

# **TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Hyderabad**

## **Experiential Learning-2019 Group Report**

**Group Number: - 5**

### **Members:**

Anuja Prasad (H2019DS002)

Athira Raj (H2019DS005)

Olek Kombo (H2019DS014)

Hitesh Kumar Nayak (H2019RDG009)

S Rakesh Naik (H2019RDG029)

Samreen Sardar (H2019RDG020)

Srikanth Kavali (HMO2019RDG004)

### **Coordinator:**

**Village Visited:** Gunthakodur

**Mandal :** Tadoor

**District :** Nagarkurnool

**State :** Telangana

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

As a part of the curriculum of Experiential learning which aimed at understanding rural society, we were placed in Gunthakodur, a village in the Nagarkurnool District of Telangana. The village is a small hamlet with a very small population of 2034 people. This experiential learning in the village indeed helped us understand the true essence of a village, its resources, main institutions etc.

This report is thus a comprehensive report of all the things we did and what we learned about the village during the 4 days fieldwork. It includes data from all our observations, interviews, conversations and activities. We have also added our takeaways from the experiences in the village.

## **2. OBJECTIVE**

As the main objective of experiential learning was to understand a village we went to the village with no particular agenda attached to it. This gave us the liberty to explore various aspects of village life. Thus, the main objective of this fieldwork and the report following it is:

- Understand the village as a whole
- Understand the various resources, institutions and activities in a village.

We were able to do this as we got a first-hand experience and opportunity by living the same lifestyle as the rest of the villagers did along with talking to the people of the village.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

We used a number of different tools to gather our information and create an understanding of the village, some of which are:

- TOOLS

- A. Observation: Our eyes were open from the time we entered the village, we observed conversation, activities, habits, etc. We observed who spoke in the family and among a group of people, whose voice appeared to influence the discussion, and the ways in which

the decisions were reached. Observations were made about how men gathered, when and where and how women spoke, which was a visual representation of power and social relationships. Thus, we were able to understand things that people didn't speak of but did practice or things that people were so habituated that they never noticed it and hence forgot to tell us about or never thought it was important enough to talk about.

B. Interview/conversation: We interviewed elected officials like the Sarpanch of the village, head of Self Help Group and others like the PDS distributor, school teachers, ASHAs, Anganwadi workers. We also interviewed families, women and men working in fields. On the other hand, we used informal conversations to gather information. We talked to shop keepers while buying something from their shops or walked along with the farmers when they were returning from their fields. This was we tried to ensure that the people were comfortable as well as didn't feel like we were officials who have come to take some vital information from them. These informal conversations helped us understand their expectations from the government, their dreams and what they had to say about their village.

C. Participatory Rural Appraisal: An approach through which we incorporated the knowledge and opinions of rural people to derive knowledge about the resources of the village. We used two methods of PRA the village map and the daily clock.

The village map was prepared with the help of the villagers. It was done with the help of almost 40 people from the village who drew the map of their village on the ground with the help of chalk. They marked their streets, shops, tanks, etc. It helped in navigating our way to some of the important infrastructure and places of the village.

The daily clock was prepared after talking to at least 5-6 men and 8 women who helped us in dividing our work for the day. With the help of a daily clock, we could estimate the time when different categories of people would be available. For instance, the women of the village could be found only in the field during the afternoon and at night we could visit their house. So during the afternoon, we visited fields and schools, Anganwadi, and sub-

health centres. More importantly, it told us about the lives and day to day activities of the women and men in the village.

- **SAMPLING METHOD**

The sampling method inculcated in the study would necessitate biases in the study as it was a Non-Probability sampling method. This was followed by convenience sampling as most of our samples were based on the availability of the person and who was easily accessible and were needed for our study.

#### **4. DAY TO DAY ACTIVITIES**

We were at Gunthakodur for a duration of 4 days. We initially tried to build a rapport with the people of the village, this was necessary to build trust among the village people. It was only after this that the villagers could open up to us and share information about the village.

DAY 1: The first half of our day was spent in travelling to the village. On reaching the village we found our accommodation and settled down. After which we started our work.

- We met our coordinator Ramesh Bhandari, who gave us an overview of the village.
- Transect walk along with children of the village and few old men
- Informal conversations and introduction of ourselves with villagers sitting at Rachabanda.

DAY 2:

- Visited Upper primary Gunthakodur school and interacted with teachers and students.
- Visited a few local shops and interviewed them.
- Met with ASHAs
- Went to the fields and interviewed the labourers and farmers in the cotton fields
- Prepared for village map and Made the village map along with the villagers

DAY 3:

- Visited Anganwadis
- Visited Sub health centre and interviewed ANM (Auxiliary Nursing Midwife)
- Went to the paddy fields and talked to labourers and farmers.

- Meeting with Sarpanch
- Making of Daily clock
- Interviewed a few households

DAY 4:

- Met with Gram Sevak/ Panchayat Secretary
- Visited PDS Shops
- Went to the chilli fields and interviewed the workers.
- Interviewed households
- Interviewed SHG Health

## 5.VILLAGE PROFILE

<b>Village</b>	Gunthakodur
<b>Mandal</b>	Tadoor
<b>District</b>	Nagarkurnool
<b>State</b>	Telangana
<b>Pin Code</b>	509209
<b>Nearest Towns</b>	Kalwakurthy, Nagarkurnool, Bijinapally
<b>Population</b>	2034
<b>No. of Households</b>	726
<b>No. of wards</b>	10
<b>No. of Tandas</b>	None
<b>Total Area(hectares)</b>	826
<b>Literacy rate</b>	65%
<b>Castes</b>	SC-123(m),146(f); ST-2(f) OBC/OC-893(m),870(f)
<b>No. of voters</b>	1541
<b>Languages spoken</b>	Telugu, Hindi

**6. VILLAGE MAP (SOCIAL AND RESOURCE)**



Fig:-Village map of Gunthakodur made by PRA

## **7.INSTITUTIONS AND RESOURCES OF THE VILLAGE**

To get a better understanding of the village we have divided the village into various spheres:

### **A.SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

We identified 4 prominent social institutions which determine the behaviour and how the people of the village live their lives. The values of these social institutions have been preserved and followed for all these years. These institutions are:

#### **1. MARRIAGE:**

The village has specific practices when it comes to the institution of marriage, some of which include:

- **Exogamy:**

Majority of the village practices Exogamy. They do not marry people within the same village but instead look for partners from other villages. However, when partners are chosen it is ensured that the villages chosen are not very far off from each other so that the women can go back to their native villages when they like.

- **Preference to Arranged marriages:**

People in the village usually have arranged marriages where the parents and elders select the partners for their sons or daughters. This is also more likely to happen because the women are married off at an earlier age and hence are not given time or opportunities to look for partners. Furthermore, love marriages are looked down upon. In the past, people have had love marriages, while some have run away, the others have settled down in the same village, however, their parents refuse to accept them or even talk to them.

- **Dowry:**

Dowry is given by the bride's family to the groom. In order to have a smooth marriage, it is mandatory that the bride's family pay whatever the groom's family demands. The dowry may even go up to 22-25 lakhs. The dowry increases with the qualifications of the groom, no matter how educated the bride is. If the bride's family cannot pay, the marriage either gets cancelled or the bride faces a lot of hostility from their in-laws after marriage.



- Child marriage:

Girls get married off at a very early age. Many of them are married off after they finish their 10th standard while some are even married off earlier than that. Since this was a very sensitive topic to talk about we spoke to young girls indirectly about it and one of them happened to tell us the story of how her classmate got married at the age of 13. Most of the time the husband of these girls are not the same age as them, they are usually much older. Sometimes the age gap is even 10-15 years.

*Kalyana Lakshmi-Shaadi Mubarak:* The Telangana government came up with this scheme in order to prevent child marriage. According to this scheme, the girls family gets an amount of 1 lakh if their daughter is married after 18. This money is also used to help families with marriage expenses. As a result, this scheme has helped a lot of young girls as now families are waiting for their daughters to turn 18 so that they get the benefits of this scheme, and thus do not marry off their daughters when they are children.

## 2. CASTE:

Caste is another such institution that governs the behaviour and patterns of people in Indian society. There are 5 prominent castes in this village: The Shettys and Vaishyas, Yadavas and the Malas and Madigas (SC). The following is a graph representing the population.

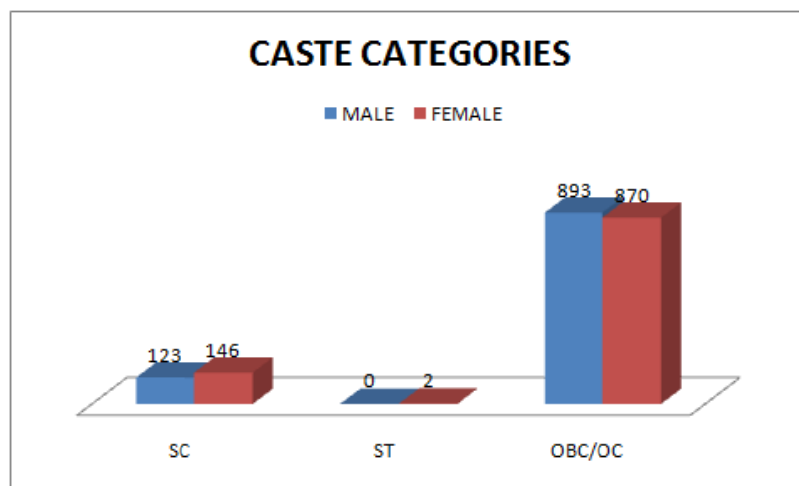


Fig:-Representation of the population on the basis of SC, ST and OBC/OC

One couldn't see the difference between members of these castes at one glance. However, through observations and informal conversations as well as with the help of interviews we could find some differences. Furthermore, in the few days that we spent in the village we couldn't find caste discrimination as such, however, caste consciousness was very much present. This could be seen in various areas, such as:

- The geographical location of each caste in the village:

While the Shettys, Vaishyas and the Yadavs lived all around the village and their houses were mixed throughout the village not having a particular colony or street specifically for them, it was not the same for the Mala and Madigas. The Malas and Madigas had a separate street where only members of these castes lived. This street was more towards the entrance of the village and not anywhere near the central part of the village.



Fig:-Location of the Malas and Madigas in the village (yellow shaded area)

- Occupation:

Our observations showed that the majority of the members of the Malas and Madiga community did not have ownership of land or did not have their own business. They were usually labourers who worked on other peoples agricultural fields.

- Education:

One major observation made was that the government schools had only children from the Scheduled castes or Backward classes. This was because the children from the other castes went to private schools outside the village.

- Attitudes of the people:

When it came to caste people looked down at the Malas and Madigas. There were two instances that showed us this. The first one was when we were at a villager's house having lunch when we heard a drum beat. On enquiring about it to the lady, she said it was coming from the marriage celebrations taking place in Mala and Madiga street. She used the term "uncivilized Harijans" to describe them in a very casual way. Furthermore, when we asked her if she could take us there because we didn't know which house it was, she refused to come with us, saying she couldn't go there. The second instance was when we saw a lady in the field give the labourer drinking water by pouring it directly into her hands instead of giving the jar to her.

### C. RELIGION:

The people in this village were either Hindus or Muslims. Yet, there were no significant differences between them. They didn't have different colonies or streets for a particular religion, the houses were mixed when it came to religion. There was one mosque and 5 temples in the village. While the mosque was in one corner of the village, the temples were distributed in the central parts of the village. When it comes to festivals Bonnalu, Sankranti, Dussehra, Diwali, Ramzan, Bakrid, etc. The festivals are usually celebrated together as communities. There were no negative differences or hostility between people from both the religions that we saw during our stay.

### D. GENDER:

The sex ratio in the village is 1:1. There is an equal number of men and women in the village. In fact, the number of females is more than men as there are 1118 females and 1116 males.

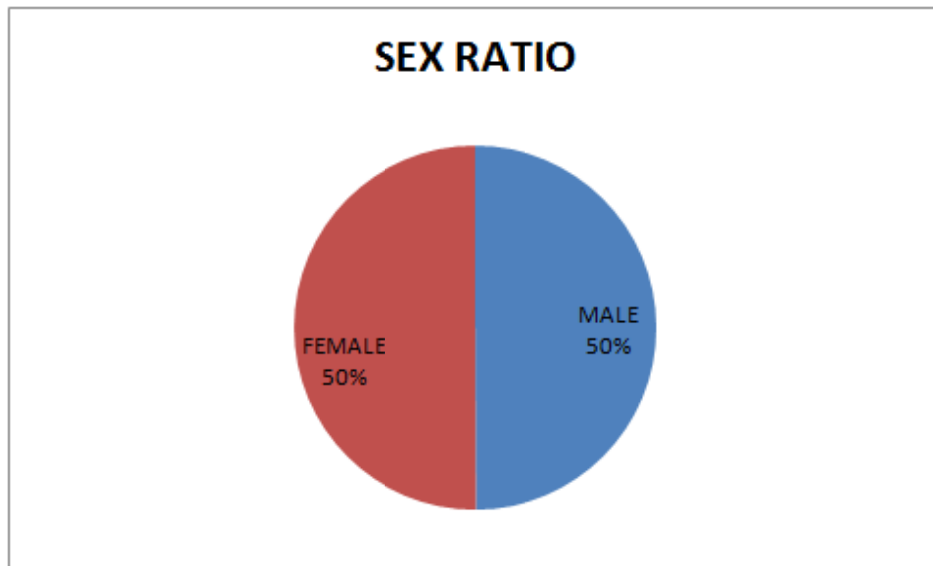


Fig:-Representation of population on the basis of caste

The gender of a person also imposes certain restrictions or set certain freedoms for the people.

This can be seen in:

- Marriage: women are married off earlier, they have less say as to when they get married, who they marry, etc. Furthermore, after marriage, it is the man who takes all the decision regarding his wife. The female gets subjugated under him. On the other hand, men can get married at a later age, they can decide who they want to get married to and become the dominant one after marriage.
- Occupation: There is a division of work on the basis of gender. Since the people in this village primarily deal with agriculture we can see the division of work in this sphere. For example, in this village woman only work in the fields or do household work, men, on the other hand, engage in agricultural work that requires going outside the village like getting the inputs, or transporting the harvests to mills and so on.
- Education: We can see differences here as well. Girls only study till class 10 or maximum till class 12 after which they are married off. Men, on the other hand, complete their post-graduation as well. Additionally, boys are sent to private English medium schools outside the village while girls are sent to the government school in the village.

- **Political Participation:** Women in this village do not participate much in the political processes. They only vote and sign wherever their husbands ask them to. This can be seen significantly in the Panchayati institution of the village where there are 5 females in the panchayat, however, they are only nominal heads as the real heads are their husbands, fathers or their brothers. While talking to the women we realised that the women do not find any of these political processes or institutions useful and consider them to be a waste of time as they distract them from their daily work and at times results in loss of pay.

### DAILY CLOCK

To get a better understanding of the activities of the men and women we created a daily clock which is as follows.

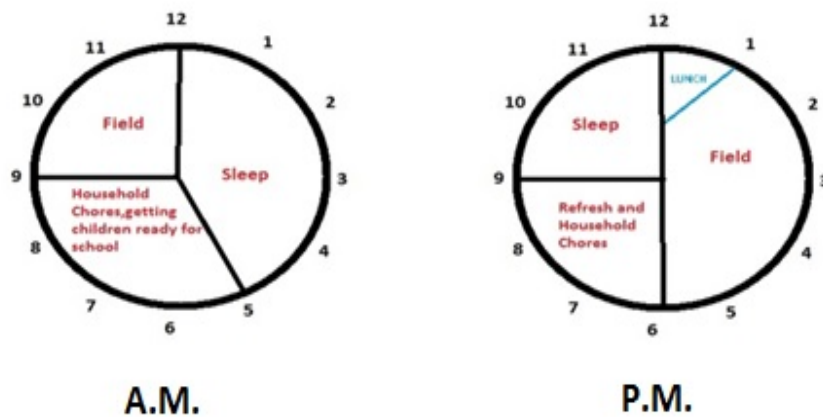


Fig:-Daily Clock of the women of the village

This clock clearly shows how women work for nearly 16 hours a day. They are either engaged in household chores or are working in the fields. On the other hand when we spoke to the men in the village it than out that men are free from all the household chores and as a result, they are either engaged in work or are at home resting or drinking with their friends. Even though women work more than men, their contributions are not considered as work as they believe that it is only the men who are working and only they are the ones who earn money.

## B.ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS, RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

The villagers as we observed were involved in a variety of occupations, agriculture being the predominant one. Other sources of livelihood were Animal Husbandry, Fisheries, Businesses, Labour and employment in government institutions.

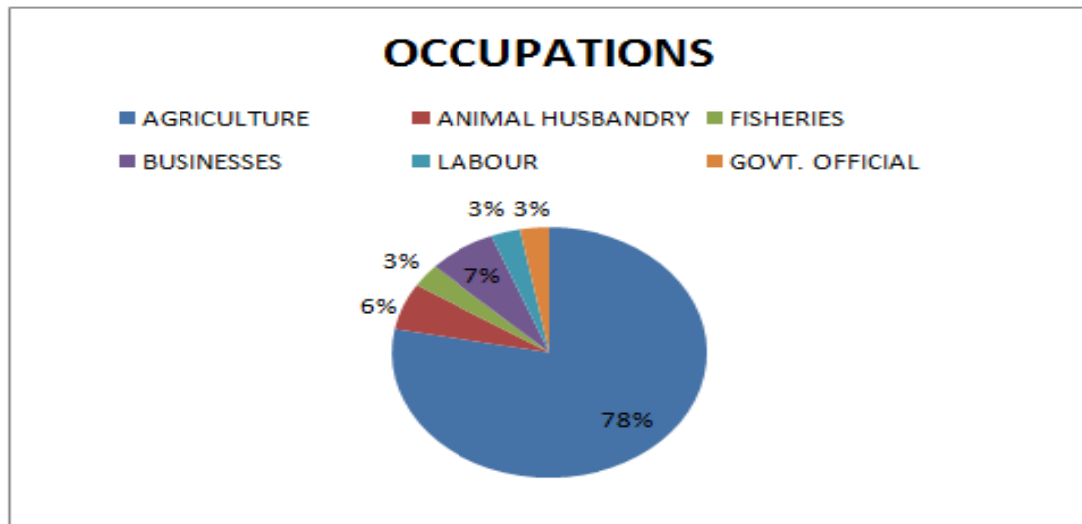


Fig:-proportion of major occupations in the village

- Agriculture
  - Paddy, cotton, pulses, vegetables and chilli are the main crops in the village. These crops bring a good income and are most appropriate for the climate and soil. Seasonal crops grown are usually pulses that depend on rain. Compared to the meagre rain in the past two years, this year has had good rainfall and the villagers expect good produce. The insufficient rains in the past have decreased water levels in the tanks.
  - Tractors, iron equipments for ploughing and carts are also used by the farmers, some people rent harvest machines and use that as their income as well.



Fig:-a)Drip Irrigation system at the fields;b)Mix vegetable farming;c)Cotton cultivation field and d)Chilli cultivation field

- There are agriculture schemes to help farmers and promote ;
  - Rythu Bandu which gives two sessions investments on agriculture Rs 6000 per acre in two installments in a year
  - Crop insurance when there is crop failure they get a certain amount as a relief which helps to come out from loss and zero per cent interest in the banks,
  - Runamafi or crop loans in the bank through which they can avail up to Rs 100000 which is from the state government of Telangana.
  - Yet another scheme is the mission Kakatiya which works for improving groundwater for agriculture.

- People of Gunthakodur are both directly and indirectly linked to agricultural activities. They either own lands and cultivate crops or they provide labour on the fields that belong to their friends or other landowners for wage which ranges from 300 to 350 rupees per day.

- Animal Husbandry

Sheep, Goats, Cows, Bullocks and Chicken are reared by the villagers for meat, milk, eggs and transport.

- Fisheries

The lake at the end of the village facilitates fishing activities. We noticed trucks and bikes used to transport and sell fish respectively which were subsidised under the Integrated Fisheries Development Scheme in Guntakodur.

- Businesses

Lorries were quite common. In fact, we were told Guntakodur had the maximum number of lorries i.e, 30, in the whole Mandal. There were also quite a few shops; general stores, an electrical shop, a pesticide shop, chicken shop etc.

### **Seasonal Occupation**

While the winter season is taken up by cultivating and harvesting crops, most people find themselves unemployed in the summers. Which is when they take to migration to cities in search of job opportunities and education. Nevertheless, this kind of migration is temporary as most people aren't keen to leave the village. As for people who do not migrate, they turn to 30 days action plan by the Telangana government for sanitation and cleanliness or MGNREGA for employment.

### **Financial Support Schemes**

Centrally and State-sponsored schemes are implemented to aid the villagers;

- Asara Pension. For the aged population (₹ 2016/yr) and the physically challenged people(₹ 3016/yr).



- Rythu Bandhu. Investment Support against the cycle of rural indebtedness.
- Rythu Bima. Financial Support in the event of loss of life of a farmer.
- Crop Insurance. Financial Support in the event of crop damage.

### **Banking Systems**

Both formal and informal forms of banking exist in the village. While most people depend on informal types; borrowing money from landlords or relatives, banks, SHGs, the post office also occupy a significant part of the banking system. The Self Help Groups in the village have aided a lot of small businesses to come up. Although a few of them have become defunct due to internal conflicts and the inability of people to pay the monthly amount after it increased from rupees 30 to rupees 100, these groups have been quite active.

### **Self-sustenance**

The village of Gunthakodur does not have weekly markets. The people there are self-sufficient in growing their vegetables and other essentials within the village in the backyards. They use barter or money mediated exchange to avail the products they need.

## **C.HUMAN CAPITAL**

### **(I) Health**

When it comes to the health facilities in the village, there are a number of ways that the people in the village can access health facilities:

#### a) ANGANWADI:

The Anganwadi is an institution created by the government under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, it not only helps to prevent child hunger but also avoids malnourishment in children and also has provisions for pregnant women and adolescent women. This village has 2 Anganwadis which have been separated by the main road in the village

- Provisions for children: There are 29 children between the ages of 3 and 5 under these Anganwadis. Both these Anganwadis have one teacher and a worker each. They all

receive food and other supplements from the Anganwadi as Bal Amrutham. Along with this the children are also immunized and regularly given deworming tablets. It is for this reason that all the children in the village are within the green zone and none of them come under the yellow or red category.

- Adolescent Girls: The Anganwadis also help the girls between the ages of 11-18 by making them aware of hygiene and menstrual practices. There are approximately 120 adolescent girls in the village.
- Pregnant Women: Under the Arogya lakshmi scheme, the Anganwadis provide meals for pregnant and lactating women for 25 days in a month. 16 pregnant women and 6 lactating women are covered by the Anganwadis in the village.

Nutritional awareness programs: Such programs are conducted by the ANM, AWW and the ASHAs. They recommend and suggest diets and medicine for pregnant women.

#### b) SHC-ASHAs and ANM

This village had 2 ASHAs and 1 ANM while the ANM visits the village two times a week and provide general medicine for common diseases. The ANM is also responsible for administering injections to pregnant women and persuading women to have institutionalized deliveries. The ASHAs make door to door visits, ensure children are immunized, provide ORS and iron tablets and are also engaged in spreading awareness about family planning by conducting workshops.

People in the village have also started receiving better health facilities and opportunities from the schemes like Janani Suraksha Yojana, KCR Kit, Amma Odi, Aarogyashree.

#### → Janani Suraksha Yojana

- ◆ It is a central government scheme which aims to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting institutional delivery among the poor pregnant women. The ASHAs are the link between government and pregnant women. Under this scheme, the pregnant women get Rs 1400 and ASHAs get Rs 600.

→ KCR kit

- ◆ The state government provides this kit to the women who gave birth at a government hospital and it contains all the necessary items for pregnant women and the newborn baby. The women also get Rs 1200 in 3 phrases and in case of girl child an additional Rs 1000.

→ Amma Odi

- ◆ The provision of transport facility for the pregnant women before and after delivery has been facilitated and the ambulance takes half an hour at the most to reach them.

→ Aarogyasri

- ◆ Its a community health insurance scheme giving financial protection to BPL families up to 2 lakhs in a year for the treatment and almost all of the BPL families of the village are the beneficiaries.

## **(II) Education**

Anganwadi: Education first starts off at the Anganwadi. It facilitates conducts preschool activities like learning the alphabet and rhymes to the children of ages between 3 and 5.

School: Children of the village go to either private or government schools.

- There are three private schools at a distance of 4 km from the village at Tadoor; Prism, Siddhartha Model School, Brilliant Grammar School.
- There is one government school, Upper Primary School, Gunthakodur from class 1 to 8. There are 170 students (90 girls and 80 boys) and 7 permanent and 1 para teacher

Other facilities at the school.

- Biometric Attendance for both teachers and students was also available. Teaching Aids such as worksheets, charts, Azim Premji Foundation Interactive Lessons and Computer Aided Learning(CAL) to help the students was yet another highlight. It's the only school which has systems in the whole Mandal.
- Free uniform and free textbooks have also been provided to the students.
- Under the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education Mid-day meal has been provided and students are very satisfied with it.
- PHC doctor visit for every 2 months for the health check-up of students.

- There's a Student Management Committee (parents of 3 students from each class and a Chairman is selected among them). Its there from 15 years and the SMC and Principal represents the school in the Gram Panchayat.

### **School strength and dropout:**

Students opting English medium schools instead of Telugu resulted in the strength of the school to decrease from approximately 300 to less than 100. Hence, in 2015, the school brought in English as a medium of education till class 4 and this has shown a fairly lesser percentage of dropout.

A major drawback is unavailability of pre-primary classes like LKG, UKG, leading to well off families sending their kids to private schools. Of those who study at the school, meritorious ones leave after 5th class as they get admitted to Navodaya and Welfare School

### **(III)SHGs**

As skills are an asset of the livelihood of a place and SHGs in the village play an important role in the skill enhancement. There were 24 groups which are functional and active and 4 groups are now defunct due to internal conflicts and the inability of people to pay the monthly amount after it increased. They have activities like training to make wax candles, tailoring etc. They also provide loan to buy livestock, facilitate small business and for other activities. Before the SHGs, there were not enough women activities but after SHGs, there are many women activities started. Within 24 hrs loans are given in the case of emergencies.

## **D. PHYSICAL RESOURCES**

### **(I) VILLAGE INFRASTRUCTURE**

- **ROADS:** The village had concrete roads which connected the entire village. These roads were constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. This road connected the village to some of the important towns like Kalwakurthy and Nagarkurnool. Thus the schools and hospitals nearby have become easily accessible to people because of the well-constructed roads.

- **TOILETS:** Only 50% of the villagers have toilets in their houses. The construction of these toilets has been possible under the Swachh Bharat Mission. Under this mission, people get a reimbursement of Rs.12000 if they build the toilet. Till date, 180 toilets have been constructed. However, some houses could not avail the full amount and have received only Rs.10,000.
- **HOUSES:** The houses in the village were mostly pucca. They have been constructed without any government assistance.  
The villagers do not have a separate godown to store their farm produces and they use one of the rooms in the house to store it.
- **COMMON SPACES:** The houses in the village were mostly located around common public spaces like, Rachabanda and community hall. The people of the village gathered in these spaces for any kind of public meetings and celebrating festivals. It is also a space for people to gather and interact with each other and they play different kinds of games.

## **(II)WATER DISTRIBUTION:**

Under the Mission Bhagiratha, all the houses in the village are given access to water through the pipe connection. The tap water connection has helped women who had to travel far to fetch water which now comes through taps to each household 2 hrs a day regularly. This water is used for household purposes like bathing, washing clothes, dishes.

## **E. NATURAL RESOURCES**

The village has natural resources like water, land, forests in abundance.

- **Water:** It is one of the resources used for agriculture purposes, fishing and sanitation. There are two lakes that belong to the village. The water from the lakes is used for agriculture on the land that is spread over 250 acres.
- **Land:** Also used for agriculture. The village has two types of soil; red and black soil. Red soil crops are groundnut, sorghum which need less amount of water. Black soil is suitable for crops like cotton, paddy, chilli, pulse, corn and vegetables. The advantage of black soil

is that it holds large amounts of water. It is keeping this in mind that the farmers grow selected crops.

- Forests: Although there isn't a forest around the village the villagers use wood and fruits from trees. The wood collected is used for cooking and construction of huts and walls for housing.

In order to conserve water and preserve soil, two types of irrigation methods are used; sprinklers for pulses, oilseeds and vegetables and drip irrigation for chilli and other vegetable cultivation. These irrigation techniques use less water and lead to less soil erosion.

## **8. LOCAL SELF GOVERNANCE**

Local self-governance is a form of governance which paves the way for the proper decentralization of powers and functions to local bodies and smooth flow of funds from the state governments. It also ensures community involvement in the activities and strengthens local bodies at the lowest levels.

The whole village was divided into ten wards. Each ward is represented by one person in the gram panchayat. Thus, there are 10 members in the Gram panchayat of which one belongs to SC, five are women, and four belong to BC. As told by sarpanch, frequent gram panchayat meetings and gram sabhas are held in the village. But the people of the village denied the occurrence of gram sabhas. The Gram Panchayat also has a Panchayat Secretary, who looks into the official work and documentation of matters of the village. He is a link between the Government and the Gram Panchayat.

### *Difference between the real head and Nominal Head of the village:*

The head of the village.e.the sarpanch is a lady. However, our observations and conversations with the people showed us that the real head of the village is actually the sarpanch's father and she is the nominal head meant only for official purposes. Apparently, this is a result of the compulsory 50% reservation of seats in the panchayat for women. In order to complete this quota, the panchayat has 5 women. However, behind each of these women are their husbands, fathers or brothers who hold and exercise power.

### **Recent Activities of Gram Panchayat:**

#### **→ Infrastructural Development**

- Construction of water tanks under Mission Bhagiratha
- Revamping Anganwadis
- Construction of CC roads
- Construction of Bus stop
- Plantations

#### **→ Conflict Resolutions**

#### **→ Village Development**

Most of the people in the village say that the recent division of districts in the Telangana has led to improved governance and accountability. Due to smaller jurisdictions officials frequently visit the village and check the developmental activities.

## **9. INNOVATIONS**

Like many other villages, Gunthakodur also takes pride in its innovations that were created by some of the villagers. There are two that are worth mentioning; Bike Trolley by Mallaiah Bhandari and a seed collecting bank by Mr. Ramesh Bhandari.

### **Bike Trolley :**



**Fig:-Mallaiah Bhandari with his Bike Trolley**

Mallaiah Bhandari, the brains behind this innovation recounted how he came up with this idea in the first place. The bags of cotton that he had to carry from the cotton fields were too many for him or anyone to handle. Which is when the idea struck him, a trolley fitted on to the back end of

a motor bike. This enables him to carry as much luggage as he wants and people can use it to travel too. This innovation is recognised by the voluntary organisation, Palle Srujana.

### **Seed Bank:**



Fig:-Ramesh Bhandari with his seed collection

Ramesh Bhandari is a graduate who began collecting seed varieties in 2013 after he noticed that where there used to be more than varieties of seeds decades ago and now, there were hardly any left as we have been modifying them for our needs. He then travelled across the country; mostly the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and a few from Assam, Sikkim and collected 460 varieties in a span of three years. He's been featured in a lot of news articles and the voluntary organization Palle Srujana helped him gain recognition from various institutions.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

### **(I)Limitations**

- ❖ Time: It was felt that four days weren't enough to build a rapport with the villagers.
- ❖ Unavailability of officials and villagers: There was a mismatch between our time and villagers' time. Officials were not always available in the village.
- ❖ Language: Only two people in our group were able to completely converse in Telugu. As a result of which we were slower in collecting data. Many of the times important points were lost in the process of translation.



## **(II) Learning and conclusion:**

This experience gave us an opportunity to practice the theory we learnt in our classes. We used the techniques of interviewing and sampling that were taught in our class. Furthermore, a significant learning from this fieldwork was that it is very difficult to get information about people when we have nothing to give them in return and usually end up wasting their time. Which is probably why people are reluctant to talk to us? Hence, this taught us the importance of rapport building with people before trying to extract information from them. The fieldwork also taught us how to work as a group, how to divide our work based on the skills and capabilities and use our strengths and weaknesses accordingly.

We learnt that our perception about villages is in contrast with the reality. We believed that villages were deprived of basic amenities, live in poverty and admire the city life. But after four days of our stay in the village we now see villages as self-sufficient, self-sustaining and content. We were able to reach this conclusion after interviewing many households and observing the conditions of the village.

We also learnt that this visit was important if we were to make contributions towards villages in the future. Without a proper understanding of what a village is and what their real needs are, we would end up imposing irrelevant ideas and technology which instead of complimenting their strengths would replace a perfectly functioning, well existing society.

## **11. REFERENCES:**

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