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Johnson, K. A., 2012, “Education for the children of wandering labours, in the context of salt workers (Agariyas), in little Rann of Kutch”, thesis PhD, Saurashtra University

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**Ph.D. Thesis**

**EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN OF WANDERING LABOURS,  
IN THE CONTEXT OF SALT WORKERS (AGARIYAS),  
IN LITTLE RANN OF KUTCH**

Thesis submitted to the  
Saurashtra University for the Degree of  
**Doctor of Philosophy**  
in  
Sociology  
Under the Faculty of Arts



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**Year : 2012**

## Certificate

This is to certify that *Mr. Johnson K. A.* has presented a thesis on *"EDUCATION FOR THE CHILDREN OF WANDERING LABOURS, IN THE CONTEXT OF SALT WORKERS (AGARIYAS), IN LITTLE RANN OF KUTCH"* to the Saurashtra University, Rajkot for the Degree of Ph.D. in Sociology under the faculty of Arts.

It is further certify that the work has not been submitted either partly or fully to any other University or Institution for the award of any degree.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I express my sense of profound gratitude to almighty God who gives me strength to face the challenges of the world bravely.

I owe my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Haresh Zala, Prof. & In-charge Head, Department of Sociology, Saurashtra University, Rajkot, my esteemed guide, for his scholarly guidance and support to my study. Without his help and encouragement this thesis would have been impossible. I pray for God's blessings for him. He is also an inspiration for me.

I respectfully express my thanks to Dr. Jayshree Nayak, Professor, Department of Sociology, Saurashtra University, Rajkot, who rightly initiated me towards this research study, and other members on faculties who were always helpful and contributed to my endeavors. My special thanks to Dr. Hemixa Rao, Vice-chancellor, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar for her moral support and guidance in my studies.

Words will never suffice my sense of gratitude when it comes to the support and encouragement that my family members, members in my congregation and my friends endowed me with. They inspired me and kept me motivating throughout in each of my dispiriting moments.

I extend my sincere thanks to the staff members of the Department of Sociology, librarians and other clerical staff, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

I am also thankful to all members of social service center Jogud, Priest Fr. Vincent K. CMI, Rev. Sisters, Mr. Devjibhai, and all the

coordinators of the center for their help and providing with necessary information.

My thanks are due to my typist Mr. Shahbhai without whom this thesis would not have appeared in this concrete shape.

I thank and pray for many others who helped directly or indirectly in this work. I thank all the members in Agariya community about whom I did my studies. May God Bless all those children and their family members.

***(Johnson K. A.)***

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## **Chapter 1**

# **INTRODUCTION**

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## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

*"I know that one revived rural community would be more convincing and more encouraging than all the government and university programs of the last fifty years, and Researcher think it would be the beginning of the renewal of our country, for the renewal of rural communities ultimately implies the renewal of urban ones."*

– Wendell Berry, "The Work of Local Culture"<sup>1</sup>

### ❖ INTRODUCTION

Research studies are based on principles and theories, which are scientifically proved and methodologically designed. Thus the method of seeking and establishing truth is called research study. 'Truth makes you free' is a factual truth taught in all the Holy Scriptures. Gandhiji rightly said, my life is a search for truth and my day today living is an experiment of truth'. When the research study is about the facts of social human living conditions or social issues and facts, it can be said as a sociological research study

Primary education is a fundamental right of every child. Thus it becomes a social duty of every individual and society to ensure that all children in our society get basic education. Education could mean all-round development of an individual and human society in large. Heredero J.M. says, "Education is a creative act and an educated man is a creative man."<sup>2</sup>

Therefore a sociology student has social responsibility and moral obligation; to ensure by studying and scientifically proving all basic principles or fundamental rights concerning human society and individual in society. It is rightly said by a group of students from the Behaviors science centre Ahmedabad did a study on rural education, "Therefore, if economists, agricultural experts, engineers and other professionals have a vital role to play in rural development, educators (who deal with persons) can not disclaim responsibility in this task; because they, too, have a role to play in it."<sup>3</sup>

Therefore this research study is focused on the possibility of child education; where the parents are on move for their livelihood. My title for the paper is "Education for the children of wandering labors, in the context of salt workers (Agariyas) in Little Rann of Kutch."<sup>4</sup>

There is no Agaria language, and since these tribesmen live outside the Goindi area they usually speak a corrupt Hindi. The Asur of Neterhat, however, have their own Munda tongue, a so-called Aghori language noted by Sir G. A. Grierson.<sup>5</sup>

But the fact that the Agaria in many ways resemble their neighbours must not be taken to mean that they do not have a highly distinctive and vigorous life of their own. The totemistic customs of the tribe are highly developed and of great significance. The mythology is striking and distinctive, and offers interesting parallels to the Baiga stories. It controls and vitalizes to an unusual degree the material culture of the tribe.

If this book lacks the intimate human touches of *The Baiga*, which is due, to the character of the people. Malinowski noted the very striking differences in temperament between the people of the Trobriand Islands and those of the neighbouring Amphletts. The Agaria are a people absorbed in their craft and their material; they seem to have little life apart from the roar of the bellows and the dang of hammer upon iron. Few of them live to a great age, they have poor memories, and there are few outstanding personalities among them. It made many attempts to collect autobiographies as I did easily and successfully from the Baiga, but failed to get anything worthy of a permanent record.

Yet the folk-lore and mythology of the Agaria is fascinating, and the tribe seemed to me to demand at least a short mono-graph because here was a people that lived every moment of their lives for an ancient craft and by a living myth. This marriage of myth and craft, which is the central theme of the book, gives the Agaria great significance.<sup>6</sup>

Very little has ever been written about the Agaria and most of that little has been wrong. In the earlier provincial literature, which gives excellent accounts of the Gond and Baiga, there are only the scantiest references. In 1867 Colonel Ward<sup>7</sup> considered, most unjustly, that the Agaria were drunken and lazy. When in 1909 Sir C. B. Low selected for Government assistance those village industries 'which had some vitality left and were thus capable of improvement ' he did not include primitive iron-smelting. The Bourne Committee of 1930, which examined many of the indigenous industries of the Province, does not

mention the craft of the Agaria. The Census of 1931<sup>8</sup> did not even enumerate them, though it briefly refers to them in the schedule as 'a caste' although as one of the most primitive peoples in the Province they, if any, should have been described as a 'tribe'. The Census also makes the extraordinary statement that, in regard to the production of raw materials, only nine men and seven women were returned as engaged in the extraction of iron. 'Figures are not available for 1921 but those for the recent Census definitely indicate the death of an industry which was once important in certain districts.

Actually, even with the numbers reduced owing to heavy taxation, there were over a hundred furnaces working in 1931. The industry was not dead yet.

In *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces*, Russell and Hiralal have a section on the Agaria. 'This article', they admit with engaging frankness, is compiled from papers by Mr. Mir Padshah, Tahsildar of Bilaspur, and Kanhya Lai, clerk in the Gazetteer office cannot believe that this is how scientific work should be produced. He had many years' experience of Tahsildars and other minor officials. They make excellent magistrates, and do exact and faithful work in the Treasury and Revenue Department, but they are not trained to observe ethnographic details. A Boiler Inspector can get an admirable focus on a boiler, but he does not know what to look at in a Gond marriage. Casual observation is nearly always inaccurate. Low-paid officials, with little interest in the subject, are apt to produce very dubious work.

For example, the Tahsildars of certain Districts in the Province were asked to compile lists of villages in which there were Agaria smithies. This, you would say, was a simple enough business and, since Government taxes the smithies, almost a speciality of Revenue officials. Yet every list was hopelessly inaccurate and useless, not only for the purposes of science, but even as a guide to research.<sup>9</sup>

Yet this blind reliance on the statements of subordinate officials who, moreover, on account of the conflict between country and Government, are the last people to be able to get real information seems to be taken for granted. Methods of research which would not be tolerated for a moment in Africa, Melanesia or Australia are accepted and established in India.<sup>10</sup>

Enthoven based his Folklore of Bombay and even his Tribes and Castes of Bombay on 'raw material' furnished by primary school masters. Risley's Tribes and Castes of Bengal, like all the volumes in the Ethnographic Survey of India, contain much misleading information. 'Inaccurate and even erroneous statements', says Mr. S. C. Roy,<sup>11</sup> are unfortunately not rare in Risley's accounts of different tribes, and indeed are inevitable in a writer whose information was in most cases not collected first-hand but was made up of varying information supplied by subordinate officers of Government and other correspondents most of whom had little interest in the inquiries, had no clear idea of what was wanted and lacked the equipment and discernment needed to discriminate between things bearing the same names but differing in essentials.

In their account of the Agaria, Russell and Hiralal are equally inaccurate, and for the same cause. They begin with the highly controversial statement that the Agaria are 'an offshoot of the Gond tribe'. They put the Maikal Range in the Raipur District. They allow the 'caste' only two, instead of half a dozen, endogenous divisions. Their list of septs is so incomplete as to be dangerously misleading, and they make the astonishing statement that 'the Agaria do not know the meanings of their section names and therefore have no totemistic observances'. The dead are not 'usually burnt', but even now are still buried. They do not 'worship Bara Deo'.

Russell and Hiralal say that the Agaria 'do not eat beef' and imply that they have given up worshipping 'Lohar Sir' with a black cow. It is almost certain, it is true, that the Agaria told this to the Tahsildar and the Hindu clerk in the office, but it is incorrect. Their account of the iron-smelting industry is so meager and incomplete that it gives a false picture of the life and interest of the tribe.<sup>12</sup>

#### ❖ **RESEARCH AREA:**

Life is tough in the Little Rann -- the Kutch desert is divided into the Little Rann and the Great Rann -- with temperatures touching 50 degrees Celsius in peak summer and dropping to near-zero during the winter nights. In June, the monsoon heralds an invasion by the Arabian Sea from the mouth of the Gulf of Kutch, causing the mudflats to disappear under knee-deep water for four months and, as a consequence, become saline.

The **Rann of Kutch** is a seasonally marshy saline clay desert located in the Thar Desert biogeographic province in the state of Gujarat situated 8 km away from village Kharaghoda located in the Surendranagar District of northwestern India and the Sind province of Pakistan. The name "Rann" comes from the Hindi word ran meaning "salt marsh". The Hindi word is derived from Sanskrit / Vedic word attested in the Rigveda and Mahābhārata.

Kutch is the name of the district wherein it is situated. The Rann of Kutch comprises some 30,000 square kilometres (10,000 sq mi) between the Gulf of Kutch and the mouth of the Indus River in southern Pakistan. The Luni River, which originates in Rajasthan, empties into the northeast corner of the Rann.

In India's summer monsoon, the flat desert of salty clay and mudflats, averaging 15 meters above sea level, fills with standing waters, interspersed with sandy islets of thorny scrub, breeding grounds for some of the largest flocks of Greater and Lesser flamingoes, and is a wildlife sanctuary. At its greatest extent, the Gulf of Kutch on the west and the Gulf of Cambay on the east are both united during the monsoon.

The area was a vast shallow of the Arabian Sea until continuing geological uplift closed off the connection with the sea, creating a vast lake that was still navigable during the time of Alexander the Great. The Ghaggar River, which presently empties into the desert of northern Rajasthan, formerly emptied into the Rann of Kutch, but the lower reaches of the river dried up as its upstream tributaries were captured by the Indus and Ganges thousands of years ago. Traces of the delta and its



distributory channels on the northern boundary of the Rann of Kutch were documented by the Geological Survey of India in 2000. This inhospitable salty lowland, rich in natural gas and a resting site for migratory Siberian birds, is part of India and Pakistan's ongoing border dispute concerning Sir Creek. In April 1965, a dispute there contributed to the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, when fighting broke out between India and Pakistan. Later the same year, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson<sup>2</sup> successfully persuaded both countries to end hostilities and set up a tribunal, to resolve the dispute. A verdict was reached in 1968 which saw Pakistan getting 10% of its claim of 9,100 square kilometres (3,500 sq mi). The majority of the area thus remained with India. Tensions spurted again in 1999 during the Atlantique Incident.

The Rann is also famous for the Indian Wild Ass sanctuary, the **Little Rann of Kutch**, where the largest population of Indian Wild Ass still exists along with wolves, foxes, jackals, chinkara gazelles, nilgai antelope and blackbucks. The Rann of Kutch is also the only place in Pakistan and India which plays host to migrating flamingoes. There are 13 species of lark in the Rann of Kutch.<sup>13</sup>

Covering about 5000 sq km of area and spread in Patan, Surendranagar, Rajkot and Kutch district, Little Rann of Kutch had been notified by the state government under Wild Bird and Wild Animal Protection Act in 1973 and the Act was later repealed in 2004.

Besides Gujarati the Kutchi language is widely spoken in the Kutch District. The 'Kutch Festival' or the 'Rann festival' is celebrated at the time of the Shiv Ratri in February/ March. The centre of the

festival is Bhuj in Kutch. It has crafts, fairs and folk dances and music and cultural shows, all organized by the Gujarat Tourism. Tours are also conducted, out to the ruins of Dhola Vera, a city that was once a part of the Indus Valley civilization. The Kutch Mahotsava is usually organised during the end of February month and beginning of March. The Kutch region in Gujarat abounds with splendid beaches, fascinating wildlife and beautiful palaces and monuments. The TCGL i.e. Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd., organises the Tour of Kutch which is a six day Tour and the tour covers the Kutch Museum, Mata no Madh, Lakhpatri, Narayan Sarovar.

Lothal is the site of the ancient ruins of the first Indian port, dating from the time of the Indus Valley Civilization. Dholavira, the ancient city, locally known as Kotada Timba, is one of the largest and most prominent archaeological sites in India, belonging to the Indus Valley Civilization. It is located on the Khadir Island in the Kutch district of Gujarat — the island is surrounded by water in the monsoon season. The site was occupied from about 2900 BC for about a millennium, declining slowly after about 2100, briefly abandoned and then reoccupied, finally by villagers among its ruins, until about 1450. Gola Dhoro, dating from 2500-2000 BCE, was recently discovered near the village of Bagasra. Shell bangles, copper and beads were found there.

The saltpan workers or 'agariyas', as they are called in Gujarat, is one of the most backward communities, with over 70 per cent living below poverty line under harsh conditions in the Little Rann of Kutch

(LRK). According to the latest available report prepared by the Union Ministry of Labour and titled ‘Working and Living Conditions of Salt Workers in India’: “The Agariyas, who depend exclusively on salt processing, live in very poor conditions. There is a lack of basic amenities like drinking water, shelter, education and facilities like gumboots, sunglasses, tools and healthcare... Children are brought up on salty land with no activities for growth. The seasonal workers live on the pan itself... They face health hazards like blisters, burns, cuts, eye-burning, falling hair, headaches and many other ailments. Lower legs and feet develop lesions like ulcers and warts. Skin problems occur like scaling, atrophic scars, keratoderma, callosities, and fissures. This facilitates enhanced absorption of salt into the body, which could be one of the causes of high blood pressure. They also have to drink saline water most of the time. Vitamin A deficiency, night blindness, tuberculosis, infant mortality and gynaecological problems are common.”<sup>14</sup>

In the present study total 100 child of Agariya family included. To study the children of Agarias (salt-pan workers) and know the present system of educational facility, present educational structure and study whether the present system of education brings creative transformation in all the levels, economical growth and formation of future generation, to create a new method of education in this context by various sources.

### ➤ POST INDEPENDENCE

After Indian independence and the partition of India in 1947, the new Indian government grouped the former princely states of Gujarat into three larger units; Saurashtra, which included the former princely states on the Kathiawad peninsula, Kutch, and Bombay state, which included the former British districts of Bombay Presidency together with most of Baroda state and the other former princely states of eastern Gujarat. In 1956, Bombay state was enlarged to include Kutch, Saurashtra, and parts of Hyderabad state and Madhya Pradesh in central India. The new state had a mostly Gujarati-speaking north and a Marathi-speaking south. Agitation by both Gujarati and Marathi nationalists for their own states led to the split of Bombay state on linguistic lines; on 1 May 1960, it became the new states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The first capital of Gujarat was Ahmedabad; the capital was moved to Gandhinagar in 1970.

Gujarat borders with Pakistan to the north-west, bounded by the Arabian Sea to the southwest, the state of Rajasthan to the northeast, Madhya Pradesh to the east, as well as Maharashtra, Union territories of Diu, Daman, Dadra and Nagar Haveli to the south. Historically, the North was known as Anarta, the Kathiawad peninsula, "Saurashtra", and the South as "Lata". Gujarat was also known as Pratichya and Varuna. The Arabian Sea makes up the state's western coast. The capital, Gandhinagar is a planned city. Gujarat has an area of 75,686 sq mi (196,077 km<sup>2</sup>).

## ➤ CLIMATE AND NATURAL FEATURES

The **relief** is low in the most parts of the state and involves diverse climate conditions. The winters are mild, pleasant, and dry with average daytime temperatures around 29 °C (84 °F) and nights around 12 °C (54 °F) with 100 percent sunny days and clear nights. The summers are extremely hot and dry with daytime temperatures around 41 °C (106 °F) and at night no lower than 29 °C (84 °F). In the weeks leading up to the arrival of the monsoon rains the temperatures are similar to above but with high humidity which makes the air feel hotter. Relief comes when the monsoon season starts around in mid June. The day temperatures are lowered to around 35 °C (95 °F) but humidity is very high and nights are around 27 °C (81 °F). Most of the rainfall occurs in this season, and the rain can cause severe floods. The sun is often occluded during the monsoon season. Though mostly dry, it is deserted in the north-west, and wet in the southern districts due to a heavy monsoon season.

India, the major portion of the Indian subcontinent, sits atop the Indian tectonic plate, a minor plate within the Indo-Australian Plate. India's defining geological processes commenced seventy-five million years ago, when the Indian subcontinent, then part of the southern super continent Gondwana, began a northeastwards drift—lasting fifty million years—across the then unformed Indian Ocean. The subcontinent's subsequent collision with the Eurasian Plate and subduction under it, gave rise to the Himalayas, the planet's highest mountains, which now abut India in the north and the north-east. In the former seabed

immediately south of the emerging Himalayas, plate movement created a vast trough, which, having gradually been filled with river-borne sediment, now forms the Indo-Gangetic Plain. To the west of this plain, and cut off from it by the Aravalli Range, lies the Thar Desert.

The original Indian plate now survives as peninsular India, the oldest and geologically most stable part of India, and extending as far north as the Satpura and Vindhya ranges in central India. These parallel ranges run from the Arabian Sea coast in Gujarat in the west to the coal-rich Chota Nagpur Plateau in Jharkhand in the east. To their south, the remaining peninsular landmass, the Deccan Plateau, is flanked on the left and right by the coastal ranges, Western Ghats and Eastern Ghats respectively; the plateau contains the oldest rock formations in India, some over one billion years old. Constituted in such fashion, India lies to the north of the equator between  $6^{\circ}44'$  and  $35^{\circ}30'$  north latitude and  $68^{\circ}7'$  and  $97^{\circ}25'$  east longitude.

India's coast is 7,517 kilometres (4,700 mi) long; of this distance, 5,423 kilometres (3,400 mi) belong to peninsular India, and 2,094 kilometres (1,300 mi) to the Andaman, Nicobar, and Lakshadweep Islands. According to the Indian naval hydrographic charts, the mainland coast consists of the following: 43% sandy beaches, 11% rocky coast including cliffs, and 46% mudflats or marshy coast.

The Himalayas form the mountainous landscape of Northern India. Seen here is Ladakh in Jammu & Kashmir Major Himalayan-origin rivers that substantially flow through India include the Ganga (Ganges) and the Brahmaputra, both of which drain into the Bay of

Bengal. Important tributaries of the Ganga (Ganges) include the Yamuna and the Kosi, whose extremely low gradient causes disastrous floods every year. Major peninsular rivers whose steeper gradients prevent their waters from flooding include the Godavari, the Mahanadi, the Kaveri, and the Krishna, which also drain into the Bay of Bengal; and the Narmada and the Tapti, which drain into the Arabian Sea. Among notable coastal features of India are the marshy Rann of Kutch in western India, and the alluvial Sundarbans delta, which India shares with Bangladesh. India has two archipelagos: the Lakshadweep, coral atolls off India's south-western coast; and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a volcanic chain in the Andaman Sea.

India's climate is strongly influenced by the Himalayas and the Thar Desert, both of which drive the monsoons. The Himalayas prevent cold Central Asian Katabatic wind from blowing in, keeping the bulk of the Indian subcontinent warmer than most locations at similar latitudes. The Thar Desert plays a crucial role in attracting the moisture-laden southwest summer monsoon winds that, between June and October, provide the majority of India's rainfall. Four major climatic groupings predominate in India: tropical wet, tropical dry, subtropical humid, and montane.

At the turn of the 19th century, Governor-General Wellesley began what became two decades of accelerated expansion of Company territories. This was achieved either by subsidiary alliances between the Company and local rulers or by direct military annexation. The subsidiary alliances created the Princely States (or Native States) of the

Hindu Maharajas and the Muslim Nawabs, prominent among which were: Cochin (1791), Jaipur (1794), Travancore (1795), Hyderabad (1798), Mysore (1799), Cis-Sutlej Hill States (1815), Central India Agency (1819), Kutch and Gujarat Gaikwad territories (1819), Rajputana (1818), and Bahawalpur (1833). The annexed regions included the North Western Provinces (comprising Rohilkhand, Gorakhpur, and the Doab) (1801), Delhi (1803), and Sindh (1843). Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, and Kashmir, were annexed after the Anglo-Sikh Wars in 1849; however, Kashmir was immediately sold under the Treaty of Amritsar (1850) to the Dogra Dynasty of Jammu, and thereby became a princely state. In 1854 Berar was annexed, and the state of Oudh two years later.

The East India Company also signed treaties with various Afghan rulers and with Ranjit Singh of Lahore to counterbalance the Russian support of Persia's plans in western Afghanistan. In 1839, the Company's effort to more actively support Shah Shuja as Amir in Afghanistan, led to the First Afghan War (1839-42) and resulted in a military disaster for it. As the British expanded their territory in India, so did Russia in Central Asia with the taking of Bukhara and Samarkand in 1863 and 1868 respectively, and thereby setting the stage for The Great Game of Central Asia.

In the Charter Act of 1813, the British parliament renewed the Company's charter but terminated its monopoly, opening India to both private investment and missionary work. With increased British power in India, supervision of Indian affairs by the British Crown and



parliament increased as well; by the 1820s, British nationals could transact business under the protection of the Crown in the three Company presidencies. In the Charter Act of 1833, the British parliament revoked the Company's trade license altogether, making the Company a part of British governance, although the administration of British India remained the province of Company officers.

In 1297 to 1300 Allauddin Khilji, Sultan of Delhi, destroyed Anhilwara and incorporated Gujarat into the Delhi Sultanate. After Timur's sacking of Delhi at the end of the fourteenth century weakened the Sultanate, Gujarat's Muslim governor Zafar Khan Muzaffar asserted his independence, and his son, Sultan Ahmed Shah (ruled 1411 to 1442), restructured Ahmedabad as the capital. Cambay eclipsed Bharuch as Gujarat's most important trade port. The Sultanate of Gujarat remained independent until 1576, when the Mughal emperor Akbar conquered it and annexed it to the Mughal Empire. The port of Surat becomes the prominent and main port of India during Mughal rule. Gujarat remained a province of the Mughal Empire until the Marathas sacked eastern and central Gujarat in the eighteenth century; Western Gujarat (Kathiawar and Kutch) were divided among numerous local rulers.

Portugal was the first European power to arrive in Gujarat, acquiring several enclaves along the Gujarati coast, including Daman and Diu as well as Dadra and Nagar Haveli. The British East India Company established a factory in Surat in 1614, which formed their first base in India, but it was eclipsed by Bombay after the British acquired it

from Portugal in 1668. The Company wrested control of much of Gujarat from the Marathas during the Second Anglo-Maratha War. Many local rulers, notably the Maratha Gaekwads of Baroda (Vadodara), made a separate peace with the British, and acknowledged British sovereignty in return for retaining local self-rule. Gujarat was placed under the political authority of the Bombay Presidency, with the exception of Baroda state, which had a direct relationship with the Governor-General of India. From 1818 to 1947, most of present-day Gujarat, including Kathiawar, Kutch, and northern and eastern Gujarat were divided into dozens of princely states, but several districts in central and southern Gujarat, namely Ahmedabad, Broach (Bharuch), Kaira, Panch Mahals, and Surat, were ruled directly by British officials.

### ➤ **DEMOGRAPHICS**

The population of the Gujarat State was 50,671,017 as per the 2001 census data. The density of population is only 258 persons per km<sup>2</sup>, and compares favourably with the other states of the country.<sup>15</sup>

Its official and primary language is Gujarati. About 89.1% of the population of Gujarat is Hindu. Muslims account for 9.1%, Jain 1.0% and Sikh 0.1% of the population. . Amongst Hindus the deity of Krishna is famously worshipped in His form of Shrinathji throughout Gujarat.

71% of Hindus in Gujarat speak Gujarati while the other 29% speak Hindi. Almost 88% of the Muslims speak Gujarati while the rest speak Urdu. Almost all of the Jains speak Gujarati (a few speak Marwari

as well). Parsi Zoroastrians also speak Gujarati as their native language. Marathi is spoken by a large number of people in Vadodara and Surat.<sup>16</sup>

### ❖ **AGARIYA CHILDREN**

The word Agaria probably means a worker in Agni or fire; the root of Agni, the Hindu god of fire, or of Agyasur, the tribal demon who was born in flame. The Agaria are indeed the servants of the fire which they so constantly tend, and the name will not seem inappropriate to anyone who has watched by night their ghostly figures clothed in showers of sparks as they move to and fro in the weird light of the flames flickering above the furnace.

Another derivation is from agar, the name which in Rewa State is applied to the local iron-mines. In Udaipur State, the name is traced to Agar Sai, Raja of the iron city Lohitpur. But in any case the blacksmith Agaria must not be confused with the Agharia, the great cultivating caste of Chhattisgarh who are said to take their name from Agra, or with the Agari, the salt-makers of Rajputana and the Pan jab, who derive their title from the agar or shallow pan in which they evaporate the saline water of lakes or wells.

The name Agaria proper is applied rather loosely too many of the primitive iron-smelters in the Central Provinces, in Rewa State, in Mirzapur, in the Surguja, Udaipur, and Jashpur States, to a branch of the Asur in Ranchi and Palamau, to sections of Korwa and Binjhia in Bihar and in Bengal. The Agaria do not form one homogeneous tribe; there are many different sections, diversified by small customs and even by name,

owning no relation to each other, yet marked by a common appearance, mythology and technique. It is thus possible to trace an Agaria belt across the centre of India within which the primitive iron-smelters are quite distinct from the Hindu iron-workers on every side of them. In the Central Provinces, the blacksmith neighbours of the Agaria are mainly Lohar, from whom they may be readily distinguished even when, as in Raipur, they have adopted the Hindu name. There are certain features characteristic of the Agaria tribes everywhere. The Agaria burn charcoal and extract iron from ore in small clay furnaces. It is rare for the Lohar to practise iron- smelting.

The Agaria use bellows of a particular kettledrum pattern and work them with their feet. A glance at Plate 25 will show the remarkable contrast between these primitive bellows and those used by the T/ohar which is worked by hand. Many Agaria cover the bellows with cow-hide which the Lohar refuse to touch.

The Agaria worship tribal gods or demons, who are clearly associated with the ancient Asura, such as Koclasur and Agyasur. The very form of their names marks them as Asura and enemies of the Hindu gods. The Lohar, on the other hand, worship the ordinary Hindu gods and do not seem to have a special god of the forge.

The Agaria have an elaborate mythology of which the heroes are Logundi Raja, Jwala Mukhi and Kariya Knar, but they are ignorant of the Hindu Vulcan, Twashtri or Vishwakarma, the artisan of the gods, who made the fiery weapon Agneyastra and revealed the Sthapatya-veda, the science of mechanics and architecture. The Lohar, on the other

hand, who are ignorant of the tribal heroes, derive their caste and its profession from Twashtri or Vishwakarma. Another interesting point in the mythology is that whereas the Loliar claim, as for example in Garhwal, that their ancestors furnished the Pandava with their weapons, in Agaria legend it was the Pandava who attacked and destroyed their iron city and the old kingdom Raja. Other stories attribute the city's destruction to the Hindu god Bhagavan or to the Hindu solar deity Narayan Deo or Suraj Deo. Here the Agaria hero Jwala Mukhi plays the part of Rahu the Asura and swallows the sun. There is a very strict taboo in Mandla among the Agaria on working in the sun. Researcher will return to this later, but Researcher mention these facts now because they are highly characteristic of Agaria legend and would never be found among the Hindu.

Finally, it is generally possible to distinguish an Agaria from a Lohar by looking at him. The Agaria are short, sturdy, square-headed, with broad heavy noses, thick-lipped, very dark in colour, with straight hair; the features are coarse and unattractive. They are rather stupid, dull and heavy. It is rare to see a beautiful Agaria woman. The Lohar are more finely built and of a generally lighter colour, taller, longer-headed, with mesorrhine to leptorrhine nose, and thin lips.

Where we have the above conditions fulfilled, along with some tradition of the name Agaria, we shall be justified in regarding a group of iron-smelters, even if they now call themselves by some other title, as belonging to the true Agaria. Let us now make a rapid survey of the 'Agaria belt', moving eastward from Mandla. In the Dindori Tahsil at the

east of that District we find the Patharia Agaria; these may be regarded as the 'standard' Agaria their culture is highly characteristic and fairly well preserved.

Moving further east to Bilaspur, there is Kama Agaria in the foothills of the Maikal Range and in the remote zamindaris of the east. To the south are the God-dhuka lyohar of Raipur and the Gondi-speaking Agaria of Drug. All these are obviously related to the Mandla Agaria, by their physical characters, their professional technique, their mythology and their religion. North from Mandla, there are Patharia in Rewa State, some of whom have migrated to Mirzapur. The Mirzapur Agaria worship lyokasur Devi and their smelting methods recall those of Mandla.

But all these tribes have a tradition of the name Agaria and sometimes use it. They erect the same general type of smithy, build the same kind of kiln, use bellows of the same pattern and work them with their feet. They all make Virgin Iron, and believe in its power. Many have a taboo on working in the sun. Anthropometric measurements are not available and in any case would prove little, for there has obviously been a great deal of inter-marriage between the smiths and their neighbours.

Although the mythology at the two ends of the belt is different, we can trace the gradual transformation of one type of legend into the other. Thus an Agaria story of north Udaipur gives us a link between the Agaria and the Mahali Chokh. 'Sabar Sai had twelve sons ' such is the story given by Kanpi Agaria of Dehidanr 'they were called the twelve

Asur brothers. They were great smelters of iron. One of them took Mahali girls as wives and their sons became Mahali Chokh. Logundi Raja was an Asur. He and his wife the Asurin are offered a pig before the iron-kiln. Sabar Sai and Ogundi Raja are the chief heroes of the Agaria legends of Mandla. In another village it was related how Sabar Sai reigned in Lohripur (a further parallel with Mandla) which is seven days' journey north-east from Assam. The twelve Asur brothers fled from Lohripur to Saraidi in Jashpur, where there are mountains of slag to be seen even today. Other Chokh Agaria blacksmiths of Udaipur identify Ogundi Raja and Sabar Sai, and even Logundi Raja and lyohasur. Yet another synonym is Agar Sai, from which the name Agaria is said to be derived. In Semipali village the Chokh Agaria said they were descended from the twelve Asur brothers and Sabar Sai; in Rainier village, they said that the founder of the tribe was J v ohri Raja who was also called l,oha Asur. Some Chokh of the north of the State (near the Surguja border) worship at the iron-pit I/ohgund-Tinga (that is, Ogundi Raja and his consort Tingamati), Asur- Astirin and Lohasur; others worship the twelve Asur brothers in the iron-kiln. Although the Agaria of Mandla do not know the Asur- Asurin and the Asur of Chota Nagpur do not worship Researcher v ohasur or Logundi, we can see in the transition area how these tribal heroes and deities are identified with one another. The Agaria, Chokh and Asur regard themselves as separated by minor differences of food and custom one, for example, fixes the bellows with a stone, another with a peg but they recognize their ultimate similarity and relationship.

It was obviously impossible, however, for the Census authorities to classify these different tribes under one heading. The iron-smelters further complicate matters by changing their names from time to time, with the result that the 1891 Census Report declares that 'the tribes who follow the profession of smelting iron-ore have been returned in such various ways at the Census that it is difficult to ascertain what their real numbers may be'. Sometimes the Agaria have returned themselves as Gond, often they have been confused with the Agharia. In Raipur in recent years they have taken to calling themselves I^ohar. In 1921 they were tabulated only in Bilaspur and Surguja State. The population figures are thus almost wholly unreliable. We will, however, run quickly through the Census reports and tables to see whether at least some approximations to the facts can be discovered.

In 1901, when R. V. Russell was in charge of the Census, incorrect classification caused the number of Agaria to drop from 5,832 to 644 and we are told nothing at all about them. In 1911, on the other hand, there was a 90 per cent increase. The Agaria now numbered 9,500 and to this figure we should probably be right in adding 276 Mahali and 129 Asur, the only time, Researcher think, that the Asur have been tabulated in the Central Provinces. There were also 8,712 Panchal the I^ohar of the Maratha Districts, 451 Sikligar a branch of the foliar who specialize in cleaning swords, and no fewer than 181,590 L,ohar, a very considerable increase on the figures of 1891.

In 1921 the figures go down again and there are only 3,661 Agaria, a decrease of 61 to 62 per cent. But this is explained. 'The



apparent decrease of 61 per cent in their numbers is due to the fact that at the present Census they have only been tabulated in the Bilaspur District and Surguja State, where they are mostly found. They may also have been confused with the Agharias. The Agaria were not tabulated at all in 1931. Probably the 1911 figures, which were adopted by Russell in his article on the Agaria, come nearest to the correct figure for the Central Provinces. To get a complete total we should have to add figures for Rewa State, Mirzapur where there were 1,186 Agaria in 1909 and Bihar. Possibly today there may be altogether some 15,000 Agaria.<sup>17</sup>

#### ➤ EDUCATION POLICY AND CHILDREN OF AGARIYA

Extending the system of primary education into tribal areas and reserving places for tribal children in middle and high schools and higher education institutions are central to government policy, but efforts to improve a tribe's educational status have had mixed results. Recruitment of qualified teachers and determination of the appropriate language of instruction also remain troublesome. Commission after commission on the "language question" has called for instruction, at least at the primary level, in the students' native tongue. In some regions, tribal children entering school must begin by learning the official regional language, often one completely unrelated to their tribal tongue.

Many tribal schools are plagued by high dropout rates. Children attend for the first three to four years of primary school and gain a smattering of knowledge, only to lapse into illiteracy later. Few who enter continue up to the tenth grade; of those who do, few manage to

finish high school. Therefore, very few are eligible to attend institutions of higher education, where the high rate of attrition continues. Members of agrarian tribes like the Gonds often are reluctant to send their children to school, needing them, they say, to work in the fields. On the other hand, in those parts of the northeast where tribes have generally been spared the wholesale onslaught of outsiders, schooling has helped tribal people to secure political and economic benefits. The education system there has provided a corps of highly trained tribal members in the professions and high-ranking administrative posts.

An academy for teaching and preserving Adivasi languages and culture was established in 1999 by the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre. The Adivasi Academy is located at Tejgadh in Gujarat.<sup>18</sup>

### ❖ THE ORIGIN OF THE TRIBE

We now approach the important and difficult problem of who the Agaria really are. Are they a separate tribe, a tribe as it were on their own, which came into being long ago, perhaps at the time of the discovery of iron or its introduction into the Province? Or are they simply a conglomerate of those members of many different tribes who have taken to iron-smelting? Is the Patharia Agaria of Dindori a separate tribe or are they a branch of the Gond who have taken to the despised iron work and thus been gradually isolated as a special community? The Chokh Agaria of Bilaspur has many affinities with the Korwa; are they a group of Korwa who have taken to iron-smelting? We may illustrate the problem from other parts of India. Risley, for example, describes how

the I<sup>h</sup>oliar of Bihar and Western Bengal 'are a large and heterogeneous aggregate, comprising members of several different tribes and castes, who in different parts of the country took up the profession of working in iron'. Thus, the Kokas Lohar seems to be Barhi who had to separate from the parent stock. The Kamarkalla Ivohar may be 'a degraded offshoot from the Sonar caste. The Manjhal-Tuiya of Lohardaga may similarly be a branch of the Turi. In Bastar, this process may be seen actually at work at the present day. Grigson, describing the Maria blacksmiths, remarks that 'these blacksmiths appear to be of Maria stock, speaking the Maria language, indistinguishable physically, having the same phratrics and clans, and following the same customs. Enquiry showed in every case that some of the blacksmiths either had themselves once been cultivators or had fathers who were originally cultivators. In some cases they had obtained cultivators' daughters as wives; but these appeared all to be runaway matches without the consent of the girls' parents; in other cases cultivators had become blacksmiths in order to marry blacksmiths' daughters. Halba and Telanga neighbours refer to them often as Kammar by caste; but so far as the word can be used of them, it is clearly rather an occupational term. Yet for some reason the aboriginal everywhere looks down on the smith, and as soon as a Maria takes to this occupation he must live with his fellow-smiths either in a separate village or hamlet, or segregated in a separate part of the village. It is obvious that where there is a social ban on any occupation, the evolution of a new tribe from those who take to it is greatly accelerated. A sub-tribe of Korwa in Surguja, Jashpur and Palamau was already

known in Risley's day as the Agaria-Korwa, for they made axes from iron of their own smelting, and a similar group of Binjhia was known as the Agaria-Binjhia. Both these groups are now probably merged in the main Agaria tribe. The Savara have a division called Muli who work in iron and are separating from the original tribe. Some of the Kharia also smelt and work iron, but have not yet become a separate group. Mr. S. C. Roy believes that the present-day Astir of Bihar are simply a tribe of Munda or Kol stock which has adopted the characteristic occupation of the ancient Asur and with it the tribal name.<sup>19</sup>

If this is correct, we can see the entire social process at work in Raipur. A group of Gond takes to iron-smelting. Despised by their brethren they become a separate group under the name of Agaria. Later they see in Hinduism a chance to recover something of their social position and they begin to call themselves Lohar, forgetting either that they were Gond or Agaria. It may be added that the Agaria have the same customs and beliefs as the Gond, often the same steps. But this would be equally true of the Korwa among whom many of the Bilaspur Agaria has their homes, while in Chota Nagpur the Agaria Asur share custom, religion and totems with other Munda tribes.

The older writers generally refer to the iron-smelters of Ranchi and Palamau as Agaria, though today these are more often called Asur. Ball's authority may be given as supporting S. C. Roy. In Palamau, he says, 'the Agarias, it is considered by the best authorities, belong to the Munda family of aboriginals; but another tribe, the Kol Lohar, is, it is supposed, Uraons'. And elsewhere he says that in the Ramgurh Hills he

was speaking of a date before 1880 there were Kol, using small furnaces, whom he thought identical with the 'Aguriah's' of Hazaribagh and Palamau. The Mirzapur Agaria are, according to the Gazetteer, of non-Aryan origin and connected with other Dravidians such as the subdivision of the Korwa described by Dalton and Risley, the Parahiya and the Mandla Agaria. On the whole, however, I am inclined to think that the Agaria are something more than a branch, or a collection of branches, of another tribe or tribes. There is a distinct physical and cultural resemblance between all sections of the Agaria: they have the same professional technique, they have the same mythology, they worship the same gods, and they have the same magic. Unless they are all ultimately one tribe I cannot understand how the cult of Lohasur should be so widespread and so vigorous among them. Otherwise I would have thought that this cult and the memory of such tribal heroes as Logundi would have disappeared before the all-prevailing influence of Hinduism and the more powerful cult-heroes like Twashtri or Vishwakarma.

This belief is strengthened if, as I hope to show in the next chapter, the Agaria and Asur are descendants of a tribe which is represented by the Asura of Sanskrit legend. I suggest it is possible that this ancient Asur tribe invaded the Munda country in Bihar. They were driven back by the Munda, under the rallying standard of their deity Sing-bonga, to the very borders of Bihar, and thence spread west and north, through Surguja and Udaipur, Korea and the north of Bilaspur, a weaker branch filtering down to Raipur, until in the Maikal

Hills they found a congenial home and a plentiful supply of iron. The migration to Mirzapur through Rewa seems to have occurred in recent times, at least since the British occupation.

These movements were controlled by two chief factors a supply of ore and a forest of sarai trees, from which charcoal suitable for use in the furnaces can best be made. The Agaria are a pleasant and mediocre race. Their chief faults are those of timidity and dullness. Writing in 1867, Colonel Ward described them as ‘ the laziest and most drunken of all the Gonds. He says again how the forges are generally set up near the mines ‘as the people are much too lazy to carry the ore any distance ‘ an unusually stupid remark, for every industry in the world tries to get its factory as near as possible to the source of supply.

As a matter of fact, the Agaria are a very hard-working people. The conditions of their life are strenuous and exacting; I have seldom spent more exhausting days than in their company. The long tramp through the forest, the cutting of the trees and the tedious and smoky business of making charcoal, the journey home with laden baskets this alone is no light labour. The pits where iron may be dug are often in the most inaccessible places and require long climbs in the hills, followed by digging with small picks in a confined space. The work of the smithy is heavy enough: often Researcher have watched the household rise at three or four in the morning and work on till ten or eleven without food or refreshment. When the long labour of the smithy is over, there is sometimes work in the fields, or on the tobacco-patch, or they have to carry their wares to a distant bazaar. The Chokh have a rule that the day

following a big bazaar should be observed as a holiday. Nor are the Agaria, at least at present, specially drunken. It seems that they drink much less than the Baiga. In Bilaspur, the excise policy was at one time driving them to drugs such as ganja and bhang, the inevitable result of forcing the political fad of prohibition on primitive people.

The Agaria are not nearly as jolly and amusing as the Baiga. They are not good company, and there are very few whose personalities stand out memorably. They are thin, timid, anxious little men, depressed and hungry. Borne of the younger men, however, are not unlike young Baiga, good-looking, friendly and affectionate. Deo Singh of Umaria, Buddhu of Bahapur, Kuar Singh of Gaura, Anath of Dumarkachhar are interesting and attractive youths but as compared with the Baiga, how few come to the mind! Murwa and Nanas of Karanjia were two very attractive boys; we employed Murwa for some years as a teacher and he did well at it the children liked him. Nanas might have grown up into a leader of his tribe; he was a good craftsman and sensitive and intelligent. But he developed tuberculosis and died while still young. His elder brother Sujawal is a famous singer and dancer, very popular, a great social success. The Agaria, in view of their occupation, are fairly clean, and they keep their houses and smithies in good order. They are generally believed to be honest, and except for a group of railway thieves near Pendra Road, do not often come into the courts.

But work among them was difficult and sometimes depressing. They were not deliberately uninformative, but most of them had very little to say. Yet they are good craftsmen and could easily be trained,

and it would be a thousand pities if they were to die out. Owing to their craft the Agaria have more to do with the outside world than some other aboriginals. 'If you think iron is nothing/ so runs one of their proverbs, 'look out of your house and see it wandering all over the three worlds. There is iron everywhere, and it is all 'their' iron. It all comes from Lohripur. It is born there and the world goes to steal it. When the rat sent by the Hindu Bhimsen burrowed under the city, the iron flowed out and away across the world. The Agaria are specially fascinated by trains and no wonder, for here are iron and fire and coal combined in a gigantic moving furnace. An Agaria who had actually travelled in a train Researcher only know one who has composed the following Karma song which was sung in the wilds of the Motinala forest. The Agaria have no politics. 'We were born and ripened under the English Raj', said an Agaria in Motinala, 'and all our money goes to stuff that scarecrow. 'But in the same breath he was calling the British Government 'Bhagavan the British are Bhagavan, for they create the jiv.

Four months after the war had started, Researcher found many Agaria in the Motinala Range who had not heard of it. But shortly afterwards in lyapha Zamindari Researcher was mistaken for a recruiting officer, and Researcher started a panic in a bazaar in Udaipur State among the people who thought Researcher had come to carry them away for the war. Researcher has met many Asur, Chokh and Patharia who had never heard of Mahatma Gandhi or the Congress. In the Karanjia Range there was an old Agaria who believed Gandhi to be a god, and every year offered him coconut, supari and incense. But in



parts of Bilaspur near the road, Researcher found some bitterness against the Congress on account of the high price of liquor. Here it was seven-and-a-half annas a bottle, compared with two annas in Mandla. ‘What is the use of stopping our liquor,’ said an Agaria bitterly. ‘This has become ganja-ilaka, the Province of Ganja, and that is worse for us. This is very true, for the effect on a man is far more devastating, and many of the Chokli Agaria has taken to the habit with disastrous results.

Some insight into the character of the Agaria is gained from a study of their proverbs, though they are not rich in these. They are undoubtedly proud of their craft and the physical strength that enables them to perform it. The Agaria like to feel that, even if their social standing is low, everyone has to come to them. Everyone comes to say, Ram ram. He answers Johar. ‘The Agaria are the mainstay of the village economy and they know it. ‘The black iron is born in the Agaria’s bones, and the world enjoys the sweets of it. ‘The Agaria sometimes compare themselves to the Sonar goldsmiths, so much more well-to-do, yet in the Agaria’s view, no happier. ‘The poor Sonar must tap tap a hundred times: the Agaria does it with a single blow/ ‘He who has gold in his house death is near him. He who has iron in his house can live secure. Gold is the brother of the Sonar; iron is the brother of the Agaria but in the long run iron brings safety and happiness.

For the Agaria is absorbed in his business. ‘The Agaria cares not for going here and there; all his intoxication is for his hammer. He is lord in his little smithy. ‘The tongs are yours, the hammer is yours. Hammer away just as you like. Love affairs may be ruinous to his trade.

‘If the heart is abroad, who will care for the smithy? One or two proverbs reveal the Agaria in unexpectedly reflective moods. Just as God seems to care little for the fate of his creatures, so ‘what cares the bellows-blower for the fate of the cinders? God too makes no distinctions between man and man. ‘Brother Agaria, bellows-blower, you make no distinctions for you put into the same fire the finest sword and the roughest axe-head or sickle.

On the other hand, the Agaria traditions add no little support to the suggestion that the Agaria-Asur of today is descended from and in the same line of business as the Asura of old legend. In the first place there is the similarity of name. Again, the Asura of Sanskrit mythology holds the very place which tradition assigns to the blacksmith all over the world. The Deva, like the fairies and spirits of Kurope, belong to the Age of Stone. The Asura, like the blacksmith, is the new, disturbing, hostile bringer of the Age of Iron. This is the real reason for the implacable enmity between the Gods and the Asura.

This conflict finds many echoes in the Agaria legends: just as Vishnu cheats the Asura out of their share in the rich products of the churning of the ocean, so Bhagavan tricks the first Agaria Raja, lyogundi, and destroys his city. As Arjuna and the Panda had fight against the Asura and capture their forts, so do the Pandava, led by Bhimsen, attack and destroy I/ohripur, the Agaria citadel. As the Asura Rahu for ever seeks to devour the Sun, so does the Agaria Jwala Mukhi, and in Mandla at least there is a strong tradition of enmity between the Sun and the tribe and a strict taboo on working iron in the Sun’s rays.

Geography can give us little help, but it is just worthy of mention that, according to Reuben, near Jubbulpore there were three metal castles of the Asura ; and the upper part of the Narbada, the home of the most characteristic Agaria, is the main region of the mythical Asura. An iron fortress of the Asura is mentioned in the Rigveda.

It is true that the connection of the Asura with iron is not very close, but there is some connection. Roy tells how the Munda describe the old Asur giants as a pundi or white people of enormous stature, strength and agility, who could in the course of one night walk a hundred miles with giant strides to attend dances at distant villages and walk back to their own homes before dawn. They are said to have lived in huge brick palaces, to have been engaged most of their time in smelting copper and iron, and the tradition goes that they even ate iron and blew fire from their mouths. The power to eat iron was characteristic of the first Agaria, and many such fiery meals and excrements are described in the mythology. On the other hand Reuben says that fire-eating is not ascribed to the Asura of Sanskrit literature. In the later period, however, in the Epics and Purana, we hear of iron demons. Thus in the Mahabharata we read of four demons made of iron who punish a bad king at the behest of a saint. They are demons with iron faces and one has an iron head (Ayahsiras). Another demon with an iron arrow is Ayahsanku. One of the demons killed by Krishna is Lohajandha. In the Vishnu Purana, we read how the saint Gargya eats iron as an asceticism offered to Siva in order to get a son who could not be overcome by the inhabitants of Mathura who had laughed at his

childlessness. The son was the dark-faced Kalayavana, the most dangerous of all Krishna's enemies. In the Linga Purana, which gives an account of different lingams, some are golden, some copper for the Aditya, but the Daitya and Rakshasa produce and worship an iron one. The Asura are not specifically mentioned here, but they are described as lingam-worshippers, a characteristic also of the early Asur. In this Purana, the Asura are also called 'dark as the blue petals of a lotus'.

Many Purana contain the story of the milking of the earth and tell how the gods use a golden bucket, ancestors a silver, the mountains a crystal, the Yaksha a pot of unbaked clay, the Gandharva lotus leaves, the Naga pumpkins, and the Asura an iron bucket. No one has studied this problem more elaborately than Dr Reuben, and we cannot end this chapter more fittingly than by quoting the conclusion to his *Eisenschmiede und Dämonen in Indien*.<sup>20</sup>

### ➤ TRIBAL SYSTEM

Tribals are not part of the caste system. This is an egalitarianism society. Christian tribals do not automatically lose their traditional tribal rules. When in 1891 a missionary asked 150 Munda Christians to "inter-dine" with people of different rank, only 20 Christians did so, and many converts lost their new faith. Father Haghenbeek concluded on this episode that these rules are not "pagan", but a sign of "national sentiment and pride", and wrote:

“On the contrary, while proclaiming the equality of all men before God, we now tell them: preserve your race pure, keep your customs, and

refrain from eating with Lohars (blacksmiths), Turis (bamboo workers) and other people of lower rank. To become good Christians, it (inter-dining) is not required.”<sup>21</sup>

However, many scholars argue that the claim that tribals are an egalitarian society in contrast to a caste-based society is a part of a larger political agenda by some to maximize any differences from tribal and urban societies. According to scholar Koenraad Elst, caste practices and social taboos among Indian tribals date back to antiquity:

"The Munda tribals not only practice tribal endogamy and commensality, but also observe a jāti division within the tribe, buttressed by notions of social pollution, a mythological explanation and harsh punishments. A Munda Catholic theologian testifies: The tribals of Chhotanagpur are an endogamous tribe. They usually do not marry outside the tribal community, because to them the tribe is sacred. The way to salvation is the tribe. Among the Santals, it is tabooed to marry outside the tribe or inside ones clan, just as Hindus marry inside their caste and outside their gotra. More precisely: To protect their tribal solidarity, the Santals have very stringent marriage laws. A Santal cannot marry a non-Santal or a member of his own clan. The former is considered as a threat to the tribe's integrity, while the latter is considered incestuous. Among the Ho of Chhotanagpur, the trespasses which occasion the exclusion from the tribe without chance of appeal, are essentially those concerning endogamy and exogamy.”<sup>22</sup> Inter-dining have also been prohibited by many Indian tribal peoples.

Most tribes are concentrated in heavily forested areas that combine inaccessibility with limited political or economic significance. Historically, the economy of most tribes was subsistence agriculture or hunting and gathering. Tribal members traded with outsiders for the few necessities they lacked, such as salt and iron. A few local Hindu craftsmen might provide such items as cooking utensils.

In the early 20th century, however, large areas fell into the hands of non-tribals, on account of improved transportation and communications. Around 1900, many regions were opened by the government to settlement through a scheme by which inward migrants received ownership of land free in return for cultivating it. For tribal people, however, land was often viewed as a common resource, free to whomever needed it. By the time tribals accepted the necessity of obtaining formal land titles, they had lost the opportunity to lay claim to lands that might rightfully have been considered theirs. The colonial and post-independence regimes belatedly realized the necessity of protecting tribals from the predations of outsiders and prohibited the sale of tribal lands. Although an important loophole in the form of land leases was left open, tribes made some gains in the mid-twentieth century, and some land was returned to tribal peoples despite obstruction by local police and land officials.

In the 1970s, tribal peoples came again under intense land pressure, especially in central India. Migration into tribal lands increased dramatically, as tribal people lost title to their lands in many ways – lease, forfeiture from debts, or bribery of land registry officials.

Other non-tribals simply squatted, or even lobbied governments to classify them as tribal to allow them to compete with the formerly established tribes. In any case, many tribal members became landless labourers in the 1960s and 1970s, and regions that a few years earlier had been the exclusive domain of tribes had an increasingly mixed population of tribals and non-tribals.

Government efforts to evict non-tribal members from illegal occupation have proceeded slowly; when evictions occur at all, those ejected are usually members of poor, lower castes.

Improved communications, roads with motorized traffic, and more frequent government intervention figured in the increased contact that tribal peoples had with outsiders. Commercial highways and cash crops frequently drew non-tribal people into remote areas. By the 1960s and 1970s, the resident non-tribal shopkeeper was a permanent feature of many tribal villages. Since shopkeepers often sell goods on credit (demanding high interest), many tribal members have been drawn deeply into debt or mortgaged their land. Merchants also encourage tribals to grow cash crops (such as cotton or castor-oil plants), which increases tribal dependence on the market for basic necessities. Indebtedness is so extensive that although such transactions are illegal, traders sometimes 'sell' their debtors to other merchants, many like indentured peons.

The final blow for some tribes has come when non-tribals, through political jockeying, have managed to gain legal tribal status, that is, to be listed as a Scheduled Tribe.

Tribes in the Himalayan foothills have not been as hard-pressed by the intrusions of non-tribals. Historically, their political status was always distinct from the rest of India. Until the British colonial period, there was little effective control by any of the empires centered in peninsular India; the region was populated by autonomous feuding tribes. The British, in efforts to protect the sensitive northeast frontier, followed a policy dubbed the "Inner Line"; non-tribal people were allowed into the areas only with special permission. Post-independence governments have continued the policy, protecting the Himalayan tribes as part of the strategy to secure the border with China.

Government policies on forest reserves have affected tribal peoples profoundly. Government efforts to reserve forests have precipitated armed resistance on the part of the tribal peoples involved. Intensive exploitation of forests has often meant allowing outsiders to cut large areas of trees and ultimately replacing mixed forests capable of sustaining tribal life with single-product plantations. Non-tribals have frequently bribed local officials to secure effective use of reserved forest lands.

The northern tribes have thus been sheltered from the kind of exploitation that those elsewhere in South Asia have suffered. In Arunachal Pradesh, for example, tribal members control commerce and most lower-level administrative posts. Government construction projects in the region have provided tribes with a significant source of cash. Some tribes have made rapid progress through the education system. Instruction was begun in Assamese but was eventually changed to



Hindi; by the early 1980s, English was taught at most levels. Northeastern tribal people have thus enjoyed a certain measure of

Agaria is one of little known tribe found in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh in India. The Agarias are closely related to the Gonds. They have been metal workers from time immemorial. They are called Agarias because of their little furnaces, which are used for conversion of iron-ore into iron for making the metal malleable for manufacture of weapons and agricultural implements. The Agarias live in close juxtaposition with both the Baigas and Gonds.<sup>23</sup>

### ➤ CLASSIFICATION CRITERIA AND DEMANDS

Population complexities, and the controversies surrounding ethnicity and language in India, sometimes make the official recognition of groups as adivasis (by way of inclusion in the Scheduled Tribes list) political and contentious. However, regardless of their language family affiliations, Australoid and Negrito groups that have survived as distinct forest, mountain or island dwelling tribes in India and are often classified as adivasi. The relatively autonomous Mongoloid tribal groups of Northeastern India (including Khasis, Apatani and Nagas), who are mostly Austro-Asiatic or Tibeto-Burman speakers, are also considered to be adivasis: this area comprises 7.5% of India's land area but 20% of its adivasi population. However, not all autonomous northeastern groups are considered adivasis; for instance, the Tibeto-Burman-speaking Meitei of Manipur was once tribal but, having been settled for many centuries, is caste Hindus.

It is also difficult, for a given social grouping, to definitively decide whether it is a 'caste' or a 'tribe'. A combination of internal social organization, relationship with other groups, self-classification and perception by other groups has to be taken into account to make a categorization, which is at best inexact and open to doubt. These categorizations have been diffuse for thousands of years, and even ancient formulators of caste-discriminatory legal codes (which usually only applied to settled populations, and not adivasis) were unable to come up with clean distinctions.

An additional difficulty in deciding whether a group meets the criteria to be adivasi or not are the aspirational movements created by the federal and state benefits, including job and educational reservations, enjoyed by groups listed as scheduled tribes (STs). In Manipur, Meitei commentators have pointed to the lack of scheduled tribe status as a key economic disadvantage for Meiteis competing for jobs against groups that are classified as scheduled tribes. In Assam, Rajbongshi representatives have demanded scheduled tribe status as well. In Rajasthan, Haryana and other northern states, the Gujjar community has demanded ST status, even blockading the national capital of Delhi to press their demand. In several cases, these claims to tribalhood are disputed by tribes who are already listed in the schedule and fear economic losses if more powerful groups are recognized as scheduled tribes; for instance, the Rajbongshi demand faces resistance from the Bodo tribe, and the Meena tribe has vigorously opposed Gujjar aspirations to be recognized as a scheduled tribe.

Bharat Devsinh Patadia, a salt pan worker from Ajitgadh said, "So far we have not been forced out of the sanctuary area, however the officials have told us to leave on our own."<sup>24</sup>

Also, from last many years the lease of salt-pan workers has not been renewed. "There are close to 10-12 thousand families or over 40,000 salt pan workers in the area. Each family can produce an average of 500-600 tonnes annually from one pan. The 'agariyas' have been into salt harvesting for over 300-400 years. This is the community's livelihood since ages. Where can we go now?" said Thakkersinh Dharamsinh Mahaliya, a salt pan worker from Himmatpura in Surendranagar district.

The season for salt harvesting is from September to June when over 10,000 agariya families wade three kilometers deep in the deserts in search of livelihood. A worker earns about Rs 140 per tonnes of salt.

"The government has stopped renewing or issuing new leases to salt pan workers from last ten years. Since some companies cannot buy directly from the workers in Little Rann, they buy it through traders and contractors,"<sup>25</sup> said Jeetu Zala, member of Kuda Agar Kamdar Mahamandal.

The government had entered into long-term lease agreement with some big players hence their activity is not considered illegal, said another worker.

According to Bheemani Jaresa, an agariya community leader, "Although some measures like a mobile ration shop and potable water supply through tankers are being initiated, these are certainly not

enough. Our demand is that the government must introduce a minimum support price for the salt produced by us on the same lines as given to farmers for agricultural produce."<sup>26</sup>

Despite growing demand from chemical industry, the salt pan workers had to face a brunt of rising fuel prices and excessive rains in last two years.

Temperature variation is very high which ranges from 0°C minimum to 48° C maximum making habitation difficult especially for the People working in the saltpans. Many of them contract diseases working in saltpans. Malaria, skin diseases, eye problems, and stomach problems are very common. What ever is the disease there is no medical facilities available in the village. They have to travel minimum 20 K.M to the nearest place for the service. People working in the saltpans it becomes further difficult.

For several villages together there is a Primary health centre but if that itself is sick with lack of medical staff and doctors then what good can they expect? Speaking about the Govt. mobile service, its frequency is low, irregular and untimely. It is this situation of the villages and their request forced us to begin a dispensary and start mobile medical service in the area.

Almost all the bordering villages are completely saline therefore we cannot expect potable water in those villages. They get drinking water either through pipes or tanker supply. Where even cities fail in regular water supply can they expect anything better? So far Govt. hasn't taken any measures to solve this problem by promoting rainwater

harvesting. Little Rann of Kutch is also a reserved sanctuary for Asiatic Wild Ass, an endangered fauna of the world. It is the only place in the world where we can find this variety of wild ass. And therefore it is also important to keep the ecology of the place intact. More than the salt manufacturing by the villagers big companies are trying to acquire the land on lease which will disturb the ecosystem by mass production of salt, industrialization and heavy vehicular service in the area. Unpredicted salt market is not regulated by Govt., and the salt traders, who are middlemen, control the whole business. As a result the real manufacturers- Agarias are exploited heavily and they live in inhuman conditions. The middlemen in liaison with the industries try to pay very low price for the salt creating situations favorable to them and thereby the agaria forced to sell the salt at a lower price. These are some of the issues that affect all the villages on the periphery of the Little Rann. Lack of electricity, water, and road add to the misery of people in some of these villages.

The Agariya are one of the Scheduled Tribes of India. They live primarily in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. Those in the vicinity of Mirzapur were involved in mining and smelting iron during the British Raj. The Agariya speak the Agariya language as well as Hindi and Kutchi. There is a group known as the Agariya in Gujarat that are salt makers in the desert. It is not clear if these Agariya have any relation to the others. In the early 20th century, the Agariya in Little Run of Kutch were divided into totemic groups. They had been heavily influenced by

Hinduism. They called themselves Hindu but did not worship any of the major Hindu deities which other Hindus did.

"Agraria" is intended to be an innovative Low-energy Use, Small, and Sustainable Community. The Low-energy Use designation comes from the knowledge that global oil production will peak soon, followed by natural gas, and ultimately by coal and uranium. Low-energy, in the context of this document, implies a goal of using one-fourth of the current average energy used per capita. Sustainable implies a community that can operate, to the extent possible, without inputs (particularly of fossil fuels) and outputs (such as trash and sewage), but also of other materials. Small is a designation based on the founding principles of our organization, the Arthur Morgan Institute for Community Solutions, that states smallness itself is a value for positive social organization.

And finally Community implies a way of living together and is also based on the principles of our organization which views a cooperative way of life to be preferable to current competitive ways of living. Agraria is planned to be an attractive low-energy community that will serve as a model for similar development across the country as a response to global warming and Peak Oil. (Peak Oil refers to the point in time when global oil production reaches its maximum and begins to decline. According to the Association for the Study of Peak Oil and Gas this may occur as early as 2007. Read a Q&A on Peak Oil [here](#).)

The organic gardens, low-energy building techniques and other aspects of the neighborhood-community design will be strong

educational tools and even sources of income for some of the neighborhood' residents.<sup>27</sup>

### ❖ **PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICALITY OF AGARIYA**

The current energy crisis in the world, and the high probability of it worsening, has generated a sense of urgency in developing alternatives. Thus there is a great need for low-energy-use agrarian models. Although this Agraria neighborhood-community proposal may include new ways of living that are unique, some compromise may be made to it in order to achieve early implementation or to fit within zoning or other limitations. One example is composting toilets which may be controversial and zoning that requires standard water toilets.

This agrarian development will be closely integrated with Yellow Springs, Ohio, taking its needs into consideration. Having it be part of a small town is based on a belief that Peak Oil will lead to a large migration from cities to rural areas (large meaning 10s of millions of people). Furthermore, as oil and gas diminish, society will require far more farmers and others who produce locally grown food and other locally produced goods. Agrarian-style developments will protect the agricultural land and provide housing for those working the land. The design also takes into account a future when food can no longer be transported the current average of 1200 miles, nor can we expend 10 calories of fossil fuel for every calorie of food produced.

Yellow Springs, similar to other small communities in the U.S., is dealing with the problems of declining employment, an aging citizenry

and a declining population. The current economic system (based on high fossil fuel energy use) rewards population concentration and size while punishing smallness and community cooperation. Peak Oil will provide the opportunity for resurgence of small communities. Agraria will be a practical model for this small town renewal, including the revitalization of the many skills and traditions lost in the rush for industrial urbanization.

It is our view that new agrarian communities will be most successful if done in proximity to existing small communities. This will allow rebuilding of small towns while renewing and protecting nearby agricultural land. Thus Agraria is intended to be a "neighborhood" of Yellow Springs. This will enable a more successful implementation than would be possible if developed in a more remote rural area with limited infrastructure. Existing small towns will be enhanced by the development of nearby Agraria communities and provide a place for peak oil forced de-urbanization. This is seen as preferable to the alternative of developing Agraria communities in undeveloped areas.

The name Agraria has been selected for its association with the Agrarian tradition, as described in numerous books. It is in contrast to the existing world paradigm of Industrialism. Agrarianism and Industrialism are viewed as two mutually incompatible world views. Industrialism and the growth model of society have led to the decline of small farms and towns and the loss of valuable agricultural land. We project that declining fossil fuels in the next 10 to 20 years will reverse this trend until a more balanced state between urban and rural is



reached. Industrialism will not totally disappear, but will be controlled by energy quotas and pollution limits.

High-energy-use industrial agriculture and businesses must evolve to be sustainable, a state which is possible only with the curtailment of fossil fuel consumption.

Finally, Agraria is based on the social principles, which form the underlying philosophy of organizations like Community Service, The Land Institute, The Schumacher Society and The Fellowship for Intentional Communities, as well as writers like Wendell Berry, David Orr and Wes Jackson. Agraria is not a return to the past, nor does it imply that small, rural communities were the ultimate social organization. Rather it represents an evolution toward community living in a way that is frugal in terms of fossil fuel consumption. It also represents a return to high standards of soil fertility, with a minimum release of toxins into the environment. But it does not imply, for example, returning to a lower level of medical knowledge, education or other services.<sup>28</sup>

#### ❖ **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF AGARIA**

Agraria homes will be clustered with paths replacing roads, leaving over half of the land for gardens, orchards and recreation. The Agraria neighborhood will not be completely "car-free" – that does not appear possible at this time. However, it will not be "car-focused". Agraria will not include garages, driveways and roads for cars. Thus cars will not be driven directly to each residence, but will be relegated to parking areas on the edge of the development, requiring one to walk or

bike to their residence. However, due to the cluster concept, parking will be relatively close to the houses.<sup>29</sup>

### ➤ **OCCUPATION OF AGARIYA COMMUNITY**

Agraria supports the concept of local economies. "Local economies" suggests a major change in the current distribution of goods and services. This change will be a move from highly centralized production facilities owned and managed by large corporations to decentralized facilities managed by small local business owners. Centralized corporations require large economies of scale of production which are extremely energy intensive. A second major change will be in the mix of goods and services delivered. Our current society is focused on consumer goods which have a high content of energy, both in manufacturing and shipping costs, and a low labor component. Agraria will be focused on products with a low content of energy and a higher labor input.

The occupational implications are that high tech, high energy consumptive jobs will decline. More labor intensive jobs with a high level of manual skills will replace them. Less fossil fuel energy implies more human labor. In addition these jobs will tend to be local because high gasoline prices will encourage working locally rather than commuting.

Craft products will replace low cost manufactured goods and this implies an increase in trade and craft skills. As plastics decline and wood reappears, classic woodworking skills will be reborn on a local level. The same will occur for mechanical metal materials and local

custom manufacturing will prevail. A community is more than a set of houses – it includes skilled people. The low-energy use and the sustainability parameters require that certain trades be available within the community itself. Some of the more obvious and most important ones are: farmers/gardeners, food preservers and woodworkers/builders.

The goal is for Agrarian residents to work and live within their community. Some residents might work on premises to maintain gardens, grounds, common buildings, shared equipment, or may run educational programs from the community. Common space includes business space (offices and shops) and business incubator space as well as space for farming and orchards. There will be a major shift to growing and storing of local food and the associated skills will be developed. Provisions in the covenants of the community will insure that such personnel are always resident in the neighborhood-community.

The history of the formation of this Agaria tribal community is quite interesting. In fact the name, Agaria has been derived from the most revered Hindu god of fire, namely Agni. Some historians also claimed that the name originated from the demon that was believed to be originated from the flames of fire. The name of that demon of tribal community is Agyasur.

Although they do not form a homogenous group, most of them primitively belong to Dravidian speaking group. Agaria tribes have been branched into various sub castes, Lohar castes too fall amongst them. Others include Sonureni, Dhurua, Tekam, Markam, Uika, Purtai, Marai

etc. Main languages that they speak, for obvious reason, also have originated from the famous Dravidian language family group.

Agaria tribes are chiefly iron smelters by profession. In the scheduled regions of Central India, the whole of the Agaria populace reside in their own part of a village. Often they have built their own settlement in the outskirts of a town also. There are a handful of Agaria tribes who have also settled down in cities and adapted to different trading occupations like laborers, masons, grocery etc. Otherwise, almost all of them stick to their original occupation of iron smelting, which involves lot of hard work and labour.

As per conventions of Agaria culture, both males and females involve in the words and support each other. Both of them collect the ore and make the charcoal for the furnaces. In Bilashpur district, however, only the males carry on this task. At nightfall the women cleanse and also prepare the 'kilns' for the next day. They also break the pieces of ore and roast them into fire. Special cylindrical vents are made from clay for oozing out air to a furnace. Also mantra (prayer) is recited near the furnace at the end of it.

Festivals of an Agaria society are truly colorful, bearing the tradition of their own religion. Their ancestral god is Dulha Deo, and during festivals especially during Phaguan and Dasahia, the Agaria community offers quite a number of animals like goat, fowl etc. They also worship the forest Gond deity, Bura Deo and also the demon Lohasur, is the revered deity, whom they believe dwells the 'smelting

kilns'. Enrichment of Agaria tribal community is widely possible due to its language, festival festivities and also in its exotic lifestyle.<sup>30</sup>

### ➤ ENDOGAMY, EXOGAMY AND ETHNOGENESIS

Part of the challenge is that the endogamous nature of tribes is also conformed to by the vast majority of Hindu castes. Indeed, many historians and anthropologists believe that caste endogamy reflects the once-tribal origins of the various groups who now constitute the settled Hindu castes. Another defining feature of caste Hindu society, which is often used to contrast them with Muslim and other social groupings, is lineage/clan (or gotra) and village exogamy.

However, these in-marriage taboos are also held ubiquitously among tribal groups, and do not serve as reliable differentiating markers between caste and tribe. Again, this could be an ancient import from tribal society into settled Hindu castes. Interestingly, tribes such as the Muslim Gujjars of Kashmir and the Kalash of Pakistan observe these exogamous traditions in common with caste Hindus and non-Kashmiri adivasis, though their surrounding Muslim populations do not.

Some anthropologists, however, draw a distinction between tribes who have continued to be tribal and tribes that have been absorbed into caste society in terms of the breakdown of tribal (and therefore caste) boundaries, and the proliferation of new mixed caste groups. In other words, ethnogenesis (the construction of new ethnic identities) in tribes occurs through a fission process (where groups splinter-off as new

tribes, which preserves endogamy), whereas with settled castes it usually occurs through intermixture (in violation of strict endogamy).<sup>31</sup>

### ➤ EDUCATION

Education Department manage Education sector in Primary, Secondary and Higher Education. Various other branches dealing in the subject like Technical Education are also being managed by the Department. Policy structures are framed for Literacy enhancement and implementation of quality education and distance learning with technology. The Department aims for "Smart Goals" with a future vision "Education for All" to reduce drop out rates, Focus on Girl Education, Teachers' Training and a series of other Initiatives are being implemented.<sup>32</sup>

### ❖ ABOUT WANDERING LABOR

Owing to their craft the Agaria have more to do with the outside world than some other aboriginals. 'If you think iron is nothing so runs one of their proverbs, 'look out of your house and see it wandering all over the three worlds.'<sup>33</sup>

There are said to be a few other minor subdivisions of the tribes, but Researcher have not personally been able to see any of them. Rowney, in a work that can hardly be regarded as authoritative, refers to the 'Tareemooks', a tribe of wandering blacksmiths, who from their name appear to be connected with the Mukhi Agaria. They are, he says, 'a poor and improvident race, living from hand to mouth. They are of a

dark colour, though not quite so dark as the Gonds and some of the other tribes, and are a little taller and better formed than all of them. They are very laborious also, and are always loyally assisted in their labours by their women, who collect wood in the jungles to make charcoal for them, and work their forge-bellows; but they cannot, for all that, make the two ends meet, principally from being much addicted to drink. The life of the tribe, moreover, is very loose; there is no such thing as constancy among the men or chastity among the women; and married men make love to each other's wives almost openly.

It was spent four days in the Little Rann wild ass sanctuary in Gujarat, Western India. It was one of the most memorable experiences of my trip so far. Staying in the desert inspired me to write about many things, including the salt workers (the agaria).

Nowadays Researcher expects to see something miraculous everyday. At least one thing every day has to make an ever-lasting impression on me. This time this experience came in the form of a young girl, may be 6-7 years old, who walked to us around the salt field from the other side where there was a simple hut. The girl was holding an iron mug in her hand. She was wearing a bright red dress and light colored pants. She had no shoes. Her black scrubby hair reached her shoulders. She came towards us. Researcher started getting my camera ready. She approached the salt worker and handed him the mug. Researcher could not help thinking that Researcher had just seen something utterly sweet. Researcher asked the men if Researcher can take a picture of the girl and they said OK. The men even went as far as

to seat the girl on the pile of salt by which our jeep was parked. Researcher did not have that in my mind but Researcher settled for it.

Later, looking at the pictures of the girl, Researcher felt a little ashamed for seating her on that pile of salt, which obviously is the livelihood of her family and working on it definitely shortens the lives of her relatives, family and someday maybe even her own. Their vision suffers a lot from the UV rays that are reflected off the surface of the salt pool. Their feet do not burn properly when they are cremated because of years of walking in the salty water!

On the way back Researcher felt like walking instead of riding in the jeep. Researcher tried to tell the driver that he can go home and Researcher can walk. The resort was no more than about 1km away. The driver did not understand and he stopped every 200m to check if Researcher wants to get on. Maybe these people don't understand the thrill of walking in the dark. They don't realize that Researcher is not walking in just any kind of darkness but in the Little Rann of Kutch desert, Gujarat, Western India. That is what tourists want to do here. Walk in the dark in the desert, on a beach in Goa in the moonlight, on top of a hill-station or down a dimly lit street somewhere in Mumbai, looking at the glow of the billboards high above.

The next morning we woke up to the cheerful chatter of the agaria people, the happy voice of the owner of the resort, once an agaria himself, the delightful chirping of birds and the thought of a cup of chai, delivered to my mud hut together with a bucket of hot water for showering. Today, on the second day of the Holi festival, the road close



to the resort was quiet as even the salt truck drivers were on holiday. The jeeps were being prepared for the full-day safari across the desert. A doctor from Dhrangadra and his three doctor friends with their kids were getting ready for their holiday out of the city. They had brought their kids here to relax after school's exam period. The sun was not yet warm enough and Researcher had to wear woolen socks on the stone porch of my hut to keep warm. The night had been chilly and the porch was still cold. At night Researcher had woken up for 40 minutes at 4.12am to look at the full eclipse of the moon. In addition Researcher saw a few satellites, two planes and one shooting star.

It was very curious to see how these people would interact with the salt workers we would be seeing soon. Researcher was delighted to see that there was no problem. The salt workers we saw talked with the doctors but they were not photographed by them, whereas Researcher took many pictures of them and their families and they were always happy, if a little shy, to pose.

We continued then to the highest point in the desert. Out there, where you could no longer see the salt fields, people or cars anywhere, you really felt like being in the desert. As far as the eye could see there was just nothing but grey dry mud, cracked in the sun. The mirages in the horizon created an effect of floating cars, people, trees and bushes. If you have seen any of the Star Wars movies with the hover crafts you can imagine what Researcher saw.

Maybe you are wondering why there is dry mud in this desert. That is because during the monsoon a great part of Little Rann becomes

a shallow lake, over flown with river water. At that time fish and prawn comes from the sea to spawn here. That is why in many pictures you actually see some fishing boats. The same trips Researcher did now with the jeep, would be done on a boat during and right after the monsoon. The salt workers abandon their temporary huts after the salt is collected and the fisher men move into their own huts built on the areas that are slightly higher so that the water does not reach them.

And why is there salt in the desert? The sea used to be here once but due to earthquakes the landscape has changed enormously. The salty water was left trapped under the ground and now pumps are used to get that salty water to surface. The water is kept in shallow pools for five months, between the monsoon and the summer, during which the salt in the water slowly crystallizes and can be collected.<sup>32</sup>

## ❖ CONCLUSION

All in all, the Little Rann was a great experience. This community is a useful group for the society but very rarely the society comes after this community to see and understand the reality. Everything there is to see, and the wonderful place with hardworking people must not be forgotten by the society. The discussions, study and the reports must be a helping tools for this community. Really the study helped me know more about the people who inhabit this place that to us seems completely inhabitable and do work that takes so much from them and gives so little. If we do not take care of the future of this community then the future may ask every individual the answer to the taste of salt.

This community with the difference in nature must be taken in to consideration and they must be taken seriously. Society happily forgets the work and effort of these people, who adds the taste to our food. The future of the society depends on the future of the children and therefore we being the social students must take care of the future of a society by taking care the future of these children.

Change of transformation of individual effects on the transformation of society. Therefore the children must be taken care, thus we take care not only the future of a society but also a social system which is an essential part of social existence.

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## **Chapter - 2**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

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## **Chapter - 2**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### ❖ **INTRODUCTION**

Research studies are based on principles and theories, which are scientifically proved and methodologically designed. Thus the method of seeking and establishing truth is called research study. 'Truth makes you free' is a factual truth taught in all the Holy Scriptures. Gandhiji rightly said, 'my life is a search for truth and my day today living is an experiment of truth'. When the research study is about the facts of social human living conditions or social issues and facts, it can be said as a sociological research study

Primary education is a fundamental right of every child. Thus it becomes a social duty of every individual and society to ensure that all children in our society get basic education. Education could mean all-round development of an individual and human society in large. Heredero J.M. says, "Education is a creative act and an educated man is a creative man."<sup>1</sup> Therefore a sociology student has social responsibility and moral obligation; to ensure by studying and scientifically proving all basic principles or fundamental rights concerning human society and individual in society. It is rightly said by a group of students from the Behaviors science centre Ahmedabad did a study on rural education, "Therefore, if economists, agricultural experts, engineers and other professionals have a vital role to play in rural development, educators

(who deal with persons) can not disclaim responsibility in this task; because they, too, have a role to play in it."

Therefore this research study is focused on the possibility of child education; where the parents are on move for their livelihood. My title for the paper is "Education for the children of wandering labors, in the context of salt workers (Agariyas) in Little Rann of Kutch."

### ❖ **OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH STUDY**

Modern world is a global village. Interactions and transformation of the world is fast developing. Transportation and transactions take place so fast due to inter-net and e-transactions. It is possible today due to modern education; which promotes technology. On a sociological point of view, about child education, no much study have been seen, which deals with education of children of wandering laborers.

Social mobility is a common phenomenon, but effective sociological solutions to the problems of child education, considering the social, economical living situations of society, have not yet developed. It is the responsibility of every society to ensure education of its future generation.

Selection of my topic of research study is done with lot of personal concern, study and discussion with the university professors at Saurashtra University. Because it was found that study on child education with a view of sociological aspect is essential, especially about the children of salt labourers.

My personal encounter with this particular community (Agarias) for the past four years inspired me to do a research study on this topic. No one has done a research study concerning issues of child education of wandering salt labourers; though there are many social activities going on to uplift this community. It is my hope that this study will help the NGOs as well as the government organization to reform their education approach toward the children of wandering labourers.

### ➤ **GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

The study is focused on the salt workers; who go for their work in desert and remain for a period of six months, isolated from the larger village community. Children are the future of any society or community. Here due to the particular situation the future of a particular community is seems to be doomed with illiteracy. Thus it becomes the serious social problem to be studied and encountered.

Considering all above facts it seems that as a student of sociology, myself has the social responsibility to do a scientific study on this particular topic concerning the future of a particular social group. Therefore I would like to do a scientific study with following objectives.

- To empower the education system of saltpan workers, coastal farmers, fisher men and other deprived groups living along the bordering villages of Little Rann of Kutch.
- To give quality education, by re-structuralizing the existing method of education considering with the living conditions.

- Study the ups and downs of traditional system of education and bring improvement in the existing system in this context.
- To understand that, how do people look at education system in this particular social context and study, How to bring social transformation through child education.
- To understand the sociological point of view, how does society look at this problem of child education and what do they look for?
- Study the social mobility is a problem for child education or not.
- To know that how far social mobility affect children and the future generation?

#### ➤ ***SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES***

Salt farming is an on going process, traditionally followed and having minimum technological facilities, in the interior place of Little Rann of Kutch. They remain there, with their family, for the salt farming season. Such people when they go to the salt farms naturally their children also will have to accompany them, forgoing their schooling. It happens in social mobility too. Therefore these are my, specific objectives of study; which not only applicable for salt works but for all wandering labours.

1. To study the children of Agarias (salt-pan workers) and know the present system of education in little ran of Kutch.
2. To evaluate the present educational structure and study whether the present system of education brings creative transformation in all levels, economical growth and formation of future generation?

3. To propose a new method of education in this context.

This place of study is important because of its peculiar character. During the monsoon Little Rann of Kutch becomes a fishing lake and in summer the land turns to be desert for the salt works to prepare for the salt pan. This is also famous for the 'wild ass' sanctuary. There are around 199 villages depending on their livelihood.

Children of all these villages do get education but the traditional methodology of salt work still exist and that is not giving a transforming effect to the people's living conditions of near by societies in Little Rann of Kutch. Therefore a serious study has to be done on the issue and bring about little methodology to transform these situations.

#### ❖ **SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH STUDY**

This study will help me as well as social students to know, how the wandering labourers cop-up with the realities of life. Study will also help us to know the real situation of child education in this community. It will also help us to understand the role of a sociological student in the field of basic education programme. Here is a best example and a real situation; where the labours go for the livelihood and that affect the study of children. The situation is as follows.

Parents have to go for their bread and butter. At the same time they can't leave their children alone at home. Salt workers leave to the fields in the month of Oct. - Nov. and remain in the field for next six months, that is, till April - May. By the time the classes will get over and student's names will be removed from the rolls. Even if they are

permitted to sit for the exams they can't write anything since they did not attend the classes. Such process might continue for two or three years and subsequently children will have to quit the schooling all together. Therefore the society has got social responsibility to look in such situations and bring effective solutions to the problem. It is a serious problem which affects the entire community members, a particular group which is involved in the production of salt.

### ➤ ***SOCIAL ASPECTS***

Social mobility is a universal phenomenon which has to be and will be, in a society. There can be different reasons for that. But it is the duty of society to see to the well beings of community or social group. Since the people have to move for their livelihood, children may suffer by not getting the minimum or essential needs fulfilled. Therefore this study will enlighten the society with the social responsibility. Following points will be studied as social importance.

- This study will help us to know the social aspect of education of children
- Education is a needed for the wholistic development of these children and society will be made clear.
- Government system of primary education may be available but its effectiveness will have to be studied and reformulated for the betterment of particular societies.
- Families and their social situations may not be apt for education system.

- Absence of basic education programmes for these children is a sociological matter.
- Parents may not be educated and not interested in it which will affect the new generation.
- Children may not be interested in education and it may not be a need for them because of the system of education.
- Parents may not be sending children for education.

➤ ***INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS***

Primary education is a fundamental right of every child. The society has the responsibility to see to that, it is made available to each and every child in any society. Education is the basic structure for a human formation. Therefore one can say that the existence of a human society is biased on the education system which brings social stability. Deprivation of this fundamental right due to social mobility can not be justified. Instead it has to be found out all other alternative systems in order to bring human formation. Following are the individual importance of this study

- This will help to formulate effective alternative system of education suiting to the individuals.,
- Role of an education system in an individual transformation. Effective systems may get evolved through a personal study.
- Sociological aspect of education will be made clear to individuals and society in large.

- Knowledge about the education of wandering labours is a personal and social responsibility.
- One can know, whether the physical and psychological aspects of children is taken care through present system of education.
- Children of salt workers may not be capable of study.

These above objectives point out to or lead us towards the development of individuals. In the very objectives we find many concerns of study too. Therefore we shall specify them and reach to stable position of the individual in the society.

#### ➤ ***ECONOMICAL ASPECT***

Society exists because of the economical stability of a society. My pilot study revealed to me that the economical aspects affect the very existence of this community. Though they are part of global economy their day today living is affected by the broken economy system. Proper education in this field can uplift the people from the economical imbalance. My study hopefully will open an eye to the economical aspect of this people.

#### ➤ ***GLOBAL ECONOMY***

Global economy affects the salt business but this people are rarely effective in a global issue. Salt is a global product which is globally used and economically controlled by the economy of global village. My study will look in to the following aspects.



- Whether these people are economically relevant and can bring an economical reformation by the salt business.
- It will help us to know the importance of this community in the global market and the place of these people in a global realm of society.
- Does the global economy affect this business if so how can global economy help the community?

#### ➤ **LOCAL ECONOMY**

Local economy is a broken system of in it functioning. It is the basic reason for the brokenness of this community. Unless and until the community come in to the unity they can do very little in their business as well as in their living conditions. Education in economical knowledge only can uplift the community in to the stability of living. There for my study on education will help the people to build up strong economical stability in the society.

#### ❖ **HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY**

The importance of hypothesis lies in its indispensability for any research. Hypothesis forms the basis of the scientific research. It makes the research more specific and to the point that lead towards the destination. It also provides directions, thus a study with proper hypothesis can arrive at right conclusion in the long run of research. Hypothesis is necessary link between theory and investigations, which

lead to discovery of addition knowledge. Keeping in mind following hypothesis are formulated in-order to do this study.

- The fundamental right of primary education is not materialized in its true sense.
- Education system and methodology that is being followed in this area of rural village is similar to that of urban system of education.
- The education is not generating creative people and technological advancement in people's livelihood.
- There is no link between people's livelihood and education. Parents are not educated and there by do not promote the education of the children.
- Agariya community does not realize the need of education. Children are largely promoted for work with money incentive than backing them to school.

❖ **IMPORTANCE OF STUDY:**

- This will help to effective for the children of salt pan workers to education suiting to the individuals.,
- Role of an education system for the children of salt pan workers and in individual transformation. Effective systems may get evolved through a personal study.
- Sociological aspect of education policy for the society in large will be made clear to individuals.

- Knowledge about the education of children of wandering labours is a personal and social responsibility.
- One can know, whether the physical and psychological aspects of children is taken care through present system of educational policy of the various department of Government.
- Government provides facilitate like seasonal school with hostel to Children of salt workers may be capable of study.

❖ **LIMITATIONS OF STUDY:**

- Education system and methodology is being in this area of rural village is similar. So it is limitations of the present study.
- The education is not generating and creative for the Agaria community people and technological advancement in people's livelihood any where. So it is limitations of the present study.
- Parents are not educated and there do not promote the education of his children. So it is limitations of the present study.
- Agariya community does not realize the need of education and its effect to his community. Children are largely promoted for work with money incentive than backing them to school.
- Proper educational facility for the children of Agaria Community is very limited.
- Proper information is not carefully provided by the responders i.e. Agaria. So it is our limitations of the present study.

## ❖ **FIELD OF RESEARCH STUDY**

In-order to attain the objectives of the study we must have the selection of field with proper study. Here we have selected the research field in a particular context. Mainly focused on education but in a peculiar situation is taken to consideration. That will help us to know the real methodology that is to be applied for the betterment of society and individual.

### ➤ ***GEOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND***

Little Rann of Kutch is situated in western part of India in the state of Gujarat. It touches the Gulf of Kutch along with the borders of four districts viz. Kutch, Surendranagar, Rajkot and Patan. The entire Little Rann and wastelands with an area of 4953 Sq. K.M. have the fringe of about 600 villages of more than 10 lakh saltpan workers and subsistence farmers. My area of study is the border of Rajkot and Surendranagar districts along the Rann of Kutch.

### ➤ ***POPLE AND ECONOMY***

The life of people living at the periphery villages of the Little Rann of Kutch has their economic dependence on Little Rann. Salt manufacturing, grazing and fishing are the major economic activities. Coastal farmers and small salt manufactures called Agarias are the major inhabitants of the place. People living in fringe of the little Rann are basically poor. They can't work round the year. The salt farming lasts only for six months, by April- May.

➤ ***ENVIRONMENT AND LABOUR CONDITION***

Temperature variation is very high which ranges from 0° C minimum to 47° C maximum making habitation difficult. Little Rann of Kutch is also a reserved sanctuary for wild ass. And therefore, it is also important to keep the ecology of the place intact. They leave to be in the fields in the month of Oct.- Nov. and remain in the field for next six months, that is, till April - May. The living conditions of the people are so horrible because extreme climate in the desert.

The middlemen control the production and marketing. Before monsoon people have to transport the salt from the saltpans or else, rainwater may wash off their six month long harvest.

➤ ***HEALTH AND EDUCATION***

Many of them contract diseases, working in saltpans. Strokes and minor illnesses are very common. What ever is the disease there is no medical facilities available in the village. They have to travel minimum 20 K.M to the nearest place for the service. People working in the saltpans it is still difficult.

Concerning the education of the children many NGOs do a lot, effecting a little due to the typical topography and the geographical nature of the Rann. Since there are many NGOs, different varieties of education methodologies also are seen in this particular area. Namely there are mobile schools, temporary schools, non-formal schools, special schools, alternative school etc. It all seems to be breathing their last, due to the peculiarities of the place as well as the people's living conditions.

## ❖ STUDY AREA

The **Rann of Kutch** is a seasonally marshy saline clay desert located in the Thar Desert biogeographic province in the state of Gujarat situated 8 km away from village Kharaghoda located in the Surendranagar District of northwestern India and the Sind province of Pakistan. The name "Rann" comes from the Hindi word ran meaning "salt marsh". The Hindi word is derived from Sanskrit / Vedic word *iriṇa* attested in the Rigveda and Mahābhārata.

Kutch is the name of the district wherein it is situated. The Rann of Kutch comprises some 30,000 square kilometres (10,000 sq mi) between the Gulf of Kutch and the mouth of the Indus River in southern Pakistan. The Luni River, which originates in Rajasthan, empties into the northeast corner of the Rann.

### ➤ *VILLAGES OF LITTLE RANN OF KUTCH*

#### **Villages - Major constituent Group and No. of Families**

1.	Vihod Nagar (Jogad, rehabilitated)	Salt workers	39
2.	Juna Jogad (Old)	Salt workers	15
3.	Kidi (New, Old & Kidipara)	Salt workers	484
4.	Shaktigad (Jogad, Rehabilitated)	Salt workers	110
5.	Rameswar (Jogad, Rehabilitated)	Salt workers	215
6.	Ingorala	Salt workers	132
7.	Isanpur (Old & New)	Salt workers	478
8.	Ganesh Nagar	Salt workers	180

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9.	Malaniyad	Salt workers	542
10.	Khod	Salt workers	193
11.	Ajitgadh	Salt workers	350
12.	Miyani	Salt workers	224
13.	Mayapur	Agriculturalists	114
14.	Tikar	Salt workers	681
15.	Mangadh	Salt workers	733
16.	Kuda	Salt workers	300
17.	Nava Kuda	Salt workers	275
18.	Nimakna ar	Salt workers	500
19.	Narali	Salt workers	600
20.	Koparni	Salt workers	340
21.	Enjar (old)	Salt workers	322
22.	Enjar (new)	Salt workers	161
23.	Ranmalpur	Agriculturalists	900
24.	Jasmatpur	Agriculturalists	220
25.	Vaghgadh	Agriculturalists	100
26.	Jesada	Salt workers	195
27.	Satapar	Salt workers	194
28.	Virendragadh	Agriculturalists	260
29.	Sajjanpur	Agriculturalists	140
30.	Ghanad	Salt workers	130
31.	Malvan	Salt workers	519
32.	Krishnanagar	Agriculturalists	80

## ❖ **METHODS OF STUDY**

According to Dr. Pauline Young<sup>2</sup>, in order to do a research in social science, student must learn the basic rudiments of careful and systematic inquiry. Secondly they must comprehend clearly the nature of each of the major techniques of social research. Finally student should understand both the differences and the techniques, when to use one and not another, and how they must be employed in combination.' She added telling that, the statistical, the case study, the historical, and the ecological methods seems to fit into an integrated arrangement and to aid in securing a natural view and balanced picture of human life.

### ➤ ***HISTORICAL METHOD***

Historical method is more of subjective and had less importance, but from 20<sup>th</sup> century this method got much impotence in social science, because of it's relation with the human living conditions. According to W.H. Burston and C.M. Green<sup>3</sup>, 'History is essential, if we are to understand our present environment that we should know how it grew up. History is the story of its development; of its evolution and of its origin; and it helps to explain the present in this way.'

### ➤ ***SOURCES OF HISTORY DATA***

1. Documents
2. Cultural and Analytical materials in the history
3. Reliable sources of personal knowledge.



➤ ***COMPARATIVE METHOD***

Comparative method is a scientific method involving the collection of comparative data with a specific purpose and analyzed to draw specific conclusions. It will be useful in studying the different education system that prevails in the Little Rann of Kutch.

➤ ***STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL METHOD***

This method of study primarily helps the researcher to study the structures and the functions of the society. According to Morris Ginsberg<sup>4</sup> The study of social organization is concerned with the principal forms of social organizations, i.e., types of groups, associations and the complex of these which constitutes... A full account of social structure would involve a review the whole field of comparative institutions'. Therefore in order to do a systematic study on the issues of Agriya one must understand the structural functions of the society. Thus this method is essential to be used in my research study.

➤ ***INDUCTIVE AND DEDUCTIVE METHOD***

While doing a study if the researcher is moving from the specific information to the common or a particular fact to a general, it is termed as induction method. Deductive can be understood as the just opposite of the above definition that is to say when one moves from general to a particular conclusion it is said to be deductive method.

In my field study I will have to use both the method in order to get the real facts. Some times both methods will be of great use in a

research work. These are a few methods that are to be used in my study in order to get the clear picture of the facts. Now we shall see the sources of information.

### ❖ **DATA AND SOURCE OF INFORMATION**

Source of data can be of documentary and filed source. Documentary could mean that which collected and published or unpublished, where as field source may include living persons, scholars, scientists, research workers, leaders etc.

### ❖ **REVIEW OF LITERATURES**

Documentary source can be like books, reports of surveys, accounts of travel, historical accounts, official published data and unpublished data etc. Field source is also known as direct source. Therefore it can be as direct observation, data that are of witnesses etc. Review of literatures is important in the field of data collections

These data can be of two types and names as primary data and secondary data. Now we shall see them in detail.

### ❖ **PRIMARY DATA**

Primary data refers to the data collected from primary sources of information. It may be the data collected by the investigator himself. It can be also said as original data since it is collected for the first time.

➤ ***METHOD OF GETTING PRIMARY DATA***

1. Direct personal investigation.
2. Indirect oral investigation.
3. Information through local sources.
4. Schedules to be filled in by information.
5. Schedules to be filled in by enumerations.

❖ **SECONDARY DATA**

The facts and figures that have already been collected are said to be the secondary data. Secondary data exists before the investigation starts. According to Blair, the data which are used in an investigation, but which have been gathered originally by some purpose are known as secondary data.

❖ **TECHNIQUES AND METHODS OF GATHERING DATA**

Data collection, analysis, study, evaluation and reporting are the basic method of collecting the data and representing the data. There are the following techniques or method of collecting data.

➤ ***SOCIAL SUVEY***

According to Mark Abrams, 'a social survey is a process by which quantitative facts are collected about the social aspect of a community's composition and activities.' Since the subject of my research is related with the children, lot of surveys must be contacted, in order to get facts of study. Survey gives first hand knowledge from the

people around the field of study. But there may be personal or biased information come on the way of study.

➤ ***CASE STUDY METHOD***

According to P.V. Young, 'case study is a method of exploring and analyzing of life of a social unit, be that a person, a family, an institution, cultural group or even entire community.'

➤ ***STATISTICAL METHOD***

Statistical method is widely used in the area of social research. The definition of the word 'statistic' suggests its origin. It involves systematic collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation of numerical data.

➤ ***EXPERIMENTAL METHOD***

A few sociologists regard a social experiment as a method of testing hypothesis. The cause of the experiment method is the control over the subject of study and manipulation of the independent variable with the object of studying its effect upon the dependent variable.

➤ ***SCHEDULES AND QUESTIONNAIRES***

Schedules and questionnaires are one of the largest used methods of collecting data. It is generally used when a data is to be collected at a large scale. This method involves a careful preparation of list of

questions relating to the object of the enquiry and send to the group for the data information.

➤ ***INTERVIEWS***

Interviews provide face to face contact between the social researcher and the subject and thus provide a better appreciation of facts. Interview always gives first hand information. In the case of salt workers, Persons directly involved in the field of study are many; like merchants, labours, NGOs, social organizations etc. Mr. Devjibhai one of the tourist guides in this field will be of great help to get the data. Interviews can be of focused interview, repeated interview, depth interviews etc.

➤ ***CENSUS AND SAMPLE METHOD***

Statistics covers a large number of facts and figures. The whole spectrum of all the items under consideration in the field of inquiry constitutes a universe of population. There is a complete enumeration of all the items under investigation in the population, and it is known as a census method of collecting data. The sample is considered to be representative of universe and if the sample has been properly selected and if its size is appropriate, whatever holds good for the sample should also hold good for the universe.

### ➤ **USE OF INTERNET FACILITY**

Use of internet and other technological facilities will of great use in the field of research study. There are articles and studies that are published in this media of information. We can also collect data regarding our study from the media and publications.

### ❖ **PRESENTATION OF DATA**

Data can be presented in the following ways.

1. Tabulation methods.
2. Statistical tables
  - 2.1. Simple and complex table
  - 2.2. One-way table or single table
  - 2.3. Two ways tables or double tables
  - 2.4. Three ways tables
  - 2.5. Higher order tables or manifold tables.
3. Diagrammatic and graphic representation of data.
4. Measures of Central tendency
  1. Mean,    2. Median    3. Mode
5. Correlation.

### ❖ **DIFFICULTIES AND PROBLEMS IN THE STUDY**

Though the study will be done basing on sociological principles and scientific methods, study seem to be difficult, because of its nature itself. Focusing on a particular community, doing the study may not give the wholistic view of the fact; still it will help the particular community.

Social mobility is a wide spread reality and focusing on salt workers is essential, but Agaria community is mostly seen only in Gujarat. The study may have to face with the socio-economical aspect of this particular community. It also will be difficult to get a scientific knowledge about the physiological and psychological aspects of children and this community.

Since study is concerning the children, regarding many facts on study, one may have to depend on the elders to get the information, which may be baseless and prejudiced. Wandering parents may not have sufficient knowledge about the system of education in which their children are involved.

Teachers and other authorities who are involved in education field may not give a clear picture of the facts due to their insecurity of job. Children may not open up the facts by fearing the parents and teachers.

It will be also difficult to do a study on children of salt workers, because of their economical variations and social status. Merchants and middlemen may be an obstacle in doing the study of this particular group. In spite of all these, study on the sociological aspect of education for the child of wandering workers or seasonal workers is essential today. Expectation of this study is that education for children of nomadic labourers may get a new sociological out look.

## ❖ **PREVIOUS CASE STUDY REPORT**

### ➤ ***GENERAL INTRODUCTION***

Since its inception, the programme has generated interest among accademicians, planners, administrators and those responsible for

implementing the programme. Consequently, a large number of research studies have been conducted to evaluate and assess the impact of the programme on the beneficiaries.

The Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of the Planning Commission conducted a baseline survey of ICDS in 1976 and a repeat survey during 1977-78. Subsequent expansion of ICDS was based on these evaluations. Another significant study taking an overall perspective of ICDS was carried out by Krishnamurthy and Nadkarni in 1983 for UNICEF. It studied the outreach of the programme in 16 ICDS projects spread over 8 States and one, Union Territory. The findings were based on observations, secondary data and interviews of the beneficiaries/ mothers of children below six years. It reported positive attributes of the scheme such as substantial enrolment of the Scheduled Caste and the Scheduled Tribes as beneficiaries. NIPCCD also carried out a pilot study in 13 ICDS blocks spread over 6 States and one U.T. during 1985-86 to develop a system for monitoring social components namely, pre-school education, nutrition and health education and community participation. While the main objective of the study was to identify the key indicators for monitoring social components, it also provided useful insights into the implementation of ICDS scheme. It studies the perception and views of beneficiaries from 195 AWs and 8,076 households regarding the programme. The findings provided comprehensive, empirical information on the efficacy of the delivery of services and the extent to which the objectives of the scheme were being



achieved. The long-term benefits of the scheme were also ascertained on selected outcome indicators.<sup>5</sup>

Some of the health aspects of the programme have recently been investigated by Nutrition Foundation of India. The study acclaimed its contribution towards preventive and promotive aspects and recommended expansion of ICDS as a powerful ally to the existing health system.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the above large-scale studies, several micro-level researches, surveys, postgraduate and doctoral dissertations have attempted to study the implementation of the programme and evaluate its impact on the beneficiaries.

An attempt has been made by NIPCCD to compile and review the widely scattered research on ICDS in the document 'Research on ICDS: an Overview'. The two volumes included abstracts of around 300 research studies.

There are comparatively fewer studies available on pre-school education component. However, these do indicate improvement in enrolment and scholastic performance of ICDS children in primary schools. Pre-schoolers attending AWs performed better on language, cognitive, conceptual and personal behaviour parameters as compared to their counterparts in non-ICDS areas.

It has also been found that exposure to ICDS raises the level of mothers' awareness about the value of pre-school education, and health and nutrition needs of their children.

➤ ***EFFECTIVENESS OF PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION***

The need for an environment conducive to early learning during pre- school age has been recognised increasingly. Pre-school education (PSE) or early childhood education provides stimulating experiences to children, which facilitate optimal cognitive development. It aims at developing competencies required for formal education, particularly in children from vulnerable sections of the population, in which first generation learners predominate. PSE is considered as a distinct strategy to reduce dropouts and increase retention in school system. Accordingly, as early as the sixties, pre-school centres called 'balwadis' were started in the rural areas. These are either a part of Government welfare schemes or are run by voluntary organisations.<sup>7</sup>

ICDS has non-formal pre-school education as an important component in its package. PSE is imparted to children in the age group 3-6 years at AWs through non-formal play-way methods of learning. With consistent expansion of ICDS, considerably large number of disadvantaged children have benefited from the programme. Currently 80.46 lakh children are receiving PSE under the programme.

The National Policy on Education (1986) placed high priority on early childhood care and education (ECCE). It was considered as a feeder and support programme for primary education. It suggested integration of ECE with other child development programmes, particularly ICDS. ICDS thus, has become a major plank for providing pre-school education to the poor. Pre-school education brings about an improvement in various inter- related dimensions of child development

such as social, emotional and cognitive development Adhish (1985), Chaturvedi (1985), Paranjpe (1985). Children attending Anganwadis have been found to be better than non-ICDS children in the development of motorskills, language skills and psycho-social behaviour Anandalakshmy (1986), Devadas, (1986), Mistry (1986), Sood (1986), Tarapore (1986), Bilquees (1987). It is also observed that children attending Anganwadis performed significantly better tasks of listening comprehension, object vocabulary, sequential thinking and time perception Sahni (1984), Khosla (1985).<sup>8</sup>

The role of pre-school education in improving scholastic performance has also been reflected in the study conducted by Sunderlal (1981). It was observed that pre-school education results in higher primary school enrolment. Seventy percent children who had received pre-school education were enrolled in primary schools. At school, a majority of these children were better adjusted as compared to other children. A series of studies on PSE conducted as a part of NIPCCD's pilot project (1987), pointed out that mere exposure to PSE is not enough to result in positive development of aspects discussed above. Unless an input is of good quality, children may not develop and demonstrate the competencies intended to be promoted through PSE.<sup>9</sup>

The feedback on quality of PSE component of ICDS has not been very positive. It presents a grim scenario of children in large numbers flocking at AWs to collect supplementary food. The set up at AWs is dull and drab, devoid of play material and other learning equipment NIPCCD (1987). AWWs also possess limited skills in implementing

PSE component. It is observed that Anganwadis are not organising any creative activities. These are geared towards rote learning, and are monotonous and repetitive in nature Khosla (1985), Sharma (1987). Supervisors also do not provide the required guidance and support to AWWs. During the last few years, several efforts have been made to strengthen this component through training of Helpers in PSE, revision of syllabi of functionaries, preparation of manuals and guide books, etc. The revised MPR has introduced relevant indicators to monitor quality of PSE activities and use of appropriate play and learning material at AWWs to facilitate cognitive development of children.

AWWs are organising pre-school education activities in most of the projects. It has been observed that there is an improvement in physical growth, language and mental ability of children as a result of pre-school education imparted Bahl (1983), Goriawalla (1983), Saroja Devi (1984), Singh (1984), Sethi (1985), Nalini (1989), Murthy (1989). The constraints in organising these activities are poor attendance, non-availability of teaching aids, lack of space and supervision etc.

Sunderlal (1981) observed that pre-school education resulted in higher enrolments as 70 percent children who had received pre-school education were enrolled in the primary school. The enrolment of male children and those from higher castes was slightly better than female children and those from lower castes. Once in school, the majority of these children were well adjusted as compared to other children.

Study also observed that pre-school education also brings about an improvement in the various interrelated dimensions of child

development such as social, emotional and cognitive development. Hunshd (1979) observed that cognitive and social development of urban children was comparatively better than that of rural children and it was related to variables like educational, occupational level of parents.

Seshama (1986) observed that play has its own importance in the life of a child. It enables physical, intellectual, emotional, social, aesthetic, motor, language and attitudinal development. It is through play that children learn to explore, construct, create and also destroy.

Abrol (1985) found that on an average three children per Anganwadi exhibited symptoms of behaviour problems and they were more among girls (54%) than boys (46%). It was also reported that to reduce the severity of these problems there is a need to educate parents to enable them to identify the signs and causes of deviant behaviour in their children and seek timely treatment. The major problems identified were speech, slow learning and mental retardation, shyness/withdrawal, aggressiveness, hyper activity, hearing problems, temper tantrums, bedwetting, thumb sucking, physical problem, visual and poor motor co-ordination.

Rahgir (1984) found that children studying in ICDS Anganwadis showed a significant improvement and progress in their learning activities after receiving the pre-school education programme.

Shrivastava (1985) studied the effect of pre-school education component of ICDS on symbolic play and observed that there was no significant difference in total actions of the children of the two groups with respect to their age. It may be concluded that ICDS scheme does

not exercise much influence on the total number of actions performed by the children while manipulating the toys.

Kanthi Shrivastava (1985) studied the impact of ICDS on the problem solving ability of the children and made the following observations. ICDS has a definite impact on the problem solving ability of the children. The average time taken for the successful completion of the task was 4.7 minutes for ICDS children and 6.2 minutes for non-ICDS children.

The level of achievement of children in ICDS group was 1.2 and in non- ICDS group it was. 7.2. Ranjini assessed the impact of ICDS on the school enrolment and dropout rate of children. It was found that over 90 percent children from all the ICDS pre-schools were admitted to schools immediately after leaving the Anganwadi and there was no difficulty in getting admission. The children from the rural ICDS block showed better progress in school than their counterparts in the non-ICDS area. The percentage of children willing to attend school enrolment was comparatively better for ICDS children than those from the non-ICDS area.

### **➤ *EFFECTIVENESS OF NUTRITION AND HEALTH EDUCATION***

A major chunk of the available ICDS research is focussed on health and nutrition component of the scheme. Most of these studies have been carried out by the consultants of CTC. Around 624 baseline/ repeat surveys and 250 research studies have been collated, in a

document 'ICDS Evaluation and Research (1975-88)' prepared under the auspices of CTC. Both these documents are an excellent source of information consisting of micro-level studies on ICDS.

A review of these research studies indicates that ICDS has had a positive impact on beneficiaries and has the potential of enhancing the child survival rate. Definite improvement has been reported in major indicators of health nutrition like IMR, nutritional status, morbidity pattern, immunisation coverage and utilisation of health services.

Researchers have however indicated a need to strengthen delivery of two components of ICDS, namely, nutrition and health education and referral services. Community participation, which is so vital for the success of the programme, is confined only to a passive acceptance of ICDS services. The community in most projects has been involved only marginally. The low level of participation has been attributed to lack of awareness and knowledge of ICDS scheme, poverty, lack of time on the part of beneficiaries and inability of the project functionaries to augment community participation.

Providing Nutrition and Health Education to women is an important job responsibility of AWW. However, very few studies have reported that the component is being implemented satisfactorily Saroja Devi (1982), Nalini Bahl (1983), Sethi (1985), Coonar (1985), Bhattacharjee (1985), Rane (1989). By and large, the feedback indicates that NHE is neither being carried out as often as required nor is imparted effectively Sharma (1987).<sup>10</sup> The independent studies by Nair (1988) and Begum (1988) both found that the health and nutrition practices in a

community were affected by level of education, income and types of occupation of the respondents.

Rajagopal (1985) observed that in an urban ICDS block, use of Oral Re-hydration Solution and management of diarrhoea was influenced by literacy rate and traditional beliefs and taboos prevalent in society. He also observed that health education imparted to mothers by private practitioners was more effective than that given by neighbours and primary health workers.

Sunderlal (1978) observed that when local leaders were involved in the programme, the public was more receptive to health education. He also found that only 15 percent of AWWs were imparting NHE with enthusiasm while the performance of others was either average or they had indifferent attitude towards work.

Shanna (1986) observed that to a large extent, successful delivery of NHE component depends upon the attitudes and skills of ICDS functionaries. He also observed that NHE was rarely conducted by AWWs. Only a small percentage of AWWs were rated satisfactory on skills, times and promotion of literacy. He also concluded that health education regarding ORT should be imparted through mass media and through non-formal local community leaders and elder members of the family who should be motivated to give ORS to children during diarrhoea.

Seshadri (1986) observed that the mothers who had received NHE were neither aware of the value of the growth charts in monitoring the health of the child nor of oral re-hydration therapy for diarrhoea



diseases. Knowledge regarding immunisation schedule was poor. Breast-feeding was universally practised and most of the mothers were aware that breast-feeding is indispensable in the planning and implementation of NHE.

Pramila found that tremendous efforts were required to motivate ICDS functionaries to organise methodical health programme in order to get full *co-* operation from the public. She also found that the public was more receptive to health education when local leaders were involved in the programme.

Booma Rajagopal (1985) observed that in urban areas, awareness and administration of ORS were directly proportional to the literacy rate. In the rural ICDS awareness and administration of ORS was high, i.e., nearly three times the literacy rate. Late weaning and inadequate feeding of toddlers was also observed in the community. Mothers also lacked knowledge regarding causes, symptoms and prevention of major nutritional diseases prevalent in the community.

The knowledge of the mother improved after training, especially in the areas like management of diarrhoea and use of OM. Sunderlal (1984) observed that NHE imparted through mass media has a significant impact in enhancing knowledge.

Gupta studied the impact of ICDS on the feeding practices, growth and development, prevalence of malnutrition and utilisation of health care services. It was found that the breast feeding practices were comparatively better in ICDS areas than non-ICDS areas. The weight of male children in ICDS block was more than that of children in non-

ICDS block at all ages except in the case of children below three months of age.

Khalkdina studied the impact of: Health and Nutrition Services on the status of children; Pre-school education on the development status of children; and Functional literacy programme on the information and level of knowledge of ICDS women beneficiaries.

It was observed that there were no significant differences in the health and nutritional status and pre-school abilities of children in ICDS and non- ICDS areas. In both the areas there were 50 percent malnourished children. It was also observed that there was no significant difference in the level of knowledge of women in both ICDS and non-ICDS areas. However, literacy and numeracy knowledge of ICDS women was better than that of non-ICDS women.

Mehandale conducted a study on an urban ICDS project in Pune. The object of the study was to assess the health, nutritional and immunisation status of children, to find out the extent of utilisation of health and nutrition services by them and to compare the findings of the baseline and repeat surveys. The major findings of the study was that the nutritional and immunisation status of children and the utilisation of services by them were that nearly 81 percent children in the baseline surveys and 83 percent in the repeated survey were showing one or more clinical signs of malnutrition. It was observed that nutritional grading by weight for age chart could help in detecting malnourished children who did not have visible symptoms of Marasmus or Kwashiorkor.

It was concluded that ICDS had a definite impact on the health and nutritional status of children as evident from the increase in the coverage of services and the decrease in the incidence of malnutrition.

Subramonian conducted a study in 1987 to assess the impact of ICDS on immunisation, supplementary nutrition, non-formal education and family size in a community. It was found that ICDS scheme had a positive impact on the immunisation status and supplementary feeding of children.

It was also found that non-formal education raised the level of knowledge regarding breast-feeding (92%), family planning (81%) and immunisation (90%). Tandon has undertaken a study on ICDS to evaluate the health and nutrition services provided under the scheme. He observed that there has been significant improvement in the utilisation of essential health services in ICDS project areas.

It was further observed that the distribution of nutritional supplement to children and expectant and nursing mothers also improved significantly. There was marked improvement in the percentage of expectant mothers receiving antenatal check-up, tetanus toxoid injections and iron and folic acid tablets. The percentage of nursing mothers receiving postnatal services increased significantly.

#### ➤ ***EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHEME OF IMPLEMENTATION***

The above mentioned research efforts have contributed considerably to the understanding of the programme and have helped in identifying bottlenecks and lacunae in the implementation of the

scheme. Nonetheless, the studies have provided only piecemeal information and have not taken systematic stock of the delivery of inputs vis-a-vis the outputs', nor have these investigated the impact of the target groups in a comprehensive manner. These studies have also not been able to illustrate the interdependence of various variables related to implementation of the scheme.

A visible research indicates lack of interdepartmental co-ordination, and reports that various committees in most projects are not functioning to the desired level. Even when the committees meet, the problems faced by ICDS functionaries are rarely discussed Krishnarnurthy (1983), Coonar (1985),

Satiamurthy (1989), Panda (1990). Further, AWWs, contrary to the envisaged role, have little interaction with local level organisations Bahl (1983), Bhowmik, (1990). The need to improve functional links among ICDS functionaries and between ICDS and health functionaries has been stressed by several micro-level studies Vasundhara (1982), Planning Commission (1982), Bahl (1983), Paramewaran (1984), Visvesvaran (1985), Murthy (1989), Chetna (1989), Ray (1989). Constant efforts are being made by the Department to improve convergence and co-ordination. During 1991, a status paper titled 'Fifteen Years of ICDS' indicating specific steps to be taken was prepared for the National Conference.

Though ICDS has well defined eligibility criteria for the recruitment of staff, there are variations in following these norms in States. Studies have indicated that low level of literacy of AWWs

imposed serious constraints on their performance and skill required for the job Philips (1986), Jain (1989), Panda (1990), Khosala (1991). In some of the studies, it has been recommended to reconsider the criteria for the recruitment of the Supervisors and CDPOs. It was suggested that preference should be given to candidates with home science or social work background and there should be less varied qualifications for the recruitment of these functionaries Raina (1983), Bhalla (1986), CRD (1988). The Department of Women and Child Development has given due consideration to such recommendations and has issued guidelines for eligibility and recruitment criteria to States from time to time.

To avoid stagnation and frustration among the functionaries, avenues of promotion for both AWWs and Supervisors have been created. Matriculate AWWs with ten years of experience and Supervisors with adequate experience are being considered for appointment against the posts of Supervisors and CDPOs respectively. The delay in recruitment and long period for which these posts remained vacant was found to be a factor hampering smooth implementation of ICDS Mehta (1985). A number of studies have also reported that the poor performance of AWWs can also be attributed to the low honorarium paid to them Indira Bai (1980), Bandari (1980), Rane (1980) Singh (1984), Goriawalla (1985), Visvesvaran (1985), Bidarkoppa; Maggie; Philips, (1986), Widge (1986), Panda (1990).

The Government has been equally concerned about these issues and has taken up appropriate steps. The case of creating a cadre for Anganwadi workers are under consideration. The deviation &om

original conceptualisation of the grassroots workers being voluntary seems the main constraint in absorbing AWWs in the government set up. It changes the profile of the programme, which has a unique feature of being community based. ICDS scheme spells out clearly the job responsibilities of various ICDS functionaries. A number of studies support the fact that functionaries are well aware of their role and responsibilities. AWWs, due to multifarious responsibilities, have a multidimensional role.

It is found that most of the time of AWWs is being spent on preparation and distribution of supplementary food. In spite of this, beneficiaries were found to be dissatisfied with the food provided Bhal (1983), Saroja Devi (1984), Visvesvaran (1985), and Philips (1986). Further, it has been reported that food was not given to malnourished children as required in the scheme Nalini (1984), Saroja Devi (1984). The problems faced by AWWs in providing supplementary nutrition are irregular supply of food, inadequate storage space, fuel shortage etc.

In spite of all the above responsibilities, AWWs are able to elicit community participation Vasundhra (1982), Bhal (1983), Visvesvaran (1985), Philips (1986), Rane (1989), Ray (1989). However, the involvement of the community is limited and is mostly restricted to bringing children to AWWs, giving toys, etc. The main constraint in eliciting community participation has been identified as inadequate skills of the functionaries in mobilising the community Cooner (1985), Salomi (1986), Philips (1986), NFT (1988), NIPCCD (1988).

Studies have reported that poor location and physical set up of AWWs, unhygienic environment; non availability of equipment and other basic amenities like electricity and water, shortage of storage space; wastage and misuse of material, failure to maintain accounts and absence of staff, etc., are some of the factors which hamper smooth implementation of ICDS Singh (1984), Parameswaran (1984), Visvesvaran (1985), Coonar (1985), Philips (1986), Sharma (1987), Rane (1989), Ray (1989). Some other difficulties faced by ICDS functionaries are lack of transport facilities, village level politics, lack of community participation, ineffective community participation, ineffective co-ordination between ICDS and health staff, delay in the appointment of AWWs, lack of supervision, poor interpersonal communication and leadership, poor or irregular attendance in AWWs, delay in food supplies and frequent transfer of project staff Sharma (1980), Khan (1983), Nalini (1984), Jayanthi (1984), Visvesvaran (1985), Battacharjee (1985), Indira Bai (1986), Maggie (1986), Philips (1986), Lakshmi Kumari (1987) Chetna (1989), Murthy (1989), Rane (1989). Training of ICDS functionaries though rigorously monitored, has not been evaluated comprehensively.

Micro-level studies have however recommended the need to critically evaluate and revise the training of AWWs Kant (1984), Murthy (1984), Kishore (1984), Jayanthi (1984), Verma (1985), Sharma (1986) and to make training of Supervisors more practically oriented with a focus on development of supervisory skills Khan (1983), Sharma (1987), CRD (1988), Chetna (1989). Further, an evaluation of CDPOs

training suggested revision and examination of the syllabus so as to improve the quality of training imparted to CDPOs Bhalla (1986). Over the years, concerted efforts have been made by NIPCCD to modify the training syllabus of all categories of ICDS functionaries based on informal and formal feedback of monitoring and evaluation of research. Besides this, periodic workshops and seminars are held to review the implementation of the programme, to identify gaps, and to work out strategies to improve training.

Effective functioning of an Anganwadi is dependent on a harmonious balance between various administrative factors, its infrastructure, job responsibilities, job satisfaction, job performance, training of functionaries, etc. Many socio-economic factors like age, marital status, educational background, type and size of family etc., have direct effect on the job performance of ICDS functionaries Singh (1984), Bhattachaqee (1985), Sharma (1987).

Further, most of the studies undertaken so far were limited in coverage and therefore making generalisation became difficult. Besides, many methodological limitations were also observed in these studies. The samples by and large, were small and not representative. The conceptual understanding of researchers varied of great deal with respect to different components of ICDS. Studies relating to knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) and views of beneficiaries were not planned and executed in a methodologically sound manner. This was particularly true of the research on community participation and nutrition and health education.



➤ **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

People's active participation and cooperation is the key to the success of a social and development programme which is aimed at bringing about a change in the life of the people. To ensure people's participation to the maximum, it is imperative that they are involved in the programme right from its inception and the objectives and services of the programme are interpreted in a manner that enables them to perceive the programme as the one based on their felt needs. Community participation is not an automatic process. It moves at its own pace and requires systematic planned efforts on behalf of the social workers to stimulate and motivate people to actively participate in it.

In ICDS programme, community participation is an essential built-in component. The Anganwadi worker is expected to elicit community participation in running the programme, not only to minimise the operational cost, but also to make the people aware of the special needs of children and their mothers, and enhance their capabilities in taking care of them in the family environment.

Community participation, a social component of ICDS, is not subjected to evaluation very easily. The findings of the limited research studies indicate that participation of the community is only marginal or low in most of ICDS blocks and needs special efforts on behalf of ICDS functionaries to elicit community participation to make ICDS programme a success. In the research available, community participation has been mostly assessed by the knowledge of the beneficiaries about ICDS, their perception and extent of participation in the programme.

The data available from the research studies are not given in a systematic manner and are also inadequate.

Community members can fully participate in ICDS only when they are aware of the objectives and services provided and have full knowledge of its beneficiaries and mode of implementation. It was observed that women and community leaders had low level of awareness regarding ICDS programme Shanna (1986), Sushama (1986). In a community only 4 percent respondents could link the scheme with child welfare and only 9 percent respondents knew that women in the age group 15 - 45 years were also among the beneficiary group. They also had limited knowledge about ICDS functionaries and their job responsibilities. However, AWWs and helpers were better known than CPDOs. Further, the level of knowledge was comparatively higher in a rural area than in an urban area Paranjpe (1984). The awareness of the community members was maximum regarding supplementary nutrition followed by pre-school education and immunisation and that of health functionaries was of immunisation followed by supplementary nutrition and prophylaxis programme Shanna (1986), Sushama (1986).<sup>11</sup>

However, - other researchers Rarndev (1982), Sharma (1986) found that people were aware of the scheme and had fairly adequate information regarding ICDS functionaries and various categories of beneficiaries but had low knowledge about the activities of other voluntary organisations. Variables like age, caste, type of family and literacy level had a significant effect on the knowledge of respondents about ICDS (Bhatnagar).

A majority of ICDS functionaries were not able to perceive the importance of community participation Sharma (1986), Sushama (1986). It was reported that the community perceived non-formal pre-school education as learning of counts though AWWs considered pre-school education as a better way to acquire good habits and moral values. It was found that ANMs and LHVs had not understood the purpose of pre-school education Rajesh Kumar (1984). In another study, it was observed that pre-school education was the most linked service in all the three blocks surveyed as it inculcated good habits and children could get admission in schools easily Paranjpe (1984).

Community leaders considered supplementary nutrition only for supplementing the diet of the beneficiaries. However, all AWWs, ANMs, LHVs found NHE more useful than supplementary nutrition. In an urban ICDS project, 90 percent beneficiaries felt that their children did not benefit by supplementary nutrition Paranjpe (1984). In another ICDS block the community members had a favourable attitude towards health check-up and immunisation Rajesh Kumar (1984).

The level of participation of both the beneficiaries and community leaders was low in rural, urban and tribal ICDS blocks, the highest being in a tribal ICDS block and the lowest in an urban project Sharma (1986). He observed that participation and involvement of beneficiaries and local organisation in ICDS was minimal. Majority ICDS functionaries had no concept of the importance of community participation. They were of the view that the community could be involved in giving accommodation or motivating people for immunisation. However,

Paranjpe (1984) was of the view that in an ICDS block, *mahila* mandals and youth clubs were actively involved in implementing ICDS programme. They were helping AWWs regularly in all the activities. But Sharrna (1986) found that very few women were members of *mahila mandols* and those who were did not attend the meetings regularly.

Ramdev (1982) found that community's development in relation to Anganwadi activities was minimal although ICDS functionaries agreed the community participation was essential for effective implementation of the programme.

According to CDPOs, there was a higher level of community participation in 40 percent Anganwadis, moderate in 20 percent and low in 24 percent Anganwadis.<sup>12</sup>

ICDS functionaries felt that low level of community participation was attributed to lack of awareness and knowledge of ICDS scheme, ignorance, poverty, lack of time on the part of the villagers, inadequate training of AWWs, lack of transport facilities etc.

The factors considered crucial for strengthening and promoting community participation were skills of the worker in eliciting community participation, existence of co-ordination committees, frequency of their meetings and the involvement of local organisations Sharma (1986).

However, in 15 percent Anganwadis the community did not participate due to inefficiency of AWWs and negative attitude of *Pradhans* and members of *mahila mandols* Ramdev (1982). Over 50

percent of the potential beneficiaries were not availing themselves of the benefits of ICDS scheme because women in the age group 15 - 45 years were not utilising the services.

Anganwadis were at a greater distance from their homes. There was besides lack of regular supplies, lack of time, ignorance, poverty, negative attitude of parents towards supplementary food and Anganwadis Ramdev (1982), Paranjpe (1984).<sup>13</sup>

To sum up, the research conducted in this area is too meagre to come to any significant conclusions. There is a need to draw the attention of researchers towards this important social component of ICDS. There are certain constraints which restrict community participation in ICDS and there is lack of clarity about the concept of community participation. It is important to develop an operation definitional definition of community participation and identify the indicators to measure this social component of ICDS to enable ICDS hctionaries and researchers to promote and analyse it effectively.

There is also a need to have constant feedback from the community to strengthen this component. Suman Agarwal and Prem Lata (1985) studied about parental participation with special reference to their satisfaction and functioning of Anganwadi Centres and it was found that a majority of mothers had a high level of expectation ffom AWWs. It was also observed that though they were somewhat satisfied with the Anganwadi services, yet they were not participating in ICDS programme. However, the relationship between expectations and satisfaction and expectations and participation was not found

satisfactory. Moreover, the centres that were functioning satisfactorily had a positive correlation both with the participation of the parents and their level of satisfaction. Gandhi (1984) assessed the extent of community participation in the urban ICDS project Vizag, Andhra Pradesh and it was found that in ICDS project area there were 82 *mahila mandals*, 95 youth clubs and 97 ACWs.<sup>14</sup>

### ➤ **THE OTHER IMPORTANT FINDINGS**

Mahila mandals were closely connected with ICDS programme and helped AWWs regularly. They were also running sewing centres (15.5%) and were associated with middle level functionaries training (15.5%), non-formal education (63.9%) and nutrition and health programme (63.9%).

Although *mahila mandals* were evincing a keen interest in functional literacy and pre-school education programmes, the number of women attending the literacy classes declined marginally from 2148 to 2137 and the number of children from 4,283 to 3,851 from April 1981 to September 1983. The reason for the lack of progress were non availability of inputs like audiovisuals and teaching aids, class room, type of training with particular emphasis on attendance and preference for mothers' education rather than functional literacy.

Youth clubs helped in providing 5 1.5 percent Anganwadis with rent free accommodation. They also participated in other activities of ICDS like supplementary nutrition (49.5%), health check-up (49.5%) and non-formal education (49.5%).

Rewati Bhagwat (1984) conducted a study of perception and participation of the community in ICDS in Maharashtra and it was found that the respondent's knowledge about ICDS scheme was poor. Only 4.2% of them could link the scheme with child welfare.

She also observed that the best known beneficiary group was of pre-school children (85%), followed by expectant and nursing mothers (45%). Only 9 percent respondents knew that women in the age group 15 - 45 years were also among the beneficiary group. The respondents in the rural block were comparatively well informed about the beneficiaries compared to the urban block.

The respondents in the rural block were the most well informed about services provided to women and children. The most known service was supplementary nutrition (77%) followed by pre-school education (75%), health check-up (23%), immunisation (14%), referral services (8%) and health and nutrition education (6%).

The knowledge about ICDS scheme was obtained through informal channels like observation or casual discussions with A W s or neighbours. Campaigns or meetings were not mentioned as source of information.

### ➤ ***PERCEPTION AND PARTICIPATION***

Most of the respondents felt that the visits of AWWs to their houses were irregular. The common places of meeting were village streets, bazar or wells. The topics discussed revolved around child's

health (47%), child's progress at the Anganwadi (36%) and the health of the mother beneficiaries (20%).

Thirty-three percent respondents were never invited by AWW to attend a meeting or a function, 29 percent always went to the Anganwadi if invited, 10 percent never went and for 29 percent respondents it was a matter of convenience.

Supplementary nutrition was the most appreciated service. The utility of nutrition programme was felt by 45 percent of the rural and 21 percent of the urban population. However 90 percent of the urban respondents categorically stated that their children did not benefit by supplementary nutrition.

Pre-school education was widely appreciated in all the three blocks because it helped in inculcation of good habits (40%) and admission in schools (28%).

Health check-up was considered a useful service by 50 percent respondents and immunisation and referral services were rarely utilised by the respondents. Health and Nutrition Education programme which centred on nutritive value of foods and diet for expectant and nursing mothers had an impact on very few respondents. Over 50 percent of potential beneficiaries (1,218/2,273) were not availing themselves of the benefits of ICDS scheme. The number of non-beneficiaries was high because of non-utilisation of service by women in 15-45 years age group, children above six years in the families, parents did not approve the food served in the Anganwadis, and parents preferred private



*bahvadis* and Anganwadis located at a greater distance from their homes.

Computation of the data collected for the second time showed that 55 percent of the eligible families in the urban block and 60 percent in the rural block were utilising the services provided under ICDS. Participation by way of contribution in terms of time, service, accommodation, etc., was totally absent. The ladies of the *mahila mandals* refused to help AWWs in their routine activities. The people in the community had inadequate awareness about ICDS scheme which led to their low level of participation.

Prominent persons like *Sarpanchs* or *Gramasevaks* who were exposed to ICDS scheme by virtue of their office had some knowledge and understanding about ICDS programme. The contribution of office bearers of the local bodies was limited to giving advice or arranging accommodation for the Anganwadl or AWW. Lack of participation was attributed to lack of awareness as participation for them primarily meant utilisation of services.

No conclusion should be drawn regarding the understanding of the term participation by ICDS functionaries because questions asked were open-ended. These were answered on different dimensions and did not yield adequate data.

However, from the available data it could be stated that the functionaries did not grasp the full meaning of the term participation, especially Supervisors and AWWs. Participation was linked with

attendance and very little efforts were made to seek participation of the community. Bhagvat (1984).

Sunderlal (1984) conducted a study of Community's reaction to the scheme of ICDS and its package of services in a rural ICDS block. The objective of the study was to know the community's perception and reaction to various components of ICDS; and to find out the extent of involvement of adult women to promote ICDS. It was observed that the community regarded non-formal pre-school education component of ICDS as preponement of traditional school education in which emphasis was laid on counting and alphabets.

AWWs considered pre-school education as a better way of acquiring good healthy habits and moral values. Ram Dev (1982) conducted a study on monitoring and evaluation of community participation in an ICDS project. The specific objectives were: The nature and extent of community participation in an ICDS block; The nature and functions of various community organisations and institutions existing in the area; AWWs knowledge and perception of community participation,

The effort being made by the project staff for the elicit community participation and the ways of methods to improve community participation in ICDS.

It was found that most of the A W s had no information regarding the establishment, registration, membership and activities performed by the local organisations and had very little contact with them. At the time of establishment of the Anganwadis, *mahila mandals* and co-operative

societies held organised activities. There were eight *bahvadis* run by voluntary organisations in the area. Supplementary nutrition was being provided to the children regularly.

Services were also being provided to women at the time of establishment of the Anganwadis. Adult education centres were imparting education, organising activities and assisting women. It was found that 56 percent women were benefiting from these activities. In the dispensaries, health check-up and immunisation services were provided to expectant and nursing mothers.

AWWs were also aware that health check-up and immunisation services were being provided to children (0-6 years) regularly through government organizations and dispensaries. Thirty percent AWWs stated that the level of awareness of the community regarding various categories of beneficiaries (except children) was fairly high. However, the reasons for lack of awareness were low level of education, lack of time and short time span since the inception of the programme.

According to the Supervisors and CDPO, people were somewhat aware of ICDS scheme. The level of awareness corresponded with the frequency of visits of the project in charge, the attitude of the *Pradhans*, the existence of *mahila mandals* and the efficiency of AWWs. However, the youth were not aware of the programme.

It was observed that less than 50 percent children in the age group 0 - 3 years and more than 50 per cent in 3-6 years age group benefited from ICDS. Supplementary nutrition was the most utilised service. Expectant and nursing mothers' benefited from NHE (56.7%),

supplementary nutrition (74.9%), immunisation (60.7%) and health check-up (56.1%). The reasons given for lack of utilisation of the services were inadequate facilities, lack of regular supplies and lack of time.

All the Supervisors and CDPO agreed that community participation was essential for effective implementation of ICDS programme and the community should be involved in the programme right from its inception. However, the community's involvement in relation to Anganwadi activities was minimal. Community's assistance was in the form of building for dispensary (45.2%) and clean water supply (59.5%).

The reasons given by AWWs for low level of community participation were lack of awareness and knowledge of ICDS scheme, ignorance, poverty and lack of time on the part of villagers. Supervisors stated that there was moderate to low level of participation due to inadequate knowledge and interest in ICDS programme. According to CDPO there was high level of community participation in 40 percent Anganwadis, moderate in 20 percent and low in 25 percent Anganwadis.

In 15 percent Anganwadis the community did not participate due to inefficiency of AWWs and negative attitude of *Pradhans* and members of *mahila mandals*. Other reasons given by Supervisors and CDPO for low level of community participation were lack of training of AWWs, infrequent contact with the community due to lack of transport facilities, caste rivalries, party politics and inadequate efforts by ICDS functionaries to motivate the community to participate.

Supervisors and AWWs (50%) stated that local organisations provided no help/resources in terms of money, food grains and fuel. But CDPO was of the view that *mahila nuznahls* had contributed in kind in 20 percent Anganwadis. AWWs, Supervisors and CDPO were making efforts to increase the involvement of the community in ICDS programme. AWWs were making frequent door-to-door visits to propagate the aims, objectives and activities of ICDS. They were also imparting basic message of health and nutrition to expectant and nursing mothers and enrolling children in the age group 3 - 6 years for pre-school education and 0 - 6 years for supplementary nutrition.

The Supervisors and CDPO were seeking the help of village *Pradhman mahila mandals* and DDO to propagate the benefits of ICDS. They were also organising community meetings, puppet shows and exhibitions to make people aware of various components of ICDS.

Gayatri Chand (1986) conducted a study of perception and participation of the community in ICDS to find out the perception of the community and its participation in ICDS, to study the perception of the project staff regarding community participation, to analyse the impact of ICDS in terms of attitude and response of local community towards different components; and to suggest modifications, if required to enhance community participation. It was found that the level of awareness and participation of women respondents and community leaders was low in all the three blocks. Within the blocks it was lowest in the urban area and highest in the tribal project.

The awareness of women respondents, community leaders and project functionaries was the highest for supplementary nutrition followed by pre-school education and immunisation. The functionaries perceived ICDS as a programme for children and expectant and nursing mothers. Their awareness about women in a reproductive age group as a beneficiary group was low. Consequently, this group was not adequately covered.

A majority of the functionaries were not able to perceive the importance of community participation clearly. Involvement of community was sought only in case of difficulties. In the urban block participation of the community was negligible. In the rural and tribal blocks the involvement of local organisations was evident in their providing accommodation for the Anganwadis.

The project functionaries were of the view that community would be effectively involved primarily in providing accommodation for the Anganwadis while for medical and paramedical functionaries indicated that the probable area of community participation could be motivation of the other members of the community for immunisation. The findings reflected in these studies have covered several valuable insights, nevertheless, the need for a comprehensive investigation to assess ICDS at the Kottayam District level has been felt for a long.<sup>15</sup>

## ❖ CONCLUSION

The above mentioned studies clearly indicate that the implementation of the ICDS project in the various rural, tribal and urban

slums have significant impact on the development of women and children belonging to the weaker and vulnerable sections; the impact shows variations from group to group. The scheme broadly facilitates intellectual, social and psychological development among children below 6 years of age. The Pre-school education also contributed a great deal in child development and has encouraged school enrollment and retention. The non-formal nutrition and health education given by the anganwadi worker empower the women in the age group 15-45 years; to enable them to look after their own health and nutrition needs as well as that of their children and families. Some of the above studies clearly reveal that community participation is a vital element for ensuring the success of an ICDS project.

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## **Chapter 3**

### **OVER VIEW OF AGARIA - WANDERING LABOUR**

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- **Bactrian Greeks (184-70 BC).**
- **Scythians (70 BC to 46 AD).**
- **Parthian (46-78 AD).**
- **Kushans (62-283 AD).**
- **Sassanians (176-367 AD).**
- **Vahlikas (367-470 AD).**
- **Rai Dynasty (499-640/41 AD).**
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- **Abbasid Governors of Sindh (751 – 854/55 AD).**
- **Habaris in Sindh (854 – 910/11 AD).**
- **Soomras (1010/11-1351/52 AD).**
- **Samma Dynasty (1351/52 – 1524).**
- **Arghoons, Tarkhans, Mughal and Kalhoras.**

❖ **CONCLUSION.**

## **Chapter - 3**

### **REVIEW OF AGARIA COMMUNITY**

#### **❖ INTRODUCTION:**

The entire village covered as sample is seen to migrate to salt pans in order to earn their livelihoods, as the region lacks other employment opportunity. In addition to this the people also lack skills for doing any other work. Child and adolescent labour is on the rise in the salt pans as children also migrate with their parents and are engaged as salt labourers. The district is marked by a vicious cycle of credit, a lack of labour opportunities and a high rate of migration.

The Rann of Kachchh, which is adjacent to Surendranagar district, is being destroyed due to human interference and increased salt pans. The government has not been giving fresh leases on land to the agaria for the last 15-20 years. However, in violation of this law leases have been issued to powerful and large salt manufactures. So the exploitation rate in salt business against the agaria and salt workers by the traders has increased. In Banaskantha and Dahod districts though the people have agricultural land, its location on the hilly terrain renders it unfit for cultivation and reduces their dependence on this activity. This increases the dependence on casual labour activities finally resulting in migration. The rate of migration is reported to be very high in Dahod district.

With reference to Kachchh district the land is highly disaster prone and it inhibits agriculture from becoming a major source of

livelihood support. Livestock dependence is restricted due to the unavailability of fodder, lowering the income from livestock. The region is dominated by minority population and also inhabited by SC and ST population, strengthening the indicators of vulnerability. The district lacks irrigation facilities except in Mandvi and Nakhatrana blocks, thus reducing income from farm labour. Therefore, the people have to migrate temporarily in order to earn a livelihood from casual labour.

Despite the presence of renewable and non-renewable resources manpower is the biggest resource of a region. The people earn a major part of their income in Surat district from farm and casual labour in the normal year. However, since two years because of the slowdown in diamond business, casual labour has been affected and people are more involved in farm related activities since the district has good irrigation facilities. In Surendranagar the main source of income for the people of vulnerable households is working in the salt pans. In Dahod and Banaskantha the main activity of such households is agricultural labour, but due to the prevailing drought in the area these people are now more engaged in casual labour. In Kachchh the main activities are agriculture and livestock rearing. However, due to the drought income from both these sources has been reduced substantially.

All the districts covered under the study show dependence on livestock but due to the drought the income from cattle selling has been reduced due to the scarcity of fodder. The tribals of Surat district were given good breeds of buffalo (Surti and Mehsana) under the tribal sub-plan. The milk obtained from cattle does not show a drastic change

during the crisis year, as the dairy co-operatives help the tribals with fodder and “Sumul daan” because of which the milk yield remains nearly the same in the crisis year.

The villagers (koli) of Surendranagar reported maximum workload in the months of February- May as they are engaged as salt labourers and *agaria* in the salt pans in the winter months. Men and women are engaged in salt work and earn Rs 70-90 for 12 hours across all the blocks covered in the Surendranagar talukas.

The people of Dahod and Banaskantha districts reported coming back from the place of migration in March-April as it is the festive season for the tribals. As the festivities end they migrate again for employment and reported coming back in the month of June for cultivating their own land.

A majority of the villagers across all the districts covered reported possessing meagre land. Since a high proportion of households own land, although small patches, incidence of farm labour on the land of other farmers is low and casual labour is also limited. In areas where people are engaged in farm labour during the crisis year, farm labour declines and casual labour increases. Casual labour is prevalent from late November to April, in both normal and crisis years.

People are engaged in non-farm activities apart from farm activities in order to earn their living. The major non-farm activities are salt work (Surendranagar district), casual labour, forestry, dairy business, livestock selling and fishing. The villagers go to neighbouring towns and villages in order to work as farm and casual labourers.

Women and children form an important part of the work force. The villagers of Surendranagar taluka reported going to the Rann with their families for 8 months i.e. from late October to May in order to earn a livelihood. In October, the men go to the salt pans to start the work by digging bores and the entire family joins them after Diwali. They come to the village in the monsoon months as the Rann gets filled with water and salt farming is not possible. They work in various salt *mandlis* located in the Rann.

The period of migration varies across districts. The villagers of Surendranagar district migrate between the months of October and May to the Rann to work as salt labourers. In Banaskantha and Dahod districts migration is temporary i.e. for 15-20 days in a month, all throughout the year. In Dahod district it was reported that people migrate for casual and farm work within the areas of Gujarat. The maximum rate of migration is seen between the months March-May when villagers migrate for farm work and are involved in harvesting activities.

The villagers of Dahod district revealed that when they migrate to Saurashtra to work as farm labourers they earn Rs 20/day plus food and tea. They migrate as casual labourers in the months of December to February. From March to May, when farm work is not available, then they are engaged as casual workers for 5-7 days in a month. When they are not migrating i.e. July to October, they cultivate their fields. Once the work on their fields is completed, they again engage as casual labourers or farm labourers within the village or in nearby villages. At

the place of migration they are involved in weeding (earning Rs 40 per day) and spraying of pesticides (earning Rs100 per day).

In Surat, only in the Uchchhal block villagers reported migrating temporarily as farm and casual labourers for 10-15 days in a month. Mostly the households migrate to nearby towns within the district depending on the availability of labour work. They return to their village in June for cultivating their own fields. An individual earns a minimum of Rs 800-1000 per month by working as a casual labourer and Rs 1700-1800 by working on farms after migration. The industrial labourer earns Rs 1200-1500 at the place of migration.

In the tribal community's loan off -take was the maximum in a normal year in March and April, the months of festivity. In a crisis year it was seen that food loans were taken in a majority of the cases in February and March, to replenish the depleting grain stock at home. All these loans are taken from the local markets from the moneylender. In Surendranagar district it was seen that the salt workers and agaria 'salt pan owner' take money from the trader/employer for purchasing the diesel required for running the engine used in manufacturing salt and for meeting livelihood expenses in the Rann. The salt workers and agaria are never able to repay the debts due to exploitation by the traders. The terms of payments are such that they get trapped in the vicious cycle of debt.

Salt is the most essential ingredient of man's food items but a bitter story to tell in the Little Rann of Kutch. It is a long story of human suffering and abject exploitation aggravated by governmental apathy.



The Rann of Kutch is seasonally the marshy region located in the Thar deserts by geographic province extending to Gujarat. The people involved in salt making are from Koli community; but now they are popularly known as agariya community. They spend six months in the Rann making salt. In every respect they are neglected and powerless. These economically, politically and socially powerless and voiceless agariya families are our target group.

Agariya welfare centre is located in Jogad at the fringe of Little Rann of Kutch in Halvad Taluka of Surendranagar district. The centre was established for the Integral development and Empowerment of Agaria. The word 'agaria' means salt worker. The main activities of the centre are, improving and building up of human worth and life quality, strengthening of agaria community through awareness creation and group formation, Educating the children of agaria, and general health care services. Lack of education and thereby lack of unity and community consciousness is the main cause of backwardness and exploitation. Approximately more than 600 children are benefited from this program. Other than class room teaching he is trying to bring out the hidden talents of these children through extra-curricular works and activities. All the children are not competent for higher studies or capable of obtaining employment, therefore target is not to concentrate on all school going children but the exceptionally smart few who can stand par excellence with city children. During the academic year, in this centre is started a boarding house for the children of Agaria at Jogad.

As far as lifestyle of Agaria community is concerned, the society follows the patrilineal rule. The father usually arranges marriages. Usually marriage is allowed during the monsoon seasons when iron smelting is postponed and there is no work. Widow marriage is also accepted. Late husband's younger brother, particularly if he is a bachelor is the most eligible one for second marriage. Divorce is permissible for either party on grounds of adultery, extravagance, or mistreatment.

#### ❖ **TRIBAL SYSTEM**

An estimated 43,000 people -- saltpan workers, their families and dependants -- engage in salt farming during the September-May season in the Little Rann of Kutch, living and working in conditions that can only be described as medieval. They earn 12 paise a kg of salt produced, suffering all sorts of skin diseases from being constantly immersed in brine. There is no power, no potable water, no schools and no healthcare here.

#### ❖ **ABOUT WANDERING LABOUR**

The only sign of life on the horizon is the hazy outline of men, women and children from the local community of Agariyas engaged in neat square fields of steadily evaporating salt waters. The jagged mural formed by their primitive salt-making activity and accompanying poverty completes the landscape.

It was a drought year across many parts of Gujarat, and I had heard that the situation was very bad across the dry Kutch desert. The saltpan workers cheered our arrival for a simple reason: truck drivers

invariably turn up with precious stocks of drinking water. The 20 litres Bhikabhai and I had brought were barely enough for the group of 20 or so men, women and children toiling in the midday heat (the mercury hovered above 45 degrees Celsius). It was virtual hell out there and walking just a few metres was a major effort.

A desperate woman salt worker, with only the tattered end of her sari protecting her infant from the sweltering heat, said: “There is no water, no doctor here. If somebody collapses due to the heat and exhaustion, there is little we can do except pray to god. A medical emergency at night is worse, because there is no power inside the Rann.”

Ignorant about their socio-economic situation, I asked her why the grown-up children, who looked ill and unkempt, were not in school. She said there were no schools, and no hospital. Social activist Prashant Raval, who is also a successful organic farmer from Patdi, explained: “The debt-ridden Agariyas can barely afford basic food. Most children suffer malnutrition and poor eyesight because of lack of vegetables and fruit in their diet.”

A various study of salt workers with over last few years of exposure in working at various salt sites in the Little Rann of Kutch and nearby villages, by the Ahmedabad-based National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), showed significantly greater skin and eye symptoms among them.

There is no alternative means of livelihood because very few saltpan workers own farmland at their village of origin. “There is no

other work we know. During the rains, we work on other people's farms. Besides that there's nothing," the woman salt worker said. The fact that most of them are illiterate does not help.

The saltpan workers still depend on their acquaintance with truck drivers to provide water and transport during emergencies. Government tankers are irregular, they say, and individual families that procure potable water from private operators spend as much as Rs 2,000-Rs 3,000 a month. Not everybody can afford that.

The nature of the Agariyas' existence can be gauged from the fact that even today they use broken pieces of mirror to flash messages during the day across long distances inside the Little Rann; much like the Native Americans and Australian aborigines used fire to send smoke signals!

Salt production in the Little Rann dates back 5,000 years. The British regulated salt-making and made Kharaghoda, a remote village on the periphery of the Little Rann, a hub of the salt trade. Local historian-writer Ambubhai Patel says: "Historical sources indicate that by the middle of the 19th century, British India derived 10% of its revenue from the salt monopoly. The saltpan workers of Kharaghoda and other villages on the periphery of the Little Rann were the unsung beasts of burden."

After Independence, domestic salt production was encouraged and in 1953, the country became self-sufficient. Today, India is the third largest producer of salt in the world; some 5 million tonnes of its annual production of 17 million tonnes are exported. All aspects of the salt

industry are controlled by the salt commissioner from Jaipur, in Rajasthan. The country owes this success primarily to centuries of hard slog by some 150,000-odd saltpan workers in coastal and desert regions of the country.

The Agariyas migrate to the desert every year from the 107 villages bordering the Kutch desert after the monsoon. It's a vicious cycle that begins with an Agariya family seeking an advance or loan from a wholesale salt trader who pre-fixes the price at which he will buy the salt at the end of the season, the next year. The advance or loan money helps meet the running costs of manufacturing salt and afford the family a subsistence living in a temporary shelter on a plot adjoining the pans.

The family, including children, first constructs a hut over pits dug in the mudflats to protect themselves from the wind and the sun. They then prepare the fields, hardening the land surface and raising embankments with their bare hands and feet to create about a dozen evaporation pans, measuring approximately 200 feet by 250 feet. Simultaneously, they dig a shallow well and, with the help of Rajkot pumps (a locally manufactured contraption that operates on crude oil), start drawing groundwater from saline aquifers into the first of the pans.

Once the salt-making process starts, the Agariyas cannot leave the saltpans unattended because it is essential that saline water keeps flowing without interruption to allow salt crystals to form. It is a series of chores that has remained unchanged for centuries; the brine is transferred from one pan to another through narrow channels to increase

the salt content before it reaches the final pan where it starts producing salt. During the four months this process takes, workers regularly scrape the surfaces of the saltpans with heavy wooden rakes to even out the salt, which is slowly captured and dried in the heat, transforming the pans into hard fields of coarse salt ready for harvest.

Most saltpan workers are from the Chuvaliya Koli and dalit communities. Other backward communities like the Vaghri, Bharwads, Rabaris, Ahirs, Sipahis, Fakirs, and Muslims are also engaged in allied activities like transport, loading and unloading, grinding and packaging. But it is the low-caste Kolis and dalits who live and work in hazardous conditions, dominated and exploited for decades by the Barbas, a higher-caste community, who own the saltpans. Throughout their working lives -- they start at the young age of seven or eight years -- saltpan workers encounter serious physical and mental health hazards.

Working in extreme temperatures without any protective gear against the intense sun and the salt, many Agariyas suffer blindness and skin damage. Exposed parts of their body get covered in an abrasive coating of salt, drastically reducing their life expectancy. "Even a small cut takes months to heal," Labhubhai said. Lack of money means they cannot afford to buy rubber boots or gloves that would offer some protection to their ravaged limbs.

The late Gujarati writer, Dilip Ranpara, who published a book on the exploitation and sufferings of saltpan workers in the early-90s, has described how an Agariya's hands and legs take more time to burn than his body on the funeral pyre because a lifetime spent working in salt

causes them to harden and become nearly acid-proof! Though his book, *Kali Majuri, Dholo Mithoo* (Black Labour, White Salt), is often quoted by social activists at public and official fora, not many people are aware of this darker side of common salt.

Salt, an “essential item”, may be a central subject under the seventh schedule of the Constitution, but the working conditions of workers also fall within the purview of state governments. The Centre set up three special committees in the years 1948, 1950 and 1958 to review the progress of the salt industry. It also passed the Salt Cess Act, 1953, which provided for the levy and collection of a cess on salt that would be utilised for labour welfare schemes and development work in the salt industry. In 1954-55, a five-year programme was prepared for development and welfare in the salt industry. A salt development fund was established in 1958, under the Act, to be operated by the Central Salt Board.

But, says a report prepared by the Union Ministry of Labour, “there is no clear separation of funds; as a result, administrative expenses constitute almost 80% of total expenditure. This despite the fact that the Government of India gives budgetary support to the salt commissioner’s office for its running. The salt cess, at Rs 3.50 per metric tonne, has remained unchanged over these years. It is applicable only to salt works of over 100 acres; it is half for those with more than 10 acres but less than 100 acres. Salt works up to 10 acres are exempt from the cess”.

These report further points out that unlike welfare funds where, apart from welfare fund Acts there are separate Acts like the Beedi and Cigar Workers (Terms of Employment) Act 1966, there is no such Act to govern conditions of employment of saltpan workers. The Centre had formulated a code of principles under which assistance from the cess proceeds was to fund welfare works like water supply schemes, including provision of water coolers, storage tanks, water tankers mounted on trailers; construction of labour rest sheds, crèches, toilets; augmentation of medical facilities including conducting health camps; community centres and recreation facilities; educational facilities for the children of salt workers; labour housing, etc.

“However, it is observed that the organisation of the Central Salt Commission has generally been meeting the requirements of drinking water supply to some extent. For the other welfare measures, the salt workers have to depend on the governments of respective states. The thrust and major objective of the Central Salt Commission is to improve skills in the production of salt and its quality control,” the report adds.

The government of Gujarat claims to run a group insurance scheme from 1993 that offers coverage to around 46,000 salt workers across the state. Under the scheme, workers are entitled to Rs 25,000 in case of accidental death or complete disability and Rs 12,500 in case of partial disability. It also runs salt workers’ welfare centres where activities such as primary education, primary healthcare, sports and cultural events are conducted. Financial assistance for the construction of *pucca* houses or temporary tent accommodation, and treatment of



serious diseases, is also promised. But the implementation of these schemes is at best tardy, say the salt workers.

Thanks to the efforts of Ganatar, an Ahmedabad-based social change organisation, the Gujarat state government has, in recent years, taken some steps to make the saltpan workers' lives a little more bearable. "The government has sanctioned schools for the Agariya children, promised potable water in tankers in remote saltpans, a weekly medical van service, and a limited number of rubber boots," says Rupalben of Ganatar.

Ganatar has been educating the children of saltpan workers for over a decade now through a network of mobile Rann shalas (desert schools) that operate during the seasonal migration period starting October through to the month of May. Classes up to 7th grade are conducted as supplementary to the mainstream government schools running in the villages. Thus, students enrolled in village schools continue their respective grade education at the mobile schools when they migrate with their parents to the saltpans. And, at the end of the year, they appear for the annual examination at their respective village schools.

Before the mobile schools came into existence, the children of saltpan workers had to leave their schools in the village and accompany their parents to eventually join the swelling masses of child labourers being initiated into a life of backbreaking drudgery. "It was the success of the Rann shalas that enabled Ganatar to pursue the Gujarat government to replicate the model inside the Little Rann, besides other

areas, for children of migrant communities in the state,” Rupalben claims. The Gujarat government set aside a grant of Rs 4.70 crore in 2006-07 for social organisations running schools on the lines of Ganatar’s Rann shalas; last financial year, the amount was raised to Rs 11.50 crore. In 1996, around 100-odd students joined the first school started by Ganatar. Today, 10,000 children of migrants benefit from the Rann shala model. The state funds over 50 schools and 50 hostels for migrant children.

However, it’s a case of too little, too late as thousands of young Agariyas have already been sucked into the vicious cycle of salt-making and are faced with a bleak future. The Little Rann has been declared a sanctuary by the Gujarat forest department as it is the habitat of a thriving population of the endangered Asiatic wild ass (*Equus hemionus khur*).

The first set of sanctuary notifications was issued on January 12, 1973, followed by a second notification in 1978. In early-1997, the state government set up an office to survey and settle the claims of traditional dwellers in the sanctuary area, in Surendranagar. Predictably, the saltpan workers have been up in arms ever since. An assemblage of NGOs led by Harinesh Pandya of Janpath and Sukhdev Patel of Ganatar is lobbying the state government to end the uncertainty over the workers’ existence inside the Little Rann. Interestingly, while the state forest department has issued eviction notices to the salt workers, the state government has provided nearly 41,000 of them identity cards, certifying them as traditional saltpan workers.

The salt workers were finally issued eviction notices in 2007. But, sensing popular protest in an assembly election year, the state government, led by Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi, promised to try and persuade the Centre to reconsider dislodging the salt workers. The government is presently seeking documented evidence from the Agariyas to establish their right to produce salt inside the wild ass sanctuary. “The state forest department’s only concern appears to be to throw the impoverished Agariyas out of the Little Rann. Last year, it even blocked a government plan to lay a pipeline inside the Little Rann to provide potable water to the Agariyas because it would impact the wild ass’ grazing area,” says local activist Ishwarbhai Desai.

So far, the government continues to delay a mutually agreed settlement. The salt workers say that if given an option they would gladly give up salt-harvesting; anyway, they are treading a thin line for survival and will need more than just salt to sustain them in future. Some of them, like Kantibhai, feel their lot was better off under British rule. “From what we have heard our elders say, they (the British) took good care of our people. Those were glory days at Kharaghoda. The saltpan worker was king then.”

The saltpan workers of Kharaghoda dismissed the Agariya Kalyan Sammelan (conference for the welfare of salt-makers), organised by the state government in Patdi, in 2007, as a “political farce”.

Chief Minister Narendra Modi had announced grand plans to develop the nearby Navlakhi port in Kutch, with a special jetty dedicated for salt export so as to fetch the best prices for salt workers in

the Little Rann of Kutch. “The proposed port will cut transportation costs and give a boost to the local economy, at a time when the railways have failed to provide any concession in freight charges for salt. Besides, the government wanted to develop a Rann-based tourism plan,” said a senior aide of the chief minister in Gandhinagar.

The state government also wants to promote prawn culture inside the Little Rann to create new job opportunities for the next generations of salt workers. Modi has promised that the much-touted Rs 11,000 crore schemes for the development of Gujarat’s coastal areas and fisheries will percolate down to the salt workers. But one saltpan worker stated the real problem as he looked across the bountiful hot fields of salt: “What good are these grand promises when the government cannot provide us drinking water, medical care and education here?”

The saltpan workers, most of them illiterate, fail to comprehend such grand development initiatives. All they have known is a poverty-stricken existence in the wilderness. Savshibhai, my guide who started life as a child salt worker, said: “We are destined to spend our entire lives in the company of dogs, bicycles and pigeons -- the dogs are faithful companions and security, the bicycles the only means of transportation, and the presence of pigeons protects from death due to variable concentrations of carbon dioxide inside the saline aquifers.”

As the unrelenting sun beat down on the parched desert, a small group of men gathered under a shed at the Shri Veer Vaccharaj Solanki temple. This is the centre of the Little Rann and a sacred place for the saltpan workers. Mythology has it that King Vaccharaj left his marriage

ceremony halfway on hearing that the enemy had taken away cows belonging to his people for slaughter. “He saved the cows but died in battle. We expect our rulers to come to our rescue in similar fashion. But would they ever?” wondered Mahadevbhai, the temple priest.

RAJKOT: In a bid to augment the livelihood of saltpan workers in Gujarat, Bhavnagar-based Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSMCRI) has embarked on a project to provide them its patented technology to produce export quality salt and extract valuable chemicals from waste generated in the process.

The saltpan workers or 'agariyas', as they are called in Gujarat, is one of the most backward communities, with over 70 per cent living below poverty line under harsh conditions in the Little Rann of Kutch (LRK).

The CSMCRI project titled 'saltpan cluster development programme' has been funded by the state industries department to train the saltpan workers to produce better quality salt that can fetch them good income and is being implemented with support from Agariya Heet Rakshak Manch (AHRM), a non-governmental organization (NGO), working for the saltpan workers.

This initiative of the institute is also aimed at arming the saltpan workers with technology to extract valuable chemicals from bittern (the liquid pumped off after the salt is harvested from the brine), which could be sold to industry adding to their income.

"Under this project we train saltpan workers to use our patented technology using which they can produce better quality salt and also

utilize the waste or reject from the manufacturing process to extract valuable non-common salts for industrial use," said a senior scientist at CSMCRI Dr V P Mohandas, adding that they have already trained over 500 saltpan workers. This would augment their livelihood as they would be able to get more income from the salt and the rejects also, he added. Under the project, saltpan workers are linked directly to the industries through NGOs SEWA and Anandi in LRK and Rajkot districts respectively by forming small collectives or associations, he said.

Some of the companies' now directly purchasing salt and chemicals from saltpan workers include Gujarat Heavy Chemicals Ltd, Punjab Alkalies, Indian Rayon and Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Ltd.

According to AHRM, over 12,000 families of saltpan workers, including children, migrate from more than 100 village bordering LRK to produce salt. The LRK is also home of the wild ass or the Godhkhar in local language and is declared as a protected area. The inland salt produced from LRK accounts for 40 per cent of salt produced in Gujarat, which in turn is also largest producer of salt in the country.

LRK characterizes a unique eco-system having saline desert and wetland with high biodiversity. It is also flood plain of eight rivers. The ecosystem supports various livelihoods of people living in and around LRK that consists of saltpan workers, marginal farmers, fishermen and charcoal makers.

❖ **REVIEW OF AGARIA COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION**  
➤ **INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPOWERMENT  
OF AGARIYS**

1. To provide facilities for a continued schooling to the children of saltpan workers who stay away in the saltpans.
2. To avail facilities to train, develop and bring out the hidden artistic skills and talents in the deprived rural children.
3. To Give basic education to all the children of the Agaria (salt-pan workers) and prepare a few smart children competent to go for higher education and thereby employment and ability to combat existing social evil of illiteracy, caste deprivation and social and economical exploitation.
4. To avail opportunities for intensive and better learning while children are in the primary to enable them to excel in high schools.
5. To provide supplementary education, character formation and behavior to the children of saltpan workers.
6. To construct a boarding house (residential schooling) for the children of Agaria.
7. To start Competitive and Career Oriented Education Program.
8. To open avenues for better Education and Employment.
9. To empower Women through SHG's and other Enhancement programs.
10. To Form groups of enterprising members of Agaria to fight for their rights and sensitize their fellow men from succumbing

themselves to the exploitation and wave way for a decent return for their work.

11. To promote eco-friendly programs.

Rural Education and Advancement Program was initiated in view of improving the quality of education that is going on in the village schools of this area where even normal literacy is taking place. After completing the primary education in many of these schools majority of them are unable to read and write properly and also do basic calculations. Our aim is to bring substantial change to this prevailing situation. To this end we have introduced the following programs.

#### ➤ TUITION CLASSES FOR SCHOOL GOING CHILDREN

This program was started in view of supplementing and strengthening the knowledge base of the school going children. In the initial phase we selected 10 villages and started 26 tuition batches through which we could support and supplement the existing education system.

In the absence or of illiterate parents, as the children come back after the school hours in the evening and before the school hours in the morning, we collect these children and help them to do their lessons with the help of specially appointed teachers. Every year more than 700 children are benefitted from this program.



### ➤ INTENSIVE COCHING CLASSES

This program was initiated to help those children who want to join for high schools. Short term intensive coaching classes for different subjects like Mathematics, Science and English, are arranged for the primary school children during the summer and Diwali holidays.

### ➤ ALTERNATIVE HOMES (SEASONAL HOSTEL)

The people of this area are basically seasonal salt-pan workers who move to the Little Rann to make salt during October- November and remains in the saltpans next six months till April-May. This program was envisaged to help the children of these migrating parents to continue their education retaining them back in these seasonal hostels.

### ➤ BOARDING HOUSE (RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL)

This facility is availed for intellectually competent children of Agaria (saltpan workers) who aspire for higher education and better job prospects. The centre provides opportunities for an all round development of the child.

### ❖ WOMAN EMPOWERMENT AND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WEEP)

WEEP was designed specially for the uplift of the society through women who play vital role in moulding the society. They are the key agents of change. The role and the influence of woman is unopposed. Therefore to empower and enrich this women force is very important

for the sustenance and renovation of the society. Especially least literate and socially and economically backward area like this, women has a chief place in forming their children for a better tomorrow. Studies show that when women are supported and empowered, all of society benefits. Their families are healthier, more children go to school, agricultural productivity improves and incomes increase. In short, communities become more resilient.

Empowerment is the process that allows one to gain the knowledge, skill-sets and attitude needed to cope with the changing world and the circumstances in which one lives. The following programs initiated to meet this end.

#### ➤ **FORMATION OF SELF HELP GROUPS**

The women self help groups were initiated to improve one's positive self image and overcome stigma increasing one's ability in discreet thinking to sort out right and wrong. Through group process enable them to improve the decision making power of one's own and have access to information and resources for taking proper decisions. It also improves one's ability to learn skills for personal or group power.

#### ➤ **TRAINING IN DIFFERENT TRADES**

Economic development is very important for economic empowerment and self reliance. This empowerment approach focuses on mobilizing the **self-help** efforts of the poor, rather than providing them with some material help. The Organization arranges training in

different trades according to the taste and feasibility of the group and the individuals as per their requirements.

➤ **PROMOTION AND TRAINING**

The local arts and the handicraft work are always novel and non-imitated. And therefore, on one side people always have an attraction for it and on the other there is no industrial competition and large scale production. Our effort is to take advantage of this positive environment for the economic sustenance and empowerment of women.

➤ **AWARNESS PROGRAMS ON HEALTH AND HYGIENE, REARING AND NUTRITION**

Good health care and nutrition during pregnancy, infancy, and childhood are essential but often overlooked factors in the growth and development due to lack of awareness.

➤ **COMPETITIVE AND CAREER ORINTED EDUCATION PROGRAME.**

In the present world of competitions, financial and political influences for securing admissions for higher education and better job placements it becomes the duty of a philanthropist to prepare the rural children to withstand the so called influential city children.

➤ **COACHING FOR HIGHER LEARNING AND COMPETITIVE EXAMS**

This program is mainly meant for intellectually capable children who complete high schooling and are willing to go for higher studies in search of a better career prospects. Those aspirants are trained to appear for any competitive exams they want to pursue.

➤ **VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

Those children who want to study but are not intellectually gifted for higher education are trained in some skills that taste/suit to them.

➤ **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AND MONITORING IN HIGHER EDUCATION.**

Those children who come out from our institutions and pursue higher fields of education elsewhere are not left for their fate but are constantly monitored for their educational advancements and wherever necessary with educational support.

❖ **RELIGION**

The majority of Adivasi practice Hinduism and Christianity. During the last two decades Adivasi's from Orissa, Madhya pradesh, Jharkhand have converted to Christian Protestants groups. Adivasi beliefs vary by tribe, and are usually different from the historical Vedic religion, with its monistic underpinnings, Indo-European deities (who are often cognates of ancient Iranian, Greek and Roman deities, e.g. Mitra/Mithra/Mithras), lack of idol worship and lack of a concept of reincarnation. The "centre of Rig Vedic religion was the *Yajna*, the sacrificial fire" and there was "no Atma, no Brahma, no Moksha, no idol worship in the Rig Veda." Two specific rituals held great importance and it is known that, "when the Indo-Aryans and the Persians formed a single people, they performed sacrifices (Vedic yajna: Avestan yasna), and that they already had a sacred drink (Vedic soma: Avestan haoma)."

### ➤ **ADIVASI ROOTS OF MODERN HINDUISM**

Most important deities added to the Hindu pantheon after the Vedic period were dark-skinned, such as Vishnu (who has been described as *meghavarṇam*, or dark as a cloud), Rama, Krishna, Shiva and Kali, which may reflect adivasi origins. Today, these deities constitute the main divinities worshiped by most caste Hindus. In a marked departure from the Indo-Aryan religion (although not directly contradicted by it), idol worship has also become firmly established for most Hindus, though exceptions such as the Arya Samaj school do exist. Some historians and anthropologists assert that much of what constitutes popular Hinduism today is actually descended from an amalgamation of adivasi faiths, idol worship practices and deities, rather than the original Indo-Aryan faith. This also includes the sacred status of certain animals and plants, such as monkeys, cows, peacocks, cobras (nagas), elephants, peepul, tulsi (holy basil) and neem, which may once have held totemic importance for certain adivasi tribes.

### ➤ **CONNOTATIONS OF THE WORD 'ADIVASI'**

Although terms such as *atavika* (Sanskrit for *forest dwellers*), *vanvasi* or *girijan* (*hill people*) are also used for the tribes of India, *adivasi* carries the specific meaning of being the original and autochthonous inhabitants of a given region, and was specifically coined for that purpose in the 1930s. Over a period of time, unlike the terms "aborigines" or "tribes", the word "*adivasi*" has also developed a connotation of past autonomy which was disrupted during the British colonial period in India and has not been restored. Opposition to usage

of the term is varied, and it has been argued that the "original inhabitant" contention is based on dubious claims and that the adivasi - non adivasi divide that is created is artificial.

➤ **ADIVASI SAINTS**

- Saint Buddhu Bhagat, led the Kol Insurrection (1831-1832) aimed against tax imposed on Mundas by Muslim rulers.
- Saint Dhira or Kannappa Nayanar[2], one of 63 Nayanar Shaivite saints, a hunter from whom Lord Shiva gladly accepted food offerings. It is said that he poured water from his mouth on the Shivlingam and offered the Lord swine flesh.[3]
- Saint Dhudhalinath, Koli, Gujarati, a 17th or 18th century devotee (P. 4, *The Story of Historic People of India-The Kolis*)
- Saint Ganga Narain, led the Bhumij Revolt (1832-1833) aimed against missionaries and British colonialists.
- Saint Girnari Velnathji, Koli, Gujarati of Junagadh, a 17th or 18th century devotee
- Saint Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma or Guru Brahma, a Bodo who's founded the Brahma Dharma aimed against missionaries and colonialists. The Brahma Dharma movement sought to unite peoples of all religions to worship God together and survives even today.
- Saint Jatra Oraon, Oraon, led the Tana Bhagat Movement (1914-1919) aimed against the missionaries and British colonialists
- Saint Sri Koya Bhagat, Koli, Gujarati, a 17th or 18th century devotee

- Saint Tantya Mama (Bhil), a Bhil after whom a movement is named after - the "Jananayak Tantya Bhil"
- Saint Tirumangai Alvar, Kallar, composed the six Vedangas in beautiful Tamil verse[4]

#### ➤ SAGES

- Bhaktaraj Bhadurdas, Koli, Gujarati, a 17th or 18th century devotee
- Bhakta Shabari, a Bhil woman that offered Shri Rama and Shri Laxmana her half-eaten ber fruit, which they gratefully accepted when they were searching for Shri Sita Devi in the forest.
- Madan Bhagat, Koli, Gujarati, a 17th or 18th century devotee
- Sany Kanji Swami, Koli, Gujarati, a 17th or 18th century devotee
- Bhaktaraj Valram, Koli, Gujarati, a 17th or 18th century devotee

#### ➤ MAHARISHIS

- Maharshi Matanga, Matanga Bhil, Guru of Bhakta Shabari. In fact, Chandalas are often addressed as 'Matanga' in passages like Varaha Purana 1.139.91
- Maharshi Valmiki, Kirata Bhil, composed the Ramayana. He is considered to be an avatar in the Balmiki community.

#### ➤ AVATARS

- Birsa Bhagwan or Birsa Munda, considered an avatar of Khasra Kora. People approached him as Singbonga, the supreme spirit. He converted even Christians to his own sect. He was against conversions by missionaries. He wanted not only political, but religious freedom as well! He and his clan, the Mundas, were

connected with Vaishnavite traditions as they were influenced by Sri Chaitanya. Birsa was very close to the Panre brothers Vaishnavites.

- Kirata - the form of Lord Shiva as a hunter. It is mentioned in the Mahabharata. The Karppillikkavu Sree Mahadeva Temple, Kerala adores Lord Shiva in this avatar and is known to be one of the oldest surviving temples in Bharat.
- Vettakkorumakan, the son of Lord Kirata.
- Kaladutaka or 'Vaikunthanatha', Kallar (robber), avatar of Lord Vishnu.

#### ➤ OTHER TRIBALS AND HINDUISM

Some Hindus believe that Indian tribals are close to the romantic ideal of the ancient silvan culture of the Vedic people. Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar said: "The tribals "can be given yajñopavîta. They should be given equal rights and footings in the matter of religious rights, in temple worship, in the study of Vedas, and in general, in all our social and religious affairs. This is the only right solution for all the problems of casteism found nowadays in our Hindu society."

At the Lingaraja temple in Bhubaneswar (11th century), there are Brahmin and Badu (tribal) priests. The Badus have the most intimate contact with the deity of the temple, and only they can bathe and adorn it.

The Bhil tribe is mentioned in the Mahabharata. The Bhil boy Eklavya's teacher was Drona, and he had the honour to be invited to



Yudhisthira's Rajasuya Yajna at Indraprastha. Indian tribals were also part of royal armies in the Ramayana and in the Arthasastra.

Bhakta Shabari was a Bhil woman that offered Shri Rama and Shri Laxmana 'ber' when they were searching for Shri Sita in the forest. Maharishi Matanga, a Bhil became a Brahmana.

### ➤ SARNA

Some western authors and Indian sociologists refer to adivasi beliefs as animism and spirit worship, and hold them to be distinct from Hinduism, Christianity or Islam. In Jharkhand, Chattisgarh and Orissa states, their religion is sometimes called Sarna. Sarna involves belief in a great spirit called the *Sing Bonga*. Santhal belief holds the world to be inhabited by numerous spiritual beings of different kinds. Santhals consider themselves as living and doing everything in close association with these spirits. Rituals are performed under groves of Sal trees called *Jaher* (or *sacred grove*), where *Bonga* is believed to appear or express himself. Often, *Jaher* are found in the forests.

According to the mythology of the Santhal community, the genesis of the 'Sarna' religion occurred when the 'Santhal tribals had gone to the forest for hunting and they started the discussion about their 'Creator and Savior' while they were taking rest under a tree. They questioned themselves that who is their God? Whether the Sun, the Wind or the Cloud? Finally, they came to a conclusion that they would leave an arrow in the sky and wherever the arrow would target that will be the God's house. They left an arrow in the sky; it fell down under a Sal tree. Then, they started worshiping the Sal tree and named their

religion as 'Sarna' because it is derived from a Sal tree.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Sarna religion came into existence. There are priests and assistant priests called "Naikey" and "Kudam Naike" in every Santhal.

### ➤ SCHEDULED TRIBES

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". In Article 342, the procedure to be followed for specification of a scheduled tribe is prescribed. However, it does not contain the criterion for the specification of any community as scheduled tribe. An often used criterion is based on attributes such as:-

- Geographical isolation - they live in cloistered, exclusive, remote and inhospitable areas such as hills and forests,
- Backwardness - their livelihood is based on primitive agriculture, a low-value closed economy with a low level of technology which leads to their poverty. They have low levels of literacy and health.
- Distinctive culture, language and religion - communities have developed their own distinctive culture, language and religion.
- Shyness of contact – they have a marginal degree of contact with other cultures and people.

### ➤ PRIMITIVE TRIBES

The Scheduled Tribe groups who were identified as more backward communities among the tribal population groups have been categorised as 'Primitive Tribal Groups' (PTGs) by the Government at

the Centre in 1975. So far seventy-five tribal communities have been identified as 'primitive tribal groups' in different States of India. These hunting, food-gathering, and some agricultural communities, who have been identified as more backward communities among the tribal population groups need special programmes for their sustainable development. The primitive tribes are awakening and demanding their rights for special reservation quota for them.

### ❖ GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW

There is a substantial list of Scheduled Tribes in India recognised as tribal under the Constitution of India. Tribal peoples constitute 8.2% of the nation's total population, over 84 million people according to the 2001 census. One concentration lives in a belt along the Himalayas stretching through Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand in the west, to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland in the northeast. In the northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland, more than 90% of the population is tribal. However, in the remaining northeast states of Assam, Manipur, Sikkim, and Tripura, tribal peoples form between 20 and 30% of the population.

Another concentration lives in the hilly areas of central India (Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and, to a lesser extent, Andhra Pradesh); in this belt, which is bounded by the Narmada River to the north and the Godavari River to the southeast, tribal peoples occupy the slopes of the region's mountains. Other tribals, including the Santals, live in Jharkhand and West Bengal. Central Indian states have the

country's largest tribes, and, taken as a whole, roughly 75% of the total tribal population live there, although the tribal population there accounts for only around 10% of the region's total population.

There are smaller numbers of tribal people in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala in south India; in western India in Gujarat and Rajasthan, and in the union territories of Lakshadweep and the Andaman Islands and Nicobar Islands. About one percent of the populations of Kerala and Tamil Nadu are tribal, whereas about six percent in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are members of tribes.

### ➤ THE PEOPLING OF INDIA

The concept of 'original inhabitant' is directly related to the initial peopling of India, which, due to the debate on topics such as the Indo-Aryan migration hypothesis, has been a contentious area of research and discourse. Some anthropologists hypothesize that the region was settled by multiple human migrations over tens of millennia, which makes it even harder to select certain groups as being truly aboriginal. One narrative, largely based on genetic research, describes Negritos, similar to the Andamanese adivasis of today, as the first humans to colonize India, likely 30-65 thousand years before present (kybp). 60% of all Indians share the mtDNA haplogroup M, which is universal among Andamanese islander adivasis and might be a genetic legacy of the postulated first Indians. Some anthropologists theorize that these settlers were displaced by invading Austro-Asiatic-speaking Australoid people (who largely shared skin pigmentation and physiognomy with the Negritos, but had straight rather than kinky hair), and adivasi tribes such

as the Irulas trace their origins to that displacement. The Oraon adivasi tribe of eastern India and the Korku tribe of western India are considered to be examples of groups of Australoid origin. Subsequent to the Australoids, some anthropologists and geneticists theorize that Caucasoids (including both Dravidians and Indo-Aryans) and Mongoloids (Sino-Tibetans) immigrated into India: the Dravidians possibly from Iran, the Indo-Aryans possibly from the Central Asian steppes and the Tibeto-Burmans possibly from the Himalayan and north-eastern borders of the subcontinent. It should be noted that none of these hypotheses is free from debate and disagreement.

Ethnic origins and linguistic affiliations in India match only inexactly, however: while the Oraon adivasis are classified as an Australoid group, their language, called Kurukh, is Dravidian. Khasis and Nicobarese are considered to be Mongoloid groups and the Munda and Santals are Australoid groups, but all four speak Austro-Asiatic languages. The Bhils and Gonds are frequently classified as Australoid groups, yet Bhil languages are Indo-European and the Gondi language is Dravidian. Also, in post-colonial India, tribal languages suffered huge setbacks with the formation of linguistic states after 1956 under the States Reorganisation Act. For example, under state-sponsored educational pressure, Irula children are being taught Tamil and a sense of shame has begun to be associated with speaking the Irula language among some children and educated adults. Similarly, the Santals are "gradually adopting languages of the areas inhabited, like Oriya in Orissa, Hindi in Bihar and Bengali in West Bengal."

### ➤ **DISRUPTIONS DURING MUGHAL AND COLONIAL PERIODS**

Although considered uncivilized and primitive, adivasis were usually not held to be intrinsically impure by surrounding (usually, caucasoid - Dravidian or Aryan) caste Hindu populations, unlike Dalits, who were. Thus, the adivasi origins of Maharshi (Sanskrit: *Great Sage*) Valmiki, who composed the Ramayana Hindu religious epic, were acknowledged, as were the origins of adivasi tribes such as the Grasia and Bhilala, which descended from mixed Rajput and Bhil marriages. Unlike the subjugation of the dalits, the adivasis often enjoyed autonomy and, depending on region, evolved mixed hunter-gatherer and farming economies, controlling their lands as a joint patrimony of the tribe. In some areas, securing adivasi approval and support was considered crucial by local rulers, and larger adivasi groups were able to sustain their own kingdoms in central India. The Gond Rajas of Garha-Mandla and Chanda are examples of an adivasi aristocracy that ruled in this region, and 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."

This relative autonomy and collective ownership of adivasi land by adivasis was severely disrupted by the advent of the Mughals in the early 16th century. Similarly, the British beginning in the 18th century added to the consolidation of feudalism in India, first under the jagirdari system and then under the zamindari system. Beginning with the Permanent Settlement imposed by the British in Bengal and Bihar,

which later became the template for a deepening of feudalism throughout India, the older social and economic system in the country began to alter radically. Land, both forest areas belonging to adivasis and settled farmland belonging to non-adivasi peasants, was rapidly made the legal property of British-designated zamindars (landlords), who in turn moved to extract the maximum economic benefit possible from their newfound property and subjects without regard to historical tenure or ownership. Adivasi lands sometimes experienced an influx of non-local settlers, often brought from far away (as in the case of Muslims and Sikhs brought to Kol territory) by the zamindars to better exploit local land, forest and labor. Deprived of the forests and resources they traditionally depended on and sometimes coerced to pay taxes, many adivasis were forced to borrow at usurious rates from moneylenders, often the zamindars themselves. When they were unable to pay, that forced them to become bonded laborers for the zamindars. Often, far from paying off the principal of their debt, they were unable even to offset the compounding interest, and this was made the justification for their children working for the zamindar after the death of the initial borrower. In the case of the Andamanese adivasis, long isolated from the outside world in autonomous societies, mere contact with outsiders was often sufficient to set off deadly epidemics in tribal populations, and it is alleged that some sections of the British government directly attempted to destroy some tribes.

Land dispossession and subjugation by British and zamindar interests resulted in a number of adivasi revolts in the late eighteenth

and early nineteenth centuries, such as the Santal hul (or Santal revolt) of 1855-56. Although these were suppressed ruthlessly by the governing British authority (the East India Company prior to 1858, and the British government after 1858), partial restoration of privileges to adivasi elites (e.g. to *Mankis*, the leaders of Munda tribes) and some leniency in tax burdens resulted in relative calm, despite continuing and widespread dispossession, from the late nineteenth century onwards. The economic deprivation, in some cases, triggered internal adivasi migrations within India that would continue for another century, including as labor for the emerging tea plantations in Assam.

#### ➤ INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

At the macro level, the anganwadis are present in all the surveyed districts of the FIVP study. This section aims at highlighting the nutrient distribution, functioning of AWCs at the village level and analysing the level of satisfaction and expectations of beneficiaries.

All the villages have AWCs within the village and most of them are in government buildings. Drought has not affected the functioning of AWCs. Overall, the AWCs are perceived as a very important institution within the village. The reasons differ from a play school like environment to a place where the child gets good food. The beneficiaries in districts such as Surat view it as important because it as an important institution for pre-school education.

Apparently, a majority of the districts has a formal structure of the AWCs but as far as their functioning is concerned there are gaping holes. The main problems faced in the implementation of ICDS are the



irregularity of food stock, pilferage of the stock available, quality of food which does not suit a child's palate, inappropriate functioning of AWW and lack of motivation among the AWW due to the meagre wages.

In Kachchh, the villagers perceive AWCs as a source of food for children but they are not aware of other facilities that these centres are supposed to provide. They also opined that the centres should provide food to the children and organize plays to keep them occupied. Apart from the complaints about the quantity of nutrients during the discussions, women also complained about caste discriminations, especially in Kachchh and Surendranagar. The villagers reported that the children of Harijan are discriminated against in terms of food distribution in the AWC. The reason cited by AWW for this discrimination was the involvement of parents in selling dead skin of animals. In some of the villages of these two districts it was seen that the post of AWW is lying vacant posing a problem in the dissemination of services of ICDS. The main reason for this is the marriage of the AWW in another village. The parents in Kachchh and Surendranagar districts do not have an idea of where and whom to report all the discrepancies in the AW.

On the other hand sample villages in Banaskantha and Dahod are located on hilly terrain. This results in increased distances and inaccessibility of the AW. The AWW does not open the AW regularly because of low attendance. Across all the districts covered the commonly reported nutrients are boiled grams, biscuits, India mix (only

in Surendranagar), *sheera*, *laapsi* and *mamri* (RTE, only in Dahod). However, these nutrients are not preferred by the beneficiaries. In Dahod, the beneficiaries do not like the RTE. Though the officials reported supply of three flavours of RTE i.e. sweet, sour, and both sweet and sour. However, in reality the situation is very different. It is a compromise for the beneficiaries.

“What can these children of the poor tribal do? They consider it a privilege to at least eat something. Else if this is given to a child from a well-off family he would not be able to taste it, forget eating it.” Banaskantha and Dahod are the only two districts of the study where the lactating and expectant women are immunised and their nutritional needs taken care of. Pre-schools are also not functioning properly and adolescent meetings have not been held in any of the districts.

#### ➤ LOCAL AND COMMUNITY BASED INSTITUTIONS

The village level institutions contribute mainly in the developmental process of the communities. The biggest local level institution responsible for people’s development is the Panchayat.

However, at present the activities are being taken care by the ex-sarpanch known as the *maji sarpanch*. Overall the performance of the Panchayat cannot be rated as satisfactory on the basis of the participatory baseline exercise. The objectives of Panchayat include construction of village road, school building and ICDS building as well as digging of pond and community well and distribution of ration under the DRDA. The prime role of Panchayat is to provide employment opportunities to the BPL population. It was found that the

implementation of schemes through Panchayat is not proper as the people reported that the schemes are not floated well. Nepotism and favouritism plague the scheme implementation. Women are less aware and involved in the activities of Panchayat. If we take a closer look at the districts separately, the following picture emerges.

➤ **KACHCHH**

All the villages have a Panchayat; however, the people are not satisfied with its functioning especially after the earthquake. All the facilities that have been provided to the villages were during the normal year. No special help has been extended to the villagers during the drought or after the earthquake. Although they recognize that Panchayat is important but they are not satisfied with its performance and are unhappy at the lack of aid after the earthquake. The government programmes have not reached many villages.

➤ **SURENDRANAGAR**

Nearly all the villages covered in this district have a Panchayat located within the village. The primary activities and programmes reaching out to the villages are the construction of the ICDS or the anganwadi building, the Panchayat room, cattle trough, crematorium shade, washing platform, well and also the taps, bathrooms, a bore well and roads within the villages.

➤ **BANASKANTHA**

In Banaskantha three out of the four villages studied have a Panchayat within the village. The main activities for village welfare

include construction of the anganwadi centre, schoolroom, community hall, cattle shed, cattle troughs, wells, and Panchayat bhavan.

#### ➤ **DAHOD**

All the villages covered in the study have panchayats. The developmental activities undertaken are the construction of village roads, wells, installation of hand pumps, anganwadi building, community room and school building.

#### ➤ **SURAT**

Half the villages covered in Surat have a panchayat located within the village. The infrastructure developed for the welfare of the village includes the anganwadi building, the community halls, internal village roads, common taps and bathrooms, bore wells, panchayat rooms, cattle troughs, crematorium shades, washing platforms and wells.

Panchayats in all the districts have implemented schemes such as the Indira Awas Yojana, the Sardar Awas yojana and the other schemes of the DRDA. Though caste discrimination exists within the villages across all the districts studied, it is only confined to the social areas like marriages. It does not spill over into governance.

#### ❖ **SELF HELP GROUPS**

The SHGs were seen only in Kachchh and Surendranagar district. The concept of SHGs is promoted through the efforts of NGOs working for the upliftment of deprived groups. These NGOs are actively involved with women groups in income generation activity, creating saving groups and in their development. The aims and objectives of these SHGs include:

- To provide security at the time of loan off take
- To protect villagers from exploitation by moneylenders
- To promote income generation activities, which help in raising the economic standard of people.

It was seen in Kachchh and Surendranagar that the SHGs are formed irrespective of caste. The people are quite satisfied with the activities of the SHGs and are aware of their importance.

#### ➤ **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

It was seen that in the five districts covered, most of the NGOs are not an outcome of the exigencies. NGOs such as SEWA and Sadguru Watershed Development Trust are working towards the development of the districts specifically the rural segments.

In Kachchh, of the NGOs covered under the study, some were present in normal years, some came due to the drought and some were involved after the earthquake. Some of the NGOs working in Kachchh are the Kachchh Mahila Vikas Samiti (KMVS) and the Jan Vikas Trust (JVT) which are involved actively with women's groups.

In Surendranagar district SEWA is functional. The sector priorities of SEWA are training and thrift co-operative groups to make the women self-sufficient. The Sadguru Water Development Trust is actively involved in the area of watershed development. Both these agencies are also active in Dahod district. Swati is another NGO that has imparted training in making candles, incense sticks, papads and pickles.

As far as the Banaskantha district is concerned, Bhansali Trust is the only active NGO present. The NGO has been functional for the past

two years. As the region suffers persistent drought, the NGO concentrates on health-related issues and also cattle feed aspects. The trust organises cattle camps at the block level during the summer season.

Swami Vivekanand Trust is the other NGO working in the studied villages of Banaskantha. The main focus area of this NGO is education and it is involved in the construction of educational institutions.

On the flip side, is the fact that despite the presence and mention of many NGOs, the benefits reaching out to the beneficiaries are very limited? Utthan Sanstha in Dahod and Navsarjan has provided subsidized agricultural implements in the past. National Rural Development Trust in Surat and Swati in Surendranagar undertook some work in the area of non-formal education and were active till the earthquake but did not come back after the devastation.

GANATAR, a voluntary organization is actively working and advocating for the fundamental right to Education, Health and eradication of Child Labour of salt pan workers. Amongst its various initiatives, Ganatar provides access to education to the children of Agariyas (saltpan workers) in the vicinity of salt pans in the midst of the mud desert of the little Rann of Kutch. The Rann Shalas operate during the period of seasonal migration starting from October through the month of May, the next calendar year. In view there are no person from outside the region was likely to stick around on a teaching assignment in the Rann Shalas. Ganatar thought of selecting some of the promising youth from the agariya community or belonging to the same area, who are not qualified teachers with a diploma or a degree in education, but

have been through the high school education and are committed with a passion to work for a cause serving their own fraternity, and training them to become teachers for primary education. The Rann shalas conduct classes up to 7th grade, as supplementary to the mainstream government schools running in the villages. The students at the Rann Shalas are enrolled at their respective village schools and on migrating with their parents to the salt pans in the mud desert; they continue their respective grade education at the Rann Shalas run by Ganatar. Prior to the access to Rann Shalas, the children had to leave the school in the villages and eventually join the swelling masses of illiterate and poor people getting initiated in the back breaking drudgery as child labour. On developing the above model of Rann Shalas and demonstrating its feasibility over a period of time, Ganatar conducted persistent advocacy with concerned stakeholders including the State Government machinery for replicating / adapting the model in other socioeconomic situations and geographical conditions particularly with reference to the children of Agariyas and other migrant population in the state.

#### ➤ **CHILD EDUCATION**

Social development depends on good education. In the studied districts, although children are enrolled in the school, the attendance is quite low as they are engaged in household chores or in income generation activities. Lack of importance of education and affordability are the foremost reason for low attendance in the schools. The children are considered as additional working hands by parents and in this process all the rights of the child are being ignored. The parents feel that

education will do no good to their child as they lack the resources to invest in the child's career. It was observed that the consciousness on the need for education among girls is high. NGOs and media play a very important part in creating and propagating awareness. In spite of all the serious efforts, a majority still does not have access to education. For them education is still a forbidden fruit. The domestic duties and employment at home and outside create an impediment to girls' access to education. They are often assigned the duty to look after siblings, as the mother works hard all day to add to the family income. The main aim of ICDS and non-formal education programmes should be to reduce the burden of household duties so that girls can attend classes along with their younger siblings and get some education and income earning skills.

During the group discussions the community members opined that the provision of the MDM has attracted many children to school, and a direct relationship can be established between the supply of 'cooked food' and school attendance. Irregularity in the supply of food was cited as the most important factor for lower level of school attendance and drop outs. Enrolment is also negatively affected because parents feel that the quality and quantity of food provided is not sufficient for the children. According to them, an increase in the quantity and quality of food will attract more children to school. Items requested include rice and milk. An increase in supplies from the present quantity was also requested in most of the communities. The children are also dissatisfied with the nutrients given under the scheme as they do not suit their pallet and are contaminated with insects and



small pebbles. The parents opined that the enrolment rate would increase if the quality of meal given was improved. The parents expressed that dry grain would be a better option in order to overcome the problems faced in MDM. In addition to this it will also help in displacing food insecurities faced at the household level.

### ➤ POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The focus of Agraria is to develop the physical skills to live in a low-energy agrarian world. In most cultures around the world, and in the American culture of the not too distance past, a typical young couple would have the skills to build their own home and to raise most of their food. Constructing one's own home ranks high among the positive experiences in life. The enthusiasm of the expected member of Agraria will aid in countering the lack of skills. Building designs will accommodate self-building.

### ➤ TRANSPORTATION

Agraria views the automobile as a temporarily necessary tool until society evolves to a different way of transportation. This will take decades and initially Agraria can only limit its use. Individual car owners in Agraria will drive high mileage cars. The community may purchase high mileage cars for shared use. Sizes will be as small as possible. A few larger utility vehicles will be available for builders, farmers and the transportation of large loads.

### ➤ ZONING ENVIRONMENT

Agraria may not be possible if there is no change in the zoning laws that currently exist. Laws reflect the culture and the American

culture is based on high consumption of fossil fuels resulting in a life style that is not sustainable. A key component of the American culture is ignorance and often a contemptuous attitude toward the Agrarian concept, as exemplified by the deplorable state of our small farmers. Examples abound. For thousands of years mankind has dried its clothes on bushes, trees and clothes lines. In many places in the U.S. it is illegal to use an outside clothesline to dry clothes. Instead people are urged to use high-energy consuming clothes dryers. Similarly, livestock is often banned from a neighborhood or town (pit bulls are legal while sheep are not). Many building codes require garages be provided to house automobiles, adding to construction and energy costs.

Currently zoning laws are designed in such a way as to create sprawl covering the good agricultural land. They also force a division of the functions of a community into designated geographical areas that separate work, shops, schools and residences. Such laws assume the ongoing use of automobiles in society. New approaches must be designed.

Zoning laws that reflect America's high-energy-use lifestyle are the single most important hurdle to overcome in developing Agrarian neighborhoods in small towns. Fortunately Yellow Springs is developing a new Planned Unit Development zoning ordinance which will allow flexibility for low-energy sustainable ways of development. Agraria communities should work with their local governments to develop alternative sets of zoning regulations (as opposed to changing current zoning regulations).

This document is a preliminary description or specification for a low-energy neighborhood-community which will use energy in the limited amounts that are likely to be available in the next few decades. Agraria is intended to be an addition to the existing community of Yellow Springs, Ohio. It is offered as a strategy to enhance the community and to offer an option for a truly sustainable healthy society. This development will provide "homecoming" places to which those currently living in non sustainable cities and suburbs can move.

Agraria is proposal for a low-energy usage, small, sustainable neighborhood-community to be built in Yellow Springs, Ohio. The low-energy use model comes from the knowledge that Peak Oil production will occur within this decade. In order for its residents to live a sustainable lifestyle, it will include farm land in its design.

Residences in Agraria will be in high-density clusters so that the majority of the land can be conserved as green space to be used for gardens. Homes will be small – no larger than 1000 square feet – and highly energy-efficient, employing the latest techniques in ecological design and using various low-energy appliances & technologies.

The community buildings will provide space for occupations and may include shops, studios, and offices. They may also provide space for social events, educational activities, religious services, guest rooms, common dinners, food preparation, food processing, and storage. Communal facilities like laundry and internet stations may also be included.

In a typical development the homes are extremely energy intensive, both because of size and energy wasteful standard construction. The average new house built in the U.S. is 2,300 square feet. Roads and individual driveways, garages, and petrochemical-intensive lawns result in developments that lack common areas and green space. The goal of Agraria houses is that they will use \_ of the energy of a typical new house built in the U.S. in 2004. Because of the commitment to sustainability, the high-density cluster design coupled with protective agricultural easements will leave more land open for community gardens and natural ecosystems.

Homes in Agraria will be a combination of single-family and multi-family units and will all be designed to use little fossil fuel. Varieties of construction types will be used, including, but not limited to, conventional stick framing, straw bale, insulated block, cordwood, rammed earth, and earth berms. Other elements may include passive or active solar design, heat storage, "thick shell" construction, triple insulated glass, insulating shutters, solar hot water systems, composting toilets, and cisterns.

Because Agraria is a neighborhood of Yellow Springs, the residents will be fully integrated in the Yellow Springs community, benefiting from all of the cultural and social amenities. In addition, other Yellow Springs residents can become involved in community gardening, can purchase food from the farm, participate in social events, and enjoy the recreational open space. Far from being a "private" or "exclusive"

place, Agraria seeks to share its unique experience with all who would be interested.

The exponential population growth of the last century has been based upon the availability of cheap, abundant oil. Peak Oil implies a lower population by dieoff, violence, or voluntary restriction. China now has a one child per family policy. Germany and Italy are at an average of 1.5 children per couple. Japan's population is dropping rapidly. Since the average American consumes so much energy it is to the world's advantage if we reduce population as quickly as possible. Though there will be no restrictions on family size in Agraria, the community will support and encourage families to have fewer children.

One could view social security not as a savings account but as a system dependent on a growing population. If the population or population growth declines, Society Security will probably fail. Residents of Agraria may be encouraged to plan for a common future supporting multiple generations.

Agrarians will probably earn less money on the average. But they will be interested in low income activities and frugal living for the sake of the world or their children. They will also need less as they replace material abundance with social abundance.

The sowing, harvesting, canning, storing, and preparing of food, along with other garden, kitchen, and storage management tasks, is very labor-intensive and requires the input of time and money from all residents. However, Agrarian residents will choose how much, when, and in what activities they will participate. This will determine how

much money they will have to pay for the food grown in the community. For example, one resident may choose to pay higher prices for their produce rather than work in the gardens and another may choose to work intensively for low-cost food.

The average time Americans spend watching TV is four hours per day. This is now addictive to most people. Agrarians may have to work harder and longer hours in the community so they will have less time for this. However, because the internet now allows many people to work in their homes, thereby reducing long commutes, we may have internet access either in individual homes or in offices in the community building.

Agraria will help its residents to develop skills in group interaction and conflict resolution and encourage dialogue in all situations. The community may use a variety of techniques from Roberts Rules of Order to consensus. The residents will design the process they wish to employ, with help from organizations such as the Fellowship of Intentional Communities.

Though it is often taboo to discuss the recycling of human waste, it is critical to the sustainability of any community. Currently we concentrate waste and dump it in our water. Not only is this deleterious to our water systems, it takes vital nutrients from the land without replacement. Composting toilets, greywater systems, and other waste recycling methods will be employed and may actually decrease the cost of development, as sewer lines are very expensive.

## ❖ HISTORY

The relations between Sindh and Kutch were so close that whenever this part was threatened, by any foreign aggression, Kutch considered it an obligation to join forces. Kutch's support to Samma Rulers during the Arghoon invasion is most remarkable one in the history of Sindh. Before the British conquest, Sindh was divided into various principalities ruled by different local rulers. Kutch and some neighboring small principalities were governed by Samma, Lasbella by Samma Jams, Bahawalpur by Daudpota Amirs, Khairpur, Mirpur and Hyderabad by Sohrabani, Manikani and Shahdadani Mirs. The British authorities, however, thought it proper to annex only two principalities of Sindh viz. Hyderabad and Mirpur. The other principalities of Sindh remained, at least nominally, independent, nevertheless under the suzerainty of British power.

### ➤ ***GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING.***

The map (2300 BC – 1600 BC) shows Sindh Kutch Kathiawar and the western districts of Gujarat province. Today the Rann of Kutch is dry. It was not so before 1226 AD. It was sea creek then. The coast line of Sindh was not where it is today, but lay between Matli and Talhar 4500 years back as shown in map 40,000 – 2300 BC. That time Sindh had two river systems, one the Indus, other the Hakra. The Hakra or Sarswati, the lost river of the Indian desert was fed by Ghaggar, Chitang and Sarswati itself, all of which originated in Swalik ranges about 200-300 miles north of Delhi. In recent geological times river Jamuna also contributed part or whole of its water to it. Until the 13th

century AD part of waters from the spill channels of Sutlej River (but not the whole river) too were flowing in it. The Indus also contributed some water to it from its spill channels between Kashmore and Sukkur. The combined waters from all these sources were flowing into the Hakra or the Sarsuti River. Map 1226 AD, shows Sarsuti-Hakra System's alignment through out its length. It discharged into the Creek of Kutch, through what is now known as Koree Creek. The Indus has west-warded by a good distance during the proto-historical and the historical times. Until about the mid thirteenth century the Indus too discharged major part of its waters, through the Koree Creek, by first joining the Hakra through its eastern branch called the Eastern Puran. A third river Luni carrying the monsoon waters from the Western Rajasthan discharge into the Creek of Kutch near Nagar Parker Taluka, which too was an island probably up to 3000 years in the past. The combined waters of the three rivers discharged into the Arabian Sea through the Creek of Kutch (near present Lakhpat) and the Gulf of Kutch (near present Mandvi, into a sheet flow. This rendered waters of Gulf of Kutch and Creek of Kutch fresh (sweet).

Kutch then an island surrounded by an enormous lake bout 5000 square miles in area attracted fresh water fishes and migratory birds like ducks, swans etc. It must have been a paradise for the bunting – food gathering and fishing tribes of Sindh, Kutch and Kathiawar. The Kutch, an island was working as a bridge between Sindh and Kathiawar – Gujarat. The geographical circumstances also made communication between Sindh, Kutch and Kathiawar easy by natural water-ways. This



was as true 6000 years back as in 1200 AD. By about 1226 AD, Hakra dried up, the Indus west-warded and it was no longer discharging through the Koree Creek into the Creek of Kutch. There has been seismic activity, causing rising of the bed of the Creek of Kutch, which then dried up and turning it into Rann (waste land and desert). The means of communication of Sindh with Kutch and Kathiawar broke up and so did the other relations, cultural and economic. The Rann however still gets filled with 25 to 30 inches of sea water due to strong monsoon winds blowing from June to August as well as sea waves and tides. There is some water contributed by Luni River too. This water does not dry until December and swampy conditions exist, in whole Rann. A number of islands have emerged in the Rann due to seismic action. The islands have formed easy means of communication with Sindh. Three routes were developed connecting Rapar with Nagar Parker, Bhuj with Diplo as well as Rahimki Bazar and Lakhpat with Rahimki Bazar and Jati, as shown in map 1226 – 1843 AD. On the islands in the Rann of Kutch some grasses grow. These islands became common grass-lands used by Sindhis and Kutchis until recently. Total area of Kutch is 7.616 sq. miles. The average rainfall varies between 12” and 20” in the north and south, respectively. The land is mostly barren, treeless, and hilly, with pasture land on the slopes. Main occupation of people is cattle rising. On the coast they do fishing. On the average there is one famine in every ten years, as compared to two in Thar of Sindh. The Kutch seamen, mariners and pirates are known through out the history. First ship from the South Asia that reached England in 1762 was built and

manned by Kutchis without any outside assistance. In sixteenth and early seventeenth century when Indian Ocean was known as the Portuguese Sea and Portuguese were interfering in Mughal affairs due to the strong navy they possessed, the transport of Muslim pilgrims for Haj at Mecca was entrusted to Rao of Kutch by Jehangir. It was these Kutchi seamen who had been an asset to Sindh if friendly and could bring havoc if antagonized. The above description shows that Sindh and Kutch until drying of Creek of Kutch were, geographically speaking, a united land, Even Kathiawar was equally connected with Sindh but it did have a land boundary with Gujarat. This geographical unity resulted in cultural, political and economic relations between Sindh and Kutch. The importance of these three relations has varied over centuries, some times one appearing more prominent and important than the other two.

➤ ***HUNTING TRIBES OF SINDH & KUTCH (6000-3500 BC).***

Sea level has fluctuated during last 100,000 years. Some 20,000 years back sea was north of Multan and 430 ft above its present level. That time most of Genetic plains were also under the sea and Middle Stone Age people had migrated from the flooded area to the Deccan Plateau. 12000 years back it was near Sukkur. 8000 years back it had receded below Tando Muhammad Khan. Once clear of sea, thick forests grew on both sides of the Indus and the Hakra rivers. The total area covered by the forests must have been about 25,000 square miles as shown in map 4500 BC. The colonization of area may have started by the hunting food gatherers about 8000 years back and they must have come from South India via Kutch. This would be the first contact of

Kutch and Sindh. The Creek of Kutch must have been exploited for fishing and bird trapping both by people of Kutch and Sindh.

➤ ***THE INDUS EMPIRE & ITS PROVINCES (2300-1600 BC).***

The Indus Empire most probably had five provinces, the Eastern, the Northern, the Southern, the Central and the Western. The urban and rural centers of the Eastern province existed along the Sarsuti Chitang, and Ghagar. Eastern province almost touched the present city of Delhi in the East and border of Sindh in the west. The central province had the present towns of Uch, Sibi, Dadar, Khuzdar, Wad, and Lasbella within its borders. On the Southern side it ran along the coast line right up to present town of Nagar Parker.

The Rann of Kutch was not dry then. The Sarsuit-Hakra, the Indus and the Luni rivers discharged into it, making it an enormous lake covering about 4000 sq. miles. Kutch was an island being surrounded by the Creek of Kutch, Gulf of Kutch and the sea. It formed a bridge between Sindh and Kathiawar. Kutch, Kathiawar and North-Western Gujarat formed the southern province. The Northern Province covered urban and rural centers along the Indus, the Jhelum, the Ravi, the Bias and the Sutlej. The Western province included present Baluchistan province minus areas included in the Central province.

Harappa, Kalibangan, Mohenjo Daro and Lothal are considered the capitals of the Northern, the Eastern, the Central and the Southern provinces. In terms of distances and communications, the southern province was the nearest to Mohenjo Daro, the capital of central province. To reach Kutch or Kathiawar, from Mohenjo Daro would

involve going by boat-down the Indus, circle around the creek of Kutch and the Gulf of Kutch. Even to reach Lothal, the boats had to coast around Kathiawar. The istance between Lothal and Mohenjo Daro was less than that between Harappa and Mohenjo Daro. It took less time to reach Kutch than any place 50 miles form Mohenjo Daro, no t connected by the river, as the only means of communication was the bullock-cart; the camel and horse had not yet been domesticated by that time. The cart needed well maintained roads, of which there would have been only a few. For going form Mohenjo Daro to Harappa, most of the year the sail would have been ineffective due to absence of winds and use of oar must have been cumbersome. But in case of Kutch and the Southern province, the prevalence of monsoon winds (up to Sehwan in summer at least) and almost sheet flow of water in the Creek of Kutch, would have made the communications extremely easy.

The Eastern province was difficult to reach from the Northern Province. It would be easy to reach it via Hakra-Sarsuti system from the Central Province. There is a time lag between the rise of mature Harappa civilization in the Northern and Central provinces compared to Southern and Eastern provinces. Different explanation are offered, which are inadequate and contradictory. The reasonable guess appears to be slush and burn system of land reclamation adopted by the new settlers or immigrants in the Central and the Northern provinces, and when pressure of population increased, they moved to the Eastern and the Southern provinces in the same way as the Early Indus or pre-Harappans had done.

➤ ***ACHAEMENIANS (519-450 BC).***

After the fall of Indus culture at the hands of the Cemetery – H and Junkar people, the urban centers deteriorated and nothing is known about Sindh-Kutch relation until 519 BC, when Darius-I conquered the Indus valley. The Upper Indus valley was known as Gandhara and the Lower Indus Valley as Sindhu. Darius had the plans to connect his empire by the land routes and the sea. Kutch was still an island and its geographical situation visa-vis Sindh was difficult to be ignored. Its seamen, pirates and mariners could be danger to Sindh ports and its sea trade. Darius had planned to send Skylax to voyage from Peshawar, down the Indus, to the sea and thence to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea as shown in map 519 BC. He could not over-look the importance of Kutch and had to conquer and annex it to his empire as part of Sindhu, the 20th Satrapy. Thus he ensured regular flow of trade articles like spices, ivory and timber from Sindh's ports.

The Achaemenian held Sindh and Kutch most probably for 70 to 120 years i.e., up to 450 or 400 BC, the latest, when the remote provinces like Sindhu, Gandhara and Egypt, etc., became independent. Sindh, Punjab and Kutch were divided into small independent principalities, and Gandhara was ruled by a number of tribes. These principalities were ruling when Alexander invaded Gandhara and Sindhu in 327-325 BC.

➤ ***ALEXANDER'S INVASION (325 BC).***

Alexander wanted to conquer the whole known world of his time. His troops while still in the Punjab refused to go eastwards and insisted

on return. The passage to Greece via the Indus and the Persian Gulf was known to the Indians and the Greeks. Under circumstances, Sindh's principalities were reduced but not Kutch as shown in map 323 BC. Alexander's troops were not ready for new conquest and he (Alexander) himself does not seem to have realized importance of Kutch. When he left Patala (Bahmanabad or a town in its vicinity) anti-Greek revolt started in Patalene (The Lower Sindh) most probably on the initiative of Chandra-Gupta Maurya and Moeris (Maurya) ruler of Patala. Nearchus Alexander's general and admiral as well as close friend was still in Sindh then. He quickly left with his fleet of some 80 ships without attempting to crush the rebellion. It is a conjecture that since Kutch has not been subdued, Kutchis may have participated in the revolt and Nearchus may have realized the danger of an attack from Kutchi seamen. Soon after Nearchus departure revolt spread to the whole of Indus valley. The Greeks had to pay the price of not sub-duing Kutch then an indefensible island for defense of Sindh, like present day Aden, Singapore, Gibraltar and etc.

➤ ***MAURYANS (324-187 BC).***

The successors to Alexander's territories in the South Asia were the Mauryans. Chandragupta Maurya knowing strategic importance of Kutch annexed it to his empire as show in map 301 BC. After the death of Asoka (232 BC), his empire started breaking up into independent principalities in Sindh and Kutch, until the conquest by the Bactrian Greeks in 187 BC.

➤ ***BACTRIAN GREEKS (184-70 BC).***

The Bactrian Greeks knew the importance of not only Kutch but also Kathiawar and annexed both to their kingdom as shown in map 150 BC. They held it up to 70 BC, when they lost their possessors to Scythians.

➤ ***SCYTHIANS (70 BC TO 46 AD).***

Like the Bactrian Greeks, Scythians posed Kathiawar and Kutch as part of their southern empire. This ensured that not attack could easily be made on the Lower Indus valley without first subduing the southern districts. The areas under their possession are shown in map 46 BC.

➤ ***PARTHIAN (46-78 AD).***

Gondophares the Parthian responsible for the conquest of the Lower Indus valley reduced both Kutch and Kathiawar like his predecessors.

➤ ***KUSHANS (62-283 AD).***

When the Kushans occupied the Lower Indus Valley, they were the first conquerors in four countries, which did not realize the importance of the southern frontiers of the Lower Indus Valley, and did not annex Kutch or Kathiawar. They are however credited with abolishing the Hindu Kush and extending their territories even beyond. This made their possessions in the Northern South Asia very secure but for neglecting to possess Kutch and Kathiawar, they soon were to face serious consequences. Rudradaman the Scythian first occupied Kathiawar and Kutch, then the Lower Sindh and Sindhu Sauvira (Nawabshah district). They may have occupied it for even over 100

years, though as per Ptolemy's statement, Kushans were ruling the time of his writing the Geography i.e., 140 AD. If this statement is accepted then Rudradadaman occupied the Lower Sindh between 135-145 AD. After 175 AD, Sindh must have been ruled either by small independent principalities or by the Scythians, who were also in possession of Kutch and Kathiawar, and if latter was the case their rule may have extended for well over 100 years i.e., up to 260/65 AD. The Kushan rule over Sindh lasted for 110 years between 65-175 AD, as shown in chart 65-283 AD.

➤ ***SASSANIANS (176-367 AD).***

Sassanian gained possession of Sindh in 283 AD and held it up to 367 AD. Shahpur-II is reported to have reduced Kutch and Kathiawar in 356/57 AD, but at the best this may have been a raid. Their hold on Sindh was neither effective nor reflected culturally or politically. Kutch and Kathiawar came in possession of Gup tas after 395 AD.

➤ ***VAHLIKAS (367-470 AD).***

Sindh became independent after 367/68 AD as shown in chart 176-490 AD. Soon Chandragupta-II Vikramaditya (380-415) brought to an end the Saka rule in Kutch, Kathiawar and Gujarat. He was opposed to Vahlikas of Sindh, but conquest of Sindh never took place, as Vahlikas who may have been in possession of whole Sindh then, were too powerful to be subdued easily. However as per Mehrauli iron pillar inscription, he is reported to have crossed the seven months of Indus i.e., area in the delta, much below the delta head, which then may have been below the line from present Hyderabad. This must have been a raid



rather than conquest of capital which was either at Bahmanabad or Alore a distance of 100 and 270 miles from the deltaic area. Gupta governors held Kutch up to about 500 AD, when Rais of Sindh knowing its geographical importance to their own security, annexed it. Thus Kutch reverted back to Sindh's possession.

➤ ***RAI DYNASTY (499-640/41 AD).***

Rais Dynasty of Sindh annexed Kutch immediately after their possession of Sindh. The Gupta Empire had disintegrated. Bhatarka was the last Gupta governor. Valabhis soon established themselves in Kathiawar. Valabhis seem to have good neighborly relations with Rais. This made the latter secure against any invasion of two powerful Pratihara Kingdoms of Rajputana and South Gujarat.

➤ ***BRAHMAN DYNASTY (640/41 – 712 AD).***

Chach the founder of Brahman Dynasty had inherited Kutch as part of his kingdom, but he expanded westwards and annexed Makran to his kingdom soon after 640/41 AD. His kingdom consisted of five provinces, Multan, Alore, Swistan, Makran and Bahmanabad. Kutch was a part of the last province as shown in map 640/41 AD. Chach was succeeded by his brother Chandur in 662 AD and ruled for 7 years. On the latter's death in a third brother ruled Sindh for one year only. In 670 AD. Sindh was portioned; the Northern provinces Multan and Alore went to Dahar son of Chach and the Southern provinces to Dharsia son of Chandur. Dharsia lived 30 years up to 700 AD, during which period he lost Kutch to Jasraja the Chawra, some where between 685 and 696 AD. Sindh was reunited under Dahar. He made no attempt to recover

Kutch. It seems that people were already divided in their loyalties towards Hinduism and Buddhism. The former had threatened the existence of the latter and had ousted it out from the whole South Asia, except the present areas of Pakistan. With people so divided Dahar seems to have given up Kutch to Kalya nraja Chawra for good. Tactically it was a serious blunder. It seems that its pirates looted Arab ships. They may also have been joined by coastal sea-men from Sindh. Dahar may probably have been right if he replied to Hajaj that he had no control over these pirates, but for ignoring the geographical position of Kutch, he had to lose the kingdom. That Dahar had no control over the Lower Sindh is also reflected in the migration of Kathia a Sindhi tribe to Kutch in about 700 AD, the time of his taking over the Lower Sindh. By about 725 – 740 they established themselves in Eastern Kutch with capital at Kandhkot. Soon they migrated to Kathiawar to which they gave their own name. This migration of a sizeable tribe end-block does not appear to be an outcome of pressure of population on the land in Sindh, but possibly divided loyalties to the rulers. Arabs conquered Sindh in 712 AD, but did not annex Kutch. Either its importance was not known to them, or it was due to recall of Muhammad Bin Qasim. Among his successors Junaid (724-720 AD) and his lieutenants conducted expeditions against Kutch, Kathiawar, Gujarat, Ujjain, Chitor, Nilma, Bailaman (Vallamandla), Jurz, Marmod, Mandal, Dahnaz, Broach and Malwa. However the purpose of expeditions was not to annex the territories, but to collect booty. The southern border of Sindh was unprotected all along the Creek of Kutch. Taking the

advantage of the geographical situation, the rulers of Lata (Chaulakayas), Malva (Pratiharas), southern Gujarat and Broach (Jayabhata-IV), Kutch (Kalyanraja Chawra), and Northern Gujarat and Kathiawar (Siladitya-V or VI, Valabhi) joined hands and defeated lieutenants of Junaid between 730-738 AD. They also helped a local uprising in Sindh against the Arabs. Tamim the Governor had to abandon Sindh and his successor Hakam had to reconquer whole of it and build a city known as Mahfuza for refuge of Arabs. The result of this set back was that the expansion of Muslim empire was check in the East by about 738 AD. The Arab rule of Sindh was no longer peaceful and taking the advantage the local governor became independent in 746 AD. He ruled five years before being subdued. It can be concluded that Junaid's expeditions brought the Arabs more loss than gain.

➤ ***ABBASID GOVERNORS OF SINDH (751 – 854/55 AD).***

Abbasid governors and their contemporaries are shown in chart 751-854/55 AD. During the period Kutch was ruled by Chawras, though some Hindu Sammas descendants of Lakho Ghurano of Sindh, who had migrated to Kutch in the beginning of 9th century, established a small principality in Eastern Kutch. Arab sources mention Hisam Taghlib's expeditions against Valabhi Kingdom of Kathiawar and the northern Gujarat, but archaeological evidence shows that this may have taken place in 766 AD a year before his arrival in Sindh and therefore during the governorship of his predecessor Amar Ataki. During this expedition the Valabhi capital was destroyed, but Kathiawar was not annexed and Kutch was not even touched. The gain went to Pratiharas of Southern

Gujarat who defeated Siladitya-II, the Pratihara (Valabhi) ruler of Kathiawar and annexed it. During the Abbasid rule of Sindh, there was continuous turmoil and frequent change of governors. No less than thirty governors had changed in about a century. Of them fourteen were dismissed on account of inefficiency, three were killed in action, four died in Sindh and two were declared as failures. Under the circumstance the irrigation system could not be maintained, law and order situation deteriorated, and local tribes were in continuous rebellion. A local tribe of Hindu Sammas under leadership of Lakho Ghurano migrated to Kutch around 800 AD. His sons established a petty kingdom in the Eastern Kutch under vassal ship of Chawras. Slowly they occupied more and more areas and by 942 AD they occupied whole Kutch, and became independent rulers of it, which they held up to 985 AD. This was the first Samma dynasty of Kutch which ruled for 175 years.

Arabs of Sindh do not seem to have cordial relation with Pratiharas of Gujarat. The latter were at war with Rashtrakutas of Deccan, and therefore Arab travelers and merchants were given cordial treatment by Rashtrakutas, whom Arab called Blhara, and had all praise for them.

➤ ***HABARIS IN SINDH (854 – 910/11 AD).***

Habari ruled Sindh from 854 – 1011 AD. They were descendents of Habar Bin Aswad and had migrated to Sindh between 730 – 738 AD. In the tribal warfare between Arab tribes of Yamanites and Hijazis, they aligned themselves with the latter while Imran bin Musa Barmaki the Abbasid governor had supported the former. Umar bin Abdul Aziz the

Habari chief had Imran killed in 840/41 AD, and thus came to lime-light. With the help of local Sindhi tribes of Jats, Meds and others he was able to capture Sindh in 854/55 AD and establish Habari dynasty. He was accepted as ruler of Sindh by Khalif Al-Mutwakil on the condition that he would recite the name of Abbasid Khalifs in the Friday congregations. With exceptions of this reorganization of the Central authority, the Habaris were independent rulers. The province of Sindh was both peaceful and prosperous under them. Under Abbasids and Umayyads there was continuous turmoil in the province and law and order situation had completely deteriorated. Irrigated agriculture can only flourish under peaceful conditions. Habaris who had settled in the interior of Sindh must have been land-owners and very familiar with irrigation requirements of the agriculture. Their chief task must have been to maintain old canals, excavate new ones so as to have steady water supply. This act was bound to help them in winning over local population. They also seem to have maintained good reactions with local Buddhists and Hindu population including a Hindu Raja of Alore, a petty but independent chief. They also had good relations with the majority tribe of Sindh, the Sammas of Rajput clan, which had both Hindu and Muslim members in its community. Some Sammas of Sindh under leadership of Lakho Ghurano had migrated to Kutch at the end of 8th century and by 810 AD, his sons established a principality in Western Kutch under suzerainty of Chawras and slowly established their independent rule over Kutch which they held up to 985 AD, for 175 years. The Sammas of Kutch had maintained good relations with

Sindh's Sammas and thus with Habari rulers of Sindh. Rann of Kutch was a sea creek then and Sindh was prone to attacks from the south. The Sammas of Kutch blocked the routes of conquest from the south. The Chawras of Kutch had blood relationship with the Sammas of Kutch and were in conflict with Rashtrakutas as well as Chaulakayas of Gujarat. It was in the interests of Habaris to maintain good relations with Sammas of Kutch through Sammas of Sindh to keep strong rulers of Gujarat at bay. The Sammas of Kutch were dependent on Sammas of Sindh, in case of threat to their territories from Gujarat. They had also maintained good relations with local rulers of Kathiawar, another buffer state between Sindh and Gujarat. The Abbasid Caliphate was on decline since death of Mamun. The forces working against it were raising nationalism of Eastern Empire, the interference of army in state affairs and rise of a number of Shiite kingdoms. All kingdoms of the last group were aiming at dissolution of Abbasid power. Establishment of rival Fatmid Caliphate first at Tunisia and 60 year later in Egypt was another major factor. The Fatmids objectives were neither properly defined nor handled. Though aiming at Universal Empire embracing all Islamic countries, their efforts to give a practical shape to it never went beyond sending missionaries to the South Asia, Eastern Persian (Central Asia), and even Baghdad. There were a number of Shiite states, like Yemen, Hijaz, and Palestine. Red Sea coast of Africa, Sicily, Tunis, Idrisids and Kharijites, Rustamids and Qarmatis but they were neither part of Fatmid Empire, nor federated to it. Qarmatis, whenever co-operative did so for business and financial considerations. Fatmid missionaries however had

achieved an important purpose of conversion of people to Ismailism in remotest parts of the Islamic world, like the Central Asia and Sindh and Multan. The Habaris do not seem to have interfered with it, in spite of their reading Khutba in the name of Abbasid Calif. At the end of their rule Soomras took over peacefully. The Soomras were local Ismailis and under their rule Ismailism was the majority religion in Sindh. During 157 years of their rule the Khurasan (Central Asia, Seistan, Afghanistan and Baluchistan) was ruled by Tahrids, Saffvids, Samanids and Buwahids. These dynasties were short lived over occupied in settling affairs among themselves as well as with their local subjects and had neither power nor means to try to interfere in Sindh affairs. The Eastern boundary of Habaris of Sindh touched the Pratihara kingdom which extended to Bengal and embraced mostly northern India. Luckily for them there have been no attacks on Sindh from across the Eastern Desert of Rajasthan until the age of aero plane. Even then, for their security Habaris did maintain war elephants and large army. Their northern neighbors at Multan were Banu Saamah, who kept powerful Hindu rulers off their kingdom by threatening to destroy deity of Hindus at Multan. Samanids of the Central Asia had lost control over Makran around middle of century to Maadan and his descendents. Maadan seems to have been a favorite of locals (still having majority of Non-Muslims population), who gave him the title Majaraj (king of kings or emperor). Samanids ruled the present Baluchistan less Makran, but they do not seem to have interfered in Sindh's affairs, having been weakened them-selves by rebellions in Khurasan (Central Asia), Sijistan (Sistan),

and by the growing power of Shiite Buwahids. By 994 Ghaznawids succeeded to the Samanids territory south of Oxus. This new force was soon to threaten Sindh, Multan, Makran, and Kathiawar.

➤ ***SOOMRAS (1010/11-1351/52 AD).***

Soomras were local Ismailis who took over the kingdom from local Arabs the Habaris in 1010/11 AD. For the first 130 years of their rule, their contemporaries in Kutch were Solankis or – Chaulakayas of Gujarat, who sent their governors to Kutch. Kutch was still an island. Sultan Mohmud of Gazan invaded Kathiawar, destroyed the temple of Somnath, collected large booty and within a fortnight left Somnath. Bhima Deva-I King of Anivada fled before him but on the fall of Somnath, he and Paramadeva a Hindu King of Malwa made preparation for war. Rann of Kutch was a creek then and it was risky to wait to collect the boats, he therefore took almost the same route of Muhammad Tughlaq was to take 326 years later (shown in map 1351 AD) to Nagar Parker and March through desert on Mansura, in the central Sindh. Its ruler Khafif Soomro was probably drowned and killed, Mansura sacked, Jatts of upper Sindh punished and Mahmood reached Gazni via Multan and the Gomal pass. This was first time in history that invasion of Sindh took place from the south, not via the Creek of Kutch, but via the desert with very heavy losses to the invader, due to lack of water and fodder. Mahmud's abilities as a general are unquestionable, but he took this risk to avoid any Hindu retaliation. Bhima Chaulakaya, King of Gujarat following Mahmud via Kutch crossed the river Indus by a stone-bridge. (It may be the Creek of Kutch rather than Indus), invaded Sindh and its



ruler (local chief), Hammuka (Soomro) affected resistance in which latter lost his life, but Sindh was not annexed. Sanghar Soomro who ruled from 1098 – 1106/07 AD overran the Kutch. It is not certain whether he annexed any territories, but it appears that by his time, numerous Sindh tribes of Samma clan and Kathias were settled in Kutch and invasion may have taken place as per their initiative. During first half of this century the relations of Sindh with Kutch and Gujarat remained strained. Jayasimha Siddraja defeated Sindhraja (a Soomro chief of the Lower Sindh rather than Soomra king). Siddaraja (a local chief of Kutch) is said to have claimed before Sindh's ambassadors that he had the support of Chaulakayas and other kings. Hostilities between Sindh and Chaulakayas started with Chamandaraja's rule (1053 – 1086 AD). In 1147 AD Jareja Sammas of Kutch under the leadership of Lakho (This Lakho is different from Lakho Ghurano of early 9th century or Lakho Fulani his descendent who lived from 920 – 979 AD) established a second Samma dynasty of Kutch. It seems that they had full support of Soomras of Sindh in these ventures, as they were accompanied by some Ismailis of Sindh and Soomras themselves were Ismailis. Lakho died in 1175 AD and his son Rayadhan took over. The Chaulakayas of Gujarat seem to have organized an up-rising in Kutch, and in retaliation Pithu (a Soomra chief Pathu) conquered the whole of Kutch, reached the city of Bhadvesvara, which he destroyed. Thus he seems to have helped Rayadhan to have firm control over Kutch. Gujarat ruler Bhimdeva Chaulakya-II (1178 – 1241 AD), is said to have sent an expedition against Phitu, who is reported to have fled. In any

case advantage went to Sindh by firmly establishing Rayadhan. According to Hemchandra, Kumarapala Chaulakaya (1200 – 1229 AD) of Gujarat annexed Kutch and Sindh's ruler became his tributary. The statement is probably eulogy to please his masters. Kutch remained in the hands of Rayadhan's descendents and Sindh which had been portioned had the upper Sindh under Qabacha and the Lower Sindh under Somras. However the Creek of Kutch started drying up in 1226 AD. Kutch's communications with Sindh were cut off except by sea, until the establishment of new routes shown in map 1226-1843 AD. Under such circumstances Kumarapala may have exacted tribute from Kutchis for a short time. In 1226 AD the Creek of Kutch finally dried up as shown in the map 1226 AD. The weather had become drier in 12th and 13th centuries, in the whole world, causing migration of Mangols, in the Central Asia, reduction in waters of the Luni and the Indus and complete drying up of Hakra. Sindh's close relations with Kutch ended. Cities along the Creek of Kutch decayed, both in Sindh and Kutch. However close political relations continued between Kutch and Sindh. The economic hard-ship caused by this change resulted into Jarejas driving out Kathias from Kutch 1215 – 1296 AD. In 1297 when Allauddin's generals invaded the Lower Sindh, Soomras sent the royal ladies to Kutch who were chased by the Delhi troops, but rescued by Kutchi soldiers, as per Kutchi ballads. The authenticity of such estoris cannot be guaranteed, but it does reflect on political co-operation between them. Jareja Sammas ruled Kutch throughout the Soomra rule of Sindh and there appears to be complete co-operation between them.

Both Sindh and Kutch became tributaries of Delhi in 1297 AD, the Lower Sindh Kutch gained independence on Allauddin's death in 1315 AD. The upper Sindh became independent in 1333 AD. In 1351/52 AD. Sammas displaced Soomras. The Sammas of Kutch continued same relations with Sindh until death of Jam Feroz in Gujarat in 1556 AD.

➤ ***SAMMA DYNASTY (1351/52 – 1524).***

Sammas ruled part of Sindh probably as agents of Soomras from 1333 – 1352 AD. In 1352 AD, they established a dynasty which ruled up to 1524 AD, independently, except brief period of 20 years (1368-1389 AD) when they accepted paramouncy of Delhi Sultan. During this whole period Kutch was ruled by Hindu Sammas descendents of Lakho Jareja (Samma) originally from Sindh. Sammas of Sindh and Kutch maintained extremely cordinal relations. He had to detour Kutch and enter Sindh by a longer route, via Nagar Parker, Virawah, Diplo, Mithi, Dhambharlo, Digri, cross the river Indus near Nasarpur, on way to his death place, Songha, 23 miles from Thatta. Soon after his death Sammas displaced Soomras. With a plan to re-instate Hamir Soomra, the displaced ruler of Sindh, Feroz Shah Tughlaq in 1365 AD, invaded Sindh via the river Indus with a fleet of 5000 boats, which were destroyed by Samma sea-men from Kutch. Having been defeated, he left for Gujarat via Kutch and his land forces and cavalry perished in Rann of Kutch (which then was dry, waterless waste land) and Kutch proper. His whereabouts in this tract were not known for six months. This was due to geographical position of waste land of Rann, barren hills of Kutch and guerilla tactics of Kutchis. On his second expedition from

Gujarat to Sindh, he avoided Kutch and followed same route as Muhammad Tughlaq had done through the desert. Kutch was divided among three sons of Rayadhan after his death in 1215 AD. Kanthkot-Waged area went to Dadar, Western Kutch to Gajan and Lakhivira area to Otha. The descendents of Dadar lost Kanthkot Wagad to rulers of Gujarat in 1410 AD, but rest of area was managed by the two families. In 1472 AD, they submitted to Sultan Muhammad Begra, who allowed them to rule Kutch as his vassals, interfering little in their affairs. In 1506 AD, Lakho the descendent of Gajan, while passing through territory of Hamirji of Otha line was murdered. His son Rawal suspecting Hamirji of the murder had him assassinated. The latter's sons ran to Gujarat, where after showing some chivalry were admitted in Begra's military academy and were planted back in Kutch. At this point Sindh got involved in Kutch's internal intrigues. Jam Feroz helped Rawal against Khengar son of Hamirji and latter helped Jam Salahuddin, then in Gujarat to occupy Thatta, which he successfully did for eight months, but was ousted out by Darya Khan. Khengar occupied Rahimki Bazar and Virawah (not Vivawal), to cut off any help to Rawal from Sindh and helped Jam Salahuddin a second time for reconquest of Thatta. Feroz Shah sought assistance of Shah Beg whose troops under Shah Hassan defeated and killed Jam Salahuddin and later on invaded Thatta. Jam Feroz fled to Kutch. Khengar realizing the folly and fearing the threat of attack from new power of Arghoons now in Thatta, provided a suicidal squad to Jam Feroz, but he was again defeated and escaped to Gujarat via Kutch. Shah Hassan to avenge on Khengar

attacked Kutch in 1527 AD. The latter abandoned settlements, poisoned wells and adopted guerilla tactics. Shah Hassan's area of operations is shown in map 1524 – 1554 AD. It was raid of no consequence. In 1536 Shah Hasan was asked by Humayun Badshah to join him in his invasion of Gujarat. It was probably on account of his experience in Kutch in 1527 AD that Shah Hasan avoided going to Gujarat via Kutch and instead he took the route traced by Muhammad Tughlaq in 1351 AD as showing in that map. Earlier Shah Beg during his military campaigns of Sindh, as shown in map 1517-1523 AD, had divested most of Sindh, specially Jacobabad, Shikarpur, Larkana, Dadu, Thatta and Hyderabad districts, and had also looted, burnt and destroyed the settlements on both sides of Indus in a width of 10-15 miles between Sukkur and Talhar. Shah Hasan in addition had divested area between Rohri and Multan notably Mathelo, Ubavro, Sareali, Bhuttawahan, Darwar and Uch which lay within Sindh's boundary then, as shown in map 1524-1554 AD. In 1541-1543 AD Hamayun in exile, was to wander Sindh for another 2 ½ years with over 200,000 troops. Hearing of his defeat in 1540 AD and anticipating his movement to Sindh, Shah Hasan had the crops destroyed between Uch and Rohri and when he actually started moving to Sindh, crops of rest of Sindh were destroyed. No crop was allowed to be grown for next 2½ years resulting into famine, diseases, and misery. Hamayun's 200,000 troops deserted him, turned into free boaters and looted the settlement in search of food. Route of his wander ships is shown in map 1541-43 AD. Under such miserable condition prevailing for 25 years, the middle class population of Sindh started

mass migration to Kutch and there from to Kathiawar, Gujarat, Burhanpur, and Arabia. This was probably the last time that Kutch cooperated with Sindh in a big way. The migration started in 1542 and continued up to 1600 AD. Khengr ruled during most of this time i.e. up to 1586 AD. In 1537 AD, Khengar became independent of Gujarat. An evidence of this migration is indicated by a number of tribes common to Kutch and Sindh and the same tribe having both Hindu and Muslim members in its clan. Below is brief list of these castes as given by Shirring in 1870 AD.

#### **SNo. Castes**

1. Abra.	2. Agriya.	3. Bhundari.
4. Baraocho.	5. Bhat.	6. Bhatti.
7. Butta.	8. Chawra.	9. Dal.
10. Gaha.	11. Gujar.	12. Chand.
13. Hala.	14. Nalepota.	15. Naranpotra.
16. Jareja.	17. Jat.	18. Khatri.
19. Kathra.	20. Kathia.	21. Lohana.
22. Charan.	23. Mandhra.	24. Mangria.
25. Memon.	26. Miyana.	27. Larke.
28. Motiya.	29. Palah.	30. Pahor.
31. Rajar.	32. Solanki.	33. Samma.
34. Sameja.	35. Sanghar.	

#### **➤ *ARGHOONS, TARKHANS, MUGHAL AND KALHORAS.***

In 1555 Portuguese who came to Thatta on the invitation of Mirza Issa Tarkhan looted and burnt city of Thatta, and massacred the

populance hauling gold worth rupees two crores (20 millions). The explanation given by Sindh's historians is inadequate. The actual reason was the piracy from Sindh and Kutch coasts by sea-men and mariners; though infact Arghoons had little or no control on Sindh's coasts and Kutchis were the only sea men who could face Portuguese on sea in piracy. For next two hundred years information on Sindh-Kutch relations is lacking. Sindh's tribe the Sammas or Samejas were at actual civil war with Arghoons, Tarkhans, and Mughal governors. Kutch did accept Agra's suzerainty, but Mughal control over Kutch was nominal only. During the strife in Sindhi, Samma tribes must have migrated and taken shelter in Kutch but details are lacking.

Under Mughals, Sindh was divided into three sarkars; Bakhar, Sehwan and Thatta. The coastal and hill tribes of Thatta Sarkar were never subdued since 1524 AD. In 1736 Thatta Sarkar was transferred to Kalhoras a local Sindhi tribe, who asserted for control over the coastal area, but Jam of Kakerla, Rana of Dahrejas, Mahars, Nuhrias of Chachkan, Soomras, Nawab of Kanjarkot and etc., rebelled in 1740 AD, immediately after Nadir Shah's invasion of Sindh. The rebellion was suppressed, but during the war of succession between Noor Muhammad Kalhoras successors, they again rebelled with Kutchi help. Ghulam Shah Kalhora attacked Kutch. The Kutchis applied same tactics as Khengar did with Shah Hassan in 1527 AD. Finally a compromise was reached by offering a cousin of Rao of Kutch in marriage to Ghulam Shah. This princess was titled as Sindh Rani by Ghulam Shah.

## ❖ CONCLUSION.

The close relation between Kutch and Sindh may be considered to have ended, due to:-

- i. Drying up of Creek of Kutch and making communications difficult.
- ii. The old belief of loyalties based on tribal links, being no longer valid in the age of nationalism.
- iii. Disappearance of common pasture lands.

However one link does remain and that is common language as shown in map languages of South Asia. How far and how long this link is going to survive is difficult to predict.

Kutchi is not taught in schools. Sindhi alphabet is hardly known to Kutchis and therefore they are bound to drift apart.

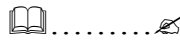
Jareja Samma religious practices are a mixture of Hindu and Muslim rituals and Kutchis pay equal respect to Muslim Saints and Pirs and Hindu deities. This has been so since 800 years. They could easily adjust to vassal ship of Muslim of Gujarat, as they did with Soomras and Sammas of Sindh. In time to come, under new influences Kutchis may not remain so tolerant.

The 700 years old rule of Jareja (of which 130 years under British paramouncy) though incredible but is a fact. The roots of success of this rule go to system of Bhayad or Brechen of the tribes. The ruler shared power with the various heads of villages. The sharing of power included taxes, expenditure, justice, land holdings etc. The British had to settle this in a dispute as per local tradition in the middle of last century. The



system was borrowed from Sindh and was probably practiced by Soomras and Sammas of Sindh.

Its studies may reveal the causes of long region of Soomras and Sammas. In the end ladies and gentlemen I thank you all for the patient hearing you have given to me. In once again thank the organizers of this talk and the Secretary culture to arrange this talk.



## **Chapter – 4**

# **DATA ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION OF INFORMATION**

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### **❖ INTRODUCTION**

- TO KNOW WHETHER THE PARENTS ARE INTERESTED IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION:
- TO KNOW WHETHER THE CHILDREN ARE TAKEN TO SALT PAN FOR WORKS:
- TO KNOW THE FACILITIES AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF EDUCATION AT HOME:
- TO KNOW THE OTHER FACILITIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE VILLAGE:

### **❖ CONCLUSION**

## **Chapter – 4**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION OF INFORMATION**

#### ❖ **INTRODUCTION:**

The major part of the north – western region of Gujarat is dry and classified as a desert region; it is known as the Little Rann of Kutch. Many of the poorest families in this district are salt workers or agarias. Twelve to fifteen thousand families from Dhangadra and Halawad talukas of Surendranagar district are engaged in the work of salt farming, which is their major occupation. For this work, these families have to migrate to the coastal desert terrains, where saltpans are being operated under private ownership. The salt workers have to stay in the proximity of their workplace for a period of six to eight months in a year i.e. from September to March. As the children also come along with their parents for six months away from their villages, it affects and disturbs their education, upbringing and overall physical and mental development. Both men and women work at the salt pans, so it becomes necessary for them to carry their children along with them to the workplace. For more than six months in a year, the families live in small shacks in the desert of the Little Rann of Kutch, pumping out brine and leading it into pans, where they slowly produce salt crystals. The salt workers work exposes them to unfavourable elements – especially the blazing sun. The children grow up by playing in salty water where their parents spend their whole day amidst the unhealthy working conditions.

Some of the families leave their children in the care of their neighbors while in some families, it is the grown up child who looks after his/her younger brothers and sisters. This affects the education and upbringing of the older child, who has to suffer in order to carry out the responsibility of baby-sitting. In this way the children of agarias have to live in insecure, uncertain life as they are largely ignored from their early childhood. Their working parents are not able to take proper care of their children nor are they able to provide them with proper education or health care.

The Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) began working with the salt-pan workers in 1992, after a study showed that the salt farming takes a heavy toll on their health and overall well-being. It was in 1993 that SEWA started a childcare centre (Balwadi) in order to take care of the physical and mental development of their children of the salt workers of Surendranagar district.

### ➤ **Issues and Problems of Salt Pan Workers**

Gujarat state in India produces 40 lakh metric tons of salt every year. This quantity serves the needs of 60% of the population of India. In Surendranagar district, places like Dhangadra, Halawad and Dasada talukas are where the work of salt farming is undertaken. About 12,000 to 15,000 people from the adjoining areas migrate to these saltpans to earn their livelihood every year.

There is an increase in the number of migrants every year. In Surendranagar, district, within the areas adjoining the desert Rann of Kutch, there are 150 small and big salt-pans. The people involved in the

work of salt farming are: (1) Merchants, b) Agarias, and c) Labourers. The merchants own the leases on the salt farms. They advance a sum of money to the agarias and buy the salt from them at a fixed rate at the end of the seasons. The rate is often less than one-third the market rate. The agarias are families who undertake to produce a certain quantity of salt during the seasons for the merchants. The labourers are paid on a daily wage basis and are called only when there is extra work that can not be completed by the agaria family.

The work of salt farming is done during the months of September to April i.e. for eight months in a calender year. During these months, the labourers who live in nearby areas frequently travel between these farms and their own villages. But those workers mainly agarias, who come to work from far off places, construct temporary huts in the vicinity of the salt farms. As these workers come here to stay with their entire families, the children also accompany them and stay with them near the salt farms. The workers are not able to send their children to the schools and in fact, the children are asked to help in the work of salt farming. The workers work in shifts at the salt-pans where the work begins at 9 a.m. and goes on till 5 p.m. in the evening.

Women workers equally participate in this work with their male counterparts. In spite of working in the salt-pans, the women also have to fulfill their entire household responsibilities including childcare. Most of the women workers take their children along with them to their worksite at the salt-pans; the women also have to fulfill their entire household responsibilities including childcare. Most of the women

workers take their children along with them to their worksite at the salt-pans. This not only exposes their children to rough conditions but also makes them vulnerable to health hazards, affecting the overall physical and mental development of the children.

According to the National Family Health Survey Report of 1992-93, 40% of the children in the age bracket of 6 - 11 months and 60% of the children in the age bracket of 1-2 years are found to be underweight in India. This indicates that the number of malnourished children is much more in India than in any other country. Due to this, the children are found to be weak right from their early childhood and they become easy targets of illness. Also, when these women labourers go to work, they find it difficult to take proper care of their siblings. Either they have to keep their children at their neighbour's house or they are taken care of by their older siblings in their homes. Generally, most of the women workers prefer to carry their children along with them to their work sites. In this case, the overall development of the children is affected as they do not get enough nutrition at the proper times and they are also exposed to unhygienic conditions, making them vulnerable.

In 1990, SEWA conducted a survey of the salt workers of Surendranagar district in collaboration with the Foundation for Public Interest. During this survey, information about how these workers had to work under harsh conditions, wherein they were exposed to hot and humid climates all year round, was obtained. In spite of their hard work, salt workers are much underpaid. They do not have access to even the basic necessities of life and thus continue to suffer in order to earn bread

for their families, who have migrated with them to these salt-pans. The women, who work with their husbands in the salt - pans, do not have enough time to give proper attention to their children. The children grow up playing near the working parents. They become prone to health hazards and acquire skin diseases, chronic coughs and tuberculosis. SEWA started a mobile clinic with permission from the Rural Labour Commissioner in 1991, in order to cater to the health needs of the salt pan workers. The organization also approached the Commissioner for starting of creches and childcare centers for the children, including education and literacy classes for the older children. After being granted the permission by the government, SEWA started its first childcare centre on 1st March, 1992 in Ruda village of Dhangadra taluka, with the collaboration of Gujarat State rural Workers Development Union. By 1993, 6 childcare centers were established.

In 1996, there were almost 21 such centers in different villages. 75% of the operating funds are provided by the Gujarat State Rural Workers Development Union, while 25% of the funds are provided by SEWA for the childcare centers.

Before starting these centres, a number of meetings were held with various salt pan workers from different villages. During these meetings, different issues like the number of salt workers in the region, their issues and problems, cooperation from the people, availability of educated and trained volunteers to run these childcare centers, feasibility of a childcare centre in a particular region etc. were discussed. It was after the collection and analysis of all such required information and

data that a particular village was selected as a site for such a childcare centre. A Gram Sabha was also convened in order to make the village people aware of the concept of a childcare centre and educate them about what needs it will cater to.

At present there are 21 childcare centers in the Surendranagar district, where children in the age group of 0 - 6 years are taken care of, by trained and educated staff. Again, in 1995, a small survey was conducted by SEWA on 150 such women whose children were kept in these Balwadis. The motive behind such a survey was to seek their opinion and know their needs; accordingly changes could be made in the operation of these centers to suit their requirements.

Initially, it was very difficult to convince the women salt workers to ask them to leave their children in the care of these childcare centers. They were reluctant to act as they believed that only mothers could take proper care of their own children and not anyone else. It was a totally new concept for them how can one trust another woman and entrust one's child in her personal care? How can one know that her children are being given proper and adequate nutrition or not?

To convince these women salt workers, the teachers at the Balwadis had to go to their houses in order to fetch the children. The organizers at SEWA conducted meetings with the women workers and explained how their children were safe in these childcare centers and that they would be provided with adequate nutrition. They explained that this will relieve their household burden and then the mothers can work without any tension for a higher number of hours, which will also



increase their average income. After a lot of discussions, the women workers were ready to put their children in these centers. Slowly and steadily the concept of childcare centres picked up among these women.

The researcher spent some time in the Little Rann wild ass sanctuary in Gujarat, Western India for his research work. It was one of the most memorable experiences in the trip so far.

Staying in the desert inspired to write about many things, including the salt workers. So many salt workers are uneducated and his knowledge about language only in his regional language i.e. Gujarati. Researcher have created self questionnaire in both the language i.e. English and Gujarati. Researcher has taken the help of translator to fill up the questionnaire.

Data Analysis of information gained from characters of model in the present study was divided in four sections as below:

1. To know whether the parent is interested in children's education.
2. To know whether the children are taken to salt pan for works.
3. To know the facilities and the atmosphere of education at home.
4. To know the other facilities inside and out side the village.

➤ **TO KNOW WHETHER THE PARENTS IS INTERESTED  
IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION:**

**Introduction:**

Extending the system of primary education into tribal areas and reserving places for tribal children in middle and high schools and higher education institutions are central to government policy, but efforts to improve a tribe's educational status have had mixed results. Recruitment of qualified teachers and determination of the appropriate language of instruction also remain troublesome. Commission after commission on the "language question" has called for instruction, at least at the primary level, in the students' native tongue. In some regions, tribal children entering school must begin by learning the official regional language, often one completely unrelated to their tribal tongue.

Many tribal schools are plagued by high dropout rates. Children attend for the first three to four years of primary school and gain a smattering of knowledge, only to lapse into illiteracy later. Few who enter continue up to the tenth grade; of those who do, few manage to finish high school. Therefore, very few are eligible to attend institutions of higher education, where the high rate of attrition continues. Members of agrarian tribes like the Gonds often are reluctant to send their children to school, needing them, they say, to work in the fields. On the other hand, in those parts of the northeast where tribes have generally been spared the wholesale onslaught of outsiders, schooling has helped tribal people to secure political and economic benefits. The education system there has provided a corps of highly trained tribal members in the

professions and high-ranking administrative posts. An academy for teaching and preserving Adivasi languages and culture was established in 1999 by the Bhasha Research and Publication Centre.

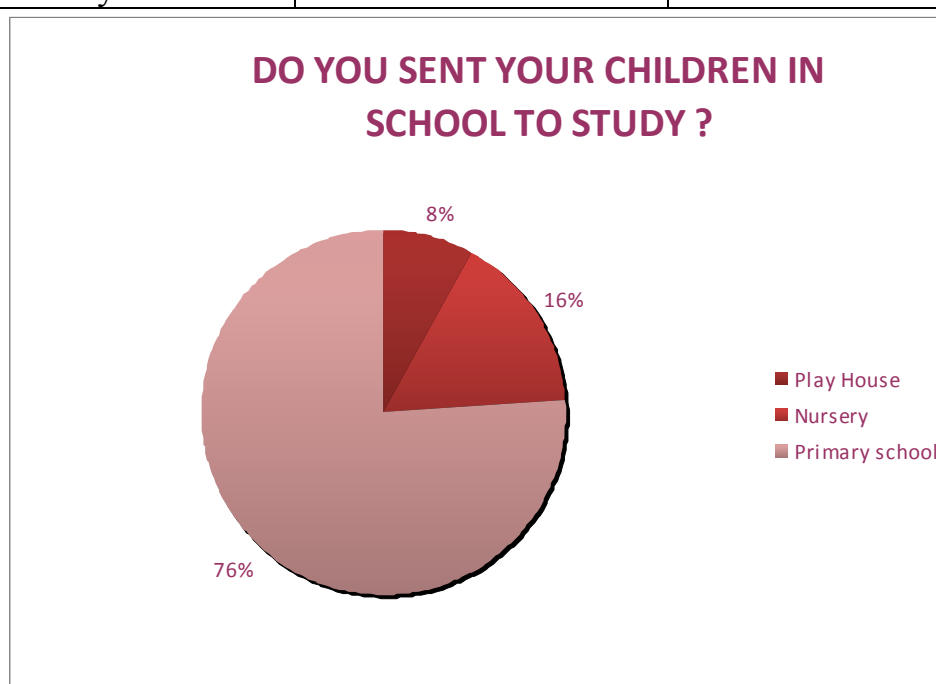
In this context researcher had know about the Agariya salt workers i.e. parents are interested in his children to educate. Some factors in this regards are children go to school, he is interested in teaching his children, he want to send in schools and teach his child, it is good to send the children to schools, his knowledge about teachers of primary school in his village, he want that his children are interested in education, any future plans for his children, wishing his children go for any other studies, course, activity, his knowledge about the seasonal hostel system in the village, he like to send children in hostels.

Effect was examined of every factor individually to respond by self-created questionnaire in the Gujarati language from the researchers and analysis is presented in order with all factors in presented chapter. Presented calculations were done by the help of computer programme.

TABLE - 1

**DO YOU SENT YOUR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL TO STUDY ?**

<i>Type of School</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Play House	08	08
Nursery	16	16
Primary school	76	76

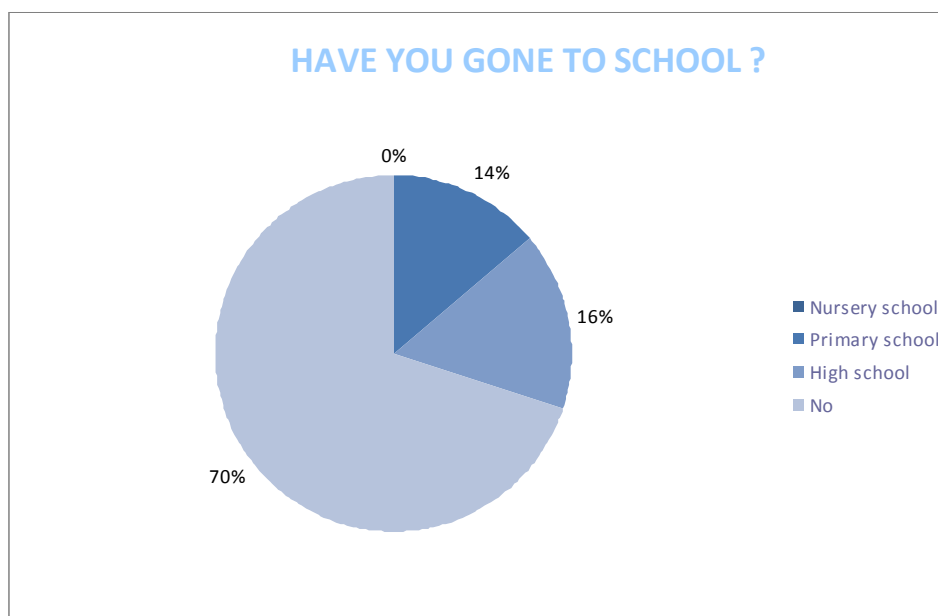


From the analysis of the table no. 1 it is clear that inspite of all the physical and financial constraints they realize the importance of education and wish to educate their children. Analysis shows that 8% parents are interested to start their child to go for education in play house, whereas, 16% from nursery and 76% from primary.

Rare educational facilities i.e. play house and nursery available in this area. Government school upto primary level is available in this area. Due to this fact, agariya families sent his children in this school for the study. Education seems to be interesting.

**TABLE - 2**  
**HAVE YOU GONE TO SCHOOL ?**

<i>Type of School</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Nursery school	-	-
Primary school	14	14
High school	16	16
No	70	70

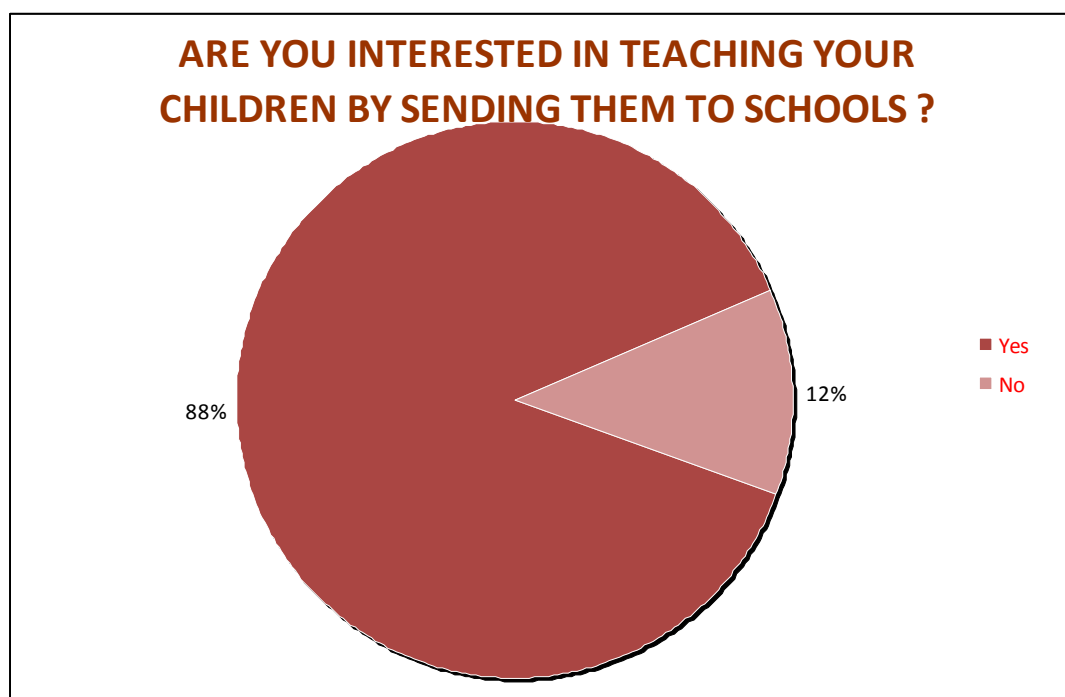


Analysis of Table no. 2 focuses on the education of the parents i.e. 'Agaria'. Non of them have been to a nursery school, whereas 14% took primary education and 16% have attained high school education, while, 70% of them have not at all attended the school.

It reflects that due to social economical and geographical limitations, majority of parents are illiterate. The fully educational facilities are not available in this area.

**TABLE - 3**  
**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TEACHING YOUR CHILDREN BY**  
**SENDING THEM TO SCHOOLS ?**

<i>Sending</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	88	88
No	12	12

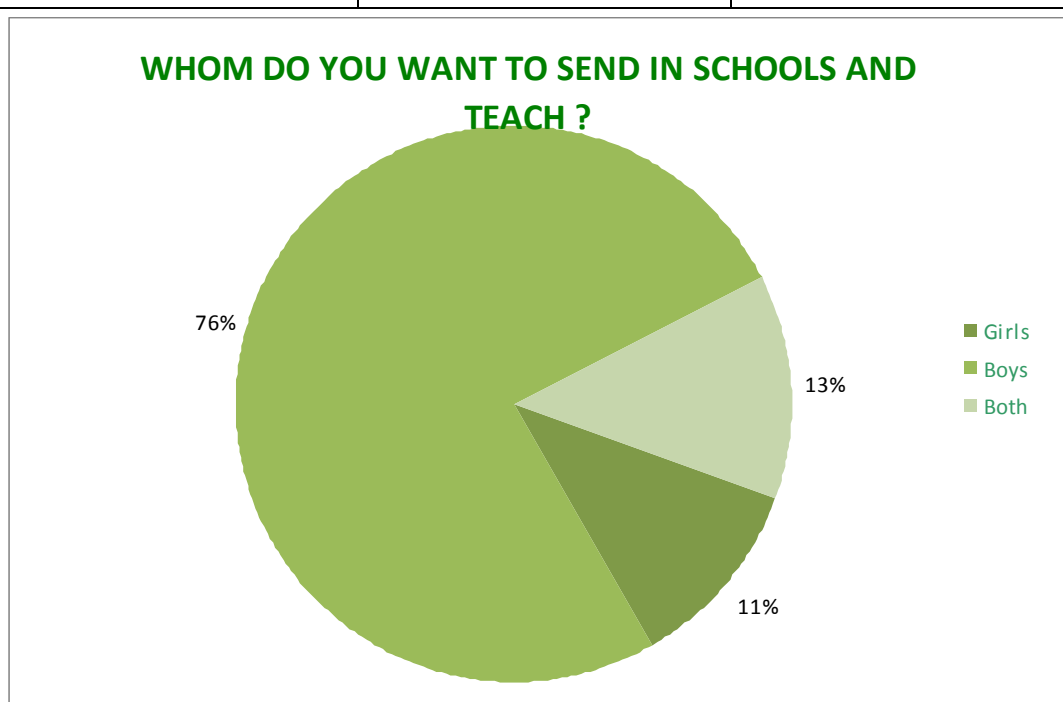


The contents of Table no. 3 evaluate the willingness of the parents to send their children to school. Analysis shows that 88% parents are interested to send their children to school whereas only 12% are not willing to send their children to school, which may be due to their financial crunch or unawareness.

TABLE - 4

**WHOM DO YOU WANT TO SEND IN SCHOOLS AND TEACH ?**

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Girls	11	11
Boys	76	76
Both	13	13



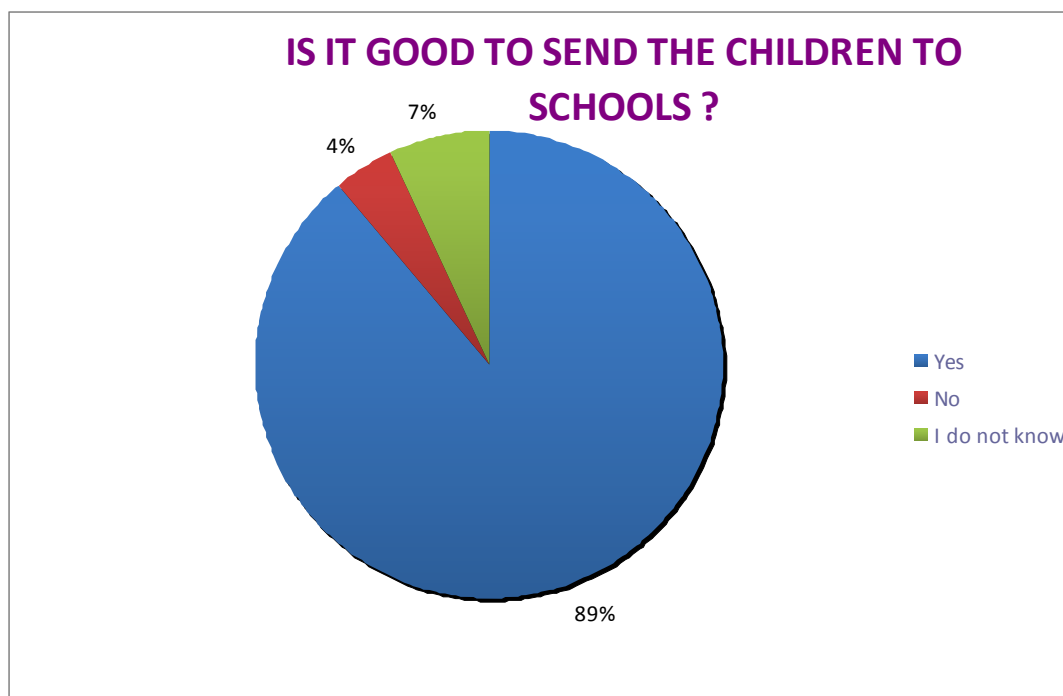
Analysis of Table no. 4 is about scrutinizing the attitude of parents for education of their children on gender bias. 11% of parents agree to send their girls child to school, whereas 76% of parents are ready to send their boy child to school and 13% are willing to send both of them to school.

This table reflects the thinking of parents i.e. 'Agaria', majority of them is interested to educate only their male child. Regarding the girls there still observations for them.

TABLE - 5

**IS IT GOOD TO SEND THE CHILDREN TO SCHOOLS ?**

<i>Good to send the children</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	89	89
No	4	4
I do not know	7	7



Analysis of Table no. 5 shows the basic attitude of Agaria parents towards school education. 89% parents think that school education is good and essential for their child's future, while 4% of them think that school education is not essential and 7% parents are unable to express their views, due to lack of proper knowledge and awareness.



**TABLE - 6**  
**DO YOU KNOW ALL THE TEACHERS OF PRIMARY**  
**SCHOOL IN YOUR VILLAGE ?**

<i>Availability of Teacher</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	65	65
No	22	22
A few	13	13

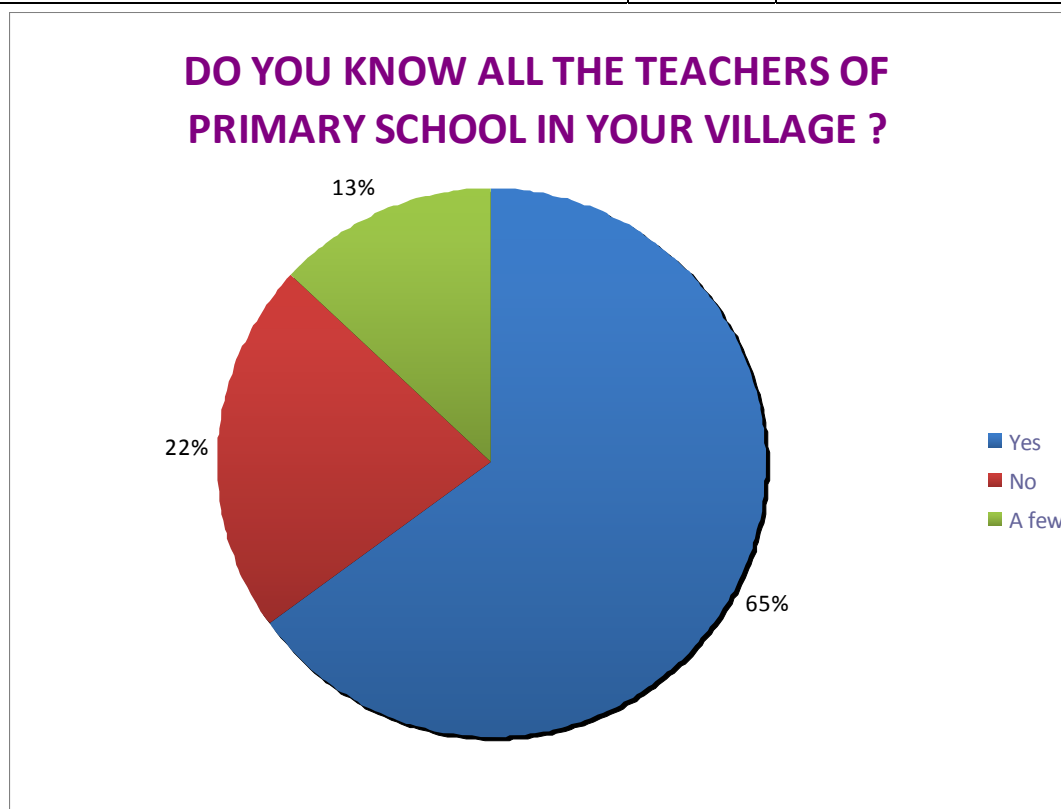
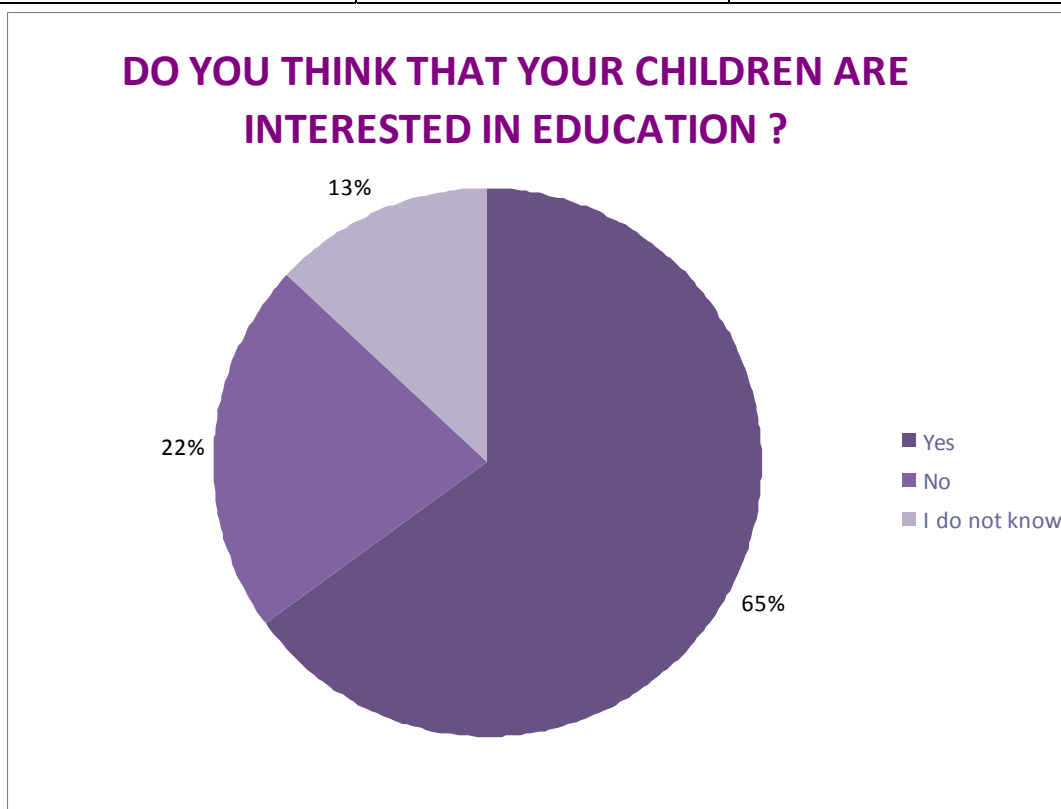


Table no. 6 is focused on the interaction and awareness amongst the Agaria parents about the teachers working in the primary school of their village.

As 65% of the Agaria parents are aware about the teachers, while 22% are unknown about the primary teacher and 13% knows very few teachers, in the primary school of their village.

**TABLE - 7**  
**DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE INTERESTED**  
**IN EDUCATION ?**

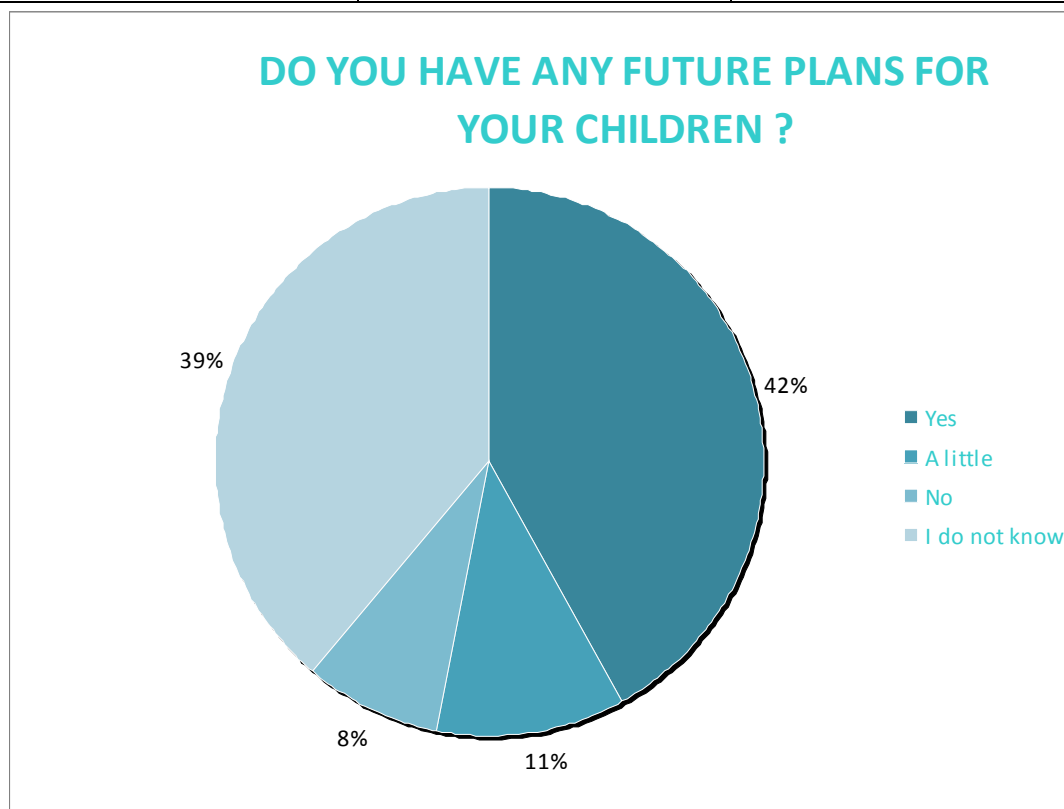
<i>Educational Interest</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	65	65
No	22	22
I do not know	13	13



Through Table no. 7 attempt was made to get the information from parents about the willingness of their children to gain education by going to school. 65% of parents informed us that, their children were interested to go to school where as, 22% parents informed that, their children were unwilling to do so and 13% parents were unaware about the interest of their children about education.

**TABLE - 8****DO YOU HAVE ANY FUTURE PLANS FOR YOUR CHILDREN?**

<i><b>Future Plan for Child</b></i>	<i><b>Yes</b></i>	<i><b>Percentage</b></i>
Yes	42	42
A little	11	11
No	8	8
I do not know	39	39



Analysis of Table no. 8 reflects the future planning of the Agaria parents for their children. 42% parents have a future plan for their children, whereas 11% of parents were able to make future plan to some extent, while 8% of Agaria parents do not have any future plan for their children. Infact 39% of them were not even clear regarding the future plan of their children.

TABLE - 9

**DO YOU KNOW THE FUTURE PLANS OF YOUR CHILDREN ?**

<i>Knowledge of Future Plan</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	35	35
No	27	27
I do not know	38	38

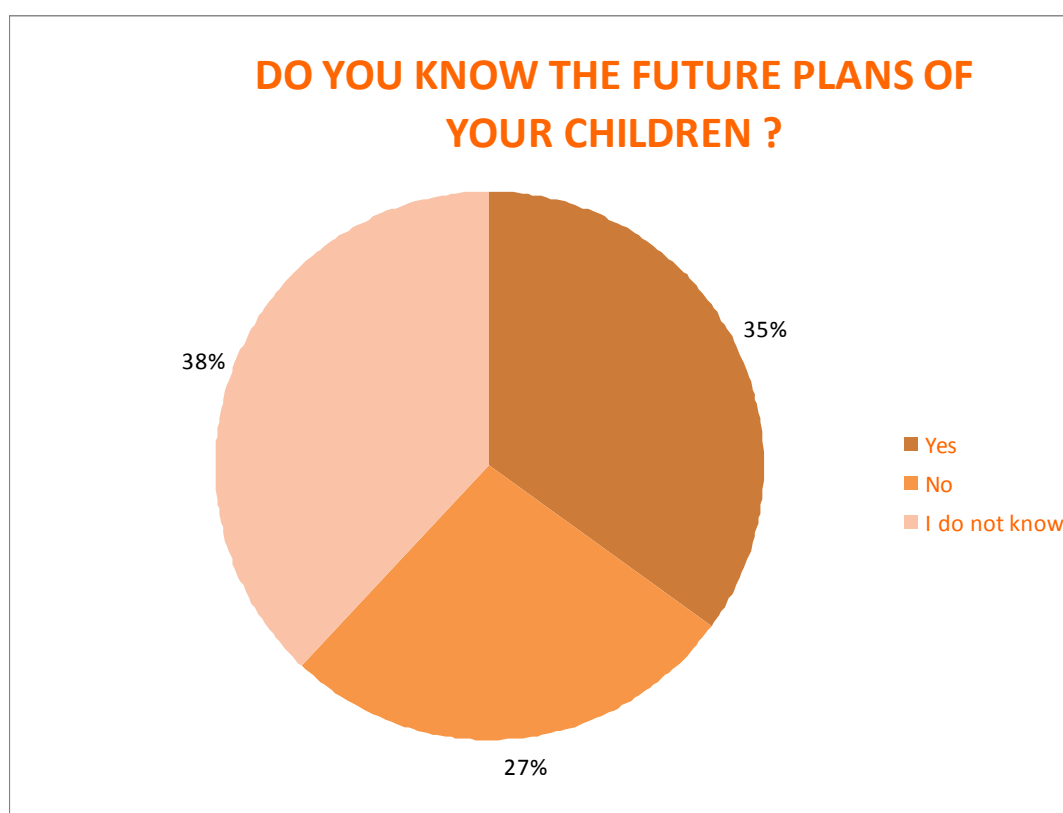


Table no. 9 shows the awareness of the Agaria parents of the future plans as planned by their children. 35% of Agaria parents are aware of the future plans prepared their children, whereas 27% are unaware of their children's future planning, while, 38% of parents do not know anything in this content.

**TABLE - 10**  
**DO YOUR CHILDREN GO FOR ANY OTHER STUDIES,**  
**COURSE, ACTIVITY ETC.**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	22	22
No	78	78

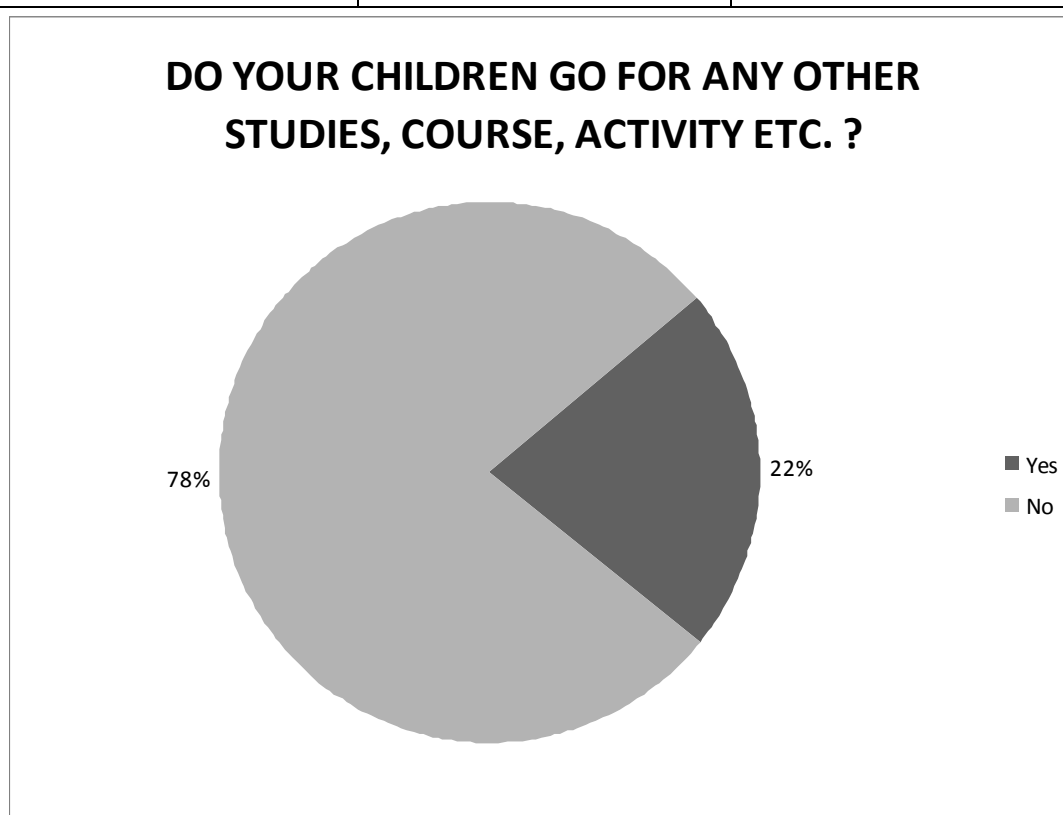
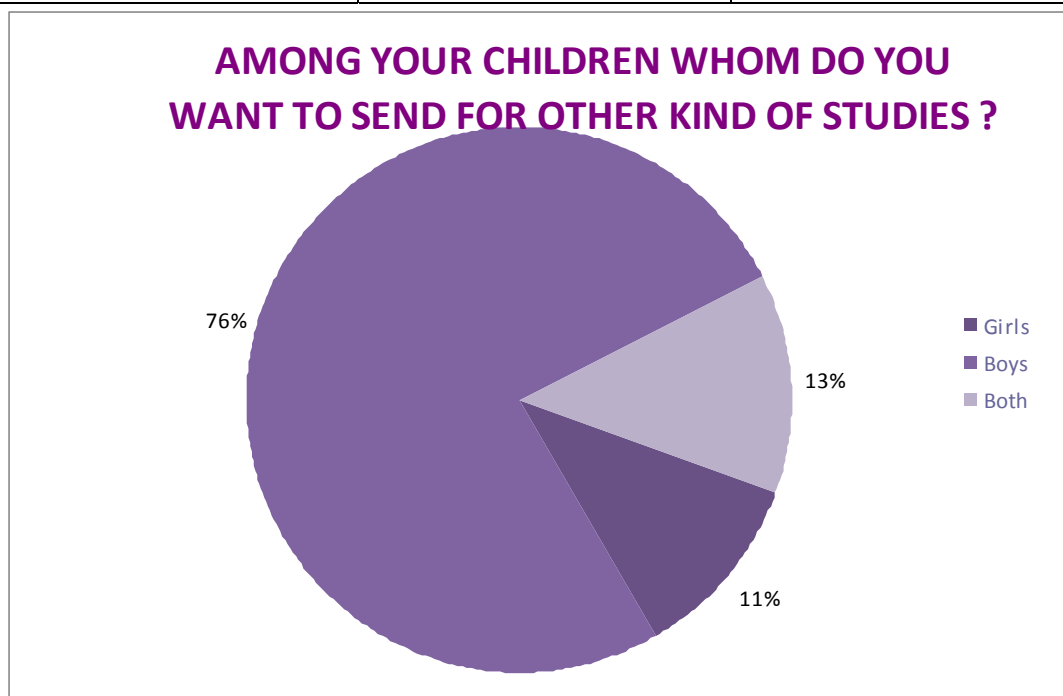


Table no. 10 shows the collected information regarding other studies, courses and activities joined by children of Agaria parents.

Analysis shows that 22% children are engaged in other studies courses and activity, while 78% are not engaged in any of the above activities. It shows that maximum numbers of children are not at all participating in any studies, whereas and activities.

**TABLE - 11**  
**AMONG YOUR CHILDREN WHOM DO YOU WANT TO SEND**  
**FOR OTHER KIND OF STUDIES ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Girls	11	11
Boys	76	76
Both	13	13

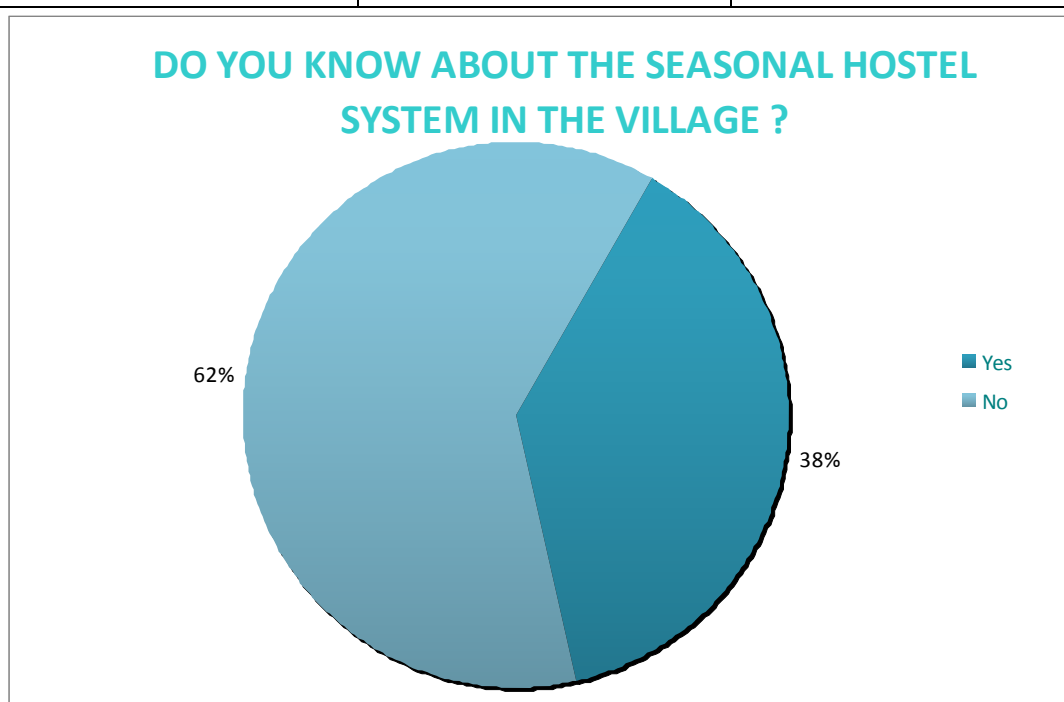


Through table no. 11 attempt was made to collect the information, from the parents whether they were interested to send their children outside for special studies.

Analysis shows that 11% parents are willing to send their girls children for special studies, whereas 76% parents are willing to send their male child outside for special studies, whereas 13% interested to send both of them for further special studies.

**TABLE - 12**  
**DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SEASONAL HOSTEL SYSTEM**  
**IN THE VILLAGE?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	38	38
No	62	62

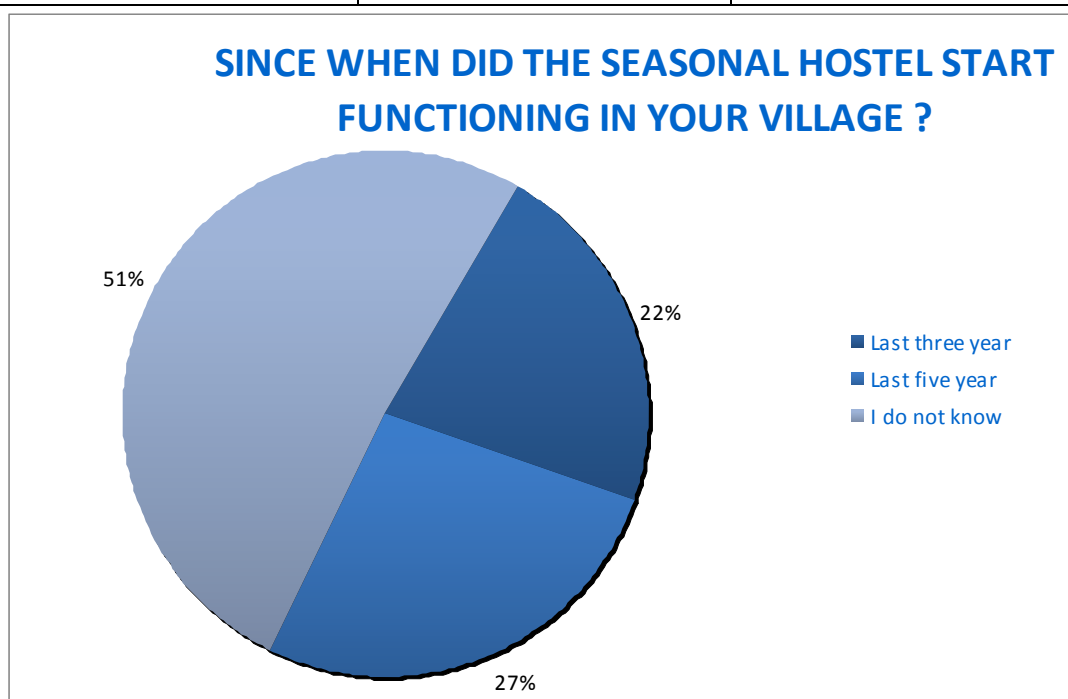


Through table no. 12 we come to know about the awareness among the parents about the seasonal hostel system available in the village.

Analysis shows that 38% parents are aware about the facility available, while 62% are unknown about this. It all depends on the interest and wish of the parents.

**TABLE - 13**  
**SINCE WHEN DID THE SEASONAL HOSTEL START**  
**FUNCTIONING IN YOUR VILLAGE ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Last three year	22	22
Last five year	27	27
I do not know	51	51



With the help of table no. 13 a tempt was made to collect the information regarding functioning of seasonal hostel facility and the time period from when it started.

22% of parents replied that, it had started since 3 yrs, whereas 27% parents replied it was made available since 5 years and 51% parents were not at all aware of this available facility.

Analysis of this table shows that maximum number of parents was unaware of any such kind of facility available in their village.



**TABLE - 14****DO YOU LIKE TO SEND YOUR CHILDREN IN HOSTELS ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	16	16
No	84	84

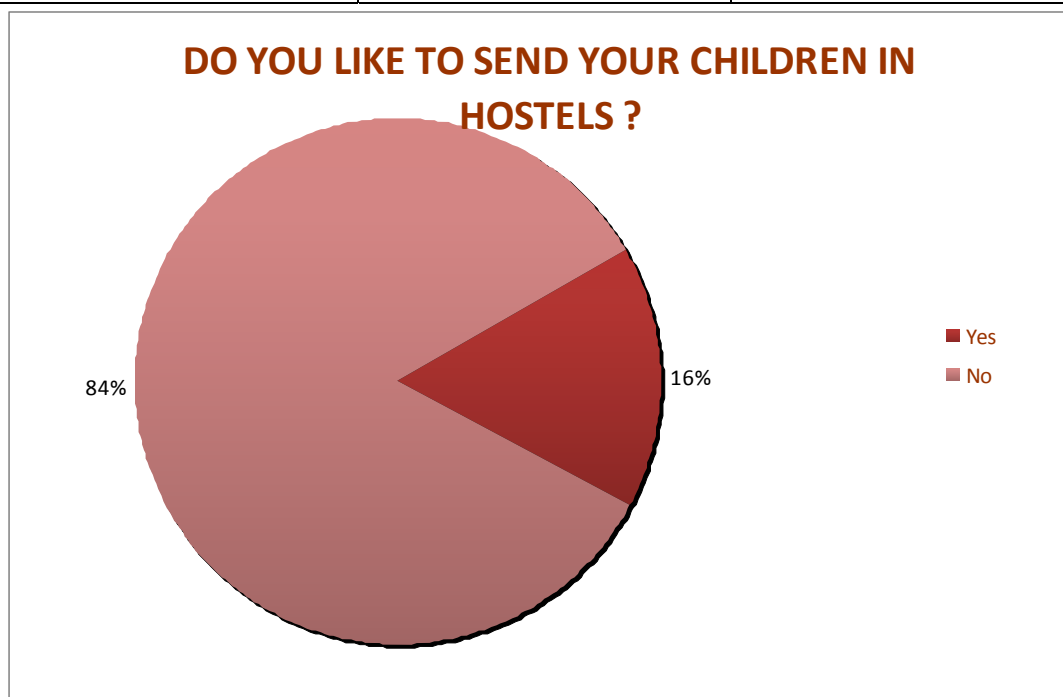


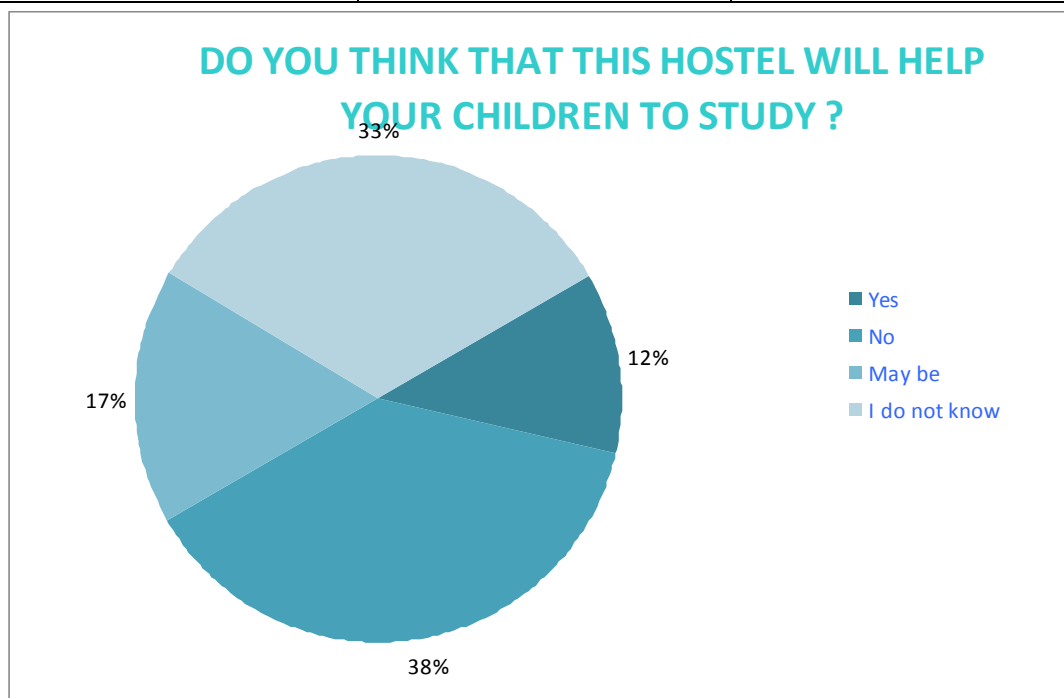
Table no.14, focuses on the willingness of parents to send their children to hostels.

Analysis shows that 16% of parents were willing to send their children in hostels; where as 84% of parents were unwilling to do so.

This, shows that, maximum number of parents are either not satisfied with the hostel facilities available, or they may not wish to send their children away from them.

**TABLE - 15**  
**DO YOU THINK THAT THIS HOSTEL WILL HELP YOUR**  
**CHILDREN TO STUDY ?**

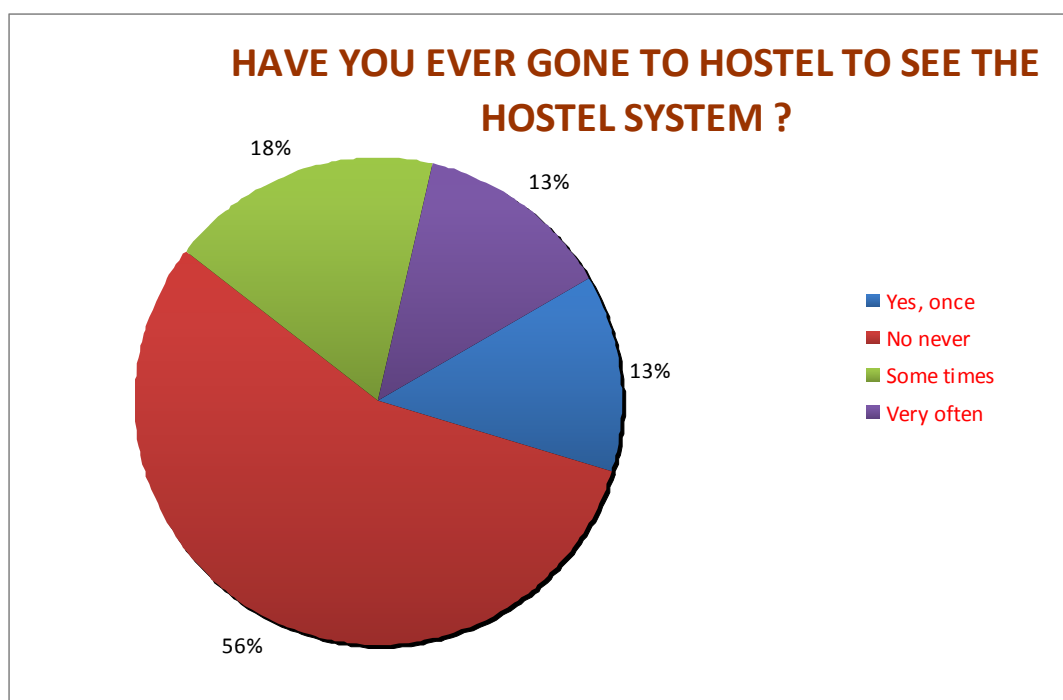
	Yes	Percentage
Yes	12	12
No	38	38
May be	17	17
I do not know	33	33



From the analysis of the information available in table no. 15, 12% parents agree that hostel will help their children to study, while 38% parents do not agree with this. 17% are not clear with their own views about this and 33% parents are not at all aware of about this.

**TABLE - 16**  
**HAVE YOU EVER GONE TO HOSTEL TO SEE THE**  
**HOSTEL SYSTEM ?**

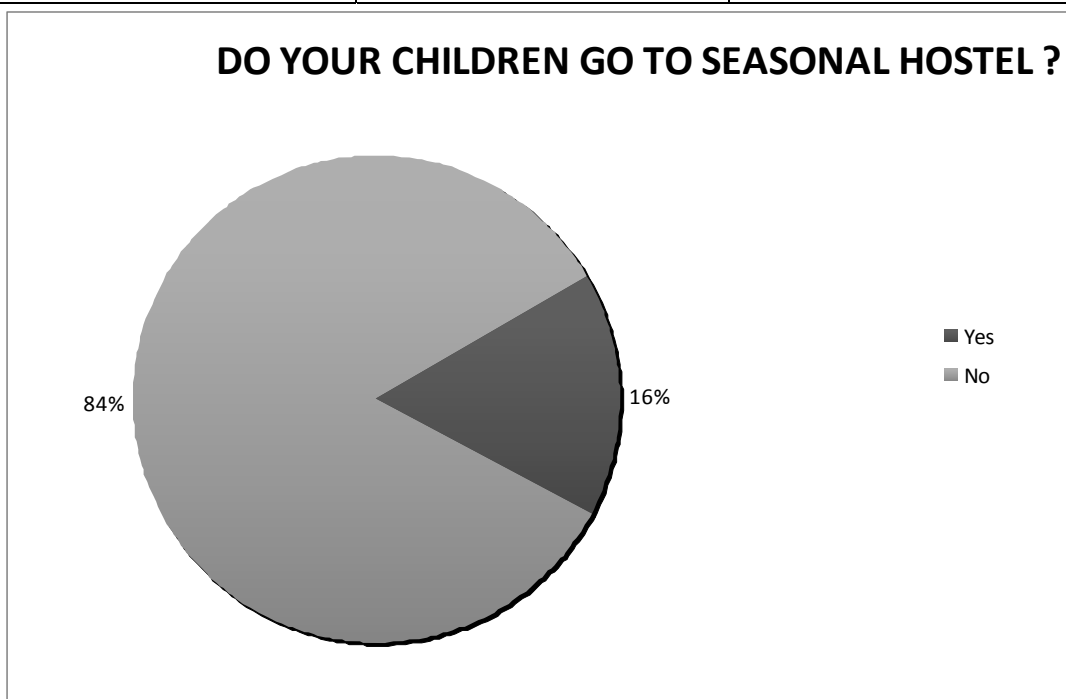
	Yes	Percentage
Yes, once	13	13
No never	56	56
Some times	18	18
Very often	13	13



Analysis the information given in table no. 16, it shows that 13% parents had visited the hostel once and viewed the hostel system, where as 56% of parents had never visited and 18% had randomly visited the hostels, where as 13% of parents had paid frequent visits to the hostels.

**TABLE - 17****DO YOUR CHILDREN GO TO SEASONAL HOSTEL ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	16	16
No	84	84



From table no. 17, it is clear that 16% of students are availing the season hostel facility, whereas 84% of students are not availing this facility.

Data reflects that majority of the students are not availing the season hostel facility, whereas 84% of students are not availing this facility.

Data reflects that majority of the students are not availing seasonal hostel facility.

**TABLE - 18****WHOM DO YOU WANT TO SEND IN SEASONAL HOSTELS ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Girls	11	11
Boys	76	76
Both	13	13

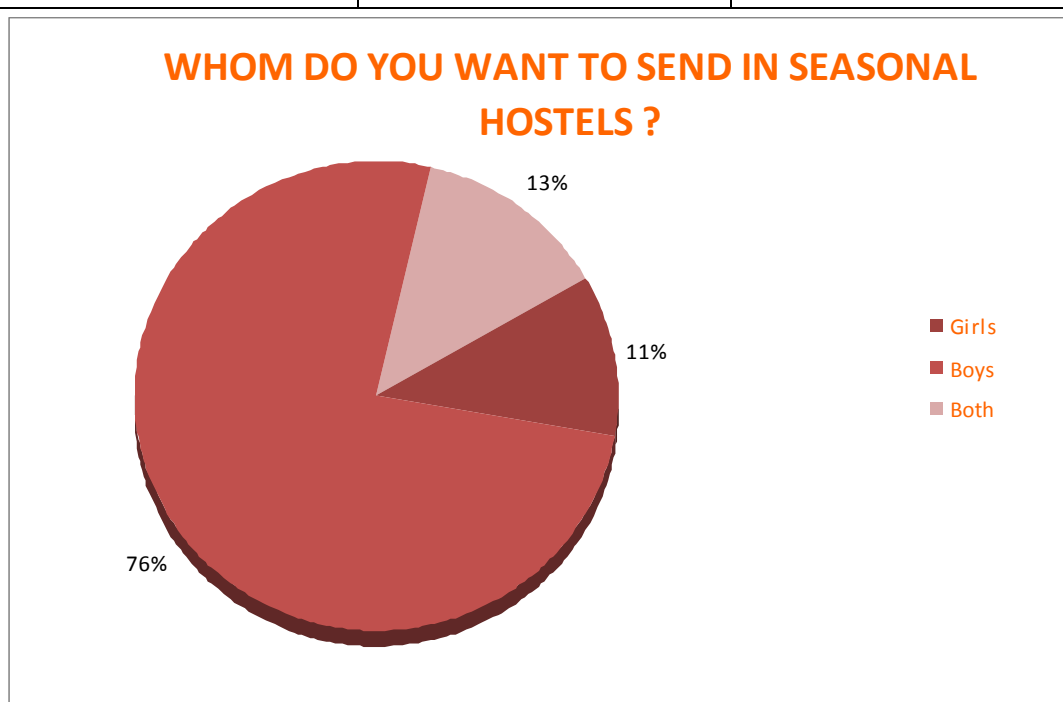
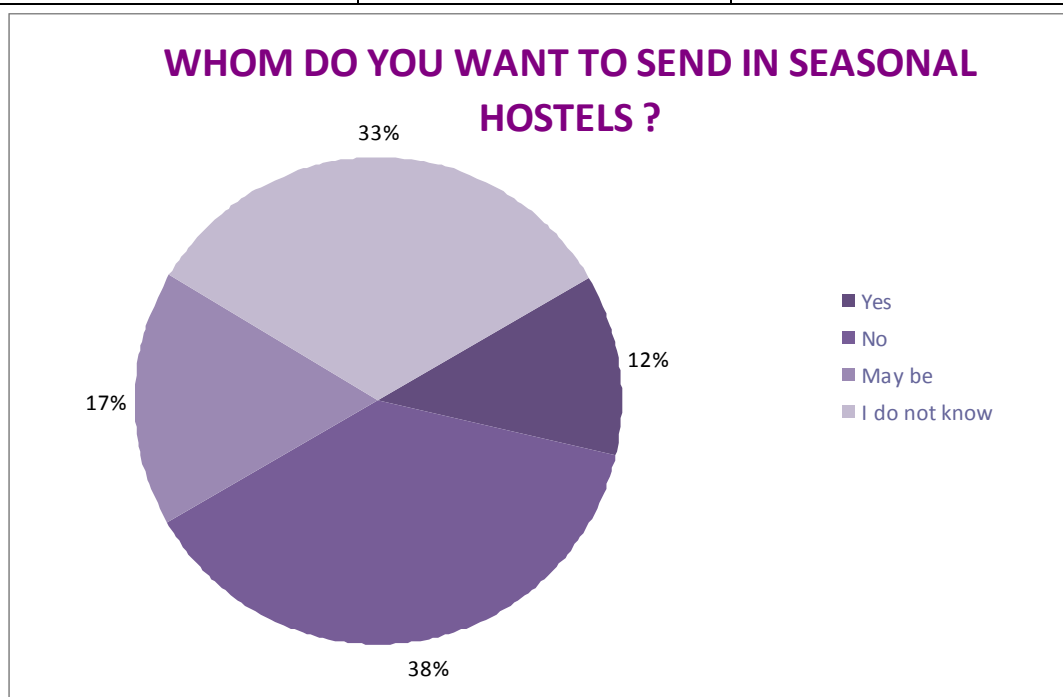


Table no. 18 reflects that only 11% parents are willing to send their girl child to the seasonal hostel, while 76% parents are willing to send their male child to seasonal hostel, whereas 13% of parents wish to send boys as well as girls to seasonal hostels.

**TABLE - 19**  
**DO YOU THINK THAT BECAUSE OF HOTELS, CHILDREN**  
**CAN COMPLETE THEIR SCHOOLING ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	12	12
No	38	38
May be	17	17
I do not know	33	33



Analysis of the information provided in table no. 19, it is clear that 12% parents agree that due to hostel facility, their children's education can be completed, while 38% parents do not agree with this. 17% parents are infact, do not have clear opinion about this, where as 33% are not at all aware with this facts.

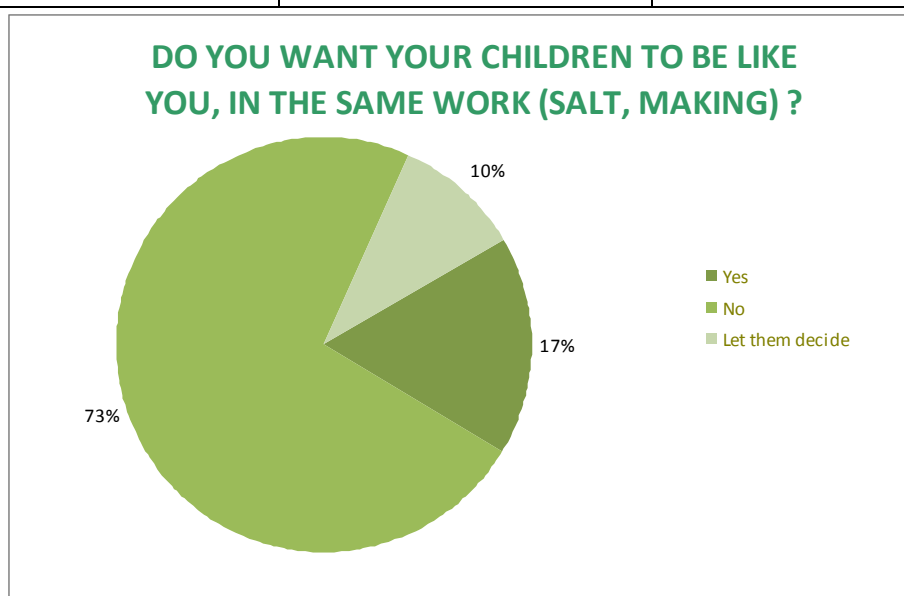
➤ **TO KNOW WHETHER THE CHILDREN ARE TAKEN TO  
SALT PAN FOR WORKS:**

**Introduction:**

Formal as well as informal primary schools and other institutions exist in all the studied districts of Gujarat. However, accessibility, availability, and utilization of education facilities are restricted in some regions. There has been an attempt to increase access to schools in Gujarat (particularly primary schools), and the number of institutions increases each year. In the 54 villages studied for the FIVP, all have a primary school, but only a few of them have middle schools. For primary schools, distance is rarely given as a reason for lack of attendance, but this is a serious problem for middle school, particularly for girls. It was observed that access to centres of higher education becomes difficult as the middle and higher secondary school are located in another town or village. In Kachchh district it was observed that non-formal education was progressing with the help of an NGO called Janvikas in only one village.

**TABLE - 20**  
**DO YOU WANT YOUR CHILDREN TO BE LIKE YOU, IN THE**  
**SAME WORK (SALT, MAKING) ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	17	17
No	73	73
Let them decide	10	10



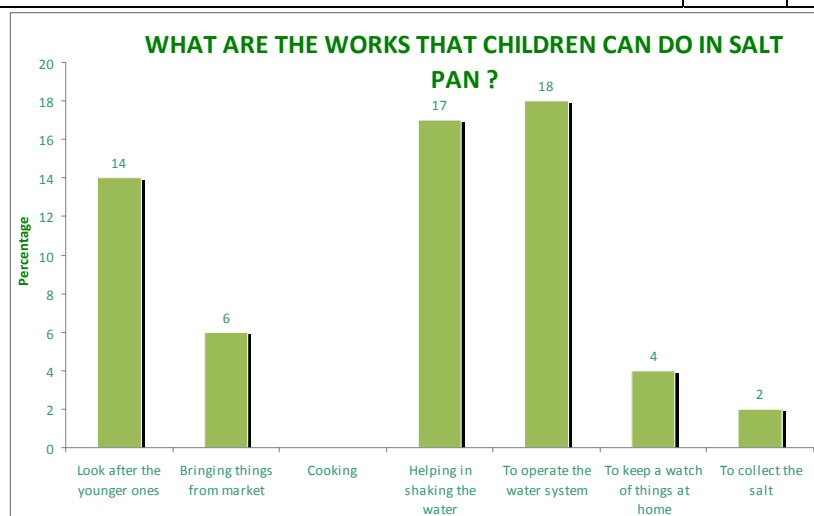
From the information available in table no. 20, attempt was made to check the interest and willingness of the parents to involve their children in the same work they are doing i.e. salt making. Scrutinizing the information it is clear that only 17% parents are interested to join their children in the same job they are doing. In this table, majority of Agaria's not interested to his children for joining the same work i.e. salt making.

Behaviour of the parents reflects that they are not happy and satisfy with their job/work and don't want to involve their children in the same work of salt making.



**TABLE - 21**  
**WHAT ARE THE WORKS THAT CHILDREN CAN DO IN SALT PAN ?**

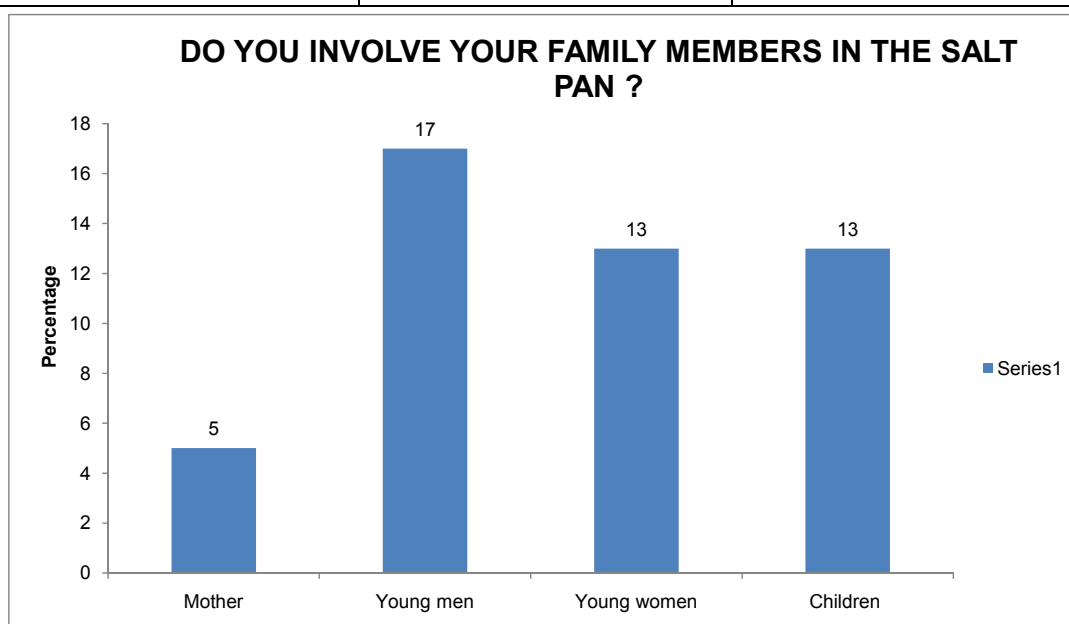
	Yes	Percentage
Look after the younger ones	14	14
Bringing things from market	6	6
Cooking	0	0
Helping in shaking the water	17	17
To operate the water system	18	18
To keep a watch of things at home	4	4
To collect the salt	2	2



Analysis the data of table no. 21 it is clear that 14% children helping their parents by looking after their younger brothers and sisters when their parents are at work. 6% children are helping their parents by bringing the commodities from market. 17% are helping in shaking salt water in salt pans. 18% is helping in operating water system. 4% children safe guard their belongings at home when their parents are on work. 2% children are helping their parents in collecting salt.

**TABLE - 22**  
**DO YOU INVOLVE YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE SALT**  
**PAN ?**

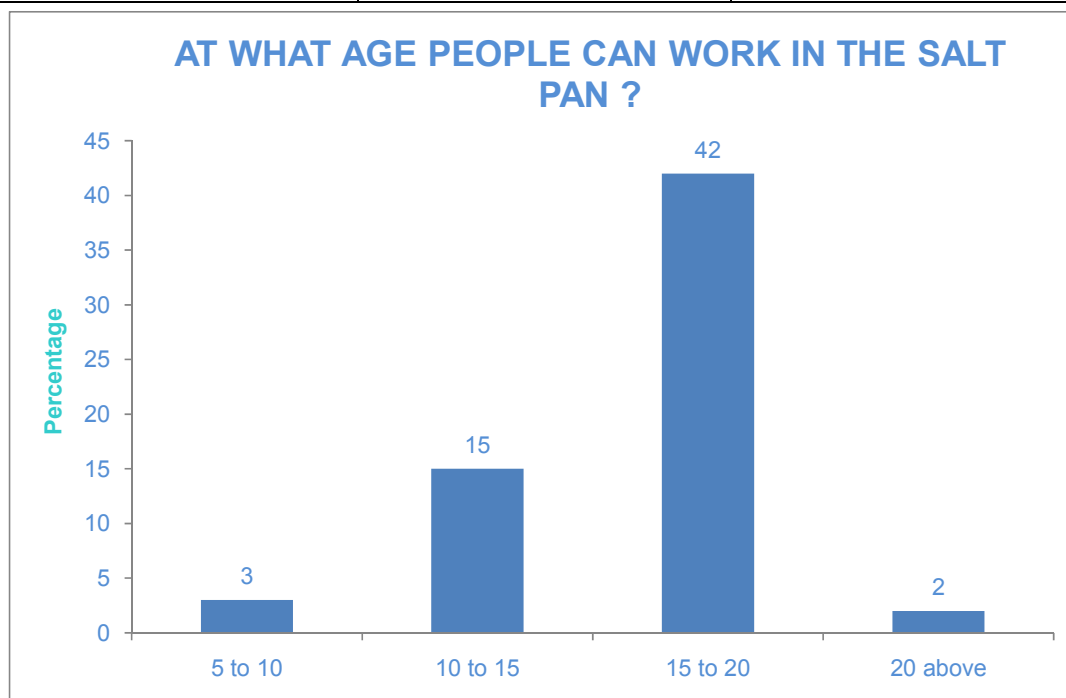
	Yes	Percentage
Mother	05	05
Young men	17	17
Young women	13	13
Children	13	13



From the data available in table no. 22 it is clear those 17% young men, 13% Youngs women and 13% children from "Agaria's" family helping them in salt pan.

**TABLE - 23****AT WHAT AGE PEOPLE CAN WORK IN THE SALT PAN ?**

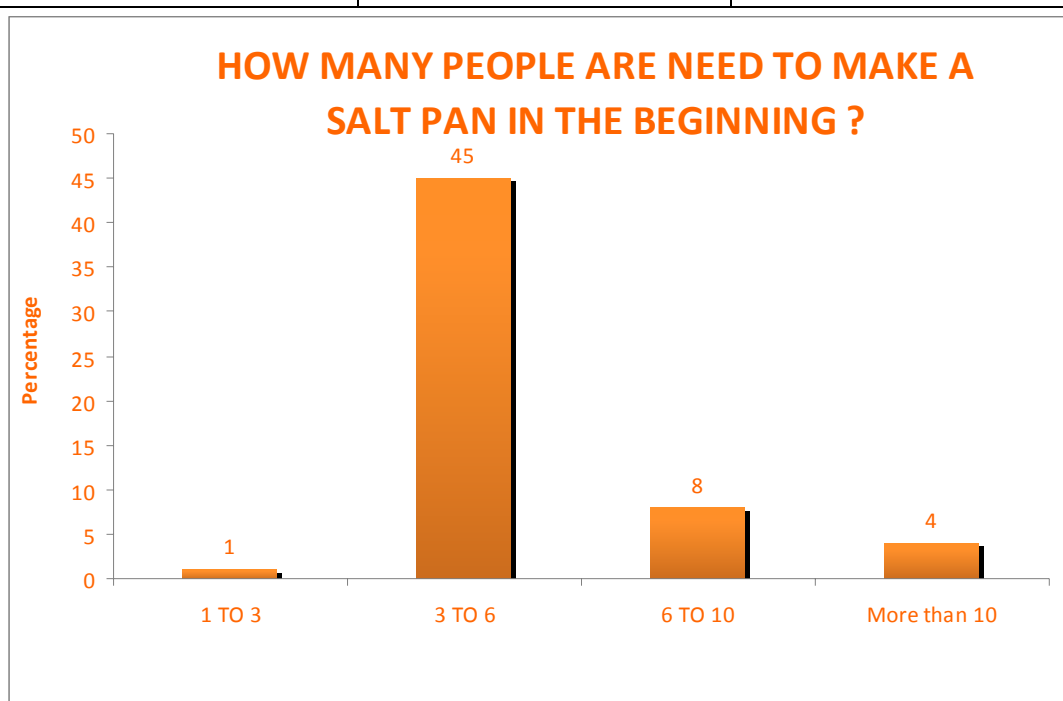
	Yes	Percentage
5 to 10	3	3
10 to 15	15	15
15 to 20	42	42
20 above	2	2



Analysis the information of table no. 23 it is clear that 15% people of the age group 10 to 15 years; 42% people of the age group from 15 to 20 years and 2% people of age above 20 years are working in salt pan.

**TABLE - 24**  
**HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE NEED TO MAKE A SALT PAN IN**  
**THE BEGINNING ?**

	Yes	Percentage
1 TO 3	1	
3 TO 6	45	
6 TO 10	8	
More than 10	4	



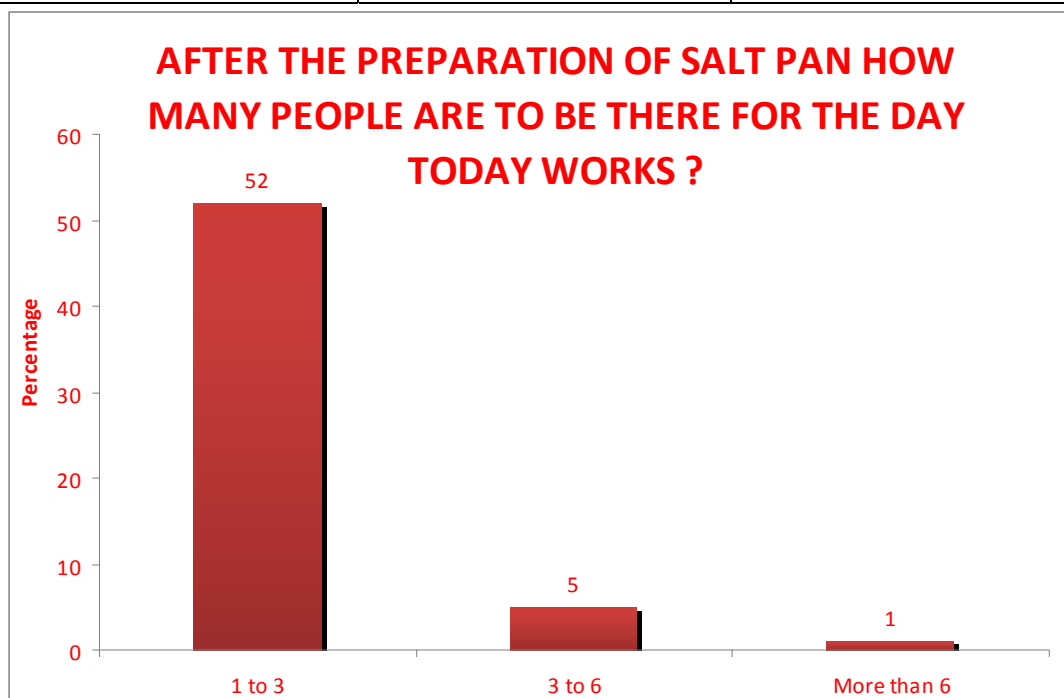
Data of table no. 24 give the information regarding man power required to start salt pan initially. 1% Agaria told that 1 to 3 numbers of persons are enough, whereas 45% told that 3 to 6 persons are required. 8% Agaria told 6 to 10 persons are required and 4% told that more than 10 people are required to start salt pans.

From overall analysis it can be concluded that maximum numbers of Agaria believe that 3 to 6 persons are required to start salt pan initially.

**TABLE - 25**

**AFTER THE PREPARATION OF SALT PAN HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE TO BE THERE FOR THE DAY TODAY WORKS?**

	Yes	Percentage
1 to 3	52	
3 to 6	5	
More than 6	1	



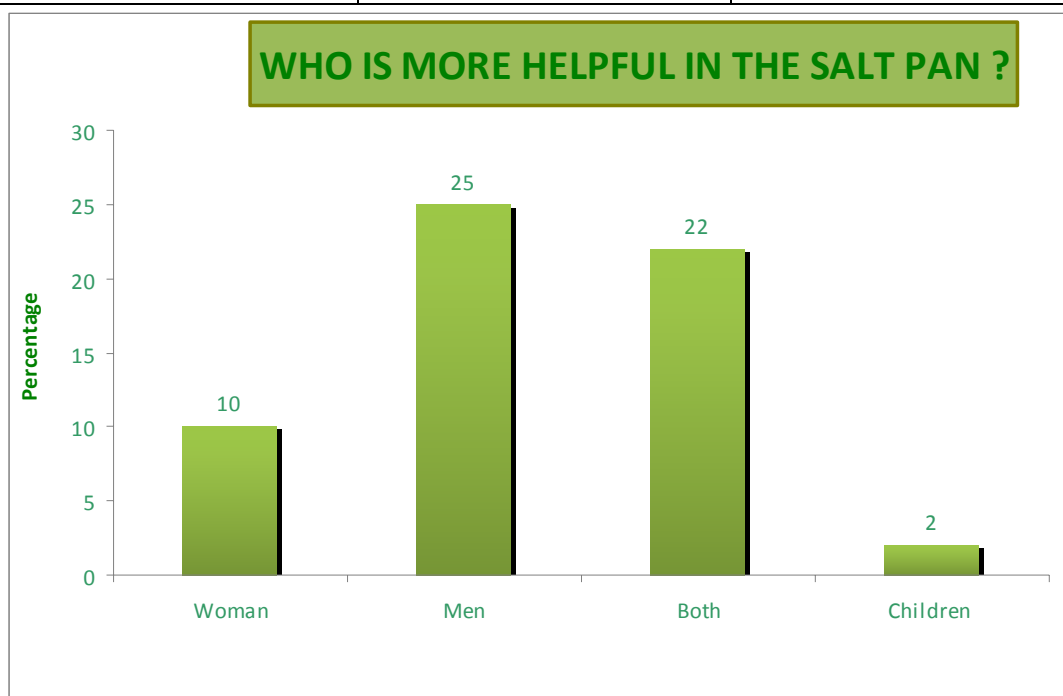
As per the data analysis of table no. 25, 52% Agaria believe that 1 to 3 workers are enough to maintain day to day activities of salt pan, once it established. 5% Agarias feels that 3 to 6 labours are required. Only 1% believer that more than 6 labours needs for day to day work.

Overall impression is there maximum 3 labours are required to manage day to day activity of salt pan after it get established.

TABLE - 26

**WHO IS MORE HELPFUL IN THE SALT PAN ?**

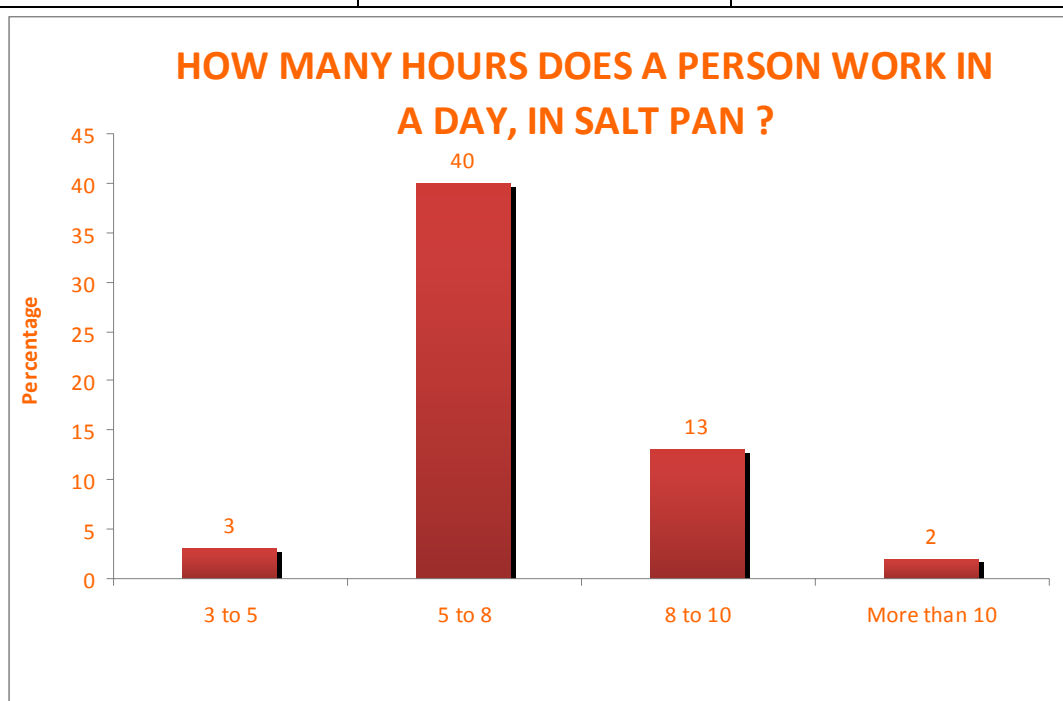
	Yes	Percentage
Woman	10	
Men	25	
Both	22	
Children	2	



Data of table no. 26 is useful to find out suitability of labour on gender bias. 10% believe that women workers are suitable 25% believe that men workers are more suitable. 22% believe that both are suitable while only 2% are agree with that children are suitable.

**TABLE - 27**  
**HOW MANY HOURS DOES A PERSON WORK IN A DAY, IN**  
**SALT PAN ?**

	Yes	Percentage
3 to 5	3	3
5 to 8	40	40
8 to 10	13	13
More than 10	2	2



Analysis of table no. 27 is helpful to decide maximum numbers of working hour; a labour can work efficiently in a salt pan per day.

3% believe that 3 to 5 working hour is enough. 40% believe that salt workers can work from 5 to 8 hours efficiently, while 13% believe that these labours can work from 8 to 10 hours. Only 2% believe that these labours can work more than 10 hours also.

Majority of them agrees that 5 to 8 working hours are convenient for salt labours.

➤ **TO KNOW THE FACILITIES AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF EDUCATION AT HOME:**

**Introduction:**

The communities do not always use educational facilities because education has no direct impact on earnings. Villagers belonging to food insecure and vulnerable households opined that the irregularity in school attendance and the unwillingness to send children to the school is due to the indirect costs of education, i.e. the loss of income, the non-involvement of children in agricultural work, and the loss of time in going to school etc. Another important reason provided for not pursuing education options was the continuous migration of the villagers. The drop out rate of girls is very high because of the cultural construct and their involvement in household chores while in case of boys, even though they are enrolled; their attendance is low as the village lacks proper facilities for commuting.

**Women's education and training**

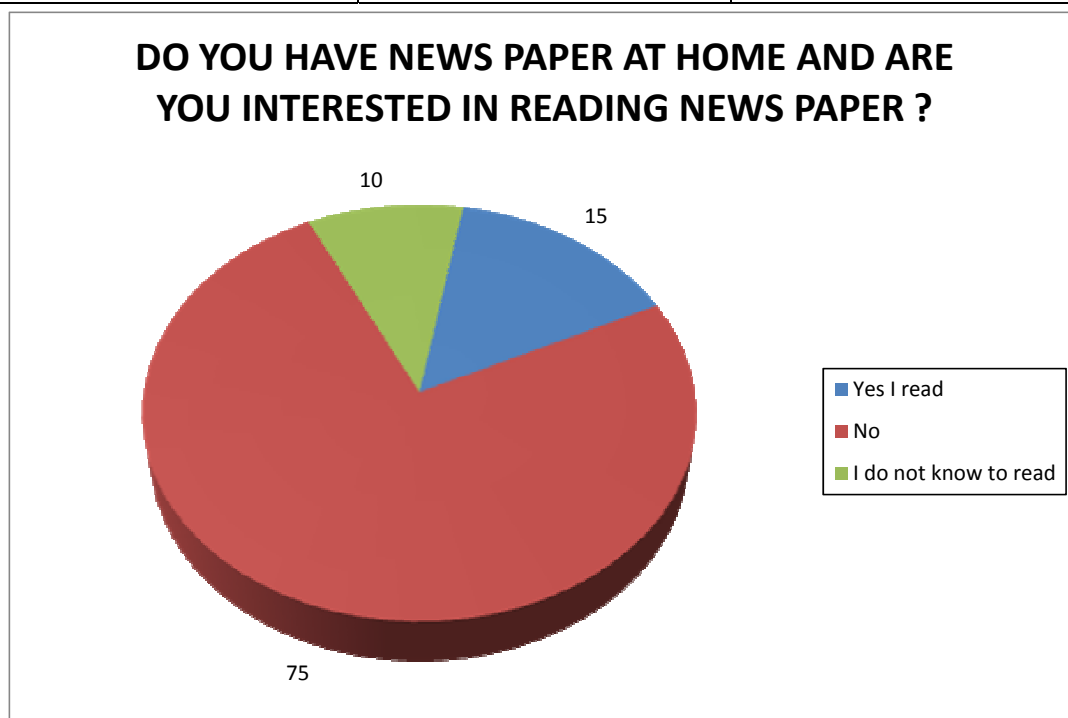
Women work extremely hard and yet are the first to be deprived of food when there are shortages. They contribute up to half of the household's income, sometimes even more, but have little control over the income that they earn. Their contribution to the household income in Kachchh and Surendranagar district is almost equal to that of the men because of lack of employment opportunities. In other districts it was seen that the contribution made by women is low but is not negligible. In spite of this situation, women expressed a strong interest in improving their income earning opportunities. Some of them recognize



the link between literacy and management of resources. And those who have formed self-help groups (SHGs) are even more committed to improving their situation. Although economic and social barriers limit women's opportunities, the following could support their development: improving income generation activities, improving literacy; and forming and assisting SHGs.

**TABLE - 28**  
**DO YOU HAVE NEWS PAPER AT HOME AND ARE YOU**  
**INTERESTED IN READING NEWS PAPER ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes I read	15	15
No	75	75
I do not know to read	10	10



Information of table no. 28 is related with the availability of news paper at home and their interest in reading them.

Analysis shows that 15% people are getting news paper at their home and they are reading them too.

**TABLE - 29**  
**WHAT ARE THE ELECTRONIC THINGS YOU HAVE AT HOME ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Radio	5	5
T.V.	41	41
Iron box	5	5
Fridge	0	0
Other items	2	2
No	12	12

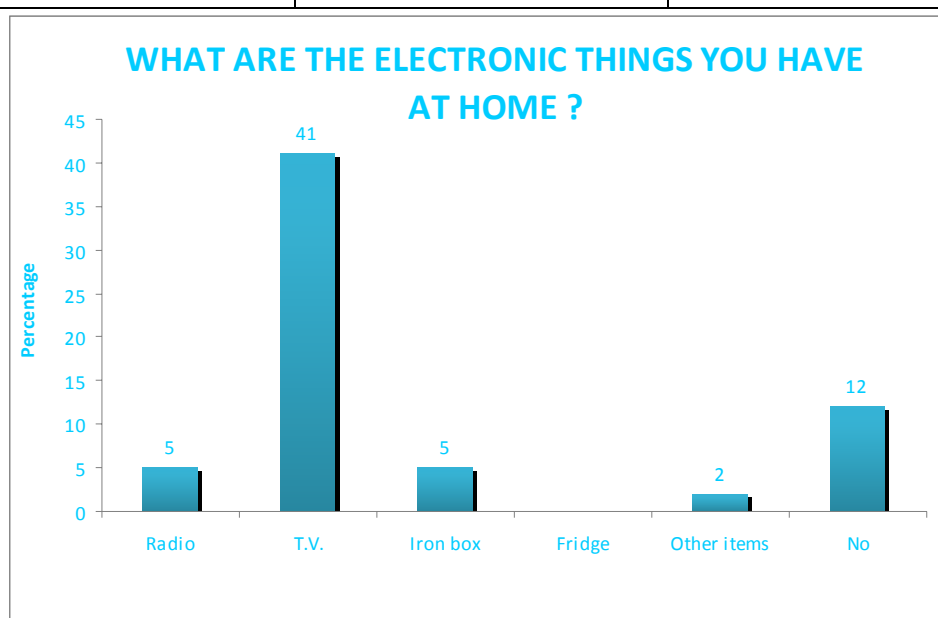


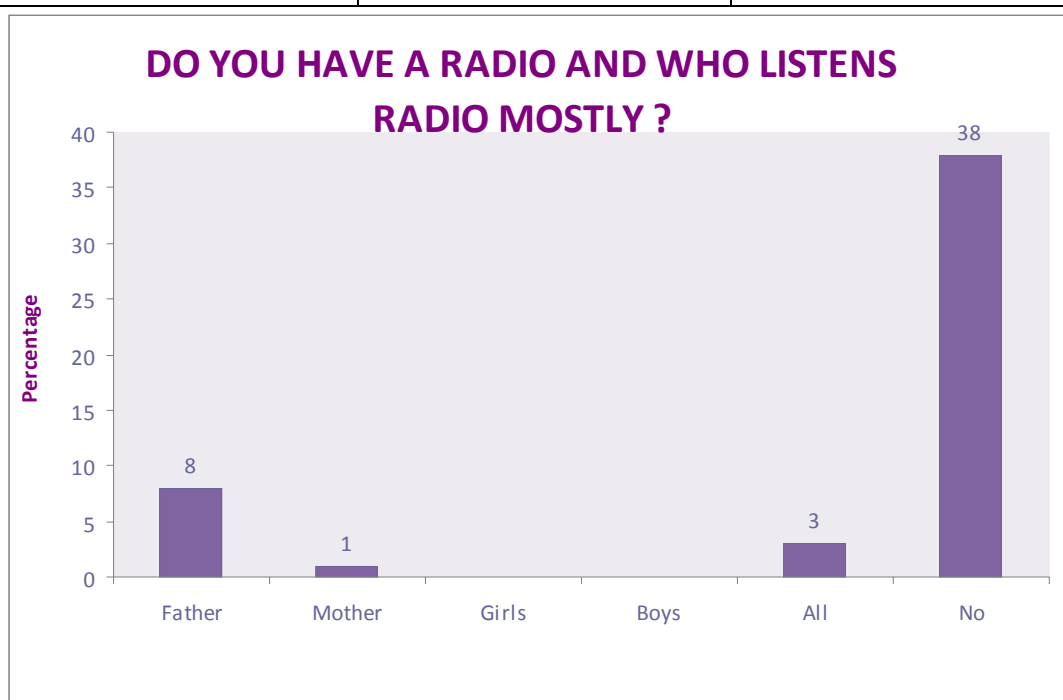
Table no. 29 shows the availability of Electronic equipments at home.

Analysis of the information shows that 5% people have radio at home. 41% have T.V. set at home. 5% of them have Iron box at home. None of them have Fridge. 2% have other electronics items, 12% don't have any electronic items at home.

Data shows that majority of the people have T.V. at their home as a source of comfort and entertainment.

**TABLE - 30**  
**DO YOU HAVE A RADIO AND WHO LISTENS RADIO**  
**MOSTLY ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Father	8	8
Mother	1	1
Girls	25	25
Boys	25	25
All	3	3
No	38	38



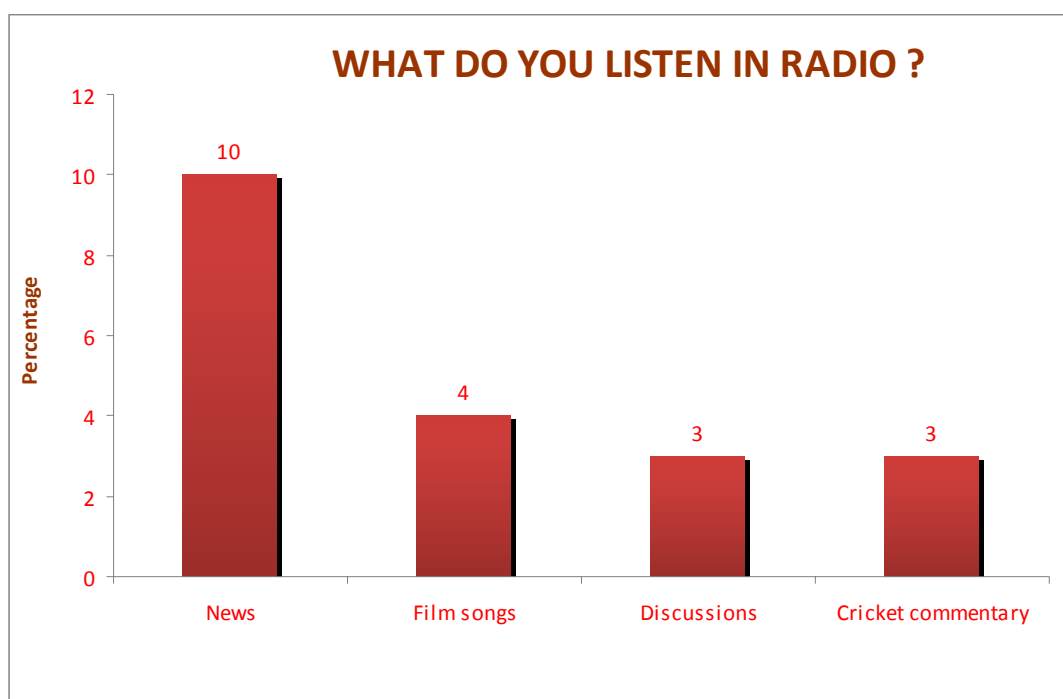
Analysis of table no. 30 is focused on availability of Radio and frequency of its use / listening amongst family members.

In 8% family father used to listen radio. In 1% of family mothers listen. None of the girls or boys is using radio. In 3% family all family are use to listen radio. In 38% family no one is using radio.

Analysis shows that availability and habit of using Radio at home is less. It also can be due to the TV world.

**TABLE - 31****WHAT DO YOU LISTEN IN RADIO ?**

	Yes	Percentage
News	10	10
Film songs	4	4
Discussions	3	3
Cricket commentary	3	3



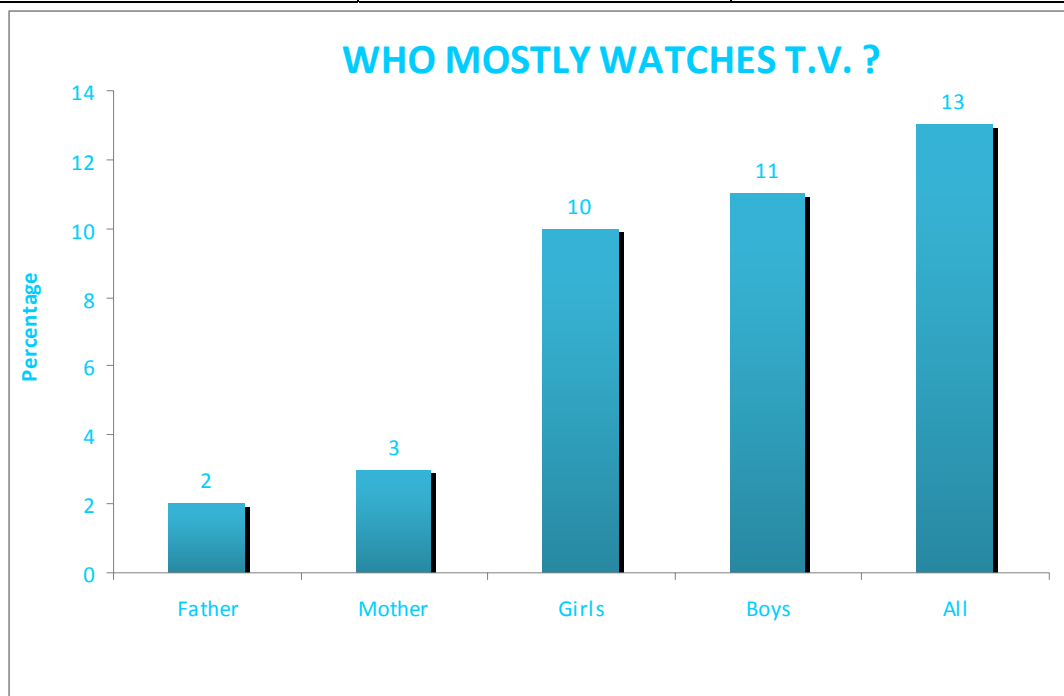
Information of table is focused on the type of programme preferred by the people on radio.

Analysis shows that 10% people are listening news on radio. 4% people enjoy filmy songs, while 3% are interested to listen dibets and discussions on various topics. 3% of people are listening commentary on radio.

From the analysis it reflects that large number of people listen news and radio.

**TABLE - 32**  
**WHO MOSTLY WATCHES T.V. ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Father	2	2
Mother	3	3
Girls	10	10
Boys	11	11
All	13	13



Analysis of table shows that in 2% family father used to watch T.V. while in 3% family mother used to watch T.V. In 10% family girls, in 11% family boys and in 13% family all members used to watch T.V.

In most of the family all members prefers to watch T.V.

**TABLE - 33**  
**WHO DO YOU WATCH IN T.V. ?**

	Yes	Percentage
News	29	29
Film songs	2	2
Discussions	0	0
Films	24	24
Village matters	11	11
Serials	29	29
Entertainments	80	80
Cricket	9	9

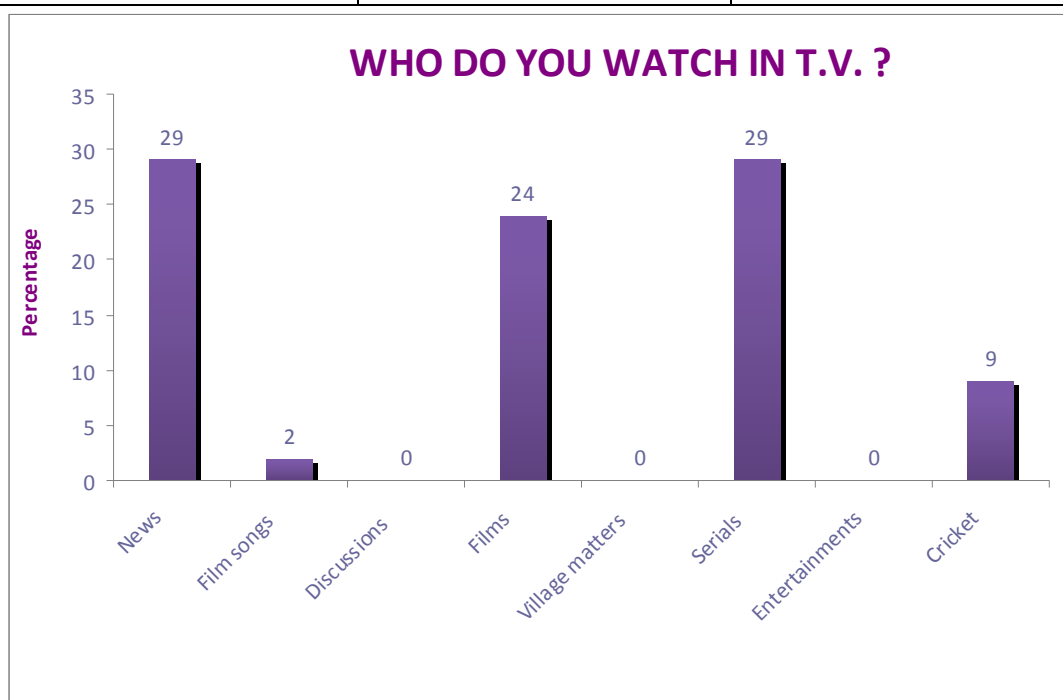


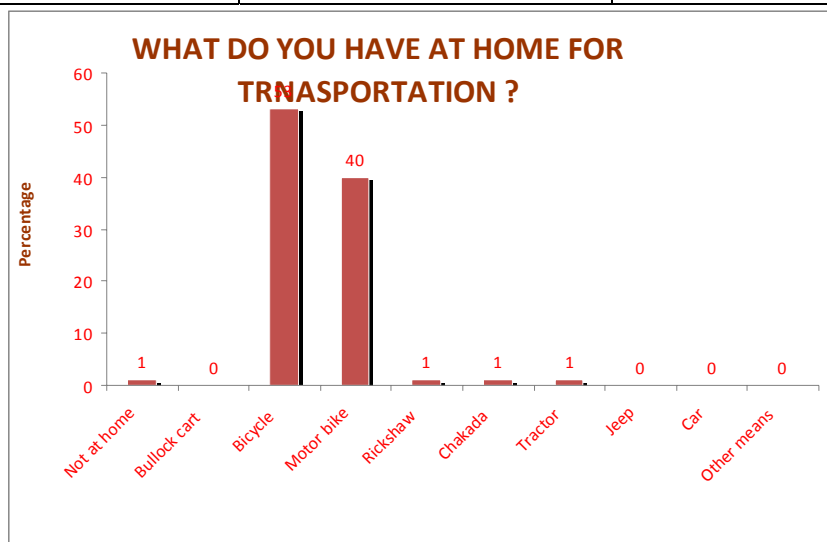
Table no. 33 refers to the selection / preference of T.V. programme given by the family members.

Data analysis shows that 29% family members prefers news. 2% film songs, 24% films, 29% serials and 9% family members prefers to watch / view cricket.

Overall it reflects that almost equal numbers of family members are interested in watching news, films and serials.

**TABLE - 34****WHAT DO YOU HAVE AT HOME FOR TRNASPORTATION ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Not at home	1	1
Bullock car	0	0
Bicycle	53	53
Motor bike	40	40
Rickshaw	1	1
Chakada	1	1
Tractor	1	1
Jeep	0	0
Car	0	0
Other means	0	0



Information of table no. 34 is based on the transportation facility available at home.

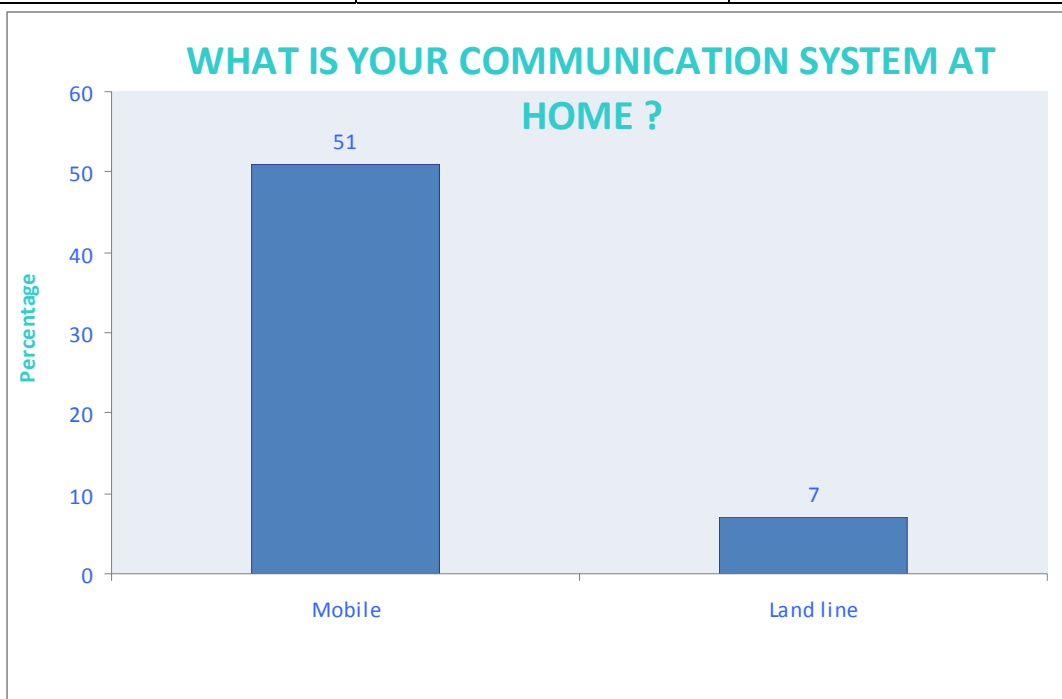
Data analysis shows that 1% people don't have any transport facility at home. 53% have bicycle, 40% have motorbike, 1% have chhakda, 1% have tractor as a transport vehicle at home. None of them have Bullock cart, jeep or car at home.

Overall analysis reflects that maximum numbers of persons availing bicycle and motorbike as a transport facility at home.



**TABLE - 35****WHAT IS YOUR COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AT HOME ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Mobile	51	51
Land line	7	7

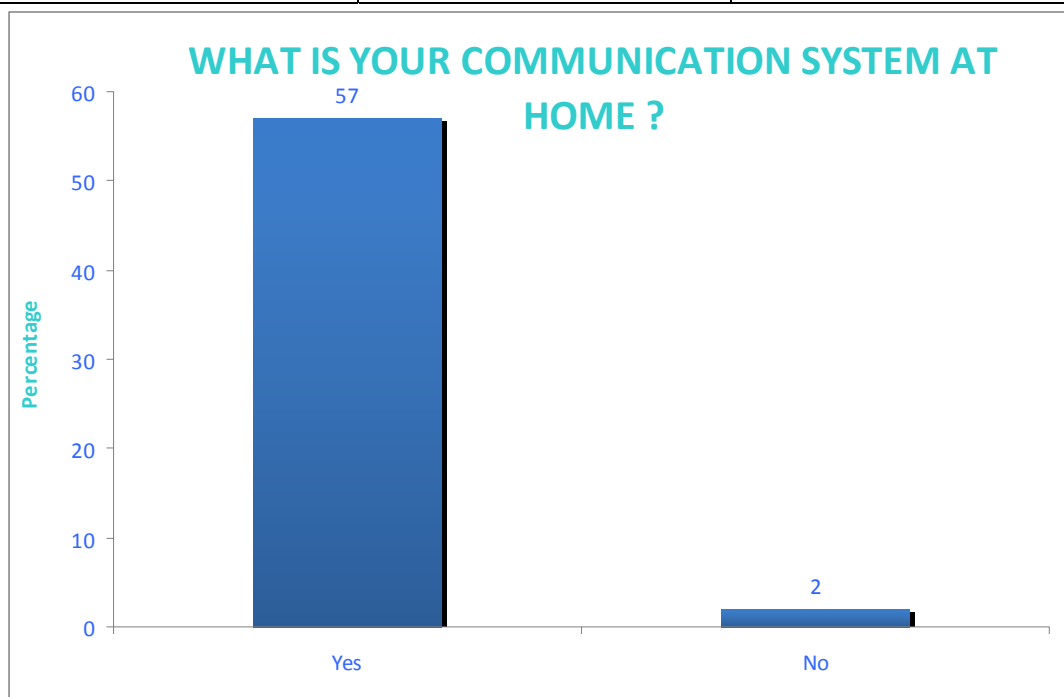


Data analysis shows that 51% people are using mobile as a communication device at home. 7% people are using land-line telephone at home.

Analysis shows that trend to use mobile / cell phone is maximum as a communicating device in comparison with land line phone.

**TABLE - 36****DO YOU HAVE ELECTRICITY AT HOME ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	57	57
No	2	2

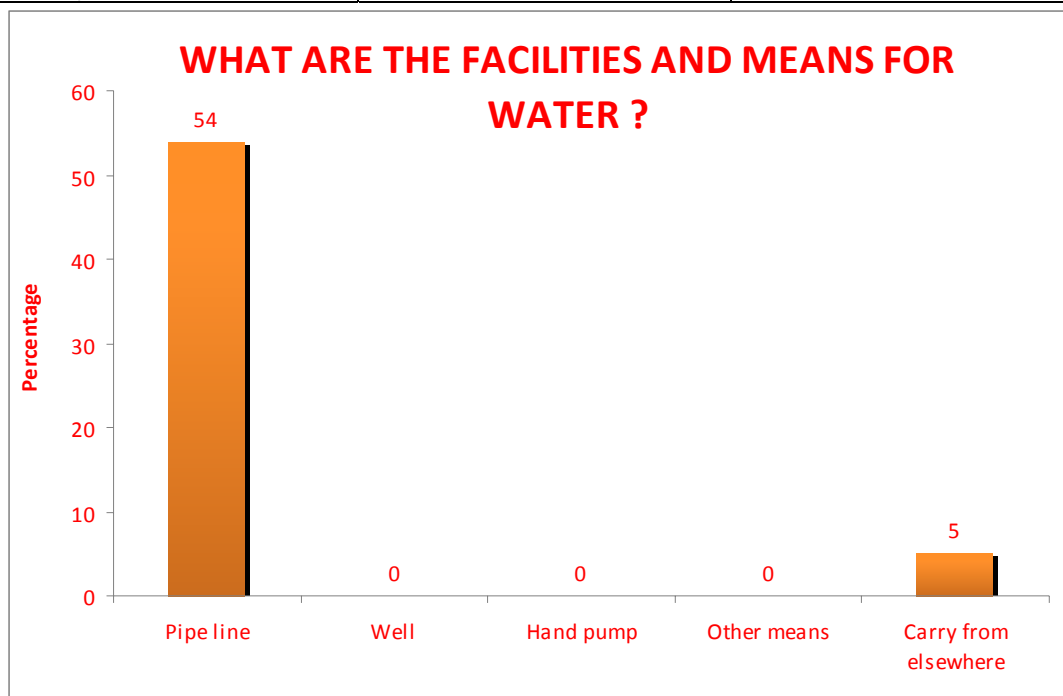


Data analysis shows that 57% houses are covered with electrification while 3% people don't have electricity at home.

From the analysis it can be concluded that maximum numbers of house are facilitate with electricity.

**TABLE - 37****WHAT ARE THE FACILITIES AND MEANS FOR WATER ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Pipe line	54	54
Well	0	0
Hand pump	0	0
Other means	0	0
Carry from elsewhere	5	5



Data analysis shows that 54% houses are getting water through pipe line while 5% people satisfying their water requirement by borrowing water from outside source. There is no independent source of water such as well, hand pump etc at home.

Overall impression shows that getting water through the pipe line is the main source of potable water.

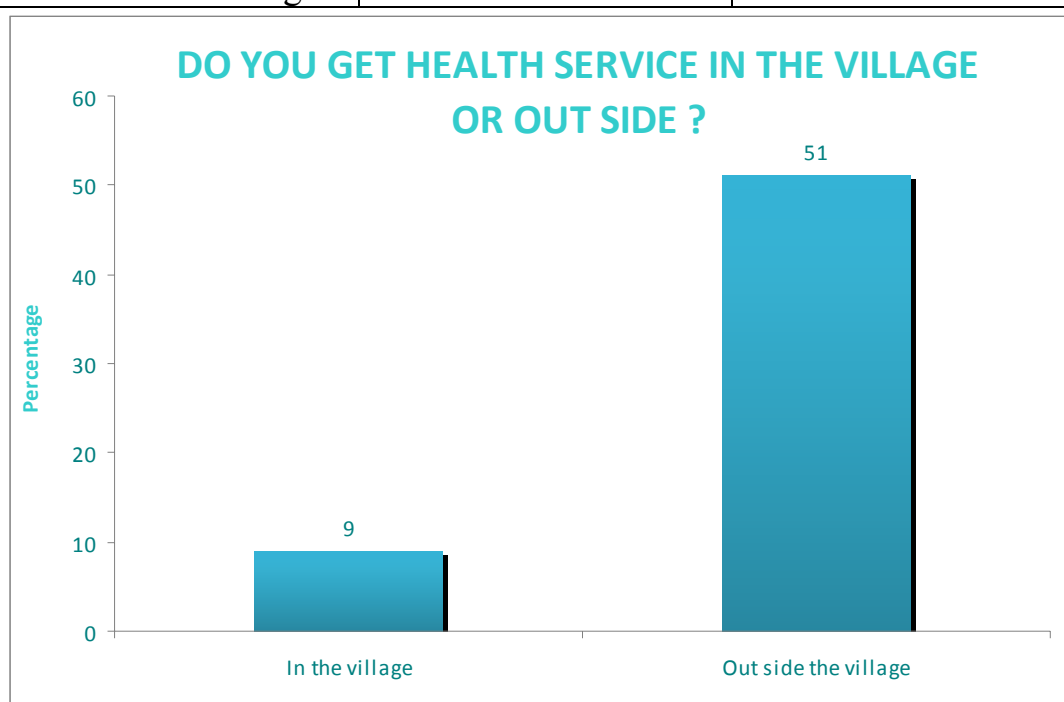
➤ **TO KNOW THE OTHER FACILITIES INSIDE AND OUT  
SIDE THE VILLAGE:**

**Introduction:**

The parents opined that indirect cost incurred on education is high. Children have to travel 10-12 kms in order to go to school as reported in Khumbaria village of Kachchh, which becomes cumbersome. More importantly the boys drop out of school, as the families are so poor that they cannot afford the cost of education. After leaving school they support the family by working as casual and farm labourers. Most important, there is a problem of affordability and a lack of motivation on the part of parents. It is also seen that parents do not consider education as important. In the Surendranagar district it is seen that attendance of children is low as they accompany their parents to the Rann where they are also engaged as salt workers.

**TABLE - 38**  
**DO YOU GET HEALTH SERVICE IN THE VILLAGE OR OUT**  
**SIDE ?**

	Yes	Percentage
In the village	9	9
Out side the village	51	51



Through analysis of table no. 38 we can get information regarding the health services which are made available in the village or outside the village.

Data shows that only 9% of health services are easily approachable as they are inside the village, whereas 51% of health services are situated outside the village.

Thus, it can be clearly started that these salt workers do not have an easy access to health services.

**TABLE - 39**  
**ARE YOU A MEMBER OF ANY WORKERS UNION ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	22	22
No	43	43

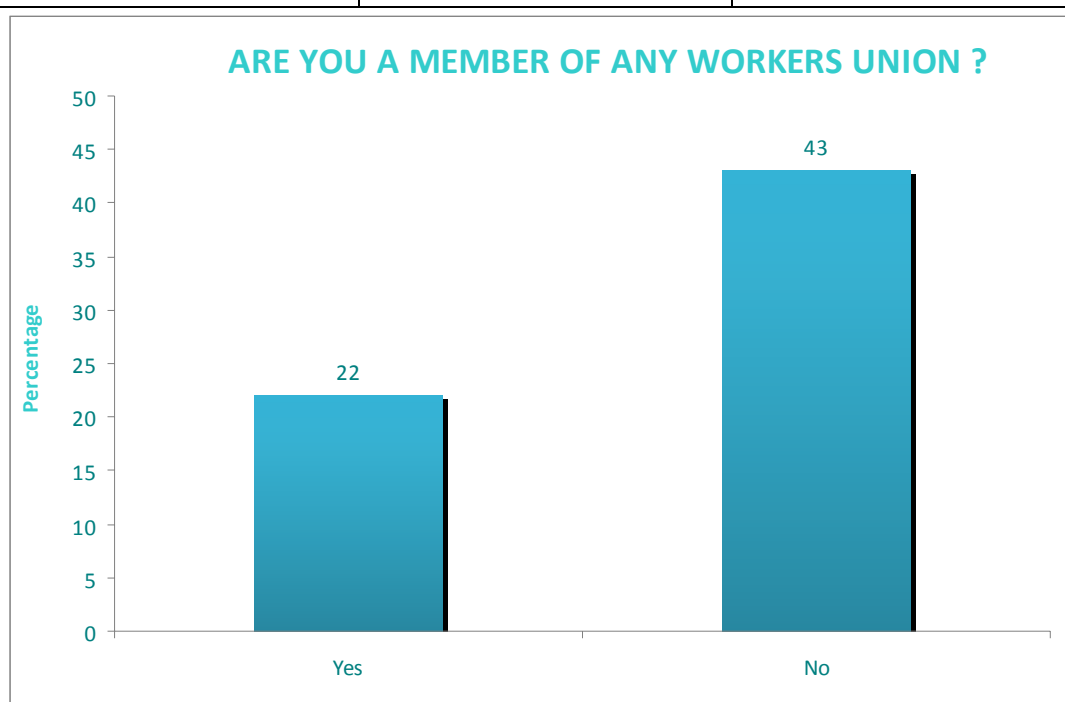


Table no. 39 provides us with the information about the participation of these Agaria's into any source of workers union.

Analysis of the table shows that, 22% of them are members of wakeri union, where 43% are not participating in any workers union.

Thus it can be seen that maximum Agaria people are not part of any union. This may be due to their lack of willingness or unawareness of any such unions.

**TABLE - 40****NAME A FEW WORKERS UNION IN THE VILLAGE ?**

	Yes	Percentage
1	26	26
2	3	3
3	2	2
4	1	1



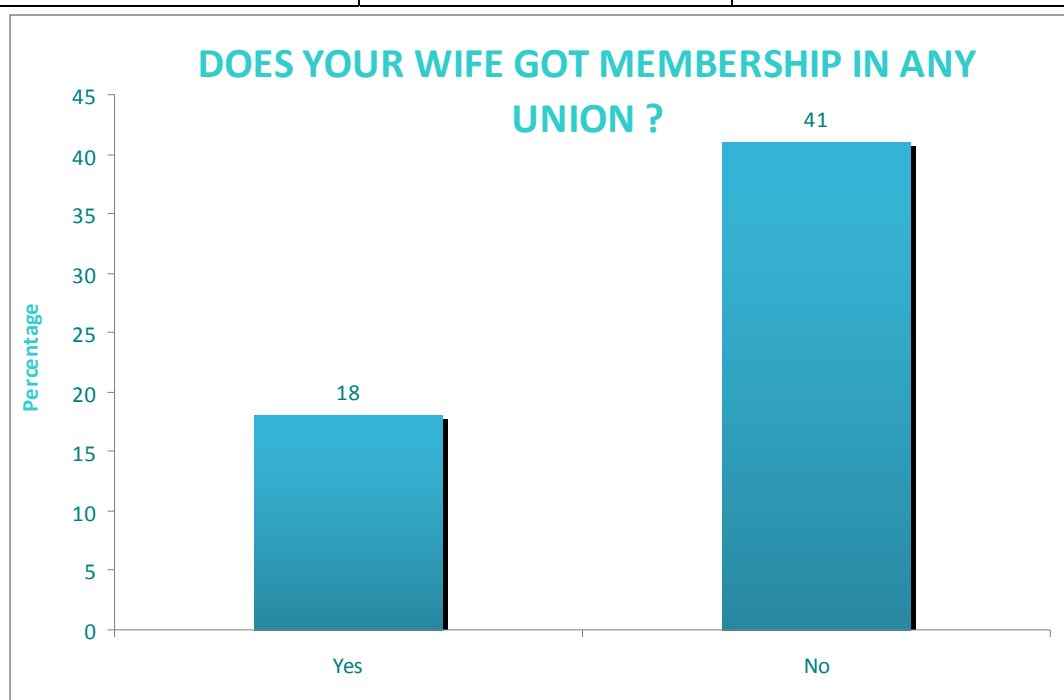
Table no. 40 shows the awareness and knowledge of the Agaria's about the names of the worker union which were present in their village.

26% would name only 1 worker union, 3% were able to name 2 of the workers union, whereas 2% Agaria's could name 3 worker union and only 1% of Agaria's were able to name 4 worker union present in their village.

This shows that minimum number of people were no ware of names of the workers union.

**TABLE - 41****DOES YOUR WIFE GOT MEMBERSHIP IN ANY UNION ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	18	18
No	41	41



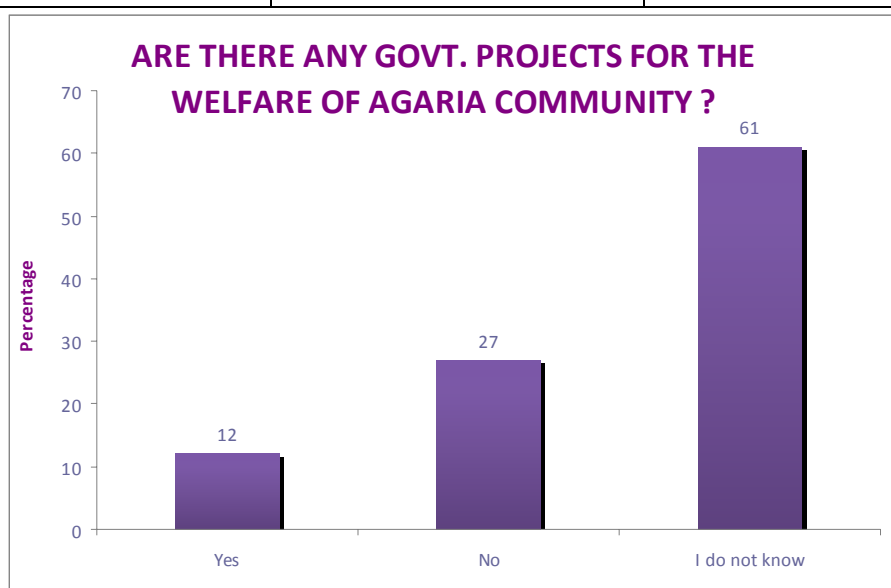
This table gives us the information regarding the participation of the wives of Agaria's in the women union, prevalent in the villages.

18% of the Agaria's replied positively, i.e. their wives were a member of women's worker union, where as 41% of the Agaria's denied as they did not sent their wives or infact allowed their wives to become a member of any such women's union.



**TABLE - 42**  
**ARE THERE ANY GOVT. PROJECTS FOR THE WELFARE OF**  
**AGARIA COMMUNITY?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	12	12
No	27	27
I do not know	61	61



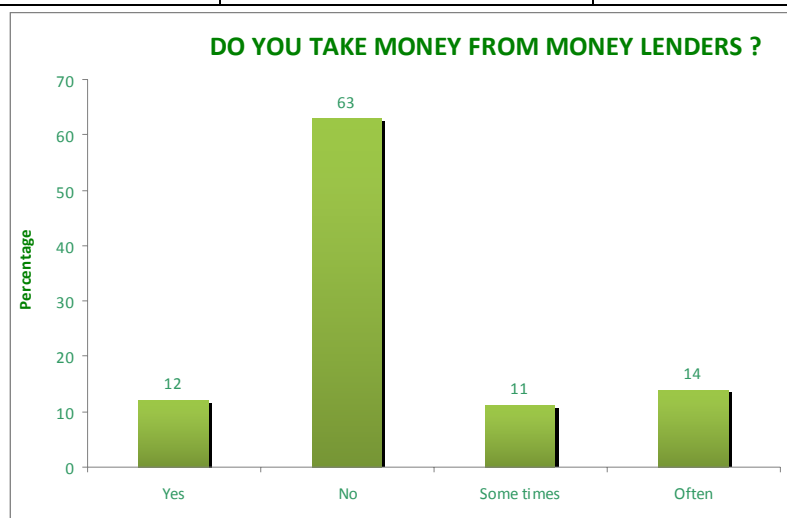
Through the Table No. 42, we can come to know about the projects undertaken by governments in their village to provide welfare and support of this Agaria community.

From the analysis it can be said that 12% of Agaria's do know about such government projects and are being benefited by them, where as 61% of Agaria families do not even know about such government projects, so it can be said that, they are unable to undertake any benefits from these projects, while 27% of Agaria families denied of presence of any government projects for their welfare.

Thus, this analysis shows that a very few percent of Agaria people know about the government welfare projects for them. So, only a few percent of them are benefited by these projects.

**TABLE - 43**  
**DO YOU TAKE MONEY FROM MONEY LENDERS ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	12	12
No	63	63
Some times	11	11
Often	14	14



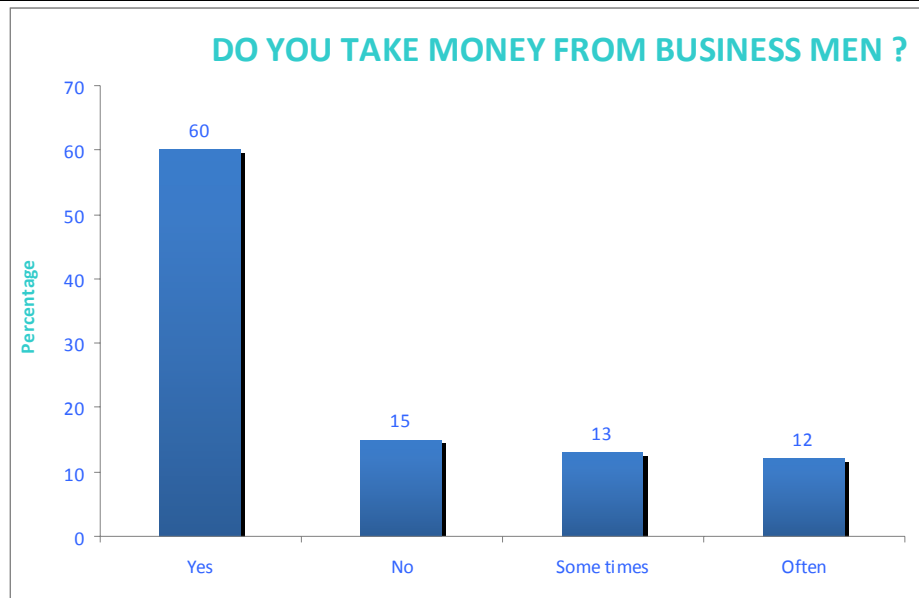
Mainly, due to the geographical, sociological and economical drawbacks of this Agaria community, almost all of the whole community faces financial crisis frequently.

As these communities are wandering communities, and apart from it, their lack of education and other preliminary documentary requirements, they are unable to get loans from banks to subside their financial crunch. So, money lenders are the major source for these people to procure money to meet their emergency needs.

Analysis shows that, 12% of Agaria's borrow money from money lenders, where as 63% of Agaria's do not borrow money from money lenders and 11% of people borrow money from money lenders a very few times, while 14% of Agaria people often borrow money from money lenders.

**TABLE - 44****DO YOU TAKE MONEY FROM BUSINESS MEN ?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	60	60
No	15	15
Some times	13	13
Often	12	12



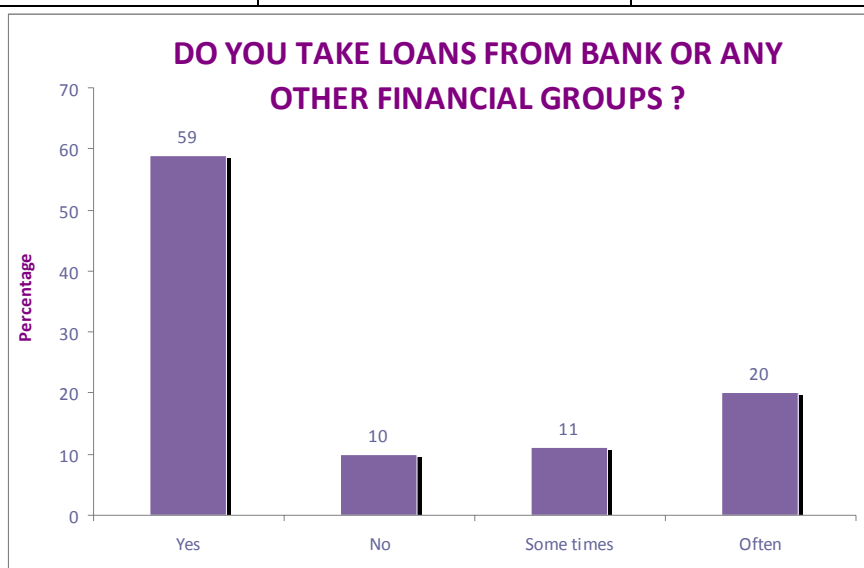
As studied from Table No. 44, we could analyse that the Agaria's have to depend on other sources to meet their financial crunch, whether it may be Bank, money lenders or businessmen.

Table No. 48 shows the data regarding the percentage of Agaria people who borrow money from businessman.

60% of Agaria's borrow money from business man, where as 15% do not borrow money from businessmen. 15% of Agaria's agreed that they sometimes borrow money from businessman, while 12% of them often borrow money from businessmen.

**TABLE - 45**  
**DO YOU TAKE LOANS FROM BANK OR ANY OTHER**  
**FINANCIAL GROUPS?**

	Yes	Percentage
Yes	59	59
No	10	10
Some times	11	11
Often	20	20



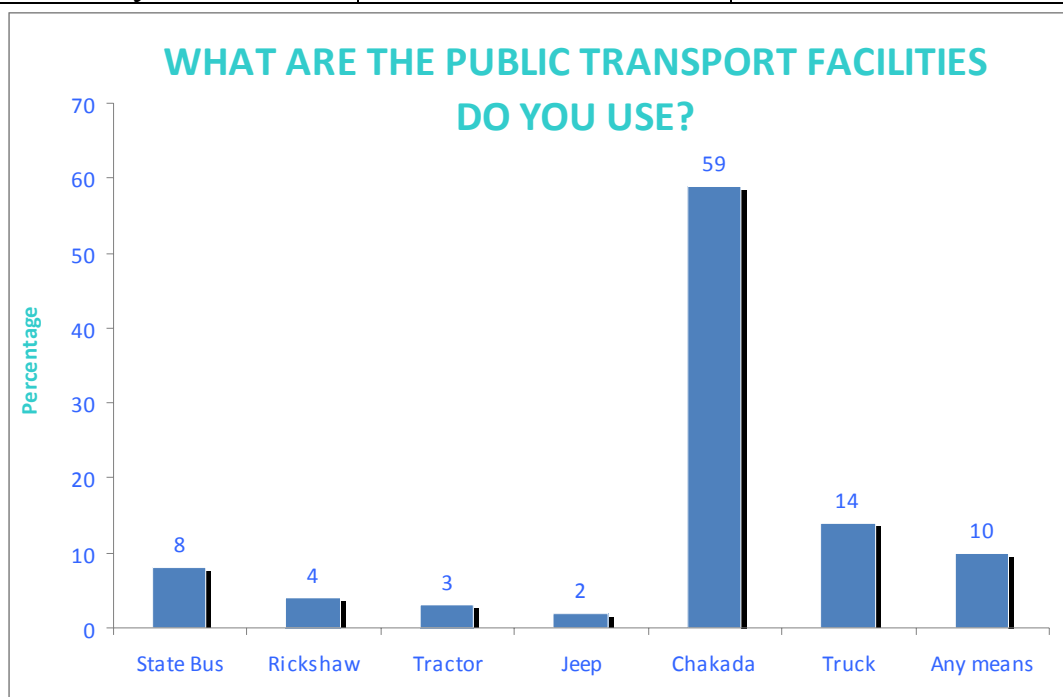
Through table No. 45, we can analyse about the loan taking frequency of Agaria's from banks and other financial groups.

Analysis shows that 59% of Agaria's are taking loans from banks and other financial groups, whereas 10% of Agaria do not take loan from any such source.

Among them, 11% of Agaria, agreed that they sometimes take loan, whereas 20% of Agaria's often take loan from bank and other financial groups.

**TABLE - 46**  
**WHAT ARE THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES DO YOU**  
**USE?**

	Yes	Percentage
State Bus	8	8
Rickshaw	4	4
Tractor	3	3
Jeep	2	2
Chakada	59	59
Truck	14	14
Any means	10	10



As a matter of fact, these Agaria's reside at a distance from their places of work. They need to travel a lot to reach the salt pans to work.

Table No. 46 shows the data regarding the mode of public transports, which they use to reach there work places.

Analysis of the above table shows that 8% of agaria's travel through State Bus, 4% of Agaria's travel through Richshaw, while 3% of Agaria's go to their places of work by a tractor.

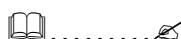
Further analysis shows that 2% of Agaria's travel in a Jeep to reach their work place, where as 59% of Agaria's travel to and fro (i.e. from their home to work place and from work place to home through a chakada.

14% of Agaria's travel by truck, whereas 10% replied they travel through any means they can, which means, they changed their means of transport as per their own situations.

So, it reflects that 'Chakada' is the maximum utilized public transport by the Agaria's.

#### ❖ **CONCLUSION:**

All in all, the Little Rann was a great experience in practically everything there is to see, and it is a wonderful place to stay. Also the discussion researchers had with the priest was really great, as researcher got to know more about the people who inhabit this place that to us seems completely inhabitable and do work that takes so much from them and gives so little. In this questionnaire filled up the salt workers are very helpful for all type of criteria.



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## **Chapter – 5**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

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- ❖ **INTRODUCTION**
- ❖ **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**
  - *General Objective.*
  - *Specific Objectives.*
- ❖ **HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY.**
- ❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE PARENTS IS INTERESTED IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION:**
- ❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE CHILDREN ARE TAKEN TO SALT PAN FOR WORKS:**
- ❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE FACILITIES AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF EDUCATION AT HOME:**
- ❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE OTHER FACILITIES INSIDE AND OUT SIDE THE VILLAGE:**
- ❖ **CONCLUSION:**

## **Chapter – 5**

### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

#### ❖ **INTRODUCTION:**

Agrarian life is a whole culture, not just a way to make a living, and we should seek to protect that culture and make it available to more and more families.

Some people may object that such a program is simply not possible. The family farm cannot be made economically viable in today's world. I am not certain on that point. I do know that most of the billions we spend each year for agricultural subsidies go to support big agribusiness, not family farms. What if we changed that? What if instead of subsidizing factory farming, we provided financial support for people who were trying to start new family farms? Such support should not go on forever, but if it were in the form of a revolving fund, it could help them get started.

This is also a situation where we, as conservatives, need to learn from others. One place to start is with the Amish. The Amish are cultural conservatives.

Beyond the family farm itself, the next conservatism should seek to make the countryside available to as many Americans as possible. The Mennonites have a wonderful program where they bring inner-city children to their farms for part of their summer school vacations. What a tremendous and health-giving change for kids who have never known anything but asphalt and crime! Many cities and towns now have



farmers' markets, where people in the city and the suburbs can buy fresh farm product directly from the farmers. Both the farmers and the city-dwellers benefit.

This is an appeal for support higher education among children of traditional salt workers in Gujarat. Education ratio among traditional salt worker is very low. This is mainly because community migrates along with their families to little Rann of Kutch (mud desert popularly known as LRK) for making salt.

Children help their parents in salt making and gradually turn into a child labour. In order to prevent this situation, we support these children to study in residential schools as well as utilized of government schemes.

The explanations that they involved in salt manufacturing in this area are thousands of Agarias depend on this for their livelihood. These activities have not damaged or caused any danger to the wild life in the LRK nor have they caused any pollution. In fact, the Agarias have provided protection to the wild life around the Rann.

Cohesion has been working with the salt-pan workers of Kutch since 2001. To support the education of children from migrant families, Cohesion has set-up hostels in home villages, where children can stay for 8 months whilst their parents migrate for work. This means children are able to attend their regular village school.

However, many parents still choose to migrate with their families and children. For these families Cohesion has worked with them to set-up a school at the salt-pan site. These schools are affiliated with the

government education system schools in the families' local villages, which mean that their attendance is registered there, and so children are eligible to take government exams and receive official certificates.

Each salt pan school has a single teacher who is trained by Cohesion; preferably someone from the local community is employed. About 30 -40 children attend each school, with ages ranging from 5 to 13 year old. After 13 years old children generally go to work on the salt pans as child labourers and support to his parents for the earning basis.

Currently the schools take place in a single room hut. At the start of each season after building their own homes, the families get together to build their own small school hut, according to their capacity. This is an important activity as many of families may not know each other, and this task gives an opportunity for these families to bond and build a sense of community.

At many times, the discussion became quite intense with people regularly interrupting each other. All those in attendance were after the same goals, yet there are serious disagreements about how to implement those goals. The situation is very complex but Seva Mandir and other NGO's are well on the way to changing the system.

## ❖ **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

### ➤ ***General Objective.***

This research work is focused on the salt workers; who go for their work in desert and remain for a period of six months, isolated from the larger village community. Children are the future of any society or community. Here due to the particular situation the future of a particular

community is seems to be doomed with illiteracy. Thus it becomes the serious social problem to be studied and encountered.

Considering all above facts it seems that as a sociological research work, the social responsibility to do a scientific study on this particular topic concerning the future of a particular social group. So, I would like to do a scientific study with following objectives.

To study the empower of the education system for saltpan workers, coastal farmers, fisher men and other deprived groups living along the bordering villages of Little Rann of Kutch.

- To identify for the quality of education, the existing method of education considering with the living conditions of the people.
- To study and the ups and downs of traditional system of education and bring improvement in the existing system in this context.
- To understand that, how do people look at education system in this particular social context and study, How to bring social transformation through child education.
- To understand the sociological point of view, how does society look at this problem of child education and what do they look for him.
- To studying whether social mobility is a problem or not, for child education.
- To studying that social mobility affect children and the future generation.

➤ ***Specific Objectives***

Salt farming is an on going process, traditionally followed and having minimum technological facilities, in the interior place of Little Rann of Kutch. They remain there, with their family, for the salt farming

season. Such people when they go to the salt farms naturally their children also will have to accompany them, forgoing their schooling. It happens in social mobility too.

- To studying and know the present system of education in little ran of Kutch for the salt-pan workers.
- To evaluate and conclude that the present educational structure and study whether the present system of education brings creative transformation in all levels and economical growth and formation of future generation.
- To studying that propose a new method of education in this context is required.

This place of study is important because of its peculiar character. During the monsoon Little Rann of Kutch becomes a fishing lake and in summer the land turns to be desert for the salt works to prepare for the salt pan. This is also famous for the 'wild ass' sanctuary. There are around 199 villages depending on their livelihood.

#### ❖ **HYPOTHESIS OF STUDY**

The importance of hypothesis lies in its indispensability for any research work. Hypothesis forms the basis of the scientific research work. It makes the research work more specific and to the point that lead towards the destination. It also provides directions, thus a study with proper hypothesis can arrive at right conclusion in the long run of research work. Hypothesis is necessary link between theory and investigations, which lead to discovery of addition knowledge. Keeping in mind the following hypothesis are formulated and its significance level in-order to do in this study.

- It is significant that the fundamental right is essential to all the community for the primary education.
- It is significant that the education system and methodology that is being followed in this area of rural village is similar to that of urban system of education.
- It is significant that the education is not generating creative people and technological advancement in people's livelihood in rural area.
- It is significant that there is no link between people's livelihood and education. Parents are not educated so he is not promoted the education of his children.
- It is significant that Agariya community does not realize the need of education. Children are largely promoted for work with money incentive than backing them to school.

❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE PARENTS IS INTERESTED IN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION:**

- It is clear that inspite of all the physical and financial constraints they realize the importance of education and wish to educate their children.
- Analysis is cleared that majority i.e. 70% of them have not at all attended the school. It reflects that due to social economical and geographical limitations, majority of parents are illiterate.
- The contents of Table no. 3 Most of the parents i.e. 88% are willingness to send their children to school for education.
- This reflects the thinking of parents i.e. 'Agaria', majority of them i.e. 76% are interested to educate only their male child.

- The basic attitude of Agaria parents i.e. 89% towards school education. 89% parents think that school education is good and essential for their child's future.
- Majority i.e. 65% of the Agaria parents are aware about the teachers in the primary school of their village.
- It is pertaining to the fact that inspite of willingness to 87% send their children to school and 13% due to financial and other circumstances they could not educate their children.
- To get the information from parents about the majority i.e. 65% are willingness of their children to gain education by going to school.
- To do the future plan of their children, 42% parents have a future plan for their children.
- Knowledge of the future plan of his children are almost all responders the same i.e. yes, no and do not know.
- Information regarding other studies, courses and activities joined by children of Agaria parents, the maximum number of children are not at all participating in any studies, whereas and activities.
- Majority i.e. 76% Parents are interested to send their boys children outside for special studies.
- To do know the seasonal hostel system available in the village, majority i.e. 62% are unknown about this.
- Maximum number of parents i.e. 51% was unaware of any such kind of facility available in their village.

- Maximum number of parents are either not satisfied with the hostel facilities available, or they may not wish to send their children away from them.
- Mix response regarding the hostel will help their children to study.
- Majority i.e. 56% of parents had never visited and viewed the hostel system.
- Data reflects that majority of the students are not availing the seasonal hostel facility, whereas 84% of students are not availing this facility.
- Majority i.e. 76% parents are willing to send their male child to seasonal hostel.
- Do not have any clear opinion by the parents about their children education can be completed due to hostel facility.

❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE CHILDREN ARE TAKEN TO SALT PAN FOR WORKS:**

- All most of all the parents reflect that they are not happy and satisfy with their job/work and don't want to involve their children in the same work of salt making.
- It is clear that only 31% children are helping their parents for working at salt pans.
- It is clear that children are helping their parents for various kind of work.

- It is clear that young men, young women and children from "Agaria's" family helping them in salt pan.
- Majority i.e. 42% people of the age group from 15 to 20 years are working in salt pan.
- From overall analysis it can be concluded that maximum numbers of Agaria believe that 3 to 6 persons are required to start salt pan initially.
- Overall impression is there maximum 3 labours are required to manage day to day activity of salt pan after it get established.
- It is clear that the all kind of useful and helpful in the salt pan.
- Majority i.e. 40% of them agrees that 5 to 8 working hours are convenient for salt labours.

❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE FACILITIES AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF EDUCATION AT HOME:**

- To getting the news paper, 15% people are at their home and they are reading them too.
- Majority of the people have T.V. at their home as a source of comfort and entertainment.
- The availability and habit of using Radio at home is less.
- The large number of responders are used radio and to listen news and songs.
- In most of the family all members prefers to watch T.V.
- Overall it reflects that almost equal numbers of family members are interested in watching news, films and serials.



- The maximum numbers of persons availing bicycle and motorbike as a transport facility at home.
- It shows that trend to use mobile / cell phone is maximum as a communicating device in comparison with land line phone.
- It can be concluded that maximum numbers of house are facilitate with electricity.
- Overall impression to getting water through the pipe line is the main source of potable water.

❖ **FINDING ABOUT THE OTHER FACILITIES INSIDE AND OUT SIDE THE VILLAGE:**

- It can be clearly stated that these salt workers do not have an easy access to health services in the village.
- It can be seen that maximum Agaria people are not part of any union. This may be due to their lack of willingness or unawareness of any such unions.
- This shows that minimum number of people were now are of names of the workers union.
- This analysis brings to our knowledge, the prevalent gender biased society, their working difference and the low and negligible working atmosphere for women present in the villages.
- It gives regarding the participation of the wives of Agaria's allowed in the women union, prevalent in the villages.

- A very few percent of Agaria people know about the government welfare projects for them. So, only a few percent of them are benefited by these projects.
- Majority i.e. 60% of Agaria people who borrow money from businessman.
- Majority i.e. 59% of Agaria's are not taking loans from banks and other financial groups.
- It reflects that 'Chakada' is the maximum utilized public transport by the Agaria's.

❖ **CONCLUSION:**

All in all, the Little Rann was a great experience in practically everything there is to see, and that it is a wonderful place to stay. Also the discussion researchers had with the priest was really great, as researcher got to know more about the people who inhabit this place that to us seems completely inhabitable and do work that takes so much from them and gives so little. In this questionnaire filled up the salt workers are very helpful for all type of criteria.

Study really helped me not only to know them but being with them was an unforgettable experience in my life.



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## ANNEXURE

To know whether the parent is interested in Children's Education		
1	Do u sent your children in school to study?	Play house
		Nuesery
		Primary school
2	Have u gone to school?	Nuesery school
		Primary school
		High school
3	Are you interested in teaching your children by sending them to schools?	No
		Yes
		No
4	Whom do you want to send in schools and teach?	Girls
		Boys
		Both
5	Is it good to send the children to schools?	Yes
		No
		I do not know
6	Do you know all the teachers of primary school, in your village?	Yes
		No
		A few
7	Do you have children whom you could not educate?	Yes
		No
		Yes
8	Do you think that your children are interested in education?	No
		Yes
		I do not know
9	Do you have any future plans for your children?	Yes
		A little
		No
10	Do you know the future plans of your children?	I do not know
		No
		Yes
11	Do your children go for any other studies, course, activity etc.?	Yes
		No
		Yes
12	Among your children whom do you want to send for other kind of studies?	Girls
		Boys
		Both
13	Do you know about the seasonal hostel system in the village?	Yes
		No
		Yes
14	Since when did the seasonal hostel start functioning in your village?	Yes
		No
		Yes
15	Do you like to sent your children in hostels?	No
		Yes
		No
16	Do you think that this hostel will help your children to study?	May be
		I do not know
		Yes, once
17	Have you ever gone to hostel to see the hostel system?	No, never
		Some times
		Very often
18	Do your children go to seasonal Hostel?	Yes
		No
		Girls
19	Whom do you want to send in seasonal Hostels?	Boys
		Both
		Yes
20	Do you think that because of hostels, children can complet their schooling?	No
		May be
		I do not know

To know whether the children are taken to salt pan for works			
1	Do you want your children to be like you, in the same work (salt-making)?	Yes	
		No	
		Let them decide	
2	Do the children help in your works at salt pan?	Yes	
		A little	
		No	
3	What are the works that children can do in salt pan?	Look after the younger ones	
		Bringing things from market	
		Cooking	
		Helping in shaking the water	
		To operate the water system	
		To keep a watch of things at home	
4	Who are more helpful in your works, in salt pan?	To collect the salt	
		Boys	
		Girls	
5	Do you involve your family members in the salt pan?	Both	
		Mother	
		Young Men	
		Young women	
6	At what age people can work in the salt pan?	Children	
		5 to 10	
		10 to 15	
		15 to 20	
7	How many people are need to make a salt pan in the beginning?	20 above	
		1 to 3	
		3 to 6	
		6 to 10	
8	After the preparation of salt pan how many people are to be there for the day today works?	More than 10	
		1 to 3	
		3 to 6	
9	Who is more helpful in the salt pan?	More than 6	
		Woman	
		Men	
		Both	
10	How many hours does a person work in a day, in salt pan?	Children	
		3 to 5	
		5 to 8	
		8 to 10	
		More than 10	



To know the Facilities and the atmosphere of education at home		
1	Do you have news paper at home and are you interested in Reading news paper?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes I read <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I do not know to read
2	What are the electronic things you have at home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> T.V <input type="checkbox"/> Iron box <input type="checkbox"/> Fridge <input type="checkbox"/> Other items <input type="checkbox"/> No
3	Do you have a radio and who Listens Radio mostly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Girls <input type="checkbox"/> Boys <input type="checkbox"/> All <input type="checkbox"/> No
4	What do you listen in Radio?	<input type="checkbox"/> News <input type="checkbox"/> Film songs <input type="checkbox"/> Discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Cricket commentary
5	Who mostly watches T.V?	<input type="checkbox"/> Father <input type="checkbox"/> Mother <input type="checkbox"/> Girls <input type="checkbox"/> Boys <input type="checkbox"/> All
6	What do you watch in T.V?	<input type="checkbox"/> News <input type="checkbox"/> Film songs <input type="checkbox"/> Discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Films <input type="checkbox"/> Village matters <input type="checkbox"/> Serials <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainments <input type="checkbox"/> Cricket
7	What do you have at home for transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Not at home <input type="checkbox"/> Bullock cart <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle <input type="checkbox"/> Motor bike <input type="checkbox"/> Rickshaw <input type="checkbox"/> Chakada <input type="checkbox"/> Tractor <input type="checkbox"/> Jeep <input type="checkbox"/> Car <input type="checkbox"/> Other means
8	What is your communication system at home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile <input type="checkbox"/> Land line
9	Do you have Electricity at home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
10	What are the facilities and means for water?	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipe line <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Hand pump <input type="checkbox"/> Other means <input type="checkbox"/> Carry from elsewhere

## To know the other facilities inside and out side the village

1	Do you get Health service in the village or out side?	In the village	
		Out side the village	
2	Are you a member of any workers union?	Yes	
		No	
3	Name a few workers union in the village?	1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
4	Name a few woman workers union in the village?	1	
		2	
		3	
		4	
5	Does your wife got membership in any union?	Yes	
		No	
6	Are there any Govt. projects for the welfare of Agaria community?	Yes	
		No	
		I do not know	
7	Do you Take money from money lenders?	Yes	
		No	
		Some times	
		Often	
8	Do you take money from business men?	Yes	
		No	
		Some times	
		Often	
9	Do you Take loans from bank or any other financial groups?	Yes	
		No	
		Some times	
		Often	
10	What are the Public transport facilities do you use?	State bus	
		Rickshaw	
		Tractor	
		Jeep	
		Chakada	
		Truck	
		Any means	