

IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AMONG THE TRIBALS OF KERALA

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In India, the tribal people are an important group among the economically weaker sections of the population. According to the 1971 census, the tribal population in Kerala state was over 269,000. Though they constitute 1.26% of the population in Kerala, they are the most backward in the state, both socially and economically.

The need to rehabilitate the tribal communities is, therefore, urgent. Recognising the urgency of the problem, the Kerala State Government has initiated several projects with the basic objective of emancipating the tribal communities. But no systematic study has been made on the impact of these tribal development programmes on the extent of adoption of attitude towards and knowledge about modern practices by the tribes. Therefore, a study was conducted to investigate these aspects and the important results are reported in this paper.

Materials and Methods

The investigation was carried out in the South Wynad and North Wynad taluks of Wynad district in Kerala. The tribal settlements in the district was classified into more developed and less developed on the basis of funds utilised for the development activities. After categorising the settlements, ten settlements were selected both from more developed and less developed areas by simple random sampling. One hundred and fifty tribal families from the more developed area and fifty tribal families from the less developed area, randomly selected from the four major tribes viz., Kurumans, Kurichians, Paniyans and Adiyans, constituted the respondents of the study. The sample selected represented about 10% of the tribal population in the area.

Adoption was measured by the adoption of modern practices scale developed for the purpose of the study which was a modification of Supe's (1969) cotton practices adoption scale. The scale was developed on the basis of the composite score of a number of practices recommended by Tribal Development Department regarding education, health and housing aspects. The total scores obtained by the respondent on the modern practices adoption scale was considered as a measure of his adoption behaviour.

The equal appearing interval scale developed by Thurstone and Chave (1929) with slight modification was used to measure the attitude of the respondents towards modern practices.

Knowledge of the respondents was measured by the 'teacher made test' described by Remmers *et al*, (1967). It consisted of simple question items and constant alternative items (true-false) about modern practices in health, education and housing.

The mean scores of the respondents with reference to these three characteristics were computed using the formula

$$\bar{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n} \text{ where } \bar{X} = \text{mean score}$$

\sum = summation

X = scores obtained by the individual respondents

n = total No. of respondents

Results and Discussion

A. Extent of adoption of modern practices by the tribes

Table 1
Mean scores of extent of adoption of modern practices

	Kurumans	Kurichians	Adiyans	Paniyans	Overall
	C ₁	C ₂	C ₃	C ₄	mean
More developed area	30.00	29.03	30.35	26.77	29.04
Less developed area	28.94	30.78	30.56	24.33	28.18
Mean	29.71	29.42	30.39	26.09	

C₃ C₁ C₂ C₄

C₃: Adiyans

C₁: Kurumans

C₂: Kurichians

C₄: Paniyans

A perusal of the data in table 1 reveals that the tribal farmers in both more developed and less developed areas did not have any significant difference in their mean scores of adoption. Among the four types of tribals, Paniyans had the lowest adoption score while Adiyans exhibited the highest adoption score in more developed area. The lack of adequate development activities coupled with the low level of socio-economic, educational, psychological and communication characteristics of the tribes might have resulted in the low level of adoption of modern practices by them. The higher level of adoption exhibited by the Adiyans might be due to their relatively better conviction about the utility of the improved practices.

B. Knowledge of the tribes about modern practices

Table 2
Mean knowledge scores of the tribes

	Kurumans	Kurichians	Adiyans	Paniyans	Overall
	C ₁	C ₂	C ₃	C ₄	mean
More developed area	14.11	11.84	15.18	11.08	13.09
Less developed area	12.76	10.11	13.11	11.53	11.98
Mean	13.75	11.45	14.75	11.21	

C₃ C₁ C₂ C₄ (C₃: Adiyans, C₁: Kurumans
C₂: Kurichians C₄: Paniyans)

The tribes' mean scores of knowledge about modern practices reveal that there was no significant difference between the more developed and less developed areas. With reference to the individual tribes, it was observed that Paniyans had low level of knowledge while Adiyans possessed high level of knowledge about modern practices in more developed area. The low level of knowledge of the Paniyans could be attributed to the lack of educational facilities in the remote tribal areas and their low level of contact with external agencies. High level of knowledge among the Adiyans might be due to their comparatively better exposure to cosmopolitan sources of information.

C. Attitude of the tribes towards modern practices

Table 3
Mean attitude scores of the tribes

	Kurumans	Kurichians	Adiyans	Paniyans	Overall
	C ₁	C ₂	C ₃	C ₄	mean
More developed area	5.77	6.88	8.12	4.13	6.11
Less developed area	6.81	7.07	7.89	6.10	6.85
Mean	6.05	6.92	8.09	4.68	

C₃ C₂ C₁ C₄ (C₃: Adiyans, C₂: Kurichians
C₁: Kurumans, C₄: Paniyans)

A critical observation of the data in Table 3 reveals that there was no significant difference between the tribes in more developed and less developed areas. With reference to the individual tribes, Paniyans had the lowest mean attitude scores whereas Adiyans were having highest mean attitude scores in both more developed and less developed areas. This could be due to the inherent contrasts regarding their views about development efforts. In so far as the tribes are

concerned, they could categorically be termed as those living below poverty line, and hence one cannot visualise any major differences in their attitudes also.

The above results clearly point out that there had been little perceptible change in the adoption, knowledge and attitude of the tribes towards modern practices as a consequence of the implementation of the development programmes. In other words, the tribal development programmes have not made much of an impact in changing the living patterns of the tribes. This calls for the attention of the development agencies to design multipronged educational programmes catering to the felt needs of the tribal communities.

Summary

An investigation to study the impact of development programmes among the tribals of Kerala was carried out in the South Wynad and North Wynad taluks of Wynad district. Two hundred tribal families selected from the four major tribes of the district viz., Kurumans, Kurichians, Paniyans and Adiyans constituted the sample of the study. The analysis of data revealed that there was no significant difference in the mean adoption scores, mean knowledge scores and mean attitude scores of the tribes living in more developed and less developed areas. It is also found that among the individual tribes, Adiyans had high adoption, high level of knowledge and more favourable attitude towards modern practices whereas Paniyans had low adoption, low level of knowledge and less favourable attitude towards modern practices,

സംഗ്രഹം

വയനാടു ജില്ലയിലെ തെരഞ്ഞെടുക്കപ്പെട്ട വികസിതവും അല്പ വികസിതവും ആയ ആദിവാസി കുടികളിലെ അടിയർ, പണിയർ, കുറിച്ചിയർ, കുറുമർ എന്നീ ആദിവാസികളെ ഉൾക്കൊള്ളിച്ചുകൊണ്ട് നടത്തിയ ഒരു പഠനത്തിൽ, ഈ രണ്ടു പ്രദേശങ്ങളിലുള്ള ആദിവാസികൾ തമ്മിൽ ആധുനിക രീതികളുടെ അംഗീകാരത്തിലും അവയെക്കുറിച്ചുള്ള അറിവിലും, അവയോടുള്ള അഭിമാനത്തിലും സാരമായ വ്യത്യാസം ഇല്ലെന്നു കാണുകയുണ്ടായി.

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