

**SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF TRIBAL ELDERLY WOMEN IN PRAKASAM DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH****M.Srinivas**

Research Scholar in Ph.D, Dept. of Sociology and Social Work, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur

**Dr.P. Venkata Rao**

Asst. Professor, Dept. of Social Work, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Ongole Campus, Ongole

**Abstract**

The studies relating to socio-economic profile of ageing are still at the infancy and some time is required to draw broad generalizations on ageing in the changing context of tribal society. Therefore, the following delineations on the socio economic status of the aged in tribal elderly women are based on the finding of the empirical studies undertaken on different communities of aged population.

**Key words:** Aged, Socio-economic status, Population etc.

The social background of the elderly is very important in understanding their living conditions, perceptions and expectations from the family members, the community and the state in terms of their needs. The tribal elderly women with various cultural backgrounds follow various customs and beliefs, which ultimately mould their lifestyles. Understanding their social background in terms of culture and family life situations would probably help their problems. The social background of a person is expected to have a vital influence on the living conditions of the elderly women.

The sample selected the elderly tribal women in household setting 25 respondents from each village like 12 villages of three mandal were selected randomly for in-depth study. So, the total sample constitutes 300 respondents.

**Major findings of the study****Table – 1: Age Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	60 - 70	128	42.7
2	71 - 80	84	28.0
3	81 - >	88	29.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Mean Age ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 72.15 years

In the study, the age of the elderly tribal women ranges from 60 to 88 years. In order to facilitate further analysis, three age categories have been developed. The table 1 reveals that the majority of the Elderly Women respondents were belonging to age group of 60–69 years are 42.7 percent, 70–79 years of age group are belongs to 28.0 percent and followed by 80 and above years of age group belongs to 29.3 percent. Thus, making a majority of 60-70 age group and the mean age is 72.15 years. **NIBEDITHA KAR (2004)** in her study found that majority (51 percent) elderly women are 60-70 age group.

**Table-2: Sub Caste Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Sub Caste	Frequency	Percentage
1	Chenchu	134	44.7
2	Sugali/Lambada	97	32.3
3	Yerukala	53	17.7
4	Yanadi	16	5.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The sub caste of the sample respondents describes that 44.7 per cent belong to Chenchu sub caste in Scheduled Caste and 32.3 per cent respondents belonging to Sugali/Lambadi sub caste in the Scheduled Caste. About Yerukala sub Caste groups constitute 17.7 per



cent and 5.3 per cent are Yanadi respectively. About majority of the respondents belong to Scheduled Caste in Chenchu. It indicates that the majority people who belongs to scheduled Caste are marginalised sections in India and they are more backward with compare to other groups.

**Table – 3: Marital status Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	171	57.0
2	Unmarried	5	1.7
3	Widow	111	37.0
4	Divorced	13	4.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It plays a crucial role in identity formation, social, emotional and economic well-being, especially in the case of women. Patriarchal social structure has always expected women to be dependent on her husband in her youth. A high value is attached to the marital status of women, and widowhood, separation, divorce are taken as curse on her.

Regarding marital status it was found that majority 57.0 percent of the respondents were married followed by 37.0 per cent widows. While 1.7 per cent of the elderly women were unmarried and 4.3 per cent respondents were divorced.

Most of the elderly women respondents were reported to be married and widowhood, however, proportion of others are found very few.

**Table – 4: Education Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	225	75.0
2	Primary	46	15.3
3	Secondary	15	5.0
4	Inter	8	2.7
5	Graduate & above	6	2.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is often held that education leads to empowerment. Education is believed to inculcate knowledge, understanding, confidence and independence. It follows that, generally speaking, literate people would tend to be more vulnerable than literate or educated ones. Most of the elderly women were found poor in terms of education and literacy development. Even, 75.0 per cent elderly women respondents were reported to be illiterate. Importantly, educated elderly women respondents were reported high in primary education about 15.3 percent. Further, 5.0 per cent are secondary education followed by 2.7 per cent studied inter and 2.0 per cent studied graduate. **Khan et al (2013)** reported in their study that a majority (93 percent) of elderly women was illiterate and 7 percent primary and secondary are studied matriculation.

**Table – 5: Type of family Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Type of family	Frequency	Percentage
1	Nuclear	207	69.0
2	Joint	55	18.3
3	Extended	38	12.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The overwhelming majority of the respondents were found living in nuclear families (69.0 percent) while more than one fourth respondents (18.3 percent) accepted that they are living in joint families and 12.7 percent of the respondents are belongs to extended family.

**Table – 6: Occupation Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	House wife	114	38.0
2	Agriculture	18	6.0
3	labour work	144	48.0
4	Petty Business	19	6.3
5	Any other	5	1.7
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

As regards to occupation the table 6 shows majority elderly tribal women are working and it has been revealed that the half of women elderly respondents 48.0 percent are working as labour work in agriculture allied works/daily wage earners, 38.0 percent elderly tribal women are not engaged in any work and they residing at home, whereas 6.0 percent elderly women are engaged in agriculture followed by 6.3 percent are carried out petty business and remaining are 1.7 per cent belongs to other occupations such as forest produce collection.

**Table – 7: Income Wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Income	Frequency	Percentage
1	< - 2500	86	28.7
2	2501 - 5000	54	18.0
3	5001 - 7500	30	10.0
4	7501 - >	16	5.3
5	Not applicable	114	38.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>



It is evident from table 7 that a vast majority of the elderly tribal women are below poverty line with low income. However, majority of the elderly women are getting pension under social assistance scheme and they receiving Rs 2250/- per month. Some of the elderly tribal women are also still continuing in Self Help Groups (SHGs), and earning little more income by engaging Income Generation Activities. The majority 28.7 percent are getting below Rs. 2500 per month. About 18.0 percent getting 2501 – 5000 of income, followed by 10.0 percent 5001 - 7500 of income and remaining 38.0 percent are no income that means they totally dependent on their family members. It is good trend for getting some income through various sources such as SHGs programme, Pension and MGNREGA job card.

**Table – 8: Percentage distribution of Satisfied with income Vs. Age**

Age	Satisfied with Income		Total
	Yes	No	
60 - 70	37	91	128
	12.3%	30.3%	42.7%
71 - 80	25	59	84
	8.3%	19.7%	28.0%
81 - >	25	63	88
	8.3%	21.0%	29.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>29.0%</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=0.039$ ,  $df=2$ ,  $P < 0.981$ , Not Significant at 0.01 level

The table 8 portrays that whether the respondents are satisfied with income or not. The majority of tribal people totally depend on the collection of forest produces and allied activities. A few numbers of people depends on agriculture and the income earned from that sources. A vast majority 71.0 per cent are not satisfied with the income earned from their family members and 29.0 per cent are satisfied with income earned from their family members.

The study shows the results of the Chi-square test that there is no significant difference between age and satisfied with income ( $P=0.981$ ) at 0.01 levels. The results show that there is no statistically significant difference in satisfied income by their age wise categories.

**Table – 9: Savings of money Vs. Occupation**

Occupation	Savings		Total
	Yes	No	
House wife	31	83	114
	10.3%	27.7%	38.0%
Agriculture	5	13	18
	1.7%	4.3%	6.0%
labour work	52	92	144
	17.3%	30.7%	48.0%
Petty Business	4	15	19
	1.3%	5.0%	6.3%
Any other	1	4	5
	.3%	1.3%	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>69.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=7.157$ ,  $df=4$ ,  $P < 0.128$ , Not Significant at 0.01 level

It is found that the majority 31.0 percent of the elderly tribal women expressed that they maintaining saving account independently and among those they are belongs to members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) due to that they save money in Banks or post offices. Women SHGs in India are mobilizing savings and managing credit within the group for self development as well as improvement of their quality of life conditions. Remaining 69.0 percent elderly tribal women do not like to savings because they are not aware of banks and also due to ignorance and illiteracy.

The chi-square table 9 revealed the relationship between occupation and saving of money. There is no relationship in between occupation wise categories and saving of money and there is statistically no significant at 0.01 level.



**Table – 10: Having any Responsibility in the family Vs. Marital status**

Marital status	Responsibility		Total
	Yes	No	
Married	54	117	171
	18.0%	39.0%	57.0%
Unmarried	1	4	5
	.3%	1.3%	1.7%
Widow	28	82	110
	9.3%	27.3%	36.7%
Divorced	3	11	14
	1.0%	3.7%	4.7%
<b>Total</b>	86	214	300
	28.7%	71.3%	100.0%

$\chi^2=1.807$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $P < 0.614$ , Not Significant at 0.01 level

The table 10 revealed that responsibility of the elderly women in their family chores the majority one third said that they did not have any duties followed by 28.7 percent still have the responsibilities regarding the household work or looking of the household needs.

Therefore, the chi-square test reveals that there is a relationship between marital status wise categories and any responsibility in the family. Hence, there is no statistically significant different in Any Responsibility in the family about marital status wise categories at 0.01 level.

**Table – 11: Leisure time activities of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Leisure time activities	Frequency	Percentage
1	Playing with grand children	116	38.7
2	Watching TV	90	30.0
3	Listening Radio	27	9.0
4	None	67	22.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Regarding the leisure time activities, out of 300 respondents, the majority (38.7 per cent) are playing with grand children followed by 30.0 per cent of the respondents watching TV. About 9.0 per cent of the respondents listening Radio and 22.3 per cent are none category.

**Table-12: Socioeconomic status Vs. Income**

Income	Socio-Economic status			Total
	Good	Average	Poor	
< - 2500	10	23	53	86
	3.3%	7.7%	17.7%	28.7%
2501 - 5000	9	15	30	54
	3.0%	5.0%	10.0%	18.0%
5001 - 7500	4	8	18	30
	1.3%	2.7%	6.0%	10.0%
7501 - >	3	4	9	16
	1.0%	1.3%	3.0%	5.3%
Not applicable	15	33	66	114
	5.0%	11.0%	22.0%	38.0%



Total	41	83	176	300
	13.7%	27.7%	58.7%	100.0%

$\chi^2=1.344, df=8, P < 0.995, \text{Not Significant at } 0.01 \text{ level}$

The socio-economic status of the elderly tribal women is analysed to find out any relationship with their income. The majority ( 38.0 per cent) are belongs to house wife's. The chi square table reveals that there is no relationship between the socio economic status and by their income. Income has no impact on socio economic status. Thus, there is no statistically significance difference at 0.01 level.

### Conclusion

The profile of respondents deliberated on various subjective characteristics like age, gender, marital status, the number of children of the beneficiaries, family type, monthly income, and education. It is also dealt with the savings of the respondents which are to be more understanding of their socio-economic status. They are also very backward in their social and economic status in the study area.

### References

1. Bhatia, H.S. (1983), Aging and Society; A Sociological study of Retired Public Servants, Udaipur; The Arya Book Centre publishers.
2. Khan.M.Z et al.,(2013); Elderly Women, Vulnerability and Support Structures, Gyan Publishing house, New Delhi, pp. 19-30 & 78-118.
3. Srivastava,V.K (ed.).2004. Scientific Social Surveys and Research. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.