

**SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF LINGAYAT  
WOMAN: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY IN KALABURAGI CITY**

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**Abstract**

The objective of this paper is to find out the socio-cultural and economic status of the Lingayat women in Kalaburagi district of Karnataka state and to suggest ways and sociological upliftment for their overall development. The Lingayats are economically rich and cultural heritage, and strong traditions, but lacks socio-economic empowerment of woman was meagre. They cannot hold land and properties and so on because of land property owned her husband's name and their cultural situation was high and they have the boss of their culture and tradition issue. Therefore, a detailed research study has been carried out on the socio-culture and economic status of Lingayat women in the study area. Here several strategic suggestions as well as policy guidelines have been suggested.

**Keywords:** Lingayat Women, Socio-Culture, Economic Situations and Kalaburagi

**I. INTRODUCTION:**

A socioeconomic status is an intricate concept covering of two different aspects, the social aspect that includes status or position within a social stratification and the economic aspect that includes resources such as income, occupation and wealth. Even though there is no generally accepted definition of the term "socioeconomic status", it was defined heterogeneously by writers and scholars. A

socioeconomic status is a construct that reflects one's access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time, or educational opportunities. (Oakes and Rossi, 2003). 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 (Chaphin, 1928). Very often it is measured as a combination of various factors such as education, income and occupation. Therefore, it can be said that a socioeconomic status is not a unitary concept and with this notion in mind, for the present study a socio-economic status is measured by using some of the prominent factors such as social factors, demographic factors and economic factors. (Shrabanti Maity, Victoria Haobijam and Alok Sen, 2014).

A socio-economic profile has an important role in characterizing the social life and behavior of an individual. It is, therefore, essential to analyze the socio-economic background of lingayat women and to understand the pattern of relationships between women and local environment. In Indian society, caste and kinship has been a very important influencing factor on social life, and it exists an acute disparity in terms of standard of living and sub-culture among various groups and regions. A study of the socio-economic conditions of a leader would help reveal its sociological significance. At the same time, socio-economic stratification determines the structure of political power.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

There are a good number of studies, explaining the causes and consequences of backwardness and the low socio-economic status of LINGAYAT women. Such studies are related to a general enquiry on women exploitation and dependency.

Ramjan Darga in his paper "Jaativyavastege Savalaada Sharanaru", details on the social orientation of Sharanas, who lived during 12th century. Sharanas followed secular approach and they were free from caste based and other social inequalities. They all thrived to attain the objectives of sharana philosophy by creating an egalitarian society where all people enjoy equal status in terms of social equality and economic equality through the phenomenal principles of Kayaka and Dasoha (Darga, 2013).

According to Shivamurthy Shivacharya Swamiji, emancipation of women or the spiritual equality is another “important dimension in the humanitarian aspects of Shivasharana”. Basaveshwara and other Shivasharanas have made untiring efforts by putting all their energy for building a society of equals where both men and women could participate in spiritual and religious spheres on equal footing. Discrimination or exploitation of women on the basis of sex is against the very principle of rationalism of Shivasharanas, the religious movement of Basaveshwar and other Shivasharanas at Kalyan against the discrimination of caste, creed or sex attracted people across the country including women. According to Veerashaiva Philosophy of which Basaveshwar was the champion, men and women differ only in physiological level but they are one and the same in metaphysical effect. (Shivamurthy, 1985).

Geetha and Palekar states that Anubhava Mantapa was one of the democratic structure, in which both men and women were participating in discussions and deliberations. Their ideas were expressed through their Vachanas (literary poems). Their ideas expressed revealed that women are also equal or even greater to men. Hence the principles and philosophy of Shivasharanas on emancipation of women is much to be appreciated and such ideas are relevant for the present society (Nagesh & Palekar, 2012).

Basaveshwara spoke in terms of social equality, caste and class equality, occupational equality, religious equality, equality of sex and so on which act as a catalyst for social change. Basaveshwara’s ‘Kayaka’ theory insists on the honest discharge of occupational responsibilities (Jadhav, 2014).

### **III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

1. To study the socioeconomic and cultural status of Lingayat women in Kalabuaragi city.
2. To find out the educational level of the Lingayat women in the study area.
3. To scrutinize the factors influencing on the socioeconomic status of Lingayat women in the study area.

### **IV. METHODS OF THE STUDY:**

The present study is based on primary data collected from 120 sample respondents from Kalaburagi city following the purposive sampling method. A schedule is used to collect the demographic, social and economic status of the Lingayat women and have also been used Interviews, observation, group discussion, and case study methods.

## **V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION:**

In the present study we attempted to understand the different aspects of the social and economic status of the respondents. The main features of the socio-economic profile are family composition, education composition, occupation composition, marital status, family income, and family background of the respondents. Nevertheless, these variables could help us know the socio-economic status of Lingayat women in the selected study area.

Table: 1  
Type of family

Type of Family	Frequency	Percentage
Nuclear family	105	87.5
Joint family	11	9.2
Extended family	4	3.3
Total	120	100

Source: Filed study

A family is the basic unit of society, which assigns social status, roles and social responsibilities to every individual. A family is the most powerful medium through which a value system can develop over a period of time, and individual behavior and attitudes are determined by the family which he/she belongs to. That is, whether the family is joint or nuclear and it also determines the status and role of Lingayat women.

Table No 1 shows that 81.7% of the respondents belongs to nuclear families and 16.7 % of the respondents belongs to joint families and only the remaining 1.7% of the respondents are living in an extended family. Thus, the data indicate that there are more nuclear families than joint and extended families.

Table: 2  
Age of the respondents

Age group	Frequency	percentage
Below 20 years	07	5.8
21-30 years	28	23.3
31-40 years	42	35.0
41-50 years	17	14.2
51-60 y	15	12.5
Above 60 years	11	9.2
Total	120	100

Source: Filed study

The above table shows that 10.0% respondents are in age group below 20 years, 17.5% of respondents are in the age group of 21-30 years, 25.8% of respondents are come 31 to 40 years age group, 19.2% of respondents are come under below 41-50 years age category, 15.8% of respondents are in the 51-60 age group, and only 11.7 % of respondents are above 60 years.

Table: 3  
Marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	82	68.3
Unmarried	13	10.8
Widow	18	15.0
Divorced/separated	7	5.9
Total	120	100

Source: Filed study

Marital status is also a social indicator for understanding the socio-economic status of women. The early marriage system has been one of the important characteristics of Lingayat community. Marital status changes the women's status. It also changes the women's role and increases the duties and workload of the women. The marital status of the respondent is shown in the table 3.

The table 3 shows that out of 120 of respondents 65.8% of them are found to be married, 13.3% unmarried, 18.3% widowed and only 2.5% of them are divorced/Separated. Nowadays married and widowed/ divorced women get different a treatment in the society but before there was no discrimination in this community. Remarriage is accepted in this society.

Table: 4

Educational status of the respondents

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	49	40.8
Lower Primary	33	27.5
Higher Primary	18	15.0
High school	10	8.3
PUC	06	5.0
UG and Above	02	1.7
Professional Course	02	1.7
Total	120	100

Source: Filed study

The educational status is divided into 7 categories which are illiterate, Lower primary level, Higher primary level, high school level, Pre-University level, under graduation and above, also other professional course. The educational status of the respondents is shown in Table 4, that reveals that 42.5% of respondents were observed to be illiterates followed by Lower primary (26.7%), Higher primary (14.2%), High school (6.7%), Pre university (5.0), under graduate and above (2.5% ) and only 2.5% women studied in Professional courses. This is mainly because Lingayat women are more prone to their traditions and they do not come forward to upgrade their educational standards. Among this community school dropout is very common both boy and girls.

Table: 5

Occupational structure of the respondents

Type of Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agricultural	20	16.7
Agriculture labour	53	44.2
Collection of minor forest product	29	24.1
Govt service	4	3.3

Any Other	14	11.7
Total	120	100

Source: Filed study

Occupation is considered as the main source of income, and it represents the socio-economic status of people. Lingayat women in India contribute positively to the local economy and participate along with men in subsistence activities. In reality, women do more work than men. In the study area they carry out all types of work at home as well as outside that according to the needs of a mixed agro-pastoral economy. Apart from caring for the house, children and cattle, the major portion of the agricultural work is made by women, who do weeding, hoeing, harvesting and threshing. Women also work as labourers. The role of women is important in economic as well as non-economic activities.

The above table (5) shows that out of 120 of respondents 38.3% are working as agricultural labourers, 20.0% are engaged in agriculture, 26.7% in the collection of minor forest products, 6.7% in government service, and 8.3% of respondents are engaged in other occupations like business, tailoring, selling in livestock product, gazing cattle, handicraft etc.

Table: 6

Annual family income of the respondents.

Income in RS	Frequency	Percentage
Upto 10000	34	28.4
10,001-20,000	57	47.5
20,001-30,000	19	15.8
30,001-40,000	06	5.0
Above 40,000	04	3.3
total	120	100

Source: Filed study

The income of a person in general, is an indicator of his/her economic status. The economic status of a person will impact on his/her attitude. Therefore, the study assumes that the attitudes of women belonging to the families with higher income differs from that of the attitude of women who are in middle or lower level of the income group. The economic status of a family also plays an important role in

influencing the attitudes, ideas and values of its family members and their decision-making process. The respondents' annual income is indicated below in the table No.6, in a detailed manner.

Table No 6 indicates that 23.3% of respondents have annual income of up to Rs. 10,000, 40.8% of respondents annual income is from Rs.10,001-20,000, 19.2% of respondents annual earning is Rs.20,001-30,000, 7.5% of respondents are earning is 30,001 to 40,000 and only 9.2% of respondents annual income of above Rs. 40,000.

Table: 7  
Preferred Place of Treatment by the respondents:

Place of treatment	Frequency	Percentage
Govt Hospital	66	55.0
Private Hospital	28	23.3
Traditional healers and temple	22	18.4
Don't go anywhere	4	3.3
Total	120	100

Source: Filed study

Health conditions can be taken as another important socio-economic indicator. Even in this modern era quite a large number of people including tribes believes in superstitious practices, preferring the shamans and healers. Preferred place of treatment by the respondent women has been presented in Table 7.

The above table indicates that 59.2% of respondents prefer Government hospitals for treatment whereas 17.5% of respondents prefer private hospitals or clinics, 20.8% of respondents are dependent on traditional healers and temples, but 2.5% of respondents do not take treatment. This is due to lack of education, old mentality, belief in superstition and low economic status.

### **Cause of Low Socio-economic Status of Respondents**

The researchers asked some questions to know opinions of the respondents about the main reason of Lingayat women's backwardness. In the study area, the higher percentage of respondents reported that the main cause of backwardness and poverty, as well as lack of education, the patriarchal system as such are the causes of the low status of Bettakuruba women, together with an inferiority complex, culture constraints, and lack of awareness.

### **VI. CONCLUSION:**



In this study, we found that Lingayat women have multidimensional roles and responsibilities in their families. Their work burden is higher than that of men, but most of the time spent in their household activities. The literacy rate of scheduled tribe women is low. They are deprived from acquiring an education due to various social, personal, economic factors which are directly related to their incapacity to get a waged job. Only few scheduled tribe women own their houses and some land. Most of the scheduled tribe women have to work more but have a comparatively less decision-making power than the male counterparts in agriculture. Actually, the decision-making role of men is superior in most of the variables. Only few activities see an equal contribution of men and women in a household decision making. Thus, it can be concluded that the socio-economic status of scheduled tribe women is low, and policy makers and local development practitioners should design appropriate and effective policies and programs in this regard. Informal education classes should be supported for illiterate women with some incentives. Efforts are necessary to be made to develop women's social prestige, self-confidence and feeling of equality by educating them. Poverty is the most threatening constraint against the improvement of women's socio-economic status. Various programs such as vegetable farming, goat farming etc., education, free health, and incentives for higher and employment-based programs etc should be launched by the government in order to increase the living standard of the community.

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