Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction:

Social exclusion is the systematic exclusion of individuals and groups from one or more dimensions of society, such as structures of power and privilege, opportunities and resources. Caste, traditional India’s system of social ordering and control, is the most elaborate form of social stratification ever known. It has dominated the Indian sub-continent for about three millennia and is also the most exhaustive and obnoxious of all exclusionary systems. Caste-exclusions are explicit in traditional society. Membership and status are determined by birth; there is a hierarchy of social precedence among the castes; there are restrictions on social and cultural intercourse between castes; castes are segregated and stratified with regard to civil and religious privileges; occupations are caste determined with relatively little choice allowed; restrictions on marriage outside one’s sub-caste help maintain the system (Ghurye, 1979). Those historically excluded in Indian society are broadly several social groups subsumed under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe categories, the lower strata of caste-Hindus, women, Muslims and some Christians.

An exclusion in the Indian context is complex, widespread and multi-layered. It may be the result of a lack of social and economic opportunity, as in the case of the urban poor, denial of legitimate social space thus causing social segregation and exclusion, as in the case of the lower castes. Exclusion may be the result of social uprooting by the state, as has been happening to tribal peoples due to development projects, special economic zones and displacement from traditional occupations caused by economic globalization and liberalization. While such exclusion is not new, the “development project” as part of the globalization mission has accelerated the processes involved. Census of India classified the age group of different castes and education of
those age groups and at the lower strata there are the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. That is, it revealed that degree holders in the 20-24 age groups account for only 2.3 percent of the total population in this age groups among the STs, 3.6 percent among the SCs (Radhakrishnan, 2005).

The Scheduled Tribes (ST), the most neglected sections of the Indian society have been subjected to economic exploitation and social discrimination for same ages. The age old exploitation and repression of the tribal have cut them from the mainstream of the socio-economic and educational development. This state has been largely responsible for their abject poverty, illiteracy and overall backwardness. Due to geographical isolation they have been alienated from the rest of the community as a result of which they have been forced to lead a life of economic and social subjugation.

A tribe is a group comprising families, alone or generations, having its own customs, occupying a specific geographical territory and being independent of, or having little contact with, the dominant national society of the country in which they live (Goodland et al., 1982). Scheduled Tribe communities are especially those residing in interior and inaccessible areas have had a very raw deal. As Sujatha (2002) points out, interior habitations are small in size, scattered, and sparsely populated. Most of the predominantly ST habitations are benefit of basic infrastructural facilities like transport and communication.

The tribals are also called as ‘Adivasis’ are living in forests and their main occupation was hunting, collecting and selling of forest products, agriculture products, etc. The tribal were used to cultivate their lands near forests. Tribals were inexorably drawn into the vortex of colonial capitalism, by way of their employment, often forced, high plantations, mines, and industries, or wherever British capital wanted to draft them into its service. There also developed an adjunct agricultural and economic sector dealing with cash crops and forest-produce dominated by the non-tribal Indian, landowners, forest-contractors, traders and moneylenders, often combined in the same persons and concerns,
turning tribals, very often whole families, into bonded and attached labour. This fierce economic thrust resulted into more and more encroachment on tribal lands and increasing economic exploitation and cultural impoverishment (Kamat, 1981).

The word ‘tribe’ is generally used for a “socially cohesive units, associated with a territory, the members of which regard themselves as politically autonomous” (Mitchell, 1972). The ideal type of tribe can be characterized as a socially homogenous unit having its own dialect, political and cultural institutions and territory, which isolate them from the outside influences. Scheduled Tribes are spread across the country mainly in forest and hilly regions. The essential characteristics of these communities are (Bhardwaj and Tungdim, 2010):

1. Primitive traits
2. Geographical isolation
3. Distinct culture
4. Shyness of contact with other community at large
5. Economically backwardness

There is no agreed definition of a tribe. The word, as such, has dictionary meaning of “a race or family descended from the same ancestor: an aggregate of families forming a community usually under the government of a chief.” The Hindi equivalent ‘Adivasi’ has a clearer connotation. It means those who are the earliest inhabitants of the country.

Due to the privileges given in the Constitution of India, the tribals are gradually gaining the education. As a result of greater geographical and occupational mobility tribals been moved out in sizeable numbers to urban and industrial centres and into new occupations. Although this is no doubt a significant change its impact is not very large relatively, and like the other backward non-tribals, the tribals also tend to concentrate at the lower levels of Job hierarchy. It has been observed generally that the below-SSC (Below 10th Standard) tribals enter skilled and unskilled labour while the SSC
(10th Standard) holders and above seek clerical and similar jobs (Vidyarthi and Roy, 1977).

In tribal society the religious, the economic, the cultural formed a composite whole; now they differentiate, separate, get modified. They differ characteristically from the vicissitudes through which the SCs are going, because the Hinduisation process often turns tribals into a caste in Savarna (upper and touchable) society. In the process they lose many of the old tribal norms, (some of them more equalitarian than those of caste society). Education, urbanization and entry into new occupations hastens these changes, and also the formation of a new social stratification (Kamat, 1981).

The tribal groups are known to be the original inhabitants of the country prior to the coming and settlement of the Aryans in different parts of India. The Aryans considered the indigenous people primitive and forced them to move to isolated areas in forests and mountains. In the context of Hindu civilization, the experiences of the tribal population have been quite different from that of the Scheduled Caste population. While the latter was discriminated against and placed in the bottom rung of the social and cultural hierarchy by Hindus, the tribal population, by large, has been socially distanced and isolated by Hindu society. Tribal people exhibit family, social, and cultural values that are clearly different from the mainstream Hindu population in India. In general, the Adivasis are characterized by lack of hierarchical social and cultural practices, a non-acquisitive value system, and absence of taboos in food and social practices, and a relatively high status of women in many communities. Each tribe has its own religion, culture, occupations, and lifestyle. Thus, it is important to emphasize that the tribal people do not constitute a homogeneous community (Mitra, 2007).

The different tribes in India are dispersed across the whole country, living in different physical environments, exhibiting different lifestyles, social habits, religious beliefs and cultural patterns. In some areas of India, the tribal
population constitutes a large proportion of the total population whereas in many regions they are a minority. Additionally, some tribes are in contact with the mainstream Hindu population and other Scheduled Caste population whereas in some areas the tribes are completely isolated.

The invasion of Adivasi land and territories began mostly during the colonial period and continued extensively during the post-colonial period. Large parts of the land occupied by the Scheduled Tribes were claimed by the state in order to build new roads, dams, industries, and infrastructure. As a result, many states and territories have witnessed significant out-migration of tribes and in migration of other groups. With the extinction of forests and wildlife, many tribes have shifted their occupations from hunting and gathering to agricultural activities. The vast majority of the tribal population is engaged in the primary sector and work as cultivators and agricultural laborers. With the disappearance of many traditional crafts, many tribes are resorting to newer occupations. The tribes are predominantly non-vegetarian. They eat pork, beef, rice, and wheat and drink alcohol. The different tribes speak diverse languages and dialects with the vast majority of them being bilingual. Some tribes have a patriarchal form of society while a few tribes, follow the matrilineal mode of family structure and inheritance patterns. Despite the heterogeneity found among the different tribes, they all display some common characteristics in their family and social values. In general, all tribes display absence of occupational specialization, lack of hierarchy in their social structures, absence of consumerism, and very close ties to nature and their environment (Mitra, 2007).

The term ‘Scheduled Tribes’ (STs) first appeared in the Constitution of India. Article 366 (25) of the Constitution defines Scheduled Tribes as “such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution”. Empowered by Clause (l) of Article 342, the President of India will notify the list of Scheduled Tribes in the States and Union Territories.
The Scheduled Tribes are tribes notified under Article 342 of the Constitution, which makes special provision for ‘tribes, tribal communities, parts of, or groups within which the President may so notify’. There is no definition of a tribe in the Constitution but one may distinguish some characteristics that are generally accepted: self-identification, language, distinctive social and cultural organization, economic under-development, geographic location and initially, isolation, which has been steadily, and in some cases, traumatically, eroded. Many tribes still live in hilly and/or forested areas, somewhat remote from settlements. The Scheduled Tribes wherever they live, are faced with many and diverse problems, which are of social, economic, political and educational in nature. Because of acute poverty, the tribals had been victims of exploitation by powerful classes like money-lenders, traders, landlords, labour contractors and officials. Scheduled Tribes form the very segment of the weaker sections of the society with their traditional skills and resources. They are the most vulnerable section of the population and they are exploited by the most age-old social and cultural handicaps coupled with environmental factors. The poverty level of different caste groups’ shows that compared to all other communities and castes, the poverty among the Scheduled Tribes is higher.

**Table No. 1.1. The Caste, Ethnic Group Inequality in Poverty, All India, 2000 (Figures in Percentage)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>Non-SC/ST</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty-Percentage of Poor (Rural)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty-Percentage of Poor (Urban)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty of Agricultural Labour (Rural)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty of Casual Labour (Urban)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many stereotypes flourish about the tribal persona and tribal society. Many of the tribal people are undeniably economically under-developed, and the process of their marginalization can be traced to the intrusion of British colonialism, which quickly detected in the forest that was home to tribals, great potential for appropriation of resources. Exploitation of forest-lands by both the British and the Zamindars resulted in the clearing of huge tracts for commercial crops such as tea, coffee and rubber and allowing contractors to fell trees in the very heart of the forest. These actions deprived the tribal people of their livelihoods because many of them were hunters and gatherers of forest produce. The interaction with the outside world brought the tribal people face to face with problems they were not equipped to cope with, such as alcoholism and sexually transmitted diseases. In the post-Independence period, while the Constitution protected the rights of the Scheduled Tribe and accorded them reservation in the legislature, educational institutions and government jobs, other ‘development’ activities, such as the construction of large dams or the sale of timber, led to the further marginalization of some tribes. The scenario is therefore a mixed one. It may be necessary to use natural resources to improve the living conditions of the people of the state, but it must be done in a manner that is sensitive to ensuring the protection of the environment, which provides a livelihood to tribal people.

It is noted that each of the tribe has its own social culture, traditions, religious characteristics and celebrations. Earlier, the Scheduled Tribes were deprived from education, as they are living in forests or scattered land, where there is poor facilities for education and organized employment. As such, their socio-economic and education status is lower. After independence, due to the reservation facilities, now the Scheduled Tribes are getting more educational and employment opportunities. As a result, their socio-economic and educational status is improving in the study area. When the population statistics of the Scheduled Tribes are analyzed, there is increase in the growth rate of females compared to male population among the Scheduled Tribes. But, it is
noted that like other social groups, the women have got secondary status among the Scheduled Tribe. As such, there is gender discrimination in the tribal society. Due to such discrimination, there is lower status of women among the Scheduled Tribes.

**Tribal Women:**

The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women’s status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. In tribal communities, the role of women is substantial and crucial. The constitute about half the total population but in tribal society women are more important than in other social groups, because their works harder and the family economy and management depends on them. Even after industrialization and the resultant commercialization swamped the tribal economy, women continued to play a significant role in study area. Collection of minor forest produce is done mostly by women and children. Many people work as laborers in industries, households and construction, contributing to their family income. Despite exploitation by contractors and managers, tribals are more sincere and honest than non tribals (Awais et al., 2009).

However, tribal women face problems and challenges in getting a sustainable livelihood and a decent life due to environmental degradation and the interference of outsiders. The strategy for tribal development, and specially women, needs improvement, betterment, development and upliftment to effect their empowerment. Tribal women have adjusted themselves to live a traditional life style in the local environment and follow occupations based on natural resources. Undoubtedly, the programmes, oriented towards the empowerment of tribals, particularly women, have improved their socio-economic conditions and status. However, there are wide variations across regions and tribes in terms of work participation, sex ratio, economic productivity and social life. The impact of development planning needs to be evaluated in terms of desired and unanticipated
consequences. The development process should be perceived as an involvement and reorganization mechanism of not only the socio-economic system but the entire eco-system.

The status of any social group is determined by its levels of health-nutrition, literacy education and standard of living. The tribal women, as women in all social groups, are more illiterate than men. The low educational status is reflected in their lower literacy rate, lower enrolment rate and their presence in the school. United Nations has defined the status of women as the “conjunction of position a women occupies as a worker, student, wife, mother......of the power and prestige attached to these positions, and of the right and duties is expected to exercise” (UN, 1975). “To what extent, do women, compared with men, have excess to knowledge, to economic resources and to political power, and to what degree of personal autonomy do these resources permit in the process of decision-making and choice at crucial points in the lifecycle?” (UN, 1975).

Tribal societies have been by and large characterized as egalitarian societies especially in relation to the hierarchical character of caste society. However, it cannot be said of women status. Status of women varies in different societies. All societies offer its children the presence of two genders and related roles, according to kinship, sexuality, work, marriage and age. It also supplies the broad guidelines for undertaking these roles through a body of attitudes, specifications, metaphors and myths (Bhasin, 2007).

A tribal woman occupies an important place in the socio-economic and political structure of her society. They exercise free and firm hand in all aspects related to their social and economic life. But it is still important to emphasize that the tribal woman is in herself exactly the same as any other woman with the same passion, love and affection, the same devotion to the home, to husband and to children. Though the tribal women are away from the main stream of national life, but they are not kept away from the impact of socio-economic changes
effecting the neighborhood or society in general. In the process of change, the tribal woman is forced to adhere to certain norms which may even take away her freedom, her control over the traditional productive system, her house, family and children and even her own life. The process of such alienation has an impact on the tribal women. It is often alleged that the level of aspiration of these women as a group is low and they are quite satisfied with what they are and with what they have. It is most often not true only to womenfolk but to everyone who feels helpless and frustrated. However, in order to develop and raise their level of aspiration, adequate educational opportunities are to be provided, so that they get motivate to participate, support and also ultimately learn to initiate their own programmes of individual or groups.

Before discussing the status of tribal women, it is important to demystify certain commonly held views regarding tribals and tribal women. Idealizing the tribal ways of life and the higher status that women enjoyed among their own community is to large extent based on the perception of an earlier lifestyle. Vijayalaxmi (2003) described the status of tribal women as under:

1. Gender Division of Labour Without Social Asymmetry being construed as Higher Status of Tribal Women:

   It is often presumed that there is no social hierarchy in tribal societies despite a gender division of labour. On the contrary, there is evidence that the gender division of labour among the most tribal communities is also hierarchical. Even among the matriarchal tribes, male members of the household managed the resources of women. Gender hierarchy among tribals is also evident from the low ritual status accorded to women. The sedentary form of living altered some of their earlier livelihood practices. Certain changes in the economic activities performed by men and women resulted in further dependence of women on men. Although women’s role in the livelihood system is considered natural, their participation in leadership roles and the political sphere are not encouraged.
2. **Tribal Women enjoyed More Freedom and Power:**

In the traditional mode of subsistence production the activities performed by men and women were complementary in nature. There is more interdependence between men and women. With the changes in livelihood practices and wage work is becoming an important component, the asymmetry in gender relations and power differences within the tribal household is now more pronounced and evident, leading to a lower position for women.

3. **Tribal Life is without any Social Problems such as Destitute Women, Stigma about Widowhood, etc.**

While no stigma is attached to widowhood and widow remarriage, going to faraway places for wage work has increased the number of deserted women who have to support the children. Problems such as alcoholism and drug abuse are also becoming more common among men and women in tribal communities.

4. **Tribal Health Practices are the Best form of Health System for Tribals:**

It is not true that all tribals are knowledgeable about indigenous herbal medicine. Further, for certain health problems such as Anthrax, which the SVYM detected or viral diseases, preventive measures for cure disease. There are certain practices, particularly those related to childbirth, that are harmful for the mother and the child. These practices continue to be justified as indigenous health care monitoring system. It needs to be emphasized and awareness should be created that nothing can substitute for institutional support in reproductive health. Although tribals had managed their health problems in their own way over a long period of time, when modern medicine is now available they consume in time and not takes continue to do so.
5. Development means Detribalizing:

The paradox of the development debate on tribals is that the welfare initiatives are interpreted as detribalizing. Acculturation of tribals is bound to be one of the consequences of integrating the tribal population into the development process. It is difficult to keep the tribals isolated and insulated from social and economic changes that are taking place around them. This does not mean that tribal identity should be lost. But retaining tribal identity should not hinder while tribal development and activities that take place. Often development specialists argue against evicting tribals from forests and resettling them outside the forests. Instead, the emphasis should be on adequate rehabilitation and compensation, now that they have been moved out of the forests. The development requirements of tribal communities are often sidelined because of the excessive importance given to issues such as the breakup of social cohesion among tribals through development initiatives. Such misplaced emphasis would only lead to increased polarization between the tribal and non-tribal populations.

While discussing the status of tribal women, it is noted that there is a certain degree of transformation in livelihood practices, distribution of resources and control over labour among tribal men and women. There are changes in the notions of purity, about marriage and sexuality. There is also a reconstruction of the public space by minimizing the role of women in politics and rituals. Transition from interdependent and complementary roles in the livelihood system to a patriarchal structure is evident in most tribal communities. There are several contending hierarchies within the various tribal communities that decide whether there is going to be greater balance between gender relations or an asymmetry in relations. These changes are to a large extent a consequence of their displacement. Due to such displacement, there are changes in the status of tribal women.
The changing role of men and women in tribal communities was to a large extent dependent on the nature of the livelihood system. Among the tribal groups practicing semi-traditional mode of subsistence, i.e., hunting and collecting minor forest produce, supplemented by wage labour, there is continuation of the non-patriarchal gender practices which allowed a greater social and economic role for women. On the other hand, among the tribes practicing settled agriculture supplemented with wage labour and income from minor forest produce, the gender relations are more asymmetrical. With the land ownership being associated with the male head of the household, social hierarchies are getting internalized in the tribal system.

An analysis of the role of women in the tribal economy reveals that their contribution to income generating activities is substantial. Among agricultural tribes such as Soligas in Karnataka, the participation of women in agriculture is significant in all the activities relating to farming. When Soligas practiced shifting cultivation, women were similarly involved in all the farming activities except the clearing of land. In the traditional shifting form of cultivation women continue to do most of the agriculture work. However, the contribution of women is undermined because of low returns from the small land holdings and the supplementing of household income with wage labour.

Apart from agriculture, women also contributed to other livelihood practices such as collecting minor forest produce and working as wage labour. The contribution of women in each activity depends on the livelihood strategies adopted by the household. If the landholding is small, women managed the farm actively, supplemented by the labour of men whenever there was no wage work. Women are involved in all activities from preparing the land to cultivation and harvesting. Men took up wage labour in the nearby villages or on construction sites. Except for a few cases, farming among these communities is not a commercial activity. Ragi and Paddy are grown as subsistence crops.
Women are involved in a wide range of activities, though most of them are cultivate. Both men and women are involved in the collection of minor forest produce. Although there is gender-based division of labour, it is less rigid when compared with non-tribal societies. Women are responsible for childcare and food preparation and men play an important role in hunting. In activities such as collection of forest produce, fuel and building the house, both men and women are involved. The gender regimes in these tribal communities are not rigid and there is no dichotomy of public and private spheres in economic and other day-to-day subsistence activities. In the market interactions too there is symmetry between the participation of men and women in the transactions.

Despite the equality in some areas of life, there are perceptible gender differences in at least two spheres, that is in rituals and political participation. Among all the tribal groups women are associated with household rituals and men represent the household in public rituals. The ritual knowledge is passed on to men and they head the performance of most public rituals. Similarly gender differences are evident in the participation of tribal committees. The tribal committee of a settlement is responsible for the enforcement of the tribal laws and ensured that the norms of behaviour are not violated. Although women are members of tribal committees they are not required to attend the meetings or participate in the proceedings. Women are also excluded from tribal leadership. All tribal leaders are men as they are perceived as ritually superior to women and as the natural leaders of a settlement or a group.

In tribes, the women’s problems mainly arise out of under-utilization of their time and labour and development strategies that are insensitive to the requirements of women. The study areas of particular concern in the development and welfare of tribal women are women’s access in the development and welfare of tribal women are women’s access to resources, low literacy rates, high levels of fertility, lack of community services and inadequate state interventions. Barring a few instances, women do not have
access to resources such as land, credit, training and counseling that would improve their standard of living. There are no specific interventions targeted to improve the access of tribal women to these resources.

**Education of Tribal Women:**

India is the second population country in the world with 6.77 crores of tribal population. Most of the tribal people are poor, illiterate and inhibited in inaccessible forests and hilly areas. They lag behind in all spheres of life in comparison with other sections of the society. The government of India has launched a number of schemes for the promotion of education and scheme among the tribes in general and different new initiatives for the women weaker section of the society in particular. In spite of these efforts, the rate of literacy has not improved. In case of the primitive tribes, it is very poor and among women, it is very low. Literacy is the key for socio-economic development of any section or region, and this is the reason that the tribal community all over India have subjected to various forms of deprivation such as alienation from land and other resources. Especially the tribal women though they are away from the main stream of national life, but they are not kept away from the impact of socio-economic changes effecting the society in general (Puhan et al., 2013).

As provided by Karnataka Human Development Report, 2005, the tribal population of Karnataka increased to 34.64 lakh in 2001 from 19.16 lakh in 1991. The decadal growth rate during this period is a high 80.8 per cent, caused not by a spurt in fertility rates but by the addition of several new tribes to the Scheduled Tribes (ST) category. The decadal growth rate is higher for females (81.9 per cent) than for males (79.8 per cent). The literacy rate among Scheduled Tribes, which was 36.0 per cent in 1991, increased to 48.3 per cent in 2001, while the state average moved up from 56.04 to 66.64 percent the female literacy rate among STs in 1991 was 23.6 per cent and it increased to 36.6 per cent in 2001. While it has increased at a faster pace than the male
literacy rate (the increase during the decade was 13.0 percentage points for females and 11.8 percentage points for males) the gap between the ST male and female literacy rate declined only marginally, from 24.3 in 1991 to 23.1 in 2001, which is slightly higher than the gap between the male and female literacy rates for the total population (22.92 in 1991 and 19.22 in 2001). The literacy rate for ST women is the lowest in the state in comparison with all women as well as Scheduled Caste women. The literacy rate for rural ST women is a low 33.3 percent compared with 56.9 per cent for men. Following table revealed that literacy rates of Scheduled Tribes by Gender and Urban/Rural Habitation from 1961 to 2001.

Table No. 1.2. Literacy Rates of Scheduled Tribes by Gender and Urban/Rural: 1961 to 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rural/ Urban</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>13.37</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>8.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td>13.45</td>
<td>22.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>8.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>10.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>37.09</td>
<td>19.64</td>
<td>28.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>4.85</td>
<td>11.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>22.94</td>
<td>6.81</td>
<td>14.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>47.60</td>
<td>27.32</td>
<td>37.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.52</td>
<td>8.04</td>
<td>16.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>38.45</td>
<td>16.02</td>
<td>27.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>66.56</td>
<td>45.66</td>
<td>56.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40.65</td>
<td>18.19</td>
<td>29.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>57.39</td>
<td>32.44</td>
<td>45.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>77.77</td>
<td>59.87</td>
<td>69.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>59.17</td>
<td>34.76</td>
<td>47.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It is essential to know about the literacy rates of Scheduled Tribes compared to other castes and communities, so as to know about progress of the literacy rates of the Scheduled Tribes. The following table revealed the same.
Table No. 1.3. Literacy Gains during 1991-2001 among Various Demographic Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Categories</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Female ST</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Female SC</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Female Non-SC &amp; ST</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Male SC</td>
<td>53.7</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Male ST</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Female SC</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Female ST</td>
<td>59.9</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Literacy Rate</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Male Non-SC &amp; ST</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Female Non-SC &amp; ST</td>
<td>75.2</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Male SC</td>
<td>77.8</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Male Non-SC &amp; ST</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>83.4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As the literacy of the Scheduled Tribes is low and the following statistics on the gender-wise enrolment of the STs in primary and secondary education, it is proved that there is low education among the Scheduled Tribe population in India.

Table No. 1.4. Gross Enrolment Ratio of Scheduled Tribes (ST) Students (as on 30-09-2006), (Percentage), 2006-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>State/UTs</th>
<th>Gross Enrolment Ratio for Scheduled Tribes (ST) 2006-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Classes (I – V) [6-11 Years]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>102.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>152.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>95.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>115.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>135.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>136.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>147.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>108.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>144.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>107.89</td>
<td>108.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>125.19</td>
<td>122.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>170.46</td>
<td>164.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>147.94</td>
<td>121.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>160.04</td>
<td>146.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>166.76</td>
<td>164.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>167.55</td>
<td>161.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>92.46</td>
<td>88.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>129.84</td>
<td>122.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>113.85</td>
<td>103.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>251.18</td>
<td>250.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>186.79</td>
<td>162.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>157.06</td>
<td>144.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>170.09</td>
<td>118.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>148.28</td>
<td>154.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>113.19</td>
<td>97.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


As discussed above table, literacy of the Scheduled Tribe students is gradually developing through decades and the progress of Scheduled Tribe students studying at different levels of higher education in India in 2004-05 is shown as under.

**Table No. 1.5. Scheduled Tribe Students Studying at Different Levels of Education in India (2004-05)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Level</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>793</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>1337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>14271</td>
<td>8808</td>
<td>23079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Sc.</td>
<td>3324</td>
<td>2160</td>
<td>5484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Com.</td>
<td>2296</td>
<td>1347</td>
<td>3643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A./B.A. (Hons)</td>
<td>124645</td>
<td>71533</td>
<td>196178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.Com./B.Com. (Hons)</td>
<td>31353</td>
<td>17018</td>
<td>48371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Not Known Faculty/ Distance Learning)</td>
<td>38754</td>
<td>27445</td>
<td>66199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the there is gender disparity in literacy among the Scheduled Tribes, many questions raised at different forums related to: i) constraints in increasing girl’s enrolment at school level, ii) education and training opportunities for girls, and iii) facilities at secondary training institutions to allow women to enroll? At some part of the universe religion is a major constraint to girls and women’s education. The weight of socio-cultural and religious belief and attitudes remain very strong and play an important role in education and development of girl’s children. Less enrolment of girls in the tribal areas demands to investigate different factors which are affecting overall situation of girls’ education. Parents’ attitude is central point in these circumstances. Parents’ attitudes and behaviours reflect the cultural and social picture of this tribal community (Dash et al., 2013).

The education is a fundamental right that provides opportunities for socio-economic uplift. The girl child is deliberately denied and the future opportunity of the total development. The reasons associated with not educating girl child are financial constraints, early marriages, submissiveness, motherhood, and parental perception of education on women’s worldview. Girls have no say on the topic of education. It is entirely parents’ decision. Regarding their aspiration to educate their daughters, the parents in the four communities had different response. More than half of them wanted to send their daughters to schools but others thought it was useless. In absence of hired labour the girls, work at home and fields is of utmost importance and all considered the fact that eventually the girls have to get married and start their families. Where parents are enthusiastic about educating their daughters, they enroll their daughters in schools but rarely allow them to complete their schooling. The girls study up to primary or middle level and get married. Sometimes girls are withdrawn from school after three years (when they have learned to write their names) to work, with preference for education given to boys (Bhasin, 2007).
Literacy for tribal women aims at giving them better knowledge of tribal development in particular and national development in general, thereby enabling them to raise their standard of living and simultaneously giving them enough expertise in agriculture and industry so as make them produce more and earn more in their respective capacities. Education in the modern world is not only a process of learning and becoming wise but also a tool at one’s command to survive in this age of competition. However, cynical this view may be, it is a fact of life and those who are equipped with education of a formal kind, are the achievers, and those who have not acquired or have been denied this tool, are at a tremendous disadvantage vis-à-vis modern living because it is no longer possible in this world today for any society to remain untouched by modern civilization. Hence, education amongst tribal women who are considered most backward needs to be examined and developed.

**Socio-economic Status of Tribal Women:**

The status of women can be measured in terms of degree of equality and freedom enjoyed by them (Bala, 2004). Equal participation of women with men in decision making, free expression of their views and participation in the community life help them to get recognized in the society. The power of expression and ability to solve problems through their views and ideas, make women capable of getting attention from everyone. The financial independence along with employment opportunity makes a woman capable of asserting her voice in community as well as in the family.

After independence, the Constitution of India has provided a framework for equal opportunities to men and women by granting them equal political, economic, and social rights. Since then more than half a century has passed but have not produced results close to the desirable level. Women in India still now are largely confined to the domestic chores of life.
Social culture and status of women is different among different individual and indigenous tribes. Unlike non-tribal societies, it is understood that the tribal societies have given special status to their women (Mitra, 2007) who is considered to be better than the practices in Hindu societies. In Bhutia community the tribal women play a vital role in domestic economy. They have a major share in contributing to the family income. They hardly allow women to participate in formal political decision making process, but they are often consulted by their male counterparts (Bhasin, 2007). In few tribal societies the land matriarchy is also practiced. But then also the land in reality is managed and control by men. Indigenous women’s right to land is usually only a nominal right. Ownership normally rests with their fathers, brother or husbands. Men therefore tend to have greater control over agriculture production and product.

Tribes too have son preference but do not discriminate against girls by female infanticide or sex determination tests. Boys and girls do not have similar inheritance laws. Tribal girls do not inherit land, except in matrilineal societies or under special circumstances. Nonetheless they are not abused, hated, or subjected to strict social norms. Tribal girls are free to participate in social events, dancing and other recreational programmes. There is no dowry on marriage. Among tribes, the father of the bridegroom pays a bride price to the father of the girl. Widowed or divorced women are free to marry again. As incidence of child labour is high among the tribes, girls are no exception. Girls care for younger siblings, perform household jobs and work in the fields along with their brothers. This leaves no time for education of girls; consequently there is gender gap in education. Both boys and girls are equally exposed to hazards, infections and undernourishments. Infant and child mortality among tribal is high due to poverty and its related malnutrition for both boys and girls. However, all household members are heavily involved in agriculture and subsistence tasks, and that all family members contribute long hours each day to the household economy.
In many of the tribes girls are not considered as burden because of their economic value. In few tribes girls participate in all types of work at home and agricultural activities along with their mothers. The girls are trained to be good housewives and motherhood, together with behavioural pattern that are consistent with obedience, being ladylike and as expected passive. While boys are trained in the fields or pastures under the supervision of their fathers or in the educational institutions, the girls are trained at homes under the strict supervision of their mothers. They are taught to take care of their homes and household work. They act as pseudo-parents and look after their siblings. If they have spare time in spite of all these activities and obtain permission from their parents then they may go to school.

The concept of patriarchy prevails in all the four societies, yet views regarding inheritance were different among the four groups. The inheritance of household property is determined by customary laws. Married women in almost tribes carry out all types of work at home as well as outside that are demand of mixed agro-pastoral economy. Apart from looking after the house, children and cattle major portion of the agriculture is done by women who do weeding, hoeing, harvesting and threshing. Role of women is not only of importance in economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important.

The role of women in childbirth, funerals and fairs and festivals is an important part of village life. In the tribal areas, women are carriers of traditional information in absence of written records. They are crucial actors in the preservation and dissemination of such knowledge. They are not only competent food producers and house makers but are also the transmitters of rich local oral traditions.

Women play an important role in their household economy. They work in most operations of all sectors of the local economy and for longer hours each day than men. In addition to the domestic and reproductive activities associated
with household maintenance they also collect and gather free goods especially fuel, fodder and water. Tribal women operate effectively in most economic and social institutions, participating in both local and migrant labour activities. Women’s autonomy in terms of decision-making is highly constrained among tribals. They have little access to, and exercise limited control over resources; and few are free from threat and violence at the hands of their husbands. Working for wages is not necessarily an indicator of autonomy. The wage earning tribal women cannot make the decision to work on their own, nor do they have control over their earnings. The marriage pattern and family ties ensure that women are not cut off from family support.

Tribal women recognize the fact that they have been discriminated against in education, income, consumption, status and access to power; they have a worse health record than men; they suffer from social, cultural and legal discrimination and often from violence. They are discriminated on grounds of equity (which refers to equality of opportunities and choices) and efficiency. There is need for quantitative measurement, for a complete set of cultural and rights indicators to assess women’s rights.

Earlier when a woman was working on her farm or collecting minor forest produce from the forest for her family, she felt belonged to it. However with the change in scenario, when she has to do the labour work, she has to collect forest produce for the other agencies, her economic role becomes different. They feel as they are working as unskilled labourers, it does not help in improving their position. Providing skilled training to women may help in elevating their status. Tribal women insist on a need based plan for providing work on year round basis, in line with the multiple occupational pattern of their work.

Few tribal women are free from threat and violence at the hands of their husbands. Violence often becomes a tool to socialize family members according to prescribed norms of behaviour with an overall perspective of male
dominance and control. Kelkar situates violence against women ‘in the socio-economic and political context of power relations’ and it should include ‘exploitation, discrimination, upholding of unequal economic and social structures, the creation of an atmosphere of terror, threat or reprisal and forms of religo-cultural and political violence (Kelkar, 1991). However, the violence in the form of female feticide and infanticide suffered by women of other castes and communities it seems is not present among tribals.

Tribal women take pleasure in their voting rights and majority of women exercise their right. Most of them follow the advice of their husbands or some of them are under pressure to accept the wishes of their husbands.

Tribal women have no personal opinion on the women’s movement in the other parts of the world on the reproductive health issue as a part of women’s reproductive rights. They are not comfortable with the idea of women regulating their own fertility. Though they do manage to have abortion with crude methods but men tackle major issues of planning the family. However, the women’s reproductive health problems are originated in gender inequalities, control of power and resources.

The common beliefs, customs and practices connected with health and disease have been found to be intimately related to the treatment of disease. It is necessary to make a holistic view of all the cultural dimensions of the health of a community. In most of the tribal communities, there is a wealth of folklore related to health. Documentation of this folklore available in different socio-cultural systems may be very rewarding and could provide a model for appropriate health and sanitary practices in a given eco-system. Maternal and child care is an important aspect of health seeking behaviour which is largely neglected among the tribal groups (Basu and Jindal, 1990). Health and treatment are closely interrelated with the environment, particularly the forest ecology. Many tribal groups use different parts of a plant not only for the treatment of diseases, but for population control as well (Chaudhuri, 1990).
There exists a definite nexus between forests and nutrition. It has been noted by many that tribals living in remote areas have a better overall status and eat a more balanced diet than tribals living in less remote, forest free areas. The mode of utilization of available natural resources often determines the long term impact on health (Basu, 1993).

Tribal speak little of status and roles when talking about their social life. What they do talk of are the skills for managing the environment for making a living. They also talk of marriage, married life, children, and their socialization within a community of relationships.

The Indian family has many forms and on the status of women, not only in terms of the number and quality of relationships to which they have to adapt and the distribution of functions and roles, but also with regard to the allocation of resources. In the study area nuclear, joint, polygamous nuclear, polygamous joint, polyandrous nuclear, polyandrous joint and extended types of families are present. The beliefs and ideas held by locals have a vital influence on the lives of the men, women and children. For one thing, it reinforces the gender division of work, place, tools and language. According to religious beliefs, women are considered impure, that is why they are not allowed to use plough and interact with supernatural beings directly. The present position and condition of the tribal women is not an accidental affair. It has evolved because of the operation of several forces in the past. The economic cycle and division of labour in the tribal areas has given an important role to the women. This economic role has undoubtedly affected the social position of women, who have social freedom that is quite remarkable in its scope. There is cultural similarity among the different tribal groups in the respective areas under study, as the women from different areas have the similar economic roles to play, necessitated by the demands of environment to grow food for their own consumption. The economic value and worth of women therefore as (a) an independent and necessary unit of economic activity without which the given economic system will not survive, (b) as complementary to the men as work
force, in the organized functioning of the whole economic system. Role of women is not only of importance in economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important. Women’s role as wives, mothers, organizers and as the basic foundation of other dimensions of social life is of utmost importance. The tribal women in these areas occupy an economically significant place that is reflected in the generally high position and the importance that they have. The socioeconomic equality of sexes can be observed in the attitudes and practices concerning marriage, divorce and household harmony. The tribal women work very hard, in some cases even more than the men. However, these women are not backward. They have power in their own sphere, no men tell them what to do. They are responsible for their own share of work and share the benefits of their own work as long as the unit of production and consumption remains the home. Their own perception and that of their men, is that women share major share of socio-economic activities and consequently they are respected, well thought of and think well of themselves. The concept of patriarchy, which prevails in subsistence societies, conveys respect rather than envy between the genders (Illich, 1982). Despite the fact that tribal women live their lives as dependents throughout their life cycle: as daughters, sisters, and wives; or as mothers of sons, they have far more power and independence than modern sub-urban housewives. A woman always has it in her power to leave her husband if she is angry, dissatisfied or unhappy. She has great freedom of movement as children, if any, remain with the husband. Her labour is sufficiently in demand so that she can move not only back to her natal family but also to a sister’s husband’s house or a more distant kinsmen’s house. She can stay there till such times as she returns to her husband’s house or finds a new one. There is no great need for her to return to the natal village although this is the usual practice. Whenever a man in these regions acts on an assumption that his authority will be accepted simply because he is a man and fails to take into account the wishes or feelings of his wife, sister or daughter, he often gets himself into trouble. There is no way for a man to force women’ compliance with his
wishes. Her economic ability and consequent social position has resulted in special institutional privileges that are bestowed on the women. In spite of having freedom they seldom have a voice in the political sphere. They are not ignored at household level, but are not given due credit and importance in political and religious subjects. They are like invisible hands shaping and maintaining the structure of society.

Tribal women receive only a small share of developmental opportunities. They are often excluded from education or from better jobs; from political systems or from adequate health care. Even as doors to education and health opportunities have opened speedily for women, the entry to religious and political fields is still not effortless.

Even in the economic field, if they are working outside the household, they have an unequal situation in the labour market. They are treated unequally under social welfare systems that affect their status and power in the family. Women receive a small share of credit from formal banking institutions, as they have no collateral to offer. Women normally receive a much lower average wage than men. They are paid less than men for equal work.

Before the 1980s it was assumed that all women shared a common subjugation, and reasons for their oppression were open to explanation. However multiculturalism and identity politics overcame this consensus and set the debate about differences. Full range of social and cultural institutions, which reproduce gender hierarchies and gender-based inequalities include legal equality and excess to education and health. In the tribal areas under study the economic cycle and division of labour in the area has given an important role to the women.

Work participation is influenced by a combination of number of social, economic, cultural and demographic factors. This economic role has undoubtedly affected the social position of women, who have social freedom
that is quite remarkable in its scope. There is cultural similarity among the
different groups in the study area, as the women from different tribes have the
same economic roles to play, necessitated by the demands of environment to
grow food for their own consumption. The economic value and worth of
women therefore is as without which the given economic system will not
survive, complementary to the men as work force, in organized functioning of
the whole economic system. Women exhibit ingenuity, creativity and initiative
in solving their daily problems of sustenance and survival and often
demonstrate organizational skills as revealed during labour exchange (mutual
aid groups) and communal service ventures. These social networks are
important for the local economies. This cultural acceptance of the fact of their
raised status gives them a voice in household affairs that is almost equal to their
husbands. The economic power of the women in the household is not translated
into a corresponding community authority. The male head, which is custodian
of property, manages the family finance. Selections of the bridegroom for the
daughter or sister, acquisition or disposal of property are all domains of the
male members or eldest male. In spite of a substantial contribution in the
subsistence economy, a women’s right is not recognized in the transmission of
landed property and this makes her dependent upon men. The socioeconomic
equality of sexes can only be seen in the attitudes and practices concerning
marriage, divorce and household harmony.

   Men dominate in public, in social and religious affairs, and continue to
play the role of the head of the family and breadwinner, women enjoy a greater
say in their family life, they have a greater deal of social freedom and several
of their actions are condoned/tolerated (Bhasin, 1991).

Political Status of Tribal Women:

   The 73rd Constitutional Amendment and Karnataka’s 1983 and 1993
Panchayat Raj Acts, provided for the reservation of seats in local government
for women and other disadvantaged sections such as Scheduled Castes,
Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, is a positive step towards equal opportunity in politics. However, such provisions did not result in equal and effective participation of tribal women in local governance. While gender inequality in political participation is applicable to women in general, the tribal women are also confronted with problems arising out of their social and economic position. The perception of tribal women’s role in local governance was to a large extent influenced by the position of tribals in the social hierarchy. The provision for representation of women in the institutions of local governance therefore did not result in equal sharing of power.

There were differences between tribes on certain issues. The conflict was between tribal groups who considered themselves as the original tribal groups (such as Soligas, Jenu Kurubas and Betta Kurubas) and the groups who were recently included into the Scheduled Tribe list (Parivara Nayakas). There was a perception among the former group of tribals that the Nayakas played a dominant role in the panchayats in association with non-tribal representatives. The inclusion of Nayakas was considered a political decision and had nothing to do with their being a tribal group. The common perception was that if the non-tribal groups use the benefits of representation in local governance the development interests of the tribal population will not be taken up by the panchayats.

**Health Conditions of Tribal Women:**

Health is a prerequisite for human development and is an essential component for the well being of the mankind. The health problems of any community are influenced by interplay of various factors including social, economic and political ones. The common beliefs, customs, practices related to health and disease in turn influence the health seeking behaviour of the community (ICMR, 1998).
Tribal communities are mostly forest dwellers. Their health system and medical knowledge over ages known as ‘Traditional Health Care System’ depends up on the herbal and the psychosomatic lines of treatment. While plants, flowers, seeds, animals and other naturally available substances formed the major basis of treatment, this practice always had a touch of mysticism, supernatural and magic, often resulting in specific magico-religious rites (Balgir, 1997). Faith healing has always been a part of the traditional treatment in the Tribal Health Care System, which can be equated with rapport or confidence building in the modern treatment procedure. Health problems and health practices of tribal communities have been profoundly influenced by the interplay of complex social, cultural, educational, economic and political practices.

One of the major problems of tribal groups concerns their health and sickness. For certain reasons, the disease and sickness, prevalent in tribal societies, have not received much attention and health services. Responsibility of this situation can be attributed to both providers of health services (generally outsider-their attitude, behaviour, commitment, etc.) and tribal groups themselves- their life style, i.e., custom, practices and above all their compulsions on which they hardly have any control. Life style and cultural practices including subsistence, diets, occupation, habits, ceremonial/ritualistic customs, other cultural practices and environment, influence the susceptibility to certain diseases. From an overview of the distribution pattern of the tribes, it becomes evidently clear that the tribals inhabit hostile terrains. Invariably these areas are highly endemic zones for Malaria and other infectious diseases. Due to the absence of safe drinking water, proper sanitation and hygiene, coupled with primitive health practices, a number of diseases breed obviously leading to higher mortality and morbidity rates among the tribals. Even they believe in orthodox ideas to cure their illness and generally due to negligence, they do not prefer to visit the health centres. Even in many of the remote areas and forest areas, where the tribals are living, there is no availability of health infrastructure. This has become a major problem for the tribals. Following health indicators have proved the same.
Table No. 1.6. Health Indicators of Tribal and Non-Tribal Population in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Tribal</th>
<th>Non-Tribal or National</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neo-natal Mortality</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Mortality</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 Mortality</td>
<td>101.6</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fertility Rate</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Currently using any Contraception</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant Mothers who received ante-natal care from a Health Professional</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers Who Received post-natal care from a Health Professional within 2 days of delivery for their last birth</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Assisted by a Health Professional</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Mortality means deaths per 1000 live births.

The health and nutrition problems of the vast tribal population of India were as varied as the tribal groups themselves who presented a bewildering diversity and variety in their socio-economic, socio-cultural and ecological settings. The nutritional problems of different tribal communities located at various stages of development were full of obscurities and very little scientific information on dietary habits and nutrition status was available due to lack of systematic and comprehensive research investigations. Malnutrition was common and greatly affected the ability to resist infection, led to chronic illness and in the post weaning period led to permanent brain impairment (Basu, 1993).

Maternal malnutrition which was quite common among the tribal women was also a serious health problem, especially for those having many pregnancies too closely spaced, and reflected the complex socio-economic factors that affected their overall situation. The nutritional status of pregnant women directly influenced their reproductive performance and the birth is crucial to an infant's chances of survival and to its subsequent growth and development. Nutrition also affected location and breast feeding which were key elements in the health of infants and young children and a contributory factor in birth spacing.
Utilization of health and maternal health services is influenced by the characteristics of the health delivery system such as the availability, quality and the cost of the services. However, it does not necessarily mean that if medical services are operational in an area all women are expected to avail the facility. It may be true that, even under the same conditions of availability, the response is different. Other factors such as social structure and status of women are equally important. In many cases, women could not take the decision on their own about going to health centres. It was not only peer pressure but lack of education was the deciding factor.

The health care services and challenges in rural and tribal areas are a complicated phenomenon such as:

- Concept of health and disease is rather traditional which results in their not seeking treatment at an early stage of physical maladjustment and frequent refusal of preventive measures in rural areas and their idea of medical care is some treatment not easily accessible and available. Lack of motivation of people for availing medical care at the initial stage of the disease.
- Limited paying capacity or habit of getting treatment always free of cost.
- Comparative inaccessibility of medical care services due to under-developed communication and transport facilities.
- Non-availability of qualified medical practitioner in the village.
- Qualified health workers and professional medical and paramedical staff do not want to work in rural and tribal areas because of professional, personal and social reasons.
- Non-availability of private or governmental doctor as and when need arises.

There is a consensus agreement that the health status of the tribal population is very poor and worst among the primitive tribes because of their isolation, remoteness and being largely unaffected by the developmental
processes going on in the country. To enable health and nutrition of the tribals, the Government has set up, Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres, Auxiliary Mid Wives (ANMs), etc., at rural areas, hilly areas and remote areas in forests.

**Development of the Scheduled Tribes:**

The constitution has given more than 20 articles on the redressed and upliftment of underprivileged with policies on positive discrimination and affirmative action with reference to Scheduled Tribes.

- Article 14 confers equal rights and opportunities to all
- Article 15 prohibits discrimination against any citizen on the grounds of sex, religion, race, caste etc;
- Article 15 (4) States to make special provisions for advancement of any socially educationally backward classes;
- Article 16 (4) empowers the state to make provisions for reservation in appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens, which in the opinion of state, is not adequately represented.
- Article 46 state to promote with special cares the educational and economic interests of the weaker section, especially the ST and protects the social injustice and all form of exploitation.
- Article 275 grant–in aid for promoting the welfare of ST and raising the level of administration
- Article 330 - Seats shall be reserved in the House of the People for -Article 332 Reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Legislative Assemblies of the States 332,335 stipulates the claims that the members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes shall be taken into consideration, consistently with the maintenance of efficiency of administration, in the making of appointments to services and posts in connection with the affairs of the Union or of a State.
Article 244(1) tribal welfare communities to be setup for the welfare of the tribes.

Article 22(2) 73rd and 74th amendments - to ensure effective participation of tribal in the process of planning and decision making.

Extension to scheduled Areas Act 1996. Amendments of Constitution are extended to the Scheduled Areas through Panchayats.

These constitutional provisions of the Government of India helped in the development of the tribes and their education and the efforts of Government of India are continued with formulation of welfare schemes for the Scheduled Tribes. Government of Karnataka also formulated many of the social welfare schemes for the development of the Scheduled Tribes in the State.

The national programmes that are implemented by the Government of Karnataka recognize the importance of an all round development of tribal people through special and targeted planning. Allocations were made in the Five Year Plans on various programmes for tribal communities. It was intended that specifically targeted programmes would quicken the process of economic development among these groups. From the third Five Year Plan there has been an increase in the institutions such as Tribal Development Blocks to facilitate development work undertaken for tribal populations. The Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP) was started during the fifth Five Year Plan in the Scheduled Areas. Five ITDPs were set in Chikkmagalur, Kodagu, Mysore and Dakshina Kannada. Although Karnataka is not a Scheduled Area, ITDPs were set up in areas where there are tribal groups designated as ‘primitive’. However, these programmes were not successful in ameliorating the economic and social conditions of the tribals.

Displacement is major problem of the tribals and consequent frequent disruption of the livelihood practices and acute poverty make survival and subsistence the main issues among these groups. Most of the tribal settlements lacked basic amenities such as drinking water, proper housing, sanitation, health
and transport facilities. Women were not engaged in any gainful work for most of the year, as collecting minor forest produce was a seasonal activity. Getting wage work was also difficult and they have to migrate to Kodagu or Kerala or commute more than 25 Kms to get work. Men often migrated while the women remained at home without being engaged in economically productive work.

The Tribal Sub-Plans in the fifth and sixth Five Year Plans were ambitious programmes aimed at economic development of tribal populations. During the seventies, the expectation was that the general development programmes would cater to the needs of these weaker sections and would provide the much needed thrust as an additive to the general efforts. This has not occurred. Further, the special provisions for the welfare and development of the backward classes began to supplant rather than supplement the general sector provisions. It was in this context that the two innovative strategies of the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for STs and the Special Component Plan (SCP) for SCs, were launched during 1974 and 1979 respectively. These two special strategies were expected to ensure that all the general development sectors, at the Central and State levels, earmarked funds for SCs and STs in proportion to their population so that adequate benefits from all the sectors concerned flow to these two disadvantaged groups.

The objective of the Tribal Sub Plan are:

- To enable tribal families, both in ITDP areas and non-ITDP areas to come out of poverty;
- To lay down policies which will protect tribal culture and promote tribal welfare;
- To provide a basic minimum infrastructure to tribal habitants; and
- To accelerate social and economic progress and remove the obstacles in development.
In Karnataka, the Tribal Sub Plan has been implemented since 1996-97. There are also special grants to augment the programmes under the Sub-Plan from the Central Government under the Special Central Assistance Scheme. For the year 1997-98 an amount of 8288.55 lakhs under the state plan and 59.54 lakhs under the special central assistance were allotted for the Tribal Sub-Plan. Under this scheme various departments were involved in development planning for tribal communities. The impact has been limited because of low allocation for programmes under the sub-plans. Except for a few cases when they were included as beneficiaries in government schemes of various departments, tribal groups living in areas surrounded by forests and hills are yet to experience the benefits of state intervention. The forest areas that have tribal concentrations do not have adequate health, education, transport and other basic services. The sporadic medical facility the government extends through mobile units is mainly confined to inoculations. Although they reduce mortality rates these medical facilities are far from meeting the medical requirements throughout the year. It is evident from the examination of the tribal sub-plan and various schemes that were implemented as a part of it that no special programme was designed for tribal women.

A similar effort at tribal development though central assistance was setting up of the State Tribal Development Co-operative Corporations. The programme was started in 1992-93. Under this programme, Large Multipurpose Co-operative Societies (LAMPS) were set up. Mysore, Kodagu, Chikkamagalur and Dakshina Kannada were the districts where LAMPS were started. The main function of the LAMPS is marketing the minor forest produce collected by the tribals and arranging for financial assistance to the tribals through public sector banks. The functioning and effectiveness of the LAMPS need to be examined considering the low profits of these cooperatives. It needs to be mentioned here that no special effort was made either to enrol women as members of these cooperatives or to promote co-operatives for tribal women under the Tribal Co-operative Marketing Federation (TRIFED) in Karnataka. In addition to the efforts of the Government,
there are also developmental programmes formed by the Non-Governmental Organizations and voluntary agencies at different tribal areas aimed for the welfare and development of the tribes. The Scheduled Tribe women are facing many types of problems and due to developmental programmes and schemes of the government, the education level of ST women is increasing. Consequently, there is considerable changes in the status of Scheduled Tribe women. Hence, the present study is made to explore the socio-economic and educational changes of the Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district.

1.2. Statement of the Problem:

As discussed above, the Scheduled Tribes are groups of different tribes. They have their own social culture and now due to the privileges provided by the Indian Constitution, they are getting reservation in education and employment. But, each of theScheduled Tribe is following their own social culture and traditions pertaining different social aspects. As many of the tribes are still living in forest areas, they are deprived from education, health, etc., which are located at urban areas. Women are deprived sections among the Scheduled Tribes. Hence, the present study is made to know about the socio-economic and educational change among the Scheduled Tribes and the study is stated as “Socio-economic and Educational Changes among Scheduled Tribe Women: A Sociological Study of Koppal District”.

1.3. Significance of the Study:

Each of the tribe classified under the Scheduled Tribe was engaged in a different occupation related to the nature, society and forests and even few of the tribes engaged in agriculture. Further, in many of the tribes women are playing significant role in co-ordinating the family based occupations. Due to the impact of globalization and displacement projects, tribal population is migrated to urban areas. Due to the welfare schemes of the government, few of the tribal people are getting educated and are employed in organized sector. Earlier, in few of the tribes, the females were not having equal status compared
to males in the tribal society, even though participating in the employment. Due to the impact of education, many of the ST women are also employed in organized sector. Consequently, their socio-economic status is also changed. Hence, the present study is proposed to explore the socio-economic and educational changes among the Scheduled Tribe women. The present study is proved significant to analyze the change in the status of women in Scheduled Tribes.

1.4. Objectives of the Study:

As already discussed, the present study is analyzed the socio-economic and educational change among the Scheduled Tribe women and the specific objectives are:

1. To know about the socio-economic background of the Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district;
2. To find out the educational development among the Scheduled Tribe women;
3. To analyze whether women are getting equal status in the society with men due to the educational development;
4. To look into the social culture of Scheduled Tribes; and
5. To gain information on the social welfare schemes formulated by the government for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribe women and to check whether the Scheduled Tribe women have got the benefits from these schemes.

1.5. Hypotheses:

Following are the hypotheses for the present study.

1. Education is major factor in influencing the gender equality among the Scheduled Tribes.
2. There is significant difference between the life styles of the Scheduled Tribe women living in urban areas and rural areas.
3. Education and employment are major impact factors for social change among the Scheduled Tribe women.

4. Cultural and traditional beliefs among the majority of the Scheduled Tribe women have no influence of education.

5. Health status is influenced by urban/ rural and educational level of Scheduled Tribe women.

1.6. Limitations of the Study:

As discussed in the methodology, the study is limited to the Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district. To get the responses from women from all the occupations, all the occupations were chosen as stated in the research methodology. Further, it is not possible for the researcher to survey and collect primary data from the all the Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district, the present study is based on survey 500 Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district. Hence, the present study is limited to 500 Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district.

1.7. Chapter Scheme:

The present study is structured into seven chapters with two appendixes as under.

The first chapter provided brief background information to the research topic such as Scheduled Tribes, tribal women and different aspects related to Scheduled Tribe women. Here research problem is stated clearly. The significance of the study is also discussed. The clear aims and objectives are discussed. The scope and limitations are stated in this chapter. Some generalizations and assumptions are fixed as hypothesis of the study. The first chapter will be written under the title “Introduction to the Study.”
Before conducting the present study, it is necessary to know about the research gap in the studies that are already conducted. Hence, the studies already conducted and published already in the secondary literature such as research papers, books, journals, articles, conference and seminar papers that are published will be reviewed in the second chapter under the title “Review of Literature”.

Methodology is significant to conduct every research study. The methodology covers the sources of information used such as primary sources and secondary sources. The concepts used in the research are defined in the methodology. It covers the step-by-step process in the present research work and the methodology is described in third chapter under the title “Sources and Methodology”.

Area or location plays an important role in the status and development of the people. As such it is also applicable to the Scheduled Tribe women in Koppal district. Hence, there is need to study on the Koppal district in particular. The fourth chapter covered the area, demography, population, literacy, education, employment, occupation, environment, etc., of the Koppal district under the title “Area of the Study”.

Collection of primary data and its analysis, so as to derive findings is main part of the research study. The collected primary data is classified and presented in tables. The primary data is analyzed and interpreted using percentages. Further, statistical techniques are applied to get the authenticity of the data. The primary data collected from the Scheduled Tribe women on socio-economic change is analyzed and discussed in the fifth chapter under the title “Socio-economic Change Among Scheduled Tribe Women”.

Economic change in terms of the occupations, income, properties owned by tribal women is also main criterion to determine the overall change of Scheduled Tribe women. As such, primary data collected on the economic
change among the Scheduled Tribe women is discussed in the sixth chapter under the title “Economic Change”.

After the analysis and interpretation of the primary data, certain findings are derived from the study and summaries of the study are stated. Useful suggestions will be given for development of the socio-economic and educational status of the Scheduled Tribe women. Further, the research study is concluded. Hence, the seventh chapter is written under the title “Findings and Conclusion”.

Apart from the above stated seven chapters, two appendixes are given at the end covering Bibliography and Interview Schedule. The research papers, books, Journal articles etc. that are used and relevant to the present study are listed in appendix-1 under the title ‘Bibliography’. The Interview Schedule used to collect Primary data is given in appendix-2.
1.8. References:


