

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Tribal Areas in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

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Abstract—The occurrence of traditional authorities and tribal land within South Africa results in unique developmental trends and challenges. Tribal communities, typically located in rural environments, are perceived to be severely affected by poverty and poor living conditions relative to their urban counterparts. The exact extent of the socio-economic disparity between tribal and non-tribal communities is addressed in this paper. After adjustment of available census data to correspond with the delineation of tribal and non-tribal land in the KwaZulu-Natal province, seven selected socio-economic indicators were compared. The investigation revealed that although tribal areas are characterised by low employment rates and educational levels, a young population, fairly large household sizes, lower access to basic services and lower income households that are highly dependent on social grants, tribal area populations do have moderate levels of education, access to formal housing and relatively good access to services.

Keywords—KwaZulu-Natal, tribal areas, traditional authority, socio-economic, well-being.

I. INTRODUCTION

THE South Africa of today is a product of a singular and dynamic history. A notable feature of the unique South African context is the occurrence of tribal land and its associated traditional authorities within the borders of the country.

Tribal land originated from segregatory practices based on ethnicity. Traces of these segregatory principles were already evident in the 1800's [1]. A key period in South Africa's more recent history that influenced the continued existence of tribal areas is the period known as Apartheid. During the Apartheid regime from 1948 to 1994 governmental policy and practice were driven largely by racial segregatory principles. During this period in South African history tribal land was given formal status in areas that was known as Bantustans or homelands.

After the election of the new government in 1994, the Bantustans were disbanded and integrated into a democratic new South Africa. Today, these former homelands or Bantustans are referred to as communal land areas or tribal areas [2]. Communal land areas - together with their associated traditional authorities - are formally recognised in contemporary South Africa. The existence of these communal land areas is a fascinating yet challenging reality that provides a variety of challenges for the South African government and its people.

Communal land areas or tribal land is legally owned by the South African government [3] but is placed under the

custodianship of the respective traditional authorities still evident today. According to the Communal Land Rights Act (Act 11 of 2004), communal land refers to land that is occupied or used by members of a community who are subjected to the rules and customs of that particular community [4].

Given the origin of tribal areas and their locations, it is understandable that overall development in these areas lags behind that of their formal, urban counter-parts. The exact extent of the disparity between the quality of life of residents in tribal and non-tribal areas has however not been addressed in official planning documents to date [5].

The focus of this study is on the KwaZulu-Natal province. The KwaZulu-Natal province is further divided into two sub-regions: tribal land areas and non-tribal areas. The categorisation of these two sub-regions is based on the classification of the Municipal Demarcation Board where tribal land is referred to as traditional areas. All other areas within the municipality are classified as non-tribal areas.

The KwaZulu tribal area in the KwaZulu-Natal province was selected for this investigation based on the size of the tribal area as well as the availability of relevant data. This delineation will facilitate future investigation of similar and associated research topics.

Fig. 1 indicates tribal areas within the KwaZulu-Natal province. It is evident that the KwaZulu-Natal province accommodates all the KwaZulu tribal areas, as well as a small section of the Transkei tribal area toward the south-west of the province. For the purpose of this investigation the small portion of the Transkei area was combined with the KwaZulu traditional areas in order to provide a holistic, provincial overview.

The KwaZulu-Natal province extends over approximately 93 326 km², of which 38 555 km² are tribal land. Non-tribal areas therefore constitute 58.7% of total land area while tribal areas constituted 41.3% of total land area [6].

The statistical data utilised in the investigation have been apportioned using geographical information system (GIS) technology. The data utilised – National Census data – are only available on levels that coincide with Statistics South-Africa's various boundaries - for purpose of this investigation, on a sub-place level. Since tribal area boundaries and census boundaries do not correspond, GIS technology was utilised to apportion Census data according to tribal area boundaries.

Apportionment of Census 2001 and 2011 data according to tribal areas and non-tribal areas (see Fig. 2) resulted in two datasets. The various indicators that were used in the socio-

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economic comparison process are extracted from these adjusted data-sets.

- Personal security
- Subjective well-being
- Material conditions
- Income and wealth
- Jobs and earnings
- Housing.



Fig. 1 (a) Geographic location of the KwaZulu-Natal Province in South Africa



Fig. 1 (b) Study Area Delineation (KwaZulu-Natal Province) with Tribal Areas (Author's compilation from [6] and [7])

II. METHODOLOGY

According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [8], the well-being of societies can generally be categorised into two broad classes of indicators: quality of life indicators and indicators relating to material conditions. Typical quality of life indicators include [8, p.2]:

- Health status
- Work-life balance
- Education and skills
- Social connections
- Civic engagement and governance
- Environmental quality

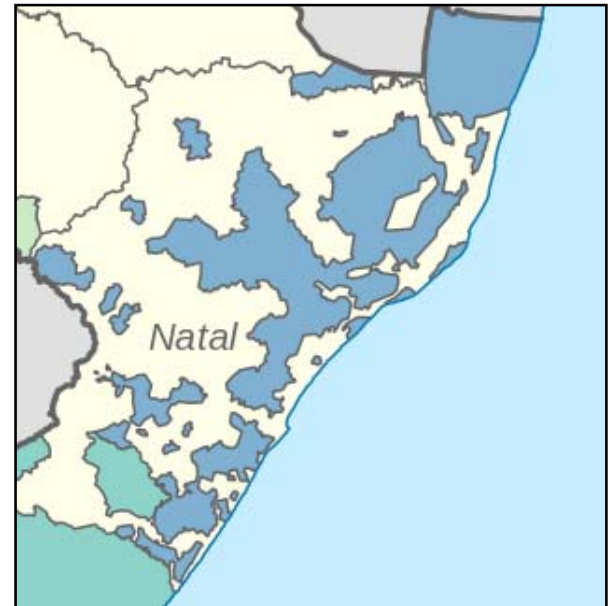


Fig. 2 Tribal vs. Non-Tribal Areas within the KwaZulu-Natal Province (author's compilation from [6] and [7])

The primary challenge of this investigation was the selection of suitably representative socio-economic indicators. Given that the selected indicators should include both quality of life and indicators relating to material well-being, the following indicators were applied in this study:

- Population dynamics and trends
- Level of education
- Employment profile and household income
- Dwelling typology
- Tenure status
- Access to basic services (water, energy, sanitation and refuse removal).

III. RESULTS

Table I provides a summary of results for both tribal and non-tribal areas associated with the investigation.

A. Population Dynamics

1. Population Size

The total population in non-tribal areas in 2018 was estimated to be just over 4 million, while that in tribal areas was estimated to be nearly double that (just over 8 million). The population in non-tribal areas is estimated to grow at an average annual rate of 0.74% while the population in tribal areas is estimated to grow by an average of 1.42% per annum [6].

The high total population apparent in the tribal areas of KwaZulu-Natal can be attributed to the large initial population

of the previous Bantustans in South Africa, together with a relatively high natural population growth. Evidently, household sizes are larger in tribal communities than that in non-tribal

communities. This trend corresponds to the findings about the age and gender profile as well: a larger proportion of young children is evident in tribal communities.

TABLE I
SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL AREAS

Category	Indicator	Tribal Areas	Non-Tribal Areas	
Population	Population Size	Population Estimate 2018	Population Estimate 2018	
		People – 8 013 648	People – 4 010 351	
	Racial Profile	Households – 1 880 929	Households – 1 235 946	
		Household Size – 4.3	Household Size – 3.2	
		Black/African – 99.4%	Black/African – 65.5%	
		Coloured – 0.2%	Coloured – 3.4%	
		Indian/Asian – 0.2%	Indian/Asian – 19.6%	
		White – 0.1%	White – 10.9%	
		Other – 0.1%	Other – 0.5%	
		Age and Gender Profile	Male	Male
			0-14 years – 38.9%	0-14 years – 26.2%
			15-24 years – 22.7%	15-24 years – 20.3%
	24-39 years – 19.7%		24-39 years – 27.1%	
	40-59 years – 14.0%		40-59 years – 18.7%	
	60+ years – 8.1%		60+ years – 7.5%	
	Education	Level of Education	Female	Female
0-14 years – 34.5%			0-14 years – 24.8%	
15-24 years – 21.7%			15-24 years – 20.3%	
24-39 years – 19.8%			24-39 years – 24.9%	
40-59 years – 15.9%			40-59 years – 20.5%	
60+ years – 8.1%			60+ years – 9.5%	
Educational Attendance		No Schooling – 16.1%	No Schooling – 6.3%	
		Some primary – 16.4%	Some primary – 10.6%	
		Complete primary – 4.5%	Complete primary – 3.7%	
		Some secondary – 31.3%	Some secondary – 30.0%	
		Grade 12/Std 10 – 27.1%	Grade 12/Std 10 – 34.4%	
		Higher – 4.6%	Higher – 14.7%	
		Pre-School – 0.4%	Pre-School – 0.85%	
		Ordinary School – 96.2%	Ordinary School – 88.5%	
		Special School – 0.4%	Special School – 0.64%	
		FET College – 1.1%	FET College – 2.49%	
Income	Employment	Other College – 0.3%	Other College – 1.1%	
		University – 1.3%	University – 5.7%	
	Industry of Employment	ABET – 0%	ABET – 0%	
		Literacy classes – 0%	Literacy classes – 0%	
		Home Schooling – 0.5%	Home Schooling – 0.7%	
		Economically active – 39.0%	Economically active – 57.4%	
		Employed – 54.9%	Employed – 78.1%	
		Unemployed – 45.1%	Unemployed – 21.9%	
Occupation Profile	Agriculture, hunting, forestry & fishing – 5.1%	Agriculture, hunting, forestry & fishing – 8.4%		
	Mining & quarrying – 0.6%	Mining & quarrying – 0.6%		
	Manufacturing – 13.1%	Manufacturing – 13.7%		
	Electricity, gas & water – 0.8%	Electricity, gas & water – 0.7%		
	Construction – 10.6%	Construction – 8.6%		
	Wholesale & retail trade – 18.6%	Wholesale & retail trade – 19.3%		
	Transport, storage & communication – 7.7%	Transport, storage & communication – 7.3%		
	Financial, insurance, real estate & business services – 14.6%	Financial, insurance, real estate & business services – 15.6%		
Community, social & personal services – 28.9%	Community, social & personal services – 25.4%			
Legislators, senior officials & managers – 4.3%	Legislators, senior officials & managers – 10.5%			
Professionals – 4.8%	Professionals – 8.0%			
Technicians & associated professionals – 11.0%	Technicians & associated professionals – 11.0%			
Clerks – 8.7%	Clerks – 12.7%			
Service workers, shop & market sales workers – 17.7%	Service workers, shop & market sales workers – 15.8%			

Category	Indicator	Tribal Areas	Non-Tribal Areas
Source of Income		Skilled agricultural & fishery workers – 0.7%	Skilled agricultural & fishery workers – 1.2%
		Craft & related trades workers – 12.7%	Craft & related trades workers – 11.7%
		Plant and machine operators & assemblers – 7.3%	Plant and machine operators & assemblers – 5.6%
		Elementary occupations – 32.9%	Elementary occupations – 23.5%
		Sales of farm products and services – 0.0%	Sales of farm products and services – 0.0%
		Other income sources e.g. rental income, interest – 0.3%	Other income sources e.g. rental income, interest – 0.6%
		Pensions – 0.5%	Pensions – 1.5%
		No income – 0.7%	No income – 1.5%
		Unspecified – 3.5%	Unspecified – 3.2%
		Income from a business – 5.3%	Income from a business – 6.4%
		Remittances – 17.4%	Remittances – 9.9%
		Grants – 39.9%	Grants – 23.0%
	Household Income		Salaries/wages/commission – 32.4%
		Average annual household income – R63 650	Average annual household income – R156 685
		Average monthly household income – R5 304	Average monthly household income – R16 389
Dwelling Type	Dwelling Type	House or brick/concrete structure on separate stand or yard or farm – 54.6%	House or brick/concrete structure on separate stand or yard or farm – 64.3%
		Traditional dwelling/hut/structure made of traditional materials – 31.2%	Flat or apartment in a block of flats – 10.5%
Tenure Status		Owned and fully paid off – 47.9%	Owned and fully paid off – 32.7%
		Occupied rent-free – 28.2%	Occupied rent-free – 31.1%
		Rented – 13.7%	Rented – 15.5%
Access to Services	Source of Potable Water	Regional/Local Water Scheme – 56.6%	Regional/Local Water Scheme – 82.8%
		Borehole – 6.8%	Borehole – 5.2%
		Spring – 3.4%	Spring – 1.3%
		Rain Water Tank – 1.1%	Rain Water Tank – 0.7%
		Dam/Pool/Stagnant Water – 3.5%	Dam/Pool/Stagnant Water – 2.1%
		River / Stream – 20.2%	River / Stream – 2.7%
		Water Vendor – 1.6%	Water Vendor – 0.8%
		Water Tanker – 3.9%	Water Tanker – 2.4%
		Other – 2.9%	Other – 2.1%
		Lighting	
	Candles – 30.1%		Candles – 13.4%
	Paraffin – 0.8%		Paraffin – 1.4%
	Solar – 0.7%		Solar – 0.3%
	None – 0.6%		None – 0.4%
	Gas – 1.9%		Gas – 0.3%
Access to Sanitation			Flush Toilet Connected to Sewage Network – 19.4%
		Flush Toilet Connected to Septic Tank – 2.8%	Flush Toilet Connected to Septic Tank – 6.5%
		Chemical Toilet – 10.3%	Chemical Toilet – 4.1%
		Pit Latrine with Ventilation (VIP) – 23.3%	Pit Latrine with Ventilation (VIP) – 6.0%
		Pit Latrine with No Ventilation – 26.1%	Pit Latrine with No Ventilation – 10.8%
		Bucket Latrine – 1.8%	Bucket Latrine – 1.4%
		Other – 4.1%	Other – 2.5%
Refuse Removal		None – 12.2%	None – 4.4%
		Removed by Local Authority Once a Week – 29.6%	Removed by Local Authority Once a Week – 75.1%
		Removed by Local Authority Less Often – 1.2%	Removed by Local Authority Less Often – 1.9%
		Communal Refuse Dump – 1.6%	Communal Refuse Dump – 1.6%
		Own Refuse Dump – 57.9%	Own Refuse Dump – 17.3%
		No Rubbish Disposal – 8.5%	No Rubbish Disposal – 3.2%
	Other – 1.2%	Other – 0.9%	

Author's calculations based on Census 2001, Census 2011 and Community Survey 2016 data [9]-[11].

Rural communities often include migrant workers who have to travel to employment nodes far from their home-towns. It has been found that in most cases, migrant parents do not include their children in the travel to their new destinations and children often remain behind in their home town [12]. This trend also results in different household care and structure dynamics – e.g. child-headed households or households with several children

and one caretaker [12].

2. Racial Profile

Given the origin of the former homelands in South Africa, it is to be expected that the racial profile of tribal communities would be dominantly Black/African. Although the Black/African population segment is still dominant in non-tribal communities, these communities do reflect a comparatively

mixed racial profile relative to tribal areas. Non-tribal area communities include Black/Africans, Whites, Indians/Asians and Coloureds.

3. Age and Gender Profile

The age and gender profiles of non-tribal communities reflect a larger proportion of young adults, supported by a notable proportion of mature adults. In addition, the age and gender profile pyramid of the non-tribal areas is typical of a community characterised by higher life expectancy and moderate birth and mortality rates. Conversely, the age and gender profile for tribal areas reflects a population with a substantial child and young adult population. The age and gender pyramids are also typical of an environment characterised by a comparatively lower life expectancy, high birth rate and high mortality rates. The age and gender profiles for the respective regions also indicate marked differences relating to employment. Non-tribal areas reflect a larger working age population – people aged between 16 and 65 years – than tribal areas. This has a huge implication for a variety of factors, including high dependency rates and high number of indigent households, which are not ideal conditions for social and economic progress.

4. Interpretation of Population Dynamics

Investigation of the population dynamics of non-tribal and tribal area communities revealed that tribal areas accommodate nearly double the population evident in non-tribal communities. This population dynamic has several social and economic implications of which the two most notable impacts are associated with economic and social development.

A large population offers a large labour pool for economic activity but in turn requires a myriad of supportive features and functions to be in place in order to ensure sustainability over the longer term. Interventions required include physical infrastructure and utilities, educational institutions and other social facilities as well as improved transportation networks to facilitate access to markets. Given the history and development trends associated with tribal areas, these environments typically have a limited or no economic base, which hampers socio-economic prosperity.

B. Education Dynamics

1. Level of Education

The survey compared the highest level of education obtained by local residents in non-tribal and tribal communities respectively. Non-tribal areas reflect moderate educational levels with the largest proportion of residents having completed secondary education (34.7%). The population in tribal areas mostly have some secondary education (31.3%).

Despite having quite similar education profiles, the most notable difference in level of education is the proportion of residents with no schooling on the one hand and with higher education on the other hand. The difference in higher education can be attributed to the higher ratio of learners in non-tribal areas who obtained secondary education and the access to tertiary educational facilities in the urbanised environments associated with non-tribal areas.

2. Educational Institution Attendance

The largest proportion of both non-tribal and tribal area populations attended primary and secondary schools. The most notable difference is again associated with tertiary education, with non-tribal area populations having greater attendance of universities. This trend corresponds to the findings of the preceding section relating to level of education. It is therefore evident that tribal area populations typically reflect moderate levels of education which could be indicative of a semi-skilled workforce, able to engage in economic activities if the opportunity was available.

3. Interpretation of Education Dynamics

Despite the similar education profile of tribal and non-tribal area residents, it is evident that non-tribal areas typically accommodate residents with access to higher education. Despite this fact, education levels among tribal area residents do not appear to be entirely dire, boding well for possible development and strategic interventions in future. Given the educational levels evident in tribal areas, it is to be expected that most residents would be able to read and write. This reflects the potential for residents to engage in further education and training opportunities should these be provided.

Evidently, access to further education and training is challenging in tribal areas, as tribal areas are relatively underdeveloped and existing facilities are predominantly located in urban centres.

Education is instrumental in enabling long-term societal prosperity. The provision of adequate basic education and access to further educational opportunities should therefore be a primary concern of authorities involved with the functioning of communal land areas.

C. Dwelling and Tenure Dynamics

1. Dwelling Type

An overview of dwelling typologies in tribal and non-tribal areas revealed that 64.3% of non-tribal households reside in formal houses or brick structures on a separate stand or yard, as against 54.6% of households in tribal areas. While 31.2% of residents in tribal areas reside in a traditional dwelling or a structure made of traditional materials, 10.5% of residents in non-tribal environments live in flats or apartments. A minority of residents in tribal areas (4.4%) reside in informal dwellings not in a back yard and 7.3% of residents in non-tribal areas live in informal dwellings not in a back yard.

It is evident that residents in tribal areas have relatively good access to formal housing opportunities, predominantly in the form of freestanding dwellings. Although fewer residents live in traditional or informal dwellings, the situation would not appear to be entirely dire. The dwelling typology is more mixed in non-tribal areas but also mostly formal in nature. Given the nature of non-tribal areas, a more mixed residential market is to be expected.

2. Tenure

Non-tribal area households reflect higher diversity in tenure than households in tribal areas. Similar ratios of households

own their dwelling that is fully paid-off (32.7%) or occupy their dwelling rent-free (31.1%). Smaller ratios of households own their dwelling although it is not fully paid off (17.2%) or rent their dwelling (15.5%).

In tribal areas a notable proportion of households own dwellings that are fully paid-off (47.9%). Households who occupy their dwelling rent-free comprise 28.2% and households who rent their dwelling comprise 13.7%. A smaller proportion of households own dwellings that are not fully paid-off.

Despite the significant proportion of households in tribal areas indicating that they own their dwelling, it is possible that the reality is different. In communal land areas, residents are often under the impression that they own their dwelling. This might be true for the built structure, but not for the land on which the dwelling is situated. Very few tribal area residents legally own their dwelling and property in terms of having a legal title deed to show ownership. Residents of tribal areas may inhabit the same piece of land for centuries, but in reality, they have little legal claim to the property they reside on [13].

3. Interpretation of tenure dynamics

The investigation revealed that although a notable proportion of residents in tribal areas has access to formal residential typologies, in reality a smaller proportion of informal dwelling typologies still translates into a significant number of residents residing in sub-par housing.

Although the investigation indicated that a significant proportion of residents in tribal areas owns their dwelling, this is a typically a misrepresentation. Residents of tribal areas are often under the impression that they own their property although they have limited legal claim of the property.

Residential dwellings within tribal areas therefore do not typically form part of the formal governmental and economic structures typically operating in modern society. Households and traditional authorities or custodians of these areas pay little or no rates and taxes, thereby making minimal contributions to the local municipal fiscus and exacerbating the challenges faced by local municipalities.

D. Household Income Dynamics

1. Employment Profile

Non-tribal areas reflect an economically active population proportion of 57.4% of which 21.9% are unemployed. Tribal-area populations reflect an economically active population proportion of only 39.0%, of which only 54.9% are employed.

An alarming proportion of the tribal-area economically active population is unemployed. The 45.1% of unemployed population in tribal areas translates to approximately 729 389 people. It is evident that non-tribal areas accommodate a larger proportion of economically active population than tribal areas. This corresponds with the preponderance of younger residents/children in tribal areas and the comparatively mixed profile of non-tribal areas.

2. Industry of Employment

People in non-tribal areas that have formal jobs are employed mainly employed in tertiary industries (67.9%). The larger

proportion of population is employed in the community, social and personal services sector (25.7%), followed by those employed in the wholesale and retail trade sector (19.3%). Similarly, tribal area employed population is also largely employed in tertiary industries (69.8%), dominated by community, social and personal services sector (28.9%) followed by those employed in the wholesale and retail trade industry (18.6%).

The similarity in employment profile can be attributed to government being the largest employer in South Africa. The KwaZulu-Natal Province is characterised by a notable proportion of rural environment and communities and it is therefore to be expected that government accounts for the majority of employment opportunities as these rural communities are not as developed as urban environments.

3. Occupation Profile

In terms of occupation profile, non-tribal area employed populations are employed predominantly in semi-skilled professions (47.0%), dominated by elementary occupations (23.5%) and service workers, shop and market sales workers (15.8%).

Employed tribal area populations reveal a very similar profile with a preponderance of semi-skilled occupations (47.0%) and the largest proportions of employed populations having elementary occupations (32.9%) and being service workers, shop and market sales workers (17.7%). It is however evident that employed populations within non-tribal areas reflect a greater variety of occupations than those in the non-tribal areas. Non-tribal area populations also comprise a larger proportion of skilled occupations than tribal area populations.

Overall, employment indicators for tribal areas paint a dismal employment picture. The significant levels of unemployment among the economically active population could be attributed to both structural inadequacies associated with the low level of development and economic activity in tribal areas as well as to the challenges associated with accessing employment opportunities, given the typical location of tribal communities.

4. Household Income

Tribal area households reflected a lower income than non-tribal households. A notable 17.1% of tribal area households has no income while in non-tribal households that ratio is 13.9%. The average household income in non-tribal areas is more than double the income of tribal area households, with average household income profiles for tribal and non-tribal areas are found to be:

- Average Income (2018 Estimate) in tribal areas - R63 650 per annum (i.e. R5 304 per month)
- Average Income (2018 Estimate) in non-tribal areas - R196 667 per annum (i.e. R16 389 per month)

Household income levels in tribal areas correspond with the trends reflected in preceding sections relating to employment profiles, industry of employment and occupations profiles. Elementary occupations and lower-skilled employment typologies typically translate into a lower income earning ability, resulting in the comparatively lower household income

evident in tribal areas. Given the severe poverty and vulnerability typical of rural and tribal communities, households rely heavily on social grants [12]. This trend also correlates with findings in the preceding section reflecting that the largest proportion of tribal area residents indicated their primary source of income to be social grants (39.9%).

5. Interpretation of Household Income Dynamics

An alarming number of residents in tribal areas is currently unemployed. This reflects the relatively low number of economically active individuals in tribal communities. This trend again highlights the importance of focusing on stimulating economic development in tribal areas. Currently, employed residents of tribal areas are in low-skilled positions in tertiary industries, typically associated with lower pay grades and hence lower income profiles for households.

The employment and income profile of tribal areas have a significant impact on government as these communities have become increasingly dependent on social grants. Social grants have often proved to provide an alternative to finding employment and has become an immense burden on government. It has become increasingly evident that social-grant recipient households often choose to make use of free support from government in the form of social grants as opposed to finding means of becoming self-reliant [14]. This trend again highlights the importance of addressing economic development in tribal areas.

E. Services

1. Access to Services

An overview of the source of water in non-tribal and tribal areas revealed that most households in both areas (82.3% and 56.6% respectively) have access to a regional/local water scheme. However, significant proportion of households in tribal areas still access water from other sources.

Most households have access to electricity (84.1% in non-tribal areas and 65.9% in tribal areas). A notable proportion of households in tribal areas still makes use of candles as their primary source of lighting.

The level of sanitation in tribal and non-tribal households reveals perhaps the most insightful results. The largest proportions of households in non-tribal areas (64.2%) have access to a flush toilet connected to a sewage network, as opposed to only 19.4% of tribal households. Tribal households predominantly make use of pit latrines, with 26.1% making primary use of a pit latrine with no ventilation and 23.3% making use of pit latrines with ventilation.

Refuse removal trends again reflect an interesting dynamic. Most non-tribal households have their refuse removed by a local authority once a week (75.1%) whereas only 29.6% of non-tribal households have their refuse removed the same manner. The largest proportion of households in tribal areas makes use of their own refuse dump (57.9%).

2. Interpretation of Access to Services

Access to services is not entirely as lacking in tribal communities as the general perception might be. The level of

service provision in tribal areas does, however, lack behind the levels of access to basic services in non-tribal areas. Although access to water and electricity is relatively good in tribal areas, the levels of sanitation and refuse removal fall far behind. This finding can again be attributed to the jurisdictional challenges associated with tribal authorities and local municipalities as well as the rural location of tribal areas, which challenge efficient and effective service delivery. Given the rural locations of tribal areas in the KwaZulu-Natal province, locational challenges are further exacerbated by a challenging topography.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite some obvious challenges encountered in tribal communities, the overall picture is not as dire as might have been originally anticipated. According to findings of this investigation, certain socio-economic characteristics are not as negative as are often perceived to be the case, with tribal area populations, at least in the case of the study area, having moderate levels of education, access to formal housing and relatively good access to services.

The most material difference that emerged is in the issue of employment. A shockingly high ratio of residents in tribal areas is unemployed. This is coupled with a low economically active population. Despite the positive characteristics that were highlighted, the impact of unemployment is a major concern. This adds pressure on government to provide social grants and fuels underperforming and underdeveloped local economies.

The level of unemployment can, in part, be attributed to the limited opportunities associated with the local economies of tribal areas. Tribal environments are often far from established urban centres that offer more employment opportunities. In addition, although the economic potential in tribal areas is underdeveloped, this should not result in a total absence of opportunity. Several environments offer unexploited agricultural opportunities.

This investigation revealed pertinent socio-economic characteristics of tribal communities. It is evident that although conditions do not appear to be as dire as anticipated, there is definite room for future investigation regarding the economic opportunities associated with tribal areas. The economies of tribal areas are often underdeveloped with residents having limited access to economic opportunities. In addition, more detailed and focused research could prove to be valuable in the identification of opportunities that do occur in tribal areas and how to address prevalent challenges.

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