

# **Social Structural Determinants of Education among Tribes in Kerala**

*Thesis submitted to the  
Cochin University of Science and Technology  
for the award of the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Under the Faculty of Social Sciences*

*by*

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(Reg. No. 3686)

*under the guidance of*

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Kochi – 682022**

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*Date: 10/04/2015*

## **Certificate**

This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis entitled “**Social Structural Determinants of Education among Tribes in Kerala**” submitted by Mr. P. R. Suresh is a record of bona fide research work carried out by him under my supervision and guidance in the Department of Applied Economics in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Cochin University of Science and Technology.

The thesis has not formed the basis for award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title of any other University or Board and is worth submitting for the award of Doctor of Philosophy under the Faculty of Social Sciences of Cochin University of Science and Technology.

**Dr. D. Rajasenan**  
Supervising Guide

## *Declaration*

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**Social Structural Determinants of Education Among Tribes in Kerala**” is a record of bona fide research work done by me under the guidance of Prof. (Dr.) D. Rajasenan, Department of Applied Economics, Cochin University of Science and Technology, and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or any other title of recognition.

**P. R. Suresh**

*Dedicated to solemn memory of my father, (the late)*  
*Sri. N. R. Ravindran who had supported me unconditionally*  
*during my long period of education....*

---

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## ||| List of Acronyms |||

AIEC	Alternative and Innovation Education Centres
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
AWC	Anganwadi Centres
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CA	Capability Approach
CEE	Commissioner of Entrance Examinations
CSES	Centre for Socio-economic and Environmental Studies
CSS	Centrally Sponsored Scheme
CSSEIP	Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DPI	Directorate of Public Instruction
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EFA	Education for All
EGS	Employment Guarantee Scheme
EV	Education Volunteer
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GOI	Government of India
GOK	Government of Kerala
HDR	Human Development Report
HS	High School
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ITDP	Integrated Tribal Development Project
KILA	Kerala Institute of Local Administration
KIRTADS	Kerala Institute for Research Training and Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
LP	Lower Primary
MDMS	Mid-Day Meal Scheme
MGLC	Multi Grade Learning Centres
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MRS	Model Residential School
NCSC	National Commission for Scheduled Castes
NGO	Non-Government Organisation

NPE	National Policy on Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
PTG	Primitive Tribal Groups
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SCA	Special Central Assistance
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled Tribe
STDD	Scheduled Tribe Development Department
TSP	Tribal Sub-Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UP	Upper Primary

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**INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

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*“India is the cradle of the human race, the birthplace of human speech, the mother of history, the grandmother of legend and the great grandmother of tradition. One most valuable materials in the history of man are treasured up in India only.”*

*- Mark Twain*

**1.1 Introduction**

Since independence, India has made immense advancements in the social sectors of education and health. Educational institutions have increased by more than five times from 1951 to 2011 to reach 13.9 lakhs. The enrolment in institutions has also gone up enormously from 23.8 million to 248 million i.e., a rise by more than ten times (GOI-MHRD, 2014). Even after more than five decades of developmental efforts, educational status among social groups is found to be highly skewed in India. Despite several programmes implemented towards the provision of compulsory education, especially for

SCs/STs, the illiteracy rate continues to be quite high among them. Literacy is the basic necessity for each person in social development. UNESCO (1997) defined Literacy as an activity embedded in social and cultural practice aimed at bringing social and cultural transformation. At the same time, the educational status of women is significantly lower than that of male counterpart in all social groups and such disparity is high among Scheduled Tribes.

In India, Scheduled Tribes constitute 8.6 percent of total population numbering 104.28 million (Census of India, 2011). More than half of the Scheduled Tribe population is concentrated in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Jharkhand and Gujarat. The Tribes generally reside in isolated places situated in remote areas of forests, islands, hills etc. These communities are not able to access basic facilities such as schools, hospitals and other amenities due to their remoteness. All these factors have led to the socio-economic backwardness of the community.

Educational advancement is regarded as the main catalyst for social development. Statistics show that tribes lag much behind in educational attainments compared to other communities in India. The important reason for the low level of education among tribes is the peculiar nature of their habitations. Lack of sufficient educational institutions in tribal areas, poverty, lack of nutritional and healthcare programmes, poor enrolment and high dropout from schools are the major problems faced by Scheduled Tribes in India. All these point to the need for development of education among the Tribes. The fact is that, it is only from the Fifth Five-Year Plan onwards special attention has been given to the education development programmes of tribes. This indicates that the policies for the empowerment of tribes commenced only after several decades of Indian independence.



Despite the government initiatives, including the Tribal Sub-Plans (TSP) giving great emphasis on the education of tribals, the problem of educational dropouts is high among the tribes compared to the mainstream population (Mitra and Singh, 2008). Dropout rate is high even when comparing with that of Scheduled Castes. This is of particular significance to Kerala, the State excelling other States in almost all development indices, and the marginalized group like Scheduled Tribes remains excluded from these development processes. Kerala is regarded as an educationally forward State compared to other States in India. This is marked by high levels of literacy rate, improved enrolment of students etc. (Naidu and Nair, 2007). Though the overall educational development indices were much above the national level, the disparity in educational attainment between non-SC/ST populations and tribal communities still continues and remains a dilemma.

The total Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of Kerala is 4, 84,839 constituting 1.45 percent of the total population of the State<sup>1</sup> (Census of India, 2011). Significant concentration of STs is in the three districts viz. Wayanad, Idukki Palakkad and Kasaragod accounting for well over 60 percent of the total tribal population in the State. The Scheduled Tribes are overwhelmingly rural as 89.3 percent of them reside in villages. Since majority of them resides in remote areas and difficult terrains, they remain isolated from the mainstream population. This could be attributed as the major reason for their social and economic deprivation. The present study tries to identify the exact problems facing tribal education of Kerala.

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<sup>1</sup> Total population of Kerala is 33,406,061 and ST population numbers 484,839 (Rural – 433,092 and Urban – 51,747) as per 2011 Census estimates.

## 1.2 Tribes in India

### 1.2.1 Meaning and Features

The term 'tribe' is derived from the Latin word '*tribus*' designating a particular kind of social and political organization existing in all these societies. Originally, it was used to imply three divisions among early Romans. Later on, it was used to mean the 'poor' or the 'masses'. In India, the term 'tribe' has legal and administrative connotations. British census officials- cum- anthropologists first used the term 'tribe' for the purpose of enumerating social groups in India and the term was used from 1881 to 1991 Censuses (Panda, 2006). The Dictionary of Anthropology mentions *tribe* as a social group, usually with a definite area, dialect, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organization. The tribes in India differ from one another depending upon the region, language, customs, culture, religion, racial traits and so on. Prior to independence, Government of India Act 1935<sup>2</sup> used the term 'backward tribe'. Later, the Indian Constitution has retained the terminology with slight modification using 'Scheduled' in place of 'backward'. However, the Constitution does not have precise definition for the term 'tribe'. Article 366 (25) of Indian Constitution refers Scheduled Tribe as those who are scheduled in accordance with Article 342<sup>3</sup>. Article 342 says that Indian

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<sup>2</sup> Passed in August 1935 and known to be the largest Act in parliament at that time. The Act intended to introduce the degree of autonomy to the provinces of British India.

<sup>3</sup> 342 (1) The president may with respect to any state or union territory and where it is a state after consultation with Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts or groups within tribes or tribal community which shall for the purposes of this constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory as the case may be.

(2) Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or parts of or groups within any tribe or tribal community, but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

President after consulting with the concerned Governors of State or Union territory can specify the tribe or tribal groups through public notification. Still there exists no clarification as to whom to be included under the category of Scheduled Tribe. Lokur Committee 1965<sup>4</sup> identified certain criteria for specification of a community as Scheduled Tribe. They are:

- a) Indication of primitive traits
- b) Distinctive culture
- c) Shyness of contact with the community at large
- d) Geographical isolation; and
- e) Backwardness

Historically, Tribes in India are called as ‘Adivasis’ literally means ‘original inhabitants’. Tribal society tends to be egalitarian, with its leadership based on their ties of kinship and personality rather than hereditary status. Tribes in India can be categorized into three ethnic groups’ viz. (a) Mongoloid (b) Austric and (c) Dravidian or Mediterranean<sup>5</sup>. Tribes in North-Eastern part belong to Mangaloid and Austric. Tribes such as Naga, Kuki, Chakma, Abor, Mishmi, Mikir, Khasi, Garoo comes under the category of Mongoloid. Whereas Oroan, Santhal, Ho, Bhumij, Biyar, Kandha, Savaras tribes belong to Austric. Tribes residing in Bihar, Gujarath and southern States are Dravidians according to their language.

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<sup>4</sup> Established by Govt. of India in June 1965 for reviewing of the existing lists of SCs and STs and presented report on August 25, 1965. The committee devoted most of its attention to several technical changes in the list including a number of minor exclusions and inclusions.

<sup>5</sup> There are wide discussions on the classification of tribes. Different anthropologists have categorized Indian Tribes into more than three groups. But controversies are going on with regard to inclusion of different categories.

### 1.2.2 An Overview of Tribes

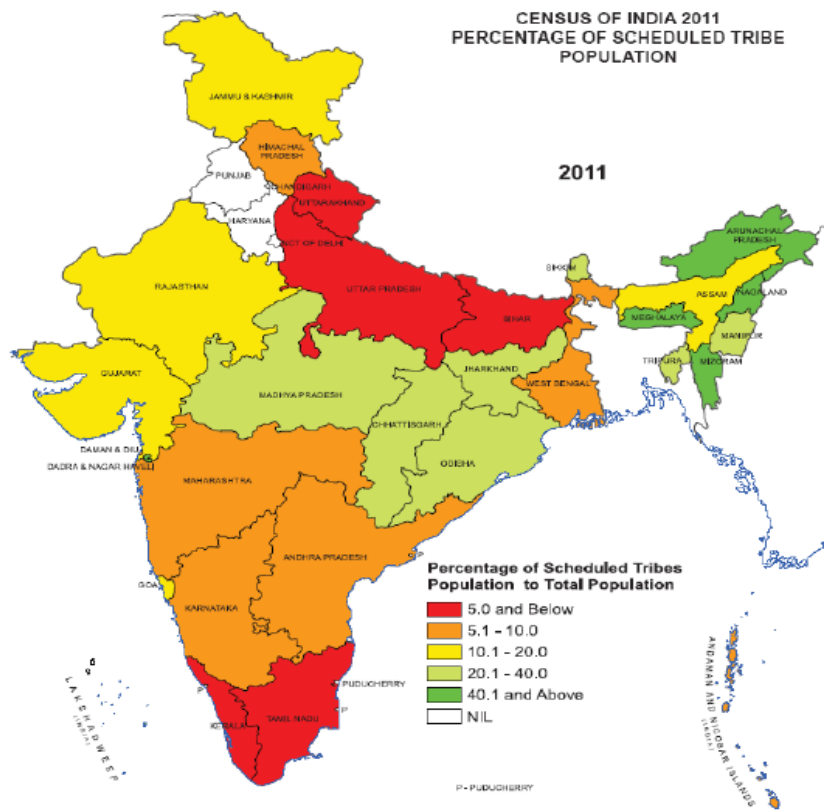
Tribal communities are living across worldwide but majority are concentrated in Africa and India. India stands second behind Africa in terms of tribal concentration. Tribes in India are scattered all over the Indian States except Punjab, Haryana and Union territories such as Chandigarh, Delhi and Pondicherry. Tribes in India come to 104,281,034 constituting 8.6 percent of the total population. Most of the tribes are concentrated in central parts of India comprising Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand (Table 1.1). There are more than 533 tribal groups already identified, having heterogeneous social, religious and cultural difference between them. Some of these groups have sub-categories within them. Among these tribal groups, 75 communities are categorized under Primitive Tribal Groups (PTG)<sup>6</sup>. PTGs are most vulnerable and economically backward communities within Scheduled Tribes. Numerically, most highly populated tribes are *Gonds* of Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra; and *Santhals* of Bihar, Odisha and West Bengal with more than 4 million populations for each group. Kerala has a tribal population of 484,839 divided across 36 different communities. Though Madhya Pradesh has the highest tribal population, the concentration of them is only 21.1 percentages to the total population. Highest tribal concentrated States are located in north-eastern parts of India. Mizoram has the highest concentration with 94.3 percentage of total population followed by Nagaland and Meghalaya (Table 1.1). Location of tribes in India can be divided into five territorial groups taking into account of their historical, ethnic and social structural relations (Sharma, 1998). These are as follows:

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<sup>6</sup> Central Government has initiated four criteria in identifying Primitive Tribal Groups. They are (a) pre-agricultural level of technology and economy, (b) very low rate of literacy, (c) declining or near stagnant population, and (d) a subsistence level of economy

- a) North-East India – Tribes residing in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura.
- b) North and North-West India – The Sub-Himalayan region includes Uttar Pradesh, Jammu Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh
- c) Central and East India – Consisting of West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh
- d) South India – States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka formerly known as Madras and Mysore regions; and Kerala
- e) Western India – Includes States of Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Gujarat

**Figure 1.1 Percentage of ST to Total Population**



Source: Census of India, (2011)

Large numbers of tribal communities are in the State of Odisha with 62 categories while Kerala have 36 tribal communities among 4.8 million population. North eastern side of India represents more representation of tribal population to total population which is clearly evident from Figure 1.1. In Mizoram, 94.4 percent of the total population is STs, Meghalaya and Nagaland also has ST representation above 85 percent. While Southern States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and Northern States like Uttar Pradesh have low representation of STs to total population.

More than 89 percent of the tribal communities regard themselves as part of Hindu religion. Among rest of the tribes dominant religions are Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. Many Tribes located in parts of Jammu Kashmir follow Islamism. Muslims are also seen in a few tribes residing in parts of Maharashtra and Lakshadweep. Most of the Christian Tribes are located in North-Eastern States. Majority of the tribal languages belong to Austric, Dravidian and Tibeto-Chinese families though the language differs among each community.

**Table 1.1 Tribal Populations in India**

State/ Union Territory	Population	Proportion to Total Population (Percent)	Total Communities
Madhya Pradesh	15316784	21.1	46
Maharashtra	10510213	9.4	47
Odisha	9590756	22.8	62
Rajasthan	9238534	13.5	12
Gujrat	8917174	14.8	29
Jharkhand	8645042	26.2	30
Chhattisgarh	7822902	30.6	42
Andhra Pradesh	5918073	7.0	33
West Bengal	5296953	5.8	38
Karnataka	4248987	7.0	49
Assam	3884371	12.4	23*
Meghalaya	2555861	86.1	17
Nagaland	1710973	86.5	5
Jammu & Kashmir	1493299	11.9	12
Bihar	1336573	1.3	30
Tripura	1166813	31.8	19
Uttar Pradesh	1134273	0.6	5
Mizoram	1036115	94.4	14
Arunachal Pradesh	951821	68.8	12
Manipur	902740	35.1	29
Tamil Nadu	794697	1.1	36
Kerala	484839	1.5	35
Himachal Pradesh	392126	5.7	8
Uttarakhand	291903	2.9	5
Sikkim	206360	33.8	2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	178564	52.0	7
Goa	149275	10.2	5
Lakshadweep	61120	94.8	
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	28530	7.5	6
Daman & Diu	15363	6.3	5
Chandigarh	-	0	-
Delhi	-	0	-
Haryana	-	0	-
Pondicherry	-	0	-
Punjab	-	0	-
<b>India</b>	<b>104,281,034</b>	<b>8.6</b>	

Source: Census of India, (2011)

Table 1.2 Profile of Tribes in India

Particulars		Year (2001)	Year (2011)
<b>Population</b>		84,326,240	104,281,034
<b>Sex Ratio</b>		978	990
<b>Literacy</b>		47.1%	59.0%
<b>Male literacy</b>		59.2%	68.5%
<b>Female literacy</b>		34.8%	49.4%
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Cultivators</b>	44.7%	34.5%
	<b>Agriculture labourers</b>	36.9%	44.5%

Source: Census Data, (2001 and 2011)

The population of tribes has been increasing over the years and now they constitute more than 10 Crore (Census of India, 2011) in number registering 23.7 percent growth from 2001. Compared to national sex ratio for all communities, it is much more favourable among tribes as there exist 990 females for 1000 males against the national average of 943 females for 1000 males (Table 1.2). The literacy rate of Scheduled Tribe as per 2001 Census is 47.10 percent which stands much below the national literacy of 64.84 percent. But, there was a tremendous increase in literacy rate of STs from 29.6 percent in 1991 to 47.10 percent in 2001. The literacy rate of STs further increased to 59 percent, but still it is much below the general literacy level<sup>7</sup> (Census of India, 2011). Male-Female literacy rate indicates the gender discrimination existing in education among tribes. Male literacy stands high with 68.5 percent compared to female literacy of 49.4 percent which means there is a difference of 19 percent between them showing clear gender discrimination in the case of opportunity for education. Census, 2011 data shows that tribes are generally dependent upon primary sector for their income

<sup>7</sup> As per 2011 Census data, effective literacy rate of India is 73 percent (Male -80.9 % and female 64.6 % literacy rate).

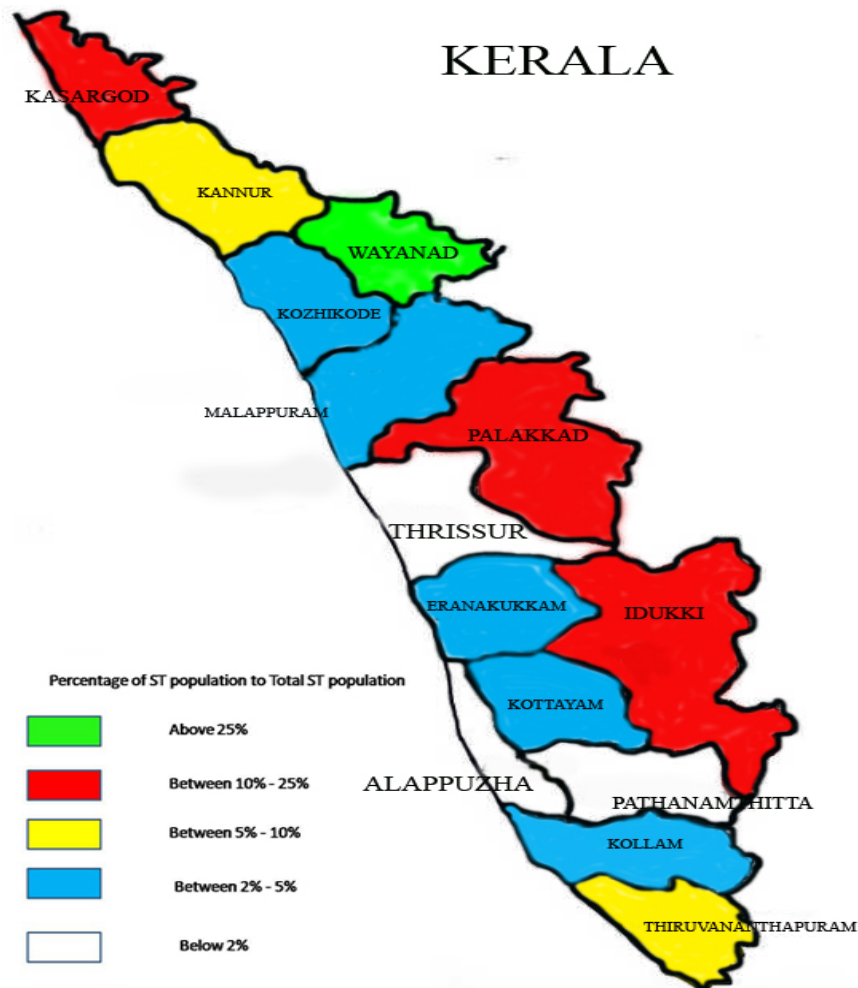


and livelihood aspects as 34.5 percent are cultivators and 44.5 percent are agriculture labours. These together constitute 79 percent which is engaged in agriculture sector.

### 1.3 Tribes of Kerala

There are 36 notified tribal communities in the State, numbering 484,839 as shown in Box 1.1.

Figure 1.2 District-wise Percentage of ST to total ST Population of Kerala



Source: Census of India, (2011)

**Box 1.1 Scheduled Tribes of Kersala**

1. Adiyar
2. Aranda (Arandan)
3. Eravallan
4. Hill Pulaya (Mala Pulayan, Kurumba Pulayan, Karavazhi Pulayan, Pamba Pulayan)
5. Irular, Irulan
6. Kadar (Wayanad Kadar)
7. Kanikkarar, Kanikar
8. Karimpalan
9. Kattunayakan
10. Kochuvelan
11. Koraga
12. Kudiya, Melakudi
13. Kurichchan (Kurichiyar)
14. Kurumans (Mullu Kuruman, Mulla Kuruman, Mala Kuruman)
15. Kurumbas (Kurumbar, Kurumban)
16. Mahamalar
17. Malai Arayan (Mala Arayan)
18. Malai Pandaran
19. Malai Vedan (Mala Vedan)
20. Malakkuravan
21. Malasar
22. Malayan, Nattu Malayan, Konga Malayan (Excluding the areas comprising the Kasaragod, Kannur, Wayanad and Kozhikode Districts)
23. Mavilar
24. Malayarayar
25. Mannan (to be spelt in Malayalam script in parenthesis)
26. Muthuvan, Mudugar, Muduvan
27. Palleyan, Palliyar, Paliyar, Palliya
28. Paniyan
29. Ulladan, Ullatan
30. Uraly
31. Mala Vettuvan (in Kasaragod and Kannur Districts)
32. Ten Kurumban, Jenu Kurumban
33. Thachenadan, Thachenadan, Moopan
34. Cholanaickan
35. Malapanickar
36. Vettakuruman

Source: Scheduled Tribe Development Department, (2012)

Each community is so heterogeneous in terms of culture, belief, livelihood strategies, social organization, economy and developmental perspectives. Major tribal communities in Kerala are Paniya, Kurichchya, Kuruma, Kattunayakans, Uralies etc of Wayanad, Irulas of Attapady, Muthuvans, Malayarayan and Uralies of Idukki and Kottayam and Kanikkar of Thiruvananthapuram. Five tribal communities are notified as primitive considering the stage of transition into modern society. They are Kattunaikans of Wayanad, Koragas of Kasaragod, Cholanaikans of Nilambur Valley and Malapuram district, Kurumbar of Attappady and Palakkad districts and Kadars of Cochin.

**Table 1.3 District-wise Distribution of Tribal Population in Kerala, 2011**

<b>Districts</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Percentage of ST to Total Population</b>	<b>Percentage with in Communities</b>
KERALA	484839	1.45	100
Kasaragod	48857	3.75	10.08
Kannur	41371	1.64	8.53
Wayanad	151443	18.55	31.24
Kozhikode	15228	0.49	3.14
Malappuram	22990	0.56	4.74
Palakkad	48972	1.74	10.10
Thrissur	9430	0.30	1.94
Ernakulam	16559	0.50	3.42
Idukki	55815	5.04	11.51
Kottayam	21972	1.11	4.53
Alappuzha	6574	0.31	1.36
Pathanamthitta	8108	0.68	1.67
Kollam	10761	0.41	2.22
Thiruvananthapuram	26759	0.81	5.52

Source: Compiled from Census Data, (2011)

Figure 1.2 depicts district-wise ST population as percentage to total ST population, indicates the concentration of STs in Kerala. With regard to the inter-district differences, the size of tribal population is the highest in Wayanad. It has 31.24 percent of tribal population of the State, which constitutes 18.55 percent of the total population in the district. The second largest tribal concentration is in Idukki with 11.51 percentages (Table 1.3). Other significant concentrations are in the districts of Palakkad (10.1 percent), Kasaragod (10.08 percent), Thiruvananthapuram (5.52 percent), Kannur (8.53 percent), Malappuram (4.74 percent) and Kottayam (4.53 percent). Alappuzha district has the least tribal concentration as well as population of tribes. It can be further noted that tribes are more concentrated in hilly areas of the State. Tribal population in Kerala segregated across all the Districts but majority is concentrated in Palakkad, Idukki, Wayanad and Kasaragod as it constitute 62.93 percentage of total population.

### 1.3.1 History of tribal communities of Kerala

Though there is no strict definition of an *Adivasi*, it is generally assumed that they are the original inhabitants of a region or locality, leading an isolated life having very minimal contact with the rest of the population<sup>8</sup>. A number of characteristics have also been attributed to Adivasi communities of India. These include:

- a) They have strong ethnic boundary based on kinship.
- b) They have own dialect instead of languages.

---

<sup>8</sup> The Constitution of India does not define Scheduled Tribes as such. Article 366(25) refers to scheduled tribes as those communities who are scheduled in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution. According to Article 342 of the Constitution, the Scheduled Tribes are the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within these tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the President through a public notification

- c) They lead a life based on subsistence economy.
- d) Their customs and traditions are distinct from that of other communities.
- e) Unlike castes, which form part of a complex and inter-related local economic exchange system, tribes traditionally were self-sufficient economic units.
- f) Their society was egalitarian, with its leadership based on ties of kinship and personality rather than on hereditary status, and
- g) Traditionally their religion recognized no authority outside their community.

However, many of these criteria may not apply in specific instances, in defining an Adivasi, particularly in Kerala. For instance, language does not always form a criterion for many Adivasi communities of the State, as the majority of them speak Malayalam or a dialect close to Malayalam. Similarly, they cannot always be viewed as people living apart as the degree of isolation of various Adivasi communities of the State is varied depending on the localities in which they inhabit. But typically an Adivasi community of the State consists of lineages whose extended families provide the basis for social organization and control. They were the aborigines of a region before the arrival of any settler peasantry in the locality where they inhabit today.

Tribes residing in Kerala were primarily engaged in the occupation of agriculture or allied activities. Among all Tribes, Adiya, Irulas, Paniya, Kurichchian and Kanikkars are leading cultivators (Luiz, 1962). Their major produces include rice, ragi, cholam, tapioca, ginger and cardamom. Tribes such as Malai Vedan, Maha Malasar, Kadars, Malai Pandaram and Kattunayakan

engage in hunting as their primary occupation. The diet followed by Tribes of Kerala is non-vegetarian. Tribes have headman named 'Muppan' and his wife as 'Moopathy'. Mooppan is consulted before finalising marriages and is expected to attend all weddings and funerals within his territory. Each community has different customs and traditions relating to the authority and jurisdiction of mooppan. For Irula community, they permit *mooppan* to have two wives and Mannans provide spacious hut with coat to sleep for *mooppan*. Most of the tribes followed *Makkathayam* i.e. 'succession through male line' (patrilineal rule) except Kurichchians, Kunduvadias and Malayarayas. Taboos are more popular in tribal societies. Important taboos are connected with puberty, and woman in menses and childbirth.

### 1.3.2 Profile of tribal communities in Kerala

In all, thirty five communities have been enlisted in the Scheduled Tribes list of the State<sup>9</sup>. The majority of these communities are concentrated in Wayanad, Palakkad, and Idukki districts which together accounts for more than 62 percentage of total tribal population. Most of the Adivasi communities of the State inhabit in the Western Ghats in proximity to the forest ecosystem. The distribution of tribal population of major tribal groups in Kerala is shown in Table 1.4.

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<sup>9</sup> As amended by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Order (Amendment Act) 1976 and as amended by the Constitution (Scheduled castes) Orders (Second Amendment) Act, 2002 (Act 61 of 2002) vide Part VIII- Kerala- Schedule I notified in the Gazette of India, dated 18 December, 2002) and (As amended by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act 2002 (Act 10 of 2003) vide Part VII- Kerala- Second Schedule notified in the Gazette of India dated 8 January, 2003) thirty five communities have been included in the Scheduled Tribe list of the State. In previous listings a few other communities have been erroneously enlisted in the Scheduled Tribe list. However, their names have been removed from the ST list of Kerala since 2003.

Out of thirty five Adivasi communities notified as Scheduled Tribes by the GOI, Paniyan is the largest with a population of 81,940 forming 22.5 percent of the total tribal population of the State and Kurichchan is the second largest community with a population of 32,746 constituting 9 percent. Five other Adivasi communities, viz. Muthuvan, Kanikkaran, Irular, Kuruman and MalaiArayan having a population ranging from 21,000 to 32,000 along with Paniyan and Kurichian constitute nearly 75 percent of the total Adivasi population of the State. Some of the communities such as Aranadan, Kudiya and Wayanad Kadar are only very few in number having a population less than one thousand.

**Table 1.4 Population and Sex Ratios of Major Tribes in Kerala**

Sl. No.	Community	Population Total	Population %	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	Child Sex Ratio
	All tribes	364189		180169	184020	1021	974
1	Paniyan	81940	22.4	40001	41939	1048	971
2	Kurichchan	32746	8.9	16474	16272	987	956
3	MalaiArayan	32332	8.8	15916	16416	1031	953
4	Kurumans	26177	7.1	13123	13054	994	948
5	Irular	23998	6.5	12038	11960	993	960
6	Muthuvan	21266	5.8	10764	10502	975	943
7	Kattunayakan	14715	4	7425	7290	981	1,024
8	Uraly	11103	3	5545	5558	1002	1,019
9	Adiyan	10715	2.9	5141	5574	1084	1,037

Source: Calculated from Census Data, (2001)

Until the middle of the last century, most of the Adivasi communities in the State have been leading a relatively isolated life, having very minimal contact with the caste society of Kerala. However, in the past few decades,

they have undergone remarkable changes owing to the socio-economic transitions that Kerala has experienced since the middle of the last century. Exposures to modern education, political process and media have altered the traditional life style of these communities. These changes are well expressed in their food habits, dress, religious practices, language, worldview, community structure, social interactions etc. Most of the community members are well conversant with Malayalam. Even in the households, Malayalam is increasingly becoming common language replacing local dialects. Most of the community members follow the ‘locally standardized’ religious practices. Traditional political structure is no more powerful as it used to be among most of the communities a few decades ago. All these factors have contributed remarkably to the detribalization of Adivasi communities in Kerala and being a “tribe” in Kerala today has only very little to do with customs and practices and kinship-based political structure. Today, the connotation “tribe” refers to the endogamous communities that have been leading a relatively isolated life until the beginning of the last century, living close to the forest ecosystem, depending on the subsistence economy. Owing to their relative isolated life, they have been able to keep many of their traditions and practices intact.

Generally, it is assumed that the Adivasi communities remain outside the caste system, there does a sort of hierarchy exist among communities in certain localities. For instance, in Wayanad, the landed Scheduled Tribes such as Kurichchian and Kuruman claimed a higher status over the rest of the Adivasi communities of the district and even practiced ‘untouchability’ with other Adivasi communities and even had a patron-client relationship with them. Again, in regions such as Wayanad, the Adivasi communities viz. Adiyans and Paniyans were occupying a position very similar to that of the



Dalit communities such as Pulayan and Cheruman in local caste relations. The basic characteristics in defining 'tribe' has transformed over the years but still they stand far below the mainstream population in parameters such as education and health.

#### **1.4 Statement of the problem**

Research works on tribal communities in India has different dimensions. Much of the studies vary according to different regions, cultures, caste etc. Studies on tribal education in India particularly focused on various aspects such as policies and programmes implemented for tackling educational backwardness of tribal students, factors affecting the education of students, literacy, etc. The existence of difference in culture, religious belief, nature and remoteness of habitation and dialect restrict the researchers from making generalization of results across the whole nation.

Educating the weaker section of our society including the tribals is very important as education is a necessary pre-condition for socio-economic development and a crucial element in sustaining the social exclusion. This fact is substantiated by the stipulation of educational interests of the weaker sections in the Directive Principles of State Policy and our Constitution. The modern values emerging along with modern education and clashing with the age-old belief system of the tribal societies resulted in the tribes becoming antagonistic to modern education.

Education plays an important role in every human being's life. As Scheduled Tribes are considered marginalized groups residing in interiors of forests and far away from the mainstream population, they require proper

education to develop the human resources necessary for economic and social transformation. Promoting early childhood education will lay foundation for later learning and skill development. Considering the literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes all over India, it shows an increasing trend which indeed a good sign of acceptance of education as a *sine qua non* for the improvement of physical quality of life. But here the gap between the ST and total population at national level still shows a significant difference (Table 1.5). The inter-state comparison between literacy rates among Scheduled Tribes also shows a huge disparity. These variations are a reflection of the differences in economic, social, cultural, religious and demographic characteristics of the different tribes and their exposure to the forces of modernization, urbanization and industrialization (Mitra and Singh, 2008).

**Table 1.5 Literacy Rates of STs and Total Population at National Level**

Year	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
<b>Total population</b>	29.45	36.23	52.21	64.8	73.0
<b>Scheduled Tribes</b>	11.30	16.35	29.60	47.1	59.0
<b>Gap</b>	18.15	19.88	22.61	17.7	14

Source: Census of India, (1971 to 2011)

Though, Kerala has achieved remarkable development in social sector, described as ‘Kerala Model of Development’, it is observed that the development process fell short to encompass the tribal communities in its development process (Davis and Sunitha, 2009), which makes them outliers in the process of development (Kurien, 1995). On account of this, still they are the most vulnerable community in the state. It is reported that 24.2 percent of

tribes fall Below Poverty Line (BPL) whereas the corresponding State average is only 9.4 percent (GOK, 2008).

In many societies, there exists discrepancy between the mainstream population and the marginalized including tribes in acquiring human capital (Mitra and Singh, 2008). Here too, Kerala is no exception. There are many reasons for this sorry state of affairs. One major reason is the prevailing high rate of poverty and the other is the over dependence on natural resources/ agriculture causing increasing child labour among the tribes. Poverty is a significant deterrent to tribal children as they often dropout of school for helping their family in occupation and their families cannot afford the cost of education as they are deprived of economic resources. Education is a major non-income factor determining the development of any economy or society (UNDP, 2000). In the State, school education is free, students belonging to SC/ST and other eligible sections are being provided with lump-sum grants to the tune of ₹ 140-330 for buying study materials, cloths etc (Praveen, 2009).

The incidence of poverty among the Scheduled Tribes in Kerala is only half the all India figure which suggests that the poverty alleviation measures implemented in the State have been more effective compared to the rest of India (GOK, 2008). However, when the incidence of poverty is examined at the State level, the situation reveals the vulnerability of the tribal community in the State. The poor among the scheduled tribes in Kerala constitutes 3 percent of the total BPL population in Kerala, while their total population in the state is only 1.14 percent (Appendix 1.1). With regard to the incidence of

poverty among all sections, it is found that the incidence of poverty in ST population is about 3 times that of the general population.

The income and livelihood situation of tribal communities in Kerala presents a mixed picture. While some communities like Kattunayakan are still in hunter-gatherer stage, other communities who have lost their land to settlers and encroachers work as agricultural or non-agricultural labourers (Wayanad Initiative, 2006). The livelihood options of the majority of the tribal communities are dependent on primary sector with very minimal dependence on other avenues of employment. Eventhough there is not much variation in the reported income of tribal communities, there is substantial difference in the levels of indebtedness among land owning communities like Kurichya, Kuruma and the backward communities (Wayanad Initiative, 2006).

Scheduled Tribes are subject to educational backwardness along with other backwardness which prompted the governments to make elementary education as priority scheme in all the Tribal Sub-Plans from the Fifth Five Year Plan it got a thrust with the formulation of National Policy on Education (NPE 1986). This was not only because of the constitutional obligation [Article 15(4) and (5)] that stipulates creation of equality, promoting conditions including reservation of seats in educational institutions, but also because of the felt necessity for the total development of tribal communities in the changing socio-economic scenario which is possible only through the instrument of education. Education is a powerful indicator of social and economic development among the backward groups including tribes (Mitra and Singh, 2008). These communities reside, normally, in the remote interiors which are inaccessible

terrains or hilly areas thus they remain as underdeveloped. Besides, they live in small habitations without basic infrastructures like transportation and communication. Moreover, they have their own structural impediments which make them deprived and excluded with regard to almost everything that a contemporary mainstream society has access to, the major one being education.

The situation in Kerala is not different, as the structural impediments preventing the tribal communities from being on par with the mainstream communities are in existence here as well. The literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes in the State is only 57 percent as against 90 percent among the general population and 79 percent among the Scheduled Castes (NCSC, 2002). Likewise, the share of ST students in the total school enrolment in the State is only 1.63 percent in 2008-09 (GOK, 2009). The disparity in literacy and educational level between the STs and the general population is continuing despite a number of educational support programmes made available to them. The two major reasons for this situation are the low enrolment ratio and high dropout ratio of ST children in educational institutions as compared to general students and even SC students.

**Table 1.6 Community-wise Dropout Rate of School Students (In Percent)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>All Communities</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>ST</b>
2007-08	0.83	0.96	4.54
2008-09	0.66	0.72	3.54
2009-10	0.51	0.58	2.36
2010-11	0.53	0.55	2.52
2011-12	1.05	0.61	3.71

Source: DPI- Kerala, (2014)

When we look at the dropout rate of boys and girls belonging to ST category, it shows an increasing trend as the level of education increases (Appendix 1.2). The tribal dropout rate is high compared to SCs and general population. The present study on education of tribes in Kerala particularly addresses issues such as low literacy level, low enrolment and high dropout rate of students. In this context, it is vital to make an investigation into the problems of tribal students and suggest solutions to improve the situation.

### **1.5 Review of literature**

Significant studies on tribal folk in Kerala started way back from the close of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Research by Thurston, Iyer, Luiz, Ayyappan, Mathur and Kunhaman are some of the relevant works in this field. Anthropologists were the first group which has shown keen interest in tribal research. Their focus was on customs, rituals and living condition of tribes. Later, sociologists and economists made significant contributions to tribal research by analyzing the issues or problems related to tribal folk.

Thurston (1907) in his study gives a detailed note on hill tribes of Kerala. The study is anthropological in nature that pinpointed customs, beliefs and the life of tribal groups. The work by Thurston which can be viewed as ground-breaking in the field of tribal research formed a platform for further research in this area. Iyer (1909) makes a study on Cochin tribes and later a similar work is done on Travancore tribes by the same author. Comparing with Thurston's work, Ananthakrishna Iyer's is of sociological dimension. The researcher discussed social and cultural aspects of the tribes. The important drawback of these studies can be exclusion of the economic dimension of the tribes.

A detailed account on each tribal group of Kerala is given by Luiz (1962), the former chairman of Kerala State Tribal Enquiry Committee, His study is a comprehensive research in this field. The author has described 48 tribal communities in detail, their origin, traditional occupation, beliefs, customs and other socio-cultural traits. Though the approach of the work is sociological in nature, it is different from previous works done on tribal folk of Kerala. The researcher does exploratory research but fails to come up with issues faced by the tribes.

Ayyapan (1948) is the first to make remarks on educational backwardness of tribal folk. The study focuses on tribes located at Malabar regions especially Kurichchan and Paniya groups. The research work, analyses from anthropological line, tries to bring out the problems existing in tribal communities. He addresses socio-cultural aspects and customs prevailed in Paniyans and Kurichchans as reasons for their educational backwardness. Social taboos among Kurichchans abstained girls from having education, and Paniyans by tradition, were reluctant to provide education. The researcher stressed the importance of education in socio-economic transformation of tribes.

Studies on tribal education in India emphasize poverty and poor economic background of the families as the major causes for educational deprivation among the tribal communities. Also, poor health is a major hindrance in the promotion and participation of tribal children in education (Sujatha, 2002 and 1999). The works by Sujatha have made significant contributions for analyzing problems in tribal education. Sujatha<sup>10</sup> analysed

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<sup>10</sup> Study on 'education among Scheduled Tribes' published by India Education Report (2002)

the issues of tribal education from a broader base. Jayachandran (2002) has identified female literacy level, female work participation rate, poverty, caste status and household size as the major determinants of school attendance in India in general.

Saxena (2002) investigates into reasons for the absenteeism of students in schools by collecting information from parents and teachers. Both these groups are agreeing on certain factors such as children's help in work, their free nature and lack of interest in studying. Apart from these regular factors, the author identified some interesting reasons for student absenteeism. As far as tribes are concerned, they celebrate too many festivals which cause student irregularity. The parents argued that the irregularity of teachers, and sometimes, the classes remain suspended; in such cases, the children roam around the schools and gradually lose their interest in attending classes. Therefore, the author argued that it is important to ensure regularity of teachers and working of schools to encourage the parents in sending students to school. Saxena also suggested that adjusting holidays in schools with that of tribal festivals rather than giving holidays for Diwali, Dasarah etc which tribes are not involved could reduce student absenteeism. Another important thing noticed by the author is that student absenteeism is high at the time of agricultural sowing and harvesting seasons which is due to the fact that students often help in supporting these activities.

One of the major challenges in providing education to tribal children is setting up school facilities in small, scattered and remote tribal habitations (Gautam, 2003). The majority of scheduled Tribes live in sparsely populated



habitations in the interior and inaccessible hilly areas of the country, and this is a major constraint in attaining formal education<sup>11</sup>.

Recruitment of well qualified teachers in tribal areas and determination of the appropriate language as medium of instruction remain as a major problem in educating tribal in South India (Mahanty, 2006). The continuing dropouts at different levels of education at schools manage only a few to finish high schools. Thus, only limited number of students is eligible for higher education from tribal community. The researcher also mentions that the tribes engaged in the occupation of hunting and gathering as well as shifting cultivation face problem of non-enrolment in schools as they frequently engaged in migrating settlements in connection with their search for employment.

The audit report on 'Educational Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' (2007) points to many issues such as underutilization of funds, non-availing of central assistance, diversion of funds etc. This indicates inefficient financial management by the authorities with respect to the implementation of schemes. Besides, delayed/non/short release of funds creates problems in educational development of ST students. Sah and Sisodia (2004) identify two major factors governing the literacy rate of boys and girls located in tribal areas. First factor is the poor socio-economic condition of tribal people and secondly the lack of political will and administrative

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<sup>11</sup> The Tribal Development Plan<sup>11</sup> exhibits (Appendix 1.3), that 79.3 percent of habitans have primary schools within 1 km radius. Similarly, 67.2 percent have upper primary schools within 3 km. The report points out that still there exists the problem of inaccessibility to primary schools (20.7 percent) and 32.8 upper primary schools (32.8 percent).

commitment to provide adequate primary and secondary education in such remote and tribal belts.

Mitra and Singh (2008) points out that the tribal children often enroll in primary education and then dropout of school in order to help family. Female dropout rate is high among tribal communities as they are expected to help out family in household chores. They also identified the discrepancy existing in female literacy level of tribes in India using census data. The reasons for the low tribal women literacy rates were also analysed by the researcher with the help of existing literature. Poverty is identified as the core variable leading to low literacy achievement, low gross enrollment ratio and high dropout rate of Scheduled Tribes. The work lack empirical evidence to prove reasons for the underlying problem.

A qualitative research by Bagai and Nundi (2009) on tribal education in India draws insights into reality of present situation of tribes. The study discussed about the educational backwardness of tribal areas and tried to find out the reasons for the same. Bagai and Nundi identify language of instruction in State language as a major problem faced by ST students. The tribal children have limited contact with State language, and tend to speak in their own dialect. Their unfamiliarity with State language creates hurdles in understanding lessons at pre-primary and primary levels. However, Kerala has developed bilingual materials at district levels in Kasaragod, Wayanad, Malappuram and Palakkad (Gautam, 2003). A few other problems identified by Bagai and Nundi are the continuing problem of teacher absenteeism in Tribal schools and seasonal migration of tribes. As a result the education of these children is seriously affected.

Dutta (2012) gives a detailed note on problems with education of tribal women in India and recommends the inclusion of Tribes for sustainable growth<sup>12</sup>. The focus of this paper is particularly on education of tribal women, issues and identifying causes for slow progress on educational development of tribal women. The researcher uses existing literatures for identifying reasons for the poor growth in education of tribal women, the variables identified seems to be less relevant considering the transformation of tribes.

During the early years of tribal research in Kerala, much of the works focused on the traditions, customs, way of life and similar socio-cultural traits of tribal groups. Drastic changes emerged in tribal research during these years and many research works today addresses the problems faced by the tribes including education. Chandrasekhar et al. (2001) address the problem of inequality existing across different social groups. Over the years, Kerala has been able to overcome three great obstacles of mass education, specifically, caste, class and gender discrimination. The public provision of education in Kerala is much better than that of other states in India. Though it is equitably distributed between sexes, social groups and regions, the traditional patterns of inequality still remain across social groups. The study also points out that Scheduled Tribe is one among the three communities facing inequality in education.

A study under Adiyar, Kattunaykan, Kurichian, Kuruman and Paniyan tribal communities in Panamaram panchayat in Mananthavady Taluk of

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<sup>12</sup> Submitted for international conference on 'Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Role of Industries, Government and Civil Societies' Organized by IMT & BAIF

Wayanad district, Krishnan (1999) observes that there exists inter-tribal difference in the utilization pattern of educational development schemes provided by the government. The attitude of tribes changed positively in educating their children including girl children. Still the dropout rate remains high as a result of the higher opportunity cost of education compared to the benefit of children joining the labour force at very early stage. Moreover, the awareness of educational schemes also differs according to the communities. Only Kurichians and Kurumas have higher awareness about the educational scheme and large portion of Paniyans, Adiyans and Kattunayalans are unaware of these schemes. Overall, the study was able to outline the problems associated with tribal education in Kerala.

Omanaseelan (2002) has conducted a study on status of formal and non-formal education programme prevalent for scheduled tribe students in Kerala. The author used observation technique for analyzing formal and non-formal education by visiting tribal schools, ashram schools, residential schools and a selected few tribal settlements. The study highlights the inadequacy of proper infrastructure facilities at non-residential schools compared to that of ashram and similar residential schools. The work was more generic in nature and lack in-depth analysis on the problem stated. Different dimensions of the problem with respect to formal and non-formal schooling are missing in the study.

Varghese (2002) studies socio-economic transformation of tribes and the role of development programmes. The study was conducted with special reference to Wayanad district using survey and observation method. Varghese used comparative analysis between Kurichchans and Paniya community in

terms of living conditions, nature of the family, landlessness, income and impact of co-operative movement. The author criticizes the tribal welfare authorities in light of poor development progress of tribal groups and inefficiency in implementation of welfare schemes. Kurichchans show positive response while Paniyans have negative attitude to educational welfare programmes showing disparity within tribal groups. However, the researcher failed to identify the underlying reasons for this disparity.

A study on dropouts' students of Wayanad district by Mathew (2002) points out that the tribal parents have less concern about their children's education. The absence of proper involvement by the parents is regarded as a very important factor for the dropout of students, as parents can contribute and influence their children's studies. The study highlights that the parents usually abstain from PTA meetings and they come to schools only for collecting educational stipend of their children.

A study by Centre for Socio-economic and Environmental Studies (CSES, 2007) suggests 'PadithaVeedu' (Study home), a new institution to be established in each Ooru (habitation/settlement) to improve the quality of education among Scheduled Tribes. It will provide a home like environment. But the study has no empirical support to prove the requirement of home like environment necessary for the ST students.

Rajasenan et al. (2013) analyse the standard of living of tribes in a forward, backward dichotomous framework. The study covers major tribal communities of Kerala and unfolds inter-communal disparity in elements of physical quality of life such as education, health and livelihood. The authors

use three point scales, low, medium and high to determine the level of education among the communities. It reveals that the six communities such as Kattunayakan, Aadiya, Paniya, Muthuva, Irula and Uralis have low level of education out of the nine considered for the study. Interestingly, the fact is that only MalaiArayans have high level of education, shows the extent of educational deprivation among tribes, requiring unique inclusive policy option for the overall development of the tribes.

Centre for Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy (CSSEIP), Cochin prepares a Human Development Report (2009) for Scheduled tribes in Kerala (2009). The report covers human development indices across the nine tribal communities considered for the study. The report points out that tribal community in Kerala are facing less accessibility to seek higher levels of education. In the State, there are about 189 Arts and Science colleges which include 39 government colleges and 150 private colleges. Among them, the least number of colleges is situated in tribal populated districts such as Wayanad, Idukki and Kasaragod<sup>13</sup> causing inaccessibility to higher education for tribal students.

Davis and Sunitha (2009) find that the ST population stands far behind the general population in literacy rates, average years of schooling, retention rates and pass percentage at higher secondary exam levels in Kerala. The percentage point of difference on average years of schooling is high (i.e., more than 50 percent) in the tribal concentrated districts. The study identifies the dialect used by the community coupled with economic backwardness and socio-cultural reasons as barriers to enrolment at schools.

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<sup>13</sup> For Wayanad, Idukki and Kasaragod the number of colleges are 6, 8 and 5 respectively

The government has implemented single teacher schools in tribal areas to supplement primary schools education among them. An analytical study on these single teacher schools done by Menon (2013) which gives a detailed account on the curriculum, pedagogy and teacher-training aspects of single teacher schools. The problems faced at primary schooling by the tribes also were covered in the study. But, the author lacks sufficient literature support to substantiate the problems identified under primary schooling, considered as a major limitation of the work.

Paul (2013) discusses education of tribes in a study primarily carried out on income, livelihood and education of tribal communities in Kerala which can be viewed as a comprehensive work in this field. The coverage of the study is limited to 9 major tribal groups, six from Wayanad, two from Idukki, and one from Palakkad. A snapshot of tribal literacy, enrolment and dropout situation is visible in the study and it highlights familial aspects such as poverty, looking after youngster, adverse family environment as major impediments to tribal education. The most significant contribution of the study can be the classification of tribal groups into forward and backward based on standard of living index.

An analysis of Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) approach by Rajasenani and Rajeev (2013) show how inclusive was the effort taken under TSP in overall development of the tribes. The study is critical in nature, tried to give detailed account on TSP with particular reference to education, health and social development of tribes using data published by the Scheduled Tribe Department. The author gives special mention to education of tribes, inter communal disparity is sorted out using correspondence analysis.

The study by Chathukulam et al (2011) on ‘Tribal Sub-Plan formulation and implementation’ is another significant study in TSP. The researcher used secondary information for analysing TSP allocation, categorized funding mainly into education, housing, health and resettlement of landless tribes. The educational expenditure pattern analysed from 2002-03 to 2010-11. The study could not bring a detailed analysis of educational expenditure under TSP and its impact on development of tribes. Kunhikrishnan (2009) elucidates Tribal Sub-Plan of Kerala as implemented in the State particularly for the period after decentralization during 1996-97. The study highlighted the huge proportion of unspent TSP amount by the authorities indicating inefficiency at the implementation side.

The situation of underdevelopment of tribes analysed by Rajasenan and Abraham (2013) is much more a kind of descriptive research. They focused on education, employment livelihood and variables indicating basic amenities of household. The study signifies the need for such study in the context of Kerala acclaimed as ‘model’ for human and social development as the STs remain excluded from robust central tendency of the State.

George (2011) makes a study on higher education in India from the angle of exclusion of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes. The study gives a detailed note on enrolment at higher education from social group perspective and explains reasons for exclusion of SCs/STs. The researcher also tried to find out the reasons for lower educational attainment of these groups. Rajasenan et al (2010) find no presence of SC/ST among top 101 ranks in professional engineering entrance examination conducted by the Commissioner of Entrance Examinations (CEE), Kerala.



Baiju (2011) analyses the development and welfare programmes implemented by the government addressing poverty, land alienation, health care and social development of tribes. The work focuses on implementation side of the programmes and explains the reasons for not reaching the ultimate beneficiaries. The study evaluates welfare schemes and their implementation from four dimensions viz. awareness, eligibility, accessibility and availability among tribes located in Thiruvananthapuram district. The study reveals that as the remoteness of the habitation increases, the awareness on educational schemes comes down and the proportion of respondents availing the benefits of the scheme is less than three-fourth of the eligible respondents. The delay from government side is found to be the reason for this. The work has certain limitations as it fails to find more reasons for low usage of the schemes by the eligible candidates and lacks in-depth analysis on implementation side of various schemes.

Kakkoth (2012) conducts a significant study on perception of tribal school dropout with particular reference to Ashram schools. The study observes subjective experience of Ashram school dropout children from an anthropological and sociological perspective. School dropout reasons were analysed from the perspectives of headmaster, teachers and staff by carrying out a Case study on Indira Gandhi Memorial Model Residential School, Nilambur<sup>14</sup>. The researcher observes that the percentage of students coming back after vacation/holidays to the school is very low, nearly 30 percent comes back and rest 70 percent returns weeks or months of reopening of the school, gradually leading to dropout. The study also observes that non-tribal teachers

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<sup>14</sup> Exclusively set up for PTGs, located in Wayanad district of Kerala. Admits students from Kattunayakan, Pathinaickan and Cholanaikan tribal groups

have less exposure to tribal way of life or their value system which creates problems to the students. Lack of generalization of the findings is the major drawback of the study.

Reviewing available literature, we can see that most of the studies are qualitative in nature and failed to explore the exact cause for low enrolment and high dropout rate in schools. Absence of statistical methods for interpretation of results is seen as major limitations of the studies. An empirically connected study in this area will definitely help the policy makers in making changes according to insights obtained from the study. This thesis intends to find out the determinants of education among tribes from an empirical perspective.

## 1.6 Theoretical Framework

Education has been discussed from the era of classical period of economic thought. Smith<sup>15</sup> (1776) believed education as a basis for good administration. Likewise, the economists in this period discussed the benefits of education. Significant development started during neo-classical period (1870–1930). Marx<sup>16</sup> (1859) in his base-superstructure model suggested that dominant class has complete control over all ideologies. Base explains ‘means of production’ and superstructure includes culture, the state, education etc.. Later, Weber<sup>17</sup> (1864-1920) used ‘structure domination’ in educational system.

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<sup>15</sup> Adam Smith, in *Wealth of Nations*, stressed the importance of education in economic growth of a nation

<sup>16</sup> Karl Marx’s *A Preface to The Critique of Political Economy* explains the base-superstructure model. This discuss economic as base which shapes the superstructure that includes ‘education’.

<sup>17</sup> Max Weber, German economist and sociologist, in his theory of Stratification, discussed social inequality

After the neo-classical period economists have not shown importance on education. The importance was on output and employment generation. Late 1950s onwards a few of them have shown interest in ‘economics of education’. The present study using Capability Approach is being developed by Sen (1995). Capability Approach is about freedom and the development of an environment sustainable for human flourishing. It refers to what people are able to do, rather than to what resources they have access to (Walker, 2005). Traditional theories focused on income and other related variables for analyzing social equality. Unlike these theories, Capability Approach by Sen considers the extent of freedom to achieve capabilities as each person endowed with a set of capabilities which improve his or her overall living well-being.

Sen refined and transformed the concept of ‘entitlement’ into capabilities which is advocated in his study of ‘famines and poverty’. Traditionally, it is believed that famines occur due to decline in food production and supply in the region. But his study on Bengal famine showed that famines occur not mainly because of fall in supply of food, but because of loss in ‘entitlements’ of the people and ‘the purchasing power’ to acquire and have access to food. The study highlighted the cause of hunger and deprivation not only due to fall in food production, but also distribution of food to the economic, social and political arrangements which can directly or indirectly influence people’s capabilities or abilities to acquire food and to achieve health and nourishment (Alexander, 2008). Entitlements mentioned in the study are transformed to ‘capabilities’. ‘Entitlements’ is used to depict lack of capabilities or abilities to meet necessities for base survival, and capabilities is used to refer to a wide range of capacities and opportunities required for human well-being as a whole.

Capability set represents various alternative combinations of functionings from which the person can choose one combination (Sen, 1995). The choice of selecting valuable functionings and the opportunity to develop the capability through achievement of functionings require freedom. Thus capabilities stand for the extent of freedom that a person has, in order to achieve different functioning.

### 1.6.1 Functionings and Capabilities

The concepts used by Sen in Capability approach are those of ‘*functionings*’ and ‘*capabilities*’. The Capability Approach by Sen is based on the notion of life and living as a combination of various doings and beings, with quality of life to be assessed in terms of our capability to achieve valuable functionings (Walker and Unterhalter, 2010). To be precise, a person’s Capability can be assessed on the basis of well-being and the freedom to pursue well-being. Well-being is seen in terms of quality of a person’s ‘being’. Capability approach focuses on individual’s valuable ‘doings and beings’ where he has freedom to achieve his valuable choice from a wide range of options. A person’s living assists a set of interrelated ‘functionings’ i.e. beings and doings. Thus, we can say that a person’s achievement is a vector of his or her functionings. Functionings may vary from adequately nourished, being in good health, with access to quality education etc. Capability function represents various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that a person can achieve and it reflects the person’s freedom to choose from possible livings (Sen, 1995).

Sen developed Capability Approach as an alternative to utilitarian<sup>18</sup> concept that used to comprehend poverty, living condition and well-being.

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<sup>18</sup> Utilitarians in general want the equality of total utilities enjoyed by different people. The utilitarian formula requires the maximization of the sum-total of the utilities of all the

Unlike utilitarian concept, Capability Approach does not focus on how much an individual consumes or the utility accumulated to evaluate well-being but this approach is based on the capabilities related to the possibilities and choices that possess to achieve valuable 'human functionings'. Capability Approach does not look well-being from the angle of how rich a person is. We can say that it is not the income which matters the capabilities or well-being of a person but it is the freedom on the opportunities or choices made available. Sen integrates securing and expanding intrapersonal and interpersonal freedom (individual agency and social arrangements). Freedom in the opinion of Sen, depends upon social and economic arrangements, and political and civil rights. If there is any exclusion on a person's freedom to achieve the alternatives or choices on social arrangements it restricts that persons capability set.

Capability Approach (CA) emerged as an instrument for measurement of inequality in various spheres associated with human being as it focused on components of human well-being such as education, health, security which are not directly acquired by an individual. Traditional approach used real income, resources and primary goods for individual and social evaluation. Sen identified these variables as mere means to freedom. The drawback of income in inequality measurement is that it does not take into account social and physical aspects determining human diversity. CA moves away from the space of commodities, incomes, utilities etc to constitute elements of living. The central concept of CA is the idea of having life is reflected with well-being and agency. A person's capability to his or her well-being arises from two distinct but interrelated considerations. First, the achieved functioning which constitute well-

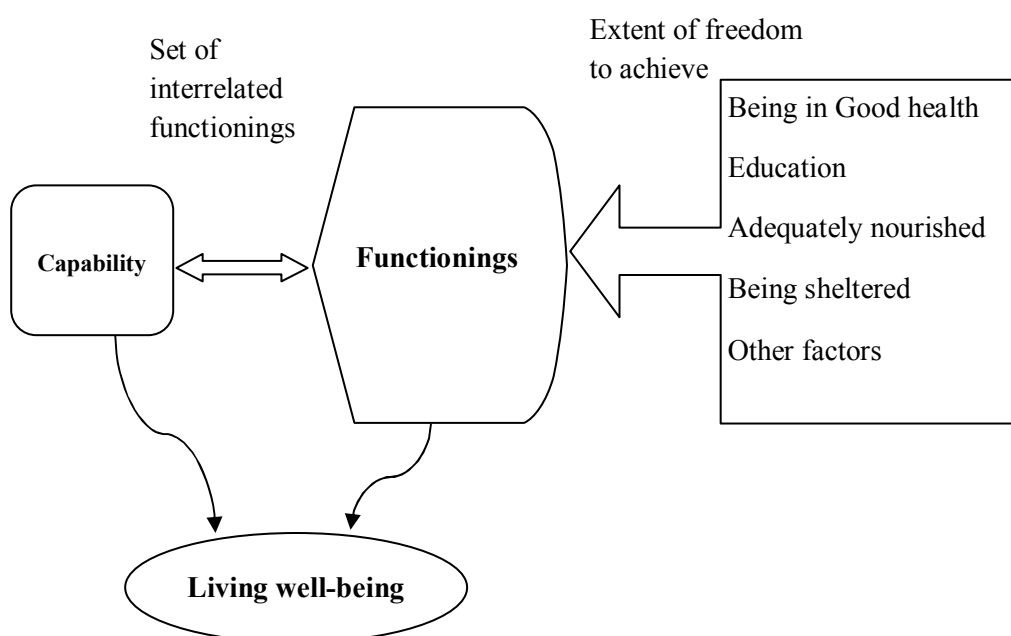
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people taken together [Sen, 1995]. Equality under utilitarian concept takes in to account equal treatment of human beings in the form of gains and losses in utilities.

being and secondly, capability to achieve functioning constitutes freedom to achieve well-being. This framework is explained in Figure 1.3.

Functionings constitute those elements which create well-being while, capability represents a person's freedom to achieve well-being. Besides, the achieved well-being is related to capability. Therefore, capability is related not only to freedom to achieve well-being, but also to achieved well-being.

**Figure 1.3 Capability Frameworks**



Sen (1995) explained inequality on the basis of characteristics and circumstances. Human beings differ in their personal characteristics such as age, sex, physical and mental abilities which are important variables in assessing inequality. These characteristics form different dimensions in assessing inequality. Equality in income of two persons may still leave inequality in the ability to do what one would value doing. Thus, inequality in terms of one variable (e.g. income) may take us in a very different direction from inequality

in the case of another variable. Capability Approach concentrates on freedom rather than on means to achieve freedom and it identifies the real alternatives that a person has. Sen also made a difference between ‘freedom’ and ‘right’. Policy of government to form social state is attached to freedom that people are enjoying to achieve well-being. If the authority concerned is not incorporating the exact way to achieve ‘goodness’ of social state, it merely stands as ‘right’ of individuals for achieving substantial freedom.

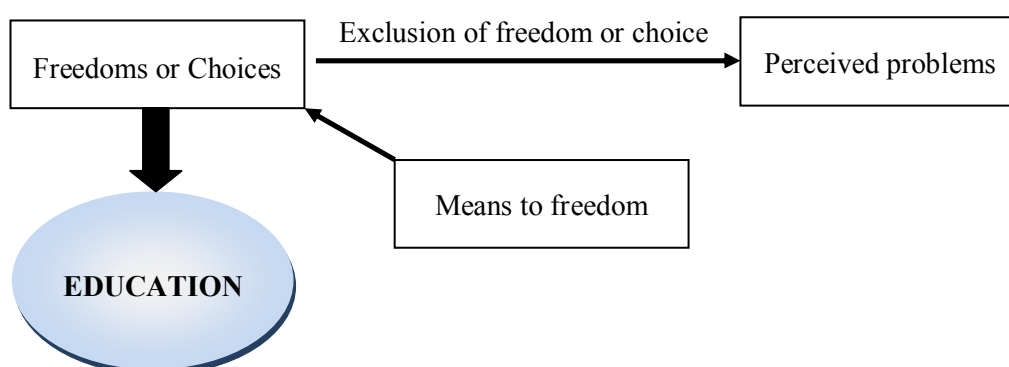
### **1.6.2 Capability Approach and Education**

Capability Approach of Sen is a broader framework which is widely used in various spaces of inequality measurements. It is used to analyze situations of ‘deprived people’ and, in turn, helps in framing favourable policies to make necessary improvements in resources and ability to increase their choices which make them most valuable. This approach is aimed at making correct choice of variables for improving the quality of life of people. Well-being of a person depends on freedom to achieve security, education, health and other variables having direct impact on improvement quality of life. As already discussed; Capability Approach focuses on two sets of elements i.e. *capability* and *functionings*. The capability set constitutes alternative combinations of functionings, a person can choose to have.

Education is both instrumentally and intrinsically valuable for human flourishing, and in this regard, education is one of the functions affecting the capability set of a person. Extent of freedom in achieving basic education is essential for overall development. In fact, it is clear that a basic minimum education or schooling is necessary for an individual in attaining well-being. Any exclusion in acquiring the basic education certainly reduces the capabilities of the individual. Freedom to educate will expand overall development in capability of a

person. Education as functioning depends on freedom or choices, and any exclusion among these creates problems in education (Figure 1.4). Improvements in different means to freedom extend real freedom or choice.

**Figure 1.4 Functioning Framework**



In the context of education, the people's desire varies according to different classes. Low income group or marginalized groups have limited educational opportunities. On the other hand, high income group can have high level of education. If both the groups are satisfied with the same, then there is no problem in terms of utility on desire satisfaction. This is quiet incomplete under capabilities approach in determining educational well-being. Focus on capabilities is not just an evaluation of satisfaction. In a country like India where social stratification is based on caste system, it is a fact that Scheduled Tribe is the most deprived community and it requires development in education, healthcare and other aspects of well-being.

Capability Approach is mostly used in qualitative measurements rather than in quantitative measurements. Tribes in India are far behind educational attainments compared to all other communities. Most often, there is high rate of students' absenteeism and discontinuation of studies reported from among these groups. This results from their lack of freedom and flexibility to attend



the class and complete the schooling. Literatures related to tribal studies highlight medium of instruction as a major hindrance in the progress of their education at school levels. In addition to the freedoms mentioned above, we can also add freedom to comprehend lessons for achievement of education. These, indeed, result in chronic absenteeism and lack of interest in studies, finally, leading to dropout of students from studies.

In the present study, the focus is to identify the variables determining the education of tribes and the problems associated with schooling. This thesis goes in line with the theory of Capability Approach propounded by Sen and looks into educational aspects of tribal students from capability perspective as tribes, who reside in interiors of forests far away from the mainstream population, have limited choices or alternatives in all aspects of well-being including education.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

Backwardness in education is regarded as one of the major hindrances in social advancement of Scheduled Tribes and due to this very reason, both the State and the Central government have given greater importance to plug in this widening development gap. The governments have implemented several programmes and schemes to improve the education of tribes including full fee concession for the students belonging to ST category. Apart from this, lump-sum grant and special stipend are also being given to them in order to encourage education among them. But still, rampant dropout is prevalent among them especially in tribal hamlets of Wayanad, Palakkad and Idukki districts. On account of this, continuing dropout at school level, only a few students manage to complete matriculation or higher secondary level of schooling. This factor leads to low attainment of higher education among them as only a few students are eligible for higher education. Thus, low enrolment at higher education leads

to low human capital formation among them. Several factors are responsible for this sorry state of affairs, of which the most important are social, economic, cultural, low education attainments of parents, use of tribal language in tribal hamlets and lack of exposure to the mainstream society.

Scheduled Tribes, broadly referred to as indigenous groups, normally reside in the interiors or remote forest areas which are much far away from mainstream population. On account of their nature of habitat, they are excluded from social development processes. The case of Tribes in Kerala is also not different. The available statistics on education signifies the fact that they lag much behind in all aspects of education. This situation of tribes is not much widely discussed in Kerala. The continuing dropouts as well as the inequality in education need to be examined and analyzed. The available literature shows that there is hardly any such studies that discussed the discouraging educational situation of the tribes in Kerala. The present thesis intends to fill this gap.

## **1.8 Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to understand the problems of tribal education in Kerala, and to make suggestions for the improvement of the situation. The specific objectives are:

- To analyse the education among the tribes in Kerala through capability framework.
- To compare and analyse education of tribes with other social groups and within tribal sub-groups.
- To identify social, economic, cultural and institutional factors determining education of the tribes.
- To evaluate the existing policies and programmes, to identify their drawbacks and to make suggestions, which have policy implications.

## **1.9 Hypothesis**

The hypotheses formed for the present study are as follows:

Ho - literacy of parents determines education of children

Ho - Poverty and education are interlinked

Ho- There exists high correlation between family environment and dropouts

## **1.10 Methodology**

### **1.10.1 Sampling design**

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through a well-structured questionnaire from Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad districts using stratified random sampling technique. These districts were selected to ensure representation of population. A total of 400 samples were taken from these districts. Secondary data were collected from various government and other sources. A detailed note on primary and secondary sources used for the study is stated below.

### **1.10.2 Primary data**

The young children among the tribal communities in the State who are structurally constrained from going on with their formal education and the students continuing with their studies at 10<sup>th</sup> level constitute the population for the present study. The samples were collected from three locations of Wayanad, Palakkad and Idukki districts<sup>19</sup>. The tribal children from the schools

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<sup>19</sup> Tribal population in Wayanad, Palakkad and Idukki accounts 62 percent of total ST population of Kerala (Census, 2001)

located in the districts of the State comprise the sampling frame of the study (Table 1.7). The locations include Mananthavady in Wayanad District, Attappady in Palakkad District and Munnar in Idukki District.

**Table 1.7 Area Selected for the Study**

Districts	Population	Percentage across Districts	Percentage to Total STs
Wayanad	136062	17.43	37.36
Idukki	50973	4.51	14
Palakkad	39665	1.52	10.89

*Source: Worked out from Census, (2001)*

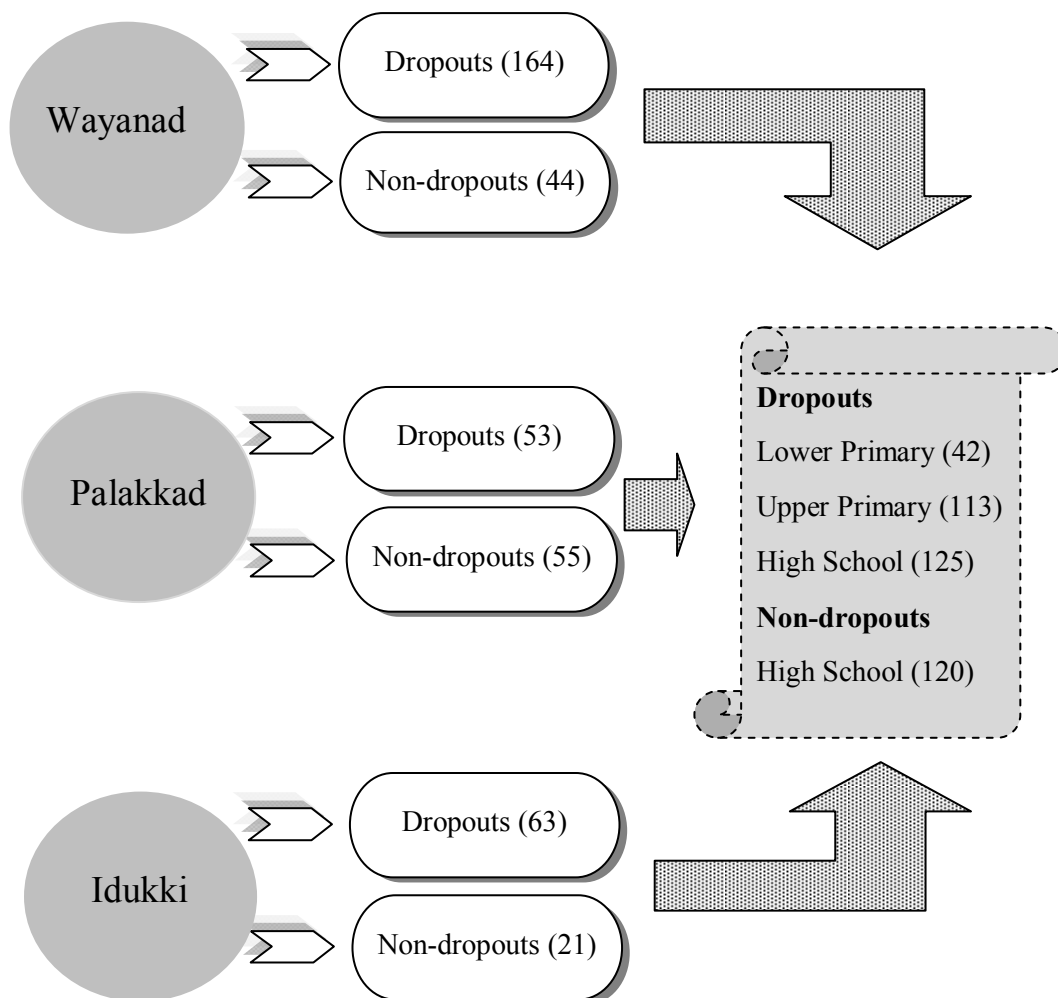
The sample consists of both dropout students and non-dropout students (Figure 1.5). Dropouts are those students who have dropped out from the school at any stage of schooling. Non-dropouts are those students who are continuing studies at 10<sup>th</sup> level without being dropped out from any class. Out of these 400 samples, 280 are dropouts and 120 are non-dropouts. From the sampling frame, a total of 7 tribal communities selected for the study. Paniya, Kuruma, Adiya and Kurichchan were selected from Wayanad. From Idukki two communities (Mannan and Muthuvan) and Irula selected from Palakkad district. Stratified random sampling is used for sample selection. The stratification is done at school level viz. lower primary, upper primary and high school. Besides, in-depth interviews with the important stakeholders would be done with semi-structured interview schedule. The unit of observation was the selected student from the schools. Case studies also form part of the methodology.

### **1.10.3 Secondary data**

Important sources of secondary data are stated below

- Data and related information were collected from journals, published articles, magazines, and newspapers. Besides, unpublished data were gathered from research organizations/institutions, internet sources etc.
- Records relating to the study are also collected from various educational, tribal offices and other departments of government including Kerala Institute for Research Training and Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (KIRTADS), Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) etc.
- Data were also collected from Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) offices of Idukki, Wayanad and Palakkad districts. Details regarding Multi Grade Learning Centres (MGLCs) functioning in Kerala were obtained through interaction with Research Officers in SSA office.
- Educational indices relating to Scheduled Tribes in Kerala were adopted from Census published by GOI, Economic Review published by Planning Board of Kerala, Directorate of Tribal Welfare, DPI (Directorate of Public Instruction) office Trivandrum, Directorate of Collegiate Education and Directorate of Technical Education

**Figure 1.5 Representation of Samples**



#### 1.10.4 Data analysis

The major tools used in this analysis are Chi-Square tests, t tests, correspondence analysis and logistic regression.

- Logistic regression - to find out determinants of dropout of students

- Chi-square - to find association of variables across dropout and non-dropout, gender and between other variables.
- t-test – to statistically prove difference on mean values if any on variable/variables across educational status, gender etc.

### **1.11 Limitations of the study**

The study was conducted backward districts such as Idukki, Palakkad and Wayanad. Except for Wayanad, the habitations of tribes are located in remote areas which were difficult to access. In many times, we found difficulty in identifying dropout students. Lack of proper information from the part of government authorities due to improper management of records by the departments was another challenging task associated with the study.

### **1.12 Chapterisation Scheme**

The entire study divided into six chapters which are shown in Figure 1.6. Chapter 1 deals with introduction to tribal education. This Chapter covers background of the study and review literature connected with tribal education in India and Kerala. In addition to educational literature, a brief profile of tribal communities in Kerala is also mentioned. The conceptual framework of the study also included in this Chapter. Methodology adopted for the study is also given here.

Chapter 2 starts with community profile of tribes located in the districts of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad. A comparison of literacy and educational attainment across various tribal communities is presented in this Chapter. An

in-depth analysis of the various dimensions of high dropout rate and low level of education is presented here.

Chapter 3 begins with a historical review of the educational policies implemented in India since independence. Critical analysis is made on those educational policies which intended towards the upliftment of tribal children. This includes, the educational allowances, scholarship and educational expenditure under tribal sub-plan. The Chapter concludes with an analysis on effectiveness of such programmes.

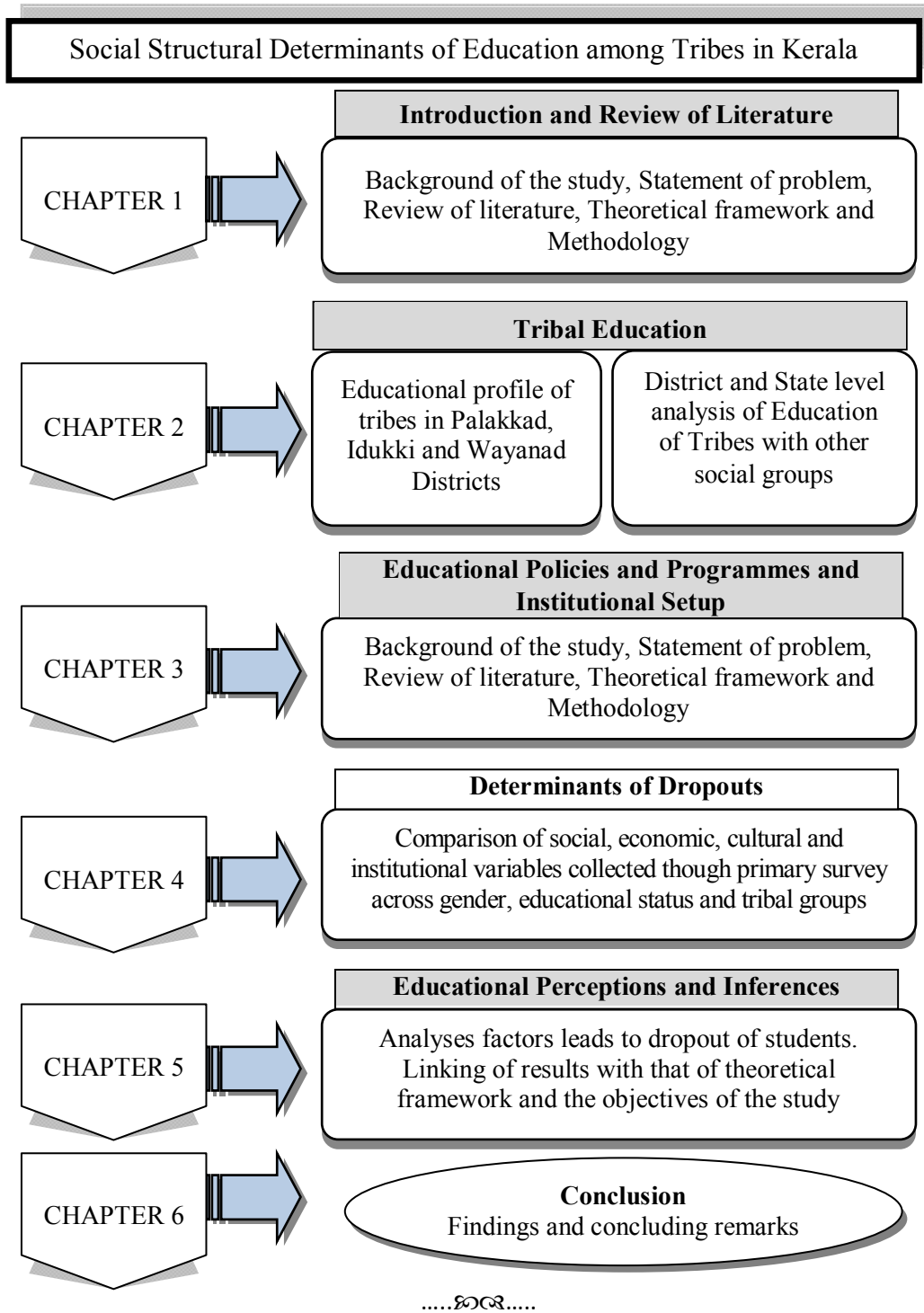
Data collected through primary survey from the respondents is analysed in Chapter 4. Detailed analysis is carried out to identify exact problems faced by the tribal students and to identify the conversion factors leading to dropout of students. Variables identified through primary survey compared among gender as well as dropout and non-dropout respondents. Standard statistical techniques were used to make inferences.

First part of Chapter 5 deals with perception of tribal students to education. This is also analysed through survey data. An empirical analysis of different factors leading to high dropout rate of tribal students is mentioned in this Chapter. Finally, the Chapter links the results obtained with that of theoretical framework which is followed for this particular study and the objectives set for the study.

Chapter 6 deals major findings and conclusions of the study. Recommendations are also made on the basis of the findings.



Figure 1.6 Scheme of the study



## Chapter 2

### TRIBAL EDUCATION

<i>C o n t e n t s</i>	<i>2.1 Idukki District</i>
	<i>2.2 Palakkad District</i>
	<i>2.3 Wayanad District</i>
	<i>2.4 Unequal Educational Status among Tribal Groups</i>
	<i>2.5 Education among Tribes: An Inter-district Analysis of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad</i>
	<i>2.6 Education among Tribes: State Level Analysis</i>

The Scheduled Tribe communities in Kerala are heterogeneous in social customs, beliefs and practices. It is also possible to demarcate them on the basis of health, education and their physical quality of life. The present Chapter depicts a snapshot of education of tribes in Kerala. The analysis starts with the level of education of tribal communities belonging to Idukki, Palakkad and Wayanad. Here, each tribe is analysed separately. Next, a comparison of tribes at district as well as State level is presented. The Chapter finally ends up with a detailed analysis of the enrolment and dropouts of ST students at the school level and the performance of tribal students at the higher education level.

### 2.1 Idukki District

#### 2.1.1 Profile

Idukki has a total area of 4,358 sq. km with a density of population of 254 per sq. km<sup>1</sup>. A brief demographic profile of Idukki is presented in Table 2.1.

<sup>1</sup> Provisional data released by Census, 2011.

The total population of the district is 11, 07,453 which includes 5, 51,944 males and 5, 55, 509 females (Census of India, 2011). General literacy rate is 92.2 percent where males have higher literacy rate than that of females. Idukki, the second largest tribal concentrated district of Kerala has a Scheduled Tribe population of 50,973 persons constituting 4.5 percent of the total district population<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 2.1 Demographic Profile of Idukki District**

	Year	
	2001	2011
<b>Population</b>	<b>11,28,221</b>	<b>11,07,453</b>
Male	5,66,682	5,51,944
Female	5,62,539	5,55,509
<b>ST Population</b>	<b>50,973</b>	<b>55,815</b>
Male	25,510	27,995
Female	25,463	27,820
<b>Literacy (All communities)</b>	<b>88.69%</b>	<b>92.20%</b>
Male	92.33%	94.84%
Female	85.02%	89.59%

Source: Census Data (2001, 2011)

There are, in all, 10,539 tribal households settled in 256 tribal hamlets across the district (Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, 2011). There are 99 tribal settlements in Devikulam Block Panchayath which is the highest compared to that of the other Block Panchayaths. The number of settlements in other Block Panchayaths area Idukki - 50, Adimali - 36, Kattappana - 31, Nedumkandom - 17, Azhutha - 12, Elamdesam - 10 and Thodupuzha - 1. The peculiar nature of settlements located in Idukki is its large size in terms of number of households.

<sup>2</sup> STs in Idukki constitute 12 percent to the total ST population of Kerala (Census, 2011)

Out of the 256 settlements, 15 of them have more than 100 households and 76 settlements have a size of 50 to 99 houses. This indicates 36 percent of the tribal settlements have more than 50 households (Appendix 2.1). In terms of physical access to basic amenities such as hospitals, educational institutions etc., and these settlements face problems and for a few settlements, it's very severe. There are 21 settlements, where there are no proper roads or paths to reach households and people living in 41 settlements should walk more than 10 km to reach the nearest bus stop (Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, 2011). This is a clear evidence of the extent to which they stay far away from the mainstream population. Tribes concentrated in Idukki include Muthuvans, Malai Arayan, Uraly, Mannan and Hill Pulaya. Besides, there are a few other tribal groups, who also reside in certain parts of Idukki. However, they are concentrated in other districts of Kerala. Detailed analysis of education of major tribes residing in Idukki district is given below.

## **2.1.2 Tribes of Idukki**

### **2.1.2.1 Malai Arayan**

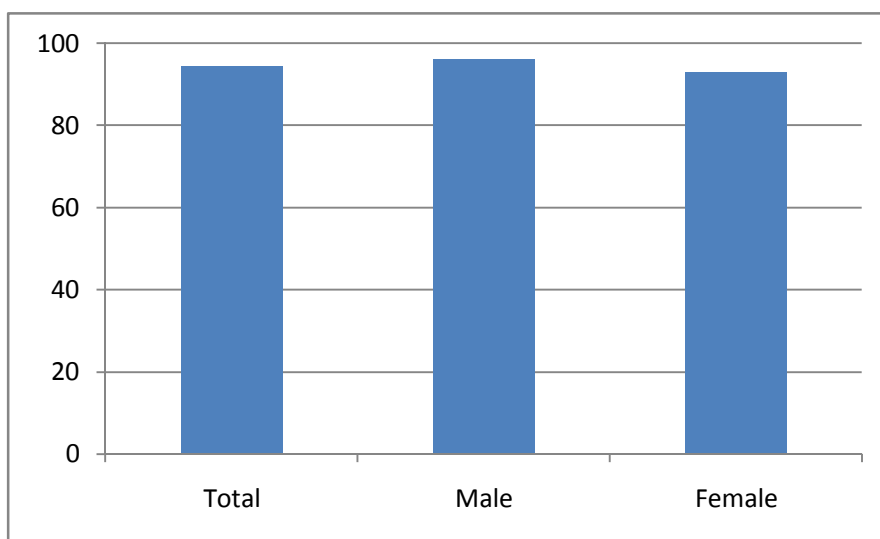
Majority of the Malai Arayans are concentrated in Idukki district. They are also located in Ernakulam and Kottayam districts<sup>3</sup>. Their name denotes Arason (King) of Mala (Hill). The community has profusely benefited from missionary activities. In this regard, a large number of them follow Christianity. They are comparatively better educated and are the major beneficiaries of the reservation policy of the Central and State governments in education and government jobs (Paul, 2013). The land holding status of the community and income generation from agriculture are relatively high

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<sup>3</sup> They are located at Kanjirappally, Muttom, Melukavu, Thodupuzha and Kothamangalam areas of Kottayam and Ernakulam district.

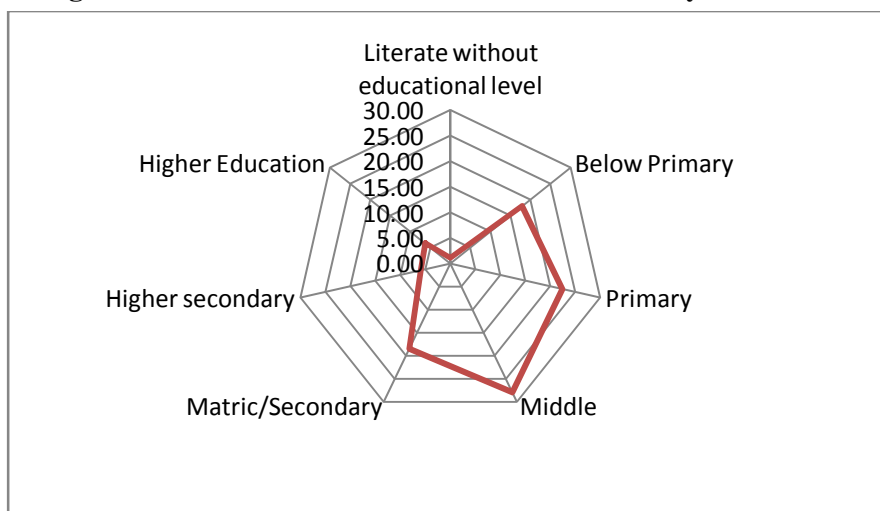
compared to that of the other Adivasi communities. They are the third largest tribal community of Kerala with a population of 32,332, representing 8.9 percent of the total State tribal population (Census of India, 2001).

**Figure 2.1 Literacy Rate of Malai Arayans (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.2 Educational Attainments of Malai Arayan Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)



Malai Arayans have the highest literacy rate among tribes of Kerala with 94.5 percent (Census of India, 2001). The literacy gap between male and female is also minimal. Among males, it is 96.12 percent and among females, it is 92.94 percent (Figure 2.1). Educational attainments among them underline the fact that they are well educated compared to STs. Out of the total literates, 6.22 percent possesses higher educational degrees (Figure 2.2). This indicates comparatively better human capital formation among Malai Arayans and this, indeed, is a good sign of improvement in their social status.

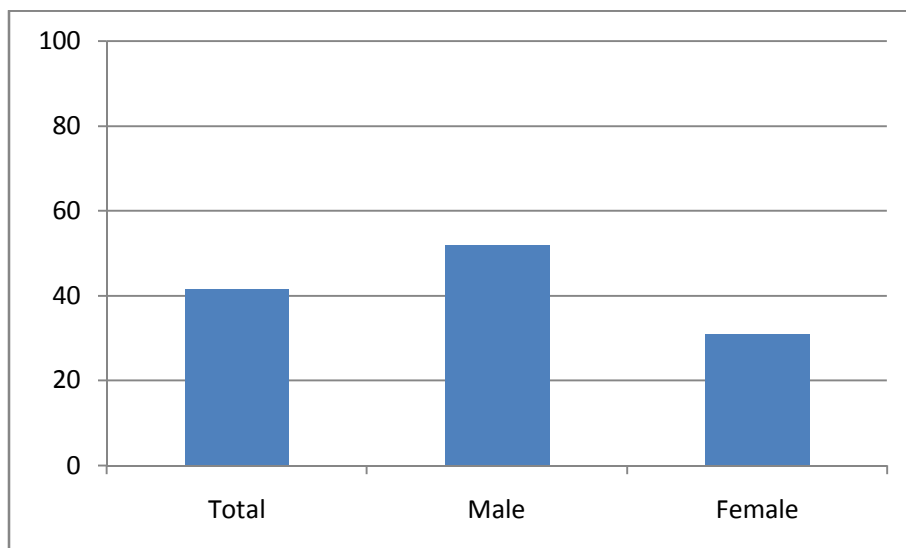
#### **2.1.2.2 Muthuvan**

Muthuvans are 21,666 in number and more than half of their population is concentrated in Idukki district (Census of India, 2001). Muthuvans are believed to have migrated to the Western Ghats from the planins of Tamil Nadu. They are scattered across these three Taluks in Idukki viz. Devikulam, Udumbumchola and Peerumedu in the areas of Poompara, Kanjiyar, Kalipparambu, Pooyamkutty, Kuttambuzha, Edamala, Marayoor, Mannakandom and Bodimettu. Muthuvans are also named as Mudugar and Muduvan (Singh, 1997). The word 'Muthuvan' has been taken from the word "muthuku" which stands for back in both Malayalam and Tamil languages<sup>4</sup>. At present, they are engaged in different occupations such as agriculture in their own or leased lands, animal husbandry etc.

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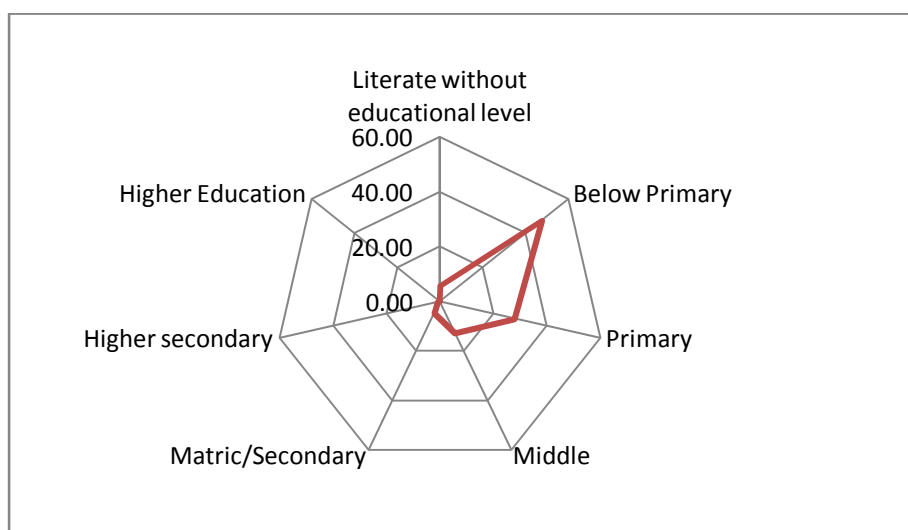
<sup>4</sup> It is believed that they were part of royal dynasty of Madurai, when the dynasty was thrown out of power; these royal members immigrated to several places of the central Kerala, like Travancore, and accomplished the famous dynasty of Poonjar. While going to Kerala State, the Muthuva tribes carried along with them the images of the deity of the royal family, Madurai Meenakshi, on the back of their bodies (Luiz, 1962).

**Figure 2.3 Literacy Rate of Muthuvans (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.4 Educational Attainments of Muthuvan Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

Though, Muthuvans represent 5.8 percent to the total tribal population of the State, their literacy fall far below the general literacy rate. Literacy rate of Muthuvans is 41.5 percent which is even far below the national literacy rate of



STs<sup>5</sup> (Census of India, 2001). We can also see the large discrepancy existing between male and female literacy rate of Muthuvans (Figure 2.3). This, in fact has led to the low educational attainment among them which is clear from Figure 2.4.

Among the literates, about half of them have either attained primary level education or are literate without any formal education. The percentage of population who has attained higher education is only 0.38 percent. This indicates low level of education among Muthuvans. Besides, being one of the significant tribes, they remain excluded from educational development process.

### **2.1.2.3 Mannan**

Mannans are largely concentrated in Idukki district in the areas of Thodupuzha, Udumbumchola, Perumedu, Chettupara, Machiplavu, Adimaly, Kattapana, Kozhimala, Murikasserry, Nedumkandom and Kumily. Population of Mannan is 7764, out of this, 3814 are males and 3950 are females (Census of India, 2001). The name 'Mannan' is a combination of 'mannu' means earth and 'manushian' means sons of soil (Luiz, 1962). Agriculture is their main occupation. Besides, making baskets and weaving mats are also part of their livelihood<sup>6</sup>.

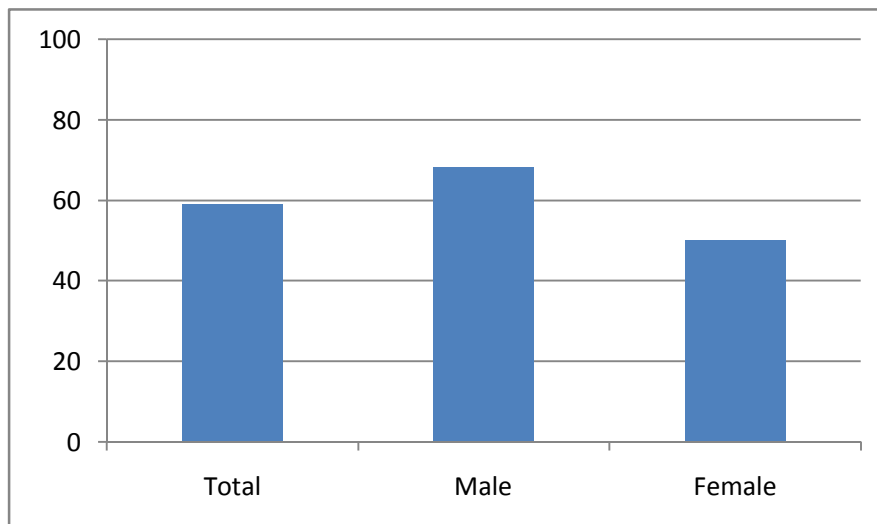
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<sup>5</sup> State level ST literacy is 64.4 percent and National level ST literacy is 47 percent.

<sup>6</sup> Traditionally, Mannans were hunters and gatherers besides this, they were also engaged in shifting cultivation. Presently, majority are employed as agricultural labourers. Among Tribal communities they still have their own king 'raja mannan'.

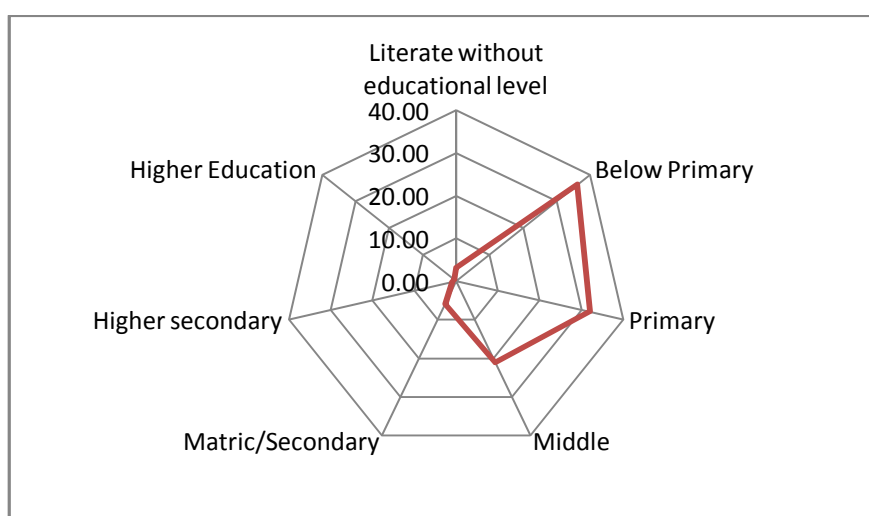


**Figure 2.5 Literacy Rate of Mannan (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.6 Educational Attainments of Mannan Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

The community is educationally backward which is evident from their literacy and educational attainments shown in Figure 2.5 and 2.6. Male literacy among Manna's is 68.28 percent which is higher than that of the

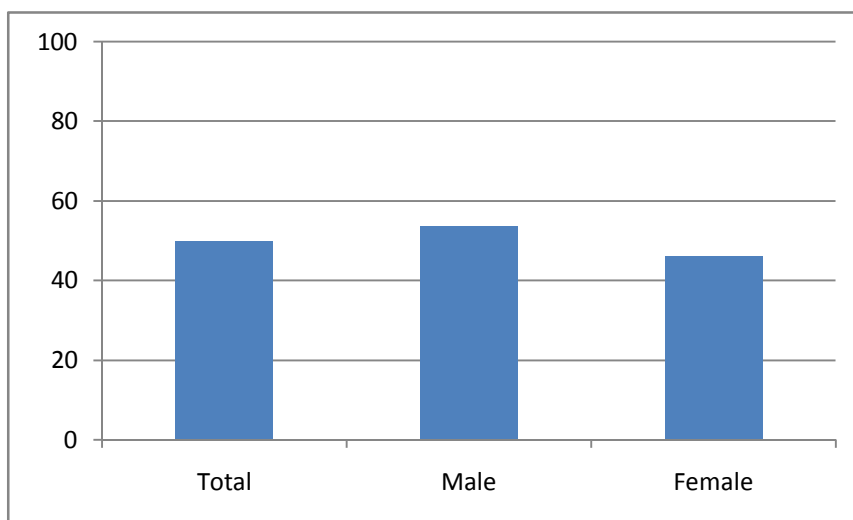
State level average ST literacy. But, the female literacy level is much below the State average which is only 50.21 percent, signifying wide gender disparity existing within them. This indeed, resulted in overall reduction of literacy level to fall below the State average as literacy rate among them is 59 percent.

The educational attainments of literates belonging to Mannan community shows that majority of them have either primary or below primary level of education. Almost 90 percent of the literates have attained education up to middle level only, indicating their poor attainment at metric or secondary level.

#### **2.1.2.4 Hill Pulaya**

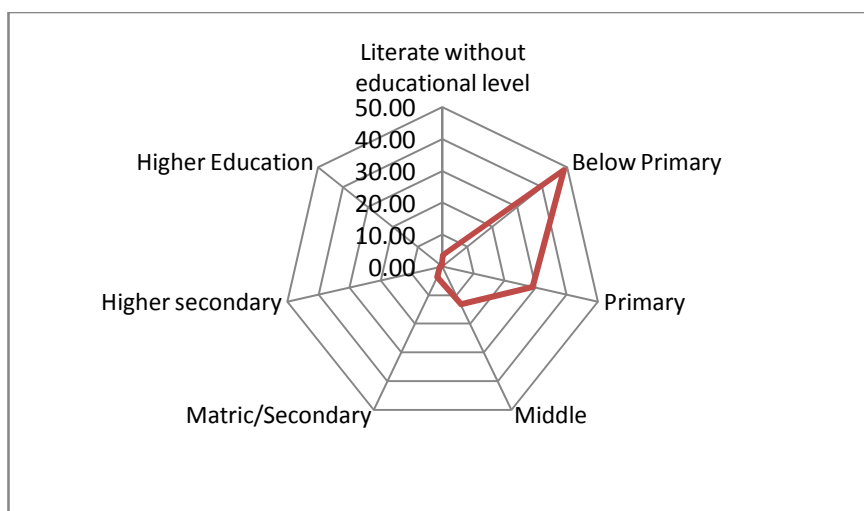
Another tribal community concentrated in Idukki is Hill Pulaya with a population of 2893 which includes 1437 males and 1456 females (Census of India, 2001). Hill Pulaya belongs to two subgroups viz. '*kurmba hill pulaya*' and '*karavazhy hill pulaya*'. They differ in their occupation, Kuruma hill pulayas are gatherers of hill produce while latter is employed as agricultural labour (Luiz, 1962). They are located at Devikulam Taluk in the areas of AnchuNadu, Palapetty, Karimutty, Alompetty, Chambakkadu, Eechapetty, Puravayal and Kottapalam. They normally speak Tamil within their community. At present, majority find agriculture as their important source of livelihood.

**Figure 2.7 Literacy Rate of Hill Pulaya (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.8 Educational Attainments of Hill Pulaya Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

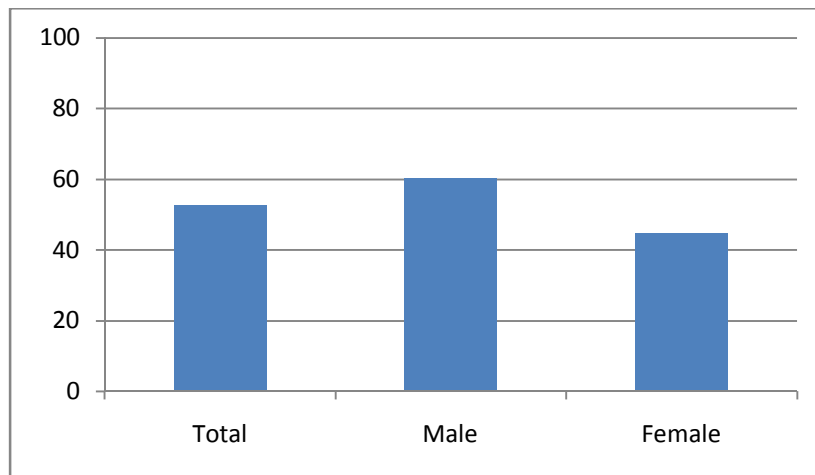
By tradition and nature of the occupation engaged in, they are treated as one of the backward tribes in Kerala. Moreover, their educational backwardness is visible from their literacy and educational attainments (Figures 2.7 and 2.8). Though, there is not much gender disparity in literacy rates of Hill Pulaya, it is

much below the State average literacy rate of tribes. Literacy rate of Hill Pulaya is 49.94 percent which is marginally above the national average literacy rate of STs (Census of India, 2001). Among literates, almost 50 percent have only below primary level education. This gives a clear indication of the extent of backwardness in education among Hill Pulayas.

#### 2.1.2.5 Palliyar

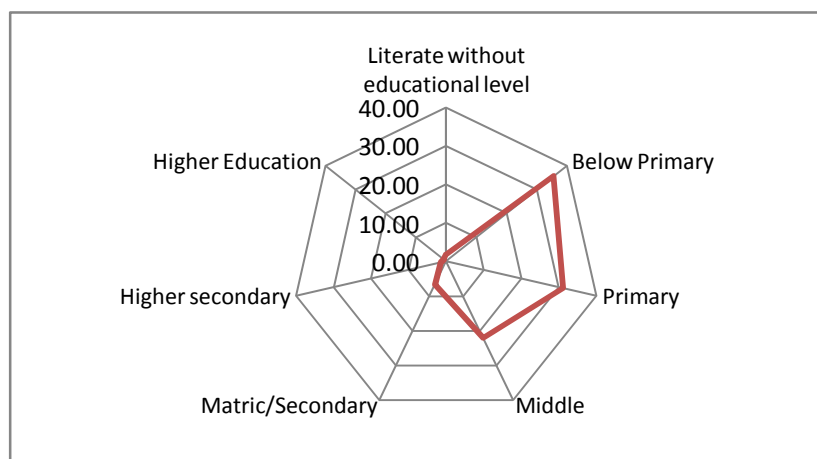
Palliyars reside in the eastern parts of Idukki district, located at Kumily (Chakkupallom, Anakkara) and Thekkady (Peerumedu and Udumbumchola) range. Palliyar, Palliyar and Palleyan together constitute 1709 in number. Among this, 852 are males and 857 are females (Census of India, 2001). Earlier they were engaged in shifting cultivation, hunting, fishing and gathering hill produce but now majority of them work as plantation labourers. They speak poor dialect of Tamil with many Malayalam phrases and words<sup>7</sup>.

**Figure 2.9 Literacy Rate of Palliyar (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

<sup>7</sup> Palliyar claim that their original home was near Gudalar within Cumbom Taluk of Madurai district and later they moved into the fertile cardamom hills of Central Travancore at the direction of a Pandaram chief (Luiz, 1962).

**Figure 2.10 Educational Attainments of Palliyar Literates**

Source: Census of India, (2001)

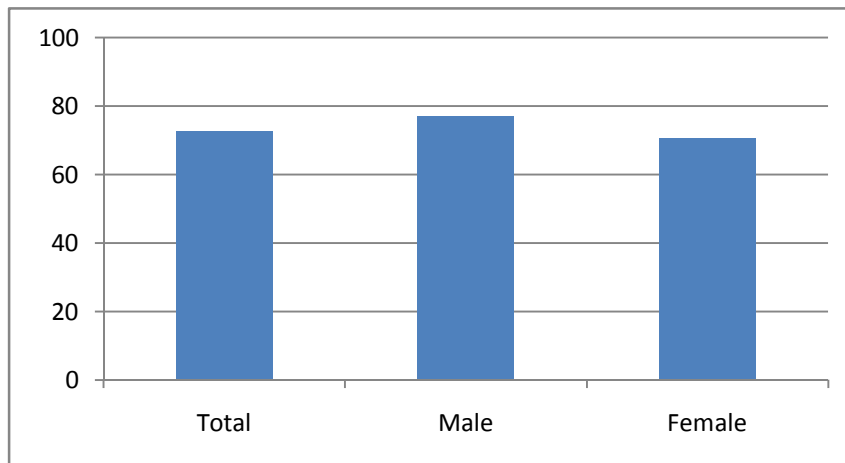
Palliyan, Palliyar and Palleyan together have low level of advancements in education which is indicated by their poor literacy rate and low educational attainments (Figures 2.9 and 2.10). Literacy rate is 52.60 percent and there exists wide gender disparity within them (Male literacy is 60.33 percent and female literacy is 44.92 percent). Among the literates, 89 percent have only below middle level education indicating low educational attainment. Besides, their scanty representation in higher education shows educational deprivation of the community.

#### 2.1.2.6 Uraly

Uarlies are speard over Idukki, Ernakulam and Pathanamthitta districts of Kerala but, majority are concentrated in Idukki district. Their total population numbers 11,103 which include 5545 males and 5538 females (Census of India, 2001). In Idukki, they are located at Thodupuzha Taluk in the areas of Vallakandom, Cheradikudy, Pathipally, Nalayani, Churuli, Keerithodu, Vazhathoppu, Cheruthoni and Vairamani. Besides, they are also

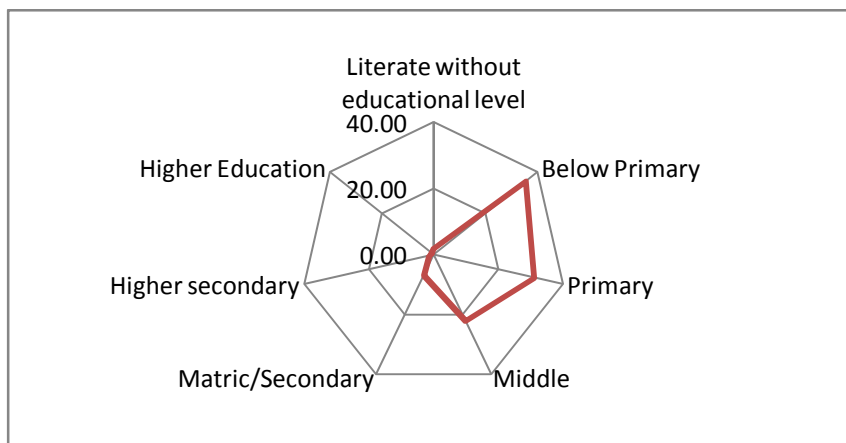
located at Udumbumchola and Peerumedu Taluks<sup>8</sup>. Traditionally, they were shifting cultivators, now they are settled cultivators and agricultural wage labourers.

**Figure 2.11 Literacy Rate of Uraly (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.12 Educational Attainments of Uraly Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

<sup>8</sup> Vandanmedu, Edappalayam, Nedithavalam, Thodinool, Velloor, Vanchivayal, Upputhara and Kanchiyar are the areas of Udumbumchola and Peerumedu Taluks. A separate language which is a mixture of Tamil and Malayalam is used for conversation within the community which is difficult for other communities to understand.

Compared to other tribes in Idukki, Uraly has better literacy rate which is much above the State average of STs. Literacy rate of Uraly is 72.54 and difference in literacy between males and females comparatively low compared to that of other tribes concentrated in this district. Males have a literacy rate of 76.83 and that of female is 70.49. Unfortunately, this higher literacy achievement has not resulted in higher educational attainments as the proportion of literates to higher education is less than 1 percent. Moreover, more than 90 percentages of the literates have low level of education which is either below or up to middle level of education.

## **2.2 Palakkad District**

### **2.2.1 Profile**

Palakkad is situated in central part of Kerala and remains as the biggest of all the fourteen districts with an area of 4,480 sq. km with a density of population of 627 persons per sq. km. The total population has increased to 28,10,892 in 2011 from 26,17,482 in 2001 registering a decadal growth rate of 7.3 percent (Census of India, 2001 and 2011). The population includes 13,60,067 males and 14,50,825 females (Table 2.2). The literacy rate has also increased to 88.49 percent from 84.35 percent but, there exists a significant gap between male and female. The Scheduled Tribes of the district constitute only 1.74 percent to the total population of the district but, Palakkad remains as the third largest tribal concentrated district of Kerala as 10.1 percent of the tribes are located here. Scheduled tribe population of the district is 48,972 where, 24,314 are males and 24,658 are females (Census of India, 2011).

**Table 2.2 Demographic Profile of Palakkad District**

	Year	
	2001	2011
<b>Population</b>	<b>26,17,482</b>	<b>28,10,892</b>
Male	12,66,985	13,60,067
Female	13,50,497	14,50,825
<b>ST Population</b>	<b>39,665</b>	<b>48,972</b>
Male	19,990	24,314
Female	19,675	24,658
<b>Literacy (All communities)</b>	<b>84.35%</b>	<b>88.49%</b>
Male	89.52%	92.27%
Female	79.36%	84.99%

Source: Census Data, (2001 and 2011)

A total of 426 tribal settlements are located in Palakkad district which is the third largest district in terms of the number of tribal settlements<sup>9</sup>. Out of the 426 tribal settlements, 45 percentages are located in Attappady Block Panchayat i.e. 192 settlements, which indicates that majority of the tribal population concentrated in this area (Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, 2010). Among other Block Panchayats, where significant numbers of tribal settlements are located include Chittur (69), Kollankode (50), Mannarcaud (40), Malampuzha (35) and Nenmara (27). The number of settlements having no proper footpath to reach their houses is less in number compared to that of the tribal settlements located in Idukki district. But still, there are 19 settlements which are reported to have severe physical inaccessibility problem. On an average, majority of tribal settlements in the district are of lower in size as 81 percent of the settlements have houses less than 50. Among this, majority of settlements have houses

<sup>9</sup> Wayanad (2167) has the largest number of tribal settlements followed by Kasaragod (612) and Palakkad (426).



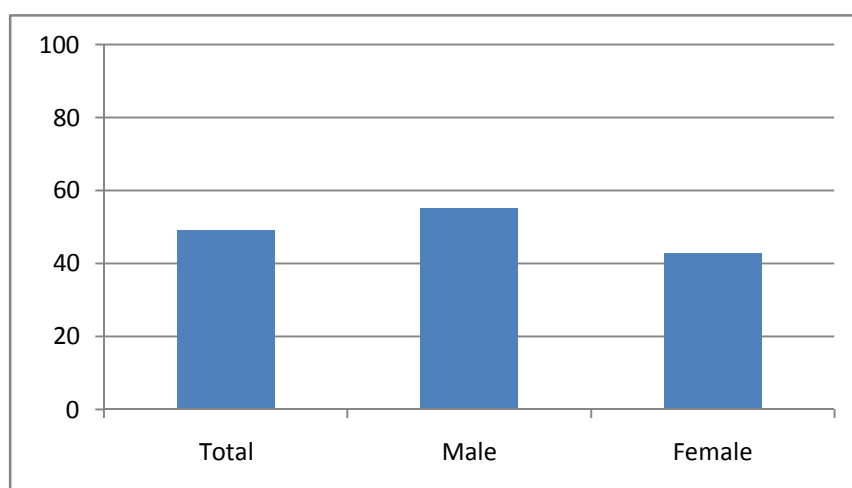
ranging from 5 to 24. Only 3.52 percent of the settlements have more than 100 houses (Appendix 2.2). This indicates that settlements located in Palakkad are of small in size and they are scattered in a few areas. Tribes concentrated in this district are Irular, Eravallan, Kurumbas, Maha Malasar, Malasar and Kadar. Among these communities, Irula remains as a dominant community with highest number of population. Details of education of these tribes are given below.

## 2.2.2 Tribes of Palakkad

### 2.2.2.1 Irulas

Majority of the Irulas reside in Palakkad district in the areas of Attapadi and Silent Valley. Besides, they are also present in Coimbatore and Pollachi districts of Tamil Nadu. The word Irula has been derived from the Tamil word ‘*Irul*’ either implying the dark complexion of the Irulas or being constantly spotted by villagers in the ancient past as distant silhouettes in the forests (Luiz, 1962). In all, there are 171 tribal hamlets in Attapadi out of which 135 are Irula hamlets, indicating their strong presence in this area.

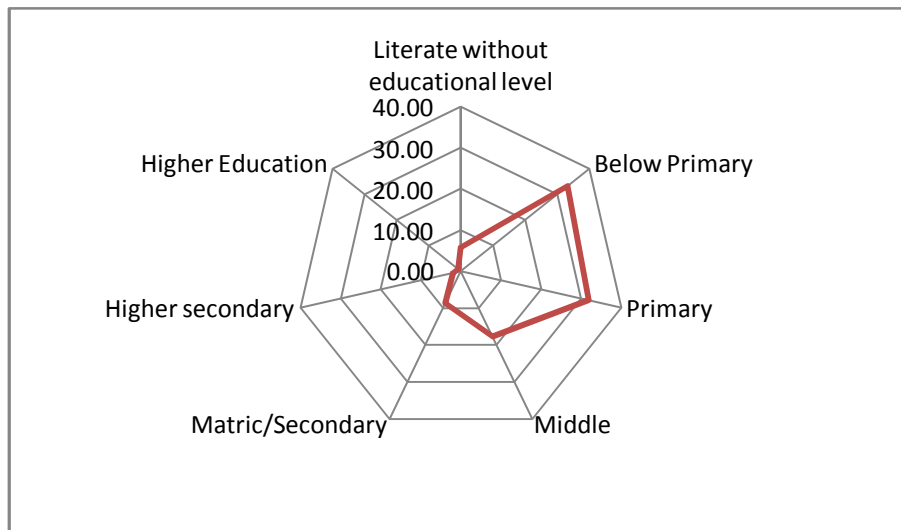
**Figure 2.13 Literacy Rate of Irulas (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

The population of Irula is 23,998 representing 6.6 percent to the total tribal population of Kerala (Census of India, 2001). Out of this, 99.03 percent are located in Palakkad district. Being the largest tribal community in Palakkad, their problems have not been properly addressed which made them marginalized from the development process to some extent. The literacy rate of Irula is 49.05 percent which is far below the State average. Moreover, there exists significant gender disparity in the literacy rate as their female literacy rate is 42.89 percent which is low by 12 percent than that of the male counterparts (Figure 2.13).

**Figure 2.14 Educational Attainments of Irula Literates**



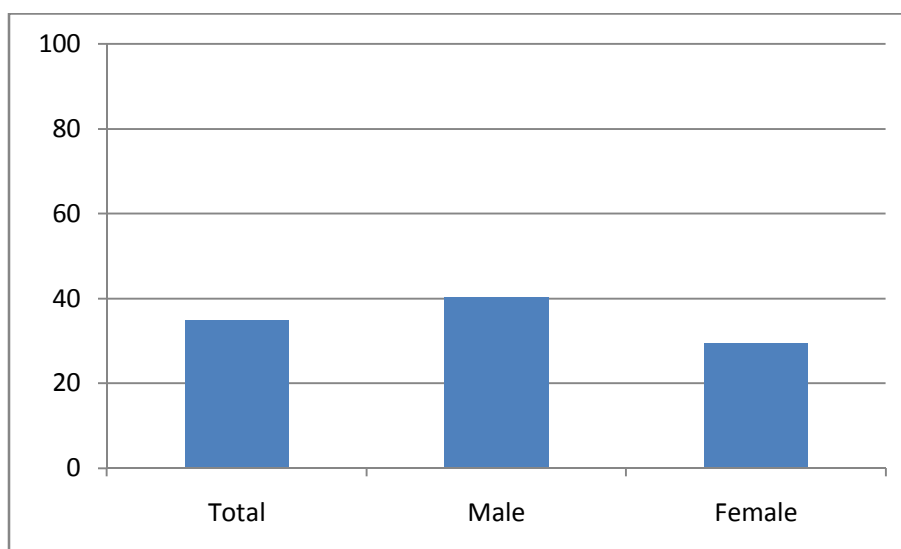
Source: Census of India, (2001)

Among the literates, majority has either below or up to middle level of education, and they represent almost two-third of the total literates (Figure 2.14). Though, there are 84 people having higher education, this account only less than 1 percent of the total literates. This indicates that Irula is much backward in educational advancements and the policies intended to impart education to them did not achieve the desired results.

### 2.2.2.2 Eravallan

Eravallan were also known in the name of Eravallar or Villu Vedans. The term Villu Vedan means hunters with bows and arrows. As the name suggests, they were hunters and is found in Moolathara village of Chittur Taluk in Palakkad and earlier, they were slaves and compelled to work under landlords (Singh, 1997). The language they speak within their community is similar to Tamil. The population of Eravallan is 3890 which includes 1972 males and 1918 females (Census of India, 2001).

**Figure 2.15 Literacy Rate of Eravallan (Percent)**

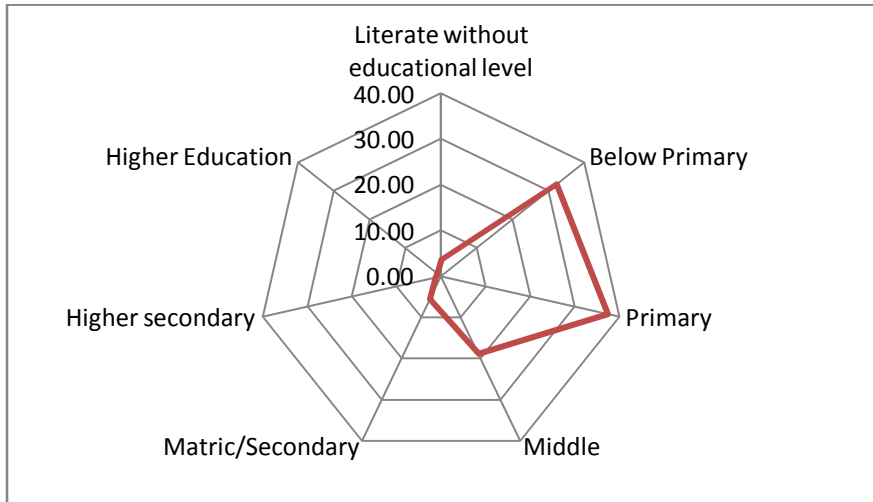


Source: Census of India, (2001)

Eravallans constitute only a minority in the total tribal population of Kerala. As a result, they are often sidelined in all developmental aspects including education. This is clear from the Figure 2.15, that their literacy rate is much below the State as well as national average of STs. Out of the total population above 7 years, only 34.7 percent of them are literates and rest are

illiterates. Compared to male literacy of 40.09 percent, females have very poor literacy rate of 29.27 percent only.

**Figure 2.16 Educational Attainments of Eravallan Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

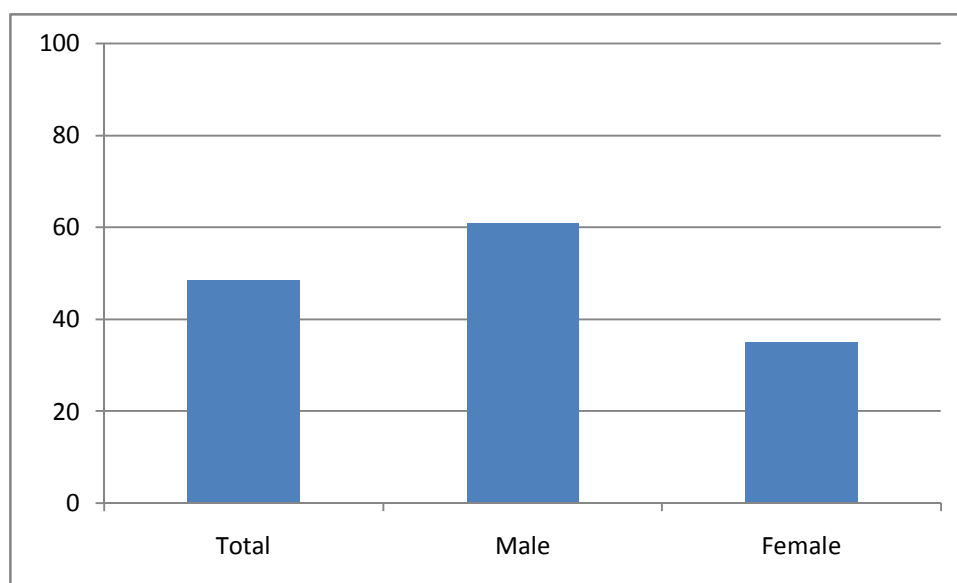
Educational attainment is almost similar to that of Irula community i.e. almost 90 percent of the literates completed their education up to middle level only (Figure 2.16). Among this, majority are having below primary level education. Only one percent of them attained higher education. The literacy and educational attainment of Eravallans clearly indicates the education exclusion of the community from higher education.

### 2.2.2.3 Kurumbar

Kurumbas is considered to be socially, economically and educationally backward tribal group in the State and they are one among the Primitive Tribal Groups declared by the GOI. They are located in the hills of Attappady and have a population of 2174 (Census of India, 2001). Out of this, 1132 are males and 1042 are females. Traditionally, they were doing shifting

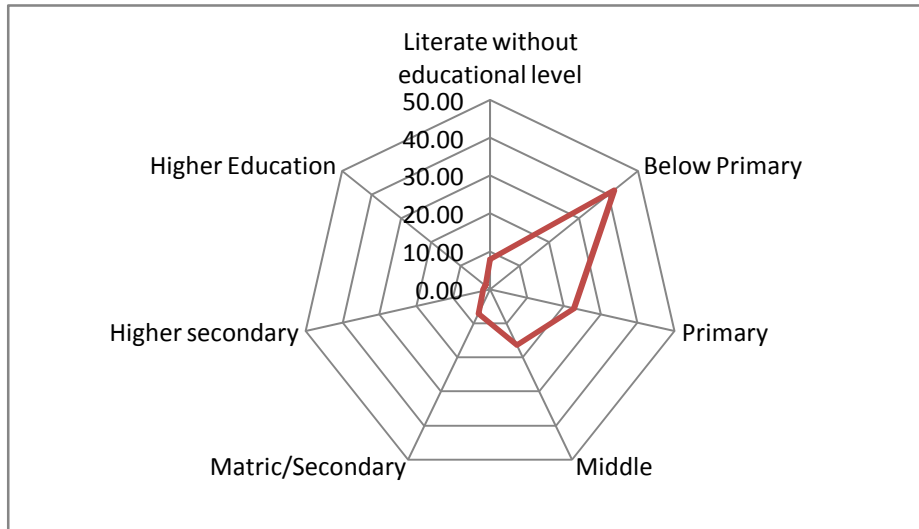
cultivation. Besides, hunting and timber collection were also part of their livelihood options. Now, they have completely avoided hunting. Even though they were included under PTGs, their present status of education is not satisfactory.

**Figure 2.17 Literacy Rate of Kurumbas (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

One of the reasons for the educational backwardness among them could be their primitive traits and low population representation. The literacy rate of Kurumbas shows that it is far below that of the State average of STs (Figure 2.17). The literacy level of males stands much higher than that of females indicating wide gender disparity existing between them. The literacy rate of female is 35.02 percent compared to male literacy rate of 60.96 percent.

**Figure 2.18 Educational Attainments of Kurumba Literates**

Source: Census of India, (2001)

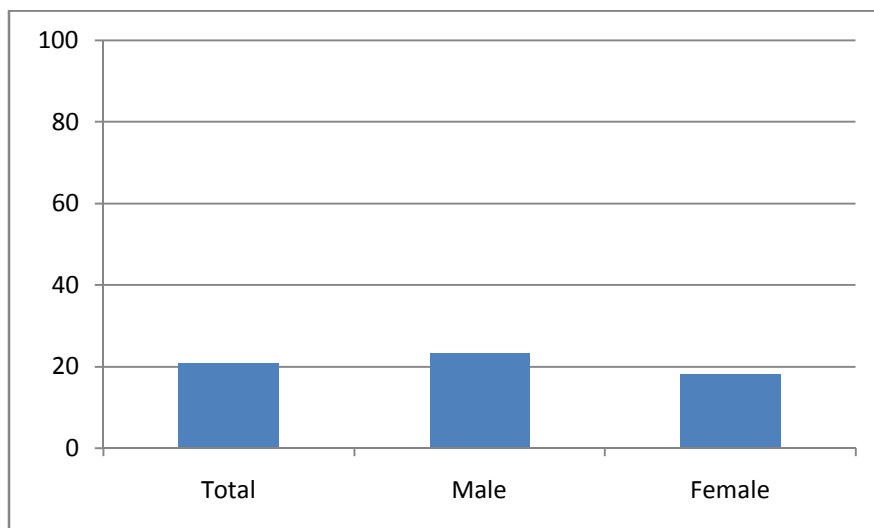
Educational attainment among Kurumbas also shows a dismal picture. Among the literates, about half of them are literates with no formal education or with maximum primary level education (Figure 2.18). Their representation to higher education or even higher secondary level is very meager. This indicates their poor academic performance and inability to grow from primary and middle level to metric or secondary levels of education.

#### 2.2.2.4 Maha Malasar/ Mala Malasar

Maha Malasar is one of the least populated tribal communities with a total population of 116 (Census of India, 2001). They are located in Nenmara East to NadarThodu range inside Parambikulam forest. Traditionally, they were hunters and gatherers of forest produce. Still, they gather honey and other food items from the forest for their livelihood. Their name originated from the words 'Arasson' (king) and 'Mala' or 'Malai' (hill) to connote king of forest (Luiz, 1962). The prefix 'maha' has been added to indicate that they

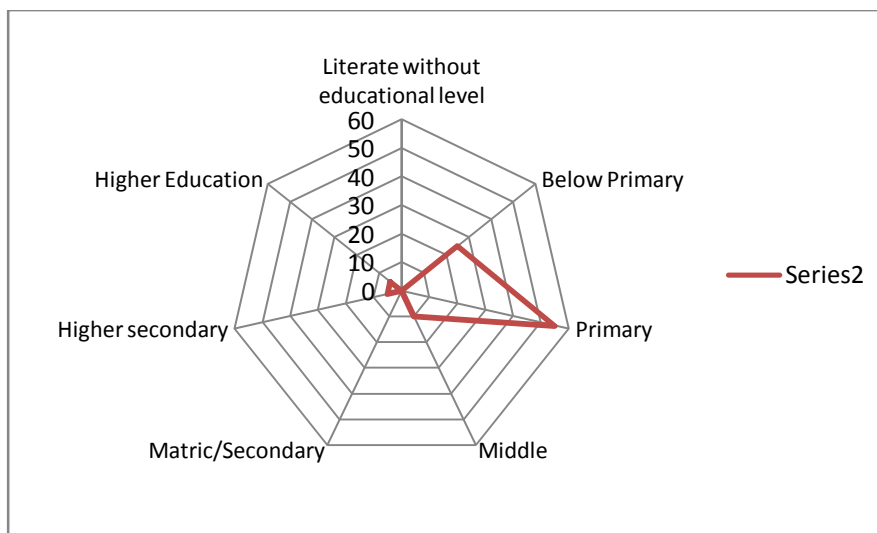
are superior tribes inhabiting in high mountains. They normally speak Tamil within the community.

**Figure 2.19 Literacy Rate of Maha Malasar (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.20 Educational Attainments of Maha Malasar Literates**



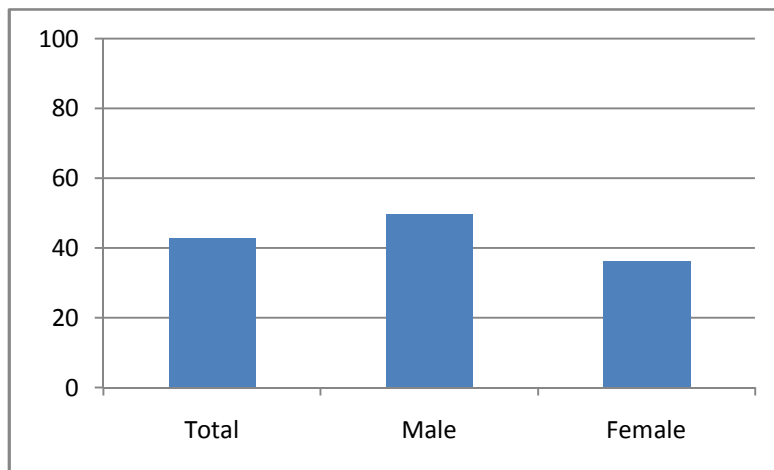
Source: Census of India, (2001)

As Maha Malasar being one of the sparsely populated tribe of Kerala, they are far behind in educational advancements compared to that of other tribes (Figures 2.19 and 2.20). The literacy rate of Maha Malasar remains lowest compared to other tribal groups in Kerala. The literacy rate is 20.83 percent and it is below by 44 percent to the State level average and by 26 percent to the national average literacy rate of STs. Their educational attainment also depicts a similar picture. This community has 79.17 percent illiterates and among the literates, most of them have very low educational attainments.

#### 2.2.2.5 Malasar

Total population of Malasar is 1720 which includes 859 males and 861 females (Census of India, 2001). Malasar comprises two sub groups viz. Malancherry Malasar and Nattu Malasar. These groups are located in Nelliampathy, Pothumudy, Thoothanpara, Kollankode and a few parts of Chittur Taluk (Luiz, 1962). A mixture of Tamil and Malayalam is their language. They are known to be clever in felling and collecting bamboos and timber. Malasars are mostly agricultural labourers working for the forest department or plantations.

**Figure 2.21 Literacy Rate of Malasar (Percent)**

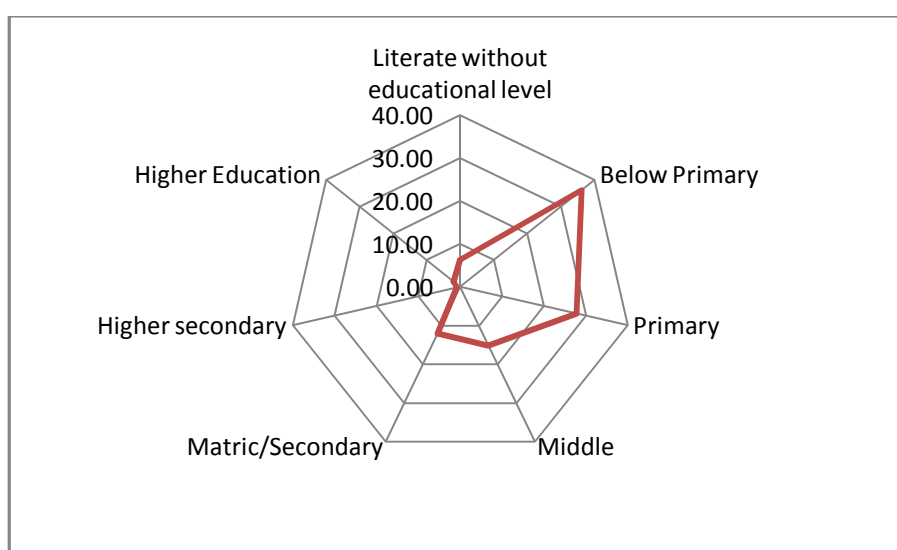


Source: Census of India, (2001)



The overall literacy of this group is 42.80 percent which is well below the State as well as national averages of STs (Figure 2.21). Besides, there exists wide gender disparity between male and female literacy rates. Male literacy is 49.59 percent and for females, it is only 35.96 percent.

**Figure 2.22 Educational Attainments of Malasar Literates**



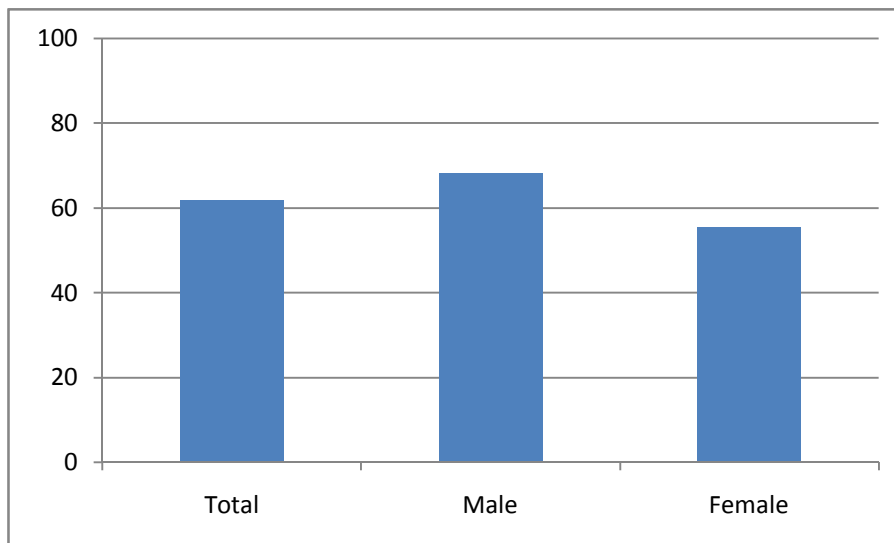
Source: Census of India, (2001)

The educational attainment among literates shows that majority are having primary or below primary education (Figure 2.22). But, we can see that about 12.08 percent of the literates have metric or secondary education and 2 percent of them attained higher education. This shows a different picture in educational attainment compared to other tribal communities. Even though, the presence of Malasar is quite high in higher educational attainment compared to other tribes, their literacy rate needs improvement.

### 2.2.2.6 Kadar

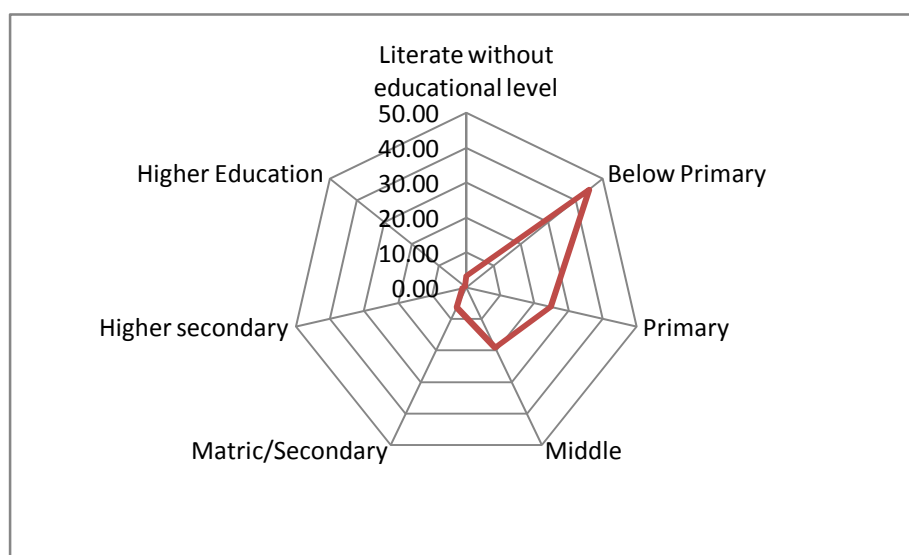
Kadars are mostly concentrated in the districts of Palakkad and Thrissur with a total population numbering 2145 (Census of India, 2001). This includes 1067 males and 1078 females. In Palakkad, they reside at Kariarkutty, Parambikulam dam site, Earth dam, Thekkady, Kalchal Cheruneeli and Thaliyakallu. Their name connotes people of forest as ‘kad’ means forest and ‘Al’ means people (Luiz, 1962). They work as agricultural labourers and also, are engaged in making baskets, mat weaving and cultivation<sup>10</sup>. They have changed a lot from their backwardness in terms of living standards, education, clothing etc. by mingling with others.

**Figure 2.23 Literacy rate of Kadar (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

<sup>10</sup> They use language similar to Tamil with no script. Earlier, they were hunters and gatherers.

**Figure 2.24 Educational Attainments of Kadar Literates**

Source: Census of India, (2001)

It is evident from the Figure 2.23 that the literacy rate of Kadars is 61.83 percent which is much better compared to Maha Malasar and Malasar (Census of India, 2001). But, the rate is below the State average literacy rate of 64.4 percent. The literacy rate across gender also shows difference as males have high literacy rate than that of females. However, this literacy achievement has not turned to better educational attainments (Figure 2.24). Among the literates, about 45 percent of them have education below primary level and moreover, the higher educational attainment is almost zero percent among them.

## 2.3 Wayanad District

### 2.3.1 Profile

Wayanad is the lowest populated district in Kerala with a population of 8,16,558 spread over an area of 2,131 sq.km (Census of India, 2011). This includes 4,01,314 male and 4,15,244 female population. The literacy rate of

the district has increased to 89.32 percent in 2011 from 85.25 percent in 2001 where male literacy remains on higher side compared to that of females. The Scheduled Tribe population of the district is 1,51,443 which represents 31.24 percent to the total ST population (Census of India, 2011).

**Table 2.3 Demographic Profile of Wayanad district**

	Year	
	2001	2011
<b>Population</b>	<b>7,80,619</b>	<b>8,16,558</b>
Male	3,91,273	4,01,314
Female	3,89,346	4,15,244
<b>ST Population</b>	<b>136,062</b>	<b>151,443</b>
Male	67,394	74,476
Female	68,668	76,967
<b>Literacy (All communities)</b>	<b>85.25%</b>	<b>89.32%</b>
Male	89.77%	92.84%
Female	80.72%	85.94%

Source: Census of India, (2001 and 2011)

In Kerala, Wayanad district has the largest tribal population with highest number of tribal settlements. In all, there are a total of 2167 tribal settlements spread over all the four Block Panchayaths of the district viz. Kalpetta, Mananthavady, Panamaram and Sulthan Bathery; and Kalpetta municipality (Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, 2011). The size of the tribal settlement in terms population is low when compared to the size of the tribal settlements located in Palakkad and Idukki districts. On an average, 37 percent of the settlements have a size of less than 10 houses and 46 percentage of settlements have houses within the range of 10 to 24 (Appendix 2.3). Only 5 settlements have a household size of more than 100 houses. This indicates that tribes are scattered across the district and living in small hamlets. In each block

Panchayaths, there are significant numbers of tribal settlements and in Kalpetta Municipality, there are 43 tribal settlements. Paniyan, Adiyar, Kurichchian, Kurumans/Mullu Kurumans, Uraly Kuruman/ Vettai Kuruman, Kattunayakan and Kadar are the significant tribal groups located in Wayand district. Besides, there are certain other communities such as Kanalady, Kundu Vadian, Wayanadan Pulayan/Motha Pulayan, Thachanadan Mooppan, Pathiyar and Uridavan having similar culture and traditions of Scheduled Tribes but they are not coming under the Scheduled Tribe list of the governments (Damodaran, 1974).

Traditionally, Paniyans and Adiyans were bonded labourers and Urali Kuruman was part of artisan community but now, they all work as agricultural labourers. These three groups together account 55 percent of the total tribal population of the district. Kattunayakan, a significant tribe in the district classified as “Primitive Tribal Group” by the Government, depends mostly on forest for their livelihood<sup>11</sup>. They constitute nearly 9 percent of the total Adivasi population of Wayanad. Kurichchan and Mullu Kuruman, the traditional agricultural communities, constitute 35 percent of the total tribal population, they are, by and large, marginal farmers. Remaining communities nearly form only one percent of the total tribal population. The most vulnerable tribal communities in Wayanad are Adiyar, Paniyan, Kattunayakan, Urali and Kuruman. Communities like Mullu Kuruman and Kurichians are relatively better off than the rest of the tribal population in Wayanad district owing to their high land holding status. Detailed analysis on educational aspects of these tribes is given below.

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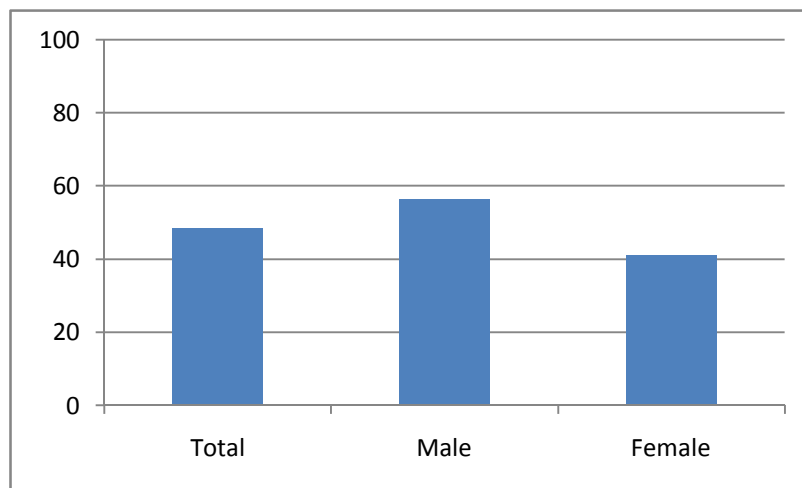
<sup>11</sup> Kattunayakans work as forest labourers or as collectors of non-timber forest produces

## 2.3.2 Tribes of Wayanad

### 2.3.2.1 Paniyan

Paniyan is the largest tribal community in Kerala constituting 22.5 percent of the total tribal population in Kerala (Census of India, 2001). Their total population is 81,940 spread across the hilly and forest tracks of Wayanad, Kozhikode, Kannur and Malappuram<sup>12</sup>. Though they are the largest tribal community in Kerala, their condition is very miserable compared to that of other tribes. Traditionally, they were bonded laborers attached to local landlords. At present, majority are employed as agricultural labourers.

**Figure 2.25 Literacy Rate of Paniyan (Percent)**

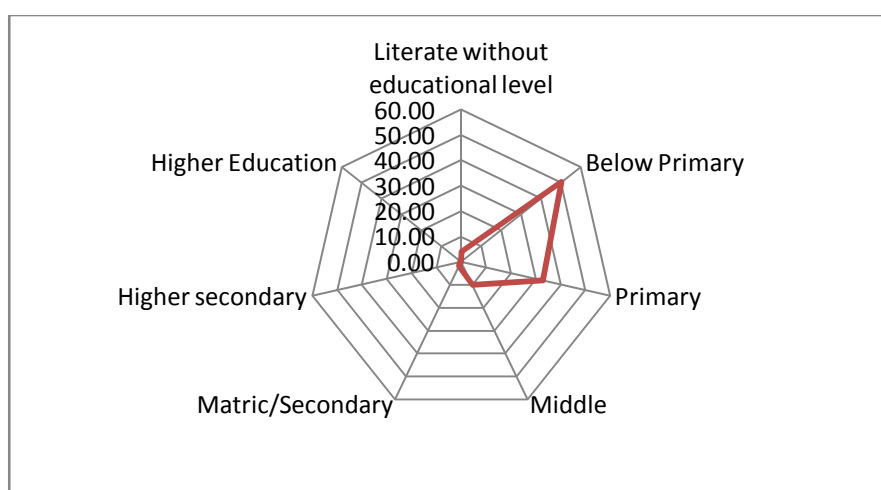


Source: Census of India, (2001)

<sup>12</sup> It is believed that they were brought to Malabar to work in the fields of *Jammies*, the then land lords. History says that they were bought and sold like commodities. The trading of Paniyas was done at *Valliyoorakav* temple during festival times. They worked in paddy fields and were living in hill slopes and paddy fields adjacent to the land belonging to the landlords and were known by his landlord's *tharavadu* name. It is said that they were even sold by landlords when land transactions were made. Even after the abolition of bonded labour, they were depending on their former landlords for support and employment. With the arrival of coffee plantations in Wayanad by 19th century, they were used as labourers for clearing forests, and developing lands for the purpose of coffee plantation (Luiz, 1962; Singh, 1997).

Despite being the largest tribal community of Kerala, they remain excluded from all developmental aspects including education. The benefits of reservation and other allowances have not made any significant impact on this community. The literacy rate and educational attainment among them indicate their educational deprivation. Paniyar have an overall literacy rate of 48.47 percent which is far below the State level ST literacy rate of 64.4 percent (Figure 2.25). Though males have high literacy rate compared to females, it is also well below the State average. The female literacy is even far below the national literacy rate of STs.

**Figure 2.26 Educational Attainments of Paniyan Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

Besides, the educational attainment among literates also indicates disappointing situation as half of them have attained below primary level education only (Figure 2.26). The proportion of literates' attained education below middle level also remains higher side as it comes around 97.5 percent. Only 0.17 percent of the literate Paniyans have attained higher education. The

education exclusion of Paniyans need more discussions and requires more inclusive educational policies to improve the present condition.

### **2.3.2.2 Kurichchan**

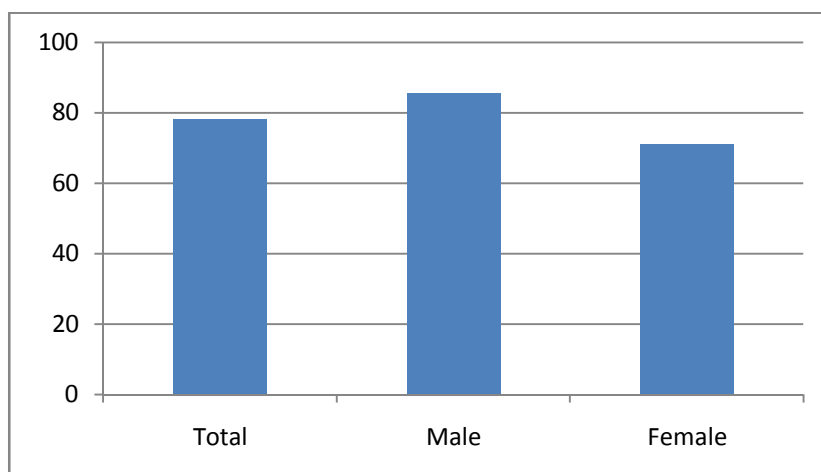
Kurichchan is another major community in Wayanad district and the second largest tribal group of the State. Kurichchia community constitutes 17.38 percent of the total tribal population of the district and accounts for 8.9 percent of the State tribal population (Census of India, 2001). Their population is 32,746 which include 16474 males and 16272 females (Census of India, 2001). Majority of the people belonging to the community are land owners and a couple of them are employed in government service. Mananthavady and Kalpetta Taluks of wayanad district are the major locations of this community. Kurichchiar located in Wayanad district stand socially above all other tribal communities (Damodaran, 1974). Still, Agriculture remains as their major source of livelihood. Earlier, they were reluctant to send their children to school especially if it was a girl child. But now their attitude towards education for boys and girls has changed<sup>13</sup> (Singh, 1997). Literacy rate of Kurichchan shows that they are better placed compared to other tribes of Kerala. The literacy rate of this community is 78.21 percent which is higher than that of the State average literacy rate of STs (Figure 2.27). Males have high literacy when compared to that of females which indicates significant gender disparity in literacy attainments. Male literacy is 85.48 percent and that of female is only 70.89 percent.

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<sup>13</sup> Kurichchians themselves maintained untouchability with other tribes/ castes. Till recently, the Kurichchians were following joint family system and community heads had much authority over its members. Traditional authority has changed in recent years but it still occupies an important role in Kurichchian life. Kurichchians also have reasonably good representation in local decision-making bodies. Many of the community members are actively involved in party politics and have strong political affiliation (Singh, 1997).

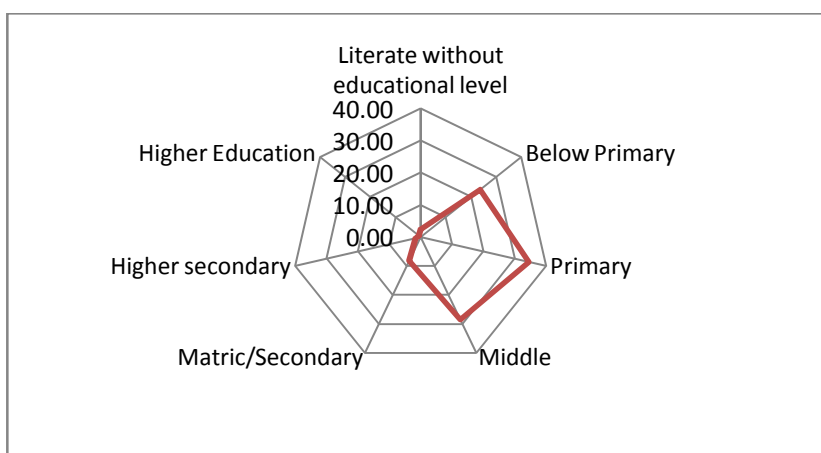


**Figure 2.27 Literacy Rate of Kurichchan (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

**Figure 2.28 Educational Attainments of Kurichchan Literates**



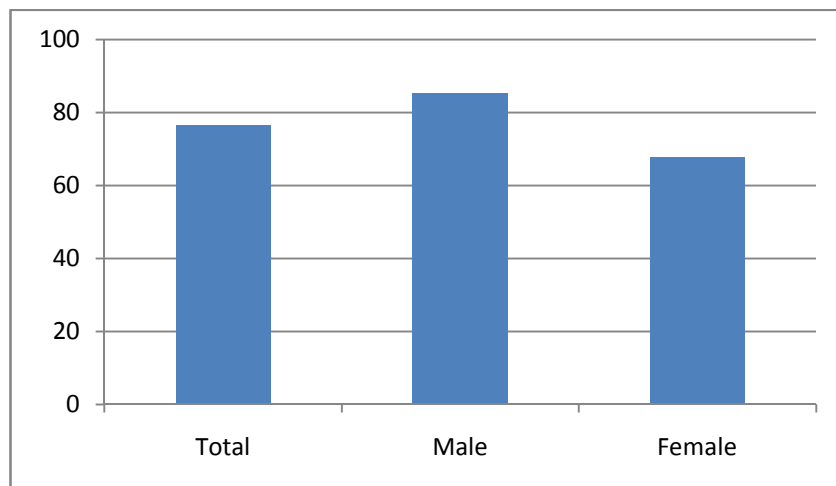
Source: Census of India, (2001)

But, the better literacy achievements have not turned into higher educational attainments among them (Figure 2.28). Only about 8.26 percent of them have metric/secondary level of education. Higher education holders from this community are very negligible as only 182 of them hold higher education which is just 0.81 percent of the total literates.

### 2.3.2.3 Kuruman

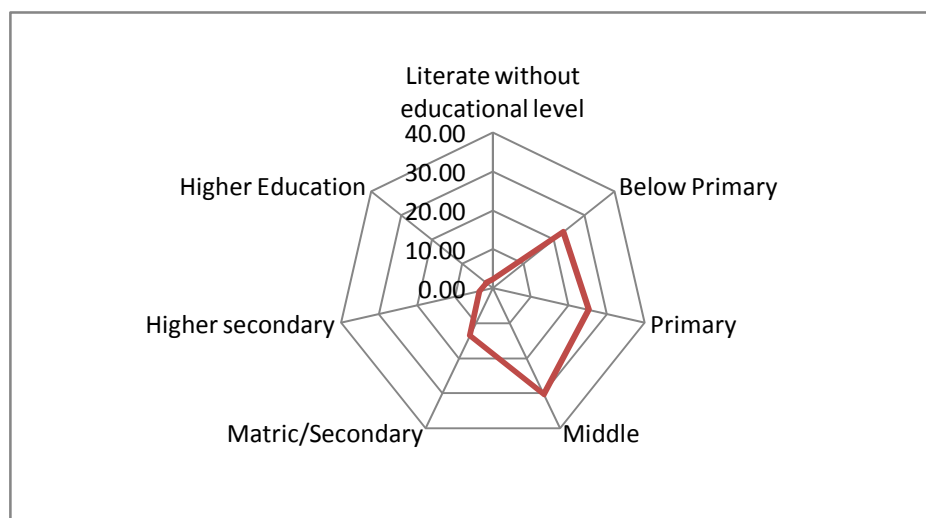
The population of Kurumar is 26,177 which includes 13,123 males and 13,054 females (Census of India, 2001). They are one of the significant tribal groups accounting for 17.51 percent of the total tribal population of Wayanad. They are found mainly in Sultan Bathery Block of the district<sup>14</sup>. The community is also found in the adjoining areas of Gudallur Taluk of Nilgiri District of Tamil Nadu. These people possess various skills in making baskets, pottery and blacksmith. Besides, many of them earn their livelihood by working as daily wage labourers.

**Figure 2.29 Literacy Rate of Kuruman (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

<sup>14</sup> The principal occupations of Kurumar were wood cutting and collection of minor forest products. Kurumans have different subdivisions: (a) Mullu Kuruma, (b) Then Kurumar and (c) Uraly Kurumar/ Vetta Kurumar. *Mullu Kuruma* has a very distinct in lifestyle, beliefs and body structure from Kurichchians. The prefix may have originated from 'mula' (bamboo) which provides them with an important occupation (Luiz, 1962). They used to speak a language similar to kannada for conversation within the community. *Then Kuruma* (Who collects honey from forest) are also known as Cholanaikans. *Urali Kuruma*, also Known as Bettu Kuruma and Vetta Kuruma. Their name derived from the word 'Urali' means civilized person and 'Kuruman' means one who tends sheep (Singh, 1997).

**Figure 2.30 Educational Attainments of Kuruman Literates**

Source: Census of India, (2001)

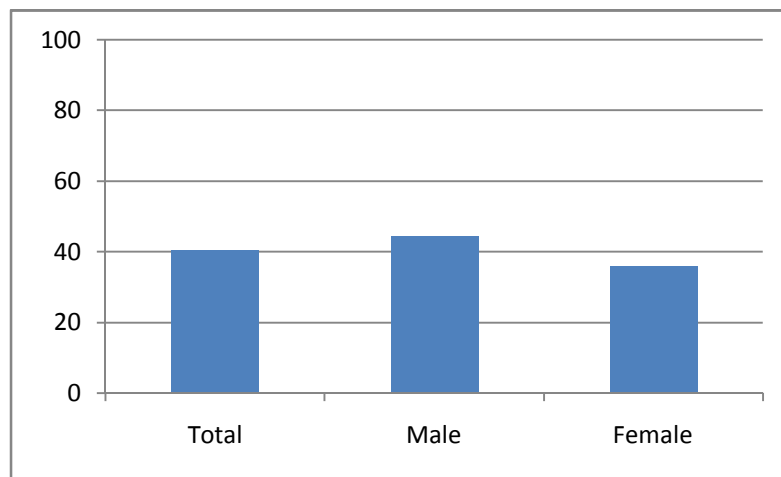
Among Kurumans, the literacy rate is 76.56 percent which is better when compared to that of the other Scheduled Tribes in Kerala (Figure 2.29). Though literacy is on higher side, there exists wide gender disparity between the literacy rates of males and females. Males are having a literacy rate of 85.36 percent while that of female is only 67.76 percent. Educational attainment among literates also shows better statistics while comparing with that of other tribes (Figure 2.30). Among 17,770 literates, 357 hold higher education degrees which constitute 2.01 percent of the total literates.

#### 2.3.2.4 Kattunayakan

The population of Kattunayakan is 14,715 and 81 percent of them is concentrated in Wayanad district (Census of India, 2001). They are found in the deep forests of Kidangad, Purakadi, Pulpalli, Noolpuzha, Maruthenkara, Tharuvana, Nallanad, Kattikulam areas of Wayanad district. Kattunayakar were

also called as Jenn Kuruman, Then Kurumban and Sholanayakan<sup>15</sup>. They use dialect kattunaikan which is close to Dravidian language kannada for conversing within the community, but younger generation can converse in Malayalam. Those who are living within the forest areas are involved in cultivation in the areas allocated by the forest authorities. Besides, forest labour and wage labour in agriculture also form sources of their livelihood. Kattunayakan is one among the five tribal communities in Kerala included in PTG by the government.

**Figure 2.31 Literacy Rate of Kattunayakan (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

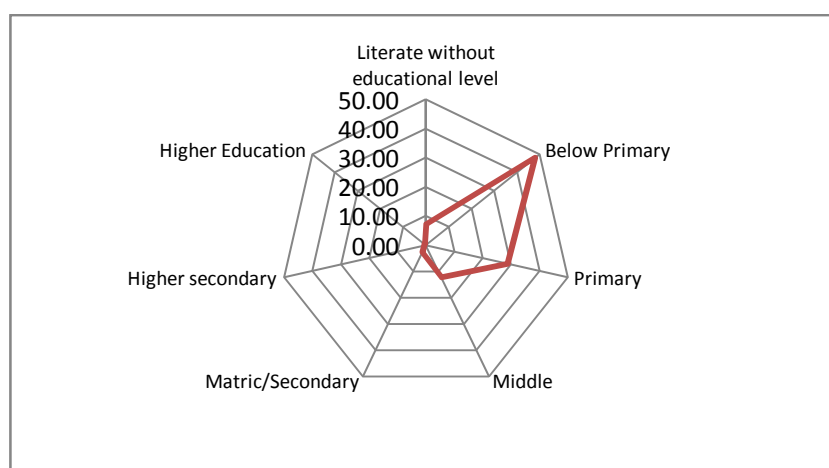
Their remoteness and other socio-cultural aspects put them backward and still, they remain least exposed to ‘modernity’. The welfare programmes of the government meant for the development of PTGs have not brought about the intended results. This is more visible in the case of education which is shown in Figures 2.31 and 2.32 respectively. Literacy rate of Kattunayakan

<sup>15</sup> Term ‘Kattunayakan’ derived from word ‘kadu’ means forest and ‘nayakan’ means leader or headman. Kattunayakans notified as ‘Primitive Tribal Group’ lives in high altitude thick forests. Food gathering, hunting, fishing and trapping of birds and animals are the traditional occupations of this community which a few of them pursue till today (Singh, 1997).

stands far below State as well as national literacy average of STs. Out of the total population aged 7 and above, only 40.18 percent of them are literates. The female literacy rate also shows the pathetic condition of education among them as it is only 35.72 percent.

96.26 percent of the literates have only education below middle level. Their representation in higher education is only 0.41 percent of the total literates. Literacy as well as educational attainments among Kattunayakan shows the slow pace of the transformation from their past.

**Figure 2.32 Educational Attainments of Kattunayakan Literates**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

### 2.3.2.5 Adiyān

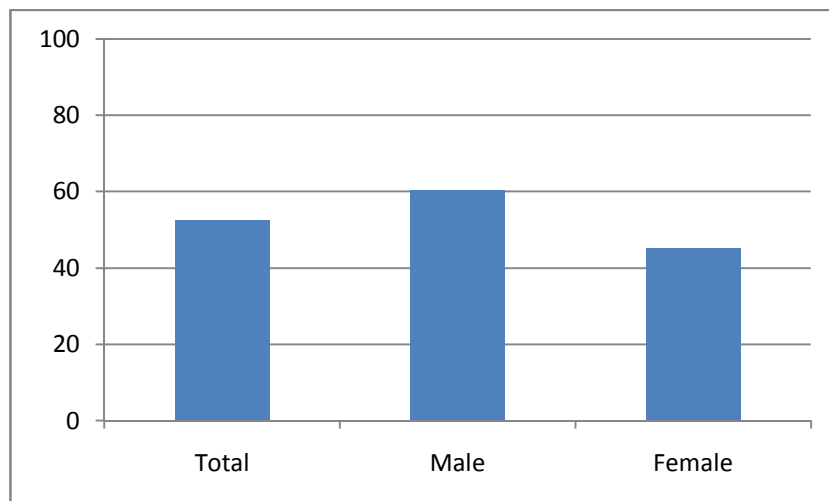
Adiya community mainly resides in Mananthavady Thaluk and Pulpally region of Bathery Taluk<sup>16</sup>. They have a total population of 10, 715 which

<sup>16</sup> Adiyān has originated from old rule by Brahmins that they should maintain *ar* (six) *adi* (feet) from Brahmins to avoid pollution. It is believed that they are brought in from different regions of Mysore for work in the fields of Brahmins, Chetties and Gounders. They are considered as the attached labourers of landlords like Brahmins, Chetties and Gounders as *adiyan* means slave labour (Luiz, 1962; Singh, 1997).

includes 5,141 males and 5,574 females (Census of India, 2001). They live as groups in *kunt*<sup>17</sup>. Ethnographic history of Adiyans reveals that traditionally, they were slaves to local landlords and later, they became bonded labourers attached to their landlords<sup>18</sup>.

Though literacy rate of Adiyans shows better than that of Kattunayakan, the rate is far below the State average of STs and it is only 52.49 percent (Figure 2.33). Males have higher literacy rate than that of females showing wide gender gap between them. Like Kattunayakans, Adiyans require lack improvements in educational aspects.

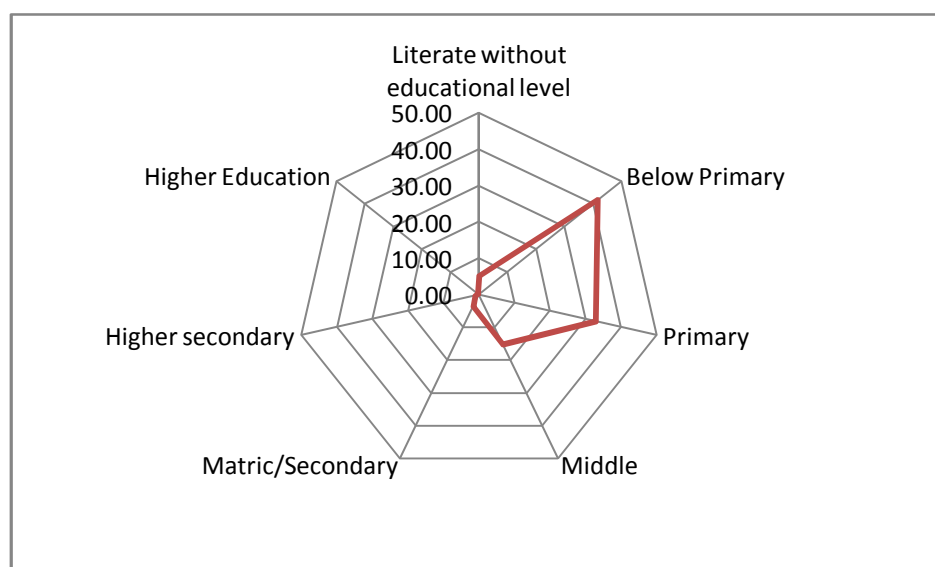
**Figure 2.33 Literacy Rate of Adiyans (Percent)**



Source: Census of India, (2001)

<sup>17</sup> Kunt is the residing place of many households which is attached to the concerned land lord.

<sup>18</sup> Even in the 1970s, bonded labour in its residual form existed among this community and community members had a “patron-client” relationship with their erstwhile landlords. Like most of the Adivasi communities of Kerala, Adiyans also are being detribalized as a response to socio-economic transitions that the region is undergoing.

**Figure 2.34 Educational Attainments of Adiya Literates**

Source: Census of India, (2001)

The educational attainment among them is very poor as majority of the literates have education only up to primary level (Figure 2.34). The number of persons with high or even higher secondary education is very meager. Unlike Krurichchan and Kurumans of Wayanad district, Paniyan, Kattunayakan and Adiyan are far below in both literacy as well as educational attainments.

## 2.4 Unequal Educational Status among Tribal Groups

Analysis of each of the tribal group concentrated in the districts of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad indicates that the educational development is unequal among them. In Idukki district, except for MalaiArayanas and Uralies, the other communities such as Palliyar, Hill Pulaya, Mannan and Muthuvan have low literacy rate. As far as educational attainment is concerned, only Malai Arayans show better education and other communities including Uralies show poor educational attainments. Though Uralies have better literacy rate,

they couldn't convert this into better educational attainment. Tribes concentrated in Palakkad shows poor literacy and educational attainments. The literacy rates of sparsely populated communities such as Malasar, Maha Malasar and Eravallan are far below the national literacy rate of STs. In the case of Irula, one of the major tribes in Kerala, the extent of educational deprivation is very high. In Wayanad, the most tribal concentrated district of Kerala, education among the tribes lags much behind the mainstream population. This is clearly evident from the analysis of education among Paniyans, Kurichchans, Kattunayakans and Adiyans. Among socially backward communities such as Paniya and Adiya, the literacy rate is very low which is much below the State average of STs. Kattunayakan, one of the community included in PTGs, the situation is not satisfactory. Considering their primitive traits, the present level of education could not help them to come out of this vicious circle. Only among the Kurichchans, we can see comparatively better literacy and educational attainments in Wayanad district. The picture of the tribes in these districts indicates that the policies aimed at the development of education was not successful among both the highly populated tribes such as Paniyans, Kattunayakans, Adiyans, Muthuvans, Mannans, Irula etc. and the sparsely populated communities such as Eravallan, MahaMalasar, Malasar, Palliyar, Hill Pulaya etc. In this context, an inclusive educational policy is vital for the overall improvement of the tribes

## **2.5 Education among Tribes: An Inter-district Analysis of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad**

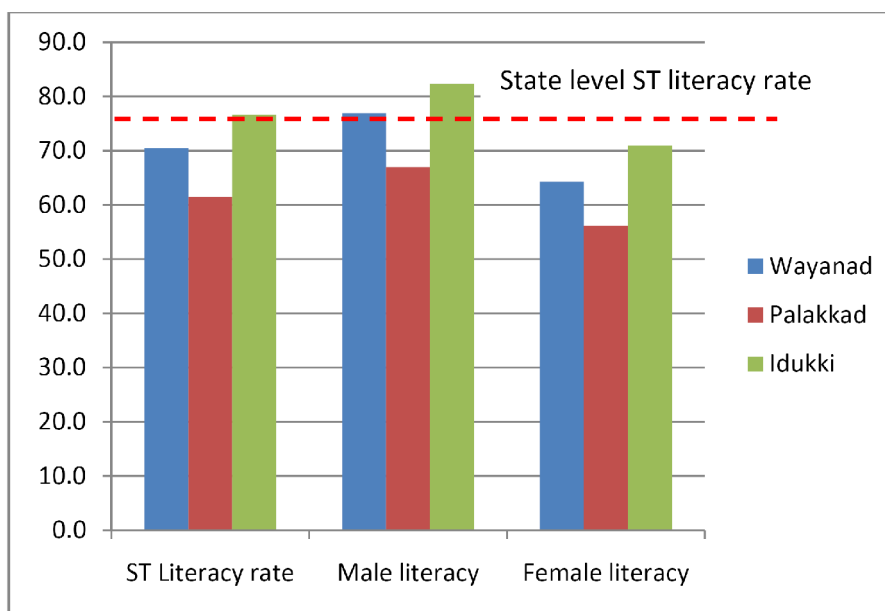
### **2.5.1 Regional Disparity exists in ST Literacy Rates**

The Scheduled Tribes literacy rate of Kerala is 75.8 percent in 2011 which is indeed, higher than that of 64.35 percent registered during 200 (Census of



India, 2001, 2011). The district-wise literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes shows that there exists regional disparity among them. The ST literacy rates of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad districts are shown in Figure 2.35. Idukki is showing almost a central tendency to State's ST literacy rate. For the other two districts, Wayanad and Palakkad, the ST literacy is below the State average registering 70.5 percent and 61.5 percent respectively. In addition, there exists wide gender disparity among the tribes. In all the three districts, male literacy stands far above the female literacy rate. For Idukki and Wayanad, the male literacy is above that of the State average of STs. But, the female literacy falls below the State average for all the districts. An important observation which can be made from this figure is that tribes located in Palakkad and Wayanad districts have poor literacy achievement which is much below the State average of ST's.

**Figure 2.35 Inter Comparison of ST Literacy between Wayanad, Idukki and Palakkad**



Source: Worked out from Census Data, (2011). (See Appendix 2.4)

In Idukki district, the literacy rate of ST is comparatively better while comparing with that of the other two districts. More efforts are required from the part of government to improve literacy in all the three districts with special focus on Palakkad and Wayanad district. Discrepancy prevailing between male and female literacy should be reduced for the overall improvement in literacy rates.

### **2.5.2 Poor Educational Attainments: Palakkad remains more backward**

Comparison of educational attainment among tribes located in Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad shows a different picture (Table 2.4). In all the three districts, we can see that significant number of illiterates is within the ages of 18 to 59 years. Maximum number of illiterates is from Wayanad district but when we compare the proportion of total ST population of the district<sup>19</sup>, Palakkad district has the highest proportion of illiterates i.e. 49.7 percent. Programmes aimed at improving literacy showed only a slow progress in all the three districts as new literates represents only a small percentage. In Idukki, 28.3 percent of the STs have attained education up to primary level which is high compared to proportion of illiterates. In the case of other two districts, the proportion of illiterates is higher compared to the proportion of population with different levels of educational attainment. Besides, more than 87 percent of the tribes located in Palakkad and Wayanad districts have poor educational attainment as they have completed education below 10<sup>th</sup> level only and for Idukki district, the proportion of population who completed 10<sup>th</sup> level is 83.5 percent.

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<sup>19</sup> ST population within the ages of 18 to 59 years

**Table 2.4 Educational Attainment of Tribes between the Ages of 18 to 59 years**

Level of Education	Idukki		Palakkad		Wayanad	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Illiterate	6019	24.5	13759	49.7	28695	31.3
Newly literate	1725	7.0	1559	5.6	3767	4.1
Primary	6942	28.3	4277	15.4	25784	28.2
Below SSLC	5809	23.7	4547	16.4	21843	23.9
S.S.L.C	2258	9.2	1948	7.0	6556	7.2
Plus-Two/ Pre-Degree	1198	4.9	1302	4.7	4031	4.4
Graduation	426	1.7	251	0.9	773	0.8
Post Graduation	118	0.5	32	0.1	78	0.1
Others	58	0.2	33	0.1	53	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>24553</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>27708</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91580</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Compiled from Scheduled Tribe Basic Information Reports, GOK (2010 and 2011)

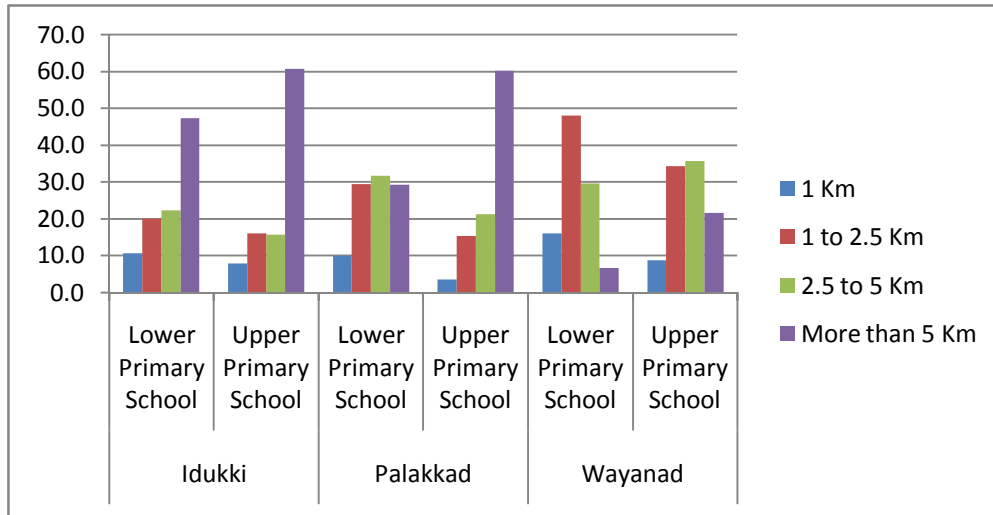
The number of persons who achieved higher level of education i.e. above graduation is very low in all the three districts indicating their marginalization at these levels. This is more visible among tribes located in Palakkad district. Comparing all the three districts, we can see that there is significant disparity in the level of education among the tribes. Better educational attainment is visible among the tribes located in Idukki district. This may be attributed to the educational development of the Malai Arayans concentrated in the district which is discussed in section 2.1.2.1. Tribes located in Palakkad district have poor educational attainment, the proportion of illiterates is high and only a few of them have higher education. Wayanad tribes also are no exception to this situation as majority of them have low educational attainment and only 1.1 percent completed higher education. This clearly indicates that the growth in the literacy rate of tribes has not turned into

better educational attainment which eventually leads to poor human capital formation among the tribes.

### **2.5.3 Physical Access to Educational Institutions**

#### **2.5.3.1 Tribes in Idukki and Palakkad face more Inaccessibility to Elementary Education**

In Idukki district there are in all, 256 tribal settlements, out of these, 35 percentages of the tribal settlements has houses more than 50 in number. As discussed in Section 2.1.1, the tribes located in Idukki face severe physical inaccessibility to basic amenities including educational institutions. In the district, tribal children living in 60.5 percent of the settlements, have to travel more than 5 km to reach a nearby Upper Primary school (Figure 2.36). The figure indicates almost a similar picture for both LP and UP school distances. At LP level, more than 45 percent of the tribal settlements do not have any school within 5 km reach. This indicates that only a few percentage of tribal settlements has access to elementary level schools within 2.5 km. The government should give equal importance to both UP and LP level for making proper arrangements to have better access to elementary schooling for the tribal children in Idukki district. Since the size of settlements in the district is quite large, the physical inaccessibility to one settlement affects more number of houses. In order to facilitate primary schooling, the government should set up more number of single teacher schools at those settlements where the houses are comparatively less in number and they can come up with new LP school, if they can attach it to more than one settlement. Starting adequate number of pre-metric hostels for both boys and girls near the UP schools, can encourage upper primary schooling among the tribal children.

**Figure 2.36 Distance to the Nearest Elementary School**

Source: Compiled from Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, GOK (2010 and 2011) (Appendix 2.5)

Tribal settlements in Palakkad also face similar situation as in the case of Idukki tribal settlements. But, here the major problem is with regard to the physical inaccessibility to UP level schooling (Figure 2.36). Tribes residing in 60 percent of the settlements need to travel more than 5 km to reach a nearby Upper primary school and at lower primary level, about 60 percent of the tribal settlements do not have any LP school within the distance of 2.5 km. For both upper primary and lower primary levels, the students are facing physical inaccessibility but it is more at UP levels. The nature of tribal settlements in Palakkad district has been discussed in Section 2.2.1 and it was visible from the analysis that tribes are concentrated in certain parts of the district. There are significant number of tribal settlements having severe physical inaccessibility to educational institutions, hospitals etc. Besides, there are settlements that are without any proper footpaths or roads. In such a situation, it is difficult to start educational institutions within the settlements. The

solution lies in providing proper transportation facilities from these settlements so that the students residing in these settlements can pursue their schooling.

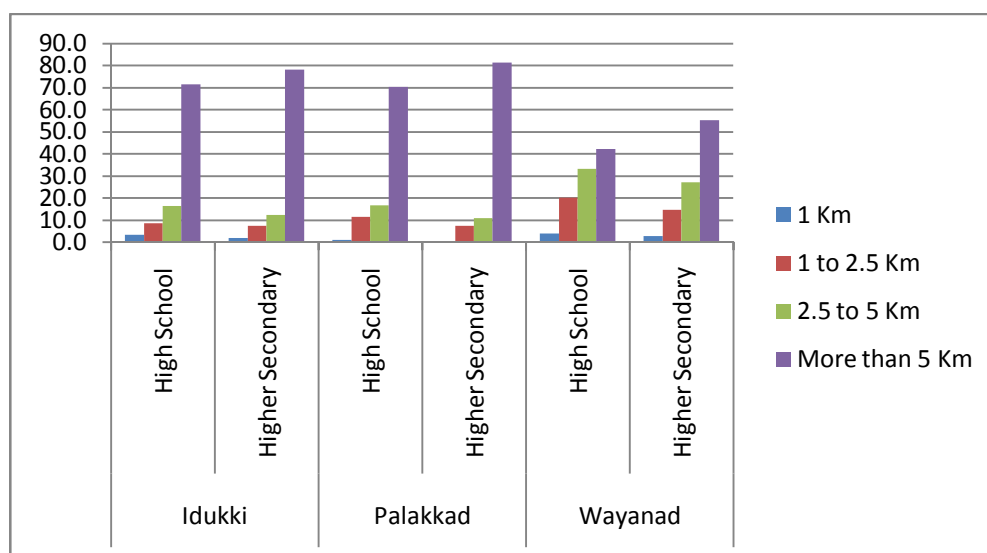
Tribes in Wayanad are much better placed compared to the tribes located in the districts of Palakkad and Idukki for accessing elementary level of schooling. But still, there are many settlements which face severe physical inaccessibility concerns. The percentage of settlements that needs to travel more than 5 km for reaching a UP school is just above 20, and for LP school, it is only 8.6 which is much low compared to other two districts (Figure 2.36). But, Wayanad district has highest number of tribal settlements (2167) in Kerala and a small percentage which, indeed, includes significant number of tribal settlements. Though the percentage of tribal settlements that needs to travel more than 5 km to reach elementary school is very low, it includes significant number of settlements when we convert these percentages into absolute number. Another important aspect is that only 16 percent of the tribal settlements have an LP school within 1 km but 60 percent of the settlements have access to LP school within a distance of 1 to 2.5 km indicating better accessibility to LP schools compared to other two districts. But, 6.6 percent i.e. 143 settlements are not having any LP school within 5 km. In the case of UP schooling, about 42 percent of the settlements has an UP school within 2.5 km. About 21.6 percent tribal settlements in the district does not have any UP school within 5 km reach. Though the percentage of settlements is lower compared to other districts, in absolute terms, it comes to 468 tribal settlements with the problem of inaccessibility. As has already been discussed in section 2.3.1, the tribal settlements of the district are located in all the four Block Panchayats and Kalpetta Municipality which indicates that the population is spread out across all the regions of the district. Besides, the

settlements are lower in size as majority of the settlements have less number of houses. Considering all these aspects, one way for resolving the physical inaccessibility at lower primary level is by extending the coverage of single teacher schools to all the tribal settlements. At UP level, the government should increase the number of pre-metric hostels for both boys and girls.

### 2.5.3.2 Access to High School and Higher Secondary Schools: A Major Concern

It is clear from Figure 2.37 that high schools and higher secondary schools are located far away from the tribal areas. Tribal students are facing severe physical inaccessibility at secondary level of education. For majority of the settlements, these institutions are located more than 5 kilometers of reach. In Idukki district, tribes residing in 71.5 percent of the total settlements need to travel more than 5 km to reach high school. The percentage is much higher if they want to do their higher secondary education (78.1 percent).

**Figure 2.37 Distance to the Nearest High School and Higher Secondary School**



Source: Compiled from Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, (2010 and 2011) (See Appendix 2.6)

Out of the 426 tribal settlements in the Palakkad district, only 29.6 percent has a high school within a radius of 5 km. The situation is much worse at higher secondary level as the percentage of settlements having a higher secondary school within 5 km is only 18.5 percent of the total settlements. The picture is different in accessing high school and higher secondary schools in Wayanad district compared to that of other two districts. About 42.4 percentage of the tribal settlements located in Wayanad does not have a high school within 5 km radius. Though the percentage of settlements facing inaccessibility problems to a high school is less compared to that of other districts, it includes a total of 918 tribal settlements. At higher secondary level, 55.3 percent of the total tribal settlements are not having such schools within the reach of 5 km.

The analysis of physical access to secondary schooling indicates that the majority of the tribal settlements located in all the three districts suffer from the inaccessibility problem. The physical inaccessibility cannot be fully resolved only by setting up of pre-metric hostels in these localities, but it requires additional secondary schools to improve enrolment and to reduce the high dropout prevailing at these levels among the tribes.

## **2.6 Education among Tribes: State Level Analysis**

Data on school education describe the low enrolment and high dropout among tribal students in Kerala at each sections of schooling. This Inequality in Education is predominantly persisting in all sections of the society. This section highlights the inequality in school and higher education from gender as well as from social group perspective.



### 2.6.1 Tribal Literacy: Continuing Gap between General and STs

The overall literacy rate of Kerala is 93.91 percent and that of the Scheduled Tribes is only 75.81 percent but it is much higher than the national average ST literacy rate of 59 percent (Census of India, 2011). Male literacy has increased from 70.8 percent to 80.76 percent from 2001 to 2011 and there was tremendous improvement in female literacy during the same period where it reached 71.08 percent in 2011 from 58.1 percent in 2001 (Table 2.6). Even though, there was a significant increase in the literacy rate of both males and females, it is far below the general literacy rate of males and females in Kerala. Besides, we can see a significant gap in literacy rate between the general and STs for all the census years starting from 1961 to 2011 (Table 2.5). The continuing huge gap in literacy rate is a major concern to be addressed and requires strong government intervention to reduce the gap. The policies aimed at improvement in literacy rate has made only a slow progress which is evident from the wide disparity gap existing between the literacy rates of general population and STs, and also clear from the gender disparity existing within the STs. This signifies the need for proper implementation of literacy campaigns among the marginalized social groups including the Scheduled Tribes.

**Table 2.5 Literacy of Scheduled Tribes and General State Average**

Year	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
<b>General Literacy</b>	55.08	69.75	78.85	89.81	90.92	93.91
<b>ST Literacy</b>	17.26	25.72	31.79	57.22	64.35	75.81
<b>Gap in Literacy</b>	37.82	44.03	47.06	32.59	26.57	18.10

Source: Census of India, (1961 - 2011)

**Table 2.6 Gender-wise General and ST Literacy Rate**

Year	General literacy			ST literacy		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2001	90.86	94.24	87.72	64.40	70.80	58.10
2011	93.91	96.02	91.98	75.81	80.76	71.08

Source: Census of India, (2001, 2011)

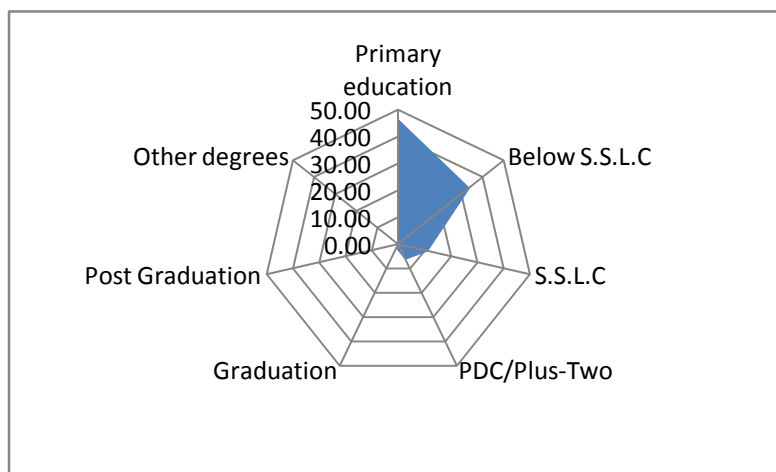
### 2.6.2 STs remain backward in Educational Attainment

The educational level of the ST communities is dismal compared to that of other communities in Kerala indicating the horizontal disparity existing in the State (Table 2.7). More illiterates are from STs compared to any other social groups in Kerala which is evident from the Table 2.7. Besides, there is much decrease in the percentage of population going for secondary education immediately after the completion of middle level schooling. This is significant in the case of both SC and ST communities. This in turn, is reflected in the lower level of educational attainments at higher education leading to low level of human capital formation.

**Table 2.7 Level of Education among Social Groups, 1999-2000 (Rural)**

Level of Education	ST	SC	OBC	Others
Illiterate	26.36	23.6	17.36	11.67
Literate Without Formal Schooling	0.33	1.80	0.93	0.86
Below Primary	16.12	17.05	18.31	12.30
Primary	12.50	20.99	19.76	14.93
Middle	26.32	25.67	27.52	26.00
Secondary	8.22	7.49	10.72	19.50
Higher Secondary	5.26	1.67	3.20	7.44
Graduation above	4.90	1.73	3.20	7.30

Source: Kerala Human Development Report, (2005)

**Figure 2.38 Educational attainments of tribes in Kerala**

Source: Scheduled Tribes Development Department, (2013)

The educational attainment of Scheduled Tribes in Kerala is shown in Figure 2.38. This indicates that majority of them are having low level of education. About 80.7 percent of the literates have education below 10<sup>th</sup> level only but, 11.2 percent of literates have attained education up to matriculation level. Over the past 12 years, there has been improvement in the percentage of tribes with plus-two degree which is 6.02 percent during 2013 compared to that of 2.58 percent during 2001<sup>20</sup>. The tribes with high level of education i.e. above graduation are only just above 2 percent of the literates indicating their marginalization at this level. It is evident from the analysis that tribes lag much behind other social groups of Kerala in the attainment of higher levels of education.

### 2.6.3 Enrolment and Retention

For the year 2009-10, the ST students constituted 1.74 percent of the total enrolment in schools (Govt. of Kerala, 2009). The percentage of ST Students to

<sup>20</sup> 2013 data is based on Socio Economic Report on Scheduled Tribes by GOK and 2001 data is based on Census of India.

the total enrolled students in the government schools, private aided schools and private unaided schools constituted 3.01 percent, 1.26 percent and 0.34 percent respectively for the year 2009-10. This indicates that majority of the students belonging to the ST community is pursuing their studies at government or government aided schools. In recent years, the enrolment of tribal students at elementary schooling has been impressive and it is even more than 100 percent (Table 2.8). The mean Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the classes I to V and VI to VIII during the period 2007-08 to 2010-11 are 130.11 and 121.63 respectively. At secondary levels, the GER of ST students is coming down which is only 80.04 for classes IX and X, and it is less than 50 at higher secondary level. At secondary level, we can see a significant improvement in the GER of ST students in 2010-11 compared to that of previous years. The picture is entirely different at higher secondary levels as the GER remained almost stagnant during the years and it drastically came down during 2010-11.

**Table 2.8 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of Scheduled Tribe in Kerala**

Year	Classes I-V			Classes VI-VIII			Classes IX-X			Classes XI-XII		
	(6-10 Years)			(11-13 Years)			(14-15 Years)			(16-17 Years)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2006-07*	125.2	122.8	124.0	105.4	103.2	104.4	69.6	76.5	72.9	44.6	53.3	48.9
2007-08	127.5	125.8	126.7	110.6	113.5	112.0	69.6	74.9	72.2	44.6	58.1	51.0
2008-09	132.7	130.3	131.5	123.5	125.1	124.3	71.9	81.2	76.4	41.9	48.3	45.1
2009-10	137.2	130.6	134.0	121.9	123.2	122.5	81.0	86.5	83.7	47.5	55.1	51.4
2010-11	137.6	130.9	134.3	146.3	143.6	145.0	91.9	98.3	95.0	24.7	25.8	25.3
<b>Mean</b>	<b>132.0</b>	<b>128.1</b>	<b>130.1</b>	<b>121.5</b>	<b>121.7</b>	<b>121.6</b>	<b>76.8</b>	<b>83.5</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>48.1</b>	<b>44.3</b>

\* Class I to V include age between 6-11 years, Class VI to VIII include 11-14 years, Class IX to X include 15-16 years and Class XI to XII include 17-18 years  
Source: Compiled from Statistics of School Education, GOI, (2014)

**Table 2.9 t-test Result of GER of Males and Females**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	0.039	0.848	-1.106	8	0.301	6.04413
Equal variances not assumed			-1.106	7.995	0.301	6.04413

Source: Statistics of School Education, GOI, (2014)

Over the years, we can see a slight difference in the GER between boys and girls at all levels of schooling. At elementary level it is almost same for both boys and girls and, at secondary and higher secondary levels, the GER for girls are impressive when compared to that of boys. Table 2.9 indicates that the equality test for mean values of GER of boys and girls failed to show the difference. So, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that statistically, there is no difference in the mean values of boys and girls. In other word, there is no gender disparity in GER of tribal students at schools.

**Table 2.10 ANOVA across GER at different Levels of Schooling**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	23610.309	3	7870.103	67.338	0.000*
Within Groups	1869.992	16	116.875		
Total	25480.301	19			

\*Significant at 1% level

Source: Statistics of School Education, GOI, (2014)

**Table 2.11 Tukey Test Result for Mean Difference**

Section	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05		
		1	2	3
Class XI-XII	5	44.402		
Class IX-X	5		80.038	
Class V-VIII	5			121.63
Class I-IV	5			130.11
Sig.		1.000	1.000	0.61

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

Source: Statistics of School Education, GOI, (2014)

The ANOVA for mean difference across different levels of schooling i.e. LP, UP, HS and Higher Secondary levels shows that it is significant at one percent level (Table 2.10). This indicates that there is disparity in GER across various levels of schooling. Tukeys test result depicted in Table 2.11 states that across three groups there is difference in the mean value of GER. For LP and UP levels, statistically, there is no disparity in GER. But, at high school and higher secondary levels the difference in the mean value is significant. The mean GER at higher secondary level is 44.4 which considerably lower than that of high school (80.04). From this we can conclude that though there is no gender disparity in enrolment of students at various levels of schooling, there is considerable difference in the GER of tribal students at various levels of schooling. As schooling goes up, there is significant drop in the number of students enroll at next levels of education.

#### **2.6.4 School Dropouts**

The important challenges of tribal education are high dropouts and low enrolment at school levels. Data on dropouts shows that there exists high rate

of dropouts among the students belonging to Scheduled Tribes of Kerala compared to that of other communities (Table 2.12). This may be even higher if we count the actual number of dropouts as there exists wide underreporting of dropouts in tribal areas in order to safeguard the schools and employees. The government has implemented various policies and programmes for improving the school attendance among the tribal students but the continuing high dropout rate at school levels requires either modification of existing policies or development of new strategies. Table 2.12 clearly states the extent of school dropout among the ST students when compared to that of other communities in Kerala. The dropout rate of SCs and other communities of Kerala was less than 1 percent during the period, 2007-08 to 2011-12 except for the year 2011-12 where the dropout rate for the other communities was 1.05 percent. Compared to this, we can see that the dropout percentage of the Scheduled Tribes remains very high in all the six years. For the year 2007-08, the dropout rate was 4.54 percent which was more than 6 times higher than that of other communities. Gradually, the dropout rate came down during next three consecutive years recording 3.54 percent, 2.36 percent and 2.52 percent during 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively. But, thereafter, the dropout rate further increased to 3.71 percent during 2011-12. For the past academic year i.e. 2012-13, it was 3.53 percent. Over these six years, the average dropout rate of STs remained at 3.37 percent. If we assume that the mean dropout i.e. 3.3 percent to remain the same for all the years, the total strength of a class will come down by 33 percent by the time when they reach 10<sup>th</sup> level i.e. after 10 years of schooling. This indicates that there exists lower retention rate among the tribal students at school levels.

**Table 2.12 Dropout Rate at School Level**

Year	SC	ST	Other Communities
2007-08	0.96	4.54	0.75
2008-09	0.72	3.54	0.52
2009-10	0.58	2.36	0.46
2010-11	0.55	2.52	0.48
2011-12	0.61	3.71	1.05
2012-13	0.54	3.53	0.40

Source: Compiled from DPI Data, GOK, (2014)

**Table 2.13 ANOVA across Dropout Rate of SC, ST and Other Communities**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	143.607	2	71.804	79.399	0.000*
Within Groups	13.565	15	0.904		
Total	157.172	17			

\*Significant at 1 % level

Arc Sin value of the dropout rate is used for the analysis

Source: Directorate of Public Instruction, Kerala, (2014)

**Table 2.14 Tukey Test Result for Mean Difference**

Community	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
OC*	6	0.610	
SC	6	0.660	
ST	6		3.367
Sig.		0.983	1.000

\*Other Communities

N indicates number of years

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

Source: Directorate of Public Instruction, Kerala, (2014)



The ANOVA for the dropout rate of communities such as SC, ST and other communities was significant at one percent level (Table 2.13). This indicates that the dropout rate significantly differs across these communities. Tukey test result depicted in Table 2.14 states that there is no significant difference between the dropout rate of SCs and other communities, but the dropout rate of ST significantly differs from the dropout rate of these two communities. The mean dropout rate of STs is 3.37 percent which is higher than that of the mean dropout rate of SCs i.e. 0.66 percent and other communities i.e. 0.61 percent.

It is evident from Table 2.15 that there exists high dropout rate in both boys and girls belonging to tribal community. It is also clear from the table that dropout rate of boys is high compared to girls in all the six years from 2007-08 to 2012-13. However, the t-test result on equality of means between average dropout rate of males and females indicates that there is no significant difference between them; as a result the null is being accepted i.e. statistically the dropout rate of male and female shows no difference (Table 2.16). Over the years, we can see a similar trend in the dropout rate of both boys and girls as it declined for the period 2007-08 to 2009-10 and thereafter, showed an increasing trend for the next two consecutive years. For the year 2012-13, the dropout rate of boys was 3.91 percent and for girls it was 3.13 percent. The analysis shows that there exists no gender disparity among the school dropout rate of STs.

**Table 2.15 Gender-wise Dropout Rate of STs in Kerala**

Year	Dropout rate	
	Male	Female
2007-08	5.11	3.94
2008-09	4.13	2.93
2009-10	2.63	2.08
2010-11	2.75	2.27
2011-12	4.13	3.27
2012-13	3.91	3.13
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>2.94</b>
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>0.939</b>	<b>0.682</b>

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

**Table 2.16 t-test Result for Equality of Dropout Rate of ST Male and Female**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	0.370	0.557	1.751	10	0.111	0.75502
Equal variances not assumed			1.751	9.608	0.112	0.75502

Arc Sin value of dropout rate used for the analysis

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

It is evident from Table 2.17 that the dropout rate of ST students increases as the level of schooling increases. In all the six years, i.e. from 2007-08 to 2012-13, we can see slightly low level of dropout rate of STs at Lower Primary (LP) section. As they move on to next level of education i.e. Upper Primary (UP), the rate increases. For all the years, the dropout rate at High School (HS) section remained high among STs compared to other that of

UP and LP levels. During the year 2012-13, the dropout rate at LP section was 1.87 percentage while that of UP it was 3.03 percent and for HS section the rate was much higher which is 6.46 percent. The ANOVA result across dropout rate at various sections of schooling i.e. LP, UP and HS indicates that it is significant at one percent level (Table 2.18). On account of this, we can conclude that there is significant difference among the mean value of dropout rate at different levels. The mean dropout rate at LP is 2.27 percent which is lower when compared to that of the UP level mean dropout rate of 3.19 percent. The mean dropout rate at HS section is 5.55 percent which is much higher than other two levels. Tukey result depicted in Table 2.19 explains the mean difference which indicates that statistically, there is no difference between the mean value of dropout rate at LP and UP level though they differ in actual value. But there is significant difference between mean values of dropout rate at HS section with that of other two sections. The dropout rate at HS section significantly higher and we can conclude that among the ST students the dropout rate is very high at high school level.

**Table 2.17 Section-wise Dropout Rate of Scheduled Tribes of Kerala**

Year	Lower Primary	Upper Primary	High School
2007-08	3.40	4.90	6.47
2008-09	2.29	3.30	6.59
2009-10	1.60	2.21	4.05
2010-11	1.91	2.41	3.71
2011-12	2.57	3.28	6.00
2012-13	1.85	3.03	6.46

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

**Table 2.18 ANOVA across Dropout Rate at different Levels of Schooling among STs**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	76.337	2	38.169	17.230	0.000*
Within Groups	33.228	15	2.215		
Total	109.565	17			

\*Significant at 1 % level

Arc Sin value of the dropout rate is used for the analysis

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

**Table 2.19 Tukey Test Result for Mean Difference**

Section	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
LP	6	2.270	
UP	6	3.188	
HS	6		5.547
Sig.		0.285	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed

N indicates number of years

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

We have already analyzed the dropout among STs across communities, gender and sections of schooling. It is also relevant to analyse whether there exist any significant regional disparity in dropout rate among the tribes. For the analysis, we divided the regions into four group viz. districts having ST population of more than 10 percent to the total STs in Kerala, districts with a tribal concentration between 5 to 10 percentage, districts having concentration between 3 to 5 percentage and districts with less than 3 percent of STs (Table 1.3). The first group includes four districts viz. Wayanad, Idukki, Kasaragod and Palakkad, and the second group includes two districts viz. Kannur and Thiruvananthapuram. For the third group i.e. ST population ranging between 3 to 5 percent, the districts are Malappuram, Kozhikode, Ernakulam and

Kottayam. The last group i.e. STs population representation below 3 percent to total STs in the State includes the remaining four districts viz. Thrissur, Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta and Kollam.

**Table 2.20 Dropout Rate of STs on the basis of their Population Concentration**

Year	Concentration of STs			
	More than 10 %	Between 10 - 5 %	Between 5 - 3 %	Less than 3 %
2007-08	5.50	2.76	2.79	2.21
2008-09	4.34	2.09	1.57	2.43
2009-10	2.78	1.36	1.63	1.66
2010-11	3.00	1.44	1.63	1.45
2011-12	4.34	1.32	3.31	2.51
2012-13	4.32	1.03	2.89	1.24

Source: Compiled from DPI Data, GOK, (2014)

**Table 2.21 ANOVA across Dropout Rate on the basis of Tribal Concentration**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	63.127	3	21.042	11.061	0.000*
Within Groups	38.049	20	1.902		
Total	101.176	23			

\* Significant at 1% level

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

**Table 2.22 Tukey Test Result for Mean Difference**

Region	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
ST between 5 - 10 %	6	1.667	
ST less than 3%	6	1.917	
ST between 3 - 5 %	6	2.303	
ST more than 10%	6		4.047
Sig.		0.485	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

N indicates number of years

Source: DPI, Kerala, (2014)

Table 2.20 depicts the dropout rate among the districts on the basis of the degree of tribal concentration. We can see that the dropout rate varied across these four groups in all the six years. During the year 2012-13, the dropout rate among districts with more than 10 percent of total State ST population is 4.32 which are much higher when compared to that of the other regions. For districts having 5 to 10 percent concentration, the dropout rate is 1.03 percent and for the districts have population within the range of 3 to 5 percent it is 2.89 percent. The least tribal concentrated districts i.e. less than 3 percent ST concentration, also reported lower dropout rate of 1.24 percent. The ANOVA result states that there is significant difference in mean values of the dropout rate across the region (Table 2.21). Tukey test result depicted in Table 2.22 indicates that the difference in the mean value arises between the regions which are having more than 10 percent tribal concentration with the other three regions. The mean dropout rate in highly tribal concentrated regions is 4.05 percent which is significantly higher than the dropout rate in other regions. Moreover, statistically, there is no difference in the mean value of dropout in other three regions though it differs in actual value. From this we can conclude that, the policies aimed at reducing the dropout among the Scheduled Tribes have not resulted in a decrease in the dropout rate among the STs in tribal concentrated districts such as Idukki, Palakkad, Wayanad and Kasaragod remains much higher compared to that of other regions.

### **2.6.5 Enrolment of Scheduled Tribe Students at Higher Education**

The relative percentage of people with higher qualification is low among tribes compared to other social groups in the State. Only 1.16 percent of tribal population located in Kerala have attained graduation and above qualification (Census of India, 2001). This indeed led to low human capital formation of this

community. Table 2.23 indicates that majority students seeking higher education opt for conventional degree courses such as B.A, B.Sc. and B.Com. Out of this, majority are joining BA courses as the number of students studying this course have shown rapid increase compared to that of other courses. There is less enrolment in students at PG level for courses such as M.A, M.Sc. and M.Com after the completion of graduation. Besides, the presence of STs at research courses such as M.Phil and PhD. were found to be very meager or even zero for the year 2006-07. It is also evident from the table that the total number of students enrolled in higher education showed an increase from 2006-07 to 2010-11. There was rapid increase in the enrolment of students during 2007-08 compared to that of previous years registering a growth rate of more than 50 percent. For the period 2009-10 and 2010-11, there was only a marginal increase in the enrolment of students.

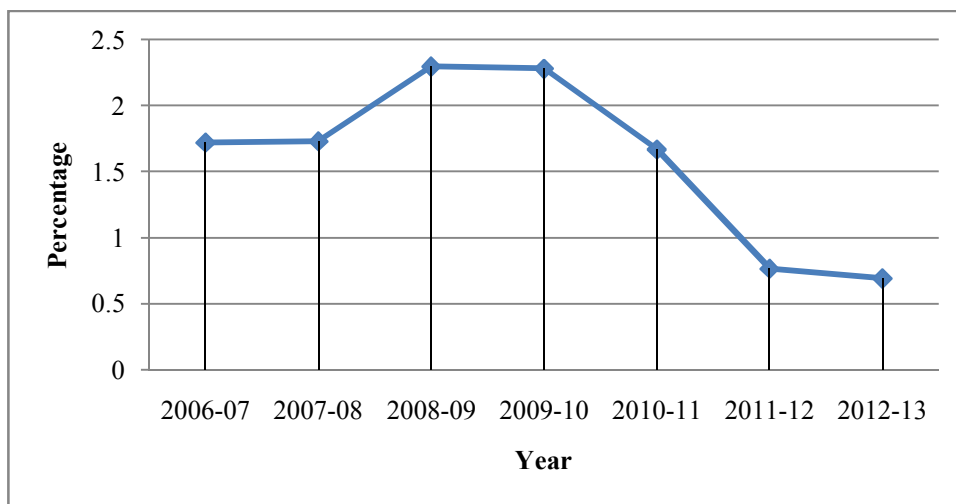
**Table 2.23 Enrolment of ST students' for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Courses in Kerala**

Courses	2006-07		2007-08		2009-10		2010-11	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
<b>Mphil/PhD</b>	0	0	0	13	1	0	1	0
<b>MA</b>	33	68	48	85	62	95	63	98
<b>MSc</b>	24	56	33	72	56	70	61	72
<b>M.Com</b>	19	26	25	25	25	29	27	33
<b>BA</b>	376	562	590	925	550	917	528	921
<b>BSc</b>	124	242	200	330	244	379	248	382
<b>B.Com</b>	162	183	240	262	206	216	226	223
<b>Total</b>	<b>738</b>	<b>1137</b>	<b>1136</b>	<b>1712</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>1706</b>	<b>1154</b>	<b>1729</b>
<b>Growth (In Percent)</b>	-	-	<b>53.93</b>	<b>50.57</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>-0.35</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>1.35</b>

Source: Directorate of Collegiate Education, Trivandrum, (2013)

Female enrolment is quite appreciable in case of tribal students as the number of female students remained top in all years from 2006-07 to 2010-11 compared to males in enrolment for higher education. Both male and female enrolment showed a positive trend during these years. We need to see their enrolment in other professional and technical education to see how their higher education perspective is behaving in recent past. Figure 2.39 shows the ratio of tribal students studying in polytechnics as a percentage of total students enrolled at these institutions. Data include both government and government aided colleges. From 2006-07 to 2010-11 we can see that the percentage of tribal students was above 1.5 percentage which was above their population representation of 1.14 percent. In 2008-09 and 2009-10 the percentage went up by more than 2 percent. But for the recent two years we can see that there is a drastic drop in percentage of tribal students studying in polytechnics as it dropped down to 0.76 percent during 2011-12 and for the succeeding year, i.e. 2012-13, it is only 0.69 percent.

**Figure 2.39 ST Students in Technical Education as a Percent of Total Students**



Source: Economic Review, (2006 - 2013)



One of the reasons for this sudden drop is their low enrolment in polytechnics for the years 2011-12 and 2012-13. It is evident from Figure 2.40 that the number of ST students studying in polytechnics was almost 500 during 2008-09 and 2009-10. For the next two years, there was an increase in total number of students studying in these institutions. It went up by almost 200 additional numbers of students to reach 680 and then 690 during 2008-09 and 2009-10 respectively. After 2009-10, we can see a substantial drop in number of ST students enrolled in polytechnics. For the years 2011-12 and 2012-13 the number of ST students was only 237 and 223 respectively, and it was recorded during the periods where the total number of students studying at polytechnics remained at a higher level.

**Figure 2.40 Number of ST Students in Polytechnics**



Source: Economic Review, (2006 - 2013)

Figure 2.40 also indicates that majority of the ST students seek admission in government polytechnics compared to aided colleges. For the periods 2006-07 and 2007-08, almost 98 percent of the tribal students opted for government polytechnics. And for next three years, their representation at aided

colleges increased which resulted in higher enrolments of tribal students at polytechnics.

Educational level of the Scheduled Tribes was found to be very poor in India as well as in Kerala. Their literacy level shows that they lag much behind the mainstream population in literacy attainments as more illiterates are from STs, and among the literates, majority are with low level of educational attainments. Besides, there exists inter-communal disparity within the STs with regard to educational attainments. As highly populated communities such as Paniya, Irula, Adiya, Muthuvan etc. stands far behind in this aspect compared to that of forward tribal communities such as Malai Arayan and Kurichchan. Among sparsely populated communities such as Eravallan, MahaMalasar, Malasar, Palliyar, Hill Pulaya etc., the literacy is far below the State average and for a few communities; it is even below the national average for STs. The enrolment and retention level at schools also indicate their educational deprivation. There was a drastic decrease in the enrolment of students at high school and secondary level compared to that of elementary level. The dropout rate of ST students was found to be much high compared to that of other communities in Kerala. As the level of schooling increases, we can see an enormous increase in the dropout rate of ST students. The dropout rate at High School section is significantly higher than that of LP and UP levels. Besides, we can see that the dropout rate significantly differs across the regions as it is significantly higher in tribal concentrated districts such as Wayanad, Palakkad, Idukki and Kasaragod compared to that of least tribal concentrated districts. The continuing high dropout at school level will lead to less number of students eligible for higher education. Most of the students going for higher education join conventional courses such as B.A, B.Com and B.Sc. Besides,

they have meagre representation for research courses such as M.Phil and Ph.D, and professional courses. Overall, the educational position of Scheduled Tribes was found to be pathetic and needs improvement at all levels of education. The Chapter 3 deals with a critical analysis of various policies and programmes implemented by the State as well as Central Government for enhancing tribal education.

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## Chapter 3

### EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES AND INSTITUTIONAL SETUP

<i>Contents</i>	<i>3.1 Policy on Education</i>
	<i>3.2 Programmes for the Development of Pre-school and Primary Education of Tribes</i>
	<i>3.3 Programmes and Schemes for School and College education</i>
	<i>3.4 Grants and Allowances for Promoting Education</i>
	<i>3.5 Tribal Sub-Plan Approach</i>

Statistics show that the tribes in India lag much behind the mainstream population in all the developmental aspects including education. There are numerous reasons for this poor state of education among tribes such as the lack of sufficient educational institutions in tribal areas, high rate of poverty, lack of efficient nutritional and health care programmes, lack of proper policies to improve the enrolment or to reduce the dropout of students etc. All these problems highlight the shortcomings for promoting education among the Tribes. Education is regarded as the important catalyst for social development and through this, social and economic development of a community or individual can be made possible. During the period immediately after the Indian independence, tribal education did not get the attention it deserved from the authorities. Only a few strategies were introduced in the subsequent Five-Year Plans for the upliftment of tribes and these policies were inadequate to

address the problems faced by the tribes in India. It was only in the Fifth Five Year Plan (i.e. for the period 1974-79), specific programmes aimed at the development of education among tribes were been introduced. Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) approach, a comprehensive strategy for the socio-economic development of the tribal people was the major highlight of this Plan.

There are several policies and laws to safeguard the Scheduled Tribes apart from the constitutional provisions. The constitution has made some provisions for the protection of the interests of STs which are enlisted in Box 3.1. The Central government formed a few Educational Commissions after the Indian independence to frame proposals to modernize educational system, but it took a long time to frame an educational policy for the country and the first of its kind came into existence during the year 1968 (National Policy on Education) based on the recommendations of Education Commission (1964-68). But this policy was silent about the educational developments of the tribal people. Major development in tribal education emerged after the implementation of new National Policy on Education (NPE) which came to existence in 1986. This policy addressed many problems faced by the tribes in education.

Apart from these policies, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has made certain significant interventions in tribal education as part of the objective of universalizing elementary education in the country. The schemes run by SSA have positively impacted the education of Kerala especially in universalizing primary education to the socially excluded. The major policies implemented include District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Alternative and Innovation Education Centers (AIEC). The tribal students were mostly

benefited from AIECs as the preference in setting up these Centers was given to tribal and coastal areas of Kerala. Identifying the importance of education, the Indian Parliament passed the Right to Education Act on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2009. The important highlights of RTE Act, 2009 are shown in Box No. 3.2.

**Box 3.1 Constitutional Provisions – Scheduled Tribes**

Indian constitutions contain extensive provisions for protecting the interests of Scheduled Tribes. These provisions are relevant in the context of implementation of Tribal Sub Plan (TSP). The important provisions are

Article 244 (1): Provision regarding administration and control of scheduled areas and tribal areas

Article 244 (2): Provision for payment of grant-in-aid to enable the States to meet the cost of such schemes of development as may be undertaken by the States with the approval of the Government of India for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in that State or raising the level of administration of the Scheduled Areas therein to that of the administration of the rest of the areas of that State.

Article 339: Control of the Union over the administration of Scheduled Areas and the welfare of Scheduled Tribes.

Article 46: Promotion of educational and economic interests of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections.

For enhancing school education among tribes the government started a number of schools focusing tribes such as Model Residential Schools, Ashram Schools, Tribal schools etc. Besides, the tribal students studying at school level are provided with pre-metric hostel facilities along with financial assistance and other allowances. At college level also, they are provided with free education along with lump-sum grant and other scholarships. The present Chapter critically

analyses various policies and programmes implemented in Kerala for the development of education of tribes. The Chapter will end up with suggestions that will help in the successful implementation of these programmes.

### **Box 3.2 Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009**

Right to Education Act was passed by the Parliament on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2009 with the objective of providing free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years. The Act confers every child the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till the completion of elementary level. In India, school education is divided into two categories, namely, elementary and secondary education. Thus, the RTE Act provides free and compulsory education upto 8<sup>th</sup> Standard. The Act contains certain special provisions for those children who are not admitted to, or have not completed, elementary education. The Act also makes it obligatory on the part of the government concerned to ensure that each child gets free elementary education with provision for adequate infrastructure for imparting quality education.

## **3.1 Policy on Education**

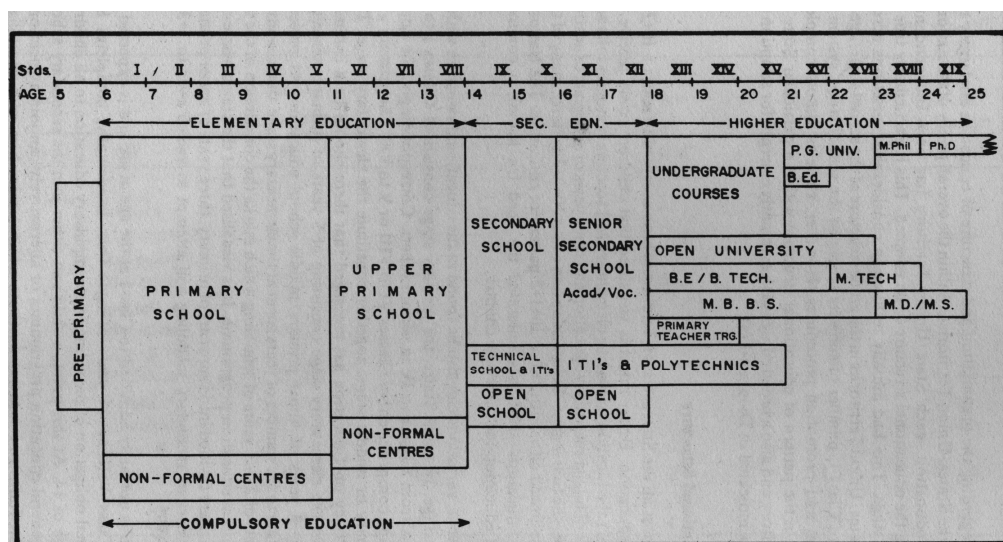
### **3.1.1 National Policy on Education (NPE) 1968**

The first policy regarding the development of education in the country was formed in 1968 called National Policy on Education, 1968. Prior to this policy, several commissions and committees were formed to review the problems of educational reconstruction in post-independence period, notably University Education Commission (1948-49) and the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53). Though, some steps were taken to implement the recommendations of these commissions, the government was not able to formulate a comprehensive educational policy for the country during this period. The consensus on national policy emerged from the wide discussions on the report submitted by

the Education Commission of 1964-66. The policy covered all levels of education from elementary to collegiate education. The structure of education system in India is depicted in Figure 3.1<sup>1</sup>.

Instead of giving more importance to elementary education which was required during that period of time, the policy gave more emphasis on secondary education which, indeed, can be viewed as a major drawback of this policy. The policy highlighted “Three Language Formulae” to be implemented in secondary education. The formulae included study of a modern language, preferably one of the southern languages, apart from Hindi and English, in Hindi-speaking States, whereas, in Non-Hindi speaking States, Hindi was included along with English and regional languages. The policy also gave much attention to science and technology education.

**Figure 3.1 Structure of Education in India**



Source: India Country Report, UNESCO, (2000).

<sup>1</sup> In India, elementary education includes Class I to VIII level, but in Kerala it is only up to VII standard.



As part of achieving equality in educational opportunity, the NPE, 1968 prescribed the need for extensive efforts to promote education among backward classes and especially among the tribal people. However, the policy was silent on how to promote education among the tribes and other socially backward sections. Overall, the policy laid emphasis on the radical restructuring of the Indian educational system but failed to structure policies to reduce the inequality prevailing in the system.

### **3.1.2 National Policy on Education 1986 (As Modified in 1992)**

Since the adoption of NPE during May 1986, there have been significant changes in the education system of India. The policy called for ‘child-centered approach’ emphasizing the importance of developing a child from his/her young age, giving high priority to impart the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme and also, laid special emphasis on the removal of inequality existing in the education by formulating exclusive measures for the Scheduled Tribes to make them par with others. These measures include:

- a) Giving preference to opening primary schools in tribal areas under the tribal welfare schemes as well as normal funds for education.
- b) Opening Model Residential Schools and Ashram Schools on a large scale in TSP area.
- c) Starting Anganwadis and Non-formal and Adult Education Centres on a priority basis in areas predominantly inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes.

Later, the policy was modified in 1992 in accordance with the recommendations made by Ramamurti Committee after reviewing the NPE<sup>2</sup>. The policy developed programmes for covering all levels of education starting from early childhood to higher education. It also devised measures to impart education to the socially vulnerable groups such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections of the society. Since school dropout has caused great concern to the policy makers, the new policy gives high priority for universal access and retention of children. The new policy points to the need for a well-coordinated network of non-formal education as one of the measures to resolve the issue, which eventually benefited the tribes as more dropouts were reported among them.

The policy can be found to be effective among tribes as it paved path for opening up of residential schools such as MRS/Ashram schools in tribal areas. The amounts spend on tribal education also increased since the implementation of TSP. But, the policy was not completely successful in reducing the inaccessibility and school dropout of children. As tribes still face problems in these respects, it is vital for restructuring or modifying the existing policy.

### **3.2 Programmes for the Development of Pre-school and Primary Education of Tribes**

#### **3.2.1 Nursery Schools/Anganwadi Centers in Tribal Areas**

Preschool education has positive impacts in promoting enrolment and retention of students at schools, and thereby helps in reducing the dropout of

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<sup>2</sup> The modification made by Ramamurti Committee is known as National Programme of Action of 1992. This policy aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration.

children at primary education. Children with proper pre-school education has more probability for retaining or continuing their studies compared to those who are joining primary school without pre-schooling (Khullar, 1998). In India, Early Childhood Care and Education got its importance through development of National Policy on Children in 1974. Subsequently, in 1975, the central government initiated with Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme one of the world's largest programmes intended to lay the foundation for holistic and integrated development of the child between the ages of 0 to 6 years. ICDS projects are functioning through Anganwadi Centres (AWC) which mainly cover rural and tribal areas compared to urban areas where many of these centres are located in slums and underdeveloped areas. In Kerala, the ICDS programmes implemented in 32,922 AWCs across the State. The percentage of tribal students attending AWC is impressive in Kerala and it is even on par with other the castes, indicates the effectiveness of these centres in tribal areas (World Bank, 2005).

Apart from AWC under ICDS scheme, Scheduled Tribe Development Department of Kerala runs 40 Nursery Schools to promote early childhood education and 29 Single Teacher Schools for enhancing primary education (Table 3.2). The students are given financial aid and other incentives for promoting pre-school education among them. The children studying in Nursery Schools are given free mid-day meals and dress in addition to a lump-sum grant of ₹100 per annum for each student. Admission is being given to children of 3 to 5 years old. Wayanad district has the maximum number of nursery schools run by the department. Idukki has 7 nursery schools followed by Palakkad with 6 nursery schools (Table 3.3).

In all, there are 4644 tribal hamlets in Kerala and out of these; only 31 percent has an anganwadi centre within the area (Table 3.1). About 58 percent of the tribal hamlets have easy access to anganwadi even though it is not located within the habitation. But still, there are 11 percent of total tribal settlements without any anganwadi centre near to or within the hamlet. This indicates that 511 tribal hamlets are facing the physical inaccessibility to preschool education. Among this, the highest number of settlements without any pre-schooling centres within or near to hamlets are located in tribal populated districts such as Wayanad (253 settlements) and Palakkad (62 settlements). This reflects the lack of sufficient efforts from the authorities concerned in identifying inaccessible tribal areas to preschool education.

**Table 3.1 Anganwadi Centres in Tribal Hamlets**

<b>District</b>	<b>Within Habitations</b>	<b>Near to Habitations</b>	<b>No Anganwadis within or near to Habitations</b>	<b>Total Habitations</b>
Thiruvananthapuram	46	102	25	173
Kollam	18	8	0	26
Pathanamthitta	21	22	0	43
Alappuzha	9	25	0	34
Kottayam	30	43	6	79
Idukki	166	90	0	256
Ernakulam	28	21	12	61
Thrissur	27	21	11	59
Palakkad	213	151	62	426
Malappuram	54	136	39	229
Kozhikode	52	47	27	126
Wayanad	443	1471	253	2167
Kannur	123	193	37	353
Kasaragod	198	375	39	612
<b>Total</b>	<b>1428</b>	<b>2705</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>4644</b>
<b>Percent</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: GOK, (2013)

Besides, the anganwadis functioning in tribal areas lack basic infrastructure facilities. In a study on anganwadis by 'Rights', an NGO based in Trivandrum found that most of the anganwadi centres in tribal areas lack infrastructure facilities such as drinking water, toilet and own buildings<sup>3</sup>. An important fact to be noted in the study is that the budget allocation for anganwadis from plan fund of local bodies is showing a declining trend. The budget allocation for anganwadis had shown a decline from 0.57 percent in 2009-10 to 0.40 percent in 2010-11 (The New Indian Express, 2012). The important problems they face with regard to pre-schooling are physical access and infrastructure. Proper pre-schooling in tribal areas will certainly help in bringing down the dropout rate at school levels.

### **3.2.2 Importance of Multi Grade Learning Centres/Single Teacher Schools**

Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE) is one of the major interventions of SSA to provide for all children access to primary education. It is one of the central government-funded initiatives focused on education to all students (Box 3.3). Various strategies have been developed for ensuring participation of children of marginalized and deprived groups in tribal and coastal areas. In Kerala, all AIE centres are called as Multi Grade Learning Centers (MGLCs). It is functioning through an Educational Volunteer who is appointed by the SSA office concerned. Generally, the person appointed is equipped with general pedagogy and class room teaching skills giving support to children for their studies. The self-learning materials/textbooks are prepared by the SSA and supplied to the students free of cost. Presently, the government

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<sup>3</sup> The study was conducted by 'Rights' an NGO based in Trivandrum and it is focused on dalit-tribal-fishermen belt. The study conducted anganwadi centres across 7 districts of Kerala. This included tribal areas of Palakkad and Wayanad

has extended the Mid-Day Meal Scheme to these centres also<sup>4</sup>. The results of the MGLCs highlight that more than thousands of children are mainstreaming from these centres to formal schools annually. For strengthening these centres and promoting enrolment and retention, a variety of activities had been implemented.

### **Box 3.3 Schemes by Central Government Focusing Education for All (EFA)**

#### **District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)**

DPEP is a centrally sponsored scheme intended to promote primary education as a whole in selected educationally backward districts. Its emphasis is on decentralized planning and management as well as community participation. The programme was introduced in December 1994 in three districts of Kerala viz. Malappuram, Wayanad and Kasaragod. Wayanad got the DPEP scheme on account of the most tribal populated district in Kerala. The second phase of DPEP programme was introduced in another three more districts viz. Palakkad, Idukki and Thiruvananthapuram during 1997. The basic objective of this scheme was to provide access to education for all the students through formal system or non-formal education programme. In addition, it also aimed at reducing dropout rates and disparity in the enrollment of students and also, the learning achievement among gender and social groups. This initiative came to an end by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003 after the introduction of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

The vision of DPEP was reaching the unreached and all to school; back to school. The vision clearly explains the objective of bringing down the dropouts and of providing education within the access of the unreached population. To achieve this goal, one important strategy was opening up of Multi Grade Learning Centres in less accessible areas.

#### **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)**

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a flagship programme by the Central Government, started in the year 2001, to universalize elementary education across the nation. The core objectives of the programme include universal access, retention and bridging social inequality and gender gaps in the economy. SSA gives special emphasis on children belonging to socially deprived communities, SCs, STs, other weaker sections and minorities of the whole nation. SSA can be viewed as an extension of DPEP.

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<sup>4</sup> The government decided to extend the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) to alternative innovative schools from October 2002. The food materials as per Mid-day meals norms were received from the Department of Education.

In Kerala, MGLCs operate in the areas of tribal, coastal and also in those regions where there are no primary schools within a 3 km radius. It is evident from Table 3.2 that majority of the MGLCs is located in tribal areas. At present, there are 384 MGLCs running across 12 districts of Kerala. Out of the total MGLCs, 266 are located in tribal region which is 69.3 percent of the total MGLCs in the State.

**Table 3.2 Area-wise and District-wise Distribution of MGLCs in Kerala**

District	Coastal Area	Tribal Area	Areas where no Schools within 3 km	Total
Thiruvananthapuram	17	13	-	30
Kollam	-	3	-	3
Pathanamthitta	-	12	-	12
Alappuzha	-	-	-	0
Kottayam	-	-	-	0
Idukki	-	88	-	88
Ernakulam	-	18	4	22
Thrissur	-	-	3	3
Palakkad	-	33	-	33
Malappuram	6	23	18	47
Kozhikode	-	9	7	16
Wayanad	-	53	-	53
Kannur	-	14	5	19
Kasaragod	-	-	58	58
Total	23	266	95	384

Source: SSA Trivandrum, (2010)

Alappuzha, Kottayam, Thrissur and Kasaragod districts have no MGLCs functioning in tribal areas. Idukki has the highest number of MGLCs (88)

followed by Wayanad (53) and Palakkad (33) focusing its operation in tribal concentrated districts. Kasaragod, the second highest district in terms of the number of tribal settlements has no MGLCs functioning in the district indicating the lack of coverage of these centres in tribal areas.

**Table 3.3 List of Nursery schools and Single Teacher schools run by ST department**

<b>District</b>	<b>Nursery Schools</b>	<b>Single Teacher Schools</b>
Thiruvananthapuram	4	-
Kollam	2	-
Pathanamthitta	1	-
Alappuzha	-	-
Kottayam	-	-
Idukki	7	27
Ernakulam	-	2
Thrissur	-	-
Palakkad	6	-
Malappuram	2	-
Kozhikode	1	-
Wayanad	16	-
Kannur	1	-
Kasaragod	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>

Source: Scheduled Category Development Guide and ST Department, (2011)

Apart from the SSA initiative, Scheduled Tribe (ST) department of Kerala is also running Single Teacher Schools and Peripatetic schools<sup>5</sup> for the

<sup>5</sup> Peripatetic schools are a type of single teacher school meant exclusively for Primitive Tribal Groups



tribal students. The Single Teacher Schools were set up with the intention of creating awareness about education. Moreover, it gives emphasis on making them understand about the health and cleanliness of the surroundings, especially to those who dwell in forlorn areas. There are about 29 single teacher schools run by the department, out of this 27 are located in Idukki district and two are located in Ernakulam district (Table 3.3). Functioning of single teacher schools has been explained in Box 3.4.

#### **Box 3.4 Functioning of Single Teacher School**

The Single Teacher School is monitored by a teacher named as Education Volunteer (EV). The qualification required for the post is lowered to a mere pass in 10<sup>th</sup> level examination. The honorarium paid to the teacher is ₹ 3000 per month and for the helper it is ₹ 1000 per month. The maximum strength of the class is limited to 30 students. The admitted student shall study for a period of minimum 4 years in order to qualify primary level of education. The main drawback of this system is that all the Children from grade I to IV are taught in a single class and they all belong to the age of 5 to 13 years. Also, there is only one teacher for all subjects at all levels.

Till now, there are 295 single teacher schools run by SSA and ST Department to promote primary education in tribal areas. Considering the number of settlements i.e. 4644 and the extent of physical inaccessibility to schools, the number of single teacher schools is found to be inadequate.

### **3.3 Programmes and Schemes for School and College education**

From the second Chapter it was clear that the physical inaccessibility to the schools is more severe among the tribal settlements located in Idukki district followed by Palakkad and Wayanad districts. Since the implementation

of Tribal Sub-Plan and National Policy on Education 1986, the government has initiated with new policies and programmes to enhance the tribal education. This section analyses the initiatives such as Model Residential School, Tribal schools and pre-metric hostels set up in Kerala targeting tribal students.

### **3.3.1 Model Residential Schools (MRS)/Ashram Schools**

The concept of Ashram School<sup>6</sup> is based on the Gandhian philosophy of self-reliance and practice started with an experiment by Thakkar Bupa, a Gandhian, in Panchmahal district in Gujarat during pre-independence days (Jha and Jhingran, 2005). Ashram School is a centrally-sponsored scheme initiated by Government of India which is residential in nature, built to serve the tribal students from various clusters by providing free board and lodging. Many reasons are there to start such schools: first, the difficulty of establishing primary schools in tribal hamlets is due to the existence of rigid conventional norms. Second, it is aimed at creating a congenial atmosphere for learning/teaching as majority of the tribal households lack such an environment. Third, the policy is aimed to develop the total personality of children by imparting vocational skills in order to help them with better occupational and employment opportunities (Sujatha, 2002).

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<sup>6</sup> There is only a slight distinction between MRS and Ashram Schools. Article 275(1) defines MRS as schools with 100 percentage central government assistance for construction of school buildings, where as Ashram Schools get only 50 percentage central assistance for the same.

**Table 3.4 List of MRS/Ashram Schools Functioning in Kerala**

Sl No	District	Location	Year of establishment	Students	Class	Type of School
1	Thiruvananthapuram	MRS Kattela	1990-1991	Boys	5-12	Higher secondary School
2	Thiruvananthapuram	MRS (CBSE) Njaraneeli	2002-2003	Boys and Girls	1-8	Upper Primary
3	Kollam	MRS Kulathupuzha	2000-2001	Boys	5-10	High School
4	Pathanamthitta	MRS Vadasserikkara	1998-1999	Boys	5-12	Higher secondary School
5	Kottayam	MRS Erattupettah	2000-2001	Girls	5-10	High School
6	Idukki	MRS Munnar	1997-1998	Boys	5-12	Higher secondary School
7	Idukki	MRS Idukki	2001-2002	Boys and Girls	6-10	High School
8	Thrissur	MRS Chalakkudy	1998-1999	Girls	5-12	Higher secondary School
9	Palakkad	Ashram School Palakkad	1999-2000	Boys	1-10	High School
10	Palakkad	MRS Attappady	1999-2001	Girls	5-10	High School
11	Malappuram	Ashram School Manjery	1993-1994	Boys and Girls	1-10	High School
12	Wayanad	MRS Nallooradu	1990-1991	Boys	5-12	Higher secondary School
13	Wayanad	Ashram School Noolpuzha	1994-1995	Boys and Girls	1-12	Higher secondary School
14	Wayanad	Ashram School Thirunelli	2000-2001	Boys and Girls	1-10	High School
15	Wayanad	MRS Kalpatta	1997-1998	Girls	5-10	High School
16	Wayanad	MRS Pookode	2000-2001	Boys and Girls	6-10	High School
17	Kannur	MRS Kannur	1998-1999	Boys	5-12	Higher secondary School
18	Kasaragod	MRS Kasaragod	1998-1999	Girls	5-12	Higher secondary School

Source: STTD,GOK (2010)

The core objective of Model Residential School (MRS) is to give high quality education to the bright young students belonging to tribal communities. The functioning of the school will be in accordance with the public school which is good indeed for the tribal students who face the problem of great inaccessibility to such a kind of quality education. At present, there are 18 MRS/Ashram Schools functioning under the Scheduled Tribe Development Department. Among this, four schools located at Mancherry (Malappuram), Noolpuzha (Wayanad), Thirunelli (Wayanad) and Malampuzha (Palakkad) are specifically meant for Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs). All these schools are functioning under the control of Kerala Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe Educational Society. The admission procedure to MRS is given in Box 3.5.

Among these 18 schools, 8 are running up to higher secondary level, 9 up to high schools and one up to upper primary level (Table 3.4). Five schools are located in the district of Wayanad, the most tribal populated district in Kerala. We can see from the same Table that MRS functions in almost all the tribal populated districts of Kerala. Out of the total schools, 7 schools are exclusively for Boys, 5 are for girls and the remaining 6 schools admit both boys and girls. The allocation of MRS has maintained gender equality and significant number of MRS are located in most tribal populated districts such as Wayanad, Idukki and Palakkad indicating low regional disparity.

**Box 3.5 Admission Procedures to MRS**

The admission to MRS is done through a common admission test conducted by the Scheduled Caste department. An income limit is also fixed for admission by the department. Those parents whose annual income is less than INR 1,00,000 shall be eligible to apply for admission of their children. All expenses of students for stay and study are funded by the government.

**Table 3.5 Percent of MRS Students to Total Students**

Level of schooling	MRS Students	Total Students	Percent of MRS Students to Total Students
Primary	1141	64216	1.78
Secondary	633	13552	4.67
Higher Secondary	198	6805	2.91
<b>Total</b>	<b>1972</b>	<b>84573</b>	<b>2.33</b>

Source: Scheduled Tribe Development Department, (2013)

Table 3.5 indicates the number of students in MRS at different levels of schooling. It is evident from the Table that more number of students is studying at primary level and at secondary level, we can see a drastic decrease in the number of students compared to that of primary level as the number of students came down to nearly half of the primary level students. But, the number of MRS offering primary schooling is only five and all the 18 MRS provides secondary schooling. This indicates that more number of students is expected to study at secondary schooling in MRS compared to that of primary schooling. The drastic reduction in the number of students at secondary and higher secondary levels clearly points to the low enrolment or high dropout existing in MRS schools. The basic objective of inception of MRS is to reduce the dropout of students in tribal areas. The data highlighted above reveals the fact that dropout of students in these schools is not much different from that of other schools located in tribal areas.

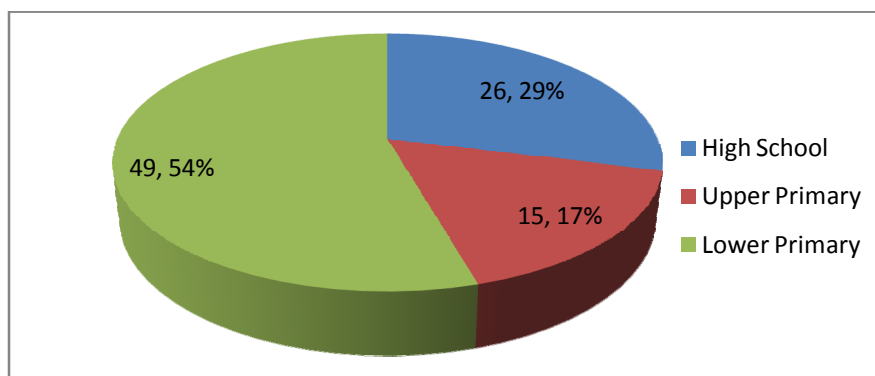
In a study by Kakoth (2012), on perception of tribal school dropout of Ashram school in Malppuram district, identified large number of school dropouts among Ashram School, Manjeri. Even though, the school is providing free food, accommodation, uniform etc., they were reluctant to return to the school once they go back to their respective home during vacation

or holidays. The study identified that the Ashram School had a high dropout rate during 2006-07 to 2010-11 and it was 38.8 percent indicating a distressing situation. From this analysis we can conclude that dropouts are not only a major threat to non-residential school in tribal areas but it emerged as a challenge for residential schools such as MRS/Ashram Schools as well.

### **3.3.2 Tribal Schools**

Apart from the MRS/ Ashram schools proposed by Central government to initiate education among tribes, Kerala state government runs tribal schools understanding their inaccessibility to educational institutions. These schools are started in those tribal areas having limited access to schools and have no such schools located nearby tribal settlements for continuing education of the tribes. Unlike MRS schools, these are not residential in nature and the schools consists of lower primary (LP), upper primary (UP), high school (HS) and higher secondary school (HSS). At present, there are 90 tribal schools running across all districts except Alappuzha district (Directorate of Public Instruction, 2012). Out of the total tribal schools, 49 are LP schools which run from I to IV standard, 15 are UP schools and the remaining 26 are High School (Figure 3.2).

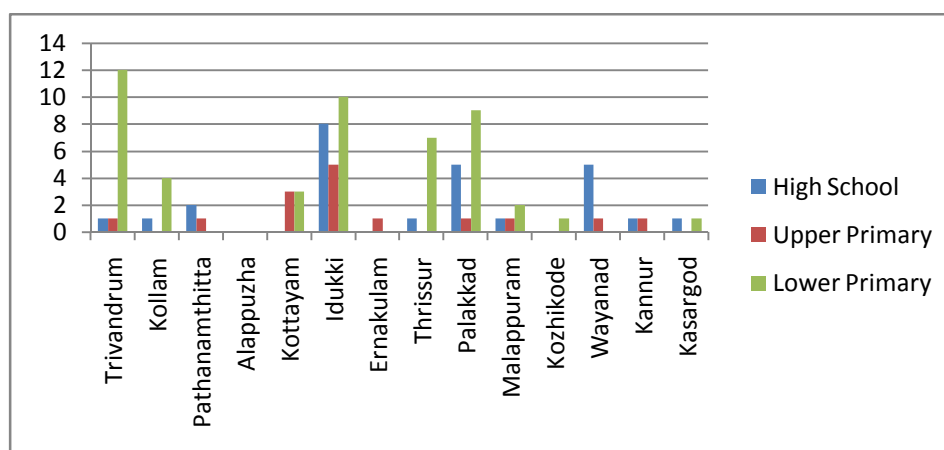
**Figure 3.2 Levels of Tribal Schools Functioning in Kerala**



Source: GOK, Directorate of Public Instruction, (2012)

Idukki, the district facing severe physical inaccessibility to schools by tribes has the largest number of tribal schools i.e. 23 schools which comprises of 8 HS, 5 UP and 10 LP schools (Figure 3.3; Box 3.6). The performances of tribal schools in Idukki are analyzed and depicted in Box No 3.6. Wayanad, the most tribal populated district of Kerala has only 6 tribal schools which include 5 HS and 1 UP schools and has no LP schools. The data shows that there are 53 MGLCs (an alternative for LP school in rural remote areas) running in Wayanad district. This clearly indicates the need for LP schools in tribal areas of Wayanad.

**Figure 3.3 Tribal Schools across Various Districts**

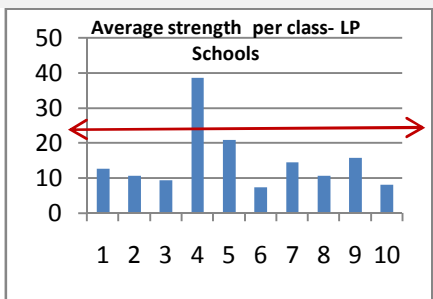


Source: GOK, Directorate of Public Instruction, (2012). (Appendix 3.1)

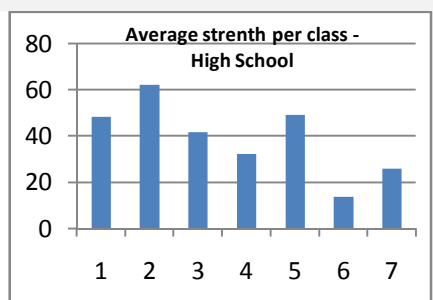
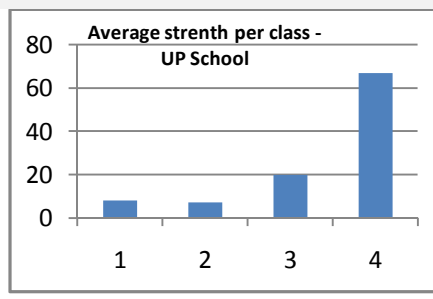
Subsequently to Idukki, the most number of tribal schools located in Palakkad district i.e. 5 HS, 1 UP and 9 LP schools which overall accounts for 15 tribal schools. Considering the inaccessibility problem in tribal areas of Palakkad, more number of schools is operating at LP level. Even after setting up of tribal schools in these areas, there are large numbers of MGLCs and single teacher schools running across Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad a district which indicates that still, there are significant tribal areas where formal schooling is far from the reach.

**Box 3.6 Case Study - Performance of Tribal Schools in Idukki District**

In Kerala, the highest number of tribal hostels is located in Idukki district. All the three figures give information on standard wise average strength at each school. From Figure 1 we can see that only one LP school functions at economic level because as per Kerala Education Rules, a school is considered to be uneconomic if minimum strength per batch/standard in LP/UP/HS is below 25 in number. The average number of teachers is 4 which is quiet sufficient at this level. Though these schools have less strength it provides sufficient quality education compared to single teacher schools



The case of UP schools is also not much different (Figure 2). Out of the four schools, three have less than the required number of students for running at economic level. One school has an average of more than 60 students in each standard. One of the reasons for this may be that the particular school is located at Kumily city where large number of non-tribal students is also studying in this school. They represent almost half of the students admitted to the school. The average strength of teachers is 10 which are sufficient at this level.



At high school level 6 schools out of the 7 are functioning as economic schools (Figure 3). Out of this, two schools runs up to higher secondary level where one school offer science and arts subjects as electives while the other school offers science and commerce. All these schools run classes from I to X.

Tribal schools are found to be economic at high school level. But there are more schools needed at lower primary level considering the inaccessibility facing at lower primary level. Tribal schools functioning at inaccessible areas generally found to be useful in getting quality education compared to the education provided at single teacher schools/ MGLCs. It may not be economic to run LP schools at tribal areas, but it is necessary to promote such schools to enhance compulsory elementary education among them.



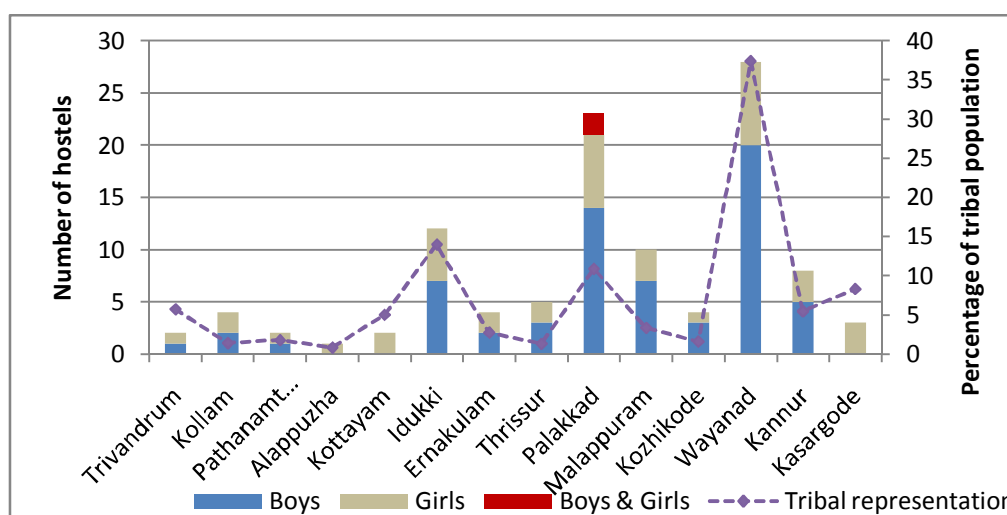
The allocation of tribal schools is disproportionate considering the criteria such as tribal concentration and physical inaccessibility. Measures should be taken by the government to set up schools in tribal areas considering is the fact that there is large number of tribal settlements which are having no schools located within the specified distance as permitted by RTE rules.

### 3.3.3 Hostel Facilities

It may not be possible to set up UPS and HS in all tribal areas, in such cases hostels facilities are needed for continuation of education of tribal students as these schools are located far away from tribal settlements. Scheduled Tribe Department of Kerala provides hostel facilities for tribal students studying at schools as well as colleges. In all, there are a total of 108 pre-matric hostels run by the department across all the districts of Kerala. The beneficiaries are those students whose house is located far away from the school. The inmates are provided with free meals, two pairs of dress in a year, educational aids and notebooks. The hostels are functioning under the supervision of a warden, assisted by other employees such as watchmen, cooks etc. From the Figure 3.5 we can see that more pre-matric hostels are located in Wayanad district (28) followed by Palakkad (23) and Idukki (12) districts. These districts represent the highest number of tribal population in Kerala. But, in the case of other districts, we can see that the hostels are allocated on uneven basis without considering the representation of tribes to the total tribal population. For example Kasaragod district, which is having 8.33 tribal populations (Fourth largest tribal concentrated district in Kerala), has only 3 pre-matric hostel and that too only for girls. Similarly, in Trivandrum district, there are only two pre-matric hostels; among this one is for boys and the other for girls. But this district is having 5.74 percentage of the total tribal population.

For the tribal populated districts viz. Wayanad, Idukki and Palakkad, the department has maintained equality in allocating pre-matric hostels but these are found to be inadequate as most of the hostels in these areas are running above its permitted intake capacity. And in a few areas there is lack of hostel facilities for boys and/or girls which were visible at Puthur Panchayath of Palakkad district. A tribal school located in this locality has only boys' hostel and no hostel facility for girls, which exclude girls from faraway places from getting higher levels of schooling.

**Figure 3.4 Number of Pre-matric Hostels run by ST Department**



Source: Scheduled Tribe Development Department, (2013). (Appendix 3.2)

The allocation of hostels for girls also found to be inadequate as they are having less number of hostels (41) compared to that of boys (65). Though the allocation is not standing with gender equity, the hostels for girls are covered in all the fourteen districts compared to that for boys where they have hostels in 11 districts only. The excluded districts include Kasaragod and Kottayam which are having 8.33 and 5.04 percentage of tribal representation. From the Figure 3.4 it is evident that hostels are not allocated on the basis of tribal

concentration and many districts with more tribal concentration are not having sufficient number of hostels to accommodate the students.

**Table 3.6 Place of Stay of Tribal Students while doing Primary and Secondary Schooling**

	<b>Pre-matric Hostels</b>	<b>MRS</b>	<b>Own House</b>	<b>Other Arrangements</b>
Primary	-	1.78	94.99	3.23
Secondary	14.19	4.67	77.71	3.43

Source: Scheduled Tribe Development Department, (2013)

Table 3.6 indicates the place of stay of students while doing primary and secondary schooling. Out of the students studying at primary level, most of them are going from home and 1.8 percent of them are studying at MRS. About 3.23 percent of students have any hostel facilities offered by the schools or government. More than 2,000 have the same problem and they seek alternative arrangements which are not conducive for their studies. Statistics by Scheduled Tribe Development Department (STDD) shows that still 576 tribal settlements do not have any LP school within 5 km radius. Considering the inaccessibility to LP schools and the number of students seeking alternative accommodation facility, the authorities need to extend single teacher schools to these regions or make necessary arrangements by way of setting up of hostel facilities ensuring easy access to primary education.

During secondary education by the tribal students majority of them are staying at own house while doing secondary education (Table 3.6). The pre-matric hostels are found to be very useful for them and around 14.2 percent of the students studying at this level make use of this facility. But, many pre-matric hostels in these areas are running above the permitted intake capacity indicating demand for more hostels. About 4.67 percent are admitted to MRS

and stays at hostels run by the institution. Here also, we can see that a significant percentage of students are not having pre-matric hostels and they are either staying at relative's house, charitable institutions or make their own arrangements. They account for around 3.4 percent of the total students studying at secondary level. The data supplied by STDD indicates that more than 40 percent of the tribal settlements are not having any secondary school within 5 km radius indicating severe physical inaccessibility to high school. The facilities offered by the government are inadequate to provide an inclusive education to all the students. The extension of schools in tribal areas as well as hostel facilities is necessary for improving the present situation.

### **3.4 Grants and Allowances for Promoting Education**

#### **3.4.1 Pre-matric Education Grants**

Kerala government provides lump-sum grant and monthly grant to each tribal student in order to meet the expenses incurred by the parents for educating children. The grant amount varies according to the level of education. The rate of lump-sum grant and monthly stipend up to 10<sup>th</sup> level is as shown in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7 Grant Amount at Pre-matric Level**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Lump-sum Grant</b>	<b>Monthly Stipend</b>
Lower Primary Level (Class I to IV)	140	55
Upper Primary Level (Class V to VI)	240	60
High school Level (Class VII to X)	330	70

Source: Scheduled Category Development Guide, (2011)

Often the amount of money provided as grant is found to be inadequate for parents especially for those who send their children to far away schools

(see Box 3.7). Grant amount need to be improved to find additional expenses like travelling and other costs associated with education.

### **Box 3.7 Allowances to ST students**

The government gives two sets of uniform every year for each tribal student studying in tribal or welfare schools at lower primary level. The benefit for each student is fixed at Rs. 250 per year. The state government allocates funds for this purpose.

In order to encourage parents to send their children to primary classes, attractive cash incentive is given to parents. The students having an attendance rate of minimum 75 percent are eligible for the same. The amount fixed at ₹ 50 per month totaling ₹ 500 will be given to parents at the end of 10 month. This scheme is to prevent dropout from LP Schools.

In addition to the above mentioned concessions and allowances, the state government has designed various other policies and programmes to encourage and promote education among Scheduled Tribes. These policies are listed below.

- The State government allocated ₹ 500 per month as grant for board each students staying at hostels having the recognition of the ST department and hostels run by voluntary organizations.
- Those Students secure 45 percent and above marks in annual examinations in 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> standards are given ₹ 50 to encourage them to continue their education.
- Separate tutorial facility to students studying in 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> levels with the objective of increasing the percentage of pass.

### **3.4.2 Post-matric Education Grants**

The Govt. provides more assistance to ST students after the completion of the pre-matric education. Govt. will bear their complete educational fees without any income limit for various courses. In addition, monthly stipend and annual lump-sum grants are also provided. This annual lump-sum grant varies according to the course selected. Monthly stipend rate is fixed at ₹ 405 for

each student within the reach of 8 kilometers from the institution and ₹ 475 per month for students residing beyond 8 kilometers. Monthly stipend is not provided for Students staying at college hostels or at recognized hostels but Govt. meets the actual food and lodging expenses. To meet other expenses of the students, pocket money is provided at ₹ 120 per-month for engineering/medical students and ₹ 100 for other students.

### **3.4.3 Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS)**

In Kerala, the MDMS started in 1984. Mid-Day Meal scheme was first introduced at LP schools in the selected 222 villages in Kerala. Later, it was extended to all LP schools (Standard I to IV) in 1985. During 1987-88, the scheme was extended up to UP level (Standard I to VII) and in 2007-08, further up to standard VIII. The scheme consists of supplying cooked food to the children using rice, pulses, and coconut oil/palmolen.

The major objective of the scheme is to increase gross enrolment and attendance at school levels. Through this scheme, 90 percent of class attendance is expected everyday. One of the important landmarks of MDMS with regard to tribal education is that the government decided to extend the scheme to all EGS/AIE centres from October 2002. Even after introduction of MDMS Scheme, the continuing dropout at all levels of schooling need to be addressed and require exact solution to resolve the issue.

## **3.5 Tribal Sub-Plan Approach**

Since the Indian independence, the economy was brought under the concept of planning which was carried out through the implementation of Five-Year Plans

(FYP). The First Plan was introduced in the year 1951 and currently the economy is running through Twelfth Plan (2012-2017). The inception of FYP has made significant impact on the development of tribes in India. Since the very First Five-Year Plan onwards the Planning Commission has made allocation of funds for the tribal development. But the proportion funds were inadequate considering their backwardness and their proportionate strength in the total population. Later, from Fifth Plan onwards the government has increased the amount allocated for tribal the development programmes which is which is visible from Table 3.8.

**Table 3.8 Plan Outlay and Expenditure for Tribal Development Programmes in India**

Plan Period	Total Fund Allocation (₹ in Crores)	Allocation for Tribal Development Programmes (₹ in Crores)	Percentage
First Plan (1951-56)	2069.00	13.93	0.67
Second Plan (1956-57)	4800.00	49.92	1.04
Third Plan (1961-66)	7500.00	50.53	0.67
Annual Plan (1966-67 to 1968-69)	6686.54	32.32	0.48
Fourth Plan (1969-74)	15901.47	79.50	0.50
Fifth Plan (1974-79)	38853.24	1157.67	2.98
Annual Plan (1979-80)	12176.00	855.16	7.02
Sixth Plan (1980-85)	97500.00	3640.25	3.73
Seventh Plan (1985-90)	180000.00	6744.85	3.75
Annual Plan (1990-91 & 1991-92)	139196.70	N.A	N.A
Eighth Plan (1992-97)	434100.00	22409.65	5.16
Ninth Plan (1997-2002)	859200.00	32087.26	3.73
Tenth Plan (2002-07)	1618460.00	1481.00	0.09
Eleventh Plan (2007-2012)	3644718.00	3633.00	0.10

N.A Not Available

Source: Suresh, Devath (2014)

It is clear from the Table that the proportion of amount allocated for the tribal development as a percentage of total Plan outlay from Fifth Plan to Eighth Plan has shown an increasing trend. Though it showed a decrease during the Ninth Plan, the actual amount allocated for the tribal development showed a tremendous increase compared to that of previous year. For the next subsequent Plans, there was a sharp decrease in the allocation of funds for the tribal development programmes.

The increase in the share of funds for tribal development witnessed soon after the introduction of Tribal Sub-Plan during the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79). This has been implemented across all the States and Union Territories in India. Since the inception of TSP, there has been a tremendous increase in the allocation of funds for the tribal development under various heads such as education, health, housing etc. TSP is being funded from five sources. They are:

- a) State Plan outlays
- b) Special Central Assistance (SCA) to TSP
- c) Grants under Article 275 (1) of the constitution to the States/U.T
- d) Sectoral programmes of Central Ministries/Departments; and
- e) Institutional Finance.

Among these sources, Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Plan is a Centrally sponsored programme where 100 percent grant is provided by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The ultimate objective of extending SCA to TSP is to boost the demand-based income-generation programmes and thus raise the social and economic status of the tribes. The policy covers income-generation schemes in sectors of agriculture, horticulture, sericulture and



animal husbandry. For the year 2013-14, an amount of ₹ 549 lakh was allocated for Kerala under this scheme.

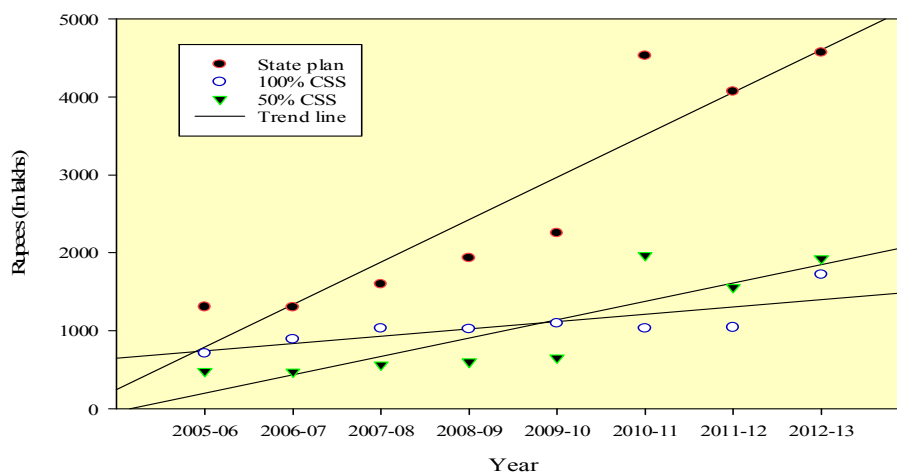
### **3.5.1 Educational Sector Development under TSP**

The Tribal Sub-Plan of Kerala was prepared in accordance with the guiding principles of Five-Year Plan and the recommendations of the working group on tribal development. There are six schemes upon which the budget allocation was undertaken. They are:

- a) Direction and Administration
- b) Education
- c) Health
- d) Housing
- e) Special Central Assistance
- f) Other Expenditures

The Tribal Sub-Plan includes State Plan outlay, 50 percent State's share of Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), 100 percent CSS and Special Central Assistance (SCA) to TSP and Grants under Article 275(1) of Indian Constitution. Significant proportion of funds is allocated for education, health, social development and income generating activities. Among this, more funds are allocated for educational projects and also, there are many projects under the head of education compared to that of other sectors. As on 2012-13, the educational budget allocated among 27 projects and a total of ₹ 11493.45 lakh is set-aside for these projects under both Plan and Non-Plan provision. This accounts almost 41 percent of the budget estimates of State sector schemes by the Scheduled Tribe Development Department.

**Figure 3.5 Trends in the Allocation of Tribal Education Budget**



Source: STDD, Various TSP Budget Estimates, (2005-12). (Appendix 3.3)

From Figure 3.5 it is evident that the expenditure under the head of education shows an upward trend from the year 2005-06 to 2012-13. The education expenditure includes three important sources viz. State Plan, 100 percent Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) and 50 percent CSS. The major proportion of tribal education budget is contributed by the State Plan representing almost 60 percentage of total educational outlay in 2012-13. We can see a tremendous increase in State Plan expenditure on education under TSP over the years. The central government assistance by way of Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) has also increased during these years especially partially sponsored scheme i.e. 50 percent CSS. For the period up to 2009-10, the increase was only a nominal for both State well as Central Plans but thereafter it recorded a sharp increase in educational allocation of funds especially under the State Plan.

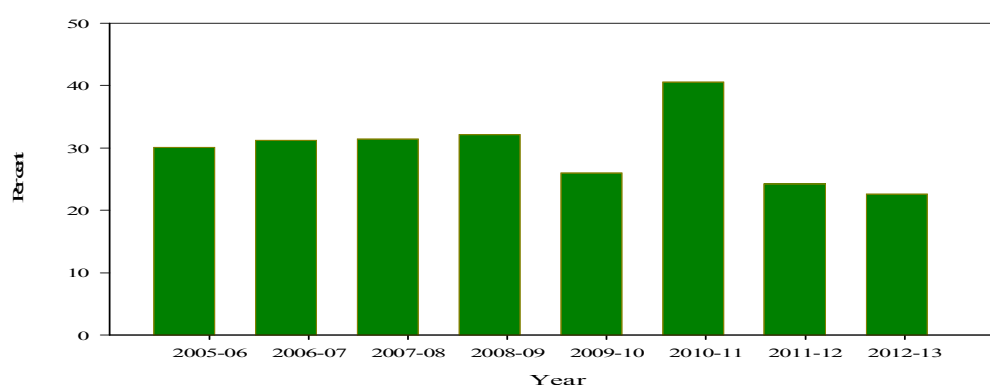
Over the years, the government has given due importance to education by allocating considerable amount of funds in various TSPs. For the year

2012-13, government allocated ₹ 8220 lakhs towards education under TSP. This include ₹ 4570.35 lakhs as State Plan, ₹ 1722 as 100 percent Central assistance and ₹ 1928.35 as 50 percent Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The State Plan is included with 50 percent State's share of CSS.

### 3.5.2 Education Outlay under State-Plan

Education is one of the key components of Tribal Sub-Plan and the government has given importance to this sector by providing significant budget allocation under this head. Figure 3.6 shows the percentage of educational outlay under the State-Plan for the years starting from 2005-06 to 2012-13. We can see considerable allocation towards educational projects/ schemes over these years. The highest share of educational expenditure to total State-Plan outlay witnessed during 2010-11 in which it had a share of around 40 percent and thereafter, for next two consecutive years, we can see a decline in the share of education as it fell to 24.3 percent during 2011-12 and 22.7 percent during 2012-13. Even though, the share of education decreased during these years, the amount allocated for education almost equaled previous year's budget estimate.

**Figure 3.6 Percent of Education Expenditure under State Plan**



Source: Worked Out from Various Tribal Sub-Plan Estimates, STDD, (2005-12)

### **3.5.3 Projects aimed at the Development of Early Childhood Education**

In all, there are 40 pre-schooling centres which are run by the Scheduled Tribe Department of Kerala. Considering whole tribal settlements in Kerala i.e. 4762 settlements, about 1236 of them have an Anganwadi centre within the settlement and 2980 settlements have an anganwadi centre located near to their settlements i.e. within a radius of 2.5 km (STDD, 2013). For 244 settlements, they have such facility within a distance of 2.5 km to 5 km radius and for 117 settlements; the nearest anganwadi centre is located at a distance more than 5 km. This indicates that still many tribal settlements are not having easy access to pre-schooling centres which is essential for setting a foundation in the overall development of a child. The TSP State Plan budget estimates for the past ten years shows that the government has not allocated any kind of funds for the improvement of anganwadi centres under the Plan estimates. Besides, the government has not taken initiative for starting anganwadi centres in those settlements which are facing severe physical inaccessibility to these centres. But, the government is providing lump-sum grant and cash allowance for buying one set of uniform for those tribal students studying at the pre-schooling centres which are run by the department, included in Non-Plan estimates. For the year 2012-13, a sum of ₹ 80.46 lakh is set aside under Non-Plan budget provision for nursery schools. From the analysis it is clear that the department is not giving much focus for Early Childhood Education of tribes. Considering the physical inaccessibility to anganwadi centres, it is vital to give due importance to pre-schooling and require an early action from the part of the government.

### **3.5.4 Projects for Promoting Primary Schooling among Tribes**

As we discussed in Section 3.2.2, there are a number of single teacher and peripatetic schools which are run by the ST Department of Kerala. Among 4762 tribal settlements in Kerala, about 1892 settlements are not having any Lower Primary (LP) schools within 5 km radius. The number of single teacher schools and MGLCs initiated by the government are inadequate to meet the severe physical inaccessibility to primary schools faced by the tribal settlements. Under TSP projects, the department included only one project component for promoting primary schooling in tribal areas which are by way of allocating funds for peripatetic education. Since 2006-07, the single teacher schools and balavinjna kendras run by the department also bought under this scheme. For the year 2012-13, ₹ 100 lakh is allocated for the scheme targeting around 700 tribal students to benefit this scheme. The amount allocated under this scheme for the year 2012-13 showed 33 percent increase compared to that of previous year i.e. 2011-12. However, the budget estimate do not highlighted any additional projects for enhancing primary education. Comparing with the extent of physical inaccessibility to primary schools by many tribal settlements, they require more number of single teacher schools or hostel facilities for accessing primary schooling. This need to be addressed by the department and required to incorporate more policies in this regard.

### **3.5.5 Allocation of Funds for Projects aimed at Promoting Upper Primary and High School Education among Tribes**

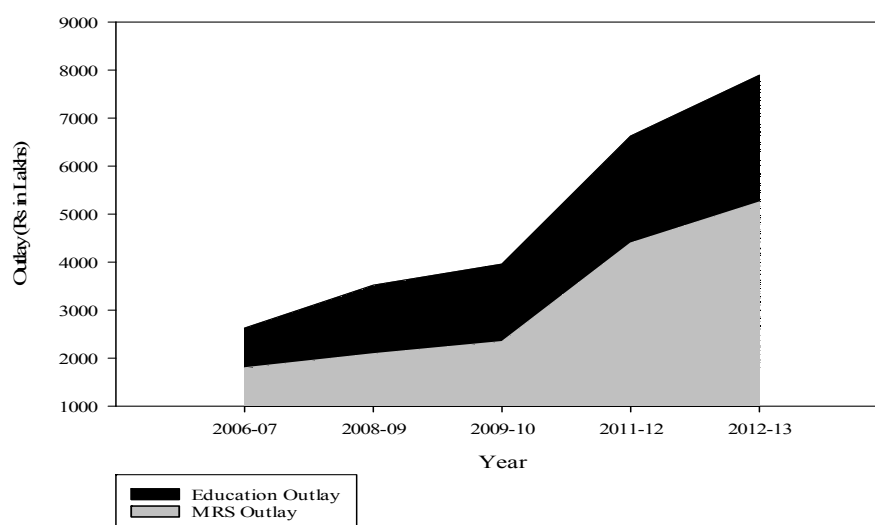
The government has allocated more funds towards the promotion of UP and HS level schooling by tribal students. Funds are allocated for construction of Model Residential Schools (MRS)/Ashram schools, management of MRS/Ashram schools and among other special schemes. Majority of the Central

allocation i.e. both 100 percent and 50 percent assistance is given for construction of MRS/Ashram schools. For this purpose, ₹ 1928.35 lakhs were allocated as 50 percent Central assistance and ₹ 200 lakhs as 100 percent Central assistance during the year 2012-13 which shows much higher allocation compared to that of the previous year. TSP budget estimates shows that a considerable proportion of educational outlay has been set aside for the construction and management of MRS and Ashram school. Figure 3.7 shows that in all years from starting from 2006-07 to 2012-13, the proportion of MRS Outlays are at higher side. The funds allocated for MRS are for two purposes viz. construction of MRS/Ashram schools and management or running of MRS. Moreover, we can see considerable increase in educational outlay during 2006-07 to 2012-13 which was due to the overall increase in State Plan expenditure under TSP.

During 2012-13, an amount of ₹ 79 Crores was allocated for educational expenditure under TSP. Out of the total amount, two-third is allocated for construction and running of MRS school and only ₹ 26 Crores was left for other educational projects including construction of pre-matric hostel facilities which are essential for resolving problems related to physical inaccessibility to schools. The total MRS in Kerala can offer education for around 4000 tribal students. Government offers quality of education through MRS or Ashram schools and these schools continues to play an important role in the transformation of tribal education. The fund allocation for MRS shows the importance given by the governments in imparting education for tribal students. But, there are many tribal students whom are studying at government and government aided schools in Kerala. During 2012-13, about 79,900 students are enrolled at different levels of schooling i.e. up to High School level and the educational improvement of these students is also important.

Since major proportion of the funds are allocated for MRS, only less amount left for developmental schemes such as grants, scholarships, special schemes and infrastructure development of hostels. The budget allocated for various developmental schemes is depicted in Table 3.9.

**Figure 3.7 MRS Outlay as a Proportion of Education Outlay**



Source: Worked Out from Various Tribal Sub-Plan Estimates, STDD, (2005-12). (Appendix 3.4)

**Table 3.9 Schemes to Promote Schooling at UP, HS and Higher Secondary Level**

Schemes	Target	Outlay* (₹ in Lakhs)
Ayyankali memorial talented search and development scheme	Brilliant students passed in an intelligence test conducted at the end of IV <sup>th</sup> and VII <sup>th</sup> standard	50
Special incentive to brilliant students	Students from educationally backward community who perform well. Apart from SSLC and Plus-Two students, degree, post graduate and professional courses degree holders are also included under this scheme	60
Tutorial scheme for school going students and failed students	Target students studying at SSLC, Plus-one and Plus-two, and students failed at SSLC and Plus-two	85

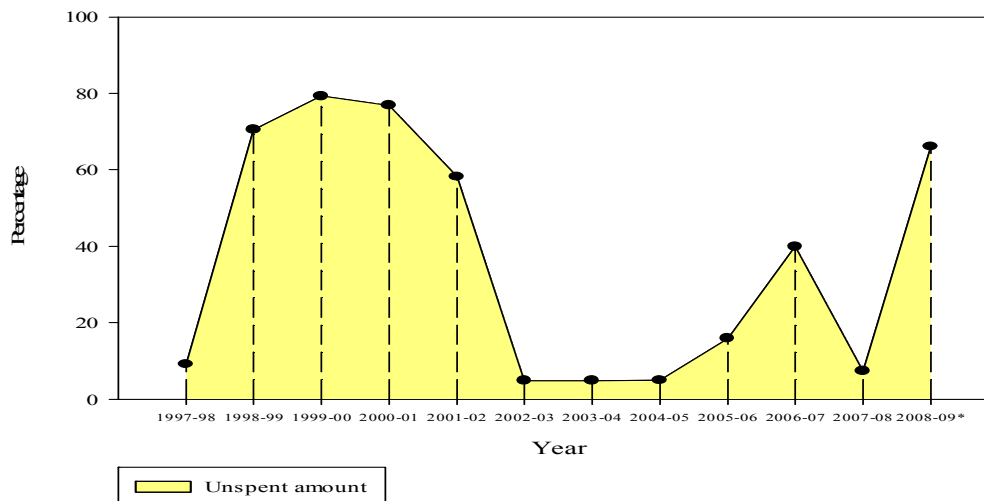
\*Outlay during 2012-13

Source: Budget Circular and Tribal Sub-Plan Programmes, (2012)

There are three schemes for promoting tribal education at UP and High School levels viz. Ayyankali Memorial Talent Search and Development Scheme, special incentive to brilliant students, and tutorial scheme for school going and failed students. The first two schemes are targeting brilliant tribal students and the third one is targeting tribal students who are weak in learning subjects. Among the two scholarship schemes, only first one is specifically targeting the school students. The special incentive scheme is meant for those students who secure first class in S.S.L.C, Plus-Two, graduation, post graduation and professional courses and for which ₹ 60 lakhs has been allocated during 2012-13. The students selected through an intelligence test conducted at the end of standard IV and VII are eligible for Ayyankali Memorial Talent Search and Development Scholarship. An amount of ₹ 45 lakhs has been allocated towards this scheme during 2012-13 which covers the cost of books, medical care, hostel facilities, special guidance and counseling of the selected students.

For tutorial facilities, an amount of ₹ 85 lakhs is being allocated under the State Plan during the year 2012-13. The scheme is extremely beneficial for tribal students but, the coverage of the scheme is limited to school going students studying at 10<sup>th</sup> level, Plus-one and Plus-two, and also for 10<sup>th</sup> and Plus-two failed students. The dropout rate indicates that irrespective of the levels of schooling there are significant number of students dropping out at each class. The nature of schemes implemented for promoting school education indicates that the authorities have failed to build policies which can improve the enrolment and reduce the school dropout rate of tribal students.



**Figure 3.8 Percentage of Unutilized TSP Amount**

\* Expenditure up to December 2008

Source: Kunhikrishnan, (2009)

The spendthrift amount of tribal budget as a percentage of total allocation was high during the years from 1998-1999 to 2001-2002 (Figure 3.8). This percentage declined from 2002-2003 to 2005-2006 and we can see an efficient use of TSP funds during these years. Thereafter the unutilized ratio showed fluctuation this indicates that the TSP amounts are not efficiently utilized in all the years for the benefit of tribes. The department needs to bridge the gap between allocation and actual expenditure under TSP. In order to get complete benefit of budget allocation the funds need to be utilized efficiently.

The educational development in India was sluggish since the Indian independence and it took more than two decades to frame an educational policy for the country. First of such policy came in the year 1968 but it failed to address many issues of school education. It was only from the Fifth Five-Year (1974-1979) Plan onwards the tribal education got its attention. The second policy on Education adopted in the year 1986 proved to be useful for

tribes as it included many measures to improve tribal situation. Even after the introduction of these policies, still many tribal areas are facing challenges to school education. Initiatives by SSA and ST department through opening up of MGLCs and Single Teacher Schools in tribal areas were found to be beneficial for remote dwelling students. This helped many tribal students in mainstreaming from these centres to formal schools. MRS and Ashram schools in tribal areas provide quality residential education but the dropout rate prevailing at these schools also adds more concerns. The setting up of pre-matric hostels was more uneven across various districts considering population representation of tribes from each district. Besides, the present number of hostels is inadequate to resolve the physical inaccessibility faced tribal students. Since the introduction of Tribal Sub-Plan, there was considerable increase in the allocation of funds for the tribal developmental activities such as education, health, housing, livelihood etc. The share of education under TSP indicates that the government has given due importance to this sector. But, we can see that only less proportion of funds are made available for projects benefiting majority of the school going students. Moreover, the government/department has not taken any specific projects which can resolve the problems such as high dropout rate prevailing at school levels, poor enrolment of students at high school level etc. Besides, the department also failed to address the severe physical inaccessibility to various levels of schooling faced by the tribal settlements. Another important aspect which needs the attention is to give importance to early childhood education i.e. the department should frame projects which will enhance easy access to pre-schooling and primary level schooling.

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**DETERMINANTS OF DROPOUTS**

<b>C o n t e n t s</b>	<p>4.1 <i>Characteristics of Samples taken from the Districts of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad</i></p> <p>4.2 <i>Schooling by Dropout Respondents</i></p> <p>4.3 <i>Socio-Economic and Family Background of Dropout Students'</i></p> <p>4.4 <i>Income, Expenditure and Indebtedness</i></p> <p>4.5 <i>Place of Stay while Schooling.</i></p> <p>4.6 <i>Physical Inaccessibility—Still an Impediment to Education</i></p> <p>4.7 <i>Dialect and Medium of Instruction</i></p> <p>4.8 <i>Cost of Educating Tribal Children: A Burden for Families</i></p> <p>4.10 <i>Inability to Comprehend Subjects</i></p> <p>4.11 <i>Parental and Teacher Motivation on Students</i></p> <p>4.12 <i>Impact of Familial Aspects on the Studies of Children</i></p> <p>4.13 <i>Helping the Family: Predictor of Dropouts?</i></p> <p>4.14 <i>Lack of Enthusiasm in Studies: A Causal Factor to Student Absenteeism</i></p> <p>4.15 <i>Student Absenteeism: Major Challenge in Tribal Education</i></p>
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In Chapter 3, we have discussed the various educational policies and programmes implemented by the Central as well as State governments. It was evident from the analysis that there are a wide range of programmes implemented in tribal areas for the educational advancement of tribal students but the continuing high dropout rate at schools indicates the lack of effectiveness of such programmes. Chapter 4 deals with an in-depth analysis of tribal school dropouts' situation in Kerala which indeed, helps in identifying the reasons for the same.

#### **4.1 Characteristics of Samples taken from the Districts of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad**

In Kerala, about 53 percent of tribes are located in the districts of Palakkad, Idukki, and Wayanad. Each tribal group is unique with respect to their socio-cultural traits. The samples for the present study were collected from tribal predominant districts of Kerala such as Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad. A total of 400 samples were taken which include 280 dropouts and 120 non-dropouts. The highest number of samples were taken from Wayanad District (208) followed by Palakkad with 108 samples and Idukki district with 84 samples (Table 4.1).

The sample size covers seven important tribal communities in Kerala. In Palakkad district, samples were collected from *Irula* community, the dominant but educationally backward community in the district. As Wayanad has the largest number of tribal communities in Kerala, in the present study, samples were collected from four important tribal communities such as *Paniya*, *Kuruma*, *Adiya* and *Kurichchan*. Out of the 208 samples in Wayanad district, 108 are Paniyans, 51 Kurumans, 18 Adiyas and 31 Kurichchan. Samples covered in Idukki district include *Muthuva* and *Mannan*. Out of the 84 samples taken from Idukki district, 26 are Muthuvans and the rest belongs to Mannan community.

Besides, out of the total samples, 280 are dropouts and 120 are non-dropout students. Non-dropout represents those tribal students who are studying at 10<sup>th</sup> level schooling. The dropout respondents are further classified on the basis of levels of schooling completed i.e. High School (HS), Upper Primary (UP) and Lower Primary (LP). Out of the 280 dropout students, 42 are dropped out at LP level, 113 students dropped out at UP level and the remaining 125 are those students who dropped out during HS level (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.1 Caste-wise Segregation of Tribal Population**

District	Caste							Total
	Irula	Paniya	Kuruma	Adiya	Kurichia	Muthuva	Mannan	
Palakkad	108							108
Wayanad		108	51	18	31			208
Idukki						26	58	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>400</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.2 Dropouts on the basis of Level of Schooling**

Dropout school level	Frequency	Percentage
Lower Primary	42	15
Upper Primary	113	40
High School	125	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey

The secondary data on dropout rate in Kerala show that as the level of schooling goes up, the dropout rate is showing an increasing trend and it is significantly high at high school level (See section 2.6.4). In order to analyse this scenario, the study included more dropouts' samples from high school level. The data was analysed and compared with the variables such as level of schooling, gender, community and educational status which has been explained in coming sections.

#### **4.1.1 Segregation of Dropout Respondents on the basis of Community**

The dropouts samples selected for the study comprise of students dropped out from 2<sup>nd</sup> standard to 10<sup>th</sup> standard. The majority of the respondents are from High School (VIII to X) level followed by Upper Primary (V to VII) and

Lower Primary (I to IV) (Table 4.3). The basic intention of classifying the dropouts according to level of schooling will certainly help in identifying factors that lead to dropouts of students at various levels which are relevant in tribal education.

**Table 4.3 Segregation of Dropout Respondents According to Level of Schooling**

Caste	Lower Primary	Upper Primary	High School	Total
Irula	3	11	39	53
Paniya	24	50	21	95
Kuruma	0	15	21	36
Adiya	3	9	6	18
Kurichia	0	6	9	15
Muthuva	6	11	3	20
Mannan	6	11	26	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>280</b>

Source: Field Survey

Among the seven tribal groups taken for the study, more dropouts samples are from Paniya (95 respondents), followed by 53 respondents from Irula community (Table 4.3). In Kerala, more dropouts are reported among Paniyans, by taking more samples from this particular group could ensure an in-depth study. At UP and HS levels, all the seven tribal groups have significant number of dropout respondents.

#### **4.1.2 Gender and Age Specification of Samples taken for the Study**

Out of the total respondents taken for the study, 34 percent are females and the remaining 66 percent are males (Table 4.4). The secondary data of dropout of tribal students indicates that the dropout rate is slightly higher

among the males compared to that of females. This particular classification could bring out the gender dimensions dropouts. More female respondents are from Paniya community and, Irula has the largest number of male respondents. Among all the communities, there is significant number of male and female respondents from each community.

**Table 4.4 Male and Female Sample Representation**

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Irula	28	80	108
Paniya	46	62	108
Kuruma	16	35	51
Adiya	9	9	18
Kurichia	14	17	31
Muthuva	4	22	26
Mannan	19	39	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>400</b>

Source: Field Survey

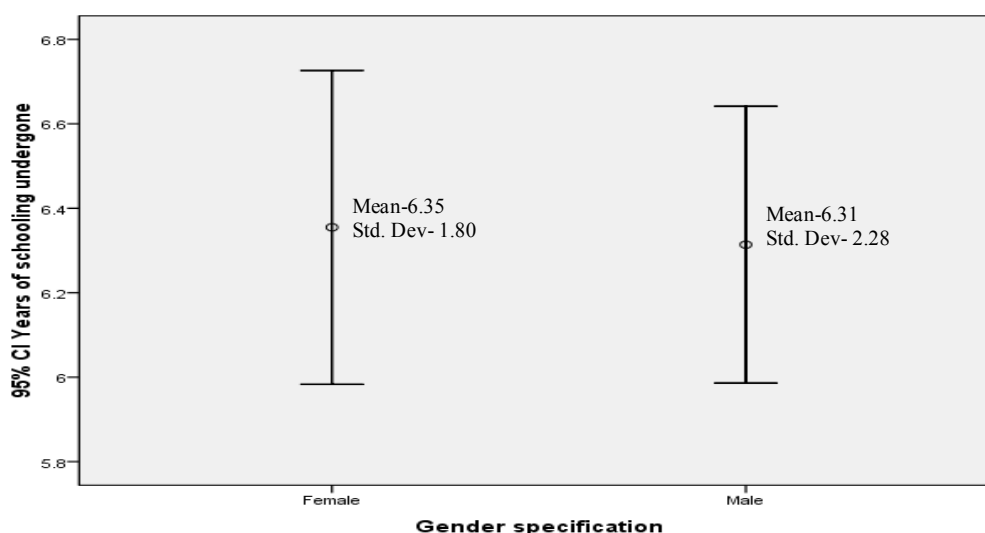
The age of the respondents ranges between 7 and 24 (Appendix 4.1). Among this, majority of the respondents are between the age of 14 and 18 years. This indicates that the respondents have very recently dropped out from the schools. Analysis on recently dropped out students will give more insights and relevant information to the present situation.

## **4.2 Schooling by Dropout Respondents**

Dropouts' respondents have distinct years of schooling and the mean years of schooling is an important variable in determining the level of education of a particular community. Besides, the average years of schooling spent by

dropout respondents would help in analyzing the level of education completed by them. The average years spent by dropout tribal girls at school is 6.35 which is not much different from that of boys i.e. 6.31 years. The error bar at a confidence interval of 95 % indicates a small interval for males compared to that of females which means that the average years of schooling for the population of males will show only less variation from the mean value (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1 Average Years of Schooling Undergone by Dropout Male and Female Tribal Students**



Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.5 t-test Result – Average Years of Schooling across Male and Female**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	13.144	.000	0.152	279	0.88
Equal variances not assumed			0.164	225.431	0.87

Source: Field Survey



The t test result after analysing the difference in the mean years of schooling across the gender is depicted in Table 4.5. The 't' value of 0.152 is not significant i.e. p value  $>.05$ , so we accept the null hypothesis and conclude there is no gender difference in the mean values of average years of schooling undergone by the dropout males and females. It was also evident from the analysis that the dropouts have very low level of schooling and the mean value shows that, on an average, they have only middle level of schooling.

As we discussed in Chapter 2, large number of tribal children depends government and government-aided schools for their education. The majority of the surveyed respondents are students who studied at government and government-aided schools (Table 4.6). The government and government-aided schools account for majority of (97.5 percent) dropouts and only 1.1 percent of them comprises of dropouts from private schools. Dropouts from tribal school comprise of 13.9 percent of the total samples. MGLCs, the single teacher school established in tribal areas to enhance primary education in those settlements which face severe physical inaccessibility, the sample size constitutes 1.4 percent of the respondents who have dropped out from these schools.

**Table 4.6 Nature of School from Where Student Dropped**

<b>Nature of school</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Tribal	39	13.9	13.9
Non-tribal –govt.	89	31.8	45.7
Government aided	145	51.8	97.5
Private	3	1.1	98.6
MGLC	4	1.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.7 Person Insisted for Dropping out from the School**

<b>Person</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Father	14	60.9
Mother	6	26.1
Teachers	3	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey

Although majority of them are dropped out from the government schools, we cannot make a conclusion on the nature of school as a determinant factor of dropouts. In most cases, the decision to dropout was taken by the students themselves. About 91.8 percent of the dropout respondents replied that decision to drop out from school was their own. Remaining 8.2 percent of the respondents mentioned that it was due to the influence from the persons such as father, mother and teacher which made them to discontinue from their studies.

Among the others who influenced, about 60.9 percent of the cases mentioned that their father insisted them on dropping out from the school (Table 4.7). About 26.1 percent cases mentioned that they have dropped out from the school by the influence of their mother, and among 13 percent cases, it was by teacher's influence that students decided to withdraw from schooling. We can further group the persons who had influenced the students into two categories viz. Persons within the family i.e. father and mother, and outside the family i.e. teachers. In most cases the members within the family (87 percent) insisted the students to dropout. Though the decision-makers are internal, the reasons for dropouts may not be internal as there are several external factors which directly or indirectly affect the education of children.

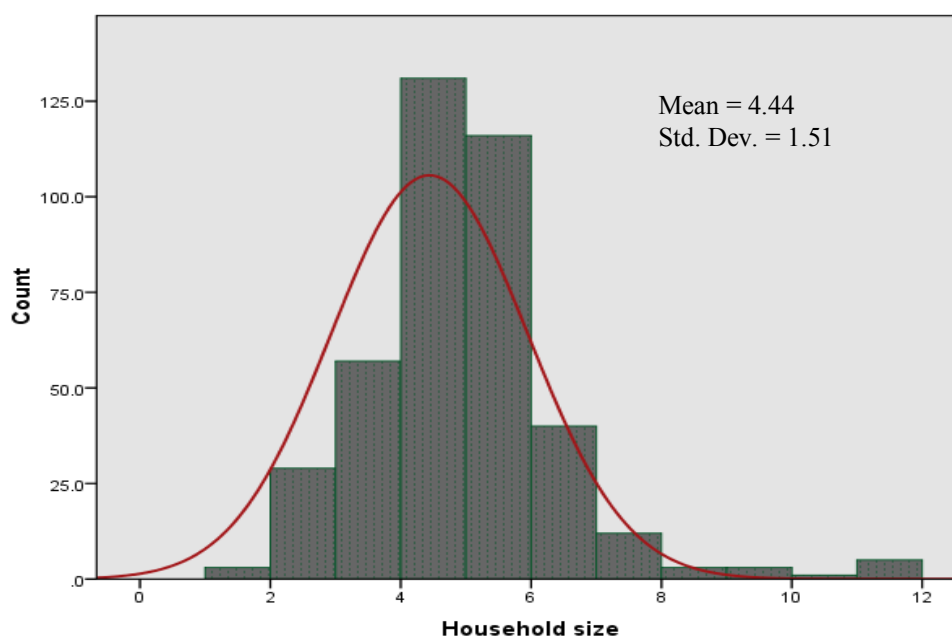
### **4.3 Socio-Economic and Family Background of Dropout Students'**

Education of parents, their income, marital status, occupation and other related indicators significantly affect the education of children. Personal and economic background of parents largely contribute to the home environment that they provide for children (Gratz, 2006). The parental background significantly influences various outcomes of children, and the most important variables which have got certain impact on the education of children are parental education and income (Harmon, 2005). This section covers background of tribal parents and their involvement in the education of their children.

Relevant literatures related to education of children show that the average household size of a family does not have any significant impact on education of children but it has impact on poverty and income of a family. If average household size is high and has only one earning member, this results in low per-capita income of the family. Income poverty resulting from low per-capita income is common for the families settled in tribal areas and remains as a common causative factor for several problems faced by them. The size of the tribal households taken for the study is represented as a distribution in Figure 4.2. The average size of the household is 4.44 which indicate that the tribal families considered for the study are more or less similar to nuclear family structure. There is not much difference between the average household sizes of dropout and non-dropout families (Table 4.8). The mean value of dropout student's families is 4.56 which is marginally higher than that of non-dropout students' families i.e. 4.15. In several tribal studies on education pointed out 'looking after siblings' as important causative factor

leading to dropout of students. But, now the nature of families shifted to nuclear structure and therefore, we can say that there are shifts in the problems of tribal education as well.

**Figure 4.2 Household Size Distribution Families**



Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.8 Household Size of Dropouts and Non-dropouts**

Category	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dropouts	4.56	1.685
Non-dropouts	4.15	0.926

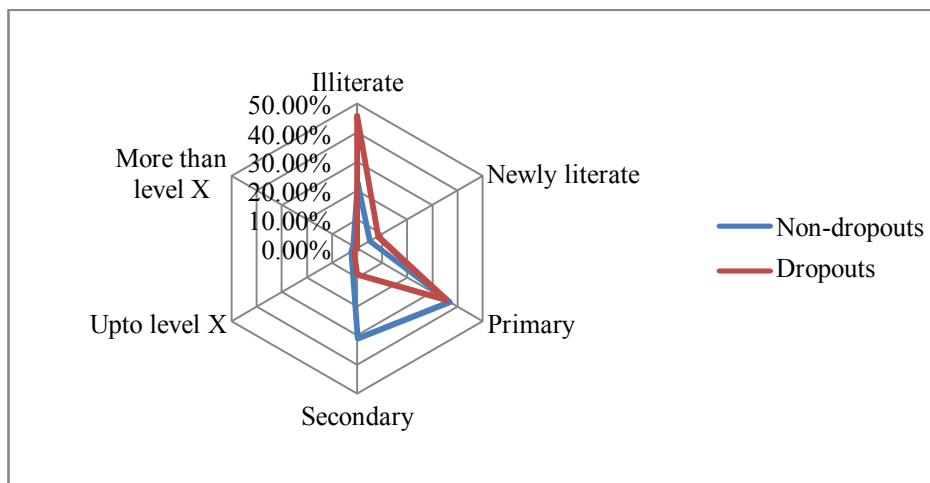
Source: Field Survey

### 4.3.1 Low Educational Level of Parents

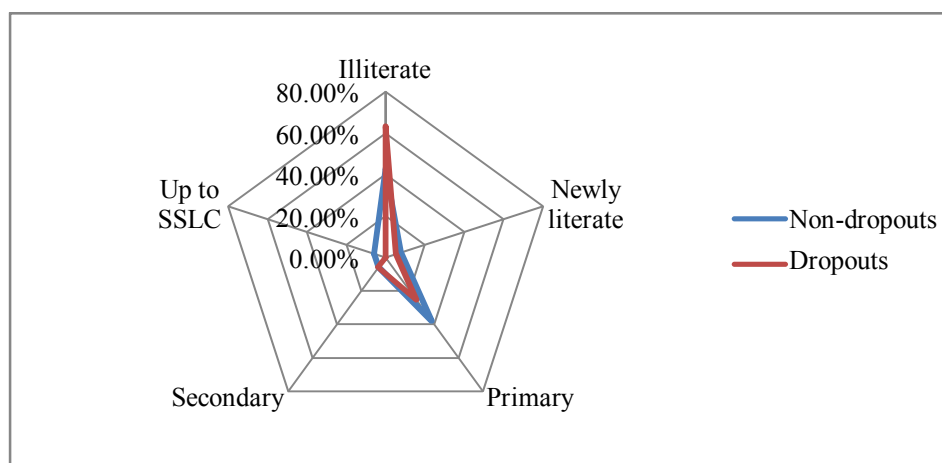
In a nuclear family, the income of the family depends upon the educational level and occupation of the family head. The education levels of

tribes are very low compared to that of other communities and the level of education of parents is certainly a determinant of education of children. Children of those parents who have limited formal schooling are very less likely to progress in schooling (UNESCO, 2010). The educational attainment of father and mother of dropout and non-dropout respondents is shown in Figure 4.3. It is visible from the figure that across dropout and non-dropout respondents, there is disparity in the educational level of parents. Among the non-dropout respondents, the educational level of father is higher than that of dropouts. From Figure 4.3 it is evident that the proportion of illiterate or newly literate fathers is higher in the case of dropouts compared to that of non-dropouts. This indicates that the dropout student's father has low level of education and it adversely affects the educational attainment of children.

**Figure 4.3 Educational Attainment of Father across Dropouts and Non-dropouts**



Source: Field Survey. (Appendix 4.2)

**Figure 4.4 Educational Attainment of Mother across Dropouts and Non-dropouts**

Source: Field Survey (Appendix 4.3)

In the case of educational level of mother, we can see almost a similar educational attainment across both dropout and non-dropout respondents (Figure 4.4). But still, the percentage of illiterate mother is slightly higher for dropout students. These two Figures indicate that the illiteracy of parents some way influence the education of their children as more illiterate parents is among dropout respondents.

To analyse further in this aspect, the educational attainment of father is categorized into two namely ‘illiterate and newly literate’ and ‘undergone schooling’. It is clear from the Table 4.9 that the percentage of illiterate is higher among dropout students than that of non-dropout students. Among the dropout students, 54.3 percent of the fathers are either illiterate or newly literate and only 45.7 percent of them went for formal schooling. Among the non-dropout respondents, it also includes illiterate and newly literate fathers but the percentage of them is very low compared to that of dropout respondents.

**Table 4.9 Percentage Parents Undergone Schooling across Dropout and Non-dropouts**

Category	Illiterate and newly literate		Undergone schooling		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Non-dropouts	33	27.5	87	72.5	120
Dropouts	152	54.3	128	45.7	280
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>53.8</b>	<b>400</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.10 Chi-Square Test Result between Educational Status of Parents and Students**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.369	1	0.000*
Continuity Correction	22.321	1	0.000*
Likelihood Ratio	24.087	1	0.000*
N of Valid Cases <sup>b</sup>	400		

\* Significant at 5 % level

Source: Field Survey

The Chi-Square result depicted in Table 4.10 explains the association between illiteracy of parents and educational status i.e. dropouts or non-dropouts. The Chi-Square value of 23.369 is significant at 5 percent level which indicates that there is an association between these two variables. So, we can conclude that, if the illiteracy among the parents is high then the possibility of their children to dropout from school is also high and education of parents certainly has got indirect impact on the education of children.

### 4.3.2 Occupation of Parents

Occupation of parents positively influences the academic achievement of child (Bala, 2011). The educational level as well as employment status of the parents has substantial influence on the education of their children. Table 4.11

indicates the occupational status of dropout students' parents and it is evident that majority of them are employed in agriculture and allied activities. Among occupational status of father, most of them are employed as agricultural labourers (52.9 percent). About, 12.9 percent of them are engaged in agricultural cultivation in their own land or leased land. Only 8.6 percent of them are employed in non-agriculture sector which is more remunerative than agricultural sector. A few of them are self-employed while some are employed in government service; however, their representation is only marginal. Out of the total respondents, 17.5 percent of them do not have their father at home. This is either because the person might have passed away or left the family. There are many problems faced by the tribal family due to this aspect.

**Table 4.11 Occupation of Dropout Students' Parents**

Occupation	Occupation of Father		Occupation of Mother	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No income	0	0.0	29	10.4
Agriculture	36	12.9	17	6.1
Animal husbandry	0	0.0	8	2.9
Small vendor	5	1.8	0	0.0
Agricultural labourer	148	52.9	105	37.1
Employment guarantee scheme	8	2.9	91	32.5
Non-agricultural labourer	24	8.6	16	5.7
Estate labourer	3	1.1	0	0.0
Govt./ Semi-govt. job	1	0.4	0	0.0
Unfit for doing work	6	2.1	7	2.5
Not Applicable (Passed away/ went away)	49	17.5	8	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey



Among the mothers, most of them (69.8 percent) are engaged in agricultural activities and projects under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)<sup>1</sup>. About 10.4 percent of them have no income which indicates that they remain unemployed. The occupational status of tribal parents highlights that the major source of livelihood is from low income-earning sectors. The income paid to labourers in agriculture and allied sectors is far below than that of non-agricultural sectors.

Most of the parents are engaged in unskilled jobs like agriculture and allied jobs and works related to employment guarantee scheme. Only less than one percent of them are engaged in skilled or government jobs. The number of persons unfit to work is also very minimal. It is evident from the occupational status that still, tribes form part of agrarian economy where most of them are dependent on agriculture and allied sectors. Since most of the parents are employed in low income-earning sector, their family income also remains at lower side. Income pattern of the tribal families and its association with education of children is explained in the next section.

#### **4.4 Income, Expenditure and Indebtedness**

In the previous section, we discussed the occupational pattern of tribal parents and it was clear from the analysis that majority was employed as agricultural labourer in primary sector. An agriculture labourer from tribal area, employed for 15 working days per month may, perhaps, earns a meagre

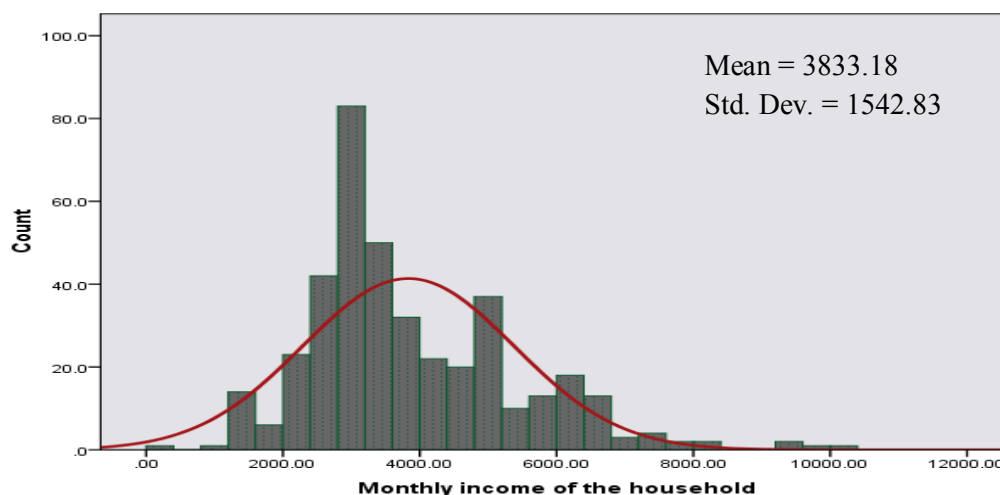
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<sup>1</sup> MGNREGA is aimed at guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work for enhancing livelihood security of the rural people.

amount of monthly income between ₹ 1500 to 3000 only. Since the families are nuclear in structure and majority are employed in agriculture and allied jobs, there will be only less variations in the monthly income of the families. The average income of the surveyed household was found to be ₹ 3833.18 per month (Figure 4.5).

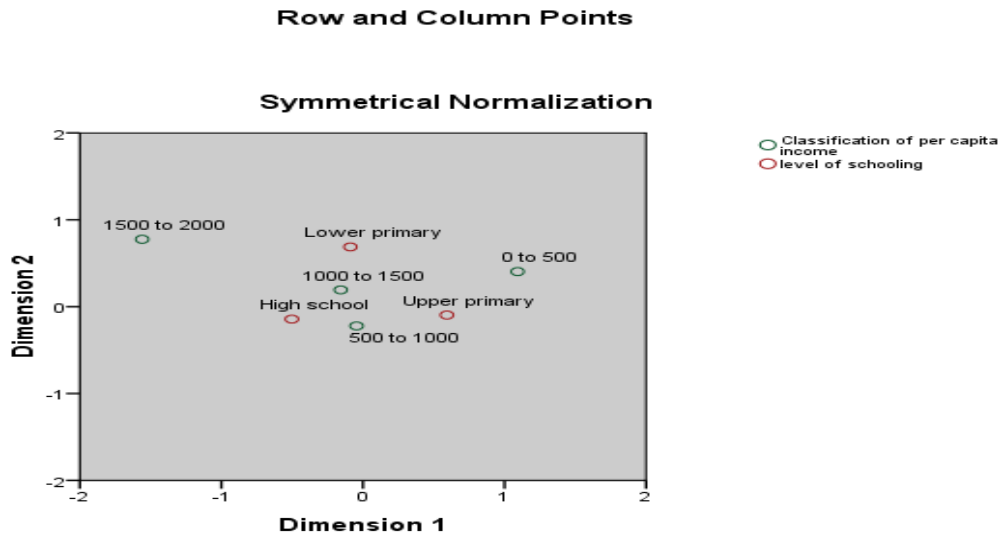
Studies show that there is significant correlation between family income and education of children. In an empirical study by Chevalier et al (2013) indicate that the early school leaving (at the age 16) by the students is due to variations in permanent income of the family. Though majority of the tribal parents are employed, the low wages offered in the market coupled with less number of effective working days emerge as important constraints for low income of the family. The per-capita income of the tribal families is far below the State level average.

**Figure 4.5 Monthly Income Distribution**



Source: Field Survey

**Figure 4.6 Correspondence Analysis between Per-capita Income and Level of Schooling of Dropouts**



Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.12 Chi-Square between Per-capita Income and Level of Schooling**

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation 2
1	0.256	0.065			0.903	0.903	0.046	-0.288
2	0.084	0.007			0.097	1.000	0.064	
Total		0.072	20.341	0.009 <sup>a</sup>	1.000	1.000		

a. 8 Degrees of Freedom

Source: Field Survey

Figure 4.6 shows correspondence analysis between dropouts school level and per-capita income of the family. Besides, there exists an association between these variables (Table 4.12). From the figure we can see that the per capita income is not an influencing factor leading to dropout at primary level.

But, among low per-capita income of families i.e. those households having less than 1500 Rupees, the dropout level is more significant at High School and Upper Primary level. This clearly states the education attainment of children is dependent on the economic background of the family. As level of schooling goes up, the economically backward families find it difficult in providing education to their children. This shows the interdependence of family income and education.

Apart from income of the family, poverty is very often analyzed using per-capita monthly expenditure of family. Here, the per-capita monthly expenditure between dropouts and non-dropouts families are compared and analyzed to see whether there is any difference in the mean value between them. The average monthly consumption expenditure of the family is ₹ 2530.83 (Table 4.13) and the average monthly income as mentioned in previous section is ₹ 3833.18 which indicates that more than 66 percent of the total family income is spent on consumption purpose. The per-capita monthly consumption expenditure of dropouts and non-dropouts households shows only a minor change in the mean value.

**Table 4.13 Average and Monthly Per-capita Consumption Expenditure**

Component	Amount(₹)
Average monthly expenditure	₹ 2530.83
Per-capita monthly expenditure (Dropouts)	₹ 607.76
Per-capita monthly expenditure (Non- Dropouts)	₹ 612.63

Source: Field Survey

In general, the tribal families have low per-capita income and the most part of their income is spending on consumption purpose. Additional requirement of money will certainly lead to indebtedness of the family. Out of

the total households surveyed, 67 percent of them do not have any kind of financial indebtedness to any financial institution (Table 4.14). Among the rest 33 percent respondents, the major sources of indebtedness are retail shops and co-operative societies.

**Table 4.14 Profile of Indebtedness**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent (Out of total respondents)</b>
Dropouts	101	35.9%
Non-dropouts	31	26.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>33.0%</b>

Source: Field Survey

While studying dropout situation, it is necessary to analyse whether financial indebtedness of a family as a significant factor affecting the education of children. It is evident from the Table 4.14 that the percentage of indebted families is similar for both dropout and non-dropout respondents. Among the dropout respondents, 35.9 percent of the families have indebtedness while in the case of non-dropouts families, about 26.1 percent of them are under indebtedness. Since there is not much difference in the proportion of indebted families among dropouts and non-dropouts, we cannot conclude that financial indebtedness as a causal variable leading to dropouts.

#### **4.5 Place of Stay while Schooling.**

The place of stay of tribal students while schooling may be their home, hostel or other places and this is important while analysing the education where the schools are located far away from tribal settlements. Most of the respondents went to school by staying at their respective houses which forms 71 percent of

the total samples (Table 4.15). Rest of the respondents stayed at tribal as well as non-tribal hostels for schooling. The proportion of students staying at hostels and home is almost similar to the proportion for dropout and non-dropout respondents. This indicates that place of stay is not a key factor leading to the dropouts of students. Even though the place of stay is less related to educational status, it has got significant association with cost of education (Table 4.16).

**Table 4.15 Place of Stay while Schooling**

Category	Home	Tribal hostel	Non-tribal hostel
Non-dropout	82 (68.3%)	35 (29.2%)	3 (2.5%)
Dropout	202 (72.1%)	59 (21.1%)	19 (6.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>284 (71%)</b>	<b>94 (23.5%)</b>	<b>22 (5.5%)</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.16 Chi-Square Result between Place of Stay and Educational Cost**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.496	2	0.002*
Likelihood Ratio	16.682	2	0.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	12.164	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	400		

\* Significant at 5% level

Source: Field Survey

In the case of tribal children, students staying at hostels incur more expenditure compared to that of those students who goes to school from home. This indicates that as the place of stay shifts from home to hostel more families incur expenditure in educating child. When students stay at hostels, the transportation cost from the home is very high as the schools are located

far away from the home with no proper means of transport, in some cases the parents need to spend money for buying uniform and if the students are staying at private hostels, the food expenditure are also met by the parents. All these contribute to increased cost involved in educating child. Among the students who go to school from home, some of the families incur high costs because of long distance to school and, or lack of proper transport facilities from the tribal settlements.

**Table 4.17 Place of Stay of Dropout Students (In Percent)**

<b>Place of stay</b>	<b>Lower Primary</b>	<b>Upper Primary</b>	<b>High School</b>
Home	69.0	77.0	69.0
Tribal hostel	14.3	15.9	27.8
Non-tribal hostel	16.7	7.1	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

It is clear from the Table 4.17 that dropout respondents prevail in all stratum of place of stay. In all the three categories of place of stay a significant percentage of students dropped out in each level of schoolings. Among the respondents, more dropouts are reported from those who go to school from their home. Though there are more dropouts among the day scholars, this data is not a sufficient ground to establish that place of stay is a major factor in determining dropout.

#### **4.6 Physical Inaccessibility—Still an Impediment to Education**

As discussed in section 4.5, while schooling the place of stay for students may be at home, tribal hostel or non-tribal hostel. There are many tribal settlements in Kerala which are facing severe physical inaccessibility to

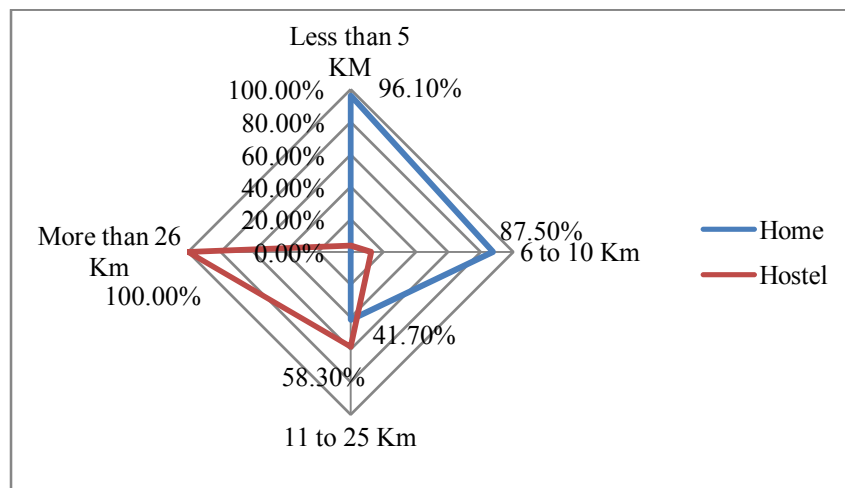
schools and the number of hostels run by the ST department is inadequate to accommodate all the students from these settlements. At many times, the students are facing the problem of accessibility go to the schools from their settlements. Physical inaccessibility to school often appears as an impediment to schooling of tribal students especially to those who are going to school from home. Substantial access to meaningful learning that has value is critical to long-term improvement in productivity, the reduction of inter-generated cycles of poverty, demographic transition, preventive healthcare, the empowerment of women and reduction in inequality (Hossain and Zeitlyn, 2010). Universal access to education is being widely discussed across the world and includes access to quality education, early childhood education and primary education. The term ‘accessibility’ has overlapping dimensions which include non-discrimination, physical accessibility and economic accessibility. Discrimination includes the situation where a student has been treated less favourably than the other student on the ground of racial or ethnic origin. Farkas (2007) identified that the educational institutions and programmes have to be accessible to everyone, without any discrimination. Economic inaccessibility arises due to poverty and poor economic background of the family. While physical accessibility considers the actual distance from home to the school. In this section, the dimensions of physical inaccessibility faced by the tribes are analysed.

The actual distance from their respective place of stay to the school where the students’ are pursuing their studies or the school they last attended is shown in Figure 4.7. The actual distance to school has been classified into four groups. First, distance is less than 5 km; second, between 6 and 10 km; third, between 11 and 25 km, and the last case includes above 25 km. In general, as the



distance to the school increases, the place of stay of students while schooling is likely to change. In the case of tribal students also, the same pattern is seen. When the distance to school is less than 5 km, the majority of the students (96 percent) went to school from their homes. Among those respondents where school is located within a distance of 6 to 10 km, 87.5 percent of them stay at home and rest 12.5 percent stay at hostels. When distance is more than 26 km, all the students reside at tribal or non-tribal hostels. However, if the distance to school is between 11 to 25 km 41.7 percent of the students are travelling daily to reach the school as there is no hostel facilities near the school. This situation is much worse among the respondents living in remote or interior areas and consequently, they need to walk kilometers to find access to good roads or travel options. This indicates that still, there are problems faced by tribes in terms of physical access while doing formal schooling.

**Figure 4.7 Distance to School from Place of Stay**



Source: Field Survey

The extent of difficulty to access the school has been categorized into three groups; Easy, Normal and Difficult. Under ‘Easy’ group, the school is

very near to home or hostel and the condition of road is good for walking. If the school is a bit away from home but transportation is available and/or only less cost is involved, it is measured as 'Normal'. 'Difficult' group comprise of those cases where transportation is unavailable, incurs high travelling cost and/or very long distance to school from the hamlet. 'Difficult' covers dimension such as economic, distance and means of transportation.

Table 4.18 explains dimensions of accessibility to the schools where they are pursuing their studies/ they last attended. 21.2 percent of the total respondents mentioned access to school as 'normal'. About 48.8 percent of the total respondents' mentioned that they have easy access to the school with proper transportation and/or less distance to travel. About 30 percent of the respondents expressed that they are facing difficulty in accessing schools. This is clear evidence showing physical inaccessibility faced by the tribal students.

**Table 4.18 Accessibility to School**

Access to school	Number	Percent
Difficult	120	30.0
Normal	85	21.2
Easy	195	48.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.19 Multiple Response Output- Difficulty in Access to School**

Type of Difficulty	Percent	Percent of Cases
No transportation	14.1	22.5
Long distance	58.9	94.2
Cost of transportation	27.1	43.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>160.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

As mentioned earlier, 'difficulty' is divided into three sub categories they are:

- No transportation: - The students do not have any kind of transportation at all to reach school
- Long distance: - The school is far away from the hamlet
- Cost of transportation:- Incurring high cost for transportation to school

If the school is far away from tribal settlements, there arise subsequent problems such as lack of transportation and high travelling cost. Table 4.19 represents multiple response output of those respondents who mentioned accessibility to school as 'Difficult'. Out of the 30 percent of the respondents whom mentioned accessibility as difficult, long distance to reach the school can be seen as a common factor to almost all the respondents. This is mentioned by 94.3 percent of the total respondents. Higher cost of transportation is regarded the second important problem with 43.3 percent respondents mentioned the same. Long distance and cost of transportation are correlated variables as distance to school increases naturally the cost of travel also increases. About 22.5 percent cases reported that there is no proper transportation facility from their settlements to reach the schools.

About 120 respondents mentioned accessibility to school as 'difficult' which was clear from Table 4.18. These 120 respondents include students staying at hostel as well as at home. A clear distinction between places of stay of these respondents and extent of difficulty is analysed in Table 4.20. It is clear from the table that in all the three segments the rank order of the problem with regard to inaccessibility differs. Among those who are staying at home, major problem is transportation followed by long distance and cost of transportation respectively. Among day scholars who mentioned difficulty in

access, 70.4 percent of them do not have any kind of proper transportation. While 29.2 percent mentioned distance as a barrier to studies. A similar case of inaccessibility to school due to long distance is mentioned in Box 4.1. Most of the tribal students who stay at hostel are accommodated in tribal hostels.

#### **Box 4.1 Case Study - Inaccessibility Still a Problem**

Kundalakkudi is a tribal (Muthuva tribe) settlement at Munnar, Idukki district. The nearest Upper Primary school available for the families at Kundalakkudy is located at Munnar, 26 kilometres away from the settlement. It is impossible for Ramakrishnan, an inhabitant of the settlement to send his three children to the schools in Munnar, as there is no hostel facility attached to the school and moreover, the children have to walk 4 kilometres through rough forest road to reach the bus stop. All the three have joined the Upper Primary School at a convent school at Marayoor which is 66 kilometers away from the settlement. Two types of hostel facilities are available at Marayoor; a tribal hostel and a hostel which is run by the convent. Only one of his children was able to get admission to Tribal hostel which is running above the permissible intake capacity. In the convent hostel, he should pay above ₹. 300 per month for each student. The lump-sum grants provident to his children were bagged by the school authorities on account of cost of electricity and mess charges. Besides, He needs additional money for meeting transportation cost to the school. Each child needs ₹ 135 to travel one side for one time. At present, these three children are not going to school because of these factors. Analysing this case we can find that there are three problems faced by Ramakrishnan and his family, finally leading to the dropout of all his children. The major problem is inaccessibility to school and the other two problems arise due to this inaccessibility. Though he decided to send his children to far distant school, the cost of board and lodging was high against his monthly income. The transportation cost was also high though the journey to school was limited to vacation and leave days. The problem is common to all the 102 families residing in the same settlement.

The respondents, who stay at tribal hostel, ranked ‘long distance’ as their major problem. They solved this problem by changing their place of stay from home to hostel. The second major problem ‘transportation cost’ was mentioned by 48.1 percent of the respondents. As they need to cover more distance from their habitations to hostel, the cost of travelling is high. These show that still there are tribal students in Kerala with no proper transportation facilities to access schools.

The difficulty in accessibility to schools is more experienced by the dropout students (Table 4.21). But, a few non-dropouts students are also facing the same problem. Irrespective of educational status, the common problem identified among dropout and non-dropout is the long distance they have to travel for reaching the school. More than 90 percent of the respondents facing ‘difficulty’ in accessing school mentioned that they travel long distance to reach the school. Second important common problem among them is ‘cost of transportation’ which is followed by ‘no transportation’. In all the categories we can see that the proportion of dropout respondents is much higher compared to that of non-dropouts. From this we can conclude that still tribes face severe problems of accessibility to school, and to a certain extent, it may lead to dropouts of students from the school.

**Table 4.20 Dimensions of Difficulty among Student’s staying at Home and Hostel**

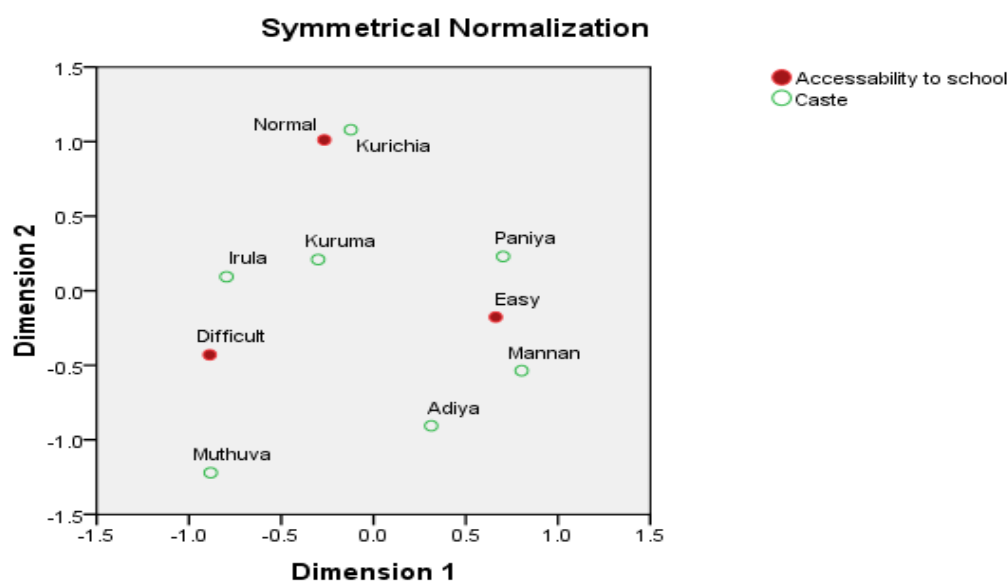
	Home		Tribal hostel		Non-tribal hostel	
	Percent of Cases	Rank	Percent of Cases	Rank	Percent of Cases	Rank
No transportation	70.4	1	29.6	3	0.0	
Long distance	29.2	2	51.3	1	19.5	2
Cost of transportation	15.4	3	48.1	2	36.5	1

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.21 Accessibility Difficulties among Dropouts and Non-dropouts**

	Non-dropout (25 no.)			Dropout (95 no.)		
	Number	Percent of Cases	Rank	Number	Percent of Cases	Rank
No transportation	7	28.0	3	20	21.1	3
Long distance	23	92.0	1	90	94.7	1
Cost of transportation	14	56.	2	38	40.0	2

Source: Field Survey

**Figure 4.8 Correspondence Analysis between Tribal Group and Extent of Accessibility**

Source: Field Survey

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter, we have discussed the intensity of remoteness in the location of tribal settlements and it is high among the tribes located in Palakkad and Idukki districts. Prominent tribal groups such as Irula, Muthuvans, Mannan etc. are located in these districts. Figure 4.8 indicates the extent of inaccessibility to school across the surveyed tribal groups. There was

only one community near the variable 'normal' access i.e. Kurichchians. In the case of Kurichchians, the school is bit far away from the settlements but there is proper availability of transportation and/or they incur only low cost of transportation to reach the school. Among Paniya and Mannan community, they have easy access to schools. Students from Irula and Muthuva face more difficulty in accessing schools. Out of this, Irula is one of the predominant tribal groups in Kerala and majority of them are located in Palakkad district where as Muthuvans are located in Idukki district. This evidently shows that physical inaccessibility varies across the communities as certain communities have easy access while some other communities face severe difficulty in accessing school.

#### **4.7 Dialect and Medium of Instruction**

Tribes have their own dialect for communication within their community and these dialects do not have any scripts of their own (See Chapter 2). Schools in Kerala generally follow regional language as medium of instruction which is entirely different from tribal dialects. At early stages of entry to schooling, the tribal children are less exposed to other languages (Kanungo and Mahapatra, 2004). Gautam (2003) indicated that one of the reasons for high dropout rates among tribal children is the medium of instruction in regional language as it creates difficulty for many tribal students. There is an argument from many sides to follow tribal language in early days of schooling for tribal students. In this context, a detailed understanding is required on the medium of instruction followed in schools located in tribal areas and how it is significant in explaining the dropout situation.

From Table 4.22, it is evident that the medium of instruction followed in schools is entirely different from that of the language they usually use to communicate among them. Most of the respondents (97 percent) are enrolled in Malayalam medium schools. It is also evident from Table 4.22 that only 11.8 percent of the surveyed respondents use Malayalam for communication within the family and the rest still follow their own dialect for communication indicating the difference in the language the students use within the community and in schools. In this context, it is required to find out whether the medium of instruction other than tribal language creates any problem for the students.

**Table 4.22 Language used at Home and Medium of Instruction**

	Language		
	Tribal/Tamil	Malayalam	English
Language generally used in the community (In Percent)	88.2	11.8	-
Medium of instruction at school (In Percent)	1.2	97.0	1.8

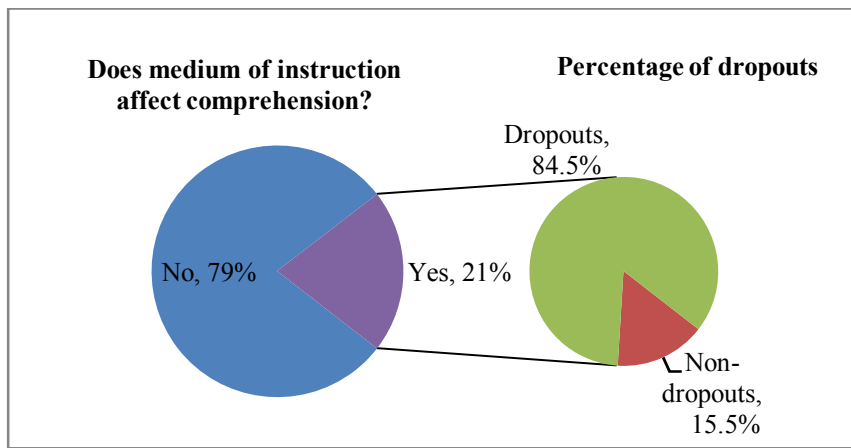
Source: Field Survey

Out of the total respondents, 21 percent mentioned that the existing medium of instruction affects their comprehension (Figure 4.9). Though the medium of instruction is not a common problem for all the students, it creates certain problems for some students in comprehending lessons. Now, it is significant to know how this problem influences the dropout and non-dropout respondents. Figure 4.32 explains that out of the respondents who have difficulty (21 percent) in comprehension due to the medium of instruction, 84.5 percent are dropout students. From this it is evident that if any student is



having difficulty with medium of instruction, the probability of that student to dropouts from school is very high. Here, the percentage of respondents with the problem of medium of instruction is comparatively low, but if any such problem arises, then it can have serious impact on education of students which may even lead to dropout of students.

**Figure 4.9 Problem of Medium of Instruction**



Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.23 Level of Schooling where Medium of Instruction is a Problem**

Level of School	Number	Percent	Percent across Total Samples
Lower primary (N = 42)	8	11.3	19.0
Upper primary(N = 113)	37	52.1	32.7
High school (N = 125)	26	36.6	20.8

Source: Field Survey

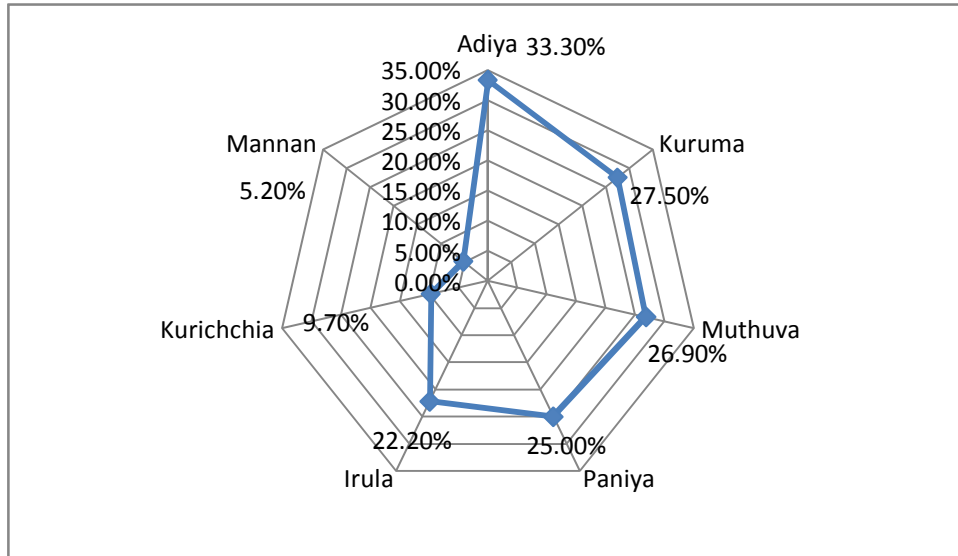
It is evident from the Table 4.23 that the problem with respect to medium of instruction is visible at all levels of schooling but, it is more felt at UP and HS sections. About 32.7 percent of the total respondents in UP level

face problem with medium of instruction and at High School level, it is 20.8 percent of the total respondents having the same issue. At LP level also a significant proportion of students have the problem with medium of instruction other than tribal language. This accounts for 19 percent of the total respondents from this category. A few MGLCs in tribal areas use Tamil as medium of instruction, it also often creates problem for students when they join for next level of schooling in a different school. A similar case is exhibited in Box 4.2.

**Box 4.2 Case Study - Medium of Instruction in Tamil, a Barrier for Next Level of Education**

Government has setup many Multi Grade Learning Centres (MGLCs)/Single Teacher Schools in many tribal belts in Kerala where students face inaccessibility to primary level schooling. This school caters to the children of grade I to IV in a single class. One such MGLC is functioning at Kundalakkudy (Idukki District). This is the one and only primary school within the reach of the families in the settlement(Muthuva) The medium of instruction followed here is Tamil and this creates a major problem for students who join the next level schooling because the medium of instruction followed in all other schools in the nearby areas is Malayalam. When a student who joins at next level of schooling, they find it is difficult to follow subjects in Malayalam medium as they know only Tamil and finally they are compelled to rejoin primary school that follow Malayalam medium. This creates a loss of four years of schooling for the students. This problem is frequently reported by the ST promoters in this area to the concerned ITDP offices, but no solution has been found so far. The students and residents in this settlement demand for Malayalam medium instead of Tamil medium at MGLC to resolve this problem.

Figure 4.10 Percentage of Students facing Comprehension Problem across Communities



Source: Field Survey

It was evident from the analysis that medium of instruction creates problem for tribal students in comprehending lessons taught in the school. But, from Figure 4.10 we can see that there is significant variation in the proportion of respondents having the problem of medium of instruction. This is because of the fact that the language they normally spoke within the communities differs from regional language and for some of the communities they find it extremely difficult in comprehending lessons in regional language. The problem is more felt among those tribes whom reside in interiors or remote areas of forests. The students belonging to Adiya community face more difficulty with respect to medium of instruction as 33 percent of them said that they have the same problem. More than one fourth of the students belonging to Kuruma, Muthuva and Paniya communities also have stated similar problem. Out of the seven tribal groups, only Mannan and Kurichchian have less percentage of students facing problem with medium of instruction. From this it

can be concluded that though there is problem with medium of instruction faced by the tribal students, it considerably varies across various tribal communities. Their nature of isolated living from mainstream population and the location of habitation in forest interiors often creates problem for students coming from these settlements unfamiliarity with regional language. This gradually creates problem for them in comprehending lessons as most school in Kerala follows regional language, Malayalam as medium of instruction.

#### **4.8 Cost of Educating Tribal Children: A Burden for Families**

There are provisions made in Indian constitution in order to safeguard the educational interests of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

“The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation<sup>2</sup>.”

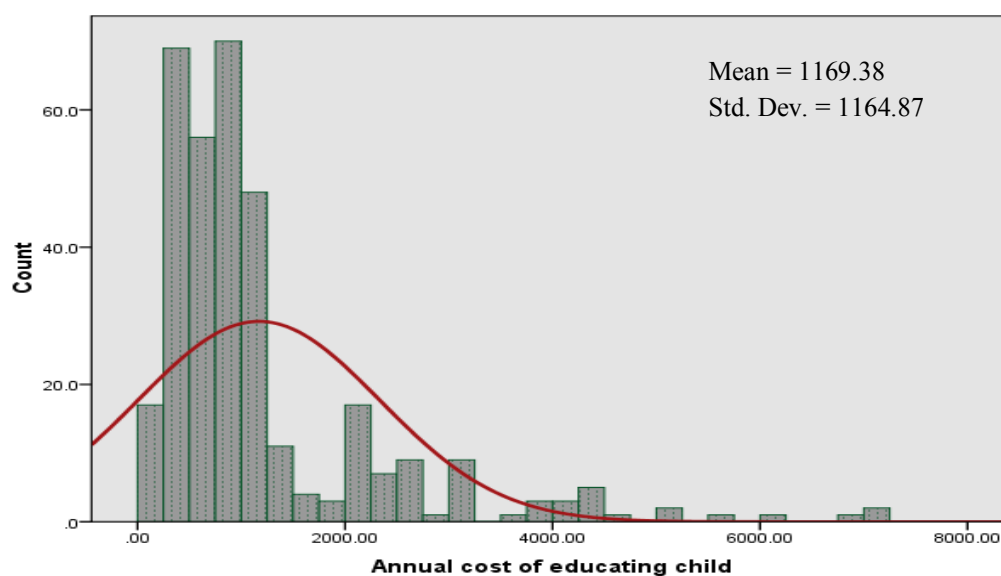
The State as well as the Central governments provides the schemes such as free education, lump-sum grant, residential schools, mid-day meal scheme etc. for sending the tribal children to the school. There are certain problems at the implementation level of these schemes and it was clear from the analysis that in most cases, the grants are not reaching the beneficiaries except for lump-sum grant (Table 4.26). In addition, the amount of grant/ financial aid provided by the governments is very small and most of the students are getting it very lately (Duary, 2010). When we consider the education exclusion of tribes, it is

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<sup>2</sup> The Directive Principles of policy, Article 46 - Promotion of Educational and Economic interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections

completely different from that of other communities in India. They incur high travelling cost as they have to travel long distance to reach the school or tribal/non-tribal hostels. In the previous section, we found that the important problem faced by the tribal students is the long distance to the school associated with higher cost of transportation. In addition, the parents often buy textbooks, bags, note books and uniform in the case of those students who do not stay at tribal hostel. In such a situation, the cost of educating the children may further go up. Among the surveyed respondents, about 85.2 percent of the respondents mentioned that their parents incur expenditure in educating them. Even after providing a wide range of concession and grants, the families continue to incur expenditure for educating their children. This may be due to the inadequate or low amount of grants or else, it may not be reaching the appropriate beneficiaries.

The average cost involved in educating a single tribal child is ₹ 1169.38 per annum (Figure 4.11) which is a high amount for the tribes when we consider this particular amount as a proportion of their annual family income. As the number of school children in a tribal family increases, the cost also increases and it puts an additional burden on the family. The relation between mean and standard deviation explains that there exists wide difference across the families in this regard. The major cost incurred by the families is by way of buying study materials and uniforms. If the student is a day-scholar and the school is far away from the settlement, then the transportation cost will be higher. In case of a few tribal students staying at non-tribal hostels, we found that they are paying mess charges and lump-sum grant towards hostel accommodation. This indicates that there are some instances where the tribal students are exploited by the non-tribal hostel administrators.

**Figure 4.11 Distribution of Annual Cost in Educating a Single Child**

Source: Field Survey

#### 4.8.1 Dynamics of Cost of Education among Dropouts

Among the dropouts, the average cost of education incurred by the families is ₹ 1152.50 (Table 4.24). The cost involved in educating the children at various levels of schooling has been differentiated by segregating the dropout classes into LP, UP and HS. Table 4.24 shows the mean value of cost involved in educating a child at different levels. It can be seen that the cost of educating a dropout child is high at Lower Primary level but they represent only less proportion (i.e. 7.2 percent). The reason for the higher cost of education at LP level is because of the fact that majority of them stays at hostel and, the distance between hostel and their respective house is comparatively very high. The average cost of educating a dropout child is slightly higher at High School level than that of Upper Primary level.

**Table 4.24 Cost of Education among Dropouts at Various Levels**

	<b>Lower Primary</b>	<b>Upper Primary</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>Total</b>
Percentage of Observation	7.2	41.4	51.4	100.0
Mean	1761.2	913.8	1259.6	1152.5
Standard Deviation	1678.18	1015.77	1306.61	1243.14

Source: Field Survey

Table 4.25 indicates place of stay of dropout families that incur cost in educating children. At LP level, the number of respondents incurring cost is very less. Among them, more than 80 percent are staying at hostel and the mean distance to LP school is 82.3 km., this has resulted in higher cost of education at LP level schooling for dropout respondents. There is an increase in the families incurring cost as the level of schooling increases. Among UP and HS dropouts, more educational costs are incurred by students going to school from their home i.e. day-scholars. The average distance of dropouts to UP school is 13.6 km and that of HS is 23.4 km which is a long distance for day scholars.

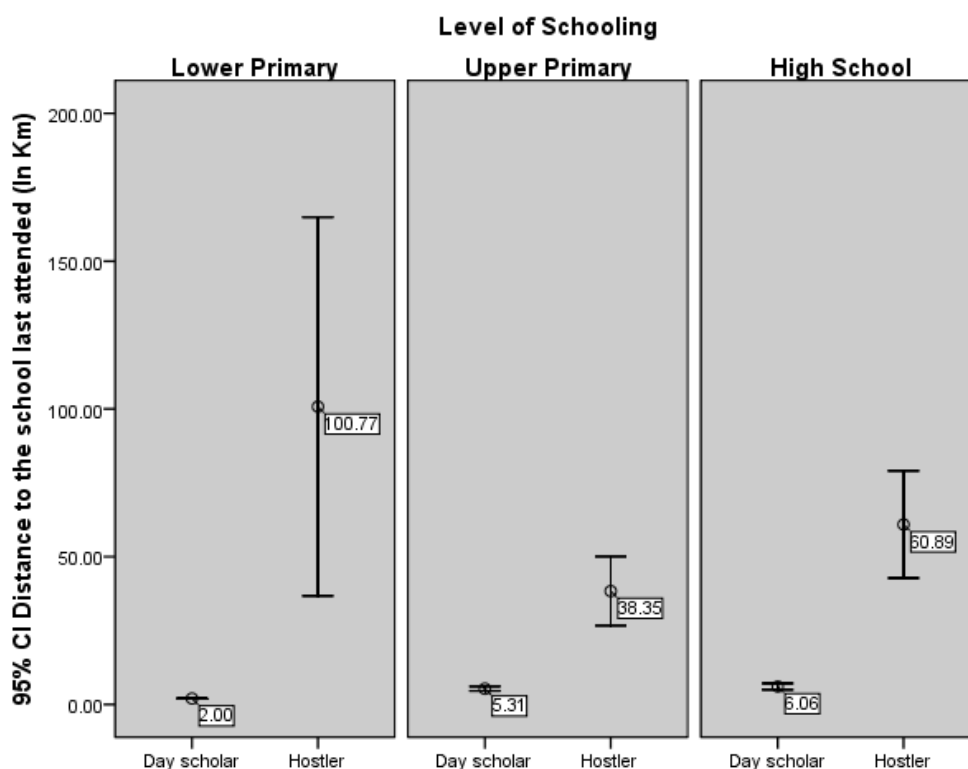
Figure 4.22 intends to provide information on the mean distance to the school across day-scholars and students who stay at hostels. The analysis is done on the dropout students whose parents incurred expenditure in educating their children. In the previous analysis we made it clear that the average cost of education is high among day-scholars compared to that of the students who stay at hostels among UP and HS levels. The mean distance of dropout students to UP and HS level is 5.31 and 6.06 kilometres respectively (Figure 4.12). This short distance indicates that transportation cost is not a major component to total cost of education among day scholars. In addition, the cost involved in buying books, bags, uniforms and other study materials which increase the cost of educating a child at higher levels of schooling.

**Table 4.25 Dropout Student’s Place of Stay Categorized on the basis of Level of Schooling (Families Incurring Cost in Education)**

Levels	Number	Home (Percent)	Hostel		Mean distance to school (km)
			Tribal Hostel (Percent)	Non-tribal Hostel (Percent)	
Lower Primary	16	18.8	37.5	43.7	82.3
Upper Primary	92	75.0	16.3	8.7	13.6
High School	114	68.4	28.1	3.5	23.4

Source: Field Survey

**Figure 4.12 Average Distance to School among Day-scholars and Hostlers at Various Levels (Case of Families Incurring Expenditure on Education)**



Source: Field Survey



The average cost of educating tribal children is very high when we compare it with their average family income. We can see that the cost is prevailing at all levels of schooling irrespective of LP, UP or HS level. Considering their geographical location, extent of inaccessibility and lack of educational institutions and other infrastructure facilities the grant provided by the government to the families is not enough to meet the rising cost of education. For certain dropout respondents, the rising cost of education remains as a major hindrance for continuing their education. The government should consider relevant factors while framing the policies with regard to the nature of grant to be provided for enhancing tribal education.

#### **4.8.2 Educational Grant Usage among the Tribes**

The section 4.4 discussed the economic background of the tribes and it was evident from the analysis that majority of them were employed in agriculture sector having low per-capita income. Considering their economic backwardness, the State government has come up with the provision of educational grants to enhance education among the tribes. The grant provided to the tribal students can be divided into three categories namely (a) lump-sum, (b) uniform and (c) other grants. The 'other grants' include cash allowance to parents for sending their children to school regularly, cash allowance is given to encourage those students securing marks above 45 percent at 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> level etc. Table 4.26 depicts the multiple response output on the status of the various grants availed of by the respondents. About 98.7 percent of the total respondents received lump-sum grant. The uniform grant is availed of by only 31.5 percent of the total respondents and the low percent of beneficiaries in this category is due to the fact that the grant is restricted to the students studying at lower primary level and also,

for the students who stay at tribal hostels. The other grants are availed of by 4.5 percent of the total respondents. The analysis clearly states that the lump-sum grant is availed of by almost all the beneficiaries but with regard to other types grants, the beneficiaries are very low which may be due to the lack of awareness of such schemes or may be due to the limited coverage of schemes.

**Table 4.26 Multiple Response Output – Educational Grants Availed**

<b>Category Label</b>	<b>Responses in Percent</b>	<b>Percent of Cases</b>
Lump-sum grant	73.3	98.7
Uniform grant	23.4	31.5
Other Grants	3.4	4.5
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>134.8</b>

Source: Field Survey

We can see only a slight difference between dropouts and non-dropouts in terms of grants availed of (Table 4.27). It is to be noted that almost 100 percent of the non-dropouts are getting lump-sum grants. The other grants are also mostly availed of by the non-dropout respondents. Among the dropout respondents also the percentage of beneficiaries of various grants are almost similar to that of non-dropout respondents. The satisfaction level of grants availed of across families incurring cost on educating their children mentioned that they require an increase in the amount of grant provided to them. Majority (95.2 percent) of the respondents are not satisfied with the current amount of grant as their parents are incurring additional costs in educating them (Figure 4.28).

**Table 4.27 Grants Availed of by Dropouts and Non-dropouts**

Type of grant	Non-dropouts		Dropouts	
	Count	Percent of Cases	Count	Percent of Cases
Lump-sum Grant	120	100.0	273	97.5
Uniform Grant	33	27.5	92	32.9
Other Grants	12	10.0	6	2.1

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.28 Satisfaction on Educational Grants Availed**

	Families with no Cost	Families incurring Education Cost	Total
Grant enough (Percent)	32.4	67.6	100.0
Grant not Enough (Percent)	4.8	95.2	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Though the government provides different kinds of grants, majority of the respondents is not satisfied with the amount and they mentioned that the grants availed of were not enough to meet the educational expenses of the students. Compared to other communities, the nature of location, lack of availability of schools within the area creates more implicit costs. Mere lump-sum grant amount may not be sufficient to meet the additional expenses. The major factors determining the cost of education among tribes are distance, mode of transport to school, uniform and expenditure to buy textbooks and notebooks. In this context, a radical restructuring is required in the determination of grant amount to the tribal students. Rather

than providing standardized amount as grants to the tribal students, it should vary according to the remoteness of the habitation, distance to the school and travelling costs involved. Increasing lump-sum grant amount and supplementing with new provision of grants, the government can improve the education of the tribes.

#### **4.9 School Environment: Attitude Non-tribal Students and Teachers**

Attitude of the teachers is an important variable to be analysed as it has got direct impact on the education of students. Negative attitudes and low expectations by the teachers can result in reduced opportunities for students to learn (Woodcock, 2013). In addition, students' performance in the class is influenced by teacher attitudes (Forlin et al, 2007). Tables 4.29 and 4.30 respectively analyses the attitude of non-tribal students and attitude of teachers towards tribal students. It is clear from the table 4.29 that 97.5 percent of the non-tribal students keep friendly attitude toward non-dropout tribal students. Among the dropout students, 87.9 percent of the non-tribal students maintain friendly relation with these students. But, there are cases where some of the non-tribal students have unfriendly relationship with the tribal students. This was reported among 7.8 percent of the dropout respondents. Though, we cannot generalise the unfriendly attitude of non-tribal students as a leading significant factor leading to dropout of students, it may affect the studies or performance of the students which gradually lead to lack of interest in studies or irregularity in attending classes among the students.

**Table 4.29 Non-tribal Student's Attitude towards Tribal Students**

Status	Friendly	Hostile	Indifferent
Non-dropouts (Percent)	97.5	0.0	2.5
Dropouts (Percent)	87.9	7.8	4.3

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.30 Attitude of Teachers towards Tribal Students**

Category	Status	Friendly	Indifferent
Tribal teachers (Percent)	Non-dropouts	100.0	0.0
	Dropouts	98.9	1.1
Non-tribal teachers (Percent)	Non-dropouts	100.0	0.0
	Dropouts	98.6	1.4

Source: Field Survey

The teachers were sub-divided into tribal and non-tribal to understand whether there is change in attitude towards students within these groups. As tribal teachers know the tribal culture better than non-tribal teachers, it is easier for them to understand the background of tribal students and sort out their problems. Table 4.30 states that both tribal as well as non-tribal teachers have friendly behaviour towards tribal students. Only a few cases were found among dropout students with regard to unfriendly attitude of tribal as well as non-tribal teachers. In the case of those students staying at tribal hostel, the attitude of hostel authorities is an important aspect. During the Field Survey we could find a few cases where the students are facing unfriendly behaviour on the part of hostel authorities. One such case is mentioned in Box 4.3. From this section we can conclude there are only very few cases where teachers were indifferent or hostile, but from the part of non-tribal students, few cases were reported which need to be taken into consideration.

**Box 4.3 Case Study - Non-friendly Behaviour of Hostel Authorities**

Manu Thankachan belonging to Mannan tribe studied at government higher secondary school which was 120 kilometres away from his home. He and his family settled at Mankulam in Idukki district. He got admission to the tribal hostel which is located near to the school. Though he faced some difficulties in understanding a few subjects, but it was quite manageable for him. He said that during the stay at hostel, he faced some problems from the part of hostel authority. The hostel warden was hostile towards him. He also mentioned that the warden frequently harassed almost all students who stay at the hostel. But, this may not be the case for all the tribal hostels in Kerala. If the government appoints a person from the tribal community as warden, the students will be much more comfortable to stay at hostels.

**4.9.1 Regularity of Teachers and their Interaction with Tribal Students**

The schools located in tribal areas have teachers from different parts of Kerala. The appointment of non-tribal teachers in tribal schools is a tough task faced by many States in India (Gautam, 2003). Most of the surveyed respondents stated that the teachers are regular in schools. Only 4.5 percent of the total respondents said that teachers are irregular in the classes (Appendix 4.4). But, during the Field Survey, an important aspect we have noticed in this respect is about the vacant positions existing in most of the tribal schools located in remote tribal areas. This occurs because of the fact that the teachers appointed in these areas come from far places of Kerala. Once they are appointed, the next day onwards they look for transfer to their convenient locations and with their political influences; they will get transfer from tribal areas. These practices are very common in most of the schools located in tribal areas. In these circumstances, the faculty positions remain vacant and the institutional authorities are finding it difficult in filling up the vacant positions with guest

faculty due to shortage of qualified candidates from the tribal areas. This often creates problem of incompleteness of various subjects due to shortage of faculties.

**Table 4.31 Percentage of Students face Problem in Interacting with Teachers (Percent)**

Status	No Difficulty	Difficulty
Non-dropouts	95.8	4.2
Dropouts	89.3	10.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>8.8</b>

Source: Field Survey

Interaction of students with teachers is essential for the improvement in the skills and personality of the students. From Table 4.31 it is evident that in a few cases, the students face difficulty in interacting with teachers. Majority i.e. 91.2 percent of the total respondents has no problem in communicating with teachers; rest of them have some problems in interacting with teachers. This is mostly found among dropout students compared to that of non-dropout students. Overall, we can conclude that teachers are regular in the schools located in tribal areas and their interaction with students is also fair having only a few unsatisfactory responses. Though they are regular and interactive, the problem arises in schools due to the transfer of teachers and inability to find qualified guest faculties to fill the vacant positions.

#### **4.10 Inability to Comprehend Subjects**

Medium of instruction followed in schools is completely different from that of the language the tribes normally use for communication within the community. In Section 4.7 we discussed these aspects in detail and this section

is trying to identify whether they face any difficulty in learning particular subjects and also to know whether the problems are properly addressed by the authorities concerned. Under the circumstances where the appointed teachers get transfer to their convenient locations, it will reduce the interest and lack of dedication on the part of these teachers which will have serious impact on the quality of teaching. If anyone gets transfer to other schools, the particular subject normally remains less taught. In the present study, about 80.8 percent of the respondents expressed that they are facing difficulty in understanding subjects (Appendix 4.5). This means out of every five tribal students, four of them will have same problem.

In this milieu, it is important to know at which level of schooling the students are facing this problem. From the Table 4.32, it is clear that students studying at High School are having more problem associated with learning of subjects compared to that of UP and LP level respondents. At the LP level, 45.2 percent of the total respondents are facing difficulty in understanding the subjects where as at UP and High School levels the percentage of respondents having the similar problem are 67.3 and 95.2 respectively. Table 4.33 depicts the Chi-Square test result between the level of schooling and difficulty in learning subjects, and the result is significant at 5 percent level. This indicates that there is association with the level of schooling and difficulty in understanding the subjects. Thus, we can conclude that as the level of schooling goes up the proportion of students facing the difficulty in understanding the subject also increases. In certain cases, the difficulty in understanding the subject can lead to absenteeism of students. A similar case is explained in Box 4.4. Out of the dropout respondents, 23.6 percent of them



have no problem in understanding subjects but, rest of them i.e. more than three-fourth (76 percent) of the respondents are having the problem of inability to understand subjects.

**Table 4.32 Difficulty of to Understand across Various Levels of Schooling (Among Dropouts)**

Level of schooling	No Difficulty		Difficulty		Total
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Lower Primary	23	54.80	19	45.20	42
Upper Primary	37	32.70	76	67.30	113
High School	6	4.80	119	95.20	125
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>23.60</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>76.40</b>	<b>280</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.33 Chi-Square Result between Difficulty to Understand and Levels of Schooling**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	52.831	2	.000*
Likelihood Ratio	57.350	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	52.349	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	280		

\*Significant at 5% level

Source: Field Survey

**Box 4.4 Case Study - Difficulty in Comprehending leads to Absenteeism**

This case was reported at Devikulam located in Idukki District. The question on difficulty in comprehension instigated some of the students to abstain from attending the classes. Subhash was studying at 10<sup>th</sup> level in a government aided higher secondary school which was just 3.5 kilometres away from his home. He found difficulty in comprehending certain subjects such as English and Mathematics. No tuition facilities were available within his reach. Among these subjects, English was the most difficult one to understand. Finally, he started avoiding those school days where English is there in the time table. On these days, he simply sits at home and doesn't obey his parents even if they induce him to go to the school. This has led to his non-attendance in school and finally, he dropped from the school. In the field investigation, it was found that many tribal students face problems in comprehending subjects and they are not getting any tutorial facilities for these subjects. This case points to the situation that if adequate arrangements are not made for enabling the students to comprehend they would lose their interest in studies and would end up in absenteeism and finally lead to dropout of students.

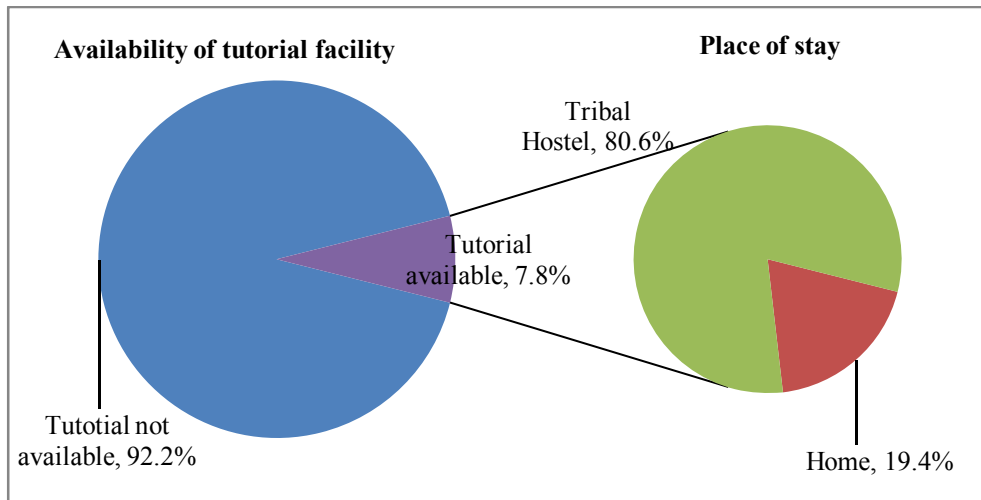
**Table 4.34 Multiple Response Output – Difficult Subjects**

Category label	Responses in Percent	Percent of Cases	Rank (Based on Difficulty)
English	25.8	57.8	1
Mathematics	24.1	54.1	2
Hindi	22.4	50.3	3
Science	12.5	28.1	4
Malayalam	8.2	18.4	5
Social science	7.0	15.6	6
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>224.4</b>	

Source: Field Survey

Table 4.34 depicts the list of difficult subjects ranked on the basis of percent of cases where the respondents mentioned difficulty in understanding the subjects. The most difficult subject cited by the respondents is English followed by Mathematics, Hindi, Science, Malayalam and Social Science. About 57.8 percent of the total respondents mentioned English as the most difficult subject, followed by Mathematics (54.1 percent) and Hindi (50.3 percent). Most of them have difficulty in understanding language subjects and mathematics. Some of the reasons for this can be attributed to lack of teachers, inability to find qualified guest teachers from tribal areas and the irregularity of students in attending the classes.

**Figure 4.13 Status of Tutorial Facility for Tribal Students**



Source: Field Survey

However, the surveyed respondents believe that the tutorial facility can improve the present situation. But, the provisions for providing such facilities are very less in tribal areas due to their remoteness of the location. It is evident from Figure 4.13 that 92.2 percent of the total respondents do not have any

proper access to tutorial facilities. Only 7.8 percent of them were able to get tuition for difficult subjects indicating their less access to tutorial facility. Out of the 7.8 percent of the respondents getting tutorial facility, 80.6 percent of them stay at tribal hostels and the rest are day-scholars. This is due to the fact that certain tribal hostels provide tutorial facility to weak tribal students. Practically, it is not possible for setting up adequate tutorial facilities in tribal areas but the problem can be resolved by the setting up of adequate number of school, appointing qualified teachers, filling up of vacant teaching positions and also, by providing proper infrastructure facilities at schools/tribal hostels.

#### **4.11 Parental and Teacher Motivation on Students**

Parental involvement and motivation are very important factors and it forms an integral part in the development of a student as it can make positive impact on the studies of children. Gonzalez-DeHass et al (2005) studied the relationship between parental involvement and motivation of students, and the study indicated that parent involvement, both at home or school, is associated with positive outcomes for the motivation of students. The research works on these aspects particularly suggested the need for parental involvement by way of attending school programmes, parent-teacher meetings, remain abreast on progress of the student, provide encouragement and engage the children academically and intellectually at home. The present study focuses on the motivational aspect of the teachers and parents in encouraging the studies of tribal children. Regular monitoring of students helps them in acquiring higher levels of educational attainments. Student requires motivation and frequent monitoring from the part of teachers and as well as parents. This is particularly

essential for tribal students as the school dropout ratio is high among them. The probable ways to encourage the students is by praising them on achievements or by assisting in daily life needs such as textbooks, exercise books, pens, pencils, satchels etc. (Ghazi et al., 2010). Table 4.35 indicates the percentage of dropouts and non-dropouts respondents who receives support from parents and teachers for their studies. It is evident that the teachers are giving support to the students in their studies which are significant among both dropouts and non-dropouts.

**Table 4.35 Parental and Teacher Motivation among Tribal Students (Percent)**

	<b>Whether motivates?</b>	<b>Non-dropouts</b>	<b>Dropouts</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Parents</b>	<b>Yes</b>	97.5	73.3	80.5
	<b>No</b>	2.5	26.7	19.5
<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Yes</b>	100.0	96.8	97.8
	<b>No</b>	0.0	3.2	2.2

Source: Field Survey

The percentage of parents motivating their children in studies is 80.5 percent and for the rest of the 19.5 percent respondents, their parents do not give any kind of motivation for the studies. Inter-comparison of motivation by parents between dropouts and non-dropouts students shows a significant difference. Among the non-dropouts, only 2.5 percent of the respondents are of the opinion that their parents are not encouraging them in studies where as among dropout respondents the percentage is much higher (26.7 percent). During field visit also we could feel similar attitude from the part of parents. In most cases, the parents are daily wage earners and they go for work early in

the morning and will come back very late in the evening. Thus, they will get only less time to observe and monitor the studies of children. At early stages of schooling the children require more support and monitoring from the part of parents. Lack of motivation on the part of parents will gradually lead to irregularity of students which further lead to lack of interest in studies and finally, end up with dropout from the schools.

## **4.12 Impact of Familial Aspects on the Studies of Children**

### **4.12.1 Home Environment**

Home environment is an important factor determining the education of students. A child's family and home environment have a strong impact on his/her language and literacy development and educational achievement (Cole, 2011). The variables such as education of parents, the family size and socio-economic aspects of a family will determine the background of the family. The home environment is determined by the behaviour or attitudes of members at home especially parents and their involvement in home learning by students. An adverse home environment can seriously have an effect on the studies of children. Table 4.36 illustrates the impact of home environment on the studies of dropout and non-dropout respondents. Among the non-dropout students, only 17.6 percent mentioned that their family environment not favourable for the studies but among dropout respondents, nearly half (49.1 percent) them are of the opinion that the home environment is not conducive for learning at home. The Chi-Square result between these variables also shows that there is an association between them (Table 4.37). The result is significant at 5 percent level and it can be interpreted that if the family environment is not conducive

for study, the probability for getting the children dropped out from the school is very high. Thus, one of the reasons in dropping out from the school may be the unfavourable family environment. A case study on dropout due to adverse family environment is cited in Box 4.5.

**Table 4.36 Impact of Home Environment on Studies**

Educational Status	Negative Environment		Positive Environment		Total
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Non-dropout	21	17.5	99	82.5	120
Dropout	143	51.1	137	48.9	280
Total	164	41.0	236	59.0	400

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.37 Chi-Square Result between Family Environment and Educational Status**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.190	1	0.000*
Continuity Correction	36.828	1	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	41.119	1	0.000
Fisher's Exact Test Linear-by-Linear Association	38.094	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases	400		

\*Significant at 5% level

Source: Field Survey

The various factors that lead to negative family environment are the nature of house, number of family members and alcohol consumption by the family members. The relevance of these factors in tribal education and how they influence the education of students are analysed below.

**Box 4.5 Case Study - Adverse Environment in Family: A Major Hurdle**

Shivakami(belonging to Irula tribe)resides at Sholayur Panchayat in Palakkad District. She has dropped out recently from the 7<sup>th</sup> standard. Though the journey to school was difficult, she was very much interested in studies. The adverse family environment insisted her to dropout from the school. Financial problems and poverty interrupted her studies. Her father had passed away earlier and later, she was looked after by her mother. But now, her mother has gone away with a man leaving her alone at home. As there is no one else to take care of her studies, she decided to drop out from the school. More similar cases are found in Palakkad region.

**4.12.2 Poor State of Dwelling**

One of the determinants of family environment may be the type of house where the school going children stay. This is because house is not just a dwelling place, but a symbol of the socio-economic background of the inhabitants. Here, an analysis is made on nature of houses stayed by both dropouts and non-dropouts respondents. Table 4.38 indicates that there is difference in the type of house owned by the families of dropouts and non-dropouts respondents. In the case of non-dropouts, 25 percent of them lives in pucca houses and 64.2 percent have semi-pucca houses which mean that the majority (89.2percent) of them have comparatively good housing facilities. Only 10.8 percent of them live in kucha houses and there are no respondents from this category having unserviceable kucha houses.

However, the housing condition is entirely different in the case of dropout respondents, as only 18.6 percent of them have pucca houses and about 42.9 percent of the respondents reside at semi pucca houses (altogether accounts only 61.5 percent). The remaining (38.5 percent) have kucha houses.



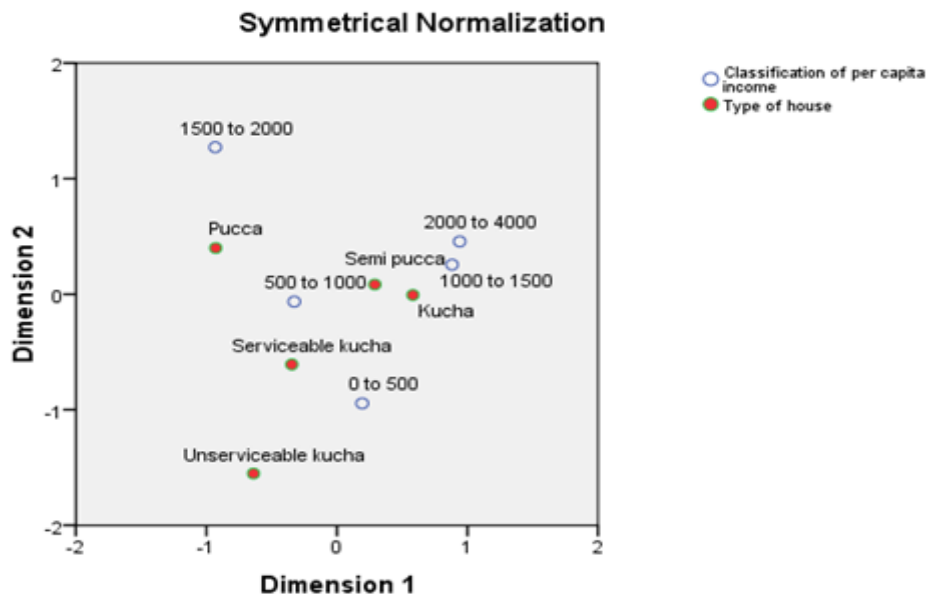
This includes 21.1 percent kucha, 10.4 percent serviceable kucha and 7.1 percent unserviceable kucha. Only among dropout respondents category, we could see serviceable and unserviceable kucha houses. This shows that if the condition of the house is very bad, it severely affects the studies of children particularly if they are going to school from home.

**Table 4.38 Condition of House among Dropouts and Non-dropouts**

Type of house	Non-dropout		Dropout		Total	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Pucca	30	25.0	52	18.6	82	20.5
Semi Pucca	77	64.2	120	42.9	197	49.3
Kucha	13	10.8	59	21.1	72	18.0
Serviceable kucha	0	0.0	29	10.4	29	7.3
Unserviceable kucha	0	0.0	20	7.1	20	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Figure 4.14 Correspondence Analysis between Type of House and Per-capita Income**



Source: Field Survey

The condition of the house is very often determined by the per-capita income of the family. This is clearly explained in Figure 4.14 using correspondence analysis between type of house owned by the respondents and the per-capita income of the family. We can see from the figure that serviceable and unserviceable kucha houses are owned by those households having very low per-capita income. Unserviceable houses are owned by those households having a per-capita income between ₹ 0 to 500 per month. Serviceable kucha houses are owned by those households having a per-capita income of ₹ 0 to 1000 rupees per month. From the previous analysis, it was clear that serviceable and unserviceable kucha houses are owned by families of dropout respondents. It is evident from the analysis that income of the family is directly connected to the nature of houses owned by them. Further, this will have impact on the education of children.

#### **4.12.3 Alcohol Consumption among Families**

Another important variable which determines the family environment is the alcohol consumption by family members which has emerged as a common evil faced by the tribal communities in Kerala. Table 4.39 indicates that the proportion of alcoholic parents is almost similar across dropouts and non-dropouts respondents. However, more parents addicted to alcohol are reported from the families of dropout respondents i.e. 42.5 percent of the total dropout respondents mentioned that their father is alcoholic. But in the case of non-dropouts it is 36.7 percent indicating only a slight difference between them.

**Table 4.39 Alcohol Addiction by Father**

Status	Father addicted to alcohol?						Total
	Yes		No		Not Applicable		
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Non-dropouts	44	36.7	55	45.8	21	17.5	120
Dropouts	119	42.5	114	40.7	47	16.8	280
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>400</b>

Source: Field Survey

The survey results showed that among 40.8 percent of the families, the head of the family i.e. the father is addicted to alcohol. About 42.3 percent of the respondents mentioned that there are no such issues from their father and 17 percent of the family remain as exception to this which is due to the fact that either their father has divorced/died/gone away or the respondent’s mother remains unwed. We cannot draw the conclusion that the alcoholic nature of student’s father will lead to dropout of students from the school but, it will certainly create an adverse family environment which is not conducive to the studies of children. In the field visit also, we could make similar observations that in many tribal habitations alcohol consumption is showing an increasing trend. As houses in the habitations are located nearby, a quarrel in one house due to alcohol consumption will affect the other houses settled in the same locality. Children going to school from home are often affected with these problems.

#### **4.13 Helping the Family: Predictor of Dropouts?**

Tribal studies on education mostly highlight the engagement of tribal children in agricultural or household activities and its impact on low enrolment or high dropouts of children at school levels. It is relevant from these studies that engagement of children in day to day activities to help their family affects

the studies of children and can lead to dropouts of students (Mohanty and Biswal, 2009; Duary, 2010; Manjunatha and Annapurna, 2012). In the present study, we could see that there was very high participation by the students in activities intended to help their family. About 64 percent of the total respondents were found engaged in activities aimed at helping the family (Table 4.40). The students mostly assist their families in various activities such as looking after siblings, household chores, agriculture, gathering firewood etc.

**Figure 4.40 Respondents Involved in Helping out the Family**

Whether helps family?	Frequency	Percent
No	144	36
Yes	256	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.41 Multiple Response Output – Percent of Cases Involved in Helping Family**

Category label	Responses in Percent	Percent of Cases
Looking after siblings	3.6	5.5
Household chores	47.3	71.1
Gathering firewood	27.3	41.0
Assisting agriculture	18.4	27.7
Other activities	3.4	5.1
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>150.4</b>

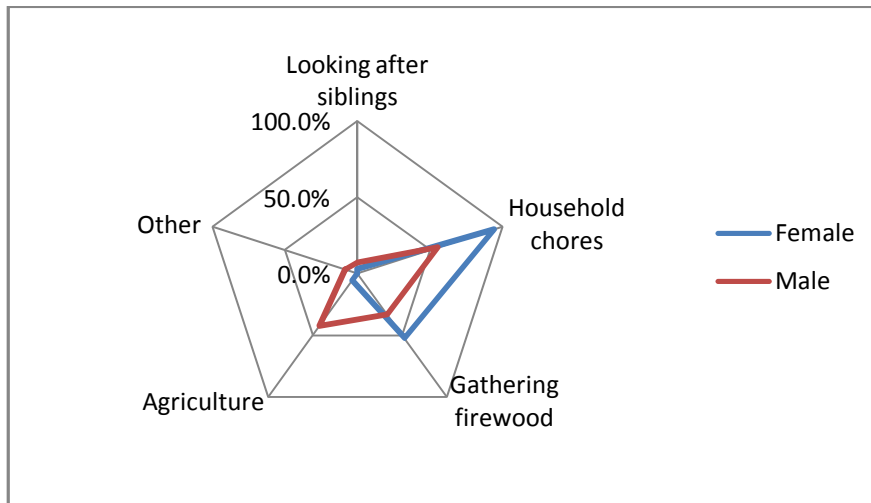
Source: Field Survey

The multiple response output (Table 4.41) clearly illustrates the activities in which respondents are involved. Out of the total respondents involved in helping the family, majority are engaged in some kind of

household chores (71.1 percent). This is followed by gathering firewood (41 percent), assisting in agriculture (27.7 percent) and looking after siblings (5.5 percent). First two activities are purely related to the day to day activities of the household and helping these activities frequently may affect the studies of the children.

More girls are engaged in helping the family activities compared to that of boys (Figure 4.15). Majority of female children are involved in household chores and gathering firewood whereas the males have got less representation in these two activities. They are mostly engaged in agriculture and the proportion of girls in agriculture is very low. A few males are engaged in other activities which include looking after parents, going for job etc.

**Figure 4.15 Type of Family Help Versus Gender of the Respondent**



Source: Field Survey. (Appendix 4.6)

Place of stay while schooling is very important aspect when you consider familial responsibilities taken by students apart from the studies. We

could not make any clear distinction between the activities engaged by students in terms of those who stay at home and hostel (See Table 4.42). Among the respondents who go for schooling from home, 61.3 percent of them were engaged in familial help activities. Among those who stay at hostel, 70.7 percent of them help the family. This clearly states that place of stay is not a key determinant of the activities by the students who intend to help the family.

**Table 4.42 Proportion of Respondents Engaged in Familial Help Considering Place of Stay**

Place of Stay	Yes		No		Total
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Home	174	61.3	110	38.7	284
Hostel	82	70.7	34	29.3	116

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.43 Proportion of Respondents Engaged in Familial Help Considering Educational Status**

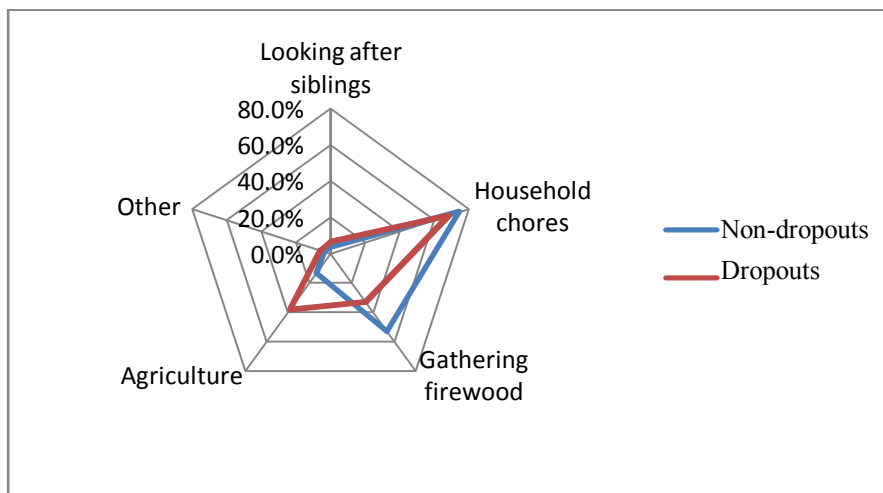
Educational Status	Yes		No		Total
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Non-dropouts	106	88.3	14	11.7	120
Dropouts	150	53.6	130	46.4	280

Source: Field Survey

Though place of stay does not determine the familial help of students, it is important to know whether it leads to dropout of students. Table 4.43 shows proportion of students engaged in familial help across dropout and non-dropout respondents. It is quite interesting to see that the proportion of students engaged in familial help is more from non-dropout respondents.

Among non-dropouts, 88.3 percent of them were found helping the family and that of dropouts the proportion of students engaged in familial help is only 53.6 percent. From this we can draw a conclusion that helping/supporting the family by small activities may not lead to dropout of students. But can lead to dropout provided the kind of activity they are engaged in. An analysis of the activities engaged by dropouts and non-dropouts is explained in Figure 4.16. Comparing it with the educational status of the respondents, we can see a significant difference in the activities engaged by the dropout and non-dropout respondents. Among the non-dropouts, significant percentage of the students is engaged in household works as well as gathering of firewood for cooking purpose. While in the case of dropout students, they are mostly engaged in three activities such as household chores, gathering firewood and agriculture. Among these two groups, ratio of dropouts to non-dropouts is high in agriculture.

**Figure 4.16 Type of Family Help Versus Educational Status of the Respondent**



Source: Field Survey. (Appendix 4.7)

It can be inferred that the students helping in agriculture activities have more chance of dropping out from the school. In most cases, students who stay

at hostel are engaged in cultivation. In the case of these students, when they reach their home for holidays or other occasions, the students engaged in agricultural activities may not go back to the school which will have serious impact on the studies of the students.

#### 4.14 Lack of Enthusiasm in Studies: A Causal Factor to Student Absenteeism

Table 4.44 indicates that the extent of enthusiasm among the students in attending the classes. It is to be noted that a significant percentage of tribal students (31.5percent) lack keenness in attending the classes. Among the respondents who mentioned lack of interest in studies, belongs to dropout category. This accounts for almost 44.8 percent of the total dropout respondents. Since lack of interest is an important factor which made a significant impact on the decision to dropout, the factors that created less enthusiasm must be removed.

**Table 4.44 Status of Keenness in Attending Class**

Category	Keen to attend		Not keen to attend		Total
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Non-dropouts	0	0	120	100	120
Dropouts	126	45	154	55	280
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>400</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.45 Reasons for Lack of Keenness in Attending Classes**

Reasons	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Not interested Studies	62	49.2	49.2
Unable to understand lessons	52	41.3	90.5
Other	12	9.5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Field Survey



It is identified that majority of the dropout students lack enthusiasm in their studies. Out of the students having lack of enthusiasm in the studies, 49.2 percent of them mentioned that they are not interested in attending the school and 41.3 percent of the respondents mentioned their inability to understand the lessons taught in the class (Table 4.45). The other reasons are mentioned by only 9.5 percent of the respondents which include the problems in interacting with teachers and/or students, laziness of the students etc. In order to increase the enthusiasm among the students, the policies should be framed so as to increase the interest in studies by way of informal teaching methods. Moreover, the authorities should appoint qualified teachers, introduce tutorial facilities and improve the infrastructure facilities of the schools located in tribal areas which will make improvements in comprehending lessons taught in the class (See Section 4.10 for a detailed analysis).

#### **4.15 Student Absenteeism: Major Challenge in Tribal Education**

When we observe studies on tribal education, an important challenge faced by the schools located in tribal areas are irregularity of the students in attending classes (Malhotra and Rizvi, 1997; Yadappanavar 2003). In the present study also, there is a large number of respondents reported to have irregularity in attending classes. It is clear from the Table 4.46 that non-dropouts students are more regular compared to that of dropout respondents. Among non-dropout respondents, 78.3 percent of them mentioned that they are regular in attending classes and corresponding to this, the regular students among the dropouts is only 31.4 percent. From this we can see a wide difference between the dropout and non-dropout respondents in maintaining

regularity to attend the schools and more than two-third of the dropout respondents are irregular. This gives a clear indication of the chronic absenteeism prevailing among tribal students.

The Chi-Square Test shown in Table 4.47 shows that there is an association between absenteeism and educational status. The result is significant ( $p$  value  $> 0.05$ ) at 5 percent level. From this it can be inferred that if a student is more irregular in attending classes, the possibility of that particular student to get dropped out from school is very high.

**Table 4.46 Irregularity of Students**

Educational status	Regular		Irregular		Total
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	
Non-dropouts	94	78.3	26	21.7	120
Dropouts	88	31.4	192	68.6	280
<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>400</b>

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.47 Chi-square Test between Irregularity of Students across Dropout and Non-Dropout Students**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	72.827	1	0.000*
Continuity Correction	70.965	1	0.000
Likelihood Ratio	75.427	1	0.000
N of Valid Cases <sup>b</sup>	400		

\* Significant at 5 percent level

Source: Field Survey

The reasons for this absenteeism among tribal students are depicted in Table 4.48. Out of the total irregular students, 61 percent of cases mentioned laziness as the major reason for not going to the school on a regular basis followed by playing with friends (29.4 percent cases) and health issues (22.5 percent cases). About 20.2 percent of cases cited other reasons for not going to school which includes financial constraints of the family, looking after parents due to their old age or illness, engaged in household jobs, and a few mentioned that in rainy season they do not go to the schools. Among other factors of irregularity, about 9.2 percent of cases reported that they are going for daily wage jobs, 6.9 percent mentioned that attending festivals as reason for being not regular in school. In about 3.2 percent cases they were engaged in helping agriculture activities of the family which lead to absenteeism.

**Table 4.48 Multiple Response Output – Reasons for Irregularity**

<b>Category label</b>	<b>Responses in Percent</b>	<b>Percent of Cases</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Attending the festival	4.5	6.9	6
Helping agriculture	2.1	3.2	7
Ill health	14.7	22.5	3
Playing with friends	19.2	29.4	2
Laziness	40.2	61.5	1
Going for job	6.0	9.2	5
Other reason	13.2	20.2	4
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>152.8</b>	

Source: Field Survey

**Table 4.49 Reasons for Irregularity across Dropout and Non-dropout Students**

Reasons	Non-dropouts			Dropouts		
	Count	Percent of cases	Rank	Count	Percent of cases	Rank
Attending the festival	3	11.5	5	12	6.2	5
Helping agriculture	0	0.0	-	7	3.6	6
Ill health	9	34.6	2	40	20.8	3
Playing with friends	0	0.0	-	64	33.3	2
Laziness	10	38.5	1	124	64.6	1
Going for job	7	26.9	3	13	6.8	4
Other reason	4	15.4	4	40	20.8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>			<b>192</b>		

Source: Field Survey

The reasons for not attending classes regularly vary considerably between dropout and non-dropout students. The major problem in both the groups is the same i.e. laziness but there is much variation between them in terms of percent of cases (Table 4.49) and it is very high among the dropout students. Other than laziness, playing with friends and ill health are also major factors for irregularity among dropout students. ‘Ill-health’ and ‘going for job’ are the other relevant factors among non-dropout students. Thus, laziness, playing with friends and ill-health are major reasons for irregularity of students. It was evident from the analysis that absenteeism is a common feature among the tribal students and it is the most significant factor leading to dropout of students.

The economic and social background of the tribal students reveals that they come from poor families and majority of them depends on agriculture, the low income earning sector in the country. The illiteracy of parents shows that

it is on higher side and which in fact, is a reason for poor educational attainments of the children. Among the dropout respondents, most of them replied that the decision to dropping out from the school was personal. This section conducted an in-depth analysis of important variables affecting the education of tribal students such as physical inaccessibility, medium of instruction, attitude of teachers as well as non-tribal students, parental motivation, family atmosphere and irregularity of students in attending classes. Among these, the most significant factors which have got impact on the education of tribes are physical inaccessibility faced by the tribal households and student absenteeism due to lack of interest in studies and inability to comprehend lessons taught in the class. Chapter 5 will be dealing with the factors that lead to the dropouts of tribal students from the schools.

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**EDUCATIONAL PERCEPTIONS AND INFERENCES**

<b>C</b> <b>o</b> <b>n</b> <b>t</b> <b>e</b> <b>n</b> <b>t</b> <b>s</b>	5.1 <i>Students' Views on Infrastructure and Education</i>
	5.2 <i>Reasons for Discontinuing Studies</i>
	5.3 <i>Factors identified through Focus Group Discussions and Field Observation</i>
	5.4 <i>Factors causing School Dropout of Tribal Students</i>
	5.5 <i>Exclusion Freedom or Choices Results in Perceived Problems of Dropouts</i>
	5.6 <i>Improvements in Means to Freedom</i>

In Chapter 4, we discussed the variables associated with education of tribal students. This Chapter mainly deals with perception of the tribal students and the factors influencing the dropouts of students. It covers the reasons for dropouts as mentioned by the students. Further, a comparative analysis is made across gender, region and levels of education. The factors causing dropouts of tribal students are analysed using binary logistic regression model. Finally, these factors are linked to the theoretical approach to arrive at conclusions.

**5.1 Students' Views on Infrastructure and Education**

Improvements in the institutional infrastructure ensure growth in school enrolment which is of prime importance to tribal education. Proper infrastructure at school facilitates learning and development and shrinks barriers to education. Inadequate schools and lack of teachers materialize as the common issue in tribal areas. It is essential to identify the infrastructure facilities

in these schools and the satisfaction levels of students with regard to present amenities at schools. The present study covers analysis on basic school infrastructure where the respondents are pursuing their studies or the school they last attended. The basic school infrastructure involves proper sanitation facilities, safe drinking water, proper building, sufficient bench and desks; and quality mid-day meals. The result of Likert scale analysis on school infrastructure is presented in Table 5.1. The mean score of all the variables is above 3 points and nearing to 4 which indicates that majority of the respondents feel that the facilities are above average level and satisfies most of them.

**Table 5.1 Rating on School Infrastructure Facilities**

		Sanitary	Drinking water	Building	Adequate bench and desk	Mid-day meal
N	Valid	400	400	400	400	400
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Statistics	Mean	3.72	3.82	3.9	3.91	3.95
	Std. Deviation	0.594	0.46	0.318	0.312	0.425

Source: Field Survey

Mid-day meal scheme is found to be effective in those schools where the students attending or last attended; the implementation side of this scheme is quite remarkable as the students feel satisfied with this scheme and this, in turn, has helped in improving enrolment of students to a certain extent. During the field visit it has been observed that the schools visited have their own toilets and drinking water facility except for certain single teacher schools or MGLCs. The students rated the building and seating arrangements above average level. But, in field visit, we could find that though there were buildings and associated facilities, the students did not have hostel facilities. Many hostels are running above the permitted level of intake capacity and fail to meet adequate number of hostels considering the demand side.

## 5.2 Reasons for Discontinuing Studies

Research work on dropouts of students from the school has come out with multiple factors differing across various levels of schooling. Overall, the reasons for dropouts cited by the students are mainly personal and familial (Table 5.2). The most important reason is their lack of interest in studies followed by difficulty in understanding the subjects. Out of the total dropouts students, 40.6 percent cases mentioned that they are not interested in continuing their studies, 32.7 percent of cases is facing difficulty in understanding subjects and 31 percent cases has other reasons. The other reasons mentioned by the respondents include various factors such as lack of transportation, medium of instruction, laziness, negative attitude of teachers and/or students, unfavourable family environment, issues related to hostel viz. indifferent attitude of warden, lack of facilities etc. About one fifth (19.6 percent) of cases reported that financial constraints or poor financial condition of the family prevented them from going to school.

**Table 5.2 Multiple Response Output – Dropouts Reasons**

Category label	Responses in Percent	Percent of Cases	Rank
Poverty	7.7	13.2	6
Responsibility to earn more income	2.1	3.6	9
Helping household chores	2.5	4.3	8
Health issues	4.0	6.8	7
Playing or hanging out with friends	10.9	18.5	5
Not interested in continuing studies	23.8	40.6	1
Unable to understand lessons	19.2	32.7	2
Financial constraints	11.5	19.6	4
Other reasons	18.2	31.0	3
<b>Total responses</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>170.1</b>	

Source: Field Survey



It is also to be noted that 18.5 percent of cases mentioned ‘playing with friends’ gradually led to their dropouts while 13.2 percent held poverty as the reason. The remaining includes factors such as health issues (6.8 percent cases), helping household activities (4.3 percent cases) and the responsibility to earn more income through going for job (3.6 percent cases). In the coming sections these dropout reasons are analysed across gender, levels of schooling and region/district to identify whether there exists any significant disparity with regard to percent of cases.

### **5.2.1 Dropouts Reasons varies across Gender**

In the previous section we discussed the overall reasons for school dropouts among tribal students. Here, a comparison of these dropouts reasons are carried out across gender and it is evident from Table 5.3 that the reasons vary across the gender. Among the boys, we can see that three reasons as more important and commonly mentioned by them. These include lack of interest in studies, problems with comprehending lessons and the students’ habit of playing or hanging out with friends. Out of the total dropouts’ boys, 43.1 percent cases mentioned that they decided to discontinue schooling due to lack of interest in studies and 37.8 percent cases decided to discontinue the studies because of problems in comprehending lessons taught in the class. Among a significant percent of cases, they were interested in playing with friends which eventually led to dropouts of students. Familial reasons such as poverty, financial constraints, and household chores have got less influence on tribal boys to dropouts from the schools as the percentage of such cases are very low compared to that of other reasons.

**Table 5.3 Gender-wise Reasons for Dropouts**

Reasons	Boys	Girls
	Percent of Cases	Percent of Cases
Poverty	10.1	19.4
Responsibility to earn more income	5.3	0.0
Helping household chores	0.0	12.9
Health issues	9.0	2.2
Playing or hanging out with friends	24.5	6.5
Not interested in continuing studies	43.1	35.5
Unable to understand lessons	37.8	22.6
Financial constraints	12.8	33.3
Other reasons	30.3	32.3
<b>Total cases</b>	<b>172.9</b>	<b>164.5</b>

Source: Field Survey

In the case of girls, the reasons to dropouts are many as compared with that of tribal boys. Apart from common factors of boys such as lack of interest and difficulty in understanding lessons, financial constraints and poverty also influence the girls to dropouts from the schools. Compared to that of boys, only lower percent of cases mentioned lack of interest in studies (35.5 percent cases) and inability to understand lessons (22.6 percent cases). Almost one-third of the girls mentioned financial constraints of the family as the main reason which made them to discontinue their studies. Very low income of the family i.e. poverty is also a significant reason for school dropout among girls. The girls are less interested in playing or hanging out with friends instead of going to school which is one of the prominent reasons for dropouts among

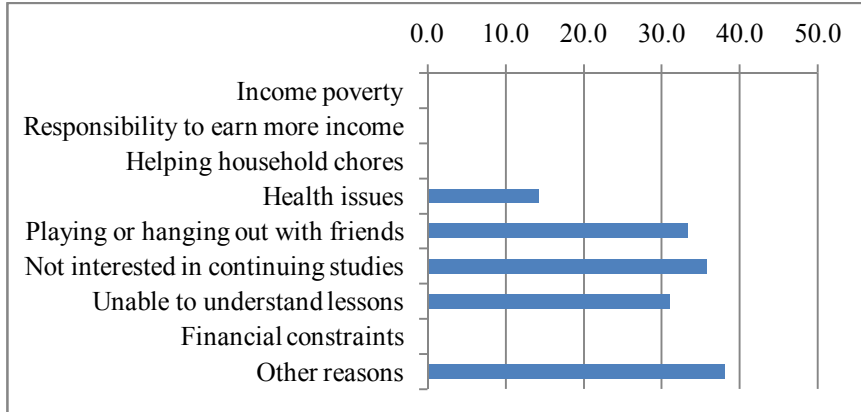
boys. From the analysis, it is clear that there is a significant gender difference in the percent of cases regarding the reasons for dropout.

### **5.2.2 Reasons to Dropouts varies across Levels of Schooling**

Having identified gender difference in reasons to dropout among tribal students, it is also important to identify whether there exists any difference with regard to levels of schooling. Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 explain the dropout reasons across Lower Primary (LP), Upper Primary (UP) and High School (HS) respectively. We can see some similarity in the structure of dropouts reasons across UP and HS levels though there exists difference among percentage of cases. But, the reasons to dropouts among those who dropped out from lower level schooling confined mainly across four important factors such as lack of interest in studies, difficulty in comprehending lessons, playing or hanging out with friends and health issues. Other reasons also form a significant factor and the various reasons that come under this category are explained in the first part of the same section.

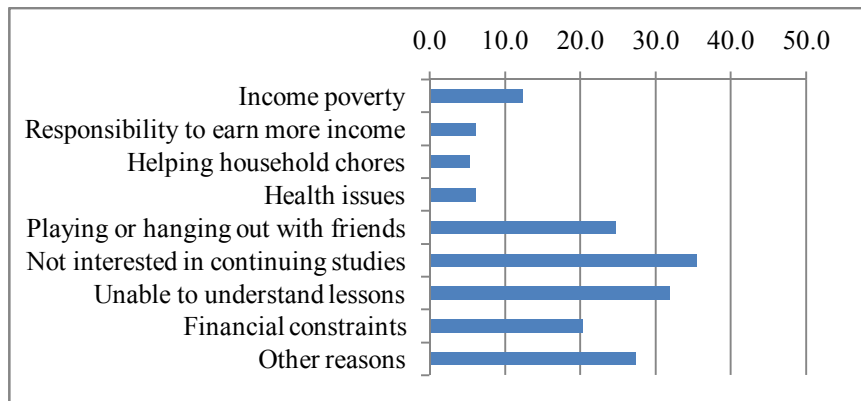
For those who dropped out from UP and HS levels, the reasons are many, however, the important ones are lack of interest in studies, difficulty in comprehending lessons and financial constraints. The students' habit of playing with friends is a major factor at UP level but less significant at HS level. Similarly, poverty is less significant at UP level compared to that of HS level.

**Figure 5.1 Reasons for Dropouts at LP Level**



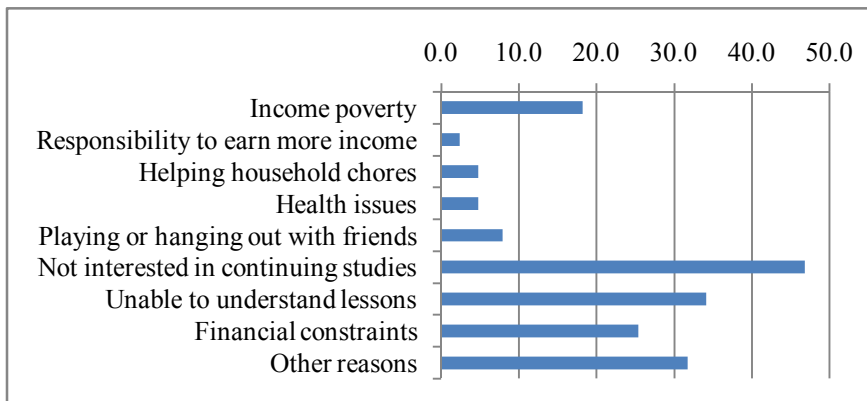
Source: Field Survey. (Appendix 5.1)

**Figure 5.2 Reasons for Dropouts at UP Level**



Source: Field Survey. (Appendix 5.1)

**Figure 5.3 Reasons for Dropouts at HS level**



Source: Field Survey. (Appendix 5.1)

From the analysis it is clear that familial aspects are less influencing the students studying at lower classes. But when it comes to higher classes, the influence of familial factors is more visible especially financial constraints, poverty, helping household chores activities etc. The habit of playing or hanging out with friends is more common at lower level schooling rather than higher classes. There are a few reasons which are common and significant among the three levels of schooling viz. lack of interest in studies and difficulty in understanding lessons. Health aspects of the children that need to be addressed by the authorities are visible at all levels of schooling.

### **5.2.3 Disparity in Dropout Reasons across Districts**

In all the three districts, the important reason for dropping out from schools is the lack of interest in studies of children (Table 5.4). But, the percentage of cases varies across these districts and it is more at Idukki (52.4 percent cases) followed by Palakkad and Wayanad. Among the districts, we can see a wide disparity with regard to the percentage of cases of reasons for dropouts. In Wayanad district, the important reasons apart from the lack of interest are difficulty in understanding lessons, financial constraints and the children's habit of playing with friends. Only a very few respondents mentioned poverty, going for job to earn additional income for the family, helping household activities and health issues as reasons for dropouts. Students in Idukki mentioned lack of interest and difficulty in understanding lessons as important reasons for discontinuation of studies. The next important reason is poverty which was mentioned by almost 27 percent cases. Apart from these reasons, out of the total dropouts in the district 17.5 percent cases mentioned health issues and 14.3 percent cases mentioned the playing with friends. Only a few of them are of the opinion that helping household activities as major reason to dropouts.

**Table 5.4 Reasons for Dropouts in the Districts of Palakkad, Idukki and Wayanad**

Dropout reasons	Percent of cases		
	Palakkad	Wayanad	Idukki
Poverty	20.8	5.5	27.0
Responsibility to earn more income	11.3	1.8	1.6
Helping household chores	5.7	3.7	4.8
Health issues	9.4	1.8	17.5
Playing or hanging out with friends	7.5	23.8	14.3
Not interested in continuing studies	45.3	34.8	52.4
Unable to understand lessons	18.9	32.9	44.4
Financial constraints	18.9	23.8	9.5
Other reasons	30.2	32.3	27.0

Source: Field Survey

Among dropouts of Palakkad district, 45.3 percent cases mentioned lack of interest as the reason for discontinuation of studies. Among the remaining reasons, the important ones are poverty (20.8 percent cases), difficulty in comprehending lessons (18.9 percent cases) and financial constraints (18.9 percent cases). Compared with that of other two districts, the percentage of cases that mentioned responsibility to earn more income (11.3 percent) as the reason for dropouts is more in Palakkad. A noticeable percentage of cases mentioned assisting household chores, health issues etc as the reasons for dropouts. Overall, we can see a clear difference in dropout reasons across the three districts covered under the study.

### **5.2.3 Comparative Analysis of Dropouts Reasons**

#### **5.2.3.1 Poverty, Financial Constraints and Responsibility to earn Income**

In Section 4.4, we discussed the income, expenditure and indebtedness of the surveyed tribal families. From the analysis, it is clear that most of the

tribal families have low income and many of them are facing financial indebtedness. It has been found that majority of the indebted families are those of dropouts. Low income and indebtedness create unfavourable condition for the children to continue their studies. In some cases, the situation will demand going for jobs to earn additional income for the family. A few (3.6 percent) of the respondents mentioned that 'responsibility to earn' more income for the family has affected their studies which finally resulted in their dropouts. Responsibility to earn more income arises as a result of unfavourable family environment or financial constraints of the family.

#### **5.2.3.2 Health Issues**

The major health problems found among the tribal students are scabies/itching. Unclean surroundings and lack of potable clean drinking water are the major reasons for these diseases. This can be attributed mainly to the nature of the habitations they live in. Even after the diseases getting cured, some of the students continue to abstain from school. Lack of care from the parents is also responsible for this. Besides, factors like helping household chores, playing or hanging out with friends etc. also contribute to the dropout of students.

#### **5.2.3.3 Unable to Understand Lessons and Lack of Interest in Studies**

Among the reasons for dropouts mentioned by the students, the most important reasons are difficulty in comprehending lessons (32.7 percent of cases) and lack of interest in studies (40.6 percent of cases). Section 4.14 explained keenness of the students in attending their classes. Out of the total respondents, 31.5 percent lacks keenness in attending schools. This constitutes 44.8 percent of all the dropout students. Among them 41.3 percent has

problems in understanding subjects and lessons and it is higher at upper levels of schooling. If a student drops out from Upper Primary or High School levels, one of the reasons may be his/her inability to grasp the lessons (Section 4.10). Thus, in order to avoid dropouts from higher level of schooling, quality of teaching should be enhanced and tutorial facilities should be provided. At higher levels of schooling, difficulty in understanding subjects has subsequently led to the lack of interest in studies. While in lower level of schooling, the students' habit of playing or hanging out with friends finally result in the loss of their interest in studies. Better quality in education and introduction of tutorial facilities can solve the problem of difficulty in understanding, while increased motivation and frequent monitoring of students by parents can correct the habit of children playing or hanging out with friends without going to the school.

### **5.3 Factors identified through Focus Group Discussions and Field Observation**

In Kerala, majority of the ST students comes from far interiors or remote areas and stays at tribal or government hostels for their schooling. Lack of transportation from hamlets, distance to school and lack of school itself prompt parents to send their children to hostel rather than going from home. The tribal hostels in Attappady region are running beyond their capacity. For instance, the tribal hostel in Puthur Panchayath (Palakkad District) was constructed for accommodating 60 students. But, it is occupied by more than 100 students. The Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP) officials have also confirmed the same and agree that more hostels are required in Attappady area to accommodate comfortably all students seeking hostel facility. Another



problem in this region is the lack of teachers in schools. Many teachers employed in these schools are from distant parts of the State. They join here as there is no option and seek for the transfer, if one of them gets transfer to a convenient place, the school authorities find it difficult to find a substitute as there is scarcity in obtaining required personnel from these remote areas. Thus, the subject concerned remains less taught or may be taught in a very short period of time. This adversely affects the quality of education rendered to the tribal students.

The views expressed by the administrators and teachers on dropping out of ST students from school are quite interesting. Most of the teachers are of the opinion that the negative family environment and financial backwardness lead them to dropouts. Negative family environment is characterized by frequent quarrel between parents together with their alcoholism are creating a negative environment for the students to study at home especially for day scholars. Another problem mentioned by teachers is that if some of the students going for vacation holidays tend to stay at home for more than the permitted days. This is because of either home sickness or financial problem of the family in sending back the children to hostel or may be due to ill-health of the student or sometimes they hang out with friends etc. All these lead to absenteeism and finally result in dropouts. Seasonal climatic change also affects students' attendance at school. In rainy season, most of the students studying at primary level abstain from going to schools. Teachers also have pointed out the lack of motivation on the part of parents to send their children to school. The participation of parents in Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings is minimal and only a few parents visit their children at hostels.

One of the problems pointed out by the administrators is that colony based living affects the studies of tribal children especially, the day scholars. Tribes live as a group in habitations where houses are situated in close proximity. The quarrel and such unwelcome incidents in one house affect the whole families in the settlement. Alcohol consumption is a serious problem among the tribes and it seriously affects tribal education.

#### **5.4 Factors causing School Dropout of Tribal Students**

Many factors are affecting education of the tribes with region or culture specific differences. The present study uses binary logistic regression model to understand the determinants of education by considering educational status as the dependent variable. Educational status means the respondent's present position which is either dropouts or non-dropouts. Dropouts have been chosen as the base variable and factors/variables determining educational status are explained in Table 5.5. Here, the determinants explain the significance of each variable in determining the dropouts. The factors significant in determining dropouts are distance to school, lack of motivation resulting from illiteracy of parents, family environment, financial constraints, difficulty in comprehending lessons and irregularity of students. These identified variables are significant at 5 percent level. Variables with a positive relation are distance, financial problem, difficulty in comprehending lessons and irregularity of students, other significant variables that have a negative relationship with dropouts are education father and mother, familial help by children, motivation by parents and family environment. An increase in the positive variable has more probability of being dropped out from the school. For example, as the distance to school increases, the probability to dropouts from the school also increases.

Similarly, an increase in the illiteracy level of parents has an increased probability for their children to dropouts.

**Table 5.5 Logistic Regression Output**

	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>Wald</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Exp(B)</i>	
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	distance_school	0.026	0.010	7.659	1	0.006*	1.027
	father_education	-0.511	0.162	9.923	1	0.002*	0.600
	mother_education	-0.363	0.151	5.797	1	0.016*	0.696
	monthly_income	0.000	0.000	0.022	1	0.883	1.000
	cost_of_education	-20.758	4202.914	0.000	1	0.996	0.000
	financial_problem	1.247	0.386	10.424	1	0.001*	3.480
	Med_of_instru_comprehension	1.057	0.478	4.886	1	0.027*	2.879
	regularity_teachers	1.329	0.837	2.521	1	0.112	3.777
	communication_teachrs	-0.621	0.763	0.661	1	0.416	0.538
	helping_family	-2.624	0.452	33.691	1	0.000*	0.072
	irregularity_of_students	1.680	0.376	20.001	1	0.000*	5.363
	infrastructure	-13.418	9378.099	0.000	1	0.999	0.000
	parent_motivation	-2.903	0.671	18.732	1	0.000*	0.055
	family_environment	-1.190	0.408	8.510	1	0.004*	0.304
	Constant	39.480	10276.829	0.000	1	0.997	1.400E+17

\*Significant at 5% level

Source: Field Survey

Expected Beta (Exp B) value indicates the extent of probability to dropouts from the schooling. Higher the Exp B, more the chance of getting dropped out. Among the significant factors, beta value is high for ‘irregularity of students’ which indicates that this is the most important variable causing dropouts. The other important factors are financial indebtedness of the family, followed by difficulty in comprehending lessons and distance to school. These are the pertinent problems that make the tribal students dropouts and discontinue their studies.

***Model***

Educational status  
(Base variable Dropouts) = 0.026 (Distance to school) -0.511 (Education of father) - 0.363 (Education of mother) +1.247 (Financial indebtedness) +1.057 (Medium of instruction) -2.624 (Helping family) +1.680 (Irregularity of students) -2.903 (Parent motivation) -1.19 (Family environment) +  $\varepsilon_i$

These significant factors are discussed below.

**5.4.1 Irregularity of Students**

Irregularity of students is the major factor affecting dropouts of the students. From Expected (B) column we can infer that irregularity of students work as a major factor for dropouts since the value is 5.363. If the value of Exp (B) greater than 1, then these variables have more chance in determining the dependent variable. As the analysis is based on dropouts as dependent variable, student's irregularity has more probability of dropouts from the schools. This indicates that if tribal children are irregular in attending classes, it has got more than 5 times probability to get dropped out from the schooling. Section 4.15 discussed in detail about irregularity of students and the corresponding factors across dropouts as well as non-dropouts. Since, the variable has got positive relationship with dropout, as the irregularity increases, the probability to dropout from the school also increases.

**5.4.2 Distance to School**

The exp (B) value of variable, distance to school is 1.027 indicates that it is a significant factor causing dropouts of students. Many tribal students are facing physical inaccessibility issues while doing their schooling and the

major component is the actual distance to the school (See Section 4.6). Besides, the major challenges in tribal areas are lack of proper transportation facilities coupled with rough roads or footpaths and for some tribes, they do not even have these facilities to reach schools. Table 5.6 indicates that distance to school has association with the educational status of the student. As the distance to school increases, the percentage of students dropped out also increases. Thus, distance to school has a significant impact on dropouts of students.

**Table 5.6 Chi-Square Result of Distance to the School Last Attended and Educational Status**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	46.428	4	0.000*
N of Valid Cases	400		

\*Significant at 5% level

Source: Field Survey

### 5.4.3 Financial Indebtedness

The second important determinant of school dropouts is financial indebtedness of the family as it has almost 3.5 times chance of causing the same. Out of the total dropouts, 35.9 percent shows financial indebtedness (Section 4.4). Poverty is the major reason for such a sorry state of affair. Most of the tribes engage in agriculture and allied activities with very low income levels insufficient to meet basic needs of the family and hence these families find other source like the money lenders to get money to meet any contingencies. The repayment capacities of the families are also on lower sides and this influence many students to discontinue their studies once the family is indebted to any kind of debt.

#### **5.4.4 Parents Education and Motivation Levels**

Parents with education can motivate their children to attain better educational achievements. Tribes in Kerala have only very low educational status and most of them (60 percent) have up to or below primary level schooling only. Estimate based on Logistic regression shows that poor education among parents acts as a significant variable. This shows that poor education of parents leads to low level of motivation for attaining education for their children. A livelihood-threatened community like the tribes cannot think in a different way as they are ignorant of the fact that education changes the very nature of livelihood and hence are unable to motivate their children for studies.

**Table 5.7 Chi-square Result between Parent Motivation and Educational Status**

	<b>Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-square	31.11	1	0.000*
N of Valid Cases	400		

\*Significant at 5% level

Source: Survey data

Motivation of parents is necessary for the educational attainment of the students. The study shows that there is a significant association between parental motivation and educational status (Table 5.7) [also see section 4.11]. There is a significant difference between dropouts and non-dropouts as far as motivational factors are concerned. In the case of dropout students, 26.7 percent does not get motivation from their parents. This leads to the conclusion that lack of motivation from the part of parents' leads to student dropout.

#### **5.4.5 Medium of Instruction**

Tribes have their own dialect for communication within the community. But these dialects do not have any scripts. The schools generally follow

regional language as medium of instruction which is entirely different from that of tribal dialects. This seems to be the major problem faced by the tribal students and the field data (21 percent have problem with medium of instruction) substantiate the fact that, medium of instruction affects their comprehension and subsequently lead to dropouts. Medium of instruction as a variable responsible for dropouts has almost 3 times chance according to binary logistic regression analysis.

Section 3.7 clearly evince the fact that majority of the tribal students are studying in Malayalam medium schools and out of this one fifth (21 percent), faces difficulty in comprehension. Among them, 84.5 are dropout students. Also, Chi-Square result (Table 5.8) shows that there is a significant association between medium of instruction and educational status.

**Table 5.8 Chi-Square Result between Medium of Instruction and Educational Status**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-square	10.366	1	0.001*
N of Valid Cases <sup>b</sup>	400		

\*Significant at 5% level

Source: Field Survey

About 25.3 percent of the dropouts faced difficulty in understanding subjects with the existing medium of instruction. In the case of non-dropout students, only 10.9 percent faced such problem. This shows that medium of instruction, to a certain extent, affects the studies of the tribal students which might lead to their dropout.

#### 5.4.6 Helping Family

The activities in helping the family include looking after siblings, household chores, gathering firewood, assisting agriculture etc. (see section 4.13

for a detailed explanation). Both dropout and non-dropout students are engaged in helping out the families alike. Majority is engaged in household chores and gathering firewood. The primary data analysis indicated that helping in day to day household activities has less chances of getting dropped out as they are performed by both dropouts and non-dropouts during schooling. But, in the case of ‘assisting agriculture’, the percentage of dropout students is higher. This is normally engaged by the boys and once they assist in these activities, get less time for learning process. Gradually, their focus shift from studies to income earning activities and they find that the opportunity cost associated with schooling is higher, finally decides to end their schooling.

#### **5.4.7 Family Environment**

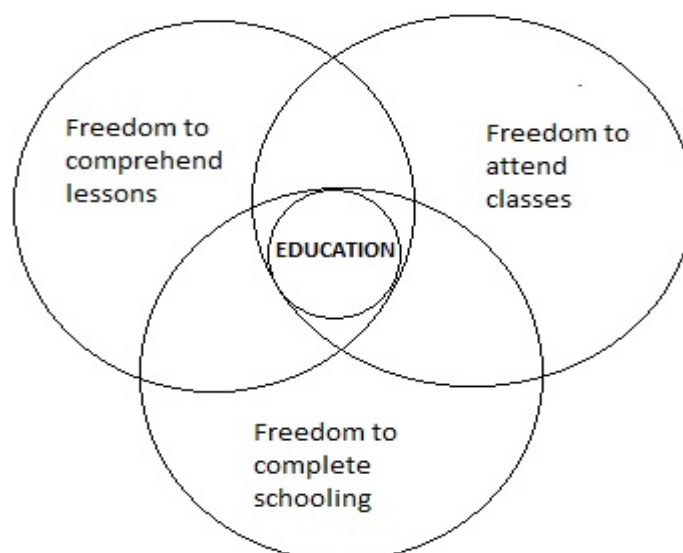
Family environment and education levels of children are highly correlated. Tribes live in colonies, where housing pattern in the tribal settlement is entirely different from mainstream population, and they are most often segregated from the general pattern of settlement. Many tribal settlements are not conducive for learning and education of tribal students. The result of the logistic regression also endorses that negative family environment as a factor determining dropouts and thereby low educational levels. Analysis of the data showed that many tribal parents have the habit of consuming liquor regularly and it negatively affects the students especially if he/she is a day scholar. Such incidents lead to adverse family environment which is not conducive to learning of children.



### 5.5 Exclusion Freedom or Choices Results in Perceived Problems of Dropouts

Theoretical framework of the present study discussed that various set of functionings determine a persons' capability set. Education is the major functioning which determines the capability of individuals. This unequivocally determines freedom or choice to attain the opportunities to improve the situation. Capability Approach focuses on social arrangements, which, in turn, should be evaluated on the basis of extent of freedom people have to promote or achieve valuable functionings (Alkire, 2005). Thrive for education to enhance overall capabilities of a person requires different sets of freedom. Tribes in India are structurally constrained from attaining education due to internal as well as external factors. In order to achieve basic schooling, they are often constrained with lack of freedoms in different aspects such as freedom to comprehend lessons, freedom to attend class and freedom to complete schooling (Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4 Education and Freedom**



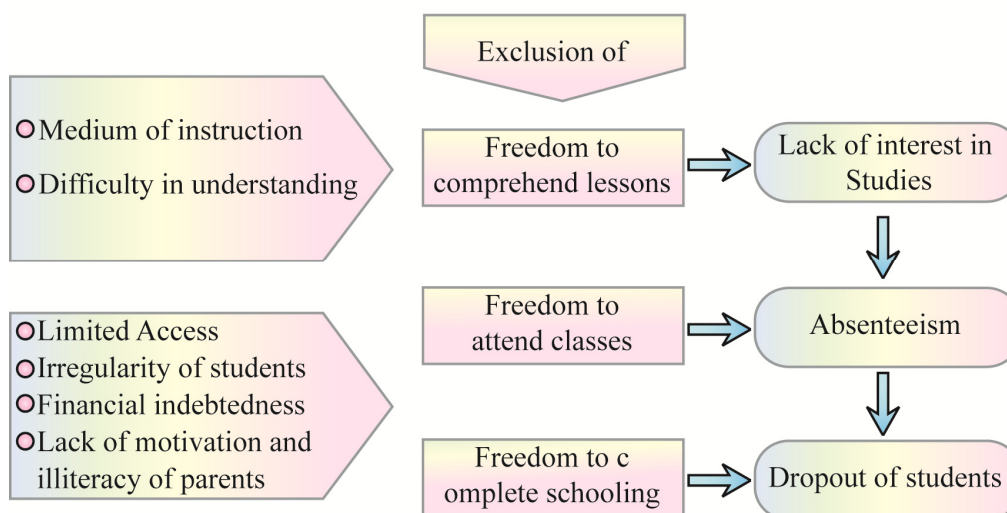
An improvement in freedom to comprehend lessons arises as result of better school environment and the quality in teaching. The schools in tribal areas face shortage of teachers and many are far behind in having basic infrastructures. In the present study, the results indicate that difficulty in understanding lessons is a common problem faced by the dropouts as well as non-dropouts. Any exclusion of freedom to comprehend lessons will result in many problems.

Schools in tribal areas are reportedly having chronic absenteeism of students due to physical inaccessibility schools and many other socio-economic and cultural factors also cause the problem. This restricts the freedom of students to attend the classes. Children require freedom to attend the class or schooling. The extent of achievement of freedom to comprehend lessons and to attend schooling determines the freedom to complete schooling. Better schooling is essential for attaining high levels of education and moreover, education can bring significant benefits to society, not only through higher employment opportunities and income but also via enhanced skills, improved social status and access to networks (OECD, 2013). The policy makers should recognise the relative importance of education in building the capacities of individual and thereby ensuring overall human development of the nation.

The tribes of Kerala have innumerable inconveniences to effectively make their freedom to attend classes, to comprehend lessons and to complete schooling so as to flourish their overall human capability. Figure 5.5 explains the linkage on how perceived problems results in exclusion of educational freedom of tribes. The identified problems in tribal education are financial indebtedness of the family, extensive physical inaccessibility to schools,

problem with difference in dialect and medium of instruction followed at the schools, difficulty in comprehending lessons taught at the schools, irregularity of students due to structural constraints, illiteracy of parents and lack of motivation by parents.

**Figure 5.5 Exclusion of Freedom or Choices and Resultant Problems**



As we discussed early, the different sets of freedom which influence education of tribal students are freedom to comprehend lessons, attend classes and complete schooling. The problems mentioned above restrict or exclude these freedom or choices. There exists difference in the language they normally speak within the community and the medium of instruction followed in schools which are normally in regional language. For some communities the dissimilarity between the languages is very high, in those cases, the students from these communities have the problem with medium of instruction. The educational institutional set up in tribal areas is a major challenge faced by the authorities; there is large number of single teacher

schools in these areas to enhance primary schooling. The qualifications for the eligibility for the post of instructor or teacher for these schools were lowered in tribal areas due to inability to find suitable candidates from these areas. In such cases, the teaching skills of the instructor and the curriculum factors are major concerns affecting quality of education. Moreover, many tribal hamlets lack the pre-schooling centres. All these factors act as a major hindrance for proper formal schooling for the tribal students. Difference between the dialect and the medium of instruction, and improper early childhood education creates many problems when the students reach higher levels of schooling. Among these, the important one is difficulty in understanding lessons. Problems with medium of instruction and subsequent difficulty in comprehending subjects taught in the class exclude their freedom to learn lessons. As the stage of schooling goes up, the percentage of students who have difficulty to comprehend lessons increases. This seems to be the primary reason leading to lack of interest in studies and finally to dropouts.

Irregularity of students in attending class is a common factor irrespective of region, caste or even levels of schooling. The irregularity reasons have been discussed in Chapter 4. Children feel that they are less motivated by the parents. The parents are not aware of the importance of education and the resultant change it can make in the human and social development of children. The illiteracy of parents along with the nature of work status keeps them at the same level of thought. Besides, parental involvements in the studies by way of attending PTA meetings, monitoring the studies of children etc. are also lacking. Another problem existing in tribal families is with regard to financial indebtedness of the families which,

in turn, leads to adverse family environment. The remoteness of their settlements leading to limited access to schools coupled with family issues, *inter alia*, illiteracy of parents and the very nature of irregularity among students exclude their freedom to attend classes and to complete schooling. This is further reinforced in the form of exclusion of freedom as well as their choice to attend classes, which again leads to dropouts. The point of essentiality at this juncture is improvements in means to freedom for the overall development of tribal education.

## **5.6 Improvements in Means to Freedom**

Extent of freedom to attend classes determines the well-being aspect of education and any exclusion from this freedom leads to absenteeism and dropouts. Any exclusion on his/her freedom to attend classes diminishes the capability set of the respective person. Absenteeism may arise from a vector of variables which may directly or indirectly exclude students from attaining the required level of education. Why do these problems exist? Or how can we improve the situation so that freedom to attend class is improved? Creation of enthusiasm among students is the important factor to avoid irregularity. Distance to school is a common problem in almost all the tribal areas. Setting up of schools in these areas are difficult and schools may not have adequate number of students to run the schools. What is possible at this level is to inculcate and provide incentives to students to attend classes. But, Right to Education Act (2009) confers each child to have right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school. The Act also makes it obligatory on the part of government concerned to ensure that each child gets free elementary education and adequate infrastructure for quality education.

**Table 5.9 Well-being Aspects to Improve School Education**

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Well-being/Agency freedom</i>
Student	Being able to actively participate in class, being able to understand the lessons taught in the class, being able to reach the school within time, being able to get neat and tidy hostel facility near to school
Parent	Being able to motivate students, being aware about the importance of education, improvements in social living conditions of tribal families
Teacher	Being well equipped with pedagogy, being able to teach student friendly, being knowledgeable about the tribal customs, problems, culture and social interactions

Means to freedom determines the extent of freedom or choices an individual has, to improve his/her set of capability function. Table 5.9 explains how we can improve the well-being aspect of students in the present situation. Several agency drivers are important in this respect and the most important drivers in the present context are student, parent and teachers. Improvements in agency freedom are necessary for the educational development of tribes. From the student level, each student should be able to actively participate in classes, to understand lessons, to get proper transportation facilities to reach school on time, to get neat and healthy hostel facilities and to get schools in the close vicinity of the tribal settlements are necessary factors for improving agency freedom. When coming to parental level, they should have proper knowledge and awareness about the importance of giving education to their children (based on parental attitude and motivation) and improvements in social and living conditions (improve their positive attitude towards education). Teacher level is vital and directly influences the student enthusiasm to continue studies. The knowledge in tribal customs and cultures will help the teachers to build up positive attitude towards the students for their learning without any interruption. This shows that the extent of well-

being/ agency freedom achieved determines the educational progress of the tribal children. The Agency freedom levels in a way can be achieved effectively through proper policy framework by the government giving proper space to tribal educational in the overall education policy of the State.

In Chapter 5, we discussed perception of students regarding the infrastructure facilities provided at school. Many students believe that they have good infrastructure facilities. But, through the field visit, it was observed that many a tribal school lacks infrastructure facilities, such as safe drinking water, adequate building and number of teachers, hostel accommodation for tribal students from far places etc. Next section analysed the reasons for dropouts mentioned by the respondents which was further compared with gender, levels of schooling and region. In all the three comparisons, we could find out difference with regard to percentage of cases mentioned as reason. Among these, lack of interest, inability to comprehend lessons and financial constraints of the family were more common reasons among the respondents. Binary logistic regression result shows that irregularity of students has got more probability to get dropped out from the class. Other variables which have got more probability for dropouts are financial indebtedness, medium of instruction and distance to school. Finally, these dropout determinants were linked with theoretical framework of the study. The study found that chronic dropout rate among Scheduled Tribe students arise due to exclusion of their freedoms i.e. freedom to comprehend lessons, freedom to attend classes and freedom to complete schooling. Problems such as medium of instruction, difficulty in understanding lessons, limited access to schools, irregularity of students, financial indebtedness of the family, lack of parental motivation and illiteracy of parents exclude their freedoms. Exclusion of freedom to

comprehend lessons leads to lack of interest in studies and exclusion of freedom to attend class results in absenteeism of students. Any exclusion of freedom to complete schooling leads to dropouts. Similarly, lack of interest in studies and absenteeism of students also result in dropouts. The study has elucidated different agency drivers which have key role to improve the current situation. These drivers are student, parent and teachers. Further, they should focus on improving different sets of agency freedom which, in turn, will result in the execution of proper freedom or choice of children.

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# Chapter 6

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## CONCLUSION

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- 6.1 *Summary and Findings*
  - 6.2 *Recommendations of the Study*
- 

The study is focused on education of tribes particularly the problem of high dropout rate existing among the tribal students at school level. Scheduled Tribe is one of the marginalized communities experiencing high level of educational deprivation. The analysis of the study shows that the extent of deprivation existing among STs of Kerala is much higher compared to that of other communities.

To sum up the study, the present Chapter has been divided into three sections where the first section briefly describes the summary and findings of the study. The recommendations of the study based on the findings are explained in the second section. The last section ends with concluding remarks of the study.

### 6.1 Summary and Findings

The present study covered tribes of three tribal predominant districts of Kerala such as Idukki, Palakkad and Wayanad. Out of the 35 tribal communities in the State, 17 of them are concentrated in these districts. Tribes concentrated in Idukki include Muthuvans, Malai Arayan, Uraly, Mannan and Hill Pulaya.

Tribes concentrated in Palakkad district are Irular, Eravallan, Kurumbas, Maha Malasar, Malasar and Kadar. Paniyan, Adiyan, Kurichchian, Kurumans/Mullu Kurumans, Kattunayakan and Kadar are the significant tribal groups concentrated in Wayanad district. These communities are heterogeneous with respect to their socio-cultural characteristics. The literacy rate and educational attainments of each community showed wide disparity existing within them. Only a very few communities such as Malai Arayans, Uralies and Kurichchans have better literacy rates. Among the rest of the other communities, their literacy rates are very low and for some communities, irrespective of the size of the population, the literacy rate is below the national average of STs. Educational attainment is an important variable for human capital formation which depends on the educational attainment, employment and skill achievement of the people. These communities have very low level of education and majority of them is below primary level. Only very few of them possess higher educational qualifications.

At school level, the low enrolment and high dropouts of students indicate that it is still a major challenge faced by the authorities in tribal areas of the State. Among the tribal students studying at elementary level, it shows a better Gross Enrolment Ratio in the recent years. But, when it comes to the secondary and higher secondary level, there is a sharp decline in the GER of tribal students. At higher secondary level, it is even below 50 percent which may be due to higher school dropout rate prevailing in tribal areas. Data on school dropouts shows that there exists high rate of dropouts among the students belonging to Scheduled Tribes of Kerala compared to that of other communities. For the year 2012-13, the dropout rate of STs was 3.53 percent which is significantly higher than that of Scheduled Castes (0.54 percent) and

Non-SC/STs (0.40 percent). Though there is no gender difference among the dropout rate of tribal boys and girls, at different levels of schooling, we can see considerable difference in dropout rate of ST students. The dropout rate among the tribal students' increases as the level of schooling goes up and the result showed that it is very high at high school level. Besides, the region-wise analysis showed that in those tribal areas where the concentration of STs is higher, the dropout rate remained very high. This is clear evidence that the government has not initiated proper policy measures to bring down the dropout rate existing in tribal areas. Finally, these have resulted in low enrolment of students for graduate and post graduate courses especially for professional courses. Poor educational attainment coupled with high dropout and low enrolment resulted in human capital deprivation of Scheduled Tribes.

Proper educational policies are essential to impart education among the tribes of India. Policies developed by the Indian government soon after the Indian independence was not given enough emphasis for improving the educational deprivation of tribes. It has only from the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1974-79) onwards tribal development got the pace as the government introduced Tribal Sub-Pan Approach during this period which aimed at the holistic development of the tribes. The second educational policy of the nation introduced during the year 1986 also gave due importance to tribal education. Opening up of Model Residential School in TSP areas was an important step put forward by this policy. Currently, there are 18 MRS and Ashram school functioning in different parts of the State aimed at giving quality residential education for tribal students. But, these schools can accommodate only 2.5 percent of the total tribal students of the State. For improvement of education among the rest of the students, broad inclusive policies are necessary. It is

understood from the study that many tribal areas lack adequate number of schools for serving the needs of the students. This is quite evident from the extent of physical inaccessibility persisting in tribal areas. Initiatives by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and ST Department by starting Single Teacher schools in tribal areas have helped in reducing the physical inaccessibility to primary schooling. But still, these areas are in need of more Anganwadi centres and LP schools for resolving the issue completely. At higher levels of schooling, there are schools that are facing the shortage of adequate number of pre-metric hostels for both boys and girls. From the analysis, it was evident that the hostels are allocated without considering the population representation of tribes in each district. For example, Palakkad, one of the tribal concentrated districts of the State, does not have enough number of pre-metric hostels for tribal students. Among, the educational schemes, we could see that lump-sum grant as a major aid for sending the children to the schools. Considering their physical inaccessibility and lack of transportation facilities from tribal hamlets, the allocated funds are inadequate to meet the expenses involved in sending children to the school.

Educational budget under Tribal Sub-Plan has shown an increase in the recent years due to sharp rise in the allocation of State Plan. The major proportion of budget under education component was allocated for construction as well as running of MRS/Ashram schools. The fund allocated for purchasing land and construction of pre-metric hostel facilities for tribal students are found to be inadequate. Besides, the TSP completely ignored policies which are aimed at reducing the continuing high rate of dropouts prevailing at all levels of schooling. The amount allocated under the head of education was inadequate to meet the infrastructural requirement of tribal

students for doing their schooling. Adequate allocation of funds and development of new projects are vital for resolving problems such as low enrolment, high dropouts and physical inaccessibility. Different institutions aimed at enhancement of schooling among tribal students such as Anganwadi centres, single teacher schools, MGLCs, MRS and tribal schools are managed by various government departments. Often, lack of coordination among various government departments continues to be one of the main reasons for not getting the desired result which is found to be a problem at the implementation side.

The present study analyzed dropouts situation in tribal areas of Kerala by conducting Field Survey among dropout and non-dropout students at school level. High dropouts among STs persist due to many problems which are of structural in nature. Important problems faced by the tribal students that have been analyzed, this can be classified as economic, social, cultural and institutional. A brief summary of these factors are below:

### **6.1.1 Economic Factors**

Many studies prove that economic variables have direct impact on education of children. In the present study, the economic variables are analysed with educational status i.e. dropout or non-dropout. It is found that there exists high correlation between Income and expenditure of the family with the well-being of individuals. Significant economic factors are poverty and financial indebtedness of the family which are summarized below:-

- **Poverty**

Doubts often arise from many quarters as to how financial constrains of the family affect studies of tribal students as education is free and moreover, the government provides various grants. The economic

background of the families is determined by the occupation of the family members. From the study, it was evident that most of the parents are employed in agriculture sector, the lower income earning sector of the country. In the study, a significant proportion of respondents mentioned financial constraints as a reason for dropouts. The monthly income of the tribes is far below the general population. Therefore, the majority of the tribal families do not have enough money to meet the health and education costs after meeting their day to day expenditures. Low level of monthly per-capita income denotes the poverty existing among the tribal families. Educational backwardness among the tribes is directly linked to poverty and it was clear from the analysis that higher the per-capita income, more the chance for students to be regular in the class.

- **Indebtedness of the Family**

Financial indebtedness was a significant factor for both dropout and non-dropout students. However, it is found more among dropout students. Inadequate income to meet the day to day expenses compels the tribal families to acquire additional income from creditors or they may be purchasing goods from retail shops for credit which gradually increases indebtedness. In this situation, the family finds it difficult to meet even the day to day expenditure and repayment of debt which, in turn, affects the studies of their children. Lower income coupled with indebtedness of the family has emerged as a constraint for continuing studies of children.

### 6.1.2 Cultural Factors

Tribes have their own culture, tradition and ritual which are entirely different from that of other communities which are even different across the subgroups. Some of the common cultural factors of tribes have got significant impact on the education of children. They are summarized below:

- **Nature of Habitation**

The nature of habitation affects the studies of tribal students, especially the day scholars who stay at home. As the housing pattern in tribal settlement is in such a way that houses are in close proximity to one another, problems like quarrelling or alcoholic consumption, which are quite extensive among them, affect the whole families within the settlement. As the parents are less involved in studies of the children, their way of living in community will negatively affect the studies of children. Besides, the students have more chances of being involved in playing or hanging out with friends which are common among them.

- **Difference in Dialect and Medium of Instruction**

Each tribal community has its own dialect which is used to communicate among its members. In Kerala, the majority of tribal students are studying in Malayalam medium schools which are entirely different from their dialect. This causes difficulty in comprehension for many students. The problem is more severe at higher levels of schooling. Difficulty in understanding the subjects create problems for students studying in UP and HS sections. Thus, medium of instruction affects their performance; however, it is not a very severe factor leading to dropout among tribal

students. To a certain extent, this issue can be resolved through proper enhancement of early childhood education in tribal areas.

### **6.1.3 Social Factors**

Social factors analyzed in the study are illiteracy of parents, migration of family, family environment, motivation by parents, activities engaged in for helping the family and students' lack of interest in studies. The analysis showed that all these factors except migration of the family, are affecting the education of tribal students. A brief summary of these factors are below:

- **Illiteracy of Parents**

It was evident from the study that majority of the parents have low level of education and within them a significant proportion are either illiterate or newly literate. The study shows an association between educational status i.e. dropout or non-dropout with educational level of parents. As the literacy/educational level of parents goes down, the probability of their children to dropout from the school increases. This is because the illiterate parents do not know the importance of education and consequently fail to give special care for the education of their children. Secondary data published by Census of India indicates that illiteracy among STs is very high. This issue need to be taken up by the government and requires strong policy intervention to bring down the illiteracy among STs.

- **Lack of Motivation from Parents**

The study also found that a significant number of students are not getting any kind of support or motivation from their parents for their studies.



The result showed a significant relationship between motivation from the parents and educational attainment of students. As explained earlier, significant number of parents is illiterate without any knowledge on the importance of education and therefore, they do not take initiative to motivate their children to study well. Besides, the study noted lack of parental involvement in the studies of children. All these will impact the educational attainment of students.

▪ **Unfavourable Family Environment**

Three major components decide the family environment; they are financial condition, alcohol addiction by father and the absence of father. There are numerous families without the presence of fathers to look after the family and children. In such cases, children are compelled to dropout from school. Frequent quarrels between parents affect the studies of their children especially if the student is a day scholar and the situation is more severe in those families where the father is addicted to alcohol. Financial constraints as explained earlier also affect the studies of children. The respondents are of the opinion that negative family environment adversely affects the academic performance of children and it may even lead to dropout from the school.

▪ **Familial Help by the Students**

Tribal students are often engaged in helping their families. They generally engage in activities like household chores, gathering firewood, assisting own agriculture, looking after siblings etc. The first three cases are more significant among the tribal students. Among these three activities,

‘assisting agriculture’ is more significant as those who are engaged in this activity have more chances of dropping out from the school. As mentioned earlier, the parents have got less concern on education of their children and if any child is engaged in such activities, it will affect their education.

#### **6.1.4 Institutional Factors**

Apart from social, economic and cultural factors, there are a few institutional factors which will also influence the education of tribal students. Institutional factors analyzed in the study include students’ absenteeism, irregularity of teachers, attitude of non-tribal teachers and non-tribal students, infrastructure facilities and accessibility to school. The study found irregularity of students and accessibility to school as significant factors which determine the dropout of the students. The summary of these factors are given below:

- **Accessibility to School**

Tribal students are still having severe physical inaccessibility to the school. Though majority of the tribal students get lower primary schooling within their reach, a significant percentage of students still has to travel long distances, stay at distant hostel etc. In the present study, it is found that accessibility to school is highly correlated with level of education. As the extent of physical inaccessibility increases, the probability to dropout also increases.

- **Lack of Sufficient Grants and Schemes**

Rising cost of education is of great concern to the tribal students in Kerala. Though the government provides various grants to the students,

they are often not sufficient to meet the increasing cost of education incurred by the tribal families. Most of the students travel many kilometers for doing their higher levels of schooling which involve more travelling costs. Besides, they also incur extra costs in buying study materials and uniforms. This creates an additional burden for the family especially for a lower income or indebted family. It can be concluded that considering the cost (both manifest and latent) involved in education, the present amount of lump-sum and monthly grants are not sufficient to meet their educational expenditures.

The above identified factors are further linked with capability and freedom. These economic, social, cultural and institutional factors exclude the freedom of children to comprehend lessons, attend classes and complete schooling. Freedom of children is necessary for improving the well-being of children. The study identified lack of interest in studies and irregularity of students as important factors leading to dropout of students. Lack of interest and irregularity of students arise due to the exclusion of freedom to comprehend lesson and freedom to attend the classes. The study identified three agents as most important for improving the well-being aspects of tribal students' i.e. student, teacher and parent. The government or authority concerned should focus on the improvement of various agency freedoms. Once the agency freedom is achieved, it will result in an overall improvement in the education of children and finally, enhance his/her overall capability.

## 6.2 Recommendations of the Study

The following are the recommendation of the study:

- **Effective Early Childhood and Primary Education:** An effective early childhood education could improve the enrolment and reduce dropout rate at school levels. From the study it was clear that the inability to understand lessons creates more problems at higher levels of education. This can be resolved through the promotion of effective pre-schooling within the access of tribal people. Besides, it will encourage the children to cope up with regional language and thereby reduce the problem with medium of instruction.
- **Ensure parental involvement in the studies of children:** There is a need for parental involvement by way of attending school programmes, parent-teacher meetings, remain abreast on progress of the student, provide encouragement and engage the children academically and intellectually at home. This would improve the overall educational levels of Scheduled Tribes.
- **Measures to reduce physical inaccessibility to schools:** Physical inaccessibility to school is still a major challenge faced by the tribal students. The government should ensure that the tribal students are able to achieve compulsory elementary education as proposed under the Right to Education Act, 2009. Physical inaccessibility to secondary level schooling can be resolved to a great extent by setting up adequate number of hostel facilities near the school.

- Necessitate more pace in eradication of illiteracy among tribes: Illiteracy of parents significantly impact the education of their children. Giving emphasis on literacy campaigns in tribal areas is a necessary precondition to resolve the educational backwardness among them as illiterate parents' do not motivate their children and engage their studies. Implementation of an inclusive strategy will enhance the improvement with regard to literacy level across all the communities. Special emphasis should be given to those tribal areas where the sparsely populated tribal groups are residing.
- Policies to extend the services of teachers to remote/tribal areas: In the field visits, it was observed that schools located in the tribal areas have shortage of teachers and the school authorities are finding it difficult to fill the vacant position of teachers by guests due to the lack of qualified teachers in these areas. It is very often reflected in the studies of children as well. This problem may be resolved by framing policies to extend compulsory service by the government teachers to remote rural areas.
- Tutorial facility at higher levels of schooling: By offering tutorial facility for selected subjects at higher levels of schooling, the issue with comprehension of these subjects can be resolved. This would generate more interest in studies and improve pass percentage of students
- Awareness among teachers about tribes and their problems: More awareness among teachers should be given especially to those teachers who are working in tribal areas. This will enhance their knowledge about the tradition, beliefs and the current challenges or issues faced by the

tribes. Once the teacher is equipped with adequate knowledge, then issues such as alienation faced by tribal students, lack of interest shown by the students etc. may be handled by the teacher.

- Effective coordination of government departments can improve overall efficiency: Often, the lack of coordination within the departments will exclude the government from achieving desired results for many project schemes. At grass root level, implementation of projects through any single department such as ITDP will enhance the government in analyzing the progress as well as the effectiveness of such schemes.
- New criteria required for fixing lump-sum grants for tribal students: Among those who mentioned physical inaccessibility, one of the components was long distance they normally travel to reach the school and the lack of proper transportation facilities. Many tribal families incur higher costs in sending their children to the school. It is essential to increase the actual amount paid as lump-sum grant and also, while fixing grant amount, the actual distance to the school may be considered.
- Need more educational schemes: Special schemes should be implemented in Tribal Sub-Plan under the head 'Education'. The present budget allocation is not enough to launch any new schemes. While implementing new schemes, focus should be given to those schemes which would address the problems in tribal education such as high school dropout rate, low enrolment at secondary level, poor performance at higher education etc.

- Policies to bring down poverty and improvement in livelihood options: As tribes are depending on agriculture and allied sector for livelihood option, the income remains very low. They need alternative employment opportunities for better earning which are very limited in tribal areas. In such case, it is only through enhancing proper quality education among the present generation, poverty could be reduced.

The present study analyzed tribal education through capability framework. Continuing high school dropouts was the research problem of the study and through the study; it was able to come out with results which would improve the current deprived situation. Overall, the summary and findings of the study give an in-depth examination of dropouts' situation prevailing among Scheduled Tribe students. The study empirically analyzed various economic, social, cultural and institutional factors affecting the dropout of tribal school children. The factors identified through the study will be helpful for the policy makers in bridging the existing gap in the policy framework. The recommendations of the study are aimed at the overall upliftment of the tribal students. Further, there are many areas which require more research especially on higher education. The low enrolment and poor performance at higher education is significant among tribal students. Besides, extended research works are needed on educational schemes and the outcome of such schemes, and parental involvement in education of children. Research on implication of Right to Education in tribal areas is necessary considering their physical inaccessibility faced at elementary level schooling. The present study identified that the tribal community is not coherent enough to achieve the vision of improvement in tribal education level in the State. Focusing on overall agency freedom of student, parent and teacher through proper policy

framework can effectively improve the current negative situation. This necessitates the requirement of a need-based policy option on the part of the government; instead of focusing on the measures of central tendency, it is high time to focus more effectively on the measures of dispersion for an all inclusive society.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1.1 Poverty among Different Sections in Kerala

Sl. No	Category	Share of BPL	% of total population
1	Scheduled Castes	19	9.81
2	Scheduled Tribes	3	1.14
3	Others	78	89.05

Source: Government of Kerala, (2008)

### Appendix 1.2 ST Dropout rate at Different Levels

LEVELS	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL
L.P SECTION	3.79	3.00	<b>3.40</b>
U.P SECTION	5.25	4.53	<b>4.90</b>
HIGH SECTION	7.85	5.08	<b>6.47</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5.11</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>4.54</b>

Source: DPI Statistics, Govt. of Kerala, (2009)

### Appendix 1.3 Distance to Schools from Tribal Habitations

	Habitants with Primary Schools		Habitants with UP Schools	
	Up to 1.0 km	More than 1.0 km	Up to 3.0 km	More than 3.0 km
<b>Total Habitants</b>				
<b>242993</b>	192624 (79.3%)	50369 (20.7%)	163308 (67.2%)	79685 (32.8%)

Source: Tribal Development Plan Ministry of HRD, (2008)

### Appendix 2.1 Size of Settlements in Idukki District

Number of Households	Number of Settlements	Percentage
<10	33	12.89
10 to 24	79	30.86
25 to 49	53	20.7
50 to 99	76	29.68
>100	15	5.87
Total	256	100

Source: Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, (2011)



**Appendix 2.2 Size of Settlements in Palakkad District**

Number of Households	Number of Settlements	Percentage
<10	82	19.25
10 to 24	167	39.2
25 to 49	98	23.01
50 to 99	64	15.02
>100	15	3.52
Total	426	100

Source: Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, (2011)

**Appendix 2.3 Size of Settlements in Wayanad District**

Number of Households	Number of Settlements	Percentage
<10	805	37.15
10 to 24	1004	46.33
25 to 49	300	13.84
50 to 99	53	2.45
>100	5	0.23
Total	2167	100

Source: Scheduled Tribe Basic Information, (2011)

**Appendix 2.4 ST Literacy Rate ( Percent)**

State/District	ST Literacy rate	Male literacy	Female literacy
Kerala	75.8	80.8	71.1
Wayanad	70.5	77.0	64.2
Palakkad	61.5	67.0	56.1
Idukki	76.6	82.3	70.9

Source: Worked out from Census data, (2011).

**Appendix 2.5 Distance to LP and UP Schools**

District	School	Distance ( In km)			
		1	1 to 2.5	2.5 to 5	More than 5
Idukki	Lower Primary	10.5	19.9	22.3	47.3
	Upper Primary	7.8	16.0	15.6	60.5
Palakkad	Lower Primary	9.9	29.3	31.7	29.1
	Upper Primary	3.5	15.3	21.1	60.1
Wayanad	Lower Primary	16.0	47.9	29.5	6.6
	Upper Primary	8.6	34.2	35.5	21.6

Source: Compiled from Scheduled Tribe basic information, GOK (2010 and 2011)

### Appendix 2.6 Distance to HS and Higher Secondary Schools

District	School	Distance (In km)			
		1	1 to 2.5	2.5 to 5	More than 5
Idukki	High School	3.5	8.6	16.4	71.5
	Higher Secondary	2.0	7.4	12.5	78.1
Palakkad	High School	1.2	11.5	16.9	70.4
	Higher Secondary	0.0	7.5	11.0	81.5
Wayanad	High School	4.1	20.1	33.4	42.4
	Higher Secondary	2.8	14.6	27.2	55.3

Source: Compiled from Scheduled Tribe basic information, GOK (2010 and 2011)

### Appendix 3.1 Tribal Schools in Kerala

District	High School	Upper Primary	Lower Primary	Total
Trivandrum	1	1	12	14
Kollam	1	0	4	5
Pathanamthitta	2	1	0	3
Alappuzha	0	0	0	0
Kottayam	0	3	3	6
Idukki	8	5	10	23
Ernakulam	0	1	0	1
Thrissur	1	0	7	8
Palakkad	5	1	9	15
Malappuram	1	1	2	4
Kozhikode	0	0	1	1
Wayanad	5	1	0	6
Kannur	1	1	0	2
Kasaragod	1	0	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>90</b>

Source: GOK, Directorate of Public Instruction, (2012).

**Appendix 3.2 Number of Pre-matric Hostels in Kerala**

District	Pre-matric Hostel			Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys & Girls	
Trivandrum	1	1		2
Kollam	2	2		4
Pathanamthitta	1	1		2
Alappuzha	Nil	1		1
Kottayam	Nil	2		2
Idukki	7	5		12
Ernakulam	2	2		4
Thrissur	3	2		5
Palakkad	14	7	2	23
Malappuram	7	3		10
Kozhikode	3	1		4
Wayanad	20	8		28
Kannur	5	3		8
Kasargode	Nil	3		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>108</b>

Source: GOK, Scheduled Tribe Department, (2012).

**Appendix 3.3 Tribal Education Budget included in TSP (In ₹. Lakhs)**

Year	State plan	100% Central	50% Central	Total
<b>2005-06</b>	1305.50	712.50	477.50	<b>2495.50</b>
<b>2006-07</b>	1303.00	892.52	475.00	<b>2670.52</b>
<b>2007-08</b>	1599.00	1032.52	561.00	<b>3192.52</b>
<b>2008-09</b>	1933.00	1023.26	600.00	<b>3556.26</b>
<b>2009-10</b>	2255.00	1093.99	650.00	<b>3998.99</b>
<b>2010-11</b>	4530.00	1032.00	1970.00	<b>7532.00</b>
<b>2011-12</b>	4072.21	1042.00	1554.21	<b>6668.42</b>
<b>2012-13</b>	4570.35	1722.00	1928.35	<b>8220.70</b>

Source: Tribal Sub-Plan estimates, STDD, (2005 - 2012)

**Appendix 3.4 Total Education and MRS Outlay**

Year	Education outlay	MRS Outlay
2006-07	2629.52	1800.00
2008-09	3517.26	2100.00
2009-10	3967.99	2350.01
2011-12	6628.42	4408.42
2012-13	7900.70	5256.70

Source: Worked out from various Tribal Sub-Plan estimates, STDD, (2005 to 2012)

**Appendix 4.1 Appendix Age of the Respondents**

Age	Percentage
7	2.14
9	1.07
10	4.27
11	4.63
12	7.83
13	2.14
14	10.32
15	8.54
16	10.68
17	7.12
18	17.08
19	6.41
20	5.69
21	5.34
22	4.63
23	1.07
24	1.07

Source: Field Survey

**Appendix 4.2 Educational Attainment of Father**

	Non-dropouts (Percent)	Dropouts (Percent)
Illiterate	22.7	45.9
Newly literate	5.0	8.2
Primary	37.0	35.6
Secondary	31.1	8.9
Upto level SSLC	2.5	1.4
Above SSLC	1.7	0.0

Source: Field Survey

**Appendix 4.3 Educational Attainment of Mother**

	<b>Non-dropout (Percent)</b>	<b>Dropout (Percent)</b>
Illiterate	42.9	63.3
Newly literate	7.6	5.3
Primary	37.8	25.3
Secondary	5.9	6.0
Up to SSLC	5.9	0.0

Source: Field Survey

**Appendix 4.4 Regularity of Teachers (Percent)**

<b>Regular</b>	<b>Irregular</b>
95.5	4.5

Source: Field Survey

**Appendix 4.5 Difficulty in Understanding Subjects (Percent)**

<b>Difficult</b>	<b>Not Difficult</b>
80.8	19.2

Source: Field Survey

**Appendix 4.6 Gender-wise Familial Help**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
	<b>Percent of Cases</b>	
Looking after siblings	2.9	7.2
Household chores	94.2	55.6
Gathering firewood	52.4	33.3
Agriculture	5.8	42.5
Other Activities	0.0	8.5

Source: Field Survey

**Appendix 4.7 Familial Help by Dropouts and Non-dropouts**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Non-Dropouts (Percent)</b>	<b>Dropouts (Percent)</b>
Looking after siblings	3.8	6.7
Household chores	74.5	68.7
Gathering firewood	52.8	32.7
Agriculture	13.2	38.0
Other Activities	3.8	6.0

Source: Field Survey

### Appendix 5.1 Section-wise Reasons to Dropout From School

Reasons	Number	Lower Primary	Number	Upper Primary	Number	High School
Income poverty	0	0.0	14	12.4	23	18.3
Responsibility to earn more income	0	0.0	7	6.2	3	2.4
Helping household chores	0	0.0	6	5.3	6	4.8
Health issues	6	14.3	7	6.2	6	4.8
Playing or hanging out with friends	14	33.3	28	24.8	10	7.9
Not interested in continuing studies	15	35.7	40	35.4	59	46.8
Unable to understand lessons	13	31.0	36	31.9	43	34.1
Financial constraints	0	0.0	23	20.4	32	25.4
Other reasons	16	38.1	31	27.4	40	31.7

Source: Field Survey

**Interview Schedule**

**Social Structural Determinants of Education among Tribes in Kerala**

**Ph.D. Thesis**

**DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED ECONOMICS  
COCHIN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
KOCHI- 688 022**

**Basic Information**

District.....Taluk .....

Panchayat.....Ward No.....

Name of the Tribe .....

House Name/No.....

Name of Interviewee.....

Investigator.....Date of Interview.....

Supervisor.....

**Section 1: Profile of respondents**

1. Age.....

2. Sex: Male -1, Female - 0 3. Educational status Dropout- 1, Non-dropout- 0 

3 (a). If dropout, which class .....

3 (b). What was the reason for dropping out?

Poverty Responsibility to earn more income Helping household chores Unable to understand lessons Health issues/disease Playing or hanging out with friends Not interested in continuing studies Financial Constraints Other reasons..... 

3 (c). Did anybody encourage you to dropout from the school?

Yes-1, No-0 

3 (c) i. If yes, who?

 Father  Mother  Both father & mother Siblings  Friends  Teachers  Others  
(specify).....

4. Years of schooling you have undergone.....

5. What type of school last attended (✓)?

Government		Government aided	Private	MGLC
Tribal	Non tribal			



6. Specify the place of stay while doing schooling  
 Home/Day scholar    Tribal hostel    Non tribal hostel    Rented  
 Others (Specify).....
7. The distance from the place of residing to the school where you are studying / decided to dropout (In km) .....
8. Approximate distance to nearest town (In km) .....
9. Number of families settled in your locality.....
10. The families residing in your settlement belongs to:  
 Single community   
 Multiple communities of Tribes only   
 Multiple communities of tribes and other communities

**Section 2: Profile of Parents**

11. Educational status of your father (See code No: 1).....
12. Educational status of your mother (Code No: 1).....
13. Occupation of your father (Code No: 2).....
14. Occupation of your mother (Code No: 2).....

Code No:1		Code No:2	
Illiterates	1	Collection of forest resources	1
Newly literate	2	Agriculture	2
Primary	3	Production of traditional products	3
Secondary	4	Animal husbandry	4
Up to SSLC	5	Small vendor	5
SSLC	6	Collection of herbal medicines	6
Pre-degree/Plus 2	7	Agricultural labourer	7
Graduation	8	Forest related jobs	8
Post graduation	9	Employment guarantee scheme	9
Others (specify)	10	Non-agricultural Labourer	10
Not applicable	0	Estate labourer	11
		Govt. semi-govt job	12
		Private sector job	13
		Other (specify)	14
		Too old	15
		Unfit for doing work	16
		Not Applicable ( Passed away / went away)	17
		No income	0

15. House hold size (Total).....Adults..... Children (Below 18years).....

16. Monthly income of the household (In ₹)

16 (a).Primary.....

16 (b).Secondary.....

17. Type of House

Pucca-1 Semi pucca-2 Kucha-3 Serviceable Kucha-4

Unserviceable Kucha-5

18. Monthly Expenditure (To be collected from parents)

#	Items	Amount (₹)	#	Items	Amount (₹)
1	Food		5	Alcohol & tobacco	
2	Education		6	Entertainment	
3	Health		7	Debt repayment	
4	Communication		8	Other	

19. Does anyone in your family have social connection Yes-1. No-0

19 (a). If Yes, tick (✓) who have such connections

Father  Mother  Elder siblings  
others.....

19 (b). Tick the connection applicable

Self Help Group member  
 NGO relations  
 Regular in PTA meetings  
 Member in political party/local government body  
 Regular in MNREGA works  
 Other.....

**Section 3: Economic aspects**

20. Does your family incur any cost in educating you? Yes- 1, No- 0

20 (a). If yes, please mention

Per annum (In ₹)	
Tuition fees	
PTA fund	
Study Materials	
Uniform	
Transportation	
Others	
<b>Total</b>	

21. Does your household have any financial problems? Yes-1, No-0

21 (a). If yes, Specify the amount (Rs).....

21 (b). The source of indebtedness

- Money lenders   
  Retail shops   
  Co-operate societies  
 Public sector banks   
  Private sector banks   
  SHG

22. Aailed grants received from government for education (Multiple Choice)

- Lump-sum Grant  
 Grant for buying Uniforms and Text books  
 Other Grants.....  
 No grants aailed

23. If grants aailed, Was it enough Yes-1, No-0

23 (a). If No, Why?.....

**Section 4: Social aspects**

24. What is the language you generally use in your community?
- Tribal language – 1, Malayalam – 2 Tamil-3      Kannada-4
25. What was the medium of instruction in school?
- Malayalam – 1 English - 2 Tribal languages - 3      Tamil - 4      Kannada - 5
26. If medium of instruction was other than tribal language,
- 26 (a). Did it affect your comprehension?      Yes- 1, No - 0
- 26 (b). Did it affect your performance?      Yes- 1, No – 0
27. Access to school is/was .....
- Difficult       Normal       Easy
- 27 (a). If Difficult, specify the problem ( Multiple Choice)
- No transportation       Distance       Cost of transportation
- Others
28. What was the attitude of non-tribal classmates towards you?
- Friendly       Hostile       Indifferent
29. How do teachers behave to you?
- 29 (a) Tribal teachers       Friendly       Hostile       Indifferent
- 29 (b) Non- Tribal teachers  Friendly       Hostile       Indifferent
30. Did the teachers motivate you in your studies?
- Yes- 1, No- 0
31. Do the teachers regular in taking classes?
- Yes- 1, No- 0
32. Did you face any problem of communication while interacting with teachers?
- Yes-1, No- 0

33. Did you face any problem of communication while interacting with non-tribal students?

Yes-1, No- 0

34. Did you face any problem in understanding subjects?

Yes-1, No- 0

34 (a). If yes, specify the subjects

- English
- Hindi
- Malayalam
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Science
- Other .....

35. Was there any tutorial facility available within your locality/accessibility?

Yes- 1, No-0

35 (a). If yes, specify the type of facility  Home  Institution

35 (b). Distance in km.....

36. Do you engage in any activity on helping out your family?

Yes- 1, No- 0

36 (a). If Yes, please specify (Multiple Choice)

- Looking after siblings
- Household chores
- Gathering firewood
- Assisting in agriculture activities
- Other Activities.....

37. Were you very keen to attend the classes? Yes- 1, No-0

37 (a). If No, Why? (Multiple Choice)

- Not Interested in Studies  
 Unable to Understand lessons  
 Other .....

38. Were you irregular in attending the classes?

Regular- 1 Irregular - 0

38 (a). If Yes, specify the reason (Multiple Choice)

- Attending the festivals  
 Helping in a agriculture harvesting/cropping  
 Ill health  
 Playing/hanging out with friends  
 Laziness  
 Going for job  
 Other reason (Specify).....

39. Does/did your school have infrastructure facilities?

Yes-1, No-0

If Yes,

39(a) The Drinking water facility Yes-1, No-0

39(b) Toilet  With water connection  Without water connection

39(c) Classrooms with  Bench & Desk  Electricity connection  
 Light

### **Section 5: Cultural aspects**

40. Did your parents motivate you in your studies?

Yes- 1, No- 0

41. Did your family frequently migrate in search for job?

Yes-1, No- 0

42. Do your parents read/listen to news regularly?

Yes- 1, No- 0

42(a). If Yes, through which media (Multiple choice)

TV       Radio       Newspaper

43. Are your father addicted to alcohol?

Yes- 1, No- 0

44. Did your family environment permit you to study at home?

Yes- 1, No- 0

**Section 6: Perception of the student**

Influence of education      Yes – 1      No-2      May be- 3  
 don't know -4

45.	Do you think education will make a difference to your lives?	
46.	Do you think education will help you get a better job?	
47.	Do you think education will help you overcome poverty?	
48.	Do you think education will help you further your livelihood opportunities?	

49. Are your teachers sensitive towards your limitations in

49 (a). Financial constraints that cause irregular attendance Yes- 1, No - 0

49 (b). Difficulty in access to education Yes- 1, No - 0

49(c). Difficulty in comprehension Yes- 1, No - 0

Rate the facilities in the school from which you dropped out/ studying. If there is **no such facility** skip the question

Very bad- 1    Bad- 2    Average- 3    Good -4    Very good- 5

- 50. Sanitation facilities
- 51. Drinking water availability
- 52. Buildings
- 53. Bench, desk, table etc
- 54. Computer facilities
- 55. Mid-day meal scheme
- 56. Co curricular activities
- 57. Do you think of going outside your locality in search of jobs? Yes -1, No-0
- 58. Please mention the average distance to the following (In km)
  - a) Anganwaadi .....
  - b) LP School .....
  - c) UP School.....
  - d) High School.....
  - e) HS School.....
  - f) College.....

Any suggestions

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**EDUCATION AS CHOICES AND CAPABILITIES:  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE LEVEL OF EXCLUSION OF  
THE TRIBES IN KERALA**

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The paper tries to analyse various factors affecting education of the tribes in Kerala using capability framework. The remarkable achievement of Kerala in social development indicators has not helped the tribes to attain this. The tribes face exclusion in all fields and education exclusion is the most important among them as it has several externalities. The paper, with the aid of empirical background, tries to link lack of freedom and choices as the principal force making the tribes excluded in education. The data for the study is obtained from 400 samples collected from the tribal predominated districts of Wayanad, Idukki and Palakkad.

*Keywords:* Education, Exclusion, Capability, Tribes, Freedom, Well-being

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

Education and health achievements of Kerala are commendable compared to other Indian states and even some of the developed economies of the world. But this robust central tendency does not manifest in the case of the tribal community as a result of which they continue to be outliers in the social development process. Another noteworthy implication exemplified in the Human Development Report of the Scheduled Tribes in Kerala 2010 is the existence of high levels of inter-caste disparities irrespective of elevated social development and class-based social reform movements in the mainstream society. But this kind of disparity is beyond bounds with respect to the tribes. In literacy level also the disparity is visible as the tribal literacy level is 72.77 per cent in lieu of the state level literacy of 94.00 (Census, 2011). This level of conspicuous gap has been visualised and anticipated since 1961 census<sup>2</sup>. Furthermore, the level of educational attainment of the tribes in Kerala is abysmally low since majority of them have not undergone formal schooling. The education exclusion of the tribal

community is not a widely discussed issue and the reason for this is their small representation with respect to total population of Kerala<sup>3</sup>. Like school enrolment, dropouts' rate is also very high among the tribes. In the academic year 2007-08, the dropouts' rate of the tribes from schools was 4.54 per cent, which was four times higher than that of the state average. Subsequently, the rate came down to 3.54 per cent and 2.36 per cent during 2008-09 and 2009-10 respectively. But the rate again increased to 3.71 per cent during 2011-12<sup>4</sup> [Government of Kerala, 2012]. This average annual rate of 3.34 per cent for the five years would entail more than 33 dropouts from class 1 to class 10 for class strength of 100. With this low level of retention rate, it is not easy for the tribes to attain the basic education for their all round development, particularly for an outlier community striving for their economic and social inclusion in a knowledge based society like Kerala, giving high emphasis on education.

## 2. THEORETICAL INFERENCE AND LITERATURE

Kerala, as a welfare state, has been spending huge money for public provision of education. In comparison to other Indian States, the public expenditure on education is much higher. This has in a way helped to overcome three facets of discrimination usually witnessed like caste, class and gender. Though the government follows the maxim of social equity in education sector spending, it has not helped the tribal belt to get the share of the pie in a regional perspective. Even the central and state governments' special allocation like the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) meant for the tribal welfare including education has not salvaged the tribes from the malady of education dropouts and exclusion

Most of the literature on tribal education is region specific. This is because of the existence of difference in culture, religious belief, nature and remoteness of habitation, and dialect across various tribal groups. In this dimension, it is difficult to generalise without considering inter spatial differences. Bagai and Nundi (2009) identify the difficulty in comprehending the language followed in the school as they are only familiar with the specific tribal language. The major reason cited in this respect is that the tribal children have no contact with persons outside the tribal community and the state language. This makes them difficult to learn at the pre-primary and primary levels. A closely related problem is the non availability of teachers who can understand the tribal dialects and the problem of the students to kindle interest among them to attend the classes (Mohanty, 2006). Low socio-economic conditions of the tribes followed by livelihood threat are also important constraints for the formal education (Gautam, 2003; Sah and Sisodia, 2004). Jayachandran (2002) identifies female literacy level; female work participation rate, poverty; caste status and household size as major determinants of school attendance.

## 3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Data for the study are obtained from a primary survey among the tribal students in Idukki, Palakkad and Wayanad districts of Kerala. These three districts constitute more than 60 per cent of the tribes in Kerala<sup>5</sup>. 400 samples have been selected based on stratified random sampling technique, which includes dropouts and non-dropouts.

Out of the total samples, 280 are dropouts and remaining 120 are non-dropouts. Dropouts are those students who have dropped out from the school at any stage of schooling and non-dropouts are those students who are continuing studies at 10th level. Logistic regression is used for identifying factors leading to dropouts. The factors identified through this technique have further been used to analyse the capability framework.

#### 4. CAPABILITY AND EDUCATION

Sen (1995) considers the extent of freedom to achieve capabilities as each person enhances with a set of capabilities which improve his or her overall well-being. Capability set represents various alternate combinations of functionings from which the person can choose one combination. Functionings may vary from adequately nourished, being in good health, access to quality education etc. The choice of selecting valuable functionings and the opportunity to develop the capability through achievement of functionings requires freedom(s). This shows that capabilities stand for the extent of freedom that a person has, in order to achieve different functioning. Capability Approach (CA) is about freedom and the development of an environment sustainable for human flourishing. It refers to what people are able to do, rather than to what resources they have access to (Walker, 2005).

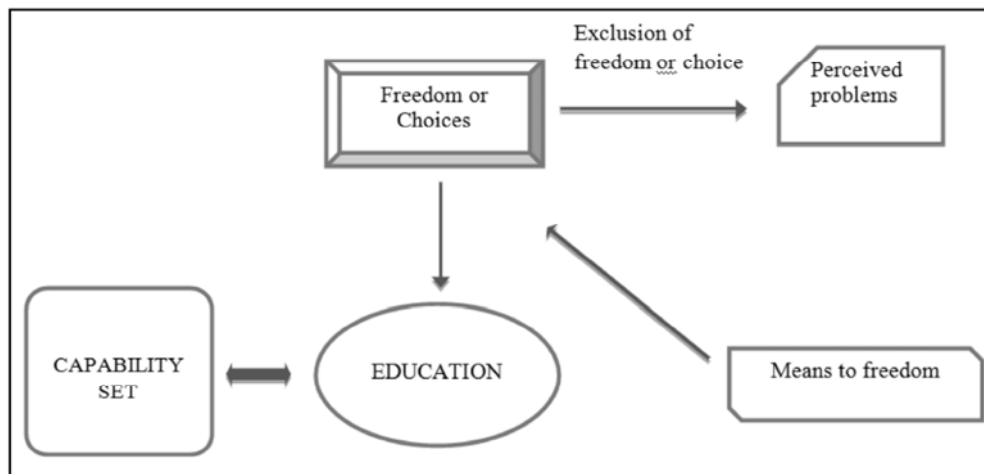
CA is based on '*functionings*' and '*capabilities*'. It is also based on the notion of life and living as a combination of various doings and beings, with quality of life to be assessed in terms of our capability to achieve valuable functionings (Walker, 2005). Functionings encompasses elements which create well-being while capability signifies a person's freedom to achieve well-being. A set of interrelated '*functionings*', i.e. beings and doings would assist one's living. CA emerged as an instrument for measurement of inequality in various spheres based on components of human well-being like education, health, security which are not directly acquired by an individual.

CA is used to analyze situations of 'deprived people' and in turn helps in framing favourable policies to make necessary improvements in resources and ability to increase their choices which they consider to be most valuable. Education is both instrumentally and intrinsically valuable for human flourishing and in this regard, education is one of the functions affecting the capability set of a person. Extent of freedom in achieving basic education is essential for overall development.

Figure 1 portrays Capability-Education framework which explains interrelationship between education and freedom or choices associated to education in building capability set of an individual. To be precise, these freedoms can be freedom or choice to attend classes, comprehend lessons and complete schooling. Improvements in different means to freedom extend real freedom or choice and any exclusion of these freedoms or choices leads to perceived problems.

The tribes in Kerala are far behind in educational attainments compared to rest of the society. Most often there has been wide range of students' absenteeism and discontinuation of studies among these groups. The basic reason behind this picture is their lack of freedom or choices available to them. Improvement in education depends upon achievement of freedom or choices associated with it.

Figure 1: Capability-Education Framework



## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1. Problems in Tribal Education

Many factors are affecting education of the tribes with region or culture specific differences. The paper uses binary logistic regression model to understand the determinants of education by considering education status being the dependent variable. Education status means the respondent's present position which is either dropouts or non-dropouts. Dropouts has been chosen as the base variable and factors/variables determining educational status are explained in Table 1. Here, the determinants explain the significance of each variable in determining the dropouts. The factors significant in determining dropouts are distance to school, lack of motivation resulting from illiteracy of parents, family environment, financial constraints, difficulty in comprehending lessons and irregularity of students. These identified variables are significant at 5 per cent level. Variables with positive relations are distance, financial problem, difficulty in comprehending lessons and irregularity of students, other significant variable that has negative relationship is dropouts.

Irregularity of students is the most important factor determining dropouts. Other factors are financial indebtedness of the family, followed by difficulty in comprehending lessons and distance to school. These are the pertinent problems that keep the tribal students in dropouts and discontinuation from studies.

### 5.2. Irregularity of Students

Irregularity of students is the major factor affecting dropout of the students. From Expected (B) column we can infer that irregularity of students work as a major factor for dropouts since the value is 5.363. If the value of Exp (B) greater than 1, then these variables have more chance in determining the dependent variable. As the analysis is



based on dropouts as dependent variable, student's irregularity has more probability of dropouts from the schools.

**Table 1**  
**Factors Leading to Dropouts (Logistic Regression)**

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 <sup>a</sup>	distance_school	.026	.010	7.659	1	.006*	1.027
	father_education	-.511	.162	9.923	1	.002*	.600
	mother_education	-.363	.151	5.797	1	.016*	.696
	monthly_income	.000	.000	.022	1	.883	1.000
	cost_of_education	-20.758	4202.914	.000	1	.996	.000
	financial_problem	1.247	.386	10.424	1	.001*	3.480
	Med_of_instru_comprehension	1.057	.478	4.886	1	.027*	2.879
	regularity_teachers	1.329	.837	2.521	1	.112	3.777
	communication_teachers	-.621	.763	.661	1	.416	.538
	helping_family	-2.624	.452	33.691	1	.000*	.072
	irregularity_of_students	1.680	.376	20.001	1	.000*	5.363
	infrastructure	-13.418	9378.099	.000	1	.999	.000
	parent_motivation	-2.903	.671	18.732	1	.000*	.055
	family_environment	-1.190	.408	8.510	1	.004*	.304
	Constant	39.480	10276.829	.000	1	.997	1.400E+17

\*Significant at 5% level  
Source: Primary survey

**Table 2**  
**Multiple Response Output – Reasons for Student Absenteeism**

Category label	Responses in Per cent	Per cent of cases
Attending the festival	4.5	6.9
Helping agriculture	2.0	3.2
Ill health	14.7	22.5
Playing with friends	19.2	29.4
Laziness	40.2	61.5
Going for job	6.0	9.2
Other reason	13.2	20.0
Total responses	100.0	152.8

Source: Primary survey

The manifold reasons leading to irregularity and dropouts of the tribal students are given in Table 2. Two normal reasons leading to irregularities are laziness and playing with friends in a cross tabulation angle. 61 per cent of the students mentioned laziness as the reason for not going to school on a regular basis followed by playing with friends (29.4 per cent) and health issues (22.5 per cent). Other reasons (20.2 per cent) for not going to school show that financial constraints, looking after parents,

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household jobs and rainy season difficulties. In the category of other leading factors, 9.2 per cent reported doing job for daily wages, 6.9 per cent attending festivals and 3.2 per cent helping agriculture activities of the family.

### **5.3. Financial Indebtedness of the Family**

Financial indebtedness of the family has almost 3.5 times chance in determining dropouts of students. Of the total dropouts, 35.9 per cent show financial indebtedness. Poverty is the major reason for such a sorry state of affair. Most of the tribes engage in agriculture and allied activities with very low income levels insufficient to meet basic needs of the family and hence these families find other source like the money lenders to get money to meet these contingencies

### **5.4. Medium of Instruction**

Tribes have their own dialect for communication. But these dialects do not have any scripts. The schools generally follow regional language as a medium of instruction which is entirely different from tribal dialects. This seems to be the major problem faced by the tribal students and the field data (21 per cent) substantiate the fact that, medium of instruction affects their comprehension and subsequently their dropouts. Medium of instruction as a variable responsible for dropouts has almost 3 times chance.

### **5.5. Access to Schools**

Distance to school is also a significant factor responsible for dropouts. Availability of schools in their close vicinity is a pre-requisite for a community famous for illiteracy and low education levels, but the existing facilities in the tribal areas are awfully inadequate to meet the requirement of a tribal child to get motivation for learning. Field data show that about 30 per cent of the dropouts are the result of difficulty in reaching schools, as most of the schools are away from their settlements. Inaccessibility followed by inadequacy in transportation makes the problem vulnerable leading to high levels of dropouts.

### **5.6. Parents Education and Motivation Levels**

Parents with good education can motivate their children to attain better educational achievements. Tribes in Kerala have only very low education status and most of them (60 per cent) have up to or below primary level schooling only. Estimate based on Logistic regression shows that poor education among parents acts as a significant variable. This shows that poor education of parents leads to low level of motivation for attaining education levels to their children. A livelihood threatened community like the tribes cannot think in a different way as they are ignorant of the fact that education changes the very nature of livelihood and hence unable to motivate their children for studies.

### **5.7. Family Environment**

Family environment and education levels are highly correlated. They live in colonies, where housing pattern in the tribal settlement is entirely different from others, and

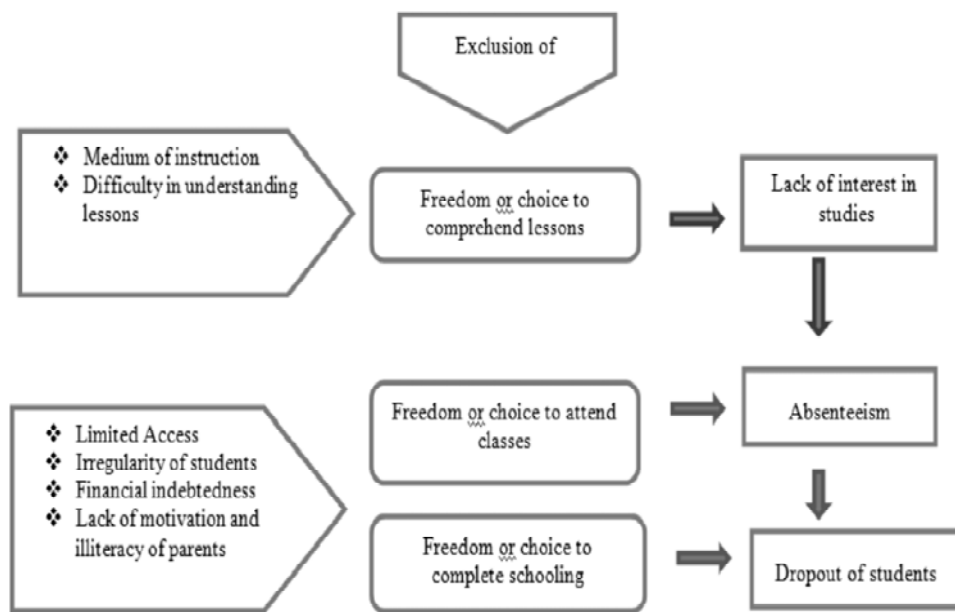
they are most often segregated from the general pattern of settlement. These colonies are centres of all kinds of problems and hence not conducive for learning and education. The result of the logistic regression also endorses that negative family environment and alcohol consumption of parents are as factors determining dropouts and there by low educational levels.

**5.8. Linkage between Freedom or Choices and Perceived Problems**

Education is the major functioning which determines the capability of individuals. This unequivocally determines freedom or choice to attain the opportunities to improve the situation. Capability Approach focuses on social arrangements, which in turn should be evaluated on the basis of extent of freedom people have to promote or achieve valuable functionings (Alkire, 2005). The tribes of Kerala have innumerable inconveniences to effectively make their freedom to attend classes, to comprehend lessons and to complete schooling so as to flourish their overall human capability. Figure 2 explains the linkage on how perceived problems results in exclusion of educational freedom of tribes.

Problems with medium of instruction and subsequent difficulty in comprehending subjects taught in the class exclude their freedom to learn lessons. As the stage of schooling goes up, the per centage of students who have difficulty to comprehend lessons increases. This seems to be the primary reason leading to lack of interest in studies and finally to dropouts. Similarly, the remoteness of their settlements leading

Figure 2: Exclusion of Freedom or Choices and Resultant Problems



to limited access to schools coupled with family issues *inter alia* illiteracy of parents and the very nature of irregularity among students excludes their freedom to attend classes and to complete schooling. This is further reinforced in the form of exclusion of freedom as well as their choice to attend classes, which again leads to dropouts. The point of essentiality at this juncture is improvements in means to freedom for the overall development of tribal education.

### 5.9. Improvements in Means to Freedom

Extent of freedom to attend classes determines well-being aspect of education and any exclusion from this freedom leads to absenteeism and dropouts. Any exclusion on his/her freedom to attend classes diminishes the capability set of the respective person. Absenteeism may arise from a vector of variables which may directly or indirectly exclude students from attaining the required level of education. Why do these problems exist? Or how can we improve the situation so that freedom to attend class is improved? Creation of enthusiasm among students is the important factor to avoid irregularity. Distance to school is a common problem in almost all the tribal areas. Setting up of schools in these areas are difficult and schools may not have adequate number of students to run the schools. What is possible at this level is to inculcate and provide incentives to students to attend classes? But, Right to Education Act (2009) confers each child to have right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school. The Act also makes obligation to the concerned government to ensure that each child gets free elementary education and to provide adequate infrastructure for imparting quality education.

Table 3  
Well-being Aspects to Improve school Education

Agency	Well-being/Agency freedom
Student	Being able to actively participate in class Being able to understand the lessons taught in the class Being able to reach the school within time Being able to get neat and tidy hostel facility near to school
Parent	Being able to motivate students Being aware about the importance of education. Improvements in social living conditions of tribal families
Teacher	Being well equipped with pedagogy Being able to teach student friendly Being knowledge about the tribal customs, problems, culture and social interactions

Means to freedom determines the extent of freedom or choices an individual has, to improve his/her set of capability function. Table 3 explains how we can improve the well-being aspect of students in the present situation. Several agency drivers are important in this respect and the most important drivers in the present context are student, parent and teachers. Improvements in agency freedom are necessary for the educational development of tribes. From the student level, each student should be able to actively participate in classes, to understand lessons, to get proper transportation facilities to reach school in time, to get neat and healthy hostel facilities and to get schools in the close vicinity of the tribal settlements are necessary factors for improving agency freedom. When coming to parental aspects, they should have proper knowledge



and awareness about the importance of giving education to their children (based on parental attitude and motivation) and improvements in social and living conditions (improve their positive attitude towards education). Teacher aspect is vital and directly influences the student enthusiasm to continue studies. The knowledge in tribal customs and cultures will help the teachers to build up positive attitude towards the students for their learning without any interruption. This shows that the extent of well-being/ agency freedom achieved determines the educational progress of the tribal children. The Agency freedom levels in a way can be achieved effectively through proper policy framework by the government giving proper space to tribal education in the overall education policy of the state.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Capability of a person is decided by the extent of freedom or choice to attain valuable functioning's. Education as a functioning index, it is the freedom to achieve various choices that improves capability. The choices of tribal students are basically limited to three functioning like, attend classes, comprehend lessons and complete schooling. Exclusion happens to any of these freedoms or choices levels, which in turn results in perceived problems. The log odds of probability based on logistic regression confirms problem variables as difficulty in medium of instruction, limited access to schools, lack of educational attainment of parents, lack of motivation, family issues like indebtedness and living environment, and irregularity of students. It is unlikely to have a situation in the tribal belts of Kerala free from these problems, which in turn promoted exclusion of their freedoms to comprehend lessons, attend schools and complete schooling. This is the reason for the very poor education attainment and human development index of the tribes. Though, the state has achieved very high level of education attainment and human development indicators, the tribes still remain as sad outliers. The agency freedom level of the tribal community is not coherent enough to achieve the vision of improvement in tribal education level in the state. This necessitates the requirement of a need based policy option on the part of the government; instead of focussing on the measures of central tendency, it is time to address more effectively on the measures of dispersion for an all inclusive society.

### Notes

1. In 1961 census, the gap between general literacy and Scheduled Tribes was 37.82 percent and for next four consecutive censuses it was 44.03 percent (1971 census), 47.06 percent (1981 census), 32.59 percent (1991 census), 26.57 percent (2001 census).
2. According to Census 2011, the total Scheduled Tribe (ST) population of Kerala is 4, 84, 839 constituting 1.45 percent of the total population of the State. Significant concentration of STs is in the three districts namely Wayanad, Idukki and Palakkad accounting for over 60 percent of the total tribal population in the State.
3. For the year 2011-12 dropout rate of different categories as follows: Scheduled Tribe-3.71%, Scheduled Castes-0.61%, all communities-1.05%.
4. There are 14 districts in Kerala and tribal population of each district as a percentage to total tribal population in Kerala are: Wayanad-37.36%, Idukki-14%, Palakkad-10.89%, Kasargod-8.33%, Thiruvananthapuram-5.74%, Kannur-5.48%, Kottayam-5.04%, Malappuram 3.37%,

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Ernakulam-2.76%, Pathanamthitta-1.8%, Kozhikode-1.63%, Kollam-1.43%, Thrissur-1.33% and Alappuzha-0.86%.

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