

# CONCEPTS AND METHODS

BA [Tribal Studies]

Paper I



**RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY**

Arunachal Pradesh, INDIA - 791 112

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## About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.



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# SYLLABI-BOOK MAPPING TABLE

## Concepts and Methods

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Syllabi	Mapping in Book
<b>Unit I: Definitions and Scope</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Introduction to Tribal Studies: Nature, Scope, Relevance and Relationship with other Disciplines.</li><li>(b) Concepts and Categories: Tribes and Indigenous People; Use of the Terms in India: Scheduled Tribes, Primitive Tribes, De-notified or Ex-criminal Tribes in India.</li></ul>	<b>Unit 1: Definitions and Scope</b> <b>(Pages 3-41)</b>
<b>Unit II: Tribal Studies in India</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Emergence and Growth</li><li>(b) Approaches to Study the Tribes</li></ul>	<b>Unit 2: Tribal Studies in India</b> <b>(Pages 43-78)</b>
<b>Unit III: Social Structure and Process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Structure, Function and Organisation</li><li>(b) Social Mobility: Types, Tribe and Caste, Tribe-Caste-Peasant Continuum and Sanskritization</li><li>(c) Social Processes: Tribalisation, Detribalisation and Re-tribalisation</li></ul>	<b>Unit 3: Social Structure and Process</b> <b>(Pages 79-104)</b>
<b>Unit IV: Fieldwork Tradition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Historical Background and Significance of Fieldwork</li><li>(b) Ethics of Fieldwork</li><li>(c) Etic and Emic Perspectives</li></ul>	<b>Unit 4: Fieldwork Tradition in Tribal Studies</b> <b>(Pages 105-132)</b>
<b>Unit V: Collection of Data</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) Methods and Methodology</li><li>(b) Quantitative and Qualitative Research</li><li>(c) Tools and Techniques: Survey and Sampling, Observation, Interview, Case Study, Genealogies, Participatory and Focused Group Discussions</li><li>Sources of Data: Primary and Secondary Sources</li></ul>	<b>Unit 5: Collection of Data</b> <b>(Pages 133-190)</b>

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# INTRODUCTION

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The tribal people are rich in cultural heritage and skill of art and craft but they are still marginalized in respect to higher education as well as in other walks of life. In the present age of globalization the world has shrunk into a village as the society has advanced in technology. But the tribes, who are the custodians of Indian culture in the real sense, are far behind in this race of advancement.

The greatest challenge that the Government of India has been facing since independence is the proper provision of social justice to the scheduled tribe people, by ameliorating their socio-economic conditions. Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and de-notified tribes constitute the weakest section of India's population, from the ecological, economic and educational angles. They constitute the matrix of India's poverty. Though the tribal community are the sons of the same soil and the citizens of the same country, they are born and grow as the children of nature. From the historical point of view, they have been subjected to the worst type of social exploitation. They are practically deprived of many civic facilities and isolated from modern and civilized way of living since so many centuries.

The British rulers really did something in providing certain facilities in villages and towns such as, education, transport, communication, medical etc. though inadequate and mainly with self-interest. But it did nothing for ameliorating the socio-economic conditions of tribal people, except to the people in North-East region of the country, because of certain reasons. First, the British administrators thought it expedient generally to leave the tribal community alone, as the task of administration in the hill areas was difficult and costly. Second, it was considered desirable to keep away the tribal community from possible political influence from the world outside. Third, some of the British officers genuinely felt that left to themselves, the tribal people would remain a happier lot. The Scheduled District Act of 1956 had, therefore, kept most of these areas administratively separate, the same situation was allowed to continue under the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935. However, post-independence this policy was abandoned and new policies of tribal development and integration were initiated. The Constitution of India has made definite provisions for the welfare and upliftment of the tribal people throughout the country.

There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies. In recent years, national and international funding agencies (ICSSR, UGC, UNESCO, Ford Foundation) have been funding researches to study tribal culture and life. Tribal studies has assumed an interdisciplinary commitment over the last several decades.

This book, *Concepts and Methods*, is written in a self-instructional format and is divided into five units. Each unit begins with an *Introduction* to the topic followed by an outline of the *Unit objectives*. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with *Check Your Progress* questions to test the reader's understanding of the topic. A list of *Questions and Exercises* is also provided at the end of each unit, and includes short-answer as well as long-answer questions. The *Summary* and *Key Terms* section are useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

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# UNIT 1 DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

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## Structure

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- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction to Tribal Studies
  - 1.2.1 Relevance
  - 1.2.2 Nature
  - 1.2.3 Scope
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- 1.9 Further Reading

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

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India has the largest tribal population in comparison to any other country in the world. According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of tribes in India is nearly 104.3 million with a sex ratio of 990 per thousand. They constitute an important segment of the Indian population and account for nearly 8.6 per cent of the total population of India. Their literacy percentage is recorded at 58.96 per cent. Except for Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Union Territories of Chandigarh and Puducherry, they are present in all the states and Union Territories of India. This does not mean that there are no tribes in these places. Every year hundreds of tribal students move to Delhi to join the Delhi University for higher education. What it means is that there are no tribal communities native to these places. Tribes occupy around 15 per cent of the total geographical area and are mostly located in the hills, forests and other relatively inaccessible places. Many tribal areas are very rich in natural resources like flora, minerals deposits and natural water bodies.

The term tribe is used for a very diverse set of communities, each of which is different from the other. They show wide diversity in terms of their cultural practices, social organizations, occupations, levels of literacy, languages, physical characteristics, degree of acquired traits, demographic characteristics and levels of economic development. Some, like the Khasis and the Garos of Meghalaya, are matrilineal while the Nagas and most of the tribes from Central India, like the Mundas and the Oraons, are strongly

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patrilineal. All the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are also patrilineal. Polygyny i.e. socially approved union of one man with two or more women is accepted among the Varlis of Dadar and Nagar Havelli, and Nishis and Adis of Arunachal Pradesh, while polyandry i.e. socially approved union of one female with more than one man was known to be prevalent among the Todas of Tamil Nadu and the Monpas of Arunachal Pradesh.

A literacy rate of more than 90 per cent is reported among the Mizos and the tribes of Lakshadweep while tribes like the Chenchus and Cholanaiken have around 1 per cent literacy. The lowest literacy rate is recorded among the tribes of Uttar Pradesh (0.06 per cent). Tribes like the Gonds and Bhumijas happened to establish a dynastic role for some time in the history of India. The Khamptis of Arunachal Pradesh, a Buddhist tribe, also ruled the Sadiya outpost of the Ahom kingdom during the first part of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Meenas from Rajasthan have a large representation in government jobs, others like the Kochuvelans and the Koragas of Tamil Nadu or the Puroiks of Arunachal Pradesh have negligible presence. Why do we still call all of them as tribes? How are they different from other communities? What are the important cultural characteristics of these communities and how are these communities different from others? This unit attempts to answer some of these questions. We shall begin with the relevance of tribal studies and then proceed to understand the concept of tribe and how it evolved in anthropology. Thereafter, we will see how tribes are defined in the Indian context.

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### 1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Discuss the nature and scope of tribal studies
- Describe the importance of studying tribes in the present context
- Assess the relationship between tribal studies and other disciplines
- Explain the debate on the use of the terms tribe and indigenous people
- Analyse the terms used in India to refer to the tribal communities like Scheduled Tribes, Primitive Tribal Groups and De-notified Tribes

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### 1.2 INTRODUCTION TO TRIBAL STUDIES

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Tribal studies have been a matter of interest since the late sixteenth century. It was around this time that the Western world came to know of communities and cultures which were very different from them. The study of tribal communities commenced with anthropologists' interest in the study of '**other cultures**'. Anthropology as a discipline emerged with the study of tribes. In the initial years, anthropologists were mainly interested in understanding and explaining tribal communities.

With time, the discipline of anthropology got diversified. Besides studying the tribes, anthropologists now also study the various aspects related to non-tribes and humankind in general. Therefore, we have civilizational studies, village studies, ecological anthropology, psychological anthropology, urban studies, medical anthropology and many more areas of study under the discipline of anthropology. At the same time, scholars from other disciplines like sociology, economics, history, political science, education, ecology, law, botany, zoology and literature also take an interest in the study of tribes. Scholars from these diverse disciplines have enriched the understanding of tribes through

their theoretical perspectives. In contemporary times, there is an inter-disciplinary convergence in the study of the tribes. However, the contribution of anthropologists in tribal studies remains the foremost. This is because it was due to the account of anthropologists that tribal culture and practices which were once thought to be weird, bizarre, primitive and irrational were shown to be meaningful, scientific, rational and contextually relevant. It was their accounts which brought about the much deserved respect for tribal cultures and institutions in the Western world.

Studies on tribes have contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics. The origin and growth of anthropology—more precisely social (cultural) anthropology—has its roots in tribal studies. The holistic approach to study a phenomenon, comparative methods to study cultures, understanding religion as syncretism, micro studies to understand the essence of ‘human-nature-super-nature’ relationship, all have come from the study of tribes. Tribal studies have given a perspective to appreciate diversity and pluralism. Besides, emic-etic debate in academics, substantivist and formalist approaches to study economics, understanding social categories as acephalous (society without a head; democratic societies for example) and cephalous (society with a head), are offshoots of tribal studies. K. S. Singh (1991) informs us that ‘the studies of the tribes have considerably enriched our understanding of Indian pluralism. At a time when everything appeared well and harmonious in the 1950s and 1960s, it was the study of the tribal societies that made us aware of our diversities.’

There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies. In recent years, national and international funding agencies (ICSSR, UGC, UNESCO, Ford Foundation) have been funding researches to study tribal culture and life.

### 1.2.1 Relevance

Tribal studies have been relevant in many ways. In the seventeenth century, studies on tribes commenced with the aim to understand them as a representative of the earlier stage of human civilization. They were seen as social fossils and by studying them it was recognized that it was possible to reconstruct the past of human society and culture. Seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were also the era of expansion of Western colonization. Many of the tribal areas of Africa, America and South East Asia came under the control of colonial powers. With this, there was an urgent need for understanding the tribal communities for governing them. Therefore, the colonial power promoted the tribal studies with the ostensible objective to serve the administrative interests. However, anthropologists like Evans-Pritchard, Radcliffe-Brown, Max Gluckman and Lucy Mair, who undertook these studies, did not restrict themselves to serving the interest of the colonial government. They carried out detailed and exhaustive fieldwork to satisfy their academic and intellectual curiosity. Their efforts have contributed immensely to academic debates and broadened our understanding of many social phenomena.

With the end of colonialism, tribal studies acquired a different set of objectives. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns. In India, for example, the approach shifted to the welfare and development of tribal communities, rather than the colonial approach to keep them isolated. Tribal studies have been conducted to understand these communities better. A better understanding of the tribal society has become essential to prepare programmes of planned change and development in accordance with their own values and practices.

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With the passage of time, there has been a change in the paradigm of tribal studies. In the initial phases of post-colonial era, the objective was the welfare of tribal societies. Now, we talk about the welfare of non-tribal societies through the knowledge obtained from studying tribal societies. The tribal societies are seen as knowledge societies. They are viewed as sources of new ideas and innovation. The tribal art and craft objects are of great demand in cities and urban places. The tribes' knowledge of local herbs and medicines are considered to be of immense value by the practitioners of modern biomedicine. Their relationships to their ecology, and their lifestyles are often cited as models of sustainable living. Many people feel that it is essential to incorporate tribal ethos and values to overcome many of the problems besetting contemporary non-tribal societies. The knowledge derived from the study of tribal societies can go a long way in improving 'others' (i.e. non-tribals) way of life.

The tribal studies have provided a holistic understanding of social phenomena in contrast to an atomistic, fragmented understanding fostered by the Western system of knowledge. The reductionist approach of the West has promoted more and more specialized studies. It has promoted a specialized and partial understanding of societal reality. A tribal society does not manifest a segregated and isolated characteristic of a social phenomenon. In matters of selection of a plot for shifting cultivation, the people perform rituals according to their faiths and beliefs. The Adis, propitiate Kine Nane, the goddess of wealth in *Uning-Aaran* festival for good harvest. Like the Adis, all tribes believe in a deity of crops. For example, in many tribal societies, economic activities are closely tied to religion. Similarly, the same person can play the role of a medical specialist and religious specialist in another situation. The study of tribal societies has underlined how all the aspects of social life are integrated. Hence, no aspect of life can be studied in isolation. It has reiterated the significance of a holistic understanding of society and social phenomenon.

The methodology of holistic understanding derived from tribal studies has also made its impact on other disciplines. The contemporary trend in social sciences is of inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary understanding of social phenomenon. This is best exemplified in the case of the concept of development. Earlier, the concept of development was considered in terms of economic development only. This understanding was again based on specialized disciplinary boundary. Therefore, economic development could not bring about development in other aspects of life. Moreover, it could not be equitable. Today, the concept of development is not restricted to economic development; it includes human, social and cultural development also. As we are developing a holistic outlook to understand humankind and related issues, it is but natural to know the sources which have given such an outlook. Moreover, no community today exists in isolation; all have been exposed to forces of development to different degrees. This means, the tribal communities are also in transition. The traditional tribal society exposed to modern forces, which are more specialized, faces challenges of accommodation between holistic and specialized ideas. It is in this context that tribal studies bear greater significance.

**1.2.2 Nature**

The knowledge system pertaining to tribal studies so far has not been recognized as a separate discipline. However, it has been emerging as a discipline of inter-disciplinary nature. Interest in tribal studies, no doubt, has evolved into the discipline of anthropology. But anthropology is no more the study of the tribes alone. At the same time, there are other disciplines in social sciences and life sciences which take interest in the study of the tribes giving it an inter-disciplinary status.



Presently, no societies including the tribal societies are static. They have been exposed to external forces of change in different degrees. Hence, the tribal societies in particular are in transitional phases. The tribal studies have been emerging as a discipline focusing on the study of social dynamics of tribal societies.

As mentioned earlier, scholars from various disciplines take interest in tribal studies. This interest is mainly academic in nature. But the governmental and non-governmental organizations also have taken to tribal studies from the perspective of development. Their interest lies in action research to evolve development schemes and to get a feedback for policy formulation and planning the development of tribes in a better way. No doubt tribal studies promote researches which are both fundamental and action oriented. Besides, the laboratory experiment has been linked to the tribal studies especially in the study of ethno-medicine by the scholars from life sciences.

We are aware that tribal studies began with the outsiders' interest. They study the tribes from their own perspective. But over the years there are scholars from the tribes also. Clearly, the interest in tribal studies no more remains in the domain of outside scholars. It is being pursued by both outsiders and indigenous scholars and from this trend of studies we get new insights into the tribal studies. Briefly, we allocate the nature of tribal studies as a discipline in the following way:

- It studies the changes as societies are transitional.
- It is inter-disciplinary in the use of methodology and disciplinary perspectives.
- Tribal studies' research has gone beyond academic interest as is reflected in the interest of governmental and non-governmental organizations (GOs and NGOs), and therefore, has both academic and non-academic dimensions.
- It includes both theoretical and action researches.
- It is no more the study performed by outsiders; it is taken up by both outside and indigenous scholars.
  - o Major portion of the knowledge is field-study based.
  - o It uses both quantitative and qualitative methods of research.
  - o Approach to tribal studies is of a holistic understanding as opposed to specialized knowledge.

### 1.2.3 Scope

Interest shown in the study of the tribes has gone a long way since its beginning with the colonial interest in these communities. Studies are now taken up for academic interest and also with objectives with policy implications. If we look closely at the subject, we will discover that field study tradition is the predominant approach to study tribes. B. Malinowski, Margaret Mead, A. R. Radcliff-Brown, Raymond Firth, to mention a few, were the pioneers in the field study tradition. But there were also library works on tribes. Mention may be made of Edward Burnett Tylor and his publication on culture and James Frazer and his publication entitled *The Golden Bough*. However, the field study tradition is the essence of tribal studies even today.

As we know, a tribe is a social category like a non-tribal community. There are various aspects of life of non-tribal people. Almost all these aspects are present in tribal communities either in form or in spirit or in both. Hence, the scope of tribal studies is wide like the study of non-tribal communities. A tribal community has a culture, a language, a social organization, an economic pursuit, a system of power and authority, a sense of

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artistic perception and ascetic expression, and many such things. Studies on all these aspects have a vast scope. But studies on non-tribal communities are normally specialized investigation of phenomena. In case of tribal studies, the approach is holistic.

The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes from a cross-cultural perspective. In the former sense, individual tribes are studied in totality or a particular phenomenon relating to the tribe's culture is the focus. The same trend is noticed in case of cross-cultural studies. Two or more tribes are studied either in totality and then compared or one aspect of culture in more than one of the tribes is studied. In recent years, because of the interest of GOs and NGOs, tribal studies are becoming more action oriented. However, the focus is always on the dynamics of tribal societies and more often on various aspects of the social process. As has been said, various disciplines have shown interest in the study of the tribes. Medical practitioners also have started showing interest in the ethno-medicine system. Obviously, the scope of tribal studies is expanding and the discipline is in the making. Its scope can also be understood with its relation to other disciplines. We have discussed it in the following section.

### 1.2.4 Relationship with Other Disciplines

#### (a) Tribal Studies and Life Sciences

The life sciences deal with the evolution of life, taxonomy, physiology of animals and plants, and therefore explain the process of evolution in the case of living objects. Tribal studies carried out by physical anthropologists have close connections with life sciences. They have tried to study the process of physical adaptation and bodily changes it has caused in the process of evolution. They have also studied the disease patterns, anatomy and physiology but not in relation to an individual but as a group. In case of life sciences, the focus is on the individual, while in tribal studies the focus is on the community. There is a great degree of overlapping in tribal studies. In tribal studies, there are many topics especially related to health and medicine having many close associations with life sciences. However, in tribal studies the emphasis is on indigenous knowledge of medicine; a subfield known as ethno-medicine is a popular topic of research in tribal studies. Health is seen not merely as a biological phenomenon but also as a cultural and psychological process. Ethnobotany and ethnomedicine, which concern the tribes, have been emerging as areas of investigation in Botany.

The evolutionary theory applied to the study of tribes and their culture was influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution of life.

#### (b) Tribal Studies and Political Science

Political scientists generally study the nature of the state and the organs of power. They study how in a particular setting distribution of power is ordained. They also study the rules by which the groups struggle for power. Political scientists study the nature of government with special reference to its political executive, judiciary and legislative powers. In tribal studies, the concept of power has been viewed from the social perspective. They have tried to understand the relationship between power and social institutions like kinship and religion. Many tribal societies are without a governing head and are known as acephalous societies. They have tried to determine how order is maintained in such societies without any separate political institutions. The roles of lineage, economic and religious institutions have been explained in resolving conflicts. As far as

the study of power and authority is concerned, political science focuses mostly on literate societies while tribal studies on pre-literate societies. Nevertheless, there are attempts to study the body politics of pre-literate societies using the concepts and theories of political science. For example, political scientists apply the concept of deliberative democracy to understand the decision-making process in tribal village councils. There are also studies in understanding state formation in many tribal communities.

### **(c) Tribal Studies and History**

The tribes may remember their history restricted to only three to four generations. Beyond that it tends to get merged in mythology. Moreover, there are no written records. They have only oral histories. History and historical methods tend to emphasize political and economic history. But many historians are writing about the past of tribal communities. The growth of studies based on oral records is emerging as an important method to study the history of tribal societies. In fact, recognition of the method of oral history has been helping the reconstruction of history of tribal communities. Folklores like legends and myths form the basis for preparing the historiography of non-literate society in general and tribal communities in particular. The concept of ethno-history is emerging as an important branch of knowledge in the discipline of history.

### **(d) Tribal Studies and Economics**

Tribal studies have been focussing on studying tribal economies where one encounters a different kind of economic system. In a tribal economic system, the emphasis is not so much on economic rationality or profit maximization. Tribal markets are not based on the pure market principle of demand and supply. The economic relationships are embedded in social relationships. As a result, they play an important role in economic transactions. Economic theories are based on the theories of maximization of profit. In tribal societies, people give equal importance to social values.

Studies conducted on tribal societies have contributed immensely to the understanding of many economic phenomena. The notion of development is no more confined to the basis of statistical indices like GDP, GNP, per capita income; it is conceived in terms of quality of life, level of aspirations of people and so on. We also talk about development through culture.

When an African chieftain destroys his cattle stock, it seems he is irrational. But he does so with an objective to maximize his satisfaction in terms of his social status corresponding to such an act. There is a principle of maximization guiding human behaviour; in conventional economics it is maximization of material benefit while in tribal communities it is non-material consideration in a cultural context. Tribes, unlike earlier beliefs, produce surplus, but the purpose of the surplus is not in terms of investment, but for earning social prestige, and sometimes using it as a medium of exchange. In both the cases, an economic transaction takes place; in tribal economics it is a barter exchange while in market economics money plays an important role as a medium of exchange. Many economic principles operate in both the economies, but with a difference owing to the difference in the level of technology and perception about maximization. However, tribal (barter) and non-tribal (market) economies have expanded the scope of economics as a discipline and the understanding of economics in a holistic sense. They both are complementary. We know that in recent years tribal economy is being integrated with market economy and national development planning. In recent years, tribal development has emerged as an important area of research in the discipline of economics.

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**(e) Tribal Studies and Sociology**

Tribal studies are closely related to sociology. Earlier, sociologists were only interested in studying urban societies. Their approach was macro and the comparative perspective was absent. But this distinction is fast eroding. This is especially true for sociologists in India. This is because, as we would see later, the distinction between tribe and non-tribe is not so clear in the context of India. Many sociologists are also studying tribes using a micro perspective and through fieldwork. M. N. Srinivas's work among the Coorgs is an apt example. The contributions of sociologists like G. S. Ghurye, A. R. Desai, Andre Beteille, and Virginius Xaxa to our understanding of tribal communities are very significant. The differences are more historical. The only difference is that sociologists study societies other than tribal societies also; and the tribes do not form the main thrust of their study as it happens in tribal studies. Tribal societies are changing rapidly. In fact, all tribal communities are in a transitional phase. Sociologists have developed concepts and theories for studying social change which tribal studies can make use of. Moreover, due to the process of change, tribal communities experience social problems which provide an interesting area of study for field sociologists.

**(f) Tribal Studies and Literature**

Tribal/indigenous literature is emerging as a genre in the field of literature in American Literature, Canadian Literature and Indian Literature. The creative imagination in the tradition of orality often gets expression in the written tradition. The writers of the tribes write down songs, prayers and myths in their dialects or in Roman scripts. The area of ethno poetics is a significant emerging field in literature. The ballads of Nandamma, Liamen, Thulasilamma and many others of the Irular tribe of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala are enriching experiences in ethno poetry. You will find many narratives created in response to endeavours to adjust to transitional social dynamics. The narratives also present exploitative forces which unleash the transitional phase or the personality conflict one encounters. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe narrates the social conflict within his own Igbo tribe of Nigeria. You will also find narratives of exploitation in the transitional phase of tribal society. Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja* is an example of exploitation of the Paraja people during the colonial period. Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, for example, narrates the exploitation of the tribes and their response and struggle against it.

The exploitation and oppression by national governments of the natives in Australia, Canada and other such countries also form the theme of literary narratives. Edwidge Danticat's novel *The Dew Breaker* is a narrative of the sufferings of those Haitians who are believed to be political opponents or disloyal citizens. Lee Maracle's novel *Sundogs* is a narrative of the lives of aboriginal Canadians affected by their struggle for territorial rights. Socio-political, cultural and historical contexts are rich areas of literary creation in changing tribal communities. Feminist writings on the plight of women in patriarchal tribal communities are another area of literary activity. Many tribal writers pen down their life stories straddled between the boundary between tradition and modernity. Mamang Dai's *The Legend of Pensam* is an example of this category of literature. Tribal folklores provide more fertile ground for literary creation. Precisely, the invasion of the oral world by the written world enables tribal writers to produce literature on self-assertion and reconstruction of history. No doubt, in recent years, literature on religious movements in the tribal communities is an emerging area. It is true that the discipline of tribal studies enriches the discipline of literature and thus the two are very closely related.

### (g) Tribal Studies and Archaeology

Archaeological studies are definitely essential for understanding the tribal situation. The dynamics of the tribal societies, like the process of migration, cultural contact and diffusion and evolution in phases, needs inputs from archaeological sources for better understanding. Since archaeology is basically concerned with the reconstruction of the extinct societies based on material traces, the simple facts of material culture of the tribal societies are immensely helpful in understanding the past-present continuum of these societies. Such concepts of archaeology like artefacts, monuments and conservation strategy have to be redefined in the context of tribal societies. The established pre-historic archaeological discourses also present a different picture and situation when applied in the context of tribal societies, many of which are in a pre-literate stage. Ethno-archaeological investigation which tries to unveil the unrecorded past with the help of ethnographic data is very much a dimension of tribal studies. Ethno-archaeology is, therefore, considered to be an important field of study in situations where archaeological sources are scant but tribal ethnography is conspicuous. Many of the age old practices considered as extinct facts of archaeology are still continuing in tribal societies, termed as 'Living Archaeology'. The scholars studying tribal cultures with the help of archaeological evidences call it 'Living Culture'.

Archaeological methods help understand the tribal culture as a continuum. Similarly, ethnographic data help explain archaeological facts. Obviously, archaeology and tribal studies have an overlapping area where they complement each other. From the archaeological point of view, the branch of knowledge is called ethno-archaeology while from the tribal studies point of view this could be archaeological ethnography. The only difference is in the approach, whether it is ethnography applied to archaeological facts or vice versa.

The knowledge of archaeology is also necessary for understanding the contemporary tribal situation, as tribal revivalism very often seems to manipulate the archaeological facts for glorification of the past and reconstruction of exclusive tribal history. Recently, archaeological facts have been judiciously used for understanding the ethno-history and this is considered very much relevant in many of the underdeveloped territories which were under colonial subjugation.

### (h) Tribal Studies and Linguistics

Tribal communities provide a rich field of linguistic studies. Many theoretical perspectives in linguistics are linked to the study of tribal communities. Syncretic and diachronic approaches to study tribal cultures are perspectives from linguistics. The perspective in emic-etic debate also has its origin in linguistics. These terms were first introduced by linguist Kenneth Lee Pike, who argued that the tools developed for describing linguistic behaviours could be adapted to the description of any human social behaviour. The terms **emic** and **etic** are derived from the linguistic terms phonemic and phonetic respectively.

Linguistic structures which attempt at studying pairings of meaning and form can profitably be used to understand object names in a cultural perspective in tribal communities. Therefore, linguists study the tribal language system to understand the rules regarding language use that tribal speakers know. In fact, contemporary linguists believe in the fundamentality of spoken language rather than the written one. There are many tribal languages which are yet to be studied properly. Stephen Morey informs us that so many of the languages of North-East India are still very much under-recorded

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and under-described. Therefore, many foreign linguists take interest in studying tribal languages. Mention may be made of Mark W. Post who wrote a grammar book on Galo language. Similarly, Stephen Morey has also worked on Singpho language (Turung variety) as well as the Tai languages of Assam. Morey and Post have also worked on Tai Ahom Dictionary and Galo Dictionary respectively.

By Language Documentation, we mean not only recording examples of language-stories, songs, rituals conversations, procedural texts (processes for agriculture, marriage, etc.), but also producing good quality mega data for those recordings and where possible, detailed transcriptions, translations and analysis of those texts. In addition, the work is also to produce dictionaries.

— Stephen Morey

Linguists describe and explain the features of language. To study a language effectively, it is necessary to know a great many things about its structure: its phonetics (sounds), phonology (sound system), lexicon (words), morphology (word structure), syntax (sentences), semantics (meanings) and pragmatics (use in communication). However, this is still not enough. It is also necessary to understand how language evolves and takes its shape in their social, cultural and environmental contexts. In this sense, linguistics form an essential component of tribal studies, and the discipline of tribal studies constitutes an essential framework in which linguistic research can be carried out. Such studies may develop new theoretical perspectives and methodological framework also.

Language being a component of culture, the study of a language system of a tribe unravels the cultural dynamics of the people. Moreover, linguists in recent years increasingly use field methods of investigation developed by anthropologists from their study of tribal communities. They try to understand the cognitive, historical and socio-linguistic processes of a language in the changing context.

In the discipline of tribal studies tribal linguistics would form a distinct but interrelated branch of knowledge. For the linguists there is ample scope for language documentation and translation of tribal languages. It is to be noted that Franz Boas, an American anthropologist emphasized on language documentation as early as 1900s. The ethnographic dimension of language documentation and description played a significant role in the development of disciplines like *socio-linguistics* and *anthropological linguistics*. The documenting endeavour has also assumed added significance in recent years when the attempt is directed to preserve endangered languages. Endangered languages are mostly the tribal languages. Linguistics and tribal studies can complement each other to study the relations of language, culture and society and to develop the knowledge in tribal linguistics.

### (i) Tribal Studies and Law

The discipline of law without the recognition of tribal customary laws will not be a complete discipline. In fact, every tribe has its customary laws to deal with civil disputes like land disputes and criminal cases like theft, rape and murder. However, these customary laws are uncodified. In 1992, the Government of India decided to conduct an all India survey where an attempt has been made to codify the customary laws of many tribal societies. The Land Record Department of Guwahati High Court has documented customary laws of more than 35 tribes in North-East India. Many tribal communities are documenting their customary laws because they consider them central to their identity. In Arunachal Pradesh, many communities like Aka, Nyishi, Adi, Apatani have documented

their customary laws. The Constitutional provisions including the Sixth and Fifth Schedules are exclusively meant for tribal communities. These provisions have legal implications. Articles 371A and 371G accord constitutional recognition to the Naga and Mizo customary laws respectively. However, other tribes also run their civil affairs according to it.

There are various Acts exclusively for the tribals and others applicable to tribals along with other social categories. Two recent Acts, namely the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Area) Act (PESA) 1996 and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 have been tribe specific in that their problems have been recognized and strategies formulated to address them.

There are other laws also which are meant to safeguard the interests of tribal people and other people as well. Some of them are: The Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Money-lenders Regulation, 1963; The Agency Debt Bondage Abolition Regulation, 1964; The Assam Money-lenders Regulation, 1968; The Bihar Money-lenders (Regulation of Transaction) Act, 1939; The Bombay Agricultural Debtors Relief Act, 1947; The Kerala Money Lenders Act, 1958; The M. P. Anusuchit Jan Jati Rini Sahayata Ordinance, 1966; The Madras Indebted Agriculturists (Repayment of Debts) Act, 1955 and many others. Today, the tribals feel much more unsecured to preserve their common property resources when Multinational Companies (MNCs) occupy their resources to launch development projects under the provisions of mining laws, forest Acts, land laws and so on. There are laws which go against the tribal interest. There are also human rights dimension to tribal interests. All these require legal protection and herein comes the rule of law.

In India, the country's legal system recognizes tribal customary laws in many areas. Even during the colonial rule, the customary laws were taken as a point of reference to settle disputes relating to tribes. S. C. Roy's ethnographic account on the Mundas and J. K. Bose's account on Garo customary law were consulted to settle disputes of these communities. Even in Independent India, there are Acts, other than Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) and The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 (Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers [Recognition of Forest Rights] Act) which recognize customary laws to a great extent. Nagaland Jhum Land Act, 1970; and The Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act, 1978 are two such Acts. The Sadiya Frontier Tract Jhum land Regulation, 1947 recognizes many aspects of customary laws though its main purpose was to regulate the customary rights over Jhum land.

In America, tribal legal studies are emerging as a distinct branch of academic discipline. The discipline deals with laws developed by and for the native people and the power of tribal courts and legal systems. In India, many law institutes undertake research in tribal customary laws and evaluation of rights in the context of tribal people. Tribal societies provide scope for in-depth study of the histories, structures, and practices of tribal justice systems, efforts to balance tribal legal heritage and Indian Penal Code. Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities. No doubt, tribal studies and law have close linkages. It is not a surprise to note that the Central University of Jharkhand has set up the Centre for Tribal and Customary Law. Many University Law departments conduct research programmes relating to tribes.

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### Check Your Progress

1. How did the study of tribal communities commence?
2. How did tribal studies acquire a different set of objectives with the end of colonialism?
3. 'The studies on tribes have generally two aspects.' What are they?
4. What does Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* deal with?
5. Name some of the areas of research in tribal communities.

## 1.3 CONCEPTS AND CATEGORIES OF TRIBES

### NOTES

In this section we shall conceptualize the term ‘tribe’ as a social category with special reference to India. We shall begin with its colonial connection in general and India in particular. Then we shall proceed to discuss the concept from an academic perspective, and as constitutional categories in India. Then we shall also discuss the indigenous debate to designate tribes as indigenous people. This frame of analysis will provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept right from its origin and subsequent evolution.

There is ambiguity in providing a universally accepted definition of the term tribe. Anthropologists, sociologists, social workers, administrators and such other scholars who have been involved with the tribes and their problems are still not in agreement regarding the concept and the definition of their subject. This is because the term tribe has evolved in different contexts under different historical and political conditions.

### 1.3.1 Colonial Origin of the Term ‘Tribe’

The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin’s, the Sabine’s and the Etruscans. The three were referred to as the three Tribes of Rome, who founded the earliest Roman Empire. The word is believed to have its origin in Old French *tribu*, which in turn comes from a Latin word *tribus*. The English word ‘tribe’ occurs in the 12<sup>th</sup> century Middle English literature and refers to one of the twelve tribes of Israel. But the Portuguese used the term to designate the colonized people in Africa. Since then it is a colonial term of reference to groups whom colonial people considered as ‘others’ or different from the major groups living in a country.

### ‘Tribe’ as a Colonial Construct in India

In the pre-colonial times, we did not have a vernacular equivalent of the term tribe in any of the Indian languages. We have already discussed some of the terms by which the present ‘tribal’ communities were addressed. Besides, we also find the usage of the Sanskrit term *Kirata* in ancient literature, perhaps in the context of the North-Eastern tribes. According to K. S. Singh (1997), there are respectable references to some of the tribes in classical literature. He quotes one of the Shlokas from 6<sup>th</sup> century AD:

The Kirata king is a master of the martial arts. Do not disregard him as mountain dweller. Indra, the king of gods, entreated him to reside in the Himalayas to protect the earth.

Before the British rule, no community in India was designated as a tribal community. The communities designated as tribes have/had their own terms of reference and reference by the outsiders. The Adis of Arunachal Pradesh had the appellation of ‘Abor’ by the outsiders. But they had their own terms of reference as Minyong, Padam, Bokar, Bori and Pasi in a wider context and the clan name in the context of self-introduction. As the communities had their own terms of reference and no community was designated as a tribe, there were no generic social categories of any sort before the colonial rule.

As the term ‘tribe’ was not used to designate a social category as such, the British administrators were confused to apply this term to some groups. They tried to understand these groups with reference to corresponding categories in America, Australia and Africa. But there were vast differences. Hence, they used different terms in successive censuses because the enumerators could not understand the prevailing Indian



dynamics within their theoretical construct when they attempted to fit some sections of the population as tribes. K. S. Singh (1998) writes:

The tribe is a colonial concept, an Anglo-Saxon word, defined for the first time in the Census of 1901, in contra-distinction to caste. The notion of tribe has evolved over the censuses, from a hill and forest tribe, to a primitive tribe, to a backward tribe, and finally, to the scheduled tribe.

Susana B. C. Devalle (1992) from her study of the Jharkhand tribes concluded that 'tribe is essentially a construct', and is a 'colonial category'. The characteristics attributed to tribes, such as egalitarianism, subsistence economy, little or no external control, autonomy and isolation of such a unit, Devalle argued, are not found among Jharkhand people, known as *adivasi*. There are no evidences found to prove that these characteristics existed in the past. Needless to say, according to her, there were no tribes in Jharkhand until the European understanding of the Indian reality constructed them. The category thus devised evolved into an administrative concept later.

### 1.3.2 Academic Perspectives

Though the term was used by the colonial administrators to designate some groups of people, academicians used it to conceptualize social dynamics from historical perspectives. Hence, the term is defined from different angles.

#### Definitions

One of the earliest definitions comes from George Peter Murdock. To him a tribe is a:

... social group in which there are many clans, nomadic bands, villages or other/subgroups which usually have a definite geographical area, a separate language, a singular and distinct culture and either a common political organization or at least a feeling of common determination against strangers.

The Imperial Gazetteer of India defines a tribe as:

A tribe, as we find it in India, is a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, which as a rule, does not denote any specific occupation; generally claiming common descent from a mythical or historical ancestor and occasionally from an animal, but in some parts of the country held together rather by the obligation of blood-feud than by the tradition of kinship; usually speaking the same language; and, occupying, or claiming to occupy, a definite tract of country. A tribe is not necessarily endogamous, i.e. it is not an invariable rule that a man of a particular tribe must marry a woman of that tribe.

John Milton Yinger defines it as:

... it is small, usually preliterate and pre-industrial, relatively isolated, endogamous (with exogamous sub-tribal divisions), united mainly by kinship and culture, and in many places also territorial boundaries, and strongly ethnocentric ('We are the people').

From the Indian perspective, D. N. Majumdar's (1967) definition is noteworthy. It can be briefly paraphrased as follows:

A tribe is a collection of families, bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation.

It is evident from these few definitions that a tribal community possesses some characteristics. It should be made clear that all the characteristics may or may not be found in a particular community. Some general characteristics may be outlined as follows:

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- Inhabiting a specific geographical area or territory
- Using a specific language or a dialect
- Known by a distinct name and exhibiting a strong sense of belongingness or identity
- Possessing customs and laws which often vary in some degree from those of neighbouring tribes
- Having their own rites and beliefs which frequently differ from those practised and held by the people around them
- Economically self-sufficient and politically autonomous
- Are not part of civilization

**Tribe as a Stage of Evolution**

Academicians used the term tribe to explain the evolution of society. They placed 'tribe' as a stage in the evolution of society through different stages.

Earlier, anthropologists like Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-81), Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) and other evolutionists not only defined tribe as a type of society but also regarded them as representing a particular stage of evolution. A tribe was seen as a primitive social formation; primitive because they were supposed to represent the earlier stages through which the contemporary Western civilization has evolved.

Elman Service and Marshall Sahlins were the two most important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages—socio-economic development. They placed 'tribe' as a stage in socio-economic development to explain the evolution of society.

According to the evolutionary scholars, society or socio-political development has occurred through four stages and the tribe represents the second stage in the pre-state social organization. Their scheme was:

<b>Band</b>	ØØÈ	<b>Tribe</b>	ØØÈ	<b>Chiefdom</b>	ØØÈ	<b>State</b>
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**Band:** Their first level of organization is a band. A small group of people are related through the ties of common descent. The members have face-to-face interaction and migrate together within a specific locality. Bands were generally exogamous and other than a marriage partner, each band was self-sufficient and independent of the other.

**Tribe:** For certain strategic significance, like conflict or exploitation of resources, some bands may come together to form a tribe. A tribe represents more than a mere collection of bands; it differs from bands in terms of nature of integration of society. Other than kinship affiliation, association was based on age grades, religious congregation and ceremonial parties. In the absence of any centralized authority, social order was maintained through the relative differences in statuses and roles.

**Chiefdom:** A third stage of pre-state social organization was marked by the emergence of a ruler. In the initial stages, the chiefdoms were theocracies, with the ruler or the members of his family also serving as high religious officials. When the chief died, the role was filled by someone from a particular line of descent.

**State:** It is a system of social organization marked by stratification with the separation of political power from religious power. The centralized government was bestowed with

political power and the state had the right to collect taxes, drag citizens for work and for war, and enact and enforce the law.

**Tribe as a segmentary society:** Marshall Sahlins (1968) places tribe as a stage of evolution. But he associates the term tribe, i.e. the stage with segmentary lineages as distinguished from centralized chiefdoms. According to him, tribe is a segmental organization. It is composed of a number of equivalent, unspecialized multifamily groups, each being the structural duplicate of the other—a tribe is a congregation of equal kin group blocks. The segments are the residential and proprietary units of the tribe. It is held together principally by likeness among its segments and pan-tribal institutions, such as the system of intermarrying clans, of age grades, or military or religious societies, which intersect the primary segment.

**Self-contained primitive social formation:** Maurice Godelier also argues that the tribe is a type of social organization which can only be understood if we view it as a stage in the social evolution. The 19th century evolutionists readily believed that the development of a more complex or a more advanced type of society would automatically lead to the effacement of the tribal type. For these scholars of tribal studies, it is a truism that the tribe has preceded the state and civilization on the broad scale of social evolution. Hence, Godelier and his associates placed tribe as opposite to civilization. Ideally, they saw a tribe as an isolated, self-contained primitive social formation, but not as a part of civilization by force or by choice. It was defined on the basis of the absence of those characteristics which we associate with civilization.

While studying the tribes, the concept of civilization has its own connotation. Henry Lewis Morgan's work of 1977 emphasizes on the 'practice of reading and writing'. It is also understood in the presence of 'great tradition' as defined by Robert Redfield in 1947. Naturally, the tribes do not have a 'great tradition', but have their local specific cultural behaviour, i.e., the 'little tradition'. In the sense of absence of the 'practice of reading and writing', they are not illiterate, but are 'preliterate'. Hence, while placing the tribes in the scale of civilization, they would not feature in the binary oppositions of 'civilized' and 'literate', i.e. they should not be designated as 'uncivilized' and 'illiterate'. Rather, they should be designated as 'non-civilized' or 'preliterate'. Therefore, Andre Béteille has suggested for a flexible attitude towards the definition of the term 'tribe'.

**Tribes in transition:** Tribes in India were never in isolation. The communities at different levels of civilization have co-existed with the non-tribal communities since time immemorial. Because of this co-existence, the tribal communities have been interacting with the non-tribal communities (caste societies) at different levels. Needless to say, tribal communities in India are not static; they are always in the process of adoption and change. The process is more visible when these communities, whether scheduled or non-scheduled are integrated into the Nation's development agenda. A. R. Desai (1969) has, therefore, aptly remarked that the tribes in India are in transition. According to A. R. Desai (1969), in India, majority of the tribes should be viewed as 'tribes in transition'. To define them as a tribe, one has to take a historical perspective. Béteille (1992: 76) advocates a historical perspective to define a tribe. According to him, only by getting to know the predecessor of a group can a group be considered as a tribe.

The transitional concept can also be understood with reference to syncretism or adaptation to different livelihood strategies. This concept portrays tribal society against the background of self-contained and static nature as was attributed in the earlier writings on tribes.

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Among the Khamptis of Arunachal Pradesh, one would find a syncretic tradition of Buddhism and indigenous practices. They belong to the Theravada cult of Buddhism, but also believe in the deities of mountains, forests and many other animistic traditions. Ancestor worship is a part of their curative system. Such a syncretic tradition is noticed in the study of Subhadra Mitra Channa on the Jad of Harsil (one of the five ST groups of Uttarakhand included within the generic category of Bhotiya). The people do not subscribe to any clearly bounded social or religious category; but rather display a tradition betwixt and between the Hindu and Buddhist tradition. Tribe as a 'closed cultural group' is not evident in Khampti or Jad communities. Subhadra Mitra Channa further writes that Jad, being the pastoralists, move with their animals from one location to another as an adaptive strategy to different ecological niches. Obviously, they do not follow a singular adaptive strategy for themselves and their animals. Appropriately, she labels them as a 'mode of adaptation', a way of life with adjustment to different ecological conditions rather than a bounded unit as a tribe is understood to be in conventional scholarship.

Changes have been occurring in 'tribal' communities of India at different perceptible levels from pre-colonial period. Tribes do not stick to one locality. They migrate when the resource base is depleted. Against this background, 'tribes in transition' is one of the characteristics to explain the tribal communities in India.

**Tribe-caste continuum:** As has been mentioned earlier, tribes in India have never lived in isolation. Hence, a tribal community is never static. In other words, the community is in transition. There is another dimension to understand the tribal interaction with non-tribal community (caste-based societies). Tribes learned from caste-based societies and castes also learned some aspects of life of the tribals. Due to this process of interaction, assimilation, acculturation and adaptation have taken place between the tribal community and non-tribal community to different degrees.

This interaction has been a feature of the Indian society from the early stages and can be traced back to the days of Ramayana and Mahabharata. The groups were referred to as *Jana* in Ramayana. When Ram reached the borders of the forests of central India during his exile, the land was introduced to him as *Jana-sthan*, the land of tribal people. His meeting with Guha and the Bhil woman Savari is a popular episode in Ramayana. In Mahabharata, there are references to *kiratas*, Bhim's marriage with a tribal girl, Hidimba and Krishna's fight with Banasura. These were in fact interactions between tribes and non-tribes during that period.

Thus, in the process of this interaction, the tribals have adopted some aspects of non-tribal ways of life. The contrary is also true. There is a legend in Odisha about the incorporation of a tribal God into the Hindu tradition which evolved into 'Jagannath Cult'. The Badaga of the Nilgiri Hills were influenced by the neighbouring tribes. The Karma festival of the Oraons has also become a festival of many neighbouring communities in Jharkhand and Odisha.

It is very difficult to place the tribal communities at one end of a pole and the non-tribal peasant communities at the other end. If we place tribal and peasant communities at the opposite ends of a pole, there will be many tribal communities displaying characteristics of peasant and caste-based communities and many caste-based communities displaying characteristics of tribal communities to varying extents. There will not be a vacuum between tribal and caste-based societies placed at the end of the opposite poles. Hence, it is said that there is a continuum between tribal and caste-based societies, known as tribe-caste continuum.

We can cite some examples of such continuum. Anthony Walker (1998) having worked among the Toda community of the Nilgiri Hills for several years, arrived at the conclusion that in comparison to 'tribes', the term 'caste' has a 'considerable value', for it helps in placing them in the context of the South Indian cultural matrix, to which they actually belong. He finds it confusing when the Toda are designated as a 'tribe' in the sense in which this term has been used in anthropological and sociological literature. In a similar methodological perspective, Hockings (1993) after working among the Badaga of the Nilgiri Hills concludes that the Badagas have been referred to as a 'tribe', 'caste', and 'Hindu race' in literatures dealing with the community starting from 1922. He argues, like Walker, that instead of focusing on a unit and labelling it, the entire system of which the unit is a part of needs scrutiny. The Badaga had migrated to the Nilgiri Hills from the plains to the north. Theirs is an example of a caste group which adopted a tribal model through its regular interaction with the Toda, the Kurumba, and the Kota, the Scheduled Tribes of the Nilgiri Hills. Hockings considers the Nilgiri people as a 'case of a caste society' displaying 'several distinct indigenous cultures' which have their 'respective origins in pre-caste social formation'.

F. G. Bailey (1961), proposed this continuity in his concept of 'Tribe-Caste continuum', where he showed there are societies with both characteristics of tribes as well as caste. Surajit Sinha (1965), similarly proposed a continuum between the tribe and peasant societies in India. Further, with several changes occurring within the community in independent India, because of government programmes of planned change, many of the tribes have undergone rapid transformation.

### 1.3.3 Origin of the Term Tribe and its Evolution in India

The term tribe did not exist before the colonial period. However, most of the people with whom the term is associated used to live in forests and hills. Therefore, in India the notion of tribe has evolved from these people. Over the censuses during the colonial period, the nomenclature referring to tribes underwent successive modifications, involving primarily changes in the descriptive adjectives like hill and forest tribes, a primitive tribe or a backward tribe. The Constitution of India has dropped the qualifying adjectives and has adopted the notion of Scheduled Tribes for this category. In the first Census Report of 1891, J. A. Baines, the then Commissioner for Census of India, classified some groups of people as 'Forest Tribes' under the sub-heading of 'Agricultural and Pastoral Castes'. Their number was enumerated as 16 million. In the subsequent Census Records, the nomenclature underwent successive modifications. In 1901 Census, Sir Herbert Hope Risley classified them as 'Animists', in 1911 E. Gait further classified them as 'Tribal Animists' or people following 'Tribal Religion'. J. H. Hutton categorized them as 'Hill and Forest Tribes' in 1931 Census. These people by that time were numbering 22 million. The term 'tribe' or 'tribal religion', however, does not have any definitional note in the above Census Reports. In The Government of India Act, 1935, these people came to be recorded as 'Backward Tribes' without a definition of the term. Similarly, in 1941 Census they were designated as 'Tribes' accounting for 2.47 crore of people. Post-Independence, some of these people were listed in the Constitution of India and designated as Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Though the definition of tribe was not clear, it was more or less considered to be in contrast to castes which were occupational groups. In caste system, the principle of caste endogamy was strictly followed, which was in Risley's opinion not the case with the tribes. Contrary to Risley's definition, the tribes in contemporary India have an

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occupation or set of occupations; they speak many languages. They are mobile and have migrated to different parts of the country even during and before colonial rule. For example, Santhals, Oraons and Mundas who are the native people of Jharkhand were brought to settle in Assam during the last part of 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Oraons, who are the tribes of Jharkhand, are also spread over Odisha. Their original homeland was somewhere in the hills of South India from where they migrated to Rohtasgarh in present day Chhattisgarh from where they again migrated to avoid Muslim attacks, much before the colonial rule. The Mudma fair in Mandar block of Ranchi district held every year is a conglomeration of Oraons to commemorate their migration from Rohtasgarh. In Jharkhand, Oraons also live with other tribes like Mundas and non-tribes, recently called *Moolbasis* in many villages. No doubt isolation has never been a characteristic of Indian 'tribes'. The application of the term tribe to groups does not have a clear basis in the Indian context.

It is not a surprise that concepts like *tribes in transition* and *tribe-caste continuum* have been coined to explain the Indian situation. Post-independence some people were treated as Constitutional categories and were designated as Scheduled Tribes. Among them are PTGs (particularly vulnerable tribal groups). Among the tribes and some other groups of people, the colonial rulers designated some groups as criminal tribes. These groups were treated as de-notified tribes by the Government of India. Among these de-notified tribes, there are some groups scheduled and some not scheduled in the Indian Constitution. Similarly, all the groups that were enumerated under the category of tribes are also not scheduled. Therefore, academicians, like scholars of tribal studies, designate them as non-scheduled tribes. There is also a debate on the designation of Indian tribes as indigenous people.

We shall discuss about scheduled tribes, Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), de-notified tribes and indigenous people in the following sections. Let us discuss the non-scheduled tribes, the groups who display the characteristics of tribes but are not scheduled in the Constitution.

**Non-Scheduled Tribes:** As has been discussed, the tribe is an administrative and political concept in India. The concept whether we accept it or not, has both administrative and political overtones. Scheduled Tribes, De-notified Tribes, and Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), are examples. There are also communities possessing all the characteristics which have been the criteria to enlist a community as a Scheduled Tribe. But still they are not scheduled in the Constitution. These communities are called Non-Scheduled tribes and unfortunately are deprived of the benefits which accrue to Scheduled Tribes according to the Constitutional provisions. The members of these communities feel that they are tribes. At the same time they feel that they are deprived of what their counterparts enjoy having been scheduled in the Constitution. It is not a surprise that the Gujars in Rajasthan and Koch Rajbongshi in Assam claim for Scheduled Tribe status. The Dhankuts of Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh have all the characteristics of a tribe but are not scheduled in the Constitution. Similar is the case with the Yobin group of Arunachal Pradesh, and the Badaga of Nilgiri Hills who do not enjoy Scheduled Tribe status.

Interestingly, the Malai Kuravar is a Scheduled Tribe community in Kanyakumari district and non-ST (Scheduled Caste) community in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. Another interesting case of territorial dimension of identification of a tribe is the Bharia. C. S. S. Thakur, Professor of Sociology, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur informs that Bharia is a primitive tribal group in Patakot valley of Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh. Outside the valley but within the district they are recognized as a

Scheduled Tribe community. Further, outside the district the community is not scheduled. Similarly, Rabari community enjoys Scheduled Tribe status in Gujarat but Other Backward Class status in Rajasthan. These groups are considered to be non-scheduled tribes by the academicians.

**Generic Identity:** In India, a tribe is not always community specific. You will find many tribal communities sharing a common name. There is no community as Naga tribe. The appellation Naga is shared by many communities like Ao, Angami, Rengma, etc. In fact, Ao or Angami is a tribe both anthropologically and constitutionally, but not Naga. Nevertheless, Naga is an identity of these groups which is generic in nature. Similarly, in Uttarakhand Jad along with other four Scheduled Tribe groups shares the generic Bhotiya identity.

The *adivasi* in Assam is a generic term and includes communities like Oraon, Suara, Munda and Santhals. These are scheduled tribes in their respective states of origin but these groups are non-scheduled tribes in Assam. All of them are addressed as *adivasi*, and in the popular perception of North-East, the term denotes a single community who otherwise have their individual community identity.

**Terms of address:** In the earlier period the communities who are now called tribes were known by their community names like the Baigas, the Oraons and the Saoras. Over the years, for the term 'tribe' in India, a number of synonyms have evolved. These are *Adivasi* (original settlers), *Girijan* (forest dwellers), *Vanyajati* (forest caste), *Adim jati* (primitive caste), *Jana jati* (folk people), *Vavavasi* (inhabitants of forest), *Pahari* (hill dwellers) and *Anusuchit jati* (Scheduled Tribes). David Hardiman (1987) notes that in Gujarat, terms like *kaliparaja* (the 'black people') is used to refer to the tribal people. Persian terms like *qabila*, *qabilewale* were also in vogue to refer to tribes. There are empirical evidences which suggest that the term 'jati' was used as a suffix to tribal communities. Mention may be made of the appellations *Adivasi jati*, *Vanyajati*, and *Jana-jati* (the 'kind of forest dweller'). Denis Vidal (1997) writes, 'In Sirohi (Rajasthan)... the same generic term (*jati*) was often used to refer indiscriminately [to] the castes or tribe'.

In fact *jati* does not bear the connotation of its English equivalent 'caste'. The word connotes to a 'kind or type' rather than 'caste'. In India, it is used in a variety of other contexts such as *manushya jati* to mean humankind, *devta jati* and *danav jati* to mean gods and demons respectively, *stri jati* to mean women, *pashu jati* to mean the 'category' of animals or *vanaspati jati* to mean plants.

Many tribal communities were also designated through fictitious names, sometimes a common nomenclature. Often, the designations by which tribes are known are outside constructs. Therefore, most of them are not known to the outside world by their respective indigenous names. Contrary to the terms that the outsiders have improvised for them, tribes refer to themselves by their respective community names like Munda, Santhal, Gond, Baiga, Sahariya, Gaddi, or by the generic term *jati*, or the hybrid term *Adivasi jati*. The outsiders may also be the neighbouring tribes or clans. The Laju Nocte, known to outsiders and to other clans of Nocte by this name, refer themselves as Olo. The Khamptis address themselves as Tai, though the term Khampti has meaning in their language system.

It becomes difficult to decipher the meaning of some names, even by the people to whom it is labelled. For example, the Tagin and Nyishi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh were designated as Dafla whose origin and meaning are still a matter of speculation. Niharranjan Ray (1972) has suggested the term *Jana*, used earlier to denote tribal

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communities like Savaras, Bhils, Nagas, Kirat, Pulindas, Kols, etc., in place of the term 'tribe'. He argues that *Jana* and *Jati* are both derived from the root *Jana* meaning 'to be born', 'to give birth to' and hence has a biological connotation. Their inhabited territories were known as *Jana Padas* in ancient India. G. S. Ghurye, however, uses the term 'Backward Hindus' for the tribes. This connotation is in conformity with the 'nation building' project, which requires the national identity, essentially of a Hindu nation, through the amalgamation of all people in a common bracket.

### 1.3.4 Search for an Alternative to the Term 'Tribe'

The term 'tribe' is a colonial construct, so also is the term 'indigenous'. In India, the term 'indigenous' is not applicable the way it is applicable in America, Canada, Australia and Africa. The scholars are engaged in finding a suitable designation for the groups who otherwise have a wide range of appellations academically, administratively and constitutionally.

It is to be noted that many scholars consider the term 'tribe' pejorative. Some have suggested to use the term 'community': say 'Santhal community', 'Birhor community' and 'Saharia community'. The word 'community' is also used for the members of a caste like 'carpenter community, weaver community', or urban neighbourhoods. Buddhadeb Chaudhuri (1992) has suggested the term 'ethnic group' as an alternative which is defined as a largely self-perpetuating group in biological terms, sharing the same descent, real or putative, which has a set of similar fundamental values realized in cultural forms. The members of an ethnic group normally have the same field of communication and interaction; they speak the same (or similar) language and understand its cultural nuances, and distinguish themselves from other categories of the same order. Jagannath Pathy (1988) however, prefers the term 'ethnic minority' because tribes are always sub-ordinated to the majority. Moreover, the term 'ethnic group' has also been used as a generic category for castes as well as religious communities.

Other terms suggested for tribes are 'autochthones' and 'indigenes'. However, none of these alternative terms have the same level of popularity and acceptance as does the term 'tribe'. That is why, notwithstanding the polemics surrounding the term, it is still the most widely used social category to describe certain sections of societies.

#### Check Your Progress

6. From where has the term 'tribe' been derived and what does it refer to?
7. Name the two important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages of socio-economic development.
8. How can a tribe be understood according to Maurice Godelier?
9. What according to Buddhadeb Chaudhuri is an ethnic group?

## 1.4 TRIBE AS A CONSTITUTIONAL CATEGORY

In India, tribe is an administrative concept. It refers to Scheduled Tribes, i.e. the tribes and communities listed in the Constitution of India. Other than the Scheduled Tribes, we come across two other administrative terms in the context of tribes: The Primitive Tribes and the Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes. Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is a sub-category of Scheduled Tribes. But a number of communities, tribes and other communities were labelled as criminal tribes under the colonial rule. The Government of India by an Act later de-notified these communities. These communities are designated as Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes. In this section, we shall discuss these three administrative concepts.

### 1.4.1 Scheduled Tribes

Post-independence it was realized that the most backward communities in terms of development indicators like literacy, access to healthcare, nutrition, income, poverty are from the tribes of India. Therefore, a list of tribal communities was drawn to provide



special assistance to them. Certain pockets in India are largely dominated by the tribal communities. These areas were known as 'excluded area' and were later designated as Scheduled Area. The tribes and other communities, especially in the 'scheduled area' were listed in the Indian Constitution and they came to be known as Scheduled Tribes as per Article 342. There was a debate on the use of a term for these communities. In the debate held in the Constituent Assembly, Jai Pal Singh, a tribal leader, favoured the term *adivasi* in place of Scheduled Tribe. But Dr B. R. Ambedkar, who was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, argued that *adivasi* is a general term, which has no special legal *de jure* connotations. As the term Scheduled Tribe has a fixed meaning, because it enumerates the tribes, he favoured its use.

The Constitution of India, Article 366 (25) defines Scheduled Tribes as,

...such tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to the scheduled Tribes (STs) for the purposes of this Constitution.

It is to be noted that only those tribes which have been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes are given special treatment or facilities envisaged under the Constitution. The Scheduled Tribes are specified by the President under Article 342 by a public notification. The Parliament may, by law, include or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes any tribal community or part thereof in any State or Union Territory. In Article 342, the procedure to be followed for specification of a Scheduled Tribe is prescribed.

Article 342 of our Constitution states that:

The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor on... thereof, by public notification, specify tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purpose of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be.

However, it does not contain the criterion for the specification of any community as Scheduled Tribes. The Lokur Committee has established the following criteria for declaring a particular community a Scheduled Tribe:

- **Geographical isolation:** They should be living in cloistered, exclusive, remote and inhospitable areas, such as hills and forests.
- **Backwardness:** Their livelihood should be based on primitive agriculture, a low-value closed economy with a low level of technology that leads to their poverty. They have low levels of literacy and health.
- **Distinctive culture, language and religion:** These communities should have developed their own distinctive culture, language and religion.
- **Shyness of contact:** They should have a marginal degree of contact with other cultures and people.
- They should be an ensemble of primitive traits.

The definition was not very precise and it would have been difficult to go about identifying tribes with it. For example, what is meant by primitiveness was nowhere defined. The Draft National Policy of Tribals, 2006 admits, 'The criteria laid down by the Lokur Committee are hardly relevant today. For instance, very few tribes can today be said to possess "primitive traits".' The Presidential Order, 1950 declared 212 tribes located in fourteen states as Scheduled Tribes. In fact the list was more or less similar to the list prepared in the 1931 Census. Their number increased to 427 in 1971, 437 in 1981, and to

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621 in 1991. Communities can be excluded or included in the list based on the recommendation of the President. The National Tribal Policy, 2006, puts the figure around 700 while in the First Draft, 2004, the number of ST communities was given to be 698, in 2013 the number of ST communities was given to be 705.

According to V. K. Srivastava (2005), today when the anthropologist uses the term tribe in the context of India, they include all the communities included in the list of the Scheduled Tribes, although some of them may not be in accordance with the anthropological conception of tribe.

The Scheduled Tribe is an administrative and political concept and applies to individual communities and to territories as is the case of Kinnaur, Jaunsar-Bawar and Pangwal. In these territories, people irrespective of their social categories have been declared as Scheduled Tribes.

The territorial dimension of the concept of Scheduled Tribe needs an explanation. Though Kinnauras are a territorial group which forms their socio-cultural identity, the Constitution of India has treated them differently unlike the Jaunsar-Bawar. T. S. Negi writes that originally there was the Kinnaura tribe—by legendary belief as well as some historical evidences and deduction—to be the descendant of the Kinnara Tribe of Hindu Mythology. But the tribe is stratified as Khasia, Chamang and Domang castes on the basis of specialized occupation. Those who followed the profession of shoe-making are called Chamang, and those who followed the profession of iron works are called Domang. Khasias are equated with the Rajputs. Consequent to these occupational divisions, the Rajputs are known as ‘Sawarn’—the high caste, and Domang and Chamang as ‘Harijan’. Interestingly, all these groups have their socio-cultural identity as Kinnauras. Strangely, in the Indian Constitution the Khasias are enumerated as Scheduled Tribes and the Domang and Chamang as Scheduled Castes.

Some of the areas like Jaunsar-Bawar in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand were declared as scheduled areas in 1967. As such the communities living there were scheduled as Jaunsar-Bawar. Jaunsar is derived from the name Jamunasar referring to the Jamuna tract of the district. The communities living there have three distinct social divisions. These three divisions are Khasa, which includes the Rajputs and the Brahmins. The second one is the middle division under which Lohar, Sunar, Badi, Ode, Bajigi—the artisan communities are included. The third division is categorized as *harijans* and includes such communities as Dom, Koli, Kolta, Koior, Angi, etc. The Jaunsar-Bawar tribe in fact has a complete social categorization, in addition to it being a territorial construct. The territorial dimension of the tribal status is also reflected in case of many other tribes.

The territorial dimension also emerges from the fact that the Scheduled Tribe is a state concept. The tribe of one state does not enjoy the same status in another state. The *Adivasis* of Central India who belonged to Munda, Santhal, Saura, and other tribal communities were brought as tea plantation labourers to Assam during the British period. They are designated as *Adivasis* in Assam, the place to which they migrated, but without the status of Scheduled Tribe. This ambiguity stems from the Constitutional provision as is read in Article 342 (1).

**Article 342 (1):** The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities, which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory as the case may be.

**Article 342 (2):** Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

In the early anthropological literature, tribe is constructed as a community outside the state. But in India, there are tribal communities scheduled in the Indian Constitution which participated in state formation. Rajgond, Jaintia, Tripuri and Bhuyan are examples.

Hugh Chisholm (1910), informs us in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

...The 16th century saw the establishment of a powerful Gond kingdom by Sangram Sah, who succeeded in 1480 as the 47th of the petty Gond rajas of Garha-Mandla, and extended his dominions to include Saugor and Damoh on the Vindhyan plateau, Jubbulpore and Narsinghpur in the Nerbudda valley, and Seoni on the Satpura highlands...

It is to be mentioned here that the tribal chiefs were not only the rulers of their own communities. There are 'non-tribal' communities which were also ruled by them. The Khamptis of present Arunachal Pradesh were sometimes rulers of the Sadiya outpost of the Ahom kingdom during the first half of 19th century. Interestingly, Sadiya was not the inhabited land of the Khamptis.

R. Singh (2000) in his book entitled *Tribal Beliefs, Practices and Insurrections* writes,

... The Gond rajas of Chanda and Garha Mandla were not only the hereditary leaders of their Gond subjects, but also held sway over substantial communities of non-tribals who recognized them as their feudal lords...

Raji, a small primitive tribe of Central Himalayas claim to be the rulers of the half of Northern Pithoragarh district. They are descendants of the Eskt dynasty. Similarly, the history of the Jaintia kingdom of Meghalaya is an example of participation of the Jaintia tribe in state formation. The state Tripura is named after the Tripuri tribe who once ruled the land through the Debabarman clan.

During the British period, the construct of a tribe was basically in contrast to a caste which is a construct of occupational groups. But there are scheduled tribal communities within which occupational diversification is clearly visible. Kolcha, a primitive tribal group in Valsad and Panchmahals districts of Gujarat are basket makers, agriculturists and forest labourers. But traditionally, this community used to handle carcasses. We have also discussed the caste-based social system among the Kinnaura and Jaunsar-Bawar tribal communities.

The Scheduled Tribe group also includes communities with class formation. The Bhoksa tribe of Central Himalayas live in two territorial divisions. Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal and Bijnor districts constitute the first zone, while Nainital district constitutes the second one. The Bhoksas of the second zone are economically better off as compared to those in the first zone and consider themselves superior.

The territorial dimension of Scheduled Tribes is also reflected in their nomenclature. The Khampti tribe of Arunachal Pradesh has derived its name from a place full of gold (*Kham*: gold; *ti*: land). The Tangsa tribe of the same state derives its name from a place called *Tang*, Tangsa meaning the children of *Tang*. The Nyishi tribe identify themselves as the people living in a territory lying between *Nyeme* (Tibet) and *Nyipak* (plains). The Scheduled Tribe communities do not exist in all the states of India. In the states of Punjab, Delhi and the Union Territory of Chandigarh, there are no communities identified as Scheduled Tribes. This does not mean that there are no Scheduled Tribe population in

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these places. Thousands of students and members from the Scheduled Tribe communities come to these places to study and work. It is to be mentioned that the Scheduled Tribe category is not inclusive of the social category called tribe in anthropological literature. The social category called tribe in anthropological literature includes both scheduled tribes and non-scheduled tribes.

Significantly, there are no religious bars for specifying a person as a member of a Scheduled Tribe or a community to schedule in the Constitution. Thus, we have Muslim Scheduled Tribes such as 17 tribal groups of Lakshadweep and the Gaddi and Bakriwal of Jammu and Kashmir and Scheduled Tribes following Christianity such as the Nagas, and Mizos. Similarly, we have the Khamptis and Monpas of Arunahcal Pradesh who follow Hinayana and Mahayana cults of Buddhism respectively.

**1.4.2 Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)**

The Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is not a Constitutional category different from the Scheduled Tribes. It is a category within the Scheduled Tribe category. The distinction between the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) and the Scheduled Tribes is a matter of degree of development. The Shilu Ao Committee constituted by the Planning Commission in 1969 had observed that the impact of planned 'change and development' has not been uniform in all the tribal communities. Within the Scheduled Tribes, conditions of some of the communities have not improved. They remained extremely backward and some of them continued to be in the primitive food gathering stage.

Primitive tribe is an administrative category used for those Scheduled Tribe communities who were identified as more isolated from the wider community and who maintain a distinctive cultural identity. These hunting, food-gathering, and some agricultural communities, have been identified as less acculturated tribes among the tribal population groups and that is why they are in need of special programmes for their sustainable development. In these communities, the development indicators are most vulnerable. Understandably, these groups are more vulnerable to hunger, starvation, malnutrition, and poor health. Important communities among the PTGs are Chenchu, Asur, Birhor, Birjia, Korwa, Parhaiya, Savar, Kolgha, Kathodi, Kotwalia, Padhar, Siddi, Chuktia Bhunjia, Bondo, Didayi, Dongria Khond, Juang, Kharia, Kutia Khond, Lanjia Saura, Lodha, Jarwa, Onge, Buksa, Raji, Riang, Toda, Kota, Irular and some others. Some groups like the Andamanese, Shom Pan, Cholanayakan and Koraga are on the verge of extinction.

In order to ensure the development of these communities, certain groups within the Scheduled Tribes were historically classified as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) for the first time in 1973. These groups were identified in 1975-76 and thereafter in 1993. These groups are regarded as the poorest of poor amongst the Scheduled Tribes. The criteria fixed for identification of such PTGs are:

- Pre-agricultural level of technology
- Remote isolated enclaves
- Small population
- Economic and social backwardness
- Very low level of literacy
- Declining or stagnant population

Based on the above mentioned criteria, 75 tribal communities were identified as PTGs spread over 17 States and one Union Territory. According to Census 2001, the

total population of PTGs in the country is 32, 62, 960. The Sahariya primitive tribal group has the highest number of population which stands at 4, 50,217 and the Sentineles the lowest at 39. Similarly, the population of PTGs in Madhya Pradesh is 9, 38,190, the highest among the states, and in Andaman and Nicobar Islands it is the lowest at 672. The National Tribal Policy has further mentioned two broad categories among the PTGs keeping in view their development requirements. The first group consists of communities which have been more or less insulated from the surrounding populations and are placed in isolated ecological environments. This group is named as 'heritage group' and includes such communities as the Jarawa, Sentinelese, Shompen and Cholanayakan. The second group does not have any name but includes the categories of PTGs which are located on the fringes of 'mainstream' population and have some contact with them. The Birhor, Chenchu, Jenu Kuruba, etc. come under the second category. The strategy of development will be group oriented in case of the heritage groups. But for the second group it will be a mix of group oriented and area development.

Although the concepts of Tribal Sub-Plan and the Special Assistance to the state governments have been in operation since the Fifth Five Year Plan, it was felt that these funds were not reaching the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) in proportion to their requirements and as such not much development had taken place with respect to these communities.

The PTGs can also be understood with reference to Bhupinder Singh's distinction between the two types of tribal communities on the basis of their development requirements. The first category's requirement is 'first-aid treatment', meaning little help, while that of second category is 'hospitalization', meaning proper intensive care. According to him, the primitive tribes fall under the second category. He prefers to call the PTGs the 'Primary Tribes'.

The term 'primitive', however, has derogatory overtones. Therefore, B. K. Roy Burman suggested renaming these communities as 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups'. But, he could not get rid of the derogatory overtones and in short Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups also bear the acrimony of PTGs. Nevertheless, the connotation of the term 'vulnerable' is still problematic. There are no objective measurements to determine the degree of vulnerability amongst the PTGs and Scheduled Tribes. However, their socio-economic and cultural development would be considered by formulating conservation-cum-development micro plans suitable to their requirements. The main objective is to raise the socio-economic standard of these groups at par with other Scheduled Tribes by 2020.

### 1.4.3 De-notified Tribes/Ex-criminal Tribes

The de-notified tribes were earlier known as criminal tribes. After they were de-notified, they were also known as ex-criminal tribes. It is important to mention that ex-criminal tribes are those tribes who were earlier listed under the British Government's Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Important groups listed as criminal tribes were Bawaria, Bhatu, Beria, Bhedkut, Dom, Karwal, Mina, Mantam, Yerkula Sugali, Yandi, Koravas, Lambadi, etc. The interesting thing is that the so-called criminal tribe population constitutes a group or section of a group within a tribe or caste or an entire tribe or caste. Thus, one would find in the category of criminal tribes group of people who may be considered as tribes, Hindu caste and the Muslims. Ethnically, criminal tribes were mixed groups.

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## Background of the Criminal Tribes Act

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British rule in India created some social categories. As you know, one is the category of tribes. This category came in as a result of the colonial policy of 'divide and rule'. The other one is the 'criminal tribe' which later became the de-notified tribe in free India. The colonial policy of exclusion of people from their traditional livelihoods resulted in resorting to petty crimes by them as an alternative source of livelihood. Instead of understanding the reason for their criminal tendencies, they were brought to task by enacting criminal laws.

The British attitude towards the petty crimes committed by some people or groups of people was based on a false notion. The colonial ruler believed that crime was a hereditary calling of these people. It is to be noted that Dr Lombroso's widely accepted theory of 'inborn criminality' continued to influence the administrators for years together.

**Criminal Acts:** The Criminal Tribes Act was passed by the British Government as early as 1871 and was applied arbitrarily and unjustly against some of the aboriginal tribes, castes and Muslims of our country. In 1876, the law was extended to many other parts of British India, specially to lower Bengal. An amendment of the Act in 1897, even empowered the local government to separate the children of these groups aged between 4-18 years, from their irreclaimable parents. This law empowered local governments to declare any community or tribe or any part of a tribe, gang or class indulging in systematic commission of non-bailable offences as a criminal tribe. In 1911, further amendments were made which provided for the maintenance of a register of persons considered as criminals for detailed information of their whereabouts (place). The amendments made it obligatory on the part of the members of the criminal tribes to give their fingerprints and to report change of residence. It also empowered the Provincial Governments to restrict the movement of these communities within particular areas. The offenders were punished according to the nature of their crimes. Through gradual modification, this Act was more or less, consolidated in 1924.

**Who are the people who took to crimes as a source of livelihoods?:** The people who were clubbed as criminal tribes did not constitute a homogenous group. P. K. Bhowmick (1989) in his article entitled 'Problems of De-notified Tribes: A Case Study of the Interaction of Government and Diverse Ethnic Groups in Fringe Bengal' informs that the so-called criminal tribe population constitutes a group or section of a group within a tribe or caste or an entire tribe or caste. Some of them would be found to be members of one particular Scheduled Caste or another. A few also were found belonging to higher castes. At the same time, some sections of the Muslims also belonged to the criminal tribes category. Thus, one would find in the category of criminal tribes groups of people who may be considered as tribes, Hindu caste and the Muslims. It marks for a group as 'habitual' rather than 'natural' offenders. On the basis of their habitats, occupations and ways of life, Bhowmick presents a classification of these de-notified tribes into the following groups:

- (i) Nomadic groups who have taken to criminal life
- (ii) Fighting men and soldiers who having lost their jobs and have turned into criminals
- (iii) Communities who used to work as village watchman and police, but have taken to criminal life
- (iv) Wild tribes in distress who took to criminal living as a way out of the plight they had fallen in

- (v) Beggars turned into criminals
- (vi) Some settled castes and tribes who took to criminality due to poverty

**Why did people take to crimes?:** Most of the groups, who were clubbed under the category of ‘criminal tribes’, had their traditional source of livelihood patronized by rich persons and royal families. The products had a market among common people also. With the coming of the colonial rule, the royal families lost their status and hence the people who enjoyed their patronage, lost their livelihood sources too. Due to the availability of cheap machine made goods in the market, the traditional handicrafts lost their market. The colonial laws were also responsible for the deprivation of the communities, especially tribals from their sources of livelihoods. The government forest policy (the forest laws of the 1880s), for example, prevented free grazing of the cattle owned by these groups and prevented them from collecting forest produce. The Chenchus of Hyderabad were very much affected by the forest laws. Out of desperation, they turned into bandits. This also happened to Lodhas of West Bengal. Bhowmick writes that territorial and economic displacements along with the changing situations forced them to commit crime and offence.

The development of roads and railways also destroyed traditional trade and commerce. Because of development activities people lost their source of livelihood and due to the availability of cheap goods they also lost the market. As a result they lost their traditional means of livelihood. Mildred MacKenzie, in his book *The Mud Bank* writes:

The Yerukulas were originally merchants. Their forefathers carried salt, grain and other commodities inland, on the backs of the pack animals, but in the march of progress, rail, and roads came and transportation was taken out their lands. Their living was gone, they knew no trade and they resorted to crime.

These tribes led a vagrant life in the jungles, hills and deserts with no fixed abode. They wandered about with their bag and baggage and pitched their tents on the outskirts of a village or a city or in some secluded place. In the absence of any substantial means of living these people depended on begging, cattle lifting and crop stealing.

There were widespread and severe famines in many parts of the country in 1866, 1876-78 and 1898. It witnessed unprecedented outbreaks of dacoity, food riots and looting of markets, house-breakings and cattle-stealing. The Inspector General of Police (IGP) observed in 1877 that ‘Dacoity as the “special famine crime” was committed by hungry people, not ordinary criminals’.

Meena Radhakrishna (2001) in her book *Dishonoured by History: Criminal Tribes and British Colonial Policy* has presented the trading Korava community of the then Madras Presidency, who were labelled as criminal tribes as her case study. The Korava community lost their salt trade due to the colonial salt policy, and access to forest resources due to the forest policy of 1890s. The forest products were important items of barter in their trade. The laws did not allow them to collect bamboo and leaves which they used for making mats, baskets and brooms. Common grazing lands were cordoned off and thus not available to their cattle. In the 1850s, road and railway networks were established throughout the Madras Presidency and the bullock cart as a mode of transport suffered a setback. The famines of late nineteenth century were devastating as far as salt trade was concerned. Large numbers of their cattle also died due to famine and restrictions on grazing in common lands. As a result of all the above factors, the Korava community suffered a massive economic setback in the period between 1850s and 1890s.

The Banjaras of Andhra Pradesh were peripatetic (walking about) common carriers for generations. But due to the development of transport facilities, they lost their

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jobs and became criminals. Ranoshis and Wagharis, who acted as guards near the hills, ghats and forts during the Maratha regime adopted the life of criminals after the loss of their jobs.

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By now you must have gathered that people resorted to petty crimes as a survival strategy. It is noteworthy that criminality does not happen in groups; it is an individual phenomenon. But unfortunately, the provisions of the Criminal Act applied to all the individuals of the group. Even women and children were considered to be suspects in the eyes of law. It may be said that a large percentage of the communities were led into criminality when they were stuck with the stigma of criminal tribes.

**Repeal of this Act:** In 1937, the Criminal Tribes Committee was set up which was headed by V. N. Tiwari. The Committee was appointed by the Government of United Provinces. Tiwari opined that criminal tribes were a legacy of unhealthy social environments and wrong methods pursued through many centuries in dealing with them. They are not the sinners, they have been sinned against. This Committee, thus, has recommended as well as introduced some welfare activities for their group.

The Madras Province repealed the Act in 1947 and Bombay in 1949. The Government of India appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Ananthasayanam Ayyangar in 1949.

The Committee after studying the conditions of the 'Criminal Tribes' in the entire country recommended the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act. The Government of India accordingly repealed the Criminal Tribes Act and replaced it with Habitual Offenders Act 1952. The Habitual Offenders Act is a state government legislation. With the repeal of Criminal Tribes Act, the communities notified under this Act as 'Criminal Tribes' were de-notified and were recognized as 'De-notified Communities'. A list of the tribes which were de-notified with the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act was issued by the respective state governments as the list of De-notified Tribes or *Vimukta Jatis*. Thus, the list of De-notified Tribes came into existence for each state. The list of De-notified Tribes of the erstwhile Madras State, for example was issued in 1952.

The Bauria, Bazigar, Barad (Barar), Bangala, Gandhila, Nat, and Sansi communities in Punjab celebrate their Independence on 31<sup>st</sup> August as on that day in 1952 they were de-notified and became de-notified tribes (*Vimukta Jatis*); the tag of criminality was removed legally from them.

**Approach of the government of free India:** After the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act, a good number of people were freed from the stigma of criminality imputed to them. The Backward Classes Commission appointed by the Government of India made many suggestions for amelioration (to become better) of the conditions of these problem ridden communities. They are summarized below:

- Criminal tribes should be called 'De-notified communities' (*Vimukta Jati*).
- These communities should be included in the category of Scheduled Castes or Tribes and Backward classes according to their distinctive social features.
- They should be resettled in batches and gradually integrated within the larger society.
- Proper education for effecting national integration should be imparted to them for making them free citizens of free India.
- Reform activities should be undertaken for them.



- Collective criminal activities and the individual criminal activities should be clearly distinguished and understood for dealing with them.
- Proper education and employment for their children should be ensured.
- Economic rehabilitation should be ensured simultaneously.

In conclusion, it can be said that de-notified and ex-criminal tribes are the same. The only difference is that while the term de-notified tribe is an administrative category; ex-criminal tribe is a social category coined by the colonial rulers.

#### 1.4.4 Indigenous People

The native people of many countries did not like to be referred to as a 'tribe'. In different countries, they have their own appellations. In Australia, these people are recognized as 'Aborigines', in New Zealand as 'Maaori', in Canada, as 'First Nations' and in Americas as 'Indigenous people'. All these appellations point to their original/earlier settlement. This originality again is related, as you will know, to the colonial contact. These people existed in their countries before the colonization of their territory. Therefore, they are indigenous. Indigenous movement has been a global phenomenon. In countries like India, China and some other Asian countries, different groups lived together before the colonial contact. Nevertheless, some groups of people from these countries who somewhat resemble the original people of Australia, America and Africa in social, cultural and economic life also have become a part of the indigenous movement.

#### Historical Background

The issue of indigenous people was almost non-existent in the Indian academics as well as political world before 1993. The United Nations declared 1993 as the 'International Year of the Indigenous People'. Arguments against and in favour of considering tribes in India as indigenous people have come up with the same degree of intensity. Many of those who defended the term 'indigenous' for tribes happened to be activists. The slogan—'The adivasis of the world unite'—acquired popularity. This slogan was printed on the cover of the booklets that the Indian Conference of Indigenous and Tribal People brought out in 1993 on the occasion of the UN Year of the Indigenous People of the World.

However, the indigenous movement that culminated in 1990s can be traced back to 1923. During this year, the Cayuga Chief Deskaheh, a representative of the Iroquois of Ontario in Canada went to the League of Nations to represent the 'Six Nations of the Great River'. He carried a passport issued by the 'authority of his people'. However, two years before this event in 1921, the General Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) had showed concern for indigenous workers, who were among the most exploited. In 1926 its governing body adopted Convention No. 50 'Concerning the Regulation of Certain Special Systems of Recruiting Workers'. In 1939, it adopted Convention No. 64 'Concerning the Regulation of Certain Special System of Recruiting Workers'.

It is to be noted that the real indigenous rights movement began only with decolonization after the Second World War. Autonomy movement began in several independent countries. Mostly such movements took place in Latin America where indigenous populations were feeling doubly exploited. On one side foreign companies controlled their wealth and on the other the national elite collaborated with those foreign corporations. Many indigenous communities of the Americas questioned the genocide of their own ancestors. Additionally, the European indigenous people began to become more aware of their rights.

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These movements created heightened awareness in some international organizations, especially ILO, whose mandate is protection of the workers' rights. The result was ILO Convention 107 of 1957 'Concerning the Populations in Independent Countries'. In this Convention, the term 'indigenous people' came in. The convention used the term as a 'population of special category analogous to the tribal and semi-tribal population'.

**International Perspectives:** Indigenous movements, among other things, recognize the term 'indigenous' to designate people who were original settlers in their territory before the colonial contact. International organizations such as the ILO added to their concerns positively by defining the term.

According to the General Council of the International Labour Organization (ILO, 1957):

Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest, or colonization or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

The aim of this convention was to protect and integrate indigenous and other tribal and semi-tribal populations in independent countries. However, notwithstanding the many positive stipulations, the ILO convention of 1957 was criticized for its 'ethnocentric bias and patronizing attitude.' Accordingly, the ILO adopted a revised Convention 169, where the concept of indigenous has been overtly de-linked from the concept of tribe. By implication, however, they have been treated as synonyms. The convention applies to:

- (a) Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs and traditions or by special laws and regulations
- (b) Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of the conquest or colonization or the establishment of the present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

The General Assembly of the United Nations in a resolution states that:

Indigenous or aboriginal peoples are so called because they were living on their lands before settlers came from elsewhere; they are the descendants...of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived, the new arrivals later becoming dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means.

Mme Erica-Irene Daes, former Chairperson of the UN Working Group on indigenous populations, provides another widely used definition. According to Daes:

Certain peoples are indigenous because they are descendants of groups which were in the territory of the country at the time when other groups of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived there; because of their isolation from other segments of the country's population, they have preserved almost intact the customs and traditions of their ancestors which are similar to those characterized as indigenous; and because they are, even if only formally, placed under a State structure which incorporates national, social and cultural characteristics alien to theirs.

Jose R. Martinez Cobo in 1986 in his work entitled *The Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations* has proposed the following definition of indigenous people:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical contiguity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.

**Indigenous People: A Restricted Applicability:** The term ‘indigenous’ to designate the original people of a territory was born in the Americas, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand where a clear line divides them from the colonial conquerors. In Australia and Africa for example, the natives who inhabited the land before the colonial contact and the new migrants including the colonizers live together in post-colonial period. Obviously, the population is divided into earlier settlers and new migrants. In countries of South Asia, however, different ethnic groups lived for millennia. As a result, there is a difference of opinion on who is indigenous to these countries.

The use of the term ‘indigenous’ as a synonym of ‘tribe’ lacks definitional clarity when its universal applicability is concerned. Because of this ambiguity, the ILO Convention 169 (Article 1) recognizes both, indigenous and tribal people. This means those who live in a way that sets them apart from the national community, whether or not they have descended from ‘first inhabitants’. For instance, in several Central American countries, garifunas (or maroons, or other terms) are descendants of escaped African slaves, and thus are not indigenous in the literal sense, but they are tribal and are covered by the Convention.

It is to be noted that the definition of Daes on indigenous is taken as the unofficial UN definition of the term indigenous people. However, Miguel Alfonso Martinez (1999) does not agree with the universality of its application.

While working on a UNESCO report entitled ‘Study on Treaties, Agreements and Other Constructive Arrangements between States, and Indigenous Populations’ he has questioned the usage of the term indigenous people in Asian countries in general and in India in particular. We know that in India not only the tribal communities but all the communities which form the Indian nation-state in the post-colonial era were inhabitants even before the colonial contact. Needless to say, the parameter of colonizers’ contact put all the communities of India, including the tribals, under the category of indigenous.

#### 1.4.5 ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Tribe’ Distinguished

The Portugal colonizers designated the earlier people of their colonies as tribes. But some of these tribal groups in many countries distinguished themselves from the colonizers and preferred to use the term indigenous. The essence of indigenous initially concerned the natives vis-a-vis colonial settlers. The term tribe is imposed while the term indigenous is self-chosen.

It is further clear from the ILO Convention 169 that the terms ‘indigenous’ and ‘tribal’ are not properly defined. It takes a practical approach and only provides criteria for describing the people in either of the two categories. Self-identification is considered as a fundamental criterion for the identification of indigenous and tribal people, along with the criteria outlined below:

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**Elements of tribal people include:**

- Traditional lifestyles
- Culture and way of life different from the other segments of the national population, e.g. in their ways of making a living, language, customs, etc.
- Own social organization and traditional customs and laws

**Elements of indigenous people include:**

- Traditional lifestyles
- Culture and way of life different from the other segments of the national population, e.g. in their ways of making a living, language, customs, etc.
- Typical social organization and political institutions
- Living in historical continuity in a certain area, before others “invaded” or came to the area.

**Tribal and Indigenous Interface in India**

In India, the use of the term ‘tribe’ as a synonym to ‘indigenous’ is contested. In India those who live in post-colonial state also lived together during the pre-colonial period. But some scholars apply the concept to tribal communities considering their domination by the nation states. The state power is considered to be dominating the marginalized people including the tribals. It is often highlighted that these people are reduced to a colonial situation and are dominated by a system of values and institutions maintained by the ruling groups of the country.

However, this type of explanation of the relations between the power of the state and the marginalized communities is too partial an understanding. The dominating role of the state as ‘colonial invasion and domination’ does not hold to the principles of welfare commitments of the nation states like India. Policies and programmes are formulated for the general welfare of marginalized people with compensatory discrimination and affirmative action to raise their level of development at par with the national level.

There are other concerns which need scrutiny when one addresses the issue of the ‘indigenous’. The moot issue is whether to consider tribes that include Scheduled Tribes, non-Scheduled Tribes and de-notified tribes as indigenous people or only the Scheduled Tribe category under it. If we consider the Scheduled Tribe category, it becomes problematic. There are migrants from plains to hills like some communities of Jaunsar-Bawar and Gaddi of Himachal Pradesh who are included in the Scheduled Tribe category. Moreover, the Scheduled Tribe being a state specific category, the same community across the political boundary may not be considered as indigenous. If the tribe is called indigenous then that indigeneity is lost if they migrate to other places. The Santhals and Mundas, who are called *Adivasis* in their respective earlier settlements and in Assam to which they migrated, belong to tribal category in the anthropological sense. These people migrated to Assam which was then inhabited by Assamese people. Hence, in comparison to the Assamese population are the early settlers of Assam. Being *adivasis*, they could not be indigenous while the non-tribe Assamese would come under the definition of indigenous as they are the early settlers.

Many ethnographical studies on tribes point to the migratory nature of the Indian population in general and tribes in particular at different points of time. The Tani groups of tribes in Arunachal trace their migration in different batches from a place in Tibet over centuries till they came to their present habitation with short sojourn en-route.

In this context the remarks of Ludwig Gumplowicz and Irving Louis Horowitz (1980) in their work entitled *The Outlines of Sociology* is worth mentioning. They inform us that:

... The Negritos were the earliest inhabitants of India ... The Proto-Australoids who followed them had their type more or less fixed in India and therefore may be considered to be the true aborigines. Thereafter the Austro-Asiatic peoples came ... the Indo Aryans came and settled in India; so, too, did the Dravidians ... This being the state of our knowledge regarding the peopling of India, it would be hazardous to look upon one particular section of the population as the aborigines of India ...

On the basis of the findings of the People of India Project, K. S. Singh (1997) writes:

Four hundred and nine tribes (64.3 per cent) claim to be migrants to their present habitat. In fact all our tribal people have been migrants. Their migration is recorded in oral tradition and historical accounts. About eight per cent of the tribes record their migration in recent years.

The migration has led to various levels of interaction of different communities. In this context, S. C. Dube (1998:5) notes:

The Kol and Kirda of India have had long association with later immigrants. Mythology and history bear testimony to their [tribals'] encounters and intermingling.

It is a known fact that the indigenous debate is of a recent origin. It has political and colonial overtones. Therefore, the point is that the tribal world should be understood in the context of its cosmology and the thoughts of the people. In this context, Andre Beteille observes:

Where historical records are scarce and historical memory is short, the idea of 'indigenous people' provides abundant scope for the proliferation of myths relating to blood and soil.

Does it then mean that the term 'indigenous' does not have any use in the Indian context? The term *adivasi* is analogous to the term indigenous. The *adivasi* concept was accepted by the communities much before the indigenous issue emerged. Whereas, the term indigenous has an international dimension, that of *adivasi* has Indian specificity. When two communities co-exist in a particular place, there is a possibility that one community could be the earlier settler. If this earlier settler is a so called tribal community then the *adivasi* appellation has some meaning. If two communities are so-called Aryans, for example, the *adivasi* identity does not have any meaning for the earlier settlers. For all practical purposes, the *adivasi* word was used to refer to the tribal groups, who identified themselves in their community names like Gond and Bodo. To bring all of them to one category, the generic *adivasi* term has been coined. In this sense, indigenous as an equivalent to the term *adivasi*, perhaps will have a meaning in India. On the other hand, the term indigenous with its international connotation is a misnomer.

### 1.4.6 Contemporary Tribal Situation in India

The tribes in contemporary India have undergone many changes. Though the most primitive group in terms of indices of growth and development are the tribes but not all tribes are primitive. In many tribes, there are sections which are as influential as the sections of middle class anywhere. Internal heterogeneity in terms of differentiation of wealth is increasing. According to Srivastava (2006), with respect to the outside world, tribes have reacted in two ways.

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There are tribal communities who have changed qualitatively. Economically, their condition has improved. They have better health profile, higher level of literacy and have entered new occupations. Examples of such communities are the Nagas, Mizo, Khasi, Mina and those sections of tribes of Central India who have embraced Christianity.

The second group constitutes of those who have not been benefited by the development programmes. Development has led to pauperization and marginalization. They have been displaced from their traditional habitat, forced to lead an ignoble existence as wage labourers, rickshaw pullers or domestic help to others. Majority of tribes belong to this category. This group represents the exploited and marginalized lots.

The main problem of the contemporary tribal communities is their exposure to development interventions. This has led to different problems which the tribals are victims of.

There is a rising awareness of unmet needs among the tribes in India. Resentment against exploitation is giving rise to violence. Extremist movements, like Naxalism, is gaining stronghold in many tribal areas. The tribes are deprived of the use of common property resources. There are also issues of identity assertion. All these problems have an economic dimension. In fact, economic problem is at the centre of tribal problems and it causes other problems like human trafficking, the system of bonded labour and political problems relating to insurgency, policy atrocities, declining common property resources and so on.

On the one hand, the tribals are being integrated to national development projects and on the other, majority of them have become victims of such exposures. There is a need to initiate corrective measures at the earliest to redress their problems, before the situation goes out of hand.

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## 1.5 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that,

- Tribal studies have been a matter of interest since the late sixteenth century. It was around this time that the Western world came to know of communities and cultures which were very different from them.
- Studies on tribes have contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics. The origin and growth of anthropology—more precisely social (cultural) anthropology—has its roots in tribal studies.
- There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies.
- With the end of colonialism, tribal studies acquired a different set of objectives. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns.
- The methodology of holistic understanding derived from tribal studies has also made its impact on other disciplines.
- Interest shown in the study of the tribes has gone a long way since its beginning with the colonial interest in these communities. Studies are now taken up with academic interest and also with objectives having policy implications.

### Check Your Progress

10. Why was a list of tribal communities drawn post-independence?
11. Who are the primitive tribes?
12. How does P. K. Bhowmick present a classification of the de-notified tribes?
13. State the mandate of the International Labour Organization.

- The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes from a cross-cultural perspective.
- Tribal studies have been focussing on studying tribal economies where one encounters a different kind of economic system.
- Tribal/indigenous literature is emerging as a genre in the field of literature as American Literature or Canadian Literature or Indian Literature.
- Archaeological methods help understand the tribal culture as a continuum. Similarly, ethnographic data help explain archaeological facts.
- Every tribe has its customary laws to deal with civil disputes like land disputes and criminal cases like theft, rape and murder. However, these customary laws are uncodified.
- Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities.
- The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin's, the Sabine's and the Etruscans.
- Before the British rule, no community in India was designated as a tribal community. The communities designated as tribes have/had their own terms of reference and reference by the outsiders.
- According to the evolutionary scholars, society or socio-politico development has occurred through four stages and the tribe represents the second stage in the pre-state social organization.
- Tribal communities in India are not static; they are always in the process of adoption and change. The process is more visible when these communities, whether scheduled or non-scheduled are integrated into the Nation's development agenda.
- The term tribe did not exist before the colonial period. However, most of the people with whom the term is associated used to live in forests and hills. Therefore, in India the notion of tribe has evolved from these people.
- The tribe is an administrative and political concept in India. The concept whether we accept it or not, has both administrative and political overtones. Scheduled Tribes, De-notified Tribes, and Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), are examples.
- In India, tribe is an administrative concept. It refers to Scheduled Tribes, i.e. the tribes and communities listed in the Constitution of India. Other than the Scheduled Tribes, we come across two other administrative terms in the context of tribes: The Primitive Tribes and the Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes.
- According to V. K. Srivastava (2005), today when the anthropologist uses the term tribe in the context of India, they include all the communities included in the list of the Scheduled Tribes, although some of them may not be in accordance with the anthropological conception of tribe.
- The territorial dimension also emerges from the fact that the Scheduled Tribe is a state concept. The tribe of one state does not enjoy the same status in another state.

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- The Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is not a Constitutional category different from the Scheduled Tribes. It is a category within the Scheduled Tribe category.
- The term 'primitive', however, has derogatory overtones. Therefore, B. K. Roy Burman suggested renaming these communities as 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups'.
- The de-notified tribes were earlier known as criminal tribes. After they were de-notified, they were also known as ex-criminal tribes.
- In 1937, the Criminal Tribes Committee was set up which was headed by V. N. Tiwari. The Committee was appointed by the Government of United Provinces.
- The native people of many countries did not like to be referred to as a 'tribe'. In different countries, they have their own appellation. In Australia, these people are recognized as 'Aborigines', in New Zealand as 'Maaori', in Canada, as 'First Nations' and in Americas as 'Indigenous people'.
- Indigenous movements, among other things, recognize the term 'indigenous' to designate people who were original settlers in their territory before the colonial contact.
- The use of the term 'indigenous' as a synonym of 'tribe' lacks definitional clarity when its universal applicability is concerned. Because of this ambiguity, the ILO Convention 169 (Article 1) recognizes both, indigenous and tribal people.
- The tribes in contemporary India have undergone many changes. Though the most primitive group in terms of indices of growth and development are the tribes but not all tribes are primitive.

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## 1.6 KEY TERMS

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- **Appellation:** It means the name or title by which someone is known.
- **Acephalous society:** It is the society without a political head or hierarchy, democratic type of societies.
- **Cephalous society:** It is the society with a central political head like the chief.
- **Endogamy:** It is the practice of marrying within the defined kin-group, be it clan, lineage, village or social class.
- **Exogamy:** It is the practice of marriage outside the kin-group.
- **Morphemes:** They are meaningful units into which a word can be divided.
- **Morphology:** It is the study of the morphemes of a language and how they are combined to make words.
- **Theocracy:** It is the system where there is a state religion.

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## 1.7 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. The study of tribal communities commenced with anthropologists' interest in the study of 'other cultures'. Anthropology as a discipline emerged with the study of tribes.



2. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns. In India, for example, the approach shifted to the welfare and development of tribal communities, rather than the colonial approach to keep them isolated.
3. The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes in a cross-cultural perspective.
4. Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, for example, narrates the exploitation of the tribes and their response and struggle against it.
5. Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities.
6. The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin's, the Sabine's and the Etruscans.
7. Elman Service and Marshall Sahlins were the two most important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages— socio-economic development.
8. Maurice Godelier also argues that the tribe is a type of social organization which can only be understood if we view it as a stage in the social evolution.
9. Buddhadeb Chaudhuri (1992) has suggested the term 'ethnic group' as an alternative to the term 'tribe' which is defined as a largely self-perpetuating group in biological terms, sharing the same descent, real or putative, which has a set of similar fundamental values realized in cultural forms.
10. Post-independence it was realized that the most backward communities in terms of development indicators like literacy, access to health care, nutrition, income, poverty are from the tribes of India. Therefore, a list of tribal communities was drawn to provide special assistance to them.
11. Primitive tribe is an administrative category used for those Scheduled Tribe communities who were identified as more isolated from the wider community and who maintain a distinctive cultural identity.
12. On the basis of their habitats, occupations and ways of life, Bhowmick presents a classification of these de-notified tribes into the following groups:
  - (i) Nomadic groups who have taken to criminal life
  - (ii) Fighting men and soldiers who having lost their jobs, have turned into criminals
  - (iii) Communities who used to work as village watchman and police, but have taken to criminal life
  - (iv) Wild tribes in distress who took to criminal living as a way out of the plight they had fallen in
  - (v) Beggars turned into criminals
  - (vi) Some settled castes and tribes who took to criminality due to poverty
13. The mandate of the International Labour Organization is the protection of the workers' rights.

## NOTES

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## 1.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### NOTES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. How have the studies on tribes contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics?
2. State the relevance of tribal studies.
3. Why are tribal societies in a transitional phase?
4. List the nature of tribal studies as a discipline.
5. What is the relationship between life sciences and tribal studies?
6. Name few laws which are meant to safeguard the interests of tribal people.
7. Write a note on tribe as a colonial construct in India.
8. State the reason behind the tribes being in a state of transition.
9. Why is Anthony Walker of the opinion that the term 'caste' has a 'considerable value' in comparison to the term 'tribe'?
10. List the criteria established by the Lokur Committee for declaring a particular community as a Scheduled Tribe.
11. The term 'primitive' has derogatory overtones. Give your views.
12. Give a background of the Criminal Tribes Act.
13. Who are the indigenous people? How are they different from the tribes?
14. What is the contemporary tribal situation of India?

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. What are tribal studies? How did they evolve?
2. Discuss the nature, scope and relevance of tribal studies.
3. Assess the relationship between tribal studies and other disciplines like economics, sociology and law.
4. Critically analyse the relationship between tribal studies and political science, history and literature.
5. Assess the colonial origin of the term tribe.
6. Describe tribe as a stage of evolution.
7. Evaluate the origin of the term tribe and its evolution in India.
8. Who are the Scheduled Tribes? Why is the concept of Scheduled Tribe a state concept?
9. Describe the Primitive Tribals Group (PTGs) as a category of the Scheduled Tribes.
10. Explain the category of the de-notified tribes and the reason behind their taking recourse to theft.

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## 1.9 FURTHER READING

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- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
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- Devy, G. N.; Davis, Geoffrey V. and Chakravarty, K. K (ed.). 2011. *Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

## NOTES



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# UNIT 2 TRIBAL STUDIES IN INDIA

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## Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Unit Objectives
- 2.2 Emergence and Growth of Tribal Studies
  - 2.2.1 Beginning of Tribal Studies in India
  - 2.2.2 Stages in Tribal Studies
  - 2.2.3 Present Trends in Tribal Studies
  - 2.2.4 Characterizing Indian Tribes
  - 2.2.5 Emerging Fields of Knowledge in Tribal Studies
- 2.3 Approaches to Study the Tribes
  - 2.3.1 Anthropological Approach
  - 2.3.2 Historical Approach
  - 2.3.3 Folklores
  - 2.3.4 Emic and Etic approaches
  - 2.3.5 Human Rights Approach
  - 2.3.6 Policy Approaches to the Tribes
- 2.4 Summary
- 2.5 Key Terms
- 2.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 2.7 Questions and Exercises
- 2.8 Further Reading

## NOTES

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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

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The origin of the term 'tribe' has been discussed in the previous unit. The unit also defined its meaning and scope. As we know the concept of tribe was never in use before the British rule. Hence, the concept of tribe in India is a colonial legacy. Therefore, post-independence, the word 'tribe' is not used in the anthropological sense. We use it as an administrative concept. Moreover, there are tribes who are not scheduled in the Constitution and exist in an anthropological sense. Therefore, in India tribes are studied either in the colonial sense or as an administrative concept or as an anthropological category. There exists different approaches to study the tribes. In this unit, we shall discuss the historical background and different approaches to study the tribes. Moreover, studies on tribes show different perspectives which have emerged from such studies. We shall also discuss the nature and types of such studies to understand the interdisciplinary perspectives in tribal studies.

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## 2.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Trace the establishment of tribal studies in India
- Describe the characteristics and features of the Indian tribes
- Analyse the emerging fields of knowledge in tribal studies
- Explain the anthropological approach to study tribes
- Describe the emic and etic approach to tribal studies
- Assess the policy approaches to tribes in detail

## 2.2 EMERGENCE AND GROWTH OF TRIBAL STUDIES

### NOTES

Tribal studies, as a discipline are of a recent origin and emerged when different universities started offering Post-graduation courses, M. Phil courses, Ph. D programmes or Post-graduation diploma programmes in tribal studies. But the interest in the study of tribes dates back to the colonial period. In India, the study of tribes started with the administrative support during the British period with an objective of generating data for the smooth administration of tribes. The government of independent India took interest in tribal studies as its welfare measure of the people of India in general and the tribes in particular. In this section, we shall discuss the history of tribal studies and its growth over the period.

### 2.2.1 Beginning of Tribal Studies in India

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British government felt the need to have an ethnographic account on different tribes of India with a view to rule them easily. They were not anthropologists by training and profession, but their account on the tribes provided ample information on the tribal history of India. A number of foreign anthropologists visited India to record the customs and traditions of the Indian tribes. British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers came to India in 1904 and studied the Toda tribe of South India, which was published in 1906. Another anthropologist, Alfred Radcliffe-Brown came to India to study the Onge tribe of the Andaman Islands in 1906 and 1908. A monograph on the Onge tribe was published in 1922 under the title *The Andaman Islanders*. Therefore, during the colonial period, we have works on tribes which are administrative accounts and ethnographic studies. Most of the data were collected from fieldworks.

Among the Indian scholars, **S. C. Roy** is regarded as ‘The Father of Indian Ethnography’. He was a lawyer by profession. He settled in Ranchi to establish his practice as a pleader (legal practitioner). Gradually, he came in contact with the tribal people of Chota Nagpur. He gradually developed an interest in their life and culture. As a lawyer, S. C. Roy used to visit the interiors of Chota Nagpur on commission from courts and could observe the tribals from close quarters. He was distressed by the way tribals were treated in the court of law. He emphasized the need to study the tribal customary laws in order to do justice to their cases. Roy was of the opinion that having knowledge about the history of a tribe would help us appreciate its culture better. He studied the Munda, Oraon and Birhor tribes and published the information he collected on them. He first published a monograph on the Mundas.

The later ethnographic works of S. C. Roy are *The Oraons of Choto Nagpur: Their History, Economic Life and Social Organization* (1915), *The Birhors: A Little-known Jungle Tribe of Chota Nagpur* (1925), *Oraon Religion and Customs* (1928), and *The Hill Bhuiyas of Orissa* (1935). Because of his deep and sound understanding of tribal life and culture, the government often sought his advice whenever the government faced administrative problems in dealing with the tribals. He proved how timely intervention by an anthropologist could lead to the end of stress and strain in the society. He emphasized the need for giving anthropological training not only to the administrative and judicial officers, but to the forest and excise officers also, who were posted in tribal areas.

Another anthropologist who contributed immensely to tribal studies in India was **D. N. Majumdar**. He conducted fieldwork among the Ho tribes of Bihar, which later

## NOTES

was published as a book in 1937. He was the first Indian to study and write about the impact of non-tribals on the life of Indian tribes. He also pleaded for the application of the findings of anthropology to the task of development and policy formulation. His posthumous book, *Himalayan Polyandry, Structure, Functioning and Culture Change: A field study of Jaunsar-Bawar* (1962) contains a detailed discussion of the community development programmes in Jaunsar-Bawar in Uttaranchal.

J. K. Bose's book on *Culture Change among the Garos* (1985), based on his field work in 1941 is significant from both methodological and empirical points of view. In this book, Bose has studied the Garo tribe who had migrated to the plains of Mymensingh (present Bangladesh) adjacent to the Garo Hills around 1891 and had adopted cultivation. On the basis of field study, he studied the changes taking place among the Garos in their new settlement with reference to their original settlement in Garo Hills.

Another popular work on the tribes was the one conducted by **M. N. Srinivas** among the Coorgs. In his one year of fieldwork among the Coorgs, he gathered data on marriage and family, which was published in 1942.

Prabodh Kumar Bhowmick is another Indian scholar who studied the tribes on two accounts: To prepare ethnography and to work towards the upliftment of the tribes. He believed that research does not merely lie in 'knowing about underprivileged' rather in 'doing something for the upliftment of the underprivileged'. Since 1955 P. K. Bhowmick carried out his activities for the socio-economic development of the tribes in general and the Lodha tribe in particular. He founded the Ashram-cum-Research Institute *Bidisha*, where traditional knowledge on tribes culminates with the social research for their upliftment according to the changing needs of modern times. His twin objectives are reflected in his book *Applied-Action Development Anthropology* published in 1990.

Renowned anthropologist L. P. Vidyarthi studied the tribal village named Ghanhra under the auspices of Census Operation in 1961. The study of this Munda village reflects how Manjhi, a section of Munda tribe, has adopted the Hindu style of life and become a caste. His book, *Cultural Contours of Tribal Bihar* (1966) explains the historical, geographical and social background of the tribes of Chota Nagpur. Some concepts like unity and extension, sanskritization and desanskritization, tribalization and detribalization have also been attempted in the context of tribal Bihar. The book explains the factors responsible for bringing changes in the tribal societies of Bihar. **L. P. Vidyarthi** and **B. K. Roy Burman** wrote a book under the title *The Tribal Culture of India* (1976). Taking data from secondary sources at the Indian level, the authors have attempted to present a comparative and comprehensive view on the social, economic, political and religious life of the Indian tribes. The book also presents a good amount of information on folklore, art, course of life and personality structure in the context of tribal India. The book highlights the character of tribal village, matriliney and polyandry in tribal India. It also deals with the approaches, planning and programmes for tribal development and cultural changes among the tribes of India.

### 2.2.2 Stages in Tribal Studies

The researches conducted on the tribes of India may be reviewed at par with researches on Indian anthropology in three chronological phases of development, namely:

1. Formative phase (1774-1919)
2. Constructive phase (1920-1949)
3. Analytical phase (1950-1990)

## NOTES

**1. Formative Phase**

It may be noted that though the scholars have identified these three phases of development, it does not mean that one phase completely replaces the other phase. Also, there have been different rates of development of tribal researches in various parts of India.

Tribal research in India owes its foundation to the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1774). Sir William Jones, the founder member, piloted a number of researches and publications on subjects concerning the tribes. Hereafter, the British administrators, missionaries, travellers and other individuals interested in tribal studies collected data on tribes and wrote extensively about their life and lifestyle. They collected ethnographic data and published a series of handbooks on the tribes. They also wrote about tribal life and culture in *The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1784), *Indian Antiquary* (1872) and later in the *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (1915) and *Man in India* (1921).

The British government appointed a large number of scholarly-oriented British administrators in tribal areas to enquire about their habits, religion and other cultural aspects to facilitate easy rule. These generalized works about the land and people of different regions were followed by some detailed accounts by scholars who were greatly influenced by British anthropologists like Rivers and others who published monographs on different tribes of India.

These works by British administrators are still valuable for basic information about the life and culture of the tribes and castes in different regions of India. Risley, Dalton and O'Malley wrote on the people of East India, Russel of Middle India, Thurston of South India and Coorcks on people of Northern India during this period. Besides, there are some other works on tribes by some administrators. Mention may be made of the following:

- G. Campbell, 1866: *The Ethnology of India*
- R. G. Latham, 1859: *Ethnography of India*
- H. H. Risley, 1891: *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*
- George W. Briggs, 1920: *The Chamars*

Under these influences, the first Indian, who was later known as the 'Father of Indian Ethnography' to write exhaustive monographs on the tribes of the country was S. C. Roy, who published a monograph on the Munda (1912) and the Oraon (1915). He is also called the 'Father of Indian Ethnology'.

**2. Constructive Phase**

Tribal study in India entered its second phase—constructive phase—when social anthropology was included in the curriculum of the two important universities of Mumbai (in 1919) and Kolkata (in 1921). Scholars like G. S. Ghurye, Irawati Karve, A. Ayyappan provided the initial stimulation to organize scientific anthropological researches. They did this by conducting field expeditions, writing books and articles and also by training researchers for undertaking anthropological researches especially on various aspects of tribal culture. These scholars have worked across disciplinary boundaries.

A big advancement in tribal studies came in 1938 when the joint session of the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) and the British Association was held. During the session, the progress of anthropology in India was reviewed and the plans for future anthropological researches in India were discussed.



## NOTES

During the constructive phase, different anthropologists studied and analysed their doctoral data critically and brought out a certain amount of theoretical sophistication in tribal researches in India. D. N. Majumdar's work on changing Hos of Singbhum entitled *The Affairs of a Tribe: A Study in Tribal Dynamics* (1950), M. N. Srinivas' publication *Marriage and Family in Mysore* (1942), and N. K. Bose's *Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption* (1941) brought the turning point in tribal studies in India. During this time, missionary turned anthropologist Verrier Elwin, came out with a series of his problem-oriented publications on the tribes of Madhya Pradesh and Odisha. His publications like *The Baiga* (1939), *The Agaria* (1942), *Maria, Murder and Suicide* (1943), *The Muria and Their Ghotul* (1947), and *The Religion of an Indian Tribe* (1955) were important insights in tribal studies. *A Philosophy for NEFA* and *Democracy in NEFA* were his further contributions to tribal studies.

Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf's publication like *The Chenchus. A Jungle Folk of the Deccan* (1942), *Tribal Populations of Hyderabad* (1945), *The Reddis of the Bison Hills: A Study in Acculturation* (in collaboration with Elizabeth von Fürer-Haimendorf in two volumes, 1945), were landmarks in tribal studies. His works on Apatanis also were subsequent additions to tribal studies. The tradition of tribal studies as the exclusive focus by the progressive British scholars, administrators, missionaries and the British and Indian anthropologists continued till the end of forties of the 20th century.

### 3. Analytical Phase

After Independence, the tribal studies in India witnessed an analytical and action-oriented approach. As a result the tribal communities began to be studied with an interdisciplinary approach. The constitutional commitments to ameliorate the conditions of the tribal communities gave a boost to study and evaluate the processes of change in the tribal communities. The Census operations of the Government of India also intensified the schemes of tribal studies. The tradition of tribal research was further enriched during the contemporary analytical phase. A number of non-governmental organizations came up in the country to look into the welfare of the tribal people. They drew the attention of the government to the tribal problems and their possible solutions.

During the early period of the analytical phase, D. N. Majumdar, M. M. Das, L. P. Vidyarthi, K. N. Sahay, B. N. Sahay, S. C. Sinha, P. K. Bhowmick and N. K. Behura contributed to the tribal studies from an analytical viewpoint. The analytical tradition is upheld by present scholars of tribal studies like A. K. Kapoor, V. K. Srivastava, K. K. Mishra, Jagannath Das, L. K. Mahapatra, Ashim Adhikary, V. S. Sahay, Tamo Mibang, M. C. Behera, Malli Gandhi, Karma Oraon, Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, Prafulla Mohapatra and many others.

#### 2.2.3 Present Trends in Tribal Studies

##### Interest of Government Organizations (GOs) and Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

Beginning with the colonial interest to study the tribes for the purpose of administration, the interest in the study of tribes has been diversified and has travelled a long way. It is not the academic interest, but the necessity of the development practitioners which has strengthened the studies on the tribes and about the tribes. No doubt various government organizations and NGOs have taken interest in tribal studies. The University Grants Commission (UGC), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Indian Council of Social Science Research

## NOTES

(ICSSR) and many funding agencies provide financial assistance to research projects on tribes and their ways of life. Dibrugarh University, Assam, for example, has made a study of demographic profiles of more than 10 tribes of North-East under Special Assistance Programme of University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

K. S. Singh, in his project 'People of India' and in various seminars and conferences, has contributed to the tribal studies. His approach is basically anthropo-historical studies of the tribes and tribal–non-tribal relations. In the academic sphere, various universities having centres, institutes and departments promote research works on tribal studies. Recently V. K. Srivastava has made a survey of ICSSR funding to tribal researches in the country. In many states, there are tribal research institutes and many research institutes are coming up which conduct researches on different aspects of tribal way of life. The Anthropological Survey of India conducts studies not only on socio-cultural aspects of the tribes, but also on physical aspects. Recent interest in Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) has given a new impetus to the study of tribes.

Scholars study the various aspects of tribal life from interdisciplinary perspectives. Not only that, they study different tribes and topics in the course of their academic pursuits contrary to the earlier tradition of studying one tribe for a long time. This is because language is not a problem for field scholars and there are earlier works available as base work. Moreover, refined field methods like participatory rural appraisal are also available. Jagannath Das, V. S. Sahay, A. K. Kapoor and many others have studied a number of tribes. M. C. Behera has also studied a number of tribes with distinct research objectives and methodological perspectives. On the basis of his study of the Puroiks (2001-02) of Arunachal Pradesh, he has contributed to the understanding of the concept of *foraging mode of thought*. He has also produced two ethnographic reports, namely *Impact of Orange Cultivation on Traditional Role of Galo Women* (1999), *Village India: Identification and Enhancement of Cultural Heritage* (2000) on the Galo and the Minyong group of Adi tribe respectively. He has—after working among the Khamptis—produced a book entitled *Planning and Socio-Economic Development of the Tribals* (1994).

The growing academic and applied interests in tribal studies has increasing institutional support in the form of a National Commission or Tribal Research Institutes in many states, Line Ministry of Tribal Affairs, and Centres, Institutes and Departments in Universities. Institutional interests in tribal studies sometimes aim at promoting and preserving tribal culture. The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was established in 1996 as a voluntary organization for the study, conservation, and promotion of tribal languages, literature, history, culture, arts, and crafts. It is also concerned with the socio-economic welfare of the tribals and protection of their human rights. Bhasha's work is mostly conducted in the western tribal belt of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. It also extends to other regions, primarily through its activities among migrating communities, especially the de-notified and nomadic tribes. In order to save the tribal languages from extinction and to preserve their vast cultural and literary treasures, Bhasha publishes a magazine called *Dhol* in 11 tribal languages (Ahirani, Dungri Bhili, Panchamahali Bhili, Kunkna, Dehvali, Rathawi, Bhandu, Choudhri, Gor-Banjara, Pawri, and Marathi). The editor of each issue is a folklorist/compiler of oral literature in his or her respective community. *Dhol* has emerged as a platform on which tribal intellectuals can share their cultural knowledge and practices with the other tribes of India. The COATS (Council of Analytical and Tribal Studies), Koraput provides M. Phil and Ph. D degrees in Tribal Studies at the Berhampur University. Besides, it is engaged in researches pertaining to tribal development of the region.

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Tribal studies have been introduced as a research subject at M. Phil and Ph. D. levels of many Universities like Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur; Rajiv Gandhi University, Itanagar; Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak and many others. Except one University (Kannada University, Hampi) there are no independent Post-graduation (P.G.) programmes in other Universities. However, P.G. Programme in anthropology is combined with tribal studies in North Orissa University, Guru Ghasidas University and Central University of Orissa. Moreover, Tripura and Himachal Pradesh University have introduced P.G Diploma in tribal studies. Universities like Assam University, Nagaland University, Anand Agricultural University, Kannur University have centres of tribal studies, mainly to promote research activities.

The Central University of Jharkhand has established four centres pertaining to tribal studies. These are Indigenous Cultural Studies, Tribal and Customary Law, Tribal Folklore, Language and Culture and Tribal Music and Performing Arts. Krishna Kanta Handique State Open University has introduced a paper on 'Tribal Social System' in its Programme Masters of Social Work. Rajiv Gandhi University also has introduced Tribal Studies as a subject at the Under-graduate level in distance education. Quite a good number of journals are now available on tribal studies. You will also find that many state governments have started with tribal research institutes. This growing importance of tribal studies can be attributed to its relevance and in its expanding scope in contemporary times.

Tribes are studied as a stage in the process of social change. Obviously, there are theoretical works. The development practitioners show interest in action-oriented researches. Language and identity issues have become a thrust area in tribal studies. Due to the conversion to alien religion, many scholars take interest in the study of the identity and cultural process of the tribal communities. Resource management and people's knowledge in bio-diversity has also become a thrust area of research in tribal studies. Documentation of culture and knowledge system of the tribes has been undertaken by many scholars. As the tribes are conscious of their rights and duties, there are attempts to safeguard their rights on land and forests. Impact of different policies and Acts on these resources and on tribal rights has emerged as an interesting area of study. So is the case with the area of health and hygiene. The tribal system of medicine and its efficacy is now the interest of study for many scholars. Documentation of customary laws has been the thrust area of study for many research organizations. The syllabus is so designed as to focus on the above aspects through four papers.

#### 2.2.4 Characterizing Indian Tribes

We all are aware that the term 'tribe' is a colonial construct. The colonial ruler divided the Indian society into tribes and castes; the analogy for the group of people as tribes was drawn from the Australian and African experiences. Risley used this analogy to define tribes in the 1901 Census. According to Risley and Gait, a tribe is a collection of families or groups of families having the following characteristics:

- Bearing a common name, which as a rule, does not denote any specific occupation
- Generally claiming a common descent from a mythical or historical ancestor and occasionally from an animal, but in some parts of the country held together rather by the obligation of blood feud than by the tradition of kinship
- Usually speaking the same language and occupying, professing, or claiming to occupy a definite tract of the country

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- Is not necessarily endogamous; that is to say it is not invariably the rule that a man of a particular tribe must marry a woman of that tribe and cannot marry a woman of a different tribe

Risley's attempt to define a tribe, in contrast to caste is clearly apparent in his definition of a tribe. Tribes were not occupational groups; their names do not specify any occupation. On the other hand, caste names mostly denote the occupations of the members. For example, *Lohar* (ironsmith), *Swarnkar* (goldsmith) or *Teli* (oil presser) caste names also indicate their respective occupations. In caste system, the principle of caste endogamy is strictly followed, which was in Risley's opinion not the case with the tribes.

Contrary to Risley's definition, the tribes in contemporary India have an occupation or set of occupations and they speak many languages. They are mobile and have migrated to different parts of the country. For example, Santhals who are the native people of Chota Nagpur plateau have also settled in Assam for occupational reasons since a very long time. Isolation is disappearing. A section of them is as advanced as any middle class community in India. Why do we then continue calling them tribes? This is so because they are scheduled as a tribe in our Constitution.

In India a tribe is always in the process of interaction and we have constitutional nomenclature for it. Though the tribes are in the process of interaction, still they differ in respect of their level of interaction, place of habitation and so on. Therefore, Indian scholars have their schema of characterizing a community as a tribe. All characteristics may or may not be present in a community but these are general aspects for our understanding of what a tribe stands for.

S. C. Dube (1990) has listed the following characteristics of the tribal groups in India:

- Their roots in the soil date back to a very early period. If they are not original inhabitants, they are among the oldest inhabitants of the land. However, their position is different from the American Indians, Australian aborigines and the native African population. They were present much before the white settlers arrived in these countries. There is no doubt of their being the indigenous population of these places.

However, this cannot be true in the case of Indian tribes. Tribes have been living in close contact with the non-tribals for centuries. Some tribes like the Mizos and Khamptis have settled much later in their place of habitation.

- They live in the relative isolation of hills and forests. This was not always so. There are evidences of their presence in the Gangetic plains. It is only because of subordination and marginalization that they have been forced to retreat to inaccessible places.
- Their sense of history is shallow, for them history is restricted to three to four generations. Beyond that it tends to get merged in mythology. But in recent years the oral tradition which was considered to be a weak source of history is accepted as the source material to reconstruct the history of the pre-literate people.
- They have a low level of techno-economic development.
- In terms of their cultural ethos—language, institutions, beliefs, worldview and customs, they are different from the others.
- By and large they are non-hierarchic and undifferentiated. There are some exceptions like the Gonds, the Ahoms and the Cheros who once had a ruling class or the landed aristocracy.

T. B. Naik has given the following features of tribes in the Indian context:

- A tribe should have least functional interdependence within the community.
- It should be economically backward (i.e. primitive means of exploiting natural resources, tribal economy should be at an underdeveloped stage and it should have multifarious economic pursuits).
- There should be a comparative geographical isolation of its people.
- They should have a common dialect.
- Tribes should be politically organized and the community panchayat should be influential.
- A tribe should have customary laws.

Naik argues that a community should possess all the above mentioned characteristics to be eligible as a tribe. A very high level of acculturation with the outside society debar it from being a tribe. Thus, the term tribe usually denotes a social group bound together by kinship and duty, and associated with a particular territory. The society is changing, therefore, the concept shifts to accommodate changes over the period to understand the dynamics.

Today, in India, the term 'tribe' is used to mean:

- The communities included in the list of the scheduled tribes
- The communities that were relatively isolated at one time and later had their integration with the outside world, but have continued to call themselves tribes because of their vested interests
- The communities that still dwell in remotely situated forests and hills and are backward in terms of the indices of development, although they may not have yet found a place in the list of the scheduled tribes

### 2.2.5 Emerging Fields of Knowledge in Tribal Studies

Studies on tribes have not been limited to research engagements only; the nature of study has been diverse, topically including research works, creative world view, and aesthetics. Further, the research is no more confined to knowing the tribal culture and tribes for the purpose of administrative necessity or for the academic curiosity of knowing the 'others'. The study now addresses the contemporary issues both from the empirical and theoretical perspectives. In India, works/studies on tribes that could be summed up in the discipline of tribal studies, cover a wide range of subjects and topics. We have categorized a few of the available works on tribal studies to understand its growing importance as a discipline.

As you know, the discipline tribal studies provides a holistic frame of understanding of phenomena. Further, it is also interdisciplinary even in topical investigation. Tribal studies as a discipline has been included in many University courses in different forms— as a separate paper or a few chapters in a paper. As a result, research works are undertaken by students and faculty members within the discipline providing such courses. There is no doubt that disciplines like sociology, history, economics, political science, social work and development studies have contributed immensely to its growth. For example, in the discipline of history you will find a good number of studies on tribes. Few of such works are as follows:

- *Problem of the Hill Tribes: North-East Frontier 1843-72* (1978) by H. K. Barpujari

## NOTES

### Check Your Progress

1. State the purpose behind the visit of British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers of India.
2. Who was the first Indian to study the impact of non-tribals on the way of life of Indian tribes?
3. Who is known as the 'Father of Indian Ethnology'?
4. Why was the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre established?

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- *Glimpses of the Early History of Arunachal Pradesh* (1973) by L. N. Chakravarty
- 'Customary Rights and Colonial Regulations: Thana Forests in the Nineteenth Century' (1993) by Indira Munshi Saldanha
- *History of the Frontier Areas Bordering on Assam: From 1883-1941* (1983) by Robert Reid
- *The North-East Frontier of India* (1884) by A. Mackenzie
- *Tribal History of Eastern India* (1973) by E. T. Dalton
- *Ahom-Tribal Relations: A Political Study* (1968) by Lakshmi Devi

Ethnohistory is also emerging as a branch of tribal studies in recent years. Mention may be made of *The Nyishi of Arunachal Pradesh: An Ethnohistorical Study* (2009) by Tana Showren.

The categorization of various fields in tribal studies made here is often overlapping. For example, exclusion is a conceptual frame of examining the impact of development. Hence, it is a development issue. But the concept being a distinct way of understanding the impact of market driven development process is treated separately in our categorization. Similarly, tribal culture and tribal ethnography do not have much difference except from the methodological perspective while studying the culture. But ethnography is not limited to the study of culture only. It covers the study of contemporary issues. For example, *Ethnography of Development among the Car Nicobarese* by Keya Pandey and Sashi Bhatia, 2006, describes development dynamics in the community based on ethnographic data. However, we have discussed tribal culture and ethnography together from the point of view of studying culture only.

You will also find that the issue of identity pervades through many categories made here. So the categorization is made for the convenience of understanding the emergence of different distinct fields in tribal studies.

Similarly 'indigeneity' in itself is very wide in scope to cover all aspects of culture. Traditional knowledge, faiths and beliefs, arts and crafts and customary laws, all are inclusive in the frame of indigeneity. Similarly, the cultural frame of analysis is also wide in its scope and includes all these aspects. Without defining conceptual perspectives, we have presented topical divisions in tribal studies. However, these divisions are not made as water-tight compartments.

Emergence of important fields of knowledge in tribal studies and examples of a few of the available works have been presented here. The list of books presented will motivate you to study further on the subject.

### **Ethnography and Culture**

Cultural and ethnographic studies cover a wide range of topical investigations. Civilizational studies, for example, are an important dimension of such studies. 'Tribal Cultures of Peninsular India as a dimension of Little Tradition in the Study of Indian Civilization: A Preliminary Statement' (1959) by Surajit Sinha is an example in this regard. In civilizational studies, village studies constitute an important dimension. You will find works on village studies which have enriched tribal studies in general. Mention may be made of the following:

*Tribal Villages in Arunachal Pradesh: Changing Human Interface* (2004),  
*Dynamics of Tribal Villages in Arunachal Pradesh: Emerging Realities* (2004) edited

by Tamo Mibang and M. C. Behera, and *The Tribal Village in Bihar: A study in unity and extension* (1966) by Sachidananda.

Many topical divisions present the culture of the tribes. These include monographs, works on cross-cultural studies, ethnographic works on society and social institutions, beliefs and practices and so on. A few general works on ethnography and tribal cultures is mentioned below:

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*The Binjhias* by Sushil Kerketta (1996); *The Maria Gonds of Bastar* by W. C. Grigson (1935); *Hill Kharia/Sabar* by V. S. Upadhyay; *Society and World View of the Birhor* (1984) by Ashim Kumar Adhikary; *Kora Tribal Community* by Rajesh Kumar Choudhary; *A Glimpse of Santali Tradition* by Parao Murmu; *Polyandry in India* (1987) edited by M. K. Raha and P. C. Coomar; *History and Culture of the Adis* (1993) by Tai Nyori; *The Naked Nagas* (1946) by C. F. Haimendorf; 'Ethnographic method and its Applications in Cultural and Social Anthropological Research' (2009) by D. K. Sahu and Ankita Arya; 'Between Ethnomethodology and Ethnography: Constraints and Strategies' (2009) by Bindu Ramachandran; *The Tribal Culture of India* (1985) by L. P. Vidyarthi and B. K. Rai; *Social Organization of the Minyongs* (1990) by R. N. Srivastava; *Dialogues with the Dead: The Discussion of Mortality among the Sora of Eastern India* (1993) by Piers Vitebsky; 'Communities, Conservation and the Challenges of Participation: An Ethnographic Detour of Conservation Programme and the Fate of Jhumias in Naga Villages' (2010) by Debojyoti Das; *Amazing Arunachal Pradesh* by M. C. Behera and K. K. Misra, 2013; *Marriage in Tribal Societies (Cultural Dynamics and Social Realities)* (2007), 2006 *Marriage and Culture, in two volumes* (2006) edited by Tamo Mibang and M. C. Behera.

### Tribal Literature

Literature in tribal studies reflects the creative imagination of the authors in the form of poems, essays, novels and so on. But this imagination is coloured by the contemporary social issues. Needless to say, the literatures available on tribes by tribal authors and others present the dynamics of society including such themes as gender issues, violence and insurgency, feminism, ecological concerns, exploitation and many others. Here, mention is made of two novels to understand how creative imagination incorporates the protests to exploitation in the society.

The first one is *Paraja*, a novel written by Gopinath Mohanty which was first published in 1945, before Independence. *Paraja* is a tale of woe of a tribal peasant family living in a remote village of the then Koraput district of Odisha. Sukru Jani, who belongs to the Paraja tribe is easily exploited by everyone in authority. Money lenders, forest guards, judges, letter writers, lawyers, land owners, policemen, all prey on him until at last he loses his land, his freedom, and his family. Sukru Jani's tragic tale begins when one day he is fined for cutting down forest trees—the same trees that he had always thought to be free gifts of nature—and he has to borrow money from the Sahukar to pay the fine. In order to pay off this small debt, he and his younger son become *gotis* to the Sahukar. However, the small debt is never redeemed. Their valuable land is mortgaged and is never returned even when debts have been repaid. They go to the court of law but lose the case. Sukru Jani and his sons begin to live elsewhere as *gotis*, and the daughters are left at home. It is at this point that the daughters begin to feel an emotional vacuum. Their dreams are lost in the quagmire of poverty and they begin to stray. Things get more complicated when the elder daughter, Jili, becomes the mistress of the same Sahukar who had snatched their land, cheated, exploited and tortured her

father and brothers. Sukru Jani and his sons appeal once more to the Sahukar to return their land, but when their humble submission is met with abuses, they lose their head and kill the Sahukar.

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The same overtone is clearly visible in Mahasweta Devi's novel *Chotti Munda and his Arrow* written in 1980. Devi presents the conflicts and compromises in the Munda community through the life of Chotti that ranges over the decades in which India travels from the colonial rule to the unrest of 1970s via independence of the country. Chotti Munda, the hero of the novel is believed by his community members to have supernatural powers; myth is woven around his arrow of having a spell. But Chotti Munda is more practical towards life. He protests against injustice to his people. He negotiates with agents of 'modernity' with a sense of strong commitment for the cause of his community and its members. He is hailed as a leader and thus the myth about his supernatural power becomes his community identity. Later, to protect and preserve the dignity of the community and protect the future of the youths, he accepts a crime which he had not committed.

In Arunachal Pradesh, Lummer Dai, Y. D. Thongchi and Mamang Dai write on their own culture as it encounters external forces of change. There is a humanitarian overtone in their writings and a critical description of the cultural change; somewhere a conflict between tradition and modernity is noticed in their writings. Lummer Dai's *Paharor Xile Xile* (In the Midst of Rocks of Hill), 1961; *Prithibir Hanhi* (The Smile of the Earth), 1963; *Mon Aru Mon* (Heart to Heart), 1968; *Kainyar Mulya* (Bride Price), 1982 and *Upur Mahal* (Higher Level) are novels written in Assamese. Y. D. Thongchi's *Saba kota Manuh*, *Mouna Ounth Mukhar Hriday* (Silent Lips, Talking Heart) situates culture in the changing context. Mamang Dai's *Legends of Pensam* (2006) is a search of her own cultural identity through her journey from the past to the present. J. Malsawma is a Mizo writer who writes in Mizo. The works such as *Zozia: Ethics and Moral Principles of Mizo People* (2003) and *Zonun: Collection of Essays on Mizo Culture* (1963) are presentations of the culture in the changing world. There are some works on tribal leaders and eminent persons. Mention may be made of *Life and Times of Birsa Bhagwan* by P. C. Orwan (General editor), 1964; *Jadonang: A Mystic Naga* (2009) by Gangmumei Kamei; and *Rani Gaidinliu* (2002) by Kusumlata Nayyar.

### Tribal Customary Laws

Studies on tribal customary laws in India can be traced back to the beginning of tribal studies in the country. The British administrators reported the customs, practices and culture of the tribes in their writings. Ethnographers also recorded the customs and practices while writing monographs. There are occasions when the government deputed anthropologists to document the customary practices for reference in courts. We are already aware of the works of S. C. Roy on the Mundas and J. K. Bose on Garo inheritance laws in this regard.

Studies on tribal customary laws cover a wide range of topics and issues. The themes cover documentation of customs and practices, examines constitutional provisions, various Acts and regulations, and their critiques from various perspectives. For example, studies that are carried out relate to the extent to which the constitutional provisions have been able to conserve tribal traditions. The development interventions conform to the functioning of traditional tribal institutions and preserve the tribal mode of life. The provisions of laws and regulations accommodate customs and practices, and so on. The study also examines the implementation of various Acts and assesses the impact on tribal communities.



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The topics and issues taken up for study are also varied in nature. Some of them are customary laws in social and political institutions, land tenure and inheritance, succession, adoptions, social and criminal offences, traditional system of administration of justice, process of arbitration, nature of witness and evidence, leadership pattern and its changing nature. The study also addresses such issues as critical analysis of uncodified customary practices vis-a-vis codified laws.

There are also laws to accommodate the changing trends taking place in the society. There are legal views on the status of the child of a couple where one of the spouses does not belong to the tribe or the endogamous group. The scholars study such types of laws with reference to customary practices.

Studies which form the subject matter of tribal and customary laws are based on various Acts and regulations. Some of them are: Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 and its amendments as in 1982, 1983; The Orissa Scheduled Areas Transfer of Immovable Property (By Scheduled Tribes) Regulations, 1956 and Rules 1959; The Agency Tracts Interest and Land Transfer Act, 1917 (covers the then Ganjam, Vizagapatnam and Godavari agency tracts); The Government of India (Excluded and Partially Excluded Area) Order, 1936; The North-East Frontier Tracts (Internal Administration) Regulation, 1943; The Bihar Scheduled Areas Laws Regulation, 1950. Two recent Acts on the matter are the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), 1996 and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

You will come across a good number of works on tribal customs and practices documented during the study of tribal cultures. These are tribe specific or general in nature. These works are either authored or edited covering various tribes. Some of them are:

*Tribal Customary Laws of North-East India* (2011) by Shibani Roy and S. H. M. Rizvi; *Tribal Ethnography, Customary Law and Change* (1993) by K. S. Singh; *Life and Customary Laws of Tripura Tribe* (2009), K. N. Jena and B. D. Tripura; *Customary Laws of Tribes in Rajasthan* (2012) by Mukesh Bhargava; *Customary Law of the Austric-Speaking Tribes* (2002) by P. K. Bhowmick; *Garo Customary Laws and Practices* (2000) by Julius Marak; *Tribal Law in India* (2004) by G. S. Narwani; 'Laws relating to Land Transfer in Scheduled Areas of Andhra Pradesh' (2009) by Sri O.S.V.D. Prasad; 'Customary Rights in Law and Forest and the State' (1993) by L. K. Mahapatra; *The Customary Laws of the Munda and the Oraon* (2002) by Jai Prakash Gupta; *A Handbook of Dimasa Customary Practices* (2004) by L. K. Nunisa; *Customary Rights in Land and Forest of the Tribals of Chotanagpur* (1993) by M. C. Sarkar; *Customary Laws of Nyishi Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh* (2012) by N. N. Hina; and many others. Jagannath Shroff has compiled various Acts in a book entitled *Laws Preventing Land Alienation by Scheduled Tribes and Castes* (2013) which governed land tenure and land transfers in some agencies of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa during the colonial rule. He has also included laws on the subject after independence and the implication of such laws.

There are also works available on tribal leadership, working of tribal political institutions, status of women in customs and practices. Some of the works are:

*Democracy in NEFA* (1965) by Verrier Elwin; *Tribal Leadership in Bihar*, (1991) by S. P. Sinha (ed.), *Emerging Pattern of Tribal Leadership in Arunachal Pradesh* (2005) by Rejir Karlo; *Local Government in Arunachal Pradesh* (1997) by D. Pandey;

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*Customary Laws in North-East India: Impact on Women* (ed.) by Walter Fernandes, Melville Pereira and Vizalenu Khatso; *Kinship, Politics and Law in Naga Society* (1993) by N. K. Das; *Customary Law and Women: The Chakhesang Nagas* (2003) by Adino Vitso and many such types of works covering different tribal groups of the country.

### Tribal Development and Policies

In tribal studies, the issues of tribal development have emerged into an interesting area of enquiry. The issues relate to health, education, economy, livelihoods, occupation, migration and many others. The enquiry deals with development perspectives, policies, programmes, schemes, strategies and their implementation, impact and evaluation. The perspectives on tribal development keep changing. Consequently, development policies, programmes and strategies also change. Tribal development is investigated in response to these changes.

Most of the studies on tribal development examine the impact of development policies and programmes on the traditional way of life of the tribes. Issues such as exclusion, marginalization, displacement, deprivation, inequality, participation, empowerment, finance, administration and institutional support, and resource management are included in the study of tribal development. Generally, tribal development is often studied from cultural perspectives that provide a critique of general development policies and strategies.

You know that development is not a mere economic concept. It includes all aspects of life. So studies on tribal development cover a wide range of issues. Some of the works on tribal development in India are as under:

*Tribal Development: The Concept and the Frame* by B. D. Sharma, 1978; *Agricultural Patterns of Tribals* by M. S. Rao, 2010; *Tribal Development in India: Myth and Reality* (1994) by L. K. Mahapatra; *Tribal Development: Options* (2001) edited by P. K. Samal;

*Tribal Affairs in India* (2001) by B. D. Sharma; *Sustainable Development in Bonda Hills* edited by P. Mohapatra, K. K. Mohanti and P. C. Mohapatro; *Tribal Development in India* (2006) edited by Govinda Chandra Rath; *Tribal Economy in Transition* by M. K. Sukumaran Nair, 1987; *Institutional Framework for Tribal Development* by P. V. Rao, 1988; *Out of this Earth: East India Adivasis and the Aluminium Cartel* by Felix Padel and Samarendra Das, 2010; *Sacrificing People: Invasions of a Tribal Landscape* by Felix Padel, 2011; 'Habitat, Health and Nutritional Problems of Kondhs: A Major Scheduled Tribe Community in Orissa' by Gandham Bulliyya, 2003.

Research papers on issues of tribal development in the context of globalization are included in various volumes edited by M. C. Behera, Jumyir Basar and some other scholars. Some of them are:

*Resources, Tribes and Development* edited by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2014; *Investing in Globalization: Policy, Participation and Performance in Odisha*, edited by M. C. Behera and R. C. Parida, 2013; *Interventions and Tribal Development: Challenges before Tribes in India in the Era of Globalization*, edited by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2010; *Globalization and the Marginalized: Issues and Concerns for Development*, edited by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 2010; *Globalization and Development Dilemma: Reflections from North-East India*, by

M. C. Behera, 2004; *Agricultural Modernization in Eastern Himalayas* edited by M. C. Behera, 1998; *Trends in Agrarian Structure in the Hills of North-East India* edited by M. C. Behera and N. C. Roy, 1997; *Planning and Socio-Economic Development of the Tribals*, by M. C. Behera, 1994.

Gender issues have also been taken up in development studies. We can cite an example of a work entitled 'Gender issues in Tribal Development and Empowerment: A Focus on Women Displaced by Irrigation Projects of Southern Odisha' (2009) by Latha Ravindran and Babita Mahapatra. An edited volume entitled *Tribal Women: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (2015) by S. N. Chaudhary has included papers on gender issues.

### **Applied and Action Research**

Applied and action research is an important area of research in the discipline of tribal studies. 'Development' in earlier years was considered as an economic phenomenon. But in later years the concept was considered from a holistic perspective encompassing all aspects of life. On the basis of the studies on the tribes, scholars realized that in tribal communities, economy is not a separate domain of activity. Like other activities, such as social, political and cultural, the economy is integrated and instituted in the social process. This holistic understanding of the concept of development is the contribution of tribal studies. Therefore, when tribal development was considered only in economic terms, some anthropologists and sociologists tried to implement development programmes to suit the holistic life of the tribes. Hence, they not only provided theoretical perspectives of tribal development but formulated strategies and put them into practice. Out of this concern of tribal development, there evolved a branch of applied and action research in anthropology.

L. P. Vidyarthi is regarded as the pioneer in applied and action research. He carried out field works mostly among the tribes of the then Bihar and developed new insights into applied anthropology. He developed the concept of 'Tribal Sub Plan' (TSP) which is now in vogue in planning strategies of tribal development. Vidyarthi had headed the 'Task force for the Development of the Backward Areas', appointed by the Planning Commission on the eve of the Fifth Five Year Plan. In his report, he forwarded the concept of TSP for tribal development.

You are already aware of Prabodh Kumar Bhowmick's work namely *Applied, Action Development Anthropology* published in 1990 in this regard. NGOs that are involved in development issues of the tribals also engage in applied and action research. There are a few more works on the subject. *Applied Anthropology and Development in India* by L. P. Vidyarthi (1980); *Anthropology of Development* by Jagannath Pathy, 1987; *Shifting Cultivators and Their Development* by B. D. Sharma, 2003; *Sparks from Bidisa, Vol-I: Tribal Development* edited by S. N. Rath and many others.

### **Tribes and Exclusion**

The concept of social exclusion has been employed to study the nature and extent of economic exclusion of social groups in market driven development processes. The concept was used for the first time by René Lenoir in 1974. This concept is also used to study the nature, process and extent of exclusion of the tribes socially, educationally and economically. The process of social exclusion is studied in terms of deprivation, marginalization and displacement. The following studies in the field of social exclusion of the tribes are noteworthy.

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*Issues on Ethnicity, Discrimination and Social Exclusion* (2010) by S. N. Tripathy; *Dimensions of Social Exclusion: Ethnographic Explorations* (2009) by K. M. Ziyauddin and Eswarappa Kasi; *Unbroken History of Broken Promises* by B. D. Sharma, 2010; 'Informal to Formal Education in Tribal Communities of Arunachal Pradesh and Issues of Exclusion' (2011) M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar, 'Conceptualizing Social Exclusion in the Context of Tribal Communities of Arunachal Pradesh' (2010) by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar; 'Interventions and Exclusion: A Critique of Tribal Exclusion in Formal System of Education' (2010) by M. C. Behera and Jumyir Basar; *Exclusion, Discrimination and Stratification: Tribes in Contemporary India* (2013), edited by N. K. Das; *Tribal Marginalization in India: Social Exclusion and Protective Law* (2013) by Kavita Navlani Søreide; *Social Exclusion and Adverse Inclusion: Development and Deprivation of Adivasis in India* (2012) edited by Dev Nathan and Virginius Xaxa; *Navigating Social Exclusion and Inclusion in Contemporary India and beyond* (2013) by Uwe Skoda, and many others.

### Tribal Art and Craft

Art and crafts are identity markers. A tribe has its own colour pattern, design, beliefs, taboos and so on relating to its tradition of art and crafts. You must have seen that a tribe is identified from its distinct weaving tradition.

In common language, art and craft constitutes material objects which are mostly utilitarian in nature. But in a broader sense, performing arts such as music, painting, song and dance, also come under tribal arts. Most of the art and craft of a tribe have myths around them; some of them have a soul consciousness and all of them have a purpose of use. Traditionally, these objects were not sold in the market, though there are examples of use of some of these objects in barter trade. In recent years, the artistic genius and craftsmanship of tribesperson create objects for the market.

The tradition of art and craft of a tribe along with its contemporary status is a well-researched subject. But presently, various socio-cultural organizations and government departments maintain websites of the tradition of tribal arts and crafts. Along with the corresponding literature, you will also get to see the visual display of art and crafts of various tribes. Few works by scholars and academicians have been mentioned here.

*Marginalized Identity: An Engagement with Art, Literature, Language and Ethnicity* edited by Jumyir Basar, M. C. Behera and Lisa Lomdak, 2012; 'Traditional Dhokra Art of Chhattisgarh' by Neetu Singh, 2012; 'Art of Body Decoration: Some Aspects of Dress and Ornaments among the Rongdani Rabha of East Garo Hills, Meghalaya' by Moromi Talukdar, 2003; 'Tribal Art, Artifacts and Art Objects: Need for a Demand Driven Marketing Strategy' (2009) by Sahoo. A. C.; *The Tribal Art of Middle India: A Personal Record* (1951), *The Art of North-East Frontier of India* (1959), and *Folk Paintings of India* (1967) by Verrier Elwin; *The Arts and Crafts of Nagaland*, Compiled by Naga Institute of Culture, Government of Nagaland, Kohima, (1968); *Nagaland* by Prakash Singh (1972); *Folk And Tribal Designs of India* (1974) by Bhavnani Enakshi; *Tribal Art and Crafts* by A. K. Das (1979); *Art of Manipur*, by Nilima Roy (1979); *Cane and Bamboo Crafts of Manipur* (1994) by Mutua Bahadur ; 'The Sauras and their Panoramic Paintings' (2005) by C. B. Patel; *Tribal Arts and Crafts of Madhya Pradesh (Living Traditions of India)* by Aashi Manohar and edited by Shampa Shah (2008); *Nomadic Embroideries: India's Tribal Textile Art* (2008) by Tina Skinner and Sam Hilu; *Tribal Architecture in North-East India* by Rene Kolkman

and Stuart Blackburn (2014); *Folk Art and Culture of Bodo-Kachari and Rabha Tribes of Assam* (2015) by Paresh Bhuyan; *The Black Cow's Footprint: Time, Space, and Music in the Lives of the Kotas of South India* (2005 and 2006) edited by Richard K. Wolf, Stephen Blum and Christopher Hasty; *Painted Myths of Creation: Art and Ritual of an Indian Tribe* (1984) by J. Jain; *Handloom and Handicrafts of the Adis* (1995) by H. Borgohain; *Handicrafts of Arunachal Pradesh* (1990) edited by P. C. Dutta and D. K. Duarah.

Given below are links to some websites where you may find the literature and visual display of tribal art and crafts:

- <http://www.folkways.si.edu/tribal-music-of-india-the-muria-and-maria-gonds-of-madhya-pradesh/world/album/smithsonian>
- [http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner\\_notes/folkways/FW04028.pdf](http://media.smithsonianfolkways.org/liner_notes/folkways/FW04028.pdf)
- [http://chandrankantha.com/articles/indian\\_music/nritya/folk\\_dance.html](http://chandrankantha.com/articles/indian_music/nritya/folk_dance.html)
- <https://mamtavn.wordpress.com/2011/12/06/tribal-art-of-india/>
- <http://www.ishafoundation.org/blog/inside-isha/isha-yoga-center/gond-art-painting/>

### **Tribal Ecology**

Ecological studies generally focus on the interaction of human beings, animals and plants among themselves and with their natural surroundings. This operational frame of interaction is quite visible in tribal communities. Therefore, the tribes have been living in harmony with nature from time immemorial. But this harmony is disturbed due to modern forces of development and as a result we face a number of crises. For example, mega dam projects displace a number of people including the tribesmen. Such displacement adversely affects the socio-cultural and economic life of displaced persons. Before finalizing such mega projects, conducting environmental impact assessment along with the assessment of socio-economic impacts has become a pre-requisite in recent years. Projects get clearance on the basis of the nature and extent of impact on environment and socio-economic life.

In order to address many such emerging crises, scholars and academicians look for a solution in strategizing a harmonious relationship among humans, animals, plants and their natural surroundings. It is true that ecological tradition in tribal communities provides an interesting area of study. Therefore, a number of works are available on different perspectives pertaining to tribal ecology. These studies are either simple presentations of traditional ecological system or critiques of development philosophy in relation to ecological wisdom or any such related issue. A few works/studies on the subject are mentioned below:

*Ecology, Economy: Quest for a Socially Informed Connection* by Felix Padel, Ajay Dandekar and Jeemol Unni, 2013; *Tribal Ecosystem and Malnutrition in India* (1989) by A. N. Sharma and P. D. Tiwari; 'Ecology and Rice Cultivation among the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh' (1991) by Arun Kumar Singh; *Identity, Ecology, Social Organization, Economy, Linkages and Development Process: A Quantitative Profile* (1996) by K. S. Singh; *The Tribal Man in India: A Study in the Ecology of the Primitive Communities* (1974) by Paramanand Lal; *Conservation Ethos in Local Traditions: The West Bengal Heritage* (2001) by Debal Deb; 'Shifting Cultivation and Man-Nature Relationship: An Ecological Study with Reference to Nishing tribe of Arunachal Pradesh' (2004) by M. C. Behera; 'Sacred Groves' (1992) by Madhav Gadgil and M. D. Subash Chandra; 'Conserving the Sacred: Ecological and Policy Implications'

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(1998) by P. S. Ramakrishnan; 'Forest and Tribal Culture: An Overview of the Man-Plant-Animal Relationship' (1993) by S. N. Rath; *Community-based Natural Resource Management: Issues and Cases from South Asia* (2007) edited by A. P. Menon, P. Singh, E. Shah, S. Lélé, S. Paranjape and K. J. Roy; *Forest Management in Tribal Areas: Forest Policy and People's Participation* (1997) P. M. Mohapatra and P. C. Mohapatro; 'Indigenous Communities' Knowledge of Local Ecological Services' (2001) by Sanjay Kumar; *Indigenous Knowledge and Resource Management: Perspectives of a Tribe in North-East India* (2014) by Jumyir Basar.

**Tribal Folklores**

In tribal studies, folklores have occupied an important area of enquiry. Both outsiders and insiders study folklores for the purpose of documentation of vanishing tribal culture with a view to preserve them for posterity. Besides, the study also has academic importance and literary expressions. Folklores inform us a great deal about culture. Like kinship and cosmology, they present and explain tribal attitudes and actions, rituals and practices, fears and fantasies, and in general their world view. Folklores provide the rationality behind social reality. In recent years, studies on folklores have enriched our conceptual and methodological knowledge to understand and present various dimensions of social process.

We find tribal scholars and writers using folklores to examine the cultural identity in a changing situation. Shanchuila Ramung in the book entitled *Head Hunting Nagas: A Tangkhul's Journey into the Past* (2001) searches the identity of the community in today's world of fading customs and of the mundane replacing the mystic. The feasts and festivals, myths and ceremonies come alive in the vibrant portrayal of Tangkhul identity through ballads and folktales. S. Bhattacharjee and Rajesh Dev, in their edited book entitled *Ethnonarratives: Identity and Experiences in North-East India* (2006) have included ethno-narratives of various communities of North-East India with a wide range of themes to construct various identities such as political and historical. Mamang Dai in her books *Once upon a Moontime: From the Magical Story World of Arunachal Pradesh* (2005) and *The Sky Queen* (2009) has presented the identity of the Adis through folk tales.

Folklores help in reconstructing the historical past of the pre-literate people. Stuart Blackburn (2003/2004) in his paper entitled '*Memories of Migration: Notes on Legends and Beads in Arunachal Pradesh, India*' has used both verbal and material aspects of culture to trace the migration history of some tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. Similarly, Blackburn (2005) has studied the importance of oral texts in his paper entitled '*The Journey of the Soul: Notes on Funeral Rituals and Oral Texts in Arunachal Pradesh, India*' to explain people's philosophical perception on soul. More importantly Blackburn (2007) explained the concept of *cultural area* with reference to material culture and verbal culture of the tribal people in another paper entitled '*Oral Stories and Culture Areas: From North-East India to South-West China*'. Through folk stories, he established the importance of vertical borrowing down generations to explain the similarity in verbal culture and commonality in material culture.

Verrier Elwin had worked among a number of tribes of the country. A number of works by him on folklores on different tribes are available. Some of them are *Folk-songs of the Maikal Hills* (1944) (with Shamrao Hivale), *Folk-songs of Chhattisgarh* (1946), *Myths of the North-East Frontier of India, Volume 1* (1958), *When the World was Young: Folk-tales from India's Hills and Forests* (1961), *Tribal Myths of Orissa*

(1954), *Myths of Middle India* (1949), *A New Book of Tribal Fiction: North-East Frontier Agency* (1970), and *Folk-tales of Mahakosha* (1980). *Tribal Songs, Ballads and Oral Epics of Bastar* by Uma Ram and K. S. Ram, 2012; 'The Songs of the Hill Maria, Jhoria Muria and Bastar Muria Gond Tribes' by Walter Kaufman, 1941; *Folksongs of the Mishing* (1992) by B. Datta and T. R. Taid; *Mishing Folk Tales* (2013) by T. B. Taid; *Folk Tales of the Adis* (2003) by Obang Tayang; *Oral Literature of Arunachal Pradesh: Creation of Universe* (1999) by B. B. Pandey; *Tribe, Caste and Folk Culture* (1998) by Chitrasen Pasayat; *A History of Nagas and Nagaland: and Dynamics of Oral Tradition in Village Formation* (1996) by Visier Sanyu are some other works on folklores.

The Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies promotes folklore studies by conducting seminars and motivating M. Phil and Ph. D scholars to work on folklores. Mention may be made of two edited volumes. The edited volume entitled *Folk Culture and Oral Literature from North-East India* by Tamo Mibang and Sarit K. Chaudhuri (2004) is a compilation of 22 papers on various aspects of tribal folklores. Another volume entitled *Indian Folk Tales of North-East India* by Tamo Mibang and P. T. Abraham (2002) is a documentation of 47 Adi folk tales.

Some scholars of Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies have worked on folklores from different perspectives. The works are analytical and topical. Kime Mamung (2011), Tage Pugang (2008-09), Jombi Bagra (2009) and Pranab Jyoti Gogoi (2001-2002) have investigated the rationality behind social practices followed in tribal communities through oral traditions. In a similar vein, Nending Butung (2010-2011) has made an investigation of culture as it reflects in Apatani oral narratives. Tenzin Yeeqha has studied the meaning of symbols as used in the dances of Tawang-Monpas (2008-09). Tunge Lollen (2006-07, 2006) has studied the symbolic expressions in Galo proverbs and marriage respectively.

### **Tribal Knowledge system**

The tribal knowledge system is very comprehensive. It includes material culture and non-material culture, arts and crafts, technology and belief; it presents the way of life in its totality. The tribal knowledge system manifests the culture, but the two differ the way they are perceived. In fact, the knowledge gets expressed through culture. Generally, tribal knowledge system refers to the informal knowledge system of a tribal community. Such knowledge is derived from informal sources and acquired through contact. The knowledge is mostly tribe specific and is orally transmitted down the generations. You may find works on traditional knowledge, culture and indigenous knowledge which presents the same phenomenon but with different topical perspectives. A few works on the topic are as under:

*Indigenous Knowledge and Intellectual Property Rights of Tribals: A Case Study* (2000) by A. M. Kurup; 'Traditional Knowledge, Innovation System and Democracy of Sustainable Agriculture: A Case Study of Adi Tribes of Eastern Himalayas of North East India' (2010) by R. Saravanan; *Traditional Knowledge System in India* (2009) by Amit Jha; *Indigenous Knowledge, Natural Resource Management and Development: The Konda Reddi Experience* (2005) by Kamal K. Misra; *Indigenous Knowledge: An Application* (2007) by T. R. Sahu; *Indigenous Knowledge on Forests: An Enquiry into Worlds of Kuttia Knondhs and Saoras of Orissa* (1995) by K. Seeland, G. B. Patnaik, K. K. Patnaik, H. C. Das, M. K. Jena, P. Pathi and S. C. Behera; 'Traditional Knowledge in Biodiversity: Past Trend and Future Perspective' (2000) by A. K. Ghosh; *Indigenous Knowledge: A Handbook of Sora Culture* (2011)

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by Piers Vitebsky; *Tribes of Panchmarhi Biosphere Reserve and their Indigenous Knowledge* (2006) edited by S. N. Chaudhary and R. P. Singh; *Tribes and their Indigenous Knowledge: Implications for Development* (2008) by S. N. Chaudhary; *Traditional Systems of Forest Conservation in North-East India: The Angami Tribe of Nagaland* (2001) by Alphonsus D' Souza; *Cultural Diversity, Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity Conservation* (2010) edited by N. K. Das; *Traditional Knowledge System and Technology in India*, edited by Basanta Kumar Mohanta and Vipin Kumar Singh, 2012; *Traditional Knowledge in Indian Society* edited by Amitabha Sarkar, A. V. Arakeri and Suresh Patil, 2012.

### Issue of Indigeneity

The term 'tribe' is a colonial construct which was used to designate some people in different countries by the European colonizers. But these people in some countries in Americas, Canada and Australia preferred to be designated as indigenous people in contrast to what the European settlers named them. The issue has become a global phenomenon and even in a country where the designation 'tribe' is used, a sense of feeling 'indigenous' pervades among the tribes.

There are studies conducted all over the world on these topics such as indigenous knowledge, indigenous literature, indigenous governance, indigenous health system and indigenous institutions. Seminars and workshops are held on indigenous issues including conceptual and theoretical perspectives. The UNO and other international organizations also support indigenous issues and the UNO has enacted various rights on the indigenous people. Needless to say, the issue of indigeneity has been an interesting area of investigation by scholars, writers, academics, intellectuals and activists. A few of the works available on the topic are as under:

*Indigenous and Tribal People: Gathering Mist and New Horizon* (1994) by B. K. Roy Burman; *Indigeneity in India* (2006) by B. G. Karlsson and T. B. Subba; *Globalization and Indigenous Peoples in Asia: Changing the Local-Global Interface* (2004) edited by Deb Nathan, Govind Kelkar and Pierre Walter; 'Tribes as Indigenous People of India' (1999) by Virginius Xaxa; 'The Idea of Indigenous People' (1998) by André Béteille; *'Indigenous' and 'tribal' peoples and the UN International Agencies* (1995) by B. K. Roy Burman.

### Tribal Religion

There was doubt about the religion of tribal people in the earlier tribal studies. Many researchers were of the opinion that tribal people do not have a religion. But with deeper insight into tribal faiths and practices, scholars of tribal studies later did not nourish any such doubt and misconception. Scholars of tribal studies recognize tribal religion and believe in its various forms like animism, animatism, totemism and shamanism across tribal cultures. All these forms come under the banner of *tribal or indigenous religion* where the tribal world view of nature and super-nature provides for the basis of faiths and beliefs, practices, and a state of transcendental consciousness.

In recent years, tribal people are getting converted to other religions. The issues of conversion and interpretation of traditional culture in the light of the philosophy of a new religion also come under the studies of tribal religion. In recent years, there are attempts being directed to conserve the traditional faiths and practices. Obviously, a revivalist trend is noticed among the tribes. Literature on revivalism in tribal communities forms a part of studies on tribal religion. *Bathouism, Saranaism, Donyi-Poloism* etc.



are revivalist literature on tribal religion. Similarly, folk Hinduism among the tribes is a case of syncretic tradition and the literature on the topic also comes under the study of tribal religion.

Therefore, one will find many works available on tribal religion. These works are mostly ethnographic depictions, though a few works have conceptual and theoretical perspectives. You will find some works on religious syncretism. A study of Tanginath or Gonasika—sacred place—shows the syncretic tradition of tribal and non-tribal faiths. However, many of these works are available in edited volumes. You can know about the tribal religion from the following works which have resulted from the study on various tribes.

*Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption* (1949) by N. K. Bose; *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (1952) by M. N. Srinivas; *The Religion of an Indian Tribe* (1955) by Verrier Elwin; *The Maler: The Nature-Man-Spirit Complex in a Hill Tribe* (1963) by L. P. Vidyarthi; *Hinduization of Tribal Deities in Orissa: The Shakti Typology* (1986) by Anna Charlotte Eschmann; *Tribal Priesthood and Shamanism in Chhattisgarh* (1988) by N. K. Das; *Hinduization among Western Indian Tribes* (1989) by R. S. Mann and K. Mann; *Rama-Katha in Tribal and Folk Traditions of India* (1993) edited by K. S. Singh and B. Datta; *Bhagat Movement: A Study of Cultural Transformation of the Bhils of Southern Rajasthan* (1997) by V. K. Vashishtha; *Conversion, Reconversion and the State: Recent Events in the Dangs* (1999) by G. Shah; *Tribal Religion: Change and Continuity* (2000) edited by M. C. Behera; *Culture, Religion and Philosophy: Critical Studies in Syncretism and Inter-Faith Harmony* (2003) by N. K. Das; 'Hinduism and Tribal Religion' (2003) by K. S. Singh; *The Debate on Conversion Initiated by the Sangh Parivar, 1998-1999* (2005) by S. Kim; *Christian Therapy: Medical Missionaries and the Adivasis of Western India* (2006) by D. Hardiman; *Hindu Shrines of Chotanagpur: Case Study of Tanginath* (1975) by K. N. Sahay; 'Religious Beliefs and Practices among the Koyas in Andhra Pradesh' (2009) by Reddi Sekhara; and 'Whose centre? Gonasika: A tribal Sacred Place and a Hindu Centre of Pilgrimage' (2012) by Cécile Guillaume-Pey.

A few works on North-East are as follows:

*Indigenous Faith and Practices of the Tribes of Arunachal Pradesh* (1998) edited by M. C. Behera and S. K. Chaudhuri; *Understanding Tribal Religion* (2004) edited by Tamo Mibang and Sarit K. Chaudhary; *Religious beliefs and Practices of the Mishing People of Assam* (1998) by Durgeswar Doley; 'Religion of the Adis' (1980) and 'Philosophy of Donyi Polo' (2004) by Oshong Ering; *Religious History of Arunachal Pradesh* (2008) edited by B. Tripathy and S. Dutta; *Tingkao Ragwang Chapriak: The Zeliangrong Primordial Religion* (2005) by Gang Mumei Kamei; 'Christianity and its Impact on the Nagas: An assessment of the Work of the American Baptist Mission' (1984) by S. K. Barpujari; *Christianity in North-East India* (1976) by Frederick S. Downs; *From Naga Animism to Christianity* by Veprari Epao; *Nyibo Agom: The Sacred Religious Literature of the Adi*, Two volumes (1983 and 1984) by T. Ete.

### **Tribal Movements**

Numerous uprisings of the tribals have taken place beginning with the one in Bihar in 1770s followed by many revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Odisha and in the North-East. The famous tribal movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> century are Revolt of Paharia Sardars in 1778, Halba rebellion in 1774-79 against the British, Revolt

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of the Tamars in 1789 and 1794-95 and uprising of the Koli tribes in Maharashtra in 1784-85. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, tribal movements were mostly directed against the British rule itself or against the representatives of the British government. The famous movements against the leaders recognized by the British were Kond revolt against the leadership of Chief Bisoi (1850), the Santhal uprising in Dhanbad against the local monarch in 1869-70 and the Koya community's revolt against the landlords in 1862. The movements against the British were the Santhal rebellion in 1853 and 1855; the Bhil revolt in 1857-58; the Lusai people's raid into the British territory in Tripura in 1860 and revolt in 1892; the Synteng revolt in 1860-62, the Juang revolt in 1861; the Naga revolts in 1844 and 1879; the Koya revolt in 1880; the Sentinelese attack on British in 1883 and the Munda agitation 1874-1901. The 20<sup>th</sup> century also saw many revolts organized by the tribes who had revolted in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Important among them are Koya revolt in 1922 and the Gond and the Kolam revolt in 1941. The Naga movement under the leadership of Rani Gaidinliu though was against the British, was also directed towards socio-religious reforms. Similarly, the Bhagat movement in 1913-14 and in 1920-21 had reformist zeal at its centre.

Scholars and academicians of different disciplines show interest in the study of tribal movements of the country. As a result, studies on tribal movements have emerged as an inter-disciplinary enquiry. These movements have been classified under different categories by different scholars. These can be as under:

- Movements seeking autonomy and movements with separatist tendencies
- Agricultural movements
- Movements on forest rights
- Socio-religious movements

Mostly, the movements are resistances against the oppression and discrimination, neglect and backwardness, denial or restriction of rights to resource use and apathy of the government towards the tribal communities. The resistances also are for identity assertion.

The Bodo or Karbi movement and Kamtapur movements are movements for autonomy. Unfortunately, incidences of violence also took place in these movements. The revolts against the British had questions of autonomy at the centre though there were issues of forest rights too. Movements with separatist tendencies in independent India are often called insurgencies.

Studies on tribal movements are historical studies. There are many works on the topic available as independent research papers or included in edited volumes. Some studies also concern the contemporary movements. A few works on tribal movements are mentioned below:

*Zeliangrong Heraka Movement and Socio-Cultural Awakening in Naga Society* (2005) by N. C. Zeliang; *Tribal Movement, Politics and Religion in India: Tribal Religion in India*, Vol-III (1998) edited by A. C. Mittal and J. B. Sharma; *Tribal Movements in Jharkhand (1857-2007)* edited by Asha Mishra and Chittaranjan Kumar Paty, 2010; *Struggles for Swaraj* by Mathew Areparampil, 2002; 'Tribal Movements: Resistance to Resurgence' (1998) by Pradeep Prabhu; *Adivasis in Colonial India-Survival, Resistance and Negotiation* edited by Biswamoy Pati, 2011; 'The Kamatapur Movement: Towards a Separate State in North Bengal' by I. Sarakar, 2006; *From Phizo to Muivah: The Naga National Question* (2002) by A. Lanunungsang Ao; *Strangers*

*of the Mist: Tales of War and Peace from India's North-East* (1994) by Sanjoy Hazarika; *Naga Insurgency: The Last Thirty Years* (1988) by M. Horam; *The Night of the Guerillas* (1978) by Nirmal Nibedom; *Tribal Movements in India: Visions of Dr. K. S. Singh* (2012) edited by Kamal K. Misra and G. Jayaprakashan; and *Tribal Movements in India*, two volumes (2006) edited by K. S. Singh.

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### Tribes and Insurgency

Resistance has been a characteristic feature of Indian tribes since the British rule. During the British period, the resistance was against the exploitation by the colonial ruler and its agencies. Such resistances were aiming for freedom and safeguarding rights on land and other resources. Further, there were socio-religious movements like the Bhagat movement. Such movements were also against exploitation but with a zeal for reformation within the society. All these resistances are termed as tribal movements. Post-independence the tribal communities have become part and parcel of the Indian nation and are governed by the provisions of the Constitution of India. Nevertheless, some members of one or some tribal communities are involved in separatist activities following the path of violence in order to achieve their goals. These activities are against the government and the spirit of democracy and Indian nationalism. Such activities are called tribal insurgencies in Independent India. In tribal movements, the issue of resistance concerns the entire tribe. But in case of tribal insurgency, some members of a tribe or across some tribes pick up an issue against the democratic government and resort to the path of violence to fulfill the demand. Often, they exploit the sentiment and the sense of community consciousness of the members of the tribe/tribes.

Many scholars, intellectuals, NGO activists and many others who are interested in tribal studies have been working on the issue of tribes and insurgency. Some of the works on the subject are as following:

*Terrorism and Separatism in North-East India* (2004) by Chandra Bhusan; *Insurgencies in India's North-East: Conflict, Cooperation and Change* (2007) by Subir Bhaumik; 'Tackling Tribal Insurgency in Central India: From Verrier Elwin to Vijay Kumar' (2013), by K. S. Subramanian; 'Ethnicity, Ideology and Religion: Separatist Movements in India's North-East' (2006) by Subir Bhaumik; *Naga Insurgency: The Last Thirty Years* (1988) by M. Horam; *Tribal Insurgency in Tripura: A Study in Exploration of Causes* (1990) by S. R. Bhattacharjee; 'The Naxalites and Naxalism' (1971) by M. Sen; 'Naxalite Armed Struggles and the Annihilation Campaign in Rural Areas' (1973) by Biplab Dasgupta; *Tribal Guerrillas: The Santhals of West Bengal and the Naxalite Movement* (1987) by Edward Duyker; '“People's war” and State Response: The Naxalite Movement in Telangana' (1995) by R. Ravikanti; *The Naxalite Movement in India* (1995) by Prakash Singh; *Maoist 'Spring Thunder': The Naxalite Movement 1967-1972* (2007) by Arun Mukherjee; 'Naxalism, Caste-Based Militias and Human Security: Lessons From Bihar' (2008) by R. Sahay; *Hello, Bastar: The Untold Story of India's Maoist Movement* (2011) by Rahul Pandita; *Days and Nights in the Heartland of Rebellion* (2012) by Gautam Navlakha.

### Tribal Identity

The issue of tribal identity provides a very interesting area of academic enquiry. The issue has been taken up by political scientists, folklorists and others who have interest in the topic. Identity issue provides an interdisciplinary approach to study. There are many works available on identity issues including cultural identity. You will find works on identity

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issues in language studies, folklore studies, and in literature as well. Even tribal insurgency is also studied from the identity point of view. A few works on the topic are as under:

*Nationality, Ethnicity and Cultural Identity in North-East India*, edited by B. Pakem, 1990; 'Territory, Identity and Mizoram' by Sivasish Biswas and Sravani Biswas, 2012; 'Globalization, Ethnic Identity and Karbi People', by Nityananda Pattanayak, 2012; 'Ethno-regionalism and Tribal Development: Problems and Challenges in Jharkhand' by Sajal Basu, 2006; *Ethno-history, Ethnic Identity and Contemporary Mishing Society* (1984) by J. S. Bhandari; *Cultural Identity of Tribes of North-East India* (2003) by J. L. Dawar; *Emerging Religious Identities of Arunachal Pradesh* (2005) by N. T. Rikam; 'Politics of Language, Religion and Identity: Tribes in India' (2005) by Virginius Xaxa; 'Tribal Identity Movements Based on Script and Language' (1982) by K. S. Singh; *From Fire Rain to Rebellion: Reasserting Identity through Narratives* (2011) edited and translated by P. Andersen, M. Carrin and S. Soren; *People of the Jangal: Reformulating Identities and Adaptations in Crisis* (2008) by M. Carrin and H. Tambs-Lyche; *Ethnic Identity, Ethnicity and Social Stratification in North East India* (1989) by N. K. Das.

### Tribal Language

Interest in the study of tribal languages has been a significant area of research for quite a long time. Tribal languages are studied, as you know, for the purpose of documentation, to prepare grammar books and to understand the culture. You will find socio-linguistic studies on tribes undertaken in many University departments in India. Moreover, studies on tribal languages also have a commitment of preservation and promotion. Few works on tribal languages and related issues are as the following:

*The Language of the Muria* by A. N. Mitchell, 1942; *Languages of North-East India* by Dipankar Moral, 2004; *Endangered Languages in India* edited by K. Sengupta, 2009; *Multilingualism in India* (1990) by D. P. Pattanayak, 1990; *Endangered Cultures and Languages in India: Empirical Observations* (2015) edited by Gautam Kumar Bera and K. Jose; 'Language Contact and Genetic Position of Milang (Eastern Himalaya)' (2011) by Mark W. Post and Yankee Modi; 'Language Diversity, Indigenous Knowledge and Biodiversity' (2010) by M. Sreenathan; *An Introduction to Galo Language* (1963) by K. Dasgupta; 'The Future of Tribal Oral Literature' (2008) by Anjali Padhi; 'The Other Maternal Uncles in Indian Languages' (2009) by Panchanan Mohanty.

### Conceptual and Theoretical Issues

The strength of a discipline lies in its growing theoretical foundations, conceptual perspectives and the extent of application of scientific methods of enquiry. In all these aspects, tribal studies have had a rich tradition right from anthropological interest on tribes and their cultures. One may find works that attempt at conceptualizing a tribe as a category. There are works on analytical concepts like 'tribe-caste continuum', 'nature-man-spirit-complex', 'syncretism', 'foraging mode of thought', 'giving environment', 'culture areas', 'cultural relativism' and many more to understand and explain tribal cultures. Theoretical perspectives from other disciplines are also applied to understand and explain the social process of tribal communities. On the basis of evolutionary perspective, tribal communities were considered as a stage of social evolution. A few works on Indian tribes concerning theoretical and conceptual perspectives are mentioned here.

*The Maler: The Nature-Man-Spirit Complex in a Hill Tribe* by L. P. Vidyarthi (1963); ‘Transformation of Tribes in India: Terms of Discourse’ (1999) by Virginius Xaxa; ‘Tribe’ and ‘Caste’ in India’ 1961, by F. G. Bailey; ‘The Definition of Tribe’ (1960), ‘The Concept of Tribe with Special Reference to India’ (1986) and ‘Construction of Tribe’ (1995) by André Béteille; ‘Tribes in Transition’ (1969) by A. R. Desai, *The Scheduled Tribes* (1963) by G. S. Ghurey; ‘What is a Tribe: Conflicting Definitions’ (1968) by T. B. Naik; ‘Tribe into Cast: A Colonial Paradigm’ (1997) and ‘Concept of Tribe: A Note’ (2003) by K. S. Singh; *Foraging Mode of Thought and Forager Sulung’s Social Self: A Critical Insight into the Concept of Foraging Mode of Thought* (2009) by M. C. Behera; ‘The Giving Environment: Another Perspective on the Economic System of Gatherer-Hunters’ (1990) by Nurit Bird-David; ‘Tribe in India: A Discourse of Temporal and Contextual Limitations’ (2010) by M. C. Behera; ‘Tribe-Caste and Tribe-Peasant Continuum in Central India’ (1965) by Surajit Sinha; *Civil Society and Democratization in India: Institutions, Ideologies and Interests* (2013) by Sarbeswar Sahoo; ‘Between the Visible and the Invisible: Gender Relations in a Tribe in India’ by Arima Mishra, 2010; ‘Embeddedness of Violence in Inequality: Understanding Violence against Women in Patriarchal Tribal Culture with Arunachal Pradesh as Case Study’ by M. C. Behera and Jummyr Basar, 2008; ‘Contemporary Status of Tribal Women: A Critique of “Lenski’s Status Inconsistency”’ by M. C. Behera, 2015.

### Tribal Communities and Social Change

Tribal communities are frequently in the process of transition consequent upon their exposure to such forces as education, cultural contact, conversion and apparently, development interventions. Few more works have been mentioned to emphasize on the topic of changes in tribal communities.

*Peripheral Encounter, Santhals, Missionaries and their Changing Worlds* (2008) by M. Carrin and H. Tambs-Lyche; *Modernization and Elites in Arunachal Pradesh* (1975) by S. M. Dubey, *Traditional Rationality and Change: Essays in Sociology of Economic Development and Social Change* (1972) by M. S. A. Rao; *The Tribals and their Changing Environment* (2000) by Tomo Riba; *Continuity and Change in Tribal Society* (1993) edited by Mrinal Miri; *Tribal Elites and Social Transformation* (1993) by Kamal K. Misra.

## 2.3 APPROACHES TO STUDY THE TRIBES

Before Independence, the British government in India had its own interest in studying tribes. But after Independence, the Government of India gave much attention to the development of tribes. It was a challenge for the academicians too. Therefore, different approaches have been advocated for studying the tribes keeping the above objectives of tribal development and welfare in mind. The approaches have been discussed in this section.

### Interdisciplinary approach

Presently, interest in disciplines like economics, political science, sociology, biology, law, psychology, etc. has been growing to study the tribes. An economist applies either the economic approach or anthropological approach to study the developmental aspects of the tribes. Scholars talk about development through culture. A botanist applies his approach

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### Check Your Progress

5. What does the literature available on tribes present?
6. What are the issues of tribal development in tribal studies?
7. How are folklores significant in tribal studies?
8. Why are tribal languages studied?

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to study ethno-medicine. Hence, the approach is interdisciplinary. History also has been using oral tradition to reconstruct the history of non-literate society, especially of the tribes. Tribal studies are emerging as the interdisciplinary approach to knowledge on the tribes from a changing and comparative perspective.

### 2.3.1 Anthropological Approach

This approach was adopted by anthropologists to study the tribes. The approach has passed through different stages. The first one is an administrative account by administrative scholars. The East India Company appointed various administrators in tribal areas to collect ethnographic details about the tribes and this knowledge was used for administration of the country. Owing to the pioneering efforts of these administrators, a bulk of ethnographic data was produced which aided the colonial administrators.

The second one is the isolationist approach. Anthropologists have been widely criticized for this approach for conspiring to isolate the tribes in a zoo for the progress of their discipline. The temporary isolation of the tribal groups recommended by Elwin also faced a number of criticisms. In his book on Baigas (1939), Elwin not only discussed the malady and devastating effects of 'over-hasty and unregulated process of civilization', but also suggested remedies. The first step in this direction, according to him, was the establishment of some sort of a National Park where the tribesmen could live their life with utmost happiness and freedom. Due to this, anthropologists were labelled as 'isolationists' and 'non-changers' by the social workers. In his later works, Elwin clarified the misconception surrounding his work and emphasized the need for careful planning.

The third one is the integrationist approach. By and large anthropologists believed in the complete integration of tribes into the mainstream of Indian life.

In the anthropological approach, the tribes were initially studied as 'outsiders'. But later, anthropologists participated in the tribal way of life. They visited the tribals in their natural habitat and conducted fieldwork among them. They stayed with the people and learned their language. They collected information of their customs and beliefs. With time, from the top down approach the anthropologists adopted a bottom-up view of the society. Some anthropologists became so involved with the locals while conducting fieldwork that they became their spokespersons. The fieldworkers too got so involved with the tribals and their issues that they became their leaders and drew the attention of the general public to the tribal matters.

There is a fourth approach to study the tribes. This approach, focused in 1960s, aimed at quick documentation of tribal cultures before they disappeared in the rapidly changing world. This approach was named as Urgent Anthropology. The main motive was sheer academic interest, but not any ideological commitment. However, work on traditional knowledge system in recent years has fulfilled the objective of the Urgent Anthropological perspective.

### Evolutionary Approach

This is an anthropological approach to study the evolution of the societies in the historical context. In the previous unit, we got to know that some anthropologists placed tribe as a stage on the scheme of evolution of the society. According to them, society evolves from being simple to complex, from being primitive to a civilized state. This assumption is used to understand tribes as a stage of development in the evolution of human society.

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Classical anthropologists, especially the colonial anthropologists, believed that the study of tribes can obtain greater benefit when understood in evolutionary perspective i.e. principle of succession. Following this approach, the tribal society was taken as if it is at a particular stage of cultural evolution. The tribal group was understood to be in an arrested stage of development. Here, Morgan's definition of tribe draws our attention. He described tribe as a completely organized system having within its boundary all resources that are necessary for maintaining a particular mode of collective existence. This approach of understanding tribes has emphasized the principle of succession, i.e. one type of culture preceding and succeeding the other type of culture.

### 2.3.2 Historical Approach

The evolutionary approach is not applicable in the case of India. Instead, the historical approach is applicable in India. The historical approach believes that a tribe does not represent a stage in cultural evolution. According to this, a tribe cannot be placed in an evolutionary sequence following the principle of succession. In case of India, the tribes have been living in India since time immemorial along with the corresponding civilizations and other castes. Archaeological findings in Daojali-Hading prove that even tribal communities of the Garo Hills knew the cultivation of crops as early as the Neolithic period along with, what we call today, the 'non-tribal' communities. During that time, 'tribes' and 'non-tribes' were at the same stage.

Therefore, in India, tribes and non-tribes do not reflect differential stages of cultural evolution but have to be viewed from the *point of interaction*. Scholars who have studied the tribes from the historical point of view are N. K. Bose, S. C. Dube and F. G. Bailey. They took recourse to this approach since the evolutionary approach was grounded in the colonial approach. In places like Australia and Africa, there are major distinctions between the local community and civilization. In both these cases, civilization was a Western import but in case of India, civilization has been there right from the beginning and tribes have been in constant interaction with it.

### 2.3.3 Folklores

Folklore is regarded as the prehistory of a society. The folklore researches, which were at the level of sporadic collection of tribal songs taken to be included in the monograph, received a systematic treatment with Verrier Elwin to begin with, under the influence of Franz Boas and E. B. Tylor. With the passage of time few anthropologists unearthed social elements hidden in folklore. Now-a-days, anthropologists and historians are attempting to collect information on folk songs, folk beliefs, folk medicines and folk proverbs under the topic folklore to explore the folk-culture of an area.

In recent years, oral history has been a growing branch of knowledge based on folklore. Among the Indian anthropologists, S. C. Roy made a strong plea for the study of folklore by anthropologists. Roy believed that folklore throws light on the early intellectual evolution of human society. He emphasized upon the need to collect and preserve folklore traditions, since they are the treasures of past handed down from generation to generation. Roy held that Indian students are in the most advantageous position to collect and study folklore, although folklore traditions have already disappeared due to various reasons. According to him, in the study of folklore of the Indian tribe, a systematic collection of these folklore materials can be done on the basis of districts, taluks and smaller territorial arrangements. He held that the study of folklore should include folk songs, folk-rites, folk-magic, folk-riddles and folk-recreation. Roy was of

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the idea that in order to know about the origin of any item of folklore, the researcher will have to make a deep analysis and distributional study of such folklore items by plotting it out on a map, determining its focal centre and tracing its diffusion to marginal areas. The search for folklore customs was referred to by Roy as tracing *the genealogy of folklore*.

Another Indian anthropologist, L. P. Vidyarthi too contributed a lot to the folklore approach to the tribal studies. Vidyarthi collected rich materials on folklore and folkloric traditions. In his book on Maler (1963), he also attempted to collect and analyse the folklore of the Maler dealing with their habitat, family, economics, festival, fairs and religion. He edited a book titled, *Folklore Researches in India* (1973). This book is a collection of essays on Indian folklore written by eminent anthropologists on the basis of fieldwork.

### 2.3.4 Emic and Etic Approaches

The neologisms 'emic' and 'etic', which were derived from an analogy of the terms 'phonemic' and 'phonetic', were coined by the linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954). He suggests that there are two perspectives that can be employed in the study of a society's cultural system. In both cases, it is possible to take the point of view of either the insider or the outsider.

The emic perspective focuses on the intrinsic cultural distinctions that are meaningful to the members of a given society. The native members of a culture are the sole judges of the validity of an emic description.

The etic perspective relies upon the extrinsic concepts and categories that have meaning for scientific observers. Scientists (outsiders to the culture) are the sole judges of the validity of an etic account.

Besides Pike, the scholar most closely associated with the concepts of 'emic' and 'etic' is the cultural anthropologist Marvin Harris, who has made the distinction between the emic and etic perspectives an integral part of his paradigm of cultural materialism.

Emic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the members of the culture under study. An emic construct is correctly termed 'emic' if and only if it is in accord with the perceptions and understanding deemed appropriate by the insider's culture. The validation of emic knowledge, thus, becomes a matter of consensus of native informants. They must agree that the construct matches the shared perceptions that are characteristic of their culture.

Etic constructs are accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories that are regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers (scholars who are outsiders to the culture). The validation of etic knowledge, thus, becomes a matter of logical and empirical analysis. It is to be verified whether the construct meets the standards of falsifiability, comprehensiveness, and logical consistency or not. The empirical analysis will ensure whether or not the concept has been falsified and/or replicated.

Finally, most cultural anthropologists agree that the goal of anthropological research must be the acquisition of both emic and etic knowledge. Emic knowledge is essential for an intuitive and empathic understanding of a culture, and it is essential for conducting effective ethnographic fieldwork. Furthermore, emic knowledge is often a valuable source of inspiration for etic hypotheses. Etic knowledge, on the other hand, is essential for



cross-cultural comparison because such comparison necessarily demands standard units and categories.

In India, we have scholars who have studied Indian culture. A Hindu studying Hindu culture can also be considered to have an insider's perception. G. S. Ghurye, D. N. Majumdar, and many others have studied Indian societies and their perspectives are apparently those of insiders. L. P. Vidyarthi, K. N. Sahay, Makhan Jha and Baidya Nath Saraswati and M. C. Behera have studied the sacred complexes of Indian tradition. They are insiders to the culture they have studied. There are many such examples.

Similarly, in different Universities, tribal scholars study their respective communities for their Ph. D dissertations. Tamo Mibang has studied his Minyong (Adi) community for his Ph. D dissertation at Dibrugarh University. In Rajiv Gandhi University, Tomo Riba and Jumyir Basar have worked on their own Galo community, Tana Showren, N. N. Hina and N. T. Rikam in their own Nyishi community, Ashan Riddi in his Tagin community, Pura Tado in his Apatani community, Gindu Borang and Otem Pertin in their own Padam community for their respective Ph. D degrees.

### 2.3.5 Human Rights Approach

Tribal communities are no more self-reliant; they are integrated to the national development policy and development ideology. These communities have been exposed to market forces. Their resources are used for mega development projects which they exclusively use as their common property resources. Many rules and regulations are applicable to them that curtail rights they used to enjoy within their cultural frame. Because of mega projects, the tribal people are displaced, or denied access to their common property resources. Any protest is brutally suppressed by the state machinery. Many tribal people lose their lives, as happened in Kalinga Nagar in Odisha in 2006. Many tribals also lose their lives in police encounters as suspected insurgents or at the time of bombing operations.

Development interventions grossly intervene in their traditional way of lives. Moreover, they cause deprivation, exclusion and marginalization of tribal people. Therefore, many NGO activists and academicians consider the situation of displacement, exclusion, poverty to which tribal people are pushed to in the process of development as a violation of human rights.

The preservation of tribal culture experiences contradiction. On one hand there is a cry for preservation of tribal culture. On the other hand there are forces unleashed that would make the preservation efforts futile. For example, in recent years, language is linked to the job market. While tribal people are concerned about the protection and preservation of their language, they educate their children in English language keeping in view the demand of the job market. These are two opposite forces, and the demand for job market is very powerful. The situation of contradiction is not favourable for preserving a tribal language. That is why scholars in recent years study the tribes and development interface from the human rights perspective.

### 2.3.6 Policy Approaches to the Tribes

Tribes in India have been living with dignity along with the non-tribal communities since time immemorial. It is the British government that viewed the tribes from their own perspective and tried to bring them to their administrative fold. Since then the interest of the state has been directed towards the tribes and as a result the search for policy measures became a priority among scholars and administrators for a long time. There

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are three distinct approaches that mark the state's policy approach towards the tribes. They are:

- Isolation
- Assimilation
- Integration

## NOTES

### 1. Isolation

The isolationist approach is a colonial mindset of divide and rule. In fact, it existed in the colonial mind much before Verrier Elwin wrote his book on the Baigas. Inner Line Permit Regulation of 1873, which was extended to the territories of Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, is nothing but a strategy of the British administration to keep the tribals isolated.

In 1930s, the idea of isolation came up in academics being pioneered by missionary turned anthropologist, Verrier Elwin. In 1936, he wrote a detailed account of the primitive tribe called 'Baigas' of Bastar district of Chhattisgarh. In his work, Elwin came with the idea of isolation. He found that unless the tribal life and culture is preserved and protected from extinction, things would go out of hand. This idea was not purely Elwin's idea. On the other hand, it was a product of the existing intellectual climate of Indian anthropologists.

Hutton in 1931 talked of the loss of tribal political and cultural autonomy mainly in the North-East. He opined that this loss was a result of acculturation. Hutton argued that unless we check such changes taking place, it would be difficult to maintain their identity. His idea came close to Elwin's idea of isolation. Indian scholars like S. C. Roy and D. N. Majumdar strongly believed that problems among the tribals were due to the overexposure to the industrial culture. All the writings of 1930s had the same view of tribal isolation.

Elwin came up with the idea of creating National Parks or protected areas in which the Baigas and their neighbouring communities could lead a life of their own without much difficulty. Elwin's idea was accepted by the colonial government, which found expression in the Government of India Act of 1935. It decided to create protected and excluded areas for the tribal dominated areas of Bastar of Chhattisgarh and outsiders were not allowed on the assumption that it might lead to exploitative consequences. Elwin felt that this was a temporary isolation and was required for the greater good of the tribe. The British administration realized that administering certain tribal areas caused much more problem in comparison to the general areas and therefore they should be kept away. Whenever the British saw the emergence of any tribal uprising, they suppressed it by declaring that area as protected area. Within these protected areas, attempts to convert the people to Christianity continued.

Anthropologists like G. S. Ghurye criticized the policy of isolation. He found that the policy of isolation was promoted to ensure adequate revenue generation within the protected land area. Another criticism against this policy was levelled by S. C. Dube. According to him, it was a deliberate attempt by the colonial government to create a cleavage between the tribals and non-tribals. Even Gandhi criticized the British policy of isolation on the grounds that they are spreading separatist tendencies. The policy of isolation was also criticized vehemently by the famous social worker A. V. Thakkar. He believed that the policy of isolation supported the academic interests of anthropologists. He said that this policy helped them in maintaining the distinction between the tribals and

non-tribals and thus, they could academically romanticize the tribes. In fact, Thakkar gave his own approach, which came to be popularly known as the social workers approach or the policy of assimilation.

## 2. Assimilation

Thakkar said that the policy of isolation favoured the Britishers and a category of scholars who were none other than the anthropologists. He was of the opinion that the isolation was contradictory to the ongoing and spontaneous process of acculturation. He strongly believed that the tribals were devoid of entrepreneurial skills. They have superstitious beliefs and they are not at all forward looking. This was responsible for their backwardness, low status and exploitation. He said that the work of social workers should be to point out the superstitious beliefs and practices and their evil effects on tribal life. He was of the opinion that the social workers should make the people aware about the positive sides of mainstream and caste society. They should act as facilitators of change generating the forces of acculturation leading to assimilation.

Elwin responded critically to Thakkar's idea of assimilation. He questioned that how can a social worker believe that there is nothing good in a tribal society. He also pointed out that the tribal people with their social differences could not be regarded as belonging to the lower social order. Therefore, Elwin was of the opinion that assimilation is not a spontaneous process. He said that it was unsound on the part of social workers to attempt either by force to convert the tribes or impose on them the elements of great tradition. He said that the social worker's approach treated the tribal social system not as a meaningful system but as a system of oddities. According to them, only after these oddities are dropped, that the meaning will emerge. In 1952, even the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru criticized the approach of assimilation. He said that assimilation would lead to second role imitation of wider culture and by converting them they would lose their identity. Through this we will be destroying the fabric of cultural life. He questioned if the civilized society is developed and better off in comparison to them. He said, 'I don't have an answer to this but I certainly know that tribal life having its own characteristics is happier in many ways than of our own and every attempt should be made to preserve the best of tribal life.' And this marked the beginning of the policy of integration.

## 3. Integration

This approach is the middle path. It falls between the other two policies i.e. isolation and assimilation. This approach argues that some institutions of tribal society should be preserved. The institutions that are to be isolated are the administrative institutions and no interference from the government should be tolerated. Institutions that can be assimilated are the ones that do not affect tribal sentiments.

The pioneers of the integration approach were Nehru and Elwin together. Elwin raised a fundamental question in his article entitled 'Do We Really Want to Keep them in Zoo'. In this article he countered the charges, which were levelled against him by the social workers. He explained that the policy of isolation came up in response to the general breakdown of tribal social fabric. It was the manner in which the tribals were responding to industrialization. In his work 'A Philosophy of NEFA', Nehru in the preface gave his opinion of integration. Elwin in the book gave the following points as an essence for the policy of integration.

## NOTES

## NOTES

- Tribal people should be approached with a tribal mindset.
- Tribal cultures with special reference to traditional practices and customs must have continuity and change.
- The economic rights of tribals must be protected and they should be allowed to continue with their traditional practices.
- The tribal culture should be preserved, integrated and developed.
- Finally, tribals must be united and integrated with the Indian mainstream.

Pandit Nehru, in the Preface, identified five important principles which characterized the essence of the policy of integration:

- (a) People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
- (b) Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.
- (c) We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders in the tribal territory.
- (d) We should not over-administer these areas or overwhelm them with a multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.
- (e) We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

These five principles are popularly called the *tribal panchsheel*. Elwin in his book demonstrated how challenging the task before the anthropologist is. Integration involves creating a sense of desire among the tribals to get united with the Indian mainstream. This is a very problematic area because the Indian mainstream has not been defined properly. There are religious, linguistic, ethnic, political and regional factors which hinder such integration. These are all the primordial elements which come in the way of integration. It was observed by some anthropologists that integration is taking place or can take place at different levels—at the level of materialism and idealism. According to K. S. Singh, in the Indian context, integration takes place more in the material aspect than in the ideational one.

Among the scholars who criticized the policy of integration was G. S. Ghurye. He opposed the policy of integration and said that it was a Western model and was not applicable in the Indian context.

However, in spite of the criticism levelled against integration, it remains the essence of state policy towards the tribes since independence.

**Check Your Progress**

9. Why have the anthropologists been criticized for the isolationist approach to study tribes?
10. What is the evolutionary approach in tribal studies?
11. Who gave a systematic treatment to folklore studies?
12. Name the pioneers of the integration approach.

**2.4 SUMMARY**

- Tribal studies as a discipline is of recent origin when different universities started offering Post-graduation courses, M. Phil courses, Ph.D programmes or Post-graduation diploma programmes in tribal studies. But the interest in the study of tribes dates back to the colonial period.
- During the 18th century, the British government felt the need to have an ethnographic account on different tribes of India with a view to rule them easily.

- A number of foreign anthropologists visited India to record the customs and traditions of the Indian tribes. British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers came to India in 1904 and studied the Toda tribe of South India, and their findings were published in 1906.
- Among the Indian scholars, S. C. Roy is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'. He was a lawyer by profession. Another anthropologist who contributed immensely to tribal studies in India was D. N. Majumdar. He conducted fieldwork among the Ho tribes of Bihar, which later was published as a book in 1937.
- Renowned anthropologist L. P. Vidyarthi studied the tribal village named Ghanhra under the auspices of Census Operation in 1961.
- Tribal research in India owes its foundation to the establishment of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1774). Sir William Jones, the founder member, piloted a number of researches and publications on subjects concerning the tribes.
- The British government appointed a large number of scholarly-oriented British administrators in tribal areas to enquire about their habits, religion and other cultural aspects to facilitate easy rule.
- During the constructive phase, different anthropologists studied and analysed their doctoral data critically and brought out a certain amount of theoretical sophistication in tribal researches in India.
- After Independence, the tribal studies in India witnessed an analytical and action-oriented approach. As a result the tribal communities began to be studied with an interdisciplinary approach.
- The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was established in 1996 as a voluntary organization for the study, conservation, and promotion of tribal languages, literature, history, culture, arts, and crafts.
- The colonial ruler divided the Indian society into tribes and castes; the analogy to group the people as tribes was drawn from the Australian and African experiences. Risley used this analogy to define tribes in the 1901 Census.
- Studies on tribes have not been limited to research engagements only; the nature of study has been diverse topically including research works, creative world view, and aesthetics.
- Cultural and Ethnographic studies cover a wide range of topical investigations. Civilizational studies, for example, is an important dimension of such studies.
- Studies on tribal customary laws in India can be traced back to the beginning of tribal studies in the country. The British administrators reported the customs and practices of the cultures of the tribes in their writings.
- In tribal studies, the issues of tribal development have emerged into an interesting area of enquiry. The issues relate to health, education, economy, livelihoods, occupation, migration and many others.
- Applied and action research is an important area of research in the discipline of tribal studies.
- Art and crafts are identity markers. A tribe has its own colour pattern, design, beliefs, taboos and so on relating to its tradition of art and craft.

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- Ecological studies generally focus on the interaction of human beings, animals and plants among themselves and with their natural surroundings.
- Folklores inform us a great deal about culture. Like kinship and cosmology, they present and explain tribal attitudes and actions, rituals and practices, fears and fantasies, and in general their world view.
- The tribal knowledge system is very comprehensive. It includes material culture and non-material culture, arts and crafts, technology and belief; it presents the way of life in its totality.
- There was doubt about the religion of tribal people in the earlier works of tribal studies. Many were of the opinion that tribal people do not have a religion.
- Numerous uprisings of the tribals have taken place beginning with the one in Bihar in 1770s followed by many revolts in Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Odisha and the North-East.
- Interest in the study of tribal languages has been a significant area of research for quite a long time. Tribal languages are studied, as you know, for the purpose of documentation, to prepare grammar books and to understand the culture.
- Before Independence, the British government in India had its own interest in studying the tribes. But after Independence, the Government of India gave much attention to the development of tribes.
- Anthropologists have been widely criticized for the isolationist approach for conspiring to isolate the tribes in a zoo for the progress of their discipline.
- The evolutionary approach is an anthropological approach to study the evolution of the societies in the historical context.
- The evolutionary approach is not applicable in the case of India. Instead, the historical approach is applicable in India. The historical approach believes that a tribe does not represent a stage in cultural evolution.
- In recent years, oral history has been a growing branch of knowledge based on folklore. Among the Indian anthropologists, S. C. Roy made a strong plea for the study of folklore by anthropologists.
- The neologisms 'emic' and 'etic', which were derived from an analogy of the terms 'phonemic' and 'phonetic', were coined by the linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954).
- The integration approach is the middle path. It falls between the other two policies i.e. isolation and assimilation. This approach argues that some institutions of tribal society should be preserved.

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## 2.5 KEY TERMS

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- **Assimilation:** It is the social process of absorbing one cultural group into harmony with another.
- **Matriliny:** It is the practice of tracing descent through the mother's line—contrasted with patriliney.
- **Tribal knowledge system:** It refers to the informal knowledge system of a tribal community.

- **Emic:** It relates to, or involves analysis of cultural phenomena from the perspective of one who participates in the culture being studied.
- **Etic:** It relates to, or involves analysis of cultural phenomena from the outsider's perspective.

## NOTES

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## 2.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. British anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers came to India in 1904 and studied the Toda tribe of South India, which was published in 1906.
2. D. N. Majumdar was the first Indian to study the impact of non-tribals on the way of life of Indian tribes.
3. S. C. Roy is known as the 'Father of Indian Ethnology'.
4. The Bhasha Research and Publication Centre was established in 1996 as a voluntary organization for the study, conservation, and promotion of tribal languages, literature, history, culture, arts, and crafts.
5. The literatures available on tribes by tribal authors and others present the dynamics of society including such themes as gender issues, violence and insurgency, feminism, ecological concerns, exploitation and many others.
6. In tribal studies, the issues of tribal development have emerged into an interesting area of enquiry. The issues relate to health, education, economy, livelihoods, occupation, migration and many others.
7. Folklores inform us a great deal about culture. Like kinship and cosmology, they present and explain tribal attitudes and actions, rituals and practices, fears and fantasies, and in general their world view.
8. Interest in the study of tribal languages has been a significant area of research for quite a long time. Tribal languages are studied, as you know, for the purpose of documentation, to prepare grammar books and to understand the culture.
9. Anthropologists have been widely criticized for the isolationist approach for conspiring to isolate the tribes in a zoo for the progress of their discipline.
10. The evolutionary approach is an anthropological approach to study the evolution of the societies in the historical context.
11. Verrier Elwin gave a systematic treatment to folklore studies.
12. The pioneers of the integration approach were Nehru and Elwin together.

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## 2.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. How did tribal studies in India evolve?
2. State S. C. Roy's contribution to tribal studies.
3. Was it academic interest of the British government for which tribal studies in India was promoted? Why?
4. What is the analytical phase in tribal studies?

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5. What was the contribution of the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre to tribal studies?
6. State the relationship between ethnography and culture.
7. 'Art and craft are identity markers.' Explain briefly.
8. How does the tribal knowledge system manifest culture?
9. Why have tribal movements evolved as an important field of study in tribal studies?
10. 'The issue of tribal identity provides a very interesting area of academic enquiry.' Discuss.
11. What are the different stages of the anthropological approach to study tribes?
12. Do you think the evolutionary approach is the right approach to study Indian tribes? Why or why not?
13. Mention two grounds of criticism labelled against the policy of isolation.

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Assess the establishment of tribal studies in India.
2. Discuss in detail the stages in tribal studies.
3. Evaluate the present trends in tribal studies.
4. Describe the characteristics and features of the Indian tribes.
5. Critically analyse the emerging fields of knowledge in tribal studies.
6. Discuss the significance of folklores and art and crafts in tribal studies.
7. Analyse the differences between tribal movement and tribal insurgency.
8. Explain the anthropological approach to study the tribes.
9. Describe the emic and etic approach to tribal studies
10. Assess the policy approaches to the tribes in detail.

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## 2.8 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT 3 SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

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## NOTES

### Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Structure, Function and Organization of a Society
  - 3.2.1 Social Structure
  - 3.2.2 Function and Functionalism
  - 3.2.3 Organization
- 3.3 Social Mobility
  - 3.3.1 Types of Social Mobility
  - 3.3.2 Social Mobility among Tribes
  - 3.3.4 Tribe-Caste-Peasantry Contrast and Continuum
- 3.4 Social Processes
  - 3.4.1 Tribalization
  - 3.4.2 Detribalization
  - 3.4.3 Re-tribalization
  - 3.4.4 Sanskritization
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 Key Terms
- 3.7 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.8 Questions and Exercises
- 3.9 Further Reading

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## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

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The structure, content and organization of any society or culture are far from static and monolithic. Changes in the society and culture are imminent due to two factors: external and internal or endogenous. External forces like acculturation most often bring about changes in society and culture. Sometimes endogenous forces also attract changes in the social structure that come from within the society itself to adapt to a difficult or changing environment. Therefore, social scientists study the structure of a society and its process of change to understand its dynamism.

Let us understand and appreciate the fact that no society or culture exists in a state of chaos and conflict for long, but are organized in a particular manner. For example, social norms in the form of rules, regulations, prescriptions and prohibitions keep the societies running, however chaotic they might seem on the surface. But even these organizational aspects are far from static and change in response to changing environments around them. Therefore, there is a need to study the changing dimensions of social organizations as well.

In this unit, we shall discuss some concepts that relate to societies and culture and try to understand and appreciate their dynamic nature.

## NOTES

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### 3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Define the concepts of structure, function and organization as they are often used in anthropology and sociology and tribal studies
- Explain the concept of social mobility and its operation among the tribes and castes of India
- Explain the concept of social process, particularly the way tribalization, detribalization and re-tribalization take place in the Indian context
- Evaluate the process of Sanskritization as a form of social mobility in rural and tribal India

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### 3.2 STRUCTURE, FUNCTION AND ORGANIZATION OF A SOCIETY

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A society is an abstract idea, but it expresses itself through its structure, function and organization. However, there is a lot of confusion in the usage of these concepts. In this section, you will learn about the meaning and nature of these concepts to clearly understand a society and to distinguish them from each other.

#### 3.2.1 Social Structure

There are different writers who have made attempts to understand the society in terms of its structure. In this section, you will be able to learn what a structure is and what a social structure means.

##### What is a structure?

The term 'structure' is derived from the Latin word, *struere*, which means to build. In order to understand the idea behind a structure, let us examine the following analogy. Most of us live in multi-roomed houses or dwelling units. Each room in a house has a special function. The purpose of the sitting room is different from that of the kitchen. The arrangements inside these rooms are also different. For example, we may not have furniture in our kitchen, but it is perfect to keep them in our bedroom. Therefore, each of the rooms has a distinct identity, yet they are essential to the very concept of a house, and contribute to the structure of a house. But most of the traditional tribal houses are single-roomed dwelling units. In these houses, while one corner of the room is used for cooking, the other corner is used for worshipping the ancestral spirits. There may be a fire place at the centre. The corners here have distinct identities, yet they contribute to our conception of a house. Please note that rooms in a multi-roomed house or the corners in a single-roomed unit are not put together haphazardly, but are 'arranged' or 'organized' in a particular design.

Let us discuss an example of a traditional house of the Adis in the village of Riga of Arunachal Pradesh which was studied by M. C. Behera as a cultural space. The house is rectangular in shape. The house has the following pattern and is shown in figure 3.1:

1. **Bale**: The staircase, also called the *ebang*  
In fact, a big sized ladder is called *bale* while a small one is called an *ebang*. Its location does not vary from house to house.
2. **Batum**: Temporary place for pigs, mithuns, etc.
3. **Gojok**: Left side corridor of the house
4. **Tungo**: Right side corridor under the main roof, inner portion of a *tungo* is called *garang*
5. **Gotek**: *Tungo + atek* (extra) extension of *tungo* beyond the main roof
6. **Eyap/yapgo**: Front door, entrance
7. **Kok gojok**: Attached corridor to the right side of the house
8. **Asi dupu lingko**: The place for keeping water container
9. **Yapok sodung/hodung**: Place for sleeping (guests, family members, etc.)
10. **Hodang**: Place nearer to fire place from the door
11. **Gulung**: The fire place
12. **Rising**: Place for male members of the family  
The female members are not allowed there. It is believed that if the female members enter this space then the male efficiency will be adversely affected. The popular slang for an ineffective hunter is—*mlme kisa na*—like a female.
13. **Kiipar**: Place for kiipar/kipar (rice pounder)
14. **Kodang**: Main working space in the house  
Dead body of a member is kept in this portion of the house before taking for cremation.
15. **Kok eyap/yapgo** also called *kodang yapgo*: Side door (the second door to the left side of the house is a custom in Riga area)  
It opens into the attached corridor to the right side of the house.
16. **Erang**: Place for female members
17. **Erang yupko**: Sleeping place for female members
18. **Bango riising/rising**: Place for rituals after successful hunting, only male members are allowed
19. **Yugum**: Pig sty
20. **Adang**: The two main pillars of the house

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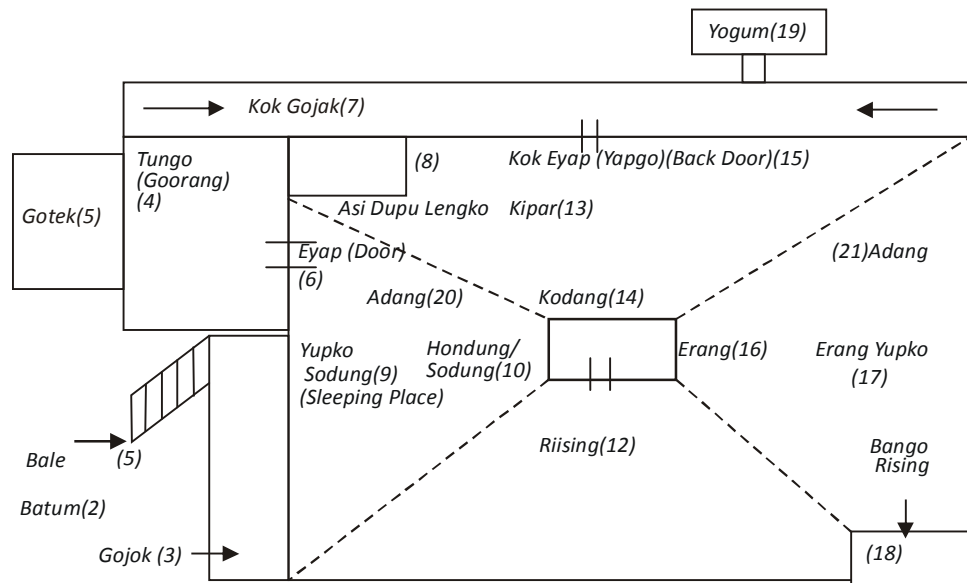


Fig. 3.1 An Adi House Structure at Riga

The idea of this analogy is to appreciate that the concept of a structure is very much linked to the concept of proper arrangement of its parts. A house is not only a physical structure; it has its patterned functional structure also. However, in the concept of social structure, the pattern includes abstract ideas, norms, etc.

**History of the Concept of Structure**

The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. Earlier, structure was used to form the concept of ‘social structure’, it had different meanings in different centuries. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19<sup>th</sup> century work of Georg Simmel. In the works of these writers, we understand social structure as abstract patterns underlying human interaction.

The notion of social structure is intimately related to a variety of central topics in social science. It has been extensively developed in the twentieth century from a variety of analytical perspectives. For example, the structuralist perspectives drawing on the structuralism of Levi-Strauss, Feminist or Marxist perspectives, functionalist perspectives such as those developed by Talcott Parsons and his followers have contributed to the understanding of the concept of ‘social structure’.

**Use of the term structure before its use in social sciences:** We have already mentioned that the word ‘structure’ has been derived from the Latin word *struere* which means to build. The word was widely used in this sense in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to refer to the construction of a building. It retained this meaning through much of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Its main uses were in practical architecture and the science of geometry. In the science of geometry, it was used as abstract mathematical properties of different kinds of structure. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was used in the branch of engineering with the introduction of *elastic* and *plastic* structures. The extension of structural idea from architecture to engineering encouraged their use in other scientific disciplines. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the word ‘structure’ came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism. At the same time, the term ‘structure’ had begun to be used in geology to describe the patterns of rock formation; in chemistry, it was used to explain the arrangement of atoms in molecules.

Until the publication of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin in 1859, in all the uses mentioned above, the word 'structure' was used to give a static idea about the forms. It did not give any idea about the development or transformation of forms. But Darwin believed in linking the idea of structure to that of development. He suggested that structural analysis could be dynamic as well as static. With this shift in thought, the sociologists felt the need to use the concept of social structure for scientific studies of the subject matter. However, the concept of social structure became popular among sociologists and anthropologists in the decade following the Second World War. It became fashionable to apply this concept to almost any ordered arrangement of social phenomenon. Other scholars on tribal studies also applied the concept to understand the tribal social structure.

### Understanding Social Structure

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1999) gives three meanings of the term structure, they are: (i) the way in which something is organized, built, or put together (e.g., the structure of the human body); (ii) a particular system, pattern, procedure, or institution (e.g., class structure, salary structure); and (iii) a thing made up of several parts put together in a particular way (e.g., a single-storey structure).

When an anthropologist or a sociologist speaks of structure, the anthropologist/sociologist has all the three meanings in his mind. By structure, the anthropologist/sociologist means an 'interconnectedness' of parts, i.e., the parts of a society are not isolated entities, but are brought together in a set of relationships to each other.

Secondly, social structure means the enduring nature of such relationships. Thirdly, the concept is used to mean enabling institutional frames/norms to govern these relationships in practice/action.

It was Herbert Spencer who was one of the first scholars to talk about structures of societies with a biological analogy. In chapter IV of his book, *The Principles of Sociology* (1876), he puts forth that social structures are analogous to the organs of a living body in so far as they tend to be specialized in particular tasks or activities. These tasks are the functions. A whole society, then, is a set of connected structures, or a 'system of organs'.

Later, the French sociologist, Émile Durkheim, was greatly attracted to the organic analogy, and said that the idea of function in social sciences was based on an analogy between the living organism and the society. He used the term 'social morphology', by which he meant what we mean by the term 'social structure'. He postulates that social structure has two attributes: first, 'collective relationships', which are internal arrangements of a society like its kinship; second, 'collective representations', which are the mental phenomena and include beliefs, ideas, values, symbols and expectations of the members of the society. He holds that the social structure of a society consists of a complex combination of collective relationships and collective representations that give society a unique identity.

Lopez and Scott (2000) have defined social structure from two perspectives—institutional and relational.

In the first sense, 'social structure is seen as comprising those cultural or normative patterns that define the expectations of agents hold about each other's behaviour and that organize their enduring relations with each other'. In the second sense, 'social structure is seen as comprising the relationships themselves, understood as patterns of

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causal interconnection and interdependence among agents and their actions, as well as the positions that they occupy’.

Social structure is also defined in relation to social groups. Social structure when defined in this pattern results into **segmentary social structure**.

There are two ways of observing social structure: One is the notion of social structure with family as a basic unit. It was propounded by E. E. Evans-Pritchard. The other way is to study the society with individuals as the basic unit where the social behaviour of each person is the essence of study. This person to person relationship exists at various levels or segments of the society such as family, lineage and clan. It is because in his study of the tribe *Nuer*, he observed the society through different segments like clans, lineages, consanguineal and affinal kins. In case of *Nuer*, he started with homestead. He studied the *Nuer* under the relationship of the homestead with the wider group of a village. Then he studied the village in relation to a group of villages called tertiary group; tertiary group in relation to secondary group which is composed of several tertiary groups; the secondary group with the primary group which is composed of several secondary groups till the whole tribe was included. His approach to study the society with family or the homestead as the basic unit gives us the concept of segmentary social structure.

Social structure is also studied in relation to **social roles**. The components or units of social structure reflect interpersonal relations. The units, however, become part of the social structure in relation to interpersonal relations which exist within the unit. This interpersonal relation defines the status positions occupied by individuals in the unit. The status of a person defines the person’s role which he has to perform. We can cite the example of a priest/shaman as a social unit and relate his role in terms of relations with other individuals. We can see the structure of the society in relation to the role and status of the priest and other individuals or social units. Thus, social roles within the units of social structure help in understanding the society. This is the social structure approach in relation to social roles to study the society. S. F. Nadel in his book, *The Theory of Social Structure* (1969) has defined social structure in relation to social roles. He has emphasized on the roles played by the individual actors in the society and the consequent social status. He writes, ‘We arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behaviour the pattern or network (or “system”) of relationships obtaining between actors in their capacity of playing roles relative to one another.’

### **Radcliffe-Brown and Social Structure**

The British social anthropologist, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, was greatly influenced by the idea of organic analogy of Durkheim and contributed immensely to the study of social structure. His name is associated with the ‘structural-functional approach’ in the analysis of the structure of society. Let us examine some of the salient points of Radcliffe-Brown’s concept of social structure.

Radcliffe-Brown has related the concept of social structure to the concept of social function. The concept of function, according to him is the ‘contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part’. This concept involves the notion of a structure consisting of a set of relations amongst unit entities. He argues that social structures are ‘just as real as are living organisms’ and that social structure is ‘the

set of actually existing relations, at a given moment of time, which link together human beings'. He says that social structures encompass 'all social relations of person to person'. Precisely, social structure consists of arrangement of people in relation to each other.

The continuity of the structure is maintained by a life-process made up of the activities of the constituent units. He referred to the structural aspect of a society as **social morphology**, and the functional aspect as **social physiology**. Thus, for Radcliffe-Brown social structure consists of a network, of person to person relations and when we study social structure we are concerned with the set of actually existing relations at a given point of time.

Radcliffe-Brown has introduced the concept of **dyadic relations** to understand all social relations of person to person. For example, the kinship structure of any society consists of a number of dyadic relations, such as father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, and so on. These relations, according to Radcliffe-Brown, are the basis of the social structure of a given society.

He includes under the social structure, the differentiation of individuals and classes by their social role. He also states that social structures encompass 'the differentiation of individuals and of classes by their social role'. This means that the relations between the headman or the priest and an ordinary villager, between men and women, between the employer and the employee, come under the purview of social structure. To him, social structure is not an abstraction but an empirical reality.

Radcliffe-Brown is also of the opinion that social structure is a dynamic concept, and not a static one. As the living body replaces the dead cells by new ones and replenishes the level of energy, similarly the 'social life renews the social structure'. This obviously means that relations between persons change over time. It is also clear from his statement that the continuity of the structure is maintained by a life-process made up of the activities of the constituent units. Another British anthropologist, E. E. Evans-Pritchard differs from Radcliffe-Brown with regard to the conception of social structure, when the former says that social structures 'refer(s) only to persistent social groups', and thereby, not recognizing person to person relationships as such.

### **Lévi-Strauss and Social Structure**

The French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, has also contributed to the study of social structure. In contrast to Radcliffe-Brown, Lévi-Strauss says that the term 'social structure' has nothing to do with empirical reality. It precisely refers to 'models' that are built up from empirical realities. For Lévi-Strauss, social structure is an 'abstraction' from what we observe as person to person or group to group relationships. These observable relations, Lévi-Strauss says, are just 'social relations' and not 'social structures'. He says '...the object of social-structure studies is to understand social relations with the help of models'. He adds that social structure is a model; it is a method of study.

According to Lévi-Strauss a structure consists of a model meeting the following requirements:

- The structure exhibits the characteristics of a *system*. It is made up of several elements, none of which can undergo a change without effecting changes in all the other elements.

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For any given model there should be a possibility of ordering a series of transformations resulting in a group of models of the same type.

- The model should be constituted so as to make immediately intelligible all the observed facts.
- The above properties make it possible to predict how the model will react if one or more of its elements are submitted to certain modifications.

The British anthropologist, Edmund Leach, also made a significant contribution to the idea of social structure as a model, although there are many significant differences between the approaches of Lévi-Strauss and Leach to structuralism. For instance, whereas Lévi-Strauss is interested in formulating the ‘universal structures’—structures applicable to all human societies at all points of time—Leach applies the method of structuralism to understand the local (or regional) structures. Because of this, some term Leach’s approach as ‘neo-structural’.

### 3.2.2 Function and Functionalism

Many writers opine that a society exists and continues because of the functions it performs for its members. From this idea, the concept of functionalism has developed. In this section, we shall discuss the meaning of function and the concept of functionalism.

#### What is function?

Literally, the word ‘function’ refers to activity of some kind for the fulfillment of a given objective. The Oxford Dictionary defines function as the ‘activity, proper or natural, to a person or thing; the purpose or intended role of a person or thing; an office, duty, employment, or calling, also, a particular activity or operation (among several); an organizational unit performing this’. We understand the term with reference to the function of a machine, function of an institution, function of a job or an occupation. In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture. In this section, you will learn function in terms of performance and interconnectedness of different aspects of culture in tribal communities.

#### Functionalism in Anthropology and Tribal Studies

Functionalism dates back to the 1920s. It is concerned with finding: (a) reasons why people act the way they do, and (b) interrelations between the different aspects of society. Whereas personality was mainly an American interest, functionalism was predominantly a British focus. The leaders of functionalism were Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown.

Bronislaw Malinowski was the pioneer of modern fieldwork methods. He emphasized functional relations which ethnographers could observe in the field. He also tried to emphasize relations between biological needs and cultural life.

Radcliffe-Brown emphasized the interrelation between social systems: kinship, politics, economics and religion. He was also interested in the function of social institutions (e.g. marriage, initiation) within these systems. Above all, he believed that the goal of anthropology ought to be the comparison of societies and formulation of general laws to explain how the society works. Sometimes Radcliffe-Brown’s approach is referred to as structural functionalism and Malinowski’s as pure functionalism.



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Functionalism was a dominant theory in the British and American anthropology and sociology from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century till the end of the Second World War. It was based on four basic assumptions. First, ideally the societies and cultures are very well integrated wholes and are in a state of homeostasis. Second, study on functions should be synchronic rather than diachronic, necessitating long-term intensive fieldwork in simple societies with participant observation. Third, holism is the hallmark of cultural studies, and to understand one aspect of a culture, such as kinship, one has to understand all the other aspects like politics, religion, economy, and so on. And fourth, it should aim at studying any institution to understand how it contributes to the maintenance of integrity of the whole society.

### **Malinowski and Functionalism**

The contributions of Bronislaw Malinowski have been considered paramount in establishing the foundation of functionalism in British social anthropology. His prolonged fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands has resulted in an important method in anthropology, known as **participant observation**. Malinowski viewed function from a physiological point of view. He says, function may be defined as ‘... the satisfaction of an organic impulse by the appropriate act. Form and function, obviously, are inextricably related to one another.’ He believes that cultural institutions are integrated responses to a variety of human needs. For example, he says that kinship as an institution is a response to the biological urge for reproduction. In order to comply with acquiring a mate, establishing a family, procreating children, ensuring livelihood and social status for them, care is taken by the institution of kinship. Therefore, the function of kinship is to satisfy the human urge for reproduction.

Malinowski argues that contrary to popular belief that ‘magic’ is a mere superstition or empty gesture in a simple society, it has multiple functions, such as to kill enemies and prevent being killed, to ease the birth of a child, to enhance the beauty of dancers, to protect the fishermen, or to ensure a better harvest. He says that magic still persists in societies because it works or functions well. Malinowski, thus, believes that no institution in a culture is unimportant; all of them function so as to contribute to the holistic functioning of the culture.

### **Problems with Functionalism**

Despite its strong appeal to understand the integrity of societies and cultures through their institutions, functionalism is fraught with many problems. It is criticized, largely because of its inability to deal with changes in the society and culture. Further, it is realized that synchronic approach alone cannot make us understand the culture; it needs to be combined with historical or diachronic approach. Its somewhat mechanistic models and assumptions have not been favoured by many later scholars.

The structural perspective forwarded by French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss provided an alternative to understand social structure. His perspective has become popular as structuralism.

Structuralism is the perspective which argues that meaning is only revealed through the relation between things. Things have no meaning independently. This perspective was borrowed from linguistics and was developed by Lévi-Strauss and his British admirers such as Sir Edmund Leach.

In rituals, meaning is embedded in the juxtaposition of ritual actions. In mythology, meaning is found in contrasts between events or between characters. This structural explanation became problematic for functional explanation.

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### 3.2.3 Organization

The literal meaning of organization is to arrange something systematically. The Oxford Dictionary defines organization as 'the way in which something is organized; coordination of parts in an organic whole; systematic arrangement'. If we extend this concept to society, it would be referred to as 'social organization' or the systematic arrangement of a society.

#### Social Organization

Humans are social animals and live in groups throughout their lives. We may enjoy isolation for some time, but we cannot live in complete isolation, because of our dependence on other humans for many things. We get our food, shelter, security through other fellow members of the society. Therefore, humans form numerous social groups to live a decent life. In fact, we are members of many social groups at the same time. We may be family members, employees in a company, citizens of the country, members of clubs, religious organizations, political parties, occupational groups (like doctors and engineers), and ethnic groups and so on. In pre-literate tribal societies, people are grouped around their kinship network. For example, a stranger in these societies is questioned regarding his tribe or clan rather than his name.

Many anthropologists have endorsed this definition of social organization. For example, Robert Lowie advocates that the study of social organization deals primarily with the significant grouping of individuals. Humans do not and cannot live alone. They have to fulfill their basic biological as well as social needs. They need food, clothes, shelter, recreation, safety and security, for which they form groups of various kinds. These groupings are nothing but the organization of the society. British anthropologist, Raymond Firth, therefore, says that all community life involves methods of grouping and grading people for an effective carrying out of various types of activities necessary for common existence.

#### Social Structure and Social Organization

Confusion may arise between the concepts of 'social structure' and 'social organization'. Social structure, in a general sense, is 'any ordered arrangement of social phenomenon' for a 'permanent and enduring social relationship'. An organization or social organization is a formal group of people with one or more shared goals. The word itself is derived from the Greek word *organon* meaning *tool*.

In the social sciences, organizations are studied by researchers from the point of view of several disciplines. The study of organizations is available in sociology, economics, political science, psychology, management, anthropology and tribal studies. In sociology 'organization' is understood as a planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.

This action is usually framed by formal membership and form (institutional rules). Sociology distinguishes the term organization into planned formal and unplanned informal (i.e. spontaneously formed) organizations. In tribal communities, organizations are mostly informal in nature. Social organizations can take many forms, depending on a social

context. For example, for family context the corresponding social organization is of course the 'family'. The social organization next to 'family' may be 'lineage' or 'clan'. The *Patang* of Apatanis is an organization of division of labour. Similarly, the *Mukchum* of the Khamptis or the *Kebang* of the Adis is a political organization. Needless to say, the sociological understanding of informal institutions is applied to study organizations in tribal societies.

Social organization is more concrete, formal and goal oriented. Social structure, on the other hand, is more general, inclusive and comprehensive. However, some scholars use these two concepts interchangeably. But Raymond Firth in his book *Elements of Social Organization* (1956) has made a distinction between the two concepts.

He regards both these terms as only heuristic devices or tools rather than precise concepts. According to him, social organization is concerned with the choices and decisions involved in the actual social relations: while the concept of social structure deals with the more fundamental social relations, which gives a society its basic form, and which provides limits to the range of action organizationally possible within it.

Firth says that in the aspect of structure, the continuity principle of society is found, while the variation or change principle is to be found in the aspect of organization. The latter aspect allows evaluation of situations with a scope for individual choice.

Firth studied the social structure and organization of small communities, such as the Tikopians of Solomon Islands. He found that the structure and organization of the community life possess certain constituents which are essential for social existence within a community. These constituents are: social alignment, social control, social media and social standards.

### **Social Organization among the Tribes of India**

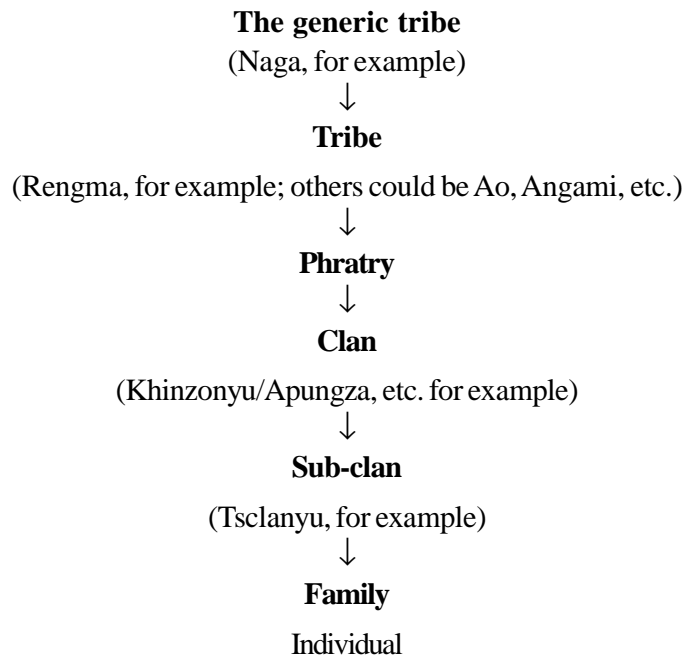
Indian tribes invariably organize themselves by grouping and grading their fellow members to meet the demands of a collective life with the help of their kinship network. This conscious exercise of grouping and grading ensures a smooth collective life. These groupings may be of two types: kin-based and non-kin-based. In India, we find that individuals of the tribal societies form families, families form lineages, lineages form clans, clans form phratries, and **phratries** form tribes. Many tribes are divided into two or more sub-tribes or into two **moieties**, each moiety being endogamous. Hence, moieties are popularly known as 'half-tribes'. Sometimes a group of tribes come together with the same generic name, as in the case of the Nagas. In fact, Ao Nagas, Rengma Nagas, Konyak Nagas, etc. are individual tribes and generically call themselves as Nagas.

Although individual tribes have their own typical way of organizing their society, which varies considerably between the tribes, we will discuss two examples of social organization. Our first example is the social organization of the Rengma Nagas inhabiting Nagaland and the second example is of the Kondhs of Odisha.

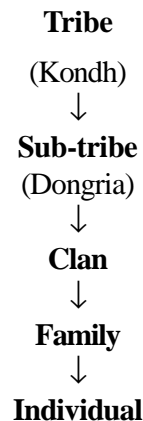
The Rengma Naga is a member tribe of the Naga group as discussed above. But they are territorially divided into the Eastern Rengmas and the Western Rengmas. J. P. Mills in the book *The Rengma Naga* (1937) informs us that the Western Rengmas are further divided into six exogamous groups or phratries. Each of these six phratries is further divided into a number of clans. The Eastern Rengmas have no such phratries, but are divided into three clans. The clans have sub-clans, which are divided into families and families into individuals. Therefore, for the Rengma Naga, the social organization is:

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The Kondhs in Odisha are territorially divided into Kutia Kondhs, Desia Kondhs and Dongria Kondhs, which are the sub-tribes of the main tribe. Each sub-tribe is further divided into many exogamous totemic clans, constituted by a number of families. Each family is again constituted by many individuals. Therefore, the Kondhs organize their society in the following pattern:



Besides these kin-based social organizations, Indian tribes also have non-kin-based organizations in the form of age-grades and age-sets. The age-based groups among the tribes are termed as age-grades by the anthropologists. For example, in the youth dormitories of the Oraon of Jharkhand, known as *Tur*, there used to be three grades of members: *Puna Jokhar* or novices entering at the age of 11 or 12, *Majh Turia Jokhar* or the middle class members, and *Koha Jokhar* or the oldest members. While the first two age-grades are of three years duration each, the last grade continues until the member is married, and sometimes until the member has a child. Among the Padams of Arunachal Pradesh, *musup* is a male institution similar to the youth dormitory in other tribes to some extent. The members in a *musup* are graded as *Musup ko*, *Minil*, *Ruutum* and *Pator Mijing*.

In some societies, age-grades are clearly recognized as distinct identifiable groups of people. Anthropologists refer to these groups as age-sets. They are members of

similar age and usually of the same gender, who share a common identity and maintain close ties throughout their lives. They also pass through age-related statuses together as a group. Age-sets are especially common in sub-Saharan Africa. Among the Masai cattle herding people of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, for instance, male age-sets have been traditionally very important. The Masai strongly differentiate between three major age-based male groups—boys, warriors, and elders. The latter two groups are also informally divided into junior and senior warriors, and junior and senior elders.

In many tribal societies of India, social groupings are made on the basis of gender also. This differentiation is more visible in the tribal youth dormitories. Among the Oraon of Jharkhand and the Juang of Odisha, the youth dormitories were divided on gender lines, which means that there used to be separate dormitories for unmarried boys and unmarried girls. Among the Padams of Arunachal Pradesh, there is *musup* and *raseng* for boys and girls respectively. Among Ao Nagas, *Ariju* existed for boys and *Tsiiki* for girls. Of course, many of these dormitories are now extinct among the tribes of India. But among the Padams both the institutions exist in the villages of the hills.

### 3.3 SOCIAL MOBILITY

Mobility stands for shift, change and movement. The change may be of place or from one position to another. Further, change is value free i.e. it cannot be said that change is for good or bad. When we prefix 'social' along with mobility it would imply that people or individuals occupying a social position, move to another position or status. In the social ladder, this movement may be upward or downward or it may be inter-generational or intra-generational. *In short, social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.*

Social change in traditional societies is culture determined. In such societies, money and market in their present form do not exist. Hence, the status is determined not in terms of occupation or quantity of money, but in terms of social position as culturally recognized. But traditional societies, such as tribal societies, in recent years are not exclusively traditional. These societies have been exposed to money, market forces and development interventions. Therefore, status and position are also determined by contemporary factors like occupation, education and so on. In this section, we shall discuss the concept and process of social mobility in general and with reference to the tribal societies in particular.

The study of social mobility is important for a number of reasons. We can observe changes in the class system of a society by studying social mobility. If the society and its members are more mobile, we can conclude that it is more open. In closed societies, social mobility is relatively difficult. We can also understand people's life histories through the study of social mobility.

#### Meaning and Definitions

As we have noted earlier, no society or culture is static, but always in a state of flux. Along with the changes in the society and culture, social positions also undergo changes. Therefore, Pitirim A. Sorokin, an eminent sociologist, in his book, *Social and Cultural Mobility* (1959) says: 'By social mobility is understood any transition of an individual or social object or value—anything that has been created or modified by human activity—from one social position to another.'

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#### Check Your Progress

1. From whose writings can the concept of social structure be traced?
2. What did the term 'structure' refer to in biology in the 19th century?
3. Whose name is associated with the 'structural-functional approach' in the analysis of the structure of society?
4. What is 'function' in anthropological, sociological and tribal studies?
5. How is organization defined in the field of sociology?

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Barber (1957) defines social mobility as ‘movement, either upward or downward between higher or lower social classes; or more precisely, movement between one relatively full time, functionally significant social role and another that is evaluated as either higher or lower.’ This movement is to be conceived as a process occurring over time, with individuals moving from one role and social class position to another because of what has happened to them in various kinds of social interaction. Mobility arises in social interaction, as each individual reacts to others in a changing series of social roles.

In case of individuals, it is common in industrial societies that people move from one level of occupation to another with the change in the social position, which is an example of social mobility. In tribal societies, when an ordinary citizen is selected or elected as the headman or the priest of the village, there is a change in his social position, which exemplifies social mobility. Similarly, groups of individuals also change their social positions, and the mobility of castes in India is an example of this kind of social mobility.

### 3.3.1 Types of Social Mobility

There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical.

#### 1. Horizontal Social Mobility

By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level. An example of horizontal social mobility is given here. When a person changes his religion from animism to say, Christianity, it signifies a horizontal social mobility, as all religions are on the same level. Similarly, when a person changes his citizenship from one country to another, or changes his factory or workplace with the same occupation (say, a mechanic, a fitter, a doctor), or changes his family by divorce and remarriage, or changes his place of residence, we call it horizontal social mobility. In all these cases, ‘shifting’ may take place without any noticeable change of the social position or status of an individual or social object.

Sorokin explains the concept of horizontal mobility more broadly. According to Sorokin, ‘Horizontal mobility refers to territorial, religious, political party, family, occupational and other horizontal shifting without any noticeable change in vertical position.’ A clan or a tribe, for example, may migrate to another place. In the new place, it may have a new identity. But in relation to its original tribe its status does not change. This is an example of horizontal mobility.

#### 2. Vertical Social Mobility

When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility. In the words of Sorokin, ‘by vertical social mobility is meant the relations involved in transition of an individual (or a social object) from one social stratum to another.’

According to the direction of transition, there are two types of vertical social mobility: (a) ascending (also called social climbing or upward mobility), and (b) descending (also called social sinking or downward mobility).

- (a) **Upward mobility:** When a person of a lower social position moves to a higher social position, the mobility is of ascending vertical type. For example, when a ward member of a local Panchayat becomes a member of the Legislative Assembly of the state, there takes place an ascending vertical mobility for that person. This may be true for a group also.

When some members of an existing group form a new group and insert this group into a higher stratum, there takes place an ascending vertical mobility of that group. The shifting of students' associations into powerful political parties is an example of this type.

- (b) **Downward mobility:** When a person of a higher social position is dropped to a lower social position, it is called vertical descending mobility. Reduction in the amount of wealth, losing elections, going to jail for criminal activities, etc. denote sinking of the social position of an individual, and hence, are examples of descending vertical mobility. This may be true for a group also. When a political party loses the election, it causes sinking of social position of its members. Among the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh, if someone commits a crime towards a member of a family, then he has to pay some fine to compensate the family. In case of failure, he becomes a *Mura* of the family till he repays the fine. Similar is the case among other Tani group of tribes. The *Mura/Nera* is dropped to a lower social position. However, this practice does not exist now.

Social mobility can be observed taking into consideration the generational factor as well. Accordingly, there may be two types of social mobility: inter-generational and intra-generational social mobility. These two types of mobility are noticeable in modern tribal societies also.

**Inter-generational:** When change in the social position is noticed in two or more generations, it is termed as inter-generational social mobility. For example, the son of a farmer becomes a civil servant, there is evidently social mobility across generations. Hence, usually, inter-generational mobility is used to compare the level of the parents with that of their children. This type of mobility means that one generation changes its social status in contrast to the preceding generation. However, this mobility may be upward or downward.

**Intra-generational:** If a person has risen in the level of his career in his own lifetime, the mobility is of the intra-generational type. For example, if a tribesperson during his life time becomes a shaman, his status in the community changes. It is an upward intra-generational mobility. In tribal societies a good hunter has a higher status than a common man. If misfortune touches a tribesman and he fails to repay debt, then he may be a bonded labourer to the lender's family. His social status sinks. It is an example of downward intra-generational mobility.

### 3.3.2 Social Mobility among Tribes

We are aware of the fact that the tribes of India are undergoing a rapid process of transformation, which induces social mobility among them. This is not to discount the fact that still they have retained a large part of their traditional cultures and values. Vidyarthi and Rai (1985) discuss two broad types of factors that bring about social transformation among the tribes of India—traditional and modern.

The traditional factors include the impact of certain traditions of the major neighbouring communities on the tribes, which have been continuing for a long period. These are the processes of Hinduization, Sankritization, revitalization and many other reform movements.

The modern factors of social transformation are due to the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread

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of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have a direct bearing on tribal cultures. There are also some other factors like motivation, achievements and failures, skills and training, and migration which affect the status of people. These eventually induce social mobility among the tribes.

Now we will discuss some concrete cases of social mobility among the tribal groups of India. The central Himalayan tribes, the Tharu and the Khasa studied by Srivastava (1958) and Majumdar (1962), have been accepted as the Hindu Kshatriyas due to constant interaction with the neighbouring Hindus. The Tharu wear sacred threads like the Kshatriyas, call themselves 'Thakurs' and have succeeded in establishing marital relationship with the Hindu Thakurs. Similarly, the Khasa have declared themselves as Hindu Rajputs and have established social connections with the Brahmans and Rajputs of the plains. One can notice here the instances of social mobility from tribes to caste Hindus of these tribes.

The Santhals of central India, distributed over the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, have witnessed social mobility in some areas. Those of them who adopted the Baptist way of Christianity during the British days, and others who revitalized their tribal religion and cultural values sought for a higher social status. Many of them emphasized on thrift and abstinence from liquor, avoidance of wasteful ostentation, and valued the ethical principles of high living of the Hindus or Christians, eventually attaining a higher social status. Therefore, Roy Burman (1970) prefers to call them 'post-primitives' in place of 'primitive tribes'.

### 3.3.3 Social Mobility among Castes

Castes in India are considered to be very rigid and closed theoretically. Surajit Sinha has defined caste:

... as a hierarchy of endogamous groups, organized in a characteristic heredity of division of labour. The endogamous segments, castes or *jatis*, are committed to internal structural solidarity as well as to organic coordination with the large multi-caste social system. This coordination is brought about through functional specialization of the endogamous groups as also through hierarchical relationship among the *jatis*.

Two important features of caste are evident from this definition: endogamy and hereditarily ascribed status. Endogamy refers to marriage within the caste boundary, and ascribed status means the status gained by a person by his/her birth. For example, a person born in the caste of a barber or a potter remains as a member of the same caste throughout his life.

However, there are many instances of social mobility among the castes of India. M. N. Srinivas has attributed the process of Sanskritization to social mobility among the castes as well as tribes in India. We shall discuss about Sanskritization later in this unit. In Sanskritization, lower castes imitate the lifestyle of the neighbouring higher castes, and try to attain a higher caste status in course of time.

### 3.3.4 Tribe-Caste-Peasantry Contrast and Continuum

Here, we will see the differences between the concepts of 'tribes', 'castes' and 'peasants' and also the areas of overlapping between them. Our first task will be to distinguish between tribes and castes. First, there is a relative isolation of tribes as compared to castes. This means that the tribe has very limited external social ties, whereas a caste is



linked with many other castes by multifarious ties. Second, the tribes speak a number of dialects/languages, although they inhabit the same locality or region. For example, in any district of Arunachal Pradesh, many tribes live together and speak their own dialects. In case of a caste, many castes living in the same region speak the same language or dialect. Third, most of the tribes are animists, while castes profess Hinduism as their religion.

Now let us examine the concept of peasants. Beteille, for example, identifies three important features of the peasants. First, peasants are attached to land either as owners or as tenants or as labourers without any right over land, yet earning their livelihood through labour. Second, peasants occupy a lower social and economic status in the society compared to the gentry or the nobility. Third, they represent a class of exploited people in the hands of various classes.

Despite conceptual differences, in terms of operational realities, it is difficult to see the tribes, the castes and the peasants as disjointed or compartmentalized categories; it would be prudent to view them in terms of a continuum. A continuum is nothing but a scale, on which tribes, castes and peasants are located, due to the overlapping of their values and ideal behaviours. Ghurye's characterization of tribes as 'backward Hindus' differing only in degree from other segments of the Hindu society gives credence to the idea of a continuum between tribes and castes. In his celebrated article, 'Hindu Methods of Tribal Absorption', Bose (1941) has shown how the tribes of India gradually get absorbed into the Hindu fold by observing Hindu rituals and sharing Hindu values. He says 'such a slow movement of economic change, spread over at least a hundred years or more, has led to the gradual absorption of some sections of tribal people into the Hindu fold.'

Surajit Sinha had once commented on the amorphous boundaries that exist between the tribes, castes and peasants, which are in a state of continuum. He refers to various central Indian tribes and castes and says, 'The Bhumij, the Santhal, the Kharia and the Pahira of Singhbhum; the Bhatra, Dorla and the Dhurwa of M.P.; and the Riang of Tripura; and the Paundra, a scheduled caste of West Bengal represent a series in the degree of intensive articulation with the regional Hindu hierarchical system. While the Bhumij and the Paundra have been more or less fully integrated into the Hindu social order, the Kharia and the Pahira of Manbhum, the Dorla of Bastar and the Riang of Tripura still maintain a much greater distance from the mainstream of the Hindu social order surrounding them. The position of the Santhal of Manbhum, the Dhurwa and the Bhatra of Bastar fall somewhere between the two extreme types mentioned above' (Sinha 1965).

Many tribes in India are peasants for all practical purposes. The Raj Gond of Andhra Pradesh, the Munda of Jharkhand, the Bhuiyan of Odisha satisfy all the criteria of a peasant described above. Many tribes in India were rulers of their small kingdoms during the pre-British times and were claiming to have a Kshatriya or warrior origin. History is replete with many myths that were in circulation, legitimizing the Kshatriya status of these rulers. There have been many instances of the rulers upgrading the status of tribes to peasant castes and vice-versa, rendering the boundaries between them spurious. Thus, the contrast between tribes, castes and peasants are merely conceptual; in reality, they were along a continuum due to highly fluid boundaries between them.

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### Check Your Progress

6. Define social mobility.
7. Name the two principal types of social mobility.
8. What are the modern factors of social transformation?
9. What is a continuum with regard to tribes, castes and peasants?

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## 3.4 SOCIAL PROCESSES

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A society is not static. It changes over time. There are various factors affecting this change. These factors may vary from society to society. The study of these factors gives us an idea about the process of social change in different societies. We shall discuss the process of social change with reference to tribal communities in India.

### Social Processes in Tribal India

Social process is a phrase that carries multiple meanings. But let us define it in a crude manner. It includes generic processes that structure the time-space fabric of a society. It may include political, economic, and socio-cultural processes, and human interactions arising out of these processes. If we restrict ourselves to the socio-cultural processes among the tribal or pre-capitalist social formations, we notice the use of kinship, exchange relations, social control mechanisms and the human interactions arising out of them that ensure the continuity of the society. These are characteristically different from the capitalistic societies with their emphasis on capital, class and state. In this section, we shall discuss a few social processes that operate in the tribal societies of India in the form of tribalization, detribalization, re-tribalization and sanskritization.

### 3.4.1 Tribalization

In the previous section we learnt that many tribal communities received the profound impact of 'Hinduization' due to their interaction with the neighbouring Hindu peasants, thus elevating their social position to the Hindu castes. But it is also true that in some tribal pockets the reverse trend of caste Hindus adopting tribal customs and rituals have been noticed. This may be known as the process of 'tribalization' of the castes. Kalia (1959) is of the opinion that the process of 'tribalization' is found in many tribal pockets of the country with gradual internalization of the tribal customs, mores and religion by the neighbouring caste groups, which are in many respects antithetical to the caste ideology in India. In the following paragraph, we shall discuss some examples of tribalization in India.

In his study among the Kondh of Odisha, F. G. Bailey (1955) observes that the tribal Kondh dominated region has also a considerable Pano population, who are Scheduled Castes and had migrated from the plains prior to the migration of Oriya foot warriors (*Paika*) as a part of the army raised by the local chiefs/kings in the hills. Bailey prefers to call them the 'Kondh Pan' in contradistinction to the 'Oriya Pan', as the former speak Kui—the Kondh language—participate in their rituals, share their worldviews and values, and are adept in Kondh dancing and music. With regard to the Oriya population living in the Kondh inhabited region, Bailey observes that although both these communities live in separate villages, 'there has been intermarriage, although not extensively, since such marriages offend the rules of caste. It is also clear from records and tradition that Oriyas were fully committed in the Kond ritual of human sacrifice. Even today many rites in an Oriya village are in essence Kond rites' (Bailey 1955). This is an excellent example of tribalization of Oriya caste people in the Kondh hills of Odisha.

Behura and Misra in their study have highlighted the process of tribalization with the help of the concept of 'encysted castes'. They observe that three artisan castes from the plains, such as, the blacksmiths, potters and weavers have settled down among

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the Koya, Kondh and Gadaba tribes of south Odisha for generations, and have been serving them for pecuniary advantages. These three artisan castes are so much assimilated with their host tribal populations that except endogamy they can be easily identified by their 'encysting tribes' (Behura and Misra, 1985). They opine that 'The encysted castes have even adopted tribal dialects and tribal way of life, to the extent of participating in community festivals with them, quite often headed by a tribal priest. It is, therefore, plausible to assume that despite many strong claims of tribes and castes of Odisha belonging to two separate cultural genres, in reality the boundary has been much more fluid and porous facilitating tribe-caste continuum on a long-term basis' (ibid).

### 3.4.2 Detribalization

Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture. In an earlier discussion we have learnt that tribal cultures undergo transformations due to both traditional as well as modern factors. While the traditional factors include the processes of Hinduization, Sankritization, revitalization and many reform movements, the modern factors are the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have direct bearing on tribal cultures. The factor maybe any of the above two factors, but when the tribal culture starts losing its identity, we say that detribalization has taken place.

Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization. It is said that '... these (indigenous or tribal) people were able to maintain somewhat their socio-religious, economic and cultural identity. But because of their close locational proximity and the steady pressure of the larger and techno-economically more organized communities, they were obliged to enter into social and cultural and more importantly, economic contacts, communication and exchanges with their neighbours who were socially, culturally and economically more dominant' (Ray, 1972). N. K. Bose is of the opinion that culture '... seems to flow from an economically dominant group to a poorer one when the two are tied together to form a larger productive organization through some historical accident' (Bose, 1967). This implies that it is rather obvious that when tribes are surrounded by economically stronger Hindu peasants, the former lose their tribal characters and get detribalized. Sinha attributes the role of tribal markets, which accelerate the process of detribalization, and hence, he says, 'These tribal communities have been in touch with the traditional network of weekly markets whereby they are involved in economic symbiosis with at least ten or more Hindu castes'.

Detribalization may take place in the entire tribe or a group or section of the group within a tribe. A section of a group or groups of a tribe may convert to an alien religion, thereby losing many aspects of their culture. Similarly, we see a section of a tribe becoming economically better off because of the benefit its members derive from development schemes. This section of tribe enjoys the marital culture alien to their culture. These are few instances of the process of detribalization.

We have already discussed the cases of the Tharu, Khasa and Bhumij, who have been detribalized to a large extent and are considered as caste Hindus in their respective regions of habitation. Similarly, the Gond, Bhuiyan and many other tribes have lost their tribal characters, thus being detribalized.

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### 3.4.3 Re-tribalization

Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization. It is clearly a revivalistic phase of glorifying the tribal origin, language, religion, cultures and customs, portraying a tribal cultural identity with a new vigour, different from the non-tribals. A couple of examples here would help us understand the concept and its empirical manifestations.

Revival of tribal languages and creation of tribal scripts are some of the components of the process of re-tribalization. Revival of the Kui-lipi (Kui script) by the Kondh, the Ol Chiki for the Santhali and other Munda languages, the Warang Chiti for the Ho language, etc. are some of the trends of re-tribalization of the tribal communities. In the Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh, there have been considerable efforts to re-create the Khampti script. It is a definite marker of self-assertion and re-tribalization by the Khampti (Misra 1994).

Revamping the old religions into more ethical religions is another dimension of re-tribalization. For example, the new Sarna religion of the Santhal, the emergence of Donyi-Polo faith in Arunachal Pradesh and similar efforts in other tribes indicate the process of revitalization of renewed tribal identities in a changing context. There is revivalism of traditional socio-political institutions and youth associations, as in case of the Christian Ao Naga, towards the process of re-tribalization and resurgence.

In order to concretize the process of re-tribalization and bring together all the members into the fold of the tribe, many tribal communities have formed their own associations very much like the caste associations. The examples of Utkal Kui Samaj of the Kondh of Odisha, the Kula Mela (community assembly) of Suddha Savara of Odisha, Gond Jatiya Mahasabha (Pan-Gond Caste Super Association) of the Gond and Bhauma Samaj of the Hill Bhuiyan, are clear evidences of re-tribalization or identity reinforcement among the tribes of India.

In recent times, re-tribalization has gained momentum due to the Constitutional safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes and greater benefits in education, politics and service sectors arising out of that.

It is debatable if the recent trends regarding some of the former tribes such as the Kurmi-Mahtos of Chota Nagpur, who were de-scheduled as a tribe in 1931, and of other communities, seeking tribal status to avail themselves of the privileges of being a 'tribe' granted under the Constitution of India could be considered a dimension of tribalization. The Mahtos of Chota Nagpur do claim that they share many social characteristics with tribes, but these are not spelt out. Similarly, the Bhumij who once claimed to be Kshatriyas have now discovered fresh merit in 're-tribalization.' The Bhotiyas of U.P., who acted as traders across the Himalayas before the Indo-China conflicts, once claimed the status of Rajputs. Later, as border trade came to a standstill and their economic condition deteriorated, they laid claims to be members of a Scheduled Tribe. Claiming tribal status is one thing; accepting tribal mores is another thing. Evidences on the part of such claimants regarding their newly discovered affinities with tribes, participation in tribal festivals and worship at tribal shrines is still weak. However, with the increasing politicization of such communities as live on the borderline of a tribe and a backward community, this trend deserves to be noted.

### 3.4.4 Sanskritization

As we have noted earlier, it is but natural that with more organized cultures and religions around, tribal people imitate the rituals, cultures and customs, in an effort to raise the social position of their group in the hierarchical Indian society. It was M. N. Srinivas, who first used the concept 'Brahminization' and later 'Sanskritization' to refer to this process.

The term **Sanskritization** has been coined by M. N. Srinivas, a distinguished Indian sociologist. This term has been used to symbolize the process by which the people of the lower castes in the caste hierarchy emulate the behaviour and practices of the upper castes to seek social mobility.

Srinivas defines Sanskritization as a process by which:

... a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently 'twice-born' caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant class by the local community...

A prominent example of Sanskritization is the implementation of vegetarianism by members of a community belonging to the low castes who are traditionally not opposed to non-vegetarian food. This change was brought about through the emulation of the practice of *dvija*, the twice-born castes.

Realizing social mobility among the tribes to achieve the status of a caste and ensuring a place in the local caste hierarchy, Srinivas adds that a tribe may undergo the process of Sanskritization 'claiming to be a caste, and therefore, **Hindu**'. We have already seen the examples of the Bhumij, the Paundra, the Gond, the Bathudi, the Bhuiyan, etc. who are almost integrated with the caste structure of the Hindus. In order to be recognized as a Hindu caste, many of them lead a life recommended in the Hindu scriptures, usually written in Sanskrit. In Robert Redfield's terms, there is an effort to emulate the values of the 'Great Tradition' of the Hindus by the tribes by worshipping Hindu deities, believing in Hindu values and practising Hindu ways of ideal behaviour. Therefore, M. N. Srinivas is of the opinion that Sanskritization not only includes the adoption of new customs and beliefs but also comprises the revelation to new ideas and values appearing in the Sanskrit literature. He informs us that the terms *Karma*, *dharma*, *papa*, *maya*, *samskara* and *moksha* are the most used theological Sanskrit ideologies which appear into the daily usage of the terms among people who are sanskritized.

Perhaps one of the glaring examples of Sanskritization or Hinduization by a tribe comes from the writings of L. K. Mahapatra (2005). Describing the process among the Saora of South Odisha, he notes economic specialization, purity/pollution differentiation and caste-like exclusiveness among them. Some of them consider themselves superior to others by abjuring beef (but not the flesh of sacrificial buffalo), giving up abhorrent and unacceptable eating habits from the Hindu point of view, and naming themselves as *Suddha* (pure) Saora. There are many such examples of Sanskritization process among the tribes of India.

The theory of Sanskritization was first proposed by M. N. Srinivas in his D. Phil. Thesis at the Oxford University. This thesis was later published as a book in 1952 titled *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*. This book was an

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ethnographical study of the Coorg community of Karnataka, India. Srinivas writes in the book:

The caste system is far from a rigid system in which the position of each component caste is fixed for all time. Movement has always been possible, and especially in the middle regions of the hierarchy. A low caste was able, in a generation or two, to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon. In short, it took over, as far as possible, the customs, rites, and beliefs of the Brahmins, and adoption of the Brahminic way of life by a low caste seems to have been frequent, though theoretically forbidden. This process has been called 'Sanskritization' in this book, in preference to 'Brahminization', as certain Vedic rites are confined to the Brahmins and the two other 'twice-born' castes.

The book *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* challenged the idea which was rampant in that period regarding caste being non-flexible and an invariable institution. The concept of Sanskritization addressed the actual complexity and fluidity of caste relations. It brought into academic focus the dynamics of the renegotiation of status between various castes and communities in India.

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### 3.5 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that,

- A society is an abstraction but it expresses itself through its structure, function and organization.
- The term 'structure' is derived from the Latin word, *struere*, which means to build.
- The concept of a structure is very much linked to the concept of proper arrangement of its parts. A house is not only a physical structure; it has its patterned functional structure also.
- The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel.
- During the 19th century, the word 'structure' came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism.
- It was Herbert Spencer who was one of the first scholars to talk about structures of societies with a biological analogy.
- Émile Durkheim used the term 'social morphology', by which he meant what we mean by the term 'social structure'. He postulates that social structure has two attributes: first, 'collective relationships', which are internal arrangements of a society like its kinship; second, 'collective representations', which are the mental phenomena and include beliefs, ideas, values, symbols and expectations of the members of the society.
- There are two ways of observing social structure: One is the notion of social structure with family as a basic unit. It was propounded by E .E. Evans-Pritchard. The other way is to study the society with individuals as the basic unit where the social behaviour of each person is the essence of study.

#### Check Your Progress

10. Define detribalization.
11. What are the major factors of detribalization?
12. What is re-tribalization?
13. Give an example of Sanskritization.

- Radcliffe-Brown has related the concept of social structure to the concept of social function. The concept of function, according to him is the 'contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part'.
- Radcliffe-Brown has introduced the concept of dyadic relations to understand all social relations of person to person.
- The French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, has also contributed to the study of social structure. In contrast to Radcliffe-Brown, Lévi-Strauss says that the term 'social structure' has nothing to do with empirical reality.
- In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
- Functionalism dates back to the 1920s. It is concerned with finding: (a) reasons why people act the way they do, and (b) interrelations between different aspects of society.
- Bronislaw Malinowski was the pioneer of modern fieldwork methods. He emphasized functional relations which ethnographers could observe in the field.
- Radcliffe-Brown emphasized the interrelation between social systems: kinship, politics, economics and religion.
- Despite its strong appeal to understand the integrity of societies and cultures through their institutions, functionalism is fraught with many problems. It is criticized, largely because of its inability to deal with changes in the society and culture.
- The literal meaning of organization is to arrange something systematically. The Oxford Dictionary defines organization as 'the way in which something is organized; coordination of parts in an organic whole; systematic arrangement'.
- Indian tribes invariably organize themselves by grouping and grading their fellow members to meet the demands of a collective life with the help of their kinship network.
- The Kondhs in Orissa are territorially divided into Kutia Kondhs, Desia Kondhs and Dongria Kondhs, which are the sub-tribes of the main tribe.
- Social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
- There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical. By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level.
- When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility.
- The Santhals of central India, distributed over the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, have witnessed social mobility in some areas.
- Despite conceptual differences, in terms of operational realities, it is difficult to see the tribes, the castes and the peasants as disjointed or compartmentalized categories; it would be prudent to view them in terms of a continuum.
- A society is not a static reality. It changes over time. There are various factors affecting this change. These factors may vary from society to society. The study

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of these factors give us an idea about the process of social change in different societies.

- Many tribal communities received the profound impact of 'Hinduization' due to their interaction with the neighbouring Hindu peasants, thus, elevating their social position to the Hindu castes. But it is also true that in some tribal pockets the reverse trend of caste Hindus adopting tribal customs and rituals have been noticed. This may be known as the process of 'tribalization' of the castes.
- Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
- Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization.
- Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.
- The term Sanskritization has been coined by M. N. Srinivas, a distinguished Indian sociologist. This term has been used to symbolize the process by which the people of the lower castes in the caste hierarchy emulate the behaviour and practices of the upper castes to seek social mobility.

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### 3.6 KEY TERMS

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- **Function:** It refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
- **Functionalism:** It is a theory about the nature of mental states. According to functionalism, mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of.
- **Structuralism:** It is the perspective which argues that meaning is only revealed through the relation between things.
- **Organization:** In sociology 'organization' is understood as planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.
- **Phratry:** It is a grouping of clans or other social units within a tribe.
- **Social mobility:** It stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
- **Horizontal social mobility:** By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level.
- **Vertical social mobility:** When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility.
- **Detribalization:** It is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
- **Re-tribalization:** It is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.



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### 3.7 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

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1. The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel.
2. During the 19th century, the word ‘structure’ came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism.
3. The British social anthropologist, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown’s name is associated with the ‘structural-functional approach’ in the analysis of the structure of society.
4. In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
5. In sociology ‘organization’ is understood as a planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.
6. Social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
7. There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical.
8. The modern factors of social transformation are due to the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have direct bearing on tribal cultures.
9. A continuum is nothing but a scale, on which tribes, castes and peasants are located, due to the overlapping of their values and ideal behaviours.
10. Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
11. Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization.
12. Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.
13. A prominent example of Sanskritization is the implementation of vegetarianism by members of a community belonging to the low castes who are traditionally not opposed to non-vegetarian food. This change was brought about through the emulation of the practice of *dvija*, the twice-born castes.

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### 3.8 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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#### Short-Answer Questions

1. What is a structure? Describe the use of the term structure as it was used before its appearance in social sciences.
2. How does the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary define structure?

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3. What does the term 'social morphology' mean as used by Durkheim?
4. Write a note on the segmentary social structure.
5. What is the concept of dyadic relations introduced by Radcliffe-Brown?
6. What is the meaning of social structure according to Evans-Pritchard? How does he differ from Radcliff-Brown?
7. Why has functionalism been criticized by various scholars?
8. How is the tribal society of India organized?
9. State the differences between tribes and castes.
10. Write short notes on the following giving examples:
  - (i) Tribalization
  - (ii) Detribalization
  - (iii) Sanskritization

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the concept and the history of the concept of social structure.
2. Explain the concept of social structure with reference to segmentary social structure and social roles.
3. Assess the contrasting approaches of Radcliffe-Brown and Claude Lévi-Strauss to social structure.
4. 'Functionalism was a dominant theory in the British and American anthropology and sociology.' Discuss.
5. Critically analyse the relationship between social structure and social organization.
6. Describe the concept of social mobility.
7. Evaluate the concept of social mobility among the tribes and castes.
8. Describe social processes such as tribalization, detribalization, re-tribalization and Sanskritization with regard to tribal studies.
9. Discuss how Sanskritization works in raising the social position of some tribes to the level of Hindu castes. Discuss how the tribes achieve that.

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## 3.9 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT 4 FIELDWORK TRADITION IN TRIBAL STUDIES

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## 4.0 INTRODUCTION

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The tradition of fieldwork goes hand-in-hand with research work. Generally, research is defined as a scientific investigation of phenomena which includes collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation of data that reflects an individual's perception and speculation of reality.

A research can be a library research or a field research or a laboratory research. The last one is an experimental research and is related to physical and natural sciences. In library research, answers to research problems are found from secondary sources. It is the tradition of finding a solution to a problem using 'others' information'. In field research, the fieldwork is the heart and soul of the research and the research is conducted in the natural setting. The threefold classification of research is based on the access to data. In fact, **fieldwork is a method of data collection.**

Social science researches can be either library research or field research. The research can be a combination of both library and field researches. Accordingly, social researchers mainly employ two methods of data collection, viz., fieldwork and documentary research in the library. The process of collecting data by living with the people, having a first-hand experience of their lifestyle is termed as fieldwork. Fieldwork method generates a lot of data about the lifestyle of people and the meaning they attribute to their actions. It also teaches the distinction between 'what people think', 'what people say', 'what people do', and 'what people say they ought to have done'. Field data is not 'others' data'; it is the researcher's own data generated for his own purpose. It is, therefore, the primary source of data and hence original. In this unit, you will learn about the fieldwork tradition in tribal studies.

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### 4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the fieldwork tradition as a method of data collection
- Trace the origin of fieldwork tradition in studying the tribes
- Explain the nature and course of fieldwork tradition in India
- Describe the significance of fieldwork
- Discuss the meaning of ethics and its importance in fieldwork tradition
- Evaluate the comparative method and its significance in tribal studies
- Assess the emic-etic debate around studying a culture

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### 4.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF FIELDWORK

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The tradition of fieldwork in tribal studies is as old as the interest in studying the tribal communities. In this section, we shall discuss the tradition of fieldwork while carrying out researches on tribal studies.

Fieldwork is central to researches in tribal studies. It is the crowning jewel of anthropology. In studying the tribal communities of the Trobriand Islands of New Guinea, Malinowski is credited as being the most important figure in the development of the modern fieldwork tradition. Not less were the contributions of Franz Boas, Radcliff Brown, Evans-Pritchard, Lewis Henry Morgan, Ruth Benedict and others to this tradition of studying the tribal cultures.

#### Tradition of Fieldwork outside India

The tradition of fieldwork is heavily credited to the American and British anthropologists. Bronislaw Malinowski, a Polish-British anthropologist, is a pioneer of the tradition of field research in tribal studies. He studied the Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea during the last part of the first decade and the first part of the second decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century. He emphasized on participant observation and the use of tribal language during field studies. His student Sir Raymond Firth worked among the Tikopia of Polynesia. Phyllis Mary Kaberry, another student of Malinowski, had studied the Australian aboriginals.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the fieldwork tradition among the sociologists of Chicago University was known as 'case study method'.

E. E. Evans-Pritchard, another British anthropologist, studied the Zande and Nuer community in Sudan, and other East African groups as well. In America, Franz Boas (1920), a German-American anthropologist studied the Inuit or Eskimo of Baffin Island and Kwakiutl of British Columbia. He trained generations of American students in the field study method. Famous among them are Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead. You will study about them later in the same unit.

By now you must have known that the fieldwork tradition gathered momentum in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to study tribal communities. Prior to Malinowski, E. B. Tylor and other writers produced ethnographic information collected from secondary sources.

## 4.2.1 Fieldwork Tradition in India

The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars. The first group includes those who are outsiders to India, especially the colonial anthropologists and administrators. The second group includes the Indian scholars who have studied their own culture. In other words, the field study in India has etic and emic dimensions. We shall discuss the field tradition in India, its origin, nature and scope in the following sections.

### Outsiders' Involvement in Fieldwork in India

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the British government felt the need of having an ethnographic account on different tribes of India with a view to rule them easily. They were not anthropologists by training and profession but their accounts provided ample description on the tribal history of India. A number of foreign anthropologists visited India during that period to record the customs and traditions of Indian tribes. British anthropologist W. H. Rivers visited India and conducted a field study among the Toda tribe in the Nilgiri Hills of South India for about six months in 1901-02. He published a monograph entitled *The Todas* in 1906. Scholars maintain that his fieldwork among the Todas set the trend of anthropologists visiting the cultures they are interested in to conduct a field study. Malinowski later declared Rivers to be his 'patron saint of fieldwork'. Another anthropologist, Radcliffe-Brown, came to India to study the Onge tribe of Andaman Islands in 1906 and 1908. He published a monograph on Onge in 1922 under the title, *The Andaman Islanders*.

We also have material available on the tribals which were actually administrative reports of British administrators. On the tribes of East India, we have accounts of E. T. Dalton, H. H. Risley and L. S. S. O'Malley. Russel had written on the tribes of Middle India and E. Thurston on the tribes of South India. On the tribes of West India, we have the accounts of W. Crooke. In fact, their accounts were not tribe specific; rather these were reports covering both tribes and castes. Most of the publications available by then were in the form of Handbooks, Census Reports, District Gazetteers and a few articles. Only two full length works were available on the people of Chota Nagpur and on the Saurias of the Rajmahal Hills before the publications of S. C. Roy. F. B. Bradley-Birt, a British Officer, wrote a book entitled *Chota Nagpore: A Little Known Province of the Empire* in 1903 where he provided a full length account of the land and people of the region. Four years later, in 1907, R. B. Bainbridge, another British officer, published *The Saurias of the Rajmahal Hills*.

In North-East India, the colonial administrators have produced few important works on tribes based on fieldwork. Mention may be made of W. W. Hunter's *A Statistical Account of Assam* (1879), R. Brown's *Statistical Account of Manipur* (1873) and B. C. Allen's *Gazetteer of Naga Hills and Manipur* (1905). These works were field based accounts. However, there were some ethnographic works by some administrators. These are T. C. Hudson's *The Meitheids* (1908) and *The Naga Tribes of Manipur* (1911), W. C. Smith's *The Ao Naga Tribe of Assam* (1925), J. H. Hutton's *The Angami Nagas* (1921), J. P. Mills' *The Rengma Nagas* (1937) and Alexander Mackenzie's *Memorandum on the North-East Frontier of Bengal* (1869) which later developed into a book entitled *The North-East Frontier of India* and was published in 1884. Some other works during this period are W. Robinson's *Notes on the Dophlas and the Peculiarities of their Language* (1851), T. T. Cooper's *The Mishmee Hills* (1873), E. T. Dalton's *Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal* (1872), G. W. Dun's *Preliminary Notes*

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on *Daphlas* (1897) and C. V. Haimendorf's *Ethnographic Notes on the Tribes of the Subansiri Region* (1946) and *Notes on Tribal Justice among the Apatanis* (1946). C. V. Haimendorf was an anthropologist who was appointed by the government for preparing ethnographic account of the Apatanis. Later, he kept visiting the Apatanis and published *The Hidden Land* (1953), *The Apatanis and their Neighbours* (A primitive civilization of the Eastern Himalayas) (1962) and *A Himalayan Tribe from Cattle to Cash* (1980). Ursula Graham Bower, also published a book entitled *Himalayan Barbary* (1955) based on fieldwork.

Even today, scholars take interest in field studies in India. They study both tribal and non-tribal cultures. Lidia Guzy from Ireland, Nel Vandekerckhove from Amsterdam, Robin Oakley from Canada, Bengt G. Karlsson from Sweden, Vanessa Cholez from France, Stuart Blackburn from United Kingdom, Nicolas Laine and Philippe Ramirez from France, Skoda Uwe from Denmark, Stephen Morey from La Trobe University, Australia, Emile Parent from Canada, to mention a few, have selected tribal areas for their field study.

### **Indian Scholars in the Field**

The Indian tradition of fieldwork began with the publication of 'The Mundas, Their Country, Their Character and Their Poetry' in 1908 by S. C. Roy. It was not an administrative account, but an ethnographical account based on Roy's field experience. The history of tribal studies in India took a turning point with the publication of this article.

### **Period of S. C. Roy**

The beginning of field tradition in India is attributed to Sarat Chandra Roy. He is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'. Roy was a lawyer by profession. He settled in Ranchi to establish his practice as a pleader. He started his career in 1898. He came in contact with the tribal people of Chota Nagpur. The region of present Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and around was known as Chota Nagpur. Gradually, Roy developed an interest in the life and culture of the tribal people of this region. His interest in tribal ethnography developed in the course of his visit to the interior areas of the region because of his professional requirement as a lawyer. He became acquainted with the problems of the tribal people and came to know that they were oppressed and exploited owing to their ignorance of administrative and judicial matters. His great compassion for tribal people initiated him to plead in favour of the tribals against the exploitation of their landlords. He took deep interest in their customary laws in view of his profession as a lawyer and learnt their languages.

The simple beginning of the Indian tradition of fieldwork with the publication of an article by S. C. Roy in 1908 made a benchmark in 1920. In that year S. C. Roy published a detailed monograph entitled *The Mundas and their Country*. This is the first field based full length ethnographical account on the Mundas, a major tribe in the then Chota Nagpur, by an Indian ethnographer. This was highly acclaimed, acknowledged by the High Court of Patna and Calcutta (Kolkata), as authoritative for conducting legal cases for proper justice to the tribals.

S. C. Roy's ethnographic works were based on in-depth field studies through the participant observation method. He was very much accepted by the tribals as a man of their own society, who shared their joys, hopes and sorrows of life with them. Rapport establishment is an important quality of an investigator in anthropology and tribal studies.

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S. C. Roy had that quality because of his compassion for the tribal people, his efforts to bring them legal justice against exploitation, and his ability to communicate with them in their own languages. It is not surprising when he spent much of his time and energy to conduct field study in the thickly forested areas of Birhor settlements, scattered and secluded, to write on the Birhors. Fieldwork tradition to S. C. Roy was not a method of producing ethnography; it was a road map for good governance, both on the administration and development fronts.

Field tradition is not competitive with the other methods of data collection. Rather, the method of fieldwork could be used to complement the other methods of data collection. It is not a surprise to find Roy combining historical methods and ethnography in his first monograph on the Mundas. In describing the history of the Mundas, he dealt with the tribal history of Ranchi to trace the origin and history of the Munda tribe from different sources including folklore, linguistics and prehistoric evidences. He has provided a historical background on the advent of Christian Missionaries, institution of Zamindars and their exploitation and the Birsa movement against the British.

The use of other sources is also evident in his book *The Kharias* (1937), published in two volumes, which he co-authored with his son Ramesh Chandra Roy, a trained anthropologist. With the help of his son, he incorporated the anthropometric data available on the Kharias and got the data analysed with the help of P. C. Mahalanobis, a renowned statistician.

Evidently, the field work tradition does not display exclusiveness in writing ethnographical accounts based only on field data. Therefore, Roy's ethnographical works are forerunners of interdisciplinary studies of our time. In other words, the history of field tradition in India by the Indian nationals marks the history of interdisciplinary perspectives in the pursuit of knowledge.

Field tradition is vast in its scope. It is not limited only to ethnographic studies. Scholars of pre-history and archaeology also conduct fieldworks. Roy himself presented a paper in 1915 entitled 'A Note on Some Remains of the Ancient Asurs in the Ranchi District' based on field study. He explored about 45 sites and collected over hundred stone tools from different pre-historic sites of Ranchi. In the cited work, Roy had collected copper ornaments from a number of sites as evidences to prove the chalcolithic culture in Ranchi. The following year he also published another paper entitled 'Relics of the Copper Age Found in Chota Nagpur' on the basis of field data.

S. C. Roy was a strong advocate of anthropological training to administrative and judicial officers, forest and excise officers who were posted in tribal areas. He believed that such trainings would not only improve the quality of judicial and executive work, but would also help the cause of science through observation and investigation of tribal customs that might be recorded during the fieldwork. He visualized the training of fieldworkers as a means of capacity building of these workers to serve the tribal people better. No doubt, the fieldwork tradition includes the essence of understanding and working better particularly for the tribal people.

During this period, another scholar named J. K. Bose was engaged in fieldwork among the tribals of North-East India. His tenure of fieldwork was not long, but the contribution he made is outstanding. His fieldwork spanned a few years in early 1930s and a year in 1940-41. However, his works were published in the 1980s. The first one, entitled *Glimpses of Tribal Life in North-East India* is a collection of six papers, along with few papers of other scholars in the appendix section, which was published in 1980.

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The collected papers are the result of fieldwork conducted by Bose in early thirties when he was a Research Fellow at the American Museum of Natural History. In about two years, he covered an extensive area and collected large quantities of field data on the social organization of Garo, Khasi, Chiru, Kuki and Nagas of North-East India.

In 1940-41, being appointed by the government of Bengal, he made a careful and systematic study of the Garo inheritance law conducting field study. Bose was already a trained anthropologist and a law graduate before he worked among the tribes of North-East India and particularly on the Garo laws of inheritance. His study became the official manual for deciding cases of land ownership and inheritance among the Garos.

### Post Roy Period

During the post Roy period, we have scholars who were in contact with S. C. Roy or were trained or influenced by him. The works of these scholars have been labelled as 'Continuity of Roy's Tradition'. Also, there were scholars who were not trained by Roy, but contributed immensely to the field tradition in the country. Their fieldwork was not limited to tribal studies; rather they extended the field study method to study the caste societies. Therefore, a new trend was set in the field tradition. Nirmal Kumar Bose can be regarded as the forerunner of this trend because his fieldwork not only encompassed the tribes but extended to study the Indian civilization. The field method which was popular in ethnographic studies has crossed the disciplinary boundary. Its use has been comprehensive and it also encompasses development studies.

### Continuity of Roy's tradition

After Roy, Nirmal Kumar Bose, S. S. Sarkar and D. N. Majumdar continued the field tradition having been inspired by Roy. These three scholars including A. Aiyappan and K. P. Chattopadhyay received primary training of fieldwork from Roy. D. N. Majumdar of Lucknow University undertook the monographic study of the Ho tribe of Seraikela under the guidance of Roy. The report from the field study appeared as a book in 1937. He was the first Indian anthropologist to study and write about the impact of non-tribal culture on the lives of Indian tribes. S. S. Sarkar of Calcutta University undertook an ethnological survey of the Maler. Sarkar's work, mostly on physical anthropology includes field study based papers on Jarwa and Onge tribes as well as Negritoid traces on the Indian mainland.

A. Aiyappan, a musicologist and also a Professor of Anthropology for a short period, has produced field study based ethnographic works such as *Nayada in Kerala* and *Social Revolution in a Kerala Village* (1965). Nirmal Kumar Bose began his field study among the Juangs of Odisha, but later he extended its scope to other fields and societies. His field interest encompassed art and architecture, the Indian society and culture. He played an important role in 'building an Indian tradition in Anthropology' including tribal studies.

### New Trend

A new trend in field tradition emerged when scholars studied not only the tribes but also other communities and dimensions of the Indian civilization. One of the fieldworkers in the phase of new trend is M. N. Srinivas. He employed fieldwork methods in his research. Particularly, he followed ethnographic research based on participant observation. But his fieldwork was tied to the notion of locally bound areas. He did not conduct field studies with the notion of studying 'the others' like the anthropologists. Except his work



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on the Coorgs, his other works were on the non-tribal caste societies. It is not a surprise that his papers on dominant caste and joint family disputes were largely inspired from his direct participation in the rural life of South India. His *The Remembered Village* (1976), considered a classic in fieldwork tradition is a study based on the 11 months he spent in the village (Rampura, a fictitious name) in 1948 and on subsequent visits until 1964. His book entitled *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* (1952) is an outcome of his ethnographic research among the Coorg (Anglicized name of the Kodava) tribal people. On the basis of field studies, scholars have been able to formulate new concepts and a theoretical framework. He conducted field study among the Coorgs of Karnataka for a year and has coined the concept Sanskritization. Sociologist Andre Beteille's study of the Sripuram village (also a fictitious name) in Tanjore in South India provided a theoretical frame of understanding the caste system of South India. The point is that field tradition was not only limited to the study of tribes in the post Roy period. It has a vast canvass and tribal studies constitutes the major portion. Moreover, those who are trained in field studies among the tribals do better in other area.

In 1956, Nabendu Datta-Majumder produced a field study based monograph on the Santhals entitled *The Santhal: A Study in Culture Change*. Prabodh Kumar Bhowmick produced his Ph. D thesis on the topic *Lodhas of West Bengal* in 1961 which was later published as a book in 1963. After that he focused on applied and action anthropology for the welfare of the tribals, especially Lodhas, in situ. On the basis of field experience of scholars and activists involved in action based approach for the development of the tribals, he compiled a volume entitled *Applied and Action Anthropology* in 1990.

In the later part of 1950s and thereafter, L. P. Vidyarthi conducted field studies not only among the tribals, but extended it to study the Indian civilization. He began his field study in Gaya and submitted a field report in 1950 to the Patna University. He published his field study based book entitled *The Sacred Complex in Hindu Gaya* in 1961. His work along with Makhana Jha and Baidyanath Saraswati is entitled as *The Sacred Complex of Kashi: A Microcosm of Indian Civilization* in 1979. In 1961, he published an article entitled 'Sacred Complex in a Hilly tribal Village' on the basis of field study. He conducted field studies among the Malers who lived in Rajmahal Hills and published a monograph entitled *The Maler: The Nature-Man-Spirit Complex in a Hill Tribe* (1963). On the basis of his field work among the tribes he coined the concept of 'Nature-Man-Spirit Complex', and in Gaya he conceptualized 'Sacred Complex' as a frame of analysis which could be expended to study the scared space in tribal villages also.

### Contemporary Tradition

Field study today is not limited among the academic scholars only. NGOs and non-academic institutions take interest in field methods to study the different aspects of tribal life in the changing context. Few individuals also have taken up field data to present tribal problems.

B. D. Sharma, an I.A.S officer has a long experience of working in the Bastar tribal region. The field data collected by him as an administrator in the course of his official work and later as an amateur scholar has been used by him to understand the development dynamics. He has used the field data as a critique of various government policies. *Besieged, Tribal Affairs in India, Against Imperialism, Forced Marriages in Bailadila*, and *Shifting Cultivation* are some of his critiques based on field data. As

an NGO activist, he has reported his field experience of atrocities on tribes in Kalinganagar of Odisha.

Recently, various NGOs have used field data for action and applied researches. In fact requirement of field data spreads beyond ethnography to participatory learning action, development studies, environmental conservation studies through Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) and many others.

Post-Independence tribal research institutes/departments in states like Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Odisha, former Bihar, former Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Rajasthan have been set up. These institutes have been undertaking ethnographic studies and collecting field data on development projects. Some of the ethnographic works produced by the Department of Research in Arunachal Pradesh are as follows:

Authors	Name of Monographs
B. K. Shukla (1959)	<i>The Dafla of the Subansiri Region</i> (The designation Dafla is no more in use. People call themselves Nyishi)
Sachin Roy (1960)	<i>Aspects of Padam Minyong Culture</i>
Raghuvir Sinha (1962)	<i>The Akas</i>
L. R. N. Srivastava (1962)	<i>The Gallongs</i> (The people call themselves Galos)
N. Sarkar (1974)	<i>Dances of Arunachal Pradesh</i>
Ram Kumar Deuri (1982)	<i>The Sulungs</i> (Sulungs are now called Puroiks)
L. R. N. Srivastava (1990)	<i>Social Organization of the Minyongs</i>

University departments, centres and institutes, in recent years are engaged in field studies in general and on tribal affairs in particular. Land Record Department of Guwahati High Court has recorded tribal customary laws by conducting field study. National Institute of Rural Development and its regional centres conduct field studies both in tribal and non-tribal areas to evaluate rural development schemes.

In some University departments, the field tradition is a requirement of the University degree of students, and career concern of teachers. Some teachers of the University, especially from the Anthropology departments, have studied the tribals in the course of their academic pursuits. Jagannath Dash of Utkal University has worked among the tribes of Shimilpal, A. K. Kapoor of Delhi University among the Sahariyas of Rajasthan and Jaunsar-Bawar of Uttarakhand, V. S. Upadhyaya and V. S. Sahaya who belong to the Ranchi tradition worked among the tribes of Andaman and Nicobar and Ashim Adhikari among the Birhors. The anthropologists of various centres of Anthropological Survey of India have worked among the tribes of their respective areas. S. N. Chaudhary, Professor of Rajiv Gandhi Chair in Contemporary Studies, Barkatullah University, Bhopal, is engaged in field based tribal studies.

It is to be noted that studying more than one tribe has been a trend in contemporary field tradition. Jagannath Dash has worked among the Ho (1981), Bathudi Santhal (1981), Paraja (1982), Dongria Kondh (1985) and many more. V. S. Sahay has worked among the tribes of Nicobar Islands and Khasa in Himalayas. Besides that, he has worked among the tribal communities of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. M. C. Behera has worked among the Khamptis (1986-88, 1988-90, 2001, 2007), Adis (Minyong: 1992, 1994; Padam 2003-2004), Apatani (1992-94), Galo (1998-99), Mishmi—both Miju

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and Digaru (1988-89, 2002), Nyishi (1997) Sulung—now called Puroik (2002-2003), Monpa (2005) and Bugun (2008) in Arunachal Pradesh. Besides he has studied the Paraja of Odisha (2002, 2010) and the Birhor of Jharkhand. Individual scholars working among a number of tribes is possible because of project works they undertake, selection of tribes for Ph. D work and the field study conducted by students during field training.

Presently, scholars belonging to their own tribe conduct field study as a requirement of their Ph. D work or project work they undertake. In Delhi University, most of the Ph. D and M. Phil scholars select their own tribe for field study. Avitoli Zhimo and Kanato Choppy of Delhi University have conducted fieldwork in their respective Naga communities for Ph. D degree. Similar trend is followed in other Universities as well.

Therefore, the contemporary trend in field study is a growing academic engagement of insiders studying their respective tribes. More and more tribal youths go for higher studies and pursue Ph. D and M. Phil courses. Besides these scholars, there are other scholars who study their own tribes for the project work undertaken by them. Malli Gandhi, himself a de-notified tribe has studied not only his own tribe but many other de-notified tribes like Dasaris, Sugalis, Woddars, Yerukulas and Yandis.

### **Elwin's Fieldwork**

While S. C. Roy was working among the tribes of Chota Nagpur, another scholar was actively involved in fieldwork among the tribes of the present Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. He was Verrier Elwin, who came to India in 1927 as a Christian Missionary, but became a self-educated anthropologist. On the basis of his fieldwork, he came out with numerous books on various tribal groups of Central India, but he is best known for his work with the Baigas and Gonds. Later, he shifted his field interest to North-East India. He published *The Baiga* in 1939. His famous books based on fieldwork and some on participant observations in 1940s are *The Agaria* (1942), *The Aborigines* (1944), *The Muria and their Ghotul* (1947), *Bondo Highlander* (1950) and *Maria Murder and Suicide* (1950).

Elwin was a British citizen, but later he took up Indian citizenship. On the basis of fieldwork, he became an authority on Indian lifestyle. His publication on intimate sexual life of Gonds is based on what he calls participant observation. He married Kosi, a Gond girl whom he made the subject of his anthropological studies.

Elwin has his independent tradition of fieldwork. After coming to India he worked with Shamrao Hivale, an Indian from Pune. Their fieldworks on tribes and subsequent publications are some of the earliest field based studies in the country. Elwin's fieldwork is contemporary to that of S. C. Roy for a period of around two decades. But he continued his work after the death of Roy.

### **4.2.2 Significance of Fieldwork**

Fieldwork is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.

Largely, anthropologists employed field study methods to study tribal communities. As a method it has its own place in the research process. The fieldworker collects original or unconventional data using such methods as face-to-face interviews, surveys, or direct observation. Fieldwork enhances enumerator's personal experiences, improves his learning process, and increases his understanding and knowledge. It broadens awareness and establishes links between ideas and practical realities, for the field is not

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limited to any disciplinary branch of knowledge. Fieldwork widens the frontiers of knowledge and it is not a surprise that scholars from other disciplines are increasingly using this method in their researches. It is only field experience that broadened the outlook of S. C. Roy beyond socio-cultural study of tribes. Sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu, William Foote Whyte, Erving Goffman, Harriet Martineau and economists like Wassily Leontief, Alan Blinder, Lawrence Klein and Jack Johnston have employed field methods in their respective disciplines. Henry Mintzberg, who is a pioneer in crystallizing management studies, has used and advocated the use of field study in management. Even Alan Lomax and John Peel have conducted field study in the discipline of music. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods and techniques in rural development studies have emerged essentially as a refinement of traditional methods. In fact, field tradition pervades through Art, Photography, Forestry, Botany, Geology, Geography, Physics, Education, Ecology, History, Agriculture, Zoology and Political Science.

Tribal communities are pre-literate; these communities do not have written records of their life and culture. Moreover, there are no adequate literatures available on each and every community from the studies conducted on them. A large number of communities have not been studied properly. In recent years many tribal communities have been exposed to different forces of change. In these communities has emerged a syncretic cultural tradition along with an interactive process of adaptation and adjustment. No doubt, the perspectives of tribes on their ways of life are changing. Field methods provide an opportunity to study the response of people to the changes from their perspectives.

The field method is not a mere visit to the tribal settlements. It is a systematic and planned approach to understand the life and culture of people in a better way from their perspective through interaction over a long period of time. The planning also includes learning the language of the community that the fieldworker has studied. Therefore, it is not a surprise that Malinowski advises the fieldworkers to spend around a year in the field. The fieldworker lives with the community of people, in their natural habitat, collecting information about all social and cultural aspects, so that in the end he has a fair idea of typical annual activities. During the early years of field tradition Jean-Paul Dumont spent two years in Tamil Nadu. But practically his contact with Pramalai Kallar, the community he studied, was for eight months. Similarly, Rivers studied the Todas for about six months. Nevertheless, the depth and quality of ethnographies produced was superb. Thus, the time spent in carrying out fieldwork is in fact dependent upon the nature and scope of problem the researcher has chosen to investigate.

The significance of fieldwork lies in its principle of learning the vernacular language of the tribes. This requires the fieldworker to understand the systems of meaning on which the tribal culture operates. Tribal people too like other human beings live in a culturally constructed world of meanings. They interpret everything they live in with reference to culture and this interpretation takes different meanings in different cultures. Therefore, before embarking upon the field, the fieldworker is expected to learn the language. If the facility for a particular language is not available, the fieldworker is required to learn it by living with the people, engaging an interpreter in the beginning, and then gradually using it himself. A fieldwork conducted in vernacular is more reliable and authentic than carried out through an interpreter.

The fieldwork tradition does not believe in disciplinary rigidity. The fieldworker learns from the shortcomings and improves upon the nature of investigation. It is well

known that male anthropologists working in sexually segregated societies have often been shut out from participating in or observing female activities. Franz Boas was well informed about this problem and thus, encouraged women to take up a career in anthropology, carrying out fieldwork on those aspects that mainly concern women.

### Advantages of fieldwork

Fieldwork is an important method in research. The following are the advantages of field study:

- A field provides scope for verification of information. The information from one informant can be verified through cross checking other informants. Moreover, as the enumerator lives in the field, he can clarify his doubts later if any doubt arises or ambiguity/inconsistency is noticed. The degree of reliability and accuracy thereby increases.
- Field study is progressively revealing. The data and work of a first enumerator on a tribe provides a base to subsequent enumerators who study the same tribe. Later enumerators may substantiate, modify or contradict earlier findings, and add to the existing stock of knowledge on the tribe by exploring new areas. It is not a surprise to find that earlier concepts of 'egalitarian', 'isolation', etc. have been challenged by later fieldworkers on tribes.

Many misconceptions are gradually removed through subsequent studies. Today, tribal communities are not considered lacking religion or political organizations. One of the stereotypes regarding the tribes is that they do not have a sense of history. But a contemporary fieldworker among the tribes will not believe in such a stereotype. In fact, in recent years history of tribal communities and other pre-literate communities is reconstructed drawing on oral sources. Paul Thompson's *Voice of the Past: Oral History* is a methodological classic on the use of oral sources to reconstruct history of pre-literate people.

- Society is dynamic. It changes over time and space. Field study helps understand the nature and trend of social dynamics in tribal communities over years in the absence of written records.
- Field study is an effective method of scrutinizing the impact of development programmes on tribal communities. Assessment of the impact drawing on statistics from official sources is often misleading. These statistics do not reflect the impact on the cultural life of people. The provision of a swing machine under the self-employment programme may provide employment to a tribal lady. But her engagement in swing machine limits her time to attend to other activities like collecting firewood, cooking food, participation in social functions and collection of vegetables. Official data do not present a picture of her net gain from her employment in the swing machine business at the cost of gainful traditional activities in the tribal village.

The intensity of problems of the tribal people is linked to the forces of development and exposure to the outside world. This intensity of problem cannot be captured without field study. The case of Jarwa is worth mentioning here. Survival, a London based worldwide organization supporting tribal peoples, gives an account of the plight of the Jarwa people due to their encounter with development forces. It reports,

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Outsiders are invading the reserve of the isolated Jarwa tribe in the Andaman Islands, India... Despite a Supreme Court Order to islands' administration to close the highway which runs through the reserve, it remains open, bringing disease and dependency... The Jarwa are one of four 'Negrito' tribes who are believed to have travelled to the Andaman Islands from Africa up to 60,000 years ago... The Jarwa are hunter gatherers, and number around 270 people. They use bows and arrows to hunt pigs and monitor lizards, and catch fish and turtles. Now, hundreds of Indian settlers and Burmese poachers are hunting along the road and the coast, depriving the Jarwa of vital game. The problem has become so acute that in some areas the once abundant wild pigs and fish are now scarce... The main highway which runs through the Jarwa reserve, known as the Andaman Trunk Road, is also bringing exploitation of the Jarwa. There are numerous reports of poachers and other outsiders sexually exploiting Jarwa women, and outsiders are introducing alcohol, tobacco, and alien food items on which the Jarwa are starting to depend. Those entering Jarwa land also bring outside diseases to which the Jarwa have no immunity.

No doubt, statistical data on number of schools, number of enrolments, number of hospitals and people treated, length of road in tribal areas will not give the picture of tribal human resource evolved in true sense of the term.

- Tribal culture is a holistic worldview evolved over years in the course of their interaction with nature. A tribal person cannot perceive the holistic knowledge system in terms of specialized academic disciplines. Usually, specialized methodological renderings do not help appreciating the holistic tribal perspectives even in a changing context. Field study contains the potentiality of providing a holistic understanding of a phenomenon, as we have discussed, the field does not limit its scope to any disciplinary rigid frame.
- Field study provides first-hand information. The enumerators get wider scope to collect right information in consistent with objectives of the research. The scope is limited in secondary sources of information.
- Fieldwork is self-educative. University students obtain knowledge through texts on the topic. Often, it raises new research questions for further investigation. The horizon of knowledge expands. Gap between 'armchair' knowledge and 'field reality' reveals and narrows down. Field tradition provides an opportunity to appreciate diversity.
- Tribal culture is not a monolithic whole. It varies across the tribes and between the settlements of the same tribe. The enumerator being an outsider encounters a different culture. That diversity as a reality is understood and appreciated by the fieldworkers.

### Limitations of fieldwork

There are some limitations in the field study method. But these limitations are scope to improve the efficacy of the method. The limitation of male enumerator to interview female respondents on some matter is the scope to employ female enumerators as anthropologists. The limitations discussed below are challenges to overcome for an effective field study method.

- It may not be possible for the solitary enumerator to observe everything that goes on in the community. Certain events may take place in certain part of the village when the enumerator is busy interviewing someone else. It is also possible that certain events may not take place during the time of fieldwork, or they may not form a part of the annual ritual cycle.

- The people of ethnographic investigation are treated as **other**. When their moorings are different from those of fieldworkers, they constitute the **other** both in an empirical and a methodological sense.
- Even when the subjects of study are one's own people, the investigator does not assume that he knows them fully well; rather he still considers them as 'others', about whom he will only come to know during the course of his study. As the insider researcher has an outlook different from his own people because of formal education he may interpret information differently or be selective in presenting information.
- There is a difference between the knowledge the investigator acquires by being a natural member of the society and the one he acquires by consciously undertaking its study. When the researcher undertakes a study of his society, he excitedly discovers many aspects of his society that he did not know beforehand.

When a field worker undertakes the task of fieldwork, he is taking on an overwhelming amount of obstacles, called cultural barriers. He must overcome the barriers in order to record accurate information regarding a specific civilization. He must overcome many obstacles such as language, race and culture in order to start a study on a specific culture. There are many advantages in conducting a fieldwork that makes for a very rewarding experience once the 'culture barrier' has been overcome. One advantage is that one gains a lot more from a culture when you are 'immersed' in the particular culture. You can study about a culture in books or watch a movie about an area but it is absolutely nothing like actually being there. You can talk to people living in that culture, attend their religious ceremonies, and see basically how they live on a day to day basis.

Fieldwork is not an easy venture. Fieldwork conducted in modern societies differs from the one that is conducted in tribal societies. In modern societies and institutions, permission to carry out fieldwork is required from the people who are considered to be 'the gatekeepers'. These gatekeepers control the flow of information. In tribal societies, there may not be 'gatekeepers' guarding information and if there are, they do not exercise the kind of surveillance on the fieldworker as is exercised in modern institutions. This gives an opportunity to unscrupulous enumerators to exploit the tribal knowledge system.

### 4.2.3 Ethics of Fieldwork

Ethics is concerned with **wrong** or **right** with reference to a standard. The standard may vary from discipline to discipline and over time and space. Hence, ethics are contextual. Research ethics involve the question of right or wrong in the process of research. Ethics in the fieldwork tradition conform to the research ethics in general.

An enumerator while conducting fieldwork experiences some problems. As a researcher, the enumerator also faces a set of related problems, for example, while planning the fieldwork and writing the research report. The researcher may face the following problems:

- Should the researcher inform the people about the nature of his study?
- If he should share the information, then how much of it should be revealed/shared?

The researcher may also face other problems such as:

- Should he publish his findings notwithstanding the furore it may cause among the 'subjects' of study?

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- Should he deliberately suppress those pieces of information and practices that people find embarrassing?

Each and every researcher may have his own way of addressing the problems. He may have to compromise between polarities. Sometimes, the researcher may ignore the interest of the informants or he may sacrifice the degree of accuracy to avoid a problem. But can the researcher do that?

The researcher may find himself in an advantageous position to ignore the interest of the informants once the fieldwork is complete. Then the balance of power shifts from the informants to the fieldworker/researcher. He may choose to use this knowledge in any desired manner. However, in reality, the fieldworker is caught in a dilemma. He may not reveal the information that might harm the people in the long run. Or, he may receive information from an informant with the explicit instruction of not using it ever in his writings. Therefore, the fieldworker does not have the kind of power that is generally assumed to exist because he is not supposed to use the information for any purpose that might harm the integrity, identity, and image of the people. If a fieldworker 'harms' the people in any way, he also jeopardizes the chance of future fieldworkers in that community.

Sometimes the fieldworker/researcher experiences the dilemma of using or not using the data at the time of analysis. Under such a situation he may choose to overcome this problem by not revealing the name of the community where he conducted his fieldwork or by using pseudonyms for the people who provided the sensitive and controversial information.

But a research is objective in nature and aims at finding the truth. It is but natural to think of a standard way of addressing these problems while looking at the interests of all who involve in the process of research. Normally, the parties involved in a fieldwork-based research are the researcher/enumerator, informants, community, sponsors of research, public and the readers. Each party has its own interest, short term or long term, to be guarded with. This is where ethical considerations get importance in research.

Ethics in research in general and in fieldwork in particular usually refers to well based standards of right and wrong that prescribe what the researcher ought to do. It includes rights, obligations, benefits to society and informants, fairness, or specific virtues. The standards may be **reasonable obligations to refrain** from any act that may harm the long term or short term interest of informants or community or the quality of research. It enjoins virtues of honesty, compassion, and loyalty. Precisely, the ethical standards relating to rights may be the right to life, the right to freedom from injury, and the right to privacy.

The following are some ethical principles which the researcher/fieldworker should be fully aware of and adhere to during fieldwork and thereafter.

1. **Honesty:** The enumerator should record the data honestly in field notes without any fabrication. He should be honest to the purpose of collecting data and his dealings with the informants.
2. **Responsibility:** The enumerator/fieldworker should consider the effects of his work, including the consequences of misuse. He should strive to promote social good and prevent social harms that may come along with his work. Therefore, he should be responsible to secure safety both for the individuals and groups among whom they conduct their fieldwork, and for their colleagues and for the wider society. The responsibility of the fieldworker demands that he should secure the actual permission and interest of all those who involve in the fieldwork process.



He should avoid discrimination against colleagues or members of the team on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors. Responsibility demands that the enumerator should be familiar with, and respect, the culture of the people among whom he conducts fieldwork.

Responsibility demands that the enumerator should ensure human subjects protection. The enumerator should avoid taking interest in the lives of individuals or communities he studies. The welfare of the informants should be the highest priority; their dignity, privacy, and autonomy should be respected.

3. **Accountability:** The fieldworker should be accountable to his work in every field. He should be accountable to the accuracy of data, maintaining confidentiality, protecting privacy, timely completion of fieldwork and legality. The fieldworker should know and obey the relevant laws and policies on the subject/topic on which data are collected. The fieldworker should be accountable to the funding agency, and to general public and any damage caused in the process of data collection.
4. **Integrity:** The fieldworker should keep promises and agreements made with the informants and other participants. The fieldworker should act with sincerity and strive for consistency in thought and action.
5. **Objectivity:** The objectivity of research depends on the nature and reliability of data. Therefore, the fieldworker should avoid bias in methods of data collection. The fieldworker should conduct pilot survey before standardizing questionnaires. The fieldworker should ensure that the data collected conform to the research objectives.
6. **Trust:** The academic research as a whole is built on a foundation of trust. The fieldworker should be aware of this principle at the time of collection of data. He should ensure that the community has trust in his words and that the research results would reflect an honest presentation of the society and its people and culture.
7. **Carefulness:** The fieldworker should be careful to avoid errors and negligence while recording or reporting data.
8. **Confidentiality:** This refers to the participant's confidentiality—both individual and information. The fieldworker should ensure that the identity of the informant would be kept confidential and the personal information would not be shared with anyone. Sometimes it may so happen that the informant may share some information with the enumerator out of curiosity which would reflect on his personal dignity, if disclosed. The enumerator should practice restraint to keep it a secret. Otherwise, it will be a breach of trust.
9. **Respect for intellectual property:** The fieldworker should be aware of the local customs, norms and regulations. The fieldworker should give due respect and credit to the indigenous knowledge holder and indigenous rights. He is required to honour patents, copyrights, and other forms of intellectual property. He should not use community knowledge without proper prior permission.

Protection of Plant Variety and Farmers' Right (PPVFR) Act (2001), Biological Diversity Act (2002) and Indian Patent Act (1970 as amended in 2005), Protection for Handicrafts under Indian Intellectual Property Laws which includes Protection under Geographical Indications of Goods

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(Registration and Protection Act [1999]), Combined Interpretation of Design Act (2000) and Copyright Act (1957) are some of the major legal instruments which the fieldworker should be aware of. These Acts would provide legal shields for tribal communities to protect their biodiversity and traditional knowledge (TK).

10. **Prior Informed Consent:** Prior Informed Consent (PIC) was incorporated in Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Act, 1992. It is one of the important tools through which community opinion and willingness to share their TK knowledge with enumerators is obtained. PIC aims at protecting traditional knowledge (TK) which includes traditional cultural expression (TCE) and folklore and technology transfer.

An agreement format in language known to the informant is signed before the collection of data. This is essential if the informant has to share knowledge on traditional tribal medicine system or other form of knowledge which could be used to earn benefit. Prior Informed Consent (PIC) requires that the informant should be fully informed about the knowledge he would share and the prospective risk or benefit involved. The informant should give his consent willingly; he should not be forced to give consent. The informant also has the right to decline to sign the agreement or may withdraw at any time.

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## 4.3 COMPARATIVE METHOD IN TRIBAL STUDIES

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Comparative method is based on comparison and is the oldest method in social science. It is as old in tribal studies as is the study on tribes. The method has a 'common-sense understanding' in our day to day life and analytical perspective in social science research. You know that comparison is a phenomenon in our day to day life. We compare 'our dresses', 'marks secured in Field Tradition paper', 'the cost of mobile set' and so on. At another level, we also compare 'our religion' with another one or 'our culture with other cultures'. While comparing cultures, we give labels like 'more developed culture', 'less developed culture', or 'primitive culture'. These levels give us an idea of societies with different stages of cultural development, meaning some cultures are considered 'more developed' while some are 'less developed', and still others are considered 'undeveloped' or 'primitive'. In such remarks we find, consciously or unconsciously, an ordering of cultures from 'primitive' to 'more developed cultures'; each successive stage is superior to the preceding one.

### 4.3.1 Evolutionary Perspective on Comparison

The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into the highest order in the course of time. That is what at least the European scholars thought when they encountered the non-European societies. They argued that the primitive cultures like tribal cultures would evolve over time to reach the standard of European societies.

This evolutionary perspective and comparative method of studies dominated the thinking of earlier social science theorists. Positivists like Auguste Comte called it a reliable and scientific method of enquiry. He felt that the comparative study of societies as a whole was a major subject for sociological analysis. Spencer also held that the

### Check Your Progress

1. Who is credited as being the most important figure in the development of modern fieldwork tradition?
2. 'The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars.' Who are the two groups of scholars?
3. Who is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'?
4. What does fieldwork involve?
5. Why are ethics said to be contextual?

researcher must compare 'societies of different kinds and societies at different stages'. Durkheim, too, considered societies to be important units of sociological analysis. In his book, *The Rules of Sociological Methods*, he said, 'one cannot explain a social fact of any complexity except by following its complete development through all social species.' Durkheim's plan for comparative studies of societies was ambitious. The comparison that he made in his study of totemism (among the Australian Aborigines) dealt by and large with societies of a single type. In his study on suicide he compared different types of European societies and in *The Division of Labour in Society* (1933), he compared forms of solidarity among all human societies. Thus according to him, comparison can include facts borrowed either from a single and unique society, from several societies of same species, or from several distinct social species.

Among Durkheim's successors, Radcliffe-Brown took the lead in promoting the view that detailed empirical studies of particular societies must be combined with extensive and systematic comparison. He argued his case in the *Preface* he contributed to an influential collection of papers on African political systems. His argument was that the systematic comparison of **segmentary** and **centralized** political systems in sub-Saharan Africa was the first and essential step towards a better understanding of all political systems, simple and complex.

Even Max Weber has given importance to the comparative method, which treats societies as its unit of analysis and enquires into those factors, which accounts for similarities and differences between them, as they exist in different places and time. Echoing Durkheim, Evans-Pritchard in 33<sup>rd</sup> L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture, 1963 commented that, 'in the widest sense there is no other method. Comparison is, of course, one of the essential procedures of all science and one of the elementary processes of human thought'. In a similar tone, R. Lowie (1950) remarked, 'At the same time a phenomenon is understood only in relation to others: "He little knows of England who only England knows".'

The pioneers of the comparative method in social anthropology were all influenced to a greater or lesser extent by the theory of evolution. Indeed, it was the search for the stages of evolution that largely shaped the comparative method of Morgan and Spencer. This imposed certain limits on the extent to which they did in fact assign equal value to all societies and cultures. It was tacitly accepted that Western societies had reached the highest stage of evolution and that all other societies stood at graduated distances below them. Comparative method was extensively, if not always consciously, used by Western sociologists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to reinforce their belief in the superiority of their own society and culture.

Hundred years ago, the practitioners of the comparative method in sociology and social anthropology were all Europeans and Americans. This is no longer the case. Not only are many different societies being studied throughout the world, but they are being studied by a variety of persons from many different angles. There are more facts available and more ways of looking at facts. Today, the comparative method has come to terms not only with diverse facts but also with diverse perceptions of the same facts viewed from different angles. It is no more a mere evolutionary understanding of cultural reality.

### **Comparison beyond Evolutionary Perspective**

**Cross-cultural studies:** The first breakthrough came with the critique of the earlier evolutionary comparative perspective by Franz Boas. Earlier, the evolutionary theorists

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used the comparative method to explain the similarity of cultural traits and thus the evolution of societies. These theorists, known as ‘arm-chair scholars’, used secondary data to break up cultural wholes into traits and compared them to evolve theories of evolution and diffusion.

Franz Boas, an American anthropologist, criticized evolutionary comparative method and emphasized on studying culture in the historical context. In other words, he emphasized on the use of historical data for comparative study of ‘cultural relativism’ rather than evolutionary theorization through comparison of cultural traits. Thus, the comparative method emerged as *cross-cultural studies*. Precisely, it explains ‘why things are the way they are’. Scholars studied universal categories such as kinship, marriage, religion, political system in each culture to compare with other cultures and to understand the similarities and differences. Levi-Strauss used this cross-cultural comparison as the basis of conceptualizing structuralism in anthropology.

Cross-cultural comparison uses field data or secondary ethnographic data or both to study relationships or lack of relationships between cultures all over the world. The works of Edward Burnett Tylor and Lewis Henry Morgan could be considered as two earlier cross-cultural studies using secondary sources of data. Following Franz Boas, his students Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead conducted cross-cultural studies using field data directly collected by them and relying upon other scholars. Benedict in her book entitled *Patterns of Culture* (1934) has compared the cultures of Kwakiutl of the Pacific North-West (based on field data of Franz Boas), the Pueblo of New Mexico (own field data) and the Dobu of New Guinea (based upon field data of Margaret Mead and Reo Fortunes). Mead in her work *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (1935) has made a cross-cultural comparison of sexuality from infancy to adulthood on the basis of her fieldwork conducted among three New Guinea tribes namely, Arapesh, Mundugumor and Tchambuli (now called Chambri).

Later, the cross-cultural studies standardized by George Peter Murdock (1940) was considered the modern version of comparative cross-cultural studies, which he prefers to call cross-cultural survey. He has compiled the *Ethnographic Atlas* using statistical techniques which has given a new dimension to his method. He employed *synchronic* and *diachronic* analytical frame in cross-cultural studies.

A *synchronic* study concerns itself to the study of a culture at a point of time. You can study a tribal culture or culture across tribal communities at a particular moment of time. You can also make a synchronic study of a culture with reference to a past period of time. In contrast, a diachronic study concerns itself to the study of a culture over a period of time. It concerns the process of evolution and change in the culture. In other words, a diachronic study is roughly historical in nature.

Let us take a concrete example. The study of, say the family system of the Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh as it exists in 2015 or the family system as it exists in Nyishi, Adi, Monpa, Khampti tribes simultaneously in 2015 is a synchronic study. Similarly, the family system of the Nyishi tribe as it existed in 1947 and as it exists in 2015 are both synchronic studies. But if you study the evolution and change of the family system in Nyishi tribe from 1947 to 2015, it will be a diachronic study. You study how the family system changed over the period from 1947 to 2015. This process of change is not present in your study of the marriage system at two particular points of time, namely in 1949 and 2015. Only the study referred to two points of time, but not the process during the period between two points of time.

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Therefore, cross-cultural studies can be conducted with reference to time, same culture at one point of time or two points of time or over a period of time. The same temporal factor can also be employed to study across cultures. Secondly, the cross-cultural comparison can also be made over space. The same tribe living in two different environments can also be compared at a particular point of time. The tribe living in a new environment can be compared with its culture of the original place. Such a comparison involves both time and space. We can give an example of both a synchronic and diachronic study of the Garos living in two different environments from the study of J. K. Bose.

J. K. Bose in his book entitled *Culture Change among the Garos* (completed in 1977 based on field work conducted in 1930s and published in 1985) has studied the Garos who had migrated to the plains of Mymensingh in present Bangladesh adjacent to Garo Hills around 1891 and adopted plough cultivation. The cultural change of the Garos is analysed around a shift from the earlier shifting cultivation practice to the plough cultivation in a different ecological setting and in relation to their interaction with the Hindu Bengalis. In the process they had developed a competitive spirit and a new social situation as compared to their counterparts living in hills. He has studied the change by situating the culture of migrant Garos with that of the non-migrant ones in the hills when the former returned to their own ecological settings due to political reasons.

Bose has given us an account of the change, both in material and non-material aspects of culture. Precisely, he has discussed the change with reference to food and drink, dresses and ornaments, social organizations and institutions like inheritance, marriage, dormitory, agricultural practices, and religion. For example, he has informed us about the emerging practice of son's inheritance to plough land, absence of dormitory, evolution of economic individualism in place of community based economy, system of hiring cattle for ploughing, decline in the *katchi* (phratry, probably it was of the nature of moiety earlier) and *machong* (in nature of a lineage or extended family) system, change in cropping pattern from multi-cropping practice in jhum fields to mono-cropping in plough fields, change of the concept of residence after marriage, conversion to Christianity and other religious sects and many more among migrated plough cultivators.

### 4.3.2 Ideographic and Nomothetic Approaches to Cultural Studies

By 1960s the main aim of comparative method had shifted from attempts of universal generalizations to presentation of culture specific accounts. Because of the shifting emphasis on perspectives, we can categorize cross-cultural studies as **elemental** or **idiographic** and **generalizing** or **nomothetic studies**.

Idiographic (from the Greek term for one's own or oneself) studies concern with the detailed understanding of particular circumstances. An idiographic study accounts for the facts in a single case. It seeks to arrive at general rules from the study of individual cases. Hence, it uses the **inductive method** of reasoning. In tribal studies, ideographic approach would be employed to study a group, a clan, a village community for example, which is seen as an entity. The group should be an individual entity with distinct characteristics which set it apart from other groups of the category.

In contrast, a nomothetic (from the Greek term for law giving) study concerns with particular understanding with reference to many cases. A nomothetic study accounts for the facts in many cases. Julian Steward chose a handful of cases when he developed his theory of cultural change (1955). When an individual case is studied to verify the general rule it is also a nomothetic study. It uses the **deductive method** of reasoning.

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The group is not studied as an individual entity, but with reference to general rules that could be applied to the study.

Thus, idiographic studies describe a single event, person, group or situation. In our example of clan as a group, the idiographic study will be interested in, say, the role of clan in the Adi tribe in labour organization. Whereas, the nomothetic study will try to understand the role of the Adi clan in labour organization with reference to the general law of labour organization by a clan in a tribe. It seeks to understand generality in specific cases. No doubt this generality is arrived at by studying many such cases earlier.

### Characteristics

The following are some of the characteristics of comparative methods:

- It is a scientific method in which comparative data is collected with a specific purpose and analysed and specific conclusions are derived from its result. For the scholars of tribal studies comparative approach is one among many analytical tools available in their kit. He has to justify why a particular method is used, for what purpose and how best the method can be used.
- No hypothesis is formulated in the comparative method to mould the study in a particular direction.
- The units to be compared are as simple as is possible. These should be simple, symmetrical, similar, and small. The success of this method, therefore, depends on the units of comparison that could be comparable. You cannot compare the kinship relation of the Khampiti tribe with the Igu dance of the Mishmis. Further, the smaller the units, the better the results. In big units, there is every possibility of external factors influencing it and thus, creating difficulty in arriving at an objective conclusion. The more certain the comparable units are, the more objective will be the conclusions.
- The method makes systematic comparison between cultural wholes of cultures of the world in different ways. You can compare, say relationships, in a single culture at a given period of time or at different periods, or you may compare relationships in a few contemporaneous cultures. You can also compare several cultures, which are widely different but share some identical features. In other words, you can employ synchronic and diachronic methods of study.
- It aims at answering questions about causes of cultural variations or similarities and complex problems across the cultures of the world.
- It recognizes the uniqueness of each culture compared.
- In this method both types of primary and secondary ethnographic data are used.

The researcher adopting comparative method for his study should possess deep observation power. All the facts will not emerge before him. He will have to possess deep insight into the cause and effect of different factors. He should be acquainted with all the aspects of the subject matter. The researcher should possess the critical power for discrimination. He should not leave any aspect untouched and unattended. He should also be able to interpret the facts in a logical way. The researcher uses figures and facts for explaining conclusions. These conclusions drawn from a comparative method must be reported in a convincing manner. It should be scientifically justified. This requires an objective reporting. The researcher should not be biased and try his best to present his findings in a logical and convincing manner.

The comparative method as a tool of investigation, designed consciously to discover the general features of all societies (or cultures) without losing sight of the distinctive features of each, has been a particular obsession of scholars of tribal studies across disciplines.

### 4.3.3 Etic and Emic Perspectives

The studies on tribes began as a study of the 'other' by European scholars during the colonial period till the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Unit 2 has already dealt with the emic and etic approaches to study the tribes. Here, we learn more about them. Scholars who study a culture other than their own are outside scholars, called **etics**. As a matter of fact, the discipline of social anthropology began with the study of the 'other' by the etics. The colonial anthropologists and administrators studied the culture of the people whom they considered as 'savage', 'primitive' and 'barbarous'. The sense of racial superiority of the European anthropologists is evident in their studies of artefacts, social institutions, religion and culture of 'others'. M. N. Srinivas informs us that in their studies they have 'invariably reinforced the Western assumption that the Western world stood at the apex while the other races occupied lower rungs of the ladder'.

During that time, none was present among the 'others' to study his own culture. Gradually, scholars from the 'other', i.e. tribes, became capable of writing about their own culture. They questioned the authenticity and bias-free presentation of etic views on culture of the 'others'. These writers who wrote about their own culture are called the insiders or **emics**. With a sense of racial superiority, the colonial anthropologists considered emic views as insider's 'preconceptions' and 'private prejudices'. Consequently, the debate on etic and emic views emerged.

In India, with the field research of M. N. Srinivas, the tradition of studying one's own culture became significant. But presently, the outsider studies a culture and the insider also engages in studying his own culture. The issue of the insider, i.e. emic perspective is not as clear as is an outsider's. It is because a member born to a culture can be a 'cultural outsider'. The term *dikku* of the Santhals, earlier used to designate non-Santhalees, is extended to include the Santhal elites as well. The community consider these elites as 'outside the culture'.

Understanding an insider as a cultural outsider is not specific to a particular culture. This is associated with the social process to which every culture and most of its members are exposed to. For example, the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have been exposed to external forces of change especially through government interventions. Some members of a particular community have more exposure to the formal system of education or to religious conversion or both. This makes the person's perception different from the perception of a member of the culture who is not exposed to such forces and lives a traditional way of life in the village. Hence, a little caution is needed while considering this exposed person as 'an insider' to the culture. There are examples of how the formal system of education changes the outlook and thus the perception of people. M. N. Srinivas's candid expression in this regard is noteworthy. He confesses:

It is only in the village that I realized how far I (and my family) had travelled away from tradition.

A person in a cultural space lives for a relatively short span of time but the culture is a process of accumulated experience through ages. Further, the researcher could be a social categorization even in tribal communities as among the Gonds, Bhills and Khampits

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or across gender as male and female. Being a woman there are certain expected roles in a patriarchal setup which limits the insider status of the researcher.

The outsider perspective is not free from bias either. The work of Malinowski, considered to be the founder of fieldwork tradition, is also found having male bias and his personal bias towards the people of the Trobriand islanders, his subject of study. Annette Weiner (1976) in a re-study of the same people found that Malinowski's account happens to be the account of the life of the Trobriand males. His account does not reflect the contribution of female members of Trobriand Islands. The publication of his field diary entitled *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (1967) reveals his personal bias towards the people he studied in spite of his apparent empathy in his works. This puts a question on the objectivity of etic study. However, the emic-etic issue has academic significance. The debate cannot be ignored altogether.

Even **emic** and **etic** terms are used by some scholars in the social sciences and the behavioural sciences to refer to two different kinds of data concerning human behaviour.

- An 'emic' account of behaviour is a description of behaviour or a belief in terms meaningful (consciously or unconsciously) to the actor; that is, an emic account is culture-specific, an insider's view.
- An 'etic' account is a description of a behaviour or belief by an observer, in terms that can be applied to other cultures; that is, an etic account is culturally neutral, it is an account of a scholar who does not belong to the culture he studies.

Scientists interested in the local construction of meaning, and local rules for behaviour, will rely on emic accounts; scientists interested in facilitating comparative research and making universal claims will rely on etic accounts. The terms were first introduced by linguist Kenneth Pike, who argued that the tools developed for describing linguistic behaviours could be adapted to the description of any human social behaviour. The terms **emic** and **etic** are derived from the linguistic terms phonemic and phonetic respectively.

The terms were also championed by anthropologists Ward Goodenough and Marvin Harris with slightly different definitions. Goodenough was primarily interested in understanding the culturally specific meaning of specific beliefs and practices; Harris was primarily interested in explaining human behaviour.

Harris is known for his support of the emic and etic idea. Harris advanced the idea that etic accounts were inherently better, as outsiders observing a culture would not be blinded by the biases that members of that culture carried. This was strongly influenced by Karl Marx's **theory of false consciousness**.

M. N. Srinivas has addressed the problems in the study of one's own society in several of his publications. Srinivas disagrees with the statement that social anthropologists do not study their society well. Ideally, one should begin with the study of a culture different from one's own. Whether it is one's own or a different society much depends upon the 'frame of mind' that the fieldworker adopts. One should look at one's own society as a stranger would, Srinivas notes, keeping aside one's preconceptions and the already-acquired understanding. Srinivas believed that the native anthropologist has a distinct advantage over the outsider-anthropologist: he has a mastery over the language. Because of this, he does not need to engage a research assistant.



## NOTES

The detached observer's (outsider's) view is one window on the world. The view of the local scene through the eyes of a native participant in that scene is a different window. Either view by itself is restricted in scope and leads to a kind of distortion—the first, since it ignores the concept of relevance, or purpose, or meaning, and the second because it distorts or moulds vision or experience so that one interprets what one sees, or hears, or understands, only through the rose-coloured glasses of one's own experiential structure.

Social scientists differ in their treatment and explanation of cultural reality primarily over the reasons or causes for general cultural, universal and specific cultural variations. However, there are other differences in theoretical schools that must be considered before directly investigating fundamental causal issues. These involve different approaches to how meaning is inferred from cultural data and whether culture can be grouped into wider categories for the purpose of generalization.

Researchers must record not only their direct observations of cultural phenomena but must also consider the meaning that informants explicitly or implicitly assign to objects and events in a cultural context. This strategy is called the **emic approach**. It may also so happen that the emic depiction may use concepts and clarifications from cross-cultural generalizations rather than from culture specific meaning system. This type of analysis is termed the **etic approach**. Thus, an outsider can be emic in approach and an insider can be etic in approach.

To some extent emic and etic approaches are complementary. The anthropologist starts with certain cross-cultural analytical principles to help identify a research issue and organize and interpret the data but also considers his observations within the informants' categorization and meaning system to provide an additional empirical dimension. After fieldwork the research proceeds to process the data in an etic framework of general analytical categories and theory. However, some anthropologists maintain that it is not legitimate to apply any cross-cultural terms and that the etic approach is invalid.

Differences between emic and etic approaches are closely related to issues of generalization. Anthropologists like Franz Boas argue that etic or cross-culturally valid terms and categories are not possible. They also maintain that cultures and their component traits and institutions cannot be subjected to comparative conclusions or generalizations. Each culture represents a particular configuration of elements and must be understood only in terms of its uniqueness. Boas first articulated this approach to culture and established an ethnological school, which is sometimes called **historical particularism** because it is critical of generalization. In contrast to particularism, many anthropological theories emphasize the need to draw general conclusions or laws on the basis of comparing individual cases. In other words, they suggest ideographic studies.

Researchers must decide whether their study will be approached from an etic or an emic perspective, and they must establish the way in which they will define or consider culture in the context of their research. The emic approach, as it applies to cross-cultural research, focuses on studying a construct from within a specific culture, and understanding that construct as the people from within that culture understand it. The etic approach, on the other hand, involves developing an understanding of a construct by comparing it across cultures using predetermined characteristics. Researchers have recognized the importance of both of these approaches.

## NOTES

From a measurement standpoint, criteria in an emic approach are relative to the characteristics of the particular culture being studied. Hence, differences or variability in one culture may not have the same significance as they would have in another one. The etic approach is more suited for broader analyses, usually involving two or more cultures. The main assumption in etic research is that there is a shared frame of reference across culturally diverse samples. This frame of reference can be applied to all the samples in the same way, ultimately allowing for more generalization. Since cross-cultural organizational research often involves comparative studies between two or more cultures, much of the research is conducted with an etic perspective. From a measurement standpoint, criteria in an etic approach are considered absolute or universal, with less attention being given to the internal characteristics of a particular culture. However, if etic frames of analysis are used to make cross-cultural comparisons, researchers risk not capturing all of the culture-specific (emic) aspects of the construct relative to a particular culture in the study. On the other hand, if an emic strategy is used, a more precise and thorough description of the elements within one culture is obtained, but the ability to make cross-cultural comparisons becomes more difficult.

When researchers fail to consider the emic aspects of the different cultures involved in their studies, and when they assume that the concepts being tested exist across all cultures, they are applying **imposed** or **pseudo etic** approach. This problem has been recognized as being fairly common in cross-cultural research. A best-practice suggestion for dealing with this problem is to use a combined emic-etic approach, or a **derived etic** approach. Rather than identifying emic dimensions from one culture and simply applying those dimensions to the other culture(s) in the study, a derived etic approach requires researchers to first attain emic knowledge (usually through observation, and/or participation) about all the cultures in the study. This allows them to put aside their culture biases, and to become familiar with the relevant cultural differences in each setting. When this is done, it may then be possible to make cross-cultural links between the emic aspects of each culture. While some emic dimensions will emerge in all cultures, some dimensions may emerge in only one of the cultures. Only where there are observed commonalities can cross-cultural comparisons be appropriately made. The comparisons here are considered derived etics since they are derived by first conducting emic research in each of the cultures, and not just one.

Conceptualizing as an insider is a problematic issue in contemporary field studies among the tribes. But the issue of the debate is not to define an insider or examine the bias of an outsider. As Appadurai (1988) maintains, the issue should be on the focus on authenticity of research.

### Check Your Progress

6. What is the evolutionary comparative approach?
7. Name the theory by which the pioneers of the comparative method in social anthropology were influenced.
8. What is the emic approach to fieldwork?
9. Why is emic perspective culture specific?

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## 4.4 SUMMARY

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In this unit, you have learnt that,

- The tradition of fieldwork in tribal studies is as old as the interest in studying the tribal communities.
- Fieldwork is central to researches in tribal studies. It is the crowning jewel of anthropology. In studying the tribal communities of the Trobriand Islands of New Guinea, Malinowski is credited as being the most important figure in the development of the modern fieldwork tradition.

- The tradition of fieldwork is heavily credited to the American and British anthropologists. Bronislaw Malinowski, a Polish-British anthropologist, is a pioneer of the tradition of field research in tribal studies.
- The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars. The first group includes those who are outsiders to India, especially the colonial anthropologists and administrators. The second group includes the Indian scholars who have studied their own culture.
- The Indian tradition of fieldwork began with the publication of 'The Mundas, Their Country, Their Character and Their Poetry', in 1908 by S. C. Roy.
- The beginning of field tradition in India is attributed to Sarat Chandra Roy. He is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'.
- Field tradition is vast in its scope. It is not limited to ethnographic studies. Scholars of pre-history and archaeology also conduct fieldworks.
- S. C. Roy was a strong advocate of anthropological training to administrative and judicial officers, forest and excise officers who were posted in tribal areas. He believed that such trainings would not only improve the quality of judicial and executive work, but would also help the cause of science through observation and investigation of tribal customs that might be recorded during the fieldwork.
- During the post Roy period, we have scholars who were in contact with S. C. Roy or were trained or influenced by him. The works of these scholars have been labelled as 'Continuity of Roy's Tradition'.
- A new trend in field tradition emerged when scholars studied not only the tribes but also other communities and dimensions of the Indian civilization. One of the fieldworkers in the phase of new trend is M. N. Srinivas.
- Field study today is not limited among the academic scholars only. NGOs and non-academic institutions take interest in field methods to study the different aspects of tribal life in the changing context.
- The contemporary trend in field study is a growing academic engagement of insiders studying their respective tribes.
- While S. C. Roy was working among the tribes of Chota Nagpur, another scholar was actively involved in fieldwork among the tribes of the present Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. He was Verrier Elwin.
- Fieldwork is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.
- Fieldwork enhances enumerator's personal experiences, improves his learning process, and increases his understanding and knowledge. It broadens awareness and establishes links between ideas and practical realities, for the field is not limited to any disciplinary branch of knowledge.
- The significance of fieldwork lies in its principle of learning the vernacular language. This requires the fieldworker to understand the systems of meaning on which the tribal culture operates.
- A field provides scope for verification of information. The information from one informant can be verified through cross checking other informants.

## NOTES

## NOTES

- Field study is an effective method of scrutinizing the impact of development programmes on tribal communities.
- There is a difference between the knowledge the investigator acquires by being a natural member of the society and the one he acquires by consciously undertaking its study.
- Ethics is concerned with wrong or right with reference to a standard. The standard may vary from discipline to discipline and over time and space. Hence, ethics is contextual. Research ethics involves the question of right or wrong in the process of research.
- Ethics in research in general and in fieldwork in particular usually refers to well based standards of right and wrong that prescribe what the researcher ought to do. It includes rights, obligations, benefits to society and informants, fairness, or specific virtues.
- Prior Informed Consent (PIC) requires that the informant should be fully informed about the knowledge he would share and the prospective risk or benefit involved.
- Comparative method is based on comparison and is the oldest method in social science. It is as old in tribal studies as is the study on tribes. The method has a 'common-sense understanding' in our day to day life and analytical perspective in social science research.
- The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into highest order in course of time.
- Among Durkheim's successors, Radcliffe-Brown took the lead in promoting the view that detailed empirical studies of particular societies must be combined with extensive and systematic comparison.
- Franz Boas, an American anthropologist, criticized evolutionary comparative method and emphasized on studying culture in the historical context. In other words, he emphasized on the use of historical data for comparative study of 'cultural relativism' rather than evolutionary theorization through comparison of cultural traits.
- By 1960s the main aim of comparative method had shifted from attempts of universal generalizations to presentation of culture specific accounts. Because of the shifting emphasis on perspectives, we can categorize cross-cultural studies as elemental or idiographic and generalizing or nomothetic studies.
- The studies on tribes began as a study of the 'other' by European scholars during the colonial period till the middle of the 20th century. Scholars who study a culture other than their own are outside scholars, called etics.
- Researchers must record not only their direct observations of cultural phenomena but must also consider the meaning that informants explicitly or implicitly assign to objects and events in a cultural context. This strategy is called the emic approach.

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## 4.5 KEY TERMS

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- **Fieldwork:** It is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.

- **Research ethics:** It involves the question of right or wrong in the process of research.
- **Evolutionary comparative approach:** The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into highest order in course of time.
- **Totemism:** It is a belief in which either each human, or each group of humans (e.g. a clan or tribe) is thought to have a spiritual connection or a kinship with another physical being, such as an animal or plant, often called a 'spirit-being' or 'totem'.
- **Emic and etic:** Emic and etic, in anthropology, folkloristics, and the social and behavioural sciences, refer to two kinds of field research done and viewpoints obtained; from within the social group (from the perspective of the subject) and from outside (from the perspective of the observer).

## NOTES

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### 4.6 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

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1. In studying the tribal communities of the Trobriand Islands of New Guinea, Malinowski is credited as being the most important figure in the development of the modern fieldwork tradition.
2. The fieldwork tradition to study the tribes in India has been followed by two groups of scholars. The first group includes those who are outsiders to India, especially the colonial anthropologists and administrators. The second group includes the Indian scholars who have studied their own culture.
3. Sarat Chandra Roy is regarded as 'The Father of Indian Ethnography'.
4. Fieldwork is a method of data collection in a 'natural' world in 'natural' environments. Naturally, it involves collecting data outside an experimental or laboratory setting.
5. Ethics is concerned with wrong or right with reference to a standard. The standard may vary from discipline to discipline and over time and space. Hence, ethics is contextual.
6. The comparison involving ordering of elements or societies is known as evolutionary comparative approach, for the lowest order, it is argued, will evolve into the highest order in course of time.
7. The pioneers of the comparative method in social anthropology were all influenced to a greater or lesser extent by the theory of evolution.
8. Researchers must record not only their direct observations of cultural phenomena but must also consider the meaning that informants explicitly or implicitly assign to objects and events in a cultural context. This strategy is called the emic approach.
9. Emic perspective is culture specific because the native scholar studies his own culture.

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## 4.7 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### NOTES

#### Short-Answer Questions

1. When did the tradition of fieldwork on the tribal communities gather momentum?
2. Briefly describe the tradition of fieldwork outside India.
3. State the contribution of S. C. Roy in the tradition of fieldwork.
4. 'S. C. Roy was a strong advocate of anthropological training to administrative and judicial officers.' Give reasons.
5. Write a short note on continuity of Roy's tradition.
6. What are the contributions made by Verrier Elwin in the study of tribes?
7. Is it necessary to learn the language of the people who are to be studied? How does one treat the people/culture of an ethnographic enquiry?
8. List the limitations of fieldwork.
9. What is the synchronic and diachronic analytical frame in cross-cultural studies?
10. Why did the debate on etic and emic views emerge?
11. Does fieldwork tradition suggest that it is always the outsider who should study a culture? Give reasons to your answer.

#### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss in detail the fieldwork tradition in India.
2. Evaluate the contribution made by the Indian scholars in fieldwork.
3. Describe the contemporary tradition of field study in India.
4. Critically analyse the significance of fieldwork.
5. Explain the advantages and limitations of the fieldwork method.
6. Assess the ethical principles which the researcher/fieldworker should be fully aware of and adhere to during fieldwork and thereafter.
7. Evaluate the evolutionary perspective on comparison.
8. Discuss the ideographic and nomothetic approaches to cultural studies.
9. Discuss the emic-etic debate in studying a culture.

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## 4.8 FURTHER READING

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# UNIT 5 COLLECTION OF DATA

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## Structure

- 5.0 Introduction
- 5.1 Unit Objectives
- 5.2 Research and Data
  - 5.2.1 Planning Data Collection
- 5.3 Some Concepts Used in Research
  - 5.3.1 Methods And Methodology
  - 5.3.2 Tools and Techniques
  - 5.3.3 Objectivity in Research
- 5.4 Methods and Techniques of Collection of Data: Survey and Sampling
  - 5.4.1 Census and Sampling Methods
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- 5.5 Quantitative and Qualitative Methods of Research
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  - 5.6.5 Participatory Methods
  - 5.6.6 Focus Group Discussion
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 Key Terms
- 5.9 Answers to ‘Check Your Progress’
- 5.10 Questions and Exercises
- 5.11 Further Reading

## NOTES

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## 5.0 INTRODUCTION

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There are five questions that relate to the topic ‘collection of data’. The answers to these questions form the subject matter of discussion taken up in this unit.

What is data? In simple terms, we can say that data is quantitative and qualitative information. What is the need of collecting data? The answer to this question lies in the role data plays in research work. It speaks of the purpose of data collection. How to collect data? The answer to this question entails the methods and techniques of data collection. Lastly, you can ask, from where does one obtain data? In these questions, the reply is concerned with the sources of data.

Primary significance of collection of data is the purpose it intends to serve. Then follow other aspects of data collection. Data is collected because they help in addressing a research problem. Therefore, Simpson and Kafka (1952) have said, ‘Data have no standing themselves; they have a basis for existence only where there is a problem.’ In this unit, we shall discuss some aspects of collection of data for research.

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## 5.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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### NOTES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Describe the nature and significance of research and the importance of data in research
- Define concepts like method, methodology, tool and technique, census and sampling as used in research
- Explain the types of sampling
- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, written and unwritten sources and published and unpublished sources of data
- Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative methods of research
- Assess the various field methods of collecting data for conducting a research

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## 5.2 RESEARCH AND DATA

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In the previous unit, we have learnt that research and data are inseparable. Data helps in understanding, analysing, interpreting and solving a research problem. A research can be a social science research or a physical science research. As the discipline of tribal studies belongs to the branch of social science, we shall try to understand research from the point of view of social science. Tribal studies like any other research study attempts at addressing and solving research problems. With the identification or conceptualization of a problem, the research process starts. Understanding the meaning of research will help us to know the need and type of data.

Research, as you know, is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world. P. V. Young defined **social research** 'as the systematic method of discovering new facts or verifying old facts, their sequences, inter-relationships, causal explanations and the natural laws which govern them.' In social research we study the behaviour of human beings as members of society and their feelings, responses and attitudes under different circumstances.

Social science research is carried out with the aim of discovering new facts and verification of the old ones. The academic purpose of social research is the acquisition of knowledge. The goal of every research is the discovery of new facts, new relationships and new laws governing the phenomena. Besides this, the objectives of research also includes the constant verification of the old concepts and generalizations. For all these, researchers need qualitative or quantitative data.

Scholars of tribal studies visit the tribal areas and conduct research on the tribal people, their customs, attitudes, behavioural pattern and habits in their natural settings using various qualitative and quantitative research methods. Using the field data, they try to address various research problems. For example, they try to establish a causal connection between various human activities. They try to establish the laws that govern the various complex human activities. Or simply they describe the culture of the tribe to understand it as it is.



## 5.2.1 Planning Data Collection

Data is the heart and soul in the process of research work. Does any kind of data help in research work? Let us discuss.

A researcher sets his research objectives. Any kind of data cannot help research objectives set with a particular purpose. Data on political institutions cannot explain the objectives formulated to study the marriage system. Hence, data that conform to and are consistent with the objectives formulated is the required data for the purpose of research on marriage system. Hence, data must be appropriate, focused, authentic and reliable to conform to the objectives. Data must be relevant to the topic of research investigation. One must be very cautious while selecting the category of data. The categories relate to the sources, methods and nature of data.

Generally, data can be classified in the following ways:

- Quantitative and qualitative data
- Sample and census data
- Primary and secondary data

**Quantitative and qualitative data:** On the basis of nature, data can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are those which are quantifiable. In other words, they can be expressed in quantitative (numerical) terms. Data on number of houses or number of clans in a particular tribal village and age-group wise distribution of population of a tribe are examples of quantitative data.

Qualitative data, on the other hand, are not quantifiable. They refer to attributes—qualities, characteristics, etc. The colour of festival dresses, faith in supernatural power, bravery, dream and its interpretation, the quality of a girl that makes her an ideal wife, honesty, and many such attributes are examples of qualitative data.

**Sample and census data:** They refer to data collected either from a sample or a universe. Sample is a part of the universe or population. Universe or population refers to all units under study. Sample and census data also refer to methods of collection. Data collected through the sampling method are sample data. Similarly, data collected through the study of the universe, known as census survey, are called census data. Details on sample and universe are discussed later in the same unit.

**Primary and secondary data:** Data collected from primary sources are called primary data. On the other hand, data collected from the secondary sources are called secondary data.

While collecting data, one must be cautious about the selection of methods and sources, and be aware of the nature and scope of data to be collected. Like the nature and quantity of data, methods and sources are very important in the process of collection of data. Therefore, planning data collection and executing the plan are very important.

The researcher or investigator is required to consider the following preliminaries while planning data collection:

- Objective, nature and scope of data
- Source of data
- Choice of methods of data collection
- Area to be covered, i.e. sample, sample unit and sample frame
- Resources available—finance and human

## NOTES

**NOTES**

- Time factor
- Desirable degree of accuracy—extensive or intensive enquiry

After planning data collection, the investigator must think of how to put the plan into action, i.e. how to execute the plan. This is also a stage before the real collection work begins. The stage comprises the following steps:

- Organization of human resources in carrying out collection, editing, coding, presentation, analysis and interpretation of data
- Allotment of supervisory duty to ensure fairness in work
- Training of members of research staff including enumerators
- Preparation of questionnaires and schedules including pilot survey
- Sending the enumerators to field
- Engagement in editing, coding, analysis and interpretation of data

The planning and execution of investigation is outlined through team research. However, an individual scholar has also to plan his data collection keeping the preliminaries outlined in view. The scholar may execute the collection by himself or hire some human resource.

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## 5.3 SOME CONCEPTS USED IN RESEARCH

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On seeing a piece of writing one can know if it is a journalistic writing or research writing. Through presentation one can distinguish between various writings. This is because each type of writing has its own way of presentation. The way of presentation differs, to a great extent, because of the differences in the concepts, vocabulary, etc. used. In research tradition too there are some concepts. Use of these concepts distinguishes research writings from other types of writing. The concepts are used as a frame or tool of analysis and explanation. They sometimes provide theoretical perspectives, a philosophical approach to research. Here, we shall discuss some general concepts used in research.

### 5.3.1 Methods and Methodology

Method and methodology are sometimes used as synonyms, when they are actually not. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions. However, the word 'method' is used liberally to denote a number of things which we shall discuss in the following paragraphs.

**Methodology = Method + Rationale that support the method's validity**

Methodology refers to more than a simple set of methods; rather it refers to the rationale and the philosophical assumptions that underlie a particular study. Methodology is defined as 'the analysis of the principles of methods, rules, and postulates employed by a discipline' or 'the development of methods, to be applied within a discipline' or 'a particular procedure or set of procedures'. Precisely, methodology is a body of practices, procedures and rules used in research investigation.

**Check Your Progress**

1. Define research.
  2. How can data be classified?

Methodology includes the following concepts as they relate to a particular discipline or field of inquiry:

- Collection of theories, concepts or ideas
- Comparative study of different approaches
- Critique of the individual methods

The term ‘method’ has a wide range of use. It is used to distinguish between the nature of research such as quantitative and qualitative research. Often, it refers to a broader approach of data collection. In this sense, we use the field study method and case study method. The field study method refers to an approach to collect data from primary sources and includes various methods like case study method, interview method, observation method and so on. Within the field study method, case study is also a method which refers to a technique of data collection. But the case study as a method includes interview, observation and so on. These are techniques of case study method. Separately, each technique is called a method, such as the interview method or the observation method. In the interview method, the way one collects data, say face-to-discussion, is known as technique. No doubt, the term ‘method’ has a wide range of use. We also use the term statistical methods or methods of analysis. Therein, we refer to statistical tools of data analysis.

Therefore, a method is the combination of several techniques plus something more i.e. it refers to the entire set of rules and procedures for collection and analysis of data. For example: qualitative method, historical method and comparative method are methods. Precisely, methods are the way one applies to the theoretical perspective(s) to explain the facts or the data collected. On the other hand, methodology is a broad philosophical framework or theoretical perspective which guides the research using the methods.

Most sciences have their own specific methods, which are supported by methodologies (i.e., rationale that support the method’s validity). The social sciences are methodologically diverse, using both qualitative methods and quantitative methods, including case studies, survey research, statistical analysis, and model building among others. Interview is a method, face-to-face interaction or telephonic interaction is the technique. But in case of observation, it is the method and the technique at the same time.

When we speak of methodology, it generally denotes a combination of: (i) ‘technology’ of data collection, namely *tools* and *methods* of research such as the questionnaire, schedule, interview guide, case study, life history, survey and participant observation methods and content analysis; (ii) analytical tools such as statistical tests and methods; and (iii) philosophy, theory and epistemology of social science guiding the conduct of research in the definition and understanding of the problem and logic of inquiry. —

Partha Nath Mukherji, *Methodology in Social Research*

### 5.3.2 Tools and Techniques

**Technique** is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data. **Tool** is the simplest element, an instrument, in research. Examples include questionnaire and interview schedules, tape recorder, field notes, etc. Combination of several tools leads to the construction of a technique, like an interview.

## NOTES

## NOTES

Technique is a way through which one collects data, for example, interview and observation. Tools are the instruments with which data are recorded. Telephonic interview is a technique, but here telephone is the tool that facilitated the talk and hence the telephone is a tool. The instrument used to record the talk is also a tool.

The terms methodology, method, technique and tools are relative. In one situation, interview is a method and in another, it is a technique. Further, these four terms are also inter-dependent. Any one of the four terms has no meaning without the other three. For example, the use of tools for collection of data requires an adequate knowledge of the techniques of data collection. Without knowing the methods, the techniques cannot be properly applied to collect data. Similarly, one cannot select the methods without knowing the philosophy behind it. Conversely, the philosophical basis has emerged on the basis of the data generated and explained. Therefore, all these four terms are very much interdependent in the field of research.

### 5.3.3 Objectivity in Research

Objectivity in research ordinarily means *value-neutrality*. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what *should/ought to be*; rather it shall focus on *what is*. Further, it shall be verifiable, predictable and applicable to similar situations. We can apply the research findings for generalizations.

Objectivity is contrasted with subjectivity in research. Subjectivity is value loaded and normative in nature. A simple distinction between the two is as follows:

#### Distinction between objective and subjective researches

Objective and subjective researches are two ways of finding truth. A simple distinction between the two is as follows:

- In objective research we focus on what the phenomenon is. For example, we may say, on the basis of research findings, that the literacy percentage among the tribes in a state is less than 50 per cent. But in subjective research, we focus on what the phenomenon should be. For example, we may say that the literacy percentage of the tribes in India should increase. The first one is a *statement of fact* while the second one is a *value-loaded statement*. In the second, we do not know what the phenomenon (literacy) exactly is, but approximate what it should be and not its magnitude.
- Objective research is usually a quantitative research, but the subjective research is qualitative in nature. Quantitative researches have numerical expressions while qualitative ones include words, pictures and visual materials, audio materials and so on.
- Usually researches in social sciences, especially in tribal studies, are qualitative researches. This does not mean that quantitative researches do not fit into social science researches. Data on tribal demography or consumption pattern of a section of people can be quantitatively represented.

#### Is qualitative research scientific?

It is a common belief that qualitative researches lack objectivity as they cannot be quantified and hence cannot be scientific studies.

Let us discuss the essence of science as a method. Keith F. Punch (1998) writes that science as a method has two parts. The first part concerns the vital role of *real-*

*world data*. In other words, science accepts the authority of empirical data and its ideas have to be tested against data. The second part is the role of *theory*, particularly theory which explains. The aim, therefore, is to explain the data, not just to collect the data and not just to use the data to describe things.

A good way to understand what theory is about is to pick something that begs to be explained and look at competing explanations for it.

Bernard, H. R. (2002), p.77

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Science as a method gives us an idea that it is scientific to collect data about the world, to build theories, to explain the data, and to test those theories against further data. When we understand science as a method in the above sense, it is not necessary that science involves numerical data only. It puts emphasis on data which help in theory building and theory testing with further data. Both *qualitative* and *quantitative* data may also do so. In other words, qualitative researches can use the essence of science as a method and can have *objectivity* in presentation, analysis and interpretation.

The topics of objectivity in research in social sciences, choice between quantitative and qualitative methods are very complex and debatable issues. For a beginner's understanding, we can say that both qualitative and quantitative researches have differences and similarities. The similarities are the general logic of enquiry, the basics of designs and the empirical procedures which make the researches objective and produces valid knowledge.

Hence, we can say that qualitative researches (researches using qualitative methods) can also be scientific researches and thus objective researches. Science in terms of producing valid knowledge refers to a set of principles or a methodology that informs us how to produce valid knowledge.

### Characteristics of scientific research

You know that the qualitative research is scientific because it follows scientific procedures. What are scientific procedures? Here we have listed certain postulates/characteristics which the scientific research follows:

- Relies on empirical evidence
- Utilizes relevant concepts
- Is committed to only objective considerations
- Presupposes *ethical* neutrality, i.e., they aim at nothing but making only adequate and correct statements about population objects
- Result into probabilistic predictions
- Aims at formulating most general *axioms* or what can be termed as scientific theories

Thus, 'the scientific method encourages a rigorous, impersonal mode of procedure dictated by the demands of logic and objective procedure'. Accordingly, scientific method implies an objective, logical and systematic method. In other words, scientific method is a method free from personal bias or prejudice, to ascertain demonstrable qualities of a phenomenon capable of being verified, wherein the researcher is guided by the rules of logical reasoning, and the investigation proceeds in an orderly manner, and that implies internal consistency.

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**Is tribal study research scientific?**

Researches on tribes are usually qualitative studies. But the logic of enquiry, selection of a methodology, use of empirical procedures and sometimes building of theory are core to such studies. The researcher designs the research work with four main ideas: the strategy; the conceptual framework; the question of why, who and what will be studied; and the tools to be used for collecting and analysing empirical materials. The research recognizes an objective reality in the tribal way of life and in their belief system.

In other words, researches on tribes try to produce a valid knowledge of tribal culture. But such an exercise is possible only through the scientific approach to research.

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## 5.4 METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF COLLECTION OF DATA: SURVEY AND SAMPLING

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Collection of data is not a haphazard process. It is systematic and hence emphasizes on the rules and procedures. These are known as the techniques of data collection. Here, we shall introduce some important but common techniques applied for the collection of data.

### 5.4.1 Census and Sampling Methods

Research requires information i.e. data. We find that there are two main sources of data—primary and secondary sources. Primary data is collected from the field. For the purpose of collecting primary data, surveys are conducted. While conducting a survey, there are two important considerations. The first one relates to the selection of items from which data is to be collected. The second one relates to the methods applied in collecting data from selected items. The issue of selecting items from which data is to be collected is a choice between census and sample survey. In other words, we can use the census or sampling method in selecting items for the purpose of survey. The second one relates to the use of methods or method for collecting data from the selected items.

#### Census and Sample Survey

Suppose a researcher selects a research problem related to female literacy in a tribal community for study. In order to collect information, the researcher has to interview all the female population of the community or a few of them depending on his research objectives, time factor and financial implications. Conducting an interview of all the female members is known as census survey while a few of them is known as sample survey.

Let us discuss what a census is and what a sample is. In order to understand the concept of census you should be aware of the meaning of *universe* or *population*. The universe is the totality of observation or items which are of interest to the researcher. The observation or items may be persons, households, firms, shops, farms and so on under study. When a researcher studies a students' achievement in tribal areas, his observation is the students in the community. If his interest is on the study of female workers in the tea industry of Assam, then the observation or item of study shall be the female working population in all the tea estates of Assam.

#### Check Your Progress

3. What is methodology?
4. What does objectivity in research mean?
5. What are the four main ideas with which a researcher designs the research work?

In the first example, all the students of tribal areas constitute the universe of the study. The universe is also referred to as **population** which constitutes all observations considered under study. Hence, population has a meaning different from the one we use in general sense. In the second example, all the female workers in the tea industry of Assam constitute the population or universe under study.

**The universe is relative:** This means that the universe or population under study varies from study to study. When the researcher studies the students' achievement of tribal areas, only the students of tribal areas of the country constitute the population. If the researcher studies the tribal students' achievement in tribal studies, then all the students studying tribal studies constitute the population. It is clear that in the second case the population i.e. only the tribal students studying tribal studies as a subject is a part of the total tribal students of first research problem under study. What may constitute a population in one study may be a part or sub-set of another study. Hence, the population varies from study to study and so is the relative concept.

**The universe may be either finite or infinite:** In a finite universe the number of items is determinable. For example, the number of students in Rajiv Gandhi University or in India gives the idea of finite universe. In infinite universe, for example, stars in the sky, the number of items is not determinable.

The information collected about each item of the universe is called a **census survey**. It is a complete enumeration method. A **census**, therefore, is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population. In case of a census, each and every individual of the population is significant and counted. The term is mostly used in connection with national 'population and housing censuses'. In India census is undertaken in every 10 years to study the demography and other aspects of the country. Last census was undertaken in 2011. Census data are also commonly used for research and planning purposes. You will find that the Department of Agriculture also conducts Agricultural Census.

## 5.4.2 Sample and Sampling Methods

A sample is a part or subset of the universe selected for the purpose of collecting information. In some surveys it may not be required to investigate each and every unit/item of the population. For example, one does not taste each grain of rice in the cooking pot to ascertain if the rice is cooked. One does not taste each drop of sea water to know its characteristic. One drop is representative enough as evidence for the salinity of sea water.

Census surveys are costly and time consuming. As has been said, census surveys may not be necessary to reach valid conclusions. Instead, we study a sample, which is a part of the population, to draw conclusions about the entire population. Of course, the sample should be representative of the characteristics sought to be investigated in the population. A **sample** is, thus, a portion of people drawn from a larger population. A sample should be representative of the population. Thus, a sample is a part of the population which is studied in order to make inferences about the whole population.

Most of the surveys, however, are sample surveys. In tribal studies, it is not necessary to draw information from each and every individual of the society to investigate the cultural life of a tribe. Folk tales, legends and myths need not be collected from each and every individual of the tribe to understand the tribal way of life. In the changing situation when tribes have been exposed to development processes, sample surveys

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provide the insight that census survey could provide. Therefore, sample surveys are preferred because of a number of reasons. These are as follows:

- Ordinarily, a sample can provide reliable and useful information at a lower cost.
- We obtain information in a short span of time that can serve the purpose of data collection.
- In sample surveys, non-sampling errors can be controlled in a better way than in census surveys. This is because careful training and supervision form a part of the sampling method of data collection. While in a census survey, training and supervision exist more as routine work, because of the volume of work it involves. Hence, a sample often provides more accurate information. Moreover, the investigator gets an opportunity to conduct intensive enquiries on fewer items than on larger items usually carried out in a census survey. It is easy to manage fewer items efficiently than bulk items of a population.
- In some cases sample survey is the only method of conducting a study. To test the quality of gold in a necklace, the goldsmith conducts only a sample test.
- Though sample method of data collection is more popular, one must be cautious in selecting the sample. Unless the sample is representative of the population, the inference to be drawn from the sample about the entire population will be misleading.

### Sampling

There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample. Here, sampling is considered as a method of knowing the characteristics of the universe by examining a small part of it. Sampling involves three elements:

- (i) Selection of the sample
- (ii) Collection of information
- (iii) Interpreting the population

However, these three elements interdependently or together form the idea about sampling.

### Sampling Unit and Sampling Frame

Sampling unit refers to individual items to be studied within the sampling frame. Sampling frame is the list of sampling units of the population from which random sampling is to be drawn. For example, while studying tribal female literacy in Arunachal Pradesh, the female population to be studied need to be clearly defined. It is because even a girl child aged one year comes under the female category, but she is not eligible for the study of female literacy. All the female population to be studied for the purpose constitute the population. Each of its constituent, that is the individual female member within the population, is known as the sampling unit. Then a list of the female population is prepared from which sampling can be drawn. This list is known as the sampling frame.

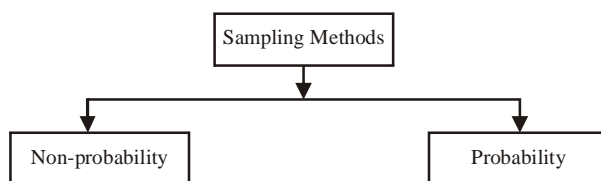
The frame may not necessarily be a list. It may also be maps showing the boundaries of area units. Thus, a frame may be broadly classified into two types: the first one is **list frame** consisting of sampling units and the second one is **area frame** or **map frame** consisting of geographical areas.



### 5.4.3 Types of Sampling and Sampling Errors

There are two important methods of sampling, they are:

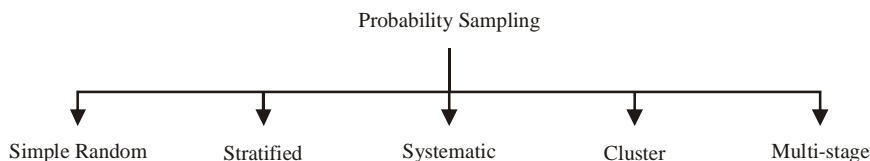
- Non-probability
- Probability



#### 1. Probability Sampling

Probability sampling is one in which every unit of the population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample. In other words, every item in the population has a known chance of being included in the sample. It offers a high degree of representativeness. However, this method is expensive, time consuming and relatively complicated. Non-probability sampling makes no claim for representativeness, as every unit does not get the chance of being selected. It is the researcher who decides which sample units should be chosen.

Probability sampling can be mainly simple random, stratified, systematic, cluster or multi-stage sampling. Sometimes a distinction is made between cluster and multi-stage sampling also.



(i) **Simple Random Sampling:** This refers to the sampling procedure in which each and every item of the population has an equal chance of being selected in the sample. The researcher cannot influence the selection of a particular item. It purely depends on the chance factor.

In simple random sampling, the sample units are selected by means of a number of methods, like lottery method or table or random number method. To understand the food habits of people in a tribal village, it may not be necessary to study all the households. Out of, say 50 households in the village only 10 can be studied. First, the households will be numbered from 1 to 50. Then chits for each number will be prepared and kept in a container. After reshuffling the chits, 10 chits can be drawn. The households against these 10 different numbers drawn will be the sample households for investigation.

There is no personal bias of the researcher in the simple random sampling procedure. If the size of sample increases, it becomes increasingly representative of the population.

However, it has also some limitations. It requires complete listing of the items of the population. This often becomes difficult. In case of large area coverage of population, the sample drawn by simple random sampling procedure is likely to be widely dispersed. Small size samples may not be

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representative. For example, out of two male and two female members, it may so happen that two male members can be drawn by lottery method. Thus, simple random sampling may be technically unbiased, its representativeness is not always guaranteed. Nevertheless this method is widely used for scientific investigation.

- (ii) **Stratified Random Sampling:** Stratified random sampling is also simply called stratified sampling. It is a probability sampling procedure wherein the entire population is divided into different sub-groups or strata on the basis of some non-overlapping attributes and from each stratum items are selected randomly. The division of the population into a homogenous strata is based on one or more criteria, for example, sex, age, educational level and so on. For example, Arunachal Pradesh can be geographically stratified on the basis of heights/elevation into high altitude regions, middle altitude regions and low altitude and plains regions. Tribal villages from each stratum can be selected for study. The Khampti (a tribe in Arunachal Pradesh) society can be stratified into royal families (*Phanchau*), commoners' families (*Paklung*), and families who do not belong to these two groups (*Phan-e-on*). It should be noted that sub-groups or strata must be non-overlapping. This procedure is used when the researcher wants to highlight a specific stratum or compare some characteristics among the strata.

Stratified sampling may be proportionate or disproportionate. In case of former, the sample in each stratum should be proportionate to the population size. For example, there are 100 families of *Phanchau* group, 1500 families in *Paklung* group and 1200 families in *Phan-e-on* group. The researcher wants to investigate 10 per cent of the families. Hence, the researcher can select 10 families from *Phanchau* group, 150 from *Paklung* group and 120 from *Phan-e-on* group. In case of disproportionate stratified sampling the researcher may select 50 families from each group.

**Advantages:** Stratified sampling has some advantages. They are:

- It is more representative than a simple random sampling.
- It is simple and convenient to apply.
- The variability within the subgroups is compared.

**Disadvantages:** There are limitations also in this method of sample selection, they are:

- It may require more administrative planning than a simple random sampling method.
- It is difficult to ensure homogenous items in each stratum.

- (iii) **Systematic Random Sampling:** Systematic random sampling is a probability sampling procedure wherein the random sampling method is applied to a systematic process of data collection. The systematic process provides an interval and units are collected after the given interval. The first unit is selected at random and other units at the given interval. Usually, this method is applied when the population is homogeneous. There are six steps in this procedure. These are: (a) defining the population, (b) determining the sample size, (c) listing the population assigning numbers to each unit/case, (d) calculating the interval, (e) selecting the first unit, and (f) selecting the sample.

Let the population consist of 20 tribal households in a tribal village. Let the sample size be five. The next step is to list the households assigning serial numbers from 1 to 20 like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20. Since the number of units in the population is 20 and sample size is five, the interval shall be calculated as  $20 \div 5 = 4$ . Let the first unit selected from the list of 1 to 20 be the household numbered 3. Then every fourth unit beginning from unit 3 will be selected units in the sample. Therefore, other units will be the households against serial numbers 7, 11, 15, 19.

**Advantages:** The sample is representative of the population as the researcher's personal bias is not present in the process of selection. The sample units are evenly distributed as compared to simple random sampling.

**Disadvantages:** The systematic sampling also requires a complete list of the units in the populations. It is difficult to always obtain a complete list of the population when the size is large. This method does not allow capturing cultural traits.

- (iv) **Cluster Sampling:** Cluster sampling implies dividing the population into clusters and drawing random samples either from all clusters or selected clusters. Initial clusters are called primary sampling units; clusters within the primary clusters are called secondary sampling units, and clusters within the secondary clusters are called multi-stage clusters. Suppose you have a population that is dispersed across a wide geographic region like the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh. This method allows you to divide this population into clusters (usually districts, circles, agro-climatic zones, or other boundaries) and then randomly sample everyone in those clusters. For example, you could randomly select five of Arunachal Pradesh's 16 districts, but you would have to make sure that almost every person in those five districts participated in your study.

Cluster sample and stratified sample apparently seem to be same. But they are different. According to stratified sampling principle, the population is divided into strata on the basis of some meaningful attribute. For example, the population can be divided on the basis of social hierarchy as is the example of the Khampti tribe. Each stratum is different from the other so that the member of one stratum cannot be a member of the other stratum. But individual members of the stratum are the same, each one belongs to the same social group. In *Phanchau* stratum, there will be only *Phanchau* members. In case of cluster sampling, the population is divided into clusters. Suppose the Khampti population is divided on the basis of circles. One circle (cluster) is same as the other, for each one is a circle. But the members of the sample are same as the members in the population and thus diverse. This means in every cluster there may be members of three social groups namely, *Phanchau*, *Paklung* and *Phan-e-on*. Thus, strata look different from each other, but their individual members are all the same in the sense of the group attribute. Clusters, on the other hand, belong to the same group, say district, or circle, etc. and look the same. But their members are diverse as the population, as a whole.

- (v) **Multistage Sampling:** Multistage sampling is a complex form of cluster sampling. Constructing the clusters is the first stage. Deciding what elements within the cluster to use, is the second stage. The technique is used frequently when a complete list of all members of the population does not exist. For

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example, after selecting five districts you could systematically sample within your clusters (the districts), and this is called multi-stage sampling. This method generally refers to any mixing of sampling methods. Finally, multi-phase sampling is defined as a type of sampling similar to multi-stage sampling i.e., primary selection, secondary selection, and so on. However, in a multi-phase sampling procedure, each sample is adequately studied before another sample is drawn from it. Consequently, while in multi-stage sampling only the final sample is studied, in multi-phase sampling, all samples are researched. Let us take an example. To study the income of Arunachal people, we divide the state into five clusters, say five districts. From these five districts, by applying either simple random sampling or systematic sampling, we draw samples from our study. We can also take blocks of the state as clusters in place of districts. From the total blocks ten blocks could be the clusters from where we can draw samples.

But in multi-stage sampling, clusters are further divided and sub-divided at different stages. For example, we can randomly select five districts, from each district we can select two blocks, from each block we can select three circles and from each circle we can select ten villages. From each village we can also select households. This type of division of the population at different levels—district to blocks to circles to villages to households—is called multi-stage sampling. But in cluster sampling the population is directly divided into clusters like districts or blocks.

### Sampling Error

When undertaking any sample survey, one may experience what is known as sampling error in statistics. Sampling errors arise because we do not estimate all items of the population. We only estimate a part of it, i.e. of the sample. Moreover, the sample may be the true representative of the population along a characteristic. Sample error is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the ‘true’ value of its population. There are no sampling errors in a census survey because the calculations are based on the entire population. The sampling error:

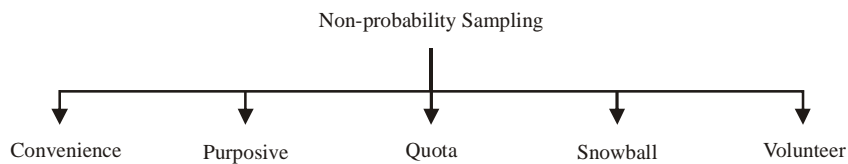
- Generally decreases as the sample size increases (but not proportionally)
- Depends on the size of the population under study
- Depends on the variability of the characteristic of interest in the population
- Can be accounted for and reduced by an appropriate sample plan
- Can be measured and controlled in probability sample surveys

Sampling errors may be of two types: **biased errors** and **unbiased errors**. Biased error arises from the faulty process of selection of samples, faulty methods of collection and faulty methods of analysis of data. When a respondent is absent, the researcher is tempted to interview any one available. This is likely to make the sample unrepresentative. As a result errors occur. Unbiased errors occur when the sample does not truly represent the population.

### 2. Non-probability Sampling

As the name suggests, there is absence of the probability factor in non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling methods are procedures in which the rules of probability theory are not applied in the selection of a sample. In other words, every item

in the universe does not have the chance of being included in the sample. Hence, non-probability sampling procedures do not claim representativeness, and are usually used for qualitative exploratory analysis. Non-probability sampling can be convenient, purposive, quota, snow ball and volunteer samplings.



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- (i) **Convenience Sampling:** A convenience sampling is also known as ‘accidental’ or ‘haphazard’ sampling. It is a type of non-probability sampling procedure. In this sampling, the researcher studies all those persons who are most conveniently available or who accidentally come in his contact during a certain period of time in the research. In other words, the sample is selected because of the convenience of its accessibility and proximity to the researcher.

For example, if a researcher wants to study the tribal village life, the researcher will select the one which he knows or which will be easy to access or which is located nearby. The researcher considers one or more of the above factors in selecting the village as his sample of study. The researcher does not apply any random sampling method. It is the convenience factor that determines his choice.

The convenience sampling procedure is useful in pilot survey. It is easy, time saving and less expensive. When the researcher wants to have the basic knowledge to plan further investigation this method is employed. However, it is criticized because it suffers from biases. Moreover, the sample is not a representative one.

- (ii) **Purposive Sampling:** Purposive sampling, also known as judgemental, selective or subjective sampling is a non-probability sampling technique. The researcher purposely chooses people who are thought to be most relevant to the research topic and are easily available to him. Purposive sampling is significantly useful in tribal studies. The probability sampling methods may not be effectively followed in the exploratory qualitative study of tribal cultures. Students of tribal studies widely use purposive sampling method as it provides a wide range of choices. Hence, we shall discuss the different types of purposive sampling for the benefit of students of tribal studies.

Purposive sampling can be **maximum variation sampling**, also known as heterogeneous sampling. The researcher seeks maximum variation among the items in the sample. When a researcher wants to know the food habits of the tribal population in a village he would interview such diverse persons as men, women, rich, poor, children and old persons. He may also include persons from different occupations. Maximum variation among the items according to different traits, behaviour pattern, categories and experiences provides greater insight into the topic of research.

Purposive sampling can be **homogeneous sampling**. It is just opposite to maximum variation sampling. The researcher selects a homogenous group who share common characteristics. For example, to study the food habit of traditionally rich tribal persons in the village he will study only the rich people of that category.

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The researcher selects such a sampling to address a research question pertaining to specific issues present in a particular group.

The purposive sampling can also be **typical case sampling**. The researcher selects such a sample of items/members whom he considers are typical/normal for the purpose of study. To study, for example, the normal food habits of tribal people he will select an average tribal traditional family, not the rich or educated or traditional elite family of the village.

There may be *extreme or deviant cases* of food habits in a tribal village. The habit may not be a normal food habit in tribal villages. For example, the food habit of a priest during some rituals may not be a normal food habit of the tribe. A pregnant lady may follow some food taboos. A tribe person of some tribes who kills a tiger observes food taboos for a certain period of time. Such examples are extreme or deviant cases of food habits. The researcher selects such a sample purposely to focus on individual behaviour, attitude or experience which is not normal. Such information provides significant insight into individual cases within a group.

The purposive sampling may also be **critical case sampling**. This procedure of sampling is useful in exploratory qualitative studies, where resources are limited and where a single case can be decisive and be used for a logical generalization. It is this decisive aspect of the sample that is important. In order to know whether the sample is decisive or not, the following statements will be useful: if it happens to a group, it may also happen to other similar groups; if it does not happen to a group, it may not happen to other similar groups. In our example of food habits, if a priest of a particular tribe has a different food habit at the time of performing rituals, priests in other tribes will have a different food habit too. The study of the case of the priest with a different food habit during a ritual is a critical case sampling as it can be logically generalized to other such cases. This differs from extreme case sampling in that in the former the study is tribe/group specific. But in the latter, the purpose is to make logical generalizations under similar cases.

Purposive sampling may also be **total population sampling**. Here, the researcher studies each member of the universe/population. This is possible when the population is very small. For example, to study the food habits of a traditional tribal elite family, the researcher shall study each and every member of the family that constitutes his population. For example, in a tribal village there are three families that suits to the purpose of his study. Hence, he will study each and every member in these three families of the village. This will give a significant insight into the issues studied.

The purposive sampling may be **expert sampling** also. In this situation, the expert in the field constitutes the item of sample. To study the work of a traditional tribal mid-wife at the time of child delivery, the researcher will select the women who are in this profession. This type of sampling is selected during an exploratory qualitative study where the researcher is interested to highlight new areas or opens up to include a new group of participants with a new area of knowledge.

**Advantages:** Purposive sampling has a wide range of techniques. This gives an opportunity to collect a huge amount of cross-section of information. The qualitative research becomes progressive in the field of gathering information by using various techniques. A researcher may start with critical case sampling to judge whether

the research is worth investigating or not. If he is affirmative then he may proceed to use expert sampling.

**Disadvantages:** The use of different techniques by the researcher implies that he wants to prove a specific point. In every sampling technique his judgement is used to select respondents. The procedure has high probability of the researcher's bias. Representativeness of the sample is often questioned because of the obvious research bias. Nevertheless, purposive sampling with its wide range of techniques is a significant sampling procedure in non-probability sampling. It is widely used in tribal researches.

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**(iii) Quota Sampling:** This is a version of stratified sampling of the probability type. But it has a difference. Instead of dividing the population into strata and randomly choosing the respondents, it works on 'quotas' fixed by the researcher. Quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method. The sample of any sub-group shall have the same proportion of individuals as the entire universe selected for the study.

Suppose a researcher wants to study the opinion on career options of tribal students studying in a University. The researcher finds from the University records that 500 tribal students are on the roll. Hence, the researcher may decide to study 10 per cent of students. In other words he will study 50 tribal students in total. He cannot take any 50 students as respondents. There may be boys and girls, there may be students from urban setting and from rural setting. If the researcher considers rural-urban and male-female criteria he will have four groups—rural male, rural female, urban male and urban female. He will select respondents from each group in such a way that from each group 10 per cent of respondents are selected and in total they make up 50. Suppose there are 50 urban boys and 30 urban girls and 300 rural boys and 120 rural girls. Ten per cent of each group will come to 5, 3, 30 and 12 respectively; and the total comes to 50. However, within a sub-group the selection of sample items depends on personal judgment of the researcher.

Normally, there are three steps to be considered during quota sampling. These are:

- Choosing the relevant stratification of the population on the basis of some criteria (in our example we used rural-urban divide and male-female divide criteria, and divided/stratified the population into four groups)
- Fixing the quota (10 per cent in our example)
- Selection of respondents on the basis of quota fixed and considering representativeness

**Advantages:** Normally, this method is useful in the preliminary stages of research and when detailed accuracy is not required. Following are the advantages of quota sampling:

- It is easily and quickly administered, as it does not require a strict use of random sampling technique.
- It allows the researcher to compare the groups easily.
- It is relatively inexpensive.

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- It is useful when it is not easy to get a probability sample and the intention of the researcher is to create a sample that is as representative of the selected population as possible. In this sense a quota sample is non-probability based equivalent of the stratified random sample.

**Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of quota sampling are:

- It is often difficult to find exact proportion of respondents. The 15 per cent of a sub-group of 23 persons will come about 3.45.
- It is difficult to select appropriate control categories.
- The sample, on the basis of quota of respondents from each sub-group may not be representative. Consider our example. In the urban tribal boys sub-group there may be students from higher income group and students from very low income group. Their career options may be different. Hence, the respondents in the sub-group may not be representative. Precisely, selected traits of population are considered, hence the quota method may not provide representativeness of the respondents.

(iv) **Snowball Sampling:** Snowball sampling is a type of non-probability sampling procedure. It is also known as chain referral, or referral or chain sampling. This method is employed when the target population is unknown or when it is difficult to approach the respondents in any other way. Moreover, such a technique is applied where other non-probability procedures are not useful much. It is more direct and purposeful. Convenience sampling, for example focuses on members of the sample which are easily accessible. But snowball sampling focuses on members who are difficult to identify and locate.

In **snowball** sampling, the researcher begins with the research with a few respondents who are known and available to him. Subsequently, these respondents give other names who meet the criteria of research, who in turn give few more new names. This process is continued until 'adequate' number of persons is interviewed or until no more respondents are discovered.

Snowball sampling uses the social network that exists between the members of the same group. In recent years, you will find a new social category as sex workers. But it is difficult to find sex workers as subjects for interview. Even most of the people in the community might not have known them except the user group. It is also difficult to identify the people who take the service of these sex workers. Under such a situation, the researcher aims at identifying one sex worker. As there exists a network between them, the researcher comes to know of the other sex workers from the first one.

Creation of sample using the snowball procedure has two steps: (i) identification of at least one respondent from the population in the beginning, and (ii) use of the first respondent to find other respondents and through every other respondent to find the required number of respondents.

Snowball sampling is named after snowball because once the snowball starts rolling it picks up more snow along the way and grows larger and larger. Similarly, the researcher starts with one respondent and gradually comes to know many other categories by asking more from every respondent he interviews.

**Advantages:** The advantages of this method are:

- Snowball sampling procedure is cheap, simple and cost effective.



- It needs less planning and human resource as compared to other sampling procedures.
- Snowball sampling is a type of chain referral process of identifying respondents. Hence, respondents who are normally not reached are accessible. It makes a study possible.
- The hidden/unreached respondents have a social network. This helps in reaching the other respondents through the first one or subsequent ones. Normally, sex workers, or drug abusers, or AIDS patients have a social stigma of opening up. But this barrier is eased out through snowball sampling, for the reference comes from one among their category.

**Disadvantages:** The disadvantages of snowball sampling are:

- The researcher has little control over the procedure of selecting sample members.
- Representativeness in terms of coverage of different types of respondents cannot be ascertained.
- As selection of respondents depends upon the first and subsequent respondents, it is likely to carry the respondents' bias in selecting members.
- Members of the sample are not selected following the probability sampling procedure. Hence, sampling error cannot be determined.
- The previous respondents will name those people whom they know. There may be many unknown members in the population.
- As a corollary, generalization about the population cannot be made.

Nevertheless, the method is still a useful procedure of sampling when the researcher studies hidden or hard-to reach respondents.

- (v) **Volunteer Sampling:** A volunteer sampling procedure is a non-probability sampling procedure. In this procedure, the respondent himself volunteers to give information he holds. No doubt, people volunteer their services sometimes for payment, or sometimes to gain self-importance, or for both. Sometimes they have a motive behind it, that something about the culture should not be disclosed. In many tribal communities, the elites have started interpreting a phenomenon differently in the light of newly acquired ideology. Some elites do not like to reveal a practice which they now feel wrong.

Therefore, this procedure is a weak procedure of selecting members of a sample. Nevertheless, it is useful when respondents are difficult to find by any other procedure.

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## 5.5 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE METHODS OF RESEARCH

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From the viewpoint of presentation and analysis, research methods may be either quantitative or qualitative. Each method has its own distinguishing features; hence each method has its own tools and techniques. In this section, we shall discuss the above two methods and the tools and techniques associated with them.

**Quantitative methods** are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable. They are, therefore, to be distinguished from qualitative methods.

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#### Check Your Progress

6. Define a census.
7. What do the terms sample and sampling mean?
8. What is systematic random sampling?
9. Why do sampling errors arise?
10. What happens in a volunteer sampling procedure?

Counting and measuring are common forms of quantitative methods. The result of the research is a number, or a series of numbers. These are often presented in tables, graphs or other forms of statistics.

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An intelligent way of differentiating qualitative research from quantitative research is that largely qualitative research is exploratory, while quantitative research is conclusive. Quantitative data is measurable while qualitative data cannot be put into a context that can be graphed or displayed as a mathematical term.

In the social sciences, particularly in sociology, social anthropology, tribal studies and psychology, the use of one or other types of method has become a matter of controversy. On the other hand, advocates of quantitative methods argue that only by using such methods can the social sciences become truly scientific; advocates of qualitative methods argue that quantitative methods tend to obscure the reality of the social phenomena under study. These methods underestimate or neglect the non-measurable factors, which may be the most important.

**Qualitative research** is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative. The methods used in qualitative research provide subjective information. There are different angles to define qualitative research. Historical-comparative researchers would argue that it always involves the historical context, and sometimes a critique of the 'front' to get at the 'deep structure' of social relations. Qualitative research most often is *grounded theory*, built from the ground up.

Qualitative research approaches began to gain recognition in the 1970s. The methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Qualitative research involves an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern human behaviour. It seeks to describe the meanings of the central themes in the life of the respondents. The research depends more on personal interaction than on questionnaires. The investigator gets an opportunity to probe or ask follow-up questions. He gets details on the topic from the respondents.

Qualitative research relies on the reasons behind various aspects of behaviour. Simply put, it investigates the 'why' and 'how' of decision-making, as compared to 'what', 'where', and 'when' of quantitative research. Hence, the need is for smaller but focused samples rather than large random samples. No doubt, these methods are very much significant in tribal studies.

Data is not inherently quantitative, and can be bits and pieces of almost anything. They do not necessarily have to be expressed in numbers. Usage of frequency distributions and probability tables is not necessary. Data can be in the form of words, images, impressions, gestures, or tones which represent real events or reality as it is seen symbolically or sociologically. Qualitative research uses unreconstructed logic to get at what is really real—the quality, meaning, context, or image of reality in what people actually do, not what they say they do (as on questionnaires). Unreconstructed logic means that there are no step-by-step rules, that researchers ought not to use pre-fabricated methods or reconstructed rules, terms, and procedures that try to make their research look clean and neat (as in journal publications).

## Methods of Qualitative Research

The methods of qualitative research are:

1. Participant-observation
2. Ethnography
3. Photography
4. Ethnomethodology
5. Dramaturgical interviewing
6. Sociometry
7. Natural experiment
8. Case study
9. Unobtrusive measures
10. Content analysis
11. Historiography
12. Secondary

### A Comparison

Qualitative research involves analysis of data such as words (e.g., from interviews), pictures (e.g., video), or objects (e.g., an artefact).

Quantitative research involves analysis of numerical data. The following table gives a brief comparison between the two methods:

*Table 5.1 Difference between Qualitative and Quantitative Research*

Quantitative	Qualitative
Objective	Subjective
Deductive	Inductive
Generalizable	Not generalizable
Numbers	Words

We can understand better the difference between quantitative and qualitative aspects of a research asking the following two questions:

1. How many *mithuns (bos frontalis)* did you give to your in-laws as ‘bride price’ when you got married?
2. Why did your men give bride price that too in the form of mithuns to your in-laws at the time of marriage?

The answer to the first question comes in terms of quantitative information. But the answer to the second question comes in terms of descriptive information. The research that uses the first type of data for analysis and interpretation is simply called quantitative research. On the other hand, the qualitative research uses the second type of information for explanation and analysis.

### 5.5.1 Sources of Data

Research in social sciences is a methodical and systematic study of a subject. It is a search, an enquiry with the aim to generate new information, verify the existing knowledge in the subject of research and reach a new understanding.

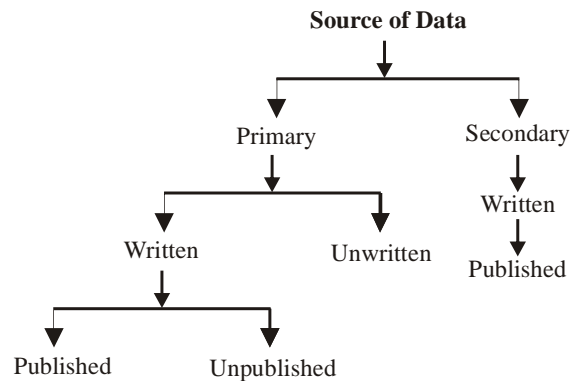
Disciplines in social sciences are generally empirical in nature and therefore information is very important in the research activities. This is because on the basis of information and facts new information is generated or the existing knowledge is verified or the existing knowledge is understood in a new way.

Facts or data are very important to research, so also are their methods of collection. We know that research becomes meaningful with correct information. That is why the method of collecting information is very important. We use different methods to collect

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data from different sources. On the basis of sources, data can be internal or external, primary or secondary, written or unwritten. In this section, we will discuss primary and secondary sources of data and written and unwritten sources of data.

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### 1. Primary and Secondary Sources of Data

Data for research are collected from various sources. But mainly there are two sources widely used by the researchers namely, primary sources and secondary sources. Data collected from primary sources are called primary data. Similarly, data collected from secondary sources are called secondary data. Primary sources may consist of published or unpublished materials or written or unwritten sources.

Field study is an important primary source of collecting data by the researchers. Internal records of the government department also constitutes the primary sources. These are also called internal data.

#### Primary Sources of Data

A researcher on social sciences in general and tribal studies in particular collects the **primary data** to have a better understanding on the community. The researcher collects the information about the people on his own. He visits the people and stays with them in their natural habitat over a long period of time. He observes them closely and sometimes even participates in their activities. If the scope of enquiry is such that observation is not possible then the researcher tries to obtain information through interviews. By doing so he collects data from primary sources.

**Primary sources** are the ‘materials on a topic upon which subsequent interpretations or studies are based, anything from first-hand documents such as poems, diaries, court records, and interviews to research results generated by experiments, surveys, ethnographies, and so on.’ Primary sources are records of events as they are first described, without any interpretation or commentary. There are also sets of data, such as census statistics, which have been tabulated, but not interpreted. Primary sources provide original materials. Some important primary sources are:

- Diaries
- Interviews (legal proceedings, personal, telephone, e-mail)
- Observation
- Case studies
- Letters
- Original documents (i.e. birth certificate or a trial transcript)
- Patents, treaties

- Photographs
- Proceedings of meetings, conferences and symposia
- Survey research (such as market surveys and public opinion polls)
- Works of Literature

Thus, primary sources are those sources from which original data are collected for the first time for a specific use. These may be from field studies whether on a sample or census basis, or from observation, or case studies. These may be from written and unwritten sources or from published and unpublished sources also.

Before deciding upon the use of primary sources, one should acquaint oneself with the work already done on the research topic. It is necessary because you can identify the data gap. In other words, by consulting the work already done by the researcher the researcher knows the problems studied, and the possible areas of investigation which he can objectively take up. This saves the researcher from repetition and thus saves time and money. Moreover, the researcher develops a perspective that helps him to focus on relevant data which he will collect. Needless to say, the researcher has to survey the available secondary sources before determining to go for primary source of data.

The nature of a primary source depends on the historical problem being studied. In political history, the most important primary sources are likely to be documents such as official reports, speeches, pamphlets, posters, or letters by participants, official election returns, and eyewitness accounts (as by a journalist who was there). In the history of ideas or intellectual history, the dominant primary sources are books, essays and letters written by intellectuals. A study of cultural history could include fictional sources, such as novels or plays. In a broader sense, primary sources also include physical objects like photographs, newsreels, coins, paintings or buildings created at the time. Historians may also take archaeological artefacts and oral reports and interviews into consideration. Written sources may be divided into three main types. As has been said written sources are also included in primary sources:

- Ñ **Literary sources** tell a story or message. They are not limited to fictional sources (which can be sources of information for contemporary attitudes), but include diaries, films, biographies, scientific works, and so on.
- Ñ **Diplomatic sources** include charters and other legal documents which usually follow a set format.
- Ñ **Social documents** are records created by organizations, such as registers of births, tax records, and so on.

In the study of historiography, when the study of history is itself subject to historical scrutiny, a secondary source becomes a primary source. For a biography of a historian, that historian's publications would act as primary sources. Documentary films can be considered a secondary source or primary source, depending on how much the filmmaker modifies the original sources.

### **Advantages of Primary Sources of Data**

Being a source itself, the primary source is significant primarily in field research. The following are some of its advantages:

- Primary source provides data which is original and relevant.
- This source generates data which may not exist or may not be available for the specific purpose of research.

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- The source, especially field investigation, is not limited by disciplinary boundaries. Hence, the data base is wide and thus widens the scope before the enumerator.
- Data collected is specific, focused and makes the study objective.

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### Disadvantages of Primary Sources of Data

Primary source is not an unmixed bliss. Some of its limitations are as follows:

- Collection of data from primary sources is expensive and time consuming.
- There is always the risk of enumerator's bias which influences the quality of data.
- Respondent's self-eulogizing or irresponsible information is likely to present an erroneous picture of the culture and society. Margaret Mead's findings on adolescent sexuality in Samoa has come under fire because she believed in witticisms of sexual fantasies of her female informants. Derek Freeman in his book entitled *Margaret Mead and Samoa* (1983) presents her belief in witticisms strongly.
- There may be distorted presentation of a fact due to language problems or interpreter's interpretation. The label given to many tribes comes from miscommunication. The people of the Shan race are known as Khamptis in Arunachal Pradesh; the reason is believed to be miscommunication.

Even if the enumerator learns the language, it may not be possible to understand the whole system in two or three years.

A classic example of misinterpretation is Max Muller's translation of *chhatish koti devata* as 'thirty-six crore gods'. He translated *koti* for crore though *koti* also means 'high standard', the top thirty six. Short duration of Sanskrit learning did not help him to understand the symbolic complexity in the language system.

There may also be a gap between what the enumerator means in his communication to the interpreter and what the interpreter understands. The same gap may arise between the interpreter and informant when the interpreter conveys the question of the enumerator to the informant. The reverse, i.e. informant's information, interpreter's understanding and his communication to the enumerator may not be free from communication lapse. The result will be unreliable data.

Despite the drawbacks, primary source has its own merit and necessity in tribal studies and in other disciplines.

### Secondary Sources of Data

A **secondary source** is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources. Secondary sources are those sources which provide data collected through primary sources by another researcher for certain specific uses or for general presentation in summary form.

An example of a secondary source is the biography of a historical figure in which the author constructs a narrative out of a variety of primary source documents, such as letters, diaries, newspaper accounts, photographs, and official records. A scholarly secondary source is familiar with the existing secondary literature and seeks to engage it in terms of arguments and evidence. Most, but not all, secondary sources utilize extensive citation. Scholarly secondary sources are peer-reviewed by scholars before publication in book or article form, and books are reviewed and evaluated in the scholarly journals.

When a historian is writing about the historiography of a particular topic say XYZ, the primary sources used are secondary sources written by scholars about XYZ.

You should be clear that the distinction between primary and secondary sources is not always a matter of kind. In fact in many cases the distinction is a matter of degree. You will find an explanation in the following paragraph as to how Census Reports can be used either as a secondary source or a primary source depending on the nature of use. Here, we give another example. An evaluation report on the impact of tribal sub-plan may be a primary work for the researcher who conducted the study on the basis of field data. But to another researcher it may be a secondary source when he uses the report as a source of data for his study. Data which is primary in the hands of one become secondary in the hands of another.

Secondary sources offer an analysis or a restatement of primary sources. They often attempt to describe or explain primary sources. Examples of secondary sources include: Dictionaries, encyclopaedias, textbooks, biographies, commentaries, dissertations, indices, abstracts, bibliographies (used to locate primary and secondary sources), journal articles, monographs, and books and articles that interpret or review research works. Secondary sources are not evidences, but rather commentary on and discussion of evidence.

Sometimes we talk of **tertiary sources of data**. Tertiary sources consist of information which is a distillation and collection of primary and secondary sources. They can be:

- Almanacs
- Encyclopaedias
- Tribal atlas
- Fact books

However, distinction is not often made between tertiary and secondary sources. The tertiary source data are treated as secondary source data.

*Table 5.2 Examples of Primary and Secondary Sources in Different Disciplines*

Discipline	Primary Source	Secondary Source
Art	Original artwork	Article critiquing the piece of art
History	Slave diary	Book about the underground railroad
Literature	Poem	Treatise on a particular genre of poetry
Political Science	Treaty	Essay on Native American land rights
Theatre	Videotape of a performance	Biography of a playwright

### Advantages of Secondary Sources of Data

The advantages of secondary sources of data are as follows:

- Collection of field based primary data is expensive. The researcher has to spend money on printing data forms and hiring enumerators. He has to incur other field expenses like engaging an interpreter. Such expenses are not incurred while using

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secondary sources. Hence, it is economical to use secondary sources to collect data.

- Collection of data from secondary sources is time saving. It may take months to complete field work for obtaining primary data. Secondary data, if available, can be collected in a few days.
- Sometimes secondary source remains the only alternative from time, money and above all from the practical point of view. For example, a researcher may require data from diverse subjects pertaining to health, education, income, employment and population of tribal people at a macro level—national or international. These data cannot be generated by an individual researcher from field study for his research. Even individual research organizations may not create such a data base for general use. But these data are available in government publications in the form of census data and national income data. Moreover, international organizations like ILO and UNO also conduct field studies on tribes and indigenous people all over the world. Primary sources for these data cannot be the viable alternative.

It should be kept in mind that Census Reports become a primary source if data from these reports are reconstructed and interpreted differently to substantiate to a specific research perspective. If used without any change then Census Reports become secondary sources.

- Secondary source often supplements data from primary sources. Secondary source may provide lots of usable information which can well be utilized by the investigator to develop new insights concerning the problems he is studying. It will save time and money, and also from the unreasonable work of repetition while conducting a survey by the researcher.
- Some of the field data are authenticated with reference to the available secondary information. Information collected from the field may be verified with historical data. Tribal people do not keep record of events. Suppose one informant informs the enumerator that the village was established in the year following the great earthquake. No doubt, the year of the occurrence of the earthquake will be available from secondary sources. This will help determine the year of establishment of the village. Secondary source, if available and cross-checked with, adds objectivity to subjective information.
- A comparative study of tribal cultures in general cannot be possible for a researcher on the basis of field study and primary data. Ruth Benedict wrote *Patterns of Culture* by using the data collected by her and other ethnographers. Franz Boas has also advocated to study a culture in the historical context along with field data.

### 1. Disadvantages of Secondary Sources of Data

The disadvantages of secondary sources of data are as follows:

- Secondary data is 'other's data'. It is difficult to find secondary data which exactly suits the objectives of the research problem.
- There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy. Due to individual bias, small size of sample, selection procedure of sample and errors of definition, the secondary data may be erroneous.



- Secondary data are by definition old data. These data cannot be timely even on the same topic. Moreover, researches on tribal culture from new perspectives necessitate primary data. New perspectives may need current data which earlier studies may not provide. Data on social change collected ten years ago cannot be of any help to throw light on tribal women empowerment from rural development schemes. Therefore, secondary sources cannot present recent dynamics for better appreciation of changing tribal situation.
- Secondary source may perpetuate a wrong interpretation or may be inadequate in generalizing a culture. Malinowski's generalization of the Trobriand culture was later found to be male biased from the field study of Annette Weiner (1976). Reliance on secondary sources limits the scope of expansion of the horizon of tribal knowledge system over space and time. Ethnographic data will not be of much help to explain tribal perception in identity movements, though it may supplement it.

Both primary and secondary sources have their own uses. One should not be used as an alternative of the other where it does not fit well. Both the sources have their advantages and disadvantages. A researcher has to select one or the other source depending upon time, cost and his objective. He can also select both the sources.

## 2. Written and Unwritten Sources of Data

Tribal societies do not have written records. But there are some references about a tribe available in personal diaries or in government records and so on. Thus, it is important to know both the written and unwritten sources so that a researcher can meaningfully conduct research in tribal societies. This source is also important to those researchers who study societies of similar nature.

**Written document:** Written sources include published documents and unpublished materials. Published materials may include printed documents, archival record, print media, statistics and so on. Unpublished materials may include personal letters, field diaries, field notes, travellers' diaries and so on. Printed documents may be official or unofficial. Official documents include the records of various governmental departments like Parliamentary documents, gazetteer, annual action plan, various Acts and laws and so on. Unofficial documents include auto-biography, books and journals, various pamphlets of non-governmental organizations, hand-outs, posters, personal letters, diaries and so on. Print media is a source of information of socio-economic life and changes of different communities and different places. They provide useful documentation to study public policies, development schemes of tribals and so on. Archival records also provide some information of interest to the researchers in tribal studies and other disciplines in social sciences. The researcher can also conduct field study and prepare his own written records.

**Unwritten documents:** Unwritten sources are very important in providing information to a researcher. It can be visual or audio. However, the following are some of the unwritten sources of data collection.

- **Folklores:** Tribal societies do not have a script and hence no written records. However, they have a treasure house of oral sources which are transmitted from one generation to another. This includes myths, legends, folktales, folk songs, jokes, riddles and performing arts.

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- **Iconographic documents:** Iconographic documents provide valuable information about the time, the techniques and the social environments of the time when they were made. For example, the statues in Konark temple tell us about the tantric tradition and the artistic skill of that time.
- **Photographic and cinematographic documents:** Photography and films are the sources of information about social reality. It is because they reproduce scenes and events of social life which help the researcher to understand the society. Cinema provides an image of the society as a whole or a particular social environment. Photographic documents provide means of communication which the researcher can analyse thoroughly. A satellite image of the earth provides immense sources of material to analyse the resources of the earth.
- **Non-photographic documents:** This includes visual documents of specialists or artists. Some of the documents provide valuable information about the society in which they have been conceived. For example, the painting of Radha by a Rajasthani artist and by an Assamese artist differs in the dresses because artists conceive the image of Radha in their respective social setting. The painting of Radha by the Rajasthani artist is likely to wear a Ghagra while that by an Assamese artist a Meckhla or saree.
- **Phonetic documents:** These include all documents pertaining to communication by sounds. In modern times, they may be recordings of songs, music and speeches. But these phonetics also help in studying the non-literate society. For example, from the vocabulary used in a culture, one can thoroughly study the level of technology of that culture.
- **Objects/material culture:** These include material elements used by human beings. They may consist of pottery, implements, coins, beads, religious and magical objects, objects of games and entertainment or domestic objects like cooking utensils, basketry and clothes.

### Published Sources

In recent years, field study has not been the only source to study the tribes. Tribes have been linked to the market economy. Central and state governments require data on them for proper planning of their development. These data are published for official use and for publicizing the achievements of the government. Census reports provide different types of statistics about population. There are also demographic data on tribes. These data help in understanding sex ratio of tribal population, literacy, occupation, health status, rural-urban variations and so on. A comparison with the previous data of census reports presents the dynamics of tribal demography. Annual Reports of line departments of the government are also published sources. A researcher can gather data on tribes from the publications of Labour Bureau, National Sample Survey Organization, Anthropological Survey of India, National Health Survey, etc. Various treaties, diplomatic records, social records, reports of ILO, UNO and other International Agencies, publications of indigenous and tribal groups also come under published sources.

Published sources are primarily secondary sources and include books on tribal issues, journal articles and so on.

## Unpublished Sources

Unpublished sources include materials such as diaries of administrative officers, travellers' diaries, personal letters, unpublished biographies and autobiographies. Unpublished data may also be available with scholars and research workers, trade associations, labour bureau and other private/public organizations and individuals.

Data available through electronic media (through internet) can be grouped under unpublished materials. The desired data can also be accessed from websites like Google, Yahoo and so on. These data can fall into the category of secondary sources.

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## 5.6 SOME FIELD METHODS

In this section we shall discuss some of the methods widely used by the researchers during field study. These methods are quite important in the study of tribes because they capture the qualitative and quantitative aspects of tribal life. These are also known as primary sources of data collection.

### 5.6.1 Observation

The earliest method of field investigation in social research was observation. This is because, fieldwork involves, as DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) points out, 'active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience.'

There is no doubt that most of the ethnographers have employed this method while working among the tribes. Observation is a method that employs vision as its main means of data collection. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines observation as 'accurate watching and noting the phenomena as they occur with regard to the cause and effect or mutual relations'. It is watching the other person's behaviour as it actually happens without controlling it. In this method, the required information is obtained directly through observation rather than through the reports of others. It is useful when the questioning method is restricted by some kind of communication problem and the informant's unwillingness to share information. The behaviour of a child who cannot speak can be studied better using observation.

Observation as a method is not simply watching; it is watching with a purpose. Thus, observation is more than the bare act of observing: To perform observation, a being must observe and seek to add to its knowledge. Observation is also defined as 'a planned methodical watching that involves constraints to improve accuracy'. It is a systematic field method. Goode and Hatt write, 'Science begins with observation and must ultimately return to observation for its final validation.'

Frank Hamilton Cushing lived among the Zuni Pueblo people for four and a half years, much before Malinowski, as a participant observer in a study for the Smithsonian Institution's Bureau of Ethnology during the first part of 1880s. He learned the language, participated in the customs, was adopted by a Pueblo, and was initiated into the priesthood. His case is so far the best known case of fieldwork. But Cushing did not publish his work for which he was criticized as having gone native (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002).

Scientific observation involves three processes: (i) sensation, (ii) attention, and (iii) perception. Sensation is gained through the sense organs and depends upon the physical alertness of the observer, for he observes with a purpose. Erlandson, Harris,

### Check Your Progress

11. What is qualitative research?
12. List two advantages of primary sources of data.
13. What is a secondary source of data?
14. What are the risks involved in secondary sources of data?
15. What do unpublished sources of data include?

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Skipper and Allen (1993) maintains that observation enables the researcher to describe the existing situations using the five senses, providing a 'written photograph' of the situation under study. Attention is concerned with concentration and readiness to observe what the investigator wants to observe. Perception is the act of interpreting what is reported by sense organs. Through this process, observation serves the following purposes:

- Studying collective behaviour and complex social situations
- Following up of individual units composing the situations
- Understanding the whole and the parts in their interrelation
- Obtaining detailed information of the situation and information related to it

In other words, observation studies both the group and the individual in the group.

**What does an observer observe?**

An observer observes in detail everything the people do and the observer is permitted to observe. The observer can observe the proceedings of *Adi Kebang* (a village council of the Adi tribe) and during the proceeding may observe the following:

- What people discuss, how they discuss, who are the people
- Facial expressions
- Language used, voice modulation
- Patterns of communication, behaviour
- Sitting pattern—is it as per status?
- Status symbol, if any
- Gender dimension and so on

**Characteristics of Observation**

Observation as a method is not confined to tribal studies. It is used in other disciplines also. Observation differs from other scientific methods because of its distinct characteristics. Its difference from the other methods is understood by studying its characteristics. They are:

- As you know, observation involves sensation, attention and perception. In other words, it depends upon the physical and mental activity.
- Observation is always direct while other methods could be direct or indirect.
- Field observation takes place in natural settings.
- Observation tends to be less structured.
- It makes only the qualitative (and not the quantitative) study which aims at discovering subjects' experiences and how subjects make sense of them.
- Observation is purposive, not random. The observer goes to the field with certain objectives of study. He may observe everything he is permitted to observe, but he concentrates on those facts in details which fit into his objectives. At the end, observation becomes selective and purposeful.
- Observation needs efficiency. As you know, mere watching is not enough, there must be scientific thinking and use of tools of research which have been properly standardized.

- Observation studies the relationship between cause and effect of social events. Through observation you can know the reason behind many practices or happenings which exists in the society.
- In this method, the observer first observes the things and then collects data.

### Aids in Field Observation

Tribal communities are not static as was considered in earlier researches. It is dynamic and is exposed to various forces. In most of the cases it is a part of society of the nation with its distinct characteristics. Therefore, the observer has to employ a wide range of tools to capture the ground reality objectively. We shall discuss here some of the tools which help in field observation. P. V. Young, Willim J. Goode and Paul K. Hatt have called these tools as ‘Aids’ in observation. Goode and Hatt emphasize that an observer ‘must self-consciously apply a range of tools for systematizing and recording the data’ keeping in view the ‘the research problem itself’. The following are some of the aids in field observation:

- **Field experience log:** This may take the form of field notebook, or a diary, or it may be a daily record of each item written under appropriate headings and sub-headings. The observer may not carry his diary or record book to the field. But he must always keep a notebook for writing notes. These notes need to be compiled in the diary or record book daily at the end of the day, for memory may betray when one sits to read the notes after several weeks. The investigator may find it useful to record both observation and interpretation of the observation during the field work.
- **Cameras and photographs:** These are essential in field research. Photographs are used at a later stage to supplement interpretation. P. V. Young writes, ‘Photographs tend to present accurately a mass of detail which is apt to escape the human reporter. The photographic “eye” views with authenticity and impartiality. It has not preconceived notions and selective interests.’
- **Voice recorder:** It is profitable for an observer to keep permanent record of various sounds of a phenomenon with the help of a tape recorder. Recording helps collect more detailed information at the time of observation than would be possible by an observer working alone. Sounds so recorded help in an in-depth analysis at a later stage.
- **Maps:** A map is a very important tool in field research. Its utility is not limited to the graphic presentation of facts, but these help in locating problems, verifying hypothesis, analysing data and discovering hidden facts and relationships. P. V. Young writes, ‘Maps are in some respects much like photographs, since they also give “pictures” of various situations. Maps and particularly social base maps are more highly selective than photographs, since they give just those spatial relations upon which one wants to concentrate.’ By using different base maps the data can be reflected against a variety of social backgrounds. Moreover, the social base maps, showing the relation of typological aspects of a community to its social organization will call for further investigation which perhaps would not have come to light otherwise.
- **Detailed observation plan:** Before field study, the observer should prepare a detailed plan of observation, which is often called ‘observation design’. This will be the important tool to guide the investigator for precision and focus on relevant

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aspects to be observed. In the plan, the necessity of training the investigator, tools to be used, aspects to be studied, place where study is to be conducted and time required, shall be considered.

- **Observation schedules:** To facilitate observation in the field, the researcher may make use of observation schedule. Observation schedule is a device used by an observer to systematically record observations. It is similar to interview schedule except that it employs observations instead of verbal questions. Questions in the observation schedule are answered not by talk but by observations. This helps the observer not to feel lost in a sea of data.

Use of observation schedule helps objectify the observation of complex situations. P. V. Young asserts that an observation schedule, 'aids in standardizing the recording of observed phenomena; it isolates individual elements, and thus facilitates concentration and measurement.'

Preparation of schedule is a task at the planning stage. However, an outline is prepared with the scope to revise it in the field. Goode and Hatt suggest that the schedule will be:

... drawn up in outline before the beginning of the work, and will be revised in the field. Often, these will contain such basis organizing data as age, sex, and numbers of individuals; occupational structure; religion; income; hierarchy of power; family pattern; etc. Even when these items are not the principal focus of the research, they will be essential for any description of the group, community, or organization.

'The construction of observation schedules involves many procedural difficulties. The schedule must be so devised as to provide an optimum of verifiable, quantifiable data and to avoid selective bias and misinterpretation of observed behaviour. The units of observation must be simple, minute, and meticulously worded, if they are to lend themselves to precise and uniform recording by several observers at different times'.— P. V. Young

- **Checklist:** The observer has to prepare a check list of topics to be observed, tools to be used, and other details. He uses it to ensure that the observer looks every bit of evidence that he has previously determined as essential. It should be prepared in advance before observation, but should include a blank space for recording phenomena that were not anticipated while formulating the problem and deciding upon the topic.
- **Socio-metric scales:** Use of socio-metric scales quantify the observation and thus objectify the study. Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary defines sociometry as 'a measurement of attitudes of acceptance or rejection through expressed preferences among members of social groupings'. The scales are used in social research to measure a wide range of social factors, such as attitudes, morale, status and home environment. The anthropologists also use it in field research to study the ethnic relationship and the way individuals identify with ethnic groups. For instance using sociometric scale James Page (1988-89) investigated intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic identification in Malaita province of Solomon Islands in the Pacific. In tribal studies this can be profitably used to study the attitude, morale, home environment, socializing process of tribal children and identity assertion of the tribal people.

## Types of Observation

Before going to the field for observation, the observer plans his observational study. While planning he decides upon the way he will observe the phenomenon and record the information. He may also decide upon his role: whether to take active participation or watch the events passively. In other words he will decide upon the type of observation he will apply. These are important types of observation. In early stages of tribal studies, usually participant observation was considered to be most useful. However, non-participant observation was also widely used. In recent years, along with these two methods controlled observation is also gaining importance to study some events.

- (i) **Participant Observation:** It is a method in which the investigator becomes a part of the situation he is studying. H. R. Bernard (2002) writes, 'Many phenomenologist's see objective knowledge as the goal of participant observation'. Danny Jorgensen, for example, advocates complete immersion and *becoming the phenomenon* you study. 'Becoming the phenomenon' Jorgensen says, 'is participant observational strategy for penetrating to and gaining experience of a form of human life. It is an objective approach insofar as it results in the accurate, detailed description of the insiders' experience of life' (1989:63). 'In fact, many ethnographers have become cab drivers or exotic dancers... in order to do participant observation fieldwork.'

Observation method is the foundation of research in tribal studies. It involves establishing rapport in a new community, learning to act so that people go about their business as usual when you show up; and removing yourself from cultural immersion so that you can intellectualize what you have learned, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly. For instance, the observer may participate in the activities of the people going for collection of vegetables or trapping animals or fishing in the river. This does not mean that he will merely accompany the people, but he will collect the vegetables, make the traps and place them as the trapper does, and do the fishing. He can actively participate in the agricultural activities or in festivals. Malinowski studied Trobriand Islanders by applying participant observation. In India, M. N. Srinivas had used this method in studying the process of 'Sanskritization' in Mysore.

P. V. Young writes, 'The participant observer shares, to lesser or greater degree, the life of the observed group. This sharing may be intermittent but active contacts at close proximity afford intimate study of persons'. However, the degree of participation depends upon the nature of study.

Participant observation ethnography relies on a few key informants rather than on a representative sample.-Bernard, H.R.

In all cases, an observer cannot be a genuine participant in many activities in which tribal people believe as taboos. He cannot be a genuine member in some of the institutions like boys' or girls' 'dormitories'. He cannot be a genuine member of a particular clan institution that may be hostile to other clan institutions of the village.

- (ii) **Non-participant Observation:** Observation by the observer without actively participating in group activities or becoming a member of the group or community is called non-participant observation. In this the observer remains detached and does not participate or intervene in the activities of those who are being observed. He merely observes their behaviour. The observer may go with the people to the

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agricultural fields, but only watch them working as an onlooker without participating in their works. In this method, the observer may not reveal his real purpose. The informants are not aware of the fact that their particular activities are observed by somebody. Hence, the observer goes in disguise, stating a different purpose, so that the behaviour of the informants is not influenced by their knowledge that they are being observed. However, there lies an ethical question in this kind of observation.

Purely non-participant observation is extremely difficult. It is most likely to make both the observer and the group uncomfortable. The observer actively participates in some of the ordinary activities while remains only a distant observer in others. A non-participant observation is, therefore, in practice only a **quasi-participant observation**.

**(iii) Non-controlled Observation:** When the observation is made in the natural settings and the activities are performed in their usual course without being influenced or guided by any external force it is known as non-controlled or natural observation. In the words of Goode and Hatt, 'Most of the knowledge which people have about social relations is derived from uncontrolled observation, whether participant or non-participant.' In this observation the observer visits the places of occurrences of phenomena in order to observe, no matter whether the observer uses participant or non-participant observation. P. V. Young emphasizing participant observation writes that many observers 'must of necessity identify themselves closely with the groups studied because the subject matter is so novel that it needs intensive study under close proximity.'

**(iv) Controlled Observation:** Non-controlled observation is generally not very reliable because observation itself may be biased and there is no check upon it. Various observers may observe the same thing but may draw different conclusions. That is why controlled observation techniques have been developed.

Controlled observation affords greater precision and objectivity and can be repeatedly observed under identical circumstances. The main aim of a controlled observation is, thus, to check any bias due to faulty perception, inaccurate data and influence of outside factors on the particular incident. In this the control is exercised: (i) over the phenomena and (ii) over the observation or observer.

To understand the reaction of tribal people to a new development scheme, the observer may discuss it with different groups and individuals separately. In this the phenomenon is put under the guided conditions. Since social research deals with social phenomena it is not easy to put it in a laboratory or under controlled conditions fully. In our example, the first person with whom the scheme was discussed may convey it to the others. Therefore, the reaction of the later persons to be studied may be different from the first one.

As the event cannot be fully guided or controlled, it is possible to exercise control over the observer only. Goode and Hatt remark that it is difficult for the observer 'to control the *object* under investigation, he must at least put control *on himself*'. In this sense, the observation schedule, maps, checklist, etc. are controls over the observer.

**(v) Structured Observation:** One of the most profitable bases of classification of observational procedure is the degree of structuredness. Accordingly, observation may be structured or unstructured.



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Structured observation is organized and planned. It employs formal procedures, and is subjected to high levels of control and differentiation. It has a set of well-defined observation categories for systematic study. The units to be observed are carefully defined. The conditions of observation are standardized. This observation is used mostly in studies designed to provide systematic observation or to test casual hypothesis. Its use and construction presupposes the observer's knowledge in all aspects of the situation under study. Structured observation may take place in the natural field setting or in laboratory setting.

- (vi) **Unstructured Observation:** On the other hand, observation method can also be unstructured. Unstructured observation is loosely organized and the process is largely left to the observer to define. Unstructured observation is mostly used as an exploratory technique. As the observer experiences the situation, his understanding is likely to change. This, in turn, may call for changes in what he observes. Such a shift in focus according to the demand of the situation is a characteristic of unstructured observation. Obviously, unstructured observation is flexible.

In practice, both structured and unstructured observations may be used for better results. Therefore, the focus should not be on the distinction between the structured and unstructured observations. It should be on the degree of structuredness so that the scope of observation is wide.

**Advantages of Observation Method**

Observation method is widely used in social research. It is a popular method of study because of certain advantages that it has. The advantages and merits of this method are enumerated below:

- Observation method is the most appropriate method when the informants are unable to provide information or are unwilling to give exact information.
- This method is useful for formulating **hypothesis**. Through observation the researcher is able to know about the sequence and causes and effect relationship. It is this sequence and the cause and effect relationship that forms the basis of hypothesis.
- It is a direct method in which the researcher himself collects data. Many other methods are indirect and so the researcher has no agency to check and test their validity. Observation gives ample scope to check the validity of data.

**Disadvantages of Observation Method**

Observation is an important method of social research. Although this method is widely used in social research and has its importance but it suffers from certain drawbacks. Its limitations may be listed as below:

- It is not possible to study every phenomenon. It means that the phenomenon in a social research is generally a human phenomenon and the people involved may not agree to be observed.
- The method is not suitable for large scale extensive studies.
- Many of the social events that form a part of social phenomena are uncertain as far as their occurrence is concerned. The observer cannot predict when the events occur. Some events may not occur during his field study also.

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- Many social problems particularly those of abstract nature cannot be observed through observation method.
- Observation is likely to become faulty if the subject of study becomes conscious that he is being observed.
- Personal bias and the prejudices of the observer also make the observation faulty.

Observation is a popular method in the field of scientific study. It has limitations, but in spite of these limitations it is scientific and rightly can be called the classical method of scientific enquiry.

**5.6.2 Interview Method**

Social research has one fundamental advantage over physical research in the sense that the researcher can talk to his subject, know his feelings and reactions. This technique is known as interview, or personal interview. It is a direct method of enquiry and employs the verbal method of collecting data, especially in the field research connected with social problems. The interviewer in a one-to-one conversation collects detailed personal information from individuals using oral questions. We get both quantitative and qualitative data from this method as per the nature and objectives of the research.

C. William Emory defines the interview technique as ‘a two-way purposeful conversation initiated by an interviewer to obtain information that is relevant to some research purpose.’ According to Pauline Young, ‘interview may be regarded as a systematic method by which a person enters more or less imaginatively into the life of a comparative stranger.’ During an interview the past incidences, feelings and reactions are recalled by the subject in front of the interviewer. The interviewer listens to the subject with a scientific approach, always ready to find sequences of fundamental traits of human behaviour, underlying universal laws, guiding and motivating human actions and reactions. The researcher tries to penetrate deeply into the circumstances being narrated by the subject and realize the full significance of the feelings being expressed by him.

Interview is thus defined as ‘a conversation with a purpose’. The conversation is focussed by the content specified by the research objectives of description and explanation. The information revealed during the interview provides insight into the nature of social reality. It provides insight into the unexplored dimensions of the problem.

**Characteristics of Interview Method**

The characteristics of interview method are as follows:

- Interview can be direct—face-to-face, or indirect—over phone or internet.
- It is a conversation with a purpose. The conversation is initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information.
- The conversation is focused in consistent with the objectives of research. Interview is a two-way process. It involves the interviewer asking questions to the interviewee (s) to get answers. The interviewee mostly answers the questions and also asks certain questions which the interviewer replies.
- The interview is mostly oral, though the gestures, glances, facial expressions, pauses, and modulation of voice mean a lot. It provides insight into the process of interview and information. Goode and Hatt, therefore, remark that interviewing is fundamentally a process of social interaction.
- An interview is planned before the actual interview takes place.

- Proper time and place of interview plays an important role in obtaining reliable data.
- Interview is non-experimental in design.

### Considerations to Make the Interview Effective and Objective

Interview has a purpose and it seeks scientific information. Obviously, it demands pre-planning, a definite attitude and behaviour and the quality of the interviewer. Here are some considerations to be kept in mind.

- Interview is not a mere conversation. It includes observation and knowing things about the person interviewed. It is, therefore, necessary that before the actual interview takes place, it should be properly arranged and planned.
- It is necessary for reliable collection of data that the interview should take place at a proper time and place.
- Rapport establishment is the most important element in interview process. This helps the interviewer to get valid data. In order to establish a good rapport, the interviewer should consider the following:
  - o The interviewer must be introduced to the interviewee.
  - o He should explain the objective of the interview to the interviewees. This helps remove his misgivings if any with respect to the research.
  - o In the beginning of any interview, generally the respondent is very cautious and comes only with the formal information. The researcher has to be tactful and should create a friendly atmosphere.
  - o He must build up the confidence of the interviewee. One of the ways is to ensure confidentiality of identity of the interviewee. He should ensure that the data collected will be used for academic purpose only.
  - o He should sound interested in listening to what the respondent is telling. This would create confidence in the respondent and encourage him to come out with the required information.
- Interviewer must be a patient listener. Sometimes it so happens that the respondent after narrating a particular thing becomes silent. The researcher like a patient listener should keep quiet and let the respondent begin again. He can also help the respondent recall the things correctly.
- The beginning of the interview is quite important and so is the closing. The interviewer should not close the interview abruptly or in a manner that the respondent should feel that because the job has been done, therefore the researcher does not bother about him. The closing of interview should be natural. The respondent should not fear that he has outspoken too many of his secrets to a stranger. He should in no way feel threatened and insecure.
- Training of the interviewer is very important. The interviewer should to be well acquainted with various interviewing processes and techniques. The interviewer should conduct a pilot survey, i.e. a preliminary practice of the interview plan and questions. By carrying out a pilot survey, the interviewer can check the accuracy and reliability that could be obtained from the interview. A preliminary practice or rehearsal will make the interviewer confident and focused.

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## Types of Interview

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There are different ways of classifying an interview process. On the basis of formality, it can be either formal or informal. In a formal interview, questions are standardized unlike in an informal interview. The interviewer is allowed to make suitable changes in the question to suit a context. It can either be an individual or group interview depending on the number of persons to be interviewed at a time. On the basis of the nature of data to be collected, the interview can be qualitative or quantitative interview. Quantitative and qualitative data are obtained depending on the structure of the interview questions. Accordingly, we can have structured or unstructured interview. If we combine qualitative or quantitative methods, we get mixed interview or semi-structured interview.

**1. Unstructured Interview:** It is known as uncontrolled, unguided or undirected interview. No direct or predetermined questions are used in this type of interview. It is generally held in the form of free discussion or story type of narrative. In this there are no specifications in the wording of questions or the order of questions. The interviewer forms questions as and when required. In other words, in unstructured interview, the questions are unplanned and spontaneous. Spontaneous questioning is more responsive to participant, but it does not allow for generalization like the planned questions. Clearly, the structure of questions in an unstructured interview is flexible, being presented in the form of a guide. Usually we get qualitative information from unstructured interview. Precisely, in this interview, the interviewer has:

- Only the general nature of questions in mind
- No prior indication of the specific issues on which the questions are to be asked
- No specific and ordered sequence of questions in mind
- No time-limit for conducting the interview

The biggest advantage of this type of interview is that the questions are asked spontaneously, there is greater possibility of exploring in an unrestricted manner. However, it has few limitations too. With no systematic control over asking questions, the reliability of data becomes doubtful.

**2. Structured Interview:** It is also known as controlled, guided or directed interview. In this kind of interview a complete schedule is used. The interviewer is asked to obtain answers to those questions only. He generally does not add anything from his own side. The language too is unchanged. He can only interpret or amplify the statement wherever necessary.

The structured interview is based on the structured interview guide. Interview guide is a set of specific points and definite questions prepared by the interviewer. Structuredness determines the degree of quantitative data. The more structured or standardized the interview is, the more is the extent of getting quantitative data. Structuredness is standardization of questions. Standardization increases the reliability of the information and research findings. Structured interview allows little freedom to make adjustments to any of its element, such as content, wording, or order of questions. In this kind of interview, all dimensions, i.e., specifying the setting of the interview, regulating questions and range of responses, limiting the facet of the problem, are regulated.

**3. Semi-structured Interview:** Somewhere between the structured and unstructured interview, there exists **semi-structured interview**. It has characteristics of both. This method is used for both quantitative and qualitative research.

*Table 5.3 Comparison of Types of Interview*

Types of interviews	Advantages	Disadvantages
Structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides quantifiable data</li> <li>• Replication</li> <li>• Degree of reliability is more</li> <li>• Possibility of generalization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planned questions are restrictive, so answers are also restrictive</li> <li>• Less scope for the interviewee to open up beyond planned questions</li> <li>• Questions are not flexible to deal with the changing context</li> </ul>
Unstructured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions are spontaneous, hence flexible, responsive and sensible to participants</li> <li>• Informal element is more, so the atmosphere of interview becomes relaxed and natural</li> <li>• Provides qualitative data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to replicate</li> <li>• Generalization for a wider population is not possible</li> <li>• Interviewer bias may be reflected in open and spontaneous questions</li> </ul>
Semi-structured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes standardized questions which can generate quantifiable data</li> <li>• Replication</li> <li>• More reliable than unstructured interview</li> <li>• The possibility of spontaneous questions makes the interview responsive, flexible to some degree</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers to spontaneous question are not quantifiable</li> <li>• Spontaneous questions may reflect interviewer's bias</li> </ul>

**4. Individual or Group Interviews:** Some scholars make the distinction between the individual and group interviews. Individual interview is one in which the interviewer interviews only one interviewee at a time. But in a group interview, the interviewer interviews more than one interviewee simultaneously. The individual interview (also called personal interview) helps establish close contact between the interviewer and the interviewee. As a result, detailed knowledge about intimate personal aspects of the individual can be obtained. Group interview suits to collect routine information which may not reflect in a personal interview.

When the entire interview has been completed, one important question that emerges is how far the narrative and generalization drawn from it are valid from the research point of view. In order to achieve validity, the researcher should carefully try to avoid any bias being introduced. Even after the interview has taken place, it requires thorough screening and editing. Invalid parts have to be discarded.

### Advantages of the Interview Method

Interview method has its merits and demerits too. It is a popular method and has its score over other methods when nature and purpose of the research is concerned. The following are some advantages of this method:

- Through interview we can gather information on topics which are not open to observation. Some events may not happen during the time of observation. Such information can be obtained from the method of interview. Thus, through the interview method it is possible to study the phenomena with the historical background.
- Face-to-face interview uses schedules and the interviewer himself interviews the interviewees. He can explain the questions to the interviewee. In case of

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questionnaire method questions are sent to respondents/interviewees who may not be interested to return the questions. They may not sometimes understand the questions in the right sense.

- It is the best method for getting information about inner feelings, emotions and sentiments.
- It is applicable to a situation where interviewees are not able to read and write. On this account it also scores over the questionnaire method. Moreover, people feel convenient to speak than to write on different topics. It is very useful in tribal studies as many villagers may not be acquainted with the words and concepts and the meaning they imply.
- Face-to-face contact helps minimize interviewees' bias. The interviewer removes the doubt if any and understands many things from the body language of the interviewee.
- Rapport establishment is an essential part of interview method. It creates a friendly atmosphere. As such the interviewee is likely to cooperate more with the interviewer than through questionnaire method. The face-to-face contact brings more cordiality than contact through sending questionnaires by post or through persons other than the researcher. In tribal areas, the questionnaire method has its own limitation because of less postal service and most of the interviewees may not know how to read and write.
- The interviewer can interview a number of persons as per requirement. But in case of the questionnaire method the researcher may not get the required responses as all interviewees may not return filled in questionnaires.

### Disadvantages

The interview method is also not free from limitations. Some of its limitations are as follows:

- The method is too much dependent on the memory of respondent.
- In this method there is no check upon the interviewee. The interviewee narrates stories and the interviewer has to listen to them. Every detail is not useful. If the interviewer is not able to remove irrelevant details, data is likely to become doubtful.
- There is a possibility of the influence of bias and the prejudices.
- It is not economical.
- Interviewer may not find his sample interviewee because of 'non-availability' or 'not at home'.

Nevertheless, the interview method is useful for the study of social phenomenon which is abstract and complex in much respect. Through this method the researcher has a greater opportunity to appraise the accuracy and validity of replies.

### 5.6.3 Case Study

Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play is said to have introduced the case study method into social science in 1829. He used it as a handmaiden to statistics in his studies of family budgets. But this method has been popular in social science disciplines like psychology, sociology and anthropology. Case study is defined as a method of exploring and analysing the life of a social unit, called as the subject (or the case) in-depth. Therefore, Carla Willig (2008) asserts that case studies 'are not characterized by the methods used to

collect and analyse data, but rather its focus on a particular unit of analysis: a case.’ The case may be an individual, organization, event, action, a family, an institution, cultural group, a process, an episode, a community or any other unit of social life existing in a specific time and place. It is useful to understand what a unit means in a case study. In this context Robert E. Stake (2005) gives an example. He writes, ‘A doctor may be a case. But his or her doctoring probably lacks the specificity, the boundedness to be a case.’ The point which is important is that the topic of the case can be an individual, but not the means by which the individual engages in a particular practice.

Yin (2009) defines case study as an ‘empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a ‘case’), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’. For P. V. Young, case study is a ‘comprehensive study of a social unit—be that unit a person, a group, a social institution, a district, or a community’. To Goode and Hatt, case study is ‘a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied.’

From the above definitions we can outline the following characteristics of case study:

- The case study method involves the study of a unit in detail, both horizontally and longitudinally. In other words, case study is an intensive or in-depth study of the unit. In the words of Goode and Hatt, the case study is ‘an approach which views any social unit as a whole’. As the unit is studied intensively by examining the context and other complex aspects related to the case, a wide range of topics to be covered is produced by any given case study.
- It usually deals with the knowledge of behavioural pattern—what and why—of the subject.
- The method is non-experimental because the researcher has no control over the unit under investigation.
- The relevant data is likely to come from multiple and not singular sources of evidence.

### Types of Case study

The case study method is of three types. These are as follows:

- **Single case study:** Here, only a single case is studied. The single case study is sometimes used to test a theory. The case study may be either exploratory or descriptive or explanatory.
- **Deviant case study:** There may be a case that does not conform to the existing theory of knowledge. When such a case is studied in detail, it is known as deviant case study. The researcher tries to explore the reasons of difference.
- **Multiple/comparative case study:** The study of two or more cases is called multiple or comparative case study. If the purpose is to test a theory, then the researcher gets more than a case to test it.

### Steps in Case study

The case study follows the following four important steps:

- **Choice of case:** The first step in the case study method involves a choice of the unit. The researcher has to decide the unit to be taken up for the study. Depending

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upon the nature and objective of research he has to choose the unit as an individual or a group of individuals, an institution or a group of institutions. Then he selects the unit to be studied if there are many such units.

- **Collection of data:** The second step of this method involves collection of data using different tools and techniques. The researcher may use different tools and techniques for the different aspects to be studied.
- **Analysis of data:** Data collected has to be classified and analysed for interpretation. Analytical tools like ratio and percentage or advanced ones like variation may be used whenever necessary. Analysis can be descriptive like ethnographic studies.
- **Interpretation and reporting of data:** After analysis data is interpreted. Relations among aspects may be established. Cause and effect relations may be explained. But while interpreting the presentation shall be logically consistent. The interpreted data are finally presented in a report/thesis form.

### When to use the case study method

Case study as a method has its own logic of use. This logic concerns three situations where the use of case study is profitable. The first situation is the one where choice of a method is determined on the basis of overall advantage of the method. It depends on the kind of research question that a study is trying to address. When research question is *descriptive* or *explanatory*, the case study method has a score over other methods. Other methods may not provide the rich descriptions or the insightful explanations that might arise from applying the case study method.

The second situation demands its application when the research proposes the study of a unit in natural settings. Case study provides original data which is qualitatively rich than derived data obtained from the use of other methods. Even observation method cannot be handy to capture some aspects which are not allowed by the interviewer for observation. As case study uses various instruments, it has greater scope to study more aspects relating to the unit in greater detail.

The third situation is a recent need of evaluating government programmes and schemes. Scholars and NGO activities commonly use this method for evaluation studies.

We apply case study method under three situations. But what benefit does it give? In other words, what benefit does the researcher get by using the case study method under the three situations? Precisely, what is his objective of employing the case study method? The researcher employs the case study method:

- To get intimate and detailed information about the structure, process and complexity of the research problem
- To formulate hypothesis
- To expand quantitative findings
- To test the feasibility of the quantitative study
- To refute a universal generalization
- To use the case study as a unique, typical and an interesting case in its own right

A single case can represent a significant contribution to theory building and assist in focusing the direction of future investigation in the area.



## Designing Case Studies

Yin (2009) identified five components of research design that are important for case studies:

- A study's questions
- Its propositions, if any
- Its unit(s) of analysis
- Logic linking the data to the propositions
- Criteria for interpreting the findings

The **study's questions** are most likely to be 'how' and 'why' questions, and their definitions is the first task of the researcher. While developing the study's questions the researcher has to decide whether to use 'theory' or not. The study's **propositions** sometimes derive from the 'how' and 'why' questions, and are helpful in focusing the study's goals. Not all studies need to have propositions. An exploratory study, rather than having propositions, would have a stated purpose or criteria on which the success will be judged. The **unit of analysis** defines what the case is. This could be groups, organizations or countries, but it is the primary unit of analysis. Here, the researcher has to consider the selection of a single or a multiple of cases. **Linking the data to propositions** and the **criteria for interpreting the findings** are important components of case study for its validity and reliability. However, these components are, according to Yin, the least developed aspects in case studies.

### Sources of Evidence

Case study does not depend upon any single source of data. Stake (1995), and Yin (2009) identified at least six sources of evidence in case studies. These are as follows:

1. **Documents:** Documentary sources consist of letters, memoranda, agendas, administrative documents, newspaper articles, or any document that is germane to the investigation.
2. **Archival records:** Archival documents can be service records, organizational records, list of names, survey data, and other such records. The investigator has to be careful in evaluating the accuracy of the records before using them. Even if the records are quantitative, they might still not be accurate.
3. **Interviews:** Interviews are one of the most important sources of case study information. There are several forms of interviews that are possible: Open-ended, focused, and structured or survey. In an open-ended interview, key respondents are asked to comment about certain events.

The focused interview is used in a situation where the respondent is interviewed for a short period of time, usually answering set questions. This technique is often used to confirm data collected from another source.

The structured interview is similar to a survey, and is used to gather data in cases such as neighbourhood studies. The questions are detailed and developed in advance, much as they are in a structured interview.

4. **Direct observation:** Direct observation occurs when a field visit is conducted during the case study and the researcher focuses on human actions, physical environments, or real world events. It could be as simple as casual data collection activities, or formal protocols to measure and record behaviours. This technique is useful for providing additional information about the topic being studied.

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**5. Participant-observation:** Participant-observation makes the researcher an active participant in the events being studied. This often occurs in studies of neighbourhoods or groups.

**6. Physical artefacts:** Physical artefacts can be tools, instruments, or some other physical evidence that may be collected during the study as part of a field visit.

### Disadvantages of Case Study Method

The case study method has been criticized on the basis of following limitations:

- The case study design is regarded with disdain because of the investigator's subjectivity in collecting data for supporting or refuting a particular explanation. Case study requires rapport building. The more the rapport, the more subjective will be the entire process of study rather than factual.
- Case study provides little evidence for inferences and generalizing theory.
- It is difficult to establish reliability in case study.
- One more argument against case study is that it has no representativeness, i.e., each case studied does not represent other similar cases.
- There are new developments in social science researches which provide better information than the researcher obtains from case study. According to Goode and Hatt, 'modern social research has attempted gradually to systematize and make precise the various special "qualitative" techniques which were once thought to be exclusive characteristics of the case study approach.'
- Herbert Blumer, as quoted by Young, is of the opinion that the case study method is not in itself a scientific method, but a first step in scientific procedure.

### Advantages of Case Study method

The various criticisms levelled against the use of case study method have not discouraged social scientists to drop the method as unscientific, unsystematic and unfit for valid generalizations. On the other hand, they have made determined efforts to put the method on more scientific lines. The social scientists have adopted improved techniques of collecting, recording and processing the case study.

The method is still profitably used for the intensive study of subjective aspects and deviant cases. It widens the range of personal experiences and provides scope for further research.

#### 5.6.4 Genealogy method

Genealogy is the study and tracing of family pedigrees. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history. This method was used by early ethnographers to identify kinship relations as determined by marriage and descent. Hence, it involves the collection of the names of relatives, both living and deceased, and establishing the relationships among them based on primary, secondary and/or circumstantial evidence or documentation. Genealogists, therefore, use oral interviews, historical records, and other records, and recently genetic analysis, to obtain information. By collecting information from these sources, they build up a cohesive family tree.

The word genealogy comes from two Greek words; *genea*, meaning ‘generation’ and *logos*, meaning knowledge. Thus, the method means ‘to trace the ancestry’ and therefore, it is the science of studying family history.

The pedigree of the Japanese emperors has a divine origin which is easily recited and memorized. This pedigree is mainly a chain of names mixed with semi-fabulous legends which was first written down in the early centuries of the Common Era.

Genealogy is often also referred to as family history, although these terms may be used distinctly: the former being the basic study of who is related to whom; the latter involving more ‘fleshing out’ of the lives and personal histories of the individuals involved.

With the advent of the Internet, the number of resources available to genealogists has vastly increased. However, some of these sources must be treated with caution due to issues of accuracy. The classes of information that genealogists seek include: place names, occupations, family names, first names, and dates. Genealogists need to understand such items in their historical context in order to properly evaluate genealogical sources. Genealogists collect oral histories and preserve family stories to discover ancestors and living relatives. Genealogists also attempt to understand not just where and when people lived but also their lifestyle, biography, and motivations. This often requires or leads to knowledge of antique law, old political boundaries, immigration trends, and historical social conditions.

The history of genealogy method can be traced through three stages. The first one is oral tradition, the second one is written document in some cases and the third one is the efforts of Europeans approximately around 1500 and thereafter to trace their ancestry. No doubt, the genealogy method draws on primary sources of data. These include oral tradition, records made at the time of an event, say birth or death certificate. In some groups of people there is a tradition of keeping records of family history. In Arunachal Pradesh, the Galo people have the rich tradition of tracing their origin from the mythical ancestor Tani. In fact, all groups of Tani tribe follow the tradition of tracing their origin from Tani. The Khamptis maintain *cheteiu*, a family history that could be explored to prepare the genealogical tree of many families.

Genealogical study became important among the settlers of New Zealand, USA and Canada as they took interest in linking their ancestry with their European families. Therefore, it is not a surprise when George Washington’s ancestry was traced to old English landed families. In USA, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand and Australia there are societies to study genealogy. The New England Historic Society in USA, International Confederation of Genealogy and Heraldry in Denmark are some examples.

In its original form, genealogy was mainly concerned with the ancestry of rulers and nobles, often arguing or demonstrating the legitimacy of claims to wealth and power. Genealogy, as a popular hobby, received a big boost in the late 1970s after the telecast of *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* by Alex Haley. It contained Haley’s account of his family line.

In China, with its ancient system of ancestor worship, long, drawn-out pedigrees including claims to descent from Confucius are not unknown.

Information (or evidence) found in historical or genealogical sources can be unreliable and it is a good practice to evaluate all the sources with a critical eye. Factors influencing the reliability of genealogical information include: the knowledge of the informant (or writer); the bias and mental state of the informant (or writer); the passage of time and the potential for copying and compiling errors.

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### 5.6.5 Participatory Methods

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Participatory methods are non-conventional methods. In conventional methods like interview, observation and questionnaire method, interviewees mostly remain passive. But participatory methods in research are ways to ensure participation. The question arises: *Why participation, who to participate with and where to participate?* Obviously, the participation shall be in the process of conducting research and thus participation does not merely mean involvement in one stage or the other; it means participation in the entire research process. This takes care of the question *where to participate*.

Now the question is *who to participate with*. If we see, it is always the researcher who designs the research, collects data directly or through his investigators, analyses, interprets, draws conclusions and produces a research piece. The researchers and the investigators are external agents. They are called subjects. The objects, on the other hand, are people/respondents from whom data is collected. In fact, the research is about them (object), for it is their information which gives the 'subject' to learn. But the subject finally 'claims' ownership of 'knowledge' because of his research. The objects, however, remain passive and respond to the subject's requirements. As the knowledge belongs to the people, and the research is about them, it is but fair to think that they should participate in the research process. This roughly answers to *why* and *who to participate with*. However, this is not possible through conventional research methods of survey type by using questionnaires and schedules to collect data.

In conventional researches the researchers usually give importance to the male voices and among male population to the voices of the elites. Therefore, in conventional methods the understanding of the social reality happens partially. For example, when Annette Weiner (1976-77) re-studied Trobriand Islanders, she found that what Malinowski depicted to be true for the entire Trobriand society was only true for the world of men.

In development understanding, now, the focus is on people-centred development. It means people are at the centre of development unlike earlier times. In earlier times, the notion of development happened to be at the centre and people at the periphery. Planners and administrators were the one who thought of people's development and implemented development programmes. As a result, a section of people were deprived of the participation in their own development. In the new development process, people's role has been recognized in the process of their development. In other words, the voices of marginalized and local people, such as the tribal community, assumed importance in recent years. But these voices could not be rightly captured through conventional methods of research. The search for a new method evolved and we have what is called participatory methods. These methods have enabled participatory researches.

As Partha Nath Mukherji writes, 'Participatory research is thus a *process*, specifically directed towards ameliorative or transformative change/development in the conditions of life and living of the group/population, who themselves are participants in the research process.' He further enumerates three important considerations which form the bases of participatory research methodology:

- There is a target community/group which is in felt-need of changing its underdog (oppressed, marginalized, exploited) situation to a more favourable one.
- This target group in cooperation and conjunction with an acceptable, external interventionist-oriented researcher formulates research goals, participates in data collection and, as far as possible, also in analysis and drawing of conclusions, which directly feed into decision-making relating to community action for change/development.

- The ultimate aim of external researcher is to attempt to ensure complete *ownership of knowledge* (e.g. of the health system, technology, management techniques) by the target community.

## Meaning of PRA

Participatory methods have formed into a body of methods called PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal). A discussion of PRA will help you to understand participatory methods better.

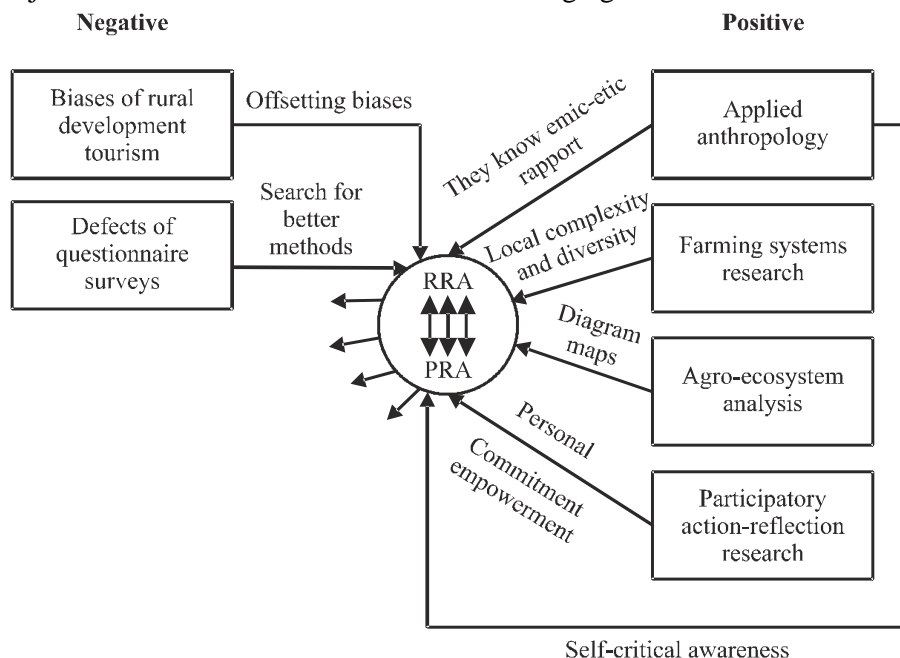
PRA is a perspective, a method and a technique—all in one. It is a growing family of participatory approaches and methods that emphasize local knowledge and enables local people to make their own appraisal, analysis and plans. It is a method which allows the investigator to interact and understand the local people by learning from and with them. PRA involves a set of principles, a process of communication and a list of methods for empowering local respondents so as to enable them to put forward their viewpoint according to their participation of the social issue or the social problem.

## Sources of PRA

PRA evolved from five sources namely:

- Activist participatory research
- Agro-ecosystem analysis
- Applied anthropology
- Field research on farming systems
- Rapid rural appraisal

These sources are the positive sides of the evolution of participatory methods. There are also negative sides which required a method alternative to conventional methods. This search was due to the non-involvement of people in conventional methods who formed the object of research. This is shown in the following figure.



**Fig. 5.1** Sources of PRA

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**Activist Participatory Research** was associated with adult education movement and was mainly used by NGOs since early 1970s. Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire proposed de-schooling and an alternative—**pedagogy**—facilitating a horizontal dialogue between the teachers and taught (adult learners). The objective was to establish the control of the learner over his learning process. Participatory research was conceived within this framework. The term gained its coinage from a group of adult educators in 1974-75 and was conceptualized and adopted by the International Council for Adult Education. It has gained importance with the increasing non-governmental sector which undertakes developmental activities in rural areas.

**Agro-ecosystem** analysis was developed in Thailand from 1978 onwards. The studies drew on systems and ecological thinking. In applied anthropology, **participant observation** and importance of field study have been well established methods of data collection. The observation and importance of people and their knowledge have contributed to the growth of PRA. Many field researches were conducted on **farming systems** where the importance of farmers' knowledge was recognized. Farmers' participation in agricultural research became the focus and their ability to conduct their own analysis was recognized. This understanding contributed to the growth of participatory methods. The idea of **Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)** developed in some workshops conducted at the IDS (Institute of Development Studies), Sussex, on rural development tourism, IKS and RRA itself. From the discussion, RRA emerged as a method which later contributed immensely to the growth of PRA. Relation between RRA and PRA can be viewed from the table below:

*Table 5.4 RRA and PRA Compared*

Basis	RRA	PRA
Period of major development	late 1970s, 1980s	late 1980s, 1990s
Major innovators based in	Universities	NGOs
Main user	Aid agencies Universities	NGOs, Government field Organizations
Key resource earlier overlooked	Local people's knowledge	Local people's capabilities
Main innovation	Methods	Behaviour
Predominant mode	Elicitive, extractive	Facilitating, Participatory
Ideal Objectives	Learning by outsiders	Empowerment of local people
Longer-term outcomes	Plans, Projects, Publications	Sustainable Local action and institutions

*The RRA-PRA Continuum*

Nature of process	RRA ↔	PRA
Mode	Extractive-elicitive	Sharing-empowering
Outsiders' role	Investigator ↔	Facilitator
Information owned analysed and used by	Outsiders ↔	Local people
Methods used	RRA ↔	PRA

In RRA the outsider is an investigator whereas in PRA the outsider is a simple facilitator. The knowledge belongs to the local people but not to the investigator. It is the understanding of local people that provides a basis for the outside investigator to learn.

## Principles of PRA

Following are the principles of PRA which guide the participatory researches:

**A reversal of learning:** In participatory method, the importance is given not to the investigator but to the respondent. It is the respondent who shares his knowledge with the investigator. The respondents do not remain passive. The investigator simply performs the role of a facilitator. He learns from face-to-face interaction with the people.

**Optimal ignorance:** This refers to knowing what is not worth knowing. The investigator is to collect accurate and necessary information for his purpose. In the conventional method, the investigator collects information more than required for his purpose. In the process he spends more time and money. But PRA promotes quick appraisal of data which is to the point. As a result, the data which is necessary are collected.

**Seeking diversity:** Conventional methods seek representativeness in the population to collect the data. But PRA seeks diversity i.e. all the groups, sections on the basis of caste, gender, religion, etc. so that the issue is understood in its totality.

**Offsetting biases:** There is always a difference between the mind-set of the investigator and the understanding of the respondents. Therefore, the investigator fails to understand the viewpoint of the respondents in the right perspective. Moreover, there are other biases. For example, the investigator tries to find the respondent with whom he can communicate. A male investigator usually and conveniently ignores female respondents. But in PRA, because of its principles of seeking the diversity, these biases are offset.

**Triangulation:** This is an important principle of PRA. Triangulation means checking the validity and reliability of data using different methods. Data collected using a single method may not be correct. Therefore, the data is checked and re-checked using different methods to improve the accuracy of the research.

**Learning rapidly and progressively:** As has been said the investigator has his individual mind-set. Hence, he does not fully understand the perception of the people. When he interacts with them and learns from them he accurately appreciates their knowledge. The local people have their own experience, their history and culture, their ideas and their priority. The more the investigator interacts with them the more he learns. His level of knowledge progressively increases as PRA is the least time consuming. He learns rapidly through interaction. Therefore, in PRA the investigator learns rapidly and progressively.

**Investigator as facilitator:** In PRA the role of investigator is to facilitate and motivate the respondents. He creates an enabling environment so that the respondents easily share their experience with the investigator.

### *PRA Methods*

PRA methods are ever growing. There is no end to the discovery of participatory methods. PRA believes in flexibility and hence different research issues may need different methods for study. It also depends on the user, who uses the method. But there are some methods common to PRA literature. They can be divided into two methods: (i) methods directly or indirectly supportive of PRA; and (ii) methods which involve direct participation of the respondents. Supportive methods include primary and secondary sources of data, direct observation and other conventional methods. But methods of direct participation are diverse and situation-specific. Some important ones are as follows:

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- (i) **Participatory mapping and modelling:** The respondents are asked to draw a map even on the ground or build the model of the resource bases of the village. It is not necessary that the respondents should be literate. Therefore, it is useful in tribal villages with low level of literacy. Participatory maps include maps relating to social issues, resources, health, wealth, literacy, livestock and economic activities. Such maps can portray the image of dwellings in the village, farms and fields, water points and various soil varieties.
- (ii) **Transect walk:** This refers to the walking of the investigator with the respondents from one end of the village to the other. The walk can be taken from north to south and from east to west. While walking, the investigator can observe soil conditions, crop varieties and vegetation types, which the respondent may explain. In this way, the investigator learns different aspects of land use, crops grown, and agro-ecological zones within a short time. While explaining, the respondents can also provide information relating to the past land use pattern or crop varieties.
- (iii) **Time lines:** This refers to the sequence of events like construction of the road or establishment of school in the village. A list of events gives an idea of development of the village over a time period.
- (iv) **Seasonal diagram:** In the villages different activities take place in different seasons. Moreover, different crop items available in nature depend on seasons. All these can be presented in what we call seasonal diagrams in which different activities in different seasons can be known. In other words, the annual calendar of the activities, along with the items available can be known.
- (v) **Venn diagram:** This diagram is also known as *chapatti* diagram because it looks like a *chapatti*. The size of diagrams and their distance from each other inform about the importance of the subject discussed. However, overlapping diagrams represents interaction between two institutions or individuals. The diagrams are useful to study the relationship of institutions and individuals.

Participatory methods are more popular in action researches especially for rural development—both tribal and non-tribal villages. Field scholars also use it for quick generation of data with some degree of accuracy.

### 5.6.6 Focus Group Discussion

A focus group, also called ‘focused interview’ is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic. The group is formed by interactive respondents having some common interest or characteristics. A moderator brings the interested respondents together with a view to elicit information through their interaction about a specific or focused issue. It is a form of qualitative research. An ideal focus group typically consists of 7-10 persons.

Focus group interviews were born in the late 1930’s by social scientists who had doubts about the accuracy of traditional information gathering methods. It is defined as a research technique involving means to reach end. When it becomes a research technique it is different from group discussion. In focussed group discussion the researcher introduces the topic. Some kind of control is exercised and at the same time the researcher allows free and spontaneous discussion from participants. It is a mixture of control and freedom. It is a participatory method. It is a method in which stakeholders take part. It is interactive. It is empowering. It is a collaborative exercise. It is a method where the



researcher empowers people. People react forcefully to the conclusion drawn about them. Thus, the gap between the researcher and the researched is fading. The researcher has mainly three roles in focussed group discussions. He is a moderator, a note taker and is a participant too.

The focus group can be of the following types depending on the nature of conducting the interview:

- **Two-way focus group:** This consists of two sub-groups. One sub-group watches the other, discusses on the observed interactions and draws inferences.
- **Dual moderator focus group:** In this type, two moderators conduct the interaction. One moderator conducts the session while the other ensures that all issues are covered.
- **Duelling moderator focus group:** In this type, two moderators remain present during the discussion. But they deliberately take opposite sides on the discussion of the issue.
- **Respondent moderator focus group:** In this group one of the respondents is asked to act as a moderator.

### Conducting a Focus Group

Focus group is planned and conducted for reliable information. The information collected from a focus group discussion is raw data. The researchers' task is to prepare a statement regarding the collected data. The first step is to transcribe the entire interview. This will provide a complete record of the discussion and will facilitate the analysis of data. The next step is to analyse the content of the discussion. The aim of this analysis is to look for trends and patterns that reappear within either a single focus group or among various focus groups. Some researchers suggest that content analysis begins with a comparison of the words used in the answer. Also, the researcher must consider the emphasis or intensity of the respondents' comments.

Krueger (1988) has identified three stages of conducting a focus group. These are conceptualization, interview and analysis and reporting.

**Conceptualization:** This stage includes defining the objective of research, justification of selection of focus groups over other methods, selection of issues, determining whom to study, planning the resource requirement and specification of procedure.

**Interview:** This phase includes formulation of adequate and appropriate questions, selection of moderator, understanding of group dynamics, introduction to the issues of discussion, responding to participants' comments, recording of discussion, and finally concluding the discussion with a thanking note.

**Analysing and reporting:** In this stage data is examined and reported. Krueger (1988) suggests three levels at which data is examined and reported. These are: at the level of raw data, descriptive statement level and the third one is the level of interpretation. Raw data needs to be ordered by natural levels or thematically. At the second level, respondent's comments are summarized. At this stage, data receives meaning to descriptions. The third level, i.e. the level of interpretation depends on the descriptive process or presentation of the meaning of data rather than the summary of data.

Focussed group is useful in describing and interpreting perceptions of group participants. It is not a top down approach. It is a research where people's need and

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perspective matter. It is primarily useful in obtaining free information, probing concept and ideas, probing range of behaviour and depth. Focused group discussion is a rapid appraisal tool. It takes less time. Focused group discussion is useful before one starts a survey for developing relevant hypothesis. It can be used as an exploratory research design. The main purpose of focus group research is to draw upon respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a way which would not be feasible using other methods, for example observation, one-to-one interviewing, or questionnaire surveys.

### Advantages of Focus Group

It can be concluded that focus group interviews can be used in a variety of settings. A review of the literature reveals that for successful data collection, focus group methodology must be employed in a manner to promote validity. The issues outlined above are essential elements for credible qualitative (action) research. The following are a few highlights about focus group discussion:

- Focus group research involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences on a topic.
- Focus groups can reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight. The benefits of focus group research include gaining insights into people's shared understandings of every day life and the ways in which individuals are influenced by others in a group situation.
- It has high face validity. Respondents in the group interact among themselves and each one in the group is also influenced by others.
- This method fits well to a situation where people do not know how to read and write.
- It is less expensive and time saving. Groups can be formed and assembled at a shorter notice. Data can be obtained at a shorter time from the interactions of the members.
- The researcher can get information from both verbal and non-verbal communication. Body language if observed properly can give a lot of information.
- The researcher can interact for clarification and ask follow-up questions.
- The focus group is a flexible method. A wide range of topics can be discussed, and a number of groups can be formed for interaction. Therefore, focus group interviewing is particularly suited for obtaining several perspectives about the same topic.

### Limitations of Focus Group

Focus group technique is not free of shortcomings. Some of them are as follows:

- The moderator cannot have full control over the group
- As the group is small, and as convenience sampling is used to select respondents, there is the risk of generalization
- Moderator may knowingly or unknowingly feel biased for the group
- A dominating member in the group may also produce biased information

Nevertheless, focus group has its own advantage and is still used by social science researchers including scholars of tribal studies.

#### Check Your Progress

16. Define non-participant observation.
17. How does C. William Emory define the interview technique?
18. What is a deviant case study?
19. State the use of the genealogy method of data collection.
20. What is a focus group?

## 5.7 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that,

- Research and data are inseparable. Data helps in understanding, analysing, interpreting and solving a research problem.
- Research is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
- Social science research is carried out with the aim of discovering new facts and verification of the old ones. The academic purpose of social research is the acquisition of knowledge.
- On the basis of nature, data can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data are those which are quantifiable. In other words, they can be expressed in quantitative (numerical) terms.
- Qualitative data, on the other hand, are not quantifiable. They refer to attributes—qualities, characteristics, etc.
- Method and methodology are sometimes used as synonyms, when they are not. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions.
- Technique is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data. Tool is the simplest element, an instrument, in research.
- Objectivity in research ordinarily means value-neutrality. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what should/ought to be; rather it shall focus on what is.
- Researches on tribes try to produce a valid knowledge of tribal culture. But such an exercise is possible only through the scientific approach to research.
- Collection of data is not a haphazard process. It is systematic and hence emphasizes on the rules and procedures. These are known as the techniques of data collection.
- There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample.
- There are two important methods of sampling, they are:
  - o Non-probability
  - o Probability
- Probability sampling is one in which every unit of the population has an equal probability of being selected for the sample. In other words, every item in the population has a known chance of being included in the sample.
- Sample error is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the ‘true’ value of its population. There are no sampling errors in a census survey because the calculations are based on the entire population.

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- Non-probability sampling methods are procedures in which the rules of probability theory are not applied in the selection of a sample. Non-probability sampling can be convenient, purposive, quota, snow ball and volunteer samplings.
- Quantitative methods are research methods dealing with numbers and anything that is measurable. They are, therefore, to be distinguished from qualitative methods.
- Qualitative research is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative.
- A researcher on social sciences in general and tribal studies in particular collects the primary data to have a better understanding on the community. The researcher collects the information about the people on his own.
- A secondary source is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources.
- There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy.
- The earliest method of field investigation in social research was observation. Observation is a method that employs vision as its main means of data collection.
- Scientific observation involves three processes: (i) sensation, (ii) attention, and (iii) perception.
- Participant observation is a method in which the investigator becomes a part of the situation he is studying.
- Observation method is the most appropriate method when the informants are unable to provide information or are unwilling to give exact information.
- Social research has one fundamental advantage over physical research in the sense that the researcher can talk to his subject, know his feelings and reactions. This technique is known as interview, or personal interview.
- There are different ways of classifying an interview process. On the basis of formality, it can be either formal or informal.
- Rapport establishment is an essential part of interview method. It creates a friendly atmosphere. As such the interviewee is likely to cooperate more with the interviewer than through questionnaire method.
- Pierre Guillaume Frédéric Le Play is said to have introduced the case study method into social science in 1829. He used it as a handmaiden to statistics in his studies of family budgets.
- The case study design is regarded with disdain because of the investigator's subjectivity in collecting data for supporting or refuting a particular explanation.
- Genealogy is the study and tracing of family pedigrees. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history.
- In its original form, genealogy was mainly concerned with the ancestry of rulers and nobles, often arguing or demonstrating the legitimacy of claims to wealth and power.

- Participatory methods are non-conventional methods. In conventional methods like interview, observation and questionnaire method, interviewees mostly remain passive. But participatory methods in research are ways to ensure participation.
- Participatory methods have formed into a body of methods called PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal).
- A focus group, also called ‘focused interview’ is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic.
- Focus group research involves organized discussion with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences on a topic.

## NOTES

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### 5.8 KEY TERMS

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- **Research:** It is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
- **Quantitative data:** They are those data which are quantifiable.
- **Qualitative data:** They are, on the other hand, are not quantifiable.
- **Methodology:** It is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process, while a method is an approach to data collection under those philosophical assumptions.
- **Technique:** It is defined as an apparatus or device, either verbal or physical, used to elicit information. It refers to the way one uses a tool to collect data.
- **Tool:** It is the simplest element, an instrument, in research.
- **Census survey:** The information collected about each item of the universe is called a census survey.
- **Universe:** It is the totality of observation or items which are of interest to the researcher.
- **Census:** A census is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population.
- **Sample:** A sample is a part or sub-set of the universe selected for the purpose of collecting information.
- **Sampling unit:** It refers to individual items to be studied within the sampling frame.
- **Sampling frame:** It is the list of sampling units of the population from which random sampling is to be drawn.
- **Sample error:** It is the difference between the results derived from the sample and the ‘true’ value of its population.
- **Case study:** It is defined as a method of exploring and analysing the life of a social unit, called as the subject (or the case) in-depth.

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## 5.9 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

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### NOTES

1. Research is a human activity based on intellectual investigation and aimed at discovering, interpreting, and revising human knowledge on different aspects of the world.
2. Generally, data can be classified in the following ways:
  - Quantitative and qualitative data
  - Sample and census data
  - Primary and secondary data
3. Methodology is the study of methods and deals with the philosophical assumptions underlying the research process.
4. Objectivity in research ordinarily means value-neutrality. In other words, the research shall be free from value judgment, it shall not focus on what should/ought to be; rather it shall focus on what is.
5. The researcher designs the research work with four main ideas: the strategy; the conceptual framework; the question of why, who and what will be studied; and the tools to be used for collecting and analysing empirical materials.
6. A census is the process of obtaining information about every member/unit of a population.
7. There often arises a confusion between the terms ‘sample’ and ‘sampling’. Sample is simply a part of population, while sampling is the procedure of selecting the sample and knowing about the population on the basis of the sample.
8. Systematic random sampling is a probability sampling procedure wherein the random sampling method is applied to a systematic process of data collection.
9. Sampling errors arise because we do not estimate all items of the population. We only estimate a part of it, i.e. of the sample.
10. A volunteer sampling procedure is a non-probability sampling procedure. In this procedure, the respondent himself volunteers to give information he holds.
11. Qualitative research is an important approach to research methodology in social sciences. The research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative.
12. The advantages of primary sources of data are:
  - Primary source provides data which is original and relevant.
  - This source generates data which may not exist or may not be available for the specific purpose of research.
13. A secondary source is a study written by a scholar about a topic using primary sources and other secondary sources.
14. There are risks involved in secondary sources of data at four levels: reliability, suitability, adequacy and accuracy.
15. Unpublished sources include materials such as diaries of administrative officers, travellers’ diaries, personal letters, unpublished biographies and autobiographies.
16. Observation by the observer without actively participating in group activities or becoming a member of the group or community is called non-participant observation.

17. C. William Emory defines the interview technique as ‘a two-way purposeful conversation initiated by an interviewer to obtain information that is relevant to some research purpose.’
18. There may be a case that does not conform to the existing theory of knowledge. When such a case is studied in detail, it is known as deviant case study.
19. Genealogy is the study and tracing of family lineages. It is a well-established method in ethnography. Precisely, the genealogy method is used to study family origins and history.
20. A focus group, also called ‘focused interview’ is an interview of a small group of respondents by a trained moderator in an informal way to know the perceptions, opinions and beliefs of the respondents on the research topic.

## NOTES

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## 5.10 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

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### Short-Answer Questions

1. Why should data be appropriate, focused, authentic and reliable to conform to the objectives?
2. State the differences between method and methodology.
3. How are the terms methodology, method, technique and tools interdependent in research?
4. ‘While conducting a survey, there are two important considerations.’ What are they?
5. Give reasons for the preference given to the sample surveys over census surveys.
6. Write short notes on:
  - (i) Simple random sampling
  - (ii) Sampling error
  - (iii) Purposive sampling
7. What are the differences between the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in tribal studies?
8. List the disadvantages of primary sources of data.
9. Name some published sources of data.
10. List the characteristics of the observation method of data collection.
11. What are the considerations to make the interview method effective and objective?
12. Why is the method of case study considered to be better than the other methods of data collection?
13. What is triangulation?
14. What is the role of interviewer in participatory method?

### Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the relationship between research and data. Also, discuss the method of planning data collection.
2. Describe some of the major concepts used in research.

## NOTES

3. What does objectivity in research mean? Also, provide the distinction between objective and subjective researches.
4. Explain the concepts of census and sample surveys.
5. Critically analyse the two methods of sampling: Probability and Non-Probability sampling.
6. Evaluate the quantitative and qualitative methods of research in tribal studies.
7. Assess the primary and secondary sources of data.
8. Discuss the observation and interview method of data collection in field study.
9. Assess the case study and genealogy method of data collection in field study.
10. Explain the participatory and focus group discussion method of data collection in field study.

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### 5.11 FURTHER READING

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- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
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