Chapter II

Review of Literatures

2.1. Introduction

India is a fascinating country where people of many different communities and religions live together in unity. Indian Population is polygenetic and is an amazing amalgamation of various races and cultures.

Tribal study is nothing new to this present research world. There are many studies already done on this for the last two centuries. Many scholars have paid their attention on it and contributed very much to the field of tribal studies. Tribals are spread throughout the world, large numbers of the tribal population are found in African, South American and Asian countries.

In this study on Paniyas of South India, this researcher has made use of the literatures contributed by well known, prior and contemporary anthropologist of the world. The last few decades were the decades of information and technology. The tribal study also got its momentum, that many researchers took interest to make use of the modern facilities for the tribal study. Today there are many websites available on many of the Indian tribes. Many researchers have spent their precious time towards the tribal study and brought lot of insights into this, on various aspects of tribal life, issues and challenges. Some of their studies are reviewed in this chapter are from various books and websites available in order to support the researcher’s hypothesis of the thesis.

The very purpose of this review study is to get a comprehensive and broad knowledge of the study on Paniyas, which will surely help to pave a solid foundation for the further construction of the chapters of the study. This review also will help the writer to get extensive understanding on the contributions of ideas of the previous scholars who studied on tribes in general and particularly on Paniya tribe.
There are few studies on the anthropological and social aspects which is already been done by scholars. British and other European scholars were the pioneers of these kinds of studies. Prof. Luiz A.A. (1962) had published a book titled ‘Tribes of Kerala’. In this book he had mentioned about some basic information on Paniyas of Kerala. Later period of history many have tried to make studies on them. Prof. Panoor K (1971) studied on them and published a book in Malayalam titled ‘Keralathile Africa’ (The Africa of Kerala). Prof. Somasekharan Nair (1976) published his study as a book, titled ‘Paniyar’. Prof. Aiyappan A (1992) made an extensive study on Paniyas and published a book ‘Paniyas , an ex-slave tribe of South India’. The recent book (1996) on them is ‘Encyclopaedia of Dravidian Tribe’ which gives more details on them. Besides the above works there are several other articles, studies, govt. records, unpublished materials etc.

2.2. Tribes in India

It is very difficult to give a sufficient definition for the word ‘tribe’. Many scholars have tried to define various aspects of tribe and tribal life in the past centuries.

Thomas M.M. (1965) an eminent modern theologian and sociologist in his book *Tribal Awakening* gives an another definition on tribe as, “A tribe is an indigenous, homogenous unit, speaking a common language, claiming ancestry, living in a particular geographical area, backward in technology, pre-literate, loyally observing social and political customs based on kinship”. The tribes of India are characterized by the identifications remarked by the above definitions.

*The World Book Encyclopedia* (1969) defines the word ‘Tribe’ as: "A tribe is a group of people who live in a particular place, speak the same language and obey a chief or elders. Its members have a common way of life. The tribe is one of the earliest forms of society. Tribe ranges in size from a few hundred people to more than a million. They may be organized into clans, families or customary ways of
doing things”. The etymological meaning of the word ‘Tribe’, is derived from a Latin root, term ‘Tribuz’ which means race or subdivision of race of people.

Prof. D.N. Majumdar (1973), an eminent scholar favored the definition on tribe as given in the Imperial Gazetteer. According to him, "a tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so." The writer upholds the commonness of the tribal community through this chapter.

K.C. Mark (1984) in his book, The Church in India, observes some of the general characteristics of the Tribals of India as: They are simple, honest and truthful, hard working and industrious. They are community (group) conscious, self- reliant and help themselves. They identify themselves with their land and conservative in regard to change.’

Ram Nath (1987) an eminent scholar in anthropology confirms this fact in his book ‘Social Anthropology and Indian Tribes’. He observes that the tribals are casteless and classless society. In several parts of India, the tribals are made Schedule Caste as they have adopted Hinduism as their religion. He also explores various aspects of tribal life in India. In this book a chapter is dedicated to explain the important characteristics of Primitive Religion. He continues to explain some of the religious topics such as Mana, Animism, Beliefs and Practices, Faith in Rebirth, Magic, Totem and Taboo. In another chapter he continues to writes on the topic ‘Primitive Language’. He refers to various theories about the evolution of language. In an another chapter Ram Nath deals with ‘Primitive Art, Mythology, Folklore, Primitive Painting, Sculpture, Music, Dance and Craft in the primal societies. He also deals with one of the very important topic: ‘Government and Law in Primitive Societies’. Government is the institution form of the state, which is a sovereign political organization of the people settled in a particular country. The government runs the administration. Each of the tribal group has local self-
government with their leaders such as the chieftain, the headman and council. They are also having their own primitive unwritten law and order system, which is to be followed by all members of the community. They follow their own style of administration, judgment and punishment.

Rona Locke (1992), famous anthropologist affirms in his book *Tribals for Christ*, that the present day’s Tribals in India are living in diverse social levels. They are divided in to six categories according to their social levels: ‘Those into which Hinduism has infiltrated, those who are so primitive they have no corporate life, those organized into well-developed communities, those so little affected by outside influence that they still have their own laws and customs, those where systems have been weakened as the country has been opened up, those without a caste system who therefore are free from scruples about eating various foods.’

Shiv Kumar Tiwari (1994) a well-known author on the Indian Tribes affirms in his well written book, *Encyclopedia of Indian Tribals*, ‘the Tribals in India are geographically distributed into five regions. This division is for a better study and to understand the tribals of India. He divided the tribe geographically as: North-East Indian Tribal Region. (Assam, Arunachal, Megalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura.), Himalayan Tribal Religion. (Jammu, Kashmir, Himalayas area), Central Indian Tribal Region.(Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharstra), South Indian Tribal Region. (Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala), The Island Tribal Region. (Islands in Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal)

Ponraj S.D. (1996), one of the well-known Indian anthropologists evaluates socio-political life of the tribes in India in his book *Tribal Challenges*. According to him, Tribals are the indigenous people of India. Then they were made ‘Tribals’. The Dravidians were the ancient inhabitants of India, settled in the Indus valley, around BC 1500, the powerful race Aryans from Middle East came and invaded the Indus valley areas. This way many Dravidians who were the ancient inhabitant
of Northern India flew into other parts of the India. They can be traced according to their physical features even today from the many parts of South, North, West, East and Central India. Some group of people fled into mountains of Central India, Western Maharastra (Vindhya Satpuira Hills), Eastern Bihar (Rajmahal Hills) and South India. Presently they are known as ‘Dravidians tribals’. They have Dravidians physical features generally and also their languages are included in to Dravidian language family. Ponraj in his tribal research also affirms the fact as: ‘People who conquered preferred to flee to the mountains, were of isolated over the centuries, they remained backward. They may even have become more backward because of the condition of those who fled had to begin all over again in a difficult terrain.’ He also write about some of the tribals coming under the Dravidians race noticed in the different states of India such as Kuis of the Orrisa, Kolamis of Maharastra, Gounds of M. P., Maharastra, A.P. Orrisa and West Bengal, Malers of Bihrs, Tulus of Karnatakta, Todas, Kotas, Badagas, Paniyas of Tamil Nadu and Kerala .etc. There are also numbers of Dravidian tribes besides above mentioned. He also mentioned in his book that next to African countries India has the largest tribal population in the world. There are around 580 tribal groups in India. Generally the word ‘Tribal’ regarded to all tribe but they are not of one category. They have innumerable inward and outward differences within themselves. The tribal people of India are belonging to various racial backgrounds. Ponraj also states in his book of how the Dravidians were made hill tribes, the most civilized Dravidian Indus people encountered with the Aryans who came into the same geographical area. The Dravidians had to be scattered away into south India. In this way many went into the hills and forest, and became Dravidians hill tribes.

The Oxford Dictionary (1998) gives the meaning of tribe as follows, ‘A race of people, now applied especially to a primary aggregate of people in a primitive or a barbarous condition, under a headman or a chief’.
Paula Muni (2000) in his book, _Tribal India: Communities, Customs and Culture_, affirms various details of tribes in India. He writes some of the important fact that tribals in India do not present a homogenous ethnic stock. They differ from one another in physical appearance, language, and forms of socio-cultural patterns. Their language comes from three dominant language families: The Austric, the Dravidian and the Tibeto-Chinese. According to statistics based on the Censes of India 1971 nearly 74 lakh tribals speak their own tribal languages. The rest of the tribals have the languages of the non-tribal neighbours as their mother tongue. Majority of the tribals living in Central India speak one or more subsidiary languages in addition to their own. Regarding the Tribal Religion he writes, it is often held that the tribals of India follow their own distinctive religious beliefs and practices, but as the Censes data tells us majority of them (over 80%) are Hindus. Tribal following Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and other religions are lesser in number. About the tribal skills and economy he writes, tribals in India follow more than one mode of livelihood. The statistics reveals that bulks of the tribals in the country are land-based people. That means they are agriculturist, though some of them depend on forests. Some are artisan and still others are cattle keepers. In post independence era a few educated tribals are found employed with white collar jobs including administration. Basically the tribals are attached to their land and are traditional cultivators. Today many of the tribals are influenced by the modernism. It is because of the rapid growth of urbanization and industrialization the tribals have found their ways of traditional life at stake.

_The New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language_ (2001) gives the meaning of the word tribe as: ‘A division, class, or group of people, varying ethnologically according to the circumstances from which their separation or distinction is supposed to originate. Among primitive peoples, a group or aggregation of persons, usually consanguineous and endogamous, under one chief, characterized by its own culture, and having a name, a dialect, a government, and usually a territory of its own.’

According to this book, the tribals in India are belonging to the any one of the above-mentioned first five racial backgrounds. There are some tribes who are lost their racial purity because they have mixed up with other groups.

Negritos: It is believed that Negroids, are originally from Africa. They were the earliest people group who came to India. They can be traced back to the different parts of India, mostly the hills of south India. This group is believed to have come to India from Africa in the prehistoric period- before 4000 BC. It is assumed that some racial group like Irulas, Kadars, Kurumbas, Paniyas, Pulayans etc. are belonging to this group. Some tribes live in Andaman Islands are also believed to be the part of the same group. They have lot of physical and racial similarities with this group. Their languages have some sort of similar features. This fact reveals that they belong to the same language family.

Proto-Australoids or Austric: Their physical feature is observed as wavy hair plentifully distributed over their brown bodies, long heads with low foreheads, and prominent eye ridges, with low and flat noses, broad root thick jaws, large palates and teeth. They are the race mostly with medium height and dark complexion. It is believed that they came to India from Palestine and settled in North India. They also would have come to India in almost the same period around 4000 BC. During the Aryan invasion they were pushed into Central India and were tribalized. It is remarked by some historians that, Austric laid foundation for Indian civilization. They cultivated rice and vegetables and made sugar from sugar cane. Even today their language is survived among the Kol, Munda, Bhil, Billala, Patlai, Naike, etc. Manorama Year Book (2001) also affirms: 'Austric tribes spread over the whole of India and then pass on to Burma, Malaya and the islands of South East Asia'.
**Mongoloids:** Mongoloids are a group of people generally found in the North and North-Eastern part of India. They came to India around 3000 BC from China, Tibet, Mongolia and Indonesia. At present, they are spread in the various parts of Assam, Nagaland, Mizoram, Garo hill area and Jaintia hills. Their physical features are oblique eyes, high cheekbones, sparse hair and medium height. Generally, they are with a yellow complexion.

**Dravidians:** It is believed that they are generally comprised of Mediterranean people group. Their physical features are very much similar to the people of Asia Minor. It confirms the fact that their origin is from the Middle East area. They came to India around the third millennium BC. The Dravidian civilization was very much advanced in those periods. During the Aryan invasion, they have been defeated and took shelter in the hills and forests. They can be mostly in the various parts of South India. It is generally believed that they are responsible for the ancient Indus valley civilization. The archaeological scholars have excavated from the various sites at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa and other Indus cities of this ancient civilization. This gives the best proof of their advanced civilization of that time. This racial group is found throughout India, also some parts of Pakistan and in Nepal.

**Western Brachycephals:** They are the broad-headed people living mainly on the western side of the country such as the Ganga valley and the delta parts of Kashmir, Kathiawar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Their representatives are found among the Coorgies and the Parsis.

**Aryans:** Aryans are the people to be believed as the last racial group migrated to India from Iran or nearby areas. They are also called Indo-Iranians because they had originally left their homes from in Central Asia around 5000 years ago, and had settled in first Mesopotamia for some centuries then moved in to India. According to the history, they would have come into India between 2000 and 1500.
BC. Their first home in India was western and northern Punjab. The coming of Aryans into India encountered with early dwellers of these areas. They were highly civilized and lived with many advanced amenities.

2.2.1. Tribal Society

Kingslay Davis, (1998), a well-known anthropologist, in his well circulated book *Human Society*, analysis the human society and animal society, and points out some of the important factors of the society. According to him all societies have certain things in common. They involve a certain level of association, a level closer and more intricate than a mere aggregation. Human beings are not only creatures who live in societies. Ants, termites, birds, monkeys, apes and countless of other animals do the same. It would be surprising then if human society bore no relation to some of the animal societies. Indeed, the very fact that man as an organism has evolved from lower forms suggests that his society has also developed from animal society or that knowledge of the latter is an adequate substitute for knowledge of the former.

Gabriele Dietrich (1998) in his book, *Towards Understanding of Indian Society*, gives a general analysis on the tribal societies of India. Tribal societies are the lineage-based societies. They are the indigenous people. According to him in the early days of human history all people lived in kinship based communities. In this way all are having tribal origin. He evaluates, the indigenous people are under the threat of modern capitalism and its expansion drive and imperial conquest. Many indigenous communities violently destroyed in Africa, America and Asian countries. In spite of this entire terrible on slaughter, indigenous people in various parts of the world have survived and are totally claiming their rights while struggling against ongoing discriminations and exploitation. The author also reflects on the Karl Max’s analysis of the tribal societies. He wanted to find out what we can learn from this, in the search for a society, which is not geared towards accumulation of goods and profit but towards celebration of life, based not on competitions but on co-operation and equality. Similarly feminists have
contributed to the study of tribal society in order to show that human societies can exist without patriarchy.

The New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language (2001) gives a clear definition for the word ‘society’. According to this: ‘society is the system of community life, in which individual or ordinarily territorial establishments form a continuous and regulatory association for their mutual benefit and protection. The body of person composes to community. The people of the community regarded as forming a class having certain common interests, status, etc., It is an association based on friend ship or intimate companionship or company’.

2.2.2. Tribal Population in India

Trevor and Rona (1992), notes in his book that the tribal population in India is in increase. The census records of last five decades evidently state that the fact the tribal population in India is increasing. The following record very clearly proves this fact. In 1951 it was 6.23%, in 1961-6.87%, in 1971-6.94%, in 1981-7.7% and in 1991-8.08%. In 1991 total tribal population was 67758380 (Census of India 1991:102). The following table will give a comprehensible picture of percentage of tribal population of the each states of India. In some states majorities are tribals.

Table- 2.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the state</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>4,199,481</td>
<td>6.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>550,351</td>
<td>63.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>2,874,441</td>
<td>12.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>6,616,914</td>
<td>7.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>6,161,775</td>
<td>14.92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hariyana</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>218,349</td>
<td>4.22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vasatharaj Albert (1995) refers in his famous book, *Portrait of India*, about the backwardness of tribals in India. ‘Most of the Tribals in India are found very backward and oppressed by others in various ways. For this reason Indian government is giving special status for their development and welfare. In the constitution of India they are given much consideration and concession. They are
been categorized as Scheduled Tribes (ST) for the administrative purpose. The government of India extends supports, and other material welfare for their developments. According to the 1991 census there are 580 recognized Scheduled Tribe (ST) in India. In the Constitution of India the Scheduled Tribe is defined as "Schedule Tribe means such tribe or tribal communities or parts of groups within such tribes or tribal comminutes as are deemed under article 342 to be Schedule Tribe for the purpose of this constitution. In India the population of Scheduled Tribes according to 1991 census is 6.78 crore. It constitutes 8.08% of the country’s total population. Their literacy rate is just 29.60%. Literacy among the women is 18.19% compared to the national average of 39.29%.

2.3. Study on Paniyas

In the beginning of twentieth century many scholars took interest in the tribal studies in general and Paniyas in particular. Some of the studies based on Paniyas are mentioned as follows.

Thurston E (1902) an eminent anthropologist, he is regarded as a pioneer of tribal study in India. He published a book titled ‘Caste and Tribes of South India’ vol.1-7. ("Paniyan" in Castes and Tribes of Southern India, edited by Edgar Thurston and Kadamki Rangachari. Madras Government Press. Vol. 6, 57-71. It was reprinted in 1975 by Cosmo Publications, Delhi). This was the main reference material available at earliest days or prime resource which was available for any researchers on Paniyas. In this book he refers most of the tribes of south India; he gives several pages for giving various details of ‘Paniyas’.

Aiyappan A. (1948) was one of the anthropologist who made several studies on the tribes of South India. In 1948 he has published a book titled ‘Report on the Socio-economic conditions of the Aboriginals Tribe of the provinces of Madras’. In 1992 he also published a exclusive book on Paniyas. (Aiyappan, A.1992 The Paniyas – an ex-slave Tribe of South India. Institute of Social Research and
This book is written by a renowned anthropologist, who tried to study the Paniyas from 1934, but had very limited and only third party information on them. He tried again in 1972-73, and this time was successful in obtaining Paniya informants for much of the information provided in the book.

Luiz A. A. D. (1962) studied on all the tribes of south India and published a book entitled as ‘Tribes of Kerala’. In the recent periods there are many studies made on the Paniyas of south India.

Jekka Parthasarathy (2003) has made several studies on the tribes of Nilgiris. He has published several articles in the contemporary journals and magazines. He has published one of the recent book ‘Paniyans of Nilgiri District of Tamil Nadu’. Beside of these above mentioned scholars there are several others who ventured into the study of Paniyas tribe of south India.

2.4. Origin, Development and Social Structure of Paniyas

Luiz A. D. (1963), one of the pioneers of the Tribal studies in India refers in his book, Tribes of Mysore, about the origin and some of the basic features of Paniyas. The term 'Paniyas' literally means "a worker". The name has originated from Malayalam word 'Panikkar' (laborers). Paniyas or Paniyan or Paniyar is believed to be a Dravidian tribe. In his book he also writes, Paniyas are a dark-skinned tribe, short in stature, with broad noses and curly or wavy hair inhabiting in several parts of North Kerala, South Karnataka and Northwest Tamil Nadu. They are a homogenous community having distinct social and cultural traditions. They speak Painyabhasha, unintelligible dialect of Malayalam with a mixture of Tamil and Tulu words. They are found to be educationally and economically very backward. Government of India categorized the Paniyas in constitution as Scheduled Tribe (S.T.) to give a special status and consideration in the administration. The author also comments of Paniyas in his book. ‘Paniyas are seen in the Gundlupet Taluk of the Mysore District and the Virajpet Taluk of the Coorg District. The name has
originated from the Malayalam word Panikkar (laborers), or from Pani (work) and is indicative of the object state of servitude. They are seen in the Kerala and Tamil Nadu state. He also writes of the legend of their origin. ‘Paniyans of this state (Mysore) are immigrants from the Kerala. There are various speculations regarding their origin. One such opinion indicates they are an African tribe that came to India after a shipwreck on the west coast. Anthropologists claim that their cephalic and nasal indices have resemblance to the long armed Negroes and Kapiris of Africa. The habit of uttering the word ‘Ippi’ when excited led to the presumption that they had their early home in the Ippi hills, which remain unlocated. Paniyas claim that they were brought to Wynad in the early past by a ruler of Malabar. Another speculation tries to describe them as primitives discovered and trained by Gowdalus to be agricultural labors.

Census of India report (1964) in the Ethnographic note on scheduled tribe, observes the habitant of Paniyas of Gudallur. ‘Today the Paniyas do not know any legend about their origin. Words Ippi and Ippimala referred to by Thurston and Gopalan Nair are quite unknown. The other tribals call the Paniyas as ‘Koottanmars’ meaning a tribe brought from elsewhere. The Paniyas are found in large numbers in the adjoining areas of Malabar, i.e. Palaghat, Kozhikode and Cannonore (Kannur) districts of Kerala. It is surprising that the Paniyas found in Gudalur Taluk have been brought over long time back from Wynad in Malabar by the Mandatan Chetties as agricultural labors. Even now the Paniyas are attached more to the Mandatan Chettis than to other newly come land owners, like Moplas, Chetans (Syrian Christians) Gounders etc.

Thurston (1975) in his book Caste and Tribes of South India, describes about their physical appearance and their early inhabitation of South India. The Paniyans are a dark-skinned tribe, short in structure, with broad noses, and curly or wavy hair, habituating the Wynad, and those portions of the Ernad, Calicut, Kurumbanad and Kottayam Taluks of Malabar, which skirt the base of the ghats, and the Mudanad, Cheramgod, and Nambhkod amshams of the Nilgiri district. There is a
theory of their African origin based upon their general appearance. According to this theory: ‘The Paniyas are descended from ancestors who were wrecked their ship on Malabar coast. The Nayar Janmis (land lords) says that, when surprised in the act of some mischief or alarmed, the Paniyas calls out ‘Ippi’! Ippi’ as he runs away, and they believe this to have been the name of the country where they came from originally; but they are ignorant as to where Ippimala as they call it. It is believed that this is situated in Kapiri (Africa or the Cape) is also sometimes suggested as their original habitant. The Paniyas himself, though he occasionally put forward one or other of the above places as the home of their forefathers, has no fixed tradition bearing on their arrival in Malabar, beyond one to the effect that they were brought from a far country, where they were found living by a Raja, who captured them, and carried them off in such a miserable situation that a man and his wife only possessed one cloth, were living by means of hunting when they were captured.

*The Encyclopedia of Dravidian Tribe* *(1996)* marks of Paniyas as, ‘The Paniya constitutes the largest single Scheduled Tribe in Kerala. They numbered 56,952 at the 1981 Census. They are mainly found in the Waynad district and the neighboring areas of Karnataka (population:482), Tamil Nadu, in the Nilgiris district (population: 6393), Kerala (population is 50077). About their origin, there is an accounts in it: ‘According to their legends the Paniya came from Ippimala, a mountain near the Banasuram peak. When a Paniya brother and sister came near a (Wayanadan Chetty = Goundan) house hold, the Goudan caught them to live as ‘brother and sister above the waist and as husband and wife below it’. The progeny constitute the Paniyas. They formed themselves into various clans and migrated to other regions also. They however continued to have no rights to property, but were doomed to be the slaves of others. The establishment of feudal administration by the Raja of Kottayam (Malabar) was the culmination of the process of colonization of the Wayanad plateau by people of the plains which had started as early as the beginning of the 5th century.
2.4.1. Language of Paniyas

The Imperial Gazetteer (1911) reports as, ‘the Paniyas are the most characteristic representatives of the Dravidian type admixture of Aryan, Scythian and Mongoloid elements in it”. They have their own language called ‘paniyabhasha’ which has no script but is a spoken language. It is believed that their original occupation is agriculture but they are also famous for hunting wild animals with spear and nets.

Negi B.S. (2000) an anthropologist in his book Social Anthropology: A Case Study, provides various details connected with the tribals of India, especially of their languages. India is a multi racial country. People’s physiognomy, colour, language and physique are different among the nationalities. In this book author also gives details about the social anthropology, racial logical data, racial background and cultural life of the people. The author also comments about the basis of the tribal languages. According to him there are mainly three linguistic families pre-dominant in India. They are: 1. The Dravidian Language Family: These are spoken mostly of the aboriginal tribes of southern India. 2. The Aryan Language Family: These are spoken by the civilised and uncivilised tribes of northern India. 3. Indio-Chinese Language Family: These are spoken by Mongolian races and they all have some characteristics in common.

2.4.2. Origin of Paniyas

Luiz A.A. (1963) in his book Tribes of Mysore, comments on the African origin of the Paniyas in his book. ‘One such opinion indicates they are an African tribe that came into India after a shipwreck on the West Coast. Anthropologists claim that their cephalic and nasal indices have resemblance to the long armed Negroes and Kapiros of Africa’. Paniyas have number of traditionally established practices. Their customs and cultures are mainly related with their social and religious life. Culture is accepted way of behaving for members of a particular society.
Thurston (1975) one of the scholars in tribal studies refers in his book, *Castes and Tribes of South India*, the Paniyas as one of the Dravidian tribes. There are many mythical stories of their origin, but still there is no proper evidence of their origin. Among them one of them refers to their African origin. According to that, European planting community brought their ancestors to work in their estates in Malabar from Africa. However this theory is not proved with sufficient reasons. Their language is very much related to Dravidian family. Most of the anthropologist regard them as a Dravidian tribe.

### 2.4.3. Social Structure of Paniyas

*Census of India* (1961) observes on tribal hierarchy of Paniyas as, ‘each Paniya settlement, or a group of close by settlements, has a headman, who goes under the name of Kuttan. He is also called in some places as Mudali, meaning the first man. The Paniyas living in the settlement are subject to his social discipline. If there is any dispute, or a move for divorce, he decides the issue with the help of a tribal-Panchayat called “Kottani”. If there is report of any problems such as adultery, stealing, murder, etc. the tribal Panchayat meet together impose necessary action. When the Panchayat is seized of the matter, it levies a fine which normally does not exceed more than Rs. 7.00. The fine amounts collected are used for conducting festivals. Cases of divorces disposed of by the Panchayat are also few. The office of the Kuttan is usually a nominated one and olden days the nomination was done by the Jenmi. Now the Paniyas themselves nominate the most influential person among them as the Kuttan. Cases which cannot be amicably settled by themselves in the Panchayat are taken to the Jenmi or Chetti under whom they work, for a verdict. Census of India also remarks on Succession as: ‘The District Gazetteer of the Nilgiris says that the Paniyas follow the Makkathayam law of inheritance i.e., by the male line. Rao Bahadur C. and Gopalan Nair, says that the Paniyas in Wynad follow the Marumakkathayam law, i.e., by the female line. Actually we found that the Paniyas in Gudalur taluk follow no definite rules of inheritance. In most cases, it turns out that there are no properties to be bequeathed. In the few cases in which there is some piece of land or house to be inherited, they mostly
follow a via media system in which both sons and daughters get shares, according to circumstances. In one or two cases the sons inherit the entire property.

Thirston E (1975), notes of the structure of Paniyas dwelling places in his book *Caste and Tribes of South India* as: ‘The Paniyas settle down happily on estates, living in a settlement consisting of rows of huts and detached huts, single or double storied, built of bamboo and thatched. During the hot weather, in the unhealthy months which precede the advent of the south-west monsoon, they shift their quarters to live near streams, or in other cool, shady spots, returning to their head quarters when the rains set in.’


_Census of India “Nilgiris” 1991_ states that the Paniyas in Tamil Nadu are mainly inhabited in Gudalur taluk of Nilgiri district. According to 1991 census their population in Nilgiri is 5700.

Singh K.S. (1995) in his book, *The People of India*, observes how the Paniya society is organized into different groups and the myth behind it. ‘The Paniyas are divided into various lineages known as illam. Members of an illam trace their lineage from a common ancestor. They believe they are the descendants of Ippimalamuttappe and Ippimalamuttasi and their children, after them they were given ten kulam names (kulam is equivalent to gotra or clan), which they could not tell. They were collectively referred to as pantirappanmare. There are innumerable illam among the Paniyas, but four illams are associated with a special status; these are Koyimutan, Mutettan, Nattilapadan and Padikan. Among the Paniyas, illam regulates the marriage, illam is exogamous in nature. Self-perception by other communities is also low. They are not aware of the varna order. The Paniya practice endogamy at community level, but exogamy at illam level.”
Consanguineous marriages are not allowed. Girls get married between the ages of 16 and 18 years and boys between 18 and 25 years. Mode of acquiring a mate is by negotiation. Marriage symbols among the Paniya are the thali and nose-ring. Bride-price (kanam) is payable both in cash and kind. It is known as arupattinaalu (ie 64). Divorce is permitted for either sex with social approval. Adultery, non-payment of kanam after a specific period, non-payment of anjai one pothi (bag) of paddy or Rs.20/- every year, incompatibilities of husband and wife, are some of the reasons for divorce. If the demand for divorce is from the husband’s side, he has to give a new pair of clothes and half of the bride price to the wife and this is known as silaikal and the money paid is silvana. If the wife opts for divorce, then her parents are expected to pay back half the bride-price received. When the wife dies, the husband has to pay compensation to her father or her elder brother. After divorce the liability of children is on mother. Widow/ widower and divorcee remarriages are permissible.

Mann R. S. (1996) a well-known anthropologist, in his book, *Aspects of Indian Social Anthropology*, analyses on the tribals social structure in his book. According to him the tribals all over the world largely maintain their exclusiveness and uniqueness when compared to the non-tribal communities around the world. The author has done a serious of anthropological exploration in respect of unique customs, institutions and other ways of Indian tribes has been a long pending felt need in academic circle. He gives the essence of general social structure and characteristics of tribal life. There are number of commonalities which are observed among the tribes in their way of life and thoughts. The contemporary trend is noted by the author in the process of changes taking place in the culture, custom, language and systems. One of the important aspects of the tribal life is the belief about the other world – the belief system and the worldview; this belief controls the life designs. These belief systems tend to the quality of life and to have a value system in the society. In the atmosphere of ignorance or under the climate of partial and superficial understanding of tribal life, social structure and culture of the people cannot be under estimated. They have their own well-
established social structure and belief system. The author reflects on the following topics in this book, on some of their general social practices. They are: Polyandrous Marriage- A new theoretic construct, Matrilineal Descent and its Exegesis, Shifting Cultivation: A way of life, Dormitory System and Modernization, Chieftain and Serfdom: Model of Tribal Stratification, Nature and Man, Instates of Cultural Ecology, Man and Spirit: The basis of Ritual Performance, Simpler Societies and Ethnicity based Generalizations, Culture Contact, Acculturation and integration issues.

According to the 2001 Census Report S.T. of Kannur district of Kerala, the details of this tribe in shows as follows, ' Number of colonies-134, Number of families- 2167, Population- 9557. This tribe is also settled in several parts of Kannur, Kozhikode and Wynad district of Kerala.

Jekka Parthasarathy a cultural anthropologist (2003) has published a small book, The Paniyas of Nilgiris, which gives vivid details of Paniyas of Nilgiri districts of Tamil Nadu. This book is one of the important best documentation available on Paniyas of these days. He spends many years in studying the tribes of Nilgiries and published several articles in the contemporary journals. He writes, the Paniyas are the tribe found in southern parts of India in the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. In Tamil Nadu they are found in Gudalur and Pandalur taluk of Nilgiris districts. According to the 1981 census their total population in T. N. was 6391, in 2003 it became 5541. There are 66 Paniya settlements with 1197 households. In this book the author describes different topics such as Paniyas Social organization, Life cycle rituals, Political organization, Belief system and oral traditions. He concludes in this book with much essential information, which are very important.
2.4.4. Present Status of Paniyas in Kannur

Paniyas are spread throughout the different Panchayat of Kuthuparambu, Peravoor, Iritty and Irrikkur blocks of Kannur Districts of Kerala. According to *Census report of ST Kannur 2008*, details of their status gives in the following tables. It gives the details of number of colonies, families and population.

**Table 2.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Panchayat</th>
<th>Total Families</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Colonies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payam</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aralam</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kizhur-Chavasery</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayyankunnu</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thillenkery</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1627</strong></td>
<td><strong>4976</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Panchayat</th>
<th>Total Families</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Colonies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payyavoor</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padiyoor</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulickal</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>562</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>546</strong></td>
<td><strong>1724</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.4
Paniyas Kuthuparambu Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Panchayat</th>
<th>Total Families</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Colonies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pattiam</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panoor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittariparambu</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>197</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
<td><strong>273</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5
Paniyas Peravoor Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Panchayat</th>
<th>Total Families</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Colonies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kolayad</td>
<td>679</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peravoor</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanichiar</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelakam</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kottiyoor</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maloor</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muzhakkunnu</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>1319</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2334</strong></td>
<td><strong>7081</strong></td>
<td><strong>111</strong></td>
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</table>

Table 2.6
Total Population of Paniyas in Kannur

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Families</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Colonies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4616</td>
<td>14143</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.5. Present Status of Paniyas in Nilgiris

Jakka Parthasarathy (2003) provides the details of the Paniyas settlements in Nilgiri of Tamil nadu. Table No. 1 : Details about the Paniyas tribal settlements and demographic features in Nilgiri district. (as per TRC census 2003)
Table 2.7
Paniyas in Nilgiris

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No.</th>
<th>Name of the Taluks (2)</th>
<th>Name of the Revenue Village (3)</th>
<th>Name of the Paniya Tribe Settlements (4)</th>
<th>No.of Families (5)</th>
<th>Total Population (6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gudalur</td>
<td>Kambai Padanthaai</td>
<td>Padanthurai</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gudalur</td>
<td>O’valley Karumarapalli</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gudalur</td>
<td>O’valley Manvoyal</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<tr>
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<td>O’valley Poliyampathi</td>
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<tr>
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<td>O’valley Manjumoola</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gudalur</td>
<td>O’valley Gudalur</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Gudalur Kotharvoyal</td>
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<td>Vazhavoyalakkerai</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Luiz A.D. (1962) Paniyas are clever agricultural labourers, particularly for rice cultivation in the high mountains. Low remuneration and extravagance makes poverty a feature of their society. There are a few in the service of the State Government. They are regarded as clever hunters and when occasions permit, they hunt to supplement the menu. There is no evidence that they own land in this state. The tribe has the Institution of the Kuttan (headman). Though convention prescribes election, he is generally the choice of the landlord. Among some sections the office of the headman is hereditary. He is obeyed and respected but no contributions are made for his maintenance. The Kuttan is consulted before venturing on new undertakings, including marriage negotiations, and for settling disputes that may lead to litigation. Often he plays the role of the Pujari (priest) and oracle, and for such service he is remunerated.
About the social organization of Paniyas in the individual settlement, Thurston (1975) reports ‘that a headman called Kuttan used to be appointed at every settlement by the Nair land-lord; his major responsibility was to account for the actions of every one in the settlement. The installation of the Kuttan with powers of office is celebrated with a feast and dance, at which a bangle is presented to the kuttan as a badge of authority.

Mathur P R G (1977) states in his book, The Tribal Situation in Kerala. The Paniyas seems to have been the first to point out that the Paniya adopted a dual descent system: “Every individual belongs to a clan and a gen. The gen is no less exogamous than the clans. The double exogamy is extended by the rule forbidding marriage in the father’s clan as well as that of the mother. However, the residence is patrilocal”. Through an example, Mathur indicated that while the patrilineal clan was called kulam, the matrilineal identification was to a kudumbam.

Aiyappan A. (1992) while studying the lineage system of the Paniyas of the Wynaad region of Kerala state, found totally 48 illams among the Paniyas of Kerala, but in Nilgiri district in Pandalur and Gudalur taluks where Paniyas live, we found only 8 (eight) illams among the Paniyas. They are: Churivechil illam, Kattupalli illam, Koyilevi illam, Onimoola illam, Muyachu illam, Nirutari illam, Pongi illam and, Wynaad Nambi illam. These lineage names, mentioned above are sometimes of original habitation places, these may categorize the above eight lineage names of Paniyas as under:
1. Named after some distinguished ancestors.
2. Named after the acts of their masters where the Paniyas were slaves.
3. Named after the place where the family once lived before immigrating to their present abode.

At present the importance of the lineage illam exogamy is declining among the Paniyas because of the external social forces among them. Most of the Paniyas younger informants do not remember their illam or kulam names. Several elderly
Paniyas, today do not remember their illam name. If asked, ‘what is your lillam? Many Paniyas may not give an answer. It is also observed in the study area that because of the influence of the neighboring patrilineal Muslims, Syrian Christians and Chetti Hindus, with whom the Paniyas have closer contacts, the emphasis now has come to be inclined towards patrilineal descent affiliating a group in which descent is traced only through father. So now days, if anyone studies carefully about descent and other cultural traits, the Paniyas follow the matrilineal principle in certain spheres of life and the patrilineal principle in certain other aspects.

Marriage is universal and its institutional form has been accepted by all. It varies from culture to culture and from people to people. Marriage is defined as “a socially recognized and normatively defined as male, the other as female, that defines and establishes economic, sexual and other rights and duties each to the other and to other members of society and provides the primary or most usual mechanism in the society by which offspring are recognized as legitimate and accorded normal rights as members of their society”. Some of the commonly known forms of marriage all over the world are monogamy, polygamy and polyandry. Among the Paniyas, there is a restrictive principle which requires that one should not marry any one who is already related with other through blood or through the marriage of some other close relative. Though it is now days, not strictly followed, but the Paniyas also usually avoid marrying their cross-cousins which is contrary to the neighboring Hindu communities. There are a few cases in Nilgiri district where the Paniyas married maternal uncle’s daughter. They avoid the alliance of the paternal aunt’s daughter and sister’s daughter. They also follow the restrictions that those cannot be any exchange of brides between any two local illams because of a principle that wife-givers cannot be wife-takers.

The well-known anthropologist, Aiyappan in his book also writes of how their settlement is administered: ‘each nadu or traditional group of villages, still remembered in their liturgical songs, had a patrilineally hereditary headman called koyma. Under him, there were chemmis, the actual heads of each settlement; they
were assisted by messengers called karayma. The succession to the offices was patrilineal, but occasionally matrilineal also. The office of koyma is virtually extinct; his traditional role was to preside over all social activities and meetings of elders to settle disputes. As the chemmis had parallel powers in their respective settlements, his role was more of an appellate authority. He was entitled to various payments for approving and validating functions. The chemmi had the right to permit the digging of the grave for burials, and was entitled to a payment called vizhunta vari (“death tax”). The chemmi’s wife acts as the leading personage at the menstruation rites of the girls. The chemmi could punish persons guilty of violating norms with fines, of which a share goes to him and another to the koyma. In smaller settlements, a muppan used to be appointed by the landlord, by investing a Paniya with one amulet (vala). He also considered them to have had “dispersed, non-corporate, matrilineal descent groups called illam or kulam; some typical names were munnillam, anchillam, arillam, etc., in which the first component is numerical. They did not want to limit their circle of exogamy to narrow groups – “When a sib grows too large and splits on account of its size, or wide dispersal, the Paniyas are not able to keep track of the segments and the relation between the split segments of the sibs”. They also tended to identify, each with the lineage name of their masters, eg., the serfs of “Ettil Nambiar” would describe themselves as “Ettil Paniyar” The Paniya have largely forgotten these classifications now.’

### 2.5. Customs of Paniyas

*Madras District Gazetteer* (1908) affirms of their customs and lifestyle as: ‘each family is attached to some Chetti household and works on its fields, and in past times they were little better than agrestic slaves. The advent of the coffee planter did much to liberate them, but they are still usually poor, unkempt and unclean. They are clever at netting animals, poisoning fish, and daring at spearing tigers. They have hereditary caste headmen (called Kuttans or Janmis) at all the larger centers, whose consent to all marriages is necessary.
This book also narrates of the customs practiced relating to death and burial of Paniyas. It is as follows: ‘Young folk are buried and the rest cremated. Graves are dug in an unusual way at the bottom of a trench some five feet deep and running due north and south a chamber big enough for the body is excavated in the western wall and the body, wrapped in a mat, is laid therein. A little cooked rice for the spirit is added and the trench filled in. For seven days afterwards the deceased’s relations abjure meat and fish, and a little rice gruel is placed at some distance from this grave by the Kuttan, who claps his hands as a signal to the evil spirits round about to come and be fed. Mourning ceremonies are held in the month of Magaram (January-February), when those who have lost relatives during the year cook their food in a special shed apart from the village and eat neither flesh nor fish. On the last day of the month they assemble at the shed and the Kuttan or Janmi walks round it three times, holding in his crossed arms two winnowing sieves containing paddy which he eventually deposits in the middle of it. Then a komaran or thyyam, a kind of professional soothsayer, appears with a new cloth about his brows, his body smeared with rice-flour and ghee, and bells on his legs to scare away the evil spirits, and advancing with short steps and rolling eyes, stagggers to and fro, sawing the air with two small sticks, and gradually works himself into a state of frenzy which ends in his collapsing on the ground. The assembled mourners then question him as to the reason why their bellowed one is killed by spirits.’

Luiz A D (1963) writes of the marriage, divorce and childbirth of Paniyas in his book as: ‘Marriages are mostly after puberty, and monogamy is the general rule. Negotiations are initiated by the parents of the bridegroom, and confirmed after obtaining the approval of the headman who is the only competent person to certify whether the contract is exogamous or otherwise. When negotiations have been concluded and the amount of bride-price decided the bridegroom has the option to serve the parents of the bride in case he and his parents are unable to pay the agreed bride-price (purchase money). There are instances when both service and bride-price are insisted on. Some clans consider a regular annual contribution
to the parents of the wife as essential, and there are instances when the wife has
been called back or forced to stay away by her parents for default. The giving of
presents is customary and should include colored beads and a new cloth. Their
customs, folk songs and folk lore contains the details of their primitive forms of
marriage, by capture, elopement, exchange and service. The primitive custom of
the bridegroom being bathed by the headman has been discontinued. Eating
together is the essential part of the marriage ceremony.’ The author comments of
their rules and regulation on divorce as follows: ‘Divorce and desertion are rare for
there is a popular saying that a Paniya husband is permitted to kill his adulterous
wife. Paniya husband proudly claim that they punish adultery severely. A widow
and divorcee are free to marry whomsoever they like. Levirate is permissible, but
not sororate. Luiz also comments of their customs related with childbirth as:
‘Paniyathies generally refrain from hard work after childbirth and attend to the
child till it is able to help itself. A girl at puberty and a woman in menses are not
segregated in the rigid manner popular with the other tribes. There are no
ceremonies during pregnancy, but the father is expected to avoid a diet of fish and
meat.’

Singh K.S (1995) refers of Paniyas customs related with pregnancy and
naming: as, Pregnancy: pre-delivery ritual (allu pundayattu) is observed by the
Paniyan during the eighth or ninth month of pregnancy at the husband’s house. In
early days and in a few cases even now, the delivery is performed by atukari
(midwife), who belongs to the same community. Nowadays, however, most of
them go to hospital. On the 12th day, they perform a purificatory ceremony called
pnniyaham. Rice mixed with turmeric powder is cooked and served to her along
with vegetable. Post-natal restriction exists for a period of one month. The naming
ceremony is observed by the Paniyan on pnniyaham day in case of the first child
only. The child is given a bath by the father’s sister and adorned in new dress.
Then she calls the name in the presence of all relatives. First cereal feeding
ceremony is observed during the fifth month and is called pullante choruttae.
Presence of paternal and maternal uncles and aunts is a must in this ceremony. Ear
piercing ceremony (*kathukuttu kalyanam*) is performed for either sex in the presence of mother’s brother.

*Encyclopedia of Dravidian Tribes* (1996), notes the customs of Paniyas. There are number of customs and cultures observed among the Paniyas of Kannur and Nilgiris. In this paper only few of them are referred such as Family, Birth, Puberty, Marriage, Death and Burial. The author also writes of their family life. They have very strong family feeling within themselves. They are more attached to one another than other non-tribals. Their family is called 'kudumbam'. The family is also divided into clan, which is called 'kulam' or 'illam'. There is no inequality between men and women in the area of work. Both husband and wife go for work and earn money for their daily survival. After coming back from the work mostly husband goes to market and buy daily provision, whereas the wife cooks and prepares items. Though there is division of labour between them and they enjoy equal rights in the family. In the family husband and wife are generally expected to be faithful to one another. Adultery is dealt with severely. The divorces are very rare among them. In this article the writer also remarks of their child birth. Child is delivered usually in husband’s house. The pollution of the mother is observed for about fifteen days. For the first 39 days the father of the child or any male relations are not permitted to touch the child. On the fortieth day child is given a purification bath. Naming is done mostly after a year. Paniyathis generally refrain from hard work after childbirth and attend to the child till; the child is able to help by self.

The custom related with the puberty is as: ‘soon after the girl gets matured, they separate her from the normal life in the family; she is given a separate hut. In this hut she is not allowed to be seen by males. She will remain there for seven days, on the eighth day she is given a bath and taken home. Then the hut is dismantled and burned, the old cloths also burned. The writer also refers of the Paniyas marriage. Marriage mostly practiced within the family, seeking a bride preferably the boy goes to uncles daughter, if he couldn't find it is allowed to take
from outside. 'Marriage to one's father's sister's daughter and mother's brother's
daughter is preferred'. Marriage is generally after the girl attains puberty. There are
number of customs accompanied with marriage. The wedding is officiated by the
priest or 'kutten' (elder). The bride prize has to be paid to her father by bridegroom.
Widow marriage is allowed. It is customary among Paniyas community that the
husband has to give an annual subscription known as 'Thalapattom' to his wife's
parents on the 'Uchal' (annual festival) day, failure of this can cause the brides
parents to call back their daughter. The customs related with the death and burial
mentioned in this article as: ‘In the time of death mostly the relatives gather
around to perform required rites and rituals. Soon after the death the dead body
will be given a bath, decorated and taken to the burial ground in a platform of
bamboo. The priest will come and perform certain religious rituals. Then the body
will be taken to buried. 'In burying the dead-body, the head is placed towards
south, with face upwards. After burying the dead body, a small quality of 'kanji'
(rice gruel) is placed and covered up with earth. Burials mostly take place very
near to their house 'padi’. Some time they also cremate the dead body, this is done
mainly to satisfy a Hindu master.’

*Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (1998) defines the word 'Custom' as: Customs
are established ways of thinking and acting in societies’.

of Indian Tribes*, of the dress code of Paniyas as follows: ‘The dress of Paniyan is
simple and easily distinguishable from other tribal communities. The males wear a
long cloth (‘Mundu’) which is wrapped around the waist and a small ‘mundu’ is
worn on the shoulders covering the body. The Paniya women (‘Panichis’) wear a
long cloth on the loins and a smaller one above the bosom through the armpits. A
coloured scarf either red or black which they call ‘aratti’ is tied around the waist of
women.’
2.5.1. Culture of Paniyas

Sigh K (1990) in his book *Social Changes in India*, states about the various elements of the culture and cultural change. Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society. He also defined the ‘Culture as a system of derived needs and organized system of purposeful activities’. According to him culture is the summed total of integrated, learned behavior and pattern, which are therefore not the result of biological inheritance. In his book, he also observes some of the general characteristics of culture, 1. Every society has a distinctive culture, 2. It is reflected in the organization of the family, group and clan etc., 3. It has definite method of working, 4. There is a basic discipline whose violation is punishable, 5. There is a psychotically unity, 6. Culture has a definite object of life, 7. Culture is transmitted and consists of learned behavior, 8. It is social in nature and meant for satisfying human wants, 9. It is responsible for accommodation and acclimatization.

David Jerry (1995) observes in his book, *Collins Dictionary of Sociology*, Culture is the way of life of the particular society. 'Culture may be taken as constituting the way of life of an entire society and this will include code of manners, dress, language, rituals norms of behaviors and systems of belief'. The author also observes of two kinds of cultures, one is learned and another is shared or adopted.

Haralambos M (2003) writes in his book, *Sociology themes and Perspectives*, about how the culture is learned by the young one in the society. “To all intents and purposes a new born human body is helpless. Not only is it physically dependent on older members of the species but it also lacks the behavior patterns necessary for living in human society. It relies primarily on certain biological drives such as hunger and the charity of its elders to satisfy those drives. The infant has a lot to learn. In order to survive it must learn the skills, knowledge and accepted ways of behaving in the society into which he is born. It must be the way
of life: in sociological terminology, it must learn the culture of its society”. He also refers about how the culture is transmitted to another generation. The culture of the society is the way of life of its members, the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation. Culture is a design for living held by members of a particular society. The two essentials in culture are, one is learned, and another is shared.

2.6. Religion of Paniyas

Luiz A.D. (1963) comments on the religion of Paniyas: ‘Paniyas traditional religion is mainly come under the category of animism and totemism. Even today there are people practing this religion. Many of them have adopted other religions of the surroundings namely Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. This is mainly because of the influence of their masters or 'Yasman'. In the traditional religion of some places their supreme God is known as 'Ippimala Teyya'. In some other places they worship 'Kattu Bagavathi' (god of the jungle) and their family deity is 'Guliyan' or 'illateyya'. No image of the god is erected in the shrine. They have worship place in every settlement, every house has a small platform 'tina' or kulithara believes to be the dwelling place of spirits. Besides this they also believe in number of good and evil spirits. In order to please God and spirit they practice various rites and rituals, hectic dances and festivals. Some trees are considered as evil spirit possessed or haunted. These trees are not to be touched or cut. They have priests appointed in every settlement shrines. He is called 'Nolambukaran'.

They believe in many spirits, god and goddess. They believe sun as 'pakal bhagavan' god of the day and the moon as 'iravu bhagavan' god of the night. Paniyas give offering to these deities during rituals and festive occasions. It is customary to observe a prescribed cycle of religious ceremonies in a year. Paniyas observe a number of festivals in different seasons, some of them are exclusively as their own, some of them are widely spread through out the state.

Aiyappan (1992) in his book, The Paniyas, refers about the religious functionaries of the Paniyas settlement, ‘the important religious functionary is the
attali, a combined hymnist, ritualist and medium-dancer, engaged for rituals in honor of the gods, the spirits of the dead, and for exorcising evil spirits who possess persons. In addition, there are “ordinary medium dancers, the velichapads”, who get the afflatus of various deities; also specialists in sooth-saying, divination and astrology, who practice their trade of sorcery (kodi vekkal, mantidal, etc). The vaidyakkar are medical practitioners who can cure those suffering from sores by symbolically “drinking” the blood, and can charm thorns, hairs, and other harmful foreign bodies from the sufferers’ by means of the manipulations of magic sticks.

Shiva Kumar (1994) observes the tribal’s religion that they have left their traditional religion and adopted the new religions. ‘In many places the tribal people have adopted other religions in the recent years. The 1961 senses the following report gives a clear picture of it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL No.</th>
<th>Religions</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>26,710,428</td>
<td>89.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>1,653,570</td>
<td>5.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>100,243</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>61,233</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>1,353,775</td>
<td>4.53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

religion, theory of revelation and biblical theory. All these theories are effort of the
different scholars trying to explain how the religion came to exist in the society.

Manorama Year Book (2002) writes about general structure of religions in
India. ‘India is a multi-religious country. Beside the major religions of India like
Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikkism, Buddhism, Jainism and Parsis, there are
also many other religions and tribal religions. According to the 1991 Religious
Census there are 672.6m Hindus, 95.2m Muslims, 18.9m Christians, 16.3m Sikhs,
6.3m Buddhists and 3.4m Jains in India.’

2.6.1. Conversion and Untouchability

of T.N.), tries to point out the problem of untouchability among the tribals of India
after their conversion to Roman Catholic Christianity. He makes the case study of
the Paraiyars of Madurai districts of T.N. South India. According to him there is
caste system among the Christians, the converted Christians from Paraiyars
community are regarded as lower caste Christians and they are been ill treated by
the other Christians. In this book author also criticize the some of the methods and
practices of Christianity, instituted by the 16th century Christian missionary
Robert de Nobili. He states in his book about the dissatisfactions of the Catholic
Paraiyars, in the Church as they were expected. Their relationship with the Church
is distant and purely ritual.

2.7. Social Changes and Contextual Issues of Paniyas

India, analysis some of the major social problems of the country India. He
identifies them as population, family disorganization, problems of the aged,
violence against women, youth unrest, child labour, drug abuse, terrorism, and
problems of industrialization etc. He states all these problems bring social
disorganization to the society. When the problems exist in the society, it cannot
2.7.1. Social Changes

Social change is observed among most of the societies in the modern era. There are influence of external and internal elements on the society, as a result of that the social change take place. In the social changes the tribals are not spared.

Thomas M.M. (1965) one of the well-known social theologian comments on the social change of tribals in India in his book *Tribal Awakening*. Originally the tribals were the food gatherers for their survival, now they have become terrorist with nuclear power. Many of the tribals were in isolation till the few decades back, now they have been brought into mainstream through modern developments and all kinds of changes in social, cultural, economic and political. Tribals came out of the forest to the land, town and cities. He also state various factors related with the social change of the tribals in India. Thus are: ecological, religious, educational, technological, industrial, political and government policies and programs. The tribal culture is changing over all parts of the world. Now it is very hard to trace the original tribal culture, custom and religion.

Sigh K. (1990) in his book, *Social Changes in India*, gives a historical transition of the social change happens in India. India is basically an agrarian society, but it has transferred in to industrial society. Social change in India includes five ways, they are: 1. Changes in family structure, 2. Changes in caste system, 3. Changes in the social stratification, 4. Increasing mobility, 5. Changes in the marriage institution. Social changes can be surely caused by the changes taking place in the area of political and religious. Political changes take place by the regulations made by legal laws, local autonomy, changes in the pattern of political leadership, etc. Economic changes take place mainly because of the developments in the technology, Information Technology, transportation and communication. The recent developments have largely influenced our economy.
Our agrarian economy changed into industrial economy. Religious changes are mainly because of philosophical development, the spread of rationalism, impact of western culture and religion, etc. He also recognizes some of the factors responsible for the social changes. These are as: 1. Economic factors, Karl Max recognizes economy is the basic factors of social change. 2. Physical environment of geographical factors of social change, such as land, natural calamities, discovery of minerals and mines and climates etc. 3. Biological factors: this includes the birth and death rates, racial mixture, racial issues, etc. 4. Technological factors: in the process of fulfillment of needs of human beings a new civilization is formed. 5. Cultural factors. 6. Demographic factors: this is because of increase or decrease of population, problem of poverty, hunger, immigration, struggles of meeting basic human needs etc. 7. Psychological factors: the new industrial society is with lot of tensions.

Ivan Craib (1997) in his well written book, Classical Social Theory, explains the relationship between the social change theory and communism / Marxism. He analysis the present day’s society and pointing out that how the hunting society developed into industrial society. The distinction between those societies, which employ a process of simple re-distribution through a network of relations which are temporary, which might last only long enough for the immediate distribution of the skills and societies with a more complex re-distribution system.

Sachchidanda, R.P. Prasad (1998) in his book, Encyclopaedic Profile of Indian Tribes, comments on the dwelling pattern of the tribe. The Paniyas have two subdivisions according to their dwelling pattern, that is, Paniyas of the plains having contact with non-tribal people and those living in interior forests more or less in an isolated manner with limited interaction with the plainsmen. The latter groups are mainly found in Nilambur forests of Malapuram District.

movements were Samatva Samaj: a movement started by Muthukutty Swamy, the Cheramar movement: fought for the education for the Pulaya community and Sri Narayana Guru and Ezhava movement: fought for the religious freedom from upper caste. These mentioned movements had tremendous influence on the social changes in Kerala. These movements contributed very much to the complete modification of the social order. It took place in the context of high class Nairs dominating in the society.

Mukhi H. R. (1999), in his book, *Principle of Sociology*, highlights some of the definitions on social change. According to him ‘Social change is a term used to describe variations or modifications of any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organization’. Gillin and Gillin: says ‘Social changes are variations from the accepted modes of life; whether due to alteration in geographical conditions, in cultural equipment, composition of the population or ideologies and whether brought about by diffusion or invention within the group’. Mac Iver: defined, as ‘Social change is the change in social relationship’. Social change means that large numbers of persons are engaging in activities that differ from those in which they or their immediate forefather engaged in some time before.

Topro R. S. (2000), in his book, *Tribes in India*, states about the change taking place among some of the hill tribes. According to his book many of them adopted the religion and social order of the surroundings. The tribes like Bhumji, Bhil, etc. can be considered to be incorporated in the Hindu social order; they have accepted caste structure and can hardly be differentiated from the neighboring Hindu peasantry. The tribes like Santal, Oraon, Munda, Gond, etc. can be considered positively oriented towards the Hindu social order. In this book he also classifies the tribals into four categories according to their relationship with the surrounding Hindu order: 1. Incorporated in the Hindu social order, 2. Positively oriented towards Hindu social order. 3. Negatively oriented towards Hindu social order. 4. Indifferent towards the Hindu social order.
Yogendra Sigh (2000) in his book, evaluates on the social change happening in Indian society. ‘The process of the change in the Indian society has entered a qualitatively new phase- substantial material exists on the analysis of the changes in the social stratification and the processes of social mobility, the nature of demographic changes and the extent of urbanization and industrialization’. These social changes help people to come out of their backwardness, cast structure and social evil. In this book the author writes about the following topics: Significance of culture in the understanding of social changes in contemporary India, Globalization and the local cultures, Is globalization a threat to regional and local identities, Social change rise of popular culture. He also critically evaluates of the changes in cultural values, institutions and ideologies that constitute India’s response to the contemporary challenges from the forces of cultural and economic globalization. This book mainly concerns with changes in cultural styles through exposure to global cultural patterns. It also examines the impact of electronic media, migration and increased pace of intercultural interactions upon local, regional and national levels of culture.

2.7.2. Cultural Change

Singh K.S. (1995) in his book, People of India, remarks on some of the changes taking place in marriage customs of Paniyas. ‘A few important changes are reported in marriage customs. There is a slight rise in the age at marriage for both boys and girls and preference for ‘arranged’ marriage. The payments in kind which are made to the girl after thali kettukalyanam are made mostly in cash, payment of anjai by every husband to their in-laws is done only for two to three years after marriage and then it is discontinued. Incidence of divorce shows decline. The author also comments on the change of the family structure from joint family to nucleus family. ‘The most common type of family (kudumba) found among the Paniyas is of the nuclear type. The main reason for the prevalence of nuclear family is the high dependence on wage earning. Through wage earning, they are unable to support and sustain large group. Some extended families of
patriarchal type are reported, but, we cannot call them vertically extended because married sons living in the same hut are found to maintain a separate hearth even though there is great co-operation and exchange of cooked food. Interpersonal relationships are cordial with economic cooperation and reinforcement. The status and role of the father, mother and children are very clear cut. Husband and wife work in unison in bringing up the children. As wife and mother, she plays the major role in running the household, cooking, husking, cleaning, washing and feeding children. The wives also go for gathering edible leaves, tubers, and land crabs. Daughters are also taught the above activities from their young age. During the ‘busy’ agricultural season when both parents are fully engaged, the daughters are left in charge of the household and they look after their younger siblings. In the family, father is the most respectable person, whose decision is honored by all. Avoidance of relationship is reported between mother-in-law and son-in-law. Joking relationship is also present between brothers and sisters-in-law. Main reasons for conflict and confrontation are check on freedom of youngsters and challenge to authority of elders.

Vatsyayan (1998) refers in this book, *Anthropology: Social and Cultural*, about the tribal’s cultural change taking place among them. He says due to content with Hindu and western culture, the tribal culture has constantly changed. This cultural change has been affected by the following ways. 1. Simple adoption: In this process of cultural change a tribe simply adopts the culture of another tribe. 2. Acculturation: Where a culture almost engulfs another culture and changes it the process is known as acculturation. This involves a wider and deeper cultural change. 3. Assimilation: In this process of cultural change, a culture is not only adopted, but also assimilated and therefore becomes an integrated part of the adopting culture. The author also evaluates the impact of Hindu and Christian culture to the tribal has resulted both in evil as well as favourable consequences. This cultural contact has removed many superstitions and evil customs from the tribes. The Christian missionaries have opened hospitals and schools for the benefits of tribal people. These have decreased the influence of disease and
illiteracy. The followings are the evil consequences in this connection:
Degeneration of collective live, Social disorganization, Economic exploitation,
Moral degeneration and gradual disappearance of the tribal culture.

2.7.3. Changes in Status of Woman

Singh K.S. (1995) remarks on the duties performed by Paniya women in the
home and outside. ‘The Paniya women have roles in agricultural operations,
animal husbandry, bringing potable water, collection of fuel and other economic
activities. They participate in social functions, ritual and religious spheres, but they
do not have a leading role in the political sphere and in mechanisms of social
control. The do not have decision-making powers and cannot control expenditure
though they contribute to family income.’

Shah M A (1996), in his book, Social Structure and Change, comments, on the
changing status of Indian women in the society. The writer distinguishes wide
ranges of issues concerning women in the Indian society. He observes some of the
gender-biased policies of the government and social systems. The author remarks,
education is the root of all social changes. The women in India need to be brought
into the front of education, through this only she can be brought into the social
development. By educating the women folk they may participate in productive
activities and she will get her rights. The writer also observes some of the
interesting facts are that female infanticide is in increase in northern and western
India. Indian village society traditionally constructed as a patriarchal model,
considers the status of women is law. The writer in this book suggests various
steps to up-bring the status of women.

2.7.4. Education and Social Change

Denis Coelho (1995) affirms in his book, Changing Perspectives in Education,
the fact that influence of the education for the social change. He writes that the
education is something that primarary influences social change. It is an open fact
that education is important for the people’s all kinds of progress. Education needs
to be understood as a potent tool for the development of the individuals and nation as whole. In this book he also emphasis about the liberating functions of education in the Indian society.

2.7.5. Paniya Children’s Education

Pottala Paniya Pre- School Primer (1996) is published in order to strengthen and encourage the education of the Paniya children of Gudalur taluk of T. N. In the recent years, the tribal children’s education was the prior concern of government and many NGOs in our country. The tribal numbering 20,000 in Gudallur taluk speak their respective tribal mother tongues and are in addition capable of speaking one or more of the regional languages like Tamil, Malayalam or Kannada which are also of Dravidian stock. The study on the government residential hostel reveals some of the interesting facts that in the last 39 years of the history only 5 tribal students could complete the standard 10th class. Many of them dropout in the school in primarily level itself. The research reveals the main reason for this dropout is when children come to the school they are not getting education in their own mother tongue. They struggle in the school in the early stage itself finally ends with leaving the school. In order to rectify this issue the government and NGOs have come up with a new method for tribal children’s education. The National Educational Policy 1986 has clearly spelled out the importance of using the tribal mother tongue at the initial stage of education with arrangements for a gradual switching over to the regional language of the state. Most of these tribal languages are not having script; in this situation they use the script of the state language. In the case of Paniyas of Gudalur they use Tamil script in preparing this Primer in Paniya language. Similar Priemer is prepared to educate the children of Bettkurumba, Kattunayaka, Mullukurumba and Irula tribes.

As a result of these social changes so many people of this tribe have shifted their life style from nomadic to modern life style. In nomadic life style, they were using their traditional skills, which enable them to get their daily bread. Present day's changed situation they have to depend on the other surrounding communities for their survival. For this reason many of them suffer poverty and famine death.
(The researcher has collected report of these from current magazines and newspapers regarding these issues, it is surprising to note down that number of poverty deaths are reported in the recent years among the paniyas). The social changes also cause many sociological and ecological problems such as population explosion in the colonies, pollution and unemployment. Many of the Paniyas suffer with unidentified diseases. The indigenous people are found deprived of their traditionally enjoyed privileges. In this research, the researcher wants to probe into some of the social issues of Paniyas.

2.8. Sociological Theories

Some of the sociological theories help for this research study, here few of them are identified and explained briefly.

2.8.1. Functionalism

Haralambos M (2003) writes about functionalism, one of the sociological theories. According to this the various parts of society are seen to be interrelated and taken together, they form a complete system. To understand any part of society such as the family or religion, the part must be seen in relation to society as a whole. Functionalism begins with the observation that behaviour in society is structured. This means that relationships between members of the society are organized in terms of rules. Social relationships are therefore patterned and recurrent. The structure of the society can be seen as the sum total of normative behaviour- the sum total of relationships, which are governed by norms.

2.8.2. Marxism

Oxford Dictionary of Sociology (1998) refers, ‘Marxism is named after its founder the German born philosopher, economist and sociologist, Karl Marx (1818-83). Marxism viewpoint behaviour of a person in ultimately determined by the economic infrastructure. Marxism begins with the simple observation that in order to survive, man must produce food and material objects. In doing so he enters into social relationships with other men. From simple hunting band to the
complex industrial state, production is a social enterprise. Production also involves a technical component known as the forces of production, which includes the technology, raw material and scientific knowledge employed in the process of production. Marx maintained that with the possible exception of the societies of pre history, all historical societies contain basic contradictions which mean that they cannot survive forever in their existing form society, lords’ exploitation of one social group by another. For example in feudal society, the lords exploit their serfs, in capitalist society, employers exploit their employees. This creates a fundamental conflict of interest between social groups since one gain at the expense of another’s lose.

2.8.3. Socialization

Haralambos M (2003) refers socialization as the process by which individuals learn the culture of their society. Primarily the most important aspect of the socialization process takes place during infancy, usually within the family. By the responding to the approval and disapproval of its parents and copying their example, the child learns the language and many of the basic behavior patterns of its society. The important agencies of socialization include the educational system, the occupational group and the peer group. In this book the author states about how the young ones follow the elders among the tribals. He writes, ‘To all intents and purpose a new born human baby is helpless. Not only is it physically dependant on older members of the species but it also lacks behaviors patterns necessary for living in human society. It relies primarily on certain biological drives such as hunger and the charity of its elders to satisfy those drives. The infant has a lot to learn. In order to survive, it must learn the skills, knowledge and accepted ways of behaving of the society into which it is born. It must learn a way of life of its society.

2.8.4. Theories of Social Change

Singh K. (1990) in his book gives some of the relevant theories of social change. These theories are based on different factors which causes for the social
change. Deterministic theory: according to this theory, human behavior as primarily to be explained by environmental external or internal conditions. Linear theory: according to theory the changes that take place in the society are not repeated, social thinkers who have contributed to this theory are Auguste, Herbert Spencer, Hobhouse and Karl Marx. Cyclic theory: this theory view that social changes in the society take place in a cyclic manner which means the changes that have taken place today are repeated after one stage or the other. Environmental theory: according to this theory of socio cultural changes are the result of the changes in atmosphere and environment.

Ivan Craib (1997) in his book analysis the social change theory of communism and Marxism. He analysis how the hunting society developed into industrial society. ‘The distinctions through a network of relations which are temporary, which might last only long enough for the immediate distribution of the skill and societies with a more complex re-distribution system’.