

## Economic Condition of Paliyar Tribal Women's in Bodinayakanur

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### Abstract

Women's studies has evolved in the past few decades as a vibrant subject with important contributions to make to the mass existing knowledge. It questions traditional ways of thinking. It revisits and reinterprets available information offering alternate and more holistic perspectives in contrast to conventional binary approaches. Women's studies first emerged in India during the 1970s as a forceful critique of those processes that had made women invisible after independence-invisible not only to society and the state, but also to higher education and its discipline.

Women's Studies is a 'Scientific and systematic study of Women's / gender issues involved in the structure and functions of any society'. It is still digging out the hidden realities of women especially the biology and sociology of women and their mutual contribution in defining women and consequently their status and position. This paper "Economic Condition of Paliyar Tribal Women's in Bodinayakanur" deals about the Paliyar Women's Economic Condition in Bodinayakanur.

**Keywords:** Paliyar Tribes, Bodinayakanur, Wage Labours, Plantation, Economy

### Introduction

Women's studies has evolved in the past few decades as a vibrant subject with important contributions to make to the mass existing knowledge. It questions traditional ways of thinking. It revisits and reinterprets available information offering alternate and more holistic perspectives in contrast to conventional binary approaches. Women's studies first emerged in India during the 1970s as a forceful critique of those processes that had made women invisible after independence-invisible not only to society and the state, but also to higher education and its discipline. The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR)

was announced for new research on women studies. The council asked to research on women's movement and women's studies

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### **Bodinayakanur**

Bodinayakanur is a Municipal town in Theni District, Tamil Nadu in the Border of Present Kerala, Geographically it is located on 100<sup>0</sup> North Latitude. It lies 90 Km. West of Madurai. In Bodinayakanur a few traces of Megalithic remains are found. This Megalithic culture undoubtedly coincides with the Sangam Age which dated from 3<sup>rd</sup> Century B.C. to 3<sup>rd</sup> Century A.D. In 1950 the Archaeological survey of India discovered more than 1500 Silver coin in Bodinayakanur. The Legend of this coin are invariable and with the help of these coins we could come to know that this area was once ruled by Pandyas. During Sangam period Bodinayakanur formed the party of Alanadu Division, one of the political division of the Pandya Country.

According to 2011 census, Bodinayakanur had a population of 75,676 with sex ration of 1018 females for every 1000 males the city is the taluk head quarters, due to the weather and natural environment, the first prime minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru called the city as "South Kashmir". A town located on the foot hills of Western gate in the Southern State of Tamil Nadu in India. The major plantation crops here are Silk Cotton, major Pepper, Coffee, Tea and Cardamon. The Paliyar Tribes are living in the foot hills area of Bodinayakanur at Kottakudi, Vedakkumalai, Seraikkadu, Mundhal and etc. thus places are all mountain region they are not mingle with the other peoples who living inside the town.

### **Paliyar Tribes in Bodinayakanur**

The Paliyan (or) Paliyar (or) Pazhaiyarare are Adivasi Dravidian people living in the South Western ghats mountain rain forest in South India, especially in Tamil Nadu and Kerala the Paliyar women are generally called as "Pallichi" they are mostly forest product sellers, food cultivators and bee keepers, some work intermittently as wage laborers, mostly

on plantation. They are included in the list of scheduled tribes in India. They are short in stature and black in colour with curvy hair, thick lips, broad and flat nose. Tamil is their mother language.

## **Economic Conditions of Paliyar Women**

### **Collection and gathering**

The Tribals of Paliyar family is engaged in collecting Minor forest produce from the forest and also from the near by plan basis. The whole family including children move out during the collection season in search of roots, tubers, fruits, leaves, honey and also deer horns. In the forest they collect hill brooms, tubers like hekke, bennia, korani, narame, nuraga etc., and other items like sadavari, nanari, pavatta, arippu, padagala, kunthirikom, mave manjal, etc., Among the leaves collected by them for self consumption and for sale are keera soppu, kakkai soppu, matan soppu, Kurasoppu, etc., They also collect fertilized eggs of the peacocks from the forest and hatched, placing them along with hen's eggs.

### **Hunting**

The Paliyars are experts in hunting the birds and animals. They go as group with trained hunting dogs with snares and traps to hunt small animals. They are fond of porcupines. Rats are trapped in the ilikudi and also they catch rats form agricultural fields and collect food grains stored by the rodents in their burrows. Porcupines would be smoked in their holes and caught when they struggle with suffocation. They are experts in catching jungle wild lizards living in holes of the trees. They used birds by using stone pellets as well as using birdlime through coloured bamboo sticks. They consume a few of their catch also sale in the market. The Paliyar women's did not involve in the hunting but they sale the hunted animals or birds in the streets or markets.

### **Honey collection**

The Paliyars are well -known honey hunters. They collect honey from the honeycombs inside the holes of the trees or hollows in the stones. They extract three types of honey i.e., Tudejenu, Nethere jenu and Kombuge jenu. They are fond of hunting Kombu jenu from the branches of huge trees. They use the techniques of smoking rope ladder system, basket rope ladder with bamboo steps and the bamboo peg system for high trees. They use honey (Tude Jenu) as a special diet for new born children, and pregnant women and aged

male patients. During the honey collecting women's are also accompanied with their partner's and sell it in the market.

### **Fishing and crab catching**

The Paliyar women and children are always engaged in catching fish and their favorite crabs. They use common technique of fixing bait to an Iron line attached with a rod in long rope. Usually women in a circle group use a big cloth stand against flow of water use conical basket to catch the fish. They catch the crabs by hands from the holes on the side of their paddy fields. By movements of the crabs on the soil in front of the hole, they detect their presence in the hole. They use another skill to catch crabs by putting an insect tied to the stick in the front side of the hole. When the crabs come out to bite the insect, they catch the crabs by using cloth and crabs are put in their crab baskets. They use crabs of different variety to prepare many dishes for self-consumption. Mostly the women's of this community involve in the fishing for sale purpose.

### **Basketry preparation and Rope making**

Paliyar men and women recently started to weave baskets and bamboo vessels of different sizes and shapes for self - consumption and also for sale. They learned this skill for their income generation usually Bodinayakanur is the land of cultivation. Coconut is one of the huge income crops for the people. This Paliyar women's were work as labour in the forest and get the bamboo which was used for the preparation of basket from the owners of the land. The women's of this Paliyar community involve in the basketry making and sale in the market and they also involved in the rope making by the use of coconut waste and sale the ropes in the market.

### **Agriculture Activities**

They were traditional forest dwellers this Paliyar tribes work for daily wage in mango plantations. For monthly wage of 1000 to 1500 other than for the ration rice they were known about the medicinal plants and how to cure the disease through that plants the wage labourers say that the whole family is working in field for a month but their wages is equivalent of the individual work only few family brought the ration cards. Before the seven years back their knowledge in medicine plants is extraordinary.

## Wage Labour

Paliyar women's are also earning their livelihood by working as labourers on the agricultural fields owned by non-tribals and also labour work inside the nearby reserve forest they are with sound knowledge about trees and wild life. A few Paliyar women are also working as labourers in tea estates owned by private landlords. A few Paliyars even declared as bonded labourers in the farm houses of non - tribal land lords. A few have become labourers in road and house construction works. The women's are also working as a wage labours in the mango, tea, coffee plantation forests in Bodinayakanur region.

## Conclusion

This tribes were mostly involving in the old incoming activities and they are working as a labours their children's are also working in the agricultural field they are not allowing their children's to go school. Most of the Paliyar tribes are working and staying in the interior forest out of the city and there are no separate schools for the tribes in the forest. Another pathetic matters regarding paliyar tribe is there was no place for them to bury the dead. They bury the dead in the forest caves only. The only solution to improve their life is they have to mingle with the people who living in the town not only to get education but also to improve their economic position.

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