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## Socio-economic conditions of folk artists

**K Kavitha Maheswari, A Subhashini**

### Abstract

This descriptive study is to know the socio-economic profile of the respondents in the selected area and to analyse the socio-economic conditions of the respondents. The universe of this study constituted of folk artists in Thanjavur. Purposive convenient sampling was employed to collect the data, the sample size was 54 those who met by the researcher who were performing in various programs like karagattam, kavadi attam, Therukoothu, Oyilattam, Kuravan Kurathi, Thappu etc. The researcher used a self-prepared interview schedule for data collection. From the study it is revealed that the respondents are having insecured economic status, relying on unstable job nature, having health hazards and sexual harassment, educational backwardness and inability to give proper education to their children. Thus the study helped know the conditions of the folk artist. The study is concluded that the folk artists need support and encouragement in the society and family without partialities.

**Keywords:** Socio-Economic condition, folk media, folk artists

### 1. Introduction

Folk art is practical, functional, natural and spontaneous. The folk performing art is changing its structure continuously over centuries modifying it to the needs of the changing situations. It is making itself functionally relevant to the society. In traditional societies art is an integral part of the life of the people. In primitive societies, there is no real distinction between art and life. Folk art is considered as part and parcel of their daily lives. It touches the core of their being.

The Indian society is a complex social system with diverse castes, classes, doctrines and tribes. There is a high rate of illiteracy in most of the rural people. The modern mass media, with all its expansion and complexity has not yet reached the people who are in most need of it. To these rural citizens the modern mass media seems too inadequate. It is because their life has not gone through much transformation after the advent of the modern mass media. It may be that the mass media proved too glamorous, impersonal and unbelievable in contrast with the familiar performance of traditional folk arts. The villager could not only see and hear these folk arts but also even touch them. The folk arts take up the issues, events, problems and issues that are relevant to him.

### Problems of folk artist

#### Ignorance

Ignorance means having a lack of information, or lack of knowledge. It is different from stupidity which is lack of intelligence, and different from foolishness which is lack of wisdom. The three are often mixed up and assumed to be the same by some people.

#### Disease

When a community has a high disease rate, absenteeism is high, productivity is low, and less wealth is created. Apart from the misery, discomfort and death that results from disease, it is also a major factor in poverty in a community. Being well (well-being) not only helps the individuals who are healthy, it contributes to the eradication of poverty in the community.

#### Apathy

Apathy is when people do not care, or when they feel so powerless that they do not try to change things, to right a wrong, to fix a mistake, or to improve conditions.

**Dishonesty**

When resources that are intended to be used for community services or facilities, are diverted into the private pockets of someone in a position of power, there is more than morality at stake here. In this training series, we are not making a value judgement that it is good or bad. We are pointing out, however, that it is a major cause of poverty. Dishonesty among persons of trust and power. The amount stolen from the public, that is received and enjoyed by the individual, is far less than the decrease in wealth that was intended for the public.

**Dependency**

Dependency results from being on the receiving end of charity. In the short run charity may be essential for survival. In the long run, that charity can contribute to the possible demise of the recipient, and certainly to ongoing poverty. It is an attitude, a belief, that one is so poor, so helpless, that one cannot help one's self, that a group cannot help itself, and that it must depend on assistance from outside. The attitude, and shared belief is the biggest self-justifying factor in perpetuating the condition where the self or group must depend on outside help.

**Improper health care**

Degrees of social status are closely linked to inequalities. Those with poor health tend to fall into poverty and the poor tend to have poor health. According to the World Health Organization, within countries those of lower socioeconomic strata have the worst health outcomes.

**Review of literature**

Rajendran (2013) "Only the poorest among us will continue to perform. Enough is enough. Who wants to dance when the audience make vulgar gestures and utter dialogues laced with sexual remarks," said Rajendran, a thavil ('nayandi melam') player and his wife Thenmozhi, a winner of Kalaimamani award for 'karagam' dance. Ganesan (2011) "As education is opening up employment opportunities, the next generation is not ready to take up this art form. Moreover it is not an easy art for everyone to perform. Singing, playing magudam and dancing in an aggressive manner may not suit everyone. After a certain age, you cannot do all these things," says Ganesan. Bernad Bel *et al.* (2010) in his study focuses on, the consciousness of lower castes creates symbols and myths of protest against the domination of hegemonic classes. Because the subaltern are not able to stand openly against the latter's control, their protest finds its expressions in the creation of mythical characters. This gives the satisfaction of a symbolic resistance. The oppressed then identify themselves with these mythical figures of their creation and convert themselves too into symbols of protest. If not able to strongly oppose anybody, then the mighty myths of resistance are worshipped in the subconsciousness. Similarly, such heroes are perceived as devatva (deity). Myths channel and regularize protests through repetition. Arpita Chatterjee, Barasat College, West Bengal State University, India (2009) Dance provides an active, non-competitive form of exercise that has potential positive effects for physical health as well as mental and emotional wellbeing. Dance therapy is based on the idea that body and mind are co-relational.

**Materials and methods****Objectives of the study**

- To study the socio-economic profile of the respondents in the selected area.

- To analyses the work life of the respondents.

Descriptive research design has been used to do this study; descriptive research is concerned with describing the socio demographic characteristics of the folk artists.

**Universe**

The universe of this study constituted of folk artists in Thanjavur. The data were collected from the folk artists in Thanjavur who were participating in various programs like karagattam, kavadi attam, Therukooth, Oyilattam, Kuravan Kurathi, Thappu etc. The universe of the study is infinite in nature because of the migrating nature of the respondents.

**Sampling technique**

Since the universe is infinite the researcher has adopted the purposive convenient sampling because the folk artist were migrating from one place to another place for the purpose of performance, so the researcher cannot fix the sample size for the research, therefore the researcher chose the sampling technique as purposive convenient to collect the data from the available, accessible and the respondents who are ready to respond.

**Sample size**

Purposive convenient sampling was employed to collect the data, the sample size was 54 those who met by the researcher who were under the criteria during the period of data collection.

**Inclusive criteria**

- People who are participating in folk media and made their folk media as their occupation
- Both female and male aged between 15-65 years

**Exclusive criteria**

- People who are not performance in folk art at present.
- People who are working as the agent for the folk artist

**Tool for data collection**

- The researcher used a self-prepared interview schedule for data collection which includes age, sex, religion, marital status, education, socio-economic background, income, native place, housing type, family type, work life and its related problems.

**Findings and Discussion****Findings related to socio-demographic variable****Personal life**

More than ¼ of the respondents belonged to the age of below 30 years and more than ¼th of the respondents belonged to the age group of 31-40 years. 33.3% of the respondents were at the age of above 40 years. More than half of the respondents (55.6%) were female. Majority of the respondents (87%) belonged to Hinduism. A little less than half of the respondents (42.6%) are belonged to backward caste, remaining 37% of the respondents were from schedule caste and 20.4% of the respondents belonged to most backward caste. Majority of the respondents (70.4%) are married. More than half of the respondents studied up to primary school level. A vast majority of the respondents (92.6%) are speaking Tamil.

**Family details**

More than ¾ of the respondents belonged to nuclear family. More than half of the respondents were new to this field.

More than ¼ of the respondents (31.5%) having below 10 years of experience. A vast majority of the respondents having ration card (98.1%), voter id (92.6%) and Aadhar card (77.8%).

### **Economic condition**

Majority (63%) of the respondents were in rental houses. Majority (59.3%) of the respondents were not able to give rent properly. Majority of the respondents (24.1%) among those who are having their own houses were able to maintain their house. More than ¾ of the respondents were not able to run their family with their wages. More than ¾ of the respondents are not involved in any other jobs. 90.7% of the respondents didn't have the bank savings for their future.

Majority of the respondents (88.8%) were not taking nutritious food. More than half respondents (66.7%) were not able to give a quality education to their children. A vast majority of the respondents (90.7%) were not able to spend for medical needs through private health care systems. Majority of the respondents (88.9%) were not able to celebrate fares and festival because of their insufficient income.

### **Social life**

More than ½ of the respondents (68.5%) were not getting proper recognition from the society. Majority of the respondents (72.2%) were not able to mingle with society. Nearly half of the respondents (48.1%) were facing dignity problem, remaining 46.3% of the respondents were facing the problem of heavy competition. ¾ of the respondents were getting respect for their job in the society. More than half of the respondents (63%) were getting proper identity in public and remaining opined that they have identity problem in public.

Majority of the respondents (74.1%) were willing to provide education to their children. Majority (70.4%) of the respondents are interested to educate their children in private school. 35.1% of the respondents were ready to give higher secondary education to their children.

### **Occupational condition**

Nearly ½ of the respondents were having knowledge on the technical equipments. 40.7% of the respondents are receiving scholarship for their children's education. More than half of the respondents (51.9%) were not spending enough time with their children. Nearly ¾ of the respondents were getting their full payment for their performance in a right manner. More than half of the respondents (63%) manage the delay of payment through their union.

More than ½ of the respondents were getting the proper safety measures while performing their job. A vast majority (98.1%) of the respondents didn't get the job at all days in the year. 46.3% of the respondents were managing the family by borrowing money from the local money lenders. (64.8%) of the respondents were doing the job for the purpose of earning money.

### **Cultural life practices of folk artists**

Majority of the respondents (70.4%) didn't have any traditional worship pertaining to their occupation. 70.4% of the respondents opined that they don't have any special ceremonies and festivals for folk artists. Majority (88.9%) of the respondents were convenient with the cultural ethics in relation to their folk media.

### **Problems of folk artists**

53.7% of the respondents were performing during their menstruation and pregnancy time also. 20.4% of the respondents consume alcohol daily. Majority of the respondents (74.1%) underwent love marriage. More than half of the respondents' (53.7%) life partners accepted them to perform the job with other opposite sex members. A little less than ¾ of the respondents were getting stress at the time of performing their job. More than half of the respondents (53.7%) felt that they are engaged in a job of inferior status.

A vast majority 96.3% of the respondents felt that their health issues affect their job. A vast majority of the respondents (90.7%) were going to government hospital for treatment of the health problems.

### **Health awareness**

A vast majority (90.7%) of the respondents believing and maintaining body fitness for their occupation. 25.9% of the respondents have proper knowledge on menstrual hygiene. A vast majority of the respondents (77.8%) were aware about family planning. More than half of the respondents (59.3%) were not facing sexual harassment in their job.

### **Conclusion**

The above discussion has helped the researcher to conclude that the social and psychological conditions of the folk artists, from the study it is revealed that the respondents are having insecure economic status, relying on unstable job nature, having health hazards and sexual harassment, educational backwardness and inability to give proper education to their children. The study helps us to know the conditions of the folk artist. The study is concluded that the folk artists need support and encouragement in the society and family without partialities.

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