



MARITAL TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS, AMONG YANADI IN NELLORE DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Marriage is a social institution and marriage and family are complementary concepts. As such marriage is found in almost all societies. Without marriage one cannot think of a family." It is a set of cultural patterns to sanction parenthood and to provide a stable background for the care and rearing of children." Among the Indian tribes has peculiar practice of marrying within one's own group. This marriage within one's own group is known as Endogamy. Now the Yanadis are an oppressed, pre-dravidian tribe who are found mostly in SPS Nellore and Chittoor districts in Andhra Pradesh, and in some pockets in neighbouring districts. The Yanadi are dark skinned people, short in stature. Many believe them to be tribal because of their primitive ways; others believe them to be a part of a caste system. The Government enlisted them in the Scheduled Tribes category. Their main occupation, apart from fishing and hunting, is domestic work like cleaning which is considered a menial job, some among them still lead a semi-nomadic existence. They have been denied opportunities both in education and employment. Yanadi tribe is one of the tribal groups among 34 sub groups. At Present this sub tribe became the highest population among sub tribe groups in new Andhra Pradesh. Kovur Mandal has long costal line, most of the Yanadies located near the costal line. The present study is concentrated the traditional marriage system and custom of Yanadi Tribes in Kovur Mandal region of Nellore district in Andhra Pradesh.

KEYWORDS : marriage, cultural patterns, endogamy, Yanadi, semi-nomadic

INTRODUCTION

In India the ST groups differ in features and living conditions depending upon the geographical and topographical conditions. The Anthropologists are yet to be clear and lake of awareness about the criteria used to define as tribe. The question of tribes in India is closely linked with administrative and political considerations. Hence there has been increasing demand by groups and communities for their inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes (STs) of the Indian Constitution. That partly explains the steady increase in the proportion of the scheduled tribe population in India, especially in the period between 2011 and 2018. In India, sizeable tribal population prevalently live in Andhra Pradesh state. Inhabiting in jungles in North coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh has popularly known as Yandi. The people of this group tossed widely in Nellore, Chittoor, Prakasm, and Kaddapa Districts. Nellore district anciently known as Vikrama Shimapuri laid in the south eastern part of state, Latitude: 14°27' 13" N Longitude: 79°59' 12" E Elevation above sea level: 23 m = 75 ft. Bounded by 163 km coastal length of Bay of Bengal East The Sri Harikota island now ISRO was considered as origin place for primitive Yandi tribal's in Nellore district latter they dispersed the entire district specifically large aggregations in Allur and kovur Mandals Different sub-casts among the Yanadis and their religious worship now Yanadis are one of the major scheduled tribes of Andhra Pradesh. Thurston (1909) noted that the people were natives of Sriharikota Island and suggested that they derived their name from the Sanskrit word "Anadi" denoting those whose origin is unknown. Now they are predominantly spread over the districts of Nellore, Chittoor, Guntur, Krishna, Kadapa and Prakasham. Yanadis live in symbiosis with non-tribals. Their population according to 2011 census reports is 5, 33,746 in Andhra Pradesh. The total literacy rate among Yanadi is 35.35 as per 2011 census. Their mother tongue is Telugu.

From primitive days, they have a freedom in marriage is not associated with any kind of legal involvement, which many other Hindu groups disapprove. In the present investigation it was notified to palliate the stigma and do not suffer any caste discrimination. Even though the Yanadhi view themselves as a tribe, their association with caste communities has imbibed the concept of purity and pollution associated with

occupations and hierarchical order. Now 60% of the marriages legal and follows the Hindu rituals. Yanadis are broadly divided into four endogamous groups on the basis of occupations and dietary habits.

The sub divisions are:

1. Manchi Yanadi or Reddi Yanadi (Cultivators and servants)
2. Adavi Yanadi (those living in forests)
3. Paki Yanadi (Scavengers) and
4. Chella Yanadi (those who collect left out food from leaf plates in the dust bins).

Reddy Yanadi are agricultural labourers. The Adavi Yanadis depend on forest for their livelihood, and the Challa Yanadis are working as scavengers. The Manchi or Reddy are superior to the Adavi and Challa Yanadis in their social livelihood. These people do not have clams, but they have surnames. The people are living outside the village and in agricultural fields as field's watchers. Manchi Yanadis are allowed in to the houses of non-tribal. They are allowed to draw water from the well. The Yanadi can also wash and carry water for Brahmins. The social status of Yanadis is higher than scheduled castes. Most of the studies say that Yanadis are Non-Vegetarians. They all verities of food grains, roots and tubers vegetables and fruits would be taken. They are taking to some liquors also. Challa Yanadi eats Rats and Frogs. The language of Yanadis is Telugu. Identification of Yanadi community is very easy. Yandais has consisted a Australoid characteristic their physical features such as dark brown to nearly black skin colour, wavy to curly black hair, dolichocephalic head, platyrrhine nose, short and narrow face, moderate prognathism, prominent eye brow ridges, dark brown eye colour; thick lips and generally with short stature. and dark skinned. Racially they are considered to Platy Rhine and short statured people. They wear ordinary clothes. Females wear saris and blouses and males wear dhothis

Demographic Status of Yanadis in Kovur Mandal

In Yanadi Families the women will play crucial role in maintaining scio-economic conditions. In preset study the authors are considering the vital activity of Yanadi women as respondents the Marital and marriage status of the sampling areca was elevated as shown in the below table

Marital Status Distribution in Yanadi Domain by women Respondents in Kovur & Allure Mandal			
S.No	Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Kovur Mandal			
1	Married	1764	95
2	Widow	25	1.4
3	Divorce/isolated	11	0.6
	TOTAL	1800	100

Source: field work

The data reveals that out of 100 percent 95% of people are married persons. Only 1.4% are widows, however the remarriages are encouraged and few are (rare) divorced in Kovur Mandal. However in Allure mandal prevailing the type of marriage in the Sample area. It reveals that a little bit more than half of the marriages are non consanguineous. The remaining a little less than half are consanguineous marriages. Among the consanguineous marriages Manirakam is only about 20 to 25%, and marriages with rear relatives are only 5 to 6%. It concludes still more non-consanguineous marriage is prevailing in the sample area.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Kovuru mandal, it is revenue mandal of Nellore district in Andhra Pradesh, which is located on the east coast and is one of the nine coastal districts of the state. The district comprises of rural and tribal areas that have striking socio-cultural and economic differences. Among the 46 mandals of Nellore district Kovur mandal has consisting a highest number of Yanadi population. The paper has using multi stage cluster sampling method was applied for the selection of the study area. The data was collected from anthropological field work methods, like interview schedule, observation community.

Objectives of the Study

- to understand the customs and traditions in marriage system of Yanadis community in Nellore

Marriage and Customs of Yanadies

Customs of Andhra Pradesh vary from place to place depending on whether they are rural areas, forest regions and other tribal areas. The marriage alliances are always endogamous. The tribals abhor alliances with people of other tribes and strangers and such marriages are considered misalliances. A hostile attitude is also taken towards elopers.

Love and courtship precede the marriage of Yanadi's. The first year of their married life is the happiest for the Yanadi couple. The parties together decide about their marriage and seldom are the parents or other elders consulted. After their decision, the friends are invited, betel and nuts are distributed and the marriage string is tied round the neck of the bride by the bridegroom as a sign of acceptance of their living together as husband and wife. Yanadi's are particular about observing customs. The 'tali', the marriage string, is tied at a specified time on the day fixed. This is done at mid-day, i.e. when the sun is at the meridian. During the ceremonies the maternal uncle presents to the bride all her toilet articles. Some pancakes are supplied by him for distribution among the relatives present at the wedding. The ends of the clothing of the bridal pair are tied, to symbolise that they have to live together thereafter. That night they are directed to see the star Arundhati.

There is rejoicing, including dancing and singing. One of the party plays the buffoon, regaling the gathering with jokes. Those who can afford it have the wedding festivities for three days. The groom pays a sum as the bride price. The elders from both families share the expenses. The bridal pair anoints themselves with sandal paste and turmeric. All this is carried on in a small improvised thatched pandal. The rural couple

are generally very devoted to each other, suffering the pangs of loneliness in separation. To avoid this, the husband is always by her side and the bride demands exclusive affection. Their dalliance is frequent and the wife never tolerates the husband straying away from her. Polyandry does not exist among the Yanadis, but they practice polygamy. Sterility is rare among Yanadi women. The love of the Yanadi is simple, direct and spontaneous.

Marital Customs of Yanadis

There is no polygomyism tradition in the past. The parents of Yanadi children are incapable to admin any directive functionaries, ethics they simply learn by observing in the environment of their colony residents. After attaining 11 to 15 years of age, depending on gender they select either boy or girl by intimacy and live together by developing habitation.

Recently number of studies found tremendous developments in the processes of Vivaham (Marriage) among the Yanadis particularly in colonized Manchi Yanadis and Challa Yanadis of Kovur Mandal of Nellore District. It was noticed in Challa Yanadis even though they are settled, still some cases (a few) are practicing the polygamy not only in the sampling area but also in all other Mandals of Nellore Dist. Most of the both Categories are civilized and following some empirical rules, traditions in marriage ceremony. Now the Marriage ceremony becomes a vital initiation and persisting long time (chronic) achievement among the Yanadis. Now a days the selection of mates is by negotiations, love and elopement. After selection, the couple will inform to their parents, who start negotiations, even though the dowry paid by Bride's parents to Bride-groom, latter friends and kin relatives of both are invited, betel & nuts are distributed, finally Bridegroom ties a string around the neck of Bride to indicate the sign of acceptance for marriage .

No determinant rules for the fixing of auspicious day time to tie up the bride with "mangala Sutramu" by Bridegroom. We came to know from the sample area the tradition followed from the past decades they put a Crowbar (Gunapamu) vertically in front of the Bride groom house, if the shadow was not fond around the periphery of Crowbar is the auspicious time for tie up the "Mangala sutra. Finding of auspicious time for Kalyanam



Finding of auspicious time for Kalyanam

Traditional Music The maternal uncle of Bride will play significant role in marriage ceremony. Feasting, drinking and dancing are compulsorily associated with marriage Drums and small stringed instruments are their favorite musical instruments. They brought the Bride to Bridegroom house are to the holy place where the Bride groom is waiting, with traditional music and dance



Traditional Music

The "kulapedda", the elderly person of the caste and also protect, look after the welfare of people living in that colony

will act as a priest, In well established colonies the Yanadis even consult a Brahmin priest to fix and to perform the marriage. The processes of Kalayanam totally ahead in a tradition of Hinduism, i.e. Involves the toeing of Kankanam to Wrist of Bride & Bridegroom Chanting of their house hold god & goddesses, Keeping of Gela-Kara-Belam on the head, toeing of Mangalasutram, Talambralu, Chasapoyadam, looking of Arundathi Star.



Yanadi Folk Dance

In the evening Bride & bridegroom play Vasanthalu which was celebrated by boys and girls having matrimonial relations. The above stated pattern of marriage ceremony is identical (with a slight variations) to all other non-tribal communities of Hindustani's. It is a good sign to say the Yandi tribals will deny and disclose the term tribal in the coming few decades.



Placing o Jeelakarra-Belum



Tying of Mangalasutra



Talambralu



Vasanthalu

Marriages system of Yanadis are not associated with any legality, as long as the couples are like each other they continue the cohabitation, whenever they differ they break up. Now the conditions are not like this most of them, particularly Manchi Yanadis are following the Hindu Marriage act. However the Challa Yanadis are still in past Synario

Traditional Customs of Yanadis

Birth ceremony

The birth of Child among Yanadis, is considered as a blessing of God. Though preference is given to male child, they welcome both male and female children with equal joy and enthusiasm. Miscarrying during the childbirth is not only considered as ill luck to the family but also as punishment inflicted by God on mother for a grievous sin committed by her in the previous life.

The Yanadis consider nausea, stoppage of menstruation and the liking of sour eatables as indications of pregnancy. The parents of ht women are alive and are in a position to maintain their daughter for some time during and after childbirth, the daughter is taken to their home for the first delivery or otherwise if her parents are not alive the delivery takes place in the husband's house. Yanadi women believe that the pregnancy period lasts for nine months in case of a male child and for ten months in case of female child. For this they give their own explanations. They say that a male has an instinctive liking for outdoor work to earn its livelihood,

whereas a female by nature wishes to stay at home and in comfort, therefore a female by nature wishes to stay at home and in comfort, therefore a female child stays longer in the womb than a male child.

No minute restrictions are placed on a pregnant woman with regard to diet but they generally avoid heat generating good lest it may cause abortion, and some avoid the meat of wild boar also. Depending on one's economy the coveted desires of the pregnant women are satisfied in each household. It is considered that in case she does her work and goes about her business as usual, delivery would be easy. Thus, a pregnant women works till the time she beings to complain of lobur pains. There is no separate hut or screened apartment in the house, specially arranged for delivery. Body posture, at the time of deliver, is in the setting position. As a support to the labouring women, a hanging rape from the roof is provided. An experienced Yanadi midwife is summoned to attend on her. The midwife is paid Rs. 100/- to 200/-, and is also given free meals and fruits. The Child's umbilical cord is cut with a knife and is carefully deposited by putting it inside the hole of a bandicoot. Sometimes they adopt the practice of typing it to the roof also. The child is given both at the same place. Now, presently Simhapuri Vydy Seva Samithi trust conducting awareness camps on health care issues under the guidance of ITDA (Integrated Tribal Development agency).The trust is special medical care on pregnancy women. Now number of Yanadi women preferring to hospital so, the midwife system is continuously declining.

Soon after the delivery, the mother is given some liquor. On the second day, kashayam (decoction) is prepared by boiling Vepachakka, nelavenu leaf, garlic and pepper and the decoction is given as drink early in the morning, even before she washes her face. For about five to eight days food is given to her only once a day. No pollution is observed by them. Anyone can visit the child and the mother at any time.

A women after confinement, eats for three days tender leaves, or cabbage or date plam (phoenix sylvestris) and then rice, margosal leaves, sometimes the leaves of other tree are placed under the infants head for six days. A net is hung in front of door to keep out devils. The baby is given a name by a soothsayer who pretends to be in connection on the subject with the god or goddess.

It is very interesting to note how the Yanadis perform puja to the deities for speedy birth of the child. It is reported that if there is any delay in the delivery the husband prays and discovers by divination whether any supernatural influence has been the cause of obstruction. After knowing which deity is causing the delay, the husband promises to call the child by the deity's name.

The women are now availing themselves of the facilities provided by the modern maternity services. In the initial period, they did not come forward to engage the services of the midwife. But now their customs and beliefs are in no way hindering the community to avail itself of the modern services. No ceremony is observed to initiate the first feeding of the child. After the completion of the first year the child is habituated to eat all kinds of food that other members of the family take. Least attention is bestowed to regulate the child's food habits or the habits of defecation and general cleanliness. The normal duration of suckling may be up to four years. There are some cases, when mother breast-feed their two children- the first and the next born. At the time of weaning the child the juice of neem leaf is smeared on the mamilla.

Abortion system

Abortion is practices by the Yanandi women if they indulge in illicit sexual contact, to avoid the fury of the husband or the

community. The methods practised to effect abortion are using asafoetida and papai fruit and leaves collected from the jungle or market are also used to induce abortion. The name of the tree which is used for the purpose is called Guddu matra chettu. The leaves of this tree are powdered and mixed with water leaf after cooking the rice, and it is taken thrice a day for two days continuously. They claim that they have administered this medicine to many plains women belonging to Komati and Brahmin castes and it was found successful. According to them many widows from higher castes also approach for this medicine whereas the incidence of use among the Yanadi women is very less. Barrenness is considered as an act of God. They try to get is cured by taking some indigenous medicine. According to an old Yandi, the barren women are given a decoction prepared with the leaves of pulligoruchettu and gogu chettu. They make the powder of all the above kinds of leaves and mix it with milk and the barren woman is given this mixture on the last day of her menstruation. Not all the Yanadis are aware of these leaves and herbs, only very few experienced and old people have knowledge about these herbs and whenever the necessity arises they are consulted. By the awareness of health camps, presently some of abortion cases are deal with the Simhapuri Vydy Seva Samiti Trust (Jayabharat Hospital, Nellore), the hospital maintaining a special care on tribal people, and the trust allotted a separate wing in hospital.

Naming Ceremony

Some they name the child even before the birth of the body. It happens when the parents have no children and taken any vow in the name of some deity or saint. It is stated that the child is given name on the fourth day itself by an old women. If the child dull in activities and continues to cry, and does not suckle milk property, it is attributed to be the act of some god or ancestral spirit or evil spirit.

Generally, the male Yanadi name ends with 'adu' or 'lu' or 'anna' like Ramudu, Chegaiyah, Venkateswarlu, Chenchaiyah, Yanadaiah. The female names terminate in 'amma', for instance Chengamma, Muthamma, Chenchamma. Most of their names are derived from the deities just as the name of the Chendraiah is derived from the deity Chenchoru. Among the Yanadis, wife does not pronounce the name of the husband while addressing, and the name is mentioned through a third person.

Tonsure Ceremony

When the child attains the age of three or four years, he is taken to the shrine of anyone of their deities. The tonsure ceremony is initiated by the maternal uncle who removes some hair from the child's head. The ceremony is completed by man proficient in hair shaving. For boys the head is completely shaved, and for girls only a few locks are removed on the scalp. The maternal uncle is given a cloth to cover his shoulders, a measure of rice, Rs. 116 and he in turn presents a saree to his sister and new cloths to the child. At this custom which is a borrowed custom, the uncle plucks a lack of hair from the head of the old, and ties it to a bough of the dancing and the feasting go on for the whole evening.

Puberty

Usually by 4th year, a girl attains puberty. This is locally known as Edgindi or Paduchu Samathainadi meaning the girl has attained maturity. At the first menstrual period, the Yanadi girl occupies a hut erected for the purpose, which much have within it at least one stick of *Strychnos nuxvomica*, to drive away devils. On the ninth day the hut is burnt down, and the girl cleanses herself from pollution by purify catory both.

Pre-Marital and Extra-Marital Sex Relations of Yanadies

Pre-marital sex relations are not very rigidly insisted upon. Obviously the conception of virginity or chastity in a society

plays the crucial role in the context. In the case of Yanadi the amount of bride-price or dowry is either reduced considerably or waived altogether. Among Yanadis no separate dormitory house exists. Young boys and girls after marriage are traditionally allowed a degree of permissiveness within four walls of bridegroom's households. And all the other family members adjust themselves in neighbouring houses leaving the house for the recently-wedded couple. Extra-marital relations are more common or permissible. The marital infidelity has been the main cause of high incidence of dispute among them. The wife may indulge in extra-marital sexual liaison and get away with it.

Divorce

Divorce, remarriage and widowhood are also the elements of marital institution. Unlike Hindus, marriage is not a religious sacrament among the Yanadis. Hence divorce or desertion or dissolution or marriage is not only possible but widely practised. Both Yanadi man and women can freely initiate the divorce. When a women goes with another man, her husband moves the tribal elders to sanction the divorce.

CONCLUSION

Yanadies Martial life is not akin with the reaming Hindu Society, which is comparable with the distance between the vision and helm. In such case there is no question of divorce and Alimony. Significance number of Yanadies habituated in Kovur mandalam marriage alliance of Yanadies always endogamous, till now practicing bride price. In marriage customs Yandies specifically practiced toiled articles .this are the presented by maternal uncle. The bride to bride groom houses are to the holy place where the bride groom is waiting with traditional music and dance. It was astonish to say years together the Yanadi couple lives together without any hindrance by continuing as a Cart on Nalleru without any vibration.

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