

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

# Participation of tribal youth in agricultural activities

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**SUMMARY :** The present study was carried out in two districts of Karnataka State during 2017-2018 to analyze the participation of tribal youth in agricultural activities. One hundred and sixty tribal youth were interviewed using a pre-tested interview schedule. The results revealed that a large number of tribal youth (40.63%) belong to high category of overall participation in agricultural activities, whereas 38.13 and 21.25 per cent of the tribal youth belong to low and medium level of overall participation in agricultural activities. Further, it was found that there exist no significant difference between Soliga and Kuruba tribal youth with respect to their participation in agricultural activities.

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**KEY WORDS:**

Youth, Participation, Agricultural activities

## **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

Jenu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba / Kadu Kuruba, Yarava and Soliga are some of the primitive tribal groups found in southern districts (Mysore and Chamarajanagara districts) of Karnataka. These two districts are located in southern part of the Karnataka and National Reserve Forests of Nagarahole, Bandipura and B.R. Hills forests are also located in these districts. Among the above tribes, Jenu-Kuruba is the primitive tribe and Soliga and Jenu-Kuruba tribes are the major groups, whereas Kadu-Kuruba and Yarava are smaller tribal groups. In terms of population Soliga tribe is a major tribe in Chamarajanagara district and Jenu-Kuruba is the major tribe in Mysore district.

Kadu-Kuruba and Betta-Kuruba are one and the same. The lifestyle of Betta-Kuruba is producing household items like baskets and

sieves from the bamboo and other forest produce. They are also elephant trainers and live in settlements called Hadi, practicing the traditional occupation of collecting and selling forest produce and also practicing agriculture as subsidiary occupation. Most of them have shifted from Nagarahole National Park to outer fringe area. Soliga is a type of tribe in India that inhabitate the Biligiri Rangana Hills and associated Hill ranges in Southern Karnataka, in Chamarajanagara district. Most of them are concentrated in and around the B.R. Hills in Yallandur and M.M. Hills of Kollegal Taluks, and also spread in Chamarajanagar and Gundalpet taluks of this district. They speak Soliganudi, an ancient Kannada language. They practiced shifting cultivation, but have more or less given up this practice now. They cultivate ragi for subsistence, although their main source of income is harvesting and sale of Minor Forest

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Produce like honey, nellikai, bamboo, paasi (Lichen). With this background, the presents study was carried out with the specific objectives:

- To study the extent of participation of tribal youth in agricultural activities
- To find out the test of significance between Soliga and Kuruba youth in respect of their participation in agricultural activities.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present investigation was carried out in Chamarajanagar and Mysore districts of Karnataka state during 2017-18. Chamarajanagar and Mysore districts were purposively selected for the study since they are having highest population of Soliga (34,413) and Kuruba (39,603) tribes, respectively in southern states of Karnataka (Anonymous, 2010). Heggada Devana Kote (4841 tribal families and 114 hadies) and Hunsur (2916 tribal families and 51 hadies) taluks in Mysore district and Gundlupet (1048 tribal families and 29 hadies) and Kollegal (3176 tribal families and 80 hadies) taluks in Chamarajanagar district were also purposively selected for the study. From each of the sampled four taluks, two forest fringe villages were randomly selected for the study. In each village, 20 tribal youth were again selected randomly for the study. Eighty Soliga tribal youth from two taluks of Chamarajanagar district and 80 Kuruba (Jenu Kuruba and Kaddu Kuruba) tribal youth from two taluks of Mysore district formed the sample of the study. Thus, the total sample constituted 160 tribal youth. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the present study.

Tribal youth participation in the context of present study is defined as the 'degree to which the respondent has actually involved in different activities of agriculture'. The scale developed by Shivalingaiah (1991) was modified and used to measure the tribal youth participation in the activities of agriculture. The six major agricultural activities identified to measure the tribal youth's participation were, land preparation, sowing activities, manuring and fertilizer application, intercultural and other operations, harvest and post-harvest activities and management aspects. A total of 33 activities were identified from among the major six activities for the measurement. The responses were collected on four point continuum *viz.*, most often, often, sometimes and never in the activity and responses were given scores of

3, 2, 1 and 0, respectively to each of the response. Accordingly, the total score obtained from all the steps constituted the extent of participation of respondent in the six activities of agriculture. Thus, after computing the extent of participation scores, the respondents were grouped into high, medium and low categories by considering the mean and standard deviation as a measure of check.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

### Participation of tribal youth in agricultural activities:

It is observed from Table 1 that in case of land preparation activities, the tribal youth participation is more in leveling the land (Rank I) followed by opening the ridges and furrows (Rank II), ploughing of land (Rank III), harrowing (Rank IV), clod crushing (Rank V) and removal of weeds (Rank VI). The youth are involved in almost all the land preparation activities utilizing farm machineries and equipment.

In the sowing activities, participation of tribal youth is more in the preparation of nursery fields and raising of seedlings (Rank I), followed by selection and treatment of seeds (Rank II), broadcasting (Rank III) and seed drill sowing (Rank IV). The reason for this would be that, the cultivable area of land of tribal youth are under rainfed where they have to depend on rains for establishment of seeds hence, youth are more concentrating on establishment of more population of the seedlings. Hence, youth are more participating in nursery field preparation and selection of seeds which are of preliminary activities.

In manuring and fertilizer application activity, the trend of participation is in the order of application of fertilizers to the field (Rank I) followed by, transportation of manure to the main field (Rank II), uniform distribution of manure in the field (Rank III) and transportation of fertilizers to the field (Rank IV). The reason might be that youth are highly involved in application of nutrients to crops to get good yields hence they are more enthusiastic in the application of fertilizers to increase the fertility of the soil.

Regarding intercultivation and other operations, the rank order is participation in top dressing with fertilizers

stood first rank, followed by intercultivation by using spade (Rank II), identifying the pest and diseases (Rank III), control of pests and diseases (Rank IV) and construction and repair of field (Rank V). Top dressing of fertilizer is one of the easiest inter-cultivation operation which increases the crop yield.

In respect of harvest and post-harvest activities,

participation in threshing and storing of produce ranks first followed by transporting the produce (Rank III), marketing of produce (Rank IV) and harvesting of the crops (Rank V). The possible reason might be that tribal youth are living in the fringes of the forest where attack of wild animals is frequent and hence, threshing, storing of farm produce and transporting the farm produce is

**Table 1 : Participation of tribal youth in agricultural activities**

Sr. No.	Statements	Tribal youth	
		Mean score	Rank
<b>Land preparation</b>			
1.	Ploughing the land	2.25	III
2.	Clod crushing	2.05	V
3.	Levelling the land	2.35	I
4.	Harrowing	2.24	IV
5.	Opening the ridges and furrows	2.34	II
6.	Removal of weeds	1.45	VI
<b>Sowing activities</b>			
1.	Selection and treatment of seeds	2.41	II
2.	Preparation of nursery fields and raising of seedlings	2.68	I
3.	Broadcasting	2.23	III
4.	Seed drill sowing	2.03	IV
<b>Manuring and fertilizer application</b>			
1.	Transportation of manure to the main field	2.57	II
2.	Uniform distribution of manure in the field	2.52	III
3.	Transportation of fertilizers to the field	2.37	IV
4.	Application of fertilizers to the field	2.59	I
<b>Intercultural and other operations</b>			
1.	Intercultivation by using spade	2.30	II
2.	Top dressing with fertilizers	2.64	I
3.	Identifying the pest and diseases	1.96	III
4.	Control of pests and diseases	1.80	IV
5.	Construction and repair of field channels	0.14	V
<b>Harvest and post harvest activities</b>			
1.	Harvesting of crops	1.10	V
2.	Transporting the produce	2.07	III
3.	Threshing	2.30	I
4.	Storing the produce	2.30	I
5.	Marketing	1.93	IV
<b>Management aspects</b>			
1.	Supervision of hired laborers in the field	2.52	I
2.	Engaging and paying wages to farm laborers	2.52	I
3.	Maintaining farm accounts	1.05	VIII
4.	Borrowing and repaying loans	2.42	III
5.	Purchasing inputs	2.31	IV
6.	Maintaining farm implements	2.31	IV
7.	Discussion with other progressive farmers or specialists	2.19	VII
8.	Decision on sowing and selection of varieties	2.30	VI

Sr. No.	Categories	Tribal youth	
		No.	%
1.	Low	61	38.13
2.	Medium	34	21.25
3.	High	65	40.63
Total		160	100.00

Tribal youth	Particulars		
	Mean score	Standard deviation	't' value
Soliga	66.55	8.96	0.692 <sup>NS</sup>
Kuruba	69.71	9.01	

NS=Non significant

the first preference to tribal youth.

With respect to the participation in management aspects among tribal youth, the results shows that supervision of hired laborers in field (Rank I) and engaging and paying wages to farm laborers (Rank I) followed by borrowing and repaying loans (Rank III), purchasing inputs (Rank IV) and maintaining farm implements (Rank IV), decision on sowing and selection of varieties (Rank VI), discussion with other progressive farmers or specialists (Rank VII) and maintaining farm accounts (Rank VIII). The plausible reasons might be that hired laborers are the one of the main input which accounts for cost of production where lot of care should be taken for effective utilization of the labour services. To maintain good rapport with hired laborers for getting the work at right time maintenance of rapport is very important hence paying wages to farm laborers regularly is also one of the important management activity carried out by youth hence rank in first order. The findings are in confirmatory with the finding of Rajula (2010); Savitha (2011) and Hadagalli (2013).

### **Overall participation of tribal youth in agricultural activities :**

As high as 40.63 per cent of the tribal youth belong to high category of overall participation in agricultural activities, followed by low (38.13%) and medium (21.25%) category of overall participation in agricultural activities (Table 2). The likely reason might be that earlier youth were not having land to practice agriculture, later after the rehabilitation youth are provided with land by the Government, which has motivated the youth to involve / participate more in agriculture activities. The tribal youth

attend almost all the farm related activities and only in peak period, they will employ labours on wage basis. The findings are in line with the study of Hadagalli (2013); Preethi (2015) and Nishitha (2016).

### **Test of significance between Soliga and Kurubayouth with respect to participation in agricultural activities :**

Paired 't' test was employed to know the statistically significant difference between the Soliga and Kuruba youth with respect to their participation in agricultural operations. It is evident from Table 3 that the mean participation score of Soliga and Kuruba youth were 66.55 and 69.71 per cent, respectively. However, the 't'-test results revealed that there exist no significant difference between Soliga and Kuruba tribal youth with respect to their participation in agricultural activities. It can be inferred that both the tribal youth groups actively participated in the agricultural activities.

### **Conclusion :**

Majority of the tribal youth were found in high participation level in most of agriculture activities studied. Making farming still more attractive can ensure their participation *i.e.*, by the way of providing urban amenities in rural areas thus by preventing migration. It is necessary to promote tribal youth associations wherever necessary to mainstream the youth into development process. The tribal youth should be actively involved in planning and executing the tribal development programmes.

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