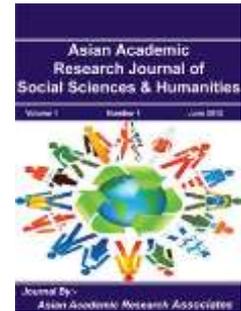




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**HEALTH DETERMINANTS OF BAIGA: A PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE
TRIBAL GROUP IN CENTRAL INDIA**

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ABSTRACT

Tribal groups constitute 32.45 percent of the total population of Chhattisgarh state. There are 43 tribal groups including 05 primitive tribal groups inhabiting in Chhattisgarh. Baiga was identified as one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTGs) of Chhattisgarh as well as Madhya Pradesh because of their isolated living, dependency on forest economy, low literacy and high mortality rate. A large number of Baiga mainly live on and around Achanakmar-Amarkantak Bio-Sphere Reserve. The major part of the Bio-Sphere Reserve lies in Chhattisgarh mainly over Bilaspur district and the remaining part of the area extends into Dindori and Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh. Baiga tribe residing in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh state was selected for the study. They inhabited in Lormi, Kota and Gourela block of Bilaspur district. Three villages each from three blocks were selected for the study on the basis of concentration of Baiga families in the village. An attempt was made to collect the data from each and every family. Out of 390 Baiga families inhabiting in three villages, information on demographic features was collected from 385 families. 270 ever married women in the age group 15-44 were also interviewed. Health is one of the important indicators of social development. In recent years the slogan of “Health for all” by 2000 AD has been extended to 2020 AD. The national health policy also includes the provisions of health services to tribal areas. But health workers have failed to introduce modern health care services in tribal areas. This could be because of lack of knowledge about the culture and society of tribal people. The challenges regarding health for Baiga can be seen as health care for children, antenatal and postnatal care of the mother, disease associated with poor economy, unsafe drinking water, low literacy level and cultural belief associated with various diseases. An attempt has hereby made to examine the health status of Baiga in terms of some important health indicators. Factors affecting fertility like age at marriage, age at first birth, number of children have also discussed here. Information on health status among the Baiga will be helpful to understand the realities of health problems prevailing among them and also useful to implement health care services. The present paper therefore aims to understand the health status among the Baiga by looking demographic variables, health indicators and some health statistics.

Key Words: *Health, Mortality, Fertility, Health Care Services*