

## LAMBADAS, A UNIQUE COMMUNITY

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### ABSTRACT

*Lambada are the most colourful of all the tribal groups. They are widely dispersed in almost all the district. Lambadas are declared as Scheduled Tribe in Andhra area and as a Denotified Tribe in Telangana area of Andhra Pradesh. After 1976, they are declared as Scheduled Tribes in Telangana area also. The origin and history of Lambadis is very Vague and ambiguous. There are many legends which explain their origin. The Lambadas themselves claim that they are of Rajput origin and Kshatriyas. At present some of the economically better off have built improved houses at a considerably greater cost with proper ventilation and more accommodation. The Government also constructed colonies for them.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Lambada, Tribal, Denotified, Origin, Economically, Accommodation.*

### INTRODUCTION

Lambada are the most colourful of all the tribal groups of Andhra Pradesh, widely dispersed in almost all the district. According to Scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribe Lists Modification Order of 1956, Lambadas are declared as Scheduled Tribe in Andhra area and as a Denotified Tribe in Telangana area of Andhra Pradesh. After 1976, they are declared as Scheduled Tribes in Telangana area also. They are also found in other States like Bihar, West Bengal, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Mysore and Orissa where they are called Banjaras. According to Edger Thruston, the Lambadis are also called Lambani, Brinjari or Banjari, Borpari, Sukali or Sugali.

### OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this research paper is to study the conditions of the Lambadas, and to study their socio economic condition of these people in Telangana State.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method of research will be used to study about this research work. The researcher will visit the schools and colleges to collect the data which is required to analyze. The data will be collected based on both the primary and secondary sources. The qualitative research methods like ethnography, narrative, phenomenology, ground theory, and case study will be used for the research work.

The origin and history of Lambadis is very Vague and ambiguous. There are many legends which explain their origin. The Lambadas themselves claim that they are of Rajput origin and Kshatriyas. It is believed that the Lambadas came into South along with the great armies or the Moghal Emperors when they invaded the South. They helped the imperial army fighting in an exhausted country far from their suppliers, by supplying a fearless and reliable transport service. The

following anecdotes are related about their service. These fascinating immigrants from the North remained in the Deccan and in spite of coming into contact with different castes and creeds, have retained the characteristic features of their culture, viz., dress, dialect, mythology and rituals. For several their service, they were the only means of supply to the different parts of the extensive state.

From several records, it is clear that life of the Lambadas was essentially nomadic. For reasons of earning their livelihood, they had to move in bands-men, women and children and only temporarily could they have any settled life. With the increase and developments in the modern means of transport, the occupation of the Lambadas became obsolete being too slow and risky. These people were forced to take to a more settled existence. Consequently, most of them have taken to agriculture for their livelihood. Some of them became petty traders and merchants and others are labourers.

Tanda is very common among Lambadas in almost all places to have their settlements outside the main village exclusively inhabited by hem. Some times their settlements may be as far away as one or two miles from the main village. They call their settlement as Tanda so much so that in many districts.

At present some of the economically better off have built improved houses at a considerably greater cost with proper ventilation and more accommodation. The Government also constructed colonies for them. Wells are the source of water for the Tandas and Government facilitates some Tandas with bore wells. Many Lambadas in Andhra Pradesh are getting subsidies for modernization.

Every Lambada Tanda has got its own traditional Panchayat consisting of the Nayak, the Karbari, and a few experienced elders. The Nayakship is an important institution among the Lambadas. He looks into the general administration of the Tanda. He is responsible to maintain Law and order in the Tanda. The Naik presides over all the deliberations and announces the decisions in all the cases of Tanda. He represents the authority of the community on occasions like marriage, divorce, death and on various festivals. Without his presence no function or ceremony is complete. Generally, he knows all the people in the Tanda and their affairs. He is expected to possess the qualities of honesty, truthfulness, integrity, bravery and in addition he must have an understanding of all the problems connected with his Tanda. Nayak is assisted by Karbari in all the matters. In the absence of Nayak, he officiates for him.

The Banjaras are a strong and virile race, with tall stature and fair complexion. Men are muscular and of medium height with Rajput features. The traditional attire of the men comprises of dhoti, short trousers and gaudy turbans or rumal (phadki) on their head. Most of the men wear foot-wear made locally by a cobbler, which are considered durable and cheap.

The ornaments of Lambadas are many and varied. Lambadi women are very fond of ornaments and they are never tired of wearing many heavy ornaments made of silver and gold.

The Banjaras mostly claim themselves to be Hindus and worship many of the deities of Hindu pantheon. Most of them worship Lord Venkateshwara and call him as "Balaji". They also worship Krishna, Rama and Siva. Besides the Hindu pantheon, they also worship local Gods and Goddesses for different proposes. These deities are also worshipped by other local Hindu castes.

As already mentioned, the importance of the post of Nayak has gone down considerably in recent years. The statutory panchayats set up under the programme of democratic decentralization are providing alternative forces of power. There is thus not only clash of personalities but of systems. The Nayak derives his authority from the moral sanction of the community the Sarpanch derives his authority from the legal sanction of the state.

### **REFERENCES**

1. *Sumahan Bandyopadhyay says something fairly similar - "Derived from ban and charan, meaning wanderers of forest" or "cattle grazers".*
2. *A tanda refers to a caravan of bullocks but was also used to describe a Banjara encampment.*
3. *The association of wandering groups with criminality was neither a colonial notion nor necessarily one that first arose during the British era in India. The British treated vagrants as criminals in their own country.*

