

**Awareness and Utilisation of Educational
Development Schemes by Tribesfolk
of Wayanad, Kerala**

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1. Introduction

Education has a significant role in national development and integration. Article 46 of the Indian Constitution states that “the State shall provide special care to the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people”. According to the Report of the Education Commission (1964-’66), the education of the backward classes in general and of the tribesfolk in particular is a major programme of equalisation and national integration. No expenditure is too great for the purpose” (Government of India, 1966). The Third Five-Year Plan document in its introduction to the section on education, notes thus: “Education is the most single factor in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress in creating a social order founded on values of freedom, social justice, and equal opportunity” (Government of India, 1967). The Government of India and the State Governments have been implementing various special education schemes and programmes for the socio-economic development of the tribesfolk.

Tribesfolk have had some educational and health improvement since the 1930s though critical gaps still exist as between tribesfolk and non-tribesfolk (Singh, 1982). According to the 1991 Census, the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes is 29.60 per cent. The rate of Scheduled Caste is 37.41 per cent and that of the general population is 52.21 per cent.

Kerala introduced tribal education schemes right from the inception of development planning. As a result, literacy rate among the tribesfolk has improved considerably. Yet, it still lags far behind the general literacy level in the State. Compared to the general literacy rate of 89.81 per cent in 1991, the literacy rate of tribesfolk was 57.22 per cent. Scheduled Caste literacy rate was higher, ie 79.66 per cent. Glaring inequality in literacy exists between the males and females, and it widens at higher levels of education. The low literacy rates may be due to several factors: ineffectiveness of the educational schemes; inadequacy of funds; non-utilisation or under-utilisation of funds. The report on the Tribal Sub-plan (1994-’95) of Kerala states that, for general education, only 33.38 per cent of the provision was utilised. In the case of technical education the record is worse: only 17.80 per cent was utilised (Government of Kerala, 1997). The reasons for under-utilisation have to be examined.

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Are the tribesfolk unaware of the educational development schemes? Are they utilising these facilities properly? Are the schemes suitably designed? Is it possible to improve the schemes, increase awareness, and ensure efficient utilisation?

We seek to address these questions in this study. Studies on tribal education may be classified into two categories: (i) Studies relating to regions outside Kerala and (ii) Studies pertaining to Kerala.

Studies on Regions Outside Kerala

All the studies have looked into the factors which account for lingering educational backwardness of tribesfolk. Two types of factors have been identified; (i) those which pertain to the tribesfolk themselves and (ii) those which relate to the schemes.

Under the first type there are a few studies which point out that tribesfolk are apathetic and indifferent to education and that they lack the required motivation [Renuka Roy Committee (1959), Amvasht (1965), Das Gupta (1963), Sachidananda (1967), and Rathnaih (1977)]. Their living in areas isolated from the mainstream society is also pointed out as a causal factor (Kailash, 1991).

Another set of studies under this type has pointed to economic status and lack of educational opportunity of the tribesfolk as the inhibiting factor. The studies on *Purus* of Manipur (Das, 1945), on Ho-Tribal Children (Majumdar, 1950), in the Sakharshet area of Maharashtra (Mutatkar, 1994) and on primary school children of Orissa (Singh UK and A K Nayak, 1997) may be cited as examples.

In an early study on *Bhils*, Naik noted that the arrangements in existence for their formal education were irrelevant and ineffective (Naik, 1950); he pointed out that the schemes could be made use of only by the better off sections of the tribesfolk (Naik, 1959). Another major drawback of the schemes was the lack of adequate initiatives in them to arouse the interest of the target groups and to attract them to education. In fact, the majority of the target groups remain unaware of such schemes (Subrahmanian, 1986). Non-utilisation of funds was also a major handicap which led to dropping out of children of the target communities from schools (Fuchs, 1982).

Studies on Tribesfolk in Kerala

The interest in the tribal situation of Kerala began as early as in the closing decades of the 19th century. The earlier studies were undertaken by historians, sociologists, and anthropologists. Enquiries specifically on the living conditions of tribes began after independence. Problems of educational development of tribesfolk received attention only still later.

Among the earlier studies, the pride of place goes to Thurston who brought to light valuable information on *Paniyans*. According to him, intrusion of plainsmen into settlements of *Paniyans* had begun by the 1850s. The plainsmen were purchasing land together with *Paniyans* as

chattels to be used as slaves on their cultivable lands (Thurston, 1897). A later study by Thurston was on the traditions, belief systems, customs, and religious practices of the various tribal communities (Thurston, 1907). Ananthakrishna Iyer's study on the tribes of Cochin and Travancore had discussed in detail the socio-cultural dimensions of tribal life (Iyer, Ananthakrishna, 1937). The anthropological studies made by Ayyappan on various tribal communities such as the *Nayadis* (Ayyappan, 1937) and other aboriginals (Ayyappan, 1948) of Malabar are also well known. Ayyappan has referred to the lack of educational facilities in Wayanad and the aversion of *Paniyans* and *Kurichians* in the area to send their children to school. Another study on similar lines was the one on *Kadars* of Cochin, which also gave attention to the educational problems of the community (Ehrenfels, 1952). A relatively recent study on tribal life came out in 1962 (Luiz, 1962).

A government-appointed committee during the mid-1950s enquired into the living conditions and economic travails of the tribesfolk of Travancore and Cochin. The Committee came up with recommendations for development schemes for *Muthuvans*, Hill *Pulayas*, and *Kadars* of Cochin. Educational development schemes, particularly development of vocational education, received specific attention among its recommendations (Government of Travancore-Cochin, 1956).

After the formulation of Kerala (in 1956), the educational problems of tribesfolk have received greater attention of the government, as is evidenced by the appointment of various Commissions and Committees. The Evaluation Committee on the Welfare of Backward Communities brought out a report in 1963 which made several suggestions for a school and college education of children of these communities including a hike in fee concessions (Government of Kerala, 1963). The Nettoor Commission and Kumara Pillai Commissions were concerned with the question of reservation of jobs for backward communities in Kerala. These commissions recommended *inter alia*, provision of larger educational facilities to children of the concerned communities (Government of Kerala, 1965; Government of Kerala, 1970).

Unemployment including unemployment of the educated was found rampant among the tribesfolk. It was also observed that among them, educational levels were low, non-utilisation of educational concessions was high, aversion to technical and job-oriented courses was severe, and awareness about job opportunities was low (Government of Kerala, 1983).

Apart from the governmental agencies, a few individual scholars also have looked into socio-economic and educational problems of tribesfolk in Kerala, in recent years. Some of these studies have looked into educational performance of tribal students at the high school stage (Nayar, PKB, 1975; Ashok, 1989) at the college level (George, 1975); others have looked into the reasons for backwardness and identified lack of educational facilities as one of the major reasons (Rajendran, 1978); still others trace the historical roots of the present-day problems of tribesfolk, such as land-use alienation, labour bondage, and indebtedness (Mathur, 1977); at least one scholar pointed out that tribesfolk in south Kerala are more developed than their counterparts in north Kerala (Kunhaman, 1980) and that the difference arose primarily from the differences in the patronage extended by the rulers of these two areas during the British period (Kunhaman, 1982). Inter-community variations in socio-economic

and educational status (Paul, 1989; Balakrishnan, 1989) and gender differences in educational levels among tribesfolk (Basheer, 1994) have also come up for research.

The preceding review shows that educational status of tribal communities remains lower than that of the rest of the community though there exist inter community differences as well. However, specific and reliable answers to questions of awareness and utilisation of available educational development facilities for the tribesfolk, are not available.

Objectives

The general objective of the study is to analyse the level of awareness about and utilisation of schemes for educational development of tribesfolk. The specific objectives are:

- (i) To identify and review the various tribal educational schemes implemented by the government;
- (ii) To study the level of awareness of the households of the different tribal communities about the educational development schemes;
- (iii) To examine the level of utilisation of educational development schemes by different tribal communities; and
- (iv) To discuss the problems faced by the tribesfolk in the utilisation of educational facilities.

Study Area

A multi-stage stratified random sampling procedure was adopted to select the households. The study was confined to Wayanad district of Kerala that is chosen on well-founded grounds. First, it is the homeland of the most primitive and smallest of the tribal communities on the Indian mainland (Singh, 1977). Secondly, Wayanad has the highest tribal concentration in the State. Finally, Wayanad is one of the districts with poor tribal literacy. The Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) survey conducted in Wayanad has identified five major tribes in the district, viz *Paniyan*, *Adiyan*, *Kuruman*, *Kurichian*, and *Kattunayakan*. Together, they account for 73 per cent of the total tribal population of the district. As the present study focuses on the inter-tribal differences in educational aspirations, the first task is to locate the area where all the above mentioned tribal communities are living. So, in the first stage, the Community Development Block in which all the major tribes are found has been identified. Of the three Community Development Blocks in Wayanad, only in Mananthavady Block do all the major tribes live. Hence, it is selected in the first stage. In Mananthavady Block, all the major tribal communities could be seen only in three panchayats, viz Panamaram, Thavinhal, and Thirunelly. From these, one panchayat, ie Panamaram, has been selected randomly for intensive study in the second stage. It is the most backward panchayat in the district that has the concentration of all the major tribal communities of Wayanad.

Data

Both primary and secondary sources have been explored for collection of data. The secondary sources include publications of the State Planning Board, Department of Economics, Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP), Department of Tribal Development, Census reports, information available with institutes such as KIRTADS and KSD, and books and journals.

Sampling of Households

Two-hundred-and-fifty tribal households have been selected from Panamaram panchayat by stratified random sampling. The major tribes are viz *Adiyan*, *Kattunayakan*, *Kurichian*, *Kuruman*, and *Paniyan*. According to the ITDP, 46 per cent of the tribal households are of *Paniyans*; 19 per cent are of *Kurumans*; 15 per cent are of *Kurichians*; 13 per cent are of *Kattunaykans*, and 7 per cent of *Adiyans*. Sample households were selected by giving these percentages as weights. The maximum number of members was limited at 100 and the minimum at 30. Accordingly, the sample of 250 tribal households has been distributed among the five communities: *Paniyans* (100), *Kuruman* (48), *Kurichian* (38), *Adiyan* (32), and *Kattunayakan* (32). The sample covers about 15 per cent of the tribal households of the Panamaram panchayat.

Information was also collected through personal interviews with knowledgeable persons. Special mention may be made of the ITDP Project Officer, Kalpetta, Tribal Development Officers, Tribal Extension Officers, DPEP office, District Education Office etc. Together with these, critical and objective observations made by the researcher are used to supplement the data.

Instruments of Data Collection

A detailed schedule was prepared for interviewing heads of the sample households. The major items of information sought to be collected were: Demographic details, economic status (income, expenditure, savings etc) educational status, educational assistance received, and awareness about educational assistance schemes. The interview schedule was pre-tested among a few respondents belonging to the different tribes. In the light of the pre-test, the interview schedule was modified and finalised.

Field Work

The field work for the study was carried out in three phases: Collecting information concerning the distribution of tribal population, their other features etc from knowledgeable persons and published reports (March-April, 1997); personal interviews of the heads of sample households (May-August, 1997); and discussions with government officials, teachers, and other knowledgeable persons (February-March, 1998).

In order to facilitate effective communication with the respondents, three well-qualified Scheduled Tribe investigators were employed for field investigation. They were given adequate training for handling different stages of the field work.

Owing to inhospitable terrain and lack of motorable tracks, the investigators had to negotiate long distances through thick and dark forests to reach tribal hamlets. Most of the interviews were conducted during early mornings or late evenings when the heads of households were available at home.

Limitations of the Study

The study was conducted within some constraints. First, the work was conducted in an extremely backward district of Kerala. Moreover, the majority of the respondents were illiterate. Most of the hamlets were not connected by transport facilities. There were also financial and time constraints.

Plan of the Report

Section 2 overviews the tribal situation with special emphasis on education. Section 3 provides the profile of the study area and presents the socio-economic features of the sample households. In Section 4, levels of awareness and utilisation of educational development schemes by the sample tribal households are discussed. The last section summarises the findings and conclusions.

2. Tribal Education: An Overview

Introduction

As in other parts of the country, the tribes in Kerala constitute a weaker section of the population. Tribal concentration in Kerala is very low and they constitute only 1.10 per cent of the total population.¹ In all, there are 35 communities recognised as Scheduled Tribes in the State. Tribal communities remaining at the pre-agricultural stage of development and with very low literacy rates are recognised as primitive tribes by the Government of Kerala. *Cholanaikas*, *Kattunaykans*, *Kurumbas*, *Kadars*, and *Koragas* are the primitive tribes in the State. They together constitute nearly 4.8 per cent of the total Scheduled Tribe population in the State.

Owing to peculiar settlements and occupational occupations, the Scheduled Tribes are concentrated in certain regions of the State (Narayanan, 1973). The Western Ghats region that dominates the cultural geography of Kerala is an area where most of the tribes live. The district-wise population of tribesfolk in Kerala is given in Table 2.1. It is found from the Table that more than 70 per cent of the tribal population in Kerala reside in four districts viz. Wayanad (35.82 per cent), Idukki (15.66 per cent), Palakkad (11.05 per cent), and Kasargod (9.12%). Tribesfolk live, in general, in forests areas which give them shelter and subsistence. According to a survey conducted by the Forest Department in 1992, 17,156 Scheduled Tribe families (in 671 settlements) live in the forests (Government of Kerala, 1994). Majority of them is engaged in the collection of minor forest produce. Their basic disability is "rooted in their physical isolation and associated psychological insulation" (Dube, 1977). They still practise customs and conventions unknown to the larger society. During the decade 1981-1991, the rate of growth of tribal population in the State was 22.75 per cent as against the general growth rate of 14.32 per cent. The sex ratio of tribal population was 996 females per 1,000 males. The total number of tribal households as per 1991 Census was 69,441. The highest number of tribal households is in Wayanad district (23,287) followed by Idukki district (11,516). The lowest is in Alappuzha district (651).

Table 2.1 District-wise Distribution of Tribesfolk in Kerala (in Lakh)

| Population | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------|------|------|------|--|--|
| Districts | 1971 | 1976 | 1981 | 1991 | Percentage of Dist. SC population to State ST population | Percentage of Dist ST population to total State population |
| Trivandrum | 0.11 | 0.10 | 0.14 | 0.16 | 5.04 | 0.55 |
| Kollam | 0.14 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.04 | 1.21 | 0.16 |
| Pathanamthitta | | | | 0.07 | 2.16 | 0.58 |
| Alappuzha | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.87 | 0.14 |
| Kottayam | | 0.13 | 0.15 | 0.18 | 5.61 | 0.98 |
| Idukki | 0.11 | 0.34 | 0.39 | 0.50 | 15.66 | 4.66 |
| Ernakulam | 0.23 | 0.02 | 0.03 | 0.05 | 1.54 | 0.18 |
| Thrissur | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.04 | 1.26 | 0.15 |
| Palakkad | 0.25 | 0.21 | 0.29 | 0.35 | 11.05 | 1.49 |
| Malappuram | 0.09 | 0.29 | 0.08 | 0.11 | 3.29 | 0.34 |
| Kozhikode | 0.85 | 0.51 | 0.08 | 0.04 | 1.69 | 0.21 |
| Wayanad | | | 0.96 | 1.15 | 35.82 | 17.11 |
| Kannur | 0.90 | 0.50 | 0.40 | 0.18 | 5.68 | 0.81 |
| Kasargod | | | | 0.29 | 9.12 | 2.73 |
| Total | 2.69 | 2.00 | 2.61 | 3.20 | 100.00 | 1.10 |

Source: (i) Census of India, Series -12, Kerala, Paper -3 of 1971,1981, and 1991, Final Population Totals.
(ii) Socio-economic Survey of Tribesfolk in Kerala. Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1979.
(iii) Tribal Sub-plan, Annual Plans 1996-'97 (Draft). Directorate of Scheduled Tribe Development, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum.

The tribesfolk in Kerala have undergone various kinds of exploitation for long periods of time and their life is characterised by poverty and misery. The district-wise distribution of

Scheduled Tribes population below the poverty line is given in Table 2.2. As Indra Deva (1983) puts it, indiscriminate contact with uprooted people from various cultural background has led to sexual as well as economic exploitation. The report submitted in 1997 to the Government of Kerala by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare Committee stated unequivocally that sexual assaults and crude abortion methods were widely practised by the affluent upper castes on the tribal women of Wayanad, Idukki, and Palakkad districts. In Waynad alone, the number of unwed mothers is more than 400. The social structure of the tribal society continues to stagnate; it has no inherent capacity of change; and its members have no occupational mobility even under conditions of fast-changing production relations (Bardhan, 1973).

The tribal communities in Kerala stand at unequal levels of socio-cultural development. Among them, *Mala Arayans*, *Kanikkars*, *Kurichians*, *Ulladans*, and *Uralis* are comparatively advanced. *Kattunaykans*, *Thenkurumans*, *Paniyans*, *Hill Pulayans*, and *Naykans* are the most depressed among them (Government of Kerala, 1979).

Table 2.2 Tribal Households below Poverty Line in Kerala: 1992

| District | Total no. of ST households | Number of ST households BPL* | Percentage of ST households BPL* |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Thiruvananthapuram | 4059 | 2161 | 53.23 |
| Kollam | 925 | 95 | 10.27 |
| Pathanamthitta | 1647 | 722 | 43.83 |
| Alappuzha | 651 | 47 | 7.21 |
| Kottayam | 3999 | 749 | 18.72 |
| Idukki | 11516 | 6422 | 55.76 |
| Ernakulam | 1212 | 118 | 9.73 |
| Thrissur | 967 | 480 | 44.46 |
| Palakkad | 8610 | 4571 | 53.08 |
| Malappuram | 2363 | 1247 | 52.77 |
| Kozhikode | 1215 | 288 | 23.70 |
| Wayanad | 23287 | 14063 | 60.38 |
| Kannur | 3635 | 196 | 5.39 |
| Kasargod | 5355 | 2555 | 47.71 |
| Total | 69441 | 33664 | 48.71 |

* BPL: Below Poverty Line

Note: (i) Tribal households with annual income below Rs 11,000 are considered to be below poverty line.

(ii) There are 17,84,874 households below poverty line in the State (32.41 per cent) as a whole.

Source: Vikasana Guide 1995, Rural Information Bureau, Rural Development Department, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum.

The tribal economy, from time immemorial, has remained forest-based. The forests provide everything for their existence. "Their day starts and ends with the battle for food and they

seldom find time to earn for other essential needs” says Luiz (1962). Easy availability of forestland provided them sufficient opportunities to practise slash and burn type cultivation (shifting cultivation) for long periods. Large-scale immigration of settlers and continued deforestation have disturbed the ‘subsistence economy’ of the tribesfolk and rendered the traditionally cultivating tribesfolk landless (Government of Kerala, 1984). Landless labourers among tribesfolk are found more in the northern districts of Kerala because of in migration to tribal settlement of peasants from the Travancore area.

The tribesfolk of Kerala were food gatherers and hunters, shifting cultivators, farm labourers, and agriculturists (Mathur, 1977). At present, most of them are agricultural labourers. The proportions of tribesfolk in all other occupations are small. Their work opportunities, even in the agriculture field, are shrinking.

As a prelude to our detailed discussion of the educational status of tribesfolk in Kerala, we may situate the problem against the all-India perspective.

Tribal Education: An all-India Perspective

The tribal population, which forms 6.9 per cent of the country’s total population in India, is distributed across the different regions unevenly. Large intra-zonal and inter-zonal variations exist among the tribes in language, culture, and ethnicity. The tribes of the southern zone are numerically small, semi-nomadic, and more under-developed socially and economically than their counterparts in the eastern and the central zones of the country (Ushadevi, 1983).

In pursuance of the directives of the Indian Constitution and its special provisions, the Governments, both at the Centre and at the States, have been implementing special programmes for the socio-economic development of the weaker sections. The Indian Constitution has specially provided for the safeguard of the interests of the weaker sections and for their protection from social injustice and exploitation (articles, 46, 275, 300, 332, 335, 338, and 340). Article 45 guarantees free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14 within 10 years of adoption of the Constitution.

Despite such efforts by the Central and the State governments, the Scheduled Tribes do not seem to have made appreciable headway in literacy and education (Table 2.3). A few States, particularly in the northeastern regions, have achieved high levels of literacy among Scheduled Tribes, levels exceeding even those of the general population. The trend of tribal literacy has, however, been continuously on the increase, despite regional differences in the rates of increase. Kerala ranks the fifth in terms of tribal literacy, the States with higher ranks being Misoram, Lakshadweep, Nagaland, and Sikkim that have predominantly large tribal population.

Wide disparity exists in the literacy rate as between the general population and Scheduled Tribe population. Disparity is found as between the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes also. While the national average literacy rate in 1991 was 52.21 per cent, it was lower for the Scheduled Castes (37.34 per cent) and the lowest for the Scheduled Tribes (29.60 per cent) (Table 2.4).

Table 2.3 State-wise Literacy Rate among Tribes in India: 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1991

| SL No | State/UTs | 1961 | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 |
|-------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 4.41 | 5.33 | 7.82 | 17.16 |
| 2 | Assam | 23.58 | 26.02 | — | 49.16 |
| 3 | Bihar | 9.16 | 11.64 | 16.99 | 26.78 |
| 4 | Gujarat | 11.69 | 14.12 | 21.14 | 36.45 |
| 5 | Haryana | — | — | — | — |
| 6 | Himachal Pradesh | 8.63 | 15.89 | 25.93 | 47.09 |
| 7 | Jammu & Kashmir | — | — | — | — |
| 8 | Karnataka | 8.15 | 14.85 | 20.14 | — |
| 9 | Kerala | 17.26 | 25.72 | 31.79 | 36.01 |
| 10 | Madhya Pradesh | 5.10 | 7.62 | 10.68 | 57.22 |
| 11 | Maharashtra | 7.21 | 11.74 | 22.29 | 21.54 |
| 12 | Manipur | 27.25 | 28.71 | 39.74 | 36.79 |
| 13 | Meghalaya | - | 29.49 | 31.55 | 53.63 |
| 14 | Nagaland | 14.76 | 24.01 | 40.32 | 46.71 |
| 15 | Orissa | 7.36 | 9.46 | 13.96 | 60.59 |
| 16 | Punjab | - | — | — | 22.31 |
| 17 | Rajasthan | 3.97 | 6.47 | 10.27 | — |
| 18 | Sikkim | - | — | 33.30 | 19.44 |
| 19 | Tamil Nadu | 5.91 | 9.00 | 20.46 | 59.01 |
| 20 | Tripura | 10.01 | 15.03 | 23.07 | 27.89 |
| 21 | Uttar Pradesh | — | 14.59 | 20.45 | 40.37 |

| SL No | State/UTs | 1961 | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 |
|-------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 22 | West Bengal | 6.55 | 8.92 | 13.21 | 35.70 |
| 23 | Andaman | 1.10 | 17.85 | 31.11 | 27.78 |
| 24 | Arunachal Pradesh | — | 5.20 | 14.04 | 56.62 |
| 25 | Chandigarh | — | - | — | 34.45 |
| 26 | Dadra | 4.40 | 8.90 | 16.86 | — |
| 27 | Delhi | — | - | — | 28.21 |
| 28 | Goa | — | 12.73 | 26.48 | — |
| 29 | Lakshadweep | 22.27 | 41.37 | 53.13 | 80.58 |
| 30 | Mizoram | — | 53.49 | 59.63 | 82.71 |
| 31 | Pondichery | — | — | — | — |
| 32 | Daman and Diu | — | — | — | 52.91 |
| | India | 8.54 | 11.29 | 16.35 | 29.60 |

Source: (i) Census of India, Series- 1, Paper-1, Provisional Population Totals 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1991.
(ii) Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annual Report, 1995-'96.

Sex-wise literacy rates of Scheduled Tribes is given in Table 2.5. While women's literary rate is lower than men's for all communities, in the case of tribes, they are not only lower, but abysmally low as well. For instance, the women's literacy rates for tribal population in the large States of India such as Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa are around 10 per cent. And for Rajasthan, it is as low as 4 per cent! Viewed against, such a bleak scenario, Kerala presents a much better position with the tribal women in the State having an overall literacy rate of 51 per cent.

The rate of growth of literacy among the tribesfolk was higher than for the general population during all the three decades from 1961 to 1991 (Table 2.6). It is also seen that the rates have been increasing from decade to decade, the highest being during 1981-'91. However, in terms of absolute difference, the gap between the tribesfolk and the general population was much wider in 1991 than in 1961.

In terms of the size and structure of school enrolment of tribesfolk, significant gains are noted. Their overall school enrolment increased from 12.33 lakh in 1961 to 117.86 in 1991.

The growth rates of enrolment at the secondary level (1746.30 per cent) exceeded that at the upper primary level (1537.31 per cent) and that the upper primary level exceeded enrolment at the lower primary level (722.49 per cent) (Table 2.7).

Table 2.4 State-wise Literacy Rates for the General Population, SCs, and STs: 1991

| Sl No | States/UTs | General | Scheduled Castes | Scheduled Tribes |
|-------|----------------------|---------|------------------|------------------|
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 44.09 | 31.59 | 17.16 |
| 2 | Assam | 52.89 | 53.94 | 49.16 |
| 3 | Bihar | 38.48 | 19.49 | 26.78 |
| 4 | Gujarat | 61.29 | 61.07 | 36.45 |
| 5 | Haryana ! | 55.85 | 39.22 | — |
| 6 | Himachal Pradesh | 63.86 | 53.20 | 47.09 |
| 7 | J & K* | — | — | — |
| 8 | Karnataka | 56.04 | 38.06 | 36.01 |
| 9 | Kerala | 89.81 | 79.66 | 57.22 |
| 10 | Madhya Pradesh | 44.20 | 35.08 | 21.54 |
| 11 | Maharashtra | 64.87 | 56.46 | 36.79 |
| 12 | Manipur | 59.89 | 56.44 | 53.63 |
| 13 | Meghalaya | 49.10 | 44.27 | 46.71 |
| 14 | Nagaland ** | 61.65 | — | 60.59 |
| 15 | Orissa | 49.09 | 36.78 | 22.31 |
| 16 | Punjab ! | 58.51 | 41.09 | — |
| 17 | Rajasthan | 38.55 | 26.29 | 19.44 |
| 18 | Sikkim | 56.94 | 51.03 | 59.01 |
| 19 | Tamil Nadu | 62.66 | 46.74 | 27.89 |
| 20 | Tripura | 60.44 | 56.66 | 40.37 |
| 21 | Uttar Pradesh | 41.60 | 26.85 | 35.70 |
| 22 | West Bengal | 57.70 | 42.21 | 27.78 |
| 23 | A & N Islands ** | 73.02 | — | 56.62 |
| 24 | Arunachal Pradesh | 41.59 | 57.27 | 34.45 |
| 25 | Chandigarh ! | 77.81 | 55.44 | — |
| 26 | Dadra & Nagar Haveli | 40.71 | 77.64 | 28.21 |
| 27 | Delhi ! | 75.29 | 57.60 | — |
| 28 | Goa | 75.51 | 58.73 | 42.91 |
| 29 | Lakshadweep** | 81.78 | — | 80.58 |
| 30 | Mizoram | 82.27 | 77.92 | 82.71 |
| 31 | Pondicherry ! | 74.74 | 56.26 | — |
| 32 | Daman and Diu | 71.21 | 79.18 | 52.91 |
| | India | 52.21 | 37.34 | 29.60 |

Note: * Census was not held in Jammu & Kashmir ; ** Scheduled Caste population does not exist;
! Scheduled Tribe Population does not exist

Source: Census of India, Series - 1, Paper - 1 of 1991, Provisional Population Totals.

Consequently, the structure of school enrolment has also undergone significant change. The percentage distribution of school enrolment in 1955-'56 was as follows: 84.75 per cent in lower primary level, 10.87 per cent in upper primary level, and 4.38 per cent in secondary level. The corresponding figures for 1993-'94 were 72.93 per cent, 18.61 per cent, and 8.46 per cent.

Table 2.5 Sex-wise Tribal Literacy Rates in India, 1991

| Sl No | State/UTs | Male | Female | Total |
|-------|-------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 25.25 | 8.68 | 17.16 |
| 2 | Arunachal Pradesh | 44.00 | 24.94 | 34.45 |
| 3 | Assam | 58.93 | 38.98 | 49.16 |
| 4 | Bihar | 38.40 | 14.75 | 26.78 |
| 5 | Goa | 54.43 | 29.01 | 42.91 |
| 6 | Gujarat | 48.25 | 24.20 | 36.45 |
| 7 | Haryana | — | — | — |
| 8 | Himachal Pradesh | 62.74 | 31.18 | 47.09 |
| 9 | Jammu & Kashmir | — | — | — |
| 10 | Karnataka | 47.95 | 23.57 | 36.01 |
| 11 | Kerala | 63.38 | 51.07 | 57.22 |
| 12 | Madhya Pradesh | 32.16 | 10.73 | 21.54 |
| 13 | Maharashtra | 49.09 | 24.03 | 36.79 |
| 14 | Manipur | 62.39 | 44.48 | 53.63 |
| 15 | Meghalaya | 49.78 | 43.63 | 46.71 |
| 16 | Mizoram | 86.66 | 78.70 | 82.71 |
| 17 | Nagaland | 66.27 | 54.51 | 60.59 |
| 18 | Orissa | 34.44 | 10.21. | 22.31 |
| 19 | Punjab | — | — | — |
| 20 | Rajasthan | 33.29 | 4.42 | 19.44 |
| 21 | Sikkim | 66.80 | 50.37 | 59.01 |
| 22 | Tamil Nadu | 35.25 | 20.23 | 27.89 |
| 23 | Tripura | 52.88 | 27.34 | 40.37 |
| 24 | Uttar Pradesh | 49.95 | 19.86 | 35.70 |
| 25 | West Bengal | 40.07 | 14.98 | 27.78 |
| 26 | A & N Islands | 64.16 | 48.74 | 56.62 |
| 27 | Chandigarh | — | — | — |
| 28 | D & N Haveli | 40.75 | 15.94 | 28.21 |
| 29 | Daman & Diu | 63.58 | 41.49 | 52.91 |
| 30 | Delhi | — | — | — |
| 31 | Lakshadweep | 89.50 | 71.72 | 80.58 |
| 32 | Pondichery | — | — | — |
| | India | 40.65 | 18.19 | 29.60 |

Source: Census of India, Series - 1, Paper - 1 of 1991, Provisional Population Totals.

Table 2.6 Decennial Growth Rates of Literacy among Different Social Groups, India, 1961-1991

| Categories | Growth Rates | | | |
|------------|--------------|----------|----------|----------|
| | 1961-'71 | 1971-'81 | 1981-'91 | 1961-'91 |
| General | 22.71 | 23.02 | 44.11 | 117.54 |
| S C | 42.84 | 45.74 | 75.31 | 263.58 |
| S T | 32.20 | 44.82 | 81.04 | 242.59 |

Source: Census of India, Series-1, Paper - 1 of 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1991, Final Population Totals.

Table 2.7 Progress of Enrolment of Tribal Children

| Year | Classes (Number in Lakhs) | | | |
|----------|---------------------------|-----------|--------|--------|
| | I - V | VI - VIII | IX - X | Total |
| 1955-'56 | 10.45 | 1.34 | 0.54 | 12.33 |
| 1970-'71 | 24.63 | 3.79 | 1.71 | 30.13 |
| 1980-'81 | 46.60 | 7.42 | 2.66 | 56.68 |
| 1983-'84 | 54.00 | 10.00 | 3.86 | 67.86 |
| 1993-'94 | 85.95 | 21.94 | 9.97* | 117.86 |

* Includes enrolment at higher secondary level also.

Source: (i) Government of India (1986), Selected Educational Statistics, New Delhi.

(ii) Government of India, Ministry of Human Resources Development, Annual Report, 1994-'95.

The educational status of the tribesfolk in India continues to remain low despite such positive indicators.

Tribal Education in Kerala

Kerala is one of the States that gives due emphasis to human resource development. A large share of government expenditure is devoted to education. The concerted efforts over several decades, of various agencies - the state, voluntary agencies and religious organisations - have taken Kerala to high levels of educational achievements. The State spends about 26 per cent of its budget on education.

Kerala ranks third among the States in India in this respect. The average for all the States taken together is only about 11 per cent. Education budget of the government formed 6.7 per cent of the State's net domestic product in 1993-'94, the all-India average being 3.8

(University News, April 1996). Table 2.8 gives details on the attainment of Kerala with respect to literacy in various categories.

Table 2.8 Literary Rates according to Gender and Community, Kerala: 1991

| Sl No. | Category | Male | Female | Combined | Rank of Kerala among the States of India |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-------|--------|----------|--|
| 1 | Total Literacy Rate | 93.62 | 86.17 | 89.81 | I |
| 2 | Literacy Rate of Scheduled Castes | 85.22 | 74.31 | 79.66 | I |
| 3 | Literacy Rate of Scheduled Tribes | 63.88 | 51.07 | 57.22 | V |

Source: Census of India, 1991; Series -10, Kerala, Paper 3 of 1991 Final Population Totals.

It is observed that literacy levels of the tribesfolk lag far behind those of the other sections of the population. Further, despite rapid growth rates of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes during 1961-1991, the gap between them and the other social groups in absolute terms remains virtually undiminished (Table 2.9).

The Government of Kerala has made significant efforts for tribal development in a big way. This is clear from the amount of expenditure on tribal development as given in Table 2.10.

Table 2.9 Growth of Literacy: Kerala, 1971-1991 (per cent)

| Category | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| General | 60.42 | 70.42 | 89.81 |
| Scheduled Castes | 4.21 | 55.96 | 79.66 |
| Scheduled Tribes | 25.72 | 31.79 | 57.22 |

Source: Census of India, Series -10, Kerala. Paper -3 of 1971,1981,1991 Final Population Totals.

It is observed that the State Government has been spending increasingly large amounts of money for the development of Scheduled Tribes. The scheme-wise analysis of the budgetary provision for various tribal development schemes for 1997-'98 reveals that a major chunk of the funds is set apart for education (Table 2.11).

Table 2.11 shows that, in the total State-level schemes, a lion's share is kept apart for educational development of the tribesfolk. The budget provision for 1997-'98 for education was 52.21 per cent under plan and 64.94 per cent under non-plan. In almost all the recent years, more than 50 per cent of the allotment under the State-level schemes of the Scheduled Tribes Development Department has been on education. The budgetary allocations and actual expenditure on tribal development for a few recent years are shown in Table 2.12

Table 2.10 Expenditure on Development of STs in Kerala: 1975-'76 to 1996-'97
(Rs Lakhs)

| Year | Through ST Development Dept. (Plan & Non-Plan) | Through other Dept.s under General Sector Schemes (TSP) | Total |
|----------|--|---|----------|
| 1975-'76 | 93.120 | 39.939 | 133.059 |
| 1976-'77 | 116.385 | 117.120 | 233.505 |
| 1977-'78 | 122.779 | 244.389 | 367.168 |
| 1978-'79 | 153.220 | 231.142 | 384.362 |
| 1979-'80 | 155.388 | 579.033 | 734.421 |
| 1980-'81 | 155.082 | 1112.411 | 1375.493 |
| 1981-'82 | 295.761 | 273.370 | 569.131 |
| 1982-'83 | 284.614 | 318.727 | 603.34 |
| 1983-'84 | 344.597 | 446.288 | 790.885 |
| 1984-'85 | 377.920 | 553.073 | 930.993 |
| 1985-'86 | 501.944 | 624.482 | 1126.426 |
| 1986-'87 | 554.332 | 728.630 | 1282.962 |
| 1987-'88 | 636.456 | 662.579 | 1299.035 |
| 1988-'89 | 703.210 | 730.000 | 1433.210 |
| 1989-'90 | 798.601 | 987.760 | 1786.361 |
| 1990-'91 | 871.262 | 1020.550 | 1891.812 |
| 1991-'92 | 1123.330 | 1479.360 | 2602.690 |
| 1992-'93 | 1362.903 | 1241.980 | 2568.488 |
| 1993-'94 | 1534.818 | 1675.670 | 3210.488 |
| 1994-'95 | 1633.905 | 1893.640 | 3527.545 |
| 1995-'96 | 2303.112 | 2296.727 | 4599.839 |
| 1996-'97 | 2303.635 | 2965.320 | 5268.955 |

Note: In column (3), from 1975-'76 to 1980-'81, the expenditure is for both SC and ST; Source: Govt. of Kerala, Scheduled Tribes Development in Kerala, Dept. of Scheduled Tribes Development, Tvm, 1997.

Table 2.11 Scheme-wise Budgetary Provision for Department of Scheduled Tribes Development 1997-'98*
(inRs Lakh)

| Sl No. | Name of Scheme | Budget Provision | |
|--------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| | | Plan | Non-Plan |
| 1 | Direction & Administration | — | 118.34 |
| 2 | Special Central Assistance | 251.00 | 127.66 |
| 3 | Education | 637.50 | 707.22 |
| 4 | Health | 55.00 | 64.56 |
| 5 | Other Expenditure | 277.50 | 64.33 |
| 6 | Other Rehabilitation Schemes | — | 2.50 |
| 7 | Interest Free Loan | — | 7.00 |
| 8 | Total (State Level Schemes) | 1221.00 | 1089.11 |
| 9 | Grand Total (Plan & Non Plan) | 2336.00 | 1121.95 |

* includes the pooled tribal sub-plan fund for sectional departments for the year 1997-'98; Source: Dept. of Scheduled Tribes Development, Trivandrum, Government of Kerala, ST Development in Kerala, 1997.

Table 2.12 Budgetary provision and Actual Expenditure for Tribal Development in Kerala (Rs Lakh)

| Year | Budget Provision | Expenditure | Percentage of Expenditure |
|----------|------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1985-'86 | 467.338 | 495.663 | 106.06 |
| 1988-'89 | 805.238 | 703.210 | 87.33 |
| 1991-'92 | 1245.405 | 1119.736 | 89.91 |
| 1992-'93 | 1331.458 | 1326.902 | 99.66 |
| 1993-'94 | 1453.620 | 1442.819 | 99.26 |
| 1994-'95 | 1669.520 | 1633.905 | 97.87 |
| 1995-'96 | 2256.440 | 2194.998 | 97.28 |
| 1996-'97 | 2155.550 | NA | NA |

Source: Department of Scheduled Tribes Development, Trivandrum, Government of Kerala, Scheduled Tribes Development in Kerala, 1997.

Educational Status of Tribesfolk in Kerala

The tribes of Kerala have been exposed to formal education only recently. Their response to formal education and programmes of literacy has varied from community to community (Moniz Raza 1985).

It was noted in the early 1960s that “While among the *Pulayas*, *Mala arayans*, *Irulas*, and *Kanikkars*, the percentage of literacy (according to 1965 figures) was about 20 to 25 per cent, it was only about 10 per cent among *Kurichians*, *Kurumans*, *Mannans*, *Maratis*, and *Kattunaykans* and as low as 5 per cent among the *Paniyans*, *Muthuvans*, *Adiyans*, and *Eravallans*” (Krishna Iyer, 1962).

After two decades of special efforts by the government for the betterment of education among tribal population, the level of literacy among them remained awfully low in the State (Government of Kerala, 1984.)

It is usually held that the incentives provided by the government, voluntary organisations, and other agencies for the educational development of tribesfolk through special programmes and literacy drives have not yielded significant results in Kerala.

Of course, there have been variations in the intensity of effort put in by the different agencies in different regions. Tribal literacy is, in general, lower in the northern districts than in the southern districts of the State (Table 2.13).

Kottayam has the highest tribal literacy and Palakkad has the lowest. About two-third of the districts in Malabar region have literacy rates lower than the State average. It is to be noted that more than 65 per cent of the tribal population of the State lives in the Malabar region.

Table 2.13 District-wise Tribal Literacy Rates; Kerala; 1971, 1981, and 1991

| District | 1971 | 1981 | 1991 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>I. Southern Districts</i> | | | |
| Thiruvananthapuram | 42.17 | 58.06 | 74.00 |
| Kollam | 32.59 | 50.30 | 62.42 |
| Pathanamthitta | — | — | 73.21 |
| Alappuzha | 60.23 | 53.71 | 74.48 |
| Kottayam | 38.44 | 73.63 | 88.69 |
| Idukki | 45.12 | 52.60 | 76.96 |
| Ernakulam | — | 43.35 | 62.78 |
| Thrissur | 25.06 | 29.90 | 51.40 |
| <i>II. Northern Districts</i> | | | |
| Palakkad | 7.13 | 12.04 | 34.87 |
| Malappuram | 13.67 | 16.33 | 43.93 |
| Kozhikode | 23.24 | 14.24 | 52.36 |
| Wayanad | — | 43.24 | 50.63 |
| Kannur | 25.52 | 33.18 | 58.61 |
| Kasargod | - | — | 66.38 |
| Kerala | 25.52 | 31.79 | 57.22 |

Source: Census of India, Series -10, Kerala, Paper -3 of 1971, 1981, and 1991, Final Population Totals.

Dropout Rate

The school dropout rate in Kerala is much lower than in the rest of India. One of the reasons for the low rate is the policy of wholesale promotion followed from one standard to the next in the State since 1973. Since admission of children after private study is allowed in classes I to VIII, Kerala witnesses a situation in which enrolment in classes II to VIII exceed enrolment in class I (enrolment as recorded on the 6th working day after reopening), if you follow a class I cohort of a particular year. This happens when new admissions to classes II to VIII exceed dropouts from the class I cohorts from these classes. If dropouts exceed new admissions, enrolment figures in Classes II to VII would tend to become increasingly lower than enrolment in class I.

Thus we find from Table 2.14 that for the general population, enrolment in classes II to VII exceeded enrolment in class I; for the Scheduled Castes, this phenomenon is not seen only up to class V; when we come to the case of Scheduled Tribes, the increase is found only in class I, - due, may be, to new admissions to class I, later in the school that school dropout rates are the highest for Scheduled Tribes among all the social groups in the State.

Several reasons are attributed for this phenomenon; uneducated parents, apathy to education, non-availability of educational facilities, etc.

Table 2.14 Number of Students Completing School Education during 1987-'88 to 1996-'97 in Kerala

| Year | Std | Total enrolment | % | SC | % | ST | % |
|---------|------|-----------------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|
| 1987-88 | I | 630053 | 100 | 74570 | 100 | 8802 | 100.00 |
| 1988-89 | II | 655416 | 104.02 | 77168 | 103.48 | 8842 | 100.45 |
| 1989-90 | III | 642428 | 101.96 | 75803 | 101.65 | 8260 | 93.84 |
| 1990-91 | IV | 636690 | 101.05 | 75124 | 100.25 | 8281 | 94.08 |
| 1991-92 | V | 640105 | 101.59 | 74754 | 100.25 | 7072 | 80.34 |
| 1992-93 | VI | 630396 | 100.05 | 71873 | 96.38 | 6142 | 69.78 |
| 1993-94 | VII | 651424 | 103.39 | 73545 | 98.62 | 6231 | 70.79 |
| 1994-95 | VIII | 617424 | 97.99 | 67187 | 90.10 | 5579 | 63.38 |
| 1995-96 | IX | 567963 | 90.14 | 60969 | 81.76 | 4595 | 52.20 |
| 1996-97 | X | 449381 | 71.32 | 43639 | 58.52 | 3125 | 35.50 |

Source: Directorate of Public Instruction, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum.

Out of the tribal students who enrol in Standard I, only 35.50 per cent complete the X Standard. The corresponding percentages are 58.52 for Scheduled Castes and 71.32 for all groups of students taken together. This shows that the incentives given by the government for the promotion of tribal education have not been effective enough.

Dropout rates are the highest among the tribal students, for both the sexes, as may be seen from Table 2.15.

Table 2.15 Sex-wise Dropout Rates according to Community and Stage, Kerala, 1994-'95

| | L P School | | | U P School | | | High School | | | Total | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | AC | SC | ST | AC | SC | ST | AC | SC | ST | AC | SC | ST |
| Boys | 1.32 | 2.14 | 9.54 | 5.53 | 9.22 | 13.27 | 17.67 | 24.28 | 26.58 | 4.06 | 6.03 | 10.23 |
| Girls | 1.36 | 1.96 | 8.68 | 3.54 | 6.54 | 10.68 | 11.24 | 16.86 | 18.71 | 2.71 | 4.27 | 8.51 |
| Total | 1.34 | 2.05 | 9.13 | 4.57 | 7.93 | 12.02 | 14.46 | 20.56 | 22.71 | 3.40 | 5.17 | 9.40 |

Note: AC=All Castes, SC= Scheduled Castes, ST= Scheduled Tribes

Source: Selected Statistical information on education in Kerala, 1996-'97, Directorate of Public Instruction, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum.

Enrolment figures given in Table 2.16 indicate that the number of students belonging to all communities, enrolled in Standard I have been declining during the past decade; the decline is found to have been the lowest in the case of Scheduled Tribes and highest in the case of Scheduled Castes. While the decline among most communities must have been due to decline in the number of children reaching the school-going age caused by decline in birth rates, that observed among the Scheduled Tribes may be due to two types of causes.

Table 2.16 Enrolment in Standard I (Kerala) 1987-'88 to 1996-'97

| Year | All Communities | Index | SC | Index | ST | Index |
|---------|-----------------|--------|-------|--------|------|--------|
| 1987-88 | 630053 | 100.00 | 74570 | 100.00 | 8802 | 100.00 |
| 1988-89 | 608642 | 96.60 | 71591 | 96.01 | 9037 | 102.67 |
| 1989-90 | 594548 | 94.36 | 68854 | 92.33 | 8866 | 100.73 |
| 1990-91 | 601030 | 95.39 | 68822 | 92.29 | 9827 | 111.65 |
| 1991-92 | 575909 | 91.41 | 63046 | 84.55 | 9269 | 105.31 |
| 1992-93 | 564737 | 89.63 | 61545 | 82.53 | 8065 | 91.63 |
| 1993-94 | 540593 | 85.80 | 56880 | 76.28 | 7200 | 81.80 |
| 1994-95 | 528784 | 83.93 | 56456 | 75.71 | 7504 | 85.25 |
| 1995-96 | 519048 | 82.38 | 56380 | 75.61 | 7959 | 90.42 |
| 1996-97 | 507072 | 80.48 | 54630 | 73.26 | 8372 | 95.11 |

Source: Ibid., p 17.

First, the enrolment ratio must have been rising and infant and child mortality rates declining among them. Second, birth rates must have been declining in some of the tribal communities also. The extent to which these different factors have been in operation can be ascertained only after an in-depth enquiry.

From the foregoing analysis, we find that tribal literacy lags behind general literacy and literacy of Scheduled Castes. It is also found that the Malabar region was more backward in the matter of tribal literacy.

Tribal Education in Wayanad

The history of education in Wayanad starts with the arrival of the settlers from the plain lands. Till the settlers come, the tribesfolk had not heard about any formal education system. During the British period, when Wayanad was under the Malabar district of the former Madras State, a few educational institutions run by private individuals and Christian Missionary organisations existed. The large influx of settlers during the first half of the 20th century transformed the socio-economic and cultural scenario of the district. All the ecclesiastical sections of the Christian community started schools in the district. Therefore, formal education began to spread in different parts of Wayanad.

The first school in Wayanad, the precursor of the present Upper Primary School, Mananthavady was established in the year 1869. By 1900, there were six schools in the region. Besides Christian missionaries, some influential communities of Wayanad such as the *Goudas* also started schools. The Malabar District Board also started schools during the late 1940s and early 1950s. After the formation of the present State of Kerala, 26 schools were begun in 1957 in several remote areas of Wayanad. The government has ever since then shown keen interest in the educational progress of this area, which became a separate district in the 1980s.

Until independence, education had remained the privilege of the elite group of the area. After independence, universal primary education became the declared objective of the State. Class education has turned into mass education, with special emphasis on the education of the backward group.

In the process, the literacy rate among the tribes of Wayanad has also improved substantially; although it still has to go a long way to reach the lengths reached by the other sections of the population in the district (Table 2.17).

Table 2.17 Literacy in Wayanad District, 1991

| Community | Percentage |
|---------------------------|------------|
| General | 82.73 |
| SC | 75.27 |
| ST | 50.63 |
| Tribal Literacy in Kerala | 57.22 |

Source: Census of India, 1991, Series 12, Kerala, Paper 3 of 1991, Final Population Totals.

Tribal settlements do not have adequate educational facilities. There are only 0.39 schools per 1,000 population (Lakshmanan, 1995). In Kerala, there is a school for an average population of 2,387; in Wayanad, the corresponding number is 2,591. Further, while the State has a school for an average area of 3.2 sq.km, in Wayanad there is a school for only 8.07 sq.km. The average number of students per school in Wayanad is 532 whereas in Kerala, it is around 481. As transport facilities in the district are unsatisfactory, the children find it extremely difficult to reach out to schools (Lakshmanan, 1995).

In all the Five-Year Plans, educational development of tribes received priority. It is therefore necessary to examine why they still remain educationally backward. One of the major reasons must be the peculiar nature of their habitations. Majority of the Scheduled Tribes lives in remote areas far away from educational institutions.

Another reason is the inhospitable social and economic conditions of the tribal settlements (Government of Kerala, 1996-'97). As many as three-fifths of the Scheduled Tribe households in the district were below the poverty line according to a survey conducted by the Rural Development Department (Government of Kerala) in 1992.

Another factor that hinders the development of education among tribal community is parental lethargy. Again two-thirds of the adult population of the tribesfolk is, in general, illiterate (Government of Kerala, DPEP Draft Project Report, 1994). They give little importance for the education of their children; nor do they insist on the regular attendance in classes by the children who happen to be enrolled.

Most of the tribal pupils being first generation learners, their home environment is not congenial for education. Their dwellings lack facilities for study - no study room, no furniture, not even proper food.

In the tribal belt of Wayanad district, the number of children attending schools is less than three per cent of the tribal population in the area (KIRTADS). As evident from the figures given in Table 2.18, only 66 per cent of children, enrolled in Standard I reach Standard VII; the corresponding figures for non-tribal students is 95 per cent. In this respect, not much difference exists as between girls and boys among the tribesfolk, the respective figures being 67 per cent and 66 per cent (Table 2.19). However, we may note that these rates are extremely high when compared to those of their counterparts in the other States.

Table 2.18 Progress of the 1992-'93 Standard I Cohort, Wayanad District

| Year | Std. | Tribal | Index | Non-Tribal | Index |
|---------|------|--------|--------|------------|--------|
| 1992-92 | I | 3079 | 100.00 | 13426 | 100.00 |
| 1993-94 | II | 3050 | 99.06 | 12422 | 92.27 |
| 1994-95 | III | 2807 | 91.16 | 12119 | 90.00 |
| 1995-96 | IV | 2754 | 89.44 | 11916 | 88.52 |
| 1996-97 | V | 2363 | 76.75 | 12237 | 90.00 |
| 1997-98 | VI | 2045 | 66.42 | 12820 | 95.23 |

Table 2.19 Progress of the 1992-'93 Standard I Cohort of Students according to Sex

| Tribal Students | | | | | | Non-Tribal Students | | | |
|-----------------|-----|------|-------|--------|--------|---------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| Year | Std | Male | Index | Female | Index | Male | Index | Female | Index |
| 1992-93 | I | 1611 | 100. | 1468 | 100. | 6060 | 100.0 | 7402 | 100.0 |
| 1993-94 | II | 1597 | 97.27 | 1483 | 101.02 | 6218 | 102.61 | 6204 | 83.82 |
| 1994-95 | III | 1421 | 88.21 | 1386 | 94.41 | 6103 | 100.71 | 6016 | 81.28 |
| 1995-96 | IV | 1380 | 85.66 | 1374 | 93.59 | 6021 | 99.36 | 5895 | 79.64 |
| 1996-97 | V | 1245 | 77.28 | 1118 | 76.16 | 6202 | 102.34 | 6035 | 81.53 |
| 1997-98 | VI | 1059 | 65.74 | 986 | 67.17 | 6267 | 102.41 | 6553 | 88.53 |

Source: Deputy Director of Education, Wayanad.

On an average, about 35 per cent of the tribal children in the district enrolled in Standard I drop out from schools before reaching Standard VI whereas the corresponding dropout rate for non-tribal children was hardly 5 per cent.

There are also inter-community differences in literacy levels among tribesfolk in Wayanad. Out of 765 heads of households of the *Adiyan* community only 44 (5.75 per cent) were literate in 1982 (Government of Kerala, 1982, Bench-Mark Survey of ITDP, Directorate of Economics and Statistics).

In the case of *Paniyans*, it was only 2.15 per cent; for *Kurichians* and *Kurumans*, they were a little higher, 13.07 per cent and 20.32 per cent respectively. Employment Exchange data on Educational Status for Scheduled Tribes in Wayanad for 1994, 1995, and 1996 are furnished in Table 2.20. It is found that only *Kurichians*, *Kurumans*, and Christian converts *Kurichians* have college-educated and technically qualified persons among them.

**Table 2.20 Community-wise and Education-wise Details of Scheduled Tribes
Registered in the Mobile Employment Exchange in Wayanad District**

| Community | Below Matric | | | Matric | | | Pre-degree | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------|------|--------|------|------|------------|------|------|
| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 40 | 25 | 38 | 6 | 7 | 3 | — | — | — |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 72 | 111 | 24 | 35 | 34 | 3 | — | — | — |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 48 | 51 | 65 | 36 | 24 | 20 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 1 | 1 | 2 | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | — | 2 | — | 2 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Xian converted <i>Kurichian</i> | 5 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 1 | — | — |
| Xian converted <i>Mala Arayans</i> | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |

| Community | Graduate | | | Post-Graduate | | | Technical * | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|------|------|---------------|------|------|-------------|------|------|
| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | — | 1 | 1 | — | — | — | 3 | — | 1 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 3 | 2 | 2 | — | — | — | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| <i>Adiyan</i> | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Xian converted <i>Kurichian</i> | 1 | — | 1 | — | — | — | — | 2 | 1 |
| Xian converted <i>Mala Arayans</i> | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — |

* Includes persons with qualifications like ITI, VHSC/THSLC, Typist, JDC, TTC, and Diploma holders;
Source: Mobile Employment Exchange, Kalpetta, Wayanad.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion shows that tribesfolk in Wayanad continues to be educationally backward. Dropout rates are higher among them than among the non-tribesfolk. The various government schemes pursued for tribal upliftment during the past half a decade have not succeeded to ward off their educational backwardness.

3. Tribal Economy of Wayanad

Introduction

Wayanad, one of the 14 districts in Kerala is situated in an elevated picturesque mountainous plateau on the crest of Western Ghats. The district came into existence in November 1980. Wayanad was inhabited exclusively by tribesfolk only until the seventeenth century. Attracted by the fertility of the land, streams of people from the neighbouring State of Karnataka and

Tamil Nadu and from the southern parts of Kerala migrated to Wayanad since the beginning of the 18th century. Bulk of the migration from south Kerala took place during the 20th century. In-migration led to growth and expansion of settled agriculture in the valleys. The settlers encroached upon the fertile regions and enslaved the tribesfolk.

Attracted by the growth of spices in the hilly tracks, the Europeans, mostly the British, opened up the plateau for the plantations and cultivation of spices; they also developed transportation facilities for laying roads for vehicular traffic for opening out Wayanad to the outside world. The roads that pass through Wayanad are the major ones among them.

In-migration and settlement of outsiders brought sharp changes in the socio-economic fabric of the area. The period since independence has witnessed phenomenal all-round development in its infrastructural facilities. The area remains backward despite its rich natural endowments and income from cash crops (Canara Bank, 1997-'98).

Tribal Economy

Traditional tribal economy is essentially a subsistence economy. Family is the basic unit of the tribal society. Each tribe has its separate dwelling localities. A group of families belonging to a particular tribal community has a common dwelling place and a common leader who acts as priest, judge, doctor, and administrative head, all blended into one.

Under the barter system which it followed, the different tribal settlements were organised around lineage and clan bounded by tradition and ethnic kinship, an arrangement which helps minimise the rigours of the tribal life. The technology in use is associated with the tribal tradition and beliefs.

Wayanad is the major pocket of tribal concentration in Kerala. The Scheduled Tribes population according to 1991 Census was 1,14,969 in Wayanad, which was 35.82 per cent of the total tribal population of the State. The tribal population of Wayanad district is distributed among the three taluks that constitute the district as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Taluk-wise Distribution of Tribal Population in Wayanad - 1991

| Taluk | Total Population | Total Tribal Population | Percentage of Tribal Population |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Mananthavady | 203701 | 40395 | 19.83 |
| Sulthan Bathery | 255397 | 45334 | 17.75 |
| Vythiri | 213030 | 29240 | 13.73 |
| Wayanad Dist | 672128 | 114969 | 17.11 |

Source: Census of India 1991, Series -12, Kerala, Paper -3 of 1991, Final Population Totals.

Table 3.2 Taluk-wise Distribution of the Population in Wayanad: Tribal and non-Tribal & Rural and Urban: 1991

| Taluk/District | Total Population | | | Tribal Population | | |
|-----------------|------------------|--------|-------|-------------------|---------------|------------|
| | Total | Rural | Urban | Total | Rural | Urban |
| Mananthavady | 203701 | 203701 | - | 40395 | 40395 (100) | — |
| Sulthan Bathery | 255397 | 255397 | - | 45334 | 45334 (100) | — |
| Vythiri | 213030 | 190081 | 22949 | 29240 | 26814 (91.7) | 2426 (8.3) |
| Total | 672128 | 649179 | 22949 | 114969 | 112543 (97.9) | 2426 (2.1) |

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage to total tribal population; Source: Ibid.

From Table 3.2, we observe that 97.9 per cent of the tribal population in the district reside in rural areas. Only in Vythiri taluk there is a small urban population of tribesfolk, which accounts for 8.3 per cent of the total population. Altogether 35 sub-sects among the tribesfolk are identified in the State. The majority of these sects are represented in Wayanad. However, the major tribal communities here are the *Paniyans*, *Kurichians*, *Kurumans*, *Kattunaykans*, and *Adiyans* (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Community-wise Distribution of the Major Scheduled Tribes, Wayanad, 1990

| Community | No. of Habitats | No. of Families | Male | Female | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 99(5.5) | 1360(6.7) | 2817(7.0) | 2884(7.1) | 5701(7.0) |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 201(11.3) | 2631(13.0) | 4685(11.6) | 4510(11.1) | 9195(11.4) |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 324(8.2) | 3037(15.0) | 6802(16.8) | 6565(16.2) | 13367(16.5) |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 310(17.4) | 3884(19.2) | 8100(20.0) | 7986(19.7) | 16086(19.9) |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 849(47.6) | 9314(46.0) | 17990(44.5) | 18570(45.8) | 36560(45.2) |
| Total | 1783(100.00) | 20226(100) | 40394(100) | 40515(100) | 80909(100) |

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage; Source: ITDP Office, Kalpetta, Wayanad.

Paniyans are the single largest segment and they account for nearly 48 per cent of the habitats, 46 per cent of the families, and 45 per cent of the population among these five communities. *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* are the next in the order, each accounting for about 18 per cent. *Adiyans* form only seven per cent of this population. Mananthavady taluk has a fair representation of all the five communities as may be seen from Table 3.4.

Table 3. 4 Taluk-wise and Community-wise Distribution of Major Scheduled Tribes Habitats in Waynad District

| Taluk | <i>Adiyan</i> | | <i>Kattunayakan</i> | | <i>Kurichian</i> | | <i>Kuruman</i> | | <i>Paniyan</i> | |
|----------------|---------------|------|---------------------|------|------------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|------|
| | H | F | H | F | H | F | H | F | H | F |
| Mananthvady | 98 | 1344 | 31 | 461 | 221 | 2089 | 24 | 340 | 257 | 2837 |
| SulthanBathery | 1 | 16 | 139 | 1790 | 2 | 28 | 234 | 3043 | 291 | 3359 |
| Vythiry | - | - | 31 | 372 | 101 | 930 | 52 | 501 | 301 | 3118 |
| Total | 99 | 1360 | 201 | 2631 | 324 | 3037 | 310 | 3884 | 849 | 9314 |

Note: H= No. of households, F= No. of families; Source: ITDP Survey, Waynad, 1990.

Topography and Climate

Topographically, Wayanad is a continuation of the great Mysore plateau and lies above the crest of the Western Ghats. It is rugged and mountainous on the south and the west. It has an area of 2,116 sq.km in which 544 sq.km are reserved forests (Government of Kerala, May 1989). Hill ranges with peaks soaring to above 2,000 metres adorn it on the southern and western sides. On the east, the topography is flatter. On the north, the hills are tall. The tribesfolk of Wayanad lived in isolation in these salubrious environs for several centuries. The in-migration of the past three centuries of plainsmen from the neighbouring States took place through the mountain passes at Thamarassery, Paria, and Kuttiadi. Availability of natural irrigation facilities and the unique geographical features helped the tribal communities to cultivate food crops and the in-migrants to introduce plantation crops in Wayanad.

Almost all the accessible areas in Wayanad have been cleared and planted with tea, coffee, pepper, and cardamom. Deforestation and introduction of plantation crops have affected the occupational structure of tribesfolk. They have been deprived of their natural habitats and hunting areas and sources of forest produce such as honey, medicinal plants, and drugs.

Kurichians and *Kurumans* are traditional cultivating communities while *Adiyans* and *Paniyans* are non-cultivating communities. The *Kattunaykans*, most primitive among the tribesfolk of Wayanad, do not follow any occupation and live a precarious life subsisting on whatever comes handy to them. After the arrival of the intruders, the tribesfolk have been subjected to various types of exploitation for generations; at present, they are in general, a poor, servile, and miserable people.

Socio-economic Profile of Tribal Households

The social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the sample tribal households of the area may be discussed. All the households in the sample live in rural areas, some of them in interior forests (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 Community-wise Distribution of Sample Tribal Households

| Tribe | No. |
|--------------------|------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 32 |
| <i>Kattunaykan</i> | 32 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 38 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 48 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 100 |
| Total | 250 |

Source: Sample survey

The hamlet-wise distribution of tribal households is given in Table 3.6. About 84 per cent of the hamlets is tribal majority hamlets.

Table 3.6 Percentage Distribution of Tribal Households: Hamlet-wise

| Tribe | Tribal Majority Hamlets | Other Hamlets | Total |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 59.4 | 40.7 | 100 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 81.2 | 18.8 | 100 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 84.4 | 15.8 | 100 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 85.4 | 14.6 | 100 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 91.0 | 9.0 | 100 |
| Total | 83.6 | 16.4 | 100 |

Source: Sample Survey

The majority (70 per cent) of the sample tribal households resides now in tiled houses; most of the residences are not electrified (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7 Housing Conditions of Tribal Households (in percentage)

| Types | Electrified | Non-Electrified | Total |
|----------|-------------|-----------------|-------|
| Tiled | 33.7 | 66.3 | 70.0 |
| Thatched | 55.6 | 44.4 | 10.8 |
| Hut | 2.1 | 97.9 | 19.2 |
| Total | 30.0 | 70.0 | 100.0 |

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage to total

Source: Sample Survey

The average size of a tribal household is 4.44. Inter-community differences in household size are small and fall in the range of 3.97 to 4.74 (Table 3.8). It is observed that 58.4 per cent of the household has a family size of 1-4 members.

The other 36.8 per cent of households has a family size of 5-7 members and 4.8 per cent have 8-10 members (Table 3.9).

More than 90 per cent of the tribal households are nuclear type families. Only 10 per cent of the households were found to be following the joint family system as evident from Table 3.10

Table 3.8 Size of Tribal Households by Sex

| Tribe | Male | Female | Total | Average Size |
|---------------------|------|--------|-------|--------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 76 | 71 | 147 | 4.59 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 59 | 68 | 127 | 3.97 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 82 | 98 | 180 | 4.74 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 103 | 93 | 196 | 4.08 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 231 | 230 | 461 | 4.61 |
| Total | 551 | 560 | 1111 | 4.44 |

Source: Sample survey

Table 3.9 Distribution of Households by Community and Size

| Size | <i>Adiyan</i> | <i>Kattunayakan</i> | <i>Kurichian</i> | <i>Kuruman</i> | <i>Paniyan</i> | Total |
|-------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| 1—4 | 17 | 21 | 32 | 32 | 53 | 155 (62.0) |
| 5-7 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 15 | 39 | 82 (32.8) |
| 8-10 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 8 | 13 (5.2) |
| Total | 32 | 32 | 38 | 48 | 100 | 250 |

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage to total. Source: Sample survey.

Table 3.10 Structure of Tribal Family (in percentage)

| Tribes | Joint Family | Nuclear Family | Total |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|-------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 0.4 | 12.4 | 12.8 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 0.4 | 12.4 | 12.8 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 0.8 | 14.4 | 15.2 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 2.0 | 17.2 | 19.2 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 5.6 | 34.4 | 40.0 |
| Total | 9.2 | 90.8 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample survey.

Ninety-four per cent of the tribesfolk is Hindus and six per cent is Christians. All the Christian households are of *Kurichians*.

Sex of the Head of Households

According to our survey, 88.4 per cent of the heads of sample households is males. Nearly 90 per cent of the tribal households is of agricultural labourers, and 5 per cent is of domestic workers. Their percentage in service sector activities is as low as 1.3 per cent.

Though the tribesfolk are mostly agricultural labourers, they hold small plots of land, mostly of less than 2.5 acres in size (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11 Size-wise Distribution of Land Holdings among Tribesfolk (in percentage)

| Tribes | < 0.50 acre | 0.50-2.5 acre | > 2.5 acre | Total |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 2.9 | 5.36 | 0 | 7.55 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 2.03 | 2.71 | 0 | 4.74 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 5.40 | 14.54 | 9.73 | 29.67 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 5.94 | 16.25 | 0 | 22.19 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 10.24 | 25.06 | 0 | 35.30 |
| Total | 25.80 | 63.92 | 9.73 | 99.45 |

Source: Sample survey

The majority of tribal households have annual income of less than Rs 6,000. Of them, nearly 20 per cent is extremely poor, having an annual income of less than Rs 22,000. There

are only a few (3.2 per cent) households with more than Rs 11,000 as annual income to be considered above the poverty line. Sixty per cent of the income of the tribal households accrue from wage labour. Agriculture contributes 22 per cent and salaries only 8 per cent (Table 3.12).

Table 3.12 Sources of Income of Tribal Households (in percentage)

| Source | <i>Adiyan</i> | <i>Kattunayakan</i> | <i>Kurichian</i> | <i>Kuruman</i> | <i>Paniyan</i> | Total |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| Agriculture | 20.2 | 15.2 | 29.3 | 25.6 | 20.4 | 22.4 |
| Wage Labour | 72.7 | 73.9 | 33.5 | 54.8 | 66.5 | 60.4 |
| Salary | 0.0 | 0.0 | 29.6 | 6.8 | 4.5 | 8.1 |
| Others | 7.1 | 10.9 | 7.6 | 12.8 | 8.6 | 9.1 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample Survey

About two-thirds of the expenditure of the tribal households is incurred on food. Educational expenditure is on the average less than six per cent. *Kurichians* have distinctly different expenditure patterns: they spend a lower percentage on food and a high percentage on education, than other tribal communities do (Table 3.13).

Table 3.13 Expenditure Pattern of Tribal Households (in percentage)

| Expenditure items | <i>Adiyan</i> | <i>Kattunayakan</i> | <i>Kurichian</i> | <i>Kuruman</i> | <i>Paniyan</i> | Total |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| Food | 69.3 | 68.2 | 56.0 | 64.0 | 65.6 | 64.6 |
| Clothing | 8.6 | 10.5 | 10.1 | 10.2 | 12.6 | 10.6 |
| Education | 4.2 | 3.8 | 10.2 | 6.3 | 3.4 | 5.5 |
| Medicine | 6.4 | 8.0 | 9.7 | 7.4 | 7.9 | 7.5 |
| Others | 11.5 | 9.5 | 14.0 | 12.1 | 10.5 | 11.8 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Note: Others includes expenditure for Betel chewing and Cinema; Source: Sample Survey

Most of the heads of households in the sample are illiterate. The range of illiteracy is from three-fourths in the case of *Kattunaykans* and *Paniyans* to less than two-fifths in the case of *Kurichians* (Table 3.14).

As a result of the low educational status of the heads of households, and several other inhibiting factors such as poverty, inaccessibility to schools, and poor performance at school, the literacy of the tribesfolk in the sample is also found to be low. Only 54 per cent of the members is found literate (Table 3.15).

Illiteracy is found to be above 50 per cent among *Kattunayakan*, *Paniyan*, and *Adiyan* communities. More than two-thirds of the literate population in the sample, have only primary, or less than primary, schooling. About 30 per cent have secondary education. The proportion of tribesfolk who have gone beyond the school is extremely low, only two per cent. Inter-community differences in educational levels among the tribesfolk in the sample are also found to be large (Table 3.16).

Table 3.14 Literacy Status of Tribal Head of Households

| Tribe | Illiterate | Literate | Total |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 62.5 | 37.5 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 75.0 | 25.0 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 36.8 | 63.2 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 47.9 | 52.1 | 100.0 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 76.0 | 24.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 62.8 | 37.2 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample survey

Table 3.15 Literacy Status of Tribal Households

| | Illiterate | | | Literate | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Tribe | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 19.7 | 31.3 | 51.1 | 32.0 | 17.0 | 49.0 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 24.4 | 31.5 | 55.9 | 22.0 | 22.0 | 44.1 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 5.6 | 13.3 | 18.9 | 40.0 | 41.1 | 81.1 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 21.9 | 24.5 | 46.4 | 30.6 | 23.0 | 53.6 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 22.8 | 30.1 | 52.9 | 27.3 | 19.8 | 47.1 |
| Total | 19.6 | 26.7 | 46.3 | 30.02 | 23.75 | 53.7 |

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages to total members (row total)

Source: Sample survey

Table 3.16 Level of Education of Tribal Household Members

| Tribes | Primary and below | Secondary | Pre-degree | Graduation and Above | Total |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 56 (77.7) | 16 (22.3) | — | — | 72 (100.) |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 52 (92.9) | 4 (7.1) | — | — | 56 (100) |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 65 (44.5) | 74 (50.7) | 6 (4.1) | 1 (0.7) | 146 (100) |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 74 (70.5) | 30 (28.6) | 1 (0.9) | - | 105 (100) |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 160 (73.7) | 53 (24.5) | 4 (1.8) | - | 217 (100) |
| Total | 407 (68.3) | 177 (29.7) | 11 (1.8) | 1 (0.2) | 596 (100) |

Note: Figures in parenthesis are percentages to row total; Source: Sample survey

Thus, we find that most of the sample tribal households are poor and educationally backward. Majority of the them are residing in remote rural areas in colonies consisting of small houses, and are engaged as agriculture labourers. All these facts take one to conclude that tribesfolk continue to be a backward segment of our society.

4. Awareness and Utilisation of Educational Development Schemes by Tribesfolk

Attempts by the Government of India to improve the educational status of tribes date back to early 1940s. A special provision was made for the first time in the Central budget in 1944 for providing scholarship for students of backward communities including Scheduled Tribes. Despite the genuine efforts made by various agencies to promote their education, the Scheduled Tribes continue to remain educationally backward. The past few decades have seen a

plethora of schemes for development of the tribesfolk and tribal education. In this study, we analyse 20 schemes that are related to education. Table 4.1 gives the level of awareness among the tribesfolk in our sample about the various educational development schemes.

Table 4.1 Awareness of Educational Schemes among the Heads of sample Households
(in percentage)

| No. | Schemes | <i>Adiyan</i> | <i>Kattunayakan</i> | <i>Kurichian</i> | <i>Kuruman</i> | <i>Paniyan</i> | Total |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| 1 | Kindergarten | 75.0 | 62.5 | 81.5 | 81.2 | 45.0 | 63.6 |
| 2 | Vikasvadi | 40.6 | 25.0 | 71.0 | 79.2 | 39.0 | 50.0 |
| 3 | Single teacher school | 43.7 | 43.7 | 81.5 | 79.2 | 42.0 | 55.6 |
| 4 | Lumpsum grant & monthly stipend | 87.5 | 93.8 | 94.7 | 89.6 | 91.0 | 91.2 |
| 5 | Hostel facilities | 93.8 | 75.0 | 100.0 | 93.8 | 87.0 | 89.6 |
| 6 | Incentive grants to parents | 90.6 | 90.6 | 100.0 | 95.8 | 95.0 | 94.8 |
| 7 | Incentive grants to students | 96.9 | 96.9 | 89.5 | 87.5 | 89.0 | 90.8 |
| 8 | Special award for brilliant students | 40.6 | 43.7 | 84.2 | 77.1 | 25.0 | 48.4 |
| 9 | Enrolment in tutorials | 40.6 | 37.5 | 84.2 | 70.8 | 50.0 | 56.4 |
| 10 | Facilities for better education | 46.8 | 50.0 | 57.9 | 60.4 | 46.0 | 51.2 |
| 11 | Encouragement for sports and arts | 46.8 | 65.6 | 68.4 | 68.7 | 48.0 | 57.2 |
| 12 | Ashram schools | 37.5 | 46.8 | 50.0 | 41.7 | 44.0 | 44.0 |
| 13 | Bharat darshan | 28.1 | 34.4 | 21.1 | 43.8 | 32.0 | 32.4 |
| 14 | Studies outside State | 43.7 | 21.9 | 13.2 | 43.8 | 28.0 | 30.0 |
| 15 | Industrial Training Centres | 50.0 | 53.1 | 86.8 | 77.1 | 42.0 | 58.0 |
| 16 | Assistance to attend interviews | 28.1 | 37.5 | 76.3 | 50.0 | 33.0 | 42.8 |
| 17 | Pre-examination coaching | 56.2 | 40.6 | 31.6 | 52.1 | 35.0 | 41.2 |
| 18 | Vocational training | 21.9 | 0.00 | 15.8 | 47.9 | 31.0 | 26.8 |
| 19 | Mob.Emp. exchange | 34.4 | 37.5 | 18.4 | 27.1 | 25.0 | 27.2 |
| 20 | AMRID | 50.0 | 31.2 | 23.7 | 47.9 | 32.0 | 36.0 |

Source: Sample survey

Most of the respondents are aware of a few schemes - lumpsum grant, monthly stipend, hostel facilities, incentive grant to parents and students and kindergarten. However, a sizeable section is unaware of several other schemes in operation. In general, they seem to know of schemes available in their villages or in the villages nearby; but remain ignorant of schemes implemented in far off places.

Only about one-fourth of the respondents know about vocational education and training and mobile employment exchange facilities. A large proportion of the respondents from the communities of *Paniyans*, *Adiyans*, and *Kattunaykans* are unaware of most of the educational development schemes. *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* have a higher level of awareness about most of the educational schemes.

Measurement of Awareness

Awareness is a qualitative attribute that hardly yields to quantification. Still, there are some methods in use for qualification of such attributes. We use a three-point scale to measure awareness: ‘fully aware’ with three points, ‘aware’ with two points, and ‘not aware’ with one point. Based on this scale, three awareness levels have been identified. They are (i) highly aware (ii) moderately aware, and (iii) low aware. Persons who have a score above or equal to mean score plus standard deviation ($\bar{X}+s$) are considered highly aware. Those who have a score below the mean score minus standard deviation ($\bar{X}-s$) are included among the low aware category and a score that falls between these extreme values ($\bar{X}+s$) and ($\bar{X}-s$) are categorised as moderately aware. In other words, moderately aware respondents are those who have a score between ($\bar{X}+s$) and ($\bar{X}-s$). The results of this classification are given in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Tribe-wise Awareness of Educational Development Schemes (in percentage)

| Tribe | Highly Aware | Moderately Aware | Low Aware | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------|-------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 8.7 | 68.8 | 12.5 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kattunaykan</i> | 18.7 | 62.6 | 18.7 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 26.3 | 50.0 | 23.7 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 22.9 | 56.3 | 20.8 | 100.0 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 22.0 | 59.0 | 19.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 16.0 | 69.2 | 14.8 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample Survey

Only 16 per cent of the respondents are found to possess a high level of awareness about the tribal educational schemes. About 70 per cent is moderately aware and 15 per cent has only low awareness. Table 4.3 shows the mean awareness scores of different tribal groups.

Table 4.3 Awareness Levels of Tribal Community

| Tribe | N | Total Score | Mean | S.D |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Adiyan | 32 | 1115 | 34.84 | 5.31 |
| Kattunaykan | 32 | 983 | 30.72 | 3.40 |
| Kurichian | 38 | 1395 | 36.71 | 3.56 |
| Kuruman | 48 | 1793 | 37.35 | 3.63 |
| Paniyan | 100 | 3276 | 32.76 | 3.20 |
| Total | 250 | 8562 | 34.24 | 4.35 |

Source: Sample Survey

Kurumans have the highest mean score followed by *Kurichians* and *Adiyans*. The *Paniyans* and *Kattunaykans* are at the lowest end with scores lower than the average of 34.24. Thus, inter-tribal variations in awareness of educational development schemes are observed.

The tests of significance of the difference between the means are used for finding out whether group difference exists for the relevant sub-samples (Garret, 1979). The critical ratio is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Critical Ratio} = \frac{m_1 - m_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{N_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{N_2}}}$$

Where m_1 and m_2 are the means of two samples: N_1 and N_2 are sample sizes and s_1 and s_2 are standard deviations. If the critical ratio falls outside the range ± 1.96 , the difference is significant at a 0.05 level for a two-tailed test. For a critical ratio falling outside the range ± 2.58 , the difference is significant at 0.01 level. If the observed critical ratio falls within the range ± 1.96 and ± 2.58 , it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the groups at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance respectively.

Mean Awareness between Adiya and other groups

The analysis of significance of difference in mean awareness of educational development schemes between *Adiyan* and *Kattunaykan* has revealed that the critical ratio is 2.68, which lies in the rejection region at 0.05 and even 0.01. Thus, it is found that there is significant difference in the mean awareness between *Adiya* and *Kattunayka* tribes. In the case of *Adiya* and *Kurichia*, *Adiya* and *Kuruma*, and *Adiya* and *Paniya*, the difference is found insignificant.

Mean Awareness between Kattunaykan and other tribal groups

The analysis shows that there exists significant difference in awareness between *Kattunaykan* and the other tribes. However, as between *Kattunaykan* and *Paniyan*, the difference is not significant at 0.01 level.

Mean Awareness between Kurichian and other tribal groups

It is found that there is no significant difference in the mean awareness level of *Kurichian* and *Kuruman* and *Kurichian*, and *Adiyan*. Nevertheless, the difference is highly significant in the case of *Kurichian* and *Paniyan*, and *Kurichian* and *Kattunaykan* tribes.

Mean Awareness between Kuruman and other tribal groups:

The difference in the awareness between the *Kuruman* and *Paniyan*, and *Kuruman* and *Kattunaykan* is found highly significant, while the difference is insignificant in the case of *Kuruman* and *Kurichian*; and between *Kuruman* and *Adiyan*.

Mean Awareness between Paniyan and other Tribal groups

There is significant difference between *Paniyan* and *Kattunayakan*, *Paniyan* and *Kurichian*, and *Paniyan* and *Kuruman* in the mean awareness level. However, the difference is not significant between *Paniyan* and *Kattunayakan* at 0.01 level. In the case of *Paniyan* and *Adiyan*, the difference is not significant. This may be due to the high standard deviation of the *Adiyan* tribal groups.

The above analysis stands testimony to the hypothesis already stated. There is significant difference in the awareness of educational development schemes among different tribal groups.

Table 4.4 shows the tribe-wise mean awareness and the co-efficient of variation of awareness.

The mean awareness score for the total group (34.24) is a little higher than one half the possible maximum score of the measure. The co-efficient of variation in the scores of the respondents is also relatively large. We find that the *Kuruman* respondents have the highest mean score and the *Kattunayakan* respondents have the lowest mean score. The co-efficient of variation is high for *Adiyan* respondents and low for *Kurichian* respondents. As the C.V of *Kurichians* are found less variable or more consistent, uniform, and more stable.

Table 4.4 Mean and Co-efficient of Relative Variation (CRV) of Awareness by Tribe

| Tribe | Mean Score | CRV | N |
|---------------------|------------|-------|-----|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 34.84 | 15.24 | 32 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 30.72 | 11.07 | 32 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 36.71 | 9.70 | 38 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 32.76 | 9.72 | 48 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 32.76 | 9.77 | 100 |
| Total | 34.24 | 12.70 | 250 |

Source: Sample Survey

Utilisation of Educational Schemes by Tribesfolk

Table 4.5 shows the level of utilisation of the different educational schemes by the sample tribal households. Most of the educational schemes are yet to be utilised by the sample households. The important schemes made use by all the tribal groups are lumpsum grants, monthly stipends, and incentive grants to parents and students. The schemes like special award for brilliant students, facilities for better education, Bharat Darshan and studies outside the State, and vocational education and training programme, were never utilised by them.

Table 4.5 Level of Utilisation of Educational Development Schemes by Tribes
(in percentage)

| No. | Schemes | <i>Adiyan</i> | <i>Kattunayakan</i> | <i>Kurichian</i> | <i>Kuruman</i> | <i>Paniyan</i> | Total |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| 1 | Kindergarten | 12.5 | 18.8 | 18.4 | 16.7 | 18.0 | 17.2 |
| 2 | Vikasvadi | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| 3 | Single teacher school | 0.0 | 0.0 | 13.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 |
| 4 | Lumpsum grant & monthly stipend | 68.8 | 50.0 | 78.9 | 64.6 | 55.0 | 61.6 |
| 5 | Hostel facilities | 12.5 | 6.3 | 5.3 | 14.6 | 4.0 | 7.6 |
| 6 | Incentive grants to parents | 68.8 | 56.3 | 81.6 | 62.5 | 56.0 | 62.8 |
| 7 | Incentive grants to students | 68.8 | 53.1 | 57.9 | 62.5 | 57.0 | 59.2 |
| 8 | Special award for brilliant students | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 9 | Enrolment in tutorials | 12.5 | 0.0 | 26.3 | 16.7 | 8.0 | 12.0 |
| 10 | Facilities for better education | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 11 | Encouragement for sports and arts | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| 12 | Ashram schools | 0.0 | 6.3 | 10.5 | 6.3 | 0.0 | 3.6 |
| 13 | Bharat darshan | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 14 | Studies outside State | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 15 | Industrial Training Centres | 3.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.4 |
| 16 | Assistance to attend interviews | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.3 | 4.2 | 0.0 | 1.6 |
| 17 | Pre examination coaching | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.9 | 6.3 | 0.0 | 2.4 |
| 18 | Vocational training | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 19 | Mob. Emp. exchange | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.9 | 6.3 | 0.0 | 2.4 |
| 20 | AMRID | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.9 | 4.2 | 0.0 | 2.0 |

Source: Sample survey

Measurement of Utilisation

Utilisation has been measured assuming that there can be two extreme possibilities with regard to it defined as 'utilised' and 'unutilised' and scored as one and zero respectively. Again, these scores were converted into levels of utilisation as (i) highly utilised, (ii) moderately utilised, and (iii) low utilised. Score higher than or equal to the sum of the mean and the standard deviation are considered a highly utilised score less than the difference between the mean and the standard deviation, a low utilised. All scores between are listed as moderately utilised (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Level of Utilisation of Educational Schemes

| Tribe | Highly Utilised | Moderately Utilised | Low Utilised | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------------|--------------|-------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 6.25 | 71.87 | 21.88 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 15.62 | 46.87 | 37.51 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 26.32 | 55.26 | 18.42 | 100.0 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 16.67 | 50.00 | 33.33 | 100.0 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 22.00 | 36.00 | 42.00 | 100.0 |
| Total | 9.60 | 62.40 | 28.00 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample Survey

The sample as a whole has about 10 per cent households 'highly utilised', 63 per cent 'moderately utilised' and 28 per cent 'utilised in a low level'. As far as the inter-tribal variations in utilisation are concerned, the emerging picture is the same as that of awareness. There are inter-tribal variations in utilisation levels as indicated by the mean scores.

The Arithmetic mean and co-efficient of variation of utilisation by tribes is given in Table 4.7. Only three communities have mean utilisation score above the sample average; the co-efficient of relative variation is found the lowest for *Kurichian* and the highest for *Kattunayakan*.

Sources of Information of Educational Schemes

During the interview with heads of tribal households, we found that nearly three-fifths of them got the information from schools and one-seventh from extension officials or social workers. Another one-seventh got it from friends and neighbours. Newspapers and other media were hardly a significant source (Table 4.8).

Table 4.7 Mean and Coefficient of Relative Variation (CRV) of Utilisation by Tribe

| Tribe | Mean | CRV | N |
|---------------------|------|-------|-----|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 2.47 | 63.97 | 32 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 1.91 | 89.01 | 32 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 3.00 | 60.33 | 38 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 2.69 | 72.12 | 48 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 2.05 | 81.46 | 100 |
| Total | 2.38 | 75.21 | 250 |

Source: Sample Survey

Adequacy of the Assistance

Table 4.9 shows that almost all the heads of sample felt that the amount provided under the government schemes for education of tribal children are grossly inadequate. In this respect, inter-community differences are found to be marginal.

Table 4.8 Sources of Information of Educational Schemes

| Source | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------|--------|------------|
| Schools | 148 | 59.2 |
| Extension/ Social Workers | 36 | 14.4 |
| Friends/Neighbours | 37 | 14.8 |
| Newspapers | 19 | 7.6 |
| Others | 10 | 4.0 |
| Total | 250 | 100.0 |

Source: Survey data

Table 4.9 Adequacy of Educational Assistance

| Tribe | Adequate | | Inadequate | |
|---------------------|----------|------|------------|------|
| | No | % | No | % |
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 4 | 12.5 | 28 | 87.5 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 0 | 0.0 | 32 | 100 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 2 | 5.3 | 36 | 94.7 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 4 | 8.3 | 44 | 91.7 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 8 | 8.0 | 92 | 92.0 |
| Total | 18 | 7.2 | 232 | 92.8 |

Source: Sample survey

Difficulties Faced in Availing of the Facilities

It is also important to examine whether there is any difficulty in availing the educational facilities by the beneficiaries. The data given in Table 4.10 make it clear that difficulties arise in various forms: indifferent officials, cumbersome procedures, and corruption in schools. Illiteracy on the part of the parents also constitutes a major difficulty.

Table 4.10 Difficulties in Availing Educational Assistance

| Difficulties | No. of Responses | Percentage |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Indifferent Officials | 20 | 13.1 |
| Procedural Difficulties | 21 | 13.7 |
| Donation to Schools | 65 | 42.5 |
| Illiteracy of Parents | 32 | 20.9 |
| Others | 15 | 9.8 |
| Total | 153 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample survey

5. Educational Performance of Tribal Children

Having discussed the general socio-economic conditions of the sample tribal households, we

now turn to look into the educational performance of the tribal children in the sample. Table 5.1 shows the community-wise distribution of children in the age group 6-14 by their schooling status.

Table 5.1 Community-wise Educational Particulars of Tribal Children of the Age 6-14 in the Sample Households

| Tribe | Children | | | Children Attending Schools | | |
|---------------------|----------|-----|-----|----------------------------|----|------------|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T |
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 25 | 11 | 36 | 16 | 4 | 20 (55.6) |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 16 | 13 | 29 | 9 | 9 | 18 (62.07) |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 19 | 30 | 49 | 14 | 21 | 35 (71.14) |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 34 | 26 | 60 | 23 | 20 | 43 (71.7) |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 60 | 54 | 114 | 25 | 24 | 59 (51.8) |
| Total | 154 | 134 | 288 | 97 | 78 | 175 (60.8) |

| Tribes | Children not Attending Schools | | | Children never Enrolling Schools | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----|-----------|----------------------------------|----|-----------|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T |
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 9 | 3 | 12 (33.3) | 0 | 4 | 4 (11.1) |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 1 | 1 | 2 (6.9) | 5 | 4 | 9 (31.0) |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 2 | 7 | 9 (18.4) | 2 | 3 | 5 (10.2) |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 5 | 4 | 9 (15.0) | 6 | 2 | 8 (13.3) |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 15 | 14 | 29 (25.4) | 10 | 16 | 26 (22.8) |
| Total | 32 | 29 | 61 (21.2) | 23 | 29 | 52 (18.0) |

Note: Figures in parenthesis denote percentages to total children

M=Male, F=Female, T=Total

Source: Sample survey.

Of the 288 children, 61 per cent attend schools, 21 per cent were school dropouts, and 18 per cent have never attended schools. The highest percentage of children attending school was found among the *Kuruman* community and the lowest is among the *Paniya* community (Table 5.1).

Dropout

More than one-fifth of the children in this age group is school dropouts. Dropouts are higher among *Adiyan* and *Paniyan* children. Most of the dropouts have been from the primary State. Only 28 per cent of the dropped out children did so from the secondary stage.

In the case of *Kurichians* and *Kurumans*, the percentage of children who dropped out from the primary stage was relatively low; in the range of 22 per cent to 33 per cent (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Distribution of Dropout according to Level of Discontinuance

| Tribe | Primary | Secondary | Total |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 10 (83.3) | 2 (16.7) | 12 (100.0) |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 2 (100.0) | — | 2 (100.0) |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 2 (22.2) | 7 (77.8) | 9 (100.0) |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 3 (33.3) | 6 (66.7) | 9 (100.0) |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 27 (93.1) | 2 (6.9) | 29 (100.0) |
| Total | 44 (72.1) | 17 (27.9) | 61 (100.0) |

Source: Sample survey

Children Who Never Enrolled

In Kerala, which attained universal literacy in the early 1990s, it may appear paradoxical that 18 per cent of the tribal children are never enrolled in school: 15 per cent among boys and 22 per cent among girls. The proportion of non-enrolment is found the highest among *Kattunaykans* and *Paniyans*.

Reasons for Dropout / non-enrolment

No single reason can be attributed to non-enrolment and dropout. The reasons as reported by the households are given in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Dropout according to Reasons

| Sl No | Reasons | Percentage |
|-------|----------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | Economic reasons | 38.0 |
| 2 | Non-accessible | 9.2 |
| 3 | Disinclination towards education | 26.8 |
| 4 | Disableness | 14.3 |
| 5 | Social reasons | 3.7 |
| 6 | Baby sitting | 3.0 |
| 7 | Any other | 5.0 |
| | Total | 100.0 |

Source: Sample survey

The prime reason reported for dropout is economic backwardness. The other reasons are all manifestation of this primary condition of deprivation. More than one-fourth of the households reported apathy towards education as a major factor, apathy on the part of the parents, and laziness on the part of children. As the tribesfolk live mostly in colonies, non-enrolment or non-attendance by one child will lead to non-enrolment or non-attendance by other. The tribal children are found to be victims of a host of diseases: tuberculosis, polio, viral fever, and sickle cell anaemia. Physical inaccessibility to schools is also reported to be an inhibiting factor. In some areas, a child has to walk five km to reach school and 16 km to reach a

college. The walk to school is often through dense forests. Withdrawal of female children for baby sitting, rampant elsewhere in India, was not cited in the sample area. However, withdrawal for taking up paid work, particularly of boys, is not uncommon. However, the option is the children's own. They are fond of quality dress, footwear, modern food, and the gadgets of civilisation.

The report of the DPEP House-to-House Survey 1995 Wayanad district, conducted in Panamaram panchayat also found apathy towards education, economic backwardness, and ill health the main reasons behind non-enrolment and discontinuation of studies. Most of the households do not have facilities for study such as furniture, electricity, and even space. Huddled in houses of 17 to 20 sq metres in area with a single room and a veranda, the room serving as kitchen, bed room and dining room all the members are huddled together with none having an elbow room.

Parental Aspiration of Children's Education

One positive aspect to this gloomy firmament is the positive attitude towards children's education on the part of the parents (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Parents' Attitude towards Children's Education

| Level of Education | No. of Households | Percentages |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Just literate | 24 | 9.6 |
| Primary | 43 | 17.2 |
| Secondary | 84 | 33.6 |
| College | 70 | 28.0 |
| Technical | 22 | 8.8 |
| Not interested | 7 | 2.8 |
| Total | 250 | 100.0 |

Source: Sample survey.

It is satisfying to note that most of the parents in the sample area wanted their children to become educated. Interestingly, about three-fourths of the parents wanted their children to get secondary or higher levels of education. There were parents who aspired for college and technical education for their children. The proportion of parents who were totally uninterested in the education of their children was less than three per cent.

Parental Aspiration of Children's Occupation

The data given in Table 5.5 show that the majority of the parents (63.2 per cent) would like their children to follow their own traditional occupations. The children should become government officials (63 per cent) and professionals (9 per cent). These are again very positive attitudes indicating the great change that has come about in tribal thinking about their long-term future.

Table 5.5 Parental Aspiration about Children's Education (in percentage)

| Aspired Occupation for Children | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Parents' (traditional) occupation | 19.2 |
| Government service | 63.2 |
| Professional occupation | 9.2 |
| Others | 8.4 |
| Total | 100.0 |

Source: Sample survey

Opinion about Educating Girl Child

It is usually held that social taboos stand in the way of tribesfolk in sending the girl child to school. In our sample, we find that the taboos have mostly vanished (Table 5.6).

Table 5.6 Views of Parents about Educating the Girl Child (in percentage)

| Tribe | Interested | Opposed | Indifferent |
|---------------------|------------|---------|-------------|
| <i>Adiyan</i> | 87.5 | 6.2 | 6.2 |
| <i>Kattunayakan</i> | 56.3 | 6.2 | 37.5 |
| <i>Kurichian</i> | 89.5 | 0.0 | 10.5 |
| <i>Kuruman</i> | 91.7 | 6.2 | 2.1 |
| <i>Paniyan</i> | 63.0 | 13.0 | 24.0 |
| Total | 74.8 | 8.0 | 17.2 |

Source: Sample survey.

Surprisingly, the proportion of households which are openly against girls' education is a low eight per cent. Another one-sixth is indifferent, but not against the concept. Three-fourths of the parents were positively interested their girl children. Even among *Kattunaykans* and *Paniyans*, the proportions are quite high, by all-India standards.

Reasons for Inter-tribal Variations in Education

In the matter of awareness and utilisation of educational facilities, inter-tribal variations are found to be significant. The relatively high position attained by *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* could be attributed to the level of economic and social development already achieved by them. Even in the middle of 17th century, *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* lived in separate geographical divisions ruled by tribal chieftains. They led a settled life practising slash and burn agriculture. During the Mysorean invasion that began in 1760s, the Rajah of Pazhassi mobilised tribal army recruiting able-bodied *Kurichians* and *Kurumans*. The Rajah granted them land in return. *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* thus became peasant farmers. These communities took to institutional education much more readily than the other tribal communities did. On the other hand, *Adiyans* and *Paniyans* led a nomadic life until very recently. Moreover, *Kattunaykans* live even today in virtual isolation from all other sections of the population including tribesfolk.

Conclusion

The government has been implementing several programmes for the educational improvement of the tribesfolk for the past few decades. The levels of awareness and utilisation of these schemes are relatively low among the tribesfolk. However, we find that the attitudes of all the tribal communities towards education of their children both boys and girls, have undergone a significant and positive transformation. This augurs well for tribal education¹.

6. Summary of Findings and Conclusions

For the past several decades, the governments at the Centre and the States have been following a policy of protective discrimination to serve effectively the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of society including the Scheduled Tribes. Several programmes were launched to motivate and to assist the target populations.

The present study has made an effort to examine in some depth the educational situation of the tribesfolk in Kerala and the levels of awareness and utilisation on their part of the different educational development schemes specifically meant for them.

The specific objectives of the study were (i) to identify and review the various tribal educational development schemes, (ii) to analyse the levels of awareness on the part of the heads of households of the different tribal communities about the schemes, and (iii) to examine the levels of utilisation of the schemes by different tribal communities. The study was conducted in the Panamaram panchayat in the Mananthavadi taluk of Wayanad district in which five major tribal communities of the State live. These communities are *Adiyan*, *Kattunayakan*, *Kurichian*, *Kuruman*, and *Paniyan*.

The educational status of tribesfolk has improved considerably during the past few years. Tribal literacy levels have also increased substantially, both for males and females.

However, non-enrolment and dropouts from schools, constitute major problems. It was a shocking situation that the total tribal students who enrolled in standard I in 1987-'88, only 35.5 per cent reached standard X by 1996-'97 as against 58.5 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 71.3 per cent for all communities taken together. It is noticed that gender disparity in enrolment still exists, even though its intensity is low.

The major factor accounting for low educational achievements and low aspirations on the part of the tribesfolk is their poor social and economic condition. They live in unhealthy environment, do low-paid physical labour, and own very little land. Inter-community differences in socio-economic conditions and educational status are wide among the tribesfolk. Illiteracy is the highest among *Paniyans* and *Kattunaykans* and the lowest among *Kurichians* and *Kurumans*, the relatively better-off communities among the tribesfolk.

Of the several tribal educational development schemes, the tribesfolk are, in general, familiar only with a few such as lumpsum grants, stipends, hostel facilities, and kindergartens. Only *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* have a much higher level of awareness about the educational schemes.

Schemes such as lumpsum grant, monthly stipend, incentives grants to students and parents, are among the more commonly available facilities. Inter-tribal difference was observed in the utili-

sation patterns and levels as well. The usual pattern of inter-tribal difference, with *Kurichians* and *Kurumans* at the top and *Adiyans*, *Paniyans*, and *Kattunaykans* at the bottom was observed. However, the tribesfolk had now a very positive attitude towards education of their children including girl children and were prepared to educate them. They preferred to educate children in common schools, in Malayalam medium and hoped that their children would become government employees.

Yet, dropout rates of tribal students are high. Economic pressures prevent them from continuing their education. Children join the labour force early in life. The opportunity cost of education is therefore quite high.

Tribal children take up paid work early in life, more for satisfying personal wants rather than supporting their households. They spend their incomes on garments, footwear, etc in order to emulate the modern society to which they come into frequent contact. Non-enrolment in school is more due to poverty and parental apathy than to deliberate choice by the child itself. Usual inter-community differences are observed in the case of enrolment and continuation of studies as will.

The following conclusions emerge from the present study.

- (i) There is an urgent need to improve the levels of awareness and utilisation of the various educational development schemes among the tribesfolk.
- (ii) A long-lasting solution to the educational backwardness of tribesfolk cannot be found without substantial improvement to their economic status.
- (iii) Since there are wide inter-tribal variations in socio-economic status among tribesfolk, a blanket policy for development of tribesfolk may not be effective.
- (iv) The labour participation by the children of school-going age could perhaps be discouraged to some extent by making school education more attractive, by giving them higher economic incentives, by making education more entertaining and relevant and by giving the households a more active role in the conduct of school affairs.

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Section 2

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Section 5

1. In the discussion about awareness of tribal educational development schemes, equal importance has been attached to all the schemes. It is due to the constraints on scheme-wise data availability that such an approach was adopted. This may be treated as one of the limitations of the study.

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