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Lifestyle of the Yanadi Tribe and Food Habits in the Socio-Cultural and Economic Contexts

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ABSTRACT

Yanadi are indigenous tribes who are rodent eating community with nomadic way of life. The animistic nature of their religion, the production of fire by friction, the primitive hunting and fishing stage indicate that the Yanadis have not yet emerged from primitive stage of culture. About 53 million people (8% of the population) of India belong to various tribes in about 400 tribal communities. These groups live in different ecological geo climatic conditions throughout India ranging from the Sub-Himalayas to the islands in the Bay of Bengal and in the Arabian Sea. They also differ in distinct biological traits and cultural and socioeconomic background. Due to cultural patterns which vary from tribe to tribe, they are all at different stages of social, cultural, and economic development. The objective of present study is to have understanding of lifestyle of Yanadi tribes and their food habits in the socio culture and economic context. The study reveals that main occupation of maximum number of the respondents is fishing, cat hunting and scavengers. Mostly the houses are hut type with thatched roof. Toilet facilities and electricity facilities not available to more than half of the sample. Source of drinking water is bore water and most of them drink without purifying it. The study shows that the distance of residence from the available service is more than 5kms, from the study it can be understood that most of study population is scavengers and their residence is found far away from the center of the village. Only one fourth of the sample utilizes services like Anganwadi, PHC, Primary school, government hospital and PDS (Public Distribution System). The most important reason for not utilizing the service is marginalization.

Key words: *Yanadi tribes, Government hospital, Primary school, Anganwadi*

INTRODUCTION

Yanadis are one of the major scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh. Thurston[3] noted that the people were natives of Sriharikota Island and suggested that they derived their name from the Sanskrit word "anadi" denoting those whose origin is unknown. Now they are predominantly spread over the districts of Nellore, Chittoor Guntur, Krishna, Kadapa and Prakasham. Yanadis live in symbiosis with non-tribals. Their population according to 2001 census reports is 4, 62,167 in Andhra Pradesh.

The total literacy rate among Yanadi is 35.35 as per 2001 census. Their mother tongue is Telugu. Yanadis are broadly divided into four endogamous groups on the basis of occupations and dietary habits. The sub divisions are:

1. Manchi Yanadi or Reddi Yanadi (Cultivators and servants)

2. Adavi Yanadi (those living in forests)

3. Paki Yanadi (Scavengers) and

4. Challa Yanadi (those who collect left out food from leaf plates in the dust bins).

The Challa Yanadis and Paki Yanadis are considered to be unclean and low among Yanadis. Each division of the Yanadi is further divided into a number of patrilineal exogamous groups representing their lineage names (intiperlu).

Yanadis are non-vegetarians and eat the meat of rabbit, fowl, goat, sheep fish etc, but abstain from eating beef. Yanadis mainly subsist on agricultural labour. They are traditionally inland fishermen and are also engaged as watchmen in the fields and orchards of farmers. Collection of firewood, rickshaw pulling, rodents catching etc., constitutes secondary occupation of the Yanadis.

The Yanadi are below-medium statured, long headed with the medium value of cephalic index being the lowest observed in the state. They have a broad facial profile with a short chin and short and broad nasal features (Sreenath and Ahmad 1989). According to Andhra Pradesh Tribes Enquiry Committee, the Chenchu and the Yanadi are one and the same. To put it briefly the Chenchu ran down the hill because of Yanadi. Their food habits, religious beliefs, cultural approaches, clan characteristics, folklore and to a great extent living conditions are the same[4]. Yanadi tribe of Andhra Pradesh, India is endemic to the region and recognized as Scheduled Tribes under the Indian constitution. They lived traditionally in the fringe forests and derived their primary source of livelihood from collecting non-timber forest products. The Yanadis have rich traditional health knowledge, including knowledge for everyday health care and specialized knowledge (eg. snakebite cures). The traditional health knowledge of the yanadis is closely interlinked with bio-resources and medicinal plants for healthcare are derived by continuous access to and observation of the natural resource. It was found from the secondary sources that the Yanadis have many religious beliefs and festivals connected with the forest flora. Ceremonial visits are made to the forest to show respect to nature and deceased ancestors, worship health goddesses and give reverence to the plants that keep them healthy. In the past entire family used to go to the forest for collection of non timber forest products and the head used to educate his family members about medicinal plants and their use.

Objective: The aim of present study is to understand the profile of Yanadi tribes and their food eating patterns.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Selection of the study Area:

Guntur District comprises of rural and tribal areas that have striking socio-cultural and economic differences. All villages had the facilities provided by the government such as electricity, cement roads and transport, protected municipal water supply and primary schools. The total number of villages is 240 identified from 4 different mandals where yanadi tribal population is predominant in the Guntur District.

Table 1: Table Distribution of Locale of study area mandala wise and village wise

S.No	Mandal	Village
1		Munipalle
2	PONNUR	Doppalapudi
3		Vallabharaopalem
1		Indira Nagar Colony
2	KAKUMANU	Garikapadu
3		Kothivanipalem
1		Manchala
2	CHEBROLU	Yedlapati Nagar
3		Thotlapalem
1		Inturu
2	AMARTHALURU	Gowada
3		Ramamohana Nagar

Table 2: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

S.no	Attribute	N=250	%
1.	Age		
	20-25yrs	116	46.4%
	25-30yrs	134	53.6%
2.	Mother Education		
	No schooling	149	59.5%
	Primary	101	40.4%
	Secondary	-	
3.	Father Education		
	No schooling	101	40.4%
	Primary	132	52.8%
	Secondary	17	6.8%
4.	Family Income per month		
	<3000	119	47.5%
	3000-5000	101	40.4%
	>5000	30	12.1%
5.	Mother occupational status		
	Not employed	17	6.8%
	Agricultural laborers	53	21.2%
	Fishing& Cat Hunting	89	35.6%
	Scavengers& Escorts in fields and ponds	91	36.4%
6.	Father occupational status		
	Not employed	9	3.6%
	Agricultural laborers	54	21.6%
	Fishing& Cat hunting	72	28.7%
	Scavengers and Escort in Fields& Ponds	81	32.4%
	Migration	34	13.6%

The table 1 presents information about demographic profile of parents. The study shows that the age range of 46.4% of parents as 20-25yrs and 53.6% parents are in age group of 25-30years. From the table it can be inferred that 59.5% (i.e 149) of mothers had no schooling while 40.4% of them are primary educated and non of them completed their schooling. The educational levels of 52.8 % i.e 132 fathers is primary and 101 (40.4%) of them were illiterates but 6.8% i.e 17 were educated to secondary level. Family income of 40.4% is found to be less than 3000rs, while it is 3000-5000rs for 40.4% and only 12.1% i.e 30 had family income more than 5000rs. Mother's occupational status reveals that 36.4% I,e 91 mothers work as scavengers and escorts in fields and ponds and 89 mothers i.e 35.6% occupation is fishing and cat hunting, 21.2% of them work as agricultural laborers

while 6.8% are unemployed. Father occupational status indicate that 32.4% i.e 81 of them work as scavengers and escorts in fields and ponds while 72% occupation is fishing and cat hunting. Agricultural laborer is main occupation of 21.6% i.e 54 fathers while 9 were unemployed. It is noted from the study that 13.6% (34) fathers are migratory workers.

Table 3: Family variables of the study population

Variables	N	%
Type of family		
Joint	21	8.4%
Nuclear	229	91.6%
Size of Family		
<4	28	11.2%
4-6	203	81.2%
>6	19	7.6%
Number of children per family		
2	77	30.8%
3	119	47.5%
4	54	21.6%

The family variables are given in the table 2, which reveals that 8.4% of sample are from joint families while 91.6% (229) are from nuclear families. The size of the family is 4 in 11.2% sample and 4-6 members in 81.2% sample while it is more than 6% in 7.6% (i.e19) families. The table indicates that in 30.8% (77 families) number of children per family as 2 and in 47.5% of sample have 3 children however in 21.6% of sample it was 4 children per family.

Table 4: Percent distribution of type of house in study population

Variable	N	%
Kuchha	133	53.2
Semi Pucca	49	19.6
Temporary constructions	68	27.2

The house type of the sample is represented in the table above, from which it can be stated that 53.2% of the sample have kuchha houses, 19.6% semi pucca and 27.2% population live in temporary constructions. Mostly the houses are hut type with thatched roof.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of study population by socio economic characteristics

Variable	N	%
Toilet facility		
Available	71	28.4
Not available	179	71.6
Electricity		
Yes	87	34.8
No	163	65.2
Source of drinking water		
Wells	12	4.8
Municipal water	65	26
Bore water	173	69.1
Purification of water		
Don't purify	177	70.8
Boiling	21	8.4
Strain by cloth	52	20.8

The distribution of population according to the housing characteristics indicated that 71.6% i.e179 houses have no toilet facilities while it is found only in 28.4% i.e 71 houses. The study shows that in 163 (65.2%) houses don't have electricity while 87 (34.8%) of the houses have electricity. The source of drinking water of 69.1% is bore, for 26% it is municipal water while 4.8% depend on well for their water requirements. The study population, 70.8% of them doesn't purify water for drinking purpose, 8.4% boil water and 20.8% purify water by straining through cloth.

Table 6: Availability of Community services

Services available	Distances from place of residence		
	1-3kms	3-5kms	More than 5kms
Anganwadi	27(10.8%)	73(29.2%)	150(60%)
PDS	33(13.2%)	51(20.4%)	166(66.4%)
PHC	67(26.8%)	82 (32.8%)	101(40.4%)
Subcenter	44(17.5%)	96 (38.4%)	110(44%)
RPM/ Private practionaries	56(22.4%)	96(38.4%)	98(39.2%)
Primary school	71(28.4%)	87 (34.8%)	92(36.8%)
Govt hospital	33(13.2%)	69(27.6%)	138(55.2%)

Information about availability of services for the study population shows that anagawadi is at distance of 1-3kms for 10.8% of population, 3-5 kms for 29.2% while it is more than 5 kms for 60% i.e 150 study population. The public distribution is at distance of 1-3kms for 13.2% (33) of sample, 3-5kms for 20.4% and more than 5kms for 66.4% of sample. The Public health center is at distance of 1-3kms for 26.8%, 3-5kms distance for 32.8% and at 5kms distances for 101 i.e 40.4% of population. Sub center is at distance of 1-3kms for 17.5% sample, 3-5kms for 38.4% and more than 5kms for 44% of sample. From the place of residence Private hospitals are found at distance of 1-3kms for 22.4% of sample. 3-5kms for 38.4% of sample and more than 5kms for 39.2% of the sample. The distance of primary school from the sample residential areas is 1-3kms for 28.5% and 3-5kms for 34.8% of population and the distance is more than 5kms for 36.8% of population. The place of residence of sample from government hospital was 1-3kms for 13.2%. 3-5kms for 27.6% and more than 5kms for 55.2% of population. The study shows that the distance of residence from the available service is more than 5kms, from the study it can be understood that most of study population are scavengers and their residence is found far away from the center of the village.

Table 7: Utilization of services by the Yanadi tribes

Utilization of Services available	Yes	No
Anganwadi	131 (52.4%)	119(47.5%)
PHC	77(30.8%)	173(69.1%)
Primary school	63(25.2%)	187(74.8%)
Govt hospital	91(36.4%)	159(63.6%)
PDS	73 (29.2%)	77(30.8%)

by 52.4% of the sample and remaining 47.5% don't send their children to anganwadis because most of them are migratory families and work as escorts in fields. Primary health center service utilized by 30.8% and not utilized by 69.1% of the sample. The study reveals that 25.2% of them send their children to primary school while 74.8% children don't go to school. The percent of sample utilizing government hospital services is only 36.4% while 63% don't go to government hospitals because of their strong belief in their own traditional healing system.The public distribution service is utilized by 29.2% of sample and not utilized by 30.8% of them.

Table 8: Reasons for not utilizing the services by the Yanadi tribes

Reasons	N=250	%
Ignorance	96	38.4
Taboos	14	5.6
Distance	43	17.2
Migration	97	38.8
Marginalization	167	66.8

The above table gives reasons for not utilizing the services by the yanadi tribal community. The most important reason for not utilizing the service is marginalization (66.8%) . Because of their occupational status i.e scavengers and rat eating tribes they are facing marginalization. The next important reason cited by the study sample is migration (38.8%) and ignorance of services available (38.4%). From the study it can be noted that taboos of the tribes as one of reasons for not utilizing the services (5.6%) while large distance of these services from the residence is the reason for not utilizing the services as citied by 17.2% study population.

Table 9: Associations available in the selected locale and participation of the respondents in them

Associations Available	Members	Not members
SHG groups	-	250(100%)
DWCRA	41(16.4%)	209(83.6%)
Girijan coop society	-	250(100%)

The associations available in the study areas are Self Help group, Development of women and children in rural areas and Girijan cooperative society. The study reveals that none of the study sample were members of the group available. Only 16.4% of them are members of DWCRA.

Table 10: Percentage distribution of population by Food habits

Food habits	N	%
Vegetarians	-	
Non vegetarians	250	100
Meal pattern		
Twice	78	31.2
Thrice	172	68.8
Four times	-	

The table above presents the food habits of the study group. All the sample selected are non vegetarians and 68.8% have meals three times a day while 31.2 (i.e78) have two meal pattern

CONCLUSION

The Areas of the study of Guntur District are 30- 80 kilometers away from Guntur District. It was observed that the proximity to these urban areas does influence the lifestyle of the inhabitants and food habits in the socio-culture and economic contexts. All most all the tribal population were illiterates or only primary educated. The family income does not exceed more than 5000 rupees per month. The main occupations were Agriculture laborers, Rat pickers in the fields, Daily wage laborers of building works, riksha pullers and Maid Servants etc. Each habitat was composed of main areas and small hamlets, where only scheduled tribe (Yanadi) families were the inhabitants. For a cluster of villages there was one hamlet inhibited by only scheduled tribes. Mostly the houses are hut type with thatched roof. All villages had the facilities provided by the government such as electricity, cement

roads and transport, protected municipal water supply and primary schools. The study shows that the distance of residence from the available service is more than 5kms, from the study it can be understood that most of study population are scavengers and their residence is found far away from the center of the village.

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