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ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF SCHEDULE TRIBES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

^{1,*}Raj Kumar, P., ²Pulla Rao, D. and ³Jayanand Kumar, P.

¹Research Associate, National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-30, (A.P)

²Professor, Department of Economics, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam-03 (A.P)

³Lecturer in Economics, Government Degree College, Nidadavolu, West Godavari District (A.P)

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ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to investigate the socio-economic status of scheduled tribes in Vizianagaram District of Andhra Pradesh state. Multi-stage random sampling technique was employed for the study, primary data was used with the help of pre-structured questionnaire for 89 sample respondents during the year 2009, further the results were interpreted with help of tabular analysis. The results reveals that, more than 94 per cent of the sample households are male headed, 83 per cent of the heads of the sample households are agricultural labour, as majority respondents opined that it was major source of income and as significant for livelihood in the study area. Further, the study indicates that, among gender wise classification only 927 females for one thousand males. It was important to note that there was decline in sex ratio in this community. However, this may not indicate that, there is female infanticide in the study area but indicate the customary son preference in the study area. The study also depicts that, among source of the incomes for the sample households, farming was the primary occupation which contributes for more than 80 per cent of the sample households, there income range was Rs.6000 to Rs.10000 rupees per annum followed by wage labor. The study also makes an attempt to analyze the outstanding loans among the sample respondents in the study area. The results revealed that, even though the amount of loans seems to be less when compared to their incomes. it is very disheartening to state that institutional sources are serving on 3 per cent of the sample households. This belief is making the scheduled tribes to approach the disloyal private money lenders for their credit requirement who charge high interests rates especially for tribals and uneducated people to exploit their money. Hence the government should take inventiveness in order to promote the financial stability among the schedule tribal by offering better banking service by transfer of technology towards the economic development of the individual level and rural community as a whole for the development, as well all know that, development beings within the rural villages itself.

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INTRODUCTION

The term development concerns with the development of a country along with the development of the people. It is a process of improvement and progress to provide a better life to the community or region it concerns. It may be planned or unplanned. The former is related to self natural function and the other deal with the process to a desired aim. Economic development means the removal of poverty and rising income levels of the people ultimately to increase standard of living.

***Corresponding author: Raj Kumar, P.,**
Research Associate, National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad-30, (A.P)

With this backdrop, there is need to the present research paper aims to study the economic status of scheduled tribes before government makes planning development framework for them. The scheduled tribes accounts for 8.2 % to the total population in India (Census of India, 2001). Caste is commonly thought of as an ancient fact of Hindu life, but various contemporary scholars have argued that the caste system was constructed by the British colonial regime (Frank, 2000). The Indian government officially recognizes historically discriminated communities of India such as Untouchables and Shudras under the designation of Scheduled Castes, and certain economically backward castes as Other Backward Castes. The Scheduled Castes are sometimes

referred to as Dalit in contemporary literature. Since 1950, India has enacted and implemented many laws and social initiatives to protect and improve the socio-economic conditions of its Dalit population. In 1997, India elected K.R. Narayanan, a Dalit, as the nation's President. All though there are thousands of castes in India, they are grouped under five major divisions, they are - the fourfold varna (ritual orders of the caste system) scheme and those who fall outside this typology, the untouchables or Harijans. The five categories are the Brahmins, the priestly caste; Kshatriyyas, the warrior caste; Vaishyas, the merchant caste; Shudras, the artisan caste; and those who carry out ritually polluting work and are considered 'untouchable' (Das 1982). In addition to the population encompassed within the caste system, India also has a large number of native tribes. India has one of the largest tribal populations of any country - tribes represent about 7 percent of the total population (Chattopadhyay 1978; Debi 1978).

The World Bank Country study on Poverty in India (1997) pointed out that "an illiterate rural women, a member of scheduled tribe, a person who lives in a landless household or is dependent on wage-earnings, all face a significantly higher than average risk of poverty". This phrase explains the status of tribal people living in our country. The tribes when compared to other community people are facing major problems. Hence, the development of these scheduled tribes is inevitable and it is necessary to improve them in all arenas of socio-economic features, this is lacking in the many parts of countries development, where many developmental programmes have been launched and progressed but still this attention has not been paid. Hence, this paper makes an attempt to address and analyse the economic status of scheduled tribes in Vizianagaram District of Andhra Pradesh state.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in the tribal areas of Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh. A Multi-stage random sampling technique was employed to study the objective. In the first stage, Vizianagaram, of Andhra Pradesh was purposively been selected for the study. Then, randomly Vepada mandal was selected from Vizianagaram district. In the third stage, one village panchayat was selected. In the fourth stage, all the tribal households in the sample village were interviewed with the help of pre-prepared schedule. Ultimately the final sample respondents interviewed were 89 from the Vizianagaram district.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The paper aims to study on the socio-economic aspects of Schedule tribes in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh. For better interpretations the variables taken in to consideration to explain the economic status were namely like land, different sources of income and trends in the levels of income, agricultural status-cultivation expenditure on seeds, fertilizers and on labour, cropping pattern, saving behaviour, expenditure pattern, and sources of credit along with the trends of loans taken and so on. Let's discuss each of the above variables.

Table 1. Gender wise classification of the Heads of the households

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	84	94.38
Female	05	5.62
Total	89	100.00

The results of gender wise classification of sample households are presented in the Table 1. The results reveals that, among the gender wise classification of the heads of the sample households the male headed households was more than 94 per cent when compared to female headed. This was due to the existence of female headed households does not indicate that there exist the matrilineal ideology but due to prevailing health and economic conditions and the constraints put forth by the inaccessible topography make them vulnerable to the vagaries of the nature. Here, it indicates that, gender equality is not a matter, but survival makes the society with in which women can live. In this case also males are dominated by households head. Similar results are conformity with the research work done by Mukhopadhyay 1984.

Table 2. Specific Caste wise classification of the sample households

Specific Caste	Frequency	Percentage
Konda Dora	62	69.67
Nooka Dora	26	29.21
Valmiki	01	01.12
Total	89	100.00

Further, the made study focused on Specific Caste wise classification of sample households (Table 2). It revealed that, there are as many as 33 types of scheduled tribes in Andhra Pradesh. After the analysis, it was interesting to note that, the Konda Doras, Nooka Doras and Valmiki were also living in the study area. Majority of the sample belong to Konda Doras (96.67) followed by Nooka Doras (29.21) and Valmiki (1.12). Similar results were found by Pulla rao, (2013) study conducted in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

Table 3. Gender wise classification of the Sample Population

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	192	51.89
Female	178	48.11
Total	370	100.00
Sex Ratio	927	
Average size of the family	4.16	

The gender wise classification of the sample population (Table 3) in the study area revealed that, the males were accounted for 51.89 per cent of the sample population which is closely followed by females. This indicates that the number of female's sex ratio is not equal to the number of males sex ratio. Numerically, the sex ratio also explains the same as there are only 927 females for one thousand males. This may not indicate that, there is female infanticide in the study area but indicate the customary son preference in the study area.

Table 4. Classification of the sample households based on their durable assets

Item	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
Radio	04	4.50	85	95.50
Television	01	1.12	88	98.88
Bicycle	30	33.71	59	66.29
Bullock cart	44	49.44	45	50.56

The important economic indicator is sample households (Table 4), which explains that, the durable assets owned by the sample households in the study area, it shows that the assets owned by the sample households was lacking information technology era like television. However most of the sample does not have even bicycle also. The common feature owned by sample households was bullock carts.

Table 5. Ownership rights (“in Acres”)

Having Ownership rights		
Land in ranges	Having land	No rights
< or equal to 1	29 (36.71)	14 (48.28)
1 to 2	21 (26.58)	13 (61.91)
2 to 4	23 (29.11)	03 (13.04)
4 & Above	06 (7.60)	0 (0.00)
Total Land owned sample	79 (88.76)	30 (37.98)
No Land	10 (11.23)	
Total	89 (100.00)	

The results of land ownership details of the sample households in the study area are presented in Table 5. The result shows that, more than 11 per cent of sample households do not have any land. Among sample respondents having land, among those only more than 60 per cent are very small farmers and the remaining owned more than 2 acres of land. Marginal farmers were accounted for more than 48 per cent of the farmers in the less than one acre range does not have ownership rights. However, there was 61 per cent owned sample were not having ownership rights for their lands in the study area for more than 1 acre range, As a whole more than 37 per cent of the land owned sample households do not have ownership rights. This is a quiet interesting aspect prevailing in the areas of scheduled tribes. Most of the tribal households may have some land but they do not have an ownership right, which is the capacity to improve their standards of cultivation and their life. Most of the tribal cannot approach the institutional sources of credit and they fall prey to clutches of the private money lenders.

Table 6. Gender wise occupations of the heads of the sample households

Gender	Occupation			
	Agricultural labour	Labour	Others	Total
Male	74 (83.22)	09 (10.11)	01 (1.12)	84 (94.38)
Female	05 (5.62)	--	--	05 (5.62)
Total	79 (88.76)	09 (10.11)	01 (1.12)	89 (100)

Table 6 reveals the occupational pattern of heads of the sample households in the study area. It revealed that, more than 94 per cent of the sample households are male headed, 83 per cent of the heads of the sample households are agricultural labour that is having some land and also going for agricultural labour as majority of their incomes are derived from wage labour they are classified as agricultural labour and the remaining is wage labour. All the female heads of the households are agricultural labour. Similar results were found by Debjani Roy, (2012) study conducted on Socio-economic Status of Scheduled Tribes in Jharkand. This clearly indicates that, agriculture was the main source of livelihood in the study area, where majority of the sample households are depending on agriculture and land related activities for their livelihood. The gender wise occupational classifications of the sample population are presented in Table 7. The results say that, in order to avoid exaggeration the occupation which contributes significantly

for their income generation. The analysis result reveals that, more than 48 per cent of the sample population is wage laborers. Interesting aspect to note that, in the study area it is more than 22 per cent of the sample population were educated and they intended to educate more in the future course of time and they were closely followed by cultivators. Conversely, Less than 1 per cent of the sample population was practicing Non Agricultural Activities (NAA) for their livelihood and its contribution to the society improvement was least when compared to the development through the agriculture as livelihood component. However, among women section the contribution of women towards income was high from wage labor, it indicates that, women contributes major significant to family income. Similar results were found by Singh, 1994. Finally, infant population in the study area was accounted for 5.41 per cent (Table 7).

Table 7. Gender wise occupations of the sample population

Gender	Occupation						
	Cultivators	Wage Labour	NAA	Studying	HW	IC	Total
Male	75 (39.06)	48 (25)	3 (1.56)	44 (22.92)	--	12 (6.25)	192 (51.89)
Female	5 (2.81)	130 (73.03)	--	30 (16.85)	5 (2.81)	8 (4.49)	178 (48.11)
Total	80 (21.62)	178 (48.11)	3 (0.81)	84 (22.70)	5 (1.35)	20 (5.41)	370 (100)

Table 8. Source wise classification of income (in Rs.) of the sample households

Ranges of Income	Cultivation	Wage Labour	Minor Forest Produce	Total Income
0	10 (11.24)	--	--	--
1 to 500	--	--	71 (79.78)	--
501 to 1500	--	--	18 (20.22)	--
1501 to 4000	22 (24.72)	39 (43.82)	--	--
4001 to 6000	29 (32.58)	39 (43.82)	--	09 (10.11)
6001 to 10000	26 (29.21)	11 (12.36)	--	45 (50.56)
10001 to 15000	02 (2.25)	--	--	35 (39.32)
Total	89 (100.00)	89 (100.00)	89 (100.00)	89 (100.00)

This table explains the source wise classification of the incomes of the sample households are presented in the table.8. The results of the study shows that, farming was the primary occupation in the study area which contributes for more than 80 per cent of the sample households are deriving less than or equal to 10000 rupees per annum. In the study area the next subsidiary activity was wage labor, where more than 87 per cent of the sample households are deriving less than 6000 rupees per annum from wage labour. As tribal's live in forest or adjacent to forest areas so forest produce plays a major role in income generation activities for their livelihood and assets creation. Hence, study signifies that, the value of the forest produce is intangible in the sense it is distributed over their live a minimal value and is assigned to the forest produce and added to their sources of income. The total sample income range from the 1 to 1500 rupees. With respect to the total income, the study indicated that, more than 60 per cent of the sample households in the range of less than 10000 rupees per annum. This alone designates the backwardness of the scheduled tribes, as their levels of income are low they are falling prey to the vicious circles of poverty and vagaries of

nature and informal money lenders. The results are conformity with the results obtained by Murthy *et al.* (2000) on the impact of development on disparities between SC/STs and others.

Table 9. Classification of the beneficiary households by programmes

Programme	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
FFW	89	100	0	0
INDIRAMMA	46	51.68	43	48.32
NREGS	89	100	0	0

The Table 9 explains results of the beneficiary status of the sample households. The results show that, though the governments were implementing many a number of programmes for the upliftment of the scheduled tribes, it is imperative to bring out the information on which programme is successful with regard to its outreach. With regard to their outreach the Food For Work Programme (FFW) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGES) are a success as the total sample are beneficiaries of these two programmes. However, the INDIRAMMA scheme (Housing Scheme) was only half the sample respondent population, which are least benefited and the rest are left out. Hence, the present status of the income will provide better social security for living standards; instead they have to depend on housing facility provided by the government for the scheduled tribes. The government has to be innovative in implementing the above said scheme. The similar results were conformity with the study made by Valentina (2005) on "Impact of road improvement in the Tribal economy of Orissa.

Table 10. Classification of the sample households based on their Annual Expenditure on selected items

Range of Expenditure	Food	Clothes	Education	Medical Care	Paying Interests	Electricity	Miscellaneous	Savings
0	--	--	45 (50.56)	3 (3.37)	--	18 (20.22)	--	8 (8.99)
1 to 500	--	54 (60.68)	38 (42.70)	76 (85.39)	73 (82.02)	--	42 (47.19)	74 (84.27)
501 to 1500	--	35 (39.32)	6 (6.74)	10 (11.23)	16 (18.98)	71 (75.77)	47 (52.81)	6 (6.74)
1501 to 5000	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
5001 to 7000	29 (32.58)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
7001 to 10000	59 (66.30)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
10001 & Above	1 (1.12)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total Sample Size	89	89	89	89	89	89	89	89

Table 10 explains results on expenditure pattern spent yearly basis of the sample households. The major items of expenditure taken in to consideration are food, clothes, education, medical care, paying interests, electricity charges, miscellaneous items and savings. The results expose that, more than 98 per cent of the sample households are spending an less than 10000 rupees per annum on food. The major share of income of scheduled tribes was taken away by the food expenditure. However, when compared to the levels of income majority are in the range of income level adjacent to 10000 rupees per annum. This being a sign of that, most of the sample households are spending most of their incomes on food. Further, most of the sample households are in the lower than the requirement income range. With regard to clothes the total sample lies in the expenditure range which is less than 1500 rupees per annum. The same trend existed with regard to the expenditure on education also. Similar study results were found by Dana Dunn (2012). It was quiet interesting to observe that, all the sample households are indebted and are paying for their debts. Another interesting feature was habit of

saving was inculcated in the study area. Even though they are paying for their debts most of the sample households are saving some amount through the self help groups. This indicates that the SHG programme is successful in its outreach. Hence the study suggests that government should provide and assist the banking sector to facilitate better and efficient self help groups programmes which not only focus for saving but also it should bring the change of economic standards among the schedule tribes and in overall aspect a complete social development is inevitable for the present stage of globalization.

Table 11. Cropping Pattern of the sample households

Crops	Percentage
Maize and grams	70 78.65
Rice	09 10.11
No land	10 11.23
Total	89 100.00

The Table 11 explains the cropping pattern of the sample tribal households in the study area. The results shows that, the cropping pattern was much typical when compared to other areas in and around study area; however major crops grown in the study area were Maize, grams and other millets which are dominant in the study area for their food grain requirements. This Table 12 explains the costs of cultivation prevailing in the study area. The results say that, cultivating contributed for more than 85 per cent of the sample households and it was very important to revise their expenses on agriculture. As traditional methods of cultivation are practiced and prevalent in the tribal areas the cost of cultivation was found to be low. Most of the cultivating households are spending around 500

rupees and less than 500 for seeds and fertilizers/pesticides respectively. However, among the cost of cultivation, the labor cost was highest in the study area when compared to other variables accounted for the cost of production (Table 12).

Table 12. Cost of Cultivation

Expenditure in ranges (in Rs.)	On seeds	On fertilizers/pesticides	On labour
0-100	4 (5.06)	46 (58.23)	1 (1.26)
101-500	72 (91.14)	32 (40.51)	58 (73.42)
501-1000	2 (2.53)	1 (1.26)	13 (16.46)
1001 and above	1 (1.26)	0	7 (8.87)
Total	79 (100)	79 (100)	79 (100)

Table 13. Classification of the sample households on their outstanding loans

loan in ranges (in Rs.)	Institutional sources	Private money lenders	SHG
0	86 (96.63)	33 (37.10)	4 (4.50)
1-1500	0	10 (11.24)	85 (95.50)
1501-5000	0	41 (46.10)	0
5001 and above	3 (3.37)	5 (5.62)	0
Total	89 (100.00)	89 (100.00)	89 (100.00)

The study also makes an attempt to analyze the outstanding loans among the sample respondents in the study area presented in Table 13. As the earlier expenditure classification, explained that all the sample households are paying interest to their loans, so it is vital to analyze their outstanding loans with their source on incomes. Even though the amount of loans seem to be less when compared to their incomes. The result shows that, it is very disheartening to state that institutional sources are serving on 3 per cent of the sample households. This notion is making the scheduled tribes to approach the treacherous private money lenders for their credit purposes and they set financial burden very high though lending for high interests rates specially for tribal's and uneducated people to exploit their money. Further, the study also reveals that, more than 60 per cent of the sample households are in the hands of the private money lenders.

Even though the penetration of the SHGs was high in the study area most of their credit needs are met by private money lenders who charge exorbitant interest rates and make their lives more vulnerable to their intangible problems. Hence the government should take inventiveness in order to promote the financial stability among the schedule tribal by offering better banking service by providing good amount of loan money with lower interest rates for the needy people who are being in the thrust of the improvement and ultimately the process of development can't be hindered in the initially level which can put into more towards the economic development of the individual level which in turn reflect on the society and rural community as a whole for the development, as well all know that, development beings within the rural villages itself.

Summary and Findings

On the basis of the results of the above study, it can be concluded as follows:

- Majority of the sample households are male headed households
- Majority of the sample households are konda doras and nooka doras
- With regard to the gender wise classification of the sample population 52 per cent are male and the remaining are female. The sample study area is lagging behind in sex ratio. The average size of family in the study area is more.
- Majority of the sample households lack most of the durable household assets taken into consideration.
- More than 37 per cent of the land having sample does not have ownership rights.
- More than 88 per cent of the heads of the sample households depend on agriculture for their earning.
- More than 20 per cent of the sample population are cultivators and 48 per cent are wage labour. More than 22 per cent of the sample population are students.

- More than 80 of the sample households are having less than 10000 rupees per annum as their total family income.
- Majority of the sample households are beneficiaries of the public welfare programmes.
- Food expenditure lies top on the annual expenditure pattern of sample households followed by expenditure on paying interests on loans and expenditure on health concerns.
- Maize, grams and other millets are cropped most in the study area.
- Expenditure on labour and seeds takes the lion's share of the sample household's expenditure on agriculture.
- More than 60 per cent of the sample households are fulfilling their credit needs from the unwanted private money lenders.

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