



# Roots and Routes: The Journey from Nomadism to Sedentarization

Lucy M\*

Department of sociology, School of Liberal Studies, KIIT University, India

\*Corresponding author: Lucy Mishra, Department of sociology, School of Liberal Studies, KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, India, Tel: 8658723778, Email: lucy.mishra2000@gmail.com

Review Article

Volume 7 Issue 2

Received Date: July 23, 2024

Published Date: August 27, 2024

DOI: 10.23880/aeoj-16000247

## Abstract

Nomadic People and their lives are full of challenges. The nomadic people often stand at the cross roads in comparison to other communities when any concerted efforts are made to sedentarize them. In the process of sedentarization, these people are not just uprooted from their territory, culture, customs, ecology, economy, but their entire identity faces challenges from many sides. When they are sedentarized, they encounter issues which lend them in a place where they face acute dilemma. Starting from experiencing cultural shocks, identity threats, and occupational overhaul. This article tries to shed some light on the Birhor tribe (a nomadic tribe) when experienced sedentarization, a series of changes started following. When a nomadic community is permanently settled the whole social milieu gets entangled in a situation which drifts them apart from their customary ways of living and doing things.

**Keywords:** BNomadic; Birhor; Sedentarization; Pvtg; Tanda; Haat; Foragers

## Abbreviations

IAY: Indira Awas Yojana; PMAY: Prime Minister Awas Yojana; PTGs: Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

## Introduction

All over the world since the last century attempts have been made to bring about a transition from nomadism to sedentarization. This process of transition which involves transition of one social group from being mobile to settling down involves multiples challenges. This process includes confirming practices as well as divergences. The residential permanence not only draws the attention towards rethinking on this process, because settling down though may provide some important insights into the demographic characteristics, yet in many fronts the nomadic hunting

gathering communities miss their indigenous practices and belief system. When they do not come up with the changing social milieu be it economy, culture, religious practices or hunting rituals or gathering forest produce, and then they experience despair, illusion and psychological setbacks. Under new type of social structure and altered relationship with natural environment which they used to explore for their sustenance, the hunter gathers cannot march ahead in the modern complex society and subsequently they fall prey to inequality, deprivation. When they cannot inherit resources, cannot even monopolize over the resources and the new social arrangements and social adjustments have eroded their band like organization and they end up in experiencing power differentials in terms of having access to income generating activities, material resources, few live stocks, educational facilities versus those who lack everything mentioned here.

## Identity in Flux: Insights on Nomadism and Sedentarisation

Spooner [1] observes that there are no cultural or social traits that are universally shared among all nomads or unique to nomads alone. This raises the question of why nomads who practice spatial mobility as a somewhat permanent and often traditional way of life for subsistence—remain a topic of discussion and academic interest. The topic invites inquisitiveness as to why nomadic groups are distinct because of their constant mobility which sets them apart from other groups.

According to Asad [2] understanding nomadic social life is best achieved by examining the overall system and their historically specific role within larger economic frameworks. It becomes less crucial to label them as nomads or pastoralists and more significant to identify who controls their land, owns the animals, and whether production is geared towards market or subsistence. For Asad, the concept of subsistence allows for independence from market-based assessments of wealth. He highlights a distinctive aspect of nomadic-pastoral economies: the ways in which ownership of animals and territory are structured, setting them apart from other economic systems.

Köhler [3] offers an in-depth analysis of the Wodabbe, a group of Fulbe pastoralists. Historically, the Wodabbe were highly mobile cattle nomads, but today, they are more settled, engaging in diversified livelihoods such as agro-pastoralism and urban migration. Köhler's study is based on his extensive fieldwork in Niger, beginning in 2004 as a conflict prevention expert and continuing with ethnographic research from 2010 to 2011 among a Wodaabe clan in Zinder Province. The book starts with a paradox: while nomadic pastoralists are becoming more sedentary, society as a whole is increasingly mobile. Köhler investigates how these new forms of mobility manifest, analyzing the complex interplay between rural and urban economic activities. A key aspect of the book is its focus on the rational strategies of the Wodaabe, countering narratives that portray them solely as victims of global forces.

Hanna [4] examines various Romani groups in Soviet Ukraine and their lifestyles—whether sedentary, semi-nomadic, or nomadic—emphasizing the often-overlooked category of semi-nomadism. Despite its prevalence among the Roma in Soviet Ukraine, semi-nomadism has been underrepresented in scholarship. The study discusses how Romani lifestyles evolved before and after World War II, focusing on Soviet policies that influenced these changes. In particular, the creation of the kolkhoz system in the 1930s and the “Khrushchev Decree” of 1956 played significant roles in the forced sedentarization of Roma, reflecting broader repressive Soviet strategies.

Semplici [5] by referring to Jeffrey C. Kaufmann's idea of ‘sediment of nomadism,’ where pastoralism is often associated with a ‘pure’ form of mobility and livestock-centered economies, this article contends that sedentism is similarly idealized in pastoral contexts. Instead of the usual critique of the nomadism/sedentism divide, the article challenges the notion of ‘pure sedentism.’ Based on fourteen months of ethnographic research in Northern Kenya's arid regions, it shifts focus away from large cities and regional urban centers to explore the emerging small settlements along improved roads and telecommunication networks. These findings suggest that places are never truly stationary, even with the emplacement efforts of national and local governments or the international community.

Goodall [6] finds out that the sedentarization of Ladakh's nomadic pastoralists in north-west India aligns with a global trend toward settlement. While some regions see pastoralism thrive or revive due to market reforms, many nomadic communities face significant changes as they integrate into national and international economies. This study examines the migration of Ladakh's pastoralists to the urbanizing capital, Leh, focusing on three communities. It analyzes out-migration patterns and settlement decisions, considering both structural and individual factors. These differences do not necessarily indicate a decline in nomadic pastoralism but reflect how external socio-economic pressures and local factors influence migration strategies as a means of survival and security.

Dounias, et al. [7] through their studies has observed that the last nomadic groups, like the Punan of Borneo, are pressured to abandon their traditional foraging lifestyles in favor of settled agriculture. Despite transitioning to farming, these changes do not always enhance diet and health as expected. A study comparing three Punan groups—each practicing rice cultivation for about 60 years—found that those further from urban areas had more varied diets and better health. Proximity to cities reduced reliance on forest resources and negatively impacted diet and fitness. The main issue is not just increased agriculture but the broader shift from nomadic to sedentary life, affecting their social and ecological well-being.

Meir [8] explores the concept of demographic transition theory, focusing on its often-overlooked implications for the continuum between nomadic and sedentary lifestyles. Published in the *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, this article examines how demographic changes impact societies that shift between nomadic and settled ways of life. The paper argues that while demographic transition theory typically analyzes the progression from high to low birth and death rates in industrialized societies, it also offers valuable insights into how these transitions affect

less permanent, mobile communities. By integrating the theory with the study of nomadism and sedentarism, Meir highlights the need for a broader application of demographic principles to better understand the dynamics of various societal structures. The research suggests that recognizing these demographic patterns can enhance our understanding of how different societies manage transitions in their lifestyle and population dynamics.

Nomadism, a way of life historically seen across all continents. Recently, cultures that have historically embraced nomadism are facing increasing political and economic pressures to settle down. This process involves lots of impacts starting from socio-political, economic, behavioural change to environmental impacts caused by the shift from nomadism to sedentarization.

Roger Barker [9] and his colleagues developed a model that is effective for analyzing environmental changes. According to Barker, the environment consists of various behavior settings that can be reliably identified and described using different survey methods, without needing a specific theory (Barker, 1968) [9]. Each behavior setting has a "standing behavior pattern" that aligns with and is constrained by the social and spatial structures of the setting. In the context of nomadic environments, where behavior settings are not fixed geographically but are defined by the presence of certain people, objects, and activities, the analysis takes on a new dimension. As nomadic groups transition to more permanent, place-based settings, the dynamics of behavior settings are expected to change.

### Birhors as Foragers: Yesterday and Today

Roy [10] asserts that the Birhor community is peripatetic and semi-nomadic, living as hunter-gatherers in the dense forests and jungles of the Chotanagpur region, which was part of the state of Bihar at the time.

The Birhors are a relatively obscure and underdeveloped tribal community residing in the forests of Odisha. The name "Birhor" combines two words: 'Bir' meaning jungle and 'Hor' meaning man, translating to "forest-dwelling man." In Odisha, they are referred to by different names depending on the district; for instance, in Sundargarh, Kalahandi, and Keonjhar, they are known as Mankidi. In Mayurbhanj and Sambalpur, they are referred to as Mankirdia. This name is derived from their unique characteristic of monkey catching, which led to their being called Mankidi or Mankirdia. The Birhors are classified into two groups: Uthlu Birhors (nomads) and Jhagi Birhors (settlers). The Birhors are considered a Primitive tribal group and were originally nomadic hunters and gatherers who engaged in exchange relationships with local peasants. According to the 1971

census, the Birhor population in Odisha appears small because the Birhor, Mankidi, and Mankirdia were counted separately. Each group is listed individually in the Scheduled Tribe list of Odisha. However, when combined, the total number of Birhors, Mankidis, and Mankirdias was 1,307 in the 1971 census. These groups are primarily located in the Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, and Sundargarh, Sambalpur, and Kalahandi districts of Odisha [11].

To address the needs of PTGs (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups), both the central and state governments of Odisha have proposed the establishment of micro projects aimed at improving the conditions of the most at-risk segments of India's tribal communities. In 1987, during the Fifth Five-Year Plan, a Micro Project called the Hill-Kharia and Mankidia Development Agency (HK&MDA) was set up in Mayurbhanj.

### Review of Literature

Sinha [12] attempted to understand the dynamics involved in the socio-economic sphere after the transformation of economic activities experienced by the Birhors on account of settlement drive. The transition from predominantly rope making activity to plough cultivation has ushered in many changes in the lives of Birhors of Madhya Pradesh.

Schleiter [13] maintains that it is highly likely that the development programs specifically designed for the Birhor community have encouraged others to identify themselves as Birhor. Sahu [14] expresses concern not just about population, but also poverty and malnutrition. He is a critique to the settlement process which constantly unleashes socio-administrative dialogues which happen without the knowledge of the Birhor people. Birhor people are of critical importance because for implementing any developmental scheme, exact enumeration of the population has to be ensured. Without taking the entire Birhor population into consideration, if developmental schemes would be implemented, it will not be successful in fetching targeted results. Mukherjee [15] is apprehensive of the potential risk of "endangerment" of the Birhors. Debbarman views that though Birhors are grappling with the transition between pre-agricultural economy to settled agriculture, yet their economic condition is a matter of deep concern.

Bose [16] finds that the traditional practice of the Birhors has been rope making. Apart from this, they used to sustain themselves by hunting and gathering. But in recent times they have started working as drivers, daily labourers and even few of them have secured government jobs. There has been constant decline in forest dependence among the Birhors for sustenance. However, due to their

strong emotional connection to their ancestral practices and the inherited skills, many Birhors continue to make ropes, sourcing raw materials from distant parts of the forest.

Manna and Sarkar [17] notices the semi-nomadic Birhor rely on their ecosystem, particularly the nearby forest, for their livelihood. Their traditional economy and lifestyle are intertwined with the environment. However, diminishing natural resources are causing daily challenges. Recently, efforts have been made to address their development issues.

Nadal [18] stated that “the forest is fundamental to their identity in reference to the other neighboring groups in the area. The Birhor regard other communities as being associated with the agricultural side of the world, which includes fields, markets, and villages.” The main purpose of their visits to the market is to sell their goods and acquire their daily needs. The shifts from the forest to the market significantly affect their livelihoods in the Birhor communities.

Pankaj [19] noted in his study that the depletion of forest resources has limited the mobility of the Birhor community, who traditionally had cyclical movement patterns. In the study area, it has been noted that the Birhor are starting to establish them in a single place and are looking into different nearby livelihood opportunities. They are participating in a range of supplementary and varied activities, including agricultural labor, part-time farming, operating tractors, household work, and earning wages in brick kiln industries.

Mathew and Kasi [20] have found that modernization is impacting the lives and livelihoods of the Birhors. Previously, they were employed as wage laborers in agriculture. However, with the advent of new tools and machinery, the Birhor people have been displaced from their jobs within their community. This has resulted in greater migration. As the men relocate to urban areas, women bear the brunt, as they are left to manage their families on their own.

Karmakar [21] views that close interaction of Birhors with Hindus and neighboring communities has transformed their traditional social, psychological, and economic spheres. Industrialization, urbanization, and government initiatives have significantly altered their lives, impacting forest rights and traditional livelihoods, while modern technologies have brought economic changes.

## Methodology

The present research paper has both theoretical as well as empirical connotations. The study has been conducted among the Birhors of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, India. In Mayurbhanj there has been a Micro Project named as Hill Khadia and Mankidia Development Agency started in

1986-87, which made concerted efforts in permanently settling down the Birhors. The Birhors of Mayurbhanj have been settled down subsequently. Apart from two Micro Project villages inhabited by the Birhors viz. Jashipur and Karanjia, at-least four other Birhor settlements have been purposively chosen for the present study based on numerical preponderance of the Birhor tribe. Other than Micro Project areas villages like Dengam, Mahalibasa, Uthanisahi and Baliposi where Birhor reside have been selected. The study has been both descriptive and exploratory in nature with survey method. For eliciting response, the researcher has chosen participant observation and focused group discussion where ever the situation arose.

## Nomadic Tribes: From Across the World

Gron, et al. [22] in their studies have highlighted the fact that among the Evenk hunter-gatherers who are typically seen in Siberia, the territory they reside in has both practical as well as ideological aspects. Among the Evenks though a particular clan controls particular area's resources and productive areas, but this control over the resources does not give a distinctive sense of 'ownership' right to that particular clan, but rather there is ritual negotiation and belief in spirits controlling the territory cannot be avoided. As a hunting gathering community, the Evenk and their settlement areas are intertwined with the material and ideological cultures.

Dounias and Froment [23] have pertinently found out that there is strong connection between the future of forest eco systems with that of people who reside in forests. Most research on the effects of biodiversity loss on human health has predominantly concentrated on ecological and global systems, with limited focus on sociological and psychological factors.

As per the findings of this study the former hunter-gatherers have been experiencing emerging diseases which are nothing but the ecological and cultural costs accruing to them as a result of their exposure to modernity. These problems are indicative of the sociopolitical problems these hunter-gatherer communities experience which require concerted efforts. Enquiring into the present day hunter-gatherers insightful information can be obtained regarding their genetic endowments and lifestyle which helped them surviving and preventing many health issues. Same behaviour can be replicated after observing them in depth.

For Lathrap [24] the Amazon basin before coming into contact with the European culture has wide range of cultural pattern, admirable level of complexity of social units and wide array of material culture. The Amazon and its tributaries sustained major sedentary populations engaged in fishing, hunting of aquatic mammals and reptiles along with



intensive root-crop farming. For Lathrap there were number of hunting people who were failed agriculturalists. He cited the example of Siriono of South America and the Veddas of Ceylone as those communities who had this experience of re adaptation or devolution as hunters. Various terms have been used by Lathrap like “devolved” hunters and “reformed” hunters.

The nomadic tribes do not have any fixed abode and they travel in search of their livelihood [25]. On the other hand, Semi-nomadic tribes are those tribes which have fixed abode but they migrate to earn their livelihood. Usually the semi-nomadic tribes come back to their original place of abode [26]. The nomadic tribes have been offered to settle down in villages and towns by the Government of India, but these attempts have been marked with stiff opposition from the native villagers.

Some of the famous incidents can be mentioned which reveal the dark side of the settlement process of some nomadic tribes. Renake [27] takes stoke of the situation that led to the murder of Kalu there, belonging to Thelari nomadic tribe who along with his fellow tribesmen were settled in a village in Maharashtra and eventually the outrageous villagers had murdered Kalu Thelari. In Gujarat when the Nathbhava tribes were settled down received opposition from the villagers.

Misra [28] does not consider the sedentary and spatially mobile human beings as exclusive categories. In human history adapting one life style out of these two does not indicate excluding another or in simple terms both sedentarization and spatial mobility have close correlation. It is also not a very novice idea that nomadic people settle down temporarily in camps for certain periods of time. The distinction between pastoral and non-pastoral nomads has often led to labeling them as wanderers and itinerants according to the author. The author prefers to call them “symbiotic nomads” i.e. sharing close relations with the settled population. Hayden [29] uses the term “Service nomads” indicating the roles performed by the nomadic people in meeting the needs of the settled population.

Gulliver [30] cites the interplay of physical environment and socio-cultural factors in nomadic movements. Berland [31] finds “..... Spatial mobility is the characteristics of human groups and not exclusive characteristics of pastoral or non-pastoral nomads”. Salzman [32] has used the term “multi-resource nomadism”. Sometimes people start as hunter-gatherers and eventually resort to agriculture and then pastoralism.

According to Murdock [33], hunters were those people who subsist primarily by hunting the domestic animals

which they ride for pursuing their game. Murdock cites the examples of the North American Indians of the Plains and the South American Indians of Patagonia and the Gran Chaco who hunted with horses. Murdock includes those who pursue fishing, shell fishing and depend on aquatic animals as hunters and gatherers. But since the marine food supply is plenty and stable, Murdock finds these communities as predominantly sedentary. Such conditions allow for developing certain degree of cultural complexity. Goggin and Sturtevant [34] have found out that among the Calusa; a fishing community of Southern Florida who are comparatively sedentary have fairly developed political organization with sizable states.

### Nomadic Birhors, Sedentarization and Continued Struggle: Reflections

Patnaik [35] presents a holistic study of the Birhors of Odisha by referring to various settlement places of nomadic Birhors wherever the tribe is found. His deductive study concentrates on the study of Birhors of Mayurbhanj district. He discussed the social organisation and economic system of the Birhors in a descriptive manner. Tribe- caste and tribe-tribe interaction is also finds place. The author finds that the Birhors are driven towards settling down permanently due to stringent forest laws.

Rath [36] dwells on the forces of change encountered by the Hill Kharia and Mankidias of Mayurbhanj district of Orissa. These two tribes come under Primitive Tribal Groups. Both the tribal groups come under hunting-gathering category. In her study Rath firstly examines the nomadic habit and subsistence of the tribes which was mainly forest based. Then she tracks the induced change after coming up of the Hill Kharia and Mankidia Primitive Tribes Development Agency. Agriculture was promoted with an aim to arrest the nomadic behaviour of the Birhors. Livestock rearing and cottage industry were also promoted in rehabilitation attempt. The tribal have not accepted agriculture due to psychological reasons. Due to unavailability of irrigation and suitable land and allied reasons they have side-lined agriculture and still continue to hunt and prefer forest collection.

Chaturbhuj Sahu [37] examines the migration causes and patterns of the Birhors of Chotanagpur plateau. His study finds out that there are instances of individual family, sections of the tanda (members of one lineage) as well as whole tanda migration. The Birhors migration is cyclic and there is a fixed geographical area within which the migration takes place. The causes of migration include death, epidemic, wrath of the Bonga and personal cause. He classifies the pattern of migration into four viz. Local tanda migration, distant tanda migration, individual and family migration and temporary migration. Government aid and developmental schemes have lured them to adopt a settled life. The isolated wandering

Birhor of yesteryear have now established close symbiotic relationship with the non-Birhors due to rehabilitation programmes where there is constant interaction between them and the other communities.

Sarkar [38] in his account of the Birhors of Bihar has revealed that they are semi-nomadic in Bihar. He explores the nomadism among the Birhors from his field accounts as well as from the memoirs of B.J. Williams' [39] inferences. Drawing inferences from Durkheim's functional isolate Sarkar finds the *tanda* or small group among the Birhors serves as functional isolate. Brief accounts of Birhor mode of subsistence i.e., hunting, collection along with socio-cultural ties and importance of kinship has been described. He identifies the problems of landlessness, destruction of forest ecology and their direct impact on subsistence of the Birhors. He recommends land rights, training, promotion of horticulture, animal husbandry, introduction of cooperative societies for sale or exchange of rope made products, health care, drinking water, and educational, housing and social assistance. Sarkar's account of Birhors concentrates on the band life of the community. He sees the band organization of the Birhors as the functional isolate of Malinowski. The migratory and nomadism practised by the Birhors give certain anomalies in the census enumeration. Sarkar cites the demography of B.J. Williams concerning the Birhors of Bihar and particularly to Hazaribagh district. Food quest, kinship ties and marriage serve as the base structure on which the social organization of the Birhors stands. Nomadic habit has negative effects in terms of poor literacy level and resource constraints.

## Excerpts from the Field

### Changing Occupational Structure

Broadly the occupational structure of Birhor comprises of a number of activities performed indoor as well as outdoor and their activities are changed as per seasons in a year. The field study conducted among the Birhors reveals that they are engaged as agriculture labour and non-agricultural labourers. Siali, Sawai and plastic rope making is their major indoor activity and selling of such ropes are their main outdoor activity which is commonly undertaken in all seasons. Besides, these few of the Birhor are also associated with some micro economic income generating activities. From the field survey it could be ascertained that Birhor households are engaged in number of occupations. It is found that significantly higher proportion of households derive their maximum household income from rope making and selling. Exclusive Siali rope making is found prominence among the households of micro project areas, however, in addition to Siali rope making, Sawai and plastic rope making and selling are also found among the non-project

area households. This implies market dependence for raw materials has already started among the non-project area households as against exclusive forest dependence for raw materials i.e., Siali creepers is evident among the Micro Project area households. Besides, rope making, non-agricultural labour followed by agricultural labour are found as next important sources of household income.

### Birhors and Their Nexus with the Village Haat

"Village Haat" has cultural significance in any of the tribal society so also for the Birhor people. "The Haat" mostly a weekly or fortnightly makeshift market situation where tribal people come to sell their own products and purchase their day-to-day requirements by exchanging their own produced items. Although cash transactions are more prevalent, now-a-days, but during olden days it was a solid platform for barter type of transaction. Apart from transactions of goods, "Tribal Haats" also provide ample scope for cultural exchanges among the tribal people. Tribal people come to Haat for shopping, marketing, recreation and social interaction. A leading newspaper remark is "A haat is not a place of mere shopping or marketing. It provides scope for recreation and social interaction. Here, the tribal people exchange information about family, marriages and festivals. In short, it is a meeting place for exchanging news and views. Haats are the nerve centre of tribal life". The role of Birhor women especially in the village haats is very important. During the nomadic times the Birhor women used to be experts in selling the Siali rope products amongst the Neighbourhood mostly comprising people from Caste society. But after the sedentarization process has started, the Birhor women have lost their independence while selling the ropes. In contemporary times as observed from the field it could be seen that mostly these women are accompanying their husbands to village haats. The expertise and skill of the Birhor women as indigenous entrepreneurs has been taken a back seat. After engaging themselves as agricultural labourers during harvest seasons and as non-agricultural wage labourers during other parts of a year, the existing division of labour among the Birhors where the women were equal contributors of their economy has been going into oblivion. Now days in the Haat they help their husbands in selling the rope made products.

### Sedentarization Hardly Impacts the Migrating Birhors

Household migration of Birhor households has been analyzed on the basis of migrant households' migration behaviour on the basis of type of migration, place of migration and average duration of migration. It is well known that Birhor households are very much migration prone by virtue of their traditional occupation pattern. During olden

time period they did not have any permanent settlement and they were continuously wandering to different places, where possibility of accessing Siali creepers is high in the nearby forest. The incidence of interstate migration is found to be higher among the households of the micro project areas compared to non-micro project areas.

### Changes in Dwelling Abodes

Traditionally, the Birhor households live in small, scattered communities. Until the 1950s, their lifestyle was primarily nomadic and depended on the availability of forest game and market trends. The government of India then began to limit Birhor access to the forests, forcing them into low-skilled agricultural and mining jobs and settling them in resettlement colonies [40].

During olden days, when they were mainly pursuing hunting-gathering type of economic activity, they were usually staying in Tandas i.e., group of 6-7 or 10-15 huts together at one place. Most of the members of each household of a group or Tanda are relatives to each other. Tanda is also known as tola or band. Their hut has leaves thatched roof [41]. But, nowadays, such kind of huts have become out of practice particularly in Mayurbhanj district, where the study is being undertaken. From the field it is observed that all of the households living in micro project area have pucca houses, while around 50 percent of the households in non-micro project areas have Pucca houses. It can be said that due to development intervention over time and particularly due to continuous schemes implemented through micro project development agencies, the Bihors' housing style is upgraded to Pucca houses. They are the beneficiaries of different housing schemes like Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), Prime Minister Awas Yojana (PMAY) and Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana of the Govt.

### Way Forward

Sedentarization has multiplied the challenges faced by the Bihors. Identity crisis and identity loss are the main concerns. Frequent cultural borrowing and exchange have gulfed down the traditional social structure of the Bihors. For keeping the identity intact, it is indeed essential that the tribal nomenclature must be rationalized. They no more catch or eat monkey meat hence rationalization of their community's nomenclature will bring a sense of ethnic pride and would revive their distinct cultural heritage.

Karmakar [21] the traditional semi-nomadic lifestyle of the Bihors in Purulia district historically hindered the development of crafts among them. Despite this, the craft of making ropes and rope-based products has persisted as a distinctive artistic tradition of this primitive tribe.

They possess expertise in crafting ropes using various fibers gathered from local forests. Birhor men, women, and occasionally children skillfully produce ropes of varying sizes from these fibers, which are known for their beauty and durability.

Mathew and Kasi [20] observe that the Birhor tribe, like other South Asian indigenous groups, relies on forests for their livelihood. However, large-scale exploitation by multinational corporations and the state conflicts with the tribes' sustainable use of forest resources for their survival.

Firdos [42] finds out extensive degradation of forest resources and diminished forest cover have profoundly impacted the traditional ways of life for the Birhor. Consequently, they are increasingly seeking alternative livelihood opportunities in their vicinity. This situation highlights the need for support from both governmental and non-governmental organizations to enhance their access to forest resources and ensure a fair distribution of land and other natural assets [43].

Since the Bihors are categorized as nomadic hunting-gathering tribe, the efforts for permanent settlement have ushered in a lot of changes in terms of their habitat, ecology, occupation, religion, political participation and acculturation. All these areas are important because any significant alteration to the age-old social structure would gulf down the unique characteristics and social heritage of this Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group. Development interventions and policy planning must be done in a way that the tribe will be able to adapt to the changing scenario without compromising its identity and ideology.

### References

1. Spooner B (1973) the cultural ecology of pastoral nomads. Addison-Wesley Modules in Anthropology.
2. Asad T (1978) Equality in nomadic systems. Critique of Anthropology 3(11): 57-65.
3. Kohler F (2020) Space, Place and Identity: Wodaabe of Niger in the 21st Century. Integration and Conflict Studies 21: 246.
4. Hanna A (2022) Roma in Soviet Ukraine: Ways of Life and Forced Sedentarisation Before and After the Second World War. Journal of the Hugo Valentin Centre 42: 63-80.
5. Semplici G (2020) Clotting nomadic spaces: On sedentism and nomadism. Nomadic Peoples 24(1): 56-85.
6. Goodall SK (2007) from plateau pastures to urban fringe:

- sedentarisation of nomadic pastoralists in Ladakh, north-west India. Adelaide Research & Scholarship.
7. Dounias E, Selzner A, Koizumi M, Levang P (2007) from Sago to Rice, from Forest to Town: The Consequences of Sedentarization for the nutritional ecology of Punan former hunter-gatherers of Borneo. *Food Nutr Bull* 28(2): 294-302.
  8. Meir A (1986) Demographic Transition Theory: A Neglected Aspect of the Nomadism-Sedentarism Continuum. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 11(2): 199-211.
  9. Barker RG (1968) *Ecological Psychology: Concepts and Methods for Studying the Environment of Human Behavior*. Stanford University Press 3(4).
  10. Roy SC (1925) The Birhor: A little known jungle tribe of Chota Nagpur. *Man in India*.
  11. Singh KS (2012) *People of India*. Anthropological Survey of India.
  12. Sinha AK (1999) the Birhor of Madhya Pradesh: As they are today. *Indian Anthropologist* 29(1): 77-101.
  13. Schleiter M (2005) Enduring Endangerments: Constructing the Birhor "Tribe", Development Officers and Anthropologists from Early Twentieth-Century Colonial India to the Present. *Perspectives on Endangerment*. Olms: Leipzig, 71-82.
  14. Sahu C (1995) *Birhor Tribe: Dimensions of Development*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons.
  15. Mukherjee M (2000) *The Birhor towards the next Millenium: Glimpses of a Primitive Tribal Group at Kodarma in Bihar*. Calcutta: Sujan Publications.
  16. Bose R (2016) Changing lives of Bihors in Purulia: A socio-economic observation in twenty-first century. *Contemporary Voice of Dalit* 8(2): 206-219.
  17. Manna S, Sarkar R (2015) *Bihors' Ways of Life in 21st Century: A Micro Study in a Few Villages of Hazaribag District, Jharkhand*. *Man and Life* 41 (1): 71-78.
  18. Nadal D (2014) Hunting monkeys and gathering identities: Exploring self-representation among the Birhor of Central-East India. *La Picerca Folklorica* 69: 263-278.
  19. Pankaj R (2008) the changing economy of the Birhor of Jharkhand. *Indian Anthropologist* 38(2): 75-82.
  20. Mathew GS, Kasi E (2021) *Livelihoods of Vulnerable People: An Ethnographic Study among the Birhor of Chhattisgarh*. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Rural Development* 31(1): 127-142.
  21. Karmakar S (2022) Occupational Diversification of the Bihors in Purulia District, West Bengal (1956-2017 AD). *Journal of Adivasi and Indigenous Studies*.
  22. Gron O, Turov MG, Klokkernes T (2008) settling in the landscape—settling the land: Ideological aspects of territoriality in a Siberian hunter-gatherer society. *Archaeology of Settlements and Landscape in the North*, pp: 57-80.
  23. Dounias E, Froment A (2006) when forest-based hunter-gatherers become sedentary: consequences for diet and health. *Unasylyva* 57(224): 26-33.
  24. Lathrap WD (1970) *the Upper Amazon*. Ancient Peoples and Places Series. Vol. 70. London: Thames and Hudson.
  25. Mishra PK, Malhotra KC (1982) *Nomads in India*-Proceedings of the National Seminar.
  26. Govt of India (2008) *Report of the National Commission for De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes*. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, New Delhi, pp: 14-16.
  27. Renake B (1984) *Kalu Thelarichya Hatyechi Katha (A story of Murder of Kalu Thelari)* Granthmala: Khand. Granthali Publication.
  28. Misra PK (1986) *Mobility-Sedentary Opposition: A Case Study of the Nomadic Gadulia Lohar*. *Nomadic Peoples*, White Horse Press pp: 179-187.
  29. Hayden B (1972) Population Control among hunter/gatherers. *World Archaeology* 4(2): 205-221.
  30. Gulliver PH (1975) *Nomadic Movements: Causes and Implications in Pastoralism in Tropical Africa*.
  31. Bernland J (1979) *Peripatetic, Pastoralist and Sedentism Interactions in Complex Societies*. *Nomadic Peoples* 4: 6-8.
  32. Salzman PC (1972) *Multi-Resource Nomadism in Iranian Baluchistan*, in William Irons and Neville Dyson-Hudson.
  33. George P (1967) *the ethnographic atlas: a summary*. *Ethnology* 6(2).
  34. Goggin JM, Sturtevant WC (1964) *The Calusa: a stratified, nonagricultural society (with notes on sibling marriage)*. In W.H. Good enough (Ed.), *Explorations in cultural anthropology; essays in honor of George Peter Murdock*.



New York: McGraw-Hill.

35. Patnaik N (1987) the Birhor. *Adibasi* 27(2): 1-17.
36. Rath R (1993) A Study of the process of change in the life of the Primitive Tribe in Mayurbhanj, Orissa. *Adibasi* 33(4).
37. Sahu C (1993) Migration of the Birhor and their present attitude. *Vanyajati* (2): 10-17.
38. Sarkar A (1994) the Birhor-A Semi-Nomadic Tribe of Bihar: Problems and Suggestion. *Man and Life* 20 (3): 153-160.
39. Williams BJ (1974) A Model of Band Society. *Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology* 29: 1-138.
40. Nadal D (2015) Housing Ancestors: The Reorganization of Living Spaces among the Birhor of Jharkhand and Odisha. *Internationales Asienforum* 46(1): 39-58.
41. Tripathi S (2017) Birhor and their culture: an ethnographic account of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group of Chhattisgarh.
42. Firdos S (2005) Forest degradation, changing workforce structure and population redis-tribution: The case of Bihors in Jharkhand. *Economic and Political Weekly* 40(8): 773-778.
43. Debbarman P (1995) Birhor of West Bengal: An Overview on a Tribe in transition. *Bulletin of the Cultural Research Institute* 26(1): 10.