



E-ISSN: 2278-4136

P-ISSN: 2349-8234

JPP 2018; 7(5): 3207-3211

Received: 22-07-2018

Accepted: 24-08-2018

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## Lifestyle of the yanadi tribe and food habits in the socio-cultural and economic contexts

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**Abstract**

The Indian constitution identifies the ethnic minority groups, traditionally referred to as tribes or tribal as Scheduled tribes (STs) who constitute around eight percent of the total population of the country. About 53 million people (8% of the population) of India belong to various tribes in about 400 tribal communities. These groups live in different ecological geo climatic conditions throughout India ranging from the Sub-Himalayas to the islands in the Bay of Bengal and in the Arabian Sea. They also differ in distinct biological traits and cultural and socioeconomic background. Due to cultural patterns which vary from tribe to tribe, they are all at different stages of social, cultural, and economic development. Constitutionally referred to as 'scheduled tribes', tribal communities are among the poorest social groups in the country. Yanadis are non-vegetarians and eat the meat of rabbit, fowl, goat; sheep fish etc, but abstain from eating beef. Yanadis mainly subsist on agricultural labour. They are traditionally inland fishermen and are also engaged as watchmen in the fields and orchards of farmers. Collection of firewood, rickshaw pulling, rodents catching etc., constitutes secondary occupation of the Yanadis. The aim of present study is to understand the profile of Yanadi tribes and their food eating patterns. All most all the tribal population were illiterates or only primary educated. The family income does not exceed more than 5000 rupees per month. The main occupations of tribal population were agriculture labourers, Fishing & hunting, Watching orchards, Forest produce collection, Goats and sheep rearing, Agriculture, Private employed (Scavengers), Self-employed (Making bamboo products and selling) working in MNREGS (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme), Rat pickers in the fields and Maid Servants etc.

**Keywords:** Yanadi tribe, lifestyle, socio-cultural profile, food eating patterns

**Introduction**

Yanadis are one of the major scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh. Thurston (1909) [4] noted that the people were natives of Sriharikota Island and suggested that they derived their name from the Sanskrit word "Anadi" denoting those whose origin is unknown. Now they are predominantly spread over the districts of Nellore, Chittoor Guntur, Krishna, Kadapa and Prakasham. Yanadis live in symbiosis with non-tribals. Their population according to 2011 census reports is 5, 33,746 in Andhra Pradesh. The total literacy rate among Yanadi is 35.35 as per 2011 census. Their mother tongue is Telugu. Yanadis are broadly divided into four endogamous groups on the basis of occupations and dietary habits. The sub divisions are:

1. Manchi Yanadi or Reddi Yanadi (Cultivators and servants)
2. Adavi Yanadi (those living in forests)
3. Paki Yanadi (Scavengers) and
4. Chella Yanadi (those who collect left out food from leaf plates in the dust bins).

The Chella Yanadis and Paki Yanadis are considered to be unclean and low among Yanadis. Each division of the Yanadi is further divided into a number of patrilineal exogamous groups representing their lineage names (intiperlu). Yanadis are non-vegetarians and eat the meat of rabbit, fowl, goat, sheep fish etc, but abstain from eating beef. Yanadis mainly subsist on agricultural labour. They are traditionally inland fishermen and are also engaged as watchmen in the fields and orchards of farmers. Collection of firewood, rickshaw pulling, rodents catching etc., constitutes secondary occupation of the Yanadis.

The Yanadi are below-medium statured, long headed with the median value of cephalic index being the lowest observed in the state. They have a broad facial profile with a short chin and short and broad nasal features (Sreenath and Ahmad 1989) [2]. According to Andhra Pradesh Tribes Enquiry Committee, the Chenchu and the Yanadi are one and the same. To put it briefly the Chenchu ran down the hill because of Yanadi. Their food habits, religious beliefs, cultural approaches, clan characteristics, folklore and to a great extent living conditions are the same. (Vedavathy S., 2010) [5] Yanadi tribes of Andhra Pradesh, India are endemic to the region and

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Recognized as Scheduled Tribes under the Indian constitution. They lived traditionally in the fringe forests and derived their Primary source of livelihood from collecting non-timber forest products. The Yanadis have rich traditional health knowledge, including knowledge for everyday healthcare and specialized knowledge (eg. snakebite cures). The traditional health knowledge of the yanadis is closely interlinked with bio-resources and medicinal plants for healthcare are derived by continuous access to and observation of the natural resource. It was found from the secondary sources that the Yanadis have many religious beliefs and festivals connected with the forest flora. Ceremonial visits are made to the forest to show respect to nature and diseased ancestors, worship health goddesses and give reverence to the plants that keep them healthy. In the past entire family used to go to the forest for collection of non-timber forest products and the head used to educate his family members about medicinal plants and their use.

### Objective

The aim of present study is to understand the Socio-cultural profile of Yanadi tribes and their food eating patterns.

### Methodology

#### Selection of the study Area and Tools

The study was carried out in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh which is located on the east coast and is one of the nine coastal districts of the state. The district comprises of rural and tribal areas that have striking socio-cultural and economic differences. Among the 57 mandals of Guntur district the four mandals namely Chebrolu, Ponnur, Kakumanu and Amarthaluru have tribal population and are considered as tribal (Yanadi) belt of the district which is 30-80 kms away from the district headquarters. All villages had the facilities provided by the government such as electricity, cement roads and transport, protected municipal water supply and primary schools. The total number of villages is 12 identified from 4 different mandals where yanadi tribal population is predominant in the Guntur District. In the present study Multi stage cluster sampling method was used for the selection of the study area. The data was collected using interview schedules, questionnaires, observations, Focus Group Discussions

### Results and discussion

**Table 1:** Distribution of Locale of study area mandal wise and village wise

S.No	Mandal	Village
1	Ponnur	Munipalle
2		Doppalapudi
3		Vallabharaopalem
1	Kakumanu	Indira Nagar Colony
2		Garikapadu
3		Kothivanipalem
1	Chebrolu	Manchala
2		Yedlapati Nagar
3		Thotlapalem
1	Amarthaluru	Inturu
2		Gowada
3		Ramamohana Nagar

**Table 2:** Personal and Family Profile of the respondent's Parents

S. No	Variables	Number	Percentage (%)
Age of the Parents of the sample			
1.	20-25 yrs	116	46.4
	25-30 yrs	134	53.6
	Total	250	100
Mother's Education			
2.	No schooling	149	59.5
	Primary	101	40.4
	Secondary	-	-
	Total	250	100
Father's Education			
3.	No schooling	101	40.4
	Primary	132	52.8
	High school	17	6.8
	Total	250	100
Family Income per month			
4.	<3000	119	47.5
	3000-5000	101	40.4
	>5000	30	12.1
	Total	250	100
Mother's occupation			
5.	Not employed	17	6.8
	Agricultural laborers	53	21.2
	Fishing & Cat Hunting	89	35.6
	Scavengers & Escorts in fields and ponds	91	36.4
	Total	250	100
Father's occupation			
6.	Not employed	9	3.6
	Agricultural laborers	54	21.6
	Fishing & Cat hunting	72	28.7
	Scavengers and Escort in Fields & Ponds	81	32.4
	Migration	34	13.6
	Total	250	100

The table 2 presents information about demographic profile of the parents. The study shows the age range of parents; 46.4 percent of them were aged between 20-25 years and 53.6 percent of parents were in the age group of 25-30 years. From the table 4 it can be inferred that 59.5 percent of mothers had no schooling, while 40.4 percent of them had primary school education and none of them completed their schooling. The educational levels of 52.8 percent of fathers was primary school education and 101 (40.4%) of them were illiterates and 6.8 percent were educated up to High school level. Family monthly income of 40.4 percent is found to be less than Rs.3000 while it was Rs.3000 -5000 for 40.4 percent and only 12.1 percent that is 30 had family income more than 5000 rupees. Mother's occupational status reveals that 36.4 percent worked as scavengers and escorts in fields and ponds and 35.6 percent occupation was fishing and cat hunting, 21.2 percent of them worked as agricultural laborers while 6.8 percent were unemployed. Father's occupational status indicates that 32.4 percent that is 81 of them worked as scavengers and escorts in fields and ponds while 72 percent occupation is fishing and cat hunting. Agricultural laborer was main occupation for 21.6 percent, while 3.6 percent of fathers were not employed. It is noted from the study that 13.6 percent fathers were migratory workers.

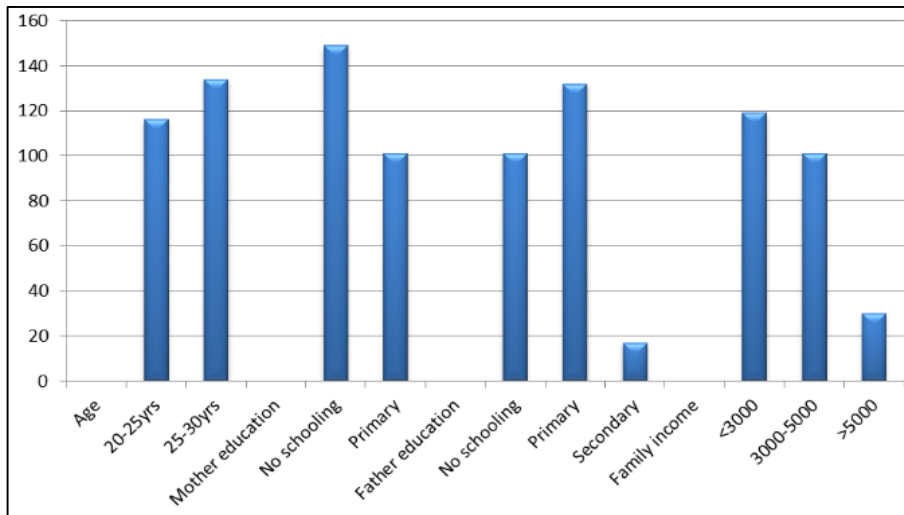


Fig 1: Personal and Family Profile of the respondent's Parents

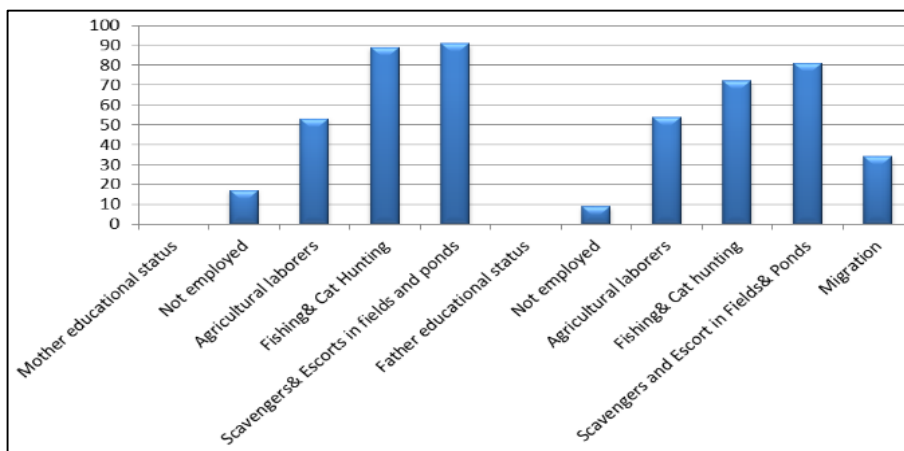


Fig 2: Occupational Status of the Parents

Table 3: Family variables of the study population

Variables	N	%
Type of family		
Joint	21	8.4%
Nuclear	229	91.6%
Total	250	100
Size of Family		
<4	28	11.2%
4-6	203	81.2%
>6	19	7.6%
Total	250	100
Number of children per family		
2	77	30.8%
3	119	47.5%
4	54	21.6%
Total	250	100

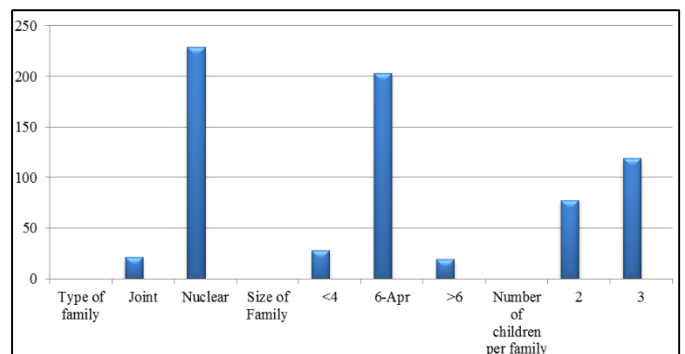


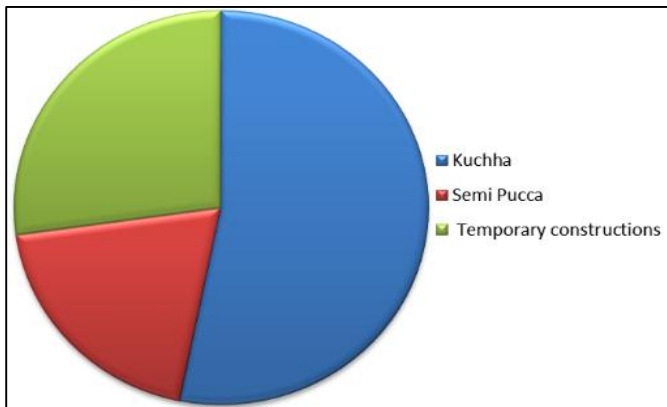
Fig 3: Family variables of the study population

Table 4: Percent distribution of Type of House in study population

Variable	N	%
Kuchha	133	53.2
Semi Pucca	49	19.6
Temporary constructions	68	27.2
Total	250	100

In the table 3, this reveals that 8.4 percent of sample was from joint families while 91.6 percent (229) were from nuclear families. The size of the family is 4 in 11.2 percent sample and 4-6 members in 81.2 percent sample while it is more than 6 percent in 7.6 percent that is 19 families. The table 3 indicates that in 30.8 percent (77 families) of children per family as 2 and in 47.5 percent of sample have 3 children however in 21.6 percent of sample it was 4 children per family.

The type of the house of the sample is represented in the above table, from which it can be stated that 53.2 percent of the sample have kuchha 133 houses, 19.6 percent semi pucca and 27.2 percent population live in temporary constructions. Mostly the houses are hut type with thatched roof.



**Fig 4:** Percent distribution of Type of house in study population

**Table 5:** Percentage distribution of study population by socio economic characteristics

Variable	N	%
Toilet facility		
Available	71	28.4
Not available	179	71.6
Electricity		
Yes	87	34.8
No	163	65.2
Source of drinking water		
Wells	12	4.8
Municipal water	65	26
Bore water	173	69.1
Purification of water		
Don't purify	177	70.8
Boiling	21	8.4
Strain by cloth	52	20.8

The distribution of population according to the housing characteristics indicated that 71.6 percent i.e 179 houses have no toilet facilities while it is found only in 28.4 percent i.e 71 houses. The study shows that in 163 (65.2%) houses don't have electricity while 87 (34.8%) of the houses have electricity. The source of drinking water of 69.1 percent is bore, for 26 percent it is municipal water while 4.8 percent depend on well for their water requirements. The study population, 70.8 percent of them doesn't purify water for drinking purpose, 8.4 percent boil water and 20.8 percent purify water by straining through cloth.

**Table 6:** Availability of Community services

Services available	Distances from place of residence		
	1-3kms	3-5kms	More than 5kms
Anganwadi	27(10.8%)	73(29.2%)	150(60%)
PDS	33(13.2%)	51(20.4%)	166(66.4%)
PHC	67(26.8%)	82 (32.8%)	101(40.4%)
Sub center	44(17.5%)	96 (38.4%)	110(44%)
RPM / Private practionaries	56(22.4%)	96(38.4%)	98(39.2%)
Primary school	71(28.4%)	87 (34.8%)	92(36.8%)
Govt. hospital	33(13.2%)	69(27.6%)	138(55.2%)

Information about availability of services for the study population shows that anagawadi is at distance of 1-3kms for 10.8 percent of population, 3-5 kms for 29.2 percent while it is more than 5kms for 60 percent i.e 150 study population. The public distribution is at distance of 1-3 kms for 13.2 percent (33) of sample, 3-5 kms for 20.4 percent and more

Than 5 kms for 66.4 percent of sample. The Public health center is at distance of 1-3 kms for 26.8 percent, 3-5 kms distance for 32.8 percent and at 5 kms distances for 101 i.e 40.4 percent of population. Sub center is at distance of 1-3 kms for 17.5 percent sample, 3-5 kms for 38.4 percent and more than 5 kms for 44 percent of sample. From the place of residence Private hospitals are found at distance of 1-3kms for 22.4 percent of sample. 3-5kms for 38.4 percent of sample and more than 5 kms for 39.2 percent of the sample. The distance of primary school from the sample residential areas is 1-3kms for 28.5% and 3-5 kms for 34.8 percent of population and the distance is more than 5 kms for 36.8 percent of population. The place of residence of sample from government hospital was 1-3 kms for 13.2 percent. 3-5 kms for 27.6 percent and more than 5 kms for 55.2 percent of population. The study shows that the distance of residence from the available service is more than 5kms, from the study it can be understood that most of study population is scavengers and their residence is found far away from the center of the village.

**Table 7:** Utilization of services by the Yanadi tribes

Utilization of Services available	Yes	No
Anganwadi	131 (52.4%)	119(47.5%)
PHC	77(30.8%)	173(69.1%)
Primary school	63(25.2%)	187(74.8%)
Govt hospital	91(36.4%)	159(63.6%)
PDS	73 (29.2%)	77(30.8%)

The utilization of services by Yanadi tribes presented in table 7. The anganwadi services are utilized by 52.4 percent of the sample and remaining 47.5 percent don't send their children to anganwadis because most of them are migratory families and work as escorts in fields. Primary health center service utilized by 30.8% and not utilized by 69.1 percent of the sample. The study reveals that 25.2 percent of them send their children to primary school while 74.8 percent children don't go to school. The percent of sample utilizing government hospital services is only 36.4 percent while 63 percent don't go to government hospitals because of their strong belief in their own traditional healing system. The public distribution service is utilized by 29.2 percent of sample and not utilized by 30.8 percent of them.

**Table 8:** Reasons for not utilizing the services by the Yanadi tribes

Reasons	N=250	%
Ignorance	96	38.4
Taboos	14	5.6
Distance	43	17.2
Migration	97	38.8
Marginalization	167	66.8

The above table gives reasons for not utilizing the services by the yanadi tribal community. The most important reason for not utilizing the service is marginalization (66.8%). Because of their occupational status i.e scavengers and rat eating tribes they are facing marginalization. The next important reason cited by the study sample is migration (38.8%) and ignorance of services available (38.4%). From the study it can be noted that taboos of the tribes as one of reasons for not utilizing the services (5.6%) while large distance of these services from the residence is the reason for not utilizing the services as cited by 17.2 percent of study population.

**Table 9:** Associations available in the selected locale and participation of the respondents

Associations available	Members	Not members
SHG groups	-	250(100%)
DWCRA	41 (16.4%)	209(83.6%)
Girijan coop society	-	250(100%)

The associations available in the study areas are Self Help Groups, Development of women and children in rural areas and Girijan cooperative society. The study reveals that none of the study sample was members of the group available. Only 16.4 percent of them are members of DWCRA.

**Table 10:** Percentage distribution of population by Food habits

Food habits	N	%
Vegetarians	-	
Non-vegetarians	250	100
Meal pattern		
Twice	78	31.2
Thrice	172	68.8
Four times	-	

The table above presents the food habits of the study group. The entire sample selected is non vegetarians and 68.8 percent have meals three times a day while 31.2 percent (78) have two meal pattern

### Conclusion

The research areas of the study are 30 - 80 kilometers away from the District headquarter. It was observed that the proximity to the urban areas does influence the lifestyle of the inhabitants and food habits in the socio-culture and economic contexts. Regarding the Personal and Family Profile of the tribal children majority of the parents of the sample were in age group of 25-30 years. More than half of the mothers were illiterates and half of father were educated to primary level. Family income of nearly half the sample was less than Rs. 3000 per month and the family income of other half sample was between Rs.3000-5000. Majority of the mother's and father's occupational status is Fishing, Cat hunting, Scavenger and Escorts in the fields and ponds. The type of the family is nuclear family and the family size is 4-6 members in each family. Number of children per family is 3 in majority of the families.

Standard of living Index shows that mostly the houses were hut type with thatched roof. The distributions of population according to the housing characteristics majority of houses had no toilet facilities and did not have electricity. The main source of drinking water was bore water. Standard of living Index (SLI) scores of the tribal families under study reveals that majority (64.8%) of the families had low standard of Index followed by 31.6 percent medium and 3.6 percent of tribal children belong to high standard of living index which shows that the standard of life of the sample was low. From the study it can be understood that most of study population is scavengers and their residence is found far away from the center of the village.

All tribal villages had the facilities provided by the government such as Anganwadi centres, primary schools, PDS, PHCs but utilization is poor, the major reasons found in the study are marginalization (66.8%) and ignorance (38.4%). The study reveals that only 16.4 percent of the women of these families are members of DWCRA. The entire sample selected is non vegetarians and majorities (68.8%) have meals three times a day while 31.2 percent have two meal pattern.

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