Chapter-V

Conclusion and Recommendations
CHAPTER – V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Introduction

Of the 300 million indigenous people living across more than 70 countries, approximately 70 per cent live in Asia. The indigenous people or original inhabitants, also known as Tribals, Adivasis, Moolvasis, aboriginals, hill tribes, ethnic minorities, and ethnic nationalities living in various parts of Asia, constitute a considerable number on the continent (Kujur, 2011). Scheduled tribal communities live in about 15 per cent of the country area, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains, forest to hills and inaccessible areas (MOTA Annual Report, 2010 -2011). There is still isolation in these natural and unpolluted surroundings far away from civilization and the people living in these places with their traditional values, customs, beliefs and myths intact, are commonly known as Tribals (Lal, 2006). India has the second largest tribal population in the world. Tribals are traditionally distinct cultural groups that have evolved in isolation from the mainstream cultures. With heterogeneous social, economic, linguistic, and religious pattern, these tribals survived in isolation for centuries, until modern development projects, rightly or wrongly, impinged on their world (Hussain, 2012). Tribal people are usually understood as having a self-sufficient way of life, largely outside the mainstream of urban nation-states (Corry, 2011). The tribals have been living in the forest areas for centuries which have continued even today, and their livelihood depends on forest resources.

Tribal situation

The tribal situation in each state is different. Their dependency on the forest and the types of problems faced by them are also different, but most of them faced displacement problems due to the forest policy and are living with limited basic facilities. They are living in the forest and inaccessible forest areas. Tribals have been subjected to disabilities like poverty, malnutrition disease, ill-treatment, exploitation, illiteracy and marginalisation over the centuries (Sinha, 2012). Since time immemorial, tribal communities have spent a life in relative isolation under thick canopies with harmony, protection, and belief developing a mutual association. The
deep rooted tribal conditions and sentiments are fulfilled by the reserved forest environment, jungles which helped them to lead a simple life. Most of their requirements like wood for building purposes, resins, gums, dyes, firewood, herbal medicines, fodder for cattle, mahua flower, sal seeds, sal and Tendu leaves, edible roots, tubers, bamboo and wild fruits are met by the forest (Lal, 2013). Tribal communities continue to be vulnerable even today, not because they are poor, asset-less and illiterate compared to the general population, but because they are often unable to negotiate and cope with the consequences of their integration with mainstream economy, society, culture and political systems, of which they were historically protected by their relative isolation. The requirements of planned development, which include the dam, mines, industries, roads, were located in tribal land. With these came the concomitant process of displacement followed by a conflict between development and protection of tribal rights and interests (Tenth Five Year plan Report 2002-2007).

During the post- independence period, states were led towards modernisation. Dam construction, mining, agricultural expansion, and the industrially oriented forest policy caused further dislocation of the tribals. With the state tribal development policy focused on bringing tribals into the modern mainstream, it is not surprising that this dislocation was ignored or even justified, with increased priority given to forest and wildlife in the 1970s. Leading to further misery, tribals were considered external to the ecosystem to be preserved and were evicted from national parks and sanctuaries (Lele and Rao, 1996). The process of deforestation compelled Adivasis to migrate to other areas. In the name of development 18.5 million people were displaced by dam, mines, industries, wildlife sanctuaries, and other projects, 75 per cent of whom have still not been rehabilitated (Gautam and Singh, 2011).

Most of the tribals survive on the collection of forest products for fulfilling their requirement of fuel, fodder, fruit, fertilizer, fiber, and so on. In their diversified economic system, agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, forest activities have significant contribution (Shukla, 2012). Tribals in different parts of the country used to reside in remote and inaccessible regions and therefore, were isolated from the mainstream of the society. The light of education could not reach them for long. As a result tribals not only remained backward and poverty-stricken but also were deprived
of the benefits (Narkulwad, 2012). A large number of tribal communities continued to be extremely backward and some of them are still in the primitive food-gathering stage, whereas some others have registered economic and educational advancement (Behura, 2000). The problem of life of the Hill Bonda not only arises from the constraints of their habitat, but also substantially from their cultural and social imperatives buttressed by the lack of education and awareness of acceptable and available alternatives (Mahapatra and Mohanty, 2000).

The Government of India has taken up many so-called development activities such as setting up industries, mining, and dams without taking proper care of the people. These activities further lead to the displacement of the tribal communities. According to the Action Aid and Indian Social Institute, over 1.4 million people have been displaced from their homes in the four states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and Jharkhand where a total of 10.2 million acres have been acquired for setting up of development projects such as mines, industrial plants, and dams in the last decades. Of the 1.4 million displaced people in these four states, 79 percent were tribals (The State of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Report, 2008). In India, planned development at the national level started in the true sense only after independence. During the British rule, when the Indian economy as a whole was near stagnant, the tribal areas were generally kept secluded out of the normal process of administration and economic action. There was little infrastructure in the tribal areas, excepting a few pockets. The character of tribal policy of the British Government was of isolation of the tribal people from the rest of the population. Some of the British officers genuinely felt that left to themselves, the tribal people would remain a lot happier. Some welfare programmes and legislations were enacted and implemented by the British during the pre-independent period to mitigate the suffering of the tribals and prevent their exploitation by outsiders. However, there was no deliberate attempt to strengthen the economic base of these downtrodden backward communities in the country. It was only after the country became independent that the leaders began to talk in terms of planned economic and social development (Catherine, 2009). The tribals are living in the forest and facing different problems, and a series of forest policies changed and affected the livelihood of the tribals all over the country.
Lifestyle of the Tribals

The myths, religious beliefs and practices, socio-cultural customs and traditions of Oraons point towards the age-old harmonious relationship with nature. On the other hand, Western theology has often described human beings as strangers and pilgrims on earth (Sinha, 2012). The tribal people achieved harmony between their lives and nature through the forest. But as they came in contact with the non-tribal population, their lifestyle has changed to some extent (Mishra, 2012). Tribal females contribute significantly to the tribal economy in the conservation of common property resources and in the preservation of the eco-system. As such, their education and well-being is of paramount significance for the development of tribal society (Narkulwad, 2012).

Lifestyle is constrained by local conditions and unless these are brought into the picture, we cannot say a lot on how to induce a lifestyle change. This type of geographic detail allows a shift from the one-size fits all policy (Scott, 2009). Lifestyles are shaped by a host of factors. Their roots are in culture, politics, economics, and social norms (Falemo, 2010). Sustainable lifestyles are patterns of action and consumption, used by people to affiliate and differentiate themselves from others, which meet basic needs, provide a better quality of life, minimise the use of natural resources and emissions of waste and pollutants over the lifecycle, and do not jeopardize the needs of future generations (UNCED Report, 1992). Sustainable lifestyles should reflect the specific cultural, natural, economical, and social heritage of each society. The basic issue in the whole process of tribal development is to improve the quality of their life (Dashi, 1997).

Soliga tribal distribution

The Soligas are an aboriginal forest tribe inhabiting the states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In Karnataka they are mainly distributed in the interior of forests skirting the slopes of the Biligiri Rangana (BR) Hills and other hilly parts of Mysore and Chamarajanagar districts (Kumar, 2008). The Soliga tribe, which has lived in isolation in and around the forest under the foothills, is one of the most backward. The forest is the source of livelihood for them (Kumar, 2006).
Conclusion and Recommendation

The earliest evidence of human habitation in the B.R. Hills range may be found in the megalithic sites which have been uncovered. Some of these sites are dated as far back as 1200 BC, while the latest ones are dated around AD 200. A menhir on top of a hill in the BRT Sanctuary is also evidence of an early civilization in the region. These megalithic sites and menhir are woven into the ritual and daily lives of the Soliga people who have been living there for the past few centuries. As the number of Soligas continued to rise, they migrated all over the state. In 1956, Soligas were recorded residing in Bangalore, Mysore, Mandya, Kolar, Tumkur, Shimoga, Chikmagalur, Hassan, and Chitradurga, while almost 90 percent of the Soligas lived in Mysore district, specifically in the rain-heavy forests of B.R. Hills and M.M. Hills. They were well suited to life in the thick forests of the region (Somasundaram et al., 2007). Soliga tribal population usually lives in dense or semi-dense forest areas. They live or rather seem to live aloof. In most cases one finds the hamlets of Soligas on the outskirts of the main village Panchayaths. Basket making and agriculture is their main occupation (Nanjunda, 2010).

**Socio-economic and cultural factors of the Soliga tribe**

Tribal society and tribal culture are not static. So transformation in the structure and functions of the tribal society and their culture is rather obvious. Such transformation in their society and culture is a continuous and constant process. Sometimes the process of change is rapid or sometimes slow because of the action of some external and/or internal force or of the psychological or mental condition of the people. Sometimes the rate of change is not only rapid but also much drastic, whereas in some cases it is very slow. Similarly, the nature of such change is not the same everywhere. For obvious reasons the nature of changes may be different in different tribal societies and even different in different aspects of the same society (Raha and Roy, 1997). Nuclear types of families is predominantly found in the Ao (name of tribe) community as after marriage, the newly married couple live separately in a new house constructed by the husband (Boruah, 2011).

In each Podu they have a well-organised Nyaya system of justice. In consultation with the senior members of the community, important decisions are taken to resolve any crisis. The social system of this tribal community is guided by self-sustainable, eco-friendly, use-value based production and exchange. Accumulation, planning, and individualistic ideas are not valued much in the community. They live
in close association with nature. There is a wide gap between the culture, lifestyle, and social values of a tribal community and the mainstream population in the district. However, the community lived with the difference for over centuries (Kumar, 2006).

As a community, the Soligas are one of the poorest in India. After BRT was declared a wildlife sanctuary, the Soligas were settled into Podus, where they were given land to cultivate and to lead a sedentary way of life. The landholdings were small and there are landless peasants, with the community heavily dependent on the collection and sale of NTFPs for subsistence, domestic consumption, and cash income. There is uncertainty of crop production because of absolute rain-dependency, wildlife depredation, and gradual soil erosion from the sloping lands. There is seasonal unemployment. The traditional income of bamboo basket weaving is lost to the Soligas because of the Government ban on the extraction of bamboo after indiscriminate harvesting by pulp industries in the last six decades (Final Report, 2005-2008). Most of the Soligas were shifting cultivators in 1965. A few families had taken to plough cultivation. The population was small in the past and the cycle of shifting cultivation ranged from 50 to 70 years. Now there are no shifting cultivators. The tribal land has been taken over by the Government (Bhat, 1997). Large-Sized Adivasi Multipurpose Cooperative Societies (LAMPS) play a very important role in meeting the socio-economic needs of the tribal people of Karnataka (Raja, 2012).

Tribal education

Most of the tribals are not highly educated, especially those living in the forest areas of B. R. Hills and M. M. Hills. Basic education is available within the forest with the help of Government and NGOs, while access to higher education means relocation to urban areas. This is difficult for them as it involves exposure to a new culture and a new world which further entails considerable expense for fees, food, accommodation, clothes, shoes, and books. Such amounts of money are hard to come by for the forest-dependent Soligas (Somasundaram et al., 2007). The Ravulas (Yeravas) were bonded labourers for many years and slaves before that. Hence, people in positions of power were habituated to exploiting the labour of this tribe. Their status is very low even in the hierarchy of tribal people. They are now being educated in Ashrama Schools, but very few of them opt for higher education. Politically however, they are in a better condition as they have been able to avail of the seats reserved for tribals in some areas (Veena, 2007).
Education in tribal areas, despite being promoted on a war-footing by the various Governments, still struggles to survive. Increase in dropout rates, decrease in enrolment rates, lack of infrastructural facilities, indifferent attitudes of teachers towards tribal children, and vague understanding of the benefits of education among the parents of tribal children are some of the major ills plaguing the educational scenarios in the tribal areas (Nanjunda, 2010)

**Research Methodology**

This study is an exploration of the life style of Soliga Tribes at Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary. This intends to study the factors responsible for the life style of the Soligas like the socio-economic and cultural issues related to their day-to-day life. The Government has introduced a number of programmes for the development of the tribal community since the first five year plan (1952). Abundant resources have been pooled by the Government and implemented in the name of numerous tribal development programmes. To what extent the resources reach to the primary stakeholders need to be understood properly. It seeks a systematic inquiry. Understanding the drawbacks in this regard would improve the service delivery system. Hence, the present study is undertaken.

The present chapters deals with the statement of the problem, importance of the problem, scope of the study, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research design, area of the study, universe and sampling procedure, inclusion and exclusion criteria, ethical issues considered, tools and techniques used for data collection, method of data collection, source of information, pre - testing, main study, data processing and analysis, limitation of the study, operational definition, and chapterisation of the study. Detailed procedures are adopted to make more appropriate in the process.

**Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of the study is to understand the life style of the Soligas of BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. The Constitution of India declared India to be a Welfare State. Article 38 in part IV under the Directive Principles of State Policy lays down: “the State shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as
effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political, shall inform all the institutions of the national life.” Article 46 lays down: “the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation”.

The Census Report 1991 has tried to deal with a lot of problems regarding the word ‘tribe’. They have dealt with Aborigines, Primitives, Animists, Primitive tribal, Hinduised tribal, Jungle tribal, etc. A tribe is a distinct type of social organization, and it plays a significant role in human history. It is often accepted as the origin of the nation. According to Hunter, a tribe descends from a common biology, mythical or legendary ancestor; it occupies a defined territory; it has a common history; they speak a common dialect; and it is invariably endogamous. No reference is made to the economic life or occupation or to animism or other aspects of its religion or culture.

After a detailed review about the topic, the researcher felt the need to study about the lifestyle of the Soligas residing in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. The researcher spent a lot of time with field experts and NGOs to finalize the topic into the final stage. The researcher himself belongs to the Soliga tribe and thus has an added advantage about the community and their lifestyle. So the researcher is able to relate to their problems more sympathetically. The discussion with field experts and educationalists helped a lot in shaping the topic.

The basic outcome of the review of literature will be the knowledge as to what data and other materials are available for operational purposes which will enable the researcher to finalize the topic. With this in the background, the statement of the problem is called a study on “Life style of Soliga Tribes at Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary - A Social Work Perspective”.

Importance of the Study

This study focuses on the indigenous Soliga tribal people living in BRT Wildlife Sanctuary in the Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka. They have been living there for centuries and their livelihood depends upon the Non–timber forest
produces, subsistence agriculture, and other labour works. For the last four years, the collection of Non-Timber Forest Produces (NTFP) in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary was totally banned (2004-05) as per the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972. The Soligas were not provided with any alternative livelihood opportunities when they were cut off from their main economic source which led to an economic crisis among the tribes. Presently they are facing myriad of problems to lead their life peacefully.

Few of the Soligas families are cultivating the forest land without possessing appropriate land record. Some of them are landless families, and face lack of drinking water, housing, road, and electricity in the BRT Soliga Podus (hamlets). Due to lack of health and education facilities in the Podus (hamlets) they have to walk miles to get these services. The Wildlife Protection Act 1972 affected the Soliga life style and because of the forest policy the forest department did not allow the other departments to implement the development programmes. The Soligas are living in isolation in the forest areas. In 2002, a mini cabinet meeting under the leadership of Sri.S.M. Krishna, the then Chief Minister of Karnataka, was conducted in B.R.Hills to solve the tribal problems.

Recently Government of India passed the The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. This Act is very important for the Soligas as it vests rights to the forest and land as well as gives opportunity for collaborative management. The study focuses on the life style of Soligas and explores how this is linked to their development. The BRT Wildlife Sanctuary has 61 Soligas Podus of which 22 Podus are found inside the forest and 39 Podus are around the periphery or outside the forest.

**Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. It intends to study the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the Soliga tribes and the influence of their culture on the socio-economic status. This would help policy makers, the Social Welfare Department, Non-Government Organisations, Research Institutes, Community Based Organizations, People’s Organizations for Tribal Development, and the Forest Department to uplift the tribal community towards a better life.
Presently the Soligas are facing several problems and they are affected by the government policy, especially the Soligas residing inside the forest. At present the state and central governments have introduced several forest policies to uphold the forest rights and the protection of wild animals. These policies are affecting the tribals residing in the forest. The present study made an effort to highlight the life style of Soligas in a different dimension.

Aim of the Study

The study is aimed at understanding the life style of the Soligas in the backdrop of their socio-economic and cultural factors and how these factors influence their life. This will also help to know more about an alternative source of income for their livelihood to lead their daily life. Further it is aimed to prepare an action plan based on the findings to improve their life style and also help them to overcome any kind of problems related to their socio-economic and cultural factors.

Specific objectives

A detailed survey of the available literature of the life style of the Soliga tribes in particular, and of the Bilgiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary in general, reveals that there are hardly any studies available on this subject. Further, there is no study to be found with social work dimension intended to bring out a comprehensive understanding with holistic perspectives. To fill up the research gaps identified, the following objectives have been formulated -

1. To describe the profile of the Soliga tribes.
2. To study the social structure and functioning of the Soliga tribes.
3. To evaluate the economic status of the Soliga tribes.
4. To examine the cultural factors associated with the Soliga tribes.
5. To identify the factors influencing the Soligas’ culture, economy, and social status.
6. To suggest strategies for the development of the Soliga tribes with a social work perspective.
Research Design

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of the data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure (Kothari, 2005).

The study is descriptive in nature. It is learnt from a review of the literature that, there are hardly any studies on the life style of the Soligas with socio-economic and cultural background at the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. Further, there are hardly any studies with a social work perspective intended to bring out a comprehensive understanding with a holistic perspective. Its aim is to describe the income, socio-cultural practices, social systems, occupations, and sacred sites, problems faced by the Soligas, employment opportunities, forest conservation knowledge, socio-cultural structures, and development opportunities for the Soligas in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. Hence, the descriptive research design was considered appropriate for the present study in order to contribute something new to the existing body of knowledge.

Study Area

Chamarajanagar district is situated in the southern part of the Deccan peninsula and it forms the most backward district of the Karnataka state. The district lies between longitude North 76°24’ to 77°43’ South and latitude – West- 11°32’ to 12°16’ East. The district is surrounded by Mysore, Mandya, and Ramanagar district apart from Tamil Nadu and Kerala states towards its southern and western side. The district is a table land situated at an angle where the Eastern and Western Ghats converge into a group of hills called the Nilagiri hills. There are three hill tops, namely, (1) Gopalaswamy betta (Gundlupet taluk),(2) Biligiriranganaga betta in Chamarajanagar and Yelandur taluk- Kollegal taluk, and (3) Mahadeswara hills of Kollegal taluk.

Chamarajanagar district was carved out of Mysore district. The total extent of Chamarajanagar district is 5686 sq kms consisting of 4 taluks and 16 hoblis, 446
habitated villages, 66 non-habitated villages, and 461 revenue villages. The 4 taluks are Chamarajanagar, Gundlupet, Kollegal, and Yelandur. The Chamarajanagar Parliamentary Constituency consists of Chamarajanagar, Gundlupet, Kollegal, Yelandur, T. Narsipur, and Nanjangud. The Chamarajanagar Legislative Assembly Constituency consists of Chamarajanagar, Gundlupet, Kollegal, and Hanur.

The Soligas, Kadu Kuruba, and Jenu Kuruba are forest based tribes living in 148 Podus/colonies of Chamarajanagar, Gundulepet, Yelandur, and Kollegal taluks of Chamarajanagar district. The tribal population (mainly Soligas) is about 31,303, comprising of 5738 families in the district. All the tribals derive their livelihood from the collection and sale of NTFPs through the Society of tribals called LAMPS (Large Scale Adivasi Multipurpose Co-operative Society).

The BRT Wildlife Sanctuary covers three taluks of Yelandur, Chamarajanagar, and Kollegal of Chamarajanagar district. The BRT Wildlife Sanctuary houses 61 Podus, of which Yelandur has 10 Podus, Chamarajanagar has 25 Podus, and Kollegal has 26 Podus/colonies.

The Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple (BRT) Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka state. The Sanctuary derives its name "BILIGIRI" from the white rocky cliff, the top of which resembles a tabletop and has the temple of Lord "VISHNU" locally known as Rangaswamy. The hill range also gets its name by the white mist and silver clouds that cover these lofty hills for a greater part of the year. This unique bio-geographical entity which is situated in the middle of the bridge between the Western and Eastern ghats in South India located between 11°43’ and 12°09’ North Latitude and 77°01’ and 77°15’ East Longitudes. The BRT Wildlife Sanctuary area spreads over 571.06 sq kms. There are 61 Podus situated in the interior as well as exterior of the forest area and a total of 2905 families depend on this forest for their life.
The natural vegetation consists mainly of dry deciduous and scrubs with stunted growth and an open canopy with evergreen, semi-evergreen, and shoal forests mostly restricted to hilly terrain and hill top slopes of the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. The BRT Wildlife Sanctuary is well known for its wildlife consisting of elephants, sambars, leopards, gaur, and tigers and rich bio-diversity. The ancient temple of the Biligiri Rangaswamy situated on the hilltop in the sanctuary has been a place of pilgrimage for more than 500 years.

In 1974, under Government Notification the Chamarajanagar Protected Forest and BRT reserve forests were declared as the “Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary”. Nearly 7000 tribals derive their entire livelihood from this area. The big Michelia champaka known as “Dodda sampige” is the most sacred flower for the Soliga tribes and other local people.

The BRT hills are home to the Soligas, an indigenous people, whose co-existence with the forest goes back centuries. They are hunter-gatherers who have traditionally practiced shifting agriculture. In 1974, BRT was declared as a wildlife sanctuary and the Soligas were banned from hunting and shifting agriculture. At the same time, the Government expanded the area of the sanctuary, redefining the territory that the Soligas could occupy, farm and collect NTFPs since 2003. Despite the Wildlife Protection Act Amendment, BRT was the only wildlife sanctuary in the country where the collection of NTFPs was allowed under the clause ‘bonafide livelihood use’. The NTFPs collection was banned in 2004-05. After BRT was declared a wildlife sanctuary, the Soligas were settled into villages called Podus, where they were given land to cultivate and expected to lead a sedentary way of life. The landholdings are small, there are landless peasants, and the community is still, post ban, heavily dependent on the NTFPs for subsistence, domestic consumption, and cash income.
Universe and Sampling

The study focuses on the Soliga tribal community in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary of Chamarajanagar district, excluding the non-tribal families. There are 61 Soligas Podus in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. Hence, the universe of the study constitutes 61 Soliga Podus. To have a greater representation the 61 Podus, 36 Podus were chosen by adopting a disproportionate stratified random sampling design. The methodology adopted for drawing the unit of samples from the universe is given in the following table.

The sampling process was done in several steps. In the first stage, the Podus were identified with the number of families residing in each Podu. There are 2905 families residing in 61 Podus. These families were classified into Podu-wise distribution.

In the second stage, each classification having number of families. Those families were listed and the classification number was given. Based on the number of families, disproportionate weightage was given for random selection.

In the third stage, a number of Podus and families were selected based on the disproportionate weightage. A total of 36 Podus were selected based on the classification and using the lottery method 1527 families was selected in the process.

In the final stage, of the 1527 families 25 per cent families were selected for the study. Only the head of the family/responsible person of the family was considered for the purpose of the interview. Finally 370 families were selected for the study.

Sampling frame work chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLING FRAME WORK CHART</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Podus – 61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selected Podus for the study - 36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The prime criteria of including the respondents in this study are the Soligas tribes who are dominant (majority) living in the BRT Sanctuary.

The other small groups or communities, viz., the Nayakas and Brahmins living at BRT Sanctuary were excluded from the present study.

Tools and Techniques used for Data Collection

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<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Type of Respondent</th>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Technique</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Head of the Soliga household</td>
<td>Semi-structured Interview Schedule</td>
<td>Interview/Observation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Key persons in the Soliga Podus</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Groups of Soliga tribe in the Podus</td>
<td>Checklist</td>
<td>Focused Group Discussion</td>
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Construction of Research Tools

In order to satisfy the objectives of the study, two different tools were developed to gather the primary data from the Soliga tribes. The required primary data was gathered using the following tools:

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

The semi structured interview schedule was prepared based on reviews of literature, field experience, and Government and non- government organisation reports. The researcher identified the problems faced by the Soligas based on personal observation and from different sources like the media, newspaper and reports, etc. and went though schedules conducted by earlier studies. A Semi- structured Interview Schedule was developed keeping in view the objectives of the study. Objective - wise questions were organized logically on their profile, socio-cultural, and economic structure of the Soliga tribes and the influence of various factors on their life.

The study focuses on the respondent’s profile, family profile, education, occupation, sex, Clan, age, Tribal council (Nyaya system), practices, social structure, tribal council functions, types of disputes, how the tribal council helped in solving the
disputes, the younger generation’s respect for the tribal council and their awareness of it, level of acceptance of the tribal council’s decision by the community, types of marriage, marriage practices, appropriateness of marriage in the current situation, landholding, types of landholding, types of crops cultivated, income from agricultural crops and its consumption, agricultural cash and non-cash income, labour income, livestock cash and non-cash income, types of livestock holding, agricultural expenses including own labour expenses and outside expenses, use of seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides, migration income, migration problems, reasons for migration, dependency on the forest, forest cash and non-cash income, total income, household assets, prefer to buy or build household assets, support from the government or NGOs for availing certain basic items, consumption expenses, sources of credits needed, festivals celebrated, worship and to what purpose, agriculture related cultural rituals, health status of the family, family planning, family members eligible to vote in the elections, media used for information and reasons thereof, sources of drinking water, approximate distance of the Podu, government facilities received, major aspects that have influenced the family life style, sources of energy used for light and fuel, problems faced after the ban on NTFPs, assistance received from the government, developmental assistance received from the government in the last ten years, support received from the Panchayathi, developmental assistance received from Non-Governmental Organisations, help and support expected from the NGOs, opinion on shifting the Soligas from their natural habitat, awareness on different development programmes, government help in the development process, NGOs help in the development process, type of programmes needed for the improvement of the Soliga community, and list of problems faced by the community.

Checklist

A checklist was also prepared keeping in view the objectives of the study to conduct the Informal Interviews and Focused Group Discussions with the community members. The researcher sat with the individual respondents and conducted the personal interview in the respondent’s house at the Podus/colonies, after explaining the purpose of the study. The interview was conducted in the morning and towards the evening because most of the respondents are engaged in agriculture labour and wage labour. Based on the respondent’s available time, the researcher approached them and
collected the information. The data was collected from the months of July 2009 to December 2009. The Focus Group Discussion was conducted in the Podus with the elder persons and respondents towards the evening because this is the time that they are available or have free time and the researcher stayed in the Podus for the duration and collected the information. The researcher explained the purpose of the study, and then conducted the focus group discussion, with each group having 10 to 20 members. Thus 10 focus group discussions were conducted and information collected on the social structure, functions, marriage, birth, death rituals, naming ceremonies, festival celebration, types of festival celebrated, cultural relationship with nature, etc.

Techniques Adopted for Data Collection

In order to get an accurate data from the different stakeholders of the Soliga tribe, the technique of data collection, viz., interview and observation and Focused Group Discussion were adopted.

Methods of Data Collection

The researcher felt that only through personal contact with the respondents could proper and required amount of information related to the issues under analysis be obtained. So the interview was held in the tribal language. The researcher felt this as the most suitable method, so the researcher met the respondents personally. To get co-operation from the respondents, the researcher decided to approach them with a pre-planned schedule and collect the information after explaining to them the purpose of the study.

Sources of information

From the following two sources, the data related to the present research study was collected by the researcher.

(a) Primary source of data

- Interviews
- Focused group discussion
- Observations
- Informal discussion with tribal leaders
- Informal discussion with NGO heads and forest department personnel
(b) Secondary source of data

- Research publications on tribal issues
- Reports collected from the Government and Non-Government Organisation about tribal activities
- Magazines, journals, books, and other research materials related to tribals
- Gazette reports of the Government of India and the Government of Karnataka

Pre-testing

After the semi-structured interview schedule and a checklist were prepared by the researcher, it was administered on the selected families of Soliga Tribe. The purpose of this exercise was to find out the effectiveness of the tools in gathering the primary data. After pre-testing both the tools, necessary modifications were made, with additions and deletions, on the basis of the findings of the pre-testing. The pre-testing exercise took about 10 days. The tools were standardized and finalized for the main study.

Main Study

The researcher approached each Soliga family personally and explained the objectives of the study before seeking their permission and co-operation in conducting the study. The researcher has spent about 90 minutes with each family.

The primary data was collected through personal interviews, informal interviews, and focused group discussions with 370 families of 36 Podus. All together the process of gathering empirical data took about six months

Data Processing and Analysis

The primary data collected according to the above methodology was subjected to processing. It was edited and classified. The data was quantified with the help of a coding key. Further, the data was transformed to SPSS for the application of necessary statistical techniques. The percentages, frequency distribution tables, charts, graphs, cross tables, and co-relation coefficients were drawn with the help of a computer in SPSS.

The qualitative data obtained from the informal in-depth interviews and focused group discussions were used as supportive and complimentary to the quantitative data.
The study considered the variables such as Agriculture Cash Income, Livestock Cash Income, Forest Cash Income, Total Cash Income, and Own Labour Expenses as independent variables, while Agriculture Non-cash Income, Livestock Non-cash Income, Forest Non-cash Income, Total Non-cash Income, and Outside Labour Expenses are to be considered as dependent variables.

**Limitations of the Study**

The study did not cover the other tribes residing in the BRT Sanctuary. However, in spite of these limitations the insights gathered from the data were enough to draw inferences and satisfy the objectives of the study.

**Operational definitions**

**Scheduled Tribes:** The criteria followed for specification of a community as a Scheduled Tribe are Indication of primitive traits, Distinctive culture, Geographical isolation, Shyness of contact with the community at a large, and Backwardness (MOTA, 2012-13).

**Tribe:** “A tribe is a group of local communities which lives in a common area, speaks a common dialect and follows a common culture” (Gillin and Gillin).

**Scheduled Tribe:** A Scheduled Tribe refers to “a collection of families or group of families, bearing a common name, members which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observed certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed as well as assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations” D.N. Majumdar (Shankar Rao C.N., 2012).

**Life style:** Life styles are shaped by a host of factors. Their roots are in culture, politics, economics, and social norms (Falemo, 2010).

Sustainable life styles should reflect the specific cultural, natural, economical, and social heritage of each society. The basic issue in the whole process of tribal development is to improve the quality of their life (Dashi, 1997).
NTFPs/MFP: Non-timber Forest Products or Minor Forest Produce: Minor Forest Produce and a broad spectrum of biomass related products: food, fiber, fodder, gum and resins, medicinal plants, structural material, household articles, religious and ornamental articles and a range of other items with both subsistence and economic value. From plants, these may come from the leaves, flower, fruit, seed, twig, pods, stem, roots, tubers or bark of plants (Jeffrey Y. Campbell, 1994).

**LAMPS:** Large Scale Adivasi Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society (LAMPS) – these cooperatives provide employment to the tribals.

**Podus:** A tribal settlement is called ‘Podu’. It is located in a place far from the din of civilization and is sheltered from wild animals. It consists of a group of 10 to 50 huts.

**Soliga:** The word ‘Soliga means one who has come from within a bamboo’; they believe that their ancestors originated from the bamboo. Luize in the year 1963 wrote –“the name ‘Soliga’ is a corruption of the Tamil word’ Colai or Solai (thicket) and refers to the dense thickets in which they live” (Rao Usha, 1990).

**BRT:** Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary

**Chapterization of the Thesis**

The thesis is organized into five chapters as follows -

- Chapter I : Introduction
- Chapter II : Review of Literature
- Chapter III : Research Methodology
- Chapter IV : Data Analysis and Interpretation
- Chapter V : Findings and Recommendations and Conclusion
- Appendix : Annexure
MAJOR RESULTS

4.1: Profile of the respondents

The study highlighted that 26.5 per cent of the families belong to the Belliru Clan, 25.7 per cent of the families belonged to the Selikiru Clan, and the lowest 0.3 per cent of the families belong to the Kupperu Clan in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. The five Clans, namely, the Belliru Clan, Selikiru Clan, Halaru Clan, Teneyaru Clan, and Suriru Clan population are widely spread while the other four Clans, the Baleyaru Clan, Honganur Clan, Sambar Clan, and Kupperu Clan population are very less, whereas the Kalkatti Clan, Purigar Clan, Peradava Clan, and Vellegar Clan do not exist in the study area.

It was found that around 60 per cent of the respondents belong to the age groups of 31-35 years and 46-50 years, 38 per cent of the respondents are in the age groups of 51-55 years and 66-70 years and 26-30 years, and the lowest two percent of the respondents fall in the age group of 20-25 years. All the respondents in the various age groups were occupied or engaged in agriculture. Respondents belonging to the age groups of 26 – 30 years and 36-40 years were engaged in wage labour because they did not have agricultural land and very few respondents had Government and other work as a primary occupation.

It was evident that the distribution of the primary sources of occupation of which 74 per cent of families is agriculture, 23 per cent of families are wage labour, and for the remaining three percent of the families are holding Government job or any other occupation. Secondary occupation is followed by 58.6 per cent of the families through wage labour. Around 36.4 per cent of the respondents were not engaged in any secondary occupation because they continued as wage labour in both primary and secondary occupations.

The present study found that the rate of illiteracy among the respondents was 69.2 per cent while 14.4 per cent had primary level education, 11 per cent had middle school education, and 4.4 per cent had high school education. Only one percent of the respondents were college educated.
It was evident from the study that 84.3 per cent of the respondents belong to nuclear families, 9.2 per cent of the respondents belong to joint families, and 6.5 per cent respondents belong to extended families. Of the 370 families the total estimated population is 1,565 and an average family size is 4.22 per family, of which the average size in joint families stands at 7.1, extended families at 5.2, and 3.97 in nuclear families.

The study found that the majority of the males and females are spread out equally in the 370 families. There are 816 males and 749 females. The male population is more when compared to the female population. The results prove that the male population is more when compared to the female population; however the average size of the families being 4.22, i.e., 2.20 males and 2.02 females.

It was evident that the literacy and illiteracy distribution between 1565 population of the 370 Soliga families. Among these 760 family members were literate and 689 family members were illiterate. About 116 (7.4 per cent) members were not taken into consideration as they are below six years of age. Of the 370 Soliga families, 48.6 per cent males and 44 per cent females were literate which shows that the literacy rate of male is more when compared to female literacy rate.

It was evident that 215 male children, 156 male children were studying in different classes. About 99.7 per cent of the families did not have any illiterate children. Only one child, i.e., 0.3 per cent was found to be illiterate.

It was clear in the study that the 206 female children out of those 144 female children are studying in different classes. There were 22 per cent families who had educated female children and 70 per cent of the families did not have any literate female children below the age of 6 to 14 years. One percent of four female children were illiterate and 99 per cent of the families did not have any illiterate female children.

The study identified the distribution of school going children. Of the 215 male and 206 female school going children, 0.2 per cent of the families have illiterate male children while one percent of the families have illiterate female children were found in the study site.
4.2: Social structure and social functioning of the Soliga tribe

It was evident that the around 62.4 per cent respondents opined that they were following the tribal council system, 29 per cent of the respondents mentioned that the tribal council system was not practiced as it used to in the earlier days, and 7.8 per cent of the respondents said that now the Soligas were not following the old rules and regulations strictly but in a more flexible manner.

It was evident that understood that disputes were tackled earlier when the nyaya panchayathi was held and now it is different in the sense of the type of issues being resolved. Among them 79 per cent mentioned that they had issues relating to quarrels between the families and about 9.1 per cent mentioned that they had issues relating to quarrels between members of the same family. Whereas 5.6 per cent mentioned that there were problems related to alcohol.

It was clear that 96.5 per cent of the respondents are of the opinion that the traditional council and people gather and identify the person responsible for the mistake made and warn the person from repeating it in the future.

The study found that when asked to express the way in which the younger generation looks at the tribal council, 60 per cent of the respondents had stated clearly that even now the younger generation had respect and regard for the tribal council, whereas 25.8 per cent of the respondents stated that the younger generation were not respecting the tribal council, and 14 per cent respondents observed that some of the youths did not respect the tribal council.

It was clear that when the younger generation were asked their opinion as to how aware they were regarding the tribal council, customs and values, 55.6 per cent of the respondents were fully aware of it, 22.4 per cent respondents stated that they did not have any awareness of the tribal council, and 13.5 per cent stated that they had less awareness of the tribal council.
The study found that 93.3 per cent of the respondents have opined that majority of the people do accept the decisions of the traditional tribal council unanimously and 4.4 per cent of the respondents stated that nowadays people are not respecting the decisions of the tribal council.

It was clear that presently the Soligas are practicing four types of marriage of which the respondents have given their opinion on three types of marriages. Of the 370 respondents, 76 per cent said that arranged marriage was good, 12.7 per cent preferred love marriage, and 9.2 per cent favoured Kuduvali marriage.

It was evident that about 27 per cent of the respondents mentioned that elders and family members accept arranged marriage since all of them feel that the boy and girl will be happy in the future, 18.3 per cent and again another 18.3 per cent of the respondents mentioned that both the boy and girl and accept the traditional rules and regulation and that both the families accept the arranged marriage system, and 14 per cent of the respondents mentioned that in love marriage there is no expense incurred, both the boy and girl understand each other.

4.3 The economic status of the Soliga tribe

It was evident that 61.6 per cent of the respondents were holding forest land. 11.9 per cent of the respondents were holding revenue land, and 20 per cent of the respondents were landless. This meant that most of the Soligas were holding forest land while 25 per cent of the respondents were landless which included those who cultivated the leased land and the landless families.

In the present study that 37.5 per cent of the respondents were holding 1-2 acres of land, 19.4 per cent of the respondents were holding 51-99 cents of land, 7.2 per cent of the respondents were holding 0.50 cents of land and the same per cent of respondents were holding 2-3 acres of land, and 20 per cent of the respondents were landless.
The study reveals that the average size of landholding patterns varied in different types of land like 1.6 acres of revenue land, 1.5 acres of forest land, and 1.3 acres of other land and 1.5 acres is the average size of land holding by the Soliga families in BRT Wildlife Sanctuary.

The study found that Soligas are consumed including 40 varieties of fruits, 35 varieties of leaves, 10 varieties of mushrooms, nine varieties of barks, and four varieties of honey, tubers, bamboo shoots, seeds, and roots by the Soligas. It also means that more number of species may be available in leaves, fruits, and mushrooms. A total of 117 species of forest products are used by the Soligas in their everyday life.

It was evident from the study that 50 per cent of the respondents said due to less rain, 30.2 per cent of the respondents had given opinion that due to the spread of lantana in the forest, there is a decrease in the forest products.

The present study found that crops are cultivated on agricultural lands, the respondents said that they cultivated five varieties of cereals, 10 varieties of legumes, nine varieties of vegetables, five varieties of oil seeds, five varieties of spices and condiments, three varieties of aromatic plants, nine varieties of tubers, 11 varieties of fruits, nine varieties of tree crops, two varieties of beverage and one variety of fiber. Thus a total of 69 varieties or species of crops are cultivated in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary.

It was evident from the study, the mean income per year was Rs. 17,969.36 per family and the standard deviation per year was Rs. 7,019.03 per family and the income per month was Rs. 1,497.44 per family. The per capita income per month per person was Rs. 354.02 and the per capita income per day per person was Rs. 11.80. Presently they are getting per capita income of Rs. 11.80 per person per day which is insufficient for an individual persons’ food and other needs.

The study reveals that the individual respondents have different sources of income, 47 per cent earn from labour, 32 per cent from agriculture, 18 per cent from sale of forest resources, and three per cent from sale of livestock. 73 per cent of the tribals out their living from agriculture. While cultivators amount to only 17 per cent, the remaining 56 per cent are labourers, tribals living inside the forests.
Conclusion and Recommendation

It was found from the study that 12 per cent of the respondents migrated to Bedaguli coffee estates and 9.2 per cent migrated to Kodagu. Totally 32.5 per cent of the respondents migrated to different places searching for employment and 67.5 per cent did not migrate.

It was clear in the study that 29 per cent of the respondents were migrating outside because of unemployment and the other two responses were small in number and 67.5 per cent of the respondents did not migrate.

Present study found that, Seven per cent of the families migrate up to 101-200 days in a year, 6.2 per cent migrate up to 21-30 days in a year and the same per cent of the respondent’s families migrate up to 51-75 days in a year. Of the 32.5 per cent respondent migrating families, for 21.7 per cent the migration ranges from 41-50 days to 101-200 days in a year in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary, while 67.5 per cent did not migrate. It shows that most of the respondent families migrate from 10 - 300 days in a year.

It was found in the study that they were cultivating different types of crops, namely, three varieties of cereals, six varieties of legumes, six varieties of vegetables, three varieties of leaves, five varieties of tubers, eight varieties of fruits, four varieties of spices and condiments, one variety each of seed and oil seeds. Some of these crops were used for consumption and other uses while some of the products were also sold.

The study identifies that Soligas consume different types of food items like six varieties of cereals, 11 varieties of legumes, 12 varieties of vegetables, three varieties of leaves, 12 varieties of fruits, six varieties of tubers, six varieties of oil seeds, five varieties of spices and condiments, two varieties of beverage and milk, and three varieties of meat.

It was evident that from the study that 71.9 per cent of the respondents own a radio, 44.6 per cent have a watch, 20.3 per cent have bicycle and television, and due to the influence of the outside the world 5.7 per cent possessed gold. The Government provided 71.6 per cent pukka houses, ten per cent was provided by the NGOs, and 16.4 per cent did not have pukka houses. The Government provided limited number of toilets, bicycles, etc.
It was clear in the study that 39 per cent of the respondents had paid an interest of Rs. 5-6 per month and 19.1 per cent had paid interest of Rs. seven and above per month. A total of 71.9 per cent of the respondents had taken loan from different sources and 28.1 per cent of the respondents had not taken loan. The major credit or loan was provided by the local people and farmers compared to the Self Help Groups and Banks.

4.4: The Cultural factors associated with the Soliga tribe

In the present study it was found that 100 per cent of the respondents celebrated Gowri habba, Sankranthi habba, and Ugadi festival, 55.4 per cent celebrated the Mari habba, and 44.6 per cent of the respondents did not celebrate any festival as they were living on the periphery of the forest and did not celebrate festivals like the others. 52.7 per cent of the respondents celebrated the Rotti habba (harvesting festival) and 47.3 per cent did not celebrate this festival.

It was evident in the study that 86.4 per cent of the respondents celebrated the festivals because it had been celebrated since their grandparents and the other two responses were small in number.

It was clear from the study that 59.5 per cent of the respondents celebrated the Dolu puja (Sowing rituals) and 40.5 per cent of the respondents did not celebrate. 49.2 per cent of the respondents celebrated the Ede puja (Harvesting rituals) and 50.8 per cent of the respondents said that they did not celebrate.

4.5: Factors influencing the culture, economy, and social status of the Soligas

It was clear from the data that 28.6 per cent of the heads of the household suffered from pain in the body, leg, and hand and 19 per cent of the spouses had body, leg, and hand pain, and minimum per cent of daughters and sons had body pain. About 62 per cent of the spouses had fever and 46.5 per cent of the heads of the household also got fever. Around 54.6 per cent of the spouses had headache and 39.2 per cent of the heads of the household had headache. Many Soliga tribals suffer from the genetic disorder of the Sickle Cell Disease.
It was evident from the study that 56.5 per cent (209) have adopted family planning. Earlier the Soligas used traditional methods to control and stop childbirth. This practice is slowly decreasing because of modern medical influences and health awareness.

The study reveals that 37.3 per cent of the respondents 6-10 kms to reach the PHC, 30 per cent had to walk 1-5 kms, and 20.3 per cent had to walk 11-15 kms. It shows that most of the primary health centers are within a radius of 15 kms. Some of the PHCs are close to the Podus, but the doctors and nurses are not to be found so they have to go to the private hospitals for treatment. 98.4 per cent of the respondents have visited the hospital once in a while, 0.3 per cent visit once in a month, and 1.3 per cent does not visit the hospital for treatments.

The study indicated that of the 370 families, 63.3 per cent of the respondents’ families had two eligible voters, 23.2 per cent had three voters and 10 per cent had four eligible voters. Of the 47 per cent voters in the families only two members were found eligible to vote and of the 26.7 per cent voters in the families only three members were found eligible to vote. There were 967 voters in 370 families.

It was clear that from 370 families there were 967 eligible voters, showing an average (Mean) of 2.6. Of the total eligible voters, 718 (74.1 per cent) voted in the Parliament election, 679 (70 per cent) voted in the Assembly election, 699 (72.3 per cent) voted in the Zilla Panchayati and Taluk Panchayati election, and 748 (77.3 per cent) in the Grama Panchayati election. The overall average showed that over 71.8 per cent eligible members voted and the remaining eligible voters possibly did not because they had migrated outside for employment and did not get to participate in the election while some had to walk a long distance from the Podu.

The study reveals that 39.4 per cent of the respondents were using a radio, 28 per cent were using radio and TV, and 18.1 per cent were using the radio, TV, cinema. About 97.9 per cent of the respondents were using different types of media
and the remaining 2.1 per cent of the respondents were not using any kind media for information and entertainment.

It was evident from the study that 75 per cent of the respondents were using media to gain information, 18.3 per cent were using for listening to music and eight per cent of the respondents not using any kind of media.

The highlighted that 42 per cent (154) of the respondents were using water from the borewell, 24 per cent (88) were using water from borewell and mini water tanks, 12 per cent (43) of respondents were using water from ponds, and 11 per cent (43) were using water from mini water tanks. About 20 per cent of the respondents using water from the pond and streams and 80 per cent of the respondents were using water from bore well and mini water tanks.

The Present study found that of the 370 respondents, 45.4 per cent (168) were using kerosene, 41 per cent (152) were using kerosene and electricity, and 13.6 per cent (50) were using solar and kerosene.

It was clear that NGO’s provided benefits to community that, 56.7 per cent of the respondents had received awareness and capacity building training, 43.3 per cent did not receive any training, 15.7 per cent had been provided health facilities which had not been received by 84.3 per cent of the respondents. Education was provided to 10.3 per cent of the respondents while 89.7 per cent were deprived of it. Houses had been constructed for ten per cent of the respondents while the same was not provided to 90.0 per cent of the respondents.

The study found that 96.2 per cent of the respondents had received the public distribution system card which was not received by 3.8 per cent. Around 69.7 per cent of the respondents had been provided a house and 30.3 per cent did not receive. About 29.2 per cent of the respondents were supplied electricity and 70.8 per cent were not. Again, about 18.4 per cent of the respondents received sheep, cow and bullocks and
81.6 per cent did not receive any of this the other benefits received by the respondents were less in number. The Government provided public distribution card, housing, electricity and livestock but the other benefits distributed were very less over the years.

In the present study it was found that 56.2 per cent of the respondents felt that the radio always influences, 39.2 per cent felt it that sometimes, 37.8 per cent said that TV always had influence, 37 per cent mentioned that only sometimes TV had influence, and 25.2 per cent mentioned that TV did not influence at all; 44 per cent mentioned that cinema did not at all influence, 37 per cent opined that sometimes cinema had an influence, 74.6 per cent stated that newspaper had no influence at all and a small per cent mentioned that newspaper always influence and sometimes.

The study found that 57.3 per cent of the respondents had always been influenced by VGKK and sometimes influenced 36.55 per cent of the respondents. The Sanghas had always influenced 74.6 per cent of the respondents and sometimes influenced 22.7 per cent of the respondents. ATREE had always influenced 27.8 per cent of the respondents and did not influence 43 per cent of the respondents. ATREE’s influence is less compared to VGKK and the Sanghas because these two have been working with the Soligas over the past 30 years, whereas ATREE has been working for the last 16 years.

The study indicates that 5.4 per cent of the respondents had received benefit from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and 94.6 per cent of the respondents did not receive the same. Drinking water facility and solar light had been received by 4.6 per cent of the respondents equally. Around 97.3 per cent of the respondents were not provided any of these benefits by the Grama Panchayati.

It was evident from the study that 99 per cent of the respondents faced unemployment and wage problem due to the NTFPs ban.
Conclusion and Recommendation

The study states that 88 per cent of the respondents do not want to leave the forest because they have lived there from their grandparents’ time. 2.7 per cent of respondents wanted to live there because they get all types of forest produce for consumption like honey, fruits, tubers, vegetables, etc., and 2.1 per cent of the respondents get good air and have adjusted to the environment whereas outside the climate is hot and difficult to adjust.

In the present study it was found that opinions expressed by the Soligas on the lack of their development in which 31.2 per cent said that the Government had not provided any facilities, 17.2 per cent mentioned that the benefits had been improperly distributed among them, and 14.3 per cent had said lack of awareness on Government programmes and facilities.

It was found that 62.1 per cent of the respondents had mentioned that NGOs did not provide development programmes, 26.2 per cent had said that they lacked awareness of the NGOs programmes, and the other reasons given were small in per cent.

It was evident from the study that 58 per cent of the respondents had mentioned that qualified teachers are required in schools to uphold the education in the tribal areas, 22.1 per cent wanted clothes, books, bicycle, and other education facilities. It would be very useful if the Government could upgrade the facility and 17.2 per cent needed financial support for higher education.

It was evident from the study that 74 per cent of the respondents had wanted five acres of land for each family and 19 per cent wanted loan and other facilities.

It was revealed from the study that 57.3 per cent of the respondents had mentioned that good hospital and treatment should be available locally, 13.8 per cent wanted good treatment and sub-centre at the Podu level, 9.7 per cent wanted free medical insurance.
Conclusion and Recommendation

The Study found that 54.5 per cent of the respondents mentioned financial support for the Sanghas (CBO’s) and 32.4 per cent of respondents supported capacity building training.

The study indicates that 61 per cent of the respondents mentioned lack of land as the problem faced by them, 56.2 per cent said drinking water, 49 per cent mentioned road, 39 per cent mentioned a house, 29 per cent mentioned electricity, 28.6 per cent said lack of loan facilities, and thus the respondents presented the different problems faced by them.

Implications of the Study

The following implications are made based on the study analyses and the major findings of the data and knowledge gained by the researcher on the study - Lifestyle of Soliga tribe at the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary - A Social Work Perspective. The Soligas have been living in this forest area for centuries and their major livelihood depends on the forest resources. The Soligas are nature worshippers and they have a relationship with the forest which is akin to a mother and child. The forest is considered as the backbone of the Soliga economy.

Due to the forest policies, the Soligas are living in a poor condition lacking basic facilities like housing, electricity, drinking water, road, health, education, etc. Before 1974 they lived in the forest happily and were collecting and selling NTFPs for their livelihood. Under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, the Government declared the Biligiri Rangana Hills Reserve forest as a wildlife sanctuary in 1974. In the name of protecting wild life, the forest department displaced the Soligas from the interior of the forest to its periphery, while some of the Soliga Podus were settled beside forest roads. The forest department arranged unplanned rehabilitation and provided small pieces of land for cultivation without land record. Although the required basic facilities are not being provided by the forest department and it is also not allowing other departments to work with the Soliga tribe for their upliftment.
The Government started the Large Scale Adivasi Multi-purpose Cooperative Society (LAMPS) in 1981-82 to help the Soligas in the collection and sale of NTFPs for their livelihood. The NTFPs collection and sale was banned in 2004 under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 in the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary. Earlier the Soligas were earning nearly 50 to 60 per cent of their family income from the sale of NTFPs. After the ban the Government failed to provide an alternative source of livelihood to the Soligas, so they started to migrate outside the district in search of employment which automatically affected their livelihood and lifestyle.

The Soligas got land rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006. Earlier they did not have land rights for agriculture. At the same time some of the Podus received community rights (NTFPs collection/sale). But still there is a fear of displacement because the wildlife sanctuary has been declared as a Tiger Reserve in 2011. At present the Government is planning to shift the Soligas from the interior of the forest to its outskirts.

The Soligas had been involved in two types of occupation, namely, primary and secondary. Being involved in agriculture and agricultural labour constitutes as primary occupation, while in secondary occupation, majority of the Soligas work in coffee plantations. The researcher observed that none of them have a permanent or stable income to lead their life peacefully.

It was also observed that a social worker is much needed in this area. Some NGOs have made efforts to mobilise the people for social action activity, viz., protesting for forest rights, NTFP collection protest, right to livelihood, ban on alcohol sale, etc. Awareness activities could be carried out to motivate the Soligas to get employment under the MGNREGA, NTFPs collection, and irrigation facilities for their agriculture lands. In these cases a social worker can work as a liaison officer between the Government department and the Soligas.
Conclusion and Recommendation

Education awareness among the Soligas is very poor. Even though, there is availability of education facilities provided by the Government, very few of them are utilised. There are two reasons for this: (1) Unawareness about where the facility is available, and (2) illiteracy among the parents and less importance about sustained life. So, the Government needs plan to reach out to these people or should appoint some Non-Governmental organisation to reach these facilities to the untouched areas.

The researcher observed that a large number of children were brought to the school in the name of compulsory primary education. But in most of the tribal areas only pre-primary education facilities are available. Once the children complete pre-primary education most of them discontinue their school education because they have to move to another area, where primary education is available. The case work method will be most appropriate to enable the child to continue education in another area. In this regard family counseling should be undertaken and parents should be motivated to send their children to schools regularly and should be allowed to stay in the hostels built for them by the Government or run by the NGOs.

The Soligas have their traditional tribal council system to control the tribal society. At present it shows that the tribal council is losing its control over the community. Today the Soligas are approaching local police station and legal system. Social Workers can use the community organisations and group work methods to empower tribal council members by conducting meetings and holding discussions on the importance of the tribal council. Awareness activities could be conducted in order to strengthen the council and to settle disputes within their purview.

In the study it was found that Soligas are practicing four types of marriage, namely, arranged marriage, love marriage (elopement marriage), Kuduvali (marriage treaty) marriage, and marriage by service. A majority of the Soligas prefer arranged marriage than the other types of marriages. Due to outside influences they no longer have their traditional form of marriage ceremony, but have started to spend a lot of money on the functions involved where earlier they used to spend less. This indicates
that the Soligas are adopting external practices of marriage. Here the social worker can intervene through the community organisation method, and conduct awareness meetings and street play and hold discussions with the tribal council members and the community, and encourage them to preserve their traditional types of marriage systems involving less expenditure.

The Soligas are cultivating three types of lands - revenue land, forest land, and leased land. The study found that 25 per cent have become landless families. The current landholding is not sufficient to feed a whole family and there is a need for Government intervention to upgrade the family income. The Government could provide land under the Scheduled Tribes Corporation and formulate policies to provide the land for agricultural purpose. To get the land would need a lot of effort from the community and NGOs. The social worker can use the community organisation and social action methods to mobilise the people and spread awareness through motivation meetings, workshops, training activities, etc.

The Soligas were not earning much income from rearing livestock as they were maintaining small number of it in their family, so the Government needs to provide livestock and training on livestock rearing under the Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) and Cluster schemes. The social worker can organise training on livestock rearing by using group work and community organisation methods and also social action methods to get different benefits from the Government.

Social work intervention is needed in the form of social action and community organisation methods in order to get the right to collect and sell NTFPs. A social worker can organise and motivate the community to get their rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, by using different types of activities like meetings, training and workshops, etc. This will require a lot of community based intervention to address these kinds of issues which makes the role of a social worker very much important.
The study also highlighted that 10 per cent of their income is spent on smoking and alcohol. It affects an individual health and also creates problems in the tribal community. In order to prevent this, health awareness activities need to be carried out by the Government, NGOs, and CBO. A social worker can use case work, group work, community organisation, and social action methods to provide awareness and motivation to quit bad habits. Counseling is an important tool to motivate the youth to overcome bad habits.

The study highlighted that, the majority of Soligas have availed credit from local money lenders instead of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and banks. There is lot of scope for major NGOs to form SHGs in the tribal areas. A social worker can use the case work, group work, and social action methods, to form Self Help Groups.

Soligas are largely celebrating Hindu festivals compared to traditional festivals which have decreased compared to the earlier days because of external influence and their adoption of the Hindu culture. The Kannada and Culture Department and the Tribal Welfare Department can help in promoting and preserving the culture through their department activities. The NGOs, CBOs, and Social Workers can highlight the importance of the tribal cultural festivals and organise awareness meetings to preserve and promote tribal culture.

The Soligas continue their traditional culture practices of marriage, birth and death ceremony, traditional festivals, and other rituals even today and which needs to be preserved because their children are now being educated and exposed to external culture. Hence the parents and children should be motivated to safeguard their traditional culture.

Soligas celebrate four types of agriculture rituals, of which the sowing ritual (Dolu puja) and the harvesting ritual (Ede puja) are given more importance. The Soligas are losing interest in their agricultural ritual celebrations because of external influence, hence there is a need to provide awareness on the importance of
agricultural rituals and build confidence in their traditional cultural practices. The CBOs and Social Workers can organise awareness meetings and convince the Soligas to preserve their agricultural ritual practices.

Soligas suffer more than 16 types of diseases including body pain, fever, headache, diarrhoea, stomachache, dental, and cough/cold, and prefer faith healing and medicinal plants for their treatment rather than approaching the hospitals. Hence, motivation could be provided to make use of the good traditional treatment methods and some of the faith healing methods to be less appreciated. A social worker can use the case work methods to identify the sick and motivate them to undergo treatment. Community organisation method can be used to arrange health awareness meetings and street plays could be conducted to make them understand the health services available to them. Research can be carried out on the traditional treatment methods to generate scientific results on the usefulness of these treatments.

The study highlighted that even after 65 years of independence some of the hamlets are without electricity (45.5 per cent). These villages are just 230 to 250 Kms from state headquarters and 25 to 35 Kms from district headquarters and yet the problem persists. Urban people cannot live without electricity even for a day, but these tribals till today have not used electricity. The NGOs and CBOs can play an important role by ensuring electricity to these hamlets. Even Section 3 (2) (e) of the Forest Rights Act, 2006 permits electricity to be provided to these hamlets.

The NGOs have implemented a number of developmental programmes for the Soligas, of which capacity building awareness is enjoyed by many members, while some benefits are enjoyed by very few people. Hence the NGOs can involve more tribal people in their developmental programmes and lay more stress on developmental activities like health services, education, awareness, land development, housing, self-employment trainings, etc. to improve the lifestyle of the Soligas. A Social Worker can take an active part in the effective implementation of the NGOs programmes at the grass root level.
The study has highlighted that the Government has implemented various developmental programmes for the Soligas over the years like the Public Distribution System, housing and electricity, but these are enjoyed by very few families. The Government is spending a lot of money on tribal development, the benefits of which is not reaching the people. Hence the Government needs to implement more effective schemes with the involvement of the Soligas. The tribals lack of information on Government programmes, therefore the Government, NGOs, and Social Workers can help the Soligas get such information by organizing them to get benefits.

The study highlighted that external factors like education, religion, media, NGOs, and Government agencies have largely influenced the Soliga lifestyle because of which they are losing their traditional culture. In order to preserve it, interventions through awareness programmes need to be carried out by NGOs and Social Workers.

The study also highlighted that after the ban on the collection and sale of NTFPs in BRT Wildlife Sanctuary, most of the Soligas faced unemployment and wage problems, as the Government failed to provide alternative employment for them. So under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 the Government should allow the Soligas to collect and sell the NTFPs. The NGOs, CBOs, and Social Workers can use the community organisation and social action methods to mobilise the community people to get their rights.

The forest department is planning to settle the Soligas outside the forest area which is not acceptable to them as their ancestors, God, Goddess, Heroes, burial ground, and sacred water are within the forest. As an alternative the Government along with private sectors can provide education and employment to the younger generation which will make them settle down in cities and towns and they would not want to go back to the forest. Their dependency on the forest will slowly decrease and it will be a case of natural rehabilitation. They will also take care of their parents. In this way without violating human rights and tribal rights, tribals can be relocated in the future.
Hence, if the Government could provide good education and job opportunities to the Soligas there would no need for a forceful evacuation. The Social Workers can use the community organisation, case work methods, and group work methods to encourage the Soliga children to get a good education. Social Workers can organise awareness meetings, street plays, and motivational workshop for the parents and children.

The NGOs have not effectively worked the way the Soligas expected resulting in less than anticipated development. Hence, the NGOs could consider developmental activities based on their objectives and collect feedback from the community.

The importance of life skill structured programmes for life skill and education are developed all over the world. It is useful even across cultures; helps to promote wellbeing and enables are how to deal effectively with everyday life challenges. Life skill is defined as abilities for adaptive and positive behaviors that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO, 1993). These life skills are basic to every culture and can be used even for tribal children and adolescents for promotion of Psychological health.

The study explored that in spite of the Government spending money towards tribal education, most of the children of the respondents were not receiving proper education and there was a lack of educational facilities in the community. Therefore the Government could implement compulsory education programmes and other educational facilities. Social work intervention is needed to be implemented and community people should take part in educating their children. Community organisation and social action methods can be used to approach the education department and Tribal Welfare department in order to provide educational facilities.

In order to economically empower the Soligas, a minimum size of land for each family is a necessity for agricultural and horticultural loan, and irrigation facilities for their agricultural land. Education and employment also needs to be provided by the Government to improve the economy of the Soligas. The Social
Workers can take up the community organisation to mobilise the people to approach the Government and political leaders and officials to get the land. Social action activities can be taken to organise mass movements to get land, land policy, and other benefits.

**Table – 5.1.1 : A table on the role of Government, NGOs, CBOs, and Social Workers in uplifting the Soligas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Government role</th>
<th>NGOs role</th>
<th>CBOs role</th>
<th>Social Workers role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Scheduled Tribe developmental schemes and programmes to be implemented effectively at the grass root level</td>
<td>The NGOs can focus and work on the current problems faced by the Soligas.</td>
<td>The CBOs can identify the issues effecting the community and then work on them</td>
<td>Social Workers can organise the community in receiving the benefits from the Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Identify need based programmes for the Soligas and then implement it</td>
<td>NGOs can co-ordinate with the Government to get the benefits to the Soligas.</td>
<td>CBOs can be involved in obtaining all types of rights in the forest under FRA, 2006.</td>
<td>Social Workers can provide awareness on different issues which are currently faced by the Soligas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 can be effectively implemented in tribal areas.</td>
<td>NGOs can organise and educate the Soligas to get different rights under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 and motivate them to participate actively in getting their rights</td>
<td>CBOs can gather information regarding schemes from all the Government departments and share the same with the community. They also need to join the Government in its effective implementation</td>
<td>Social Workers can educate the Soligas to get different rights in forest under the FRA, 2006.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conclusion and Recommendation</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Government can appoint dedicated officers who are interested to work with tribal communities in various Departments like - (1) Tribal Welfare Department, (2) Social Welfare Department, (3) Scheduled Tribal Corporation, and (4) Zilla Panchyat to implement the tribal development schemes effectively at the grassroots level.</td>
<td>The NGOs can motivate and give inputs to community based organisations (Sanghas) to work for their own community.</td>
<td>Social Workers can focus on improving the education of the Soliga children</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Government can train the present officials to implement the tribal development schemes effectively.</td>
<td>NGOs can collect information on different Government departments and share it with the community; it will help the community to get benefits.</td>
<td>CBOs can work on strengthening the tribal council and preserving their culture.</td>
<td>Social Workers can work on the community based organisations to strengthen and motivate them into obtaining benefits from the Government and preparing them to handle all types of issues arising in the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Government can provide separate reservation for the Soligas and other forest tribes because they are unable to compete with newly included communities in education, employment, and politics</td>
<td>NGOs can focus on health and education programmes to improve the lifestyle of the Soligas</td>
<td>Social Workers can identify the problems faced by the community and focus on the issues and thereby help the community to independently resolve the issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>NGOs can conduct programmes on life skill education for tribal children to enhance their self-worth and social adjustment</td>
<td>CBOs can involve in imparting life skill education programmes</td>
<td>Social Workers can conduct intervention studies taking life skill education for tribal children to enhance their individual needs for sustaining and enriching their life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Government of Karnataka has implemented tribal development schemes through 45 departments. But it is not effectively reaching the grass root level. Hence there is a need of implementing the schemes from a single department, called as the single window agency</td>
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**Conclusion**

This study is an empirical attempt to explore the lifestyle of the Soliga tribe residing in the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple Wildlife Sanctuary. It addresses many issues of the Soligas including literacy, occupation patterns, children education, family size, tribal council practices, types of disputes raised in the community, awareness of the younger generation towards the tribal council, marriage practices, landholding, sources of income from different sources, migration problems, dependency on the forest, problems arising from the ban on the collection of NTFPs, unemployment problem, cultural practices, festival celebration, rituals and culture of the Soligas, types of health problems faced by the Soligas and their treatment sources, drinking water problems, the different reasons for lack of development, and the different socio-economic, cultural, political and external factors influencing the lifestyle of the Soligas. Welfare programmes introduced by the Government concentrating on the development of the Soligas have not succeeded in reaching them. The Soligas expect programmes on social, political, health, economic, Sanghas and empowerment activities. Quantitative as well as qualitative techniques are used to analyses the data in order to understand the problems of the Soligas and hence to evaluate the holistic intervention from different activities of the Government, NGOs, and CBOs.
The Soliga children are being schooled in recent years. It is observed that the educational facilities have not reached the Soliga community to a large extent. To empower the Soliga community, every individual needs to be educated, and if this is achieved most of the problems faced by the Soligas could be solved and they can sustain themselves like any other community of people in the society.
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