

# Nature and Extent of Backwardness among Primitive Scheduled Tribes in Access to Basic Amenities: A Micro Level Study from Kodagu District of Karnataka

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**Abstract:** Tribal people have three main routes to map their skill and labor endowments into wages/entitlements available—rights on forest products, working in the coffee plantation and working for the forest department. However, most of the tribal people live in utter poverty even though, there are so many programmes launched to benefit them under government policies and programs on the tribal welfare that have been in place since independence. These policies and programs are designed to help to improve the social, political and economic status of the tribal people. Providing education to tribal children, public distribution system, decentralization of political administration, occupational training are some of the programs of the state that are designed to help the tribal people to improve their capabilities. These programs and policies are supposed to act as entitlement stimulants and reduce their social exclusion. It is necessary to analyze the role of state's welfare programs, political decentralization of local administration and also their accesses to education, resources and markets which have direct and indirect impact on empowering and creating better livelihood outcomes for the tribal people.

**Keywords:** Tribes, Households, Backwardness, amenities

## I. INTRODUCTION

India has been land of the tribes since time immemorial and recognized as second largest concentration of Schedule Tribes (STs) in the world after Africa. The Scheduled Tribe population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized groups in India. The tribal population accounted for about 9 per cent of the total population of the country (2011 Census). Out of their total population in the country, 91.7 per cent were living in rural areas, whereas, only 8.3 per cent from urban areas. They generally live in remote areas mainly forests, hills and inaccessible areas and speak a different language. Areas inhabited by ST groups tend to be rich in natural and mineral resources. Among social groups, primitive tribes are the most marginalized groups with respect to social, economic and participatory indicators. The Planning Commission in its latest report (March, 2012) revealed that the Scheduled Tribes face the highest level of poverty at 47.4 per cent, followed by Scheduled Castes at 42.3 per cent and Other Backward Castes (OBCs) at 31.9 per cent as against 33.8 per cent for all classes in rural India. Socio-economic status of STs in India has been drawing attention of the practitioners of social science for long, often being recognized as a deprived community.

There are over 700 STs notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India, spread over different States and Union Territories of the country. Out of the total ST population, 2.59 million (3.07 per cent) belong to Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) earlier referred to as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). Seventy-five of the 700 Scheduled Tribes in the country spread across 17 States and UTs are identified as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) as they are more backward (Planning Commission, 2013).

Primitive tribes are geographically isolated, and socially, educationally & economically backwardness these are the traits that distinguish STs of our country from other communities. However, the Government of India has made concerted efforts to enhance the standard of living and the overall condition of these tribes. Despite Government policies aimed at improving the status of the tribals, significant disparities remain. Since PTGs constitute the most vulnerable among tribal groups. Against this background, an attempt has been made in this paper to analyse the extent of backwardness among primitive tribes in Karnataka with reference to Kodagu district.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present paper are as follows:

1. To analyse the geographical spread of STs in Karnataka.
2. To analyse the nature and extent of backwardness among primitive tribes in access to basic household amenities in the study area of Kodagu district.
3. To provide the policy implications for the welfare of primitive tribes.

## III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND MATERIALS

The present study was undertaken from Kodagu district of Karnataka for an in-depth analysis. The district is selected based on certain parameters like tribal geographical exclusion, heavy concentration and also of their primitive conditions. The selection of the district was purposive for the following reasons: (i) the district provides an excellent background for the study. The reason for selecting Kodagu is, many primitive tribes are settled in the district. Tribal communities are isolated from general population and are socially and economically vulnerable. Kodagu is home to

tribes such Yerava, Kudiya, Jenu Kuruba, Kadu Kuruba, and Soliga who are believed to be the original settlers of the area, and (ii) there are 200 tribal colonies in which 15433 tribal families are residing with population of 56298. Jenukuruba, Bettakuruba, Kadukuruba, Kuruba, Yerava, Marata, Meda, Kudiya and Nayaka communities come under the preview of tribes in Kodagu district (Census 2011).

A multi-stage stratified sampling technique was employed for selection of the sample ST households. The sampling process consisted of three stages viz., at the first stage district, taluka/block were in the second and the sample households have been selected ultimately at the third stage. Kodagu district has three taluks, namely Madikeri, Somwarpet and Virajpet. A preliminary information on ST community with respect to socio-economic variables were collected from the three taluks. Total samples of 400 ST households have been selected with representation of all the taluks. The data for the present study is drawn from both primary and secondary sources to accomplish the set objectives of the research endeavor. Statistical tools such as average, percentage, cross tabs were used to analyses the primary data.

#### IV. PROFILE OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Table-1 provides the composition of sample respondents' households in Kodagu district. The data show that out of the total number of 400 hundred households, Jenu Kuruba accounts 72.8 per cent and Yarava Accounts for 9.5 percent and Kudiya and Others accounts for 9.8 per cent and 8.0 per cent respectively. An attempt is made to due representation

of Jenu Kuruba, Yarava, Kudiya, and Others in the sample size of the households. Not much difference is found by the Yarava and Kudiya and Others category, by and large equal share has been prevailed.

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE RESPONDENTS BY SUB CASTE

Sub Caste	No. of Respondents	Percent
Jenu Kuruba	291	72.8
Yarava	38	9.5
Kudiya	39	9.8
Others	32	8.0
Total	400	100.0

Source: Primary Survey.

##### A. Age Profile of the Sample Respondents

The data provided in Table 2 indicate that a great majority of the population tends to fall under the age category of 15-25 years (28.8 per cent) followed by less than 14 years and it accounts for 27.1 per cent in the age category of less than 14 years, in the age group of 26-35 years, 16.8 per cent in the age group of 36-45 years, 14.8 per cent in the age group of 46-55 year and 7.9 per cent in the age group of 56 and above 4.6 per cent. The risk of social exclusion is more likely to be higher in the older age groups. Across sub caste the share of older population was reported to be higher in the case of others and it is followed by Kudiya, Yarava and Jenu Kuruba. The share of population less than 14 years was reported to be relatively higher in the case of Jenu Kuruba and Yarava in the study areas.

TABLE II DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLD POPULATION BY AGE-GROUPS

Age	Jenu Kuruba	Yarava	Kudiya	Others	Total
< 14	29.6	29.6	11.7	24.8	27.1
15 - 25	32.1	18.5	25.9	18.2	28.8
26 - 35	16.2	18.5	17.9	18.2	16.8
36 - 45	14.2	17.8	14.8	16.5	14.8
46 - 55	5.7	10.4	17.3	9.9	7.9
56 and above	2.2	5.2	12.3	12.4	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

##### B. Housing Status of Tribes in the study area

The difference in the earnings of the sample members have differential impact on the accessibility of basic facilities such as housing condition, access to electricity, safe drinking water and sanitation. A greater social exclusion in the case tribal population has been reflected in terms of access to basic facilities such as better housing condition, safe drinking water, electricity and sanitation. It has been observed that the tribals are continued to be deprived of

these basic facilities which may be due to income earning levels.

The data provided in Table-3 indicate that majority of the tribals living in huts (74.50 per cent) followed by Tiled with mud and Thached houses 14.75 and 6.00 per cent respectively. The proportion of households living in Tiled with cement is only 4.00 per cent and the percentage living in RCC is only 1.25 per cent. Across the sub caste the share of households living in huts is more in the case of Jenu Kuruba (86.25 per cent) followed by Yarava, Others

and Kudiya (44.74, 35.90 and 43.75 per cent). It is noted that about 6.00 per cent of ST households are still living in thatched houses. The proportion of households living in RCC houses is only 1.25 per cent. It indicates that social

exclusion is higher in terms of housing status among STs. It is observed that among sub caste the social exclusion is higher in the case of Jenu Kuruba.

TABLE III DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH HOUSING STATUS ACROSS SUB CASTE

Type of house	Jenu Kuruba	Yarava	Kudiya	Others	Total
Thatched	5.50	7.89	5.13	9.38	6.00
Hut	86.25	44.74	35.90	43.75	74.00
Tiled with mud	7.22	39.47	33.33	31.25	14.75
Tiled with cement	0.69	5.26	20.51	12.50	4.00
RCC	0.34	2.63	5.13	3.13	1.25
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey

The data in the Table IV indicate that the distribution of ownership of house across the sub caste. Majority of the households have own houses (93.00 per cent). More or less similar trend can be seen across the sub caste. About 2.50

per cent of houses are living in rented houses. The proportion of government allotted houses is only 4.50 per cent.

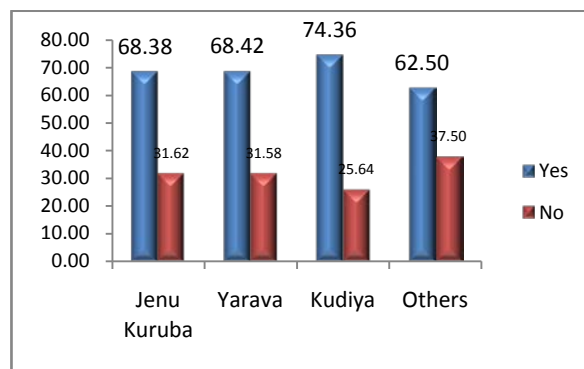
TABLE IV DISTRIBUTION OF OWNERSHIP OF HOUSE ACROSS SUB CASTE

Ownership	Jenu Kuruba	Yarava	Kudiya	Others	Total
Own	93.47	92.11	94.87	87.50	93.00
Rented	2.06	2.63	2.56	6.25	2.50
Govt allotted	4.47	5.26	2.56	6.25	4.50
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey.

*B. Access to Basic Household Amenities*

The Figure-1 provides data on the share of households with electricity by sub castes. The data indicate that the share of households with electricity was estimated to be 68.50 per cent with varying degrees across sub castes. It was marginally lower in the case of Jenu Kuruba with 68.38 per cent as against with Kudiya and Yarava 74.36 and 68.42 per cent and Others with 62.50 per cent. The data clearly indicate that the share of households provided electricity by the government was estimated to be large in the case of Kudiya as compared to that of Yarava, Jenu Kuruba and Others. It is observed that still 31.50 per cent of HHs have no electricity facility.



Source: Field Survey.

Fig. 1 Distribution of Households with Electricity across Sub Caste (%)

Further, the Table V presents data on the share of households with access to source-wise drinking water by sub castes. The data indicate that the members have largely depended on public tap and Steam/Pond was reported to be quite less. It can be noted that there is no private connection for water. This indicates that their economic backwardness and inaccessibility. This situation was quite explicit in the tribals. This is directly related to the income earnings as well as the governance.

The data provided in Table VI indicate that large share of the sample households depend on the open defecation and no individual toilets and community toilets were found. The data show that the share of households with toilets attached to house is only 4.00 per cent. And toilets separate to house is 23.75 per cent. Data shows that 27.75 per cent of STs have toilet facilities both attached to house and separate to house.

TABLE V DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH DRINKING WATER FACILITY ACROSS SUB CASTE

Source of drinking water	Jenu Kuruba	Yarava	Kudiya	Others	Total
Open well own	3.44	15.79	25.64	9.38	7.25
Public tap	62.20	63.16	51.28	62.50	61.25
Steam/ pond	29.21	15.79	17.95	18.75	26.00
Other	5.15	5.26	5.13	9.38	5.50
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey.

TABLE VI DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH SANITATION FACILITY

Toilet	Jenu Kuruba	Yarava	Kudiya	Others	Total
No facility	227	22	20	20	289
	78.01	57.89	51.28	62.50	72.25
Attached to house	6	4	4	2	16
	2.06	10.53	10.26	6.25	4.00
Separate to house	58	12	15	10	95
	19.93	31.58	38.46	31.25	23.75
Total	291	38	39	32	400
	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Socio economic conditions play a major role in increasing the vulnerability of accepting the socio-economic backwardness of schedule tribes. As far as the access to basic facilities is concerned, the data indicate the accessibility of better housing condition, access to electricity, sanitation safe drinking water was reported to be much lower in the case of tribals. Large percentage of tribals are living close to forest areas constitute the most disadvantaged section of society based on per capita income, literacy rate, health status and lack of access to basic amenities. The Indian Constitution has made special provisions for their improvement. To address the issue of social inequality, several policies in the post-Independence period have caste-based orientation. But the results have been far from satisfactory. Based on observation tribals are facing in access to basic amenities in the study area. There

is no bath room facility for most of the sample households. Large share of the households have separate bath room outside the house constructed with either plastic paper or covered with walls made out of leaves. It is important to note that the percentage of households having bath rooms inside the house is very small. Hence, the local governments should provide basic facilities to the tribal community and give attention for their socio-economic development.

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