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Research Article

An Analysis of Socio- Economic Conditions of Iruliga Tribal Community in Ramanagara District, Karnataka

Dr. Kariyanna. E

Faculty of Kannada, Department of B.A UG)
Bangalore University, Jnanabharathi Campus, Bengaluru-56, India

Corresponding Author: * Dr. Kariyanna. E

Abstract	Manuscript Information
<p>The present research paper deals with the Iruliga tribal community as part of the tribal community in the Ramanagara district of Karnataka state. Iruliga tribals live in the southern part of India. Most of the Iruliga Tribal Populations live in the country's Tamil Nadu state. Their population in Karnataka is estimated at 25,000 people. However, the tribal populations are 189,621 in the significant region of Tamil Nadu and 23,721 in Kerala. This research paper focuses on the socio-economic status of the Iruliga tribal community in the Ramangara district of Karnataka. This study is mainly based on secondary and primary data. The primary data has been collected from schedule-cum-questionnaire, personal interviews, group discussions, and observations in the study area. The field study observed that most ITPs live below the poverty line in the study area. Due to the high unemployment, they have a low standard of living. They are socially stigmatized as ITPs due to lack of access to formal education. Their standard of living is based on their culture. They follow traditional occupational to earn their livelihood and earn every little out of it. The ITPs are socially deprived in community due to their low socio-economic status.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ISSN No: 2583-7397 ▪ Received: 16-01-2025 ▪ Accepted: 22-02-2025 ▪ Published: 27-02-2025 ▪ IJCRM: 4(1); 2025: 202-206 ▪ ©2025, All Rights Reserved ▪ Plagiarism Checked: Yes ▪ Peer Review Process: Yes
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KEYWORDS: Iruliga Tribal Population, Socio-Economic Status, and Living Status.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Iruliga tribal population community is a Dravidian ethnic/traditional community inhabiting the area of this Nilgiri Mountains, in the states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and in some parts of Karnataka state in the country. The Iruliga tribal populations have their origin from ethnic communities of Southeast Asia and Australia. They speak Iruliga tribal population language that is

closely related Dravidian language like Kannada and Tamil. The Iruliga tribal population community resides in just three South Western countries - Tamil Nadu, Kerala and in some parts of Karnataka. In Tamil Nadu, they reside in the Nilgiris, Coimbatore, Erode, Namakkal, Salem, and Dharmapuri. Back in Kerala, they reside in the Palakkad district and Attapady and Walayar Panchayats. In Karnataka, they reside in the

Ramanagara, Davanagere, and Bangalore Rural District. Peoples of Iruliga ethnicity are known as Irular and talk Irula, which belongs to the Dravidian family. Alongside their understanding in medicine, their ability in few agriculturists, collecting honey, rat catching, catching snakes particularly poisonous ones, is nearly legendary. Traditionally, the main occupation of the Iruliga tribal populations has been snake, rat catching and honey collection in living areas. They also work as labourers (coolies) in the fields of the landlords during the sowing and harvesting seasons or in the rice mills. Fishing and cattle farm is also a major occupation.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the status of Iruliga Tribal populations in India and Karnataka in general.
2. To study the traditional culture and occupation of Ramanagara district of Karnataka.
3. To analyzed the present socio-economic conditions of the Iruliga Tribal people in Ramanagara district.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is mainly based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Secondary data was collected from various reports of the Government of India, books, journals, and periodicals. Primary data collected from multiple Anthropological research methods and tools, such schedule-

cum-questionnaire, personal interviews, group discussions, and observations in the study area. The present study uses the simple random sampling technique to select the respondents from the Ramanagara district of Karnataka state. The size of the sample is 150 respondents in the field study area.

Study Area

Ramanagara district is study area of present study. This district is one of the important districts in the Southern part of Karnataka. In the district, it has four taluks namely Ramarnagara, Channapatna, Kanakapura, and Magadi. The total population of district is 10, 82,739 according to the census of 2011. This district has a more rural population and its economy depends more on the rural economy. The majority of the religions living in the district are Hindu is 88.60 percent and Muslim is 10.56 percent of the total population respectively.

Status of Iruliga Tribal Population in India

The Iruliga tribal populations are a small tribal people who live in south India. The Iruliga tribal populations were traditionally hunters and gatherers of forest products. They call themselves the devotees of the forest. They used to live in caves but with the help of the government have built houses of stone with tile roofs. The Iruliga used to catch and eat rats and snakes, which gained them the distain of others. As the wildlife of the forests declined, the Iruliga became agricultural workers.

Table 1: Total Populations of Iruliga Tribal Community in India 2011

Sl. No	Name of the State	Male	Female	Total Population
1	Karnataka	5267 (51.34%)	4992 (48.66%)	10259 (100.00%)
2	Kerala	11766 (49.60%)	11955 (50.40%)	23721 (100.00%)
3	Tamil Nadu	94521 (49.84%)	95140 (50.16%)	189661 (100.00%)

Source: Population Census of India 2011

The above table reveals that the total population of Iruliga Tribal Community in India as per 2011 Census. Tamil Nadu state has the highest number of total populations of Iruliga Tribal Community is 189661, out of 189661 populations, male population is 94521 (49.84%) and female population is 95140 (50.16%). Kerala has the second highest of the total number of Iruliga Tribal Populations is 23721, out of these, male population is 11766 (49.60%) and female population is 11955 (50.40%) and Karnataka state has the third position of the Iruliga tribal population is 10259, out of these population, male populations is 5267 (51.34%) and female population is 4992 (48.66%).

Status of Traditional Culture and Occupation in Ramanagara District

Iruliga Tribal people are very different in their social and cultural system. There are kind of economy activities like catch snake, rat catching, honey collection, forest produce activities, etc. Traditionally, the foremost occupation of the Iruliga Tribal people has been snake, rat catching and honey collection in the areas. They also work as labourers coolies in the fields of the

property owners during the sowing and harvesting seasons or in the rice mills, fish rearing, goat and sheep rearing, and cattle farm is also a main livelihood activity. To combat this pest, Iruliga men people use a traditional earthen pot smoking method. Smoke is blown through their mouths, which leads to severe lung and heart problems. When natives made in roads to their settlements, Iruliga Tribal people are shifted their forest centers from one to another and in this process, cultivation too experienced transition. The major crops are Ragi, mustard, grains, and pulses with bamboo activity. There are Iruliga Tribal people property owners, who own 5 to 10 acres of land. However, due to shortage of rains and lack of irrigation, cultivation of grains is becoming less. They used to change the land of cultivation although they do not shift their houses and agriculture materials. That means they have some kind of shifting cultivation. Cattle production is another source of income. The main forest resources like honey, bamboo activity, frankincense, firewood etc., are also being collected. In the previous, rice was consumed only during festivals and some days like family ceremonies (Birth and ear name celebration, marriage, etc.). Presently, as government due

to the lack of cultivation, rice has become their staple food. Some Iruliga Tribal people do not consume beef. However, meats of chicken, goat, pig and fish are favourites.

includes four taluks of Ramanagara district. In the district, all the taluks have been selected for the field study on the basis of the high concentration of people Iruliga Tribal Population.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The details of the number of Iruliga Tribal Population sample respondents are presented in the below table. The research study

Table 2: Socio-economic Profile of the Respondents

S. No	Factors	Particular	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Gender	Male	93	62.00
		Female	57	38.00
2	Marital Status	Married	89	59.33
		Unmarried	37	24.67
		Widowed	24	16.00
3	Age Group	20-35	68	45.33
		36-50	43	28.67
		51-65	22	14.67
		66 and above	17	11.33
4	Educational Status	Illiterate	87	58.00
		Literate	33	22.00
		Primary	17	11.33
		Secondary	13	8.67
5	Occupation	Daily Wages/ Labours	142	94.67
		Agriculture	4	2.67
		Business	3	0.67
		Others	3	2.00
6	Annual Income Status	Below Rs.10,000	136	90.67
		Rs.10,001 to 15,000	8	5.33
		Rs.15,001 to 20,000	4	2.67
		Rs.20,001 and above	2	1.33

Source: Field Survey

Gender Classification

The Iruliga Tribal Populations so many faces of poverty and livelihood problems is not a matter of male or female but it is about to how the people are solved these problems is very important factor. Table – 2 shows that the gender wise distribution of the sample respondents in the study area. Out of 150 respondents, the majority of respondents are male about 62.00 per cent and female respondents are 38.00 per cent in the district.

Composition of Marital Status

This section reveals about marital status of sample households in where farmers are engaged in agriculture and labours activities. Under these circumstances, many of the married and unmarried farmers are doing labour work and agriculture in the selected sample area, which explains in the following table. The above table-3 illustrations that married as well as unmarried are involved in agriculture activity. Out of the total samples, 59.33 per cent of married peoples, 24.67 per cent of unmarried peoples are doing daily wages and agriculture labourers and the remaining only 16.00 per cent of the respondents are widowed women tribes in the study area.

Age Structure

The above Table-2 deals with the impact of poverty and livelihood problems on people from different age group in the selected sample area. Out of 150 samples, the majority of the

respondents are 45.33 per cent are in the age group of 20-35 years. The next positions of 25.67 per cent of the respondents are they have age group of 36-50 years. The very important factor is from 36 to 50 age group is very responsible for their family survival. About 14.67 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 51-65 years, and the remaining 11.33 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of above 66 years.

Educational Status

From the above Table -5, it is clear that the educational status of the sample respondents in the study area. Out of 150 respondents, the majority of the respondents 58.00 per cent are uneducated and illiterate. The total respondents in the study area the number of problems of poverty and livelihood are 87 (58%) illiterates. The next position of respondents that completed their knowledge is literate are 33 (22%). Then, the respondents who have completed their education up to primary is only 17 (11.33%) and the remaining respondents completed their secondary level of education is only 13 (8.67%). Reason for poor education development is poverty, livelihood, low level of work, depending on coolie, and socially they occupy very low status in the society. Therefore, they cannot give importance to education.

Occupation of the Sample Respondents

Occupation of every individual's determined by the capacity, life secure, family maintenance, skill and efficiency. The level of occupation and income always go hand by hand. The good

occupation always gives the good income level. Out of 150, the majority of the respondents are 94.67 per cent are engaged in the daily wages in construction work and 2.67 per cent are involved in agriculture activity in their village and other villages. About 2 per cent of Iruliga tribal are engaged in others work like Preparing Price of Chalk, Handloom Works, Preparing the Agarbathi Activities, and Caste Based Occupation and the remaining 0.67 per cent of respondents are involved in business activities in the area.

Annual Income of Respondents

In this part detail of the annual income of the respondents is one of the important livelihood factors where it increases standard of living level of the people. Table-2 details of the annual income level of the Iruliga community in the field study area. Out of 150 respondents, the majority of the respondents are 90.67 per cent belongs to below Rs.10,000, 5.33 per cent belongs to Rs.10,001 to Rs.15,000 income level, 2.67 per cent are in between Rs.15,001 – 20,000 income level and the remaining only 1.33 per cent are in the income level of Rs.20,001 and above. It is

observed this study is very low of the annual income of ITP community in the study area.

Socio-economic Conditions of the Iruliga Tribal Population

In this section analyse the socio-economic conditions of the Iruliga Tribal Populations in Ramanagara district of the state. The Iruliga Tribal populations are very crucial role in the culture and traditional activities and their living conditions also difficulty in the area.

Expenditure Pattern

Expenditure pattern is also considered as an active variable, which determines the economic status as well as the living conditions of the respondents. The more they spent for their requirements the better will be their livelihood. In the field study, expenditure of the respondents is classified into expenditure on essentials, expenditure on education and health care and expenditure on social activities. This is given in Table- given below.

Table:3 Expenditure Pattern of the Respondents

S. No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Per cent
1	Essentials commodities	87	58.00
2	Health care	29	19.33
3	Education	10	6.67
4	Social activities	24	16.00
	Total	150	100.00

Source: Field Study

From the above Table-3, it is clear that the expenditure pattern of the respondents in the study area. Out of 150 samples of ITPs respondents, 58% of the respondents are spent for purchasing essential commodities in their family, 19.33% are spent for health care services, 16% of the respondents are spent for social activities and the remaining only 6.67% of the respondents are spent for education of children. It is result found that the majority of the respondents are spent for essential commodities like food, cloths, daily usage costs, etc.

Savings Pattern of the Respondents

In this part, give the details of the savings pattern of the respondents in the study area. Savings is an amount left over after an individual's consumer spending is subtracted from the amount of disposable income earned in a given period of time. Savings can be used to increase income through investing.

Table:4 Savings Pattern of the Respondents

S. No	Types of Savings	No of Respondents	Per cent
1	SHGs	15	10.00
2	Banks	8	5.33
3	Self-Savings	9	6.00
4	Chits	4	2.67
5	Postal Saving	3	2.00
6	No Savings	111	74.00
	Total	150	100.00

Source: Field Study

The above Table-4 depicts the savings pattern of the respondents in the field study area. Out of 150 samples, 74.00 per cent of the respondents are have not saving in any banks, 10% has savings in SHGs, 6% has savings in own/ self-savings, following by the banks (5.33%), Chits (2.67%), and postal savings (2.00%). The field study observed that, the majority of the respondents are having not savings due to daily expenditure on livelihood and daily wages are very low.

Health Conditions of the Iruliga Tribal Populations of the Respondents

Health is a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. It is more precious than gold, as if it is true in their daily life. A person who possesses good health it may support him to become rich in socially, economically, culturally, moreover there is so benefited to get

over all personality development. The study reveals the family factors, the members of the family want to establish good family status, society, economically, culturally, and ethically

maintenance of good health of the members of the family is very important.

Table:5 Types of Sufficient Treatment Facilities for Diseases

SL. No	Health Treatments	No of Respondents	Percent (%)
1	Government Hospitals	79	52.67
2	Private Hospitals	9	6.00
3	Traditional Medicine	38	25.33
4	Homeopathy	14	9.33
5	Ayurveda	10	6.67
	Total	150	100.00

Source: Field Survey.

From the above Table-5, it is clear from the types of sufficient health facilities for diseases of the Iruliga Tirabl Population respondents in the study area. Out of 150 respondents, 52.67% of the respondents have depended government hospitals that means primary health care centres till today for health treatment, 25.33% are accessible to traditional medicine, 9.33% and 6.67% are depends up on homeopathy and Ayurvedic medicine respectively, and remaining only 6.00% are private hospitals.

Living Conditions of the Respondents

The respondents of Iruliga Tribal people are living in nature of residence in the study area. The concept of community can be seen through their housing conditions and which they are having basic requirements at home. Housing a condition, this indicates nature of their individuality. Status of an individual can be assessed based on the nature of the house which their live. If the individual possesses low quality houses, normally we can understand that they are economically, socially poor, poverty, livelihood, etc. One factor that can be observed easily that a person who possess economic requirements naturally he can lead a very comfortable life. Nature of houses is depending on their income. Income indicates their status and nature of the houses. Many Iruliga Tribal Population communities do not have good facilities because they are very poor.

In the reveal that the different source of houses of the Iruliga tribal respondents in Ramanagara district. Many housing schemes in the district like tribal sub plan, Indira Awas Yojana, NGOs, and own constructed. The ITP are aware of the development schemes implemented by the State Government for their socio-economic and educational developments only through the local Panchayat. Gradually, the sanctioned numbers of houses are increased due to the impact of new development schemes. The nature of houses includes thatched, tiled and terraced, with two or three rooms. The respondents have got houses through the different sources of housing schemes. Access to safe and clean water and sanitation facilities is a basic right of all people, including people with disabilities, the denial of which can have serious implications on their well-being. This study observed that the majority of people not have sanitation facilities in their living place, because problems of financial and not provide government facilities to them. Therefore, Iruliga tribal people are very critical situation in poverty and livelihood situation. Out of 150 sample respondents, the majority of

respondents 48.67 per cent are not accessible for sanitation facilities in their living place, 20.67% are toilet facilities, 13.33% are drainage facilities, 10% are rooms in their houses and the remaining only 7.33% are accessible for bathroom facilities.

Major Findings

- This field study found from the gender-wise distribution of the respondents. Out of 150 respondents, the majority of respondents are male about 62.00 per cent and female respondents are 38.00 per cent in the district.
- The marital status of the respondents in the study area. Out of the total samples, 59.33 per cent of married peoples, 24.67 per cent of unmarried peoples are doing daily wages and agriculture laborers and the remaining only 16.00 per cent of the respondents are widowed women tribes in the study area.
- Its interesting point out the study area, out of 150 samples, the majority of the respondents are 45.33 per cent are in the age group of 20-35 years. The next positions of 25.67 per cent of the respondents are they have age group of 36-50 years. The very important factor is from 36 to 50 age group is very responsible for their family survival. About 14.67 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 51-65 years, and the remaining 11.33 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of above 66 years.
- In field study area clear that the educational qualification of the respondents. Out of 150 respondents, the majority of the respondents 58.00 per cent are uneducated and illiterate. The total respondents in the study area the number of problems of poverty and livelihood are 87 (58%) illiterates. The next position of respondents that completed their knowledge is literate are 33 (22%). Then, the respondents who have completed their education up to primary is only 17 (11.33%) and the remaining respondents completed their secondary level of education is only 13 (8.67%).
- Out of 150, the majority of the respondents are 94.67 per cent are engaged in the daily wages in construction work and 2.67 per cent are involved in agriculture activity in their village and other villages. About 2 per cent of Iruliga tribal are engaged in others work like Preparing Price of Chalk, Handloom Works, Preparing the Agarbathi Activities, and Caste Based Occupation and the remaining 0.67 per cent of respondents are involved in business activities in the area.

- Out of 150 respondents, the majority of the respondents are 90.67 per cent belongs to below Rs.10,000, 5.33 per cent belongs to Rs.10,001 to Rs.15,000 income level, 2.67 per cent are in between Rs.15,001 – 20,000 income level and the remaining only 1.33 per cent are in the income level of Rs.20,001 and above.
- It is interesting factors of the expenditure pattern of the respondents in the study area. Out of 150 respondents, 58.00 per cent of the respondents are spent for purchasing essential commodities in their family, 19.33 per cent are spent for health care services, 16.00 per cent of the respondents are spent for social activities and the remaining only 6.67 per cent of the respondents are spent for education of children.
- The field study found from the savings system of the respondents. Out of 150 samples, 74.00 per cent of the respondents are have not saving in any banks, 10.00 per cent has savings in SHGs, 6 per cent has savings in own/ self-savings, following by the banks (5.33%), Chits (2.67%), and postal savings (2.00%).
- Out of 150 respondents, 52.67 per cent of the respondents have depended government hospitals that means primary health care centres till today for health treatment, 25.33 per cent are accessible to traditional medicine, 9.33 per cent and 6.67 per cent are depends up on homeopathy and Ayurvedic medicine respectively, and remaining only 6.00 per cent are private hospitals.

education facilities, government schemes, health facilities, land facilities, drinking and sanitation facilities, etc. However, the present study fulfilled that the need of socio-economic materials for iruliga tribal populations in their living areas.

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5. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION REMARKS

The present study observed that the majority of the Iruliga tribal people are living below the poverty line in study area. Due to the high unemployment, they have a low economic standard of living. They are socially stigmatized as Iruliga tribal people due to lack of access to formal education. Their standard of living is based on their culture. They follow traditional occupational to earn their livelihood and earn every little out of it. The Iruligas are socially deprived in community due to their low socio-economic status. The present study was analysed that the socio-economic conditions of the iruliga tribal population in Ramanagara district. The main occupation of the ITPs has been rat and snake catch and rabbit and squirrel hunt in the study area. It is their main source of income. Wild resources like honey, firewood and the like are also collected. They also work as coolies in the fields of the landlords during the sowing and harvesting seasons. The original occupation of these ITP was rat, rabbit and snake catching.

However, the field study observed that the since abolishing of snake catching by the Indian Government, the community had to abandon their migratory lifestyle and make their living among the mainstream society. The community has settled down in the outer edge of various villages, trying to make their living in as daily laborer in the fields, bonded labour in rice mills. Since, they do not have sufficient education and relevant livelihood skills. The above results observed that the iruliga tribal populations very critical position of the living and socio-economic conditions. So, local government should be providing need of basic facilities to iruliga tribal peoples, should be provides

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