



Traditional Agriculture Plays Vital Role In Santal Culture

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Abstract

The paper is mainly focused to study the relation of culture and traditional agriculture among the Santal community. The study were done during the period of 2018-2020 at the adibasi village of Chitamatia which is located at Gopiballavpur I Block of Jhargram district in West Bengal, India. Earlier A large number of rice varieties were grown by the community at this village. Rice is the main crop for the source of their livelihood, income generation, employment generation and It is also major importance for sociocultural practices in Santal community. In this respect , santal rituals and traditions have dependent on traditional agricultural practices. During study we observed the changes among santal culture because the community adopted modern technology in agriculture for obtaining higher production. Therore, We should aware to protect our culture for human beings related to knowledge, belief, moral, art, habits , capabilities etc as well as sustainable method of cultivation practices including cow and bullock power instead of machinery power and conservation of traditional (local) varieties of paddy for genetic diversity in sustainable agriculture.

Key word : Santal cultural, traditional agriculture, modern agriculture

Introduction:

Santals are belonging from homogeneous tribal groups of India and the community having near about 10 million people. Now days, santal are living in Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and out side of India such as Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan (Baskey 2018). As per linkage of santal culture and their agricultural land division, the land allotted to the offices of Majhi gets four portions, Paranik gets three portions, Jog Majhi gets two portions and each portion of land allotted to others such as Jog Paranik, Godet, Naeke, and kudum Naike who are selected by the support of villagers unanimously to conduct the smooth running of village. Santal have oral traditions, songs, and ritual which play an important role in cultural those are associated with agriculture (P.O.Bodding 2013).

India is an agrarian country and most of the peoples of India are totally depend on agriculture. 70 % of the peoples in rural households are initially depending on agriculture for their livelihood. [1]. Earlier, agricultural productivity was very less due to lack of technology by which some peoples faced the shortage of food. In this situation, after modernization in Indian agriculture the progress has been made to solve some extent. The cost of increasing production was less and changes occurred from time to time and also maintain the level of productivity by the application of mixing inputs (Kadam, 2009) [2]. Earlier agricultural practices were done in Santal community by using their own cultivation methods and culture in India where fertilizers and pesticides received from plants and animal products. The traditional cultivation practices of Santal community is now converted to cultivation practices with modern technology. The Indian economy is dominated to such an extent by the involvement of maximum population whose are actively connected in agriculture and allied sector. In this connection the agricultural productivity needs to be increased by the application of modern technology in agriculture for supplying food to high population in India. Consequently happened the changes of santal culture in their community by adopting modern technology (Agarwal 1983) [1]. In santal community arising problems for observing their such festivals those are related with agriculture by using of modern technology. In this paper santal cultures, occupational structure and their agricultural practices were studied.

Study Area:

The present work was done at the adibasi village of Chitamatia which is located in Gopiballavpur I Block of Jhargram district in West Bengal, India. Kendugari is the gram panchayat of Chitamatia village known as the part of Jangalmahal. This adibasi village is situated near on the borderlines of Orissa, Jharkhand and West Bengal with presence of natural forest (Sal, Piyasal and Mahua) and also having Subarnarekha River across distance of approx 10 km.

Survey of Study: The survey was carried out during 2018-2020 in the following manner

Direct meet to the farmers individually for the collection of household data information, observation of santal cultures those were related to their cultivation, data of field performance and productivity and some important characters of earlier cultivated traditional varieties of paddy.

Discussion and Major Findings of the Study :

The changes of Agricultural operations of the farm work is done by the application of modern technology instead of traditional method where animal or human labour is replaced by power tillar, tractor etc. The machinery changes are reducing the drudgery of certain agricultural operations which will be performed either by human labour or animals like cow and bullock. The lifting water for irrigation, threshing, winnowing, grinding and mixing livestock food, hauling rice etc. these can be done by or performed by machine (Paul 2005)

a. Village Occupational Structure in relation to the impact of agriculture

In the village of chitamatia several changes are occurred of their different occupational structure for sustaining their day to day life. The following data were collected through direct meet to the farmers individually on economic activities of Santal at chitamatia like agriculture, allied agricultural migrant labour, Govt. servant etc.

Table I : Occupational structure in the villages of chitamatia at Jhargram

Occupation Types	No. of Person				Total
	No. of Male Candidate	Percentage	No. of Female candidate	Percentage	
Agriculture	41	40.1960784	49	42.6087	90
Allied Agriculture	3	2.94117647	0	0	3
Migrant labour	19	18.627451	10	8.695652	29
Unemployment (old age, children, etc.)	33	32.3529412	56	48.69565	89
Govt. Service	6	5.88235294	0	0	6
Total	102	100	115	100	217

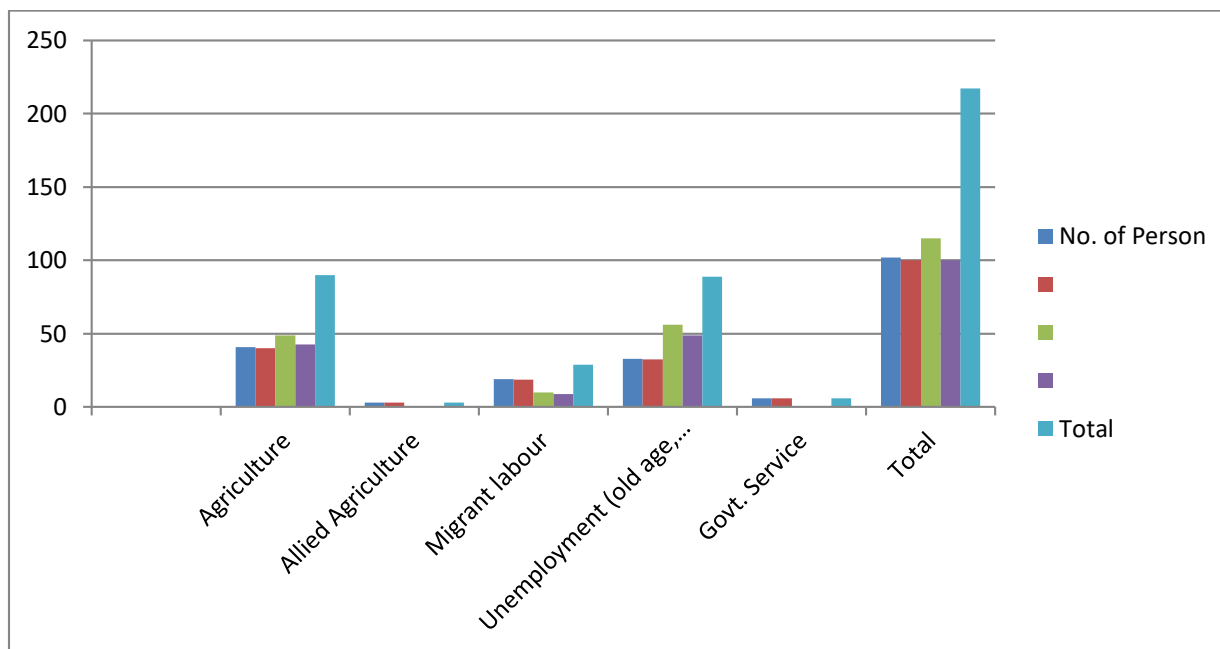


Fig 1 : Occupational graph in the village of Chitamatia at Jhargram

In the village of Chitamatia , Table 1and Fig 1 showed there were 89 person are unemployed which include old aged man and women, children etc. out of them 33 were male and 56 were female. On the other hand 90 persons were employed in their own agricultural land out of them 41 were male and 49 were female. 29 persons were working as migrant labour or daily wage labour those were also gone to other state for the purpose of agricultural work and allied agricultural work. In this connection we can say that most of the peoples were engaged in his own agricultural land for producing more yield and earning money in limited areas by the application of modern technology. Apart from the agriculture and allied sector there were only 6 male persons were working as Government servants.

b. Changes of agriculture and social culture among the santal tribes

Agriculture is the main source of income for the Santal tribes of the study area. Earlier, traditional cultivation practices were applied in his own land like in case of paddy only traditional varieties of paddy used for cultivation purpose (Table 2), cow and bullock power is used for tillage operation in traditional way and also cow dung is applied in field as organic manure etc. At the present time they are adopting modern cultivation practices like power tillers, tractors those are used for tillage operation and sprayers for pesticide application , paddy threshers for threshing operation and High yielding varieties (Table 3), chemical fertilizers , pesticides etc. are applied for increasing more yield in limited areas etc. Lack of irrigation facilities is a major problem in this village. For irrigating their own lands, earlier they were dependent on monsoon rainfall and thus single crop was received or not received sufficient water for proper growth and development. But the introduction of water harvesting structure sponsored by various scheme of Govt. changes in their

cultivation practices and reduce the risk of cultivation, consequently received the harvest crop without loss. Many changes has occurred in the features of their social organizations and cultural activities or life. Culture is a broad ethnographic sense which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Edward Tylor, 1832-1917). In the past, there were various festivals in the village where santal culture was highlighted through the festivals. The saharai is one of the most important festival. The festival is done during the month of November in every year. In this festival, the cows are respected and encouraged with more number of panicles made necklace (The panicles consist of more number of seeds those comes from their own paddy crop field), marked with varmilion on their forehead and polished their horn by mohua oil. The cows are welcomed by placing raw rice and durba grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) in a bronze dish. Another important festival viz. Akhan is known as new year in santal tribes which comes on 1st day of Magh month (February-March). On that day the santal people goes their own land for three times tillage operation those tillage operation are done on traditional way by the help of their cows and also all types agricultural instruments like kodai, hoe, bamboo basket, khurpi etc are marked with proper mixed raw rice powder and varmilion. Now a days, these popular festivals going to less popularity due to the introduction of modern technology in agriculture. In modern agriculture, tractor is used instead of cow and bullock power in this case changes have occurred in festival. Therefore, to protect this festival we have to use sustainable management in agricultural development.

Table 2 : Performance of farmers adopted earlier (past) traditional paddy cultivars in santal tribes areas at chitamatia, Jhargram District, West Bengal

Name of traditional paddy cultivar	Date of sowing	Date of transplanting	Type of land	Time of Maturity	Plant height	Yield/ha (qt.)	Misslenious purpose
Siram	June	July	High Land	3 month	2.5 ft	2.00	Black
Ahirman	May last weeks	June	Low Land (on water)	5.5 Monts	3-3.5 ft	4-4.5	Grain color white dumkuj
Bansgaja	June	July	High Land	3 months	2.5ft	3.00	Grain color white suga.
Jota	May last weeks	1 st June	Middle Land	5 months	2.5-3ft	3.5-4	Read(mota)
Mugui Sal	May last weeks	1 st June	Middle Land	5month	2.5 ft	3.5-4.0	Read(nanha)
Karakuthi	May last weeks	1 st & 2 nd June	Middle land	5 th month	3ft	3.5-4	Black
Jhuli	June	july	High land	4month	2.5ft	3.7-4.0	Whaite
Nurehuru	June	July	Low Land	5 month	Long	3-3.5	Grain color white
Luhuchi	June	July	High land	3month	2.-2.5ft	2.5-3	Black type suga.
Alsanga Gorahuru	May	Drai land	3month	2.5-3ft	3.00	Read
Tetke gorahuru	May	Dry land	2.5 month	2.5ft	2.5	Black & short

Table 3 : Cultivation of High Yielding Varieties of paddy crop at chitamatia,Jhargram District, West Bengal

Name of High Yielding Cultivars	Yield per ha (qt.)
MTU 7029	5-5.5
MTU 1010	4.00
MTU 1001	3.5-4
IET 4786	4.00
Lalat	4.00

Conclusion :

In response to present work the adaptation of modern technology in agriculture, many changes has been seen on account of their day to day life . The communities are using modern technology in agriculture field. They use tractors, power tillers for tilling the land by hireing as payment basis whereas previously the tillage operation was done by cow carrying hand making plough. In this connection recently maximum agricultural activities through the use of new machines, those require less labour, expensive and Consequently they loss their employment in respect of hired labour for outside. Therore, We should aware to protect our culture for human beings related to knowledge, belief, moral, art, habits , capabilities etc as well as sustainable method of cultivation practices and conservation of traditional (local) varieties of paddy for genetic diversity in sustainable agriculture.

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