CHAPTER - VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
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The present piece of study "The Impact Of Malnutrition On The Growth And Development Of Children Of The ST Of Sikinda Block of Cuttack district was carried out by the author. The most important objective of the study was to find out the impact of malnutrition on the growth and development of children and their mothers. The specific objectives of the study were:-

A. To find out the socio-economic background of the respondents.

B. To study the nature of diet taken by the children of the schedule tribe communities.

C. To study the impact of nutrition on the growth and development of children and their mothers.

D. Sources and channels of getting information about nutrition.

E. Knowledge level of mothers about child care and nutrition.

F. Suggestions for solving problems of malnutrition among tribals.

Exploratory or Formative design was followed for undertaking this study. Two hundred children and two hundred
mothers were selected for the purpose of present study. The following steps were followed in undertaking the research project.

1. Selection of the villages.
2. Selection of the respondents.
3. Developing interview schedule.
4. Pre-testing of the schedule.
5. Interviewing and collection of data.
6. Tabulation and Analysis of data.
7. Reporting and Interpretation.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The summary of the research findings have been presented below.

A. Socio-Economic Background of The Respondents:

1. The majority of the parents were in the age group of 20 to 40.

2. Average number of children per mother increased with the increase in age of the mother.

3. As regards to education: 88% of the fathers and 93% of the mothers were found to be illiterate.

4. Sixty one percent of the respondents had joint family system and only 39% had nuclear family system.

5. Average size of the family was found to be six.
6. Extent of social participation among the respondents was found to be very low.

7. Agriculture was found to be the occupation of the majority of the respondents (45.5%) followed by wage earning (25.5%) and trading (10.5%).

8. As regards to dependency on land; 48.5% of the respondents were found to be fully dependent and only 25% were non-dependent.

9. Average monthly income of educated people was found to be more than the illiterate only.

10. Average monthly family income of the majority of the respondents was found to be between Rs.500/- to Rs.1000/-. Only 2.5% of the respondents had income exceeding Rs. 1500/- per month.

11. The average monthly expenditure on food by an individual was found to be Rs.113/- per month (at 1991/92 Price).

12. It was noticed that with increase in the average income, expenditure on food decreased and with decrease in the average income, expenditure on food increased.
B. Nature of Diet Taken By The Children of The Schedule Tribe Communities.

1. The children of the respondents were not able to get minimum requirement of food for survival. Fruits, milk, meat and egg etc. were also not available to these children.

C. Impact of Nutrition On The Growth And Development Of Children And Their Mothers:-

1. Children under study had exhibited under height and under weight.

2. The same situation was also observed among non-tribal children of the same locality.

3. The problem of malnutrition was found to be more acute among tribals than non-tribal children.

4. Tribal women also found to be under weight and under height.

5. Non-tribal mothers of the same locality also had the same problem, although it was more among tribals than the non-tribals.

6. According to the Harvard Standard, 94.5% of the respondents had under weight and 91% had under height.
7. By following the same Harvard Standard, 85.71% of the non-tribal children had under weight and 81.42% had under height.

8. By following the same Harvard Standard, 88.5% of the tribal mothers had under weight and 89.5% had under height.

9. By following the same Harvard Standard, 77.14% of the non-tribal mothers had suffered from malnutrition, which had affected their weight and 74.28% were malnourished, which had affected their height.

D. Sources And Channels of Getting Information About Health Care And Nutrition:

1. No body at the government level sincerely tries to educate people about nutrition, health and child care. Even the Lady Health Visitor also does little in this regard. As most of the respondents are illiterate, they do not use any reading material to get information.

E. Knowledge Level Of Mothers About Child Care And Nutrition.

1. The mothers were very much ignorant of nutrition and health care. The knowledge level on food, hygiene, and vaccination was found to be very very low. The knowledge level on child care
and diseases was found to be only 10% in each group.

2. It was observed that mothers with higher income had better knowledge on nutrition than mothers having lower income.

F. Problems Identified By The Respondents:

1. Non- of the district and state level officials had visited the sample villages except Chief District Medical Officer, who had visited only once in connection with the selection of site for Primary Health Sub-Centre.

2. Medical Officer and Veterinary Surgeon had visited the sample villages on request of the people to attend sick patients for which both of them were paid for the visits.

3. Tahasildar of this area had not even gone to some of the sample villages as reported by the people.

4. Field officer of the Commercial Bank seldom visited the villages not to give technical guidance but to recover the advances given to the people.

5. This study reveals that functionaries were more interested in their self development rather than the development of the common people.
6. The functionaries were indifferent to the problems of the tribal people.

7. In none of the offices, there was arrangement to listen to the problems of the people and to take action for solution of their problems.

8. Some of the officers were politically motivated.

9. The vehicle given by the government was hardly used for the interest of the people.

10. Hardly any action was taken against government officials neglecting their duties, rather some of them were rewarded in the form of promotion.

11. Agriculture Extension Officers and Village Agricultural Workers had not visited the sample villages even 2 times a year.

12. Honesty and integrity of most of the functionaries were found to be doubtful.

13. It was very difficult on the part of the people to meet the high ranking officials such as Sub-Divisional Officer, Additional District Magistrate, Collector and other District level officers.

2. **Suggestions Given By The People:**

a) Rice, wheat grains, vitamin tablets should be made available to the tribal people at cheaper rate to
prevent problems of malnutrition.

b) Tribals should get facilities for their treatment in hospitals and dispensaries.

c) Tribals should be educated to have knowledge about nutrition and health care.

d) Hospitals and dispensaries should be fully equipped with improved equipment and skilled staffs.

e) All facilities should be made available either at Panchayat level or Block level. People should not be made to run from place to place or person to person.

f) The B.D.O. should develop a plan for each village covering different aspects of health and nutrition in collaboration with other officials. He should also keep liaison between the people and other organisations.

g) Persons with interest in the problems of the tribal people should be appointed in different government positions dealing with tribal problems.

h) Group discussions should be conducted in the villages by the officials at least 2 to 3 times a year.

3. Suggestions Given By The Functionaries:

a) Adequate funds should be provided for undertaking developmental activities.
b) Adequate transport facility should be provided. Most of the officers at the block level expressed that they had not been provided with good transport facilities.

c) Most of them expressed their discontentment about the political interference.

d) Lady health worker should be appointed to keep contact with the housewives, particularly in the area of family and child welfare, social welfare, health care and sanitation.

e) Experienced technical persons should be appointed for executing different programmes.

f) The villagers should extend co-operation.

g) The people should bring their problems to the notice of the officials.

h) The job of the functionaries should be specific rather than multifarious.