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Socio Economic Benefits from Tribal Co-operative Societies to their Members in Western Ghats Regions of Attappady

Rohith Ravi
Assistant Professor& Head, Al Shifa College of Arts and Science, Kizhatoor, Malappuram, Kerala

Abstract — This paper presents the members socio economic benefits from tribal cooperative societies in Western Ghats regions of Attappady Kerala. The main focus of the paper was to understand the member's various socio economic benefits from four tribal sholayoor, kottathara, kurumba and pudurco operative societies, the study mainly focused on the major socio economic benefits from tribal cooperative societies in Attappadi. The data for this study collected 115 respondents in Attappady tribal area in Kerala. Arithmetic mean standard deviation and ANOVA analysis was used for the analysis purpose and it is finding that the various socio economic benefits of members from tribal cooperative societies. And this study tries to know significant difference between members of tribal category with regard to their social benefits through tribal cooperative society.

Keywords — *Social Benefits; Economic Benefits; Tribal Cooperative Societies.*

1. Introduction

Tribes are considered as the most subdued category in India. These people constitute 8.6% of India's total population, and this is the largest population of the tribal people in the world.(census of India,2001) Tribal people groups in India ordinarily called as 'Adivasi', it is an umbrella term for a heterogeneous arrangement of the ethnic and innate gathering thought about the native populace in India. The larger part of the clans customarily lived in the timberland and they thought about woodland as their salary for business. India has one of the world's largest tribal centers. Preceding the selection of Indian constitution the tribes were differently termed as aboriginals, Adivasi, forest tribes, slope tribes, primitive tribes and so forth. Up to 1919, the tribes were incorporated under the head of discouraged classes; the Indian Franchise Committee in 1919 agreed a different terminology for the evaluation reports in 1931 primitive tribes; 1941 tribes and 1951 scheduled tribes. Attappadi is among the biggest tribal settlements in Kerala at Palakkad district. It is an extension of mountain valley of 731 sq. km. in the area lying at Western Ghats ranges. Attappadi is situated in the middle-eastern part of Kerala on the northeast side of the district of Palakkad, adjacent to Coimbatore and the district of Nilgiri in Tamilnadu. The tribal region of Attappadi consists of Agali, Pudur, and Sholayar tribal villages. Over 10,000 families are live in 187 'Ooru' settled all over Attappadi. Muruga, Irula, and Kurumba are the three tribal groups in Attappadi. Based on the review of literature, it is felt hat some question need to be addressed here such as what is the role of TCS in NTFP procurement and marketing, what are the members perception towards the services provided by tribal cooperative society in Attappady, what are the socio economic benefits of members from tribal cooperative society and what are the problems faced by members while procuring NTFP. The problem of the study is formulated here based on these research questions.

2. Statement of the Problem

Tribes are considered as the most subdued category in India. These people constitute 8.6% of India's total population and these were the largest population of the tribal people in the world. Agriculture and non-timber forest products collection are the two major lively incomes for tribal community in Kerala. For uplifting tribes and protecting them to the exploitation of private parties, tribal co-operative societies were established. In the initial stage, their functions were concentrated on providing agricultural assistance, running consumer stores, providing training for tribal women's etc. When achieving all the above functions TCS concentrated on NTFP procurement and marketing. When the TCS move to NTFP procurement and marketing more tribes are involved in the active participation of TCS. But tribal co-operative society still follows the old rules and bylaws for their functioning. At the same time, Kudumbasree and other self-help group are engaged in NTFP procurement and marketing and that reduce the quantity of NTFP procured by TCS, and these agencies offer a high price for NTFP products to attract collectors to these institutions. There arise some questions as to what is the role of TCS in NTFP procurement and marketing, at the current scenario, it is necessary to know what kind of strategies they adopted for NTFP procurement and marketing, what are the member's socio economic benefits of TCS.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To assess socio economic benefits from tribal co operative societies to their members in Attappady.

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- To study problems faced by the members in the procurement of NTFP's in Attappady.

3.1 Hypotheses

- There exists significant difference between members of tribal category with regard to their social benefits through Tribal Co operative Society.
- There exists significant difference between members of tribal category with regard to their economic benefits from Tribal Co operative Society.

4. Research Methodology

The present study is both descriptive and explanatory in nature; both primary and secondary data were collected and used for the study.

4.1 Population of the Study

The population of the study covers all the members from four tribal co-operative societies in Attappady, those members who collect NTFP in Attappadi engaged for the last 12 months on an average will be included in the list of the population

4.2 Sampling

From the four tribal co-operative societies in Attappady, all the four are selected for this study. For the selection of the respondents, convenience sampling method was adopted. The respondents of this study include NTFP collection members of Karumba, Kottathara ,Pudurandsholayoor tribal society. The sample size of the study is limited to 200 members of four cooperative societies.

4.3 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data were collected and used for the purpose of the study. The primary data was collected through using questionnaire two different questionnaires prepared to collect data from members and societies.

4.4 Secondary Data

The secondary data were collected from the books, published journals, last five year annual reports of tribal co-operative societies in Attappady, the bylaw of tribal co-operative societies in Attappady, annual report of ministry of co-operative society (government of Kerala) government publications, published dissertation and thesis.

4.5 Primary Data

The primary data required for this study were collected from 200 members of four tribal cooperative societies in attappady.

5. Result and Discussions

5.1 Reliability Test of Socio Economic Benefits

Reliability is a measure of the accuracy of a measuring instrument; a collection of query statements is usually the instrument itself.A measurement instrument is said to have good reliability if the question statements (or other measures) associated with each latent variable are understood in the same way by different respondents. Initially, for establishing the reliability, Cronbach's alpha is calculated where the recommended minimum value is 0.7 .Higher alpha values (greater than 0.8 and 0.9) shows that indicators are truly representative measures of the construct.

5.2 Members Social Benefits through TCS

Tribal co-operative society provides directly or in directly various kinds of social benefits to its members. These benefits include improving social interaction, increasing communal harmony, reducing social discrimination, helping to identify their role, reducing social isolation etc. the result of descriptive statics of social benefits are shown below table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of Members Social Benefits through TCS

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
TCS improve my social interaction	3.22	1.400
TCS make communal harmony between members	3.15	1.118
TCS reduce social discrimination from public	3.04	1.188
TCS help to identify my role in the society	2.98	1.132
TCS reduces social isolation	3.21	1.166
TCS made cooperation and interaction with other tribal groups	3.51	1.273
TCS improves transportation and communication facility among tribes	3.23	1.313

The above table 1 presents the mean scores and standard deviation calculated based on the responses given by the respondents for their Social Benefits through tribal co-operative society, TCS help to improve corporation and

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interaction among other tribal group have high mean value (3.51) that is majority of the members agreed to the statement that TCS help their interaction with other tribal groups.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Members Social Benefits through TCS: Category-Wise Analysis

Category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Muruda	32	3.1964	0.69773
Kurumba	51	3.0980	0.95211
Irula	32	3.3393	0.84145
Total	115	3.1925	0.85590

The table 2 reveals that, members in Irula category have the highest mean value for Social Benefits. So it can be inferred that the perception towards social benefits higher for the members belongs to Irula tribal category. The results of One-Way ANOVA are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3 : Variation in Members Social Benefits through TCS with Respect to Category: Result of ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.145	2	0.573	0.778	0.462
Within Groups	82.367	112	0.735		
Total	83.512	114			

From the above ANOVA Table 3 which is calculated at 5% significance level, within members in the different tribal category, there is no significant variation in the member's social benefits from TCS since p value is greater than .05. So, the result of the above analysis reveals that the fourth hypothesis formulated for the study, there exists significant difference between members of tribal category with regard to their social benefits through tribal co-operative society, is rejected. It is inferred that members in the three tribal category getting same kind of social benefits from TCS.

5.3 Members Economic Benefits through TCS

Tribal co-operative society indirectly provides various kinds of economic benefits to their members. These benefits includes increasing saving and investment, help to meet household expenses, economic self-reliance of members, enhancing financial security etc. result of descriptive statics of Economic Benefits are shown below table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of Members Economic Benefits from TCS

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
TCS has helped in saving	2.60	1.401
TCS help to manage my financial constraints	2.89	0.980
I am getting additional income from TCS to meet my household expenses	2.75	1.227
TCS helps to increase my investment in gold, property etc.	2.77	1.172
TCS helps to meet timely cash requirement	3.41	4.819
My income level has changed due to TCS participation	2.99	1.239
TCS ensures my economic self-reliance	3.07	1.160
TCS helped me to reduce borrowing from money lenders	2.83	1.213
TCS helped me to enhance financial security	2.82	1.302

(Source: Result of Analysis of Primary Data)

The above table 4 presents the mean scores and standard deviation calculated based on the responses given by the respondents for their Economic Benefits from tribal co-operative society, TCS help to meet timely cash requirement have high mean value (3.41) that is majority of the members agreed to the statement that TCS help meet their cash requirement on time.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Members Economic Benefits from TCS: Category-Wise Analysis

Category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Muruda	32	2.7153	0.76510
Kurumba	51	2.8649	0.86533
Irula	32	3.1493	1.38307
Total	115	2.9024	1.01751

The table 5 reveals that, members in the Irula category have the highest mean value for Economic Benefits. So it can be inferred that, the perception towards economic benefits higher for the members belongs to Irula tribal category. The results of One-Way ANOVA are presented in Table 6 below:

Table 6 : Variation in Members Economic Benefits from TCS with Respect to Category: Result of ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.143	2	1.571	1.532	0.221
Within Groups	114.885	112	1.026		
Total	118.028	114			

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So, the result of the above analysis reveals that the fifth hypothesis formulated for the study, there exists significant difference between members of tribal category with regard to their economic benefits from tribal co-operative society is rejected. It is inferred that members in the three tribal category getting same kind of economic benefits from TCS.

6. Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, discussions with members and officials of TCS the following suggestions are made. The TCS in the Attappady area are not maintained accurate and proper transaction of NTFPs in context to collection, marketing and financial transaction to overcome this problem proper, accurate and transparent data must be maintained and auditing activities must be conducted by external auditors in order to avoid the financial indiscipline of the societies. From the study it is clear that co-operative department offering various kinds of assistances to the members, but majority of the members are unaware about these assistances, so the authorities must conduct proper awareness campaigns to the members to aware them about these assistances.TCS must issue collection passes and collection kits in proper time or before season time that will help the collectors collect NTFP in proper time. Collection of NTFP's is a risky process so the TCS must provide proper insurance coverage to members.

7. Conclusion

The present study was indented to understand the member's perception towards various services provided by tribal co-operative societies in Attappady and also study the problems faced by the members in NTFP procurement and marketing. From the review of literature pertaining to tribal co operative society and NTFP procurement was found that there are many factors that influence member's participation in tribal co operative society. The study is attempted to analyse the member's perception from various services of tribal co operative society that help to understand its influence on member's perception then. The socio-economic benefits are indirectly influence the members encaging in the activities of tribal co operative society.

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