

ANALYSIS OF TRIBAL POVERTY USING MPI:A STUDY AMONG THE PANIYA TRIBES OF KANNUR DISTRICT

PRAPHUL K VARKEYCHEN.

Abstract: This paper analyses the socio economic conditions of the Paniya tribes in Kannur district of Kerala. The study is based on primary data collected through interviews among forty households Paniya tribes of Kuthuparamba block of Kannur district. Various indicators of Multidimensional Poverty Index are used in order to determine the level of poverty among the tribals. MPI of Paniya tribes is also calculated by finding the product of Multidimensional Headcount ratio (H) and Intensity of poverty (A). The study shows that Paniya tribes are deprived of all basic infra-structural facilities like safe drinking water, sanitation, housing and drainage facilities, malnutrition and poverty are wide spread among them.

Introduction: According to United Nations poverty is defined as, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to; not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation. The World Bank estimated 1.29 billion people were living in absolute poverty in 2008. Of these, about 400 million people in absolute poverty lived in India and 173 million people in China.

Though Kerala has achieved outstanding progress in human development, however, is that all areas, all sectors and all sections of people have not evenly experienced the gains accruing from this progress. Despite the mind blowing achievements in human development index of mainstream communities, conditions of the everyday life of tribal people in Kerala is disheartening. The high rate of poverty, inadequate health resources, ignorance and traditional practices among the tribal communities contributed to the vulnerability of this section.

Different forms of exploitation, socio-physiological problems produced by several centuries of suppression, the present day economic liberalization, globalization etc add fuel to the fire and pose major threat to the survival of tribal groups of Kerala. A vast majority of the tribal people in Kerala belong to the Paniya group Paniyas were bonded labourers who were supposed to have been the workers of non tribes. Paniya tribes are less sensitive to the tribal development programmes, especially in the field of education so the poverty level among this tribal group is comparatively higher than other groups. Improvement in the health and nutritional status has been one of the major thrust areas for the social development of the tribes. There are frequent

reports in the media on the various cases of exploitation faced by this vulnerable group. They are deprived of basic amenities of life. It is observed that they are caught in the vicious circle of poverty, hunger and malnutrition

The objective of the study is to understand the socio-economic conditions of the Paniya tribes in the Kannur district of Kerala. The study also estimate the level of poverty among the Paniya tribes using Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). The study highlights the analysis of tribal poverty using MPI. The area of study is confined to be the Paniya colony of Kuthuparamba block, Kannur district of Kerala state. Kannur ranks sixth among the districts of Kerala in tribal population with 6 per cent. The primary data for the study are collected through a comprehensive schedule, with forty households having been visited for this purpose by random sampling. There are a total of 214 paniya colonies across the district.

The problems of Scheduled Tribes began to receive increasing attention from planners and administrators after independence. Poverty is a serious issue among the tribal population and it is increasing in a drastic manner in the current period. The Multidimensional Poverty Index is an index of acute multidimensional poverty. It shows the number of people who are multidimensionally poor. MPI uses different factors to determine poverty beyond income-based lists; it replaced the previous Human Poverty Index. So, as MPI talks about the proportion of people who experience multiple deprivations and the intensity of such deprivations, so the study has got much significance especially among the tribal group which is the most deprived community.

The Multidimensional Poverty Index(MPI) was developed in 2010 by Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative and the United Nations Development Programme and uses different factors to determine poverty beyond income-based lists. It shows the number of people who are multidimensionally poor (suffering deprivations in 33.33% of weighted indicators) and the number of

deprivations with which poor households typically contend.

The MPI has ten indicators: two for health, two for education and six for living standards. The following are the ten indicators used in order to calculate the MPI.

- **Education** (each indicator is weighted equally at 1/6)
 1. Years of schooling: deprived if no household member has completed five years of schooling
 2. Child school attendance: deprived if any school-aged child is not attending school up to class 8
- **Health** (each indicator is weighted equally at 1/6)
 1. Child mortality: deprived if any child has died in the family
 2. Nutrition: deprived if any adult or child for whom there is nutritional information is malnourished
- **Standard of Living** (each indicator is weighted equally at 1/18)
 1. Electricity: deprived if the household has no electricity
 2. Sanitation: deprived if the household's sanitation facility is not improved or it is improved but shared with other households
 3. Drinking water: deprived if the household does not have access to safe drinking water or safe drinking water is more than a 30-minute walk from home roundtrip.
 4. Floor: deprived if the household has a dirt, sand or dung floor.
 5. Cooking fuel: deprived if the household cooks with dung, wood or charcoal.
 6. Assets ownership: deprived if the household does not own more than one radio, TV, telephone, bike, motorbike or refrigerator and does not own a car or truck.

A person is considered poor if they are deprived in at least 33.33% of the weighted indicators. The intensity of poverty denotes the proportion of indicators in which they are deprived. MPI follows the Alkire and Foster (2007, 2011) methodology; it has a flexible structure which can be adapted to other specifications.

The MPI combines two key pieces of information: (1) the proportion or incidence of people (within a given population) who experience multiple deprivations and (2) the intensity of their deprivation: the average proportion of (weighted) deprivations they experience. Formally, the first component is called the **multidimensional headcount ratio** (H). $H = q \div n$. Here q is the number of people who are multidimensionally poor and n is the total population. The second component is called the **intensity of poverty** (A). It is the average deprivation score of the multidimensionally poor people and can be expressed as: $A = \sum_{i=1}^n c_i(k) \div q$. Where $C_i(k)$ is the censored deprivation score of

individual i and q is the number of people who are multidimensionally poor.

The MPI is the product of both: $MPI = H \times A$.

In this study the MPI of Paniya tribes has been found out from forty households.

- Multidimensional Head Count Ratio = $193/213 = 0.906$
- Intensity of Poverty = $101.3/193 = 0.524$
- $MPI (H \times A) = .906 \times .524 = 0.474$

From the study it is found out that the socio economic conditions prevailing among the Paniya tribes are very pathetic. By using the MPI index we will get the real picture of the socio economic condition of the tribes. The socio economic condition of tribes is very worse than what we actually think about them. By using the MPI we can analyse almost all the socio economic condition prevailing among them. From the study it can be seen that MPI among the Paniya tribes of Kuthuparamba block is 0.474 which shows the deprived situation of them. MPI which is the product of Multidimensional headcount ratio (H) and Intensity of poverty (A) is 0.906 and 0.556 respectively is also very high among the Paniya tribes used in the study.

When we compare the MPI of India .283 with the MPI value of 0.474 of Paniya tribes of Kuthuparamba block we can find extend of inequality exist between the normal population and the tribal population within the country. Out of the forty Paniya families taken for the study it can be seen that only four families are considered not poor because their score C_i is below .333 which is the cut off and rest of the 36 households are considered poor. Education is an indispensable factor for economic development and health standard. Education not only provides better job but also creates awareness of opportunities available to the people. Education and employment ultimately determine one's status. When we analyse the education indicator we can see that the changing scenario about education prevailing among the Paniya tribes. Among the forty households at least one member in twenty three households has not completed five years of schooling. Remoteness of educational institutions and lack of awareness of the benefits of education are the main reasons for the educational backwardness of the tribes. It is also related to their cultural practices and ecology.

When we take the second indicator of education which is 'at least one school age child not enrolled in school' we can see that ten families haven't enrolled their children in school shows a good sign for the future, because all those children who enrolled in school will get formal education and will help to eliminate poverty in the future. But still this rate is very low when we compare it with the common population. And also we can say that it is because of the Government initiate to give free formal education

for all those children aged 6-14 years which is the right to education bill helps in making the upcoming generation literate.

When we look into the health conditions of the Paniya tribes we can see that almost 70 per cent of the Paniya tribes are malnourished. That is BMI of most of the adult Paniya tribes is below 18.5. We can also see that in 30 per cent of the family at least one child death had occurred. From the data analysis it is observable that the Paniya groups in the Kuthuparamba block are not having proper living standards. Only twenty six families are having electricity connection out of the total sample size of forty families taken for the study. This shows that around 65 per cent of the Paniya tribal household's doesn't have electricity connection at their place. Clean drinking water is an important civic amenity required for a healthy living. Many communicable diseases are waterborne. As such, non-availability of clean drinking water is a fundamental health hazard. From the data we can see that 50 per cent of the households don't have access to clean drinking water. When impure water is used for cooking, drinking and other such purposes, it affects the health of the tribes through diseases like jaundice, diarrhoea, typhoid.

The availability of sanitation facility is an important determinant of the health status of the people. It has a vital role in providing a healthy environment to the people residing in a particular area. Among the forty households, only 27 families is having access to adequate sanitation facilities the rest of the households are suffering without proper sanitation facilities. This is one of the major problems faced by the Paniya tribes. As sanitation facility itself will determine the health condition of an area. Most of the Paniya houses is having dirt floor. That is out of the forty houses, twenty seven houses floor is made of dirt. That is almost 70 per cent of the Paniya houses is having dirt floor, rest of the houses flooring is of cement and the cement flooring is done with the help of government aid. This shows how poor they are in their living standards.

When we analyse the indicator 'household's uses dirty cooking fuel' we can see that in most of the

houses cooking is done with the help of dirty cooking fuel that is by using dung firewood or charcoal. That is in seventy five percent of the households cooking is done using firewood, dung and charcoal as they have easy access to these products, rest of the households uses kerosene stove for their cooking purposes and the interesting fact is that none of the houses uses gas for their cooking needs. Among the Paniya tribes none of the tribes in the sample households owns a car or a refrigerator maximum what they own is either bicycle, motorcycle, telephone, radio or television. This shows the backwardness in their living standards; only less than five per cent of the family owns television or motorcycle. Radio and bicycle are the two things that are seen common among the Paniya tribes. For the tribes electricity is a rare thing and the aforementioned electronic media are considered luxuries. The government should design income generation programmes with emphasis on skill development, specifically for each tribal colony to bring the tribes out from the clutches of poverty. And also government should increase budgetary provision for housing, electricity, drinking water and sanitation are needed for the tribes, ensuring end use with its cent per cent utilisation. Health and nutrition classes should be given to tribes regularly on a monthly basis to create health consciousness among the tribes.

Conclusion: The study is based on primary data collected through interviews among forty households Paniya tribes of Kuthuparamba block of Kannur district. The objective of the study was to find the Multidimensional Poverty Index and to find the socio economic conditions of the Paniya group. The malnutrition among the population is also found out by using the Body Mass index. Different MPI indicators are used in order to find the socio conditions prevailing among the Paniya tribes. As MPI talks about the proportion of people who experience multiple deprivations and the intensity of such deprivations, so the study has got much significance for future research especially among the tribal group which is the most deprived community.

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Praphul K Varkeychen, 2nd Ma Economics, Christ University Bangalore.