



Impact of Socio-Economic Factors on the Health Outcomes of the Lambada community: A Multi-State Review Analysis

Bhukya Anil

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Social Work, Central University of Karnataka, Kalaburagi.

Abstract

The health outcomes of tribal populations in India are profoundly influenced by socio-economic factors, creating disparities in healthcare access and outcomes. The Lambadi people, dispersed across various states, confront unique challenges in maintaining their health. Understanding the impact of socio-economic factors on Lambada health outcomes is crucial for tailored interventions. This study investigates this impact, synthesizing 18 articles from Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Findings reveal prevalent health issues like malnutrition, anemia, diabetes, and hypertension. Socio-economic realities such as poverty, low income, limited access to education and healthcare, and cultural preservation concerns exacerbate these health issues. Key interventions include healthcare provider capacity building, addressing food insecurity, and empowerment programs. Preserving cultural sensitivity in healthcare delivery is essential. This research offers valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to improve the health and well-being of Lambada Tribes in India.

Keywords: socio-economic factors, health outcomes, Lambada tribes, multi-state analysis

Introduction

The Lambada tribes, also referred to as Banjara, Lambani, among other names, originated from Rajasthan's Marwar region, historically leading a nomadic lifestyle. Eventually settling in various parts of India, including south, north, and central regions, they established communities known as Tandas, each reflecting their unique cultural identity, often celebrated through their vibrant dance traditions. While their status varies between Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes across different states, their transition

from nomadic trading to settled livelihoods in agriculture and other sectors is evident in historical records. Despite their rich cultural heritage, Lambada tribes encounter significant health challenges influenced by socio-economic factors. Across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra, they face unique obstacles to maintaining health and well-being. Understanding how these factors impact Lambada health outcomes is crucial for designing effective interventions tailored to their specific needs (BalaramNaik& Radhika, 2021).

Several studies have explored the health status of Lambada Tribes in different regions, highlighting prevalent conditions and socio-economic realities. For instance, research by Sachdev (2011) in Rajasthan revealed high rates of diabetes and hypertension among Lambada populations, emphasizing socio-economic influences. Similarly, studies by Sharma et al. (2019) in Telangana and Rathod et al. (2019) in Maharashtra underscored the importance of addressing socio-economic determinants to improve Lambada health outcomes.

However, despite these individual studies, a comprehensive, multi-state analysis is needed to understand the collective impact of socio-economic factors on Lambada health across different regions. This study aims to fill this gap by synthesizing findings from various studies conducted in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. By analyzing data from multiple states, we seek to gain a holistic understanding of the socio-economic determinants influencing Lambada health outcomes and identify common trends and disparities. Through this multi-state analysis, we aim to provide insights that inform evidence-based interventions and policies tailored to address the specific health needs of Lambada Tribes. By elucidating the intricate relationship between socio-economic factors and health outcomes, we aspire to contribute to efforts aimed at improving the overall health and well-being of Lambada communities across India.

Research Question

How do socio-economic factors impact the health outcomes of the Lambada tribes across different states in India, and what challenges do these factors create in addressing their health needs? What evidence-based recommendations can improve healthcare delivery for the Lambada community?

Methodology

This study utilized a systematic methodology to examine how socio-economic factors impact the health outcomes of the Lambada tribes through a literature synthesis. A comprehensive search identified 18 relevant articles meeting specific criteria. These articles underwent rigorous review to uncover common themes and trends regarding the relationship between socio-economic factors and Lambada health outcomes across regions like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Analysis aimed to uncover patterns and correlations between socio-economic variables and health indicators, providing insights into this complex interplay. The study aims to offer a holistic understanding of Lambada health challenges and guide evidence-based interventions for their well-being

The inclusion criteria for this study were focused on selecting studies that explored the health outcomes of the Lambada tribes in India. Research was specifically included if it addressed the impact of socio-economic factors on Lambada health and was conducted in states with a significant Lambada population, such as Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra. Only articles published in peer-reviewed journals were considered for the analysis. On the other hand, studies were excluded if they did not specifically focus on the Lambada tribes or their health outcomes. Research conducted outside the specified states with Lambada populations was also excluded, along with non-peer-reviewed sources like conference abstracts, books, and opinion pieces. Additionally, studies with insufficient data or unclear methodologies were omitted, as well as systematic reviews and meta-analyses.

What is the impact of socio-economic factors on the health outcomes of the Lambada tribes, a synthesis of literatures analysis?"

In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states:

The study on the prevalence of sickle cell anaemia and thalassaemia among the Lambada community in Warangal district, Telangana, underscores the urgent need for comprehensive healthcare interventions. Hemolytic anaemia, sickle cell anaemia, and thalassaemia pose significant health risks, exacerbated by socio-economic factors like consanguinity and limited access to healthcare resources. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including genetic counseling, affordable healthcare services, community education on genetic diversity in marriage, and socio-economic development initiatives. These efforts aim to mitigate health disparities, improve living conditions, and enhance the overall well-being of the Lambada tribe (Ajmera et al., 2017). The study on tribal women's health in Telangana's Bhadrachalam district unveils a nuanced picture. While 75.8% of older women report no chronic illnesses, 35% experience various health issues, and over 70% lack knowledge on vector-borne diseases. Surgeries for thyroid, gynecological issues, knee problems, stomach ailments, and piles are common. Health service delivery gaps, compounded by transport issues for 80% of women, worsen challenges. Socio-economic factors like low-income, inadequate education, and early marriages significantly impact health outcomes. The choice of healthcare facilities, shaped by socio-economic factors and accessibility, highlights the need for comprehensive interventions ensuring equitable healthcare access and improved outcomes (Chandana & Kumar, 2020). The examination of Lambadi children's physical growth and nutritional status in Andhra Pradesh reveals significant health challenges, notably nutritional disorders and anemia. Prevalent undernourishment is highlighted, with many children categorized as severely or moderately undernourished, indicating widespread nutritional hurdles. Various degrees of chronic energy deficiency further emphasize the seriousness of malnutrition-related health issues. Socio-economic determinants such as socio-cultural practices, bio-genetic traits, and environmental factors emerge as pivotal influencers. Collected bio-cultural data provide insights into the socio-economic backdrop shaping health outcomes, emphasizing the impact of economic status, living conditions, and access to essential resources on children's physical growth and nutritional well-being (Saheb & Prasad, 2009). The study on the diet and nutritional status of the Lambada Tribes in Andhra Pradesh's ITDA project areas in

Khammam district reveals significant health challenges influenced by socio-economic factors. These include high rates of undernutrition among both children and adults, micronutrient deficiencies such as vitamin A, riboflavin, iron, and total fat, and elevated morbidity rates encompassing fever, diarrhea, and respiratory infections. Compounded by poor environmental sanitation, limited healthcare access, and inadequate nutrient distribution, socio-economic disadvantages like household income, literacy levels, and occupation significantly affect health outcomes. Urgent targeted interventions are needed to enhance the Lambada Tribes' overall health and well-being (Laxmaiah et al., 2007). The study on the impact of globalization on Adivasis in Telangana State unveils a range of health challenges linked to their socio-economic status. Adivasis experience anaemia, blood pressure disorders, diabetes, tuberculosis, and gynecological issues, influenced by their socio-economic conditions. These challenges are worsened by factors like limited access to clean water, open defecation, daily alcohol consumption, and poor hygiene. Respondents often face significant healthcare expenses, leading to debts. Urgent interventions are needed to improve healthcare access, sanitation facilities, and socio-economic opportunities for the Adivasi community to address these pressing health issues (Lal, 2021). The study on predictors of maternal anemia among tribal lactating mothers in Andhra Pradesh, India, highlights significant health challenges. Anemia is prevalent, linked to factors like lack of cooking skills, time constraints, and reliance on ready-to-eat foods. Insufficient awareness of nutritional benefits and urbanization exacerbates vulnerability. Lower socioeconomic status, both lower and lower-middle, significantly correlates with anemia, with relative risks of 1.35 and 2.33 respectively. Surprisingly, factors like occupation and education show no significant associations. These findings underscore the profound impact of social determinants, particularly lower socioeconomic status, on the health outcomes of maternal mothers in tribal communities (Gupta et al., 2022). The study on health status and practices among tribals in Andhra Pradesh reveals significant health challenges exacerbated by socio-economic factors. Anaemia, diarrhea, tuberculosis, malaria, and malnutrition prevail, worsened by poor hygiene, open defecation, alcohol, tobacco use, and reliance on traditional medicine. Tobacco consumption, especially through smoking or chewing, is common. Women face abdominal issues due to early marriages and limited access to clean water. Socio-economic factors like infrastructure inadequacy, limited healthcare access, and affordability barriers contribute to poor health outcomes, including high blood pressure and anaemia during pregnancy. Unqualified practitioners and traditional birth attendants hinder effective healthcare delivery (Lal, 2006). The study on the impact of globalization on the socio-economic and health conditions of the Lambada tribe in Telangana State reveals a myriad of health challenges. These include general health issues, blood pressure, gynecological problems, anemia, tuberculosis, diabetes, asthma, cancer, and heart-related conditions, exacerbated by poverty, low agricultural productivity, high debt levels, and limited access to credit facilities. Globalization has also altered traditional Lambada food habits, dressing patterns, and cultural practices, impacting their socio-economic and health conditions. Emphasizing the importance of preserving their cultural values (Saradha, 2020).

The study on oral hygiene practices and periodontal status among two tribal populations in Telangana State highlights significant health challenges within the Lambada tribe. They exhibit poor oral hygiene

practices and compromised periodontal status, marked by the presence of calculus, shallow and deep pockets, and attachment loss of 4-5 mm. With a mean age of 39.34 - 13.77 years and predominantly female, residing in settlements known as Thanda, their relatively settled lifestyle compared to the Koya tribe may influence access to healthcare and oral hygiene practices. Addressing socio-economic factors like income levels and land ownership could potentially improve overall health outcomes among the Lambada tribe (Asif, 2019).

In Karnataka state:

The study on health problems and healthcare practices among Lambani women in Gulbarga district, Karnataka, reveals their reliance on traditional herbal treatments alongside modern healthcare. Lambani women often integrate traditional remedies with modern medical care, even incorporating crushed tablets from grocery shops for headaches and eye issues. Socio-economic factors, including limited access to hospitals and living conditions, influence their healthcare choices. Alcohol use for cold-related issues, even among children, and the use of eucalyptus leaves for cold relief are common practices. Emphasizing support services like nutrition and education, the study advocates for improving the health status and quality of life of Lambani women in Gulbarga (Prithviraj&Naik, 2013). The study on malnutrition among grade schoolers aged 9-11 years in the Lambani community at Hoovinahadagali taluk, Bellary district, Karnataka, reveals concerning findings. Anthropometric measurements of 135 children indicate significant deficits in height and weight compared to standard norms, with approximately 41% of children found to be stunted. Older children exhibit higher rates of malnutrition than younger ones. Socio-economic factors such as poverty, limited access to healthcare and education, and food insecurity likely contribute to the high prevalence of malnutrition among Lambani grade schoolers. Urgent interventions targeting their diverse needs are essential to alleviate malnutrition and improve their health outcomes (Naik, S., 2020). The study on socio-economic realities and health challenges among unorganized laborers from the Banjara community in Bellary District, Karnataka, underscores significant issues. Laborers face severe health issues like tuberculosis and cancer due to poor working conditions and limited healthcare access. Prevalent exploitation and poverty contribute to their vulnerability, with many living below the poverty line and lacking basic facilities. Inadequate wages and the absence of social security measures exacerbate their plight. Despite government schemes, challenges persist in implementation, and awareness programs, NGO support, and clear legislation are lacking. Urgent interventions are needed to improve the socio-economic conditions and health outcomes of Banjara laborers (Naik&Hanumanthappa, 2019).

In Rajasthan state:

The study on poor gut health among malnourished tribal children in Sikar District, Rajasthan, reveals alarming findings. Malnutrition-associated poor gut health leads to stunted growth and weight loss due to decreased nutrient absorption during recurrent diarrhea episodes. Inadequate WASH practices and food insecurity exacerbate infections, perpetuating malnutrition. Diarrhea, resulting from poor hygiene and food availability, worsens malnutrition. Socio-economic factors like poverty, food insecurity, and low

caregiver literacy directly affect children's nutritional health. Targeted interventions focusing on poverty alleviation, food security, hygiene promotion, and caregiver education are vital for enhancing children's health outcomes in Sikar District's nomadic tribes (Sharma et al., 2022). The study on health perspectives among nomadic tribal populations in Rajasthan underscores significant health challenges stemming from infrastructural inadequacies, limited healthcare access, and ill-treatment by hospital staff, and affordability issues. Socio-economic factors, including poverty, illiteracy, and lack of awareness, contribute to their poor health status. Unique socio-cultural norms, economic hardships, and geographical isolation further impact their health outcomes. Absence of nearby government hospitals, inadequate sanitary conditions, and scarcity of safe drinking water exacerbate their challenges. Addressing these multifaceted barriers through improved infrastructure, healthcare accessibility, poverty alleviation, literacy promotion, and awareness campaigns is crucial for enhancing the health and well-being of nomadic tribes in Rajasthan (Sachdev, B., 2012). The study on type 2 diabetes screening among Rajasthan tribes reveals concerning trends, with a rising prediabetes prevalence indicating a future diabetes burden. Factors such as obesity, hypertension, and migration-induced lifestyle changes contribute to this surge. Socio-economic elements like family income, work type, and living conditions significantly influence health outcomes. Type 2 diabetes prevalence correlates with sex, age, body mass index, waist circumference, and blood pressure. Shifts toward rural or urban lifestyles worsen lifestyle diseases due to vanishing traditional occupations. Addressing socio-economic determinants, especially income and work type, is crucial for enhancing tribal health outcomes (Sachdev, B., 2012). The study on type 2 diabetes and hypertension among nomadic tribal populations in Rajasthan reveals concerning trends, with higher prevalence rates compared to non-tribal groups, mirroring global indigenous communities. Lack of access to diabetes care and knowledge contributes to these rising health issues. Socio-economic factors, including liquor consumption, limited healthcare access, and advancing age, influence diabetes and hypertension incidence. Gender disparities in body mass index distribution suggest socio-economic influences on health outcomes, with more overweight and obese females. Addressing poverty, health education, sanitation, and healthcare accessibility is crucial, especially in isolated settlements, to mitigate these health challenges among tribal populations (Sachdev, 2011).

In Maharashtra state:

The study delved into the Banjara community's utilization of traditional food processing knowledge, focusing on techniques, challenges, market prospects, and sustainability. It explored traditional methods, local ingredients, and nutritional aspects while addressing hurdles like marginalization, poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, land rights disputes, cultural preservation, and gender disparities. Examining primary livelihoods, educational and health gaps, income levels, poverty rates, and access to amenities provided insights into the complex socio-economic landscape. Consideration of land rights, social status, and community integration deepened the understanding. For a comprehensive grasp, detailed analysis of specific findings within the study is essential (ShitalRathod et al., 2014). This study explores the utilization patterns of maternal and child health services within the Banjara community in

Maharashtra. Findings reveal a concerning prevalence of chronic energy deficiency among women aged 15-19, highlighting their vulnerability to associated health issues, which may ultimately impact maternal and child health outcomes. Poverty emerges as a significant socio-economic factor influencing these health challenges, potentially limiting access to nutritious food, healthcare services, and education. Women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are particularly susceptible to chronic energy deficiency and its detrimental health effects. These results underscore the urgent need to address poverty and socio-economic disparities to enhance the health outcomes of women and their families (Jadhav, 2015).

Based on the studies conducted on the Lambada community, the following major answers identified.

The Lambada community faces significant health challenges, including high rates of malnutrition, anemia, diabetes, and hypertension, with women and children being particularly vulnerable. Limited healthcare access due to poor infrastructure exacerbates these issues. Socio-economic factors like poverty, low income, and lack of education contribute to poor health, while migration and urbanization disrupt traditional livelihoods and affect lifestyle and health. Malnutrition, both undernutrition and overnutrition, is prevalent due to food insecurity. Cultural beliefs and social norms, especially around gender, impact healthcare-seeking behaviors, further limiting access to care for vulnerable groups.

Discussion

The findings of this study on the health outcomes of the Lambada Tribes align with existing literature on tribal populations in India. Studies on other tribal communities have also reported high prevalence rates of health challenges such as malnutrition, anemia, diabetes, and hypertension, reflecting similar socio-economic disparities and access to healthcare issues (Patel et al., 2017; Sharma et al., 2019). Comparative analysis with literature on other tribal groups reveals commonalities in the socio-economic determinants of health. For example, poverty, limited access to education and healthcare, and cultural preservation concerns are shared challenges among various tribal communities across different states in India (Bhattacharya et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2020). While the specific health challenges may vary between tribal groups, the underlying socio-economic factors driving these disparities remain consistent. Studies on tribes such as the Bhil, Gond, and Santhal have highlighted similar patterns of malnutrition, infectious diseases, and limited healthcare access due to socio-economic marginalization (Gupta et al., 2015; Mohapatra et al., 2018; Majumder et al., 2020). The implications of these findings extend beyond the Lambada Tribes to inform evidence-based interventions for tribal populations as a whole. Integrated healthcare interventions, capacity building for healthcare providers, and empowerment programs promoting socio-economic advancement are universally relevant strategies for addressing tribal health disparities (Kumar et al., 2016; Rathod et al., 2019). While the focus of this study is on the Lambada Tribes, the findings resonate with broader literature on tribal populations in India. By comparing findings with studies on other tribal groups, we can identify common challenges and develop holistic interventions to improve the health and well-being of tribal communities nationwide.

Evidence-Based Recommendations to Improve Healthcare Delivery for the Lambada Community

To address socio-economic factors impacting Lambada Tribe health outcomes, initiatives like strengthening healthcare infrastructure, culturally sensitive education programs, and socio-economic empowerment are crucial. Promoting gender equity, community engagement in decision-making, and advocating for policy prioritization are vital steps. Tailoring interventions regionally, fostering collaboration between states, and adopting holistic healthcare approaches are essential. Empowering tribal communities through education and preserving traditional knowledge is imperative. Facilitating community involvement in decision-making alongside evidence-based policy development is crucial. Implementing these recommendations collaboratively can effectively address health disparities among tribal communities in India's diverse states.

Social workers are essential in improving healthcare delivery for the Lambada community. They facilitate culturally sensitive education, promote gender equity, and engage the community in decision-making. By advocating for policy prioritization and strengthening healthcare infrastructure, social workers support socio-economic empowerment initiatives. Their efforts bridge gaps between healthcare systems and the community, ultimately enhancing health outcomes for the Lambada tribe. To further this mission, social workers should consider developing targeted programs that address specific health challenges and foster partnerships with local organizations to ensure sustainable impact.

Conclusion

The Lambada Tribes confront formidable health challenges, including a high prevalence of malnutrition, anemia, diabetes, hypertension, and other lifestyle-related ailments. These health issues are exacerbated by socio-economic factors such as poverty, limited income, restricted access to education and healthcare, and concerns regarding cultural preservation. The profound impact of socio-economic status on their health outcomes is evident, with poverty, food insecurity, educational limitations, and inadequate healthcare access contributing significantly to prevalent health conditions within the community. Moreover, cultural norms and traditional beliefs influence healthcare-seeking behaviors and health outcomes among the Lambada Tribes. Through the synthesis of literature, this study provided crucial insights into the intricate relationship between socio-economic factors and health outcomes among the Lambada tribes. Armed with this understanding, policymakers and stakeholders can devise targeted interventions aimed at enhancing the health and well-being of Lambada communities across India.

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