

Oraon Identity under Transformation: Anthropological Insights from Balasore District of Odisha

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Abstract: Oraon identity encompasses their unique culture, animistic religion, forest-based livelihood, agrarian economy, *kurukh or oraon dialect*, bohemian participation in rituals and festivals, and communal identity. Oraon Identity has been preserved by their ancestors and passed to their successors through each generation. Each of the factors such as industrialization, modernization, acculturation, cultural and linguistic domination, westernisation and sanskritisation has contributed to the identity crisis of the Oraons. However, the marginalization and exclusion in past and contemporary social, economic and political sphere have taken the root position to accelerate this crisis process. Lag in culture has also marginalized to empower and establish in current society. Failure and negligence of evaluation of such factors and their relationships by administrative policies and state is leading to the loss of Oraon identity. As a result, Oraon people have shown a decline of linguistic representation, erosion of cultural elements and values, lack of employment, failure to participate in mainstream social, political and economic forums and dilution of religious identity.

Keywords: Identity, Oraon tribe, Ethnic group, Ethnic boundaries, Language

Introduction

Ethnic groups around the world have unique socio-cultural features which differentiate one from the other. According to Yinger (1997:3-4), “an ethnic group is a segment of a larger society whose members are thought, by themselves or others, to have a common origin and to share important segments of a common culture and who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients”. Above definition has three constituents: “the group is perceived by others in the society to be different in some combination of the following traits: language, religion, race and ancestral homeland with its related culture; the members also perceive themselves as different; and they participate in shared activities built around their

(real or mythical) common origin and culture”. According to Kunstadter (1978:386), an ethnic group means “a set of individuals with mutual interests based on shared understandings and common values. Ethnic identity is a process by which individuals are assigned to one ethnic group or another. It, therefore, implies boundaries, their creation, maintenance, and change”.

The essential building blocks of “ethnicities” are “Identity and culture” (Nagel, 1994:153). Max Webber (1961:385) defined ethnicity “as a sense of common descent extending beyond kinship, political solidarity, vis-a-vis other groups and common custom, language, religion, values, morality, and etiquette”. F. Barth (1969:385) has made a summary of “anthropological definitions of ethnicity” with the following four essentials: “a biologically self-perpetuating population; a sharing of cultural values and forms; a field of communication and interaction; and a grouping that identifies itself and is identified by others as constituting a category different from other categories of the same type”.

The structure of identity is “regulated by two universal processes, namely the assimilation-accommodation process and the evaluation process. The assimilation-accommodation process refers to the absorption of new information in the identity structure and the adjustment which takes place for it to become part of the structure. The evaluation process confers meaning and value on the contents of identity” (Rusi Jaspal & Marco Cinnirella, 2012:505). Breakwell (1996) has identified four identity principles that are said to guide these universal processes namely “continuity across time and situation; uniqueness or distinctiveness from others; feeling confident and in control of one’s life; and feelings of personal worth or social value” (cited in Rusi Jaspal & Marco Cinnirella, 2012).

There is a very close association between ethnic identity and the areas of boundaries. Sanders (2002:327) stated that “ethnic boundaries are patterns of social interaction that give rise to, and subsequently reinforce, in-group members’ self-identification and outsiders’ confirmation of group distinctions”. Ethnic boundaries decide “who is a member and who is not and designate with ethnic categories are available for individual identification at a particular time and place” (Nagel, 1994:154). Different factors are responsible for the weakening of ethnic boundaries which ultimately leads to loss of identity or reformation of a new identity with changing boundaries. The important factors are “intermarriage, language loss, religious conversion or declining participation” (Nagel, 1994). Yinger (1997:39) stated that “assimilation is a process of boundary reduction that can occur when members of two or more societies, ethnic groups, or smaller social groups meet”.

Oraon Identity similarly encompasses their unique culture, animistic religion, forest-based livelihood, agrarian economy, *kurukh or oraon dialect*, bohemian

participation in rituals and festivals, and communal identity. Oraon Identity has been preserved by their ancestors and passed to their successors through each generation. Each of the factors such as industrialization, modernization, acculturation, cultural and linguistic domination, westernization and Sanskritisation has contributed to the identity crisis of the Oraons. However, the marginalization and exclusion in past and contemporary social, economic and political sphere have taken the root position to accelerate this crisis process. Lag in culture has also marginalized to empower and establish in current society. Failure and negligence of evaluation of such factors and their relationships by administrative policies and state is leading to the loss of Oraon Identity. As a result, Oraon people have shown a decline in linguistic representation, erosion of cultural elements and values, lack of employment failure to participate in mainstream social, political and economic forums and dilution of religious identity.

Methodology

The present research was conducted in Balasore district of Odisha. The primary data was collected from Pathuria village where 101 Oraon households are living with a population of 498. For primary data collection, two anthropological methods were used, i.e., observation and interview. Through observation, changes in religion, language and traditional political organization were recorded. The interview method was instrumental to understand emic perspectives on the changing scenario and its effects on the day-to-day life Oraon tribe in general and Oraon identity in particular. Both older and younger generations were interviewed for the study. The purpose of selecting the village for the study has the following justification. The village is located close to the national highway which connects it with the outside world. The village is also surrounded by non-tribal villages with constant socio-economic interactions.

Oraon Tribe: A Brief Ethnographic Outline

The Oraon tribe is one of the major Scheduled Tribes in India mainly found in the states of West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. In Odisha, they are mainly concentrated in the districts of Sundargarh and Sambalpur which is in the Western part of the state. According to Oraon tradition, their original homeland is said to have been in the Deccan. Roy (1915) attempted to reconstruct the Oraon history before they entered into the present home of Chhotanagpur. They have their language called Kurukh, which is classified as a Dravidian language. Although the Oraon lives in mixed villages, they tend to build separate settlements of their own. Earlier, each family tended to build its house close to its reclaimed agricultural land.

The traditional dress is the *kareya* for men and the *khanria* for women, made from self-made yarn and woven by a weaving caste called *Ganda*. The traditional dresses are

rapidly being replaced by modern saris and other dresses available in the local market. A limited variety of ornaments made of gold, silver and alloys are worn by the women. The profusion of tattoos seen among the old women is not found among the younger generation nowadays.

The internal structure of the Oraon society is very elaborate. Rishley (1898) mentions that the tribe had five sub-tribes, i.e., Garga-Oraon, Dhanka-Oraon, Kharia-Oraon, Khendro-Oraon and Munda-Oraon, who have in course of the time become strictly distinctive endogamous groups. At present, the Oraon tribe is internally divided into a number of exogamous totemic clans known as gotra or varga. Each clan contains a number of families which are distributed in different villages. Das and Raha (1963) have given a list of 38 totemic groups which they found among the Oraon of Sundarban in West Bengal. Among the Oraons of Odisha, only 18 totemic groups are found. These are Tirki (mouse), Lakda (tiger), Kerketa (hedge sparrow), Gidhi (Vulture), Toppo (a species of fish), Khalkho (a species of fish), Minj (a species of fish), Kachchu (tortoise), Bakla (a kind of grass), Barla (Ficus Indica), Khes (paddy grain), Panna (iron), Bekh (salt), Kujur (a variety of wild fruit on a creeper), Kispatta (pig's entrails), Bandra (monkey), Khakha (raven), and Gidhra (vulture). The members of the totemic groups pay reverence to their respective totemic animal or plant whenever they come across it.

The Oraons are described as an agricultural community. Though, indeed, the major segment of the Oraon population who own some agricultural land adhere to agriculture, there has been considerable diversification in occupation. The employment pattern among the Oraon is substantially different from the total tribal population and the general population in the state. Dependency on agricultural labour is less among the Oraon, while the participation of workers in the mining, quarrying, manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairs within the industrial sector has shown a rising trend.

The staple food of the Oraon tribe is rice. Occasionally they supplement with millet gruel. They have changed their food habits after coming in contact with the neighboring Hindus. They are no longer omnivorous as they were in the past. They have given up many items which are considered unclean by the local people. They relish goat, pig and fowl meat. Rice beer, mohua liquor and tobacco smoking and tobacco chewing are their traditional intoxicants.

Life Cycle Rituals

Birth Ritual

The birth pollution continues for 7 to 10 days, after which the Chhati (purification rite) is observed soon after the stump of the umbilical cord dries up and drops off. During the period of pollution, the family does not take part in any ritual activities.

No member of the other families will accept food from this family. A fowl is given to the Oraon priest to perform a sacrifice to protect the baby from evil spirits and the evil eyes. On the day of purification, the houses are cleaned and all the clothes used by family members are washed. The traditional midwife (*kusren*) and other women who conducted the delivery wear the clothes and mat used by the mother. The baby is bathed in tepid water. All male members of the family have their hair cut. All those assisting at the time of delivery are entertained with festive meals and rice beer. The baby's name is selected among the names of the dead ancestors through grain divination performed by an unmarried boy.

Marriage

They practice adult marriage. Premarital unions and marriage within one's own totemic group or to a person belonging to any other community are considered unsocial. Preferential marriages to cross-cousins and levirate and sororate marriages are still practiced. marriages by elopement, capture, or service occasionally take place. But the most common and expensive type of marriage is held through negotiation. In this type of marriage, several visits are exchanged by both parties to fix the amount of bride price and date of the marriage. The wedding takes place in the girl's house. Putting vermilion on each other's forehead is the binding ritual. The occasion is celebrated with singing and dancing which continues for three to four days in both villages. Widow remarriage is socially approved. Divorce by either side is permissible on grounds like adultery, laziness and bad temper with the approval of the village panchayat.

Death Ritual

The deceased except for children and pregnant women are generally cremated. Those who die after the sprouting of the new paddy plants and before the harvest are buried temporarily. If the family wishes, it can cremate the deceased immediately after death. In case of temporary burial, the remains of the deceased are collected after the harvest and then cremated. After cremation, all male members who attended the funeral take a bath and return to the deceased's house to purify them from the smoke emerging from the fire in grain husks and by sprinkling water mixed with rice beer. On the following day, women go to collect the bones of the deceased. The bones of all those who have died in the village during the year are taken ceremonially for drowning in a river or a stream. The occasion is celebrated with dancing, singing and fasting.

Traditional Political Organisation

The Oraon had a tradition of managing their tribal affairs through multilevel panchayats. At the village level the *Mahato* (secular headman) and the *Naega* (the

sacerdotal head), assisted by the *Pujari* or *Panbhara* and the village elders, constitute the village panchayat. Beyond the village, a group of neighbouring villages of 10 to 12 constitutes a *Parha* under the leadership of the *Mahato* of the important village. Here inter-village disputes are settled. But after they migrated to the Sundargarh area, the Oraon leadership was subjected to many factors which influenced and reduced the importance of their leadership pattern.

Religious Organisation

Oraon religious beliefs and practices have been considerably influenced by Hinduism and Christianity. They believe in the existence of several Gods and Goddesses. Their supreme benevolent God is called *Dharani* who is equated with the Sun God and is worshipped at every religious ceremony. According to their belief system, the fate of the individual and the community depends on their relationship with the supernatural powers that intervene in human affairs by bringing diseases and other hardships. They employ a village priest called *Naega*, who belongs to their group, whenever any misfortune befalls on an individual. The *Mati* is consulted also. They appease supernatural powers by offering sacrifices through a series of rites and ceremonies around the year for their safety and protection. They observe religious rites connected with their economic pursuits and at each individual's life stage like birth, marriage and death. The important religious ceremonies include *Phagu* in February-March to mark the end of the year and the beginning of the New Year. They observe *Sarhul* in March-April before eating the new fruits and flowers of the forest, *Bisu-Sikar* (summer hunt) in April-May, *Jetha-Jatra* in May June, *Jitua* in August-September and *Karma* in September-October.

Research has followed many methodological approaches as mentioned above to analyze and evaluate the results. It has largely focused on changes in language, socio-political institutions and religion of Oraon and solidarity movements in such areas and presented it descriptively with reasonable analysis in each section.

Changes in Language and Issues of Identity

Oraon or Uran are historically founded to be using oran, oraon or kurukh or Sadri dialect name changes according to the variability of the region. Kurukh dialect comes under the Dravidian language family. Population spread across the Odisha, Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Assam with dissimilar concentrations. Linguistic groups of Oraon are more concentrated in the region of Chhotnagpur Plateau of Chhattisgarh also known as the origin of the tribe. Now they have disintegrated geographically by migration, demographic pressure, industrialization and exclusion throughout pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial era to different regions subsequently failing to preserve their original identity by social change. Language is considered one of the major-force for the

integration of tribal identity as also known as the fundamental base of tribal ethnicity and culture. It has consistently helped them to pass their cultural complex to successive generations until the contemporary crisis of Oraon linguistic groups that erected the wall of obstruction in process of preserving ethnic identity. The dramatic decline of Oraon language-speaking group has been witnessed not only in the research area but all across the states and others. Cultural interaction with native areas posed a situation like the complete elimination of Oraon dialect as it is not popular as a major language and often neglected for being a primitive language, other language group has more populations that dominated tribal to adopt those through diffusion, assimilation and modern education. Each of the characteristics mentioned above has vividly reflected in the Oraon Tribe of the Pathuria village. The community has demonstrated a decline rate of 30-35% per decade (approx. Ratio Normalised with bilingualism and years) linguistic population with the adoption of assimilated or imposed language. Factors such as high rate of communication, unidirectional assimilation, diffusion, modern education, lack of consciousness and exclusive state policy have contributed to the rise of decline. The research within the region attempts to elaborate on the impact of such factors, the process of language crisis by such factors and the causal interrelationship of each factor.

Oraon tribe in Pathuria resides at the native place of many non-tribal communities. Communication with outside through many institutions and markets they have majorly started to use Odia language with influence and impose. Frequent use of terminologies of other language developed the kind of adaptation and acquaintance with a new term, subsequently, terminologies have created a kind of consciousness and convenience among them. It has become a new kind of trend or tradition for Oraon to use such a term among the larger population that passes to the younger generation. However, the younger later pass on the trend to their successors by omitting original linguistic terminologies and the language itself. They are seen to be using '*chhua*' instead of '*ingyo*' (mother), *babu* or *chhua* instead of *haddas* (child), *puja* instead of *paarab*, *sadak* instead of *daahre*, *budha* and *budhi* instead of *pachho* and *pachgi*. They now feel insecure to communicate with Oraon dialect outside the community. They have been mocked for not being able to pronounce *alu* (potato), *chaula* (rice) and *kudalo* (hoe used for farming) which are usually uttered as *adu*, *chauda* and *kudado* in their *kurukh* dialect by Oraon people. Surprisingly those words have also diffused from the Odia language in the replacement of *tinkhil* (rice) and *kuddi* (hoe) respectively. As a result, they started to develop aspirations towards Odia language as an improvement in status. The process somehow has created voids in the original linguistic dictionary by ripping the terminologies apart. Due to the lack of written records of language and literature preserved by the Oraon community poses a possibility of the permanent vanishing

or disappearance of language if the trend goes on. As many people and children from Oraon couldn't answer the original terminologies when we asked in an interview; "we don't know. We have learned this way" they responded. Though the development of such new kinds of trends and the inclination of minority communities towards such linguistic trends can be completely understood by McKim Marriott's little and great tradition. So embracing majoritarian language through the influence of diffusion, a lack of consciousness for language caused by an inferiority complex has become their ultimate choice. The field observation and interview have sufficiently substantiated this fact as well. Younger and more educated sections seem to prefer using language that is majorly spoken outside the community. They have adopted similar norms in Modern education which don't promote Oraon languages or values. There is a linguistic segregation trend that has been observed in the community. However, the analysis of statistical data establishes the discourse that it is the older and uneducated sections that use more of their language than others. In the interview, we recorded a gap of 48% between younger (26%) and older (74%). More participation of older and uneducated people in tribal language compared to younger and others justifies their inclination towards traditionalism without a touch of modern education and linguistic assimilation, as it has been seen that older people have a very low rate of education. Moreover, it may not be completely true because few among them also speak Odia depending on the place and time. Time and place have taken a significant position to decide their communicative language. Statistical analysis of the study has shown great variability in using language in different places and times. It is the younger who have stepped on the path of modernisation and social changes that have changed their perception and use of their tribal dialect. A very low rate of linguistic representation has been founded among the younger community i.e around a 48% of the marginal gap compared to the older, in the similar case 58% marginal gap has been observed among educated and uneducated section. Though evaluation of such data in the study isn't cross verifiable as we know frequency of using language is a subjective and causal choice of individual as well as community. But the marginal gap between these categories indicates towards those affecting factors behind the segregation process. Younger and educated sections use very less frequently with own dialect as they are more affected by linguistic assimilation. They are very frequent of using their language at school, tuition, study mates, teachers and text book that predominantly use Odia language. Even in the Anganwadi we encountered teacher offering teachings to kids in Odia. From the above discourse and analysis, symbolism of mainstream language superiority is clearly visible whereas normalisation trend to speak in major language (i.e Odia) are breaching among the community because of those factors. It has to be generalized as status of being civilised as they jokingly call themselves *junglee* and *radhoo* (indicates primitiveness)

for using it in front of other places such as school and public place. Their dialect has been restricted among themselves with their region and kin group for several reasons as such concept of civilised or *jungle* has breed insecurities and lack of consciousness for their own language and culture. The use and operation of tribal dialect has been seen to be varying from place to place respective to their social sphere. Most of the people are seen to be using their dialect within own social group, kin groups and home. They feel insecure to display their own dialectic conversation in front of outside non-tribal.

When we asked students; “Do they speak with their own dialect in front of other students in school? They strictly denied neither they talk with their tribal friends with own dialect nor they do feel secure about to talk there”. Same kind of observation we recorded from the people of their village. They also don’t establish conversation in own dialect outside village, commercial place and public sector. A conjugative or combinative linguistic relationship that is seen among their community, i.e., language used in the initial establishment of relationship in a conversation decides the use of such dialect in further or near future. The theory of conjugative language that we have approached in the research further helps to examine the decline of representation of tribal dialect.

However this conjugation is so fruitful for the linguistic representation at large extent in the case of tribal community as it restricts the language trend within own community when it is tribal dialect. But this linguistic conjugation favours a devastating impact when it is non-tribal dialect. That is parents influenced by Odia and other languages are initiating their conversation with children in such languages whereas the social circle has adopted the same method through diffusion of other languages. While deeply examining the interrelationship of various factors we deduced the fact that modernisation and assimilation have introduced new kinds of dialects within community. Inclination towards has been cumulatively increasing by several factors as mentioned above.

Changes in Socio-Political Institution and Religion

Studying the social and political organisation of Oraon community separately hasn’t been possible as it is integrated with each other that one of such aspect of Oraon people affects another. So delineating social and political aspect completely is not only futile for Oraon but also any of the tribal society. Advent of modernisation, industrialization, cultural diffusion and the state has forced the Oraon socio-political institution to undergo change. Drastic change in such aspect has been currently turned out to be crisis as initially witnessed in the interview that concept of *Parha* is totally non-existent in the Oraon village of Pathuria. *Parha* is a traditional council of the Oraon village operates for ensuring unity and order among the community. It also advocates the interest of their community. Oraon people of Pathuria village call it *Pada*, there is a position of chief in

Pada that is termed as *Padda mukhiya* or village chief. Pada council is autonomic works for the betterment of the interest of villagers that is currently very less functional in this matter. It now operates to perform ritual worships for Oraon God and Goddesses in the village and maintains the village pond (mutually owned by villagers) for fish cultivation.

Chief of the *Pada* council is democratically elected by villagers, position is considered as good social status. So there was an ample amount of interest to nominate themselves in position among such people and a mutual obligation bounded the remaining people to attend in such occasions or meetings. Now a day instances of such interest has been diminished for such position and participation. Current chief of the village expressed his anguish for the change of motive in people by act of several reasons. People have become more individualistic to do their work without the help of community. They are using tractor, power tiller and vehicle instead of neighbouring labour that amounts less interaction and relationship with them. Monetary system has reduced any sort of exchange of product process with community. They aren't sharing *hesse (paddy)* to their community people for the need of other things. Rice was a very base product in their barter-system. Lots of people have migrated to the other part of state to have their livelihood. Many of them have also migrated to the state of Karnataka, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh and few other states. Heterogeneous mode of livelihood created unequal time to interact with community in the respective time schedule. Few people are seen to be working in morning routine, few in afternoon while working place have changed. Growth of consumerist attitude confined the villagers within their own home or narrow social sphere. They are participating very less in village meeting, common festival, social gathering and *Parha*.

Exchange of labour force became less existent as industrialised machine replaced a little or more of the labour classes. They aren't getting sufficient employment any more. Socialisation process showed a little or more change with the usage of television, mobile, vehicle and technical home appliances. As people used to be socialised physically that had helped them to learn and participate more knowledge of their socio-political institutions, cultures and practices.

Village chief satirically stated that people aren't participating in meeting because they are indulgent in watching television. His statement remained evident when we established the causal relationship between such negligible factors that has also contributed to socio-political functionality of Oraon in participant observation. More of the adults have been migrated for livelihood to different states who are considered to play dynamic position in such institution remained at the remotest place outside the village failed to participate in such community interest. Education has broadened the distance between village community and the educated individual because of two reasons. They don't seem to like traditional way of operating community interest any

more. Educated people employed in job maintained isolated distance from such council either by reluctance or distance. *Dhumkuri* is a traditional institution of Oraon tribe that empowers the youth of the village by teaching traditional education, occupational skill and sports has been completely vanished from the Oraon community of Pathuria village. People from the contemporary generation don't even remember the existence of such institution with the influx of diffusion. *Oraon Pada* or village council had strong interest in exercising law and order of the community. It resolves the various domestic, civil and criminal disputes of the village under the supervision of *padda mukhiya* or village chief. Justice was ensured irrespective of any class and gender of the members in Oraon village. Emergence of legal system with state has benefited as well as marginalised such victims. As people don't have much knowledge about legal justice nor money. *Pada* used to sort out domestic disputes or violence most convenience way to ensure justice to the victim and penalty to the perpetrator. But ineffectivity of *pada* in contemporary crisis resulted ample amount of domestic violence and civil dispute issue remain unresolved. Financial issue and lack of legal knowledge of current judiciary system has obstructed the path of justice. Most of cases of domestic violence and civil disputes remained unreported that are unaffordable for Oraon people. In-effectivity and coercion of their traditional legal system remained a factor for this issue.

Religious identity of Oraon has always been confused and imposed by the outsiders and states. Oraon are animistic tribe possess belief in supreme god *Dharmes*. By the influence of outsiders in each space from educational institute to public monuments, they now consider themselves as Hindu as state have neither acclaimed nor coded their religion. In our interview old people from Oraon villages claimed they weren't worshipping any Hindu god or Goddess before. Neither observes any Hindu festivals like *manabasa* and other. In similar case Christian church from colonial era nearest of the village has transformed their religious concepts as few of the conversion has taken place whereas having a religion in conventional sense mushroomed as aspiration. As their own religion were not acclaimed. Subsequently major religious practice of the tribal started to get diluted like *pach balaro* is now very minimally observed to tribute dead souls.

Discussion

Continuity of such vicious cycle of change through factors of assimilation, diffusion and cultural lags induced by modernization, exclusive state policy for cultural integration, systematic poverty, exclusion and marginalization have adulterated Oraon Identity in both etic and emic dimension forever. They have on un-intendedly marched on the path of modernisation and change as ultimate way to escape from exclusion and marginalization process to integrate with state and mainstream social affair. The march

or the change can be termed as forcible march to fit in the modern society and state. Where state adopted huge policy to include and society very little but the impact of such approaches and policy have failed to reach the ground significantly. As the study on the Oraon village of Pathuria has clearly indicated. Whereas it (policies and approaches) has developed equal amount of marginalization and crisis on the aspect of preserving social, political, economic, cultural and religious identity of Oraon.

Inclusive policy seems encourage embracing the culture, trends and norms of majority by the minority by leaving their own behind. Even if Oraon adopted the mainstream aspects of state and society, they still remained far behind and marginalised. The crisis is clearly reflected on the Oraon tribe whereas the negligence of state's interest and policy in the matter records another crisis.

There is any amount of curriculum offered to study tribal culture, arts, festivals, traditions, religion and traditional institution neither to the tribes nor to the non-tribe by modern education. Even in the remotest part of the tribal land school institution teaches disciplinary subject that are so alien to their own. Education curriculum prioritises to so many elements of mainstream language, culture tradition and values by emitting tribal. Celebration of Hindu festivals and imposition of mainstream language like Oriya, Hindi, English and others in disciplinary and interdisciplinary curriculum whereas no amount of Oraons in such curriculum is reflected. Hinduised method of educating children in primary and secondary school measures the interest and influence of state and society to stimulate the crisis of Oraon identity. In the interview we found very negligible amount of students studying in primary or secondary school have knowledge about the tribal language, folklore, myths and legends, tribal gods and goddesses, custom and tradition whereas they (Oraon people) have more or sufficient knowledge about others learnt from educational institute. They have created a negative and inferior image for their own culture. As it is generally considered that education is the only process of being civilized and equal. As a result the educational values seem to be more immunised for development and manifestation of Hindu identity by alienating their own. It has been seen to be catalysing the cycle of Identity breach.

However other factors such as a lack of livelihood resources inadequate access to quality education, failure to participate in economic, political, social and legal sphere of institution as their own have already been breached by state and society. "They said none of the member of their village community has been a Sarpanch or any higher political leader since the advent of Panchayati Raj in Odisha 1961". Community has not even witnessed any business person for good tradesmen outside their economic spheres, neither they have been able to present sound social figures outside their religion nor could able to access social justice without the barrier of money and legal knowledge as their own legal system had become sterile.

Conclusion

Oraon seem to undergoing through a rapid transformation of their culture and cultural identity. Crisis of internal factors lie inside the community has manifested in several social indices whereas as external factors such as dominant culture, state policy and perception of outsider has equally catalysed for the change. As a result, Oraon community has lost the ethnic identity of its own called as Hindu people while most of the participant responded inside and outside the community. Though it is less strange as state try to fit them in the knot of dominant religion such as Hindu and Christian, they have facilitated movements for such crisis by demonstrating the voice of dissent and unrest through solidarity movement in Western Odisha, where lots of people from the eastern Odisha have joined. Backwardness in education, economy and political participation because of modern frames and policies has broadened the gap between their culture and sustainable development. Their historical exclusion and marginalization in perinea Hindu, pre-colonial and colonial era seem to be repeating till now. The Constitution and state made several promises, rights and privileges to incorporate tribal but not as much as an individual or community deserve.

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