

**CHANGING SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS AND
LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS OF THE KUTIA KONDH: A CASE
STUDY IN KANDHAMAL DISTRICT OF ODISHA**

**A thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad in partial
fulfilment of the requirements of the award of the degree of**

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by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work embodied in this dissertation entitled **“Changing Socio-Cultural Aspects and Livelihood Patterns of the Kutia Kondh: A study in the Kandhamal District of Odisha”** is carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. George Tharakan C., Department of Anthropology, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, and has not been submitted to any degree in part or in full to this University or to any other University.

Date:

Hyderabad

Sushree Sangita Mohanty



CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**Changing Socio-Cultural Aspects and Livelihood Patterns of the Kutia Kondh: A study in the Kandhamal District of Odisha**” submitted by **Sushree Sangita Mohanty** bearing registration number **10SAPH03** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Social Science is a bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

This dissertation is free from plagiarism and has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for award of any degree or diploma.

Parts of the thesis has been

A. Published in the following publication

1. ‘**Indigenous knowledge of Shifting Cultivation: Observations on three Primitive Tribal Communities in Odisha**’. *ADIVASI: A Journal of Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI)*, Vol-53, Number 1 & 2, June & December 2013. ISSN: 2277-7245

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ABBREVIATIONS

AEO	-	Agricultural Extension Officer
AMCS	-	Agency Marketing Co-operative Society.
ANM	-	Auxiliary Nursing Midwife
ASL	-	Above Sea Level
BDA	-	Bonda Development Agency
BDO	-	Block Development Agency
BPL	-	Below Poverty Line
CC	-	Community Centre
CCD	-	Conservation-cum-Development
CD	-	Community Development
CIP	-	Community Irrigation Project
CS	-	Cooperative Society
DFO	-	Divisional Forest Officer
DKDA	-	Dongaria Kondh Development Agency
D.P.F.	-	District Protected Forest
DRDA	-	District Rural Development Agency
EMRS	-	Eklavya Model Residential School
FGD	-	Focused Group Discussion
FRA	-	Forest Right Act
GP	-	Gram Panchayat
HSC	-	Higher Secondary Certificate
HH	-	Household
IAY	-	Indira AwasYojna
IGNDPS	-	Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme
IGNOAPS	-	Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme
IGNWPS	-	Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme
IGP	-	Income Generating Programme
IRDP	-	Integrated Rural Development Agency
ITDA	-	Integrated Tribal Development Area
JDA	-	Juang Development Agency
JRY	-	Jawahar Rojgar Yojna
KKDA	-	Kutia Kondh Development Agency
LAMPS	-	Large Scale Multipurpose Co-operative Societies
LDA	-	Lodha Development Agency
LIC	-	Livestock Inspection Centre
MADA	-	Modified Area Development Approach
MBPY	-	Madhu Babu Pension Yojna
MCS	-	Marketing Corporative Society
MFP	-	Minor Forest Produces
M.L.A.	-	Member of Legislative Assembly
M.P.	-	Member of Parliament
MSL	-	Mean Sea Level
NGO	-	Non-Government Organization

NTFP	-	Non-Timber Forest Produces
PD	-	Project Director
PDS	-	Public Distribution System
PHC	-	Public Health Centre
PTG	-	Particularly vulnerable Tribal Group
R.F.	-	Reserved Forest
SCA	-	Special Central Assistance
SCSTRTI	-	Scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribe Research and Training Institute
SGSY	-	Swarnjayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana
SHG	-	Self Help Group
SMPT	-	Special Multipurpose Tribal Development
TDCC	-	Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation
TSP	-	Tribal Sub-Plan
VOM	-	Value Orientation Method
VSS	-	Vana Samrakshana Samiti

CHAPTER- I

INTRODUCTION

Conceptualizing Man-Nature relationship

Every community has its own way to meet its basic needs. Nature coalesce with human to fulfill their needs, fashioned in their own ways depending on their customs, traditions, demographic structure etc. Consequentially people with same natural surroundings have developed different categories of economic processes to meet their needs in a sustainable manner. However, the contemporary tribal cultures have developed two different modules, one being totally different from another. One is the age-old tradition, in which the tribes have been living, and another is developmental involving all interventions and challenges, unfamiliar surroundings making tribal culture in-roads. In the former aspect, there is a preservationist tendency, while in the latter, there are challenges and threats for identity and conservation. It is interesting to know, how people and their culture and environments are interconnected as well as how developmental interventions contribute to these aspects. Therefore, it is very important to examine the basic truth behind these factors and to arouse interest to know whether the age-old mechanism is well enough to manage the sustainable livelihood in the present surroundings as the situation is different compared to earlier one. The present study is an attempt to decipher and dissertate these consequences.

The relation between human, nature, and culture usually revolves around each other. It is interesting to know, how nature influences humans and their cultures reciprocally. Most important is that, we cannot understand any aspect of this triad in isolation; we must consider these three as one entity. Human, nature, and culture form a social complaisance, interdependent in an integrated way. Former pioneers in anthropology have established their theses, tenets, and concept on the basics of nature and human relation. The field was recognized initially by Franz Boas and his intellectual acolyte, Julian Steward. In the fifties and sixties, this apriorism was reinforced further particularly thanks to the ecological studies of Southeast Asia by Conklin, Geertz, Rappaport, Vayada and the likes. In France, anthropology like history was influenced by the great French traditions of human geography: Emile Durkheim's emphasis on the symbolic aspect of social life dovetailed to an extensive literature on the meaning, which differentiates social groups ascribed to nature- beginning with Durkheim and Mauss's study of '*totemism*' as 'primitive classification' and culminating in Claude Levi-Strauss's wide-ranging studies on myth and folklore vis-a-vis the natural

world. Anthropologists following Radcliff-Brown and Malinowski wrote monographs which highlight the evolution of social institutions courtesy their ecological surroundings; Evans-Pritchard on the Nuer, Raymond Firth on social life in the island of Tikopia, Edmund Leach on socio-political systems in upland Burma, and the work of Fredrik Barth, a Norwegian and a pioneer of ecological anthropology are insightful extraordinary.

Rappaport, the well-known cultural ecologist espouses his views regarding the relationship between culture and environment, According to him, the physical and social environment affect the development of cultural traits in that: individuals or populace behaving in certain different ways have different degrees of success in reproductive survival and consequently in the transmission of their ways of behaviours from generation to generation (1968: 20). He has depicted an example to consider how culture and environment interact with each other among the Tsembaga of New Guinea (1968). The Tsembagas are horticulturalists, living mainly on the root, tubers, crops, and greens they grow in their backyards and also raise pigs. The pigs are seldom eaten but keep residential areas clean by consuming garbage and help prepare the soil for planting. Small numbers of the pig are easy to keep for them as it requires a minimum of rearing and serves as both janitors and tillers. But the problem arises when the swineherd grows large, often there are not enough substandard tubers hence they forage for human excreta. A large herd also decimates garden crops. To cope up with the problem of pig proliferation, the Tsembaga developed an elaborate cycle of rituals that involves the slaughter of a large number of pigs. The pigs can then be distributed in the form of pork to friends, kiths, and kins. Thus this cultural practice of pig festival can be viewed as a possible adaptation to environmental factors for the moderation of pigs' proliferation. How nature influence human culture is clearly elucidated by Rappaport's example of Tsembaga.

Berry (1976) cited Murdock's (1969) analysis of 322 societies, which indicates that food gathering, hunting, and pastoral cultures tend to be nomadic, whereas fishing and agricultural societies tend to be more sedentary. Furthermore, the population of settled societies is usually larger than that of nomadic groups. Thus, style of food-gathering, presumably related to the environmental factors, is also related to settlement patterns. Many a related and relevant data suggested that migratory hunter-gatherer societies have very simple social organizations and weaker leadership systems than settled societies, which tend to organize cohesively and to have systematic leadership protocols and hierarchical structures. In Altman's (1984) analysis, agrarian and settled groups seem to be emphasizing

responsibility, obedience, and compliance, because people who live together and work in organized communities require more structured social practices. On the contrary, nomadic people often groomed children with an emphasis on independence and indigenous resourcefulness to eventually prepare and equip them well for the unpredictable and sometimes harsh demands of their environment.

Thus, the physical environment is very important in relation to the cultural practices, involving exact cause and effect synapses. But cultural practices in relation to the environment seem to involve a complex network of events. It is not a simple chain of causation that begins with one aspect and ends with another one. Different cultures have seen themselves as subordinate or dominant in relation to nature. Florence Rockwood Kluckhohn (1953:346), an eminent anthropologist, describes the appropriate explanation to the man-nature relationship. According to her, there are three general orientations of nature and culture relation in different societies and at different junctures in history.

(1) *People are subjugated to nature* (or) Subordinate to nature: living at the mercy of a powerful and uncompromising nature. People cannot change nature.

(2) *people are over nature* (or) Dominant over nature: it is the great human challenge to conquer and control nature; in simple terms: dominating, exploiting, and controlling the environment.

(3) *people as an inherent part of nature* (or) Harmony with nature: Man should in every way live in harmony with nature, like other animals, trees, and rivers, trying to live in harmony with the environment (Altman 1984).

These three types of orientations are present in each and every society within its cultural boundary, but the matter of fact is, who use it in what percentage. While '*People are subjugated to nature*' factor relates to spiritual activity i.e. rituals, another two aspects '*people rule over nature*' and '*people as an inherent part of nature*' introduced forest, as a means of livelihood, which should sustainably subsist. However, every society practise these three orientations and culture shapes through the ratio of using these three aspects. The ethnic culture, as it is reflective of a totally pre-arranged socio-cultural livelihood is closely related to a supportive environment. The tribal people have been coming under the influence of their environment, which provides them the matrix in course of time. The people belonging to tribal society are born and brought up in life-sustaining environ, where each one is entitled to

her/his meagre need (Das & Nayak 2001). There is subsistence economy, where the food security is supposed to be ensured at any cost. The inhabitants of these societies have an inbuilt equation with the unseen entity which, according to them helps the trees to blossom and bear fruits. The values shared by the tribal people are life-affirming. The constant belief on supernatural powers constitutes the very basis of their life process. The song, music and tribal dances have acquired meaning in the context with the celebration of life process (Sachchidananda 1979: 259). They have an absolute conviction that they are ordained to descend down the earth by the unseen power. Tribal culture is simply a way of life, where the concept of market dynamics reflective of the supply-demand cycle is non-existent.

There are evolutionary transformations in the society, with the advent of developed road communication, along with the profusion of information technology and mass media. It is more in the 21st century, because of the continuous actions and reactions of different forces and factors both internal and external (Ray 1989:1). Now-a-days, tribal populace has started increasingly participating in a wider, more generalized culture and in the pluralistic social community (Sharma: 2001). There are changes also in cultural aspects, in each and every sphere of societies, with a varying degree (Sahoo 2014:92). Culture change can be explained in terms of change in the composition of social units over time, and the change in the relations among units. Change is seen as a process, not as a state. All social changes are innovations, defined as an idea, practice or object perceived a new by individuals. Culture is an external expression of communities in their social and economic situations. Its core is the worldview and value system on which it is built (Sahoo 2014:94).

Tribal communities may be explained in terms of their ecological, economic and socio-cultural aspects, which have been differently influenced by the contemporary process of change. This process of change can also be visible in literature; for example, Ray (1989: xvii) explained the factors of change, as the impact of communication, science, technology and the access of modern society to interact with the tribal regions (previously inaccessible). Utilization of forest resources and hilly regions- the abodes of tribals, for implementation of national programmes, harnessing of mineral resources for country's upliftment, establishment of various factories around the periphery of scheduled hilly belts, have created a new kind of worldview, perhaps new incentives to turn their faces to the new life ahead. Sharma (2001) raised yet another factor to change, i.e. the identity, and explained it as this may be due to the emergence of non-tribal Hindu middle-class family within their social setup. With the emergence of this Hindu middle class, in particular, issue of culture, tradition, livelihood,

even control over land and resources, as well as demands of a share in the benefits of the projects of modernity, have become an integral part of the articulation of identity among the tribes. Therefore, a new consciousness among the tribes has emerged from interaction with the middle-class non-tribal Hindus. Sahoo (2014:94) explained changes in the economic and political environment of the tribal population had a profound influence on the social order prevailing among most of the tribes. He adds that contemporary society incorporates various social processes such as industrialization, urbanization, liberalization, privatization, and globalization etc. Among all those ongoing social processes, globalization is a process that has its impact on local communities too. Local technology, culture, and economy were delegitimized and under the influence of the new value system, the indigenous value system of the tribals underwent drastic changes. A change of culture is basic to the globalized economy, and the tool instrumental today is the information technology.

Whatever the powerful forces acting upon them, the change is inevitable, and natural, as explained in the above three authors' explanations. However, the factors, which are responsible to bring the aforesaid changes are different as Ray, Sharma and Sahoo explained it, which has been espoused by them. But the matter of fact is, people are changing, which was again raised by Ray in 1989 as to how to preserve the cultural identity and self-esteem of the tribals on one hand, and on the other, to widen the economic and political interface for integration into the mainstream. He raises two vital questions, how to resist change and how to initiate change, as studies suggested that, the factors which are acting behind the concept of mainstreaming are the major factors of bringing changes like education, communication etc. The role of identity also remains constant with the study of Sahoo in 2014.

The factors catalyzing, the concept of tribal society, is also a flexible one and the context of time and space are important considerations for the understanding of such a concept. As explained earlier, many pioneers like Whiting (1964), Rappaport (1967), Altman (1984) etc. envisage humans' socio-cultural and economic lives as intertwined with their surroundings, any change in their physical environment directly or indirectly affects their socio-cultural system and livelihood too (Behera & Basar 2010). The tribal populace of the world has learnt to live in most hostile environmental conditions prevalent on the earth. And it is also noticed that tribal people know how to live in harmony with nature, under the shield of their culture (ibid). As Bukhari (2006) explained, every change we witness today is bound to give way to some new changes, hidden within time. And every change leads to a life of every group, gives it a new lease of life with the help of time and space. Therefore, the process of

change is the harbinger of transformation through the help of times, decades, periods or it can be through generations. As is also explained by many researchers that the knowledge and experience which has been acquired and accumulated through the practice and understanding is being passed on to the next generation, and through examining this aspect, a process of change may be understood. Taking a view of this discussion, the study is categorized into three subsections.

Understanding changes in socio-cultural aspects and livelihood patterns:

a) Understanding human-nature relationship and its applicability:

Many authors have drawn their views on the relationships between nature and culture. Altman (1980) suggested how different cultures view their environments in different ways. Culture and environment are linked with people and various physical processes, which comprise two main components, i.e. mental activities and behavioural activities. Mental activities include phenomena that occur in the minds of the people and it also includes attitude, beliefs etc. These psychological processes are affected by the environment. For example; chronic food shortage influences behavioural and cultural attitude towards the environment. People may build different structures on the basis of their understandings and feelings about the environment.

For forest-dependent dwellers or small-scale hunter-gatherers or subsistence farmers, the forest provides collective invaluable resources. A variety of trees, with varying densities, maximize the number of people for whom the forest provides a livelihood, through the roots and fruits to supplement diets as well as produces that can be sold for cash. The forest also caters to the pastoral need as meadows for domestic and agrarian livestock and the grazing field for peripheral settlements. Hunter-gatherers, other forest dwellers, and subsistence farmers have a holistic cultural orientation that imparts value to the trees and the animals in the forest as well as to the human beings who inhabit the forest or its surroundings (Jeffery 1998).

Tribal communities are distinct in their cultural ethos and life pattern from the rest of the Indian society. This view holds that tribal people are the innocent offspring's of nature, who seek to live in harmony with nature but suffered due to the harsh climatic conditions (Areparampil: 1996). In this aspect, Phansalkar and Verma (2004) said that the tribal people do not have a sharply defined notion of private property, and resources around them seem to be meant for the nurturance of every one. Further, they said that the forest provides for their

simple needs, and it is this resource abundance that traditionally kept them away from the need and concepts of resource utilization intensification and settled farming.

Rao (1988) in his study of Inumanda village says collection of various forest produce is an important source of subsidiary earning for the tribals. It is especially important for the landless tribals. Mahalingam (1992) mentioned that forest not only provides the food, materials to build homesteads, fuel for cooking, light for warmth and fodder for their cattle, but also satisfy the deep-rooted sentimental need of the tribals. Vidyarthi (1985) says that the economy is an important constituent of the community life and plays a deciding role in the formation of the cultural and social structure of the society. Similar to Vidyarthi's view, Polanyi's study of primitive economy says that, in primitive societies, their economy is a set of rules of social organization and on socioeconomic structure rather than quantifiable performance" (Polanyi 2001, 133-115).

Since long, tribals have been occupying the sequestered forested regions. Though they are living in isolation for long, they are living in harmony with the forests and drawing their sustenance largely from the forests. Their life is connected in one way or the other to the forests right from birth to death. Forests represented and also represent for them a whole way of life, be it home, culture, worship, food, income and everything else. Their cultural and social life is closely interlinked with their forest habitat which is regarded as a deity on whose blessings the tribe survives. Not only are they familiar with a number of biological species around them, but also they possess lots of understanding of ecological inter-dependence of the various components of the forests. They have appropriate knowledge and skills of gathering minor forest produces from the forests.

The Tribal communities have been living in the hilly forest tracts for centuries in varying degrees of isolation, agglomeration and in varying levels of economic evolution. They have established a direct and beatifying relationship with the physical environment around them for subsistence. Man-nature relationships in such societies are explicitly comprehensible with every aspect of human living. This relationship is the nucleus of their culture. Culture plays as a facilitator between human behaviour and their respective physical environment (Misra & Bondla: 2010). Therefore, culture emerges as a balancing mechanism in ensuring survival and continuity of mankind.

The forest seems to be meaningful not as a concept or as an abstract idea, but as the real physical eco-system. The forest, that people are surrounded by, and which they

appropriate in their everyday life, is their compatible physical environment. When relating to their physical environment by acting, interpreting, talking etc., they relate to it as a bundle of significations (Jeffery: 1998). Every single practice is implicitly or explicitly determined by natural phenomena. The social implication of physical environment is very important, as it helps to understand the meaning of physical environment and how people interact with it. The physical environment is not only determined by its physical characteristics like density of the greenery, the species represented, the geological substratum etc, but also how its utilitarian value is harnessed by the people with meaningful restraints like where cattle are allowed to graze, which trees are cut for firewood, which land is cleared for agriculture or what fruits, leaves, tubers, and roots are collected for medicine or food.

In the process of interaction with nature, every society or culture always acquires a knowledge base. In the case of tribal societies, this knowledge base is known by the term 'indigenous knowledge'. Such knowledge is commonly manifested in the form of traditions, customs, beliefs systems, rituals, cognitive perceptions, worldviews etc. constituting the ideological basis of the tribal-nature interface. In the process, culture not only decides the utilization pattern of the natural resources but also regulate their use against over-exploitation. As the economy of these societies, particularly their level of rudimentary implements is spartan and subsistence-oriented rather than surplus-generated, it alleviates greed based accumulative greedy method of resource utilization (Misra: 2010).

In a broader term, it may be said that the tribal culture and forest ecosystem is so intertwined with each other that one of them is inconceivable without the other. Needless to say that, their material culture and economy is shaped with forest produces, religious beliefs, myth, values, lore, superstitions; all cultural patterns bear clear imprint of the tribe-forest continuum. Even though now the ground reality around the tribal communities has changed or is fast changing with rapid depletion of forests and consequential dispersal of tribal people, they attempt to guard the essence of their way of life and are unwilling to resist or lack the necessary attributes for regaining the demographic reinforcement required for entitlement.

b) Subsistence activities and livelihood practices:

The tribals are classified into various categories depending upon their patterns of livelihood and culture. When a hunter-gatherer community requires dense forest diversity for its survival, a shifting cultivator community slash and burn the forest, for crop diversity in multiple cropping cycles on hill slopes, along with forest produce collection and game

hunting. There are various communities showing various types and degree of dependency on the forest. Consequently, their livelihood trends become a part of their culture. The geography and topography influence the tribe's livelihood, earning potential, culture and above all navigate their interaction with the forest.

While explaining *Baiga's* source of income, Elwin (1986:79) suggested that it is very hard to estimate the actual source of income, as it is anthologized and variegated in nature. Their livelihood depends mostly on forest and accrues in the most haphazard way, which depends on the season or month. The income of *Baiga* is only partly in money; most of it is in kind. Some of the livelihood sources are collecting tubers, fruits, roots, hunting animals and catching fishes, collecting honey and forest produces bamboo matting and basketry. The problems of assured yielded outcomes are always haphazard, as it was also explained by Sachchidananda (1979:134) that, all communities are faced with the problem of allocating their resources within the limits set by their ecology as transformed by culture, skill and the acquired knowledge, their social structure, and values. While studying the economic activity of a certain society, this is important to keep in mind that, who are producers and what is the produce? How is the workload distributed? How are the productive groups organized? How and in what way the conflicts regarding produce collection solved and its resolutions are attained? What are the strains generated by the forces of modernization and how are the social structure and social values changing? These queries are being cropped up by him while studying *Munda's* economic activities. While restudying Sarat Chandra Roy's work '*The Munda and their Country*', he has identified that *Munda* economy is based on economic co-operation and reciprocity, and it is a fundamentals feature of the tribal economy.

There are many studies that explained the division of structures of the tribal economy: Verrier Elwin (1986:78-131), Devendra Thakur and D. N. Thakur (1994:160-164), U. C. Mohanty (1989:121-122) etc. They classify the tribal societies into five basic groups: a) Hunter-gatherers, hunters, and those who have to depend on the forest for their survival, like the Mankirdia, Birhor and Pahari Khadias of Odisha. b) Shifting cultivators, c) settled cultivators, d) Industrial and Mining workers, e) Miscellaneous group consisting of service holders, traders, workers of large farms and tea gardens, and artisans. The above criteria can be used while segregating them on their major source of income, but in general, almost all tribal communities are peasants, live in the hamlet and combine animal husbandry, poultry with different ancillary and auxiliary economic occupations to supplement their income. There are very few communities who are practising shifting cultivation en-bloc in-toto, others have combined *podu* cultivation along with settled agricultural practices. Whether

practising shifting cultivators or settled agriculture, they depend on and exploit the forest for their food gathering and hunting orgies. Even service holders and artisans too combine agricultural practice with hunting and gathering activities (Mohanty: 1989-121-122), which shows that the tribal people are basically propagulators (mostly shifting cultivators) and they try to adopt various means to supplement their livelihood needs.

Shifting Cultivation: a way of living

Shifting cultivation has generally been seen as cultivation and not culture, by those who are closely concerned and associated with the degradation of the environment. To bring the concept of culture in their frame of reference is as essential as bringing the concept of environment in their domain of culture (Atal & Bannagen: 1983). Practitioners of the shifting cultivation have always viewed from the perspective of the outsider who treated them either as from a different and closed social system or viewed them as of a satellite system having deleterious effects on their society and surroundings. The first perspective leads to the unintended consequence of a 'leave them alone', philosophy and the second, to the missionary zeal reflected in a 'change them fully', slogan (*ibid*). In the present situation, neither the philosophy nor the slogan would work fully for the lack of alternatives.

Considering the nature of economy and economy of nature in relation to shifting cultivation, it can be said that it is not completely non-economic or destructive to the environment. According to Jena (2006), some of the environment specialists took the stand that in the kind of environment in which this kind of cultivation is practised, it is the most rational form of cultivation, as no other form of cultivation will be possible. The tribal people know enough about their environment as they take good care of those trees and plants that are regarded by them as useful. Only the unwanted ones are destroyed. Moreover, Patnaik (1993) says, actually it is a practical approach to certain inherent difficulties in preparing a proper seedbed in steep slopes where any disturbance of the surface by hoeing or ploughing will result in washing away of fertile topsoil. The tribal people, therefore, take care not to plough or disturb the soil before the sowing. The destruction of weed and improved filth, necessary for proper seedbed are achieved with the support of fire. In most of the interior areas, where communication is not well developed and sufficient land for terracing is not available, slash and burn cultivation can be done for the present, and as such, every effort should be made to improve the fertility of the land. In fact, shifting cultivation comprises of highly variable and site-specific systems, that have developed in response to local environmental and cultural

conditions (*ibid*). The essentials are that fields are rotated rather than crops, and that forest recuperation returns the fertility to the soil (Jena 2006).

One major source of food security of tribes comes from what is known as shifting cultivation, a system of livelihood support, dependent upon the age-old primitive pre-agricultural practice. According to the records (Rout2005), there are at least 109 tribes practicing shifting cultivation, have been identified in India. It is practiced in 233 blocks of 62 districts spread over 16 States and nearly one million people are under this form of cultivation. It is estimated that around 25 percent of tribals in India are shifting cultivators (Reddy 1991).

However, with the population pressure, communities are needing to grow more food which is affecting directly and indirectly to their life. As a result, soil degradation, fall in yield, lower return, and reduction in green cover, change in traditional practices, arising out of changing conditions has entailed tremendous pressure against the shifting cultivation (Sule, S. 2006). It is argued that shifting cultivation as a cultural practice and as a mode and means of sustenance is not completely an unscientific and destructive practice. It is not the sole cause of biodiversity erosion, although it is one of the major causes (Jena 2000). There are arguments made from the anthropological viewpoints, for, not to abandon shifting cultivation completely, for the cause of biodiversity conservation, rather rational land use patterns may be considered to save the local culture on one hand, and conserve the biodiversity on the other. Now-a-days it has been realized that it is the knowledge inherent with the indigenous people that have the potential to manage the biodiversity. Moreover, it will provide a rich repository of farmer tested innovations, carefully analyzed traditional ecological knowledge available with the local communities and a powerful tool for upgradation. This can be used as a part of a more comprehensive landscape management plan in the form of land use systems, such as traditional water harvesting system, soil fertility management etc. (Jha 1997).

Dr. H.F. Mooney who had worked as Forest Adviser to Ex-states in Odisha for the period of 1942-61, and subsequently as Conservator of Forests, Odisha had carried out a survey of 'incidence of shifting cultivation in Odisha'. He estimated that about 12,770 square miles or about one-fifth of the total area surface in the State is affected by shifting cultivation, and nearly one million tribal people depend upon this method of raising crops for their subsistence.

From the long experience of cultivation, the traditional communities have acquired enormous working knowledge in the fields of classification, codification, accumulation, dissemination, and dispensation of accumulated knowledge on cultivation. Their understanding of the environment and sustainable resource management is largely embedded in their socio-cultural heritage and manifest in their interactions with the socio-ecological entity they are part and parcel of. These knowledge base reflect their perception of ecologically sensitive interactions with local ecosystems and the changing paradigm shift under the spell of modern technical knowledge and management practices.

Shifting cultivation is one such area of their interaction with the forest ecosystem, which showcases age-old wisdom in managing environment security and food security and disseminates treasures of indigenous knowledge of eco-system. It is one of the primary means of earning livelihoods for many tribal communities inhabiting dense hinterlands and hilly terrains of the state. It is synonymous with slash and burn cultivation, swiddening, *jhum*, fallow farming, *podu*, *nella* and many other local nomenclatures. It is a flexible and highly adaptive means of production. In Odisha, as per an estimate, the extent of shifting cultivation has been spread over 118 Tribal Sub-Plan blocks, of which 62 comes under shifting cultivation zone and 56 are partially covered.

On the basis of the degree of dependence on swiddens, L.K. Mohapatra (1983, vol2, ix) comprehended four types of dependence on shifting cultivation; i) exclusive dependence, ii) major dependence, iii) contingent dependence and iv) marginal dependence. With respect to each category of dependence, he has analyzed the community-wise and individual-wise dependence on shifting cultivation, portraying the situations at which the community or the individual may be categorized under the above-said dependency categories. Most of the tribes in Odisha, engaged in shifting cultivation as a means of livelihood fall under the category of exclusive dependence and major dependence, as shifting cultivation symbolizes a subsistence economy.

Because shifting cultivation in the traditional manner is highly diversified, it is more stable and reliable for the farmer than specialized cultivation. Economic self-sufficiency protects ecological integrity and viability in ways more important than simply maintaining diversity. The survival is contingent upon maintenance, rather than the exploitation of the larger community, of which they know themselves to be only one fractional component. In short traditional shifting cultivation is a system, which is well adapted to the tropical forest

environment, it helps maintain the bio-diversity of the forest and often provides significant benefit to wildlife species as well. The maintenance of such system is of considerable importance to the modern form of development.

Jena *et.al.* (2013) have made an attempt to explore the indigenous knowledge and traditional knowledge by trying to understand the community perceptions relating to shifting cultivation. The authors have analyzed the community perceptions on a conceptual understanding of indigenous knowledge in the context of primitive tribal communities, namely, DongariaKondh, KutiaKondh and Lanjia Saora in Southern Odisha for whom shifting cultivation is a way of life.

Since Hobart (1993) has explained that the tribal development has gone through several stages from the 1950's, such that the focus was first on their economic growth, then to growth with equity, then to basic needs, then to sustainable development, and finally to participatory development. At present, tribals are seen as an essential stakeholder in discussions on sustainable resource use and balanced development (Brokensha, 1980).

Non-monetized mode of production, Weekly market, and Government welfare schemes

Rai (1967) studied the tribals in the context of their economy, which is based on the forest, irrespective of economic stratum. The problem of getting the basic needs of economic life in a small, non-monetized or monetized economy of the tribals is of specific nature. The comparative nature and functioning of the economic system or organization of tribals will present a true picture of their problem. Dubois (2002) uses the sustainable livelihoods framework to argue that forest contributes to livelihoods, not only natural but also financial and a political capital and several social, ritual, spiritual and totemic or anthropomorphic needs. The tribal economy is no longer unfamiliar with money concept and, acts as a powerful incentive in their economic life over the generations of experiences with the modern and developmental aspects. Yet in the economic life of tribals, there are certain factors which are still free from money influenced economy, though it is not applicable to all tribal groups on traditional shifting cultivation have retained to a great extent their mode of production free from the monetized economy. The land for such tribal groups is not a marketable commodity and any person belonging to the group has access to the resources such as land, forest or fishing, and hunting territory. These resources are owned jointly by the lineage or clan and are transmitted to the next generation through inheritance (Mohanty: 1989).

The market in the tribal areas plays an important role, as these markets are the meeting places for the inter-tribal and intra-tribal interactions. It gives a space to the tribal people to interact with themselves as well as with other tribes and castes. While studying two minor tribes such as *Asur* and *Birjia* of *Chotanagpur*, authors M. Jha, H. Prasad and K. Agarwal (1993: 103) explained the role of the weekly market in tribal people's socio-economic setups. The tribal markets are generally weekly markets, which remain the hub of the tribal people's economic activities. Weekly markets play a major role in the tribal economy, which has been a process, where the local produces and other needful items, brought from outside, are distributed on purchase and sale basis among the tribals and non-tribals. Therefore, there is sale, purchase, and exchange of items of their daily needs where various castes and tribes are found to be involved, resulting in economic interactions among themselves.

Since independence, Government of India and Government of the various state have taken lots of initiatives for development of tribal communities. Lots of programmes are implemented for sustaining their multimodal livelihoods. The development policy for the tribals has changed in strategy continuously in search of sustainability (Thakur & Thakur 1994:187). The social scientists have laid emphasis on the importance of cultural fabric of the tribals to accelerate this process (Upadhyay: 2000). The social and economic conditions of the people belonging to the scheduled tribes have been the concern of Indian political and social movements in pre-independent India. Soon after independence, the basic principles for the development of the scheduled tribes were clearly articulated such as: 'Tribal Panchasheel', which was later endorsed by the Renuka Roy team (1959), Dhebar Commission (1961) and Shilu Ao Committee (1969). The creation of the separate Tribal Development blocks in the second Five Year Plan (1956-61), Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) within the state plan in the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), and formation of Large Scale Multipurpose Co-operative Societies (LAMPS), Tribal Development Agencies', Integrated Tribal Development Area Projects (ITDA), Modified Area Development Approach (MADA) and the Micro Projects for Particularly vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) reflected the course of tribal development administration in the country and so on (Rao 2001). The main motto of these initiatives is to bring sustainable development in tribal areas and especially to sustain the livelihoods of tribal communities. In spite of all these development initiatives, there are still scopes to impart and harness better economic dynamism, as a number of changes have been taking place with regards to the land use, access, control and utilization of the resources.

c) Changing traditional lifestyle and livelihood patterns

Change is also an eternal nonstop progressive phenomenon. It is not a biological hybrid; rather it is a cultural and social phenomenon. Change according to Napoleon Wolanski:

“.. is not unequivocal which elements of culture are old-fashioned and which are modern, or which are regressive and which are progressive. Each time this requires a separate evaluation with respect to a certain criterion; this criterion can be of adoptive value” (1995:245).

Change can be understood in the context of adaptation, because an adaptation is a smooth rollover mechanism, which does not have controversies, and it is continuous, whereas changes always have gaps. People adapt to new innovations to access better comfort of the present, which change their culture and social system. The human mind is the most complex natural phenomenon and it is the product of the evolutionary process which is vitally ever-changing, in addition to properties acquired by coincidence, the thought process consists of a set of adaptations designed to solve the long-standing adaptive problems. As a result, all cultures are inherently predisposed to change and, at the same time, to resist change. There are dynamic processes operating that encourage the acceptance of new innovations and improvisations while there are others that encourage changeless status quo. Since humans always live in a dilemma, at one stage they have the fear of losing their identity, and in another stage, they have the fear of isolation. Fear of isolation initiates changes whereas fear of identity initiates resistance.

According to Sahu & Sahu (2004), the task of documenting the traditional living patterns of indigenous people and their harmonic relation with the forest is of extreme relevance. It is also rapidly being lost, as ecosystem stands degraded, as people move to the urbanized conglomerates, as traditional communities and cultures disintegrated or assimilated into modern agglomerates, and as children are educated only in modern methods curricula and beliefs and in the predominant. The loss of an ethnic group or its culture and its associated knowledge is similar to and contrasted with the burning of a library. As the degree and volume of the interaction of tribal societies with the outside world are increasing and it is more increasing day-by-day, the future of the indigenous and accumulated knowledge is at risk of obliteration. Tribal youth with relatively higher exposure to consumer culture and outside modern world is developing disrespect (or lack of respect) for the age-old accumulated and indigenous knowledge.

The erosion of traditional living system (ethnicity) is increasingly on the rise and it threatens the biodiversity and cultural diversity in the interacting and interdependent system. Notwithstanding the fact that, some traditional aspects lost naturally, as techniques and tools are modified or obsolete and out of use, the recent and current loss is accelerating due to the rapid population growth, international markets, educational growth, environmental degradation and development process, and pressure related to rapid modernization (Srivastav: 2008). Similarly, the introduction of market-oriented agricultural and forestry exploitation focused on mono-cropping pattern substituting traditional practices, dovetailing losses in biodiversity and cultural diversity.

Conceptualizing change as a process

No culture is static, changes occur both from within and without. It has been noticed that, in all the societies, change is inevitable. However, the ratio can be varied according to the physical and social situation, as explained by Sachchidananda while restudying *Munda* changing culture (1979: 14). According to him the difference between one society and another under the aspect of change is that some may change faster than others. In some societies, there may be more resistance, while others may be more receptive to innovations. Some innovations and their consequent effects may change the identity of the receptor society beyond recognition. Some societies may be selective in their response to factors of change. In them, changes may occur in certain aspects of the society only, while the fundamentals remain intact for a longer period.

Therefore, change is the only unchangeable aspect of the society and constant change is among the most permanent features of the society. Change, that alters the 'underlying structure of an object or situation over a period of time' (Gidden 2005:42), does not refer to any and all the changes, but such changes, which transform the society fundamentally. The term change is considered neutral. This means that the objectives to which it is applied become different with time. Hence in this sense, a social change suggested no law, no theory, no direction and no continuum. The idea of a continuum is introduced when we refer to social change as a process. A process means a continuous change taking place in a definite manner through operation of forces, present from the very beginning within the situation (Sharma 2007). Social change as a process acquires meaning against the backdrop of the continuum. Change makes sense as a concept, only if there are also something that are not changing. This is because it gives a binary insight and there is a

possibility of comparison or contrast. As a matter of fact, social change may be understood together with social order. Social order is the tendency within the established social system that resists and/or regulates change (Ervin 2015:3).

To study a process, we observe a series of transitions between one state of being and another. The quality of two stages of the process may not be the same. The direction also may not be the same. A process may be forward or backward, upward or downward, towards progress or regress. Thus the process implies movement from one stage to another in a definite direction. Processes are both system-sustaining and system-transforming. Social processes are a part of social structure, regularly in the system- sustaining and system transforming exercises.

Types of changes that are identified by their nature or impact include structural changes and changes in ideas, values, and beliefs. Structural changes refer to transformations in the structure of society, to its institutions or the rules by which these institutions are run. Changes in value and beliefs may also lead to social change. Changes in the ideas and beliefs about children and childhood have brought about very important types of social changes.

Since time immemorial, two types of understanding i.e. prevalent tradition and moving tradition or in modern language, earlier tradition, and contemporary tradition, are coexistent, continuum and changes are empirical or observed facts of social life. Tradition and continuum coexist because all societies need a certain amount of stability and in-built social check and balance mechanism. Modernity and change are required to achieve a new level of knowledge, improved skill and technical know-how to meet changing demands and challenges. Social tensions and conflicts are also catalysts for social changes.

While explaining the process of social change, there is always a similar type of notional view, as social change extremely deterministic in presenting such causes, as technology and economics, as significantly limiting human choice and overlooked factors like 'the actual ongoing process of change' itself. Often reference is made with the view such as introduced technology, environmental shift or new contacts (Ervin 2015:31). Again Ervin raised some fundamental questions to understand the actual process of social change like;

- a) What happens while the actual change process is underway?
- b) What exactly changes- is it the society or is it the people?

c) How precisely do people change their behaviour during the process?

d) Is there a need to establish the role of individual intentions and actions for change?

Since long, the anthropologists studied traditional societies and people. The methods that they used were extremely suited to such studies. The functionalist approach further strengthens the interest of anthropologist in the integrated and surrounded study of people. This was used to bring up the functional interdependence between various parts of the culture. On the basis of these types of theoretical approach, the anthropological analyses are more descriptive. Evans-Pritchard insisted that the fieldwork monographs should aim at giving more than a description of the life of the people. They should involve in the interpretation of culture (Sachchidananda 1979:11). In the late 1960s and through the 1970s, the emphasis was placed more on the process or the actual dynamics of change, rather than just the result of the change. In the 1960s there was a trend with a predominate approach labeled as 'structural-functionalism' to study both societies and their changes. Alexander M. Ervin explained societies and their cultures portrayed them as largely static units and making up organic like bodies with the components such as social, economic, values, and belief systems, which were inseparable in their function and interconnections. Perception of change was strongly influenced by this static paradigm. The change was mainly seen, as brought about, by the persistence amalgamation of two or more cultures through- acculturation as formulated by American Anthropologists and British studies like the encounter between colonizing societies and the local tribes or nations in their colonize (2015:32).

Fredrik Barth's (1976) view on studying social change was with the earlier views of studying social change on the basis of patterns, customs, functions, and institutions and taking whole society as a standard unit. Barth contended that, to understand change, there should be better off to narrow the units of study to individuals, households or network of people in interaction with one another, and the people who change (based on) the choices they make in the process and beyond that, the actual processes they undergo, that include some persistence and the actual changes underway; how and why people are allocating their time and resources etc. (Ervin 2015). It is people, not societies that experiment with change. Society is an abstraction, generated from the agency and interactions of people.

Conceptual framework: Generations' adjustment process

The perspective of the tribal people is not an astatic picture of their universe, nor is it a closed phenomenon; it incorporates the changing perspectives of the world, which in turn,

guide their day-to-day life and culture (Adhikary 1991:116). With the change in the elements of the traditional universe of their forest habitat and self-sufficient or self-sustaining economy, as explained by B. N. Nanda (1994:11), while conducting a study on *Bonda Highlanders of Odisha*, the traditional economy was not exactly self-sufficient but was certainly self-sustaining. There is not the only appearance of literate, knowledgeable, educated and fluent expressive intelligentsia but also occurred growth in their cognitive perception of the universe. Based on their experiences, the young and youthful group often develops a fresh outlook on life, which, in turn, is placed as a conscious and aware model for their life. The perspective that, the upcoming young and youthful groups have built up, in the contemporary context, besides having an urge for a meaningfully defined area of socio-cultural communication in the changing situation, has a notion of an adjustment process to the changing environment.

Changes in the lifestyle, economy, culture, social structure challenge the developmental approaches to work effectively across all situations. One of the fundamental problems of working or studying effectively with people of another culture is understanding basic differences in their 'worldview'. Without this understanding, it is difficult to provide an appropriate explanation or analysis, and easy to get confused.

There is, however, a way or a process to quickly help to understand cultural differences i.e. generation's adjustment process. The study focuses and analyzes data using the above said 'generation's adjustment process', a tool that can facilitate to identify differences in core values across the culture within one particular time phase.

Applicability of the present study

As discussed above, for understanding a particular society, there is a need to understand their worldview over the generation. In this process, generation is taken as a nodal aspect, as on one hand, it is present in each and every society and on the other, it can be traced in different periods of a particular society or it can be traced within one particular society in a given period of time. As every society is having at least three basic generations, 1) old generation, 2) present or current generation, 3) younger generation, all social, cultural, educational, ritual and so many aspects of social life as explained by Ervin (2015:32) acted, interacted and interplayed within these three phases of generation. Furthermore, while acting, interacting and interplaying, each generation accumulate certain knowledge based on their experience, which helps to create or re-modify their viewpoint or worldview and with those

experiences passed down to the subsequent generations and in the same way it is passed on to the next generations. The vision, knowledge, worldview, which is passed on from the preceding generation is again modified with this process and passed on to the succeeding generation which is the present generation and so on. In this process, people who are acting within their generational limit always try to fit into their surroundings, as discussed in previous paragraphs. But the important aspect to understand a particular society is, how they are actually acting and how their experiences shifting to the next generation and with what kind of value they are perceiving? And, with the help of value oriented method¹, every generation's perception can be traced and there is no need to flash back or focus on historical data. It can be understood within one particular society at a particular time period, analyzing values by using this orientation method, with its five important components. Its five common human concerns such as man-nature relationship, man-man relationship, time sense, activity and social relationship and possible responses over generations.

It is important to note that, each and every generation within every society will express all three possible responses at some point of time. This study aims to find out, there is diversity within a culture, both among subgroups and individuals of different generations, and that degree of acculturation matters.

Most of the tribal people in India in general and Odisha in particular lead a toilsome, materially poor spartan life, in spite of multiple natural resources in abundance along with strong community ties, even under difficult and adverse circumstances. Subsistence and livelihood pattern of these forest communities are mainly based on shifting cultivation and some practise sedentary agriculture in forest regions, supplemented by hunting, foraging, and pastoral activities simultaneously, exploiting three main natural resources i.e. land, forest, and animals. Due to this, when any problem arises for their livelihood, these communities exercise all possible precautions for the conservation of the biodiversity, or else it could pose a serious threat to their survival and continuity. However, in the contemporary environment, tribal culture is fast transforming because of contact with outsider people and influenced by their different ways of life. The process has been continuing for a very long time and as facilities for communication have improved by leaps and bounds, the isolation of tribal hamlets have meltdown. Constant living with non-tribal caste groups in the village, the

¹ Tom Gallagher's (2001) Value Orientation Method (VOM), was initially started by Florence Rockwood Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck in 1940s to understand fundamental values held by different cultures in a Harvard Value Project.

growth of education, the growth of modern infrastructure in the previously inaccessible tribal belts, the work of various NGOs, SHGs and missionaries and also the growth of political consciousness have brought about a tidal change among the tribal people. Administrative agencies, forest officials, businessmen, money-lenders, and contractors have aided and added further stimulus to cultural transformation.

Therefore, the present study is an attempt to enquire into their tradition, customs, religious beliefs, superstitions, myths, values and more, in order to understand their attitude towards their environment and to understand, how their culture, beliefs, and practices are geared to maintain a balance between human and ecological needs. In a broader sense, it is intended to explore the man-nature relationship, which most often exists in their thought process and it also provides an understanding of how modern and developmental aspects value the natural environment and to assess in what ways they are likely to participate in and engage with their natural environment. The study is conducted in three selected hamlets out of 68 of the Kutia Kondh settlement in Kandhamal District of Odisha, India.

There are number of studies conducted on Kutia Kondh. For example; the gallant British Army Officer, Major General John Campbell's vivid account of the Kondh and their country during 19th century in his famous book *A Personal Narrative of Thirteen Years Service amongst the Wild Tribes of Khondistan* (London, 1864), Rowney (1882) had described Kondh as "a race even wilder than the Gonds and Bhills, Thurston had cited the following observations of W. Francis in the *Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam District, Vol.-1* (1907) about the Kutia Kondh: the only really primitive Khonds in Vizagapatam are the *Dongria (Jungle) Khonds* of the north of *Bissamkataluk*, the *Desya Khonds* who live south-west of *Bissamkatak*, in and around the Niamgiris, the *Kuttiya (hill) Khonds* of the hills in the north-east of *Gunupur taluk*, N.A. Watters in his famous book *The Half Clad Tribals of Eastern India* (1970) wrote, Much of the (Kutia) area is a virgin forest in which herds of elephant roam freely and bears and tigers abound. According to Thurston (1989, 357), ..the name which they use themselves is 'Ku' and their language accordingly denominated as 'Kui', and therefore the tribe call themselves 'Kuiloka' or 'Kuienju' which may possibly be derived from 'Ko' or 'Ku', a Telugu word for a mountain (Russell & Hiralal, 1916: .461-465). All the aforesaid studies are based on their habitats, dressing pattern, ritual activities and some books like 'The Kondh (1982)' by Barbara, M. Boal and 'The Kondh of Orissa (1982)' by N. Patnaik and P.S. Daspatnaik contains some ethnographic account of the tribe. Likewise in 1964 *Niggemeyer*, a German Anthropologist had published a detailed ethnographic account

of the KutiaKondh in the German language. Besides this, in 2002 *M. K. Jena et.al* has given an account about their social organization, religious belief and classify various components of their nature in the book '*Forest Tribes of Orissa: The Kuttia Kondh*'. Similarly, S. C. Mohanty (2009), K.Patnaik (2008), K. Mohapatra (2008), N.K. Behura & N. Panigrahi (2002 & 2003) have done some of the other types of research among the Kutia Kondh of Odisha. However, there is no comprehensive work dealing with all the aspects of Kutia Kondh life and culture. Another reason for the study of this community is, there is no detailed ethnographic study on their changing life and culture with special reference to socio-cultural and livelihood patterns. So it is the reason for studying this particular community. This study does not confine itself to changes taking place in such aspect which are dealt with in previous studies, rather it is an attempt per se to cover those that deserves depiction and analyses in the present scenario. Care has been taken to show horizontal variation in culture, evident in the three geographically distinct areas.

The major objectives of the present study are:

- 1. To understand how the Kutia Kondh socio-cultural life is interwoven with the forest, land and other aspects of their environment.**
- 2. To understand the Kutia Kondh's traditional source of livelihood.**
- 3. To study the changes in the Kutia Kondh socio-cultural aspects and livelihood patterns and also to analyze its consequences.**

Scope of the Study

The study aims at providing a surrounded picture of Kutia Kondh life and culture. The introductory chapter deal with the background of the study. The second chapter deals with the detailed description of the village such as description of geographical area, flora and fauna, minerals, climate, population, administration, health, hygiene, sanitation, literacy rate, institutional and financial organization i.e. bank, market, household income and marital status. It also discusses the ecological setting of the field of study. The third chapter deals with the complete picture of the socio-cultural life of Kutia Kondh, which includes ethnic identity, language, settlement and housing pattern, concept of beauty, body adornment, tattoo, life cycle rituals, family, marriage, kinship, political organization, economic organization, ritual activity, music and dance etc. In the fourth chapter, titled 'the world of Kutia Kondh' there is an attempt to sketch out the role of the forest in the Kutia Kondh's day to day life. Strong social and spiritual ties with forests, plants, and animals have contributed to the tribal

culture and the natural environment with direct and indirect reciprocal relationship. Forest, trees, sacred groves and certain landscape are held with kinship relations as brother and sisters of Kutia Kondh. These relationships with nature or parts and elements of nature matter a lot to almost all the members of the tribe.

The Kutia Kondh economy and livelihood is analysed in the fifth chapter with a detailed discussion on the available resources, their notions of resources, livelihood, and dependency on the forest for livelihood. Focusing from the point of view of the Kutia Kondh, who are inhabiting within the forest, the attempt was to understand the ascribed meaning to the natural resources. Since the most important economic activity is shifting cultivation, the land system is sought to be analysed in-depth so as to obtain an accurate overview of the age-old traditional cultivation process. This is followed by land, soil, main crops, agricultural operations and rituals before and after cultivation etc. The last section of the chapter deals with Kutia Kondh economy in changing scenario with reference to, markets, exchange, and credit. The weekly market explained in details with its functions analyzed.

The sixth chapter details the trends of transformation in Kutia Kondh life and culture and ends with some reflection on the future of the community. This chapter attempts to discuss their age-old traditional system regarding the forest, socio-cultural life, health, hygiene, and disease. Through the impact of outer forces, the society has transformed to a certain extent and the traditional mode of the economy has no more importance nor the sole source of economy. At present, they depend on a variety of economic activities. At the same time, Kutia Kondh's understanding about their environment is also changing. As a result, today most of them interpret their world with a different sense, which is explained with generations adjustment process, taking three different age-groups as a case study (especially three generations). This chapter aims to identify the new varieties, which they have developed to cope up with the changing environment. The last (seventh) chapter is an attempt to provide a summary of the findings of the study. A critical overview of the findings along with a few observations are also discussed.

Methodology

Before going to the field, a number of available published materials on Kutia Kondh and other study materials relevant and relating to the study have been reviewed and cited in the introductory chapter. The study was carried out in the Kandhamal district of Odisha among the Kutia Kondh, one of the Particular vulnerable Tribal Group (PTG) in Odisha.

The methods employed for study are, observation, both participant and non-participant, as conditions prevailed and permitted; interviews, both individual and group; household census, scheduled for each family; and case studies were also conducted in certain cases to give an in-depth understanding.

A comprehensive schedule, covering the demographic and other aspects (house type, occupation, means of livelihood, family type, marriage system, educational status, age-sex ratio, etc.) adheres for the collection of basic data. Schedules also provided a standardized tool for observation and interview and help to gather data systematically attaining objectivity. This schedule helped the researcher to ask questions systematically so that the interview becomes mutually engrossing. Case studies were done to gain in-depth knowledge about their traditional skills and also it gave insight into their personal experience of the forest resource management. This helped to identify the changes in due course of time. Focused Group Discussion (FGD), where a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment from personal experience on the topic of research helped to know the opinion of the people with regard to the livelihood, economy, forest management, and developmental intervention.

After the fieldwork, the data processed and the quantitative data were coded and tabulated. Percentage and average were calculated wherever required to make the data meaningful for both linear and curvature interpretations.

CHAPTER-II

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

As per the census 2011, the state of Odisha has the third highest percentage of the tribal population in the country, which stands at 95,90,756. The State has the unique distinction of having 62 different tribal communities, spread over 30 districts and 314 blocks. They constitute 22.85 percentage of the total population of the state and contribute 9.17 to the total tribal population of the country. Among the numbers of the tribal communities, living across the length and breadth of the State, there are some groups who are relatively more isolated, archaic, vulnerable, deprived and backward. Out of the 62 tribals, 13 tribal communities have been identified as Particular vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs). Odisha has the largest number of PTGs i.e. 13 among the States and Union Territories of India. They are Birhor, Bonda, Chukutia Bhunjia, Didayi, Dongaria Kondh, Hill Kharia, Juang, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan, and Saora. These PTGs were identified in Odisha during different plan periods starting from the 5th Plan Period (1974-79) to the 8th Plan Period (1992-97)

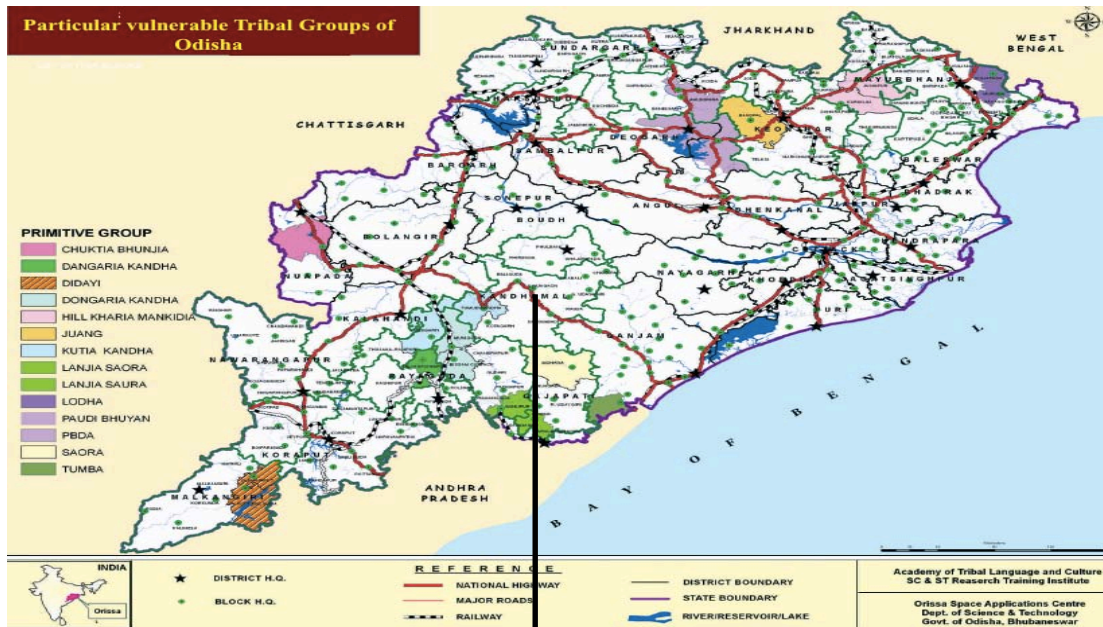
Kutia Kondh area:

The Kutia Kondh is one of the 13 Particular Vulnerable Tribal Groups of Odisha. They have been identified in two plan period i.e. plan holiday (1978-80) and 7th plan period (1985-90). The Kutia Kondh's are the sub-group of Kondh tribe. The Kondh tribe is the largest among the Scheduled Tribes of Odisha, according to the 2011 census. However, now their population is decreasing. The majority of Kutia Kondh inhabit the south-eastern part of the Kandhamal district, while some communities have settled in the Kalahandi district near the western boundary of Kandhamal (erstwhile Phulbani) District and also in the Koraput District, south and south-west of Kandhamal. They mostly reside in the Eastern Ghat Region of the State.

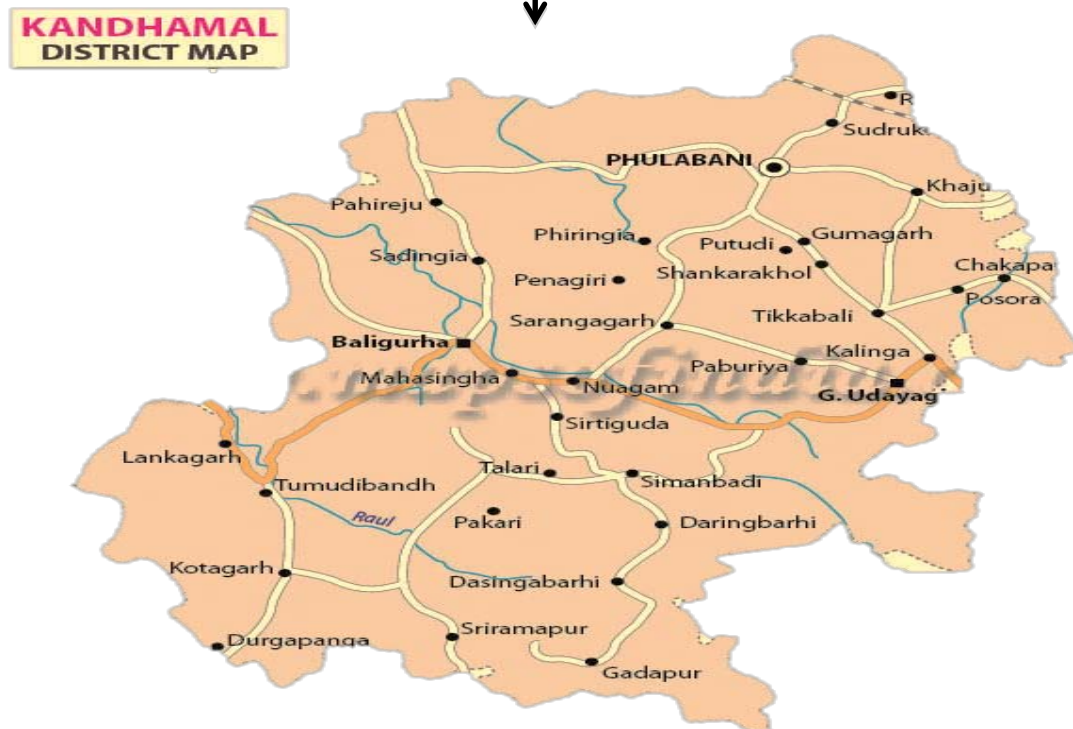
The Kandhamal District

Kandhamal, literally meaning the Land of the Kondh, is one of the 30 districts of Odisha, with a substantial concentration of tribal population. It was formed on 1st January, 1994 vide Government of Orissa Notification No.56403/R C.D. 218/93, dated 22.12.1993 by bifurcating the former Boudh-Kandhamal (Phulbani) district. The district covering a geographical area of 7,654 sq. km. is bounded by Boudh district in the North, by Rayagada district in the South, by Ganjam and Nayagarh districts in the East and Kalahandi District in

the west. The district is situated within the longitudes 83° 30' and 84° 35' in the East and latitudes 19° 34' to 20°34' in the North. Phulbani and Balliguda are the two sub-divisions of the district. The Balliguda sub-division lies on the plateau at heights varying from 300 meters to 1100 meters above the mean sea level (MSL). The eastern side of the sub-division consists of wide, well-cultivated valleys. The hills of this sub-division are a part of the Eastern Ghats.



Map 1: Odisha map showing distribution of PTGs



Map 2: Kandhamal District

Sanctuary, the Protected area

According to the Kandhamal new Gazetteer (), in Kandhamal district, there is only one wildlife sanctuary namely Kotagarh Wildlife Sanctuary located in the Baliguda subdivision. It covers an extensive area of 399.5 Sq. Kms, well spread over the part jurisdiction of Kotagarh and Tumudibandha Range under Kotagarh, Tumudibandha and Daringabadi LAMPS of Baliguda Civil Sub-Division. The sanctuary is bounded by forests of Baliguda Range on the North, forests of Belghar Range on the West, Srirampur 'A'- D.P.F. and Durgapanga R.F. on the South and Forests of Simanhbadi Range on the East. The forest type mostly noticed in the area is North Indian Moist Peninsular Sal Forest, Northern tropical semi-evergreen forest and a limited patch of *TerminaliaTomentosa* Forest and some patch of dry Bamboo Brakes. There are good numbers of creepers and climber species coupled with a variety of grasses, seen in the sanctuary. The dense lush green forests with Sylvan and serene picturesque beauty are a major attraction. A wooden bungalow at Belghar attracts many nature-loving visitors.

Ecology

Climate & Soil

The climate in the Kutia Kondh hills is more extreme than in the plains of Odisha. The cold and dry season starts approximately in November and ends in February. It is followed by an increasingly hot season that lasts until mid-June. But in April or May, the pre-monsoon storms register the arrival of South-west monsoon, lasting from mid-June to October. The average rainfall during monsoon is 1,587 mm (62.5 inches) per annum.

The soil in the fields of Kutia Kondh consists of red laterite that becomes hard, caked and cracked during the dry season and can be tilled only after it has been softened by the rain. One of the characteristic features of the Kutia Kondh hills is that the dense forests cover the east slopes, whereas in the south and west slopes, trees and engulfing creepers reach great heights, while in the north slope, the mixed forest is frequently interspersed with dense bamboo grooves. Jena et.al (2006), in their ethnographic study about the Kutia Kondh, describe the area as densely covered by tropical forests but mention that formation of primeval forest can only be found in peripheral hilltop areas, on the top of the hills and in the borderlands of hutment settlement. In addition to these characteristics, the enclosing landscape is the secondary shrub-jungle, dominating the areas used by the Kutia Kondh for shifting cultivation, areas that will be abandoned for years till the next agricultural cycle.

Forest, Flora & Fauna

Kandhamal has the highest forest coverage in Odisha. About 65.38 percent of the district is under forest cover. A major portion of the forests is covered by *sal* trees. *Sal* leaves, *sal* seeds, *kendu* leaves, *siali* leaves, and honey are among the major Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP), collected by the forest dwellers. Rural populace depends on forests for firewood, foliages, fruits, roots, tubers, logs, small timber and for other needs.

The forests extend over an area of about 5,709.83 sq. km which exceed 71.19 percent of the geographical area of the district. The district forest resources are administered and managed by the two Territorial Forest Divisions of the district, headquartered at Phulbani and Baliguda. A number of *VanaSamrakshanaSamitis* (VSS), which are community institutions for forest protection, are functional in the district. Each of the forest division is under the administrative control of a Divisional Forest Officer (DFO). The office of the Divisional Forest officer, Baliguda was created in 1938 while that of Phulbani, was created in 1945. The Divisional Forest Officers are assisted by a number of subordinate staffs for the smooth and efficient management of the forests.

Flora

The forests, coming under Kandhamal subdivision is broadly classified as (i) Northern Tropical Moist Deciduous Forest (moist *sal* along the northern border) and (ii) Northern Tropical semi-evergreen Forest (dry *sal* along southern border). Mixed forests occur in pockets within the moist and dry *sal* forests. A large area of forests is covered with dense thickets of bamboos (*Dendrocalamus strictus*) generally found on the hill slopes. Mixed forests are also found in pockets, both in the moist and dry *sal* forests. *Salis* one of the dominant species of the forests, held in high esteem by the Kutia Kondh due to its manifold usages in their everyday life and its religious and ritual significance, additionally, *sal* has also a commercial value.

Mango trees are another widely distributed species of great importance in the economic and cultural life of the Kutia Kondh. Bamboo is common, even though there are little extensive bamboo stands in the area of the Kutia Kondh. A variety of other trees like *mahula* tree (*Bassia latifolia*), the Indian sago palm (*Caryota urens*) and the *Siali* creepers (*Bauhinia vahlii*) are grown in forest areas of the Kutia Kondh. In addition, the Jungle yields grass, shrubs, herbs, foliage's, leaves, bark, edible fruits, roots and berries, tubers, and many other utilitarian forests produces contributing to the living of the Kutia Kondh. Besides these,

there are numbers of other floras with its predominant and economic species types, which are as follows:

Local Name	Botanical Name
<i>Anla</i>	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>
<i>Arjuna</i>	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>
<i>Asan</i>	<i>Terminalia tomentosa</i>
<i>Asoka</i>	<i>Saraca Indica</i>
<i>Bahada</i>	<i>Terminalia belerica</i>
<i>Bandhan</i>	<i>Ougeinia dalbergioides</i>
<i>Bheru</i>	<i>Chloroxylon swietenia</i>
<i>Champa</i>	<i>Michelia champaca</i>
<i>Char</i>	<i>Buchanania latifolia</i>
<i>Dhaman</i>	<i>Grewia tiliaefolia</i>
<i>Harida</i>	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>
<i>Jamun</i>	<i>Eugenia jambolana</i>
<i>Kasi</i>	<i>Bridelia retusa</i>
<i>Karada</i>	<i>Helicteres isora</i>
<i>Kumbhi</i>	<i>Careya arborea</i>
<i>Mahi</i>	<i>Wodier ougeinia</i>
<i>Mahul</i>	<i>Madhuca indica</i>
<i>Makara Kendu</i>	<i>Diospyros embryopteris</i>
<i>Mango</i>	<i>Mangifera Indica</i>
<i>Mitikinia, Tentera, Salai, Dhaura</i>	<i>Anogeissus latifolia</i>
<i>Mundi, Sunari</i>	<i>Clasia fistuala</i>
<i>Nageswar</i>	<i>Mesua ferrea</i>
<i>Piasal</i>	<i>Pterocarpus marsupium</i>
<i>Sal</i>	<i>Shorea robusta</i>
<i>Sidha</i>	<i>Lagerstroemia parviflora</i>

Table 2:1 Flora: list of predominant species

English/Local Name	Botanical Name
Bamboo: (4 types)	<i>Bambusa arundinacea, Dendrocalamus stratus, Bambusa tulda, Bambusa nutens</i>
<i>Eucalyptus</i>	<i>Eucalyptus toreliana</i>
<i>Gambhari</i>	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>
<i>Kendu</i>	<i>Deospyrosmelanoxylon</i>
<i>Sabai Ghasa</i>	<i>Eulaliopsis binate</i>
<i>Simuli</i>	<i>Bombax ceiba</i>
<i>Sisoo</i>	<i>Dalabergialatifolla</i>
<i>Tamarind</i>	<i>Tamarindus indica</i>
<i>Teak</i>	<i>Tectona grandis</i>

Table 2:2 Flora: List of economic species

Fauna

The wildlife of the district is protected under Wild Birds and Animals Protection Act, 1912, and the Odisha Forest Act 1972. The commonly seen wild animals are bison, bear, elephant, hyena, leopard, tiger, wild dog, wolf and the smaller species like fox, jackal, weasel etc. The ungulates usually spotted with are, barking deer, bison, boar, elephant, mouse deer, *nilgai*, porcupine, *sambar*, and spotted deer. The other animals that inhabit these forests are horned antelope, civet cat, Indian badger, mongoose, pangolin, wild buffaloes, etc. Among the reptiles are the cobra, krait, python, russell viper, whip snake, and the ordinary grass snakes. The forests were once full of wildlife and it was rightly referred the paradise for the lovers of wildlife and the *shikaris* (hunters). But due to the wanton destruction of forests, unrestricted poaching, and adverse biotic factors, the number and density of wild animals drastically declined. So the fauna of the forest was regarded as much a liability as an asset for the Kutia Kondh.

English/Local Name	Botanical Name
Barking Deer	<i>Muntialis muntjak</i>
Bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>
Bison	<i>Bos gaurus</i>
Chital (or) Spotted Deer	<i>Axis axis</i>
Elephant	<i>Elephas maximus indicus</i>
Fox	<i>Vulpes bengalensis</i>
Hares	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>
Hyena	<i>Hyaenidae</i>
Indian Mouse Deer	<i>Tragulus meminna</i>
Jackals	<i>Canis aureus indicus</i>
Leopards	<i>Panthera pardus</i>
Monkey	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>
Nilgai	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>
Porcupines	<i>Hystrix Indica</i>
Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>
Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>
Wild Pig	<i>Sus scrofa cristatus</i>
Wolf	<i>Canis lupus pallipes</i>

Table 2.3 Fauna: List of predominant species

The Kutia Kondh highland with its dense forests, numerous ever-flowing streams, and small rivers serve as a la haven for animals such as bears, boars, deer, elephant, leopards, monkeys, peacocks, snakes and occasionally Royal Bengal tigers too. The fauna of the forest may be regarded as much a liability as an asset for the Kutia Kondh, as some of the predator animals endanger their life even entering the settlements. Sometimes

they cause huge damage to the cultivation field and standing crops entailing hunger for the cultivator (Jena et.al 2006, Niggemeyer 1964).

Hunting is an important tradition for the Kutia Kondh society. It provides not only animal-protein rich meat but also fulfills part of needs of socially and culturally ritualistic activities. Animals have manifold significance in the religious and ritual life of the Kutia Kondh. By sheltering both the flora and fauna the Kutia Kondh hills accentuate the elements that contribute to the traditional customary and cultural life of the forest dwelling communities. With the degradation of the forests, the forest flora and fauna is diminishing. Whereas in Niggemeyer's view, around the fifties of the last century speaks of the Kutia Kondh environment as a 'paradise' for wild animals, which has become severely endangered in the meantime.

Historical context regarding administrative setting

The image of the pre-colonial tribal societies was that they were living as an isolated community in their forest, fully autonomous within the political sphere that does not stand up to the scrutiny of the century before British colonization. The population of the Kondh area, as well as of other tribal areas in Odisha, was dependent, even though loosely, on small principalities of the coastal plains. The Rajas of these princely states governed their hinterlands with the help of local representatives, although their hold was lax and remote. For different reasons, the tribal communities in the Kondh hills enjoyed a much higher degree of local political autonomy rather than during post-colonial times (Praharaj 1988).

After the introduction of Anglo-Indian administration in the Kondh hills by the middle of the nineteenth century, the Kui speaking people lived under three separate authorities. The Kandhamal sub-division in the North was administered from Anugul, the Baliguda sub-division south of Kandhamal had come under the authority of a British Collector, and a part of Ghumusar, situated in the hill tracts was administered by an Indian Deputy Collector.

The Kutia Kondh inhabited forest was part of the Baliguda sub-division belonging to Ganjam District. The District was then part of the Madras Presidency and the whole Kondh region was known as the Hill-Tracts-Agency. The Collectors of the sub-divisions exercised special powers as agents to the Governor. They were responsible both for the civil and criminal jurisdiction, granting and exercising further passage of right to appeal to the High Court and the Governor-in-Council. The historical reasons for this procedure go back to the British policy of abolishing the practice of human sacrifices, widespread in the beginning of the 19th century in the Kondh hills (Jena 2006).

Based on the British colonial policy of ‘Indirect Rule’, Zamindars acted under the Collectors, received a fixed amount of money from ‘*mutha* head/*sardar*’ (area headman). *Mutha* means a small area including its village. The *mutha* head, which was a hereditary office, was responsible for the collection of the tribute taxes on each village and for maintenance of law and order in the *mutha* (*ibid*). The power of the *mutha* was quite limited, but in isolated areas like Kutia Kondh land, the *mutha* heads exerted their influence on the local tribal communities even some years after independence. With the reorganization of the Indian Administration, the institution of *mutha sardar* was abolished. Then the Baliguda Sub-division, as one of the three sub-divisions of Phulbani district, was divided into several Panchayat units and provided with the local self-government.

With the change in the Panchayat Raj system and the reforms in the local self-government, a new administrative hierarchy was formed through a process, implemented since 1996. The local self-government is headed by the chairmen of the Zilla Parisad, and then the Project Director (PD) of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), followed by the Block Development Officers (BDO). At the Gram Panchayat Level, the chairman of the Panchayat Samiti heads the Panchayat Samiti, assisted by the subordinates, the Sarpanch and Samiti Savya, followed by the Naib Sarpanch and finally the ward member.

Tumudibandha Block: Kutia Kondh Development Agency (KKDA) Belghar

Kutia Kondh Development Agency (KKDA), Belghar was established on 16th, June 1978-79 during 5th Five Year Plan (1979-80) and registered under the Society Registration Act, 1960 in 1978 titled Kutia Kondh Development Agency Belghar, with its Head Quarters located at Belghar, 48 km afar from Baliguda, the district headquarter of Kandhamal. It is situated at a distance of 30 km towards Tumudibandha C.D Block headquarters, Kandhamal district. It is spread over 3 Gram Panchayats in Tumudibandha Block of Kandhamal District. It comes under the jurisdiction of Baliguda ITDA of Kandhamal District.

KKDA year of Establishment & Plan Period	1978-79 (5th Five Year Plan- 1979-80)
Language Spoken	Kui- A Dravidian Language
Name of the Block/Blocks covered	Tumudibandha
Name & Number of the Gram Panchayats	3 (Belghar, Guma & Billamal)
Number of Villages	68
Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)/Non-TSP Area	TSP Area
Total Geographical Area	300 Sq. Kilometer
Administrative Zone	Southern

Average Size of Land Holding per household (in acres)	1.30		
Total Population of Kutia Kondh in Kandhamal District			
Total Population	5953		
Male	2800		
Female	3153		
Growth Rate (From 2007-2010)	16.60%		
Sex Ratio (Per 1000 male)	1126		
Child Population (up to 5 years)	1028		
(up to 6years- 14 years)	1852		
Density of Population (per sq. km.)	20		
Total no. of Kutia Kondh household			
Details	PTG	BPL	Landless
Total No. of Household	1331	1255	76
Average Household size	5		
Type of Household Structure	Linear		
Number of IAY Household	81		
Number of <i>MoKudia</i> Household	559		
Literacy level			
Detail	No. of Literate		
Level of Education	Male	Female	Total
Primary	275	245	520
Upper Primary	33	26	59
HSC	3	-	3
+2 Level	25	4	29
+3 Level	2	1	3
Technical	0	0	0
Total	338	276	614
Literacy Rate (in %)	44.48	22.42	34.31
Agriculture			
Net Area Sown (in Acres)	822.00		
Major Crops	Paddy, Maize, Black grams, Ragi, Nizer		
Soil Type	Red Lateritic Group		
Forest type,(in acres)			
Reserve Forest	447.00		
Protected Forest	227.00		
Village Forest	695.00		
Minor Forest Produces (MFP)	<i>Mahula</i> Flowers & Seed, <i>Jhuna</i> , Honey, Tamarind, Tubers, Hill Brooms and <i>Siali</i> Leafs		

Table 2.4 Kutia Kondh of Kandhamal District at a glance

KKDA, Belghar covers 1331 Households in 68 villages with a total population of 5953 (2800 male & 3153 female). Their growth rate is (from 2007-10) 60.60% and the sex ratio is 1126 per 1000 male. The density of population of the area is 20 per sq.kms and the

average household size is 5. The total literacy rate of the Kutia Kondh of the Micro Project is 34.31%. The literacy rate for male is 44.48% and the female literacy rate is 22.42% (according to the SCSTRTI, Bhubaneswar Odisha).

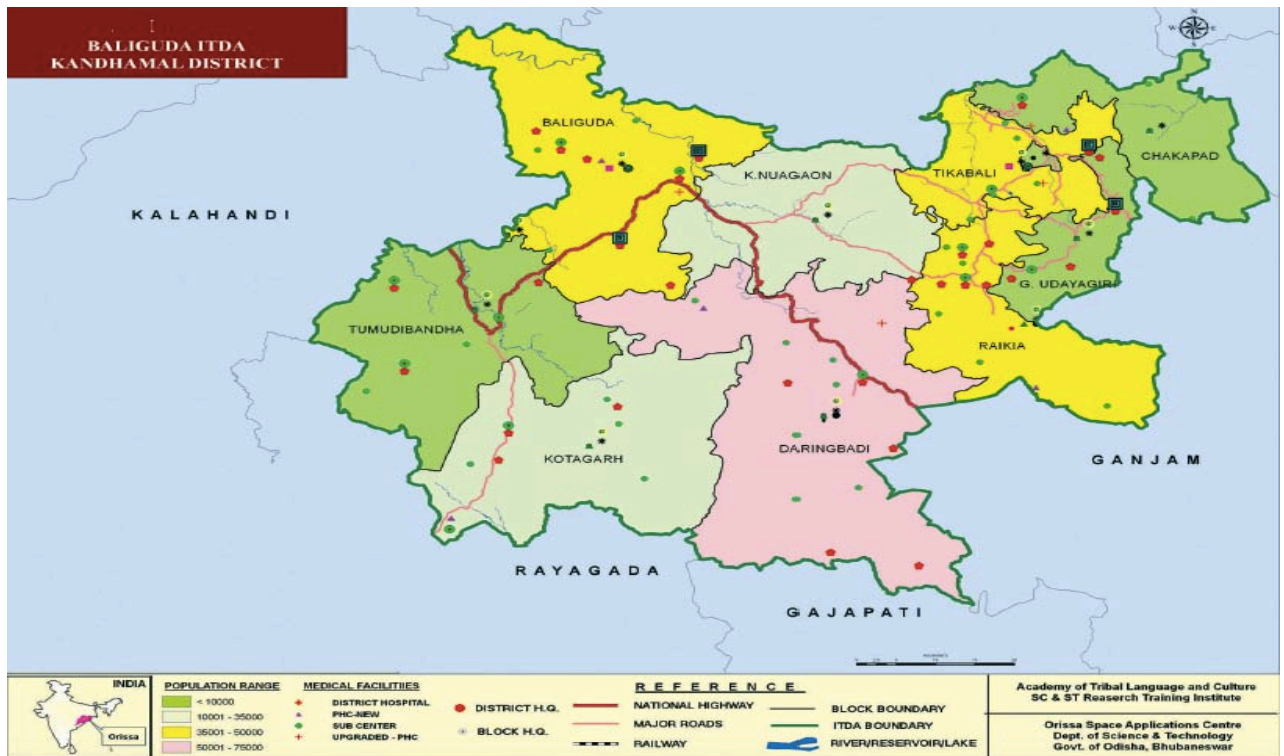
Educational Institute			
Run by ST & SC Development Department	No.	Run by Education Department	No.
Sevashram (Primary)	0	Primary School	33
Residential Sevashram (Primary)	1	Upper Primary	1
Ashram School (Upper Primary)	2	High School	2
Educational Complex	1	+2 College	0
Non-Formal Education Centre (Gyanamandir/Chatasali)	0	+3 College	0
Primary School hostel	3		
Irrigation			
Types	No	Area (in acres)	
Major	1	20.00	
Medium	4	42.00	
Minor	5	60.00	
Dug Well	10	34.00	
Shallow Tube Well	1	6.00	
Deep Bore Well	0	00	
CD Pond and Tanks	6	10.00	
Water Harvesting Structure	1	13.00	
Weir Dam	7	111.00	
Community Irrigation Project (CIP)	5	40.00	
Other facilities			
Primary Health Centre & Dispensary	2		
Post Office	1		
Livestock Centre	1		
Post Office	1		
Police Station	1		
Electrified hamlets	45		
Drinking water			
Type	Total	Functioning	
Tube Well	61	48	
Open Well	46	43	
Pipe Water/ Spring Base	1	1	
Pond	23	21	
Stream/Cistern	45	45	
Other social amenities			
Types	No.		
Anganwadi Center/Mini Awanganwadi Centre	19/15		
LI Centre	1		
Village Electrified	51		
Village Having Solar Light	6		
Post Office	3 (all three blocks)		
Bank & Name	1 (Utkal Gramya Bank)		
Cooperative Society (CS)	1 (LAMPS)		
Self Help Groups (SHG)	58		
Community Centres (CC)	12		
Non-Govt. Organizations (NGOs)Operating	2 (Seba Bharati & Pradata)		

Social security programmes	
Type	No. of Beneficiary
Old Age Pension (IGNOAPS)	75
Disable Pension(IGNDPS)	131
Widow Pension(IGNWPS)	472
Madhubabu Pension (MBPY)	1446
FRA status	
No. of titles distributed under FRA	1210
Area Distribution (in Acres)	2693.00

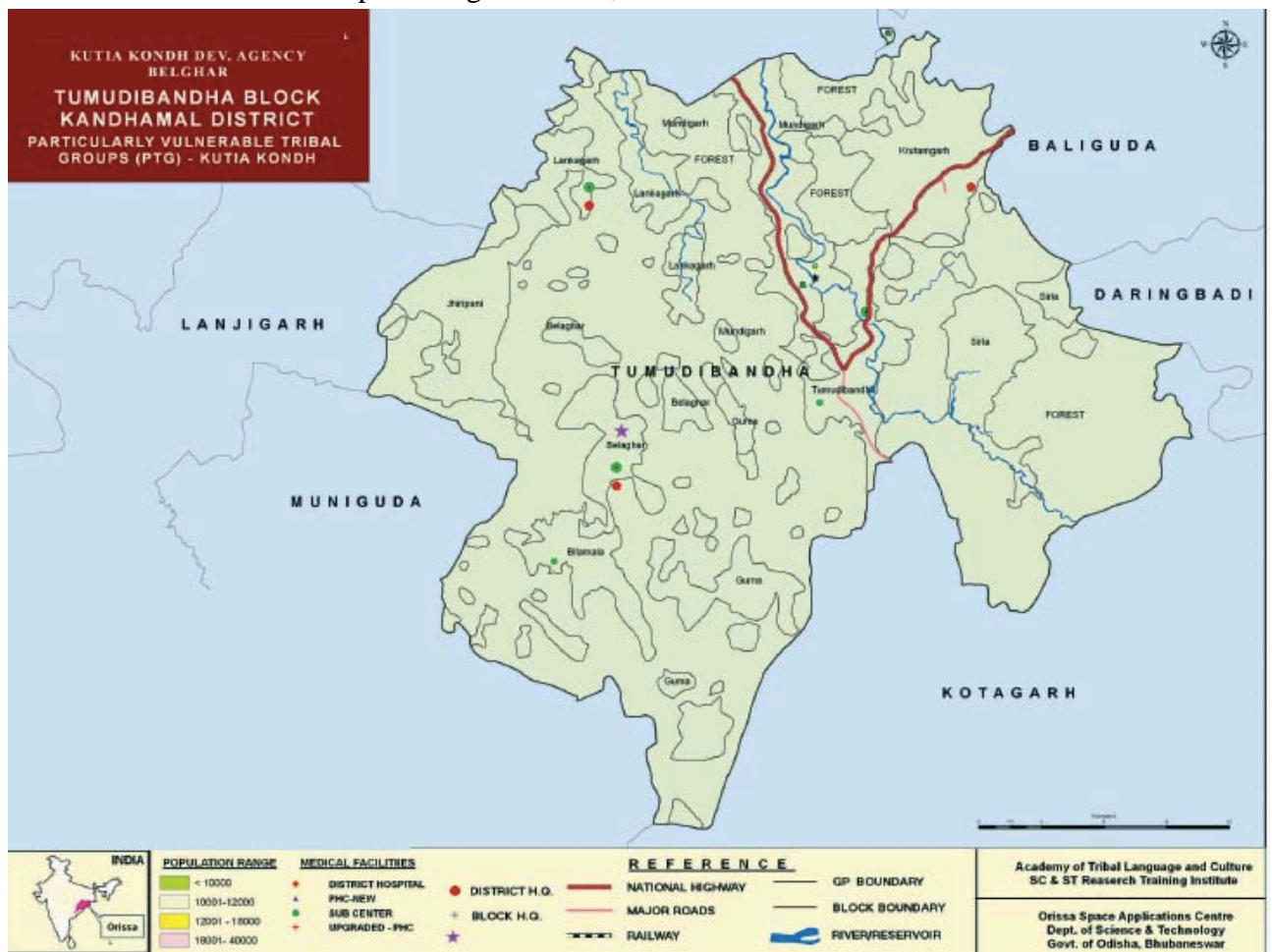
Table 2.5 Infrastructure and basic facilities in KKDA, Belghar

Belghar is part of Tumudibandha block of Baliguda subdivision in Kandhamal District of Odisha. It is connected by road transport with Bhubaneswar. Tumudibandha is a junction from where one road goes to Bhawanipatna and the other to Rayagada. Tumudibandha is roughly 25 km. from the district headquarters and Belghar is 28 km. from Tumudibandha. Belghar has a sound infrastructure of institutions and organisations run by Government Departments such as a Forest Range Office, a Revenue Bungalow, a Forest Rest House, an Additional Primary Health Centre, a Veterinary Dispensary, a bank named ‘the Kalahandi Anchalika Gramya Bank’, an office of LAMPCS (Large Size Agricultural Multipurpose Co-operative Society), a police station, an office of the Junior Agricultural Officer, a residential school having educational provision up to secondary level, an Anganwadi, a collection centre of AMCS (Agency Marketing Co-operative Society) and the KKDA office. Some other development activities are as follows:

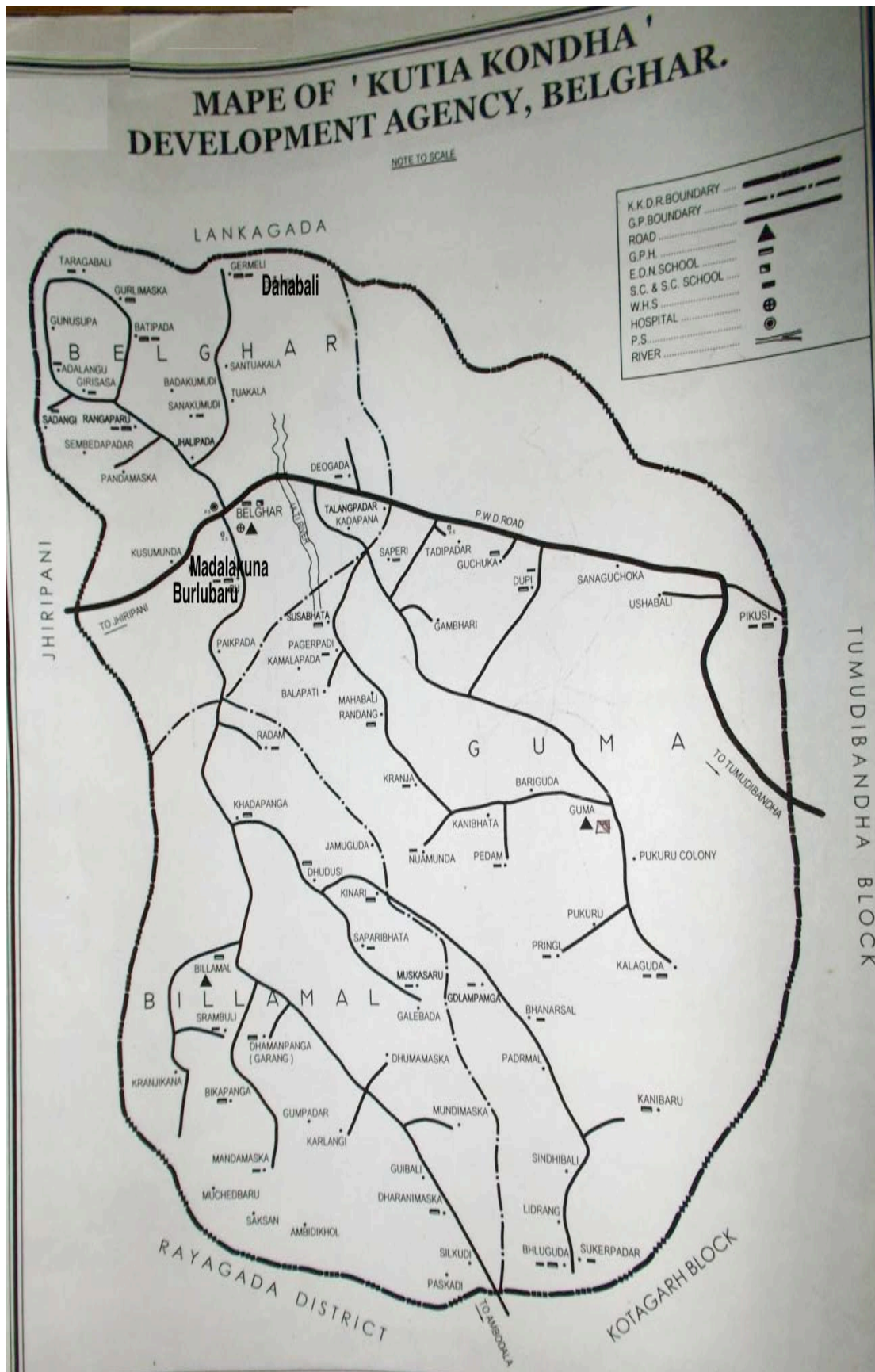
- Under CCD plan Pucca Canal at Peda Village, Guma G.P of Tumudibandha Block, District Kandhamal has been constructed. As a result of which 27 nos. of families are able to cultivate paddy, maize, mustard, cabbage, banana, and other vegetables both in Rabi and Kharif seasons.
- Construction of M.P.S.C building at village- Madalakuna: Under the Article 275 (1), M.P.S.C building at Madalakuna village has been constructed for which 10 numbers of Kutia Kondh families are getting facilities due to opening up of Nursery Education Center, Anganwadi Center, P.D.S. center, Health Camp and many other functions and activities throughout the year.
- Installation of SolarPDS Light System in Madalakuna village, under the C.C.D plan solar lighting system has been commissioned and 10 numbers of Kutia Kondh families are getting light facilities at night.



Map 3: Baliguda ITDA, Kandhamal District



Map 4: Tumudibandha Block, Kandhamal District



Map 5: Kutia Kondh Development Agency (KKDA), Belghar

The Studied Village

The research work was conducted amongst the Kutia Kondh residing in and around Belghar Gram Panchayat of Tumudibandha block, Baliguda sub-division, Kandhamal district. Belghar lies at an elevation of 2,255 feet above sea level (ASL) within 19.45' to 20.5' N(latitude) and 80.30' to 83.45'E (longitude). The temperature records 33°C during summer and 3°C in winter. The average annual rainfall is 1360 mm. The type of soil found in the region is of the red lateritic group.

The native of two Gram Panchayats, namely Belghar and Gumma, were my usual informants. However the base hamlets chosen for the study were Burlubaru, Madalakuna and Dahabali, the former two hamlets were larger in size and quite developed due to its location in comparison to the other hamlet Dahabali, a small hamlet in the remote pocket where life is still very orthodox and traditional due to its isolation from the mainstream. All these three hamlets are located in Belghar Gram Panchayat.

The People: Kutia Kondh

The Kutia Kondh constitutes a sub-tribe of the most numerically preponderant Kondh tribe in Odisha. The origin of the Kutia Kondh is connected with the place called *Sapangada* near the Guma G.P. of Tumudibandha block, Kandhamal. Previously their hamlets were uniclans, but now-a-days multi-clan hamlets are found in the study area, due to the influx of people from other clans. The social solidarity is maintained through thesegmentary opposition. The clan as a social institution is exogamous in nature.

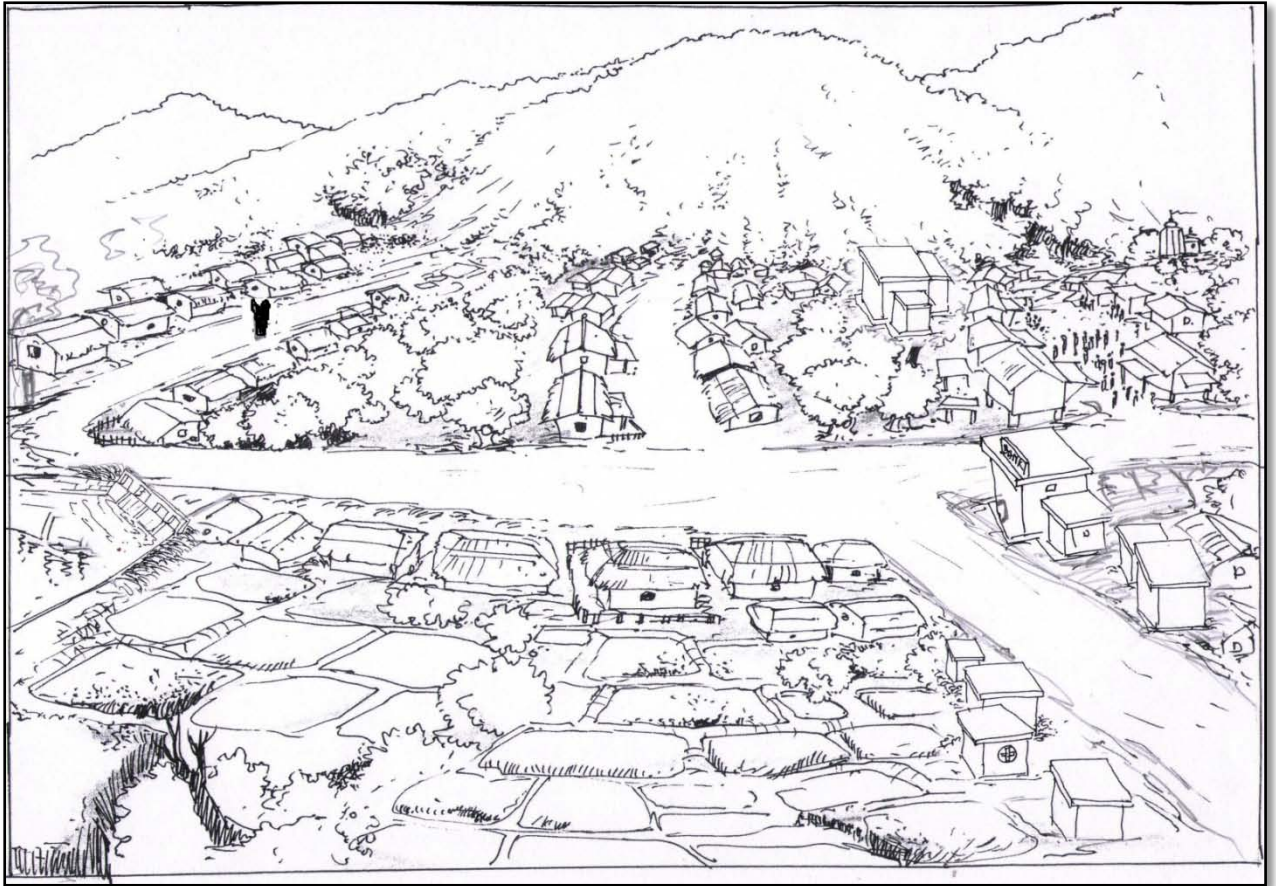
The supreme spirituality and religiousness that shapes tribal peoples' everyday life, their perception, and how they order environmental phenomena which represent and connect all spheres of their material and immaterial surroundings, is the center of their culture (Jena: 2000). In connection with the above view, Seeland (*et al.* 1995, Appendix 1.1 (A)) says, their world is defined by cosmogenic myth, and even in a transitional phase between their traditional lifestyle and all-pervading modernity, they refer to the myth as a basic foundation of their culture. There can be no understanding of forest lifestyle if the social meaning of a tribe's surroundings is not seen and interpreted on the basis of their background.

About the Kutia Kondh clothing, Campbell observed, "...their clothes consist merely of a few yards of cotton cloth bound around the loins, ornamented with a separate piece stripped with red and dangling behind like a tail. Their thick black hair wound round and round their heads, is fastened in front by a knot, over which is tied a strip of red or other clothes ...

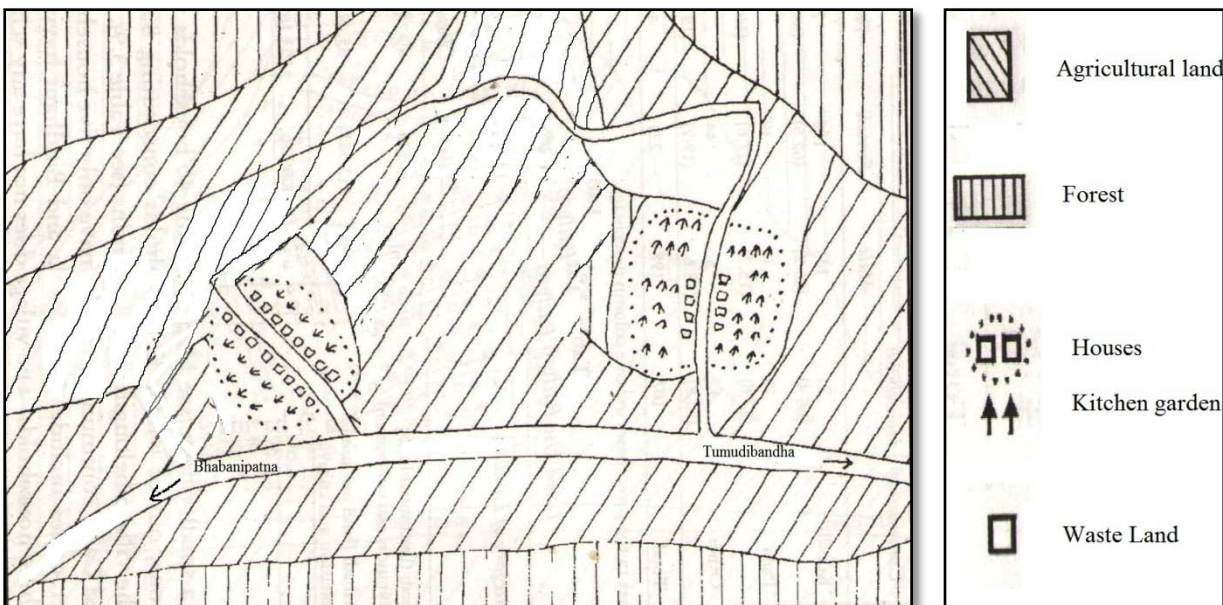
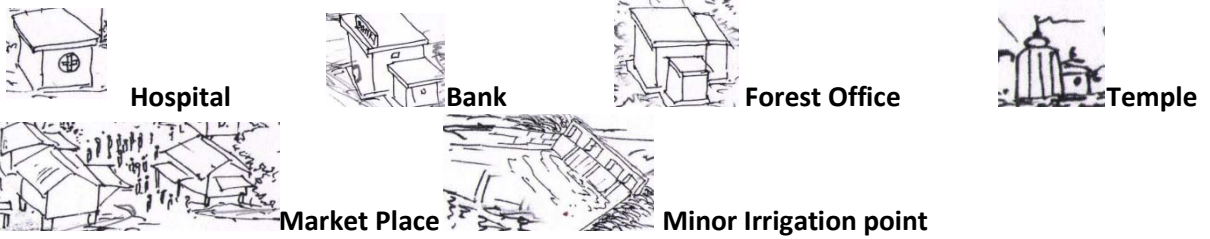
Kondh women are scantily clad as men. They partake of the prevailing weakness of their sex- an intense love of ornaments and finery. Coloured beads are highly prized and generally used as well as arduous and heavy description of the brass bracelet worn on their arms and ankles". The Kutia like other subsections of the Kondh tribes are a Dravidian clan bearing racial affinity with Proto-Australoid stock (Mohanty: 2009). Their skin colour varies from light brown to dark brown. They have medium stature, large head, broad nose, wide face and curly hair. Their life in the natural environment has endowed them with a sound physique and cheerful disposition. Kutia men grow long hairs tied in a knot. The Kondh are a Dravidian tribe and they speak Dravidian dialects. The Kutia being a section of the Kondh speaks a Dravidian colloquial dialect called "*kui*". It has considerable resemblance with Telugu, Tamil, and Kanarese in grammar but not with Odia. However, due to long-lasting contact with the neighbouring Odia people, some Odia words have assimilated into their dialect. But it has little impact on *kui* grammatical forms and idioms.

Their superstitions, beliefs, and practices have made them well known to the world outside. But the thorns and thickets of the wilderness and the unhealthy climate which is notorious for malaria and backwaters were deterrent to free access and to have firsthand knowledge about the tribe. However, as time passed by and road communication was developed, entry into the Kondh area and contact with the tribe became possible. Scholars like Dalton, Risley, Thurston, Russell, and Hiralal have left behind a few pages about the Kondh in their published works. But much of these writings have been reproduced over and over again. Thereafter these have come out as articles and notes on some aspects or the other of the tribe in the census reports and scholarly journals. Recently some books such as 'The Kondh' by Barbara, M. Boal and the Kondh by N. Patnaik have been published which contains some ethnographic accounts of the tribe.

The British officers namely Campbell and Mc Pherson came in contact with this community as early as the middle of the nineteenth century when they were deputed to suppress the practice of human sacrifice in the Kondh society. Their reports serve as a valuable source of information regarding the community. Russell was the first person who through his report brought the barbarous practice of human sacrifice cannibalism and female infanticide of the Kondh to the notice of the Madras Government in 1866. Elwin was the first anthropologist in this country who wrote about the tribe in 1943. In 1964 Niggemeyer, a German Anthropologist had published a detailed ethnographic account of the Kutia Kondh in the German language.



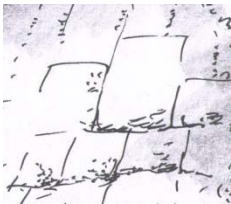
Map6: Burlubaru & Madalakuna hamlet



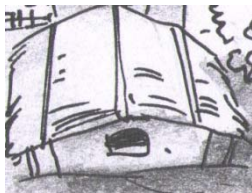
Map 7: Graphical outline of Burlubaru & Madalakuna hamlet



Map 8: Dahabali hamlet



Agricultural Land



Kutia Kondh house



iPenu

Salient features

As discussed, Kutia Kondh, a section of Kondh Tribes of Odisha, mostly inhabit in the Southern part of Kandhamal district and a few in the Kalahandi district. The hills around their village are marked by dense mixed forests. Traditionally, Kutia Kondh villages are uniclans village occupied by members of one clan. But gradually most of the villages are found to be inhabited by people of other clans. Their village settlements signify architectural design and allocated placement of functional areas. There are two parallel rows of huts across a rectangular space facing each other. The pathway between the two parallel rows of huts is quite wide, neat and clean. In the middle of the pathway, *meria* pole is situated before *dharanipenu* (earth goddess). Sun is their supreme deity. *Jani* is the religious head who performs all rites and rituals. The *majhi* is the commune's societal head of the village, and the village council of Kutia Kondh is composed of male heads of each household. The *majhi* or *jani* as conveners, conduct the meeting as per the need. The *muthadhari* system was in operation in British India, when the *mutha* head was supposed to be the most powerful person with high esteem and government recognition. The details of administrative set-up, demography of Kutia Kondh, household, literacy, educational institute, agriculture etc. in Kandhamal District are as follows:

The demographic profile of the sampled hamlets:

The Kutia Kondh settlements comprise of 68 hamlets out of which three hamlets been taken as a sample. On the basis of these three hamlets, the demographic details are explained as follows:

Sl No.	Hamlets Name	No. of Household	No. of Male	Percentage	No. of Female	Percentage	Total
1	Burlubaru	35	53	44.53%	66	55.46%	119
2	Madalakuna	10	24	46.15%	28	53.84%	52
3	Dahabali	12	17	51.51%	16	48.48%	33
Total		57	94	46.07%	110	53.91%	204

Table 2.6 Ethnic composition of Kutia Kondh in sampled hamlet

The table 2.6, highlights the ethnic composition of the selected three hamlets. It shows that a total number of households (sample) in each hamlet are 35, 10 & 12 respectively. Out of which Males are 53, 24 and 17 in numbers constituting 44.53%, 46.15% and 51.51% correspondingly of the total sampled hamlets. The females are 66, 28 and 16 number with constituting 55.46%, 53.84% and 48.48% correspondingly of the total sampled hamlet. It

also reveals sex ratio that in each hamlet the female member is higher or almost equal to the male number.

Sl.No	Age Group	Burlubaru		Madalakuna		Dahabali		Total	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1	0-4	9	7	2	2	2	1	13	10
2	5-9	5	10	1	1	-	2	6	13
3	10-14	10	6	3	2	-	1	13	9
4	15-19	3	14	-	2	2	-	5	16
5	20-24	2	3	2	5	1	-	5	8
6	25-29	2	4	3	3	3	1	8	8
7	30-34	3	3	3	2	3	2	9	7
8	35-39	6	4	2	3	3	3	11	10
9	40-44	4	7	4	2	1	2	9	11
10	45-49	2	2	2	2	1	3	5	7
11	50-54	3	-	-	3	1	-	4	3
12	55-59	1	2	2	-	-	-	3	2
13	60+	3	4	-	1	-	1	3	6
Total		53	6	2	1	15	17	94	110

Table 2.7 Age-Sex distribution of Kutia Kondh in the selected hamlet

The above table shows that the number of population is more in the age-group 0-4, 15-19, 5-9, 35-39 and 40-44 respectively with constituting number 23,21, 19, 21 and 20. It is peculiar to note that in the age group 0-4, males are more in number i.e. 13 and in the age group, 15-19 females are more in number i.e. 16. The data also reveals that youth population is very less in number i.e. 13 for male and 16 for female in 20-29 age-group. Less number of populations is found in the age group 55-59 which constitute 5 in numbers.9 numbers of the populace are under 60+.

Marital Status	Burlubaru		Madalakuna		Dahabali		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Unmarried	27	28	6	7	4	4	37	39
Married	25	30	15	15	11	10	51	55
Widow	-	7	-	6	-	2	-	15
Widower	1	-	3	-	2	-	6	-
Divorce	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	53	66	24	28	17	16	94	110

Table 2.8 Marital status of Kutia Kondh in the selected hamlets

Table 2.8 represents the marital status of the Kutia Kondh in the three selected hamlets. It is evident from the table that, out of the total population of 204 members, 106 are married which constitute 51.96% of the total population, out of the total population 15

members are widows, 6 members are widowers and 1 is a divorcee. It also shows that 76 members which constitute 37.25% of the total population are unmarried.

Type of Literacy	Burlubaru		Madalakuna		Dahabali		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Literate	18	20	12	9	7	1	37	30
Illiterate	24	34	10	16	8	12	42	62
Not yet started/ Aanganwadi	11	12	2	3	2	3	15	18
Total	53	66	24	28	17	16	94	110

Table 2.9 Literacy rate of Kutia Kondh in sampled hamlets

The above table shows that out of the total population 104 members are illiterate which constitute 50.09% when compared to the literate, i.e. 67 members which constitute 32.84% of total population. This study reveals that compared to female which is 30 (14.70%) there is more number of literacy rate among males, i.e. 37 members which constitute 18.13% of total population. In both, the cases literacy rate is very low.

CHAPTER- III

SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE OF KUTIA KONDH

Ethnic identity and language

The Kutia Kondh named as such by Odia speaking non-tribals and the name does not refer to the origin of the term 'Kondh' (Jena 2006). According to Bates (1995), Kondh is a generic term given to various *Adivasi* communities in Odisha, '*konda*' meaning 'low hills' in Telugu. As time passed on, tribal people started to use this term to describe themselves in communicating with outsiders. It is not clear how the Telugu word '*konda*' entered the Indo-Aryan language. Furthermore two Odia words, '*kutto*' and '*kutti*' offer an explanation: *kutto* means mountain and *kutti* means hut. The Kutia Kondh distinguish themselves from the other Kondh group as they have a specific way of building their huts. The floor of the mud-walled thatched hut is at about two feet below the ground level. So the ethnic identity is congruent with the terms Kondh, *kutti*, and *kui*. The term *kutti* gives the cultural identity of the tribe that they emerged out of a cleft in *sapangada* - a forest patch and later started living in *kutti* (holes) of hills. Further, they speak *kui* language. On the basis of the language, they refer as *kuenja* to the male folks of the tribe, *kuiladu* to the female folks and are collectively known as *kuianka*.

Kui is the language spoken by Kutia Kondh. Linguists identified it as belonging to the Dravidian group due to resemblance with Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada in grammar but not Odia, the Indo-Aryan language spoken and written by their non-tribal neighbours. The language *kui* varies a little bit from the other Kondh communities, those of the community who are exposed to the mainstream speaking Odia along with *kui*. Edgar Thurston quoted G.A. Grierson on Kondh language in the 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' that, 'the Kondh are a Dravidian Tribe in the Hills of Orissa and neighbouring districts (see also Das Patnaik 1984).

Settlement and housing pattern

In a Kutia Kondh village settlement (*naju*) huts are arranged in two rows facing each other and each row is occupied by a sect of the tribe. Huts in each row are attached to each other in such a manner that from a distance each row appears as a single long hall. The traditional structure of the village itself is a symbol of unity. Sometimes the village settlement looks like a cluster of huts.

A large space is left in between the two rows. More or less at the middle of the longitudinal space, *karumunda* i.e. the *meriah* (sacrificial) pole is anchored. The backyard is used for kitchen garden and cattle shed.

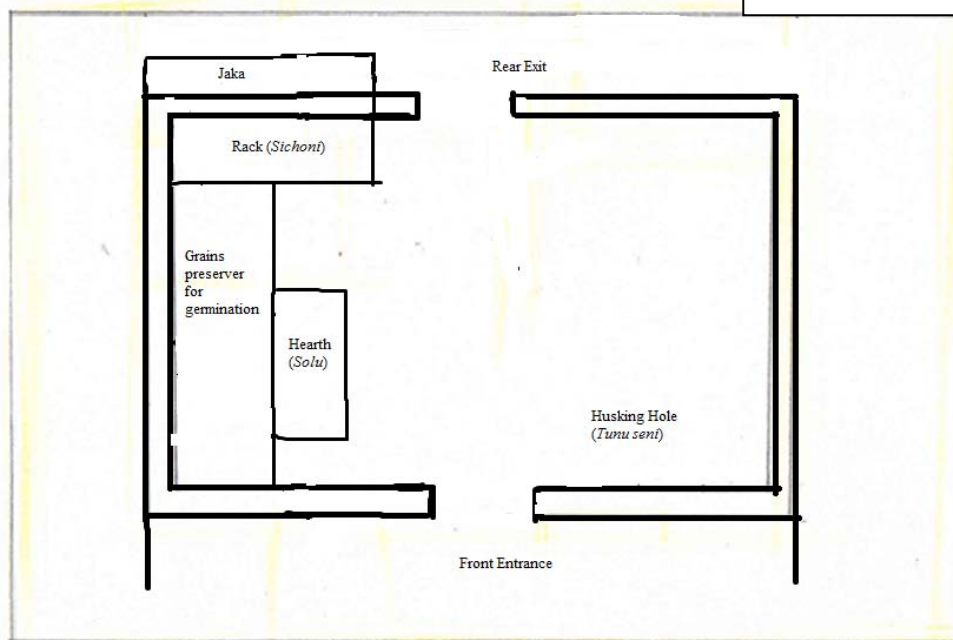
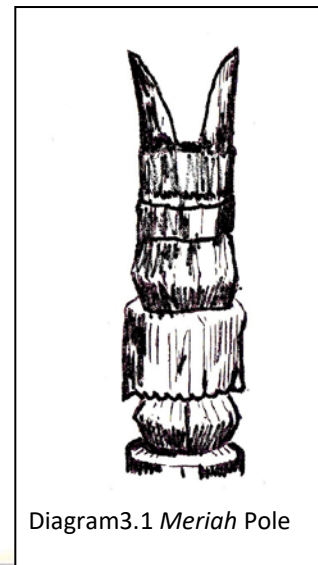


Diagram- 3.2 Interior outline of Kutia Kondh hut

Kutia Kondhhut (*ilu*) is mono-hut type built on a rectangular plinth plan with gabled (triangular upper part of a wall at the end of a ridged roof) roofing. It is usually a two-room structure with a high verandah, converted into a sitting place. The floor of the house remains at a lower level than the premises and the design is called *kutti*, the ethnic identity of the tribe. Immediately contiguous with the backdoor are provisions for pigsty and goat pens. The traditional pattern of settlement is the same throughout with the uniform design, architecture, and management of space.

Walls of the huts are made of *sal* poles planted on the ground or with poles of *mahula* and *kangda* plastered with mud. In some cases, walls are made with bamboo mats smeared over with mud. Earthen walls are very common. The roofs are thatched with jungle grass (*Themedaarundinacea*) or by tiles (*khaparli*). *Khaparli* is much preferred by the community.

The huts are painted red with black borders and the walls are engraved by fingers to make various designs called *pitching*. Inside the hut or in front of the hut the deity (*ilupenu*) is nestled.

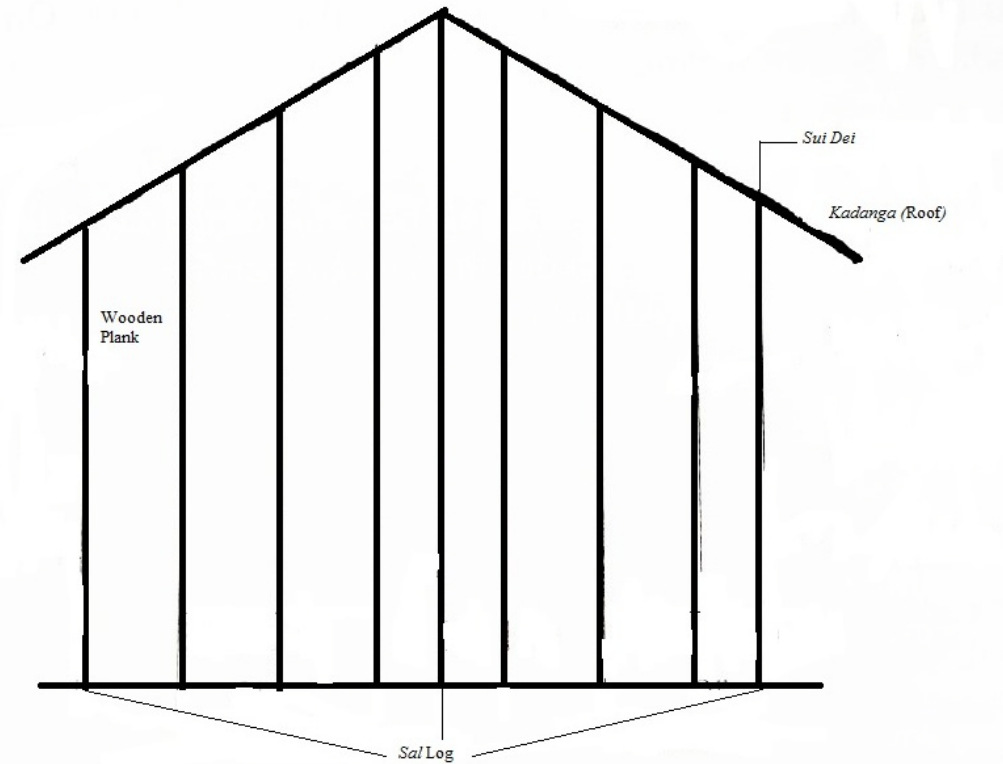


Diagram 3.3: Wall construction of Kutia Kondh house

Concept of personal grooming

Kutia Kondh women have established the concept of aesthetic beauty. A girl feels that without the traditional costumes and ornaments she cannot be known as a Kutia girl. *Tikanga* is the best way of making herself look beautiful. The costumes and ornaments have also been mentioned in their myth. The traditional Kutia women feel that waistband is not only an ornament to make a woman beautiful, but also it strengthens their waist. Especially on a marriage occasion, a Kutia bride does not look traditionally appreciable if she is not adorned with the traditional costumes. However, a great many changes have taken place during the last few years in the costumes of Kutia Kondh. Loin clothes are seen no more, only owned by some very old people. The two-piece cloth of women has been replaced by sarees and blouses. Traditional women who remain topless in clothing pattern, do not feel that they are naked. But the young generation feels abashed to keep the breast uncovered so they wear sarees and blouses. Therefore changes in dress pattern are perceptibly marked now-a-days.

Clothes

Kutia Kondhis easily identified from their clothes. Traditional dress for a Kutia Kondh male is a loincloth of one and a half cubits long and less than a foot broad. The loincloth is called as '*limta*', which is worn only to hide the lower private part of the body while the upper part of the body is naked. This is the pattern of the young and old alike in earlier days. Now the older generation still sticks to such clothes, but due to acculturation, the younger generation has learnt to wear shorts, trousers, shirts, lungis etc. During the winter they simply wrap a cloth around the body. The Kutia Kondh female usually wears two pieces of clothes. The upper part of the body is covered on front side only by a piece of cloth like an apron extending to the lower thigh region. This used to be a handloom cloth called '*urmali*'. This was then replaced by a towel which is worn by tying one knot on one side of the shoulder. This hangs down right up to the knee keeping the back bare. The lower garment usually consists of two pieces. The first one is a loincloth passed between the thighs to the back where it is tugged with a waist string. The loincloth is known as '*topodipa*'. The second piece of it is like a plain skirt. The embroidered piece over it is called '*capta*'. As the '*urmali*' was losing its ground vying with other types of garments. In the same way, '*capta*' was also being replaced by sarees. *Capta* usually worn by the married and old ladies. But now saree has replaced all these traditional outfits. The young girls now-a-days prefer to wear sarees called as '*zira*' and blouses.

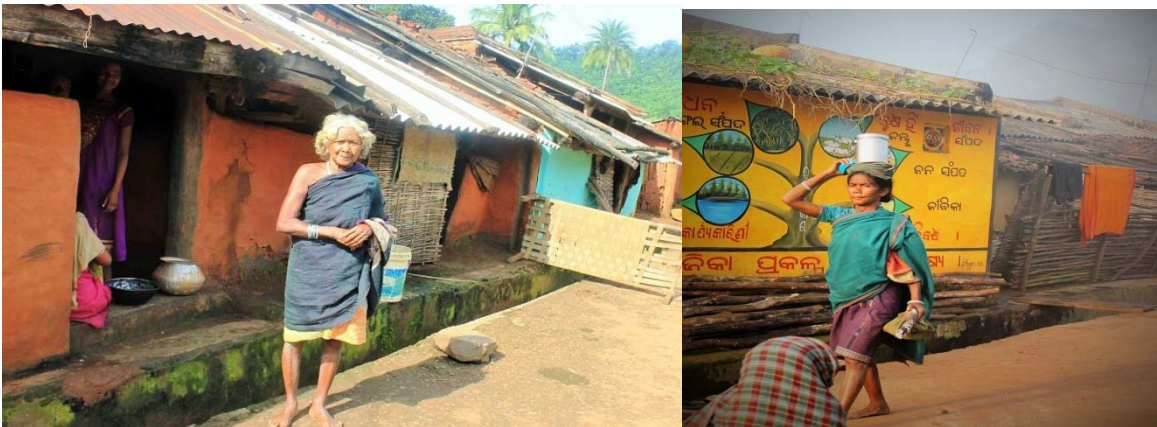


Plate 3.1 Two pieces of *capta* worn by the Kutia Kondh female

Boys and girls usually roamnaked up to the age of three or four. After that, they start wearing the innermost clothes i.e. '*topodipa*'. Due to the modernization, girls below ten years of age have started to wear the frocks, minis, middies, maxis, and skirts purchased from the local market. A similar change is also marked among the boys who wear shorts and vests purchased from the market.

Ornaments

Kutia Kondhis well distinguished for their ornaments which form an important part of their costumes. Both male and female use traditional ornaments that stand as a mark of their cultural identity. The ornaments used by men and women are made of silver, gold, brass, aluminum, transparent plastics and acrylic.

A young girl at a tender age gets her ears and nose pierced. The nose and ear piercing are done by senior women. They use thorn of *bael* tree called *belamara* (*Aeglemarmelos*) better than steel needles or any other sharp pointed pins. With growing age, more and more numbers of pores are made on the ear pinnas with the help of the thorns of *bael* tree.



Plate 3.2: Traditional body ornament of Kutia Kondh women folk

A Kutia Kondh girl wears five pieces of gold on the nose trinkets. They are called *mungelimundi*. *Mungeli* stands for nose and *mundi* for rings. *Mungelimundi* is worn on the septum. The earlobe is usually pierced at auricular base several times. Rings worn is called *dadanga* and are made of gold. On the edge of the pinna and lobe, about 20-30 pores are made to hold about 20-30 rings which are called ‘*keykichadaka*’ made of brass or ordinary metals or aluminum electroplated with iridium. The hands of the women are always loaded with a number of bangles, covering the hands up to the elbow. The older ladies still wear bangles made of brass and aluminum while the young girls have adapted to transparent plastic, acrylic, lacquer and glass bangles. The bangles are called *pajang*. There is no restriction on any women for wearing bangles, irrespective of age, marital status etc.

The neck of a woman is always adorned with necklaces of various types. The necklaces are made out of aluminum and colour beads. The necklet made of aluminum or silver is called ‘*kagada*’, which is usually a ring around the neck, very snug and rigid. If the *kagada* is more decorated with filigree works or handicrafts, it is called ‘*kagdang*’. The

necklaces, made from beads are called *saska*. The girls are skilled in making various designs with different coloured beads.

Pendants of coin medallions are mostly worn by the children and old women. Coins of one rupee, two rupees, and fifty paise are mainly used in making this kind of necklaces, which are called '*rupangasaka*'. Usually, brass and copper rings are worn on the fingers. They are of different types. Sometimes coins especially old copper coins are also used to make rings for fingers. The finger ring is called '*kajumudi*'. The ankles are decorated with anklets of two varieties. One is flowery and thread like while the other is light and arch-shaped, and both are called '*katariang*'. The toes are adorned with toe rings called '*kalumudi*'. The waist of Kutia girls and women are decked with waistbands made of metal, silver, and beads. The waistbands have many names i.e. '*kadarka*, *kodivanang* and *japisaka* (seeds of a shrub called *japi* is usually used to make this)', and the cinctures have religious value for sorcerers driving away evil spirits.

The headgear of the Kutia Kondh women is long hairs made into a sidebar. In olden days male folks were also keeping long hairs made into a side or middle bun. The bun is called '*kapoli*'. On the forehead, a chain made from babe grass (*Eulaliopsisbinata*) or a white metal called '*kapadabini*' is tied. The main item of the headgear is the comb made of wood of *gambar mara* (*Gmelinaarborea*). In olden days comb was made from twigs of broom grass i.e. *satranga* (*Thysanolaneamaxima*). But now it has been replaced with a plastic comb. Only during festive occasions, they use the traditional comb.

The traditional Kutia Kondh males also have long hairs combed into a small knot at the back of the head. This has changed now and younger generations do not keep their hair like that. The older men used to wear earrings but this also has changed albeit some have their ears pierced as a customary tradition.

Tattooing

Besides these artificial items for decorating, the Kutia Kondh women also tattoo themselves. Tattooing is called '*tikanga*'. They tattoo their face, hands, legs and sometimes portion beneath the neck. They believe that these tattoo marks go with them when they die and become spirits i.e. *duma* or *dukeli*.

The tattooing is done by the women themselves. Sometimes a young girl does it with the help of her elder sister or elder brother's wife (*awa*). In olden days Pano women were doing the job. But now Kutia women are skilful experts. The designs could be as simple as two or three lines on the forehead or a complicated structure of dots (see appendix-I). But the

tikanga art also requires some primary processes. Usually, with *bael* thorns, design is made on the pierced points and is polished black. The black is prepared through a special process. Over a lamp flame, *sipaluaku* leaves (*Euphorbia antiquorum*) are kept in which the lamps black soot is stored. The black is used on a first priority over others.

Food & drinks

Cereals, pulses, eggs, meat, tubers, roots, fruits and other edibles available in the forest are the main sources of food items of Kutia Kondh. The principal food is gruel with some vegetables. Gruel is made of rice (*Oryza sativa*), *mandei*.e. finger millets (*Eleusine coracana*), little millet (*Panicum miliare*), jana (*Sorghum vulgare*) etc. Raw rice is called *pranga*, paddy as *kulinga* and cooked rice as *bidi*. *Mande* gruel is a favorite item as '*peja*'.

Both men and women are fond of drinking *mada* i.e. toddy tapped from sagopalms (*Caryota urens*). Another type of drink preferred by the Kutia Kondh is *irpikaluor adkinga*, brewed out of dried flowers of *mahua* (*Madhuca langifolia*) by distillation. They also prepare liquor out of cereals which they call as *katul*, specially prepared during festivals and ceremonies. Apart from toddy, they distill liquor out of mango (*Mangifera indica*), jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), banana (*Musa sapientum*) and molasses. Now-a-days they mostly depend upon toddy of sagopalms and date palm, distilled *mahua* liquor and other types of crop beverages. Besides drinks, they also use narcotics (*dhuanbada*) i.e. dry tobacco leaf and its powders called *nasa ordua* as refreshment. A *sal* leaf or *siali* leaf is rolled containing shredded and shriveled tobacco to make impromptu cigar called *kali or tapari*. The other type of stimulant is the tobacco paste (*gudakhu*) purchased from market vendors or local shops, which they keep under the tongue or lips or brush the teeth with it.

Life cycle rituals

Kutia Kondh birth is celebrated by offering gratitude to the gods and a death is celebrated by mass mourning. The remaining period in between is called the life cycle of a being. In between the birth and death of a being so many rituals and rites are organized. Given below is the Kutia Kondh's way of performing the life cycle rituals from holy grail to hilly grave.

Birth

Everyone rejoices on the birth of the child. In case of Kutia Kondh, a boy and a girl enjoy the equal status of birth. They feel that a child is a rebirth of an ancestor through the blessings of God. So newborn is taken as a representation of a *dukeli* which refers to ancestral spirits. It creates stronger bonds between the parents and all those who are related to them from both the sides. For a Kutia Kondh birth of a child is the time to rejoice be it a girl or a

boy, but more pleasure when the child is a girl because she has a greater utility value in household works apart from her contribution to the agricultural sector.

During pregnancy, a woman is not given that much of importance as is given after she delivers a child. At the very moment when the pregnant woman starts to suffer from labour pain, she is taken to the back side of the house or to the *jakakuda* where women stay during their seclusion period of the menstruation and childbirth. An experienced erstwhile mother (*eea*) remains present with the pregnant woman to help her during the delivery. As an experienced, she helps the child to slither out of the mother's womb. In case of difficulties, she is not taken to a local health center, though they go and request the doctor or pharmacist to check the case. After the childbirth, the experienced who used to be there with the child's mother cut the umbilical cord with a knife. The father then buries the placenta in a deep hole in the backyard. The baby and the mother are then left on their own. However, precaution is taken keeping the mother and the child in the backyard hut (*mamalielu*). Dung and resin smokes are churned out to help drive out the mosquitoes, from the backside hut, that has a very unhygienic atmosphere due to insanitation as all the domestic animal sheds remain adjacent to it. The baby is kept warm by a burning charcoal pot nearby. The mother is also given something hot to drink. Both the father and mother are considered impure and untouchable after the birth of the child. The father is 'impure' till the umbilical cord with placenta falls down. The baby is then given a bath with warm water boiled with *neem* leaves and turmeric paste.

The mother is considered impure for one month from the date of delivery. She does not cook or move around the hut or in front of the house. There is a belief associated with it, that before completion of one month since the day of the child delivery if the mother comes out of the house to move around the premises, the '*dharnipenu*' feels disturbed. But that is not the ending. The mother and child are not accepted by the community unless a ritual is performed. The gratitude is offered to the ancestors '*jendabenja-kadenja*'. In the puja, the ancestors are venerated by the priest for their rebirth in their society. The worship is offered to *elupenu* (home deity) along with *lingapenu* who is considered to be the authority of birth. After that, the whole village is offered a small feast. If the parents of the newborn are financially sound, a large quantity of rice is cooked in the parents' house out of which a leaf pot full of cooked rice sent to each household in the village.

Name giving ceremony: (Daru itina)

The Kutia Kondh believe that a child is the reincarnation of its ancestors. So during the nomenclature ceremony, they invite all the ancestors who would tell the priest about the

ancestor who has resurrected in their house. The priest traces up to three generations to find who among the deads in the last three generations of the village has resurfaced. A *semul* pole is worshiped at the time of naming a child. The ceremony is called '*dukelidakina*' meaning worship to *dukeli* i.e. the ancestral being living as a spirit in the outer celestial sphere of the village. Usually, a child is anomenclature after he attains three years of age.

For the first child, the Kutia Kondh gives a big sacrifice. The animal chosen for the sacrifice is usually a pig or a buffalo. Later on, it is substituted with a cock. There are several rituals done during the nomenclaturing for different deities *likelinga penu*, *dukelipenu*, *elupenu*, *sapangadapenu*, *sarchangadapenu*, *ranipalu*, *bendipalu* and other hill deities.

After all the performances the priest declares the name of the child. As he is aware of the *dukeli* or ancestral spirit who has resurfaced during the worship, accordingly the child is named. In the same day, the nose and ear of the child are also pierced by the grandmother. She first touches the *semul* thorn at places where it is to be pierced. But the actual piercing is with the thorn of *bael* tree or by a pointed brass wire. The ritual ends with a common feast with the meat of the sacrificed animal. If the feast cannot be given by the child's father, he distributes the sacrificed animal's meat to all the households. But the mother of the child is not given meat even a morsel.

Puberty rituals:

A Kutia Kondh girl's puberty is associated with a number of taboos. The menarche (*jakaaate*) of a girl is an occasion to rejoice amongst the women folk because it establishes the potency of a girl to be impregnated. Immediately after the first menstrual flow of a young girl, she is taken for a bath by the old women of the village. They massage turmeric paste and oil on her body. She takes bath. After that, a new set of clothes is given to her to wear and she is taken to the menarche place or to the *jakakuda*. She stays there for seven days till her initial cycle is over. All the women then have rice prepared for the feast on account of the girl's puberty. During her seven days solitary confinement in the *jakakuda*, she is served food by others in leaf plates. During this period the girl or married women are never allowed to cook, move in the front path of the house where *dharani* is established, and they have to go about their work through the backyard. They do not sweep the cattle shed and do not touch agricultural implements. All the male members are avoided during this period. Deviation from the rules is believed to result in misfortune and gods have to be propitiated by sacrifice.

Marriage

Marriage is the most important aspect of Kutia Kondh life cycle, for, it is not only the basis of all relationships between two spouses but also a close relationship between two families. Thus, with the union of two individuals in a marriage process, the union of two families is solemnized. Again marriage is not only meant as a process that leads to the recreation or procreation but also it is a process that brings home (for a male) a new individual (female) who would take up the whole burden of the family. In a Kutia Kondh society, different types of marriages are prevalent. Marriage is called '*sedi*' in their language. The prevalent types of marriages are as follows:

Marriage by elopement: Guisata

This is a type of marriage in which an eligible young boy and a nubile young girl fall in love, on mutual consent, they decide when and how to get married. Thus a plan is made out and on getting a suitable opportunity they both elope without telling anyone. The opportunity is usually availed and exploited during community ceremonial events. The boy beckons the girl to discreetly spirit away to a safe haven, where the boy would have arranged for a stay with the girl for a few days. They remain hidden from their friends, relatives, and villagers. After some days of conjugal life, they urge their parents to agree to their formal marriage. Then the parents organize their societal solemnization of marriage with usual give and take formalities.

Marriage by capture: Tatanja

In this type of marriage, first, a young boy decides to marry a girl of his choice whom he adores. He then vents out his desires directly before the girl. If the girl accords her consent personally or she keeps quiet or conveys approval through one of her most intimate friends, then the matter is fixed. The boy and the girl may occasionally snuggle or meet them discreetly. This may lead to informal fornication between them. But if the boy and the girl apprehend their parent's dissension to their marriage, they decide to follow this method i.e. marriage by capture. They decide about the time and day when further actions are to be taken.

The boy goes back and tells his intimate friends all about the beloved and his discreet affairs with her. He then tells his friends that he wants to spirit away the girl from her parents. He seeks the help of his friends for the purpose. When his friends agree to help him, he fixes the time and day of capture with the help of his friends. He may or may not convey the news

to his girlfriend instantly. Then the boy waits for the opportune moment. They await usually for a community ceremonial event or the weekly market day to snatch away the girl. On availing the chance the boy lifts the girl and run away. The girl's friends try to dissuade the youth of the bride's village. Then the boys of the bride's village oppose this so-called 'forced marriage' venture and a big fight ensues between the people of bride's village and groom's village. Since the groom's group are prepared earlier, they become successful in spirited away the girl to a suitable place out of bound for the youth of the bride's village. The groom waits there for the bride. During the fight between the two groups, the police do not interfere, because it is a traditionally accepted way of marriage in Kutia Kondh society.

Marriage by Negotiation: 'Sedi'

This is the ideal form of marriage among the Kutia Kondh. The marriage is a long process. It takes a long period to be completed. Because the fixture of marriage is done at one time and the marriage is solemnized long after that. In the normal process, male and female family members of the bridegroom go to the bride's house with rice and liquor. The quantity of rice and liquor are not fixed. On reaching the bride's house they call the father and offer him the rice and liquor. It indicates that the guests have come with a proposal for marriage. If the rice and liquor are accepted by the girl's father it indicates an agreement from that day.

The period in between the negotiation and solemnization of the marriage is the transitional engagement period. During that period the negotiation may break down. If the negotiation is broken down from the bride's side, all the amount and materials that they received are returned. If the negotiation is broken down from the groom's side they will have to forget the materials, but the pecuniary handout is returned by the parents of the bride. The bride's side remains neutral during the day fixation, and the groom's parents decide the date of the marriage. Then the day is fixed. On the day of marriage, the groom along with his friends and village elders come to the bride's village and partakes the feast prepared for them. But it is not common or not compulsory that the groom should visit the bride's house on the day of marriage.

When the guest of the groom's village arrives at the bride's village, they are treated with *mahua* liquor first. Then they are called to have food in the feast arranged from bride's side. In the feast, two types of meat: buffalo meat and meat of goat are served. Buffalo meat is partaken and relished mostly by the older generation. The groom's father and the bride's father sit at one place and ceremonially partake the buffalo meat, as partaking of buffalo meat makes them *samdhi*. The term *samdhi* is explained in the kinship system. Without partaking

buffalo meat they cannot be *samdhi*- the tradition avers. Then all the groom's cohort and bride's friend of both the villages sing and dance together on that day. The song that is sung at this event is called '*sedigaani*', which is nothing but the *kuigaani* and in the song the role of *Nerandali* is emphasized, that works as a guideline for the bride. Elderly people also participate in the celebration (singing and dancing). When one group gets tired, then another group comes to the stage and the singing and dancing goes on. Amidst singing and dancing the girl is taken to a different hut where she is dressed and adorned with ornaments by her friends in a traditional fashion.

The bride is made ready to go with her husband's parents and villagers by the afternoon. The *jani* of the bride's village and her in-law's village bless the bride, and the boy if he is present, at the altar of *dharni* and inside the house. Then the bride is taken for a bath before she is outfitted with her jewelry and bridal costumes. The bride wears a saree. Her neck is covered with beads, *kagada*, bangles in hand, hairpins on *kapoli* and a number of combs on her hair. The bride is taken to all her elders to seek blessings and meet her friends.

Before leaving the village she is again blessed by the *jani* at the outskirts of the village. The *jani* 'spits' on the bride's head to neutralize the evil eyes. The *jani* massage *tolo* oil extracted out of *mahua* (*Madhukalongifolia*) fruits on her head and by invoking all the deities blesses the bride. The *Jani* also requests the gods and goddesses to bless the bride in her in-law's house.

Then the bride is taken to the outskirts of the village or a little far from the village where a log of *sal* tree about ten feet high is erected. The *sal* stump is cut and stumped by the friends of the girl. There the bride is given the farewell bid from the village. The process near the *Sal* pole is like a game played by the female groups of the bride's village and the groom's village. The bride is asked to cling and hold tightly the *sal* stump where a large clearing is wiped around the stump. The bride is then encircled by her friends and women of her village who make a chain to cordon the bride. After the cordon is made by the women of the bride's village, the women of the groom's village encircle around them. The women of the bridegroom's village and women of the bride's village test each other's strength. After a lot of pull and push the women of the groom's village topull out the bride from the *sal* stump. After this, the bride goes with the people of the groom's village.

The bride's parents gift a buffalo, some clothes, rice, and liquor to the groom's parents. The buffalo is meant for a community feast of the groom's villagers. The bride's family also provides gifts for her younger in-laws. The gifts depend upon the income of the bride's household.

Intra-lineage marriage is considered incestuous. Even marrying within a hamlet is considered to be incest because the boys and girls of the same hamlet are considered to be brothers and sisters. Now-a-days deviation is observed in this pattern. Girl and boy of different lineage living in the same hamlet are marrying.

The eighth day is much awaited by the bride at her husband's house. Because that is the day when her parents and friends with village people come to accompany her back to her village. During the eight days of the bride's stay at her husband's place, she is kept in a separate hut. The husband and the wife cannot meet each other or copulate to consummate during that period. It is a taboo.

On the eighth day, the parents and the villagers of the bride reach the groom's house. The groom's side receives the guest heartily. *Mahua* liquor is served to the guests. *Katul* is also served. If *salap* toddy is available, guests are escorted to the *madangabasa*, dance and song ensure. Everybody participates in a community feast there. If the groom's house is a long way from the bride's house then the guests take shelter at the groom's village for the night. The next day the bride is dressed and decorated to be sent to her own village with her parents and villagers. The bride is dressed in the traditional pattern. The young girls of the groom's side may add more ornaments to the bride's jewelry. The bride walks with bent head with her two palms kept beneath her lower jaw. This is regarded as the traditional veil. The bride before leaving the groom's village is blessed by the elderly people and *jani* for a safe journey to her village. They bless her to be saved from evil spirits, wild beasts etc. The *jani* requests the deities around the village for the safety, security, and well-being of the bride.

The bride's new friends at her husband's village accompany them halfway to bid farewell as well as to wish an early return. The villagers and parents are gifted with a buffalo from the groom's side for a community feast in the bride's village.

When the bride is with her parents after marriage, the husband visit, the newly-wed wife time and again. In fact, the first coitus between the wife and the husband takes place in the wife's parental place. As per the tradition, the wife will not return to her husband's hut until she is impregnated. That's why the husband has to visit the wife from time to time. Once the wife is pregnant, she stays no more with her parents and returns to her husband's hut.

Sororate and Levirate:

This type of marriage is known as '*michulanitatanja* and *midpasidi*'. This is the most preferred marriage of a widow or widower. The younger brother of a widow's husband is the

first claimant to be considered for a marriage with the wife of his deceased elder brother. Similarly, wife's younger sister is considered for a marriage with her brother-in-law after her sister's demise. These relationship does not involve the give and take of bride price. For example, to marry a widow, if her husband's younger brother disagrees, and another man is interested to marry the widow, the interested person will have to give gifts to the widow's parents as well as to the family of the widow's former husband.

Death

The body of a dead person is usually cremated. A pregnant woman who dies during delivery or a baby under a month old is usually buried. The personal belongings of the dead person are also cremated along with the demised.

Kutia Kondh observes bereavement for three days after death. The mourners after rendering their condolence to the bereaved family bathe in the stream with mango twigs. The bereaved family does not cook for these three days, food is provided by the villagers.

As soon as a person is dead, all the close kin and relatives are informed. They all come to extend their condolence to the bereaved family and are offered food by other members of the village. They may bring some *kueri* (millet granules) and cook it. This is not compulsory for all except the daughters and sisters of the dead.

Immediately after a person is dead, the corpse is covered with a cloth of his/her own, and the body is kept for the last viewing of near and dears. Then a bamboo bier is prepared to carry the dead body by the pallbearers to *tuleni* (the graveyard). A *kadeli* (four-poster) may be used instead of a bamboo bier. In the *tuleni*, the body is either cremated or buried. The *jani* first spread earth on the dead body, if it is being buried, or consigns the body to the flames, if it is being cremated. Before burial or cremation of a demised, oil mixed with turmeric paste is embalmed all over its body. Then everybody leaves the place and takes a bath, washing the clothes worn at the time of escorting the corpse to the graveyard. For three days, the *janipays* visitation to the place where the dead were buried or cremated and offers food for the *duma* or *dukeli*, i.e. the ancestral spirit.

Death rituals are organized in the village in-between third to theseventh day. Usually, if the ritual is organized on the seventh day, it is called *dasah*. On the ritual day, which is called *dadi* the departed soul is propitiated by the *jani* along with the help of *kutak* by performing the rituals and sacrificing the animals brought by everyone. That day, all the earthen pots are discarded and rice is cooked in new pots.

The relatives of the dead, particularly the in-laws, daughters, and sisters contribute animals and millet granules for the *dasah* feast, which is customary among the Kutia Kondh. Along with the contribution of the relatives, the village people contribute some millet granules according to their capacity, which is cooked in the '*dasah*' feast. The animals contributed by the relatives after sacrifice are hacked into two symmetrical halves, one half of which is sent back to their respective relatives and the other half is chopped and cooked in new earthen pots. *Mahuli* liquor, as well as *salap*, are served to all guests and the villagers. All the ancestors with the spirits of the dead are invoked and offered foods and drinks on that day.

Family: The nuclear social unit

The family is the smallest unit in the Kutia Kondh social organization. The family is of a nuclear type, where parents and unmarried children live under one roof. As soon as the son gets married, he builds a hut for himself but does not start cooking there, until he becomes the father of a child. He lives and dines with his father, mother and unmarried siblings in the paternal hut. After the birth of a child, its father and mother move to their new hut and begin their life in a separate independent unit. It has been also observed that son of the same father tend to live under one long roof, without partitioning the long verandah, except when their own children are married and have their children.

Types of Family	Burlubaru	Madalakuna	Dahabali	Total
Nuclear Family	17	5	6	28
Broken Nuclear Family	5	2	3	10
Lineal Joint Family	6	2	1	9
Nuclear Family with lineal dependent	4	1	1	6
Rare form of Family	3	-	1	4

Table 3.1: Types of families in the selected hamlets

Table 3.1, shows the different types of household based on the genealogical composition of the Kutia Kondh of Burlubaru, Madalakuna and Dahabali hamlets, where the household survey was carried out. This shows that there are four types of the different family including nuclear, broken nuclear, lineal joint and broken lineal joint families along with four rare forms of families.

Nuclear family

This type of family consists of a man, his wife with their unmarried children. This family evolves with the birth of children of a married couple. Out of the total household, i.e. 57, 28 households are composed of nuclear family, which constitute 49.12 percentage of total household.

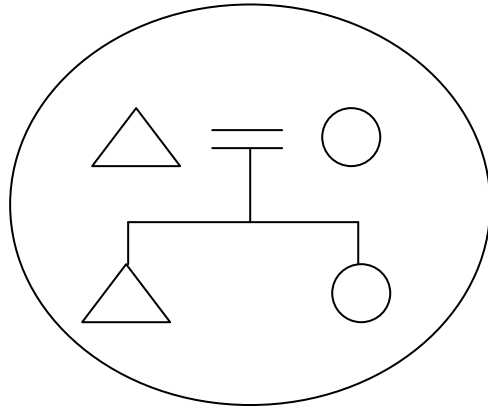


Diagram 3.4 Genealogical composition of nuclear family

Broken nuclear family

A broken nuclear family comes into existence with the death or separation or divorce of either husband or wife of the nuclear family. Among the Kutia Kondh out of the total sample of 57 households, 10 are broken nuclear family, which constitute 17.54 percentage of the total selected household.

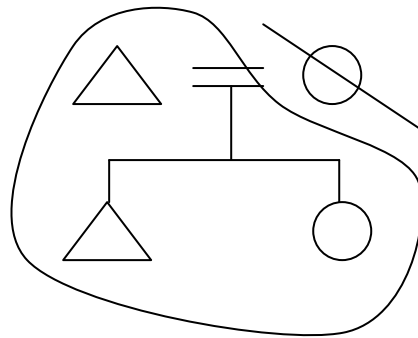


Diagram 3.5 Genealogical composition of broken nuclear family

Lineal joint family

This type of family consists of the nuclear family units of two or more lineally related persons, their spouses, and children. This type of family usually formed when parents alone join with the nuclear family unit of their son along with their unmarried children. Among Kutia Kondh, this form of family is very common and preferable, because according to their customary rules the youngest son will take care of his parents and unmarried sister till the end of their life. Out of 57 total selected household 9 households are of this type, which constitutes 15.78 percentage of the total selected household.

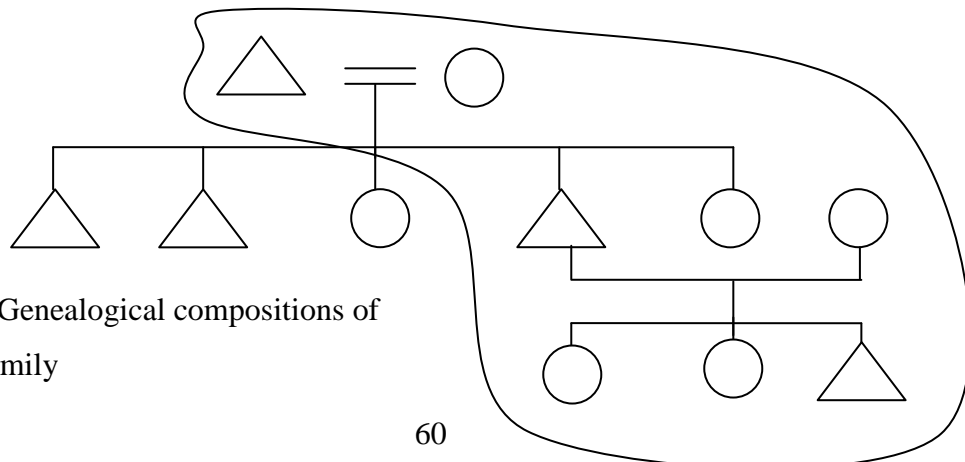


Diagram 3.6 Genealogical compositions of lineal joint family

Nuclear family with lineal dependant

This family type is formed when the addition of one or more dependant unmarried sister and/or widowed or widower parents live together with the nuclear family of their son. Out of 57 selected households, 6 are composed of this type of family i.e. 10.57 percentage of the total selected household.

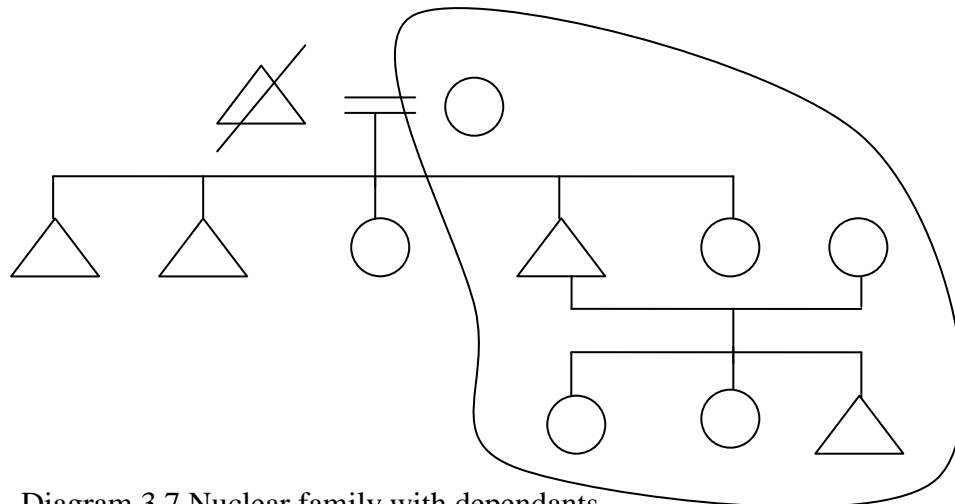


Diagram 3.7 Nuclear family with dependants

Rare forms of family

Out of 57 selected household, 4 are very rare forms of the family which constitute seven percent of the total selected household.

Single member family:

This type consists only one member of male or female after the death or separation or divorce from either spouse. There is only one case from Burlubaru hamlet, where Binita Jani stayed in the parental hamlet after the separation from her husband as she was accused of being a barren woman.

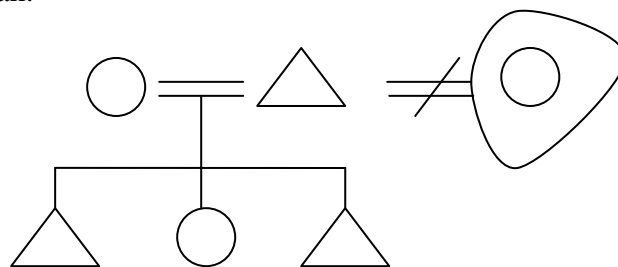


Diagram 3.8 Single member family

Nuclear Family with lineal and bi-lateral dependants:

This type of family consists of the nuclear family of a man with an addition of a widowed parent along with or without separated or widowed or unmarried children. This type of family represented by only one case, at Burlubaru hamlet Nabina Majhi household consist of his wife and children, along with his widow mother and unmarried elder sister.

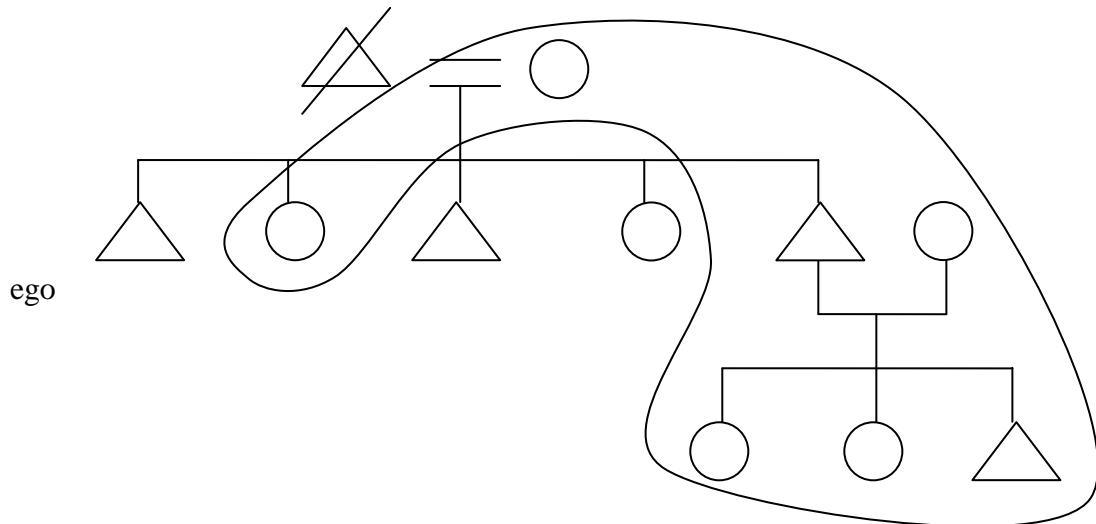


Diagram 3.9 Nuclear family with lineal and bilateral dependants

Incomplete family with grandchildrendependant

This type of family composed of husband and with the addition of their unmarried grandchildren. Only case coming from this type of family.

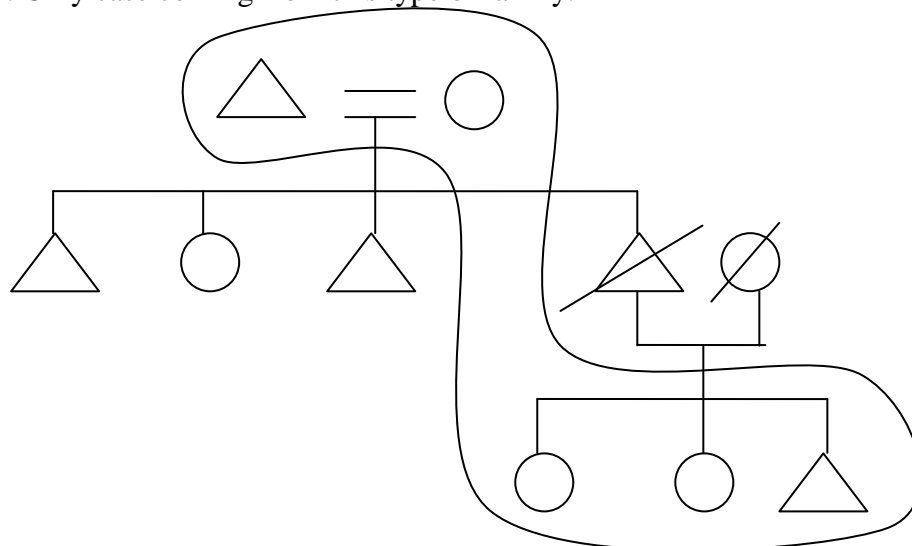


Diagram3.10 Incomplete family with grandchildren as dependants

There is also some rare genealogical composition which results in the rare form of family structures as in the case of Sunita Majhi who is staying with her younger brother's second son.

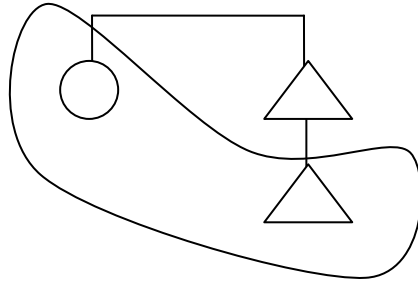


Diagram 3.11 Rare form of family

Father is the authority of the family. Every decision requires prior approval of the father. He is the decision maker but does not decide alone. He consults his wife, discusses all the matters with her and finally both resolve a solution on consensus. Affairs relating to family, which include the mother, sisters, and brothers are resolved by the father in consultation with the mother and sometimes with the unmarried sons and daughters. In most cases, the husband consults with his wife and married sons. The father does not give much importance to his married daughters in a decision-making process.

As soon as the son gets married, he brings his wife to his father's hut. Thus the Kutia Kondh practises a patrilocal residence pattern. There are diversions from this rule, where the son-in-law stays with his father-in-law or leave the father's village to settle down in father-in-law's village, due to various reasons like the father-in-law may have only one daughter or there may be more agricultural land in his village. A new couple may have to leave the groom's father's village due to the paucity of land. In case, when they leave the father's hut, either they build a new hut of their own in the village or migrate to the in-law's village. But this does not break their kinship relation.

Kutia Kondh believes in monogamous family life. It is very rare for a man to marry a second wife when the first one is alive, but not divorced or issueless. In any case, more than one wife is restricted in their society. In the family, divorce cases are not decided by the family members. When such type of case arises it is decided in the village meeting by the *majhi* and the villagers.

If the children get married, they move to their own huts and they are provided with necessary durables by their parents. Not all useful materials are gifted away by the parents. Articles such as dresses, ornaments, most of the kitchen equipment, utensils and other artifacts are purchased from the market by the married couple. When the youngest son gets married, he gets the belongings of his parents which is not needed by their elder brothers as they have already settled. Thus the youngest one gets most of the household artifacts of his parents.

The mother's possessions go equally to all the daughters. Every one of the family contributes to the wellbeing of the family, irrespective of age and sex. They contribute economically, socially and culturally, together for the upkeep of the family. The Kutia Kondh society is an agrarian society but mostly the agriculture is on the hill slope. So the workload is different for everyone. The females of the society are more industrious than the male members.

They have time-honored customs relating to property and inheritance, which are decided in view of prevailing social norms on the principles of equity and sound conscience. However, regarding trees in the forest, the ownership goes to the person who first utilized it. Then such trees become family properties and inherited according to the set social principles.

Kinship system

The Kutia Kondh attach due importance to their kin and the elaborated kinship system. The members of their society are tied together in groups by blood and by marriage. A definite clan-based organization; clan exogamy and patriliney are the main features of Kutia Kondh kinship system. The descent is counted in the male line and marriage inside the clan is tabooed.

The Kutia Kondh kinship system is defined by the patrilineal notion of a common agnatic essence inherited from the paternal ancestors. Though members, claim to be descendants of a particular ancestor, they, however, could not clearly link their genealogy towards their founder ancestor. The primary kinship units among the Kutia Kondh are clan (*gochhi*), which are further divided into smaller unit equivalent to lineage. After the family (*kutum*) forms the smallest unit of social organization. Thus the Kutia Kondh have clan (*gochhi*), lineage and family (*kutum*) organization, which form the crucial aspect of their social structure. Membership to these unilineal descent groups is attained through birth and the members conceive that the agnatic substance inherited through the male parents, forms the essence of their descent group. After marriage a woman becomes a member of her husband's kin group, however, she is not completely detached from her natal group but maintains a relationship with her agnatic group.



Nadruga, Saraka, Timaka, Sukbicha/Sukbichaka, Adanga, Rodamaka, Urlaka, and Kadraka, which have emerged from sapangadaholy grail and several other sub-clans are derived from those.

Kutia Kondh lineage system is not very broad. The whole society has been divided into two main group i.e. '*jani*' and '*majhi*'. *Jani* and *majhi* are the only two broader descent based categories existing in the society of Kutia Kondh. Both the kin categories have interactions so far as the family configuration is concerned. In the two rows of huts, *jani* and *majhi* make two groups. But a boy from one row can choose a girl of the opposite row or same, but prior to that clan should be a different clan. Thus a *jani* can marry to a *majhi* and vice versa.

At the family level, there is the tradition that, after a marriage, the bride is brought to the groom's house. The married woman adopts the lineage of her husband. For example, when a *majhi* woman married to a *jani* man, she goes to her husband's house and she lives in the *jani* rows, she is then called as '*janiadu*' i.e. a woman married into *jani* group. Since it is a patrilineal society, in no case husband adopts his wife's descent. Deviations are often marked in this principle, that a man and woman of the same descent, living in the same row cannot be married to each other. But it happens on rare occasions. Marriage between the man and woman of the same category of the same row cannot take place through proper negotiation. But this type of marriage can only happen if the marriage is by elopement or capture. Also, marriage between two persons, even if they belong to the same clan can take place if the two persons are from two different villages. Spouses from the different settlements can marry in the same group. But it is also subject to certain restrictions.

Marriage within or outside the lineage does not always conform to the traditional principles. Most of the marriages in Kutia Kondh society are of marriage by elopement. Cases of elopement and capture are not very uncommon within the same descent group. It is not accurate that the marriage takes place within the same consanguineal kinship of the family. Again a married woman can also elope with or captured by a man, though he is penalized afterward. Since marriage at times takes place between *jani-majhi*, *jani-jani*, and *majhi-majhi* groups, so the members of the different clans get mixed up with each other through the passage of time.

Kinship terminology

Generations	English Term	Terms of Reference
G2	Paternal Grandfather	<i>Dutanja</i>
	Paternal Grandmother	<i>Dutali</i>
	Maternal Grandfather	<i>Aku</i>
	Maternal Grand Mother	<i>Dutali</i>
G1	Father (F)	<i>Abba (Tanji)</i>
	Mother (M)	<i>Eea (Tali)</i>
	Father's Younger Brother (FyB)	<i>Kaku</i>
	Father's Younger Brother's wife	<i>Kaki</i>
	Father's Elder Brother	<i>Pemba</i>
	Father's Elder Brother's wife	<i>Kaki</i>
	Mother's Brother (MB)	<i>Mama</i>
	Mother's Brother's Wife	<i>Amma</i>
	Mother's Sister (MZ)	<i>Kaki</i>
	Mother-in-law	<i>Eea</i>
	Father-in-law	<i>Abba</i>
	Son's Wife's Father	<i>Samdhi</i>
	Son's Wife's Mother	<i>Samdhiadu</i>
	G0	Elder Brother
Elder Brother's Wife		<i>Awa</i>
Elder Sister		<i>Nana</i>
Younger Brother		<i>Appu</i>
Younger Brother's Wife		<i>Appi</i>
Younger Sister		<i>Appi</i>
G-1	Son	<i>Appu</i>
	Daughter	<i>Appi</i>
	Sister's Son/Brother's Son	<i>Bhanaja</i>
	Sister's Daughter/Brother's Daughter	<i>Bhaniji</i>
G-2	Grandson	<i>Natti</i>
	Granddaughter	<i>Putti</i>
	Bride	<i>Kudua</i>

Table 3.2 Kinship terminologies

*G2: Ego's Grandparents generation, G1: Ego's parental generation, G0: Ego's generation & G-1: Ego's children's generation, G-2: Ego's grandchildren's generation.

The family is patriarchal with father as the head. The father is called as 'abba' and the mother 'eea'. The kinship also tends to both the sides of a married couple. Kinship system also maintains an elaborate joking relationship, as a younger brother or sister may share jokes with their elder brother's wife 'awa' or elder sister's husband respectively. Younger brother's wife 'appi' and elder sister avoid sharing jokes with elder brother-in-law and younger sister's husband respectively. They also do not sit together on one mat. The mother and father do not sit in the same seat or bed in front of the hut. The mother usually sits on the ground, whereas

the father sits on the furniture as it is believed that because the god would get angry if they deviate from the norms.

The behavior towards their community members, all the visitors, kin and other community members are mutually respectful.

The family head is '*abba*' i.e. the Father. But 'my father' in their community is '*ni abba*'. To call a person having the name of his son (for example Ram) one would call 'Ram *tanji*'; same with the daughter's name. Hence *tanji* and *abba* are the two terms used for the father but in two different contexts.

The mother is called '*eea*', for my mother, it is '*nieea*'. *Tali* is used similarly as '*tanji*' for a father. Thus mother is known with two terms '*eea*' and '*tali*'.

For sister of the mother, only one term used- '*kaki*'. *Kaki* is also applicable for paternal uncle's wife. If the uncle is younger than the father, he is called as '*kaku*', but the uncle older than the father is called as '*pemba*'. All paternal and maternal aunts are called as '*Kaki*'.

Grandfather is known in term of '*dutanja*', and the Grandmother as '*dutali*'. But an old person, at the stage of being the grandfather is called as '*deranji*', but '*dutali*' is used for all old women by other folks, no other terms used by affinity or consanguinity.

The deceased or dead do not have any name. The utterance the name of the dead person's name is regarded as a taboo by Kutia Kondh. They are either called '*jendaenja-kadenja*' or simply a '*dukeli*'. '*jendaenja-kadenja*' refers to very elderly dead persons and '*dukeli*' literary refers to spirits. However, for dead women, there is no gender-specific term. They are simply known as '*Dukeli*'.

In the family, 'brother' has two terms, used differently. The elder brother called by the younger brother as '*tada*', but to the Older brother calls the younger brother as '*appu*'. There are two terms for sisters i.e. '*nana* and *appi*'. *Nana* is used to calling the elder sister. *Appi* is used by all seniors to a girl or a woman irrespective of age.

Maternal grandfather is called as '*aku*' and grandmother as '*dutali*'. Grandson is called as '*nati*' and granddaughter is called as '*putti*'.

A bride is called '*kudua*' by her father-in-law and mother-in-law. Elder brother's wife is '*awa*' and younger brother's wife is '*appi*'. There is no specific term for a wife to call her husband, and she cannot call her husband even by his name as it is a social taboo in Kutia Kondh Society. A bride calls her mother-in-law as '*eea*' and father-in-law as '*aba*', so also for a groom to his in-laws.

Mother's brother is called as *mama*. *Mama* is widely used. Anybody not related to a person, who is middle-aged or old is called either *kaku* or *Pemba*. A son's father calls his son's father-in-law as '*samdhi*' and mother-in-law as '*samdhiadu*'.

Political organization

The Kutia Kondh society is less hierarchical. So their political organization is skimpy and succinct. The political head of the village is called *majhi*. He decides the inter-personal conflicts, misunderstandings, conflicts over the inheritance of land and property etc. His most important function is a decision, pertaining to the selection of swidden plots, distribution of plots and amongst the villagers. He is the village representative to the courts to handle disputes with forest department for slashing and burning of forests. He takes the responsibility of liaising with the lawyers, officers and thus, acts as a situational leader to villagers at the time of need. The village social and cultural affairs are organized in consultation with and by the approval of the *majhi*. In the Panchayati Raj system, the village head *majhi* was being unanimously elected to represent the village Panchayat. The people still obey the *majhi* as their head and so normally they do not take help of the administration, police or judiciary even in serious cases. Women are not given any position or status in the Kutia Kondh political set-up.

Livelihood and economy

Taking into consideration the technology and methodology adopted for acquiring food, the Kutia Kondh have been identified as one of the primitive tribal groups of Odisha. Their economic life centered exclusively on slash and burn type shifting cultivation which has become a way of life for them. They also practise food gathering and occasional hunting. Apart from the daily routine of work, the seasonal labor is hard and labour intensive. Division of labour is based on sex. Women have to do all the vital tasks of housekeeping. In swidden plots women perform de-bushing, dibbling, hoeing, weeding, guarding the crops, harvesting, winnowing, finally storing and selling. Men undertake the tasks of cutting big trees, burning the felled trees, watching the crops, etc. In wet cultivation, which is very rare, women undertake the important tasks of transplanting, weeding, reaping, harvesting and storing the produce. The Kutia Kondh do not engage themselves much for Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) collection except some important ones like hill-broom, tamarind, berries and char seeds etc.

Religious belief:

For the Kutia Kondh, the environment is sacred and god (*penu*) is omnipresent. The entire animate and inanimate worlds that are found around them are a small part of the larger whole, nature. *Penu* is manifest in different forms of nature. Some of the *penuni*(single:*penu*) are benevolent and most are malevolent. All of these need to be invoked and propitiated duly at one time or other. Some require big sacrifices and some are satisfied with small animals. The *penuni* have different forms and abodes. Some live in mountains, some on plants and trees, boulders rocks and eerie forest landscapes. They are also seen in dreams of the priest in different forms. The *penuni* themselves approach a priest in dream and direct him to propitiate for the welfare of the society. The priests are directed always to act for the welfare of people in the village by obtaining the blessing and acquiring secret knowledge imparted by the *penuni*.

Dharni penu(earth goddess) is the most important one in Kutia Kondh pantheon. *Weda penu* (sun god) is equally powerful. Besides, there are innumerable hill spirits, ancestral spirits and supernatural spirits whom the Kutia Kondh propitiate to preserve their well-being.

The important festivals around the year include *Punikalu* (meaning: new liquor, full-moon, new partaking, new festival etc.) in January, *Wango Dropondi* (preparation of swidden plots) in April, *Bicha Supinere* (sowing) in June, *Taka Kalu* (Mango kernel festival) in July, *Badbinere* (farewell festival) in October, *Dussera kandangadakina*(*Dasahara* sword worship) in October etc. The most important festivals that are organised once at an interval of 3-4 years include *Biha Katina* (*Meriah* Festival) and *Burlanga Dakina* (crop container worship), organised during January - February, and April - May respectively. Their dance forms are *Kedu* dance, *Meriah* dance, and *Dhangada-Dhangidi* dance.

Festival around the Year:

Puni kalu: this is celebrated as *pusalanju* to worship *dharnipenu*, *deu kuda penu*, and *sataripenu*. The ritual is performed by the *jani*. The *jani* who worships *dharnipenu* and *sataripenu* does not worship *deu kuda penu*. Other *jani* must be there. The *deu kuda penu* is offered with eggs which are broken there. No sacrifice is given to *deu kuda penu* except eggs. *Punikalu* is the largest regular festival of the year. *Puni* refers to the full moon and new moon, whereas *kalu* to pestle, liquor or legs. Thus the *panikalu* is a new partaking festival organized on a bright fortnight. On this occasion, *kueri* liquor i.e. *katul* is drunk by the populace. This is regarded as new partaking of *katul*.

On this occasion, pigs, cocks, *kueri* (millet granules), *kuling* (paddy) *katul* (liquor of *kueri*), turmeric and *mahuli* liquor are offered to *dharnipenu* and *sataripenu*. *Elupenu* is also worshiped along with other *penuni*. In this ritual new harvesting of *jata* (*rajma- Lablab purpurens*) and *anka* (*lagenaria siceraria*) are partaken. New *kueri* offered to the *penunis* is used to prepare *kena* (which is used after a month to make *katul*). This ritual is performed inside the village by the *jani*.

Meriah festival or bia-dakina:

It is celebrated in *phagun* or *chaitlanju*. The appropriate time is the full moon of *phagunlanju* (March-April). The *kutaka* foresees in adream where the *dakina* has to be performed. In the dream, it may be suggested that the *dakina* is to be performed to *sorudharni* or *najudharni* (*dharni* in hill or *dharni* in the village). The main sacrificial offering is the *podho* (buffalo). The buffalo to be sacrificed is called *nia*. The main hill associated with village has to be offered with cocks and goats. The pigs and cocks are offered when the *kurumunda* is installed at the *dharni* where the *dakina* is to be performed. On this occasion, the *katul* is prepared for 2 to 5 times. This varies from village to village. This ritual is performed for the wellbeing of the village and good yield from agriculture.

This festival is not a regular festival of the year. It is organized at an interval of every 3 to 4 years and is celebrated when people are in sound pecuniary condition, particularly after a good harvest. This festival is the revolutionized version of the ancient *meriah* festival in which human being was sacrificed.

Burlangadakina:

It is celebrated in *baishakhalanju* or *kudalanju* (April to May). On this occasion, *burlanga* (large bamboo container to store grains) is worshiped. Mainly goats and cocks are sacrificed. Usually, only two cocks are offered. But, if *penu* asks for goat it is to be offered. *Kueri* is usually the grain which is filled in the *burlanga* and offered. The ritual usually begins from one end of the village. The last householder on *majhi* line is called 'routmajhi' from whose hut the rituals start. The sacrificial cock is taken to every hut in the village where it is given *kueri* to eat and then it is sacrificed in *routmajhi's* hut. In this ritual, a home deity (*elupenu*) is also propitiated by the *jani*. There is a legend regarding the *burlangadakina*. During this ritual, *kueri* is filled in *burlanga* and prayer offered. The legend runs that there was a village *surungabaru* where the *kueiri* was being offered. All the households had filled their *burlanga* to the rim and cleaned their houses for the purpose. But the *majhi* was

indigent, he had not enough yield that year and what he had harvested was finished in family consumption. He was in a fix for not knowing what to do. Intuitively he collected *kulipiri* (hay) and spread it on the *burlanga*. Then he went and borrowed one *mana* (3 Kg.) of *kueri* from his neighbour and spread it over the *kuli piri*, in such a way that it looked as if the whole *burlunga* was filled with *kueri*. Seeing the *burlanga*, and earnestness of the *majhi*, the *penu* blessed him with affluence. So that he could always lend to others and became rich thereafter.

On the occasion of *burlanga*, the *bichavali* stone is also propitiated. The person in whose house this stone lies starts the ritual. The stone is believed to change places from one's house to another.

Music and dance: aesthetic scene

Singing and dancing are the integral parts of the Kutia Kondh life. Every occasion is marked by different songs. These songs have different themes and are sung differently. The hymns chanted by the priests on various occasions are different. The songs sung for the 'meriah' ritual is different from invoking ancestors to attend rituals, asking the buffalo to understand why they have to sacrifice it to the *dharni* and recalling the ancient myths associated with the ritual. Marriage songs also vary from one sing during dressing the girl in her fineries to the one sing while sending her off. The vital one is *kuigaani* which would go on for seven days and seven nights non stop. The *kuigaani* explains the creation of the world and its evolution today. These songs explain the way of nature and the beautiful world they live in. These songs express the joys and sorrows of the tribals and elucidate the changes that are occurring and the reasons of their occurrences. Thus the songs are their day-to-day renditions relayed for the younger generations to follow and act accordingly.

Dances of Kutia Kondh are very simple. For some, it involves just walking hand in hand while exchanging riddles with each other. For others, it is just swing and sway of hips while walking by placing one foot in front of the other. The second one is a dance pattern determined by the rhythm of the songs.

The musical instruments of the Kutia Kondh comprise big drums 'mada' or medium drums *pidinga*, small drums *bandi*, metal ankle bells *jhanjianga*, bamboo flute *mahura*, an indigenous mouth organ made by a string called *gauni* and an iron stick with bells called *muangalaudi*. Most of these instruments are used during dancing and singing associated with their traditional festival.

CHAPTER-IV

THE WORLD OF KUTIA KONDH

The entire lifestyle of Kutia Kondh community is embedded in two of its most important discourses- society and culture. Society and culture are two divergent lines of the lifestyle of Kutia Kondh often intersected at a point when the lifestyle becomes a form of the socio-cultural identity of the community.

When the term 'social' refers to having to do with the interrelationship between individuals and groups, the term 'cultural' becomes different from it in meaning, sense, justifications and in terms of appropriateness to certain factors. Thus the term 'social' is distinguished from 'cultural' in that, 'social' pertains to relations between persons whereas 'cultural' pertains to beliefs, standards of behaviour, values, knowledge and all other aspects of culture. It is difficult to justify whether culture is first or the society is first. Even before the society came into being, groups of people were living in concentric patches with a particular set of beliefs, behaviour, values, knowledge which they acquired spontaneously or through their direct and indirect association with the environment. It will not be untrue to state that the Nature around them which we now term as the environment is the soul of education, as Rath and Behera (1985) explain in their study:

The indigenous people of the world possess an immense knowledge of their environment, based on the centuries of living close to nature. They have an understanding of the properties of plants and animals, the functioning of ecosystems and the techniques for using and managing them that is particular and often detailed. Their knowledge and perceptions of the environment, and their relationships with it and often important elements of cultural identity.

The pre-historic man lived on this basis, learning a lot from nature. Thus nature conditions smaller beings, human beings, animals, plants, and trees to live coherently. But nature which is composed of those living beings with inanimate matters may be regarded as the 'environment' in which the 'living beings' are a smaller set of functional entities.

Societies differ with the difference in the interrelationship between individuals and groups. Interactions among the groups clearly delineated about the type of society. The style of living in the society is directly or indirectly reflected in the social interaction of the

individuals. Thus style of living also changes with the change in form and structure of a society. Tribal community differs a lot from the non-tribal style of living. Every tribal community shows a typical style of living. The condition of living is also unique to them. It has its own way of living based on the environment and the surroundings. The interaction of the tribal societies with the natural environment, forests, and their abodes at the base of the hills and amidst the forests make them known as forest-dwelling communities. Thus a lifestyle is not designed by itself but it is made to design in relation to the living space, the cultural background, and the environment around them, the resource, the religious beliefs and all that directly or indirectly contribute to the nature and behaviour of the society. To understand the community, its culture and configuration of the society amidst the forests and natural environments one will have to very carefully observe and analysis its association with the animate and inanimate materials around, its association with the biotic and abiotic components of the environment that have significant role in the overall layout of their cultural patterns and traditions. To understand the communities vast cultural heritage and lifestyle, customs and traditions at a closer look one have to look into its living conditions which are the first to be affected by any change (Seeland: 2000).

Kutia Kondh community, by virtue of their long association with the forest, has enjoyed considerable freedom to use wood and fuel, to hunt animals and to exploit Non-Timber Forest Produces for their sustenance. The forest not only provides them with food and shelter but also satisfies their ethos and sentiments. This intimate association has developed a symbolic relationship between the Kutia Kondh and the forest which has however developed their understanding of their surrounding environment. The following paragraphs will discuss how the Kutia Kondh are accustomed to a style of living where they feel that surrounding environment is closely intertwined with them and their culture is attuned to it.

The origin of the Kutia Kondh society is progenerated from their cosmological myth, *kuigani*. It tells about human beings who got materialized in the world under the earth and their subsequent division into different groups. The *kuigani* starts with “*linganainjanejananaijane*” & “*daenwangadae, daennelladaeti*” which etymologically conveys that ‘parturition undercover, under the earth, under the swidden plot’, so accouchement is upcoming from under the earth or under the swidden plot.

“*Nerandalitoduta, kapandalitoduta*” means the sacrosanct supreme creatrix procreated other creatresses under the earth. *Kapandali* is the synonym for the supreme creatrix. The incantation intones that the perinatal pressure under the earth is brimful, so they are bubbling over to emanate from the underground. But there seems no way to materialize.

Only darkness prevails in the underground cells. *Nerandali*, the ultimate creatrix is perturbed by problems galore, so *nerandali* broods about how to catalyze her progeny to come out. This is the beginning, progeny are under the earth and the underground is completely sans light and no sparkle- '*anasiladaenujadsiladaen*'.

Nerandali leads a plethora of progeny. She is being followed by a number of women nomenclature: *serengelaji*, *brabelaaji*, *sringuliaji*, *gundeliaji*, *palupuri-datapuri*, *tendeliaji-mranjeliaji*, *kittimai-kabadmai*, *sareni tali*, *banjuri tali*, *rangeni tali*, *paweri tali*, *kandra aba*, *warapu aba*, *enguri aba*, *sechkuri aba*, *kutakadu*, *lambikadu*, *deheradu*, *pejerada* and many others after her, who are expectantly labouring to come out from the underground. They all have taken birth under the earth after the *Nerandali*. Male folks are suffixed by- *enja* and female folks by- *adu*. *Aji* is the term for maternal grandmother, *aba* refers to sister-in-law (Brother's wife) and *adu* refers to women. *Tali* refers to themother. *Eia* also means mother. The difference lies in between is that the child calls her mother as *eia* but the child's mother is called by other as child's *tali*. Hence in the process of creation in the underground, women of three generations coexist. *Aji* makes the first and the foremost generation, *tali* is the second generation and *aba* is the third generation. Since *adu* is commonly used to denote women beings, it is identified with any generation.

Many a number of women took birth following *nerandali* to find out a passage for coming on to the earth. The huge gathering of the women folk in the underground is narrated in a metaphorical way. In the *kuigani* the mixture of many types of women is compared to *atpabicha*. *Bicha* is seed and *atpabicha* is the term indicating an assortment of crop seeds. As per the Kutia interpretation, each seed is typical of a particular plant or tree. Accordingly, the above said women's' progeny will hold the same skill or profession as their mothers. The Kutia Kondh believe that, as theseed is to a plant so a woman to children. Further, the huge populace in the 'underworld' is compared metaphorically to ants and white ants, sometimes as herds of cattle etc. Thus "*atpabichalega*" implies that the Kutia Kondh populace has emerged like different varieties of seeds, alluding to different types of crops, grown in a mixed cropping system in shifting cultivation.

The above-mentioned folks took birth under the earth. The nomenclature of the place of their re-emergence is called '*Sapangada*'. '*Sapan*' in *kui* language means birth and '*gada*' stands for crevice. The mythical attributes aver that Kutia Kondh materialized through ant-hole like cervical clefts named as *sapangada*. Women of different clans and lineages are in accouchement under the earth. *Nerandali*, who is also known as queen(rani), infers that the society or the generation she is the harbinger of, rendered handicapped without the siring by

male folks. So the parturition continues again. But this time only males materializes. The populace is now divided into groups or lineages. The lineages are marked by names ascribed to them. Lineage has its origin in *kuigani*. One stanza, mentioned in the *kuigani* relates to lineage i.e. '*sender lienja-baser lienjajudeka*' meaning populace of different lineages conjoins.

None of the male folk created occupied the dominant position of hero. After creation of many a people, *nerandali* felt the problem of managing the society without a real leader. She summarised that without a real hero, who would roam about the earth and fields, who would worship goddess earth and thunder god, who would organize rituals and worships, who would manoeuvre natural elements, hills, and slopes, who will welcome guests, who will be the peer fo and so forth. To fulfill all these needs she procreated *betamangera*, also known by many other names like *betaka*, *prambuka*, *anamanger*, *gatimanger* etc. *Ana* and *gati* refer to hill slopes and hilltop respectively, *beta* means hunting. Such kind of names is ascribed to suit to the purpose for which each one was needed. *Nerandali* thus regarded as the sole supreme creatrix while *betamangera* is the real lord, the king of the earth. With the coming of *betamangera*, the entire birth episode ended.

The Nature and Culture

The relationship of plants with the other forms of life like animals including human beings is of great significance. Plants and trees have served to the human need since primordial time (Patnaik: 2007) similarly. Plants and trees are being used in all aspects of the Kutia Kond's life. To sum up, plants and trees provide for food, clothing, and shelter and also used in worship, rituals, ceremonies, witchcraft, sorceries and in many aspects of their culture.

The 'nature' thus becomes a larger phenomenon as the 'environment'. The 'human being' experienced different feelings, structural patterns of similarities in living being, the behaviour and such other things which are parts of the larger set of 'environment' or the 'nature' over the years. Thus the experience of human beings gave an understanding that, the environment is a larger phenomenon. Then the question arises as to what is the root of 'environment' or what is the unit of 'environment' from which human started to experience it. The quest has both simple and complicated answers as it goes on, either way, the physical side of 'environment' and the moral, or the high moral and philosophical understanding of the environment. Hence on the physical plane, it is simply known with the objects, entities and its structures, and philosophically the pattern in which the objects, entities, and structures interact, interplay within the 'environment'. Thus the physical understanding of the

environment gives a description of its form, structure as a whole as 'nature'. On the other hand, the philosophical understanding goes along experiencing the mystery, the mysterious power, and dynamics of the environment. This confirms that environment is not a simple structure, rather a larger structural, and functional whole.

The human being through observation and analysis of the environment prepares a set of standing principles and methods which continues for a period of time. This standing set of principles is based on the moral values, which is created and passed down by itself through generations. Both human and its environment are subject to time and space, both changes with time and space. One operates another. The operation, classification and the analytical processes evolve with time. Culture is born out of the interactions between these human and environment interactions.

Culture in a broad sense is the sum total of beliefs, morals, values, and ethos of a community binding all the members in a common bond. According to another connotation, culture is the sum total of agrifacts (product of agriculture), socifacts (social organization, family etc.) and mentifacts (religion, behaviour, pattern and other traits pertaining to mind and brain). In fact, culture is man and his work (Herskovit:1948). Keeping broadly in view of the discussion, a community having a separate cultural entity of its own have a separate set culture.

The Kutia Kondh living in different regions has a separate culture different even from the other segments of the same tribe (Kondh). Thus the culture of the Kutia Kondh born and developed over the ages is attuned to nature. Confined to a certain space, to make it clear, culture is the understanding of human and its environment relationship over a particular period and over a particular space. As space became different, cultures became different too. The interaction of human beings (Kutia Kondh) with the environment over different periods of time and over a particular space, made different sets of standing principles of culture. At this moment when co-relations are made with human being and its environment and their interactions, interrelations, interplays which gave birth to the term culture, then the human being must be very much specific with who determines the culture. The human being here is the '*kuianka*', the group of human beings, popularly known as Kutia Kondh. Thus the culture under analysis here refers to the culture of the Kutia Kondh that has been or is being framed at a particular time with additions, deletions, supplements and complements cropping up intermittently, so to say the culture developed and develops over a particular space in different periods of time.

Kutia Kondh's understanding of the environment

Kutia Kondh have a systematic view or spiritual outlook towards nature. Its relation with nature is ecological, organic and holy. 'Ecological' in the context of Kutia Kondh and their culture is nothing but what is called spiritual.

Nature is a major aspect of the Kutia Kondh culture. It is said by Chandrakant Jani (65/M), the priest of Burlubaru village who opines that the Kutia Kondh have innumerable gods and goddesses subsumed into the Kutia Kondh pantheon. To the Kutia Kondh, the environment is sacred and all the elements in it are manifestations of *penu* (god). All the animate and inanimate matters that are found around them and a small part of the environment which is the larger whole have the apprehension of *penu* in different forms. All the hills, animals, plants and the biotic components have *penu* and most are also propitiated as *penu*. It is because their living patterns indicate that they are nature believers, they act with nature and deal with nature in their everyday life. The understanding of nature starts with their fear complex, which was triggered by the mystery of their origin and of course the origin of the world. The fear complex dovetailed the whole set of their religious pattern and cultural base. In their religious behaviours, they worship the different elements of the surrounding in different names. Some of them are benevolent, who helps them in their day to day life and some are malevolent who are there to cause harm to them and even perceived to destroy them. There lies the secret of their understanding of nature; as a complex whole, the creatrix, creatress, creators and the destroyers. In their religious beliefs, the Kutia Kondh worship a great number of deities with various names. In their system of nomenclature, they refer the gods in the names of sun, sky, wind, rain, earth, plants and trees, hills and forest, animals etc. In naming the deities, the fact is that the deities are named after their sector of authority such as *Dharani penu*: (earth goddess), *Soru penu*: (hill god) etc.

The '*dharanipenu*' is regarded as the goddess who is the authority of the entire earth on which the Kutia Kondh live and build their settlement. The earth itself is a vital resource, for it has provided them the basis to live. With this belief, they worship the earth goddess with great esteem. They have the belief that, the goddess holds the life of the Kutia Kondh and the other beings who live on its surface. Therefore the '*dharanipenu*' is worshipped, propitiated with sacrifices and other materials borne or found on the earth. The earth goddess must be satisfied, failing which catastrophic calamities engulf community lives, living on its cradle. It must, therefore, be propitiated with sacrifices of living beings. They believe that the animals and human including themselves have derived life from it. Moreover Kutia Kondh's staple foods, the fruits, roots, animals etc. are also the bounties of the earth goddess. The

blood (*neri*) that is flowing in the animal body or on the Kutia Kondh body is a gift of '*dharanipenu*' directly or indirectly. Therefore she is propitiated by the blood through a sacrifice. The human sacrifice to *dharanipenu* was an old practice as recorded in their belief pattern and later on in history.

'*Wango penu*' is worshiped with respect, who is associated with the agricultural fields and the fields used for the shifting cultivation. The shifting cultivation and plain land agriculture is the only source of the vegan food supply of Kutia Kondh. They worship '*wangopenu*' for a better yield from crops. They feel that the crop is also made available to them through the grace of gods and goddesses. They worship the '*wangopenu*' along with '*dharanipenu*' for the resource base, the earth. It is the '*wango*' that provides sufficient favourable opportunities for a good cropping. The '*sorupenu*' i.e. the hill god is regarded as the protector of the Kutia Kondh. It saves them from storms. It provides lands (*nella*) for shifting cultivation. It looks for the Kutia Kondh well being from a great height. It has its trees and animals from whom Kutia Kondh collect food, fuel-woods, wood for household artifacts etc. The religious feelings are associated with all aspects of nature.

The water comes under the arena of '*ejupenu*' and '*gangipenu*'. Kutia Kondh feels that it is water that washes away all their miseries, as well as harbingers all the miseries in the form of diseases and illnesses. Furthermore, water is the prime source that is the basis of cropping and cultivation. Water resource in any form i.e. streams, pools, rainwater and everything is associated with '*ejupenu*' and hence accordingly propitiated on religious ground.

Likewise, the sun is niched with reverence as '*wedapenu*' who is the master of all knowledge and awareness. Kutia Kondh understood that sun makes the distinction between day and night regulating, timely and untimely action. The Kutia Kondh avail awareness, good cropping, know about the changes of seasons and weathers thanks to the sun's power.

Wind also has a place of importance in Kutia Kondh religious beliefs. Wind is respected as '*widipenu*'. They believe that the wind has a significant contribution to their life and that it is the god that initiates life by managing and maintaining respiration. It dries up the earth and has the ability to change things (like a simple wind can be a storm). It has developed a fear complex in the Kutia Kondh that it may appear in form of storms to demolish the Kutia Kondh's well-being.

Furthermore, tree is regarded as a *penu* called '*marapenu*'. Trees and plants are well accepted to be benevolent to human life. It caters to most of the material needs of Kutia Kondh who lives in forest. Trees have great deal of association with their life and culture and other aspects of moral values. Kutia Kondh believe that the plants and trees are oldest and

longest surviving companions on the earth. The trees are possessed by spirits, both good and bad. A tree is considered as an abode of deities and spirits, who love to stay in larger trees. Taboos, beliefs, superstition, medicinal importance associated with plants and trees are culturally intertwined in Kutia Kondh society. According to them, trees are regarded as natural representatives of god who looks after the welfare of their societies. It is their belief that either the spirits stay in trees or the trees are totems of spirits and both the tree and spirit are part of the nature. The nature is the creation of the god, so god is in trees and sometimes believed by them that trees are gods. In Kutia Kondh society, to observe certain form of rituals and ceremonies, symbols of trees and plants are used (*Sal* and *Mahula* tree). Usually various parts of trees, shrubs, herbs and plants are used as mascots. Wooden pillars or posts represent the living tree which is considered as the abode of deities. In a worship, the deities are invoked to accept the offerings by transmuting into such symbolic tree parts, as revealed by the village priest. So the symbolic trees are considered as a token of the deities' presence or as a mascot for invocation of supernatural powers. The stumps of trees are sometimes designed in different shape (*mariha* pole). Such wooden figurines are believed as the iconic talisman of tree god. Image of gods are made out of wood. So here, worshipping symbolic trees may be assumed that trees, plants or parts of it which are often used in worshipping are the connecting link between the Kutia Kondh and the deities or supernatural spirits and powers. Trees and plants thus bridge over the communication gap between Kutia Kondh and gods/goddesses. The tree-stumps are regarded as the convenient and conventional talismans for the trees and tree gods/goddesses. Tree worship is also associated with the worship of the ancestors of the Kutia Kondh. Sometimes particular trees are worshiped under which one's ancestor was buried or burnt. Sitakanta Majhi (M/43) from Dahabali village worships *sal* tree situated in their graveyards from childhood, as his father was also worshipping that tree and believed their forefathers' spirits still are niched there and they will protect them from any eventual mishaps. Each hamlet has its own graveyard which is situated nearer to their settlement and they perceive these graveyards as their sacred *sanctum sanctorum*, as all of their loved ones, seniors and ancestors are buried or burnt there so they refrain from cutting any tree without taking the permission from the ancestors who are believed to be residing in those trees. So it is evident that trees and plants are bonded with religion and religious beliefs in Kutia Kondh society, as it is the living basis of food, medicine, clothes, ornaments etc.

Animals are also given importance in Kutia Kondh religion. The animals whether domestic or wild is one of the greatest resources for Kutia Kondh. The domestic animals and wild animals constitute an important part of their food habit. Furthermore, working stocks

contribute substantial labour in the field processing for agriculture. According to Kutia Kondh, animals are seen as an incarnation of gods and goddesses. The *maju* (sambar) is equivalent to *penu*. The *maju* is so important an animal that it is worshiped as a god. But the same animal also is hunted for meat. For Kutia Kondh, *maju* is very important as the plants and trees believed to emanate from the *maju's* organs as per their folklores, sung during the festivals, and is popularly known as *kui gani*. The habitat of the *maju* is usually a *kambani* (hill top) because the animal is large sized, averse to stay in dense forest (*bati*). *Kambani* is also considered as the abode of *penuni*. So, *maju* is regarded with the same dignity as *penu*. Finding the animal in hunting is a good fortune. It is their belief that the animal species are distributed by *penu*. So finding the animal is predicted at an interval of every four to five years. If the animal is available every year, then it is considered as the *penu's* munificence on the Kutia Kondh and their village. On the demise of a *maju* during hunting, some soil from beneath the head of the animal is collected and worshiped. Then the animal is shifted for chopping. Before chopping it, the *kutaka* (medicine man-cum-magician) worships it again. A hen's egg is usually kept in one of its ears. A chick is led to eating the rice kept over the head and neck of the sacrificial animal. Then the *kutaka* first chops a piece of its skin and takes it away. After that, the egg from its ear is taken out and kept with the soil collected earlier to be preserved by the hunter. The jaw bones and horns (in case of male sambar) of the animal are also privileged mementos of the hunter. The Kutia Kondh believe that such rituals dovetail good hunting of such animals. The horns and the jaw burnt in *burlanga kalu* (see Chapter- II), is celebrated during *Baisaka lanju* (April-May) at an interval of five years.

The animals in the forest are also associated with the indicators of social events, both auspicious and ominous. Domestic animals are also associated with such beliefs. The tiger (*kdani*) in a dream indicates a good sign for the family. It also indicates hunger. The bear (*ali*) in the dream is a sign of a damage to crops by grasses and weeds. The crop fields get so much infested by insects, grass, and weeds that the crops lack nourishment resulting in a poor harvest. The horse in a dream is a sign of good millet production in the current year. An elephant in a dream is a good sign of prosperity. The elephant is an indicator of *bidi penu*, the goddess of crops. So good crop harvest, particularly production of paddy, is assured when it is seen in the dream. A jackal is profoundly ominous if seen during hunting; it indicates non-availability of games. Seeing the animal at the time of venturing out for an important work is believed to forecast failure. Porcupine and pangolin are always associated with an ominous sign. Peacock and peahen are associated with the inauspicious sign. If a peahen is seen standing in front of a house in the dream, the affliction of epilepsy (*doali*) to any of the

family members is expected. Seeing a peacock on the way to any venture indicates definite failure. The domestic animals are also indicators of many social phenomena, like buffalo in a dream indicates continual spousal conflict, a cow in a dream is a symbol of Goddess Laxmi and a good crop is predicted. Pig in a dream indicates water crisis, entailing worship to *gangi penu* (water god). At the time of going for hunting seeing a cock indicates a good sign. The list of some totemised animals propitiated as various *penuni* by the Kutia Kondh is as follows:

Sl. No	Animals	Local Term	Gods
1	Bear	<i>Ali</i>	<i>Murjikeri penu</i>
2	Buffalo	<i>Poda Kama</i>	<i>Kamei penu</i>
3	Cock	<i>Tadra Kaju</i>	<i>Pdiudupa penu</i>
4	Deer	<i>Sitadi</i>	<i>Mauntipenu</i>
5	Horse	<i>Goda</i>	<i>Gada vali penu</i>
6	Peacock	<i>Melu</i>	<i>Dimbuli soru penu</i>
7	Pig	<i>Paji</i>	<i>Gangi penu</i>
8	Rabbit	<i>Deta</i>	<i>Kraha penu</i>
9	Tiger	<i>Kdani</i>	<i>Rasi penu</i>

Table 4.1 Totemic animals incarnate as *penuni*

Sky (*wani*) and universe (*padani*) are accorded importance in Kutia Kondh religious hierarchy. They are given high regards as they carry the sun, the moon, the lightning, and the thunders. The above elucidation points to an understanding that the Kutia Kondh comprehend the nature through their cultural orientations. The religious belief set by their culture emphasises on the supreme power, regarded as *penu*. The *penu* may be unseen, but they are manifest in the various panoramic expanse of nature, that is mysterious in origin. Baffled by such confusion, they considered that the *penu* must be the intriguing creator of the entire landscape including their living space. As the entire earth (*dharani*) is fragmented into many smaller space (like cultivation field, settlement site, forest, hills etc.), so the main *penu* is also fragmented and each fragmented segment has got its own name with an added *penu*. For example; *dharani* (earth) *penu*, *soru* (hill) *penu*, *eju* (water) *penu* etc. Thus the *penu* defines the whole, as the 'whole' being the mystery to the Kutia Kondh's understanding. So nature is understood with the metaphorical way through *penu*, alludes to become a collection of various forms of landscape and also an association of *penu*. Again each *penu* is specified with special sets of beliefs. The respect to nature is extended through the *penu*. Nature is the collective body of *penu* (according to the Kutia Kondh belief). Thus *penu* is pivotal to the exploitation of nature, so the Kutia Kondh propitiate the *penuni* through their rituals and religious performances.

The earth, the fields, the sun, water, wind, sky, universe, lightening, thunders in the abiotic sphere and plants, animals in the biotic sphere are associated with a particular *penuni*. *Penuni* is therefore accepted as a supreme being who stands at the centre of Kutia Kondh cultural belief and traditions. In fact, they take the permission from the concerned *penuni* for need-based limited use of the *penuni* bestowal. Thus for Kutia Kondh, *penuni* stands to explain the nature, which is the colossus of all resources, the effective and limited utilization of which ensures the Kutia Kondh's well-being. They have a strong sense of self conviction that as long as the *penuni* are propitiated the sustainable resources of Kutia Kondh will never be exhausted. This is their self perception which leads them to offer their gratitude to the *penuni* through religious performances commemorated during the cutting of a new field or forest for cultivation, at the time of sowing seeds, at the time of harvesting for a perfect yield from the field. (see chapter-V). Thus there are cultural grounds that made the Kutia Kondh value their resources and this cultural link has reinforced their conviction of *penuni*, as the sole creator of all things and beings.

Sl. No	Gods & Goddesses (<i>penuni</i> & <i>penuni</i>)	Association with	Description and Abode
1	<i>Dharani penuni</i> (female)	Earth and Settlement	In middle of the village represented by three stones and on mountains
2	<i>Keri penuni</i> (male)		Hill slope, village road
3	<i>Satari penuni</i> (female)/ <i>Deu Kuda penuni</i>		At the outskirts of the village, under a tree, represented in form of wooden stumps.
4	<i>Giripenu</i> (male)		No representative form, village road
5	<i>Sandhi penuni</i> (male)		By a stone or wooden stump, village border
6	<i>Wangopenuni</i> (female)		Village
7	<i>Sorupenu</i> (male)		Hill
8	<i>Ejupenu</i> (male)		Water <i>ghats</i> near settlement
9	<i>Elu penuni</i>		House
10	<i>GatiiJaka</i>	Hills (<i>soru</i>)	<i>penuni</i> 's meeting place
11	<i>Keri penuni</i>		Hillslope
12	<i>Dharnipenu</i>		Small hilltop or a region below hilltop to large hills (hill base)
13	<i>Bhunjangapenu</i>		Bad spirits on hills (shifting cultivation fields)
14	<i>Lingapenu</i>	Sky (<i>wani</i>)	The authority of birth
15	<i>Wedapenu</i>		Sun god
16	<i>Elu penuni</i>	House (<i>elu</i>)	Family deity
17	<i>Mala penuni</i>		Lamp (fire)
18	<i>Mamalipenu</i>		Menstrual hut
19	<i>Kamati/Manali/Mardi penuni</i>		Banyan trees (nearer to settlement) or else in home; these goddesses do not have any structure

Table 4.2 Name of the gods and goddesses and their various association

The elaborate list of *penuni* envisages that the spiritual understanding of the Kutia Kondh about their outer world provides for the unified vision of the whole. In this vision, there is neither subject nor object but exists only an indivisible 'oneness'. With this spiritual vision, Kutia Kondh conditions their life harmoniously into the whole.

The organic understanding of the environment or the whole as is perceived by the Kutia Kondh makes it to identify and know the other living beings living side by side with them. On the other side of the organic components lies the object or the non-living entities. This makes it to understand the counter-part elements of the nature with whom Kutia Kondh deals in his everyday life. In his holiest understanding of the universe, Kutia Kondh does not confine herself/himself to the physical nature around it with many micro dimensions. The various micro-dimensions of this holiest association of the Kutia Kondh with nature are the subjects like the culture, the knowledge, the belief, the moral values, the principles of living that tend to the Kutia Kondh wellbeing. The '*kuianka*' feels that the 'large' is magnanimous and the 'small' is miser. It thus grows from the small height of individualness to the large height of the wholeness. It retains an axiom of peaceful synchronized coexistence with the larger whole of nature and culture around it.

From where do the Kutia Kondh's understanding of their natural surrounding starts? The answer lies in Kutia Kondh's understanding of nature. It starts from the very smaller space to know about their existence in the larger space. In this regard first Kutia Kondh knows only about her/his village, then the mysterious nature surrounding the village. Thus the first identification of nature for a Kutia Kondh starts from the village. In this regard, the village is the first 'environ' that gives a concise idea of the living place. Thereafter, the Kutia Kondh comes across great many living and non-living materials inside the living space. But this living space is a microcosm of the macrocosm. Thus the Kutia Kondh delves deeper to understand the other elements of the encompassing nature.

Kutia Kondh's understanding of their surrounding starts with their settlement, and on which ground they select the foothill for settlement is important. A hill is called as *soru* as described earlier. Thus the summit of the hillock is called *sorujaka* and precipice of a steep mount acclivity is *gati jaka* (this is normally used in case of big hills). *Gati jaka* is a place where living of human beings is very hard. It is because, there is an negligible chance of getting the source of water, hence this part of the hill is not used for settlement. Moving downwards from the *sorujaka* or *gati jaka*, towards the cleaved canyons or valleys of the hills (*panga*) a

sloped path followed. The slope in some hills is very stiff and the slope that connects the hill base with the *gati jaka* is called *keri*. If the slope is not so steep and the hill base and is connected with the summit then it is called as *danda*. *Danda* mainly stands to explain the connecting link between the hill top and the mid hill (*sorunede*). The hill is differentiated into four parts. the top most part is called *soru jaka/gati jaka*, the upper middle hill is called *soru tude*, the lower middle hill is called *soru nede* and the base is called *soru panga*. As the *soru tude* is so steep that the settlement is cumbersome. The *soru nede* is the part where Kutia Kondh practise shifting cultivation and the fields under cultivation is called as *nella*. The plain land contiguous with *soru panga* is called *wanga*. *Wanga* is the plain land where Kutia Kondh makes their settlement. *Panga* is for hill and *wanga* for settlement. Following diagram will help to know the Kutia Kondh understanding of their settlement:

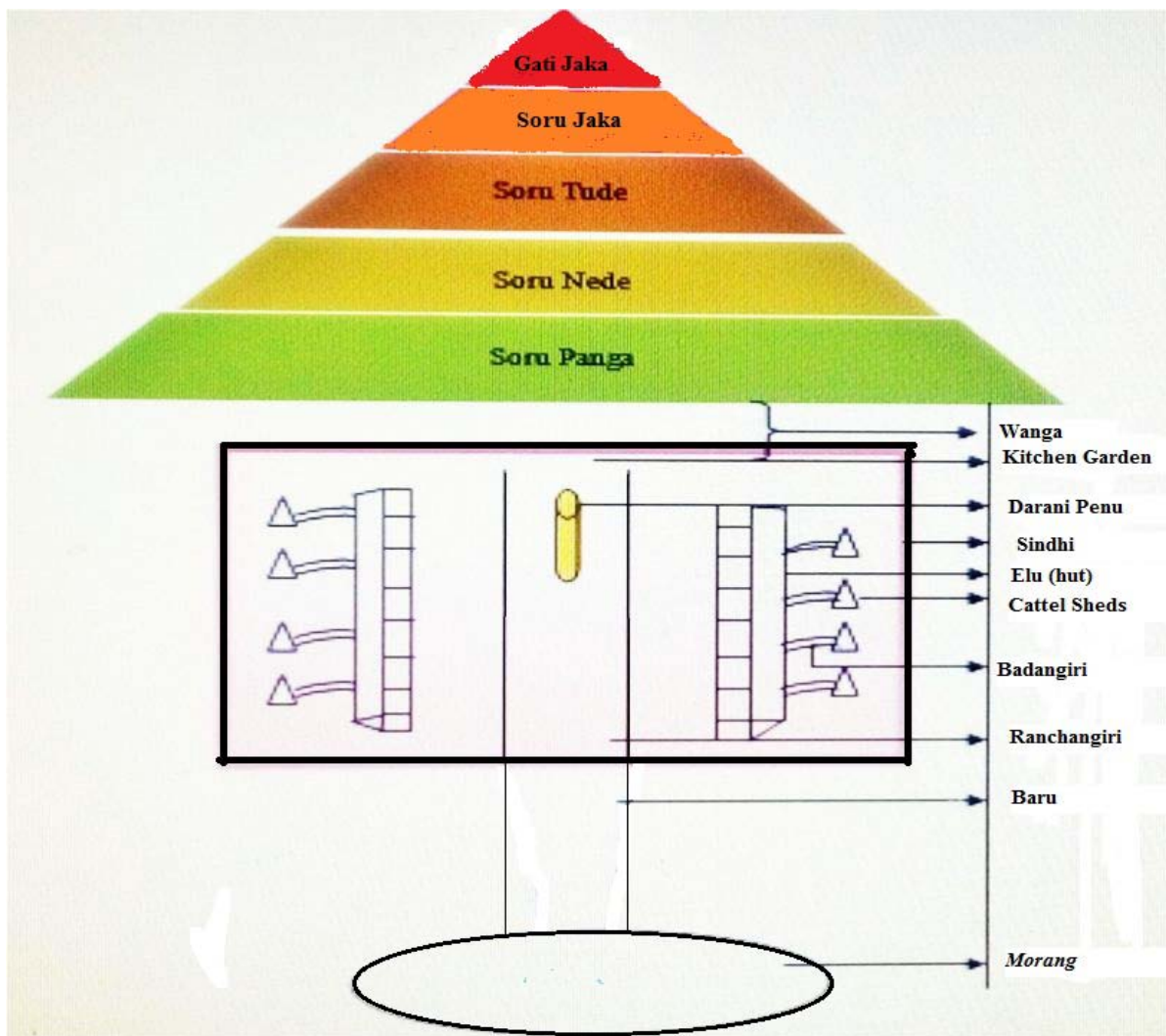


Diagram 4.1 Kutia Kondh's understanding of hamlet and its surrounding

Wanga is the available living space where Kutia Kondh establishes village settlement. *Wanga* is contiguous with *soru panga*. But compared to *wanga*, *soru panga* is the higher level space. So the settlements are made on a slope contiguous with the hill base. The settlement thus starts from the slope, one end of the settlement is made at a higher level than the other end which is at the lower level of the slope. This slope (*wanga*) on which the settlement stands is known as *baru*.

The outermost part of the settlement is known as *sindhi*. *Sindhi* is the boundary of the hamlet. But *sindhi* has no linear demarcation. It is determined by the priest. Kutia Kondh believes in and install clan gods and benevolent deities at certain places around the hamlet. Deities are mostly installed under larger trees or sometimes small huts are made for them. The placement of deities around the settlement marks the territory of the deities albeit their omnipresence is well entrenched. Kutia Kondh feels that the deities established by them would look for the welfare of the populace living inside the boundary. Thus the placement of the deities around the settlement makes the demarcation of *sindhi* i.e. the boundary. Though Kutia Kondh establishes their settlements at the foothills, they do not consider the hill base (*sorupanga*) to be included in the hamlet boundary. Thus a larger space is left in between the hamlet boundary and the hill base. The hill base termed as *soru panga* is not often used by Kutia Kondh when they discuss their settlements in relation to the hill. Rather they refer the term *nella*, which is derived from *sorunede* to describe the location of the hamlet in relation to the nearby hills. *Nella* is the term used for swidden fields which are also called *nelang*. The space left in between the *nelang* and *sindhi* is used by the Kutia Kondh to raise kitchen gardens and for settled cultivation.

Low lands are termed as *morang*. The upper level of *baru* leads to *nelang* and the lower level of *baru* descends to *morang*. Being the low land, water gets into this area and gathers there. Springs and streams are found in the *morang*. In between the *morang* and the end of the settlement immediately approachable from the *morang*, there is a large space left. This large space is used to prepare rice cultivation fields. The *baru* is the connecting link between *nelang* and *morang*. *Baru* is also the link between the hills and streams. In terms of propagule practice, *baru* is the mid-space on one side of which swidden plots or non-swidden plots are found and on the other side the rice fields are found.

Batang is the courtyard immediately adjacent to the back of the dwelling hut. Towards the courtyard of the dwelling hut i.e. *badang* there is a path known as *badagiri*. This *badagiri*

links up the dwellings and sheds of domestic animals. Pig sheds and goat folds are placed immediately behind their dwelling huts. Cattle sheds remain a little afar at the backyard. *Badagiri* thus links up the cattle sheds and goat folds. The path separating the two rows of huts is known as *rachangiri*. The menstrual hut- *jakakada* is situated away from the path at a secluded outermost part of *badang*.

Understanding of settlement

The Kutia Kondh's understanding about the settlement starts from the term '*basa*', which refers to 'gathering'. Ordinarily '*basa*' is the term for a place, especially where many people gather around for a festival or for some social and cultural events. '*Basa*' also refers to community feast in the forest. It gives a meaning to a situation. Thus '*basa*' is the term that distinguishes many a places or many a situations. It is interesting to note that the term '*basa*' is not used in one situation, but is associated with several other units of reference. So *basa* may be surrounded by *basa* too. It makes an understanding that the first unit, *basa* is a part of the second unit *basa*. This gives the understanding of the surrounding (*gunjare*). In this regard, *basa* fits into many categories with different utilitarian purposes. For a Kutia Kondh, in the understanding of the living space, the term *basain* one sense is the dwelling hut (*elu*). Many objects around or surrounding the hut which is a part of the whole village is '*naju*'. Thus *elu* makes the first sense of *basa* and *naju* makes the second. The surrounding of the hut is called *elu* and the surrounding of the hamlet is called *naju*. *Elu* and *naju* differ from each other with the measurement of space, living and non-living areas in which Kutia Kondh is a part. All the space which are understood as *basa* are nothing but the environment.

To an outsider, '*basa*' is regarded as the habitat or the population living in such places. However, the *basa* in the social context of Kutia Kondh refers to the settlement pattern, the understanding of the settlement of other living beings. As such, *basa* does not confine or demarcate a particular space, rather it is a space within a larger space. In the Kutia Kondh terminology space is meant as *basa* within a broader term *basa*. This gives the dual meaning to *basa*, that it is a larger whole in combination with a smaller whole. However, the smaller units may be fragmented to still smaller wholes which are also called *basa* but named after some particular characteristics associated with it. The following table will describe the varying meaning of *basa* with its characteristics:

Name	Characteristics
<i>Madangbasa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A place where people sit and drink home-made beverage <i>toddy</i>. It is a place of social intercourse and a place for the exchange of ideas and thoughts. • The very title <i>madangbasa</i> relates that it is associated with <i>mada</i> i.e. <i>salaptoddy</i>. Hence, no other place can be regarded as a <i>madangbasa</i> for the reason that such places cannot be <i>toddy</i> drinking areas. • It is unique in its aspect that its surroundings create a peculiar environment of its own. The behaviour pattern and interaction of the populace amidst such an environ forms the structural and functional aspects of <i>madangbasa</i>. • Thus the <i>basa</i> here refers to the place or the environ and ‘<i>mada</i>’ defines the nature, behaviour types of interaction of people at that environ.
<i>Najubasa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Najubasa</i> refers to a place where a <i>naju</i> is settled. <i>Naju</i> is a village in which many families live. Thus <i>najubasa</i> refers to the sum total of the populace living in a village. In this regard, the structural components of the <i>basarefer</i> to the living human beings, animal beings, the dwelling huts, kitchen gardens and all other inanimates. <i>Najubasa</i> specifically emphasizing the needs and conditions that make a place habitable. • <i>Kadibasa</i>, <i>karubasa</i>, <i>pajibasaincludas</i> part of the hamlets where animals like <i>karu</i> (buffalos), <i>kadi</i> (cattle), <i>paji</i> (pigs) are accommodated.
<i>Penubasa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hills (<i>soru</i>) is regarded as the <i>penubasa</i>. <i>Penu</i> is believed to reside in the hill-top (<i>sorujaka</i>), which is also considered to be <i>penu</i>’s meeting ground. The <i>sorujaka</i> is also known as <i>gatiijaka</i>. • The <i>penubasa</i> can be related to <i>najubasa</i> and <i>madangbasabut</i> has some distinct features. <i>Najubasa</i> is at the bottom of a hill whereas <i>penubasa</i> is at the top of the hill. The <i>madangbasa</i> can be anywhere in between these two <i>basas</i>.
<i>Majubasa</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Majubasa</i> in contrast to <i>penubasa</i> refers to the place where <i>maju</i> i.e. sambar lives. The abode of <i>maju</i> is somewhere amidst the forest or forested hills. The hilltop is the <i>penubasa</i>, the hill base is the <i>najubasa</i> and the surrounding forested patches and parts of hills are occupied by <i>maju</i> i.e. sambar. But the term <i>maju</i> is not only meant for the <i>sambar</i> but in general to all other beasts in the same place. In this context, <i>majubasa</i> refers to the whole of the animals living habitat. Hence, the <i>majubasa</i> has special characteristics so far as its location, surroundings, species of animals and their interaction and hence it refers to the entire territorial space is concerned.

Table 4.3 The usage of 'basa' and its meaning

The above table depicts the varying meaning attached to the term *basa* and helps in a clear understanding of the usages. Thus the *basa* provides an overall idea of a living space, i.e. Kutia Kondh’s habitat, living place of animals and the adobe of their godly beings etc.

The different types of *basas* described makes the differences in the physical plane and the behavioural patterns and the type of populace. For example *kadibasa* and *majubasa* i.e. the habitat of cattle and habitat of sambar are not only different in physical plane or in consideration of the location but also mention about the difference in the type of the animals. The domesticated and the other wild animals also show the distinction in their behavioural patterns.

The Kutia Kondh idea about those smaller habitats or *basa* leads to the Kutia Kondh's microcosmic thought process. The Kutia Kondh live in close association with nature, gathered experiences from its interaction with nature and realize the microcosmic perceptions and the ideas about the environment. The microcosmic insights or the cosmology of Kutia Kondh came long after living in a space under the earth. Then, the cosmos meant to them as their abode only. When the Kutia Kondh came above under-the-crust living space, they experienced the real world outside. The cosmology then underwent metamorphosis.

Kutia Kondh association with the environment has graduated to their understanding between them and the environment and this lead to creating their myths and legends, ideas of evolution and a specific identity etc. Their love and concern for nature and the forests are reflected in their cultural customs, traditions, religion and their social organizations which still function as a bequeathal of the past legacy. The whole environment has cultivated in them the religious ideas, moral values and has designed their pattern of life and living in concentric forest-clad patches, terrains, hills, and mountains. Thus the Kutia Kondh community lives in the peaceful tranquillity of the environment, maintaining a carefree life without much worries, finds its place in between the *penu* at the top and the bottom, has a myth of origin from the forest and has preserved the contact with forests *vis-a-vis* nature since primordial times which continues till today. The Kutia Kondh are accustomed to a style of living where they feel that environment or nature is closely intertwined with them and their culture is accustomed to it.

For the Kutia Kondh understanding is the appropriateness of the process, a practice or an activity with regard to specific situations. It is the awareness that leads to the concept of well-being. Then the thoughts, the intellect, the action, the appropriateness of process, practice, activity and overall the awareness; everything emerged out from understanding. Thus it becomes the 'value'. It gives value to a situation, a society, a culture from which emerges out the tenets of the social value, cultural value, aesthetic value in relation to a situation or environment over a period of time. Therefore based on this understanding Kutia Kondh have developed or understood their environment in two major compartments: (i)

penu(ii) basa. With these two quintessence of elements, Kutia Kondh portray their whole worldview. One is the visible *basa* and another is invisible *penu*. Interacting with these two elements, their entire culture has evolved. Kutia Kondh's need-based utilization of their environment consists of three parts, which are:

- i. Settlement
- ii. Agricultural field
- iii. The forest.

These three leeways provide them the two vital needs for survival i.e. food and shelter. So their utterance or activity revolves around this triad of their environment with different terms and as they do not know how it is created, they connect it with certain mysterious invisible power, which not only created the environment but also created the Kutia Kondh. The following diagram will help to understand their worldview:

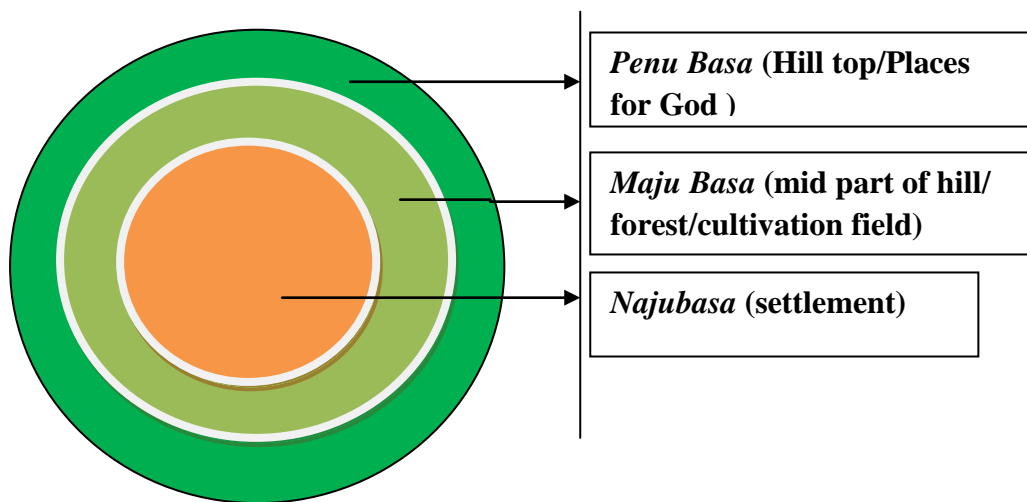


Diagram- 4.2 Kutia Kondh's concept of environment

Having discussed how the Kutia Kondh culture is shaped, now we will focus on how they use these 'resources' in their day-to-day social life. Forest which is the part of the whole environment occupies the central position in Kutia Kondh scheme of things. A change in the forest or anything that affects the forest invariably affects their life directly or indirectly. Forest represented a whole way of life, a culture, worship, shelter and everything else. Kutia Kondh cultural and social life is closely interlinked with their forest habitat which is regarded as a deity, on whose blessings the tribe survives. Not only are they familiar with a number of biological species around them, but also they possess lots of compatible ecological inter-

relationship with the various components of the forest. They have appropriate knowledge and skills of gathering minor forest produce from the forests.

Kutia Kondh collects Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) for fuel-wood, charcoal, poles and logs, gums, resins and oil, carpentry and crafts, medicines, fruits, roots, tubers and leaves etc, which they use for themselves or dispose of them in markets for cash. This is advantageous to them in comparison to jobs and other sources of income. For household needs, they get fuelwood and charcoal, logs, poles, fodder and forage, fruits, nuts, honey, herbs, shrubs, roots and materials for thatching, weaving, and medicines etc. At the same time, they derive benefits from the forest like fertile soil for cultivation and a better yield, water resources, shade, protection from wind and rain etc. Thus they acquire a lot of multifarious benefits from the forest in various ways. They are so accustomed to these benefits that they cannot live without it. To get benefit from the forest, not only the able-bodied youths but also the old infirm as well as children frequent it as a part of their daily routine.

Their sentimental attachments with the terraqueous forest impel them to regard it as *penu's* gift to them. Their folklore, customs, and traditions have portrayed their relationship with the forest. Many of their rights, rituals, and festivals are conducted in the forest which is an indication of their cultural attachment. In such rituals many forest products are used in one or the other. Many plants, roots, tubers, leaves, flowers, climbers, grass are needed in the rituals for their magico-religious rites. In their cultural traditions, they pay great reverence to trees which are considered as totemised godly beings or symbols of gods/goddesses or as the abode of gods and goddesses. Those trees form a lion's share of their indigenous forest.

Thus, their indigenous knowledge is shaped by the experiences they gather from forests and natural phenomena. This accumulated knowledge has enabled them to be unique among the indigenous communities. Kutia Kondh believes in a reciprocal relationship with the forest. On material grounds, they feel, they cannot give anything to the forest. They believe in 'live and let live' for forests that are virgin in terms of plants, trees, and animals and also 'live and let live' for forests that are overtly exploited and/or covertly abused. This is better marked from their sacred feelings of reverence attached to the forest.

Kutia Kondh explores and develops the forest as a place of work, where they make clearings to shape it into a hutment or a village settlement. They are socialized with the freedom to know, test, touch, smell, see and hear all forest products. In areas where the Kutia Kondh's traditional work such as food collection, shifting cultivation and horticulture are alive and active, their method specifies the minimum requirement of time, space and

materials, specific work and not to be counterproductive by the nature of work. There, they are not subjected to any crisis. Their social life in relation to the forest remains in a way far from a crisis when they experience a sense of social relationship with the forest through work patterns and deduce their constructive insight for a good and desirable life and perfect well-being. However, their concept of well-being and to feel easy with the forest is entrenched with a relation of mutual aid to each other or interdependency. Their respective experiences about their well-being and associations with the forest are commensurate with the question of preservation and conservation. This notion of their well-being, work, rest and leisure in relation to the forest shape their respective tenets of the phenomenon of "live and let live". Therefore, their sense of well-being is area specific to their forest living spaces.

Accordingly, Kutia Kondh believes that their relationship with the forest is shaped appropriately with regard to time, place, space and action. This has two aspects: firstly, specific situations and events that spell out their specific relation with the forest and secondly, a situation may provoke to shape a dealing with the forest. But in either case, the Kutia Kondh use their full intent and intellect to shape the situation to go in favour of them and the forest, for their well-being is determined with that. Kutia Kondh believes that their well-being lies in the forest, which they do not want to lose. This is not merely their sentimental attachment to their place of origin. On the contrary, it is the most practical wisdom as well. This response is based on the view that one must continue to do what one knows best. They know how ill-equipped they are to successfully earn a sustainable livelihood in the market-driven economy and at the same time they are aware of how well-equipped they are to earn a sustainable livelihood from the forest. Lack of an ensured alternate livelihood hence becomes the root of the problems.

The Kutia Kondh prefer very much to be regarded as a forest dwelling community as their ethos and sentiments are very much associated with the forest. A very taciturn old Kutia Kondh of Dahabali village, Dati Majhi may be taken here as an example. In his everyday life, he used to go out from his home, after having food to behold the forest. His *bagad/nella* is situated at some distance away from his home. There is a boulder on which he often sits and spent most of the day. To him, the sequestered bouldered is as dear as his home. He talks to nobody, likes to sit quietly imbued in deep introspection and fealty to the forest. He was interviewed many times during the investigations. He is regarded as a resource person about Kutia Kondh traditional way of living. But it was quite hard to elicit a response to a regional vernacular question, as he does not know the Odia language. Of his own volition, he took a great interest all of a sudden one day to reveal all his suppressed feelings when he was asked

about what pleasure he derives by sitting on in gormless snugger of the sequestered boulder and looking towards the forest the whole day. His emotion jettisoned out. He became emotional and responded to the question in *kui* language, as follows:

"What I get from here is not known to me exactly. But I find this place more than anything else in my known world. Since my childhood I used to sit on this particular place, watching the forest, cattle, streams flowing down from the rock. But at present, I feel as if the place is coaxing, cajoling and beckoning me all the time. Because I have already reached the ripe age to leave my friends and relatives, I cannot watch the forest, for enchanting landscape and relish the pleasure anymore. Therefore, I am spending most of my time here. For once I am out of life would mean being out of the forest as well. The same thing happens to me at present. I feel, if I am out of the forest I will be out of life too."

This may be termed as an emotional outburst of an indigent. But it is a fact, and also a fealty. There is a discreet charm which Kutia Kondh derive out of the forest. They admit that throughout their whole life they have received everything from the forest. Forest will live forever but they will not live forever. The truth is that 'life is mortal'. They feel forest is standing there only to cater to the needs of the Kutia Kondh and to preserve their lives. Both are true in the long run paradoxically.

Kutia Kondh believes that their society will exist, with its traditional structure, configuration, culture, customs, systems, beliefs, and ideas. Their outlook is a seamless panoply of atavistic reverential consternation and awestruck admiring fascination on the forest world. They want to live as part of the forest with all-out effort and wholehearted support for its preservation and conservation. The point at which the Kutia Kondh cease to explain about their life in the forest in the very social context is, 'we want to live, not exist'. This is the very essence of the perception of Kutia Kondh about their life in the forest. There lies the elixir of life, their notion of well-being and beautifying feeling of eternal continuity of their race on the earth, forever.

CHAPTER- V

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES AND LIVELIHOOD PRACTICE

It has been accepted fact that the Kutia Kondh's live in harmony with nature and their livelihoods are in tune with it. The nature of relationship between their livelihoods, culture and environment has always been symbolic. This very nature of relationship was responsible for resource conservation and sustainable environment. The present chapter broadly discusses the Kutia Kondh's subsistence activities and livelihood practices in terms of available resources, their access, utilization etc. in the pursuit of livelihood. This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section explains the Kutia Kondh's daily routine work, division of labour, agricultural calendar and available resources. The second section deals with the existing occupational pattern, subsistence activities which majorly focuses on shifting cultivation as it is their main source of survival. The third section tries to discuss livelihood and occupational activities. Further it also tries to understand the diversification of livelihoods.

I

To a layman, who is not born and brought up in a forest ecosystem, the land, water, plant, animal and other elements of the sylvan surroundings mean something else than for a forest dweller. Those living in the forests regard themselves as a part of the community of beings that lives inside, including all elements of the sacred landscape. The Kutia Kondh treat them as their kin and therefore make a prudent use of nature. They have a variety of practices and restrictions which regulate their behaviour towards another member of their community of beings, particularly in respect of their use of natural elements. These practices are followed with the single objective of ensuring the long-term sustainability of natural resources.

It is necessary to mention a few words about the salient features of the Kutia Kondh tribe with particular reference to the forest which forms the mainstay of their subsistence. The Kutia Kondh are basically shifting cultivators with gathering and hunting as subsidiary sources of livelihood. Their material requirements are met from plants and animals from the forest. Being technologically in a rudimentary evolutionary stage, they occupy a small area which is at their command for all purposes. Even though the area at their command is small, the biodiversity of the area is vast.

Considering technological paucity, the quantities harvested for consumption are restricted to subsistence level. The villages are very small and inhabited by agnatic and cognatic groups. The inter-village transactions are very much limited. The notion of private property is at a rudimentary stage, whereas communal holding of property is predominant. The division of labour is practised primarily along the gender lines. Village boundaries are exclusively guarded and the flow of resources across boundaries is scarce. The inflow and outflow in all spheres of life between the Kutia Kondh domain and the external world are limited. The territorial integrity is observed and more or less intact.

The Kutia Kondh populace may not be putting any large pressure on the local resources, but the general population pressure, both of human and animals, is largely responsible for the fast depletion of fuelwood, fodder, and timber in their forest (*dongar*). Thus, traditional resource use for subsistence by the community has changed due to indiscriminate exploitation of these resources by the general population for commercial gains, such as manufacturing, transporting and value-added commodity production. As a result, the cohesive local communities have undergone a process of disintegration. The market economy has increasingly replaced the traditional barter economy, resulting in massive over-exploitation of resources. Many other development measures, for instance, monoculture plantation and plantation of exotic plants are contributing to the depletion of forest and other elements of wild biodiversity of the Kutia Kondh eco-system.

Dongar (terrain) provides basic raw materials for a wide range of material requirements of its indigenous indigent populace, such as a variety of cultivated forest products for food as well as animals for food and healthcare. Their mode of appropriation of wild and cultivated food has a bearing on the resource management in their environment. This chapter is an account of the entire range of survival requirements of the Kutia Kondh with relation to the forest they are living in. This chapter will also touch upon certain ritual aspects pertaining to agricultural activities. Through these rituals one gets a clear picture of the various stages and corresponding activities to be carried out in the swidden farm by the Kutia Kondh.

Throughout the evolution of human society, the forest has served as its cultural preservative and subsistence practices (Harrison 1993). Over the centuries a substantial part of the indigenous population in India has been living and making a living amidst its forests. Their knowledge of the resource base not only helped them to a wide range of food items but also to make controlled use of it, so as to maintain the resources and manage them

sustainably as far as they are allowed to make environmental decisions for themselves and at their own free will.

For generations, the Kutia Kondh have been depending on their surrounding forests for their food requirements. About half a century ago, their dietary habits were based on forest produce collection and less on shifting cultivation, which was introduced later. But things have changed since. Shifting cultivation has attained a prominent position in the Kutia Kondh lifestyle owing to changes in their diet, and it is practised as a mainstay of their economy. Cleared forest patches are cultivated for two to three years followed by a fallow period of several years to allow the natural vegetation to recover. In Kui language, this agricultural technique is called *nellakama* (*dongarchasa*, *bagadachasa*, *gudiachasa*). On their swiddens, the Kutia Kondh grow more than twenty different kinds of crops in a mixed cropping system. Now-a-days settled agriculture in the form of irrigated paddy cultivation is also practiced, but due to the scarcity of suitable land, it contributes little to their subsistence. Gardens in or near the hamlets provide supplementary subsistence. The Kutia Kondh keep livestock such as cattle, buffalo, goats, pigs, and poultry.

Besides shifting and settled cultivation, the gathering of a wide range of forest produce is of immense importance to the community. It bridges food gaps that increase towards the end of the summer i.e. *Jyesthanju* (May-June) and the beginning of the rainy season i.e. *Asadlanju* (June - July) before the harvest of the cultivated crops begins. Today hunting adds little to the livelihood of the Kutia Kondh, although it was one of the mainstays of their livelihood earlier times. Yet hunting is still highly appreciated and replete with cultural reverence to the Kutia Kondh.

The Kutia Kondh have great pride and self-respect to be self-sufficient. They are usually reluctant to work or serve for aliens. Daily wage labour is hardly ever engaged by the Kutia Kondh. But to get some additional income, they may occasionally work as a wage-earning labourer for other peasants, Government agencies such as forest department or for private contractors. There is seldom occupational specialization within Kutia Kondh society. With a few exceptions, most are shifting cultivators, where the division of labour is by sex and age. Except for the role of the political/ religious head man, there are no other notable social peerages too. This is not to say that there are no specialities in the Kutia Kondh society or that skill and knowledge are homogeneously distributed within the community.

Everyday routine work of the Kutia Kondh:

The daily routine of work at home and in the fields are marked by a gender-centric division of labour.

Phases	Local Term	Work Associated with Men		Work Associated with Women	
		Main	Subsidiary	Main	Subsidiary
Early morning (Dawn)	<i>Kaju gnepata</i>	Resting		Pound paddy, millet, <i>jowar</i> , etc. for daily food.	
Morning (sunrise)	<i>Laesi</i>	Wake up and gather under <i>salap</i> tree to drink <i>toddy</i> (<i>madangabasa</i>), gossiping and smoking tobacco (<i>pikka</i>)	Collect <i>siali</i> leaves from forest	Sweeping, cooking fetching water, cleanup both yards/hut and cattle sheds	Collect <i>siali</i> leaves from the forest
Forenoon	<i>Gauat/M adeni</i>	Work on swidden	Collection of edible roots, tubers, and fuelwood, hunting etc.	Work on swidden	Collection of fruits and edibles roots, fuelwood etc.
Afternoon	<i>Mileniwe da</i>				
Dusk	<i>Andharju mjum</i>				
Evening	<i>Mileni</i>	Proceed to <i>madangabasa</i> for evening drinks		Cooking and cleaning huts	Spread the grains over the loft above the fireplace for next day need
Night	<i>La-angi</i>	Rest time		Rest time	
Midnight	<i>Tadekena</i>				

Table 5.1 Everyday routine of work of the Kutia Kondh

For the Kutia Kondh, the day is divided into eight phases. They are called '*kajugnepata*', i.e., when the cock crows, followed by the morning, '*laesi*'. The mid-day is called '*gauat*' or '*madeni*', the afternoon is known as '*mileniweda*' and dusk '*andharjumjum*'. The evening is called '*mileni*' and night '*la-angi*'. Midnight is called '*tudekena*'. Daytime is measured by the sun's movement. To know the time during the day people ask '*ichekeweda*', which literally means 'how much sun'? For the time at night, they ask '*ichekela-angi*', which means 'how much darkness'? Light and dark are described in one term '*la-angi*' (light). For the Kutia Kondh daily life begins in the *kajugnepata* and the night begins immediately after *mileni* when darkness gets the upper hand. The period from *la-angi* to *ujali* (night to dawn) is the rest time. Kutia Kondh's perception of time or phases helps them to do work resourcefully and divide their labour accordingly.

Agricultural work in the Kutia Kondh society varies with the seasons. It is very taxing and extremely labour intensive. The daily routine of work at home and in the fields is marked by a gender division of labour. For a Kutia Kondh woman, the morning starts earlier than *kajugnepata*. She pounds paddy, millet, jowar etc., for food. After pounding grains, she starts cooking. While the food is being cooked, she sweeps the house, fetches water, cleans up the front yard and the courtyard as well as the cattle sheds. When the food is ready, she serves all the family members. She keeps aside some food to be carried to the fields where she works with the male members. Women do a lot of work in the field, and they have their food by *madeni* (midday), and after some rest start working till dusk. Sometimes, women also go to collect fruits and edible leaves for their households. After returning from the fields the women take bath and also bathe their children. They return to their homes, carrying a load of fuelwood on their heads, and continue with their household work till evening. They spread the grains needed for the next day on the loft above the fireplace to dry and prepare the beds for all members of the family.

The Kutia Kondh men wake up later than the women. If *salap* toddy is available (in winter or early summer) they gather under *salap* trees (*Caryota urens*) to drink toddy. When they do not go to the toddy drinking place (*madangbasa*), they leave the house either to tend their vegetable plots or for other agricultural work. In the rainy season, they usually sit on their veranda, light local cigars called '*tapari or kali*' made of tobacco leaves (*Nicotianatobaccum*) and relax. If they do not have any work outside, they do work around their homes, such as constructing houses, making agricultural implements, etc. In early summer periods, after having morning food, the male members leave for the field to work (*nellakama*) to slash and burn trees in the forest and hills for preparing swidden plots. They work in the field till noon and then have their afternoon meal, and rest for some time. After that, they continue to work till about dusk. Then in the evening after returning to home, they take bath and sometimes they proceed to *madangbasa* to drink toddy. At night around 7 to 8 o'clock they have their dinner. In winter a small fire is lit to warm them. Then they go to sleep.

Manpower is the chief input in almost all works, and everybody contributes according to his/her physical ability, either in joint labour ventures or in work performed at the household level. Cooperative labour beyond the household level is provided by the Kutia Kondh for the cleaning of new swiddens and the harvesting of paddy and other crops cultivated in the plains. For agricultural needs, a person may seek the help of several farmers from different families for one day and is bound to serve them for one day each reciprocally.

Cooperative labour is also augmented raising for a hut, digging a well or a water pool, for performing different rituals and festivals concerning the village community. It increases efficiency and helps to handle activities according to the agricultural calendar. Thus cooperative labour stands as a symbol of unity in Kutia Kondh society. To refuse to work for others in exchange for having being helped by the others is punishable by social isolation or by formal punishment by the *majhi* in the village meeting.

Agricultural calendar:

The term for a month in *Kui* language is '*lanju*' which means moon. Their agricultural calendar has three seasons, termed as '*wedalanju*' summer season (*weda* stands for sun), '*pijulanju*' rainy season (*piju* stands for rain) and '*penilanj*' winter season (*peni* stands for winter). The different types of agricultural works are scheduled, depending upon the changing conditions of climate and vegetation.

Months in English	Local Name	Activities			
		Men		Women	
		Main	Subsidiary	Main	Subsidiary
February-March	<i>Phagun lanju</i>	Felling trees, clearing swidden patches	Collection of edibles roots, tubers, fuelwood and community hunting	Cutting and clear of bushes, Collection of tuber and <i>mahula</i> flowers.	Collection of <i>siali</i> leaves and leaf plate making
March-April	<i>Chaitalanju</i>	De-grassing for growing crops in awetland, fetching grass and repairing huts.	Collection of forest produce	Weeding	Collection of fruits
April-May	<i>Baisakalanju</i>	Burning dried vegetation in the swiddens.	Collection of firewood	Weeding	Collection of fruits and other Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP)
May-June	<i>Jyesthalanju</i>	Ploughing, spreading ash and sowing in swidden.	Collection of fuelwood	Hoeing and spreading ash	Collection of Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP)
June-July	<i>Asadlanju</i>	Sowing in swidden (niger)	Collection of Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP).	De-bushing and sowing and helping their men.	Collection of Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP).
July-August	<i>Sravanlanju</i>	and harvesting millets, sowing			
August-September	<i>Bhadralanju</i>	paddy seeds in available plain lands			

		and watching crops			
September-October	<i>Aswin lanju</i>	Sowing mustard, rai, cumin and till seeds.		Watching fields, helping men in harvesting	Collection of Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP).
October-November	<i>Dassera lanju</i>	Watching crops.		Watching crops and harvesting.	
November-December	<i>Margasi ra lanju</i>	Harvesting multi crops along with paddy	Community hunting, feast, and festivals	Harvesting and helping in field while harvesting	Collecting Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP).
December-January	<i>Pusa lanju</i>	Harvesting niger, mustard, and cumin		Harvesting	Taking part in festivities, dances and visiting relatives.
January-February	<i>Magha lanju</i>	Harvesting niger, till and associated crops.	Fuel-wood collection	Harvesting and preserving the harvested crops	Collection of roots, tubers and green vegetables

Table 5.2 Agricultural calendar of the Kutia Kondh

The work schedule of the Kutia Kondh follows the annual agricultural cycle and agricultural work is divided according to the twelve calendar months. The names of the months are given in the above Table. Month in *kui* language is called as '*lanju*', which also means moon. The name of the months is having resemblance with that of Odia months. The different types of agricultural work are structured by changing conditions of climate and vegetation.

The preparation of hill plots for swidening starts during the month of *phagunlanju* (February-March). Men cut trees and remove rocks while women cut and clear bushes. The children help their parents, if required. After that, the cleared fields are left to dry in one-two months. During *chaitalanju* (March-April) and *baisakalanju* (April-May), the forest surface is completely cleared. By the end of April or early May, the slashing is burnt. *Baisakalanju* to *jyesthalanju* are the periods when Non-Timber Forest Produces are plentiful. Produces like mango (*Mangifera indica*), flowers of the *mahula* tree (*Madhuca longifolia*), thatching grass (*Eulaliopsis binata*), tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), seeds of *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) are collected by men and women, sometimes by children too, and sold them in the market for money. During the month of *jyesthalanju* (May-June), the field is hoed, weeding starts and after the first shower, the seeds are sown. This procedure continues till *asadlanju* (June-July). By the end of *sravanalanju* (July-August), the harvesting of the early millet starts. Although

sown at the same time, the different crops on the swiddens mature at different times and thus, the harvesting is carried out till the month of January.

The available plain lands is cultivated during *asadlanju* (June-July) for paddy, and harvested in *margasiralanju* (November-December). After the rainy season, around *bhadrablanju* (August-September) and *aswinlanju* (September-October), the Kutia Kondh cultivate winter vegetables, such as mustard (*Brassica campestris*) and niger (*Guizotia abyssinica*). The staple crops (millets) are harvested in *pusalanju* (December-January) or *maghalanju* (January-February). *Kartika lanju* or *dusseralanju* (October-November) is for harvesting the swidden plots. By end of the *maghalanju* (January-February), the harvesting of the crops is over. The hunting season starts with the summer month (*chaitalanju-baisakalanju*), due the leisure time as the harvesting is over. In this time the forest looks less dense, so this period is preferred.

Resources in Kutia Kondh economy:

The Kutia Kondh does not have a specific term equivalent to the term 'resource'. For them a resource is something which is presented for their use '*kamaate*' or '*kamaatati*', i.e., 'something which has to be worked on' and 'gives' (*si-eete*). The Kutia Kondh perceive nature as comprising earth (*tana*), soil (*uira*), tree (*mara*), forest (*kambani*), hills (*soru*), cattle (*kadi*), buffalo (*karu*), water and sun (*weda*). The sun is considered to be one of the most useful resources, and its origins are described in their myths (Srivastava 1972).

Traditionally, the Kutia Kondh hunted animals and collected fruits and roots in the forest. While wandering through the forest, they began to associate different kinds of edibles with different landscapes and these became the resource points for particular foods. They thought that their ancestors lived in a certain place till the food supply has been exhausted before moving to another location where the supply is abundant. Long ago, when the Kutia Kondh led a more nomadic (*treyenja*) existence, the roots that they gathered from the forest made an important part of their nourishment. The hill, known as *dimbulisoru*, was their food base. The Kutia Kondh believe that on the hilly terrains, the *sorupenu* of *dimbuli* cultivated the same varieties of crops as those grown by the Kutia Kondh today. The word '*basa*' is used to refer to both 'place' and 'tuber'. Tubers play an important role in the food pattern of the Kutia Kondh and the use of tubers has been traced back to mythical origins of the Kutia Kondh. Tubers are considered to be the tribe's primal food source. In this case, '*basa*' can also be used metaphorically to refer to the Kutia Kondh basal food.

For the Kutia Kondh, rain, wind, vegetation, animals and the earth are the most important resources, and they identify their origin by naming the source often according to the physical characteristics of a place. For example, a hill may be named according to a tree species that was grown earlier or still grows in the area. Thus, *Pijubangeri* hill is associated with rain (*piju*), while *widibanderi* hill is associated with the wind (*widi*). The name of the hill *titigada-bajargada* refers to the plentiful wildlife in the area. Similarly, forest or patches of forest are generally named according to the types of vegetation and wildlife found there.

The Kutia Kondh believe that the two main perennial streams known as *gunjinanu* and *mahananu* are their primeval source of water. *Daharanipenu* is the all-powerful earth goddess, who is the authority of the land where the Kutia Kondh live. The Kutia Kondh believe that the goddess controls their lives and those of other beings inhabiting the earth and that the (blood) '*neri*' is flowing in the body of an animal or human being is a gift from *dharani penu*. Therefore, the goddess is propitiated and offered blood in sacrifices.

The Kutia Kondh in common with many other tribal societies, generally perceives women as creator and men as dependants. In addition to their daily household work, women are invaluable contributors to agricultural production as they undertake most of the inherent labour. The Kutia Kondh adhere to a remarkable well-coordinated management pattern. Management of raw materials, manpower and the necessary tools and equipment are essential for manufacturing, production or maintenance.

The inputs for the production process includes manpower (*maane*) considered the most important, seeds (*bicha*), know-how, skill and, of course, simple agricultural implements and equipment. As part of the process, seed (*bicha*), is considered the most important raw material which is sown to produce crops. This basic seed input produces an output of many seeds (*penka*) from the fruit (*padasi*). The terms *bicha* and *penka* both mean seed, they distinguish between the seeds as input (*bicha*) and the seed as the output (*penka*), while the conservation of *bicha* to *penka* is the core of the Kutia Kondh economic reasoning, a seed can be a *pan-no* (*penka*-singular), if it is harvested for consumption, while a *pan-no* can be *bicha*, if it is sown with the intention of producing a crop. *Bicha* needs some sort of treatment (*itautimena*) before it is sown. The *itautimena* depends upon how careful *bicha* has been stored (*sapaitina*). The Kutia Kondh keep the seeds in containers made of hay and bamboo in which they put *beganmara* (*vitexnigundo*) leaves which act as an insect repellent. The seeds are kept in places with low humidity and this prevents them from germinating before they are sown. Yet before the seeds are taken to the field, they are put in a humid or wet place to germinate and grow.

When the crops ripen and reach maturity, they need to be harvested before the seeds and fruits fall to the ground. Family members transport the crops from the field to the hut where they are stored. Further maintenance is required for the preservation (*nehi sapa itina*) and conservation (*ninieani* or *nipandi*) of the crop in the hut. *Dapkandi* is the term used for processing crops at the household level. An important aspect of the management of the crop production is the timing, as crops grown on swidden and on dry land depend upon rain for their growth and survival. Therefore, crops may fail if cultivation does not begin at the appropriate time.

The Kutia Kondh believe that shifting cultivation maximizes the fertility quotient of the land. By practising multiple cropping on the hill slopes they can provide themselves with different foods at different time frame throughout the year and this strategy makes their economy self-sufficient. Then the same land is left fallow for several years for regeneration of forest over there, a practice that ensures the depleted soil fertility brought to normal. A specific man-to-land ratio is usually maintained. The size of the cultivated area depends upon the number of members in a family but they never clear more swidden patches than they are able to cultivate.

During the early summer season, when the fields are prepared for the cultivation of crops on swidden the Kutia Kondh collect minor forest produces, which they sell in the market to get some cash. But the income from the collection and sale of minor forest produce is meagre. So they suffer from continuous economic crisis although it seems that the quantity they produce (harvest and collecting) is sufficient to meet their family's needs. However, the Kutia Kondh become indebted due to the economic crisis, as they incur loans from their neighboring non-tribal farmers called Pano to fulfill their basic need. As a result, they are ruthlessly exploited by local Pano farmers.

The Kutia Kondh associate the term 'economy' with trading for money as opposed to barter, while the bulk of the crops are kept for household consumption, a small part is sold for ready cash, either in the market or to traders or their agents. The Kutia Kondh are aware of the market value of cowpea, black-gram, pigeon-pea, mustard, niger, til and castor seeds produced in their shifting cultivation plots or cultivated on plain lands. These are regarded as cash crops, although cowpea and pigeon-pea are also used for household consumption, in addition to arrowroot, little millet, finger millet, *bajara*, maize, tapioca, and tubers. The non-cultivable cash crops sold in the market include the non-timber products gathered from the forest, and bamboo shoots important for consumption, during lean periods; *Sal* seed (*sargi mara*; *Shorea robusta*), *mahula* flowers and seeds (*puju mara*; *madhukalongifolia*), and

broom grasses make the majority of the minor forest produce sold to local market or the collection centres of the Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation (TDCC) and Marketing Corporative Society (MCS). Meat is rarely sold in the market due to the restrictions on the hunting imposed by the forest department.

By participating in the market economy the Kutia Kondh are exposed to inflation in the market price of commodities. The cost of goods for daily use purchased in the market has risen dramatically and to generate cash, Kutia Kondh depends on the sale of their crops. When the market price for their crops is low, they cannot afford the articles of daily use from the market. They feel that they are unable to generate sufficient income by selling their labour and dislike the fact that they are becoming landless labourers. However, the present circumstances give them little choice.

II

This section will discuss the Kutia Kondh's methods of utilization, distribution and consumption of resources. Traditionally, Kutia Kondh used simple and crude techniques, which resulted in a system of production primarily meant for consumption, thus indicating a subsistence production. The early writing regarded agriculture as the chief occupation of the Kutia Kondh. But the contribution of forest resources to Kutia Kondh economy is substantial. This is not to undermine the importance of agriculture, but to point out that forest resources are also important for the Kutia Kondhs. Thus, the Kutia Kondh economy has been solely based on cultivation- both hill and plain, supplemented by forest resources and livestock.

The economic life of the Kutia Kondh and their struggle for earning a livelihood is mainly centered around cultivation. They practise both shifting cultivation on the hill tops and hill-slopes and settled cultivation/ plough cultivation in valleys and low lands. The Kutia Kondh have a meagre control of settled cultivable land as the settled cultivation land is limited. So they mostly depend upon swidden lands and practise swidden cultivation. Collection of edible roots, tubers and leaves from the forest, hunting of wild animals, fishing in the hill streams and tanks, animal husbandry and wage earning by daily labour supplement their income from land.

Shifting Cultivation

Shifting cultivation is a way of life for Kutia Kondh and swiddens are their principal livelihood resource. Swidden is not only considered a physical resource, it is also considered as an important cultural resource. Resources are understood in various ways and through several connotations by the Kutia Kondh that may be different in many ways compared to

other communities living in different geo-social situations in relation to their environment. The Kutia Kondh, as a forest dwelling community, practise shifting cultivation with a firm belief that the supreme god has ordered their living and the unseen powers foster their life and livelihoods. Oral reference to such beliefs is well depicted in their origin myth.

According to the cosmological myth, they emerge out from a place called *Sapangada*, which has already been discussed in the previous chapter. After surfacing out they saw the sky and the earth were mingled into one. They used poles of wood to push the sky up and made space for their living. On the earth, forests had come up. They cleared the forests to make space for living and used wood to raise and build sheds and huts. They started to cultivate on the patches where forests were slashed and cleared. While surfacing out on the earth they had brought many kinds of seeds with them and they sowed the seeds on cleared patches. According to the older generation, they could know about sun, moon, earth, trees, forests, animals and other animate and inanimate objects only after slithering out through *Sapangada* and gradually they learnt to use these resources for their living. Kutia Kondh's indigenous knowledge is based on the natural phenomena happening around them, which they describe in their own terminology as '*mehananganibudhi*' that may be translated as knowledge acquired through observation. The germination of a seed or coming up of forests with respect to different conditions stand as examples. Thus, they knew about the various environmental factors that influence the germination of seed or existence of a forest. These environmental factors, they perceived as very important, have been attributed to the gods and goddesses without whose good will life and living are impossible. For example, the sun, moon, water, earth, wind, rain has been deified. Shifting cultivation is one such tradition that establishes a strong link among the various environmental factors religiously attributed as gods and goddesses. However, shifting cultivation is done on the hill slopes and to understand the location and condition of slopes where it is practised, probing their knowledge on the landscape matters much.

Understanding of a landscape

The Kutia Kondh has denominated parts of hills in consideration to their suitability for different land use practices. The hilltop is called *sorujaka* or *gatiyaka*. It is a place where establishing settlements is difficult and hence is not suitable as a living space for the Kutia Kondh. The most important point is that finding a perennial source of water for common use is difficult at such an elevation although many streams might have been originated from the hilltop. Hence the hilltop is regarded as the abode of gods. Hilltops foster tall canopy-

forming trees and hence is preferred as the abode of gods and goddesses who oversee the life and livelihoods of Kutia Kondh. While *sorujaka* is the term used to describe any type of hill, *gatijak* describes steep slopes and high hills or mountains although both the terms are used synonymously. Plateaus on the hilltops are called *agari* and better described with a prefix like *sorujaka* or *gatijaka*. The hills having plateaus are considered important from religious grounds. While the *sorujaka*, *sorunede* and *soru panga* are associated with *dharnipenu*, *sorutude* is associated with *gangipenu*. *Soru tude* is the area from where most of the perennial streams have originated and hence the area is associated with *gangipenu*. From shifting cultivation point of view *sorunede* is the most important part of a hill. When brought into land use under shifting cultivation the same area is called *nella*. In other words, the same area with forests on it is called *sorunede*. While after clearing the forests for cultivation it is called *nella*.

Knowledge of shifting cultivation

The practice of shifting cultivation is a tradition, a way of life, and the exclusive mode of subsistence for Kutia Kondh. The shifting cultivation is popularly known as '*nellakama*', '*bagada*' or '*dongarchasa*' by the community. In local Odia language it is called '*poduchasa*'. '*Bagada*' (a cleared patch of forest or hill slope prepared for cultivation or under cultivation) and '*dongarchasa*' (hill agriculture) are popular terms for the practice in conversational Odia language.

The practice of shifting cultivation begins with a piece of forest land which a Kutia household has acquired and cleared by approval of the village chief. The extent of allocation depends on the availability of able manpower in the family. The family has to clear the land from wild vegetation growth and make it arable. By use of customary rights the land is owned, inherited, leased out and the land use decisions are vested in the family who owns the land. The land remains unchallengeable within the community until and unless the owner gives it back to the village chief.

Site selection

Experience-based knowledge of the people helps selecting a proper site for shifting cultivation. In case of site selection for shifting cultivation the village political head (called *majhi*) takes the decision. After harvesting of rabi crops when the villagers are relatively free, the *majhi* convenes a meeting of all the household heads or their representatives. *Majhi* presides over the meeting. He then proposes about a prospective site for shifting cultivation

among the villagers. Then the matter becomes subject of an open discussion and opinions in this regard is sought.

Many factors are considered and discussed regarding the suitability of the site for shifting cultivation. The important points include:

Highest emphasis is laid upon fertility aspects of the site. In the understanding of Kutia Kondh, the soil fertility is directly related to the vegetation cover on the selected patch. If it has a good ground cover in terms of vegetation then it is believed that the fertile topsoil is not lost. Further, the leaf litters add to fertility as humus. With a good vegetation cover, it is expected that the moisture regime must be good. If the vegetation cover is relatively less, then it is not fertile enough, and hence not very suitable for cultivation, the Kutia Kondh understands. Along with soil fertility, another factor required is the interventions for preventing soil erosion and also water management after slashing. This is discussed among the people but not decided till the villagers conduct a group inspection of the site.

Proximity and distance from village: If there is a distant patch with optimum soil fertility then that is also considered. In most cases, the preference goes to choosing a patch of land nearby the settlement. This helps their purpose in two ways: one, they would be able to maintain a close watch and ward on the *bagad*, and second, they would be able to harvest crops with less labour. Apart from that, there are social reasons accounting for such a choice. That, for watch and ward they build watch huts (*nellaelu*) in the swidden itself. In the daytime the family members work in the swidden and rest and relax in the watch huts. In a bigger family or joint family, the young couples usually prefer spending their time in the watch hut. Similarly, pace of regeneration, the requirement of labour to clear the patch, legal status of the forest, vigilance by the forest department, are also important factors in shifting cultivation.

The most important consideration is an assessment of the site in terms of the required extent of per capita share of land. The density of forest and presence of wildlife is also taken into consideration and on the basis of that, an assessment is made on the possibility and frequency of crop raiding by wildlife. If the site seems to be an abandoned swidden since long without any traditional claimant, then the reasons why it could be abandoned is discussed and possible religious and administrative restrictions are thought about. If religious reasons appear to be important then remedial measures may be discussed, otherwise, it is left to the decision of *jani* and *kutaka* (supreme religious heads). By probing the past history of the abandoned swidden, they try to collect information if the patch was abandoned due to heavy

damage caused by jungle beasts or if any accidental death occurred there or if any death due to trampling of elephant or an attack by tiger or if an epidemic had ever occurred in the village that owned the swidden. Any history in this regard is attributed to religious lapses. Frequent crop raiding by wild animals and accidental deaths could be because of displeasure of *sorupenu* (hill god) or *gadapenu* or *gopalapenu* (god of wildlife). Epidemics is attributed to the wrath and anger of village deity or *dharnipenu* and similarly other causes, as the religious heads would conclude. The possible remedial measure may be prescribed by *jani* and *kutaka* or they may advise not to take up cultivation thereafter performing certain religious processes and practices.

Availability of tubers in the proposed site for cultivation is an indicator for ecological assessment of the area in terms of suitability for cropping. Availability of tubers indicates good soil depth as well as porosity of the soil. It helps in retention of moisture by harvesting maximum rainwater before runoff. Such soil is suitable for all kinds of crops starting from herbaceous to woody perennials. Due to better retention of moisture the crops, to the maximum possible extent, withstand unpredictably prolonged dry spell or low rainfall.

The wild tubers, especially the yam (*basanga*) varieties, if found abundantly gives the impression that any other tuber crop would thrive better in the patch. Tubers are good food for wild boars. Despite that, if there is a good reserve of yam then it makes sense that the area is least visited by the wild boars and hence predicted that the chances of crop raiding by wild boar would remain low. The abundance of tubers also indicates that the forest floor is not very rocky and hence the labour input in field preparation would be reasonably less.

Pollinators are also indicators of a good site. Pollinators include butterflies, honey bee, tiny birds, hopper insects, etc. Without pollinators expecting a bumper yield remains far from expectation. While making an assessment of a site the Kutia Kondh also give importance to the pollinators.

A good forest patch with shrubby growth, mango trees, *mahua* trees, even a large number of weeds attract pollinators. Hence, availability of such species in a patch is also assessed suitable. Honey bees, however, nest on tall trees and forage upon many forest species. They usually make hive on tall trees on the uppermost part of a hill. Hence, by seeing honey bee the Kutia Kondh become sure that there would be good harvest from the swidden. The pollinators also indicate, in case of older swiddens that there had been little or no pesticide or insecticide application in the past. Adding to that, there are observations that of *girli* (*Caesalpineasps*) and *dhatki* (*Woodfordia fruticosa*) flowers attract pollinators indicating that abundance of such species in a patch is good for swiddening. In practice, as it is observed

in most of the swiddens in the area, the *girli* and *dhatki* species are spared from slashing, not simply for pollinators rather as food and NTFP sources.

After discussions on all the above points, a day is decided for group verification of the site in consideration, for its suitability for converting into swiddens. On the same day, the villagers may also visit more number of prospective sites, if it was discussed in the village meeting. Led by the *majhi* the villagers finally decide a site. During the group verification, highest importance is laid upon accommodating all households in the village in the patch with an appropriate share for living. The share of land may not be equal as the household share is decided on the basis of family size.

Religious rites and traditional restraints

After finalizing a site and before starting the clearing operations, the religious heads of Kutia Kondh perform certain religious rituals to know if the gods and goddesses would be happy with the decision of farmers cultivating there. The *jani* and *kutaka* with or without being accompanied by village folks do a rice test on the site. Standing at a point they throw rice to all sides and wait patiently for any sound from anywhere. If they hear sounds of any forest occupant (such as animals), then they may straight away reject the area for swiddening or may prescribe some rituals for remedial measures. The hearing sound of jungle animals is considered inauspicious and is therefore taken as the unwillingness of the gods and goddesses for cultivation there. In a matter of fact, as Arjuna Majhi (Male/ 35 Years) from Madalakuna village, Belghar Block described, when the priest throws rice and if any sound is heard then such sounds, generally the call of birds such as peacock or jungle fowl or such animals found in the forest periphery, is considered inauspicious. Especially when the farmers gather and the rice is thrown then the birds would obviously respond. On hearing such a sound the priest realizes that when sowing would be done, similarly, the birds would eat up all the seeds from the cleared swiddens. Common folks may not seriously think over this as long as the priest is there. Hence, embedded in the religious practice is the experience-based knowledge which saves the farmers from suffering a total crop loss because of the seeds being eaten away by the birds. So each process is meaningful if one thinks beyond religious dogma. Whatever prescriptions the priest makes is towards preventing the seeds from the birds till they germinate and stand up properly. Arjuna Majhi quoted a reference to similar practice like this in Burlubaru village which he heard during his childhood:

Once upon a time, villagers of Burlubaru decided for clearing a forest patch to convert it to swiddens. The patch was not far from the village and was

contiguous with a thick forest sideways and upwards. After assessment of the area by the senior members of the village, it was found that cultivation on the site would be very productive. For the next step of the process, the *jani* was called from Burlubaru to examine if there was approval of gods and goddesses for farmers to cultivate there. The priest uttered some chants and threw some rice in all directions. While he was throwing rice he himself, as well as others who gathered there, heard many unusual sounds resembling to call of birds. The priest rejected the site for cultivation on religious grounds. Back in the village, the villagers discussed the matter again and some of them thought of finding some new site that would be suitable on religious grounds. However, the majority of the villagers were well convinced about the suitability of the site in terms of fertility, proximity to village and availability of land to accommodate all villagers. Some farmers thought about going back to the priest for a second opinion or propitiation to satisfy the gods and goddesses and seek their benevolence for the survival of the villagers. The suggestion was liked by one and all and they again invited the priest from Burlubaru for remedial measures to get the approval and benevolence of the gods and goddesses for cultivation on that site.

The *Kutaka* (medicine man) from the village was called and they all together visited the site again. He conducted some religious rituals by sacrificing a fowl. He sang certain chants and threw rice to all sides. He then went into trance. In the state of trance, it appeared as if, he was discussing with gods and goddesses. Finally, he came to a conclusion and got out of the trance. Then he spoke to the villagers that the gods and goddesses expressed their willingness and allowed to cultivate there with one condition, that the cultivators have to build watch huts on the uppermost boundary of their swiddens, and not anywhere they wish, and should offer regular sacrifices to gods and goddesses in case their crops are harmed by wild animals.

Whether by direction of the gods or on the basis of his practical knowledge and experience the *kutaka* suggested allocation for construction of watch huts, which was never seriously thought in depth by anybody. But, from experience based knowledge point of view, it was the right suggestion as the proposed area for cultivation was part of a contiguous hill terrain. The location where the watch huts were to be built is the ridge line of a hillock from the range of hills that formed the topography. The watch huts thus separated the wildlife

habitat and the swiddens creating a buffer zone for free wildlife movement into the swiddens. Thus, many factors may be interpreted as experiential knowledge relating to shifting cultivation, an attribute from which their knowledge base can be better understood.

Examples like this are there in abundance, which may be interpreted as experiential learning depicting the situation of specific management know-how. What appears as an advice otherwise if matches with the religious perception, farmers accept it wholeheartedly. The practitioners of religious rituals in the society are therefore regarded as the most prudent crisis managers. When something is prohibited, in general, farmers may ignore it knowingly or by ignorance. However, if the same thing is restraint is imposed as a religious restraint, farmers follow it both in letter and spirit.

Thus, the basics of shifting cultivation practice are something that the community members have inherited from their ancestors. Over the years there have been changes in the practice, depending on variable situations, but there has been no change as regards to conducting specific rituals and religious processes before, during and after shifting cultivation.

Installing of dharnipenu

The last step in the selection of a site is looking for the existence of *dharnipenu* on the site. It is believed that their ancestral spirits were living in the area and they must have someday used the land for settlement or swiddens. Hence, it is expected that *dharnipenu* must have been installed somewhere within the swidden. *Dharni penu*, the goddess of earth, is represented by three stones in a particular fashion. Without installing *dharnipenu*, nobody would ever dare to exploit the land for any purpose. It is not to be understood that each piece of swidden should be having one *dharnipenu* altar, rather for the whole village community and for all the swiddens one altar must be there. Farmers look around and do a combing operation through the bushes and jungle to find the *dharnipenu* altar on the selected swidden site. If they find it there, then immediately plan for propitiation in consultation with the *jani* and *kutaka*. If the *dharnipenu* altar is not found, then it becomes a cause for concern. Farmers visit other forests in the contiguous patch, look around areas in close proximity of the settlement and when they find the *dharnipenu* somewhere, they establish her in the new swidden. They prefer to place it under a big tree like *sal*, mango, blackberry, *nagvalli* (ceiba lion), *asantree* and such others. This is also called *dedhiuseni*. If the *dharnipenu* is installed a new, she is propitiated with the blood of a sacrificed animal and then a grand feast is

organized on the site. If while installing the *dharnipenu* any untoward, ominous or inauspicious event happens then the swidden is discarded.

Invocation for divine Guidance by Damanaka

After finalizing the site for cultivation the first ritual is conducted offering gratitude to and seeking goodwill of ancestral spirits, gods, and goddesses related to earth, cultivation and climate. The ritual, in general, is known as '*nelladakina*' (swidden-worship) but only the *jani* knows the processes, steps, and procedures in the practice with or without specific names being attached to it. The ancestral spirits called '*damanaka*' meaning 'great-grandparents' are invoked during the first ritual conducted in the new swidden. The *jani* narrates that 'your farmers are cultivating the area where you had been cultivating. They are following your traditions and practices. Without your goodwill and benevolence, the harvest can never be bountiful. Hence, they are invoking you to take your permission for cultivation in the selected site. You know what might cause harm to their crops and you know how to regulate such incidence. We promise, that we would regularly offer you the first harvest of any crop and before offering you, we would not taste them. Please let us have your good will for a bumper harvest, for no accidents, for none or little crop raising, and for our overall well-being'. This follows sacrifice of an animal and offerings to the ancestral spirits after which a community feast is organized there.

Bicha supinere ritual

Bicha means seeds and *supinere* means sowing. This ritual is conducted before sowing the seeds in swiddens. Usually, seeds are sown after a first or second shower of rain when the clearing traps moisture. The community members carefully examine if there is adequate moisture appropriate for sowing seeds. Since the showers come during mid-May to early June, the ritual is conducted during that time. On the occasion, all the households in the village bring out the seeds preserved since harvest and gather en-masse at the swidden. The *jani* and *kutakaare* are also invited there. The priest starts the worship and invokes all the gods like the hill god, the earth goddess, the rain god, the wind god and their associates to the seat of worship. The seeds are brought as assortments. The seeds are kept near the site of ritual. The priest addresses all the gods and goddesses believed to be present there, and seeks their goodwill for the proper germination of the seeds, requests for adequate rainfall, seeks mercy to save the seeds from insects and pests, pray the hill gods not to send the birds to the site lest the seeds are devoured. After due offerings to the gods and goddesses they bid goodbye and

the priest declares that the ritual is over. He orders the community members to sow the seeds in their respective swiddens. Farmers follow the orders of the priest and ritually they sow and dibble the seeds. If the moisture is adequate then the farmers may sow seeds in the entire swidden or else they sow some seeds as a ritual and wait for further rains to complete the sowing.

In the past, farmers were very particular about conducting *bichasupinere* during the month of May. In recent days due to climate fluctuations and inadequate rainfall, the ritual is being preponed or postponed. It is to be understood that the farmers remain ready for the ritual after the month of April. According to the community, the timeline for conducting agricultural activities is important. They need to wait for the right climate and right weather to come. Hence, preparedness is vitally important. Weather and climate are controlled by unseen powers and hence, they must be appeased for a good harvest at the end of the cropping cycle.

Takakalu

Taka means mango kernel and *kalu* means festival. This is a symbolic agricultural ritual conducted in the swiddens during late June to mid-July. The day for the ritual is decided by the *kutaka* who is regarded as the astrologer. The ritual is conducted after sprouting and rooting of the seeds in the swiddens. On the occasion, each household in the village gathers at the center of their swidden garden, where the ritual is conducted. They carry mango kernels with them to the site of worship. The priest and astrologer start their process by invoking various gods and goddesses. They appraise them about the development in the swiddens and acknowledge their benevolence for good germination in the swiddens. Having done this, the priest and astrologer cut open a mango kernel as a symbol of the bursting of seed coat with the sprouting of shoot and root. The priest and astrologer offer thanks on behalf of the community to the gods and goddesses for helping the seeds break their dormancy and catalyze good sprouting.

This ritual is generally conducted when the seedlings in the swiddens are about four inches in height. The density of the seedling is carefully observed for an analysis of which seed germinated well and which did not. It is desired that all the seeds in the assortments should have germinated. The priests share the report among the gods and goddesses and apologise for inadvertent commissions or omissions.

Usually during *takakalu* big animal like buffaloes are sacrificed and blood is offered to gods and goddesses and also the blood is smeared on the seedlings. However, presently, big

animals are not being sacrificed, rather a pig or piglet is substituted. With the meat of the sacrificed animal, a community feast is organized in the swiddens.

Duludakina

The ritual *duludakina* is conducted in the month of October-November, when most of the crops are matured in the swiddens and some have been harvested and collected in the threshing yard. *Dulu* is the goddess of wealth and she is offered sacrifice on this special occasion. This is conducted near the village where threshing yards are makeshift. Some farmers also clean a patch in their swiddens to store the reaped crops. They may conduct the ritual there. This worship is conducted household wise and the village priest conducts the worship. Fowl or goat is sacrificed as per the pecuniary strength of the family. On this occasion, the priest is offered with either of the agricultural produces or a fowl, liquor, etc., as a matter of gratitude for his noble act of appeasing the gods and goddesses as a result of which the household could reap a bumper harvest. The *duludakina* occurs during the Dasahara festival of the Hindus. At the community level *dassara, kandangakina* is observed, which is not regarded as an agricultural ritual.

Punikalu

It is a grand festival commemorated during December-January after all the crops except for *arhar* and castor have been harvested and preserved. *Puni* means full moon and *kalu* means festival. During this festival, *katul* is prepared out fermenting little millet in each household in the village. Little millet is one of the most preferred crops cultivated in the swiddens. To prepare *katul*, otherwise called *kena*, first husked little millet is cooked and crammed in *siali* leaves and stitched from borders. Each such pack is perched on fire for a couple of days and then stored in earthen vessels for another couple of days. During this period the content in the leaves gets fermented and tinted with a purple color. When it looks purple they are unpacked and put in water for further fermentation. On the scheduled day of the festival each household offers *katul* to near and dear, to the guests and visitors, and to friends and relatives. It is a fun-filled festival when everybody makes merry in a festive mood.

Burlangadakina/ kalu

Burlanga means containers made of bamboo splits smeared with mud and cow dung. *Burlangadakina* is not a regular annual festival. It is observed once in every three to four years when the empty *burlanga* are sacrificed to the fire god after the seeds are sown in the swiddens. This is organized during the month of July-August after the *bicha* worship is

conducted. There is a belief that *burlanga* needs to be renewed intermittently otherwise the gods and goddesses would be annoyed with the household. *Burlangadakina* is conducted in the village or near the hill ridge adjacent to the village. The priest conducts the ritual with the sacrifice of one or more goats. In the same festival, the remains of previously hunted animals, like the horn of deer, antelope, sambar, etc., are also sacrificed to the fire.

There are two reasons why the *burlangadakinai*s are conducted at an interval of three to four years. One reason is related to their ecological understanding, while the other reason is linked to the shifting of swiddens. The Kutia Kondh believe that once in an interval of three to four years the productivity of nature goes down. For example, at an interval of three to four years the production of mango, jackfruit, blackberry and other fruit-bearing trees in the forest goes down. Their lean period also is linked to the low production of tree species in the forest or orchards. After that lean year again the trees produce to their full potential continuously for three to four years. It means to them that in every three to four years nature renews herself. This also happens to the field crops. Once in every three to four years, they observe a reduced yield from field crops. Hence, they feel that the containers should also be renewed at an interval of three to four years which they conduct ritually and religiously through *burlangadakina*.

The other reason is that at an interval of three to four years they shift from one swidden to another. In a swidden, they usually cultivate continuously for three years and then they fallow it for restoring fertility. When they shift to new swiddens, they feel, the old containers should also be changed. Superstitions remind that if they do not change the containers then the yield from the new swiddens would remain low. Hence, with every change of swiddens, they change their *burlanga*.

Another reason cited by women seems to be the more practical reason for changing *burlanga* every three to four years. That, the mud and cow dung smeared on the inner side of *burlanga* repels pests and insects due to the odor of cow dung. The typical odor diffuses out in a three to four years time. The bamboo splits also get weaker. If the same *burlanga* is used for a longer extended period, then there is the possibility of pest infestation in stored harvested produce which are also used as seeds. To save the seeds from pest infestation and insects, the containers are changed from time to time. The *burlangadakinam* mandates this changing in a religious way. Thus, *burlangadakinam* carries a lot of significance albeit it is not very explicitly expressed.

Practices and activities in shifting cultivation

Hoeing and sowing

Swiddening is a sort of rainfed agriculture on hill slopes. In certain places there may be perennial streams found that is used for making the floor moist by diverting the course of streams and channelizing water into swiddens. However, this is of rare occurrence in Kutia Kondh area. So, rain is the only means that provides moisture to the swiddens. Before the showers, the soil remains almost dry because of the burning of slashes in the swiddens. During the first shower of rain, the soil absorbs all the rain water but it is not enough for creating conducive conditions for seed germination. However, if it is a good shower, then Kutia Kondh do simple hoeing of the soil in a manner so that the topsoil and the residual ash of the slashes are not washed away. For that, they create barriers with stone bunds or use available vegetation for their benefit. Hoeing the soil after the first shower is also not very common. Before the sowing, sometime in April, one or two showers of rainfall occurs. It is during that time if the burning of slashes had been completed, Kutia Kondh do light hoeing of the swidden floor to trap moisture from the rainfall that occurs later.

In swiddens, ploughing is not done so as to avoid the topsoil loss. Hence, to trap the moisture, the summer hoeing is done. According to the Kutia Kondh, if summer hoeing is done, not only it makes the soil soft but also increases the fertility of the soil. Hence, summer hoeing is practised in many ways and most of the Kutia Kondh practice it. Fertility increases, as the Kutia Kondh understand, with summer hoeing because by the residual ash and topsoil is mixed up properly making the soil fertile. The ash generated out of burnt slash carries a lot of important nutrients and hence they should not be allowed to be washed away by rain. Hoeing helps in trapping the ash.

Hoeing is considered a women's job. Women are very careful while doing hoeing. They leave certain patches without hoeing which may appear surprising on first observation. In a matter of fact, women have good experience and wisdom of patches and conditions where mushrooms sprout. They also have very good knowledge on other herbaceous plants that are collected as vegetables for the lean season. When they identify places where mushrooms come up, they rather dump some decomposed leaves in those sites so that more humus deposit would be there and mushrooms would come up well.

Sowing is done when the moisture regimen of soil in swiddens is optimal and after the pre-sowing rituals are performed. Sowing of multiple crops (like cereals, pulses, vegetables, oilseeds, etc.) follow a pattern. The cereals (such as maize, little millet, finger millet, etc.) are usually passed on from experience of the older generation as to how much of crops the

swidden can foster. The Kutia Kondh make an assumption of possible germination percentage. If they assume that the rate of germination of crops would be about 40 percent they spread about two and half times seeds in the swiddens. The seed of pulse varieties (like pigeonpea, cowpea, black-gram, etc.) variety is put in dibbled holes. At least three to four seeds are dibbled to ensure that at least one germinates and stands up. The pulses that are of woody variety are dibbled in line and the climbing pulses (like tubers/gourd, cucumber, ridge-gourd, etc.) are dibbled adjacent to the woody ones so that the climbers can grow on the woody plants. The castor seeds are also dibbled in lines. The castor seeds are never dibbled randomly because they are affected by insects. The process for killing the insects can be easier if the plants are grown in line. Hence, the castor seeds are mostly dibbled on the outer borders of the swiddens. The oilseeds like niger, mustard, sesame are spread. Vegetable seeds (like pumpkin, potato, tomato, brinjal, yam, etc.) are dibbled but at a later time, when the moisture in the swidden increases. No transplanting of vegetables is usually seen. The varieties of crops grown in swiddens are presented in the following Table No 5.3.

Weeding and watching

Weeding is considered a very important process. Three to four weeding operations are conducted for the standing crops. Weeding at the early stage of crop growth is very important as weeds compete with the crops for nutrients. For that purpose during the first weeding practice, irrespective of usefulness, all the weeds are removed. Weeding is generally done carefully and manually by women. The first weeding is particularly a very patient and delicate job because it is done at a stage when the plants are very small and in a recruitment stage. There is every possibility that one might step on, crush and flatten the growing seedlings or saplings while trying to reach out to a weed. Hence it takes quite some time and patience for women to complete the first weeding.

When the crops start growing well, they naturally suppress weed growth to a greater extent. However, weeds are considered stronger than crops in thriving well in swiddens. Despite the fact that weeds often overtake the crops in the struggle for existence, still the standing crops do not allow much space for the weeds to grow and thus it appears like a natural control mechanism.

During the second weeding the farmers do not face many difficulties as the crops, by then, attain a good height and so the chances of trampling the crops are the least. However, during the second weeding, farmers sometimes spare certain aromatic weeds (like wild-type Spanish flag, tansy, tropical white weed, etc.) which they believe, are having pest repellent

ability. So, certain weeds are deliberately spared from weeding. The weeds that are of importance as food are also spared. The grasses are cleared from the floor. It is believed that by weeding the grasses the soil also becomes light and it is like light hoeing of the swidden soil. The weeds like a tropical whiteweed (*Ageratumconyzoides*) and wild-type Spanish flag (*Lantanacamara*) are sometimes spared for their pest and insect repellent character while the weeds like feverfew guayule (*Partheniumhysterophorus*) and Pogostemon (*Pogostemoncablin*) are meticulously removed. Sometimes the weeds in the border of swiddens are not cleared as they act as a vegetative barrier to soil loss and at the same time repel pests and insects from damaging crops.

Crop protection

Watch huts (*nella kuda*) are erected in the swiddens for watch and ward activities. The Kutia Kondh stay in the watch huts and keep the crop raiding animals at a distance by drumming and shouting. They also use tin drums or hollow trunk of timbers for battering as they generate sounds to drive away the wild animals. Along with the watch huts, they also build lofts (*mara kuda*) on big tree branches from where they can easily see the movements of animals. If the area is frequently visited by elephants then the lofts on trees are better than the watch huts.

The wild boars and porcupines visit swiddens at night and raid over the tuber crops. Wild boar also damages standing maize and other cereals. In order to drive them away, they put snares and traps or use crackers, create sound from hollow trunks, shout, and even make fire. For bigger animals like sambars which come in herds and cause massive damage, making a fire to drive them away is believed to be the best possible abhorrent. In some swiddens, they also dig out trenches that obstruct passage of animals particularly the sambars. In case of elephants, gunfire, crackers, and fire line are the protective measures taken. The peafowl's and junglefowls usually visit the swiddens at dusk hours and they are easily driven away or trapped. However, the knowledge on food habit of various animals is important for safeguarding the crops.

Protecting crops at the early stage, particularly during the rainy season, is a difficult proposition. During this season setting a fire at strategic places is not that easy because of rain. Hence, generating sound from hollow metals and wood is the best possible repellent. Stone blockades, sisal plantation on boundaries are recent improvised additions in the Kutia Kondharmory. These innovations provide ecological safeguards in terms of arresting the soil erosion by retarding the velocity of top-soil washout and on the other hand by creating

protective barriers to obstruct easy access of wild animals into the swiddens. The pet dogs to some extent are of big help in crop protection as they drive away the wild animals.

Frequency of cropping in a three-year cycle

Multiple crops in the first year: As a matter of practice, the Kutia Kondh grow multiple crops that may range from 15 to 35 varieties in the first year swidden cycle. This is applicable in case of a newly prepared swidden, or to a swidden where farmers returned after the fallow period. When a swidden is cultivated for the first time, it is expected that the fertility of the soil must be good enough and suitable for multiple cropping. In a newly developed swidden, the growth of weeds remains the minimum. Hence, it is very suitable for multiple cropping. The ecological understanding of the community presages that much of the weeds come with the seeds of crops as it is difficult to ensure pure crop seeds sans an admixture of seeds of weeds during the final harvest. This envisages that in the first year while cropping in a new swidden, Kutia Kondh add weeds inadvertently along with seeds. In the subsequent years, gregarious growth of weeds entails. About six varieties of cereals and a similar number of pulses make most of the crops in the first year cropping cycle. The vegetables, spices, and tubers add to the number. The first year crops provide to both subsistence and cash requirements of the community. In all about 35 varieties of crops are grown together.

Selection of crops for the second year: In the second year, consecutively, Kutia Kondh make a selection of crops mainly for subsistence requirements. Those crops, that can grow and yield well with low fertility of the soil and by competing with weeds are preferred for cultivation in the second year. Kutia Kondh has a perception that in the second year the weeds grow gregariously in the swiddens and to counter it, they choose such crops that can withstand such hurdles well. The total number of crops are about half of that crop in the first year. The crops mature at different intervals of time and hence the swiddens sustainably provide to the food requirements of the community. Weeding intensity is high for the second year crop.

Cereals and oilseeds in the third year: In a consecutive cropping cycle, the third year crops in the swidden are generally pure. Usually, two crops, such as little millet and ragi are chosen as the third year crop. The tubers and spices like ginger and turmeric may be taken together but in most of the cases, it is found that ragi and little millet or upland paddy is grown. According to the ecological perception of the Kutia Kondh, by the third year, the

moisture regime of the swidden goes down and the fertility also decreases to a larger extent. In such a condition the drought-hardy crops like the millets withstand well. In the areas, where residual moisture is available, the ginger and turmeric type of crops are grown. The intensity of weeding is relatively very less for the third year crop. Since the Kutia Kondh has a mindset to abandon the land for fallowing after three years of consecutive cropping, they do not bother much about weeding. After harvesting the crops, they do not also bother to clear the crop residues from the field.

Seldom, if at all anybody cultivates, in the fourth year the oilseeds like niger, mustard and sesame are grown in the swiddens. Usually, these crops are upland crops and are generally grown on foothill's gentle slopes. However, under compulsion, for meeting the cash needs some farmers cultivate oilseeds in swiddens in the fourth year.

Suitable crops in a one year fallowed swidden: The field condition in one year fallowed swidden is a shade better than the swidden where cultivation was done for three consecutive years. The one-year fallow swiddens are cultivated with millets in a mix of pulses. Vegetables and tubers do not yield well in a one-year fallow swidden.

Suitable crops in a two year fallowed swidden: In a swidden fallowed for two years, the spices thrive better. Hence, spices are preferred with a mix of cereals and pulses. The moisture regime in these swiddens is relatively better compared to a swidden cultivated for three years consecutively. However, the climbers do not fit well here. Woody perennials do better in these kinds of swiddens.

Pest control in the swidden

The Kutia Kondh follow natural control measures for preventing and reducing the insect and pest manifestations. In a natural process, the aromatic weeds control most of the insects and pests from damaging the crops. There are various kinds of insects who also eat up the pests. The huge spider nets arrest many insects and the insectivorous lizards like geckoes predate over the insects. Since rocks and stones are available in plenty in the swiddens, it provide safe habitat for the geckoes, which naturally control the insects in the swiddens. In the watchhuts Kutia Kondh cook and also keep fire to feel comfortable during rain and winter chill. The ashes from those hearths or ovens are sprayed over the crops to reduce pest infestation. Furthermore, there are certain basic preparations that are made in severe pest infestation. Cattle dung and urine mixed with water are sprayed over crops to reduce the pests. A mix of bark of neem and parboiled in garlic water is prepared and sprinkled over the

crops to drive away the flies and moths. That apart, bigger centipedes are picked up and thrown into the fire for controlling their population. The birds are the best predators of termites and worms on the ground.

Type of crop	Crop name	Sowing – harvesting
Cereals	Maize, littlemillet, fingermillet, Sorghum, pearl millet or bajra, upland paddy,	June-July – November-December. Maize is harvested intermittently
Pulses	Pigeonpea, cowpea, blackgram, greengram, <i>kaudaka</i> , <i>kating</i> , horse gram, lentil, French beans, carpetlegume	June-July – Nov-Dec. Pigeon pea is the last agricultural product harvested
Vegetables	Pumpkin, bottle gourd, ivy gourd, papaya, banana, tomato, chili, potato, yam, brinjal, cucumber, ridge gourd, cassava, sweet potato,	Cropped in June – July. Tubers are harvested during early winter. Other vegetables are harvested intermittently
Spices	Turmeric, ginger, birdchilli, onion	Cropped in June-July and harvested in November-December. Bird- chili is harvested intermittently.
Oilseeds	Castor, Niger, sesame, mustard, sunflower	Cropped in June-July, harvested in winter.

Table 5.3 Crops grown in swiddens

Design of crops in a swidden (bagad)

The Kutia Kondh follow some patterns in the arrangement of crops in swiddens. By arranging them in a pattern they feel comfortable in working inside the swiddens and also the harvesting becomes easier. The boundary of swiddens is marked out by crop fencing. Usually, the castor seeds and maize seeds and sometimes the sorghum seeds are planted on the fences. The seeds are put in dibbled holes along the boundary so that the boundary demarcation is clear and at the time of harvesting they do not pose a problem. These species are taller ones and are planted with regular spacing so that they grow well and create a screen for the crops grown inside. In two adjacent swiddens, if one cultivator puts castor as a boundary marker, the adjacent cultivator plants pigeon-pea or sorghum to mark the beginning of the boundary.

The advantage of putting the tall species along the boundary is that it provides a visual blockade for the crops grown inside. Again these crops flower late and are harvested later. So, initially when the crops inside the boundary start ripening the wildlife fails to spot it because of the hedge. Maize which has a shorter life cycle can be easily harvested along the

boundary marker. Yam varieties are planted near the castor seeds in big pits. The cow-pea, french-bean, pumpkin, etc., are distantly planted to allow the boundary species to grow better, otherwise the climbers may coil around them choking their growth.

Pulses and vegetables are cultivated randomly inside the boundary. Ginger, turmeric is grown in patches and the bird chili share space with them. Cassava is planted at random, generally much inside the boundary to save it from porcupines.

Cooperative labour in shifting cultivation

The tradition of cooperative labour system in Kutia Kondh society is very old. The cooperative labour system is management related knowledge of Kutia Kondh as regards to their cultivation practices are concerned. This is very conspicuously observed in case of shifting cultivation. In general understanding, all the processes and practices under shifting cultivation are appropriated in terms of season and climate. Hence, for proper management of shifting cultivation, the cooperative labour use is of immense importance for the community cultivators.

The cooperative labour in shifting cultivation follows a pattern. In the past when they wanted to clear patches of forests for shifting cultivation, all the households were gathered at the site or a foothill, which they found suitable. When the site was unanimously selected by the villagers, an assessment of the labour requirement for clearing the forest was being made. After the assessment, a day was decided when the entire hamlet participated in the clearing process; felling big trees, cutting branches, de-bushing, climber cleaning, etc. While clearing the vegetation they took care not to harm the totemic trees, the trees of speculative market value, medicinal and food importance. The slashes are neither picked up or piled, rather left on the spot. Once the clearing is finished, family wise distribution of swiddens was made. After the distribution, the management of the slashes became the swidden owner's family job.

During the cycles of cultivation, usually, the family labour force of individual households performs the mid-term operations. The cooperative labour is used only during the field preparation for swiddening. After about three cycles of cultivation, the swiddens are fallowed for a reasonable number of years. During the period the regeneration of forest takes place and produces huge biomass. When the community people come back to the area after a fallow period, massive clearing job awaits them which would not be possible without harnessing the cooperative labour system. The system is in vogue for ages.

The cooperative labour is mostly common in case of swiddening as compared to plain land agriculture. It is so because all the households in a settlement possess swidden plots, whereas very few families have some plain lands or low lands for cultivation. Hence, in the swiddening system it is ensured that each family contributes labour and also avail labour in return, which does not happen in plain land agriculture. Although that is the prime consideration, yet the cooperative labour is common in hut building, land leveling, water channeling, digging of well or in the performance of rites and rituals in the village. Thus, cooperative labour augmentation happens only in cases of common interest purposes. Any person having availed cooperative labour, if do not contribute his part in return is penalised by the village headman. Cooperative labour is, therefore, a symbol of unity and swiddening is one such area in which this unity is better showcased.

Risk and vulnerability in swidden cultivation

Swidden cultivation is always involved with risks; climate, time sensitivity, diseases and several other factors affecting productivity. There are certain crops, the Kutia Kondh regularly cultivate. They include ragi, paddy, littlemillet (and other kinds of millets for subsistence) mustard, niger and vegetables for cash supplement. While the risks are many, both internal and external, the following discussion concentrates on identifying the main risks involved at the level of people in the village. The people identified the following as internal risks to agriculture, which they have experienced and mentioned as examples.

Land type

According to the Kutia Kondh, the cultivation pattern is primarily dependent on the land type, which includes terrain, rolling slope and plains, rain-dependent or having irrigation facility, and selective cropping or multi-cropping. As they relate their agriculture pattern in the past with the present, they realise that the productivity of the agriculture has gone down substantially. There are many reasons that account for this decline in production. In swiddening practice, after burning the slashes they used to wait for one or two showers of rain for adding moisture to the fields. Once the fields captured little moisture they sow the seeds – a mixture of millets, maize, sorghum and other vegetables. For crops like *kandula*, they used to put seeds in dibbled holes. In the process, a number of varieties of crops were being grown together. The crops were maturing at different intervals of the year and thus the farmers were getting food for the most part of a year.

In slash and burn agriculture, the slopes are continuously cropped for three years when multiple varieties of seeds are broadcasted. After two years of continuous cropping, only ragi and millets are cropped for next two years. After that, the lands are fallowed for about two to three years for regenerating and restoring fertility. This way, the cropping cycle continued. The productivity from the sloped terrains where multiple and selective crops were being grown was good. Depending on the size of land and the size of family, the annual yield from agriculture could meet the needs of some families for the whole year. Kandana Jani (Male/60 years) of Burlubaru village, Belghar Block, owning 3 acres of plain land, both wet and dry types, and 4 acres of swidden land, also has taken 2 acres of leasehold land (both wet and dry type). For some families, it could meet needs for about six months. Only a few families could earn enough to make a buffer stock, which they used to barter or lend to needy families, or were selling in the market to meet cash needs.

Since about twenty years, a decrease in the production level of field crops has been realised. Only certain crops yield the average produce, for example, ragi, millets, niger, etc., if cropping was on time. The vegetables and other crops like *kandula*, *biri*, *kaudaka*, *jhudunga* etc., hence, decreased the yield. Earlier there was hardly any pest infestation in the field crops. But in about last 10-15 years *kida* (insects and pests) infestations are an increasing trend. In the past, there were two to three such seasons, when pest infestation was so high that the yield was very disappointing. In such exigencies, the people take recourse to forests in search of wild edibles to get rid of the hunger.

For slash and burn swiddening they used to set fire to the slashes. But the fire was spreading beyond the slashes and was also burning down part of the forest close to the lands. Kutia Kondhwere least bothered for the destruction done to the forests beyond the plots. Because, after one or two showers the raindrops were carrying down the ashes into swiddens and thus contributing to fertility gain.

Those having plain lands along the streams have the opportunity to crop round the year. They do not suffer as much. But all the families are not having plain lands. There are plain lands where paddy is grown, and there are patches where only vegetable cultivation is done. Paddy cultivation was also being done on the slopes in the distant past. Paddy varieties like *balu*, *karandi*, *chipti*, *bata* are the kind of varieties that were being grown on the slopes as well as on the plains. The major difference is that on the slopes they were being broadcasted and on the plains, they are transplanted.

Settled cultivation

Settled cultivation is not an old practice. The flat hilltop, the plain land at the foothills, or for that matter the low-lying land between the hills used to be cultivated with the use of plough. Generally, the Kutia Kondh practise two type of settle cultivation, namely, *bata*(upland) cultivation and *mera* (low land) cultivation. The land at the foothills is called *bata* (up land), where oilseeds, paddy, turmeric, ginger, and pulses are chiefly produced. This *bata* cultivation is another form of shifting cultivation practised by them. The flat hill top or the plain land located at the foot of the hill below the swiddens are selected for such cultivation. Kutia Kondh is famous for the cultivation of turmeric, mustard, niger and upland paddy.

Bata cultivation is different from shifting cultivation in many respects. In this cultivation, the branches of big trees are cut and left to dry. In April when the branches are sufficiently dried, they are dragged down to the *bata* field. Fire is set to the only leaves. When the rain comes the ashes get mixed up with the soil. The *bata* land is then ploughed with the help of cattle. When the land is ready, niger or mustard seeds are spread over the field during June-July and harvested during November-December. For turmeric and ginger, holes are dibbled in rows and in each hole a piece of the turmeric root is planted. The whole area under turmeric plantation is covered with *sal* leaves. The leaves supply not only warmth but also manure to the crop after they are decomposed. The harvesting starts during the winter season. Turmeric or ginger is an important cash crop for Kutia Kondh. Upland paddy is also cultivated in *bata* field. The sowing starts during the month of June-July and harvested in November-December. No special inputs are given to this cultivation. No improved agricultural practices, such as the application of fertilizer and pesticide, are used for growing paddy.

Low land paddy cultivation is locally called as *mera* cultivation, found in the narrow valleys between the mountains. In most of the *meraland*, perennial hill streams cut through or pass by the side. The only paddy is cultivated in this type of land and after the harvest, the land remains fallow till the next sowing. But some Kutia Kondh now-a-days, cultivate cabbage, cauliflower, brinjal, radish and chilly in Rabi season. Local varieties of paddy are grown in these lands. The lands are ploughed more than once. Transplantation of paddy plants rather than sowing seeds by scattering them is most common among the Kutia Kondh and cowdung manure is applied to the paddy fields. Transplantation takes place in the month of June and the paddy is harvested from September to November. The Kutia Kondh believe that a deity called *duludemaka* resides in the paddy fields, which is worshiped before paddy is

harvested. Every household performs this ritual. On an appointed day the head of the household sacrifices a fowl with the help of jani in one of the paddy fields where the deity is supposed to live. If the ritual is not observed, it is believed that the deity would get angry and the crops will taste bitter.

Factors affecting and changing cultivation practice

Land degradation

Several factors have contributed to the changes in production. The land where they used to cultivate many kinds of foods, vegetables and cash crops have become degraded. Many lands have become unproductive, dry and soilless. In the quest for more lands some farmers tried to extend their swiddens towards the upper end and for that they cleared more forests towards the hilltop. Due to that, massive soil erosion is happening by surface runoff during the rainy season. The runoff is washing away the topsoil as well as the precious nutrients. As a result, the forest floor where once lush green vegetation was seen now appears as deposits of sand, pebbles, and stones.

Timely action

Amongst the various internal risks articulated by the Kutia Kondh, timely actions in agriculture happen to be the most important factor. The people believe that, if the agriculture work is carried on in consideration to timely action and seasonality, then an average good harvest can be expected. For example, they used to start sowing after one or two summer spots of rain. If somebody delayed the operation and failed to maintain timely action in the process, then he is destined to lose, for sure. This delay in starting agricultural operations was not happening earlier. Everybody in the settlement; the old and children alike, knew when to start agricultural operations. During the months between February to April all the Kutia Kondh used to start agricultural operations. A delay in initiating the scheduled works, for any reason, contributes to crop failure in parts or in totality.

Seeds

People in the hamlet habitually safekept a portion of the agriculture produce as seeds for next cropping season. But now such seriousness is not seen. Dependency on seeds from the market instead of storing the same at home costs the Kutia Kondh a lot. Having no seeds at home, to take up timely cultivation is a greater risk.

Manpower

The manpower and skill has been proving to be an important internal risk. Now-a-days, the young boys are not taking usual interest in agriculture, whereas the older and the aging are getting physically weak. A larger load of agriculture is on women. Therefore, with the reducing interest of the younger generation on agriculture and other land-based activities aggravate the risk in agriculture incrementally day by day.

According to Sarad Jani (Male/ 60+ years) from Dahabali village, Belghar Block, the cooperative labour system is breaking down now-a-days. When he was young, the cooperative work was more, like for example, in the time of clearing forest patch, cooperative labours are most needed. For this, he used to ask the village fellows if ten people worked on his land, then in return, he had to work for ten days on the field of other members one after the other. In this process, each phase of agriculture operation was well coordinated and was being done on time. This was happening timely and with greater security. But now-a-days the land for their labour, and there are so many other interventions like Wadi production and Mango plantation, for which they are getting instant cash remuneration. Thus money overlapping the value of goods, correlation and cooperativeness. This breaking down of the cooperative labour system and the labour barter, increase in wage rates have been increasingly perceived as risks to agriculture. There are many households in the villages, owning good extent of land, but because of a shortage of manpower, they are not able to cultivate it properly.

Further, the Kutia Kondh think, there has been erosion in the skill base, that is, essentially required for agriculture. Nowadays the boys are more interested in knowing about high yield hybrid varieties. They impart such knowledge to their parents, but not fairly engaging themselves in agriculture operation. The erosion in the skills is also related to the patterns of agriculture in the past and at present.

Multiple cropping versus selective cropping

Some Kutia Kondh prefers to shift from multiple crops to selective crops. When it was multiple cropping, the risk of food security was less, compared to the present situation. For example, when there were many crops, if one crop was growing poor, the other was growing well. Hence, there was greater security in terms of returns from agriculture. But, as the terrain slopes lost fertility and lands degraded, Kutia Kondh are confining themselves to produce *mandia*(millet), *suan*, *alsi*(niger), *sorisa*(mustard), etc. With the shift from multiple cropping to selective cropping, they are taking a greater interest in cultivating ginger, frenchbeans,

carrot, turmeric, niger, etc on fertile swiddens so as to fetch good cash income. Basic food production is decreasing, and the market demand for cash crops is increasing, thereby threatening the hearth at home, as articulated by some Kutia Kondh.

Input intensiveness

Agriculture in the swidden system is gradually becoming input intensive. Labour is the main input in such type of agriculture. It consumes lots of labour in different phases of agricultural operations, starting from land leveling through land preparation, sowing, weeding, till harvesting and storing. That apart, to ensure a good harvest, one needs to add enough fertilizer and also spend on pesticides. Pesticide use was abysmally low in the past. However, now-a-days it needs lots of pesticide application on standing crops. It also requires manual combing out of the insects and the pest colonies. The supply of natural *khat* (manure), *kalapani* (nutrient) from forests have dwindled, the supply of cow dung has decreased, for which, the lands require plenty of fertilizer inputs. Starting from seeds to fertilizers and labourers dependency in agriculture has increased manifold over the years.

Forest resources

Hunting and gathering

For Kutia Kondh, the forest is the treasure-house and an important source of their livelihood. It gives them food in the form of nutritious fruits, edible leaves, mushrooms, roots and tubers, nourishing honey, wild game, and fish.

Now-a-days, hunting is not a regular feature of the Kutia Kondh economy. Much less importance is attached to it. There are mainly two reasons for this. As wild animals are in great danger with its decreasing numbers and many surrounding forest areas of Kutia Kondh settlements are labelled as a protected area, so either way they are not allowed to do hunting. However, now the Kutia Kondh do hunting for ritual activities only. Earlier, the people went for hunting when they are not busy with cultivation work. The wild birds and animals which are found in the nearby forest are barking deer, sambar, wild buffalo, bison, spotted deer, duck, fowl, and peacock.

Forest produce supplements their meagre income from land. The important forest collections include timber, firewood, bamboo, *siali* creepers and leaves, *kendu* leaf, *sal* leaf and seeds, *mahula* flower and seeds, etc. The timber and bamboo are used for the construction of the house and making agricultural implements and fishing traps. The Kutia Kondh collect firewood for their own use and also for sale. *Siali* creepers are used in the

construction of houses and for making ropes. *Kendu* leaves, *sal* leaves and *siali* leaves are an important source of cash income. The former is sold to *kendu* leaf society established at various centers and the later are used for making leaf plates and leaf bowls which are sold to Cooperative Societies.

During preparation of swidden plots, weeds in the swidden fields make an important part of their food. These are *madarangakucha* (*Alternanthera sessilis*) found at water places, different species of *khada* (*Amaranthus*), *barada kucha* (*Bauhinia purpurea*), *pita kucha* (*Benincasa hispida*), *chakda kucha* (*Cassipourea*), *nahga kucha* (*Celosia argentea*), *kamban sarcha kucha* (*Cleome gynandra*), *torda kucha* (*Coccinica indica*), *kena kucha* (*Commelina benghalensis*), *girli kucha* (*Indigofera cassioides*), *saru kucha* (*Alocasia indica*), *gassa kucha* (*Leucas aspera*) etc. which are most commonly used for their edible leaves.

Many varieties of *basanga*, i.e. tubers are found in the forest which contribute a lot to their food habit. Some are also cultivated. Among all the types of tubers, *kuna basanga* (*Dioscorea alata*), *supkabasanga* (*Dioscorea belophylla*), *kuibasanga* (*Dioscorea bulbifera*), *napangabasang* (*Dioscorea glabra*), *patibasang* (*Dioscorea oppositifolia*), *nangalbasanga* (*Dioscorea pentaphylla*), *kandubasanga* (*Dioscorea wallichii*) make the major part of their food. Other edible tubers are *rani basanga* (*Ipomoea batatas*), *mara basanga* (*Manihot esculenta*), *sarubasanga* (*Colocasia indica* and *Lasiacis spinosa*) etc. Besides, many a number of tubers are there which could not be identified botanically. Such types are *talankabasanga*, *loaribasanga*, *katkabasanga*, *poandaka*, *acha basanga*, *potingabasanga*, *kakarokabasanga* etc. During the rainy season, many varieties of mushrooms (*kutka*) are also used by Kutia Kondh. Some of them are *arevigurkutka*, *kambalkutka*, *madagkutka*, *gachakutka*, *lugakutka*, *singmornakutka*, *vada kutka*, *maskakutka*, *puchukutka*, *jaranpatrakutka* etc. Many other varieties which are occasional, (depending on the availability) find a place in Kutia Kondh food patterns. Some of them are like wild banana flowers and fruits, the pith of sago palm tree, the pith of banana plant, young jackfruit etc.

Fishing

Fishing is an occasional pursuit. So also is hunting. Waterlogged paddy fields, tanks, and hill streams are the only sources from which they catch fish. Fishing is largely an individual action and not group activities like hunting. Fish is caught both by hand and by trap and net. Generally, the fish caught are used for their own consumption and rarely for sale.

III

These days all modern avenues are open to Kutia Kondh and some of them have availed these opportunities and are utilising them properly. These includes different occupations like Government jobs, and non-governmental jobs coming under the income generation programme of the Government schemes like Wadi, banana plantation, diary, poultry etc. Taking the above factors into account, the present section describes the type of occupation in the studied hamlets, annual income, animal husbandry, trading and money lending, and economic development among the Kutia kondh.

Occupation in the three studied hamlets

The livelihood of Kutia Kondh can be broadly divided into two segments, one is agrarian and another is non-agrarian. Kutia Kondh does not stick to one mode of livelihood to get their subsistence. Each Kutia Kondh household has a primary and one or more other subsidiary occupation. Each group is again divided into different types as shifting cultivator, simple agriculturalist, own land cultivators, an agricultural labourer, forest produce collectors, hunters, wage labourer, etc. The non-agricultural occupations can be similarly classified into main and subsidiary and are divided into Government services, educational services, Anganwadi services, and other services like artisans, handicrafts (bamboo making) and traditional dancers. The occupational patterns in the selected villages show that most of the households depend on agriculture, including shifting cultivation and collection of forest produces, as their principal means of livelihood.

Hamlet Name	Major Occupation			Total
	Shifting Cultivation	Settled Cultivation	Others	
Burlubaru	29 (80.55%)	3 (8.8%)	2 (service)+1(Anganwadi worker)(8.8%)	35
Madlakuna	8 (80%)	1 (10%)	1(Anganwadi worker) (10%)	10
Dahabali	8 (66.67%)	4 (33.33%)	Nil	12

Table 5.4 Major occupation of sampled hamlets

Hamlet Name	Minor Occupation				
	Settled Cultivation	Wage	Animal Husbandry	Forest	Other
Burlubaru	30 (85.71%)	22 (63%)	10 (29%)	35 (100%)	10 (29%)
Madlakuna	9 (90%)	6 (60%)	7 (70%)	8 (80%)	4 (40%)
Dahabali	10 (83.33%)	4 (33.33%)	2 (17%)	12 (100%)	--

Table 5.5 Minor occupation of sampled hamlets

The above mentioned two Tables reveal that, in the three selected hamlets, there are altogether 35 families at Burlubaru, and 10 families and 12 families at, Madlakuna and Dahabali hamlets, respectively. Out of these 57 families, 45 (i.e. 78.94%) depend on agriculture, which is mostly of the shifting cultivation type. Second major occupation for livelihood is settled agriculture and a total of 8 families which is 14.03% of total studied families depend on it. But with regard to the minor occupation, the Table shows that around 49 families are only partially involved with settled cultivation, which is 85.96%. The nature of casual labour varies, and most of the casual labourers in Kutia Kondh hamlets are engaged in agriculture, industrial work, quarrying, forest department work, employment in rural development programmes, like Wadi project, Indira Awas Yojna, and others. This casual labour is an additional occupation, coming under minor occupation category, but 32 families of the selected Kutia Kondh hamlets are involved with this occupation as a subsidiary source of income, which is 56.14 percentage of the sample. Collection of forest produces, especially *siali* leaf, is a major source or primary occupation to earn direct money, but none of the households completely depends on it. Rather, it is accepted as a supplementary income which is seen in all households of the selected hamlets. Animal Husbandry, also a part of the minor occupation, is practised by 19 families, (i.e. around 34%) of the studied household. Only 7% percentage of the households are in the Govt. services. Again, 14 different families are also involved with other works, like petty business and artisan works, like bamboo making, which is 24.56 percentage of the total households.

Economic activities and annual Income

Household income is one of the most important indicators of livelihood. The Kutia Kondh household has multiple sources of incomes. This is because no single source of income is sufficient to provide means of survival. It has been identified that there are six different kinds of sources for income, which is both major and minor sources of income or livelihood in the selected households. These are shifting cultivation, settled cultivation, wage labour, animal husbandry, forest-based and also income from another source which includes artisanship, Govt. services, minor business etc. Agriculture is the single most important source of household income in all the household of the three hamlets.

In the following table, the total income of the studied hamlets are divided into two parts, one is land based or from agricultural work and another is non-land based or all other subsidiary economic sources including a collection of forest produce. The total income of the studied hamlets, i.e., Burlubaru, Madlakuna, and Dahabali approximately are 7,47,000,

1,95,000 and 2,23,000, respectively. A Kutia Kondh family survives with both these sources of income. While land-based income sources are categorized as the major sources of livelihood, which constitute 56.56 percentage of total annual income of the studied hamlets, the other non-land based income is very important for survival which constitutes 43.44 percentage of the total annual income. In this study, it has been observed that, the second most important source of livelihood is a collection of forest produces, for their self-consumption and also for cash. The income from wage labour, animal husbandry, etc., also plays an important role in subsistence.

Sources of Income	Total Annual income		
	Burlubaru	Madlakuna	Dahabali
Land Based- Agricultural work	4,28,000	1,15,000	1,16,000
Non-land based work	3,19,000	80,000	1,07,000
Grand Total (in Rs.)	7,47,000	1,95,000	2,23,000

Table 5.6 Annual Income from different sources

Sl. No.	Particular for Per-capita Income	Burlubaru	Madalakuna	Dahabali
1	Total No. Household	35	10	12
2	Total Population	184	51	49
3	Total Income (in Rs.)	7,47,000/-	1,95,000/-	2,23,000/-
4	Average Income/HH (in Rs)	21,341.85/-	19,500/-	18,583.33/-
5	Per-Capita Income	4268.4/-	3900/-	3716/-

Table 5.7 Average and per-capita income of household

Per-capita income computation is based on a sample of 5 members in each family, as this society possesses nuclear family pattern (Husband, wife and their children). Average annual income per household and the per-capita income in Burlubaru, Madlakuna and Dahabali hamlets shows that it is relatively very low and all families are coming under Below Poverty Line (BPL) category.

Sl. No.	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Burlubaru	Madalakuna	Dahabali
1	Per-capita annual expenditure	3,950/-	3,500/-	3,570/-
2	Average annual expenditure per HH	19,750/-	17,500/-	17,580/-
3	Per-Capita annual expenditure on Food	2,190/-	1,971/-	1,606/-
4	Average Annual expenditure on Food items per HH	10,950/-	9,855/-	8,030/-
5	Average Annual Expenditure on Non-food Items per HH	10,350/-	7,645/-	9,550/-

Table 5.8 Total expenditure of selected hamlets:

The detailed annual expenditure on food and total expenditure is illustrated in Table no. 5.8, which shows that the annual expenditure on non-food items almost equals with food expenditure in all the three studied hamlets. Non-food expenditure mainly includes the ceremonial expenditure, as Kutia Kondhare more bonded with their Gods and Goddesses, for whom they offer different sacrifices and rituals. Some of the big festivals are *ameriah* festival and other birth and death rituals, for which the expenditure incurred is high.

Animal husbandry:

The Kutia Kondh domesticated cow, bullock, buffalo, pig, goat, poultry and pigeon. Both the bullock and cow are used for ploughing and drawing cart. Buffalos and pigs are kept for religious sacrifices. Goat and poultry are kept for both commercial and sacrificial purposes.

Livestock of owned by the Kutia Kondh

Livestock is an important asset of Kutia Kondh for their supplementary source of income. Almost all households own domestic animals. In Kutia Kondh areas, pig, goat, fowl, cattle etc., are very common and are domesticated. Goats and fowls are reared for sale, whereas pigs are sacrificial animals in rituals and sometimes sold for cash too. Cows are mostly used for agriculture and for milk. Traditionally Kutia Kondh does not keep cow or buffalo for milk. Now-a-days they rear cattle to augment supplementary income. In addition, Kutia Kondh keeps buffaloes for multiple purposes like ploughing in cultivation, milk and for sacrifices during their major rituals. Livestock grazes on common land, wasteland and forest land which comes within the territorial limits of the hamlet.

Sl. No	Livestock Particular	Burlubaru	Madlakuna	Dahabali	Total
1	Pig	50	15	20	85
2	Cow	39	27	20	86
3	Buffalo	12	8	6	26
4	Fowl	25	16	11	52
5	Goat	20	14	10	44
6	Total No. of Livestock per Hamlet	146	80	67	293

Table 5.9 Livestock Population

The above Table shows that Kutia Kondhs are keeping good numbers of livestock i.e. 293. 85 numbers of pigs, 86 numbers of cow, 26 numbers of buffalo, 52 numbers of fowl and 44 numbers of goat shows a good number of animals in the studied hamlets.

Trading and money lending

In the past, the Kutia Kondh took loans in the form of crops from farmers of their own community. But this system is slowly and steadily changing because of the tribal farmers, who produce more, now sell their surplus in the market, keeping a major stock of production for their own consumption. Those Kutia Kondh in need of money, go to the Pano or *sahukar* (the non-tribal money lenders), to get a loan and are charged very higher rate of interest. They payback these loans usually in kind, i.e., agricultural produce, but of course the person in debt is trading back his goods at a very low price. And as a result, once a Kutia Kondh has asked for a loan, it is less likely for him to free himself from the clutches of the Pano or the *sahukar*.

The Pano historically were the first traders to enter the isolated Kutia Kondh area and engage in barter. They brought salt and dry fish and later on readymade food items, matches, country cigars, biscuits, clothes, ornaments and other things not produced by the Kutia Kondh. Even today the barter system is still continuing in the Kutia Kondh villages, though now-a-days they are aware of weights and measurement systems. The barter system prevails especially during the harvesting period of the Kutia Kondh and the Pano use it to exploit the Kutia Kondh. The yields that the Kutia Kondh barter are usually cowpea, pigeon pea, mustard and *til*, in exchange for other necessities.

Loan and debt among the Kutia Kondh

Credit is one of the most crucial inputs in the process of development. Loan and debt are inborn to Kutia Kondh as they have very limited access and control over resources. But with the passing of time, access to credit and volume of credit are also changing gradually.

Loan Particular	Burlubaru	Madalakuna	Dahabali
No. of households availing loan	11 (31.42%)	3 (30%)	2 (16.67%)
Range (in Rs.)	500-10,000	1000-5000	500-1200

Table 5.10 Loan Details

The above Table explains the actual state of loan and debt. Out of the total households (i.e. 57), only 16 families have taken a loan which is 28.07 percentage out of the total sample. Loan amount range also varies, but it is seen that farmers of Burlubaru and Madalakuna hamlets have taken a higher amount of loan in comparison to Dahabali.

Source of Loan	Burlubaru	Madalakuna	Dahabali
Co-operative Bank	2 (18.18%)	1 (33.33%)	1 (50%)
SHGs	6 (54.54%)	2 (66.64%)	-
Relatives	1 (9.09%)	-	-
Money Landers	2 (18.18%)	-	1 (50%)

Table 5.11 Source of loan

The above Table, reveals that a majority of households (i.e. eight) have taken a loan from the SHGs, which is 50 percentage out of the total loan availing households followed by 25 percent of a loan from co-operative banks, 18.75 percentage from money lenders and only 0.062 percent of a loan has been taken from the relatives. The Table also reveals that the role of money lenders in a loan process is becoming weaker now-a-days. It is seen that people of the selected hamlets are preferring to take loans from Self Help Groups (SHGs). It is highly acceptable by the community due to its immediate credit disbursement without any collateral. Access to formal co-operative banks has also increased.

Planned development in the area

A discussion on the economy will be incomplete without a discussion of the development programmes initiated by the Government mainly after independence. Several economic developmental programmes for the upliftment of the KutiaKondh have been implemented under different employment-cum-income generating schemes. Constitution of India has provided special provisions allowing special privileges and protections to the KutiaKondhs who were declared as Particularly vulnerable Tribal Group (PTG). Panchayat Raj system of local self-government was introduced. Special Multipurpose Tribal Development (SMPT) Blocks started functioning for socio-economic development in the KutiaKondh areas. During the fifth five-year plan, the integrated Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) approach was implemented. The Kutia Kondhs of Belghar are covered under the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) of Baliguda sub-division. Since 1979, a Micro project named the Kutia Kondh Development Agency (KKDA) has started functioning at Belghar with the aim of bringing all round socio-economic development of the Kutia Kondhs who have been declared as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PTG).

In the study area, i.e. in the Belghar Gram Panchayat, Tumudibandh block, Baliguda sub-division of Kandhamal District, a number of development programmes are currently being implemented under Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) along with Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) and KutiaKondh Development Agency (KKDA). In addition to the above, the study area also covered under Conservation-cum-Development (CCD) Plan for the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) and a number of anti-poverty programs are also being implemented by the development administrative machinery i.e. Community Development Blocks (C. D. Blocks) under schemes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDA), JawaharRojgarYojna (JRY) etc..

which are sponsored by District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). According to the official norms, most of these schemes are being implemented with 50 percent coverage for Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste families living below the poverty line. In the following table shows Kutia Kondhs availing different beneficiaries scheme in the studied hamlets.

Sl. No.	Selected Programs	Name of the Hamlets		
		Burlubaru	Madlakuna	Dahabali
1	Milch Cow & She Buffalo	30 Families	10 Families	5 Families
2	Vegetable Cultivation	14	7	3
3	Banana Plantation	3	1	-
4	Indira Awas Yojana	27	9	-
5	Leaf Plate Making	5	2	-
6	Wadi Cultivation	23 families	9 families	5 families

Table 5.12 Kutia Kondh availing different beneficiaries scheme

To sum up, the Kutia Kondh maintain their livelihood with produce from shifting cultivation and settled cultivation with some additional inputs of gathering. Produces from cultivation, both from hill land and plain land forms the backbone of their economy and livelihood. One part of the crop is consumed by the Kutia Kondh, while another part is sold for direct cash. Paddy cultivation does not contribute substantially to their subsistence economy, as the yield from paddy field is not sufficient to provide for the household needs for the whole year. The yield from paddy fields is less than that from the swidden cultivation.

The Kutia Kondh are considered amongst the least developed tribes (PTG) of Odisha, receive some assistance from the government namely from the Kutia Kondh Development Agency (KKDA) and other departments working in their settlement area. The KKDA has devised developmental programs such as horticulture, apiculture, seasonal agriculture and cash crop cultivation with the objective of upgrading the Kutia Kondh standard of living and boosting their economy. However, the Kutia Kondh attach little value to the hybrid, high yielding varieties of crops, vegetables and fruits, and trees that they have been provided with. They are reluctant to plant these varieties on the hill slopes, though they have done so in the plains. The KKDA has also endeavored to educate the Kutia Kondh in improved land use and has provided them with irrigation facilities by making drainage canals check dams, etc., with little success. The Agriculture Department has attempted to encourage them to cultivate plain lands but due to the lack of enough plain lands and irrigation facilities, these efforts have largely failed. Furthermore, the tribe continues to cling to its traditional patterns of swiddens, despite attempts by the Soil Conservation Department and *podu* Preservation Scheme to phase out shifting cultivation.

At present, the only aspect worrying the Kutia Kondh is the monetary one. Today all aspects of life, such as food, clothing, education, medical facilities, transportation, communication, rituals and celebrations like life cycle ritual ceremonies, recreation, entertainment of guests and housing, need money. The development programmes somehow could not succeed, despite their gracious intentions. Only some community development oriented programmes like minor irrigation projects, schemes for tanks, roads and culverts, dams, tube wells, and school building were successful. Among these the successful programmes were dug-well, dairy, goatary, poultry, piggery, buffalo, banana plantation, leaf plate making, sewing machine etc. Agriculture, despite the use of improved variety of seeds, use of fertilizer and pesticides, have not been very productive. Furthermore, the impact of consumerist culture is gradually making its impact on the villagers. People are more inclined towards acquiring salaried jobs. In this manner it can be said that the Kutia Kondh economy is gradually changing over into a market based economy.

CHAPTER- VI

CHANGING TRADITIONAL LIFESTYLE AND LIVELIHOOD

PATTERNS

There have been marked changes in the Kutia Kondh tradition and culture. Adaptation to market dynamics and non-tribal material culture, religious beliefs, health, environment etc. are rapidly changing their outlook. As discussed earlier, cultivation is their predominant occupation and they mostly do swidden cultivation. They are still continuing with their practice but to a limited extent. Several factors are responsible for discouraging them to swidden the craggy rugged plateaux. Productivity has of course diminished. This happens, due to the reduced span of the fallow period between two successive harvests on a particular patch of land. They are now restricted to limited patches of lands, as they are constricted to slash and burn the forests far and wide. They are contrived to raise crops on a particular patch of lands for years together, which result in declining productivity. The Kutia Kondh have not given up swiddening, as it is their traditional mode of subsistence and it facilitates multiple cropping, yields more and less maintenance required, and produces different crops at different times round the year. When the Podu Prevention scheme launched by the Government in 1986 and the Forest Department, Odisha declared a large part of the hills and forest as prohibited and protected forests (granting only certain concessions for tribal settlers in terms of their dependence on forests for household needs, fuel woods etc.) made most parts of the forests inaccessible to them; it dovetailed a plethora of changes in their lifestyle.

The changes, however, in the practice of shifting cultivation has brought in the new occupational scenario to Kutia Kondh society. The restriction imposed upon the shifting cultivation and the declining productivity of swidden plots have compelled the Kutia Kondh to search for other modes of income generation. They have started to work as wage labourers, which they did not accept traditionally. It facilitated migration of the youths to seek their fortunes outside. Mostly the youths migrate outside in search of a congenial life and livelihood. They work as motor mechanics, motor drivers, factory workers etc. Migration to the cities is very limited among them, but gradually it is developing like a snowball. The migrants are susceptible to return from the cities after some years, with some working capital, which they invest in small business. They start tradesmanship in hamlets, procure the crops from their community folks and sell them to the big traders. They also open small businesses like betel shop, grocery shop etc. Migration, on the other hand, has helped the Kutia Kondh

youths to know about the outer world, the opportunities of livelihood in cities. They learnt the use of high-tech gadgets, implements, tools and modern equipment from the cities. This opened up a new vista of their ideas on the city life and the use of the market goods, which were since unknown in the community. The youths pass on the scopes of the city to the elders and younger, which is instilling a motivation in the younger generation to migrate to towns for job opportunities.

In order to understand changes in the Kutia Kondh community, two major factors may be elaborated here, one is tangible transformation and another is perceptual transformation.

Tangible transformation is a sum total of changing living conditions, which includes detailed analysis on hut erection, basic utensils and articles, dress (men, women and children) including attitude towards modern dress, personal attire, adornments and ornaments, land holdings per household, cultivation, modern household materials, musical instruments, occupational household materials etc. Linguistic changes are influencing changes in language and dialect. Modern food and beverages are transforming their food habits and food choices, attitude towards modern food and their method of preparation, beverages etc. Dynamics of the Kutia Kondh's economics include, the introduction of cash-crop, co-operative agrarian initiatives, attitude towards market-driven economy, local trading. Changing attitude towards health and family welfare, aptitude towards the use of preventive medicines brought changes in the ailments and treatment methods. Communication and different welfare schemes make these changes more visible.

Thus, the juggernaut of transformation has started rolling on, slowly but surely as may be envisaged from the observational analysis in two separate categories, expatiated heretofore as:

- i. Tangible Transformation.
- ii. Perceptual Transformation.

Tangible transformation

Changes in dwelling pattern

Since the Kutia Kondh is practising shifting cultivation since primordial times, their habitat is on the craggy confines of a large hill. A hamlet has two rows of huts bisected by a narrow street. The hamlet conforms to the east-west setting of the rows of the huts in a linear pattern. The huts of one row face towards the north and those of the other row towards the south. Their huts are of very typical tribal dwelling pattern built with materials, easily available in the nearby forest like, mud and bamboo stalks and poles for walls and roof respectively. Wild grass was used for thatching the roof. They used to live in their huts for a

year or two, but this practice gradually changed as new building materials are available to them free of cost from the agency or from other welfare schemes like Indira Awas Yojna (IAY). Now-a-days their houses are build up of bricks, mortar, cement (albeit rare, as the traditional use of mud for construction is still in vogue, but instead of bamboo they are using brick for a better and stronger structure) and for roofing, they are using tiles or asbestos or corrugated galvanized iron sheets. The floor of the huts earlier was about 2ft below the level of the road (this low lying floor of the hut is called *kutti*, subsequently ascribed the name of Kutia Kondh). But now such low lying structure is a rare feature. The hamlet is divided into two social groups, one belongs to *majhi* category and another to the *jani* category. While setting up a settlement, this two groups set up their households facing each other and none even by-mistake set their hut in their opposite row. But now-a-days this construction pattern is fast disappearing.

The changes in household set-up pattern are not uniformly visible in all the three sampled hamlets, rather it varies according to their geographical variance. More changes have been observed in Burlubaru and Madalakuna hamlets whereas Dahabali is still sticking their traditional mode of well-set pattern with little change in roofing pattern. The Madalakuna hamlet is very different from the othertwo selected hamlets. It is set up with two rows of households facing each other, but the vital significance is that the strict rule of one row for *jani* and another row for *majhi* pattern is done away with all huts being inhabited by the *majhi* group only. One of the major reasons for this is that the hamlet is translocated from the hamlet Burlubaru, due to the lack of adequate living space. Moreover, some families from the *majhi* group shifted to another *wanga* (settlement site) (in close proximity to Burlubaru village and started all over afresh and a new, except the role of *jani*. Another noticeable feature is, the hut size in Dahabali hamlet is comparatively bigger and cleaner than that of Burlubaru and Madalakuna huts. The construction and design of the dwelling unit have already been discussed in the previous chapter (see chapter-II). The door-to-door survey of the household of the Kutia Kondh clearly indicated that they are still maintaining their distinct identity discernibly in their hamlets through their dwelling units. Albeit, gradual modernization in the mode of construction have been observed. (The changing pattern of the Kutia Kondh dwelling units is portrayed clearly in the photographs).

Interior furnishing and need-based articles

While considering the changing aspects of the Kutia Kondh, it has been observed that tremendous amount of changes in the living conditions of the Kutia Kondh households have

taken place, particularly in the field of interior furnishing and allied articles. Earlier, the Kutia Kondh families were making use of mats woven by the women folk from palm leaves for using it as bedrolls (for sleeping purpose), sometimes they used to make mattresses of leaves for sleeping purpose as is still prevalent in the watch-huts. Now-a-days they are using wooden bedsteads and wooden benches etc. A few of the Kutia Kondh households have been observed making use of molded chairs, folding mild steel pipe beds etc. The use of the pillow, while sleeping, is also remarkable, as they used to prepare their *kanthas* (beddings) from old and ragged clothes, stitched together for making quilts. Household articles have undergone remarkable changes. The use of earthen vessels are swapped for aluminum utensils, leaf plates and cups for eating and drinking purpose has been replaced with aluminum and stainless steel plates and tumblers.

While enquiring about this shift in the choice of utensils they revealed that the earthen pots are not suitable for long-term use, whereas the aluminum utensils are almost lifelong sustainable. Another reason is, that the earthen pots are normally purchased from their neighbouring non-tribal traders and artisans, in exchange for a hefty amount of their harvested grains. Whereas in case of aluminum utensils, they can buy it from their local market in exchange for cash within their budget. Now-a-days they are using aluminum utensils, mild steel or molded buckets, stainless steel vessels and also other consumer durables like, radio, cycle, motorcycle, mobiles etc.

Dress adornments and ornaments

The Kutia Kondhare used to wear scanty clothes in the olden days (see chapter-II). Generally, the men used to wear a loin cloth just to cover the genitalia. In remote past, they used to put loincloths made out of *siali* fiber filament with ethnic intricacies. Gradually, changes are visible in male apparels. They started wearing a strip of cloth as the lower undergarment and in addition, the men put another piece of cloth as the top cover of the undergarment. Atop all these, they put on shirts and trousers. They wear these clothes on special occasions, such as festivals, social ceremonies or when they go to weekly markets. But the younger generation is always seen with this costume. Their dresses change in accordance with seasonal variance, but it is more visible during the winter season when they buy woolen sweaters, caps and mufflers from the local markets. Thus various modern dresses are being frequently used by them. The use of shoes also adds to the changes in terms of dressing pattern. In the previous days, they were not aware of using shoes, nor easily available to them. But now, they wear shoes and slippers made out of synthetic and polymers.

Those who are employed or working outside use shoes, even youth especially those associated with schools and colleges like to wear shoes and slippers. Depending upon the extent of education and financial affordability, they use wrist watch and particularly the younger generation appears to be anxious to adopt modern dress sense. This is due to the change in their social, economic, political and educational outlook. The male children, who now enroll in the schools, go with clean uniforms along with school bags etc. The children who live in the huts also wear at least shorts and a shirt. While, in the early days, the children are used to roam around naked. Many remarkable changes are also seen in their women folk's dressing pattern. Earlier, they used to wear scanty clothing, only to cover upper and lower parts of the body with two small pieces of clothes. (alsodescribed in Chapter-II). But with the onset of progressive modernization process, they also adopt various ways to transform, like,now-a-days they are wearing sarees, blouses, petticoats, nighties, frocks etc. The female children wear skirt, minis, middies, maxis and blouse, frocks etc.

It was very common for both the men and women of the Kutia Kondh families to wear different kinds of adornments, especially the bamboo slit combs, which is the sign of love in their community. But now-a-days the men do not strictly adhere to this. Previously the combs were made out of slit bamboo slivers but now it has been replaced with plastic combs and its value too changed. For females, there are various ornaments like silver or brass earrings and necklaces. But now-a-days, they rearlywear these ornaments, except especially during the time of marriages, festivals or ceremonies. The traditional ornaments are also substituted with modern ornaments like silver, white-metal, glass bangles, ear-rings, nose rings, necklaces etc. This is because these are cheaply and easily available in the local market. Now mirrors are also used as coiffeur aids by both the sex.

Food and Beverages:

The Kutia Kondh, because of their dwellings in the forest areas, their traditional edibles were totally based on the forest produces and propaguled yields from their swiddens like millet, ragi, gruel etc, and forest produces like roots (*kandamula*), tubers, *mahula* and other forest fruits. But after switching over to ploughing (subsidiary activity), they added on rice, maize, pulses like *arhar* (split red-gram), *moong* (split green-gram) and other grains in their foodchain as well as the items of food prepared from these grains by way of different methods. Besides these, they use varieties of roots and tubers as food. They used to boil and eat those roots and tubers, but now certain variations are observed in their food pattern. On the whole, all Kutia Kondh people did not change their food pattern, but those who have

slightly higher income, having good access to the outer world and especially children who are studying in the schools and colleges are zestfully changing their food habits. It is also observed that they feel shy if some outsiders visit their home during lunch or dinner time. Normally they are reluctant to exhibit their food patterns to outsiders as they think it is not up to the mark for those, who are from outside of their hamlets. Earlier, they used to eat almost all kinds of meats except that of acat, dog, and crow. But now-a-days they are only eating lean meats of chicken, red meats of buffalo and pork. The younger generations are neither interested with beef nor with the pork. They all want to eat either chicken meat or mutton. This is because of the influence of the Hindu (caste) people, staying there as their neighbours. The preparation method of food also changed, as earlier, they only added salt and turmeric to cook meat, boiled and ate, but now-a-days they are using different spices to cook meat and another kind of curries. The term curry was not in use earlier. Whatever they had, they used to prepare to mix these ingredients and eat with smoked dry fish and salt. No other variations were served.

Modern civilization is instrumental in the introduction of India made foreign liquors and beers in their staple beverages favourites, but prior to that they were well acquainted with the local fermented beer (*salap ras*). Both men and women used to take part in the community drinking, but with the advent of modern beverages, the latest variants are more acceptable by the male folk than the female folk. It was also observed that their food habits are gradually changing, as a consequence of the cross-cultural influence of other tribes as well as migrant and emigrant interactions, the influx of outsiders etc.

Hunting and Gathering:

Earlier, hunting used to play an important role in their culture, when they did not have anything to store as food in their dwellings. They used to go for hunting in groups. Whatever they derived from hunting, they used to distribute equally among all the members of the hunting team. The games which were obtained during hunting used to be the bison, deer, birds, wild hen, boars, porcupines etc. Now-a-days the practice of hunting has fast diminished, but from a ritual and religious perspective, they are still practising it. However, this practice is performed skeletal with only fowls or boars, and no other reserved or protected animals are hunted. There are quite a few reasons behind the diminishing hunting practice. First and the foremost being the strict prohibition imposed by the forest department on hunting, especially the 'reserved' declared animal species, and another is the gradually depleting game animals in the forest for hunting.

Gathering still plays an important role in their food habit. And the forest, where they are living is well stocked with roots and tubers and edible fruit-bearing trees. This forest produces are their prime source of nutrients as well as the major source of staple food. The pattern of gathering food is also changing. Earlier, the people who regularly used to collect tubers and roots were very experienced enough regarding their acquaintance with the environment and their skills to identify relevant trees, or whether a particular root or tuber is grown enough and ready to be consumed etc. However, these experiences are fading away and the younger generations are bereft of this knowledge, as they are not associated with the required daily chores nor when they assist elders for collecting those roots and tubers, primarily thanks to the government initiated subsidized rations and also the free mid-day meal in residential schools.

Health, sanitation and family welfare:

Albeit their living environment being to a large extent pollution free, this is not the only parameter to gauge the health status, rather there are various other aspects which lead to indicate very unhygienic living conditions. The geographical belt where Kutia Kondhis living is an acutely malaria-prone zone. Till date, there are several deaths recorded due to the endemic malaria attack. Another reason, for the unhygienic condition, is the Kutia Kondh habitat and surrounding space of the settlement with the co-existence of different domestic animals like pigs, hens, buffaloes, goats, and cattle. During the rainy season, the surrounding become abominably unhygienic, especially due to the pigs, as they are accustomed to roam freely everywhere and forage even inside their dwellings, spreading various zoonotic diseases, adversely affecting their abysmal population growth. But after the intervention of the KKDA, the situation is fast changing as in almost each and every hamlet now there exist a *pucca* road in between the two rows of dwelling (except Dahaballi). Kutia Kondh's outlook towards *kutaka* and *jakaka*, who are sought by them for curing various zoonoses, has also changed and they venture to cure the epidemic afflictions by herbal medicine or through magic or sorcery. However their attitude has changed and they are now prone to utilize government health delivery system, the assistance of doctors, hospitals, and dispensaries.

Social welfare transformation is accelerating rapidly in Kutia Kondh society. The recent developmental programmes launched by the Government and non-government organizations (NGO) in the tribal areas render significant contributions to upgrade their lifestyle, which is easily visible on observation of their improved overall appurtenances. Such

transformed living conditions are spin-off denouements mainly due to the factors like acculturation and intra-market facilities, availability of transport and other communication facilities provided by the government and their self-consciousness growth towards the outer world.

Perceptual transformation

Perceptual transformation is evidently manifested through education, the ameliorated literacy rate, and their perceptual change in attitude towards education. Regular contacts with outside communities affected their social customs and tradition reflecting the changes in family structure, matrimonial preferences and kinship obligations, economic and political outlook, religious belief, ritual, customs and value by the process of adapting new editions and additions.

Social customs and traditions

The social life of the Kutia Kondh is very much coalesced and intertwined with the natural environments within which they inhabit. It is evident that their socio-cultural and religious rituals in their day-to-day activities revolve around the flora and fauna of the surrounding forests, hills, and mountains. As discussed earlier nature shapes their various activities and behavioural patterns, and they are adapted to adjust themselves to deal with their various emerging problems in their day-to-day life in accordance with the harmony of nature. Their faith is deep-rooted in their old traditions, social customs, and prevalent since primordial ages. It has been observed that the Kutia Kondh are in no mood to change their social customs and traditions while they interact and interface with the social customs and traditions of other outsiders. They are continuing to maintain the distinct cultural identity of their own customs and traditions without any compromise or whatsoever with any other culture for inculcating slightest change in their social customs and traditions. They still follow the same practices, they have inherited or acquired from their ancestors. Of course, there is ample scope for transition and transformation to acquire others' cultures, especially for those, who are living side by side in close proximity with their non-tribal Hindu neighbours sans compromisingly diluting their own traditions and customs. There are cases which illustrated this sort of amalgamation with other customs, traditions, and culture.

An understanding of the changing social custom and tradition of the Kutia Kondh cannot be achieved without taking into account the structure and dynamics of the institution of kinship, marriage, and family. The Kutia Kondh's descent groups have a clan (*gochhi*),

lineage and family (*kutum*) organizations. An earlier member of the *gochhi* used to live in close proximity. But due to the expansion of population and outside job opportunities (migration), the function of *gochhi* (clan) are gradually losing their relevance and became dispersed. Therefore, it has become difficult to maintain the *gochhi* relationship among the members in this changing economic and ecological scenario. Today, *gochhi* has become a symbolic group where each member feel attached but never assembles. Even the younger generation is unable to identify the role of the *gochhi*. Patriliney is the rule among them. Thus, Kutia Kondh society is a patrilineal society. They have a clear distinction between the kinship status and the affinal status.

The Kutia Kondh clan (*gochhi*) consists of a number of lineages which are unilineal consanguineal kin groups forming patrilineages that include a number of families. Traditionally lineage members used to live together in a village or group of a village called *mutha*. This *mutha* is an important feature of the social organization of the Kutia Kondh and it acts as an administrative-cum-social unit. Traditionally a *mutha* was composed of a particular clan people, so marriage within the *mutha* was prohibited. Now-a-days, the *mutha* system has lost its significance in material affairs, because various clan (*gochhi*) people now inhabit within one *mutha*. Thus the *mutha* exogamy is not practised as a strict rule with regards to marriage.

Marriage is an Important mechanism of Kutia Kondh's life. In the past, the Kutia Kondh practised family, lineage, clan and *mutha* exogamy rule. But now-a-days, the role of *mutha* and clan exogamy has totally dispersed and village exogamy is not at all practised as people of different clans are found to be inhabiting within one village for various reason. For example, Padia Majhi (35/M) of Dahabali hamlet, due to the scarcity of land both for cultivation and settlement, came to his wife's hamlet where population ratio is very low in comparison to land. This decision was not taken by him solely rather it was approved by the whole Dahabali hamlet. However, during the festival time, Padia Majhi with his family cannot take part in the ritual activities of the Dahabali hamlet as the *dharanipenu* belongs to that particular village clan. Hence they need to go to their original village. On the other hand, through clan exogamy is still strictly practised marriage within the village is happening more frequently now-a-days. The village is no longer uniclans and members of other clans have also settled in those hamlets, making it multiclan entities. Sarita Jani (32/F) daughter of Pravat Majhi of Burlubaru hamlet belongs to the *andanga* clan and she wants to marry Dambrudhar Jani (35/M) of the same hamlet having different clan name '*banguraka*'. But their parents did not agree with this proposal, as both of them belongs to the same village. So they decided to

marry by 'elopment'. For this, their friends came forward and helped them. When everyone came to know about this, then a village meeting was held and decided for settling the marriage. Now, they are staying in the same Burlubaru hamlet as husband and wife. Since the extreme patrilineal situation is diminishing due to the influence of urban lifestyle, Kutia Kondhs are becoming familiar with this kind of situation. The dormitory (*kude*) which used to play a major role in the selection of mates has widely disappeared and got restructured as a youth club.

Despite all changes, most of the Kutia Kondh customs and tradition have been preserved all through the years of their existence. The nature of their customary laws can be comprehended on a certain basis. One of the basis lies in the principle behind the structure and function of their traditional village council composed of village elders, household heads, and traditional village leaders. The Kutia Kondh hamlet in the past was composed of families belonging to one lineage and clan. The hamlet, therefore, formed a close-knit agnatic kin group and an individual had to look forward to the other members for cooperation and support for his very existence. Therefore, in case of any wrong done to them, it also collectively affected their kinsmen. Then the kin group would rise together to retaliate or receive compensation. The role and functions of the village council are the manifestations of collective responsibility of kinship bond to perpetuate age-old customs and tradition by following the precedents of their forefathers. With the passage of time, and with the gradual growth of population, thereby increasing members of lineage and formation of clans, the preservation of kinship bonds along with the spirit of reconciliation always continued to dominate as the guiding principles of resolution of inter-personal relationship. Hence whenever there is a conflict between the new and old concept of customs, the justice, equity and good conscience play a vital role as a mitigating factor.

The excess of exposures to the modern societies and urban outlook has distanced the elders from the youth. Dormitories (*kude*) are fast losing their significance as mate selection point and traditional youth interaction setup is replaced by the youth club having scanty scope for meaningful contribution by the elderly lot. Sans any interaction with the elders, the young generation has drifted apart from traditional evening get-togethers comprising song, music and group dance sessions; substituted by solo ear-phone plug-ins for smart-phone entertainments or audio-video entertainment. According to them, the onset of modern mindset has culminated in a virtual bankruptcy of their creative abundance for cultural diversity, at the same time ruining their traditional nuptial rites. Their pivotal but remorseful

ominous apprehension was the experienced lot of elderly wise-men are progressively becoming redundant, abandoned and endangered.

Changes in religious belief

Marked transformation is not much perceptible in the Kutia Kondh rituals and customs although they are no more in the traditional fashion. Now-a-days their worship is marked by festive moods. The role of *dhangda* and *dhangdi* in terms of celebrating through dance, music and an elaborated non-stop *kuigani* is missing today. The *meriah* sacrifice which used to be a human sacrifice is now replaced with buffalo sacrifice (*podha*). Ritual performances also have undergone many changes. Earlier, offering included frequent sacrifices of buffalo, wild boar, and goats beside fowl. Now it has been limited to wild boar and fowl/hen mostly. Choices and alternatives are often restricted due to financial shortage but the critical relation concerning belief on supernatural spirit continues.

They do not consider themselves as Hindus, nor easily accept any other religious ideas. Although the influence of Hindu rituals and festivals was largely found among them. Almost all major Hindu festivals observed by the Kutia Kondh. The new generation youth are fascinated to celebrate the Hindu festivals. Though they show a little inclination towards the Hindu religion, but they do not observe it according to the Hindu process. The Hindu temple culture is flourishing in the area. Christian missionaries are already keen in their attempt to convert Kutia Kondh into their own religion, but they have not been successful in their missions so far. Rather, Hindu ideals have crept into their culture on account of their proximity to the Hindu religious beliefs. At present, the Kutia Kondh religion is in a state of flux. Due to external pressures such as the dominance of the non-tribal officials, petty businessmen, and others in their area and the Kutia Kondh appears to be facing insecurity. The younger generation it seems to be having a dualistic religious approach.

Economic transformation and livelihood changes

Kutia Kondhis culture-oriented and staunchly adhere to their practice of swidden, the primordial tradition of subsistence in their forest habitats. The settled cultivation, which was adopted much later also plays a significant role in their livelihood. Though the swidden is still their primeval subsistence mainstay the settled cultivation caters to their cash crop supplementary income. In the present situation, according to Niranjana Majhi (54/M) and Nabina Majhi (33/M), they have combined both the cash crop cultivation and subsistence

swiddening to fulfill their multifarious necessities related to food as well as exigency-centric cash needs. Based on their views, the cash crop market is fluid, seasonal and volatile. This combination provides the required cushion of absorbing unforeseen casualties and resultant cash crunch. Furthermore, they have the view that, the loss of forest cover due to deforestation cannot be reclaimed, by a complete switch over to cash crop cultivation. So in the present contextual circumstances, their mode of earning and living is a conscientious combination of both the forest dwellers' as well as the non-forest dwellers' traditions. Their experience and knowledge are incorporated in both the systems with more preference to the shifting cultivation.

According to DasarathMajhi (57/M), in the distant past, settled cultivation has never been considered as a means of their livelihood. Their ancestors were accustomed to swiddens, which was their sole subsistence means, as there was no market. Gradually the situations altered, the idea of the market was introduced to them by non-tribal traders, the Pano in particular, who provided them the essential bartered market materials and goods. To obtain such essentials, they had to spare a lion's share of their subsistence where withal or the crops harvested from their *dangar* (shifting cultivation field) to the Pano, who bartered such goods for their yields. Thus, the subsistence crop (the crops cultivated in the *dangar*) served two purposes: one is to meet the consumption needs of the household and another is to meet the liquid cash need of market consumables. Since then, the demand for market consumables gained its importance in their life (for example; the body cares, adornments ornaments etc.). Gradually, other commodities also reached them through the non-tribal traders. Their progressive orientation towards market consumables cultivated a larger interest for the same. Over a period of time, their demand increased and they participated in the market directly without intermediaries or agents like the non-tribal traders, who were more or less their neighbours in the forests. At present, the Kutia Kondhare fully participating in the market dynamics. Thus, they adopted settled cultivation side by side with shifting cultivation, one for subsistence and the other to meet the (occasional) demand of cash. This dual dependence on both subsistence and cash economies impelled the Kutia Kondh towards market dynamics and pitch-forked them on a transitional fulcrum of indigent indigenous tradition and the market dynamics. But the habitat is yet to be changed, they are still a forest dwelling community and the market dynamics is a supplementary and complementary addition to their culture.

The Kutia Kondh's dependence on the forest is not only on economic compulsions but also for their social, cultural and emotional coalescence. In the form of various fruits, seeds, leaves, succulent shoots, tubers and medicines besides fuel and timber. Cultivation on forest lands is highly preferred by them for two reasons, firstly, forest lands to them appear to be more productive than any other type of land, and secondly, forest lands are in the surrounding areas of their habitat. They feel, that, it is the forest that provides lands for all to utilize on need-based requirements. Forest land satisfies not only their economic needs for subsistence and food but also the emotional needs. Thus swiddens cultivation happens to be a recurring phenomenon of their primitive culture. The changing life led by the Kutia Kondh due to the social and ecological disturbances over the year has led to the transformation of an economy with certain salient features and fundamental characteristics, which differentiate their economy from others.

For the Kutia Kondh shifting cultivation is a highly economic activity. With growing population and dwindling forests, the gap between two cycles of cultivation (fallow period) on the same patch of land, which used to be ideally 20-25 years, has been reduced to about 3-4 years. This prevents the land from recouping its regenerative quotients and destroys topsoil fertility.

Kutia Kondh economy is neither systematically organized nor profitably exploited, besides it is also largely non-monetized with the inbuilt labour-sharing component. It is observed that at present 75 percent of their economy is monetized, while the non-monetized component of their economy remains at 25 percent. Now-a-days, items which are cultivated in their swidden is in high demand like, jawar, millet etc. It is this monetized component, which gives rise to various types of exploitations, as the tribals rarely get a just and equitable price for the forest-based produces, (especially by selling *siali* leaves in the market). This is mainly due to the lack of organized marketing outlets. Due to this exploitation, there is also no economic motivation for producing or collecting more produces for the market.

Kutia Kondh mostly required credit for consumption and for various religious and social rituals. As there is no systematic and durable production base, the tribal people have little or no access to direct cash. The co-operative credit systems are in total disarray and banks seldom extend financial support to them, except under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) and other Government sponsored programmes. Their only so-called saviours are Shylock stereotyped money-lenders like traders, shop-keepers, and agents etc., who lend them small loans for meeting religious and ritual expenses for marriages, last rites and such other rituals. Most of their earnings are exhausted in these rituals, whereas a substantial

amount of liquors and meat is consumed by the entire community. These ritual expenses nose dive the economic barometer of the Kutia Kondh. Panos, who are the scheduled castes and have a better monetary standard than indigent Kutia Kondh, double up as money-lenders and charge exorbitantly high compounding rates of interest from them.

The Kutia Kondh have very rare contacts with stronger elements of the outer civil society. Even now they dwell scattered in small hamlets consisting of 5 to 25 huts depending on available infrastructural support. This lack of contact with more developed societies has ensured, that the Kutia Kondh remain insular, insecure and abysmally backward as far as technologies are concerned while comparing to other tribal communities. But this does not mean that there is no scope for change, rather the ratio of change is quite slow.

Thus, the socio-economic structure that has evolved among the Kutia Kondh is based on rudimentary simple skill, that is eco-friendly and in keeping with their orthodox outlook, as it is largely a simple economy. The simple economy of the Kutia Kondh community is a constraint as the 'surplus' is rare. Their notion of prosperity and well-being is related to needful expenditure or spending, not saving. Kutia Kondh family is a unit of both production and consumption, while the community acts as a cooperative unit. Distribution is generally based on reciprocity of gifts in kind and ceremonial exchanges.

Consequently, the type of livelihood that the Kutia Kondh profess cannot be strictly classified as agriculture, though, agriculture at present, is the major engaging occupation of the Kutia Kondh. Information from the older generation (see chapter- V) and old records of the block reveal that the Kutia Kondhs of Kandhamal region were originally swidden propagulators with little or no efforts, in the past, especially for hilly lands, as large tracts of virgin forest cover were available for swiddens conversely as well as lack of sufficient plain lands. With the passage of time, their economic activities have been influenced by the transmogrification caused by innumerable factors. The increase in population due to convergence and the incremental birth rate had an obvious effect in minimizing the individual share of the natural resources.

Besides, Government agencies have made every effort to dissuade and discourage the practice of shifting cultivation, responsible for the detrimental effects like deforestation, soil erosion and a colossal wastage of natural resources. Forests have now been declared as reserved ones. All these factors have rendered the Kutia Kondh to carry on the practice of shifting cultivation in a very limited way and have assuaged them to practise irrigated farming, a system almost alien to their propagule mindset. The method of seasonal and natural rainfed cultivation, as practised by them, is rustic at best. They lack the know-how and

comparatively elaborate techniques required for the purpose of irrigated farming. As a result, the yield from the irrigated field is inadequate for an average family, in spite of the fact that, the area of the land owned by Kutia Kondh family is in no way less than that of similar families in other regions of Odisha.

The inadequate yield from the type of irrigated farming done by the Kutia Kondh is not sufficient for a family. There are other types of economic pursuits which the Kutia Kondh take up. One of them is the slash and burn type of swidden cultivation or the shifting cultivation about which detailed description is elucidated in the previous chapter. Another type of pursuit is the collection of roots, tubers, and fruits from the forest in large quantities, which serve them, at the time of scarcity. For meat, they depend on the boars and other games, but very rarely. The buffalomeat also provides the Kutia Kondh with enough animal protein as their primal staple diet.

The other economic activities of the Kutia Kondh are centred around getting a shelter and clothing. Earlier, the techniques to deal with these problems were simple. The materials needed for the erection of a hut were available from the nearby forests, and those were collected by them. The erection was sometimes done by the members of an individual family by themselves, or if the help of others required, rice beer and pork or fowl used to be provided as an incentive for the help. But now-a-days the situation is completely different, all these work is covered by Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) and the community help is converted to wage payment. So this part of activities is now excluded from the other economic activities in Kutia Kondh life. For clothing, Kutia Kondh sells their crops or gather the Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP) and the money is spent on purchasing clothing for all the family members.

All the age-old salient features of Kutia Kondh economy are fast losing its ground. The well-organized division of labour between age and sex is changing. The men, who were mainly engaged in hunting and grazing of herds and collection of honey and women who were mainly engaged with gathering fire-woods, nuts, fruits, roots, tubers, and herbs, are now-a-days engaged in other works. This is mainly because the forest and its natural elements are no more complaisant with the Kutia Kondh scheme of things. The role of money is increasing its value in Kutia Kondh life. Earlier their expenditure used to depend more on kinds than cash, so barter or exchange was an important aspect of their economy. But now-a-days it is obvious that the profit motive is largely emerging and the mutual sharing and reciprocity of mutual obligations are losing its ground. As a result, collective endeavor and mutual cooperation are no more visible, which was once upon a time the forte of their community.

Kutia Kondhis passing through a phase of economic upheaval alongwith the other forest dwelling communities. Modern technology and concepts are fast making inroads into their closely held realm. Consequently, their economic domain too is churned continuous tourbillion of the new contemporary economies evident from the emergence of some new economic ethos among them, such as daily wage-earning labour, white-collar job and industrial work etc.

Their economy is fast changing both on personal and community levels. But it would be best understood through a thorough identification and examination of new economic activities and developments on one hand and the elucidation of ensuing forms of economies which have emerged on the other hand to comprehend the nature and extent of the economic transformation.

The contemporary activities such as education, communication etc are playing a key role in transforming the traditional tribal economy. With the intensive expansion of new road communication, Kutia Kondh has established more frequent interactions with the non-tribal traders, and agents of the different government and non-government agencies, reshaping their needs, aspirations, expectations, and tastes in the process. Now they are using articles and consumables, previously privy only to plains, such as soap, fine clothes, tea, hair oil, and cigarettes. Their choice of consumables tends to change with easier access to these things from the market, while earlier they had to depend on the Panos. Now the Kutia Kondh are able to obtain a far greater value for their wares for sale, besides meeting their own needs more cheaply than before.

Development schemes and resultant changes:

Co-operative Banks: the co-operative movement has also introduced a new economic trend. The commercial banks have started disbursing loans to the indigent tribal people. A few people of Burlubaru have obtained loans to improve their overall conditions. This had upset the moneylenders, dubious business practitioners and exploiters from outside the hamlet as well. This has also minimized the land mortgaging practice.

The concept of savings: The monetized economy and enhanced income opportunities have equipped them with a scope and concept of savings for the eventual exigency in future. The savings from the earnings made by industrial workers/labourers are remitted regularly to their parents/wife & children, especially by those, engaged at far-off locations like Gujarat or Kerala.

Changes in need-based consumption base and a shift in the consumption pattern is evinced there. Now-a-days they are no more content with what they have but endeavor to obtain what is not locally available from urban and semi-urban markets. This accumulative new wave mindset practically inspires the tribal to go with new consumer durables articles, dress, molded household needs, cosmetics and many other varieties of jewellery for young tribal girls and boys.

The emergence of commercial aptitude is directly reflected in their produces like the sale of turmeric, ginger, mustard, niger, black gram, arrowroot etc. Sale of minor forest produces like firewood, seasonal fruits, roots, tubers & vegetables, broom grass and *siali* leaves have escalated. Various other factors, such as government and non-government agencies are instrumental for such attitudinal change. Several economic developmental programmes for the upliftment of the Kutia Kondh are being implemented under different employment-cum-income generating schemes (IGP).

As dicussed in the last chapter Government of India confers special status to Scheduled Tribes, granting special privileges and protections to the Kutia Kondh, declared as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PTG). Conforming to the statutory official norms, most of the schemes (see chapter-V) are being implemented with at least 50 percent coverage for Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste families living Below the Poverty Line (BPL).

All the development measures have brought notable changes among the Kutia Kondh. Their dependence on shifting cultivation has reduced to some extent, and they have started settled cultivation with some modernized agrarian practices. As a result of the impact of land settlement initiatives and issue of *pattas* (tenancy rights) to individual landowners, they have become more assertive of their rights over their lands. The exploitation of Panos is no longer tolerated. With the spread of formal and non-formal education, their percentage of literacy has also improved. The younger generation has become more conscious of their rights and privileges and their worldview has widened.

Changes in political organization

Earlier, the Kutia Kondh had a simple form of political hegemony, which declined with the superimposition of the statutory political institutions during the post-independent era. The traditional political arrangement contained various features such as an effective group control, welfare of the group, and a system of group dynamics. Although the traditional political organization was an effort to unite together with a number of tribes, who had originally settled over a contiguous area, called '*mutha*' (having control over the area and

hence ownership rights) for common interests. But, at a later stage, some non-tribal groups also came to be associated with it, having become domiciled inhabitants of the *mutha*.

The *Raja* (king or chieftain), for administrative convenience, divided the entire Kandhamal (before it was declared separate district) into several revenue collection units, each being called a *mutha*. The basis of such division was clan (*gochhi*) centric. This means that a *mutha* consisting Kondh (including Kutia Kondh and other sub-groups of Kondh) population may enlist to a single clan or several fraternal clans. Each *mutha* included several adjacent hamlets within it, which used to be inhabited by members of a single clan or of several fraternal clans in those days. Because of this, the practice of *mutha* exogamy was prevalent and now-a-days, some people are still practicing this. The chief of the *mutha* was appointed from among the members of the non-tribal or Hindu caste. The duty of the *mutha* head was to represent the Kondh under his jurisdiction at the court of Raja, whenever called upon to do so. Besides he also acted as the recognized official interlocutor and sole channel of communication between the Kondh and the Raja. So he became the Raja's representative and the interlocutor of the Kondh. As he performed an important duty to the Kondh, consequently he became the central person of their society. This was the state of affairs during the British occupation of the area. After the British annexation, they did not disturb the *mutha* heads. Instead, they tried to establish more elaborate and intensive control over the Kondh through these *mutha* head.

The *mutha* system has gradually declined and faded away, and the function of *muthadar* weakened over a period of time, which then ceased to exist altogether. This resulted partly due to the constitutional safeguards, included among other factors, such privileges as exemption from paying land revenue, provision of non-eviction from occupancy, non-transferability of ownership right over land etc. As a consequence of these remedial measures, the *mutha* head of the Kondh was reduced to insignificance. The position of the *mutha* head became gradually and progressively insignificant as the scope of self-rule and law and order maintenance were extended to the Kondh settlements. No longer could *mutha* head employ them either in his private capacity or for public *bethi* (work without wage) services. In the early sixties, the constitutional Panchayati Raj system was introduced in this area with a two-tier system, the Panchayat at the village and the Panchayat Samiti at the block level. With the introduction of new Panchayati Raj system, many development/welfare measures at their village level have taken place. All serious problems and conflict cases relating to law and order are being dealt with by police and judiciary. This new system, to which the native Kondh are still unaccustomed, has not proved too effective for them. They

prefer their disputes and any other socio-cultural problem to be resolved as per their traditional custom. Consequently, although they report their cases now-a-days to the statutory Panchayats, fervently request to resolve the conflict in accordance with their tribal norms and terms.

In the system of Panchayati Raj, every village has its own elected representative, called ward member. For last few decades the traditional headman, *majhi* is usually elected as the ward member. One or two days prior to the election for the post of ward member, in the village council meeting, the name of the traditional headman (*majhi*) of the village is declared unanimously to be their new elected representative. So for last many years, this process continued and only members of *majhi* group people were assigned to be elected Panchayat representatives. But now-a-days the situation has changed a bit. Therefore, the traditional role of *majhi* has also changed, as, at present, the village head (ward member) can also belong to a *jani* group. For example, BalakrushnaJani (43/M) is associated with all the village level development programmes. He is also responsible to report any problem pertaining to the village to the concerned Government agency. So he acted as an interlocutor between the village and the Government functionaries. Now-a-days, in the village politics, the traditional leaders feel it as their duty to cooperate with Panchayati Raj elected representatives, i.e. the ward member, Sarpanch, Panchayat Samity Chairman, M.L.A. and M.P. in planning and executing the development programmes. The new elected public representatives of the younger generation, instead of challenging the planned transformation rather welcome the developmental policies and programmes and explain the same to the elders in details to get their support, synergy, and advice. They also take part in the elections to elect their representatives. Despite all these, most of the traditions of their progenitors are honoured as a rule because they prefer to be abided by their traditions to preserve and uphold their 'group identity against the tidal of modern transformation.

Education and knowledge

The literacy rate of the Kutia Kondh shows that previously there was abysmally low percentage of literacy among them, but gradually it has improved. Thus, there is a clear sign of trend for development of education among them. In these terms, they were accustomed to a segregated life, almost detached from the civilized outer world. Consequentially they had very little knowledge about the outer world and became aware about their rights only after coming into contact with the society outside the forests. Of course, there were various phases in history, when they have survived inhuman exploitations, under pressure due to the lack of

adequate knowledge. But after they came into contact with the government agencies and other voluntary organizations, advocating on their behalf, regarding the importance of education through their educational programmes, gradually they started learning and as a result, the literacy rate of the Kutia Kondh registered an upward trend ever since. Taking into account the modern civilization and fast mobility of changing patterns of society, the literacy rate among the Kutia Kondh, of course, is still very low in comparison with other tribal communities, where much more advancement surfaced in this regards. Now, education is accepted well within their society. Kutia Kondhare now concerned for education and accept it as an indispensable part of their progression towards the civilized mainstream, like, fight against social inequality, injustice, and economic backwardness. However, the medium of classroom transaction (language) poses a barrier to impart adequate education.

There are three schools in the vicinity of Burlubaru and Madalakuna hamlet, but till date, in Dahabali hamlet no school has been established yet, albeit, their extreme interest not only for primary education. But they are also very much interested to impart higher and better education to their succeeding generation, as observed in case of Rajesh Majhi (37/M), Ranjana Jani (40/F) and Kambhu Majhi (39/M). Due to the geographical isolation, their hamlet is too far to get any kind of help, whether provided by the development agency or any non-government organization (NGO). They always face problems for sanitation, road communication, electricity and also education. But they neither give up nor want to leave their native land and forest. They are gradually availing these facilities at their own volition, at least for imparting education to the offsprings. All the three above referred persons sent their children to study in Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), Belghar, Kandhamal district, where they can avail quality education, study materials, lodging, boarding and free food, which they cannot afford otherwise locally. Geographical isolation is a major hindrance for imparting education for the Kutia Kondh. When asked why they chose to educate their children, their view was quite similar to those city dwellers and/or modern villagers as they aspire their children to live in better conditions than them. Furthermore, they are well-aware now, with the accompanying benefits of education and how it will affect their living style in a better way.

In case of Burlubaru and Madalakuna hamlets, almost all the families are sending their children to the schools, but in case of girls, the dropout rate is higher than the boys. When asked, Jharna Jani (17/F) about the reason for her drop out, she revealed that they are overburdened with domestic workload as the female folk is the first and the foremost worker in their daily work culture of the family. The daughter is entrusted to take care of the younger

siblings. She will be in the watch hut during the daytime, and in the morning. She has to go to the forest to collect *siali* leaves and such other Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP) as the main source of direct cash. Thus, her whole day is busy with hectic work, and that is why their parents are reluctant for their girls' education. But, now the situation has improved to some extent, as the girl children are attending their schools almost daily. The main reason for this kind of transformation is largely due to the smooth and fair availability of study materials, food, lodging, and boarding to stay under the safe and secure supervision and also due to the change in their outlook and awareness level. Previously a son was considered as a lifelong asset whereas a daughter was the asset for her family before marriage and after marriage for her in-laws. Now-a-days such outlook is fast becoming outdated and obsolete as girls are also communicating with the outer society. The intention may be different as discussed in the previous line, but they are moving with the outer force, which changes their attitude towards the traditional lifestyle.

Knowledge is also a vital aspect of every day's life, whether it is environmental knowledge or outside world's materialistic knowledge, it is necessary for survival in life. According to Maguni Jani (64/F) of Dahabali hamlet, the forest is a part of nature, which has cultivated in them the religious concept of rituals, moral values, which is elaborated in their myths and sentiments contrived their ensconced living in fully forest covered patches, rocks, hills, and mountains. Their idea of living in the forest and their love for the forest as a part of nature may be explained in the following sentences. The community lived in the peaceful and calm serenity of the forest, maintaining a life of almost no worries. They are accustomed to a style of living, where they feel that forest is closely intertwined with them and their culture coalesces to it.

As a matter of fact, a complete understanding of natural surrounding en-bloes in-toto is an everyday experience for existence in Kutia Kondh life. It is evolved from generations of understanding and coexistence with nature. Without the sense of understanding, survival in their context would defeat their existence itself. In their life, information exists in understanding the elements of nature and universe, adopting the understanding in their propagule process, in connection with their forests around them, and in encumbering the diverse natural resources to meet their daily need-based requirements. It takes forms through social celebrations or myths in cultural amusements or hunting rituals, in propitiation of the spirits or in communion with the gods. (see also Kalluri, 2010). It may also be experienced in their music, dance, or in their headmen or medicinal healers. This wider understanding includes various aspects such as astronomy, physics, geography, ecology, medicine,

mathematics, poetry, art, law, and politics etc. which is manifest through culture. Best of all, there is a sublime philosophy of life that surpasses material definitions. All these understandings create a base of knowledge which is cumulative in nature and passed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationship of living beings with one another and with their environment (Kumaran, *et.al* 2007: 2).

However, the Kutia Kondh are now-a-days experiencing a new world, which is the mixture of the traditional forest-dwelling part and emerging modern world interactions and in both these segments, knowledge is most needed in their respective applied aspects. But unfortunately, the Kutia Kondh are not so knowledgeable regarding their outside world, as all knowledge is cumulative and accumulated through the permutations and combinations experiences. However, Kutia Kondh's new entrants to the outer world, so they normally are susceptible to be biased. Furthermore, the traditional knowledge and the knowledge of the modern world is often at loggerheads with each other. Whereas traditional knowledge focused on the harmony with relations to their surroundings, modern world aims and opts for to maximum utilization. When utilization treads in, sense of harmony disappears. So Kutia Kondh society is hobnobbing between this bipolar paradox. Whereas modern education system imparts knowledge about how to live in the changing technology influenced environment, their traditional knowledge relates to, how to live sustainably and in harmony with nature. These two contradictory views are simultaneously concurrent in the Kutia Kondh world.

By rapid increase of population, socio-economic and political developments, the Kutia Kondh society is not excluded from the recurring transformation and resultant developments. At present, the general widening of the outlook of the Kutia Kondh made possible by outside contact and resulting complexities of life in general, have made room for the apprehension: to what extent the traditional way of life will be kept intact? Moreover, with the march of time, and the coming of development activities, transformation in the society and changes in the cultural values are bound to occur. The younger generation is becoming more conscious of their rights, benefits, and privileges. The changes in the outlook and policy of the Government have brought the Kutia Kondh society closer to the mainstream of the nation and their mindset broadened for acceptance of new ideas.

In the study area (Belghar), there are several Government agencies, there is a Public Health Centre (PHC), Police outpost, Office of the Agricultural Extension Officer, Livestock

Inspection Centre, Post Office, a weekly market complex. These help in the direct or indirect interaction of the Kutia Kondh with the outside world. In Belghar, there is also a Bank 'Kalahandi Anchalika Gramya Bank' sponsored by the State Bank of India which provides loans to the Kutia Kondh. The role of Agricultural Extension office and branch office of the Oil Odisha is to provide the Kutia Kondh with seeds for different crops around the year. In the Agricultural Extension programme, paddy, mustard, vegetable seedlings, and seeds etc. are supplied. The field supervisor of Kutia Kondh Development Agency supply the mustard seeds, til seeds, sunflower and other oilseed on terms of procurement after harvest. Government Primary Health Centre located at Belghar provides medical facilities. Kutia Kondh is slowly evolving out of their traditional method of curing diseases and availing the modern medical facility. This has considerably diminished the use of herbal ingredients among the Kutia Kondh. The primary Health Centre renders much-needed service to the Kutia Kondh of Belghar Gram Panchayat. The ANM (Auxiliary Nursing Midwife) center are functioning properly at the village level to motivate the people for improved sanitation, personal hygiene and attends female patients for gynaecological problems and assists child delivery.

The KKDA has developed the awareness of Kutia Kondh for sustainable development programmes. The project aims at the holistic development of the livelihood of Kutia Kondh and their overall quality of life. The Agency spends a lot of providing emergency medicines through the Primary Health Centre. It emphasizes on skill enhancement of the youth in various vocational streams like horticulture, forestry, apiculture, agriculture etc. It also concentrates on the Kutia Kondh economic development by upgrading their income from short-term agriculture, to adopting high yielding crops, by extension of horticulture etc. The agency also provides seeds, seedlings and other pre-requisites for apiculture. In many areas, the Agency has built facilities for irrigating farmlands, provided hand pumps and modern agricultural equipment. The Agency covers a vast stretch of Kutia Kondh areas and looks after the development of health, hygiene, education, occupation, agriculture, and economy. But the Agency has yet to come up to mark in all these spheres.

Transformation: as an adjustment process

On one of my days in Burlubaru, an old man, BaladevMajhi, (75 years) of was sitting alone on a charpoy (*khaat*) (four-poster) under a leafy roof near a *salap* tree. He was asked, "when the drum beats start will every one of the clan will be dancing and singing?" The old man with a quizzical stare raised some points based on his observation, that the

impact of modern civilization has robbed them of their traditional lifestyle in many ways, whether its community bonding or inter-family, intra-family, inter-personal or intra-clan relationship. While narrating, he says, "Kondh girls are no more enticing for Kondh boys now-a-days. Scented oil, soaps and perfumes have replaced the use of herbal body care; record dances, Hindi music videos etc. have taken the place of *desi* drum beats, lilting traditional Kondh songs. This current demeanour of the Kondh youths attributes a cultural backwardness of their traditional heritage". He explained at length the situational and attitudinal change of the young generation. The manner of courtship has been changed, as the male youth staying outside their settlement is no more willing to marry a girl from their own community. As in the case of his own son, RatnaMajhi (42) migrated to Kerala searching for greener, pastures and was working there in a shoe factory. At that time he was a married man with three kids. During the initial two years he had been attached with his family and after every three to four months gap he used to come home, but subsequently, the frequency became fewer and far between and ultimately he stopped coming to the home and altogether severed all contacts with his family. As a result, his wife and kids are neglected although initially, their kin members attended to the estranged family and later they themselves adjusted to the altered situation. According to BaladevMajhi, his son had migrated to the city for better earnings and prospects only, but prolonged contact with and exposure to the modern society lured him to estrange his family, his wife, and children and embrace the alluring glitziest of the modern society.

In another case, a middle-aged man named SanadanMajhi (52) from Madalakuna hamlet having 2 to 3 acres of abandoned land a little far from his settlement is compelled to discontinue his cultivation as he is old enough and none of his sons are willing to continue the cultivation. They are interested in search of other remunerative jobs and finally migrated to Kerala and Gujarat. His youngest son and daughter are studying in residential school at Rangapar. Consequently, SanadanMajhi and his wife are not willing to continue their traditional cultivation process, as there are subsidized supply of food of 25kg rice per month at the nominal price of one rupee per kilogram along with other modern edibles, which they are normally not acquainted with. They usually eat *ragi* or *millet* or *rice* with salt or any seasonal leafy vegetable which is locally available. According to him, unless there is any exigency or emergency need, he does not want to continue shifting cultivation, rather he is interested in settled cultivation with 0.25 acres consolidated plot of land contiguous to their hamlet.

In the third case, PurendraMajhi (55) of Dahabali hamlet is deeply and emotionally attached to their traditional custom of living. But he does not intend that his son or grandson should follow the same, rather he wishes his children should be accustomed to comfortable living, especially the city life, in order to be established in the society in terms of livelihood as well as respect, social status, and prestige. For PurendraMajhi, changing lifestyle or accepting modern lifestyle is a value addition aspect, as he explained the ill-treatment behaviour by his own community people of different hamlets which are rude and rough. According to him, now-a-days people are less connected and even not willing to talk with each other in public conjuncts like earlier. There is a huge socio-culturally confined barrier developed between the hamlets that are situated in the vicinity of the local marketplace and those afar or remote from the marketplace. He added that people even within the same hamlet are not much interacting with one another like earlier. But they are availing more privileges than those staying in the sequestered interior, as they are not well conversant with the changing scenario. At the same time, he was also very emotional with his traditional cultural setups. According to him, their children should learn all aspects of their surroundings, as earlier, when their surroundings consisted of the forest and few non-tribal caste people. But now their surroundings have increased and according to the changing situation, they need to adjust themselves. While explaining, he raised very vital points, like, in his childhood, his parents never allowed him to go to the wild forest alone until he became quite familiar with every nook and corner of the forest. Likewise, he is equally afraid of letting his children venture into the forest without knowing its ups and downs inside out, so he wants his children to learn the new trends of life through education.

The fourth case was near the Belgharmarketplace where 4 to 5 young Kutia Kondh youths were sharing their experiences of the outer world to fellow neighbours who are staying in the hamlet. One of them named SudamJani (26/M) described the relationship between the people staying in the settlement and those staying outside the settlement. According to him, those who are staying outside are now considered as a guest by the villagers and also they cannot participate in any kind of village decision-making process, this is just because they are treated like an outsider, they are not willing to continue their traditional lifestyle in terms of food habit, not even like to go to the cultivated field to help their parents. This attitude is also supported by their parents, as in the above case, for better social security, heightened status and prestige.

The attitude of the older generation has also been railroaded for whom at least ten years back modern concept was having no relevance at all. In the first case, it was the

question of upholding and maintaining the tribal tradition along with culture amidst the thrust of the modern concept of development. The second instance speaks of cultural assimilation according to the need of the situation. They are not prone to shun their cultural tradition but are motivated enough to change themselves, their living style, their language etc. But, they still intend to preserve their own cultural heritage although the way-out is not known to them. The third one is prudently careful regarding the modified social structures and development potentials of the family, at the same time concerned about the preservation of their own tradition, culture, language and distinct identity as well. In the fourth case, they are neither aware of the traditional life nor aware of the future; they are just living in the present. According to them, their parents do not use the traditional attire anymore, neither at home nor at any marketplace or other places. Regarding food, they opine that the earlier food pattern was due to the scarcity and non-availability of alternate foods; but now it is plentiful and available in the local market. And for the changing cultivation trend aspect, there are many obstacles confronted with continuing shifting cultivation.

At first glance, neither of these raised points are important in their daily life, but when analysing these following observations, we could easily come across the actual transforming overview of their social life. The first group belonged to the Dahabali hamlets, which was situated far from the marketplace without proper road transport connectivity to reach that hamlet. The second observation belonged to the Madalakuna hamlet, which is situated in close proximity to the marketplace (within 1 km.). Comparing these two hamlets reveals that, people of the former group are more connected with their fellow villagers. Whereas, people of the latter group have displayed their detachment from their community. It is also observed that people of Madalakuna and Burlubaru are not inclined to talk or chat with the people descending from far away hamlets. For example, Dahabali they just ignored them. The above inference is not only based just on observation but also explained by the fellow villagers; when enquired how they rationalize this behaviour, when all of their fellow villagers are separated and detached from each other (persons from Burlubaru hamlet) for generations; they replied that earlier they were together in all spheres of their daily life, but now that sense of belonging is lost, moreover they do not have time to sit and chat together as there are numerous burdens for survival. They disclose further that, people who are more exposed to and connected with the outer world are more detached from their respective earlier settlement and vice-versa.

It is visible in the above four examples that, Kutia Kondh are very much concerned about their own tradition and culture but at the same time they are careful about bequeathing

their children a prosperous future albeit not at the cost of compromise with their culture and tradition. Kutia Kondh inclination towards accepting modern activities is more prominent among the younger generation whereas the people of older generation cling cohesively to their traditional way of living. This is further supported by the fact that the older generation is somehow managing to practise the traditional lifestyle and the younger generation is eager to switch over to accept new beliefs and values, whereas the contemporary current parent's generation is neither accepting nor rejecting either one in-toto. Some specific case studies of the family of the Kutia Kondh of Burlubaru, Madalakuna and Dahabali hamlets help to have better insight into their various aspects of socio-cultural and economic environs.

In Burlubaru hamlet, 73 years old RubendraMajhi, owns a semi-pucca house with tiled roof, staying with his youngest son's family along with his wife DopikaMajhi. Though traditionally a shifting cultivator, he is presently not occupied with any work. The youngest son is GutuMajhi (30 years old) and has two daughters and one son. GutuMajhi has rented out some portion of his land to the non-tribal neighbors, the Pano for cultivation. For renting out the land, his father RubendraMajhi is not at all happy with his son. Asked about his experiences, his narration is as follows: RubendraMajhi's lived life on hilly, forested and relatively inaccessible areas and with *dongarchassa* (shifting cultivation). Those days the introduction of shifting cultivation was marked with one or two crops. This same method of practice still continues today. After the first cultivation he used to leave the forest track for seven to ten years as fallow land before he returns to it. This interval is regarded as a resting period for the land. This long rest of fallowing period regenerates the hill lands to get a good yield subsequently. As he explained further, his great-grandparents used to leave the field for 15-20 years and at that time they adopted a nomadic way of life. But subsequently they started to ponder over well-knit social order and settled life. Then along with shifting cultivation, the settled cultivation was also started. This practice has been converted to their lifeline and emerged as their very culture and tradition of their community. While explaining, he said, the role of community members were very different then, the clearing of forests for shifting cultivation was more or less a community effort, mostly organized by cooperative labour system. The allocation of plots in the swiddens, either to individuals or families was also a community decision. This practice instilled in them a sense of belonging to the community. For this, they feel that shifting cultivation withstood and sustained their life in the forest settlements. According to RubendraMajhi, shifting cultivation is not only the sole factor, for which they depend upon the forests. They support their life system with two types of economy, one is agro-based economy and another is hunting-gathering or forest-based

economy. The dependence on hunting has dwindled to totemic rituals, although gathering is still a vital part of Kutia Kondh economy. Being a forest dwelling community, hunting and gathering are a natural corollary, rather it is too old a way of maintaining themselves. So far the Kutia Kondh have passed through the phases and stages of hunting and gathering mode of life and graduated to the shifting and settled cultivation, and this is not one after another, rather all three types of activities can be identified with their society, albeit the priority and prospectives have shifted. That is why a large difference is cropping up between the thought process of the elder generation and the younger generation. So for the people, their pattern of livelihood is still conditioned to the forests and is different from the mainstream of civilization. Hunting and gathering in forest is slithering smoothly along with shifting and settled cultivation.

TaukoladuJani (Female/68) from Madalakuna hamlet also shares some similar type of outlook. According to her, the non-tribal dwellers in the plains only exploit the forest as a reservoir of natural renewable resources and not as inseparable part and parcel of their way of life. They live in caste-ridden society, which restricts freedom to know the forest in any way or the other than a reservoir of resources. But for Kutia Kondh, the forest areas, where their traditions of sustenance such as, food collection, shifting cultivation and horticulture are alive and active with their method, that specifies minimum requirement of time, space, materials, work-related skill and know-how for it, and leads them not to be counterproductive by the nature of work. There, they are not subjected to any crisis of shortfall or overexploitation. Their social life in relation to the forests remains in a way far from a crisis when they experience a sense of social relationship with the forest through occupational patterns and deduce their constructive insights for an amicable and desirable life of overall holistic well-being. However, their concept of well-being and to feel easy with the forests is reinforced by a relation of mutual aid and assistance to each other. This notion of their well-being, work, rest, leisure and pleasure in relation to the forests, shape their respective attitude and perception towards the human-forest relationship, therefore, their sense of well-being is specific to their forest living spaces. About their well-being, Kutia Kondhis sensitive to the modes of doing and thinking which they feel is appropriate in consideration to time, situation and the subjects, forests or themselves. According to her, their quest is to accomplish peace and wellbeing which is always derived from the wise sustainable mode of interaction. Hence, they continue to live in the manner they are familiar with, and this, they think is the most appropriate behaviour and response to their notion of well-being. They are reluctant to live a life, in the manner, the outsiders and non-tribals live. As they are aware of the changes the

government attempts to bring about, their socialization with the modern world begins with their contact with traders and government officers, who impel them to live in areas where forest productivity (forest produces and produces from shifting cultivation) is substantially reduced or where there is restricted or regulated supply of forest produces used for daily needs. They may be uprooted from their natural habitat and the forests may not be accessible to them, to continue to earn a livelihood. In these eventualities, they feel, that their well-being and notion of a nice and desirable life in the forest is threatened.

Furthermore, from the above narration, it is clear that the Kutia Kondh, deserve to continue their practice of living in the forest. They express this view with the assertion, that, they do not wish to abandon the settlement or dwellings and their practice of sustainable utilization of the forest for a livelihood. For them, their well-being lies in that which they do not want to lose. As they say, this is not merely their sentimental attachment to their place of origin. On the contrary, it is the most practical endeavor they strive for, as one must continue to do, what one knows the best. Besides, they know, how ill-equipped they are, to successfully earn a sustainable livelihood in the market and at the same time, are also aware and confused about how ill-equipped the government is to prepare them for participatory models of modules of living outside the forest. Due to the lack of an ensured alternate livelihood relocation becomes the crux of the problems.

The older generations of Kutia Kondh community believe that their society will exist with its traditional structure, configuration, culture, beliefs, and values. This, they consider from many angles and aspects of their socialization with the forest world. Kutia Kondh knows the forest as a place of work, where they make clearings to shape it into a home, a settlement. They are accustomed to casteless society, which gives freedom to know, taste, touch, smell, see and hear all the forest produces. This is the very perception of their older generations about their life in the forest. There lies their life, their notion of well-being and feeling of prolonged and eternal continuity of the race.

While time passes, the interactions between other societies have become more prominent and various dependency and conflict raised from this relationship. As explained by Kaperamajhi (62/M) from Burlubaru hamlet:

“We are *adivasi*. The Panos are not *adivasi*. We live in the deep forest, they live in the plains. We are the primeval and primordial inhabitants, they followed us. We emerged from *Sapangada* (holy grail), they came afterward. We love the forests, they fear the forests. Forest is our dwelling place. Kutia is the king, the Pano is his minister. We are living in the forests, they are living

for us. We produce from the fields and the forests, they trade the yield in the market. Yet Panos are our immediate non-tribal neighbour with whom we deal a lot. We vary in a lot of respects, yet are friends. They provide us with salt, dry fish, *mahua* liquor and buffalo when we need”.

Very concisely, what KaperaMajhi said about the business of Panos and Kutia Kondh, depicts the difference of outlook between the former and the latter, the distinct difference of livelihood pattern in between them summarizes the relationship between the two communities. According to him, the Panos are not fully tribal communities, rather they are, immigrants to the abode of Kutia Kondh. Further, both the communities in the same patch share their livelihood as the forest dependents. Kutia Kondh depends directly on the forests whereas the Panos depend on it indirectly through the Kutia Kondh and also for it produces. In the same way, Kutia Kondhis known as shifting cultivators of the area, Panos do not practise it, they cultivate plain lands. A Pano seldom has direct interference with the forests for it produces. Obviously, they depend upon Kutia Kondh for firewood and other minor requirements of household needs. But, sometimes they collect it from the nearby areas, where they do not have a very thick vegetation. The Pano community fears the forests, as they do not have enough ideas about the forest, especially about the deep interior jungle region. The Panos do not even know enough about the exact location, where specifically produces are available.

This, in general, is the behavioural differences between the Kutia Kondh and the non-tribal Pano community, so far as their relationship with the forest is concerned. Both the communities differ a lot in their social and cultural outlook, ethnicity, language, customs, traditions etc. Still, their lives in the forest have made them be similar in certain respects. Both the societies derive their livelihood from the forests, indirectly and directly. The life of Kutia Kondh overlaps with those of the Panos in the forest, and their relationship may be taken for a detailed understanding of the influence of one community over the other.

Kutia Kondh of the present day knows the Panos as migrants from the plain areas. They came as visitors. Their interest was limited to the specific nature of their work. Some came in search of grazing pastures, others for specific forest produce. Over a period of time, they settled in the neighborhood of the Kutia Kondh. Their relation with the Kutia Kondh was through bartered animals. As Kutia Kondh point out, the Panos were then dealing with them, as they did not know the forest landscape or they had little idea about the forest topography. As strangers, they maintained a friendly disposition, ready to co-operate whenever required. With the exception of salt, this mode of behaviour provided for all other material necessities.

But the Kutia Kondh maintained their livelihood in the same manner as they are doing now. They had a rational idea of a good and desirable life, which kept them on the track of sustainable relationship with the forests, inhabiting in the surroundings. Kutia Kondh points out that the Panos were the then communicating agent between the hills and plains and more so between the forest and the market. From the plains, they supplied to the Kutia Kondh salt, matchbox, dry fish and many common essential needs of daily life. The Kutia Kondh were enamored by the taste of titbits. The Kutia Kondh got the needful commodities from Panos through barter system (exchange in kind). For a particular measure of salt, a set measure of *mahua* flowers, paddy, cow-pea, pigeon pea was fixed to be bartered. The quantity of crops that the Panos were accepting in exchange then, was many times more than the commodities they sold. This was the first business relation of the Kutia Kondh with their neighbouring non-tribals in terms of exchange of materials and goods. This dealing with Panos gave Kutia Kondh the first idea of the market and the process of marketing.

Kutia Kondh feels that the Panos are inferior to them. Though both the communities were more or less depending on a similar type of livelihood and food habits, culturally they are quite different. Kutia Kondh is quite possessive about their origin, which developed their personality with a feeling, that, they are procreated by nature itself and are the primordial inhabitants. Besides, in a behavioural pattern in the society, the Panos were taken as outsiders and like porters, they carried goods to Kutia Kondh. In this way, they were and are providing their services to the Kutia Kondh. The Kutia Kondh did not allow the Panos to live with them in their settlements with a feeling of inferiority. Panos live on the outskirts of Kutia Kondh hamlets, in comparatively plain areas. Their selection of settlement was basically on a consideration of easy communication with the market and the Kutia Kondh. Therefore, the Pano communities surrounded or encircled the Kutia Kondh communities and lived on the link road between the market and the forest. Whenever the Kutia Kondh took interest in the markets, they were discouraged in a friendly way by the Panos. The Panos provided the interludes that Kutia Kondh required. So the Kutia Kondh were obtaining needful materials easily from Panos even without going to the market. Thus, the direct participation of the Kutia Kondh in the market was shrewdly obstructed by the Panos. Gradually this grip of the Pano community on Kutia Kondh weakened and they became closely familiar with each other. In course of time, there started a rivalry for space between them. When the market economy crept into Kutia Kondh area, more Panos emigrated to the area resulting in a rivalry between the two communities.

In due course, governmental development programmes started in the areas of Kutia Kondh usurping many reforms to transform. According to them, those developmental programmes motivated their simple supine mindset to the lure of a market. They could fetch a good remunerative price by selling their produces. Further, the developmental programmes motivated them to follow new traditions of work, to earn more with less labour input, introduced to them the cash crops and made them interested in direct participation in the market. The motivation for direct participation in the market gained swift momentum in Kutia Kondh society. Besides this, the developmental programmes also brought other infrastructural facilities to their settlements. They were motivated to participate in the provisions made for them through developmental programmes and infrastructural upgradations. The notion of the developmental programme is always associated with them in terms of getting facilities with less or no input. And for benefiting from such programmes in the Kutia Kondh locality emigration of non-tribal people to the Kutia Kondh locality proliferated steadily. The workers in the infrastructure projects for developmental programmes account for a limited number of non-tribal emigrants, who have come earlier to the area for a purely temporary period. With the developmental programmes, came permanent emigrants who settled there as businessmen or traders. Thus, the market became broad and competitive.

Furthermore, the forest legislation came up with new provisions and regulations, more and more patches of forests became restricted, protected and prohibited in their locality. They were given limited access to the forests as restrictions were imposed on them for shifting cultivation. The forest department personnel accused the Kutia Kondh as destroyers of forests through shifting cultivation. Restrictions were also imposed on their collection of essential needs from the forests. Meanwhile, with the new medical and health support, the population rate which was continuously declining in their community has started to increase, thus their population grew up, as a result, the man to land ratio in shifting cultivation dwindled. They are restricted from all sides. In the meantime, in the name of developmental programmes, the Forest Department, the Kutia Kondh Development Agency and other developmental agencies gave priority to horticulture, mono-plantations (especially mango and eucalyptus trees) and other forestry programmes. The Tribal Development Agency and the Agriculture Department started motivating them for plain land cultivation, for which the agency/department also supplied seeds, fertilizer etc. According to the Kutia Kondh in the name of development programmes, attempts are being made to drag them to the mainstreams, thus to weaken the relationship between the forest and them. As a result, they are propelled to

participate in the market directly with limited knowledge. All these factors are responsible to slowly but surely distance them from the forest. Therefore, they have understood, that, they need to learn the new market economy and cope up with the present developmental environment with a positive attitude or else their life will be more miserable.

The Kutia Kondh have an opinion that the forest legislation is prepared in such a way that they cannot stay in the forests anymore. According to them, because they are deprived of their rights on forests, they are banned to continue shifting cultivation, which is their only known subsistence practice. They narrate their discomfort: "we are left to continue shifting cultivation in our nearby areas only. But by continuous cultivation on one plot, we will not get a good harvest. For, continuous cultivation without a prolonged resting period of the land at least for two years will hamper the soil fertility. Thus the harvest will not meet our household consumption. Then what will we sell on the market for cash? We are cautioned not to continue shifting cultivation. It has been suggested so as to continue plain land cultivation. For that, we are also being provided with seeds, and irrigation facilities whenever possible. We are provided with seeds of cash crops, in which other people, and not we are interested. Those crops cannot cater to our consumption needs". The Kutia Kondh do not have any interest in cash-crop cultivation and plantations which they say cannot be comparable with *sal* and *mahula* tree. They are provided with temporary employment in developmental works. However, Kutia Kondh does not like to work as daily wage labourers. But to meet their needs they are working for the construction of roads and buildings. When they face a number of crises, they are motivated to participate in the market economy. Though the Kutia Kondh is provided with loans to purchase plough-bullocks etc., they do not have enough plain lands and do not use plough-bullocks for shifting cultivation. Moreover, they are not also provided with any plain land and hence they think that they have nothing to do with plough-bullocks and loans.

While describing, the Kutia Kondh explained almost all types of problems, they have faced during their daily struggle for survival. They suffer a crisis in their mode of living and mode of earning a livelihood. On the one hand, change in regard to the forest deprives them of its produce, legal restriction also limits their access to the forests, even where forest is not completely destroyed. On the other hand, there is not enough scope to earn a livelihood in the market, which aims to compensate for the loss of the forest produce. The marketplace, the communication between the forest and the market and between Kutia Kondh and outsiders have undergone many changes and it also has resulted in the changes of attitude towards each other as well as in the attitude towards the environment be it forest or be it market. They are

in a transitional phase of transformational reforms, as they neither maintain their well-being in the forest tradition due to the prohibition and lack of access they are able to be in a market economy due to their lack of knowledge and exposure. As in whole, they are in-between.

The above said crisis, with which the Kutia Kondhare confronting for their struggle for survival, has made them worrisome about their life in the changing surroundings. But this crisis has generated an awareness of the notions of self-regeneration, which is the active principle to merge in the mainstream society. As a result, they are in a dilemma, with this changing attitude and perception. Their worldview has transformed, the younger generation now-a-days to rent out a major portion of their local land to non-tribal people, as they are not very conversating with settled cultivation.

From the aforesaid observation, it is clear that the Kutia Kondh have both constructive and destructive engagements with the environment, as well as, age-old forbearance for customs and tradition. Equally, the life in the forest, of late, is replete with a plethora of circumstantial discrepancies and crises cropped up from such dependency and dispositions, dangling the Kutia Kondh in a system of transformation. Due to the scarcity of adequate plain lands for cultivation, they can only think of using hill slopes for shifting cultivation, which is progressively being restricted. Kutia Kondhis conscious of their crises which are multiplying day by day. Obviously, the problem knocks at their doors and understandably they endeavor to overcome their problems in tandem with the age-old customs and traditions, evolved gingerly in a continuous process.

But in spite of this, it is very clear that Kutia Kondhare facing all kind of transitional teething troubles. On one hand, the older generations are very much connected and dependent on their traditional lifestyle, and on the other hand, young generations are very frustrated with their age-old spartan living conditions. And the present generation is in a dilemma, as they confront volatile and varied situations with multitudes of mindset with a modern age complexities, driven by market dynamics.

It is obvious that generation gaps will continue to exist as omnipresent across all societies, but to understand a particular society, at any given point of time, it is important to cogitate the past, present and future matrices. Again, a society's change or transformation from one stage to another is a continuous process. The life of the Kutia Kondh is no exceptions. Neither of the generations is worried to stick strictly to the traditional life, as they are busy with their daily hectic schedule to struggle for existence. Perhaps they are not even aware of the ensuring eventualities or, it is 'the others', who are creating more ambiguities,

blurring their understanding, with jargons like conservation, destruction, preservation and so on. Only they know how to live harmoniously. Analysing the Kutia Kondh's present situation, the transformation is always depicted as a reflection of a positive acquiescence. Hence, the transformation process is conveniently acceptable for Kutia Kondh since generations. It extends a unique reinforcement support to the struggle for existence. The following diagram will give a clear insight of the above deliberation.

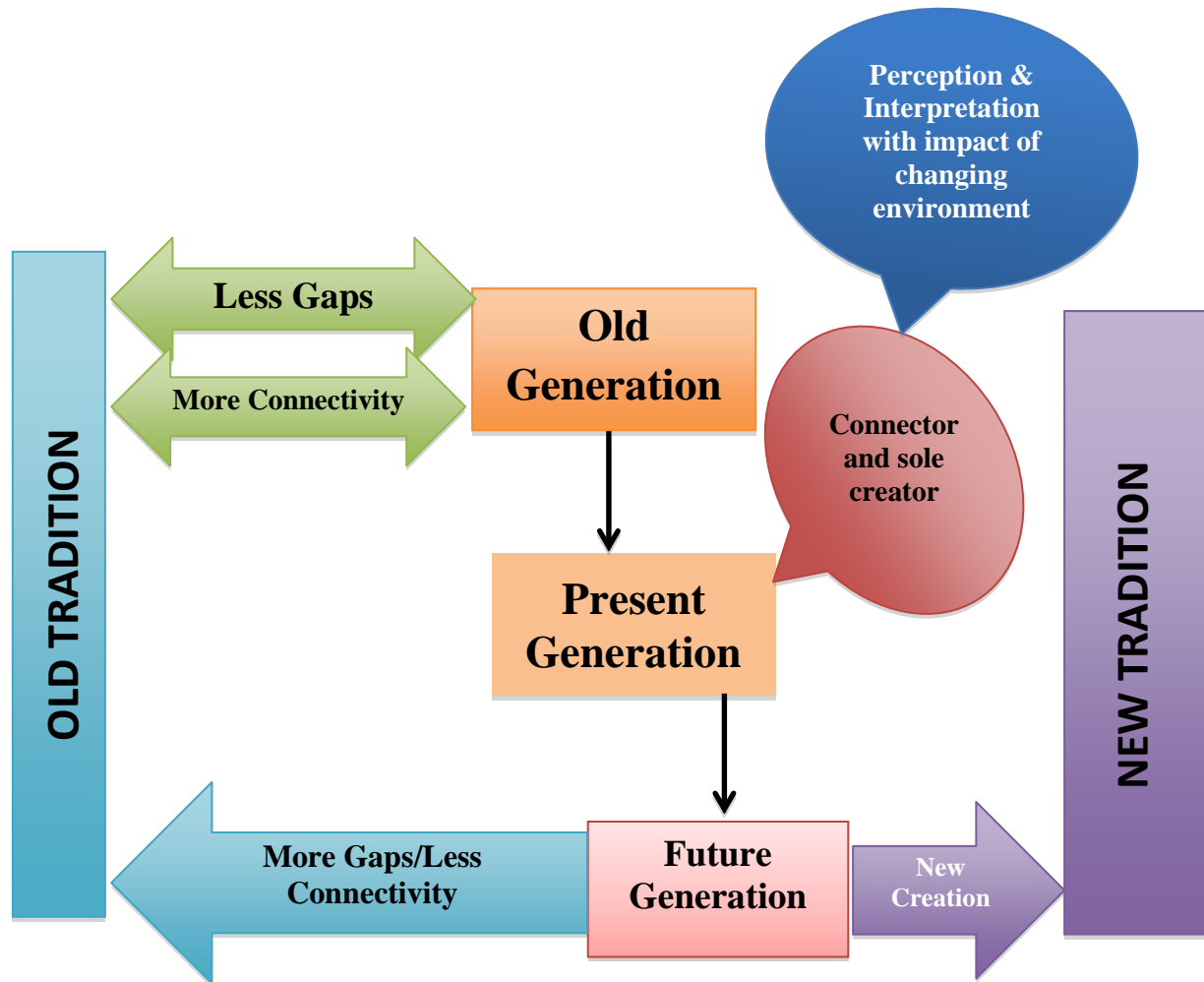


Figure- 6.1 Kutia Kondh's tradition-transformation process

In the above-said diagram, three aspects are more important, old tradition, new tradition, and the successors. Here successor represents the present generation and their connectivity with older tradition give a space to create a new tradition. The older generation has more connectivity with old tradition hence the gap is less between the generation and tradition. However in the descending generation the connectivity with the older tradition decreases and thus the gap increases. Thus, there is a chance to create a new tradition with the influence of external forces which creates a new perception and interpret things differently. Whereas the present generation is always in dilemma and in transition but plays a major role

while passing the old tradition. The situation which is faced by the present generation will reflect in the future generation.

CHAPTER- VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The result of the research venture into the changing socio-cultural aspects and livelihood patterns of the Kutia Kondh of Kandhamal district in Odisha describes detail descriptions purposively to understand the process of transformation in the Kutia Kondh's life. In the past, various remarkable studies were conducted, but none of them purposively focused on the changing aspects of Kutia Kondh. Furthermore, life in this primitive-modern continuum has undergone many transformations. Despite this, there are certain characteristic features which show remarkable persistence, especially in pursuing their patterns of livelihood, social institutions etc., although development initiatives influence the knowledge, attitude, and perception of the community, this has created a communication gap between elder and younger generation in the Kutia Kondh community. The older generation argues that the development programmes are addressed with a bias towards the market economy, ignoring their culture and traditional lifestyle. The younger generation finds itself easily influenced by these models and rush towards an easy cash-based economy. Young people fall prey to development programmes, gradually losing their traditional culture and traits. The younger generation, argues more in favour of the world-view of a developed society, one which would be possible if better income opportunities exist. So there is always a binary opposition existing between these two generations. Whereas the present generation always faces the transition, as this generation is the link between the elder generation and the younger generation. And the knowledge which they are gaining from their trial and error process they pass to their future generation which is an evolutionary process and subsequently waiting to face a new tradition. However, they have not completely transformed, rather one can see their traditional way of life along with their modern way of life within the society.

The Kutia Kondh constitute one of the sub-sections of the Kondh tribe of Odisha. They are found in a contiguous pocket comprising the Belghar area of Balliguda sub-division in Kandhamal district, Chandragiri area of Gunupur sub-division of Rayagada and Lanjigarh area of Kalahandi district. This present study concentrates on the Kutia Kondh of Burlubaru, Madalakuna and Dahabali hamlet of Belghar sub-division, Kandhamal district.

The Kutia Kondh, belonging to a simple society have their own elaborate historical mythological account of their ancestry, peoplehood and shared afate. This sense of

understanding and cultural self-image defines their degree or ethnic solidarity and often sets it apart from another non-tribal world which enclosed in it like the Pano.

The Kutia Kondh live in the small settlement. Their hamlets stand on the outskirts of forest and generally screened around by mountains. The clan organization plays an important role in their life and it determines the nature of the hamlet. It was a tradition that one particular clan group settle in a particular village, i.e. their settlements were uniclanshamlet but now they are multiclan hamlets. But now-a-days, it is observed that people belonging to two or three different clans have settled in one hamlet. Moreover, non-tribal communities like the Pano have built their separate dwelling at the outskirts or at the backside of the village. The family is the basic social unit of Kutia Kondh and it controls the social behaviour of its members and controls the use of the cultivated land in its possession. Generally, in the Kutia Kondh society, nuclear family type is predominant. Patrilineal extended families are also found, whereas the joint family system is almost nil.

A Kutia Kondh hamlet in the past was composed of family belonging to one lineage and clan. The villagers, therefore, formed a close-knit agnatic kin group and an individual had to look forward to the other members for cooperation and support for his very existence. Therefore, in case of any wrong done to him, it also affected his kinsmen. Then the kin group would rise together to retaliate or receive compensation. The role and functions of the village bonds perpetuate age-old customs and traditions by following the precedents of their forefathers. Any issue with a potential discord or dissension that cuts across kinship bonds had to be made besides conducting necessary rituals or ceremonies and feasting following the norms. This principle of reconciliation as necessitated by the preservation of kinship bonds when extended in a similar manner to the larger group comprising several lineages of one clan or more than one clan due to the democratic and the decentralized political system and institutions. But now-a-days, these kinship associations and institutions among the Kutia Kondh are gradually declining away and becoming weak. In the past, these institutions largely filled in the socio-cultural life of the people. Lineage, clan, youth dormitories, age-grades, age-set, shamanism, tribal council, village headman etc. fulfill many important functions which were so vital and crucial to the socio-cultural life of the people. These institutions have served and strengthened up to survive for thousand years. Neither there was a centralized sovereign power nor a written constitution to regulate the life of the people. The

nature of their customary laws can be comprehended on a certain basis. One of the bases lies in the principle behind the structure and function of their traditional village leaders.

With the passage of time, and with the gradual growth of population, thereby increasing number of lineages and formation of new clans, the preservation of kinship bonds along with the spirit of reconciliation always continued to dominate as the guiding principles of resolution of inter-personal relationships. Social integration in Kutia Kondh society was also maintained by an internal community authority structure based on tradition and customary laws. One of the significant characteristics of Kutia Kondh customary rules and practices is that it is not very rigid for all time to come. It changes with time to meet the requirements of the society to remain valid. But now-a-days, a new type of consciousness has been created, like gram sabha, village panchayat, *Panchayat Samiti* etc. These are constituted through an electoral system. In the village politics, the traditional leaders feel in their duty to cooperate with modern leaders' i.e. ward member, sarpanch, *Panchayat Samiti* chairman, M.L.A., and M.P., in the planning and executing the development programmes. The new leader of younger generation accepts the new policies and programmes and explains the same to the elder to enlist their support and advice. They take part in the elections to elect their leaders. Despite all these, most of the traditions by which they have preserved and upheld their 'group identity' against the tide of modern changes.

The divine power has been identified by the Kutia Kondh with a group of powerful deities and spirits which control and influence the way of life of individuals as well as the community. All these deities and spirits control and influence the way of life of individuals as well as the community. Some deities are held responsible for illness, misfortune and unusual happening in the village. They believed that the spirits live in native hills, forests, streams and inside their dwellings and their number increases by the additions of the dead ancestors or the death of persons. In fact, the Kutia Kondh appropriate nature through their cultural tradition. Their religious culture emphasizes the supreme power of gods (*penu*) manifested in various parts of the landscape. The landscape in its entirety is called *dharani*, while the components or fragments of that landscape, such as the settlement sites and the cultivation areas are identified by their own names and by their own *penus*, which are fragmentation of the paramount *dharanipenu*. The *penu* refers to nature as a whole and society are known as *grudu*. Nature is seen as a combination of different landscapes associated with different

penuni. Being a forest dwelling community, the Kutia Kondh have developed strong social and spiritual bond with terraqueous forest regarding them as their brothers and ancestors.

However, in the passage of time, the marked transformation is not noticeable in the Kutia Kondh rituals and customs. They do not consider themselves as Hindus, nor easily accept any other religious ideas. Though they show an inclination towards the Hindu religion, they do not like to embrace it. Christian missionaries are already keen in their attempt to convert Kutia Kondh into their own religion, but they have not been successful in their missions so far. Rather Hindu ideals especially the Panos have crept into their culture on account of their proximity to the Hindu religious beliefs.

The Kutia Kondh pursue many occupations, they are still in the stage of food gathering, collecting and shifting cultivation. They continue to go around pre-agricultural technology. They solely depend on the adjoining forests for their food and other requirements, and their requirements are very simple and minimal. In the past, their economy completely moved around the forest and forest resources. They still continue to subsist exclusively on gathering, shifting cultivation, simple settled cultivation and sometimes fishing. They live the life of 'natural man'; considering their forest clad habitat, which is a perennial source of food and other requirements. Kutia Kondh have their own indigenous way of choosing food items from nature as they have their own methods of food production. Of course, food production is related to the value system, customs, and cultural habits of the Kutia Kondh. Their choices in the food system are regulated by their own categorization of food and non-food within the scope of their environment and local availability. They used to glean from the forest a large variety of edible, commercial and industrial raw materials, namely, honey, fruits, nuts, roots, tubers, green leaves, arrowroot, mushrooms, flowers, creepers, herbal, medicines, *sal* resin, lac, cocoons, palm juice, *salap* juice, toddy, meats, fish etc..

Forest collection, fishing, and hunting have sharply declined in recent years. Firstly, because forest areas have been reduced with the recuperation of forest for agricultural and settlement purposes while pressure on forest has increased several folds with the rapid growth of population. Secondly, in the past, they used to depend on the forest and used to exploit resources almost exclusively for their sustenance because they lived within or in the proximity of forest. But, the outer world have been exerting more pressure on the forest for commercial reasons. Thirdly, their traditional rights over all the forest in their habitat have

been abolished with executive measures and finally, control and management of forest have been taken over by the concerned State Government. All these incidents connote encroachment upon the traditional rights and sources of food and other needs of the tribal people who have no alternative source to depend upon for survival. Without substantial changes in the environment, Kutia Kondh is not likely to modify their traditional mode of living in few decades. Depletion of forest resource on the one hand and imposition of restrictions on the use of existing forest on the other have brought miseries to the life of Kutia Kondh. They feel that they are being systematically deprived of the rich natural resources, which are part of their ecosystem, by corrupt money lenders, land grabbers, and state agencies.

The relationship of Kutia Kondh with nature is, however, assessed critically. The swiddening practice of the tribe ignites arguments in which they are accused of being destroyers of nature and environment. But the tribe gives special value to this traditional form of dependence of shifting cultivation. It is culturally valued and topographically appropriate. For the Kutia Kondh, swiddening is a sound subsistence practice as there is no risk of total crop failure. Even if drought or excessive rainfall occurs the crops ripen at various intervals of time, not all at once. Furthermore, they calculate their labour input and productivity according to this system. When productivity decreases in relation to the labour input, they shift to another plot, thus ensuring a period of fallow till the fertility of the soil is regained. Swiddening produces both cash and subsistence crops and provides them with a minimum security. As an alternative to swiddening, agriculture in the plains is not rewarding as far as the subsistence requirement for the whole year is concerned. There is very little land available to the Kutia Kondh in the plain as most of the available land is in non-tribal possession. They, therefore, restrict themselves to rain-fed paddy cultivation in the low lands once in a year. Lowland paddy cultivation is prepared as a non-viable livelihood option, as the traditional crop varieties cannot be grown there. This means a risk to their livelihood earnings. The per capita low land holding is so small that they cannot countenance maintaining a family on the basis of the small yield from low land.

Kutia Kondh culture is fast changing now-a-days, because of contact with the culture of the aliens and their different ways of life. The process has been continuing for quite a long time, and as facilities for communication have improved, the isolation of their hamlets has been diluted. Constant interactions with non-tribal castes in the hamlets, the growth of

education, the growth of modern infrastructure in the interior tribal regions, the work of various missionaries as well as the growth of political consciousness have brought about a great change in the life and livelihood of the Kutia Kondh in this area. Administrative agencies, forest officials, traders, money-lenders and contractors aid and add further stimulus to culture change. In the past few years, enormous changes have occurred among the Kutia Kondh.

It is erroneous to analyze the cause and effect relationship in a dynamic process, where changes brought out by different agencies did not always prove to be successful. As, in one place, where urbanism was sought to be assessed, schooleducation could not be left out. The impact of tribal markets, non-tribal Hindu castes (Pano) living side by side with the tribals for generations in their own hamlets could not be minimized. Before the implementation of Community Development (CD) projects, these non-tribal Hindus provided a most effective means of cultural contact through which they maintained a lively relationship not only with their kin in other villages but also in distant settlements.

The Kutia Kondh response to the increasing effects of these factors of changes is visible through their changing lifestyle, livelihood patterns, material culture, social and economic relations, political organizations, beliefs, rituals, and practices etc. Such changes have been focused in the present study at suitable chapters. In the following paragraphs, the different factors of change such as education, urbanization, Community Development programmes etc. will be discussed which affects the Kutia Kondh way of life.

Education has made rapid strides since independence. Education was confined to very few Kutia Kondh. Now there are numbers of schools run by the government, one high standard education complex and moreover, every village has an Anganwadi center. The light of learning also touches Kutia Kondh girls. They are also taking to education in a big way. The process has been accelerated by the opening of separate schools with hostel facilities for both boys and girls, and by the provision of scholarship for all tribals at the school level. And along with this, free food and study materials are the added boost for the acceleration of the education among the Kutia Kondh. Education enables farmers to be geographically mobile, and once they move out of their secluded habitat and get an urban exposure, they try to stick to the urban way of life. This generally leads to their occupational mobility. (see also Sachchidananda 1979)

Development Agencies were conceived as a co-operative partnership linkage between the farmers and the government for an all-round development of the community. In the Kutia Kondh area Development Agency has done a lot to improve the farmer's way of life. It was started in the selected areas during 1978-79 to develop many aspects like agriculture, animal husbandry, education, rural cottage industries, health, and sanitation as well as welfare measures for the women and children. Development Agency affects farmers' lifestyle and ways of thinking in a substantial measure.

With regard to cultivation, the Kutia Kondh do not like to be involved much with agriculture as they did in the past, due to the supply of rice by the government at a very low price (Rs. 1/- per Kg.). Evidently, modern youth has not learnt the art of preparing agricultural field, tools, implements etc. The use of improved seed and chemical fertilizer increases the dependency on outsiders. Earlier Kutia Kondh used to depend upon their own resources in agricultural operations. Now-a-days they have increased dependency upon outsiders as their demands are increasing. Previously when Kutia Kondh were short of credit they got it from moneylenders. Now for loans, they approach the co-operative societies, rural banks or Self Help Groups (SHG).

Therefore, modernization has significantly influenced Kutia Kondh and their culture. It has brought tangible and intangible changes to their lifestyles, attitudes, perceptions, and worldview. On the one hand, these changes may be seen as trends towards development, on the other hand, such changes pose a threat to their traditional patterns and paradigms. Over the last couple of years, the Kutia Kondh have been brought under the scope of development through holistic and sector approaches. While such development initiatives primarily address their economic development, their cultural development is ignored entirely or dealt very superficially.

Significant political and economic changes are taking place in the Kutia Kondh world. New technologies in agriculture, family planning, health, irrigation projects and Tribal-Sub-Plan, the Panchayati-Raj system of political decentralization and participation have come into their area. They no longer remain geographically or socially exclusive. On one hand there is a discernible vested interest in the maintenance of an exclusive sense of identity and on the other hand there is a growing awareness that the new political and economic system alone can bring in the benefits of economic development, such as road, drinking water wells, modernized agriculture, school, dispensaries, co-operative societies, rural banks, and extension

worker engaged in the task of development. There are the traditional, often hereditary leaders, the old-world elites who despite their declining authority in the present political context, still hold a way over the minds of the people. There are again the modern political leaders, the ward members etc. who have access to the new world of development through community development blocks, intensive development programmes, development agency, and integrated tribal development programmes.

Development as modernization has set in motion the occupational mobility of the Kutia Kondh. The occupational mobility may be seen as a move from forest to market, from tradition to modernity, from exclusive subsistence earning to marginal cash income. The younger generations have been showing greater interest in prioritizing alternative source of income, considered better than gathering forest produces and shifting cultivation, in one way or other. Wage-earning is one of the occupation Kutia Kondh younger generations are inclined towards, for which they are not even hesitating to leave their homeland. The younger generation, in particular, has taken up the jobs in road & building construction, mining, bridge construction etc, whenever an opportunity is available in their areas or outside. Their participation in different occupational earning tends to lead to many attitudinal changes and also changes in their lifestyle. These changing occupational earning sometimes seen as an employment opportunity and sometimes as a crisis management actions. Whereas these type of work has not affected the girl much, as they are more burdened with household work in comparison with young boys (see also Chapter-V). While young girls are less affected by this change, it has a tremendous impact on the boys. Since they are content to work outside, there is a scarceness of youth persons in the daily swidden works, community participation etc.

Thus the Kutia Kondh are definitely in a transitional stage in between tradition and modernity. There are existing traditions in education, agriculture, health practice which are anchored to the old value system on which the modern processes of growth and the new technology impinge. Sometimes there is the difficult task of integrating the old and the new, the tradition and the modern, in different fields of personal and social life. However, the Kutia Kondh society is face to face with two worlds. The innate supernatural and the matter-of-fact rational; the mythological yesterday's tradition and the real to-day with its degradation and poverty; ethnic understanding of the different system of thoughts and belief linked to socio-economic discontinuities. So, such problems are unavoidable in a society undergoing rapid transformation. That, however, generates an attitude of ambivalence both towards

tradition and the modernization process, which again influence the knowledge, attitude, perception, and interpretation of the community.

Today, it is evident from the study that, Kutia Kondh society is undergoing serious transformation due to the impact of certain foreign agencies, changing circumstances, and new socio-political developments etc. which make them give up their age-old traditions and accept new ideas. In addition, there is a spontaneous exchange of human resources, science, and technologies, art, culture, religion etc. With the march of time, and development taking place, transformation in the society, its norms, and values are bound to occur. The younger generation is becoming more conscious of their rights, benefits, and privileges. The changes in the outlook and policy of the Government have brought the Kutia Kondh society closer to the mainstream of rest of the nation and their mindset broadened for acceptance of new ideas.

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Glossary

<i>Aba</i>	-	Sister-in-law
<i>Abba</i>	-	Father/ Head of the family/Father-in-law
<i>Adu</i>	-	Women
<i>Aji</i>	-	Maternal Grand mother
<i>Aku</i>	-	Maternal grand father
<i>Ali</i>	-	Bear
<i>Ana/Keri</i>	-	Hill slope
<i>Andhar jum jum</i>	-	Dusk
<i>Appu</i>	-	Younger brother
<i>Appi</i>	-	Younger sister/ Younger brother's wife
<i>Awa</i>	-	Elder brother's wife
<i>Badagiri</i>	-	Courtyard path
<i>Bagada</i>	-	Clear patch of forest for cultivation
<i>Basa</i>	-	Gathering
<i>Batang</i>	-	Courtyard
<i>Bati</i>	-	Dense forest
<i>Beta</i>	-	Hunting
<i>Bhunjanga</i>	-	Malevolent
<i>Bicha</i>	-	Seed
<i>Bicha Supeinere</i>	-	Crop sowing
<i>Badbinere</i>	-	Farewell festival
<i>Bidi</i>	-	Cooked rice
<i>Biha katina</i>	-	Mariah Festival
<i>Burlanga</i>	-	Bamboo container
<i>Capta</i>	-	Waist wrap of women
<i>Chasa</i>	-	Cultivation

<i>Dadanga</i>	-	Ear ring
<i>Danda</i>	-	Gentle slope
<i>Dangar</i>	-	Terrain
<i>Dakina</i>	-	Worship
<i>Dapakandi</i>	-	Processing of seed at household level
<i>Daru itina</i>	-	Name giving ceremony
<i>Dasah</i>	-	Death ritual
<i>Deranji</i>	-	Old man
<i>Deta</i>	-	Rabbit
<i>Dhangada</i>	-	Young unmarried male folk
<i>Dhangadi</i>	-	Young unmarried female folk
<i>Dharani</i>	-	Earth
<i>Dhuan bada</i>	-	Narcotics
<i>Doali</i>	-	Epilepsy
<i>Dua</i>	-	Refreshment
<i>Duma</i>	-	Male spirit
<i>Dukeli</i>	-	Female spirit
<i>Dussera kandanga dakina</i>	-	Dassera sword worship
<i>Dutali</i>	-	Paternal/maternal Grand mother
<i>Dutanja</i>	-	Grand father
<i>Eea</i>	-	Mother/ Mother-in-law
<i>Eji penu/Gangi penu</i>	-	God associated with water
<i>Gada</i>	-	Hole
<i>Gambar mara</i>	-	Comb
<i>Gani</i>	-	Song
<i>Gauat/ Madeni</i>	-	Forenoon
<i>Goda</i>	-	Horse

<i>Gudakhu</i>	-	Tobacco paste
<i>Guisata</i>	-	Marriage by elopement
<i>Gunjare</i>	-	Surrounding
<i>Ilu/Elu</i>	-	Hut
<i>Ita utimena</i>	-	germination of seed
<i>Jaka aate</i>	-	Menarche
<i>Jaka kuda</i>	-	Back side of hut/Menstruation hut
<i>Janiadu</i>	-	Women married in Jani group
<i>Jani</i>	-	Village Prist
<i>Japi</i>	-	Beads
<i>Jendabenja- Kadenja</i>	-	Referring to ancestor
<i>Kadarka/Kodivanang/Japisaka</i>	-	Waist bands
<i>Kadeli</i>	-	Four poster
<i>Kadi</i>	-	Cattle
<i>Kadibasa</i>	-	Cattle shade
<i>Kagada</i>	-	Necklet
<i>Kagdang</i>	-	Well decorated necklace
<i>Kajugnepata</i>	-	Dawn
<i>Kaju mudi</i>	-	Finger ring
<i>Kaki</i>	-	Paternal/maternal aunt
<i>Kaku</i>	-	Father's younger brother
<i>Kali</i>	-	Homemade cigar
<i>Kalu</i>	-	Festival
<i>Kalumudi</i>	-	Toe ring
<i>Kama/Kanu</i>	-	Buffalo
<i>Kambani</i>	-	Dense Forest area
<i>Kandamula</i>	-	Roots

<i>Kantha</i>	-	Bedding made from old and ragged cloths
<i>Kapada bini</i>	-	Head band
<i>Kapoli</i>	-	Hair bun
<i>Katul</i>	-	Liquor made from millet granules
<i>Katariang</i>	-	Anklet
<i>Kdani</i>	-	Tiger
<i>Key kichadaka</i>	-	20-30 rings for ear lobes
<i>Keri</i>	-	Stiff slope path
<i>Khaparli</i>	-	Roof tiles
<i>Kida</i>	-	Insect/ pest
<i>Kokei</i>	-	Bier
<i>Konda</i>	-	Low hill
<i>Kuda/ Baishaka</i>	-	April-May time
<i>Kudua</i>	-	Bride
<i>Kuenja</i>	-	Male folk
<i>Kueri</i>	-	Millet granules
<i>Kuianka</i>	-	Total kutia kondh community
<i>Kui</i>	-	Language
<i>Kuiladu</i>	-	Female folk
<i>Kulinga</i>	-	Paddy
<i>Kulipiri</i>	-	Hay
<i>Kurumunda</i>	-	<i>Meriah</i> Sacrificial pole
<i>Kutak</i>	-	Shaman/Medicine man/astrologer/ wizard
<i>Kutti</i>	-	Hut/ hole
<i>Kutto</i>	-	Mountain
<i>La-angi</i>	-	Night
<i>Laesi</i>	-	Morning

<i>Lanju</i>	-	Month
<i>Limta</i>	-	Loin cloth for lower part of body
<i>Linga</i>	-	Male penis
<i>Maane</i>	-	Manpower
<i>Mada</i>	-	Palm wine (toddy)
<i>Madangbasa</i>	-	Place where people sit together to drink liquor
<i>Mahuli</i>	-	Liquor made from <i>Madhuka longifolia</i>
<i>Majhi</i>	-	Village head
<i>Mala</i>	-	Fire
<i>Mama</i>	-	Maternal uncle
<i>Mamali</i>	-	Menstrual
<i>Mande</i>	-	Finger millet
<i>Mara</i>	-	Tree
<i>Maju</i>	-	Sambar
<i>Mehanangani budhi</i>	-	Happening around them
<i>Melu</i>	-	Peacock
<i>Michulani</i>	-	Sororate marriage
<i>Midpasidi</i>	-	Levirate marriage
<i>Mileni</i>	-	Evening
<i>Mileni weda</i>	-	Afternoon
<i>Morang</i>	-	Low land
<i>Mungeli Mundi</i>	-	Nose ring
<i>Mungeli Dundi</i>	-	Septum ring
<i>Muthadar</i>	-	Function of <i>Muthahead</i>
<i>Muthahead</i>	-	Traditional Political head
<i>Naju</i>	-	Settlement
<i>Nana</i>	-	Elder sister

<i>Nasa</i>	-	Dry tobacco leaf powder
<i>Nati</i>	-	Grandson
<i>Nehisapa itina</i>	-	Preservation
<i>Nellang /Nella</i>	-	Swidden plot
<i>Nerandali</i>	-	Supreme goddesses
<i>Neri</i>	-	Blood
<i>Nia</i>	-	Sacrifice
<i>Ninieani/nipandi</i>	-	Conservation
<i>Padani</i>	-	Universe
<i>Padasi</i>	-	Fruit
<i>Pajang</i>	-	Bangles
<i>Paji</i>	-	Pig
<i>Panga</i>	-	Sloped path
<i>Pano</i>	-	Non-tribal neighbours
<i>Peja</i>	-	Finger millet gruel
<i>Penka</i>	-	Seeds as the output/ sprout
<i>Pemba</i>	-	Father's elder brother
<i>Penu</i>	-	God
<i>Penuni</i>	-	Gods
<i>Piching</i>	-	Wall design engraved by finger
<i>Piju</i>	-	Rain
<i>Podha</i>	-	Buffalo for sacrifice
<i>Podu chasa</i>	-	Slash and burn cultivation
<i>Pranga</i>	-	Raw rice
<i>Pujumara</i>	-	<i>Mahula</i> seeds and flowers
<i>Puni</i>	-	New moon/ Full moon
<i>Punikalu</i>	-	Full moon/ New moon festival

<i>Putti</i>	-	Grand daughter
<i>Raja</i>	-	King
<i>Rani</i>	-	Queen
<i>Rupanga saka</i>	-	Necklace made from coins
<i>Sahukar</i>	-	Trader
<i>Salap toddy</i>	-	Juice of Salap tree
<i>Samdhi</i>	-	Son's father calls his father-in-law
<i>Sapa itina</i>	-	Seeds stored
<i>Sapan</i>	-	Birth
<i>Sapangada</i>	-	Holy grail
<i>Sargi mara</i>	-	Sal seed
<i>Saska</i>	-	Necklace made from beads
<i>Satranga</i>	-	Broom grass
<i>Sedi</i>	-	Marriage/ Marriage by negotiation
<i>Semul</i>	-	Pole worship during name giving ceremony
<i>Sindhi</i>	-	Outer boundary of the settlement area
<i>Sipalu Aku</i>	-	Lamp flame
<i>Sitadi</i>	-	Deer
<i>Soru nede</i>	-	Lower middle hill/ swidden area
<i>Soru panga</i>	-	Foot hill area/ little higher than Wanga
<i>Soru tude</i>	-	Middle hill area
<i>Soru</i>	-	Hill
<i>Tada</i>	-	Elder brother
<i>Tadekena</i>	-	Midnight
<i>Tadra kaju</i>	-	Cock
<i>Taka</i>	-	Mango
<i>Tali</i>	-	Son/daughter's mother

<i>Tanji</i>	-	Son/daughter's father
<i>Tapari</i>	-	Homemade cigar
<i>Tatanja</i>	-	Marriage by capture
<i>Tikanga</i>	-	Tattoo marks on the face
<i>Toduta</i>	-	Creatrix
<i>Tolo</i>	-	Oil extract out from <i>Madhuka longifolia</i>
<i>Topodipa</i>	-	First Loin cloth
<i>Uira</i>	-	Soil
<i>Urmali</i>	-	Waist wrap of women
<i>Wango</i>	-	Cultivation field
<i>Wango Dropondi</i>	-	Preparation of swidden plot
<i>Wani</i>	-	Sky
<i>Weda</i>	-	Sun
<i>Widi</i>	-	Wind
<i>Zira</i>	-	Saree

Myth regarding Kutia Kondh:

In spite of all the dissertations and observations, the hard fact remains that, all the research and studies conducted so far, are almost unanimous in their observations that Kutia Kondh women are exclusively identifiable by their tattoos, which according to this study, proves to be a fallacy. All the Kutia Kondh encountered with, were seen sans such tattoos.

Not a single Kutia Kondh women of Kandhamal district, resort to such geometrical facial tattoos ever rather it is known that, the Panga Kondh and the Desia Kondh, who are residing in the plain areas or foot hills are amenable to this type of elaborate tattoos, especially as a means to camouflage/mask and protect their women from the outsiders sexploitation either under pressure or under coercion.

Points to Ponder:

Is it possible, all the researchers so far, had interacted only with the Panga Kondh and Desia Kondh settled in the sans venturing into the sequestered isolated hutments of Kutia Kondh, remotely located at inaccessible eerie pockets of hilly highlanders, compounded by their cannibalistic practices of *Meriah* sacrificial ritual, and opting for discretion as the better part of valour, lest to end with Rockefeller's fate of 'New Guinea tribal research study (1961)', all the erudite scholars are continuing to project Panga Kondh and Desia Kondh as Kutia Kondh since till date.

This study reveals some more interesting paradoxes:

- i. Kutia Kondh facial features are more sharp and chiseled than Panga Kondh and Desia Kondh.
- ii. Kutia Kondh are fairer in complexion, compared to Panga and Desia Kondh.
- iii. Kutia Kondh treasure trove of onomatopoeic expertise is an auto-magical illustration, to be believed, and deserves intensive research to unravel the mystery of feral linguistics, evolved over the ages, and meticulously passed on to succeeding generations.
- iv. All the so called photographs in the print media and electronics media (internet) doing the rounds as that of Kutia Kondh women (facial tattooed), are authentically negated

not only by the local Kutia Kondh women folks, but also by authoritative scholarly academician, Paramananda Patel, Ph. D. (Mundari), Research Officer (Retd.), Academy of Tribal Languages and Culture, Unit-I, Adivasi Exhibition Ground, Bhubaneswar-751009, Odisha.

In view of the points enumerated above, further studies are required essentially to set right the ambiguous notion regarding the Kutia Kondh, in proper perspective for posterity.

Appendix II

Demography of 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Odisha (2015):

Name of PTGs/ Micro Projects/ Establishment Year	Geo. Area (Sq. Km.)	Density of Population (per Sq. Km.)	Average Household Size	Population			Sex Ratio	literacy		
				Total	Male	Female		Total	Male	Female
Bonda. Bonda Development Agency, Mudulipada, Malkangiri. 1976-77	130	51	4	6676	3092	3584	1159	14.10	19.60	8.98
Dongaria Kondh Dongaria Kondh Development Agency, Kurli, Chatikona, Gunpur, Rayagada 1978-79	115	54	4	6264	2656	3608	1358	33.68	46.57	23.42
Kutia Kondh Kutia Kondh Development Agency, Belghar, Baliguda, Kandhamal 1978-79	300	20	5	5953	2800	3153	1126	34.31	44.48	22.42
Lanjia Saora Lanjia Saora Development Agency, Seranga, Paralakhemundi, Gajapati 1978-79	30	185	4	5553	1775	1778	1001	33.19	42.41	23.86
Saora Tumba Development Agency, Tumba, Ganjam 1978-79	28.49	151	4	4315	2152	2163	1005	38.36	42.58	34.16
Saora Saora Development Agency, Chandragiri, Paralakhemundi, Gajapati 1978-79	11.59	479	5	5553	2858	2695	943	48.00	53.00	42.58
Paudi Bhuyan Paudi Bhuyan Development Agency. Jamardihi, Pallahar, Anugul 1978-79	188	31	4	5823	2950	2873	974	38.82	47.39	30.00

Paudi Bhuyan Paudi Bhuyan Development Agency. Khutgaon, Bonai, Sundergarh 1978-79	174.77	24	4	4126	2060	2066	1003	18.03	23.68	12.39
Juang Juang Development Agency, Gonasika, Keonjhar 1978-79	641.44	13	5	8592	4196	4396	1047	29.75	40.62	17.52
Kutia Kondh Kutia Kondh Development Agency, Lanjigarh, Th. Rampur, Kalahandi 1978-79	17.50	153	4	2683	1357	1326	977	39.80	53.72	25.56
Lanjia Saora Lanjia Saora Development Agency, Puttasing, Gunpur, Rayagada 1984-85	35	179	6	6267	2927	3340	1141	51.81	63.26	41.52
Didayi Didayi Development Agency, Bayapada, Malkangiri 1986-87	250	27	4	7250	3394	3856	1136	20.67	25.09	16.75
Dongaria Kondh Dongaria Kondh Development Agency, Parsali, Rayagada 1987-89	50.35	51	4	2584	1105	1479	1338	25.78	33.42	20.16
Lodha Lodha Development Agency, Moroda, Mayurbhanj 1985-86	25.23	123	3	3112	1591	1521	956	26.03	31.02	20.18
Hill Kharia- Mankadia- Birhor Hill Khadia & Mankadia Development Agency, Jashipur, Karanjia, Mayurbhanj 1986-87	129.78	16	3	2111	1060	1051	991	42.41	47.66	36.41
Paudi Bhuyan Paudi Bhuyan Development Agency, Rugudakudar, Deogarh	108.79	35	4	3830	1889	1941	1027	25.61	29.54	21.79

1993-94										
Chuktia Bhunjia Chuktia Bhunjia Development Agency, Sonabeda, Nuapada 1994-95	150	16	4	2378	1220	1158	949	52.98	62.54	42.91

Particularly vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) of Odisha

As per the census 2011, the state of Odisha has the third highest percentage of tribal population in the country, which stands at 95,90,756. The State has the unique distinction of having 62 different tribal communities, spread over 30 districts and 314 blocks. They constitute 22.85 percentage of the total population of the state and contribute 9.17 to the total tribal population of the country.

Among the hundreds of the tribal communities, living across the length and breadth of the country, there are some groups who are relatively more isolated, archaic, vulnerable, deprived and backward. These tribal groups are the most disadvantaged among the tribals. They live in small scattered habitats in remote, inaccessible areas. Their livelihoods are especially vulnerable because over the years, the more dominant tribal and non-tribal groups have encroached upon the resources which are generally controlled and accessed for their survival (Ota and Mohanty 2016:303-315) Out of the 62 tribals, 13 tribal communities have been identified as Primitive vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) based on certain characteristics such as:

- 1) Pre-agricultural technology,
- 2) Low level of literacy,
- 3) Stagnant or diminishing population
- 4) Low level of techno-economy

i.e., subsistence level of economy associated with pre agricultural stage of hunting, foods gathering and shifting cultivation. (Patnaik 2005). Their material requirements are met from plants, animals etc. Considering orthodox technological simplicity, the quantities harvested for consumption are confined to subsistence level. They have been seen to be strongly associated with the forest, hills and remote areas, practising a unique lifestyle, having a unique set of culture and religious beliefs.

Odisha has the largest number of PTGs i.e. 13 among the States and Union Territories of India. They are Birhor, Bonda, Chukutia Bhunjia, Didayi, Dongaria Kondh, Hill Kharia, Juang, Kuttia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan, and Saora. These PTGs were identified in Odisha during different plan periods starting from the 5th Plan Period (1974-79) to the 8th Plan Period (1992-97) as shown in the following table:

List of PTGs identified in Different Plan Periods in Odisha

Five Year Plan	PTG
5 th (1974-78)	Bonda
Plan Holiday (1978-80)	Dongria Kondh, Juang, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Paudi Bhuyan, Saora,
6 th (1980-85)	Lanjia Saora
7 th (1985-90)	Birhor, Didayi, Dongria Kondh, Hill-Kharia, Kutia Kondh, Lodha, Mankirdia
8 th (1992-97)	Chuktia Bhunjia, Paudi Bhuyan,

(Source: 2016 *Demographic Profile of Scheduled Tribes in Odisha*. Bhubaneswar: SCSTRTI)

District Wise Distribution of PTGs in Odisha:

Name of the Districts	Name of the PTGs
Angul	Paudi Bhuyan
Deogarh	Paudi Bhuyan
Gajapati	Lanjia Saora and Saora
Ganjam	Saora
Kalahandi	Kitia Kondh
Keonjhar	Juang
Kondhamal	Kutia Kondh
Malkangiri	Bonda and Didayi
Mayurbhanj	Lodha, Hill Kharia, Mankirdia and Birhor
Nuapada	Chuktia Bhunjia
Rayagada	Dongria Kondh and Lanjia Saora
Sundergarh	Paudi Bhuyan

(Source: 2016 *Demographic Profile of Scheduled Tribes in Odisha*. Bhubaneswar: SCSTRTI)

Geo- Physical Zones Wise Distribution of PTGs:

Odisha has four distinct geo-physical zones, such as:

- i) Northern Plateau or low lands (covering 25% of the State's area)
- ii) Central Table Land (23%),
- iii) Eastern Ghats or uplands (34%) and
- iv) Coastal Tract (18%).

The Northern Plateau and Eastern Ghats Regions occupying 59% of the total area of the state are highly concentrated with tribal population including the 13 PTGs. Out of 13 PTGs, 6 PTGs such as Birhor, Mankirdia, Hill Kharia, Juang, Lodha and Paudi Bhuyan are located in the Northern Plateau, the remaining 7 PTGs such as Bonda, Didayi, Chuktia Bhunjia, Dongaria Kondh, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, and Saora reside in the Eastern Ghat Region of the State.

In TSP and Non-TSP Areas:

The analysis of the PTGs on the basis of their distribution in Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) and Non-TSP areas reveals that only one PTG namely Chuktia Bhunjia reside in Non-TSP and two PTGs namely Paudi Bhuyan and Saora inhabit in both TSP and Non-TSP areas and the remaining 10 PTGs are found in TSP areas. When the State is taken as a whole, the PTGs are observed to be distributed in 541 villages covering 84 GPs, 20 Blocks, 10 ITDAs and 12 districts as per the Mid Term Evaluation conducted by SCSTRTI, Bhubaneswar in 2009-10.

Ethno-Linguistic Identity:

The PTGs of Odisha are distributed ethno linguistically into three linguistic groups, such as, Austro-Asiatic, Dravidian and Indo-Aryan.

Linguistic Group	Ethnic Speakers
Austro-Asiatic	Birhor, Bondo, Didayi, Hill Kharia, Juang, Lanjia Saora, Mankirdia, Saora
Dravidian	Chuktia Bhunjia, Dongaria Kondh, Kutia Kondh
Indo-Aryan	Lodha, Paudi Bhuyan

(Source: 2016 *Demographic Profile of Scheduled Tribes in Odisha*. Bhubaneswar: SCSTRTI)

Techno-Economic Stages of PTGs:

The tribes of Odisha are at various stages of techno-economic development. On one side the groups depending upon the collection and hunting in forest, while on the other side, groups which are distinguishable from the general rural communities.

Distribution of PTGs according to Techno-Economic Stages:

Techno-Economic Stage	Name of the PTGs
Hunter-Gatherers	Birhor, Hill-Kharia, Mankirdia
Shifting Cultivators	Bonda, Didayi, Dongaria Kondh, Juang, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Paudi Bhuyan, Saora
Terrace Cultivation	Lanjia Saora, Saora
Settled Cultivators	Chuktia Bhunjia, Lodha

(Source: 2016 *Demographic Profile of Scheduled Tribes in Odisha*. Bhubaneswar: SCSTRTI)

Occupation:

As per the Mid Term Evaluation conducted by SCSTRTI, Bhubaneswar during 2009-10 and 2007, it was observed that the main occupations of PTGs are agriculture, horticulture, shifting cultivation, forest produces collection, food gathering, fishing, wage earning, small business etc., but it is seen that most of the PTGs like Bonda, Didayi, Dongaria Kondh, Kutia Kondh, Paudi Bhuyan and Saora are dependent upon shifting cultivation. PTGs like Hill-Kharia, Mankirdia, Lodha, Saora, Kutia Kondh and Paudi Bhuyan are dependent on forest

produces collection and hunting. Two PTGs such as Saora and Lanjia Saora practise terrace cultivation as well as the shifting cultivation. A good number of PTGs depend on land and forest for their livelihood. The Birhor and Mankirdia are semi-nomadic monkey trainers and Hill Kharias collect honey, arrowroot and other minor forest produces for their survival. Now-a-days most of the PTGs have preferred settled cultivation rather than shifting cultivation. The PTGs like Dongaria Kondh are adept horticulturalists and supplement their livelihood by forest produce collection. Average size of land holding per household is less than 2.00 acres.

Establishment of Micro Projects:

During fifth five year plan, government of India decided to implement specific development programmes focused on the all-round development of the primitive tribes to integrate them with the mainstream of society and enhance their social and economic status. With this view, the micro project approach was introduced in the country in the year 1975-76 with a goal to make all round development through multi-sectoral, socio-economic programmes meant for a small group of people in a limited area. In Odisha there are 17 micro projects functioning for 13 PTGs identified from time to time. Out of 17 micro projects, 4 are found outside the TSP area and 13 are within the TSP area. The first micro project was established for the Bonda Development Agency (BDA) and the latest one was Chuktia Bhunjia Development Agency in Sunabeda of Nuapada district established during 1994-95 in the 8th Plan period.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Plate 1: Kutia Kondh male folk with traditional musical instruments



Plate 2: Kutia Kondh male folk with hunting equipment



Plate 3: Kutia Kondh male folk preparing traditional liquor



Plate 4: Kutia Kondh women folk in their traditional outfit



Plate 5: Dahabali hamlet at a glance



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SYNOPSIS OF THE PH. D. THESIS

Title of the Thesis

**CHANGING SOCIO-CULTURAL ASPECTS AND
LIVELIHOOD PATTERNS OF THE KUTIA KONDH: A CASE
STUDY IN KANDHAMAL DISTRICT OF ODISHA**

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

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by

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INTRODUCTION

Every community has its own way to meet its basic needs. Nature coalesce with human to fulfill their needs, fashioned in their own ways depending on their customs, traditions, demographic structure etc. Consequentially people with same natural surroundings have developed different categories of economic processes to meet their needs in a sustainable manner. Thus, the relation between human, nature, and culture usually revolves around each other. It is interesting to know, how nature influences humans and their cultures reciprocally. Most important is that, we cannot understand any aspect of this triad in isolation; we must consider these three as one entity. Human, nature, and culture form a social complaisance, interdependent in an integrated way. Former pioneers in anthropology have established their theses, tenets, and concept on the basics of nature and human relation. The field was recognized initially by Franz Boas and his intellectual acolyte, Julian Steward. In the fifties and sixties, this apriorism was reinforced further particularly thanks to the ecological studies of Southeast Asia by Conklin, Geertz, Rappaport, Vayada and the likes. In France, anthropology like history was influenced by the great French traditions of human geography; Emile Durkheim's emphasis on the symbolic aspect of social life dovetailed to an extensive literature on the meaning, which differentiates social groups ascribed to nature, beginning with Durkheim and Mauss's study of *'totemism'* as 'primitive classification' and culminating in Claude Levi-Strauss's wide-ranging studies on myth and folklore vis-a-vis the natural world. Anthropologists following Radcliff-Brown and Malinowski wrote monographs which highlight the evolution of social institutions courtesy their ecological surroundings; Evans-Pritchard on the Nuer, Raymond Firth on social life in the island of Tikopia, Edmund Leach on socio-political systems in upland Burma, and the work of Fredrik Barth, a Norwegian and a pioneer of ecological anthropology are insightful extraordinaries.

Accordingly, the physical environment is very important in relation to the cultural practices, involving exact cause and effect synapses. But cultural practices in relation to the environment seem to involve a complex network of events. It is not a simple chain of causation that begins with one aspect and ends with another one.

Significance of the study:

The contemporary tribal cultures have developed two different modules, one being totally different from another. One is the age-old tradition, in which the tribes have been living, and another is developmental involving all interventions and challenges, unfamiliar surroundings making tribal culture in-roads. In the former aspect, there is a preservationist tendency, while in the latter, there are challenges and threats for identity and conservation. It is interesting to know, how people and their culture and environments are interconnected as well as how developmental interventions contribute to these aspects. Therefore, it is very important to examine the basic truth behind these factors and to arouse interest to know whether the age-old mechanism is well enough to manage the sustainable livelihood in the present surroundings as the situation is different compared to earlier one. The present study is an attempt to decipher and dissertate these consequences.

Conceptual framework: Generations' adjustment process

The perspective of the tribal people is not an astatic picture of their universe, nor is it a closed phenomenon; it incorporates the changing perspectives of the world, which in turn, guide their day-to-day life and culture (Adhikary 1991:116). With the change in the elements of the traditional universe of their forest habitat and self-sufficient or self-sustaining economy, as explained by B. N. Nanda (1994:11), while conducting a study on *Bonda Highlanders of Odisha*, the traditional economy was not exactly self-sufficient but was certainly self-sustaining. There is not the only appearance of literate, knowledgeable, educated and fluent expressive intelligentsia but also occurred growth in their cognitive perception of the universe. Based on their experiences, the young and youthful group often develops a fresh outlook on life, which, in turn, is placed as a conscious and aware model for their life. The perspective that, the upcoming young and youthful groups have built up, in the contemporary context, besides having an urge for a meaningfully defined area of socio-cultural communication in the changing situation, has a notion of an adjustment process to the changing environment.

Changes in the lifestyle, economy, culture, social structure challenge the developmental approaches to work effectively across all situations. One of the fundamental problems of working or studying effectively with people of another culture is understanding basic differences in their 'worldview'. Without this understanding, it is difficult to provide an appropriate explanation or analysis, and easy to get confused.

There is, however, a way or a process to quickly help to understand cultural differences i.e. generation's adjustment process. The study focuses and analyzes data using the above said 'generation's adjustment process', a tool that can facilitate to identify differences in core values across the culture within one particular time phase.

Applicability of the present study

As discussed above, for understanding a particular society, there is a need to understand their worldview over the generation. In this process, generation is taken as a nodal aspect, as on one hand, it is present in each and every society and on the other, it can be traced in different periods of a particular society or it can be traced within one particular society in a given period of time. As every society is having at least three basic generations, 1) old generation, 2) present or current generation, 3) younger generation, all social, cultural, educational, ritual and so many aspects of social life as explained by Ervin (2015:32) acted, interacted and interplayed within these three phases of generation. Furthermore, while acting, interacting and interplaying, each generation accumulate certain knowledge based on their experience, which helps to create or re-modify their viewpoint or worldview and with those experiences passed down to the subsequent generations and in the same way it is passed on to the next generations. The vision, knowledge, worldview, which is passed on from the preceding generation is again modified with this process and passed on to the succeeding generation which is the present generation and so on. In this process, people who are acting within their generational limit always try to fit into their surroundings, as discussed in previous paragraphs. But the important aspect to understand a particular society is, how they are actually acting and how their experiences shifting to the next generation with what kind of value, they are perceiving? And with the help of value oriented method¹, every generation's perception can be traced and there is no need to flash back or focus on historical data. It can be understood within one particular society at a particular time period, analyzing values by using this orientation method, with its five important components. Its five common human concerns such as man-nature relationship, man-man relationship, time sense, activity and social relationship and possible responses over generations.

It is important to note that, each and every generation within every society will express all three possible responses at some point of time. This study aims to find out, there is

¹ Tom Gallagher's (2001) Value Orientation Method (VOM), was initially started by Florence Rockwood Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck in 1940s to understand fundamental values held by different cultures in a Harvard Value Project.

diversity within a culture, both among subgroups and individuals of different generations, and that degree of acculturation matters.

Most of the tribal people in India in general and Odisha in particular lead a toilsome, materially poor spartan life, in spite of multiple natural resources in abundance along with strong community ties, even under difficult and adverse circumstances. Subsistence and livelihood pattern of these forest communities are mainly based on shifting cultivation and some practise sedentary agriculture in forest regions, supplemented by hunting, foraging, and pastoral activities simultaneously, exploiting three main natural resources i.e. land, forest, and animals. Due to this, when any problem arises for their livelihood, these communities exercise all possible precautions for the conservation of the biodiversity, or else it could pose a serious threat to their survival and continuity. However, in the contemporary environment, tribal culture is fast transforming because of contact with outsider people and influenced by their different ways of life. The process has been continuing for a very long time and as facilities for communication have improved by leaps and bounds, the isolation of tribal hamlets have meltdown. Constant living with non-tribal caste groups in the village, the growth of education, the growth of modern infrastructure in the previously inaccessible tribal belts, the work of various NGOs, SHGs and missionaries and also the growth of political consciousness have brought about a tidal change among the tribal people. Administrative agencies, forest officials, businessmen, money-lenders, and contractors have aided and added further stimulus to cultural transformation.

Therefore, the present study is an attempt to enquire into their tradition, customs, religious beliefs, superstitions, myths, values and more, in order to understand their attitude towards their environment and to understand, how their culture, beliefs, and practices are geared to maintain a balance between human and ecological needs. In a broader sense, it is intended to explore the man-nature relationship, which most often exists in their thought process and it also provides an understanding of how modern and developmental aspects value the natural environment and to assess in what ways they are likely to participate in and engage with their natural environment. The study is conducted in three selected hamlets out of 68 of the Kutia Kondh settlement in Kandhamal District of Odisha, India.

The major objectives of the present study are:

- 1. To understand how the Kutia Kondh socio-cultural life is interwoven with the forest, land and other aspects of their environment.**
- 2. To understand the Kutia Kondh's traditional source of livelihood.**
- 3. To study the changes in the Kutia Kondh socio-cultural aspects and livelihood patterns and also to analyze its consequences.**

Methodology

The study was carried out for a period of one year using various anthropological methods in the Kandhamal district of Odisha among the Kutia Kondh, one of the Particular vulnerable Tribal Group (PTG) in Odisha. Three hamlets been selected out of 68 through random sampling. The first few days were spent in establishing rapport. At this stage, household census schedules was used for taking basic information like occupation, age, sex, educational status, marital status, agricultural pattern, family type, etc. Carrying out the household survey helped the researcher in better understanding the layout of the research area and helped the researcher in securing information required for the study.

For intensive study, key informants were identified to take an indepth account. Observation method, both participant and non-participant were also applied. This method helped the researcher in validating the information givn out by the respondents. Interview method was also used to collect data. Structured interviews as well as unstructured interview technique were employed to get an in-depth and better insight of the society. Secondary data was also utilized for collecting information.

The above mentioned methods and techniques were adopted through the course of fieldwork which helped the researcher in getting better insights and understanding of the society as a whole.

Scope of the Study

The study aims at providing a surrounded picture of Kutia Kondh life and culture. The introductory chapter deal with the background of the study. The second chapter deals with the detailed description of the village such as description of geographical area, flora and fauna, minerals, climate, population, administration, etc. The third chapter deals with the complete picture of the socio-cultural life of Kutia Kondh, which includes ethnic identity, language, settlement and housing pattern, concept of beauty, body adornment, tattoo, life cycle rituals, family, marriage, kinship, political organization, economic organization, ritual activity, music

and dance etc. In the fourth chapter, titled 'the world of Kutia Kondh' there is an attempt to sketch out the role of the forest in the Kutia Kondh's day to day life. Strong social and spiritual ties with forests, plants, and animals have contributed to the tribal culture and the natural environment with direct and indirect reciprocal relationship. The Kutia Kondh economy and livelihood is analysed in the fifth chapter with a detailed discussion on the available resources, their notions of resources, livelihood, and dependency on the forest for livelihood. The sixth chapter details with the trends of transformation in Kutia Kondh life and culture and ends with some reflection on the future of the community. This chapter attempts to discuss their age-old traditional system regarding the forest, socio-cultural life, health, hygiene, and disease. This chapter aims to identify the new varieties, which they have developed to cope up with the changing environment. The last (seventh) chapter is an attempt to provide a summary of the findings of the study. A critical overview of the findings along with a few observations are also discussed.

Findings of the study

The study was carried out in the Kandhamal district of Odisha among the Kutia Kondh, one of the Particular vulnerable Tribal Group (PTG) in Odisha. They are also constitute one of the sub-section, of the Kondh tribe of Odisha. They are found in a contiguous pocket comprising the Belghar area of Balliguda sub-division in Kandhamal district, Chandragiri area of Gunupur sub-division of Rayagada and Lanjigarh area of Kalahandi district. This present study concentrates on the Kutia Kondh of Burlubaru, Madalakuna and Dahabali hamlet of Belghar sub-division, Kandhamal district. The Kutia Kondh, belonging to a simple society have their own elaborate historical mythological account of their ancestry, peoplehood and shared a fate. This sense of understanding and cultural self-image defines their degree or ethnic solidarity and often sets it apart from another non-tribal world which enclosed in it like the Pano.

The Kutia Kondh live in the small settlement. Their hamlets stand on the outskirts of forest and generally screened around by mountains. The clan organization plays an important role in their life and it determines the nature of the hamlet. It was a tradition that one particular clan group settle in a particular village, i.e. their settlements were uniclan hamlet but now they are multiclan hamlets. But now-a-days, it is observed that people belonging to two or three different clans have settled in one hamlet. Moreover, non-tribal communities like the Pano have built their separate dwelling at the outskirts or at the backside of the village.

The family is the basic social unit of Kutia Kondh and it controls the social behaviour of its members and controls the use of the cultivated land in its possession. Generally, in the Kutia Kondh society, nuclear family type is predominant. Patrilineal extended families are also found, whereas the joint family system is almost nil.

A Kutia Kondh hamlet in the past was composed of family belonging to one lineage and clan. The villagers, therefore, formed a close-knit agnatic kin group and an individual had to look forward to the other members for cooperation and support for his very existence. Therefore, in case of any wrong done to him, it also affected his kinsmen. Then the kin group would rise together to retaliate or receive compensation. The role and functions of the village bonds perpetuate age-old customs and traditions by following the precedents of their forefathers. Any issue with a potential discord or dissension that cuts across kinship bonds had to be made besides conducting necessary rituals or ceremonies and feasting following the norms. This principle of reconciliation as necessitated by the preservation of kinship bonds when extended in a similar manner to the larger group comprising several lineages of one clan or more than one clan due to the democratic and the decentralized political system and institutions. But now-a-days, these kinship associations and institutions among the Kutia Kondh are gradually declining away and becoming weak. In the past, these institutions largely filled in the socio-cultural life of the people. Lineage, clan, youth dormitories, age-grades, age-set, shamanism, tribal council, village headman etc. fulfill many important functions which were so vital and crucial to the socio-cultural life of the people. These institutions have served and strengthen up to survive for thousand years. Neither there was a centralized sovereign power nor a written constitution to regulate the life of the people. The nature of their customary laws can be comprehended on a certain basis. One of the basis lies in the principle behind the structure and function of their traditional village leaders.

With the passage of time, and with the gradual growth of population, thereby increasing member of lineages and formation of new clans, the preservation of kinship bonds along with the spirit of reconciliation always continued to dominate as the guiding principles of resolution of inter-personal relationship. Social integration in Kutia Kondh society was also maintained by an internal community authority structure based on tradition and customary laws. One of the significant characteristics of Kutia Kondh customary rules and practices is that it is not very rigid for all time to come. It changes with time to meet the requirements of the society to remain valid. But now-a-days, a new type of consciousness

has been created, like gram sabha, village panchayat, *Panchayat Samiti* etc. These are constituted through an electoral system. In the village politics, the traditional leaders feel in their duty to cooperate with modern leaders' i.e. ward member, sarpanch, *Panchayat Samiti* chairman, M.L.A., and M.P., in the planning and executing the development programmes. The new leader of younger generation accepts the new policies and programmes and explain the same to the elder to enlist their support and advice. They take part in the elections to elect their leaders. Despite all these, most of the traditions by which they have preserved and upheld their 'group identity' against the tide of modern changes.

The divine power has been identified by the Kutia Kondh with a group of powerful deities and spirits which control and influence the way of life of individuals as the community. All these deities and spirits control and influence the way of life of individuals as well as the community. Some deities are held responsible for illness, misfortune and unusual happening in the village. They believed that the spirits live in native hills, forests, streams and inside their dwellings and their number increases by the additions of the dead ancestors or the death of persons. In fact, the Kutia Kondh appropriate nature through their cultural tradition. Their religious culture emphasizes the supreme power of gods (*penu*) manifested in various parts of the landscape. The landscape in its entity is called *dharani*, while the components or fragments of that landscape, such as the settlement sites and the cultivation areas are identified by their own names and by their own *penus*, which are fragmentation of the paramount *dharanipenu*. The *penu* refers to nature as a whole and society are known as *grudu*. Nature is seen as a combination of different landscapes associated with different *penuni*. Being a forest dwelling community, the Kutia Kondh have developed strong social and spiritual bond with terraqueous forest regarding them as their brothers and ancestors.

However, in the passage of time, the marked transformation is not noticeable in the Kutia Kondh rituals and customs. They do not consider themselves as Hindus, nor easily accept any other religious ideas. Though they show an inclination towards the Hindu religion, they do not like to embrace it. Christian missionaries are already keen in their attempt to convert Kutia Kondh into their own religion, but they have not been successful in their missions so far. Rather Hindu ideals especially the Panos have crept into their culture on account of their proximity to the Hindu religious beliefs.

The Kutia Kondh pursue many occupations, they are still in the stage of food gathering, collecting and shifting cultivation. They continue to go around pre-agricultural

technology. They solely depend on the adjoining forests for their food and other requirements, and their requirements are very simple and minimal. In the past, their economy completely moved around the forest and forest resources. They still continue to subsist exclusively on gathering, shifting cultivation, simple settled cultivation and sometimes fishing. They live the life of 'natural man'; considering their forest clad habitat, which is a perennial source of food and other requirements. Kutia Kondh have their own indigenous way of choosing food items from nature as they have their own methods of food production. Of course, food production is related to the value system, customs, and cultural habits of the Kutia Kondh. Their choices in the food system are regulated by their own categorization of food and non-food within the scope of their environment and local availability. They used to glean from the forest a large variety of edible, commercial and industrial raw materials, namely, honey, fruits, nuts, roots, tubers, green leaves, arrowroot, mushrooms, flowers, creepers, herbal, medicines, *sal* resin, lac, cocoons, palm juice, *salap* juice, toddy, meats, fish etc..

Forest collection, fishing, and hunting have sharply declined in recent years. Firstly, because forest areas have been reduced with the recuperation of forest for agricultural and settlement purposes while pressure on forest has increased several folds with the rapid growth of population. Secondly, in the past, they used to depend on the forest and used to exploit resources almost exclusively for their sustenance because they lived within or in the proximity of forest. But, the outer world have been exerting more pressure on the forest for commercial reasons. Thirdly, their traditional rights over all the forest in their habitat have been abolished with executive measures and finally, control and management of forest have been taken over by the concerned State Government. All these incidents connote encroachment upon the traditional rights and sources of food and other needs of the tribal people who have no alternative source to depend upon for survival. Without substantial changes in the environment, Kutia Kondh is not likely to modify their traditional mode of living in few decades. Depletion of forest resource on the one hand and imposition of restrictions on the use of existing forest on the other have brought miseries to the life of Kutia Kondh. They feel that they are being systematically deprived of the rich natural resources, which are part of their ecosystem, by corrupt money lenders, land grabbers, and state agencies.

The relationship of Kutia Kondh with nature is, however, assessed critically. The swiddening practice of the tribe ignites arguments in which they are accused of being destroyers of nature and environment. But the tribe gives special value to this traditional form of dependence of shifting cultivation. It is culturally valued and topographically appropriate. For the Kutia Kondh, swiddening is a sound subsistence practice as there is no risk of total crop failure. Even if drought or excessive rainfall occurs the crops ripen at various interval of time, not all at once. Furthermore, they calculate their labour input and productivity according to this system. When productivity decreases in relation to the labour input, they shift to another plot, thus ensuring a period of fallow till the fertility of the soil is regained. Swiddening produces both cash and subsistence crops and provides them with a minimum security. As an alternative to swiddening, agriculture in the plains is not rewarding as far as the subsistence requirement for the whole year is concerned. There is very little land available to the Kutia Kondh in the plain as most of the available land is in non-tribal possession. They, therefore, restrict themselves to rain-fed paddy cultivation in the low lands once in a year. Lowland paddy cultivation is prepared as a non-viable livelihood option, as the traditional crop varieties cannot be grown there. This means a risk to their livelihood earnings. The per capita low land holding is so small that they cannot countenance maintaining a family on the basis of the small yield from low land.

Kutia Kondh culture is fast changing now-a-days, because of contact with the culture of the aliens and their different ways of life. The process has been continuing for quite a long time, and as facilities for communication have improved, the isolation of their hamlets have been diluted. Constant interactions with non-tribal castes in the hamlets, the growth of education, the growth of modern infrastructure in the interior tribal regions, the work of various missionaries as well as the growth of political consciousness have brought about a great change in the life and livelihood of the Kutia Kondh in this area. Administrative agencies, forest officials, traders, money-lenders and contractors aid and add further stimulus to culture change. In the past few years, enormous changes have occurred among the Kutia Kondh.

It is erroneous to analyze the cause and effect relationship in a dynamic process, where changes brought out by different agencies did not always prove to be successful. As, in one place, where urbanism was sought to be assessed, school education could not be left out. The impact of tribal markets, non-tribal Hindu castes (Pano) living side by side with the

tribals for generations in their own hamlets could not be minimized. Before the implementation of Community Development (CD) projects, these non-tribal Hindus provided a most effective means of cultural contact through which they maintained a lively relationship not only with their kin in other villages but also in distant settlements.

The Kutia Kondh response to the increasing effects of these factors of changes is visible through their changing lifestyle, livelihood patterns, material culture, social and economic relations, political organizations, beliefs, rituals, and practices etc. Such changes have been focused in the present study at suitable chapters. In the following paragraphs, the different factors of change such as education, urbanization, Community Development programmes etc. will be discussed which affects the Kutia Kondh way of life.

Education has made rapid strides since independence. Education was confined to very few Kutia Kondh. Now there are numbers of schools run by the government, one high standard education complex and moreover, every village has an Anganwadi center. The light of learning also touches Kutia Kondh girls. They are also taking to education in a big way. The process has been accelerated by the opening of separate schools with hostel facilities for both boys and girls, and by the provision of scholarship for all tribals at the school level. And along with this, free food and study materials are the added boost for the acceleration of the education among the Kutia Kondh. Education enables farmers to be geographically mobile, and once they move out of their secluded habitat and get an urban exposure, they try to stick to the urban way of life. This generally leads to their occupational mobility. (see also Sachchidananda 1979)

Development Agencies were conceived as a co-operative partnership linkage between the farmers and the government for an all-round development of the community. In the Kutia Kondh area Development Agency has done a lot to improve the farmer's way of life. It was started in the selected areas during 1978-79 to develop many aspects like agriculture, animal husbandry, education, rural cottage industries, health, and sanitation as well as welfare measures for the women and children. Development Agency affects farmers' lifestyle and ways of thinking in a substantial measure.

With regard to cultivation, the Kutia Kondh do not like to be involved much with agriculture as they did in the past, due to the supply of rice by the government at a very low price (Rs. 1/- per Kg.). Evidently, modern youth has not learnt the art of preparing agricultural field, tools, implements etc. The use of improved seed and chemical fertilizer

increases the dependency on outsiders. Earlier Kutia Kondh used to depend upon their own resources in agricultural operations. Now-a-days they have increased dependency upon outsiders as their demands are increasing. Previously when Kutia Kondh were short of credit they got it from moneylenders. Now for loans, they approach the co-operative societies, rural banks or Self Help Groups (SHG).

Therefore, modernization has significantly influenced Kutia Kondh and their culture. It has brought tangible and intangible changes to their lifestyles, attitudes, perceptions, and worldview. On the one hand, these changes may be seen as trends towards development, on the other hand, such changes pose a threat to their traditional patterns and paradigms. Over the last couple of years, the Kutia Kondh have been brought under the scope of development through holistic and sector approaches. While such development initiatives primarily address their economic development, their cultural development is ignored entirely or dealt very superficially.

Significant political and economic changes are taking place in the Kutia Kondh world. New technologies in agriculture, family planning, health, irrigation projects and Tribal-Sub-Plan, the Panchayati-Raj system of political decentralization and participation have come into their area. They no longer remain geographically or socially exclusive. On one hand there is a discernible vested interest in the maintenance of an exclusive sense of identity and on the other hand there is a growing awareness that the new political and economic system alone can bring in the benefits of economic development, such as road, drinking water wells, modernized agriculture, school, dispensaries, co-operative societies, rural banks, and extension worker engaged in the task of development. There are the traditional, often hereditary leaders, the old-world elites who despite their declining authority in the present political context, still hold a way over the minds of the people. There are again the modern political leaders, the ward members etc. who have access to the new world of development through community development blocks, intensive development programmes, development agency, and integrated tribal development programmes.

Development as modernization has set in motion the occupational mobility of the Kutia Kondh. The occupational mobility may be seen as a move from forest to market, from tradition to modernity, from exclusive subsistence earning to marginal cash income. The younger generations have been showing greater interest in prioritizing alternative source of income, considered better than gathering forest produces and shifting cultivation, in one way

or other. Wage-earning is one of the occupation Kutia Kondh younger generations are inclined towards, for which they are not even hesitating to leave their homeland. The younger generation, in particular, has taken up the jobs in road & building construction, mining, bridge construction etc, whenever an opportunity is available in their areas or outside. Their participation in different occupational earning tends to lead to many attitudinal changes and also changes in their lifestyle. These changing occupational earning sometimes seen as an employment opportunity and sometimes as a crisis management actions. Whereas these type of work has not affected the girl much, as they are more burdened with household work in comparison with young boys (see also Chapter-V). While young girls are less affected by this change, it has a tremendous impact on the boys. Since they are content to work outside, there is a scarceness of youth persons in the daily swidden works, community participation etc.

Thus the Kutia Kondh are definitely in a transitional stage in between tradition and modernity. There are existing traditions in education, agriculture, health practice which are anchored to the old value system on which the modern processes of growth and the new technology impinge. Sometimes there is the difficult task of integrating the old and the new, the tradition and the modern, in different fields of personal and social life. However, the Kutia Kondh society is face to face with two worlds. The innate supernatural and the matter-of-fact rational; the mythological yesterday's tradition and the real to-day with its degradation and poverty; ethnic understanding of the different system of thoughts and belief linked to socio-economic discontinuities. So, such problems are unavoidable in a society undergoing rapid transformation. That, however, generates an attitude of ambivalence both towards tradition and the modernization process, which again influence the knowledge, attitude, perception, and interpretation of the community.

Today, it is evident from the study that, Kutia Kondh society is undergoing serious transformation due to the impact of certain foreign agencies, changing circumstances, and new socio-political developments etc. which make them give up their age-old traditions and accept new ideas. In addition, there is a spontaneous exchange of human resources, science, and technologies, art, culture, religion etc. With the march of time, and development taking place, transformation in the society, its norms, and values are bound to occur. The younger generation is becoming more conscious of their rights, benefits, and privileges. The changes in the outlook and policy of the Government have brought the Kutia Kondh society closer to the mainstream of rest of the nation and their mindset broadened for acceptance of new ideas.