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**INTERPRETATION OF IDENTITY:
AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL REPORT OF SEVEN COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH INDIA**

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Abstract

The challenges and hurdles for a collective identity in pluralistic societies are numerous and humungous. The present day rampant changes under the guise of development and progress lead to different interpretations of the age-old culture South India. The various invasions in the past centuries contributed further to the complexity, creating a crisis of Identity. The agrarian culture of South India was manipulated and various social changes were imposed by the alien rulers, creating a community far removed from their origins. The colonial rule brought another complication through its interpretations of the then prevailing religion. The post-independence period saw the bureaucracy following the footsteps of their colonial masters in framing policy frameworks which were totally disconnected from the ground reality. The various social movements in South India saw development from a political prism. Revival of the indigenous practices of the agrarian community to ensure an alternative income generation for community development is the aspiration of members of these seven communities. This paper is but a small attempt to document through ethnography the perceptions of the communities about identity and the impact through positive discrimination. The Governments of the state using the welfare tool of reservation has created a socialisation process thought as the 'quota or reservation system'

Keywords: Collective Identity, Community Participation, Community Development, Cultural Pluralism, Revivalism.
