

MANKIRDIAS OF MAYURBHANJ AND THEIR SOCIETAL STRUCTURE

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ABSTRACT

The Mankirdias of Mayurbhanj are discussed in this study, with a particular emphasis on the population shifts and literacy levels that occurred between the years 1961 and 2011. The percentage of the entire population that is comprised of tribal members has gradually declined from 61.65% to 57.68%, despite the fact that the total number of tribal members has increased significantly, going from 733,777 in 1961 to 1,511,625 in 2011. The growth rate of the non-tribal population is accelerating, which is reflected in this trend. The report also shows the progress that has been made in literacy rates, with general literacy improving from 15.19% to 67.18% over the same period of time, and tribal literacy increasing from 8.11% to 55.11% from the same time period. Despite this, there is still a persistent educational imbalance, which highlights the necessity of continuing efforts to develop educational infrastructure, provide resources that are equitable, and create programs that are culturally responsive. Taking action to address these concerns is absolutely necessary in order to improve the economic well-being of tribal communities, as well as to guarantee their sustainable growth while simultaneously protecting their distinctive cultural legacy.

Keywords: Mankirdias, Mayurbhanj, Societal, Structure, Tribal, Economic

1.INTRODUCTION

One of the less well-known tribal groups living in the Mayurbhanj area of Odisha, India, is the Mankirdia community. Their deep-rooted adherence to cultural customs and symbiotic relationship with the environment have traditionally molded their social structure and way of life. The Mankirdias are members of the Kharias, a broader ethnic group that is divided into several subgroups, each with its own unique economic and cultural identity. The Mankirdias are one of these sub-groups that are well renowned for their proficiency in producing rope, which is their primary source of income. An intriguing window into how traditional knowledge, skills, and community-based systems function within an indigenous context is offered by the distinct socio-economic dynamics of the Mankirdias. The communal lifestyle and tendency toward group decision-making characterize the Mankirdias' societal structure. The society is based on egalitarian principles, and the chief of the tribe, who is typically an elder, is essential to preserving peace and resolving disputes. The Mankirdia community has a low social structure because they strongly believe in equality and shared responsibility. Their ability to maintain their indigenous customs and fend off outside influences that would threaten their way of life has been greatly aided by this arrangement. The internal dynamics of the Mankirdias, despite their seeming simplicity, contain complex kinship networks, marriage alliances, and customary regulations that serve as the community's glue.

The Mankirdia people's identity is fundamentally shaped by their relationship with the forest. Their primary means of subsistence are the gathering and selling of forest products as well as the production of rope. But as circumstances have changed, this dependence has also made people more vulnerable to socioeconomic problems including homelessness, losing their source of income, and having less access to healthcare and education. The viability of their community structure is being threatened by the slow deterioration of their traditional knowledge and practices brought about by urbanization and deforestation. The necessity to defend the rights of indigenous groups like the Mankirdias has come to light more and more in recent years. The goal of numerous governmental and non-governmental initiatives has been to enhance their standard of living while safeguarding their cultural legacy. But realizing the delicate balance between growth and the

preservation of their indigenous way of life is crucial to the success of these programs. The socioeconomic structure of the Mankirdias is evidence of a way of life that, although being marginalized and vulnerable, teaches important lessons about sustainable living, cultural preservation in the face of hardship, and communal resilience.

2. REVIEW OF LITREATURE

Ahmad's (2015) Research in Social Geography examines the intricate relationship that exists between social structures and spatial arrangements, as well as the ways in which social processes influence physical locations and vice versa. The book offers a thorough explanation of all the major ideas in social geography, including the connection between socioeconomic inequality, community structure, and the impact of culture on space. The text provides a crucial framework for comprehending how indigenous groups, such as the Mankirdias, interact with their surroundings and form their societal systems, despite not being explicitly focused on the tribe. Studies of the socio-spatial dynamics of tribal people in Odisha can benefit greatly from Ahmad's research of marginalized groups within spatial frameworks.

Behera and Nayak's(2015) Research focuses on the identity, livelihood, and effects of state policies, as well as the socioeconomic and cultural difficulties experienced by Odisha's indigenous communities. The paper clarifies how industrialization, deforestation, and economic pressures are posing a growing danger to indigenous behaviors and traditional knowledge systems. The writers stress the importance of taking a nuanced approach to development that honors the socioeconomic circumstances and cultural legacy of tribes such as the Mankirdias. awareness the Mankirdias' social structure and the continuous efforts to preserve their ancient way of life requires an awareness of the struggle for identity preservation in the face of foreign forces.

Das's (2020) The Mankirdia tribe is thoroughly explored in this study, with a particular emphasis on their traditional ways of life and cultural heritage in the Mayurbhanj district. The study emphasizes the Mankirdia people's custom of crafting ropes, their reliance on forest resources, and the social framework that upholds their communal way of life. Das also talks about the problems caused by socioeconomic marginalization, loss of access to natural resources, and deforestation.

By providing a thorough explanation of how the Mankirdia tribe has adjusted to changing conditions while attempting to preserve their cultural identity, the study makes a substantial contribution to the body of existing material. It also emphasizes the necessity of focused interventions that value the distinctiveness of the Mankirdias' way of life and advance sustainable development in line with their customs.

Hembrom's(2017) The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and its effects on the livelihood patterns of tribal tribes in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district are the main subjects of this study. This article looks at how the implementation of MGNREGA has changed traditional jobs and sources of income. According to the report, although the job program has helped many tribal households become more financially stable, it has also gradually caused a shift away from traditional ways of life and livelihoods centered in the forest. This change also has an impact on the Mankirdia tribe, who have historically relied on the forest for resources and the production of rope. Hembrom's research sheds light on both planned and unforeseen impacts at the junction of tribal livelihoods and government welfare programs. Understanding how outside initiatives are changing the socioeconomic structure of indigenous societies like the Mankirdias depends on this approach.

3. STUDY AREA

Located in the northern region of the state, Mayurbhanj is a landlocked district with a total size of 10418 square kilometers. The district headquarters are located in Baripada. The district is located between latitudes 21 degrees 17 minutes and 22 degrees 34 minutes north and longitudes 85 degrees 40 minutes and 87 degrees 10 minutes east. The district is bordered to the north-east by the West Bengali district of Midnapure, to the north-west by the Jharkhand district of Singhbhum, to the south-east by the district of Balasore, and to the south-west by the district of Kendujhar. There are four subdivisions in the district, with 26 blocks, 382 Gram Panchayats, and 3945 villages.



Figure 1: Mayurbhanj District

4. SOURCE OF DATA AND ANALYZATION METHODS

The only secondary data included in the analysis was gathered from a variety of secondary sources, including: (i) The District Statistical handbook, Mayurbhanj-2020, SC & ST Research and Training Institute, Bhubaneswar; (ii) ST and SC Development, Minorities, and Backward Classes Welfare Department (<http://www.stscodisha.gov.in>), (iv) The 2011 Indian Census

4.1 Tribal Population in Mayurbhanj

Table 1: Tribal Population in Mayurbhanj by Year

Census Year	Total Population	Tribal Population	Percentage of Tribal Population
1961	1,205,045	733,777	61.65%
1971	1,444,201	841,865	59.58%
1981	1,599,874	948,341	58.69%
1991	1,892,571	1,088,671	58.89%
2001	2,230,451	1,312,251	57.60%
2011	2,520,741	1,511,625	57.68%

An overview of the changes in Mayurbhanj's tribal population between the 1961 and 2011 census years is shown in the table. The data illustrates trends in the tribal population as a percentage of the total population as well as increase in the district's overall population. The population of Mayurbhanj increased significantly between 1961 and 2011. There were 1,205,045 people living there as of 1961. Over time, the population increased gradually, reaching 2,520,741 in 2011. The number of tribe members also grew throughout this time, rising from 733,777 in 1961 to 1,511,625 in 2011. The percentage of the tribal population in relation to the overall population exhibits a shifting trend, notwithstanding the expansion in absolute numbers.

The percentage of tribal people living in the district in 1961 was 61.65%. This percentage steadily declined during the ensuing few decades. The percentage of people that were tribal was 59.58% in 1971 and 58.69% in 1981. The percentage of the indigenous population decreased somewhat, from 58.89% in 1991 to 57.60% in 2001. But by 2011, the tendency had leveled out, and the percentage was 57.68%, somewhat higher than it had been ten years earlier.

Throughout these decades, there has been a decrease in the proportion of the tribal population, which can be ascribed to several factors such as migration, socioeconomic shifts, and the effects of development initiatives in the area. The percentage of the tribal population in the district has gradually decreased, despite the tribal population's absolute growth. This is because the non-tribal population seems to have risen at a quicker rate than the tribal population. The 2011 census shows that the percentage has stabilized, indicating that either the forces that were causing the fall have leveled out or that attempts to preserve tribal communities and their socio-cultural identity have been relatively successful. However, the data highlights the difficulties that the indigenous communities have in preserving their demographic presence in the face of more general socioeconomic changes. This analysis shows how important it is to keep focusing on both the indigenous population's socioeconomic well-being and the preservation of their cultural legacy. Tribal communities should be supported by policies and programs that address issues related to migration, livelihood, education, and access to basic amenities so that these communities can prosper and maintain their distinct identities.

4.2 Tribe's Literacy Status

Education is regarded as the foundation of any given society. As a result, the literacy rate is crucial for analyzing a community's socioeconomic standing.

Table 2: Mayurbhanj's literacy rates for both the general populace and the literate class

Census Year	Total Literacy Rate in Mayurbhanj	Tribal Literacy Rate in Mayurbhanj	Tribal Disparity
1961	15.19%	8.11%	6.05%
1971	19.06%	8.77%	7.40%
1981	22.75%	12.65%	10.25%
1991	35.89%	23.09%	10.74%

2001	52.95%	36.77%	11.12%
2011	67.18%	55.11%	11.05%

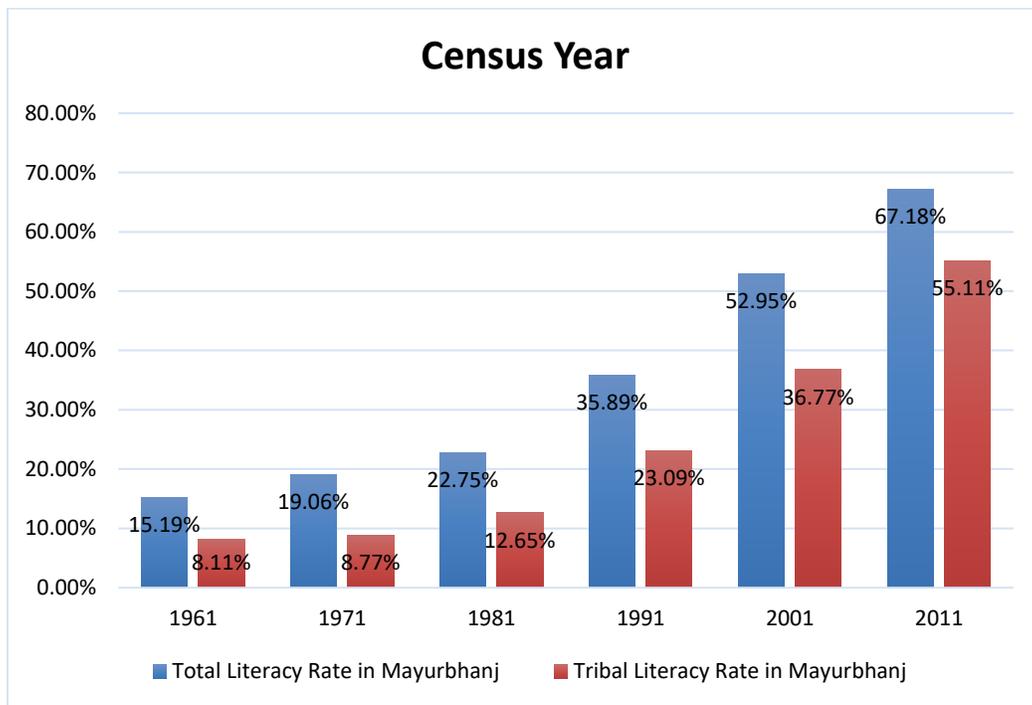


Figure 2: Graphical Representation on Mayurbhanj's literacy rates for both the general populace and the literate class

An overview of Mayurbhanj's literacy rates from 1961 to 2011 is shown in the table, which also shows the differences in literacy rates between the tribal and overall populations. The data shows that literacy has significantly increased over the years, but it also highlights ongoing differences between the general public and native populations.

The tribal literacy rate was significantly lower, at 8.11%, than the overall Mayurbhanj literacy rate of 15.19% in 1961. The difference in educational achievement between the two groups was 6.05%, suggesting a significant difference. This disparity implies that although literacy rates were generally low, tribal communities had considerably more obstacles when trying to obtain an

education. The tribal literacy rate improved to 8.77% by 1971, while the overall literacy rate increased to 19.06%. The difference between the two groups did, however, marginally broaden to 7.40%. Tribal populations lagged behind despite gains in literacy, which was caused by structural obstacles and restricted access to educational resources. More significant changes occurred between 1981 and 1991. In 1981, the overall literacy rate increased to 22.75%, and in 1991, it reached 35.89%. The tribal literacy rate increased from 12.65% to 23.09% at the same time. Even though both rates rose, the difference only slightly shrunk, going from 10.25% in 1981 to 10.74% in 1991. This implies that even when indigenous populations' literacy rates increased, there was still a sizable divide between them and the overall population.

There was a noticeable increase in literacy rates between 2001 and 2011. The tribal literacy rate improved from 36.77% to 55.11%, whereas the overall literacy rate went from 52.95% in 2001 to 67.18% in 2011. The difference between the two groups, which was 11.12% in 2001 and marginally lower at 11.05% in 2011, persisted despite these advancements. Even while overall literacy rates have risen, this persistent discrepancy illustrates continued educational inequities and problems faced by tribal populations. The data shows that literacy rates are trending upward for both the general public and tribal populations, which is indicative of effective initiatives to increase educational results and accessibility. The ongoing imbalance, however, indicates that specific interventions are required to address the particular difficulties that tribal groups experience. Reducing the disparity and guaranteeing that all communities profit from educational achievements need ongoing efforts to improve educational infrastructure, offer equitable resources, and promote culturally relevant educational programs.

5. CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that the total number of tribal people has increased from 733,777 in 1961 to 1,511,625 in 2011, the percentage of tribal people in relation to the total population has fallen from 61.65% to 57.68%, according to the findings of the analysis of the Mankirdias of Mayurbhanj. Even if there has been a stabilization in the population over the past few years, this drop is owing to a quicker growth rate in the non-tribal population. In addition, despite the fact that literacy rates have greatly improved, with total literacy increasing from 15.19% to 67.18% and tribal literacy

increasing from 8.11% to 55.11%, there is still a persistent discrepancy between the general population and the tribal community. This persisting disparity underlines the need for continued, targeted efforts to improve educational infrastructure, assure equitable resource distribution, and design programs that are culturally relevant in order to meet the specific issues that indigenous communities come up against and to promote more educational equity.

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