

Economic and Political Life of Lodha People of the Mayurbhanj District of Odisha in East India: A Psychosocial Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The economic system and political life of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj are the important aspects of the tribal history of Odisha in Eastern India. The Lodha tribe of Mayurbhanj is recognized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state of Odisha. Lodhas are economically backward and most of them are at the pre-agricultural stage of the economy. The Lodhas are the low level of technology associated with pre-agricultural stage (hunting food gathering and shifting cultivation) of economy. The economic life of Lodha are linked with their forest economy, agricultural cycle and other sources as labourers in various developmental works / schemes of the Government of India. The income of Lodhas is mostly spent in the purchase of daily food items, dress, ornaments and house maintenances. Some of their expenditure is spent for the purchase of rice beer (*handia*). They had been doing various kinds of agricultural activities, only in transplantation of rice seedlings and in harvesting. Due to improvement of the communication facilities, many changes seem to have been taken place in the economic and political life of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj. The Lodha villages are strongly organized on the basis of tradition. The traditional administrative system of the Lodha villages of Mayurbhanj district is an interesting study for the scholars of tribal history. The aim of this article is to focus on the economic system and political organization of the Lodha tribe/society of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha in Eastern India. Methodologically, both the primary and secondary sources have been used in writing of the present article.

KEYWORDS: Lodhas, tribe, economic, political , life , education, Mayurbhanj, Odisha, India.

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I. Introduction

The economy of a community plays a vital role in the reconstruction of its history as well as the history of the nation. The economic and political life of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj are very interesting study to know their status as well as history in the tribal society of Odisha. The jungle-covered rugged terrain of Bengal-Odisha border is now the homeland of the Lodhas. Odisha has the unique distinction of tribal cultural heritage in Eastern India. There are as many as 62 Tribes including the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal groups (PVTGs) spread over different parts of the state of Odisha in East India. The Lodhas are the most primitive tribal community of the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The people of Lodha tribe are found mostly in the food-gathering and hunting stage of economic culture, with occasional practice of a rude system of shifting cultivation and their social system and religious ideas and practices are also about as primitive as their economic life. The economic condition of the Lodha community/ tribe is based on forest produces /resources. Mayurbhanj is a tribal dominated district of Odisha in Eastern India. According to 1961 Census as many as 45 Scheduled Tribes are inhabiting the district of Mayurbhanja. Now, the total tribes of Mayurbhanja are increased to 53 on the basis of latest survey

made by the scholars. Out of the total 53 Scheduled Tribes of Mayurbhanj district, the Lodha tribe is one of the Primitive Tribal Groups. Suliapada Police Station and Muruda(Morada) Police Station lie to the extreme east of the Mayurbhanj district are contiguous with Midnapur district where the Lodhas live (Patnaik, 2005, p.138). The economic life of Lodhas are basically connected with their forest economy, agricultural cycle and other sources chiefly wage earning leaf plate making and preparation of *Sabai* grass ropes. The traditional village councils of the different Lodha villages of the Mayurbhanj district are found to be changed owing to the introduction of the modern Panchayat Raj of the Government of India, for which, a good number of the Lodhas are found participated in the village administration. The educational status of the Lodha children of Maryurbhanj district is very poor in comparison to the Santal children of that region. It is a fascinating study for the researchers and Governments for the introduction of different developmental schemes for the educational improvement of the Lodha children of the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The educational status of Lodha children of Maryurbhanj is very pathetic and poor. It is also interesting study for the scholars as well as readers and Governments for the introduction of different schemes for the

educational development of Lodha tribe of the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The district of Mayurbhanj lies between 21° 17' and 22° 3' north latitude and between 85° 40' and 87° 10' east longitude (Senapati and Sahu, 1967, p.2). The Lodhas are physically very strong, robust and torso muscular. The skin colour is brown to light brown and height is medium. There are nine clans among the Lodha viz: 1. Bugta, Bhukta, 2. Mallik, 3. Kotla, 4. Nayak, 5. Digar, 6. Parmanik, 7. Dandapat, 8. Ahari, 9. Bhuya or Bhunia (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.18). The Lodhas are very low level of literacy. Lodhas were initially notorious for their criminal susceptibility and the tribe was formerly designated as criminal (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.4). A modest attempt has been made in this article to highlight the economic and political life along with the educational status of the people of Lodha tribe / society of the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha in East India.

II. Methodology

Both the primary and secondary sources have been used in the writing of the present article. The primary data have been collected from *Gazetteers*, literatures, reports, practical observations, hearsay accounts of respondents through the interview methods during the period of experimental field survey. For the collection of data, the present authors have used the qualitative research methods like field study, personal interview, schedules and taking photographs. The extensive field survey had been undertaken for the collection of detailed information (data) with regard to the economic and political life and educational status of the Lodhas of the Mayurbhanj District of Odisha in East India. The secondary data used in the present article are *Books, Magazines, Reviews, Journals, Periodicals, Proceedings, Records*, and published theses. The data collected from both the primary and secondary sources are methodologically analysed for the writing of this article.

III. Discussion and Result Analysis

3. Lodhas of Mayurbhanj District of Odisha

The Lodhas claim that they were descendants of Savara king Vishwvasu the legendary hero who was the worshipper of Lord Nilamadhava, which was later stolen by Vidyapati, the Brahmin Minister of King Indradyumna of Puri (Mohanty, 2004, p.217). As such Lodhas identify themselves with the Vishwvasu group of Savaras. They claim their ancestry to the *Savara* tribe of this state. In this regard N.K. Bose remarks that the Lodhas were exclusively a jungle tribe thriving on hunting and food gathering like the Savaras as described in the Hindu *puranas* and epics (Mohanty, 2015, p.671). The name Lodha seems to have been derived from the word 'Ludhaka', which means trapper. The total population of the Lodha tribe was 9088 as per Census 2011 (*Population*

Profile of Scheduled Tribes in Orissa, p.219). They are mainly found in the dense forest regions of Suliapada and Morada / Murada Blocks of the Mayurbhanj district. Suliapada Block is located in the eastern part of Mayurbhanj District at a distance of 39 kms. from District Head Quarter (Hota, 2014, p.191). Morada Block is located in the eastern part of Mayurbhanj District at a distance of 26 kms from District Head Quarter (Hota, 2014, p.206).

The Lodhas are residing in the different places of the Mayurbhanj of our state (Odisha). In 1961 Census, 611 persons have been enumerated as Lodha out of which 318 are males and 293 females (Senapati & Sahu, 1967, p.125). The total population of the Lodha community in Odisha as per 1981 Census Report was 5100 (male 2597+female-2503). The number of population of the Lodha tribe in Odisha as per 2001 census was 7458 i.e. 3650 M + 3808 F (Ota & Sahoo, 2010, p. 4). The main Lodha hamlets are in Suliapada and Morada, C.D. Blocks. Other regions having the populaces are in Baripada, Badasahi, Khunta, Udala, Shama Khunta and Kaptipada C.D. Blocks of Mayurbhanj. At present, the total population of Lodha tribe may be approximately increased to more than 12,000. The Lodhas speak a mixture of corrupt Odia, Mundari and Bengali languages. They were originally Mundari-speaking tribe (Mohanty, 2004, p.217).

3.1. Economic Life of Lodhas of Mayurbhanj

"Lodha" in India is one of the primitive tribes living mainly in the forest covered border district of Midnapur (West Bengal), Mayurbhanj (Odisha) and Singhbhum (Jharkhand). The number Lodha tribe in Odisha is approximately 9 thousand and they are living in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha and majority of them are found in Morada (about 400 Families) and Suliapada (about 200 families) Blocks of this district (Mayurbhanj). From the very beginning, this tribe has been regarded as a criminal tribe by other community of the area. The term "Criminal Tribe" had been imposed by British Government as this community indulge in rubbery and theft most of the time. Lodhas were primarily forest dwelling tribe and they used to live amidst the dense forest exploiting various forest products and hunting wild animals since their generation and practice the nomadic culture & therefore they were treated as nomadic tribe. Lodhas are economically backward and most of them are at the pre-agricultural stage of the economy (Mohanty, 2004, p.218). The Lodhas are the low level of technology associated with pre-agricultural stage (hunting food gathering and shifting cultivation) of economy. They led a happy and peaceful life under the shadow of nature. But during the British rule in India, pressure on land increased due to increase in population and other reasons. At that juncture, the forest contractors with the help of some agricultural

communities, particularly Santhals, Mundas, Mahatos and Bhumijis, whose number is greater in this area, destroyed the forest for some reason and pushed the Lodhas, a comparatively weaker tribe inside the forest. But after the passage of time, their population increased and they fail to fulfil all their consumption needs within specific and limited area where they thrust into. This economic and territorial displacement caused adverse impact on their life style. It is probably that, finding no other alternative, they resorted to the path of criminality and plunder.

The Lodhas of Mayurbhanj district are initially found leading semi-nomadic life. The stigma of criminality has so much deep rooted on this community that they are cut off from rest of the community of the society. Till today, they are regarded as degenerated human group requiring economic, social, moral and educational rehabilitation. Many a times, the Lodhas are hunt by the public, suspecting them theft in the locality. Really, most of the Lodhas were pursuing hinting, food gathering, collection of minor forest produce and tusser (silk worm) cultivation in the forest (Patnaik, 2005, p.140). The Lodhas routinely gather natural products, roots and tubers for their own utilization. In the new past settled development was supposed to be their principle source of their vocation and tribesmen likewise relied upon woodland produce (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.12). They gather Kendu leaves to make bidi, Sal and Sialileaves to make leaf cups and plates (Mohanty, 2004, p.218). Other than the abovementioned, they likewise gather nectar, lac, gum, Sal seeds, Mahua blossoms, kindling, which they sell in the market to acquire an occupation. Deforestation and alienation of land have compelled the Lodhas to involve themselves in all kinds of criminal activities. The people of Lodha tribe are allegedly involved in robbery, theft and dacoity. A few house holds practise cultivation in their own land and the land of their neighbours. The local cultivators are casually used some Lodha men as labourers in their corn field. The Lodhas are sometimes working as labourers in developmental work of the State Government. They also work for the forest department and forest contractors in plantation programmes and timber operations (Mohanty, 2004, p.218).

The people of Lodha tribe are regularly making ropes of *Sabai* grass, which have a good market. The collection of tusser cocoons and sale of firewood are also other supplementary source of their income (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.12). In the recent observation, it is known that majority of Lodhas are cultivating their own lands as well as the land of the Local Zamindars /cultivators. The sale of fuel wood is one of the important sources of their income. The females are more hard working than their male counterparts. Generally, the male

people take care of their children, collect fuel wood, graze the cattle, harvest paddy, sometimes cook food and collect tassel cocoons, plough fields and work as labour in road construction. They also do carpentry and perform agricultural operation such as transplantation, weeding, harvesting, carrying, threshing, staking, etc. (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.13).

The Lodhas are the hunter and gatherer. They hunt with traditional bows and arrows and different varieties of traps and snares for catching animals (Mohanty, Revised Edition:2004, p.218). Fishing is another occupation of the people of Lodha tribe. They use basket traps and hand nets for fishing. Catching of tortoise is another hobby of the Lodhas. Initially, the Lodhas were practised shifting cultivation but they have abandoned it in favour of settled agriculture. Some of the Lodha people have wet land for paddy cultivation. Paddy is the main item of production but the cultivation of *Sabai* grass is found most profitable. Very few Lodhas have own cultivable lands, the produce of which is anyway insufficient to meet their household consumption needs (Mohanty, Revised Edition:2004, p.218). Most of the Lodhas are landless farmers and some of them have taken up share cropping. The Lodhas are domesticating animals like cows, bullocks, goats and raising poultry. All the animals are mainly domesticated for ceremonial sacrifices and for their own consumption.

The Lodhas were initially rearing the tusser silkworm (Mohanty, 2004, p.218) in the mass trees of *Sal* (*Shorea robusta*) as well as *Asan* (*Terminalia tomentosa*). At present, tassel cocoons are collected by a few Lodha families who rear the cocoons in forest patches and sell the cocoons to the traders. The Lodhas preferred the virgin forest of *Asan* and *Sal* trees for rearing of tassel cocoons. Generally, in the month of June, the tusser moths come out of the cocoon and mate with each other. Then, they lay eggs which are spread profusely on *Asan* and *Sal* trees. Later the eggs hatch into cocoons on the leaves of nursery trees. These cocoons are collected and boiled in order to kill the insects inside it. Then, it is sold to the local traders for extraction of the silk thread. Constant walk of deforestation tossed the Lodhas out of their standard wellsprings of job. With the fast deforestation and prohibitory woods laws the Lodhas have been denied of woodland based resource (Mohanty, 2004, p.218). The Lodha people are physically healthy but they are not very industrious, so unemployment among the youths is one of the major factors, for which they are involving in the anti-social activities like dacoit, robbery and theft. They are also making the leave plate for their livelihood.

The economic life of Lodhas are basically connected with their forest economy, agricultural

cycle and other sources chiefly wage earning leaf plate making and preparation of *Sabai* grass ropes. During the harvest season, the Lodhas get sufficient food materials with cheap rates. Most of the Lodhas are employed in harvesting jobs. They get their wages both in cash and kind. During the Summer months the Lodhas collect jungle produce and catch tortoise. Edible roots are gathered in adequate quantities and consumed as supplementary food. In Autumn season, they depend mainly on forest for their day to day livelihood. Their food chiefly consists of rice, pulses, potatoes, brinjal, fish, meat, eggs, roots, leaves. During summer their food is supplemented with mango, Mahua and tamarind.

The Lodhas also take up any kind of vocation like other Hindu castes for their socio-economic status. They earn and supplement their livelihood from variety of occupations like petty trades, rearing of livestock, carpentry, weaving, mat-making, rope making and the catching of reptiles such as snakes, lizards, tortoise from ponds, and streams are their favourite pastime subsidiary occupation (Mohanty, 2004, p.213). The Lodhas also earn money by selling the skins of reptiles for making musical instruments, shoes, etc. The most part of their earnings are spent in purchase of daily food items, dress, ornaments and house maintenances (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.16). Expenditure on education is found to be very low. Clothing is one of the important items of expenditure. Major parts of their earnings are spent in purchasing rice beer (Hota and Sahoo, 2010, p.16). The standard of living and the nature of food consumed by the Lodhas vary from household to household.

3.2. Political Life of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj

The tribes of Odisha possess a variety of forms of political organization due to their varied technological and ecological conditions. Generally, political organization is concerned with the control and regulations between groups or members of different groups within the society. The Lodha tribe is one of the Primitive Tribal Groups of Odisha. On the basis of field study made by the earlier scholars as well as the present author, the Lodha villages are mostly noticed in the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The Political organization of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj was traditional system. There were some types of socio-political organization of them like Central level, regional or inter villages level and own village level. The Lodha tribe shares a certain traits of political organization based on clan solidarity. Village is considered as the centre of Lodha community of Mayurbhanj as well as Odisha. Each Lodha village consists of some families, which are located nearby forests. Most of the houses of the Lodha village are separated from each other and in few cases, houses are constructed closely. The Lodha villages are strongly organized

on the basis of tradition. The traditional administrative system of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj is an interesting study, but now it is changed due to the introduction of the modern Panchayat Raj system of India.

From the practical field study made by the present author, it is known that the Lodhas are residing in the Chikitamatia, Barkanda, Godigaon, Jualibhanga, Haldipal Grama Panchayats of Morada Block of Mayurbhanja. They are mainly living in the eight (8) villages of the Morada Block such as Chikitamatia, Ghodabandha, Tiansi, Godigaon, Lodhasahi, Handibhanga, Purnachandrapur, Bhadrasole and Samaidihi. The Lodha community people are also found in the Patharanesa, Dhobani, Nekdagunja and Sansasole in the Suliapada Block of the Mayurbhanj District. Some Lodhas are also residing in the Agnikuanri, Ghupada villages of the Khunta Block, Champagarh, Dhanasule and Paunsia villages of Badsahi Block, Besarpani village of Shyamakhuta Block, Chandrapur (Jharanasahi), Khadikasul, Budiadara, Duayrisahi, Balighat, Kashikundala, Baniadara Villages of the Udala Block, Dhanasola, Jatipur, Hatimoda of the Baripada Block. Nedam and Gopal Villages of Kaptipada Block, and a few Lodhas are residing in the Bisoi and Rairangpur Block of the Mayurbhanja Districts. Some Lodhas are also found to be resided in the Mulising (Bagicha), Gudikhul and Similkhul Village of the Sora Block of the Balasore District of Odisha as said by a Lodha teacher/man named Chhatis Kumar Mallik of Chikitamatia School.

The village organization /council of the Lodha tribe of Mayurbhanj was being conducted by its village members. Every elder Lodha man was the member of village council. For the smooth conduct of villages, some village officers are nominated /elected by the Lodhas. Like other tribal communities, the Lodha community has also selected members /villagers for the achievements of socio-religious and political goals of their people. Different types of village disputes are adequately solved by the village councils (Mohapatra, 2002, p.38). Each Lodha village has its own customary village Council called *Desha*. All the matured male people are the members of the village council (Patnaik, 2005, pp.141-142). The village headman called *mukhia* or *sarder* directs the village Council / Panchayat and chooses cases identifying with penetrate of social traditions, standards and restrictions in meeting with the village seniors (Patnaik, 2005, pp.141-142 and Mohapatra, 2002, pp.38-39). The village headman assisted by a council of elders oversees the administration of village. The decision of village council is reached through majority verdict and the headman has no power to overrule the majority verdicts. The village headman is both a civil and moral authority. The village elders and headman regularly meet and talk

over the village affairs. The *mukhia* gives his verdict over the cases, which is obeyed by one and all. Generally, *Mukhia* is very clever, literate, powerful, influential and civilized in comparison to other Lodhas of that village. *Chhatia* is an assistant of *mukhia* of Lodha village. When police or outsider goes to Lodha village, he/she at first makes contact with *mukhia* or *sardhar* in any matter of Lodha community (Mohapatra, 2002, p.39). *Dakua*, the village messenger who helps the village headman. Generally, *dakua* of the Lodha village hails from *kotal / kotual* clan (Mohapatra, 2002, p. 39 and Patnaik, 2005, p.141). Parmanik is acting as village cook at the time of marriage and other ceremonies of the Lodha community (Mohapatra, 2002, p.39). Parmanik of each Lodha *panchayat* is appointed by the decision of the *panchayat* committee. *Dehury* is the village priest of the Lodha community. He regularly worships village gods and goddesses with utmost devotion. He is regarded as an established/ honoured person of the Lodha village (Mohapatra, 2002, p.40). *Talia / Chhadia* is the assistant of *dehury* at the time of village religious works / performances. He also co-operates *dehuri* at the time of animal sacrifices. *Hantakara* is acting as the killer of sacrificed animals, which are dedicated to different gods and goddesses at the time of specific puja/ *parva* (Mohapatra, 2002, p.40). Generally, a good number of *gunis* are found in the Lodha village. Guni was expert in *mantra*, *tantra* and *yantra* learning for achieving success of the people. All the diseases, dangers, ghost and witchcraft are initially controlled by *gunis / gunias* of Lodha villages. Thus, there are many magico-religious functionaries viz *dehury*, the village priest, *talia* or *chharidar*, the assistant to the *dehury*, *hantakra*, the ritual sacrificer, *gunni*, the medicine man, *byakra*, the shaman in Lodha villages (Mohanty, 2004, p.222). The *Dehury* conducts the worship of the village gods and deities and all the communal rituals in the village. His post is hereditary. The *byakra* is identified as *dasi*. He speaks about the past, present and future of village and its villagers (Mohapatra, 2000, pp.40-41). At the time of puja / festival, *byakras* perform different style of dances for the appearance of gods and goddess in the villages (Mohapatra, 2000, pp.40-41). All the functionaries are respected by the Lodhas and they were conducting the strong organization in the Lodha society. Now a days, the traditional custom regarding the village council / organization is in decline condition. The village organization, which was conducted in traditional basis is facing problem by the modern Panchayat Raj system. For which the traditional Lodha village organization is going to be declined rapidly.

The traditional village council has currently lost its importance, especially after

establishment of rehabilitation colonies, but in the traditional villages its importance is felt very seriously. In the past, administration of justice, settlement of disputes among individuals, families and villages are some of the important functions of traditional village council (Ota and Sahoo, 2010, p.23). Even now, the maintenance of peace and promotion of social welfare activities are managed by the same council. The set up of the traditional council is more or less same in every Lodha village and receives popular appreciation. The office bearers of the Lodha village council enjoy special prestige and privilege (Ota and Sahoo, 2010, p.23). Permission for marriages, to attend other's religious ceremony, imposition of fine or to boycott someone for his mischievous action and some of the judicial powers of the traditional council. Elderly and experienced persons are usually taken as the members of the traditional village council of the Lodha community. Women and children are not allowed to be its members. Adultery, illicit love, sorcery and breach of traditional taboos are generally dealt with in varying degrees and punishments are allowed (Ota and Sahoo, 2010, p.23).

Recently, these have been changed in the composition and activities of the traditional council of different Lodha villages. Due to the introduction of the Panchayat Raj, a good number of the Lodhas are being gradually associated with village administration (Bhowmick, 2015, p.688). A few of them have affiliated themselves with some political parties of the locality and contested in the election. Naturally, this gave them the opportunity of mixing with other sections of the people, thus bringing up the hiatus prevailing so long among these communities (Bhowmick, 2015, p.688). Before the independence, the Lodhas were not conscious regarding their political rights, demands, moral values, etc.. Now, the Lodhas are politically very conscious regarding their rights and demands. For which, the Sarapanchas and Word members are conducting some developmental works for the betterment of the villagers of Lodha community through the different schemes of Government of India. The modern political involvements have created more tension and factions in a few Lodha villages on the basis of party ideologies (Bhowmick, 2015, p.688).

In many cases the village or tribal solidarity or communal integrity has been threatened. Really, the previous traditional Lodha village councils are very strong and were the final authority for all decisions. Now-a-days, there is a growing tendency to seek help from the police (Ota and Sahoo, 2010, p.24). This is a sign of disintegration of the tribal village organization, which indicates that the fabric of traditional council is changing very fast with a passage of time due to the economic and administrative impact. At

present, the members of the Lodha community are the local representatives, Anganwari workers, who are performing their duties for the betterment of Lodhas.

3.3. Impact of Modern Economy and Polity on Education of Lodha Children

Really, the impact of modern economy and politics is found influenced the educational status of the Lodha children of the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. Socially and educationally the Scheduled Tribes (ST's) are among the most disadvantaged groups of the Mayurbhanja District of Odisha (Ota, Mohanty, Sahu, & Mohanty, 2008, p.5). In 7th Five year plan, the Lodha tribe was identified as Primitive Tribal Groups of Odisha and this tribe also included in 1985-90 year for their development. The Lodha Development Agency (The Micro Project) was established at Morada in the 7th Five Year Plan 1985-90. This agency is covering all the Lodha villages of Moroda and Suliapada Blocks of and other Districts of Odisha. The educational status of Lodha children of Maryurbhanj is very pathetic and poor. It is also interesting study for the scholars as well as readers and Governments for the introduction of different schemes for the educational development of Lodha tribe.

In the past, the Lodha children did not like to go to the schools, which are located in far distance areas for receiving education. In such situation, the poor Lodha children learnt some traditional learning / teaching from their own community like, collection of dry wood, fruits, honey, tusser moth's cocoons from forests. Other tricks viz. climbing, wrestling, catching fishes and tortoises, drinking *handia*, sowing paddy, cultivation of tusser, making rope, folk song and dance are received by the Lodha children from their elders /ancestors accordingly tradition. In the past, the Lodha girls had also done house hold works like their mothers and grandmothers. They used to learn traditional learning from their seniors / elders, but they were not going to school like boy children of Lodha community. Now, both boys and girls children are interested to learn the modern education.

Really, educational reforms the process through which students can learn something. It is categorized under Primary or Elementary, Secondary and Higher, Post Higher Secondary. There are various phases attached to the term education take Formal, Non-formal, Vocational, Adult, etc. Indigenous education as somehow similar to the expression we use as tribal education. On the basis of the National Policy on Education (NPE), emphasis has been giving on opening of Primary schools in tribal areas. Despite pragmatic policies of the government, the tribal children have

been lagging behind the general children and reasons can be categorized as internal and external.

All types of backwardness are found in the Lodha community, for which both Government and NGOs are trying at best to provide different types of facilities for the spread of education among the Lodha children. Due to illiteracy, they are provided with free teaching with fooding and other facilities by the Central Government as well as the State Government. In this respect, the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and other NGOs are also taking different type measures for the spread of education among the Lodha children of Mayurbhanj as well as Odisha.

In the Morada and Suliapada Blocks of the Mayurbhanj district is 31.31% and 44.26% literacy recorded in respect of female and male respectively ("A Survey Report, 2015-16 by the Lodha Development Agency, Morada"). On the basis of Report of Lodha Development Agency of Morada, 14 students have passed in 10th class, 8 students passed in +2 and 3 students passed in +3, but the students of Lodha community have not passed Post Graduation till today ("A Survey Report, 2015-16 by the Lodha Development Agency", Morada; Mayurbhanj). Really, education is the key to development. Unfortunately, the education scenario among the Lodhas gives gloomy pictures.

Empirical studies conducted by earlier scholars as well as by the present author have identified a numbers of factors responsible for poor educational status among the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj as well as Odisha. Similarly, various factors have been found to be responsible for low rate of enrolment and high rate of dropouts. In the field study, the present author has noticed that each Lodha village of Mayurbhanj has Anganwari School/Centre. An Educational Complex has been set up at the village of Chikitamatia of Morada Block in the 2008-2009 year where 370 Lodha girls are reading now (A Survey Report, 2015-16). During the year 2016-17, the 16 nos. girls students had appeared the HSC Examination and the total 16 girls have passed. Free fooding and boarding are provided to the Chikitamatia school students through the Lodha Development Agency, Morada. Besides, one Boys Educational Complex for Lodha tribe at Chikitamatia is also functioning since 2014-15 year. The Boys Educational Complex is established only for the Lodha children of up to 5th class. Although, college is available in the local areas, but the Lodha students are very rare for receiving higher education. There are several reasons / factors behind the illiteracy of Lodhas of Odisha. On the basis of field study of the present author, some of the main obstacles / problems are noticed. They are 1. lack of awareness among the Lodhas

regarding the value of education in society, 2. parents of the Lodha families are completely ignorant with regard to the future of their children, 3. acute financial crisis of Lodha families, 4. lack of landed property of Lodhas, 5. the most of the Lodhas are forest life oriented, 6. the life style of Lodhas is very pathetic, 7. the Lodhas are in neglected condition due to lacking of technical knowledge in different works, 8. demoralization of Lodhas for drinking of rice beer (*handia*) in daily, 9. most of the Lodhas do not like for changing, 10. the local representatives donot like to express the real grievances of Lodhas before the Government for their moral as well as physical development, 11. all the tribal development schemes have not sufficiently reached before them. Although some tribal development schemes are being implemented in the Lodha areas of Mayurbhanj, still the people of this community are not getting opportunity to avail all types of facilities provided by the Government as well as by Non-Government organization (Patnaik, 2010, pp.104-105). Achyuta Samnta, the Honorable Founder of KISS and all the active members of KISS have been trying at best to motivate the Lodha parents as well as parents of other tribes living in the tribal districts of Odisha to send their children to KISS for receiving free education. At the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), the tribal children are provided with the facilities to pursue their studies from Kindergarten to Post-Graduation (K.G.to P.G.) level. Now, both the Central and State Governments and KISS are trying at best for the spread of education among the Lodha children as well as children of other tribes of India.

IV. Conclusion

Thus, it is known from the above discussion that the economic life of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj is very pathetic. The people of Lodha society are completely neglecting their education, for which, their standard of living is inferior in comparison to other primitive tribal groups of the Mayurbhanj district. The economy of Lodhas of Mayurbhanj indicates that they are mostly acquainted with the traditional / primitive practices of hunting, food gathering, collection of fuel wood, rearing of tusser moths and collecting their cocoons, fishing, leaf plate making, preparation of *Sabai* grass ropes, bamboo crafts, paddy production, shifting cultivation for their economic subsistence. For the development of modern education among the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj, the state Government of Odisha has recently established school in the local areas of Morada. In this respect the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences, Bhubaneswar has been trying at best to educate the poor Lodha children of Baripada since 2000 onwards. In comparison to other tribes of

Mayurbhanj, the economic condition of the Lodhas is very lower, because they are not adopting modern education, sciences and technology in the day to day life for the development of their economy. Most of the Lodhas are the landless people and adopting traditional way of life like hunting animal, collection of honey, cultivation of paddy, making of *Sabai* ropes, selling of tusser cocoons, selling of fuel wood, etc. In fact, their economic condition is not so affluent for which, they are maintaining pathetic life in society. Sometimes, they are also resorting some anti-social activities like robbery, theft and dacoit for the maintenance of their families. The basic political unit of the Lodhas is the village. After independence, the Lodhas have been participating in the election of the present day. Ward members are found to be elected in the Patharnesa and Dhabani villages of the Suliapada Block of Mayurbhanj. Now, the representative of Lodha village of Partharanesa is found to be elected. In recent election, one Lodha man named Raghunatha Bhakta of Chikitamatia is defeated by his opponent /contestant in margin votes. It proves that at present, the Lodhas are conscious regarding their political rights in some extent in comparison to the past. So the introduction of Modern Panchayati Raj, the traditional village administrative system of Lodha tribe of Mayurbhanj is in declined condition. In fact, the economic life of Lodhas was pitiable, for which, both the State Government as well as the Central Government should take appropriate measures/steps for their economic development like other primitive tribal groups of Odisha. Now, the economic life of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj is also going to be changed through the different Government schemes introduced by the Lodha Development Agency, Morada. Really, the traditional economy system of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj is mostly changed due to the impact of modernization. At present, the participation of Lodhas in the Panchayat election indicates that the current political life of Lodhas is more developed than the earlier period. The educational status of Lodha children of Maryurbhanj is very pathetic and poor. It is also interesting study for the scholars as well as readers and Governments for the introduction of different new schemes for the educational development of the Lodha children of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. Now, both the boys and girls children of Lodha tribe are interested in the modern education due to the impact of globalization on their society/community. On the whole, the economic and political life along with the educational status of the Lodhas of Mayurbhanj district are found to be improved in their society like other tribal communities of Odisha in Eastern India.

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