

## Tribal Economic Management System of the Gonds of Nuapada District of Odisha in India

**Mr. Hutasan Majhi <sup>1</sup> and Dr. Ratnakar Mohapatra <sup>2</sup>**

1. NFST Ph. D. Research Scholar, Department of History, School of Tribal Culture, Philosophy and Eco-Spiritualism, KISS, Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, PIN-751024, Odisha  
ORCID: 0009-0005-3213-3996
2. Associate Professor, Department of History, KISS, Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, PIN-751024, Odisha, India  
ORCID: 0000-0002-3148-7662

Corresponding author: **Mr. Hutasan Majhi**

---

---

### Abstract

*The purpose of this article is to highlight the economic management of the people of Gond tribe of Nuapada district of the state of Odisha in India. Economic life of the Gonds of Nuapada is an amiable feature of the tribal economic system of Odisha. The Gond is an ancient tribe of the state of Odisha. Out of various Scheduled tribes, Gond community of Nuapada is recognized by scholars as an important tribe of western Odisha. The main contribution of this study is that it undertakes the economic management system of the people of Gond tribe of Nuapada district of Odisha in India. The Gond people are slightly different from other indigenous tribal people of Odisha. Really, they are very much innocent and poor in economic status like other tribal people of Odisha. The monetary existence of Gonds of Nuapada district is closely linked with agricultural cycle and different reasserts as labourers in diverse developmental works of the Government of India. In the practical observation made by the principal author/scholar was found that 80 percent to 85 percent of the Gond people were working in the agricultural field for the production of paddy, sugarcane, Mandia, Maka, onion, potato, etc. They lead an existence of poverty and indigence. They were doing diverse types of the agricultural activities, most effective in transplantation of rice seedlings and in harvesting. The main occupation of the Gonds of Nuapada is agriculture. Moreover, natural calamities causing drought, and crop failure often made the situation worse, adversely affecting these poor landless agricultural labourers by creating a situation of crisis of non-availability of wage labour in the country side. As a result, many Gond families left homes and moved to urban and industrial centers in search of employment.*

**Keywords:** Management, Tribal Economic, Gond, tribe, Nuapada district, Odisha, India

---

---

### I. Introduction

The Gond is an ancient tribe of the state of Odisha in Eastern India. One of the largest tribal groups in India is of Gonds but this name is given to them by others not by them (Deogaonkar, 2007, p.13). Out of various Scheduled tribes, Gond community of Nuapada is recognized by scholars as an important tribe of western Odisha. The Gond people are slightly different from other Indigenous tribal people of the Odisha. Their life style, culture, beliefs, tradition, customs and religions are very interesting for study. Really, they are very much innocent and poor in economic status like other tribal people of Odisha. To know the economic life of Gonds of Nuapada district of Odisha, a proper attention requires for the study. Culturally, the Western Odisha is the best site for study of tribal people particularly on Gond tribe. The Gond clans are mostly totemic and the totems are usually named after animals (Thusu, 1980, p.40). The people of Gond

tribe once lived in Gondwana area now live in Central, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and in the Deccan plateau, yet the people of Gond tribe are found to be resided in Kalahandi, Nuapada, Balangir, Koraput, Rayagada, Sambalpur, Sundergarh, Sonapur, Boudha and Phulbani districts of Odisha (Patnaik, 2005, p.125). The Gonds of Odisha are divided into two broad groups, while the Gonds living in Sundagarh, Sambalpur, Balangir, and parts of Kalahandi are deeply influenced by the Hindu customs. Gonds of Kalahandi, Karaput and Rayagada are more primitive in nature and speak a Dravidian dialect known as "Gondi". They live together with Kandha, Bhuyans in homogeneous village. The economic management of Gond tribe is very interesting aspect to the scholars. Although as many as 62 types of the tribes are noticed in the state of Odisha, still out of these, Gond tribe is very significant. Really, the economic history of unbroken tribal people of Odisha will remain incomplete without the proper study on tribal economy of Gond tribe. At present, the research work on economic management of the Gond tribe is essential for the knowledge of the unbroken tribal history of Odisha. A few works on the different tribes of Odisha have been done by the earlier scholars, but they have not dealt with the economic management of Gond tribe of Nuapada district of Western Odisha in details. The current article tries to point out the economic management of the people of Gond tribe of the Nuapada district of Odisha in Eastern India.

## II. Literature Review

The present scholars/ authors are particularly interested in detailing the economic life of the Gond tribal community of Nuapada district of western Odisha. In this regard, both national and international scholars and anthropologists have not conducted research in detail. There has been no detailed work on the economic management of the Gond tribe of the Nuapada district of Western Odisha. In their scholarly works, most of the former scholars did not pay adequate attention to economic management aspect of the Gonds of Nuapada district of Odisha. Various works done by former scholars, historians, and others are Books, Journals, Reviews, Records, Reports, Gazetteers, Proceedings, Magazines, News papers, and so on that have been read by the current scholars. The titles of previous works done by both the national and foreign scholars/authors are discussed briefly here.

S. Singh-(2014) S. Singh has published a book entitled *Gond and Sabar Tribe: A Bio-Anthropological Profile* (2014). He has documented the structure, income, age group, and fertility of a few populations in this book. He does not, however, document the Gond Tribe's economic aspect. Nagendranath Basu, (2014). Nagendra Nath Basu has published a book entitled "Changing Socio-Economic and cultural profile of the Gond of the Nuapada district" in the year 2014. He has discussed the Gond Tribe's culture and changing demographic situation. He has not gone into length on the Gond Tribe's, occupation, tradition, and economic system. Kankana Deo (2017), in his article "Health Awareness among Tribes of Rural India" has revealed the findings of their research, which was based on firsthand interviews with 200 indigenous teenagers. She discovered that the majority of rural tribal people suffer from skin disorders, sexually transmitted infections, reproductive tract infections, diarrhea, tuberculosis, and leprosy, but that most are unaware of the nature and causes of these diseases. She has not mentioned detailed about the economic system of the Gonds of Nuapada District. Gyanshwar Chaubey-(2017). "Reconstructing the Population History of the largest Tribe of India" published in *European Journal of Human Genetic* (2017). He was specifically concerned with the population of central India's focus language. Dravidian language speaking Tribals in western India He has not touched on the economic condition of the Gonds of Nuapada in details. B. Powale (2015). In his research paper entitled "A Study of the Health Care Services in Tribal Area" assessed the public health services available in Kinwat tribal block in the Maharastra state by using both primary and secondary data. He found that the tribal people of this block are not getting quality health services due to scarcity of health services and lack of effective implementation of health services. He has not touched on the economic system of the Gonds of Nuapada. Sitaram Pingua, (2017). Sitaram Pingua has written a book on "Gond Tribe Nuapada and Kalahandi district of Odisha" in 2017. He mentioned the Gond Tribe's culture and development, He has not discussed about the changes and economic conditions of the Gonds of Nuapada in detail. B. Behera, (2017). Bimabadhar Behera has published a book entitled "*Gond Janajati Jibanadhara O Sanskruti*" in 2017. In this book he has mentioned the Gond life cycle, culture and religion. He has not described the details of the economic life of the Gonds of Nuapada District. Suwarna

Deshpande (2013). She has published an article on "Traditional method of the tuber cultivation is Raja Gond Tribe of Vidarbha in Maharashtra state India" in the Journal *Annals of Biological Researcher* focusing on traditional farming techniques have been evolved by wisdom of tribal communities /Gondas from Vidarbha region who have been cultivating tubers of ginger, *Alu*, and turmeric by traditional ways which protects soil erosion, increases soil fertility control pest and diseases reduces, develop transmission rate and controls weeds in the modern agriculture crops, but he has not referred to the agricultural practices of the Gond tribe of Nuapada district of Odisha. Santosh Kumar Meher (2019). "Impact of distress seasonal migration from a social economic perspective: A case study of Nuapada district in Kalahandi, Balangir, Korput region of Odisha". The present study investigates the impact of the phenomenon on the livelihood of the people by using on the primary data, only for focusing the K.B.K areas, the migration structural. He has not mentioned the economic life of the Gonds of the Nuapada. M. J., Herskovits (2020). He has written a book on *The Economic life of Primitive People*. In his book he has mentioned general economic activities of old indigenous people of India. But this work has not recorded regarding the economic condition of the Gonds of Nuapada district of Odisha.

All the records on Gonds of Nuapada were fragmented, and their focus was mostly on particular issues of their respective aims and scopes. In fact, the present piece of research work used the earlier literature of the professional and non-professional outputs as a guiding principle specially the academic materials of related field of studies were seen critically. The above works of the earlier scholars have initially helped the current authors to write this article.

### III. Methodology

The present study used both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of both oral and written data were used in this dissertation. The Informants living in different villages of the five Blocks of Nuapada district; mostly elders and culture expert from each block, written documents and archival sources from the Nuapada district office; State Archive of Bhubaneswar and Government Communication Department of Odisha, National Culture and Heritage Conservation Association, State Museum of Bhubaneswar, KISS Library, Bhubaneswar, KIIT University Central Library, unpublished theses data are used in the present research work. Material from SC&STRTI Library, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, District Library of Kalahandi, Nuapada, official records of the Nuapada district, as well as private documents were also used in the present article. In general all the advantages of the primary and secondary sources were utilized. The extensive field survey has been undertaken by the first scholar/author for the collection of detailed information (data) with regard to the economic condition and management of the past and present life, change and development of the Gond tribe of the Nuapada District of Odisha.

### IV. Analysis and Discussion

Before discussing the economic system / management of the Gonds of Nuapada district of Odisha, we have to know the climate, geographical location and their population. The Gond tribe people are noticed in all over India. For examples Madhya Pradesh region in Central India, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, etc. (Hivale, 1994, p.38). The shifting cultivation of Gonds is a stage of graduation. The methods of shifting cultivation and shifted agriculture the system of farming some parts of regular agriculture lands are abandoned for a few years for its fertility noticed in the Gonda areas of Nuapada district of Odisha (Singh, 1944, p.22).

Nuapada district is located in the western part of the state of Odisha, lying between 20° 20' N and 21° 5' North latitude and 82° 20' E to 82° 40' East Longitude (Datt, 2011, p.4). It is surrounded on the north, west and south by Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh province; on the east by the district of Bargarh, Bolangir and Kalahandi (Datt, 2011, p.4). It ranks 19<sup>th</sup> among the districts with regard to size 2.47 percent of landed area of Odisha (Datt, 2011, p.4). Nuapada district was part of the earlier Kalahandi district till March 1993, but for administrative convenience Kalahandi district was divided into two parts. Kalahandi as well as Nuapada vide State Government Notification No. DRC-44/93/14218 / R. March 27, 1993. At last on

the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 1993, Nuapada subdivision was sculpted out of Kalahandi to become a separate new district of Odisha.

According to the population census -2011 the total population of Nuapada district is 6,10,382 out of which 3,01,962 are male and 3,08,420 female. The percentage of population of male is 49.47 per cent against 50.53 per cent female (David Karl, 1994, p.76). The demographic indexes that below indicate females outnumber males. The district comprises one Sub-division, 5 CD Blocks and 3 NAC. Nuapada district is the 19<sup>th</sup> district in terms of size. As per 2011 Census the Schedule Tribe population of the District is 2,06,327 (1,00,469 male and 1,05,858 female). This constitutes 33.8 percent of the total population of the district (Singh, 1972, p.68). Among the schedule tribe's more than 99 per cent lives in rural areas and less than 1 percent in urban areas of Nuapada District. Komna Block has the highest number of Schedule Tribe population, 55,608. The major tribe found in Nuapada district is Gond, Bhunjia, Saora, Sabar, Banjara, Binjhal, Dal, Kandha, Mirdha, Munda, Paraja and Bhattoda. The percentage of Gond tribe is 66.56% in Nuapada district. The tribal dominated villages are situated in the isolated pockets in forest area of Nuapada District. Komna Block has the highest number of Schedule Tribe population. The central focus of this study is five blocks of the Nuapada district, found in western part of the state of Odisha. Basically, Gond people have been living in the Nuapada district more than other districts of Odisha.

#### 4.1. Economic Management of the Gonds of Nuapada District

Economically, the Gonds are low caste weavers who produce crude clothing to fulfill local demands. They sell the majority of their woven items at weekly marketplaces and occasionally travel from village to village to sell the clothing. Weaving was their main source of income, which was complemented by agricultural work and other activities. The scenario has now shifted in their favour (Baily, 1960, pp.46-50). With the arrival of mill-made textiles of finer sorts in the area, Gond weavers lost the market for their coarse clothes and struggled to make a living. But the other weaving castes were not so much affected as the Gond weavers were. The other weavers such as the Kustha and the Bhulia weave not only cotton clothes but also *Tassar* clothes and are *Skiled* in tie-and-dye designs which are widely known as Nuapada tie-and-dye fabrics throughout the country and fetch a high price (Hival, 1943, pp.20-21). Though the Gond, Krustha and Bhulia weavers live side by side in the same village, but they do not encroach upon each other's caste prerogatives. One time the Barpali village service, an internationally staffed technical assistance project made sincere attempts to induce the Gond weavers to adopt superior weaving skills and take to the weaving of *Tassar* clothes. But the monopolistic nature of the caste guilds, entry into which is by birth, stood in the way (White Read, 1995, pp.34-40). The Gond resented adopting anything other than own traditional weaving methods in such a situation, the Gond had no choice but to rely on agricultural labour and the *Dail* wage. Thus the number of wage earners increased beyond what was required in the area. Moreover, natural calamities causing drought, flood and crop failure often made the situation worse, adversely affecting these poor landless agricultural labourers by creating a situation of crisis of non-availability of wage labour in the country side. As result, many Gond families left homes and moved to urban and industrial centers in search of employment. There they worked as unskilled labourers, rickshaw pullers, domestic servants, petty traders, and the like, and are known as *Saharia* Gonds (Basu. 1985, p.69).

#### 4.2. Land Revenue and Land tenure System of Gonds of Nuapada

The Gonds inhabited areas of western Odisha, where the Gonds are found in large concentration was once under the control of several ex-princely kingdoms and *Zamindaries* during British rule, this region was managed as part of Chhotnagpur till 1861. From 1861 to 1862, it was under the administration of Bengal's Odisha division. The Bengal Rent Act of 1859 was made applicable to this area at this time. This statute provided *Rayats* in specific states occupancy rights and safeguarded them against rent increases. The territory was reattached to the central provinces in 1862. The central province's later Land Revenue Act of 1881 and Tenancy Act of 1889, enacted after this date, was made applicable to this territory. These

acts continue to control the substantive and procedural rules governing land revenues and tenancy in this area, and they even provide independence (Senapati and Kuanr. 1980, p.91).

The Sambalpur district was divided into two types of tracts under the previous revenue management system: *Zamindaries* and *Khalsa*. The *Zamindary* tracts were administered by concerned *Zamindars*, whilst the properties situated outside the *Zamindary* and Reserved forest boundaries and held directly from the Government were *Khalsa* property. The *Zamindaries* were well-defined domains that were owned by leaders known as *Zaminidars*, who had a princely or feudal rank. In Sambalpur district, there were sixteen *Zamindary* estates spanning a total area of 1,791 square miles (Ranjan, 1994, p.23). The *Zamindary* system may be traced back to ancient times when tribal chiefs of Gond and Binjhals split the area among themselves. Historical data indicates that this stem was popular before to the British occupation. At the period, *Zamindars* had proprietary administrative rights over their estates in exchange for a minor tribute known as *Tikoli* and military services to the then-rajahs of princely kingdoms (Sujatha, 1984, p.31). Furthermore, some classes of village servants or village service tenants were awarded rent-free *Jagiri* lands in exchange for their community work. *Jhakar*(village priest), *Gond Choukidar* (village watchman), *Nariha* (water-carrier), *Nagi*(clerk), *Kumbhar*(potter), *Lohara*(blacksmith), *Bhandari* (barber), and *Dhoba* were among them (washer man). Of fact, the majority of these *Jagiri* territories were occupied by *Jhakars* and *Gond Choukidars* as long as they performed their regular obligations. Following independence, numerous Acts removed the above-mentioned system of land tenure, taxation, and administration (Sujatha, 1984, p.40). 1. *Zamindari* estates under *Zamindars*, 2. *Kharposhdar* estates under *Kharposhdars*, 3. *Umrahi* Tenures under *Umrahs*, 4. *Thekedari* Tenures under *Thekedars* and *Gauntias*, 5. *Gauntiai* Tenures under the *Garhtias* (the village chief), 6. *Pattadar* and *Sub-Pattadar* Tenures, 7. *Maupi* Tenures (for rent free *Maupi* village for certain families called *Maupidars* who rendered certain services to the Rulers and the community-kinds of *Maupi-Debottar*, *Brahmotar*, *Naukaran*, *Khorak-poshak*, *Bahuan*, *Sindur tike* *Ardha Jama*, *Mrutahpanchakdan*). *Rayati* holdings for different class of *Rayati* tenants as given below:-Occupancy tenants, Ordinary tenants, Under tenants, Bhogra tenants, Sikkim *Rayats*, *Thika* tenants, *Maupi* tenants, *Jagiri* tenures for village service tenants for the various village servants mentioned earlier, other service tenants(Sujatha, 1984, p.42).

#### 4.3. Occupations of Gonds

Sample survey of 110 Gond household comprising 224 working population (18-60 years age group) in Boden Block of Nuapada district reveals the following occupational Pattern. Agricultural labour, weaving and cultivation are the three main occupation pursued by the mass of Gond population. Of the 324 working persons 200 persons are engaged in agricultural labour, 100 in weaving and 45 in cultivation. The general observation is that agricultural labour including cultivation has become the primary source of livelihood for the majority of the Gonds and the weaving which was formerly their primary occupation has been relegated to the position of secondary occupation(Senapati and Mahanti,1971, p.88).

#### 3.4. Agriculture

The survey in the 500 Gond household's shows that, about one third of them are 310 households possess land and the remaining two third is 190 households are landless who primarily depend upon wage earning as agricultural labourers for their livelihood. Further, a majority of land owning households (60 out of 67) possess small and marginal land holding-the size varying between less than 1 acre and 2 acres. The remaining six households possess land above 2.5 acres (Ahluwalia, 2000, p.12). In the practical observation made by the present scholar was found that 80 percent to 85 percent of the Gond people were working in the agricultural field for the production of paddy, sugarcane, *Mandia*, *Maka*, onion, potato, etc.

#### 4.5. Types of Lands of Gond Areas

Taking into account the factors like the location, soil type, fertility, yield, drainage, kinds of crops grown and irrigation facilities the lands may be classified into several types. The characteristic features of each type of land are given in the table (*District Statistical Handbook, Nuapada, 2015.p.125*). A part from the above categories of land there are certain kind of plots called *Pan Baraj* in which *Pan* (betel leaves) are grown. The *Ata* and *Mal* areas are dry lands and the *Berna* and *Bahal* are wet lands. The *Bari Bercha* and *Bagicha* are more fertile than *Ata* and *Mal* uplands because they are either close to the village sit or lie in the backyard. Land located in such place receives water mixed with manure drained from Village Street (Datt, 2011, pp.70-81). For their reasons the sale value of the uplands is much less than that of the other categories of lands. In 1882 it was ascertained that an acre of upland fetched a price which varied from Rs 5000/ to Rs.6000/-. But corresponding value of *Berna* and *Bahal* for the same unit of land was from Rs 15,000/ to 20,000/. The *Ata* and *Mal* type of lands generally have coarse sandy soil which is dependent on rainfall and moisture. It is suitable for growing pulses and ground nuts, which are less dependent on moisture and rainfall. The term *Mal* means terraced slopes to arrest surface drainage and soil erosion (Datt, 2011, p.82). The *Berna* and *Bahal* are by far the best and the most fertile lands. These lands mostly comprise of soft clay loam. The *Berna* means the land surrounding the bottom of depression while the term *Bahal* denotes the flat land at the bottom of depression or drainage line. Both the types of land due to their location advantage receive good surface drainage, irrigation and manure and hence, are free from crop failure. The *Bahal* and *Berna* are the best wet land most suitable for paddy cultivation (Datt, 2011, p.84).

#### 4.6. Cropping Pattern

The principal crop grown by the Gonds is paddy. Besides, various kinds of pulses, cereals, oilseeds and vegetables are also cultivated by them according to the suitability of land and agro climate conditions.

#### 4.7. Paddy

Paddy is the staple crop of the Gonds of Nuapada district. There are numerous local varieties of paddy cultivated in the area. For this reason there is a proverb "there are as many varieties of paddy as the name of human beings but one less" some important varieties of paddy and the types of land in which they are grown are listed in the table.

#### 4.8. Varieties of paddy and Types of Land in which grown

The cultivation of paddy starts before the month of June. The field is ploughed at least once and prepared for sowing before monsoon breaks. The seed is sown by broadcast. However, sometimes the method of transplantation is adopted. If the seeds are sown under dry conditions before the onset of rains it is called *Kardi* sowing. This kind of sowing is feasible in the low lying lands and sandy uplands. The land has to be deeply ploughed by repeated tilling for *Kardi* sowing the crops ripe earlier by this kind of sowing. However, chances of success depend upon the rains (Datt, 2011, p.83).

Weeding operation in paddy fields starts after the plants grow to a height of 4 to 5 inches. It usually takes place in the month of July-August. Ploughing is done prior to sowing in summer months after one or two occasional heavy showers of rain. Such types of paddy as *Kuliha*, *Kalasa*, *Harisankar*, *Bad-Bunde* and *Sun-bunde* which are early ripeners are harvested in the month of October-November and thereafter the *Sarad* types of paddy which were late ripened are harvested by the month of November and December. In the irrigated area the paddy lands are utilized for a second crop is the *Dulua* paddy. *Pusa*, *Arnapurna*, *Parijatak*, *Kuliha*, *Kaling*, *Jaya*, *Padma*, *Taichung*, *Rtna*, *Jagannath* are the names of various kinds of *Dalua* paddy, cultivated by the Gonds (Datt, 2011, p.86). These are improved and high-yielding varieties recently adopted by the Gonds. Besides paddy other cereal crops like wheat, maize, *Ragi*, and *Suan* are also grown in small scale by the Gonds in the hilly areas of Nuapada district.

#### 4.9. Pulses

The Gonds of Nuapada grow different kinds of pulses namely, *Biri* (black gram), *Moong* (green gram), *Kulthi*, *khesari*, *Chana* and *Arhar*, Except *Biri* which is grown in *Khariff* season, other pulses are Rabi crops. The land is ploughed two or three time and levelled with a manures are applied seed are sown in these rows and then the land ploughed to cover up the seeds and manure *Biri* and *Kulthi* are sown in August and harvested in December. *Moog* is sown in September and ripened in February. *Biri* and *Kulthi Arhar* is sown in June and harvested in February (Shah, 1982, p.58).

#### 4.10. Oil Seeds

The important oil seeds grown by the Gonds are the sesame (till), groundnut, castor and mustard. *Tel* is the principal oil seed grown by them in large scale. It is usually cultivated in uplands and virgin soils. Groundnut is cultivated as a *Sheriff* as well as a Rabi crop. Castor is grown in small scale and mustard is grown as a Rabi crop.

#### 4.11. Sugarcane

Sugarcane is major cash crop in the Gond community areas of the Sambalpur, Kalahandi, Balangir and Nuapada, district. The *Bercha* fields lying along the river banks are extensively used for sugarcane cultivation. *Tandi*, *Bangla* and *Khari* are the important varieties of sugarcane grown in these areas. Particularly the *Khari* variety is most popular since it needs little irrigation and yields more juice that makes sugar of finer quality. Sugarcane is grown both as a *Khariff* and Rabi crop. It is generally planted in March-April and harvested in December. Sugarcane is pressed in bullock driven small cast iron mills either possessed or hired by the cultivator (*District Statistical Handbook, Nuapada, 2015, p.245*).

#### 4.12. Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are grown by the Gonds in small scale in the well-manured irrigated uplands especially in *Bari*, *Barch* and *Bagicha* type of lands. Some of the vegetables grown by the Gonds are *Brinjal*, potato, cabbage, cauliflower, tomato, sweet potato, pumpkin, ladies finger, arum, onion, garlic and chilly. Potato is grown in winter after harvesting *Khariff* crops.

#### 4.13. Manual Labour

The large section of the Gond population is found living by engaging themselves in different kinds of manual labour. Following the decline of their traditional occupation of weaving, a sizeable bulk of the Gond population who are mostly landless, poor, unskilled and resource less, have resorted to hard manual labour both in farm and non-farm activities in order to keep their body and soul together (Majumder, Dec. 2018, pp.98-103).

#### 4.14. Agricultural Labour

The most common and the largest single occupation of the Gond is agricultural labour. The survey shows that out of a total of 250 working persons 120 persons have taken up this occupation as their primary occupation and the remaining 68 as their secondary occupation. There are two classes of agricultural labourers found in the Gond areas such as casual or daily labourers, locally called *Bhutia* and contractual labourer known as *Guti* or *Halia*. The contractual labourers appointed by the prosperous and well-to-do land owners remain attached to their landlord's house for a specific period of time as per the terms and conditions of the contract. Their wages or remunerations which are determined by the local traditions vary from place to place. The contractual labourers according to their respective conditions of

employment may be distinguished into three sub-classes locally known as (1) *Guti* or *Halia*, (2) *Buthia* and (3) *Khamar* (Deogaonkar, 1994, pp.64-68).

The wages and remuneration of the *Guti* varies from place to place. It is a general order to appoint a *Guti*, the employer advances some money to the *Guti* as earnest money which the latter is to pay back to his employer without interest at the termination of his service contract. Until the advance is paid back fully and in case he violates this contract the advance money is realized from him with interest charged at the rate of 55% per annum. This contractual payment in advance of earnest money to the *Guti* is locally called *Bahabandha* and it has the effect of forcing the *Guti* to render his services unbroken throughout the contractual period in the sample of Gond households covered in the survey, there was one male *Guti* who was working for a *Kulta* family (Bhattacharya, 2001. p.43). In the pre-independence period the *Guti* in Nuapada usually paid monthly wages at the rate of 50 seers of paddy plus an annual harvest bonus of 3 S, ( $2\frac{1}{1}$  *Manas*) of paddy at the time of harvest and four pieces of cloth on festive occasions in a year. During hot summer months the *Guti* was getting a piece of cloth to protect his head from the Sun. at the time of crisis and need is on occasion of death, birth and marriage, etc. In the Sinapali area, the *Guti* besides getting prescribed monthly wages in kinds of paddy was rewarded with 8 to 9 mounds of paddy as Nistar or Barta (harvest bonus) and three pieces of the cloth annually. Supplementary allowances like pol and Liakhia for Madden operations and four pieces of cloths per annum, his monthly wages included 60 to 64 seers of paddy. An old experienced and faithful *Guti* was also enjoying certain additional privileges. Sometimes, his master used to allot him one or two plots of arable land up to an acre for self cultivation in lieu of the harvest bonus, which enhanced the income of the *Guti* and often enables him to purchase and possess small plots of farm lands (Chaudhuri, 1992,p.65). In Balangir, Nuapada and Kalahandi the average wage rates for a *Guti* or *Halia* prior to independence was in kind of 4 to 5 *Khandi* ( $1\frac{1}{4}$  mounds) of paddy per menses along with the harvest bonus 4 to 7 Kg. of paddy, for each operation, 3 to 4 pieces of clothes and other supplementary allowances. The *Guti* was also entitled to get a small share of sugarcane, pulses and oilseeds harvested by the landlords. In the present time the wages and service conditions of the *Guti* or *Halia* have been revised and improved (Kharc, 1991.p.87).

#### 4.15. Non-farm Activities of Gonds

Other than the economic activities related to agriculture and weaving, the Gond also resorts to various other pursuits involving unskilled and semi-skilled labour. However there is no distinct division between the workers with respect to various occupations. The situation of employment in the rural area is flexible and insecure. This leads to occupational mobility of the workers. The weavers, cultivators sometimes take up wage earning through agricultural and non-agricultural labour (Bailey, 1959, p.67). In the slack seasons when the Gonds do not find work in agricultural sector, they try to seek employment in non-agricultural sector. They may work under local contractors in construction and maintenance of roads, buildings, bridges dams and canals in forest and soil conservation operation or may engage themselves in earthwork either inside or outside their villages. Some Gond workers also engage themselves in semi-skilled works such as brick making, tile-making, mining and quarrying, transport and carriage masonry, carpentry, mat-making and small business (Sachida, 1992.p.89).

#### 4.16. Division of Labour and Cooperation

In the Gond society, an idler is looked down upon. He does not make a good husband. A man does not want to give his daughter or sister in marriage to an idler. On the other hand a man seeks for a strong and energetic girl to marry his son so that his daughter-in-law can help her husband in daily toil and hard manual work (Vidyarthi, 1986. p.90).

The daily routine of activities starts from very early morning. Both the man and his wife in a Gond house get up when the cock crows in the morning. They wash their faces and finish their morning ablutions (Thakur, 1986. p.12). After breakfast which comprises either tea or puffed rice cooked overnight and kept

immersed in water, the man leaves home for work. His wife gets busy in household chores like cleaning the house, courtyard, cattle shed, and cleaning the post and utensils fetching water, husking paddy and cooking food. By the time he returns home after work it is soon and sometimes afternoon and he sits down for taking his food. On some days he has to go back to his work in the afternoon and come back in the evening. During harvest he works day and night for a number of days and after the harvest he takes rest for one or two days (Rajak, 2016, pp.79-85). During busy agricultural season all adult members help each other and work together. They work in their field for the whole day either in double shifts or in long single shifts as required. Men plough and level the fields and sow the seeds while women transplant the seedlings and do the weeding. Harvesting is done by both men and women and the children are sent out to collect firewood, dry leaves and cow dung to be used as fuel. In the evening after the days toil men from different household gather in groups and spend the time in smoking *Bidi* and chit-chatting which one another. During this time women keep themselves busy in cooking meals and attending to other domestic works. Between 7 PM to 8 PM the people of Gond area starts taking their meals. Men and young children are given food first and women are the last to take food in every household (Rajak, 2016, p.86). After food which is generally over by 8 P.M. people go to bed from place to place according to the local conditions. The village watchman in the earlier dispensation used to come invariably from the Gond tribe. But the Gonds of today no longer want to take up the service of watchman as they consider it a work of inferior status and low prestige (Rajak, 2016, p.88).

#### 4.17. Occupational Mobility of Gonds

The occupational mobility among the Gonds is limited within the scope of the rural economy. Due to their low socio-economic status, poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and social discrimination the Gonds are properly equipped to take up modern economic pursuits corresponding to the change in the time and circumstances. Hence, they have no other alternative but to follow what their fore-fathers were doing. In the study area considerable conservatism is marked in the matter of adopting some new Occupation. As evident from the occupational pattern and activities discussed earlier, traditional occupations like agriculture, wage-earning and weaving still continues to be their major economic activities although such activities are not profitable (Dash, January-2020, pp.54-57). The Gonds hold the view that a change in the occupation involves risk as well as strain in course of getting used to new kind of activity. Achievement motivation which is a gateway to the adoption of occupational innovation is almost conspicuous by its absence in the Gond society. As a result very small percentage the Gond population have changed from their ancestral occupations to such occupations as masonry, rickshaw pulling, cycle repairing, brick-making, etc. however, the earlier observations made in other places show that caste barriers standing in the way of economic reforms are slowly breaking down with the spread of education and new opportunities (Dash, 2020, p.60).

#### V. Conclusion

Thus, it is known from the above discussion that the economic management of Gond tribe of Nuapada district is poor due to their backwardness. In the practical observation it was found that 80 percent to 85 percent of the Gond people were working in the agricultural field for the production of paddy, sugarcane, *Mandia*, *Maka*, onion, potato, etc. The poor Gond people of the Boden Block of Nuapada district adopt some occupations like agricultural labour, weaving and cultivation. These three main occupations are perused by the Gond people of Nuapada. The Gonds of Kumna Block of Nuapada district are mostly depending upon the forest products of that area. Now-a-days some Gonds of other Blocks are found to be connected with the traditional method of the livelihoods or collection of the varieties of forest resources. Their economic and intuitional arrangements have adjusted to natural and technological differences. The large section of the Gond people is found to be engaged themselves in different kinds of manual labour works. Following the decline of their traditional occupation of weaving, a sizeable people of the Gond tribe of Nuapada who are mostly landless, poor, unskilled and resource less, have resorted to hard manual labour

both in farm and non-farm activities in order to keep their body and soul together. The occupational mobility among the Gonds is limited within the scope of the rural economy. Due to their poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and social discrimination, the Gonds are not properly equipped to take up modern economic pursuits corresponding to the change in the time and circumstances. Hence, they have no other alternative but to follow what their fore-fathers were doing. The Gond people resented adopting anything other than own traditional weaving methods in such a situation, they had no choice but to rely on agricultural labour and the daily wage. As a result, the number of wage earners increased beyond what was required in the area. Moreover, natural calamities causing drought, flood and crop failure often made the situation worse, adversely affecting these poor landless agricultural labourers by creating a situation of crisis of non-availability of wage labour in the country side. As a result, many Gond families left homes and moved to urban and industrial centers in search of employment. There they worked as unskilled labourers, rickshaw pullers, domestic servants, petty traders, and the like, and are known as *Saharia* Gonds. The Gonds hold the view that a change in the occupation involves risk as well as strain in course of getting used to new kind of activity. However, there is no distinct division between the workers with respect to various occupations. Actually, the economic life of Gonds of Nuapada of Odisha is really based on agriculture, forest goods, migrated labour and other works. On the whole, the economic management system of the Gonds of Nuapada district is very significant to know the economic structure of the one tribal community of the state of Odisha in India.

### Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with grateful thanks to Prof. D.K. Behera, Vice Chancellor, Prof. H. K. Satapathy, Former Vice Chancellor, Dr. P. K. Routray, Registrar and Dr. Priyoneel Basu, the Director of Research, KISS, Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha for their suggestion and encouragement at the time of writing of this article.

We also acknowledge with gratefulness to **Professor. Achyuta Samanta**, the Hon'ble Founder of KISS, Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar for his encouragement in the writing of this article.

### References

1. Ahluwalia, Harjet, (2000). "Empowerment of women an Economic", in *Agenda, Yojana Vol-8, Aug, Publication Division, ministry of I & B, Block-4, Level-7 Puram New Delhi*.
2. Basu. A. R., (1985). *Tribal Development Programme and Administration in India, National Book Organization, publication, New Delhi*.
3. Beine David Karl, (1994). *A Socio-linguistic Survey of the Gondi-speaking Communities of Central India. Published, select Book Service Syndicate New Delhi*.
4. Bhattacharya, N. N., (2001). *Ancient India Rituals and Their Social Contents. Manohar Book Series,2-Dariyaganga, Ansari Road, New Delhi*.
5. Chaudhuri, Buddbadeb, (1992). *Tribal Transformation in India: Socio-Economic and Ecological Development, Vol. 2, Inter-India Publications, New Delhi*.
6. Dash, Bijayalaxmi,(January-2020). "Socio-Cultural Transformation of Kharia Tribes", in *International Journal of Research and Review (ijrrjournal.com) 320 Vol.7; (1)*.
7. Datt, Tara, ed., (2011), *Odisha District Gazetteers Nuapada, General Administration Department, Government of Odisha, Cuttack*.
8. Deogaonkar, S. G., (1994). *Tribal Administration and Development, (with Ethnographic Profiles of Selected Tribes) first published. Concept Publishing Company: New Delhi*.
9. Devendra Thakur, (1986). *Socio-Economic Development of Tribes in India, Deep and Deep Publishers, New Delhi*.
10. *District Statistical Handbook, Nuapada, (2015). Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Bhubaneswar, Odisha*.

11. Kharc, P.K.,(1991). *Social Change of Indian Tribes. Impact of Planning and Economic Development*, New Delhi.
12. Maharana, A. K., (2004). *Collection and Sale of Minor Forest Produce Among the Tribes of Orissa, A Socio-Structural and Economic Analysis*, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI), Bhubaneswar.
13. Majumder, Arup, (Dec.2018). "Problems of Tribal Education in India: A Study from a Village of Jharkhand, West Bengal", in *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Analysis*, Vol. 1 Issue 2.
14. Mohapatra, K., (2004). "Tribal Language of Orissa," in *Tribe of Orissa*, SCSTRTI, Orissa Govt. Press, Cuttack.
15. Nag, D. S., (1958). *Tribal Economy, An Economic study of the Baiga*, Bharatiya Adimajati Sevak Sangh, New Delhi.
16. Ota, A. B. , (2010). *Dimension of Tribal Education in Orissa*, Publication of and ST/SC Research Institute, Bhubaneswar.
17. Patnaik, N., (2005). *Primitive Tribes of Orissa, and Their Development Strategies*, D.K. Print World (P) Ltd, New Delhi.
18. Rajak, Jyoti , (2016). "Nutritional and Socio-Economic Status of Saharia, Tribes in Madhya Pradesh", in *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Volume 6, Number 1. Research India Publication.
19. Sachida, Nanda, (1992). "Structural Constraints in the Education of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes", in B. Chaudhuri (ed.), *Tribal Transformation in India: Socio Economic and Ecological Development*, Vol.4, Inter-India Publications, New Delhi.
20. Senapati, N. and Kuanr, D.C., eds.,(1980). *Kalahandi District Gazetteer*, Orissa Government Press, Cuttack.
21. Senapati, N. and Mahanti. B. C., eds., (1971). *Orissa District Gazetteer, Sambalpur*, Government Press, Cuttack.
22. Shah, V.P., (1982). *The Educational Problems of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe School and College Students in India*, Allied. Published, New Delhi.
23. Sujatha, K., (1984). "Asharam Schools for Tribal Children," in *New Frontiers in Education*, Vol. XVII, No. 40, New Delhi.
24. Vidyarthi, L. P., (1986). "The Cultural Factors in Development Process", in L. P., Vidyarthi (ed) , *Tribal Development and Its Administration*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.
25. White Read, H. (1995). *The Village God of South India*, Cosmo Publication, 24-B, Ansari Road, New Delhi.

Corresponding Email: [hutasanmajhi999@gmail.com](mailto:hutasanmajhi999@gmail.com) [ratnakarmohapatra2017@gmail.com](mailto:ratnakarmohapatra2017@gmail.com)