



Value orientation and activities performed by tribal lambani women of North Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

An attempt was made in this study to know the value orientation of Lambani women towards scientific farming, girls education and family planning and association between value orientation and selected independent variables, considering 200 randomly selected Lambani women in Shirahatti and Ranebennur Talukas of Haveri district. A vast majority of Lambani women had higher value orientation towards scientific farming. Whereas, majority had low value orientation with respect to family planning and girls education. Age, family size and size of land holdings of respondents were significantly associated with the value orientation towards girls education. Cleaning the house, serving food and child care works were done by all the women folk. Except chilli transplanting, all other agriculture operations were performed by women. Embroidery was a major subsidiary work. Collection and selling of forest produce were the important activities among works.

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INTRODUCTION

In the land of cultural diversity, Lambani caste (synonymous names are, Banjara, Brinjar, Bripari, Lambadi, Lamani, Labhana, Mukeri, Sugali, Sukali, Wanjari, etc.) contributed a lot to the 'culture by their rich and unique styles'. They normally live in tandas (tanda is an area where lambani caste people reside exclusively). Their traditional occupation was salt trading, harvesting and selling of forest produce besides engaging in petty business. Thus, they were leading nomadic life. After India's independence Lambani caste was included under backward caste list to extend benefits to improve their living conditions. However, in Karnataka, from July 1977 onwards, Lambani caste was included under scheduled castes. This facility has opened wider avenues for them to get better education and employment opportunities in government and private organisations. This also helped them to avail incentives from various developmental programmes to improve agriculture, housing, public health and sanitation, self-employment etc. According to 1981 census, in Karnataka as many as 44518 Lambanis are living in 136

tandas have availed one or the other benefits from various welfare programmes.

The female folk in the Lambani caste play relatively a significant role in the family affairs. Understanding of their value orientation with respect to scientific farming, girls education and family planning as well as, factors influencing the value orientation of women was felt important to develop a strategy to influence their decision making ability to improve the farm productivity, girls education and to have control over the population growth. Therefore, an attempt has been made to study the orientation of Lambani women towards scientific farming, family planning and girls' education, and to understand the association if any, between value orientation of Lambani women and selected independent variables.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Shirahatti and Ranebennur Talukas of Haveri district. These Talukas were purposively selected in view of the highest population of Lambanis. In each Taluk, five tandas were selected randomly. In each tanda, 20 women heads of the family were

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selected again randomly. Thus, there were 200 Lambani women as sample for the present study

The value, orientation is operationalised in the study as “the relative importance that an individual attaches to the object, thing, work, condition, circumstance etc. as perceived by him or her’. The value orientation of Lambani women was measured by using a standardised instrument developed for the study. The instrument had six statements under each component of scientific farming, family planning and girls’ education. Thus, there were 18 statements. The respondents’ rating was obtained on five point continuum for each statement (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree). The split half reliability score for the instrument was 0.89 indicating higher degree of reliability. Construct and content validity were also established for the developed scale. Based on the mean and standard deviation of value orientation scores, the respondents were categorised into low value orientation and high value orientation groups for each component.

The information on activities performed by Lambani women like household activities, farm activities, subsidiary activities, marketing activities and community activities was obtained by using a protested schedule developed for the study. The information was collected through personal interview with the respondents. Frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and chi-square tests were used to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation are presented below:

The distribution of Lambani women on their value orientation towards scientific farming, family planning and girls’ education:

An observation of Table 1 reveals that 62.00 per cent of women had high value orientation towards scientific farming. This might be due to the realisation that agriculture depends greatly on monsoon and also adoption of traditional practices in agriculture does not help in increasing the yield levels to improve the family income, in turn improving the life of Lambani women. The extension staff of the State departments might have distributed the inputs and laid out demonstrations to prove the worth of latest technologies. By seeing the results of the technology demonstrated, the Lambani women might have developed strong conviction to the scientific technology. This in turn might have reflected on their value orientation

Table 1: Value orientation scores for different components (n=200)

Components	Value orientation			
	Low		High	
	No.	%	No.	%
Scientific farming	76	38	124	62
Family planning	176	88	24	12
Girls education	176	88	24	12

A vast majority (88.00 %) had low value orientation towards family planning. This indicates that they are not favourably disposed towards family planning. This might be due to their inaccessibility to health workers and media which publicizes it. Also they may prefer to have bigger size family to have more wage earners.

Majority of the women (88.00%) had low value orientation towards girls’ education. Whereas, 12.00 per cent had high value orientation. The possible reasons for majority having low value orientation are, the Lambani people were toiling hard to earn their day’s bread, mostly depending on wages. If they send the children for labour work they can also earn the wages. Thus, the total income to the family will be more. If they send the children to school they will be losing the wages. Even though the government is providing scholarships and other incentives, it has not attracted many. Further, they live in tandas which will be normally too far from the village, where the school facilities may not be available. Hence, this result can be expected.

Association between the value orientation and selected independent variables of Lambani women:

The data in Table 2 depict the chi-square values indicating the association between the value orientation and selected independent variables of Lambani women. There was a significant association between age and girls’ education. Whereas, age did not establish significant relationship with family planning and scientific farming. The possible reasons for the significant relationship between age and value orientation may be due to the fact that the older Lambani women might have appreciated the facilities extended by government to improve the socio-economic status of Lambanis. The older Lambani women might have recognised the importance of education for the girls. They may be feeling that girls can be relieved from the routine drudgery, if they are educated and married to an educated boy.

Irrespective of the educational level, the Lambani women had similar value orientation towards family planning, scientific farming and girls education. This may

Table 2: Association between value orientation and selected independent variables (n = 200)

Component variables	Chi-square values		
	Scientific farming	Girls education	Family planning
Age	0.82	4.21*	2.56
Education	0.24	0.55	0.55
Family type	2.77	3.82	1.13
Family size	5.88	21.97**	2.17
Size of land holding	4.37	8.99**	2.36

* and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and P=0.01

be because, majority of the respondents were illiterate and the scope for getting Lambani women educated was limited. Although, some girls had an urge to go to school, they were inhibited in going to school on the pretext that they do not attend to the routine works of the family

The Lambani women, irrespective of the family type had similar value orientation towards family planning, scientific farming and girls education. Since the Lambani women engage themselves in activities like collecting and harvesting of forest produce, they stay away from their residence most of the time. Irrespective of the type of family, the activities to be performed are same for all. Therefore, family type might not have been associated with the value orientation of Lambani women.

The value orientation of women towards scientific farming was not associated with the family size as well as, with size of land holdings. This might be due to the non-availability of time to acquire information on scientific farming from different sources, as majority of the people were working as labourers. Also, they may not adopt scientific practices even if they know because of non-affordability of inputs like fertilisers and plant protection chemicals. Thus, irrespective of size of land holdings and number of persons in the families, the value orientation remained same. The value orientation of Lambani women towards family planning was not significantly associated either with size of the family or with size of land holdings. This may be due to limited access of Lambani women to health workers and also mass media to know the advantages of family planning. Further, the horizontal spread of positive aspects of family planning (Lambani women to Lambani women) might not have spread from the person who is adopting family planning measures to those who are not adopting. The spread effect plays very significant role in popularising family planning in a community. Yet another reason might be that the Lambanis prefer to have more number of persons in the family to have more number of workers in the family to earn wages.

A significant association between value orientation towards girls education and family size as well as size of land holdings was observed. This might be due to the fact that, normally, bigger size families possess more land and visit frequently to urban areas to get inputs and sell the farm produce. Hence, in those families, the importance of girls education in the recent years might have been felt. If the size of the family is big, more number of persons will be available for working as labourers on other farmers fields or on their farm. This will help the girls to go to school.

Activities performed by Lambani women:

Household activities:

The data presented in Table 3 reveal that, all the respondents were engaged in the activities such as cleaning of the house, serving food and taking care of children, followed by 96.50 per cent bringing water for household use. Basically household activities are performed by women. since the Lambani shows the great cohesiveness in their activities. All women irrespective of age engage themselves in household activities, and more so with respect to young women, who join hands with the older women in completing the work fast as they will have to go out for collection of fuel wood or to attend to labour work. Hence, all the women are engaged in household activities.

Farm activities:

Majority of Lambani women were engaged in sowing, weeding and application of manures, harvesting and winnowing. The possible reason being that Lambani women are engaged by landlords for works which do not require much skills. Chilli seedling transplanting is a skillful job. Thus, only negligible percentages of respondents were engaged for chilli transplanting.

Subsidiary activities:

Among the subsidiary activities, embroidery was attended to by 90.50 per cent of women, followed by collection of forest products (85.50 per cent) and weaving (29.50 per cent). The dress of the traditional women, made out of coarse cloth contains small mirrors, cowries etc. Using needle different designs on clothes is called as embroidery. So, almost all Lambani knew this embroidery work.

Marketing activities:

A considerable percentage (67.50 %) devoted themselves in collection of forest products. As while they

Table 3: Activities performed by Lambani women in Karnataka (n=200)			
Sr. No.	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Household activities		
	Cleaning the house	200	100.00
	Bringing water for household use	193	96.50
	Washing the clothes	192	96.00
	Preparation of food	199	99.50
	Serving food	200	100.00
	Collection of fire wood	166	83.00
	Teaching children	4	2.00
	Taking care of children	200	100.00
2.	Farm activities		
	Application of fertilizer	188	94.00
	Application of manure	188	94.00
	Sowing of seed	186	93.00
	Chilli transplanting	7	3.50
	Weeding	189	94.50
	Harvesting	175	87.50
	Winnowing	186	93.00
3.	Subsidiary activities		
	Collection of forest products	171	85.50
	Cattle management	70	35.00
	Rearing of poultry birds	12	6.00
	Embroidery	181	90.50
	Weaving	59	29.50
4.	Marketing activities		
	Selling milk	10	5.00
	Selling egg	5	2.50
	Selling forest products	135	67.50
	Selling wool	15	7.50
5.	Community activities		
	Taking part in cultural activities	195	97.50
	Taking part in campaign and social service activities	34	17.00

go for fuel wood collection, they also collect the forest products like lac, honey and various fruits and sell the same in the nearby town and cities. Whereas, only five per cent were engaged in selling of milk, usually the milk

is sold by men fold of Lambani tribe for this reason the selling of milk and eggs is engaged by small percentage of women.

Community activities:

It was interesting to note that almost every woman was engaged in cultural activities in their tanda. This was due to the fact that they rely on their own folks.

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