



THE SOCIO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF DALIT CHRISTIANS IN GUNTUR DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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People belonging to the lower strata of society have always made several attempts to improve their social status. Religious conversion has been one such attempt. People convert from one religion to another when they feel that they are denied equal status and opportunities in their original faith and when the new religion offers equality and freedom. The dream of eternal salvation and equality with their co-religionist was also a factor behind the mass conversion of Dalits to Christianity in the 19th and 20th centuries. This research endeavour focuses on finding out whether the 'untouchable castes' could fulfil their dream of social change and improvement in their living conditions.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the socio-economic characteristics of Dalit Christians in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.
2. To assess the constitutional rights of Dalit Christians.

Hypothesis:

1. **Ho:** There are no significant difference of aware on human and constitutional rights by their education.

Universe and Sampling:

For selection of the respondents, a three step wise process was used to draw the sample respondents of Dalit Christians. In the Guntur district four Revenue Divisions are existing i.e, Guntur, Gurajal, Narasarao Pet and Tenali. Among four revenue divisions four mandal of each one was selected. In the second stage, the villages are selected 1000 below population of Scheduled Caste Community. From the four mandals 12 villages of each three villages are from selected. In all the twelve villages, 561 Dalit Christians households families are living in the study area. The study concentrated in the respondents of household setting is being selected for the study.

Finally, from every village 25 Dalit Christians are being selected randomly in household setting by using simple random method. The total of 300 respondents from all the 12 villages selected as a sample for the purpose of study.

Findings of the study

The findings of the study presented based on empirical data which was collected from the field area.

Table – 1 : Age of Respondents

Sl.No	Age	Frequency	Percent
1	< - 25	59	19.7
2	26 - 35	75	25.0
3	36 - 45	122	40.7
4	46 - 55	29	9.6
5	56 - >	15	5.0
Total		300	100.0

The table 1 clearly indicates that 19.7 per cent of the respondents are within the age group of below 25 years old, 25.0 per cent of the respondents are within 26-35 years old, 40.7 per cent of the respondents are within the 36-45 years old, 9.6 per cent of the respondents are within 46-55 years old and remaining 5.0 per cent of the respondents are within 56 years and above age old years in the study area.

Table – 2 : Education of Respondents

Sl. No	Education	Frequency	Percent
1	Illiterate	134	44.7
2	Primary	99	33.0
3	Secondary	51	17.0
4	Degree & above	16	5.3
Total		300	100.0

The table 2 revealed that among the total respondents majority 44.7 per cent of the respondents respectively are illiterate, 33.0 per cent of the respondents are primary school educated, 17.0 per cent of the respondents are secondary educated, 5.3 per cent of the respondents are under graduate educated and above.

It shows that lack of education opportunities in the state and poor family condition of the respondents in the study area not pushed them to continue to get education. More over tough competition in public employment recruitment matters, caste biased recruitment system in private sectors in the country, family burden of respondents, early marriage of Dalit's men and women and unaffordable educational fee structures in the private educational institutions of the state to avail quality education in order to compete in job markets and lack of awareness are the main reasons which are prohibiting the Dalit's for continuing higher education. These are the reasons mainly for high rate of illiterate and primary school drop outs among the Dalit's respondents in the study area.

Table –3 : Type of Family

Sl.No	Type of family	Frequency	Percent
1	Joint	49	16.3
2	Nuclear	218	72.7
3	Extended	33	11.0
Total		300	100.0

The table 3 shows the details of the type of family in the study area. The table reveals that among the respondents, the nuclear family system is more prevalent rather than the joint family system. The nuclear families constitute 72.7 per cent and joint family's 16.3 per cent of the total sample respondents. About 11.0 per cent belongs to the extended family.

Table – 4 : Occupation of Respondents

Sl.No	Occupation	Frequency	Percent
1	Cultivation	76	25.3
2	Agriculture labour	107	35.7
3	Wage Labour	78	26.0
4	Employee	33	11.0
5	Any other	6	2.0
Total		300	100.0

The table 4 clearly depicts that among the total respondents 35.7 per cent of the respondents are working as agriculture labourers, 26.0 per cent of the respondents are working as wage labourers in various non-farm sectors, 25.3 per cent of the respondents are having own cultivation land for farming activities. About 11.0 per cent of the respondents are working as employees in government sector and private sectors and remaining 2.0 per cent of the respondents are belongs to any other category such as scavengers vendors, auto drivers etc.

The study finds that majority 35.7 per cent of respondents are working as agricultural labourers even educated also. The study clearly shows that Dalit's are mainly working as casual labourers in agricultural and unorganized sectors washer men, sweepers, manual scavengers and auto drivers in the study area. Less number of respondents are enjoying the status of marginal farmers and employees status in the study area. The study also find that Dalits are deployed by local self-government institutions as manhole cleaners without following any safety measures for poor wages in the study area.

Table – 5 : Monthly income of Respondents

Sl.No	Income	Frequency	Percent
1	< - 5000	26	8.7
2	5001 - 10000	152	50.7
3	10001 - 15000	75	25.0
4	15001 - 20000	28	9.3
	20001 - >	19	6.3
Total		300	100.0

The table 5 clearly portrays that among the total respondents 50.7 per cent of the respondents family are earning Rupees between 5001 -10000 per month, 25.0 per cent of the respondents family are earning between rupees 10001- 15000, 9.3 per cent of the respondents are earning between the rupees 15001 20000 per month, 8.7 per cent of the respondents are earning the rupees 5000 below per month and remaining 6.3 per cent of the respondents are earning the rupees between 20001 and above per month as a family income. The mean age income is Rs.10381/- per month.

The study find that 50.7 per cent of the respondents are earning rupees below 5001-10000 per month as a family income which is coming under the below the poverty line income prescribed by the government of India. The study shows that majority of respondents are daily wage labourers in agriculture field and un organized sectors in the study area where they get only seasonal employment opportunities for running life and also they are not enjoying minimum wages under the minimum wages act benefits and just human condition of work at work place.

Table – 6 : Debts of Respondents

Sl.No	Name of the Mandal	Frequency	Percent
1	Yes	155	51.7
2	No	145	48.3
Total		300	100.0

It has been observed that majority of Dalit Christians in the study area are in debts. Since they don't have surplus remuneration to deal with their families since the expenses of families have expanded contrasted with the past. For the most part, rural people acquire cash for gathering the costs of kids' training, treatment, marriage, and so forth. However, some of them are in the condition of obligation due to their extravagant use on everyday things. This can be comprehended by watching their way of life. Especially, the people of Dalit Christians spent huge money on their drinking.

Regardless of obligation, there are 51.7 per cent of the respondents have debts, though 48.3 per cent of the Dalit Christian does not have any debt.

The chi-square table revealed the relationship between income and taken any loans. There is a relationship in between income and taking loans and there is statistically significant association at 0.05 level.

Table – 7 : Source of debts

Sl.No	Source of debts	Frequency	Percent
1	Bank	47	15.7
2	Co-operative society	60	20.0
3	Money lenders	33	11.0
4	Friends and relatives	15	5.0
	Not applicable	145	48.3
Total		300	100.0

Regarding the source of debts, the majority are not applicable category and they are not interested to go for debts. By and large, especially these people earn money uncertainty for the particular day and whatever they earn money they spent immediately to alcohol. Again, they start their livelihood on the next day.

Table 7 shows that 15.7 per cent are taking loan from banks, it is due to they are members of the SHG groups and 20.0 per cent are taking loans from cooperative society followed by 11.0 per cent taken loan from money lenders. About 48.3 per cent are not applicable category.

Table – 8 : Possession of Agriculture land

Education	Agricultural land		Total
	Yes	No	
Illiterate	26	108	134
	8.7%	36.0%	44.7%
Primary	29	70	99
	9.7%	23.3%	33.0%
Secondary	18	33	51
	6.0%	11.0%	17.0%
Degree & above	3	13	16
	1.0%	4.3%	5.3%
Total	76	224	300
	25.3%	74.7%	100.0%

$\chi^2=6.354$, $df=3$, $P < 0.096$, Not Significant at 0.01 level

The table 8 clearly indicates that among the total respondents only 25.3 per cent of the respondents are possessing land for cultivation purpose and remaining 74.7 per cent of the respondents are not possessing any land for cultivation. The study finds that 74.7 per cent of the respondents are not possessing any land for cultivation. The study shows that majority of Dalit respondents are landless, agricultural labourers in the study area.

The chi-square table revealed the relationship between education and Possession of Agriculture land. Hence, there are no significant relationship of possession of agriculture land by their education at 0.01 level.

Table- 9: Aware of Human and constitutional rights

Ho: There are no significant difference of aware on human and constitutional rights by their education.

Statement	Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
Do you aware of human right ensures dignity, status and respect of each and every	Illiterate	134	2.5522	.60781	.532	.661
	Primary	99	2.4545	.68917		
	Secondary	51	2.5490	.70182		
	Degree & above	16	2.4375	.81394		
	Total	300	2.5133	.66178		
Do you aware there are certain provisions enshrined in the fundamental rights	Illiterate	134	2.5746	.61774	.780	.506
	Primary	99	2.5657	.64145		
	Secondary	51	2.4510	.61037		
	Degree & above	16	2.6875	.47871		
	Total	300	2.5567	.61757		
After completion of 73 years, untouchability is still practiced in villages in different forms	Illiterate	134	1.5149	.64581	.424	.736
	Primary	99	1.4444	.65811		
	Secondary	51	1.4118	.60585		
	Degree & above	16	1.4375	.62915		
	Total	300	1.4700	.64068		
Existing protection of civil rights act, 1955 provisions are safeguarding and protecting	Illiterate	134	2.5821	.60448	.245	.865
	Primary	99	2.5455	.65889		
	Secondary	51	2.5098	.57871		
	Degree & above	16	2.6250	.61914		

	Total	300	2.5600	.61725		
Do you aware of untouchability is abolished by Indian constitution under Article 17	Illiterate	134	1.5224	.64559	.983	.401
	Primary	99	1.4747	.69021		
	Secondary	51	1.3922	.56845		
	Degree & above	16	1.6875	.79320		
	Total	300	1.4933	.65681		

The opinions of respondents on aware of human and constitutional rights by their education. The distinct table 11 show the mean size, standard deviation, F-value and P-value. The examination shows the aftereffects of the ANOVA test that there is noteworthy contrast between reactions of people education and Do you aware of human right ensures dignity, status and respect of each and every ($P=0.661$), Do you aware there are certain provisions enshrined in the fundamental rights ($P=0.506$), After completion of 73 years, untouchability is still practiced in villages in different forms ($P=0.736$), Existing protection of civil rights act, 1955 provisions are safeguarding and protecting ($P=0.865$) and Do you aware of untouchability is abolished by Indian constitution under Article 17 ($P=0.401$) at 0.01 levels. The outcomes show that there are no significant relationship in between education and aware of human and constitutional rights. The research hypothesis was rejected and null hypothesis was accepted.

Conclusion:

The majority of respondents are landless poor, agriculture daily wage labourers, workers in non farm sector and marginal cultivators in the study area who are earning below poverty line income earmarked by government of India and also they are living in improperly constructed pucca houses in the colony/streets away from the village. The uneducated Dalits perform traditional jobs in their area and these people mostly use open defecation in the absence of toilet facility at home in the study area.

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