

IDENTIFICATION OF PVTGS (PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS) HABITAT AT KAWARDHA DISTRICT IN CHHATTISGARH STATE

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ABSTRACT

India is one of the nations of tribal concentration and is also said to have the largest tribal population, next to Africa. Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in India today. The concept of habitat structure has been adopted to encompass the study of the effects of “the arrangement of objects in space” on ecological variables. In Indian academic and administrative discourse there are different names to denote tribes. It includes Vanyajati (caste of forest), Vanavasi (inhabitants of forest), Pahari (hill dwellers), Adimjati (primitive people), Girijan (hill dwellers), Anusuchit Jan Jati (scheduled tribe). PVTGs which earlier called as Primitive Tribal Groups, identified in the different state of India. In Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh) - Abujh Marias, Baigas, Bharias, Hill Korbas, Kamars, Saharias, Birhor were identified. The present study was conducted in the Kawardha district of Chhattisgarh state, because in this district Baiga population is highest as compare to other district of state. For primary data collected the researcher surveyed three gram Panchayat namely, Bairak, Dholbazza and Borakhakar of Kawardha district. On the basis of discussion with Baigas, it may be said that Baigas living on higher hill, have retained more of their traditional features than the ones in lower areas who have mostly migrated from the top in search of cultivable land, when Bewar practice was forcibly stopped by the government. The 1912 Mandla Gazetteer noted that the ‘principal habitat’ of Baiga lie in the ‘recesses of the Maikal range’, which stretches from Kawardha district of Chhattisgarh to some part of Madhya Pradesh.

Key words: PVTGs, Baiga, BaigaChak, Tribal.

INTRODUCTION

McCoy and Bell (1990) and Beck (2000) defined habitat as “the amount, composition and three-dimensional arrangement of biotic and abiotic physical matter within a defined location and time; refers to complexity and heterogeneity of physical matter across horizontal and vertical physical space”. Although habitat structure is the physical template underlying ecological patterns and processes, the concept is relatively unappreciated and underdeveloped in ecology. However, it provides a fundamental concept for urban ecology because human activities in urban ecosystems are often targeted toward management of habitat structure (Byrne, 2007). The concept of habitat structure has been adopted to encompass the study of the effects of “the arrangement of objects in space” on ecological variables (Bell *et al.* 1990). Ecosystem processes are influenced by habitat structure through its modification of environmental conditions and resource availability. Differences in habitat structures across space create landscape patterns, which in turn affect communities and

India is one of the nations of tribal concentration and is also said to have the largest tribal population, next to Africa (Desai 1979). The pattern of distribution of tribal population across the country is extremely uneven. There are some states and minor territories with high concentration, some states with moderate and others with thin concentration of tribals in India (Singharoy, 2004). No community has been specified as a Scheduled Tribe in relation to the states of Haryana, Punjab and Union Territories of Chandigar, Delhi and Pondicheri (Anonymous, 2004-05). The total number of tribal communities in India as identified by Singh (2003) as part of his project "People of India" (1994) was 461, and about 172 were segmented.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in India today. They are often not settled agriculturists, are often regarded with fear, hostility or indifference by other communities (including other tribal communities), tend to live in remote areas and are outside most systems of education and social provision in the country.

In Indian academic and administrative discourse there are different names to denote tribes. It includes Vanyajati (caste of forest), Vanavasi (inhabitants of forest), Pahari (hill dwellers), Adimjati (primitive people),

Girijan (hill dwellers), Anusuchit Jan Jati (scheduled tribe). As these communities are presumed to form the oldest ethnological sector of the population, the term “adivasi” has become common and this is the widely used term all over India. The ILO has classified these groups as “indigenous”, but they do not take into account the internal differences within the broad category of “tribes”. They, therefore, extend the term “tribe” to any group who lives in isolation and having distinctive cultural traits (Rajora, 1978).

Among them, there are certain tribal communities who have a low level of literacy, declining or stagnant population, pre-agricultural level of technology and are economically more backward. Backwardness and primitive techniques are said to be intrinsic to tribes. On the basis of these criteria, 52 communities have been identified as primitive till the end of 5th plan, 72 in the 6th plan and 74 in the 7th plan. 75 such groups in 15 states have been identified, and have been recognized as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) (Ratnakar, 2004).

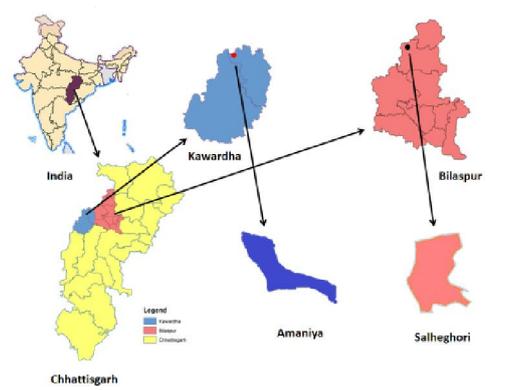
PTGs which earlier called as Primitive Tribal Groups, identified in the different state of India. In Andhra Pradesh - BodoGadaba, BondoPoroja, Chenchu, DongriaKhond, Gutob, Gadaba, KhondPoroja, Kolam, Kondareddis, KondaSavaras, KutiaKhond, ParengiPoroja, Thoti, in Bihar (including Jharkhand)-Asurs, BirhorBirjia, Hill Kharia, Korwas, Mal Paharia, Parhaiyas, SauriaPaharia, Savar, in Gujarat -Kathodi, Kotwalia, Padhar, Siddi, Kolgha, in Karnataka- JenuKuruba, Koraga, in Kerala - Cholanaikayan (a section of Kattunaickans), Kadar, Kattunayakan, Kurumbas, Koraga, in Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh) - Abujh Marias, Baigas, Bharias, Hill Korbas, Kamars, Saharias, Birhor, in Maharashtra - Katkaria (Kathodia), Kolam, Maria Gond, in Manipur - MaramNagas, in Orissa - Birhor, Bondo, Didayi, Dongria-Khond, Juangs, Kharias, KutiaKondh, LanjiaSauras, Lodhas, Mankidias, PaudiBhuyans, Soura, ChuktiaBhunjia, in Rajasthan - Seharis (Sahariya), in Tamil Nadu- KattuNayakans, Kotas, Kurumbas, Irulas, Paniyans, Todas, in Tripura – Reangs, in Uttar Pradesh (including Uttarakhand)- Buxas, Rajis, in West Bengal-Birhor, Lodhas, Totos and in Andaman & Nicobar Islands - Great Andamanese, Jarawas, Onges, Sentinelese, Shom PansPTGs were identified.

In the context of above discussion the present research work was carried on with following specific objectives:

1. To identify the PVTGs habitat in selected district of Chhattisgarh state
2. To recognize the PVTGs cultures.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in the Kawardha district of Chhattisgarh state, because in this district Baiga population is highest as compare to other district of state. Survey three gram Panchayat namely, Bairak, Dholbazza and Borakhakar of Kawardha district because of following criteria was adopted for selection:



The PVTGs areas can be essentially categorized into three zones:

- **Culture Core:** Very high concentration of concerned PVTG with traditional and customary practices in vogue to a large extent. Also falls within micro-project region.
- **Fluid Zone:** Mixed concentration with population of concerned PVTG less than half but still within the administrative zone of the micro-project. High dis-integration of customary and traditional features.

- **Outer Zone:** Very low concentration of concerned PVTGs who have migrated away from culture core or buffer areas over period of time and have gone through massive acculturation. These areas also fall out the administrative zone of the micro-project.

A multi-stage stratified random sampling method had adopted for selecting the study village. It is suggested to take up one village from the culture core area which has the dominance of the most powerful clan. Such clan hierarchy had been taken as to what is in practice and perception of PVTG communities in the concerned area. The selection village also has to be remote. In order to understand the historical and current situation around the parameter, separate discussions with representatives of three generations would be carried out in the core study villages. These villages will be taken for deeper and extensive enquiry on the aforesaid parameters while short visits to few other villages in the locality would be undertaken.

In addition to the exploring the aforesaid parameters, focused also on understanding clan, sub-clan, lineage, and tribe territories to develop a holistic picture of the habitat of the studied PVTG.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Identified PVTGs with their respective culture

S.No.	Jati	Gotra	Garh	Totam
1.	Davdiya	Maravi	Devri	Ek Dora BhatKhaneWala
2.	Ratudiya	Dhurva		NalakinareRahnewala(HadaGodaSakelneWala)
3.	Guthiya		Ghata	
4.	Guthliya			
5.	Nandiya	Dhurva		Machhli Marne NadiKinareJanewala
6.	Sardiya		Shelatala	SaraiVrichh
7.	Kusariya	Dhurva	Koshiari	Shushru(UlluPankshi)
8.	Padiya			Padiya(BhensKaNaujatShishu)
9.	Udariya			UdaarVrichh
10.	Kadmiya			KadamKadamChalnewala
11.	Tatdiya	Dhurva	Tantar	Tatra,AadmiBaura (Goonga)
12.	Barangiya(Tatriya)	Dhurva	Bangr	BargaJhhad
13.	Nidhuniya			BantneKeSamay Dan Neng
14.	Ghatiya			GhatChadneWala
15.	Bhusadiya		Bhusandi	
16.	Bariya			BarahSthano Me BethneWala
17.	Bagdariya			Bagh Marne Se MnaKrneWala
18.	Palthariya			DusriJati Me RahneWala
19.	Kachnariya		Kachnari	
20.	Mangadiya			MangneWala
21.	Sitkuriya			
22.	Ufariya			
23.	Gilambiya		Jhhiland	
24.	Panchgaeya		Panchgav	
25.	Pindragiya			
26.	Mundkiya	Dhurva		Mood PakdneWala
27.	Ghanghriya			Ghangharghat Me RahneWala
28.	Sadiya			
29.	Kukariya	Maravi	Kamariya	
30.	Chadchadiya		Chanrha	Chanrha Me RahneWala
31.	Chandniya		Chandrani	
32.	Talsiya		TaliyaPali	
33.	Chapuriya	Chapvar		
34.	Kumniya			
35.	Kudopniya		Kudobariya	
36.	Ghunddaeya		GhodaDongari	
37.	Barghatiya			
38.	Jajuliya			

39.	Samardahiya		Samardah	
40.	Bindiya			
41.	Podiya		Pondi	
42.	Palthariya(Palghatiya)		Pangar	
43.	Machhiya			
44.	Khohdiya			Khet Me Rahnewala
45.	Lamodiya		Lamorha	
46.	Bhurkudiya		Bharratola	
47.	Badriya		Barhgaon	
48.	Lakhiya		Lakho	
49.	Bumdariya		Bonder	
50.	Chhindiya			
51.	Maudhiya			
52.	Kukariya		Kukrasil	KukaraPalneWala
53.	Badahiya(Dadghotiya)		Barhghat	
54.	Dhoriya			
55.	Lakiya			
56.	Aamars			
57.	Tilasiya			

The primary data were collected about the PVTGs along with their respective culture and presented in the Table 1. On the basis of discussion with Baigas, it may be said that Baigas living on higher hill, have retained more of their traditional features than the ones in lower areas who have mostly migrated from the top in search of cultivable land, when Bewarpractice was forcibly stopped by the government. The traditional features are preliminarily identifiable through their attire, hairstyle, houses and their quick recollection of their area or about the Mukaddam(head of villages), identification of their clans *etc.* for selecting the core villages, the focus had been given more on the ones that are located on higher hills and remote in access.

It must be noted that the satellite villages would be also included some of the villages from the above list and few other district that might get identified during the course of the study. Initial discussion on the 'extent of their habitat' in the visited villages yielded interesting observation. For the village sites within Chhattisgarh, it was found close resemblance between their perceptions about their habitat which included relations related to marriage, collection of herbs, collection of NTFPs, spread of different clans *etc.*

Baiga villages are located on higher hills and lower hilly areas/plain areas. Except for the Baigachakrignion, Bewar (shifting cultivation) has ceased as a cultivation practice to pressure of the state (including promulgation of forest conservation Act, 1980). The 1912 MandlaGazeteer noted that the 'principal habitat' ofBaiga lie in the 'recesses of the Maikal range', which stretches from Kawardhadistrict of Chhattisgarh to some part of Madhya Pradesh.BaigaChak is not an exclusive habitat of Baigas. In 1912, only one fifth of the total Baiga population in Mandla (undivided) use to live within BaigaChak. It was set aside by the British in 1877 as a reservation where they were allowed to practice their ancestral Bewar cultivation and hunting covering an area of 36 square miles in the heart of Maikalrange (MandlaGazetter, 1912). Thus BaigaChak only happens to be an administrative region.

CONCLUSIONS

The 1912 MandlaGazeteer noted that the 'principal habitat' ofBaiga lie in the 'recesses of the Maikal range', which stretches from Kawardhadistrict of Chhattisgarh to some part of Madhya Pradesh. The present conditions of Baiga tribal are not good and they are suffering from many problems related to health, education, sanitation, drinking water, electricity *etc.* On the basis of the present research, it is advisable that for welfare of Baiga community the social activities and the government should take urgent action and provide them necessary basic facility.

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