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## Socioeconomic status and livelihood pattern of disadvantaged groups in Konkan

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### Abstract

This research paper delves into the intricate relationship between the socioeconomic status of disadvantaged groups and their corresponding livelihood patterns, focusing on Ratnagiri district in India. Drawing inspiration from existing research, this study aims to comprehend the diverse challenges faced by these marginalized communities and their strategies for economic survival. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, the research uncovers a multifaceted narrative. The study's findings reveal that the majority of the Scheduled Caste (SC) beneficiaries in the district had educational attainment up to secondary levels, with minimal representation in higher education. Housing conditions varied, with a majority having permanent housing structures attributed to government housing schemes. However, the study highlights the lack of socio-political participation among the SC population, emphasizing the need for empowerment strategies. In terms of livelihood patterns, the dominance of wage labor and agriculture emerges as a key feature. Limited access to resources and education confines many to wage labor, while rainfed farming remains a primary occupation. Moreover, the prevalence of landlessness, low income, and limited access to basic amenities underpins the overall socioeconomic challenges faced by these groups. The study also explores the livelihood patterns of disadvantaged households, revealing the significance of agriculture, animal husbandry, and forest-based activities. The prevalence of seasonal migration as a secondary livelihood underscores the vulnerabilities faced by these households. This research contributes to the discourse on the socioeconomic dynamics and livelihood pattern of disadvantaged groups in Ratnagiri district.

**Keywords:** Livelihood, socioeconomic status, disadvantaged groups

### Introduction

In the diverse tapestry of India's socio-economic landscape, a multitude of disadvantaged groups grapple with systemic disparities that perpetuate unequal access to resources, opportunities, and a dignified livelihood. The socioeconomic status of these marginalized communities plays a pivotal role in shaping their livelihood patterns, influencing their access to education, healthcare, employment, and overall quality of life. Understanding the intricate interplay between socioeconomic status and livelihood patterns within these groups is crucial for formulating effective policies and interventions that can mitigate disparities and foster inclusive development. Desai and Dubey (2019) [1] conducted a comprehensive study focusing on the socioeconomic status and livelihood patterns among Scheduled Tribes in select states of India. Their research underscores how socioeconomic conditions impact the livelihood choices of these marginalized communities and how regional disparities influence their economic trajectories. Kundu and Basu's research (2018) [5] adds to this discourse by delving into the urban context, where they investigate the interconnections between socioeconomic status, education, and livelihood patterns among urban slum dwellers. This study highlights the unique challenges these groups face in urban environments and the strategies they adopt to navigate their economic circumstances. The National Sample Survey Office's 78th Round (2022) provides a contemporary snapshot of household consumer expenditure trends, allowing for a deeper understanding of the economic realities faced by disadvantaged groups. This empirical data enriches the discussions surrounding policy formulation to address socioeconomic disparities and enhance livelihood opportunities.

This research paper delves into the multifaceted relationship between the socioeconomic status of disadvantaged groups and their livelihood patterns. By examining the various dimensions of socio-economic status, such as income, education, occupation, and access to basic services, this study seeks to unravel the complex mechanisms through which these factors impact the livelihood choices and trajectories of marginalized populations.

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Through an empirical analysis grounded in both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, this paper aims to shed light on the challenges faced by these groups, their coping strategies, and the potential avenues for enhancing their economic well-being. As India strives for inclusive and sustainable development, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on the socioeconomic dynamics of disadvantaged groups and provides insights that can inform policy formulation and promote equitable livelihood opportunities for all.

### Methodology

The research employed a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to investigate the interplay between socioeconomic status and livelihood patterns among disadvantaged groups in Ratnagiri district, India. A stratified random sampling strategy was used to select households from rural, urban, and peri-urban areas,

with structured household surveys capturing quantitative data on socioeconomic variables and livelihood patterns. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions gathered qualitative insights, which were analyzed thematically. Ethical considerations were prioritized, and the study's findings are expected to inform targeted policy interventions for equitable development. The data collection process occurred over the course of three-month period. Data was collected, tabulated, analysed, and presented here under.

### Results and Discussion

#### Socioeconomic status of disadvantaged groups

Table 1 revealed that the information of selected disadvantaged groups-Schedule Caste communities. Education is most important intervention to develop human capital. However, it was observed that majority (52.50%) of the SC beneficiaries were educated up to secondary level and 22.50 percent completed primary schooling.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the Schedule Caste beneficiaries on their socioeconomic status

Sl. No	SES Indicator	Frequency (N=40)	Percentage
<b>1.</b>	<b>Education</b>		
i.	Illiterate	02	5.0
ii.	Primary	09	22.50
iii.	Secondary	21	52.50
iv.	Higher secondary	05	12.50
v.	Graduate	03	7.50
vi.	Post-graduate	00	0.00
<b>2.</b>	<b>Type of house</b>		
i.	Kuccha	11	27.50
ii.	Pucca	24	60.00
iii.	Pucca with concrete	05	12.50
<b>3.</b>	<b>Type of family</b>		
i.	Nuclear	24	60.0
ii.	Joint	16	40.0
<b>4.</b>	<b>Socio-political participation</b>		
i.	No participation	34	85.0
ii.	Member PRI/SHG	04	10.0
iii.	Sarpanch/ President	02	5.0
<b>5.</b>	<b>Occupation</b>		
i.	Wage labour	19	47.50
ii.	Farming	15	37.50
iii.	On-farm business	04	10.0
iv.	Non-farm business	02	5.0
v.	Service	00	0.00
<b>6.</b>	<b>Landholding</b>		
i.	Landless	21	52.50
ii.	Marginal landholding	8	20.0
iii.	Small landholding	7	17.50
iv.	Medium landholding	00	0.00
v.	Large landholding	00	0.00
<b>7.</b>	<b>Type of farming</b>		
i.	Rainfed	12	80.0
ii.	Irrigated	03	20.0
<b>8.</b>	<b>Household annual income (Rs)</b>		
i.	Up to 50,000/-	24	60.0
ii.	Rs. 50,001 to 1,00,000/-	14	35.0
iii.	More than 1,00,000/-	02	5.0
<b>9.</b>	<b>Economic status</b>		
i.	Below poverty line	38	95.0
ii.	Above poverty line	2	5.0
<b>10.</b>	<b>Access to potable water</b>		
i.	Yes	29	72.50
ii.	No	11	27.50
<b>11.</b>	<b>Availability of latrine facilities</b>		
i.	Yes	35	87.50

ii.	No	05	12.50
<b>12.</b>	<b>Access to health care facilities</b>		
i.	Primary Health centre	38	95.0
ii.	Private clinics	02	5.0

No one had completed higher education like post-graduate degree and only 7.50 percent were able to finish their graduation. Majority of the SC beneficiaries (60.00%) reported that they have pucca living house and 27.50 percent had Kuccha house. Majority of them got permanent housing structure under *Gharkul* / PM Awas yojana. The large percentage (60.00%) belonged in nuclear family and 40.0 percent were belonged in joint family structure. This study found that huge majority (85.0%) of the SC beneficiaries did not have any socio-political participation. Therefore, socio-political empowerment of resource poor schedule caste community is one of the major concerns for their inclusive development.

Further, nearly half of the SC beneficiaries reported their primary occupation was wage labour (47.50%), followed by farming (37.50%), on-farm business (10.0%) and non-farm business (5.0%). None of the SC beneficiary was worked in service occupation. This lead to say that most of the SC population is dependent on single livelihood option-wage labour. The lack of professional skill, less education and inadequate resources might be the reasons behind having less livelihood options and opportunities. More (52.50%) of the sampled beneficiaries were found as landless and only 20.0 percent and 17.50 percent were belonged in marginal and small landholding category, respectively. Higher percent (80.0%) of the beneficiaries were cultivating rainfed farming and only 20.0 percent had irrigation facilities. Huge majority (95.00%) of the SC beneficiaries belonged in below poverty line and only 5.0 percent were rose just above poverty line. The household annual income was less than Rs. 50,000/- as reported by majority (60.0%) SC beneficiaries, followed by 35.00 were belonged in Rs. 50,001 to 1,00,000/- category of annual income. Further, 27.50 of the SC beneficiaries did not access potable water and latrine facilities (12.50%). Huge majority (95.00%) accessed primary health care facilities in rural PHC and only 5.0 percent were able to get private clinic facilities.

Considering above findings, it could be said that SC

population is having low socioeconomic and were belonged in resource poor rural families. The low education, inadequate resources, less access to basic amenities and facilities, resource constraint livelihood system and low income might be the reasons behind low socioeconomic status. Therefore, technology interventions may be delivered to develop skills and knowledge formation in agriculture through capacity development programs. The identified interventions may provide more livelihood opportunities in terms of income and employment generations. The developed livelihood facilities ensure sustainable rural livelihood security throughout the year to disadvantaged groups.

#### Livelihood pattern of disadvantaged households

Table 2 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the livelihood patterns among the disadvantaged households in the study, highlighting their primary, secondary, and tertiary livelihood activities. The numbers in parentheses represent the percentage of households engaged in each livelihood option. The dominant livelihood pattern among the disadvantaged households is agriculture, with 65.00% of households relying on it as their primary livelihood. Among crop productions, rice stands out as the most prominent, engaging 65.00% of the households. Finger millet, proso millet, and pulses are also significant contributors to crop-based livelihoods. The secondary livelihood for a substantial portion (53.33%) of households involves kitchen gardening, showcasing an emphasis on self-sufficiency and supplementing their diets. Additionally, a portion (20.00%) of households is engaged in mango and cashew cultivation. Cow-bullock husbandry is the primary form of animal husbandry, with 48.33% of households relying on it as their main source of livelihood. Backyard poultry rearing is also a significant secondary livelihood, engaging 73.33% of the households. Wage employment emerges as a prominent secondary livelihood, with 46.67% of households relying on it. Among these, on-farm wage employment is notable, engaging 40.00% of the households.

**Table 2:** Distribution of the disadvantaged households according to their livelihood pattern

Sr. No	Particular	Options of livelihood (N=60)		
		Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
a)	Agriculture	39 (65.00)	21 (35.00)	00 (0.00)
I.	<b>Crop production</b>			
i.	Rice	39 (65.00)	21 (35.00)	00 (0.00)
ii.	Finger millet	24 (40.00)	11 (18.33)	00 (0.00)
iii.	Proso millet	18 (30.00)	9 (15.00)	00 (0.00)
iv.	Pulses	21 (35.00)	9 (15.00)	00 (0.00)
II.	<b>Horticulture</b>			
i.	Kitchen gardening	00 (0.00)	32 (53.33)	00 (0.00)
ii.	Mango/cashew	00 (0.00)	12 (20.00)	00 (0.00)
III.	<b>Animal husbandry</b>			
i.	Cow-bullock	29 (48.33)	00 (0.00)	00 (0.00)

ii.	Goat	00 (0.00)	4 (6.67)	00 (0.00)
iii.	Poultry- Backyard	00 (0.00)	44 (73.33)	00 (0.00)
b)	Wage employment	14 (23.33)	28 (46.67)	05 (8.33)
i.	On-farm	14 (23.33)	24 (40.00)	00 (0.00)
ii.	Non-farm	12 (20.00)	18 (30.00)	05 (8.33)
c)	Forest	00 (0.00)	00 (0.00)	60 (100.00)
i.	Timber collection	00 (0.00)	00 (0.00)	60 (100.00)
d)	Service/business/ artisan	05 (8.33)	3 (5.00)	2 (3.34)
e)	Seasonal migration	02 (3.34)	27 (45.00)	00 (0.00)

Notably, 100.00% of households are engaged in forest-based livelihood activities, specifically timber collection, as a tertiary livelihood. This highlights the importance of forest resources in the livelihood strategies of disadvantaged households. A small portion of households (8.33%) engages in service, business, or artisan activities, demonstrating a limited diversification of livelihood options beyond traditional agriculture and forest-based activities. A notable percentage (45.00%) of households' resort to seasonal migration as their secondary livelihood, possibly indicating the need for additional income sources due to the seasonal nature of agriculture. Similar Findings was reported by (Mohammad Ajaz-ul-Islam, *et al.*, 2013)<sup>[4]</sup>.

### Conclusion and Implications

In conclusion, this study underscores the diverse livelihood patterns of marginalized communities in Ratnagiri district. Farming emerged as the primary livelihood activity for a substantial proportion (65.00%) of tribal households, aligned with similar findings from previous research. Rice farming, finger millet cultivation, and pulses were predominant agricultural activities. Livestock ownership was limited, primarily comprising desi cows, bullocks, and backyard poultry. The prevalence of subsistence agriculture and limited livelihood options highlights the need for interventions aimed at skill development, economic diversification, and sustainable resource management. Policymakers and stakeholders should consider these findings to design and implement targeted programs that enhance education, livelihood opportunities, access to basic amenities, and overall socioeconomic conditions for these disadvantaged groups.

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