

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS INFLUENCE LIFE, LIVELIHOODS AND CULTURE AMONG THE PRIMITIVE KOTA TRIBES IN THE NILGIRIS DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU - AN ASSESSMENT**

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**Abstract**

The Kotas are a tiny indigenous primitive tribal group in the Nilgiri Hills and are classified as a Scheduled Tribe in Tamil Nadu. They have become well-known in urban areas under the name Kov and have successfully made the shift from being servants to heads of postmasters, physicians, government employees, and bankers. Their versatility and choice to stay away from service connections with Badagas and Todas in response to their perceived mistreatment are credited with their success in contemporary Indian contexts. Tamil Nadu's Kota tribes relocated to the Nilgiris Hills, creating the first settlement called Kollimalai near Ketti village. The Kota-Giri, an exogamous clan, lived in Nilgiris, a traditional Indian farming village with mud and brick walls. They rely on cows for sustenance and grow crops like beans, potatoes, and carrots, using chemical fertilizers carelessly. Despite being vegans, they raise animals and consume rice, mutton, or chicken as offerings. A Hindu clan called Kotas works in skilled trades including Silversmithing, Blacksmithing, and making musical instruments. In temples, silver jewelry is worn, and deities connected to Shiva are worshipped. They believe in science, practice conventional medicine, and are afraid of Kurumbas and Irulas because of their magic.

This study employs a theoretical and conversational framework, ethnographic and descriptive techniques, and secondary sources for objectivity and validity to analyze the prehistoric Kota tribal affairs in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. Despite what was said earlier, the overarching objective of this study is to investigate, from a range of theoretical vantage points, how social and economic conditions affect life, livelihoods, and culture among the Kota Tribe in the Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu. This viewpoint makes the current issue relevant in terms of both history and the economy, and it also helps to increase its recognition as an essential demand.

**Keywords:** Kotas, Primitive Tribal Group, Silversmithing, Blacksmithing, Tribal Affairs, Culture, Livelihoods, Social and Economic Conditions.

**Theme of the article**

In Tamil Nadu's Nilgiris district, there is a significant tribal population with unique social structures, marital practices, and linguistic groups. The major ethnic groups, which are distributed throughout various altitudinal regions, include Todas, Kota, Kurumba, Irula, Kattunayaka, and Paniya. The Kotas are an ethnic group native to the Nilgiris mountain range in Tamil Nadu, India. They also go by the names Kothar or Kov. They are one of the numerous tribes that inhabit the area. The Todas, Irulas, and Kurumbas are the others. Since the early 19th century, Todas and Kotas have been the focus of extensive anthropological, linguistic, and genetic study. The study of Todas and Kotas has also had a significant impact on the growth of anthropology. Kotas have lived in seven villages for the past 160 years and have never numbered more than 2050 as a community. People have continued to lead a multi-talented existence as musicians for other groups as well as potters, farmers, leather makers, carpenters, and black smiths. They have taken advantage of educational opportunities since the British colonial era, improved their socioeconomic standing, and are no longer dependent on the conventional services offered to make a living. They have been referred to as a caste by certain anthropologists rather than a tribe or an ethnic community.

The Dravidian language family includes the Kotas' own distinct language, which split off

from the South Dravidian subfamily sometime in the first century BCE. Murray Barnson Emeneau, a pioneer in the study of Dravidian linguistics, examined their language in depth. Their social structures were different from the traditional cultural standards of India and shared some traits with the Todas and other tribal groups in the surrounding state of Kerala as well as the well-known Nair caste. Wherever possible, it was influenced by fraternal polygyny. In contrast to Hinduism, Kota religion held that both a female deity and a man deity were not anthropomorphic.

Many popular Hindu deities have been incorporated into the Kota pantheon since the 1940s, and Tamil-style temples have been constructed to facilitate their devotion. They've used specialized groups of priests to worship their gods on the group's behalf. They are classified as a scheduled tribe (ST) by the Indian government, which is a term used for indigenous tribal communities in India that are typically less well-off than the general population. A Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) designation has also been given to them based on a few socioeconomic and demographic factors. The Kotas, however, are a very prosperous tribe that supports itself through farming, medicine, postmasterships, and by taking advantage of any work opportunities in the public and private sectors. Numerous archaeologists and members of the local community view Kotas as a service caste brought to the Nilgiris to serve others, while Kotas view themselves as the region's original occupants and refuse to accept the servile status. The term "Kota" is one used by outsiders to refer to the group; Kotas call themselves "Kov." The name has several different interpretations, but according to Emeneau, ko-v denoted a male potter and ko-ty a female potter. Since the 1930s, Kotas have changed their traditional connections away from serving other so-called high prestige ethnic groups and raised their socioeconomic positions. They continue to follow their old traditions.

### **Statement of the problem**

The Kotas are an ethnic group native to the Nilgiris mountain range in Tamil Nadu, India. They also go by the names Kothar or Kov. They are one of the numerous tribes that inhabit the area. The Kotas often raise enough beans, potatoes, and carrots to meet their requirements because they are farmers. The market is where we buy rice and other veggies. In the past, the Kotas either raised millet or depended on their Badaganeighbours to provide them with regular grain supplies in exchange for their services. Even though they reside in a nearby city, the majority of Kotas now own property and cultivate tea, which sells for more than four times the price of any other cash crop. The Kotas utilize chemical fertilizers without any thought to the implications on their health or the environment, like the majority of Indian farmers. The buffalo and cows kept by Kotas are used to make milk, butter, and curds; nevertheless, neither the buffalo nor the cows are ever raised for food or sacrifice. There are frequently domestic cats and dogs, as well as poultry, in the village. Usually, other animals raised for food are purchased. There have also been reports of sheep farming and beekeeping. The Italian millet variety known as vatamk was a traditional mainstay of the Kota people. Today, this dish is a requirement for ceremonial events, but Kotas still prefer rice on a regular basis.

Rarely are the popular light meals known as idlis and dosas in the south of India provided. Two to three meals of rice (or another grain) accompanied by udk, a thick soup of pulses and vegetables in a tamarind broth spiced with chiles, salt, and other Common south Indian spices, make up the average day's menu. Omelets, fruits, papadams (fried or grilled flatbread comparable to tortillas), and pickles are occasionally served in addition to meals, especially when guests are in attendance. The Kotas rarely eat beef while not being vegans. Some of the Hindu deities the Kotas have incorporated into their communities get frequent offerings of mutton or chicken. When individuals frequently eat leaves and other greenery when out strolling or working in the fields, raw veggies are rarely consumed at meals. Although it is not as pervasive as it is among some of the other neighbouring tribes, alcohol consumption is an issue in some Kota communities. Opium use is widespread yet discreet. The tribes receive opium handouts from the government, but clandestine cultivation also takes place. There is hardly no use of additional drugs. It's typical to smoke cigarettes and beedis, which are little cigarettes rolled in leaves.

While chewing tobacco is provided during particular festival occasions, very few people do it

on a regular basis. Blacksmithing, Silversmithing, roof thatching, basket making, wood and leatherworking, and the creation of musical instruments are all skilled trades practised by Kota men. With some exceptions made for priests, these abilities are frequently passed down from father to son. Women create pottery for both home and religious uses. Market-purchased iron is used to make hand-carved rifle butts and double-reed instruments by some artists. Drums, tabatk, e-rtabatk, kinvar, and do-par are constructed from goat and ox hides, and baskets can be bought from marketplaces or merchants. There are no records of Kotas converting to any other faith; they are Hindus. They revere Shiva-related deities A-yno-r (father deity) and Amno-r (mother goddess). The temples of the Kota deities are decorated with silver jewellery despite the lack of anthropomorphic representations of them.

The Hindu gods Krishna, Rangarama, Munisvara, Badrakaliamman, and Mariamman each had their own temples built in their honour. The Kotas have traditional treatments for illnesses like boils, fractured bones, and fatigue. Because the environment of the Nilgiri region has undergone significant change over the past 50 years, many of the plants utilized in Kota medicine are becoming increasingly difficult to locate. Because allopathic medicine is linked to the West, science, and upward mobility, Kotas, like many educated Indians, has access to it and puts their trust in it. Nowadays, it appears that there is no system of "faith" healing, although there are still tales of various maladies that were actually indications that a deity wanted to communicate with the patient, wished for the construction of a temple, or had some other wish. The Kurumbas and Irulas have always been dreaded by Kotas for their sorcery, despite the fact that they do not consider themselves to be magicians. They continue to think of themselves as the "guinea pigs" Kurumba sorcerers use to test their spells. This study article's significant purpose is to provide a thorough examination of these circumstances from the conception viewpoints, taking into consideration how social and economic circumstances influence life, livelihoods, and culture among the Kota Tribe in the Nilgiris District of Tamil Nadu. It does this by incorporating statistics from a variety of secondary sources as well as information on statistics that are pertinent to the article's theme.

### **Methodology of the article**

The study was conducted in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu because of its sizable tribal population. The Kotagiri and Udhagamandalam blocks were chosen due to the size of their tribal people. Both three revenue-generating villages from the Kotagiri block and three from the Udhagamandalam block were chosen. This research focuses on historical, analytical, interpretive, diagnostic, and descriptive aspects using a theoretical and conversational methodology. A variety of studies are produced by the Tamil Nadu government's department of tribal affairs that offer details on socioeconomic changes as well as the lifestyle, customs, and culture of primitive tribal groups in the Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. In addition to the typical archival sources, the researcher has also used a variety of alternative techniques to collect data. Secondary sources of statistical data and knowledge will be used in this research investigation. The researcher participated in a variety of social activities that tribal members engaged in as participant observers. After gathering the data from secondary sources, the researcher organized it with the goal of boosting the study's objectivity and validity. The second-hand information is derived from pertinent books that can be found in various libraries relating to the theme of the study. This study uses secondary materials and literature reviews from various libraries to analyze theories and points of view on a subject through observation and theoretical inquiry.

### **Objective of the article**

The main objective of this research article is to theoretically investigate how social and economic conditions affect life, livelihoods, and culture among the Primitive Kota Tribes in Tamil Nadu's Nilgiris District, while also taking into account secondary sources of information and statistical data that are currently crucial to this area of research assessment.

### **Language of the Kota Tribe**

The "Ko-v Ma-nt" dialect of Nilgiris, used by the Kota tribe and closely linked to Toda, is an extremely ancient and crude language. There are roughly 2500 Kota tribal members. The root word "Ko" in Dravidian, which means "Mountain," is where the name "Kota" came from. In Kota, the settlement is referred to as Kokkal. The black cow that guided the Kotas across the Nilgiris and pointed with her hoof where to find each hamlet is thought to have helped decide the settlement pattern. This footprint serves as a moral centre of gravity and is significant for ritualistic activities like dancing and making music.

### **Kota Tribe clothes**

Men and women wear the "varad," a traditional Kota garment that resembles a white blanket. Male attire consists of a single piece of coarse white fabric called kir. Traditional ear ornaments, known as kadk, are worn by both men and women.

### **Colonization of the Kota Tribe**

The Kota Tribe's home is split into living and sleeping areas. The home's three main rooms are the front room, which has a raised platform for sitting and sleeping on the left and a hole in the floor for pounding, the kitchen, which is to the front room's right and has a wood burner along the wall opposite the arched entry, and the bathroom in the back. Each room and its components have unique names and purposes. The walls have designated areas for oil lamps, and the rafters above the kitchen are frequently used to store wood and other things.

### **Kota Tribe Caste System**

The Kota Tribe does not have castes, but instead is separated into Keris, or streets, such as Kilker, Naduker, Pibberker, Aker, or Gager. Since they are considered to be members of the same family, those who belong to the same keris do not intermarry. The Kotas love getting married in their own community. They regularly marry daughters of the mother's brother and daughters of the father, two different cross-cousin unions. The Kota tribal council, often known as "Koot" or "kut," upholds local customs. Gotgarin (pittakar), the village headman of Kota, is in charge of the community. The "Gotgarin" from Menar served as the village's chief. Every time a dispute developed, the gotgarin would convene a "kut" conference with the village elders and select the best course of action. In a hamlet, the gotgarin and elders decide on festival dates and how to handle issues that arise. The village "kut" handles local decisions on Kota cultural needs even while ordinary justice is handled by the Indian judicial system.

### **Religion of the Kota Tribe**

The Kota people identify as Hindus. Aynor Kamatraya and Amnor Kamatiswari are the two most important deities of Kota. One female goddess and two male gods are present. The mother goddess is thought to have been wed to two sibling gods. Each village's designated Kota religious site is a sizable square with two pentagonal sheds in the middle that is surrounded by a three-foot-high wall made of loose stones. Open to the front and back, with some rudimentary circles and other figures drawn on the stone posts that support them. They don't worship any kind of image. The temples are situated next to the Kota hamlet in a different religious complex.

### **Tribe of Kota Culture**

The Kota Tribe is a skilled craftsman; they are masters of pottery and terracotta art. The Kotas are also skilled carpenters, rope and umbrella manufacturers, gold and silversmiths, blacksmiths, and goldsmiths. The women perform household chores, work in the fields, bring water, gather wood for the fire, manufacture baskets, and create earthenware. Only a few families currently make a living using these skills. The majority of Kotas works in agriculture and grow foods such as potatoes, wheat, amaranth, samai, koral, mustard, and onions. Fine hand-carved double-reed instruments (kol) and rifle butts were manufactured by Kota artists. For some ceremonial occasions, the "kik" baskets that the Kota women manufacture are required. Their musical instruments, the kol (double reed), tabatk (frame drum or tambattai in Tamil), Dobar and Kinvar (cylindrical drums), and kob (brass horn), are made from the hides of goats and oxen. Their long, curved kob horns were once made of buffalo horn.

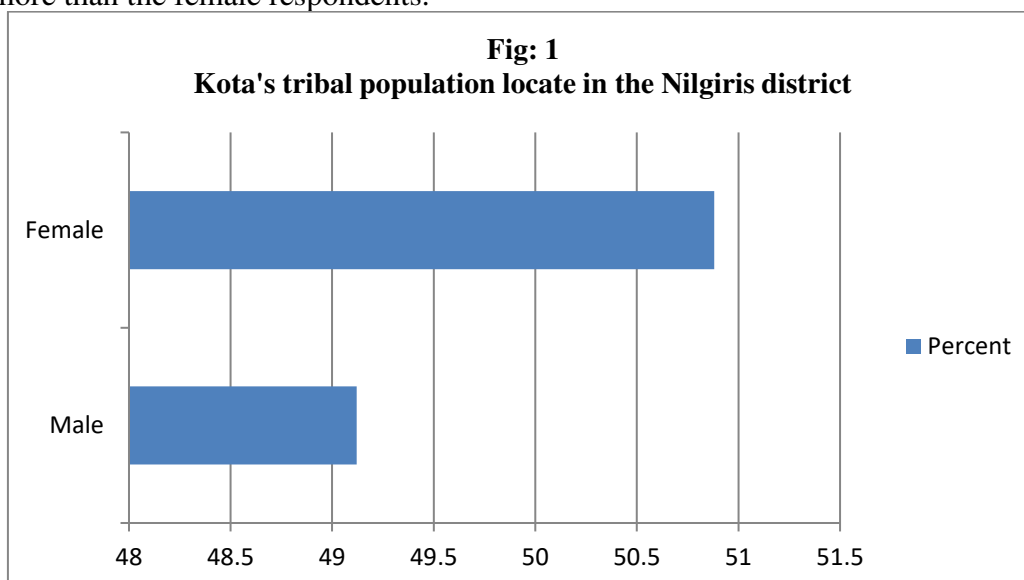
During tribal festivals and to celebrate life cycle rites, the Kota Tribe typically dances to the rhythm of their music. They perform the Kalcooseaat, Thiriganaat, Pippaalaat, and Koinaat dancing styles. For the festivals and funerals of the Badaga people as well as the Toda tribe, the Kotas provide the band. The musicians from Kota are paid by the Todas with rice and buffalo meat. Men always dance before women, and a day is set aside for women's singing and dancing at the end of larger celebrations.

**Table - 1**  
**Kota's tribal population locate in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular | Frequency   | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Male       | 673         | 49.12         | 49.12              |
| 2.           | Female     | 697         | 50.88         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>1370</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

Table 1 shows that of the 1370 respondents, men made up about 49.12 percent, while women made up less than 50.88 percent. The results were as follows because the male respondents collaborated more than the female respondents.



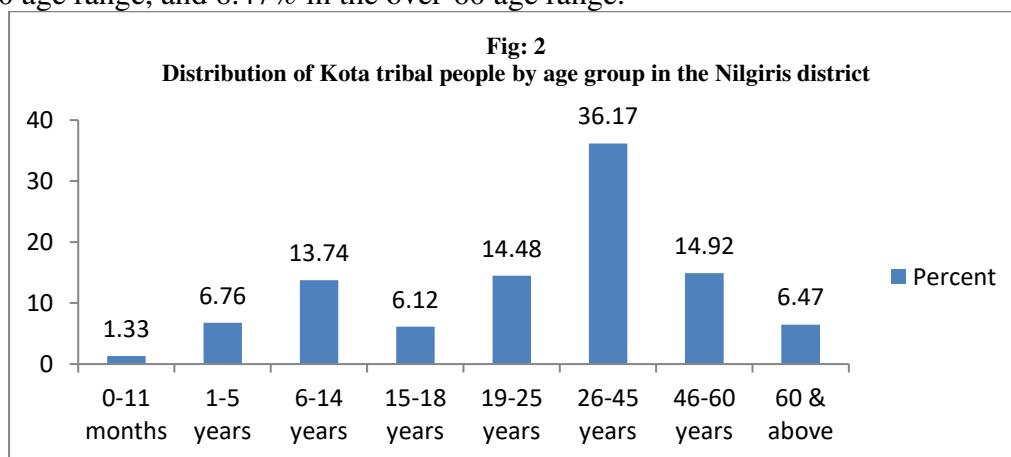
**Table - 2**  
**Distribution of Kota tribal people by age group in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular  | Frequency   | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | 0-11 months | 27          | 1.33          | 1.33               |
| 2.           | 1-5 years   | 137         | 6.76          | 8.09               |
| 3.           | 6-14 years  | 278         | 13.74         | 21.83              |
| 4.           | 15-18 years | 124         | 6.12          | 27.95              |
| 5.           | 19-25 years | 293         | 14.48         | 42.43              |
| 6.           | 26-45 years | 732         | 36.17         | 78.60              |
| 7.           | 46-60 years | 302         | 14.92         | 93.52              |
| 8.           | 60 & above  | 131         | 6.47          | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |             | <b>2024</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The facts and statistical statistics in table -2 provide a thorough explanation of the distribution of Kota in the study region by age groups. One can observe that there are 1.33% of people in the 0 to 11-month age range, 6.67% in the 1 to 5 age range, 13.74% in the 6 to 14 age range, 6.12% in the 15

to 18 age range, 14.48% in the 19 to 25 age range, 36.17% in the 26 to 45 age range, 14.92% in the 46 to 60 age range, and 6.47% in the over-60 age range.

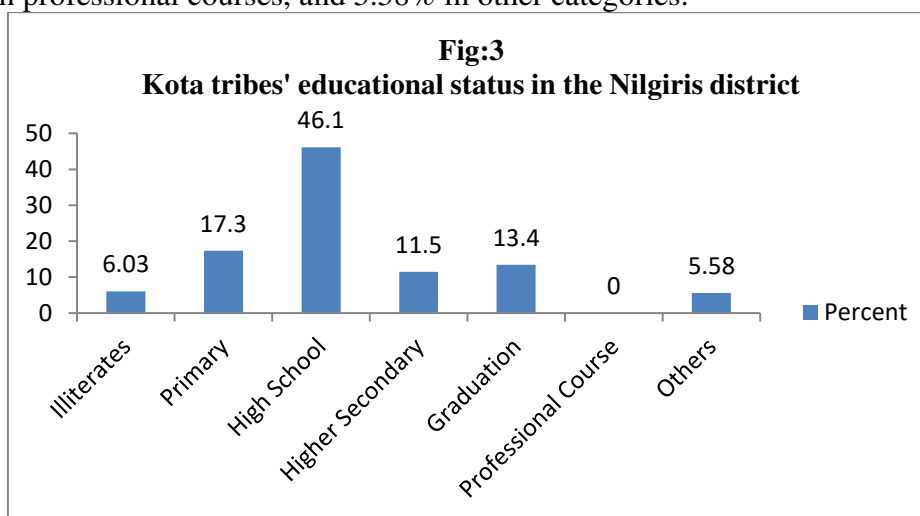


**Table - 3**  
**Kota tribes' educational status in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular          | Frequency   | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Illiterates         | 122         | 6.03          | 6.03               |
| 2.           | Primary             | 351         | 17.30         | 23.33              |
| 3.           | High School         | 933         | 46.10         | 69.43              |
| 4.           | Higher Secondary    | 233         | 11.50         | 80.93              |
| 5.           | Graduation          | 272         | 13.40         | 94.33              |
| 6.           | Professional Course | 00          | 0.00          | 94.33              |
| 7.           | Others              | 113         | 5.58          | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |                     | <b>2024</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources:** Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.

The material and statistical data in table – 3, provide a thorough explanation of Kota's educational status in the research area. It is clear that there are 6.03% illiterates, 17.30% in primary school, 46.10 percent in high school, 11.50 percent in higher secondary, 13.40 percent in graduation, 0.00 percent in professional courses, and 5.58% in other categories.

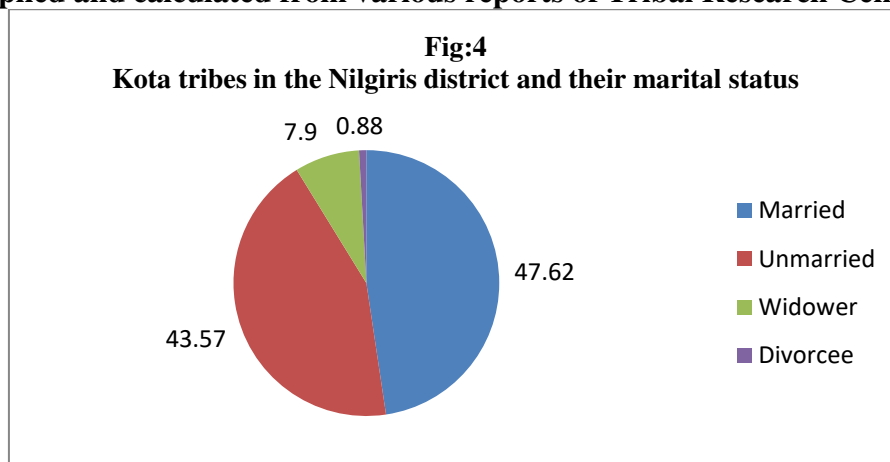


**Table- 4**  
**Kota tribes in the Nilgiris district and their marital status**

| S.No. | Particular | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|-------|------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 1.    | Married    | 964       | 47.62   | 47.62              |
| 2.    | Unmarried  | 882       | 43.57   | 91.19              |

|              |                     |             |               |        |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------|--------|
| 3.           | Widower / Widow     | 160         | 7.90          | 90.09  |
| 4.           | Divorcee/ Separated | 18          | 0.88          | 100.00 |
| <b>Total</b> |                     | <b>2024</b> | <b>100.00</b> |        |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**



The respondents' marital status is shown in the previous table to be 47.62% married, 43.57% single, 7.90% widower or widow, and 0.88 percent divorced or legally separated.

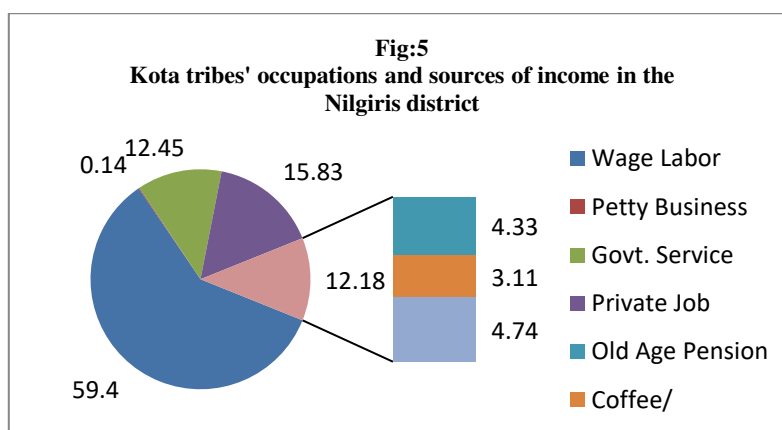
**Table - 5**

**Kota tribes' occupations and sources of income in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular             | Frequency  | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Wage Labor             | 439        | 59.40         | 59.40              |
| 2.           | Petty Business         | 1          | 0.14          | 59.54              |
| 3.           | Govt. Service          | 92         | 12.45         | 71.99              |
| 4.           | Private Job            | 117        | 15.83         | 87.82              |
| 5.           | Old Age Pension        | 32         | 4.33          | 92.15              |
| 6.           | Coffee/ Tea Plantation | 23         | 3.11          | 95.26              |
| 7.           | Other                  | 35         | 4.74          | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |                        | <b>739</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

Source of income refers to the way in which a person earns their money. It can include wages or salaries earned from a job, profits earned from a business or investments, rental income from property ownership, royalties earned from creative works, and other forms of income. According to the aforementioned statistics, 59.40% of survey participants identify as wage labourers, while 0.14 percent work for small businesses, 12.45 percent are employed by the government, 15.8 percent work in the private sector, and 4.3 percent receive an old age pension, followed by 3.1 percent who work on coffee or tea plantations and other 4.7 percent.

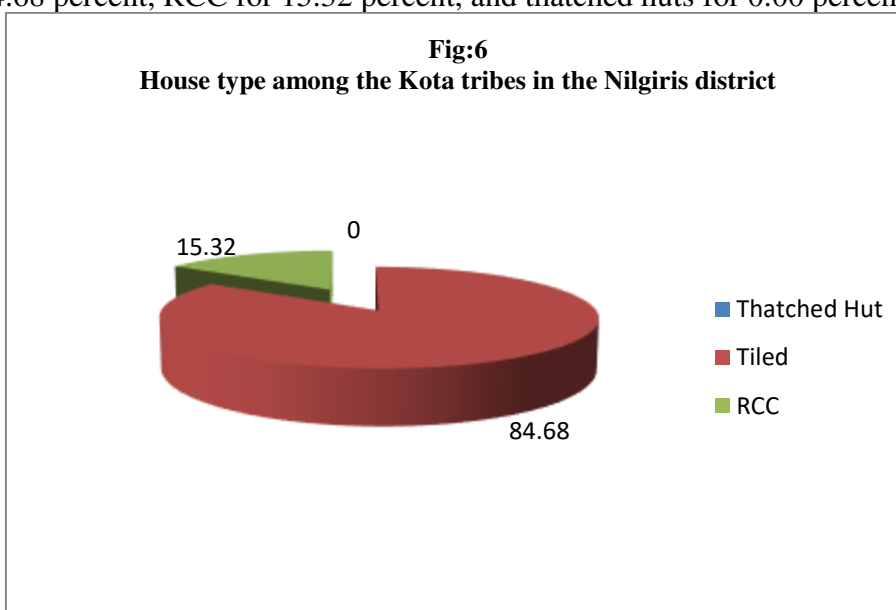


**Table - 6**  
**House type among the Kota tribes in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular   | Frequency  | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|--------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Thatched Hut | 0          | 0.00          | 0.00               |
| 2.           | Tiled        | 431        | 84.68         | 84.68              |
| 3.           | RCC          | 78         | 15.32         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |              | <b>509</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

Housing provides shelter, obviously, but it also serves other needs in the study area. Housing is a location for business and provides other intangible emotional and cultural benefits. As in the mainstream of the society, housing activities in Primitive Kota Tribal areas have economic benefits beyond the settlements. The facts and statistics data in table – 6, provide a thorough explanation of the Kota home types in the study region. As can be observed, of all dwelling types, tiled housing accounts for 84.68 percent, RCC for 15.32 percent, and thatched huts for 0.00 percent.

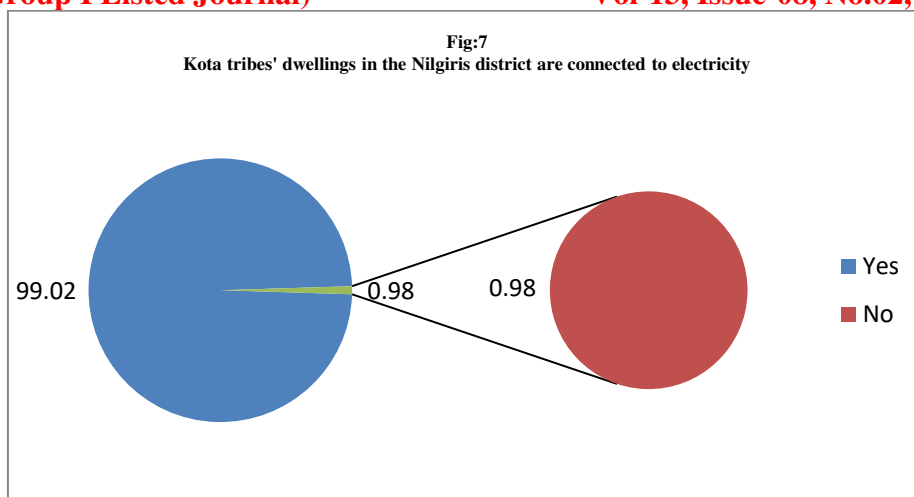


**Table - 7**  
**Kota tribes' dwellings in the Nilgiris district are connected to electricity**

| S.No.        | Particular | Frequency  | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Yes        | 504        | 99.02         | 99.02              |
| 2.           | No         | 05         | 0.98          | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>509</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The information and statistical data in table – 7, provide a detailed explanation of the facts regarding the availability of electricity for homes in the Kota villages within the study region. As can be seen, 0.98 percent of households do not have an electricity connection, compared to 99.02 percent of households.



**Table - 8**

**Kota tribes' drinking water source in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular | Frequency  | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Tap        | 509        | 100.00        | 100.00             |
| 2.           | Hand Pump  | 00         | 0.00          | 0.00               |
| 3.           | Well       | 00         | 0.00          | 0.00               |
| 4.           | Stream     | 00         | 0.00          | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>509</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty**

The information and statistical statistics in table – 8, provide a detailed explanation of Kota's drinking water in the study region. As can be observed, Kota's drinking water, which is located in the Nilgiris district, is 100 percent from the tap.

**Table - 9**

**Dwellings of the Kota tribes in the Nilgiris district have utilization of toilets**

| S.No.        | Particular               | Frequency  | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Toilet attached          | 28         | 5.50          | 5.50               |
| 2.           | Community toilet         | 256        | 50.29         | 55.79              |
| 3.           | Defecation in open field | 225        | 44.21         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |                          | <b>509</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The facts and statistical data in table – 9, provide a thorough explanation of the specifics of toilet facilities available to families in the research region of Kota. As can be observed, defecation in open fields accounts for 44.21 percent of all toilet facilities, community toilets account for 50.29 percent, and attached toilets make up 5.50 percent.

**Table - 10**

**Carrying a title deed (Patta) for Kota tribes' homestead land in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular    | Frequency  | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|---------------|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Posses        | 44         | 8.64          | 8.64               |
| 2.           | Do not Posses | 465        | 91.36         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |               | <b>509</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The information and statistical statistics in table – 10, provide a detailed explanation of the possession of title deed (Patta) for Kota Homestead Land in the study region. As can be seen,

possession of the title deed is held by 8.64 percent of those who possess it, while 91.36 percent do not.

**Table -11**  
**Involvement with the Self Help Group of the Kota tribes in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular | Frequency   | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Yes        | 240         | 11.86         | 11.86              |
| 2.           | No         | 1784        | 88.14         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>2024</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The facts and statistical information in table - 11, provide a detailed explanation of the membership in Kota's self-help group in the study region. As can be observed, 11.86 percent of homes belong to a self-help group, compared to 88.14 percent of households, who do not.

**Table - 12**  
**Having a Kota tribes community certificate from the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular | Frequency   | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Yes        | 1523        | 75.25         | 75.25              |
| 2.           | No         | 501         | 25.75         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>2024</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The previous table – 12, shows that 75.25% of respondents have a Kota Community Certificate in the Nilgiris district, while 25.75 percent do not.

**Table - 13**  
**The possession of a Kota tribal ID card, a voter identification card, and a ration card from the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular  | Frequency  | Percent       |
|--------------|-------------|------------|---------------|
| 1.           | Ration card | Yes        | 482           |
|              |             | No         | 27            |
| 2.           | Voter ID    | Yes        | 501           |
|              |             | No         | 8             |
| 3.           | Tribal ID   | Yes        | 0             |
|              |             | No         | 509           |
| <b>Total</b> |             | <b>509</b> | <b>100.00</b> |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The accompanying table – 13, shows that 94.70% of respondents have a Kota, Nilgiris district, ration card, while only 5.30 percent do not. 98.43% of Kota residents in the Nilgiris district have voter IDs, while 1.57 percent do not. 0.00% of Kota residents in the Nilgiris district have a tribal ID, and 100.00% do not.

**Table - 14**  
**Accessibility of Schools for Kota tribes in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No. | Particular            | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative percent |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 1.    | Within the settlement | 4         | 57.10   | 57.10              |
| 2.    | <1 Km                 | 0         | 0.00    | 0.00               |
| 3.    | 1-5 Km                | 3         | 42.90   | 100.00             |
| 4.    | 6-10 Km               | 0         | 0.00    | 0.00               |
| 5.    | 11-15 Km              | 0         | 0.00    | 0.00               |
| 6.    | 16-20 Km              | 0         | 0.00    | 0.00               |
| 7.    | >20 Km                | 0         | 0.00    | 0.00               |

|              |          |               |  |
|--------------|----------|---------------|--|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>100.00</b> |  |
|--------------|----------|---------------|--|

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

The facts and figures in table -14, provide a comprehensive explanation of how schools are accessible in the study region. It is clear that there are 57.10% of the settlement's schools and 42.90% of them within one to five kilometres.

**Health seeking behaviour of Primitive Kota Tribes**

Review of the global literature suggests that these factors can be classified as cultural beliefs, socio-demographic status, women's autonomy, economic conditions, physical and financial accessibility, and disease pattern and health service issues. In conjunction with the development of the primary healthcare paradigm came the social concept of health sought activity. It comprises people acting to address perceived sickness, resulting in a socially constructed entity that favours a certain medical system or treatment to satisfy needs related to health.

Understanding the constraints on programs for sexual and reproductive health, epidemic control, and universal immunization aids in making judgments about public health strategies. Social capital, several strategies, and a complicated concept all influence the action of seeking healthcare. While end point models focus on treatment options and socio-cultural variables, process models emphasize how people react to illness and how they seek out healthcare. Authorities can better understand and address health-related issues thanks to these studies. Organizational, regional, economic, and cultural issues all have an impact on the standard of healthcare services. Geographical barriers, including the distance to medical services and the difficulty with transportation, are quite significant. The social setting, transportation limitations, and accessibility are all factors that affect the action of seeking healthcare.

**Behaviour of the Kota tribes with respect to health**

How the Kota people perceive health and disease affects how they seek medical care. Their traditional medical expertise is under jeopardy because of a lack of accessible herbs, social and economic hardship, and land privatization. Although governments invest in society, the outcomes are disappointing. The state of people's health is appalling, and developmental interventions have an effect on how people behave when seeking medical attention.

**Table - 15**  
**Accessibility of Kota Tribes Health Centre in Nilgiris District**

| <b>S.No.</b> | <b>Particular</b>     | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Cumulative percent</b> |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1.           | Within the settlement | 0                | 0.00           | 0.00                      |
| 2.           | <1 Km                 | 2                | 28.60          | 28.60                     |
| 3.           | 1-5 Km                | 3                | 42.90          | 71.50                     |
| 4.           | 6-10 Km               | 2                | 28.60          | 100.00                    |
| 5.           | 11-15 Km              | 0                | 0.00           | 0.00                      |
| 6.           | 16-20 Km              | 0                | 0.00           | 0.00                      |
| 7.           | >20 Km                | 0                | 0.00           | 0.00                      |
| <b>Total</b> |                       | <b>7</b>         | <b>100.00</b>  |                           |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

Tribal people are also at risk of getting chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and mental disorders. According to a study, about 13% of tribal adults have diabetes and 25% have high blood pressure. The evidence and statistics presented in table -15, provide a detailed explanation of the characteristics of Health Centre Accessibility for Kota Tribes in the Study Area. As can be observed, there are 28.60% of health centers for Kota tribes for distances less than 1 km, 42.90% for distances between 1 and 5 km, and 28.60% for distances between 6 and 10 km.

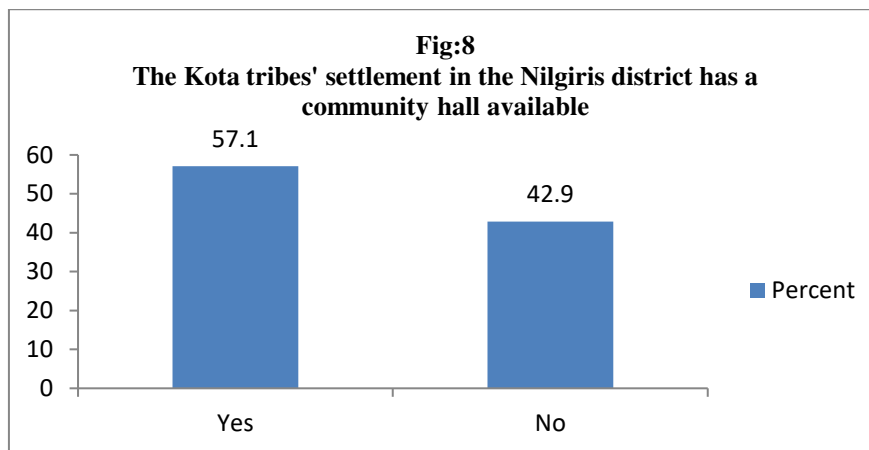
**Table - 16**

**Availability of community hall facilities in Kota tribes' settlement in the Nilgiris district**

| S.No.        | Particular | Frequency | Percent       | Cumulative percent |
|--------------|------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1.           | Yes        | 04        | 57.10         | 57.10              |
| 2.           | No         | 03        | 42.90         | 100.00             |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>07</b> | <b>100.00</b> |                    |

**Sources: Compiled and calculated from various reports of Tribal Research Centre, Ooty.**

In accordance to the previous table - 16, out of the total respondents, 57.10% of respondents from the Community Hall at the Kota Settlement in the Nilgiris area are in favours, while 42.90% are against it.



**Conclusion**

The Kotas are a tiny indigenous group in the Nilgiri Hills and are classified as a Scheduled Tribe in Tamil Nadu. They have become well-known in urban areas under the name Kov and have successfully made the shift from being servants to heads of postmasters, physicians, government employees, and bankers. Their versatility and choice to stay away from service connections with Badagas and Todas in response to their perceived mistreatment are credited with their success in contemporary Indian contexts. The Kotas' population is less than it was in 1990, when estimates put it at 1,500. The population has remained largely steady as a result of epidemics, deteriorating health, and endogamous marriage customs. Kota proverbs and ballads lament this lack of development.

The tribe currently enjoys better living and hygienic standards than other tribes, and population growth is moderate. Kotas converse with outsiders in Badaga and Tamil, two Dravidian-related languages having early links to Tamil and Malayalam. The Kotas, who are thought to be natives, were settled in the Nilgiris to serve their surrounding communities. A god instructed them in conventional techniques. These services are no longer required due to the transition to a market economy, and the increase in the Badaga population has made intimate connections unfeasible. These ancient customs are progressively being forgotten, and there is no internal drive to keep them alive. Six settlements known as Kota villages, or ko-ka-1, each have 100–300 residents living in 25–65 homes. A cow determined the settlement pattern. Traditional Kota homes featured wattle and daub roofs; however contemporary homes had gabled whitewashed cement and brick roofs.

Modern Kota homes follow a standard layout with an entryway, a small room for entertaining visitors, a main living area with a bedroom, and a kitchen with a bathroom. Since time immemorial, the Kotas have claimed ownership of territory close to their villages and have acquired new areas. Throughout Tipu Sultan's rule, they gave land taxes to his ministers. Since land frequently stayed in the family, ownership records are an invaluable source of genealogical research.

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