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Socio-economic status of tribal women: A study of Kalahandi district, Odisha

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Abstract

A tribe is a social group with territorial ties, endogamy, and no functional specialization. Tribal leaders, whether hereditary or not, are unified by language or dialect and are aware of social distance without any social obloquy attaching to them as it does in the caste structure, with other tribes and castes. The main objective of the study was to study the socio-economic status of tribal women of Kalahandi region. Samples of 300 tribal women were purposively selected from 10 villages of two blocks i.e. Lanjigadh and M.Rampur block of Kalahandi district, Odisha. Ex-post facto research design was used for the study and Interview schedule was used for data collection. Usual statistical methods were used for data analysis. The results revealed that, majority of the respondents belong to young age group and were illiterate. Most of the respondents belong to nuclear family, their family size was small, had no land and their major occupation was labour work and their annual family income was Rs. 30,001-40,000/-.

Keywords: Tribe, socio-economic, illiterate, research design

Introduction

Tribal's are a racial group, a particular class of people who live primarily in the highlands and forests. They are really simple, innocent, and primitive. Every tribe has its own way of living, including a culture, artistic tradition, habits, and customs. (Pattanaik D., 2007)^[15]. In India, the tribal's are both indigenous and inhabitants. They grow in the intimacy of the social atmosphere of his community. Tribes close association with nature inspires him to lead a carefree life. They feel pleasure in roaming about hills, forests and fields. Nature makes him intimate with the environment. They often meets friends and visits his own relations on different festive occasions and in periodical new relations and association with people (Pankaj A.K)^[14].

Socioeconomic status is a complex phrase that encompasses two separate facets: the social aspect, which refers to status or place in a social hierarchy, and the economic side, which refers to resources like income, employment, and wealth. Even though there isn't a single, widely acknowledged definition of "socioeconomic position," we nevertheless get to see a variety of definitions from authors and academics. Having access to resources that are widely desired by society, such as material possessions, money, power, social networks, healthcare, free time, or educational opportunities is reflected in one's socioeconomic status (Oakes and Rossi, 2003)^[11]. 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 (Chapin F.S., 1928)^[5]. It is frequently determined by taking into account a variety of variables, including education, income, and occupation. As a result, it can be said that a socioeconomic status is not a singular concept. In light of this, the socioeconomic status is measured in the current study using some of the prominent factors, including social, demographic, and economic factors. (Maity S, Haobijam V and Sen A, 2014)^[8].

A person's social life and behaviour can be greatly influenced by their socioeconomic profile. It is crucial to understand the pattern of relationships between tribal women and the local environment as well as the socioeconomic background of tribal women. Caste and kinship have played a significant role in affecting social life in Indian society, and there is a stark discrepancy in terms of subculture and style of living between different groups and locations. It would be possible to determine the social importance of a leader's socioeconomic situation

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by studying it. The structure of political power is also determined by socioeconomic stratification (Nagaraja, S. and Pallavi. S. K, 2013) [10].

The status of women in a culture is a key indicator of how socially just that society is. The status of women is frequently discussed in terms of their degree of income, job, education, health, and roles within the family, community, and society. Women have a significant and important role in tribal societies since they put in more effort and are responsible for managing the family's finances and economy. Women and children tend to collect the small forest crops. Many also work as labourers in families, businesses, and construction sites. However, because of environmental deterioration and outsider assumptions, indigenous women face difficulties and hurdles in obtaining a sustainable livelihood and a decent living. To achieve women's empowerment, the tribal development plan needs to be improved, bettered, developed, and elevated. Tribal women have adapted to live a traditional lifestyle in the community and pursue natural resource-based vocations. The developmental programmes focused towards

the empowerment of tribal's notably women should be seen as a participation and rearrangement mechanism of not just the socioeconomic system but the entire eco-system (Bhasin V, 2017) [3].

Methodology

The study was purposively conducted in Lanjigadh and M.Rampur Block of Kalahandi district, Odisha. From each of the block 5 villages were purposively selected. From Madanpur Rampur block Sankus, Bidabaru, Musung, Talabaju and Dam gaon were selected and from Lanjigadh block Poda Padar, Kathjani Padar, Kathsama, Jamchuan and Ambaguda villages were selected. Out of 10 villages, total 300 respondents such as 30 from each village were selected by using purposive sampling method. Exploratory research design was used for this study. The data were collected by personal interview with the help of pretested and well-structured interview schedule subjected to appropriate statistical analysis.

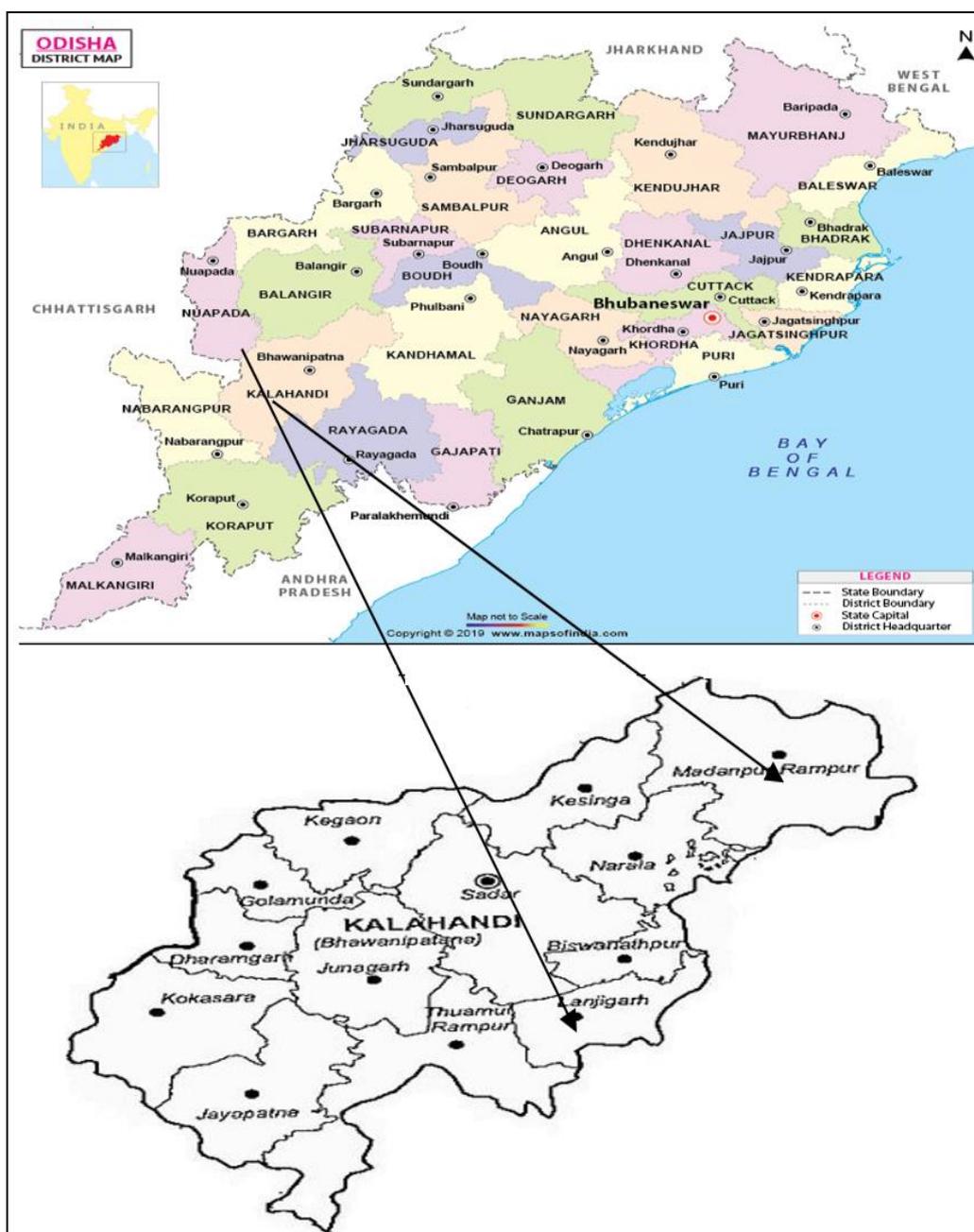


Fig 1: Map showing the study area in blocks (Source: Internet)

Results and Discussion

In the current study, the author made an effort to comprehend the various facets of tribal women's social and economic condition. The main features of the socio-economic profile are age, education, occupation, family size, types of family, land holding and annual family income of respondents. However, these factors might enable us to understand the socioeconomic position of tribal women in the study region.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on their age

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
Young age (up to 30 years)	147	49
Middle age (31-50 years)	126	42
Old age (above 50 years)	27	9

The data in the Table-1 reveals that, majority (49%) of the respondents were belongs to young, 42 per cent were middle aged and only a few number (9%) of respondents were belong to the old age group. Similar findings were reported by Preeti Dahir, PP Wankhade and D M Mankar (2019)^[16] and Agrawal S. (2013)^[11].

Table 2: Distribution of respondents based on their education:

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	249	83
Primary school	10	3.33
Middle school	5	1.66
High school	31	10.33
Intermediate	4	1.33
Graduation	1	0.33

It is clear from the table -2 that, majority (83%) of the respondents were illiterate, 10.33 per cent respondents studied up to High School. A very few number of respondents studied up to primary school (3.33%) followed by middle school level (1.66%), Intermediate level (1.33%) and Graduation level (0.33%) respectively. Similar findings were reported by B.R. Manjunatha and M.R. Gangadhar (2018)^[2], Padmavathi, C. and Saradha Ramadas, V. (2014)^[13] and Agrawal S. (2013)^[11].

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on their family type

Type of family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear	282	94
Joint	18	6

It is observed from the table -3 that, majority (94%) of the respondents were belongs to Nuclear family whereas 6 per cent respondents were belongs to joint family. Similar findings were reported by B.R. Manjunatha and M.R. Gangadhar (2018)^[2] and Thirumani Devi, A and Sindhuja, S (2015)^[18].

Table 4: Distribution of respondents based on their family size

Size of family	Frequency	Percentage
Small (up to 5)	224	74.66
Medium (6-8)	55	18.33
Large (>8)	21	7

It is apparent from the table-4 that, majority (74.66%) of the respondents had small family system followed by 18.33 per cent of the respondents had medium size family and 7 per cent had large size of family. The above result was supported by the results of the studies conducted by Rokadea S., Mogb M., Mondal N.A., (2020)^[17].

Table-5: Distribution of respondents based on land holding:

Land holding	Frequency	Percentage
No land	178	59.33
Marginal holdings (1 hectare or less)	121	40.33
Small holdings (1-2 hectare)	1	0.33

It could be observed from table-5 that, majority (59.33%) of the respondents had no land only 40.33 per cent respondents were having marginal land holdings (1 hectare or less). Similar findings were reported by Padhan S., (2014)^[12].

Table 6: Distribution of respondents based on their occupation:

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	25	8.33
Labor	181	60.33
Agriculture & Labour	67	22.33
Agriculture, Labour and Business	19	6.33
Agriculture and Business	3	1
Labor and Business	1	0.33
Collection of minor forest product and labor	3	1
Agriculture and Service	1	0.33

It is clear from table-6 that, majority (60.33%) of the respondents occupation was Labour work, 22.33 per cent respondents occupation were agriculture and labour work, 8.33 per cent respondents occupation was agriculture only, 6.33 per cent respondents occupation were agriculture, labour and business and only 1 per cent respondents occupation were agriculture and business and equal per cent of the respondents occupation were collection of minor forest products and labor work. A very few number of respondents occupation was both labour work (0.33%) and business and equal per cent of the respondents occupation were agriculture and service (0.33%). The results were in line with the findings of Chandana K.R., and Kumar R., (2020)^[4].

Table 7: Distribution of respondents based on annual family income:

Annual family income	Frequency	Percentage
Rs. 10,000-20,000/-	2	0.66
Rs. 20,001-30,000/-	34	11.33
Rs. 30,001-40,000/-	252	84
Above 40,000/-	12	4

It could be observed from the table-7 that, majority (84%) of the families of the respondents had an annual income Rs. 30,001 to 40,000/-, 11.33 per cent respondents families had an annual income between Rs. 20,001 to 30,000/-, 4 per cent respondents families had an annual income above Rs. 40,000/- and only 0.66 per cent respondents families had an annual income between Rs. 10,000 to 20,000/-. The finding was in confirmation with the findings of Mishra, B.K., (2009)^[9].

Conclusion

It is clear from the study that, majority of the respondents belongs to young age group, and were illiterate. Most of the respondents belong to nuclear family and their family size was small. More than half of the respondents had no land, their major occupation was labour work and their annual family income was Rs. 30,001-40,000/-. In light of this, it can be said that the socioeconomic status is low among Kalahandi tribal women. Therefore, in order to create policies that are appropriate and effective, policymakers and local

development experts should developers in this sense. Classes in informal education should be expanded with additional incentives for the uneducated ladies. Efforts through educating them, efforts must be taken to help women build their social standing, self-confidence, and sense of equality. Poverty and inequality is the most dangerous obstacle to the advancement of women's social and economic standing. To raise living standards, other programmes should be launched, such as those for goat and vegetable cultivation. For this government to uphold the community's standards, female base programmes like free health care, education, and incentives for programmes focused on education and employment, etc.

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