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Socio-Economic Status among Koraga Tribe of Udupi District

Ashwini Pujar¹, Praveen Hoogar¹ and T.T.Basavanagouda²

¹Research Scholar ,Dept. of Studies in Anthropology , Karnatak University, Karnataka , India

²Professor, Department of Studies in Anthropology ,Karnatak University,

Director,Karnataka State Tribal Research Institute Mysuru, Karnataka, India

*Corresponding author: Ashwini Pujar

Abstract

The present study was undertaken to evaluate the Socio-economic status of Koraga tribal people of Udupi district, Karnataka State. In Karnataka Koraga tribal Peoples are identified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG). The data or information was recorded through direct interview schedule. Total 250 subjects were studied in the district. This paper reveals that the tribal people are lagging behind the mainstream population with respect to social, political, economical, and technological standings and still going on with unfashionable lifestyle and beliefs.

Key Words: Koraga, PVTG, Socio-economic Condition and Udupi District

Introduction

The tribal population in Karnataka as per the 2011 census is 6.95% of the total population with 80.72% of them living in rural areas and remaining 19.27% of them residing at urban areas. The Indian tribal society is a distinctive society with diversity of nature and people. Our country is known for the extreme poverty of the proletariat, in this sense the tribal constitute the core of the poor. Poverty, ill health, sanitation, illiteracy and some other social problems among the tribes are wielding a dragging effect on the Indian economy. The government and their forest policies made these tribal people became poor. In Karnataka the circumstance is not different. The tribes are original inhabitants of the country. Over the centuries they have been following a symbiotic life with the forest. The great Anthropologist D.N. Majumdar describes that, the tribe is “a collection of families or common group bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos, regarding marriage, professions and have developed a well assured system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations.” Anthropological studies reveal that the tribal population was socially dominated by the advent of Aryans. To resist the complete supremacy, tribal evolved a distinct identity through endogamy, hunting, food gathering etc. Dr. D.N. Majumdar points out that the new forest policies and laws hit them very hard and made them struggle. These laws banned their freedom of free roving and comprehensive use of forest products. The socio-economic status may be inborn or achieved. But it gives certain advantage to the individuals and their children. The social behavior of the child is directly related with the family where they live. It is very essential to know the socio-economic status of tribe to examine their living condition. This paper is based on primary data and survey conducted in Udupi district of Karnataka state.

Methodology

For the present study a total of 250 subjects comprising 163 male and 87 female were selected for the study. Anthropological research methods such as participant observation, direct interview, case study and focus group discussion were used to collect the data. The Data was collected from different hamlets of Koraga tribe of Udupi District. The data was analyzed with the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20.0 Version software.

Koraga Tribe

In Karnataka Koraga tribal peoples are identified as Particular Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG), who has Pre-agricultural stage of development, stagnant population and very low literacy rates. According to the 2011 census their population is 14,794. Koragas are deft in making baskets using creepers, canes and bamboos by splitting and weaving them artistically. Basketry is the main source of income of Koraga tribal community. But nowadays majority of them working as daily wage laborers. Physically Koraga, a very quiet and inoffensive race, small and slight, the men seldom exceeding five feet six inches, black skinned, thick lipped, noses broad and flat, high cheek bones and sloping foreheads and with curly black rough hairs and very distinct eyes and lips. They are mainly distributed in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts of the state. They

speaks Koraga language, it is the mixture of Tulu and Kannada, but while communicating with others they speak Kannada language.

Result and Discussion

A total of 250 individuals comprising 163 (65.2%) males and 87 (34.8%) females were interviewed with the help of structured interview schedule (*Table 1*). *Table No-2* shows the family types. Family is the basic unit of society, which assigns social status, roles and social responsibilities to every individual. Family is the most powerful medium through which value system can develop over the period of time and Individual behavior and attitude are determined by the family which he/she belongs to. In the sense, whether the family is joint or nuclear family and it also determines the status and role of Tribal people. Out of 250 subjects as many as 62% (155 subjects) respondents are belongs to joint and remaining 38% (95 respondents) subjects were belongs to nuclear families. Thus the data indicates that joint families are more than nuclear families. The *table no-3* explains the occupational structure of the Koraga tribal peoples of Udupi District. Occupation is an important indicator of the economic status of the individual. The nature of occupational structure determines the individual, personality and standard of living. In the present paper information was collected about the occupational status of respondents. The study shows that out of 250 respondents 150 (60.%) are engaged in daily wage laborers, 35 (14%) are in basket making, 41 (16.4%) subjects are working as scavengers at hospital, panchyat, hotels, etc. 16 (6.4%) respondents are working in geru seed factory and remaining 8 (3.2%) members are drivers. *Table No-4* reveals that majority of that is 56.4% (141) respondents are married, 28.8% (72) are unmarried, 12.8% (32) respondents are found to be widow and remaining 2% (05) respondents are separated. This data reveals that more number of respondents is married. Education is the key indication of the development of the society. It is an important aspect in an individual's life. It empowers one with the capacity to take coherent decisions and analyze what is good and awful in a more realistic and pragmatic manner along with job opportunities and livelihood. The *table-5* explains that 42.4% (106) respondents are illiterate, 34.4% (86) respondents have primary education, 18.8% (47) respondents had education up-to high school level of education and remaining only 2.8 % (07) respondents have pre university education. Data indicates that majority of the respondents are illiterate. This shows that educational backwardness of tribal people. The income of a person in general, is an indicator of his economic status. The economic status of a person will impact on his/her attitude. Therefore, the study assumes that, the attitude of women belonging to the families with higher income differs from that of the attitude of women who are in middle or lower level of the income group. The economic status of the family also plays an important role in the attitude, ideas and values of family members and their decision-making. The respondent monthly income is indicated in above *table no-6*. The study reveals that 48.4% (121) of the respondents have monthly income of Rs.2001-4000, 31.2% (78) respondent income is from Rs.4001-6000, 16.4% (41) of the respondents monthly earning is less than Rs.2000, 3.2% (08) respondents earns Rs.6001-8000 and only 0.8% (02) earning is Rs.8001-10000.

Conclusion

The socio-economic profile, educational and political background of the leaders would also enable us to anticipate as to the capacity of Tribal women to discharge the responsibilities which are assigned to them. This study shows that their economic status is not at all satisfactory. Anyhow they try to meet the educational and social needs of their children. There should be launch income generating, educational and health awareness programmes as well as to make them aware and grab the opportunities provided by the government and non-government organizations to improve the status of the tribal.

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