

## AN INTER DISTRICT ANALYSIS OF THE TRIBES IN KERALA- A STUDY BASED ON SOCIO ECONOMIC FACTORS.

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### ABSTRACT

This article tries to focus on the district-wise differences in the development pattern of the Tribes in the selected districts of Kerala based on tribal concentration connecting with primary and secondary data. This is particularly significant as there are huge differences, if it is viewed, in district basis like accessibility, availability of plan funds, wage differences, social set up etc. The analysis inferred that the tribal community depends largely on government policies and programmes. So it is essential that the various developmental programmes initiated by the government should reflect the tribal aspirations and should satisfy their developmental needs.

**Key words** Accessibility, community, development, differences, district, government

### INTRODUCTION

The vision of the formulators of the Indian Constitution was to develop India into a socialist state. A socialist state is the one that protects and uplifts its weaker sections. It strives to reduce the social and economic inequality between the people. To achieve this goal, our government from time to time brought in different legislations and developmental programmes for the tribal community. This paper tries to analyze the present position of tribal communities in different districts of Kerala with regard to various socio economic variables.

### Significance of the Study

Tribals are the most vulnerable sections of the population in India. They are exploited by the most age old social and cultural handicaps coupled with environmental factors. The age old exploitation and repression of the tribals have considerably cut them off from the main stream of socio -economic development of the country as a whole. In Kerala, Western Ghats region of the state is the major part in which the tribes are concentrated and hence we can classify tribes as highly segregated as well as rural based. Almost one-third (31.24 percent) of the tribes are settled in Wayanad district, followed by Idukki (11.51 percent), Palakkad with 10.10 percent and Kasaragod with 10.08 percent. The study intends to address the developmental issues of the tribal community on the basis of different socio economic variables in a district wise analysis.

### Objectives

1. To examine the socio economic status of the selected tribal communities
2. To estimate the standard of living index of the tribal communities in terms of their dwelling district

### Data and Methodology

In the Palakkad district Irula and Kurumbas form the majority, whereas Kattunaikan, Paniyar and Kurumar constitute the majority in the Wayanad district. Muthuvan and Mannan were considered from Idukki district. Both Primary and secondary data has been used in the study. The data collected has been analysed using appropriate statistical tools.

### Results and Discussion

#### 1.1 Activity status

The activity status is important to understand the income and livelihood of tribal families. The analysis show that majority of the tribes are employed in all the surveyed districts (Table 1.1).

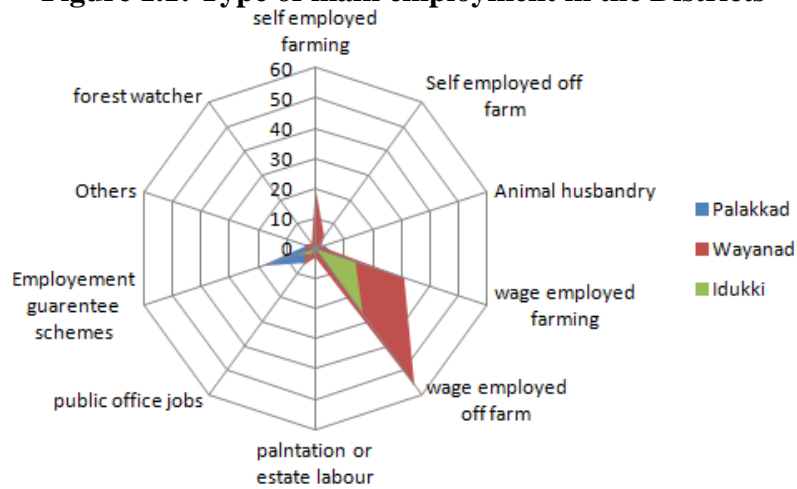
But the pertinent aspect is their wage and the type of employment. The tribes were working as casual labourers with meagre wages. This situation makes them in the poverty trap.

**Table 1.1: District and Activity**

Name of the district * activity status Crosstabulation						
Count		activity status				
		Employed	Unemployed	Doing household chores	Unable to work	Unwilling to work
Name of the district	Palakkad	73	3	2	12	0
	Wayanad	98	3	7	29	1
	Idukki	63	0	3	6	0

Source: Survey data

**Figure 1.1: Type of main employment in the Districts**



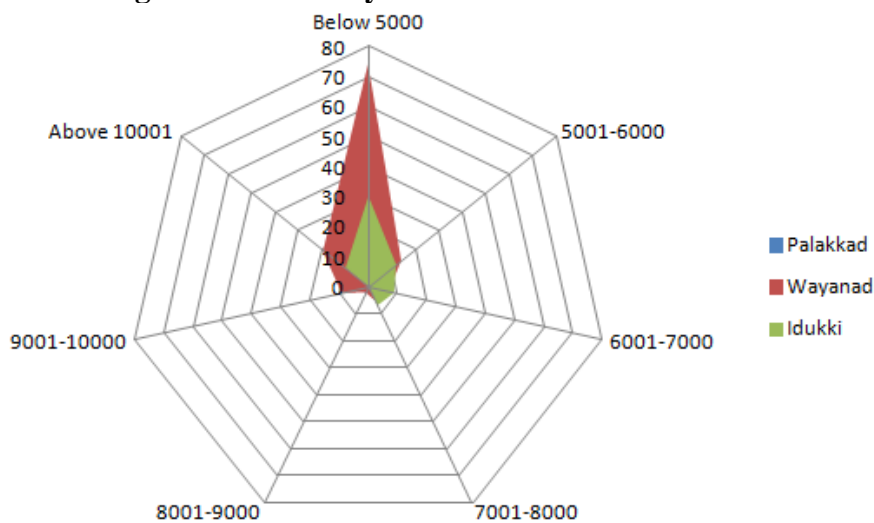
Source: Survey data

The main employment of the majority of tribes is in off farm (Figure 5.1) activity. Even though, reservation policies are favourable to the tribal population, not many are working Government sector.

**1.2 Monthly income**

The average monthly income of the tribal families in the three districts converges to below 5000 level (Figure 1.2). This analysis shows about the low standard of living among the tribal communities.

**Figure 1.2: Monthly income of the tribal families**

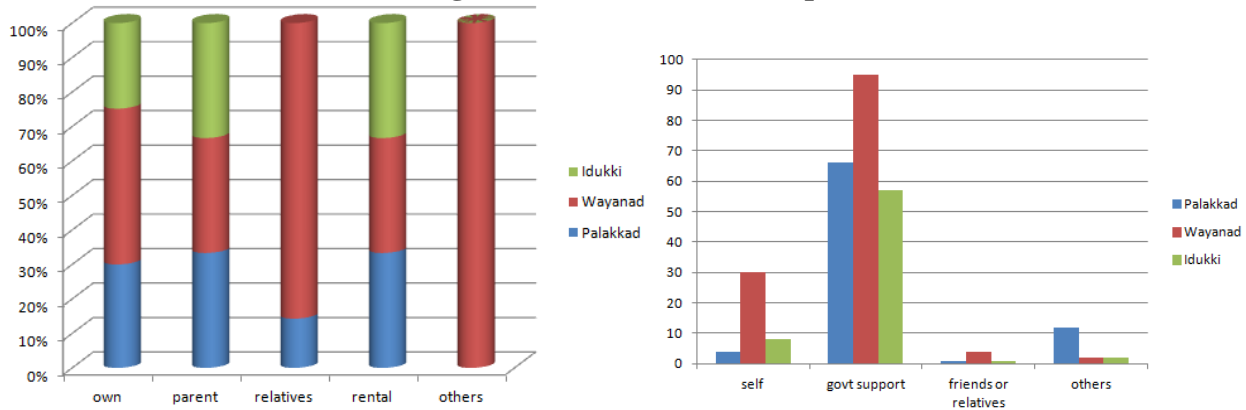


Source: Survey data

### 1.3 House ownership

The majority of the tribal families own houses in their own name (Figure 1.3). But the area of the houses ranges from 600-700 sq feet and the houses lack proper infrastructure facilities. The houses are built using government support which clearly indicates the successful housing policies of the government (Figure 1.4)

Figure 1.3: House ownership



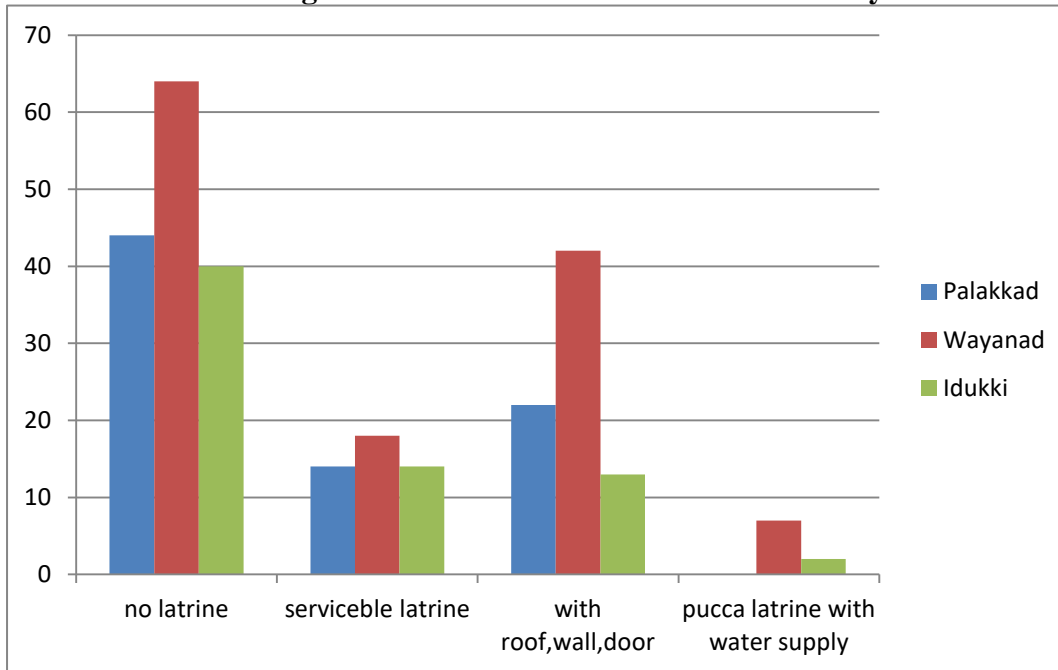
Source: Survey data

Figure 1.4: Fund for construction of house

### 1.4 Availability of Sanitary Latrines

In the surveyed districts, the majority tribal families have no access to proper sanitation facilities (Figure 1.5). Health and Hygiene are neglected leading to high morbidity and mortality rates among the tribal people.

Figure 1.5: Sanitation facilities in the surveyed Districts

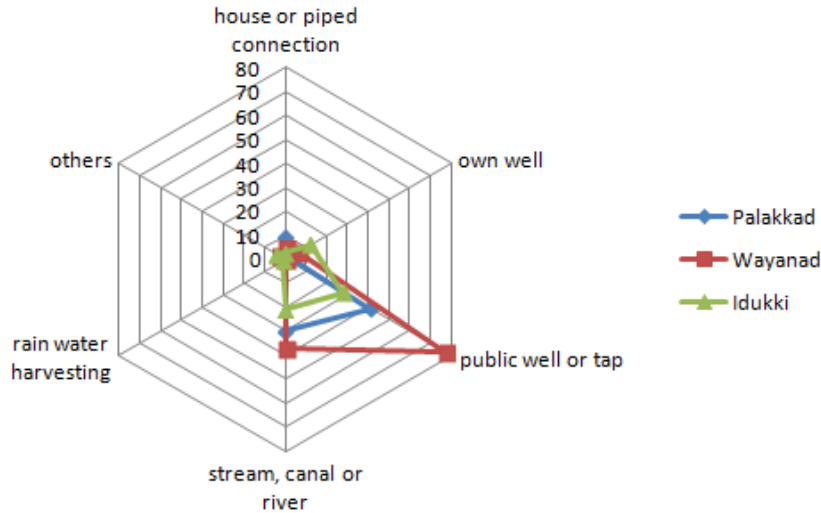


Source: Survey data

### 1.5 Drinking water facilities in the Districts.

The tribal people rely completely on the public well or tap for their drinking purposes. Own well in every house is still a distant dream for the majority population (Figure 1.6). About 50-60 families depend on a single well. During the dry season they still depend on the waterways in distant places. Pure and safe drinking water provisions in every tribal families are a necessity that improves their health and hygiene.

**Figure 1.6: Drinking water facilities in the surveyed districts.**

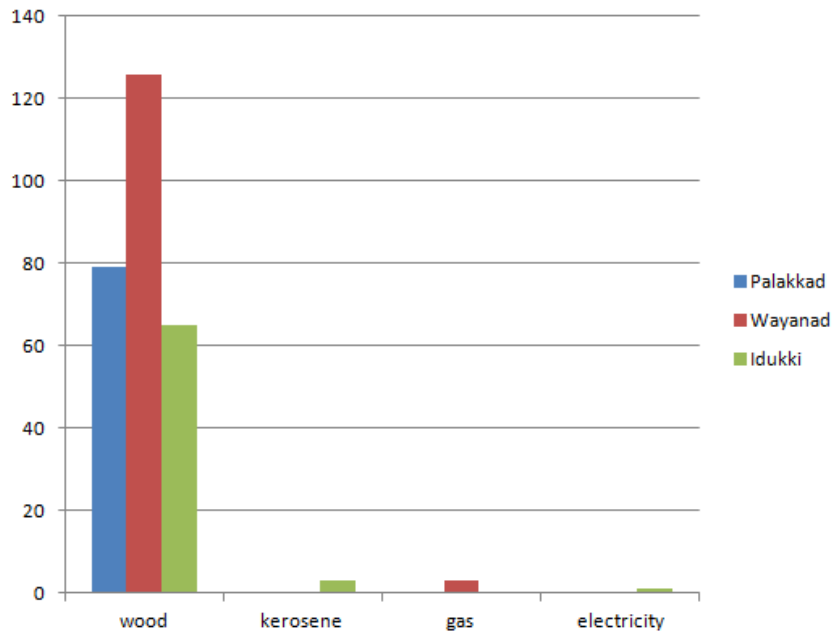


Source: Survey data

**1.6 Main fuel used for cooking purposes**

Wood has been remarkably the main fuel used by the tribal families (Figure 1.7). The other modes of fuel are inaccessible to the population. The deficiency of transport facilities hinders the distribution of gas to the families.

**Figure 1.7: Main cooking fuel used by the tribal families**

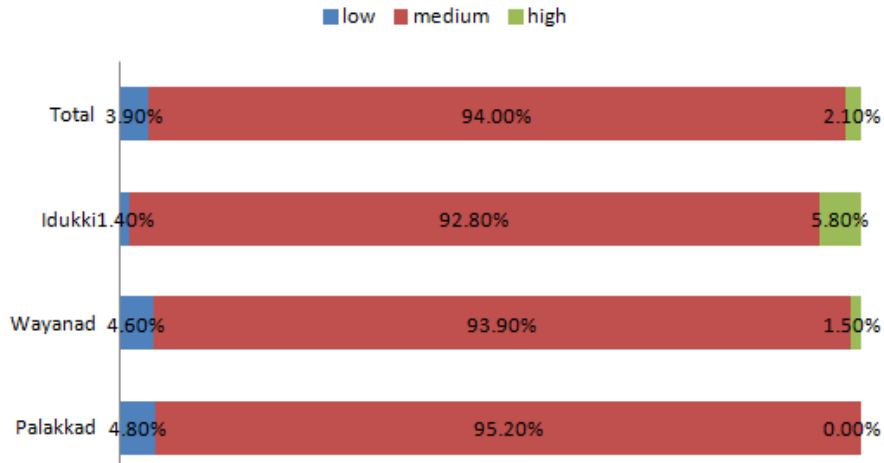


Source: Survey data

**1.7 District-wise Standard of Living**

To evaluate the living standards of the tribal communities for the three districts, the Standard of Living Index (SLI) is worked out and the results are shown in Figure 1.8. The difference based on district seems to be minimal. However, those in high SLI are more in Idukki compared to other two districts and none of the households in Palakkad is in high SLI. Across the districts, more than 90 percent of the households are exhibiting medium level of living standards.

**Figure 1.8: District and SLI**



Source: Survey data

The **Null Hypothesis “Distribution of SLI is same across the three districts”** is tested with the aid of Chi-Square test. The results show that there is no significant difference in SLI based on district and hence we fail to reject the null hypothesis (Table 1.3).

**Table 1.2: Chi-Square Tests: SLI and District**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig . (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.833 <sup>a</sup>	4	.098
Likelihood Ratio	8.499	4	.075
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.988	1	.026
N of Valid Cases	284		

a. 5 cells (55.6%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.46.

For a better inference, the district-wise results for the SLI are evaluated using correspondence analysis. The correspondence chart and its summary is shown in Tables 1.3 and 1.4. Figure 1.9 depicts the Correspondence Chart. The results reconfirm the inferences obtained from the bar chart as the three districts are closer to the medium SLI point and none of the districts is near to low or high SLI. The inter-district comparison shows that the SLI is more at the medium levels. So there has been some visible changes in the standard of living due to the various development schemes, the changes have not been that much drastic as most of the households have not achieved high SLI levels which is a benchmark when one evaluates the overall household attributes and living standards of the people in Kerala.

**Table 1.3: Correspondence Table**

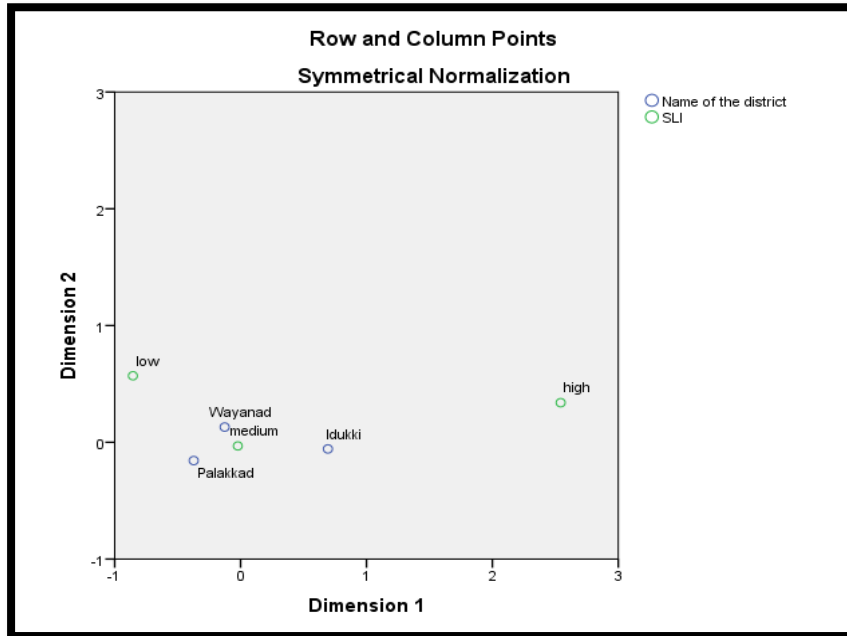
Name of the district	SLI			Active Margin
	low	Medium	high	
Palakkad	4	80	0	84
Wayanad	6	123	2	131
Idukki	1	64	4	69
Active Margin	11	267	6	284

**Table 1.4: Summary**

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	2 Correlation

1	.165	.027			.991	.991	.060	-.289
2	.016	.000			.009	1.000	.061	
Total		.028	7.833	.098 <sup>a</sup>	1.000	1.000		
a. 4 degrees of freedom								

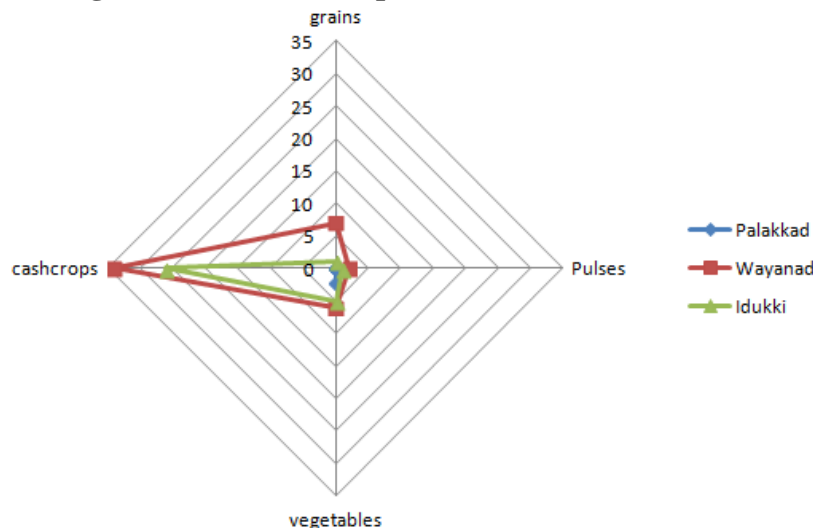
**Figure 1.9: Correspondence Chart**



**1.8 Main crops cultivated in the Districts**

The survey results show that there is negligible cultivation in the Palakkad District. In the districts of Wayanad and Idukki the cultivation is oriented towards cash crops rather than food crops (Figure 1.10). Even though cash crops are cultivated, it does not fetch a good price to make a decent living for the families. The presence of middlemen damages the opportunities for a direct sale in the open market.

**Figure 1.10 : Main crops cultivated in the Districts**



Source: Survey data

**1.9 Manner of Land alienation**

The manner of land alienation in Palakkad district is forceful eviction and also by lease. But in Wayanad district most of the land eviction is forceful. In Idukki district the land alienation is reported to be by mortgage and forceful eviction (Figure 1.11).The land alienation cases lead to the

disastrous disappearance of agriculture from the tribal families. It led to re orientation towards the cultivation of cash crops and the transformation of tribes to casual wage labourers.

**Figure 1.11: Manner of land alienation**

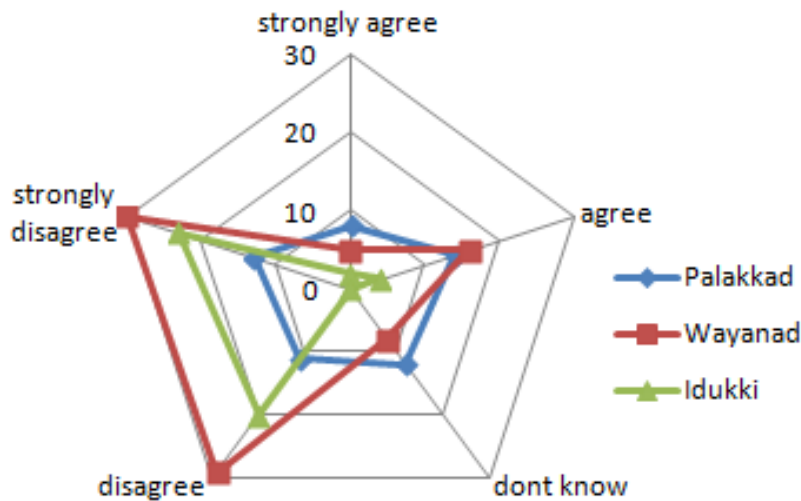


Source: Survey data

**1.10 Implementation of the Housing scheme in the Districts**

In all the three districts the tribal families are totally disappointed with the implementation of the housing scheme (Figure 1.12). The government authorities fail to monitor the progress of the construction of the houses. Most of the houses do not possess the basic facilities for a decent living. Due to the paucity of funds, the construction of most of the houses was not fully completed.

**Figure 1.12: Level of satisfaction of the families in the implementation of the housing scheme**

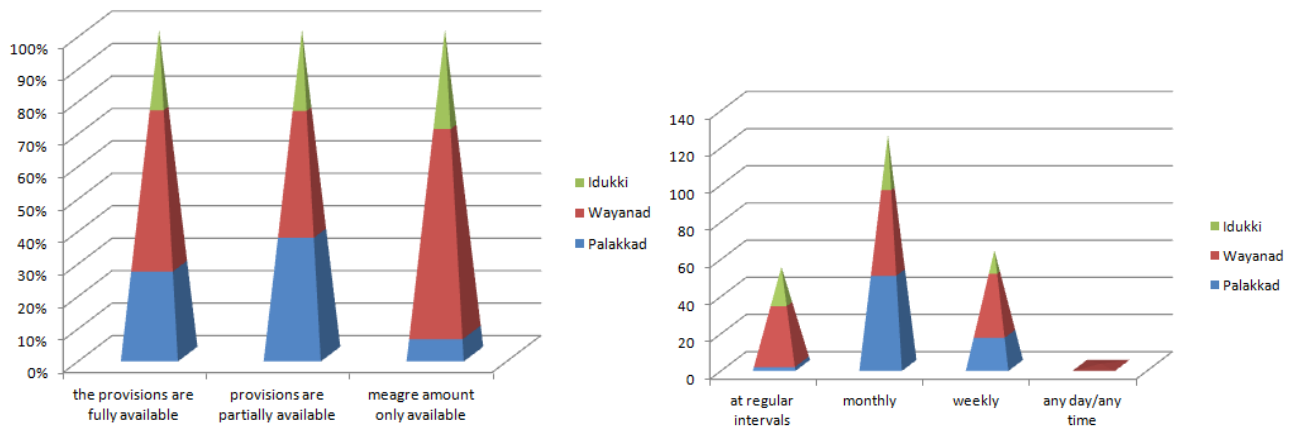


Source: Survey data

**1.11 Availability of food materials by PDS at ration shops.**

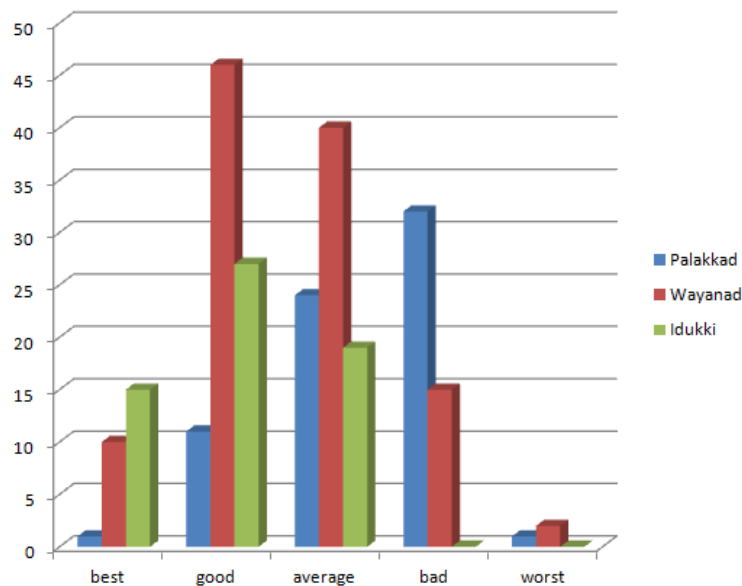
In the Palakkad district, majority of the families had reported that the PDS provisions are only partially available. But in Wayanad District, the majority gets only meager amounts of PDS in the ration shops. This is the case with regard to Idukki district also (Figure 1.13). In all the three districts, the tribal families collect their food supplements from the ration shops on a monthly basis (Figure 1.14). With regard to the quality of the provisions, Palakkad district is reported to supply bad quality food supplements compared to the other three districts (Figure 1.15).

**Figure 1.13: Nature of PDS availability in the districts.**



Source: Survey data

**Figure 1.14: Availability of PDS with regard to time period. Figure 1.15: Quality of the PDS provisions**



Source: Survey data

### Conclusion

The analysis reveals that the government needs to play a pro-active role in the overall development of the tribal families. The tribal families in all the three districts entirely depend on governmental agencies and funds from government policies and programmes. So, there is an urgent need to reform and reorganize the government programmes and policies to cater to the needs and aspirations of the tribal families so that they earn and live with identity.

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