Chapter – III

Research Methodology
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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

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 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”.

97
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 life style 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 life style. 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 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 Biligiri 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) Biligiriranagana 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 Constitutency consists of Chamarajanagar, Gundlupet, Kollegal, and Yelandur. The Chamarajanagar Legislative Assembly Constituency consists of Chamarajnagar , Gundlupet, Kollegal, and Hanur.

The district is predominantly agrarian; agriculture is the backbone of the economy. The net sown area is 1.75 lakh ha with about 30% having irrigation facilities; cropping intensity is 122%; 38507 ha is sown more than once. Ragi, maize, jowar, paddy, horsegram, blackgram, redgram, cowpea, groundnut, cotton, sunflower, and sugarcane are the major crops grown. The cropping pattern excludes sericulture and other horticulture crops. The district is traditionally known for its sericulture activities on a total area of 8,601.59 ha under mulberry cultivation. Coconut, banana, turmeric, vegetables, and sugarcane are also grown. About 33 per cent of the geographical area of the district is under cultivation and 48 per cent area is classified as forest.
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 is 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, gaurss, 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 in and collects 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.

Table – 3.1.1 : Number of Podus under the Biligiri Rangaswamy Temple (BRT) Wildlife Sanctuary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Name of the Podus</th>
<th>No. of families</th>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Name of the Podus</th>
<th>No. of families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bangale Podu</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Kulluru</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hosa Podu colony</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Bhanavadi</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Muthagada gadde Podu</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Srinivasa pura colony</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yarakana gadde colony</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Muneswra colony</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Seege betta Podu</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Hosa Podu colony</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kalayani Podu</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Bhadregowdana Podu</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Manji gundi Podu</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Kunttu gudi colony</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Purani Podu</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Kebbe palaya</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>K.Colony</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Kalikamba colony</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Buthanni Podu</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Attuguli pura colony</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bedaguli colony</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Hithalu gude colony</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mari gudi Podu</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Yara katte</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ramaiahna Podu</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Karala katte</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Bisilu Kere Podu</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Mulla Katte</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kadigere Podu</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Puttirammana doddi</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Munnukai Podu</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Kanchagalli</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Sebina Kobe</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Kaggali Gundi</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Havina mule</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Jadeswamy Doddi</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Nelli kadaru</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Budi padaga</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Keredemba Podu</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Cowli katte dam</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Gombegallu Podu</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Hosa doddi</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Kadakalu Kindi Podu</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Geerge gadde</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>K.Devarahalli Podu</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Uddatti</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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.
The random selection may be affected by the disproportionate weightage so as to give required importance to Podus which have lesser number of Podus as follows:

### Table – 3.1.2 : Sampling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Classification based on no. of families</th>
<th>Podus</th>
<th>No. of families</th>
<th>Weightage of %</th>
<th>No. of Podus selected</th>
<th>No. of families</th>
<th>Respondents required 25%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>71-80</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>81-90</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>91-100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>101-110</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>111-120</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>121-130</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>131-140</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
<td><strong>2905</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>1527</strong></td>
<td><strong>370</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sampling frame work chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAMPLING FRAME WORK CHART</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Podus – 61</td>
</tr>
<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.
Soligas have lived, farmed and used the forests of Chamarajanagar districts for centuries. Their history of residence and forest use has resulted in a landscape that is today valued for its rich biodiversity.

Over time, Soligas have evolved a social system consisting of clans or kula and of associated cultural spaces called yelle.

Each kula might have several yelle belonging to kula sub-groups. There are six kula-specific sacred sites - devaru, maramma, habbi, veeru, halligutti, and vijagi, located within each yelle.

The accompanying map shows the extent of 46 yelles and the location of 489 sacred sites within the BRT Wildlife Sanctuary.

Source: Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment
Tools and Techniques used for Data Collection

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

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, newspapers and reports, etc. and went through 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, then conducted the focus group discussion, with each group having 10 to 15 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
Research Methodology

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
References


