



Research Paper

TRIBAL POPULATION AND HEALTH AND EDUCATION STATUS OF SHETHERI HILLS IN DHARAMAPURI DISTRICT

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Abstract

India's poor tribal people have far worse health indicators than the general population. Most tribal people live in remote rural hamlets in hilly, forested or desert areas where illiteracy, trying physical environments, malnutrition, inadequate access to potable water, and lack of personal hygiene and sanitation make them more vulnerable to disease. This is compounded by the lack of awareness among these populations about the measures needed to protect their health, their distance from medical facilities, the lack of all-weather roads and affordable transportation, insensitive and discriminatory behavior by staff at medical facilities, financial constraints and so on. Government programs to raise their health awareness and improve their accessibility to primary health care have not had the desired impact. Not surprisingly, tribal people suffer illnesses of greater severity and duration, with women and children being the most vulnerable. The present study had chosen the shetheri hills, Harur Taluk, Dharamapuri District.

Keywords: *Tribal Population and Their Health Problem, Hill Zone with Awareness.*

INTRODUCTION

The Veerappan reality has brought out clearly as to how the tribal people's lives in Tamilnadu get shattered by a nexus of police, the forest department, politicians and smugglers. Their basic human rights are cynically violated. Despite being protected by law against encroachment into tribal areas, land alienation is increasingly becoming an issue in tribal areas. Their right to preserve and enjoy their cultural heritage in harmony with nature is severely threatened by the process of modernization and economic growth.

"There are 36 Tribes and the population as per 1991 Census is 5.74 lakhs, representing 1.03% of the Tamil population..." - Ninth Five Year plan Tamilnadu : 1997-2002.

The major tribes in Tamilnadu are Malayali, Toda, kurumba, Paniya, Irular, Kattunayakkan, Kani, Palliyan, Sholagar, Kadar and Veddar. Most of the tribal communities are small in size and the exceptions are Malaiali and Irular tribes. Only two taluks in Tamilnadu, ie., Devakottai Taluk in Sivagangai district and Thiruchuli taluk in Virudhunagar district do not have any tribal population. Although tribal's are found in all the districts, their major concentration is in the north, central and western regions of the State.

"2.10 lakhs of tribal people live in Tiruchi, Villupuram, Tiruvannamalai, Vellore, Dharmapuri and Salem districts." - Policy Note on Forest Department 1999-2000

Majority of the tribal population in Tamilnadu live in hilly ranges viz., Eastern Ghats, Western Ghats and the discontinuous hill tracts adjoining the plains and the hills. These tribal's live in forests. Irular in Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts form an exception to this general trend and are found to live in the plain.

STUDY AREA

Shetheri hill situated range of the Eastern Ghats, nearby Kalrayan Hill ecosystem. The chosen study area is forest Land use and Land cover of the Shetheri hill. About 50 percent of the total revenue from the forestry industry in India is in non-wood forest products category. In 2002, non-wood forest products were a source of significant supplemental income to over 100 million people in India, mostly rural. The Shetheri hill is one of the zone for potential forest products were available valuable timber and plant species.

The Shetheri hill environment is based on the scattered hill forest with 24 villages in the study area. The most of the villages located south-east and North-East of the Shetheri hill. The Shetheri village is bottom of the hill zone.



Major villages with very few houses. - Suryakadai, Mamparai, Nalamankadai, Paraivalavu, Shetheri, Pereri in the study area (Table 2.1).

The study area Shetheri hill has many more small streams as origin. Analmaduv, Piliyara, Karkampatti, Varatta, Kovil, Kallar and Uppar streams are drain in the Chittrai hill zone. The major river system is Varatta river flowing in the central portion of the study area. Kovil river, Uppar river flowing in the North and southern portion of the Shetheri hill.

The land utilization of any land is based on the soil characteristic with their texture, productivity, and capability. From the study area major soil groups are Brown reddish, sandy, with hill soils. The major land utilization of the basin is water, canalization through various methods and approaches. The major land use Build up land the Valimadurai, Kottai kuttal, Chakkami, Alaiyur, Erumankadal, Kaland, Sellur, Ammapalayam, and Nanbur and other portion of the Mullikadu, Tadampatti, Lambadi thanda, Sittilingi. Agriculture activities being in the entire study area. Aboriginal people of the study area called Malayali's are the inhabitants of Sherveroyan hill ranges of Salem, Dharmapuri, Villupuram and Vellore districts. Malayali's are the largest tribal group constituting 47.6% of ST population in the state of Tamilnadu. It is claimed that they are descents of Vellalas of Kancheepuram and following invasion they fled to Sherveroyan Hill ranges (Thurston and Rangachari, 1909). The Table 2.2 is showing the Total Population of the shetheri. Some of the high house hold villages are Anadipatti, Shetheri, Nochikutti, pallipatti and the high population in the villages.

The ratio of the population in the study area is Female population lower than Male Population. The Fig 2.2 explained the ratio of the population in the study area. From that hill zone the awareness is very less even if the local authorities now days concentrated the entire villages for health and sanitation scheme. In addition to this forest department also concentrated the Tribal people employment and their development status scenario.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the papers is study the tribal population and their health status of the shetheri hills of the zone. The following objectives are

- To study the tribal population distribution with their location habitation
- To delineated the spatial distribution of population and their habitation with health status in and around of the shetheri hills.
- To recommend the facilities of health centre with their possible locations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study chosen for the shetheri hill environment, in the portion of the kalrayain hills of Salem District. The hill zone villages are along the Valimadurai, Kottai kuttal, Chakkami, Alaiyur, Erumankadal, Kaland, Sellur, Ammapalayam, and Nanbur and other portion of the Mullikadu, Tadampatti, Lambadi thanda, Sittilingi. A methodology has been formulated to achieve the present task of Tribal population distribution. The following are the sequence of execution, through which the aims and objectives of the present study has been directed and achieved.

The different source for the present study, both primary and secondary data's was collected.

- The SOI source with scale of 1:50,000 for the study area
- Data's generated through the Shetheri Hill zone with their status of the Ecosystem. The addition to this data was collected from various private and public sector. The some of the organization like local departments. Bring out the census data for tribal population distribution.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Population Growth and Distribution

Aboriginal people of the study area called Malayali's are the inhabitants of Sherveroyan hill ranges of Salem, Dharmapuri, Villupuram and Vellore districts. Malayali's are the largest tribal group constituting 47.6% of ST population in the state of Tamilnadu. It is claimed that they are descents of Vellalas of Kancheepuram and



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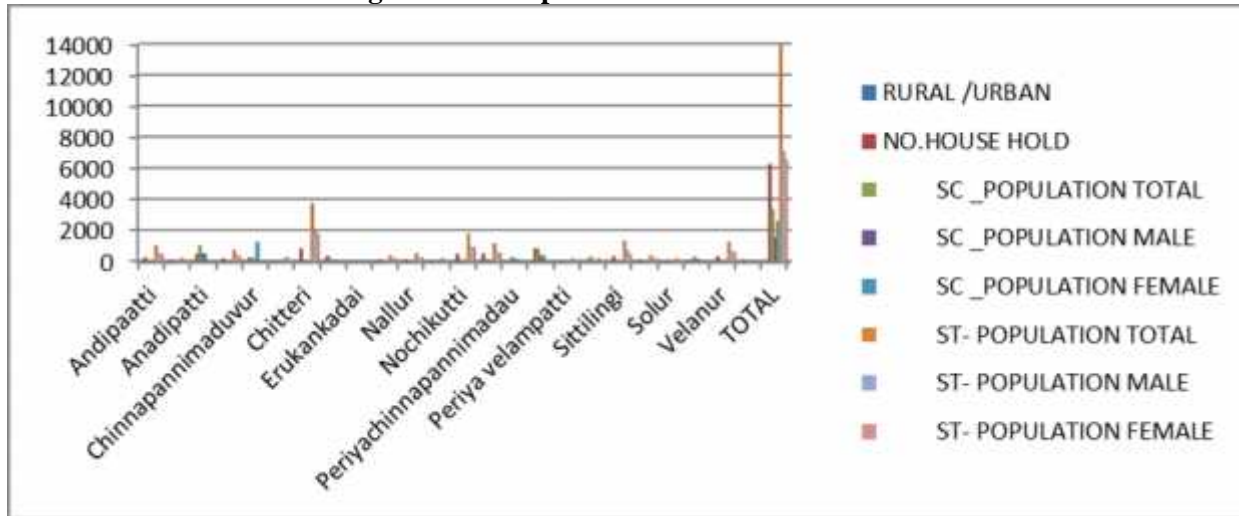
Table2.2 Total Population of the Shetheri Hills

S.NO	NAME	Rural /Urban	No.House Hold	Sc Population			St- Population		
				Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1	Andipaatti	Rural	282	12	10	2	1041	512	502
2	Ammapalyam	Rural	130	0	0	0	239	124	115
3	Anadipatti	Rural	514	1043	541	502	0	0	0
4	Arunattamalai	Rural	202	0	0	0	747	387	360
5	Chinnapannimaduvur	Rural	258	276	149	1267	4	3	1
6	Chinnavelampatti	Rural	73	0	0	0	284	142	142
7	Shetheri	Rural	840	8	3	5	3731	1934	1797
8	Dadampatti	Rural	371	161	79	82	0	0	0
9	Erukankadai	Rural	17	5	2	3	14	6	8
10	Kullampatty	Rural	135	0	0	0	403	197	206
11	Nallur	Rural	154	0	0	0	545	275	270
12	Nadamangadu	Rural	73	0	0	0	244	125	119
13	Nochikutti	Rural	501	0	0	0	1834	941	920
14	Nonanaganur	Rural	524	164	87	77	1170	604	566
15	Periyachinnapannimadau	Rural	79	304	156	148	0	0	0
16	Pallipatti	Rural	874	769	379	390	30	16	14
17	Periya velampatti	Rural	66	3	2	1	215	102	113
18	Pungemaldaru	Rural	70	315	2	3	212	105	107
19	Sittilingi	Rural	359	0	0	0	1363	718	445
20	Sirumalai	Rural	116	0	0	0	389	206	183
21	Solur	Rural	47	0	0	0	200	100	100
22	Thadampatti	Rural	143	313	166	147	0	0	0
23	Velanur	Rural	341	0	0	0	1282	641	641
24	Velampatti	Rural	129	2	1	1	0	0	0
	TOTAL		6298	3375	1577	2628	13947	7138	6609

The various NGOs where working together with the tribal people for their rehabilitation like self-help group is carried various development activities for the tribal women's were numerous employment. The one of the SAIL NGO in the harur organizing 1000 of the self help group for the development of tribal population. They are concentrating to tribal's for TAP(Tree Aforestation Programme) in and around of the Shetheri hill.



Fig 2.2 Total Population of the Shetheri Hills



The Table 2.2 is showing the no of house hold and SC/ST population in the Shetheri hill zone. The Population of the SC/ST is concentrated south, south-eastern portion of the hill zone. There is no variation of the Male and Female Population in the study area, even if the concentration of sector is potential based on the nature of the zone. In addition to this the potential zone is behalf of the water resources with potential soil for their agricultural activities. The main employment activities is hunting, agriculture and timber cutting in and around of the hill zone. In Sherveroyan, they dwell at an altitude of up to 1700m. Malayali’s are generally illiterate and speak a local dialect of Tamil, physically they resemble to the Semong of Malaya. It has been well established that tribal communities have survived on their traditional knowledge base.

Table 2.3 Literate Total Population of Shetheri hills

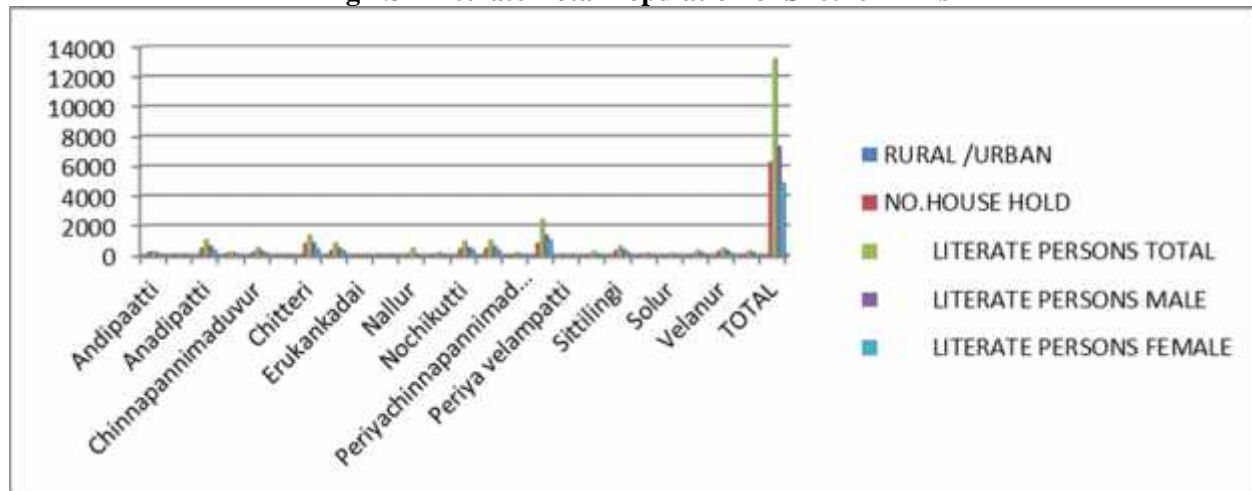
S.No	Name	Rural /Urban	No.House Hold	Literate Persons	MALE	FEMALE
				TOTAL		
1	Andipaatti	Rural	282	264	162	102
2	Ammapalyam	Rural	130	161	105	56
3	Anadipatti	Rural	514	1089	672	417
4	Arunattamalai	Rural	202	273	164	109
5	Chinnapannimaduvur	Rural	258	562	340	222
6	Chinnavelampatti	Rural	73	78	39	39
7	Chitteri	Rural	840	1381	894	487
8	Dadampatti	Rural	371	886	528	358
9	Erukankadai	Rural	17	59	21	15
10	kullampatty	Rural	135	155	93	63
11	Nallur	Rural	154	554	62	23
12	Nadamangadu	Rural	73	244	49	30
13	Nochikutti	Rural	501	994	560	434
14	Nonanaganur	Rural	524	1068	647	421
15	Periyachinnapannimadau	Rural	79	217	125	92
16	pallipatti	Rural	874	2464	1390	1074
17	Periya velampatti	Rural	66	92	46	46
18	Pungemaldaru	Rural	70	315	93	63



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19	Sittilingi	Rural	359	673	418	255
20	Sirumalai	Rural	116	222	122	100
21	Solur	Rural	47	200	42	29
22	Thadampatti	Rural	143	365	229	136
23	Velanur	Rural	341	542	346	196
24	velampatti	Rural	129	362	220	142
	TOTAL		6298	13220	7367	4909

Fig 2.3 Literate Total Population of Shetheri hills



The Education of the Shetheri is moderated one because of the scattered population in and around of the hill zone. The few villages are highly concentrated the literacy like Anadipatti, Shetheri, Nonanaganur, pallipatti, Nochikutti.

Health Status of Shetheri Hills

Traditional medicines are the primary healthcare resources for the Malayali tribes to protect/ maintain their health. Tribal practitioners within the community are curators of their society and have good knowledge of medicinal plants, diseases and treatment modalities. Besides, they have served as the custodians of biodiversity in this region. However, there are only a few reports available on ethno medicinal aspects of plants used by Malayali’s (Rengalakshmi, 2005; Viswanathan, 1987). Therefore, present investigation has been taken up in Shetheri hills.

Large inequities in health exist between indigenous and non-indigenous populations worldwide. This *health divide* has also been demonstrated in India, where indigenous groups are officially classified as scheduled tribes (STs). India has one of the largest tribal populations in the world. Tribal communities in general and primitive tribal groups in particular are highly disease prone and their misery is compounded by poverty, illiteracy, ignorance of causes of diseases, hostile environment, poor sanitation, lack of safe drinking water, blind beliefs, etc.

Socio-Economic Status

Most of the houses have low mud walls with hipped roofs thatched with hay or sugarcane leaves in this area. Water closets have been fitted near the houses, no proper septic tank and no water supply. The predominant occupation of the people is agriculture, which is mainly rain-fed. Most of the adults both men and women are illiterate. Quality of education imparted in this area is generally very poor

Health Information

Sitheri Hills contains 59 hamlets, 1 Primary Health Centre (PHC) & 4 Health Sub Centre (HSC), and having population of 9045 residing in 1908 houses. The people have reported health problems like fever, cough, cold



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along with disease caused by vectors. In such case, people depend on private health centre for periodical check up than primary health centre available in sitheri.

CONCLUSION

The paper was discussed about the tribal population in and around of the study area with basic information of the health centre and status studies.

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