

# Tribal Women and Economic Significance: A Comprehensive Study

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## ABSTRACT

This study conducted from 9th February to 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, interviewed a total of 46 tribal women farmers aged 15-49 included the pregnant women and lactating mothers were selected randomly in a comprehensive view. It aims to determine about the patterns and dynamics of tribal women's participation in economic activities, and also recognized hard work in performance of the agriculture and podu operations from the Lotheru village in ITDA Paderu revenue division of Visakhapatnam district. Empirical data about aspects of socio-economic and demographic profile, work participation, occupational distribution and occupational classification collected with the help of anthropological tools and techniques such as observations, case studies and discussions. All data were coded and analyzed with the SPSS-18 version. On the basis of findings, the highest percentage of tribal women belonged to marginal, poor income and low literacy farmer groups. The participation of tribal women was reported that the higher significantly in the agro-economic activities can be categorized like seed selection included hulling and inter-cultivation, whereas in case of land preparation, showing, harvest and post-harvest activities.

**Key words:** *Economic Significance, Lotheru, Tribal Women, Work Participation*

## INTRODUCTION

Universal access to economic opportunities and education as well as health care of women globally, has more significant positive outcomes for reducing poverty. In short, empowering women is central to sustainable development.<sup>[22]</sup> Since the inception of the 5th annual meeting of

Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), New York in 2015, all the members have made more than 700 commitments to action with a focus on women and girls, domestically. Through these commitments, women and girls have greater access to education and health care; opportunities to make their voices heard without a threat of violence; and increased access to the formal economy. A progress in development and empowerment has not translated into proportional gains. Findings of the study have been suggested that the women must enter into a labour force of the country on an equal foothold with men and get integrated into the system.<sup>[18]</sup> Women are the '*silent majority*' of particularly vulnerable, poor and the most disadvantaged group, they constitute almost half of the developing countries like India.<sup>[17]</sup> The status of women is often described in term levels of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their role in a family, a community and a society. Although, issues of the women have not solved and taken by many governments seriously.

### 1.1. Women in Agricultural Society

An agricultural society has its own distinctive symbiotic relationship with nature and people. The some historians and agriculturists believed that it was women who first domesticated the crop plants, thereby initiating the farming of art and science.<sup>[19]</sup> Since the time of Neolithic agriculture, this distinctiveness has lain in the central role of women in society and culture. Primarily, it was she involved in

gentling, nurturing and breeding; it was her capacity for tenderness and love which gave the earliest agricultural settlements, their touch of food security, receptivity, enclosure, nurture and it was she who made fully possible the growth of civilization.<sup>[10]</sup> In India, an agrarian society representing a complex social system with its heterogeneous nature, women and economic significance are relatively fixed and expected.

Indian agriculture comprises mainly marginal and small farmers. In 2013-14, budget share of agriculture in total GDP (18%) and is expected to reduce to 7-8% by 2019.<sup>[11]</sup> A large part of the farms are rain-fed, spread over 200 million hectares and constitute 62 per cent of the country's total geographical area. The rain-fed agriculture supports 40 percent of the country's population, and has a large share of cropped area under paddy (42%), pulses (77%), oilseeds (66%) and coarse cereals (85%). According to the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare,<sup>[9]</sup> nearly 72% of rural population are depending directly or indirectly on agriculture for job opportunities, more than that of any other sectors.

The socio-economic and caste census 2011 reports that almost 40% of rural households fall under the "excluded" category, as they do not fulfill the basic parameters of inclusion. Just about 8.3% of rural households reported a monthly income of over ₹. 10,000/- for the highest earning member. Average half of the rural households derive the income mainly from daily wage labour, whereas 30% from the farm cultivation. Despite Indian women have played an integral part in the farming and agricultural production, the gender division of labour remains unchanged. Women contributed in agricultural operations right from transplanting to strong about three fourth of the labour required for production. Eventually relegated women to the exclusive role of the housewife.

Many studies have focused on the financial benefits are unevenly distributed,

<sup>[1,2,5,7]</sup> leading to wide economic disparities, <sup>[11,13,15]</sup> poverty feminization, <sup>[4,6,8]</sup> increased gender inequality through deteriorating working conditions and an unsafe working environment, especially in the rural communities.<sup>[14,16,20,21]</sup> There is paucity of data on the tribal women and their economic significance. Hence, the researcher carried out the present work on "Tribal Women and Economic Significance: A Comprehensive Study." It reveals that an economic activity by time and energy spent is enormous considering the women's participation in the income of tribal households. This study is a part of PDF (ICSSR, New Delhi) which mainly focused on the impact of Government schemes on maternal morbidity.

## 1.2. Tribal Economy: Agro-Forest Mixed

This study with a comprehensive view to generate useful information on various aspects of the tribal women's participation in different economic activities and significance undertaken, particularly, anthropology domain which involves analysis of data from the multiple sources. The economy of tribals is a close relationship between economic life and natural environment or habitat which is in general, a forest. Tribals of India belong to different economic stages, with overlapping stages in the broader framework of the state economy. Nowadays, tribal societies are exposed to harsh realities of modern life, where they have to negotiate with the changing environment that is fast posing a threat to their existence. Transitional process from food gathering to industrial labour brings external influences and induces internal challenges that are sometimes detrimental to the socio-cultural fabric of tribal societies. The emphasis on infrastructural projects such as the mining, construction and industries has led to the forced eviction of people from their roots, thereby depriving them of their livelihood and homeland.

### **1.3. Tribal Women: Roles and Status**

Tribal women contribute and participate to the family economy positively along with men in subsistence agricultural activities except ploughing. They share major responsibilities in the production process. In reality, women do more work than their men. In addition, they have to manage household chores, which is a stupendous task. Child rearing is also the responsibility of the women. The work of tribal women is always more than their counterparts as they have round annually, unlike men who enjoy seasonal and periodical leisure. According to Prasada Rao 1976, <sup>[12]</sup> if she is playing an important role in economic activity particularly and adding substantial income to her family, she will achieve a status that is equal to man and further she will have a voice in the decision making process for her family.

### **1.4. Relevance of the Study**

This study has much contemporary social relevance, occupies an important position in a field of development studies. The study is intended to serve dual purpose that is academic as well as applied; and is expected to be a greater help to the students, scholars and teachers in the field of agricultural extension and women studies in general and to the social scientists like anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, and administrators who formulate the plans and policies for sustainable development of the tribals.

### **1.5. Objective of the Study**

The objective is to understand the participation in subsistence economic activities of the tribal women in Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh with a participatory approach.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

For this study, methodology that has been utilized and discussed by the following heads:

### **2.1. Study Area**

This study focused on vulnerable communities particularly the tribal women of Lotheru village in the Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh. Administratively, the study village belonging to Araku Valley mandal in the ITDA Paderu revenue division, Visakhapatnam district, it is a high density of the tribal populated village. During 9<sup>th</sup> February to 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the field work for data collection was conducted in the study area (Figure 1).

### **2.2. Data Source**

Primary data collected on socio-economic situations included demographics of the tribal households with a help of anthropological methods and techniques such as observations, case studies, interviews and discussions both formal and non-formal. A total sample of 46 tribal women in reproductive aged 15-49 included the pregnant women and lactating mothers interviewed on their observations and experiences by randomly administering a structured schedule. For the secondary data, census sources and annual reports were also tapped.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The results showed a broad to examine the tribal women and their economic significance in podu and agriculture activities from a village perspective. It is a comprehensive study, based on nature both qualitative and quantitative variables such as socio-economic and demographic profile, work participation, occupational distribution and classification etc.

### **3.1. Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile**

An understanding of the socio-economic and demographic profile is an extensive concept and valuable initial step for any research, which is derived from dependent variables related to the tribal women: geographical area, population, sex ratio, type of house, female literacy rate,

annual income, land owning capacity that can be taken.

### Geographical Area

After the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh state, area covers is 1.63 lakhs sq. km. and ranks as the 7<sup>th</sup> largest state in the country. The state situated in a tropical region, has the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest coastline in the country with a length of 974 km. As per forest records, which accounts for a forest area is 34,572 sq. km (21.58% of the total area). Under the provisions of 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule of Indian Constitution, Scheduled Areas in Andhra Pradesh extend over 14,132.56 sq. km, nearly 4,444 villages covered the five districts of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari and West Godavari.

### Visakhapatnam District: At Glance

It is one of the North Eastern Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh and it lies between 17<sup>0</sup> - 15<sup>1</sup> and 18<sup>0</sup> - 32<sup>1</sup> Northern latitude and 83<sup>0</sup> - 54<sup>1</sup> and 83<sup>0</sup> - 30<sup>1</sup> Eastern longitude. It is bounded on the North partly

by the Orissa State and partly by Vizianagaram District, on the South by East Godavari District, on the West by Orissa State and on the East by Bay of Bengal. The strip of the land along the coast and the interior called the plains divisions, and the hilly area of the Eastern Ghats adjoining on the North and West called the Tribal Agency Divisions.

In Visakhapatnam district, the scenic tribal tract popularly known as Paderu Agency, about 11,161 sq km (48%) of the total area in the district is notified with 2,312 revenue villages and 3,574 tribal habitations. A clear definition of the extent of agency is difficult to find despite its importance for Scheduled Area governance. A practical definition would be the area in which the Andhra Pradesh Government's Integrated Tribal Development Agency operates, that is to say, the 11 mandals namely, Ananthagiri, Araku valley, Dumbriguda, Hukumpeta, Pedabayalu, Munchingiputtu, Paderu, G. Madugula, Chintapalli, G.K. Veedhi and Koyyuru.

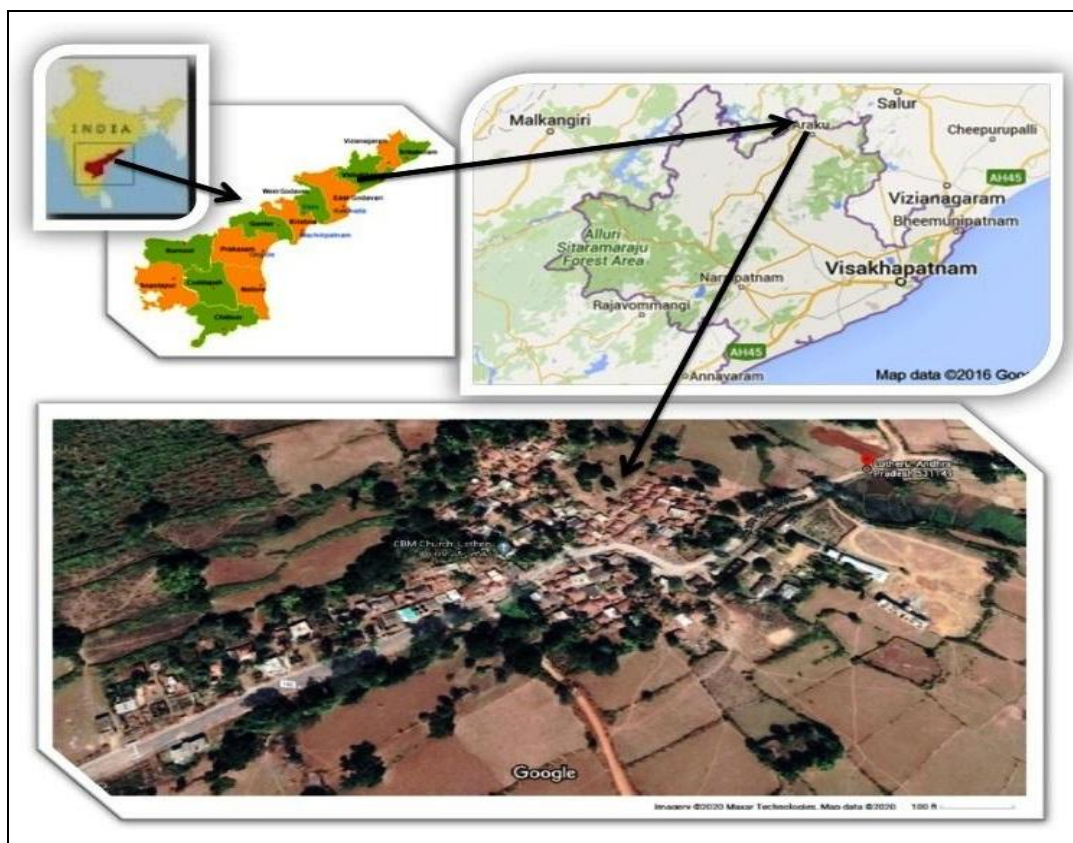


Figure 1: The study area highlighted with an arrow mark

### **Tribe Population**

As reported in the Scheduled Tribe population in Andhra Pradesh state, about 2.73 million people (5.53%) of the state's total population, in the state of Andhra Pradesh live in forested landscapes.<sup>[7]</sup> Out of the 34 STs, Yenadis are numerically the largest ST with a population of 5,33,746 constituting 19.5 per cent of the state's ST population. They are followed by Yerukulas 3,75,209 (13.7%), Sugalis 3,61,520 (13.2%), Konda Doras 2,10,509 (7.7%) and Koya 1,04,348 (3.8%). There are (34) Scheduled Tribes, out of which (6) tribal groups are categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) like Kondh, Kondareddi, Savara, Gadaba, Chenchu and Porja etc. The PVTG are characterized by smaller in size and diminishing in number, backwardness and isolation, use of pre agriculture technology and very low literacy.

From the North Coastal tribal belt of Andhra Pradesh, in particular, Visakhapatnam district has the highest number of tribals that make up 14.45% of the state population with a tribal population of about 5.57 lakhs. The Agency is home to the tribal groups such as the Bagatha, Konda Dora, Nooka Dora, Kotia, Goudu, Mali, Kammara, Dulia, Didayi and Valmiki are Vulnerable Tribal Groups. The PVTGs are Porja, Gadaba and Khond. Across the district tribal people live in homogeneous villages. Tribals live closest to nature; they rely on resources provided by forests and make a living out of it. In many aspects, tribal habitations in these parts are unique cultures. According to Prof. P.D. Satyapal,<sup>[16]</sup> the Bagatha is the dominant tribal group in the ITDA Paderu division, they own land but despite the Konda Dora tribe being numerically superior. The panchayat system has not struck roots in the region, the village headman or Naidu and village priest continue to hold sway, and in most of the villages the traditional posts are held by the Bagathas.

The study area belonging to Lotheru village falls under the Araku valley is one of

11 mandals which make up Paderu ITDA division, a pleasant hill station famous for its scenic gardens with lush green nature, valleys, waterfalls and streams. It has high level humidity and dense abounding species of flora and fauna. In this region, the forests are of mixed deciduous type, which includes many wild animals.

### **Lotheru Village: An Overview**

Lotheru is a medium size pleasant tribal village, the 20<sup>th</sup> by population and the 23<sup>rd</sup> by area, it administratively falls under the jurisdiction of ITDA Paderu division, at a distance of 24 kms from Araku valley mandal headquarters respectively. The Lotheru village is selected as a study area for a comprehensive study on the tribal women and economic significance in podu and agricultural activities, essentially a heterogeneous group, of their simple forest life, age-old methods of agriculture and their primordial cultural life which is influenced. The Lotheru village is coordinated from 18<sup>o</sup>20<sup>1</sup> to 18<sup>o</sup>33<sup>1</sup> North latitudes and from 83<sup>o</sup>02<sup>1</sup> to 83<sup>o</sup>05<sup>1</sup> East longitudes. Being a part of the Eastern Ghats, the study area is characterized by an undulating topography.

Geographically, the total area of the Lotheru village is approximately 270 hectares rounded up to one decimal place, entirely, as the hill region is still unsurveyed. Topographically, this village is situated on the top of a hill, surrounded by hills of higher altitude which provide little scope for the cultivation of large extent 117 hectares land except resorting to the shifting cultivation (*podu*) on hill slopes. Flatlands at the foothills are also cultivated, locally known as *garuvu*, such being the case, the economic life of these tribals is very simple.

### **Public Facilities in the Village: Amenities**

This village has electricity facilitated by average power supply about 10 hours in summer and 14 hours in winter period. For drinking and cooking water, facilitated through tap, tube well sources provided by a Christian missionary within the village.

Among all amenities which are public facilities distance in kilometers of nearest place where facility is available showed in series of Tables-1, 2 & 3, there are the Nutritional Rehabilitation Centre and Anganwadi centre under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, ASHA, Birth & Death Registration Office functioned within the village, health facility like primary health sub-center availability and

affordable within the village, but PHC, CHC, Divisional Hospital facilities so far distance range 15-20 kms of nearest place where facility is available, the AP TW UP Girls Residential School also functioned within the village. For transportation, all roads like Cement Concrete, Kuccha and Foot Path within the village and bus facility are available with a single trip per a day.

**Table 1: Distribution of Access to Water And Education Facilities by Distance in Lotheru**

| S.No      | Public Facility             | Distance in Kms of nearest place where facility is available |     |      |      |
|-----------|-----------------------------|--|-----|------|------|
|           |                             | Within Village   | < 5 | 5-10 | > 10 |
| <b>a)</b> | <b>Water Facility</b>       |  |     |      |      |
|           | • Tap (Treated/Untreated)   | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Well (Covered/Uncovered)  | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Tube well/Bore well       | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Tank / Pond / Lake        | Y  |     |      |      |
| <b>b)</b> | <b>Educational Facility</b> |  |     |      |      |
|           | • Pre-Primary school        | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Primary School            | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Secondary School          | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Senior Secondary School   |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Degree College            |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Engineering College       |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Medical College           |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Management Institute      |  |     |      | Y    |

\*The letter "Y" shows that availability of the public facility

**Table 2: Distribution of Access to Socio-Economic and Political Facilities by Distance in Lotheru**

| S.No | Socio-Economic and Political Meeting Facility | Distance in Kms of nearest place where facility is available |     |      |      |
|------|---|--|-----|------|------|
|      |   | Within Village   | < 5 | 5-10 | > 10 |
| 1    | PDS Depot                                     | Y  |     |      |      |
| 2    | Self-Help Groups                              | Y  |     |      |      |
| 3    | Regular market                                |  |     |      | Y    |
| 4    | Weekly market                                 |  |     |      | Y    |
| 5    | Agricultural marketing society                |  |     |      | Y    |
| 6    | Mini GCC                                      | Y  |     |      |      |
| 7    | GCC   |  |     |      | Y    |
| 8    | Birth & Death Registration Office             | Y  |     |      |      |
| 9    | Power Supply for Domestic Use                 | Y  |     |      |      |
| 10   | Newspaper Supply                              | Y  |     |      |      |
| 11   | Assembly Polling station                      |  |     | Y    |      |
| 12   | Community centre without TV                   | Y  |     |      |      |
| 13   | Sports Field,                                 | Y  |     |      |      |
| 14   | Sports Club / Recreation Centre               |  |     |      | Y    |
| 15   | AP Online Centre                              |  |     |      | Y    |
| 16   | Public Library                                |  |     |      | Y    |
| 17   | Public Reading Room                           |  |     |      | Y    |

\*The letter "Y" shows that availability of the public facility

**Table 3: Distribution of Access to Health and Nutrition Facilities by Distance in Lotheru**

| S.No      | Public Facility                      | Distance in Kms of nearest place where facility is available |     |      |      |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|--|-----|------|------|
|           |                                      | Within Village   | < 5 | 5-10 | > 10 |
| <b>c)</b> | <b>Health Facility</b>               |  |     |      |      |
|           | • Health Sub Centre                  | Y  |     |      |      |
|           | • Primary Health Centre              |  | Y   |      |      |
|           | • Community Health Centre            |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Maternity and Child Welfare Centre |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • T.B. Clinic                        |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Hospital-allopathic                |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Hospital-alternative medicine      |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Dispensary                         |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Veterinary hospital                |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Mobile health clinic               |  |     |      | Y    |
|           | • Family welfare centre              |  |     |      | Y    |

*Table no.3 continued.....*

| d) | Frontline Health Worker Facility  |   |   |   |   |
|----|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
|    | • ASHA                            | Y |   |   |   |
|    | • ANM                             |   | Y |   |   |
|    | • MHW (Female)                    |   |   | Y |   |
|    | • MHW (Male)                      |   |   | Y |   |
| e) | Nutritional Facility              |   |   |   |   |
|    | • Anganwadi Centre                | Y |   |   |   |
|    | • Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre | Y |   |   |   |
|    | • ICDS Centre                     |   |   |   | Y |

\*The letter "Y" shows that availability of the public facility

### Population Structure

Table-4 denotes that about the population structure of the Lotheru village, the total population is near 757 of the 163 households from which 359 are males while 398 are females. The tribal groups namely, Bagatha, Valmiki and Konda Dora are living together. In every family, an average 5 persons live. The village population of children with age 0-6 is 82 which makes up 10.83% of the total population of the village. Among them 47 are boys and 35 are girls.

### Sex Ratio

**Table 4: Details of Population Structure in the Lotheru village**

| S.No | Parameter                   | Frequency               |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1    | Total Population            | 757                     |
| 2    | Scheduled Tribal Population | 744 (98.3)              |
| 3    | S.T. Male Population        | 355 (46.9)              |
| 4    | S.T. Female Population      | 389 (51.4)              |
| 5    | Children (0-6 years)        | 82                      |
| 6    | Girl Children (0-6 years)   | 35 (42.7)               |
| 7    | Population Density          | 280 per km <sup>2</sup> |
| 8    | Population Growth (%)       | -1.3                    |
| 9    | Total Sex Ratio             | 1109                    |
| 10   | S.T. Sex Ratio              | 1096                    |
| 11   | Child Sex Ratio             | 745                     |
| 12   | Literacy Rate               | 342 (45.2)              |
| 13   | Female Literacy Rate        | 144 (36.2)              |
| 14   | Total Households            | 163                     |
| 15   | Average of Family Size      | 4.78                    |

\*Numbers in parentheses and brackets are percentage

Sex ratio defined as the ratio of the females per every 1000 males, changes in ratios can affect marriage prospects, labor force participation, social and economic variables. The sex ratio in Lotheru village is 1109 which is higher than average of Visakhapatnam district (1006) and Andhra Pradesh state (993). For the child sex ratio with age 0-6 is 745, it is observed that a lower than average of Visakhapatnam (961) and Andhra Pradesh (939). Population growth of the village has decreased by -

1.3% in the last 10 years. In the recent census, the total population here was 767 respectively. Female population growth rate of the village is 28% which is 49.3% higher than male population growth (-21.3%). The general caste population has decreased by -91.4%; the Schedule Tribe population has increased by 1.6% and children have decreased by -11.8% in the village since last census.

### Type of House

Under the study, majority of the tribals in the village live in their owned houses (92.2%) and mostly prefer to live in single roomed houses (59.5%) than double roomed houses (27.4%) for their domestic utility purpose. It can be observed that, majority of the houses are Semi-Pucca (79.1%) constructed with tiled or asbestos roofed and the remaining houses are Pucca (11.7%) constructed by RCC and very few houses (9.2%) are Kutcha or Thatched made with mud flooring. The study area had an average size of family of 4.78 persons per household. This is moderate family size and is in comparison with other parts of the district.

### Female Literacy Rate

The development of education that plays a crucial role in the growth process of an economy. The Literacy rate of Lotheru village is 45.18% reported with 342 are literates. Among the male literates, the literacy rate is 55.15% as 198 out of total 359 are literate males whereas female literacy rate is 36.18% as 144 out of total 398 females are literate. The dark part is that the illiteracy rate of this village is shockingly high (54%). Here, 415 of the

total 757 individuals are illiterate. It is observed that the specified tribal village has a low literacy rate (45.18%) while the female literacy rate is low (36.18%) when compared to 59.74% of Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam (59.34 %) respectively.

### **Annual Income**

An economic status is one of the determinants of the class and development. About 32.8% of households are generating income from agriculture in the study area. It is reported that nearly half of the tribals (49.4%) by annual income is below ₹ 10,000 because mostly they depend on the source of daily wage labour and podu cultivation. The average annual income of these people is ₹ 11,425 reported.

### **Land Owning Capacity**

Even in the agricultural sector, the tribal communities are not beneficiaries of the green revolution. The researcher discussed that an extent of land holdings possessed by each household in the study village, fall under the category of small and marginal. According to interactions of the tribal women, out of the total 163 households, about 28.5% are possessing the greater than 2 acres of land followed by 35.1% are possessing between less than one acre of land. About 15.1% of the households are land less category while remaining are possessing between 1.1 to 2.0 acres of land.

The average size of land in the Lotheru village is about three-fourths of an acre. The 64<sup>th</sup> round NSSO's survey showed that the percent of landless households among tribes was somewhat higher than the non tribes, the respective figures being 20.5% and 16.3%. The percentage of tribal marginal households (40.6%) was less than the non-tribal marginal households (51.7%) respectively.

### **Classification of Land**

In the tribal village, the land classification is based on location and water capacity. These people have classified into the land mainly two types: wet and dry.

Approximately, 25 hectares of cultivated land is wet also known as irrigated land, the source of irrigation in Lotheru village mainly, 12.2 hectares from canals and 12.8 hectares from watersheds or tanks. Their holdings are small and mostly in dry lands. By the local people, the dry land was classified into podu (4.6%), garuvu (8.7%) saruvu (6.7%) and coffee plantation (9.2%) respectively.

### **Work Participation**

The economic structure consists of the dependent variables such as work participation, occupational distribution and occupational classification. These aspects help us to understand the following: 1) Rate at which the population grows; 2) The number of people employed; 3) Productivity of the working population; 4) Industries which are becoming unimportant; and 5) Number of people that construct the labor force. Work participation rate highlights the occupational distribution of the percentage of main and marginal workers. The work participation of the village people in comparison with the district of Visakhapatnam, total workers account for 44.05%. Among the proportion of main workers is around 34.52%, male main workers accounted for 49.08% and female main workers are around 20.05%. The 9.53% of the remaining population are marginal workers as per the recent census. [3]

### **Occupational Distribution**

Occupational distribution of a population reflects on the degree of development and the diversification achieved in an economy. As per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the growth in GDP during 2018-19 was placed at 7.2 per cent as compared to the growth rate of 6.7 per cent in 2017-18. Through agriculture which is facing a number of challenges, the tribals in Lotheru village earned incomes. A large number of tribal households restore to the subsidiary occupation for meeting their



requirements at minimum. Another source of cash income of the tribals from the collection firewood and minor forest produce from the forest.

### Occupational Classification

The occupational structure clearly reflects a high degree of backwardness prevailing, changes are associated with development. Economic development creates various occupational types. All the occupations can be broadly classified into three categories, as follows:

1. In the Primary sector of economy, activities are undertaken by directly using natural resources: Cultivation; Agricultural Labour; Livestock, Forestry. Fishing, Hunting and Plantations, Orchards and allied activities;
2. Secondary sector includes the industries where finished products are made from natural materials produced in the primary sector. Mining and Quarrying; Manufacturing, Processing, Servicing and Repairs in 1) Household Industry; 2) other than Household Industry; and
3. Tertiary sector's activities help in the development of the primary and secondary sectors. By itself, economic activities in the tertiary sector do not produce goods but they are an aid or a support for the production: Constructions; Trade and Commerce; Transport, Storage and Communications; and Other Services.

Over the last five decades (1971-2020), the proportion of working force engaged in primary occupations remained very steady, i.e., around 70 per cent and that in the secondary and tertiary sector was ranging between 28-30% only. The occupation classification in Visakhapatnam district shows that, out of the total workers, cultivators comprising (19.23%), Agricultural Labourers (25.42%), Household Industries workers (2.55%) and other workers (52.80%). Firstly, the tribal areas are alarming growth in agriculture and development, the share of women

community in the ITDA Paderu division to the secondary sector is less than 20%.

Table-5 shows that a distribution of working group in the Lotheru village, the three fourth of working people are essentially 58.42% are marginal group and remaining constitute the main workers (21.53%) in the different ages. Among the total marginal workers, 64.86 percent of tribes participated in daily wage labour included MGNREG scheme works followed by the 40.72% of agriculture labour. Whereas a working group, female participation in daily wage labour is 54.10% and in agriculture is 40.72% in the age group 15-49 only excluded the age group of 50 years and above respectively.

**Table 5: Distribution of working group in the Lotheru village**

| S.No | Parameter                             | Frequency   |
|------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1    | Total Working Group                   | 442 (58.42) |
| 2    | No. of Marginal Workers               | 287 (64.86) |
| 3    | Female Participation in Marginal Work | 155 (54.10) |
| 4    | No. of Cultivators                    | 130 (45.23) |
| 5    | No. of Agriculture labour             | 57 (19.67)  |
| 6    | Female Participation in Agriculture   | 23 (40.72)  |

\*Numbers in parentheses and brackets are percentage

### Tribal Women's Economic Activities: A Participatory Approach

A key to achieving for sustainable development by 2030 Agenda, empowering women in the economy and closing gender gaps of work particularly Goal 5, to achieve gender equality, and Goal 8, to promote full and productive employment and decent work for all; also Goal 1 on ending poverty, Goal 2 on food security, Goal 3 on ensuring health and Goal 10 on reducing inequalities. [20] Despite a good progress in efforts to the tribals in the Paderu Revenue Division participatory approaches, the concept of participation has been differently understood by people in the Department of Tribal Welfare, in GCC, among the project officers and staff of the ITDA Paderu, and elsewhere at different times. Therefore, the strategies of participation applied were different depending largely on the perceptions of the project officers and related staff in a given period.

In the study village, even after industrialization and resultant

commercialization swamped a tribal economy, women play the most important role than in other social groups, because they work hard and family economy and management depends on them. The economic activities exist at all levels which are a set of actions that produce, trade, sell or distribute goods or services with the involvement of monetary transactions. In this, women's participation in the agricultural activities are: crop production, farm managers, agricultural labourers, livestock keeping, family affairs, household duties and MFPs collection, including fetching of water for drinking and cooking, they had to walk uphill 1.5 kms from the springs. There is a spring near the village, but water availability is less, and purity contaminated. They foregoing daily labour as, had to be absent from their daily work just to get drinking water.

### MFP Activities

The collected minor forest produce (MFP) by the tribal women in the Lotheru village from their surroundings of the forest at seasonally like 'Kanuga' (Indian beech: *Pongamia glabra*), 'Chintha' (Tamarind: *Tamarindus indica*), 'Kunkudikaya' (Soap nut: *Sapindus emarginatus*), 'Shikakai' (Soap pod: *Acacia concinna*), 'Jeelugu' (Toddy palm: *Caryota urents*), 'Nallajeedi' (Marking nut: *Semecarpus anacardium*), 'Karakkaya' (Myrobalan: *Terminalia chebula*), 'Induga' (Cleaning nut: *Strychnus potatorum*), 'Dannimma' (Pomegranate: *Punica granatum*), 'Narija' (Orange: *Citrus sinensis*), 'Sitaphalam' (Custard apple: *Anona squamosa*), 'Vusiri' (Gooseberry: *Phyllanthus embilica*), 'Jamma' (Guava: *Psidium guajava*), 'Panasa' (Jackfruit: *Artocarpus heterophyllus*), 'Neredu' (Java plum: *Syzygium cumini*), 'Nimma' (Lemon: *Citrus sp.*), 'Mammidi' (Mango: *Mangifera indica*), 'Arati' (Banana: *Musa paradisiacal*), 'Eetha' (Date palm: *Phoenix sylvestris*), 'Boppai' (Papaya: *Carica papaya*), 'Allam' (Ginger: *Zingiber officinale*), 'Pogaku' (Tobacco: *Nicotiana tabacum*), 'Miriyalu' (Pepper: *Piper*

*nigrum*), 'Alusulu' (Niger: *Guizotia abyssynic*), 'Kafi' (Coffee: *Coffea arabica*), 'Amudamu' (Castor: *Ricinus communis*), 'Nuvvulu' (Gingelly: *Sesamum orientale*), 'Puttakokku' (Mushroom), 'Konda cheepuru' (Hill broom: *Thysanolaena maxima*), 'Dabbagaddi' (Lemon grass: *Cymbopogon citratus*), 'Olibanum' (Gum: *Boswellia serrata*), 'Adda akku' and 'Adda pikka' (Platter leaf and seed: *Bauhinia vahlii*), 'Beedi akku' (Tendu leaves: *Diospyros melanoxylon*), etc and other minor products in a weekly shandy at Araku when they come into contact with the non-tribals. Due to these frequent contacts with the plains people in the weekly shandies they have taken to the use of washing and toilet soaps. There is no perceptible change in the nature of their aspirations so far as the present occupation is concerned.

### Podu Activities

It's the motto 'early to bed and early to rise' that works for the tribals, who inhabit the Lotheru village, begin their day having a small carriage with staple food or gruel before setting off to work in the forest. Their lifestyle has not changed much over the ages. The tribals are free to choose and cultivate any part of the surrounding hills. Each tribal, *podu* cultivation to the limit of his working capacity with the assistance of the family members. The land is not usually sold or purchased in this region. The son or the brother acquires the right over the land soon after the death of the owner. The land tenure rules are conventional and mostly governed by the traditional customs. The greater part of the hill slopes except the hill tops, are under *podu* cultivation as it is the principal source of livelihood. It is very interesting to study the primitive farming practices of Bagathas. During the months of February and March the tribals both men and women are usually engaged in felling the trees which are burnt completely. Afterwards in the month of April, the ash is then distributed all over the field before taking up the ploughing operations. The cattle dung, the principal manure, is evenly

distributed all over the field after completion of the ploughing operations both in *kondapodu* and *garuvu* lands. The fertilizers are not yet used by them.

- Before first rainfall in the month of *Besikalenji* (April-May), the *garuvu* lands are ploughed. There are many mixed crops of *ragi*, *virajonnalu*, *peddakorra*, *thotakura*, *peddasarasavalu*, *anuvulu* and *alachandalu* that are raised on the hill slopes.
- After the first rainfall in the month of May, the *kondapodu* begins with the turning of earth locally known as *tuvvodam* with a spade by men and women, where the cattle cannot be used for ploughing purposes was done for three or four times. Small pits of 2" depth are made indiscriminately on hill slopes to show the castor and *peddakandulu* seeds and they are covered with earth.

### Agricultural Activities

During the interactive, some tribal women shared their perceptions and experiences on the importance of traditional varieties still in use. The agriculture in this region is the most susceptible spheres to variability due to its high dependability on seasonality, especially quantity and distribution pattern of rainfall. In the Lotheru village, male-female participation in the agriculture sector is quite flexible, women play an effective role in production and resource mobilization. As regards the category, workers mainly classified into as agricultural labourers who on somebody else's farm for a wage payment either in cash or kind and as cultivators who own their own land. Moreover, the category of cultivators covers both owner cultivators and tenant cultivators. Table-6 shows the percentage of participation in agriculture activities with reference to multiple responses by the tribal women. Thus, every day, the Lotheru tribal women deposit the cattle dung in their respective fields as it is the principal source of manure. It is very

common to see heaps of cattle dung in her family land. In the month of June, they will start agriculture work. They plough their lands and sow the seeds.

**Table 6: Percentage of participation in agricultural activities by Tribal Women of Lotheru**

| S. No | Activity  | Per cent (%) |
|-------|---|--------------|
| 1     | Land preparation  | 34.22        |
| 2     | Selection, cleaning, mixing, broadcasting and dibbling of seeds | 70.51        |
| 3     | Care of germination   | 45.59        |
| 4     | Watching of seedlings   | 61.77        |
| 5     | Weeding and protecting the crop produce                         | 82.65        |
| 6     | Application of fertilizers                                      | 18.54        |
| 7     | Harvest and Post-harvest activities                             | 86.13        |

The tribals both women and men in the village neither attend to any intercultural operations nor remove the weeds. They will harvest the crop in the month of December or January. At the time of harvest, they worship God and offer sacrifice hen and goat in the land. Then they will bring the crop to their houses. The results reveal that an economic activities by the tribal women in agriculture as follows:

- Above half of the respondents (79.4%) of the farm tribal women had nuclear families and 62.4% respondents family income was quite low (less than ₹ 10,000/- annually).
- It was observed that 70.51% of the tribal women classified high levels of involvement in the selection, cleaning, mixing, broadcasting and dibbling of seeds.
- Whereas medium involvement of women was found in care of germination (45.59%) and watching of seedlings (61.77%).
- In land preparation through cutting of jungle, the tribal women showed low level of involvement (34.22%), but better involved (53.78%) in hoeing of land and land leveling of the Bagatha women.
- In application of fertilizers, a low involvement was found (18.54%) by tribal women.

- A very high involvement of the tribal women in wedding (82.65%) respectively.
- Majority of the tribal women were highly involved in all the harvest and post-harvest activities (86.13%) as follows: a) reaping of crops, b) making bundles, c) carrying of crops from field, d) threshing of grains, f) winnowing of grains, g) storage of grains for seed

purpose, h) drying of grains, and i) cleaning of grains.

### Crop Yielding in the Village

The crop yielding is sown cyclically and intercropped in the available land depending on the season. Here, agriculture is important economic activity among the tribal people. The paddy is the main crop followed by cereals and millets.

Table 7: Distribution of Crop Pattern by Annual Calendar

| Name of the crop            | Sowing season                                | Harvesting season             |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Paddy                       | May-June (Kharif)<br>December-January (Rabi) | October-November<br>April-May |
| Maize or Corn               | May-June                                     | September-October             |
| Ragi or Finger millet       | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Samalu or Little millet     | May-June                                     | October-November              |
| Virajonnalu or Great millet | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Korralu or Foxtail millet   | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Sajjalu or Pearl millet     | May-June                                     | September-October             |
| Sarasvalu                   | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Alachandalu                 | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Anuvulu                     | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Redgram                     | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Blackgram                   | May-June                                     | February-March                |
| Horsegram                   | June-July                                    | November-December             |
| Greengram                   | June-July                                    | November-December             |
| Peas                        | September-October                            | December-January              |
| Black-eyed peas             | June-July                                    | November-December             |
| Round beans                 | June-July                                    | December-January              |
| Kidney beans                | September-October                            | December-January              |
| Broad beans                 | November-December                            | February-March                |
| Sweet Potato                | November-December                            | February-March                |
| Tomato                      | May-June                                     | November-December             |
| Castor seed                 | May-June                                     | February-March                |
| Niger or Valisalu           | June-July                                    | November-December             |
| Chilly                      | June-July                                    | November-December             |
| Ginger                      | June-July                                    | November-December             |
| Yam                         | November-December                            | February-March                |

Table-7 presents the distribution of yielding crop pattern calendar by one year. In the Lotheru village, a diversity of yielding under food crops is generally very good and needs to be transported to the nearest marketing center i.e. Araku valley so as the farmers shall get the better benefits and true value that include several varieties of 'Vari' (Paddy: *Oryza sativa*), 'Cholu/Ragulu' (Finger millet: *Eleusine coracana*), 'Samalu' (Little millet: *Panicum sumatrense*), 'Korralu' (Foxtail millet: *Setaria italica*), 'Gantelu' (Pearl millet: *Pennisetum typhoides*), 'Mokkajonna' (Corn: *Zea mays*), 'Jonnalu' (Jowar: *Sorghum bicolor*), etc. Among pulses are: 'Minimulu' (Black gram: *Vigna mungo*), 'Pesarlu' (Green gram: *Vigna radiata*), 'Ulavalu'

(Horse gram: *Dolichos uniflorus*), 'Batanilu' (Peas: *Pisum sativum*), 'Alasandlu' (Cow pea: *Vigna unguiculata*), 'Rajmalu' (Kidney beans: *Phaseolus vulgaris*), 'Kandulu / Sirikandulu' (Red gram: *Cajanus cajan*), 'Chikkudlu' (Round beans: *Dolichos lablab*), 'Bobbarlu' (Black eyed peas: *Vigna catjang*) followed by vegetables such as 'Thakkali' (Tomato: *Solanum lycopersicum*), 'Gummudu' (Beech: *Gmelina arborea*),

### CONCLUSION

Where the researcher observed and finally concluded, the tribal women are found to be active in all economic activities and have significant effort to make in the Lotheru village of Araku Valley mandal comes under Visakhapatnam district from

the North Coastal tribal belt of Andhra Pradesh, it is reported that the highly proportion. The tribal women's role is not only of importance in economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important. In results, the tribal women carry out all types of work at home as well as outside. About 70.51% of the tribal women perceived drudgery in performance selection of seeds and cleaning of seeds as fairly heavy, whereas hoeing of land and land leveling was apprehended as low (34.22%). Weeding and protecting the crop produce were noted as moderately heavy by more of the respondents (82.65%). It was found that post-harvesting activities like making bundles was reported to heavy activity by women (86.13%). The study recommended that of the Agricultural Extension services to women farmers, the Department of Agriculture, Araku valley should be provide and to be educate the latest technical knowledge, to be introduce the high yielding varieties, laying demonstrations, imparting training, also to be improve skills & knowledge to be boost up the agricultural production and productivity.

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