

## Fertility Differentials and Their Determinants in Slums of Tirupati Town



### Social Science

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### ABSTRACT

*Socio-economic conditions have significant bearing on fertility levels of population poverty is the root cause for high fertility. Therefore, it is very essential to improve the socio-economic status of the respondents. In the study areas about 70 percent of the respondents were from households earning less than Rs.7500/- per annum. Government should provide loans through banks for self supporting business and other. Cottage industries should be established to provide employment for the semi-skilled and un-skilled labourers. Proper health education must be arranged to the community members. Mean number of live births were high for women who have married early. Hence, it is very essential to rise the age at marriage and thereby fertility can be decreased.*

### INTRODUCTION

Population explosion as a social problem has serious global implications. The sincere serious efforts made by the social scientists to analyse this problem and trace its source and also its economic, cultural and other implications have yielded vast knowledge which has served in tackling this problem partially. Andhra Pradesh occupies fifth place in the size of the population as well as area in India. Generally parents in developing countries like India desire relatively large families for various reasons. Children are of value to parents since they fulfill social economic, psychological and other value dimensions. From the perspective of parents, the functions served by children can be operated at different levels of civilization. The value of children conceptually refers to net worth of children implying a net balance of the positive and negative values of having them. A great part of Indian population lives in villages. As any other developing country, India is also experiencing high degree of urbanization. The heavy migration of the people from rural to urban areas is rapidly increasing the slum areas. Here, an attempt is made to study the demographic profile of one of the slums in Tirupati town.

### OBJECTIVES

1. To study the socio-economic aspects of the respondents in the study area.
2. To study differential Fertility and their Determinants.
3. To examine the nutritional and health status of the respondents.

### METHODOLOGY

The methodology occupies an important place in social, biological and demographic research. Without proper methodology the results are likely to be biased and undependable. The methodology is the scientific presentation of the systematic procedures adopted during a research process from the beginning to the end. The methodology is the guide for proper research and covers, area of the study general and specific objectives, sample frame and size interview process, analysis of data report writing limitations and problems involved in the study.

### Sample Frame and Size

The eligible women within the age group of 15 to 49 years with at least one living child were the respondents for the present study. However, their husbands were also interviewed to collect certain information like annual income for the household, type of occupation and opinion towards male sterilization. The sample size of the present study was 150 households and selected on the basis of cluster sampling.

### Area of Study

The present study was conducted in Indira Nagar which is a slum area in Tirupati town of Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh. Tirupati is a famous temple town.

### Interview Process

Interview with a schedule is the technique adopted for data collection. The information on the immunization medical facilities etc., were recorded after collection of information form the respondents. The respondents were cooperative with the researcher and participated in the interview patiently.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTIC OF THE COMMUNITY

Socio-economic factors have a considerable influence on vital events such as fertility, mortality and age at marriage. They differ from place to place and from time to time. The world population conference held at Bucharest in 1974 stated development is the best contraceptive. Hence, it is very essential to examine the socio-economic characteristics of the community. Historically socio-economic status shows in inverse relationship to fertility. However, in recent times the religious restrictions on practice of birth control are vanishing slowly due to change in attitudes of the people. Hence, this aspect is considered for study.

### Percentage distribution of respondents by Religion

Religion	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Hindu	130	86.7
Muslim	12	8.0
Christians	08	5.3
Total	150	100.0

The table shows that an overwhelming majority of the respondents were Hindus (87 percent) while a low percentage of them belonged the Muslim community (8 Percent). Interestingly the remaining eligible proportions were Christians (5 Percent). So, there is a high preponderance of Hindus in the survey area.

### Percentage distribution of respondents by caste

Caste	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Forward Caste	64	42.67
Backward Caste	70	46.66
SC & ST	16	10.67
Total	150	100.00

The above table demonstrates that in the study area more than two-fifths of the respondents belonged to forward caste. Nearly a half of the respondents belonged to backward communities (47 percent). The ST/SCs constitute the remaining 11 percent. So from this it can be concluded that in the study area majority of the population belonged to backward communities closely followed by the forward communities.

**Distribution of respondents by their Educational status**

Educational Status	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Illiterates	62	41.33
Primary	32	21.33
Secondary	43	28.7
College	13	08.7
Total	150	100.00

From above table it is evident that slightly more than two-fifths of the respondents were illiterate in the study area. About one-fifth and around three-tenths of the surveyed women had studied up to primary (21 percent) secondary (29 percent) levels respectively. It is interesting to note that nearly one-tenth of the sample women had intermediate and above level of education. Illiteracy was high being slum area.

**Distribution of respondent by occupational status**

Occupation	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Daily wages	37	24.67
House wives	111	74.0
Employees	02	1.33
Total	150	100.00

The above table clearly indicates that a very negligible proportion of the respondents were employees (1 percent) while around three - fourth of respondents were totally engaged in their households work. The rest one-fourth were going out for work as daily wage workers. So, in the study area female employment outside the home, particularly as daily wage workers in moderate.

**Distribution of respondents by household income**

Annual Income	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
≤ Rs. 10000	20	13.33
Rs. 10001-20000	90	60.00
Rs.20001 and above	40	26.67
Total	150	100.00

The data demonstrates the economic status of the respondents in the study area. An overwhelming majority of the respondents were from households having annual income of Rs. 10001 and above (87 percent) where as only a few percentage of them are earning Rs. 10,000 and below per annum. So, from the above table it can be concluded that the economic status is moderate in the study area.

**Distribution of respondents by type of Residence**

Type of Residence	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Pucca	90	60.00
Semi - Pucca	50	33.30
Hut	10	06.70
Total	150	100.00

The above table indicates that in the sample area three - fifths of the respondents were living in pucca houses, while one-third of them were (6.7 percent) residing in semi - pucca houses. On the other hand, a low percentage of them were residing in huts. So, in the study area, 9 out of every 10 were residing either in pucca or semi - pucca houses.

**FERTILITY**

The study of human fertility occupies central position in the study of population for several reasons. Human fertility is responsible for biological replacement and for the maintenance of the human society. The growth of the population of the world depends up on the levels of human fertility. Within the biological limits of human fertility, several social, cultural, psychological

as well as economic and political factors are found to operate and these are responsible for determining the levels of fertility. Thinking capacity breaks the barriers against willingness to restrict family size. Hence, other things remaining same education ought to be negatively associated with fertility. Further social and cultural factors do affect the reproductive process through intermediate variables.

**Mean live births by Educational level of respondents**

Education	Number of respondents	Mean live births
Illiterate	62	2.5
Primary	32	2.3
Secondary	43	2.2
College	13	1.7
Total	150	2.28

The above table illustrates that the illiterate women had the highest fertility having 2.5 mean live births. Women with primary and secondary education were having similar mean live births of 2.2 - 2.3 children while the collegiate women had 1.7 mean live births. The present study confirms the hypothesis that higher the literacy, lower will be the fertility vice-versa.

**Mean live births by Occupation of the respondents**

Occupation	Number of respondents	Mean live births
House wife	111	2.4
Daily wages	37	2.2
Petty Business	02	2.0
Total	150	2.28

While examining the differences in fertility across the different occupations held by the womenfolk, slightly higher fertility was noticed among the house wives (2.4) than the daily wage workers (2.2). Generally women labourers would manifest higher level of fertility compared to housewives.

**COMMUNITY HEALTH AND NUTRITION**

Health is man's normal condition and it is his birth right. It is the result of living in accordance with the natural laws pertaining the body, mind and environment. These laws relate to fresh air and sunlight balanced diet, regular exercise, rest, relaxation and sleep cleanliness-internal and external, right attitudes of mind, good habits and good patterns of living. It is needless to say that health occupies a paramount place in the welfare of the human beings. This is more so among the poor and not among the rich because health for them is not just source of comfort but also a source of their livelihood.

**Number and percentage distribution of respondents according to the consumption of different food items**

Food Items	Consumption pattern of respondents					
	Daily		Weekly		Rarely	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Milk and milk Products	110	73.3	30	20.0	10	6.6
Meat/Fish	9	6.0	122	81.3	19	12.6
Egg	10	6.6	134	89.3	6	4.0
Leafy Vegetables	134	89.3	16	10.6	-	-
Pulses	115	76.6	32	21.3	3	2.0
Fruits	74	49.3	29	19.3	47	31.3

The table clearly indicates that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (73.3 percent) were taking milk and products daily, and one-fifth weekly. Meat/Fish were taken by more than eight-tenths of the respondents (81.3 percent) weekly and thirteen percent rarely. 7 percent of the respondents were eating eggs daily and nearly nine-tenths weekly. Green leafy vegeta-

bles and pulses were daily consumed by 89 percent and 76 percent respectively. Among the respondents one-half of them (50 percent) were eating fruits daily, one-fourth weekly and the remaining three-tenths eat fruits rarely.

#### Distribution of respondents by place of recent delivery

Place of delivery	Number of respondents	Percentage
G.H/P.H.C	52	34.7
Private Hospital	60	40.0
Home	38	25.3
Total	150	100.00

The above table illustrates that the home was the place of recent delivery of respondents while one-third had given birth for recent child in G.H/P.H.C. For majority (40.0%) of the respondents, private hospital was the place of delivery for the recent child. The findings reveals that majority of the deliveries in the surveyed area were conducted in private hospitals.

#### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATION

Socio-economic conditions have significant bearing on fertility levels of population poverty is the root cause for high fertility. Therefore, it is very essential to improve the socio-economic status of the respondents. In the study areas about 70 percent of the respondents were from households earning less than Rs.7500/- per annum. Government should provide loans through banks for self supporting business and other. Cottage industries should be established to provide employment for the semi-skilled and un-skilled labourers. Education is another factor in determining the fertility levels. In the study area, 38 percent of the females were illiterate. Environmental sanitation is not satisfactory. Proper health education must be arranged to the community members. Mean number of live births were high for women who have married early. Majority of the respondents were not aware of the minimum age prescribed for marriages of girls and boys. Hence, legal age at marriage of 18 years for the girls and 21 years for boys should be implemented effectively.

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