



PIONEERING KUDUMBASREE PROGRAMME AND EMPOWERING KADAR WOMEN OF ANAPANTHAM COLONY IN KERALA

Sindhu Thomas¹ and Reji Thomas²

¹Ph.D Scholar, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu.

²Social Worker, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur.



ABSTRACT :

Kudumbashree Mission is getting strong among the tribal population in Kerala. Out of the 127987 tribal families in Kerala, 106162 families are active members of Kudumbashree NHGs. It was found out from the tribal survey that 5962 NHGs are actively participating in the tribal areas. It was in 2007, that Kudumbashree tribal special livelihood project was launched associating with Scheduled Tribes Development Department to address the issues faced by the tribal population in Kerala. The tribal population of Kerala is 454302 and there exists a total of 5484 tribal clans in the state. The present study focused on the obstacles for the introduction of Kudumbasree developmental programmes on Kadar women in Anapantham Colony. The data were collected from various age categories of women of Anapantham Colony. The various aspects of changes among Kadar women's life and with its major constraints experienced by the respondents are studied. The perception of Kadar women regarding the influence of development programmes, their level of awareness about policies and programmes, the participation in the development activities of both government and voluntary agencies, extent of utilization of the support services and linkages in their life situation, and the effectiveness of development programmes in their settlements is examined.

KEYWORDS : tribal population , Scheduled Tribes , life situation.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a crucial problem in all developing countries in the present day world. It is felt that the problem of poverty can be solved through a concerted effort by the State. Sustainable livelihood opportunities can be provided to the deprived and the destitute by means of lending asset creating facilities. Women households are the cruellest victims of deprivation and destitution. Therefore, any programme for poverty alleviation must aim at improving the living environment of the women folks. It is through creating livelihood opportunities for the women that they can be empowered, and the micro credit and self help groupings are a better means through which their living conditions can be improved.

Kudumbashree is the project launched by the Government of Kerala (GOK) with the help of Government of India (GOI) and NABARD, aimed at wiping out of absolute poverty from the state in a holistic and participatory way within a period of ten years. This is implemented through the LSGs established by the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. Kudumbashree is a multifaceted programme that provides poor women information, capacity and confidence and also provides them opportunities for better social security.

It is the State Poverty Eradication Mission, that has been paraphrased as Kudumbashree in local language, meaning 'prosperity of the family', which helps enjoy the economic opportunities by a good

number of the poor women folks in rural and urban Kerala. The study has examined the hindering factors for the launching of Kudumbasree programme for the development of Kadar women. The significant as it analyses the multiple aspects of development programme from the socioeconomic perspectives. The study is highly useful for evaluating the acquisition and utilization of resources for the development of Kadar community in the present situation. This will also help to formulate more suitable policies and programmes for tribal development. The result of this research can also supplement the formulation of appropriate tribal development plans and schemes for the community.

A tribal woman occupies an important place in the socio-economic structure of her society. The tribal women in comparison with the women of the caste hierarchy enjoy more freedom in various walks of life. It has been observed that, the status of tribal women is inferior to that of tribal men. Moreover, the status of tribal women has deteriorated from bad to worse as a result of the impact of social change which has affected the social structure of tribal society. Tribal women played a very important role in farming through their active participation in shifting cultivation. The arrival of settled farming has marginalized their role. Tribal women also contributed a lot to the family through food-gathering but this role has also been cut short due to degradation of forests. Tribal women play a crucial role in development due to their direct and greater participation in tribal economy. Their interactions with forest and the traditional ways in which they manage natural resources, harvesting significant amounts without depleting the resources, make their role in sustainable development more prominent than that of tribal men folk. In general, tribal women work harder than their men folk, putting in more hours and taking up more responsibilities. Even after industrialization and the resultant commercialization crept into tribal economy, women continued to play a significant role. Collection of minor forest produce is done mostly by women and children. Many tribal women also work as labourers in industries, households and the construction industry, contributing vitally to their family income.

Wayanad is the district with maximum number of tribal NHGs. There are 1612 tribal NHGs and 27135 Kudumbashree members in Wayanad. In Kazargode, there are 718 tribal NHGs and 15850 members. In Idukki, there are 715 NHGs and 13687 members. Alappuzha is the district with least number of tribal NHGs. there are only 3 tribal NHGs and 42 members.

Kudumbashree plans to strengthen the livelihood activities in tribal areas in the upcoming years. More micro enterprises like handicrafts, handloom, tailoring units etc will be started focusing tribal NHGs in various districts.

It is with the convergence with governmental and non governmental organisations that special tribal project was carried out by Kudumbashree. In the first phase, the programme was implemented in the selected 10 panchayaths of Idukki, Wayanad, Palakkad and Kasargod districts. The second phase was conducted in the selected 10 panchayaths of the remaining districts except Alappuzha. And in the third phase, it was extended to all panchayaths where tribals reside.

Kadar Tribal Group of Anapantham Colony



The term Kadar was derived from the Malayalam word 'Kadu' meaning forest. The tribe obviously got the name because they exclusively live in forest. The 'Kadar land' lays between the tri - junction of the Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, Palakkad and Thrissur district of Kerala are of

average height, robust, deep chested, long armed, dark in colour, slightly flat- faced have curly hair. Some are still seen with filled or a chipped tooth through the practice is fast disappearing. Nothing is known about the origin and history of the Kadar. They narrate a legend to establish that they are the progeny of a Mala vedan and Mala Korathy who lived in a cave near Karimaagopuram. Kadars of Anapantham is one of the most primitive South Indian forest tribes. They show more traces of Negrito ancestry than any other tribe.

Profile of Kadar Tribe



The Kadar tribes are a small group of tribes in Southern India residing in the hilly areas of Thrissur and Palakkad districts of Kerala. Known for the distinctive culture, artistic tradition and indigenous local knowledge system, Kadar are one among the most primitive tribal groups in Kerala. The tribe 5.1 is now resorted to 513 families in the surroundings. More than half of the Kadar tribes (58 percent) reside in the Thrissur district, with a population of 1082 persons, including 511 men and 571 women. The sex ratio of the community in Thrissur district is comparable to that of the state of Kerala. However, in Palakkad district, sex ratio is slightly lower compared to Thrissur district. The total population of the tribe in Palakkad district is 766, with 386 men to 380 women. The estimated population of Kadar tribes all over Kerala is 1848 as per the records of State Tribal Welfare Department. Total number of families is 513 out of which 306 families reside in Thrissur district and remaining 207 families in Palakkad district.

Table 1
Details of present Kadar tribal families in Kerala

District	Families	Male	Female	Total
Thrissur	306	511	571	1082
Palakkad	207	386	380	766
Total	513	897	951	1848

(Source: Tribal Department Govt.of Kerala, 2011)

Table 2
Kadar Tribal families in Thrissur District

Gramapanchayath	Families	Male	Female	Total	Percent
Mattathur	68	134	135	269	24.86
Varantharapilly	1	3	6	9	.82
Athirapilly	237	374	430	804	74.30
Total	306	511	571	1082	100

(Source: Tribal Department Govt.of Kerala, 2011)

A survey conducted in the sample primitive tribe settlements show that 13.3% of the primitive tribes don't have houses to reside. 86.7% of the primitive tribes live in their own houses, 4% live in the houses own by relatives or friends, 9.3% of the primitive tribes live in temporary huts. Among the five primitive tribe communities Cholanaikans, Kadars and Kattunaikans and Kurumbas settlements are in deep forests and Koragas live in the fringes of the forest. Those who live in the deep forest have a real

threat to life from wild animals like elephants, tiger, bear, leopard etc. The life in temporary huts with aged family members and small children is dangerous.

KADARS OF ANAPANTHAM COLONY

Anapantham colony is 16 km. away from Vellikulangara in deep forest in the Thrissur District. This colony comes under the Chalakudy division of the forest. Kadars of this colony spend a considerable amount of their time in the forest for collection of forest produce. They stay in far away forests in temporary huts and are not always available at the colony. It was learned that they occasionally visit their relatives at Kalchady and Thaliyakallu settlements with family by traveling through dense forests. The distance to reach these colonies by road is about 80 km, but they can reach there through forest by traveling 1/4 of the distance. The Kadars of this colony go for NWFP collection in rotation, so that a few families will always be present in the settlement. The Kadars do not get work throughout the year since nwfp collection is seasonal. The forest department employs them for forest works, this too is not regular, and every year they get only a few works. Kadars of Anapantham do not go for any other work since their settlement is 16 km. inside the forest. The main items of natural forest production collected from this area are Honey, cheenikai, Padakizhangu, Uruvanchi, Pathiri, whitedammer, Palmuthuku, Makkumkaya, Maramanjol kol, Nellika, Kasthuri manjal, Chandana kizhangu, pepper, Beewax, etc. Some people will go for menial jobs that are offered by the Government for daily wages.

The Government had given 50 cent land to each family for cultivation and for their livelihood. But because of the attacks of wild animals the tribal people are struggling for their livelihood. In some season they are facing extreme poverty. The total number of families is 72 and population 386 with 185 male and 201 female. There are 62 government-constructed houses in the settlement. Most of the houses use solar lamps. The peculiarity of this tribal community is that they are staying in an isolated area. Because of their allotted land, even though they are known as leading a colony life, they are not. So because of this isolated life there is no any social interaction or cordial relation among them. Visiting the neighbouring houses is very difficult because each house is far from other. If the women go to the neighbouring house it will create issues and fight in the family. In the family there is no faith between the husband and wife.

Anapantham Colony in the Google Map



Table 3: Accessibility of Anapantham colony to Public institutions

Institution	Place	Distance-km
Anganwady/ Balawady	Anapantham	Nil
Primary School	Vellikulangara	15
High School	Vellikulangara	17
Plus Two	Pariyaram	29
College	Chalakudy	34
Bus rout	Vellikulangara	16
Primary Health Centre	Kodali	21
Govt. Hospital	Chalakudy	34

Market	Vellikulangara	16
Bank	Vellikulangara	16
GirijanCo-operative Society	Anapantham	Nil
Nearest Town	Chalakudy	34

Source: Survey data

STATUS OF THE KADAR WOMEN OF ANAPANTHAM COLONY

The social and economic condition of the tribal women of Anapantham Colony is extremely low in status. The women are facing domestic violence from their husband. The women of the colony were less conscious about their actual living conditions. Even though they were facing situations like infant mortality due to malnutrition, they had not realized that one of the reasons behind it was poverty yet. It was observed that most of them were guided by the pleasure principle and lack of thrift proneness as their way of life. They were satisfied with whatever they have. They were not at all aware of opportunities and possibilities of leading a standard of life, desired by the mainstream society. The social participation of the tribal women of Anapantham area was observed to be low. That is 90 percent of tribal women were having a low level of social participation. For securing necessities of life social participation is indeed. Here inclusion of women in the kudumbasree activities will help to improve their social status. For that the extention of welfare Scheme and the implementation of strategies of the Kudumbasree for the empowerment of women are necessary. It is already proved that the kudumbasree activities among the tribal women made lots of changes in the social and economic status of tribal community.

Implementation of Kudumbasree welfare Programme among the tribal women of Anapantham Colony



The Tribal special project is an initiative of Kudumbashree in collaboration with the Tribal department to address the special issue of the tribal population of the state, in a systematic manner. The project primarily targets at bringing the marginalized tribal under the aegis of the Kudumbashree network and provide them with facilities which were otherwise less accessible or denied, as part of its poverty eradication mission. The objectives of the mission is planned to be achieved with the active convergence of various government and non government agencies as well as departments. Community mobilization and NHG formation is important for people- centered, integrated development. It is a process for empowering local communities especially vulnerable groups like tribal and combining awareness creation, self organization and action so that communities can work for changes that will benefit the social, emotional, financial and physical needs of beneficiaries. Micro finance and Micro enterprise activities are given special; focus among the tribal as part of the project activities. It is such instances that prompted Kudumbashree to form Special Ashraya projects for tribal beneficiaries. State Kudumbashree Mission has sanctioned 77 Special Tribal Ashraya Projects with 4440 families from districts.

Micro finance and Micro enterprise activities are given special; focus among the tribals as part of the project activities. Measures have also been taken to ensure cent percent tribal participation in the MNREGS actives. Formation of special Ashraya projects, provision of supplementary food for the malnourished aged, infants and adolescent girls, formation of ST Balasabhas etc are some of the highlights of the project.

Obstacles to strengthen the Kudumbasree Activities in the Anapantham Colony

It is observed that Anapantham colony is situated in the remote forest areas. It is very difficult to reach out the tribal people of the colony. One of the main obstacles noticed is that each family of the Anapantham colony is living in an isolated area. The government provided 50 cent of land to the families for their cultivation and for their settlement. So they are living separately in their own land. They need not to depend others. This is the one of the important reason to initiate the Kudumbasree programme in the colony. Because, there is no any group activities and social interaction among the people of same tribe. Lack of family relations, absence of faith in each other, lack of social contact, and fight in the name of land border etc. troubling to initiate the Kudumbasree mission in the colony. Another reason is that it will take one month if they go for collecting the forest product like honey and all other products from the forest. Other important hindrance to implement Kudumbasree mission is that the ignorance about the savings, illiteracy, lack of group activities etc. if they get money they will spend full amount to buy alcohol and other food items from the town. They don't have any saving capacity and they are ignorant about it. Because of illiteracy they are not capable to write and keep the records and registers and they don't have the knowledge about the banking and saving the money.

Remedies for the Elimination of the Obstacles

From the critical and analytical study the remedial measures that can be adopted for the initiatives of Kudumbasree mission programme among the tribal group of Anapantham are:

1. Giving Awareness about the Kudumbasree activities to the tribal community of Anapantham Colony
2. Encourage the Education for children
3. Promote the values like Share and Care
4. Awareness Programme
5. Group Discussion among tribal women
6. Organize seminars and workshops on the Kudumbasree activities and its achievements

FINDINGS

It is found that the ignorance, illiteracy is the main reason for the backwardness of the tribal people of the Anapantham.

The major findings revealed that about 95 per cent of the tribal people are not aware of the 'Kudumbashree' programme. The variables viz., education, social participation, mass media exposure, achievement motivation, age, family dependency ratio had significant relationship with the awareness level of people.

The main obstacle to introduce the Kudumbasree mission in the Anapantham colony is the isolated family life of the people. There is no any group activity among them.

The lack of faith to each other, incapability to saving the money, lack of knowledge on the keeping the records and registeretc., are other problems for the launching of kudumbasree Mission in the colony.

The women are not aware about their miserable condition and their backwardness. Lack of exposure and unfamiliarity with the modern technology are other reasons. All these are the reasons to not to form the Kudumbasree activities in the Anapantham colony.

Formation of women collectives, awareness programmes, training programmes, education, promotion of saving income, encouragement of leadership quality, and exposure to the other tribal community etc. will help to the adoption of innovative methods of the Kudumbasree mission in the Anapantham tribal group.

CONCLUSION

Development of women is one of the most important key factors for the welfare and development of any society. The government has started many women development programmes at National as well as at State level. The tribal communities in India by and large, live in areas of their concentration comparatively isolated from the mainstream of national life. This has enabled them in the past to maintain their age-old social traditions and customs, religious beliefs and myths and arts and crafts and thereby helping in preserving their own value systems and culture. The purpose of tribal development is to provide increasing opportunities to them for a better life.

The introduction of Kudumbasree activities among the tribal community of the Anapantham colony will improve the social and economic status of women. The women voluntary activities, organizations and social contact will make a rapid change in the society. Kadars are not utilizing banking and bank loan facilities available for various purposes. Their ignorance and illiteracy are major factors that hold back them from the proper management of their economic affairs. Kadars have very low general awareness due to their environmental and cultural handicaps. So by eliminating the obstacles and implementing innovative methods for the upliftment of women through the Kudumbasree activities will create a better society and better future. If sincere attempts are made, the Kadars may however move ahead towards progress in all fields gradually.

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