



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

STATUS OF ST WOMEN OF: A STUDY

KEY WORDS: Rickets , Distal renal tubular acidosis , hyperchloremic metabolic acidosis

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The development of any country depends on its human resource for which population is the basis. But mere growth in population does not contribute for the growth of human resources. The growing population needs such qualities like good health, high life expectancy and productive capacity. According to 2011 Census population of India reached 121.02 Crores. Out of which Scheduled Tribe Population occupy 10.43 Crores. In respect of gender male population is higher than female population among STs. In Andhra Pradesh according to 2011 Census out of 8.47 Crores population Scheduled Tribes occupy 0.59 Crores. In Chittoor district Scheduled Tribes population was 1,59,165 out of which males are 79,756 and females are 79,409 (2011 Census).

The Tribal economy possesses several distinctive characteristics interms of its culture, religion, occupation and settlement pattern. They are sometimes referred as 'Adivass' or 'Girijans'. For centuries together the tribals have lived in or in the fringes of forests and depended entirely on forests for their livelihood. Even today forest products continue to be main source of their income. Majority of these tribes live on object poverty having little access to capital assets.

Yerukala, Chenchus, Yanadi and Sugali Tribes are prominently seen in Chittoor district. Yanadis are one of the major Scheduled Tribe in Andhra Pradesh. Majority of them are natives of Srihari Kota Island and spread our many parts of the state – Nellore, Chittoor and Prakasam Districts. They live in symbiosis with non-tribal. They speak Telugu language as their mother tongue.

Need for the Study: Education is meant for all round development of individuals. It increases the earning capacity productivity and life expectancy. But the literacy levels among Schedule Tribes are very low when compared to the State or National figures. The low rate of literacy levels among ST women has been affecting their quality of life. Due to unawareness of the health programmes and their availability majority of maternal mortality rate is increasing. Building on the achievements of the Government of India's National Rural Health Mission, UNICEF continues to support health programs such as village Health and Nutrition Days (VHND), to reach out to pregnant women in underserved areas, ensuring that they receive the benefits of these programmes.

Therefore inview of several factors which contribute the status of ST women the present is an attempt to identity the socio, cultural economic and health status of women in the study area.

Objectives of the study:

- To observe the life style of ST women
- To study and understand the socio, economic cultural and health status of ST women.

Locale of the study: The study was conducted in the ST colony of Tirupati city during the year 2016. They belong to Yanadi Tribe 150 families are in residing in that colony. Government has constructed cement roads and overhead tank in the colony. For the present study 50 Yanadi married women in the age group of 25-50 were selected purposively.

Methodology: The present study was based on the data collected from the sample respondents through interview schedule and observation. The Schedule consists of questions on four categories such as social, cultural, economic and health aspects. The sample respondents were explained the purpose of the study before data

collection. The data thus collected was analysed and presented in the following pages.

Data collection: This study is based on, both secondary and primary data. Primary data was collected with the help of a semi structured schedule. Secondary data was collected from the official reports and concerned web sites.

The responses of tribal women are analysed in relation to the changes that are taking place in their lives. A tribal women occupies an important place in the socio – economic and political structure of her society. They exercise free and firm hand in all aspects related to their socio-economic life. Though the tribal women are away from mainstream of national life, but they are not kept away from the impact of socio – economic changes effecting the neighborhood or society in general. In the process of change, the tribal women are forced to adhere to certain norms, which may even take away her freedom, her control over the traditional productive system, her house, family and children. With this back drop for the purpose of analysis of their socio – economic life only micro level data was taken in to consideration.

Table – 1:

Education levels:

Category	Count	Percentage
Illiterate	30	60
Primary	11	22
Secondary	8	16
College	1	2
Total	50	100

Table – 1 reveals that majority of this women were illiterates. Though some of them went to schools only 16 percent of them completed secondary education and one woman had college education.

Type of House:

Table – 2

Category	Count	Percentage
Own House	2	4
Rented House	48	96
Total	50	100

Majority of the STs are living in rented houses. The Government of Andhra Pradesh provided them place free of cost for construction of houses. But most of them sold their places to other communities and living in rented houses.

Number of Children

Table – 3

Number of children	Count	Percent
One child	6	12
Two children	16	32
Three children	26	52
>Three children	2	4

Table – 3 shows the number of children of sample respondents 32% of them are having two children where as 26 women i.e 52 percent have three children. Only 2 women have more than three children. Though equal priority and same kind of treatment is

given to girl children, son preference was also observed among them.

Main occupation: The traditional occupation of the Yanadi community is living on forests for their livelihood. But since this colony is near Tirupati town and due to the proximity of the city atmosphere, these people at present are not depending neither on hunting or fishing or gathering forest products. They have been working as daily wage labourers and servant maids. The following Table – 4 gives the details:

Table – 4
Main occupation

Category	Count	Percentage
Employment	1	2
Labourers	28	56
Servant maid	21	42
Total	50	100

It is evident from the Table – 4 that the main occupation of the ST women in the study area is working on daily wages and as servant maids. Both wife, husband and children above 14 years old have been working as labourers in the agriculture fields and as construction workers.

Their staple food is Ragi, Jower and Rice. Consumption of Non-vegetarian, eggs and milk is once in a while or occasional. Intake of vegetables also very less in their daily food. With regard to frequency of food intake 68 percent of them have been taking food three times per day and 32 percent said they take food only twice in a day.

The monthly income of the families range between Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 10,000/-. None of them have any lands or other properties. The marriageable age of girl child is 14 to 18 years and in the case of boys it is 17 to 20 years.

All the sample women are having Aadhar and ration cards 36 women are members in the Self Help Groups for the past 10 years formed and administered by a local NGO. Their monthly savings is around Rs. 150/- and all of them availed bank loans. They utilized these amounts for different purposes such as marriages of children, their education, construction and repair of houses etc. They didn't show any interest to start entrepreneurship at micro level.

Table - 5
Health Status:

Health Problems	Count	Percentage
Back pain	16	32
Gastric trouble	13	26
Gynic	10	20
General Health Problems	11	22
Total	50	100

Table – 5 gives a picture of the health status of the sample respondents. No serious or chronic health problems are seen among these women. 32 percent are suffering form back pain, 26 percent from Gastric trouble and 20 percent women reported gynic related problem and 22 percent have general health problems like occasional accurances of head ache, stomach ache, body pains. 56 percent of them were following family planning methods and they supported institutional deliveries. Since the visits of ANM are regular they were motivated forwards institutional deliveries and regularly taking the medicines during pregnancy.

Table – 6
Usage of devices and Gadgets

Devises and gadgets	Count	Percentage
Gas	50	100
Mixie	40	80
Television	50	100
FM radio	24	48
Cell Phone	50	100

All the sample women are having Gas. Connection and Mixie was used by 40 women. All of them women are having Televisions and Cell Phones. For entertainment they depend mostly on TVs and occasionally go to telugu and Hindi films. No habit of reading news paper but they watch TV news and also hear to FM radio for music and news.

With regard to the knowledge on Government Schemes like National Rural Health Mission, Janani Suraksha Yojana Insurance Scheme of Government of Andhra Pradesh for people in unorganized sector, majority of them are unable of these schemes. Only a few i.e 10 percent heard about them. But all of them have complete awareness on MGNREGA.

There is indebtedness among all the sample women and they barrow loans from the money lenders at high rates of interest.

The major findings of the study are:

1. Majority (60%) of them were illiterates, 22% completed primary education, 16% completed school education and only 2% completed college education (up to Degree).
2. They are following nuclear type of family. After marriage of their children either son or daughter they keep them in a separate house.
3. Majority of the STs are having small families. But a considerable number (28%) of them gave birth to three children or more to have a male child.
4. 96% of them are residing in rented houses.
5. 98 percent of them are working as daily labour in fields and construction and as servant maids. It was also observed that both wife and husband and their adolescent children have been working.
6. All the families are suffering with indebtedness. They took loans from money lenders at high rates of interest.
7. They were willing to join their children in government schools but did not want to continue them towards higher studies because of loosing income and low financial position.
8. They strongly believe in their goddess that she looks after their children's health.
9. They take normal care of their girl children from childhood to adolescent age.
10. It was found that no one is suffering with chronic diseases.
11. 46 percent of them have knowledge about the traditional health practices from their forefathers as they migrated from their native places long back.
12. They opined that good health practice means cleanliness at home, in time food taking and physical work.
13. The ANM visits to their colony are regular. All the ST women and in the study area have been following the instructions of ANMs during Pregnancy period and Vaccinating their children time to time.

Conclusion:

Since the tribal community all over India has been subjected to various forms of deprivation such as, alienation from land and other forest resources since the British rule, as a part of tribal society women have to suffer and yet survive for the sake of their children and community.

The role of women in tribal society is very important as they not only look after the household duties many of them also participate in economic pursuits like agriculture, construction work, basket making and quarrying etc. which are productive and also contribute towards national income.

Since this SC colony is very adjacent to the city the influence of city environment is more on these people. The changes in the present society are also influencing these people and majority of them are willing to work, and interested to provide good education to their children. Further there is a need to provide a good platform to encourage these women to exhibit their talents and to utilize their knowledge on traditional health practices.

Her knowledge about medicinal plants and herbs should be best put to practice and some improved methods for the furtherance of

her talents and its tangible gains should be communicated to her.

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