



“A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF MALEKUDIYAS”

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Introduction

Within India's multifarious cultural fabric, the Malekudiya tribe continues to be a mysterious entity, marginalized within the community. Numbering about 18,000, they live in Karnataka's Western Ghats and fight to maintain their identity in the face of rapid urbanization. The goal of this sociological investigation is to uncover the social dynamics, experiences, and lifestyles of the Malekudiyas, a group that has historically been disregarded and ostracized. One of the ancient community is the Malekudiya community. Malekudiya people are Tulunad's original occupants. The majority of this population resides in the Western Ghats foothills. There are a lot of Malekudiya people in Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, Madikeri, and Kasaragod. This community's members also work on the construction of Kukke Subramanya's chariot and perform religious services in Tulunad's significant temples. Additionally, it is believed that Kukke Subramanya is home to the God for the Malekudiya hence, a deity work chariot festival would not take place there in the absence of the Malekudiyas. They are industrious individuals engaged in farming, cultivating medicinal plants, and gathering forest products.

Malekudiyas are called in different names in different places like, in Dakshina kannada as malekudiya ,kudiya and in coorg they are known as kudiya and malai kudi or maleru in chikmanglore district . Among the schedule tribes of dakshina kannda , the malekudiyas is at an inter-mediate stage of transition , where has the koragas are still in primitive satage and the Marathi naika are at a higher level of transition . Malekudiyas a considerable proportion of own arable land and have started settled agriculture and resided in

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a regions, where crops commercial like coconut, pepper, rubber, etc as well cardamom, food crop , are grown. arecanut as paddy, a food crops are grown .

Origin of Malekudiyas:

The God who always rules the earth is called Ishwara. He has been providing the world's animals with food and drink. Wife Parvathi of Lord Shiva wished to watch his service. Parvati told Shiva that she wished for this. Parvati was warned by Ishwara not to come; if she did, she would have to accompany me on a tour of the jungle. Parvati was a child at the time as well. Parvati was informed by Ishwara that her child will receive breast milk. However, Parvati disregarded Ishwara's advice. But that day, Parvati was so depressed that she asked him to accompany Ishwara. Ishwara and Parvati departed for an earthly forest as a result. Thus, Parvati spent a considerable amount of time tending to all the forest's creatures and her milk-filled breast. Then, infuriated, Lord Ishwara addressed Parvati, saying, I warned you not to accompany me into the forest at Kailasa. Look at how hot it is now. When Parvati's breast milk became stiff, she began to experience chest pain since she was unable to tolerate it. Subsequently, Parvati visited a plant in accordance with Ishwara's instructions, cleared the dirt, created a doll, gave it life, and drank milk from it; as a result, Parvati's chest ache subsided. As Parvati would be suspicious if the kid made by God was brought to Kailasa, she considered abandoning the child in the alley. Understanding that leaving a single child in such a state is bad, Parvati created a woman, and the male that Shiva and Parvati went to Kailasa, where they lived together as the female made by Parvati. As a result, the infant who grew up in the forest after consuming Parvati's breast milk was given the name "Mole Kudiya." Later they termed as Male Kudiyas.

Additionally, according to another tale, Shiva and Parvati once created a race of people who lived on Earth and practiced various kinds of crafts. They did, however, form a clan that resides in the highlands after realizing that our offspring did not make me. They call themselves 'Kudiyas'. As the mountain-dwelling Kudiyas, who are considered to be Shiva's offspring, live. As a result, the Malekudiyas openly assert that they are Shiva's offspring.

Status of Malekudiyas in the Society:

The Kudiyas are an extremely distinct and intricate society, much like the tribal societies of India. The Malekudia community developed similarly to the lower caste communities, as a result of India's economic hardships and stratification. However, in the communities where they reside, the Malekudiyas are not untouchables. They had access to the Shudras' position in this hierarchical society. Malekudias hold a unique religious standing

in esteemed holy destinations such as Dharmasthala, Kukkesubramanya, and so on. In terms of social structure, lower caste societies are more modern and well-organized than upper caste communities. getting ready to go "mainstream", attempting to live a more ordered life as well. Kodagu families are more developed socially than those in Udupi and the Dakshina Kannada area. Because it is common knowledge that Kudiyas has had a substantial influence on Kodagu society's historical growth. However, the pace of this community is slower than that of "mainstream" society. This is a result of their erratic revenue sources.

Occupation of Malekudiyas

Like many tribes in premodern Karnataka, Kudiyas formerly survived on forest byproducts. They worked mostly as a tree bark collector, Collecting Alcohol from Bhagini tree. Gathering Cardamom is one of their other major pursuits. They are famous for Kumari farming. They are expert in this form of agriculture like ancient communities of India. However, the feudal system of Malnadu has eliminated some of their revenue streams. One indication of this is their continued financial susceptibility. They were worked as slaves in the wealthy people's plantations in malnadu regions. Some people make their living by gathering forest wastes and reside in the thick forest. This community as a whole is about to undergo significant transformations in the struggle between tradition and modernity. This community is dealing with the tension and exhilaration of living in a prehistoric era while yet honoring its history and embracing modernity

Different Names of Malekudiyas:

Malekudiyas go by a variety of names, including Barikeg Gowda, Kudiyas, and Malekudiya. The term "malekudi" combines the words "male" and "kudi." Male denotes "hill," kudi denotes "top" and the term refers to either the hill's offspring or those who reside there. There are regional variations in the names given to the Malekudiya tribal community, which primarily resides in the Dakshina Kannada area. This community is called by different names in different places. Those who are living from kamalashile of kundapura to Madikeri is called as kudiyas in Madikeri. They are called as Barke in Dharmasthala, Gowdas in Karkala. Gowdalu in Arekkodi near Kanyana of Bantwala T.Q, Malettaya in Panachi of Puttur T.q, Muguulya, Mugullya in Arala of Bantwala. They are Called Malekudia, Malaikudi, Maleyakhand, and Maleru in the notification of the Karnataka government's Scheduled Tribes list. Malettaya Barike is the name given to it in Kasaragod. In the Malekudi tribal community, karulaballi, kinship, and clan have great significance. Among these are kinship-based clan and marriage customs, communities, and family customs. Blood relationship is based on the

Makkalakattu and Aliyakattu clans. The tribe of Malekudi has their own set of religious practices. The Makkalkattu sect worships Maripooja and Ganesha, while the Aliyakattu sect worships Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha, Subramanya, Manjunath, Vishnu, Kalkuda, and Pilichamundi. They have several religious beliefs, including those related to ancestors, Pitrapooja, nature worship, object worship, and so forth.

Family Structure of Malekudiyas:

Malekudiyas tend to have nuclear families, which comprise of a husband and wife as well as their kids. These are today's straightforward modern families. Their relatives are dispersed. He has ties to his family of origin even though they are all across the country. Offspring of single parents reside in many locations. Because of the economic cause they have separated from the original families. Hunting and food gathering was the occupation of the Malekudiyas during the olden days. Few of them are having their own agricultural land, rest of them are manual labourers. During olden days in nalumale group assisted the Land by the government and used to prepare bamboo baskets and mat. It was the source of their income.

Economic Status of Malekudiyas:

They were the proprietor of the wealth from the forest and resided in the hilly regions. Their way of living in the forest was reliant on its abundance. Their principal means of subsistence included horticulture, cardamom, pepper, animal husbandry, and kumari farming. The indigenous community of Malekudi farmed kumari as their primary source of income. This demonstrates the modest farming methods used at the time. The Kumari agriculture system refers to the custom of clearing the forest on the sloping slope where they resided, plow the ground, and cultivate paddy there. Those were the days they were not using the bullock cart for agriculture instead; people dug the ground with their own hands. Their tradition is to use the Jawgu waters to cultivate paddy here.

Nature of worship among the Malekudiyas:

Nature worship is highly valued in the Malekudi tribal community. The Banjaru Hill Maripuja, the Ilimala Harvest Festival, and house filling, In the forest where they reside, it is customary to worship the trees, earth, wind, water, fire, sun, and moon. In a same vein, the Malekudis honor their forefathers. The Pitru Puja system is the name for this. They follow an enjoyable tradition of adoring their elders, known as the Agelu ritual. They reveres his elders because they thinks they are heavenly creatures that will watch over us when they pass away. He believes strongly in reincarnation as well. Material worship is the term used to describe the act of worshiping all natural objects in the conviction that they possess divine power. In

the Malekudi community, there is a custom of worshipping forest animals as well as environment. worshipping Nagas, the divinity found in trees, animals, birds, and their limbs, and the forest as a manifestation of Lord Ganesha. They believe that Gods existence is there in nature and they worship the nature.

Language of Malekudiyas:

Malekudiya is a language without script. It is this community's traditional language. There are differences between this language and other languages. Similarly, the Malekudi tribe 'Tulu' is the community's indigenous and traditional language. Ambatamale, Banjarumale and in Elemale, they speak an ancient, unique Tulu dialect. Tulu is the language spoken here. It differs from what other speakers say. Everything else outside of these regions, tulu is the language used by the Malekudi community. It is related to Tulu Nadu's language heritage. has parallels. Arekallu of Madikeri borderland and in Sampaje there is a connection of Kodava Language. There is an influence of the Malayala language in the border areas of Kasaragod. However, some of them have been influenced by Kannada, Konkani and Bari languages. Those in the forest have little understanding of any other language except Tulu. Kannada script is generally used for Tulu language in Tulu Nadu. Even in the hill tribes Kannada script is in use.

Challenges of Malekudiyas:

The Malekudi community's current social, economic, and political circumstances represent the obstacles in their lives. In their first colonies, land ownership was facilitated for them. They benefited greatly from the Land Reforms Act as a result of the battle. Banjaru By declaration at Kolodi, Shishila, Halong, and Male, Ambatimale, Ilimale. the right to possess land has been acquired. They have come to settle down and elevate their social standing. Living somewhere else than these places is a possibility. The difficulties in the lives of the Malekudi community are the present social, economic, and political circumstances. As a result of their fight for land ownership at their original bases, the Land Reforms Act was beneficial to them. Through declaration, the land ownership rights of Banjaru Male, Ambatimale, Ilimmale, and Kolodi, Shishila, Halong have been obtained. They have social standing and are permitted to live here permanently. Living somewhere else than these places for this community, it is necessary for them to move around or live in constant motion without establishing a stable social identity. They have been employed as labourer's, renters, and serfs. They historically and socially identified by children's offspring and son-in-law's offspring . Due to the community's regional, family and linguistic diversity makes

organization difficult. This community is currently fighting against exploitation after a history of fighting against mercenary systems, slavery, and kumari farming.

Literature Review:

Christop von Furer- Haimendorf (1982) worked on Tribes of India- The struggle for Survival, this book done a realistic and unbiased analysis of the present situation of Indian Tribes about implication and failure of policies related to the tribes and significantly analysed the beliefs that found in the tribal of India and life styles of tribals.

N. Gayathri (2011)The study investigates tribal women's empowerment through self-help groups, examining their participation and impact on decision-making. It also investigates the shifts tribal women experience due to group involvement and the changes in their choices.

Aaron Pradeep Kumar (2015) This thesis examines the socioeconomic conditions of the Malekudiya tribe in the Karnataka region, focusing on issues with forest produce collection. Despite 15 years, the tribe faces challenges in accessing amenities like roads and electricity, affecting around 300 families in nine Panchayats.

Sabitha (2021) This thesis explores the history of tribes in Karnataka, India, examining policies and programs for their development, focusing on the socioeconomic status of Malekudiya and Koraga tribal populations in Dakshina Kannada.

R.K. Mutatkar (2023) This thesis explores the history of tribes in Karnataka, India, examining policies and programs for their development, focusing on the socioeconomic status of Malekudiya and Koraga tribal populations in Dakshina Kannada.

D.K. Sinha This article highlights the serious human rights issue of caste-based marginalization faced by Indian tribes, including social, economic, educational, and political exclusion, housing segregation, and restrictions on access to services and employment, despite Indian society's tolerance and pluralism.

Importance of Study:

Studying the Malekudiyas in Dakshina Kannada is not just about academic pursuits but also a journey towards understanding social justice and cultural preservation. These communities, part of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), face marginalization and social exclusion. Understanding their experiences can help address these inequalities and provide insights into the complex relationship between indigenous communities, development agendas, and conservation practices. Examining their evolving identities, gender roles, and kinship structures can offer insights into social change and adaptation. This research can

inform policy and development interventions, promoting more inclusive and culturally sensitive approaches.

Objectives of the study

The study aims to understand the historical background, socio-economic conditions, ethnography, status of women, impact of tribal development programs, and problems faced by Malekudiyas.

Research Methodology:

This study aims to collect relevant data on the Malekudiyas: A Sociological study, using various methods such as theoretical, historical, descriptive, and analytical approaches. It will review existing literature and secondary sources like books, journals, reports, field surveys, questionnaires, case studies, and interviews to understand the sociological study of the Malekudiyas.

Findings:

The Marathi Naika, Koraga, and Malekudiya are major tribal groups in India, with the Malekudiyas at an intermediate stage of transition. They have arable land and settled agriculture in banana and food crops. The Malekudiyas, also known as Barikegowda, Gowda, Kudiya, and Malekudiya, are a tribal community in the Dakshina Kannada area of Karnataka. They share similarities in social structure and religious standing but differ in economic hardships and stratification. The Kudiyas tribe in premodern Karnataka were skilled in Kumari farming but faced financial vulnerability due to the feudal system in Malnadu. The Malekudiyas are undergoing significant transformations, balancing tradition and modernity. Their indigenous language, Tulu, is related to Tulu Nadu's heritage and has parallels with other languages like Kodava and Malayala. They face challenges in social, economic, and political circumstances, including land ownership rights and linguistic diversity.

Suggestions:

Some suggestions are given to make the aims and objectives more successful and more progressive. Uniformity should be maintained in the formation and extension of financial assistance provided to the group and women should be given necessary training and guidance by the various agencies for their active participation in the group. More and more common meetings and seminars should be arranged for women to get a chance to exchange their views and planning's.

Conclusion:

To sum up, our sociological investigation into the tribal villages of Malekudiyas has illuminated the complex social dynamics, customs, and financial struggles encountered by this disadvantaged population. We have identified important areas of concern, such as inadequate access to economic opportunities, healthcare, and education, through intensive fieldwork and data analysis. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend the Malekudiya people's historical and cultural background, as well as their customs, social structure, and cultural beliefs. It also emphasizes how important it is for stakeholders and legislators to create focused solutions that deal with the particular difficulties this community faces. In the end, this study hopes to add to the larger conversation on social justice and tribal development by highlighting the importance of inclusive, sustainable development that puts marginalized communities' empowerment and well-being first, such as the Malekudiya. Our aim is to encourage increased consciousness, comprehension, and action towards establishing a fairer society for everybody by elevating their voices and narratives.

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