

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL SPECTRUM OF PADMAPURAM VILLAGE, ARAKU VALLEY**

**SUBHANIL GUHA**

Department of Geography, Dinabandhu Andrews College, Kolkata, West Bengal, India

### **ABSTRACT**

The present study was almost solely based on the primary data collected from a field visit at Padmapuram village of Araku valley, Andhra Pradesh which is basically known for tribal agglomeration. The local inhabitants are mainly dependent upon agriculture, mining and tourism. The household survey specially emphasised upon some of the socio-cultural parameters, e.g., demography, health, education, economy, household condition etc. which are at least to some extent distinct compare to the other non-tribal villages. The village reflects a satisfactory condition compare to the national average in terms of the aforesaid parameters. But, there is obvious some serious lacking regarding health, water, electricity and education particularly in female population. Tourism industry can enhance the economic condition in the near future.

**KEYWORDS:** Demography, Household Survey, Primary Data, Tourism, Tribal

### **INTRODUCTION**

Geography is essentially a field science. It deals with the study of spatial pattern of different models of human occupancy and the same time connotes the casual aspects of it, relating the physical environments and the cultural attainment of the human groups of the society. How much a region is geographically sound should be testified in the fields of intensive study. The college-classes actually give a student the theoretical base exemplified by some models. But, since local factors also play a major role, broad generalization of the facts is not enough for satisfaction, so, a careful study is required to investigate the micro-order adjustment of the people with the physical environs. Man has got intellects with which he wants to make his way of life comfortable. He uses to do this by obtaining something from the nature; but, nature is too miser. She exerts resistances. When techno sphere is too much, these resistances become also the resources and it is exploited and distributed and word as conditioned by the total system. This system is a unique one. To examine all these one has to study both the physical and cultural environments. But since, the present field study is not a detailed one, the ultimate does not show a very elegant firm, still the facts remain the same.

For the present study, Padmapuram village of Araku Valley Mandal in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh has been selected as study area. It is located 93 km towards North from District head quarters Vishakhapatnam. 556 km from State capital Hyderabad. Padmapuram is surrounded by Dumbriguda Mandal towards west, Ananthagiri Mandal towards East, Hukumpeta Mandal towards South, Pottangi Mandal towards North. Salur, Sunabeda, Koraput, Bobbili are the nearby cities to Padmapuram. This Place is in the border of the Visakhapatnam District and Koraput District. It is near to the Odisha State Border. The study area is extended from 18<sup>0</sup>19'17" North to 18<sup>0</sup>20'36" North latitude and from 88<sup>0</sup>52'11" East to 88<sup>0</sup>54'54" East latitude. Being a part of Eastern Ghat the study area is characterised by an undulating topography. Telugu is the Local Language here. Total area of Padmapuram is 748 hectares. However with the influx of tourists, the region is undergoing a metamorphosis, with the roads being repaired and hotels being set up. Figure 1 shows

the location of the study area.

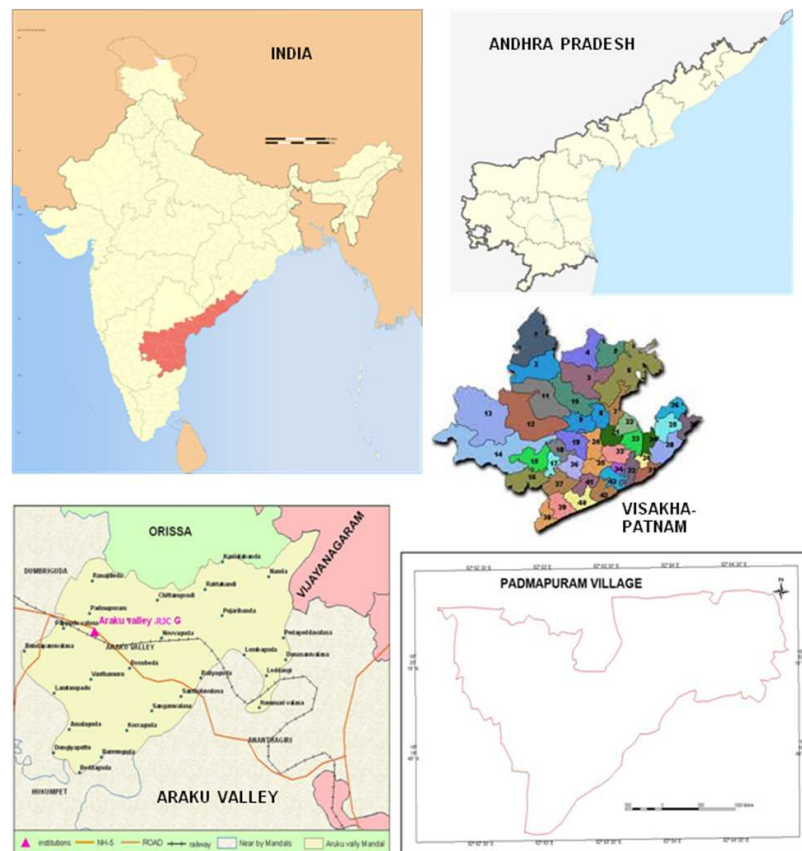


Figure 1: Location of the Study Area

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology simply implies the way of analysis of the data collected in the field. Actually, a geographer requires some fundamental tools viz. topographical sheet, cadastral map, political map, land use map etc. All these have been collected firstly so that the physical environments can be guessed vividly. All the parameters of analysis have been examined in the field and have also been shown either with the help of photographs, primary survey or of sketches.

For the cultural patterns, the analytical tools are somewhat sophisticated since the types of cultural response out of a typical terrain cannot be made out directly within a very short time. It is because of the fact that culture is essentially an evolutionary phenomenon. So the time dimension must not be overlooked as in the case of geomorphic landscape. The demographic status of the area has been studied very intensively and it has been analyzed through different techniques. The behaviour of the developmental plan and methods also indicates the channels and the ways of subsequent development. The economic basis of the people, educational spheres, medical facilities enjoyed by them has also been investigated. Broadly speaking, the resource utilization within different functional limits of the region is taken under this short study project.

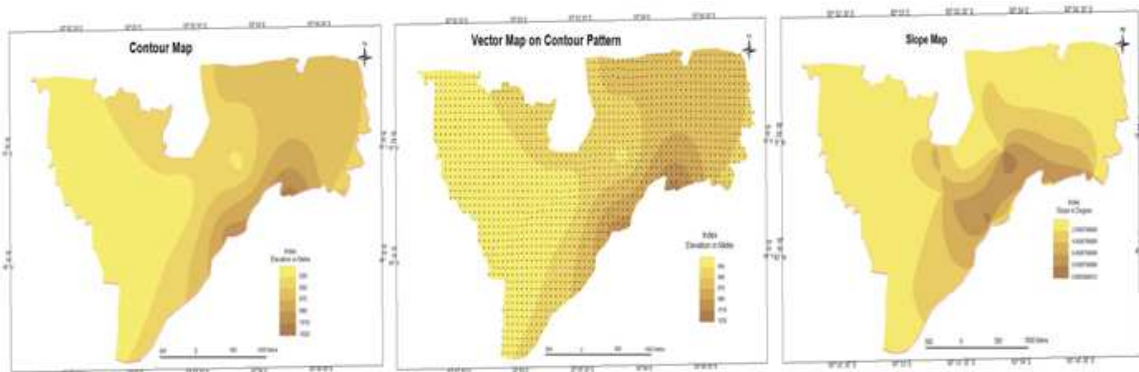
Lastly, all these have been shown with the help of maps, diagrams, graphs, sketches and photographs in course of analysis for illustration. The conclusion and the future prospect of the region have been optimized keeping a close view to the existing patterns.

## PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### Relief

Relief is a main part of physical setup of any region. The entire study area is actually a part of Eastern Ghat region. It is a moderately elevated landscape. There are five major contours have been drawn over the study area - 935 m, 955 m, 975 m, 995 m and 1015 m. Western part is comparatively lower. Elevation is almost gradually increased towards the south-eastern part. The entire study area is slightly undulating. The contour or relief map has been shown in figure. 2.

Vector map on contour pattern has been generated to determine the aspects of the region (Figure. 2). The arrow sign indicates the flowing direction. It is really a significant element for the geologists or geomorphologists to understand the erosional trend and structural interruption. Slope map has also been prepared to measure the steepness of the area and it is shown in figure. 2. The area can be considered gently steep as some of the parts have a slope of more than  $6^{\circ}$ . The slope increases towards the south-eastern part.



**Figure 2: Relief Analysis (Source: Dumpy Level, Prismatic Compass and GPS Survey)**

### Climate

The region enjoys a monsoon climate with its characteristic rhythms. On the basis of the local rainfall conditions four seasons including two monsoon seasons are recognised--South-West Monsoon (June to September), North-East Monsoon (October to December), Winter (January to February) and Summer (March to May). The mean, maximum and minimum temperature graphs have been shown in figure. 3. The season of summer monsoon starts with a sudden outburst of clouds, sometimes in second or third week of June, bringing a general decrease of 3-4 degree Celsius in the mean maximum daily temperature. The rains provided a great relief from the opposite hot winds. But the increase in relative humidity does not permit the weather to remain comfortable. Though the maximum daily temperature shows an upward trend but from the middle of January it never goes above 30 degree Celsius till the end of February. During the cold season the day usually remains calm and clear and the rains are the common feature of the climate in this region. Figure 3 also shows the precipitation graph where average number of rainy days per month has been determined. June to November may be considered as rainy season. More than 25% of annual rainfall is distributed in the month of October to December while 60% rainfall is observed in the South-West Monsoon season (Figure. 3).

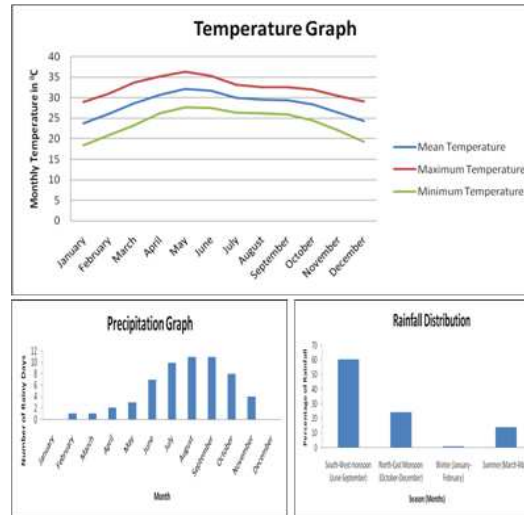


Figure 3: Climatic Characteristics (Source: Indian Meteorological Department)



Hazardous Effect of Cyclone "HUDHUD"

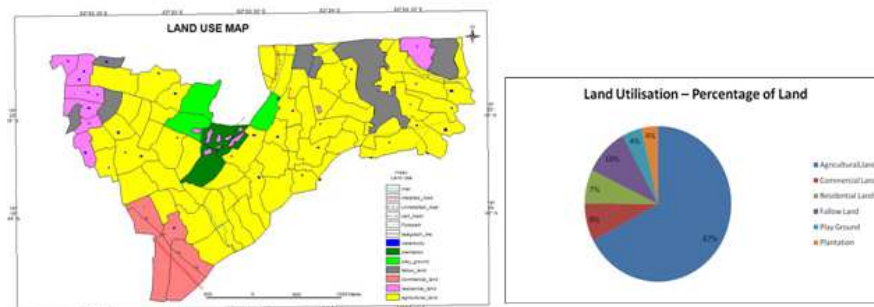
Figure 4: Effect of Hudhud at Padmapuram Village

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Land Utilization

Land use study is very significant element in our field report. Every area has specific land use pattern. From the land use pattern one can easily understand about the nature of the study area. The land use map has been prepared through minute observation over the entire study area. The land utilization map has been represented in figure. 5. Along the main

metalled road a number of commercial plots like hotels and miscellaneous shops have been marked. Most of the built-up areas are agglomerated along the Southern and north-western peripheries. Some parks and play grounds are found in the north-central part of the village among those Padmapuram garden is very much familiar to the outsiders. Most of the surrounding areas fall under agricultural land. Some of the remaining lands are identified as fallow land while others are preserved for grazing. Figure.5 shows the percentage of area under different types of land use. 67% of the total land comes under agricultural sectors while 10% land is under fallow and grazing land. Commercial and residential lands occupy almost equal percentage (8% and 7% respectively) of the total land area. Besides, park and playground have also occupied almost equal land area percentage (4% of the total land)). Percentage of water body is quite negligible (<1%).



**Figure 5: Land Use Map and Percentage of Land Utilisation (Source: Primary Data)**



**Figure 6: Different Categories of Land Utilisation**

### Agriculture and Animal Husbandry

Being a rural area, agriculture and animal husbandry is the economic mainstay of the local inhabitants. Padmapuram village of Araku valley has become famous for its coffee cultivation during the past 10-15 years and in the years to come it will also be recognized as a large bio-dynamic farming zone. Today the focus of the farming system has only been on chemical agriculture, or organic agriculture, but the future belongs to bio-dynamic agriculture which preserves bio-diversity and takes care of soil nutrition. Actually bio-dynamic farming would produce organic food, improve quality and yields of crops as well and enrich soil.

Coffee and cash crops were bringing prosperity to the region, but there was also the danger that with prosperity consumerist trends may gain ground, and that would be detrimental to the natural habitat of the tribal people and their

nutrition may also suffer. After the devastation of Hudhud cyclone in the valley a massive afforestation drive would be taken up to make up for the lost green cover. Figure.7 presents the agricultural scenario of the village. Normal cultivated area is 1972.35 acres in which only 600.05 acres are now under cultivation. Main crop is paddy. The total area under paddy cultivation is 309 acres while the alternate crops occupy 328 acre. Moreover, seed for alternate crop is supplied in the village and 50% subsidy is given for the seeds. Agricultural loans are given for 20% of the total crops. The main market of the village primarily depends upon cultivation. There are only two fair price shops in the study area, i.e. Yandapallivalasa and Ranajilleda. White card, Antyodaya Anna Yojana card (AAY card) and Annapurna card are distributed among the local inhabitants. Out of 30 days the fair price shops are kept open for 18 days. There is a huge gap between dealer price and open market price for essential commodities like rice, sugar, oil, kerosene oil and redgram. Animal husbandry and livestock take an important role of the village area. Figure.7 also shows the number of different types of livestock by simple bar graph. Milk is the most popular animal product followed by butter and egg. Nearest cattle market of the village is Araku. Fodder seeds are provided from the agricultural office. Green grass and dry grass are important among the fodder.

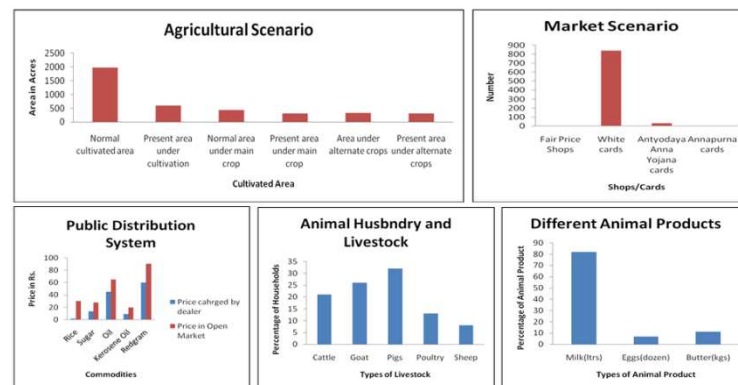


Figure 7: Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (Source: Primary Data)



Figure 8: Agricultural System

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE LOCAL PEOPLE

### Demographic and Health Profile

Demographic profile of Padmapuram village is quite significant. Figure.9a shows the different categories of population. It is the most significant fact that scheduled tribe population is almost 95% of the total population. General and

scheduled caste categories have too negligible percentage (4% and 1% respectively). Figure.9 presents an age-sex composition based on a comparative method. One of the reasons is that among the new born child, number of female is more compare to the male. Moreover, life expectancy in female population is also greater than the male population and rate of out migration is also more among the male population which may be an important indicator.

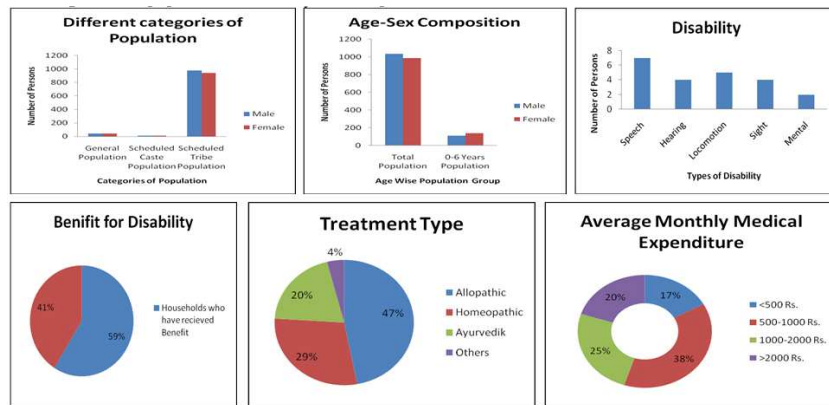
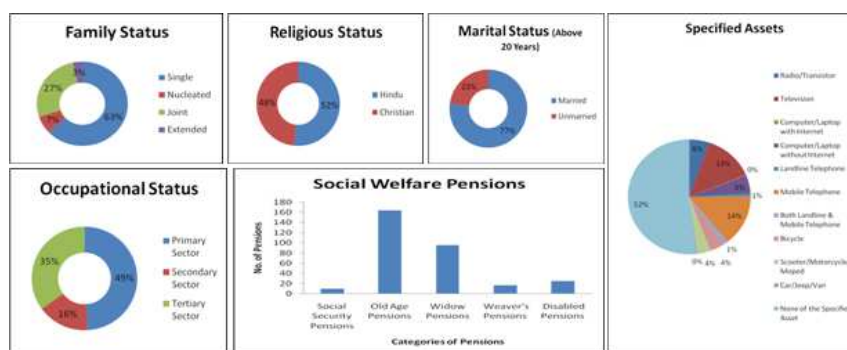


Figure 9: Demographic and Health Profile (Source: Primary Data)

Overall health status of the village is below average. A number of disabilities have been identified such as speech, hearing, locomotion, sight and mental disability. Poor food quality is one of the significant reasons behind the disability. Almost half of the population believes in allopathic treatment. Homeopathic and ayurvedic treatment are also running as parallel treatment (29% and 20% respectively). Government and some Non government organisation provide some beneficiary scheme for the poor local inhabitants. 59% of the households have directly been benefitted. Figure.9 also reflects the average monthly medical expenditure of the local people. 20% of the population expenses more than Rs. 2000/- per month for medical treatment.

**Social Status**

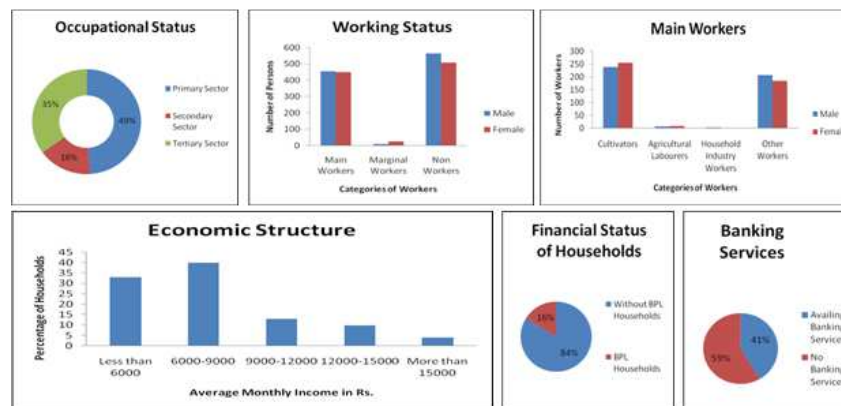
Single family status is dominant over the entire village (63%) followed by joint family. Hindu and Christian population have shared almost equal percentage in the village. In the above 20 years of age category, only 23% of the total population is remained unmarried. It indicates the general characteristic of a tribal village. Primary sector is the most dominant economic activity. There is also some evidence have been found regarding social welfare pensions, i.e., social security pension, old age pension, widow pension, weaver's pension, disabled pension etc. The people of Padmapuram village enjoy a number of specified assets. Television, computer, mobile and two-wheeler vehicles are most significant among the assets. The overview of social status of the village is shown in Figure. 10.



**Figure 10: Social Status (Source: Primary Data)**

### Economic Status

It can be said from the analytical study that the village is not very affluent in terms of economy. Cultivators and other workers share the maximum number of workers of the village (Figure. 11). 41% people avail the banking service facility which may be considered as an insignificant proportion in terms of financial advancement. Figure.11 also shows the working status of the local people. In main workers category proportion of male and female population are almost same. Proportionately more female are engaged as marginal workers while percentage of male is higher in non-workers category. More local inhabitants are engaged in primary activities compare to the others. But the recent trend shows that tertiary sector is growing in an increasing rate. According to average monthly income, 73% of the total population earn below Rs. 9000 per month and 4% have a monthly income of more than Rs. 15000. Hence, the financial condition of the villagers is above average compare to the national figure. Among the villagers only 16% households come under below poverty level. Hence, one can say that the overall economic status of the village is in improving stage.



**Figure 11: Economic Status (Source: Primary Data)**

### Educational Scenario

The overall educational scenario of the study area is not quite satisfactory. Male and female literacy rate of the study area are 67.89% and 35.83% respectively. It shows a huge gender inequality of literacy among the villagers where male population enjoys a much higher status in terms of literacy. To obtain the educational status, number of persons has been divided into several groups of educational status like primary, junior high, secondary, higher secondary, graduate, post graduate and nursing or technical. Primary, junior high, secondary and graduate level holders occupy major proportion of the total population. It is shown by radar chart. The radar chart is a chart and/or plot that consist of a sequence of equi-angular spokes, called radii, with each spoke representing one of the variables. The data length of a spoke is proportional to the magnitude of the variable for the data point relative to the maximum magnitude of the variable across all data points. A line is drawn connecting the data values for each spoke. Radar charts are a useful way to display multivariate observations with an arbitrary number of variables.



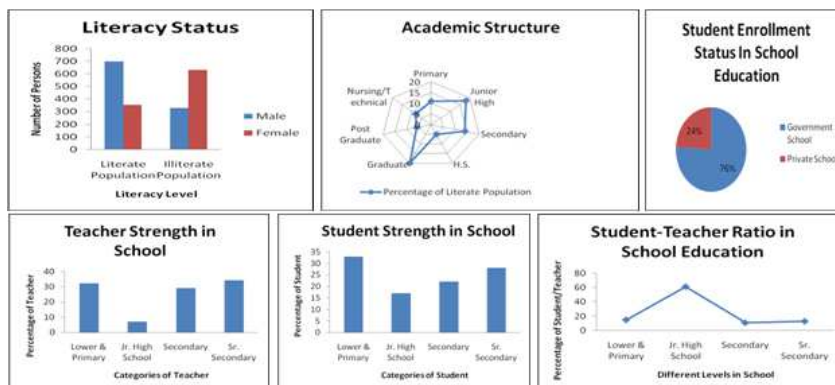


Figure 12: Educational Status (Source: Primary Data)

Figure.12 also reveals the teacher and student strength of school education. Primary and senior secondary level has more teacher and student compare to the junior high and high school. It also presents student-teacher ratio in different levels of school education. It is clear from the diagram that in junior high school this ratio is 61 which must be reduced. But, in case of the lower and primary, secondary and senior secondary level, this ratio is 15, 11 and 13 respectively which shows a quite satisfactory result. The diagram depicts student enrollment status in school education. 76% households prefer government school more and enroll their kids in the government school. R.C.M. Aided Elementary School, St. Josephs Junior College, St. Josephs High School are famous educational institution of the village. Total number of government schools in the village is 11. Approximately 912 girls and 672 boys are studying in their school. There are only 19 teachers are available. 80% of the student is passed the secondary examination. Rice, gram, egg are the most important items given in mid-day meals. Text books for all subjects are given in the school. Besides, 134 children are going to Anganwadi centres. Nearest hostels are found in Yandapallivalasa and Padmapuram. 65% of the village student is studying in hostel.

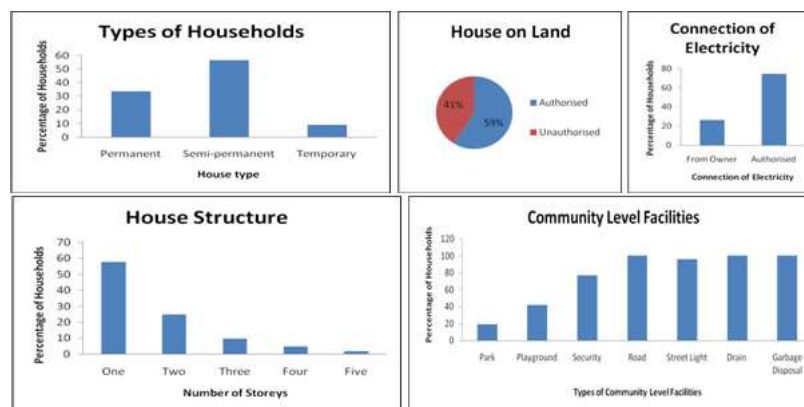


Photograph 12: Educational Profile

**Household Status**

Household status of the local inhabitants has been studied and it is reflected in the figure. 14. There is mainly three types of houses, i.e., permanent, semi-permanent and temporary. Permanent houses refer to those houses whose walls & roofs are made of pucca materials, i.e., where burnt bricks, G.I. Sheets or other metal sheets, stone, cement, concrete is

used for wall and tiles, slate, shingle, corrugated iron, zinc or other metal sheets, asbestos sheets, bricks, lime and stone and RBC/RCC concrete are used for roof. Semi permanent houses refer to those houses made of other types of materials. Temporary houses refer to those houses having wall and roofs made of Kutcha materials, i.e., where, grass, leaves, reeds, bamboo, mud and unburnt bricks are used for the construction of walls and grass, leaves, reeds, bamboo thatch, mud, unburnt bricks and wood etc. are used for roofs. Semi-permanent types of house is more common (>55%) among the local people. 59% of the land property is authorized and rest of the houses are unauthorized. Approximately 70% houses used authorized electricity and remaining houses used the electricity from the land owners. In the study area, one or two storeyed house is more common than multi-storeyed building. It is a symbolic feature of rural area. Various types of community level facilities are also noticed in the village, i.e., park, playground, security, road, street light, drain, garbage disposal etc.



**Figure 14: Household Status (Source: Primary Data)**

Cooking status of the households has been shown in figure. 16 which reveal the fact that more than 70% houses have kitchen facility whether it is available inside or outside the houses. Firewood is the most common (90%) type of fuel used in cooking. Sources of drinking water to the local inhabitants have also been shown in the figure. 16. Well (34%) and spring (25%) are the two most common sources. There is a serious lacking in latrine facility. 89% of the households use open latrine which must be decreased. Current electricity (65%) and kerosene (32%) are the two major sources of lighting. Load shading is a very common phenomenon that we often faced. Apart from that, network connection of mobile phone is literally poor in the village. Moreover, Most of households have no such type of drainage connectivity for waste water outlet. These are the serious drawbacks of the village.



Figure 15: Rural House Types - Padmapuram Village

Figure.16 also indicates the poor drainage facility for the households as 63% houses face open surface drain instead of underground drain. But more than 60% households have adequate water supply which is really a good sign. Tap water (>65%) is the most common source of normal water supply (excluding drinking water). As the percentage of unmetalled road is much greater the road condition is very much affected by waterlogged or muddy condition in rainy season. 22% of roads come under water logged condition, 37% is muddy and remaining 41% is others. Besides, 48% of the roads are cleaned daily while 52% are occasionally cleaned. Regular garbage clearance is observed for 44% households. 74% of the garbage disposal centres are organized.

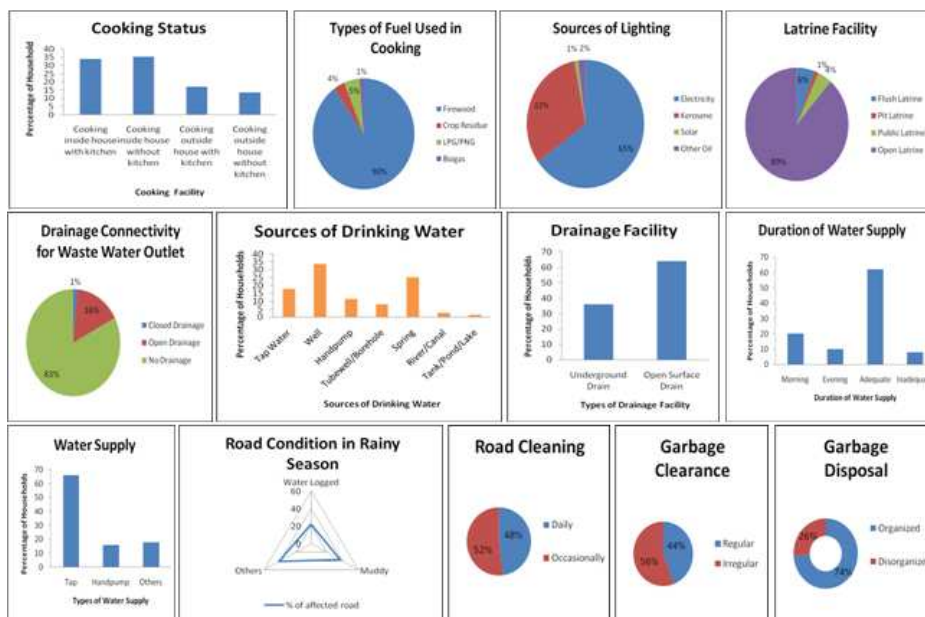


Figure 16: Household Condition (Source: Primary Data)



Traditional Lifestyle of Tribal People

**Figure 17: Traditional Lifestyle of Tribal People**

## CONCLUSIONS

Padmapuram is a village of Araku Valley, a leading tourist destination of Andhra Pradesh. Padmapuram garden is a place of tourist attraction. Besides, coffee cultivation is one of the economic activities of the village. Some mining activities are also observed in the village. Being a tribal locality the village is still suffering from a number of civic amenities like power, water, medical service, higher education and poor road condition. Agriculture is the main occupation of the local inhabitants. But, the village has a tremendous scope to emerge as a centre of tourist attraction because of its excellent natural beauty.

## REFERENCES

1. Agricultural Department, Araku Valley, Andhra Pradesh
2. District Census handbook, Visakhapatnam District, Andhra Pradesh, (2011).
3. G. Myrdal, Economic Theory of Underdevelopment-Duckworth (1957).
4. Indian Meteorological Department, New Delhi
5. Irrigation Engineering Division, Araku Valley (2013). Production Year Book
6. G.D. Thomson, a Regional System Approach (1971).