CHAPTER-V

ECONOMY AND LIVELIHOOD OF THE HILL SAORAS

Part-II

In the last chapter we have examined the traditional modes of subsistence and found the level of dependency of people over the four types of economic activities. It interrogated that how the Hill Saoras have been deriving their survival need from these sources of economy. The present chapter is an extension of the previous chapter, which tries to examine the emergence of non-indigenous or new sources of livelihood and their support for the survival of the Hill Saoras. The new sources include horticulture, wage labour (migration and native labour) and miscellaneous activities, which originated with the impact of modern institutional economic set-up. The chapter will examine the support derived by the Hill Saoras to maintain a self-sustained life and survival and to see how the socio-economic status of the people has improved.

The level of adaptability to and the techno-cultural efficiencies of a given ecological setting are the key factors in determining the basis of livelihood of a particular community. Any transformation in their economy is subjected to a disturbance in the ecological setting or adjustment to their techno-cultural efficiency or a combination of both. The economy of indigenous community is witnessing a continuous impact of modern institutional economies. This is evident from the fact of the emergence of new economic typologies into the traditional means of subsistence. For Vidyarthi and Rai “the best approach to the identification of the change would be to

consider the different new economic activities and development on one hand and the description of a few resultant forms of economies which have emerged on the other." The continuous pressure of many external agencies, the indigenous modes of subsistence is transformed to the modern system of market economy. The agencies responsible for this transformation are not only modern institutions or economy but also cultural and social, which determines economic change.

The indigenous economy of the Hill Saoras has undergone a significant transformation. A complete classification of the economic types, from the early gathering and collecting mode of livelihood to the present non-indigenous institutional stage are given in the previous chapter in figure no. 4.1. Besides the indigenous sources of livelihood, the figure has presented three main non-indigenous sources of subsistence which is divided into three categories: (i) horticulture, (ii) wage labour, which includes migration and native labour category, and (iii) miscellaneous activities. The miscellaneous activities include petty thekedari, service, petty shop-keeping, mechanical, etc., in which a very few people are engaged.

5.1 HORTICULTURE

Horticulture has been given top priority under the development programmes launched through the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Lanjia Saora Development Agency (LSDA), District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and some non-governmental organisations.

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3 The Lanjia Saora Development Agency is covering and working only for Sagada Gram Panchayat. So its activity is only limited to the Sagada G.P. But there are other agencies working for the Puttisingi and other Saora areas including for the population of Sagada G.P.
The main objective of the horticultural programme was to check soil erosion which resulted due to continuous swidden cultivation and large-scale impact of deforestation on natural ecosystem and livelihood of the Hill Saoras. The scheme also intended to improve the standard and quality of life of the poor Hill Saoras by providing alternative means of survival and economic opportunities. Among the species introduced through horticulture the most dominant one is cashew-nut. The purpose was for the plantation of cashew-nut in swidden plots so that the lands cultivated for continuous swiddening can be reduced and the pressure on land can be minimized. At the same time, it helps the people to get better income to support their livelihood. The cashew plantation, on the other hand, needs very less effort and investment in comparison to the swidden. The fundamental objective of cashew plantation is to check soil erosion and completely abandon the practice of swidden cultivation. The economic life of the Hill Saoras is fast changing towards the modern market economy. In the environment of insufficiency, from the traditional mode of subsistence, government has trying to create new avenues for living among which horticulture is one of them.

The Government agencies who are working in good pace in the areas are motivating the people to grow horticultural species in their homestead and swidden plots. The main aim of these agencies is to bring the shifting cultivation down in the hill slopes on account of soil erosion and massive deforestation through alternative means of livelihood. Horticulture as one of the viable means thought of by the government agencies, through which cashew plantation together with fruits and vegetable cultivation are promoted. In the initial period, people were reluctant to adopt cashew plantation and were not responding positively. Very few Saoras get convinced through the motivation campaign of the LSDA and accepted only on an
experimental basis. In the subsequent period, as the crop started giving better cash return, the people began to accept horticulture voluntarily. The people, who had not taken interest in the beginning, took much interest when they found good production.

In comparison to the uphill swidden lands, homestead lands are largely diverted to cashew plantation. The homestead lands are of two categories in terms of ownership: one is legal ownership and the other is hereditary possession without having legal documents.

In the beginning, there was a little protest from the people. Two important reasons may be cited in this regard. First, they had no idea about those crops, thus could not grow them properly. Second, they felt that in future no more hill slopes would be available to them for swidden cultivation, which may make them lose their subsistence for survival. However, during the later period, the Hill Saoras have realised its economic benefits and took it as a good support for their survival.

The cashew plantation programme actually started before 1990 by soil conservation department with the coordination of ITDA and DRDA. It came through LSDA later for implementation since 1992. The first intervention of horticulture programme started from cashew nut (Anacardium occidentale). Cashew nut is called Allaijir in Sora and locally called Bhallia. The motivation was that it will be produced within three to four years and people will be highly benefited in terms of cash. It got a very good response from those who possess enough of paddy lands, swidden plots, and homestead and foot hill lands, because they could divert some of their swidden lands for cashew.

\[\text{4 The information gathered from the field officer working in the micro-project of LSDA, for Sagada G.P.}\]
plantation and manage their subsistence from the paddy. The people who possessed very little lands did not take much interest in cashew plantation fearing to lose their subsistence. But after four/five years when yield came out in cashew field and gave good source of income, the poor and marginal families also got attracted and diverted some of their swidden and homestead lands for cashew cultivation. The people have realised that money is vital for survival in the present socio-economic situation.

Since a long, the idea of market economy has penetrated into the Saoras territory. The concept of market economy took a leading role in preference to the need-based and subsistence economy. Thus, realising the market value and economic support from cashew cultivation to the family it is now found that more than half of the hill slopes have been converted to cashew fields. In comparison to swidden cultivation the monetary value and labour in put of cashew cultivation is much beneficial as has been observed by many Hill Saora farmers, therefore, accepted it without giving much thought on it. There has been substantial improvement in the livelihood of average number of families from cashew cultivation. However, although it is providing good economic support temporarily it also has created a cause of concern for its impact on soil fertility and viability in long term. Therefore, the observation and perception of the Hill Saoras on the advantages and disadvantages of cashew plantation are mentioned below:

5.1.1 Advantages of Cashew Cultivation

Green covers are seen over the barren lands. Due to the impact of deforestation the conditions of the hill slopes are looking barren. With the plantation of cashew tree the barren hills are at least looking green.
Good amount of cash income give people additional support for better survival. It has improved the standard of living of the average population of the Hill Saoras by giving good amount of cash income for their survival.

The input of labour in cashew cultivation in comparison to the swidden cultivation is very less. Some of the Saoras opine that there is no grass grown under the cashew tree hence there is not much need of weeding and clearing the grasses from the cashew fields.

In the opinion of the people they are getting good food in comparison to their earlier positions. As it gives good amount of income the money is being used for purchase of rice from the Public Distribution System (PDS) which is quite cheaper and affordable in comparison to the market. The food habit has been changing. The people are now eating rice and vegetables than gruel prepared from sorghum and millet.

Change in life styles. The cash income from the horticulture is also helping the people to send their children to school. They are now adopting modern amenities and attracted towards modern way of life with the support of their good income from cashew cultivation.

5.1.2 Disadvantages of Cashew Cultivation

Marginal land holding families are the worst sufferer. The people having very less size of swidden land and without paddy lands are the worst sufferer. They do not take the risk to covert their swidden land into cashew field. If they do it their families would starve.

Loss of subsistence. The multiple varieties of crops produced in the swidden fields are seriously affected. Swidden as a main source of subsistence
will be forgotten after some eight to ten years if the trend continues. The varieties that were directly produced and consumed in the family are now reduced and the people have to purchase them from the market by paying higher price.

The varieties food crops available from the swidden cultivation provided good and balanced nutrition support is getting reduced.

Some villagers observed that the ground water level is going down near to their habitat because more than seventy five per cent of the homestead lands are covered with cashew plantation.

Impact on soils and fertility. Although cashew-nut is yielding better economy it has drastically hampers the quality of soil. It does not allow any undergrowth. No supplementary crops can be cultivated in cashew fields. Even, the climber crops and many varieties of roots and tubers cannot survive in cashew fields. During rainy season the heavy flow of rain water wash away the upper soil of the cashew fields because there are no shrubs or bushes grown under the plant, which in fact helps to hold the soil and protect from erosion. Hence, the idea of conservation of soil through cashew plantation does not get much impressive outcome as has been thought of by the soil conservation department. Although almost all the Hill Saoras have admitted that they are getting good earning from cashew cultivation and accepted it voluntarily, their view on the conservation and fertility of the soil and its effect on land and survival in future express the cause of worry. In this context, the information collected from focus group discussion (FGD) in different Gaaraasaal (toddy drinking place) reveals the fact that soil condition

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5 The number and names of Gaaraasaal where the focus group discussion are undertaken is mentioned in the chapter on methodology.
and vegetation in these areas are being damaged by cashew-nut plantation. In
the perception of the Hill Saoras cashew nut is dangerous to earth and soil,
although it is providing good economic support to the families. The perennial
sources of water near the cashew plots are getting dry day by day. The people
regard cashew tree as fire for the earth, the roots of which suck plenty of
ground water, which led to the decreasing level of water table under the soil.
No plants or even grass are growing under the cashew tree.

Besides, other horticultural species includes pineapple (*Ananus
compose*), orange (*Citrus signers*), lemon (*Citrus aurentifolia*), guava (*Psidium
guajava*), banana (*Musa sapientum*), papaya (*Carica papaya*), custard apple
(*Annona squamosa*) etc., are cultivated especially in homestead lands. These
crops are not cultivated substantially by the Hill Saoras. The people are not
taking it seriously as a source of survival but as a miscellaneous crop
cultivated for occasional household consumption. The vegetables like, brinjal,
radish, cabbage and variety of gourd, etc., are cultivated in the paddy land
nearest to the water stream. These are also practiced by a very negligible
number of families to supplement their diet, seasonally. However, the trend
of fruit and vegetable cultivation can be improved if the species selected for
cultivation are giving good cash support. This has been observed from the
attitude of the Hill Saora farmers.

5.2 WAGE LABOUR

Wage labour as an economic option is commonly found among the
indigenous population of India, the day modernisation and institutional
economy entered into their territory. Almost majority of the population are
affected by and adopted to this occupation. The Hill Saora is not exception to
this. Wage labour as a supportive means of livelihood of Hill Saoras is divided
into two broad categories: (i) migrant or emigrant labour and (ii) native labour. The former refers to large-scale migration of the people to Assam and other States in search of job and the latter refers to the availability of wage in their own locality.

5.2.1 Migration

The migration of the Hill Saoras may date back to the year 1920 (Vitebsky: 1993) to Assam tea estate as contract labour (Badiban). In subsequent period migration to Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and in recent days Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Surat, Hyderabad and Secundarabad are also extended. The works involved in these places are basically industrial and road and building construction. Out of the above mentioned places, majority of the population migrated to Assam in search of employment. The most vital factors responsible for migration of the Hill Saoras are poverty, unemployment, and better wage earning which are induced by population pressure, environmental degradation and changing style of life.

The Hill Saoras are expert in terrace making evident in their contour building technology in hill slopes and towards the down hill. One will realise the technical skills and effective methods employed by the people in terrace making after directly observing huge and high terrace built on difficult landscape. This technical skill not only helps in creation of new paddy lands from the eroded soil but also shows its effective knowledge of soil conservation and water management during cultivation. This innovative idea of the Hill Saoras does not allow of landslides during rainy season. Besides an effective terrace maker the Hill Saoras are very industrious and hardworking. However, in the initial period of migration the government of British India had preferred the Hill Saoras and recruited them to work in the tea estate in
Assam, because of their skill and expertise in terrace making. The work involved in the tea estate included building of tea garden on hill slopes in terrace type structure, which needed the same jobs and expertise of the Saoras. Therefore, the Hill Saoras were selected as labourers to Assam. They were also well paid by the company, as has been informed by the first migrant family.

Economically, the conditions of the Hill Saoras have been passing through serious challenges. They have been living with a life of financial hardship and poverty. This is because of the existing tradition of frequent animal sacrifice and ancestral worship in healing as well as all other ritual occasions, which has already been mentioned in preceding chapters. That is the reason why the Christianity has made inroad to the society of the Hill Saoras and established their faith. Each and every converts interview are of the opinion that the major cause of poverty and forsaken condition is the existence of the traditional practices of ancestral worship and offering sacrifices to Sonnums in each and every ritual occasions. The heavy and frequent expenditure on healing rituals are the vital cause of sorrow, which makes the poor Saoras families to starve with hunger, is the reference made by the Christianised Saoras. Thus, poverty is one of the main determinants for the migration of Hill Saoras to Assam, first as a worker in tea garden, in search of better or additional source of livelihood and survival.

As a forest living community, forest has been the main resource base for the Hill Saoras and a major part/support of their livelihood has been extracted from the forests. With massive deforestation and increasing pressure of population on the resource base and agricultural land the survival options became insufficient to meet the rising need and challenges of the Hill
Saoras. The increasing pressure of productivity on swidden and terrace cultivation, and forest produce are mounting. Hence, the search for alternative means of survival found inevitable to meet the challenges of poverty. This has forced the migration of the Hill Saoras to Assam for wage earning.

At home the availability of wage earning is very less. With the growth of population the demands for survival increases, as a result, difficulty arises to fulfill the increasing need of the population from the limited available resources and livelihood options. The wage available here are very limited in comparison to the population. This rising leads to unemployment and poverty. On the other hand, the trend of migration since beginning has been continuing in the area. People are coming and going. Thus, the unemployed youth thought it as a better alternative and migrated with their kins or friends.

Due to the lack of sufficient work available in their locality the unemployed Hill Saoras are feeling insecure to get their sustenance. It is also learned from the migrant Saoras that the availability of wage earning is regular in Assam. Besides, the wage they are paid is much better than the wage people are getting at home. It is also learned that some of the first generation migrants are settled and serving in Assam tea estates as permanent employees.

Another important factor which promoted migration to Assam is the influence of modern education and changing life styles of the new generation youth. Mention has already been made about the situation of education and the very scanty representation of the young boys to go beyond matriculation. This is due to the very poor quality of education. Although the trend of
literacy and education is positive, only two to three persons of this Sagada area are passing beyond matriculation, as is reported by the researcher, during fieldwork. However, the numbers of under-matric youth are quite substantial. Now-a-days these younger generations are not interested and feeling shy to work in their agricultural fields as well as wage labour in their own locality. On the other side, it has been traditionally observed that once the son is becoming adult he is automatically burdened or pressured by the social responsibility that he has to be self-dependent and self-sufficient. The youth also feel burden on society or parents if they are not able to lead an independent and self-sufficient life, which has been practising traditionally. But, they feel comfortable and prefer to work in far away places hence, migrate to Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and other States in search for survival.

Last but not the least, some of the Hill Saoras youth are migrating for a different situation, although in search of a secure chance of livelihood. The young boys and girls who develop love affairs eloped to their friends in Assam or any other places to escape from the unwillingness or protest from their parents for the recognition of their relationship. Their intention is not only to avoid the situation but also to get a secure means of survival to maintain an independent life of the new family. It is informed that there are many such instances in which the youth are migrating and earning their livelihood.

However, whatever the factors responsible for migration may be the sole purpose is to get a secure and better means of livelihood. It is observed that many first generation migrant families are living with better socio-economic status. They are maintaining an improved life-style. It is also evident from the positive impact of their life-styles on other non-migrant
families, which made the movement of migration continued. Now it will be a very difficult task to find a Hill Saora family, which is not touched by migration.

To justify the above factors and explanations the case study of some migrant informants are cited below to make the understanding more clear.

Case Study: Manasi Raika /60/ Male/ Christianised/ Sagaad.

Manasi, the ex-Sarapanch of Sagad Gram Panchayat narrated his personal life experience of migration to Assam as a tea garden labourer. He said that there was a person of Kampu Saora of Tekelli near Parlakhemundi came to (Sagaad) area with some Gora Sahib (white officers) in search of hiring contract labourer (Badiban) for tea garden in Assam. Badiban is the Sora term for ‘contract labour’.

Manasi recalls the history of migration of the Hill Saoras to Assam to the pre-Independence British period. Although no one could say the exact date of migration, many people reported that migration in this areas have been continuing before Independence. “The first persons migrated to Assam were from village Karanjasing and Tarbel. They were sending money regularly to their family and were maintaining a comfortable life. We found their families living in better conditions than the previous conditions of poverty and destitution.”

“A girl of Tarbel married in our village (Sagaad). She told everything about the improved living conditions of the family who migrated to Assam. This news spread in the area and some young people got convinced and

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6 Kampu Saora is a sub-section of main Saora who speak Telugu language and almost living and merged with the plain land Telugu population.
desired to go. In the subsequent visit of the Parteemar (Sardar or leader of the team who hired labour) Indra Buya, Lingia Sabar, Daman Buya, etc. had consulted the Parteemar. He was a Kampu Saora belonging to Parlakhemundi. Before leaving to Assam the people had to sign a contract bond after an interview and counselling."

Manasi who visited Assam as a contract labourer has narrated some of the initial incidents before he left for Assam. He recalled that “I along with my wife had gone to Assam in 1954. I was then 16 years old and was just married. A person of Parlakhemundi came and took us to Parlakhemundi after primary consultation. In the next day we visited Berhampur with the Parteemar where our primary health check up was completed by the Gora Sahib. Then a formal interview was taken by Sahib. He asked some questions like- name and our identity as Saora through an interpreter. We then signed a contract for three years on 13 May 1954.”

He explained two interesting event happened to him: first, at the time of his interview, and second, at Assam while working in the tea garden. First, “during the time of selection/ consultation Sahib had some doubt on my marriage because I was looking too young and shorter than my wife. She was taller and aged (in fact she was three years older than me). So, Sahib used to ask me frequently whether the lady was my wife or not. My wife did not know Oriya. Finally he was convinced by the interpreter and then we went to Assam with Sardar.”

In the second instances, at the tea garden, Manasi explained that “when I was appointed in duty my remuneration was Rs.1.40 paisa, whereas my wife was paid 15 paisa more, i.e., Rs.1.55 paisa, than me. When I knew the fact I felt ashamed and insulted and went to Sardar and Gora Sahib. I
complained them that I won't work anymore because my wife's salary was higher than me. In common (Saora) perception, a man is paid more remuneration than a woman. The reason explained by the Sahib was that my wife was tall and looked aged. Thereafter, I took the challenge and worked harder than my wife and other elders. Finally, I got equal remuneration like others."

"I was sending money to my village regularly but in 1957 I returned to my village along with my wife after receiving frequent letters from my parents. After returning home I got converted to Christianity and was given the charge of Secretary, Sagada Baptist Mission. Second time, I went to Assam not because of working as a labourer in the tea garden but for establishing a Girja (church) on behalf of Sagada Baptist Mission."

"The people who have migrated to Assam got in touch with many other people from different states working there as labourer. We were able to speak other languages like Hindi and Assamese. There our dress pattern gradually got changed. Our people used shorts, shirts, trousers, shoes, etc. We tried to adopt the life style of the local people. The food habit also changed. Education, health and hygiene also improved. The people earned good amount of money and sent their children to schools."

By saying the positive outcome of migration in the improvement of his family status Manasi has explicated that "We were three brothers, living together in a joint family and were looking after everything collectively. From my earning of Assam I gave education to two of my nephews who are now serving in government. The elder one is a primary school teacher and the younger is a cashier in bank. Simultaneously, I took care of the education of my children and now eldest son is in 12th class (+2 Sc.) and a daughter in 11th
(+2 Arts) class. We, comparatively, were getting good income from the tea garden. We came in contact with many other communities and their life styles at Assam and also knew the day to day life of other people living there.”

In the beginning, migration to Assam was very frequent but in latter period people started migration to Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. There have been frequent references to a place called Kemin where people largely migrated. In Arunachal Pradesh and Kemin the kind of works available were road and building construction. Now-a-days the migration has expanded to Hyderabad, Madras, Bombay, Bangalore, Surat, etc. for industrial and construction work.

Another case study represented the facts relating to improvement of education and socio-economic status told by Jamesh, son of a first generation migrant.

Case Study: Jamesh Karji/ 33/ Male/ Christian/ Sagaad

Jamesh is the second son of Dirma Karji, who was a first generation migrant to Assam. Dirma is now settled at Assam and has been permanently serving in the tea garden. He has five sons and two daughters. The three younger sons and two daughters are staying with him at Assam. Two of the daughters have completed their matriculation and two of his, 3rd and 4th, sons discontinued after before 10th class. The youngest one is now pursuing 10th class. Jamesh and his elder brother Theophil are staying in Orissa. Theophil has completed graduation from Gunupur College. He has been serving as a Cooperative Inspector, Public Distribution System (PDS) at Nabarangpur District of Orissa. Jamesh, an ITI trained educated, is temporarily serving in LSDA as an office assistant as well as working for the Public Health Division
to repair the tube wells on contract basis. Dirma was also the first generation convert in this area (Sagad and Puttasingi area). He is permanently settled their and very occasionally coming to visit his native villages. He is permanently employed there in tea estate.

Tracing back his memory Jamesh states that "if my father would not have been going to Assam we would not have come to this stage. Both my father and mother went to Assam and worked in tea garden as labourer. They always insisted us and send us money for our study. I and my elder brother only got education in Orissa and other three of my brother and two sisters stayed and studied there. My father always beat us whenever we loose our study. Because of him my brother completed his B.A. and now serving as cooperative inspector in Government of Orissa. My father is serving there permanently and has established a house to stay there permanently. All of us are educated and living in better position because of our parents' labour in Assam, who visited long before. There my father got converted to Christianity and left all the traditional practices of sacrifices and worships."

Responding the factors that prompted migration of his parents Jamesh recalled that "regarding our family conditions as my parents told us that before our birth our family condition was very poor. We had only two patches of hill lands for cultivation, which was very insufficient for the family. My father was staying at Karanjasing, my maternal uncle's house, after the birth of my elder brother Theophil. It was very difficult for my father to manage the household expenditure. With the impoverished conditions they decided to go to work in Assam. That time the age of my brother was only two years. I was born in Assam in 1971. At the age of five my elder brother was left with my uncle, who has taken care of his study because there was not
a good school facility at the place of their work. In the year 1976 I joined my brother in school and stayed with my uncle. However, whenever my parents visited us my mother always insisted us to study hard by telling us the previous background of our family and their earning for us with hard work at far away places. Now we are able to manage ourselves and leaving in our own village (Sagaad). Both my elder brother and I got married. My parents are visiting us time to time but they have built a house and planning to settle their permanently.” Jamesh has acknowledged that “we are reaching at this stage because of my parents and their hard labour.”

Another case study adds value to understand the perception and experiences of migrant labour in the improvement of their life styles and socio-economic status in the society.

Case study: Angsu Raika/60/ Male /Christianised/ Angra.

Angsu Raika is a convert aged about 60, an inhabitant of village Angora migrated to Assam after 1950s and stayed there for 10 years in three different phases. He was an illiterate. Angsu holds the view that “I had not sufficient land. Whatever was there was not giving good production hence was not sufficient to fulfil the daily need of my family. We had to live with hunger and shortage of food. Then I decided to go to Assam with a Parteemar of Parlakhemundi. While working in Assam I could be able to improve the economic conditions of my family. After working ten years I returned back home to look after my children and their education. I sent my children to school. Two of my daughters went up to matriculation before they were married. My elder son has completed M.A. in 1993 from Utkal University and now serving as a Welfare Extension Officer in Government of Orissa.”
Angsu is also of the opinion that “in visiting Assam I learn many good things about the outside societies and people working there from different parts of the country. There we slowly learn to take medicine instead of sacrificing and worship for our illness, because you have to be well immediately to resume your work. I accepted Christianity at Assam with the persuasion of some of our Saora people. Although I never gone to school now I am able to read and write in Saora language.”

The above case studies have revealed the fact that migration has, no doubt, improved the socio-economic and educational status of majority of the migrant families. The economic status of the migrant family is better in comparison to the non-migrant family. Besides the above case studies, there are many other migrant families, among whom the trend of educational awareness of the children are very positive. The persons who are now holding government offices are mostly belonging to the first generation migrant families. Out of several responsible factors of migration the major factor mentioned in the case studies are poverty, population pressure and low productivity of swidden lands, besides better payment of wage. In consequent of migration, it also observed the changes in life style, attitude, dress, and health care aspects of the migrant Hill Saora families besides economy. There is another important structural impact found among the migrant Hill Saoras is the ready acceptance of Christianity. However, there has been a continuous process of going and coming. People stay there for two to three years constantly then come back to their native villages, although some few first generation migrant families have already settled there.

The case studies of all other migrant revealed the fact that the wage they are getting varies from Rs. 2000.00 to Rs. 5000.00 per month. The first
generation migrants are getting Rs. 5000.00 per months besides some company bonus. For initial three months the people are paid less, because during this period one has to learn the work. Then the wage gets enhanced gradually. In the initial stage they are paid upto Rs. 2000.00 per months as their remuneration. It is also informed that after their expenditure on food and other necessities the people could be able to save more than half of their income.

Some negative aspects of the migration in present days are also seen in the areas. From the observation of older migrants it is found that the young Saoras are earning good amount of money but because of their extravagance nature all the earnings are spend on leisure and entertainment. Their attention towards their family at home is nil. A few of them have left their wife and children here and are not sending a penny or return home for 10 years.

As a whole, migration has not only helps to improve the people in economic front but also in education, health care and social front. It is understood that economy is the major determinant for the improvement of all other factors for the poor Hill Saoras.

5.2.2 Native Labour

This second category of wage labour refers to the availability of labour in the own locality of the people. The scope of wage earning in this area is not so good in comparison to the population and unemployment. The works available are seasonal and occasional. The major labour works available is road construction, which comes through different government schemes such as PMGSRY, PMSRY, DRDA, ITDA, LSDA, etc. The works are mostly given on food for work basis. Men, women and young boys and girls are involved
in the works. The other work also includes, building construction, nursery, etc., which are not available regularly but very rarely. They only give occasional token support for small expenditure.

It has been observed that some poor families are some extent getting benefited from the road construction work as an additional support for their survival. As per the case studies the wage labour available in this area on an average is upto 30 days. It is very meagre in comparison to the need and size of the population.

Regarding the wage, the government of Orissa has fixed minimum Rs. 50/- per day for each labour. But the Hill Saora areas the situation in the ground is very different. As observed in this area the amount paid for labour maximum are as follows:

Men-Rs. 35/- per day or Rice 45 kgs. in a week,

Women- Rs. 30/- per day or Rice 40 kgs in a week, and

Young children- Rs. 20/- or Rice 28kgs in a week.

It is also seen that the exploitation becomes more serious through food for work scheme in which the labourers are paid through rice in PDS prices.

5.3 MISCELLANEOUS

This category of occupation includes petty thekedari, petty shopkeeping, petty business, service, tailoring, mechanics, etc. A very few people have been engaged in such activities. In Sagada G.P. area most of the children belong to first-generation migrant and convert families are serving in government. Two cooperative inspectors, One WEO, a bank cashier, three primary school teachers, and some around 18 temporary teachers serving in
LSDA sponsored Gyan Mandir for child and non-formal education. As the trend of education is slightly improving, the service sector may show good representation in future. The socio-economic and educational status of their family is showing better improvement.

There are some few people engaged in petty thekedaris for repairing and construction of roads which are mostly limited to these areas. It is observed that four to five youth combiney bring tender for Rs. 50 thousands to one lakhs rupees. However, at the end of the work it doesn't help much, as has been viewed by these thekedars.

Now-a-days, some young Saoras are establishing petty shops in the villages, selling the needed goods like chilli, onion, salt, potato, biscuits, tea and other grocery items. On an average, each village has one shop of this type. But in many cases they are only opened just better than to do nothing. All of the shops belong to the converted youth.

5.4 SUMMARY

It is very difficult to say that which source is the main support of livelihood, in the present circumstances. Traditionally swidden has been practised as one of the main sources of livelihood is now replacing with horticulture (cashew) plantation. The importance of the terrace and settled paddy cultivation are realised more and more today but the availability of these lands are very scares and the average size of the population is increasing. With the change in food habits and impact of cashew cultivation in swidden lands paddy is supporting as the main staple crop. Cultivation of fruits and vegetables are very rare, however, added to the diet seasonally. Large-scale deforestation had degraded the natural resources and forest
ecosystem. There are many varieties of forest produces which already extinct or on the verge of extinction. But some of the tree species having economic value are still protected, which offers good income support from collection of its produces. Horticulture (cashew plantation) is emerged as a good source of livelihood, which is very much related to the market economy rather than traditional economic pursuit. Although it is the part of modern institutional economy, it is giving a substantial support to the livelihood and survival of the Hill Saoras in the existing situation. It has taken a position as one of the main sources of livelihood. The wage labour available in this area is very rare in comparison to the population. Migration has been giving a good support means of survival. It has not only improved economically but socially and educationally as well. Other sources include in miscellaneous category are petty thekedari, petty shop-keeping, service, mechanical, etc., are benefiting very few families of the Hill Saoras.