

**A STUDY ON THE KUDUMBI COMMUNITY IN ELANKUNNAPUZHA  
GRAMA PANCHAYATH - A SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS**



**By**

**ALEENA MARIYA V J**

**AM22SOC004**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND CENTRE FOR RESEARCH**

**ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM**

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Thesis submitted to St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam in *fulfillment of the  
requirements for the award of the degree of* **Master of Arts in Sociology**

**By**

**ALEENA MARIYA V J**

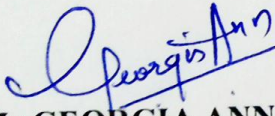
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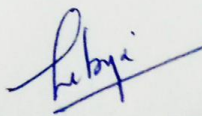
**Ms. GEORGIA ANN BENNY**

Assistant Professor

Department of Sociology  
St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam

  
**Ms. GEORGIA ANN BENNY**

Staff Supervisor

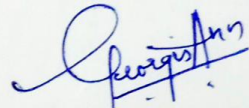
  
**Dr. Lebia Gladis N.P**

Head, Department of Sociology

**MARCH 2024**

## **CERTIFICATE**

I certify that the thesis entitled **"A STUDY ON THE KUDUMBI COMMUNITY IN ELANKUNNAPUZHA GRAMA PANCHAYATH- A SOCIO- CULTURAL ANALYSIS"** is a record of bonafide research work carried out by **ALEENA MARIYA V J** , under my guidance and supervision. The thesis is worth submitting in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.



**Ms.GEORGIA ANN BENNY**

Assistant Professor

Department of Sociology

St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam

Ernakulam

March 2024



### DECLARATION

I, ALEENA MARIYA V J hereby declare that the thesis entitled **“A STUDY ON THE KUDUMBI COMMUNITY IN ELANKUNNAPUZHA GRAMA PANCHAYATH- A SOCIO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS”** is a bonafide record of independent research work carried out by me under the supervision and guidance of Ms. GEORGIA ANN BENNY. I further declare that this thesis has not been previously submitted for the award of any degree, diploma, associateship or other similar title.

Ernakulam

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Name & Signature of the Student

ALEENA MARIYA V J



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## **INTRODUCTION**

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Family is the most fundamental and basic unit of a society. It is a socially constructed unit based on kinship and blood ties. According to Burgess and Locke , “A family is a group of people who are connected by marriage, blood, or adoption. They live in a single household and interact and communicate with one another in their respective social roles as husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, and so on, forming a common culture”. Every family will have a name of their own that will be inherited from their ancestors. The family will have a head to look after and it is his responsibility to maintain the family with it’s economic and social needs. A family requires a household for their members to live. Because without a household , it is impossible for the parents to do their task of child rearing.

According to Sociology there are two types of family in general. They are:

- 1) A family of Orientation and
- 2) A family of procreation.

The family into which an individual is born and raised is known as the family of orientation. The family of orientation has the general purpose of influencing each member's attitudes, values, and beliefs. Raising a child has long-lasting effects on the family of orientation. The family that an individual creates through birth or adoption is known as the family of procreation. The fact that the families of orientation and procreation are created in different ways is one of their primary distinctions. While parents consciously create their family of procreation, children typically do not pick their family of orientation.



## **FEATURES OF FAMILY**

A family has a number of unique features. It has a wide range of effects on people's entire lives. They are:

(i) **Universality:** The most universal group is the family. In the history of men, it is the first institution. It is present throughout the planet and has existed in all ages and societies. Without some kind of family structure, there has never been a culture or civilization. Every individual is a part of a family of some kind. The family is the most global group there is.

(ii) **Emotional foundation:**

A family is the cornerstone of human civilization. Our urges for mating, procreation, and parental care serve as its foundation. These feelings are reinforced by the close-knit group.

(iii) **Limited size:**

Because a family is determined by biological circumstances that it cannot overcome, its size is inescapably limited. Although certain groups might be smaller than families, this is not necessarily the case due to biological factors.

(iv) **Influence from formation:**

The family has the greatest overall impact on its members. It shapes people's personalities. Its influence during infancy shapes a person's personality structure. From its birth, the child inherits his physical attributes from its parents.

It has been demonstrated by psychologists such as Freud that a child inherits his family's character and mental characteristics into adulthood. Confucius correctly observed that enhancing family is the first step toward enhancing society. Confucius rightly pointed out that if you want to improve society, improve the family. "Good birth means the greatest of gifts. This world cannot afford sickness to compensate for the lack of good heredity."

**(v) Basic Position:**

The family is the core of all other social groups. Parental responsibilities and sibling relationships characteristics in marriage make the family the primary institutional cell of society. The entire social structure consists of family units.

(vi) **Members' responsibilities:** A youngster learns the value of collaboration and social duty in the family. "In times of crisis, men may work, fight, and die for their country, but they toil for their families all their lives," as MacIver eloquently puts it. The child grows his fundamental values and attitudes in it. It is a fantastic tool for the child's socialization.

(vii) **Social regulation:** Legal and social norms provide a unique defense for the family. It is difficult to break them. The family is the group that members may freely join but find it difficult to leave or dissolve. Marriages are not entered into lightly.

(viii) **Permanent and temporary:** The family, as an institution, is universal and permanent, but as an association, it is temporary and transitional. When a son marries, he leaves the family and begins another, which may also lead to more families. All of this illustrates how, despite being one of society's most limited groups, the family is unique among groupings; it is the smallest kinship group and typically starts when partners marry, changes when sons marry, and ends when one of the partners passes away. When children are small and completely dependent on their parents, the family appears to be a compact human group. This compactness loosens as children get older, and when they get married, the original family breaks up and is replaced by new ones. The parents now rely on their children, reversing the initial relationship.

## **FAMILIES IN ANCIENT INDIA**

In ancient India, men had a central role in family life, sharing the responsibility of supporting not only their wives and children but also their entire family. A joint family descended from the father's lineage comprised the ancient family. It was expected of the home father to make sacrifices for the benefit of the family as a whole. The parents of the bride and groom arranged marriages, a custom that is still commonly followed today. Male farmers were in charge of planting, sowing, digging, and building houses. Grain harvesting and collection was the responsibility of women. One's position in society was decided by their caste and jati (clan). The

clan functioned as an extended family for members of a specific profession, such as farmers, traders, master artisans, or others. Caste status determined how likely a household was to have individuals who worked physically and how probable it was that those with lower status would serve the family. Women who were unable to forgo paid work joined males in the construction and farming industries. The extended family kept an eye on the kids.

## **FAMILIES IN MODERN INDIA**

In the last 50 years, the family has seen some significant changes. Its natures have been impacted, along with changes to its structure and operations. This is caused by a number of variables, including social, economic, educational, legal, cultural, scientific, and technical advancements. Indian families are evolving. Fundamental changes in family structure are being brought about by the rapid changes in India's socio-cultural environment. Over the past ten years, there have been swift and disorderly shifts in social, political, economic, religious, and occupational domains. There have also been changes in the roles of women, power dynamics within families, and standards around marriage and divorce. At least in metropolitan areas, an analysis of data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and the national census indicates that nuclear families are progressively taking over as the most common type of Indian family structure. The 1991 census revealed that household growth exceeded population growth for the first time, indicating the possibility of household fragmentation. This trend continued to gain traction in the 2001 and 2010 censuses. A comparison of the three NFHS data points likewise demonstrate a progressive decline in the number of household members over time, along with a progressive rise in nuclear families—more so in metropolitan regions. Some noteworthy trends are the declining age of the head of the home, which indicates a shift in the power dynamic, and the rise in the number of families led by women, which implies a shift in the conventional roles of men and women.

## **MARRIAGE:**

Marriage is the official legal union of two individuals in a personal relationship. There are governmental and financial advantages and rights associated with a properly registered marriage. As stated on page 354 of the Cambridge Dictionary of Sociology, The social institution of

marriage is shaped by laws, customs, and religious beliefs." People are only permitted to marry one spouse at a time. It is known as monogamy. Divorces are a legal way to end a marriage. Its primary functions include reproduction, raising children, educating and socializing them, and maintaining ancestral lines. Marriage has taken many different forms over the ages.

The oldest social rule governing marriage is endogamy, the custom of marrying a member of one's own tribe or community. Endogamous marriage is a logical outcome when there are little opportunities for communication with external groups. In certain civilizations, cultural incentives to marry within one's social, economic, and ethnic group still hold sway.

Large groups of people who might be descended from a common ancestor are prohibited from marrying in communities with the most intricate family linkages from engaging in exogamy, or the practice of marrying outside the group.

In societies where the extended family still serves as the fundamental unit, families typically arrange marriages. Marriage is seen as the culmination of love between the spouses, and the financial benefits of the union to the extended family are carefully considered. On the other hand, young adults typically select their own partners in communities where the nuclear family structure is prevalent. Less attention is typically paid to the socioeconomic factors of the match because it is assumed that love precedes (and determines) marriage.

## **MARRIAGE RITUALS**

In marriage ceremonies, there are symbolic rituals that are believed to bestow good fortune on the couple. These rituals are frequently sanctified by religious orders. The giving of gifts to a married couple, both material and symbolic, is an important aspect of marriage rituals because financial concerns are crucial to the success of raising children. Large-scale exchanges of items between the families of the bride and bridegroom, or vice versa, typically signify that the betrothed families have curtailed the freedom of the individual to select their spouse.

In some form, every ceremony includes fertility rites designed to guarantee a successful marriage. Some of the oldest customs that are still practiced in modern ceremonies include the prominent placement of fruits or cereal grains to be sprinkled over the couple or on their



wedding bed, the bride carrying a small child, and the breaking of an object or food to help ensure a smooth delivery.

The most universal ritual is one that represents a holy marriage. A handshake, a chain or ring exchange, or tying of clothes can all be used to communicate this. However, every aspect of marriage ceremonies varies significantly throughout countries; tradition and habit fix certain aspects like time, location, and social significance of the occasion.

The religious rituals and beliefs that are present in communities all over the world have an influence on these traditions to some degree. For instance, weddings in the Hindu religion are extremely complex events that include numerous required procedures. Typically, the couple's parents organize marriages, and precise astrological calculations are used to establish the ceremony date.

## **KUDUMBI COMMUNITY**

In this light , I'm entering in to the history, Social, and Cultural specialities of Kudumbi community with specially referring to their Marriage , Family system and Linguistics structures.

With roots in Goa, Kudumbi is a farming community.

Along with the other Konkani-speaking communities in Kochi, they have a similar history of leaving Goa when the Portuguese attempted to compel them to convert to Christianity. They differ from the other communities, though, in that they are the only Konkani community in Kochi that is not vegetarian. The Kudumbis were categorized as belonging to the lower castes when the Konkani communities brought their hierarchical caste system to Kochi. They started farming and doing other manual labor to make ends meet. The Kochi nobility admired them for their adept farming methods on marshy land. This community may have been the one to introduce Pokkali farming, a special kind of saline-tolerant rice that is currently grown extensively in the districts of Ernakulam and Alappuzha that are flooded with water. They are also thought to have introduced fish farming, which developed into a prosperous sector that produces income for exports.

'Thaneeramrutham' is a food item that they make as a offering to God from the pokkali rice they cultivated. And the word 'Thaneeramrutham' means, ' Amruth' means offering and 'Thaneer' means a special kind of saline-tolerant rice. That is food made of salt rice as a offering to the God.

'Thappumelom' and 'Suvasini Pooja' is another important rituals of this community.

Thappumelom means it is a ritual of beating the musical instrument called 'Thappu' along with Walking alongside a sheep and Offer the Sheep to the Goddess in Kodungalloor (who is believed to be Kannaki). This has been done to seek protection and prevention from severe diseases , especially diseases like Small Pox and Chicken Pox. The sheep that has given as offering will be protected by the temple authorities.

Whereas 'Suvasini Pooja' is another interesting ritual of this community. It is a Pooja or prayer done to get marriage proposals and getting married. People who are not married , especially unmarried women are the one's who practice this Pooja.

On 24<sup>th</sup> November 1662, the Kudumbi community reached in the place called 'Thiruvanjikulam' in 'Kotiyas' ( a kind of boat). And these migrated people are experts in digging trenches, and filling ammunitions for holding Kachik Forts during the period of war. And this got noticed by the Kodungalloor Royalty and asserted them with the roles of house keeping and external works in the palace. And this is a written history as per the records of the community.

We can really find the roots of Kudumbi community when we thoroughly make a search in the mythology of Kudumbi community. ' Kannaki' who also known as 'Kannagi' , is the main deity or the family God of Kudumbi community. She is the protagonist of the Tamil epic 'Cilappatikaram' which tells the story of a mythical woman from Tamil mythology named Kannagi, commonly written Kannaki. It is stated that Kannagi is a chaste woman who remains with her husband in spite of his adultery, that they tried to mend their marriage after her stubborn husband had lost everything, and that he was wrongfully accused and sentenced without following the proper legal procedures. After demonstrating the injustice and raising a protest, Kannagi curses the city and the king of Madurai, ultimately resulting to the demise of the unjust Pandyan King of Madurai, who had unfairly executed her husband Kovalan. Because of her curse, the city of Madurai burns to the ground, punishing the civilization that had caused her suffering. In Tamil legend, Kannagi has been worshipped as a goddess-like emblem of purity. In

Hindu temples, sculptures or reliefs depict her breaking her anklet or cutting her wounded breast and hurling it toward the city, respectively.

She is revered as the goddess Pattini by the Sinhalese Buddhists in Sri Lanka, as Kannaki Amman by the Tamil Hindus in Sri Lanka, and as Kodungalloor Bhagavathy and Aatukal Bhagavathy in the state of Kerala in South India. Kannaki is regarded by Keralites as the embodiment of Goddess Bhadrakali, who traveled to Kodungalloor and found redemption in the Kodungalloor temple.

‘Thevandhi’ was the best friend and 'Mathari' was the closest friend and helper of Kannaki. Thevandhi represents the Nair community and Mathari represents the Kudumbi community. It is believed that ,this is how Nair community got the internal Jobs and Kudumbi community got the external Jobs that considered to be done by low caste. It is believed that , Suvasini Pooja is the prayer done for the daughter of Mathari named 'Ayya' for getting married. Because of that Suvasini Pooja is also said to be called as 'Sumangali Pooja'(Sumangali means a married woman).

## **THE TRIBAL DEITY OF KUDUMBI'S**

The tribal deity of Kudumbi's is known as 'Kurumbamma'. Kurumbamma is the another name of Mathari ,who was the close friend and helper of Kannaki. Kudumbi's made her their tribal deity because of her closed relationship with their main deity Kannaki ,that is the Kodungalloor Amma. But recently the statue of Mathari has been destroyed by unknown rivalries and protest has been going on in the leadership of 'Kudumbi Seva Sangham' which is the association of Kudumbi community.

## **KUDUMBI LANGUAGE**

Kudumbi language is actually the ‘Konkani’ language with slightest differences in the pronunciation. But both community can understand when they hear the Konkani and Kudumbi languages. Konkani is their mother tongue. It is the language that is inherited by them from their ancestors. The language doesn't have a language script. Kudumbi's uses the language script

called 'Devanagiri' for writing. The language is taught in the community from childhood itself orally. It is through communication with the help of this language that they explore new words and understand new ideas and subject.

When I asked them ,do all members in the family know the language, they said with a sad smile that , the new generation members didn't know the language , nor they are interested in learning the language. For them ,the languages that are really beneficial is the languages 'English' and 'Malayalam'. Every other caste and religious communities residing along with them are using Malayalam for communication, it is Malayalam and English that is taught in educational institutions, and job and career opportunities are in demand of knowing and being fluent in English. So they prefer to learn Malayalam and English. And also speaking in Konkani language is considered to be shameful for them in the present society. But the members from Old generations, including some millennials know the language, at least they could understand what they are saying.

The Kudumbi Seva Sangham noticed this disinterest of the new generation towards their community language , and initiated steps to decrease this disinterest. They started giving workshops in the temple related spaces and start classes for the children to learn the language. But it was not successful. Because children really didn't attended it. But still the association is pouring efforts to retain and make this language survive with other local and official languages.

## **MENSTRUATION, AND MARRIAGE CUSTOMS**

In the Kudumbi community marriage and menstruation customs and rituals are quite interesting. When a girl get her first period, she is supposed to be isolated from family and public for seven days. She will be restricted from getting out of the room that she have allowed. In the seventh day five women who are not related to the girl by any means will come to the house and make her take a bath. They will take her to the front of the house and prepare 'Aval' which is a traditional snack and feed her. And they also fill a round big spaced vessel with water and put 'Vettila'(a kind of leaf) and 'Adakka' fruit of Pana on the Vettila and make it float on the filled water of the vessel. The direction to which the leaf float is the direction from where she is going



to get her groom. They said and they blindly believes it. With that the ceremonies will be over and food will be distributed to the invited guests.

Kudumbi marriages are done in two segments. First their will be a Ceremony of fixing the marriage date. On this occasion the astrological data of both the bride and groom will be checked and will calculate the compatibility. The second custom is known as ‘Sakeeda’. In this custom four married women will go to the house of the bride and they will also bring gifts including Vettala, Adakka, pokala, a saree for the bride’s mother , bangles, bindhi, flowers, and a garland to make the bride wear. And the last function is the marriage where both the bride and groom exchanges rings and garlands and take a three rounds on the temple or the altar near them.

And the function after marriage is the pregnancy function. It is known as ‘Seemantham’ in the community. It is celebrated in the seventh month of conceiving. On this occasion the mother will be gifted whatever she asks for.

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL SPECIALITIES**

The major rituals of Kudumbi community are ‘Pooyam’. Which is a celebration that will goes on in the month of February , in Malayalam calendar in the month of ‘Vaisha Kumbam’ ,date 09. The worshippers will take penance for one week and on the last day a keen slim steel rode will be pierced through the tongue of the people who are volunteering to do it and others will take ‘Kavadi’ a kind of wood made and decorated temple shaped object that is small in size will be carried on the shoulders and they dance and jump with it till the festival is over.

The Kudumbi temple in Vypin is known as the “Sree Mallikarjuna Shekthram” . Lord Shiva , His wife Parvathi, their sons Karthikeya(widely known as Muruga) and Lord Ganesha is the main deities of this temple. Five Elephants will come from four different territories of the temple early in the morning with ‘Para’ ( carrier containing grains and wheat) and altogether get in to the temple and worship the deities.

Another important custom is the 'Suvasini Pooja' that is done in the Kodungalloor temple.

Suvasini Pooja is also known as Sumangali Pooja. Because it is a prayer that is done for getting married. This is mainly done for female members.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

1. According to Deborah Chambers and Pablo Gracia in their book called “ A Sociology of family life: Change and diversity in intimate relations, Second edition” which published in December (2021)says Both locally and worldwide, family relationships are changing dramatically. However, some aspects of family life never change. This well-known book, which is currently in its completely revised second edition, offers a thorough analysis of the most recent findings on "family," parenting, children, and interpersonal relationships. In spite of expectations that 'the family' is disintegrating, “A Sociology of Family Life” demonstrates the remarkably resilient nature of commitment and reciprocity in both new and conventional family structures across cultural boundaries. However, even when new forms of close connections like "friends as family" and LGBTQ+ intimacies become more prevalent, navigating these kinds of personal interactions can still be challenging given broader institutional conventions. This new edition, which focuses on class, gender, color, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, draws attention to the disparities that hinder and influence families and personal lives on a global scale.
2. According to Wikipedia in its title “ Kudumbi” explains about Kudumbi’s , their Goan legacy, their tradition, culture, language specialities, Cultural diffusion and language conversion, temples, deities ,festivals and social organization.
3. As per ‘ Michel Verdon’ in his American journal of Sociology, “Kinship, Marriage and the Family : An operational approach” , which was published on January (1981) suggests to propose a new, "operational" definition of group that is independent of normative representations and interpersonal conduct. Based on this new understanding of group, he then derives new and, he hopes, more "universal" definitions of kinship, marriage, and the family.



4. According to “Introduction to Sociology – 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Edition adapted by ‘William Little’ from the Open Stax College text book, discusses about Marriage and family in its 14<sup>th</sup> Chapter, and elaborated explanations are given on the titles , What is Marriage?, What is a family?, Variations in family life, and Challenges families face.
5. According to ‘Rakesh. K. Chadda and Koushik Sinha Deb in their psychiatric journal “ Indian family systems, Collectivistic society and Psychotherapy” that published on the website “Indian J Psychiatry” on January (2013).talks about Indian Joint families and changing trends in Indian families.
6. According to the website “ Lumen Introduction to Sociology” ,explains about Family, and it’s diverse family units.
7. “ The Times of India” had published an article on October 13 ,(2012) named ‘ A community rooted in roots’ written by ‘Vinobha K.T’ discusses about Kudumbi’s and their history, their migration and their historical significance as a community.
8. In the website ‘Studysmarter’ Published a writing called “Marriage in Sociology”that discusses about Marriage and it’s challenges in a sociological point of view, explains about ,marriage, it’s types, challenges, Civil partnership, trends in marriage and more.
9. According to the website ‘Ayurveda Journals’ that explains about Kudumbi’s and Kudumbi community discusses about their history, migration, their contributions to Kerala, their festivals ,deities and language and cultural specialties.
10. An Article that was published in Wikipedia by ‘Wiki Love Folklore’ explains about ‘Kannagi’ , her backstory and how her mythological character reached Kerala and became a deity.
11. Referred the community study of ‘Aswathy. K . Dilip, “An ethnographic study on the Gujarati community with special reference to Mattancherry” Published on March (2016) explains about Gujarati community, their history, their socio-cultural specialities, Occupation,food habits, festivals and more.

12. Read a case study called 'Caste and ethnicity in South India: A case study of Konkani People in Kochi' by 'Alina Kaczmarek – Subramanian' which was published on (2020) discusses the issue of caste and ethnicity in the 2010s using sociological and anthropological perspectives that are relevant to the case study of the Konkani community in Kochi, southern India.
13. Kelwin Mateus Monteiro in his study 'The Gawda/Kunbi Socio-cultural identity : A study in continuity and discontinuity' which published on (2015) examine the sociocultural identity of a group of people known as the Gawda/Kunbi community, who are thought to be the state's or region's aborigines.
14. "The Trajectory of Tribal development practice: The case of Muthuvan community in Kerala" by 'K.S.Pradeep Kumar' which was published on (2017) on the 'Artha Journal of Social Sciences' discusses about the history of tribal existence in Kerala State by using field observations. With or without academic rigor, the transition from tradition to modernity is extensively examined here in order to provide the reader some dairy notes that may help them understand the scope of the transformation and the challenges that followed.
15. " Aspects of life and language of Kanikkar Tribal community of Kerala-A- Study" by SK Syam which was published on (2017) in 'Language in India' ,explains about Linguistics is used to discuss the unique features of the language and dialect spoken by the Kanikkar communities residing in the aforementioned locations. The data obtained from the chosen informants of the Kanikkar village in the Trivandrum district's Kottur and Kuttichal areas is used for the language study.
16. "Short History of the Ismailis: Traditions of a Muslim community" by 'Farhad Daftary' which was published on (2020) discovers Ismaili literature, is the first to be grounded in contemporary scholarship. From the early formative period, through the Fatamid golden age, the Alamut and post-Alamut periods, to more modern history, it includes all the significant changes in the major phases of Ismaili history. This thorough and

approachable overview, which focuses solely on the most significant historical advancements, is ideal for those who are unfamiliar with the topic.

17. “Guardians of the transcendent : An ethnography of a Jain ascetic community” by ‘Anne Vallely’ which was published on(2002)in the University of Toronto Press, this work significantly contributes to the fields of Jain studies, comparative religion, Indian studies, and the anthropology of South Asian religions. It is the first in-depth ethnographic study of this prominent and influential Jain tradition.Among the rural Rajasthani Jains, itinerant white-robed ascetics are considered the embodiment of the greatest ethical standard. They give up their desires, families, and possessions to live entirely nonviolent lives. As teachers and truth-bearers, Jain ascetics are important members of their communities; they embody the lokottar, the world of the transcendent. This book explores the many dimensions of a moral life within the Terapanthi ascetic community and looks at the crucial role ascetics play in upholding the Jain moral order. It is based on thirteen months of fieldwork in the town of Ladnun, Rajasthan, India, among a community of Terapanthi Svetambar Jains. Vallely examines how Terapanthi Jain women construct their own austere lives by focusing on the Terapanthi moral cosmos from the viewpoint of female renouncers.

## **METHODOLOGY**

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of the study is to know more about Kudumbi community in Elakunnappuzha Grama Panchayath. Here the researcher made an attempt to find out the features of the family, marriage and socio-cultural specialties, food habits, and religious festivals of Kudumbi community.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Kudumbi people are found mainly in Vypin, Kodungalloor, and a major group near the place Kalamukku. They have a very unique culture, life style, food habits, dressing style, religious ceremonies. This study made a humble attempt to begin with an Ethnographic study on Kudumbi community in Elankunnappuzha Grama Panchayath with special reference to their family, marriage and socio-cultural elements.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

##### **GENERAL OBJECTIVE:**

An ethnographic study on the Kudumbi community of Elankunnappuzha Grama Panchayath on the basis of family, marriage and socio-cultural specialties.

##### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:**

- 1.To understand the family structure among Kudumbi community.
- 2.To analyse the cultural elements of the community.
- 3.To study the linguistic structures of the Kudumbi community.
- 4.To analyze their socio-economic conditions.
- 5.To understand the status of women in the community.

## **CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

- Kudumbi community:

Kudumbi community is a community that has their original roots on Goa which is a state in India. They migrated to Kerala, because of Portuguese invasion and settled in places called Kodungalloor and Vypin .

- Cultural elements:

The cultural elements of this community are their festivals mainly Pooyam, Suvasini Pooja, Thappumelom, Thirandu Kalyanam, their food habits, their language specialities and their indigenous customs practicing in the community.

- Linguistic Structure:

Linguistic structures are combinations of form and meaning. Any specific combination of form and meaning is a linguistic sign according to Saussure. The goal of structural linguists is to comprehend the (often unconscious) norms that native speakers follow when using language.

But in this study Linguistic structure is a term used to explain that the community has their own language called Konkani language and this particular language doesn't have a language script and it is dictated orally.

## **VARIABLES**

Independent Variables : Income, Education

Dependent Variables: Status of women

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

Descriptive Research Design - family, marriage, language, food habits, customs, festivals and socio-cultural elements in the Kudumbi community.

## **UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY**

Kudumbi Population in Vypeen.

### **SAMPLE & SAMPLING METHOD**

Kudumbi community in Elamkunnappuzha grama panchayath

8 families selected from the Kudumbi Seva Sangam list were interviewed

### **TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION**

The tool used in this study is an interview guide with both closed and open ended questions.

### **Data analysis and interpretation**

The collected data was edited, coded, tabulated and analysed qualitatively.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The study is only conducted in the Elamkunnappuzha Grama panchayath, so the study may not be accurate and perfect. There is only a small universe.

## **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

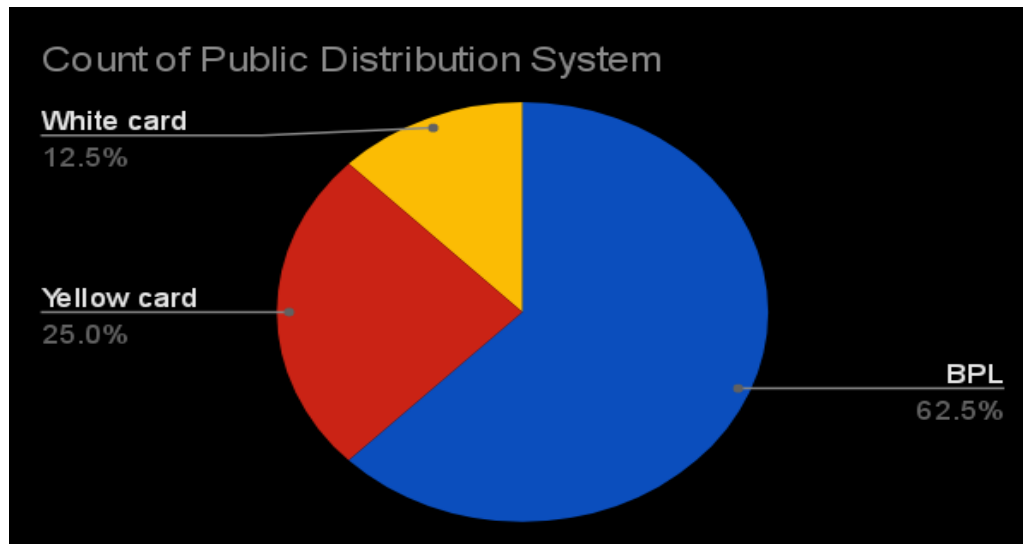


## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Public Distribution System:

Families	APL/BPL/YELLOW CARD/WHITE CARD
Susheela's fam	BPL
Pushpa's fam	Yellow card
Sura's fam	BPL
Manikyam's fam	BPL
Raveendran's fam	BPL
Prabhakaran's fam	White card
Savithri's fam	Yellow card
Raju's fam	BPL



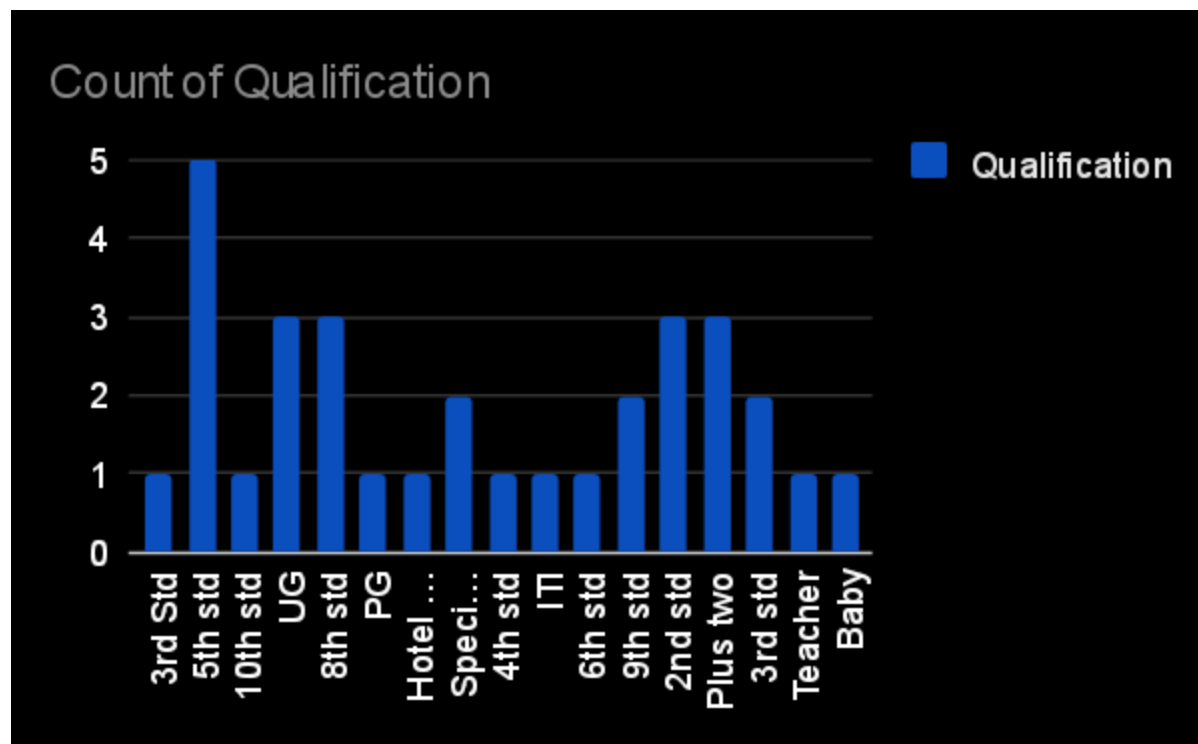
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

In the eight responded families, five of them were from BPL category. Two families were belonging to yellow card and One is belonging to Non- priority (white card) category.

### QUALIFICATION STATUS OF EACH MEMBER

RESPONDENTS	QUALIFICATION
Manikyam	3 <sup>rd</sup> Std
Sura Manikyam	5 <sup>th</sup> Std
Ajitha Sura	10 <sup>th</sup> std
Ammu	UG
Jisha	UG
Raveendran	8 <sup>th</sup> Std
Agitha	8 <sup>th</sup> Std
Athira	PG
Ajay	Hotel management
Amal	Special kid
Susheela	4 <sup>th</sup> std
Ravi	5 <sup>th</sup> std
Indu	ITI
Chanjal	6 <sup>th</sup> std
Sura	9 <sup>th</sup> std
Sindhu	5 <sup>th</sup> std
Sachin	9 <sup>th</sup> std
Sravan	Special kid
Pushpa Rajan	5 <sup>th</sup> std
Rajan	2 <sup>nd</sup> Std
Aparna	Plus two
Prabhakaran	3 <sup>rd</sup> std
Shyamala	2 <sup>nd</sup> std
Divya	Teacher
Prashanth	Plus two
Aradya	Baby
Raju	5 <sup>th</sup> std
Hema	8 <sup>th</sup> std

Athira Raju	UG
Ashwin Raju	Plus two
Savithri	2 <sup>nd</sup> std
Pushkaran	3 <sup>rd</sup> std



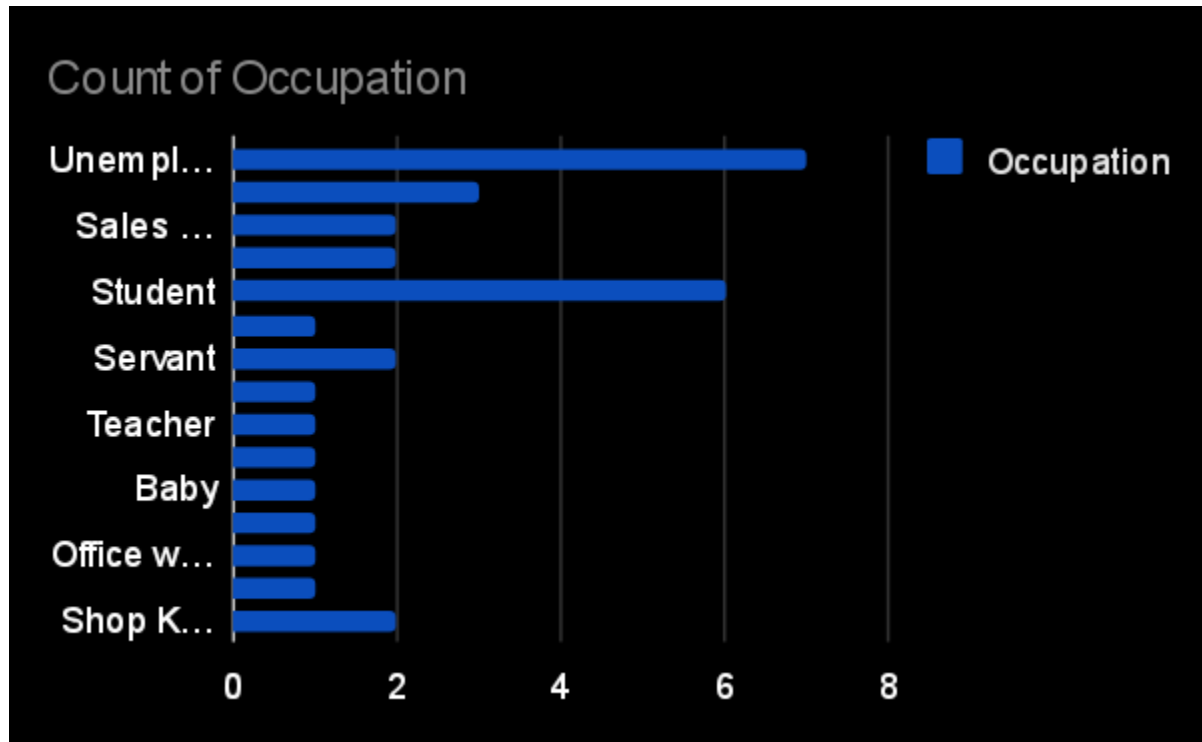
QUALIFICATION STATUS OF EACH MEMBER

In the case of Qualification status of each member, In the total 32 people; only 10 people have higher education and among them 2 members are students. And 6 of them have high school education and 13 of them have lower primary education.

## OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

Respondents	Occupation
Manikyam	Unemployed
Sura manikyam	Mason
Ajitha Sura	Unemployed
Ammu	Unemployed
Jisha	Unemployed
Raveendran	Sales man
Agitha	Sales woman
Athira	Student
Ajay	Hotel management
Amal	Student
Susheela	Servant
Ravi	Mason
Indu	Unemployed
Chanjal	Student
Sura	Fisherman
Sindhu	Unemployed
Sachin	Student
Sravan	Student
Pushpa Raju	Servant
Raju	Sales man
Aparana	Student
Prabhakaran	Mason
Shyamala	Unemployed
Divya	Teacher
Prashanth	Govt employee
Aradya	Baby
Raju Susheela	Driver
Hema	Sales woman
Athira Raju	Office worker

Ashwin Raju	Student
Savithri	Shop Keeper
Pushkaran	Shop Keeper



## OCCUPATION STRUCTURE

When it comes to occupation structure 9 people are unemployed and 8 of them are women and one baby includes. There is 3 Masons , 2 Sales mam, 2 Sales women , 1 Teacher , 1 office worker , 2 Shop keepers, 1 chef, 6 students , 2 servants both women ,1 driver, 1 fisherman and only one Govt employee.

## **FEMALE EARNING MEMBERS**

<b>Names</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Income</b>
Agitha	Sales woman	15000
Susheela	Servant	15000
Pushpa	Servant	18000
Athira Raju	Office worker	25500
Hema	Sales woman	15000
Divya	Teacher	30000
Savithri	Shop keeper	15000

Out of 18 female members , 7 women are working in different areas of the society. And 7 are unemployed , 1 is a baby, and 3 of them are students.

## **GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**

As per my data there is only one Govt employee in my study out of 32 participants.. This shows the disengagement of this community with the Government based Jobs.

## **MEMBERS WHO ARE WORKING ABROAD**

Out of 32 members there is no one in their families who are working abroad. This shows their lack of interest towards migration.

## HEAD OF THE FAMILY

Family	Family Head	Male/Female
Susheela's fam	Susheela	Female
Pushpa's fam	Rajan	Male
Sura's fam	Sura	Male
Manikyam's fam	Manikyam	Female
Raveendran's fam	Raveendran	Male
Prabhakaran's fam	Prabhakaran	Male
Savithri's fam	Pushkaran	Male
Raju	Raju	Male

In the above shown table out of 8 families 6 families are under male domination where male is the head of the family. Only 2 families are there where females is the head of the family.

## FAMILY MEMBERS

Family	No. Of family members	Children
Susheela's fam	4	1
Pushpa's fam	3	1
Sura's fam	4	2
Manikyam's fam	5	2
Raveendran's fam	5	3
Prabhakaran's fam	5	1
Savithri's fam	2	Nil
Raju's fam	4	2

Out of 8 families , each family have below 6 members. And there is only 0-3 children in each family not more.

### **MARRIED MEMBERS**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Marital status</b>
Manikyam	Widow
Sura manikyam	Married
Ajitha Sura	Married
Ammu	Unmarried
Jisha	Unmarried
Raveendran	Married
Agitha	Married
Athira	Unmarried
Ajay	Unmarried
Amal	Unmarried
Susheela	Widow
Ravi	Married
Indu	Married
Chanjal	Unmarried
Sura	Married
Sindhu	Married
Sachin	Unmarried
Sravan	Unmarried
Pushpa Rajan	Married
Rajan	Married



Aparana	Married
Prabhakaran	Married
Shyamala	Married
Divya	Married
Prashanth	Married
Aradya	Child
Raju Susheela	Married
Hema	Married
Athira Raju	Unmarried
Ashwin Raju	Unmarried
Savithri	Married
Pushkaran	Married

In the study conducted there is 18 married members , 2 widows, and 12children.

## **CULTURAL ELEMENTS**

Kudumbi's have a culturally rich background. The important deities are Shiva, Parvathi, Kodungalloor Amma , and Kurumbamma.. Their major rituals are 'Pooyam', Suvasini Pooja, Thappu melam and Manjonam. And the myth relating to this community is that, Thevandhi was best friend of Kannaki and Mathari was the friend and helper of Kannaki. Thevandhi represents the Nair community and Mathari represents the Kudumbi community. That's how Nair's got the Job of internal works relating to the house and Kudumbi's got external Jobs like cleaning, gardening, Watering, digging trenches, filling ammunitions, and filling medicine for holding Kachik Forts. Kudumbi's are related to Konkani community. Kudumbi's are from Goa, who migrated to Kerala during Goan- Portuguese invasion. They belong to the Konkani community .

They are one among the three segregated caste in Konkani ,and they are the lowest caste. But now both the Konkani's and Kudumbi's are two different communities. The language of both the community is Konkani language with slight difference in the pronunciation of words. Their special traditions are celebrating first menstruation of a female child , marriages in the community and Suvasini Pooja which is a prayer done for getting married. Their special food items are 'Thaneeramrutham' which is made from pokkali rice, 'Aval with roasted lentil' which is made during every special functions and 'Njavaru' which is a traditional snack that made during first menstruation ceremony. Other than these the most celebrated functions is the marriage ceremonies. The marriages will be very celebrating that it will last for more than two days.

## **LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE**

Kudumbi language is typically Konkani language with slightest changes. Both the community can understand each other even there is some minute differences. The language doesn't have a language script. The language is orally dictated. But they use the Hindi script called 'Devanagiri' to write. They teach the language from childhood itself orally to make it understandable for the new generation. But the new generation members who know the language are very few in numbers. They are not interested in learning the language which is a sad reality for the elders in the community. They are really worried regarding the survival of this special language with other main languages like Malayalam and English. And because of this fear the Kudumbi Seva Sangham had arranged Language classes for kids belonging to the community ,but number of kids attending it is very few. Among the families I went for data collection only the old generation know the language. In the new generation members only one member understands the language.

## **WOMEN IN THE KUDUMBI COMMUNITY**

As I took the data from the Elamkunnappuzha panchayath , which is a panchayath belonging to Vypin, the women in this region are rough and tough. They are very bold. But women always face discriminations. The minimum age of getting married for women in the community is 18 years and above. The elder women in the community are girls who got married at the age of 13, 15, 16, and 17s. But now it changed . And Kudumbi's believe in seeking help from astronomy in every special occasion including marriages. They don't accept and encourage intercaste and inter religious marriages. The first time a girl gets her period is celebrated as equal as a mini marriage. The major customs and rituals performed during this first period celebration is that , the girl will not come outside of the house nor her room for the first 7 days of the period. On the 8<sup>th</sup> day 5 married women who are not related with the girl by blood will come to the house and make her take a bath and take her to the front of the house and make 'Aval' for her and feed her. At this ceremony itself they will set a rounded- spaced- vessel in front of her and fill it with water and make a Vettala(a kind of leaf used for Hindu religious ceremonies) and Adakka on the top of the leaf to float in the upside of the filled water. And it is believed that the direction to which the Vettala and Adakka moves is the direction from which the girl going to get her groom. The girl will be provided with whatever she wants during this special day of her's. After this rituals the food will be served to the people and relatives who they invited for celebrating. And during these 7 days of period the girl is not allowed to come out of their rooms and she should lay on a mat only for her and she should not touch any plants nor any sacred things and shouldn't appear for any religious ceremonies and restricted to approach the Gods in the prayer room. And after the first period the 7 days restrictions will be decreased to 4 days ,but the restrictions remains the same , the girl would be provided with only a mat to lay and a blacker to cover. And on the 5<sup>th</sup> day she will wash the mat and complete the isolation period with her own family and the public.

Another important function that is celebrated is the 'Seemantham' .

Seemantham is the pregnancy ceremony of a pregnant woman. It is celebrated during the 7<sup>th</sup> month of conceiving. In this ceremony if the girls first menstruation isn't celebrated yet ,it will also be celebrated. And during this a special food which is belonging to the Kudumbi community

known as 'Mando' was prepared for the pregnant woman and she will be gifted with her most favorite things.

Dowry during marriages was another important factor that is affecting the women in the community. During marriages still there is a system of giving dowry in the name of gifts. Even the low income families will do their best give some valuables to their daughter as gifts which is dowry in disguise.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **FINDINGS:**

The majority of the population of the Kudumbi community are from socially backward classes. The caste Kudumbi itself is a minority caste among other castes and inside Konkani caste. Majority of the families belongs to Below Poverty Line and there's families holding yellow cards who are very low in financial abilities. Only few of the people in the caste are belonging to Non-priority category ,which shows the lack of education and opportunities in the community. When it comes to qualification status of the Kudumbi community members most of them have only lower primary education. Only 10 persons from whom the researcher collected data has higher education. In the families majority of the women are unemployed. Some are not interested in working ,but some are those who didn't got the opportunity to go for work. Only 3 people has white color Job.Rest of them are daily wage workers. The number of female earning workers are very few and among them there is woman who work as a teacher to those that work as a servant. The number of government employees are very few. Most of them unaware about the possibilities of government jobs and the reservation they have for government jobs and some are not even interested. There is actually no one in the families that the researcher collected data from with a member who is working abroad. And as the researcher who lives in this area where this Kudumbi community belong , the researcher couldn't find anyone who is working abroad from this community. And the researcher got to understand that it is because of the lack of financial support that they are not migrating to abroad even for studying. And in majority of the families , the head of the family is a male . Only few female heads can be found as head of the family in the community and it is mainly because ,their husbands are dead. This shows the male domination in the families. Each family have member less than six and everyone has less than three children. They consider Shiva and Parvathy as their important deities'. Most of them are unaware that their main deity is Kurumbamma who is their main tribal deity. Most of them are unaware about their original myth, it is from the Journal regarding Kudumbi's , from the Kudumbi temple with the help of Kudumbi Seva Sangham,that the researcher got to know about

the myth of the community. The myth they said is actually another myth that is not accepted by the history of the community. As a part of imitating the elites that they are worshipping the Lord Shiva and Parvathi according to the researcher's point of view. And Konkani's don't really accept Kudumbi's as a caste that belonging to them. They consider themselves higher caste and there is discrimination in the Konkani community towards Kudumbi community.

And when it comes to Language ,the new generation population of Kudumbi community is not at all interested in learning the language. For the sake of the language the Kudumbi Seva Sangham which is the association of the community ,have organized language classes for the children belonging ,but they didn't showed the interest to learn it. It is mainly because English and Malayalam are the languages that is popular in the area that they are residing. And opportunities in studies and work both are more accessible to the one's who know the English and Malayalam languages. And they don't have a need to learn the language as everyone of their generation at present prefer the language Malayalam to communicate. The Kudumbi Seva Sangham also publishes a journal regarding the ethnicity, origin and cultural specialties and problems the community facing known as 'Margadeepam'. The Kudumbi language is actually Konkani language with slight change in the pronunciation. The language is dictated orally and doesn't have a language script. And they use the Hindi language 'Devanagiri' to write. Kudumbi's don't give approval to inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. Women are still facing the 'Purity and Pollution' discrimination because of periods. But because of modernisation many of the modern families ignore that custom. But there is still few who celebrate that custom. Dowry is still given as gifts to their daughters. And families accept giving dowry as a part of the marriage. As per the communication that took place between the members of the family the caste doesn't enjoy Positive discrimination. They didn't come under the SC/ST category. They belongs to the OBC category.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The Kudumbi community is a culturally rich and historically significant community who migrated from Goa to cranganore , Kerala because of Portugal Invasion. Sree Kurumbamma is the tribal deity of the community. Apart from that the people of Vypin worships Lord Shiva and Parvathi as their main deities. They engages in every kind of occupation. Even though the number is low ,they are a community who are putting their maximum efforts to come in to the front line of the society. They are facing discrimination in the society based on their caste. The women in this caste are still struggling when it comes to opportunities. But some are dedicated and socially productive. The Kudumbi Language is struggling in surviving with other languages. The association and other community based groups are contributing their maximum efforts to preserve the language and they are hoping it's survival. A community with a rich ethnicity and great historical background the Kudumbi community is not yet ready to go to the backward section of the society. They are struggling , they are fighting for their rights ,belongings, and ethnicity.



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## **APPENDIX**

## **APPENDIX**

### **1. To analyze their socio-economic conditions**

- APL/ BPL?
- Qualification status of each member?
- Occupation
- Income - Family
- How many female earning members- How much
- Members who have government jobs?
- Members who are working in abroad?

### **0. To understand the family structure among Kudumbi community**

- Head of the family
- No. of family members? Children?
- Married members

### **0. To know what are their cultural specialties?**

- Who are your important deities?
- What are the major rituals performed in the community?
- What is the most celebrated festival of your community?
- Is there any myth relating to your festivals?
- Are you aware about your relation with Konkani community?
- Is Konkani and Kudumbi two different communities right now?
- Any special traditions you celebrate?
- Food during festivals?
- Marriage rituals

### **0. To study the linguistic structure of Kudumbi community?**

- Members who know Kudumbi language?
- Does the language have a particular name?
- How the Kudumbi language is studied in the community? Is there any institution?
- Does the language have a language script or is it orally dictated?
- Does the new generation members know the language?
- Is Kudumbi language and Konkani language the same?

### **0. To understand how women are treated in this community?**

- Minimum age of getting married?
- Do you seek help from astronomy before deciding to marry or the opinion and acceptance of the family matters?
- Do you celebrate your first menstruation?

- Customs and rituals performed during first menstruation?
- Do you have any rules during periods in your houses?
- Is giving dowry still there in the marriages?