

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF KALVARAYAN HILLS TRIBES IN TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

Tribals, the original inhabitants of India have contributed much to the nation's culture, history and heritage. Under the constitutional provisions of Directive Principles, the States' major concern for tribes has been their welfare and development. It is ironical that despite a large number of well meaning constitutional provisions aimed at protecting and safeguarding the welfare and interest of the tribal communities, the process of marginalization of the tribal's has gone on unabated. In this context, the paper has made an overview on the socio-economic conditions of tribals belonging to the Malayali, which has the lowest standard of living, even though being the bulk of the tribal populace in Tamil Nadu.

Keywords: Kalvarayan Hill Tribes, Socio-economic condition, Malayali Tribes

Introduction

This study reveals that there is a marked difference between the size of the present tribal families and those in older days. Now families are become more nuclear compared to the older days. Tribes prefer two or three children. Traditionally there was male domination in the tribal families. Majority of the head of the households are in economically active age group. Even now Malayali tribal community has a negative attitude towards saving. They are primarily spending their entire income for consumption. They never save anything in cash or in other assets. At present almost all the banks have introduced many schemes for ensuring the financial inclusion in rural area. Financial inclusion branches have started in rural areas. But the tribal

beneficiaries of these services are very limited in number. Tribes have only less awareness regarding the banking services. Just like the saving pattern the consumption pattern among the tribes is also unique. Consumption and expenditure pattern of the tribals gives a dismal picture regarding the standard of living of the tribes. One of the noticeable points of this study was that the maternal mortality rate is zero among the Malaiyali households. This is only because of the door to door program of the National Rural Health Mission among the respondent households. Hundred percentage immunizations are also found among the respondents. The health indicators like birth rate, death rate and infant mortality rate are showing a sound picture of the health care among the tribes. Birth rate is higher than that of the death rate. But there is only a slight difference between the two. This is also because of the active intervention of the Public Health centers in the tribal colonies. They are providing awareness regarding the health related issues weekly. The tribals, the original inhabitants of India have contributed much to the nation's culture, history and heritage. The principles entailed development along the lines of their own genius, respect of tribals rights in land and forest, training and building up a team of their own people to do the work of administration and development, to their social and cultural institutions. It is ironical that despite a large number of well meaning constitutional provisions aimed at protecting and safeguarding the welfare and interest of the tribal communities, the process of marginalization of the tribals has gone on unabated. In this context the researcher has made an attempt to examine the socio-economic conditions of Kalvarayan hills tribes, Villupuram district.

Methodology

The Study was intended to examine the socio-economic development of the tribal community, the major tribal community in Villupuram district. The work is based on primary and secondary data. The researcher selected 100 Sample households from 3 colonies in Vengadu village by employing purposive random sampling. The data was collected with the help of a well structured schedule. The secondary data is obtained from the various published sources of PHC, Tribal Welfare Department.

Data analysis and interpretation**Table – 1: Socio-Demographic Profile**

Variables	Total	
	<i>n</i>	%
Age		
Below 20yrs	17	17
21 to 30yrs	33	33
31 to 40yrs	26	26
41yrs & above	24	24
Gender		
Male	46	46
Female	54	54
Martial status		
Married	43	43
Unmarried	57	57
Family monthly Income		
Below Rs.3000	55	55
Above Rs.3000	45	45

Source: Primary data

The above percentage analysis indicates that one third (33 per cent) of the respondents age group between 21 to 30yrs, 26 per cent were 31 to 40yrs, 24 per cent were 41yrs & above and remaining 17 per cent were below 20yrs. More than half (54 per cent) of the respondents were female and remaining 46 per cent were male. More than half (57 per cent) of the respondents were unmarried and remaining 43 per cent were married. More than half (55 per cent) of the respondents family monthly income below Rs.3000 and remaining 45 per cent were above Rs.3000.

Table – 2: Association between educational qualification of the respondents and their occupational status

Educational Qualification	Occupation status		Statistical inference
	Agriculture (n=73)	Non-Agriculture (n=27)	
Below Hsc (n=64)	45	19	$X^2=9.682$ Df=1
Above Hsc (n=36)	28	08	0.004<0.05 Significant

Research Hypothesis: There is significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and their occupational status

Chi-square test indicates that there is significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and their occupational status. Hence, the calculated value is less than table value. The research hypothesis is accepted.

Conclusions

Forests have been the lifeline for the survival and sustenance of the tribal population from the time immemorial. They are known as the children of forest. It is a generally accepted fact that the tribals are one of the suffering communities in our country. Most of the tribals in our state are find backward and oppressed, by others in various ways. For this reason the state government is giving them special status for their development and welfare. They are been categorized as Scheduled Tribes for the administrative purpose. In the Constitution of India they are given much considerations and assurances. But it is really regrettable that the implementation of the constitutional rights is very poor. Every district in Tamil Nadu has some tribal population. In Villupuram district also numerically large tribal community is Malayali tribe. The main economic livelihood of the Malayali tribal community is their manual labour and there is not much diversity in their employment pattern and source of income. Their earning capacity is very low. Their income and standard of living too are correspondingly at very low level. This pilot study has revealed that lack of awareness on the various educational schemes and their ineffectiveness. Further studies should be conducted in this area for advocating for the community and providing policy level suggestions to the government departments for improving the educational outcome of unprivileged community.

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