

Costs and Revenues on Tribal Lands in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh

D. Pulla Rao

ABSTRACT

The tribal areas constitute a very significant portion of backward areas of the country presenting a complex situation for both planners and administrators. The tribal communities predominately live in hilly and forest regions, which are comparatively inaccessible and isolated. This paper has analyzed the costs and revenues on tribal lands in the study area.

The cost of cultivation on seeds is very low among the sample households. More than 79 per cent of the sample households are spending less than Rs. 500 on seeds. More than 82 per cent of the sample households are spending less than Rs.500 on fertilizers. More than 40 per cent of the sample households are having total income in the range of Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000. Non- agricultural activities in the study area are also a good substitute for the livelihood of the scheduled tribes. More than 92 per cent of the sample households do not get the credit from institutional sources and it leads to get the credit from private moneylenders. In this regard, the government should play active role in making the institutional sources disburse the loans to the scheduled tribe people in these areas so that they are brought out of the clutches of the moneylenders.

INTRODUCTION

Scheduled Tribes (STs) are facing several problems, which are forcing them to lead a life at bare subsistence level. They suffering from poverty, deprivation and other disadvantages which are difficult to be tackled effectively on their own and making the government in particular and society in general to intervene in a planned manner to solve them. A large number of tribal communities continue to be extremely backward and some of them are still in the primitive food gathering stage, through a few of them have progressed a little in terms of economic and educational advancement.

The growth rates of scheduled tribe population in Andhra Pradesh are 5.47, 2.24, 6.50, 2.79 and 3.01 for the years 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 respectively. Except 1961 and 1991, the decadal growth rate of tribal population is more

than the growth rate of general population. From 1951 to 2001 the tribal population has increased by five times but for the general population it is only 1.5 times.

In Visakhapatnam, the growth rate of tribal population from 1981 to 2001 is 57 percent. For Andhra Pradesh and India this is 58 and 63 percent respectively. This indicates that growth rate of tribal population in Visakhapatnam is less than that of state and national average respectively.

The share of tribal population in the total population of Visakhapatnam increased marginally from 13.74 to 14.55 from 1981 to 2001, the same for Andhra Pradesh and India stands at 5.93 to 6.59 and 7.6 to 8.20 respectively.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The primary data comprise of collecting information from the selected sample tribal households in the tribal areas of Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh by way of canvassing a structured schedule among them. And the secondary data are also taken from the Chief Planning Officer, Visakhapatnam District. The primary data has

Author's Affiliation: Professor of Economics, 3/5, Siripuram Quarters, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam-3, A.P.

Reprint's Request: Dr. D. Pulla Rao, Professor of Economics, 3/5, Siripuram Quarters, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam-3, A.P.

(Received on 12.10.2011, Accepted on 15.11.2011)

been collected during the month of June and July of 2007. A sample of 138 households was selected for the study. A Multi-stage random sampling technique is employed to select the sample households. In the first stage, Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh was selected for the study. Then, Anantagiri mandal from Visakhapatnam district was selected. In the third stage, four villages from the mandal were selected. Those are Damuku, Ananthagiri, Chilakalagedda and Khambhavalasa. In the fourth stage, all the tribal households in the sample villages were interviewed with a pre-prepared schedule.

This paper examines the costs and revenues on tribal lands in the study area. The variables taken in to consideration to explain the economic status are land holdings sources and trends of income, cultivational costs, cropping pattern, saving behaviour, expenditure pattern, and sources of credit.

Table-1 describes the gender wise classification of the head of the households in the sample. Out of the sample of 138, male head households

are 121 and the remaining 17 are females. With regard to the overall sample households, the male headed households are more than female headed households. In the tribal communities only 12 per cent of the households are headed by females. The existence of the female-headed households does not indicate the existence of matrilineal societies but in those particular households, the males are not alive. This may be because of the reduced level of the life expectancy and epidemics being on rampage in those particular areas.

Table-2 denotes the classification of educational qualification of the head of the households in the total sample households. In the district, out of 138 households, the illiterate heads are 115. The head of the households having primary and secondary educational qualifications are only twenty in number. It is very sad to note that out of the total sample of the district, the heads having higher education are only of three households. The literacy rate in this district, with regard to the head of the households is only 16.67 per cent.

With regard to the overall sample, the illiterate

Table-1: Head of the Household

Gender	No. of head of the households	Percentage
Male	121	87.68
Female	17	12.32
Total	138	100.00

Table-2: Educational Qualifications of the Head of the Household

Educational Qualification	No. of head of the households	Per cent
Illiterate	115	83.34
Primary	14	10.15
Secondary	6	4.35
Higher	3	2.17
Total	138	100.00

Table-3: Distribution of sample households based on their Specific Caste

Specific Caste	No. of households	Percentage
Konda Dora	105	76.10
Manne Dora	--	--
Nooka& Mooka Dora	3	2.17
Gadaba	9	6.52
Kotiya	4	2.89
Bagata	14	10.14
Yerakula	--	--
Valmiki	3	2.17
Total	138	100.00

Table-4: Distribution of sample households according to the Type of Dwelling

Type	No. of Households	Per Cent
Pucca	5	3.62
Semi-Pucca	81	58.70
Thatched	52	37.68
Total	138	100.00

Table-5: Distribution of the sample heads of the households on their Primary Occupation

Occupation	No. of Households	Per Cent
Cultivation	107	77.5
Wage Labour	24	17.39
Non-Agricultural Activities	3	2.17
Employee	1	0.72
House Wife	3	2.17
Others	0	0.00
Total	138	100.00

heads constitute more than 83 per cent. It is an indication that nearly 93 per cent of the heads of the households are either illiterates or with primary education. This indicates the inadequate performance of the governmental programmes, which are to raise the educational status of the scheduled tribes in the study area.

Table-3 shows the classification of the total sample households with regard to their specific caste. Although this is not a predetermined one, only these types of tribes have been come across in the selected sample villages.

In the present analysis, we come across different tribes such as Konda Dora, Manne Dora, Nooka and Mooka Dora, Gadaba, Kotiya, Bagata, Yerakula and Valmiki. In the sample of the district, majority of the households belongs to the tribe of Konda Dora with 76 per cent and the next majority tribe is Bagata who are of 10 per cent.

Table-4 describes classification of the sample households based on the type of their house. Houses have been classified into three types. Pucca house is a type of house built by concrete and having some facilities like own toilet facility, separate rooms for persons and so on. Semi-Pucca house is a typical house in the tribal areas. The walls of the semi-pucca houses are built by brick; have large tiles on the top, provided through the food for work programme. The thatched houses have mud walls and palm leaves as their roofs.

In Visakhapatnam District, out of sample of 138 households, more than 58 percent have a typical semi-pucca tribal house. In addition, nearly 38 per cent of them have thatched houses. Nearly 96 per cent of the households do not have proper housing facilities in the sample area of this district.

Table-5 shows the occupation wise classification of the sample heads of the households. The sample of 138 households, 107 (77.5%) are in cultivation and the remaining in wage labour, employees, housewives and others practicing non-agricultural activities. Here majority of the households depend on agriculture for their survival.

Table-6 depicts the extent of land owned by the sample households and the same whether they are with ownership rights or not. As the terrain is inaccessible, although the tribal people own land, the land is less in size. It is taken in acres. For practical purposes after the compilation of the data, the extent of land owned is divided into three categories 1) one acre or below 2) above one acre and below three acres 3) three acres and above.

In the sample of 138 households, 109 have land. Vast majority of them are small and marginal farmers. Many of them are not having the necessary ownership rights. In the sample households, 18.12 percent have both land and ownership rights. The

Table-6: Distribution of sample households according to Extent and Ownership of Land Cultivated

Having Ownership Rights				
Extent of Land Cultivated (in acres)	Ownership of land	Per cent	Total extent of land	Per cent
Below 1	18	26.47	68	100.00
1 to 3	5	13.89	36	100.00
above 3	2	40.00	5	100.00
NA	0	0.00	29	100.00
Total	25	18.12	138	100.00

Table-7: Cropping pattern of the eligible sample households in 2006

Crops	No. Of Households	Per cent
Paddy	23	21.10
Cotton	2	1.83
Tobacco	0	0.00
Milletts	16	14.68
Dals	10	9.17
Maize	37	33.94
Corn	13	11.93
Cashew nut	8	7.34
Total Eligible Sample*	109	100.00

The cultivable land having sample households.

Table-8: Classification of the Eligible sample households according to per acre cost of Cultivation on Seeds for a crop in 2006

Cost range (in Rs)	No. Of Households	Per cent
0 or <500	87	79.82
500 to 1000	9	8.26
1000above	13	11.93
Total *	109	100.00

The cultivable land having sample households.

government should intervene in this matter to issue the much awaited ownership rights for the people.

Table-7 indicates the crops cultivated by the sample farmers. The data is collected for the year 2006. The tribes cultivate many different crops but the major ones under cultivation are taken into consideration.

In our study out of the eligible 109 cultivators,

there is no considerable crop diversification. Majority of the farmers are cultivating paddy and maize. With regard to the productivity, the government should encourage the farmers to take up the crops, which need less water and can grow on the hilltops. It should encourage the scientific farming in these communities, so that they derive much income from the cultivation, and this will certainly stimulate their finances in particular and the country's economy in general.

Table-9: Classification of the Eligible sample households according to per acre cost of Cultivation on fertilisers for a crop for the year 2006

Cost range (in Rs)	No. Of Households	Per cent
0 or <500	90	82.57
500 to 1000	5	4.59
1000 above	14	12.84
Total*	109	100.00

The cultivable land having sample households.

Table-9: Classification of the Eligible sample households according to per acre cost of Cultivation on fertilisers for a crop for the year 2006

Cost range (in Rs)	No. Of Households	Per cent
0 or <500	90	82.57
500 to 1000	5	4.59
1000 above	14	12.84
Total*	109	100.00

The cultivable land having sample households.

Table-8 describes the classification of the land tribal farmer community based on the cost incurred in cultivation for seeds; this is for the reference period of the year 2006. Based on the information provided by the tribes the cost is given as ranges such as 0 or < Rs.500, Rs.500 to Rs.1,000, and Rs.1,000 and above per crop. Out of the eligible sample of 109 households, 87 are spending less than Rs.500 for the seeds to sow; this indicates that they are using the same age-old seeds for the production, which gives them reduced productivity, which is the main cause for their poverty.

Table-9 classifies the eligible sample based on the cost incurred in cultivation for fertilizers. Based on the information provided by the respondents the cost is given as ranges such as 0 or < Rs.500, Rs.500 to Rs.1000, and Rs.1000 and above.

In our study, out of the eligible sample of 109, More than 80 percent of the sample is spending

less and less amount on fertilizers. Fertilizers usage is not a pre-requisite for cultivation. In the present day scenario, usage of either organic or artificial fertilizers is must for attaining increased productivity. In this regard, in order to help the tribal community, fertilizers are to be provided to the farmers. Hence, the government should try to provide fertilizers at subsidized prices so that the tribes may reap the benefits of the increased productivity by using the fertilizers, which may help them in reducing their level of poverty.

Table-10 classifies the eligible sample based on the cost incurred in cultivation for labour. Based on the information provided by the respondents the cost is given as ranges such as 0 or < Rs.500, Rs.500 to Rs.1000, and Rs.1000 and above.

In our study, out of the eligible 109 farmers, many of them are spending a good amount on labour. This mode of cultivation is labour intensive. However, to increase the production and

Table-10: Classification of the Eligible sample households according to per acre cost of Cultivation on labour for a crop for the year 2006

Cost range (in Rs)	No. Of Households	Per cent
0 or <500	32	29.36
500 to 1000	65	59.63
1000 above	12	11.01
Total*	109	100.00

The cultivable land having sample households.

Table-11: Distribution of the sample households on their Annual Expenditure on paying interest on Loans taken for the year 2006

Range (in Rs)	No. Of Households	Per cent
0 or Not Applicable	10	7.25
1 to 500	40	28.99
500 to 2500	70	50.72
2500 to 4000 and above	18	13.04
Total	138	100.00

Table-12: Per acre cost of cultivation in the study area

Item of Expenditure	Per acre cost of cultivation (in Rs.)
Seeds	266
Fertilizers	154
Labour and Others	429
Total	849

the productive capacity of the land they have to increase their expenditure on seeds that are more productive and fertilizers so that their incomes is enhanced by the increased productivity.

In this regard, the government should encourage the tribal farmers by providing more productive inputs and implements for the sake of their well-being. Although the labour intensive cultivation is advisable, to increase the well-being of the people, the authorities should concentrate on improving the agriculture.

Table-11 brings out the classification of the sample households based on their annual expenditure towards interest on the loans taken. As already explained, many a number of persons are indebted in the sense; many are in the clutches of the private moneylenders and only some with the institution-

al loans. With regard to our sample, it is been observed only a small percentage of people are out of the ambit of paying interest on loans. Many are paying interest on loans, but the stress here, is many are in the bondage of the private money-lenders, that's why they are unable to come out of these clutches. In this context, it is reasonable from the part of the government to persuade the institutional sources of credit to go for their help.

Table-12 brings out the picture of average expenditure incurred in the study area per acre in rupees, on various items per a year. The average expenditure of all the crops has been taken into consideration for calculating the average expenditure being made by the eligible sample of the study area.

In the study area, the cultivation is labour inten-

Table-13: Distribution of the sample households on their Income from Cultivation for the year 2006

Income Range (in Rs)	No. of sample households	Per cent
<1000	4	3.67
>1000 to < 2000	33	30.28
>2000 to <5000	58	53.21
>5000 & above	14	12.84
Total*	109	100.00

The cultivable land having sample households.

Table-14: Distribution of the sample households on their annual income through subsidiary occupations of earning for the year 2006

Income Ranges (in Rs)	No. of households	Per cent
>1000 to <2000	54	40.00
>2001 to <5000	69	51.11
5001 & Above	12	8.89
Total	135	100.00

sive one. On an average, the people are expending more on the labour and then on seeds and a very less amount on fertilizers. In this area, the government should supplement the tribal people by providing necessary inputs to increase the productivity. However, the government should increase the availability of the fertilizers and necessary expert opinion to these areas so that their incomes are enhanced by the increased productivity in agriculture.

The table-13 brings out the classification of the eligible sample based on the income derived from cultivation. As explained earlier most of the tribal farmers are doing with marginal land that too on the hill slopes, and it is very old type of cultivation.

In the sample, majority of the farmers are deriving less than Rs.5,000 per annum through cultivation. Only a small percent of the sample are able to derive more than Rs. 5,000 per year through cultivation. So much is expected from the government to increase their level of income from cultivation by educating them in using the cost effective

modern implements and the high yielding varieties. In order to raise their standard of living the government should go for more pro-active steps to increase the productivity in agriculture.

Table-14 brings out the trends of the Sample with regard to the annual income through the wage employment and other occupations. With regard to the study area, as described earlier, nearly 98 percent of the sample depends on wage labour as a supplementary earning for their livelihood. However, as there is dearth of opportunities, many are able to derive only negligible income from the source of wage labour. This may be due to exploitation from the non-scheduled tribe people.

In this context, it has been suggested that the government should endeavour to provide as many days of wage employment in this area so that the minimal amount that is being derived from cultivation can be supplemented through this wage labour. The government should concentrate on reducing the exploitation in the wage labour and in reducing the working hours. The government should try to implement the minimum wage

Table-15: Distribution of the sample households on their Total Annual Income

Range (in Rs)	No. of households	Per cent
Below 3000	10	7.25
3001 to 5000	68	49.28
5001 to 10000	56	40.58
10001 to 20000	3	2.17
Above 20001	1	0.72
Total Sample households	138	100.00

Table-16: Distribution of the sample households on the basis of loans taken from the institutional sources for the year 2006

Loan amount (in Rs)	No. of Households	Per cent
Not Taken	128	92.75
1500 to 5000	3	2.17
5000 & above	7	5.07
Total	138	100.00

Table-17: Distribution of the sample households on the basis of loans taken from the Non-institutional sources for the year 2006

Loan amount (in Rs)	No. Of Households	Per cent
0 or Not taken	12	8.70
1 to 500	6	4.35
500 to 1500	35	25.36
1500 to 5000	50	36.23
5000 & above	35	25.36
Total	138	100.00

laws strictly.

Table-15 indicates the classification of the sample households based on the level of their total annual income for the year 2006. In the sample area, there is a mixed out come with regard to the level of annual income. It is quite sad to see some sample households with a level of income of below Rs.3,000 for a year. It is worthy to note that nearly 90 per cent of the sample house holds in the reference year lie and is still lying in the region of

below Rs.3,000 to Rs.10,000 per a year.

Table-16 brings out the classification of the sample with regard to the institutional loan taken by the households. This table indicates the performance of the institutional credit sources and the pattern of their loan disbursing.

With regard to our study area, it is very disheartening to see that more than 90 per cent of the sample households are not provided with institutional loans, which are intended to bring them out

Table-18: Distribution of the sample households on basis of loans Taken from the DWCRA for the year 2006

Loan amount (in Rs)	No. of Households	Per cent
0 or Not Taken		
	33	23.91
1 to 500	96	69.57
500 to 1500	7	5.07
1500to 5000	2	1.45
5000 above	0	0.00
Total	138	100.00

of the clutches of the moneylenders. This indicates that the scheduled tribe people are left aside in the developing process. When they are provided with institutional loan facilities, they will have some income for their survival left after repaying the loans which makes them averse to go to moneylenders. In this regard, the government should play active role in disbursing loans to the tribal people and make the tribal people not to approach the cruel moneylenders who target their lands and their possessions.

Table-17 brings out the trends in the sample with regard to the loans taken by the sample households from the non institutional sources. As the private moneylenders disburse the loans for any necessity and at any time for the tribal people, keeping in mind their valuable land, normally the people tend to approach them for their credit necessities, as the institutional sources are not up to their standards, disbelieving the small debtors.

In the sample area, more than 90 percent of the people are going to private moneylenders who are usurers. More and more number of persons are going for high amount of loans in the referred year. This indicates the failure of the institutional and public authorities in taking care for this downtrodden people. In this regard, the government should play active role in making the institutional sources disburse the loans to the scheduled tribe people in these areas so that they are brought out of the clutches of the moneylenders.

Table-18 brings out the classification of the sample based on the loan taken from the DWCRA groups, as they familiarly called as. They are the self-help groups, which started to enhance the rural people with timely credit, to encourage thrift in the households, to channelize the resources, to create the habit of banking and to promote the self-employment. This SHG movement is a great success in Andhra Pradesh, as it has the largest number of SHGs of India. It is also a success in the tribal areas.

With regard to the sample, many families are members of the SHGs. Many take small loans from the SHGs. Although the SHGs play a major role in the lives of these people, the main observation is, after paying some instalments, the government attaches some amount to the saving by a grant, they receive loan from the group and then they are ceasing to repay or continue the thrift activity. This means they are ceasing to exist as members of the SHGs after taking the loans. In this regard, the government should take necessary steps to enhance these groups by changing attitudes through advertisement and educating that this SHG is for their well-being. As we are aware that this SHG system is doing miracles in some areas, we should analyze the benefits that are derived from this movement.

Table-19 brings out the classification of the sample households based on their saving pattern.

Table-19: Distribution of the sample households on their Annual Savings for the year 2006

Range (in Rs)	No. of Households	Per cent
0	94	68.12
1 to 500	38	27.54
500 to 1000	4	2.90
1000 to 5000	2	1.45
Total	138	100.00

Saving stimulates the economy. Saving makes the household stand for all seasons. In these inaccessible areas, these savings make a difference. In these tribal areas, there will be no work in all the seasons; they cannot approach the other areas for work because of the rough terrain. Therefore, in the lean seasons where they do not have any income generation activity, due to the different climatic conditions these areas are prone to epidemics. If they do not have sufficient income and savings for that time, they have to starve and become prey for these dangerous epidemics, which can cost their lives. The saving households are few in the sample area. They do not have the habit of saving, due to less income where that is of hand to mouth earning, many of the families have a large percentage of their income as food expenditure and many go for other expenditure on conspicuous items during good incomes.

In this regard, the government should take necessary initiatives to inculcate the habit of saving in these areas. This issue is also a point in the vicious circle of poverty. However, the government should encourage the self-help group institutions, non-skilled employment to this indigenous people so that their paltry agricultural incomes are supplemented by that income. Measures intended to increase the level of savings of the tribal people will go a long way in the path of their development.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has examined the land cultivated,

cropping pattern, cost of cultivation, various sources of income, and pattern of expenditure on various items of the scheduled tribes in the study area. More than 87 percent of the total sample households are male headed and more than 12 percent of the total sample households are female headed. This denotes the predominance of diseases leading to death in these areas.

In our study area, the male head of the households are 87 percent and more than 83 percent of the households are headed by illiterates. There is a need to put more attention on educational aspect of scheduled tribes, where this only can motivate them for future life. The majority of the total sample households in the study area belong to Konda Dora and Bagata communities in the scheduled tribes.

The sample households with kutchha houses in the total sample are of 38 percent. But all season houses are the need of the hour. Cultivation is primary occupation practised by the most heads of the sample households and the wage labour follows. There is a need to increase the employment generation activities in this areas as lack of sufficient income is root cause for all the problems in any society.

The percentage of marginal farmers is high at the aggregate and disaggregates levels of the sample households. However, at the aggregate level only 18 percent of the eligible sample households with land have ownership rights. No basic differences exist in the cropping pattern of the eligible sample households. Majority are cultivating maize followed by paddy, millets and dals. However,

having some farmers cultivating some cash crops is welcome sign. The government should encourage the crops that can stand for that climate.

Most of the sample households are spending less on seeds. The scheduled tribes do not use modern means of cultivation and high yielding variety seeds. More than 79 percent of the sample households are spending less than Rs. 500 on seeds. This is one of the main reasons for low productivity and the vicious circles of poverty follows. Adopting modern practices in agriculture enhances the productivity levels. Using fertilisers is one of the modern means of increasing productivity. However, more than 82 percent of the sample households are spending less than Rs. 500 on fertilisers. This may be another cause for low productivity in agriculture for the scheduled tribes. The scheduled tribe farmer households are spending much on the labour. This may create employment for most of them but it is like disguised unemployment. More than 70 percent of the sample households are spending more than Rs. 500 on labours. This is also one of the causes for the operation of vicious circles of poverty in the study area in particular.

More than 53 percent of the cultivators have farm income around Rs.2000 to Rs.5000. Income from cultivation supports majority of the sample population. It is quite interesting to see that more than 8 percent of the sample households are deriving more than Rs.5000 from subsidiary occupations. Even though the wage labourers are more in the total sample population, the share of income derived from that is less when compared to cultivation. This denotes the predominance of agriculture in the study area and of sample households. With regard to total annual income, there is definite change in the sample households as some households are moving from low-income range to high-income range. The incomes of the scheduled tribes are paltry when compared to the incomes of the general population. However, there is a change in the income levels of the sample households. More than 40 percent of the sample households are having total income that is in the range of Rs.5,000 to

Rs.10,000. It is imperative to initiate measures that enhance their paltry incomes. Encouraging non-agricultural activities in the study area may be a good substitute. More than 92 percent of the sample households do not have institutional source of credit. This enhances the impact of local private moneylenders on the lives of scheduled tribes. In this regard, the government should play active role in making the institutional sources disburse the loans to the scheduled tribe people in these areas so that they are brought out of the clutches of the moneylenders.

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