

**Tribal Society**  
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**Abstract**

*Health is the criteria of national progress. Health is the basic element of national progress in any area. It is the measure of a nation's power and production capacity. Health deficiencies affect not only national production but also efficiency of any nation. Health is not only an absence of disease but also a person's adjustment with physical and social external atmosphere. Health is an effective condition of a balanced development and welfare of a person's physical and mental efficiencies. So health should be given equal status in social, economic, religious, cultural and educational factors (Macwan, 2006 : 66). An ancient proverb "Health is wealth" is a beautiful slogan presenting our health oriented ideology. In the words of Pancholi (2002 : 66), "A person succeeds in performing his role in his personal life as well as in his dealings with society only when his physical and mental condition is fine. Social condition, awareness, geographical and cultural atmosphere are the factors that affect human life to some extent.*

Tribal community has lagged behind in the development in the comparison of a village and a town. The tribal community has dwelt in the mountains and forests for the years and has been detached of the developed community. There have been some challenges of residential facilities, pure drinking water and anti - disease solutions for the tribal community. Due to less income, they cannot get nutritional food and suffer from respiratory system related diseases, digestive system related diseases and skin diseases. Medical facilities are rarely found in the tribal areas. They can hardly reach to city hospitals in illness and cannot afford medicinal expenditure. Consequently, they move to traditional health treatment and therapy. So, here it's essential to analyze social status, traditional views and beliefs of the tribals to define the concept of 'Tribal Health Status'. In a tribal community, the curses of spiritual power and other unnatural power are believed to be a biological base of any disease. So, the diseases are cured on the basis of not only physical symptoms but also on the basis of traditional magic, Bhagat - Bhuva, incantation, grain based prediction, taking religious vow, which are found in tribal community even today.

Presently, the government is taking care of the health of public at large. Health related facilities are being set up more and more at district and block level. Government is spending a very large amount for maintaining health related facilities, but the villages are not being benefitted with the health related various schemes and services due to some unknown reasons. So, the level of disease is increasing gradually among the village people. Health is a very complex issue of the tribal area especially in the months of summer and monsoon when the numbers of disease are being found to be increasing.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To get the information about the tribal's domestic, physical, economical and educational background.
- To get the information about the relation between tribal's routine habits and their health.
- To get the information about tribal's traditional health related beliefs and available modern health facilities.
- To get the information about the herbs found in tribal area and their use.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Tribal society as an inevitable part of Indian society has its unique identification at social - cultural level. So many factors have affected the tribal society since pre - independence. After independence, various development schemes have accelerated the economical development and educational progress of the tribal. In addition to this, the tribal have become conscious in transportation, industrialization, external affairs and various processes.

- What care do the tribal of Dang district take for their primary health?
- What is the level of tribal people believing in necromancer?
- In which type of illnesses do the tribal use herbs at present?

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

August Comte, the father of sociology says that the scientific method is a systematic *modus operandi* that depends mainly on observation, examination, experimentation and classification. So, the researcher has to work systematically from the beginning to end while conducting scientific study of social incidents.

Considering the topic of research, the researcher has to use an appropriate scientific method to obtain the required data so that empirical, genuine and factual knowledge can be achieved. Research related knowledge can be obtained only by the means of scientific method. Thus, scientific method is the mode leading to door of reality. The selection of proper method precludes the wastage of time, energy and money. In the present era of science, innumerable scientific methods have been developed to conduct an actual study of social incidents. In a research work, the researcher has to take a special care while selecting a scientific method suitable to his study so that reliable and valid data can be obtained by the means of an appropriate method.

The present study was mainly conducted taking care of the tribal health status of Dang district. The present study was entirely relied on field work so the researcher made a use of field work based sociological and ethnocentric methods like interview, interview schedule, case study, observation schedule

- **Information Sources:**

In a sociological research, data or information can be obtained through two types of sources namely primary source and secondary source. The researcher has used both types of sources in the present study.

- **Secondary Sources:**

When the data or information collected for other purpose is used in research work is called the data obtained by the means of secondary source. In addition to this, the data available in collected form in advance is also called 'secondary data'. Secondary sources are available in written form. In a research study, this source proves very significant for the researcher as it helps a lot from the selection of research problem to framing a provisional outline as well as in analyzing the research problem.

- **Primary Sources:**

The data collected by the researcher itself is called 'primary data.' The researcher has to be dependent on field work to collect primary data. It becomes necessary to check the reliability and validity of the data obtained through written sources. It is also necessary to get some specific type of data in the context of subject of the study. For this purpose, the scientific studies expect the researcher to approach the study area, check personally, collect data by the means of field - work and utilize the primary sources.

Looking at the nature of present study, the researcher used interview method, interview schedule, observation schedule, case study and historical method to obtain the primary data.

- **Interview Method :**

An interview method is more popular and highly well - known method to collect factual data in the area of research. Interview schedule helps to collect qualitative data. It was only by applying interview method, the researcher could know about the respondents' mentality, emotions, thoughts and views. Thus, interview method is the reliable method to collect original facts about the research study. In an interview method, the researcher has to contact the respondent personally and to collect data by the means of questioning and discussing.

- **Interview Schedule:**

Interview schedule is the register made up of questions framed serially in advance in the context of research problem. In an interview schedule, a schedule of study related questions is prepared. Here the researcher himself asks questions to the respondents and the answers of the respondents are noted down in the interview schedule.

In the present study, the interview schedule proved very useful and functional for the researcher as most of the respondents under study had acquired lower education and it could not have been possible for them

to respond to a questionnaire. By using interview schedule in the present study, the researcher obtained the data related to respondents' age, gender, profession, income, religion, education etc.

- **Observation:**

Observation is a personal experience felt by sensory organs. Observation method is considered a very crucial means of collecting data in a tribal area. Observation method is very useful in getting information related to tribal's dwelling, cleanliness and religious rites carried out by Bhagat - Bhuva at the time of illness.

- **Case Study Method:**

In a sociological study, there comes a stage when respondents feel hesitation in speaking about something in general. In such a circumstance, case study method proves very crucial. In the present study, the researcher had also used a case study method. During his visit with respondents, the researcher tried to discuss so many things with the respondents in isolation and obtained data by the means of oral discussion.

Throughout the discussion with respondents, the researcher obtained data related to respondent's life, types of diseases found in them, the efforts made by them to get rid of those diseases and so on.

- **Historical Method:**

Historical method is a basic method used for sociological studies. Through this method, the available historical information is used by the researcher. In the present study, the researcher used the historical method to get the information about origin of health science and various health treatment methods.

- **SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:**

Researcher has to decide the research area after selecting the research topic. From the entire research area, the sample of the study is selected. In the present study, it was not possible for the researcher to study all the samples of the research area in the context of objectives of the study, time limit and the financial factors. So, the researcher used 'Random Sampling Method' of 'Probability Sampling Method' to select the sample for the present study. To select the villages of the respondents, the total population of 10 villages of Dang district were classified into five division as under :

### **Respondents**

From all the families of the mentioned 10 villages, 15 % of the families leading to total 50 respondents were selected as sample in the present study.

- **AREA OF THE STUDY:**

Dang district was selected to conduct the present study. Among all the districts of Gujarat State, Dang district is the only district that bears 94 % tribal population. According to Human Resource Report of Dang district, Dang district stands last in the context of health among all the districts of Gujarat State. So, the researcher thought it timely to conduct a study on prevailing health status of the tribal in Dang district and decided to select the prescribed area to undertake the present study.

- **DATA COLLECTION:**

Various types of techniques are used to collect data for sociological research studies. As the chief objective of the present study was to know about the prevailing health status of the tribal, the researcher made a use of more than one research techniques in the present study to collect data such as interview, interview schedule, case study, observation schedule and historical method

- **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:**

The present study was about the tribal health status of Dang district. In the present study, the researcher made an attempt to find out the correlation between tribal's general habits and their health, traditional health treatment methods adopted by the tribal, use of available modern health facilities by the tribal and traditional herbal knowledge of the tribal. The present study describes the tribal health status by the means of introductory, explanatory and practical approach from sociological point of view. The data obtained throughout the study were based on field - work at large. The nature of the present study was mainly descriptive. The chief findings of the present study were as under:

In the present study, 90 % of the respondents had separate family. 50 % of the respondents were of 31 to 45 age group. 97 % of the respondents were married. 97 % of the respondents were male. The highest numbers of the respondents were of Konkani caste i.e. 86 % while the lowest numbers of the respondents were

of Varli, Kathodi and Gamit tribes i.e. 4 %. In the context of religion, 88 % of the respondents were Hindu and 12 % of the respondents were Christian.

In the context of education of the respondents, 45 % of the respondents had completed primary education, 33 % of the respondents had completed secondary and higher secondary education, 9 % of the respondents had completed higher education while 13 % of the respondents were illiterate. 65 % of the respondents were associated with agriculture. Only 1 % of the respondents were doing job. In the context of income, the annual income of 43 % of the respondents was from 11 to 15 thousand which was highest among the income of all the respondents.

Among all the respondents, 98 % of the respondents had their own house wherein 49 % of the houses were raw houses, 38 % of the houses were partially raw houses and 13 % of the houses were concrete houses which were least among the houses of all the respondents. Among all the respondents, most of the respondents got their houses constructed on their own without taking the help of government while 9 % of the respondents got their houses constructed with the help of government aid.

In the context of water facility, the respondents responded to have 100 % water facilities. 60 % of the respondents were getting water from hand pump while 3 %, 4 % and 5 % of the respondents were getting water respectively from water tap, river and stream which show the remarkable improvement came into water facility related condition. 75 % of the respondents did not have bathroom facility to take bath and used raw bathroom made up of jute bags or bamboo sticks. Only 25 % of the respondents had bathroom facility. 72 % of the respondents used open area for latrine while only 28 % of the respondents had raw or concrete latrine facility. All the people were found to be getting electricity facility. 98 % of the people used firewood as a fuel while only 2 % of the people used gas as a fuel. Even though the government has provided gas connection facility to all the B.P.L. card holders, very few people were found to be using gas facility due to fear. In the context of natural air and light as well as cleanliness facility of the houses of respondents, all (100 %) the houses were found to have enough windows and doors for natural air and light circulation which shows the change arrived in the latest housing structure.

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