

**GAMES, CULTURE AND SOCIETY: A STUDY OF
TRADITIONAL GAMES
IN THE VILLAGES OF WEST GODAVARI
DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH.**

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BY

**DIVYA TEJA PASUPULETI
12SAPH04**



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

HYDERABAD – 500 046

JANUARY, 2019.

Dedicated

to

Sri P.Ramesh Babu Garu (Father)

Late Smt.P.Uma Maheswari Garu (Mother)



Department of Anthropology
University of Hyderabad

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work embodied in this thesis entitled “*Games, Culture and Society: A Study of Traditional Games in the villages of West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh*” is carried out by me under the supervision of Prof. P. Venkata Rao, Department of Anthropology, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, and has not been submitted for any degree in part or in full to this University or to any other University.

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CERTIFICATE

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Annexure 1

This is to certify that the thesis entitled Games, Culture, Society: A Study of Traditional Games in the Villages of West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh.

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Social Sciences is a bonafide work carried out by him/her under my supervision and guidance.

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1. Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (ISBN/ISSN Number ISSN : 2349-5162), Chapter of dissertation where this publication appears (delete if not applicable) Chapter 4,

2. Proceedings of International Conference on Advances in Humanities, Sciences & Management (ICAHSN) Chapter of dissertation where this publication appears (delete if not applicable) Chapter 1

and

has made presentations in the following conferences :

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1. 13th International Toy Library Association Conference - South Korea, (National/International)

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Further, the student has passed the following courses towards fulfillment of coursework requirement for Ph.D / was exempted from doing coursework (recommended by Doctoral Committee) on the basis of the following courses passed during his M.Phil program and the M.Phil degree was awarded:

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Supervisor

Head of Department

Dean of School

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INTRODUCTION

Man has been involved in playing games along with the advent of culture and civilization. Before the advent of culture, games can be considered as random movements of hands and legs but with the start of culture, the random movements got meaning and symbols to interpret. The relation of man with games is primeval. It is known that the control of fire was a turning point in man's evolution and the advent of culture in human life. This act of controlling fire might have evolved through different ways and one of them is by striking stones against one another. The early man might have not known that striking stones gives fire before striking them and was striking the stones as a part of play which unfolded the discovery of fire and its controlled usage. In the recent times the Turkish Archeologist, Haluk Saglamtimur of Ege University in Izmir, Turkey discovered 49 small stones sculpted in different shapes (depicting pigs, dogs and pyramids, other feature round and bullet shapes) and painted in green, red, blue, black and white along with the burial at Başur Höyük, mound near Siirt in southeast Turkey. This evidence belongs to early bronze age which goes back to 5000 years ago and is considered as the earliest evidence of gaming tokens ever found Rosella Lorenzi, (2013). The importance of games and play in the prehistoric times is reflected through artifacts which include board game pieces, game boards, balls, marbles, dice (made of knuckle bones of animals), playing cards, javelins and so on. This strengthens the idea that play and games existed with humans long ago along with other basic requirements like food, shelter and protection for survival. With the advent of culture, games became integral parts of culture. They are one of the oldest forms of social interactions of humans and probably helped in making social bonds and congenial relations. Games have always been a source of human interactions, learning tools and source of creative imagination along with physical activity. Games transmit knowledge of different cultures which reflect their ideologies to next generations. Games are considered as elements of culture. They carry ideology of that particular culture along with them. Games help in building logic, strategies, creativity, learning, entertainment, and many more activities. A panoramic view of the various aspects of games, their origins and their importance as integral parts of various cultures brings to the surface, the fact that games are not trivial aspects of any society

or civilization and that games carry with them a lot of culture related aspects and are also influence the development for any individual or society.

The study of games has always been neglected both in academics and nonacademics. It is because of the conception of the words ‘play’ and ‘games’ as trivial and unimportant. But, when we try to bring a clear conceptualization of the words, we understand play and games as elements of culture. It is a fact that the concept of play took its birth before culture itself came into existence and that play is not just related to human beings but also to animals. With the understanding of various aspects of games, their origins, their importance as integral part of different cultures, it is visible that play and games are not trivial but carry various aspects of cultures and influence the development of individuals and societies. Though play existed before culture itself came into existence, the concepts of play and games are actually in a way less focused by any of the researchers till 1800s. John Huzinga, (1949) said that the concept of games has been neglected by anthropologists whose focus is always related to understanding of culture and society. In support of such an understanding his words could be quoted “It is surprising that anthropology and comparative religion have paid so little attention to the problem of...attitude and mood of play” (1949: 20). The absence of game studies by saying that there were no records of game studies till 18th century in the western countries. The absence of sufficient research work on the aspects of games may have been because of the ideology that games are not to be seriously taken aspects of any society strengthened by the notion of games as unproductive and unimportant activities of life. This situation was also commented by Helen Schwartzmann, (1979) and Thomas Malaby, (2009). Thus, the concept of games, both in academics and non academics, has been neglected as people were influenced by the perspective of watching games as trivial parts of a culture.

Playing games has always been treated as a part of leisure time activities and pastimes. To understand the concept of games and have more clarity, one has to understand its relation to leisure. The general notion of game as a free time activity has made games to be a part of leisure time activity. Traditionally, leisure has been conceptualized as a non-obligated, free time and a state of mind defined by an individual at leisure Brightbill, (1960); Shivers, (1981), Dumazedier, (1967); Roberts, (1978), deGrazia, (1964); Neulinger, (1974). Most of the definitions of leisure are based on the experiences of members of Western cultures as the initial studies

conducted on leisure are by Western scholars. However, the concept of leisure and the meaning attached to the English word 'Leisure' is not the same to all the cultures throughout the world. In spite of the differences in the meaning of the word 'Leisure', the availability of free time is universal across all the cultures in the world. According to Brown, (1991) some of the leisure activities which he defined as human universals include play, dance, music, recreational sex and recreational use of drugs. Activities which are associated with pleasure, enjoyment, fun and happiness are associated with leisure and are subjected to the emotional experiences of the individual. These experiences are universal and pan-human in nature Garry Chick, (1998). But, it is not necessary that all these activities which are also experienced among non-Western cultures fall under the same category of leisure and carry the same meaning as defined by the Western scholars. A leisure activity of one culture may be treated as a serious activity for the other culture based on their experiences and conceptualizations. Gambling could be a serious, money earning activity to a gambler, while the non gamblers often criticize it as a waste of time and money. Societies and communities which are not industrialized may not have a clear distinction between work and leisure. A game may not be just an activity of series of random movements of the physical body as defined by many Western scholars but is a serious process of enculturation and imparting of traditional knowledge in a playful way. This can ensure that sometimes, games can not be treated as leisure time activities but as serious and purposeful activities depending on the situation and experience of the individual. Thus, to have more clear understanding of games and their relation to human lives, it is better to have a broad and clear understanding of its relationship to leisure.

Initial works on Games:

Though it is very recent that the studies on games have started, people tried to look at games through different perspectives. In the late 1800s, the research work started its pace and the studies from various dimensions and perspectives such as body, behavior, thinking, group experiences, languages, mental development etc were started. From the standpoint of viewing games as trivial time pass activities diversification of focus towards research works that illustrate games as parts of culture and sources of society development of individual and have gained importance. A new, much analyzed perspective was explained by Herbert. A. Bloch, (1951). From the standpoint of viewing games as leisure time activities itself, he explained that one can

play games only in leisure which is only after work. He further analyzed that one works so that he/she could have leisure time to spend in happiness and play. Thus, it presented a cyclic and hybrid ideology.

Though games have been in existence along with the birth of culture among humans, till recently much of research did not happen. Many researchers of the late 1900s viewed children games as folk celebrations, first ages of man, first age of the world, innocence, man's folly and metaphor for the man's procession through life. Avedon and Sutton Smith, (1979) explained about this in a phylogenetic way with evolution and observed that the higher the species, the greater the amount of play. It opened further scope for research in this perspective. Sandra Hindman, (1981) supported these notions in her work. The end of 1900s has a complete change over in perspective. As the researchers slowly evolved and analyzed the importance of games through late 1900s and early 21st century, viewing games as important leisure time activity which will actually increase the productivity started to evolve. Don Lyntle, (2010) explained how social networking games during work provided scope for short and refreshing relaxation which in turn positively influences the productivity in the long run.

Definition and Classification:

Attempts have been made to classify and define games by various researchers, ever since the studies began on the topic. From the knowledge of the etymology of 'Game' itself, the real meaning and essence of the word “game” have been attempted to be understood. According to Standard dictionary of folklore mythology and legend, (1949) games are classified according to seasons, the games are played in or sex or age of players. During the same time period attempts were made to define the word “play”. John Huzinga, (1949) defined play as a ‘voluntary activity or occupation executed with in certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding having its aim in itself and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy and the consciousness that it is 'different' from 'ordinary life’ (1949: 28). This definition itself explains and touches various aspects of 'games' or 'play'. It has been stated that it is at a different form of consciousness when compared to ordinary life, a way in which psychological influences of a game has been explained and further adding to the analysis it could be also understood that the game is played according to a set of rules which become the carriers of the concept of the game.

Basing on the concept of the game, further studies in the late 1900s talk about a different ways of classification. Roberts, Arth and Bush (1959) classified games into three different categories.

1. Games of Skill.
2. Games of Strategy.
3. Games of Chance.

Classification on the basis of the place occupied by the game, implements used, qualifications needed and the number of players participating is done by Caillois, (1961).

1. Agon (Competition)
2. Alea (Chance)
3. Mimicry (Simulation)
4. Ilinx (Vertigo)

On similar lines, attempting to classify games on the place they are played, Maamidipudi Venkatarangayya, (1968) explained that in 300 B. C. Kautilya in his Arthashastra classified games on the basis of gender, places, activities and the qualifications of the players. Balendu Sekharam, (1973) classified games as indoor games and outdoor games. In the late 1900s, the biological origins of the games were also attempted to be considered as a dimension in which games or play could be defined. Edward Noreck, (1974: 1) defined play as 'a behavior resting upon a biologically inherited stimulus or proclivity that is distinguished by a combination of traits'.

In the path of understanding 'game' some scholars tried to understand and define the word from the literature. Avedon and Sutton Smith, (1979) tried to define the word 'Game'. In their attempt they explained the etymological meaning of the word game. The root word is 'Ghe' which has an Indo-European origin and the meaning is to leap joyfully, to spring. 'Ghem' represents behavior of both humans and animals and are universal in pattern. In the late 1900s, scholars made attempts to classify games according to age, sex, occasions, duration, place, participants, equipment used, state of mind or body or both religious, seasons, geographical distribution, economic and social status. Vadla Subramanyam's, (1987) works are important in this aspect. Some scholars even tried to understand games in terms of culture. Laurence Goldman, (1998) explained games as two cultures.

1. Ascriptive game culture.
2. Achievement game culture.

He explained that in Ascriptive game culture, children are engaged in imitative and non-imitative play activities. Few games that come under this category are central person games and games of physical skill. He also explained that the societies associated with this category of games are characterized by extended families where children and adults are separated.

In Achievement game culture, children play imaginative and egalitarian style games. Societies that come under this category have characters of nuclear families where children are not associated with adults. Western societies are typical examples. There are many studies that made investigations on the types of roles and status positions in games and relationships between roles and social context.

Thus, we can observe different scholars have tried to understand 'Game' in different ways and perspectives from early 1800s to recent times to have a holistic understanding. Games are considered as cultural aspects and contain ideology of culture. Games are, some times, act as doctrine of social institutions. Thus, one has to understand the different perspectives on games that were studied by different scholars from the past.

Understanding games from different perspectives

Diffusion perspective of games:

It could be elicited from all the literature gone through that games could be viewed in or from various perspectives of study such as diffusion, cultural and economic perspective, ecological perspective, religious perspective. One of such perspectives is that which talks about games as the survivals of earlier societies. Sociologists like Gomme, (1894) and Newell, (1963) are supporters of such dimensions. Attempts were made to understand the cross cultural orientation of the games throughout the world. E. B. Taylor's works (1878, 1880 and 1896) discuss on the cross cultural orientation of games. It has been also discussed that games are all universal features of all cultures and that games have perpetuated and propagated through diffusion which was explained by Stewart Culin, (1898). Diffusion has been so deeply discussed with examples like diffusion of chess game from Asiatic origin (India) to Western countries, introduction of certain games like long ball games by the

white people in North Africa from Northern Europe, diffusion of card playing in the Northern Territory through cultural contact and acculturation etc., in works of H. J. R. Murray, (1913), P. Maigaard, (1941), Ronald. M. Berndt and Catherine. H. Berndt, (1947). This concept of diffusion or spread of games does not restrict between continents and countries but also among inland states of a country. It is evident from the works of Suravaram Prathapa Reddy, (1949) that around 1350 AD several games migrated from Andhra Pradesh to Maharashtra in India.

Several aspects such as communication, development and use of language from one place to another were studied in the perspective of games using play as a prototype which was done by Bateson, (1955). It was stated that texts and contexts of play are related to one another systematically and intimately. In the 21st century works of Michael Dylan foster, (2006) explain the diffusion of Kokkuri game from Japan to various parts of the world as a religious mystery game. Such diffusion also happened at a very basic local level and helped in spreading of culture and games from one place to another. Hence, diffusion is definitely a way in which games emerged at various places across the world.

Cultural and Economic Perspective of games:

Social and Cultural anthropologists have been involved in scientific description of social and cultural elements of people. As a part of these descriptions, different scholars tried to describe the leisure and playful activities among different people in order to understand their culture. Though not scientific, these descriptions are visible in the writings of ancient travelers, writers, colonial administrators, chroniclers and so on who made their first attempt in understanding leisure activities along with other cultural activities of the people. In the recent times, studies on leisure and expressive cultures remained as pure descriptions and classification of the activities. However, a cross cultural comparison has started with the writings of E. B. Tylor, (1878) and Stuart Culin, (1898) and they believed that games existed as survivals of previous magical rites which lost their magical essence but survived as a tradition which reflected the theory of diffusionism and unilinear evolutionism Chick, (2006). L. H. Morgan, (1851 and 1962), in his book 'League of the Iroquois', provided descriptions about games and sports along with other recreational activities of the people of Iroquois which are viewed as one of the first ethnographic descriptions on games. Later, in the ages of the rise of functionalism, scholars focused on the leisure activities

and expressive culture to describe the functional aspect of these concepts in relation with culture. They believed that the leisure activities as part of social institutions try to fulfill the need of the members of the society to maintain its social equilibrium causing no chaos among the people. With the studies of culture and personality, anthropologists tried to focus on the development of culture and its relation to humans through cognitive aspect and psychology. Along with the cognitive aspect, the concepts of socialization, play as buffering systems and so on came into existence.

According to anthropologists, the evolution of agriculture has brought economic sustenance among the people which made the possibility of leisure time to come into existence and eventually helped in human development and civilization. This theory of surplus made many scholars to think about the concept of leisure and play in relation to economic sustenance and growth. All through the 20th century, various authors have highlighted the importance of games and play as cultural aspects of the societies. Play in relation to functional approach has been explained as a preparation towards attaining economic skills and learning social and cultural aspects by Malinowski, (1927) in his research on children of Melanesia. Several authors explained games and play as aspects that trigger socialization, learning and preparation in cultural and economic dimensions. Margaret Mead, (1928) explained that in Samoan Islands, games that involve children's play are observed to have chantings of the names of the plants and trees which may not prove to be of knowledge when the children leave to play, but later slowly emerge to a meaningful understanding of the learnt words through further learning.

This further explains the involvement of play in children's learning processes, the importance of play groups and communities and how they are formed makes another set of important details about how games and play are important in terms of their cultural influences. John Huzinga, (1949) in his works explained about play communities. The play communities are generally formed basing on the concepts of sharing important ideas, mutually withdrawing themselves from the rest of the world. Secrecy inside the play communities is another most important discussable aspect. It has been also analyzed that the rules of the outside social world are not important in the circle of the game and they are often overlapped by rules and secrecy of play community itself. This can be quoted in his words that 'play community generally becomes permanent even after the game is over' (1949: 12). A play community can be viewed as a "Phratric" or "Brotherhood" in anthropology and is difficult to

differentiate between permanent social groupings and sphere of play. Some scholars viewed games as devices that are used to polish or refine learning abilities. Sutton Smith and Rosenberg, (1961) described games as models of cultural power relationships which are 'buffer learning situations'. It has been also analyzed during the 20th century that games that are played by certain cultures are akin and specific to those cultures only and are not seen anywhere else in the world. Thus, games are described and viewed in terms of cultural and economic perspectives.

Ecological Perspective of games:

According to Huizinga, (1980) animals used to play even before humans started and that play was existed among humans before culture got existed. Since the studies of human evolution, research on play behaviors of primates has been given importance. Some scholars like de Waal, (2001); Whiten et al., (1999) explained that the primates like chimpanzees, orangutans exhibit rudimentary cultures serving different purposes. Activities like grooming among the primates, play among the young ones can be considered as play like or leisure like behaviors. There are other mammals like dogs, cats, monkeys, and so on exhibit playful behavior which is different from human's. Though the quality of leisure activities and playful behaviors of primates differ from the human beings, the studies on the primates and other mammals regarding these activities may help in understanding the development and function of play and the role of leisure and other recreational activities among the humans. However, the primate leisure and other play like activities plays a significant role in formation of social organizations among these mammals. The social behavior which includes communication skills, social bonds and emotional attachments among the primates helps in understanding the human behaviors. To understand children's and adults play, ethological and ecological perspectives of games have been studied in the recent times. It could be understood and analyzed from the works of Van Alstyne (1932), Johnson (1935), etc., that thorough understanding of the ecological conditions of play could provide us with the knowledge of its influences over the aspects of play, communication, socialization etc.

It has been stated by Van Alstyne, (1932) in his works that toys like dolls, dishes, wagons, telephones, escalate communication, while toys like clay, scissors, puzzles and books escalate more silent way of cooperation among children. In the same way, Johnson, (1935) explained that smaller playgrounds with lesser play

equipment escalates social contact and social conflict among children. Thus, the psychological aspects of the children are understood in relation to the games based on the ecological conditions.

Religious Perspective of Games:

Certain scholars presumed that leisure activities like games, dance, singing and so on are acts of religious events which are continued as cultural survivals. Arnold van Gennep, (1909) claimed that leisure activities in religious event are nothing but rites de passage. According to him, rites de passage are rituals that signify the transition of individual or groups of individuals from one state of life to another which are mostly observed primarily among the life activities like birth, marriage, and death. Most of the times, the rites of passage are associated with leisure activities like games, play, dance, music, feasting and so on Chick, (2006). The games played are viewed as rites de passage as they carry a symbolic meaning which is significant to its culture. Victor Turner, (1967) explained that every transitional stage as a symbol-laden activity which he termed this stage as 'liminal' stage. The 'liminal stage' is a stage that occurs in the middle stage of the three stages of rites de passage, that is, between the state of structuring their identity and community; and entering new community which will be established by the rites. It is associated with separation from everyday world and entering communitas, sharing common experiences and belonging to the community. Turner, (1969: 6) explained the importance of rituals and their recreational aspects as 'how people think and feel about relationships and about the natural and social environments in which they operate'. This explains how Turner conceptualized the relation of ritual with fun activities as a process of understanding their natural and social environments. Thus, games and play are viewed as rites de passage which some times help in smooth flow of the activity.

Others believed that games in many cultures have connections with several rituals and other religious aspects of the societies. Specific games are observed to have a significant role in rituals and are played especially during specific occasions like festivals, ceremonies, observances, cultural events etc. The relation of games with rituals was observed by Culin, (1899) where he explained that in Hawaii, it has been observed that different games are played by native Hawaiian people during Hawaiian's New Year festival. In a way, the festival itself is dedicated to sports,

games and gambling and there were some rituals and rites of purification conducted during the festival. The Hawaiian account was deeply investigated by Steward Culin in (1899). His explanations reveal that games are not just related to amusement, play and mirth and that they have deeper and meaningful cultural and religious connections.

Similarly, the relation between games and sacred rites was observed by Jeannine Auboya, (1955). One can observe a lot of similarities between the games and sacred rites and the way they are performed and the character they have. We can observe a lot of nobility and sanctity connected to games in various societies. However, it could be also analyzed that as the societies grew complex, these feelings of nobility and sanctity slowly disappear. It is evident that as the societies grow in their complexity and become more civilized, a steep decline in the importance given to the sacred rites and sanctity attached to it is observed. When games slowly lose the perception of attributed sanctity or nobility in the society, its mysterious and sacred attributes get revealed and activities then become normal everyday activities with a little story still connected to the games which then are generally perceived as elements which are part of the culture since long and not as sacred activities in particular. Jeanne Auboya, (1955) observed a close parallelism in between games and sacred rites. She said that both games and sacred rites were present in the minds of the people who conceive the universe, by remaining near to nature which deals with fortunes and misfortunes of human beings. Her sentences offer support also to an analysis that several games may have had certain ritual activities connected to them to serve the purpose of subjecting human beings to various situations which signify human connection to nature and the inevitability of winning and losing and the mental stability or philosophy with which it could be perceived. Festivals are the occasions that carry a lot of cultural information of that particular society. The games played during a specific festival conveys the information related to the culture and nature of that particular region. This was also supported by Sandra Hindman, (1981) by saying that one can understand the season of a period through the games played by the children during a festival. Play and games become the elements of changes in culture when culture changes. Factors like development of technology, industrial revolution and globalization has brought many changes in the culture which also reflected in the leisure activities. Click, (1991) explained this situation further with his work on rural Mexican tradition where its festival sponsorship system which has both religious and

recreational aspects got disappear because of the increased influence of the media and transportation.

Significant connections between games and rituals could be observed in the explanations of Rohan Bastin, (2001) by explaining the games that are played by the people of Sri Lanka, in which he stressed on the point that games played during rituals and festivals reflect the social structure of the society with the politico-religious order. In Sri Lanka, games are played on behalf of the Goddess, the sanctity attached to them and the ones who participate in such games as a continuance of the tradition reflect the social structure significantly. Thus, the perspective of understanding games through rituals and religious aspects has become one of the pioneer criteria for understanding games in societies.

Games and Social Institutions:

With the understanding of the role of games and leisure activities in relation to culture, it is important to understand the social institutions like economic, political, educational, family and religion of the society. Society includes institutions that describe the social structure and social order of the society that governs or controls the behavior of its members or people. This understanding allows a better and clear vision of how culture travels with social institutions which may provide and promote social hierarchy, social control, inequality, social role, social relations among the people. So, in order to have a better understanding of the society and its cultural significance one has to focus on the social institutions of the society.

Indian society- Caste, Class and Gender:

India is a country with its society structured as per the norms that became existent several thousands of years ago. Various groups of the society were divided into various castes based on their occupational hierarchy. The caste system though, may have come into existence to maintain occupation wise balance among the population, several other side effects have emerged and accelerated which made caste system rigid and discriminating to the people belonging to various castes in the society. People who belong to the upper castes in the society have always shown discrimination towards the people belonging to the lower castes. Caste is very deeply rooted in the Indian society that it has its influence on the individuals of the society in

every sphere of life. From rituals to socialization, from play to education, from marriage to social relations, from the way the villages and towns are structured to the way the people drive every sphere has been influenced by the caste system and the individuals of the society continued to satisfy the norms of this system.

Classes on the other hand may be simply defined in terms of property, of ownership or non ownership of means of production. The system of classes, though is intertwined with the system of caste in India, has its influence more in the society than caste. People belonging to a level of social honor, by virtue of their economic conditions combined with caste based sanctions could be categorized as belonging to a class. Class based system is vulnerable to mobility. People belonging to upper classes could face downward mobility and the people belonging to lower classes, always look for higher status mobility. Indian society has stratified to become more class oriented, especially by virtue of urbanization and openness in the growth and opportunity patterns. Gender is another important factor that has always been played a major role in the structure of the society. Gender related norms are also connected with the caste in the society which makes it much of an unbreakable rigidity. The distribution of work, authority and the sanction of liberty, the role, status and power of women are all discussable in this context. In traditional India, women belonging to the upper castes and classes were observed that they should not engage in any other duty than looking after their spouses on the basis of chastity rules. Education and modernization, however, influenced the structure of how work is distributed between men and women. In urban world, it is now observed that both men and women have almost equal levels of distribution of work because of the necessity emphasized by the insufficient incomes and economic conditions.

By the virtue of the constitution of India, equality in the country has been implemented as a mandate and is constituted in the preamble of the constitution itself. The third statement of the preamble of the constitution itself is about equality among the people of Indian society Articles 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the constitution provides right to equality to the citizens of India. Equality before law, social equality and equal access to public areas, equality in public employment, abolition of untouchability and titles are provided by the Constitution of India for the well being of its people. It is to observe the equality among the people in terms of status and opportunity and to promote equality among them all. Justice, liberty, equality and fraternity are the most important four basic principles of a balanced society which are highlighted in the

preamble. Gender equality has also been ensured in Articles 14, 15 and 23 in the preamble. It is also said that equality is ensured by mandating the maintenance of such unbiased principles of equality and implementation of them in the society.

A play community, according to Huizinga, (1980) generally rejects all the usual norms of the society. Play communities tend to become permanent even after the game is over. Inside the circle of game or play, outside world is of no concern and the rules of the 'real' life no longer count. This holds good not only for children's games but also for ceremonial games of savage or tribal societies. Huizinga, (1949). On the contrary, it has been explained by Vasanth Kannabiran and Kalpana Kannabiran, (1991) about how at Tanjore, children of the lower castes who played with the upper caste children at a water well of the upper caste were electrocuted by the people of upper caste of that particular village. It may also be understood that the ones who are indulged in the play or game have actually all the rules of the outside world suspended and what happened in the case of Tanjore incident was done by the upper caste people of that society who were not part of the game or play community. If play and games, which are treated as trivial, has no value and just for fun part of the society, had such influence of caste rules, how can the games be considered silly and not so important activity? Games and play are a part of almost every society and culture in the world and are part of socialization and developmental process. In such a case, how the principles of equality and a society which has its origins rooted in caste, class and gender influences operate, could be effectively studied through the concept of games. Thus, the motto of the study is to understand the agreements, variations and contradictions regarding the concept of equality in the society based on the concepts of caste, class and gender through the spectacle of games among the people of India along with the cultural influences on games.

Why Traditional Games?

According to Charlotte Seymour- Smith, (1986: 279) 'the word "tradition" in anthropology is used instead for patterns of beliefs, customs, values, behavior and knowledge or expertise which are passed on from generation to generation by the socialization process within a given population'. According to Merriam- Webster dictionary, (2016) the word 'tradition' is defined as 'a way of thinking, behaving or doing something that has been used by the people in a particular group, family, society etc., for a long time'. Tradition refers to collective customs, principles and knowledge

of a group or society. It is like passing the knowledge or information from one generation to another by orally or by any other means. Tradition carries the ways of doing things in a cultural or social pattern. In social sciences, tradition in a culture is transmitting of knowledge of that culture through time. Thus, traditional games are games that have been played by the people of a particular place for a very long time. In the process of understanding the society and its cultural attributes, traditional games are studied in order to have a deeper and clear vision on the social settings, customs and believes of the people. The patterns of social institutions that are followed by the people can be studied through the spectacle of traditional games. India, being a society that is dominated by caste and class systems, gender discriminations and dominations, it is important to understand these institutions through a different dimension.

With the commencement of modernity, there has always been a discrimination in understanding the relation between tradition and modern. Most of the times, the word modernization is related to westernization. It has been observed that tradition is a contrast to modernity for social scientists as modernity is linked with individualism, free choice, and development. Traditional games, instead of being actively carried from one generation to the other, have been slowly traveling towards extinction. Traditional games are seriously dominated by the newly migrated or copied games from different parts of the world. This may have been the effect of modern education and the competitive urge that is thus incepted to cope with the standards of the rest of the world as a result of modernization and westernization. The influence of video games and the emergence of new virtual reality games are being observed in the society which may have been effecting the existence of traditional games. Such reasons behind the loss of importance to the traditional games are to be discovered and analyzed. Since games have a strong connection with the culture of the society, a shift of prominence to the newly migrated games also shows its influences on the culture of the society. Thus, the reasons behind the changes and influences of new games over traditional games should be properly analyzed and explained.

Literature Review

Games and Leisure Studies:

Leisure, being a subject of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, has always been influenced by the traditional disciplines like sociology, psychology, history, philosophy and economics Chick, (1998). Leisure has always been studied as a

Western phenomena and therefore there is a rich historiographic content on the concept of leisure and its development among the Western cultures. Leisure is present across all human cultures as it is essential but it may not be the same word to which they can compare with. The concept of work and leisure is not a recent phenomena and has a long historical record which depicts their connection with culture. Chris Rojek (2000: 15) suggested that 'Leisure and work, predate the Western industrial revolution and are at the heart of the development not just of industrial society but of human culture'. His statement explains the need for understanding the history of leisure and work for better understanding of the concepts in relation to human culture. Scholars like Sebastian de Grazia, (1962) believed that leisure is a historical product where at the initial periods prior to the birth of culture and civilization, leisure was not known because the humans as hunter-gatherers were not aware of leisure and it was with the development of culture, the leisure got developed as a cultural categories like rituals, myths, etc. But this may not be true as games and play termed as a part of leisure activities by many scholars, have existed prior to the birth of culture itself Huizinga, (1980). From the initial days of understanding leisure, scholars constantly tried to identify leisure as a concept in contrast with work. This is prominently visible in the historical complexity of leisure where work is believed to be more valuable and leisure is less valuable. Both leisure and work emerged as coherent cultural and language category Benjamin K Hunnicutt, (2006). Thus, leisure's multiform and manifestations are not separable from work there by making the subjects more connected with each other.

Meaning of Leisure:

The etymology of the word 'leisure' is based on Latin word *licere* which means 'to be allowed'. But the Greek word for leisure, which is derived from a Proto-Indi-European root represents the victory or ability to dominate others Benjamin K. Hunnicutt, (2006). Among humans, there are many activities like farming, building, weaving etc which can be generally assumed under one word 'work' as they can be defined through a set of common or specific traits. Many scholars believed that for these common or specific traits to exist, 'control' was the common quality that prevailed for articulation of work which is common to all humans Karl Marx, (1859) and Sandra Wallman, (1979). Thus, they tried to define work as a process of control which is associated with slavery, control of humans over other humans and absence of

leisure and freedom among the ancient societies. According to Benjamin K. Hunnicutt, (2006) it is only through the advent of Greek Civilization that concepts of leisure and freedom were identified as cultural categories which contrast with work. When farming lost its religious sanction and tilling the land is no more a service to Gods but a service to humans was realized farming was redefined as a manual 'work'. This feeling has gradually spread to other activities like crafts and increased the spread of slavery and servitude in the Greek cities and states Toynbee, (1955); Vernant, (1983); Godelier, (1980). Thus, with the establishment of the concept of slavery and freedom based on the effective and systematic control of humans over other humans laid foundation to the development of the concept of work and leisure among the Western societies.

Leisure among Western Societies:

Certain scholars like Joseph Pieper, (1952) and Heidegger, (1927) made queries that questioned the meaning of leisure which added a philosophical aspect to leisure and its existence. This also made Joseph Piper, (1952) to claim leisure as the basis of culture. But this concept of leisure as a culture was diluted by Arnold Toynbee, (1955) who claimed the very purpose of leisure is to exercise power and control on humans by other humans. However, it is also equally important to understand the meaning of leisure from the people who experience leisure. When the servants, peasants, women and slaves are given free time as leisure what exactly they must have done is very little know. Some scholars, especially historians on the basis of historical records believe that they must have probably followed the wealthy people in spending their time to idleness, abandon, licentiousness and imitating their cultural elites by Benjamin K. Hunnicutt, (2006). Thus, celebration of leisure among the peasant and submissive people, helps in preservation and endurance of their cultures through different communal activities like festivals, ceremonies etc as a part of leisure activities as a contrast to work and control. However, in the case of women, it is still difficult to find the situations of claiming leisure from both work and the dominant male control and institutions.

The early Greek philosophers framed the world in a hierarchical pattern based on their belief that the Universe is also placed in a hierarchical order. This was explained by Arthur Lovejoy, (1936) in his 'Great Chain of Being'. Depending on the

concept of 'perfect being', the Greek philosophers determined certain places to all the creatures including humans that those beings who are close to perfection are always in near proximity to the creator and those which are not perfect are far from the creator. This concept of moving up and down in the ladder has led the Greek philosophers like Aristotle and Plato to conceptualize leisure as 'the freedom to move up the Chain toward human potential and authenticity' by Hunnicutt, (2006: 64). They believed that leisure is related with higher education, playing sports, music, philosophy which enables one to energize their soul by coming closer to one's essential self and the truth by Hunnicutt, (2006). This concept of leisure related with higher education has bluntly discarded the meaning of leisure as inactive, lazy and idle and developed into active leisure where an individual moves towards acquiring Liberal Arts like rhetoric of sciences, music, sports and gymnastics as they were given by God to humans. Thus, being at leisure according to these philosophers is to practice and train in liberal arts and activities and should work for leisure. For Plato, out of all the liberal activities, philosophy was the best of human achievement and leisure as it is both engaging and fun of all the other leisure activities as it is engaged in finding the meanings to the questions about life. For Aristotle, leisure is an activity which provides an opportunity to move forward towards better thinking and for civic engagement rather than spending time being inactive. He also believed that leisure acts as a glue that could held societies together rather than work and war which could disturb the social order of a society. It is that the leisure helps in finding the reason behind the bond between human beings irrespective of the differences among ancient societies.

The concept of leisure in contrast with work prescribed by the Greek scholars continued throughout the Middle Ages which were dominated by the European cultures and Christianity. Work was understood as the means through which ends could be met which are represented by leisure. Among the Romans, writers like Virgil, Horace and their followers brought variations on understanding the older concept of leisure with a new emphasis on nature. For them, one could attain nature by moving away from city lives and development to a closer proximity to the nature and natural world to find tranquility, simplicity and self-sufficiency. They valued privacy, individualism and being self-sufficient rather than civil engagement. Hunnicutt, (2006). Among the Biblical historians, work was treated as negative to idleness where Adam was condemned to work from the Garden of Eden to acquire knowledge of

good and evil which is written in the Book of Genesis. And that it is through work, Adam and Eve can earn and eat bread. During the Middle Ages, with the raise of Protestant Reformation, new groups or classes of clergy and monastic orders were exempted from ordinary work thus stating a clear and sharper division between work and leisure. Leisure was defined by a perfect balancing between works related to prayers, celebrations, study, worship and works related to charity, manual work, administration and so on. Thus, work was treated with spiritual value because of the influence of the Protestant concept of work.

In the Modern era, the relation of work and leisure has changed with the advent of capitalistic reforms. Karl Marx, (1930) one of the early modern scholars who recognized the change in the concept of work and the believes are irrational. There were certain arguments based on theological explanations through advanced spiritual discipline which helped in understanding work in relation with predestination and redemption. This was explained in the writings of John Calvin (2006), a French reformer at Protestant Reformation Hunnicutt. Focus on rewards in heaven and loss of interest on Earthly wealth got increased among the followers of Christ. Spending time and life of a person in praying and worshiping God is valued more among them. With the start of belief of spending non- work time or leisure period in worshiping God with various activities like music, dance, storytelling, ritual, drama and son on, these leisure activities attained the status of religious purpose. Among the Puritan Protestants, not working and spending time idle is a sin which leads to other activities like drink, licentious activities, perversion and so on which are sinful activities. Thus came the famous saying that Leisure or idle man's brain is a Devil's workshop. But in this regard, it is through the work, leisure was explained as a means through with higher and better purpose of work can be accomplished. Eventually, work became more important as a spirit of capitalism than the theological concepts and arguments and lost the concept of God associated with work. This importance given by the capitalistic ideologists to the work in the industrial world have decreased the value of leisure. In spite of the domination and hegemony of work, leisure is still finding its place a cultural value. The changes in understanding work and leisure followed a lengthy process and progress of industrialization, urbanization and migration.

During the nineteenth century, many historians tried to understand the contemporary forms of leisure and work. They concentrated on explanation of leisure and work in relation to the domination of capitalistic aspect of work. A. J. Veal, (2004: 15) emphasized that the overall theme of work and leisure was the ‘struggle between the masses and burgeoning capital over the control of work and leisure time during the process of industrialization and urbanization’. This observation of leisure and work in relation to capitalistic world made the concepts a product of industrialization and urbanization which restricted the observation among the non-industrialized societies. Capitalism started showing prosperity among the masses which resulted in the idea of procuring wealth from hard work which attracted people towards working hard and gaining rewards. The contemporary understanding of work and leisure is related with the trends in working hours in contrast with the leisure hours among the industrial societies.

Anthropology and Leisure studies:

Anthropologists are mostly concerned with the concept of Culture and it is the unifying concept of the subject itself. Different anthropologists tried to explain and define culture through different aspects and believed that culture is learned and shared but not inborn or innate to humans. Many anthropologists have defined culture through different aspects E. B. Tylor, (1871); Roberts, (1964); Keesing, (1976); Ember and Ember, (1988); Brown, (1991); Chick, (1997) and so on. Garry Chick, (2006) has divided culture into two aspects called Utilitarian aspect and Expressive aspect. According to him, Utilitarian aspect of culture includes any cultural quality which has utility aspect comes under the Utilitarian aspect of culture where as, any cultural quality which is very expressive in its behavior then it falls under Expressive aspect of culture. Chick, (2006) explained this concept of division with the help of a painting. He said that both leisure and expressive cultures do not generally fall under the utilitarian aspect of culture as they are not much utility bound. However, leisure and expression are important to anthropologists as they are directly relevant to ‘the nature of cultural evolution and change and the nature of culture as an adaptive system’ Garry Chick, (2006: 42). This was also well explained and expressed by Bronislaw Malinowski, (1931) and A. L. Kroeber, (1948) that leisure, especially games played by the aboriginal children contains the knowledge that helps in cultural progress and innovation. Chick, (2006) further divided Expressive culture into Arts

and Entertainment which will be a useful heuristic. According to him, Arts include arts, music, dance, drama, myth, literature and so on where as Entertainment includes games, sports, play, leisure and recreation. But it is unfortunate that anthropologists focus overwhelmingly on the utilitarian aspect of culture rather than the expressive aspect and in the same way focuses more on arts rather than entertainment in expressive aspect of culture, Chick, (2006).

From the ancient times, there were writers, travelers, explorers who produced accounts on descriptions of games and leisure activities of different cultures which they have visited. Later this was continued by the missionaries who went to different parts of the world to propagate Christianity and accounted different leisure time activities of different people. The early anthropologists who got emerged from explorers provided ethnographic accounts on description of these activities but these descriptions were only limited to a few pages of description of the game or how it is played. This treatment of ethnographic description prevailed for a quite long period among anthropologists who focused on games, play and other leisure activities. During the later times, these ethnographic descriptions shifted to cross cultural comparisons which are visible in the writings of E. B. Tylor, (1879) who compared *Patolli* game of Aztecs to Indian *Pachisi* game. These writings later influenced many diffusionist anthropologists and other scholars like Stuart Culin, (1895) who focused on the games as the survivals of ritual rites of primitive cultures. During the functionalist period, anthropologists and physical educators like Malinowski, (1931); Dunlap, (1951); Stumpf and Cozens, (1947 and 1949) believed that leisure activities especially games and physical recreations operate to meet the requirements of the society through its members to meet social equilibrium and maintain social structure. After the period of functionalism, there was a significant decline in the study of games and play among the anthropologists Chick and Donlon, (1992).

For Anthropologists, agriculture is not the earliest form of ‘work’ known to human beings as it came into existence very recently, that is, about 10,000 to 15,000 years ago. The early man was associated with hunting and gathering activities as a source of livelihood who may have spent several hours to hunt to satisfy his hunger. Some of the leisure theorists believe that there is no particular distinction between work and leisure among the hunter-gatherer societies as it is difficult to distinguish

between time spent on hunting and gathering activities and time spent on other activities. Thus, they believe that the concepts of work and leisure are not applicable to these societies. But in contrast, certain anthropologists like W. E. H. Stanner, (1979) explained that the aborigines are left with free time as they spend limited time to meet limited material needs. This spending of limited time on limited needs allows them to spend time and energy in leisure activities like song, dance, trade, religious rituals and so on. According to Veblen, (1898) and Sahlins, (1974), lack of material possessions will not help in achieving a balance between material needs, work and leisure as it is required for human progression. Franz Boas, (1940) and V. Gordon Childe, (1951) explained cultural evolution with respect to 'surplus theory'. Human beings has always been in a continuous attempt to achieve progression in life through development which is reflected in the shift of early nomadic life style to settled agriculture which eventually resulted in achieving complex social organization which was achieved through the phenomenon of 'work'. This phenomenon of 'work' created complex social structures which allowed the existence of chiefs, kings, warriors and priests who are extended to the elite leisure class are exempted from basic manual work and enjoy leisure which continued till the recent times. The concept of availability of free time with settled agriculture was not accepted by Lauriston Sharp, (1952); Johnson, (1978) and Marshall Sahlins, (1968) by saying that the aboriginals of Yir Yiront, an Australian aboriginal tribes, Machinguenga, of Amazon River basin have abundant leisure or free time after the food is collected. Basing on the discussions on the free time available to the people of simple societies, Just, (1980) came up with the theory of 'time scarcity' basing on the availability of time among the people of complex societies. When the society becomes complex, the availability of free time reduces and if free time is available then it is suggested to be used wisely to create more free time. Thus, among the complex societies, free time becomes scarce and valuable in terms of economic production. However, this theory did not stand as it is based on incomplete theory Garry Chick, (2006). Some other social scientists like Hawkes and O'Connell, (1981); Hill et al. (1985) and Chick, (1993) believed that there is no relationship between cultural complex and time used Garry Chick, (2006).

During the mid twentieth century, anthropologists like Arnold van Gennep, (1909); Victor Turner, (1967); Edith Turner, (1978); and so on explained that main events in life like birth, marriage, death go through rites de passage, which emphasize

the change in life or transition of life from one stage to another. Many of these rites de passage contains recreational activities like dance, music, games, feasting and so on. There are certain rituals which are accompanied by including recreational aspects like games, dance, music, and so on. The main aim of the rites de passage is to pass through a kind of threshold in order to get familiar with that particular cultural aspect. Thus, there are different yet very less focus on understanding of the entertainment aspect of culture especially games and sports among anthropologists who can study these aspects in terms of culture and its change.

Leisure among Non-Western societies (India):

The word 'Leisure' may not carry the same meaning for spending 'free time' among most of the Non-Western societies. This is because every culture has its own unique way of understanding and defining things around them in terms of language. But because of globalization, the Western ideology of leisure as a non-coerced or non-forceful activity that people prefer to do and free time as time left over after meeting an obligation which was implied to complete, have become international homogeneous concepts. However, the Non-Western societies cling to their local cultures and concepts as part of their free time activities which may be some times different from what the Western world experiences.

India, being a country with rich cultural heritage and long history, has a complex idea about leisure and leisure activities. It is complex because of the continuous influences of different cultures and people invading the country, which eventually shaped it with diverse backgrounds. Religions from outside world, that is, Islam and Christianity made strong influences which not only changed every tradition and ways of life and thinking pattern but also made their impression on leisure and leisure activities as a product of culture by Kumkum Bhattacharya, (2006). This diversity in cultures and understanding of phenomena has always been complex and hard to bring out a commonly accepted homogeneous concept on culture. In India, the cultural heritage is divided into two forms, classical and folk. These forms have their influences on leisure and leisure activities in the country which are well explained and described in epics, novels and in the books on social history written by many writers and historians. Great epics like Kautilya's Arthashastra, Vatsyana's Kama Sutra,

Kalidasa's *Abhignana Sakuntalam* are some of the works in which leisure activities are described by the poets and writers. However, in many of the historical works, it is always observed that there is a division between different types of leisure activities that can be termed according to the status of the people who practice those activities. The leisure activities that were performed by the people of higher status like kings, priests and learnt men are segmented as 'classic' or high status leisure activities whereas the leisure activities that were performed and practiced by the people who are illiterate, poverty and belong to lower caste and social status are prescribed as 'folk' or 'mundane' or 'unimaginative' activities. Just as social statuses change according to time, there is always a shift of the statuses of the activities, that is, from lower to upper and from upper to lower. But this shift is subjected to the conditions and influences of social and cultural factors.

It is believed that the folk traditions are generally evolve in rural areas as the rural people nurture and practice these folk traditions while the classical are nurtured, practiced and patronized by urban people. Kumkum Bhattacharya, (2006) in her paper on leisure studies in non-western societies, concentrating on India, she explained how the folk traditions which got emerged in rural India slowly emerged through patronage and settled as traditional arts and crafts which eventually evolved into caste based occupations. These traditional artists became providers of entertainment to the high status people in the villages slowly spread among the elites of urban societies which in later times lost the designation of traditional occupation and transformed into leisure activities among the urban populations. However, with the advent of urbanization, the traditional modes of transmission of culture which provide entertainment through leisure activities has lost their interest. Urbanization urges people to inculcate in self providing entertainment with personal preferences rather than traditional community oriented entertainment which was explained by N. K. Bose, (1957). But this concept was dismissed by Ray-Burman, (1957) who believed that leisure was always personal which will be provided by the society itself.

According to Dressler and Willis, (1969), leisure acts as a marker of social class which separates the higher social status people from the lower strata. This explains how leisure is influenced by the social institutions and reflects the social norms of the society. Kumkum Bhattacharya, (2006: 85), said 'age, social position, economic status, education, location, gender, community, identity and so on, are some

of the factors that influence preference for and participation in (leisure) activities'. Leisure in India is influenced by the status and economics of the people and are defined on the basis of education, geographical location, and so on. Leisure time is not only used as time to take rest from work but is significantly used as a source of network which further increases the value of 'free time' among the people in urban societies. But in contrast to the people of urban societies, leisure time is always associated with festivals and celebrations of special occasions with community participations. Thus, in India, leisure is recognized as a concept with different meanings and understandings which are associated with its social and cultural significances.

The studies on leisure and its relation to work have paved way for a broad understanding of the leisure among different societies. Games, being a part of leisure time activities, are universal among different cultures. Though games are omnipresent, the ways in which they are executed are different depending on their social and cultural perceptions.

Games and Social Structure:

In late 1800s and early 1900s research works by various scholars got deeper and the view that games are important parts of every culture has begun to pickup importance. Stewart Culin, (1899) was one of the first authors to examine such cultural connections. Games are viewed by some authors as activities that are similar to rituals while some tried to analyze and explain the games that are played during festivals and other special occasion which are parts of the sacred rituals. Stewart Culin's (1899) works offered valuable comparative analysis of similar games in distinctly different regions and geographies. In Hawaii, about 91 games are played during a festival time. These games have a lot of cultural importance and are self explanatory about the social values of the society, its structure and several other such attributes. Steward Culin was successful in examining and analyzing all such attributes which paves way for a further in depth understanding of the connection of games with their native cultures.

Games could be activities which could become a source of income or food or physical or mental development. Such aspects are also examined by several authors all through the 20th century. Interestingly in a research work of F. R. Barton in (1908), explanations about the game of hunting and collecting shell fishes and other small

fishes played by the children on the coral sea coasts of British New Guinea along with the singing of certain small songs triggers an understanding about how games are activities for the tribes living in the region to procure food. This food sourcing game activity intertwined with the songs they sing further explains how that activity is not only a necessity initiated, but an integral part of the culture of the tribal societies in that geographical region,

These explanations and analysis further trigger a perspective that games need not be separate activities and that play could be an embedded element in various general activities as well. Support to such a discussion could be found in Margaret Mead's works in (1928). Her research over the children of Samoan Islands opens further scope for understanding of this perspective. "Work is play" for Samoan children as said and explained by Margaret Mead emphasizes this topic of discussion.

For the Samoan Children, play is experienced in regular activities of help to the parents like young children help their mothers in looking after younger babies at home when their mothers are engaged in cooking or other such household activities. The boys of Samoan islands are found to have interest in activities like climbing up the tree to fetch palm leaves and make some traditional dolls or climb into a real canoe and practice padding as a playful activity instead of playing with plastic toys or board games. Comparative analysis of Margaret Mead (1928) between the children of Samoan Islands and the ones of the western society triggers an in depth understanding of the contrast in between the ideologies of the two societies.

Similar perspectives are seen in the works of Fortes, (1938) where socialization of children in relation to cultural and economic activities is involved in games they play. In his research work on Tallensi of North Africa and the native children who become involved in the food sourcing hunting and farming activities as playful activities which trigger skill development and hence supported the point that in various societies play need not be a separate activity but could be a part of their general activities and culture.

In the late 1900s, cultural perspective of games further gained strength. Games are then viewed as activities through which various aspects in the society could be studied. Clifford Geertz, (1972) in his research work on Balinese analyzed how the cockfight game is viewed as a token of masculine identity in that society. The attachment of Balinese men is emotional and intensive since they are direct references to their prestige and masculine identity according to their culture. Attempts were made

to understand the social structure of the Balinese society through the game of cock fight itself. A considerably new approach and a significantly effective work that made games as a tool through which a society could be studied in its various dimensions. Similar thoughts were supported in the research works of Joseph Royce, (1980). He studied people from Madurese and Semai are two different societies living in same geographical location and the people with violent and non violent attitudes. A comparison in between these two groups was made possibly through the study of the games they played, since games reflect the social attributes of the society. Even recent research works by authors like Rohan Bastin, (2001) reflected the importance of the study of games to understand the social structure of the society. His research work on the games played by Sinhalese of Sri Lanka at a ritual, analyzed the social organization of the village and its structure with politico-religious order.

Hence the literature studied provided an in depth knowledge of how the studies on games since 1800s have evolved by giving importance to understand social conditions and the society and how it could be now used in the current topic of research.

Games and Cultural impacts:

While it is evident that the culture of the society reflects in its games, it should be also understood that changes in the culture lead to the changes in the games that societies play. Attempts have been made to understand how the games are either discarded and forgotten totally or transformed to suite the current lifestyle by the societies in accordance with the changes in the culture and the social organization. Games may last longer if it fits the lives of the men who play the game. It is always difficult to find such games which are popular in ancient times and are played in modern times.

E. B. Taylor's, (1878) works in the late 1800s supported this discussion on the change in the games in accordance with the changes in the culture. Similar ideology was supported by F. R. Barton, (1908) in his research works in early 1900s. F. R. Barton conducted his research on games played by the children in the coastal regions of British New Guinea. It could be understood that the societies when they migrate from one region to the other which may bring compelling lifestyle changes resulting in the cultural changes as well often witness either change of the games that are played or major changes occur in the way the same games are played.

It could be analyzed also that a cyclic effect is seen in between culture and games where a change in the culture influences a change in the games that we play and a change in the games that are played reflects the changes that are happening in a society. These cultural changes are discussed in the research work of Margaret Mead, (1928) as well. In the Samoan Islands with the introduction of English education and the resultant effects on culture, the games that children play as well are undergoing some basic transformations. Today, the children of Samoan Islands are much into the playing of cricket and other such popular games in the rest of the world.

The relationships between games, culture and social activities are analyzed in several research works by the authors from 1800s till recent times. Games like gambling were analyzed to create an imbalance in the lifestyles of the socialites who adopt these games into their culture by virtue of the mingling of people of non native regions with native people and migration of outsiders with the local groups. Ronald. M. Berndt and Catherine H Berndt, (1947) in their study explained about a similar situation in which Native people of a region underwent drastic lifestyle shifts because of the gambling games that were adopted from the traveling Chinese and Europeans.

Changes in culture may occur because of the inevitable concepts of invention, development, migration and acculturation in human lives. Such changes are observable in every element of culture and games being a part of culture also reflect these changes. Thus, it is necessary to throw light on the cultural changes to understand the contemporary situation of games in the society.

Games and Gender issues:

We can observe some crucial gender based preferences, rules and restrictions in connection with games as well among various societies. It is a social and cultural expectation that gender specific games are to be played by the children of the respective genders only. Of course, there are games which are played by both the sexes individually and in unisex groups as well. But, when it comes to gender specific games, playing of the game by children of the gender other than the specific gender is not socially plausible and has deprivation of social value and prestige in certain societies. In general, games of the girls involve less of physical stress. String Games, ball games, indoor games and other puzzle games are played by girls in various societies. Vigorous games which involve a lot of physical stress and the risk of being injured are played by boys. Such risk taking attitude is may be a social expectation

towards boys which reinforces the necessity for the boys to comply to such expectations and norms and resist to any injuries while playing such games. In the works of F. R. Barton, (1908) on the children of British New Guinea, games based on gender differences are observed.

Margaret Mead's research in Samoan islands explains several situations depicting the gender differences in relation with games. She said 'the prestige of his (boy child) group is ever being called into account by the 'Aumaga' of the neighboring villages. His fellows ridicules and persecute the boy who fails to appear when any group activity is on foot, whether work for the village on the plantations, or fishing, or cooking for the chiefs, or play in the form of ceremonial call upon some visiting maiden (1928: 34). Disapproval of the child's behavior when he or she deviates from the expected gender specific lines of play is very common. In Margaret Mead's (1928) work, we find the case study of a girl by name 'Mala' who used to play with boys, preferred boys games, tied her clothes like a boy. This behavior was displayed to the whole village who were vociferous in their condemnation. Such social conditions are not akin to Samoan Islands alone. Traces of such conditions are found in the works of different scholars like Sutton Smith, 1968; Clifford Geertz, (1972); Janet Javer, (1976) and were discussed deeply in their works.

Game studies in relation to gender could open a much in depth scope for discussion as it involves various aspects such as sex roles, play choices, sibling and kinship relations and role involvement. Sutton smith, (1968) was one among the first to have studied these aspects through the study of games. He said that sex roles of different societies should be studied under children's play as it has been the vehicle for the learning and practicing of culturally appropriate sex roles.

Society itself as a whole, its aggressiveness and social psychology could be understood through the study of games. In Bali, the society has the game cock fight as part of their culture. Clifford Geertz, (1972) said that the Balinese men perceive the aggressiveness of their fighting male cocks as a reference to their own aggressiveness and prestige. It is like Balinese men are fighting with each other and are displaying their aggressiveness when the cock fight is going on. These animal roosters are imaged to the Balinese man's masculine symbol.

Gender differences are so significant in games in various societies as they reflect the differences seen in other aspects of their culture with reference to the social institutions, traditions, customs, family relations, social values and attitudes. Girls, in

various societies are culturally restricted to move body aggressively or execute anything that may trigger a display of their sexuality unintentionally. It is thus, perhaps, girls are much encouraged to play indoor games while boys are expected and encouraged to play outdoor games. It may be also a way of certain societies to keep boys and girls in separate groups. It may be again to minimize any sort of contact with the opposite sex marginalizing the possibility of the build up of any sexual relationships as they grow into their adolescence and adulthood, an attempt to safeguard the societal concepts like virginity and chastity. All such discussions are supported by Janet Lever, (1976) in her works.

In contrary, there are societies in which games are much like practice sessions before children face the real world and games are integral parts of the socialization process. They could be imagined as tools through which the society attempts to demonstrate the social values, culture, rules and restrictions. There are certain games that are played during the rituals which become representative of such gender specific behavioral demonstrations. There are games which reveal male castration anxieties, homo sexuality and childhood socialization practices of that region. Rohan Bastin, (2001) conducted research in this region. His works analyze such interesting findings. In some regions girls develop into agents of rejection towards anything that doesn't comply with the social order. Such a perspective was used for the study of ethnic differences in a society by Marjorie Harness Goodwin, Charles Goodwin & Malcah Yaeger-Dror, (2002). This disagreement under discussion has been identified in the behavior of the girl children during play as well. Games were used as the primary tool, in this case, to study how such behavior becomes a part of socialization and expected standard social behavior of the girls.

In contrast to Clifford Geertz's (1972) interpretation on the Balinese cock fight, Sara Miner, (2012) observed that, in Midwest, women were tied to the practice of cock fighting just as hens were to breeding of game cocks. Women also participate in cock betting and gambling practices. Especially the rural women in Midwest observed their participation in cock fighting as holding to their community. Sara Miner, (2012) explained this situation in her works in detail. Hence, gender based differences are intertwined with the social institutions and culture of various regions and the understanding and interpretation of gender issues in games have been changing from time to time in the path of understanding the relation between games and gender.

Indian Games:

The study of Indian games has always been interestingly distinct and vivid. There are many games that took birth in India and diffused or migrated to different parts of the world. Many games are so much akin and particular to the Indian culture. But in the recent times, games like cricket, soccer, basket ball and many western games which are popular across the world are being played than the traditional indigenous games of India. It is evident that influences of the western or non-Indian culture are observed through out the country in different aspects including games and play. It is also observed that the traditional or local games are at least in their fading states throughout the country. Several foreign and Indian authors have researched on the aspect of Indian games and discussed on the richness of the game culture in India.

The initial works on Indian games can be observed in the works of E. B. Taylor, (1878). The dice games popularly known as *Pachisi* and the chess have become the games from India that gained popularity across the world. E. B. Taylor, (1878) mentioned about the game called “*Chupur*” which is a game just like '*Pachisi*' which was learnt by the English people from Indians. The works of Suravaram Prathapa Reddy, (1949) reveal a lot of hidden facts about the origins of several Indian Games. In his works it was made evident that Indians not just played the game of dice as a game of chance, but as well practiced some chantings and mantra along with the worship of *Jogini* to win over the opponent. There are explanations that '*Pachisi*' game was originally the game of the Telugu people which was called *Pachika* in Telugu language. *Pachika* was taken away by Muslim people and later was again received by Telugu people as *Pachis*.

Another game of unavoidable importance is the game of chess which was first invented by Hindus in India which was later migrated to other countries. He also classified and explained about various versions of chess, the most popular game through out the world, that were played among the people of Kakatiya Dynasty during 1050 to 1350 A. D. in the ancient Telugu societies. The same was supported and well explained in the works of the Jeannine Auboya, (1955). She explained how in Atharvana Veda, some chantings enable the power to act on the dice and thus facilitating the victory to the person chanting the mantra. The uniqueness in the Indian games is also characterized by the chantings and prayers attached to these games which some times signifies astrological significances. In Rig Veda there is a hymn

called as gambler's hymn and such chantings are to escape the power of the opposite player. The first traces of swing in India were found in 2nd century. Here games are highly intertwined with culture and rituals. Among Santals of Bihar region, the rite of swing is conducted during *dola yatra* of Lord Krishna in the month of February, when it comes to outdoor games. Seasons seem to influence the type of outdoor games played by Indians. Similar discussions were supported in the works of Balendu Sekharan, (1973). He explained this in his words as 'for out door games there are special seasons and even days for out door games' (197). Games carry a lot of indigenous knowledge of that particular society within it. The songs that are sung at the games played by the children carry a lot of information and useful knowledge thus giving cultural importance to that particular activity. Vadla Subrahmanyam, (1987) explained that folk songs that are sung at the time of playing games by the Telugu people carry medicinal knowledge and Ayurvedic medicinal components.

Further in India, it could be observed that different games are played by different segments of people, basing on their castes and tribes. Some Games are played by only certain castes and further there are some special games played only during some special occasions like festivals, rites, marriages, ceremonies etc. Edgar Thurston, (1987) attempted to define and classify various games in India basing on these various social aspects.

In India, games could be observed on special occasions like weddings when the couples play several games in order to enhance the bond or lighten the mood. Games such as coconut game, flower ball game, ring in the vessel game etc., are played by the couples during or after the wedding celebrations. The bride and the bride groom play games such as loosening a ball of knots, using only one hand each, symbolizing the perseverance in resolving the issues together in their married life. Breaking *papads* on each others faces is another game. All these games have a symbolism to some real life activities. Ashok Mela, (2000) and Sravani Gullapalli, (2009) tried to explain these concepts in relation to games that are played during different occasions. Thus, there are several games akin to the culture of that particular place or community which carry indigenous knowledge of that society within it.

Indian Social Organization:

India is a caste based society. Its social system is complex in nature. Many people from different parts of the world tried to understand the caste system prevailing in India. They even tried to give a brief note defining the system. In order to understand the social and cultural significance of games, it is better to have a clear understanding of the concepts like caste, class and gender which are considered as the pillars of social institutions in India.

Caste System:

Caste system is a basic social institution on which the society is build upon. The intensity of caste system in India is explained by Max Muller, (1869: 353) that 'caste system cannot be abolished in India, and to attempt it would be one of the most hazardous operations that were ever performed in a political body. As a religious institution caste will die; as a social institution caste will live and improve'. Thus, with the words of Max Muller, the existence of caste system is unavoidable and can not be abolished in India.

Many scholars tried to understand the caste system and tried to explain the caste system. Mandelbaum, (1972) said that the first observations of caste system was made by the Greek ambassador Megasthenes who came to India about 300 B. C. He said that Megasthenes observed that people in India were divided themselves in to a number of occupationally specialized groups that a person could marry only within his own group, and that no one could change affiliation from one group to another. He explained the significance of caste system in India and also said that the status of a member in the society is ascribed in the hierarchical level and is based on the occupation a person takes up.

The concept of caste and the difference between tribe and caste was explained by Pauline Kolenda, (1978). According to her, caste is the decent group with a special role by which it is integrated into a traditional, local or regional system of inter dependence and inter change with other groups-a caste system. The caste may or may not have a distinctive sub culture. If members live within the micro-community, we call that community a tribe and if each community is related to other micro-communities in a sector of inter-dependent relationships- the grouping is called a caste.

The understanding of caste system of the Indian society advanced with the first literary traces of the caste system. Louis Dumont, 1980 explained caste system in his work *Homo Hierarchus* which became a pioneer work on caste system. According to Louis Dumont, (1980) the word 'caste' is of Portuguese and Spanish Origins: *Casta*, from the Latin, *castus*, *chaste* where Spaniards used the word in the sense of race which was used in India by the Portuguese in the middle of fifteenth century. In this social system there are set of groups whose members perform certain functions together and do not accomplish as separate entities. Thus, the groups are interdependent in a particular arrangement. The members of the groups act in regular and anticipated ways toward members of the other groups and towards the external environment. In the same way many Indian scholars have tried to understand caste system by explaining the literary traces and meaning of the word caste. M. N. Srinivas, (1982) said that the first literary traces of the caste system are found in the Rig Veda, where three groups are mentioned (Brahma, Ksatra and Vis). The *Purusasukta* hymn speaks of four classes originating from four parts of the body of the Creator. He explained the caste system and Varna categorization on the basis of social hierarchy and the color of the people. According to him, Varna is categorization of the Hindu society by four castes or sections. The term Varna was also been applied to contrast the color of the people that is the fair *Arya*, with the dark *Daasa* or *Sudra*. The initial distinction of people into two Varnas later developed into three (Brahma, Ksatra, Vis) and finally into four. The main features of caste system were explained by him as hierarchy, endogamy and hypergamy; occupational association; restriction on food, drink and smoking; distinction in custom, dress and speech; pollution; ritual and other privileges and disabilities; caste organization and caste mobility. He said there is inequality privilege in relation to dominance and subordination among the component groups.

Fall of Caste System:

All the groups have different degrees of dominance and privilege against other groups. Most of the societies are stratified or hierarchically arranged to some degree, either in the ranking or functioning groups or in class attributions. Every member of the endogamous caste groups shares the rank position of the group which effects relations with other members of the group. The members of the groups follow certain patterns of behavior and have certain assigned attributes according to the rank the

group belongs to in the local hierarchy. The main criterion for ranking is the ritual pollution and purity that are inherent in the group's practices. The members of the groups maintain certain separation from those of others especially lower groups in marriages, domestic intimacies like eating together or drinking and also observe other prescribed distances. In the late 1900s, certain scholars like Mattison Mines, (1982); Raheja, (1988); Appadurai, (1992); Andre Beteille, (2011) and so on criticized the model of caste system that was explained by Louis Dumont, (1980). They criticized the explanations of Louis Dumont, (1980) on caste system as one side explanation. According to Mattison Mines, (1982) over the past two decades, Marriott, (1959 and 1968) transactional model and Dumont's, (1970b) dual model have dominated discussion of Indian caste ranking and now that there are certain Hindu castes that do not fit either model. Louis Dumont's concept of caste system was further criticized by Raheja, (1988) and Appudurai, (1992). They said that Dumont's explanation of Indian caste system is a cultural concept which did not consider material content and concentrated on explanation of hierarchy and ritual status based on purity and pollution. Balmurali Natrajan, (2005: 227) observed this controversy on understanding and explaining caste system and said that 'in 1980s and 1990s, the anthropology of caste in India underwent a radical revision in reaction to the revolution in caste studies'. Andre Beteille, (2011), also criticized Louis Dumont's explanation of caste system in India saying that his argument on hierarchy itself is complex and not clear. He also said that 'contemporary Indian attitudes differ from the attitudes of nineteenth century Indians in regard to caste'. (2011:51) He explained the importance of caste system by saying that 'caste is not merely a form of identity, arising from the birth in a particular group; it is also a matter of consciousness'. (2011: 60). He said that the fundamental importance of caste structure to the social life of the village can be seen in its settlement pattern which clearly segregates the primary segments brahmin, non-brahmin, Adi Dravidas from one another. He explained the caste structure in relation to contemporary social life in India. The caste system in India is not explained by caste itself but also in relation to certain social concepts like class system. In the words of Andre Beteille, (2011) in the past, the division of caste in village was dominated not only by rituals but also by economic and political life. Where as, in the present day, many areas of life are becoming caste free. The education among the non-Brahmins and Adi Dravidians provides equal competition with the Brahmins for white collar jobs and equal chances of political participation. The modernization helps the areas of

social life detach from the traditional caste hierarchical structure. Thus, the importance of understanding caste in relation to class system was started in the contemporary social conditions.

Rise of Caste and Class:

It has been observed that the concepts of class in India have been voraciously used by economists, Marxists, political scientists, historians, sociologists and many other social scientists. It is very recent that scholars in anthropology started to give importance to class and caste studies. Anthropologists like Ghurey, (1950); Andre Beteille, (1965); Kathleen Gough, (1981); Kapadia, (1995); Gupta, (2000); Balmurali Natrajan, (2005) and many others have dealt with caste and class. The concepts of caste and class were explained in relation with the social status and social identity of a person in Indian society. This was explained by K. L. Sharma, (1994) in his book on caste and class system in India in which he referred to certain articles that dealt with understanding of caste and class in India. He explained the concept of caste and class in relation to social status in the articulation of aspirations for higher social status by Dalit and depressed communities. He further explained the concepts of class and caste in relation to the social identity that caste operates as a system of social hierarchy in some backward areas but as a means of social identity it persists through out India. The understanding of caste and class from the perspective of social status and identity has moved domination of class on caste. The domination of class in rural villages is slowly increasing than the caste consciousness. A class of rural rich emerged from the principal agricultural castes which began to displace the traditional dominant castes. Castes are explained on the basis of economic activity of the people and thus the domination of class has emerged. It is that the principle agricultural castes who became rich in the rural areas started class consciousness to displace the traditional caste domination. Thus, the concept of domination of class over caste has emerged which was explained by some scholars. Further the understanding of the caste and class was made in relation to culture as culture lays the basic structure of the society Balmurali Natrajan, (2005: 231) said that 'culture is a part of the structure of society since it structures the crucial social process of exploitation'. He explained the process of domination and exploitation of the class and caste in the society in terms of culture. The relation of caste and class has changed in the contemporary society with the

concept of power and increase in education. Vasanth Kannabiran and Kalpana Kannabiran, (1991) said that the factors of education and dress which used to be the mark of caste or class have now been almost faded because of the increased levels education attained and decent dress now being worn by the people of the lower castes as well. It is understood by many scholars that class consciousness is increasing than caste consciousness is contemporary India. This was explained by Andre Beteille, (2011) that the reference of urban middle class people in contemporary India as professionals, intelligentsia and service class conveys the growing class consciousness in contemporary India. He also said that the changes of caste structures are confined to urban or educated or westernized individuals who does not represent Indian society and culture. Understanding of caste and class was made in relation to the concept of power and status of an individual in the society.

In agrarian societies the ownership or non-ownership of the means of production does not necessarily constitute a basis for communal or political action. Too much diversity of occupation or economic position may disrupt the unity of status group. Status groups show a tendency to multiply. Mobility in the caste system is a much slower and gradual process than in the class system. Classes are defined in terms of property, of ownership or non ownership of the means of production and status. Property by itself doesn't create social honor although it is a precondition to it. Caste system and class system as two individual entities which are connected and dependent on each other. Unlike caste system, class system does not enjoy the religious sanctions in traditional Indian society. In Indian society, the class system was largely subsumed under the caste system. The relation between caste and class system has been a dynamic relation. There is an access of mobility in the social hierarchy for class system. One can move upward or downward in the hierarchical system as class is always prescribed status. The access of mobility in hierarchy is difficult in case of caste system as the status is ascribed. But there are situations where there is downward movement of the higher caste people in hierarchical status. This could be done in relation to class system. Divya Vaid, (2012) has explained that just as the disadvantaged lower communities find difficulty in moving upward direction, upper caste people are not protected from downward mobility.

Some scholars have observed that at times caste dominates class system in Indian society. The continuity of higher caste to be higher classes and lower caste to be in the lower classes is prevailed. Caste system is neither disappeared nor declined

in modernized India. Social mobility in the society is used to gain higher social status and domination. Thus, different scholars tried to understand caste and class and their inter relations in the contemporary India. As it is always said the influence of gender is more important in understanding the society and culture especially, caste and class systems in India. But the concept of Gender in understanding Indian society has always been neglected by many scholars. It is very recent that the issues of gender has been taken into consideration in understanding Indian society and social concepts. One should throw light on gender issues to understand caste and class.

The Triad: Caste, Class and Gender:

India is a society which has in many aspects, the influence of ideologies that see woman as of lower social status when compared to men. Differences could be observed in the preferences given to males and females in the issues of ill-health, education, inheritance of property, ideas of purity and in all these issues, men are always at an advantage. It could be also observed that such lower status has origins in the attributed ritual impurity to woman. The impact is much deeper on woman belonging to lower castes than that of the upper castes. Scholars like Louis Dumont, (1970); Miller. B. D. (1981); Paulin Kolenda, (1982); Allen. M, (1990); Harriss, (1992) and so on supported these ideas in their works. Perspective of power and status on gender is observed in the works of the authors like Vasantha Kannabiran and Kalpana Kannabiran, (1991). It is viewed that with in the caste, society is defined by the degree of control that is exercised over women by men and by the degree of passivity of women of the caste.

In an extension to this discussion, it could be analyzed that men of the upper caste execute power on the men and the women of the lower castes, by virtue of the properties they own and social status. The influence of caste is always present and can not be avoidable. It is observed that it is in rare conditions when there is a marital dissolution like death of the spouse, divorce, separation, desertation, migration of the spouse to metropolitan cities, neglecting to financially support his family etc., that women become heads of the households. Such issues have been analyzed deeply by Lakshmi Lingam, (1994) in her works. She attempted to examine the changes in the agricultural systems, social and structural aspects, family and kinship support systems in the context of class, caste and gender hierarchies and tried to explain the conditions of the families with women as heads. It has been explained that woman's home based

production, presence of children, strong kinship ties explain better life of a woman. Woman when acting as the heads of the households as well are observed to face several social status constraints amidst of a society that is framed on Patriarchal rules. Women, themselves when they are heading the families under various circumstances, do not break the patriarchal structure. This could be observed from the continuance of the dependence of the women on the brothers in the families. It has been also observed that the women of lower castes do not undergo decline of social status even at times of bankruptcy. In the middle castes, the concept is highly influenced by the idea that woman heading the families is against the patriarchal structure which in a way is the decline of the social prestige. Generally, women who are single parents are viewed as the ones well supported if she has male children and brothers from the natal side. Thus, the resultant social status as well prevails. All these issues have been analyzed at an in depth level by Lakshmi Lingam, (1994).

This does not make it a static condition however, since changes have been constantly observed in the societies with regard to the inequalities in gender and the subsequent changes in the legal systems. The economic power lies in the contribution of the women to the temporary or permanent acquisition of the property and not in the ownership of the property. Mary. M. Cameron, (1995) discussed the differences between the women of the upper castes and the lower castes and their economic power spheres in her works. While in most of the studies, caste based explanations of the societies have been attempted, it is evident that societies are as well tremendously influenced by gender differences and social setups that have become the social standards over time. Hence, studying the societies with both the gender and caste in focus and their inter dependencies optimally considered is of paramount importance.

Caste is an unavoidable element and can not be deleted in the society. The influence of caste is observed in every social aspect of the society. Despite the ownership of the property actually being present with their men, women of the upper castes are observed to display higher status on the women of the lower castes. Even if the women are for employed for some job and not in any way related to the male owner of the property, upper caste women enjoy the privilege of belonging to the upper caste and often are found in authoritative positions while women of the lower castes are employed generally for manual agricultural work. Authors like Mary. M. Cameron, (1995) supported such concepts and analyzed them deeply in her works. Poor economical conditions and their influence on women in the society is another

major topic to be discussed. Woman's social status is observed to depend on what sorts of work they under take outside their homes. Women of lower castes have further a lot more complexities in achieving a better social status because of the job opportunities that are available to them. An elevation in the job standard and the standard of living could signal an elevation in the social status. But, the society and the norms prevailing generally do not allow good opportunities to become available to the women of the lower castes. Karin Kapadia, (1998) discussed all these concepts and attempted to establish an explanation of the influences of economic conditions intertwined with the caste on the social status of the women.

Since the societies are undergoing rapid changes from the recent pasts, it is observed that men and women, especially of the lower caste have shifted slowly from their manual labor agricultural work to higher positions and are educated to attain higher positions. However, the lack of sufficient sources still haunt them and hinder their scale of growth. In such conditions, they, especially men of lower castes are witnessed to exhibit violence in their earnest attempts to fix their insufficiency that has the brutal caste influences. Authors such as S. Anandi, Jeya Ranjan, Rajan Kishnan, (2002) and Balmurli Natarajan, (2005) discussed and analyzed all such concepts in their works.

Caste, class and gender issues, thus, are interrelated to one another and are inter dependent in functioning of a society. Several authors from 1970s till date have contributed to a holistic understanding of these aspects. It is believed that the social institutions work to fulfill the needs of the society as a whole and to maintain equilibrium in its functioning aspect. But, when reality strikes, it is understood that the social institutions among complex societies work towards the power and control of humans on other humans in the name of spread of the state of equilibrium. The balance between the group of controllers who control people and the people who are being controlled is always maintained in such a way that the power hegemony prevails in the society which can be executed with the social institutions like caste, class and gender inequality.

Trends from the literature review:

Game studies have undergone a transformation from simple classification and definition to the idea of studying the cultural attributes of a society through games and play. Games are part of almost every culture across the world and correspond to one of

the basic attributes of mankind. The way the games are played, type of the games, purpose of games etc., have a lot of cultural relevance of that particular society. An in depth and informative analysis of how the players of a game perceive the outside world and how social, cultural, religious, economic, psychological and many such influences could operate on games could become another important point of discussion and idea which is compounded from the works of many scholars. It is also observed that there is a vacuum in understanding culture and society through games and play. There is always a scope to understand social institutions, values, beliefs, customs and traditions through the study of games. There are only certain studies that took place in anthropology especially in understanding culture through the study of games.

Caste, class and gender are important factors that have for ages been strongly rooted in the functioning of Indian society with the concepts of untouchability, purity, pollution, discrimination, social stratification and many more, though not physically visible, were strictly followed in the Indian society. They are the basic social institutions in India on which the society is built upon. Games as a part of culture are certainly not an exception or area for the relief of such social ideas. Class, though, has become stronger resulting in the slight weakening of caste, the efficacy of caste according to the works of many authors, is neither declined nor disappeared. With the fast and rapid modernization, changes are seen in various dimensions such as female child education, women empowerment, employment to lower caste people outside the traditional occupation frame and many more. However, one can still observe the effects of the caste system at least in its subliminal ways. How gender is intertwined with caste and class system is another interesting discussion which yielded multiple ways in understanding the status of women, the role of men and women in social set up, women empowerment, role of women in economic conditions etc. It also brought to light about in what situation women are heading the families and their social image in the society with reference to the caste and class references. It has been an interesting discussion all through the works of the authors that lower caste women do not have the limitations that are experienced by middle and upper caste women and through course of urbanization how working and earning among the females of middle castes has become necessity by driving to uphold their class status by relaxing the caste based rules. It is observed that understanding of caste, class and gender in India has always been done in relation to different social and cultural perspectives like

economic, livelihood, development, religion, food, etc., but not through the spectacle of traditional games which carry traditional customs, values and principles with them.

Statement of the problem:

Traditional games carry knowledge, information, customs, values, beliefs and principles of that society that are passed from generation to generation. There is always a scope to understand cultural and social aspects of a society through games. With the influence of development in the name of urbanization, a change in the values and customs of the contemporary society is always observed. It provides scope for understanding these changes in comparison with the traditional values and customs. The knowledge of games related to a specific society gives us an in depth understanding of various attributes of that society.

Since Indian society is structurally based on caste and class, games could become a cultural instrument through which one could evolve to a structural and cultural understanding of the society and the influences of caste, class and gender over the society in various frames. In the recent times, with the effect of modernization and urbanization discussions have been raised repeatedly that class is becoming increasingly influential, along side caste in India. A study on these aspects through games could help in understanding the concepts of caste, class and gender, their inter relation with each other and influence on the contemporary social setup of the village. Gender, being one of the most important factors that contribute to the present structure of the society, it becomes important to conduct a study understanding the gender based differences in games of various times among different age groups and what could be elicited from it. With a lot of gender oriented issues also under the influence of caste and class, it becomes rather interesting to study all these ideas through games. Since games are played by both adults and children, they could authentically serve as an instrument to study the various aspects at different age groups as well. It also may be a case that class or caste have influenced the society to move towards western games leaving the traditional games. All such aspects could be understood and come to light with this comprehensive ethnographic study. Thus, this study primarily focuses on understanding and analyzing the cultural and social aspects of the society through the spectacle of games which could become a different dimension of observation.

Objectives of the Study:

- To conduct ethnographic documentation of traditional games and understand the social, cultural and historical significance of games.
- To understand and analyze caste, class and gender dimensions of games.
- To study the effects of social and cultural changes on games in the contemporary society.
- To understand and analyze the influence of education and media on games.

Frame work of the study:

The present research is based on certain postulates to understand the social and cultural aspects of games. To understand the relation of games, culture and society on a preliminary note, history of games in relation to different social and cultural occasions and events were noted. Historical approach was used, which majorly contains historical descriptions from different sources, in order to understand the history of the games in relation with people and to compare the changes which occurred in the games in relation to the contemporary situations. An attempt of classification of the games that were observed in the field was done on the basis of the functional aspect of the games which helps in understanding the relation between games and their patterns and structures. To understand the social aspects of the games, structural-functional approach was used, based on empiricism (direct observation, identification and description), structure and function of the games, how the players are organized, transformed order of traditional games, frequencies of playing the traditional and social aspects of the village. To understand the leisure and its relationship with games and play, concepts of power and status were focused.

Methodology:

The field work was carried out for eleven months from August, 2015 to July, 2016. I collected 180 interviews for more than an hour length regarding the peoples childhood to adulthood. I also collected the schedules of two hundred people along with the people I took in depth interviews among the villages. I recorded 70 in depth case studies of the people regarding different issues in relation to games that are played at different situations. I also took schedules regarding the games children play among 580 children from three different schools. In the initial days, I made rapport

with the local people explaining my purpose of visiting their village. After a few months, I realized that the people are not reserved in their behaviors but are quite interactive which made me to mingle among the locals very quickly. The women and children quickly accepted me rather than men in the villages and this must be because of the gender orientation. I attended the celebrations of Reddy, Vysya, Settibalija and Maala who celebrated festivals, ceremonies like birth, puberty, marriage and also attended the celebrations at schools and when conducted competitions among the children.

I used different anthropological tools like informal interviews, case studies, observation some times I even learned and participated in some games played by children and women and collected data from the people of all age groups both adults and children as well as both genders in the village. I collected schedules from the village to understand the basic information of the villagers like caste information, occupation, education levels, composition of families, marriage information, material assets, livelihoods, live stocks, debts, loans, etc. I drew village map for the main village along with its allied villages with a transect walk to understand the physical and social settings of the villages, their boundaries and connections to other places. After understanding the village set up I started making rapport with the villagers in order to maintain close and harmonious relationships with the people and try to understand their feelings or ideas which helped me to maintain good rapport and communicate well with them. While making the rapport I explained the local people my purpose of visiting the village and my topic of research.

With all the rapport I developed I started conducting in depth interviews for deeper probing of the social, economic, political, religious and historical aspects of the villagers. I also conducted interviews among the children in the school and off the school, teachers, government officials, non governmental organizations, political leaders, village heads, etc. I conducted group discussions, also participated in the discussions and took case studies as and when required. I used case studies to probe more in depth in to the topic of research to get more information from the people who were in the situations which were vulnerable to social situations and stigmas. Explanatory study, bearing on cause-and-effect relationships; Exploratory study, by defining the questions and hypothesis of the research study; and descriptive study, by describing the phenomena; were used as and when required.

I tried to understand how people interact with each other, how people involve in a particular situation, their body language, procedures at the time of rituals, and a lot of other information through observation. I even realized how people, especially women warned me while talking to men as they believe that women get attracted to men, especially strangers when they talk and also expressed their knowledge on how men attract innocent women. I was asked by a few old higher caste men what is the need of me going to every place in the village which made me realize that women are not allowed to go to every place they want to easily. I was also suggested by a lady MRO not to go to certain areas especially to the places of Maala and Madiga castes as to avoid unwanted situations. Every movement I made was keenly observed by the villagers everyday and also discussed what is the need of a woman doing this kind of work by getting exposed to the people and the world instead can sit indoors and do higher studies. Along with the study of people in the village, I attended three schools (two government- one Telugu medium coeducation and one English medium girls high school and one private english medium coeducation school) for three months and interacted with the school children from 5th class to 10th class to understand the games and children in contemporary society.

Along with the above anthropological tools, I also asked children to draw and describe their streets and route from school to home which will help me to bring the socio-spatial frameworks which will explain the spatial extent and cultural importance of the children's knowledge of their villages and surroundings. Besides the primary data collection I also collected secondary data from various sources like books, journals, articles, news papers, magazines, internet blogs and online articles.

Study Area:

The present study is concentrated on rural agrarian societies which follow traditional culture and values. For this I have chosen a village Marteru from West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. I extended my fieldwork by focusing on the neighboring villages which are not geographically distant and located in the same area less than one kilometer distance. I have selected five villages along with Marteru for my study which are called *Panchagramalu* by the local people. Marteru, Sivarao peta, Velagaleru, Neggipudi and Satyavaram are the villages together called as *Panchagramalu* where *Pancha* means five and *gramalu* means villages. This name is

given by the local people, especially Reddys as it combines all the Reddy people from these neighboring villages and have community discussions. Thus, the name has come up. Major concentration was given to Marteru village and all the villages are agrarian villages and are different in terms of their caste composition, population and contact with outsiders. Some villages are more interior and rural village compared to Marteru. Marteru is a main village in the surrounding area which is exposed to high ways and connecting roads. Marteru village is more developed in terms of availability of education facilities, transportation, economic activities, water facilities and factories when compared to its neighboring villages. These villages are selected on the basis of geographical location, extent of contact, composition of social groups, availability of resources, exposition to urbanization. A detailed village map is also provided to understand the physical topography of the village and its surrounding villages.

Chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces various concepts of games and play. It also focuses on understanding the meaning and definition of games from different sources. Along with the definitions and meanings, different perspectives of games are also focused where diffusion, cultural and economic, ecological and religious perspectives of games are discussed. Later, a brief description on Indian society and its social institutions are discussed which gives a brief understanding about the society and culture. A brief discussion about literature review related to the concept of leisure among Western societies and Non-Western societies and its relationship with Anthropology is made in this chapter. Along with the literature review on leisure, a brief and detailed literature on games and play activities in relation with social structure, cultural impacts and gender issues are reviewed in the chapter. A special focus on Indian games from different sources and from different areas is also reviewed which helps in understanding the games existing in the contemporary period. A brief discussion about Indian social organization with an in depth focus on caste, class and gender issues prevailing in the society is reflected in this chapter. With the brief discussion and analyzation of the literature from different sources, trends from literature review is briefed which later paved way to describe the statement of the problem. Along with the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, frame work, methodology and

study area are described in detail. A detail note on chapterization and its contents is also given in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Profile of the Study Area.

This chapter talks about the detailed description of the major village selected for the study of games. It talks about the reasons behind the selection of the village along with brief description about the social and cultural segments of the village. The chapter concentrates on the geographical profile, climate and rainfall, population demography, literacy rate and language, demographic structure of the village and caste wise distribution of the village, residential patterns and settlement patterns of the village, structure of the houses, religion, political and administrative setup of the village, family and kinship, marriage, economy of the village, rituals and festivals, communication, transportation and conveyance, sanitation in the village, health care, water facilities, educational institutions and conclusion.

Chapter 3: Ethnographic Profile of the games.

This chapter can be divided in to three major parts, description of the games, classification of the games and the contemporary situation of the games in the society. This chapter talks about the brief ethnographic description of the games that are collected during the field work by the researcher. The games are briefly described along with how they have to be played and their social and cultural significances. After the description part, games are classified according to different factors. A brief description about classification by different scholars by both Indian and Non- Indian scholars is discussed. Games are classified on the basis of different factors like age, gender, occasion, place games are played, geographical location, time, number of players, equipment, function, seasons and economic status of the people. The last part of the chapter discusses the contemporary situation of the games in the society. Discussion on different games that are forgotten, rarely played and in the edge of disappearance and still in the practice of playing are briefly described in this part. The reasons behind the disappearance of the games that are collected in the fieldwork is also focused and discussed.

Chapter 4: Cultural aspects of games.

This chapter talks about the relation between games and culture. It majorly focuses on how games are influenced by culture at different specific situations. The coexistence

of rituals and games in relation to the functioning of cultural elements in the society is explained briefly through the concepts of rituals and games. When the societies become increasingly complex and civilized, the importance given to the sacred rites and sanctity attached to the rituals and religious activities decline. The ritual activities also lose the perception of attributed nobility in the society, their mysterious and sacred attributes get revealed and activities then become normal everyday activities with a little amount of sanctity in the form of stories still connected to the games which then are generally perceived as elements which are parts of the culture since long and not as sacred activities in particular. The games that confirm this scenario are chance games where the whole game is based on permutations and predictions. Focusing on this idea, the concepts of fate, freewill, skill and *karma* are discussed and analyzed in relation to games played on the basis of this concept. Games that are played as a part of celebration of certain festivals are focused. Festivals, especially *Dussehra*, *Atla Taddi* and *Sankranthi* are focused as games are played as a part of the celebration of these festivals. The cultural significance of activities like *Bommala Koluvu* (displaying dolls) during *Dussehra* is briefly discussed and analyzed along with the types of toys displayed, their significances, etc are discussed. The importance of social rules and principles that are attached to such rituals are discussed in relation with Ruth Benedict's concepts of guilt and shame cultures. *Atla Taddi* is celebrated as a festival of games exclusively for women in the study village. The cultural significance that is added to the games is also briefly described and analyzed. Focus is also made on the astrological significances of such events and games which helps in reiteration of the concepts which further becomes stronger in the society. The festival of *Sankranthi* is analyzed in order to understand its significance in playing and enjoyment among the people. Celebration of *Bhogi pallu* ritual to very young children, swinging games, and other amusement activities during the three day festival are briefly explained and analyzed. Rooster fights are focused with its cultural significance both among men and women and also children and the contemporary situation is also explained. After the discussions about influence of culture through festivals and games, the significance of culture in relation with socialization among both adults and children is discussed. Concepts of role and status in play and games, imitation play by imitating different persons at different activities, situations and rituals and role model are discussed briefly in relation to cultural aspects.

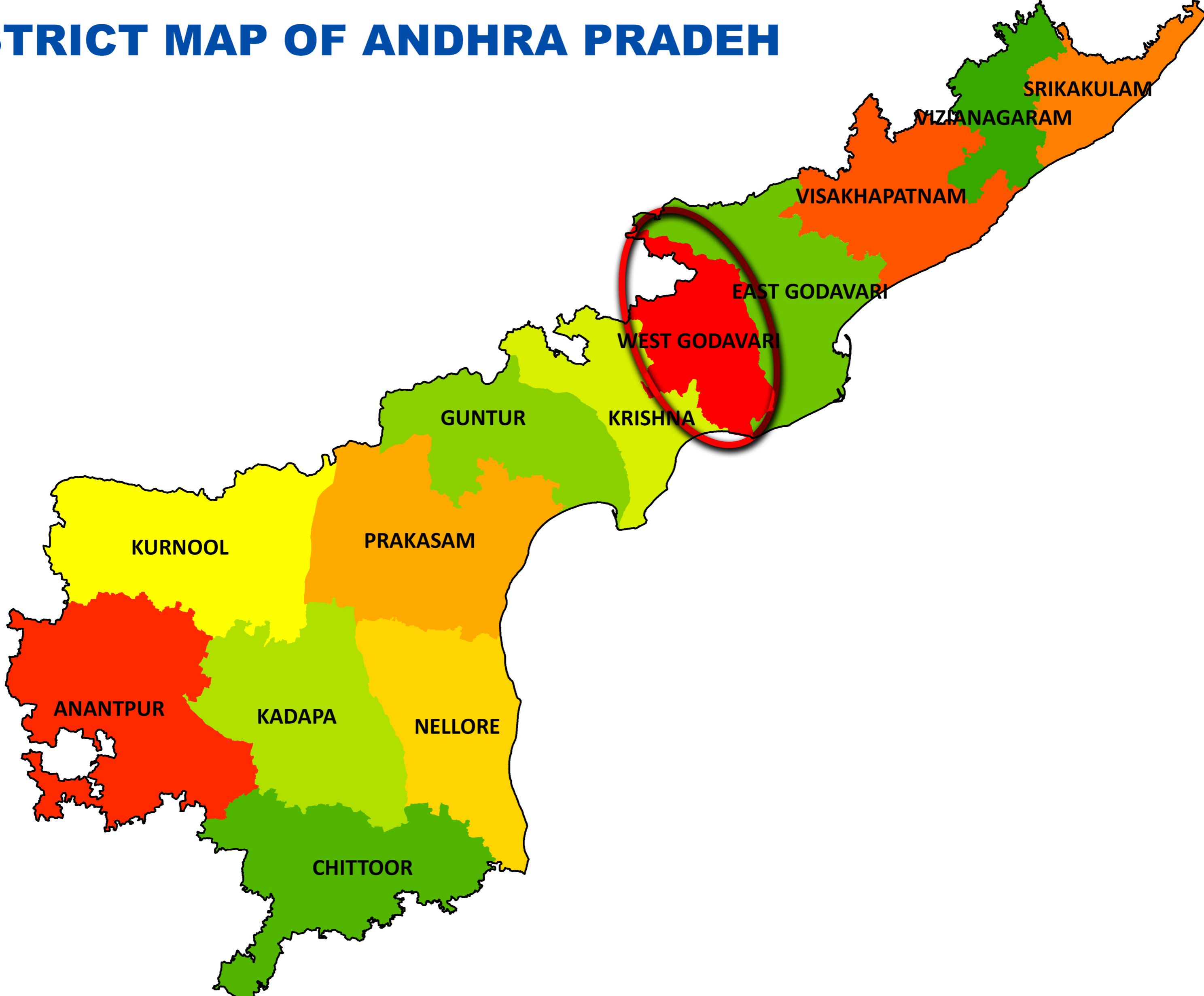
Chapter 5: Social aspects of games.

When the children grow into adolescents and adults, their cultural learnings concretize and form as rigid contours to do or not to do anything in the society. All such influences, the social attributes and how games and play could be considered as a perspective through which these aspects could be studied, how games are on a continuous basis influencing the dynamic societies and how the social changes as well reflect upon the games played, its influences on the social fragments of caste, class and gender shall be at depth discussed in the this chapter. This chapter talks about how games offer a sufficient platform for the nurturing of the younger generations in an adequate way such that they follow and become the promoters of the social rules as they grow into adulthood. Selection of playmates, what games are to be played at what time, whom are to be interacted with and all are discussed. Playmates who are blood related and non blood related, in the case of non blood related playmates, who are allowed to play with who are focused and discussed in detail. Influence of institutions like caste, class and gender are focused and discussed with various case studies. A brief discussion on the concepts of power and status, how they influence games and the players and the contemporary situation of games and society are focused and discussed in a much detailed manner.

Chapter 6: Conclusion.

In this final chapter, conclusion is drawn basing on the information collected among the villages which are studied and the aspects that are discussed in the previous chapters on games, culture and society.

DISTRICT MAP OF ANDHRA PRADEH







WEST GODAVARI MAP

(Mandal Wise Map)




Marteru Village Map


-  Temple
-  House
-  School
-  Petrol Bunk

Fields

Chinna Peta




Neggipudi Village





Fields

Relli Colony



SivaRao Peta



Ramalayam Veedhi

Chinna Canal

Chinna Canal

Chinna Canal

<- Penugonda Road

Palakollu Road ->

Pedda Canal

Koderu Road

Pedda Canal

Z Bridge



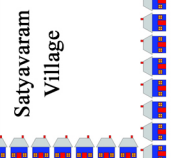


Pedda Canal

Canal Street


Canal Street

Canal Street



Satyavaram Village




Market Place




Oil Mills





Pedda Street




Chinna Street






Subhash Street



Pedda Peta



Settibalija Peta



Sivalayam Street

Gunnem Lake

Agriculture Canal

Velalageru Village



PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

Introduction:

Games are not trivial and simple items of everyday activity which independently exist as entities of recreation. They are carriers of various social rules and cultural aspects. Each game has various historical, geographical, social and political accounts which when analyzed allows us to get a deeper understanding of its functional aspects and more importantly the underlying social structure which acts as the environment to allow its perpetuation from one generation to the other. For a game to exist in a society across generations, its functional significance and historical importance are to fuel its importance with respect to perpetuation. If the society deems anything as of lower importance in a period, such a game will result in fading and ultimately extinction from the culture itself. But, sometimes the societies may not recognize the underlying importance of some of the cultural aspects during their sound existence and only repent about its non existence when the functional aspects and social impacts are later recognized. Hence, it is important to understand the social and cultural aspects of the games as well as the historical, geographical, social, cultural, economical and political aspects of the region that is being considered for study with out which it is impossible to understand the implications of a game on the society and the social structure that nurtures, perpetuates or fades a game in line with its existing environment and the reasons behind such a setup.

My study focused on Marteru village mainly and took consideration of various individual cases from each of the villages surrounding Marteru village. The surrounding villages that are considered for my study are Neggipudi, Velagaleru, Satyavaram, Sivarao peta along with Marteru village. All these villages together are called as *Panchagramalu* by the locals. The name *Panchagramalu* is given to these five villages by the Reddy community people of these five villages for their convenience to conduct welfare meetings for their community since four decades. The Reddy community in these villages is a dominating community in demographic, political and social aspects. Marteru is the central village that connects these villages and several roads that connect to other villages in various directions. It is the village to which all the villagers of the four villages would travel frequently for various purposes. Marteru, has the existence of national level research institute, Regional

Agriculture Research Station (RARS) of Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University established in the year 1965. This institute has won 'Best Rice Research Station Award' for 2012 from The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for its outstanding performance and contributions in research and experiments in developing new varieties crops. The village, Marteru has the fame in terms of sports like Basket ball, Kabaddi etc. By introduction of the basket ball training provisions in the schools and the resultant achievements of the players in various National and International tournaments, Marteru became a center for games too. My study's main focus is on the village, Marteru.

Geographic Profile:

Marteru is one of the 842 inhabited villages in the district of West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh state. Marteru village is very close to coast line with beach of Perupalem. West Godavari is one of the 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh. The state of Andhra Pradesh spreads across two unofficial regions of Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra. The district of West Godavari is part of Coastal Andhra region. It is part of the twin districts namely "West Godavari" and "East Godavari" while the west and east signify the direction on which the regions exist with reference to the perennial river Godavari. The district comprises of 46 Administrative subdivisions called Mandals. The village Marteru falls in the Penumantra Mandal of West Godavari region. The administrative Head Quarters of the district West Godavari are located in the town of Eluru. It has a geographic spread of approximately 7742 sq. km. West Godavari district is bounded by East Godavari district on the east, Bay of Bengal on the south and the state of Telangana (Khammam district) on the north. The district is located in the tropical region in between 16°-15'-00" to 17°-30'-00" N latitude and 80°-55'-00" to 81°-55'-00" E Longitude. Geographically it could be classified into three topographies, that is, Delta, Upland and Agency area.

The proximity to sea cost makes the village remain in a humid state most of the year. The sea coast line is near to Narsapur. The coast village is called Perupalem and is approximately 45 kms from Marteru. This results in a maritime climate to Marteru mostly. The village is surrounded by water bodies. The bank of river Godavari is only 12 kms away from the village which is close to the village of Siddantham. Two canals in the names of *Chinna Kaluva* and *Pedda Kaluva* serve for the purpose of irrigational

water requirements. Marteru is located in India at the longitude of 81°-67'-00" and latitude of 16°-63'-00".

Climate and Rainfall:

The location of the district in the tropical region makes it subject to extreme temperatures. The summers are extremely hot and humid in the district with temperatures reaching up to 48 degrees centigrade. The presence of the perennial water bodies like river Godavari and the Bay of Bengal makes the temperatures to remain constantly high and the climate to remain humid in the region. Summers spread from about mid of march till the ending of June. April and May are the months with the highest temperatures recorded. The district receives rain fall from the south western and north eastern monsoons. Comparatively, South Western Monsoons contribute to the rain fall of the region majorly than north east monsoons. In the year 2005, the region recorded approximately 9,120 mm of rainfall from South West Monsoons. The district faces a state of fluctuations in terms of rainfall which results in fluctuations in terms of agricultural conditions as well. Once in every 5 years, an episode of loss of the yield due to the fluctuations in climate occurs in the region. For irrigation purposes villages heavily depend on wells, tanks and canals.

The village is at an elevation of 59ft above sea level. The temperatures range in between 20 degree centigrade and 44 degree centigrade through out the year in accordance with the seasonal changes. The maximum rainfall is witnessed generally in the months of August and September with recorded rainfall up to 300 mm. The average wind speed is approximately 6.5 miles per hour. Average pressure is 1008 (mb) and up to 79% of humidity. The climate is very sultry and moist and makes sweating all the time inevitable. Rainfalls are from the North Eastern Monsoons and the South Western Monsoons in the region. The average of rainfalls fluctuates creating both good years and bad years to agricultural produces. Close to coast line Alluvial soils are the most found soil. The soil is fertile and the belt of lands are part of the reputed Rice granary of South India comprising of the delta regions of Krishna and Godavari Rivers.

Population:

By 2011 census, the population of the district of West Godavari is 39,36,966. The district has approximately equal sex ratio having 19,64,918 males and 19,72,048 females. This precisely comes to a sex ratio of 1004 females for every 1000 males. The district has approximately 10,91,525 households. The state of Andhra Pradesh by 2011 census has a population of 4.97 crores after its division from the united state of Andhra Pradesh which had the region of Telangana as well in consideration according to census. West Godavari holds rank eleven in terms of population. 79.5% are residing in the rural areas. The district has 46 mandals and 881 villages in total while 842 villages are inhabited. Eluru mandal has the highest population in the district.

The area of the village, Marteru which is considered for study is 296 hectares in terms of its area. The population of Marteru is 7,527 with 2,080 households. There are 3,710 males and 3,817 females in the village. For the purpose of study, a sample size of 180 households has been taken consisting of both males and females. The people considered for the study are from the five villages of *panchagramalu*.

Literacy Rate and Language:

At the level of district, 26,52,389 people are literates. The district ranks seven in terms of literacy in the state. In Marteru, the literacy rate is 86.77 percent. When considered gender wise, the male literacy rate is 88.50 percent and the female literacy rate is 85.11 percent. Telugu is the most spoken language in the region with its distinct accent which makes it a recognizable dialect. The accents differ across the districts of West and East Godavari also. Many families consider English as important and make all efforts possible to escalate the chances of learning english to their children. English is viewed as a symbol of development and status.

Demographic Structure:

The village of Marteru has 2,226 people belonging to scheduled caste out of which 555 people are males and 671 people are females. There are 20 belonging to scheduled tribe in the village. Hence, in terms of percentage, Schedule Castes constitute 16.29% of the total population while Scheduled Tribes are 0.27 percent of the total demographics in the village of Marteru. The sample that was taken consisted of almost all the castes in the village which became instrumental in coming to a

centralized understanding of various aspects of the village just in line with its demographics.

Caste wise distribution of 180 households. (Table No.1)

Caste Name	Traditional Occupation	No. of Households
Brahmin	Priesthood	4
Dudekulu (Converted Muslim)	Cotton ginning	2
Kamma	Agriculture, Land owners	7
Kamsali	Goldsmiths	4
Kapu	Agriculture Labour	8
Maala	Agriculture Labour	28
Madiga	Leather Workers	5
Nayi Brahmins	Temple Musicians	3
Padmasale	Weaving and Textile	5
Reddy	Agriculture, Land Owners	
Relly	Scavengers	10
Settibalija	Agriculture Labour	25
Vysya	Business	7
Yerukula	Pig rearing, Basket making	6
Total		180

*T.O= Traditional Occupation

Residential patterns and Settlements:

The village, though not physically, is divided into two parts as new and old. This division is reflected through the canals of the village which are called '*peda kaaluva*' which means big canal and '*chinna kaaluva*' which means small canal and the two canals are divided by a road called 'canal road' or Palakollu- Narsapur road which connects the towns Palakollu and Penugonda. The actual name of *chinna kaaluva* is '*chinchunadu kaaluva*'. Their names as *Chinna* and *Peda* signify the meanings as new and old respectively along with their original meanings referring their sizes as small and big. The part of the village next to '*peda kaaluva*' is old and the part of the village next to '*chinna kaaluva*' is new. The growth possibilities saturated with respect to the old part of the village because of lack of land for further expansion. The old part of the village is the earliest inhabited area in the village and hence it has been the original village ever since its foundation. The expansion of the village is happening towards the outskirts of the village which falls in the new region towards the outskirts. The streets in the old part of the village are named as '*pedha veedhi*' (big street), *mangali veedhi* (barbar street), *sivalayam veedhi*, '*pedda*' *peta* (big settlement/ area), *settibalija peta*, *venkateswara swamy veedhi* (lord venkateswara street). This part of the village is occupied by the people of different land lords, agriculture and service castes like Reddys (land owners), Vyshyas (*komatlu* or business), Kamsali (goldsmith), Setti Balija (agriculture labour), Nayi Brahmins (*mangali* or barbers), Brahmins (priests), Kaapu (agriculture labour), Kamma (agriculture labour), Dudekulu (cotton sellers), Saaleelu (weavers), Yerukula (pig rearers), Maala (agriculture labour) and a few number of Muslims. Reddys are the dominating people both socially and demographically. *Peda veedi* is dominated by the land lords from Reddy castes, *Sivalayam veedhi* and Venkateswara swami *veedhi* by Brahmin caste families, *Setti balija peta* by *Settibalija* castes, *pedha peta* is by Maala people. The centre of the village is signified by 'Poleramma temple' a small shrine for the village deity 'Poleramma' who is worshipped. *Gunnam cheruvu* is a small river which is near '*peda*' *peta* and *setti balija peta* and other streets have people from different castes living together. The road that connects Attili, Narsapuram and Marteru has shops on either sides of the road which belong to Vyshya caste people.

The other side of the village, '*chinna peta*' is the part of the village next to '*Chinna kaluva*' or small canal. This part of the village has streets like *Siva Rao peta*, *Chakali peta* (washerman area), *Chinna peta* (small area), *Thoka peta* (tail like area),

Relli peta, Ambedkar road. The road that connects Marteru in this area is Koderu road or Marteru- Aachanta- Koderu road. This side of the village is concentrated by the people from different castes like Rajaka (washerman), Relli (scavengers or sanitary workers), Maala and Madiga. Both *Chinna peta* and *Thoka peta* are occupied by Maala people. This part of the village is completely occupied by automobile shops, workshops, mechanic shops, fruits market etc.

Structure of Houses:

The village has concrete roads in the main areas and *kutchra* roads towards the exterior parts of the village. The main streets in the village reflect the old traditional setup of the buildings but most of them are renovated. The main streets like *peda veedhi* has wide and long roads connected to main road with well equipped drain systems. The roads become too narrow down along the areas like Setti Baliya *peta*, *Peda peta*, and extended part of these areas and has *kutchra* roads with open drainage systems.

The village Marteru has both *Pucca* and *Kutchra* houses. Houses in the streets like *peda veedhi* have concrete two storied buildings like that of houses in urban areas. While moving towards the exterior parts of the village, houses with roofs laid with mud tiles and thatched roofs are visible. In the areas like *Thoka peta*, *Relli peta* houses are roofed with mud tiles with the streets narrowing towards the outskirts of the village.

Religion:

Hinduism is the religion followed by the majority of population in the village of Marteru. Christianity is also increasing especially, among the people of lower castes. Conversions to Christianity are visible more among the deprived castes than others. The trend slowed down with the raise of the fear of loss of reservations in the recent past. There are a very few muslims in the village. The daily prayers of the people following Hindu religion and the people following Christianity seem to be of a competitive combative tone in the efforts to state each of their identities and statuses high. Both the Hindus and the Christians use loud microphone and speaker setups to play their respective devotional songs in the mornings. Such loud influence is not seen in the case of muslims in the village, may be because of their less numbers in the region. We could observe Buddhism and Jainism as well followed by a very few

people in the village. There is a Jain temple which is well constructed signifying the influence of Jainism in the region. According to the district statistics, there are approximately 200 buddhists in the district while very few are found in the village of Marteru. In terms of conversions to Christianity, it is either the people who belong to deprived castes or the people of higher castes but belonging to lower classes mostly opting to convert. Among the families which are going through such religion conversion episodes, it is the women who are targeted first for conversion by the influence of neighbors who are following Christianity or any of its representatives from the church. Through the women in the families, the faith is inducted into the families. Children are the first to have the influence after the women and finally the entire family. Various religious activities with respect to Hinduism that are connected to festivals like *Sankranthi*, *Krishnashtami* and the traditions like the implementation of yearly celebrations like *Jatara*, *Thirunaallu*, God *Venkateswara Swami's theertham*, procession of lord *Vinayaka* during *Vinayaka Chavithi*, the event of breaking the pot of butter hung at high elevation during *Krishnashtami* etc are all grandly celebrated according to a fixed schedule every year. The grandness of the celebrations is also in one way a statement of influence that is given by the followers of the religion.

Political and Administrative Setup:

For the administrative purpose, the district of West Godavari is divided into 46 mandals. The village Marteru is part of Penumantra Mandal in West Godavari District. According to the constitution of India and the Panchayati Raaj Act, Marteru village is headed by *Sarpanch* of the village. *Sarpanch* is the elected representative. The elections happen once in every five years. Historically there has been a political dominance of people belonging to Reddy caste in the village. In the recent years, a lady of Maala caste contested in the elections with the silent backing of a person from Chowdary community and won the position of *Sarpanch*. The *Sarpanch* is differently abled and hails from a deprived community which added to her advantage in terms of being considered to contest in elections. Though she is officially the person who has to run the office, it is her husband who handles all her office operations and she rarely visits the Panchayat Raj Office. The political parties that contest for elections in the region majorly are Telugu *Desam* Party and YSR Congress Party. The village falls in the assembly constituency of Achanta and was won in 2014 by Telugu *Desam* Party

leader Peethani Satyanarayana. In terms of parliamentary constituencies, the village comes under Narsapuram. The Narsapuram Lok Sabha constituency was won by Goka Raju Ganga Raju of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Family and Kinship:

Marteru, including the other villages follow patriarchal system. Both nuclear and joint family structures are observed in these villages. It is clearly visible that joint families are observed mostly among Vyshya caste people and the remaining castes observe nuclear family structures. It is observed that almost all families have at least two children. The common ideology of all the families is that having offspring is important, but having less number of offspring is better as it increases the quality of life of their offspring as what all they have in terms of economic resources or otherwise could be utilized for their well being in a sufficient way instead of further sharing the resources with the incidence of more number of offspring. Kinship bonds are given importance among the people in the village. The role of maternal uncle is prominent among many families in relation to different rituals. Family bondings and kinship meetings happen during almost every festival. Sankranti is the festival of new son-in-laws (*kotha alludu*) and so the parents of the girl's families invite the newly wedded son-in-laws every year to celebrate the bonding among the newly weds. Such bondings are always observed among the families of these villages. Kin members always help the younger generations to learn new things especially in teaching games and making toys.

Types of families (joint and nuclear) in relation to caste among the sample households
(in percentages) (Table No.2)

Caste	Percentile of Joint Families in Caste (More than 4 members)	Percentile of Nuclear Families in caste (Less than 4 members)
Brahmin	64.9	35.1
Dudekulu	26.4	73.6
Kamma	24.7	75.3
Kamsali	11.2	88.8
Kapu	15.7	84.3
Maala	11	89
Nayi Brahmins	4	96
Padmasaleelu	10	90
Reddy	57	43
Relly	2	98
Settibalija	13	87
Vysya	91.1	8.9
Yerukula	0	100

Marriage:

Marriages are endogamous arranged marriages and out side *gotras*. The marital age of the people in the village is twenty to twenty five years in case of both male and female. But, among certain economically backward communities, young girls are married at an early age. This situation is observed among both high and lower castes who are financially deprived in condition. Dowry in high amounts and as status symbols is very commonly observed among all the families irrespective of caste. Marriage preferences are given to NRIs and sending their daughters to abroad countries is seen as a status symbol. Marriage preferences to cross cousin marriages is prominent among the village people. Love marriages also prevail in the villages but in most of the cases, the people in love marriages are inter caste marriages. Divorce is less observed among the people in these villages.

Economy of the Village

The economy of the village is mostly dependent on agricultural activities. Paddy is the crop grown by majority of the people in the region. In the recent past, a few people have started cultivating the land for organic farming as there are new found possibilities of increased income in organic farming of paddy. Almost all the fields have either coconut or palm trees along the perimeter of the fields. This makes the coconuts and all the produces related to coconuts another major source of revenue to the region. Coirs, Kernels etc are also traded from this region. All the Reddy community people are land lords who are into agriculture or gain income by leasing out their land to any interested parties who cultivate the land and share a part of the produce. Reddy community people are also into other businesses like petrol bunks, export of produces, motor cycle dealerships, proclainers and construction material vendors etc. The Vysya community people are majorly store keepers on the main roads. We could find store keepers dealing with all types of material ranging from general groceries to hardware material, cell phone accessories etc. Both Settibaliya and Maala are found mostly working as agricultural labour or take up various skilled and unskilled works in the village related to electricity, plumbing, construction labour, technicians etc. The people belonging to Relly caste are into sanitary works and work as scavengers and look after the drainage systems. The people of Madiga are mostly into all forms of agricultural labour or Unskilled labour in the village. The Rajaka caste people perform their traditional occupation of laundry. Some of the Rajaka Caste woman also work as maids in various houses in the village. Migration to various middle east countries, especially labour to join in skilled and unskilled positions has become a source of income to the villagers. There are several people belonging to the lower caste groups especially who have even women sent to to her countries for the purpose of financial stability. It is clearly visible from the below table based on sample households that Reddys possess highest percentage of land and the Kammass and Vysyas follows next in possessing land ownership. Minor amounts of lands are vested in the hands of the lower caste communities.

Land ownership among different castes from the sample households (in percentages). (Table No.3)

Caste	Percentile of households (from sample) owning land
Brahmin	42.3
Dudekulu	6.3
Kamma	67
Kamsali	14.8
Kapu	34.5
Maala	6.1
Madiga	4.6
Nayi Brahmins	9.1
Padmasaleelu	11.5
Reddy	83
Relly	2
Settibalija	43
Vysya	65
Yerukula	0

Rituals and Festivals:

The main festivals that are celebrated by the people of Marteru are *Dushera*, *Deepavali*, *Sankranthi*, *Ugadhi*, *Atla taddi*, *Vinayaka Chavithi*, *Rama Navami*, etc are some of the main festivals that the villagers celebrate. Eid, Ramadan, Good Friday, Christmas, New Year are some of the events and festivals that these people observe along with Hindu festivals. A festival called '*Gonthenamma Panduga*' was prominent among Maala caste people which is celebrated during the festival Atla Taddi. But because of the rapid conversions and the subsequent spread of Christianity, the gradual disappearance of the festival is observed. Celebrating different festivals irrespective of religion is also observed among the people. For every three years, *Poleramma Jatara* is celebrated by the people of Marteru and every year on the eight day after Ugadi, that is, on Sri Rama Navami, Sri Venkateswara Swamy *Teertham* is celebrated in a glorious way which attracts people from near by villages. Rituals like birth ritual, puberty ritual, pregnancy ritual (*Seemantham*), death ritual are all well observed

among the people. But most of the rituals are observed among the people according to their financial capacities.

Communication:

Marteru village is well equipped in terms of communication networks and facilities. The village is covered by both wired and wireless networks. Various networks like BSNL, Vodafone, Airtel, Idea, Telenor, Reliance Mobile operate mobile phone services offering full range of data and voice services. Wired Landline and broadband services are available through Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited. There are cyber cafes in the village to deliver internet services on demand. These cyber cafes also facilitate online ticket reservations for Bus, Train and Air transport. Telegram and Postal services are offered by Indian Postal Service and there is a post office located on the main road of the village that caters to all the villagers' postal needs. Courier services as DTDC are available to make any documents reach farther destinations as quickly as possible. The village has not witnessed major network breakdowns or down times in the recent past and has been always actively connected in terms of communication. Village has cable operators to deliver television content and there are various vendors who sell Direct-to- Home dishes belonging to various private companies for the sake Television connectivity. BSNL has been running many attractive broad band plans to efficiently spread the use of internet and there are many houses in the village with internet connectivity.

Transportation & Conveyance:

Marteru village is well connected to various towns and cities through road and railways. Though Marteru does not have a railway station with-in the village, the village has near by towns of Palakollu and Narsapur which have fully operating railways stations. Palakollu and Narsapur are at 14km and 22.7 km from Marteru respectively via road. The village has a bus stop called "Marteru Center Bus Stop" where all the buses stop for arrivals and departures. For the purpose of transportation there are professional services like Navata Transport and SRMT Road Transport company to send or receive any material. Via Rail road Narsapur and Palakollu stations have several trains that operate in the routes connecting to the major cities of Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Rajamundry and Tirupati in the state of Andhra Pradesh. These cities have Airports majorly operating domestic carriers. For International

travel, Hyderabad and Chennai are the ideal destinations. Both, Narsapur and Palakollu are connected via rail route to the cities of Hyderabad and Chennai. In terms of road route, the village is connected via state high way and from Tanuku the state highway connects to the national highway 16 which was previously known as NH5. Near the center of the village which is colloquially called 'center' by the villagers, several autos and cabs are available for transport to any destination. Villagers commute to near by villages and to the towns of Palakollu or Narsapur by autos. People who can afford can also opt to travel by cabs who charge on a per day basis in general. There are local operators who own these cabs and engage drivers on salary basis. These cab operators who have good connections with the villagers and in the event of any emergency, they directly send the cabs to homes of the patrons for pickup and drop at the respective destinations. The village has both kutcha and pucca roads. The main streets have newly laid cement roads while the ones that are near the fields or towards the end of the village have mud roads that get really wet and sticky during rainy season. For the purpose of the repair of the vehicles, there is a workshop where smaller repairs could be done. For two wheelers too there are provisions for repair and regular service In the village. For any major repairs, people opt to goto Palakollu or Bheemavaram.

Sanitation:

The village has one community toilet which could be used by anyone having to use. All the houses of the higher classes have toilets built and used at homes. People of the lower classes who live near the outskirts, defecate in the fields early morning. While, the lack of toilets at homes is the reason with respect to only a few families which fall below the poverty line, the ones who defecate outside do it as it has become a habit to them over time. In schools, especially, Government schools, either toilets are not present or are not maintained with water in hygienic conditions. Girl children are the ones who suffer a lot in such situations. Though the local authorities are aware of these conditions, there are no serious attempts to correct this situation. There is a Garbage collection facility run by the panchayat. A garbage collector visits the streets by a tricycle everyday to collect the garbage bags from the houses. Though not in mint conditions, the roads and their cleanliness is all taken care by the people employed under panchayat. There are days especially during rainy season when streets are piled up with more garbage and moist soil by the sides of the roads.

When it comes to personal hygiene, they take bath everyday in the morning and consider taking bath before going to bed. The atmosphere is very humid almost all through the year and the summers are extremely sweaty. This compels the condition of having to take bath two to three times a day for release of fatigue due to temperatures especially during summers. Woman, most of them use cloth instead of sanitary pads in the village. They claim the presence of toxic chemicals and the high cost of sanitary pads as the reasons for not using sanitary pads. This condition is observed more among the families of the lower classes. Families with some sort of urban connections are the ones in which the woman opt for using sanitary pads. Even among the families that could afford sanitary pads, we witness only the sanitary pad packs that are in the range of Rs 30- Rs 40 mostly used. In many families, such a cost is treated as a waste of money and hence the use of cloth for menstruation purpose still exists.

The village has many streets connected through under ground drainage system. There are a few streets which are yet to be converted to the under ground drainage system. Some streets have drainage channels built by the side of the roads which are left unclosed. Occasionally pigs are seen in the streets which contribute to more unhygienic conditions. The cattle are taken for grazing via the village main roads and hence dung is witnessed on many roads of the village.

Health Care:

The village has all the basic health care facilities available. For any severe health issue, the villagers opt to go to Palakollu firstly. If the health issue is much severe, Rajamundry is the near by town to which the villagers generally go. Rajamundry is only 41kms away from Marteru village. There is one primary health sub centre, one veterinary hospital, one mobile health clinic within the village. A primary health centre is located 8 kms away from the village. Maternity and Child Care Centre, Tuberculosis clinic, Allopathic Hospital, Hospital- Alternative medicine, Dispensary, Family Welfare Centre are all available at more than 10 kms away from the village. There are three private clinics within the village run by doctors with MBBS qualification. Villagers often visit these private clinics as well for first aids, issues that are to be immediately attended and other general sicknesses. To a few higher class people in the village, especially in the case of elders, some of these doctors make visits to their residences on call in case of any emergency. There are 5 medical shops privately run by the villagers which stock all the commonly utilized drugs. There is a

privately run homeopathy clinic in the village with homeopathic dispensary as well. For issues like heart attack which require immediate critical care, the immediate destination to the villagers is the town of Rajamundry.

Water Facilities:

Marteru village has good under ground water resources and several households have hand -bore pumps. At a very shallow depth itself the under ground water resources are accessible. There are both tube wells and bore wells in the village. For irrigation purposes tube-wells are arranged near the fields. Water is pulled by electric motors attached to these underground water sources with pipes and all the necessary paraphernalia. Some of the fields are equipped with sprinkler systems. The installation of sprinkler systems is offered in a subsidy scheme by companies that have Government tie ups. Tanks and Ponds are available near by for water preservation. Two canals which are called *pedda kaluva* and *chinna kaluva* which flow from river Godavari source are the major sources of water for irrigation in the village. Drinking water supply is available to all the households. Some of the households, in recent have been sourcing drinking water from a private mineral water purification establishment in the village. With the growth of the culture of mineral water cans in the cities, the business of mineral water has started in the village of Marteru as well.

Educational Institutions:

The village of Marteru has three schools mainly. Sri Venu Gopal Swamy School (SVGS School), which later changed to SVGS Zilla Parishad School in the year 2012 and is being run as a Government entity is famous for its influence in sports like basket ball in the region. SVGS Zilla Parishad school is a Telugu medium school. Basanti Devi Girls High School is another school with English as medium, was established as a girls school but is now converted into co-education system. Both the schools provide secondary education from sixth standard to tenth standard. There are more than ten private schools with in the village Marteru which focuses on primary and secondary education. All the private schools are English medium schools. The village Marteru has one polytechnic college which is opted by many young students who are interested in technical education. There are two private colleges in the village which provide intermediate and degree studies.

For the study, I chose two Government schools (one Telugu medium and one English medium school) and one private English medium school in the village. The private school is run by a Reddy community person. For the purpose of research I considered a sample of size 580 students from both Private and Government schools. The gender distribution of the sample considered is as here under.

(Table No.4)

Gender Distribution of Students across schools (Percentile)		
Government School	Males	46.26
	Females	53.74
Private School	Males	55.43
	Females	44.57

It is visible from the above table that the percentage of females in Government schools are more than the males and the males are more in number in Private schools. In order to have a brief understanding about the selection of schools among the people, it is important to focus on the selection of schools on caste basis. This tells what caste people prefer to send their children to Private and Government schools and also their financial capacities in spending for education as Government schools provide no fee education. The social stigma that is attached with Government schools and the medium of education is also important to observe.

Caste based distribution of school strength in Government and Private schools.

(Table No.5)

Caste based distribution of school strength (Government School)	Percentage		Caste based distribution of school strength (Private School)	Percentage
Brahmin	0.00		Brahmin	2.72
Vysya	1.11		Vysya	4.35
Reddy	17.73		Reddy	30.98
Kapu	9.70		Kapu	4.89
Relly	0.28		Relly	0.00
SettiBalija	25.21		Settibalija	15.76
Nayi Brahmin	2.22		Nayi Brahmin	0.54
Maala	18.28		Maala	4.35
Madiga	6.93		Madiga	0.54
Others	18.56		Others	35.87

The above table explains the social stigma among the higher caste communities like Brahmins and Vysyas, whose number is very less in comparison with other students from different castes. The higher castes and class communities prefer to send their children to Private English medium schools in the towns like Palakollu and Penugonda rather than to the schools in their own villages. There is a significant difference in the schools preferred by the deprived communities like Maala and Maadiga whose percentage is very less in Private schools. This explains their economic capacities for opting a Government school.

Conclusion:

This chapter focuses on the study of the field village in terms of physical, social, cultural, economic and political setups. The understanding of the village and the surrounding villages in relation with their districts helps in getting more clear understanding about the study area and the boundaries and limitations which are attached to the villages and its people. The family setups, kinship ties and bondages

helps in having an overview about the family relationships that are prevailing in the villages. The caste distributions, occupations attached with them and gender based analysis explains the social setups of the people in the village. These understandings further lay the foundation to the conclusions of various open ended discussions. The multiplicity of influences paves way for an unclear structure in terms of what could be concluded with respect to the prevailing conditions. But, when it is analyzed to an indepth extent, whether a straight forward relationship in between various factors and the resultant lifestyle patterns and the social structures could be established or not, the multiplicity itself could be more vividly magnified and reckoned with for a thorough analysis of various traits which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Ethnographic Profile of Traditional Games.

Introduction:

It is obvious that different cultures observe games and play differently and have different perceptions regarding them which are bound to their own cultural understandings. But among all, the Western perspective of understanding play is more influential and dominating. This is because of the lack of tremendous research on play and games among the non Western societies. Play and games have always been related with leisure and pastime activities in the West. Many scholars have related games as a biological instinct which is inherent among Humans and animals. Play is always described as antithesis of work, reality, productivity and seriousness by many western scholars which is also a characteristic of industrial societies. Rather than describing what play is, they ended with describing what play is not. The meaning of work, among the Western societies is reflected from the views of Hebrew and Protestant where work is service to God. This was explained by Haworth and Smith, (1975) that work is used to earn a living which need not be a meaningful experience. The understanding of work as labour with or without payment has reduced the scope of understanding the seriousness in play and games and that the players can create a more real, and productive world in life Schwartzman, (1982). Many anthropologists and social scientists believed that the definition of play as 'not work' is not valid among the simple societies. It is that the contrast between work and leisure is not observed among the non industrial societies. Among the simple or non industrial societies, the distinction is observed between sacred and profane by Turner, (1974) and between ritual and play by Handyman, (1977). In spite of the distinction, the anthropologists neglected to give importance to the study of play and games and also on leisure time activities. It is only that since late ninetieth century scholars of different disciplines like folklore, archaeology, anthropology has started giving importance to the study of play and games. In the initial discussions about games, many scholars tried to describe games by explaining how different games are played and put more effort in categorizing and classifying games in relation to different aspects. This effort helps in understanding the origin and relation between games across different cultures. This practice of describing and classifying games has become the primary step in understanding and analyzing different games across various cultures. During the field work, in order to understand more about the games played in the field among the

people of different age groups and gender, in depth ethnographic description of the games is required. Though many games faded with time, there are still some games being played by the people since many years. The ethnographic description of the games is as follows.

Description of the Games:

Achanagandlu:

This game is also called as *Achanagandulu*, *Achanagundlu*, *Achanagaayalu*, *Gachangayalu*, *Gachakaaya* or *Achanalu* in different dialects. This game is played by women of all ages from young to old and are fond of this game. This game is both single player game and also multiple player game. This is played by women and young girls of both the Telugu states among all caste groups. Sometimes, this game is also played by men. This is considered as an indoor game where people play at veranda of the houses. After completing their work, women form in groups during their leisure time and get engrossed while playing this game. This game is considered as an ancient game and is similar to knucklebones game played in different parts of the world. Vadla Subrahmanyam, (1982) explained that according to Kodanda Raamayyagaru (1956), Achanagandlu game is a gamblers game played in the olden days.

How it is played:

This game is played with pebbles or soap nut seeds or tamarind seeds or *Gacha Kayalu* (nicker nuts) or small stones which are smooth and small in shape to handle are used to play this game. This game is played by tossing the pebbles or seeds up in the air and catching them on the back of the hand. This game is mostly played with nicker nuts or pebbles which ever is available. This game is named *Achanagaayalu* as the seeds which are used for the game are called *Kaayalu* which means seeds in colloquial language. This game is played with five *Kaayalu* (stones). To play this game, girls sit at one place on the ground in a round and among them one girl starts to play the game. The player starts the game by throwing all the five stones into the air with one hand and catches them on the dorsal side of the same hand. If the player did not catch all the five stones, the player loses her turn and the next player gets her turn to play. The five stones that are caught on the dorsal side of the hand are dropped on

the ground. The player selects a stone from the five stones on the ground, throws up the stone into the air and catches the stone by picking up one stone on the ground without touching the other stones. In this way, the player picks up all the four stones from the ground by holding the stones picked up in the hand. If the player touches other stones while picking up one stone on the ground then the player loses her chance and it is called *Kangatam*. If the player misses to catch the stone thrown in air, the player loses her chance and the game goes to the next player. This process is then repeated for two stones, three stones, four stones and all five stones followed by one stone. The player places her left hand on the ground by spreading the fingers and palm not touching the ground. The player drops the stones on the ground with her right hand. One stone among all the stones on the ground is selected by the next player. The player selects a stone other than the one selected by the other player. While the stone is thrown into the air, the player pushes each stone into the left hand placed on the ground without missing the catch. The player has to push the stones on the ground each with three attempts into the left hand by throwing the stone into the air each time and catching it. The player pushes all the stones one by one and finally pushes the selected stone into the hand without touching the other stones while pushing. If the player misses the catch or did not push the stone in three attempts then the player loses her chance. When all the four stones are pushed into the left hand, the player removes the left hand and catches all the four stones on the ground at a time by throwing one stone into the air and catching it along with the other four stones. Next, the player throws all the five stones into the air, catches them on the dorsal side of the hand and catches them into the palm by throwing them into the air again. Next, the player throws all the five stones into the air and catches them on the dorsal side of the hand, holds one stone with the fingers on the dorsal side, drops the other stones on the ground, throws the stone holding in the fingers into the air and catches the stone by picking up all the four stones on the ground.

If a player takes three stones at a time from the ground, the game is called *Muvveelu* and if the player takes four stones from the ground, then the game is called *Guppeelu*. These names change with respect to local dialect like *Muvveelu* as *Puvveelu* or *Buvveelu* and *Guppeelu* as *Kuppeelu*. The players opt and agree which game has to be played before the start of the game and play accordingly. Generally, ten *Guppeelu* and ten *Muvveelu* are played by the players to prove their skill. The player who finishes the game first is the winner and the other players continue the game. In a more

advanced version of the game, the players play sixteen *Guppeelu* and sixteen *Muvveelu* and also sometimes twenty *Guppeelu* and twenty *Muvveelu* which is generally played by extreme players. In the olden days, *Achangandlu* game was played while singing a song which contains numbers and thus helps the players to practice number counting and calculations like additions. Though there were different dialects at different locations, the main theme and purpose of the song remained same. Each player sings the song while playing.

Okka O' Cheliya- Rendu Rokallu

Moodu Muchilaka- Naalugu Nandanna

Ayidum Chitti golusu- Aarum Javvaji

Ehdum Beydeelu- Eynamala Manamanda

Thommidi Tho Kuchu- Padhi ki Pattedaa - Vadla Subrahmanyam, (1982)

The words used in the song are numbers and rhyming words of Telugu language. The song contains one to ten numbers which extend to twenty numbers along with the game. The player has to sing the song while playing the game. This shows that the purpose of the game is to increase multi-tasking capacity and concentration among the players. The player with more concentration and vigilance wins the game. When the player wins the game by completing the game first teases the other players by throwing the stones into the air in such a way that the stones fall in the pouch of the other players. Thus, the game is played by the people during their leisure time.

Significance:

This game helps the player to develop concentration, hand eye coordination, quick focus, timing and multi tasking. This game is played by both men and women in the villages. But in general it is observed that the game is mostly played by women than men. This pastime activity helps the women learn quick focus and multi tasking which increases their efficiency in handling various domestic affairs and household chores. This game focuses more on acquiring skill rather than chance and physical strength. The moderate competitive feeling among the players, when compared to highly competitive games, concentrate on increasing the skill and individual capacity. The players experience a competition that is characterized by fun and entertainment rather than winning and rivalry. It is believed among the rural people that tamarind seeds have medical values and help in treating minor skin problems, smoothens the skin and provides elasticity to the skin. Not only tamarind seeds, but also *Gacha*

Kayalu (nicker nuts) and soap nuts have Ayurvedic benefits and medicinal properties. Nicker nuts help in treating phlegm, rheumatic diseases and also helps in increasing temperature in the body. It is through playing this game, the player exposes to continuous usage of these seeds by holding in hand which in turn help the player in various ways. Thus, this game helps its players with various health benefits.

Okkasi Khokka or KhoKho

Okkasi kokka or *Kokkaata* were the names by which the present day famous game of *KhoKho* was called in the olden days. *KhoKho* is today one of the most important tag games played in Asia. It is also played in South Africa. The word *KhoKho* may have its origins in Sanskrit language which means get up and go. Out of the 12 players that are selected per team, 9 players generally play in the field, while three should be considered as extra. The game, though is in its formal format now with all the rules thoroughly stipulated, it was once a game that was frequently played in the neighborhoods and particularly in schools. Now many schools and colleges have *KhoKho* as part of their annual competitions. Though in the current formal setup in schools and in the tournaments, the game has two referees and the decision given by them on their respective sides stands as final, during the olden days and even today in the villages, this game is played in a much colloquial setup where such stringent rules on the number of players or the distance between the sitting players isn't considered as a precision to comply. Even in the formal setup the game doesn't need much of paraphernalia other than two smooth wooden posts on each of the ends of the sitting line of length 4 feet, lime powder to make markings, stop watches and whistles to the referees to signal when its timed out. It is a game for developing many important traits for sportsmanship such as teamwork, quick thinking, speed, strategy and extreme competitiveness.

How it is played:

At the beginning of the game, the teams toss a coin to decide on who chases. Generally 9 members from the team that has been decided by the toss winner team to chase enter the playground and sit in the middle of the court in a straight row alternatively sitting in opposite directions. In an informal play equal number of players exist in each of the teams and the rest of the format remains the same though the stipulated duration rules are not strictly followed and the referees generally don't exist.

Up to three members can enter from the opponent's team as runners and they are eligible by the rules of the game to pass from in-between the sitting players and run in any direction to safeguard themselves from being touched. The players of the sitting team can only run in the direction in which they are sitting and they are not allowed to pass from in between the sitting players. If they are to change direction, the only way that they could do it is by reaching the end pole running along the whole of the court and taking a U turn from there towards the opposite direction. A player gets to chase the opponent players team when he/she is touched from behind by another player saying "*Kho*".

The players of the sitting team sometimes pass on the "*Kho*" touch along the sitting line like a chain in a series sometimes to quickly ferret after the opponents and touch them despite their attempts to continuously pass through the sitting row in the direction opposite to the direction of the one who received the *Kho* in the chaser's team. A less spoken but skillfully implemented coordination should exist among the team members to chase down the opponents.

The game is played in two innings and each innings comes to an end when it is timed out. Each innings is given 9 minutes and the referees whistle when it is timed out. The number of runners that were touched by the chasers and are declared as out is the number of points gained by the chasers. If the chasers gain 9 points or more the captain of the team can raise his hand to signal to the referee that he wants to call off the play for the next innings.

Otthothi Vaarothi/ Maa Thaatha Uttaram / Chaakali Baana

This game is played across many regions in the Telugu states and is called by one of the above mentioned names depending on the region. The game consists of a song that the players sing as they play the game. Here, the significance of the song reflects on the title of the game. In regions where the game is called *Maa Thaatha Uttaram*, the players sing *Maa thaatha Uttaram Etlo Poyindi* (meaning: my grandpa's letter was lost in the canal) or *Maa thaatha Uttaram yekkadiko vellindhi* (meaning: my grandpa's letter has gone somewhere). "*Otthothi Vaarothi choosinolla kallalo surothi*" is the song sung in regions where it is called *Otthothi Vaarothi*. The name *Chaakali Baana* (*Chaakali* means washerman and *Baana* means rock) reflects the act of a laundryman who washes the clothes by beating against rocks or concrete slabs. Just as how the washerman washes the clothes by beating the clothes against rock, the

players in the game also beat the other players with the handkerchief if the player fails to recognise his turn. This game not only reflect the activity of beating which is juxtaposed with the element of fun but also the traditional occupation of washermen in the villages as they roam all the houses in the village, collect clothes, wash and give them back to the villagers.

How it is played:

Children, though not in a stipulated number, ten to twelve of them sit on the ground in the form of a circle with all of them facing the centre. A towel or hanky is carried by one player who goes around the circle with the cloth hidden under his/her shirt. The player running around the circle of the sitting players sings the song "*Maa Thaatha Uttaram Etlo Poyindi*" and stealthily places the towel behind one of the players sitting in the circle and quickly runs to take a round around the circle till he reaches back to the place where he left the towel. The sitting players should be vigilant if the towel is being left behind any of them and should quickly get up, pick up the towel thus left and run after the player who left the towel to beat him with it before he takes a round and sits in the position from which the player ferreting after got up. If the player who picked the towel runs after the player who left the towel and is able to touch him with the towel, the one touched is declared as out. The player who is out sits aside moving out of the game, while the sitting circle of players move to make a tighter circle filling the gap of the player who is out. The one who picked the towel runs around the circle again singing the song and stealthily leaves the towel behind another player and the game continues in the similar way. If a player failed to recognize that the towel was left behind him and the one who left the towel gets to complete the round and reach where he left the towel, he could playfully beat the player on his back till he gets up. The game is played in an informal context and is played both by boys and girls. It is generally played after the school hours at schools, in the neighborhoods, near the houses during the evening times. The game continues for an indefinite time till the last player is singled out by being touched with the twisted towel.

Oppulakuppa

Though not very prolific in the literary works of Telugu language, the game is undeniably the favorite across the villages and is an important ingredient of the folklore of the Telugu countryside. It is a kind of vertigo game played especially by girls. Young Girls from five years fifteen years of age play this game in common in villages. Along with the cultural significance, this game also had a traditional knowledge on menstrual periods in the form of a song of this game. This game is so much significant that every girl in the village must have played this game at least once in their life time. This explains the passing down of the knowledge on menstrual periods which is quite common among the ladies and helps in keeping their health and regularizing their menstrual periods. The ingredients which are common and easily available at every house are noted in the form of song and play so that it is easy for every girl to remember.

How it is played:

The game involves two or three players. The players hold their hands in such a way that the right hand of one player is in the right hand of the other and so it is with the left hand as well (in the case of two players). The players stand opposite to each other and firmly hold the hands as they begin to play. By moving their legs in a single direction such that all the players holding their hands rotate either clockwise or anti clockwise, they begin to play the game. The movement of the legs will be like one leg being used as the axis and the other leg continuously being pushed to facilitate a rotatory motion. As the speed picks up, the ankle becomes the axis on which the entire rotation takes place. The players bend towards their backs and slightly look up to make a semi circle like curve with their bodies. The rotation gives immense excitement to the players and is like a merry-go-round effect created in such rotatory motion just by holding hands and initiating a coordinated movement. The players laugh in all excitement and enjoy the rotation as they look up into the sky and experience the whole world rotating in front of them. The players play till they feel nauseated with the continuous rotation or when they are exhausted. They take a small pause and again continue to play. There is no winner or looser in this game. The game is seen being played by the girls in the villages. Boys are not seen playing this game in general. At homes, schools, during events and at all times where all the girls get

together “*Oppulakappa*” is definitely a game of excitement which the telugu girls never miss to play.

Significance:

As they go round, they sing a song which is now an integral part of telugu culture and folklore.

Song:

Oppulakuppa Vayyaribhama Sanna biyyam Chaayapappu

Chinna muvva Sanna Gaaju Kobbari Koru Bellapu Acchu

Gotlo Rupai.. Nee Mogudu Sipaayi... Rotlo Thavudu.. Nee Mogudevadu?

The above song includes the knowledge on curing menstrual problems with ingredients of food that are used at everyones house and are commonly available. The words “*Vayyaribhama*” (A plant of medicinal value), “*Sanna Biyyam*” (Rice), “*Chaaya Pappu* (A Pulse), *Chinna muvva* (a small bell, on an anklet), *Sanna Gaaju* (thin bangle), *Kobbari Koru* (Powdered Coconut), *Bellapu Acchu* (Jaggery) have an indication of medicinal value that is important to the girls reaching the age of puberty. The girls reaching the age of puberty also indicate their approach to marriage life. This indication is reflected in the song, as in the end there is a line that gives a mention of husband (*Nee Mogudu Sipayi, Nee Mogudevadu*) (*Mogudu* Meaning: Husband and *Sipayi* means soldier). It is understood that the song reflects the intention of the women that by keeping their menstrual cycles regular and there by their health fit, they could get a heathy and strong husband like a soldier who is generally viewed to be fit and strong.

Kanumusigantha/ Kallaganthalu Kanumoothalu/ Kannukattu/ Kannulakacchi

This game looks similar to the game ‘blind fold’. Commonly, it is girl children who are seen playing this game. The girl children of ages 10 and above are the ones who play this game at home, in the neighborhoods and during get togethers and festivals. In this game, one girl is singled out from all of the girls by a callout game and she is called “*Donga*”. The one singled out is blindfolded with a hanky or a towel and the rest of the players make her take a round around herself by holding her by her shoulders. This is done so that she looses track of where the other players are standing with reference to their positions seen just before she was blindfolded. As the game

begins, the blindfolded spreads her hands and moves forward and backward responding to the sounds and calling done by the other players. The players clap, call out the name of the player who is playing donga, say here here and suddenly move or dunk and sit below the generally reaching height of her hands and tease the player to touch them. If the blindfolded manages to touch any of the players despite all the attempts of the players to escape her touch, the one thus touched will become the new donga and the game continues.

The game is a happy time pass activity and doesn't need any paraphernalia other than a simple hanky or towel to blindfold. It enhances the ability to concentrate and perceive the surroundings by sound, smell and touch. The game may also increase one's ability to maneuver in darkness.

qKaalla Gajje

It is a song game. This game is played by girls and boys of ages 10 and below. Among the girls, if there is one who can sing the song of *Kaalla Gajje Kankaalamma*, it will be possible to play the game. An elder girl in the group generally initiates the game singing the song and makes the children play the game. The elder girl among the group is called "*Thalli baalika*" in the regional language (Meaning: Mother girl or Elder girl). The game has a special significance as a game played by mothers with their children, especially mothers who have more than 2 children. Children are seated in the form of a circle on the ground with their legs stretched. "*Thalli Baalika*" who is the elder of the game then sings a song.

Kaalla Gajje Kankaalamma

Vegulachukka Velagamogga

Mogga kaadu Vaavintikura

kura kaadu gummadi pandu

pandu kaadu paapidi meesam

lingoolitukoo... pandimaalnipatuku

Rajugari thotalo emundante.. Puvvo Moggo.. Pucchukuntebba... Kaaldeesi...

Kadagaapettu..

For every word in the song, "*Thalli Baalika*" who is singing the song touches one leg of all the stretched legs of the children sitting and the leg touched saying the

last word of the song is counted out of the game. The leg that is counted out is now taken in by bending at the knees such that only the rest of the legs are stretched and kept aligned for the game to continue. The counting out song is again continued and the legs are counted out as mentioned above. The leg that remains as the last one in the counting out process decides the person who will play the game as "*Donga*" (Thief). The girl or boy whose leg remains as the last one in the counting-out process is called "*Thotthu*" or "*Donga*" or "*Maila*" in local language. Then *Thalli baalika* asks the "*Donga*",

Kurchunte Muttukuntaava?, Nilchunte Muttukuntava?

(Meaning: Will you touch when we sit or when we stand?)

If the "*Donga*" answers (*kurchunte*) when you sit, then all the rest of the players stand. The rule then is, *Donga* should touch any of the other players only when they sit. The players tease *Donga* by sitting at a distance or by coming near and jumping away before *Donga* reaches them or by sitting as a bait behind the player and standing even before she/he recognizes it etc. When the players are not focusing on the game or when they could be reached as per the rule of the game, *Donga* manages to touch one of the players and the one thus touched becomes the new *Donga* and the game continues.

This game is played during the summers especially as the mothers at home don't want their children to go and play outside in the hot sun during the noons and they engage the kids at home with this game. Though girls are seen playing this game, there is no gender exception and children below 10 years of age are generally seen playing this game at homes.

Kuntaata

The literal meaning of the game is lame leg game where *Kunte* means lame or one leg and *Aata* means game. There are several variations of this game and is popular not only in telugu states but also in various regions across the country. In whatever variations, the central theme always remains the same, it is hopping with one leg. As the player hops with one leg, the second leg is lifted up and bent at the knee. In one variation it is played as a race where all the players hop on a single leg to reach one destination point. The one who reached the pre-decided destination point first is the one who wins. In another variation it is played as a tag game with the player singled out by a counting-out game (*Pantalu Vesukovadam*) trying to touch the other players

hoping on a single leg, while the other players try to tease the hoping player by staying with-in the reach but escaping his touch. In another variation the right leg of one player and the left leg of another player are tied up with a towel and the players hold each other with their hands. The untied legs are lifted up and are bent at the knees. The two players hop on the tied up legs and play the tag game. This format is also seen with three players sometimes. The essence of the game is to develop balancing skills and learn to render a coordinated effort. Here, if one player loses the balance, the other has to support or sometimes the other may fail to support because one of the players lost the balance. There is an element of shouldering the responsibility of balancing as they play the game. More than girls, it is boys who are seen playing this game. This game develops better friendly relations in between the players as well as the act of balancing itself is about sharing a common responsibility. Though there is no stringent age limit, it is generally played by boys under 12 years of age.

Isuka Kuppaa Aata

This game is commonly seen being played by girls. This game is generally played in the backyards of the houses or in the neighborhoods where there is availability of sand or where a small heap of sand is dumped for the sake of construction or in a beach etc. One player is singled out by a counting-out process (*Pantalu Vesukovadam*) and the singled out person is called "*Donga*". A piece of paper or a small twig is hidden a couple of layers inside the heap of sand and the sand is covered on it. A reference circle is drawn around this heap and it is the boundary in which the singled out player runs around and plays the game. *Donga* should touch the players who attempt to enter the circle and kick away the heap of sand to reveal the hidden paper. If "*Donga*" manages to touch any of the players when they are inside the circle, the one who is touched becomes the new "*Donga*" and the game continues. If the players manage to kick away the heap of sand and the hidden paper gets revealed escaping the touch of "*Donga*", then *Donga* inside the circle should run to touch a pre-decided destination (like a tree, a person or a fixed point at a distance) and return. As *Donga* runs to reach the pre-decided point, the rest of the players ferret after her to beat her till she reaches the destination point. Once the destination point is touched, the players stop ferreting after "*Donga*". The game however continues till "*Donga*" touches another player as she runs back. Quickness, skill of protecting something, running are all the elements that are the key components of the game.

Kuppiganthulu

The literary meaning of the game is jumping (*Kuppiganthu* means Small Jump). It is a game in which jumping is the central concept. It is a version of tag games. Among the players who grouped to play the game, a player is singled out by a counting out game (*Pantalu veskovadam*) and he is called "*Donga*". *Donga* is then asked by the rest of the players group,

Kurchunte Muttukuntaava?, Nilchunte Muttukuntava?

(Meaning: Will you touch when we sit or when we stand?)

When the "*Donga*" player replies that he wants to touch when they stand, the players sit in a squatted position like a frog and jump to tease *Donga* who attempts to touch the players when they stand. *Donga* continuously moves in between the hopping players and attempt to touch any of them when they are in the standing position. If he manages to touch any of them when they are standing, the one who is touched becomes the player who will be playing the next round as "*Donga*" and the game continues. The players hop in a small way continuously to tease *Donga* and the hopping thus done by the players are called "*Kuppi Ganthulu*". Quickness, Skill of jumping in all directions are the elements of importance in this game. The game helps in building strength in the lower parts of the body. The game doesn't require any paraphernalia to play the game.

Kappa Genthulu

The word *Kappa* means Frog, *Genthulu* Meaning Jumping. Though the title of the game is similar to the one described above, it is different from *Kuppi Genthulu*. Here, the players sit in a squatting position, touch the floor with their hands and jump to move forward by dragging themselves forward with their hands like a frog. This is a racing game and all the children attempt to reach a fixed destination point starting from one fixed starting point. The one who reaches the destination point jumping all the way like a frog is the one who wins the game.

This game is played in schools as well in the villages. The game doesn't require any additional paraphernalia and it is fun to play amidst of competition from other players. The game builds strength not only in the legs but also in the hands and gives way to the players to learn balancing in the squat position as they continuously jump in speed by dragging the ground with their hands and landing back on their feet.

Resisting to the pain of squatting for a longer time and jumping as long as they could and as fast as they could are the required elements to win the game. The game is played by boys of ages six to ten years.

Kodi Pandemulu/ Kodi Pandalu:

This is a betting game. This is the most important animal based fight sport of Telugu people with its cultural connections reflected profoundly in several literary works. Roosters are brought to fight with each other in a prefixed arena and the audience bet on the roosters as they are set to fight. The arena in which the roosters are left to fight is called '*bari*'. Roosters are fed and bred for this purpose. It is a sport with an image of royalty, status and power attached to it. Rooster fights have become an integral part of the culture that they are now conducted during *Sankranthi* festival every year. In villages, there are fixed places where these rooster fights are conducted. The fields where these fights are conducted are as well proudly owned by the people. There is a sense of pride in winning the sport other than the monetary gain on what is invested for betting. The Rooster fights are of two formats. *Dinki pandam* and *Kathi pandam*. In *Kathi* (Knife) *pandam*, the roosters are equipped with knives and are aggravated for the fight. In this format, generally the win is based on which rooster lives by the end of the fight. Since blades are tied up to the roosters feet, the roosters stab each other in the fight and hence the fight comes to an end quickly in a matter of minutes. There is another format of the fight in which the feet of the roosters are not equipped with any knives and they are only left aggravated in the arena. The roosters fight for hours and finally the fight comes to an end when one of the roosters is knocked out or too severely damaged to fight back. This format of the fight is called "*Dinki*" fight. Generally in Telugu states, the format in which the roosters are equipped with knives are the ones that have a greater following and encouragement. In Tamil Nadu, *Dinki* format of the fight is more prevalent.

The aggression in the Roosters is treated as a reflection of the macho and aggression of the owners of the rooster and hence is a very satisfying sport to the ones participating in it. Females are culturally restricted from the sport. Children, though are taken to the arena during the festival times when they are conducted, they are not allowed to bet. Guys are seen participating in the bets only in the late teens when they could earn some money for themselves and invest in it. To some, the sport is an addiction too. Females, though are restricted from entering the arena, they are

involved in the raising of the roosters and taking care of them back at homes. There is may be a reflection of the duty of the females to safeguard the respect and ego of their males and the symbol of such aggression (rooster) is thus taken care by the females.

There is an entire predictive science which is based on the ancient Vedic astrology which is used by the players in the villages to predict which rooster wins the fight. The predictions are based on the direction in which the arena is from the location of their residences, the color of the roosters, the star of the day etc.

The raised roosters are brought into the fight and the one who act as the referee or organizer at the arena takes in the betting amounts from the ones who invest in each of the roosters that are being setup for the fight. Sometimes the bets happen even without the indulgence of the referee, just with-in the audience as well. From large sums of money to as little as Rs. 10 the bets happen. Roosters are given water the knives that are equipped are reset frequently all through the fight. They are not allowed to fight for very long in the regular knife format of the game and are given pause in two or three rounds when they are given water and the knives are reset.

Kothi Komacchi OR Konda Kothi

The literal meaning of the word is *Kothi* meaning monkey, *Komma vanchi* meaning bending the branch of the tree. This game is played at the trees and is a game of young boys below twelve years of age. Girls are restricted from playing this game but there are cases where girl children play with their brothers in their young age.

How it is played:

There is no restriction on the number of players in this game. Ten to twelve people single out a player by a counting game (*Pantalu Veskovadam*) and the singled out player is called "*Donga*". A stick of about 2 feet length is thrown away by one of the remaining players at a height that is below the waist level of the players. The players quickly climb on to the trees and crawl to the branches and hide themselves in the foliage. *Donga* has to run and get that stick. The stick thus brought is kept in a small circular boundary which is drawn by *Donga* himself. Then, *Donga* has to climb on to any of the trees on which the rest of the players are hiding and try to touch any of the players. As *donga* tries to touch the hiding players, the hiding players jump back on to the ground and run towards the stick to take it. If in the mean while the *Donga* manages to run after the player and touches him, the one thus touched becomes the

new "*Donga*". If the player somehow escapes being touched by *Donga* and takes the stick, he throws it away again and "*Donga*" has to now get that stick and place it in a boundary again. The players run back to their trees. The children sing the song to tease the *Donga* in the game. The song consists of a traditional medicine for a broken leg. It tells that when the child breaks his leg while climbing the tree, this traditional medicine could be used for the immediate initial medication.

Konda meda Vendiginne (Kothi)- Kokki Raju (Raai) Kaaluvirigey

Silver bowl (Monkey) on hill- *Kokki Raju* broke his leg

Veregi Veregi Rendaye- Veedhillo Moodayey

It (leg) has broken in to two- In streets it (leg) broken in to three

Daaniki yemi Mandhu?- Veypaaku Mandhu

What is the medicine (for it)- *Neem* Medicine

Velulli gadda- Nunayi boddu-Nootokka Dhaara

Bulb of Garlic- (not specific)

The game is full of adventure and the skill of climbing is something that the children gradually develop as they play. Mingling with the nature, getting to learn about the trees and insects is also a subliminal element of this game. Children develop a firm grip as they involve in the activity of playing this game. Elders in the family generally restrict the boys from playing this game as there is a lot of scope for injury and damage.

Kolatam

This activity descended from the ancient times and is part of the culture of not only telugu states but also several regions of the entire country, especially from Gujarat. It is a dance or play with small sticks rhythmically synchronized with songs of cultural importance. This is played during festivals, during events like marriages and get together events. There is no restriction on age, people of all ages enthusiastically participate in the activity. Generally trained players or dancers whose moves are intact guide the whole of the group on how to dance to the tunes. Generally there is one trained elder whose moves are imitated by the others. Women, children and old aged people as well attempt to participate in the play at least for a couple of moves. There is an element of sacredness attached to this activity in Hinduism as the

holy lovers Krishna and Radha are believed to have played this game along with several *Gopikas*. Youngsters believe that they could find the right partner while playing *Kolatam*. Even if several people gather to play *Kolatam*, groups of ten or twelve people generally form a circle and begin to play. During festival times when larger gatherings occur, closer friends, family and neighborhoods flock together and form circles and enjoy the play. Sometimes the members of one circle shift in between other circles as well and find this activity as a memorable way of socializing. In the olden days *Kolatam* used to start with a devotional song such as "Siva Siva *Murthivi Gananaadha*". With the changing times, *Kolatam* as well transformed into a favorite way of dancing in a group with sticks to several famous cine numbers. The central concept is that the use of sticks and the simple movements are all easily imitated and doesn't need too much of skill to play the game. Hence anyone can participate and play in their own pace and grace. In the olden days it used to be a song being sung by the trained set of people to which the people dance , but now it is either a set of singers do the singing with mic and speaker setup or a jukebox is arranged to play the desired songs continuously. The songs are also arranged in such a way that as the play proceeds , the songs get faster and the play becomes more exciting posing a slight challenge to the players to move their bodies quickly and gracefully. Couples enjoy this game in a special way as they could play *Kolatam* together and with the group and many times in the middle of the group as well when they are brought-in by the team as such and the other players play around the centrally dancing couple. Culturally and historically also several songs, poetry and a lot of sculptural evidence is visible through Lord Krishna-Radha and otherwise as well to elucidate the depth of penetration of this play into the lives of the people.

Ganjikaalu:

The literal meaning of the game is a leg of starch where Ganji means starch and *Kaalu* means leg. This game is played by three players. Two of the players stand side by side, one extends his right hand fingers and locks it with left hand fingers of the other tightly. This alignment is called "*Allipattu*". In this arrangement the locked palms of the players face the sky. A boy, generally younger to them takes the support of their shoulders and raises up by basing his knee on the "*Allipattu*". The other leg is left loose in the air. Thus, the younger boy is now carried by the other two players

from one point to the other and the children playfully sing the words "*Ganjikaavadi Gadaga mudda*" or *Kunchadu ganji- Okkatey meythuku* which means one rice grain in a *Kunchadu* (small local measurement) of starch. This explains the availability of rice and food resource during the past where availability of rice is scarce and insufficient. Even girls play this game, though it is more prevalent among the boys. *Ganji kaavadi* means a pot of Starch. May be, it is a reminisce of the activity of the travelers who used to carry starch for food in a pot suspending it by a thread on their shoulders. The one who is standing on the *Allipattu* learns to balance on one leg. Children have their forearms and wrists throughly strengthened with the activity in this game.

Gaalipatamu, Gaalipadaga, Pathangula Pandaga

Gaalipatamu means Kite in the local language. Without a need to introduce extensively Kite is a known play item to everyone across many countries. Kite is a paper toy made with thin bamboo sticks as support and is flown in the air . The one flying the kite maneuvers the kite with the help of a thread tied to it. Kites in Andhra region are papers cut in square shape with the thin bamboo sticks stuck in cross matched shape to maintain the shape and form of the paper. A long strip of paper is attached to the bottom corner of the kite and it is called *Thoka* or tail. In Telangana kites are of greater variety and significance. They are flown in the skies during the festive seasons and special stalls are opened in the markets to sell ready made kites exclusively. Kites are generally flown at places where there is moderate wind. Beaches, large empty spaces where the breezes are ideal for the kites to be flown, on the terraces of the houses etc is where the children, teenagers and even adults play with the kites.

During the childhood, an adult in the family who is experienced in making and flying the kites generally introduces the kites to the children. Children interestingly participate in the process of making the kites by fetching the papers, pasting the paper with gum etc. To children, flying the kite is an excitement and wonder. As the children grow into teens, they participate in Kite fights or challenges where instead of the normal thread a special thread called *Maanja* is used. *Maanja* is a thread to which a mixture of moist cooked rice paste and crushed glass powder is applied and dried up in shade before the commencement of the challenge. Once the kites are flown into the air, when the fight begins the contestants challenge each other and attempt to cut-out the threads of each other by maneuvering the position of the kites, tightening and

loosening the thread continuously in accordance with the flow of the wind. Since manja is sharp , it can cut away the thread or manja of another kite when pulled in such a way that it rubs against another kite's manja. The one whose kite is cut away loses the game.

Kites have historical references that are dating back to the time of moguls and nizams in Telangana region. The *Baadshahs* and their *Begums* in the nizams era used to participate in kite fights with all the enthuse. In Andhra, we see kids running with the kites in the streets expecting it to pick pace and fly high in the air as they run. During the festive seasons and in summers, during the evening times when there is moderate wind children play with the kites.

GuduGudu Gunchamu

This is a game generally played by girls. There will be one girl or mother who acts as the elder of the game (The one who initiates the play). The girls close their fists and place them one above the other vertically. The elder girl places her index finger in the top most fist and makes circles in the fist with her finger by singing this song.

Gudugudu guncham Gundaa raagam

PaamulaPatnam Padagaraagam

Appalaraju gurram Aadukobothey (Appalraaju's horse went to play)

PePegurram Pellikibothey (Pepegurram went to marriage)

nee gurram neellakubothey (Your horse went to take bath)

naa gurram paalakubothey (My horse went to have Milk)

kattheyyanaa? baddeyyanaa? Venneella ? Channeella?

For each of the sentences after *Paamulapatnam Padagaraagam*, the sentences mention about the horses that went to various places (please refer the meanings of the sentences above). May be, here a horse is treated as a fist placed in the game. As the girl sings each of those sentences about the horse , at the phrase where it is sung that a horse went to some place, one of the fists is removed. That way the fists are removed from the vertical line at the end of each of the sentences. The children hide their fists behind them when they take them off the vertical stack of fists. Then the elder girl sings. The last sentence *Kattheyyana? Baddeyyana?* (meaning: should I use a knife or a staff) *Venneella* or *Channeella* (meaning: hot water or cold water) is asked to the girl

children who are playing the game. If the girl answers *Kattheyyanna*, the elder girl makes the gesture of slicing with a knife. If the girl answers *Baddeyyanna*, the elder girl makes the gesture of beating with a staff. This way one fist is singled out.

Gurapekkudu

The word *Gurram* means Horse and *Ekkudu* means to climb on. This game is generally played by an elder and a child or a younger child and an elder child. The elder sits with his knees on the floor and bends keeping his palms on the floor like a four legged animal which is in this case a horse. The younger child sits on the back of the bent person with his legs straddled on either sides and makes the gesture of riding a horse. The elder carrying the child crawls on the floor representing a horse. This game is played at homes. Elders in the family, generally grand fathers or fathers play this game with the children in all happiness. The children enjoy this game in full laughter and sometimes direct the horse to go left, right or turn around. The elders also enhance the entertainment by saying "The horse needs grass now" while the children take the horse to a place in the house where it is imagined as a place to graze and the play continues. When it is a family with more than two kids, the elder kids take turns to play this game with the younger child. This game signifies how the children in the family are treated as kings and how the elders in the family want them to be like a king riding a horse.

Golilu (Marbles)

Golilu are marble balls which are of the diameter of about 1 inch and are of various colors and designs. These balls are described in a literary reference as the balls made of various material like glass, stone, soft clay, lead etc. The balls are also called *Goli kaayalu*, *goli gundlu* (*Kaayalu* meaning: fruit or seed, *gundlu* meaning: sphere) There are two types of play associated with this game namely *Baddaata* and *Bacchalu*. Marbles are played by boys and young men sometimes. Girls are completely restricted from playing this game. In villages, this game has a bad reputation because of the concept of betting involved in this game which also turns to be an addiction to the players.

Baddaata or Kanchaalaata

In a playground or empty space a small groove or pit is dug with depth one inch and one inch diameter. This is called *Baddi* or *Kancham*. One of the players collects the marbles balls of all the other players. The player with everybody's marble balls stands approximately ten feet away from this *Baddi* and throws the marble ball such that they may fall into the *Baddi*. The player's marble which fell the farthest away from *Baddi* is the one who starts the game.

The game is played for a count of ten and the one who completes the count of ten first is the one who wins the game. Sometimes we see the players shooting their own marble directly into the *Baddi* or groove as well. So, it is not only the throw of others' marbles but also about throwing their own marbles into *Baddi* or *Kancham* or shooting another player's marble ball with their own marble ball. Like it is described above, the player whose marble ball fell the farthest away from *Baddi* starts the game. He picks up his own marble and tries to shoot the nearest marble to his marble or he tries to shoot his own marble ball into the groove. If he becomes successful in shooting one marble ball into the groove, he gets another chance to play the game. Otherwise, shooting the marble itself is a skill. There is a technique that is learnt by practice to shoot the marble balls. Thumb is pressed against the ground firmly and the marble ball is put in front of the middle finger. The middle finger is then dragged to create momentum along with the marble and released at once such that the marble is shot in full force at the target. The alignment is set towards the target by rotating the hand with the thumb firmly set as base on the ground. It is like the whole mechanism of shooting gun in a hand. The players take turns to shoot their marbles. An extra chance is given if a player becomes successful in shooting a marble into a groove. For a count of ten successful shots in the groove, the game's task becomes complete. The one who completes shooting ten marbles into the groove is the one who wins or completes the game (*Pandatam*). The one who completed the game need not play further and sits aside while the others continue the game. Each of the players are to play as such that at least once one of the other players' marbles is shot into the groove and at least 9 times his own marble or any player's marble is shot into the groove. Then only the task of the game is treated to be completed.

In *Bacchaata* or *Borrata* game, 4 to 5 players participate. In the play ground or the place where the game is being a played a circle of about 6 inches diameter is

drawn. From each of the players 1 or 2 marbles are taken and are arranged inside the circle in a line. From about six feet distance from this circle the players stand and one after the other shoot the marbles towards the circle. The player whose marble fell at the farthest distance from the circle starts the game. Now the game is to shoot the marble balls that are arranged in the circle in such a way that the balls inside the circle fall out of the circle. The marbles which are thus shot to fall out of the circle are won by the player who shot and he gets another chance to shoot. If the marbles fall on the circle, the player will lose the game. Then, the marbles are to be replaced in a row again in the circle and the rest of the players should continue the game.

This game is very interestingly played by boys of ages 9 and above. There is an intense spirit of competition that keeps the players engaged all through the play. Players become good at shooting with practice. The players who can shoot with accuracy build a reputation among the friends group in the neighborhood as well. Elders of higher communities are observed to restrict their children from playing this game.

Chedarangam (Chess)

This is a two-player game born in India, which became a game played by the entire world today. The game was prevalent among aristocratic families and symbolized royalty. There were various versions of chess in the past. In the past, the game used to have the attributes of a game of chance as well. The players used to move the army coins of the game in accordance with the value indicated by the dice thus rolled. The game that is now played all across the world is a pure game of brains and skill. Dice are not rolled anymore in this game. Players move their coins on a checkered board according to the rules of the game one after the other. Indian warfare was one among the first to consist of Infantry. Chess, being a game from India, reflects this aspect in its army coins.

The telugu version, *Chedarangam* has the representation of coins as mentioned below. Coins in *Chedarangam* are called “*Pikkalu*”. One move is called “*Ettu*”. A square is called “*Gadi*”. *Nalla* means Black, *Tella* means white. The reflections of an Indian Army setup are visible in *Chedarangam*. In the ancient times, the most powerful person in a kingdom is Prime Minister and he is the prime advisory of a King. So, instead of calling the most powerful coin in the game a Queen, it is called

Mantri which means Minister. Patience and a thinking that is sharp to estimate the moves of the opponent are essential to win the game. It was explained by Sun Tzu in his famous work “The Art of War” emphasized that in a war, the most essential strength is an ability to flawlessly plan the attacks. A great army with a haphazard can lose the war against a small army with a meticulous planning. The game reflects all these traits and enhances the players’ power of thinking.

There are two *Sakatam* coins (Bishops) on each side, one that moves diagonally in black squares or *Nalla Gadi* and the other that moves in white squares or *tella gadi*. There are two *Yenugu* (Elephant) coins on each side, one that is placed in the corner black square and the other in the corner white square as the game begins. Knights or *Gurram* coins also are two on each side with each of them filling one black and one white square. The Black *Mantri* Coin is in black square, white *Mantri* coin is in white square. The black *Raju* coin is in white square and the white *Raju* is in black square. *Mantri* is always on the right side of *Raju*.

The game is played on a 8x8 checker board. Players alternatively take turns to move their coins in such a way that all the army is directed towards only one task of killing the king which is called “Checkmate”. Killing the king is achieved by the placement of opponent’s army around the king in such a way that whether the king makes or doesn’t make a move, the chance of escape is null.

Ashta Chamma:

This game has its references in various literary works dating back to the era of kings and has a cultural significance. The game is played by using cowries. 4 cowrie shells are used to play the game. The number of boxes a gamer has to move his coin is decided by the number attained by rolling the cowries. If all the cowries fall facing the ground, it is treated as number “8”. If the cowries fall facing the sky it is considered as number “4”. There are two versions of this game. The one with 5x5 =25 grid is called “*Chinna Aata*” which means small and the one with 7x7 grid is called “*Pedda aata*” which means big game. *Ashta chamma* is also mentioned as “*Atta Chamma*” and is explained to have its meaning “a certain game” in some literary works. It was also called “*Atta Semma*”. Though it is a game of chance, there is the element of planning and strategy in the game which makes it unique as it is a blend of both the game types. It is played by both boys and girls. The game can be played by either two or four players. In the case of four player game, the players may choose in between playing

the game individually or by forming as two teams. Generally in villages we see this game being played at homes where it is comfortable for all the players to sit on the floor. The game is also seen being played on the mezzanine built just outside the house. Instead of using cowries Areca nuts or tamarind shells as well could be used. Generally the grid is drawn using a chalk on the floor. In some houses, we see the game permanently painted or engraved on the floor so that the players can right away start playing the game without having to draw it on the floor every time they want to play. The boxes which have “X” in them are the game boxes and the centre box marked with “X” is the box of completion of the game which is called “*Panta Gadi*” *Gadi* means box, *Panta* means a successful completion in this context, though the actual meaning signifies the ripening of a fruit. The coins used in the game are called *Kayalu* which means fruits. It may also be construed that the fruit reaches its final ripened stage upon reaching the central box. Small pebbles, shells of tamarind, Areca nuts or smaller cowries could be used as coins in the game. The players should have unique representation and identification in terms of coins they use to play. Hence a player may choose Areca nuts, the other may choose tamarind shells as the coins. In the case of the game being played with the players divided as two teams, each of the teams could choose to represent with one type of coins. Any small object can be used as a coin depending on the availability. In the villages, we see small twigs, small pieces of crushed paper, pebbles, match sticks, cloves and nuts also being used as coins. In fact anything small could be used as coins. In fact anything small could be used as a coin. This makes the game easily playable by anybody without having to look for the procurement of the game’s paraphernalia. Hence this game is played by everybody in the village away from the influence of any financial factors.

The players begin to play the game by rolling cowries on the floor. Four cowries are used to play the game. The following are the combinations and resultant number of steps the player has to move his coins. The movement or driving of coins through the grid is called “*Nappadam*”. A player has to move only that number of boxes in the grid as the number achieved by rolling the cowries. A player could move his coin into the first box or *Gadi* only when he rolls a value of 4 or 8. As long as the player fails to get 4 or 8, his coins remain out of the game. For a player to move his coin into “*Panta Gadi*” or completion box, he has to roll a number that enables him to move his coin into a box in which another (opponent) player has his coin. In such a case the player can kill the coin that is already in the box he reached. This is called “*Champudu*”

Pandem” which means killing bet. Every player has to kill at least one coin of another player to achieve chance to move towards the completion box. Upon killing, the killed coin is taken out of the game and the player whose coin is killed has to again roll 4 or 8 to begin the movement of the coin in the game from the starting box in the grid.

Upon killing the player’s coin, the player who killed gets a bonus chance to roll the cowries again. Similarly, when any player rolls “4” or “8” he or she gets a bonus chance to roll the cowries again. Killing is not possible in the boxes that are marked with an “X”. Any number of coins of any number of players can coexist in the “X” boxes without the question of killing. For rite the passage of a coin to enter the game “4” or “8” has to be rolled. If “8” is rolled, the player can bring in two coins. If a player rolls “8” or “4” and continues to roll “8” or “4” through bonus chances as well for 3 consecutive times, the entire roll chance gets cancelled. This is called “*murigi povatam*”. Each time the players roll the cowries, its called a “*Pandem*” which means a bet in its true translation. If the coins are 4 boxes away from the completion box or 8 boxes away from the completion box, the players shouldn’t move those coins unless they roll “4” *Chemma* or “8” *Ashta* again. If someone has all his coins reaching the completion box and there is some other player with not even one reaching the completion box it is called “*Putta Chintha*”. If only one of the opponent’s coins reach, its called “*Aata Pettamani*”

There are variations in the way the cowries are considered for the value in the case of 7x7 version of the game. Here, 6 cowries are used to play the game instead of 4. Some even use 8 cowries. When cowries are rolled, if one cowrie ends up facing the sky with the rest of them facing the ground, it is called “*Daayam*” or “*Kannu*” and the value is “One”. If two face the sky and four face the ground it is treated as “12”. This is in some regions called “*Baarakatta*”. If the game is being played with eight cowries, if all the cowries face the sky it is called “*Chemma*” and if all the ones face the ground it is called “*Ashta*” For *Chemma* “8” is considered as the value, for *Ashta* “16” is considered as the value. If one cowrie faces the sky and 7 if them face the ground it is considered as 11. Players get bonus chance to roll the cowries again if they rolled *Ashta*, *Chemma*, *Daayam*.

In 7x7 game, the game continues for a longer time than a 5x5 game. Coins achieve rite da passage to begin the game by rolling *Ashta* or *Chemma*. Generally, 7x7 games are played with players divided as teams.

There is another version of this game as well called “*Ashta Kashte*”. But, in *Ashta Kashte* the 7x7 game is played with 4 cowries only. The rest of the game is the same. With killing bets (*Champudu Pandalu*) and rite the passage way of playing the game, *Ashta Chemma* has the traits of a war arena. It signifies the inevitability of killing in war. The game has the requirement of an intelligent thinking and wise decision making regarding which coin has to be moved and at what time by how many boxes. The factor of luck as well is signified in the game though it doesn’t completely depend on it. Playing as a team, aspects of sacrifice, spirit of war and killing, technique of rolling cowries to get the desired values are all components of the game which make it uniquely interesting. Hence it is not just a game of chance but also a different game of skill.

Omana Guntalu

The etymology of the name of the game may have its reference to “*Homam*” which is a ritual activity in which items such as ghee, flowers, fruits and all such items that are offered to God are dropped into a hole of fire. So, here the players as the drop the coins into the sockets, it may have similarity with the dropping of the offerings to the God in a “*Homam*” and hence they picked the name *Omana Guntalu* from the word *Homana Guntalu*. *Gunta* means pit or socket in the current context. It is called *Vamana Guntalu* as well in the colloquial world in recent times. This explanation about the etymology of the game was first elucidated by *Kodanda Ramayya* in his works.

Omana Guntalu is a fish shaped wooden board game with 14 sockets carved into the board. The board has 7 sockets on each of the sides. It is a two player game, though it can be played as a single player game as well during leisure times as a time pass activity. Tamarind seeds, small cowries, small pebbles or anything small can be used as coins in this game. Each socket in the board is filled with 13 coins. In some regions each socket is filled with 5 or 7 coins (Odd number of coins). The player who begins the game should start by taking coins from one of the sockets on his/her side. He begins to seed one coin in each of the sockets from left to right. Once the player finishes dropping the coins in such a way, he /she should start again by taking the coins next to the socket where the earlier round was finished. When the player finishes dropping the coins and the socket next to where it was finished is empty, the coins in the socket next to the empty socket are taken by the player. It is like the player secured

the coins in that society. Now the second player's turn begins. The second player or opponent plays the same way till he or she ends up securing some coins when ended up with an empty socket. When the opponents coin seeding round is on, the player has to pay total attention towards the game and cannot sit idle as there is a rule in the game that requires the player to pick the coins from any of the sockets where there are only four coins immediately after the opponent finishes seeding in the socket. The coins thus picked are secured by the player. If the coins are not picked before the opponent player emptied his hands off the coins, then such a chance will come to the player again only when the number of coins in that socket reaches 8. When 4 coins are found in a socket it is called "aavu" and the player who is watching the opponents seeding round immediately picks those 4 coins by saying "aavu". In some literary references it is mentioned that who picks the coins upon a socket reaching 4 number is unclear. It may be also a regional aspect. It may also totally depend on who says "aavu" first. For one player to completely lose the game, it generally takes a very long time. If three players play this game, it is called "*Attha Kodallaata*" which means a game of mother-in-law and daughters-in-law. This game is also observed as a favorite game played by couples after dinner till they go to bed as it is a simple time pass game offering fun for a long time with only a little attention and logic required to play the game.

The board is generally setup on a flat surface on the floor or on a table, cot or on a large swing in the middle of the houses in the villages. The version of "*Attha Kodallaata*" may have gotten its name as it is a game that is playable by mother-in-law and daughter-in-law after their men go to work at home. The ironical rivalry and pun that exists in between Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law with each of them steering the authoritarian role shifting frequently with respect to the topic and context is visible in the *Omana Guntalu* game. The number of coins which are there with a player by the end of the game is what decides who wins the game. If the players choose to stop the game at any particular point of time, the number of coins at that point of time only will become countable leaving a psychological room for the player who loses the game to think that it is not a complete win. Often even the relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, there is no installation of absolute authority in any one of them. The emergence of playful time amidst of all the pun filled rivalries are represented in the game as well. Even if the players are not related

to each other as mother-in-law and daughter-in-law they feel the roles in a playful way as they play the game.

In “*Attha Kodallaata*” the central 6 sockets are taken by the mother-in-law, while the 4 sockets on either sides of the central 6 sockets are considered as that of the daughters-in law. Each of the sockets is filled with 12 coins here. The first player to begin the game here is the mother-in-law. It is said that the mother-in-law plays the game for three rounds and gives one coin to each of the daughters in law out of the coins secured by her in the game. This is explained as for the newly married woman, at the husbands place, the authority vests with the mother-in-law for three years and later shifts to daughters in law for the rest of the life time.

After the third round, for every round played, each of the daughters in law give one coin secured by them to mother-in-law. After third round mother –in-law need not pay to the daughters-in-law. This gesture by mother-in-law is called “*Ganji Poyadam*” which means pouring or providing starch. Starch is the equivalent of food or help may be in this context. In south India it was believed that “Sita” played this game when she was in Ravana’s captivity, thus giving the game a historical, mythological and religious angle as well. The game comes to an end when the player doesn’t have the required number of coins to seed the holes in a round completely. The one who has the coins in greater quantity is declared as the winner.

The game facilitates the improvement of the players’ abilities to calculate as the game continuously requires the players to keep track of how many coins are left in their hands and from what socket they should pick up to get the best results in the upcoming round.

Andalamu

The name of the game *Andalamu* means “Palanquin” in telugu language. It is a human palanquin that here in the game we are referring to. Equal heighten kids generally play this game so that the palanquin is flat and parallel to the ground. The players say “*Avva Appacchi*” and touch their mouths with their palms and firmly hold the left elbow region with the right hand. With the left hand the player holds the right elbow of the other player. The second player as well does similarly and finally the players arrive at a frame built with hands on all sides which is treated as “*Andalamu*” or Palanquin. Here, in the centre and on either sides three spaces are formed for the

one who sits on it to hold. A child, generally of 4 to 5 years age is made to sit in this frame. The child sits in the frame by keeping her legs in the central space and firmly holds the palanquin bearers by placing his/her hands around their necks towards the shoulders. The palanquin bearers then give a swing motion as they carefully carry the child and walk forward singing “*Ohom Ohom Ohom Ohom*” or “*Devudamma Devudu Mayadari Devudu*”.

The swing and the carrying forward executes the child and makes him/her laugh with joy. The elder kids who are the palanquin bearers as well enjoy the game along with kiddo while paying total attention towards carefully carrying him or her. In Telangana the same game is called “*Menaata*” or “*Pallaki aata*”. God’s idols are taken on a processing by carrying them in palanquins. In the regional culture there is a belief that children are a representation or embodiment of divinity or God. Hence, children are made to sit on this human made palanquin.

Arugaata or Nela banda:

This game has various names like “*Cheekati-Vennala*” which means darkness-moonlight and *Nela Banda* which means ground-rock/hill. The basic concept of the game is, a player who is called “*Donga*” (meaning thief) plays the game by attempting to touch the other players who tease him by running from one *Banda* to another *Banda*. The place where the game is played is divided as *Nela* and *Banda* regions. Generally elevated surfaces are treated as *Banda* and the ground level surfaces are considered as *Nela*. The thief is supposed to remain in “*Nela*” region and try to run and touch the other players who tease *Donga* by shifting from one *Banda* to another *Banda* via *Nela* region. The thief becomes eligible to touch the players and call it an “out” if he could run and touch the players when they are in *Nela* or ground region. The players tease *Donga* by continuously shifting in between several *Banda* regions. They shift from one *Banda* surface to another *Banda* surface or run back to the *Banda* they came from in a flash. When “*Donga*” runs in one direction to touch a player who came on to the ground or *Banda*, the players run from behind him quickly onto another *Banda*,” The terms of *Nela* and *Banda* may be replaced by *Cheekati-Vennala* in that version of the game, but the over all concept remains the same. If the player who is playing as *Donga* is quick enough to touch a teasing player when he is on *Banda* he calls it an out and player who was touched then turns into a thief or *Donga* and the game continues. At all times there is only one player in the game who plays as

Donga. Once *Donga* touches another player on *Nela* he joins the rest of the players on *Banda* and begins to tease the one who was touched, the new *Donga* of the game.

Concept wise when we try to analyze the hidden philosophy in the game, we are to consider firstly the word *Donga* which means thief. It signifies that all the players are thieves but remained uncalled by that name only till they are caught. *Donga* here runs to catch or touch the players who tease them by running quickly away from him or stealthily from behind him away from his notice. Generally it is thieves who hide and run away from the light and the society and hide away in darkness. But here it is the thief who does the cops' job of trying to catch the players who venture into darkness – *Cheekati* or *Nela* region in all stealth and quickness. In other words if all the players in the game are considered as the members of a society and the player playing the game as thief as *Donga* it could be emerged into a philosophy that no one is a thief till they are caught and once caught the thief works to drag others into his shade or blame. In other words, it's a shift of blame temporarily and being called a thief. The game signifies that all humans are of equal value irrespective of the roles they eventually take up or the situation they pass through. It may be construed that people are the same but the variations are brought in by the situations and circumstances of life.

It is majorly an outdoor game. Both boys and girls are seen playing this game. The game doesn't need any paraphernalia and could be played anywhere. Children under 12 years of age generally play this game. In the neighborhoods near the houses, at schools and wherever there is a scope of identifying a variation in the ground to name as *Nela* and *Banda* could become the place to play the game. The game is generally played in winter or summer. During rainy season because of damp floor, it is not possible to play this game.

Aaku Peekalu or Thaataku Peekalu

This is a play with small toy horns made of leaves. Generally, the leaves of coconut, palm, banyan etc could be used to make the toy horns. *Aaku peekalu* means leaf mouth piece as in a clarinet there is a mouth piece through which the air is blown to make the horn sound. *Thataku* means palm leaf, again *Peekalu* means mouth pieces. Since palm leaves are more often the used leaves to make these toy horns the play is more commonly referred to as *Thataku peekalu*. Elders in the family who know how

to make the horn generally make the toy for the kids. The process of making the toy itself is interestingly watched by the kids. Kids play with the toy in all excitement and sometimes overplay it for so much that the elders in the family either hide away from children or request them to stop blowing it as it is very noisy. Children blow the toy horn in a playful way placing it close to the ears of other children and family members. An under farmer or an assistant to the owner in the fields who is called “*Paaleru*” in the regional language generally brings some leaves along with him when he visits the house of the owner of the field and mingles in a play with the kids. He, with the leaves he brought, makes the toy horns and gives them to the kids in general. In a literary work of Vadla Subramanyam, (1982) it has been mentioned that in the olden days beggars who go around the houses in the village for rice used to make these toy horns for the children. The toy horn is made by folding the leaf like a horn arranging it in such a way that the air blown through its mouthpiece makes a fluttering noise with the vibration of its inner elements. Some use small pebbles or harder leaf, small potsherds or any small edible spice to act as the inner elements that make the sound. In marriage ceremonies kids are seen to draw and tear away the leaves from the décor of the space to make these horn themselves. In the past, any gathering of the kids in any function, ritual or ceremony had these toy horns as the favorite play of the kids. In the game of *Bommala Pelli* where the dolls of bride and groom are used to imitate the process of marriage, these toy horns are blown to imitate the clarinets that are used in the actual marriage ceremonies to play *Naadam*, the sacred music of the Indian weddings.

Aakumuttaata

Aaku means leaves *Muttu* means to touch, *Aata* means game. Hence, the entire title of the game *Aaku muttata* means the leaf touch game. This game is played in the fields or gardens which have trees of various kinds. There is an element of nature and the interaction of kids with the nature in this game. As they play this game, children get to know the names of the various trees and also learn to identify various trees by their leaves, branches, trunk or fruits. This game is similar to ‘*Veeri Veeri Gummadi Pandu*’ a hiding game. The game has its mention in many literary works in telugu language. In this game, the player who has to play as “*Donga*” or thief is singled out by a counting out game which is called “*Pantalu Vesukovada*” in local language. In a literary work, there is a mention of a counting-out rhyme that goes like this

Thuthelu – Mathelu

Paalu – Pallingu

Latmi- Lutmi – Chall

As the counting out rhyme is sung pointing at one player for each of the words, the one who is pointed for the word “*Chall*” becomes *Donga* or thief. All the rest of the players discuss and decide on one type of the leaf and say its name to the thief. The thief goes in search of that leaf in the garden. The thief finds the tree and plucks out a leaf from it, the rest of the players find places to hide in the garden. The thief player when he returns fetching the said leaf will start to explore through the bushes and find the players who hid themselves and runs after them to touch them with the leaf thus fetched. The one touched first with leaf will become the thief for the next round of the game and the game continues. The game has the elements of hide and seek as the players hide themselves and the aspect of running after the found player to touch him with the leaf which makes it unique.

Children as they play this game in the fields or gardens learn to maneuver themselves through the thorny bushes and witness various ants , insects, flies and various farm friendly animals during the play. They also learn to safeguard themselves from snakes or any such dangerous animals as the elders around constantly remind them and teach them to look around for any danger as they hide in the bushes. Sometimes children also play by scaring the thief from behind the bushes which adds further excitement to the game.

Uppaata , Uppanabattela Aata or Cherraata:

Uppaata is a game of imitation as one of the teams which plays the game imitates the act of stealing the salt while the other imitates the act of hunting down the thief. This game has many references in the literary works of telugu language. This game was played all across the telugu state. This game has the hyperbolic description as the state game of Andhra people in one of the literary works. The word *Uppaata* itself is descriptive of the aspect of imitation that exists in the game. “*Uppu*” meaning: salt, “*Aata*” meaning: game. It is an outdoor game and requires huge space to play. It is a multiple players game.

How it is played:

Each of the teams comprises of 5 to 6 players. In any case both the teams have equal number of players only. The players toss a coin to decide on which team has to take what role in the play. The ones who win the toss are the team who ferret after the other players while the other team stand on the horizontal lines to limit or protect from the actions of the other team. The team that stands on the horizontal lines and restricts the *Muttadi Paksham* is called *Rakshana Paksham*.

This game is played in the outskirts of the village, playgrounds or in empty spaces where all the necessary space is available. The reference lines that are drawn on the ground require a space of area 30sft x 12sft . 3 vertical lines are drawn with 6ft in between each of them dividing the space into two vertical parts. Depending on the number of players horizontal lines are drawn to create that number of boxes. The players of the *Rakshana Paksham* team stand on the horizontal lines. The captain of the team stands on the vertical line in the centre. The vertical dividing line is also called *Sura Badde*. The captain of the *Rakshana Paksham* chanting any word or sound hops to the first grid box from the 5th grid box. By that time the team players of *Muttadi Paksham* jump to the first box. They try to go into 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th boxes. The players of the *Rakshana Paksham* team restrict the other team players at the horizontal lines. The captain of the *Rakshana Paksham* runs across the vertical lines and attempts to touch the players of the *Muttadi Paksham*. The players of the *Muttadi Paksham* try to shift in between the grid boxes escaping the trials of the *Rakshana Paksham* to touch them. The players of the *Rakshana Paksham* standing on the horizontal lines continuously try to touch the players of the *Muttadi Paksham* at the horizontal lines as they shift in between the grid boxes. If the captain of the *Rakshana Paksham* running across the vertical lines or the other players of the *Rakshana Paksham* who are standing at the horizontal lines become successful in touching the players of the *Muttadi Paksham* as they attempt to shift boxes, the touched players of the *Muttadi Paksham* are declared out. Then the players of the *Muttadi Paksham* play as the *Rakshana Paksham* team and vice versa. If the players of the *Muttadi Paksham* manage to cross all the boxes without being touched by the *Rakshana Paksham*, they shout “*Uppo*”. This signifies that the player crossed without being touched. Concept wise by shouting “*Uppo*” it is being imitated that they have picked up the salt crossing all the hurdles and now they are to return with the salt shifting all the boxes they crossed to the beginning box. By the time the player or players of the *Muttadi Paksham* reach the destination box and pick the salt , there may be still some players

who are struck in the other boxes. Now, the players of the *Muttadi Paksham* who start to return to the beginning box attempt to touch their own teammates struck in the boxes. This act is called “*Uppandinchadam*” which means “handover of salt”. It is like the player who picked up the salt handed it over to another teammate who can carry it to the end box. So, after the act of “*Uppandinchadam*” the teammate who is touched could return to the beginning box without having to attempt to hop to the other side. Upon successful return of the players to the beginning box, players of the “*Muttadi Paksham*” win the game. Even if one of the players of the *Muttadi Paksham* reach back to the beginning box *Muttadi Paksham* team wins the game. If more players return it will give the team extra points or credits.. If all the players reach the beginning box then the *Muttadi Paksham* is declared as winner. If all the players of *Muttadi Paksham* are touched or caught by the *Rakshana Paksham* players then the *Muttadi Paksham* becomes the *Rakshana Paksham* and vice versa in the next round.

The same game is played with minor variations in various regions. In some regions chanting of the *Muttadi Paksham* players while shifting in between the boxes is so important that if the players stop the chant they are declared as out. In this variation, one of the players of one team stands at “*Cherpatti*” while the players of the other team stand at the vertical lines. The ones at *cherpatti* carrying salt have to progress through the boxes to reach the *Uppu patti*. Once they reach *uppu patti* the salt picked will be transferred by touching the other players in the team crossing *cherpatti* such that the received over salt reaches the beginning box via the carrying players. If they get caught while shifting by the second team they are declared as out.

In another variation called “*Chinna Uppaata*”, the game play is much easier and there are no teams. By a counting out game one player is singled out and he is called *Donga* or thief. Here a line is drawn on which *Donga* stands. At a distance in front of and behind him two lines called *pattis* are drawn, the vertical lines are joined., All the other players in the game should escape the touch of *donga* and make the salt reach the box from where the game started by picking the salt from the other end. If *Donga* manages to touch anyone of the players, he becomes *Donga* for the next round.

At a distance a tree is identified and it is called *Talli Chettu* (meaning: mother tree). If *Donga* fails to catch anyone of the other players for a longtime, the other players ferret after *donga* with a twisted towel and beat him till he touches the mother tree.

The use of salt in the concept of the game may be construed as a possible scarcity of salt during the olden days and fear of theft of salt that may have prevailed

during those times. *Uppaata* is a game filled with a lot of physical activity. The players twist their waists and bodies in such a way during their hops and play in such a way that they save themselves from being caught. The game inculcates a quickness in thinking and facilitates the development of psychomotor abilities. The game is of stringent rules and has the history of being played as a formal game even in olden days. It was appreciated as a game of such an importance that it could be called the state game of telugu people.

Uyyaalaata

It may not be termed as a game but it is undeniably worth a discussion as a form of play and entertainment with profound cultural and ritual connections. *Uyyala* meaning: swing and *Aata* meaning: game or play. Rectangular wooden planks are suspended from a tree by coconut thread on 4 sides which is used as a swing. The ones who sit on the swing and the ones who swing it standing on the ground, both experience fun, excitement and entertainment. Swings made of cloth, thread, swings that are made strongly to accommodate multiple swingers are all several types of swings we see in the villages. In some swings players stand on either sides and push the swing with their feet and start the oscillation of the swing. The player after reaching the farthest point in the swing pushes the swing with his feet to facilitate the swing in the opposite direction. This type of swing is called *Thookutuyyaala*, There are no winner or looser in the play. All the fun and excitement is shared equally and is a play of entertainment rather than that of any win or display of skill.

Classification of Games:

During the initial studies, scholars focused on origin and geographical distribution of games throughout the world (Tylor, 1879) and later extended to collection and classification of games (Newell, 1883, Gomme, 1894, 1898, Culin, 1895, 1907, Roberts, Arth and Brush, 1959). Among the early evolutionists, the study of games was related with collection of disappearing culture as they believed games were survivals of the previous cultures. The understanding of games in terms of sociocultural significance slowly emerged along with the collection of games. This delay in focusing on games and play also gave path to the criticism on the neglect of the subject by anthropologists.

During nineteenth century, anthropology started with explorers, missionaries, travellers, colonial administrators in providing reports regarding information about 'primitive' societies. But less was focused on understanding culture, values and believes of the people. It was in this process that abundant data was collected on games and play, not giving more importance on understanding the cultural significance of game in different societies. Taylor, 1879 who gave the first definition of culture in his *Primitive Culture*, 1871 was also one of the initial persons who initiated the study of games. Though he was greatly influenced by the evolution theory, which helped him to focus on understanding of the origin of games, he believed that the Aztec game of Patolli shared similar features with Indian *Pachisi* game. He explained that, it is through cultural contact different cultures share similar features which could be explained with the help of these games. He further argued that many dice games or lot-backgammon games have origins or must have similarities with Southern Asia to Burma. But this idea of borrowing culture and sharing Asiatic origin was not accepted by Stewart Culin, 1898. In his *Games of the North American Indians*, 1907 said that the similarities among games of different societies has nothing to do with origins or importing to one region from the other, but are natural and direct outgrowths within the communities. Along with Culin (1907), many historian anthropologists like Franz Boas (1888), Clark Wissler (1926), A. L. Kroeber (1920), Newell (1883), etc started understanding games from the diffusionist perspective and believed that games like hoop and ball games got diffused from a particular culture known as 'cultural areas' and spread or diffuse outward to different places of the world. They believed that one should not concern about how a game is played rather note different kinds of material that was used in playing similar game at different places Clark Wissler, (1926). This explains that the study of games in relation to culture changed its path from understanding the origin of the game to identifying different ways and methods a similar game is played across different regions and there by understanding the culture of that particular region. They viewed games and play as rule based and structured activities which further has to be collected as they are believed to be represented as children's customs. It was believed by the particularists that the ethnographic collection of data on games may lead to theoretical generalizations in the later point of time basing on the facts and texts of play and games. This was observed among the writers of late nineteen and early twentieth century who believed that one has to collect and preserve the knowledge of these

traditions or games as they become extinct in the coming future because of the television and passive involvement for children J. and D. Singer, (1976). A concern was given with the collection of games among the ethnographers that the games and traditions of the societies should be collected at the 'purest' form before they get mixed up and changed with other traditions. This change was believed to happen every time and is inevitable. Newell, (1883) believed that the change or transmission among the societies happen from superior to inferior societies and that inferior societies change according to superior societies. This is reflected in his explanation that the games played among the inferior societies will be dominated and changed to the games of superior societies and lose their purest forms.

Many scholars collected and classified games and play of different societies during early studies of games. But these classifications were made with little or, sometimes, no focus on the subject of games. The earlier classifications reflect the feeling of segregating the collected data and giving a structured form rather than analyzing the content collected. Earlier classifications were mostly depended on the type of game, materials used, context used etc. Newell, (1883) classified games collected among American children according to different themes of play like love games, history games or histories, game of chase, guessing games, humor and satire etc. Scholars later tried to collect data regarding games which are more specific to a geographical location and time. Henry Babcock, (1888) tried to classify various games he collected into 15 different categories like ring games, archway games, games of chase, games of transposition, rigmaroles and jingles, and child-stealing games. Games which include songs and jingles were much focused as it was believed that they carried information regarding culture in terms of language, sometimes just random words with no sense were analyzed to understand whether they carry knowledge regarding culture and social setups of the past times. Collection of games were further divided in to categories on the basis of gender of the players, seasons in which the game was played etc. This was found that Owen Dorsey (1891) in 'Games of Teton Dakota Children' has categorized ten different types of games played by American Indian tribes on the basis of gender and season. Along with the description of games on the basis of various categories, he also discussed about various other play activities which were not based on the categorization he had mentioned in describing games. During the same time, ethnographer Stewart Culin whose work (1890, 1895,

1898, 1900) consisted an immense description of children's games by studying the Asian-Americans workers, especially on the Chinese and Japanese living in America. Just like the 1980s scholars, Culin (1891) also investigated deeply on descriptions games but he concentrated on more formal games with rules, regulations and implements to play. He classified the games based on the descriptions of the instruments used to play by the North American Indian communities. For Culin, (1887) 'games of chance' are 'games of dexterity' which includes dice games and guessing games (Schwartzman, 1978). In his report 'Street games of boys in Brooklyn, N. Y.', Culin, (1891) classified games into different types on the basis of the implements used and how the game was played based on the descriptions told by a ten year boy residing in Brooklyn, N. Y. In this article, he described various games on the basis of rules and how the games were played. There was no specific classification of the games other than just compiling the games with a detailed description of how the games were played. Culin (1891) concentrated on formal games and did not focus on imaginative games and imitative games. Unlike Culin (1891), Walter Roth, (1902) an Australian Aboriginals Chief Protector in Queensland focused on the imaginative, imitative games, discriminative games and disruptive games of the Australian tribals. Roth, (1902) in his 'Games, Sports and Amusements' described and classified games played by the children in seven categories as Imaginative games (e.g., tales, legends and other fancies), Realistic games (e.g., playing with pet animals or birds, swinging on vines, making smoke signals, mud sliding, and bathing and aquatic sports), Imitative games (e.g., string figures), Discriminative games (e.g., hide and seek and guessing games), Disputative games (wrestling and a type of tug-of-war), Propulsive games (games which use 'toy', ball games, tops games, sticks games and boomerangs) and Exultative games (musical songs and instruments, dances and entertainments). Large number of games were included in Imitative games and so they were subdivided into string figure games and hand games. The string figure games included the games in which a string is used to imitate animal figurines. Roth classified a list of seventy four various string figures which represent animals, plants, manufactured objects, or human activities Schwartzman, (1978). The animal representations included kangaroo, wallaby, eagle hawk, cockatoos, white cranes, giant crane and a duck. Human representations included humans carrying spheres, fighting with sticks, boys waling in a row, climbing a tree etc. The other section of imitative games that were observed among the Australian tribes which Roth (1902) described were "playing house,

marriage, cooking, hunting, searching for honey, and catching cockatoos” (Schwartzman, 1978: 75). According to Roth (1902), the concept of heavy competitiveness and the custom of prizes and awards are not present and that only partial competitiveness games are practiced among the Australian Aboriginals.

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, Elsdon Best, (1925) published his ethnographic studies on games among the Maori tribes of New Zealand titled ‘Games and Pastimes of the Maori’. In this account he recorded various games, exercises and pastimes that were observed and practiced among the natives of the New Zealand. Best, (1925) categorized the data on these activities in to various categories as games of useful training which includes military exercises and games (e.g., wrestling, boxing and foot racing), aquatic games and pastimes (e.g., swimming, surf riding, and canoe racing), dexterity games (e.g., jackstones, dart throwing, and cat’s cradle), games of calculation, mental awareness and memorizing powers (e.g., riddles, draughts, and word play), children games (e.g., kite flying, stilt walking, and swinging), introduced games, and singing songs and musical instruments of Maori. During the period of mid twentieth century, many scholars contributed their work on the studies of games and play. Large amounts of data on games and pastimes were collected among different societies of both tribal and non tribal communities, some of which included comparative studies between different cultures. One of such pioneer works on comparative work on games was Paul. G. Brewster, (1952, 1953) an American folklorist and anthropologist, who focused on the games of both children and adults based on both literature and interviews conducted in the field. He believed that the elements of non-indigenous communities can be observed through the games played by a particular tribe or community when they have cultural contact with cultures from other communities. Brewster, (1952, 1953) classified the games and pastime activities from his articles ‘North Carolina children’s games and rhymes’ and ‘American non-singing games’ as Ball games, hiding games, jumping and hopping games, practical jokes, battle games, dramatic games, penalty or forfeit games, chasing games, dexterity games, tug-of-war games, imitative games, courtship and marriage games, teasing games, games of smaller children and little girls, elimination games, dancing games, miscellaneous games, paper-pencil games and tick games. Along with the classification of various games, he also provided brief information on history and geographical distribution of the games and the age of the game. Based on the number of players play in the game, Brewster and Thomas Sebeok, (1958) classified ninety

seven games of Cheremis of Uralic culture into seven different categories like 'it' games, individual competition, team play, partners, rhythmic or dramatic games, practical jokes, and unclassified or unidentified games and compared these games with the games of different countries in the world. According to Brewster's (1958) belief, the study of a particular game in comparison with other cultures helps in understanding the movement and adaptation of culture from one place to another.

Unlike many past and present scholars who concentrated on the origin, diffusion, similarities among games played at different societies, Sutton-Smith concentrated on the studies of differences and changes in games among different communities and cultures that comes over a period of time. Like Best (1925), Sutton-Smith, (1959) also collected games and play of the New Zealand tribes in his work, 'The Games of New Zealand Children' with the help of interviews from adults, university students, teachers, school children, investigative observation and different manuscripts. He categorized the games he collected on the basis of two criteria, that is, structural (based on the characteristic features of games) and developmental (based on age or sex of the player) criteria. The games that comes under structural criteria are categorized into ten types, namely, singing games, dialogue games, informal (or make believe) games, leader games, chasing games, rhythmic games, game of chance, teasing games, parlor games and skill games. On the basis of developmental terms, he categorized games into four different categories, namely, oral games (age six to nine years), central-person games (up to eleven years age), individual-skill games (start from eleven years age) and team games (beginning from eleven or twelve years of age) Schwartzman, (1978). Besides the categorization of games and play along with brief description and historical discussions, he tried to analyze the changes and effects of games of one community on the games of other communities. He also tried to understand the reasons for increase in the preference for informal games among the children than preference for formal games as formal games reflect the previous social forms of the society which do not fit in the present new generation social systems of the society. Sutton-Smith, (1959) tried to examine the social changes in relation to the games children play which shifted the focus of categorizing games to analyzing games in relation to social and cultural changes. Like many scholars on games, Iona and Peter Opie, (1959) collected and examined huge data on games played by English speaking school children in different parts of England, Scotland, Wales and Dublin. Their major contribution was 'The Lore and Language of School Children' in which

they described children's speech play which includes riddles, rhymes, chants etc. Their second major contribution on games was 'Children's Games in Street and Playground' in which they collected various games played by children from rural and urban areas and also classified the data into categories like chasing games, catching games, seeking games, hunting games, racing games, dueling games, exerting games, daring games, guessing games, acting games and pretending games. Many researchers on games and play, especially particularists and diffusionist scholars focused on the origin, distribution and description of games rather than focusing on the contextual aspect of game and play like the purpose of games, who play, who does not play, when do they play, how many times do they play, cultural and social significance of play and games, etc.

With the advent of functionalist approach in anthropology by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, (1952) and Bronislaw Malinowski (1944), the study of games and play shifted its focus from particularist and diffusionist perspective to the concept of 'function' of social behavior. George Herbert Mead, (1932) was the early scholar who applied functionalist approach in the study of children's games in his classic study 'Mind, Self and Society'. He examined various children games on the basis of language development, growth among children and classified games on the basis of the function of games in relation to the development of the child. Many scholars, especially from anthropology and psychology, got influenced by the concept of relation between function and development of the children. Continuing with the trend of observing relationships between the players, Rivera Eifermann (1970) in 'Cooperation and egalitarianism in Kibbutz children's games', classified the games collected on the basis of competitiveness, grouping in the game, symmetrical or non symmetrical relationship of player and classified the games into eight categories, namely, single-party games, symmetrical single-party games, singletons, singletons with interchangeable roles, singletons versus many singletons, singletons with overprivileged and/or underprivileged singleton, two groups and the final, two intra symmetrical groups. John Roberts, Arth and Bush, (1959) classified games into three broad categories, namely, Games of Skill, Games of Strategy and Games of Chance in their article 'Games in Culture'. Roger Callois, (1960) proposed a classification scheme based on the structure of the games in his 'Man, Play, and Games'. He proposed four types of play and were identified as Agon (competition), Alea (chance),

Mimicry (simulation), and Ilinx (vertigo). He also proposed types of play which are characterized by Ludus (controlled and regulated play) and Paidia (spontaneous play).

Indian Scholars:

Along with the attempts of Western scholars in understanding and studying play and games, certain Indian scholars also concentrated on the study of games, though not directly on the subject but through historical references and literature basis. It is evident from the literary works of the Indian scholars that the study of games and play were started before Christian era in Indian history. The book III of Kautilya's Arthashastra (c. 350-283 BC), which was translated into English by R. Shamasastri, (1915) consisted of a chapter 'Gambling and betting and miscellaneous offenses'. This chapter talks about the rules and amercements that the gamblers had to follow at the gambling houses. In Kautilya's Arthashastra translated into Telugu by Maamidipudi Venkatarangaiya, (1968), the author explained that Kautilya classified games on the basis of gender, places, activities and the qualification of the players. K. Balendu Sekharam, (1973) a historian of Andhra Pradesh classified the games and sports played among the Andhras in relation with festivals and celebrations on the basis of place the games were played, that is, inside and outside games in his book 'The Andhras Through Ages'. Though the classifications of games and play were not clearly mentioned and were not analysed on the social and cultural aspects of the people, many scholars both in regional and other languages tried to classify the games to have a better understanding. Vadla Subrahmanyam, (1982) a professor at Andhra University, in his book, '*Telugu Sahityam lo Kreedha Vinodhalu- Socio-Cultural study of Native games, sports and amusements in Telugu literature*' gave a brief description of games that were collected from various Telugu literature sources. Subrahmanyam examined the games represented in the literature through different sources and provided an elaborate description of each game.

Though many scholars tried to classify games and play according to various aspects of games, not one classification was concrete because of the very nature of the games. It is understood that it is quite difficult to categorize games under one single category as its nature is complex and that its nature is derived from different sources, Sutton-Smith, (1959) and Richard. M. Darson, (1972). Games consists of more than one character of its own and is influenced by various aspects which changes from culture to culture. To classify games, it is better to focus on the complex group

behaviors of games from multiple aspects. These aspects include age; gender; occasion; place; geographical distribution; time; number of players; equipment; function-skill, chance, strategy; religious; seasonal; and status of games. It is not that the games follow strict classification and belongs to one category. Some times, the categories are flexible and not determinant.

The category of age can further be divided into different sections. According to many psychologists, stages of human development are based on the physical and mental changes or development of a person which reflect behavioral and experience changes. The sub-categories of age includes Infancy (from birth to eighteen months of age, where the infant learns to adapt to the new world who comes out from mother's womb); Childhood (from the age of 18 months to twelve years. It is further sub-divided into early childhood (18 months to 3 years), middle childhood (3 years to 5 years) and late childhood (5 years to 12 years); Adolescence (from 12 years to 20 years); Adulthood (from 20 years to 65 years). Adulthood is further sub-divided into early adulthood (from 20 years to 30 years) and mature adulthood (from 30 years to 65 years). The last stage of development is Old age (from 65 years to death).

Games classified on the basis of age:

During the infancy, infants can not play games by themselves as they hardly move their limbs and body. So, during this stage, the infant is not left alone. The infant is assisted with someone from the family to be entertained. Most of the times, the baby is experienced to touch, sight, smell and hearing and thus, the family members entertain the baby with making sounds, showing objects which does not harm the baby, holding and moving the hands and legs of the baby etc. Elders in the family play song games like *Ugganna*, *jeernam jeernam*, *tarangam*, *Tappatloye taalaloye*, etc. They are also made to play with soft dolls and rattles. This happens till the baby reaches three years of age. When the baby grows to three years, development in the muscular and nervous systems is clearly observed. The child now no longer sits and watch. It can now move and walk by its own. Though the mental development is slow, the baby moves around and grab things to examine. During this period, the child is still assisted and accompanied with elders. Small games like catching soft small balls, making the baby run and catch the elders, making the baby swing on the legs of the elders holding the baby's hands, turning the baby round in air holding its hands, bump up the baby in the air and catching, *Deyvudamma deyvudu*, *Yenugamma Yenugu*,

Appada tappada taandri, Uppu bastha (salt sack) etc are the games which elders play with the children of three years. It is from the middle to late childhood, that is, from four years to twelve years of age, that the children involve in games more when compared to any age in life. It is that during this age the children involve in games for more time. Till the age of six years, the child is treated as special in the group of elder players. This special treatment is called '*aatallo aratipandu*' which means banana in the game. Though the literary meaning of the word is irrelevant, the word implies a special treatment to the kid that the rules in the game does not apply to the kid and is thus given a special regard to play in the game. It is from the age of six year, the child is treated as a player in the group of children below twelve years of age. During this age, both boys and girls play games together. Games like *Yedu penkula aata* (seven stones), *Guti billa*, *Bongaralu* (spinning tops), *Bachhalu*, *Kothi komochhi*, *Vangu dhookudu*, *Daagudu muthalu* (hide and seek), *Tokkudu billa*, *Kappa genthulu*, *Bommala pellillu*, *Buvvalaata*, *Uppu Bastha* (salt game), *Taadaata* (skipping), *Pinneesulu aata* (safety pins game), *Amma Nanna aata*, *Gaali patalu* (kites), *cycle tyre aata*, *Munju kaaya ballu aata* (palmyra palm fruit shell toys), *Chaakali banana aata*, *Kallaki ganthalu* (blind fold), *Esukalo ellu* (sand houses), *Achhangayalu*, *Aaku muttu aata*, *Veeri Veeri gummadi pandu*, *Uppula kuppaa*, *Kuntaata* (hopping), *Raja-Rani aata*, *Kaalla gajja*, *Ramudu- Sita*, *Uyyala* (swinging), *Neeti kappalaata*, *Debbaki rendu drakshapallu*, *Gattu meydha kodi gavvallara*, *Chinni binni yemitlu*, *Gudi gudi gunjam*, *Antukuney aatalu* (tag games), *Bomma pranam*, *Neyla banda*, *Donga police*, *Pulusu aata*, *Dhoo Dhoo pulla*, *Pulochey meyka! Dhaakko meyka!*, *Chakali baana*, *Barri aata* (buffalo game), *Mudra ball*, and *Veepu chutney*.

Adolescence is the age from twelve years to twenty years of age. This is the age when games are restricted on gender basis. Boys and girls play games separately by themselves. Girls and boys playing together is socially restricted. It is from this age girls are restricted to go out and play. They are rather asked to spend time sitting at home and play indoor games as it is the age of puberty. Once the girl reaches her puberty age, she is not allowed to play games like in her childhood. She is asked to learn household work and spend her leisure time in related to domestic work. This is also observed among young boys who just completed their childhood and enters adolescence. But restriction on boys is not as rigid as observed among girls. The girls are prepared to take up their next phase of life, that is, marriage and bringing up family. Her goals will be changed to taking care of husband and her future children.

Nevertheless, the girls are allowed to play certain games in their leisure times. Her in laws becomes her playmates and women at her husbands house becomes her friends to play. During this typical transformation time, the girls are allowed to play certain games like *Achangayalu*, *Vamana guntalu*, *Naalugu sthambaaluu aata*, *Uppula kuppaa*, *Kaalla gajja*, *Raamudu sita*, *Uyyalaata* (swinging), *Tokkudu billa*, *Chintha pikkalu*, *Gavvalaata*, *Puli joodam*, *Dhaadi aata*, *Asta chamma*, *Chedarangam* (chess), *Pachis aata*, *Vaikunta paali* and shuttle badminton. With the initiation of formal education, the girl children who are going to schools and colleges are allowed to participate in sports like *Kho-kho*, *Kabaddi*, running race and other formal games. The games boys play during this age are *Goleelu* (marbles), *Bongaralu* (spinning tops), *Bachhalu*, *Kabaddi*, *KhoKho*, *Nimma visurudu*, *Eetha poteelu* (swimming games), *Uppu Bastha*, *Kodi pandalu* (rooster fights), *Gaali pataalu* (kites), *Cheypalu pattadam* (fishing), *Neeti Kappalu*, *Chedarangam* (chess), *Pachis*, *Puli joodam*, *Vaikuntapali* and *Asta chamma* are played. Along with these games, boys also play formal games like cricket, running race, high jump, long jump, etc and participate in competitions.

Games classified on the basis of gender:

Games in the villages are very gender specific. This is because of the social and cultural constrains that are setup to be pursued for the maintenance of the structure of the society. Nevertheless, there are certain games that are played by both the gender which is again specific to situation and the age of the players. Thus, it can be understood that the gender specification is situation and culture driven rather than the social rules specified in common. As the age grows, the restrictions on games become stringent and the division of gender on games is more pronounced. The games that are specific to girls are *Tokkudu Billa*, *Buvvalaata*, *Taadaata* (skipping), *Achhangayalu*, *Atha Kodali aata*, *Vaamana Guntalu*, *Kaalla Gajji*, *Chinthapikkalu*, *Gavvalaata*, games on *Atla Taddi* festival, *Uyyala* (swing games), *Oppula Kuppaa*, *Chemma Chekka*, *Naalugu Sthambalaata*, *Bommala Pelli*, *Vaikuntapaali*, etc.

The games that are specific to boys are *Yedupenkula aata*, *Guti Billa*, *Bongaralu* (spinning tops), *Goleelu* (marbles), *Bachhalu*, *Kothi Komochi*, *Vangu Dhookudu*, *Chedugudu*, *Nimma Visurudu*, *Kappa Genthulu*, *Eethala Poteelu* (swimming), *Uppu Bastha*, *Kodi Pandhalu* (rooster fights), *Pandhula pandhalu* (pig fights), *Yedla pandhalu* (cattle show), *Pottelu pandhalu* (ram fights), *Peykaata* (playing cards),

Gaali patalu (kites), Cycle tyre *aata*, *Munjukaaya Ballu aata*, *Cheypalu pattadam* (fishing), *Uppu aata* etc.

The games that are played by both boys and girls are *Daagudu Moothalu* (hide and seek), *Chedugudu* (Kabaddi), *KhoKho*, Swimming games, *Bommala Pellillu*, *Buvvalaata*, Skipping, *Pinneesulaata*, *Amma Naanna aata*, *Kallaki Ganthalu*, *Vaikuntapali*, *Aakumuttu aata*, *Veeri Veeri Gummadi Pandu*, *Gudi Gudi Gunjam*, Fishing, *Raja Rani aata*, *Raamudu Seetha*, *Gavvalata*, *Puli-meyka*, *Daadi aata*, Toys making with mud and leaves, *Debbaki rendu draksha pallu*, *Gattu Meeda Kodi Gavvallara*, *Chinni Binni*, *Gudi Gudi Gunjam*, *Asta Chamma*, *Tag games*, *Bomma Pranam*, *Donga Police*, *Pulusu aata*, *Dhoo Dhoo Pulla*, *Pulochey Meyka! Dhaakko Meyka!*, *Chakali Baana*, *Neyla Banda*, *Sand games like Esukalo Ellu*, *Esuka Kuppalu*, *Chess*, *Pachis*, *Barri* (buffalo) game, *Mudra ball* etc.

Games classified on the basis of occasion:

Games are played on both normal days and also on some special occasions. For children, playing games on a daily basis is normal and it goes along with their routine lifestyle. But in the case of adults, playing games signifies a special occasion to celebrate and cherish joy and happiness. This is visible during different special occasions like festivals and ceremonies like birth ceremonies, cradle ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, public ceremonies, and get togethers like *Vanabhojanalu*. The participation of both adults and children in games signifies a special occasion as it is not observed in daily life. Of all the different facets of games, fun factor is the primary aspect of the games which is celebrated on special occasions. Along with the fun factor, social and cultural significances of the special situations are practiced with the help of games.

During the festivals like *Atla taddi*, *Sankranthi*, *Dussera*, *Krishnastami*, *Holi*, *Ugadi*, *Siva rathri* etc games are played as a part of celebration. Games like *Uyyala* (swinging), *Vuppula Kuppala*, *Tokkidi Billa*, *Utti Kottadam*, *Vasanthalu*, *Gaali Patalu* (kites), *Kodi Pandalu*, *Pottelu Pandalu*, *Yedla Pandalu*, *Bommala Pellillu*, etc are played during festival seasons. Games like pula *Banthe aata*, *Kaayalu-Sarulu* (odds and evens), powder game, *Vasanthalu*, *Ungaraalaata* (rings game), *Chinni Binni*, etc are played during different ceremonies and special events.

Games Played during various occasions or festivals (Table No.6)		
Festival/ Occasions	Games Played	Description of the festival
Atla Taddi	Uyyala (swinging), Oppula Kuppa, Tokkudu Billa, Ashta Chamma, Acchangallu, Housie, Buvvalata, Chinni binni emitlu, Antukuney Aata, Current Shock, Donga Police	The festival is specially important in the context of games as the girl children, by virtue of the ritual play various games all through the day. The festival has fasting as an important aspect and almost all the girls and married woman observed fasting on this day. It occurs on the 3 rd night after the full moon in Aswayuja month of Telugu calendar and falls in either September or October in the Gregorian calendar. This event is similar to karva chauth celebrated in North India.
Sanskranthi	Kodi Pandalu, Gaali Patalu, Uyyala (swinging), Housie, Bongaralu, Buvvalata, Yedla Pandalu, Pottelu Pandalu, Antukuney Aata, Current Shock, Donga Police	Sankranthi Festival is one of the most important festivals celebrated in the region and is celebrated when the sun enters the zodiac of Capricorn. The festival is celebrated for about three days. Rooster fights (Kodi Pandalu), Oxen Race(Yedla Pandalu), Ram Fights (Pottelu Pandalu) have the aspects of gambling attached which are grandly played during the festival.

Dusshera	Bommala Koluvu, Housie , Bommala Pelli, Buvvalata, Amma Naanna Aata, Antukuney Aata, Current Shock, Donga Police	Dusshera festival is celebrated every year in the month of Ashvin, the seventh month of the Hindu Luni Solar Calendar on the tenth day. According to the Gregorian calendar it falls in the months of September or October. The festival has the tradition of playing by arranging a display of various dolls (bommala koluvu), Bommala Pelli(mock marriage of the dolls) and several general tag games
Krishnashtami	Vasanthalu, Vuttikottadam, Krishna's Role Play, Antukuney Aata, Current Shock, Donga Police	This festival is celebrated signifying the birthday of Lord Krishna, a Hindu God. The festival is celebrated more popularly in North India. In village marteru too, Krishnashtami is celebrated. A game which is called vuttikottadam is prevalently played during the festival. It is where a pot which is being swiftly dragged in such a way to keep it away from the reach of the player trying to break it is the central idea. The game continues till the entire group trying to break the pot makes human ladders to climb on

		each other and finally break the pot. Vasanthalu , is a play with colors. Colored water or powder are thrown at each other and the play is totally about splashing colors at each other.
Holi	Vasanthalu, Antukuney Aata , Current Shock, Donga Police	The festival of Holi is celebrated generally in the month of February or March on a full moon day. It is a full moon day in the month of Phalguni. The festival signifies the death of the evil "Holika" and the raise of divinity and goodness. The festival mainly involves splashing colors at each other and it is a play in which people get to meet new friends, iron out old fights and discrepancies and build bonds
Ugadi	Uyyala (Swinging), Dagudu Muthalu, Antukuney Aata, Current Shock, Donga Police	Ugadi Signifies the beginning of the New Year according to telugu calendar. It falls in the months of march or april. It is a festival when people get together and eat the pickle of ugadi which is a mixture of various tastes signifying the various shades of life.

Siva Rathri	Vaikuntapaali, Housie, Antukuney Aata, Current Shock, Donga Police	Sivarathri is a festival of Hindu God, Lord Shiva, The entire day is spent in devotional activities and rituals by elders and the people do not sleep the entire night of the festival as part of the ritual. During their time in the night which is called “Jagaram” various games are played by elders and children too.
Marriage	Pula Banthi Aata, Kaayalu Sarulu (odds and evens) , Powder game, Vasanthalu, Ungaraalata (Rings Game)	In telugu traditions marriages have various games embedded in the form of rituals. This escalates the bonding between the newly wed and develops an ease for the interactions to take place. Some of these games are played by the bride with the women in the families which strengthens the ties between the family members as well.,

Games classified on the basis of place:

Depending on the place where games are played, games are divided into indoor games and outdoor games. The literary meaning of the word indoor is anything situated or conducted or used inside a building or under cover and outdoor is anything conducted or situated outside a building. Notwithstanding the literary meanings of the words, the concept of indoor and outdoor are significant with cultural understandings of the words. Though the word indoor signifies anything conducted inside a building and under a roof, sometimes a space within the premises of house and without a roof is also considered as indoor. Games that are played in the courtyards, veranda, porch, on *Racha Banda*, *Inti Arugu* etc with or without a roof are considered to be played inside the house and are represented as indoor games. Outdoor includes anything conducted outside the building, in an open space and not under a roof like play grounds, open spaces, etc. Indoor games are usually those games which are sit and play games and those which require limited space to play. Games like *Achhangayalu*, *Tokkudu Billa*, *Kappa Genthulu*, *Bommala Pelli*, *Buvvalaata*, *Uppu Bastha*, *Pinneesulaata*, *Amma Naanna aata*, *Vaamana Guntalu*, *Naalugu Sthambalu aata*, *Veeri Veeri Gummadi Pandu*, *Raamudu Seeta*, *Puli-Meyka*, *Daadi*, *Debbaki Rendu Draksha Pallu*, *Gattu Meda Kodi Gavvallara*, *Chinni Binni*, *Gudi Gudi Gunjam*, *Asta Chamma*, *Pulusu aata*, *Devudamma Devudu*, *Tappatloye Taalaloye*, *Appadatappada Taandri*, *Chedarangam* (Chess), *Pachis*, *Vaikuntapali* etc are indoor games. It is believed that games played with cowries bring bad omen as they represent gambling which were present in Hindu epics like Mahabharata. As the game of cowries, that is, pachis was played by the *Pandavas* which brought bad omen to the entire country along with the kings is significantly believed and so it is restricted from playing continuously in the house. Outdoor games include *Yedupenkulaata*, *Guti Billa*, *Bongaralu*, *Goleelu*, *Bachchalu*, *Kothi Kommochi*, *Vangu Dhookudu*, *Chedugudu*, *Nimma Visurudu*, *Eethala Poteelu* (swimming games), *Kodi pandalu*, *Yedla pandalu*, *Pottelu pandalu*, *Gaali patalu* (kites), cycle tyre *aata*, *Munju Kaaya Ballu*, *Chaakali Baana*, *Aaku Muttu aata*, *Cheypalu Pattadam* (fishing), *Kuntaata* (hoping), *KhoKho*, *Neeti Kappalaata*, *Antukuney aata* (tag games), *Bomma Pranam*, *Donga Police*, *Dhoo Dhoo Pulla*, *Pulochey Meyka!*, *Dhaakko Meyka!*, *Barri aata*, *Mudra ball*, *Uppu Bastha* etc.

Sometimes, with a small change in the rules of the game played, an outdoor game is also played inside the house by the children. Games like *Daagudu Muthalu*

(hide and seek), *Taadaata* (skipping), *Kallaki Ganthalu*, *Peykata* (playing cards), *Vuppula Kuppa*, *Kuntaata* (hopping), *Raja Rani*, *Uyyala* (swinging), *Gavvalaata*, *Asta Chamma*, *Donga Police*, *Neyla Banda* etc are the games that are played both outside and inside sometimes, under a roof and sometimes not depending upon the space required and provided in the house.

Games classified on the basis of geographical location:

Though most games are common and spread through out different places in the world, they are specific to the culture and the environment of that particular society. Games are formed on the basis of availability of natural resources which are again reflected in the games played. Certain games require sand to play and certain games require rocks to play. This explains that games can be segregated on the basis of the availability of the resources and the medium through which a game is played. Sand games and water games reflect the availability of water resources like ponds, lakes, rivers and seas at the places in which these games are played. Games like *Neyla Banda* reflect places with rocks and dry lands by which the game is played. *Kothi Komochi* game reflects the availability of huge trees with long branches like mango trees, banyan trees etc available and grown in certain locations and under certain climatic conditions. Making dolls and toys with coconut leaves, palm leaves and palm fruit toys also reflect the locations in which these trees are available. Though the availability of resources has increased with the globalization and through export and import of goods, the usage of tamarind seeds and cowries reflect the cultural implication of tamarind as a part of food and cowries from water bodies which is again pertained to certain geographical locations. Thus, it is understood that games also reflect the geographical location of a society in which the games are played.

Games classified on the basis of time

Though a multitude of factors influence play or games of any kind which makes the aspect of classification complex, time is a common factor across all the games and activities and its reflection on the way the games are structured is undeniably deep. Duration of the game offers an important aspect to segregate the games into various types. In the game of *Ashta Chemma*, two variants are generally found in the villages. One is played on a 5x5 grid while the other is played on a 7x7 grid. Which variant is

to be played is often the decision of the players basing on the leisure time available. If the players decide to play for a longer time, they select such kind of game which takes a longer duration to complete. *Omana Guntalu*, a game popularly played in the region of study, is generally played by couples to spend their leisure time after dinner till they go to sleep. This game is selected to be played during that time in the nights as it becomes an entertaining activity for the couples for about 2-3 hours till they go to bed. Another important aspect of time is about time becoming an important component of the design of the game itself. Several games have speed as an important factor in the way a game is played. Speed itself is about the distance covered in a certain time and hence time that way could influence another dimension of whether the activity involved in the game has the necessity of keeping up the speed to enhance the winning chances. Stopwatches in many games have become mandatory to calculate the performance of the players. *KhoKho*, a game played all across India has the referee standing with a stop watch to whistle when the time intended for a round expires.

On what time of the day, what type of games could be played is another important dimension by which the segregation of games could be attempted. Some games are played more commonly during the evenings while others are played during the broad day light of the mornings. *Dagudu muthalu* (hide and seek) is played generally during the evenings as it increases the chances of hiding in the shade and adds excitement to the players as they have to combat the fear of hiding in the shade or darkness, yet play with the rest of the players to win. Games like *Kothi Kommachi*, *Aaku Muttaata* which are played amidst of the trees, gardens or fields, are played during that day in broad day light as it is a safer time of the day to play avoiding the risk of being bitten by ants , snakes or any such farm dwelling animals. In a version of *Nela Banda* which is called *Cheekati Vennela*, sometimes players are seen identifying the regions as *Cheekati* (darkness) and *Vennela* (moon light) basing on the shadow differences on the play area. *Golilu*, a game in which marble balls are shot, requires day light to be present for the players to accurately shoot it from a distance and hence the game is played usually in day light. Thus, when an attempt is made to segregate the games on the basis of time, though there are many aspects which are grey and cannot be segregated distinctly as black or white, it helps us in understanding the requirements of each of the games and the reasons behind their preferred time of play.

Games classified on the basis of number of players:

Games are designed to be played as a single player, two-player or multi-player games. Depending on the number of people gathered at the time of play, the game that has to be played is identified. For instance, if ten friends gathered, it is not possible to play a two-player game as there are more number of people gathered for the play than the game can accommodate. Games like *Acchangayalu* could be played in single player or multiplayer mode as well. *Omana Guntalu* is played as a time pass game by a single player or by two players or four players in the version of *Attha Kodallaata*. Some games have fixed number of players required to play the game, like *Kho Kho* and *Chedugudu*. *Chedarangam* is a two player game and hence displays an aspect of competitiveness and rivalry between the two participants as they play the game. *Kuntaata* is a multiplayer game. In a version of *kuntaata* there is a feature of playing it in teams containing two players each. Teams in multiplayer games build friendships and enhance social bondings. A successful couple in a game are more likely to have positive interpersonal relationships and the likelihood of the continuance of their association across other games is also seen. Some games, though are designed to be played as a single player game, friends gather to take turns and play. Tyre *aata*, *Munji ballu*, *Gaali Pataalu* are some of the games which are actually played by a single player though the other friends in the group take turns or run after the actual player in all excitement. In some games, a player is singled out by a counting out game and is called *Donga* who plays a specific role and does a specific activity to escape from the other players or to ferret after the other players. Here, the aspect of one player against all the rest of the players is seen in a multiplayer game. Tag games such as *Antukune aata*, *Bomma Praanam*, *Chaakali Baana*, *Kothi Kommacchi*, *Daagudu Muthalu*, *Naalugu Sthambaalaata* etc have these traits. Thus, in single player/ multiplayer classification as well, there is further scope for segregation basing on whether it is played in teams contesting to reach a common goal, or teams playing against teams or an individual playing against teams, an individual playing to achieve a goal or an individual playing against another individual or an individual playing in a single player mode with his or her peers participating in the joy of it.

Games classified on the basis of equipment:

Attempts could be made to classify on the basis of the equipment as well. Equipment could be animate or inanimate. Here animate is the word being attributed to animals such as roosters or bulls which are part of the games *Kodi Pandalu*, *Yedla Pandalu* etc. Pigeons, bulls, dragon flies as well fall in the animate equipment category as they are used to play certain games. Any materialistic inanimate objects such as a bat, ball, twigs, leaves, sticks, stones, tamarind seeds, pebbles, cowries etc are things that could be placed in the category of inanimate equipment. When the equipment required is expensive, only certain affluent communities in the village could play the game. There are many games which don't need any equipment and could be freely played without any requirement based constraints. For a game like cricket, bats, balls, wickets and bails become the required gear to play the game. Games such as *Nela Banda*, *Antukune aata*, *Bomma Praanam*, *Vaana Lappa*, *Kuntaata*, *Andalam*, *Kalla Gajje*, *Kuppi Ganthulu*, *Oppula Kuppa* etc don't require any equipment to play the game. Board games generally have the requirement of a board and coins to play the game. Chess (*Chedarangam*), *Pachis*, *OmanaGuntalu*, *Vaikuntapaali*, *Ashta Chemma* are some of the board games which require the related coins and boards to play the game. In games such as *Chaakali Baana*, though a minor requirement, a towel or hanky becomes important to play the game. The same is the case with *Kalla Ganthalu*. *Golilu* game requires marbles, *Bongaralu* requires Tops, Sticks are required for *Karra Billa*, *Kolatam*, Dolls or Idols are required for *Bommala Pellillu*, *Gujjana Gullu*, empty cigarette boxes to play *Bacchalu*, Cycle tyre to play tyre *aata*, safety pins to play *Pinneesulaata*, sand to play *Esukalo Illu*, playing cards for *Peykaata* are the essential equipment for the respective games. The affordability of a family to purchase the paraphernalia required for a game also becomes a deciding factor of what games are played by a child.

Games classified on the basis of function:

Classification could be attempted basing on the function thus carried out by the game. Some games have the elements of extreme physical activity which escalate the development of physical strength, stamina and the skill of doing a particular physical activity. Race games and tag games often involve running which could facilitate the development of stamina and skill to run. Quickness in psycho-motor functions could be put to a drill to enhance the accuracy of limbic movements and coordination during

the play of various games. In games such as *Golilu*, *Nimma Visurudu*, shooting a target is the skill that is developed as a consequence of playing the game. Resistance is another aspect that is continuously put to a developmental process in some games. In *Uyyaalaata*, players combat vertigo and develop a resistance to the fear of falling or losing altitude. In the game of *Andalamu*, players try to carry as long as they could resisting to the pain of carrying the child from one point to the other. In several games resistance is an ingredient that is developed as a consequence. Player push themselves through all the obstacles and physical weaknesses to perform their best to win the game. Games offer both psychological and a physiological function. The will power to strain themselves beyond comfort zone to win the game is more of a psychological function first. The routine exercise of the muscles, builds up the muscle strength.

Some games have the social function of developing good interpersonal relationships between the players. Such games often don't have the aspect of win or lose as the primary aspect. Some games such as *Vaikuntapaali* function as the essential tools to introduce the mythological and philosophical concepts that are embedded in a culture. Games of chance function to introduce the unpredictable nature of human life and survival and the need of living through ups and downs in the hope of a brighter tomorrow. Games such as *Chedarangam* are pure games of strategy which enhance the power of thinking and problem solving in an individual. The aspects of war in games like *Chedarangam*, *Ashta Chemma* introduce the inevitable duty one has to execute irrespective of the element of compassion in a war like situation and emphasize the importance of planning. Further, the basis of every game of strategy is performing amidst a set of stringent rules. *Uppaata*, *Thokkudu Billa*, *Kho Kho*, *Kabaddi*, *Omana Guntalu*, *Pekata*, *Puli Meka*, etc have aspects of strategy profoundly reflected in the design of the games though a staunch of chance exists in several of them. Players play abiding by a stringent set of rules and under tremendous pressure. Planning amidst of such pressure, not bypassing any of the rules is what is reflected in these games. Hence, each of the games of strategy offers a miniature version of life itself where the pressure of rules or constraints is inevitable and the players are to maneuver with strategic planning to pass through the paths of obstacles and reach the destinations.

Life is a combination of several aspects and a wholesome picture of life is reflected in the games. Each of the games renders a unique combination of concepts,

training and an opportunity to develop to the players. In agrarian societies especially, the concept that discusses quality of life as a consequence of what nature has to offer in terms of rains is observed. This is a requisite in the society to perceive both winning and loosing in the same spirit and continue to hope for a brighter tomorrow. Life is viewed as a combination of what could be achieved with hard work and will power and what luck has to offer. Games of skill, Games of Strategy play the role of introducing life as a consequence of one's hard work, skill and learnings while the games of chance install the perspective of driving life through the sudden twists and turns of life that are not a consequence of any individual's actions but are to be perceived under the bracket of fate. Concepts of pious and sin are as well introduced through games of chance, like *Vaikuntapaali* not neglecting the aspects of compassion. Thus games as a whole have a combined function of equipping individuals with the necessary psychological concepts and skills, physiological strengths and abilities to deal with various aspects of life though each of the games have a specialized set of functions to facilitate the development of the players in one or several aspects.

Imitation of teacher, mother, father etc are forms of imitation play which as well are important as they offer the function as crucial tools of learning for children as they play. Imitation helps in enhancing the socio-cultural understanding of the children. They begin to comply to the standards that are preset in the society and work to win the appreciation of the society by imitating the ones who are setup as role models. Some games function to reminisce the history and culture of a society. In *Andalamu* game, children take a younger child in a procession by a palanquin built by placing the hands of the players like a frame. The children play the roles of palanquin bearers and the one sitting on the palanquin is treated as God. It is not only a reflection of what the society has in terms of understanding God, rituals connected and the holy procession but also about the honor attached to the palanquin bearers when they carry God. Here the function of introducing a religious thinking in all subtleness to the players is executed. All such functions are carried out subliminally just by the aspect of imitation embedded in the game. In the game of uppu bastha, the activity of salt seller is imitated when the children carry the other players on their backs. Thus the games of imitation offer two distinct functions. One, introducing what is essential to develop and consider the achievers in the families as role models which inturn installs respect

towards those role models in the minds of the children. Two, a way of introducing and reminiscing the religious, historical and ethical values embedded in the society.

Games classified on the basis of seasons:

Some games have a connection with the season and time of the year. Indoor games have a special importance during summers as the elders in the families want to have their kids engaged in a play at homes in shade, protected from the heat of the summer. *Kalla Gajje, Gudugudu Guncham, Ashta chemma, Vaikuntapaali, Veeri Veeri Gummadi Pandu, Acchangayalu* etc are played during the after noon times in summers to keep the children safely engaged in a play in the shade. Some games cannot be played during the rainy season as the floor all around becomes damp and uncomfortable to play. Tag games and games that require running and movement in between places are generally avoided during the rainy season. Certain games have ritual connections and are played during special events and festivals. Games with such ritual connections have allied stories which reinforce the religious concepts. Some stories mandate the following of the ritual and there by the play of the connected game as well. In the region of study *Atlataddi* is a festival which has a profound connection with the games. *Uyyaalaata* is specially played on the day of *Atla Taddi* festival every year and all the ladies in the village play games as part of the ritual every year in pursuit of auspiciousness in their lives which is connected to the wellbeing of their husbands or the coming of an able and handsome husband in the case of singles. *Kolatam* is played during *Krishnashtami* and *Dusshera* festivals. The legendary love story of Krishna and Radha and their holy love is reflected in games like *Kolatam* and *Uyyaalaata*. Games have astrological connections as well. The position of planets according to the Gregorian calendar are taken into consideration to calculate on the day of the festival. Legends that have an astrological connection mandate the following of a festival and play games as part of a ritual process.

Games classified on the basis of Economic Status of the people:

It was already mentioned during discussion on segregation of games on the basis of equipment that some games could be played only by the children of families that are affluent to purchase the equipment thus required. Games that don't require any equipment are generally the games played by the children coming from families with

lower levels of affordability. When we expand it on the basis of the economic aspect, we could understand that some games eventually become status symbols for some communities as they display the economic status of the family when the children play. A reverse trend could also be observed in the villages where some games are not allowed to be played by some families as they represent a low status. For instance, the game of bacchalu is not played by the higher community people in the villages as it is thought to be a game played by lower community and lower class people. The game of *Bacchalu* has the requirement of cigarette boxes to play the game. The game is played by the children by collecting the empty cigarette boxes from their fathers or uncles or by requesting a friendly vendor in the village. Children, playing with the boxes of cigarettes which are generally a symbol of addiction of smoking itself is treated as an unhealthy and low status practice of the families of lower social status. There is a shift of focus and interest among families towards games that are played as part of formal tournaments. Cricket, Badminton, *KhoKho*, Basket Ball, *Kabaddi* are all perceived to be of a higher status and encouragement to the children among the families that could afford to buy the equipment required to play these games is observed. Some communities consider certain games as a symbol of royalty and aristocracy. This is especially observed among the people belonging to Rajulu community. In the case of rooster fights, the people of Rajulu community consider the game as a symbol of royalty and status. They make sure that they play the game as much as possible and perceive even losing money in the bet as an honorable aristocratic event in the game. This concept may not pertain to the people of other communities who participate in the rooster fights.

The above discussion explains the factors on which the games can be classified and different dimensions through which a game can be understood. It is also clear that no game can be described and classified basing on a single factor as the factors are inter related and inter dependent on each other. Thus, the above are the games that are found in the study field area from the people of different age groups. Since these games were being played from generations, there are certain cultural and social significances attached to these games that are related with the people of the field. But certain games are played and certain games are not played in the present generation. Changes in games are pretty much visible along with the disappearance of the original game. Not every game which is known to any single person is played by all.

Games in the contemporary society:

Games keep changing as the time changes along with different other elements of the culture. Different factors like up-gradation in technology, development, social influences, culture diffusions, migration and many such factors influence for change in the culture and there by games. The amount of change in a game differs from one game to another depending on the degree of influence.

The change can happen from a small degree like adding new terminologies to the games or change in the rules of the game, to a larger degree like change in the structure of the game. When the degree of change is more, then the possibility of disappearance of the game occurs. Most of the times, games adapt to new rules and changes happening in the society. Most of the times, adaptations are related to the convenience of the people of that particular culture and society. For instance, games which require trees with branches hanging down to climb easily got reduced in the present generation both in urban and town atmospheres. They even got reduced tremendously in the villages which reduces the chance of playing the game *Kothi Kommochi* where low strong branches are required to climb up a tree to play this game. Factors like deforestation, expansion of the cities, urbanization etc influence the cutting down of trees which result in disappearance of the game. A much in depth discussion and analysis regarding the factors influencing the games in the contemporary society is discussed in the coming chapters.

There are various games that are still being considered and being played till today with or without some changes, while there are certain games that lost their importance and there by their existence. Disappearance of games happen when they are not deeply rooted in culture and society. Games require cultural significance to hold for a longer duration through which people practice every year in a cyclic way. Games that do not have such significance slowly disappear with time as they are not recollected every year in a cyclic manner. New games are adapted as the old ones disappear in time and memory. The adaptation to new games happens with diffusion of cultures and migration of people. Schools are the major influencing hubs that create source for students and people from different cultural backgrounds to mingle at one place which results in cultural diffusion. Migration to different places within the country or abroad like Arab countries, America, Europe etc helps in learning or influencing to such culture and bringing back to the mother town. This act leads to

amalgamation of different cultural ideas which leads to a hybridized cultural form. Following are the games that are disappeared now but were played in last generation by children then and the games that are played now including new games.

Games that are not played and Games that are played now (Table No.7)			
Games	Forgotten	Played Rarely	Played Regular
Achanagandlu	-	*	-
Okkasi Khokka or KhoKho	-	-	*
Othothi Vaarothi/ Chaakali Baana		*	-
Oppulakuppa	-	*	-
Kallaganthalu	-	*	-
KaallaGajje	-	*	-
Kuntaata	-	-	*
Isuka Kuppa Aata	*	-	-
Kuppiganthulu	*	-	-
Kappa Genthulu	-	*	-
Kodi Pandalu	-	-	*
Kothi Komacchi	*	-	-
Ganjikaalu	*	-	-
Gaalipatam	-	-	*
GuduGuduGunchamu	-	*	-
Gurrapekkudu	-	*	-
Golilu	-	-	*
Chedarangam (Chess)	-	-	*
Asta Chamma	-	*	-
Omana Guntalu	-	*	-
Andalamu	-	*	-
Nela Banda	-	-	*
Thaataku Peekalu	*	-	-
Daagudumuthalu	-	-	*

Aakumuttaata	-	-	*
Uppaata/Cherraata	*	-	-
Uyyalaata	-	*	-
Caroms	-	-	*
Ludo	-	-	*
Snake and Ladder	-	-	*
Housie	-	-	*
Anthyakshari	-	-	*
Skipping/Taadaata	-	*	-
Daagudumuthalu	-	-	*
RamuduSeeta	-	-	*
ThokkuduBilla	-	*	-
Vaikuntapaali	-	*	-
Show	-	-	*
ShuttleBadminton	-	-	*
Cricket	-	-	*
Basket Ball	-	-	*
Foot Ball	-	-	*
Volley Ball	-	-	*
Throw Ball	-	-	*
Chedugudu/Kabaddi	-	-	*
Running	-	-	*
Bomma Pranam	-	*	-
Yedupenkulata	-	*	-
Bongaram	-	*	-
VanguDhookudu	-	*	-
GutiBilla	*	-	-
Bachchalu	*	-	-
Dadie	-	-	*
Chintapikkalaata	*	-	-
SabjaIndier	-	-	*
Munjikaaya Ballu	*	-	-

Ring Catches	-	-	*
Nimma visurudu	*	-	-
Bommala Pelli	-	*	-
Buvvalaata	-	-	*
Amma Nanna aata	-	-	*
Swimming	*	-	-
Uppu Bastha	-	*	-
Pandula pandalu	-	*	-
Yedla Bandi pandalu	-	-	*
Potteylu pandalu	-	*	-
Pinneesulaata	*	-	-
Utti kottadam	-	-	*
Cycle Tyre aata	-	*	-
Isuka Ellu/ Sand houses	-	*	-
Naalugu Sthambalaata	*	-	-
Challa Golloyamma	*	-	-
Veeri Veeri Gummadi Pandu	-	*	-
Fishing/ Cheypalu pattadam	-	*	-
Playing Cards/ Peykaata	-	-	*
Raja Rani Aata	-	-	*
Mudra Ball	-	-	*
Barri Aata	-	*	-
Puli Meyka	-	*	-
Neeti Kappalaata	-	*	-
Pandem Padiveylu	*	-	-
Banka mannu Bommalu	-	*	-
Kobbari aaku Bommalu	-	*	-
Debbaki Rendu Drakshapallu	-	*	-
Drakshapallu Teyyana Pullana	-	*	-
Current Shock	-	-	*
Donga Police	-	-	*
Number Pandalu	*	-	-

Bracket game	*	-	-
Pulusu aata	*	-	-
Avva appachi	-	*	-
AppadaTappada Tandri	-	-	*

The above table shows the games that disappeared from existence, in the process of disappearance and still being played as games. The reasons behind the disappearance can be many and some of the reasons can be predicted from the social and cultural aspects of the society. Lack of sufficient land, material like trees, cycle tyres etc, loosing significance of the game to play, social constrains, lack of sufficient time, perspectives of work and leisure, etc are the reasons behind the disappearance or about to disappear state of games. The games which have social significance, monetary aspect, high status elevation, convenience to play etc are the reasons behind certain games to exist till the present day. Games which are related with religious or festival or ritual significances also continued to last in spite of the games that does not have such importance. As festivals and rituals occur in a continuous manner every year in a cyclical term, the games that are attached to these aspects reiterate every year along with the other activities. There are many social and cultural factors that influence the very existence and continuity of the games in a society. It is important to know and analyze such factors and their significances in terms of games. Thus, the cultural significance of the games is dealt in the next chapter.

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF GAMES

Games and Culture:

The study of games in anthropology started with the early works of evolutionary anthropologists. In the early studies of games, which started during late 19th century, ethnologists like L. H. Morgan (1985), argued that culture evolved through a course of development in a series of stages from savage to civilization. They stressed that the development of culture in social life was similar to development of biological organisms. The evolutionists, by studying children from Western societies, explained games and children's play with the help of the concepts like unilinear stages and survivals and viewed games as adult activities of earlier societies that helped in continuing the social aspects. But, in the early 20th century, the evolutionary theories in cultural studies have undergone criticism by 'armchair' anthropologists who had no actual field experience. It was during the same time, in psychology, G. Stanley Hall's, (1904) scientific explanation of children's play and games as bio-cultural development in humans life, influenced two significant psychological theorists namely, Jean Piaget, (1951) and Sigmund Freud, (1955). Both of them illustrated children's growth and development through different stages in life though different perspectives. Jean Piaget, (1926) tried to understand and explain how children learn language, moral and are subjected to social growth and cognitive development through different stages among different societies. He also believed that, in all cultures, children adapt lower level of thinking ability (in play) than adults and primitive societies adapt lower thinking abilities than the Western societies which was objected by different researchers like Eifermann, (1970), M. Mead, (1963) at later point of time in relation to Piaget's stages of play and game development.

In the late 19th and early 20th century, theorists on children's play and games gave importance to the need for collection of games as they carry customs and tradition of the societies, in response to the armchair evolutionists, which they thought would soon disappear. They conceptualized games as survivals and treated them as archaeological remains which are to be preserved before they were to vanish in time. Anthropologists like E. B. Tylor (1879); Clark Wissler, (1926); Alfred L. Kroeber, (1920); Stewart Culin, (1891) and Newell (1883) explained that games are universal

and used perspectives like diffusion and particularism to explain how different parts of the world borrow or draw inspiration from one society to another as they form their customs and traditions. Tylor, (1879) argued that it is through culture contact sharing of customs happened among different societies and explained this concept through his famous study of Patolli and *Pachisi* game. He explained that the game Patolli, which was played by Aztec tribe in Mexico, must have come from the Hindu game *Pachisi* as it shared some similarities with the later. Through this, he further tried to emphasize that this North American tribe shares cultural similarities which got diffused long ago with Asian cultures and have Asiatic influence. But this was not accepted by theorists like Stewart Culin, (1903); Franz Boas, (1888); Clark Wissler, (1926) and A. L. Kroeber, (1920) as they believe in Boas's historical particularism that certain traits of culture are not borrowed or imported but originated at different places and segregated over the earth. Clark Wissler, (1926) explained the concept of particularism through the hoop and ball games among the American Indian groups games, where human traits are spread to different parts of the world. To them, the important task is to collect and preserve games as they carry traditional knowledge which may disappear in the course of time. They concentrated on the collection and description of the games, mostly children's games (except Tylor who concentrated on adult games too) by using adults as informants to procure 'pure' and unchanged information regarding the games they played in the past. In this approach of collecting information, they completely neglected the then present activities of the children. The researchers classified the collected database of structural features of the game. Attention was given much to the description of the games as a part of collection and preservation of the traditional information and less focus was given to the understanding of the reasons behind any particular game or play. However, the diffusionist and particularist studies help in preserving the historic account of the games and play in anthropological studies.

It was during the beginning of 1920s and 1930s, vexed by the atheoretical perspective (or ideas not based on theories) of diffusionists and historical particularists, a new theoretical perspective called functional approach was started by a number of anthropologists. Through the functional perspective, the useless, non purposeful children's games acquired the importance as they maintain a function which is useful for perpetuation of the society and social order. According to Loizos, (1967), the application of functional approach in the studies of children's play was

started by Groo, (1898, 1901) which can be considered as the earliest application of functional perspective on play where he interpreted play as a way through which one can practice daily life activities and there by facilitating the learning adult activities through the practice which later became the most accepted theory of play. Theorists from different disciplines tried to understand the concept of play and games in terms of development of the children. George Herbert Mead, (1934) a social psychologist studied development of language and building character among children and there by children becoming members of the society, by focusing on children's games and play. In the later times, this perspective of children imitating adults and learning adult activities through games was also interpreted by anthropologists like Malinowski basing on the field based ethnographic data. Malinowski, (1944) in his study on Trobriand islanders mentioned that children play games as a part of learning adult economic activities and socialization in terms of growth of the children. He emphasized play in terms of educational values and enculturation and there by serving the function of the whole which is useful to meet the need of the individual or the society. The interpretation of play and games as practice or preparation or imitation of adult activities reflected in the studies of many scholars like Kenyatta, (1939); Edel, (1957); Turnbull, (1961); etc who studied games among the children of the tribes of non Western countries. But these scholars explained games as simple and not serious topics to examine in detail. Unlike economic, political, kinship systems which they emphasized to be serious subjects to be studied, play and games were neglected by viewing them as mere imitative. Meyer Fortes, (1938) objected the concept of play as 'simple imitation' through his study of Tale children in which he explained play and games as 'paramount educational activity' for Tale children and emphasized on the changing interests of playing specific games among the children.

Till recent times, many theorists focused on how games prepare people to achieve personal or social or cultural targets but they focused very little on what games actually do to people. E. M. Avedon and Sutton Smith, (1979) explained the concept through psychogenic and sociogenic approaches. The psychogenic approach explains complete psychological understandings of games in relation to the people and sociogenic explains the reflections of social and cultural aspects of the games among the people. The main purpose of the sociogenic approach is to understand what the games do for society rather than how they meet the individual needs. In the process of understanding what games do to society, it is better to understand how games are

encapsulated within cultural configurations. The element of play is not a necessity in life. It can not become a requirement to be fulfilled or a target to reach or a moral duty to be accomplished. It can be suspended as and when a person likes as the element of seriousness is missing. When the element of play is related to cultural function, it becomes a serious activity as it is bound up with obligations and duties and this was explained by Huizinga, (1944). This can be explained through rituals and games as they coexist in relation to the functioning of cultural elements in the society.

Rituals and Games:

In rituals and festivals, games have become integral parts as they serve as a means of entertainment, activity in religious procedures reflecting various aspects of the religion, human life etc and are often intensely used as tools for predicting future to serve as the advisory for decision making and are some times also understood as the ways in which the devotees could access the answers of the Gods to their questions through the games. There is a lot of resemblance between sacred rites and games as both obey and follow strict and definite rules by creating an order of life. They both have commonalities in terms of selection of the places to conduct them, the time or season during which they are conducted and the common human concepts they reflect. They both are conducted at prefixed locations with scope for the spectators to watch the event and become engaged in either cheering up the players of the game or chanting the Gods names in devotion. According to Huizinga, (1951) the places that are used for games like arena, gambling table, the magical circle, the temple, the stage, the screen, the tribunal, playing grounds, are all specially made, consecrated with sanctity and governed by specific rules which are special to the activities and the places or means of games like chessboard, tennis court which are used to play are not different from the sacred places or spaces like temples which carry spiritual destination. The symbolic representation of games and sacred rites in terms of the ideas and believes in the minds of the people are similar as they carry the elements of cosmos and nature which enable humans to understand the good and evil periods or fortunes and misfortunes, and there by predict them. The movement of the universe, the renewal of seasons, calculation of celestial objects are all used in the prediction of human fortunes. The societies and cultures which appear to be based on the certainty and uncertainty of the fate and which remain more near to nature and environment and where there is no significant procedure for decision making, are the ones which

observe similarities between sacred rites and games. Thus, the games carry sacredness along with the ritual rites among these societies.

When the societies become increasingly complex and civilized, the importance given to the sacred rites and sanctity attached to the rituals and religious activities decline. The ritual activities also lose the perception of attributed nobility in the society, their mysterious and sacred attributes get revealed and activities then become normal everyday activities with a little amount of sanctity in the form of stories still connected to the games which then are generally perceived as elements which are parts of the culture since long and not as sacred activities in particular. The games that confirm this scenario are chance games where the whole game is based on permutations and predictions. Both, the games and sacred rites were present in the minds of the people who conceive the universe by remaining near to the nature which deals with fortunes and misfortunes of human beings. 'When the game moves out of the religious environment, it strips itself more and more of its mystery, its secret, and enters the everyday world; it still preserves some degree of symbolism but it is no longer reserved exclusively to the priesthood and to those who are in touch with the sacred mysteries; it is still practiced by adults, who do so in a deeply serious spirit characteristic of the real and spontaneous spirit of the game' (Jeanne Auboya, 1955: 125). The understanding of the cosmological meaning attached to the game helps in understanding the purpose of games and their significance in human societies. Thus, the games are viewed as activities that carry sacred and consecrated purpose which are used in the understanding of the relation between nature and destiny or fate of mankind.

Society, Fate and Free will:

The concepts of free will and fate are always associated with the games of chance. Fate and free will are one of the pivotal concepts of Hindu philosophy. The concept of fate is reflected in the doctrine of Karma, a spiritual principle in Hinduism and Buddhism, where the current deeds of an individual present influence the future of the individual. On the other side, an individual always strives to achieve goals by changing the fatalistic destiny. The free will is associated with the likes and dislikes of an individual withstanding the predetermined fate and is regulated by the principles of the society. In Hindu mythology, the free will and fate are represented by two Gods, Kama and Yama who are never worshiped directly as themselves but are associated

with other Gods like Vishnu, Krishna and Shiva. *Kaama* is the God of love, desire and wanting. Yama is the lord of death and is associated with dharma in Hindu mythology. He determines the destiny of an individual by keeping the account of the individual's deeds. It is that the humans always try to achieve what they want and maneuver their life rather than leaving it to karma. The consistent trail of the people to achieve free will against the fate is reflected in the games of chance. This can be explained with the help of a chance game called *Vaikuntapali*. In *Vaikuntapali* game, the concept of free will is dominated by the concept of fate, that is, karma where good deeds lead to higher levels of salvation and evil deeds to rebirth. This game teaches the individuals that it is through their behavior and conduct that one could achieve the place of Gods after death but not through talent or skill or any other factor that could influence their fate. Through this game, children and adults learn that fate cannot be predicted and has a major influence on life and death.

Among the agrarian societies, the primary source of livelihood depends on agriculture which again depends on the unpredictable rainfall. The unpredictable nature of the agriculture and their livelihoods based on it reflect the concept of unpredictable fate in the cultures of agrarian societies. Every game of chance draws away the possibilities and prospects of winning by skill or intelligence. They draw away the hope of winning the game by either concentrating, applying a technique or by skillfully playing it. The action of the player is mostly like an entity performing the duty of playing the game. The player has no control over the win or loss. The only way that the player will see a win is by repeatedly playing the game till all the permutations and combinations drive the player towards a win. It might be for any number of times and trials that the player has to continue to play till game is completed. A win in the game is completing the game as the final point rather than completing it in the first or second places. In the places influenced by Hindu philosophy, games of chance have ritual connections as well. These games eventually became the sources through which the concept of fate could be introduced to the children. The concepts of fate and destiny are instrumental in explaining to the children that win and defeat are common in life, through games by not killing the spirit of playing the game itself. It is a playful method of introducing that both win and the loss are to be treated with the same positivity and pleasantness. These games in a way are a virtual way of living the reality of life, identifying and preparing to face the ups and downs of the real life. Learning through game ensures a safe environment to

the children to gain a sense of virtues and vices without being subjected to them in reality.

In *Vaikuntapaali*, a player may quickly reach a box of a higher value in number in just a few turns. Reaching a higher number doesn't ensure completion of the game. The longest ladder in game makes the player reach a block which has the largest value which is just a few blocks away from completion. But, the blocks after the thus reached block may have fierce snakes that can drown the player to the lowest line of boxes. This tells that problems hide in every possible corner of life even when everything seems to be good, one has to be vigilant to face the problems and be ready to overcome them. This is applicable not only to children but also to adults and old people who so ever play this game. Children often playfully try to suppress their excitement if they get to climb the ladder. This teaches the player that it is through the good deeds a player can reach the ultimate goal quickly by crossing the major hurdles. Sometimes, it is believed among children that the more humble the player is, the better are the chances of reaching the end box without falling prey to the snakes. This belief itself signifies a thought process of having to consider a positive result in all humbleness and not become excited or show pride of the result. This is observed mostly among girls rather than boys as the girls should learn how to control their emotions during the game.

Though all the children start the game from the same starting block, their reaching to the end box is completely based on chance and luck and that is where they learn the importance of God. A sense of belief in God as the master and blesser of luck which is essential to complete the task avoiding all the hurdles is introduced to the children through this. Children when they reach blocks with snakes that take them to blocks that are several levels down in the game, they pray to God, sometimes closing their eyes and fists in all tension, they chant the name of the God in the hope of quickly reaching a box with a ladder so that they can reach a higher level. There by they learn that it is not just the human will but also God's mercy that is required to complete the task. They also learn how to pray God at times of difficulties through the game. After completing the game, the player waits till all the players complete their game and reach the final goal. This signifies the social setup of the people among the agrarian societies where people work collectively and live together as a whole in their societies. All the children continue to play or view the game till all the players reach the end box. This signifies that whatever may be the individual's pace and magnitude

of progress, everyone has to play the game till they reach the end box. This signifies a belief in divinity and the practice of preserving the hope and optimism without panic during hard times. The end block of the game is called *Vaikuntam* or the world of Lord Vishnu which is the place or world of God. So, through the game it is signified that one has to pass through all the good times and bad times of life in all patience, endurance and humbleness to reach the salvation. Snakes and ladders may represent the good and bad events in this context respectively, inter woven with the concepts of *Karma*. It is believed that through good deeds one can quickly and in just a few turns reach the salvation, which is the ultimate goal of both game and life, escaping the snakes or bad events. The snakes are given the names of the demons which are killed by Lord Vishnu in various stories.

The demons signify various evils and bad qualities. Through the game, it is signified that the players should not do any bad deeds thus symbolized by the demons. If the player does any bad deeds his dice will role to give such numbers which launch the players into the boxes with snakes. The players are to do good deeds only so that they will reach the ultimate goal of *Vaikuntam*, the God's world. The names of the demons who fought with Lord Vishnu or his incarnations are the names given to the snakes in the game. *Raavanudu*, *Hiranyakasipudu*, *Narakaasurudu*, *Bakaasurudu*, *Tana Radhudu*, *Karkotakudu*, *Natsyaryamu*, *Arukashyudu*, *Vasudevudu*, *Ambaareeshudu*, *Shyathkaantha Raavanudu* are the names of the demons given to the snakes in the game. Several bad qualities such as ego, uncontrollable anger, unkindness, lust, disbelief in divinity, theft, brutality etc are signified by the demons in those respective stories with Lord Vishnu.

The boxes to which various ladders in the game take the player to have the names of various divine worlds. These divine worlds are described as the heavenly places where a person reaches his ultimate peace and bliss, unity with God or source of energy and salvation according to Hindu Mythology. It is believed that refraining from bad deeds and implementing good deeds will give the good fortune of escaping the snake bites and accessing the ladders that lead to these divine places. *Saalokyamu*, *Golokamu* (World of Cow), *Thapolokamu*, *Swargalokamu* (World of Indra), *Sadhushyamu*, *Brahmalokamu* (World of Brahma), *Mahalokamu*, *Kailaasamu* (World of Shiva) and the ultimate *Vaikuntam* (World of Vishnu) are the various *lokas* or worlds which appear in the game on the top ends of various ladders. Good conduct, pious deeds, meditation, having the mind or lifestyle of a saint, devotion to God,

purity in thought, knowledge etc are the good qualities which are represented by the divine worlds and one should do only such good deeds to access these worlds and the ultimate salvation without having to repeatedly take births or make never ending trials through the ups and downs of life for the ultimate bliss. All these concepts are strongly introduced and reinforced through the game. It is a constant reminder that good deeds are to be practiced by the people to reach the divine worlds. As it was played among the Brahmins, Vaishyas, Kshatriyas who are *Vaishnavites* or Lord Vishnu devotees, activities like conducting religious rites (*Yaagam*), being *Yogi*, *Guru Bhodha* are among the squares of virtue. This signifies the importance of *Yaagam* and *Yagnas* among the higher caste communities like Brahmins and especially among kings and priests in the olden days.

Fate and skill:

The freewill driven by the fate, in the later times, had evolved with addition of skill. Here, the concept of skill is attached to the throw of cowries or dice. This is associated with the game of *Pachisi* which is also a chance game. Though the game is associated with the throw of cowries in *Vaikuntapaali* game, the structure of the game is fate driven and the decision of the player is nullified. But in the case of *Pachisi* game, the game is structured in such a way that the player should possess the skill of playing the game by taking the right decision at the right time along with the skill of throwing cowries. The Kings or the Kshatriyas in the olden days, were expected to master the game and should never deny the invitation to play the game.

Skill is achieved to over come the unpredictable fate but it is that the skill without socially expected qualities can make the fate over take skill again. This is believed by the people in the village and was explained by the village priest through the epic story *Mahabharatha*. He said that though *Dhuryodhana* had the help of his uncle *Shakuni* who mastered the dice game, he failed at the end because of lack of good conduct and good deeds which are essential for having God's grace. *Yudhisthira*, on the other side, though he lost the game as did not possess the skill of playing the dice game, with his good character and God's (Krishna) grace, he, by the end, won his kingdom back. It is that the fate can be achieved through good deeds and socially expected qualities and skill alone cannot bring good endings. It is that one has to have God's grace which can be achieved through good and ideal life style only. This explains the dependency of people on fate and the qualities one should possess.

When we analyze all the afore said concepts, we could observe a multiplicity of influences with respect to various dimensions. There is a way of social control being brought in through the installation of various institutions. Rituals and Games are being utilized as tools to introduce various complex concepts. Rituals and Games are like two sides of a single coin. While rituals are targeted at controlling social behavior and formatting it as per certain conditions, games are guided sanctions that offer a relaxation from the rules under certain socially plausible conditions. Many festivals in hindu culture have various forms of play and games systematically tagged with rituals and divine legends that mandate their implementation and ensure continuance. Some games have a structure that could transform the mindsets of the children to face the challenges of the real world in a neutral and balanced way and hence are of simulation type. Rituals and Games constitute the lifelong schooling of a society to function in balance, keep away from becoming unsocial that could damage the individual as well as group interests.

With respect to the current village selected for study, the people, especially Hindus observe certain rituals and celebrate certain festivals which are related to games. Games become part of these celebrations which are observed every year during particular seasons and Hindu time cycles. Telugu calendar starts with the festival of (*Y*)*Ugadi*, that is, the beginning of the year, New Year of Telugu people generally comes in the month of March. Following *Ugadi*, festivals which have games as part of their celebrations are *Dusshera*, which comes in the month of August, *Atla Taddi* in the month of October and *Sankranthi* in the month of January are celebrated.

Pelli Koduku and Pelli Koothuru dolls:

Bommala Koluvu is a traditional practice of showcasing *bommalu* (dolls) as a part of the festival. Along with the dolls, idols and toys, people also showcase a very special pair of toys called *Pelli Koduku* and *Pelli Kuthuru*. The *Pelli Koduku* and *Pelli Koothuru* dolls are the figurines of the characters of South Indian bride and bridegroom. The measurements of these toys are approximately 25 to 30 centi meters in length and 16 to 20 centi meters in breadth. These dolls are made of white sanders, neem, sandal wood, red sandal wood or red wood. These dolls are manufactured at Tirupati and Kondapalli where toy making has been a traditional occupation among the toy makers. Traditionally, these dolls are black or dark brown in color. But, to

provide more attraction, the toy makers are using vegetable colors to decorate the toys and make them more attractive than the traditional non colored dolls. It is believed that these dolls possess medicinal values and are non toxic to the children when they play with them. The wood that is used to make these dolls like neem (*Azadirachta indica*) consists of medicinal values to prevent eye disorders, intestinal worms, stomach upsets, liver problems, skin allergies, gum diseases, etc when the children carry the dolls and infants try to lick or bite the dolls and such medicinal benefits are believed to be transferred via saliva to the child. Because of the medicinal values that are embedded in the dolls, the children are encouraged to play with these dolls rather than plastic or any other material which is hazardous to the children and infants.

Bommala Koluvu:

Bommala Koluvu is a celebration of displaying dolls and toys during the festival of *Dussehra* or *Vijayadashami*. In some regions it is celebrated during *Sankranti* as well which is also observed in the field village. It is a part of the celebration of the nine nights, ten days festival of *Dussehra* and the four day festival of *Sankranti*. Though the celebration is actually related to *Dussehra*, people of Marteru celebrate it on *Sankranti* as well. Women, young girls and children participate in the preparation of *Bommala Koluvu* which is celebrated throughout the nine days of *Dussehra*. *Dussehra* is celebrated commemorating the occasion of Goddess Durga Devi defeating a powerful asura or demon called *Mahishasura*, a buffalo (*Mahisha*) headed demon in a fierce war for restoring *Dharma*. This nine days war indicates the symbolic representation of victory of good over evil or *Dharma* over *Adharma*. In spite of other stories, this is the most prevalent story in South India. This festival is celebrated by installing huge idols of Goddess Durga Devi beheading the demon and worship the idol for ten days. Along with the worship of Goddess Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswathi Devi are also worshiped, the avatars that symbolize the energy and power of females at the time of crises and need. Though the prayers offered by women and young girls are for the well being of husbands, the power and ability invested in the women is also celebrated through this festival.

On the first day, women and young girls, also children who help them, build a rack of shelves using wooden planks. The number of shelves should indicate an odd

number like three, five, seven, nine or eleven. After arranging the planks, the shelves are to be covered with a large white fabric and clipped to make the fabric stick to the planks. The idols and the figurines of Gods and Goddess, along with the dolls with which the children play are displayed here. Some dolls with which the children play or the dolls that were once played by the elders and preserved carefully are displayed as part of the celebration. A special pair of Raja Rani dolls made of Sandalwood are also showcased. The *Koluvu* depicts the stories and characters from epics and mythologies like *Puranas*, everyday scenes, actual life, animals, weddings, kitchen utensils, dolls played by girls, rural folk life, royal processions etc. Different toys and dolls made from different types of materials like wood and clay are decorated. After decorating the *Koluvu* with dolls and idols, it is further decorated with small lights and flowers. In the evenings, women invite each other from their neighborhood to their houses to view the displayed *Bommala Koluvu*, chant some *Shlokas* and devotional hymns, perform puja by lighting up an oil lamp and distribute the food prepared as *prasadam* to the guests and exchange *thambulam* which contains Betel leaf, Areca nut, two bananas, turmeric and *kumkuma* packets and a blouse piece. This is continued till the ninth day of *Dussehra*.

On the ninth day, prayers are offered to Goddess *Saraswathi*, the Goddess of wisdom, arts and literature, along with other two powerful Goddesses, Durga and Lakshmi. This celebration is called *Ayudha puja*. On this day, people worship equipments, weapons, tools and vehicles to gain the blessings of the Goddesses such that all the tools, vehicles and weaponry perform well in their profession which are extremely important for professional success. The worship of equipments got expanded to the worship of toys and play ware of games like cricket bat, ball, shuttle bats and corks, chessboards etc along with books, tools and other instruments. This indicates the seriousness with which games are considered as they are treated at par with all the professional paraphernalia.

On the tenth day, the evening of *Vijayadasami*, after offering prayers, the women windup the *Bommalla Koluvu* by making one of the dolls from the *Koluvu* to sleep which symbolizes that the dolls and idols are put to rest till the next year. By doing this, they end up the successful completion of that years *Bommala Koluvu* celebration and pack the toys for next year.

Types of Toys:

Societies utilize various methods to ensure the continuum of its institutions, values, social attributes, customs and traditions. Toys and dolls are undoubtedly entities of such role in human lives that they become part of the lives from a very early age and continue to remain as favorite companions for a life time. Toys, dolls and games act as cultural reflectors which reflect the knowledge acquired by the people through the activities they perform. Children stay in contact with toys and dolls right from their moment of birth till they acquire adulthood. These toys and dolls act as educational devices, vehicles of socialization and also helps in imitating and learning the social activities of the adults. Toys and dolls may change in their form, shape or their existence as a three dimensional solid entity or a two dimensional image projecting on a screen, but their role and impact is inevitable in human lives.

Legends of mythology, historical and socio-cultural origins provide a backbone and environment for various toys. This is profoundly visible in the case of character toys where toys symbolize Gods or people in various events or situations. Today, across the world, the popularity of character toys has grown to an all new level with cartoon, animation and film making companies like disney, marvel etc identifying and utilizing the business opportunity and working towards creating characters which are the favorites to the children. This phenomenon is not new and it has been implemented as a part of religious celebrations and for the purpose of reinforcing various social and cultural attributes and institutions in India since times immemorial. Here, the focus is towards ensuring the compliance of future generations to the values, institutions and customs approved by the society. It is, hence, a training platform or environment for the children to grow amidst of the toys and dolls that symbolize all the aspects which the society expects to witness in the future generations.

Further, as play items, toys and dolls are always dear to kids. They are the most desired items along with food and the care of the family members. They are one of the first entities on which the infants and children try to operate a control and hence a unique bond emerges between the toys, dolls and kids. This bond is effectively utilized as a companion in need. This is more pronounced in the case of girl children in India. Toys and dolls have connection to various religious celebrations and life activities that in various occasions toys and dolls symbolize companions, family members or

offsprings in accordance with the concept of event or occasion. The word '*Bommalu*' is a single word in Telugu which can be translated as a toy, an image, a doll, an artifact, an idol or a play item. An event called '*Bommala Kolu*' is celebrated in South India which is celebrated as a festival of toys and dolls. Various '*Bommalu*' are displayed at homes and the neighbors are invited by families to witness their array of toys and dolls. The toys and dolls thus displayed, the legends attached and the importance of certain toys in various other festivals, rituals and religious celebrations symbolize different aspects in a child's life, especially in a girl's life.

Each *Bommala Kolu* includes different toys and dolls that are played by both boys and girls. Most of the times, these *Kolus* include toys and dolls of children aging from infants to twelve years. The *Kolu* includes idols which depict the stories and characters from epics and mythologies like *Puranas* and *Itihasas*; toys from everyday scenes and actual life like cars, buses, trains, scooters, cranes, ships etc; animals like elephants, giraffes, monkeys, dogs, birds, horses etc; weddings include traditions and customs of different places in the country but majorly reflecting the local marriage tradition; infant toys include rattles, learning toys, pulley toys etc; kitchen utensils; dolls played by girls, rural folk life which indicates activities like oxen cart carrying sacks of grains, rural women working, a man ploughing, a Brahmin couple, agriculture activity, vegetable seller, fruit seller etc; and royal processions like procession on elephant, palanquin with bearers etc. The toys displayed in the *Kolu* are mostly wooden and mud toys which are bought from traditional toy makers of Kondapalli, Etikoppaka, Tirupathi, Mysore and Chennapatna villages and towns of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka states. The toys are made from different kinds of wood like white sanders, sandal wood, red wood, neem (*Azadirachta indica*) wood etc. The toys are made from different kinds of material like wood, clay, sand, fiber, dry leaves, green leaves etc. Most of the toys used in *Bommala Kolu* are wooden and clay toys. Along with these toys, a special pair of dolls called *Raja Rani* (King and Queen) or *Pelli Koduku* and *Pelli Koothuru* which means bridegroom and bride dolls are also showcased by placing them at the racks of *Bommala Kolu*.

Children with *Pelli Koduku* and *Pelli Koothuru* dolls:

The relationship between the dolls and the children evolves and attains various forms beginning from their early childhood, extending into their adolescence, married life and beyond. Children's first interaction with these dolls begins as they play with them as mere play items. The siblings, elders and other kids in the families introduce the dolls to the child and make it a part of her or his play as they decorate the dolls with ornaments made of small beads and glittery items, drape a piece of cloth as a grand wedding attire, weave pieces of a black cloth around the head to represent "*Jada*" which is the prevalent way of wrapping the hair in the local village. It is a creative way of playing with the toys as the children actively participate in procuring pieces of silk cloth from their elders and involve in draping the cloth around the toys to represent the wedding attire of the bride and the bride groom. The children enjoy decorating the toys and often do it along with the fellow children at home or neighborhood. After decorating the dolls, sometimes, the children proceed to play the game by conducting a marriage to the dolls. The elders in the family as well participate in the play by singing songs and helping the children to conduct the mock marriage to the dolls. Children divide as two groups, each of them taking the side of bride or groom and imitate the role of elders in families as they negotiate a suitable match and give their son or daughter in marriage. The entire play has game songs like *Chinni binni yemitlu? Singala Gowri yemitlu?*, which has a session of rhythmic questioning in between the bride's group and the groom's group which has questions such as "Where do you hail from?", "What are you giving to our son as dowry?", "How is your daughter an ideal match to our son?" to which the bride's group answer in a rhythm saying that their daughter is worth gold of her weight and that the groom should be lucky to get a chance to partner with her. The questioning and answering happens in a playful way with songs and even the elders in the families are seen participating actively in the play. The same dolls are displayed in *bommala koluvu* festival as well. The festival ensures the iteration of the tradition and the attached play with the dolls every year. The game of imitating the marriage event need no festival or ritual attached to the play. It is played during the gatherings in the neighborhoods, during holidays, during the festivals and events when many children group to play.

Cultural significance of the dolls:

The dolls attain a multitude in their symbolic representation. The dolls of *Pellikoothuru* and *Pellikoduku* have their representation symbolize bride and groom on the surface, but there are deeper connections with the culture and values in the society as it is investigated and analyzed. The significance of these dolls reflect the practice of early marriages in the societies when the children are still in the age of playing with dolls and toys. The dolls along with their representation as bride and groom signify the event of marriage. It may be analyzed that the dolls are devised to introduce and reinforce the importance of marriage and family right from childhood along with the element of play and fun because of their young age. Families, being the fundamental units of the society, are entities inspired by love, bonding, mutual help, responsibility and every trait that influenced, supported or addressed the human need for social connections. Since, marriage is viewed as the most important event that brings two people together for the start of a family, the recognition of its importance is essential for the harmonious progression and perpetuation of the human kind. This requisite of introducing the concept of marriage to the children may have resulted in the birth of the customs that are woven around these dolls which were born ages ago and are followed till date. There are several aspects of marriage that could be magnified including but not limited to all the intricate matters of conjugal alliances, sex, children, financial interdependencies, familial responsibilities, relatives etc, but other than the event of marriage itself, no other related concepts reflect in the children's play with the dolls.

The dolls transform in terms of their symbolism as the children grow listening to the related stories, customs and build their understanding of the world around. A close relationship develops between the child and the dolls as he or she plays with them from a very early age. The relationship, though it starts with a mere play without any consideration to the meaning and purpose, it attains sanctity and importance when the children get to listen to the stories, believes and legends attached.

The dolls symbolize the God Venkateswara and his Goddess wife Padmavathi and even in the play of *bommala pelli* in which the children imitate elders and conduct the marriage, the bride is treated as Padmavathi Goddess and the groom is treated as the God Venkateswara. By this belief, the dolls are viewed as the symbols of divinity

which installs the aspects of respect and devotion towards the play. Children have their interest in marriage and related aspects naturally evolving, as they grow into adolescence and begin to be influenced by the impact of the physiological changes and recognize the need for a mate. The girl children, especially, begin to imagine the groom doll as a symbol of their future life partner. The already established symbolism of divinity merges with the representation of the future partner. This is more pronounced in the case of girl children as the entire play and the related events have the participation of more girl children than boys. By this, the society may have designed a plan for a programmed result in the girl child's thinking. They are subliminally taught to value marriage and their future partner equal to God indirectly through dolls and all the rituals, legends and play attached to them.

The dolls have their importance extending into the lives of the girls even after marriage. The dolls are sent by the parents of the girl along with the girl to her in-law's house as she begins to live with her husband after marriage. The gesture is carried out as a ritual and hence has the aspects of divinity and sanctity attached to the event. Here, the dolls attain the role of companions from her parents' family, being sent to ensure that the girl does not feel lonely when she begins to live with her husband's family leaving her home town. The dolls may be construed as siblings of the girl or an uncle and aunt being sent along as companions during her shift from her parents' place to her in-laws' place. This gesture of giving the dolls to the girl to carry them to her husband's place also has other meanings. It is about symbolically expressing the wish of the girl's parents to see their girl as a mother very soon. It is like the dolls are gifted by the girl's parents to their future grand son or grand daughter so that he or she could play with the dolls. The tradition continues this way across generations. Sometimes, these dolls are gifted as an auspicious present during weddings that happen among the close relatives' families. If they are gifted as such, new dolls are purchased and they are considered with the same values and traditions as the old toys. Since the girl develops an emotional connection with the dolls right from her childhood, to her they become symbols of her happiness, parent's family and one of the first dolls that her child would ever play with.

The girl during her childhood days at her parent's place celebrates the event of *Bommala Koluvu* and plays the game of *Bommala Pelli* with her fellow kids and the elders who actively participate in the imitation marriage event and guide the children

as they play. This play symbolizes how a girl should mingle with all the relatives and family members and become the loved one of everyone among the relatives socializing in an amicable manner with all the ones around. Similar traits are expected of the girl who begins to live at her husband's place afresh after marriage. The girl is to become the loved one of all the family members on her in-laws side as well. The sociable nature, the amicable mindset and the aspects of responsibility, sharing and family that are induced in the girl right from her childhood through tools such as the dolls of *Pelli Kothuru* and *Pelli Koduku bommalu* become her guiding values and principles through out her life. The values, traditions and all the aspects that she practiced will be inducted through culture to the next generation by the girl as she becomes a mother and takes up the responsibility of bringing up her child as desired by the society, its rules and attributes. Hence, it is a chain of values and traditions that is transmitted from one generation to the other utilizing the cultural tools, events and a social setup that facilitates the nurturing of the younger generations such that they do not ever desert the values and traditions of the society.

Cultural significance of *Bommala Koluvu*:

Bommala Koluvu is celebrated from the first day of *Navarathri* or nine nights of *Dussehra*. *Navarathri* is celebrated in the month of *Aashwayuja*, seventh month in Telugu calendar which starts generally in between 21st September and 19th October in Gregorian calendar. The month *Aashwayuja* is named after the star *Ashwini* which is the first star among the 27 Hindu astrological constellations. The star *Ashwini* is governed by twin horsemen called *Ashwins* and symbolically represents the transportation of Sun. According to the Solar calendar, Sun enters Virgo on September 17th and remains there till October 17th. Sun indicates the power and authority according to Vedic astrology. When Sun enters Virgo, the astrological sign of female gets the power and authority. The zodiac Virgo is a female symbol. This is indicated in the festival as Goddess Durga, the embodiment of power and authority defeats the evil for the good of the world. Thus, the astrological knowledge signifies the power and authority of the feminine and womanhood which is celebrated through this festival during this period. It is a tradition from generations that after marriage the parents of the bride give the *Pelli Koduku* and *Pelli Kuthuru* dolls to her daughter to take it along with her to in law's house. This signifies the initiation of the practice of *Bommala Koluvu* at her new home and the dolls representing groom and bride as a mark of their

new journey of prosperity and fertility. This tradition also signifies that the bride soon becomes a mother and soon her children play with the toys that are used for *Koluvu*. Thus, the ritual of *Bommala Koluvu* represents the prosperity, fertility and the celebration of the presence of children in the house. The celebration also signifies women visiting houses of their neighbors which also increases the feeling of bonding and staying together and unity in agrarian societies. This further increases the social bonds and relations among the children and adults which becomes a part of socialization.

Cultural elements in every society have various hidden functional aspects which influence the existence and continuum of societies with their own distinct values, traditions and rules. Often, these functional aspects are hidden to preserve their consecrated and mystical nature. Why should they even be viewed as consecrated activities? This again may have the reasons embedded in the installation of a compulsion in the minds of the followers to earnestly follow all the traditions. It is a way of institutionalization of the values and rules that are desired in society. It is important to periodically rekindle, reprophecize and reinforce various values and traditions to ensure the effective continuum and perpetuation of cultural elements across generations. Hence, periodical implementation of certain procedures in the form of rituals is observable in almost all the societies.

Generally, the periodic repetition of such rituals is attributed to a specific calendar date annually. In India, for the purpose of repetition and to further add sanctity to the rituals, it is linked to the astrological cycles and events. Various legends of the Gods are connected to every ritual to add sanctity, pious and fear of sin or misfortune in case of abusing or not following the traditions. Even astrological events have various legends connected to them to reinforce the concepts and institutionalize various principles. Rituals and games are profound reflections of various cultural aspects and they offer sufficient ground to render deeper investigations to elicit an in depth understanding of the elements of social control and the way in which these elements are culturally embedded.

The iterative aspect of the rituals signifies the functional aspect of bringing the necessity and cultural compulsion of implementation of a sequence of consecrated activities. Each of the rituals again strengthen a social concept. Often rituals are complex set of procedures sequentially implemented which could result in the

installation, reaffirmation, perpetuation and preservation of a social order, control, norms, values, restrictions and sanctions. Here, in the iterative aspect is linked to the cosmos, as the resolution of the planets follows an equal schedule every year. Almost in every culture legends are observed which strengthen the cosmic positions of the planets, their meanings and their devotional connections. All of these result in the combined effect on the society. In almost all the cultures, it is observable that people believe Gods operate from the skies. Hence, it may have added an additional layer of sanctity when the cosmic activity is connected to the rituals.

In the view of preserving the social institutions, norms and values, every culture has a multiplicity of tools. As we spoke about the cosmic cycles and their connected meanings and their iterative aspect, we should also consider the purpose of predictive subjects like astrology which are based on the cosmic positions. Whether the predictions become true or not, it is observable that the principles of *Karma*, sin and pious activities, and their reflections are all parts of the astrological predictions. An astrologer referring to the horoscope chart of an individual seeking advice, mentions about various possible mishaps and advices on ways in which his 'bad' Karma could be nullified for good results. Often, we could observe astrologers sinisterring about the 'bad' Karma an individual could incur if the person happens to do deeds which are deviating the prescribed social norms. Such deviated activities are not only bad in terms of astrology but are also considered bad according to the existing social and cultural norms. The nullification of 'bad' *Karma* could happen by implementing some remedies. Such remedies actually are activities which are considered as noble by the society. For example, helping the poor and destitute or beggars at a temple, lending blankets or clothes, helping old people, feeding animals and so on. Hence, comics are again in this contest being used for the subject of predictions. But all predictions again indicate a socially acceptable or appreciable set of activities to gain better results in each of their personal lives. Hence, all this is again being utilized as a tool to install, reinforce, ensure continuance and perpetuation of the social values, order and control.

The entire canvas of rituals, Gods, cosmic connections, legends is so tightly complexly woven that each of the threads support the existence of the other and no single thread is independent of the other in its existence, constitution and purpose. For the preservation of the whole of the set up of the social values and norms, it may have been understood by the societies long ago that a multitude of tools in various demissions is necessary. Social control could be executed by constantly steering the

societies on the socially acceptable paths and restricting the deviations. But such restrictions could strongly operate only when the restrictions have an impact at both the individual and social levels. At an individual level, it is further more important to program the internal psyche of the individuals to behave within the boundaries of restriction. When it comes to the external influences, the perception, titling of an individual as a sinner or the effect on the person's reputation will have to be considered. Ruth Benedict, (1947) perceived two types of cultures that are contrast to one another exist in different societies. Shame and Guilt cultures are emphasized based on the psychological setup of the people in the societies. She tried to explain the concept of culture based on the cultural values and patterns of behavior. In the process of explanation of these concepts, she compared Japanese culture as 'Shame' culture to American culture as 'Guilt' culture. But the titling of 'Shame culture' was strongly objected by the people of Japan saying that the writings were derogatory and offensive which were written by an 'ethnocentric' Western scholar. Besides all the controversy, the dichotomy of 'Shame' and 'Guilt' cultures is still a much debated topic with respect to anthropological study of culture. Benedict's shame and guilt culture concepts rooted the belief that 'shame' is associated with lower level of development and 'guilt' with higher level of development. Benedict's works have been perceived as a symbol of western thought which biasedly considers guilt as of a higher culture and shame as belonging to a lower culture. Setting a side the status of guilt and shame, Benedict was assumed to be failed in recognizing both guilt and shame as two entities related to each other and are intertwined which was explained by Doi, (1973) and Lebra, (1976). Though there are several criticisms on the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects related to the origins of the guilt and shame cultures, our current context has no relevance with their origins. An attempt is being made to analyze how various elements of control and relaxation are embedded in the cultures through rituals and games and how guided sanctions during the rituals and festivals influence the society.

Atla Taddi:

Atla Taddi is an important festival in Andhra Pradesh which has a profound connection with games. This festival is celebrated on *Ashwayuja Bahula Tadiya* or *Krishna Paksha Tadiya*, that is, on the third day of the waning of the moon in the *Aswayuja* month of Telugu calendar. In the Gregorian calendar, this period comes in the month of either September or October. The word *Atla Taddi* consists of two words,

Atla or *Atlu* means dosas, a south indian dish and *Taddi* or *Tadiya* means third day (of *Ashwayuja*). The festival is celebrated by young single women, girls of ages five and above and also the married women in the pursuit of auspicious marital phase in their lives. Single women celebrate the festival, perform the rituals of the festival and observe fasting praying Goddess Gowri Devi to bless them with a handsome, good hearted and capable husband. Married women perform the same rituals, observe fasting and pray Goddess Gauri Devi in pursuit of a good fortune & longevity, health & prosperity to their husbands. Pregnant women and widows keep away from the rituals of the festival. Women take *nomu* (a ritualistic religious vow), is taken by the women during this festival as a part of celebration of the festival. The women who take *nomu* should undergo a day long fasting without drinking water and in the evening they break the fast after watching moon in the sky and pray Gowri devi by performing *pooja*. The legend explains that Goddess Gowri Devi herself was advised by Narada sage to perform the rituals, observe fasting and celebrate the festival of *Atla Taddi* to get Lord Shiva as her husband. *Atla Taddi* is often compared to festival *Karva Chauth* which is celebrated as one of the important festivals of women who pray for a fortunate married life in northern part of India. The festival *Atla Taddi* has a deep connection with the astrological believes that are given prominence in all aspects of life. The festival, the rituals and the fasting, all of them are believed to safeguard the girls and single women from having to marry an old person. From the past to the present, early marriages of girls is evident and existed in most parts of the country. The early marriages of girls is considered as one of the several social evils or social problems. Young girls are given in marriage to an old aged person, often a widower in exchange of money or as a repayment of debt taken by the parents of the girl. To the girls, such a situation is definitely like a curse they had to suffer out of the inevitable social conditions. The long age gap, the mismatch of thoughts, emotions and desires, physical inactiveness and the risk of becoming a widow early in life are all indicative of a very unhappy and dissatisfied life. Hence, the festival and the rituals are believed to offer the blessings to the natives to escape such a situation. Pregnant women are not allowed to take part in the celebration of the festival as they are considered to be polluted to participate in the festival.

This festival is also called as '*Uyyala Panduga*' or '*Gorintaku Panduga*'. The women observe this festival for ten years to have a great married life and family. A women can do this ritual or *nomu* if her father's sister (*menatha*) or mother's brother's

wife (*atha*) has the tradition to observe the *nomu*. Regardless of the *nomu* or ritual, every women can celebrate the festival by avoiding *nomu* and engaging in the rest of the celebration. The tradition in the lineage is observed much among the Brahmins and Vyshyas or Komati caste in the field village. The Reddy women of the village do not observe *nomu* on *Atla Taddi* but they observe *nomu* on *Undralla Taddi*, which comes on *Bhadrapadha bahula tadiya*, the third day of the waning of the moon in *Bhadrapadha* month.

Atla Taddi is a two day festival. The first day of *Atla Taddi* is called 'Bhogi'. On this day, girls and women apply *gorintaku* or henna a dye that is applied on hands which is prepared from the leaf of the plant *Lawsonia inermis*. Traditionally, it is believed among the married women that the brighter the color of *gorintaku* imprints on the hands of the women, the more intensely their husbands will love them and among the unmarried, the brighter the color, the more intense lovers will come as husbands. So, with this belief, all the women apply *gorintaku* on their hands and feet. On this day, eleven married women are invited by the woman who is observing the *vratham* to her house. This invitation is called *peyrantam*. The women start making preparations for celebrating the festival. In the evening, the women become busy in preparing rice flour by grinding rice and there by making dosa batter for making eleven dosas to each of the eleven *muthaiduvulu*, that is, 121 small or miniature dosas which will be offered to the women during the ceremony the next day. The dosas are made of rice flour and ghee in small size. The women also get involved in making *paalataalikulu*, a sweet dish made of rice flour, milk and jagger which will be consumed after breaking the fast in the evening. The men will make arrangements for the women to swing on *uyyalalu* and tie swings at their houses or at verandas or near temples where there will be trees. On the day of *Atla Taddi*, women and children wake up at wee hours, that is, at two'o clock, an auspicious time which is called as *Brahma muhurtham* and wash their heads with soap nuts and *sunni pindi* (bath powder). The house has to be decorated with mango leaves and flowers called *thoranam*. They eat rice which is cooked the night before called *chaddi annam* with *mudda pappu* (plain dal), *gongura* pickle, ghee (a type of clarified butter) and curd. After eating rice, women along with children go to streets to play games. They go out to play before the sun rise by gathering friends and neighbors. They play all the day till the evening. In the evening, women and children come back to their houses, take bath at the near by canal and offer prayers to Goddess Gowri Devi at the canal and see moon. They return

to their homes and conduct the sacred ritual by tying auspicious thread called ‘*Sankalpam*’ to their right hand with eleven knots. The ‘*Sankalpam*’ signifies the person who did and participated in the sacred ritual. They offer all the 121 *atlu* (dosas) as *naivedyam* (offering) to Goddess Gowri Devi and read *Atla Taddi* story.

The story:

In olden days, there was a princess named Sunama. She is the youngest of all. She has elder brothers who loved and taken care of her so much. She was very fragile. In order to have a good husband, she took the vow of conducting *Atla Taddi vratham*. The *vratham* requires complete fasting and as she was fragile, she became weak while observing fasting. She fainted with dizziness and nausea. Her brothers loved her so much. Blinded by their mad love for their sister, her brothers wanted her sister to eat the food. They made a reflection of the moon in the sky by showing a shining object or light with fire and told her sister that the moon has come. Sunama saw the moon and prayed Goddess Gowri Devi and offered dosas to the her. After the prayer, Sunama broke the fast by eating the dosas or *atlu*. The days have passed and the time for Sunama’s marriage has come. Instead of getting handsome and young husband, Sunama started getting old men as her bridegrooms during the bridegroom selection. Her brother’s waited for good and young bridegrooms for their sister but all the wait was in vain. Vexed and with hope lost, Sunama wanted to commit suicide and went into the forest. Seeing the pathetic condition of her devotee, Goddess Gowri Devi, incarnation of Goddess Parvathi along with lord Shiva decided to help her as she was misled by her brothers and it was not her intentional mistake. Gowri Devi explained Sunama about what happened during the *nomu* and asked her to do the *vratham* with sincerity and devotion with out missing any procedure. By doing so, she was granted a handsome and young husband by the Goddess. The Goddess also suggested her to conduct this *vratham* for ten years for having a healthy husband and children. The legend also says that, Goddess Gowri Devi, on the suggestion of Naarada *munindra* or sage Naarada, has observed *Atla Taddi nomu* and got lord Shiva as her husband.

After the story, the eleven women who are invited to the *vratham* are given eleven miniature dosas each along with a fruit, vermilion, turmeric powder, a blouse piece, betel leaf and areca nut. This offering is called *vaayanam*. The woman gives the *vaayanam* by holding her *saree pallu* (the loose end of the saree) says ‘*isthinamma vayanam*’ (I give you (her) the *vayanam*); the other woman receives the *vayanam* with

her *saree pallu* by saying '*puchukuntinamma vayanam*' (I have taken the *vayanam*). The host again says, '*mummatiki isthinamma vayanam*' (I give you (her) the *vayanam*), the woman says '*mummatiki puchukuntinamma vaayanam*' (I received the *vaayanam*); the host says, '*vaayanam puchukuntundi yevaroo?*' (Who is taking the *vaayanam*), the woman says '*neyney namma Gowri Parvathi*' (its me Gowri Parvathi). After giving the *vaayanam* to all the eleven members, the woman sits with her family members and breaks her fasting by eating the dosas (eleven) and other dishes like rice, plain dal (*mudda pappu*), stew with eleven varieties of vegetables, *paala taaleekalu*, curd and *gongura* pickle. A married women is believed to be leading a happy and auspicious life when her husband is leading a healthy and prosperous life. The healthy longevity and prosperity of the husband are considered as the real fortune of a married woman's life. It is called *Sowbhagyam* in Telugu language. Children as well become part of the overall auspiciousness of the women. The festival of *Atla Taddi* is believed to bless married woman with *Sowbhagyam*. Children or the birth of children, fecundity is treated as one of the most important auspicious aspects of women's life. This is reflected in the festivals connection with the aspects that deal with the blessings of the divinity for the enhancement of sexual strength of the husband and the fertility of the native as well.

***Atla Taddi* and Indian Astrology:**

The festival itself is celebrated on the *Aswayuja bahula Thadiya* lunar day, which is the third day of the Telugu calendar month. *Tritiya* (3rd day) is ruled by Planet Mars. Mars in Hindu astrology is called as *angarakudu* or *kujudu*. Mars signifies the male's capacity to impregnate a woman. A man with a debilitated Mars in his horoscope is predicted to have a weakness of the reproductive organs, his impregnating strength, sperm strength etc according to Vedic astrology. Mars is the energy that blesses the woman with proper menstrual cycles as well. Offerings to the Mars is believed to nullify the bad effects of the inauspicious placement of Mars in the horoscope. In Telugu or Sanskrit language the inauspicious placement of the Mars planet is called '*Kuja Dosha*', which means fault or bad effect of the Mars. According to Vedic astrology, it is also believed that *Kuja Dosha* in a person's horoscope may signify sudden death of the Native. Hence offerings are done to Mars in pursuit of blessings to avoid such mishaps. The third lunar day is categorized under *Jaya thitihis* group in astrology which signifies '*Akash*' which means space or sky and the third day

is ruled by Mars. *Akash* is signified by Jupiter also called as *Sukrudu* in Vedic astrology. *Akash* is a period (*Mahadasha*) that is considered as the planet signifying children and the planet that brings two people together as *Akash* again is the binding force that keeps 'Jeeva' in the body. Traditionally fasting on a full moon day is believed to give the truth as it removes the negative effects of the planet 'Saturn'. Moon rules the fourth house in astrology which signifies 'mother' in the horoscope. It is believed that '*Parasakti*' the extremely auspicious Goddess resides in 'Chandra kala', which may mean the beauty of the moon. Fasting all day without even drinking water and breaking the fast after the rise of the moon in the sky after watching the moon is in pursuit of '*Sowbhagya*' through blessings of *Parasakti*. Offerings are done to the shadow planet 'Rahu' as well. Rahu, the imaginary point or shadow planet or north node or ascending node, is the lord of illusions, sudden mishaps and is the eclipse planet that is believed to have the capacity to swallow the moon and the sun. Hence, Rahu is given the offering to ensure unhindered, uninterrupted grace and blessings of the moon. As part of the festival eleven happily married woman called *mutthaiduvulu* are offered *atlu* made with lentils and rice flour. The number eleven and the *thithi* of eleventh day is ruled by Mars again according to the ancient knowledge. Rice flour is the moon's favorite, while lentils are Rahu's favorite, *urad dal* or black gram is favorite food of Mars and hence offerings are made by making *atlu* with all the ingredients are given to the eleven invited women, who represent the Goddess Gauri Devi.

Atla Taddi and Games:

All the girls gather at a place and start playing games like swinging, hide and seek, song games like *uppula kuppa*, *chemma chekka*, *tappatloy taalaloy*, etc. The games that are played during this festival are mostly physical games. It is believed among the people that the Goddess Gowri Devi likes to play games and thus they are played as a symbol of her celebration during the festival. Of all the games played by the women and children on this day, swinging is the most important and auspicious game to play. It is said that the women has to swing three hundred times before they break their fast in the evening. Thus, they swing taking turns one after the other. The children continue to play various other games till the night. The men and young boys help the women in playing these games. They help them to swing by holding the swings and pushing them forward for the swing to move and participate in the play

too. This activity of swinging in is called *Dholotsavam*. The swing is made of a wooden plank, some times two or three planks are used to sit, which are tied together with coir ropes or iron chains and is suspended from the ceiling or between two poles or from the branches of a tree. The swing, some times, is simply a coir rope tied to the branch of a tree which is seen among the people who could not pay much for the expenditure. Among the rich and higher status people, the halls or courtyards in the mansions are furnished with swings made up of beautifully designed wooden planks suspended to poles that are hung from the roof for recreation. The swings are also decorated with *thoranam* on the top of the seat to which the ropes or chains are attached. The swings which are furnished with carvings and decorations in mansions symbolizes higher status and represents royal position. These swings are only for the heads of the families as a symbol of honor and everyone is not allowed sit on them. But on this day, the women and children are given the chance to swing on these swings as a part of celebrations. Not every house in the village has a swing in their house. So, women and children from the neighboring houses gather at a place and go to the house of the girl who has a swing. Most of the times, wooden swings are available at the houses of higher status people as swings represent royalty and richness. The swings are of different sizes and shapes, some with decorations carved and some with no decoration made with different woods which are strong and durable like teak wood, redwood etc. The seats of the swings are made of thick planks so that they could hold the weight of the people when they swing. The young woman sits on the plank or the rope of the swing, two other women, one from the front and the other from behind push the swing backwards and forwards like a pendulum and the rest of the women wait for their turn. There are different ways in which the women swing. One to four people may attempt to swing at the same time as they play. Two women swing by one sitting on the plank and the other standing at the back of the one sitting on the plank and swing. Some times, two women stand on either side of the plank and a women sits in the middle and swing. Four people swing when the women stand on all the three sides of the swing while one sits in the middle and swing. The balance required to stand on the plank of the swing is practiced every time by the women when ever they swing.

Significance of games in *Atla Taddi*:

Of all the games, swinging is the most important game that girls or women play on this festival. Girls and women swing and play singing the song '*Atla Thaddoi Aaratloi, Mudda Pappoi Moodatloi*'. Younger boys in some regions are found to help the girls in swinging, though this is not a common trait across all the regions. It is believed that Goddess Gowri Devi loves to play with the swing and that the play itself has a divine ritual connection. Swinging is one of the most important activities done by the natives till they reach home after the play, take bath again and perform *puja* (worship) and break the fast after seeing the moon in the sky. Girls as they swing help each other to swing and play in all laughter and joy, though the over all idea of worshipping in pursuit of an able, healthy, young husband of choice is always the bottomline. It is a widely accepted aspect of games that they are played for acquiring physical strength, increasing immunity, growth and development. This aspect has been prominent among the functionalists who believe that games are a part of exercise and recreation that strengthens the body and mind. Psychologists and other cognitive scientists believe that games give mental relaxation, increases learning capacities, increases ability to interpret giving rise to long term benefits like language learning. Along with the physical and cognitive benefits, games carry information that has to be interpreted in relation to its cultural significance.

Swings in India have a story that is deeply connected to the cultural, historic and lifestyle aspects of the societies. The structure of the swing, the material, the shape and the way these swings are ornamented have profound and meaningful connections with the legends and believes that may have now faded with time but their existence is however undeniable. The sexual union, the togetherness of the couples, the love that they celebrate in their lives, the children, fecundity are no simple unthoughtful progression of the lives. They are culturally connected to various rites, legends and the natives actually are driven to a lifestyle where the relationships are valued as sacred connections as they refer themselves to as the blessings and representations of those divine sources.

Lord Krishna himself is found in various artistic representations playing the swing game with his love Radha. The relationship of Krishna and Radha itself is treated as the symbol of sacred and lustful love across the country. In India, may be lust itself is not a sin when such desire is the outcome of a story of love towards the partner. The desires are referred with the word *Kaama* and there is a God '*Manmadha*' sacredly

attached to all the matters of love and desires. Through the swing game, it is observable that the physical activity of the sexual union as well is subtly represented though not openly announced or debated. The game has a dual nature, one representing the amusement part of it through vertigo, which is the resultant of the perceived effect of the loss of gravity as the players swing into the air and back, while the other nature is its sacred connection with the rites and culture of the societies. Swings are seen even today in many temples where the devotees in all devotion gently swing a small plank on which the effigies of the Gods are placed. In some cases this is referred to as '*Pavalimpu Seva*', especially a ritual in temples that is done in the nights meaning (service during sleep time). Devotees render the service to the God by gently swinging him to sleep after a strenuous day of administering the various aspects of the world. It is not only the players who swing, but also the ones who push, pull and control the fly, a part of the game. It is also observed that these swing facilitators also actively involved in the game sometimes responding to the excited shouts of the ones who are on swing to either speed up or slowdown the motion. Most often as the ones who push are friends of the natives swinging, do just the opposite of what the swingers want which translates into a continued surprise and excitement. In the question of the festival *Atla Taddi* it may also be understood that the young girls are all excited to wake up so early in the morning out of the excitement to play on swings and even forget the hunger of the fasting as they play with these swings all through the day. The legends and some historic writings represent a cosmic connection to these swings as well. Even the life's philosophy itself could be represented through the swing. In Rig veda, Sun is represented as the Golden swing swinging backwards and forwards in the heavens.

Cultural Significance of Games in *Atla Taddi*:

A trend of conservatism is profoundly visible in the village with the role of girls attached to consecrated activities such as offering prayers to Gods, refraining from active involvement in any form of play with males after puberty, cooking and helping mother in all the household activities which are a subset of all the acceptable and desired activities that are akin to the role of a woman in the society. A contrast could be observed in between the conservative and restricted routine role of the females in the village and the sanction of freedom to go out and play on the day of *Atla Taddi* festival. In some cases, we witness the involvement of boys in the swing games the

girls play on the day of the festival. It signifies a momentary sanction of freedom and relaxation of the restricted pattern of rules that are in force during the rest of the year. The functional importance of such planned sanction of certain level of freedom has to be carefully examined to analyze on its purpose and implications. In this context, the popular terms of guilt culture and shame culture which were first discussed by Ruth Benedict will have to be considered.

Guilt culture is about a way of social control internalized that refrains the person from doing something wrong or unacceptable in the society. It is more related to the unacceptable deed than to the person who is doing it. Declaration of some deed as wrong, without having to title the person as the doer of it could raise the feelings of guilt in the individual which propels him or her towards correction of such behavior. In guilt culture, institutions, rituals, concepts of sin, pious and God can play a role. Guilt is internal and is the resultant of all the mental setup one develops over years.

While on the contrary, the shame culture is characterized by the members of such a society who actively involve in naming or titling the person as a wrong doer, often discussed publicly among families and peer groups. In such a case, the individual being afraid of the social consequences and the damage that could occur to his or her reputation refrains from all the unacceptable deeds. Further in shame culture, it normally takes more than simple correction to restore the tarnished reputation to positivity. Hence in the societies characterized by shame culture, individuals consider what others perceive about them as of prime importance as it may be sometimes irrevocably damaging.

Females in the society are more impacted by the traits of shame culture. The way the social restrictions are implemented over females in various situations is characterized by the aspects of shame culture. I witnessed, Lakshmi, a Reddy widow, one of my key informants in the village who accompanied me in understanding the topography of the village. By the time we complete a few streets she is familiar with, she withdrew her company from me as she was afraid of *Perlu Petteyyadam* which means 'being titled' as a sinner or a person of poor character if she is seen by the villagers at the location where she has no work to do. In the village, females are not allowed to go to all the places in the village and only certain places of the village are allowed for them to visit. If they visit the places which they should not, it indicates that they have specific interest or work to do which is always related to illegitimate actions. The villagers have more vigilant in case of women. This situation helped me

in understanding how women are controlled in the name of shame and guilt cultures. In the question of women, the shame culture is more adversely impactful if the women deviate from what is acceptable in the society as it can even destroy the good marriage prospects of a woman if titled as a lady of poor character. In the case of married woman, a deviation from the acceptable rules of the society ruins her respect and reputation as a woman of sanctity and pious nature. It could even signal that a woman is of a loose character or is easily accessible in terms of sexual relations as well. Hence, the women are not normally seen deviating from the rules of the society.

The village operates a collective control on certain aspects of the society. This is observable in the question of both males and females. The entire village is so closely knit that it appears like almost everyone knew everyone else in the village. If a child skips going to school on any day, the news is delivered by the villagers to his or her parents. If an adolescent tries to purchase a cigarette from a shopkeeper in the village, instead of selling the cigarette, the shopkeeper generally questions the kid about why and for who the cigarette is being purchased to make sure that the young are restricted from bad habits. Generally, the news of any deviation from the acceptable behavior among the children is delivered to their parents by the members of the society. In a village characterized by such strong shame culture traits, passing the news quickly about any deviations is perhaps considered as a responsibility as it is perceived as a corrective measure as well. In the question of females, the resultant fear of deviations is a carefully installed mindset by the society and the socialization processes. Mothers are seen refraining from any deviations to safeguard their own respect. This is learnt and followed by the daughters. Men in the society, fathers, uncles restrict the girl children from falling prey to any bad reputation.

Since, the whole society takes charge of operating a collective corrective control over the children and adolescents, children and adolescents are more afraid of the consequences of deviations than adults. In this context, such highly conservative and restricted culture can totally dismiss the possibility of any essential deviations like the allowance of male-female relationships which are fundamental for marriage, and progress of life. The society with all the restrictions is not promoting a monk's lifestyle. It appears to operate a control over women in particular and promote the possibility of comfortable marriages and family progression. So, a relaxation of rules is necessary to experiment with various essential aspects while still obeying the consecrated aspects. Games during *Atla Taddi* reflect such guided sanction of

relaxation. The word guided is used because there are still some aspects of restriction which are part of the entire set of rituals, procedures and games that are followed on the day of *Atla Taddi* festival. Such restrictions may have been devised to preserve the sanctity aspect. Food can also be used as a tool of social control. This has been discussed by Erik Erikson, 1977 in his attempts to explain concepts like ritualization and fasting. It is possible to institutionalize any cultural aspect through fasting. This may have been used in the question of *Atla Taddi* to sanction freedom to play around publicly and in some cases play with boys in the village as well, but systematically connect such sanction of freedom to the original purpose of the ritual, which is to be blessed with an able and young husband. In the village of Marteru, both guilt and shame cultures are visible as a mixture, one complementing the existence of another. Shame culture clearly marks the unacceptable behavior patterns as people talk about what is unacceptable and criticize as it the basis of the concept of shame culture itself. By repeatedly listening to what is unacceptable, there could be a possibility of the aspect of guilt to be strongly installed in the young minds regarding such unacceptable behavior traits.

In the aspect of guilt culture, rituals and sin play a bigger role. *Atla Taddi* has many ritual components which symbolize certain desired aspects of the socio-cultural configuration of the village. It is possible to implement social control through rituals. Guilt becomes a consequence of deviation from the acceptable behavior when such acceptable or desired behavior is enforced by rituals systematically. *Atla Taddi* has the custom of distributing *Vayanam* which are the offerings of *dosa* a south Indian dish to the females who attend the ritual. Here, many symbolic aspects of the event and their socio cultural functional aspects are to be discussed. These aspects could be analyzed from the stand points of guilt and shame cultures as well. A legend connected to *Atla Taddi* mandates the follow of the rituals every year to ensure the blessing of a young and capable person as a husband to the singles and the longevity and wellbeing of the husband and children in the case of married women. There is a trend of role fixation that is very much visible in this festival rituals as the woman's individualism, her health, her progress in any dimension is subdued or discarded and her wellbeing is equated to the longevity and wellbeing of her spouse, children and family.

As much as the legend related to *Atla Taddi* raises hopes of receiving blessings to get an able young husband instead of an old man, it also fixes the role of a woman to serve and pray for the man she is married unconditionally after marriage

(whosoever is the husband). In the olden days, there was this social activity of giving the woman in marriage to old men for exchange of money. Though it is agreeably signifying a hope to escape such a marriage with an old man and be taken by a young and capable partner, the concept of serving whosoever a female gets married to is unconditionally enforced. The symbolism embedded in the rituals of *Atla Taddi* when analyzed has a similarity to the oaths taken in an army or police parade. Such oaths are taken in front of the higher ranking senior officers in a systematically organized parade. The entire process involves taking an oral pledge to execute the duties as required of an Army or Police officer. To energize the purpose of the oath, a sense of consecration is added with the feelings of nationalism and national duty. Unquestioned subordination to the superior officers as well verbally or gesture wise becomes part of the oath taking process. Woman who follow the rituals of *Atla Taddi* symbolically do the gesture of offering *Vayanam* to the married woman in the society who are considered as auspicious and are comparable symbolically to the senior and fellow officers in a parade. But, what is the oath originally? The purpose of the ritual signifies the oath here. The purpose of the ritual is to get a young and capable husband or in the case of married woman, to ensure longevity and wellbeing of spouse and children. By the ritual, it is being mandated, with the fixture of what a woman wants for life and it is being reemphasized by an oath like gesture symbolizing the desired monogamic, dedicated to husband and family lifestyle among the woman. The ritual now has its implications in both guilt and shame cultural dimensions. Guilt is installed through the rituals, while the publicly taken oath signifies the shame culture aspect of the ritual. The Guilt and Shame cultures are intertwined and depends on one another which mandates a person to follow the rules and regulations of the society.

The role of a woman is an important aspect of the society which has its implications on the social-structure, attributes, distribution of power and responsibilities, sexual selection and various social aspects which constitute the structural and functional dimensions of a society. Thus, in executing a social control, it appears that the fixation of the role of women is pivotal. Hence, the rural societies in India have their cultural aspects designed in such a way that the follow of the cultural aspects is mandated through rituals and intensified through games. It is like a balance of rule and relaxation existing in the forms of rituals and games. While a rule is restrictive in nature, relaxation is a guided sanction purposed towards a specific socio-cultural function or to keep the generations away from abstinence and monastic

lifestyles which could become derogatory to existence and perpetuation of societies. These rural societies may have recognized the need for initiation of correction of behavior from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources. Intrinsic in this context is sourced from the realization that occurs through guilt. Extrinsic sources are the fear of loss of reputation, image, trust and respect. Reflecting these aspects with the analysis of guilt and shame cultures, it could be summarized that both rituals and games have an interplay of the aspects of guilt and shame cultures which mandate undeviated follow of social rules by programming the behavior both internally and externally. These kind of sources are reflected in the festival of *Sankranthi* through celebrations and rituals that are celebrated during this festival. Social restrictions and cultural bonds are executed and taught in both serious and playful way. This can be explained in a much in depth analysis in the following section.

Sankranthi:

Sankranthi is one of the most important festivals celebrated by the people of Andhra Pradesh. The word *Sankranthi* is derived from a Sanskrit word, *Sankramana* which means movement or transition. This festival is celebrated when Sun transits or moves from *Makara rekha* to *Karkataka rekha*, that is, from Tropic of Capricorn to Tropic of Cancer. The Sun rising towards north-east from equator is called *Uttarayana* which signifies the start of the longer days and end of winter solstice with shorter days and longer nights according to Hindu calendar. *Uttarayana*, according to Indian astronomy, is the movement of Earth towards North on the celestial sphere for six months and the period comes between *Makara Sankranthi*, which comes around mid of January and *Karka Sankranthi*, which comes around mid of July. The semantic meaning of the word *Uttarayana* is northern movement of the Earth where *Uttara* means North and *Ayanam* means movement or travel. This is observed in the month of January which generally falls on 14th of the month January according to Gregorian calendar which is fixed except in leap year when the date changes to 15th of January. In Andhra Pradesh, this is a four day festival where the first three days are majorly celebrated giving name to each day called *Bhogi*, *Makara Sankranthi*, *Kanuma* and *Mukkanuma*. Of all the four days, *Makara Sankranthi* is the main festival day on which *Sankrathi* is celebrated though all the days are given equal importance. While most of the Hindu festivals are celebrated in the lunar cycle of the Hindu calendar,

Makara Sankranthi is the first among the few festivals that are celebrated in the solar cycle of the year. The sun rays are very low in the months of *Dhakshinayanam* which decreases the power of immunity in humans and known as the period of darkness, ignorance, viciousness and immense sorrow and thus needs the help of Gods. To keep up the power of immunity and increase the inner strength in humans, practices like fasting, meditation, divine worship and holy fires came in the form of rituals. In the case of *Uttarayanam*, the sun rays are longer and noted for enlightenment, peace, prosperity and happiness and thus less number of festivals and rituals are observed when compared to *Dhakshinayanam*. *Sankranthi* indicates the end of cooler *Maarghasira Masam* (month) and the beginning of warmer *Pushya Masam* (month) according to Hindu calendar. *Makara Sankranthi* is treated as the beginning of auspicious phase and marked as the day(s) of *Devathas* (Gods) and called as *Devayanam* (movement of Gods) while the *Dakshinayanam* is treated as the phase of ancestors or the night to Lord Vishnu and marked as *Pitrayanam*, which means movement of ancestors. In South India, Surya, the Sun God is worshiped in this festival signifying the start of longer days for the next six months. In ancient Hindu mythology, Sun is regarded as the symbol of divinity and wisdom and provides light, heat and energy to all life forms on the Earth equally without any discrimination. He is worshiped as the one who could separate ignorance and provides knowledge and hope for life. Day and night, rise and set of sun provides philosophy of life that anything rises will eventually fall which is related to the concept of life and death, happiness and misery and also everything that falls has a raise like the sun rises after its set everyday.

In agricultural societies, the month of January is the time when crop is harvested and farmers get money into their hands. It is the time when *Kharif*, the south-west monsoon crops that comes in the months of July to October gets completed and farmers get ready to reap the harvest and sell the produce in the market. Farmers celebrate *Sankranthi* as a token of gratitude for the harvest and successful completion of the first phase of agriculture. It is also celebrated to have a blessings from the God for their next crop, *Rabi* in agricultural cycle where the hard work of land preparation, ploughing, sowing seeds and irrigation are completed and waiting for the next harvest to come. In a way, this period is also celebrated as a symbol of successfully completing the hardship and ready to enjoy the fruitful results of the agriculture and

thus families, friends and relatives come together and enjoy the festival as communal celebrations. The farmers now have agriculture produce like rice and money to merry with and celebrated their leisure time. They celebrate the festival by cleaning and decorating their cattle and showcase them as a part of their wealth as cattle are backbone of agriculture. Thus, being a communal festival, *Sankranthi* is celebrated by the entire village as a whole rather than an individual family celebration.

During these three days in Marteru, people, irrespective of caste, participate in social celebrations and events that are held in the villages at different places. This is the time when all the agriculture work is done and farmers getting ready for the next phase, harvesting. After spending months of hard work, this is the time when people have leisure time to relax and money to spend for entertainment, fun and happiness. Men, women and children get involved in activities for fun and joy. The village atmosphere changes from dull to a cheerful appearance with colorful decorations of the houses and cattle, bonfires, *muggulu* (colorful floor artwork) on streets and in the front yards of their houses, children singing songs and playing games, men playing rooster fights, feasts and decorating themselves with new clothes. Each day of *Sankranthi* has its own significance and is celebrated in its respective ways.

Bhogi:

The first day of *Sankranthi* is called *Bhogi*. This is the day that comes before or preceding *Makara Sankranthi* and signifies transformation. It is a harvest festival celebrated in the honor of Sun or at some places Lord Indra for abundant harvest and to bring prosperity to land and there by agriculture. This is also a festival of celebrating togetherness, perpetuation in the form of children and prospering relations. *Bhogi* has a tradition of the newly married daughters coming to their homes with their husbands and children to celebrate the festival and there by *Bhogi* became the festival of son in laws.

Bhogi is known for bringing prosperity and happiness to the families. The word *Bhogi* is derived from the sanskrit word *Bhagam* and its semantic meaning is prosperous. The prosperity is related to the cleanliness of the people along with their places of living and things they live with. People on this day clear the dust and clutter from the houses, decorate their houses with flowers, mango leaves, flour artwork (*muggulu*), turmeric powder and *kumkum*. On this day, all the people, men, women

and children wakeup early in the morning and light up a bonfire and discard old and derelict wooden things in bonfire signifying the start of new or change or transformation in life and nature. The bonfire on *Bhogi* day is called *Bhogi manta* where manta means fire. Along with the derelict things, wooden logs and fuels that are not used are disposed into bonfire. The disposal of old things signifies the sacrifice of old habits, materialistic bonds and making oneself ready to welcome new or change in life. It also represents purification of soul by transformation and realization from the old deeds. Children also bring garlands of dry cow dung patties and burn them in the bonfire. Each street in the village has a bonfire that welcomes the festival. Some times, people from two or three streets make bonfire at the junction or centre of the streets or at a common place of the streets. People come to see the bonfire and stay there for some time and enjoy the heat that could keep their bodies warm from the cool breezes. Children dance around bonfire singing songs of the Gods and harvest of the agriculture. They boil water on the bonfire and take head bath with the hot water and *nalugu pindi* and oil. The front yard of the houses are cleaned with water mixed with cow dung. This is called *peyda* (cow dung) *kallapu* (activity of sprinkling the water) in rural areas. Women and girls decorate the place with colorful *muggulu* which are further decorated with *gobbillu*. Women and children make *gobbillu* with cow dung, place them on colorful *muggu* and decorate them with flowers like marigold, chrysanthemum or pumpkin flowers. *Gobbillu* are special to *Sankranthi* where cow dung is made into balls and they are placed in front of the house as a symbol of Lakshmi Devi. It is believed that *peyda kallapu* provides germ free environment in and out side the house, turmeric which is used to decorate the front door of the house and in the front yard of the house acts as anti bacterial agent which provides health and hygiene. As a token of celebration, people wear new clothes and children become the centre of attraction with their traditional dresses. Farmers and land lords give grain (rice) and new clothes to the laborers who work for them. Elder women in the house prepare delicious foods like *arisalu*, *poornalu*, *bobbatlu*, with rice flour, sesame seeds, jagger, etc which are very special to this festival. People offer prayers to lord Vishnu and lord Surya as at houses and also visit temples.

During the first three days of the festival, people prefer being pure vegetarian and prepare vegetarian dishes like *pulihora* (lemon or tamarind rice with turmeric powder), *gaareylu*, *paala taaleekulu* made of milk and rice flour, etc. Children on this

day decorate themselves beautifully with new clothes and ornaments. They enjoy the festival by watching shows and performances of *Hari daasulu* and *Gangireddulu*. *Hari Daasulu* literal meaning of *Hari* is Lord Vishnu and *Daasu* means servant. Because of their profession, their caste name is also called *Hari Daasulu* and are nomadic. They perform *Hari katha*, a traditional way of telling stories in the form of songs with music and dance a little. *Hari Daasu* is a person who visits every house in the village performing dance by singing songs. His attire resembles the Vedic sage Naradha, a Hindu traveling musician and story teller. He visits around the world and also places of Gods and demons and carries news and wisdom. He is a devotee of Lord Vishnu and carries musical instruments *Karthal* and *Veena*. *Hari Daasu* also carries musical instruments *Karthal* (*chidathalu* in telugu) and tambura and sings devotional songs from *Bhagavatham*. He carries a large bowl on his head with a tala paaga around it so that the bowl would not fall down. The large bowl is called *Akshaya Patra*. He wears a saffron colour dhoti, a traditional wear and a *kanduva* and garlands covering his upper body. He decorates his face with white ‘V’ shaped lines called Vishnu *Naamalu* (lines of Lord Vishnu) indicating himself as a devotee of Lord Vishnu. He ties *gajjelu* to his feet to make rhythmic sound to the steps when he dances and sings. He roams all the streets and villages going from house to house. He takes up *bhikshatanam* and beg (*bicham*) people for offerings. Generally people offer rice, clothes, fruits and vegetables what ever they can provide. On receiving the offerings, he says ‘*Krishnarpanam*’ which includes two words, Krishna and *arpanam* where Krishna means lord Vishnu’s incarnation and *arpanam* means to offer and thus saying this means the offering is for lord Vishnu. He starts the activity from the beginning of the month *Dhanurmasam* till the last day, that is, *Bhogi*. The people in the village believe that *Haridasu* brings auspiciousness to their families and bless them with prosperity and good health. Children show a lot of interest to watch him and his performance and eagerly wait for him as they come only once a year.

Along with *Haridasu*, *gangireddulu* are one of the most eye pleasing activities observed during *Sankranthi* festival. *Gangireddulu* is also a caste occupation of *bhikshatanam* or begging and belongs to a backward community. The person is called *gangireddulodu* and he begs from house to house by entertaining people with his decorated bull called *basavanna*. They are the followers of Lord Shiva. The people of *gangireddulu* purchase a bull which is no more useful in agriculture for a lesser price

from farmers. They train the bull to do some feats like nodding the head as an answer to questions raised by the owner, kneeling on its front legs as a symbol of showing respect etc. They decorate the bull with peacock feathers, silk clothes, colorful threads, pearls and garlands, bells hanging on their neck and *gajjelu* tied to bulls legs. They carry musical instruments like *dhoolu* (a kind of drum) and *sannayi* (trumpet) and play music while moving on roads and visiting houses. People offer rice, used clothes and some times money to them and food to the bull, *basavanna* and children take blessings by touching the bull from behind as it is believed that the back of the cattle is more auspicious. Children and adults watch the performance of bull (*basavanna*) as it responds to the instructions or acts of the owner the bulls are often seen dancing to the rhythm of the percussion played by the owner. Bulls are specially trained for this purpose to amuse people during the festive season as the owners take them along to visit the houses in the village.

Amusement activities on *Bhogi*:

The children spend their day by enjoying the amusing special activities and games that are conducted on this day. Different active communities organize different activities in the form of competitions for the villagers. Girls and women wait eagerly to participate in *muggula* competitions which is very special to this day. They vie with their neighbors and friends to show their artistic skills. Most of the times, the competition is held at a large school ground or at an empty place in the temple. Women and girls decorate this place with beautiful *muggulu* like *chukkala* (dots) *muggulu*, *mutyala* (pearl like) *muggulu*, *meylikeyla* (twisted) *muggulu*, *radham* (chariot) *muggulu*, etc filled with bright colors and flowers. Rice flour or white stone powder, chalk powder are used to draw the designs. These designs symbolize the power to avoid evil spirits and evil eye and protect the houses and families with the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi. Large designs of *muggulu* are drawn on *Sankranthi* when compared to other days. After the harvest, the fields are cut and the lands become empty. Because of this, mosquitoes, insects and pests in the muddy paddy fields pave their path towards villages and enter the houses of the people. In order to avoid and condemn them to enter houses, women clean the house front yards with cow dung which prevents the pests and insects to enter. The materials used in *muggu* are charcoal, saw dust, burned soil etc and some times turmeric and *kumkum* also used which helps in further prevention of insects and pests. Winning in the *muggulu*

competition brings pride to the girls because of the traditional and cultural attachment *muggulu* have in the rural villages. *muggulu* are given equal importance along with cooking food, looking after young ones at home, cleaning and handling household works which are treated as female activities. A girl who does not know how to draw *muggu* is deemed to be less of traditional values and cannot become an ideal women in the future. Because of this, every girl learns how to draw designs from as early as five years of age by watching their elders doing it. Elder women like grand mothers, aunts, mothers, elder sisters teach the young ones as they sit and observe them and try to draw designs of their own at another corner of the floor. It is a part of cleaning and decorating their houses and is mandatory to be learnt by each and every girl in the village. Though for some people cleaning the house with cow dung and drawing *muggulu* are part of hygienic conditions, children from schedule castes deliberately are not allowed to practice the art form though they know the art, as it belongs to Hindu tradition. They are strictly given instructions to not participate in such competitions and games as they belong to Hindu festivals and Hindu traditional knowledge. This condition is not truly replicated among all the Christ followers. Though the girls and women from backward communities and unreserved categories go to church and follow Christianity by faith, they participate in the competitions.

Bhogi pallu:

Bhogi pallu is a ritual dedicated to children which is celebrated on *Bhogi* day. Towards the evening of *Bhogi* festival, children of below five years age are given *Bhogi pallu* or fruits shower in the house and celebrate the event by calling the neighbors for *peyrantam*, a social gathering in which *tambulam* is offered to women. This ritual is observed among the castes of Reddies, Vyshyas, Brahmins and Kammas. It is a ritual celebrated for the good health and long life of infants and children. Mothers hold their young babies on their laps and sit in the chair which is arranged in the centre of the hall. Children, when are a couple of years older, are asked to sit in the chair in the centre of hall in the house. Father and mother together take *dishti* of the child by rotating the fruits around the child. Women one by one come to them, take the *Bhogi pallu* into their hands, rotate their hands round the child and the mother holding the child three times clockwise and three times anti clockwise saying *irugu dishti porugu disthi oorlovalla disthi* and put the fruits on their heads. This procedure has to be repeated for five times. Songs relating to the longevity and prosperity of the

child are sung during this ritual. The children are given *harathi* by singing *harathi* songs praising Goddess Parvathi, apply *kumkuma* on their forehead and bless them with *akshanthalu* (rice mixed with turmeric powder). Along with *regi pallu* or *Bhogi pallu* (red dates or jujubes), small sugarcane pieces, rice, jagger, flower petals and coins are showered on the children. This is a gala ritual which generates more fun and amusement to children participating in the ritual. Children from one to five years of age are celebrated in this ritual by showering *Bhogi pallu* on them and are given blessing by the elders. This ritual is performed to ward off *nara drishti* (human eye or evil eye) and bad fortune and bless them with healthy long life and prosperity. The children are given *harathi* at the time of *Bhogi pallu* shower. Though this ritual is dominated by the presence of women, men also participate and bless their children. Thus, the child gets blessings from both father and mother along with other relatives. Some people celebrate this ritual consecutively for three years and some for five years for their children. After the ritual, sweets and gifts are distributed among the children and guests as a token of sharing happiness. The fruits which are used are not to be used again as they are used to ward off evil eye and so the elders remove the fruits from the floor and throw them at a place where no one can step on them and advice children not to eat them.

After the ritual and celebration, the children in the gathering form a group and play games while singing to different songs like devotional songs, rhythmic songs, play songs. The children thus enjoy the event by playing small games in the presence of the elders. In some cases, when the elders get dispersed to their works, the children continue playing different small games near the house. The children are taught to mingle with each other, and get connected to the little babies who are to be considered as play mates in their play groups at later times when the babies are grown up.

***Bhogi pallu* and Indian astrology:**

According to Indian astrology *Bhogi* is a festival that celebrates the relationship between father and son. On *Bhogi* day, Sun (Surya), the lord of *Simha rasi* (Leo) visits his son *Shani* (Saturn), the lord of *Makara* (Capricorn) and *Kumba* (Aquarius) and stays in this house for one month. *Bhogi pallu* are also called as *arkha phalam*, means the fruit of *arkhydu*. *Arkhyudu* is another name for God Sun and thus celebrated this

ritual to have blessings from Sun. Capricorn is an earth sign which symbolically represents the onset of heat and energy for which Sun is a significator. In the zodiac belt, Capricorn is the tenth house and the tenth house also represents profession, career and father according to astrological explanation. Astrologically, Sun illuminates any house that he visits. Sun visiting tenth house is considered auspicious and is believed to yield good results in profession to the native, that is, the son of Sun. According to the analysis of *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, tenth house is not only representing father and the authority figure, but also is signification of how father strengthens us. This brings in a new dimension of thought, especially as the sign of Capricorn is owned by Saturn and Saturn, according to the Hindu legends, is the Son of the Sun. Here, Saturn and Sun are believed to have inimical relationship and yet the combination and the overall meaning that could emerge also reflects the strengthening support of father figure despite disputed environment and inimical relationship. When an imaginary line is drawn in between Capricorn and Cancer zodiac signs, each of the halves would represent one solstice. Here, it should be understood that on the day when Sun enter's Capricorn, it is the time when according to the legends is the day-time of Gods. The time when Sun transits in between the zodiacs of Capricorn till Cancer is considered to be one day in the time scale of the Gods. The transit time between Cancer and Capricorn is considered as the night-time of Gods. Since Gods are active to receive offerings and bless with the grant of wishes during their day time, the solstice when Sun enters Capricorn is the beginning of a time when all the auspicious events are believed to happen. On another hand, the sign of Cancer is ruled by Moon. Moon, astrologically, symbolizes the Mother figure. Through Capricorn, Saturn is the son figure while Sun is the father figure. This symbolically also represents that a family is guarded and supported at all times by the son (offspring figure) and (mother) while the father (working man) goes through the dark time (inauspicious) or bright time (auspicious) with respect to the transit in between the solstices. Thus, this period of *Sankranthi* also indicates the importance of relation between children and parents and their blessings towards their children for prosperity and healthy life.

Makara Sankranthi:

This is the second day of the four day *Sankranthi* festival and is the important day of all the three days. This is also called as *Pedda Panduga* in Andhra Pradesh,

which semantically means main festival. This is known as *Peddala panduga* as the festival of *Peddalu* that is forefathers. After completing the harvest, this is the time when people have money by selling their agricultural produce and to spend their time leisurely. Like on *Bhogi*, women clean the house and decorate it with *muggulu* in the front yard of the house. On this day, the newly wed daughters with their husbands pay a visit to her parents house and the parents in laws give utmost respect and courtesy to their newly wed sons in law. The women prepare authentic dishes made of rice flour, sesame seeds and jagger as main ingredients. The dishes include *paramannam* (cooked rice and jagger), *payasam*, *chekkara* (jagger) *pongali*, *appalu* (sweet made of rice flour and jagger), *nuvvula undalu* (sesame laddoos) *nuvvula ariseylu*, *gareylu*, *janthikalu* or *murugulu*, *bobbathu*, *booreylu*, *goru meetilu*, *kudumulu* with coconut chutney and *dappalam* (a tangy vegetable stew with pumpkin), which is taken with *pappu* and rice. They offer the deliciously prepared dishes to Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu as an offering and do prayer. Prayers and food are offered to ancestors by placing their photos along with the pictures and idols of the Gods. After the prayers, people celebrate the day by sharing their food with the neighbors, friends and relatives. Great luncheons are arranged with courtesy to the guests and sons in law as a part of the festival. Women and children enjoy in preparing *Bommala Koluvu*, a traditional way of arranging toys and idols of Gods as a part of celebration. Though *Bommala Koluvu* is celebrated during *Dushera*, in Marteru it is observed that people celebrate this ritual on *Sankranthi* as well.

Kanuma:

This is the third day of the *Sankranthi* festival. Food is an important source of survival for human beings. Agriculture has become the main source of food which ultimately is the reason for human survival. Along with farmers, cattle also work equally and sometimes more to cultivate food. This is a festival of cattle and animals which help humans to live a healthy life. People recognize the help offered by these animals, especially cattle in agriculture to farmers and provides an occasion to express thanks to these animals and those who look after them. *Kanuma* is not celebrated grandly like *Bhogi* and *Sankranthi*. On this day, cattle sheds are cleaned with cow dung and water. People clean their cattle and decorate them. They decorate the horns of the cattle and their bodies with turmeric and *kumkum* powders, spread colorful clothes on their bodies, give garlands, and bells. The farmers take good care of the

cattle. In order to provide entertainment to the animals, sports and competitions among the animals have started by the farmers. *Kodi punjula pandalu* (rooster fights), *Yedla parugula pandalu* (bull running race), *gorrey pottella pandalu* (ram fights), are conducted not only for the fun and entertainment of the people but also to animals. But this idea later on has turned in to an other way. Though it is said that these sports are to be conducted on *Kanuma* day, people started conducting these sports from the first day, that is, *Bhogi* day itself. On this day, along with the cattle and livestock, farmers convey their gratitude towards birds by providing them food. Farmers bring *vari kankulu*, tie them into beautiful groups to their houses and hang them in front of their houses. Sparrows and other birds come and take grains from the hanging *kunchu*. It is that, every house should have sparrows and birds coming to their houses as it indicates the presence of Goddess Lakshmi, symbol of affluence and auspiciousness. Farmer, there by, expresses his gratitude towards these birds which help him in agriculture by eating small insects which may spoil the produce. It is also in a way to avoid birds to eat the grains from the fields and protect the produce. On *Kanuma*, girls or women cook lemon rice and make big rice balls. They put these rice balls in leaf plates and put them in front of the house or on the banks of rivers or lakes outside the village for the birds to eat. They come back and take head bath. It is believed that by doing this, they may bring fortune and prosperity to the house and its members. For doing this, women's brothers give new clothes to them as a token of gratitude. It is believed that, the forefathers come in form of birds and eat the rice balls. Along with rice, dishes with black gram like *gaareylu* are cooked and offered to the birds.

Mukkanuma:

This is the last day of *Sankranthi* festival. This day is not considered as important as the rest of the days and no celebration is seen. On this day, people prepare non vegetarian dishes as a symbol of closing festive season. *Radham muggu* (chariot design) is very important on this day. Women, in the early morning, draw chariot design in front of the house with head of the chariot towards the house and wheels facing outside. The rope of the chariot is combined to the chariot of the next house. In this way, all the chariots in the village are combined with ropes till the end of the village. This signifies the leaving of Sun God on his chariot who arrived on *Bhogi*. On this occasion, elder women teach girl children the art of *muggulu* and fill them with artistic excellence. The elders through this art along with filling aesthetic

sense in the children also teach about being hygienic and keeping the circumstances clean and away from pests. They also teach cosmic knowledge and study of stars with the help of *muggulu* and by connecting the dots. The knowledge of connecting dots which are symbolized as stars in the sky helps in understanding and observing the cosmic world and there by helps in learning astronomy. All this knowledge is taught to children in the form of celebration to create interest among them rather than just teaching in a mundane way. With *muggulu*, elders also teach children counting numbers, angles, animals, flowers etc. Each festival in India has a cosmic connection and there by has a different design explaining the importance of the festival and the celestial knowledge through *muggulu* and each design has a different name like *trikonam* (three angles), *shadkonam* (six angles), *ashtadhala padmam* (eight lines lotus), *maareydu dhalam*, *thulasi kota*, *cheypa mukku* (fish nose), *taabeylu* (tortoise), *malley pandiri* (jasmin), *uyyala mancham*, *gummadi pandu muggu* (pumpkin), *vari kankulu muggu* (paddy), *padma bandham* (lotus bond), *naga bandham* (snake bond), *swarga dwaralu* (doors of heaven), *radham muggulu* (chariot) etc. On *Sankranthi*, *gummadi muggulu* and *vari kankulu muggulu* are significant as they indicate the crops that come home and through *muggulu* elders teach children the significance of these two crops. On *Bhogi* day, people draw chariot *muggu* out side the *gummam* or main door as a symbol of Lord Sun in his chariot coming to their house. On *Sankranthi*, people draw chariot *muggu* just near to *gummam* or main door and draw the chariot coming into their house and also the rope of the chariot coming into the house. On *Kanuma* people draw chariot *muggu* in such a way that it is going from their house and draw the rope outside the main door, that is, the chariot is going outside the house. On *Mukkanuma* day, the chariots rope is extended to outside and attached to the neighbors chariot wheel. In this way, at every house chariots are drawn with their ropes extending to their neighbors chariots and finally to the outskirts of the village. This indicates symbolically that the Sun God is going back to heaven on his chariot after completing his visit to their houses. All this knowledge is taught to the children with the help of this occasion. Thus, *Mukkanuma* indicates the end of the celebration of *Sankranthi*.

Sports and Games on *Sankranthi*:

After the first two days of *Sankranthi*, traditionally it is on *Kanuma* and *Mukkanuma* people especially farmers show interest in celebrating by showcasing

their cattle and taking care of them. The farmers celebrate these two days along with their beasts by conducting sports and entertainment not only for themselves but also for their animals. They conduct competitions and sports to their animals in which they too take participation along with the animals. Sports like *yedla pandalu* (bull competitions), *kodi pandalu* (cock fights or rooster fights), *gorrey pandalu* (ram fights) are the traditional sports that have been conducted and played by the people of Marteru and its surrounding villages for the last several generations. It is fact that since thousands of years these sports have been conducted in many villages throughout the state of Andhra Pradesh and also among neighboring southern states. In Marteru, only rooster fights are conducted and stopped conducting both *yedla pandalu* and *gorrey pandalu* for the past few years. This signifies the increase of technology in agriculture and decrease of the availability of bulls and rams in the village. Both adults and children are amused by these sports but it is restricted to male gender. Women and girl children are strictly prohibited to participate in these games not only in Marteru but also among its neighboring villages. Though these sports and games are said to start on *Kanuma* and *Mukkanuma*, people conduct and eagerly participate from the first day of the festival, that is, *Bhogi*. The Supreme court of India has ordered state High court to take all the measures to prevent cockfights during the festival in order to control the gambling as betting of crores of rupees takes place in the traditional sport. It is also that the Animal welfare board of India and other animal welfare organizations like PETA, Blue Cross etc oppose the animal abuse that happens in the blood shed sports during this festival. In spite of the restrictions coming from different sides, people show high interest in these sports as they see the sports not just as sports or fun events but as rich cultural activities.

Rooster Fights:

From the beginning of *Dhanurmasam*, that is, mid December, people start preparations for participating in rooster fights during *Sankranti*. The spirit of competition is filled in the air of the villages. From young boys to old men the skill of training the roosters and taking care of them is visible at every house in the village. The roosters are found in front of every house or at the backyard of the houses. The roosters are purchased before one month of the beginning of the festival from poultry farms. These poultry farms raise roosters, feed and breed them with all the healthy nutrition. The poultry farms though are visibly more involved in the much lawful

business of breeding the broilers for food, they have the business of roosters as another major source of income and pride. Breeding of roosters for rooster fights is illegal but the real purpose of raising roosters is masked in the name of the sale of country chicken though originally they are fed and bred for fights not for reselling or consuming, but for setting them up for their own bet in a rooster fight. People from different places come to these farms to purchase fighter roosters. The prices depends on the quality of the rooster starting from hundred to thousands of rupees that may exceed to thirty thousand rupees. The quality of the rooster depends on its head comb, eyes, beak, wings, feathers, muscle, tail, age, body size and health. Before the purchase of the roosters, they also test on the readiness and quickness of the rooster to fight by conducting a test fight with the selected rooster. It is also that people purchase roosters on the basis of rooster astrology, that is, *kukkuta shastram*. An individual purchase more than one rooster at a time. Some people purchase more than hundred roosters at a time not to sale but to use for their own game.

Raising of the roosters:

People start purchasing roosters a month ahead of the big festival, *Sankranthi*. People who have big gardens and agriculture fields like mango fields, coconut fields, etc clear some space in the field and grow the roosters. The roosters of the landlords are taken care by their servants at the fields. People who have no land bring the roosters carefully to their homes and tie them either at the front yard or back yard of the house. The owners of the roosters take utmost care of them. They make them do exercise by making them run on wheels which resembles a treadmill run in a gym once in every two days. Roosters are made to swim in a tank of water for half an hour at least ten times a month which increases stamina. The roosters are given healthy food through out this month. The food includes dry fruits like almond, pistachio, dried dates, cantaloupe seeds, cashew seeds, raisins, flax seeds, walnuts and pumpkin seeds all put together and ground them into a paste. This preparation is given to roosters as food not exceeding six pounds per week. Along with dry fruits, two egg whites with a pinch of turmeric powder are given to the roosters every day. The roosters are also given B complex and multi vitamin tablets to gain more energy. Some times, non vegetarian food like chicken, mutton are also supplied to the fighting roosters. If they gain more weight, the roosters are given hot water therapy to reduce the weight. People who cannot afford costly food for their roosters give them grains like pellets,

and crumble to the roosters and other supplementary food once in a week depending on their spending capacity.

Case study:

Kiran (fictitious name) is a 16 years boy. He is studying tenth standard in a Government English medium school in Marteru. He is a *Reddy*. His father, Ramu (fictitious name) died when he was two years old from a road accident. His mother, Rama went to Arab countries to work as a domestic servant leaving her son, Kiran to her elder sister, Lakshmi who is also a widow. Lakshmi (fictitious name) has three sisters all are married. The elder sister Ratnavalli (fictitious name), 36 years age stays with her family two streets away from Lakshmi's house. The first younger sister is Rama (fictitious name), 25 years old and the last sister is Pooja (fictitious name), 19 years old who got married two years back and has a six months girl child. Lakshmi (fictitious name), who is 27 years old has a son Kumar (fictitious name), 14 years old studying in eight class in the same school where Kiran is studying. They live in a small hut of two rooms which is their own. One room is used as both living room and kitchen in which they have a television, steel utensils cleanly arranged on wooden planks. The other room has a small cot and a cupboard. They have two buffaloes and one calf of four months age. Their house is located near the agriculture fields at one end of the village. They live in Setti Baliya area along with two other *Reddy* families who are Lakshmi's elder sister and brother. Along with Lakshmi, her widowed mother also stays with them whose age is around sixty years. Lakshmi takes up different works for her livelihood like agriculture labour, sells milk and works at a lawyer. She earns a monthly income of two thousand rupees approximately which is not fixed. Her younger sister Rama sends five thousand rupees a month from which is spent for their debts and loans. Thus, the income of the house is around three thousand approximately. Ratnavalli (fictitious name), Lakshmi's elder sister has a son, Raju. Raju is twenty two years old working in a fruit stall. He goes on trucks to get fruits from the market in bulk to his owner. He earns a monthly income of thousand rupees which he spends for himself. Ratnavalli works as an agriculture labour and her husband went to Arab country to work as a driver. They recently bought a small piece of land near Lakshmi's house.

On 18th of December, Kiran, Kumar (fictitious names) and their cousin Raju bought three roosters, one for five hundred, one for eight hundred and the other for one thousand five hundred from a seller at Poduru, a near by village. Out of the total cost of two thousand eight hundred, Kiran spent three hundred rupees, Kumar did not give any money and Raju gave the rest. The roosters are kept in a hen coop the coop is kept in the recently bought land. The roosters are to be taken care through out the month and are to be trained for the fight. Kiran and Kumar after their school in the evening, have to go around the streets to distribute the milk every day. Now before they leave to distribute milk, they go to the roosters, give some grains and water, let them out for some time and put them back in the coop. They should be very careful as the roosters may get lost or be robbed as its the high time for roosters. Raju is busy with his job by going to other villages on duty. So, his presence to look after the roosters is not possible. On 25th of December, Raju went to Palakollu village for some work for three days and the boys, Kiran and Kumar also got busy with their exams. Because of the children's tight schedule, Raju's mother, Ratnavalli started taking care of the roosters while they were busy with their school schedules and exams. Every day Ratnavalli went to visit the coops in the morning and afternoon to provide food and water to the roosters. She releases the roosters for some time in the morning and went to her mother's house where Lakshmi lives and talk to them. While going back she keep them back into the coop and lock them up. On 28th of December, while Raju was still at Palakollu, and the boys were busy with their exams, Ratnavalli did not come to see the roosters. She called Lakshmi and told her that she fell sick and cannot come to the place. She requested Lakshmi to provide food to the roosters. Lakshmi went to see her sister in the afternoon. She also took some curry to her sister as she did not cook for that day. She came back to her home after an hour and brought the keys of the coop along with her. In the evening, Lakshmi went to the coop and provided food and left the roosters for some time. After an hour, she went back to the coop and kept the roosters back into the coop, covered the coop with a cloth and locked it. Like this Lakshmi took care of the roosters for two days and by that time, Raju came back from his camp. Lakshmi handed over the responsibility of taking care of the roosters back to Raju. From eleventh of December, the boys were given holidays because of *Sankranti* vacation. From that day, the boys spent enough time to the roosters along with their other duties like taking buffaloes to fields, distributing milk to people, bringing green grass from the fields to the cattle etc.

On Bhogi day, Raju called Kiran and said lets go to Kukkuteswaraswamy temple in Pithapuram. Kiran and Kumar came to Raju's house in the morning around ten thirty. They went to Pithapuram on Raju's bike to the temple which is approximately 130 kilo meters in distance on road. They went to take blessings from the God Shiva in the form of rooster for the next day's fight. On the day of the festival, Raju, Kiran and Kumar took the roosters for rooster fights in the morning around eleven'o clock. Raju suggested to participate in the fight each day with one rooster and thus they can play for all the three days of the festival. On the first day, that is, on Sankranthi, they went to a cockfight arena which is held in a coconut farm. The place is called 'kodi pandala thota' which means garden of cockfights. Because of conducting cockfights in this place for many generations, this farm got its name. I asked why did you chose this place to play, they quickly answered that this is our place and so we play here. The boys went to the farm with their rooster in their hands. The arena is completely filled with men and boy children. They went to a person who is conducting the fights. His name is Srinivas *Reddy*. Along with him, there were five other men assisting him. Three men were controlling the crowd with ropes in their hands and beating the people who ever is crossing the line of the ring in which the cocks fight. The other two men were taking note of the people who are bringing rooster for fights. Kiran and Kumar stood at a corner of the ring while Raju went carrying the rooster in his hands to the people who are carrying the roosters. He talked to some of the rooster owners asking for fight. A middle aged person checked with Raju's rooster whether the roosters are getting aggravated or not and once they are getting ferocious, the man agreed to fight against his rooster for ten thousand. Raju also agreed to the proposal. Both of their names got registered at the cockfight ring and paid each ten thousand to Srinivas *Reddy* and agreed to pay a sum of five thousand from the win amount, that is, twenty thousand to him as commission. They took the roosters into the ring and made necessary preparations for the roosters to activate. The roosters were brought face to face and they immediately started to fight. The fight lasted for ten minutes and Raju's rooster lost the match. The bleeding rooster was taken to the middle aged man and Raju returned empty handed. His face was so sad that he lost the fight. Not only his face but also Kiran and Kumar's faces got sadden. On their return, Kiran was recollecting how ferocious their rooster fought against its opponent rooster but still lost the fight. But they are not regretted that they still have two more rooster to win. Kiran continued saying we should have referred to '*Panchangam*' other wise we

would not lose the fight. We lost the fight just because we did not refer to the 'Panchangam'. We will ask *babai* (father's brother) about tomorrow's astrology of the rooster before we go to the game and went home to have lunch.

Kukkuta shastram:

People from Marteru believe in rooster astrology or *Kukkuta Shastram* and play rooster fights according to the astrology. This astrology is believed among the people of various districts of Andhra Pradesh. *Kukkuta* means rooster in Sanskrit and *Shastram* means study or knowledge. Thus, the word *Kukkuta Shastram* means study of rooster or astrology of rooster. The people of Marteru believe that the win or lose in the rooster fight is determined by the astrological association of humans and roosters. The people who play rooster fights carry cock or rooster almanac or *panchangam* on roosters along with them during *Sankranthi* festival. The knowledge of astrology is used to predict the winning prospects of a rooster. Such predictions are based on a system of Vedic astrology called Horary astrology where the transit position of the planets, the color of the rooster, the place where the event is conducted and the *janma nakshatra* (birth star) of the owner or player.

Kukkuta Shastra is based on a branch of Vedic astrology called Horary astrology where the winning prospects of a person participating in the betting could be expanded by following a set of pre-calculated tables. Roosters of various color configurations are called by various names and each of such color configurations is identified by a planet in Vedic astrology. *Kukkuta shastra*, though is based on the same principles of calculation as all the other branches of Vedic astrology, it has been made simple may be for the purpose of quick and easy utilization even by a lay man. *Kukkuta Shastra* expands the winning chances to a participant by being the advisory knowledge on which direction to go from his or her place, which direction to sit at the gallery in the arena and what rooster to bet on depending on its color configuration. It also is useful to the owners of the roosters as one could decide on the direction in which the rooster has to be released for fight to expand the winning chances. The transit chart and the *nakshatra* (star) in which the planet moon is transiting at the time of the rooster fight event also could have a say on which which rooster wins. All such astrological calculations are made and are given in a tabular format in *kukkuta shastra* which could be used by the native participating or betting in the rooster fight. For the ease of

utilization by a lay man, the *shastra* is based on *Naama nakshatra* (name star) instead of *Janma nakshatra* (birth star). This means, the participants could arrive at which rooster to bet on by just checking the beginning alphabet or sounds of their names in those tables of *kukkata shastras*. The same tables could be utilized to understand the winning prospects by considering the name of the place and the owner of the rooster. Horary system of astrology has the ability to predict the events to a very minute detail. Since, *kukkata shastra* is based on horary astrology, it is possible to predict in which round what rooster may loose as well. Pre-calculated tables are printed in the pocket books of *kukkata shastras* to understand these predictions as well and arrive at a decision on which rooster to bet on basing on the round and color configuration of the rooster. In *kukkuta shastra* the winning directions are also indicated. Thus, one could expand his / her winning chances by selecting a field where the rooster fight is conducted, which is in the advised direction from his / her place. This aspect of *kukkuta shastra* is called ‘*Disavarnam*’ (*Disa* meaning direction and *varnam* meaning color). In *Kukkata shastra* tables are given based on the week day on which the rooster fight is being organized as well. So, one could utilize these tables and filter through a set predictions by finding that one commonly predicted winning rooster across various tables and bet on it to expand his winning chances. Sometimes, it may also occur as such that the tables may not repeatedly indicate one rooster when the querent investigates through multiple tables. Such a condition still preserves the unpredictable nature of winning even with the use of *kukkuta shastra*. This entire model of prediction is in the same frame as of any other implementation of astrology which only becomes only the advisory to a native to make decisions but does not guarantee the winning. A sense of destiny and luck prevails over the entire phenomenon despite such in-depth calculations and predictions.

Women and Roosters:

It is clearly visible that women and girl children are restricted from rooster fights in the village and its surroundings. No single women is found going towards the place where rooster fights are organized. It is completely a game for men. As the roosters signify male gender, it symbolically represents the involvement of men rather than women in the game. The restriction of the game to women is well rooted in the society and its culture. The children are guided with the rules and regulations that are followed in the village very carefully from the early days of their childhood itself. Out of

curiosity when a girl child tantrums to take her to rooster fights along with her brothers, her wish is immediately corrected either by her family members or the society itself. This tells how keen the society's observation is on women participating in the game. It is a shame when a girl or woman ever visits or at least thinks of visiting a rooster fight. A cultured woman should know by herself that it is a restricted place. Women in Marteru are always afraid of '*peyrlu pettadam*' that is, calling with inappropriate names. In order to avoid such consequence they better be aware of what comes to them. This can be explained from my own experience. I asked a woman, Rani, to take her to rooster fight arena. On the request of the researcher as she happened to be her first interviewer and known person, she agreed to take me to the arena. The arena is located at a corner of the village. The place was completely filled with motorbikes, cycles and cars. From the beginning of the street with the arena still away by one kilo meter distance, the concentration of men in the area increased. There was no girl or woman seen in the place or on the street near the arena. It was only me with my companion who were the only women present in the place. Strange looks with astonishing expressions on the faces of the men were clearly visible. Some of them even stopped and gazed at them in such a way that their looks communicated anxiety filled questions of what these girls are doing here. Both the women are holding hands and walking. Slowly, the woman, Rani accompanying me started holding my hand tightly as we were approaching the arena. She stopped at the gate of coconut field where the rooster fights were happening and said that she cannot move further and enter the place. She said, 'I belong to this village. I have to go on the same streets among the same people. You do not belong to this village and will go back to your place. I cannot come. They will call me with inappropriate names (*peyrlu petteystharu*)'. She left me abruptly at the gate and left.

Women are expected to remain in the same fear to live a proper life in the village. Their characters are always accompanied by their actions and thoughts. This applies to all women irrespective of their caste and class. Women from higher castes, rich and wealthy families are also not allowed to attend any rooster fights. Not only the higher strata women but also women of low caste and class cannot enter the arena. We can see women only in cases where they accompany men for support in running the food stalls that too outside and away from the boundary of the arena.

Though there is a prohibition of women directly from the participation in rooster fights, it is observed that they play an immense role in the sport. They look after the roosters and take care of them at home. They provide food to the roosters dutifully everyday and follow a feeding schedule. It is that both men and women at homes raise the roosters and share equal responsibility of taking care of the roosters. Not that if the man purchases the rooster it is only his responsibility to take care of the rooster and make it ready for the fight. This sharing of responsibility is visible among the families of middle and lower class. Women from the higher caste and class will not show interest in such activities rather they hire servants to take care of the roosters. Doing service to the rooster like raising it and taking care of it is considered as a lower form of activity. The men from the higher families some times directly purchase the well raised and well maintained rooster for a higher cost. The lower and middle class families, as they cannot afford for servants they take care of the roosters by themselves. It is that both men and women have equal anxiety to play rooster fights though women do not express their feelings. They give huge support to their men to participate in the sport though it involves betting and money. In spite of the negative aspects of the sport, the women support their men to participate because they feel that the celebration comes annually and they need to enjoy at least for that one time in the whole year. They further say that the men earn through out the year for their family and children and this is the only time they spend the money for their enjoyment. As long as the men spend money within the limits, they earn the support from them. The women enjoy winning and loosing the game in the same way. For them it is not fair to enjoy the winning moment and become dejected for loosing the game. They constantly try not to inculcate feelings of love and affection towards the rooster as they clearly know the purpose of it at the time of purchase. But, deep inside they have the feeling of “our animal and our property” so they always look forward for the win rather than loosing the rooster. Thus, it is observed as a family celebration rather than an individual’s entertainment.

Children and roosters:

The children are deliberately taught the sport of rooster fights by the elders. Children, especially boys of below ten years age as well attend to watch rooster fights with their fathers or uncles. It is quite common to see boys of above ten years age learning to raise the roosters from their elders. The elders, especially fathers, father’s

brothers or mother's brothers or elder brothers teach the young boys how to raise the roosters. They reveal all the techniques in raising the roosters to the boys and treat such knowledge as a precious treasure of secrets which they share only within their family. The knowledge is kept as secret and is not shared among any others but only among family members or close friends. Most of the knowledge is learnt through observation and practice which is possible only at the time of festival. The people believe that it is their right to participate in the rooster fights as it is a part of their culture and that they have it passed on to them as a tradition. The role of the boys below sixteen is that they can only observe and can not participate in the rooster fights. The boys below the prescribed age participate in rooster fightings by accompanying an elder brother who is in twenties. The boys learn the sport by observing every year and by their turn comes after a couple of years of observation. By then, they will be equipped with enough knowledge and information about how to raise a rooster and what the necessary techniques are to make it strong and prepare it for the fight. The elders consciously guide their boys that they should not get addicted to the sport. For this, they follow strict reservation on the boys to play the sport. The boys are given some money to enjoy the fair at the cockfight arena but are not allowed to use the money on betting. But when the boys find their equal betting partners who are willing to bet for less amount of money like ten rupees or fifty rupees, they participate secretly away from the knowledge of their elders. But once they win the bet and earn a few amounts, they gain the confidence to share the happy winning news with their elders which the elders as well take in a positive sense. The boys cannot participate in big bets as they wouldn't generally have that huge amounts. To control the temptation of betting, the elders control it by give only a few hundreds of bucks depending on the earning capacity of the elders. The elders also teach the children to play a fair game and insist to avoid cheating or fraud game. The scope of getting cheated is very less as the people play the game in a sportive way. The boys are also taught to be vigilant and avoid drunkards and so that they can be with their elders and known people. The rooster fights are played by people of non Hindus as a part of entertainment. Thus, the sport is not just an individual sport rather a communal sport where family members come together to have fun. The socially accepted behavior which includes rules, principles, moral values are all taught to the children by the adults through the process of socialization. In the lives of the children it is not always the parents and members of the family who are involved in teaching the social and

cultural aspects but also the society that takes part in teaching and make the children learn the behavior which is expected by the society itself. The games which are part of culture of the society carry the information that is useful for the children to execute the right behavior and meet the expectations of the society to function smoothly. This process of teaching and learning which is called socialization can be explained in detail in the following explanation with the help of the concepts of role, status and imitation games.

Culture in the cradle of Socialization:

Games act as cultural reflectors. They reflect the knowledge acquired by the people through the activities they perform. The activities that are important for the lives of the people are reflected and are learnt through the process of socialization. Games act as vehicles that help in learning social and cultural aspects of the society and as a means of preparation towards attaining economic skills. It is observed that the games played by the people are influenced by the culture which is dynamic in nature. Most of the time, games are related to amusement, mirth and fun. But they have a deeper connection with the culture and society and are beyond gaining physical fitness and mere joy.

Culture carries knowledge in different forms through which people learn in the course of time through their regular activities. This process of learning starts from the early stages of life among human beings. It is understood that the babies even in their prenatal stages have a lot of limbic activity which is more a biological phenomenon. After the birth of the child, the female elders in the house especially, the grand mothers be with the child and assist the mother in taking care of the child. During this period, they make the child play by holding the hands of the child and moving them rhythmically while singing songs. This movement of hands and legs along with gestures and funny facial expressions makes the child laugh and giggle. They teach the child certain games while playing along with them. Many psychologists believe that this activity helps for the healthy growth of the baby ensuring adequate exercises to the limbic and facial muscles. It is more like a simple playful two-action activity like saying “Govinda” (name of lord Venkateswara) and making the child do *namaste* gesture. Some times, elders sing the songs of Gods or traditional folk poems all of

which have cultural concepts deeply embedded in them. By making the child do *namaste* gesture (lifting his or her hands up and saying Govinda) there are already some cultural concepts making their way to slowly influence the infant's learning. Along with the physical and mental health development, these songs and games convey certain information and knowledge and helps in building strong relations between the child and the person. The women leaves her husband's house and comes to her parent's house for delivery. Before sending her to her parents home, a ritual named '*Sreemantam*' is conducted at her husband's house which generally takes place on her fifth month of pregnancy. After the ceremony the women is taken to her parent's house. After coming to her parents house she gives birth to her child in the ninth month. She remains with her parents for about three months after the delivery as well. The duration of the stay depends on the need of her presence at her husband's house. Thus, the early days of a child are always at the mother's parents house which brings more intimacy to the child and mother's side people. The special bond with the maternal uncle also starts from this period with the child. During this period, the child is given utmost care and love and is treated as the top priority of the entire family. They spend most of the time with the child playing and singing songs. The children in the house, especially, maternal uncle's children become closer to the new born child forming a strong bond as they spend their time playing with the baby. The children are taught about their relatives, their relations with them and how to behave with them from the beginning stages itself. This helps the children understand the relations between themselves and the elders and also among the children themselves. The elders in the family, especially, the grandmothers play certain games and sing songs to the children. Since the new borns are to learn to stand and walk, it is a consequence of a lot of strength building in the muscles which are essential for such development to occur which indeed is the resultant of a lot of playful activity which is like a training for all the tasks to the infants. Grandmothers make them toddle by holding their hands and give them all such required training in a playful way. This continues to happen till the age of two or three years or till they complete their basic learning processes and begin to stand and walk all by themselves and play with the rest of the children in the families. An elder girl in the family is often seen looking after the small ones in support of the baby's mother.

Mothers or grandmothers play many games which include songs in them. The infant games observed in this village are seen in almost all the regions of Andhra

Pradesh state. *Uggu paata* is the song sung by the mother when she gives *uggu*, the quintessential baby food to the child along with mothers milk in the first six months of the baby. *Uggu* is staple food for the infants among the Telugu states. It is made up of mashed banana, apple or some times rice in boiled water. During the feeding time, the mother sings this song to the child ‘*Uu Uu Uganna- Uggupaalu indanna, Gariteydu uggu kammanna- Ummaka kakkaka minganna*’. This song tells the infant that the food is tasty and not to vomit it while eating. Mothers make circles in the air around the baby holding the last morsel of *uggu* in their hand, this gesture is believed to cancel the ill effects of any evil eye that may have witnessed the baby having the food. After eating the food the mother sings another song for complete digestion of the food. ‘*Jeernam jeernam vataapi jeernam, Yenugu thinna yelakkaya jeernam, Gurram thinna guggillu jeernam, maa abbai (ammai) taagina uggupaalu jeernam*’. While singing this song the mother smoothly rubs on the stomach of the child with her fingers. It is believed that the song and the gesture of gently rubbing the tummy of the baby after the meal facilitates complete and flawless digestion. Some times, after the consumption of food, the baby is given a small amount of warm water with little salt and *vaamu* (carom) seeds for good digestion.

The women in the house take turns in helping the mother to raise her child. To all the women from the eldest to the youngest, it is not only the interest and biological attachment for the small babies among them but it is more about a social responsibility to look after the young ones in the house. This is a condition that is observed among the joint families where the husband and wife stay with their parents and brothers. In the case of nuclear families, this condition is not observed and among the nuclear families, mother takes the entire responsibility of the children. Certain local upper caste communities in the village dwell mostly as joint and extended families which consists of more than ten members in the house. In these families, the elders take care of the children and particularly the new born. The upper caste communities like *Vysyas, Reddys*, have sustainable income from sources like agriculture and other allied activities like businesses which help them to stick together as joint families. But, the lower caste communities, who are majorly agricultural labour, have nuclear families because of their lower threshold incomes. The absence of elder people in the families make the situation quite complex for the mother to raise the children alone without any help. This is also observed among the educated upper and lower caste people who got shifted to this village for jobs and other reasons. The following case

study gives an idea of how an infant is taken care by the members in a joint family and how the knowledge regarding infants in terms of games is passed on to generations.

Case study:

Gowri (fictitious name) has two children, a girl of seven years of age and a younger baby boy who is six months old. She is from Komati (Vysya) caste and lives in the same village with her husband and in laws. She married her mother's brother's son at the age of twenty years. She lives in a joint family consisting of her husband, her husband's elder brother, his wife, their ten years boy, her father in law and mother in law and her grand mother. They have a two storied building and run a medical and general store which is a family business in the same house where they live. Everyone in the house including Gowri attends at the shop. Their daily routine starts from morning 9:30 and ends at about 10'o clock in the night. The household work is shared by the two daughters in law who cook the food and look after their children. The infant is taken care by Gowri's grand mother when ever Gowri is busy with the household work. The grand mother gives bath to the infant by placing him on her stretched legs. Gowri fetches lukewarm water and oil for the baby's shower bath. Coconut oil is used for this purpose. The grand mother ensures that the water is of a comfortable temperature to the baby by first testing it on her hand. If the water is hotter than what the baby could resist, she mixes some cold water in it and brings it down to a comfortable temperature. The baby is given massage by spreading the oil all through the body slowly and gently pulling his hands and legs. While giving the massage, the old women sings

'Yenugu vachindi yenugu, ye ooru vachindi yenugu? Maa ooru vachindi yenugu, Yemi chesindeynugu? Manchi neellu taagindi yenugu, uppu aadochindi yenugu, uppuneellu taagindi yenugu'.

If the child starts to cry the woman stops her song and starts making a sound with her mouth '*ulululul hayeee*' to divert the child. After the completion of the bath, the grandmother takes a mug full of water and makes circles with the mug in the air around the baby. This gesture is called "*Dishti Teeyatam*" and is believed to cancel the ill effects of any evil eye that may have witnessed the naked baby when he or she is given the bath. The grandmother pours the water in the mug after turning it around the baby for three times on her own legs. In such a way that the water rinses her ankles first and flows on to her rest of her feet. This gesture may also signify that the affects

of any evil eye casted on the baby are taken by the grandmother herself as a token of love and protection. Gowri takes her baby and wipes him with smooth cotton towel and decorates the baby. She applies some Johnson baby oil on to his skin, applies some talcum powder and a black round *tilakam* on the forehead and to the side of the left eyebrow of the baby as a mark to avoid *disti* (evil eye). The word *disti* has the etymology from the Sanskrit word *Drishti* which means sight or focus. Culturally there is a belief that the sight of any person with an evil or jealous mind could harm the baby's well being. All these gestures related to *disti* are hence done to the baby after every event to cast off the evil effects. Later the mother feeds the baby *uggu* singing the *uggu* song all through the feeding episode. When the baby completes his food, the grand mother takes him and sings *laali paata*, lullaby to the baby by making the sound 'ulululul hayeee'. After three hours of sleep, the baby wakes up and Gowri immediately goes in to kitchen for preparing a dish with milk, banana, cooked and mashed rice for the baby. Some times she also feeds him with cerelac. In the mean while, the women in the house, Gowri's mother in law and sister in law take the baby out of the cradle and play with him. The baby is six months old and he sits with some support and crawls on the floor. The mother in law holds him and makes him sit on her lap. She plays with the baby by singing a song and by moving the baby's hands along with her hands. She sings

'taarangam taarangam, tandava krishna taarangam, venu naadha taarangam, venkataramana taarangam, vennala donga taarangam, chinni krishna taarangam'.

The baby also moves his hands along with his grand mother to the rhythm of the song. All these activities are part of the baby's daily routine. After a three hour nap, the baby is awoken to be fed in general. That afternoon, the just then woken up baby had to be fed while the women in the house continued to sing songs and swing the hands of the baby along with theirs or make him clap to a song that they are singing. Gowri then started to sing the song.

'tappatloye taalalooye devudi gudilo baajalooye, pappu bellam pillalikoye paalu neyyi devudikoye' and made him clap to the song by holding his hands. The baby enjoyed the activity in full swing and giggled continuously in joy. Gowri then brought the baby food in a silver bowl and took the baby into her lap and fed the baby. After feeding the baby, the baby is made to sleep on the floor with a smooth and cushiony blanket. Around four in the evening, Gowri's elder child comes from school to home. She plays with her baby brother for some time and then gets ready in an hour to leave for

tuition. Around six in the evening, it is a crucial business time for them where Gowri also attends some customers who come to their shop. The baby is again taken care by Gowri's grand mother till the shop is closed which happens generally around 9:30- 10' o'clock in the night. They take turns, by the end of the day, to look after the shop. They take returns to have their dinner and ensure that some one from the family always is at the shop till it is finally closed in the night and everyone proceeds to rest.

Most of the infant games are very simple. They concentrate on simple arbitrary words and simple movements of the body. These simple and rhyming words help the child to learn the basic sounds and words of the language. They try to remember and react to the sound produced by the words and try to reproduce the same. Understanding the meaning of the words comes in the later stages of the child's development and learning processes. This elucidates that the learning of the language itself in the case of the baby is a playful progression and the sorting of random perceptions consolidated as the combined result of all the activities the baby is subjected to. Similarly, the swinging, clapping and moving of the hands and legs is like an exercise to the child to facilitate healthy and even growth in a playful way with all such regular playful activities which are part of the baby's routine at home. When deeply analyzed, all the activities reinforce the healthy maintenance of the baby's metabolic activity and growth rate. The joyful activities make the child laugh there by allowing the facial muscles to contract and relax. Along with the physical and mental development of the child, these infant games help in making social relations which become strong along with the time. The new relations thus formed with the birth of the child are not only for the child but also for all of the family members. These new relations and roles become much stronger as the family members spend time with the baby. The games help as tools to increase the intimacy and build strong relationships with the child among the family members. Thus, games play an important role in creating and increasing the strength of the social bonds and responsibilities of the family members towards the new born. These games also carry indigenous knowledge and information especially in relation to the infants and children, in the form of songs that are sung while playing these games.

Role and Status in play and games:

Malinowski (1944) has explained that every human culture possesses certain patterns of rules and regulations of what work or a specific task is to be undertaken, whom the work is to be given and in what way the work has to be performed for the survival of the society. He termed these patterns as 'cultural charter' which is stated in cultural aspects like rituals, laws, folk stories, folk songs, traditional games, myths, ideology, riddles, proverbs and puns. Sometimes, certain features of the cultural charter are either determined by the statements about behavior or through direct observation of the behavior of individuals enrolled to perform the specific task. These statements of behavior decide the social behavior of an individual which is acceptable in a specific culture. Children learn the acceptable behavior right from their early years of childhood which is no less complex as they have to understand every aspect of the culture to reflect the expected behavior. Understanding the cultural charters of the cultures and how the children replicate them can be done by analyzing the specific tasks performed and the ways in which they are performed by the children. Children engage in games for more time along with other activities. Sometimes, these specific tasks are reflected in the games children play. While replicating the socially expected behavior, the children try to grab the status and pride of the role which they easily get attracted to. It is not only the role they try to perform through imitation but they also try to carry the honor and status of the role in a playful way. The feeling of appreciation, pride or honor or sometimes self-satisfaction is an incentive for the children to replicate the ideas and behavior of elders.

Status in Games:

Status is a collection of duties and rights. It is in a way, a position of a person in a particular pattern where each individual participates in different patterns thus having many different statuses. However, all the statuses an individual acquires together can be recognized as the ultimate status of the individual. Linton, 1945 defined these statuses as polar positions in patterns of reciprocal behavior on which society functions. When an individual performs his or her rights and duties with a status combined then that individual is performing a role. Roles are always guided by rights, norms, behavior, beliefs and obligations in a social situation. Every individual is

expected to exhibit appropriate behavior according to the role and the status an individual is carrying. By consensus, a role is an expected behavior connected to the position of an individual in the society and status is the position of an individual. Both status and role are intertwined with each other and cannot act individually. It is the role that determines the dynamic aspect of a status (Linton, 1936). Every role has an independent function in relation with the status an individual occupies. The function of role and status of two individuals is to balance the social pattern of the society by performing the prescribed roles and statuses. The individuals perform their expected duties and behavior by getting accustomed and adjusted to their roles and statuses to make sure that the society runs smoothly. Disturbances occur in the smooth functioning of the society when there is an external influence on the individuals which leads to maladjustments of their roles and statuses. The society always tries hard to make the individuals stick to the roles and statuses in whatever condition. However, the individuals always get prone to the dilemma caused by their own interests and expected social responsibilities. The status and role which are appropriate and congenial to one may not be the same to another. Every individual is different from the other. In his explanation, Linton discussed statuses as categories of individuals but not as a wholesome collection of duties and rights, which was also explained by W. H. Goodenough in 1968.

There are many social and cultural factors that may influence the behavior of an individual besides his or her biological ability. The statuses are of two types, the ascribed status and the achieved status. The statuses which are assigned or allotted to individuals and have no reference to the individuals' innate abilities are ascribed statuses. The ascribed position is allotted without regard for individuals' abilities and capacities. These statuses are predicted and assigned to the individuals right from the moment they are born. Whereas, prescribed statuses are those statuses which have reference to the individuals' innate abilities like intelligence, merit, physical capacity, etc. It may also be understood that status and role are acting in a cyclical way, each aspect strengthening the other aspect contributing to the overall representation of the individual. Such representation is expected to be at par with the designed norms of the culture. This is reflected in almost every aspect. Every person continuously undergoes this process of reaching the expected level of behavior laid out by the patterns of culture. In a way it could be also explained that children, right at their birth are actually born into a space where their roles and statuses already are structured and the

children slowly learn and adapt to it as they grow. Among the higher Hindu castes, when a female child is born and her cradle ceremony is conducted, it is evident through the ornaments that are decorated to the baby that beauty and grandness of appearance become the main theme. The female child is referred to as Lakshmi (Goddess) in the families and hence she is represented as the symbol of auspiciousness and fortune. In the question of a male child, families of higher castes generally decorate him with *puli goru* (an ornament representing tiger's claw) in his neck. *Puli goru* is the symbol of masculine aggression, prestige, strength and capability. This pattern exists in the early years of childhood. As long as the child's behavior is consequential and akin to the basic developmental stages which are believed to be mere general activities of innocence, every deed of the child is attributed to the roles they are expected to play in the society. For example, when a girl child plays with anything glittery, it is generally deciphered in the families as the affinity of the girl towards jewelry, decoration and beauty while a similar activity in the case of a boy child is deciphered as acts of curiosity and exploration. Games the children play also have this pattern embedded deeply.

Imitation and Role play in Games:

Raju (seven years old): *Akka! Eesari neynu cut* (leaves imagining as vegetables) *chestha*. (Sister! I will cut the leaves (vegetables) this time).

Ramya (ten years old): *Leydhu Thammudu. Nuvvu cheyyakudadhu. Lalitha nuvvu cut cheyyi*. (No Brother. You should not cut them. Lalitha you cut the leaves).

Raju: uuhu! Neyney cut chestha. Neynuvan. (A sign of reluctance. I will cut. I will not give).

Ramya: Kudaradhu. Chelliki echeyyi. (No. Give it to sister).

Lalitha (nine years old): *Akka! Veedu evvatamleydhey!* (Sister! He is not giving me).

Ramya: Tammudu aakulu evvu. Nuvvu bayatakivelli aakulu teesukuraa. (Brother. Give the leaves to her. You go out and bring more leaves).

Raju: Leydhu. Neynu vellanu. Yeppudu neyney velthunna. (No. I will not go. Every time I am only going).

Lalitha giggled.

Ramya: Avunuraa. Ammayalu cut chestharu. Nuvvu ammayi vaa? (Yes! Girls cut the leaves. Are you a girl?).

Ramya laughed.

Raju went out to bring leaves.

The above conversation is between three children. The boy who joined a group of girls who are playing cooking game and tried to participate in the game by cutting the vegetables. But he was rejected to cut the vegetables by his elder sister as it is a girls duty to cut the vegetables and cook food but not boy's. The boys are to bring things required for home or taste or eat the food which is cooked by the girls. This clearly reflects the socially expected behavior among the children

There are many games in which children imitate the behavior of the adults in the families and society. Games which involve the imitation of cooking, feeding and looking after a doll as a newborn are all encouraged to be played by girls than boys as they are the responsibilities of a woman in the society. This pattern is more evident as the children grow. In fact, boys are discouraged and in a way made fun of when they play games of cooking, feeding etc as they represent the activities of a female or mother in the society. Even at a younger age when this gender-based difference is less pronounced, it is observed that boy children participate more in procuring the ingredients for cooking, while the girl children involve in cooking. Girls are restricted from the activities which are attributed to boys while boys are actually made fun of when they get themselves involved in activities representing girlhood. It is understood that what is happening in the real world outside slowly emerges as a socially acceptable aspect and a cultural norm in the society. These changing aspects of the society will also be reflected in the games children play and the way they constitute these aspects in games. Children try to imitate many roles they come across in their lives. The roles which are more impactful in their lives and which are some times eye pleasing are immediately get registered in their minds. Society tries to embed the expected cultural patterns in the children through different methods. The attributes of different characters at different situations reflected are absorbed by the children they come across very quickly. These absorbed attributes get mixed with the child's own frame of ideas and depends on the child's own capacity of understanding the attributes. Thus, these hybridized attributes are performed at different situations which will be guided by the elders when they are performed in the society. This process of learning, mixing the attributes with one's own ideas, performing them and getting rectified is an ongoing process in a child's life. Though the children try to replicate the roles like a mirror, they can only imitate the role but can not replicate it in its exact form. This is because of the process of hybridization that takes place in this

replication. Thus, the roles of different people in the society are learned and imitated in their own style which may get corrected by the society.

One day, five girls of six, eight, nine, ten and twelve years of age from Setti Balija and Kaapu caste groups are playing the imitation game of a teacher from the school at their home on a holiday. The eldest of all played the role of the teacher and tried to mimic the lady by reflecting her style and appearance in different ways. The rest of the girls played the role of students and they sat on the ground. The imitating girl ties a *saree* (South Indian traditional wear) with a piece of cloth called *dupatta* (a lengthy piece of cloth worn to cover the chest typically with salwar kameez) or sometimes any piece of cloth like cotton towel. She carries a stick or a wooden measuring scale in her hand imitating her teacher at the school and threatens to punish the ones who are participating or cooperating to play with her in the game of imitation if they don't listen to her. She then takes a twig or a stick in her hand and starts to shout 'silence' (imitating her teacher again) as she begins to play the game. The attractive, authoritative and punishing factor in the behavior of the teacher is what the girls often imitate and this also paves way for an understanding of what sort of behaviors are quickly grasped and imitated by the children. The attraction also may be because of an inherent thirst for power over others, that is under the current, creating the interest in the children to behave like their strict and authoritative teachers instead of many others who they get to meet at school. Parents are seen to appreciate her imitation and they often try to tell their child about how her teacher became a prolific person by studying well and performing well in the academics. The inherent desire for power in the children is utilized by the parents as a tool to inject positive behavioral pattern and create an interest towards academics. It is also that the children who play the role of students accept the power and domination of the imaginary teacher role. The acceptance depends on the mutual understandings of the children that the role is just 'played' which dominates the part of reality attached to the role. Until the mutual understandings of the rules to perform the role, the actions and the level of imagination are undisturbed, the seriousness of the play continues. The actions and the levels of imagination in a play remain undisturbed through out the play unless such framework of imaginations is broken either by a deviation of such mutually accepted set of rules or by the bombardment of anything external that suspends the framework or forces a deviation.

The girls, sometimes, write on the walls of the house or wooden cupboards or doors with chalk pieces which the girls procure from the schools or buy from the shops near their houses. Sometimes they imitate their other favorite teachers who are not displaying this authoritarian factor in their behavior. Some teachers tell stories at school after the class hours to the children and become the sweet favorites of the children as they enjoy listening to those stories. I witnessed a girl child imitating such a teacher by making all the fellow children in the neighborhood sit closely around her to tell stories. She tells whatever she could makeup as a story or sometimes tell a story that she heard from the elders in her family to the children around her. There is a factor of belongingness to a cozy group among the children participating in this imitation activity.

In the activity of imitating a strict teacher, the children who are playing the roles of students in the game carry rough notebooks along with them sometimes. They sit on the ground, in most of the cases, and the teacher stands in front of the students. The teacher also corrects the books by marking tick marks with red ink pens like their teachers on their previous class books or rough work books. The girl child playing the teacher role is seen beating and punishing the ones who are playing the roles of the students and shouts at them to behave properly (in the class). It is the elder girl of the group who takes up the role of a teacher and the rest of the children in the group become students. The children imitate their primary school teachers who are mostly females in the schools in the villages. This game of imitating teacher is not generally played by the boy children. When investigated and analyzed deeply, the reasons behind why only girls play this game but not boys surface. It is understood that in the previous generations, especially that of the grand parents and the great grand parents, such games of imitating the teacher were played by the boy children as well. It was as such because the schools then had majorly male teachers. This reinforces the point that what has come to a socially acceptable and prevalent plane, quickly influences the culture and becomes part of the games the children play as well.

In the previous generations, there were very less number of women working as teachers in schools. The male teachers were the people who influenced the boys in the class and hence the boys replicated the roles of their teachers through games. It is also that there were very less number of girls who attended the schools because of lack of awareness of girl child education and other social conditions. In the olden days, girls were never encouraged to get educated and earn a job to work. Thus, there was less

opportunity for the girls to play the teacher mimicking game in those times. The dynamics of the patterns of the society are immediately reflected in the games children play as they are influenced by the existing cultural aspects of the society. An activity which has a significance in the lives of the people is always observed and imitated or replicated by the children. This process of observation and replication is treated as a learning aspect by the people. Though various activities of the adults in different situations are observed, only a few activities pertaining to certain situations are replicated. The persistent observation of the adults upon the children regulates the selection of the activities to be replicated. The adults always make sure that the selection of these activities is always guided and bounded by the rules and norms of the society. Though the selection of the activities which are to be mimicked appears to be random and whimsical, there is always a tremendous observation by the elders and adults who regulate the process of selection of the activities. In families where smoking is a common addiction, children quickly imitate the elders by holding a twig in between their lips replicating the smoking activity. But the elders quickly and very strongly reject such behavior and restrict the children from imitating such activities though they themselves smoke. It is observed that some people in the village try to keep away from the eyes of the children when they do activities such as smoking which they do not want their children to imitate or learn. Children often grasp and imitate the activities that they are exposed to for longer durations and with a greater frequency. They are not in general influenced by activities to which their exposure is dismal. Schools are the places where children spend most of their time other than their homes. Teachers are imitated as they are the first faces with whom they interact at the schools and are in their custody all through the day perceiving the behavior of the teacher. The common aspects like holding a stick in their hands, writing on black board, correcting books, shouting, scolding and beating of a teacher are observed and mimicked later during their leisure times.

Imitating Rituals:

Children are taught to follow and implement their duties which are expected to be obliged. These duties are general across all the communities like going to school, listening to and respecting elders, participating in religious activities, helping at homes etc. But these expectations may vary when are probed deeper into the cultural and social aspects of each different community in the village. Protecting the religious

beliefs and practicing them are important aspects of the daily life that the elders of each family want their children to learn and follow. The elders in the family want the children to learn the religious concepts through practicing rituals and taking part in the ritual activities during special occasions. The regular practice of the religious prayers and the offerings which have become the part of their lifestyle now can be reflected in the games children play too. The children, as a part of a game, try to imitate the procedure of a ritual that is performed by the adults in their regular life. Festivals like *Vinayakachavithi*, Deepavali, *Atla Taddi* ritual, Christmas etc are imitated as a part of their games. The children try to imitate all the major activities of the ritual. It is only that a few aspects of the original ritual are unseen in the imitation games played by the children as they either lack knowledge of it or have a complexity in imitating such an activity because of the lack of all the resources required for the ritual. The children try to play the ritual game with the resources available and by substituting the items required for the ritual with what ever material is available. It is observed that the children play specific imitation games during specific seasons and months only. In general the season of such imitation play is in tandem with the timing of the festivals. It is during the month of *Bhadrapadha* of Hindu calendar which falls in the months of August and September according to Gregorian calendar that the children imitate the ritual of *Vigneswara Puja*. It is during this month that the Ganesh Jayanthi or *Vinayaka Chavithi* festival is celebrated. As the festival approaches, the children start to practice the making of Lord Ganesha's idols. The boys and girls both take part in making the idols with clay soil. As an extension to this activity, children worship and make offerings as well to the God imitating the actual ritual of *Ganesh Puja* done on the day of the festival. During holidays like Sundays or after the school, the children start their practice of making Lord *Ganesh's* idols. Though it is a playful and enjoyable activity to the children, a sense of seriousness and devotion is also seen in their play. An elder in the family or a teacher at school or an elder sibling demonstrates how the idols are to be made and the children thus learn and practice the activity. The children with the help of this knowledge and practice make their own idols back at their homes along with their friends. Children meet in the backyards of their homes or at open places near their neighborhoods and form as a group to practice, make and perfect their craft of making the idols during this festive season. Once they all meet at one place, the idol which is practiced on that day is brought and placed at a corner. Leaves of different trees nearby are collected and brought to

decorate the idol. After decorating the idol with leaves, flowers and fruits (if available) all the children are asked to sit in front of the idol. The elder in the group takes the role of the priest or the person who worships. He or she sits adjacent to the idol and conducts the *pooja*. The rest of the children sit behind or adjacent to the one who is playing the role of the priest, in front of the idol such that they could be of cooperation to the one who is playing the role of the priest as he conducts the ritual. They sit right in front of the idol facing the idol such that they could witness the ritual being performed without any visual obstacles. The children bring a small amount of sugar as *prasadam* or offering to the God. The elder among the group mimics the activity of worship by uttering some random words which sound like *mantras*. After a few minutes, the idol is moved, lifted up, sometimes kept on a bicycle and taken around the backyard or house or sometimes till the end of the street. This activity is an imitation of the original procession ritual which is a part of the original Ganesh *Puja* ritual. After coming back to the house, the children drown the idol in a well or in a mug of water resembling the activity of '*nimarjana*' (the ritual of sinking the idol into a water body after Ganesh *Puja*). While taking the idol on procession rounds the children either shout '*Ganapathi bappa moriyay*' or go round in silence. Thus, they end the game by eating the sugar they brought as offering. This imitation is observed only among a few groups of children who belong to *Reddy*, *Kaapu* and *Setti Balija* caste of the same street. An elder in the family like one of the grand parents or mother's brother or father's brother or sometimes father himself guides the children through the process of making the idols. In the higher castes, women do not show interest in making clay or mud idols instead they encourage the children to purchase them in the market. But, among the middle and lower sections, women show and teach their children how to make mud dolls.

Children try to imitate the activities in a playful way which they observe frequently for more times in their daily lives. The repetition of the activities is a process in which children try to learn it in a playful way and there by learn through trail and error method and practice it under the observation and guidance of the society till it becomes socially acceptable. Sometimes, they play the game of imitating the rituals that are part of a temple scene. The children start playing the game by constructing a toy temple with sand and installing an idol inside it. Children from the families of the priests generally take the lead to play the role of the priest as they are more exposed to the activities in the temples through their fathers. This is observed

when two children of a Brahmin family were playing the same game imitating their father's occupation. All the participant children involve in the construction of the temple structure with sand. The children procure flowers to the assumed God idol and follow or support the activities of the one who is playing the priest's role. The priest offers holy water (*theertham*) to the children who are in the roles of the devotees at the temple. Sugar or any such edible ingredient is offered to the God as *Prasadam* after the ritual and the same is distributed to the devotee children by the priest and the children who take the lead to assist the priest. The imitation of the priest role is seen more among the Brahmin and Vyshya families as they are more exposed to the activities of the temple and rituals. The same sand construction can be imagined as a house or a castle or temple depending on the structure of the construction and the imagination held in the minds of the children.

It is observed that it is only boy children who take up the role of the priest as they imitate the priests who are always males in the temples. In the absence of children whose fathers are not priests it is the girls who take up the role of conducting the ritual. The rest of the children hold their palms together (*namaskar* gesture) while the child playing the priest role offers prayers to the God. This game may go through several variations in the way the ritual is performed, the offerings and the ones who play the roles of the priests, depending on the imagination of the children they want to play. Children gather at a common place, bring different Gods' pictures which they usually save secretly like treasure in their books and bags. These pictures are placed near a tree or a wall in the corridor or backyard of their houses and begin to imitate the ritual activities or worship.

Among the non brahmin communities like *Reddy* and *Setti balija*, as the priesthood is not a caste based occupation, it is observed that the girl children are more interested in playing the imitation game of the person conducting rituals than the boys. The elder girl in the group imitate the process of conducting ritual, which they learn from their mothers and elder sisters as they perform the ritual at home. The girl decorates the pictures with flowers brought by the children, give *harathi* (an offering of light with camphor to God). God is offered an edible food item like sugar and the same after offering to the God, it is distributed to the children which is called *Prasadam* as blessing of the God. This *Prasadam* can be sugar, ground nuts, raisin, nuts or dry fruits of any kind or anything edible. The girl children do not utter hymns while doing the ritual in general unless they learnt any from their mothers or family

members. After completion of the ritual, the girl child offers *Prasadam* and vermilion (*kunkuma*) to the children. In most of the times, this play is played as a part of any other games like *Amma Nanna Aata* or *Gujjanagoollu*. Thus, it could be understood that children imitate the roles in accordance with the roles played by their family members and surrounding people whom they encounter in their daily lives.

Children involve in imitating adults and their activities so seriously. For them play is not just playing around for fun, entertainment or for a biological requirement but try to replicate the activities as real as possible. For this, children use real equipments to make their play activity more near to the reality. The desire behind the seriousness of the play describes their intention of becoming the socially expected and accepted person in the society which is an ongoing process in the minds of the children. Girl children form into groups and participate in playing the game. Imitating the elders, children cooperate with each other in the implementation of the *puja* and share the duties. In imitating the festival of *Atla Taddi*, girl children actively assist the elder women in the families in preparing dosas which are important offerings in the ritual. Just like in the real ritual, the children imitate the activity of preparing dosas with whatever material is available to them. They use leaves, paper cut into small round pieces etc and make replicas of the dosas as they imitate the ritual in their play. They prepare the replica of turmeric *Gowri devi* with clay which is triangular in shape and decorate it with *kumkuma* and turmeric. As *Atla Taddi* is a festival which is observed by women, girl children are found to imitate the ritual in their play than boy children. They also decorate the clay statue with flowers, while the elder girl performs *puja* by singing some divine songs. Sometimes, children also sing devotional songs from the movies as well. Unlike the real ritual where dosas are distributed to the ones who are related by family, children distribute the dosas among all the girls who grouped to play with no exceptions. While giving the dosas which is called *Vayanam* children say '*ichitinamma vayanam, puchukuntinamma vayanam*' imitating the original ritual which was already elaborately explained in the previous chapters. The children while receiving the dosas spread their *dupattas* like the *sarees* (in the case of elder women) or some times, the frocks are hold up to take the *vayanam*. They complete their game by sharing dosas among themselves. It could be analyzed that the play interests of the girl children also is a preparatory exercise to them to perform the actual ritual as they grow up into adults in future. The understanding and perception of the children are very detailed and this could be observed in the children's gesture of

spreading their *dupattas* to receive dosas imitating the *saree* wearing elder ladies who perform the actual ritual of *Atla Taddi*. Children are attracted to imitate all the elements of an elder female and hence through the game gender fixation will also be eventually happens through the imitation of socially and culturally established feminine behavior.

Similar traits are not part of every community. For instance, the children of Maala and Maadiga communities do not play similar games in their neighborhoods. Though we could observe a few physical games which are of dismal cultural significance and which are commonly played across all the communities, the games and connectible cultural phenomenon is varied across various communities. Most of the Maala and Maadiga community people in the village are converted to Christianity and do not play the imitation games of any hindu rituals as their religious teachings mandate the dismissal of the following of any other religion. It is not mandatory that the people belonging to these communities have to adopt Christianity, but a majority of them now are into the practice of Christianity. Like the children belonging to Hindu castes, even the children belonging to Christianity play games which are reflective of their culture, rituals and festivals. Christian children celebrate Christmas by bringing a small plant in a pot and decorating it with every procurable item. They become highly engrossed in this activity. The plant they select need not be a spruce, pine or fir like in the western countries, it could be any plant and sometimes even a small artificial plant could be selected for the children to play around with the decoration activity. After the decoration activity, children sing various prayer songs. Some of them sing in harmony while some take the lead and become to the main voices. The prayer songs continue for a long duration after which children take up other general physical games. It is observed that the children of Christian families who are neighbors or friends at Churches become friends and play the imitation game of decorating a small plant as an Xmas tree.

Children reflect the activities that they grasped by observing the people and the circumstances they live in. These activities that are observed by the children are treated with the knowledge they have gained in terms of norms and principles from various sources, situations and circumstances and are developed as a hybrid form of activity through replication. It is because of this hybridization of activities that the activities when replicated are slightly different from the original thoughts. Children act as mirrors but when observed keenly, their reflection of the activities will not be the

same as that of the original ones. They are blended with different other thoughts and attain a new form of activity. Only certain activities out of all the activities children are exposed to are selected for replication. This whole process is driven again by multiple entities. The cognitive selection process that happens inside the mind of the child, the instigation of the elders, the insistence of the society by approving certain behavioral patterns and by dismissing some are all responsible for the selection of any activity for replication.

Role model and play:

Imitation in a way is the primary source of learning for children to become society ready and culturally complying as they grow into adults. Imitation is utilized by the adults as a tool to train children. Members in the family are constantly shown as role models to the children. Girl children often are directed towards choosing some elder girl in the family as their role model. When teaching the aspects of responsibility and obedience, mothers become their role models. In the case of boys, fathers, elder cousins, uncles become role models. By making the members of the family as the role models for the kids, they are also establishing a sense of respect and a desire to follow their behavioral pattern in the children. In the games of *Bommala pelli* and *Amma naanna aata* as well, this is represented. Children mock the roles of the mother and father as they play. The game offers a mock environment for the children to learn and imitate the roles of their mothers and fathers.

Every element of behavior that is desirable as per the social norms is encouraged by showing role models. For example, respect towards the elders is a much desired aspect of behavior common to all people in Marteru village. Younger children are shown the elder children as role models. The elder children may have already gone through similar training when they were young. The aspect of showing respect to elders in the behavior of an elder is appreciated to create an innate desire in the younger children to quantify such behavior and be appreciated. The scale of respect to be given to a person, in Marteru village and for that matter probably in many societies in the region is dependent on the age of a person. Grand Parents are to be attended with high priority and the highest respect is to be given to them. Children learn this aspect by way of games as well. In *Buvvalaata*, when children cook food as a part of game, they approach elders in the family to taste their food though it can be done in a playful way. Children, even in these situations, are encouraged to give the grand

parents first before they feed the others in the family. The relationship between the grand parents and grand children is filled with both respect and accessibility. The father in the family is generally the person to be feared of and the restrictive or controller figure in the family as the society follows patriarchal family system. Children are made to learn fear of the controller figure in the family by constantly being reminded that they will be punished by the controller figure incase they tend to do something against the acceptable behavior. The authority, thus installed in the controller figure as well, is explained to the children as the resultant of his behavior which is strictly in compliance with the behavior standards of the society. Thus, children follow and adapt to the customs, behavior pattern, believes and the thought process of the family first and then the society as they grow into adults.

Any deviance of the controller figure from the expected pattern of behavior, duties and responsibilities is taught to the children as a threat to his position, respect and the overall progression of the family. It is represented that the controller figure in the family, anticipating this, always remains in strict compliance to the expected behavior pattern for the good of the entire family in which the learning children are precious. This installs a belief that the head of the family, is always working for the good of the family which again is to be represented and imitated by the children as they grow into adults. Thus, children slowly as they grow into adults learn that the power vested in a person is the resultant of the standards he or she follows and the compliance of an individual to the roles and the expected behavior pattern. The imitation also facilitates an understanding of the roles of various adults in the family and their interpersonal relationships which makes them to slowly but deeply arrive at an understanding of the structure of the society itself. They are also taught that the primogeniture does not always attribute higher status in the family. It is the ability of taking responsibility that decides the higher status among the members in a family. By imitating and understanding the roles of fathers and mothers in the families, children also are made to learn the gender roles in the society. As the children develop a much deeper connection to the cultural norms and start to evaluate between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, their behavior and personality are regularized and concretized. Games are not only considered for socialization and as an instrument of teaching the aspects of society to reach the expectations of the society. Games also help in bonding the gaps between new groups or families and tries to instigate a happy start of the bonds and relations. This can be observed in the case of games played at

marriage ceremonies where games are not only played among the bride and the groom but also among the family members and the newly wedded couple to relax the tensions that exists in the newly formed relationships.

Marriage Games:

Games begin earlier than the actual marriage ceremony itself and continue even after marriage in Indian traditions. Games that are played during marriage are not only related to the bride and groom but also to the others in the families by way of participation or encouragement which strengthens the bonds between the families. Games that start with several joking relations among the newly forming relationships by virtue of marriage in the families and continue till the first night event when the bride and groom officially spend their first night. Here under are some of the games that are prevalent in Indian traditions.

Pot and Rings game:

This game is visible in the weddings of Reddys, Vyshyas, Kaapus, Setti Balijas in the village. It is also observed that this event of playing games in marriage is common among people of many other castes also, except Christian marriages. It is called '*bindaata*' in local language where *Bindi* in Telugu means pot game and *aata* is game. The game is special because it is not only played by the bride and the groom but also played by the women of the groom's family like the sisters of the groom, mother and female siblings of both mother and father of the groom with the bride. Sometimes it is almost like the first event in which the bride participates in an interaction with the women in the families on the groom's side. Since it is first, the game offers a good start of interaction with fun and frolic and also signifies the ups and downs, win and loose among the people should be taken in a playful way which will help in maintaining happy families. The concept of the game is to place a small ring in a steel pot which has only space for two hands (one from each of the participants) to fit in. The game starts with a count of three and is organized by the priest conducting the marriage ceremony. The participants have to quickly search for the ring inside the pot by quickly moving the hand in all directions in the pot. The one who grabs the ring will be the winner. The game is conducted in sets of three rounds. It is bride and groom who play first and is followed by the play of other women in the groom's family with the bride. Participants quickly move their hands in the pot in search of the

rings thrown into the pot. The one who finds the ring wins the round. The priest himself participates in the game by sometimes pretending to drop the ring into the pot by making a sound as such hitting the inside rim of the pot while still keeping it in his hand. The participants then wonder and have a blast of laughter for what the priest has done. This way the game is played with all the elements of fun. After a strenuous set of marriage rituals, the pot and rings game offers a relaxation to the bride, groom and families.

Sarulu besyalu:

Sarulu Besyalu is a Telugu term and the meaning of the words is ‘even and odd’. This game is played just before the event of first night. These games act as launchers to smoothly build the interactions between the newly wed couple. Especially, as the Indian marriages were mostly in an arranged format both in old and present days, the bride and groom remained strangers till the event of marriage which made such launchers of interactions essential. The relatives on either sides cheer the bride and groom during the games that are played before the first night event. Some of the games are played on the bed laid out for the first night event itself in some communities. The concept of *Sarulu Besyalu* game is to guess the number of coins being held in the hands of the participants. A heap of coins are placed in the center, while each one of the couple sits on either sides of the coins. On the count of three, the newly wed grab as many coins as their fists can hold. The husband guesses the number of coins being held in the hands of his wife as even or odd, similarly the wife guesses the number of coins being held in the hands of her husband. The one whose guess is a success wins the game. Three sets with each of the sets consisting of three rounds of picking the coins are played by the newly wed couple. The real fun of the game is when the relatives around participate in counting the coins held in the hands of the couple. All the relatives gather to count in a single voice creating more possibilities of fun. This is a pure game of chance and signifies that married life is not about winning or loosing but is about being happily together in ups and downs not fighting for victory of one over the other. This game also signifies that the grandeur in marriage ceremonies is always with the rich and high status people who have enough money to play with during the ceremonies. This again proves the relationship of games with leisure when it comes to interaction with money which signifies the class status further. During the later periods, when the monetary value of coins dropped down

because of different factors like inflation or increase in the earning capacity of the people, availability of coins became reachable to almost all sections of the people to afford it. Thus, these games later became part of marriage ceremonies among all sections of the society.

Poola Banthi Aata:

The title of the game, *Poola Banthi* means ball of flowers in the local Telugu language. A garland of flowers, especially jasmine and rose is rolled to form a ball. The newly wed couple sit opposite each other and play with the flower ball by a throw-catch game. If the husband throws the ball, the wife catches and vice versa. The players dupe to throw it in one direction but throw it in the other. The players are encouraged to play fast such that one of them looses to catch. The players go naughty by throwing the ball at each others bodies instead of throwing the ball right into the hands of the other. It is not generally played in rounds but the game either continues till one of the couple looses it for three times consecutive times. Relatives around sing songs when this game is being played and encourage the couple. It is said that a similar game to *Poola Banthi Aata* is also prevalent among other traditions at different places like Tamil Nadu, where the game is played with coconut instead of flowers ball. Coconut is swiftly rolled on the floor in between the newly wed till one of them looses to catch.

Antyakshari:

The word *Anthyakshari* is a combination of two words, *Anthya* and *Akshara* which means ‘end’ and ‘word’ respectively. *Antyakshari* is the game of songs where the couples among all the families take turns to sing songs. The ending letter of one song becomes the beginning letter of the next and the game continues. There are traditions where the game is played in a much expanded variant also. In such expanded format, the game is played before marriage ceremony where the bride and his set of relatives, the groom and his set of relatives stand opposite to each other at a distance of 20 or 30 feet. Here the bride, groom or anyone of the relatives start the game with a song. Mostly in this format, instead of ending letter, the ending word is considered. When the bride’s side of people sing a song, they pose a challenge to the groom’s side to sing a song with the word with the which the challenging side ended the song. If they sing they transfer the challenge to the other side, if they fail to sing,

the failing side along with their set of relatives take one step towards the opponent's side. The game is played till the bride and groom come close to each other and exchange garlands and wear them. It is about whose side took more steps to reach the other and signifies a playful display of competition, dignity and power. This also signifies friendly bond and interactions among the family members of the groom and the bride.

Powder Aata:

This game received its name as such as the game ends in a play with talcum powder. The game consists of those first moments of touching each other in the form of play. This game is played before the event of the first night. Powder *aata* begins by each of the couple being given with the task of decorating the other by applying talcum powder and using *kaatuka* (black paint used as a part of traditional makeup around eyes and as *dishti chukka*, (a dot on the cheek to get rid of the bad effects of the jealous or evil eye), *tilakam* (red paint applied as a dot or line on forehead) etc. But the couple are encouraged to take on to a play where they attempt to decorate by applying powder in excess making the face appear like a clown. After all the attempts to decorate are done, the one who is decorated is given the mirror to take a look at his or her own face. In line with that the following participant will take up a playfully vindictive mode and decorate the other. It is also observed that the husband tries to decorate his wife as a male by giving her mustache and beard with the use of *katuka* while the wife tries to retaliate by decorating her husband like a female. This in a way signifies a sense of equality that needs to be there in marriage where there is no fixation in terms of roles but sometimes the conditions may lead the husband to take a wife's role and vice versa.

Vasanthaalaata:

The word *Vasanthaalu* means colors and *aata* is game Thus, it is a game of colors. This game is played by the youth among the relatives. Especially, after the marriage ceremony, along with the relatives, the husband stays in the house of the wife and his in laws to spend three days and nights, after which the wife is taken by the husband to his place permanently. This game is played especially on the third day, just before the start of their journey back to the husband's place and home. The new

bonds among the family members through the marriage create joking relations among the youth in the families who by the new relation have a marriage possibility. The young sisters of the newly wedded bride teases the new husband of her sister which reflects the joking relationships. These youth splash colors and color mixed water at each other and the family on wife's side attempt to sweetly stop the husband's side from leaving their place reasoning their having to shower and clean condition after splashing to reset themselves for a comfortable journey. This is a sweet gesture that will spark the beginning of new emotional bonds between the families. The sisters of the bride and the brothers of the groom also play in this occasion which may pave way for their bonding in future. By way of these games, the interactions among the families expand marriage prospects to the younger relatives on both the sides.

Conclusion:

Societies have their cultures built on certain rules and the continuum of such rules across generations is ensured by stories, legends, rituals and games. Games and play are extremely important to examine the structural and cultural basis of any society as they begin to influence the lives of the humans from a very early age and are often the first entities to become parts of the lives of the infants other than the basic needs such as food and sleep. Games and play carry culture with them in the form of social and religious concepts that are strongly embedded in the games and play. How, when, where and with who the games shall be played is all reflective of the culture that the society wants to build in the minds of the growing children. The games of imitation show more evidence of how ideal roles are picked up by the children to playfully imitate and how the social setups around support the scenario. Games and play are instrumental in building the social bonds not only between the new borns and the family members but also with the fellow children and the rest of the world as the children grow. There by, with who the children could mingle and according to what parameters is also introduced through the games right from a very early age. It all emerges to an analysis that games and play influence the culture and society and vice versa. As the children grow into adolescents and adults, their cultural learnings concretize and form as rigid contours to do or not to do anything in the society. All such influences, the social attributes and how games and play could be considered as a perspective through which these aspects could be studied, how games are on a continuous basis influencing the dynamic societies and how the social changes as well

reflect upon the games played, its influences on the social fragments of caste, class and gender shall be at depth discussed in the next chapter.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF GAMES

Games are generally thought to be independent to social rules and constraints. It was analyzed by Huzinga, 1949 that the play groups have their own sets of rules, identity and secrecy and are independent of the general social rules. But, in contrast, games are reflective of many social and cultural attributes. The selection of playmates, the place of play, the cooperation in between various team mates, gender considerations, caste based favoritism are all very visible and immutable in the society. Games are the means of induction and practice of several social and cultural institutions and symbolize the values and considerations that are followed and enforced by the society. Kinship, caste hierarchy, gender based roles and differences all work in several layers. Various intermediary layers have complex structures with several interdependent factors that form the complex web of social behavioral patterns. Games offer a sufficient platform for the nurturing of the younger generations in an adequate way such that they follow and become the promoters of the social rules as they grow into adulthood.

Selection of Playmates:

On the basis of blood relations:

Various parameters influence the selection of playmates. While some are resultants of conscious choices made basing on the institutions and compliance to the social structure, the others are constituted by the already existing setup of the physical, economical and kinship elements. Choice itself is never totally independent of the various social and cultural factors prevailing in the society. Choice may be also construed as a process through which an individual passes through to end up choosing the same options as institutionalized by the society. However, even under such heavy influence of the social conditions, we could observe the sprout of true and independent choice faintly during the late teens which again is observed to decline and merge with the socially desirable pattern.

The physical layout of the village which has the residences of the higher castes in the middle and the residences of the lower castes towards the out skirts compels the friendships to form in between the children belonging to the castes of the same hierarchy as the selection of the playmates occurs from among the available peer

groups at home and in the neighborhood around. Economic elements as well destine the course of friendships and associations. It is generally observable that the economic condition of higher castes is better than that of the lower castes. This affordability factor makes private schools accessible to the children of higher castes again which creates possibilities of friendships among the children of affluent higher castes only. These conditions in a way mandate status quo and reduce the possibilities of selection of playmates across the higher and lower caste thresholds.

When it comes to parameters driven by choice, the socialization and the resultant institutions play the major role. Preference towards a certain set of individuals could be based on kinship, caste preferences, gender preferences, economic and political status preferences. Social constraints begin right at the moment of child's birth in the form of kinship relations. The influence of the society begins as early as the first breath of the child. Children in all their interactions, more importantly play and games learn to respond to various individuals in specific ways.

Siblings and Cousins:

Siblings are the sort of kinship ties who play a variety of roles. During the infant stage, it is generally observed that the babies happily play with their siblings without any conflict. In general siblings have an age gap of about one to five years and in the event of a new born at home the elder sibling gets an opportunity to feel elderly and be asked by the elders to take care of the newborn. The siblings take the role of a playmate, a sibling, a parent as well sometimes. This is observed especially in the case of female sibling. The elderly female siblings are seen imitating the mother's role by carrying them around, feeding them and playing with them in support of or in absence of the mother. Male siblings are generally observed to play a protective role in various social situations. It could be observed even during play that siblings stand together in conflicts and protect each other. Siblings almost automatically become playmates as he/she is the immediate peer at home belonging to a similar age group. They find interest in similar kinds of play in general and the elderly enjoys a feeling of control and authority over the younger one. The elder sibling takes the responsibility of teaching how to play and hence could enjoy the pride of knowing many things related to play as he or she teaches the younger ones. This cooperation and togetherness is more pronounced during early childhood. As the children grow, they develop separate play groups and the preference of selection of siblings as playmates slowly decreases.

This may be because the siblings, each of them then create and associate with their own groups and maintain secrecy. Siblings perceive each other as representatives of parents or family during the adolescence and teenage. Hence, to preserve secrecy and privacy and further escalate individuality, individuals slowly detach and avoid selecting siblings as playmates in the later ages.

In the house of Maheswari (pseudonym) who belongs to a Vyshya family, these aspects were witnessed with clear division in between the roles played by the male siblings and female siblings in the family. Maheswari, who is the first girl child of Lakshmi (pseudonym) was totally excited about the birth of her younger sibling in the family and was actively involved in entertaining the newborn, though she was not allowed to carry her in her arms to ensure safe handling. A few weeks later, the elder girl child was imitating mother and was witnessed singing lullabies to the baby. She was carrying the baby around and occasionally helping her mother in taking care of her. This has the aspects of playfulness, imitation and the pride of being the elder to someone in the family. The elder girl was also accompanied by her cousin occasionally in entertaining the baby. Her cousin, herself showed active interest in playing with the baby and entertaining him. It is a joint family and hence her cousin's family and her's live together in the same house. The same is not the case with the cousin brother in the family. He wouldn't show interest in carrying the baby around. It is often believed that he may not handle the baby safely even if he ever shows some interest. The cousin brother however plays a protective role to his sisters in the family by accompanying them during their walks to school or while playing with others in the neighborhood.

The tone of the interactions change behaviorally with age, the type of kinship relation and the aspect of protection to be given to or undertaken by the child as he or she grows into an adult. A set of beliefs and rituals are connected to the introduction processes of various kinship relations. One of such believes was explained by Chandramma, a Reddy caste women of mid 50s age to a SettiBalij women who is a eighth month pregnant that during the delivery, the father is advised not to travel as it is believed to bring misfortune to the child and also pose danger to the father. But such believes are not observed among all the people. There are families where father is not in town or some times migrated to Arab countries. The functional aspect of such a belief may be to ensure that the father actively takes up the

responsibility of being supportive to the delivering mother. After the birth of the child, almost every event or ritual connected to the child has a specially designed sub-event to signify the kinship ties. There is an event by name *Anna Prasana* which is celebrated among Hindu families to signify the milestone of feeding solid food to the child. For baby boys, the event is celebrated on even months and for the baby girls the event is celebrated during the odd months. For whatever purpose this custom may have been introduced, it signifies a gender based distinction in customs. Traditionally the ceremony is carried out in the child's paternal home where the first feeding of solid food is given by the maternal uncle or the maternal grand father of the child. The maternal uncle or the maternal grand father sits on a mat laid on the floor, takes the child in his lap and feeds *Paayasam* (a dish made of mashed rice and sweetened milk) with a small silver spoon. It could be construed as a way of depositing the responsibility of having to look after the hunger, well being, support and protection of the child on the shoulders of the feeding maternal side relative, especially, maternal uncle. The event has other relatives as well feeding the baby later on. Blessings, kisses and hugs of various relatives who take part in the event further strengthen the bond between the child and the various kinship ties. The feeding is symbolic of support, wellbeing and the silver spoon may symbolize the grandness of such support. Through the event, all the kinship ties are actively evoked towards caring the new born in a responsible way.

It doesn't need to be an event or ritual only. At home, various family members interact and play with the baby. Pacifying the baby from any discomfort or cry is a responsibility that revolves in between all the family members through out the day. The baby develops a certain way of emotional security with the family members overtime. Initially such emotional bonding and security could be observed only with mother. But, mother, to entertain the child, in the company of other family members sings, plays, makes faces and gestures in her regular interactions with the baby and slowly introduce various family members to the baby through play itself. The fundamental domain of all such interactions is play. Mother takes care of feeding and making the baby sleep, while all the active hours of the baby are spent in some form of play with any of the family members. Grand parents involve actively in playing with the child. Grand parents remain as support to mother in taking care of the child. Fathers take the role of limiting the child's play through instruction and fear. This becomes more pronounced as the child grows further from infant stage to early years

of childhood. Child learns to safeguard himself or herself from the danger through such introduction of limits. Fear of danger is necessary for the child to keep away from the danger. At an age when the risk involved is yet unexperienced by the child, father role becomes the object of fear. Mothers are seen to threaten the baby sometimes by telling the child that the father could be angered if he or she does something unacceptable and mischievous. Children observe how all the rest of the family members give importance to the father role which installs in them a hierarchical understanding of the family. Father plays the role of a protector and is visible as the respected earning man of the family. The play possibilities and the various reflections of kinship increase with age.

Maternal uncles are the introducers of various forms of play. They actively involve in the play not only by providing in a materialistic way by buying for the children various play items such as kites, toys etc but also by teaching how to play. During the festival of Diwali, uncles are the ones who are easily approached by the children for money to buy fireworks and also involve in the play with fireworks along with the children actively. They play the role of an elderly playmate who simultaneously teaches, guides, provides and plays along. In the simulation games as well maternal uncles play a key role. For instance, when children play the simulation game of cooking, they share the food with the maternal uncles quickly as there is no scope of fear of error at the maternal uncles. It's a rightful sanction of liberty and authority that exists with the maternal uncles. As in a Dravidian kinship system, marriages exist between cross cousins, it effectively paves way for the birth of joking relationships among cross cousins. It is perhaps this tone of relationship that extends towards the sons and especially daughters of the maternal uncle. Though during the early years of childhood, these attributes are less pronounced, they become more visible as the children grow into adolescence and teenage. Boys generally adopt a protective, teasing, joking and a responsible role in the question of a cross cousin girl. This liberty and mixture of various emotions is may be a result of an attitude of owning. There is an attitude of owning or belongingness among the cross cousins in the frame of a future possibility of marriage. Elders as well sanction such behavior to a certain extent as they consider it is as a rightful joking relationship among cross cousins and sometimes encourage it. But, this liberty is of a gradient pattern. During the early childhood, the distinction in between various relationships is greyed and the children associate with play and fun as the ultimate needs. But, with the age, children

begin to socialize, learn the rules of the society and begin to take various roles. The reason for the emergence of a varied understanding about the various roles and relationship attributes is also the initiation of elders who continuously propel with their sanctions, encouragements and restrict with disapprovals to ultimately result in the development of various socially desirable qualities. The gradient then again begins to fade into a restrictive tone as the children reach the age of puberty signifying the onset of the possibilities of sexual relations. The marriage decisions are controlled by the elders and hence, despite marriage prospects due to consanguinity, marriages need further approvals of elders in the families. Even in a case where the marriage doesn't happen between such cross cousins and the ease of a joking relationship, the protective attributes continue all through the rest of the life. When play aspect is considered after puberty, cross cousins play generally only at homes under the supervision of their families. They are not allowed to go out and play as they are slowly growing into adults.

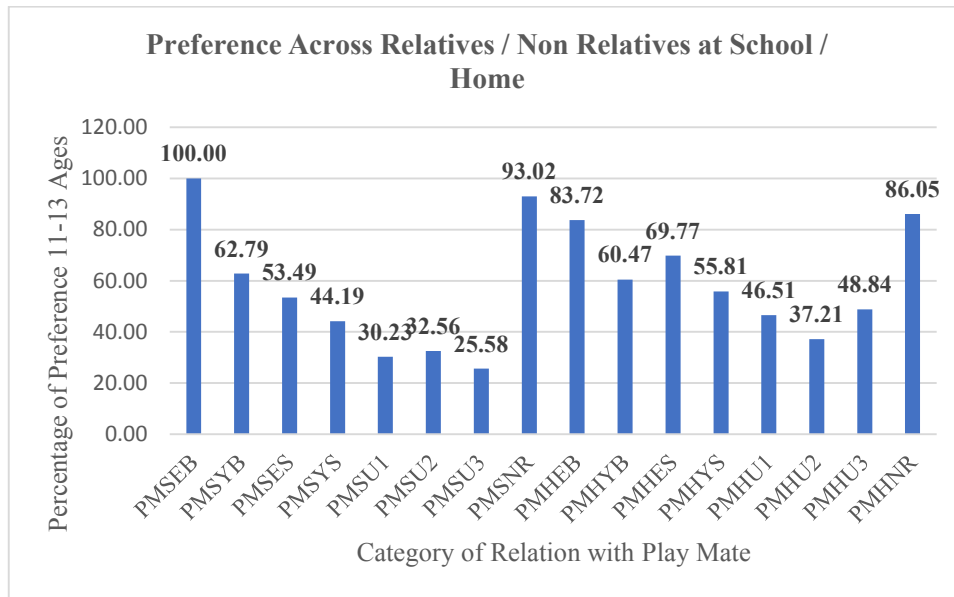
Grand Parents:

There are maxims famous in the local culture that say that old people and children are alike. It is like, infants tumble learning to walk, while the old tumble not being able to walk. Kids are a celebration to grand parents as they actively involve in taking care of them in support to mother and father. Generally, grand parents are the ones with an ample amount of free time and hence, could happily spend their time playing with kids. During infant stage grand parents could be the favorite playmates as they sing songs to the baby, make faces and gestures to entertain the baby and have patience in all the interactions with the child. Grand parents also find it comfortable and happy to play with the child during the early years of childhood, when the child is still learning to walk and developing control over his/her limbic activity. Considering grand parents as playmates decreases as the children grow and develop their own play groups.

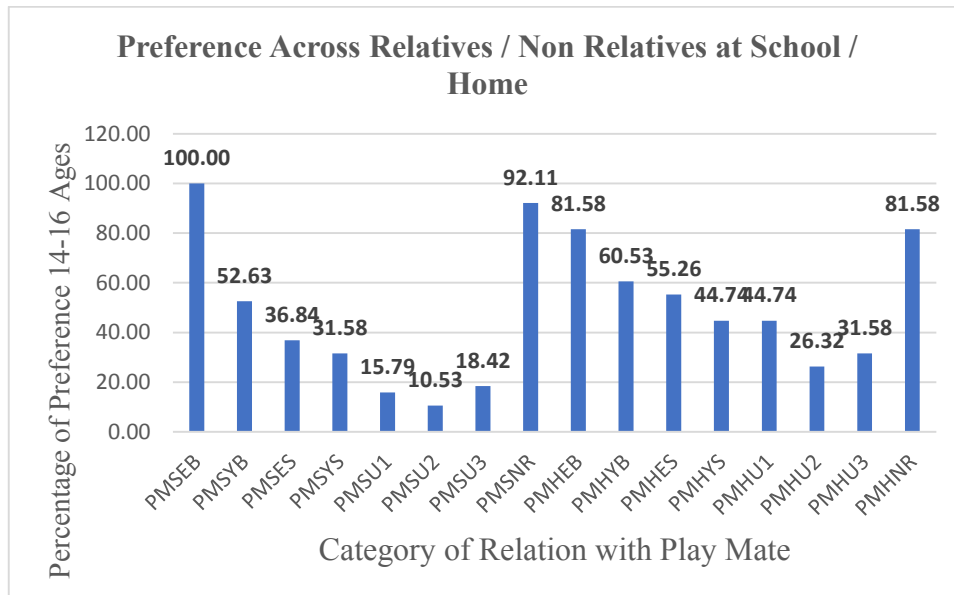
Grand parents, especially grand mothers help the mothers in giving bath to the baby everyday. Infants play with water, listen to the songs being sung by the grand mother and respond with giggles and squeals. These interactions build a special bond between the grand parents and the children. Children under ten years of age as well interact closely with grand parents during the play. In the imitation game of cooking, grand parents are the ones who are offered the sample to taste before anyone else in

the family. Grand Parents also dearly taste and appreciate. A sense of liberty and closeness exists in the bond with grand parents. By offering the food to the grand parents first, the children also learn that the old ones in the family are to be respected and taken care of as priority. Even parents encourage such behavior. Sometimes grand parents are the keepers of child's secrets and a way of relaxation from the restrictions implemented by the parents. Hence, overtime grand parents become the symbols of fun and freedom. Children even show interest to go to the grand parent's place during holidays and free time as a result of such a happy bond. When the children grow and gain control of their limbic activity, they show interest in playing board games such as chess, snake and ladder, *achhangayalu* etc with the grand parents. Grand parents also enjoy teaching the young ones such board games. They generally limit themselves to indoor games as such because of their old age and subsequent inability to participate in any games involving much of physical activity. Children as they grow further into adolescence and teenage develop their own groups and show lesser preference to play with the grand parents. However, the liberty, love, bonding and care established during the early childhood will remain in the further interactions as the children grow into adults.

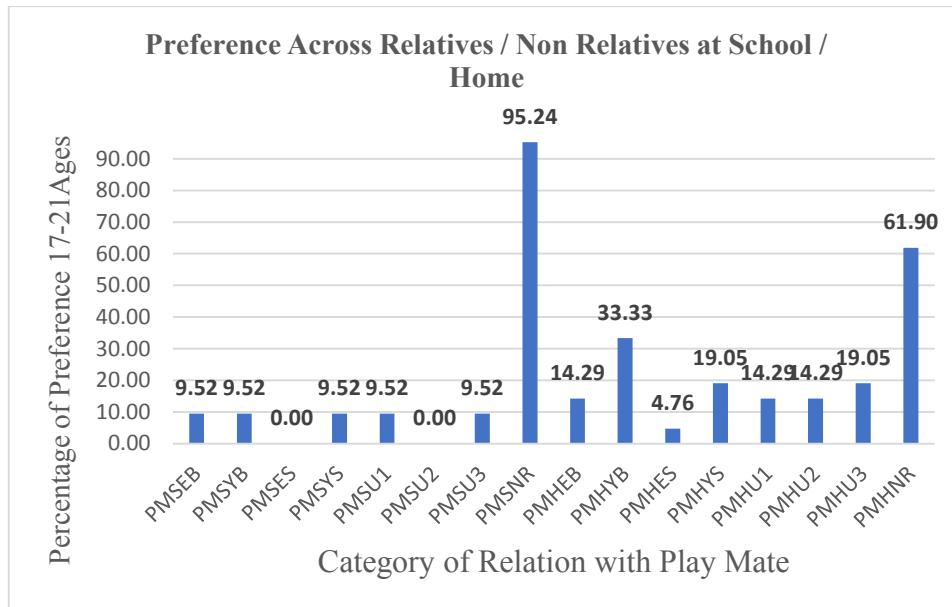
Tables on selection of playmates (Relatives and Non Relatives) (Table No.8)



PMSEB- PlayMates at School Elder Brother, PMSYB- PlayMate at School Younger Brother, PMSES- PlayMate at School Elder Sister, PMSYS- PlayMate at School Younger Sister, PMSU1- PlayMate at School Uncle 1 (Father's Younger Brother's children), PMSU2- PlayMate at School Uncle 2 (Mother's Brother's children), PMSU3- PlayMate at School Uncle 3 (Father's Elder Brother's children), PMSNR- PlayMate at School Non-Relative, PMHEB- PlayMate at House Elder Brother, PMHYB- PlayMate at House Younger Brother, PMHES- PlayMate at House Elder Sister, PMHYS- PlayMate at House Younger Sister, PMHU1- PlayMate at House Uncle 1 (Father's Younger Brother's children), PMHU2- PlayMate at House Uncle 2 (Mother's Brother's children), PMHU3- PlayMate at House Uncle 3 (Father's Elder Brother's children), PMHNR- PlayMate at House Non-Relative.



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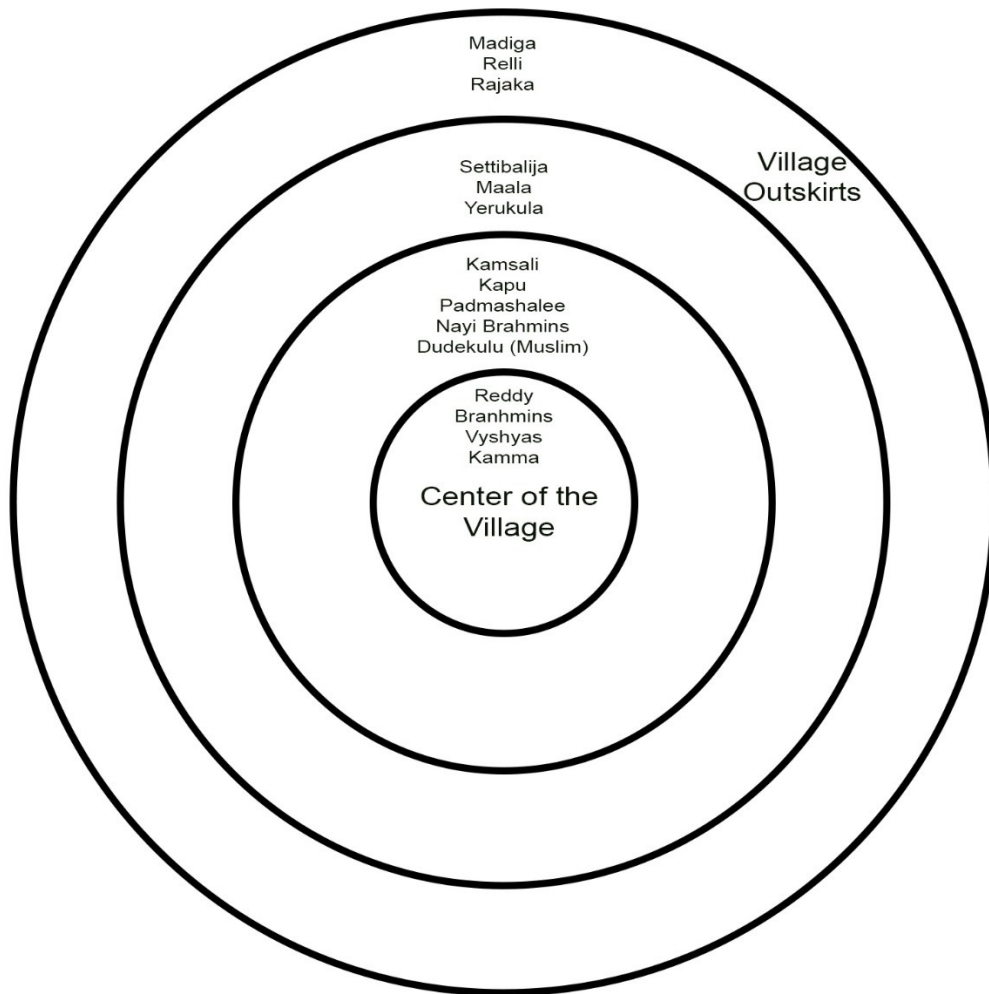
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On the basis of non-blood relations:

When connection of kinship relations to the selection of playmates is examined, preferences and differences that are recognized in the pattern of selection of playmates with reference to various kinship relations leaves us with the other relations in the society which are not kinship related but have an impact on the selection of playmates. The factors that are necessarily to be discussed in depth in this context are caste and class as they are the most influencing forms of social stratifications in India. The physical arrangement of the streets in the villages and towns in India are based on particular structure that is mostly common and applicable to all villages irrespective of their geographical locations. The people in India believe that this prescribed structure is mandatory in forming the physical structure of the village by locating what and whom are to be present and live at what places. This knowledge that defines the structure of a village is dealt with *Vasthu shastra*, which also talks about the structure of the house in a village. Anything deviating to the prescribed structure is believed to show bad results which applies to the structure of the village too. In line with what was discussed earlier, factors like caste and class indirectly influence the physical

layout of the village which forms a structurally influenced organization of the society. The people belonging to the higher castes live in the center of the village. The deprived communities or the castes of lower social status live towards the outskirts of the village. The entire village is organized as concentric circles where the circles that are closer to the center comprise the streets of higher caste people. A gradient of various castes from higher to lower is observable from the innermost circle to the outermost. This creates a geographically constrained situation for the children related to any specific circle and are left with no options with regard to the selection of playmates as the people belonging to the caste of same level of hierarchy live in one neighborhood because of already prescribed structure. Mobility in caste in terms of status is almost impossible as caste is one of the factors that determine the ascribed status of a person. Though rigid in terms of possibility of an escalation, by virtue of the increase of education and the awareness of the value of education among lower castes, it has become possible for a few families of the lower caste to move towards the center of the village with the increase of income and subsequent upward mobility in terms of their economic status. This scenario though changed the physical location of the residences of a few well educated and sufficiently employed people of the lower castes, the boundaries that are part of the social institutions are immutable. There are many lower caste people belonging to lower economic status in the previous generations started shifting their residences to much inner circles of the village where the higher status people reside. This often happens with lower castes people coming from neighboring villages rather than people of the same village. This has been observed in the following case study.

Caste Based Distribution Across Village



The settlements of various castes in the village are organized in such a way that the center of the village has the people belonging to the dominating castes, while the outskirts are populated with the people belonging to the lower communities. The diagram above represents the physical distribution of various castes across the village with concentric circles drawn to represent the various geographical zones of the village from the center of the village till outskirts. The higher castes such as Reddys, Vyshyas, Brahmins live in a few streets connected to the center of the village. The deprived communities such as Madiga and Relli live in an area called Thokpeta which is towards the outskirts of the village.

Case Study:

Samuel Raju (pseudonym) is a 37 years Maala from the neighboring village, Aachanta. His father and mother both were agriculture labour. He has four siblings two elder brothers and two younger sisters. Both his brothers are agriculture labors in Aachanta and his two sisters got married when they were fifteen years of age. One of his sisters is working in Dubai on a contract job as a maid at a house. He was provided education while his rest of the family work for food and shelter. He did his schooling in Aachanta and college at a degree college in Neggipudi. After his education he was selected as a secondary school teacher in 2010. Later he got married to Merry from his village who is also a Maala. He was given appointment to join the teaching position at Marteru village. Thus, he shifted his family to this village with his wife and a newborn son. In the initial days of shifting to this village, he took a one bedroom house on rent at Sivalayam vedhi in the village. This place is dominated by Setti Balija caste people and next to them resides Maala caste people. Since, the person is educated and working as a teacher, he was given the house and this was the notion that was existed in the minds of the owners who are also Setti Balijas. Samuel does not want to take house in 'pedha peta', a maala dominated place because it is not a sophisticated place to live and he does not like himself to stay there as most of them are not educated and backward. He said 'there are neither educated people nor sophisticated people residing in that area. It is a backward area and facilities are also not good to live in that area'.

After five years of staying in the village, he planned to purchase a house for himself in the village as a part of his investment. He was sanctioned rupees ten lakhs towards housing loan from SBI bank. With his savings and loan of fifteen lakhs, he tried to purchase a house in the same colony where he was living. But to his surprise, the owners increased the prices of the houses that are kept for sale to twenty lakhs which is beyond his capacity. After searching for reasonable prices, he planned to purchase a piece of land in the area near to Pedha peta and later construct a house in the land. Later, he said that he realized from his well wishers that it was a deliberate act of the non Schedule caste groups to increase the prices of the houses to a non-community member. By increasing the price, the non community member is restricted from purchasing the property. It is a way of restriction implemented by attacking on his purchasing capacity and affordability. All the people of the community in the same area stand for one word in the case of selling the houses. Giving the houses for rent is a little flexible activity as it happens on a temporary basis than selling a house which

is a permanent one and includes many details of the purchaser. This is a kind of community decision that decides whom to be given the house at the time of selling the house as they have to equate their status to the people who are living in their colony or street. The person's education status, profession of teaching, residing in a non-Maala community did not change his status in relation to his caste. This explains how residential places are constrained by caste consciousness of that person belongs to rather than his or her educational or financial capacities.

Influence of Caste:

While the situations at home and neighborhood signify a pronounced influence of the caste factor by virtue of physical structure majorly, it should not be forgotten that the structure itself emerged because of the social setups, institutions, discriminations and caste based influences. Dwelling in the center of the village also signifies the aspects of status and power. In the olden days, public meetings at '*Rachabanda*', a place where villagers gather to resolve disputes and deliver words of justice and punishment through public meetings, used to be located in the center of the village. It is generally an elevated dais constructed in the shadow of a tree where the elder of the village who operates political power sits and delivers judgments. Hence, the center of a village is generally symbol of power and status too considering its proximity to *Rachabanda*. The eventual development of a village with the availability of grocery stores, salons, conveyance facilities are all more concentrated around the center of the village. Hence, having residence close to a place or centre where almost every thing is available is a convenience too. In the previous generations, before and even after independence, lower caste, especially people from deprived 'untouchable' caste are not allowed to enter into the village. They used to have their own wells, water tanks, stores to purchase provisions etc as they are not allowed to the residential areas of the higher castes. This has eventually developed in to small bazars at different parts of the village or town itself. Nevertheless, people living at the outskirts of the village need to travel to the center to buy anything which they do not find at their places. Since, the owners of the lands in the center of the village belong to higher castes again, they run the shops as merchants, shop keepers, godown maintainers, stockist and different professions and gain profits. Hence, the economy and markets are again in the hands of the people of higher caste only which increases their economic positions. Each factor is interwoven with various other factors to restrict

upward mobility of lower castes and to preserve the status, power and position of the people of the higher castes irrespective of the situation. Selection of playmates is important as it becomes the reason for the buildup of friendships, networking and subsequent bridging of the gap between the higher and lower castes. Hence, such possibilities are restricted by way of physical structure of the village and subliminal yet deeply rooted and immutable social hierarchies and discriminations to withhold the power and status among the dominating higher communities.

Childhood is no exception to caste based preferences and the following table showcases the percentage of selected castes and their preferences to various castes in terms of choosing friends. While ‘choosing friends’ may not be a conscious decision taken by the children, but the environment around has a major influence in such selections to eventually happen.

Table on selection of friends on the basis of caste at home and school (Table No.9)

% of a caste having various caste friends	RE Friend @ Hom	SE Friend @ Hom	MA Friend @Home	MAD Friend @Hom	RE Friend @Sch	SE Friend @Sch	MA Friend @Sch	MAD Friend @Sch
Reddy%	88.43	20.66	7.44	0.00	78.51	49.59	22.31	4.13
Setti%	27.56	83.46	6.30	0.79	53.54	79.53	40.16	7.09
Maala%	10.39	23.38	87.01	3.90	36.3	62.34	74.03	11.69
Madiga %	0.00	11.54	7.69	84.62	30.77	46.15	34.62	53.85

RE Friend @ Home: Reddy Friend at Home, SE Friend@ Home: Settibalija Friends at Home, MA Friend@Hom: Maala Friends at Home, MAD Friend@Home: Maadiga Friends at home, RE Friend @Sch : Reddy friends at school, SE Friend@Sch: Settibalija friends at home, MA Friend@Sch: Maala Friends at school, MAD Friend@Sch : Maadiga friends at school

In terms of both demographics and status. It is observable clearly that the children of the reddy caste have more than 75 percent of their friends belonging to the reddy caste itself. The gradient of preference is in line with the social statuses of the castes. Both at school and home, the children of the reddy caste have more setti balija caste children as friends than the ones belonging to further lower status castes like maala and madiga. The curve is steep and is almost zero ties in terms of the reddy caste children, the caste of the highest social status and the children of madiga caste who are one of the most deprived castes in the village. The intercast friendships are

significantly less in percentage when compared to the same caste situations. Friendship with the children of the settibaliya caste is not restricted in the families of the children of the reddy caste. But the same is not the case with respect to maala and madiga castes. Cases where children of the reddy caste are restricted by their families from talking to the children of maala and madiga castes were witnessed during research. The formal setup at schools may have influenced a liberal way of considering children belonging to lower castes as friends by the higher castes. But, even in such conditions, the percentages are significantly low.

The onset of constitutional provisions to promote equality and curb caste based discriminations muted the activities of higher castes in a way. The discriminations that were once publicly displayed and spoken are now silently implemented in the form of rules, principles, ideas and philosophies of the societies through institutions, structures and socialization. The impact of constitutional implementation of equality and the relevant policies at schools further muted the loud nature of such discriminations. But, even those schools are a part of the same society and hence have these caste and class based differences only camouflaged and masked in various hidden forms. Among children of the very young age, that is, till ten years, the caste and class based preferences are too complex to be understood. Hence, they become friends with whosoever plays with them and on the basis of a natural selection of playmate where the social factors have very little or no impact. Though the structure of village makes friendships with the children of the same caste hierarchy, at school there is scope to mingle with children of various castes. In the days of two to three generations back, the children from depriving communities attending school were hardly found because of their social and economic conditions. If ever there were children from lower sections attending the same school where the higher community children attend, they were made to sit exclusively by demanding them to go and sit on back benches, inflicting them to isolation. The main reason or logic that was justified by the then children of higher communities who became adults now was that the children of lower communities who came to their schools were very untidy and unkempt and most of the times carried contagious diseases like scabies. Their appearances, language with local slangs and dialects made the children from lower communities always recognizable as belonging to lower sections. This explains that the children are made to take decisions in selecting playmates based on their physical appearances. But in the contemporary

situations, the context of being untidy has changed if not completely, certainly to an acceptable extent. The need for being tidy by keeping their bodies clean and wearing washed and clean clothes are learnt and followed by these young children. This made the children come closer and mingle with each other as the condition of physical appearance has changed.

It has been observed that certain children of higher castes considered children of lower castes as friends and the impact of caste consciousness is absent in such cases. But, the same is not the case when the children grow into teens and start to attend college. Still after the change in the physical appearances and cleanliness, the conscious effort in selecting playmates is being happened among the higher and lower communities without their conscious effort. With the age, the caste consciousness solidifies and the discriminations start to surface. It may not be always a spoon fed institution that necessitates this parting. By the age of reaching colleges, students begin to take sides for the sake of identity, power, availing economic resources, and voicing the demands. Such need for support translates into friendships with the ones of the same caste hierarchy. Hence, as the children grow with age, the selection of playmates begin to show the reflections of the society more pronouncedly.

Since caste and class are interwoven in terms of the impacts they create on the society, their flux also extends into schools to a certain extent by the factor of economic affordability. Families which are economically weak cannot afford to spend a lot of money in a year to get their offspring educated in a private school. It is believed that private schools generally employ better teachers and impart better standards of education though sometimes, is not fact. Factors like providing good quality education, English medium of education, better infrastructure, peer group, etc influence the parents to join their children in private organizations. Government schools offer free education and hence, are the schools opted by economically insufficient families. People of deprived castes are of poor economical conditions and hence inevitably send their children to Government Schools. This made Government schools a symbol of deprived castes and private schools a symbol of status. The low standards of education at Government schools further contributes to the preservation of the dominance of the caste and class hierarchies as well making upward mobility complex. In such a case, schools of both Government and Private, by the impact of

economical conditions already signify pre-drawn lines of separation in between higher and lower caste children which makes the children to again flock with the children at the same caste level for play. Withstanding the belief of quality education being provided by private schools, parents lately realize the fact with repetitive failures of the child in his or her studies. But in many times, it is because of the peer pressure and false prestige that makes the parents, though it is beyond their financial capacities, join their children in private schools. This is not just because of the idea of acquiring quality education but because of equating their status with the statuses of the families who join their children in such schools.

Influence of Class and Caste:

While political power and rightful discrimination were alone enough to keep the caste hierarchies unchanged in the olden days, today, the steering is taken over by the fangs of economical conditions. The people of the lower castes who are now in economically improved conditions by virtue of education, employment and migration, opt to join their kids in private schools where the children of higher castes study. Besides the selection of playmates, the type of game in consideration itself is indicative of class. It is observed that not all games are played universally by all the children in the society. There is a conscious selection on what games are to be played and what not be played just like with whom children are to play. This idea is always guided by the parents or family members or the peer or neighboring groups of the families and executed as a part of socialization. In spite of the internal forces that steers the selection of games, development and technology adds creativity to new games which come into existence and create competition to the already existing traditional games. Certain games are avoided to play by the children of higher communities and certain games are played by children from economically weak families. It may not be because of the children's preference to play any certain game by virtue of class, but it is either the availability of equipment and the sanction or restriction from the side of their families. People of higher castes restrict their children from playing certain games by reasoning such games as either dangerous or unhygienic play in the mud. They sometimes label such games as "labour *aatalu*" in local language which means the games of the working class. They further expand their reasoning saying that the poor and the working class leave their children to risk and are less worried about their safety, while they credit themselves for taking such fragile

care of their offspring. On the other side, it could be understood that the people of the higher classes and particularly higher castes do not want their offspring to group with the children of the lower classes which is the nexus of all the reasoning. People of higher classes and castes also try protecting their children from being exposed to any behavioral traits and habits of the children of the lower class or caste families. It is more about nurturing the children to behave in line with the elder's behavior which is symbolic of a higher level of caste and class. Children of the higher castes and classes are not allowed by their families to come out and play in mud in their streets. They are strict on hygiene aspects and restrict the children from keeping their fingers or hands in their mouths after playing in mud or any outdoor location. Children of the lower castes have lesser restrictions from the side of their families regarding playing in mud. This may be because working labour in houses, farms and factories are continuously exposed to mud, dirt, soil and berm. This exposure naturally keeps the people of the working classes in a state of mind to treat mud, berm and dirt as parts of their daily life and not as symbols of anything dangerously unhygienic. This attitude may have its reflections on their children too which allows them to play games out sided their houses in mud and soil without hesitation. When it comes to the higher caste families, as owners of agricultural land, as shopkeepers and as people who often hire people for every task, they consider being soiled as a low or working class condition and prefer to stay away from such conditions in the name of hygiene. These reflections in the form of restrictions show up in the case of their offspring. This attitude may have come into existence for the sake of preservation and maintenance of such behavior which is symbolic of class as well. Games such as *Bacchalu*, *Golilu* or marbles are often considered as games played by lower status communities as they are played in mud and soil in the streets and any other available spaces. But, in fact the condition of playing in mud and being soiled is not unique to these games only. The much played games like *kabaddi* has much severe physical activity which makes play in mud inevitable. But such games of national reputation are symbolic of class and they are played in both formal and informal formats at schools, colleges and at houses. Playing in such an environment is considered and encouraged to play irrespective of whether it provides unhygienic conditions as they carry a status symbol unlike many other lower quality games. When asked, they further expanded their reasoning saying that only games such as *golilu* and *Bacchalu* are played amidst of dirty and unhygienic conditions by the children of labour communities. The game *Bacchalu* has the activity

of collecting empty cigarette boxes as part of it. Children collect the boxes from their elders and sometimes go around the streets to collect them from the garbage littered on the streets or at some petty shops where cigarettes are sold. This activity itself is equated to the activity of a garbage collector which is a low caste and low class activity and considered as disgrace and shameful activity. Hence, children of the higher castes are severely restricted from playing this game. The game of *Golilu* or marbles as well is considered as a not to be played game by the families of the higher communities. The marbles are shot by bending the middle finger and using the tension and releasing it in the direction of the target. Children lift up their hand and align it inline with their eye and treat it like a viewfinder to set the target and shoot. The game of marbles involves the digging of a small basin shaped pit in mud to place the targeted marbles. Since, digging the pit involves activity in mud, it is a reason to call it unhygienic. The people of the higher communities mention stories of kids loosing their eyes in accidents during the play with *golilu* when the marbles are accidentally shot at the eyes. Swallowing of marbles, by innocent children is another claimable risk. The reflections show up on the subsequent habitual behaviors as well. For instance, the higher caste families restrict the children from eating anything that was slipped on to ground. This isn't the same with the lower caste and lower class families. The affordability factor which makes food precious and a "not to be trashed" thing or their attitude of viewing mud and floor as part of their daily lives may give them such ease to allow children to take it and eat unless the food is fully soiled and inedible. The children of higher communities are restricted from eating even a solid candy fell on the floor inside house accidentally as an act of being hygiene. Games like *Golilu*, *Bacchalu*, *Guti Billa*, *Yedupenkula aata*, *Bongaram* or spinning top, are considered as games of lower class communities and are not encouraged by the people of higher status communities among their children to play these games. However, it is observed that in cities, the change in the equipment from a traditional wooden *Bongaram* or top to a plastic and modern designed top changing its traditional look is accepted by the families to play by their kids among their peer groups. Change in the traditional look and remodeling the toys according to the new modern factory designs by giving the toys a sophisticated look carries a kind of higher status with them when compared to traditional ones and these sophisticated toys are generally accepted among the higher communities.

Children are totally unaware of the reasons behind the restrictions and only respond to the instructions of the parents and elders. Play and fun alone are the considerable factors for children to involve in any activity. Children of the higher castes when allowed to play the games which are played by the children of the lower castes, mingle and develop friendships. Elders of the higher status families consider such friendships as undesirable. Hence, the selection of playmates is a guided process with several restrictions and sanctions. The lower caste or class families choose to refrain from such situations and restrict their children from playing with the children of the higher castes in retaliation or avoidance of unpleasant situations. In case, if the children make such friendships, the elders of the higher communities consciously keep telling them either by humiliating or by threatening them. These warnings become more intense and serious when the friendships grow along with their age. In the contemporary situations, the elders of the higher communities are well aware of the society where people of different communities and statuses educate or work together and it is an unavoidable situation. In such situations, the elders advice that such relationships should only be related to work places and are not to bring back to home. This explains the levels of interaction with people of different communities at different situations. Friendships are controlled from younger ages itself in order to avoid strong bondings and relations that may sometimes turn into affinal relationships in future.

Case Study:

Prasad (pseudonym) is a 32 years man who is born and brought up in the same village, Marteru. He belongs to Yerukula tribe and belongs to one of the four families of the tribe living in the village. Their primary occupation was pig rearing which his fathers and brothers worked for. Prasad also participated in pig rearing until he got the job as a primary school teacher in 2011. Prasad's father, Yellayya was a pig rearer and earned bread by selling pork. His mother was a midwife and also an agriculture labour. Yellayya has two sons, elder is Prasad and younger is Ramesh, who also obtained a government job. Prasad went to a government school in the same village and completed his studies. He later completed his college and post graduation from different colleges outside Marteru village. He got married to his mother's brother's daughter, Suma who also studied till tenth standard. They live in their house on the banks of a small canal at the outskirts of the village. All the five families of Yerukula

tribes reside in the same small lane near to Maalas and at the back of Setti Balijas. Before he got the job as a primary teacher, he worked in pig rearing along with his family members even after his education and during his search for jobs. After three years of working as a teacher, he shifted to his new house which is two blocks away from his parents house. He has a son and daughter, who are seven and five years old. He admitted his son in a private english medium school which is in the village itself. The Yerukula boy, Ravi and the Setti Balija boy, Rakesh, as they had to go to the same school via the same route, used to talk and walk the streets to school together. This was observed by the parents of Rakesh. Rakesh, in the evening after school when he returned home, was warned by his parents to refrain from any interactions with Ravi. Further, in a tone of irony, he was questioned “*Yelakalollatho neeku friendship entiraa?*” (meaning: Whats friendship with Yerukulas?) Though the actual name of the tribe to which Ravi belongs is “Yerukula”, in the village, the people of the tribe are informally called “yelakolollu”, which also gives the meaning “rat people”. The way Rakesh was questioned at home signifies the emphasis on caste and an attempt by the parents to bring about the rejection towards any yerukula community people. Further, Rakesh was told that people of Yerukula community are thieves and threatened him about a possible risk by continuing the friendship with Ravi. Rakesh, being a kid, revealed the same to Ravi at school. Ravi distanced himself from Rakesh and shared the story with his parents who later advised Ravi not to mingle with Rakesh any further.

Prasad, while being interviewed, recollected his past experiences during his childhood and adulthood regarding the ill-treatment of the villagers towards him. He said ‘even after becoming a school teacher, the villagers treat me with disrespect. They call my name with no respect and use singular forms to represent me. They expect me to behave the same way like in the olden times. They want me to hold my hands, bend a little down showing respect with them but they always call me with informal pronouns. My education and job did not bring any change in the way people treat us. They only helped in the betterment of our lifestyle and financial conditions. But did not earn respect to me. The worst condition is that now my son is also facing the same treatment from the people.’

This case study clearly explains how children are interfered by their parents in selecting their friends or playmates. They not only want their children to be aware of the situations but also apply the information in their lives. This difference is seen not

only among the people of different castes and Yerukulas but also among Yerukulas who shifted their occupations to non-traditional occupations. The families of Yerukulas who shifted to government or private skilled professions from their traditional occupations view themselves as higher in status than the Yerukulas who are still with traditional occupations like pig rearing. Though pig rearing and midwifery were once their traditional occupation, changing their occupations to teaching and catering jobs brought differences among themselves. However, this change in their occupations and lifestyle did not bring any effect in their status among the non-Yerukulas and still face the deprived status linked with stealing and pig rearing. The children of the families of non-tribe residing near to the Yerukula are well aware of their social status and position. They are not encouraged to talk or have close friendship with them. These kids from both Reddy and Setti Balija communities tease the children of Yerukula as thieves and pig rearing people. The Yerukula kids also do not mingle with any of these kids. They maintain clear distance from them to avoid unnecessary situations. During my interaction with these kids of non-Yerukula, they suggested me by suddenly dropping their voice in a secret mode and said 'these two kids are thieves. Don't go to them' showing the Yerukula children. They shared a situation that once these kids were playing street cricket with a red rubber ball and after the play they realized that their ball was missing. They searched everyplace and every corner where they played the game. After a few days, they saw the Yerukula boys playing with the same red rubber ball. When they went and asked to return their ball the Yerukula boys bluntly said that it is their ball and not yours. After a small argument, the Yerukula boys quickly jumped into their house with the ball in their hands. Not knowing what to do, the boys returned back to their place. This was explained by the boys by recollecting their experience with the Yerukula boys. It is also observed that the non-tribe children especially, Reddy and Setti Balija show dominating behavior towards the Yerukula children in their casual talks. Their interaction with them is very less and most of the times they avoid by ignoring them.

Affordability of equipment is another factor that influences the type of games played. During the colonial rule, the game of cricket gained popularity and was played by the upper caste people who aligned with the British representatives in order to acquire higher status. Hence, cricket emerged as a game of Indian elite. Though the British never intended to promote their favorite game in India, the Indian elite and

higher caste communities, in order to acquire high prestige and status, started playing this games which later changed to 'gentlemen's game' and brought political significance to the game. In the recent years, the involvement of mass media made cricket grab more popularity which changed it from 'elite game' to 'universal game' and attracted huge masses from all sections in the society with the involvement of huge investments, celebrity status and political influence. The national level popularity of the game further brought the game to schools and colleges and attained a formal format with the introduction of various tournaments. But, to play the game, expensive equipment like bats, balls, wickets and pitches are essential. Hence, the ones who have such equipment only can play the game. The ones who can afford various sports equipment are generally of the higher caste or higher class families because of their better financial conditions. This condition makes the friendship of the higher caste children desirable for the purpose of play. By economic advantage, the influence of the elite communities starts with such conditions. Leadership and appreciation naturally are owed to the ones who own the equipment which makes the children who don't own such equipment to become part of the play group of the one who owns the equipment. The parents of higher communities purchase expensive toys and equipment so that their children carry the class status among the other children who signify their parents. Non possessing of expensive toys and equipment among children indirectly signifies the inability of their parents purchasing capacity. In order to overcome such situations people of lower communities consciously see that their children does not mingle with children of higher status communities so that they will not face such embarrassing and humiliating situations from their peer groups. The children from the economically depriving communities make their own equipment from garbage or sometimes, from things like wooden plank for bat, tennis balls for cork balls and play at grounds with no pitches unlike the children of higher communities. The situation of purchasing new equipment has become a peer pressure rather than their own decisions among the middle and lower communities. This situation has become more intense with the time as in the earlier days, purchasing toys was considered as waste of money by the family members of all the communities other than a few economically well off families. In the previous generations, elders used to make toys out of available resources like leaves, ribbons, papers, wood and such easily available materials rather than purchasing them from shops. With the increase in earning capacities, purchasing power and money flow, the concept of purchasing toys

and equipment must have increased as a peer pressure activity. It should also be noted that the slow reduction of time spent by the parents or elders with their children also reflects the increase in the concept of purchasing toys as a rather easier way than sparing time for the children from their busy schedules. This slow reduction of time being spent by the elders with their children is giving rise to faster increase in the concepts of class consciousness in the society.

On the other side, the increase in the technology and advancement in modern equipment attract more class consciousness because of their expensive prices. Many higher status families began to encourage their children to play at home video or computer games. Almost all the children of the higher castes and even toddlers of one years age play with mobile phones and tablets. Indoor games and mobile games are viewed as the symbols of class, safety and the aspect of physical inactivity is not considered. This concept will be further discussed deeply in relation to the impact of technology.

Gambling and Status:

Certain games such as *Bacchalu*, *Golilu*, *Guti billa* etc have betting as part of the game. Such aspects of gamble are treated as representative of low status as betting is viewed as an addiction and social evil. People of the both middle class and higher castes more seriously consider that children are to be kept away from the aspects of money and more importantly the spirit of gambling. Gambling attitudes are treated as uncontrollable addictions and hence they refrain their children from involving in such activities. Card games are more seriously restricted in this context. It is believed among the people in the society that the lower castes who are economically weak get much attracted and attached to gambling because of their social environments, habits and addictions. Consumption of alcohol becomes mandatory for almost all people who are engaged in manual works. The reason behind the addiction is both social and individual where social is related to peer pressure activity and individual reason is related to reduce or forget the pains that they get when their bodies strain by doing hard physical works. The elements of gambling are mostly found along with alcohol consumption as it is treated as luxury among the people. Because of the connection of gambling with other addictions and the people who are involved in it, gambling is treated as a low class activity in village atmospheres among the lower castes. When the people of higher castes are involved, the status of the activity shifts from lower to

higher and becomes a luxury of the rich but still regarded as addiction. This is reflected in the famous game of rooster fights which is completely involved in gambling and is treated as illegal activity by the Government of India. Though officially illegal, the local politicians find loop holes to bypass the law and get the law and enforcement agencies to overlook the organizing of these rooster fights for the three days of the festival of Sankranti. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 is an Act made for the prevention of infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering on animals. Various press reports say that the police warn the organisers and threaten to take them into custody if knives are tied to the legs of the roosters. This way the police construe the laws in force and implement them sparingly during the three days of the festival.

Class and Rooster Fights:

Rooster fights are played as a three day gambling during the festival of Sankranti. These fights are conducted in gardens like coconut, mango etc and vast grounds which have empty spaces that could accommodate hundreds of people who visit and participate in rooster fights. Roosters are engaged in fights over which betting happens. The win or defeat of the rooster signifies the loss or gain of money pledged for the gamble. During Sankranti, even teenage male children participate in rooster fights. The arenas where these fights are conducted again have caste and class based implications. In the olden days, same community people used to flock together at an arena. It is more like going to that arena where the land belongs to a relative or a known person within the community. Now the arenas are more class driven than caste. The amount that is pledged in betting increases or decreases with the class of the arena by virtue of its organizer, reputation and the people who gather. Arenas where very high amounts are pledged for betting are generally away from the crowds and are organized in private. Betting high amounts itself is considered as a display of status and class during the festival. Large arenas have smaller spaces beside the main rink where the fights are conducted in a small way for smaller amounts. Every village has different arenas at different places based on the convenience of the people. This convenience is always attached with aspects of group identification like caste or class or some times both. In Marteru, rooster fights are mainly conducted since many generations in *Reddy gari thota*, a coconut garden of Mr. Koteswara Reddy (pseudonym) which is located at the outskirts of the village. But because of the growth

of the village, the once outskirts has become the part of the village where Mala caste people reside. This field is also called as '*Kodipandala dibba*', that is, rooster fights arena. The person who manages and conducts the entire activity for this place is also a Reddy by name Srinivasa Reddy. Since twenty years he has been the person who is organizing these activities during the festival time by taking permissions from the police and executing the programme with all the necessary planning. The organizer of the arena gets thirty percent of the total betting amounts as his share irrespective of who wins. He also collects certain amounts like five thousands to ten thousand rupees from the people who conduct other games like *Gundaata*, *Kai raja kai*, number games etc and thousand to five thousand rupees from food sellers depending on their value of sale. Along with the organizer, there are also other people who earn money on rooster fights. They are, knives man (*Kathulodu*), that is, the one who ties knives to the roosters and a cutman (like in boxing sports) who helps in preventing and treating physical damages to the roosters during breaks in the match. There will be two cutmen, one from each side. Both the knives men and cutmen are considered as professionals and are extremely trained. The skill of the knivesmen exists in the way he ties the knives to the legs of the roosters. He ties the knives tightly at the pointed and sharp spurs of the roosters. Any alignment in tying the knives leads to severe injuries to the people holding the roosters along with him. So, it is the responsibility of this person to tie the knives correctly and firmly at the right places and angles for the roosters to win the match. Cutmen are completely engaged in providing necessary treatments to the roosters in such a way that the roosters gain energy to continue the fight till their last breath. They conduct certain activities like blowing hot air into the rooster nostrils and mouth and sprinkling water on the rooster's face by blowing water through their mouth at regular intervals during the match. These activities make the injured rooster gain energy and fight by pulling its energy back till its death or win. Though these professions are linked with the illegality of rooster gambling, these people play crucial roles in rooster fights. Generally, the person who provides rooster knives are blacksmiths from different villages and the cutmen can be from any community who has enough experience and knowledge in understanding and providing required treatment. Most of the times, cutmen belong to lower class sections. It is observed that the cutmen belong to different castes both higher and lower, according to the arenas of different castes. For instance, in the arenas of the Reddy communities, the cutmen generally belong to Reddy caste. The blacksmith

provides knives at a price of one thousand to two thousand rupees for a pair of knives and the cutmen earn five hundred to one thousand rupees per game. These rates vary sometimes according to the demand and situations like playing with or without permissions from police, increase in the number of fights, etc. Irrespective of their caste and status in the village, the people who are involved in rooster fights, starting from organizing to providing services at rooster fights are looked down upon by the people. This is because of the kind of activity they are involved in. Those who do these jobs at festival or seasonal times do not want anyone to know about these activities as these activities are linked with lower status. Earning a livelihood by conducting rooster fights is considered as a low level occupation since the activity is involved in gambling and is considered as brokerage. The low status is not just limited to the organizers of the fights but also to the knives supplier and cutmen of the game.

Unlike the status of the organizers, the social status of the players in rooster fights is not always considered as low level as they are rich, politically connected and upper caste during the festival time as it is legalized and is a temporary activity for enjoyment but not a means of serious livelihood. This is the reason that makes the people visit, especially men, to the arenas of rooster fights at the time of festivals and when the game is legalized. Elders, both men and women encourage young boys to visit rooster fights arena during the festival times. The elders generally deny their involvement in encouraging their kids' participation in the rooster fights. But, the participation of the young kids in an unrestricted manner from almost all the families in the village tells a tale of unspoken encouragement in the families. Mothers claim that they allow their children to visit these arenas as some of them have several other play items and amusement activities such as giant wheel, tora tora, merry go round etc; which are exciting play activities for the kids. But in reality, the rooster fights and the arenas are more of the tone of a casino with a lot of gambling than that of a playful kids amusement park. This explains the lack of information or knowledge about the arenas and rooster fights among many women in the village. Though fathers appear to restrict their sons from visiting these arenas, they allow them to go finally as the festive time arrives. In many cases, elder men like fathers, uncles etc encourage their sons to visit these arenas during the festival as they believe that it is part of the entertainment during the festival that has to be enjoyed by all males of the society. Nevertheless, these young men are strictly prohibited by their parents from participating in gambling as it is considered an addiction and a bad habit. These young

men and boys, most of the times go with their fathers or uncles (both maternal and paternal) till they reach an age when they have their own group consisting of cousins and friends in general. Boys don't participate in any main stream bets conducted at the arena. Instead, they bet small amounts like five rupees or ten rupees out of their own pocket money and play in an informal way sitting in the audience. Such bets could be with a friendly cousin or sibling in the families. Sometimes they bet with their Grand Fathers as they have a relationship characterized by freedom at their Grand Fathers. If they win the bet, they reveal the news of winning it to their parents in all pride which will be appreciated by the parents too. This is a sort of simulation ground to the male children to experiment under the supervision of the elders and learn various things related to the rooster fights. Hence, the young boys not only win money in return but also confidence of winning and the spirit of playing the game which they learn slowly year after year.

Male children when they grow into teens show enthusiasm to participate in smaller fights where the betting amount is small but is part of the space where the main arena is located. They get trained in selecting the rooster while purchasing, raising the rooster, getting it prepared for the fight, procedure of participating in the game and all about the rooster fights all through the years from different people starting from relatives to strangers. They tryout their roosters at various locations and have the fun of gambling. By trying out at different places, they learn about their community based rooster fights arenas and fix themselves to such arenas. Playing at one's own community's arenas makes grouping with the same community people possible which enhances the opportunities of gaining more knowledge about the rooster fights like rooster astrology and being mentored by the experienced elders. Participation in rooster fights and the gamble attached is not considered as of lower class like *bachalu* or *golilu*. In some instances male children are encouraged to participate as it is considered macho and a must have attitude. Women in the families allow their men to participate in gambling as they perceive it as the only possible time for recreation for men who work hard continuously for the well being of the family. But at the same time female members in the village are restricted to attend and participate in games and sports like rooster fights. The women are strictly restricted from certain deeds by the society as a norm and rule. To withhold the norms as a part of the society, a feeling of sanctity is attached to such restrictions and any deviation from the prescribed ones

will become unacceptable and unchaste. Such social control is executed by the society in different forms. In order to have a clear vision in understanding the functioning of such institutions, it is important to focus society from gender perspective.

Gender and games:

The nexus of the entire layout of the society has something significant to do with the position of woman in the society. The village has a stringent and defined set of rules especially in the case of woman. The status, power, discrimination, recognition and appreciation are all linked to a web of rules that play around the role of woman in the society. Among the people of the higher castes, woman stay indoors and rarely venture out of their living rooms and homes. In extreme conditions, it is observed that they talk from behind the doors in the event of having to talk to some guest or relative visiting the house. The entire gamut of rules is impacting right from the birth of the girl child. It is the position of the girl or woman which also influences and defines the role of a 'male' in the society.

In the village, the role of a girl is connected to all the appropriate, approved activities like singing devotional songs, worshipping God or helping in arranging for the worship (Puja) etc,. All activities imitating the role of a mother, helping mother in cooking and domestic chores, helping the mother in taking care of a younger sibling etc are significantly accepted and appreciated behaviors of a girl child. The connection of girls to such approved activities not only describes her character but also reflects the status of the community she belongs to. Worshipping Gods, singing devotional songs, being a theist are all the elements that bring a woman honor and respect which increases her status. This is observed among lower caste girls when they are asked to play a game '*anthyakshari*', a game of singing songs randomly by everyone in the group. Generally, this game is played by singing film songs of different languages the players are comfortable with. But in the case of lower caste girls who got converted or followers of Christ, sing devotional songs. The game is a little different from the original *anthyakshari* game. The girls divide into two groups and sing devotional songs one by one and still call it with the same name '*anthyakshari*'. When they were asked about film songs, they said they are not allowed to watch films as it is considered as an activity disliked by God. But this is not the same case with boys, who sing movie songs and watch movies on television. This clearly reflects the concept of

behaving approved and the resultant preservation of social status of girls in the society. All the social expectations when catered, results in the establishment of a reputation as a girl of decent character. Any deviations immediately signal a descent of such reputation and the raise of a label 'characterless woman' like *thirugubothu* (wanderlust), *mogalingadu* (male gendered girl), etc. The entire society takes active part in spreading the ill-reputation or bad remarks on a girl faster and wider which make the girls and woman fear the deviations from the acceptable social behavior.

The concept of higher status is more pronouncedly observed in the case of girl children. Girls are treated as symbols that carry family prestige and status in relation with their characters. Their behavior is always reflected to the 'quality' of her character which is decided by the society. The society expects the girl children and women to behave in a specific way and that behavior is attached to the quality of the character of that particular girl or woman. People of higher communities consider their young girls and women not going outside their houses as a symbol of high prestige. Talking to strangers, showing themselves to men, walking in the streets, using cosmetics or putting makeup are all considered as things a 'good' women should never do. If a young girl or woman did any of such activities, she will be considered as a 'characterless' person by the society as they believe that such acts are involved in attracting men and there by illegal affairs. Children, especially girls are taught all these things by their family members or by societies when necessary in order to attain good name or fame not only to her but also to the entire family. Girl children of the higher castes and class are restricted from going outside and playing with others in the neighborhood. This may be to avoid the risk of undesirable friendships and further to safeguard the girl child as such which is the symbolic of higher caste and class and also to prevent attractions that may happen on meeting men. For the purpose of play, the people of the higher caste and class invite the children to their homes and let the girl child play under the controlled supervision of the elders. These restrictions increase with age for the girl children as they are to be showcased as the embodiments of purity and class in the society.

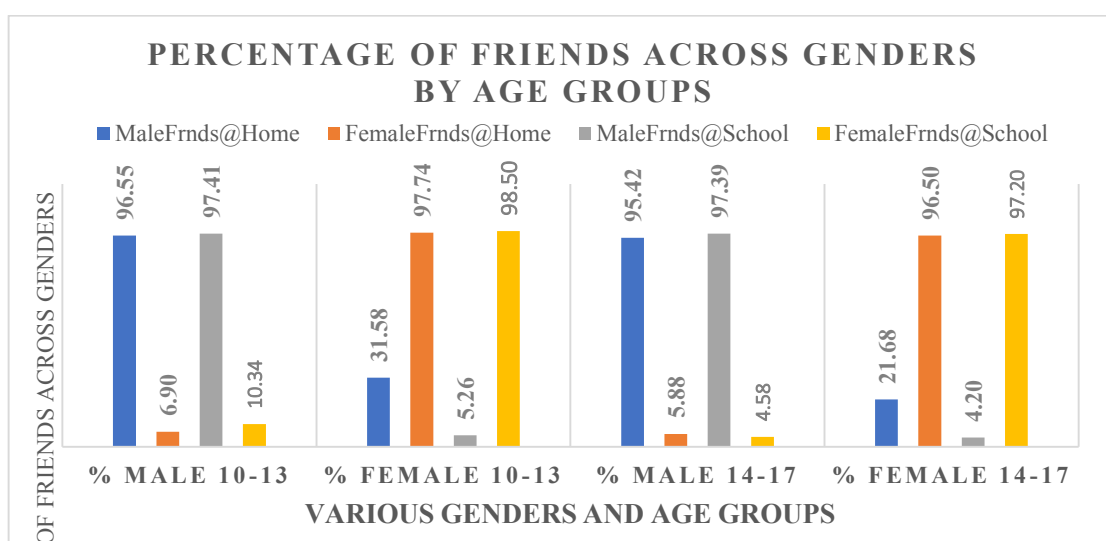
In the early years of childhood, though a certain level of freedom prevails in the selection of playmates without gender barriers, the instructions of how not to play, how to keep the dress properly covering the body, giving no chance for the exposure of body parts even accidentally during the play are all given regularly to the girl

children. Girls in general are restricted from playing all such games which involve aggressive play. *Kothi Kommacchi, Karra billa, Golilu, Ongullu Dookullu* etc which are the games played by boys are not allowed to be played by the girls. Though it is viewed as a measure to keep the girl children away from injuries which result from involving in play with such aggressive physical activity, it is also mostly to restrict the interaction of girls with boys by creating distinct lines in between games of the boys and the girls. Further, girls are encouraged to remain indoors and all the games that are played by girls involve less of space and are designed to be played at home or within the vicinity. Boys in contrast to this are encouraged to go out and play. In the event of an injury, boys are pacified and made to stop crying by saying that ‘boys don’t cry like girls’. This statement itself tells that girls are subjected to express their emotions which makes them fragile and soft in nature unlike boys who are subjected to controlled emotions. The aspect of being fragile in girls increases their femininity to become a perfect and desirable women. When an injury happened in any of the attempts to involve in aggressive or outdoor play, parents are seem to advise by saying ‘that’s the reason why we don’t want you to go out and play’ rather than making the situation light. There is also another aspect that makes elders worried about their girl children playing tough games. It is the marks of the injuries that they may get on their bodies and faces especially leave scars and injuries for a longer time, sometimes also for a life time. They are worried that the scars on their faces may effect their demand in getting good marriage matches and lead to unnecessary situations like decreasing the demand for their daughters.

By the graph displayed below, it is evident that friends of same gender are preferred across various age groups. More than the factor of choice influencing such a condition, it is the social structure and the institutions which result in such a preference eventually.

Percentage of friends across genders by age groups (10-13 years and 14-17 years)

(Table No.10)



MaleFrnds@Home- Male Friends at Home, FemaleFrnds@Home- Female Friends at Home, MaleFrnds@School- Male Friends at School, FemaleFrnds@School- Female Friends at School

The scenario is a little different in the question of games like basket ball, hockey etc which have in recent gained popularity because of their national and international influences. These games of national importance are viewed as career options and girls of some families are encouraged to practice playing those games in a formal format where a coach involves in training the girls at a school or practice grounds. However, this shift has not changed much of the other attributes that are gender driven. An interview with a female basket ball player who even played in national tournaments revealed various aspects that are related to the current context which are explained in the further case study. Girls practicing such serious play of these games are expected to keep their activities limited to games and any interactions beyond the scope of the game are again restricted. Any injury or accident that may happen while practicing are again viewed in the same way as the elders generally do at home. So, it is the responsibility of the girl to be careful and take care of herself while playing the game. There are situations other than physical injuries that may happen while playing these games. Elders worry about the connections that may happen when the girls are sent to play games at other places for tournaments. When the girls are taken to other places to participate in competitions, they are easily misled by the freedom they come across. This is the notion that prevails among many adults and could be one of the main reasons for them for not sending their girls to outstations. The interactions that may

happen between young girls and boys during this time may lead to other aspects of friendships which may lead to complicated situations in future. So, in order to avoid such conditions, the elders believe that it is better to restrict the girls to have such lenience. The event of a friendship extending towards any marital or sexual interests, the society around again applies all the stringent restrictions mostly through girls as they feel it is rather easy to restrict girls than explaining both girls and boys about the consequences.

In the event of a conflict in between boys and girls over any of the interactions, girls are the ones who are blamed for allowing such a situation to prevail. This is a very general ideology among the people in the village that it is the girls who have to be cautious and conscious about herself as she is will be the one who is victimized at any cost. This can be explained by the help of an incident that happened to a girl in the village who is a state level basket ball player.

Case Study:

Ms.R (pseudonym) started playing basket ball since eleven years of age. She did her schooling in a private school which later turned to a Government school. Her father Mr.S.R. (pseudonym) worked at the same school as a non teaching staff. She was inspired by her father who even studied in the same school and played basket ball in his school days. It was her father's inspiration that always supported her and encouraged her to become a basket ball player. Along with her, her cousins who also studied in the same school participated in many basket ball competitions. She participated in many zonal and district competitions with the support of her father. Ms.R's mother is a home maker who belongs to a neighboring village. She got married when she was 15 years of age and studied till seven standard. She was always afraid of sending her daughter to such hard games as she is afraid of the social principles and believes that girls when reached puberty should not indulge in activities that attract attention among the public. She prefers her daughter to stay back at home after her school time and learn house chores which will be helpful in her future. Her only wish for her girl is to get a good groom for her daughter's marriage.

In 2010, Ms.R was studying tenth standard in the same school, before it changed to a government school. During her tenth standard, she was selected to play at zonal

competitions along with ten other girl students who were from different standards of the same school. Along with the girl players, ten boys from different classes were also selected to play at the competitions. All the players took permissions from their parents and went to Rajahmundry to play basket ball for three days along with their coach, Srinivas Reddy.

During their stay at Rajahmundry, Ms.R's friend Ms.S (pseudonym) exchanged her phone number with male players. Mr.J, a player from the same village asked Ms.R to share her phone number with him. She hesitated to give her number as she does not want to break the trust of her parents by making friendships with boys. Her rejection increased the anxiety about her in him. With the anxiety, he asked Ms.S to tell her friend's name and Ms.W (pseudonym) who by then itself became friends by exchanging their numbers gave him Ms.R's number by having trust in him. Rajesh, after coming back to their village, started making blank calls to her number. Not knowing about the exchange of the numbers, she declined the calls for many days and later blocked the numbers. A few days after blocking the person on the phone she received a phone call from her friend that her Facebook account got hacked. When she opened her Facebook account she understood that her account was hacked and her photographs were morphed with nude pictures with her face on them. By knowing all this, Ms.R's friend Ms.S told her that she gave Rajesh her number without her concern and that she did not think that he would do this to her friend. The frightened and shocked Ms.R approached her father and told him everything that happened since her tour. When Rajesh was asked about the incident, he bluntly said that it was Ms.R who followed him and asked her father to learn how to raise a girl in a proper way. This made the girl more hurt and burst to angry. She then quickly with the support of her father went to lodge an eve teasing complaint on Rajesh. People, on knowing about her decision, started to suggest her not to take such adverse decision as it could ruin the boy's life completely. She was suggested by her teachers, fellow students and players, including her P.E.T. (Physical Education Teacher). Nothing has stopped her from going to the police station. When she approached the police station, a police constable who belongs to the same village, asked not to file a complaint. He suggested that in what ever case, it is always a girl who gets victimized in spite of the situation in the eyes of society. So, it is always better for a girl to be patient and submissive rather than taking violent decisions. Even her father, listening to all these suggestions asked

her daughter not to file a complaint against Rajesh. With her father, she returned back to home, where her mother was completely under this traumatic situation became more afraid of the society, especially her family members, relatives and neighbors. From that day, many friends and well wishers in their circle started suggesting them, especially, her father that a girl should not be given so much of freedom and liberty. Instead, she should be kept controlled and stop sending for competitions to outside villages to avoid such situations. These kind of suggestions resounded at least for a month from their relatives.

Loud, outspoken and complaining nature of a girl are considered derogatory to the image of a girl and any girl behaving as such is branded as crap in her behavior and no marital alliances are sought with a girl of such reputation. Hence girls again are refrained from voicing their problems. Further elders in the village advise that the best way to keep away from all these problematic situations is by remaining indoors within the frame work of what the society laid out as rules for a woman. It is observed that people believe in a notion that women (both married and unmarried) get easily attracted to men and are more lustful than men. To avoid adultery and illegal relationships, it is women who has to be in control and restricted from providing freedom and space. In one of my investigations along with a lady key informant, I happened to visit the principal of a school. In my later interactions with the key informant, I was advised by her to keep away from the principal as he may attract and tempt me to his advantage with his prolific talk. When I further analyzed the piece of advise I received and investigated through the motive behind such advise, I understood that it is a popular idea in the village that females upon interactions with able men could get tempted to cater to the advantage of the able men sexually or otherwise. The 'could get seduced and tempted' vulnerability itself speaks of a secretive and curious mode of interactions that exist between men and women in the society. This may be a result of extreme restrictions applied on women in the village and the lack of any relaxation from such restrictions. Since, interaction with any male is severely restricted, any interaction that has become even incidentally possible is viewed as an interaction of marital or sexual interests instantly. What is considered in the village is the vulnerability of women to the attraction of an able man. But, so little is discussed or evidenced in terms of the curiosity and promiscuity that such extreme restrictions could create in the context of women too. This became a cyclical way of impact on

the society and women. Women have highly restrictive patterns of life in the village. If such extreme restrictions yield to a desire to break out of the web of restrictions in some way, it is immediately blamed and labeled as 'characterless behavior'. If women choose to remain in good reputation, they are to remain pious and constrained with respect to their interactions. So, to quench their natural biological thirsts, if the women choose to opt secretive ways, it again escalates the possibilities of being further caught and blamed severely by the society. All the blaming appears to have a single goal to keep the women's liberty in absolute control, the seeds of which are sown at the time of birth and the fruits of it are extracted till death.

The restriction is not just limited to talking to strangers or able men but also extended to entertainment and fun. Certain village activities and celebrations are women excluded. One among such is rooster fights during festival days. Not just adult grown up women who are restricted, but also female children are restricted from participating in the rooster fights. The effects of caste and class again are interwoven here. Higher caste people are generally of a better economic condition which enables them to participate in rooster fights with amounts of bigger value. In places like Bheemvaram and I-Bheemvaram, women belonging to Rajulu caste are allowed to enjoy the rooster fights unlike other castes women from other villages. Among Rajulu, the game rooster fights is related with their community status and royalty. Women from cities and towns, far way from these villages visit the rooster fight arenas. They are provided a separate place on a dais for the convenience of the ladies to watch the game. Since they come from different places and not native of these villages, the rules of these villages may not be applicable to them as they don't know who they are. But this is not the same situation with the women of the native villages. They are bounded with the rules and restrictions of the villages they live in.

Women are restricted from visiting the arenas of rooster fights. The reasons for such restrictions are many fold. It is considered as a violent activity involving fight and blood which may be hurting to the sensitive nature of women. The arenas are visited by various men, some of who come drunk and display such behavior which is not appealing to woman. But, all such reasons also have a dimension of irony when questioned. Women in the village engage in killing, slicing and cooking chicken as part of their weekly routines. Many women physically take the chicken into their

hands and break their necks to kill them to prepare food. Hence, the aspect of violence involved in a rooster fight may not be that hurting to women of the village as hyped. Further, arenas are visited by the men of the village itself mostly who are known to them in one way or the other. In such cases, especially in the protection of their husbands and fathers, the scope of any discomfort being caused to women is dismal. However, women attending the rooster fights is severely restricted.

In the event of a lady from the local villages visiting any of the arenas, the locals start to label her as characterless and gossip about her which would result in the build-up of a negative reputation to her. Fearing such consequences women themselves stay away from visiting the arenas. The ideology to keep away from the arenas is so deep rooted that the women when asked bluntly said that it is a men's game and that they have no interest in visiting these arenas for rooster fights. However women support men in raring the roosters for the fight and encourage them to participate. Women consider that the three days of Sankranti festival when the rooster fights are conducted are the only days of relaxation to the men as they engage in strenuous work all through the rest of the year. Some women made a logical explanation for the reason of not going to rooster fights that it is not wise if both wife and husband from the same family spend money in gambling. So, it is better and wise for one person to spend towards gambling from one family instead of two or three which could further effects their financial condition.

During my enquiries, I asked a lady key informant to take me to an arena. She guided me till the street where the arena is located and refrained to enter the street. She said that she is afraid of being titled and reasoned it by saying that it is not a problem to me to visit the arena as I was not a local person, but she being a native of the village is vulnerable to all the bad reputation. This became further visible at I-Bheemavaram, a village which is reputed for high amount of betting in rooster fights. I witnessed several women there at the arenas who came from various cities and towns during the festival days. These women are not viewed in the frame of restriction as they are non-locals. The urban folk are considered as people who are not part of their social restrictions and value systems. This explains how social constraints are bound within the societal frameworks of that particular village. All the discussions above could be analyzed to understand that all rules of play align with the social norms and the implications of caste, class and gender based differences and preferences which are

considered as some of the basic social institutions. Such deeds are supported by reasoning which may be relevant or irrelevant. Reasoning may have also emerged as a means of justification of their thoughts over caste and class oriented factors in a world that is constitutionally mandated to follow equality in all respects.

Power and Games:

The situations prevailing in the village signify various attributes that systematically contribute to the structure of the society enabling an elusive but rigid pattern of power. Each of the factors could be analyzed from various standard models of power which were proposed by the popular theorists to further understand the ultimate goals of each of the components of such structures and their functional attributes. In simple terms power is the ability to influence or outright control the behavior of people. But, the simplicity of such a definition doesn't make power a simple concept. It operates in several layers, almost always inevitably working for the one who is executing such power, his ideals or belief systems. Power cannot be operated with out the active or passive acceptance or inaction of the one on who the power is being implemented. French and Raven, (1959) two prominent social psychologists theorized in a similar tone concluding 5 basic types of power. Each of the types of power discussed by them are applicable to the prevailing situations in the village with the central goal being the preservation of status-quo in terms of the social structure, the hegemonies, authorities and influences hence forth. Several activities are done to retain power and it is not a structure built on a single aspect. Even activities that appear to have humanistic objectives may have at their nexus the aims of power expansion or retention. Crises are created in various aspects to express the need of the cooperation of people with power. The cultural, economical and political factors characterize the situation in various dimensions each interwoven with the other supplementing each other to contribute to the canvas of the social structure in totality. The 5 types of power namely, positional power, referent power, expert power, reward power and coercive power are visible in various dimensions that colludes as the rigid structure it is today. All the powers mentioned are vested with the wealthy people of the higher castes in the village. On the tip of the pyramid, it is always a wealthy male of a higher caste who has his influence in all the realms constituting an undeniable form of political power.

By 'Positional Power', we consider the power constituted by virtue of the position of a person. The person holding a Political or Governmental position generally has the power to sanction or restrict various implementations by virtue of his/her holding of the position. In the Government systems, such positions could be taken up by the well educated personnel only. The well educated people in the society are mostly of the higher caste or higher class and hence the positional power naturally vests with the people of the higher caste and class only. The influence of such positional power is experienced in almost all Government related offices as they hold the power to implement various operations which are part of running the country's administration. By the effective functioning of reservations, the Government offices have recruits from people of lower caste and class as well. But, when the entire functionality of a Government office and the power thus constituted in its employees is considered, there are other types of power as well that operate and take control which ultimately results in the retention of status-quo. Here 'Expert Power' as explained by French and Raven, (1959) is the power attained by virtue a persons skill or ability to do something. Despite reservations, the ability to maneuver various operations is partly because of the intellectual excellence and training of the person. Since, the people of the higher class and caste could afford better education, it is a natural progression that the power retention happens by way of expert power. This scenario is observable in non governmental setups as well. Various private businesses recruit on the basis of talent, qualifications, expertise and experience. All such positions again are filled mostly by the people of the higher classes and castes only. Even in the realm of games, this condition prevails when the coach gets to decide who is to be sent to a district or state level tournament. Coaches all across generally belong to the higher caste communities as it is the people of the higher caste and class who get to spend their time in extra curricular activities and have little to bother about daily expenses and livelihood. Here, by virtue of expert power and positional power the situation is influenced in the direction of coach's decision. In the village, when the list of players who got selected for various national and international tournaments is observed, an abnormally high percentage of candidates belong to a single dominant caste in the village. This speaks about how influentially the power is executed for the results as wanted by the coach. However, this underlying reason is always dominated by logics such as the children from dominating caste are strong and fit to participate in

sports and games, the number of children from the same caste are more in number etc. All the decisions thus taken are backed with the reasons such as the physical fitness or the play expertise of the players. Such influential powers make the seekers of various sanctions to be loyal and unquestioning which may result in merciful grants of the holders of the power.

The other type of power discussed by French and Raven, 1959 is referent power. It is the charisma, interpersonal skills and the ability to negotiate and communicate effectively in various situations which builds up the image of the power holder. This power functions in a cyclical way. People who operate a certain level of power by virtue of their position or expertise generally attain this power. Every time a sanction happens through their initiation, they have an enhancement of value and charisma, sometimes in the tone of a gratitude and sometimes as an admiration. Specific personality traits of a person could also become the reason for the birth of such charisma. But the important point to consider is the fact that even in such conditions it is the admiration of such qualities in that person and the desire of the person being influenced to be identified by such qualities at least in the company or recognition of the power holder which solidifies as a power again to the holder. The power that is installed by virtue of position or expertise becomes the engine to cyclically operate and build referent power. Such power to influence is dependent on the other powers or capacities which are again in the hands of higher caste or higher class people in the village. Hence, the status-quo remains without any change in the social structure. Further, when power is in the tone of admiration, it is the willful acceptance of the followers to positively reflect the power holders power and further carry it as an agent to other members of the society too which only influences the situation again in favor of the power holder.

Politicians in the village often reflect these traits. Though, they have a duality in terms of their reputation as a performing or non performing leaders, it is again by virtue of the necessity and the subsequent gratitude effects that boomerangs the negative reputation into charisma and continues the status-quo. This is particularly observable in the village at the time of elections. People vote for the same leader even after years of ill-reputation as the people have a tendency to identify the leader as a charismatic person and continue to contribute to his charisma by their following unless

the person completely turns against because of any activities of damage or retaliation. It is more about whether the leader being followed is powerful or not than whether the leader is good at heart or not. French and Raven, (1959) have also discussed about reward power. This is less operative in the village in the current conditions as the situations where a person is in a condition to reward someone are only observable in a positional power condition where a Government officer sanctions a grant or provides relaxation from the restrictions applied by the rule of law formally or informally. Whether this could be socketed in the term reward or not, it is an apt fit if it is one of the most desired aspects in the village. Here, the topic considerable as a reward is the sanction of permissions to play rooster fights in the village. The entire procedure has a dramatic way of creating crises and the sanction by the interference of powerful people. By the law of the country, rooster fights are banned in the interest of safeguarding the rights of the animals. In the recent past, a relaxation of such rules is sanctioned with reference to the cultural interests of the region for the three days of the festival only. However, all the relaxation is again strictly under the control of the local police as stringent rules and procedures are laid out to attain permission to organize rooster fights even during those festival days. Many villagers who are unaware and fearful of police and all such procedures deem the politicians and the people of the reputation and status as the sources to liaison the issue and get the letters of permission. It is a dramatic crises created and operated by the people who are part of the law making procedures. It may be as such to be recognized as the solution for the problem. These activities enhance the charisma of the people contributing to the referent power. The continued relations with police and the various departments of the Government involved naturally retains the power in the hands of such higher caste people with political interests. Often a lot of offerings in the form of bribes to the police officers are catered by these people again. It is hence, an opportunity to reinforce the position and reputation through the reward of rooster fights permissions. The entire episode is given a color that it is highly illegal and it is the intervention of the higher caste people in the interest of the addictions of villagers and powerless people of the lower castes that secretively allows the fights to be played. The reality is the Government mandates the taking of permission but doesn't restrict the play during those three days of the festival.

What could be expansively discussed in the question of the village is the coercive power. Coercive power is the display of negative traits. It is the power to withhold the sanction of the desirable items or rewards. Coercive power also constitutes all such behavior where the obedience and acceptance of power is the resultant of the fear of loss of the existing sanctions or any event of a possible damage. Though this a very less effective form of power, it is visible in the village among the dominant higher caste people. Threatening, punishing through physical, verbal or social abuse are all part of such coercive power. The people of the surrounding villages also recognize this coercive power and criticize such behavior as brutal and uncivilized. This hegemony kills the desire to fight among the lower castes and classes in the quest for safety. It is an inevitable silence that prevails in several conditions. For instance, in the previous discussions, a condition of a single caste dominating the entire history of basket ball players being nominated from the district to the tournament has been mentioned. One of the important factors to be considered for discussion is how the rest of the communities allowed such a dominance to prevail without opposing for so many generations. The answer may lie in the coercive power which these higher castes operate in the village. Coercive power is often risky and constitutes an intense resentment creating possibilities for the outbreak of the suppressed in some way or the other. But, when coercive power fails, the people of the higher castes utilize their other powers which are by virtue of their position, expertise or reward sanctioning authority to prevent the disruption of the social structure.

Rooster fights vs Pig fights:

Rooster fights are the main form of entertainment and amusement that people of these villages opt for. There are other amusements with animals along with rooster fights like bull races, ram fights, etc. But of all these amusements, it is only rooster fights that most of the people opted for is because of the expenditure that is related with these games. To raise a rooster for a fight is more economical when compared to bull fights and also that roosters can be maintained by individuals where as bulls, rams require other people to look after them and train them. Along with rooster fights there are also pig fights that are observed in these villages by a group of people. But there is a huge difference in both the games as per the people who enjoy the amusement. Rooster fights are symbolic of the toughness of males, their pride and are opportunities to display ones economical and political power. Though, it superficially

appears that the villagers consider it as a mere form of entertainment during the festival days, rooster fights have serious cultural connections in the region which the villagers want to preserve strongly. The way the people and their political representatives fought with the law for the legalization of the rooster fights for the three days festival period itself is indicative of how serious of an activity it really is to the villagers. Rooster fights have various aspects of sanctity connected through the implementation of kukkuta shastra (The Science of Roosters) which is utilized to predict the winning prospects of various roosters and also to Kukkuteswara swamy temple (a temple of lord Shiva in the avatar of kukkuteswara or rooster at Pithapuram town which is 96 kilometers distance from Maruteru). The women in the families though are culturally restrained from attending these rooster fights, they support their men in all endeavors to participate and win in the rooster fights. It may have to be viewed as the sharing of their men's ego as the roosters carry their ego, prestige and pride into the arena. The connection with the festival and its iteration every year ritualized the rooster fights and embedded them as part of the culture of the village.

On the other hand, pig fights are one of such amusements that people enjoy, in relation with animals. This game is conducted by the people of the tribe Yerukula, who are spread across many villages in West Godavari district. There are three families that are residing in this village and not more than ten families living in Satyavaram, Neggipudi, Velagaleru villages. All the people of Yerukula from different villages are related to each other. A little basic information about Yerukula tribe would give better understanding about their social and cultural aspects. Yerukula tribes are classified as Schedule tribe in Andhra Pradesh. The name of the tribe Yerukula was derived from the word 'Eruka or Eruku' which means knowledge or acquaintance (K. S. Singh, 1993; Jakka Parthasarathy, 1988). They were once nomadic tribes but later on became settled population. Yerukula is one of the largest tribes in Andhra Pradesh and most of their population is settled in rural areas. Yerukulas are known for different occupations like trading, basket weaving, ropes making, mats making, salt selling etc and the women are known for fortune telling, that is, '*sodi*' in telugu. Basing on their traditional occupations, the Yerukulas are divided into three large patriarchal endogamous groups. They are, Bidari Yerukula (collectors of forest produce or traders who trade tamarind, curry leaves, salt selling etc), Dabba Yerukula (basket making from split bamboos) and Kunche Yerukula (fortune-telling and pig

rearing). Apart from their traditional occupations, the Yerukulas are known as congenial thieves and now as ex-criminal tribes. Their language is called 'Erukula Basha' or 'Yerakali Basha' which is different from telugu language and seems to be a mixture of different languages and belonged to Dravidian family of languages. They also speak local language telugu in a different dialect (Jakka Parthasarathy, 1988). In Marteru, the Yerukulas reside along with Mala and adjacent to Setti Balijas. The Yerukula women also perform midwifery to the village people. She also gives bath to the new born babies for the first one month as it is difficult to give bath to the newborns without any experience. These women clean the newborns by giving lukewarm water bath, by blowing noses of the babies with their mouths to clean the blocks, clean the mouths of the newborns with their finger and smoothly cleans the baby's mouth. The Yerukuals living in the village shifted their traditional occupations to contemporary ones like working at food catering. Education, Government policies, are helping them to earn higher status in the society in spite of their traditional occupations. However, a complete shift from their traditional occupations is not observed.

The Yerukulas, as a part of their traditional occupation rear pigs for pork along with animals like raising domestic birds like chicken, ducks etc. The game is played during the summer and is organized by the people of the Yerukula tribe who have pig rearing as their traditional occupation. The game is conducted during mid summer when all the lakes dry up to provide an empty arena for the pig fights. Though the community people remained silent when asked about the police intervention in restricting or allowing the fights, it is understandable that the focus towards pig fights is not diffused and is also considered seriously as rooster fights. Pig fights are considered as a sport played by the people of lower communities only. Here, the aspects of power and the politics of representation of power are absent. By the laws of the country, no animal should be subjected to pain or unfair treatment for entertainment sake or otherwise. Hence, pig fights are also illegal and are not even granted a seasonal permission like in the. Like rooster fights, pig fights are not a symbol of power and are not connected to any legends or consecrated activities. The absence of power and status is also reflected in the amounts of betting the gamblers play. The amounts that are bet in pig fights are also very less when compared to that of the rooster fights as the people who participate mostly belong to lower classes and castes. According to Yellayya, the highest amount that was played in betting was fifty

thousand rupees where as in the case of rooster fights, the amount increases to crores. Thus, there is a huge difference in the betting amounts too which reflects the economic capacities of the players.

The Yerukulas are given a place for rearing pigs by the Panchayat because it is not allowed to raise pigs in the village as the pigs are carriers of many contagious diseases. Bamma, a widow started rearing the pigs after the death of her husband. Her husband died five years ago who used to rear pigs. Her brother who resides in the neighboring village also rear pigs for living along with working for an unskilled job. She explained that the country pigs are bought by them with the help of government subsidies and they raise them very carefully. Every day she goes on a round on her two wheeler and collect left over food from the villagers. This food is brought to the pigs and mixed with other remaining vegetables and fruits leftovers. The female and baby pigs are allowed to eat first and later the adult male pigs are released to eat the food. It is clearly visible that the adult male pigs have the nature of fighting with other pigs like the roosters. This basic instinct among the animals is the cause for conducting animal fights for amusements. The male pig which reaches the age of six months to one year is considered as a strong grown adult swine. This is the right age for the pig to fight as they be so much aggressive in nature. The pig rearers, to make the pigs become more aggressive, conduct castration to the pigs so that they will not participate in crossing with female swines. They believe that doing castration could increase the power to fight and become more aggressive. However, this was not done in earlier days. It is that to attract more people and to make the swines more aggressive the people adapted these techniques. Once the pigs are ready, the Yerukulas convey the message that the pigs are ready to other Yerukulas when they meet at some occasions. Up on the discussion they made earlier, they fix a date and get the pigs ready for that day to fight. On the day of the fight, the two teams meet at the place they fix and leave the pigs at a particular place to fight. The aggressive pigs start pushing and biting each other with their sharp canines. After a lengthy fight, one of the pigs move away from the fighting zone and the one which remains in the field is declared the winner. Unlike the roosters in the rooster fights, the pigs are kept with the owners itself and the loser team pay the bet amount to the winner. Some times, the pig rearers rear wild bores in order to win the fights also which is not accepted and treated as cheating. Such cases are taken to their kula panchayats to resolve as per their political organization. According to Rangayya, one elderly Yerukula, 'pig fights

were not organized the way they are doing now during those times. There was no concept of betting till a decade ago. But now the concept of betting is also getting increased which only gives adverse effects. Only a few families among us are having a better economic condition and if betting increases it only makes our lives worse. The younger generation are so much attracted to these things and are not being aware of the consequences'. When Durga Rao, a 37 years Yerukula was asked about the economic ability of betting, he said 'Our people are also rich. We also have money and there are also people among us who can bet up to rupees 50 thousands'. These statements clearly explains the condition of comparison with the villagers who participate in rooster fights which reflects their status and power of spending. The influence of the dominant culture is slowly spreading towards the weak and depressed communities, especially among the younger generations who want to claim the status to their community and its celebrations. But this conscious attempt to claim higher status among the deprived ones is neither considered nor observed by the existing villagers of the higher status. In spite of their education, profession, job etc the Yerukulas are always treated the same way since generations. Lack of betterment in social, cultural, financial and demographic conditions makes the Yerukulas suffer with the same treatment by the society till today. The people of the higher castes neither participate nor visit these pig fights which makes the entire situation ignored. The ignorance itself could be construed as a representation of power and higher status. The aspects of positional, coercive, expert, reward powers are not applicable in this context because the ones with who the power is vested don't participate. This explains that power could also be projected by ignoring the ones who are not part of the power pool. All the laws are applied to only those topics which are in high demand and which give an opportunity for the raise of political power. By the implementation of law restriction are created, these restrictions create a condition of crisis which could be effectively utilized for the gain of power. Such crisis situation doesn't arise in the condition of pig fights as the demand is less and the sport is not preferred to be visited by the rest of the people of the village other than a few castes which align in status or class with Yerukula. It is a poor man's gamble sport which is organized in the hot summer. The aggression of the pigs when compared to the roosters is fierce and violent. This is another factor that contributes to the disinterest in the sport. A rooster being killed can be comfortably digested because most of the population attending the fights are consumers of chicken and killing a rooster is symbolic of food and

celebration. Not many prefer to eat pork in the village and pigs are often considered as highly unhygienic. These notions may have their reflections in the over all disinterest that is observed in the question of pig fights. Further, the amounts that are bet in the pig fights are extremely small and the fellow men who bet are of low caste and class. The mere thought of engaging in a play or gamble with a person of low caste or class itself is derogatory to the people of the higher communities in who the power is vested. The quest for power and status is not only among the deprived and depressed, but also among the higher status people who are not twice born. In fact, it is a continuous process of trying to achieve higher status and power all the time irrespective of the situation and the position they have.

Games and society in contemporary situation:

Influence of Technology:

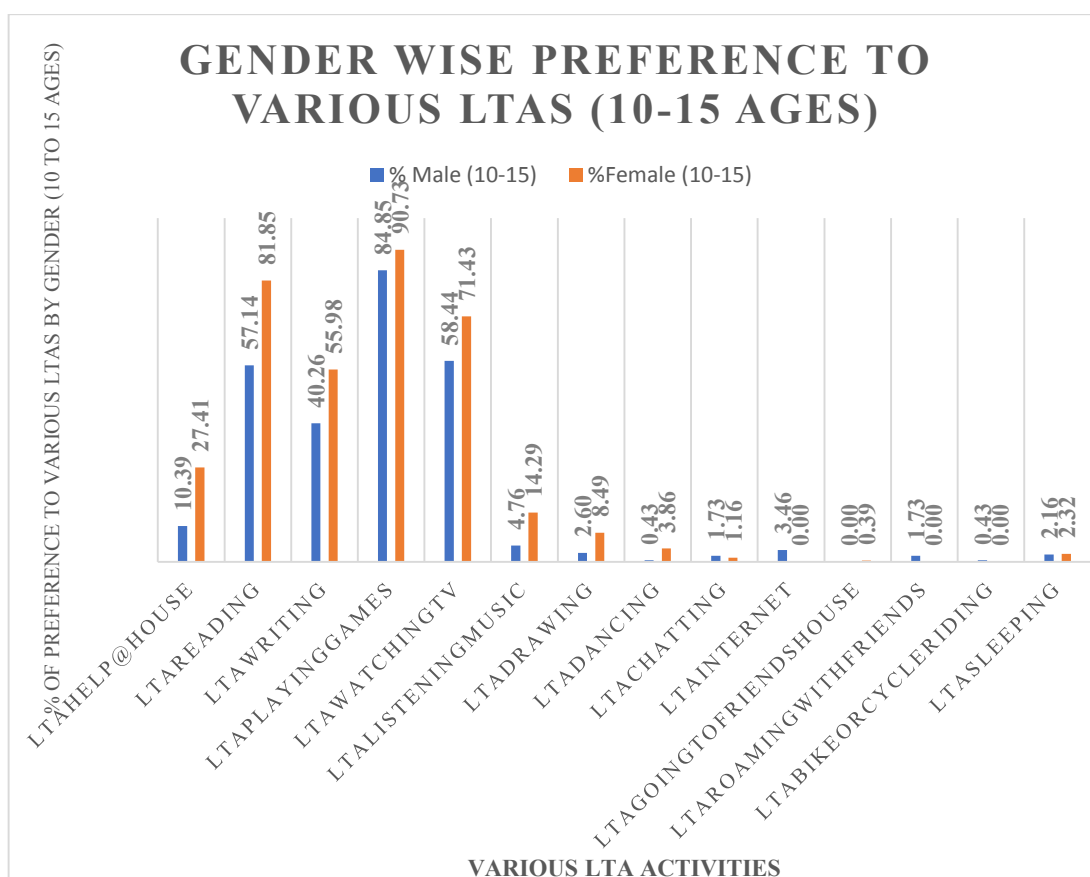
The world is struck by a rapid mutation in terms of lifestyles by virtue of globalization, urbanization, westernization and digitization. Each of these aspects impact the rural world in a much different way than what normally is the condition in an urban setup. The time gap for technological adaptations shrunk rapidly in the recent times as the technology providers have spread to rural areas as well. The induction of Chinese companies into the markets made electronic gadgets that are used for communication and entertainment available at cheaper prices. This bridged the gap between the haves and have nots in terms of adaptation of technology to a certain extent. What is available in the urban world is almost immediately available in the rural world as well today. Television and media made these advancements possible at a greater pace. In the olden days, the evenings used to be spent by the children playing some sort of an informal game in the neighborhood. Today, once the clock ticks six hours in the evening almost all streets go empty with the parents and children watching televisions. The villagers claim various reasons to back this condition saying that playing outside after 6 exposes the children to mosquitoes, snakes, scorpions or various vulnerabilities in terms of security, health etc. But, it is the bombardment of technology that totally deviated the people from their original rural lifestyles. It didn't take several decades for such changes to emerge, as it was previously said, the adaptations were fast paced. In the olden days, the couples used to spend their

evenings playing some board games like *vamana guntalu*, *asta chamma* etc. But, now this condition is not seen even scarcely in the village. Children at homes eagerly wait for their fathers to return homes not for the sake of talking to or playing with father but to quickly grab the smart phone from his pocket and spend the rest of the night till sleep playing mobile games.

This condition is more prevalent among the families of higher classes. Mobile phone games and entertainment are a way of keeping the child engaged. Parents find it easier and comforting to give away their smart phones to their kids and stay away from continuously having to entertain them or pacify them from their tantrums and cry. So the impact of mobile phones has begun to show up from a very early age. Internet is not something that is available only to few anymore. Even in the rural setups, by Government initiations and the penetration of the several private companies 3g, 4g data technologies are available even to rural people. This brought in the rural folk to be quickly exposed to various issues of the world and have an opinion over everything in one way or the other. The impact of media is more on the younger generation as their socialization is yet in its early stages leaving them with a vulnerability of impact whether it is positive or otherwise. The impact of media especially, drives the tone of perceptions that prevail. What is to be considered as important and what is to be worked for, what is to be valued and what is to be discarded are all constantly being influenced by media. In a way, what appears in the media is considered as important and the influence of publicity has brought several changes that are in a way almost irreversible. This impact is more visible in the aspect of games.

The following chart shows how the children are engaged in various leisure time activities (LTAs). The various analyses that are discussed here are reflected in the percentile trends that are displayed in the graph. It could be observed that, general chatting with friends, roaming with friends are not preferred leisure time activities anymore. It is so because, children have their environment around being impacted by various attributes. Roaming on the streets, going around with friends all are treated as worthless wander and most of the families began to restrict their children from doing so. The incidence of television and mobile games further narrowed their interest in any activity outside their homes. This trend is observable among both boys and girls.

Gender wise Preference to various Leisure Time Activities (LTAs) (Table No.11)



LTAHelp@House- Leisure Time Activities Helping at House, LTAReading- Leisure Time Activities Reading, LTAWriting- Leisure Time Activities Writing, LTAPlayingGames- Leisure Time Activities Playing Games, LTAWatching TV- Leisure Time Activities Watching Television, LTAListeningMusic- Leisure Time Activities Listening to Music, LTADrawing- Leisure Time Activities Drawing, LTADancing- Leisure Time Activities Dancing, LTACHatting- Leisure Time Activities Chatting, LTAInternet- Leisure Time Activities Browsing Internet, LTAGoingtoFriendsHouse- Leisure Time Activities Going to Friends House, LTARoamingwithFriends- Leisure Time Activities Roaming with Friends, LTABike or Cycle Riding- Leisure Time Activities Bike or Cycle Riding, LTASleeping- Leisure Time Activities Sleeping.

Games are subjected to a classification as formal and informal basing on their consideration in schools and the subsequent trajectories of growth promised by the opportunities of national and international tournaments. The games which are played at school with elements of training and periodic competitions could be categorised as formal games. These games are generally popular at national and international levels and hence are seen as career options. (Eg: Kabaddi, Kho Kho, Basket Ball). Informal games are the ones which are of traditional origins with no serious competitions and career prospects. At schools the informal games are also conducted, but are prevalent among children of primary schools (upto 6th standard) only (Eg: Lemon and Spoon, Chakali Baana, Kuntaata, Sack Race). These national and international tournaments again have gained popularity by virtue of media. This also brought about a notion that

a game that is not covered by media is unimportant. Several indigenous informal games have started to lose importance as the playing of informal games is now treated as a waste of time. It is ironical to think that the games which are played during leisure time are being looked upon as a waste of time. But, such a notion emerged with the urban views that are popularly spread in media to make effective use of time. Effective use of time is when every minute is spent in some way towards career growth, earning money or expanding the possibilities of employment. The villagers consider the participation of their offspring in formal games and spending time towards training and practice of games as time being effectively utilized as they see an opportunity to be employed under sports quota in some Government position even if they fail to perform adequately at national or international tournaments. Hence, the definition leisure time itself changed. It is now a run along with the rest of the world for status, financial stability and security. Hence, children in the village today don't even know many of the games that were part of the village's play culture in the previous generations. While the diversity of games is obviously effected by the current condition, it is actually an unstoppable process of extinction of games and endanger to the cultural aspects. With the loss in interest in some of the games like *vaikuntapaali* which convey philosophical ideas to the children, the functional advantage that is created by such a game is no longer available to the current and future generations. Moreover, with the emergence of smart phones, it is more about moving fingers around a 3 or 5 inch touch screen which obviously limits their perception to the four edges of the screens.

In the olden days, the children used to sleep listening to bed time stories from their fathers and mothers. This act builds a special bond in between the parents and the children and also paves way for the improvement of verbal communication. Today, it is mostly about children going to sleep watching a video on the mobile phone screen. There are parents among higher classes who consider such behavior of their children as a symbol of class. Sophisticated mobile phones are not available to the people of the lower classes, especially those ones who fall below the poverty line. The situation among the children of the lower classes is often like the children want to have such smart phones or play devices and this scenario creates a craving for the gadgets and the automatic "look up to " condition towards the children of the higher classes. This introduced a class based difference which was not once so pronounced at least in the aspect of games and play. Further, the lack of play stations and gaming devices with

the children belonging to the lower caste families only makes the children of the lower classes to play in the streets. So, playing in the streets itself over time has become an activity of the lower classes. This case is only different with the game of cricket. Its popularity and formal ways of conducting matches in schools and colleges made cricket one of the most desired games which is played in the streets and neighborhoods as well. But, this game is mostly played by boys only. Further, though this is a game played by the children of both higher and lower caste families, there is significant difference in terms of the equipment they use in the play. The wickets, balls, gloves, bats are all available with the children of the higher class families. Children of the lower class families use big rocks or sticks as wickets and sometimes use a writing pad as cricket bat because of the lack of equipment. Further, certain games like cricket have picked tremendous reputation by their broadcast in media. This brought stardum to the players of the game through the publicity of media. The stardum is one of the desired reasons for the attraction among the children to play games such as cricket. The impact is more visible especially with respect to the game of kabaddi. Till the Government took steps to relaunch game in India with the branding of ProKabaddi tournaments among states, kabaddi was less considered as a game to play in informal conditions though it has been played at schools and as part of state level and national level tournaments. Now that, kabaddi game also picked importance and craze among the youngsters that it has become a game towards which the parents are showing interest to get their children trained. When it comes to girls, the encouragement from the side of the parents is less. It is because of the social structure and the gender based restrictions on females. As mentioned previously, the role of girls is more or less fixed indoors and connected majorly to worship of God and looking after of the family. But, even amongst such conditions, there are a few families who are venturing to send their girls towards games. Basket ball is a game that needs mention especially, in the context of the village Marteru. In 1960s, a person by name Raghava Reddy, who was a Physical Education Teacher, worked to introduce a game in Marteru by consulting with the sports authorities in Hyderabad. Since, the villagers, especially among Reddy people, several of them are tall, he thought that basket ball would be the ideal game to be introduced in the village. He then laid foundation for the setting up of a basket ball court and all the infrastructural facilities necessary in the village in the Marteru S.V. G. School which was once under private administration but is now nationalized. Ever since then, basket ball has been an

important game that is played in the village of Marteru. Several players from Marteru contested in national & international level tournaments. This is worth a mention in the aspect of girls because, there are girl players as well who got trained in basket ball and contested in various tournaments. Badminton is played in an informal way too at their homes by both girls and boys. However, badminton picked importance in the recent times with the development of the popularity of the game and the recent achievements of Indian players at International level.

A lot of such buzzing activity is always going on because of the schools, sports authorities and the tournaments to kindle the spirit of playing the formal games. But, over time the informal games have lost their importance to such an extent that many games are totally forgotten from the cultural aspects of the village. I witnessed events when even the middle aged struggled to recollect many of the games that once used to exist in the village. Only some games which have ritual connections prevail. This again is at a very dismal scale because except for the main festivals like Sankranti, Dusshera and Deepavali the natives of the village who migrate to various towns and cities couldn't find leisure to come to the home village.

Conclusion:

Various concepts are so undividable from the social implementations that games and play have only become the avenues for such implementations and not the influencers of change in any way. The concepts that are upheld in the societies in the form of cultural norms or institutions are well reflected in various aspects of games. Synthesis of the social aspects with reference to games and play necessitated the investigations towards the aspects of playmates and the selection of playmates. The caste and class based influences are very much observable and cannot be dismissed as non existent in any case. However, it is true that the intensity of such divisions becomes more pronounced with age and the growing consciousness regarding these aspects and society. Gender based restrictions, preferences and roles are all reflected in various dimensions of games and play. The division of games in between various genders and the central idea behind each of the games played is profoundly reflective of what the society has as its social structure. An analysis of the selection of playmates between school and home reveals that, with growing age and the expansion of the scope of friendships outside of these confined spaces of school and home, there is a

steep shift of preference to playmates who are non-relatives among the natives. Across various ages, it has been understood that preference is given to the playmates of the same gender. This is reflective of the restricted and ascribed role of females in the society. The preferences are mostly choices among the available options and who are available as options is almost automatically influenced by the other social systems which have the influences of caste, class and gender. Power is an important aspect as it has political and economical aspects tied to it in various ways. Rooster fights are well used by the politicians as tools to influence the villagers. Politicians are the key holders for the sanction of unofficial permissions to organize the rooster fights. Further, a gender based restriction with respect to rooster fights is indicative of how rooster fights become the avenues for the display of power. A wealthy man is at the highest level in terms of power and a wealthy man as per the norms of the society has his woman at home always involved in household and religious activities. It could be construed that women are totally dismissed from the landscape of public display of power by their dismissal from these rooster fights and further their power is only represented by their men's power and status. The difference in between various aspects of pig fights and rooster fights draw a picture of power configuration which has the class, caste and gender based influences. Summing up all the aspects that are observable with respect to various aspects of the society in the frame of games, the focus has been directed towards the contemporary situation as well and the implications have been analyzed. The globalization and digitization made the world run faster and in a more expansive way. This raised the bar of standards to be met to win in a global world simultaneously. The economic conditions still hinder the accessibility of technology and hence signals a clear advantage to the higher classes. The connection in between higher class and higher caste is still strong and unfading. Technology is now functional as a window through which the world could be accessed. This provided ways in which class could be preserved by avoiding the interactions with the deprived classes and castes. Leisure through technology is organized according to the structure of the society by avoiding confrontations with the deprived. Social media remains as a tool to showcase status and only the ones of the affluent families remain as symbols of status. The social statuses with respect to the various caste also remain static even with the educational and career wise advancement of the deprived castes. Smart phones are now in everyones hands, the

entertainment and the social media interactions have now become an easier way of preserving group contours.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In line with the summary and objectives of the research, games have been listed, classified and described in detail to understand the historical account of games in the region of study and their cultural impacts on the society. The individual components of each of the games have been carefully noted and detailedly described to contribute to the understanding of games in the study village. Some of the games which were once prevalent in the village are now being retrieved with difficulty by the elder generations from their memories. Many games are not seen anymore in the village resulting in their fading out and eventual extinction. There are cultural aspects that are reflected in every game either by symbolism or by means of the rules pertaining to how the game is to be played, by who it is to be played and with who. Certain games emphasise the importance that was given to the caste aspects and their traditional occupation. It is not the part of discrimination, but it is the part of recognition of a certain occupation by reflecting it in the play. For instance, *Chakala baana* or *Otthothi vaarothi* is a game reflecting the occupation of a laundry washer man in the society who takes the clothes of the villagers to wash them by hand at a rock generally near a lake. Catching fishes from small ponds and water reserves by the children for fun is also a replica of fishing by the fishing community.

These reflections are also present in the game *Uppu mootu* where the activity of a salt seller is symbolically represented. Further, there are board games such as *Vaikuntapaali* which have philosophical and mythological aspects of life embedded in them. Games may be also construed as belonging to various genres of life aspects. While the functional aspect and the efficacy could be considered from the dimensions of their cognitive, cultural, social and physical impacts at large, their very diverse genre itself is indicative of their impact in multiple dimensions. In attempts to define some of the faded games in the village, the opinions of the people belonging to older generations were considered. A drastic shift in the lifestyles with the incidence of electricity, television and the subsequent transformation of the entertainment space is observable. Games like *Omanaguntalu* which were games with a reputation to serve as an entertainment to couples in particular emphasise the efficacy of games in serving to the recreation of adults in the society in the olden days. The incidence of new forms of entertainment like television, radio and now computers and internet has changed the

entire scenario to a different plane resulting in the extinction of several games as their recreational advantage is now rivalled by other forms of entertainment. Some games, especially the ones that are played during day time and in large open spaces have only little impact from the bombardment by other forms of recreation and expansion of cities. However, there are many such outdoor games too which are subjected to extinction. This may be because of the shrinkage of leisure time because of the raise of importance of education in the villages and the formal educational institutions which left a very little leisure for the children to play games. Further, the introduction of sports and physical training in schools marginalised the possibilities of playing other games and resulted in the decline of importance to several games that are traditionally played. The classification itself has been an enlightening task providing more dots to connect to discover a commonalty with respect to their domains of influence in the society. Certain games are played only by girls, while some others are played only by boys. The society has a clear gender based distribution of games and the popular reasons behind such a division are primarily related to the physical activity involved in those games. The society ensures that girls are subjected to the play of only such games which are less risky and have less physical activity which ensures their protection against the possibilities of disruption of their dress and subsequent protection of their respect by keeping away any chances of shame. This is as such because of the prevalent ideologies regarding genders in the society. Hence, games become a mirror of various social aspects and gender division and their roles are one such aspect. In the simulation and role play games, these traits are more visible. Girls imitate their mothers and adapt to the role of an ideal women through simulation games. Boys, as well are restricted through play to undertake only certain roles. Each of the games have their meanings and purposes tied to various social and cultural aspects. They play a multifaceted role where sometimes they mirror the socio-cultural aspects, sometimes they play the role of a training tool and even act as vehicles to perpetuate various traditions and institutions across generations.

The impact of games on caste, class and gender based interactions have been clearly discussed all through this work and the intensity of impact is uniform and keen in all the mentioned aspects. The social rules and the entire episteme is like a system that forms the skeletal structure of the whole society and whatever introductions and extinctions may happen the nexus of the social rules remain the same across all the generations. If the tone of interactions are ever tried to be changed by anyone

displaying a rebellious response pattern, such a person will have long term social impacts on his or her reputation, respect and social sanctions. In a way there is a risk of being outcasted in retaliation to such behaviour. Further, such response pattern cannot be avoided as the whole society is at work towards an already established charter and no single individual or group can be powerful enough to change its course. It is very rare that any single incident or crisis can become the result of some epistemic change that can revolutionize the course of perception and action of the societies.

The selection of playmates aspect in games is to be considered importantly to align with the second objective of the study. Games are no exception when compared to any of the aspects of the society and the caste, class and gender based implications are all clearly visible in various situations related to games. Particularly, the aspect of selection playmates at schools is driven by class. The families belonging to the higher castes have better financial resources to get their kids admitted in schools with higher fee structure. This affordability factor results in the flocking of the same class children at schools. By way of the structure of the village, it is evident that the people belonging to the same caste reside in a common area. This makes the people belonging to the same class almost live in the same vicinity again marginalizing the possibilities of friendships across various classes and castes. Further, parents involve in restricting their children from play with children belonging to lower caste families. The caste preferences become more pronounced as the children grow and age to their teens and ahead. The caste consciousness among children as well grows and solidifies with age. The influences of caste and class systems are visible even in the schools where a certain secular setup is mandated by way of constitution. This is reflected in situations where the preference during selection processes to various sports is considered on the basis of caste or class. As the children grow into teens and adults, these caste and class based aspects become stronger as the individuals resort to their groups in the quest for power or preservation of identity. The deprived castes and classes resort to their groups in the name of a struggle against the domination and suppression experienced by them. The higher castes work for the retention of their power by utilising their resources and strengths. These aspects reflect in selection of playmates in games as well. Games and Play also reflect aspects that are related to status. The bombardment of the indigenous games world by games like Cricket, Basket ball, Football etc; from the western world and the impact of colonial rule left the games that have western

backgrounds as belonging to a higher class. During the colonial rule, only the people belonging to higher ruling castes who had tie ups with the colonial rulers used to play the game. Hence, over time those games developed as games of higher class and status. The introduction of such games in schools and their international reputation further strengthened their status in the society. This resulted in the raise of interest among the families to encourage their children to play such games of international reputation and importance. This further declined the interest in various traditional games and resulted in their extinction. Games of international reputation are further perceived as status symbols by the society as the players of those games too carry the aspects of such reputation and status. Status is attached to playing such games in such a way that training for or playing such games is treated as worthwhile efforts towards career building than any simple leisurely activity. So, it is construed as people who are serious and not wasting time which is again a class consciousness. Affordability plays a key role in playing these games. For instance, training for these games, buying equipment related to these games, participating in district, state or national level competitions need sufficient financial backup. Hence, it has now become a situation where the traditional games are games played by the ones of the lower castes or classes in a way too. In the question of games like *Golilu*, which is generally played by children from lower caste families it is more pronounced. Families of the higher classes proudly announce that their children don't know go to play such games. Many of the traditional games except a few played indoors slowly began to fade in this context. Indoor games like *Ashtachamma*, *Achangayalu*, *Vaikuntapali* could be occasionally seen in houses. The aspects that constitute power are immediately procured by the people of the higher classes using all their resources. This is visible in the aspect of games too. It is observed that children from the families of higher castes more actively encouraged towards games of national reputation. Games which are often viewed as items of fair and peaceful competition have these non-egalitarian aspects which continue the impact of caste and class into games as well. Games, sometimes, instead of being the suppressors of differences can become the avenues for the sprout and development of rivalry and differences further enlarging the already existing differences in the society.

In the contemporary world, the affordability factor still remains strong which creates a difference in terms of the accessibility of technology and resources. The ones who belong to the higher class and castes have access to all the technological

developments and hence could catch up to the pace of the world. That is not the same with respect to the ones belonging to lower classes. Though the induction of Chinese products into the markets made technology cheaper, there is still a wide difference in terms of the accessibility of knowledge resources and usability of the technology. The ease of operating technological gadgets and the essential understanding of computers which have spread to every walk of life today further engraved the differences between the ones who can afford and who can't. Everyday, with the addition of newer technology and development, the societies find new ways to use the resource to complement their already existing social structure. In the village, it is a condition where girls are often encouraged to remain indoors and undertake only household activities in most of the families. The incidence of televisions and now the mobile phone technologies further escalated the possibilities of making the women find alternative forms of recreation to remain indoors. People, especially women and girls remain indoors and watch the tele-serials on television in total enthusiasm. Mobile and video games have penetrated into every household and started to define the leisure time activity of both adults and children. Infants are baited with mobile phones to keep their attention glued while the mother feeds them. Hence, the advancements of technology may have changed the lifestyles of the people but have not impacted the institutional setup that is built across several generations in the village. The incidence of technology for instance didn't move the villagers to look for pseudo rooster fights played on mobile phones. Live video streaming of the rooster fights was also done to broadcast the entertainment to the local people who are living abroad. The fundamental institutions and the structure by which the society runs is not subjected to deviation despite all the technological advancements in the contemporary world. The societies utilize any advancements again to complement the already existing social rules, structure and order.

One other important perspective that contributed to the analyses of many concepts in this work is Ruth Benedict's, (1947) Guilt -Shame Culture. It is identified that both Guilt and Shame Cultures intertwined and working in tandem to preserve the social order in the village. This is more pronounced in the case of gender divisions in the society. In order to limit the expansion of the role of women in the village to only a list of accepted activities, both guilt and shame cultures are strenuously at work. It is observed that the women fear deviating from the acceptable behaviour pattern as they are aware that any deviation could result in them being titled as promiscuous women.

This over time combined with the pious image or being discipline of a woman which has been well established in the village induces an internalized guilt that makes the woman prefer not to deviate. Here, the pious or disciplined feeling slowly induces various principles into the mind-sets of the people by way of worship, ritual practice, repeated advice and consecration. Here, the principles are induced to a level where woman attach themselves to only acceptable behaviour patterns and identify themselves as pious and respectable woman. The perspective of Guilt-Shame cultures could be further utilised to understand the norms that are in operation during various rituals. Especially the rituals that are part of *Atla Taddi* Festival reflect various aspects that are to be displayed by an ideal woman and concretize the desired ideologies related to the role of woman in terms of marriage and family. Hence, woman are both internally and externally driven by the controlling processes that preserve the social order. The internalization of control creates possibilities of the acceptance of power of men in the society as desired further contributing to the social order.

Games and Play when connected with rituals and legends totally transform into tools of exceptional power to steer the societies in the directions that are in compliance to the social institutions. This was discovered several generations ago and hence several games and play forms have legends and consecrated aspects connected to energize the iteration, implication and influence aspects of the games. Various games have various attributes and their cultural significances are diverse. Hence, it may not be the right method to think of extracting the whole of the influences connected to the society from a single game. Several researchers including the ace researcher Clifford Geertz, (1972) who conducted research on the Rooster Fights of Bali attempted to reflect the various aspects of the society in a single game through their extensive analysis. Societies are influenced by infinite number of cultural aspects. Hence, it is a situation to identify the versatile nature of games and look for the multiplicity of influences and their collective impact on the society. However versatile the nature of the influences is, an attempt is made in this work to discover a commonalty in terms of purpose, function and the inter-connections that exist in between various cultural elements. Games and in fact any form of play are no simple forms of entertainment and have serious cultural aspects that impact on power, role, gender and social structure. The training potential of the play and games are well identified by various psychologists reporting their clear impact on development of various psychological aspects. What is less discussed is how enculturation is possible through games. To

impose power, the one who executes power and the one who subordinates to that power are both essential. Here, the discussion is about creating a certain level of wilful subordination by the way of Games, Rituals and Play. In many encounters with women in the village, it is understood that a want to question the limitations that are being imposed on them itself doesn't occur as the women are part of a certain episteme which defined such limitations as normal. Not questioning itself is a way of creating absolute possibilities for subordination and power. But, now the question is about how such an episteme is installed in the minds of the people of the society. They are installed by the use of various everyday activities and in such a context rituals, games, legends and play are of major importance. The process of enculturation happens by the elements of experience, instruction, limitations and sanctions. People are directly or indirectly subjected to various desired social attributes such that they build as layer over layer to reach a definite pattern. What is not identifiable at a superficial level should not be dismissed as non-existent. The influences of the games and play in a society are majorly subliminal. Further, when a cultural aspect is induced through games, it is often a tool of pleasant and joyful nature being used to install such a cultural aspect. What is induced in a joyful way naturally becomes part of a no-conflict state which defines normality in a much easier way. On the other hand, rituals have the power of consecration attached to them. It is only the aspects of an unknown or mystical nature that could be tagged to consecration. Almost all the rituals have astrological and cosmic connections to support evidence and amplify the aspect of consecration. In traditional societies like that of the village considered for study, the aspect of questioning the reasoning behind various aspects doesn't exist as it is again part of their episteme. Hence the impact of consecration has not faded yet in the village. Jeannine Auboyer's, (1955) explanation that the aspects of consecration lose their importance when the societies become

complex may be true but here in the village there is a situation where respecting and following rituals is a status and the social structure provides an episteme where the quest for any deviation is absent. In such a condition the fading of the impact of consecration happens at a very slow pace even if it ever happens. Now, the combination of Games, Rituals and Legends is what is being considered as the ultimate tool set to bring upon the desired social order and ensure its continuance across generations. The suspension of questioning makes the societies ask about "what is to be done", but not about "why it is to be done". Hence the intentions behind the

implementation of rituals are invisible to the native of an episteme. Some games may have only minor cultural aspects, while the others have major cultural and philosophical aspects. Hence, instead of focusing on what ingredient of what game influences what type of impact, it is ideal to consider the important elements in a few popular games and magnify them to understand the influences at the level of a single game and also the collective impact which is attempted in this work. The use of Guilt and Shame cultures to explain the impacts of these entities on the society further strengthens the analyses of how a meticulous yet invisible flux of impact is being implemented to preserve the desired social order. In a way it is important at the level of a state too for the purpose of executing political power. The unification of any set of groups would not be possible without a method to bring people on to a map of subordination. While coercive power executed by police and law and order are important on a superficial layer. Religion, Rituals and Games constitute a bigger impact creating a social order that is auto-policed and results in a subordination for the execution of power.

In the context of several informal traditional games, it is evident that games offer a smoother way to introduce certain concepts. This is specially visible in terms of marriage games. The games that are played during the marriages function to break the barriers of unfamiliarity in between the bride and the groom. In the olden days the marital matches and alliances used to be in a much formal structure that constrained the bride and groom from interacting before marriage. So, the marriage games are a way of introducing the would be couple to each other and offer an opportunity to have some fun which may make it easier to have a good start of the interactions. The introduction of touch and a momentary flirtatious play which are introduced amidst of the relatives around with all the encouragement paves way for a smoother and memorable way of introduction. This is not limited to marriage games alone. I found games as a whole carry this concept invisibly to all the aspects of the society. Games become the smooth launchers of various concepts in the society. From fixation of gender roles to creating distinct lines of hierarchy with respect to various castes and classes in the society all aspects are smoothly manoeuvred and introduced through games. Games and play are fundamental activities of children and hence they become the first activities through which any interactions happen. This power of the games and play is utilized to the fullest extent by the tradition and the society to slowly shape the cultural, ethical and social milieu of the individuals.

Further more, in schools where the scenario is mostly run in a formal setup, it is generally deemed that an egalitarian environment exists. Egalitarian environment, though is promoted inside the schools by way of text books and lessons, the society at large does not seize to show its impacts. The entire segregation into various schools happens directly on the basis of class and caste based compulsions and priorities in such a way that the influence starts right at the time of inception into the system. There is literally or no choice to the individuals. The same is the case with respect to how the genders are defined in the context of responsibilities and roles. Right at the time of induction of children into the society as individuals, several components of the society begin to start their influence with the central idea of shaping the individuals into the desired formats in terms of character and behaviour traits. The gender role fixations may seem to change with the processes of urbanization and globalization. But, the interactions with at least four generations in the village made it clear that within the boundaries of a village, it is only their social setup that prevails. People who move to cities and other countries may have their own way of living at a different place where their society at the destination place will have its influence started over the new entrants, but, within the village, it is always almost the same attributes.

Games and play are understood as the crucial tools contributing to the training part of the children to become complete individuals as desired as per the social rules of the society. While this simulating and training advantage of games is discussed extensively all through this work, games itself have become a spectacle through which the social structure of the society, the functional aspects and the future of the societies could be viewed. In the contemporary world, a lot of changes have taken place in terms of technology. The growth of technology made the world smaller. But this did not widen the scope of egalitarianism in the society. The accessibility to the gadgets and internet expanded the ways in which the divisions could be articulated in a much subtle yet powerful way. The most effected are the ones who fall below the poverty line and do not have access to such resources. By the age when the children are to be employed for their bread and butter, it increasingly becomes tough to meet the emerging standards that are setup by the cyber world. This further pushes all the people below poverty line into an intellectual, skill and employability crisis. So, the contemporary world is contemporary because it is rapidly urbanizing and globalization, but the fruits of such processes are again divided in accordance with the age old social order that never seizes to work. People of the deprived communities

who by hard work and Government schemes got well educated and employed have been experiencing very little upward drift especially with regard to the social status. The regret about lack of mobility in terms of their social status always haunts them. Formal games reflect these divisions in the society through preferences for training, selections which are operated by the higher classes and castes again. It is the positional power here that preserves the existing social order of things.

What is true and what is right itself is defined by the social institutions around. What is right in one context and in one society may not be right in the other. In fact, what should be connected to truth itself is subjective to the conditions of the society under consideration. All the laws and legal systems emerge from the popular social law. If the society is an egalitarian society, the implication of the laws, the facilities that are rendered in the name of supporting minorities and the deprived communities will have resulted in a sense of egalitarianism. But, by the way of trying to create equality among people, we are only creating supplementary systems to keep the combat against the existing social order. But all the struggle is happening within the framework of the society in which the very basis of all the systems is already created and continuously influencing. Inevitably, egalitarianism is always the desire of the deprived and not that of the affluent classes and castes. So, the ones who are on the sanctioning end are always the affluent classes and castes and not the deprived. This majority attitudes, power and all the episteme that are deeply rooted will give little or no scope for any changes to occur at a faster pace. Laws of the country have not been enough to contribute to the cultural and institutional milieu of the society to result in a total shift of episteme. The bombardment of a foreign religions, belief systems or education that signifies and supports egalitarianism only make more people among the deprived to voice their demands and concerns but the fundamental need to struggle against the systems will not dilute ever. The change on the sanctioning end of the society is difficult by virtue of their advantageous position and the dream that it will occur has been a dream always.

Glossary

Aaku: Leaf

Aaku Muttu Aata: Leaf touching game

Aata: Game

Aatallo Aratipandu: An idiomatic expression in Telugu which means a banana in the game. It represents something worthless.

Aata Pettamani: A condition in Ashta Chemma game when only coins of one player reach the completion box.

Aavu: Original meaning of the word is Cow. It represents the value 4 in the game.

Achanagaayalu: a type of indoor game

Adharma: that which is not Dharma is Adharma

Akash: Sky

Amma: Mother

Andalamu: Palanquin

Angarakudu or Kujada: Mars

Antukuney Aata: Tag game

Appadatappada Thandri: A type of children's game

Ashvin: Seventh month of Hindu calendar.

Asta: Eight

Asta Chamma: A traditional indoor game

Asura: Demon

Aswayuja: The name of a month in Telugu Calendar

Atla Taddi: A Telugu festival

Atlu: a dish made of flour

Atha: Mother in law

Avva Appacchi: A word used in Andalamu Game. May have literal translation as Avva representing an old woman or Surprise and Appacchi meaning a snack item which is in the shape of a disk.

Baadshahs: Kings (Urdu)

Baarakatta: The number 12 when the dice are rolled.

Bacchaalu: A type of outdoor game

Bachaata or Borraata: A version of Goleelu Game

Banda: Rock or Hill. An elevated floor in the game.

Bari: A ring or place where fight is conducted (for rooster fights)

Begums: Queens (Urdu)

Bellapu Acchu: Jagger print

Bhadrapadha: A lunar month in Hindu Calendar

Bodha: Teachings

Bomma: Statue

Bommala Koluvu: Arrangement of Toys

Bommala Pelli: Marriage of the Toys

Bomma Praanam: A local outdoor game.
 Bommalu: Toys
 Bongaralu: Tops
 Buvvalaata: Cooking game
 Chaakali Baana: Laundry basket
 Chaaya Pappu: a type of cereal
 Chaddi Annam: Curd Rice
 Champudu Pandem: Killing Bet. A move that can kill the opponents coins
 Chandra Kala: Beauty of the moon.
 Chedarangam: Chess
 Chedugudu: Local Name of the game, Kabaddi.
 Cheekati: Darkness
 Chemma: Four
 Cher Patti: Horizontal main line
 Cheypalu Pattadam: Fishing
 Chinna Aata: Small Game
 Chinna Muvva: Small bells
 Chintha Pikkalu: Tamarind seeds
 Chupur: Eight
 Daadi Aata: A type of traditional game
 Daagudu Muthalu: Hide and Seek
 Daasa or Sudra: Lower strata in caste hierarchy
 Daayam: Value of 1 when the dice are rolled.
 Debbaki : For one shot
 Devudu: God
 Dhaakko meyka: Hide goat
 Dharma: In Hindu religion, Dharma is the law underlying correct behavior.
 Dhoo dhoo pulla: A type of traditional game
 Dholotsavam: A ritual in which the swinging of
 Dhuryodhana: A character in Mahabharatha epic
 Dinki Pandam: A kind of betting in rooster fights
 Dola Yatra: A type of ceremony by making God swing in a cradle to sleep
 Donga: Thief
 Drakshapallu: Grapes
 Durga Devi: Goddess in Hindu Mythology
 Eethala Potilu: Swimming competitions
 Ekkudu: To Climb
 Emitlu: It is a question which means: Which caste?
 Esukalo Ellu: Building houses in sand
 Ettu: A move in the Chess Game
 Gaali Patalu/ Gaali Padaga: Kites
 Gachangayalu/ Gachakaaya/ Gocha Kayalu: Nikker Nuts
 Gadi: A checker on board
 Ganji: Starch

Ganjikaalu: rice starch
 Ganji Kaavadi: a bowl of rice starch
 Ganji Poyadam: to pour starch (representing the lending of food). Represents help in the game.
 Gattu: Slab
 Gavvalaata: A traditional game played with cowries
 Goli Gundlu/ Goli Kayalu: Marbles
 Gongura: Roselle leaves
 Gopikas: Lord Krishna's admirers
 Gorintaku: Nail house leaf, *Lawsonia inermis*
 Gorintaku Panduga: Festival of Nail house leaf
 Gudi gudi gunjam: A traditional children's game
 Gummadi: Pumpkin
 Gurram: Horse
 Gurrapekkudu: Horse Climbing
 Guru: Teacher or the planet jupiter
 Gutti Billa: A type of outdoor game
 Homam: An arrangement for a Hindu ritual in which various sacred items such as flowers, ghee, fruits are offered to Fire God.
 Indra: A God in Hindu Mythology
 Inti Arugu: An elevated floor or platform in front of the house.
 Isuka Kuppa Aata: a kind of game in sand.
 Itihasa: Hindu mythological texts
 Jeernam: Digestion
 Jeeva: Binding force that keeps life in the body
 Kaalla gajja: A type of traditional indoor game
 Kaayalu: Fruits
 Kaalu: leg
 Kaama: God of Love, Desire and Wanting
 Kabaddi: A traditional game
 Kallaki Ganthalu: Blind fold
 Kannu: Means eye. It represents the digit 1 when the dice are rolled.
 Kappa Genthulu: Frog jumps
 Kathi Pandem: Knife betting in rooster fights
 Kobbari: Coconut
 Kobbari Koru: Grinded Coconut
 Kobbari Peechu: Coconut fibre
 Kodalu: Daughter in law
 Kodi Gavvallara: Chickens
 Kodi Pandhalu: Rooster fights/ betting
 Kokkuri Game: A game in Japan played with spirits
 Kolatam: a kind of dance performance
 Kothi: Monkey
 Kothi Komocchi: A type of game played jumping on tree branches

Kreeda: Game or related to game
Krishna: Lord Krishna
Kumkuma: Vermillion
Kunchadu ganji: a fist of rice starch
Kuntaata: A game of hopping
Kunte: hopping
Kuppi Ganthulu: a kind of jumping
Kurchunte: to sit
Loka: world
Maa Thaatha Uttaram: My Grandfather's letter
Mahabharatha: One of the two important epics of Hindu religion
Mahadasha: Main Astrological Period
Mahishasura: A buffalo headed demon.
Mantri: Actually means minister. Represents queen coin in chess
Matti: Soil
Mayadari: Full of Magic
Menatha: Father's Sister
Meyda: Upon
Meyka: Goat
Mogudu: Husband
Mudda Pappu: Dal
Muhurtham: Auspicious time.
Mummatiki: Earnestly or Definitely
Munindra: The best of sages.
Munji Ballu: A two wheeled top made of fruit of palmyra
Murigipovatam: Cancellation of the chance to roll cowries
Muttadi Paksham: Muttadi means to touch. Paksham means team. It represents team who play to touch the players.
Muthaiduvulu: Auspicious Married Woman
Muttukuntava/ Muttu: to touch
Naadam: Sacred music of Indian weddings, played on traditional instruments.
Naalugu: Four
Naalugu Sthambhaalu: Four pillars
Naanna: Father
Naivedyam: Offering to God
Nalla: Black Color
Nappadam : Movement of coins through the checker
Narada: A mythological character in Hinduism
Neeti Kappalaata: A type of game
Nela: Floor
Neyla Banda: A type of game played both indoor and outdoor
Neney: Its me
Niluchunte: to stand
Nimma Visurudu: Throwing lemons

Nomu: A ritual
 Okkasi Khokka or Kokkaata: Kho Kho game
 Okkate Methuku: single rice morsel
 Ohom Ohom: Sounds made by the palanquin bearers.
 Paalataalikulu: A dish made rice flour and milk
 Paaleru: An assistant at the fields to the farmer (An under farmer).
 Pachchis: A traditional dice game
 Padhiveylu: Ten Thousand
 Pandatam: The event of winning in a counting out game
 Pandem: bet
 Pandu: Fruit
 Pandula Pandhalu: Pig fights/ betting
 Panta Gadi: Completion box in a game
 Pantalu Vesukovadam: a kind of activity which is done at the beginning of any game.
 Parasakthi: Hindu Goddess who is the symbol of auspiciousness
 Parvathi: A Goddess, wife of Lord Shiva
 Pathangula Panduga: Kite festival.
 Patti: Line or strip
 Peekalu: Mouth piece as in a clarinet
 Pedda Aata: Big Game
 Pelli: Marriage
 Pelli Koduku: Groom
 Pelli Koothuru: Bride
 Peykaata: Playing Cards
 Peyrantam: A gathering at a ritual
 Phalguni: A month in Hindu calendar
 Pikkalu: Chess Coins
 Pinneesulu: Safety pins
 Pranam: Life
 Pooja: Worshiping God in Hinduism
 Pottelu Pandhalu: Ram fights/ betting
 Poyadam: To pour
 Pula Banthi Aata: A traditional wedding game played with a ball of flowers
 Puli: Tiger
 Pullana: sour in taste
 Pulochey meyka: Tiger coming goat
 Puranas: Hindu mythological texts
 Putta Chintha: Completion box in Ashta Chemma Game
 Raaja: King
 Raamudu: Lord Rama
 Raani: Queen
 Racha Banda: An elevated floor in a village where all the problems of the village are discussed.
 Radha: Lord Krishna's love

Rakshana Paksham: Rakshana means Protection. Paksham means team. It represents the team who play to restrict the other team Muttadi Paksham in the game.

Rendu: Two

Sahityam: Literature

Sakatam: Represents Bishop coin in Chess

Sankalpam: Literal translation is 'Will'. It is an auspicious thread tied during a ritual to the main performers of the ritual.

Sanna Biyyam: Thin Rice

Sanna Gaaju: Thin bangle

Santals: Tribes of Bihar region

Saraswathi: Goddess of Education

Saree Pallu: The loose end of the Saree

Sarulu: Evens

Seetha: Sita

Shloka: A sacred line from sacred texts

Sipayi: Soldier

Sowbhagyam: Auspiciousness

Sunni Pindi: Bathing Powder

Sura Badde: Vertical dividing line

Taadaata: Skipping

Tappatloye taalaloye: Claps and rhythms

Teyyana: sweet

Tella: White Color

Thalli Baalika: 'Mother' Girl

Thalli Chettu: 'Mother' tree

Thambulalm : An offering to guests with betel leaf, areca nut and two bananas

Thaataku: Banana Leaf

Thoka: Tail

Thookutu Uyyaala: A type of swing.

Thoranam: A garland of flowers or Hanging Decorations

Tritiya: Third day in a Hindu calander month

Ugadi: Telugu New Year Day

Uggannam: Mashed rice in small quantity fed to infants

Undrallu: A dish made of flour

Ungaraalu Aata: A traditional game played with rings

Uppu Aata.: A type of traditional game

Uppu Andinchadam: A gesture in the game of Uppu Aata. Literal translation means to handover salt to someone.

Uppu Bastha: Sack of salt

Uppula Kuppa: A traditional girl game

Uppu Patti: Uppu means salt, Patti means line. It represents the finishing line in Uppaata Game.

Utti Kottadam: A performance of hitting a pot in Krishnastami festival.

Uyyala: Swing

Uyyala Panduga: Festival of the swings
Uyyalaata: Swinging game
Vaamana Guntalu: A traditional indoor game
Vaikuntapaali: A traditional indoor game which represents snake and ladder.
Vangu Dhookudu: Bend and Jump
Vasanthaalu: A traditional game played with colors
Vayyari bhama: Graceful girl
Veeri Veeri: Referring to a person in the game. Literal translation meaning "your".
Yama: God of Death
Yenugu: Elephant
Vaayanam: Offerings to the woman attending Atla Taddi event
Vaikuntam: World of Vishnu
Venneella/ Vennela: Moon light
Vinodhalu: Entertainments
Vijaya Dasami: A festival day, part of Sankranthi.
Vratham: Ritual
Yedla Pandhalu: Bull fights/ betting
Yedupenkula Aata: A traditional outdoor game played with seven small slabs and a ball.

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Images



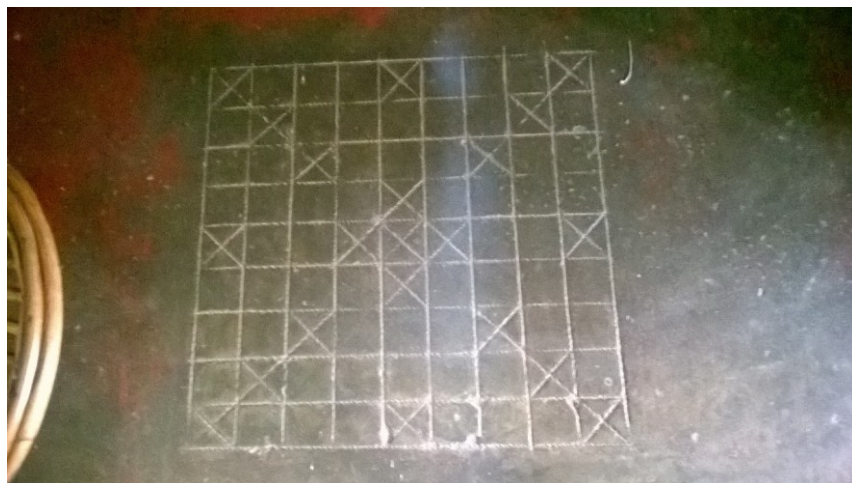
Adults and Children participating in Pot Breaking Event (Utti Kottadam) on Krishnashtami Festival



Ganesh Idols made by Children on Vinayaka Chavithi Festival



Children Playing Games on PC



Ashta Chamma game permanently played on floor



Children Playing Carroms at Temple



Elder Lady making toys from coconut leaves

Rituals and Festivals: The Tools of Social Control

Divya Teja Pasupuleti
Research Scholar,
Anthropology,
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India.

Abstract : Rituals and festivals are tools of social control that were engineered long ago through different aspects of games and play to achieve specific social goals. Games, which are leisure time activities are also made part of some rituals which signify a planned sanction of relaxation from the social control which again has specific social goals. Rituals are energized with legends that are connected to the aspects of divinity religiously to add the dimension of sanctity and are practiced across generations by connecting them to cosmic schedules. The need to institutionalize the desired social rules was perhaps recognized quite long ago when the cultures began to emerge and solidify in terms of customs and traditions. Systems of control that could have both intrinsic and extrinsic influences on the individuals through guilt and shame attributes are analyzed in this paper in the context of rituals, festivals and the related cultural aspects.

IndexTerms -Rituals, Games, Social Control, South India, Socialization, Guilt and Shame Culture.

I. INTRODUCTION

Games have become integral parts of rituals at the time of festivals as they serve as a means of entertainment activity in religious procedures reflecting various aspects of the religion, spirituality and social solidarity. These games are often intensely used as tools for predicting future to serve as the advisory for decision making and are some times also understood as the ways in which the devotees could access the answers of the Gods to their questions through the games. Alongside of prediction, games are also used as sources of uniting people irrespective of social and cultural differences and through who the social values and norms are recollected and restored which helps in the smooth functioning of the society. There is a lot of resemblance between sacred rites and games as both obey and follow strict and definite rules by creating an order of life. Both games and sacred rites follow strict and definite rules. They both have commonalities in terms of selection of the places to conduct them, the time or season during which they are conducted and the common human concepts they reflect. They both are conducted at prefixed locations with scope for the spectators to watch the event and become engaged in either cheering up the players of the game or chanting the Gods names in devotion. The places that are used for games like arena, gambling table, the magical circle, the temple, the stage, the screen, the tribunal, playing grounds, are all specially made, consecrated with sanctity and governed by specific rules which are special to the activities and the places or means of games like chessboard, tennis court which are used to play are not different from the sacred places or spaces like temples which carry spiritual destination (Huizinga 1951). The symbolic representation of games and sacred rites in terms of the ideas and believes in the minds of the people are similar as they carry the elements of cosmos and nature which enable humans to understand the good and evil periods or fortunes and misfortunes, and there by predict them. The movement of the universe, the renewal of seasons, calculation of celestial objects are all used in the prediction of human fortunes. The societies and cultures which appear to be based on the certainty and uncertainty of the fate and which remain more near to nature and environment and where there is no significant procedure for decision making, are the ones which observe similarities between sacred rites and games. This uncertainty is observed profoundly among agrarian societies which depend on the unpredictable climatic conditions for their sustenance and living. Thus, the games carry sacredness along with the ritual rites among these societies.

When the societies become increasingly complex and civilized, the importance given to the sacred rites and sanctity attached to the rituals and religious activities decline. The ritual activities also loose the perception of attributed nobility in the society, their mysterious and sacred attributes get revealed and activities then become normal everyday activities with a little amount of sanctity in the form of stories still connected to the games which then are generally perceived as elements which are parts of the culture since long and not as sacred activities in particular. The games that confirm this scenario are chance games where the whole game is based on permutations and predictions. Both, the games and sacred rites were present in the minds of the people who conceive the universe by remaining near to the nature which deals with fortunes and misfortunes of human beings. 'When the game moves out of the religious environment, it strips itself more and more of its mystery, its secret, and enters the everyday world; it still preserves some degree of symbolism but it is no longer reserved exclusively to the priesthood and to those who are in touch with the sacred mysteries; it is still practiced by adults, who do so in a deeply serious spirit characteristic of the real and spontaneous spirit of the game.' (Jeannine Auboyer 1955, 125). The understanding of the cosmological meaning attached to the game helps in understanding the purpose of games and their significance in human societies. Thus, the games are viewed as activities that carry sacred and consecrated purpose which are used in the understanding of the relation between nature and destiny or fate of mankind.

1. RITUALS AND ASTROLOGY: AGENTS OF SOCIAL ORDER.

Cultural elements in every society have various hidden functional aspects which influence the existence and continuum of societies with their own distinct values, traditions and rules. Often, these functional aspects are hidden to preserve their consecrated and mystical nature to install a compulsion in the minds of the followers to earnestly follow all the traditions. It is a way of institutionalization of the values and rules that are desired in society. Rituals are extensively used by every culture in this context to

institutionalize various sound principles. Ritualization, though is a much debated term on account of the multiplicity of its meanings, in the current context, let the meaning of doing something repeatedly be considered. It is important to periodically rekindle, reprophecize and reinforce various values and traditions to ensure the effective continuum and perpetuation of cultural elements across generations. Hence, periodical implementation of certain procedures in the form of rituals is observable in almost all the societies. Generally, the periodic repetition of such rituals is attributed to a specific calendar date annually. In India, for the purpose of repetition and to further add sanctity to the rituals, it is linked to the astrological cycles and religious events.

Various legends of the Gods are connected to every ritual to add sanctity, pious and fear of sin or misfortune in case of abusing or not following the traditions. Even astrological events have various legends connected to them to reinforce the concepts and institutionalize various principles. On one hand, these traditions and rituals are to be analyzed while on the other we have the games that are part of almost all the societies. From Halloween in the West to various festivals in Indian culture like Holi, Diwali, Dussehra etc there are many elements of play and games attached to the festivals. Rituals that are components of almost every festival, especially in India have strict rules energized by the legends, Gods and various sanctity aspects. Hence, ritual procedures are restrictive and severe in nature. Play and games are activities of relaxation and recreation and are almost opposite to the restrictive pattern emphasized by rituals. Now, it could be identified that in many festivals, rituals and games coexist. The functional aspects of such a combination have to be deeply analyzed to understand the purpose of such a cohesion. The iterative aspect of the rituals signifies the functional aspect of bringing the necessity and cultural compulsion of implementation of a sequence of consecrated activities. Each of the rituals strengthen a social concept. Often rituals are complex set of procedures sequentially implemented which could result in the installation, reaffirmation, perpetuation and preservation of a social order, control, norms, values, restrictions and sanctions. Here, the iterative aspect is linked to the cosmos, as the resolution of the planets follows an equal schedule every year. Almost in every culture legends are observed which strengthen the cosmic positions of the planets, their meanings and their devotional connections. All of these result in the combined effect on the society. In almost all the cultures, it is observable that people believe Gods operate from the skies. Hence, it may have added an additional layer of sanctity when the cosmic activity is connected to the rituals.

In the view of preserving the social institutions, norms and values, every culture has a multiplicity of tools. As we spoke about the cosmic cycles and their connected meanings and their iterative aspect, we should also consider the purpose of predictive subjects like astrology which are based on the cosmic positions. Whether the predictions become true or not, it is observable that the principles of Karma, sin and pious activities, and their reflections are all parts of the astrological predictions. An astrologer referring to the horoscope chart of an individual seeking advice, mentions about various possible mishaps and advices on ways in which his 'bad' Karma could be nullified for good results. Often, we could observe astrologers sinisterring about the 'bad' Karma an individual could incur if the person happens to do deeds which are deviating the prescribed social norms. Such deviated activities are not only bad in terms of astrology but are also considered bad according to the existing social and cultural norms. The nullification of 'bad' Karma could happen by implementing some remedies. Such remedies actually are activities which are considered as noble by the society. For example, helping the poor and destitute or beggars at a temple, lending blankets or clothes, helping old people, feeding animals and so on. Hence, comics are again in this contest being used for the subject of predictions. But all predictions again indicate a socially acceptable or appreciable set of activities to gain better results in each of their personal lives. Hence, all this is again being utilized as a tool to install, reinforce, ensure continuance and perpetuation of the social values, order and control.

The entire canvas of rituals, Gods, cosmic connections, legends is so tightly complexly woven that each of the threads support the existence of the other and no single thread is independent of the other in its existence, constitution and purpose. For the preservation of the whole of the set up of the social values and norms, it may have been understood by the societies long ago that a multitude of tools in various demissions is necessary. Social control could be executed by constantly steering the societies on the socially acceptable paths and restricting the deviations. But such restrictions could strongly operate only when the restrictions have an impact at both the individual and social levels. At an individual level, it is further more important to program the internal psyche of the individuals to behave within the boundaries of restriction. When it comes to the external influences, the perception, titling of an individual as a sinner or the effect on the person's reputation will have to be considered. Ruth Benedict, 1946 perceived two types of cultures that are contrast to one another exist in different societies. Shame and Guilt cultures are emphasized based on the psychological setup of the people in the societies. She tried to explain the concept of culture based on the cultural values and patterns of behavior. In the process of explanation of these concepts, she compared Japanese culture as 'Shame' culture to American culture as 'Guilt' culture. But the titling of 'Shame culture' was strongly objected by the people of Japan saying that the writings were derogatory and offensive which were written by an 'ethnocentric' Western scholar (Creighton, Millie R 1990). Besides all the controversy, the dichotomy of 'Shame' and 'Guilt' cultures is still a much debated topic with respect to anthropological study of culture. Benedict's shame and guilt culture concepts rooted the belief that 'shame' is associated with lower level of development and 'guilt' with higher level of development. Benedict's works have been perceived as a symbol of western thought which was biased in considering guilt as of a higher culture and shame as belonging to a lower culture. Setting a side the status of guilt and shame, Benedict was assumed to be failed in recognizing both guilt and shame as two entities related to each other and are intertwined. (Doi 1973, Lebra 1976). Though there are several criticisms on the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects related to the origins of the guilt and shame cultures, our current context has no relevance with their origins. An attempt is being made to analyze how various elements of control and relaxation are embedded in the cultures through rituals and games and how guided sanctions during the rituals and festivals influence the society. A study of various functional aspects involved in the games and rituals in relation to their cultural implications is being attempted in this paper.

The present paper is based on the ethnographic study of traditional games and rituals in rural India. The study was conducted for thirteen months between 2015 and 2016 in the villages of West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh, India. The research was conducted by using a combination of ethnographic tools like observation, interviews, conversations, and field notes among the

individuals and groups of men and women in the villages. The field study was primarily focused on the village Marteru along with its surrounding villages which are in proximity geographically. Marteru is an agrarian society where majority of the occupation of the people is involved in agriculture. The Hindus celebrate festivals in which games play a significant role and are observed in every year at particular seasons at attributed time cycles. Among them Dussehra, Atla Taddi, Sankranthi are some of the major festivals that are celebrated with rituals and games.

2.1 ATLA TADDI

Atla Taddi is an important festival in Andhra Pradesh, India which has a profound connection with games. This festival is celebrated on Ashwayuja bahula tadiya or Krishna paksha tadiya, that is, on the third day of the waning of the moon in the Aswayuja month of Telugu calendar. In the Gregorian calendar, this period comes in the month of either September or October. The word Atla Taddi consists of two words, Atla or Atlu means dosas, a south indian dish and Taddi or Tadiya means third day (of Ashwayuja). The festival is celebrated by young single women, girls of ages five and above and also the married women in the pursuit of auspicious marital phase in their lives. Single women celebrate the festival, perform the rituals of the festival and observe fasting praying Goddess Gauri Devi to bless them with a handsome, good hearted and capable husband. Married women perform the same rituals, observe fasting and pray Goddess Gauri Devi in pursuit of a good fortune and longevity, health and prosperity to their husbands. Pregnant women and widows keep away from the rituals of the festival. Nomu (a ritualistic religious vow), is taken by the women during this festival as a part of celebration of the festival. The women who take nomu should undergo a day long fasting without drinking water and in the evening they break the fast after watching moon in the sky and pray Gowri devi by performing pooja. The legend explains that Goddess Gauri Devi herself was advised by Naarada sage to perform the rituals, observe fasting and celebrate the festival of Atla Taddi to get Lord Shiva as her husband. Atla Taddi is often compared to festival Karva Chauth which is celebrated as one of the important festivals of women who pray for a fortunate married life in northern part of India. The festival Atla Taddi has a deep connection with the astrological believes that are given prominence in all aspects of life. The festival, the rituals and the fasting, all of them are believed to safeguard the girls and single women from having to marry an old person. From the past to the present, early marriages of girls is evident and existed in most parts of the country. The early marriages of girls is considered as one of the several social evils or social problems. Young girls are given in marriage to an old aged person, often a widower in exchange of money or as a repayment of debt taken by the parents of the girl. To the girls, such a situation is definitely like a curse they had to suffer out of the inevitable social and economic conditions. The long age gap, the mismatch of thoughts, emotions and desires, physical inactiveness and the risk of becoming a widow early in life are all indicative of a very unhappy and dissatisfied life. Hence, the festival and the rituals are believed to offer the blessings to the natives to escape such a situation. Pregnant women are not allowed to take part in the celebration of the festival as they are considered to be polluted to participate in the festival.

Atla Taddi festival is also called as Uyyala panduga (cradle ceremony or festival) or gorintaku panduga (gorintaku means the art of applying temporary henna tattoos and panduga means ceremony or festival). The women observe this festival for ten years to have a great married life and family. A Woman descends it as a tradition from her mother's maiden family. It is a tradition continued in the maternal lineage. Regardless of the nomu or ritual, every women can celebrate the festival by avoiding nomu and engaging in the rest of the celebration. The tradition in the lineage is observed much among the Brahmins and Vyshyas or Komati caste in the field village. The Reddy women of the village do not observe nomu on Atla Taddi but they observe nomu on Undralla Taddi, which comes on Bhadrpadha bahula tadiya, the third day of the waning of the moon in Bhadrpadha month.

Atla Taddi is a two day festival. The first day of Atla Taddi is called Bhogi Pallu Roju. On this day, girls and women apply gorintaku or henna a dye that is applied on hands which is prepared from the leaf of the plant Lawsonia inermis. Traditionally, it is believed among the married women that the brighter the color of gorintaku imprints on the hands of the women, the more intensely their husbands will love them and among the unmarried, the brighter the color, the more intense lovers will come as husbands. So, with this belief, all the women apply gorintaku on their hands and feet. On this day, eleven married women are invited by the woman who is observing the vratham (ritual) to her house. This process of invitation is called peyrantam which is a social gathering for a ritual. The women start making preparations for celebrating the festival. In the evening, the women become busy in preparing rice flour by grinding rice and there by making dosa batter for making eleven dosas to each of the eleven muthaiduvulu (married women), that is, 121 small or miniature dosas which will be offered to the women during the ceremony the next day. The dosas are made of rice flour and ghee in small size. The women also get involved in making paalataalikulu, a sweet dish made of rice flour, milk and jagger which will be consumed after breaking the fast in the evening. The men will make arrangements for the women to swing on uyyalalu and tie swings at their houses or at verandas or near temples where there will be trees. On the day of Atla Taddi, women and children wake up at wee hours, that is, at two'o clock, an auspicious time which is called as Brahma muhurtham and wash their heads with soap nuts and sunni pindi (bath powder). The house has to be decorated with mango leaves and flowers called thoranam. They eat rice which is cooked the night before called chaddi annam with mudda pappu (plain dal), gongura pickle, ghee (a type of clarified butter) and curd. After eating rice, women along with children go to streets to play games. They go out to play before the sun rise by gathering friends and neighbors. They play all the day till the evening. In the evening, women and children come back to their houses, take bath at the near by canal and offer prayers to Goddess Gowri Devi at the canal and see moon. They return to their homes and conduct the sacred ritual by tying auspicious thread called 'Sankalpam' to their right hand with eleven knots. The Sankalpam signifies the person who did and participated in the sacred ritual. They offer all the 121 atlu (dosas) as naivedyam (offering) to Goddess Gowri Devi and read Atla Taddi story.

2.2. THE STORY

In olden days, there was a princess named Sunama. She is the youngest of all. She has elder brothers who loved and taken care of her so much. She was very fragile. In order to have a good husband, she took the vow of conducting Atla Taddi vratham. The vratham requires complete fasting and as she was fragile, she became weak while observing fasting. She fainted with dizziness and nausea. Her brothers loved her so much. Blinded by their mad love for their sister, her brothers wanted her sister to eat the food. They made a reflection of the moon in the sky by showing a shining object or light with fire and told her sister that the moon has come. Sunama saw the moon and prayed Goddess Gowri Devi and offered dosas to her. After the prayer, Sunama broke the fast by eating the dosas. The days have passed and the time for Sunama's marriage has come. Instead of getting handsome and young husband, Sunama started getting old men as her bridegrooms during the bridegroom selection. Her brother's waited for good and young bridegrooms for their sister but all the wait was in vain. Vexed and with hope lost, Sunama wanted to commit suicide and went into the forest. Seeing the pathetic condition of her devotee, Goddess Gowri Devi, incarnation of Goddess Parvathi along with lord Shiva decided to help her as she was misled by her brothers and it was not her intentional mistake. Gowri Devi explained Sunama about what happened during the nomu and asked her to do the vratham with sincerity and devotion with out missing any procedure. By doing so, she was granted a handsome and young husband by the Goddess. The Goddess also suggested her to conduct this vratham for ten years for having a healthy husband and children. The legend also says that, Goddess Gowri Devi, on the suggestion of sage Naarada, has observed Atla Taddi nomu and got lord shiva as her husband.

After the story, the eleven women who are invited to the vratam are given eleven miniature dosas each along with a fruit, vermilion, turmeric powder, a blouse piece, betel leaf and areca nut. This offering is called vayanam. The woman gives the vayanam by holding her saree pallu (the loose end of the saree) says 'isthinamma vayanam' (I give you (her) the vayanam); the other woman receives the vayanam with her saree pallu by saying 'puchukuntinamma vayanam' (I have taken the vayanam). The host again says, 'mummatiki isthinamma vayanam' (I give you (her) the vayanam), the woman says 'mummatiki puchukuntinamma vayanam' (I received the vayanam); the host says, 'vayanam puchukuntundi yevaroo?' (Who is taking the vayanam), the woman says 'neyyamma Gowri Parvathi' (it is me Gowri Parvathi). After giving the vayanam to all the eleven members, the woman sits with her family members and breaks her fasting by eating the dosas (eleven) and other dishes like paalataaleekalu, rice, gongura pickle, mudda pappu (plain dal), stew with eleven varieties of vegetables and curd. A married women is believed to be leading a happy and auspicious life when her husband is leading a healthy and prosperous life. The healthy longevity and prosperity of the husband are considered as the real fortune of a married woman's life which is called Sowbhagyam in Telugu. Children as well become part of the overall auspiciousness of the women. The festival of Atla Taddi is believed to bless married woman with Sowbhagyam. Children or the birth of children, fecundity is treated as one of the most important auspicious aspects of women's life. This is reflected in the festivals connection with the aspects that deal with the blessings of the divinity for the enhancement of sexual strength of the husband and the fertility of the native as well.

2.3. ATLA TADDI AND INDIAN ASTROLOGY

The festival itself is celebrated on the Aswayuja bahula Thadiya lunar day, which is the third day of the Telugu calendar month. Tiritiya (Third day) is ruled by planet Mars. Mars in Hindu astrology is called as angarakudu or kujudu. Mars signifies the male's capacity to impregnate a woman. A man with a debilitated Mars in his horoscope is predicted to have a weakness of the reproductive organs, his impregnating strength, sperm strength etc according to Vedic astrology. Mars is the energy that blesses the woman with proper menstrual cycles as well. Offerings to the Mars is believed to nullify the bad effects of the inauspicious placement of Mars in the horoscope. In Telugu or Sanskrit language, the inauspicious placement of the Mars planet is called Kuja Dosha, which means fault or bad effect of the Mars. According to Vedic astrology, it is also believed that Kuja Dosha in a person's horoscope may signify sudden death of the Native. Hence offerings are done to Mars in pursuit of blessings to avoid such mishaps. The third lunar day is categorized under Jaya thithis group in astrology which signifies Akash which means space or sky and the third day is ruled by Mars. Akash is signified by Jupiter also called as Sukrudu in Vedic astrology. Akash is a period (Mahadasha) that is considered as the planet signifying children and the planet that brings two people together as Akash again is the binding force that keeps Jeeva (life) in the body. Traditionally, fasting on a full moon day is believed to give the truth as it removes the negative effects of the planet Saturn. Moon rules the fourth house in astrology which signifies 'mother' in the horoscope. It is believed that Para sakthi the extremely auspicious Goddess resides in 'Chandra kala', which may mean the beauty of the moon. Fasting all day without even drinking water and breaking the fast after the rise of the moon in the sky after watching the moon is in pursuit of Sowbhagya through blessings of Para sakthi. Offerings are done to the shadow planet, Rahu as well. Rahu, the imaginary point or shadow planet or north node or ascending node, is the lord of illusions, sudden mishaps and is the eclipse planet that is believed to have the capacity to swallow the moon and the sun. Hence, Rahu is given the offering to ensure unhindered, uninterrupted grace and blessings of the moon. As part of the festival eleven happily married woman called mutthaiduvulu are offered atlu made with lentils and rice flour. The number eleven and the thithi of eleventh day is ruled by Mars again according to the ancient knowledge. Rice flour is the moon's favorite, while lentils are Rahu's favorite, urad dal (split black gram) is favorite food of Mars and hence offerings are made by making atlu with all the ingredients and are given to the eleven invited women, who represent the Goddess Gowri Devi. Thus, with the knowledge and belief in astrology, necessary care is taken to see that the procreation is possible through fertility among men and women with the help different food sources and actives like games.

2.4. ATLA TADDI AND GAMES

All the girls gather at a place and start playing games like swinging, hide and seek, song games like uppula kuppa, chemma chekka, tappatloy taalalay, etc. The games that are played during this festival are mostly physical games. It is believed among the people that the Goddess Gowri Devi likes to play games and thus, they are played as a symbol of her celebration during the festival. Of all the games played by the women and children on this day, swinging is the most important and auspicious game to play. It is said that the women has to swing three hundred times before they break their fast in the evening. Thus, they swing taking turns one after the other. The children continue to play various other games till the night. The men and young boys help the women in playing these games. They help them to swing by holding the swings and pushing them forward for the swing to move and participate in the play too. This activity of swinging in is called Dholotsavam. The swing is made of a wooden plank, some times two or three planks are used to sit, which are tied together with coir ropes or iron chains and is suspended from the ceiling or between two poles or from the branches of a tree. The swing, some times, is simply a coir rope tied to the branch of a tree which is seen among the people who could not pay much for the expenditure. Among the rich and higher status people, the halls or courtyards in the mansions are furnished with swings made up of beautifully designed wooden planks suspended to poles that are hung from the roof for recreation. The swings are also decorated with thoranams on the top of the seat to which the ropes or chains are attached. The swings which are furnished with carvings and decorations in mansions symbolizes higher status and represents royal position. Generally, these swings are only for the heads of the families as a symbol of honor and everyone is not allowed sit on them. But on this day, the women and children are given the chance to swing on these swings as a part of celebrations. Not every house in the village has a swing in their house. So, women and children from the neighboring houses gather at a place and go to the house of the girl who has a swing. Most of the times, wooden swings are available at the houses of higher status people as swings represent royalty and richness. The swings are of different sizes and shapes, some with decorations carved and some with no decoration made with different woods which are strong and durable like teak wood, redwood etc. The seats of the swings are made of thick planks so that they could hold the weight of the people when they swing. The young woman sits on the plank or the rope of the swing, two other women, one from the front and the other from behind push the swing backwards and forwards like a pendulum and the rest of the women wait for their turn. There are different ways in which the women swing. One to four people may attempt to swing at the same time as they play. Two women swing by one sitting on the plank and the other standing at the back of the one sitting on the plank and swing. Some times, two women stand on either side of the plank and a women sits in the middle and swing. Four people swing when the women stand on all the three sides of the swing while one sits in the middle and swing. The balance required to stand on the plank of the swing is practiced every time by the women when ever they swing.

Of all the games, swinging is the most important game that girls or women play on this festival. Girls and women swing and play singing the song 'Atla Thaddoi Aaratloi, Mudda Pappoi Moodatloi'. Younger boys in some regions are found to help the girls in swinging, though this is not a common trait across all the regions. It is believed that Goddess Gowri Devi loves to play with the swing and that the play itself has a divine ritual connection. Swinging is one of the most important activities done by the natives till they reach home after the play, take bath again and perform puja (worship) and break the fast after seeing the moon in the sky. Girls, as they swing, help each other to swing and play in all laughter and joy, though the over all idea of worshipping in pursuit of an able, healthy, young husband of choice is always the bottomline. It is a widely accepted aspect of games that they are played for acquiring physical strength, increasing immunity, growth and development. This aspect has been prominent among the functionalists who believe that games are a part of exercise and recreation that strengthens the body and mind. Psychologists and other cognitive scientists believe that games give mental relaxation, increases learning capacities, increases ability to interpret giving rise to long term benefits like language learning. Along with the physical and cognitive benefits, games carry information that has to be interpreted in relation to its cultural significance.

Swings in India have a story that is deeply connected to the cultural, historic and lifestyle aspects of the societies. The structure of the swing, the material, the shape and the way these swings are ornamented have profound and meaningful connections with the legends and believes that may have now faded with time but their existence is however undeniable. The sexual union, the togetherness of the couples, the love that they celebrate in their lives, the children, fecundity are no simple unthoughtful progression of the lives. They are culturally connected to various rites, legends and the natives actually are driven to a lifestyle where the relationships are valued as sacred connections as they refer themselves to as the blessings and representations of those divine sources. Lord Krishna himself is found in various artistic representations playing the swing game with his love Radha. The relationship of Krishna and Radha itself is treated as the symbol of sacred and lustful love across the country. In India, may be lust itself is not a sin when such desire is the outcome of a story of love towards the partner. The desires are referred with the word Kaama and there is a God of love, Manmadha sacredly attached to all the matters of love and desires. Through the swing game, it is observable that the physical activity of the sexual union as well is subtly represented though not openly announced or debated. The game has a dual nature, one representing the amusement part of it through vertigo, which is the resultant of the perceived effect of the loss of

gravity as the players swing into the air and back, while the other nature is its sacred connection with the rites and culture of the societies. Swings are seen even today in many temples where the devotees in all devotion gently swing a small plank on which the effigies of the Gods are placed. In some cases this is referred to as Pavalimpu Seva (service during sleep time), especially a ritual in temples that is done in the nights. Devotees render the service to the God by gently swinging him to sleep after a strenuous day of administering the various aspects of the world. It is not only the players who swing, but also the ones who push, pull and control the fly, a part of the game. It is observed that these swing facilitators also actively involved in the game sometimes responding to the excited shouts of the ones who are on swing to either speed up or slowdown the motion. Most often as the ones who push are friends

of the natives swinging, do just the opposite of what the swingers want which translates into a continued surprise and excitement. In the question of the festival Atla Taddi, it may also be understood that the young girls are all excited to wake up so early in the morning out of the excitement to play on swings and even forget the hunger of the fasting as they play with these swings all through the day. The legends and some historic writings represent a cosmic connection to these swings as well. Even the life's philosophy itself could be represented through the swing game.

2.5. SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GAMES IN ATLA TADDI: RESTRICTIONS AND RELAXATIONS ON WOMEN

A trend of conservatism is profoundly visible in the village with the role of girls attached to consecrated activities such as offering prayers to Gods, refraining from active involvement in any form of play with males after puberty, cooking and helping mother in all the household activities which are a subset of all the acceptable and desired activities that are akin to the role of a woman in the society. A contrast could be observed in between the conservative and restricted routine role of the females in the village and the sanction of freedom to go out and play on the day of Atla Taddi festival. In some cases, we witness the involvement of boys in the swing games the girls play on the day of the festival. It signifies a momentary sanction of freedom and relaxation of the restricted pattern of rules that are in force during the rest of the year. The functional importance of such planned sanction of certain level of freedom has to be carefully examined to analyze on its purpose and implications. In this context, the popular terms of guilt culture and shame culture which were first discussed by Ruth Benedict in anthropology will have to be considered.

Guilt culture is about a way of social control internalized that refrains the person from doing something wrong or unacceptable in the society. It is more related to the unacceptable deed than to the person who is doing it. Declaration of some deed as wrong, without having to title the person as the doer of it could raise the feelings of guilt in the individual which propels him or her towards correction of such behavior. In guilt culture, institutions, rituals, concepts of sin, pious and God can play a role. Guilt is internal and is the resultant of all the mental setup one develops over years.

While on the contrary, the shame culture is characterized by the members of such a society who actively involve in naming or titling the person as a wrong doer, often discussed publicly among families and peer groups. In such a case, the individual being afraid of the social consequences and the damage that could occur to his or her reputation refrains from all the unacceptable deeds. Further in shame culture, it normally takes more than simple correction to restore the tarnished reputation to positivity. Hence, in the societies characterized by shame culture, individuals consider what others perceive about them as of prime importance as it may be sometimes irrevocably damaging.

Females in the society are more impacted by the traits of shame culture. The way the social restrictions are implemented over females in various situations is characterized by the aspects of shame culture. I witnessed, Lakshmi, one of my key informants in the village refraining from accompanying me to the arena of rooster fights as she was afraid of Perlu Petteyyadam which means 'being titled' as a sinner or a person of poor character if she is seen by the villagers at the location of rooster fights. In the village, females are not allowed to take part in the rooster fights that are conducted during the festival of Sankranti. Lakshmi left me at the entrance of the street and asked her ten years old son to accompany me to the location of rooster fights. On our way, at the entrance of the street, she was met by her paternal uncle who in a rude voice questioned her about why she was walking towards that street where the rooster fights were conducted and replied that she did not come intentionally or with a liking to watch rooster fights but was asked by me to take her to the place. She left me there on the street a few miles away from the arena. From there, I was taken to place where rooster fights are conducted by her uncle. This situation helped me in understanding how women are controlled in the name of shame and guilt cultures. In the question of women, the shame culture is more adversely impactful if the women deviate from what is acceptable in the society as it can even destroy the good marriage prospects of a woman if titled as a lady of poor character. In the case of married woman, a deviation from the acceptable rules of the society ruins her respect and reputation as a woman of sanctity and pious nature. It could even signal that a woman is of a loose character or is easily accessible in terms of sexual relations as well. Hence, the women are not normally seen deviating from the rules of the society.

The village operates a collective control on certain aspects of the society. This is observable in the question of both males and females. The entire village is so closely knit that it appears like almost everyone knew everyone else in the village. The closeness that is operated among the villagers in the village is explained by the villagers as follows. If a child skips going to school on any day, the news is delivered by the villagers to his or her parents. If an adolescent tries to purchase a cigarette from a shopkeeper in the village, instead of selling the cigarette, the shopkeeper generally questions the kid about why and for who the cigarette is being purchased to make sure that the young are restricted from bad habits. Generally, the news of any deviation from the acceptable behavior among the children is delivered to their parents by the members of the society. In a village, characterized by such strong shame culture traits, passing the news quickly about any deviations is perhaps considered as a responsibility as it is perceived as a corrective measure as well. In the question of females, the resultant fear of deviations is a carefully installed mindset by the society and the socialization processes. Mothers are seen refraining from any deviations to safeguard their own respect. This is learnt and followed by the daughters. Men in the society, fathers, uncles restrict the girl children from falling prey to any bad reputation.

Since, the whole society takes charge of operating a collective corrective control over the children and adolescents, children and adolescents are more afraid of the consequences of deviations than adults. In this context, such highly conservative and restricted culture can totally dismiss the possibility of any essential deviations like the allowance of male-female relationships which are fundamental for marriage, and progress of life. It appears to operate a control over women in particular and promote the possibility of comfortable marriages and family progression. So, a relaxation of rules is necessary to experiment with various essential aspects while still obeying the consecrated aspects. Games during Atla Taddi reflect such guided sanction of relaxation. The word guided is used because there are still some aspects of restriction which are part of the entire set of rituals, procedures and games that are followed on the day of Atla Taddi festival. Such restrictions may have been devised to preserve the sanctity aspect. Food can also be used as a tool of social control which has been discussed by Erik Erikson, 1977 in his attempts to explain concepts like ritualization

and fasting. It is possible to institutionalize any cultural aspect through fasting. This may have been used in the question of Atla Taddi to sanction freedom to play around publicly and in some cases play with boys in the village as well, but systematically connect such sanction of freedom to the original purpose of the ritual, which is to be blessed with an able and young husband. In the village of Marteru, both guilt and shame cultures are visible as a mixture, one complementing the existence of another. Shame culture clearly marks the unacceptable behavior patterns as people talk about what is unacceptable and criticize as it is the basis of the concept of shame culture itself. By repeatedly listening to what is unacceptable, there could be a possibility of the aspect of guilt to be strongly installed in the young minds regarding such unacceptable behavior traits.

In the aspect of guilt culture, rituals and sin play a bigger role. Atla Taddi has many ritual components which symbolize certain desired aspects of the socio-cultural configuration of the village. It is possible to implement social control through rituals. Guilt becomes a consequence of deviation from the acceptable behavior when such acceptable or desired behavior is enforced by rituals systematically. Atla Taddi has the custom of distributing Vayanam which are the offerings of dosa a south Indian dish to the females who attend the ritual. Here, many symbolic aspects of the event and their functional aspects are to be discussed. These aspects could be analyzed from the stand points of guilt and shame cultures as well. A legend connected to Atla Taddi mandates the follow of the rituals every year to ensure the blessing of a young and capable person as a husband to the singles and the longevity and wellbeing of the husband and children in the case of married women. There is a trend of role fixation that is very much visible in this festival rituals as the woman's individualism, her health, her progress in any dimension is subdued or discarded and her wellbeing is equated to the longevity and wellbeing of her spouse, children and family.

As much as the legend related to Atla Taddi raises hopes of receiving blessings to get an able young husband instead of an old man, it also fixes the role of a woman to serve and pray for the man she is married unconditionally after marriage (whosoever is the husband). In the olden days, there was an activity of giving the woman in marriage to old men for exchange of money. Though it is agreeably signifying a hope to escape such a marriage with an old man and be taken by a young and capable partner, the concept of serving whosoever a female gets married to is unconditionally enforced. The symbolism embedded in the rituals of Atla Taddi when analyzed has a similarity to the oaths taken in an army or police parade. Such oaths are taken in front of the higher ranking senior officers in a systematically organized parade. The entire process involves taking an oral pledge to execute the duties as required of an Army or Police officer. To energize the purpose of the oath, a sense of consecration is added with the feelings of nationalism and national duty. Unquestioned subordination to the superior officers as well verbally or gesture wise becomes part of the oath taking process.

Woman who follow the rituals of Atla Taddi symbolically do the gesture of offering Vayanam to the married woman in the society who are considered as auspicious and are comparable symbolically to the senior and fellow officers in a parade. But, what is the oath originally? The purpose of the ritual signifies the oath here. The purpose of the ritual is to get a young and capable husband or in the case of married woman, to ensure longevity and wellbeing of spouse and children. By the ritual, it is being mandated, with the fixture of what a woman wants for life and it is being reemphasized by an oath like gesture symbolizing the desired monogamic, dedicated to husband and family lifestyle among the woman. The ritual now has its implications in both guilt and shame cultural dimensions. Guilt is installed through the rituals, while the publicly taken oath signifies the shame culture aspect of the ritual. The Guilt and Shame cultures are intertwined and depends on one another which mandates a person to follow the rules and regulations of the society.

II. CONCLUSION

Games and rituals have complex connections that lay the foundation to the socio-cultural setup of the rural societies in India. The festival of Atla Taddi is an example of how a festival could have various functional aspects through which the society ensures the continuance of its cultural traits and the strict follow of various social rules. Though the origin of most of the rituals and an explanation of their functional aspects is not witnessed in general in any of the historical writings, owing to the aspect of sanctity and mystical nature attached to these rituals, the implications could be traced and analyzed to connect the various aspects in order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the functional aspects. Rituals are connected to various astrological legends, which mandate the follow of these rituals as the planetary positions repeat in cycles.

The role of a woman is an important aspect of the society which has its implications on the social structure, attributes, distribution of power and responsibilities, sexual selection and various social aspects which constitute the structural and functional dimensions of a society. Thus, in executing a social control, it appears that the fixation of the role of women is pivotal. Hence, the rural societies in India have their cultural aspects designed in such a way that the follow of the cultural aspects is mandated through rituals and intensified through games. It is like a balance of rule and relaxation existing in the forms of rituals and games. While a rule is restrictive in nature, relaxation is a guided sanction purposed towards a specific social and cultural function or to keep the generations away from abstinence and monastic lifestyles which could become derogatory to existence and perpetuation of societies. The rural societies may have recognized the need for initiation of correction of behavior from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources. Intrinsic in this context is sourced from the realization that occurs through guilt and sin. Extrinsic sources are the fear of loss of reputation, image, trust and respect. Reflecting these aspects with the analysis of guilt and shame cultures, it could be summarized that both rituals and games have an interplay of the aspects of guilt and shame cultures which mandate undeviated follow of social rules by programming the behavior both internally and externally.

These aspects that are discussed in Atla Taddi are not unique to Atla Taddi alone. Across India, various festivals have such deep socio-cultural and functional connections. The famous festival of Holi has men and women participating in a play with colors without any restrictions. It may also be analyzed as a guided sanction of such liberty to men and women. Every festival has a legend and several of the festivals have astrological connections too. Rituals and games are hence appropriately embedded into the cultures to protect the socio-cultural values and ensure their continuance across generations.

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Work and Leisure among the agrarian societies

Divya Teja Pasupuleti , Senior Research Fellow, Anthropology, University of Hyderabad.
email:divyateja2323@gmail.com

Abstract:

Since the period of industrialization, the concepts of work and leisure have become pioneer to understand the working system among different social groups and organizations. Though the concepts of work and leisure differ among industrialized and non industrialized societies, the growth of industries and urbanization have made the concepts more complex. This paper aims to understand and analyze the concepts of work and leisure among the agrarian societies in the contemporary social setups.

Introduction:

Work and leisure has become two of the pioneer concepts that were concentrated from the recent past both in academics and non academics. It was from 1970s, many scholars from U.S.A and U.K concentrated and focused on planning the future with the increase in the growth of leisure researchers. With the beginning of industrialization, concepts of work and leisure were given high regard in understanding work culture among the people. The literary works of nineteenth century concentrated on the struggles between the labour masses and dominating capital world regarding work and leisure time during industrialization and urbanization. The studies of work took its initial concern from the capitalistic domain. Many definitions on work and leisure were based on the concepts relating to industrialized societies. But it is a fact that the definitions which were prescribed by western scholars are not applicable to non western societies and they believe that the concept of leisure and work are similar and universal to many other societies. It is evident that very less amount of work and focus were given to the understanding of concepts of work and leisure among the non western societies by the scholars of work and leisure studies. It is believed by many scholars that non industrialized societies pass through the phase of globalization and urbanization which ultimately results in industrialized phase of social setup. Nevertheless, the fact that the concept of work and leisure among the non western societies are not similar and some times overlap with each other. This is because

of the lack of clear division between work and leisure among non industrial societies, that is, between the time spent on work for earning livelihood and time spent on other activities. Some times, the time spent on other activities can also be viewed as time spent on earning a livelihood or 'working' among the non industrialized societies. As per Rojek, (2000:115) "Human culture did not begin with the need to work, it began with language, dancing, laughing, acting, mimicking, ritual and a variety of play forms". This explains that the leisure activity was born in the lives of humans way earlier than the emergence of concept of work. But in the contemporary western societies, work is viewed as a progress of human development and the progress at both individual and social level. Development, both at individual and societal level leads to procurement of materialistic artifacts which defines the progress of human life. But it is always the major task for humans to achieve a balance between the material needs, work and leisure. In spite of the major task of achieving satisfactory balance, globalization and urbanization have tremendous effect on creating societal imbalance. Though the concepts of work and leisure are overlapping one another among the non western societies, it is visible that distinction and discrimination always exists within the social setups among these groups.

Leisure and Work in rural villages:

Leisure in India has always been aligned with rich cultural heritage. The leisure activities in India have evolved with the influence of folk and classical heritage which have a long history and distinct forms. Based on the descriptions in the literature in epics and social histories, it is evident that the leisure activities have been often distinguished between the high class of leisure and low or mundane class of leisure. The high class of leisure was always related with classical forms of leisure and the lower class or mundane class was related with folk forms of leisure activities. Leisure activities in India includes singing, dancing, visiting pilgrimage centers (an ancient tradition of tourism), playing games, participating in religious festivals, attending cultural functions, picnics, social

gatherings etc are some of the major activities that have been existed as leisure activities. It is evident that certain factors like economic status, social position, education, gender, age etc influence the preference and participation in such leisure activities. Of all the various leisure activities, games and sports are the major pastime activities that were played by both children and adults in the villages. There are different types of games, some of which could be called as sports that are played in villages. Certain games are significant to certain regions depending on the social and cultural significance of the game. Though the leisure activities seem to be available to every one in the society, it is understood that only a certain privileged section of the people enjoy the concept of leisure.

Fieldwork conducted by the researcher at a village in coastal Andhra Pradesh in 2016 made way for a better expansion and analysis of the concepts of work and leisure in agrarian societies. Through the ethnographic data that was collected from the fieldwork, it has been understood that the dominating community in that village belongs to the caste of Reddy who are landlords. Attempts are made to understand the perception and implications of work and leisure among the community of Reddy. Similarly, a lower community Maala, who are agrarian laborers, are considered for the purpose of understanding and analyses. People of Maala community are of a low income profile and work for daily wages at the Landlords. Their work involves a lot of physical toil and they are the people who actually work on ground to result in the successful agricultural yield. The landlords here are affluent and make the people of lower caste communities work for their agricultural fields. Other than the occasional supervision, checking of the accounts and planning, there is no physical toil involved in the work of the landlords. They are, hence, with a lot of accessibility to leisure time and involve in various activities all through the day. On the other hand, the Maala workers at the fields work for a minimum of six to eight hours in the fields in hot sun and have lunch in the field itself. Their day starts at around seven in the morning and continues till evening. Sometimes it is observed that some of these workers remain at the fields to safeguard the crop and the yield during the nights. Despite such variations in their lifestyles both the landlords and the workers spend time towards leisure activities, though the attributes of such leisure are extremely different and the perception of the same by themselves and the rest of the society are also varied. When a Maala worker spends his time in a leisurely activity, it is majorly towards smoking, sitting and chatting with other workers in the fields, gossips, drinking rice beverage (Kallu), playing small board games etc. In the community of Reddy, the leisure time activities include spending time with the higher community people in the name of social networking, watching television, discussing politics with the fellow community people, drinking alcoholic beverages etc. Though both the

communities do similar activities during leisure times, the perception of leisure by the people is diverse. The time spent on leisure activities by the Maala workers is often criticized by the Reddy communities as a futile time waste activity or addiction or valueless chatter which doesn't make any sense.

When the Maala workers are asked about the leisure time activities, they said that they do not have any leisure time at all. This explains that any work gaps that they go through during the day is not perceived as a leisure time by them. They further said that flocking together for a chit chat is an attempt to understand the world better and to gain the essential support of the fellow men. They reason drinking rice beverage as a relief from their body pains and fatigue because of continuous physical strain at the fields. A game played at the field is perceived as a brief relief while they say that they still continue to keep an eye on the field when they do it. This explains the meaning of leisure among the Maala community people as different when compared to the one that was explained by the western societies. On the other hand, when the people of Reddy community are asked about their leisure time activity, there is a sense of pride that exists in their talk to explain about various things that they do as leisure time activities. They tend to expect the listeners to appreciate their hobby instincts, taste for aesthetics and their humble attitude despite their profound affluence. The instinct to bet in games such as rooster fights and poker games is boasted as an adventurous way of living life, rightfully lived as they own the affluence but don't value its possession. They comment on the leisure time chit chat of the lower communities as the illiterate and unknowledgeable chatter and advise the working communities to focus on their work for the improvement of their lives. They further claim that their affluence is because of their smart hard work and discipline though it is most of the time properties descended from their previous generations.

In the field village, a sample of 200 people belonging to Maala and Reddy communities was studied focusing on the employment and unemployment thus prevailing (Table: I). It is visible that the number of male workers in agriculture sector is more than females. The Maala community works as agriculture labour at the agriculture fields where as Reddy community people own the lands of agriculture. In the recent periods, there is a shift of higher communities moving from agriculture industry to other industries like business, financing, shifting to urban cities for private jobs and Government employment etc. There is also a shift among the lower community people from agriculture labour to construction works, brick industry, factories, migration to urban cities for the posts of watchmen, labour contracts, etc. This shift from villages to cities and towns, in fact, is not providing lower communities to progress through their existing economic or social status. The work

among the lower communities that is available at the urban setups is considered as a lower level of work among the people living back at the villages.

Table I. Employment by Gender.

Community	Employed				Unemployed	
	Agriculture		Non Agriculture			
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Reddy	78	10	36	4	14	58
Maala	87	50	15	10	20	18
M- Male. F- Female. (Total Sample Size 400 people) (200 from each community)						

Women, work and Leisure:

It is a general perception of male members of all the communities universally in the village that the work of any sort done by women are trivial and are in no condition at par with the males do in the society. The work done by women at homes is not considered as work at all. Raising of children, cooking, taking care of the family members and elders, participating in social gatherings and family bondings etc are all not many times are not considered as work as they do not yield money. This happens to women across all the communities irrespective of their higher or lowers economic or social status. Men sometimes describe the condition of women as a day full of leisure despite her tightly packed day schedule with the handling of many responsibilities and activities. This is reflected in the wages that are paid to the women as well. Despite the clear legal guide lines that stipulate equal pay to men and women, the wages paid to the women are lesser than what are paid to the men. Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 guarantees equal pay to both men and women in the country. But, even then, this way of thinking is further supported by saying that men work for a higher or better yield because of their physical strength. In fact, in a true condition there is no difference in the quantity of work or yield and sometimes women are reputed to work the whole day with minimum time spent towards relaxation. Men are observed to take breaks during the work for smoking and tea, while women generally take breaks when they want to go to toilet, have lunch or take care of their child.

Women of higher communities do not go to work. Not working is not treated as an inability or lapse. Further, it is considered by the men and women of the higher communities that their women going to work is a stigma to their status and that their affluence does not necessitate women to go to work. Though the women have any hidden interests to work for themselves, such interest is suppressed by the rest of the members of the families of the higher communities. The idea of working for themselves in women itself is killed at a very early age as it has become a part of the culture of the village. But in the case of women of the lower communities, work of women is treated as an essential support to the families. Men in lower communities also support women working and earning for the sake of supporting their families. In some cases, it is also observed that the men completely depend on the earnings of the women who go, work and bring the payment.

Leisure is a product of Freedom and Independence. Freedom and independence are scarce for women in patriarchal societies. The stringent social and cultural setups in the rural societies generally restrict the women from acting independently or emancipating themselves from the tight chains and cuffs of the restrictive lifestyle. Women are often in the fear of being criticized by their own families and societies and hence don't participate in expressing their ideas of freedom and thought. The women of higher caste communities are encouraged to refrain from the concept of leisure and any activity that is dear to heart as they fancy. The idea thus imposed again by the society on a women is that they should spend their leisure time in pious activities such as worshipping God or visiting a temple only. Along with the concept of worship, activities like embroidery, learning musical instruments, learning to cook various recipes etc; which cater to the advantage of the men and family are considered to be meaningful leisure activities. Playing indoor games, watching television, chit chatting, activities that require woman to step out of the house are treated as trivial activities. In the case of lower community women, freedom and independence are integral parts of their lifestyle. The freedom thus brought in by the social setup and the economical necessity of the lower community women offers an ease to do any leisure time activity as they wish, though they are considered trivial. The social constraints that are prevailing over the rest of the society are implemented in a lesser magnitude and intensity because of a necessity driven, freedom oriented, independent lifestyle of the lower community women. This situation is made use by the lower community women to escalate in terms of the ability to understand and maneuver through any situation as exposure to multiple conditions always builds experience. Influence of education and urbanization is also visible on the social setup. The women who go to the village from an urban setup with the tag of being well educated is not considered of any low look even if she participates in any

of the restricted activities and further all the socially restricted activities are in fact demonstrated in pride to the women by men themselves. This emphasizes that education along with caste and class, influences the status of women positively when they are educated despite all the social restrictions.

Conclusion:

Among the non industrialized societies, the concept of work and leisure differs with the concept of western societies. The social and cultural setups of the people in the villages influence the concepts of work and leisure in the non western societies. India, being a caste and class driven society, the understanding of work and leisure gets influenced by the hierarchical setup that is prevailing over a long period of time. Though work and leisure are two different entities, one has to study the two concepts as a single entity, such that it helps in understanding the pattern of work and leisure among these societies. Work, though is defined as something which is serious, result oriented, not play etc differs from its stereotypic explanation and reflects a much complicated concept in relation to the social setups. Leisure is always viewed as a time pass and not a serious activity. But the meaning of leisure differs when compared with the concept that is shared among men and women from the same society. What is leisure for one may not be a leisure for other and thus, it is always better to understand what leisure is in a complete sense by comparing it with the concept of work and its social and cultural dimensions.

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