

Livelihood Diversification and Challenges among Sahariya
Tribe in Gwalior District

Manish Tyagi (Junior Research Fellow)
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology
Indira Gandhi National Tribal University,
Amarkantak (Madhya Pradesh) –484887
Email- tyagimanish181@gmail.com

And

Prof. Soubhagya Ranjan Padhi,
Prof. and Head of Department
Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology
Indira Gandhi National Tribal University,
Amarkantak (Madhya Pradesh)-484887
Email - srustisilpi@gmail.com

Abstract

Livelihood is very crucial for any community to survive in this world. Livelihood crisis as a problem pose a serious question in this regard before tribal community in the world. The world with development paradigm is intervening all corners of nation which were isolated and untouched earlier. As a result, tribal area and tribal community are mostly affected by this change. Livelihood strategies with any kind of developmental measures for tribal people should be harmonious with their contextual community skill, locally available raw materials and further capacity building to adopt a few innovative approaches. This argument has been aptly supported by the sustainable livelihood approach. The present study is an attempt to understand the livelihood diversification among Sahariya tribe. The study is conducted in two Sahariya inhabited villages of the Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh. It is observed that diversified livelihood options are adopted and followed by the Sahariya for their socio-economic survival. In this context, they adopted both farm and non-farm employment. Some have even migrated to other places of district to find an alternative livelihood. While small tribal farmers adopt enterprise based self-employment and farming as a livelihood, the poor Sahariya tribals mostly depended on low skilled jobs, low capital intensive work like agriculture labour and industrial labour especially in unorganized sector. It can be concluded that Sahariya due to their economic marginalization are forced to diversify their livelihood options but nevertheless the lack of education and skill has posed many challenges

for getting an affluent for their survival. Hence, this problem needs more attention and more planned strategies are required to provide them better livelihood on sustainable basis.

Key Words: *Tribal, Livelihood, Livelihood Diversification, Sahariya Tribe.*

Introduction:

With the development intervention and welfare measures the nation state is experiencing progress in many ways in their socio-economic life of the people. Tribals are also one in the path of transformation and experiencing different benefits vis-à-vis challenges through such development initiatives. Agricultural development is one of the most important dimensions of modern post-capitalist era has brought many prominent changes in society. It has primarily focused on food security of the people in country. Tribal in their traditional capacity were able to survive and maintain food security on the basis of their traditional knowledge of forest and land. However, in the recent time, development intervention has mostly entered to tribal regions for optimum use of natural resources as these regions are rich in natural resources. In some way this has disturbed the natural harmony of tribal region and devastated their traditional livelihood resources. In this backdrop, tribals become more vulnerable in their livelihood base and their livelihood security is endangered. Sahariya tribal regions are no exception to it and hence they face similar livelihood crisis and became vulnerable in their socio-economic life. Often they opt for multiple livelihood options but no way it has helped them to provide any better result than a mere ordinary survival.

Sahariya tribe combines their available resources for the optimal use and maintenance of their livelihood requirements. In recent days Sahariyas are even adopting various new sources of livelihood for their day to day survival. Livelihood diversification can be understood through the process by which a household follows different economic activities and social support capabilities for its survival along with improving the standard of living (Ellis, 1998 and Ellis, 2000). Problem of livelihood crisis can be overcome with adopting livelihood based extension approach in tribal area in our country. This approach can be adopted to enhance livelihood options, resource base and capacity building of the people in order to provide them better livelihood security.

This study is an attempt to understand the livelihood diversification pattern and the concomitant challenges of Sahariya tribe in Gwalior district. It also tries to identify constraints and opportunities in the pattern of Sahariya tribal livelihood.

Sahariya Tribe:

Sahariya, is a one of the most marginalized tribal groups, coming under Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) mainly resides in the area of Gwalior, Bhind, Morena, Datia, Guna, Shivpuri, Seopur, Vidisha and Raisen districts of Madhya Pradesh. According to Census of 2011, Sahariya population of Madhya Pradesh is 5,27,015. Among them male are 271,571 and female are 255,544. Sahariyas are also named as *Sosia* or *Sor*. It is etymologically expressed that the word 'Sahariya' is the combination of two words viz. "Sa' means companion and 'Haria' means tiger which together mean companion of tiger (Madhya Pradesh Tourism).

Review of Literature:

Tribal people are facing various changes in recent times. These changes led to generate various problems in the tribal society. Livelihood is very crucial aspect for the marginalized community especially for particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs). Sahariya is also one of PVTGs who are extremely marginalized in their economic life. Therefore, it needs special attention to study and understand their critical livelihood situation.

Livelihood studies focuses on various aspect of livelihood problems especially in developing countries because these are facing problems for sustainable development model. Therefore, rural livelihoods become important and need to be unfolded. These efforts will help to find out various challenges and their solutions of livelihood security in the region. It also draws strategies to curve out the problem of food security and hunger among communities those are more vulnerable than other communities.

Several Scholars have unfolded and explored the trend of livelihood and its relevant dimensions. Colin Murray has explicitly explored livelihood concept and its various dimensions. He has tried to synthesize various methods in his research and especially discussed on the limitation of the participatory techniques and survey methods to study livelihood issues (Colin Murray, 2002). In his paper 'Livelihoods perspectives and rural development' Ian Scoones has tried to analyze a historical development of livelihood

approach and the concept of sustainable livelihood and its limitations (Ian Scoones, 2009). The relation between education and livelihood with the opportunities of gaining jobs has been analyzed by Bruce Wilson and Johanna Wyn in their paper 'Livelihood and Social Division' (Bruce Wilson and Johanna Wyn, 1985). Impact of globalization on both livelihood of the people and their approach has been highlighted by Leo de Haan's in his key note speech for the 'International conference on research for development' held between 2-4 July 2008, Bern, Switzerland (Leo de Haan, 2008). Smitha Baby and S.Helen in their research paper "Analysis of livelihood diversification among farming community - towards a livelihood based extension approach" have aptly highlighted diversification of livelihood option in farming community of Kerala. They have described how the farmers of the state is opting diversified livelihood options in the state such as farming, non-farming employment, self-employment and migration strategy to generate their income and maintain the living standard of the family. The international migration is a major source of income is highlighted in their study (Baby, S. and S.Helen, 2015).

Methodology:

This study is conducted among Sahariya tribe of the Gwalior district with the sample size of 30 households. The sample has been collected from the households of two Sahariya inhabited villages. Thereby, household is the basic unit of sampling for the data collection. Selected villages had more than 50 percent population of Sahariya. The data are collected through personal interview schedule and observation using a pre-tested semi-structured interview schedule. Along with primary source, data have also been collected from secondary sources to enrich the study.

Analysis and Findings:

The livelihood diversification pattern of tribal people is shown in Table No.1. Depiction of sample helps to identify the change in livelihood and how it is diversifying. Table No.1 represents the present scenario of diversification among Sahariya tribe in the study area. Majority of tribals adopted the diversified livelihood strategies for their survival. It is found that the highest percentage of tribal people is adopting non-farming sources and has depending on migration as a means to get livelihood for their survival.

Table No.1: Livelihood diversification followed by tribal

Households (n=30)		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
Forest Produce Only	1	3.33
Farming Only	1	3.33
Migration Only	4	13.33
Non-Farming Only	5	16.67
Forest Produce+ Farming	2	6.67
Farming+ Non-Farming	2	6.67
Non-Farming + Migration	15	50
Total	30	100

Source: Field Study, 2019

Sahariyas traditionally were depended on forest produce but data show that there is very less number of households i.e. 3.33 percent only depend on it. It is observed that depending on forest and forest produce has deteriorated in recent days. In the same manner farming has been followed only by 3.33 percent households. Shifting cultivation has been stopped and they do not have proper cultivated lands available with them. Recently they are increasingly adopting non-farming livelihood options and it is observed that 16.67 percent households opt for this. As non-farming activities are also not frequently available, they prefer migrate to nearby town areas of the district for their economic survival. It is observed that majority of Sahariya households i.e. 50 percent are involved in unorganized sector non-farming activities by migrating to various nearby town areas. 13.33 percent households completely migrated and depending on outside non-farming activities only. Forest produce and farming have been adopted by only 6.67 percent. This description shows that tribal people are depending on diversified livelihood options starting from forest produce to non-farming and source of outside activities through migration. Hence mostly the combinations of livelihood are emerging as a major source of livelihood for Sahariya people. However this diversification of livelihood is not meant for any qualitative livelihood and it has not benefitted them immensely. It is observed that they do not have any settled livelihood on permanent basis and sustainability of livelihood is still a distant dream for them. The forceful diversification has only provided some hope for their economic survival but not very beneficial to curb the economic vulnerability of Sahariya.

Table 2: Diversification in farming and livestock activities

Households (n=30)		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
Food Crops Only	2	6.67
Cash Crops Only	3	10
Livestock Only	7	23.33
Food Crops + Cash Crops	8	26.67
Livestock+ Food Crops+ Cash Crops	10	33.33
Total	30	100

Source: Field Study, 2019

Tribal people in the study area are also engaged traditionally in food crops. The data show that 6.67 percent tribal are only cultivating food crops as share croppers. Cash crops are only cultivated by 10 percent tribals. 23.33 percent tribals are engaged in livestock. In the earlier time they do not have any idea about cash crop production. But now they have adopted cash crops which they produce in small quantity for selling in the market. It is observed that tribal people are changing their attitude towards cash crops and adopting new ways to sustain their livelihood. The large number of percentage of Sahariya (33.33 percentage) are opting all the mix kind of livelihood option like livestock, food crops and cash crops. Recently market influences has motivated the behavior and pattern of farming of Sahariya people. Livestock generally restricted to keeping goats because they do not have sufficient capital to invest for buffalo and cows. Therefore they prefer livestock which are available with lesser price.

Table - 3: Diversification of Livelihood pattern in Non-farm activities

Households (n=30)		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
Tribal Engagement in Manufacturing/Business Sector for Livelihood		

Non-Agriculture	14	46.67
Agriculture Allied Sector	8	26.66
Total	22	73.33
Tribal Engagement in Service Sector for Livelihood		
Organized Sector	0	0
Unorganized Sector	8	26.67
Total	8	26.67
Grand Total	30	100

Source: Field Study, 2019

Tribal are engaged in various field for their livelihood options to earn their livelihood. Table - No.3 presents the view of both manufacturing/business and service sector contribution in livelihood generation among tribals. It is revealed from table that tribals are engaged in both enterprise like non- agriculture or allied sector of agriculture. But the major proportions of tribals are engaged in non-agriculture sector. It is be due to lack of availability of land or lack of ownership of land and comparatively more availability of non-agricultural activities. It is depicted from the table that highest 46.67 percent Sahariya is earning their livelihood from non-agriculture activities. And only 26.67 percent tribal people of village are having livelihood options from allied sector of agriculture such as agricultural labour, crop cutting and helping in threshing etc.

Tribals are unable to earn their livelihood in service sector especially organized sector. The table shows that no single involvement of Sahariya in organized sector. The reasons of this are due to low literacy, lack of skill and low investment capacity of Sahariya people. However, it is observed that some proportions of tribals (26.67 percent) are engaged in unorganized sector. In recent days Sahariyas are earning their livelihood from unorganized sector primarily engaged through the economic activities like daily wage labour in mines, construction works etc.

This description shows their instability of livelihood and crisis of livelihood to daily survival of tribe. It highlights the point that how Sahariyas are facing livelihood crisis and trying to overcome it through adopting livelihood diversification strategies. It is evident that Sahariyas are depended on non-agriculture activities and unorganized sector for their livelihood. It is also clear indication of devastation of traditional livelihood options of PVTG.

Migration as a livelihood strategy:

The nature and prevalence of migration among Sahariya is depicted in Table No.4. Due to the unavailability of livelihood options in their own locality they are now forced to move other nearby town areas in search of job.

Table - No.4: Prevalence of Migration and its nature

Households (n=30)		
Nature of Migration	Frequency	Percentage
Intra-district only	19	63.33
Inter- District	0	0
Outside state	0	0
No Migration	11	36.67
Total	30	100

Source: Field Study, 2019

Field data highlight the point that about 63.33 percent Sahariyas are migrating in search of livelihood and only 36.67 percent have not migrated in search of livelihood. It is observed that non-migrating Sahariyas have somehow managed to find a little livelihood activities and stay in their village. They are primarily homesick people and therefore compromised with the adverse economic conditions just for the sake of compulsion of family or community bond. It does not conclude that the migrating Sahariyas are not bound by community bond but the adverse economic situation and marginalization force them to migrate to nearby towns. Nevertheless, it is only for the sake of livelihood and while migrating only male folk have migrated and their spouses, aged parents and children are still staying in villages. They frequently visit to their village either once or twice in a week. The entire migration is only intra-district migration. Data reveal that there is no indication of inter-district and inter-state migration among Sahariyas of the study area. This kind of migration is not significantly due to pull factors rather because of push factors just to overcome the problem of livelihood crisis.

A few Suggestive Remarks to overcome the crisis:

- Intervention of watershed management to increase the cultivable lands in Sahariya regions.

- Re-distribution of all tribal lands captured by non-tribals.
- Recognition of all Individual forest rights under Forest Rights Act, 2006
- Strengthening of Panchayat Raj Extension Act (PESA) to properly implement employment generation programmes in the village.
- Formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Village cooperatives for more livelihood generation.
- Market linking of tribal products for provides proper benefit.
- Skill development trainings by giving priority to the locally available options
- Capacity building programmes to create innovative practices for more farm productions
- Emphasis on livestock employment
- Establishment of small scale business enterprises and cottage industry

Conclusion:

Livelihood resources for rural people are very limited in nature. Most of the people depend on forest land resources and its related activities. As forest is deteriorated due to several reasons now depending on forest is a mammoth challenge for any tribe. In the case of Sahariya availability of cultivable land is very limited. There is a need of alternative livelihood. Specific options of alternative livelihood must be enhanced in Sahariya region. The skill development and the relevant training programme must be provided those people on priority basis to prevent force migration of this tribe. Multiple non-farming livelihood options like small business, Pisciculture, Sericulture, Apiculture, Aquaculture and especially strengthening of livestock goateries, piggy, dairy, and poultry can be some of the viable alternative options can reduce the crisis and make their economic life more sustainable. Apart from this proper market linking, formation of self help group (SHG) and cooperatives will certainly strengthen the livelihood of tribes on a sustainable basis.

References:

Baby, S. & Helen, S. (2015). 'Analysis of Livelihood Diversification among Farming Community- towards a Livelihood based Extension Approach' in *International Journal of Home Science Extension and Communication Management*, Vol.2, Issue, pp.18-21.

Brock, K. (1998). Draft document on livelihood diversification in Mali and Ethiopia, mimeo, Brighton: IDS- (1999). Implementing a sustainable livelihoods framework for policy-directed research: reflections from practice in Mali. *IDS working paper*. 90, p. 23.

Carswell, G. (2000). Sustainable livelihoods in Southern Ethiopia. IDS Research Report, No. 44, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

Carswell, G., Hulme, D. and Crook, B. (2002). Livelihood diversification: increasing in importance or increasingly recognized? Evidence from southern Ethiopia. *Journal of International Development*, 14(6): 786-804.

Ellis, F. (1998). Household strategies and rural livelihoods diversification. *Journal of Development Studies*. 35: 1-38.

Ellis, F. (2000) Rural Livelihoods and Diversity in developing countries. U.K. Oxford University Press.

Haan, de Leo, 2008, Livelihoods and Globalisation, presented at International Conference on Research for Development, Switzerland, pp.1-14

Joshi, P. K., Gulati, A., BIRTHAL, P.S and Tiwari, L. (2003). Agriculture diversification in South Asia: Patterns, determinants and policy implications. Markets, Trade and Institutions Division Discussion paper No. 57. *International Food Policy Research Institute*. WASHINGTON, D.C.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism website, <http://www.madhya-pradesh-tourism.com/travel-guide/madhya-pradesh-tribes.html>, accessed on 23/11/2018.

Murthy, B.E. V.V.N. (1983). Entrepreneurship in small towns: A study with special reference to two selected towns in coastal Andhra. Ph.D. Thesis, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, A.P. (India).

Murray, Colin, 2001, 'Livelihoods research: some conceptual and methodological issues', Background paper 5, *Chronic Poverty Research Centre*, p.5

Murray, Colin, 2002, 'Livelihood Research: Transcending Boundaries of Time and Space', *Journal of South African Studies*, September, Vol.28, Number 3

Prakash, B.A. (1998). *The Economic Impact of Migration to the Gulf. Kerala's Economic Development: Issues and Problems.* Sage Publication, New Delhi (India).

Sadengi, B. (1991). *Occupational Diversification among self-employed rural youth: A study in coastal Orissa.* Ph.D. Thesis, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, India.

Scoones, Ian, 'Livelihoods perspectives and rural development' in *Journal of Peasant Studies*, January, 2009, Vol.36, No.1.

Singh, K.N., Singh, K.N., Pal, K. and Singh, J. (1970). A scale for Measurement of Agricultural progressiveness of a village. In K.N. Singh et.al. (Eds.) *Measurement in extension Research: Instruments Developed at IARI (1963-1972)*, Division of Agricultural Extension, IARI, New Delhi, India.

Statistical Profile of Scheduled Tribes in India 2013, p.141; <https://tribal.nic.in/ST/StatisticalProfileofSTs2013.pdf> accessed on 04/10/2019.

Wilson, Bruce and Wyn, Johanna, 1985, 'Livelihood and Social Division' in *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Taylor and Francis Ltd., Vol.6, No. 3, pp. 273- 389.