

Abstract Of The Thesis

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Abstract of the Thesis Submitted by the Research Scholars who carried out Studies at the GIPE, to the University of Poona for the Degree of Ph.D.

Title : *Some Aspects of Tribal Economy : A Case Study of Koraput District*

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The tribal economy in India has been studied mainly by anthropologists and administrators; few economists have gone into it in detail. A study of the available literature suggests that there are considerable variations among tribal economies depending upon varying ecological settings. In every ecological setting the tribals pursue more than one line of economic activity. But little factual information is available in these studies about the pattern of employment among tribals, in the sense of how the tribals engage themselves in these multiple economic pursuits at various levels of efficiency. While general statements have been made about the tribals maximising their returns under given conditions, no empirical data are available to substantiate the proposition. No clear picture emerges about the relative importance of different activities in different ecological settings. Nor are satisfactory explanations available about the National Sample Survey findings of greater employment and lesser unemployment amongst tribals than non-tribals.

An attempt is made, therefore, to go into such unexamined hypotheses and problems by trying to understand the nature of tribal village economy under different ecological settings. It tries to study the pattern of employment of tribals, measure the relative importance and efficiency of such operations, the economic rationale of such patterns of employment, and also the seasonality of employment in order to see its relation with economic activities and their efficiency, so that any alternative proposals should take these into account.

The tribals in India, who constitute 7.76 per cent of the total population, with nearly 94 per cent of them living in rural areas, are found to live broadly in three geographical divisions. These are : (i) the Himalayan Region, including north eastern zone, in the mountain valleys and the eastern frontier; (ii) the central belt of older hills and plateaus along the dividing line between peninsular India and the Indo - Gangetic plains; and (iii) the extreme corners of South-Western India and the converging lines of the Western and Eastern Ghats. These, of course,