

A STUDY ON THE LIFESTYLE AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF TRIBAL WOMEN WITH REFERENCE TO MUTHUVAN TRIBAL IDUKKI DISTRICT, KERALA

Ahammed Munavvir B.M., Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Social Work, Sree Narayana Guru College, Coimbatore

Dr.I. Maria Yesuraja, Professor and Head, Department of Social Work, Sree Narayana Guru College, Coimbatore

ABSTRACT:

Tribal women constitute like any other social group, about half of the total tribal population. The tribal women, as women in all social groups, undergo various social problems such as poor health condition, poor education, insufficient basic amenities, poverty, debt, social structure and low level of economic condition. The aim of the study is to understand their lifestyle and social problems they face. The sample (N=50) were obtained from concerned tribal area through convenience sampling. Simple Percentage Analysis, Chi-square test and Correlation was used to analyze the data. The study findings show that more than half of the respondents are not treated equally, majority doesn't practice child marriage and majority doesn't engage their children in child labour.

Key Words: Tribal, Women, Social Problems, Lifestyle

Introduction:

A tribe is a large group of people that is distinguished from other groups mainly through its sedentary lifestyle and culture like hunting, gathering, etc. A tribe is a social division in a traditional society consisting of families linked by social, economic, religious, or blood ties with a common culture and dialect. Tribal women are affected by many social problems such as poor health condition, poor education, insufficient basic amenities, poverty, debt, social structure, low level of economic condition, etc. As a result, the social problems like illiteracy, child marriages and other social problems are taking place. The tribal women are facing various issues which curtails them from having a normal life.

The lifestyle of the tribal women is largely influenced by their traditional culture. Women cannot escape from their cultural practices which are governed by the traditional leaders in the respective community. Thus, some of these practices may have a drastic influence over the well-being of the women and also influence their health aspects. Still, after modernization, westernization and globalization, the traditional culture of these tribal people have not undergone much change due to strict community norms and traditional practices. The lifestyle largely influences the health and well-being of these tribal people. Thus, to understand the tribal people the following objectives of them are framed. The study objectives were to understand the social and economic conditions, their culture, their social problems faced and support services received from government.

Review of the Literature:

There is a significant difference in the personality characteristics according to the father's profession. (Jayaraman & P. Muthupandiselvi, 2019). Bhuvaneswari Sunil conducted a study on marginalization and access to safe abortion. A case study used a phenomenological lens to capture women's individual experience during different life events associated with pregnancy, motherhood and abortion. The study found that the needs, aspirations, interests, knowledge and agency of women from marginalized communities were not identified in public and private decision-making areas, and these factors highly impacted women's sexual and reproductive rights. Bhuvaneswari Sunil, (2019). Their study found that there was an influence on discrimination in accessing health care facilities in the Narikuravar communities that belonged to an urban and rural setting. Deepak R. Kanthiah Alias, Velaudham C and Manivannan M. (2019) their study was conducted to determine the correlation between diet score and mini nutritional assessment. There was an overall prevalence of malnutrition between the Gypsy and the general elderly population was 12.4% in which gypsy population scored

up to 19.0% when compared to the general population. At the same time, the dental diet score was very low among the Gypsy population but the general population scored more than the Gypsy. SasikalaMohanraj, SunayanaManipal, Prabu.D, Rajmohan.M and Bharathwaj.V.V (2019) their study found that the Natural tobacco preparation with tobacco leaf, betel leaf, areca nut and suppressed lime was the most common form of tobacco used by 57.5% of tribes. Prabu.D, Nirmala.S, Aurlene, and Nesa, (2019). The study found that the majority of the family's women did not have decision-making authority in their family and 32% of the respondents have revealed that inter-caste marriage was not allowed in their hometown. Amalorpava Mary &Dr.A. Anand Jerard sebastine, (2017) their study says that, the author's analyses about thier spoken language are a combined language which doesn't have any script; they are facing lot of difficulties in all walk of their life. As a result, they are facing lot of problems that lead them to feel uncertainties and unpredictability's. Ramkumar, Narayanamoorthy (2013) according to their study report Tamil Government builds educative structures that are still lacking in the country villages. It also pledged to improve the quality of all levels of education. Despite such resolutions and reforms, challenges remain current: a lack of teachers training, gender disparities in professional teams, high dropout students from pre-school. Rahman, Oliveau & Chasles, (2005) have stated the implementation of different Tribal Sub Plans doesn't solve all the problems of access to the public or private schools for many ethnic, social and cultural minority communities.

Objectives of the Study:

- ❖ To study the socio demographic condition.
- ❖ To understand the tribal women's culture.
- ❖ To identify the social problems faced by the tribal women.
- ❖ To study about the government provisions provided to tribal women.

Methodology:

Research designs outlines the research problem, need and importance of the study, population, data collection and the procedure have properly formulated to analyze the data. It is a blueprint of execution of the research study. The present study is descriptive in nature. The study attempts to describe lifestyle and problems of tribal women. In this study, the researcher used convenience sampling method to collect the data from the women respondents. The sample size of the study comprises 60 women respondents in the selected tribal community. The researcher used questionnaire to collect the data from the respondents, the questionnaire consists of two parts namely, demographic variables and social problem. Statistical techniques used to analyze the data are: -Simple Percentage Analysis, Chi-square test and Correlation.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Variables

Variable	Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Age	15 to 35	35	70.0
	36 to 55	13	26.0
	56 to 85	2	4.0
Marital Status	Married	40	80.0
	Unmarried	8	16.0
	Widow	2	4.0
Educational Status	Primary (I-V)	14	28.0
	Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	14	28.0
	High School (IX-X)	9	18.0
	Higher Secondary (XI-XII)	1	2.0
	Functional Literate	12	24.0
Family Type	Nuclear	17	34.0
	Extended	8	16.0

	Joint family	25	50.0
Occupation	Beats making	27	54.0
	Selling fancy items	16	32.0
	Others occupation	7	14.0
Income	Below 5000	21	42.0
	6000-10000	1	2.0
	10000- 15000	28	56.0
	Poor	19	38.0
	BPL	21	42.0
	Middle	10	20.0

The findings related to demographic variable shows that Out of 50 respondents, majority of the respondents belonged to the age group between 15 to 35 (70%) Out of 50 respondents, 40(80.0%) of them were married women. Out of 50 respondents 25(50%) of the respondents were belonged to joint family. Out of 50 respondents 20(40%) of them had their own house that were 5 to 6 in numbers. Among 50 respondents, 14(28.0%) women have completed their Upper Primary (VI-VIII) and 14(28.0%) of them completed their Upper Primary (VI-VIII) in this study. Out of 50 respondents 27(54.0%) of the women occupations was Beatsmaking. Among 50 respondents 28(56.0%) of the respondent's level of income was between 10000-15000. Out of 50 respondents 39(78.0%) had the habit of savings in their life.

Table 2: Cultural Aspects of the Respondents

Variable	Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Believe in Myths	Yes	45	90.0
	No	3	6.0
	Few Believe in myths	2	4.0
Believe in magic or supernatural powers	Yes	43	86.0
	No	6	12.0
	Believe in few only	1	2.0
Dress pattern	Clan traditional dress	4	8.0
	Normal dress	46	92.0
Cultural activities	Songs \ Dances	48	96.0
	Sacrificing	2	4.0
Making tattoos	Yes	44	88.0
	No	6	12.0
Liquors duringceremonies	Yes	41	82.0
	No	9	18.0
Children's preserveculture	Yes	23	46
	No\ Be modern in every aspect	4	8.0
	Be modern as well as preserve the culture	23	46.0

The above table depicts, that majority of the respondents believe in myths and supernatural powers, 92 percent have stated that they wear normal dress, 96 percent involved in cultural activities like singing and dancing, 88 percent of them are making tattoos and 82 percent of them stated they use liquors during ceremonies and 46 percent of them want to be modern and at the same time wants to preserve their culture.

Table 3: Social Problems of the Respondents

Variable	Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Equality in Civil society	People look at us equal	25	50.0
	People look at us not equal	11	22.0
	They treat us as untouchables	14	28.0
Child marriage	Still Practicing	1	2.0
	Not Practicing	49	98.0
Child labour	Yes	4	8.0
	No	44	88.0
	Cannot Give answer	2	4.0

Gender discrimination	Prevalent	3	6.0
	Not Prevalent	47	94.0
Family problems	Yes	9	18.0
	No	41	82.0

The above table shows that social problems of the respondents in which, 50 percent of them have stated that they lack equality in civil society, 98 percent of them have stated that they don't practice child marriage, 88 percent of them have stated that they don't involve their children in child labour, 94 percent of them have stated that gender discrimination is not prevalent in their community, 82 percent of the have stated that they don't have any family problems.

Table 4: Awareness on Government Services

Variable	Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness on Government project	Yes	22	44.0
	No	28	56.0
Beneficiary of Government scheme	Yes	11	22.0
	No	39	78.0
Awareness on NGOs	Yes	2	4.0
	No	48	96.0
Participation in Self Help Group	Yes	9	18.0
	No	41	82.0

The table shows that, of the total respondents, 56 percent of the respondents are not aware of the government projects, 78 percent of the respondents don't receive any benefits from government schemes, 96 percent of them are not aware of NGOs and 18 percent of them don't participated in self help groups.

Conclusion:

The present study has described and highlighted the various social and cultural problems of tribal women. This study has found that the tribes have large number of social problems. Even in modern world many of the people are unaware of these problems. Through this study, we can understand and find the way to enrich the lifestyle of the tribal women community. It is very important to have support from government and NGOs to rebuild the social structure to solve the social problems of tribal women.

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