

## Case Report

# Socio-Economic Status of Jenukuruba Tribal Women: A Case Study of Chamarajanagara District, Karnataka

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## Abstract

The Objectives of this paper to find out the socio-economic status of Jenukuruba tribal women and to suggest the way and means for overall development of the same. Junukuruba Community has rich and cultural heritage, eternal traditions, but lacking Socio-economic empowerment. Could not create wealth; they could not hold land and properties and so on. Anyhow, governments offered constitutional relieves in the form of reservation. However, it is yet to reach the needy people. Therefore, a detailed research study has been carried out on socio-economic status of women in the Jenukuruba community. Here several strategic suggestions, policy guidelines have been suggested.

**Keywords:** Chamarajanagara; Jenukuruba; Socio-economic status; Tribal women

## Introduction

Socioeconomic status is an intricate concept covering of two different aspects, the social aspect that includes status or position in a social stratification and the economic aspects that includes resources such as income, occupation and wealth. Even though there is no generally accepted definition of the term "Socioeconomic status", so we get to see heterogeneous definition by writers and scholars. Socioeconomic status is a construct that reflects one's access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time, or educational opportunities [1]. Furthermore, it has been defined as the position that an individual or family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standards of cultural possessions, effective income, material possessions and participation in the group activities of the community [2]. Very often it is measured as a combination of various factors such as education, income and occupation. Therefore, it can be said that socioeconomic status is not a unitary concept and with this concept in mind, for the present study socio-economic status is measured by using some of the prominent factors such as social factors, demographic factors and

economic factors [3]. Women in a tribal society play a vital role in their social, cultural, economic and religious ways of life and are considered as an economic asset in their society. But they are still lagging far behind in the various walks of life like education, employment, good health and economic empowerment etc. Empowering may be understood as enabling weaker sections like poor women, especially tribal women to acquire and to possess power and resources, in order to make decisions on their own. After the analysis of the data and field observation, it is revealed that lack of education, poor health status and infant mortality rate, low level of wage work, lack of self-employment opportunity, organizing capacity and leadership quality are the main obstacles to the economic empowerment of tribal women [4]. Socio-economic profile is an important role in characterize the social life and behavior of an individual. It is, therefore, essential to analyze the socio-economic background of the Tribal women and to understand the pattern of relationship between Tribal women and local environment. In Indian society, caste and kinship has been influencing on the social life and acute disparity in terms of standard of living and sub-culture among various groups and regions exist, a study of the socio-economic conditions of a leader would help to reveal the sociological significance. At the same time, socio-economic stratification determines the structure of political power [5].

## Justification of the Study

The socio-economic status of women is the position which they attain as a reason of the various norms, beneficial and obligations in the society. It is often found that the women are more vulnerable section of the society relative to the male counterpart and they often happen to be last receiver of the opportunities delivered along with the development of the nation. Tribal women are more isolated in term of education, employment and health facilities from the mainland. So, it may be that they are more deprived when compare with male-counterpart as well as the women from other communities. So, in this regard the study is an attempt to highlight the socio-economic status of Jenukuruba women in a district called Chamarajanagara. The Jenukuruba are the tribal group who are the original inhabitant of hilly region consequently they are bound to be isolated from the mainland as well as development. So, in such a case, it is of upmost important to find out the socio and economical condition in which they are living in order to bring them towards the stream of development.

## Objectives of the Study

- To study the socioeconomic status of Jenukuruba women in Chamarajanagara district of Karnataka.
- To find out the educational Level of Jenukuruba Tribal women in the study area.
- To examine the factor influencing on the socioeconomic status of Jenukuruba women study area.

## Methods of the study

The present study is based on primary data collected from 120 sample respondents from 10 Tribal settlements of Gundlupet taluk of Chamarajanagara district. Following the purposive sampling method. A schedule is used to collect the demography, social and economic status of the Jenukuruba women and also used Interview, observation, group discussion, case study methods.

## Review of Literature

There are a good number of studies, explaining the causes and consequences of backwardness and low-level socio-economic status of tribal women. Such studies are related to a general enquiry of women exploitation and dependency. These studies have identified lack of education, absence of skills and training, lack of property rights, social isolation and segregation and male control over resources and reproductive rights as responsible for women disempowerment.

Awias (2009) [6] explained through their work that tribal women play a major role in the co-management of their natural, social, economic resources and crop production, livestock production, horticulture and post-harvest operations but they remain

backward because of their traditional values, illiteracy, superstitions, indecision making, social evils and many other cultural factors.

Ashok Kumar (2015) highlighted that the condition of socio socioeconomic condition of Jenukuruba tribal community in Mysore district. This study revealed that, Jenukurubas are social and economically very backward compare to other community. Even tribal community. These people are suffering from illness, illiteracy, poverty, lack of food and other problems.

Ajay Saraogi (2013) [7] highlighted the status of women in tribal society in India; he explained Anthropologists have been till recently divided on the status of woman in tribal societies in India. The actual treatment, legal status, opportunity for social participation and the character and extent of work, all determine each in a specific sense and manner, the status of women in a society. All these four determinants are independent of each other and not casually related. The correlation between them is empirical and not conceptual.

Das (2012) [8] in an attempt to find out the level of autonomy and decision making power of tribal women and the impact of socio-economic status on decision making roles have drawn a conclusion that the tribal women enjoy autonomy at their household level, especially in social aspects and at some point enjoy equal rights along with their husbands in economic matters. But due to low literacy rate and unemployment the community participation of the women is inactive and autonomy level is very low.

Franzmen, (2000) and (Scott, 1988) [9,10] in the study, the religious sphere is most dominating among tribes it constitutes a major field for male domination. The women are deprived of public authority. Religion legitimizes gender hierarchy. The subordination of women in religious activities and their denial of access to positions of religious leadership has been a powerful tool in most world religions in supporting the patriarchal order and the exclusion of women, from the public form. The religious sphere is a major field for male dominance, and a strategy to deprive women of public authority.

Veena Basin [11] explained in his article India as a whole is characterized by sharp gender disparities, although women's status varies considerably by region. On virtually all frontiers of human societal pursuits economic, educational, scientific, legal, political, official, political and religious sphere Indian women suffer profoundly. For all time there are socio-cultural factors, which validate for the status of women in particular society. And he explained about tribal girl's education, education is a fundamental right that provides opportunities for socio-economic uplift. In India reasons associated with not educating girl child are financial constraints, early marriages, submissiveness, motherhood, and parental perception of education on women's worldview. The girl

child is deliberately denied education and the future opportunity of the total development.

## Result and Discussion

In the present study author attempted to understand the different aspects of social and economic status of respondents. The main features of the socio-economic profile are family composition [12], education composition, occupation composition, marital status, family income, and family background of respondents. Nevertheless, these variables could help us to know the socio-economic status of tribal women in the selected study area in the paper.

### Family type

Family is the basic unit of society, which assigns social status, roles and social responsibilities to every individual. Family is the most powerful medium through which value system can develop over the period of time and Individual behavior and attitude are determined by the family which he/she belongs to. In the sense, whether the family is joint or nuclear family and it also determines the status and role of Tribal women.

Table 1 shows that 87.5% of the respondents belongs to Nuclear families and 9.2 % of the respondents belongs to Joint family and remaining only 3.3% of the respondents are living in the extended family. Thus, the data indicate that the nuclear families more than the Joint families and extended family.

Type of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear family	105	87.5
Join family	11	9.2
Extended family	4	3.3
Total	120	100

**Table 1:** Type of family.

Table 2 shows that 5.8% respondents are in age group below 20 years, 23.3% of respondents are in the age group of 21-30 years, 35.0% of the respondents are come 31 to 40 years age group, 14.2% of the respondents are come under Below 41-50 years age category, 12.5% of the respondents are 51-60 age group, and only 9.2 % of the responded Above 60 years.

Age group	Frequency	percentage
Below 20 years	07	5.8
21-30 years	28	23.3
31-40 years	42	35.0
41-50 years	17	14.2
51-60 y	15	12.5
Above 60 years	11	9.2
Total	120	100

**Table 2:** Age of respondent.

### Marital Status

Marital status is also a social indicator for understanding the socio-economic status of women. Early marriage system has been one of the important characteristics of Jenukuruba community. Marital status changes the women's status. It also changes the women's role and increases the duties and workload of the women. The marital status of the respondent is shown in the table below.

Table 3 shows that out of 120 respondents 68.3% of them are found to be married, 10.8% Unmarried, 15.0 widowed and only 5.9% of them are divorced. Nowadays Married and widowed/divorced women get different treatments in the society but before there no discrimination in this community. Remarriage is accepted in this society.

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	82	68.3
Unmarried	13	10.8
Widow	18	15.0
Divorced/separated	7	5.9
Total	120	100

**Table 3:** Marital status of respondent.

### Education Status

The education is a fundamental right that provides opportunities for socio-economic uplift. In India many reasons associated with not educating girl child are financial constraints, early marriages, submissiveness, motherhood, and parental perception of education on women's worldview. The educational status is divided into 7 categories which are illiterate, Lower primary level, Higher primary level, high school level, Pre-University level, under graduation and above, also other professional course. The education status of the respondent is shown in the table below.

Table 4 reveals that 40.8% of respondents were observed to be illiterates followed by Lower primary (27.5%), Higher primary (15.0%), High school (8.3%), Pre university (5.0), under graduate and above (1.7%) and only 1.7% women are studied Professional courses. This is mainly because the tribal women are more prone to their traditions and they do not come forward to upgrade their educational standards. Among this community school dropout is very common both boy and girls [14].

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	49	40.8
Lower Primary	33	27.5
Higher Primary	18	15.0
High school	10	8.3
PUC	06	5.0

UG and Above	02	1.7
Professional Course	02	1.7
total	120	100

**Table 4:** Educational status of respondent.

## Occupational Status

Occupation is considered as the main source of income it represents the socio-economic status of people. Tribal women in India contribute positively to the local economy and participate along with men in subsistence activities. In reality, women do more work than men. In the study area carry out all types of work at home as well as outside that are demand of mixed agro-pastoral economy. Apart from looking after the house, children and cattle major portion of the agriculture is done by women who do weeding, hoeing, harvesting and threshing. Women also work as labourers, Role of women is not only of importance in economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important.

Table 5 shows that out of 120 respondents 44.2% are working as an agriculture labour, 16.7% engaged in agriculture, 24.1% in collection of minor forest product, 3.3 % in government service, and 11.7% respondents are engaged other occupation like business, tailoring, selling in livestock product, gazing cattle, handi-craft etc.

Type of Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agricultural	20	16.7
Agriculture labour	53	44.2
Collection of minor forest product	29	24.1
Govt. service	4	3.3
Any Other	14	11.7
Total	120	100

**Table 5:** Occupational structure of respondent.

## Landholding

Land can be considered as the key resource of the Jenukuruba community. The pattern of land holding influences the economic status of household but also the social status in the community. The distribution of land of the sample households has been shown in the below.

Table 6 shows that out of 120 respondent, 40.8% respondent have no land, 45.0% less than 2 acre, 8.3% hold up 2 to 4 Acre, only 5.9% respondent hold up Above 4 acre the table clearly shows that majority of the Jenukuruba of study area hold up to only Below 2 acre. In the study area, the Jenukuruba who is land less or who have less than 2 acre they are depending cooli and collecting minor forest product. Most of the Jenukurubas not cultivate land.

Land holdings	Frequency	Percentage
No Land	49	40.8
Below 2 Acre	54	45.0
2 to 4 acre	10	8.3
Above 4 Acre	7	5.9
total	120	100

**Table 6:** Type of land.

## Annual Income of the Family

The income of a person in general, is an indicator of his economic status. The economic status of a person will impact on his/her attitude. Therefore, the study assumes that, the attitude of women belonging to the families with higher income differs from that of the attitude of women who are in middle or lower level of the income group. The economic status of the family also plays an important role in the attitude, ideas and values of family members and their decision-making. The respondent's annual income is indicated below in the table No.7, in a detailed manner.

Table 7 indicates that 28.4% of the respondents have annual income of up to Rs. 10,000, 47.5% respondents annual income is from Rs.10, 001-20,000, 15.8% of the respondents annual earning is Rs.20, 001-30,000, 5.0% of the respondents are earning is 30,001 to 40,000 and only 3.3% respondent annual income of above Rs. 40,000.

Income in RS	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 10000	34	28.4
10,001-20,000	57	47.5
20,001-30,000	19	15.8
30,001-40,000	06	5.0
Above 40,000	04	3.3
total	120	100

**Table 7:** Annual family income of respondent.

## Health Status

Health condition can be taken as another important socio-economic indicator. Even in this modern era quite a large number of people including tribes believe in superstition practices, preferring the Shamans and healers. Preferred place of treatment by the respondent women has been present below:

Table 8 indicates that 55.0% respondent prefer Government hospital for treatment whereas 23.3% respondent prefer private Hospital or clinic, 18.4% respondent depending on traditional healers and temples, but 3.3% respondent don't take treatment. This is due to lack of education, old mentality belief on superstition and low economic status.

Place of treatment	Frequency	Percentage
Govt. Hospital	66	55.0
Private Hospital	28	23.3
Traditional healers and temple	22	18.4
Don't go anywhere	4	3.3
Total	120	100

**Table 8:** Preferred Place of Treatment by respondent.

## Cause of Low Socio-economic Status of Respondents

The researcher asked some questions to know opinion of the respondents about the main reason of Jenukuruba women's backwardness of their status. In the study area, the higher percentage of respondents reported that the main cause of backwardness of Jenukuruba women's low socio-economic status, lack of education, patriarchal system is the cause of their low status, and also inferiority complex, culture constraints, lack of awareness are the causes of their low socio-economic status.

## Conclusion

In this study, it is known that Jenukuruba women have multidimensional role and responsibilities in their families. Their work burden is higher but most of the time spent in their household activities. The literacy rate of Jenukuruba women is low. They are deprived from acquiring the education due to the various social, personal, economic factors which are directly related them is not getting outside job. Only few Jenukuruba women have land ownership house ownership. Most of the Jenukuruba women have to work more in agriculture but have a comparatively less decision-making power than the male counterparts. But the decision-making role of men is superior in most of the variables. Only few activities have equal contribution of men and women in household decision making. Thus, it can be concluded that the socio-economic status of Jenukuruba women is low. So, policy makers and local development practitioners to design appropriate and effective policies and programmers in this regard. Informal education classes should be extended for the illiterate women with some incentives. Efforts are necessary to be made to develop women's social prestige, self-confidence and feeling of equalities by educating them. Poverty is the most threatening constraint on the improvement of women's socio-economic status. Various programmers such as vegetable

farming, goat farming etc. should launch to increase the living standard of community, for, this government should make female base programs such as education, free health, and incentives for higher and employment based programs etc.

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