Chapter I

Introduction and Methodology
India has a unique place in the tribal community of the world. In our
country the tribal population, which is numerically considerable, is concentrated in
various tribal belts as well as the general population. There are about 400 tribal
communities in India. According to the 1991 census 6,77,58,380 tribal people
were living in India, accounting for 8.08 per cent of the total population of the
country. Majority of the Tribal people live in remote areas, mostly forest and
hilly belts, while some of them are living in areas adjacent to villages and towns.
They have specific kinds of culture, tradition, and characteristics. But the vast
majority of tribal people have been living below the poverty line. Their daily
earnings are scanty and their lives miserable.

India has greater concentration of tribal population than most other regions
and nations of the world, barring perhaps the African continent. Their stock rose
slightly in the last decade. They are largely concentrated in the regions of
Northern, Eastern and Central India. They are the unrivalled majority in at least
30 districts of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Lakshadweep,
Dadra and Nagar Haveli. 87.70 per cent of the population of the state of
Nagaland is tribal, 85.53 per cent of the population of the State of Meghalaya,
78.99 per cent of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and 63.66 per cent of the population of
Arunachal Pradesh are tribal. The states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa
and Bihar among themselves have accommodated almost 58 per cent of the total
tribal population of India. South India has its share of tribal population. Some of
the most primitive tribes of the world live in its regions.
In Andhra Pradesh the total population of the Scheduled Tribes as per the 1991 census is 41,99,481, which accounts for 6.31 per cent of the total population of the state and 6.20 per cent of the total tribal population of the country. The highest percentage of tribal population lives in the Khammam District (25.23 per cent) followed by the Adilabad (17.04 per cent) and Vishakapatnam (14.27 per cent) districts.

Criteria for the Social Identity of Tribes

An acceptable definition of a tribe may not be readily available, but several expert opinions have contributed to an understanding of the concept. The scheduled tribes are called either ‘Aboriginal tribes’, ‘Primitive tribes’, or ‘Adivasis’.

According to the Imperial Gazetteer of India, a tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a ‘tribe’, thus: ‘A tribe is a group of people in primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding themselves as having a common ancestor’.

An East Asian consultation held at Sogada (Philippines), defined a tribal community as forming a ‘group of people generally constituting a homogeneous unit, speaking a common language, claiming a common ancestry, living in a
particular geographic area, generally lacking in scientific knowledge and modern technology and having a social structure based on kinship.

According to G.W.B. Hunting Ford, 'A tribe is a group united by a common name in which the members take a pride, by a common language, by a common territory, and by a feeling that all who do not share this name are outsiders, “enemies” in fact'. The Dhebar Commission report points out that the term has not been defined in the Constitution. Generally, it refers to small communities who live in the hill and forest areas, and whose technology has not developed beyond the stage of food gathering, hunting or rudimentary agriculture.

However, there are some acceptable criteria, which may help in identifying a tribe. According to T.B. Naick, least functional dependency on economic backwardness, geographical isolation (comparatively), speaking a common dialect, rule of a chieftain, psychological conservatism (anti-change) and obligations to customary law courts, are the most obvious and prominent criteria for identifying a tribe. According to the Article 342(1) of the Constitution of India, the president may with respect to any state or union territory, and where it is a state after consultation with the Governor there of, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this constitution be deemed to by scheduled tribes in relation to that state or union territory, as the case may be. The tribe in India is basically a politico-administrative category, and has hardly any socio-cultural or economic connotation.
India has people of diverse races and cultures living within it. The tribal communities belonging to various races are spread across the country, mainly in the forest and hilly regions. The word 'tribe' means a group of families bound together by kinship, usually descending from a mythical or legendary ancestor, living in a common region, speaking a common dialect and having a common historical past. The essential characteristics of these communities are primitive traits, geographical isolation, distinctive culture, shyness of contact with outsiders and economic backwardness. According to Article 342 of the Constitution of India the Scheduled Tribes are the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the President by Public verification. More than 70 per cent of the Scheduled Tribes population of India is concentrated in seven states, namely Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Gujarat. No community has been specified as a scheduled tribe in respect of states of Haryana and Punjab & Union Territory of Chandigarh, Delhi & Pondicherry.

Profile of Scheduled Tribes

According to the 1991 census the total population of the country was 846 million, of which the population of Scheduled Tribe was 68 millions, constituting 8.08 per cent of the country's total population. A detailed state-wise information of the tribal population is presented in Table No. 1.1.
### Table No. 1.1
State-wise Distribution of Tribal Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the State</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>SC Population</th>
<th>ST Population</th>
<th>% of ST Population to Total State Population</th>
<th>% of ST Population to Total India's ST Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INDIA (excludes J &amp; K)</td>
<td>83,85,83,988</td>
<td>13,82,23,277</td>
<td>6,77,58,380</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>6,65,08,008</td>
<td>1,05,92,066</td>
<td>41,99,481</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>8,64,558</td>
<td>4,052</td>
<td>5,50,351</td>
<td>63.66</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>2,24,14,322</td>
<td>16,59,412</td>
<td>28,74,441</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>8,63,74,465</td>
<td>1,25,71,700</td>
<td>66,16,914</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>9.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>11,69,793</td>
<td>24,364</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.0006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>4,13,09,582</td>
<td>30,60,358</td>
<td>61,61,775</td>
<td>14.92</td>
<td>9.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>1,64,63,648</td>
<td>32,50,933</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>51,70,877</td>
<td>13,10,296</td>
<td>2,18,349</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>77,18,700</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>4,49,77,201</td>
<td>73,69,279</td>
<td>19,15,691</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>2,90,98,518</td>
<td>28,86,522</td>
<td>3,20,967</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>6,61,81,170</td>
<td>96,26,679</td>
<td>1,53,99,034</td>
<td>23.27</td>
<td>22.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>7,89,37,187</td>
<td>87,57,842</td>
<td>73,18,281</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>10.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>18,37,149</td>
<td>37,105</td>
<td>6,32,173</td>
<td>34.41</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>17,74,778</td>
<td>9,672</td>
<td>15,17,927</td>
<td>85.53</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>6,89,756</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>6,53,565</td>
<td>94.75</td>
<td>0.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>12,09,546</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>10,60,822</td>
<td>87.70</td>
<td>15.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>3,16,59,736</td>
<td>51,29,314</td>
<td>70,32,214</td>
<td>22.21</td>
<td>10.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>2,02,81,969</td>
<td>57,42,528</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>4,40,05,990</td>
<td>76,07,820</td>
<td>54,74,881</td>
<td>12.44</td>
<td>8.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>4,06,457</td>
<td>24,084</td>
<td>90,901</td>
<td>22.36</td>
<td>6.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>5,58,58,946</td>
<td>1,07,12,266</td>
<td>5,74,194</td>
<td>10.28</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>27,57,205</td>
<td>4,51,116</td>
<td>8,53,345</td>
<td>30.95</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>13,91,12,287</td>
<td>2,92,76,455</td>
<td>2,87,901</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>6,80,77,965</td>
<td>1,60,80,611</td>
<td>38,08,760</td>
<td>5.59</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census, 1991, Govt. of India.

The table is self-explanatory. It can be observed from the table that the state of Madhya Pradesh is having highest per cent of ST population (22.73), followed by Nagaland (15.66), Maharashtra (10.80), Orissa (10.38) and Gujarat (9.09). It is
piquant to note that Himachal Pradesh is having least ST population (0.38 per cent) to the total India’s ST population.

42.02 per cent of the S.T population were main workers, of them 54.50 per cent were cultivators and 32.69 per cent were agricultural labours. Thus about 87 per cent of the main workers were engaged in primary sector activities. As against the national average of 52 per cent, the literacy rate of the Scheduled Tribes is around 29.60 per cent in the year 1991. More than three-quarters of Scheduled Tribe women are illiterate. These disparities are compounded by higher dropout rates among them in formal education, resulting in their representation in higher education being disproportionately low. Not surprisingly, the cumulative effect has been that the proportion of Scheduled Tribes below the poverty line is substantially higher than the national average. The estimate of poverty made by the Planning Commission for the year 1993-94 shows that 51.92 per cent rural and 41.14 per cent urban S.T population were still living below the poverty line.

The Literacy Levels of the Scheduled Tribes at the National and State level

The literacy levels among the tribes of Andhra Pradesh are extremely low when compared to the national and state levels. The literacy rate of the S.Ts is at the bottom when compared to the S.T. literacy rate of the 22 states and 4 Union Territories. The States and Union Territories where there is no S.T. Population are naturally excluded in the reckoning. The details of literacy rates at the national
and state levels for both general population and tribal population from 1951 to 1991 are presented in Table No.1.2.

Table No.1.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Census Period</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Andhra Pradesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>General</td>
<td>Sch. Tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>5.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>28.29</td>
<td>8.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>34.45</td>
<td>11.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>16.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>52.11</td>
<td>29.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The above table indicates the wide disparity in the literacy levels between the all India General, Andhra Pradesh General and the all India Scheduled Tribes and the Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes population. As per the 1981 census report, the literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes of Andhra Pradesh is not even half of the national literacy rate of the Scheduled Tribes. The literacy levels between 1951 and 1971 at the national level and the literacy percentages are almost more than trebled in general population when compared to those of tribal population. During 1971-81 the general literacy level was more than double when compared to that of the Scheduled Tribes. But in Andhra Pradesh during the period from 1951 to 1981, the general literacy growth rate in each decennial period was almost four times more than that of the Scheduled Tribes. The report
of the working group on the development and welfare of Scheduled Tribes during the Eighth Five Year Plan states that in 1981 Andhra Pradesh had the lowest literacy rates for the Scheduled Tribes as a whole and for S.T. males, 7.82 per cent and 12.02 per cent respectively. During the same period, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal retained the S.T. female literacy rates of 5 per cent or less according to the 1981 census. Andhra Pradesh State was at the bottom of the 18 T.S.P. States and 6 Union Territories when placed in the order of their literacy levels as per 1981 census reports. Even in the field of female literacy, Andhra Pradesh occupied the lowest position among TSP states and Union Territories except Rajasthan. However between 1981 and 1991, literacy percentage of the tribes of Andhra Pradesh increased significantly from 7.82 per cent (1981) to 17.16 per cent (1991), but still the A.P. tribals’ literacy level was at the bottom of the literacy levels of all other states and Union Territories. As per the 1991 census, in Andhra Pradesh, the S.T. female literacy level also did not improve. The literacy percentage of the STs in Andhra Pradesh is the lowest in the country as per the 1971, 1981 and 1991 census reports. The highest literacy percentage among the Scheduled Castes is recorded in Kerala (79.66 per cent) and Mizoram achieved the highest literacy rate with 82.73 per cent among the Scheduled Tribes.
**Nature of the Problem**

In India, the tribes are socially and economically very backward compared to the rest of the nation's population. The tribal areas have remained underdeveloped, neglected, and even alienated from the rest of the land for centuries. The tribals are living under precarious economic conditions due to continuous neglect of the rulers and the successive governments over a long period and a lack of appreciation of their special problems, inadequate investment and non-integration of the tribal economy. Owing to the lack of transport, communication and other facilities, they have been cut off from the main stream. Till recently they were virtually enslaved and kept as bonded labours by moneylenders from whom they had borrowed money at fantastic rates of interest and failed to repay. The outside world was not aware of their bonded lot because their mere survival and subsistence depended on the moneylenders who were none other than the village land owners. Even now forced unpaid labour is the curse of tribal India. The vulnerability of tribal population to the exploitations by minor government officials as well as moneylenders, landlords and other agents of vested interests can largely be traced to their illiteracy and general ignorance of the world outside the narrow confines of their traditional environment.

In olden days the tribes depended on slash and burn cultivation system under which they cleared thick forests by cutting trees or burning them and cultivated crops in the land so cleared for a few years until the natural fertility of
the soil was exhausted. They then moved on to new forests, leaving the land fallow for it to recover its fertility.

The majority of the tribes fall into debt for a considerable time. This is primarily due to their low income, which is the outcome of the peculiar conditions in which they live: poor soil, uneconomic holdings, primitive techniques of cultivation, lack of irrigation facilities and absence of employment potentials. Secondly, it is due to large-scale exploitation by moneylenders, traders, the land-owning class and others.

Tribal economy is relatively backward, underdeveloped and exploited. The impact of development programmes on it and the tribals' capacity to absorb them are limited. A Director of welfare of the Government of West Bengal Says: "most of the Adivasis are up to their neck in debts and are therefore compelled to enter into unredeemable mortgages with unscrupulous non-tribals. In most of such cases they do not get back their lands".

The British followed a policy of isolation regarding the tribes and tried to keep them away from the mainstream of Indian life by confining them to exclusive areas and enacted laws for their protection. Though they were concerned with the welfare of the tribals, they were impelled by a desire to insulate them against the nationalistic movement and nationalistic sentiments. After independence, the first step necessary was the protection of the tribal population from exploitation. No effective measures were taken in that direction until recently. The Scheduled areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission, set up in April, 1960 reported that "in
most states the special protective machinery for safeguarding the interests of the tribal people and protecting them from exploitation by outsiders had not worked satisfactorily. There was large-scale transfer of tribal land, consequent upon the undesirable activities of moneylenders, forest contractors and other exploiters. The reorganisation of forests and enunciation of new policies had resulted in the curtailment of their rights in forests and in fishing and hunting. In Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, industrial and other development schemes have led to large-scale displacement of the tribal people, who live in large numbers in those states.

Over the years, the states have enacted laws/regulations to prohibit transfer of land from tribals to non-tribals. But these are full of loopholes, and so, have not been implemented properly. In recent years, some measures have been taken to plug the loopholes and land alienation thereby has been considerably reduced. The more insidious aspect of the problem is the binami holding of land by the non-tribals. In many cases the lands are nominally in the names of tribals, but they are actually cultivated by non-tribals, using the so-called owners as farm labourers. Non-tribals are thus siphoning off many of the benefits of agricultural and horticultural extension programmes in the scheduled areas. Notwithstanding the current legal restrictions over acquisition of property by non-tribals, it has been steadily increasing in the scheduled areas.

Exploitation in other fields however continues in most of the tribal areas. Forests provided a substantial part of the means of subsistence to the tribals, but as administration of forests has been tightened up, it has affected the economy of
tribals significantly. Prohibition of making traditional tribal drinks also has led to unfold exploitation and further erosion of tribal economy. As the deficit in their economy has increased on account of all such adverse forces the tribals have become a prey to usurers and moneylenders, which has further accelerated the process of deprivations\(^23\).

The problems concerning tribal economy are very acute. That it is lagging far behind that of non-tribal societies whether it be hunting and food gathering or shifting cultivation or settled agriculture needs no special mention\(^24\).

**Issues**

The tribal population faces awesome and daunting problems. Chronic problems of poverty, poor living standards and perpetually low income are rampant in their lives. As a result, the tribals suffer from severe malnutrition and starvation. They do not have the means to gratify even the basic human needs of food, clothing and shelter. Further, illiteracy, economic difficulties and the age-old and persistent superstitions have complicated their problems and forced them to live below the poverty line. This situation has made them an easy prey to moneylenders who have a stranglehold on them. It has also forced many of them into bonded labour. This condition has not only continued but has worsened without any ray of hope of redemption.

The tribals face many hardships in meeting their everyday food requirements. As their earning levels are very low, they have to find alternative
source of income to find enough food. Basically, they depend on forest-based food items, which does not always provide balanced diet to them. Most of the times they have to be without sufficient food. During the seasons when they have no work and no earning they take only 'gruel' to find temporary relief from hunger. In this situation they depend inevitably heavily on moneylenders and other middlemen. Most of the tribal people are suffering from malnutrition and ill-health for want of sufficient food. There are many cases are reported of starvation deaths and of suicide in many parts of tribal hamlets. During the rainy season severe diseases like Malaria, diarrhea, fever, anemia and the like affect most tribal villages. They do not have proper medical facilities to find relief from them.

**Government Measures**

In view of the plight of the tribals, various developmental programmes have been taken up by the Governments at the centre as well as the state for improving the living conditions of the tribal population. These programmes are intended to cover agriculture, irrigation, animal husbandry, house sites, co-operative credit, education, health, distribution of essential articles etc. They also aim at protecting the interests of the tribals by providing them with a legal framework, and streamlining their development and raising their standard of living. To serve as the main instrument of their development, tribal sub-plans have been devised and implemented in the different states and union territories. They are linked with the state plan, special central assistance, centrally sponsored schemes and institutional
finance. In this regard various institutions are buckled down to work for the welfare of the tribals. In Andhra Pradesh the Girijan Primary Co-op. Marketing Society Limited (GPCMSL), Integrated Tribal Development Agencies (ITDA) and some Commercial Banks have been functioning for the welfare of tribals by way of extending financial and other related support to them.

Top priority has been given to the tribals in the revised 20-point programme. Article 46 of the Constitution of India explicitly recognises the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes as the weaker sections of the society and provides a number of safeguards for their welfare and development. Accordingly, the Government of India, the state Governments and the union territory administrations have launched a number of schemes for their welfare and overall development and considerable amount of money has been spent for implementing them. Each state has a tribal advisory council meant to advise the state on such matters pertaining to the welfare and uplift of these people. The commission for the scheduled tribes is to look after their interest. The ITDA is also functioning in tribal areas with a number of welfare measures. It is providing the required agricultural implements, agricultural loans, seeds, manure, borewells, education facilities, health facilities etc., to the tribal people in its jurisdiction. It is a comprehensive tribal development agency, bringing considerable benefits to the tribal people. Indeed its contribution to the tribals is praise-worthy and it has to make much more for the welfare of them.
There is no doubt about the Government’s commitment to providing various benefits to the tribals to uplift them and raise their standard of living. Various steps have been taken in recent years to increase their purchasing power by making available to them essential items of daily needs at affordable prices. They are an anti-inflationary measure and have had a significant bearing on stabilising the prices and improving the nutritional standard of the tribal poor. The purchasing power of the poor tribals has to be protected and safeguarded so that they are rescued from malnutrition and starvation through the supply of essential consumer goods, particularly food grains, at subsidised prices. Since increase in the cash income of the poor may be easily neutralised by the rise in the prices of essential items, a well-planned organised Public Distribution System (PDS) has had to be devised to play a significant role in uplifting the tribals’ standard of living, alleviating poverty and rescuing them from starvation. Supply of food grains at subsidised rates to the scheduled tribes is a step in that direction.

Nowadays the tribals are compelled to rely mostly upon agriculture and live mainly on rice and coarse grains such as maize, millets etc., and vegetables. They also keep some animals as an additional source of food supply. As the poor purchasing power of the tribals has been a major constraint in meeting their food requirements, a scheme for the supply of food grains to them at concessional rates was launched in 1986 by the Central Government covering all Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) areas. Majority of these areas has remained isolated
and backward and therefore is exploited socially and economically by some non-tribals.

On 1st January 1992 the then Prime Minister of India launched a scheme at Barmar, Rajasthan for the revitalisation of the Public Distribution System in desert and drought-prone, tribal and hill areas. The salient features of the scheme are: (a) to open 11,000 additional fair price shops; (b) to create an additional storage capacity of 3 lakh MT; (c) to issue 24 lakh additional ration cards; (d) to cover 16 crore people under the scheme; (e) to set up vigilance committees of beneficiaries to supervise implementation; (f) to ensure doorstep delivery to fair price shops; (g) and to distribute additional commodities such as salt, tea, pulses and soaps. The scheme is significant in its coverage inasmuch as it covered the ITDP areas in 19 states/UTs besides covering the entire population in 6 tribal majority states. The total quantity of rice and wheat supplied annually under the scheme was of the order of 1.75 million tonnes.

The present Government of India has adopted an area specific approach to revamp and strengthen the functioning of the Public Distribution System. This involves the identification of areas having a high concentration of poor and deserving people. Nearly, 1,842 blocks have been selected throughout the country. They include 143 blocks covered under the Dessert Development Programme (DDP), 596 under the Drought-prone Area Programme (DAP), 1,048 under the Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) and 55 designated hill areas.
The Public Distribution System (PDS) has been reoriented to meet the specific needs of the tribal people. More Fair Price Shops (FPS) are being opened in tribal dominated blocks. The goods are being taken as near the tribal people as possible. Under the Central sponsored scheme of Financial Assistance to the states and union territories, funds are made available to purchase mobile vans to be operated in hilly, inaccessible and remote tribal areas, and to serve as mobile Fair Price Shops. Arrangements have been made to construct godowns in the North-Eastern States, which are predominantly tribal areas, and in Himachal Pradesh, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Jammu and Kashmir.

In Andhra Pradesh there are about 33 tribal communities living in different parts of the hilly belts of the State. Among them, the Koya tribe is the largest in terms of population followed by the Yanadi, Rajgond and Yerukula Tribes. These tribal communities in Andhra Pradesh live in deep forest areas and depend on forest-based food items for their livelihood. They undertake cultivation as well as procurement of forest produce during some seasons of the year and during the remaining off-season period, they are severely exposed to drought, malnutrition and starvation. These people face hardships during those seasons for want of food, medical care, shelter, clothes and other necessaries of life. Though the Central Government and the Government of Andhra Pradesh have devised many development programmes for their welfare, their standard of living has not improved due to various reasons.
The tribal economy in Andhra Pradesh is heterogeneous in nature ranging from food gathering, fishing and hunting, shifting cultivation, to artisan and minor labour. The tribal groups, who live in Nallamalai hills, mainly the Chenchus, have a subsistence economy depending on the collection of minor forest produce. The tribals collect a large part of their food in the form of yams, edible nuts, fruits, flowers and leaves to satisfy their hunger. The Yerukula, Yanadi and other tribes who live in the plains earn their livelihood by practising professions like midwifery, catching rodents and snakes for skin and venom, pig rearing etc. These groups lead a semi-nomadic life.

The World Bank identifies five needs, as basic needs i.e., food and nutrition, drinking water, basic health, shelter and basic education. Many of the tribes suffer from Malnutrition because of inadequate food supply. They do not have enough drinking water. Correspondingly, there are problems of health. The tribes subsist on coarse grain such as ragi, kodu, kutki etc. There is an absence of proteins and minerals in much of their diet. A.V. Thakkar, one of the well-known ‘servants’ of India, called the aborigines of India Adivasis. It was his anguish that all the rulers who enjoyed dominion over this vast country had neglected them. He found among them the poorest section of India’s population, who lived in an ‘almost pre-historic civilization’ condition. The problems of the aborigines may be analysed into poverty, illiteracy, ill-health, and inaccessibility of the areas, which they inhabit, defective administration and lack of leadership. Since independence the government has been taking several steps for their
development. But still they seem to live in the same condition as their ancestors did. Their standard of living is very poor.

**Review of Literature**

As the present enquiry is concerned with the Public Distribution of essential food items for the Tribal People and their problems in getting food items, an attempt is made here to review the earlier studies of the Public Distribution System and Tribal Economy, so that an insight into the subject can be obtained. As a matter of fact, academic discussions of Public Distribution in Tribal areas began only in recent times, but about tribal economy there are a number of studies by researchers, commissions, committees etc. Most of the literature available is on tribal economy rather than the Public Distribution System in tribal areas. These studies are reviewed here briefly so that the present inquiry may take its bearings. The indications are that there is some scope for further investigation on the supply system of food items to the tribal people.

Many studies of the tribals are related to their socio-economic and cultural aspects.

The Purpose of this *International Labour Organisation (ILO) (1953)* work is to study mainly the social and economic aspects of indigenous people in independent countries and to indicate the aims, scope and results of the national and international action undertaken to integrate them into the economic life of each country and to improve their living and working conditions.
An examination of the facts at once shows that the problems differ widely in nature and effect from country to country. This is due to historical and cultural factors and geographical and economic conditions, which sometimes hinder and sometimes favour the attainment by indigenous peoples of a standard of living above mere subsistence. Nevertheless, there are features of the problem common to all such peoples, even when their history shows that some of them differ from the others in that they have, in the past, experienced periods of great economic, social and cultural progress.

As a valuable complement to the efforts of the Governments concerned to solve their indigenous problems, the activities of international organisations are today reaching every corner of the earth. The unstinted cooperation of other international organisations with the I.L.O., both in connection with this project and in the preparation of the present volume, has resulted in a valuable contribution to a study of indigenous problems.

The magnitude of the subject and the shortage of reliable documentation regarding the indigenous groups are natural limitations to a study such as this. In spite of its shortcomings, which are freely admitted, it is hoped that the work will render useful service to all those who believe that the problem of indigenous people in independent countries can best be understood in an international context.

Nag (1958) undertook field researches among the Baigas of Madhya Pradesh with a view to studying tribal economy. He made an extensive field tour throughout the contiguous areas of Mandla, Bilaspur, Durg and Balaghat. The
sample included 2,192 individuals belonging to 350 families. He made an extensive tour of the dense forests, crossed streams, climbed up the hills and thus collected rich data on tribal economy. Nag tries to examine tribal economy in the context of modern economic theories. He deals with almost all important aspects of the economic life of the Baigas and succeeds in presenting the broad as well as the main trends of the Baiga economic life.

Nag's is a pioneering work in more than one way. It is the first work of its type, which describes the tribal economy in detail and relates it to other aspects of life. It also presents the perspective of an economist of tribal economy in India. He sees the Baiga economy as a dynamic, continuous process, and relates it to modern development. Though the book seems to be a comprehensive work, the author with all humility feels the need for further research and longer fieldwork.

Verrier Elwin (1960) the well-known Gandhian and anthropologist, toured most of the special multipurpose tribal blocks in the different parts of the country, and studied their working. He noticed a few defects in the scheme both in its conception and execution. He sounded a note of warning that there was the danger of imposing our own values on the aboriginals. For example, he found fault with the layout of the colonies. He observed that as most of the tribals were hill people they would like to have their houses on the slopes of hills and did not usually arrange them in their villages in geometrical patterns. He also observed that some colonies had been built for tribals at considerable expense without
apparently any thought of investigating whether there was any land available for them for cultivation in the neighbourhood.

Saxena (1964) studied the tribal economy of the western hills in Madhya Pradesh extending from the Vindhyas to the Satpura Mountains. This regional study by an economist covers five tribes, and includes a random sampling of five hundred households spread over 65 villages.

The data collected from the 65 villages have been presented in several chapters on shifting cultivation, natural environment, land tenure, system of irrigation, rotation of crops and agricultural holding. These are of special importance. The chapter on forests apart from examining the role of the forest in tribal economy brings out the reactions of the tribals to the introduction of the New Forest policy. The role of the moneylenders who are both lenders and traders has been carefully discussed. The factors of marketing, means of communication and transport, the history of cooperative movements and the causes of their failure have found adequate treatment. The author examines the different policies of the Government schemes and their achievements during the First and Second Five Year plans have carefully mentioned. The author clearly points out that the tribal agriculturists who practice settled cultivation are not very different from the non-tribal agriculturists of rural India as they share the same motives and problems. Presenting a comparative appraisal of the process of production, distribution, consumption of wealth, poverty, illiteracy and the faults of administration, the
author establishes that the tribals of western Madhya Pradesh and the rural agriculturists of other parts are sailing in the same boat.

Saxena's analysis is a valuable contribution to the study of the economy of a tribal region. His statistical account of tribal economy based on a sample survey of a region, inhabited by 5 tribes is full of insights and helpful not only to the social scientists but also to administrators and social workers.

Majumdar's (1967) remains an outstanding and valuable work on Himalayan Community. Majumdar undertook first field research in Jaunsar Bawar in 1937 under the inspiration and stimulation of Malinowski. He continued to work for 26 years by making long and short visits almost every year to the region. Three sets of villages, two representing the normal pattern of Jaunsar Bawar culture and the third the highly acculturated sets of villages were carefully selected and all anthropological techniques were applied to study the various dimensions of the Khasa culture. The book is divided into 3 parts. The first part based on literary and historical documents, deals with the historical aspects of the field of enquiry. The second part embodies the ethnographic details of the community and deals with social organisation, kinship structure, village organisation and leadership, economic activities and occupational specialisation, family economy, educational training and religion. In the third part, emphasising the applied aspects, Majumdar analyses the role of community development programmes in bringing about a change in the Khasa culture.
Sachidananda (1967)\textsuperscript{33} points out that the numerous programmes of socio-economic development undertaken in tribal areas in India have not made much headway mainly due to the ignorance and illiteracy of these tribals. Even to take an advantage of the various development schemes, a certain degree of education is necessary for them.

Raghavaiah (1971)\textsuperscript{34} who has an intimate knowledge of south Indian tribes has published a book, "Tribal Revolts", in which he devotes a full chapter to the tribal unrest in Andhra Pradesh. In the course of his appraisal of the series of revolts that occurred in Andhra Pradesh between the years 1879 and 1968, he comments that owing to broken premises and frustration the tribals of Andhra Pradesh and other parts of India have arisen in revolt and movements. He describes at some length the four tribal revolts, which took place in Andhra Pradesh.

The first revolt by the Hill Reddies began in 1879. The second uprising of the Reddies took place in 1915-16. The third and large-scale revolt took place in 1922-29 which was led by Sitaramaraju and the last one took place in 1968-70 which was popularly knows as Naxalite revolt and was mostly confined to the parts of Srikakulam, the agency districts of the northern border with Orissa, and all the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. It is interesting to note that while the earlier movements were led by the tribals themselves, non-tribal recruits from colleges, professionals and intelligentsia led the last. The Srikakulam rising was
organised, controlled and financed by the Marxist-Leninist extremist section of the community.

Patel M.L. (1972)\(^5\) reports on the tribals of the Mandla district in Madhya Pradesh. He analyses the subsistence sector in agriculture and the validity of productive and theory of interest in tribal economy, interrelationship of economic tools and economic soundness of farm cooperatives and tribal development through the area approach.

Gulati and Krishnan (1975)\(^6\) evaluate the PDS concentrating primarily on

1. the estimation of quantity of cereals needed for protecting the economically vulnerable sections against price rise;

2. the development of an appropriate and suitable internal procurement system for meeting the estimated requirements

The study identifies the problem of inequity in the distribution of levy burden among the farmers and recommends that the principle of equi-marginal sacrifice should become the basis for the fixation of levy rates between different classes of farmers within a state and across states. It offers an alternative PDS proposal.

Srivastava (1977)\(^7\) discusses the shifting cultivation practiced on the hilly areas by tribal people. The cultivators shift their cultivation sites every year or every second or third year, depending upon the nature and availability of forest land. The author given an account of the areas where shifting cultivation is practiced and studies the characteristic features of this type of agriculture. He also
examines the connection of shifting cultivation with peoples' social system and politico-religious organisation.

Bhowmich (1977)\textsuperscript{38} in a paper describes the various welfare measures and development plans of the Government for the welfare of the Lohras, a denotified community.

Vidyarthi (1977)\textsuperscript{39} has studied the impact of voluntary organisations functioning in the tribal belt of Chotanagpur in general, and the tribal block of Khijri in Ranchi in particular. The book deals with a small section of the problem of the "rural weak" and focuses its attention on the role of only one voluntary organisation, Adimjati Seva Mandal in the betterment of their condition and in the generation of leadership among the tribals to take up the challenge of backwardness.

Haimendorf (1977)\textsuperscript{40} along with Mathur has edited a book "Anthropology in the Development Process" to which well-known social scientists have contributed problem oriented papers. The contributors have studied the gross roots of the problems of tribal as well as rural societies and suggested measures for their development.

The study of Gopala Rao (1978)\textsuperscript{41} examines the process of transfer of land from tribals to non-tribals and various factors influencing such a transfer in Mondemkhal, a mixed village of tribes and castes, in the agency areas of Parvathipuram taluk of Srikakulam district. The data was collected by canvassing schedules and by holding prolonged interviews with tribal elders and village
officials. Land was been alienated by some people to finance agricultural operations. Cultivators require cash to buy cattle and seeds and to pay the agricultural wages. It is clear from the case studies, that the taking of credit on land has led to land alienation. Land has tremendous prestige value in the rural context; that is why it could stand as a security both for borrowing and lending.

B.D. Sharma (1978) discusses tribal economy in the context of regional development. He identifies two stages in the opening up of such regions. Current regional theories are examined in the context of their special situation. Discontinuity in the skill spectrum is identified as a special feature of tribal economy. He pleads that "the modern particularistic programmes which affect the basic socio-economic structure should be planned carefully ensuring adequate countervailing forces”.

Dholakia and Khurana (1979) point out the main weakness of the FPS and the co-operatives and strongly recommend the development of a comprehensive and coherent national distribution policy. They observe that this could necessitate the broadening of the objectives of the PDS, instruments of controls, defining vulnerable segments and the commodity coverage. They developed an analytical approach through a systematic model and flow-chart techniques for distribution policy, the objective being maximising social welfare of all the sections of the population.

Gupta (1979) has examined the formulation and implementation of the PDS policies at the national level between 1942 to 1977. The study focuses on the
objective of protection of the weaker sections of society by the PDS. The relevant factors, like movement in real income, consumption charges in food grains, price indices and the quality of the PDS supplies are analysed. This study brings to light the gaps observable between the expected role of the PDS at the conceptual level and its actual performance.

Haimendorf (1979)\textsuperscript{45} started his work on tribals in 1939. He toured extensively in the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, which were regarded as 'Kalapani of the state' and 'Death Traps'. He made a comprehensive study of the socio-economic conditions of the tribals inhabiting the hilly areas in Adilabad, Warangal, Khammam and Mahaboobnagar. He recommended measures to be adopted by the State Government for the economic and cultural betterment of the tribal population. Thereupon the Government adopted a definite and form policy for the uplift of the tribal people by setting them on the land they were cultivating, protecting them from exploitation and freeing them from the clutches of moneylenders who were demanding exorbitant rates of interest for the money they lent to tribal people. This policy later came to be known as the 'New Deal'. W.B. Grigson, a civil servant of the Nizam's administration, called it so because that would herald a new era in the development of tribal areas in the state.

Kumar (1979)\textsuperscript{46} studied the impact of the PDS on the levels of consumption and nutrition of the economically vulnerable sections in Kerala. The study conclusively proved the beneficial and positive contribution of the ration system at all levels.
In 1979 B.K. Rai\textsuperscript{47} in his unpublished thesis reported about the tribals in the context of their economy, which is based on forest, irrespective of their economic types. The tribals' specific problem is of getting the basic facts of economic life in a small non-monetary or partial economy. A comparative study of the nature and functioning of the economic system or organisation of the tribals will present a true picture of their economic life, which has a system of mutual dependence and the influence of social forces on their economic behaviour.

Ramaiah P. (1981)\textsuperscript{48} has studied in his *Tribal Economy of India* with particular reference to the Koyas of the Warangal district in Andhra Pradesh. They live in 102 tribal villages. The twin problems facing them are credit and marketing and land problems. These are examined. The author hopes that it provides a basis to evolve a development plan for the tribal areas. He draws attention of 3 important characteristics of a subsistence economy viz., (i) the level of production in the subsistence unit would only be limited by the internal demand for subsistence products rather than the supply of factors of production (ii) absence of market dependence (iii) absence of material insecurity in tribal areas.

Suryanarayana (1985)\textsuperscript{49} in his book has analysed the PDS operations in the Vishakapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh. The study concludes that all the consumer households have gained in varying proportions and benefited by the existence of the PDS.

Identification of the target groups for the PDS is not attempted in the above studies. Such identification becomes imperative in order to protect the
poorer sections from low consumption standards and inflation. Further, the benefits have to be for more than the urban families, because majority of the poor live in rural areas but the PDS seems to have a strong urban bias.

Ghanshyam (1987) examined the organisation and management of the PDS in the Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh. The study revealed a number of short-comings like irregular release of quota, wide gap between demand and supply, absence of business culture, pilferage, interference of influentialss, economic non-viability of the FPS and strained relations between dealers and consumers. The study underscored the widening gap between promise and performance in the implementation of this crucial public policy.

Radhakrishna and Indrakant (1987) formulated a dual model for analysing the price formation in the rice market of Andhra Pradesh. The model was structured to handle the effects on the welfare of the consumers and the gross revenue accruing to rice producers and millers.

The study by P.Ramanaiah (1988) deals emphatically with various issues of tribal development goes deep into the question and makes a serious attempt to diagnose the problem from different angles. Although the solutions the study offers may not totally solve the problem, they throw much light on various aspects of tribal development such as the socio-economic conditions in tribal areas, land alienation, agriculture, forestry, cooperation and industrial development, and provides altogether a new direction towards resolving the problem of tribal development.
Sachidananda (1989)\textsuperscript{53} gives an account of the various tribes in different parts of the country practicing shifting cultivation, together with their culture, customs and environment. Attempts made by Governments and other organisations to move the tribals away from shifting cultivation and the problems faced by the tribals have also been discussed. A survey of five villages of the Wancho tribe in Tirap district, Arunachal Pradesh is undertaken to examine the political and cultural milieu around shifting cultivation. According to the author, shifting cultivation is not uneconomical where no other alternatives are available. The correct approach should be to recognise this practice as a way of life and adopt improvements within this approach. But the alternative need not be agriculture alone. The opening up of the hill areas with transport facilities gives scope for a shift to horticulture and forestry. This would involve the sale of their products to the markets and purchase of their requirements of food. Examples can be seen among some of the Khasi villages in Meghalaya, which have shifted to the cultivation of Pineapples and Bananas in place of Paddy.

Wendy Olsen (1989)\textsuperscript{54} made a critical assessment of the two-rupee-a-kilo rice scheme then functioning in Andhra Pradesh. While admitting its popularity she analysed the social, political and economic implications of the scheme, and concluded that the new scheme though directly supported the poor, could not eradicate poverty substantially as it had left out the basic economic structure of the state undistributed and unchanged.
According to Mohanty, (1990) broad generalisations about the tribals and their economy run the risk of revealing too little about the actual tribal situations and setting in varied geographic settings and specific objective situation. In reality, the tribal societies in the country present a mosaic of socio-economic and cultural diversities. At one end we have tribes who are hardly distinguishable from the non-tribals and are economically advanced, partly westernised and organisationally strong. At the other end, there are tribes, who are small in number, weak in organisation, poor in resources and poor in the style of using resources. While some are completely dependent on nature and live on hunting and food gathering, other practice primitive agriculture and some others have made an entry into the threshold of modern agriculture.

In view of the above considerations, Mohanty focuses on Keonjhar, a backward district of Orissa, which not only has a high concentration of tribal population but also has a large variety of ethnic stock, including some of the most primitive ones, who are at different levels of socio-economic development. In this study he has made an attempt to make a thorough scanning of the economic anatomy of this tribal region and throws light on some of the dimensions of development, which could not be visualised by the planners. The main focus of the study has been to highlight the impact of development on the economic status and quality of life of different segments of the population of the region and study their relative access to the process of development apart from formulating a suitable spatial development strategy for the future.
Tyagi (1990) examined the various complex problems of food economy with special reference to the working of the PDS. The study concluded that the distribution of food grains had not gone in favour of the poor and the PDS had made its consumers worse-off as they had to pay a higher average price in the absence of the dual market system. He also pointed out that the per capita distribution of food grains in different states had not been consistent with the percentage of population below the poverty line in those states. The study recommended "the target-group approach" instead of the general "PDS-for all approach".

Madhusudan (1991) in his book presents a view to fill the gap in the life style of tribals. Two key elements of tribal economy have been explored. (a) the Present quality of life of the tribals and (b) their mode of living habits and facilities for food, clothing, housing, recreation, education etc., available to them. Though forming an important segment of our society, they have remained away from the mainstream of development. Extension of various facilities regarding education, health, banking, transport and communication in the Five-Year Plans eventually has helped tribes to fill the gap of socio-economic backwardness. This has given birth to the tribal sub-plan focussing on due priority to the development of tribal areas.

Thakur's (1992) paper describes the transition of the tribal and hill economy of Himachal Pradesh from the traditional to modern economy, the dawn of the new era, the development strategy being followed for the spectacular
progress and examines the factors responsible for the notable achievements and landmarks. Pertinent lessons from the development experience of Himachal Pradesh are also drawn for the consideration of policy-makers.

The paper presents the results and achievements of the implementation of various development programmes, welfare projects and policies, and clearly shows how the location-specific, need-based, problem-solving and production-oriented research and development programmes as well as the optimum cropping systems and farming system have enabled the tribal and other hill households to obtain high incomes. The study also shows the strategy behind these, rare achievements of the tribal and hill people, which are as high as those in the plains. As such, Himachal Pradesh is called the state of the affluent tribesman and modern hill people. The study calls for thinking like a tribal and like a hill itself with an integrated approach, which implies sensitisation of development policies and programmes to tribal and hill specificities to impart a tribal and hill perspective to the development of tribal and hills by the policy-makers. A few other pertinent lessons for the policy makers and Government are also implied in the paper for rapid development of the tribal and hill economy.

According to an official document of the Government of Andhra Pradesh published by the Tribal Welfare Department though the strategy adopted up to the end of the Third Five year plan resulted in improving the tribal economy and social services to a limited extent, it was found that certain regions and groups in the tribal areas continued to remain backward. Such imbalances are
attributed mainly to the uneven distribution of social services and spread of economic benefits, besides differences in natural resource endowments and levels of group receptivity to development.

The Report of the Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission published in 1960-61, presents some useful statistics apart from a discussion of the socio-cultural and economic problems of tribal people. This report is of practical significance for understanding the mind of the tribal people, their psychology, values and norms of the workers, to make a sympathetic and humanitarian approach to the tribes. This report also suggests that one should not only be concerned with spending the money and fulfilling the target in terms of statistics, but should also aim at changing the attitudes of the people and thus evolving human characters. Its recommendation with regard to a model budget is meaningfully practical and should go a long way towards tribal development and welfare work.

The Public Distribution System is a measure of the Government's intervention in the distribution of food items to help the people who are living below the poverty line. The need for the PDS was first emphasised by Gregory Committee (1943) as a policy measure for solving the problem of food scarcity prevailing them in the country. The Famine Inquiry Commission (1945), the Krishnamachary Commission on Agricultural Price (1946), the Thakurdas Committee on Food grains Procurement (1950), the Ashok Mehta Committee on Food Enquiry (1957) critically analysed the supply, demand trends in food grains
and suggested policy measures of price control and rationing. They emphasised increasing food grain production for better food distribution in the country. Subsequently the Jha Committee (1965) and the Agricultural Price Commission (1965) suggested a food grains price policy from the point of view of both producers and consumers. The Venkatappaiah Committee (1966) suggested measures for efficient working of the public distribution system. Reports of various committees and commissions (1973, 1976) analysed the different aspects of Government interventions in the food economy, thereby, strengthening the economic rationale of the Public Distribution System.

Most of the studies discussed hitherto focus mainly on the socio-economic, cultural and other geographical aspects of the tribals in various parts of the country. Only a few attempt to study the supply of food items through the Public Distribution System. They do not try any detailed investigation of the Public Distribution System in most of the tribal areas. As the Public Distribution system is expected to play a vital role in improving the living conditions and the economic development of the tribals, it is essential to conduct an in-depth study of it, its impact and efficiency in tribal areas. Such a study would fill the lacuna, left unfilled in the few decades, and it would also reveal some changes to be made in the distribution system of essential items in tribal areas. It would be useful to identify the practical difficulties the Civil Supplies Department faces and the practical problems experienced by the tribals in getting essential food items. It will contribute to strengthening the existing policy measures in order to a fool-proof
supply mechanism of essential items in the country in general and in Andhra Pradesh in particular.

Need for the Present Study

Despite the several schemes launched and steps taken to improve the functioning of the Public Distribution System to benefit the tribal people, things have not improved as much as desired. The reasons are many. First of all the tribal people themselves, conditioned as they are to live according to centuries old habits and customs, have not responded readily to the progressive measures initiated by the Government which appear very strange to them. For instance many of them still follow the outmoded barter system. Most of them are illiterate and are more or less isolated from the outside world with which their contact has been rather weak and marginal. They are not aware of their legitimate and fundamental rights; their right to receive a just deal from the other sections of society and the nation as a whole and their right to live as others do. They have not organised themselves to fight for their rights - economic, social and political, etc. because they are not aware of them. Of course, a number of voluntary agencies and dedicated workers have been trying to educate them and working for their welfare and all-round development. But in view of the immensity of their task, their success has been at best moderate. The tribal people suffer from malnutrition and starvation and continue to lend themselves to be exploited by
callous and unscrupulous outsiders, who see to it that they remain below the poverty line always.

The Government, voluntary agencies and dedicated political activists, and all others concerned about tribal welfare, should redouble their activities to help the tribal people and educate them about themselves and about their place in the modern world. The mass media such as the radio and television should be used extensively and intelligently to make them understand the advantages of the several welfare schemes meant for them such as the Public Distribution System, launched by the government. The working of the Public Distribution System itself has to be constantly monitored and made really efficient, as cunning exploiters can always find loopholes in it and use them to their advantages. There are confirmed reports that essential food items and kerosene intended to be distributed among the tribal people exclusively by the Public Distribution System have made their way to the open market and sold at four times their price. It may be assumed that other essential commodities too are diverted from time to time to the open market, depriving the tribals of what is due to them. Therefore, there is every need to study closely and objectively the working of the Public Distribution System in relation to the tribal people and to assess its role in uplifting their standard of living and in protecting them from starvation.
Objectives

The present study the "Role of the Public Distribution System in the Economic Development of Tribals in the Prakasam and Nellore Districts of Andhra Pradesh" has the following specific objectives.

1. To review the Public Distribution System for tribals as distinct from the mechanism for non-tribals in A.P.;
2. To study the Public Distribution Practices and their efficiency in the selected districts;
3. To enquire into the socio-economic characteristics of the Tribals in the selected districts;
4. To assess the impact of the Public Distribution System on the standard of living of the tribals and also the plight in the study area;
5. To examine the practical difficulties and problems of the tribals in getting essential food items, and to offer suggestions to overcome them.

Methodology

The present study purports to examine the impact and effectiveness of the Public Distribution System in meeting the food needs of the tribal population and in uplifting their standards of living in the selected districts of Andhra Pradesh. The study contemplates a two-way approach. Firstly, it focuses attention on the selected tribal population who are expected to be the beneficiaries, and secondly, on the dealers and authorities of the Fair Price Shops under the Public Distribution System in the selected Districts. The data pertaining to the items covered under
the Public Distribution System, supply system, prices, number of cardholders are collected from the records of the Civil Supplies Department and fair price shop dealers. Further, the study makes use of the various reports of the Ministry of Civil supplies, Consumer affairs and Public Distribution System; Tribal Development Division, Ministry of Welfare, New Delhi; Tribal Welfare Officer concerned of the district etc. Further, the study examines the attitudes of the tribals to the PDS, the level of their living conditions, problems of starvation, level of satisfaction, improvement in their living conditions, if any, under the Public Distribution System. The views and opinions of the tribals are ascertained through a field survey. Appropriate questionnaires have been devised and administered to the sample respondents to elicit the required information.

Sample Design

For this study, two districts i.e. Prakasam and Nellore, of Andhra Pradesh were selected keeping in view the geographical and economic constraints of the tribal population there. In Prakasam about 98,854 tribals are living accounting for 2.35 per cent and in Nellore 2,14,062 tribals are living, accounting for 5.10 per cent of the total tribal population (41,99,481) of the State. They live in hilly as well as plain areas, and experience constraints of essential food items.

Both Prakasam and Nellore Districts have 3 Revenue Divisions each. Prakasam has 56 Mandals and Nellore has 46 mandals with considerable tribal population. To collect the primary data in the field area, a three-stage sampling design was adopted. In the first stage of investigation six Revenue Mandals from each of the two districts (6x2=12), which have considerable tribal population were selected. A list of the tribal-based villages with Fair Price Shops in each of the
selected Mandals was prepared and classified into two categories viz., 'Interior' and 'Fringe' based on the transport and other facilities available. The villages situated within a kilometer from bus service were considered as 'fringe' and the remaining as 'interior' villages.

In the second stage, two villages with tribal population from each mandal were selected in each category based on the random sampling method. Necessary care was taken in selecting the sample villages so as to cover different sub-groups of tribals and fair price shops intended for them. Thus 2 villages with fair price shops in each Revenue Mandal (2x12=24) were selected for the study.

In the third stage, the number of tribal households having ration cards was listed out and 20 households were selected by using the simple random sampling method from each village (20x24=480).

Thus, as a whole, 480 tribal households in 24 villages of 12 mandals of 2 districts viz., Prakasam and Nellore, formed the total sample for the study.

<table>
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<th>Name of the District(s)</th>
<th>No. of Mandals</th>
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<th>Sample Villages</th>
<th>Sample Tribal Households</th>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nellore</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>480</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Base

The primary data for this study was collected through pre-tested schedules prepared separately for the Fair Price Shop dealers and the authorities concerned, and the sample tribal people. The secondary data was collected from the relevant publications of the Ministry of Welfare, Tribal Development Division, Government of India, State Government, Department of Civil Supplies and the...
Planning Commission. Further, relevant information collected from the published and un-published records and reports of various institutions concerned with tribal affairs. In addition to these, structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with experts in the subject and also persons who are connected in one way or other with tribal development activities in India.

**Tools of Analysis**

To analyse the data well-known tools and techniques were used. Appropriate statistical tools were also used whenever necessary in analysing the quantitative data in order to arrive at logical conclusions and interpret the data scientifically.

**Plan of the Study**

The entire thesis has Seven Chapters-

Chapter I  Introduction and Methodology
Chapter II  Trends in Tribal Development
Chapter III Public Distribution System in Andhra Pradesh – An Overview
Chapter IV  Socio-economic profile of Tribes of Andhra Pradesh
Chapter V  Public Distribution System in Sample Areas and its impact on the Tribals
Chapter VI  Problems of the Tribals
Chapter VII  Summary of Conclusions and Suggestions.
References:


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