



A STUDY ON THE MIGRATION OF SOLIGAS IN SULEKOB VILLAGE OF CHAMARAJANAGARA DISTRICT

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Abstract:

Scheduled Tribes (STs) are indigenous, have their own distinctive culture, geographically isolated and are low in socio-economic conditions. For centuries, the tribal groups have remained outside the realm of the general development process due to their habitation in forests and hilly tracts. After independence, Government of India has scheduled the tribal groups in the constitution and provided special provisions for their welfare and development as in the case of SCs. There are about 654 ST communities across the states in India and 75 of the STs are most backward and are termed as Primitive Tribal Groups. Most of the tribal areas are hilly. Although other ethnic tribes exist, the Scheduled Tribe population includes some of the more well-known tribes such as the Soligas, Yeravas, Todas, and Siddhis, and accounts for 6.95 percent of Karnataka's total population. Soligas are a forest-dwelling indigenous community found in Karnataka's Chamarajanagara district. This study was conducted in Sulekobe village in Chamarajanagara District. Sulekobe village belongs to Minyam Gramapanchayat of Hanuru Block. Only Soliga Community respondents were selected for the study. The major objective of the study is to know the migration of the Soligas in the study area. The research design adopted in this study is Descriptive Research Design. The population of the study is 315 Soliga migrants. Out of which 39 migrants were selected randomly as samples. Percentage analysis was used as a descriptive statistics to analyse and interpret the data. Interview schedule was used to collect the data. The result of the study is showing that majority of the Soliga community people are living Below Poverty Line. Majority of the migrants are men. When they migrate, the burden of the family lies on Soliga women. In most of the cases, it will be very difficult for Soliga women to look after the family and taking care of the children. Their traditional job is NTFP extraction. Because of the ban on NTFP collection, these tribes have been forced to move to other states, resulting in insecurity for the tribes and their culture (Sindhu et al., 2019). This result is showing that gradually their traditional occupation is reducing and they are looking for other unskilled labour.

Key Words: Scheduled Tribes, Soliga, NTFP, Migrants, Community

Introduction:

Scheduled Tribes (STs) are indigenous, have their own distinctive culture, geographically isolated and are low in socio-economic conditions. For centuries, the tribal groups have remained outside the realm of the general development process due to their habitation in forests and hilly tracts. After independence, Government of India has scheduled the tribal groups in the constitution and provided special provisions for their welfare and development as in the case of SCs. There are about 654 ST communities across the states in India and 75 of the STs are most backward and are termed as Primitive Tribal Groups. Most of the tribal areas are hilly. Although other ethnic tribes exist, the Scheduled Tribe population includes some of the more well-known tribes such as the Soligas, Yeravas, Todas, and Siddhis, and accounts for 6.95 percent of Karnataka's total population (Roy, Hegde, Bhattacharya, Upadhyay, & Kholkute, 2015). Soligas are a forest-dwelling indigenous community found in Karnataka's Chamarajanagara district (Uppuleti, 2018). Around 20,000 Soligas live in Karnataka, and the Biligirirangana Hills have been inextricably related to them for centuries ("Ancestral land of Soliga tribe restored: 'Government realizes that tribal peoples are the best conservationists' – Karnataka | Tribal Cultural Heritage in India Foundation," 2020). Growth and evaluation is a continuous process of nature. Different people are rooted in different areas like metropolitan cities, well developed cities, under developed cities, villages and very inner pockets. The rate and tempo of endogenous and exogenous development in these areas differ both spatially as well as temporarily. Many backward areas deprived facilities like electricity, water supply, education, farmland, houses and employment.

This study was conducted in Sulekobe village in Chamarajanagara District. Sulekobe village belongs to Minyam Gramapanchayat of Hanuru Block. Only Soliga Community respondents were selected for the study. Soliga community is a tribal community in the hilly areas of Chamarajanagara District. The majority of them work in coffee and pepper plantations or as contract labourers in farms and construction sites in Kerala's Kodagu and Wayanad, as well as far as 150 kilometres away in Tamil Nadu's Tirupur and Coimbatore (Kaur, 2008). Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are ready to assist the tribes by preventing migration to other regions (Sindhu, Natchimuthu, Ramkumar, Venugopal, & Rao, 2019).

Research Methodology:

The major objective of the study is to know the migration of the Soligas in the study area. The research design adopted in this study is Descriptive Research Design. The population of the study is 315 Soliga migrants.

Out of which 39 migrants were selected randomly as samples. Percentage analysis was used as a descriptive statistics to analyse and interpret the data. Interview schedule was used to collect the data.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Demographic Details

Number of Households	63
Population	315
Men	161
Women	154
APL Households	0
BPL Households	13
Anthyodaya Households	50
Literates-Men	21
Literates-Women	16
Non-Literates-Men	140
Non-Literates-Women	138

In Sulekobe village, there are 63 households having a population of 315 people. Men are 161 and women are 154. There are 13 households having BPL cards and 50 households having Anthyodaya Cards. There is no household having APL card. This is worrisome because the people in Sulekobe village still not empowered in terms of economic condition. Government is taking lots of efforts to reduce the poverty. But the Soliga Tribal Community still are under poverty. Out of 315, only 37 are literates. Remaining are illiterates. This shows that only 11.74% are literates in this village. One of the studies shows that Soligas have low literacy rate (Somagond et al., 2019). Illiteracy is one of the major causes of poverty. But the tribal people hesitate to go to schools. More emphasis should be put on bringing back the school dropouts children into the schools.

Age-Wise Migration Details:

Age	Number of Migrants	Percentage
18-30	19	48.72
31-50	16	41.02
51-60	2	05.13
Above 61	2	05.13
Total	39	100

This Table shows that 19 (48.72%) of the migrants are of 18-30 years of age. 16 (41.02%) of the migrants are of 31-50 years of age. 2 (05.13%) of the migrants are of 51-60 year and above 61 years of age. Majority of the migrants are from economically productive age. This should be appreciated. But only thing is instead of getting a good job, they migrate in search of unorganised jobs. Bringing the tribal youth into government sponsored skill development programs is a difficult task in this area. But promotions and changing the mind-set of Soliga youth should be encouraged.

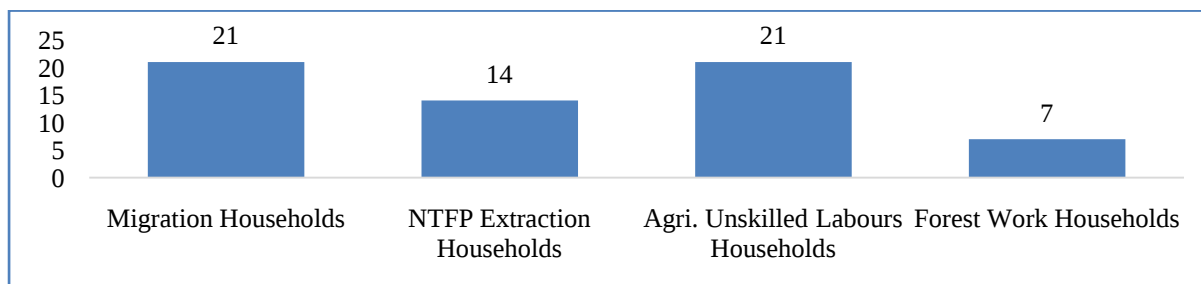
Gender Wise Migration Details:

Number of Migrants	39	100%
Male Migrants	24	61.54%
Females Migrants	15	38.46%

The above table shows that 24 (61.54%) males and 15 (38.46%) females migrated in search of job. Majority of the migrants are men. When they migrate, the burden of the family lies on Soliga women. In most of the cases, it will be very difficult for Soliga women to look after the family and taking care of the children.

Occupation Details:

Migration Households	21	33%
NTFP Extraction Households	14	22.22%
Agri. Unskilled Labours Households	21	33%
Forest Work Households	7	11.11%



Out of 63 households, 21 households (33%) are completely depend on migration and Agriculture-

Unskilled labour. 14 households (22.22%) households depend on NTFP extraction and 7 households (11.11%) depend on forest work. This shows that majority of the Soliga household members migrate in search of jobs. Their traditional job is NTFP extraction. A study by Sindhu et al., 2019 is showing that more than 70% of Soligas in the BR hills depend on Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) and have an agricultural history (Sindhu et al., 2019). This result is showing that gradually their traditional occupation is reducing and they are looking for other unskilled labour.

Over 2,500 acres of land are cultivated by 540 tribals who grow coffee and pepper (Kaggere, 2020). Soliga tribals from the Kollegala and Yelandur taluks of Chamaraajanagara district have been trading coffee and pepper for the past 20-25 years. Unfortunately, they were taken advantage of by the middlemen network and did not receive the correct price for the commodity. Angry at the exploitation, the community's trained tribals decided to take matters into their own hands. As a result, tribal youth not only formed their own trading business, 'Biligiri Soligas Producer Company Limited,' but also produced a revenue of Rs.1 crore, a record. This is a rare achievement achieved by this type of vulnerable community. Instead of promoting migration, the government should encourage these type of activities.

Details of Migration Category:

Mining	19	48.72%
Estates	07	17.95%
Driving	06	15.38%
Garments	03	07.69%
Small Business establishments	04	10.26%
Total	39	100%

Out of 39 migrants, 19 (48.72%) migrants are working in mines, 07 (17.95%) migrants are working in estates, 06 (15.38%) migrants are working as drivers, 03 (07.69%) Soligas are working in Garment factories and 04 (10.26%) Soligas are working in small business establishments.

Conclusion:

The result of the study is showing that majority of the Soliga community people are living Below Poverty Line. This is worrisome because the people in Sulekobe village still not empowered in terms of economic condition. Government is taking lots of efforts to reduce the poverty. But the Soliga Tribal Community still are under poverty. Out of 315, only 37 are literates. Remaining are illiterates. This shows that only 11.74% are literates in this village. Illiteracy is one of the major causes of poverty. But the tribal people hesitate to go to schools. More emphasis should be put on bringing back the school dropout children among Soligas. Majority of the migrants are from economically productive age. This should be appreciated. But only thing is instead of getting a good job, they migrate in search of unorganised jobs. Bringing the tribal youth into government sponsored skill development programs is a difficult task in this area. But promotions and changing the mind-set of Soliga youth should be encouraged. Majority of the migrants are men. When they migrate, the burden of the family lies on Soliga women. In most of the cases, it will be very difficult for Soliga women to look after the family and taking care of the children. Their traditional job is NTFP extraction. Because of the ban on NTFP collection, these tribes have been forced to move to other states, resulting in insecurity for the tribes and their culture (Sindhu et al., 2019). This result is showing that gradually their traditional occupation is reducing and they are looking for other unskilled labour.

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