



Malnutrition Among Tribal Communities in Gadchiroli District (A Study Related to Kurkheda Taluka.)

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ABSTRACT

Malnutrition is a global problem. Malnutrition of children is still a serious issue in a developing country like India. Even today malnutrition, unemployment & poverty such a type of social problem spread in our society. There is a need to take concrete steps to reduce malnutrition by the government mechanisms like Gramsevak, primary health center, social worker and NGOs. The government is striving hard for reduction in malnutrition but these schemes are not effectively implemented. But due to lack of ignorance, indecision, traditions, poverty, unemployment, lack of adequate habits of the community etc. Malnutrition among tribal children does not seem to be decreasing.

Keywords: Malnutrition, Child, Tribal Communities.

I. INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition in children is a national stigma. Today's children are the future pillar of the Nation. The future of the country lies in the hands of children. In this way today's children should be healthy; child's malnutrition is a loss to the national human wealth. The problem of malnutrition among tribal communities is horrific. To fulfill Dr. APJ Kalam's dream of India to be a financial superpower by 2020, then it is necessary to overcome the problem of malnutrition immediately.

Child rearing means the best nutrition, all-round development and providing them an eco-friendly atmosphere. But in today's nuclear family system affects the child development and its adverse effects on their childhood. Tribal society is also facing the same problems. People of tribal communities migrate one place to another place for getting employment, therefore they don't get time to pay attention to their child. When their parents leave their homes for work every day, their children become orphans and remain homeless even after their home and parents. In the same way, the ignorance, illiteracy, superstition, unbalanced diet, lack of medical services, lack of communication facilities, tribal children are facing a problem of malnutrition. Government schemes are ready for a dozen but effective

implementation of the schemes is not in coordination with government departments. According to the World Health Organization, "Health is the birth right of every individual and all government agencies must save this claim". But in tribal society, B. N. Tandan's observation shows that malnutrition is high. The number of malnutrition in children between the ages of 01 to 03 was the highest. All tribal children have very high malnutrition and 14% of tribal children are severely malnourished, this is twice the number of children in rural Maharashtra.

Objectives of study:

- 1) To study the geographical condition of Kurkheda Taluka in Gadchiroli district.
- 2) To study the Economic and Cultural problem of the Kurkheda Taluka.
- 3) To know the relationship between mother's literacy and malnutrition.
- 4) To know the relationship between child's supplementary food and malnutrition.

Hypothesis:

- 1) Resident area of tribal people affects children's physical development.
- 2) The social condition of tribal society has a high level of poverty, unemployment, superstition, customs, tradition and backward social situation.

- 3) Correlation of Mother's illiteracy and child malnutrition is found.
- 4) Child malnutrition appears because children do not get supplementary feeding at the right age and at proper time.

Method of study:

The villages are chosen by random sample method. A family of 0 to 5 years aged children were studied by the schedule research method.

Tools of Research:

Weighting machine and Growth Charts were used to verify the age and weight of the children is selected as samples.

Analysis of Data:

Maharashtra state is a land of the valleys. Gadchiroli district is fourth from Maharashtra in the size but in terms of population it is smallest in Maharashtra. The tribes like Gond, Rajgond, Madiya and Kanwar are predominantly occupied. Most of the of tribal people live in the small villages. In the case of tribal population India is a second largest country in the world. Tribal community live forest far away from the developed community or advance community.

Expansion of Kurkheda Taluka is 1495.97 sq. km. and whole area is rural. As a result there is a little scope for agricultural development due to hilly and sloppy areas. This areas better than urban area in terms of

environment but there are no roads to reach to the village. India has secured the place in world's first ten countries in terms of technology but tribal society is still far away from this development. There are many schemes generated by the government for tribal areas but in reality is that, these schemes are not effectively implemented because there is no co-ordination with the government department with tribals community. Tribal peoples have very little agricultural land, therefore they only depend on the forest and natural resources like gum, mushy flowers etc. but the various from one place restrictions are imposed to collect such forest resources by the forest officers Hence they migrate from one place to other . The impact of such situation is directly on the health and well-being of the tribal children and it creates a problem of malnutrition. The proper and pure drinking water system is not available on such scattered small villages. A result, drinking water contaminated by river, nalla often suffers serious illness. Tribal children do not get access to medical facilities because of unavailability of Hospitals , expert Medical officers and Doctors. Expert Doctors are trying to avoid working in remote areas. It was also noticed from the actual survey that, there are a lot of errors in the supply of food grains from government. The Tribal people have more faith in bhagat instead of doctors. Malnutrition among tribal children is seem due to poverty, unemployment, ignorance, superstition, lack of medical facilities, and in appropriate implementation of Government welfare schemes.

Table 1. Co-relation between Tribal Mother's Education and Malnutrition of their Children; Total count - 250

| Education of Mother | Malnutrition | Percentage | Normal | Percentage | Total | Total percentage |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------|------------|-------|------------------|
| Yes | 51 | 37.50% | 61 | 45.52% | 112 | 44.8% |
| No | 85 | 62.50% | 53 | 30.55% | 138 | 55.20% |
| Total | 136 | 100% | 134 | 100% | 250 | 100% |

While learning / study about tribal mother's education and malnutrition it was found from the actual survey that, 138 (55.30%) mothers of children are uneducated, among them 85(62.50%) of mothers are malnourished children's mothers. While interviewing then, it was found that they were depressed about childcare, rearing and feeding. Breast-feeding immediately after birth, breast feeding 5 to 6 times in a day and cleanliness does not seem very aware because of superstition, customs

and tradition. This shows lack of clarity on diet, water and health. Instead of Medical check-up of the children, they believe on various superstitious things like 'Bhagat', 'Ganda', 'Taet' etc. Awareness is not seen by the ignorance and illiteracy in taking advantages of the schemes available in Anganwadi and primary Health centres. This has adverse result in child development and health of a child. This lead to the malnutrition among the Tribal children.

Table-2. Actual age of child feeding supplement food

| Supplement food age in Months | Malnourished | Percentage | Normal | Percentage | Total | Total Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| 6 to 7 | 54 | 39.71% | 66 | 57.89% | 120 | 48.00 |
| 8 to 9 | 80 | 58.82% | 42 | 36.84% | 122 | 48.06 |
| 10 to 12 | 09 | 01.47% | 06 | 5.26% | 08 | 3.20 |
| Total | 136 | 100 | 114 | 100 | 250 | 100 |

After four to five months, the food given to the baby to eat is called supplementary food. While taking information about providing supplementary feed to baby of tribal communities it was observed that children who belong to 6 to 7 month are 120 (48.00%), age of 8 to 9 months children are 122(48.06%), age group of 10 to 12 month children are 08(3.20%) Among these age groups, 54(39.71%) malnourished children were found in 6 to 7 month, 80(58.82%) children of 8 to 9 months babies have been found to be malnourished, and 9(1.47%) children who belong to 10 to 12 month's age group have been found to be malnourished.

According to The Breast Feeding Promotion Network of India report in rural areas.,the child need supplementary feed from the age of 4 to 6 months and they need breastfeeding immediately after birth, but it was observed from a direct interview of tribal communities in Kurkheda Taluka of Gadchiroli district that, the tribal women do not know the importance of chewing (cheek) milk and , mothers do not breastfeeding immediately after birth, upto 6 month of birth; baby is not seen giving supplementary food. On the other hand,superstition were found in them like it is sticky, it is hard to digest and it is stick to intestinal and cause to indigestion, such type of misunderstanding found in tribal mothers. Dietary supplements are not given regularly to children because the mothers are busy throughout a day in her work. There is no awareness of supplement diet. It is found that tribal mothers feeding to their child from birth after 8-9 month and then supplementary food provided to their child. In that situation they could not provide food according to their child's age. According to their traditions, poverty and customs they provide food to their child which cooked for all. While providing supplements food it does not maintain poultry and water cleanliness. In such cases, due to insufficient diet and dysfunction, malnutrition is found in tribal children.

II. CONCLUSION

- 1) Since tribal families are living in more remote areas, tribal children are deprived from various facilities.
- 2) Tribal society is economically weak and they cannot fulfil their needs of their children's diet.
- 3) Malnutrition status is found in tribal children due to lack of education in tribal mother.
- 4) Tradition, custom ,superstition in Tribal communities' and lack of Medical facilities leads to malnutrition among the children

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) To providing road and communication facilities to each remote Tribal villages.
- 2) To providing employment or make available various resources of employment for tribal people throughout the year.
- 3) To literate or educate the tribal mothers.
- 4) Extensive education by providing comprehensive health information and eliminating superstitions and malpractices
- 5) Like polio eradication campaign, malnutrition eradication campaign should be implemented.

IV. REFERENCES

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