

A Case Study of Demographic Profile of Tribals in Gondia District

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Abstract

Tribals have lived in segregation for centuries. They had constrained contact with other social orders. Social researchers have examined broadly the social and financial life of the tribals. However, small endeavor has been made to consider the tribals' statistic circumstance. Recently in any case, there is a developing stretch on considering populace by locales and ethnic groups. Such studies will no doubt help the academicians and the policy planners in formulating development programmes to improve the quality of life of these communities, especially of those who are at the lower stage of development. In the present paper, an endeavor has been made to delineate the populace profile of plan tribe populace of Gondia area of Maharashtra, India. It is clear from the name of the district itself that the major community inhabiting from the past was Gond and the region was ruled by Gond Kingdom. At that time larger part of the locale was secured with thick woodland and local populace was basically Gond tribe. This study highlights various demographic aspects such as population distribution, literacy patterns, occupational structure, and socio-economic conditions of the Gondia tribal community. By analyzing these factors, the paper aims to provide deeper insights into their present living standards, challenges, and developmental needs. Such an understanding will not only enrich academic knowledge but also serve as a useful tool for policymakers to design effective welfare measures and sustainable development strategies tailored for the tribal population of the district.

Keywords: Tribal, demography, kingdom, social, Gond kingdom

INTRODUCTION

Tribals for centuries lived in separation and had constrained contact with other social orders. Social researchers have considered broadly the social and financial life of the tribals. But small endeavor has been made to think about the tribals' statistic circumstances. Recently in any case, there is a developing push on examining populace by locales and ethnic bunches. Such studies will offer assistance to the academicians and the programme planners in defining advancement programmes to improve the quality of life of these communities, particularly of those who are at the lower stage of improvement. In the present paper, an endeavor has been made to delineate the populace profile of plan tribe populace of Gondia region of Maharashtra, India. As the name of the locale suggest, the major community

restraining from the past was Gond and the locale was ruled by Gond kingdom. That time larger part of the locale was secured with thick woodland and local populace was basically Gond tribe [1–3].

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Profile of the District

Gondia area is the eastern region of Maharashtra comprising of eight *tahsils*. They are Gondia, Tirora, Amgaon, Goregaon, Salekasa, Sadak Arjuni, Deori, and Mor. Arjuni. The district is located on 20°39' N to 21°38' N and 69°27' E to 80°45' E. As per the census of 2001, the total population of the district was 1200707 out of which

598834 were male and 601873 were female. From total population of the district, 1057276 were inhabiting in village comprising of 88% of the total population while 143831 in urban areas that is, only 12% of the overall population. Gondia *tahsil* and Tirora *tahsil* were the two urban populace. In the country regions, the population consisted of 526,022 males and 531,254 females, making a total of 1,057,276. In the urban areas, there were 72,812 males and 70,619 females, with a total of 143,431. Altogether, the combined population stood at 1,200,707 (Figure 1).

Distribution of Population in the District

According to census 2001, total population of the district was 1200707 while it was 1133069 in the census year 1991. In the year 2001, lowest and second-lowest population group was enumerated as 77690 persons and 102093 persons in the Salekasa *tahsil* and Deori *tahsil*, respectively. Gondia *tahsil* having 371746 persons constituted about 31% of the district population and Tirora *tahsil* constituted about 14% of the district population [4, 5].

Distribution of Tribal Population

In the 2001 census, 196455 tribals resided in the district comprising about 17% of the total district population. Out of the overall tribal populace of the locale, pre-prevailing ranges of the tribal bunches were possessed in Deori *tahsil* with the largest group of 49647 (24.40% of the total *tahsil* population) persons. The second highest were those of Sadak Arjuni *tahsil* (20%), followed by Arjuni Morgaon *tahsil* (16.10%). The lowest concentration of tribal population were in Gondia and Tirora *tahsil* where they shared only 4.2% and 4.4% of the total population.

The concentration of tribal population is related to physiography and forest area of the district, where physiography is predominantly hilly and more than 50% of the geographical area is covered with forest (Table 1 and Figure 2) [6–8].

Growth of Population

In the inter censal period (1991–2001), the enumerated population of the district increased by about 6%. The population has increased unevenly within the district. The growth displayed highest value in Deori *tahsil* that is, 34.55% while minimum was observed in Tirora *tahsil* (only 3.55%). The growth rate in Goregaon, Salekasa, Sadak Arjuni *tehsil* was below 20% while in Amgaon and Gondia *tahsil* it was above 20% (Table 2 and Figure 3).

Tribal Population Growth (1991-2001)

The growth of tribal population in the district was 16.26% during the inter-censal period (1991–2001). Within district, the tribal population has increased unevenly. Amgaon, Deori and Goregaon *tahsil* showed very high growth rate above the district average that is, 40.50% in Amgaon *tahsil* and 32.81% in Deori *tehsil*. The remaining *tahsils* count near to the district average ranging from 14% to 15% growth rate [9, 10].

Table 1. Gondia district: Tribal population.

<i>Tahsil</i>	% of tribal population
Gondia	4.20
Tirora	4.40
Amgaon	8.00
Goregaon	10.40
Salekasa	12.50
Deori	24.40
Arjuni Morgaon	16.10
Sadak Arjuni	20.00
Total district	17.00

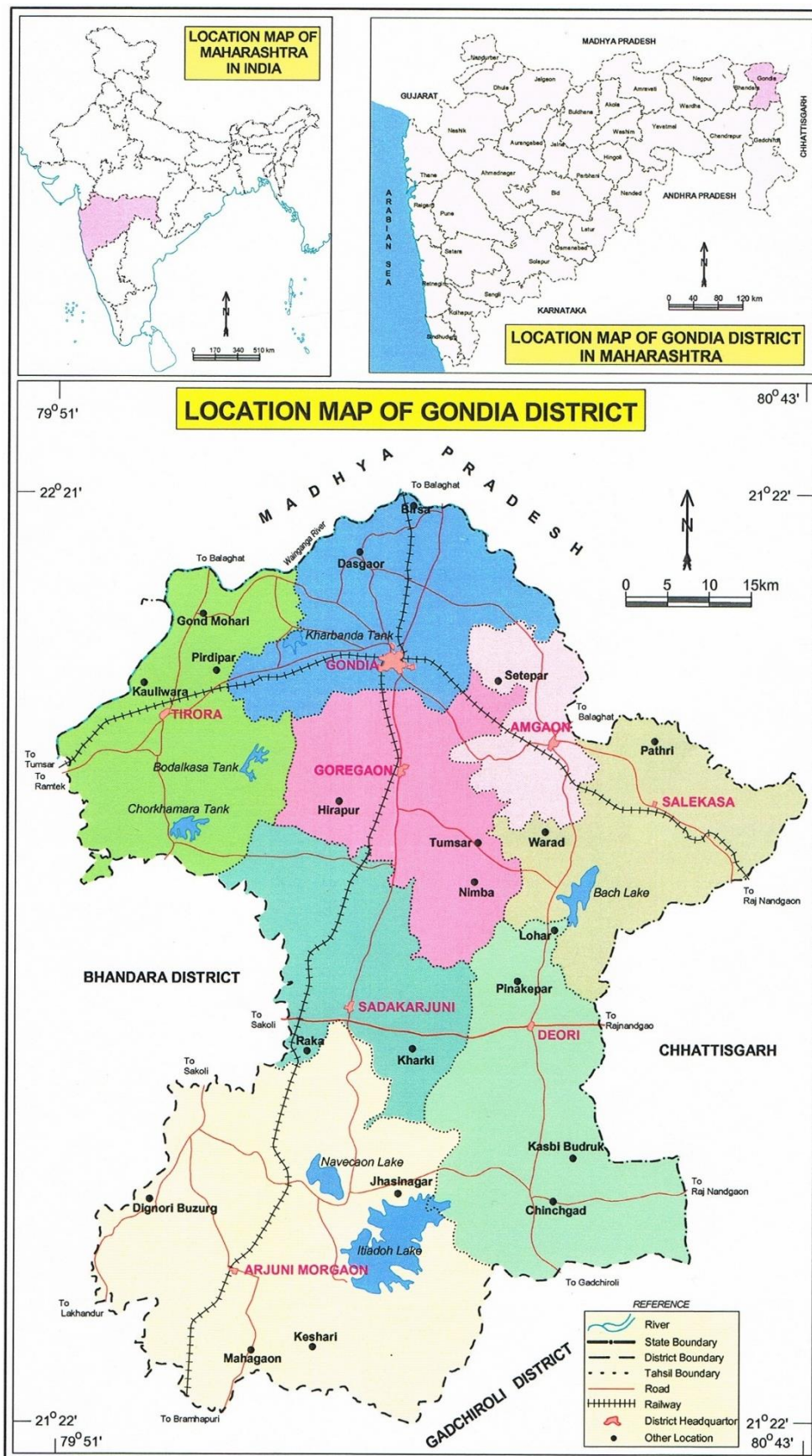


Figure 1. Location map of Gondia district and its administrative divisions.

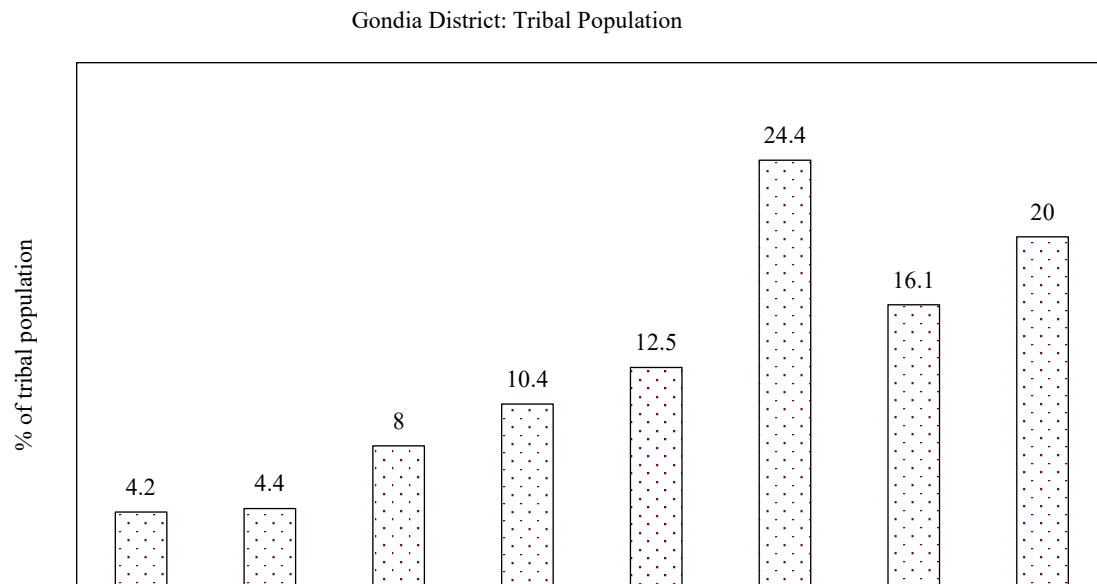


Figure 2. Distribution of tribal population across *tehsils* of Gondia district.

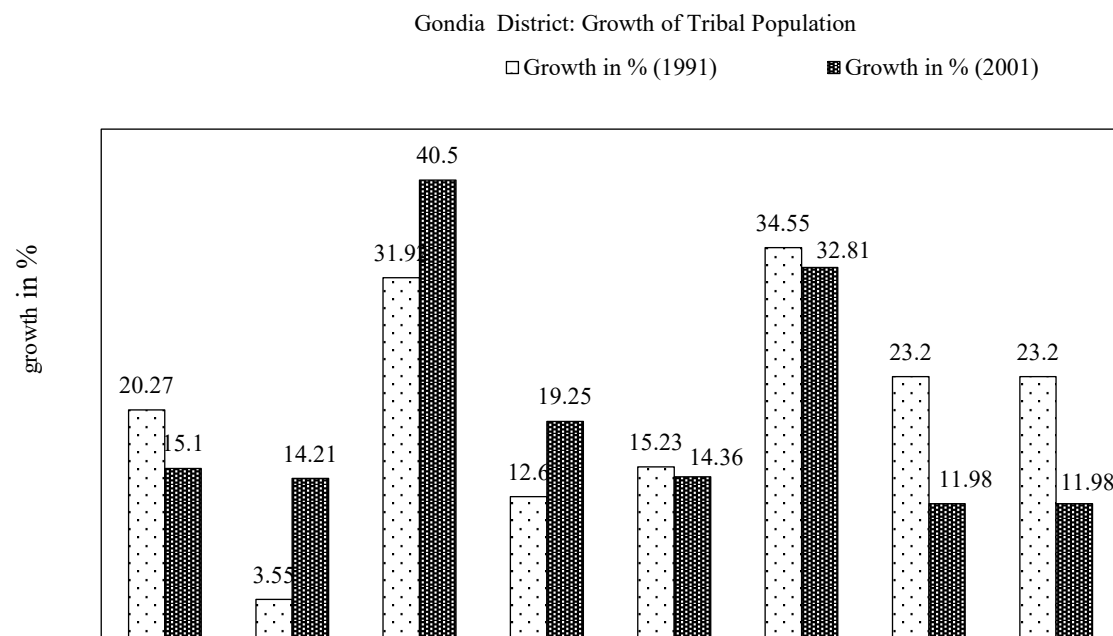


Figure 3. Growth of tribal population in Gondia district (Census 1991 & 2001).

Table 2. Growth of tribal population in Gondia district during 1991–2001.

Tahsil	Growth in % (1991)	Growth in % (2001)
Gondia	20.27	15.10
Tirora	03.55	14.21
Amgaon	31.92	40.50
Goregaon	12.60	19.25
Salekasa	15.23	14.36
Deori	34.55	32.81
Arjuni Morgaon	23.20	11.98
Sadak Arjuni	N.A.	

Literacy Rate of Tribal Population

According to the census of 2001, 78.5% (808414) population was literate in which 458266 male (89.6%) and 350148 (67.67%) female were literate. In the urban areas, literacy rate was counted as 89.10% and in the rural area, 77% literacy rate was counted. Literacy in India is defined as the ability to read and write with understanding. Literacy of any language among the tribals is very low in comparison to the total population. The figure revealed that maximum tribal literacy rate was found in Gondia *tahsil* being the headquarter of the district where it was 23% in rural and 15% in urban population. *Tahsil* Arjuni Morgaon, Amgaon and Sadak Arjuni was about 10% while it was very low in Tirora, Goregaon and Salekasa *tahsils* where it is below 7%. The low level of literacy among tribals has been a matter of concern to policy planners, educationists and social scientist. It revealed that the tribals poor economic condition prevented their children from attending schools [11, 12]. The struggle for life is very hard for the tribals. Their children make a substantial contribution to the economic activities of the households and therefore each child is an economic asset to the family (Table 3 and Figure 4).

Rural Families of Tribal Population below Poverty Level in the District

In the history of economic development, the human society has passed through many stages from a primitive stage of root digging to complex modern economy. A study of tribal economy showed that still today majority of the tribal population is living below poverty line (BPL). At the time of 2001 census, about 26478 rural families were BPL. Out of the total rural families of the district (237070), about 12% families of the district were BPL; the distribution of such families are uneven in various *tahsils*.

Table 3. Literacy of tribal population in Gondia district.

<i>Tahsil</i>	Rural	Urban
Gondia	23.15	13.48
Tirora	6.44	0.81
Amgaon	11.65	-
Goregaon	5.63	-
Salekasa	6.89	-
Deori	8.89	-
Arjuni Morgaon	12.97	-
Sadak Arjuni	8.89	-

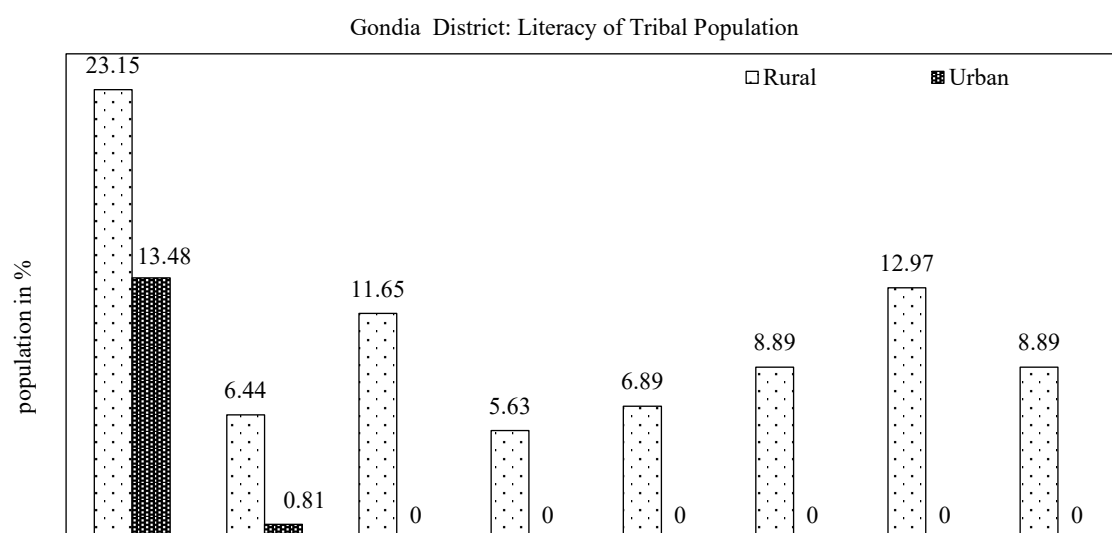


Figure 4. Literacy of tribal population in Gondia district.

Out of the total families BPL of the district, 37.34% families were in Deori and Morgaon Arjuni *tahsil* while about 15% families were in Gondia *tahsil* and minimum in Amgaon that is, about 7% of the district total [13]. The majority of families belonging to the group BPL were cultivator and agricultural workers (Table 4).

Rural and Urban Tribal Population in the District

The district mainly being rural dominancy; only two *tahsils* were having urban population that is, Gondia and Tirora *tahsil*. They shared only 3.95% and 5.79% tribal population, respectively. Out of the total tribal population (16.36%), total rural population was 18% and urban population was only 4.25%. Basically, the concentration of tribal population was more in the rural areas. In the district, only Deori *tahsil* has 48.63% tribals out of the total population. Second highest percentage of tribals was found in Salekasa *tahsil* (27.49%), followed by Arjuni Morgaon *tahsil* (23.77%). These three *tahsils* and Sadak Arjuni (20.20%) *tahsil* were predominant rural areas of tribal concentration belts where more than 20% of the total population were tribals inhabiting in rural areas. There were the *tahsils* where share of forest and hilly regions were very high having more than 40% area under the category (Table 5).

Tribal Students in Educational Societies of Gondia District (2001)

Literacy among tribals in general has improved slightly over time; though the improvement in literacy level is still lagging (Table 6).

The study revealed that out of the total tribal students enrolled for primary education in the district, Gondia *tahsil* comprised of about 28% of the total population, followed by Deori *tahsil* (19%), Salekasa *tahsil* (7.09%), and Goregaon *tahsil* (6.61%),. The census figure showed that the enrollment of tribal students in secondary education was again maximum in Gondia *tahsil* (37%) while Sadak Arjuni *tahsil* and Salekasa *tahsil* were on the 2nd and 3rd rank. The percentage share of remaining *tahsils* was very less that is, below 9% of the total population.

Table 4. Tribal population belonging to below poverty line in .Gondia district.

<i>Tahsil</i>	% of rural families	Total rural families BPL	% of BPL families
Gondia	21.78	3941	14.88
Tirora	15.16	2634	9.95
Amgaon	13.59	1824	6.89
Goregaon	11.52	3100	11.71
Salekasa	6.82	2204	8.32
Deori	8.49	5050	19.07
Arjuni M.	13.32	4839	18.27
S. Arjuni	9.28	2846	10.75

BPL: below poverty line

Table 5. Percentage of rural and urban tribal population in Gondia district.

<i>Tahsil</i>	Total (%)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
Gondia	8.23	10.29	3.95
Tirora	8.54	8.87	5.79
Amgaon	7.97	7.97	-
Goregaon	14.42	14.42	-
Salekasa	27.49	27.49	-
Deori	48.63	48.63	-
Arjuni M.	23.77	23.77	-
S. Arjuni	20.20	20.20	-

Table 6. Tribal students in educational societies of Gondia district (2001).

<i>Tahsil</i>	% of primary students	% of girls (primary students)	% of higher secondary students	% of girls (higher secondary students)
Gondia	27.78	13.51	36.59	19.48
Tirora	5.17	2.34	4.21	2.15
Amgaon	9.51	4.51	3.89	2.11
Goregaon	6.61	2.06	6.82	2.12
Salekasa	7.09	3.58	13.08	6.34
Deori	18.86	7.88	8.52	3.90
Arjuni Morgaon	13.13	6.60	8.52	4.08
Sadak Arjuni	11.85	3.86	18.36	5.96

One of the important aspects of educational analysis is that registration ratio of tribal students are already very low. The ratio of girls students in both primary and secondary level was very less only in the Gandia *tehsil*. The ratio of girls' share to primary and secondary education was 13.51 and 19.48. Every *tahsil* was below 6% of the total population overall. It indicated that there is a need to propagate importance of girls' education in tribal societies of the district in order to increase social awareness in the society.

CONCLUSION

The 2001 census of the district has brought out a few striking features that pertain to the tribal population. These are:

1. During the intercensal period (1991–2001), both the total and tribal population increased at more or less the same rate. The growth of the tribal population was because of reduction in mortality.
2. A marked growth increase of tribal population was counted in Amgaon *tahsil* (40.50%) and Deori *tahsil* (32.81%) indicating very high fertility rate of the population.
3. There was disparity in the level of literacy among the tribals within the district. The disparities have grave implication in uniform implication of tribal development programmes.
4. Not only the need of literacy level development there is also a need to increase and promote girls' education as the ratio of the girls to the total enrollment was very low.

The ultimate goal of the development programme was to achieve a better quality of life in economic terms. The study concluded that majority of the tribals belong to BPL. To achieve the goal of development, efforts should be made to create opportunities in non-agricultural sectors with the purpose to shift workers from primary sector and also accommodate the new entrants in the workforce. New economic programmes were run in this direction such as training cum production center, forest labor co-operative societies etc.

The above features, emerging from the analysis of census data, have social and economic implications that the tribal development programmes should be formulated in view of the resource available in the region perhaps even at the smallest unit of administrative division in the district. Involvement of different improvements may offer assistance in checking and assessment of the tribal advancement programmes.

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