Chapter – III

ETHNOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE YANADI
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In this chapter it is proposed to present a brief ethnographic profile of the Yanadi tribe. Yanadis are one of the major scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh. According to 2001 census the total population of Yanadis in Andhra Pradesh was 4,62,167. They are predominantly spread over the districts of Nellore, Chittoor, Kadapa and Prakasam districts. The total literacy rate among Yanadi is 35.35 as per 2001 census. Their mother tongue is Telugu.

Map-1
Profile of the Nellore District

Nellore district situated in the South Eastern portion of the state with a coastal length of 163 km bounded by Bay of Bengal on the East. The district was known as Vikrama Simhapuri until 13th century and later it came to be referred to as Nellore.
Location and topography of the Sample Villages

Venkatachalam or Venkatachalam is a village and a mandal head quarter situated 15 Km toward south of Nellore town. Venkatagiri is a famous a town famous for the handloom saris. It is located 79 KM towards South from District head quarters Nellore. These two mandals are located away from the shore.
Origin of the Yanadi

Anthropological research has shown various views on the origin of Yanadi. Thurston (1909) noted that the people were native of Sriharikota Island located in Nellore district and suggested that they derived their name from the Sanskrit word “Anadi” denoting those whose origin is unknown. Subbarao (1931) opined that yanadi means people who are nomadic and wonder from place to place. According to Raghavaiah (1994, 1962), Yanadi means people without a specific origin suggesting ancient people. The name Yanadi is said to derive from ‘yanam’ (means travelling or navigating through water course, waterways). The Yanadi have a particular inclination to reside by the side of or nearby water courses (Rangarao, 1931, Raghavaiah, 1962).

The Yanadi share some cultural, linguistic and racial features with other indigenous communities of south India. However, these are largely speculations without any solid evidence. On the contrary, the Yanadi maintain their identity and do not claim explicit connections with other communities. During the fieldwork, it is observed that some Yanadi ascertain that Yanadi, Chenchu and Irula are one and the same. The Yanadi are sometimes looked down upon due to the practice of menial jobs. In order to alleviate the stigma, they equate themselves with Chenchu or Irula who are basically forest dwelling hunter-gatherers and do not suffer any caste discrimination.¹

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Regarding the Yanadi physical features and appearance, researchers made contrasting observations.

Ragaviah (1962) who worked extensively with the Yanadi, observed that "If you come across a man anywhere in the southern part of Andhra State, tall in stature, bony in structure, somewhat dark in complexion, his ringed unkempt curly hair tied behind in a bunch, his beard scanty and straggling, his cheek bones prominent around his snubbed nose bridge, with bright mild transparent eyes, negligible moustache, lanky legs, rather thick lips and speaking with an elongated sound, you can at once

¹ It may be mentioned that though the Yanadi view themselves as a tribe, their association with caste communities has imbibed the concept of purity and pollution associated with occupations and hierarchical order.
take him to belong to the Yanadi tribe". According to Thurston (1909), the Yanadis are a dark-skinned platyrrhine tribe and short of stature.

Some researchers have conducted anthropometric studies among the Yandi to describe their physical features. Subba Rao (1930) concluded that “the Yanadis belong to the Leotrichi or smooth haired peoples and to the black strata and possess the following bodily features: dark skin, black curly hair, long and prognathous skull, broad and concave nose, well-developed brow ridges, bony frame with narrow chest and short stature. They are clearly a pre-dravidian aboriginal race". Rami Reddy (1980) found the following features of the Yanadi: “The Yanadis appear to be predominantly short to below medium stature, below medium to low sitting height, narrow to medium shoulders, dolichocephalic, to mesochphalic heads, leptoprosopic to hyper-leptoprosopic faces, mesorrhine noses, medium head length, very narrow head breadth, below medium to medium frontal breadth, mesene to hyper leptene morphological superior facial index, mesometopic to hyper-mesometopic transverse frontoparietal index, below medium transverse cephalofacial index, and very broad jugo-frontal index. The Yanadi stature is over six-and-a-half times the foot length irrespective of the sex."

**SUB-DIVISIONS OF THE YANADI**

Yanadi are broadly divided into several groups which tacitly maintain an endogamous status though in reality the divisions are on the basis of occupation and dietary habits. The sub-divisions are:

1. Manchi Yanadi or Reddy Yanadi (cultivators and servants)
2. Adavi Yanadi (those living in the forest),
3. Paki Yanadi (scavengers)
4. Chella Yanadi (those who collect left out food from leaf plates in the dustbins).
5. Kappala Yanadi (those who catch frogs, rats and fish)
6. Chatla Yanadis (roam about trees and are food collectors),
7. Garapa Yanadis (work on dry lands and produce dry grains),
8. Nakkala Yanadis (they catch and eat jackals),
9. Company Yanadi (wage labourers working for the contractors in Sriharikota island)

10. Sarkar Yanadi (those employed by the Forest Department)

These sub-divisions are not kin groups though some Yanadi maintain that these groups are endogamous and do not take brides from other sub-divisions. Some scholars have opined that these sub-divisions are occupational groups who specialized in particular occupations and gradually come to be referred by their respective occupations (Reddy 1995).

Each sub-division comprises several patrilineal exogamous groups which are called intepe ru/ gotram/kulam though the first one is frequently used. These exogamous groups are characterized by the rule of group exogamy and the existence of a putative mythical or non-mythical ancestor from whom the group members claim descendancy. Several exogamous groups are found in more than one sub-division.

The exogamous groups are named after (1) plants, (2) animals/birds, (3) objects/implements and (4) region/settlements/villages/topography and personal features like pot belly, etc. Some names of the exogamous groups are:

- Tenkayalu, Thota, Ellagees, Chintapula; of plants,
- Mekala, Pamula, Udumula, Peddapuli, Chilukala, E gala /pitta of animals,
- Bandi, Chenbetti, Kattula, Ekala, Manikela, Thupakula of implements,
- Intodu, IIia (India), Kanur, Yellampalli, Adduru, Desuru and of settlements,
- Bojjavari, Chokkala, Konda, Kottal, Jandyai, Doddi of certain specific features like pot belly hill, sacred thread, backyard where cattle and fodder are kept.

The social organization of many tribal communities is generally based on totemic clans. However the Yanadis do not have totems.

**Language**

The original language of these people is unknown. They speak a form of Telugu dialect. The speech expression is of peculiar connotation with elongations of
all vowels. They speak in their dialect when communicating with their own people but change to the local dialect version of Telugu.

**Dress patterns**

The Yanadi men used to wear only a strip of cloth called “gochi” or “gochipatha”. Their dress consists of a piece of cloth to tie around the head, and of another to go round the waist. Women wear sari from the waist to knee and covering the breast. Women comb their hair regularly; they love to wear flowers in the hair.

**Food habits**

The villagers eat vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods. They also consume raw foods from forest. Annam (rice) is consumed every day as the morning meal. Field rats and fish are a delicacy during the festivals and life cycle ceremonies. Yanadis also hunt flying foxes, jackals, and peacock. They live to a good old age and it is only very seldom that one sees a man with grey hair. Yanadis eat meat of rabbit, fowl, goat, sheep and fish etc. They eat all kinds of vegetables that are available in their surroundings. Alcoholic consumption is a common feature among males and females, and they skillfully hunt field rat because they believe that the rat flesh makes them immune to rheumatism, keeps off old age, prevents grey hair, renders the human frame elastic and supple, and enables them to walk erect even in old age (Raghavaiah, 1962).

Usually they exchange the surplus forest produce for grains and other commodities with the agricultural and artisanal castes and rarely do they sell food produce. The common wild plant foods of them are, Injeti, adaviyalla and kurella. These are tubers and resemble sweet potato. These plants grow in surplus in scrub jungle of hill slopes. Yanadis dig them out with digging stick (guchekarra), boil them in water and eat with salt and occasionally with honey. Surplus collections are stored for about 3 to 5 months for use in lean times. After boiling the stored tubers they taste as good as the fresh ones.

Minor forest produce, such as, gum, broom, tamarind, soap nuts, fire wood, wood for house construction and medicinal plants are used for both subsistence and income generation. Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) collectors typically sell a
large portion of their harvest to local traders and to Girijan Cooperative Corporations (GCCs) and retain a small portion for domestic use.

**Population of Yanadis in the Sample Area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>1548</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table 3.1 shows the total population of the families under the study area. The total number of the Yanadi households in the sample area is 400 and the Yanadi population consists of 1548 people from these households. Males are 51.3 per cent and females are 48.7 per cent. It is observed that the percentage of men population is little bit higher than the percentage of the female population.

**Marriage**

Marriage is the vital social initiation among the Yanadis. Marriage is an important social institution. Serial monogamy is common form of marriage. The usual modes of acquiring mates are marriage by negotiation, mutual love and elopement as against the rest of the fairly conservative rural society. Love and courtship precedes marriage for members of the Yanadi tribe. After the couple has independently taken a decision, friends are invited to join in, betel and nuts are distributed and the bridegroom-to-be ties a string around his bride’s neck to indicate a sign of acceptance.

In a marriage ceremony, the role of maternal uncle is significant. Feasting, drinking and dancing are compulsorily associated with marriage. Marriage is performed in two stages viz. betrothal and wedding. The ceremony is performed for the confirmation of the marriage bond and also to receive the blessing of their spirits. The traditional music programme (melamu) is arranged through the ritual. The bride’s maternal uncle leads ceremony. The bride’s maternal uncle provides all her articles of toilette and on the wedding night, the couple is directed to see the Arundathi star. A thin cord with a small pendant is worn around a married woman's neck. A toe ring is also worn on her second toe.
Marriages are prohibited within the same surname group as being practiced in other communities. In principle the intiperlu group is exogamous and marriages between the members of the intiperlu group are strictly prohibited. The surname group are again clustered into two groups name annadammula varasa intiperlu (brotherly related groups and Bava bammardi groups) affinally related intiperlu. Intiperu is equated with surname group but it is not strictly an exclusive kinship group. As said above some surname groups are clustered into brotherly related groups and the members of each group are not permitted to marry a girl from surname which stands in the brotherly relationship. The surname groups of brotherly cluster have to seek brides from the cluster of affinally related surname groups.

Marriage among Yanadis is not associated with any kind of legal involvement i.e. if one of the spouses is not interested to continue with the partner, either he or she is free to break the marriage and marry or simply start living with a person of one’s choice. It is so flexible that they leave the spouse, and arrange their union with another partner as and when they like. Hence, in this community, permissibility (the social sanction) to change the spouse according to one's own liking is extensively observed. As regards the type of marriage among Yanadis, the first marriage in this community is mostly an arranged one. While 60 per cent of the first marriages are arranged by parents, the remaining 40 per cent of marriages are arranged by the couples themselves. Among the Yanadi re-marriage of divorcees, widows and widowers are permitted. The practice of remarriage is widely practiced in the community because the pair of wife and husband constitutes an important constituent in running the household and various roles and responsibilities are equally shared and carried out by the conjugal couple.

Age differences between the couple is not very significant though elderly men are not considered worthy enough to marry an young girl. But elderly women marrying younger boys are reported and are not considered particularly unacceptable. This may be due to the fact that household maintenance is usually vested in the hands of wife and an elderly experienced woman is believed to look after the household and husband more efficiently. Such marriages are common in secondary marriages than first marriage. Notwithstanding this, usually in case of first marriages, the husband is older than the wife. It must be asserted that age difference between the prospective
couple is not a determining factor in contracting a marriage. If the husband is not sexually active, the wife simply rejects him.

Women have lot of independence in the Yanadi community. In the event of repeated differences and failure to carry out respective roles and responsibilities associated with conjugal life, the couple can breakup and form another marriage. Rao, (2002) says one of the reasons marriages breakups is physical abuse. The Yanadi women are as free as men to shift their sex relationships when they feel estranged from their spouse. Being divorced bears no stigma in their culture. When domestic disputes occur, maternal uncles may be summoned; they have the role of arbitrator in family conflicts and they normally command a lot of respect.

The matrimonial relationships among the Yanadis are not binding. They can break at any moment. A man can marry any number of women, and a woman can also leave her husband. “Children do not face any disadvantage owing to the separation of their parents because they are considered as much legitimate as any other child without parental separation. Principally, children born to a Yanadi couple are treated as members of the Yanadi community. It is a rarity that children are left as destitute in the event of marriage dissolution of parents. Such children are looked after by any relative, step mother or step father, maternal uncles or paternal aunts, grandparents etc.

The children are very rarely punished or reprimanded as they are considered as the descendants of ancestors or born with the blessing of household deities. Parents therefore must tolerate cranky children and put up with their misdeeds, but they must never spank them. They even hesitate to yell at them. Parents cannot even force their children to attend school – the children make their own choices since they have the freedom to do as they wish. Parents do sometimes discipline children with the threat of ghosts, devils, police or non-Yanadi.

Marital Status

The Yanadi women play a pivotal role in the family and the community, shouldering all the responsibilities in providing needs and comforts of the members of the family and the children, running the household and managing within the limited budget. They provide services round the clock without any payment and yet they are
considered economically dependent on their husband or any other male member of the family.

**Table: 3.2. Distribution of Respondents by their Marital Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Widow</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Divorce/Separated</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table 3.2 shows that the marital status of the respondents. The data shows that the major proportions (91.5 per cent) of the respondents are married, followed by 5.5 per cent are widowed and very minor proportion (3.0 per cent) are separated/divorced. This shows the universal practice of marriage prevailing among the Yanadis.

**Type of Marriage**

**Table: 3.3. Distribution of Respondents by their Type of Marriage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Type of Marriage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Non-Consanguineous</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Consanguineous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Mother’s Brother</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Mother’s Brother’s Son</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Father’s Sister’s Son</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>Distant Relatives</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 3.3 presents the type of marriage prevailing in the sample area, more than two thirds (64.3 per cent) of the marriages of the respondents are non-consanguineous. Only the remaining one-third are consanguineous marriages. Among them a minor proportion got married with mother’s brother’s son (11.7 per cent), 10 per cent of the respondents are got married Father’s sister’s son, followed by 8 per cent of the respondents are got married mother’s brother. 6.00 per cent of the
respondents who married distant relatives. The custom of consanguineous marriage is there and still more non-consanguineous marriage is prevailing in the sample area.

**Family**

Among Yanadis nuclear type of family is more predominant. Post-marital residential arrangements are optional and based on convenience in terms of livelihood opportunities, accessibility to kin assistance, availability of resources (water, forest, agricultural fields, pasture fields etc. The first preference is patrilocality but a separate hut or house is arranged for living (virilocal residence). Uxorilocal and bilocal residences are also reported. Living amidst one’s brothers-in-law is also a preferred choice of residence. It is very uncommon for the Yanadi to live in a strange place. In any case the Yanadi couple, their parents and the community at large prefer a separate dwelling rather than living jointly with patri or matri kin members.

Family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation, socialization of children and reproduction. It includes both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship and one or children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults (Murdoch, 1948). According to Murdoch, nuclear family comprises husband and wife and one or more number of unmarried children own or adopted; extension of nuclear family by including kin related to the couple of the nuclear family either through blood or by marriage. A typical extended family is the one having a married couple along with one or more pairs of married children along with their spouses. This type is called vertically extended family. Horizontally extended family is the one where one or more married brothers or sisters of the married couple live together. Extended families may also comprise a married couple, their children and other relatives such as a widowed mother/father/brother/sister, unmarried brother/sister, children of husband’s/ wife’s deceased /divorced brother or sister etc.

**Table: 3.4. Distribution of Respondents by their Type of Family**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Type of Family</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>95.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Extended</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table 3.4 reveal that the distribution of respondents by the type of family. 95.8 per cent of the Yanadi women are living in nuclear families, remaining 4.2 per cent of the women are living in extended/joint families. Old parents prefer to live with their son whom they like very much.

Size of the family

Among the 400 sample members 17.3 per cent of the Yanadi women have 1-2 members each, 47.5 per cent of the members have families with 3-4 members, 32 per cent of the respondents have 5-6 members each and the remaining 3.3 per cent of the members have more than 7 members each. The Yanadi families are usually small in size.

Type of House

Habitation has a lot of sociological significance. Habitation is the locus of the initial socialization of the child. This is suitably applicable in the case of Indian rural community where the existence of separate areas of living on the basis of caste-ranking and the theory of pollution and purity goes on even in the present times.

Table: 3.5. Distribution of Respondents by their Type of House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Type of House</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Kutcha</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Semi-Pucca</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Pucca</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure-3.1

The above table 3.5 shows the type of houses of the Yanadis in the sample area. Yanadis live in sangams/hamlets isolated and faraway from the main village. Their housing pattern is varied depending upon their economic status. Two-fifths (40.3 per cent) of the respondents are having pucca houses, followed by more than a quarter (26.7 per cent) with semi-pucca houses. Nearly 18.3 per cent of the respondents are having kutcha houses and only minor proportions (14.7 per cent) are having huts.

On the whole, majority of the respondents are having Pucca and Semi-Pucca houses. This may due to the State Government Housing Scheme which provides houses without any cost to the poor and marginalized.

The Yanadi live in traditional huts. Yanadis live in cone-shaped huts made of bamboo and palm leaves, grass and millet stalks. Huts are constructed with mud walls and thatched roof. Plain year leaves, grass or millet stocks consisting of single room with a small entrance, ventilation is very poor. The house can accommodate only a few members. The Yanadi group forms their small household huts into family clusters that are usually surrounded by thatch fencing, which provides privacy for each compound. Each cluster of huts will have separate entrance from the other clusters, and the entrances all face in different directions. Scattering the clusters ensures privacy and helps prevent quarrels.

The Yanadi settlement in the study area, irrespective of their location, each hut has a boundary made of hedges. But a common boundary of split bamboos or slender
canes is built for all the huts of a common exogamous unit. The hut of the headman of the settlement is normally situated in the centre. Aged Yanadi say that, during their grandparental and parental times huts were situated far off from those of upper caste people but in due course, due to increased interaction, the socio cultural distance has become minimized.

Cooking is done usually outside the house during hot and dry weather but inside the hut during the rainy season and when it is warm and smoky. The low conical structure of their house results in poor ventilation makes the internal environment stubby. This is not suitable for good health. Housing environment is one of the main factors held responsible for causing many diseases, especially, respiratory and eye related infections.

They live in small circular huts of about 8 feet in diameter, having an entrance of about 1 ½ feet in width. Before building the huts they describe large circles round the place where the huts are to be built, muttering certain words of magic, which are supposed to keep off evil spirits, influences and snakes from approaching their dwelling-places. They plant round their huts certain herbs believed to possess the virtue of keeping off venomous reptiles. It is really astonishing to find in those little huts two dozens of persons living, for a Yanadi rarely has less than a dozen children.

Earlier Yanadis did not live in regular villages. They build portable and conical huts with small opening near streams and canals. The habitation reflects their nomadic nature. Since last 4-5 years they started settling in habitations, located out of the main villages. The homestead land was given by the government. Earlier they used to live in round and cone shaped hut made of palm leaves and local bushes. In 1984 after a cyclone 2-5% Yanadis were given 1 room 1 kitchen Pucca house. Latter in 2006 housing scheme was introduced by government in which first the community needs to complete the basement with its own contribution to get further support from government. The families not having food to eat faced problem to get government benefit. Then Reddies and Panchayat leaders took the contract and constructed bad quality houses not feasible to stay by the Yanadi community. There is a problem of water leakage during rainy season. Thus 50-60 per cent of Yanadi families are still living in huts. The construction of huts also becomes difficult due to lack of availability palm trees.
Interior arrangements

Arrangements with in a hut are very typical. Immediately at the left side to the entrance is a shallow hearth dug in to the floor facing north east (Tel: Easanyamula). They believe that, their gods and goddesses are in the north, north-east and the persons who cook the food should face the gods and goddesses are in the north, north-east and the persons who cook the food should face the gods and goddesses. Adjoining the hearth is kept a water pot and a small drinking vessel which is generally made of the base half of a coconut shell. Next is a row of pots (2 or 3) arranged one upon another for storing grains, edibles and rarely dried meat. In the same way at the right side of the entrance are kept earthenware plates and saucers; they use them even if they are partly broken. Adjacent to these is a rectangular granite slab of mortar and pestle or a grinding stone. The space left in between these and right side rows are usually occupied by rags and/or a portion of mat made of polymer leaves. A broom stick made of a bunch of small dry plants, has its position near the grinding slab. On the top of the mud wall a lengthy wooden or iron rod which is used as a crowbar is inserted in to the roof besides the fish nets and traps etc.

Kinship

The Yanadi differentiate themselves from other castes and tribes by their customs of food consumption, food transactions, marital transactions and residential identity and above all by means of a distinctive dialect. Eating beef is prohibited and so is removal of dead animals. They do not participate in the life cycle rituals of their neighbouring castes. They consider themselves as superior to the scheduled castes like the Mala and the Madiga with whom commensal relations are strictly avoided.

The Yanadi is an endogamous unit where marriage takes place between individuals belonging to the Yanadi. Breaching this rule is resented though there are certain exceptions. The Yanadi call their own members as mana manushulu (our persons) and identify them by means of physical features, food habits, ritual customs and dialect. The Yanadi usually reside away from other castes/villages. They usually live in separate habitations thereby signifying a common identity.

Even though, the Yanadi view their own persons share common identity, they consider only some persons as banduvulu (relatives) who are related either through
descent, marriage or through a marriage with an agnate or affine. The relatives are
classified into close ones (bilateral) and distant ones. The Yanadi place a high
obligation towards close relatives and invariably share reciprocal roles and
responsibilities during rituals, strife and hard times. During pregnancy and child birth,
close relatives extend help and provide necessary assistance /advice/ guidance/
obstetric and gynecological services and interventions. The close relatives interact in
matters of economic cooperation, rituals and marriage and divorce.

The Yanadi at the habitation level are organized into kamatham bilateral
kindred groups comprising close relatives called dayadulu( close agnates) and close
affines. Each kamatham is made up of a few inteperlu.

The Yanadi kinship is based on classificatory system of kin terminology and
bifurcate merging type; for example male members belonging to brotherly clan
groups are all either fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters even though strict biological
connection are not traceable. Cross cousins are separated from parallel cousins and
cross cousins marriages are prescribed where as parallel cousin marriage is
proscribed.

The Yanadi are divided into a number of exogamous agnatic kin groups
named as inteperlu (surname), kulam or gotram. Each group is characterized by an
unknown common ancestor though the Yanadi fail to give details. This exogamous
group is organized on the principle of patrilineal descent. The Yanadi say that
inteperlu have multiplied over a period of time. Each inteperlu may comprise hundreds
of families. The Yanadi inteperlu (plural form of inteperlu) indicate profession, an
object, place name, insects etc. Some of the inteperlu are Ega, Thupakula, Uppala,
Yatagiri, Mandala, Thiramchetti, Kathi, Mekala, Adhuru, Yenugeti, Senaga, Patra,
Bandi, Gaddam, Rachagiri etc.

Inteperlu are divided into consanguineous and affine. Marriage is prohibited
between some Inteperlu as they stand in blood relationship either agnatically or
uterinly.
Economic Organization

Generally the Yanadis are a fishing community whenever water bodies exist. All Yanadis irrespective of their habitat are hunter-gatherers in the plays where forest is available. However, after the implementation of several developmental programmes by government, Yanadi adopted wage labor such as collection of minor forest produce and selling the same in neighboring villages and towns.

After the forest cover was lost they came down to plain areas, the only hunting available to them now, is the hunting of rats and snakes. They wait until the harvesting of paddy, locate different rat burrows, catch the rodents and also dig up the paddy stored by the rodents in these burrows. In this way they manage to collect paddy for their livelihood.

Yanadis are skilled Shikaris. The forest Yanadis imitates the cries of animals and birds. He is also a master at driving the game towards a vantage point to bring it down with bowshot. They were employed by the Rajas (Kings) of Venkatagiri for several years in the past for driving the game so that the Zamindars can do the hunting easily. They are expert fowlers. The animals they usually hunt are “Sambhar deer, wild goat, bear, porcupine, birds, boar, land tortoise, hare, bandy coot and jerboa rat, lizard, mongoose and fish” (Thurston, 1909).

The Yanadis are also found in hills in certain districts. The Yanadi Chenchu tribe has given us the legend of Chenchulakshmi and Narasimha at Ahobilam. There is a possibility that some members of fierce hill tribe from Andhra were brought to Thanjavur by Nayak kings as soldiers and this area was ear-marked for them. It may also be pointed out that the Yanadi was a title for army commanders used by the Tamil Kings. They observe omens before starting for the hunt. To ensure successful hunt they pledge to make offerings to the God of hunt namely ‘Katrayudu’ (Lord of the Jungle).

Latter the Yanadis were also used as auricular wage labour work by the ‘reddy’ community (large farmers) and were also engaged to kill the rats from their agriculture field to protect crops. One of the important food items is honey. They classify honey into four types based on size and location of the honeycomb. They collect the honey with great interest and cooperation. The yanadi have traditionally
preferred a semi-nomadic forest life subsisting on hunting, fishing, and gathering nuts, yams, and roots. An herbal health drink from its roots is prepared by yanadi tribe of the area. The plant is a liane, locally called Maredu Kommulu or Barre Suganadhi or Maredugaddalu (Telugu). The plant is known as Decalepis Hamiltonian weight and Arn. (Family Asclepiadaccae) it is an endemic and endangered plant of Andhra Pradesh. It grows in between the rocks and places where there is thick vegetation. Milky latex is present in the entire plant. Roots are harvested during summer months mostly by the Yanadi tribe of Chittoor district and it is the main source of income to them until the agricultural work resumes.

The Yanadi men are good hunters and specialize in trapping hares, rats and leopards. Their main source of income comes from agriculture. Other areas of activity include collecting forest produce, catching frogs and snakes for trade, and gathering honey to sell in the markets. The Yanadis are also known for ferocity, a quality that comes to the fore when an attempt is made to thwart their only source of living. Some members are semi-nomadic, moving every few years in search of work or good sources of forest products.

The Yanadis mainly subsist on agricultural labour. They are traditionally inland fishermen and are also engaged as watchmen of the fields and orchards of farmers. Collection of firewood, rickshaw pulling, rodents catching etc., constitutes secondary occupation of the Yanadis. Since 1970, the government of India has re-settled many in permanent villages though others still retain their semi-nomadic lifestyle.

The Chenchus of Andhra Pradesh are a variant of the Yanadis. Each yanadi sub-tribe was divided into surnames or house names (intiperlu). In census of 1921, the yanadis returned 56 occupational sub-divisions, of which were the Reddi or Chenchu. This indicates that Chenchus are a variant of Yanadis. The Yanadis household God is Chenchu Devudu and Poleramma and Ankamma are worshipped as village deities. Chenchu or Senchu could be a modification of Sanchara meaning move or nomadic. They are one of the primitive Sanchara Jatis of India.

While many yanadi are now laborers, a 1995 sample of 320 people showed that nearly one third still hunts, gather fish, trap, and dig roots for their subsistence.
According to the 2001 census of India, about 260,000 are workers, and another 200,000 are non-workers.

The Reddies (land lords) used them as agricultural and domestic labourers. Thus Yanadis lost their original home and got scattered in different plain areas, settled near canals and streams and their settlement was nomadic in nature till recent times. Their habitations are found outside the main villages. The Reddy community live in the main village, with all the facilities, like drinking water, school, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), electricity etc. Yanadis living in the small habitations are deprived of all these. The Yanadis are left with only options to serve Reddies as domestic labourer and agriculture labourer. They are also used to protect their fields from rats. More over Yanadis were made bonded labourer against loan at the rate of 100-120 % per annum. Reddi-Yanadis were taken as domestic workers, women were sexually abused. The Challa Yanadis were used as scavengers; children were also forced to do labour work.

**Occupation**

Occupation determines the social status of an individual. It also determines the income. In the present study seven types of occupation have been classified. They are agriculture, agricultural laborers, fishing, petty business, brick making, collection of forest products and others. The following table shows the distribution of respondents by their occupation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Agricultural Labour</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Petty Business</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Brick Making</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Collection of forest products</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Other’s</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table 3.6 reveals that the occupational status of the respondents. It is clear that more than two-fifths (46.5 per cent) are agricultural laborers, followed by 14.3 per cent doing own agriculture, collection of forest products (14.7 per cent) and fishing (15 per cent) followed by 4.3 per cent who have taken up brick making. A very minor proportion (3.0 Percent) is in Other’s category like tailoring and basket making, followed by 2.3 per cent in Petty business. On the whole, majority of the Yanadi women are agricultural laborers.

Income

Income is an important economic variable. In fact, income influences one’s behavior in several ways: it affects the fertility and family planning behavior directly and indirectly through education, social status, and awareness, etc. Hence, in the present study, data on annual family income are collected. The sample population is divided into four income groups.

Table: 3.7. Distribution of Respondents by their Family Annual Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Annual Income (Rs.)</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Less than 15000</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>57.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>15001 to 25000</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>25001 to 35000</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>35000 and above</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table 3.7 shows the annual income of the family. More than half of
the respondents (57 per cent) income is less than Rs. 15000/- per annum followed by
more than one fourth of the Yanadis (26.75 per cent) family income which is between
Rs. 15001 – 25000/-. Only 11 per cent of the respondents family income is Rs. 25001
– 35000/- and a minor proportion (5.3 per cent) is having a family income of Rs.
35000/- and above. This shows that majority of the Yanadis family income is less
than Rs. 25000/- per annum. Most of the respondents’ family income is less than
15,000/- per annum. This reflects their poverty.

**Land ownership**

Yanadi populations are mostly landless agricultural labourers. Only a small
percentage of Yanadis have a small extent of land ranging between below 3 acres.
The average size of land holding in Andhra Pradesh was 1.36 ha (source 1995-96) and
this has come down to 1.25 ha in 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Land in Acres</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>No Land</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>84.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>One acre</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Two acres</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Three acres</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data reveal that out of 400 respondents, 84.7 per cent are landless. They mainly depend upon agricultural labour and fishing. Only minor proportions (10.3 per cent) are having one acre of land of their own and a few have two acres of land (4 per cent). Only 1 per cent of respondents are having three acres. The analysis of above data clearly shows that the respondent’s economic status is low.

Source of Water supply to Agricultural land

Majority of the Yanadis are not having any agricultural land of their own in the sample area (84.8 per cent). Of those who are having minor proportion of land, 7.5 per cent of the respondents are getting water through pipes, for 5.8 per cent are the main sources of water supply to land through the Mud Canals, 2 per cent through Sprinklers.

Livestock

The Yanadis in the study area are having livestock in their houses as they are needed to appease the Gods. The sacrifice of different kinds of livestock accompanied by all the rites and ceremonials of fetishism is considered appropriate appeasement. Moreover, their extremely superstitious nature prohibits the undertaking of any enterprise unless the Gods are first appeased and the omens, after being carefully considered, are adjudged to be propitious.

Table: 3.9. Distribution of Respondents by their Livestock

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Livestock</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>No animals</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bulls</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Buffaloes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Goat</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Poultry</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Cows and Buffaloes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Cows and Poultry</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Buffaloes and Poultry</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table 3.9 shows the livestock position of the Yanadis. 72.5 per cent of the respondents are not having any livestock. Only 1 per cent of the respondents are having Bulls, followed by 2.5 per cent of the respondents are having buffaloes, 3.5 per cent of the respondents having sheep, 4.7 per cent of the respondents having poultry and 4.3 per cent of the respondents are having cows and poultry. These are followed by those having cows and poultry (7.3 per cent). Nearly 5.7 per cent of the respondents are having both buffaloes and poultry.

**Sources of Drinking Water**

Drinking water is water safe enough to be consumed by humans. Clean water is also an essential part of infection prevention in maternal care services. A source of drinking water is an important development variable, which influences maternal health through infant mortality. It is said that in India providing good drinking water could prevent two thirds of infant deaths.

The following table illustrates the sources of drinking water in the study area. In the study area Yanadi people are getting water mainly from wells and bore wells for drinking purpose. For the present study, the source of drinking water is classified into community well, bore well and Panchayat tap water.

**Table: 3.10. Distribution of Respondents by their Sources of Drinking Water**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Sources of Drinking Water</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Well</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bore well</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Panchayat tap</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Well &amp; Bore well</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bore well and Panchayat tap</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table 3.10 shows that the sources of the drinking water of the respondents. For 37.5 per cent of the Yanadi women main sources of drinking water are Panchayat tap, followed by 6.3 per cent of the Yanadi women who are getting from well, 18.7 per cent who are sourcing from Bore Well, followed by 12.5 per cent from Bore Well and Well and 25 per cent of the respondents who are getting drinking water from Panchayat tap supply and Bore wells.

**Political organization**

The political organization of the tribals of India reflects a paradoxical situation in which democracy and traditions co-exist. In early period Yanadis had rudimentary political organization, because people had to collect food from forests. They had a nomadic life. They were moving from one place to another. During semi nomadic period the political set up of the Yanadis was confined to institutions like the Sangha Peddalu (village elders). Since independence, due to democracy adult Yanadis became politically active. Hence the traditional institutions were gradually fading away. Presently, the Yanadis have president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer who are elected by themselves. The elections of people depend on some qualifications, age, education, intelligence and on the basis of economic status in the family etc, and their entire powers vest in the hands of president.

The president is a man who commands majority in the village. The President guides the people and keeps traditional values. He has to look after the betterment of his followers. The president performs several political and economical functions,
including adjudications of disputes, impositions of penalties and enforcement of decisions. These are performed by the village elders. In case of divorce between a husband and wife, the husband has to return the bride price money in the presence of the village elders. But on the other hand, if a husband initiates divorce he does not have any financial obligations towards his wife. In these matters they do not approach court or police station. The decision given by the village elders had to be obeyed even if it is not in the favour of a woman or a person from the weaker section. But they have to obey the decision or else they would be excommunicated. The money from the fines is utilized for the general welfare purpose like digging of wells. During elections the Yanadis people have to vote for the party, which the village elders suggest. If there is any problem in their “sangam” like adultery, elopement and divorce, the village elders give their verdict in case of adultery; the bride price has to be given back by the woman to her husband.

**Religion**

The Yanadi follow Hinduism. Around ninety percent of Yanadis are Hindus. Their territory deity is Chenchu devatha. They worship some village deities like Poleramma, Ankalamma thalli, Pallamma thalli, Yellamma thalli, Gangamma thalli, Mahalakshmamma thalli etc. The Yanadis of Eetamukkala traditionally worship Jalamma (Jwalamukhi temple at Eetamukkala) a local female deity. In addition to this they worship Hindu gods and goddesses like Venkateswara, Penusila swamy, Vinayaka and Sri Rama etc. Many festivals are observed in favour of their gods. They love dance and music. Drums and small stringed instruments are their favourite musical instruments. They have no legends or mythologies of wars in their past, and their life style matches their world view, which is to live in harmony with the gods, humanity and nature. They believe that when people die their souls go to Lord Brahma, the creator God.

**Life cycles**

**Pregnancy**

Yanadis regard nausea, vomiting sensation and stopping of monthly menstrual cycle as an indication of pregnancy. The local expression for this is ‘neellu posukovadamu’. Every Yanadi woman is likely to take rest during her pregnancy. But
some of the Yanadi women keep working more or less till the time of childbirth, in the house and in the fields. The Yanadi woman prefers her first confinement to take place at her parent’s houses. She is also not allowed to come out of her house during a storm, lightening or a thunder. During pregnancy period Yanadi women are forbidden from visiting funeral ceremonies. The Yanadi men follow certain practices like growing the beard and hair on the head.

**Seemantham**

Seemantham is fertility ritual conducted at the time of first pregnancy. Not all families conduct this ritual in elaborate way.

**Child birth**

Generally, the delivery to a child takes place in the inner part of the house. Most of the houses of the yanadi consist of only one room. Among the Yanadi women traditionally the trained midwife (Manthrasani) attends the delivery and cuts the naval chord of the body. The pregnant woman lies down on a bed on the floor. The midwife (Manthrasani) sits in front to receive the child. When the delivery is over, the midwife ties the umbilical cord (boddu) with a thread and cuts the umbilical cord with a knife. During the first three days of the delivery, no food is given to the mother. Only medicated ginger mixed with liquor is given. On the fourth day after delivery, the mother, takes rice with curry leaf powder, mixed with chilly, garlic and pepper. It is their belief that this kind of food keeps her body warm. Up to nine days from the delivery, the mother and the child are treated as polluted and they are separated from other parts of the house and the mother is prohibited from doing household duties. On the 11th day after delivery, the mother and the child are given purificatory bath. Later, they make deities of ancestors, with clay, named as pedarasi peddamma, veeriperalu idols. They put these idols on the floor. They pray to them for safety from all troubles and miseries.

Only then the mother with her child is permitted to move in all parts of the house, to participate in all household duties and to move with the other people freely. For three months, women take bath with hot water. Her mother has to wash clothes. For the service rendered by the manthrasani (midwife), she gets foodstuffs and some amount of money like Rs 200/-. In critical cases of the deliveries, the Yanadis go to
the Govt. hospital for delivery. No restrictions are observed regarding pollution since everything is over in the hospital.

**Naming ceremony**

Naming ceremony is conducted on the eleventh day, after delivery; the birth rites (purudu) are performed, to remove the ritual impurity of the mother. On that day itself, the name giving ceremony locally known as “perupettadamu” takes place. This ceremony takes place in the mother’s house. On that day the mother and child undergo ritual bath and baby is decorated with new clothes. The Yanadi name their children by giving them the name of the ancestors or household deity. Among the Yanadis there is a tendency to adopt most of the Hindu names. Generally the kulapedda (Head man of the caste) announces the name of the child in public. On that day the relatives and friends are invited to the function. The maternal uncle gives presentations both in cash and kind to the child. Some of the relatives bring presents like clothes, toys etc. Then a vegetarian feast is given to the invitees.

**Tonsure ceremony**

The Yanadis celebrate tonsure ceremony locally known as “puttuventrukalu theeyuta” during the eleventh month or when the child is three years old. This ceremony is associated with the first removal of hair from the head of the child. In this ceremony the maternal uncle occupies a very important place. Generally most of the Yanadis who have mokhubadi (a certain vow to please the deity) perform the tonsure ceremony by visiting temple.

**Puberty**

Puberty is significant life cycle occasion in the life of Yanadi women. Attaining puberty is called as ‘teerdamadatam’, ‘ediginadi or samartainadi’ as local term. Yanadi believe that attaining Puberty is stage of attaining womanhood. Similarly, it is belied that a girl who attains puberty is physically and mentally matured enough for marriage and also to hold responsibilities and duties of an adult women. It is concerned with girls of 13-15 years. During this period, Yanadi men are not allowed to see the girls, who are in puberty. They keep her in a hut and allow her to sit with relatives only on the mattress. The relatives come and see her in this period. Her uncle brings dry coconut, turmeric, and banana, and a blouse on a plate. Her
uncle builds a hut for her to stay during this period. The relatives also bring coconuts, nuvvulu, bellam and jackets. On the fifth day they allow her to take head bath and give her new clothes to wear. They offer cloths of parikini, ohni, and jacket to her. Then prepare “arabanthi” offering special meal on first day and “peddabanthi” offering meal to the whole village people on the tenth day. They invite relatives and friends for meal. They allow the girl to sit with close relatives, to be seen by all.

Festivals

In the study area popular festivals of the Yanadi are Ankallamma Jathara, Polleramma Thirunalla and Gangamma Jathara. Hindu festivals such as Dasara, Deepavali, Sri Ramanavami, Krishnastami, Vinayaka Chavithi (Ganesh Chatrthi) and Maha Sivarathri and Ugadi are also celebrated.

Status of the Yanadi women

Traditionally Yanadi women enjoy a higher status than non-tribal women. They enjoy greater personal freedom. There is greater social equality between men and women among the Yanadi society. Women are free to choose their husbands. Divorce and widow remarriages are socially accepted. There is also a practice of bride price. In addition to crucial role in domestic and child rearing activities, women contribute a major part of labour in agricultural activities. They also supplement the family income through wage labour.

Personal hygiene

Bathing

Cleaning of the skin is very important. Among the Yanadis, there is no bathing enclosure except in a few cases. Bathing takes place in the corner of the area. The old men and women and wash their clothes very rarely. In the winter season bathing is found to be very rare. During that period instead of washing the whole body they wash their face, hands, and feet. Children remain under water tap or in the stream water for prolonged period playing with water and allowing the water after bath to automatically dry up on their body and hair. Clothes are put on even when their bodies are wet. They use toilet soap at irregular intervals for bathing purpose. This irregular habit may be responsible for different skin diseases among the Yanadi.
Washing of Cloth

Washing and changing of clothes is not a regular practice among the yanadi. The old people rarely change their clothes. The educated and younger people periodically changed their dress, and wash their clothes as per convenience. Clothes are generally washed by both men and women during bathing. In practice, it is observed that a single item of dress is being used year after year without washing. This happens particularly in case of the old people layers of dirt have been found accumulated in such clothes which emit a stinking odor. This practice of unhygienic clothing also may be responsible for different skin diseases and ailments.

Eating and Drinking Habit

So far as the eating habit is concerned all the members of the family do not take meal together at a time. Generally, they take their meals thrice a day. Once at dawn before going out for work, second during work in the field or forest and third, after dusk at home. Sometimes, they eat neatly near their hearth, and sometimes in the veranda. Serving food in the same plate to other without cleaning the used plate has also been found among the Yanadis. Drinking water is stored in earthen pots or aluminum containers. The people do not adopt any measures to purify the water before consumption. Tap water or spring water is consumed directly by them. Family members drink water from a single mug during eating. Consumption of drinking water is low among the people particularly among the males. Whenever they feel thirsty, they take country liquor in lieu of water. Generally males and females consume country liquor (arrack).

Care of Teeth

Earlier, the Yanadis did not use anything to clean teeth except water to rinse the mouth. Now the Yanadis clean their teeth with charcoal, neem stems etc. These are often used by them to clean the teeth. Children are also not habituated to clean their teeth every day. Chewing of tobacco is common among them irrespective of sex. Even before reaching adulthood, the people become habituated to tobacco chewing. Some people are found to be taking betel nut and betel vine leaf. Black marks are found to be very common in their teeth. A reasonable number of the cases of toothache have been found in the study area. Habit of brushing of teeth after meal or
before going to bed is not found among them. Smoking of “beedi” is commonly found among them.

**Hair care**

Traditionally, the Yanadis from childhood either cut their hair short at intervals, though the females keep their long hair or tied in pigtail hair to grow as per the modern fashion. Grown-up girls, however comb their hair two times a day. The old folk are rarely found to be combing their hair. Adult males and females and grown up boys and girls generally apply mustard oil (amudham) on their hair. The Yanadis do not have any taboo regarding hair cutting and shaving.

**Paring of Nails**

Nail biting is frequently seen among the Yanadis in the study area. Acumination of dirt in the nails is found very common among the Yanadis which may be responsible for various stomach diseases. Old people are not accustomed to nail trimming. There is no taboo relevant to the pairing of nails among them.

**Sleeping style**

Sleeping style is an integrating factor for health and disease. The Yanadi sleep inside their dwelling houses on the floor during winter. In summer, they sleep outside the hut. Generally the husband and wife sleep together even during old age. The children sleep separately. Yanadis usually sleep early between 7:00 to 8:00 pm in the study area.

**Disposal of Sewage and Refuse**

The Yanadi clean their utensils, food items etc., in the compound yard. There is no proper drainage system in the study area to divert the sewage to any definite direction. Sometimes the water remains accumulated. Accumulation of water is also found in and around the bathing place. Regarding the disposal of household refuse, there is no definite place. The refuse is found to be heaped here and there of the courtyard or under the dwelling after a few days. These generally start decaying. It is quite likely that many kind of germs result from this accumulated refuse.
In olden days, toilets and bathrooms were not constructed by the Yanadis. They used to go to nearby jungle to attend to nature’s call after which they are not habituated to clean the affected part of the body with water. The scenario has been slightly changed. The government has initiated for Yanadis to construct household toilets. Generally, after attending natures call no toilet soap is used to clean hands and feet. The children defecate either in the kitchen garden or in the backyard, and leave night soil there which is sometimes eaten by domesticated animals like dogs etc. Infants usually defecate on mother’s lap or on bed. Night soil is thrown to the kitchen garden or under the pit dwelling.

With a view to settle these poverty-stricken Yanadis, land colonization schemes were started during the British period and continued after the post-independence period for the rehabilitation of Yanadis. The State Government has also introduced land assignment schemes to provide land for cultivation to the landless Yanadis. Besides, the development schemes under the sectors like education, housing, women and child development, medical, health and nutrition, roads etc are also under implementation for the benefit of the Yanadis.

**Pets and hygiene**

The domestication of animal has a definite role to play in environmental situation and is an important and influential factor affecting the health of the people. A good number of diseases and ailments are caused by infections from diseased domesticated animals. The Yanadis in the study area domesticate animals like dog, cat, country poultry and goat. The hens that lay eggs are incubating are kept in a basket made of bamboo and installed in one corner of dwelling house. Dogs and cats remain free with full freedom to move anywhere. The proximity between the man and the domestic animals is very close and often utensils are shared with them. The Yanadi under study do not seem to have knowledge that many diseases and ailments are caused by domesticated animal which definitely increases the chances of infection.

**Social Organization of the Society**

The Yanadi have no consciousness of belonging to clan or distinct communities. They lack any binding group feelings and do not take group actions.
They have no tribal or group control. They live on the fringes of Hindu society, with only a value sense of their own racial identity, which means practically nothing to them.

There are no expectations for sharing, though people do share when they wish to. The people who live together in a cluster will typically borrow and share with one another, plus they will help one another when assistance is needed.

**Health and disease**

The Yanadis have rich traditional health knowledge, including knowledge for everyday healthcare and specialized knowledge (e.g. snakebite cures). The traditional health knowledge of the Yanadis is closely interlinked with bio resources and medicinal plants for healthcare are derived by continuous access to and observation of the natural resource. The Yanadis have many religious beliefs and festivals connected with the forest flora. Ceremonial visits are made to the forest to show respect to nature and diseased ancestors, worship health goddesses and give reverence to the plants that keep them healthy. In the past entire family used to go to the forest for collection of non timber forest products and the head used to educate his family members about medicinal plants and their use. That way knowledge generation and transmission continued unabated and new knowledge was added.

The Yanadis of Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh now lives in isolated hamlets called sangams; some are in the fringe area of the forest and others live away from the bio resources. The traditional health knowledge of the Yanadis is closely interlinked with bio resources. Medicinal plants for healthcare are derived by continuous access to and observation of the natural resources. Knowledge generation and maintenance is dependent on their traditional lifestyle, culture and heritage. Age old herbal remedies are widespread among indigenous peoples and tribal communities in the area. This health system called *natumandhu* (amateurish medicine) is essential to the rural communities of the state, given the lack of formal primary health care network in remote villages/hamlets.

Traditional healers, known as Vydhigudu, apprentice with their family members as the associated knowledge is handed down through generations within families. Yanadi healers in particular depend on alternative income sources and offer
traditional healing services free of charge or as a secondary income generating activity. Several treatment centers exist in the district typically operated by home healers. In addition, Vydhigulu women typically serve as health providers within the home, using traditional herbal and plant based remedies that have been handed down through generations. Medicinal plants are largely harvested from fringe forests near the communities. The specialists who do the herbal cures for chronic diseases need specialized wild plants that grow naturally in wild forests.

**Traditional medicinal knowledge**

The Yanadi are specialized in snake bite, chronic diseases, paralysis, skin infections, epilepsy etc. The knowledge of medicines and herbs is kept secret and not divulged to anyone except to the kith and kin. The Yanadi knowledge of trees and herbs is phenomenal. They still use plants and herbs as medicine for snake bite, headaches and other disease. Even the plants used for the cure are not uttered loudly, since it is believed that their efficacy goes away if the name is pronounced. The healers do not like to divulge their knowledge about the locality, identity and use of the plants to outsiders. In this way the knowledge is protected and the resource base is passionately guarded by them. Even though some special knowledge about treatment for snake bite is held individually and kept secret, it is perceived to be their collective heritage. Yanadis are expert traditional medicine man. “No one knows more than the Yanadi the utility of several herbs whether it be for the kitchen or medicine” (Raghaviah, 1962). He is known as a traditional healer for many diseases.

The Yanadi culture includes principles of community property (heritage), reciprocity (collective sharing) and harmony (symbiotic relationship with nature and in society), but these principles are threatened. The traditional health knowledge used for primary health care is shared among the community and considered to be collective heritage of the community. In general Traditional Health Knowledge and resources are considered to be the collective heritage of the community that has come from God. Forest resources are considered common property. There is reciprocity and harmony in sharing resources both for food and medicine.

The Yanadis traditionally have no property of their own. No customary law of inheritance is reported since long immemorial since the Yanadis are nomadic or semi
nomadic in their lifestyle and so don’t own property. The formal laws do not make any sense to them since these are not made according to their customary rights and practices. They are poor and the older generation were nomadic and used to stay in the midst or fringes of the forest getting sustenance from the forest flora and fauna. Even the house they construct is a temporary abode. After the introduction of new policies which made them live away from the forest in separate colonies, this made them become owners of the house in the hamlet where they live. Even in this the younger generation (i.e. the sons) gets the right. The old men are not interested in owning the right since they feel that their sons have many years to live and are the rightful owners. His property is his knowledge. That is why the healer showed the sac containing medicinal herbs as his own property and god given inheritance. The communities traditionally use forest resources for food and medicine in a sustainable way, with self-imposed limitations on forest clearance, restriction in hunting certain species, protection of sacred groves/plants and rotational use of some rich biodiversity areas.

**Customary decision-making and spiritual beliefs**

Many decisions regarding customs are taken by the kulapeddalu (head of the caste) of the entire community (many hamlets elect their elders) – including on religion, worship of village goddesses, sacred trees, festivals, conservation practices linked to worship/gods, diseases linked to gods & goddesses, rituals connected to cures, and prosperity linked to Grama Devatha (village deity). Even in non-timber forest product collection clear customary laws are followed to maintain flexibility and avoid conflicts. During collection, the Yanadi go together and the community head decides about the place of collection and how to share. This provides clear evidence that the entire hamlet listens to the elder’s advice and that knowledge is generated and held collectively. All should abide by the rules framed by them.

The customs enacted by the group of kulapeddalu (head of the caste) become customary law and violation of that results in punishment. There are many examples of such customary law – one of these relates to infectious diseases. If anyone gets chickenpox or viral disease where the etiology is not known, the people isolate that house and prevent the entry of others in the name of their goddess- Gangamma. The house is identified as having the wrath of Gangamma by spreading fire ash in front of
the house. This is an indication to outsiders that someone is suffering from the infectious disease. This type of custom prevents the spread of the disease and at the same time helps the patient recover speedily without intervention of infections from outside. Other rituals which go along with this are all for the recovery of the patient-use of neem leaves, turmeric, liquid foods etc. The older people respect their customs and all observe the rituals connected with them.

The Yanadis feel a mythical affinity with certain species of nature and even with inanimate objects. They regard these as their ancestors. This belief system and associated practices are called totemism. The totemic objects are considered sacred and killing or eating the flesh is taboo. If the totemic animal dies the clan members (i.e. entire Yanadi community) come together and observe all kinds of rituals and ceremonies. The social organization of yanadis is not only based on totemic objects but is further aligned on the basis of exogamous kinship (i.e. marriage outside one’s own kinship group). The totemic living objects consisting of animals and trees are found simultaneously in each kinship group (or phratry) and all these objects are sacred - even cutting the trees is taboo. The members of a particular phratry believe that the animals or plants they represent protected their ancestors while they faced dangerous situations.

The Yanadis believe that the origin of life and the Gods and Goddesses that protect them are in the forest (adavi). The prayers (puja) and invocation they perform calls the God that is in the forest to come to their temporary abode given by the Government and rescue them from evil eye (a look superstitiously believed to cause injury or bad luck). Here the people appeal to the spiritual bodies to address their inability to live in the midst of them. Even now they go and live in the forest stealthily during famine days to get sustenance. The yanadi women play a key role in maintaining Traditional Knowledge. They are responsible for the food and nutritional needs of the families and play an important role in maintaining knowledge about wild foods and grandma cures. Yanadi women still practice their age old plant remedies or grandma cures because of their strong belief in customs and culture. They give first preference to their grandma cures rather than modern medicine. Most of the birth deliveries are conducted at home by the birth attendants.
They have pictures of their Gods in their homes and small shrines are usually located in each village. Annual festivals are held in worship of their favourite gods. The gods supposedly favour some and dislike others, depending on whether or not a ritual or penance is done to the god's satisfaction. Good luck and fate are important to the Yanadi. Charms, amulets, and "lucky people" are believed to generate good fortune.

The Yanadis have many religious beliefs and festivals connected with the forest flora. Ceremonial visits are traditionally made to the forest to show respect to nature and diseased ancestors, worship health Gods and give reverence to the plants that keep them healthy. In the past the entire family used to go to the forest for livelihood and for collection of non-timber forest products. The head used to educate his/her kith and kin regarding the identification and usage, sustainable collection etc. That way knowledge generation and transmission continued unabated and new knowledge was added.

Traditionally, collection of plants is a collective activity, through which Traditional Knowledge is transmitted. Access to sacred groves is needed to harvest plants for specialized cures (cultivation is believed to remove potency). The loss of medicinal plants has led to loss of associated cultural use and traditional knowledge. Cultural values also sustain Traditional Knowledge – e.g. Yanadi women still practice age old cures due to their strong belief in culture. Forests sustain cultural and spiritual beliefs, which in turn sustain Traditional Knowledge. The Yanadi believe that the gods and goddesses that protect them are in the forest, and that certain species are their ancestors. Thus, Yanadi, Traditional Knowledge bio resources/forests, cultural and spiritual values are closely inter-linked. Yanadi culture includes principles of community heritage, reciprocity (collective sharing) and harmony in society and nature. Traditional Knowledge and forest resources are considered common property, except for specialized cures which are only shared with kith and kin, are not uttered loudly, and knowledge about their locality and identity is kept secret. In this way the knowledge and resource base are protected. But such specialized knowledge is still considered to be their collective heritage (Vedavathy, 2010).
Education

Education plays an important role in improving the socio-economic conditions of the people. Education broadens the scope for employment, higher income, etc. It is a well-known fact that education has an indirect relationship with fertility and direct relationship with contraceptive adoption.

In the present study, respondents are classified into four groups according to their educational attainment: illiterates, neo-literates, primary and high school. The following table shows the distribution of respondents by their educational level.

Table: 3.11. Distribution of Respondents by their Educational Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Educational Status</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Neo-literate</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure-3.5

The above table 3.11 shows that the educational status of the respondents. More than two-fifths (43.5 per cent) of the Yanadi women are neo-literates, followed by more than one-third of the respondents who are (36.7 per cent) illiterates and less than one-fifths (18.3 per cent) of the respondents who have primary education.
Ethnography, the backbone of social anthropology, enjoys privileged position in social science research. But often it suffers from inadequate theoretical framework and the current shift to post-modern writing on culture demands a treatment hitherto different from that of the classical kind. This research carefully considers the two requirements: it provides the ongoing theoretical debates on South Indian kinship and social organization as also on ethnography.

The ethnography here is concerned with the life of Yanadi, a scheduled tribe inhabiting Sriharikota island situated east of Sullurupet in between Pulicat Lake and Bay of Bengal. It must be pointed out that there is no dearth of ethnographic literature on South Indian tribes and castes but certainly there is scarcity of material history that reveals a number of roving tribes which eventually settled down and assumed caste status. But their social structural features and their transformations largely remain unknown. The attempts made here fill this gap to some extent. Further, as it deals with the kinship and social organization of a Dravidian tribe it is an addition to the existing classical anthropological literature on south Indian social organization. The ethnographic profile of the Yanadi tribe in the study is shows that many socio cultural factors are influencing the mortality and morbidity profile of the women. Some of these are geographical isolations in hamlets as sangams, dietary patterns, semi nomadic life styles, traditional medicinal and herbal knowledge, occupational distribution, sanitation and personal hygiene, accessibility to the health services, reproductive morbidity of the women and so on.