

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF TRIBES IN KODAGU DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract:

Kodagu is one of the districts of Karnataka. It comprises different communities and tribes. The majority of the population is tribes. They are staying in dense forest ranges. They are struggling for their livelihood since immemorial time. But their problems are unchanged. In Kodagu so many tribal groups are residing. Especially Virajpete and Somavarapete taluks of Kodagu. The main tribes of Kodagu are Jenukuruba, Yarava, Soliga, Kadukuruba or Bettakuruba, Kudiya etc., communities. They are suppressed by dominant castes. Their main occupation is coffee plantation work. They are depending on the coffee plantation for their livelihood Since their ancestral time they are doing plantation works. Apart from this work they do not know other skills. In this view, the present study gives detailed information on socio economic conditions and problems of tribes residing in the Kodagu District of Karnataka.

Key Words: Kodagu, Scheduled Tribe, Jenukuruba, Socio-Economic Status.

Introduction

India is one of the largest countries having tribal people after South Africa. According to the 2011 census, there are 705 communities, and 8.6% tribal population of the total national population. In Kodagu District, the Majority of the tribes are working in coffee plantations and coffee-based industries. Tribes are residing inside and around the forest. Some are residing in labor lines or quarters provided by coffee plantation owners. The Hadi's (Tribal settlements) are surrounded by forest and coffee plantations. They are exposed to wild animals like tigers, elephants, leopards, bears, and a host of other wild animals. These animals roam around the Hadies even from 6 PM onwards. Due to this tribes reach home within 5 o'clock, not come out from their houses. they are not

attending to any activities during the night. Wild animals attack human beings, domestic animals like cow, dog, goats, and sheep is a common factor. In some places Elephant attack is common. Snake bites are also not uncommon during work and at night. If any medical emergency occurs, it is indeed very difficult to reach places where medical care is available.

Kodavas are socially, economically, and politically dominant caste in Kodagu District. Kodavas, Ammakodavas, Heggades, Koyavas, Gowdas, Brahmins, Mapilles, Konkan, Christians, Lingayatha are landlords; remaining communities like tribes, Scheduled caste depends on daily wages.

Madikeri (Mercara) is the headquarters of the Kodagu district. It is situated at above 4000 feet sea level. It has full of dense forests. It is famous for Coffee and other plantations. It has a rich heritage and a land of culture. It's called the Scotland of India. It is a small district, it has only 4,102 sq. KM area and has three talukas i.e., Madikeri, Virajpete, and Somavarapete. According to the 2011 census, Kodagu has 5,54,519 populations, the literacy rate was 82.61; sex ratio was 1016 women for 1000 men; density of population; 135 per sq. K M. (2011 census)

Objectives of this study

- To Study the Socio-Economic conditions of tribes in Kodagu District.
- To know the work and working conditions of Kodagu tribes.

Methodology

Kodagu district is the study area for the present study. Tribal people are residing in all three taluks of the district. The sample size for the study is three hundred (300) between the 13 to 65 age group. For sample, selection used purposive sample method. The main tool of data collection was the used interview schedule. Apart from this method observation Method is used effectively for data collection. Collected data were analyzed through SPSS.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Details of sample size

Name of the Sub-Caste	Frequency	Percent
Jenukuruba	177	59
Yarava or Panjari Yarava	44	14.66
Bettakuruba/Kadukuruba	31	10.33
Soliga	18	06
Palani	20	06.66
Paniya	10	03.33
Total	300	100

The above table shows the sample size of the present study. 59 percent of the respondent are belongs to Jenukuruba tribal community. Followed by Yarava is 14.66 percent, 10.33 percent are belongs to Bettakuruba/Kadukuruba, 6.0 percents are Pala or Palani, 06.66 percent are Soliga, and 3.33percent belongs to Paniya tribal community.

Housing problem

Lack of houses is the major problem of tribal people. Condition of tribal houses reflects the status of

tribal family. Tribes are do not having good condition and ventilated houses. No basic amenities in the house. Most of the houses are Kachcha. Tribes are live in bamboo wall or mud tiles, straw, roof tiles, cement sheets and the roof tiles covered with plastic paper for protection from rain. The floor is not plaster with cement. Most of the houses are built in government land (Paisari Jaga). Have not electricity connection, proper road connectivity, and safe drinking water. and not have proper bath room. Bathrooms are made with the support of old cloth and wooden sticks are hardly adequate to convert the shame. Tribal houses are scattered. Research data shows 66 percent houses are Kachcha, 29 percent houses are semi pacca and 05 percent houses are Pacca concrete houses.

Table 2: Details of rooms

Number of rooms	Frequency	Percent
No Regular rooms	246	82
1 to 2 Rooms	54	18
3 and more rooms	00	00
Total	300	100

The tribal houses are very narrow, small and unhealthy. Most of the houses don't have single room and few are having 1 to 2 rooms. This shows living area is highly congested. 82 percent of the houses are not having separate rooms; all family members are sleeping together. Kitchen is separated by using old cloth or plastic cover. Everything is hidden or stored in tiny place of small house. 18 percent are having 01 or 02 rooms. Rooms are not ventilated and have less hygiene.

Table 3: Type of House

Type of House	Frequency	Percent
Nuclear family	262	87
Joint family	34	11
Extended family	04	01
Total	300	100

The size of the family is very small. Most of the tribes have only two generations. Majority of the families are nuclear. The above table shows that 87 percent of tribes belongs to nuclear families. 11 percent of the houses are joint families, they are living with parents and children and grandchildren. And only 01(one) percent are belongs to extended family. This shows majority of the sample have nuclear family.

Table 4: Facilities in respondent house

Facilities In House	Response	Frequency N=300	Per cent
Electricity	No	218	72.7
	Yes	82	27.3
Chair or Table	No	192	64.0
	Yes	108	36.0
Fan	No	283	94.3
	Yes	17	05.3
Radio	No	275	91.7
	Yes	25	8.3
Tele Vision	No	241	80.3
	Yes	59	19.7
Steel Vessels	No	09	03.0
	Yes	291	97.0
Cycle	No	255	85.0
	Yes	45	15.0
Mobile	No	93	31.0
	Yes	207	69.0
Bike	No	259	86.3
	Yes	41	13.7
Safe Drinking Water	No	214	71.3
	Yes	86	28.7
Bathing Room	No	267	89.0
	Yes	33	11.0
Individual Tap	No	265	88.3
	Yes	35	11.7
Cot And Bed	No	214	71.3
	Yes	86	28.7
Gas Connection(Free)	No	225	75.0
	Yes	75	25.0
Solar Battery And Lamp	No	219	73.0
	Yes	81	27.0
Toilet	No	264	89.0
	Yes	36	12.9

Tribes are leading very simple life. they are having very least materials and house-hold articles. Majority pf households are not having minimum basic facilities. Govt. refuses to provide electricity connection due to tribe houses. Majority are not having electricity. During night they use solar battery lamp (courtesy forest department) but most of the batteries go frequently out of order. During raining season continuous rain to 5 to 6 days is very common. Due to this dark cloudy conditions provide solar energy is hard to comely and they depend upon and actually use of kerosene and winter or cloudy conditions solar has not working, they using Kerosene lights. Tribes who

have electricity connection are not required to pay electricity charges. No street lights as houses are scattered and power connection not provided. The forest department officials raised objection for their own reasons to erect electricity poles, hardly have road connectivity. Some Hadies (Tribe village) have not proper roads, if they want come to main road, have to walk hardly five to six kilo meters to reach main road. Depending upon existences people walk up to 10 to 15 kilometer to reach their village or Hadi. Otherwise main mode of transport is jeep, auto, motor bike, bicycle, are given to school going children free. Some treble pockets have tar roads but of very poor quality. Women have no bath room and thus are vulnerable. Drinking water not available and people bring it from far off places. As house-hold are scattered it has been reported and it is unviable to provide safe drinking water. Under Integrated Tribe Development Programme (ITDP) the government installed drinking water tanks, bore wells and hand pumps. At some places government dig open wells. But these open wells go dry during summer. Recently government provided gas connection to tribe free of cost. But refiling cost must be borne by the beneficiaries. Due to low earning tribes can't afford to refile to the empty cylinders. As a result, they keep empty gas cylinder aside. In south Coorg area government provides free goober gas and rainwater harvesting facilities. But laboures do not maintain properly. Some have already gone or out of order. Most of them do not have toilet. Some are having but are not maintained it properly, they prefer open defecting. Even teen age and adult women do the same with no electricity having TV set, fan, radio, is out of equation. During free time or weekly off, (Santhe day labourers do not go to work) young labourers play cricket, volleyball, and carom with Hadi adults.

The above table shows that 72.7 percent of sample are no have electricity connection. Only 27.3 percent have electricity connection. 64 percent tribes not have chairs and tables in their houses, only 36 percent tribes are reported yes. 94.3 percent have no fans as no electricity connection was provided. 5.3 percent are using fan. And 91.7 percent of tribes are not using radio and 8.3 percent of tribes have radio. 80.3 percent of the tribes are not having Television and only 19.7 percent are having television. 97 percent possess steel articles. 69 percent are using mobile phones and 31 percent are not. 86.3 percent labour not

have motor Bike and only 13.7 percent are having motor bike. 71.3 percent not have safe drinking water and 28.7 percent are using safe drinking i.e. Hand pump source of water. 89 percent are not having good bathroom, it is a big problem but the government under the rehabilitation of tribe programme government built new houses, with all amenities including independent bathroom and taps. only 11 percent are having bathroom. 88.3 percent of tribes are not having independent taps and only 11.7 percent are having independent taps. 71.3 percent not have cot and bed and only 28.7 percent are having cot and bed. 75 percent of people using fire wood for preparing food. They are collect fire hood from forest so they need not gas and 25 percent are recently having free gas connection. 73 percent of tribes are not having solar battery and lamp. 89 per of them are not have toilets only 12.9 percent have toilet but they not use properly. They prefer open areas. and only 12 percent are using toilets with in the house.

Table 5: Educational Status of tribes

Level of Education	Frequency	Per cent
Illiterate	165	55
Up to 5th Standard	26	09
6th to 7th Standard	60	20
8th to 10th Standard	48	16
PUC and above	01	0.1
Total	300	100.0

There is a close correlation between type of work and level of education. Persons with low education and unskilled fine work elsewhere and outside of plantation. majority of the tribes in Kodagu working in coffee plantations. Since the long time majority of villagers depend upon are actually earn their livelihood by means of working as wage laborers in plantation. Educated persons who studied up to pre- university (PUC) seek wage work in coffee plantation because they are unable to learn other skills that are required to find opportunities in other sector of employment.

Some are working in coffee pulping works. The tribe's children drop out school in early age. Government provides children free education to tribal through notwithstanding the facilities like free books, uniforms, shoes and free hostels for both boys and girls provided by the government. right from the nursery up to post graduation dropout rate appears very high

particularly before the reach 10 th standard, tribal children have a tendency to go back to their village being unable and un willing to adjusting to the atmosphere that provision in hostel and school. When they come back they are almost of children found wandering in the forest. This is one reason why parents like to involve them in physical labour in early age.

Above table shows majority of the tribes are (55 percent) illiterates. 09 percent studied up to lower primary or primary school, 20 percent are studied up to higher primary or middle school. Only 16 percent are reach to high school and 0.001 percent are studied per- university and above. This shows the most of the labour are illiterates

Table 6: Main occupation of the respondents

Main occupation	Frequency	Per cent
Coffee plantation work	255	85
Construction work	45	15
Total	300	100

Above table shows that majority of tribes (85.0%) of Kodagu are doing only coffee plantation work. and only 15 per cent are depending on other works like building construction.

Table 7: Annual income of the tribes

Annul income(In rupees)	Frequency	Per cent
below 10,000	54	18
10000 to 20,000	238	79.3
20,000 to 30,000	08	2.7
Above 30,000	-	-
Total	300	100

Annul income shows the economic status of the tribe. They have low annual income. Most of the tribes working as laborer in coffee plantation but this work not available whole the above table shows that the 18 per cent family have below 10,000 annual income, 79 per cent are 10,000 to 20,000 rupees, and only 2.7 per cent family have 20,000 to 30,000.

Table 8: details of Land holding

You have own land	Frequency	Percent
No	211	70.3
Yes	89	29.7
Total	300	100.0

Land is the most valuable economic asset but only 29.7 percent families have agricultural land, about

70.3 percent are not have any land. Recently Karnataka government sanctioned Land Reform Act, which promise that those who are in position the land shall provide property right. (Saguvali pathra). The line labourers Ancash it they started construct huts in forest land near Diddahally (Maldare area of Virajpete taluk Kodagu) area, most of them are line residential labour who do not have own house, land anywhere. About 500 line labourers were to construct huts in forest land in Diddahally. Forest department forcefully demolished their huts and kicked them out. Fixed boundary according their record. It became a big issue, all tribal went on saying they need to be strike at Diddahally provided shelter. To clear this issues Ministers and officers visited and conducted meeting to convenience them to call off, but they were not convinced. they demanded property rights. Only some do have own land, but only tiny plots.

Problems of Tribes in Kodagu District

Alcohol addiction effects on individual, family and community. But majority of coffee plantation labour including men and some women are addict to alcohol. Maximum earning spent to their alcohol addiction. Men are found spending almost all their wage on alcohol. This family is run with the women wage earnings. Due to drinking addiction, some tribal men not go until the money earned is totally spent. (Saturday is weekly payment day, Sunday weekly off. If they have money takes alcohol early in the morning. During shade cutting works (Mara Kafattu) many men fell from tall tree due alcohol effect and such either they become disabled or die due to such mishaps Labourers who are addicted borrow money as wage advance from Mestries and planters. This advance they deduct form weekly or daily wage payment. Tribal children start taking alcohol at the age of 10 to 12 years, in the company. Because of friends and parents using alcohol. Sometime wife and children supply alcohol to husband who found and vice –versa. Most of the families have been founded ruined due to this social malaise. De-addiction center is required to set-up in all Hadies. I the researcher had to encounter lot of attentions and nuisance of the time of collecting data from the respondents. In addition to this Men do Smoking Beedi, tobacco chewing, Hans, Panparag etc. Women chewing tobacco (Kaddipudi)with betel nut is very common. Some men have founded. chowing betel nuts.

One incident is worth narrating. when I went to collect data from plantation labour in Hebbal palya Hadi many women requested me, in this Hadi all men and some women, adults and children are addict to alcohol. Even small children (10 to 12 years) start drinking alcohol. Adult children also addicted. Some adult children after take alcohol beat parents without reason. Every day, during night men take alcohol and made because nuisance to family members. Lot of quarrels break-out between drunkard on street. Small physical fights also happened. Women said that they are very disturbed due this problem. Kindly report to higher officers and free our Hadi from alcohol. Women mistaking for an officer requested me to see that shops and out lets who sell liquor including illicit preparation are shut immediately. I returned helplessly. The present study shows that 91.3 percent of labourers are addicted to drinking habit. And only 08.7 percent not using alcohol.

Unemployment and occupational issue

Working as laborer in Coffee plantation is the main source income for tribal community of Kodagu. The Kodagu tribes are found life in plantation since the days of British. They do not know other works then coffee plantation work. If no work in found in plantation, simply stay in house. If no work in the plantation some are going to forest department works like cleaning beside road during summer, cutting dried fallen timber/trees in the forest, fix solar fence around forest, nursery works, planting new plant, fire controlling work and some are working as volunteers of forest department. If no work in the plantation, they collect forest produces like Honey, Tamarin, Soap nut, Pachi, sweet radish, forest fruits, fire wood, Ayurveda materials (Kadumaddu) etc. Majority is becoming idle and unemployed if no work in the plantation. Because they are not knowing other skill. Some men are able find work in house building and other construction work but only skilled pars in nearby towns and cities. They take part in building live quarters repair and renovation, building school, Anganawadi school. Community hall and these type of work they do only when they do not find work in plants. Some tribes possess small land holdings in which they raise some earnings. Rearing pigs, sheep, goats and cows is also common which sources as additional sources of income. Following tables deals with economic conditions of tribes.

Conclusion

Kodagu has a small tribe community. Erava, jenukuruba, Kadukuruba, Soliga are main tribal community in Kodagu district. They are suffering from so many problems like tiny land, small housing, no electricity, bathroom, separate rooms, transport, medical facility, portable drinking water, roads, low education level, unemployment and lack of basic amenities etc. Sample population analyzed and interpreted in the preceding pages reveals, among other things, drawn mainly from the tribal pockets live a hand to mouth existence. They don't have any other source of income except the wages. It has been founded that tribal children have a tendency to drop out of school at a very early stage after their admission inspire of the government providing everything free. Those who go beyond high school after go back to village by dis continuing studies. Economically, majority of the sample are landless labourers and small peasants. Tribes are continuing to remember the most exploited and the most vulnerable section of the society. Dominant castes of Kodagu are now also exploiting them.

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