



# A Comparative Analysis of Culture and Livelihood Practices of Juang and Dongria Khond Tribes of Odisha

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## *Abstract*

This review analysis is a multifaceted exploration of indigenous communities, focusing on the two PVTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group) i.e. the Juang and Dongria Khond tribes of Odisha. The objectives are to review the cultural and livelihood practices of Juang and Dongria Khond, to compare the cultural and livelihood practices of Juang and Dongria Khond tribe of Odisha. The reviewer has analysed studies in order to deeply comprehend the culture and livelihood practices of these tribes. Research highlights the significance of traditional healthcare practices among the Juang and Dongria Khond emphasizing the preservation of biodiversity and traditional knowledge for sustainable healthcare and potential drug development. Moreover, it delves into the socioeconomic challenges faced by both tribes due to modernization and developmental interventions, advocating for aligned external interventions with traditional practices for sustainable development. Additionally, some researches illuminate the connection between preservation of agricultural knowledge and indigenous practices of the Dongria Khond, stressing the importance of maintaining sustainable practices rooted in local beliefs and festivals. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of holistic approaches that blend traditional wisdom with modern interventions to address the complex challenges faced by indigenous communities.

**Index Terms:** PVTGs, Juang tribe, Dongria Khond tribe, culture and livelihood

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**Introduction:**

India is recognized for her unity in diversity, cultural heterogeneity and unique social system. Tribal culture is unique and differs significantly from mainstream cultural practices. Their culture and social customs bear the mark of nature. All rites and rituals, festivals of the tribals have an inbuilt system of nature worship in one or other form. Tribes have an inbuilt worldview, and that is based on their social system, set of customs, economy and sustenance. These are the elements that combine to give the tribals their livelihood and economic sustenance. Together these form their livelihood and give them an identity which is expressed in their culture (Sahoo, 2014). Across the diverse landscape of India, tribal populations are ubiquitous, serving as custodians of ancient cultures and traditions. Following in the footsteps of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, Odisha emerges as a supporter of tribal history, proudly claiming the title of the third-largest tribal state in the country (Census, 2011). With approximately 68 million individuals belonging to Scheduled Tribes, Odisha stands as a testament to the rich tapestry of indigenous life, offering a mosaic of cultural diversity and spiritual practices (Census 2011). A total of 75 PVTGs exist in India and 62 Scheduled Tribal communities present in Odisha, out of which 13 of these tribal communities are further identified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) (Census, 2011). The present study focuses on the Juang and Dongria Khond, the two PVTGs in Odisha.

The Juangs are a Primitive Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTGs) that is found only in the State of Odisha. The tribe is of Proto-Australoid ancestry. They are divided into two groups, Hill Juang and the Plain Juang. The Hill Juangs live in the Keonjhar and Pallahara hill ranges, whereas the Plain Juangs live in the plains of the Dhenkanal and Jajpur districts. The Hill Juang continues to use primitive agricultural technology, such as shifting cultivation. The plain Juang, on the other hand, have settled agricultural life. They divide themselves into two groups: *Thantias* (native) and *Bhagudias* (migrant). The Thantias live in their original habitat called Juang Pirh in the Gonasika hills in the Keonjhar district, while the Bhagudias have migrated from their homeland and now settled in Dhenkanal, Jajpur and Angul districts. The Juang means Man and he is born from the earth. Their neighbours refer to them as *Pattua* which means leaf wherein early period people of these communities used the leaf and bark of the tree as their clad (SCSTRTI, 2008).

The Dongria Kondh comes under the Kondhs community. They are located in the Niyamgiri hills in the state of Odisha. Mostly the areas extended from Rayagada, Koraput and Kalahandi district of south Odisha (SCSTRTI,2008). The Dongria Kondh community members is approximately 10,000(Census,2011). The people of Niyamgiri use Kui language. Kui language is not written, but it is spoken among the people of Kondh community. Dongria Kandhas are known for their deep knowledge and horticulture skills.

## Review of Literature:

### Juang Tribe: An analysis of Culture

In his discussion on ethnomedicine, Sahoo (2023) highlights the traditional healthcare practices of the Juang tribal community in Odisha, which are dependent on indigenous knowledge. For collecting the data, the investigator used interviews, focus groups (FGDs), questionnaire-based field surveys, and observation techniques. After conducting a thorough field investigation, the study revealed 38 species of wild plants with medicinal properties that the community utilized for curing many different kinds of illnesses. The practice is passed through oral tradition and is influenced by education, occupation, culture, and socioeconomic level, among other factors. The study examines how public health policies for sustainable development might incorporate ethnomedicine. It emphasizes how crucial it is to protect biodiversity and traditional knowledge. The Global Strategy on Traditional and Alternative Medicine of the World Health Organization seeks to control complementary and alternative medicine for sustainable and safe usage. The study emphasizes the need for more investigation to learn how traditional and contemporary medical systems interact and influence health-seeking behaviour, providing guidance for better public health policies.

Khatun (2020) conducted an ethno-medicinal survey in Juang villages within the Keonjhar district (Banspal block) of Odisha. It aimed to document the medicinal plant usage among the Juang community. Employing various methods such as participant observation, interviews, case studies, snowball sampling, and survey schedules, the study identified 32 plant species across 21 families utilized by the Juang people to treat common ailments and maintain healthcare. Most of these plants are sourced from the forest. Despite the Juang community's reliance on traditional beliefs and practices for disease and treatment, they also utilize modern medicine. However, industrialization and other activities have led to the depletion of some medicinal plants in the region. Documenting traditional knowledge on these plants could aid in germplasm conservation efforts and potentially contribute to new drug development. Remarkably, it was found that individual plants can serve multiple medicinal purposes, addressing numerous ailments. Promoting ethno-medicine not only benefits the Juang tribe by supporting their sustainable livelihood but also contributes to biodiversity conservation efforts.

Sahoo & Naidu (2013) discusses the importance of considering cultural factors in assessing the health status of communities, particularly focusing on the Juang primitive tribe in Keonjhar district of Odisha state. It highlights that traditional magico-religious health care systems played a significant role for certain tribal groups like the Juang. The Juang community lives in a natural forest environment with specific dietary habits closely tied to their ecological and cultural behaviors. Despite this, their health status is notably lower compared to the general population, with higher rates of infant mortality, fertility, malnourishment, and socio-economic vulnerability. The paper aims to explore how modern health practices intersect with cultural factors to impact the health outcomes of the Juang tribe, especially considering the ecological, geographical, and climatic challenges they face in their hilly region.

Sahoo, Nayak & Khurana (2023) conducted a study on the Junag tribes of Odisha with a purpose to understand their health-seeking behaviour, focusing on the acceptance and preference for traditional or

modern healthcare systems. Utilizing purposive sampling and various data collection methods like a pre-structured schedule, observation approach, case studies, and interviews. The research revealed a diverse pattern of health-seeking behaviour within the tribe. While maximum number of respondents from four villages preferred traditional healthcare due to cultural and geographical reasons, almost all favoured modern healthcare services, primarily for their accessibility and involvement of modern healthcare providers. Overall, the study suggests that the Junag tribe is in a transitional phase, adopting a hybrid approach to health seeking influenced by cultural attitudes and the affordability of contemporary healthcare services.

Sahoo (2017) focuses on the vulnerability of tribal communities, especially Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), to illness is exacerbated by neoliberal development practices. The unavailability, inaccessibility, and unaffordability of resources contribute to declining health levels, particularly among pregnant mothers and children, leading to higher mortality rates. Malnutrition among children of PVTGs is a growing concern, reflecting the adverse impact of exclusionary resource use practices. This paper examines the link between the depletion of natural resources, the failure of state institutions to provide welfare measures, and the increasing number of child deaths due to malnutrition, focusing on the Juang tribal community in Odisha. Livelihood, crucial for subsistence, is primarily derived from forest-based activities such as agriculture and collection of minor forest produce. However, degradation of forest land has damaged agricultural practices, reducing food self-sufficiency. Additionally, there is a diminishing availability of minor forest produce, limiting income opportunities. Without skills for an industrialized economy, the Juang tribe face limited livelihood options, further restricting their ability to meet basic needs.

### **Juang Tribe: An analysis of Livelihood**

Panda (2018) assessed the Juang's transformation in livelihood through developmental plans and policies. The study spotted the changing socio-economic scenario of Keonjhar Juangs of upara champai village by using tools and techniques like observation, interview, case studies, life histories and genealogy. The paper discusses that the major transformation and changes are prominently visible in the livelihood sector and that changes brought about transformation in their socio-political aspect as well. These includes changes in their family structure, marriage rituals, social relations, daily food habits, dress pattern, political administration, life style including health, education, employment and much more. The researcher also mentioned that the Juang of upara Champi village are now attracted towards cities and towns and at the same time they have not forgotten their own indigenous knowledge and relationship with the forest. At present, the Juangs of upara Champei village are at a transitional phase of identity crisis and are vulnerable to various sensitive and challenging issues.

Tripathy (2018) aimed to investigate the diversification of livelihood among the Juang community, particularly through migration and other options. It raises questions about the sustainability and potential negative impacts of these strategies on their livelihood patterns. Additionally, it delves into the evolving occupational behaviors and migration trends among the Juang, which not only affect their economic well-being but also their socio-cultural aspects. The paper discusses how these changes influence family and

kinship networks, rituals, marriage systems, festivals, and institutions, and how they shape the pursued livelihoods of the Juang.

Mahapatra, Patra & Satapathy (2023) focuses on the anthropological study of the Juang Tribe in Keonjhar District, Odisha, India, which is recognized as one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). The study explores various aspects of the Juang Tribe's demographic status, social organization, economic activities, health, education, challenges and opportunities in the face of rapid societal changes. It highlights the low socio-economic status of the Juang people leading to challenges such as undernutrition and anemia due to poor purchasing power and low-quality diet. It also highlighted the environmental threats like deforestation and loss of traditional lands pose additional challenges to the tribe's resource management practices, necessitating sustainable solutions. However, there are opportunities for socioeconomic development within the tribe, including skill development, entrepreneurship, and sustainable livelihood initiatives. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the unique cultural and socioeconomic dynamics of the Juang tribe for effective development interventions. It calls for future research to focus on innovative strategies to address their challenges, promote cultural preservation, and enhance their quality of life. By supporting the Juang tribe, researchers can contribute to sustainable development and social justice in the region.

Das (2021) focuses on documenting the traditional aspects of the Juang community in Odisha, particularly in light of the rapid urbanization and migration affecting their traditional way of life. Despite the challenges posed by urbanization and modern education, the Juang community has retained its traditional lifestyle, particularly in remote hilly regions. The research highlights the unique features of Juang life, including their reliance on forest resources for sustenance, traditional hunting and gathering practices, and agricultural techniques. Despite shifts in occupational patterns and migration to urban areas, some Juang communities still adhere to traditional customs and practices. The study also explores the cultural and artistic expressions of the Juang community, including wall paintings, wood carvings, metal sculptures, and traditional music and dance forms. These artistic traditions play a significant role in preserving the cultural identity of the Juang people amidst changing socio-economic conditions. The study emphasizes that the importance of preserving Juang cultural heritage amidst socio-economic changes, which support to sustain their traditions for future generations.

Pradhan & Sahu (2022) examine the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), specifically the Juangs in Keonjhar district, Odisha, using descriptive research design aiming to describe their socio-economic and cultural life which includes their living condition, dress, ornaments, food habit, health and hygiene, source of income (mainly by shifting cultivation), dormitory system etc. PVTGs are identified as the most vulnerable among tribal communities due to factors like declining population, low literacy and economic backwardness. These groups inhabit in remote areas with poor infrastructure and rely on traditional values and customs. India's tribal population constitutes about 8.2% of the total population, with some tribes classified as primitive tribal groups (PTGs) due to pre-agricultural development stages and low literacy rates. Orissa has 13 PTGs among its 62 tribal communities. Both the Central and State Governments have allocated significant



funds for the development of PTGs, focusing on improving socio-economic conditions and household food security. The economic life of PTGs centres around forests, which provide them with basic necessities. The study stated that the Juangs have not reached to the expected point of development in comparison to the main-stream and provide insights into the socio-economic life of the Juang community and their dependence on forest resources.

Nayak, Patro, Panigrahi (2018) discussed the socio-economic role and participation of Juang women, one of the identified primitive tribes in the Keonjhar District of Orissa. The researcher used both primary and secondary sources to collect data, including government records, gazetteers, journals, books, periodicals, and websites focusing on the study area. In tribal societies, women are regarded as essential economic contributors and play significant roles within their families and communities. They engage in various activities such as gathering fruits, roots, and timber, as well as participating alongside men in household tasks and agricultural work. Despite being part of a patriarchal society, Juang women hold considerable influence in decision-making processes within their families, including matters related to hearth, bed placement, child-rearing, and social events like childbirth and marriage. The study aims to highlight the active involvement of Juang women in social institutions and their efforts to enhance their economic status.

Mahakul (2023) explored the cultural perspectives of the Juang tribes in Odisha concerning their utilization of Common Property Resources (CPRs), with a specific focus on land, in a primitive tribal village located in the Keonjhar District. The primary objective of the study is to examine the status and socio-economic impact of CPR utilization on livelihood support and the challenges faced by various segments of the village communities. It highlights the threat posed to existing CPRs due to privatization and external interventions. The analysis of CPRs, including their depletion and degradation, is conducted from the viewpoint of the Juang community. The paper explores how CPR utilization and its evolving patterns are influenced by the condition of resources at the time of their use, which is governed by the socio-cultural practices and institutions of the Juang. It elucidates how people perceive common property resources and manage them based on their cultural knowledge. A discrepancy is identified between the understanding of resource use by the government and the perception of the Juang, particularly evident when new resources are introduced. In such instances, there is a gap between the new resources and existing traditional methods of resource utilization, as the Juang lack knowledge of the new resources and their practices. Consequently, they rely on their traditional cultural knowledge and practices to navigate this unfamiliar territory, akin to understanding the unknown through the known. Overall, the paper sheds light on the intricate dynamics of CPR utilization among the Juang tribes, emphasizing the importance of cultural understanding in resource management and the need for aligning external interventions with traditional practices to ensure sustainable development.

Debasree (2015) assessed the challenges faced by tribal communities in India amidst the backdrop of economic development and industrialization. Despite economic growth, tribal populations continue to grapple with poverty, illiteracy, and mortality rates higher than non-tribal groups. The introduction of global mining companies and large-scale development projects, often facilitated by the colonial Land Acquisition Act of 1894, has led to the forced displacement of millions of tribal people from their ancestral lands. The

disproportionate impact of development-induced displacement falls heavily on tribal communities, particularly women, who are often left marginalized and vulnerable. Many resource-rich tribal areas have been earmarked for large-scale projects such as dams, mines, and industrial plants, exacerbating the loss of land and livelihoods for tribal population. In the context of large mining projects, tribal lands are not only acquired by project authorities but also by non-tribal outsiders, leading to a loss of economic opportunities for tribal communities. Additionally, existing compensation mechanisms are inadequate to address the severity of the impoverishment faced by displaced tribal and Dalit populations. Displacement often results in the migration of tribal women and young girls to urban slums, where they struggle to secure employment and face discrimination based on caste. Mining activities further exacerbate the livelihood insecurity and rights violations experienced by tribal women. Overall, the study highlights the adverse impacts of development-induced displacement on tribal communities in India, particularly women, and calls for a re-evaluation of development policies to ensure the protection of tribal rights and livelihoods.

### **Dongria Khond: An analysis of culture**

Kumar, Marinescu & Nayak (2023) focuses on the preservation of agricultural knowledge within indigenous Adivasi communities in India, particularly in the Odisha State districts of Koraput and Rayagada. The study aims to understand the agricultural practices of these communities, their connection to local beliefs and festivals, and how this knowledge manifests in language and community life. Agriculture serves as the primary source of income in these villages, with many communities still engaging in foraging activities in nearby forests. The methodology employed includes field data collection, participative and non-participative observation, and knowledge sharing from local individuals. The research reveals that Adivasi communities maintain indigenous knowledge regarding the collection, cooking, and selling of roots and tubers. This knowledge is deeply intertwined with their understanding of the environment, respect for nature, and transmission from one generation to the next. The preservation of traditional knowledge is viewed as a form of "survivance," representing an active continuation of traditions and connection with ancestors. The researchers express interest in further exploring the oral traditions of these communities to gain a deeper understanding of the associated meanings. The research also highlights the concept of "native science," which refers to the collective heritage of human experience with the natural world. This knowledge, rooted in local ecosystems, can be beneficial to any community in establishing connections between local resources and human communities. Overall, the research underscores the importance of preserving indigenous agricultural knowledge and its broader implications for sustainable practices and community resilience.

Palita, Panda & Nayak, (2023) discusses the symbiotic relationship between indigenous communities in India and their environment, particularly focusing on the conservation of biodiversity and natural resources through traditional belief systems, such as animism, and the protection of sacred groves. These communities view natural resources as gifts from divine forces and have developed eco-cultures that emphasize harmony with nature. Rites, rituals, ceremonies, and festivals are performed to establish a friendly relationship with these divine forces, which in turn contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. However, anthropogenic pressures such as developmental activities, urbanization, and exploitation of resources threaten sacred groves and their

biodiversity. These groves not only enhance the economic status of local tribal communities but also safeguard biodiversity that is at risk of extinction. The socio-cultural life of indigenous communities is also undergoing rapid changes due to globalization and its impact on economic activities. The expansion of global markets poses a threat to their traditional lifestyle and nature-centered way of life. The research suggests the urgent need for conservation strategies for sacred groves by government agencies and non-government organizations. Furthermore, there is a call for more documentation of the rich faunal and floral resources within these groves. It also emphasizes the importance of preserving the bond between indigenous communities and nature, as well as the need for focused research to address the challenges posed by globalization while ensuring the continuation of their traditional way of life.

Hansdah & Biswal (2023) explored the Dongria Kandha community, a tribal group living in ancient conditions yet undergoing modernization. The study focuses on the Dongria Kandha community in the Rayagada district of Odisha, exploring their intellectual, food, spiritual practices, and community organization, including marriage and various forms of consciousness. Community change is identified as a key issue affecting the Dongria Kandha tribe, with shifts observed in dress patterns, cosmetics, and lifestyle choices. The younger generation is depicted as increasingly adopting contemporary products and attire, influenced by social media and popular culture, including actors and actresses. The research suggests that while some members of the Dongria Kandha community adapt to modernization comfortably, others struggle with maintaining their traditional way of life. Cultural augmentation and the shift towards modernization pose challenges, exacerbated by factors such as societal conventions and lack of access to infrastructure services. Overall, the research underscores the complex dynamics of cultural change within indigenous communities, emphasizing the need for understanding and support to navigate the challenges of modernization while preserving cultural heritage and identity.

Sethi & Naik (2020) explores the practice of shifting cultivation and cultural beliefs among the Dongria Kandha tribe of Odisha, India. It aims to highlight the preservation of age-old practices while examining the technique of shifting cultivation and the conservation and management skills of the tribe. Shifting cultivation is identified as a sustainable livelihood approach for indigenous populations, deeply rooted in their cultural and environmental needs. Despite its benefits, such as forest management knowledge and conservation systems developed by generations, the practice also has negative consequences, including soil erosion, environmental degradation, and loss of biodiversity. The Government of India has implemented various initiatives to address these issues, including introducing alternative livelihood options and imposing restrictions through land tenure systems and forest reserves. However, these efforts have faced challenges due to the strong social, cultural, economic, and psychological ties associated with shifting cultivation among tribal communities. For the Dongria Kandha and other tribal groups, shifting cultivation is not merely a means of livelihood but also entails socio-religious beliefs and rituals. Selection of land patches and various rituals associated with the cultivation process are integral to their cultural practices. Overall, shifting cultivation serves not only as a livelihood system but also as a deeply ingrained custom, tradition, and value-based system for tribal communities, shaping their way of life and cultural identity.



Dandapat (2021) assessed the role of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in sustaining swidden cultivation practices among the Dongria Kondh community. It delves into various aspects such as knowledge, beliefs, practices, and cultural elements that have enabled the Dongria Kondh to maintain their traditional farming methods over time. The findings indicate that swidden cultivation has historically supported the community's subsistence needs and continues to contribute to their sustainable development and economic welfare. Despite changes in the agricultural landscape, the traditional steps of swidden cultivation remain intact, showcasing a transformation from subsistence farming to sustainable economic agriculture. The Dongria Kondh have adapted their indigenous knowledge to cultivate a variety of crops suited to their hilly environment, while also exploring alternatives such as horticulture to enhance their livelihoods without depleting natural resources. The research highlights key elements of Dongria Kondh ecological practices, including land classification, site selection, crop rotation, and cultural rituals, which have been adapted and preserved to ensure the continuation of swidden cultivation. Overall, the study underscores the importance of indigenous knowledge in sustaining traditional farming systems amidst changing socio-economic conditions, while also fostering economic development within indigenous communities.

### **Dongria Khond: An analysis of livelihood**

Bocha & Srinivas (2021) studied the livelihood practices of the Dongria Kondh tribe, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group residing in the Niyamgiri hill ranges of Odisha, India. The study reveals that the Dongria Kondh heavily rely on traditional methods such as shifting cultivation, horticulture, and collection of Minor Forest Produce (MFP), along with hunting and gathering, for their survival. However, their livelihood is under threat due to shrinking shifting cultivation areas caused by restrictions imposed by forest authorities. Additionally, the sale of forest products like turmeric and tamarind has declined due to dependency on substitute products available in mainstream markets. Despite efforts to preserve their traditional lifestyle, the Dongria Kondh are facing challenges such as low income, inadequate government support, limited agricultural land, crop failures, soil erosion, and lack of education and technical skills. As a result, they are increasingly resorting to alternative livelihood practices such as wage labourers and cattle rearing to meet their basic needs.

Singh & Sadangi (2012) investigate the livelihood patterns and resource base of tribal communities in Odisha. It identifies farming, forest activities, wage labour, migration, and service/business ventures as the major livelihood patterns, with a prevailing low annual income. High levels of illiteracy, particularly among females, and small nuclear family structures are common characteristics. Traditional skills like shifting cultivation are predominant, while advanced skills are limited. The study highlights the reliance on local sources and NGOs for farm technologies and the limited access to basic amenities like electricity. Forest resources such as fuelwood, tamarind, and mahua play a crucial role in the livelihoods of these communities. Livestock ownership is moderate, with households maintaining goats, cows, poultry, and occasionally piggeries for household purposes. Ethnic leadership is accepted among tribal communities, but poor education, limited resources, and inadequate infrastructure undermine their livelihoods. The research underscores the need for targeted interventions to strengthen tribal livelihoods, including improved literacy,

sustainable socio-economic status, women's empowerment, and better healthcare. A sustainable livelihood pattern requires a strong resource base, but many tribal resources are becoming unproductive and inaccessible. An integrated approach is recommended to rejuvenate forest resources, considering tribal preferences and priorities. Land ownership issues, particularly related to shifting cultivation, need to be addressed to ensure nutritional security among tribal households. The study proposes agricultural crop diversification, promotion of perennial horticulture crops, conservation of medicinal plants, and agroforestry models to enhance tribal livelihoods. Additionally, policy interventions are necessary to allocate forest land for cultivation, discourage shifting cultivation, and promote sustainable farming practices. Community-based approaches and incentives can further support the economic development of tribal communities in the region.

Mohapatra (2012) reveals the significant challenges faced by the Dongria and Kutia Kondh tribal communities, as well as the Dalits (Domb) living in the Niyamgiri hills. These communities traditionally rely on hunting, gathering, and shifting cultivation for their survival, with forest resources forming a vital part of their livelihood. However, aggressive mining activities and depletion of forest resources have severely impacted their way of life, forcing them to depend on purchased foods to meet their basic needs. The proposed mining lease area has further exacerbated the situation, depriving these indigenous groups of their land rights. Despite government schemes, the living conditions in these villages remain dire, with food scarcity being particularly acute during the post-sowing monsoon period and around March after the kharif harvest. As a result, people, especially the most vulnerable, are resorting to consuming less preferred foods due to lower income levels. Various coping strategies, including reliance on own production, purchase, forest resources, credit from ration shops, and local money lenders, are employed by the villagers. However, when these fail, distress migration to neighbouring districts or outside the state becomes the last resort, driven by factors such as recurrent droughts, land alienation, debts, and high levels of food insecurity. The research emphasizes the necessity of a multi-faceted approach for sustainable livelihoods, coupled with improvements in literacy levels, to achieve economic and social empowerment for these marginalized communities. Urgent action is required to protect the land rights of tribal groups facing continuous threats of eviction from their homes and lands.

Bulliyya (2010) provide a comprehensive overview of the Dongria Kondh, a Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) located in the Niyamgiri hilly region of Orissa, India. It describes their demographic characteristics, cultural practices, and socio-economic challenges. Despite their deep knowledge and skill in horticulture, the Dongria Kondh face significant health and nutritional issues due to poverty, poor environmental conditions and limited access to healthcare facilities. Malnutrition, particularly among children and women, is prevalent, with high rates of protein-energy deficiency and micronutrient deficiencies. The study highlights the urgent need for targeted interventions to improve the health and nutritional status of the Dongria Kondh, including measures to address social isolation, improve literacy, and empower the community economically. Additionally, there is a pressing need to protect the Dongria Kondh's land rights and ensure the sustainability of their livelihoods in the face of threats of eviction and modernization. The study calls for the development of specific programs and action plans to address these challenges and uplift the Dongria Kondh community.

Tatpati, Kothari, Mishra, (2016) in their research paper discussed about threat to Dongria Kondh livelihood system in Niyamgiri forest range. The research findings highlight the integral role of the Dongria Kondh community in preserving the ecological integrity of the Niyamgiri hills through their wise and sustainable practices. Their deep reverence for the natural environment is reflected in their livelihoods, cultural traditions, and sense of identity. However, the encroachment of the welfare state and market economy poses significant threats to their way of life, potentially undermining their traditional practices without providing viable alternatives. The Dongria Kondh are becoming increasingly aware of these challenges, particularly in light of pressures to reopen mining proposals and implement culturally inappropriate welfare schemes. The government is called upon to fulfil its constitutional mandate to protect the interests of indigenous communities like the Dongria Kondh. This entails supporting their rights over the hills and assisting in the development of livelihood options rooted in their ecological, cultural, and knowledge systems. Additionally, the Niyamgiri Surakshya Samiti is urged to facilitate this process alongside its role in resisting mining proposals and state repression. Crucially, the Dongria Kondh require access to information to explore locally appropriate modes of education, healthcare, communication, and livelihoods based on their own practices and knowledge. The government is urged to cease police repression, reassess inappropriate welfare schemes, halt mining bids permanently, and create an environment conducive to the community articulating and asserting its worldview.

Devi (2016) discusses the precarious living conditions of a particular marginalized group, referred to as Dongria Kondh Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group, which face significant challenges in socioeconomic and environmental aspects. The lack of opportunities for improvement exacerbates issues such as food insecurity and impedes physical growth and development among this population. Key concerns highlighted include social isolation, poor communication, low literacy, exploitation, and inadequate resources, all of which need urgent attention. The study advocates for a comprehensive intervention strategy that combines efforts to enhance sustainable livelihoods with initiatives to improve literacy levels, thereby fostering economic and social empowerment within the community. Furthermore, the research underscores the urgent need to address the dire circumstances faced by the Dongria Khond (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group), including the continuous threat of eviction from their homes and lands. It calls for the reinforcement of existing infrastructure and welfare schemes, with a particular focus on targeted surveillance objectives to safeguard the rights and well-being of this vulnerable population. The research also highlights the imperative for immediate action to develop an action plan aimed at ensuring the survival, protection, and development of the Dongria Khond (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group). This plan should encompass basic needs fulfilment, socioeconomic upliftment, and adaptation to the challenges posed by modernization.

## A Critical Analysis on the Culture and Livelihood of Juang and Dongria Khond

### Juang's Culture:

Researches have been carried out to explore the significance of traditional healthcare practices of Juang tribe, showcasing their reliance on indigenous knowledge for treating ailments (Sahoo,2023; Khatun ,2020). Sahoo, (2023) identified 38 medicinal plant species, while Khatun, (2020) documented 32 species used by the Juang community. Both the studies underscore the importance of preserving biodiversity and traditional knowledge for sustainable healthcare and potential drug development. There is an impact of cultural factors on the health status of the Juang tribe (Sahoo & Naidu ,2013; Sahoo,2017). While Sahoo & Naidu (2013) highlighted the intersection of cultural practices with modern health systems, Sahoo (2017) focuses on the vulnerability of Juang tribal communities, to illness exacerbated by neoliberal development practices. Sahoo, Nayak & Khurana (2023) delved into the health-seeking behaviour of the Juang tribe, noting a diverse pattern influenced by cultural, geographical, and affordability factors adopting a hybrid approach. The study suggests a transitional phase where traditional and modern healthcare services are both preferred.

### Juang's Livelihood

Researchers have come forward to address the changing socioeconomic scenario and challenges faced by the Juang tribe due to developmental interventions and societal changes (Panda, 2018; Mahapatra, Patra & Satapathy, 2023; Das, 2021; Debasree, 2015). Some research findings provide insights into the socioeconomic and cultural life of the Juang community, including their living conditions, economic activities, and gender roles (Pradhan & Sahu ,2022; Nayak, Patro, Panigrahi ,2018). The studies explored that transformation in various aspects of Juang community including family structure, daily habits, and socio-political aspects, due to modernization and migration (Panda ,2018; Tripathy ,2018; Das, 2021). Some studies revealed that the low socioeconomic status of the Juang people, leading to challenges such as undernutrition and environmental threats like deforestation, necessitating sustainable solutions. (Mahapatra, Patra & Satapathy ,2023; Tripathy 2018). The studies have demonstrated the importance of aligning external interventions with traditional practices for sustainable development (Mahakul ,2023; Das, 2021).

### Dongria Khond's Culture

There is a connection between Preservation of Agricultural Knowledge and Indigenous Practices among the Dongria Khond tribe (Kumar, Marinescu & Nayak ,2023; Palita, Panda & Nayak, 2023). Indigenous agricultural knowledge helps to maintain sustainable practices and conserve biodiversity by using local beliefs and festivals (Kumar, Marinescu & Nayak ,2023; Palita, Panda & Nayak, 2023). Many researches have been conducted to address the effect of modernisation and govt intervention on their culture and shifting cultivation. It is discovered that the Dongria Khond undergo different kinds of cultural changes like dress patterns, lifestyle choices, community organization and there is a deep-rooted connection between shifting cultivation and culture. It was found that they maintain both adaptation and struggle with maintaining traditional ways of life and contributing to sustainable development (Hansdah & Biswal,2023; Sethi& Naik, 2020; Dandapat, 2021).

## Dongria Khond's Livelihood

Dongria Khond relies on traditional livelihood practices such as shifting cultivation, horticulture, and collection of Minor Forest Produce (MFP). These practices are deeply ingrained in their cultural identity and have sustained them for generations (Bocha & Srinivas, 2021; Singh & Sadangi, 2012; Mohapatra, 2012; Bulliyya, 2010). Various These challenges include shrinking shifting cultivation areas, declining sale of forest products, poverty, inadequate government support, and threats to their land rights due to mining activities and encroachment challenges have been faced by the Dongria Khond tribe in sustaining their livelihoods. (Bocha & Srinivas 2021; Mohapatra 2012; Bulliyya, 2010; Tatpati, Kothari, Mishra, 2016; Devi, 2016). Many researchers advocate for targeted interventions and policy changes to strengthen the livelihoods of tribal communities like the Dongria Khond. These interventions include improving literacy levels, empowering women, rejuvenating forest resources, and promoting sustainable farming practices, supporting their rights over the hills and assisting in the development of livelihood options rooted in their ecological, cultural, and knowledge systems and improvements in literacy levels to achieve economic and social empowerment (Bulliyya, 2010; Singh & Sadangi ,2012; Mohapatra ,2012; Tatpati, Kothari, Mishra, 2016; Devi,2016)

From the review, it was depicted that, both the Juang and Dongria Khond tribe exhibit a strong connection to their environment and traditional knowledge systems, highlighting the importance of preserving biodiversity and indigenous practices for sustainable livelihoods and healthcare (Kumar, Marinescu & Nayak ,2023; Palita, Panda & Nayak,2023; Sahoo,2023; Khatun ,2020). However, both tribes also face challenges from external factors such as modernization and government intervention, which threaten their cultural heritage and way of life (Hansdah & Biswal,2023; Sethi& Naik, 2020; Dandapat, 2021; Sahoo 2017). The Juang tribe's health-seeking behaviour reflects a pragmatic approach to healthcare, incorporating both traditional and modern services (Nayak & Khurana ,2023), while the Dongria Khond tribe's emphasis on preserving agricultural knowledge suggests a deep commitment to maintaining cultural practices despite external pressures (Kumar, Marinescu & Nayak ,2023; Palita, Panda & Nayak, 2023; Hansdah & Biswal,2023; Sethi& Naik, 2020; Dandapat, 2021). While both tribes demonstrate resilience in the face of change, there is a need for policies and interventions that respect and support their cultural heritage while addressing their evolving needs and challenges.

Both the Juang and Dongria Khond tribes face challenges related to socioeconomic changes, though the nature of these challenges differs. While the Juang tribe deals with issues like low socioeconomic status and environmental threats (Mahapatra, Patra & Satapathy ,2023; Tripathy 2018), the Dongria Khond tribe struggles with maintaining traditional livelihood practices in the face of encroachment and resource depletion (Bocha & Srinivas, 2021; Singh & Sadangi, 2012; Mohapatra, 2012; Bulliyya, 2010). Both the tribes' experiences transformations in various aspects of their community due to modernization, industrialisation and migration, impacting their traditional way of life. Both sets of researchers advocate for interventions to support the livelihoods of the respective tribes, emphasizing the importance of aligning external interventions



with traditional practices and empowering the communities economically and socially (Mahakul ,2023; Das, 2021; Bulliyya, 2010; Singh & Sadangi ,2012; Mohapatra ,2012; Tatpati, Kothari, Mishra, 2016; Devi,2016).

However, while the Juang and Dongria Khond tribes share similarities in their reliance on traditional knowledge and practices (Pradhan & Sahu ,2022; Nayak, Patro, Panigrahi ,2018; Bocha & Srinivas, 2021; Singh & Sadangi, 2012; Mohapatra, 2012; Bulliyya, 2010) their specific cultural contexts and responses to external influences vary. Understanding these differences is essential for developing culturally sensitive interventions that support their sustainable development goals while preserving their cultural heritage. While both the Juang and Dongria Khond tribes face challenges to their livelihoods, their specific contexts and responses differ. Understanding these differences is crucial for developing targeted interventions and policy changes that support the sustainable development and cultural preservation of each tribe. Efforts should focus on empowering the communities economically and socially while respecting their traditional knowledge systems and way of life (Bulliyya, 2010; Singh & Sadangi ,2012; Mohapatra ,2012; Tatpati, Kothari, Mishra, 2016; Devi,2016)

### Conclusion:

Both the Juang and Dongria Khond tribes exhibit a deep connection to their cultural heritage and traditional practices. They face distinct challenges and experience preserving their way of life amidst modernization, industrialisation and external interventions. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing effective strategies to support the sustainable development and well-being of indigenous communities. Further research and Government intervention efforts should focus to the specific needs and contexts of each tribe, considering their unique cultural identities and livelihood practices.

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