

**Ecology, Culture and the Changing Behaviour Pattern of the
Food-Gathering and Hunting Peoples:
The Hill Kharia Situation in Similipal Hills**

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ABSTRACT Any change in the physical environment has direct or indirect bearing on way of life of the people depending on it. During the pre-independence time, Hill Kharias were recognized as a specialized food-gathering and hunting tribe by the-then-kings and granted rights to exploit the renewable forest resources in Similipal Hills for the maintenance of livelihood. But during the post-independence period, the loss of their right to exploit such resources due to the changing forest policies, made them intruders in their own territory. The loss of their exclusive right, on the other hand; encouraged the neighbouring agriculturist tribes to intrude into the forest and compete for the collection of natural resources. With ample number of empirical facts, ultimate consequences of the above-stated situations have been reflected on the paper which show not only their adverse impact on the Hill Kharia economy and social structure leading to the emergence of idiosyncratic tendencies but also highlight similar impact on the culture and behaviour of the people due to the disruption of people's emotional attachment with the natural and supernatural environments.