

"Kadugolla Community in Karntaka – At the Crossroads"

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Abstract: The Kadugolla community is very backward and even the economic position of men of this community is hopeless and pitiable. In such a scenario one can understand the plight of the women folk. But things have started to change in the recent times and the Kadugolla women have been able to lift themselves up from the perennial state of discrimination and inequality.

Keywords: Empowerment, Kadugolla community, women, discrimination and inequality.

INTRODUCTION

Folk culture is a tradition that has come down to us orally through hundreds of generations. Even before man could give a literary form to his various expressions, ancient people brought out their joys and sorrows, dreams and ambitions, imaginations, experiences, actions and reactions and the myriad faces of their day to day life through songs, stories, proverbs, riddles and other local folk forms. The literature created by the learned became the written or the standard tradition whereas that of the illiterate rustic became the folk literature. Folk literature depicts the perspective of a community. It is an expression of the aims ambitions and desires of a community. Being a collective effort folk literature brings out the stories of cultural and political heroes, idealists and their achievements as well as the life vision of a community through different folk forms.

Tribes and folk Culture

With new dimensions entering in to our thought processes the way folk literature is perceived has changed today. The traditional method of interpreting folk culture has paved way for a more organic and dynamic approach which considers folk culture as an integral part of the communal structure. Tribes are a community which have a very vibrant base of folk culture.

Tribal people are identified to be living at many regions worldwide. More than 600 tribes have been identified so far. In India more than 300 tribal communities exist. These tribes are spread across the north, north-east, central and south zone. "In India tribal people are found generally in all zones. They are found to reside primarily in hilly regions, valleys, forests and in the Western Ghats adjoining the coast [1].

Kadugolla Community

For a community to make a region a place to settle social, geographical and climatic factors have an important role to play. The fertility of the land, availability of water is the main considerations too. Such factor put an end to the nomadic nature of man and makes him settle at one place. This helps in the development of communities and this in turn results in the development of the society. A stable society brings in a sense of peace, security and co-operation among the citizens of the society. Society is a network of social relationships. Each and every community of the society will have its own traditions, customs and culture which will be a source of inspiration to the next generations. The Kadugolla tribe too is a mix of many customs, traditions, food habits, dress, occupations, family professions, trials and tribulations encompassing their physical and mental spheres of life.

Whenever a community is taken up for study it is important to understand the concept of term community. Hence when we are talking about Kadugolla women it becomes imperative that we understand what a tribe is and who tribal women are. The corresponding term in Kannada for a tribe is 'Budakattu'. 'Buda' means the roots and 'Kattu' means a collection of cultural values and the strictures. Tribal people are those who follow a tradition originated from the same roots, [2]. Definitions such as these do not give a precise picture of a tribe. Therefore instead of trying to explain what a tribe is it is easier to show which a tribe is. One of the very first to study a tribe of Karnataka Thee. Nam. Shankaranarayana has tried such a method. He says, 'In India apart from the four castes, namely Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vyshya and Shudra there exists a fifth caste made up of Harijanas. The social

categories other than these five castes can be termed as Tribes in India. Even such an explanation does not appear to be appropriate as it is difficult to identify tribes in today's complex situation wherein tribes are becoming castes and castes are changing to tribes (Achala – Quarterly Edition, 2015, pg 72)[6].

Kadugolla Women – Struggling to Keep Pace with Modernity

The Kadugolla community which lived upon traditional occupations such as cattle rearing for ages is now facing the problem of standing up to the forces of modernization and are slowly adjusting themselves to the new life. The younger generations are being educated and getting exposed gradually to modernization. The region wise data related to population reflects such developments. Even though the aspects of modernization have affected the womenfolk the lives and status of women do not show any drastic improvements. Women continue to be looked down upon as second grade citizens in the male-dominated social setup. Women are finding it difficult to assert their social rights and are not able to actively participate in the process of building a strong and a self-sufficient society.

Women are always looked as dependent on men. The biological and physical factors notwithstanding it is their economic dependence on men which is proving a major hurdle in this regard. There is a strong prejudiced feeling in the society which puts the responsibility of women on men and projects her to be dependent and hence subservient. The traditional outlook of the society magnifies such feelings and poses a major block in the overall development of women in society. In this regard it has become a need of the hour to study the plight of women in all its dimensions.

Women know no differentiation with regard to caste or tribes as she has always been treated as second rate citizen. Hence the language of exploitation of women is one anywhere. As women form a distinct group in the Indian society and face gender discrimination, in a way they can be categorized as dalits. Their backwardness has made them marginalized as well. The male dominated society and more than that

the form and nature of the society is the major reason for the pitiful status of women in the society [3].

Kadugollas are identified in the flat lands of Karnataka. They have spread out densely in the districts of Chitradurga, Tumkur, Bangalore Rural, Bellary, Hassan, Kolar and the border areas of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. Kadugollas are also called as Gollas, Oorugollas, Adavigollas, Kalligollas, Hattigollas. Through a realistic and a data based study of the status of women of the community of Kadugollas one can arrive at a picture of the position of women and their inclusion and participation in the social, economic, political and educational spheres. Studies show the Kadugolla women as being backward in almost all the fields. There are many social reasons for this backwardness but the main reason has been the male domination in the society. A survey of the Kadugolla women of the taluk of Hiriya belonging to the district of Chitradurga gives a realistic picture of the plight of these women.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

This object of this study has been the lives of the Kadugolla women residing in the region adjacent to the rural and urban areas of the different hoblis of the taluk of Hiriya belonging to the district of Chitradurga. The fieldwork has concentrated on the four hoblis of Hiriya and information has been gathered from a total of 140 women at 35 women per Hobli through Random Method and direct interview.

The Hobli areas selected for the study were visited and information related to the present status of Kadugolla women has been obtained in a scientific manner through oral and other sources. Even though the status and position of Indian women vary from caste to caste and according to the traditions and customs specific to different cultures the social status of women present a similar picture throughout as depicted by this study. The women belonging to the Kadugolla, Mysasbeda, Uppara and other castes reflect a similar economic, social and educational status which is being driven by male domination. The following statistics gives a picture of the houses of Kadugolla women:

Table-1: Nature of the house of Kadugolla women

Nature of the house	Number	Percentage
Huts	68	56.66
Tiled houses	12	10.14
Cement Structure and Tin Sheet	10	08.33
Ashraya houses by the government	13	10.84
R C C houses	04	02.85

The above statistics show the pathetic economic condition of Kadugolla women. The figures are a reflection of the fact that these women living in houses that are not fit to reside.

Government and private missions for women empowerment, Self Help Groups, NGOs have been able to instill a sense of purpose in the lives of these women

and they have been exposed to commercial transactions through savings and loan schemes. About 120 women

were interviewed in this connection and the result showed their annual income:

Table-2: Annual income of Kadugolla women

Annual Income	Number	Percentage
5,000-10,000	75	60.84
10,000-15000	28	23.34
15,000-20,000	14	11.66
More than 20,000	05	14.16

The above table gives a clear picture about the financial status of the families of Kadugolla women. It needs to be remembered that these women have been able to reach their present economic status only through the assistance of the Women Empowerment Groups. The needs of their day to day life are being taken care by the BPL card and also the extra wages made paid to them through the modern agricultural methods and practices. The above income table has been generated considering the income from all such avenues.

The problem of illiteracy is bogging down the entire Kadugolla community and the women folk are the worst hit in this regard. Superstition and ignorance are the primary causes for such a situation. Noted Sociologist Pro. R. Indira says "In spite of the equality in terms of education women have not been able to achieve expected progress in the field of education. There has been an increase in terms of admission of females in all the stages of education but the literacy rate among women is disappointingly low. It is a pity that free and compulsory primary education, in many cases, has remained in slogans only. The major hindrances in this regard are poverty, ignorance, lack of knowledge and the social attitude towards women education. These four factors collectively prove to be the major block to the educational development of women", (pg 85-86, Mahile, SamajaMattuSamskriti, Prasaranga, Kannada University, Hampi).

CONCLUSION

As the majority of the women population is illiterate the subsequent generations continue to be deprived of education. The elderly folk are hardly literate and this along with poverty has closed all the doors of improvement in this regard. When it is very difficult to provide education to the males of the community the chances of women being considered for the same are too remote. But, things have been changing with the new policies of the government women are being able to at least obtain education up to high school. The above study is not complete. The aspects of employment, social status, marriage etc. need to study in detail to arrive at a comprehensive picture of the position of Kadugolla women. The statistics related to the caste-wise census would help immensely to study the plight of Kadugolla women of Chitradurga district on a comprehensive scale. Systematic implementation of the educational and developmental schemes of the

government aimed at the upliftment of the deprived and the backward classes of the society and those specifically aimed at the development of women alone can erase the age old scars in the lives of these people and bring the Kadugolla women and with them the community in to the mainstream.

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