

BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: Nutrition and Demography: An Anthropological Study on the Kondh of Odisha

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This volume, i.e., “Nutrition and Demography: An Anthropological Study on the Kondh of Odisha”, facilitated a new dimension in the area of the nutritional status of the Kondh population. The researcher equally focussed on two aspects, i.e., the biological and social-cultural life of Kondh of Ganjam district, Odisha. This book analysed the demographic profile of study populations as well as their nutritional status. This book really appealing the researcher’s interest towards further study about the nutritional status and demographic features of tribal people. The authors dedicated this book to renowned Prof. L.K. Mahapatra. In this book, the foreword part has written by an eminent Anthropologist and administrator, Prof. (Dr.) A.B. Ota, IAS.

The book content is divided into seven chapters, i.e., introduction, socio-economic demographic features, nutritional status, fertility behaviour, family planning and composition, health and mortality, and conclusion. The authors clearly discussed the nutritional status, demography, and health status with the lifestyle pattern of Kondh of the Ganjam region of Odisha. The study covered seven objectives, which really give meaning to the book. The authors selected 564 households from the roadside of Kondh village and 451

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households from the interior pocket of Kondh village. They selected 30% of households from each pocket to collect information on family diet patterns and nutritional anthropometry. The researcher also specified the age group between 15-49 years for the collection of data on nutritional anthropometry. The researchers used the household interview method for the collection of data on demographic features and observation and the interview method for nutritional anthropometry. In the dietary survey, the researcher's collected very crucial data on food habits, attitudes, consumption units, daily consumption etc. The researchers used two indicators, i.e., weight for height and weight for age, for the collection of data on nutritional anthropometry.

The authors used Swaminathan's adult consumption unit coefficient for calculating consumption units. It was found that the average family consumption unit was 4.77 in the case of roadside and 4.47 in the case of interior Kondh. Kondh mostly intakes cereals constituting 87% of calorie intake. As nutrition level has direct proportionate to the quality and quantity of food consumed by an individual. It was found that for roadside Kondh daily intake was 1890 calories and for interior Kondh daily intake was 1730 calories. It shows that the situation of both the Kondh was insufficient as the standard calorie is 2400 calories according to ICMR. It has an impact on their health.

The authors adopted two factors for calculating the national status of adults, i.e., weight for height and age. In the case of roadside Kondh, the mean height of the adult male was 158.85 cm, and the interior was 158.75 cm, whereas the mean height of the roadside Kondh female was 150.57 cm and the interior female was 147.91 cm. Males were found normal (+1 and -1 grades as normal), and females were found underweight (-3 and -2). Taking into consideration the weight for age, the maximum numbers of males and females had a normal range bit roadside and interior. Roadside Kondh had a better status in comparison to the interior in both grades, such as weight for height and weight for age. Women were found underweight in both cases, but the whole roadside Kondh was better than the interior one.

Fertility behaviour was studied in chapter four. The study shows that the average age of marriage among roadside and interior Kondh was 17 and 16 years. And the average age of both roadside and interior Kondh women was 19 and 18. The picture of age at marriage and first childbirth was 1.81 and 1.87 for roadside and interior Kondh women, respectively. Taking into

consideration the age at last birth among roadside and interior Kondh, it was found that about 39% of roadside Kondh had last birth between 30-34, and 42% of the interior had last birth between 35-39, respectively. The average ages at last birth were 37.02 in the case of roadside and 37.40 in the case of interior Kondh. The scenario was higher compared to women of Odisha, which is 31 years old. It was found that among Kondh, the acceptance of birth control was low. The study shows that all couples had three children on average, which came under a higher fertility rate than the average population of the state.

Statistical data on nutrition and fertility in the study area indirectly contribute to perpetuating poverty and malnutrition, consequently leading to severe health problems in the sections of Kondh in the study area. According to the family composition, the roadside Kondh has four surviving children, and the interior Kondh has five. In the case of preferred sex composition, most people from both sections prefer male children. Almost all roadside Kondh would rather seek advice from a private allopathic doctor, whereas an enormous proportion of interior Kondh is preferred to go to a tribal medicine man of their locality or follow traditional ways of treatment patterns.

Due to the fact that the present empirical study was conducted in tribal areas of Ganjam, the result may be useful for the general welfare of those areas, as well as for similar tribal areas in other districts of Odisha.

This book will definitely be considered a pathway in the field of nutrition. The authors cover substantial aspects related to nutrition. Researchers who are doing their study on health can also prefer this book as a reference.