



AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SELECT DALIT WOMEN IN COASTAL REGION OF ANDHRA PRADESH

K. Suvatha* Dr.K. Dhanalakshmi**

**Research Scholar, Department of Sociology and Social Work, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.*

***Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Social Work, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.*

Abstract

Caste has played an instrumental role in raising issues related to the more marginalized among women. In a highly hierarchical society, women belonging to the lower castes have lesser access to public force, which is compounded by their gender. The Dalits and the marginalized are still colonized by the feudal lords, the elites without freedom from caste discrimination. Indians have driven out the colonizers but not the ones who are discriminating Dalits. For Dalit women, they are also coerced to be victimized in the patriarchy. Dalit women are bearing the burden of double-day caste and the division of labour based on sex. Dalit women are demeaned and degraded and their body is a free terrain of colonization by men from other communities. Once, economically sound of Dalit women, they will lead better life in the society and also manage effectively in their family. Hence, the present study focuses on economic development of Dalit women in Coastal Andhra in Andhra Pradesh State.

Key words: *Economic Activity, saving, investment, Governmental programme, Dalit women.*

Introduction

Institutional delivery means giving birth to a child in a medical institution under the overall supervision of trained and competent health personnel where there are more amenities available to handle the situation and save the life of the mother and child. Even today, Scheduled Castes are among the most economically deprived and marginalized groups in India. Most are rural, scattered and difficult to reach. Dalit had lower odds of institutional delivery even after adjusting for possession of a BPL card, suggests that there might be even deeper social and cultural reasons for low uptake of services among these groups. Saroha, Altarac, and Sibley (2008), in their study of the relationship of caste and use of maternal health services, suggested that as maternal care involves physical contact with health service providers who often belong to general or other castes, lower caste women often elect home deliveries with TBA from their community out of fear of being stigmatized and discriminated against. Such a finding may also suggest the need for targeted health promotion to increase the uptake of maternal health services. For this purpose, we use the data from the National Family Health Survey conducted during 2015-2016.

The constitutions has facilitated and provided various constitutional amendments to provide various policies through articles in Indian Society. The government has classified various castes according to these characteristics and their problems. Here, the Dalit were also classified as a sub caste in various states in India. The present table discloses that the number of sub caste in Dalit in all states and it is found that highest sub caste under the Dalit were found in Karnataka state and it is third place with 76 sub castes, 69 sub caste people were living in Kerala and occupied fourth place Uttar Pradesh were taken fifth place (66 sub caste), sixth place with Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh were considered



seventh place with 61 sub caste, west Bengal 60 sub caste people have been living. It is clearly noticed that rest of the states having below 60 sub caste under the Dalit in all the states in India.

It is stated that 74 districts in India have more than 25 per cent of Dalit population. Among these 41 district have the Dalit age group is 25-30 years, 29 district across India have 30-40 years age group of Dalit population, between 40-50 years of age group of Dalit have been living in three districts and finally more than 50 years of aged population have been living one district in India. It is another found that 1455 blocks in rural areas and 281 in urban area blocks have more than 25 per cent of Dalit population in India.

Review of literature

Rafiq Maqbool (2022) India's untouchable women face discrimination even in schemes meant to help them. This article reveals that the Dalit women, being at the bottom end of the social and patriarchal hierarchy, will seldom request a reassessment. They have already been hit with a double whammy of caste and gender discrimination, and the instrument put in place to help them have become bureaucratic weapons to perpetuate this exploitation and ostracism. There is no simple solution, but the first step is to understand the extent of the problem. A full audit by the Reserve Bank of India of micro finance programs and their treatment of Dalit women is the obvious place to start.

Shailaja Paik's (2022) in the book of "*The Vulgarities of Caste: Dalits, Sexuality, and Humanity in Modern India*" is an important reflection on the question of Dalit women and their sexuality question. Through the performance of Tamasha, Paik has relooked into the lifeworld of Dalit women and has argued about what the performance of Tamasha means in Dalit women's everydayness rather than conventionally understanding it through a moral lens of good vs bad. The framework of 'manuski' and 'assli' reflects upon the Dalit women quest to transgress ascribed identities and it reinforces Dalit performance as a weapon for the weak. The work is a watershed as it re-centers Dalit woman's experiences in the sex-gender-caste complex, rather than looking at them as passive recipients of male-centered Dalit assertion.

Kavita Chowdhury (2023), *The Grim Reality of Sexual Violence for India's Dalit Women*. She opined that Dalit Women are considered easy prey by upper caste men, who harass them with impunity with no fear of reprisals. The law enforcement machinery, which is usually staffed by upper caste men, turns a blind eye to such atrocities committed against Dalit women. The victim's family, which lives under constant threat from the upper castes in their village Boolgarhi, lashed out against the judgment. Describing the verdict as biased the victim's brother said that the family had got the justice a Dalit deserves.

Nivedita (2023) presented and explore through article, the distinct upward social mobility trajectories of six high-achieving Dalit women in government services in Chennai in south India. Their mobility, primarily driven by education, makes them a very 'select' group given the larger relatively abysmal social, educational and occupational inequality of the Dalits as minority caste groups in India. Social mobility is understood here as a qualitative, subjective, and family praxis. It is argued that collective family resources, affirmative action policies, and the agency displayed by the women were key in facilitating their mobility trajectories. However, intersectional ties of caste, gender, and class make their mobility pathways complex and strewn with emotional challenges – the 'hidden costs of mobility.' Strikingly, following the minority culture of mobility the world over, the women also shared



a strong sense of belonging to their group of origin and were cognisant of paying back to the community.

Need for the present study

It is clearly understanding after collected raw-material and constructed review literature from various individuals, institutions by different dimensions of Dalit women identifying them as one of the focus group for development of them. Some of studies were taken up on political dimensions and Dalit women participation. But there is clearly defined and focused on particularly empirical studies stress on economic conditions and awareness of selected Dalit women population at carried at micro level. Here, the researcher has taken up an innovatively and specifically Coastal Andhra Dalit women and their economic awareness and conditions.

Objectives of the present paper: The main theme of this paper highlight the Dalit community in India and their proportion and also cover the economic perception of the Dalit women in Coastal Region of Andhra Pradesh State.

Sample Design: The present study covers six districts -each district 50 sample Dalit women were selected. Altogether, 300 sample women were selected in the Coastal Andhra.

Data Collection: The data were collected from both sources, i.e., primary and secondary sources. The Primary data was collected from select Dalit women respondents through a structured interview schedule. And Secondary data were collected from various sources such books, journals, dailies, government reports and websites.

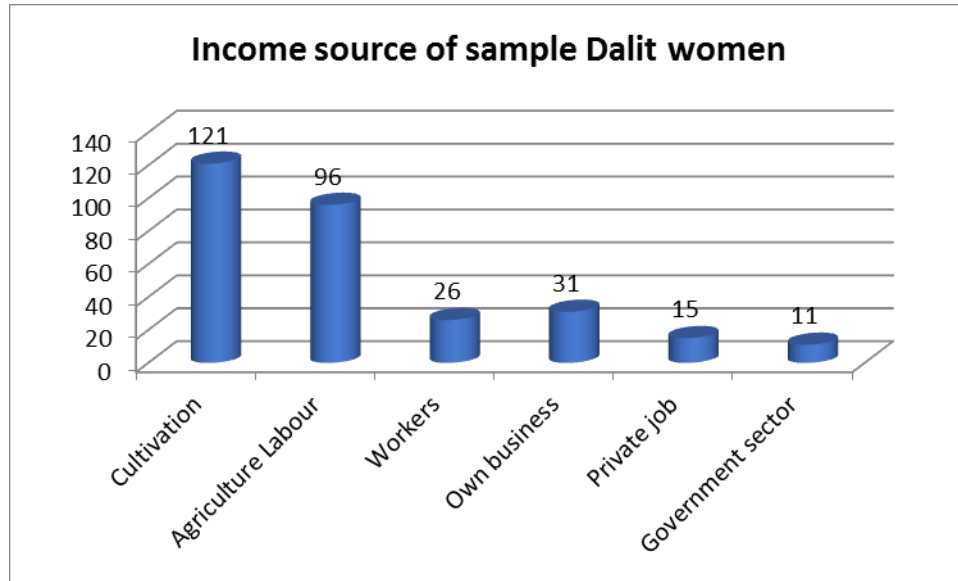
Results and Discussions

Table 1, Main source of Income of the respondent’s families

S.No	Economic Activities	Frequency	%
1	Cultivation	121	40.00
2	Agriculture Labour	96	32.00
3	Workers	26	09.00
4	Own business	31	10.00
5	Private job	15	05.00
6	Government sector	11	04.00
	Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey

The table demonstrated that the main source of income of the sample Dalit women respondents in Coastal Andhra in Andhra Pradesh state. It shows that 40 per cent of the sample Dalit women households have been earning from their economic activity like cultivation, 32 per cent of the Dalit women households income was generated through agriculture and allied sector (labour), 9 per cent have reported that they have been working as worker in small industries, 10 per cent of the Dalit women respondents have been running their own business, five per cent of the respondents have been working private job and finally 11 per cent of the respondents have government position in the study area.



It can be concluded that 72 per cent of the respondents’ income from the cultivation and agriculture labour only. It indicates that the majority of the Dalit women in the study area depended on the primary sector like agriculture for their survival.

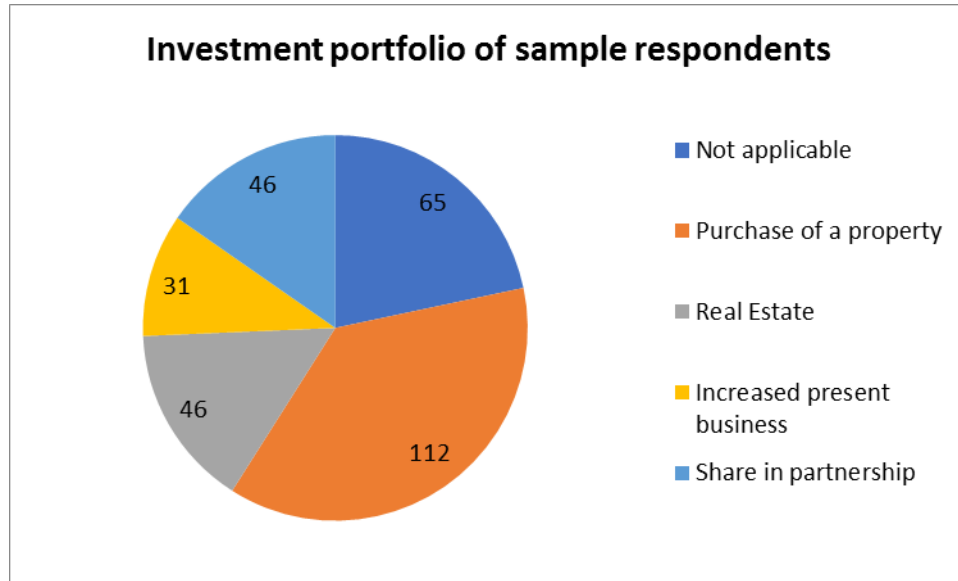
Table 2, Details of Investments Avenues by the Dalit women respondents

S.No	Details	Frequency	%
1	Not applicable	65	22.00
2	Purchase of a property	112	38.00
3	Real Estate	46	15.00
4	Increased present business	31	10.00
5	Share in partnership	46	15.00
	Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey

The researcher tried to various investments by the select Dalit women households, i.e., purchase of a property, Real Estate, expansion of present business and investment through share/partnership etc. It is clearly stated that 38 per cent of the rural Dalit women have been investing for purchase of agriculture property, 15 per cent of the sample respondents were expressed that they have been investing in Real Estate and invested in partnership firms and finally 10 per cent of the Dalit women have been investing on expansion of existing business organisation.

It is clearly concluded from the above table that 22 per cent represents 65 Dalit women households were did not investing any above investment dimensions in the study area.



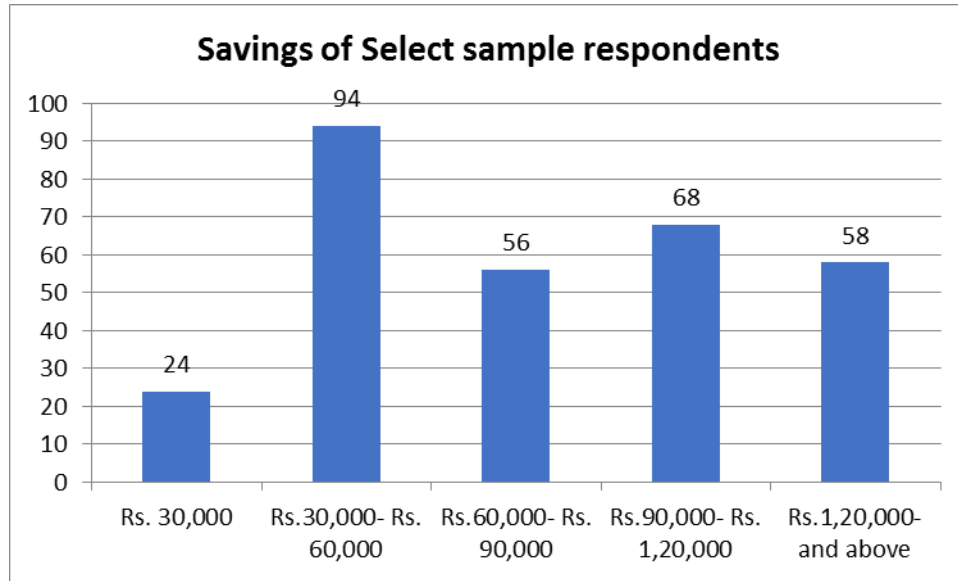
From the above analysis, it can be deduced that only 53 per cent of the Dalit women respondents in the study area had the knowledge and ability to invest on viable and feasible investment portfolios like landed property, investment in partnership business, Real Estate while negligible percentage of respondents have made investment on expansion of existing business organisation.

On the whole, it can be concluded that only those who were capable of investing viewed that investment in agriculture landed property is the safest and feasible investment portfolio followed by business.

Table 3, Details of saving amount by the select Dalit women in the study area

S.No	Savings (Amount)	Frequency	%
1	Rs. 30,000	24	08.00
2	Rs.30,000- Rs. 60,000	94	31.00
3	Rs.60,000- Rs. 90,000	56	19.00
4	Rs.90,000- Rs. 1,20,000	68	23.00
5	Rs.1,20,000- and above	58	19.00
	Total	300	100.00

Source: Field Survey



The saving attitude of any individual will save their life at old age period and also present days in any society. According to this context, the researcher has found that the saving amount of weaker section of the people like Dalit women and their saving amount per year in the study area. The saving amount were classified into various groups i.e., Rs 30,000- Rs 60,000, Rs 60,000 – Rs 90,000, Rs 90,000 – Rs 1,20,000 and final saving group is Rs 1,20,000 and above amount respectively. The present table interestingly found that eight per cent of the sample Dalit women households were saving less than Rs 30,000 in a year, 31 per cent of them have been saving Rs30,000 – Rs 60,000, 19 per cent of the Dalit women households were expressed that they have been saving amount ranges from Rs 60,000- Rs 90,000, 23 per cent of them reported that Rs 90,000 – Rs 1,20,000 and finally 19 per cent of the sample households saving amount were found that they have been saving amount is more than Rs 1,20,000 in the study area.

Table 4, Awareness levels of Dalit women on government economic initiatives

S.No	Economic Initiatives (Weights assigned)	Opinion			Weighted average
		Aware of (3)	Have a vague idea (2)	Not aware of (1)	
1	Do you have aware of national Scheduled Caste financial development corporation	51 (17.00)	30 (10.00)	219 (73.00)	1.44
2	Do you have aware about NKFDC	45 (15.00)	75 (25.00)	180 (60.00)	1.55
3	Have you aware about SC sub plan	58 (19.33)	50 (16.67)	192 (64.00)	1.54
4	Do you have aware about Central assistant to SC development corporation	42 (14.00)	45 (15.00)	213 (71.00)	1.43
5	Have you know about the credit enhancement guarantee Schemes	60 (20.00)	0 (0.67)	238 (79.33)	1.39



6	Have you an idea about Dalit India Chamber of commerce and industries	30 (10.00)	13 (04.33)	257 (85.40)	1.24
7	Do you have aware about Scheduled Caste District financial cooperative credit societies	168 (56.00)	10 (3.33)	122 (40.67)	2.15
8	Awareness about subsidies and money margin Schemes	260 (86.67)	30 (10.00)	10 (3.33)	2.83
9	Do you aware about entrepreneurial Schemes	155 (70.00)	30 (10.00)	60 (20.00)	1.95
Overall average response					1.66

The state and central government have implementing number of programmes and schemes for economically soundness of the Dalit women people in the study area. Here, the table represents that the level of awareness about governmental economic initiatives and collect the opinion through three points scale such as ‘Aware’, ‘Have a vague Idea’ and ‘Not aware’.

The table reported that 73 per cent of the Dalit women sample house hold don’t aware of National Scheduled Caste Financial Development Corporation (NSCFDC), 40 per cent of the respondents awareness ranges from aware to Have a vague idea in NFDC, overall 36 per cent of them an idea about SC sub-plan, and rest of them Don’t have aware of. It is quite interestingly found that the another statement “Aware about central assistant to SC development Corporation” was advised and collected the opinion from the Dalit women respondents like 71 per cent don’t have aware, 14 per cent have aware and 15 per cent have a vague idea.

Further it can be disclosed that the government have implemented Credit Enhancement Schemes and same is raised by the researcher to the select Dalit women respondents in Coastal Andhra. They gave responses like majority of the respondents don’t aware about said scheme and only 20 per cent of them have aware, 83 per cent of the sample respondents was expressed that they don’t aware about Dalit India Chamber of Commerce and Industries and rest of the respondents have aware about that scheme, nearly 60 per cent of the respondents have aware about “Scheduled Caste District Financial Cooperative Credit Societies” and less percentage were found without awareness about that societies in the study area. 97 per cent of the Dalit women respondents have reported that they have full aware about utilisation of subsidies from the government through various schemes and programmes, and money margin schemes, 80 per cent of them aware among entrepreneurial schemes in Andhra Pradesh.

Conclusions

The economic factors which are important for nation development must be given full weightage in an attempt to uplift and raise the standard of Dalit women from their prevailing marginalized status. The Dalit women have also contributed towards the growth and development of our country. And also even then they have remained at the lowest rung of the society, lowest of the low.

Suggestions

1. Reservation mechanism in all stage organs should be provisioned in the new Constitution for Dalit women to empower them on their economic, social, cultural and civil and political rights.
2. Dalits ownership of land should be ensured with due consideration to Dalit women on their access and control over resources.
3. The discriminatory laws, traditional practices and dogmatism against Dalit women should abolished by providing them the social security for their rehabilitation.



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