

Executive summary

E.1 Overview

The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India provides grant-in-aid to conduct socio economic research studies for upliftment of women. The Ministry has taken up several women development programmes for improving their livelihood conditions and to provide social justice.

In this context the present research carries out a study on 'Socio-Economic status of widows in Tirupati a pilgrim place of Andhra Pradesh'. The study is intended to be made with the help of field surveys contacting widow women, NGOs and other related Institutions engaged in women empowerment activities and provisioning shelter particularly widows in the study area.

The primary objective of Study is to analyse the socio-economic status of widows living in Tirupati, the most popular pilgrimage centre of Andhra Pradesh, and to suggest measures for their improvement.

E.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To ascertain the flow pattern of widows into Tirupati on the basis of their places of origin, family background etc.,
- To prepare a profile of widows at Tirupati indicating, their age, qualification, strength, weakness, skill and talent etc.,
- To ascertain their engagement pattern, earnings, living conditions etc.,
- To ascertain the job opportunities available for their absorption or rehabilitation
- To ascertain the responses of the local authority and business houses to the causes solution of the problems of widows
- Analyse their problems for living a standard life as a normal citizen
- Preparing realistic rehabilitation plan to solve the problems of these widows
- To make concerted realistic, suggestions through well drawn out schemes for solution of the problem of widows.

E.3 Salient Futures of the Study

E.3.1 Summary of the results of data analysis on social status of widows

The data analysis on general profile, flow pattern and social activities of sample widows in Tirupati brought out the following conclusions:

- 78% of the sample widows are in the economically active age group in general and 22% are reproductive age group in particular. Therefore, they can work hard to earn their livelihood, if the opportunities available to them. This is their major strength.
- 85% of the widows are illiterate and even among those literate widows; It is obviously 14.8% of the widows among the sample have the opportunity to enter into the school. It is also observed that even among 14.8% of the widows, who entered in the school, only about 11% have completed ten years and above of schooling and only about 58% have completed five years of schooling. Therefore, the sample widows didn't have the required minimum knowledge to undertake gainful employment activities in modern society. This is their major weakness.
- 72% of the sample widows did not have vocational Skills. Only few widows have training in traditional vocational skills in tailoring, weaving, garland making, artificial flower making and rangoli. Even such small and micro business skills will allow the widows to take up gainful employment in Tirupati. These are the promising opportunities for uneducated widows in Tirupati.
- Most of the sample widows are from Hindu religion (92%). Further, most of them belonged to SC, ST and OBC castes which are backward in general. Widows of SC and ST castes are socially excluded and it is difficult for them to enter into the gainful activities. This is a major threat for them.
- 90% of the sample widows are denoted that they wish to live in Tirupati, because they felt that it is a good place for staying, it is a religious place, the people in this place are helpful and there are many opportunities for getting gainful work. Tirupathi is better place for living and survival comparatively with Puri, Varanasi and Vrindvan. Because there is no problem for food and shelter in Tirupathi.

Being analysed the general profile of the widows and their social status, which brought out their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to live a comfortable life in Tirupati, the following section concentrates on summarizing the analysis on the economic status of sample widows and some case studies.

E.3.2 Summary of the results of data analysis on economic status of widows

The data analysis on economic status of sample widows in Tirupati brought out the following conclusions.

1. The economic activities of the sample widows indicate that beggars are the highest number followed by daily wage workers, workers in petty businesses, self-employed workers, garland makers and other workers in that order. This distribution of sample widows based on their works indicate that they have been involved not only in lower income generating occupations, but also in insecured occupations. There is no guarantee that they will have continuous secured employment and income in these occupations throughout the year.
2. Begging is the lowest income generating activity among the six groups of economic activities performed by sample widows in Tirupati. The distribution sample widows based on income indicate that above 89% of widow beggars have been earning less than Rs.30 per day and they are considered as the poorest among poor. Similarly, around 96% of widow beggars have been earning less than Rs.50 per day and they are in the Below Poverty Line group. Among daily wage labourers, poorest widows constitute 47.2% and BPL widows constitute 66.5%. Among workers in petty businesses, poorest widows constitute 28.7% and BPL widows constitute 56%. Among self-employed workers, poorest widows constitute 13.7% and BPL widows constitute 39.2%. Among garland makers, poorest widows constitute 25.6% and BPL widows constitute 95.2%. Among other workers, poorest widows constitute 10.5% and BPL widows constitute 23.7%. Among all widows, poorest widows constitute 52.4% and BPL widows constitute 75.3%.
3. The study considered that monthly income of Rs.1000 and Rs.1500 as poverty lines respectively for the poorest of the poor and BPL widows in Tirupati. The distribution of sample widows based on their monthly income indicate that nearly 50% of the sample widows earn less than Rs.1000 per month and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that more than 68% of sample widows earn less than Rs.1500 per month and hence they are considered as poor.
4. The distribution of sample widows based on their monthly expenditure shows that about 50% of the sample widows spend less than Rs.1000 per month and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that

nearly 70% of sample widows spend less than Rs.1500 per month and hence they are considered as poor.

5. The expenditure pattern proves that food and health are the predominant items of expenditure in the case of most of the sample widows. Even housing expenditure is unimportant in the case of more than 50% of widows.

In fine, the above analysis on the economic status of widows concludes that most of the sample widows have been chosen low paid economic activities that require lower skills and earn lower incomes, which made them to live under poverty conditions. Their expenditure pattern also shows that they have been spending mostly on basic necessities of their consumption and some of them are not even able to spend for their children education. Most of the sample widows did not save at least for their future unforeseen consumption expenditure. Therefore, it can be said that most of the sample widows are poor, backward and living in miserable conditions.

E.4 Case studies of the selected sample widows in Tirupati

The survey team of the study selected six sample widows for doing intensive case studies in Tirupati Municipality, Tirumala and Thiruchanoor towns and the detail is as follows:

E.4.1 Case Study 1

Rajamma is a widow, presently, staying at Short Stay Home run by People's Action for Social Services (PASS), an NGO at Tirupati. Rajamma migrated from Pamidi, Anantapur District to Tirupati. Her husband was addicted to drinking and died with Asthma. She became widow and doesn't have any support both from her in-laws and parents, after death of her husband. In this helpless condition, she left in-laws home and came to Tirupati with her small two children two years ago, without knowing what to do for survival of her children and herself. She was staying at Tirupati Railway Station and feeding the children some food collected through begging. In that condition, the women volunteers of PASS identified her and brought her to the short stay home for providing temporary shelter for her and her children. They further consoled her and provided some work for her in their organization and also she is earning outside by working as housemaid. Now she is sending her children to school. She has cleared the debts of her husband, who had spent the borrowed money for drinking, at Pamidi.

E.4.2 Case Study 2

Chengamma and Lakshamma are came from Chandragiri to Tirumala due to family problems in their in-laws' families. Both are selling Groundnut seeds and Mango Pieces to pilgrims at Tirumala. They are taking free food daily in TTD Nithya Annadana Programme and sleeping under the corridors of TTD Cottages in Tirumala. They have cleared their loans in Chandragiri and living independently.

E.4.3 Case Study 3

Venkatamma is 65 years old, but living independently in Thiruchanoor. Being a hard working woman, she was not able to tolerate the domination of her daughters-in-law. She used to go to the agricultural labour works for ten years and earn income for herself. Due to old age, she was not able to attend agricultural labour works and then she started flowers selling business near the Temple. Presently she is getting widow pension and also earning some money through sale of flowers.

E.4.4 Case Study 4

Jayamma belongs to an agricultural labour family in Bhakara Peta village of Chittoor district. Due to health problem she is not able to do agricultural works then the family members started ill-treatment with her and her two sons. Then she shifted to Tirupati and got the job of sweeper in TTD Temple.

E.4.5 Case Study 5

P. Chengamma of Andhra Pradesh and her husband made a livelihood from collecting firewood from nearby forest and selling them in adjacent village. They had a dream of opening a small shop providing minimum necessities to the 50 odd families in their village. It was at this stage that Chengamma got involved in SHGs promoted by Rashtriya Seva Samiti (RASS). Thus, she not only repaid her loan but also provided for family to lead a respectable life

E.4.6 Case Study 6

T. Pushpanjali, an old woman from a very poor economic background and she is continuing her own business of selling Rangoli Design Sticks on the roads of Tiruchanoor. The case studies indicates that if women widows are provided with some

financial support they can earn even with small business and able to live a happy life by enhancing their social as well as economic status. Central, State Governments and Temple authorities are not providing any scheme for helping poor widows who are migrating and living in and around the wholly pilgrim place, Tirupathi.

E.5 Limitations

- The information furnished by the respondents was not from written records but from their memory. The recall bias is unavoidable in this study.
- Since the present study is location specific, the findings of the study are applicable only to problems of similar locations and not feasible for generalisation.

I. Methodology adopted

1.1 Methodology of the Study

The methodology adopted consists of desk research; drawing a representative sampling frame of respondents; brainstorming of key issues and fine tuning methodology; carrying out multi-centric field surveys; conducting focus group interviews; processing and analysis of field survey data/information; validation of field survey findings and preparation of study report.

1.2 Desk research

A comprehensive desk research has been undertaken by the team of experts involved in the study. Key study team members have identified the sources of information and secondary data and scanned the research studies already carried out on the subject. Thus all the available literature – published and unpublished studies – concerned to the widow women and their socio economic status have been documented and reviewed to understand the scope, coverage, methodology and major findings. The results of the desk research have been presented above in Sections A, B and C of this chapter.

The literature review enabled the study team to avoid duplication of effort on aspects where information is already available in secondary data, identify critical knowledge gaps, refine study design and evolve appropriate methodology. Based on the results of Desk Research the study team:

- finalized the study instruments
- identified and selected target respondents
- identified and selected specific places for field survey
- constituted the field survey teams with leaders and data enumerators
- trained the field survey teams
- interacted with the local association/opinion leaders and took their suggestions for finding a realistic solution to solve the problems of widows
- discussed with TTD Officials and Government Officials working in Tirupati and captured their views on the development and empowerment of widows; and

- discussed with NGOs and associations who are engaged and ensuring support to widow women.

1.3 Sampling frame and size

Widow women flow pattern and settlement at the study area and NGOs & associations who are engaged and ensuring support to widow women, Community Based Organizations, NGOs working with the promotion of women rights in the targeted study area constitute the survey population and sample frame. The adopted sample size in different target respondent groups is as follows:

TABLE 1.1 Sample break-up across categories

S.No.	Categories	Sample size
1	Widow women respondents from different categories	1000
2	Control units	100
3	NGOs	05
4	MWCD officials	05
5	Temple authorities	10
6	Business people	20
	Total	1140

1.4 Geographical coverage

As per the profile of Tirupati, it is understood that majority of the population lives in Tirupati Municipality and its extended areas. However, most of the floating population lives in Tirumala and Thiruchanoor urban locations, which are considered as the most important pilgrim centers. Therefore, the sample widows have been drawn from the three locations and the details are given in Table 2.1.

TABLE 1.2 Geographical coverage of sample widows

S.No.	Zones of the study area	Number of sample widows	Percent to total
1	Tirumala	224	22.4
2	Tirupati	641	64.1
3	Thiruchanoor	135	13.5
	Total	1000	100.0

It is clear from the Table that about 64% of sample widows live in Tirupati, about 22% of sample widows live in Tirumala and the remaining 14% live in Thiruchanoor.

1.5 Sampling procedure

A simple random and incidental sampling procedure was followed for selection the locations for field survey and selection of sample widows in each selected location at Tirupati, Tirumala and Thiruchanoor zones of the study. However, a representative sample of respondents from each strata and control units, local opinion leaders and NGOs has been contacted randomly in each sample location.

1.6 Brainstorming session

After the desk research and sampling frame are accomplished, a one day Brainstorming Session was organised with participation from senior officials of MWCD, Temple Officials, and NGOs engaged in women empowerment and social activism gender specialists. The issues of the study have been discussed thoroughly and finalized the procedures, field survey teams, samples and instruments for field survey.

1.7 Field survey

Focused field surveys constitute the critical component of the methodology. During the field survey, target group respondents among the widow women, control units, NGOs etc., and policy making institutions have been contacted and their views and experiences on various aspects relevant to the study have been captured with the help of structured questionnaires and open ended interviews. The field surveys were carried out with the help of a contingent Research Officers including women who possess relevant experience in undertaking rural based socio-economic surveys and can communicate in the local dialect.

1.8 Focus group interviews

Given the fairly homogenous nature of the subject, the study has been relied more on in-depth focus group interviews and preparation of real life case studies to reflect important qualitative aspects of socio-economic conditions and their impact on the poor widow women. The survey teams have motivated the focus groups to involve deeply in the discussions and express their views on the problems and suggest possible solutions.

1.9 Methods of data analysis

During the post-field survey phase, data/information collected during field surveys have been compiled, processed, tabulated and analysed with the help of appropriate statistical tools and techniques to arrive at valid conclusions. Descriptive statistics like percentages and averages, which are mostly suitable for this type of studies, have been used for data analysis. However, the bar charts and pie diagrams were used, where suitable and applicable.

1.10 Validation of study findings

The study findings both from Desk Research and Field Survey have been validated at a one day workshop participated by a cross-section of experts representing gender specialists, MWCD officials, NGOs, Temple officials and policy makers.

Being described the concepts, results of the desk research, reviews of literature on the subjects and the methodology adopted in the study in the above four sections of this chapter, the following chapter is designed to assess the general profile of the study area, Tirupati, the holy place for Hindus.

II. Literature review

2.1 Overview

Though women today are being increasingly recognised as important, powerful and meaningful contributors towards the socio-economic development of a nation but countless women continue to be the victims of torture, violence and large scale deprivation, amongst them the condition of widows is quite thought provoking. Again, as widowhood is viewed from the perspectives of religion, custom and faith, many a times it is found that a Hindu widow with upper caste withstands a lot of torture, agony and multiple deprivations in the sphere of food, clothing, fashion, taste, preference and aptitude and financial security.

The total number of widows in India is extremely large and it was estimated at more than 33 million in 1991. The proportion is about 8% in comparable to that of agricultural labourers in the total population (sample registration system 1991). The census also reveals that the number of widows is far more than the widowers.

Widowhood as a phase in the life of a woman is definitely a tragic event. As soon as a woman enters into the phase of widowhood, she encounters a lot of socio-economic, cultural, demographic health and individual changes. As soon as the husband dies, the changes, which appear including no Vermilion on forehead, White Khadi, no cosmetic and purely vegetarian food becomes mandatory. At the same time she is not allowed to welcome a newly married bride and her presence in a social ceremony is viewed as inauspicious.

Besides these occurrences, sometimes a young widow shoulders a lot of family burden like upbringing the children and pursuance of some economic activities. Again if the husband has some property many a times a widow fails to acquire the property entitlement due to the conflict with in-laws. She is neglected and less cared for and met with inhuman treatment. Health wise a widow is most vulnerable in comparison to other family members.

Thus the present social system definitely imposes a large number of restrictions on a widow and turns her resourceless, lonely, helpless and powerless. These facts

constantly threaten the very existence of the widow in the main stream society. Due to the death of the husband even the support network is drastically failed from the nearer and dearer ones.

In this background a widow feels extremely frustrated and unhappy. She feels her life inauspicious. In order to get mental peace, many a times she devotes herself to the service of God. As she feels herself inauspicious, therefore as per the prescriptions of religion and custom, she tries to get salvation in the next birth and peace of mind in the present birth through religious means. Fasting on religious days, visit of temples, dedicated service to the God, etc. are prescribed as the means to achieve salvation and peace of mind.

From time immemorial, temples and place of pilgrimages has remained the centre of attraction for vast majority of population especially the aged widows seeking spiritual peace, divine life and bliss. Driven by an inner urge and faith to attain divine grace and blessings of God, many old men and women desire to spend their last part of life in association with religious and ceremonial activities at religious places. Many of them are left abandoned and resort to live by begging. With increasing deterioration of traditional social value system coupled with breakdown of cohesive joint family system, the position and status of old aged particularly of widows in the family set up have become miserable.

Being neglected by their young and adult children and other family members, old aged widows prefer to migrate and settle at temple places to find peaceful spiritual life. Besides, women after becoming widow are given an inferior and low status in several communities and are not properly cared for. Social dogmatism and superstition prevailing in Hindu societies do not permit respectful status to widows. Unsupported by the family and the society, several widows resort to migrate to temple and pilgrim places to live an independent and sacred life with full devotion to religious activities.

As a matter of fact, the places of pilgrims and temples have been the centre of permanent settlement for large number of widows. These vulnerable widows living at religious and pilgrim places mostly meet their livelihood on charity and begging. Many of

these poor and neglected widows are found engaged in several self earning activities and trades surrounding the temple and shrine.

Thus the dynamics of the process of migration of widows to pilgrim places is a result of two sets of factors. On the one hand, the push factors like non-availability of economic opportunity, denial of inheritance, conflict with in-laws, conflict with other family members, mental agony, physical hardship, chronic diseases due to lack of nutrition and the failure of social network support etc. are mainly responsible for the migration of widows.

On the other hand facts related with divine peace, expectation of salvation in the next birth, easy availability of food and work opportunities are the important pull factors which encourage the out migration of widows to religious and pilgrim places.

But in recent years, it is increasingly evidenced that widows at pilgrim places are subjected to multiple harassment. The young widows have been subjected to sexual abuse and other harassment at the pilgrim places like Mathura, Brindavan, Kasi and Tirupati is sufficiently documented. Besides the livelihood, their health status, shelter and accommodation are largely at stake.

Now it is high time that widowhood should be viewed not only from the individual perspective, but also from the social perspective. Hence the present study is a modest attempt in this direction.

2.2 General view of women

A woman has been given the ascription of mother goddess and is considered the source of SHAKTI. A woman mirrors the wealth and prosperity of the society to which she belongs. Her role has been duly recognised by the civilised societies and developed economies. The level of development of a country can be best judged by the status it attributes to women.

The roles of woman are multifaceted and are rightly expressed in the famous Sanskrit saying “Karyeshu dasi, karaneshu manthri, bhojyeshu matha, shayaneshu rambha”, which means a woman acts like a servant in performing her regular day to

day activities, acts like a minister in planning for her family's development, acts like a mother while serving food and acts like a lovely woman for her husband while sleeping.

India is the second largest country in the world in terms of female population, which constitutes about half of the population. A woman is not only a daughter, wife or mother, but, she is also a social being. A mother's role is more important as she has to mould the children into a dutiful member of the society. Modern women are highly endowed with intelligence, foresight, dignity and thoughtfulness to face difficult situations in their homes.

A woman is an endless source of power. She is a formidable force that can change the complexion of growth, rejuvenate the human resource, absorbs the strains of modernisation and fight the forces of destruction.

2.3 Concept of widow

Mukesh Ahuja defines a widow as "one who has no issue and who has been widowed one or two years of her marriage or she may be one who becomes a widow after a period of five to ten years and has one or two small children to support or she may be one who is above 50 years of age.

2.4 Widowhood

Widowhood is a crisis in a women's life, involving new social adjustment for the family as well as for herself. The life of the women whose husband dies while she is alive has been institutionally made miserable by the norms of patriarchy. She faces emotional trauma, familial exploitation and social stigma. She has to adjust with in-laws, find some job for supporting her young children, adjust with sons and daughters-in-law, and has to face the male gaze seductive overtones and even molestation attempts.

2.5 Problems of widows

Widows came to be regarded as inauspicious and had to suffer great disabilities. Many widows committed 'Sati' voluntarily to avoid inhuman sufferings at the hands of their relations including sons. They did not receive any sympathy from society.

The greatest danger that can overtake a woman is widowhood, says Ramayana. Within twelve days of widowhood, the *sindoor* and *bindi* in her forehead are smudged, her bangles, nose-ring, the coloured sari and *mangalasutra* removed. Her long black tresses are cropped short. Among the orthodox Brahmin widows, in the south, they must shave their heads. A white sari will replace her coloured one. A widow is ill-omen. She is not allowed to attend marriages in some villages in the south. A prostitute is given a higher status in our society than a widow.

The problem of widows with examples of three cases: One is the case of a girl who becomes a widow within one or two years of marriage and has no children. Next is the case of a woman who becomes widowed after a marital span of 5 to 10 years and has one or two small kids for support. And, last is the case of a woman who is a widow and is of 50 years of age or even above.

Similarities in the three cases are that:

- (a) all possess the status of a widow;
- (b) all have to face problems of adjustment in terms of expected roles they have to perform and
- (c) the possibility that like the third type, the second and even the first type of widows will spend the rest of their life in widowhood. But what is important is the difference in the three roles.

- The first widow has no obligations as such but she is faced with the problem of economic, emotional and sexual adjustment.
- The second widow has social obligation of bringing up children and performing even the role of a father for them. Of course, she has also to face the problem of social, psychological and biological adjustment too.
- The third widow has no obligation of supporting the young children. Nevertheless, she is confronted with some problems. Further the first and second types of widows are not as welcome in their husband's family as the third type.

Widowhood is both a crisis and a problem. When it occurs, its suddenness and intensity make it a crisis and as the individual finds ways of coping it becomes a

problem.

2.5.1 Economic deprivation

One of the most immediate problems following widowhood is economic deprivation. The widows face deprivation due to the economic disadvantages rather than widowhood itself. Almost all widows face two big problems, both closely related (i) Money (ii) Finding jobs, because of their inexperience in dealing with financial matters and their lack of occupational skills. This makes their economic condition worse.

2.5.2 Emotional deprivation

The widow becomes physically weak and mentally distressed. Sometimes, a widow becomes so highly disturbed that she even doubts her husband's death. Emotional reactions may include anger, guilt, depression, anxiety or adjustment due to individual hindrances like nervousness, moods of depression and morbidity, tendency to worry and general emotional instability.

The widow face physio-psycho problems and she loses interest in her daily life and neglects her health. Along with these, lack of social contacts, sense of insecurity, isolation and other factors affect her health adversely. She becomes restless, irritated and frustrated due to her distress of mind pathetic and over-whelmed with the sense of emptiness of life. Widows, particularly young, show withdrawal from friends and relatives and suffer from personal loneliness in life. Loneliness may reflect social isolation, psychological isolation, or a combination of both.

2.5.3 Cultural deprivation

In general, a Hindu widow is deprived of wearing the *tali*, flowers, glass-bangles, nose-ring and applying *kumkum*. A widow can not wear the above insignia of *sowbhaghya* under any circumstances. However, the life of an orthodox Brahmin widow had to face, much against her will, the horrible and inhuman rite of tonsure. Even today, widows are discouraged from taking part in any auspicious ceremonies and ritually sacred activities.

2.6 Dependency

Dependency refers to a relationship between a person and another person, symbol, substance or material object characterized by physiological or psychological withdrawal pains contingent upon its unavailability and the absence of subjectively perceived alternatives:

Woman is dependent on her husband for support, decision and protection. She has no independent identity, whether she works in the house or in the farm or in a factory, because here the man is the head of the family, owner of property and he is in-charge of the family exchequer. Under such circumstances, when a husband dies, the wife, who is unprepared for such a situation, faces several problems connected with finance, property and other matters. She has to depend upon herself except for the help received from parents, kinsmen, and others which may not be either adequate or a constant source to depend upon. Her plight is heightened when she is uneducated and poor.

Economic dependency is only one of the two variables which have important independent effects upon the decisions to leave an abusive relationship. The relation in unemployed cohabiting male economically dependent upon employed female may actually increase the likelihood of the female partners being abused in the first place. Widows can not have a separate establishment for they are not trained to lead an independent life. If a widow is young or middle-aged with minor children, she has to live with her near relatives. She often needs help to manage the property of the husband but frequently all her relatives may plot against her and exploit her helpless situation. If the widow is aged, she has to live with her sons, over whom she has no authority. The widow's life in their family and with close relations becomes miserable, if they do not have any property. Often due to conflicts between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, they are made to cook separately.

After the death of the husbands their lives become economically disorganised and they become dependent upon traditional support networks like joint family, or some specially created societal resources like widow homes, etc.

In this study, widow is deemed to depend upon her children-son/ daughter or parents/ parents-in-law for her social and economic support.

2.7 Decision making

In the joint family, decision making is centred in the hands of the eldest male person. But in the nuclear family, decision making is dispersed and women are also supposed to take part in it. In the extended family system, women tend to participate more in the family decision making.

Decision making is the oft-repeated instrument applied in studies on marital power. Expenditure on food, clothing, entertainment, going to movies, visiting friends, children's education, and giving presents to friends are taken by the head of the family.

Decision making is a process whereby decisions are arrived at over questions of general in an organisation or over the practical implementation of an established policy. For sociologists the main focus of interest is the degree to which different groups with an interest in the outcome of the decision are able to participate in and influence the process. Decision making has long been used, especially in the pluralist tradition, as a measure of where power lies.

Women are an important segment of the family's economy, because of their active participation in home and farm activities. They play a vital role in decision making regarding household resources, which are specifically used by them. Their influence and decision making in household affairs is affected due to certain factors like the degree of economic independence, socio-cultural pressures, demographic factors and physical settings etc.

A widow has to take number of decisions after the death of her husband. Those decisions may relate to personal affairs, family, finance, wealth and employment. Those decisions may affect the individual and the family as a whole.

2.8 Results of the desk research on secondary data

India has witnessed a declined trend of proportion of widows to total female population, since 1961 census. The proportion of widowhood increases, as they grow older. According to NFHS-2 (1998-99), in the age group of 60 and above, fifty eight percent are widowed among the total female population. According to Census 1991, among females in the age group of 60 and above, more than 65% of widows are in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, Goa, Assam, Karnataka and West Bengal.

Drawing data primarily from National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO), supplemented by evidence from National census, 2001, the main task of the report is to synthesize comparable information about how the widows live and what is the health status of them, and where unprecedented social, demographic and economical changes have been taking place.

Among widows surveyed 78% are in the age group of 50 and above. And 22% belongs to the reproductive age group of 15-49 years (NFHS-2). Of those widows surveyed, 78% are illiterate, close to 14% have completed up to primary education and 7% have studied up to secondary school and only 1.4% of them have studied beyond secondary school. It is seen that more than three-fifths are illiterate in the age group of 20 to 49 years. Illiteracy is mostly common in the age group 60 and above, among rural residents, among tribals and those with low standard of living (85% - 90%). Illiteracy rates for widows are highest in Bihar (91%), Rajasthan (90%), Uttar Pradesh (87%) and Orissa (86%). Around 80% of the households in rural areas do not have toilet facilities and live in semi *pucca* and *kachha* houses. On an average, in India 80% of widows live in households with low or moderate standard of living. However, in some states like Tripura, Orissa, Nagaland and Bihar more than 90% are living with lower economic status (low to moderate standard of living condition).

2.8.1 Female headed households

Female headship is likely to appear at a later stage of life cycle, compared with male headship. It may relatively be short lived because of its late occurrence and also the headship may be transferred to a male member on remarriage. Female headships are higher in urban areas than their rural counterpart (46% and 37%). Females head 40% of the households and the remaining are headed by are males in those households where at least one widow lives. As was observed, only 9% males in the age group of 60 and

above are heading the households, while 40% of females of the same age group are heading in the households. However, the proportion of female-headed households are higher than male-headed households in the states like Meghalaya (more than 70%) and Goa, Kerala, Sikkim, Nagaland and Mizoram (more than 60%).

Important finding from the study indicate that higher proportion (48%) of households headed by females belongs to low standard of living group. This implies that female-headed households are by and large poorer than male-headed households. In female-headed households one in seven widows lives alone.

There is not much urban rural difference existing regarding the headship status of widows. The highest of 63% widows are in the age group 35-49 years who head their own households. Close to one fourth of widows are heading the households in the age group 60 years and above. Close to 68% mothers (in the age group of 60 and above) live with their own children households. Among those 37% heading the household, more than one third of them are in the age group of 50-59 years. At the old age group of 70 and above, 10% of them are heading the household.

2.8.2 Living condition

Majority (three-fourths) of the widows are living with three related adults. It implies that they live in joint families in India and the average size of the families is 6.5 persons. However, one-tenth of the households are single adult (widow) household. An average household size of female-headed household is only 3. Among the widows surveyed, 35% of them are heading the households and 47% widows are mothers to the head. A significant percent (5.7%) of widows are mother in laws to the head of the household. Around 2% each of widows live as daughters or daughters-in-law or sisters in relation to the head of the house hold. Six percent of widows live with other relatives. Also it is seen that in states like Kerala and Goa, some states from northeastern states such as Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland, more than 55% are heading the households. But it comes to Andhra Pradesh there is no highly significant women headed household families. A widow, who lives alone, is either from lower economic status or is working outside home or belongs to the older age group (60+).

Among elderly widows, almost 93% in rural and 68% in urban areas are illiterate. It is very interesting to note that nearly 80% live with their children and 8% live with other relatives (other relatives include brother, sister, grand father etc.). However 10% are reported to be living alone, of which 1.4% are living in old age home. In the old age too, 13% are working outside home. Only 2% of the elderly did not have their own children and of them 34% lived alone. The work participation rate among elderly widows decreases, as they grow older. It is found that as the women grow older, proportions living alone decreases marginally from 11% in the age group of 60-69 years to 7% in the age group of 80 plus. However, at the age group of 80 plus, 13% are living with other relatives.

2.8.3 Employment

About ¼th (25%) of widows are working outside home. Those working outside home, only one percent are professionals, 5% are in clerical jobs including housekeeping and 20% are working as agricultural labourers in farm or casual labourers. About one-fourths of workers are from older age group (60 years & above) and around 78% of them are illiterate. Work participation rate among widows are higher in the small household size as against large size. The work participation rate among widows is much higher in the range of 30 to 40% in the state of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and some parts of northeastern regions. The possible reason of higher work participation is that higher proportions of widows either are head of the household or they live alone.

A little more than one-third of the widows in rural areas and one-fourth in urban areas are engaged in economic activities. Majority of widows who were engaged in labour force, are casual laborers in agriculture (13%) or self-employed in their own farm (10%). However, women who were engaged themselves in non- agricultural sector for self-employment and casual laborers are 4% and 3% respectively. Only 3% are engaged in regular employment. In rural areas, about 71% in the age group of 20–34 years and 66% in the age group of 35-49 years are working outside home.

Among the major states, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Punjab, Haryana and Goa, more than 10% are elderly widows of 80 years and above. In, majority of the states, the literacy level among widows are quite poor except in Goa, Kerala, Delhi, Mizoram, and

Meghalaya. There is a wide variation among states with respect to the working status of widows. More than 40% of widows are employed in their own farm in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland. In the states like Karnataka, Orissa, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, more than 20% are working as casual laborers, the highest in Tamil Nadu (31%). Participation in the labour force is least in the states of Punjab and Goa.

2.8.4 Education

Educational level of widows varies widely between place of residence and age group. Illiteracy rate is quite high among widows in India. Nine in 10 widows are illiterate in rural areas. In urban areas literacy status is better i.e. close to 37% are literate. At 60 year and above, 93% and 68% of widows are illiterate in rural and urban areas respectively in India.

2.8.5 Habits

One-fourth of widows are reported to chew *pan masala* or tobacco. However, this proportion rise from 2.7% at age of less than 20 years to 27.2% and 24.3% at age of 60-69 years and 70 years and above respectively. Chewing *pan masala* or tobacco is as common in rural areas as in urban areas. Chewing tobacco is much higher among widows in households with a low standard of living than in households with a high standard of living.

The prevalence of smoking bidi/ cigar/ hukka etc., tobacco chewing and alcohol drinking is much higher in rural areas than in urban areas. One-fifth of them chew *pan masala* or tobacco in rural areas where as 13% chew the same in urban areas. Alcohol drinking is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Only 3.6% of widows are reported to drink alcohol. The proportion of widows who drink alcohol uniformly varies across the age distribution. Drinking alcohol by widows is inversely related to the educational status and standard of living index of the household.

2.8.6 Disease

The prevalence rate of tuberculosis is much higher (10 per 1000) among widows than general females (4.6 per 1000). The prevalence of tuberculosis increases rapidly with age. However, there is no significant difference between widows as a whole and general

population in India with respect to prevalence of this disease. The prevalence of malaria and other seasonal diseases among widows is common and it leads to uncertain to survival.

2.8.7 Disability

The rural widows are more prone to disability than the urban counterpart. Half of widows in rural areas and 43% in urban areas have at least one disability with them. Disability with respect to vision (eye sight) is more pronounced and one -third of the total elderly widows have problems regarding eyesight. The prevalence of chronic diseases among aged widows (suffering from at least one chronic illness) is seen higher in urban areas (61%) than in the rural areas (56%). `Problem of joints' and `cough' happened to be the most severe diseases for the aged widows. High or low blood pressure comes next in order of occurrence.

2.9 Policy implications derived from desk research

- Widowhood is not a comfortable situation in life. From the living arrangement it is observed that nearly 7% of widows are living alone. Being women, in the kind of social culture we are in, living alone is a task for which there is a strong need for better coverage of social security.
- Female headship of household is one indication, but it has to consider the poverty along with headship and more particularly widows in early age. Both the government and the philanthropic organization can give a focus for empowering them.
- The NSSO data reveals that 13% of elderly widows (60+) work outside. Though it is encouraging to know that women even at this age are still working, but they are involved in occupation which requires excessive physical labour. Special programme may be targeted to them.
- Old widows also report that they work though they are in older ages (80+). This clearly shows that they may be forced/ compelled to work. An insight to this is desirable.
- The NFHS-2 shows that widows are more prone to prevalence of tuberculosis and asthma. This shows that special coverage of health schemes may be made for them, more so in the high prevalent states, in particular.

- Living arrangement analysis has revealed that majority of the widows live with one of the family members, but 10% are staying alone. They need a special care particularly those in advanced age.

2.10 Review of past studies

Traditional society looked at widow women as a prey, motivator, tempter and therefore, they were secluded, excluded and attached social stigma. The society has been very harsh towards women particularly widows, who lost their husbands and live without re-marriage. They have been ill-treated, insulted, molested and considered them as 'amangalis' and bad woman. The cruelty to widows has been very severe if they belong to socially and economically backward. There are many studies on socio-economic status of widows in India and hence it is not possible to review all of them. In this context, the forthcoming sections review only relevant studies conducted and published after 2001. They are as follows:

2.10.1 K. Padmanabhan (2006)

- has made a study on the 'Socio-economic status of widows' of the Hindu Mudaliar Community of Tamil Nadu, the so called socially and economically advanced community, declared by the Government of Tamil Nadu. The new approach, three generation study, has helped to understand the change in the status of widows over three generations. The classification of Widows into rural urban, has brought out the spatial difference in their socio-economic status. The findings of the study are revealing and exhilarating. The mean age of marriage of the young widows was higher compared to the middle aged and old generations' widows. The literacy was found to be higher among young widows compared to middle and old widows were literate and skilled compared to the old widow. Marriage among kinship and within the community was very common. More than half of the respondents were without any occupation; as a result, without any source of income and their dependency ratio was very high. Only those who are literate are able to take decisions. The only benefit received by the widows from the welfare programmes of the Government was the old age pension, which was received by 50% of the widows. The stark reality is that the widows were not aware of the various welfare programmes of the Government. The Study has made few recommendations with a view to empower the widows in particular and women in general. Universal education, training in specified trade, extension of information to all the widows and

women and women through mass media, women's associations, schools and post-offices. These measures would relieve the pain of widows, who are mental agony. It would empower the widows, change their attitude social norms as well as transform the attitude of other towards widows.

2.10.2 P.K.B.Nayar (2006)

- has published an edited Book on 'Widowhood in Modern India'. This volume is a collection of selected papers of the First National Seminar on Widowhood in India, organised by the Trivandrum - based centre for gerontological studies. It gives a fair picture of Indian widows, cutting across ethnic and regional barriers. Some of the papers trace the origin and development of widowhood practices in India, some deal with special categories of widows, like the Brindaban widows, war widows, elderly widows, tribal widows, etc., others deal with the loopholes in property right of and other legal remedies for widows and yet others deal with the double standards of society in its attitude and behaviour towards widows. The point that in spite of several social reforms and legal enactments, the widows continue to suffer from social discrimination has been brought out in the book with authenticity as also the factors contributing to the malaise. The problem assumes significance since 8% of the total women and 15% of married women in India are widows and this will make the content of this book specially significant to all concerned. From several points of view the book will have strong appeal to the policy maker, social reformer and scholars of women's studies besides social scientists and social activists indeed all those concerned with the lot of a significant segment of the population the widows-who suffer from socially instituted but invidious and avoidable sufferings.

2.10.3 Kim Gangte (2004)

- has made a study on 'Widows in Manipur'. This study found that the number of widows is about 4 lakhs and the number of widows has increased greatly in the last fifteen (15) years. The reasons are Army atrocities, Insurgency, Communal Clashes and Drug Abuse, HIV/AIDS. With the increase in the number of widows in the state, the plight of these unfortunate women becomes worse day by day. Their rehabilitation which is the greatest urgent need is also a far cry, as the Government has not enacted or enforced laws to guarantee them their right to an honourable existence. More than fifty years of independence has not done anything to brighten their future. And these unfortunate

widows grope in darkness. The political leadership of the state has totally failed to address the grievances of the widows as they do not form a vote-bank. Non Governmental Organisation is also not focusing much or specifically working for the upliftment of the widows. The widows, who are mostly illiterate, uneducated, unskilled and are economically dependent on others, are more insecure. As they are uneducated, they are also unaware of their status, their rights and their safeguards. Even in such a hostile condition, many widows, in order to survive, spend days and nights in the thick of jungles to collect wood and burn it to make charcoal. The charcoal is then brought on their backs for sale walking 25-30 kms to reach the local market which cost Rs.60/- only per bag. Their children who have been brought up with such difficulty are again claimed and taken away from them when the children attain a certain age by the in laws. So, the effort to bring up their children becomes all the more meaningless. In certain communities, for example, Kuki tribes in Manipur, when a woman loses her husband, she is forced to marry her husband's unmarried brother called 'Uthi-Naoda'. In the absence of unmarried brother-in-law, she should return to her parents. However, if she has a son (not daughter) from her husband, she can retain her son as her husband's property. The day she remarries, she loses both her son and the property rights. A widow should not participate in social functions such as 'Mou-Don' (tying of nuptial) and Khong-Choi Lam; a traditional dance performed during wedding season. She is not to adorn herself in colourful attires, and is exempted from all celebrations as it is believed that the widows carry the stigma of inauspiciousness. If a widow is seen to have relationship with a man, her house is dismantled and she is driven away to an unknown destination. No widow is allowed to participate in any religious function. In the Christian church though the Bible clearly states that widows and orphans should be cared for and taken care of, the church has not really taken up any concrete measure for the welfare of widows. Though women's rights have been acknowledged in the church to a great extent, women are still treated with discrimination and disdain, particularly widows. A widow is insecure even in her parent's home as she is looked down upon as 'Meithai' by the society and her sisters-in-law who are fearful of her old age when they might have to take care of her. Lack of concern for the physical, mental and economic well-being of widows by the public, society and the government, makes it extremely difficult to exercise their rights of making choices of their social image, of their own children, and to live on their own terms.

2.10.4 L.Thara Bhai (2004)

- in her study on 'Widows in India', found that a widow woman is surrounded by the culture that seldom she can come out from this. Though social change is very fast due to the growing globalization few areas remain unchanged and one of the areas where the change is very slow is the marriage and related customs. Society is not positive even today for widow remarriage. Setting apart the laws societal norms are strong here that a widow has to die as a widow whatever her age and surroundings be. The widows in India are one of the categories of women who are not given importance by Women's Studies' scientists and sociologists. The study on 'Widows in India' fills this gap. This study, which is conducted in Tamil Nadu, highlights the living conditions of widows of all age and income groups. This study gives several case studies, which is an eye-opener for academicians and all who are interested in women's welfare especially that of widows.

2.10.5 Dr. V. Mohini Giri and Ms. Meera Khanna (2002)

Behalf of the Guild of Service have conducted a study entitled 'Status of Widows of Vrindavan and Varanasi: A Comparative Study'. This research was conducted among a cross section of respondents staying in rehabilitation homes, boarding houses, and those leading a nomadic existence on the streets of Vrindavan and Varanasi. In the rehabilitation homes the widows were leading a life as akin to a home life as possible. Their daily needs were taken care of, medical care was provided and at the same time there existed a personal bond between the members of the home and those responsible for the efficient functioning of the home. The Boarding houses are on the whole impersonal. Members live as paying guests. Medical care and clothing is not provided for. They are absolutely at the mercy of vicissitudes of poverty and old age. By taking a cross section of respondents we have been able to achieve a comparative study of the needs aspirations, degrees of deprivation dimensions of discrimination of the widows. It has also provided an insight into the kind of care that should be made available to them. A fairly exhaustive attempt has been made to get an insight into the social and cultural deprivation of the widows and the impact that it has on their life style, their emotional and physical health, and the reactive or passive thinking that it results in. Social conditioning plays a great role in the deprivation of the widows. This conditioning is so strong that the

widows see themselves as inauspicious. They internalize their victimized status and these results in very low self-esteem. A totally integrated approach alone can build their capacities and consequently their self-esteem. Rehabilitation homes can and do provide the widows with an emotional anchor. Comparatively speaking the widows of Varanasi had less access to the comfort of the rehabilitation home. The widows of Varanasi had fewer living options and consequently a large number were to be found begging. Hence the scope for creating a network of greater efficacy in Varanasi exists. An integrated approach with both the state and civil society working in tandem can change the status of the widows. Adequate pension benefits, access to fair price shops, availability of banking benefits along with a more creative option to earn a living – can make a visible difference to the status of the widows.

2.10.6 K. Malathi (2001)

- had conducted a study on Socio-Economic Status of Hindu Naidu widows in Walajapet Taluk, Vellore District, Tamilnadu - A Three Generation Study. There were 340 widows in her sample frame which comprised of 100 young, 114 middle and 126 old generation widows. Descriptive percentage and other statistical methods were used to analyse the data. She also found that the old generation widows had a long married life and hence had a shorter duration of widowhood. Conversely, the young and middle-aged widows have a short span of married life; hence they have a longer period of widowhood. The study reported that 40 to 45% of the respondents were belonging to the lowest monthly income. The non-earners range between 36 to 45%. Similar to individual income, 26 to 36% of the respondents' family income per month ranges between Rs. 1000 to 2000. Those who belonged to the family income bracket of Rs. 2001 to 3000 ranges between 12 to 24%. Those whose monthly family income falls in the income bracket of Rs. 3001 to 4000 ranges between 2 to 11%. The non-earners had no source of income. She also reported that the family annual expenditure on food for 44 to 47% of the respondents varies from Rs. 501 to 1000, 30 to 39% of the respondents had spent Rs. 1001 to 2000 per month on food and 3 to 7% of the respondents had spent between Rs. 2001 to 3000 per month. While 63 to 73% of the respondents had spent between Rs. 200 to 400 on cloths per year, the remaining respondents had spent between Rs. 400 to 600 annually on cloths. 25 to 30% of the respondents had not incurred any expenditure on education. Those

respondents who had to repay debts were 17 respondents from young, 24 respondents from middle-aged and 22 respondents from old generation. The debt varies from a minimum of Rs. 3000 to a maximum of Rs. 5000. Some of the debts were incurred by their deceased husbands. The respondents had borrowed for meeting the medical, education and marriage expenses of their children. She observed that the younger generation widows preferred to spend more on dress materials while middle-aged and old generation widows, who preferred to wear ordinary and simple dress-white sari with blouse. She also found that the young respondents enjoyed more freedom in the choice of dress compared to the other two generations of widows. She also reported that the young respondents preferred rich and special food. The middle-aged and old generation respondents preferred simple ordinary food which was customary for a widow to eat. In her study she also reported that 46% of young respondents were used cosmetics and 54% were refused to use it. In the same way 88% of the young generation widows were used jewels as against 75.44% of middle-aged generation and 5.56% of old generation. Going to theatres for entertainment was preferred by 75% of the young respondents, 64.04% of the middle-aged respondents and 7.94% of the old respondents.

The review of the above studies reveals that there is no single published study on Socio-economic status of widows conducted by individual researchers in Andhra Pradesh. Hence, the present study on the Socio-Economic Status of Widows in Tirupati assumes importance and fills the gap in the literature. The present study is confined to study the socio-economic status of widows in Tirupati. The study has made an effort to assess the status of widows with the help of field surveys and also tried to appraise the role of Government and Non-Government Organisations by contacting different categories of widow women, NGOs, Ashramas and other related Institutions engaged in women empowerment activities and provisioning shelter particularly widows in the study area.

III. Profile of the study area: Tirupati

3.1 Introduction

Tirupati is the richest pilgrimage city (of any religious faith) in the world, located in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. The temple was richly endowed by the kings of various dynasties thus adding to its current reputation as the richest and most opulent pilgrimage centre in the world.

Tirupati is located at the foothills of Tirumala. The city owes its existence to the sacred temple situated on the Tirumala Hills. Tirumala is the abode of Lord Venkateshwara, one of the Avatars of Lord Vishnu, located atop Seshachala hills often called as "Yaedu Kondalu" (seven hills). The temple of Lord Venkateshwara was built by the Tamil king Thondaimaan, and reformed periodically by Cholas and later Telugu Kings. It is the richest and most visited temple (of any faith) in the world.

Tirupati has been a city for many years though recognised as a major municipal Corporation (MCT) only recently. Although the district headquarters, Chittoor, is 60 km away from the city, major government establishments and operations take place in Tirupati alone. The Tirupati Urban Development Authority further expanded its horizon to about 1380 km² with a total population of about 10 lakhs. Tirupati is one of the fastest growing cities in India with IT, BPO and Health industries coming up. It is a major boom for real estate. Tirupati is also emerging into a major educational, entertainment, tourism and a commercial city.

3.1.1 Etymology

The word **Tirupati** means **the Lord of Lakshmi** and the word **Tirumalai** means **Mountain of Highness** in Tamil. Tirumalai is called as Tirumala in Telugu. **Tirumagal** means Lakshmi, **Pathi** means **husband** or **king**, and **Malai** means **hill**. Within Vaishnava tradition the temple is considered as one of the 108 most sacred temples throughout India, collectively known as 'Tirupatis'. Since Tirumalai and Tirupati have been passed from the Tamil-majority Madras State to the majority-Telugu Andhra State, Tirumalai is now officially known as Tirumala.

3.1.2 History

The Tirumala hills are the world's second oldest rock mountains. The Sangam literature of Tamil such as Silapadikaram and Satana's Manimekalai, dated between 500 BC to 300 AD, mentions Tiruvengadam (now named Tirupati) as the northern most frontier of the Tamil Kingdoms.

It is believed that it was "Aadi Varaha Kshetra" (the ancient site of Varaha) mentioned in Indian literature dating during the Mauryan and Gupta regimes. Lord Venkateshwara is referred in Vedas, Tirupati is considered as Kaliyuga Vaikuntha (Heaven on the earth).

In 1843, with the coming of the East India Company, the administration of the Sri Venkateshwara temple and a number of shrines was entrusted to Seva Dossji of the Hathiramji Mutt at Tirumala as Vicaranakarta for nearly a century until 1933, when the temple was under the administrative charge of the mahants. The Madras legislature passed a special act in 1933 whereby the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) committee was vested with powers of administration and control through a commissioner appointed by the Government of Madras. A Ryot Advisory Council was formed for the management of the estates of the TTD and was assisted by a Religious Advisory Council with regard to religious matters.

The first establishment of the city was done near Kotturu, today's K.T.Road area. Later it was shifted near the temple of Govindaraja Swamy with the temple as the center of the city. It is today's railway station area. Now the city is expanded to nearby areas. Tirupati city now includes Srinivasamangapuram, Tiruchanoor, Renigunta, Chandragiri, Avilala etc.

3.1.3 Geography

Tirupati is located in southern part of Andhra Pradesh. It has an average elevation of 162 metres (531 feet). The Tirumala hill is 3,200 ft (980 m) above sea level, and is about 10.33 square miles (26.8 km²) in area. It comprises seven peaks, representing the seven hoods of Adishesha, thus earning the name, Seshachalam. The seven peaks are called Seshadri, Neeladri, Garudadri, Anjanadri, Vrishabhadri, Narayanadri and Venkatadri.

3.1.4 Climate

In summer, temperatures may go up to 42 to 45 degrees Celsius (107.6 F to 113 F), and in winter the minimum temperatures will be between 10 and 18 degrees Celsius (50 F to 64.4 F). Usually summer lasts from March to June, with the advent of rainy season in July, followed by winter which lasts till the end of February. It has an extreme type of climate. Rainy Season remains pleasant.

3.1.5 Government

Tirupati is a major municipal corporation in Andhra Pradesh state. It contributes a member in central parliament and a member in state legislature in Indian politics. Chandragiri is a suburb accounting to one more seat for the state assembly. TUDA (Tirupati Urban Development Authority) was established long back to develop the city. It is involved in the construction of second fly-over in the city and extending all two lane roads to four lane roads. Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) also contributes a maximum of funds for the development of the city.

3.1.6 City attractions

Tirupati is mainly a tourist and pilgrim spot. Traffic is peak 24 hours near Bus stand and railway stations. Otherwise the residential localities are very calm and quiet. Tirupati has many multi cuisine restaurants and eateries. It is house for many multi brand showrooms, malls and automobile showrooms. The city has many places of attraction such as municipal music gardens, also known as Centenary Park is filled with the youth. It has many musical fountains to attract children. The second hot spot in the city is the exhibition grounds near the bus-stand. The Central Park shopping mall and Arcades nearby have huge shops to cater the public with their requirements like jewellery, gifts, clothes, cosmetics, super marts, gadget showrooms and many more. One can also pay a visit to the famous Hastha-kala-ramam, formerly known as Urban Haat, near STPI on Thiruchanoor Express road. The major center of attraction for the children and youth is Grand Water World by near Karakambadi, some 13 km from the city centre. There is a proposed pharma university and medical college at Renigunta in an area of 165 acres (0.67 km²). An IT SEZ is also coming up in Renigunta in 147 acres (0.59 km²). Surappakasam township is also coming which is in between Tiruchanoor and Renigunta. Another multiplex and a recreational centre with a five star hotel are coming on the 150 ft (46 m) Bypass road.

3.1.7 SV Zoological Park and Regional Science Center

Sri Venkateswara Zoological Park is the second of its kind in the Andhra Pradesh. It has many species of animals and plants which are being conserved. Nearly 10 to 15 tigers are present in this zoo. Regional Science Center, unique of its kind and a must visit for students and teachers, is also present nearby (less than one km from Alipiri). It also has a planetarium which grabs huge amounts of crowd. It takes minimum of a day to spend around the science center completely.

3.1.8 Infrastructure

Major roads like the traffic-loaded Tirumala bypass and the rail underpass near the railway station was taken up by TTD along with TUDA. The eco-city project selected Tirupati for its Green and Clean campaign.

3.1.8.1 Road transportation

Tirupati has the third largest bus station in Andhra Pradesh. It has nearly 50 platforms. Tirupati has another bus station near Alipiri. For every 2 minutes, there is a bus facility from Tirupati to Tirumala. Tirupati has bus facilities connecting almost each and every important city and town. Tirupati has good infrastructure. The by-pass laid by NTR is a six lane road covering most of the parts in the city. Tirupati is criss-crossed by National Highways.

3.1.8.2 Rail Transportation

Tirupati East railway station has 10 platforms. The station is currently undergoing modernisation with the construction of 3 escalators. There is another major junction in Tirupati (Renigunta). Tirupati West railway station and Chandragiri stations are also present which have to be developed. There are many trains traveling across the country with Tirupati as the starting point. Tirupati is connected to all the cities in the country with railways. Tirupati railway station is the fourth in India to be recognised as a "World class" with Mumbai, Delhi, and Secunderabad in the first three places.

3.1.8.3 Air Transportation

Tirupati has an International Airport. Tirupati Renigunta International Airport is the third airport established in the state and the 18th International Airport in the country. It operates national airlines between Tirupati and Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Delhi and

Visakhapatnam. Air India operates flights from Hyderabad and Delhi, while Deccan operates flights from Vishakapatnam (Vizag), Hyderabad and Bengaluru. The airport is located 15 km from the city center. The runway is being extended by one km and the night landing facility has been installed recently. International Cargo flights to Japan are in Operation. Passenger flights to New York, London, Dubai, Singapore and Malaysia are expected to run in the near future.

3.1.9 Culture

Tirupati is a landmark in the culture and traditions for Hindus. The residents and visitors can be seen in both traditional attire like pancha, lungi, chira and modern attire. Practices of tonsure and using tilaka are commonly seen. Songs and prayers of Lord Venkateswara like Annamacharya kirtanas can be heard all over the city. Every year, "Telugu Bhasha Bramhostavams" are conducted here to develop the usage of Telugu language.

Festivals

The town celebrates most Vaishnava festivals including Vaikunta Ekadasi, Rama Navami and Janmashtami with great splendor, while the Brahmotsavam celebrated every year during September is the most important festival in Tirumala when it receives millions of devotees over a short span of a week. Rathasapthami (Magha Shuddha Saptami) is another festival, celebrated during February, when Lord Venkateswara's idol is taken in a procession around the temple chariots. Another local festival Gangamma Jathra is also celebrated as a major festival. The Goddess Gangamma is offered animal sacrifices and also pongal and other offerings by the devotees. She is considered as the sister of The Lord Almighty, Govinda.

Temples

There are many temples in Tirupati and Tirumala. Some of them are:

- Tirumala Venkateswara Temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu as 'Venkateswara' (or Srinivasa) and attracts followers from a wide range of Hindu traditions.
- Alamelu Mangamma Shrine in Alamelumangapuram also called Tiruchanoor
- Padmavati Temple
- Govindaraja Swamy Temple

- Kodhanda Rama Swamy Temple - The temple is so beautiful in architecture. Lord Rama, Seetha and Lakshmana are present in a beautiful form in the temple. Lord Anjaneya Swamy is seen near the foot of Lord Rama. The temple is in the heart of the city. There is also another temple dedicated to Lord Anjaneya Swamy opposite to Kodhanda Rama Swamy Temple. Prasadams are offered daily to pilgrims.
- Srinivasa Mangapuram
- Kapila Theertham (Lord Shiva shrine, the only Shiva shrine in Tirupati) - This temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and Parvati. There is a beautiful waterfall near the temple.
- ISKCON Lord Krishna Temple - The temple has its own style of architecture with the towers coloured in gold and white. The carvings of Lord Narasimha Swamy, Lord Varaha Swamy and Krishna Leela are marvelous. Glass painting works on the windows depicting Lord Krishna's playful acts and the ceilings decorated like Tanjore art reveals the colourful masterpiece in art work. Each pillar is decorated with ten *avatars* of Lord Vishnu. The temple inside the sanctum has Lord Krishna with beautifully dressed Gopikas. There is a beautiful park surrounded with lot of flowers, ponds, fountains and with Krishna Leela idols. The temple is on the way to Tirumala Hills.

3.1.10 Places of tourist importance

The following are the importance places in Tirupati Pilgrimage Centre where most of the widows – both natives and migrants – have found their day-to-day livelihoods.

3.1.10.1 Tirumala

Located at the top of the Seven Hills, Tirumala is the abode of Lord Sri Venkateswara. This is a very sacred place of Hindu Pilgrimage which attracts innumerable devotees from all parts of the country throughout the year. This temple has the largest income of all the temples in India and Papanasam 'Akasaganga', 'Gogarbham' and 'Pandavatheertham' not from Tirumala are also important places of Pilgrimage.

3.1.10.2 Tirupati

This is sacred place of Pilgrimage which is full of temples and holy spots. The Govindaraja Swamy Temple, the Kodanda Ramaswamy Temple and the Kapileswara Swamy Temple in this town are famous. This town being the gateway to the sacred hills

of Tirumala where Lord Sri Venkateswara has taken his abode, has acquired all India fame and hums with activity of the perennial stream of Pilgrims to Tirumala.

3.1.10.3 Thiruchanoor (Alamelu Mangapuram)

This is situated at about 5 Kms. from Tirupati and it is an equally important place of Pilgrimage as the Goddess Padmavati, the divine consort of Lord Sri Venkateswara has taken her abode here. A visit to this temple is considered a must for all devotees to worship her after worshipping Lord Sri Venkateswara.

3.1.10.4 Urban Haat (Shilparamam)

Urban Haat is established in between Tirupati and Thiruchanoor road in an area of 18 acres of land in the year 1999 at an estimated cost of Rs.1.50 cores with a motto of up lifting of Handicrafts Artisans and also cultural artists in the country, where in Handicrafts Melas are being organized by Government of India Handicrafts department twice in a year. There are 100 stall and Handicrafts items from all parts of the country will participate in the Mela and display for sales of their Handicrafts.

3.1.11 Entertainment

Grand World is the one and only amusement park cum resort in the entire Andhra and Rayalseema regions. There are nearly 25 cinema halls present in the city. Many of them are A-class theaters. There is a multiplex cine hall present in the city and another one is being constructed near RC Road. The group theater complex present in the city grabs the highest collections for the Telugu films. Fun Republic is planning its operations by 2009 March.

3.1.12 Education facilities

Tirupati is not only a pilgrimage center but an educational hub; it has become a great seat of learning and education with the establishment of S.V.University and its constituent College with Engineering, Medical, Veterinary and Agricultural Colleges also having been established here. There are also colleges for oriental languages, Music and dance at Tirupati. The Mahila University was also established in the year 1984.

It is home to several universities, including

- Sri Venkateswara University

- Sri Padmavati Mahila Viswavidyalayam (SPMVV) (one among two women universities in India)
- Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth
- Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth - Directorate of Distance Education
- Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences
- Sri Venkateswara Vedic University
- Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University (SVVU)
- Sri Venkateswara Institute of Medical Sciences university (SVIMS) {Offers PG courses and super specializations in medical fields}

Apart from these universities, it has state government sponsored medical, agricultural colleges and also an engineering college. It has nearly 50 UG & PG (MBA, MCA) degree colleges.

Also present is a state-of-art Dental college and Research Center, providing free dental health care to the people of Tirupati and surrounding villages. This institute also provides PG programme in 4 different dental branches. Around 5 engineering Colleges exist in and around Tirupati.

3.1.13 Health facilities

SVRR government general hospital (known as Ruiya Hospital) with attached SV Medical College is one of the well known hospitals besides SVIMS, a Super Specialty Center with modern facilities and S.V.Ayurveda College Hospital run by TTD to providing health services to the poor and needy patients even at free of cost. BIRRD an orthopedic center catering for physically handicapped where surgeries are done free of cost treating polio, cerebral palsy and many other congenital anomalies. Numerous small to mid-sized hospitals exist in private sector, in addition to RUSSH and Sunetralaya Hospitals Pvt Limited, which is the second & third largest privately owned hospital in Tirupati.

3.2 Demographic particulars

3.2.1 Population

Tirupati Municipal Corporation, which includes Srinivasamangapuram, Tiruchanoor, Renigunta, Chandragiri, Avilala etc., has an estimated population of about 10,00,000 persons in 2008. Males constitute 53% of the population and females 47%. However, as

on the date of 2001 Population Census, Tirupati was not announced as Municipal Corporation. It was considered as the Urban Agglomeration for Census purpose. Therefore, the following Table gives the details of Population of Tirupati Town, which includes population of Tirumala also. It is clear from the table that the population of Akkarampalle has been growing at an alarming growth rate. This might be due to concentration of migrated people in that place because of lower house rents and also provision of houses for the poor called Indiramma Gruhalu in Akkarampalle.

TABLE 3.1 Population of Tirupati town

S.No.	Name of the town/city/ urban agglomeration	Civic status of town/city	Population (persons)		Growth rate (percent)
			1991	2001	1991-2001
1	Tirupati (U.A)		210705	303521	44.05
2	Tirupati	M+O.G	182927	244990	33.93
3	Tirupati (N.M.A)	C.T	14535	25702	76.83
4	Akkarampalle	C.T	5223	20342	289.47
5	Thiruchanoor	C.T	8020	12487	55.7

Notes: C.T=Census Town; M=Municipality; N.M.A=Non Municipal Area; O.G=Out Growth; U.A=Urban Agglomeration

Source: Directorate of Economics & Statistics: Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh, 2008, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

3.2.2 Slum population

In each and every urban city, the existence of slums and population living in slums are a common phenomenon. This population normally includes poor and disadvantaged groups like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and widows from all castes. The data of slum population in Tirupati Municipality is given in the following Table. It is clear from the table that one third of Tirupati Municipality population is living in slums in 2001.

TABLE 3.2 Slum population of Tirupati Municipality, 2001

S.No.	Particulars	Persons/percentage
1	Total population (persons)	227677

2	Slum population (persons)	75528
3	Slum population as% of total population	33.17%

Source: Directorate of Economics & Statistics: Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh, 2008, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad.

3.2.3 Migration characters of population

The population of any city/ town consists of both permanent natives and migrated people. The people usually migrate to the urban centres due to the availability of employment opportunities and sources of income earning activities in urban centres. The details are given in the following Table. It is clear from the Table that nearly one fourth of Tirupati Municipality population was migrated from other places.

TABLE 3.3 Migrated population of Tirupati municipality, 2001

S.No.	Particulars	Persons/percentage
1	Total population (persons)	227677
2	Migrated population (persons)	54966
3	Migrated population as% of total population	24.14%
4	Native population (persons)	172,711
5	Native population as% of total population	75.86%

3.2.4 Economy of Tirupati

Being a pilgrimage centre, the floating population appears to be the main source of economy. Of late, Tirupati is becoming the education hub for the nearby areas because of the presence of educational institutions and universities offering almost all fields of studies at all levels. Trade and industry are burgeoning and business is flourishing. Revenue generated by travel sector is also high.

Tirupati is not only a pilgrimage centre, but also an Industrial area where lot of Large and Medium scale industries like Amara Raja, Spartek, etc. are located. Now Andhra Pradesh government has planning to improve Tirupati as IT city. This has lot of scope to develop as an IT silicon city.

3.2.5 Literacy

Tirupati has an average literacy rate of 81%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy is 82%, and female literacy is 72%. The local language is Telugu while Tamil and English are widely understood.

Following chapters

Being analysed the general profile of Tirupati, the study area, the following chapter analyses the general profile of sample widows and their social status in order to bring out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the development of widows in Tirupati.

IV. Social Status of Widows in Tirupati

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the data analysis on social status of sample widows in Tirupati and general profile, flow pattern and social activities of sample widows respectively.

4.2 General profile of sample widows

This section provides data analysis on the profile of sample widows living in Tirupati and it covers the details of their age, educational status, vocational skills, religious status, caste particulars, age at the time of became widow, remarry conditions, sons and daughters, etc.,

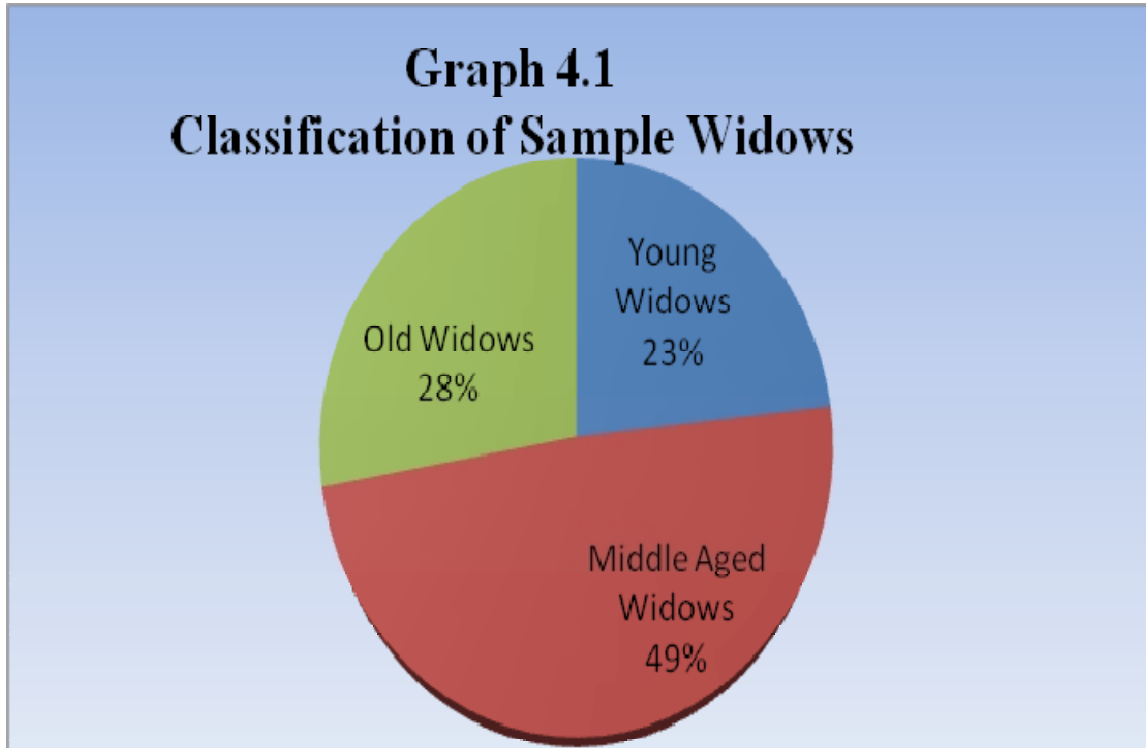
4.2.1 Age wise classification of sample widows

This section divides the sample widows into three groups based on their age – young (upto 39 years), middle aged (from 40 to 59 years), and old (from 60 and above years). The widows in the age group of below 40 years are treated as ‘young’; the widows in the age group of 40-59 years are treated as ‘middle aged’ and the widows in the age group of 60 years and above are treated as ‘old’. The present minimum age of the sample widows is 20 years and the maximum age is 88 years. The age wise classification of sample widows based on the present age is shown in Table 4.1 and Graph 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 Age wise classification of sample widows

S.No.	Age group	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Up to 29 years	71	7.1
2	30 to 39 years	162	16.2
	Young widows (1+2)	233	23.3
3	40 to 49 years	186	18.6
4	50 to 59 years	304	30.4
	Middle aged widows (3+4)	490	49.0
5	60 to 64 years	115	11.5
6	65 years and above	162	16.2

	Old widows (5+6)	277	27.7
	Total	1000	100.0



It is clear from the table that middle aged widows constitute the highest number at 490 out of 1000 sample widows followed by old (277) and young (233) widows. The young widows constitute 23.3% and are in active reproductive age group. The middle aged and young widows together called as economically active women and hence they are able to earn for their livelihood on their own, if there are opportunities. The old widows constitute 27.7% of the sample and they are the dependants on others, because their age does not permit them to participate actively in income earning activities. Within the old widows, the widows in the age group of 60-64 years are also considered economically active in the recent population census and this group constituted 11.5%. Therefore, the economically active age widows constitute more than 80% of the sample.

4.2.2 Attendance for school by sample widows

Education is the process which transforms a human resource into human capital. It changes not only the attitude of a person but also it provides an outlook, an aim and

strength to accept the changes and to face the challenges in life. Education builds up five capabilities in human beings viz., physical, mental, psychological, spiritual and environmental. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the education levels of sample widows in order to estimate the strengths and weaknesses of them to perform economic and social activities.

The education status can be assessed in terms of the number of years of schooling and the levels of education achieved. The number of years of schooling is shown in Table 4.2 and the level of education achieved is shown in Table 4.3 and Graph 4.2.

It is obvious from the table that only 148 widows (14.8%) among the sample have the opportunity to enter into the school and the remaining lot (more than 85%) does not have the chance to even enter into the school. It is also observed that even among 148 widows, who entered in the school, only about 11% have completed ten years and above of schooling and only about 58% have completed five years of schooling.

TABLE 4.2 Number of years of schooling among the sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
A	Attendance for school		
1	Attended school	148	14.8
2	Not attended school	852	85.2
	Total	1000	100.0
B	Number of years of schooling		
1	Less than one year	3	2.0
2	One year	0	0.0
3	Two years	4	2.7
4	Three years	27	18.2
5	Four years	0	0.0
6	Five years	86	58.1
7	Six years	0	0.0

8	Seven years	6	4.1
9	Eight years	0	0.0
10	Nine years	6	4.1
11	Ten years & above	16	10.8
	Total attended school	148	100.0

TABLE 4.3 Level of education among the sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Illiterate	860	86.0
2	Primary	81	8.1
3	Upper primary	31	3.1
4	Secondary	23	2.3
5	Post secondary	5	0.5
	Total	1000	100.0

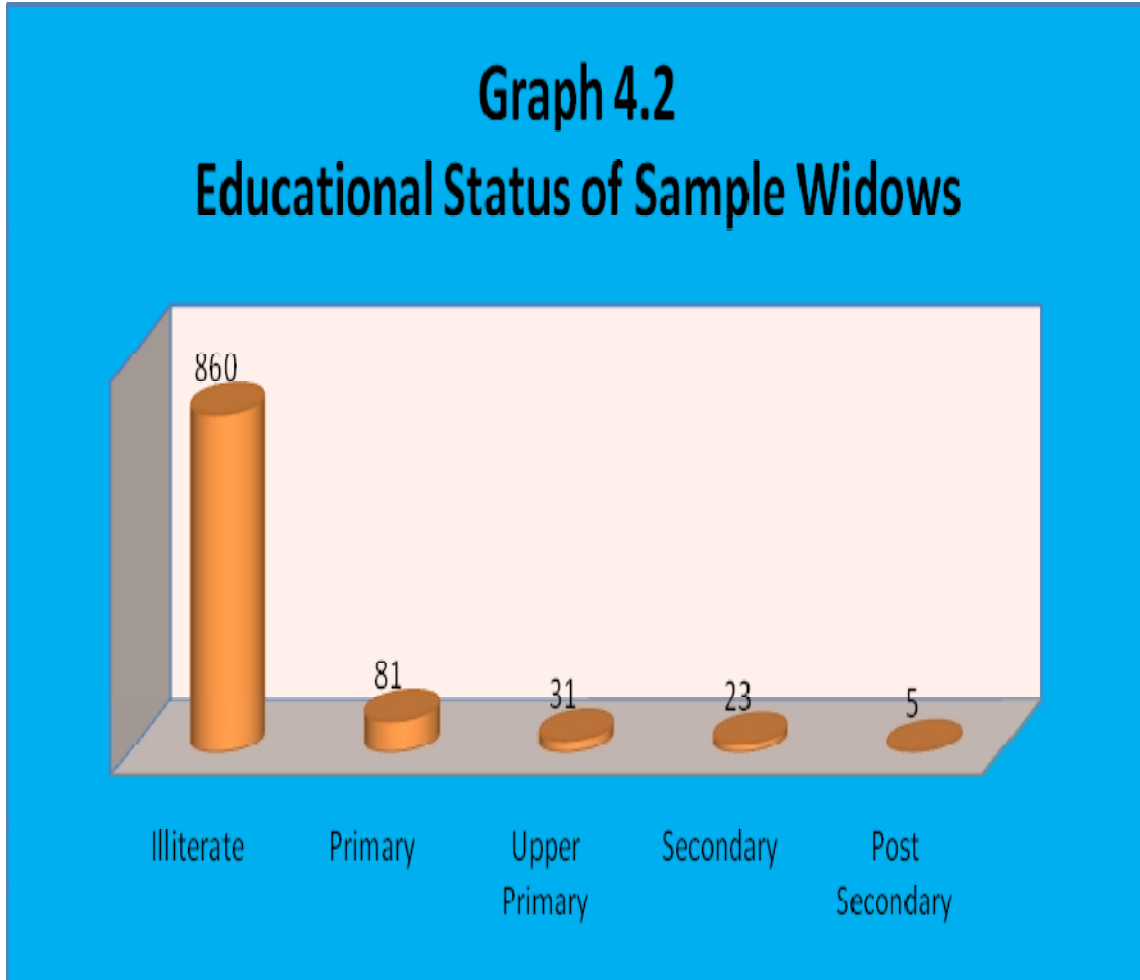


Table 4.3 shows that the level of education is very much poor among the sample widows. It is clear from the table that 86% of the sample widows are illiterate, only 8% have completed primary education, three percent have completed upper primary and two percent have completed secondary education. Post-secondary education is negligible among the sample widows. This situation indicate that majority of the sample widows does not have minimum education to understand the present day modern economic and social life of the human beings. Therefore, it can be inferred that the sample widows does not have minimum knowledge to live independently a comfortable life and they have to face the problems in modern society. Lack of education is their main weakness.

4.2.3 Status of vocational skills among widows

Development of vocational skills among women can make them to enter into the micro and small business enterprises and earn sufficient income to lead their life comfortably. Table 4.4 shows the status of vocational skills among the sample widows. It is understood that 720 out of 1000 sample widows doesn't have any vocational skill and around 280 persons have vocational skills in garland making (125), hand cart puller (10), rangoli (36), making artificial flowers (5), tailoring (62) and weaving (42). These vocational skills also have less income generating capacity, but they are useful for the widows in pilgrim centres like Tirupati, where there is demand for such type of works. This implies that the training of widows in relevant vocational skills would definitely help them to enter into modern income earning activities.

TABLE 4.4 Status of vocational skills among widows

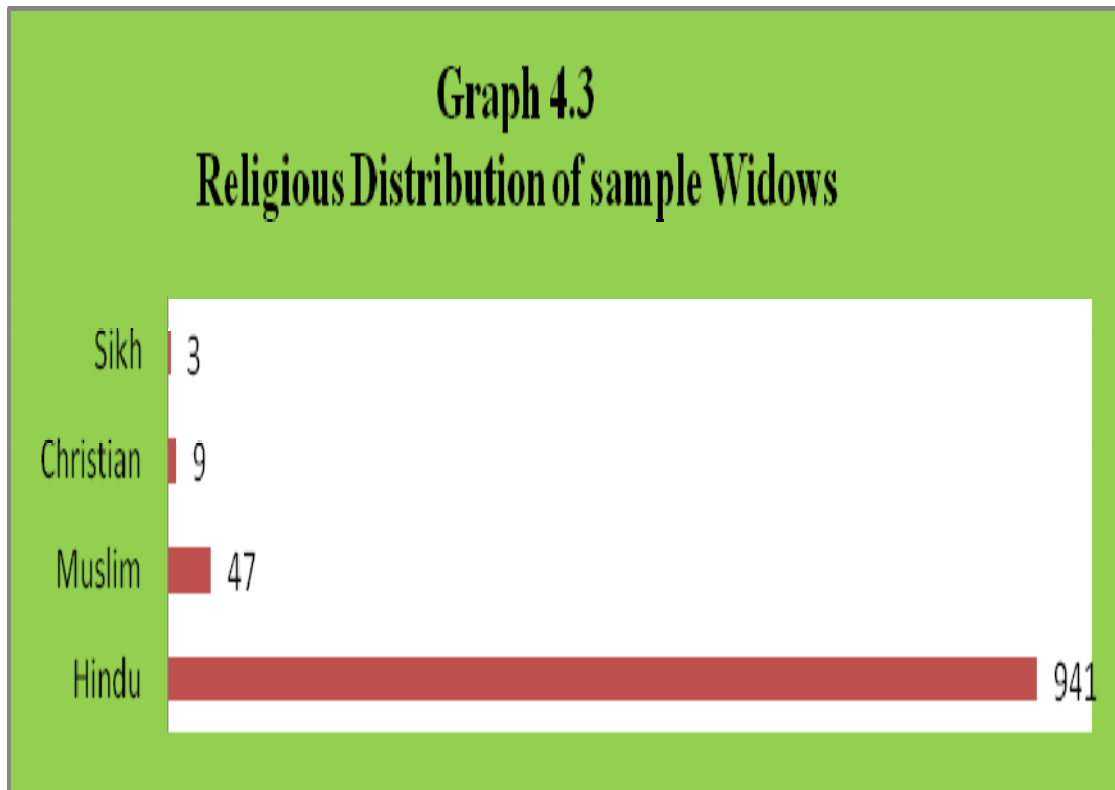
S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Garland making	125	12.5
2	Hand cart puller	10	1
3	Rangoli	36	3.6
4	Making artificial flowers	5	0.5
5	Tailoring	62	6.2
6	Weaving	42	4.2
7	No vocational skills	720	72
	Total widows	1000	100.0

4.2.4 Religion wise distribution of sample widows

The Religion wise distribution of Sample Widows indicates the influence of religion on the life of widows in the society. Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh religions prevail in Tirupati. It is clear from Table 4.5 and Graph 4.3 that widows from Hindu religion are the highest at 94.1% followed by Muslim widows (4.7%), Christian widows (0.9%) and Sikh widows (0.3%). The percentage of non-Hindu widows is much lower in Tirupati and this may be due to either their lower percentage in population or may be those religions may not allow their widows to live separately.

TABLE 4.5 Religion wise distribution of sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Hindu	941	94.1
2	Muslim	47	4.7
3	Christian	9	0.9
4	Sikh	3	0.3
	Total widows	1000	100.0

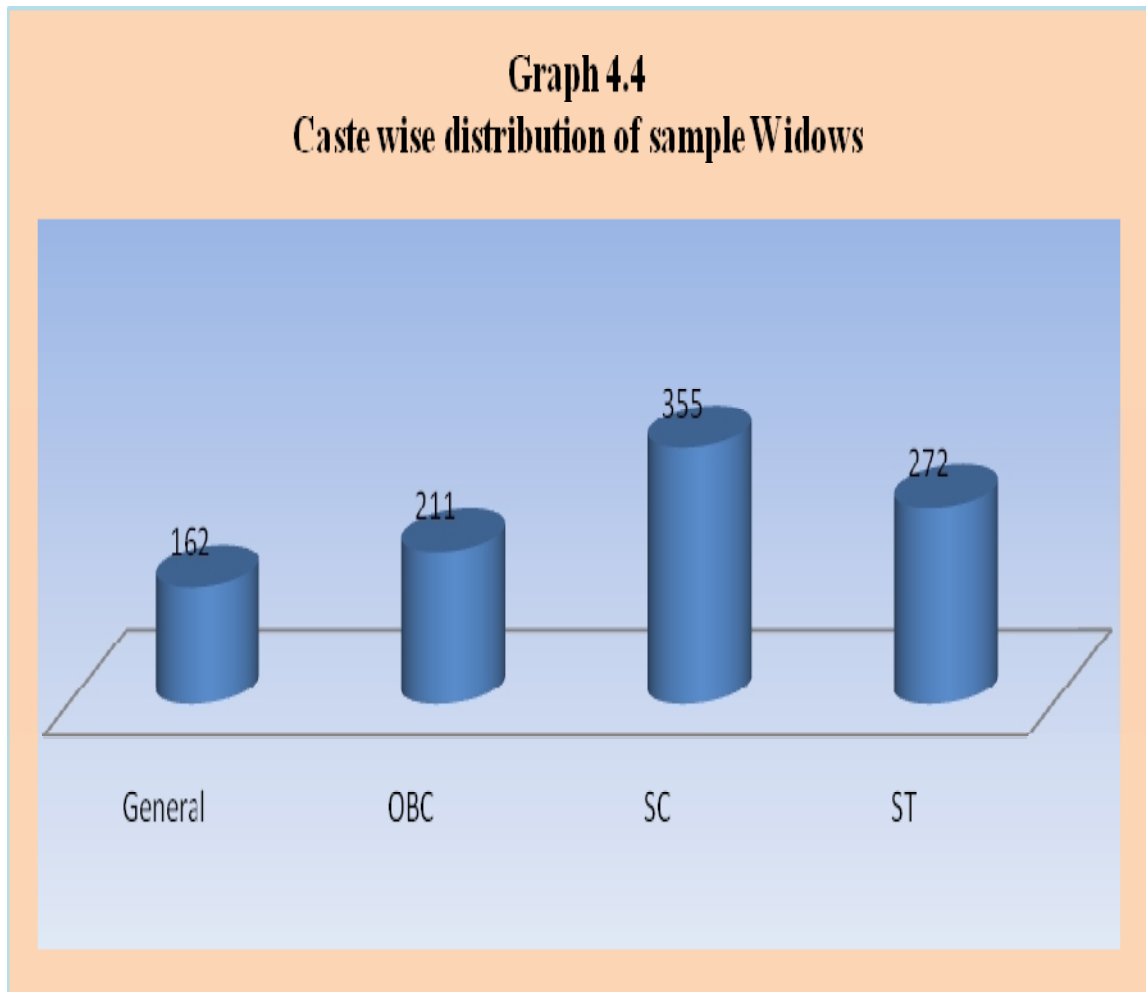


4.2.5 Caste wise distribution of sample widows

Caste in Hindu society is unavoidable and traditionally the upper caste community tries to protect widows in their homes and lower caste communities neglects the widows. The conventional way of classifying the caste groups divides the castes into four groups – general, other backward classes (OBCs), scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs). In order to assess the influence of caste on widows, it is necessary to look into the caste composition of sample widows in Tirupati, which is depicted in Table 4.6 and Graph 4.4.

TABLE 4.6 Caste wise distributions of sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	General	162	16.2
2	OBC	211	21.1
3	SC	355	35.5
4	ST	272	27.2
	Total widows	1000	100.0



It is observed from the table that the highest number of sample widows belongs to SCs (35.5%) followed by STs (27.2%), OBCs (21.1%) and general casts (16.2%). This distribution of widows resembles the general backwardness of the communities in that

order and it indicates that there is a positive relationship between backwardness and isolation of widows.

4.2.6 The age of widow at the time her husband expired

The age of widow at the time her husband expired indicates the proximity to child marriages and higher age gap between the husband and wife, which led to the young widowhood. The distribution of sample widows based on their age at the time of her husband's death is given in table 4.7.

TABLE 4.7 Age of widow at the time of her husband expired

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Less than 20 years	34	3.4
2	20 to 29 years	225	22.5
3	30 to 39 years	292	29.2
4	40 to 49 years	266	26.6
5	50 to 59 years	131	13.1
6	60 to 64 years	16	1.6
7	65 years and above	36	3.6
	Total widows	1000	100.0

It is clear from the table that majority of widows (more than 55%) have become widows while they were in the active reproductive age group, i.e., below 40 years of age. Since the average life span of an Indian is more than 55 years even during 1980s and 1990s, it can be presumed that the higher age gap between husband and wife and child marriages might be the possible reason for this early widowhood. Further, the society doesn't allow remarriages of widows in India, particularly in Hindu religion and this might be another reason for prevalence of more number of young widows in the sample.

4.2.6.1 Remarriage of young widows

The present study collected through survey the opinions of widows on the acceptance of widow remarriage and the reasons for not getting remarried. The details of widow

remarriage are given in Table 4.8 and the reasons for not getting married are given in Table 4.9.

TABLE 4.8 Remarriage of widows in their community

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Widows can remarry	119	11.9
2	Widows cannot remarry	841	84.1
3	I don't know	40	4.0
	Total widows	1000	100.0

It is observed from the table that most of the widows have the opinion that widows cannot marry as per their community customs/ regulations. As widows are giving due respect to their community customs/ regulations, they are not interested in getting remarried. This is evident from the survey that more than 53% of sample respondents have not interested in getting remarriage and another 14.5% opined that remarriage is not customary. Further, nearly eight percent of sample respondents opined that their parents/in-laws did not allowed them to remarry (vide Table 4.9). Hence, there is a need to educate the parents and in-laws about the need for widow remarriages and allow the widow remarriages.

TABLE 4.9 Reasons for not getting remarried by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Parents/ in-laws did not allow	77	7.7
2	It is not customary	145	14.5
3	Not interested	533	53.3
4	No specific reason	142	14.2
5	No response	68	6.8
6	Others	33	3.3
7	Due to AIDS	2	0.2
	Total Widows	1000	100.0

4.2.6.2 Present status of living by the sample widows

The status of widows living indicates their exclusion or inclusion into the normal living conditions of the widows. It is obvious from Table 4.10 that widowhood mostly leads to isolation of widows from their families. The table shows that 52.5% of the sample widows are living alone, 1.4% living with other widows, 0.2% living with other workers and another 0.2% living with PASS organization (NGO). Widows living with in-laws constitute 14.6% and those living with parents constitute only 1.2%. Widows living with children may also be considered as isolated, because most of the widows are young and their children are either small kids or unmarried. These facts confirm that widows are socially excluded group from their parents/ in-laws families.

TABLE 4.10 Present status of living by the sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Living alone	525	52.5
2	Living with my parents	12	1.2
3	Living with other widow	14	1.4
4	Living with other workers	2	0.2
5	Living with PASS organisation	2	0.2
6	Living with children	299	29.9
7	Living with in-laws	146	14.6
	Total widows	1000	100.0

4.2.7 Possession of children

The possession of children – sons and daughters – has been considered as symbol of motherhood and it is considered as an asset in most of the cases in Indian society. The general feeling is that children will not exclude widow mother from the family as against the in-laws, who generally excludes widows from family. It is clear from Table 4.11 that more than 60% of sample widows have possess sons and daughters and this might be the reason for nearly 30% of widows living with children.

TABLE 4.11 Possession of sons and daughters

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Have sons and daughters	604	60.4

2	Do not have sons and daughters	396	39.6
	Total widows	1000	100.0

4.2.7.1 Number of children of sample widows

The details of children of sample widows are given in table 4.12. It is observed from the table that 30.3% of widows have single child and 21.8% have two children. This shows that majority of the widows have the knowledge of small family norm and they might have undergone Family Planning Measures. Only 7.8% have three children and 0.5% of sample widows have four children. This might be the success of Family Planning Department of the Government.

TABLE 4.12 Number of children of sample widows

S.No.	Number of children	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Single child	303	30.3
2	Two children	218	21.8
3	Three children	78	7.8
4	Four children	5	0.5
5	No children	396	39.6
	Total widows	1000	100.0

4.2.7.2 Activity of the children of sample widows

The activity of the children indicates the capabilities of the family in earning its livelihood and spending. If the children are in the earning position, they will support the family with additional income. On the other hand, if the children are small kids and school going, they will not add income to the family rather this will lead to more expenditure. The activities of the children of sample widows are given in Table 4.13.

It is observed from the table that only one-fourth of the sample widows informed that their children have been earning and contributing to the family income (13.6% have been working as daily labour, 8.7% have been doing petty business and 2.1% have been working as auto drivers). Only 11.7% informed that they are sending their children to schools. On the other hand, 20.3% of sample widows informed that their children are

roaming on the streets without any activity, neither work nor school, and 4% of sample widows informed that their children are begging. This indicates that the majority of widows don't have capacity to educate their children at least in government schools.

TABLE 4.13 Activity of the children of sample widows

S.No.	Number of children	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Students	117	11.7
2	Daily labours	136	13.6
3	Auto drivers	21	2.1
4	Petty business	87	8.7
5	Beggars	40	4.0
6	Roaming on the streets	203	20.3
7	No children	396	39.6
	Total widows	1000	100.0

4.2.8 Physical/ mental disability among the sample widows

The Physical/ mental disability among the sample widows indicates their incapability and their dependency on others. Table 4.14 shows that only 15 sample widows out of 1000 have been suffering from Physical/ mental disability and more than 98% have sufficient physical/ mental abilities to do their normal activities.

TABLE 4.14 Physical/ mental disabilities among the sample widows

S.No.	Physical/ mental disability	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Having physical / mental disability	15	1.5
2	Don't have physical / mental disability	985	98.5
	Total widows	1000	100.0

4.3 Flow pattern of sample widows into Tirupati

This section deals with the flow pattern of sample widows from their original place of residence to Tirupati, the reasons for leaving the family/ house, the forces behind it, the sources of information about Tirupati, the people accompanied, visits made from the

family members and relatives, invitations to celebrations in parents/ in-laws house, number of years of stay in Tirupati and the reasons for living in Tirupati.

4.3.1 Awareness of sons/daughters/relatives about the current place of stay

The sample widows have informed that nearly 51% of their children and relatives have the knowledge about the present place of living and the remaining widows informed that their children and relatives don't know the present place of living or there is no response from them (vide Table 4.15).

TABLE 4.15 Awareness of sons/daughters/relatives about the current place of stay

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	They know	506	50.6
2	They don't know	485	48.5
3	No response	9	0.9
	Total	1000	100.0

4.3.2 Reasons for leaving the house

The sample widows informed that there are many reasons for leaving the family or house of the parents/ in-laws and living separately. These details are summarized in Table 4.16. It is clear from the table that 25.7% of widows left the house because the family members don't care her, 20.7% informed that they left house/ family to earn their livelihood and 16.5% said that they left the house/ family because there is nobody in the family to look after them. These three items together constitute more than 60% of the sample widows and indicate that the major reason for leaving the house/ family is the neglect of family members, which make them to think to live separately with their own earning and to feed their kids on their own. Further, 32% of the sample widows were unable to give any specific reason to leave their family/ house.

TABLE 4.16 Reasons for leaving the house of parents/ in-laws

S.No.	Reasons	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Family members do not care	257	25.7
2	Nobody to look after me	165	16.5

3	To earn livelihood	207	20.7
4	Religious reasons	22	2.2
5	Accompanied other workers	3	0.3
6	Motivated by others	6	0.6
7	Do not know	20	2.0
8	No response	320	32.0
	Total	1000	100.0

4.3.2.1 Forces for leaving the house

The sample widows have informed that there are different forces for leaving the family/ house as indicated in Table 4.17.

TABLE 4.17 Forces for leaving the house

S.No.	Forces for leaving the house	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Own decision	624	62.4
2	Force from sons/ daughters	14	1.4
3	Force from daughter-in-law	22	2.2
4	Force from relatives	66	6.6
5	Force from other widows	3	0.3
6	Forces from others	54	5.4
7	No response	217	21.7
	Total	1000	100.0

It is understood from the above table that more than 62% of widows informed that their own decision is the major driving force to leave the family/ house. Around 22% of widows don't have any response on this issue. However, the remaining widows informed that there are forces from relatives (6.6%), daughters-in-law (2.2%), sons/ daughters (1.4%), other widows (0.3%) and other persons (5.4%). This shows that the widows themselves are unable to adjust with the family/ house and they decided to live separately on their own.

4.3.3 Information about the place of Tirupati

The study also collected from sample widows on the sources of information about the place of Tirupati. Their information is summarized in Table 4.18. The majority of widows got information about the income earning activities and possibilities of work in Tirupati from neighbours (26.7%), relatives (17.5%), other widows (7.1%), children (3.5%) and others include NGOs (18.9%). In addition, 26.3% of widows decided on their own without anybody's information to settle in Tirupati.

TABLE 4.18 Information about the place of Tirupati

S.No.	Forces for leaving the house	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Children	35	3.5
2	Relatives	175	17.5
3	Other widows	71	7.1
4	Neighbours	267	26.7
5	Others	186	18.6
6	NGO	3	0.3
7	Own decision	263	26.3
	Total	1000	100.0

4.3.4 Persons accompanied with the widows

The sample widows informed that most of them have accompanied persons with them at the time they flow from their home place to Tirupati. Table 4.19 gives the details of the accompanied persons. 42.8% of the sample widows informed that they were accompanied with their children – sons (18.8%), daughters (13.2%), son and daughter (8.5%), daughter-in-law (2.1%) and grand children (0.2%). About 13% widows are accompanied by other widows from the native place to Tirupati.

It also evidenced from Table 4.20 that other widows from the native place of sample widows have been staying in Tirupati and 67% of the sample widows confirmed it.

TABLE 4.19 Details of accompanied persons with widows

S.No.	Details of accompanied	No. of respondents	Percent to total
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	persons		
1	Son	188	18.8
2	Daughter	132	13.2
3	Son and daughter	85	8.5
4	Daughter-in-law	21	2.1
5	Grand children	2	0.2
6	Brother	21	2.1
7	Other widow	131	13.1
8	Agent/ middle man from NGO	3	0.3
9	Beggars	38	3.8
10	Others	44	4.4
11	Total accompanied	665	66.5
12	Nobody accompanied	335	33.5
	Total	1000	100.0

TABLE 4.20 Some other widows belonging to sample widows' area staying in Tirupati

S. No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Staying	673	67.3
2	Not staying	327	32.7
	Total	1000	100.0

4.3.4.1 Visits from sons/daughters/other relatives to widows' houses

Some widows have settled properly in Tirupati and have developed regular contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives, but some widows have not settled properly and they have lost contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives.

TABLE 4.21 Visits from sons/daughters/other relatives to widows' houses

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Visited	458	45.8

2	Not visited	542	54.2
	Total	1000	100.0

Table 4.21 confirms that 45.8% widows have regular contacts with their sons/daughters/other relatives and they have made visits to Tirupati. On the other hand, 54.2% of widows have lost contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives and they did not visit Tirupati. The reasons for not having regular contacts and visits from their sons/daughters/other relatives are given in Table 4.22. About 114 widows out of 1000 were able to give reasons for not having regular contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives and their visits to Tirupati. However, there is no response from 79% of sample widows on this issue among the total 542 widows.

TABLE 4.22 Reasons for not visiting the widows' house

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	They don't know where I am living	18	3.3
2	They don't like me	14	2.6
3	They have no interest on me	21	3.9
4	I have no economic status	28	5.2
5	I have no income	33	6.1
6	No response	428	79.0
	Total	542	100.0

4.3.4.2 Visits by widows to their sons/daughters/other relatives houses

Some widows have settled properly in Tirupati and have developed regular contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives, but some widows have not settled properly and they have lost contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives. Table 4.23 confirms that 41.1% widows have regular contacts with their sons/daughters/other relatives and they have made visits to the places of their sons, daughters and other relatives. On the other hand, 58.9% of widows have lost contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives and they did not visit their native places.

TABLE 4.23 Visits by widows to their sons/daughters/other relatives houses

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Visited	411	41.1
2	Not visited	589	58.9
	Total	1000	100.0

The reasons for not having regular contacts and visits to their sons/daughters/other relatives are given in Table 4.24. About 232 widows out of 589 were able to give reasons for not having regular contacts with sons/daughters/other relatives and their visits to places of sons/daughters/other relatives. However, there is no response from close to 61% of sample widows on this issue among the total 589 widows.

TABLE 4.24 Reasons for not visiting their sons/daughters/other relatives' houses

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	I don't like them	57	9.7
2	No use of visiting them	36	6.1
3	They are not helpful	29	4.9
4	Old age and unable to travel	110	18.7
5	No response	357	60.6
	Total	589	100.0

4.3.4.3 Invitation for celebrations in parents/in-laws/children's houses

The sample widows settled in Tirupati informed that only 15.2% of them have received invitation for all celebrations in parents/in-laws/children's houses and only 20.3% said sometimes they are invited (vide Table 4.25). On the other hand, 46% widows said they were not invited and 18.5% of widows did not respond on this issue.

TABLE 4.25 Invitation for celebrations in parents/in-laws/children's houses

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Always invited	152	15.2
2	Sometimes invited	203	20.3

3	Not invited	460	46.0
4	No response	185	18.5
	Total	1000	100.0

4.3.5 Period of stay in Tirupati

The Period of stay in Tirupati indicates the migration status of widows from different place to Tirupati and the details are given in Table 4.26.

TABLE 4.26 Period of stay in Tirupati

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Up to 5 years	349	34.9
2	6 to 10 years	125	12.5
3	11 to 20 years	123	12.3
4	21 to 30 years	68	6.8
5	Above 30 years	125	12.5
6	No response	210	21.0
	Total	1000	100.0

It is evident from the Table 4.26 that 34.9% of sample widows have migrated during the last five years and 12.5% have migrated during the last 6 to 10 years. This indicates that more than 47% of widows have migrated for the last ten years. However, about 21% of the sample widows did not give any response on this issue. The remaining widows have settled in Tirupati long back. The widows have given different reasons for liking Tirupati than other pilgrim places and those opinions are summarized in Table 4.27.

TABLE 4.27 Widows like Tirupati than other pilgrim places

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Good staying place	264	26.4
2	Religious place	392	39.2
3	People are helpful	113	11.3
4	Get work easily	52	5.2

5	Get cash/ rice / pulses daily	29	2.9
6	Requirements are fulfilled	23	2.3
7	Others	52	5.2
8	No response	75	7.5
	Total	1000	100.0

It is clear from the table that majority of widows likes Tirupati; because it is a religious place (39.2%), good place for living (26.4%) and people are helpful (11.3%). Further, some people informed that getting some gainful employment/ work is easy, food is available on free of cost at Tirumala and it is possible to fulfill all other requirements. Owing to these reasons, nearly 80% of sample widows are willing to continue in Tirupati (vide Table 4.28).

TABLE 4.28 Widows willingness to continue in Tirupati

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Continue to live in Tirupati	792	79.2
2	Go back to home	17	1.7
3	Go to other places	41	4.1
4	Undecided/ Can't say	30	3.0
5	No response	120	12.0
	Total	1000	100.0

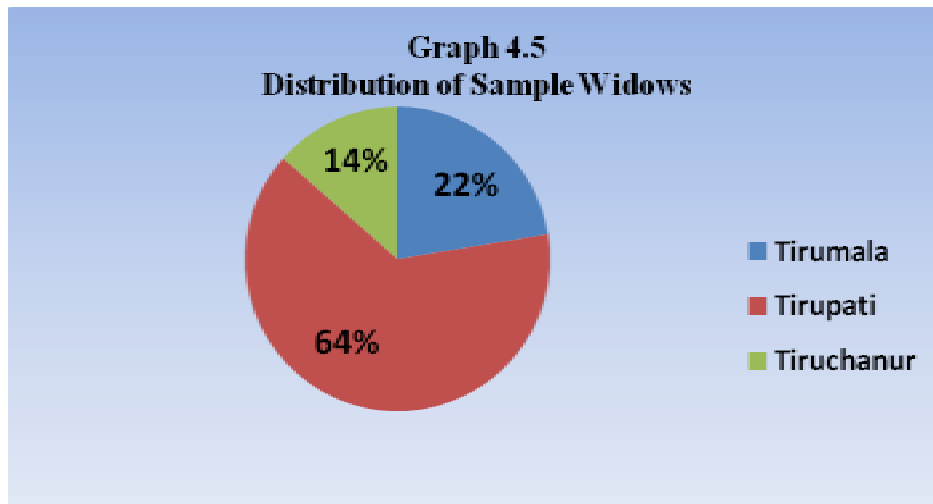
4.4. Social activities of widows in Tirupati

This part deals with the social activities of the sample widows in Tirupati. As per the profile of Tirupati, it is understood that majority of the population lives in Tirupati Municipality and its extended areas. However, most of the floating population lives in Tirumala and Tiruchanoor urban locations, which are considered as the most important pilgrim centers. Therefore, the sample widows have been drawn from the three locations and the details are given in Table 4.29 and Graph 4.5.

TABLE 4.29 Current place of stay of sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Tirumala	224	22.4
2	Tirupati	641	64.1
3	Thiruchanoor	135	13.5
	Total	1000	100.0

It is clear from the Table that about 64% of sample widows live in Tirupati, about 22% of sample widows live in Tirumala and the remaining 14% live in Thiruchanoor. The same is depicted in the Graph also.



4.4.1 Daily visits to Temple/Trust/Ashram by sample widows

As Tirupati being the pilgrim centre, the social activity of the most of the women starts with visiting Temple or other spiritual place. The responses of the sample widows about their daily visits to Temple/Trust/Ashram are summarized in Table 4.30.

TABLE 4.30 Daily visits to Temple/Trust/Ashram by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Visit daily	274	27.4
2	Visit weekly	137	13.7

3	Visit monthly	156	15.6
4	Visit rarely	102	10.2
5	Don't visit daily	307	30.7
6	No response	24	2.4
	Total	1000	100.0

It is clear that about 30.7% of the widows don't visit daily to Temple/Trust/Ashram, about 27.4% of the widows visit daily to Temple/Trust/Ashram, about 13.7% of the widows visit weekly to Temple/Trust/Ashram, about 15.6% of the widows visit monthly to Temple/Trust/Ashram and about 10.2% of the widows visit rarely to Temple/Trust/Ashram.

4.4.2 Number of visits in a day to Temple/Trust/Ashram by sample widows

Among the daily visitors of the Temple/Trust/Ashram, the number of visits made by widows is given in Table 4.31. The table shows that most of them visit the Temple/Trust/Ashram once in a day, only 45 widows visit twice in a day, only 23 widows visit thrice in a day and only 43 widows visit more than three times in a day.

TABLE 4.31 Number of visits in a day to Temple/Trust/Ashram by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Once in a day	163	16.3
2	Twice in a day	45	4.5
3	Thrice in a day	23	2.3
4	More than three times	43	4.3
5	Total daily visitors (1to 4)	274	27.4
6	Non daily visitors	726	72.6
	Total	1000	100.0

4.4.3 Participation in religious prayers by sample widows

Table 4.32 shows that about 71.6% of widows don't participate in religious prayers, about 23.2% of widows participate daily and about 5.2% of widows participate

occasionally in religious prayers. This resembles the general feeling that widows in Hindu religion are not allowed to participate in religious prayers.

TABLE 4.32 Participation in religious prayers by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Participated daily	232	23.2
2	Participated occasionally	52	5.2
3	Not participated	716	71.6
	Total	1000	100.0

4.4.4 Number of hours spent on prayers in a day by sample widows

The table 4.33 exhibits that about 11% of widows spent one hour in a day for prayer, 2.3% of widows spent two hours in a day for prayer, 4.6% of widows spent three hours in a day for prayer, 0.7% of widows spent four hours in a day for prayer and 4.6% of widows spent more than four hours in a day for prayer. This indicate that majority of widows spend only one hour on prayers in Tirupati.

TABLE 4.33 Number of hours spent on prayers in a day by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	One hour	110	11.0
2	Two hours	23	2.3
3	Three hours	46	4.6
4	Four hours	7	0.7
5	More than four hours	46	4.6
6	Total participants in daily prayers (1to 5)	232	23.2
7	Non participants in daily prayers	768	76.8
	Total	1000	100.0

4.4.5 Income earned in a day from visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram by sample widows

Table 4.34 shows that majority of widows did earn nothing by visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram. Only 70 widows informed that they will earn three times food in a day and cloth on free of cost. Only 21 widows said that they earn cash income of up to Rs.50 in a day by visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram.

TABLE 4.34 Income earned in a day from visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Three times food and cloth	70	7.0
2	Cash (Rs. 50)	21	2.1
3	Nothing	909	90.9
	Total	1000	100.0

4.4.6 Adequacy of income earned in a day from visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram

Table 4.35 shows that the income earned in a day from visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram is sufficient for the widows, who are visiting daily and their number is only 91. All other widows informed that they are not visiting temple/Trust/Ashram, because the earning is not sufficient. Through survey it is understood that only those widows who are unable to work and old aged have chosen to sit in front of temple and beg for money. The money earned through begging is considered as income in this case.

TABLE 4.35 Adequacy of income earned in a day from visiting Temple/Trust/Ashram

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Sufficient	91	9.1
2	Not sufficient	909	90.9
	Total	1000	100.0

The data analysis on general profile, flow pattern and social activities of sample widows in Tirupati brought out the following conclusions:

1. Majority of the sample widows are in the economically active age group in general and reproductive age group in particular. Therefore, they can work hard to earn their livelihood, if the opportunities available to them. This is their major strength.
2. Most of the widows are illiterate and even among those literate widows; many of them have not completed ten years of schooling. Therefore, the sample widows didn't have the required minimum knowledge to undertake gainful employment activities in modern society. This is their major weakness.
3. Most of the sample widows did not have vocational Skills. Only few widows have training in traditional vocational skills in Tailoring, Weaving, Garland making, artificial flower making and Rangoli. Even such small and micro business skills will allow the widows to take up gainful employment in Tirupati. These are the promising opportunities for uneducated widows in Tirupati.
4. Most of the sample widows are from Hindu religion. Further, most of them belonged to SC, ST and OBC castes which are backward in general. Widows of SC and ST castes are socially excluded and it is difficult for them to enter into the gainful activities. This is a major threat for them.
5. As the religions and castes of the widows don't permit the remarriage of a widow, the young widows have to suffer with longer widowhood. They have to educate their small kids, feed them properly and train them as useful citizens. This is the major responsibility in front of them.
6. The major motivating factor for them to leave the family/house and live separately is their own decision to earn their livelihood on their own and to protect their children from the negligence of their in-laws. This shows their psychological strength and self determination to live a comfortable life.
7. Some of the widows have been maintaining good relations with their in-laws/ parents even after leaving them and they are visiting the celebrations of their families in their native places. This shows their commitment for normal social life.
8. Majority of widows leaving their children on the roads, either for roaming around or for begging. Only some widows are able to send their children to schools and for daily wage works. This is a major threat for the future of their children.
9. Most of the widows did not visit Temple/Trust/Ashram, because these visits didn't provide gainful earning to them. Only old aged widows might have depended on the visits to Temple/Trust/Ashram.

10. All most all sample widows likes to live in Tirupati, because they felt that it is a good place for staying, it is a religious place, the people in this place are helpful and there are many opportunities for getting gainful work.

Being analysed the general profile of the widows and their social status, which brought out their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to live a comfortable life in Tirupati, the following chapters concentrates on analyzing the economic status of sample widows and some case studies.

V. Economic status of widows in Tirupati

5.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the economic status of sample widows in Tirupati that examine the economic activities, income earning capacities, expenditure patterns, saving capacities, ownership of properties and the taboos of the sample widows.

5.1.1 Economic status of sample widows in Tirupati

A widow has to choose an economic activity or occupation according to her capacity or skills for earning sufficient income with which she or her family has to live. Similarly, the standard of living of a widow or her family also depends on the kind of economic activity or work she does and the quantum of income earned from it.

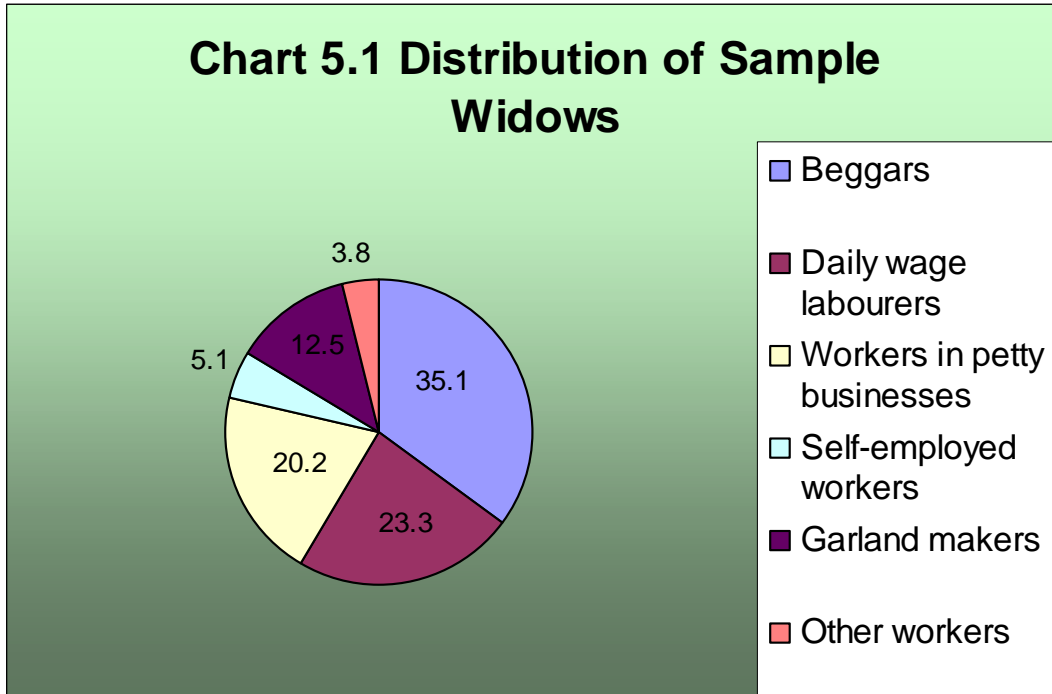
It is well known that Tirupati town (the location of study), being the most popular and the most crowded pilgrimage center, can create numerous kinds of economic activities that are suitable for illiterate and unskilled widows. These activities include working as sweepers, cleaners in Sulabh complexes, housemaids, daily wage workers, child care workers, petty business workers like selling flowers, fruits, snacks, toys, threads, photos of Gods, books and other materials of general public use, particularly the tourists and children. In addition to these works, there are many activities like works in transport operators, mini hotels, offices and service works for literate widows. Even begging is also considered in Tirupati as economic activity for illiterate, unskilled and physically disabled widows including old aged widows and small children. Based on the responses from sample widows, the economic activities or the sources of income of the widows have been grouped into six categories – beggars, daily wage labourers, workers in petty business, self-employed workers, garland makers and other workers consisting of cleaners in Sulabh complexes, sweepers, house maids and sex workers. The distribution of sample widows based on their economic activity is given in Table 5.1 and shown in Graph 5.1.

TABLE 5.1 Distribution of sample widows based on their economic activity

S.No.	Economic activities	No. of respondents	Percent to total
1	Beggars	351	35.1
2	Daily wage labourers	233	23.3
3	Workers in petty businesses	202	20.2
4	Self-employed workers	51	5.1
5	Garland makers	125	12.5
6	Other workers	38	3.8
	Total	1000	100.0

Note: Other works include cleaners in Sulabh complexes (12), sweepers (12), housemaids (9) and sex workers (5).

It is clear from the table and graph that beggars are the highest number followed by daily wage workers, workers in petty businesses, garland makers, self-employed workers and other workers in that order. This distribution of sample widows based on their works indicate that they have been involved not only in lower income generating occupations, but also in insecure occupations. There is no guarantee that they will have continuous secured employment and income in these occupations throughout the year. Therefore, there is a need to look into their incomes from these occupations in order to assess their standard of living.



5.1.2 Definition of poverty line

It is always customary to define the poverty line while making comparisons based on incomes or expenditures of individuals. As the location of the study is urban centre, the definition of urban poverty line is required. Traditionally, urban poverty line is defined as the level of income sufficient to purchase the food that supplies 2100 calories of energy per person per day. Based on this definition, the Planning Commission of India has fixed the poverty line for urban areas in 1999-2000 as Rs.454.11 per capita per month. Since the per capita income of India has increased by more than two times between 1999-2000 and 2008-09, the poverty line can be estimated at Rs.900 per capita per month – that means Rs.30 per capita per day in 2008-09.

However, the World Bank experts have defined the poverty line on daily basis and they defined that one US dollar per capita per day as the poverty line. Since the exchange rate is fluctuating around Rs.49 per US Dollar, the poverty line can be considered as Rs.50 per capita per day on international standards. In this context, the present study considers all the widows earning up to Rs.30 per capita per day as the poorest and all the widows earning up to Rs.50 as the poor.

Income

Distribution of the sample widows based on their daily income

As the incomes of the majority of sample widows are on daily basis, it is better to analyse their levels of earning on daily income basis in order to estimate the income generating capacity of each group of economic activity. Table 5.2 depicts the distribution of sample widows based on their daily incomes.

TABLE 5.2 Daily Income of the Sample Widows

Daily Income (Rs.)	Beggars	Daily Wage Labourers	Workers in Petty Businesses	Self-employed Workers	Garland Makers	Other Workers	Total
1 to 10	74	0	0	0	0	0	74
11 to 20	129	12	23	0	0	0	164
21 to 30	110	98	35	7	32	4	286
<i>Poorest widows</i>	<i>313 (89.2)</i>	<i>110 (47.2)</i>	<i>58 (28.7)</i>	<i>7 (13.7)</i>	<i>32 (25.6)</i>	<i>4 (10.5)</i>	<i>524 (52.4)</i>
31 to 40	3	12	21	3	45	0	84
41 to 50	21	33	34	10	42	5	145
<i>BPL widows</i>	<i>337 (96)</i>	<i>155 (66.5)</i>	<i>113 (56)</i>	<i>20 (39.2)</i>	<i>119 (95.2)</i>	<i>9 (23.7)</i>	<i>753 (75.3)</i>
51 to 60	3	0	10	0	6	0	19
61 to 70	0	25	8	3	0	9	45
71 to 80	0	35	0	8	0	0	43
81 to 90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
91 to 100	7	10	53	10	0	10	90
Above 100	4	8	18	10	0	10	50
Total	351	233	202	51	125	38	1000

Notes: 1. BPL Widows = Below Poverty Line Widows

2. Figures within the brackets represent percentages to totals of respective columns

The study divides the daily incomes into different classes by taking Rs.10 as the class interval and Re.1 as the minimum. Since there are only few widows earning more than Rs.100 per day, all of them are considered in the last income group as above Rs.100.

It is obvious from the table that begging is the lowest income generating activity among the six groups of economic activities performed by sample widows in Tirupati. The highest number of beggars was found in the daily income range of Rs.11 to Rs.20, followed by the income range of Rs.21 to Rs.30 and the income range of Re.1 to Rs.10. These three income ranges together constitute 313 widows out of 351 widows that are involved in begging activity. This indicates that about 89.2% of widow beggars have been earning less than Rs.30 per day and they are considered as the poorest among poor. It is also clear from the table that about 96% of widow beggars are in the BPL group.

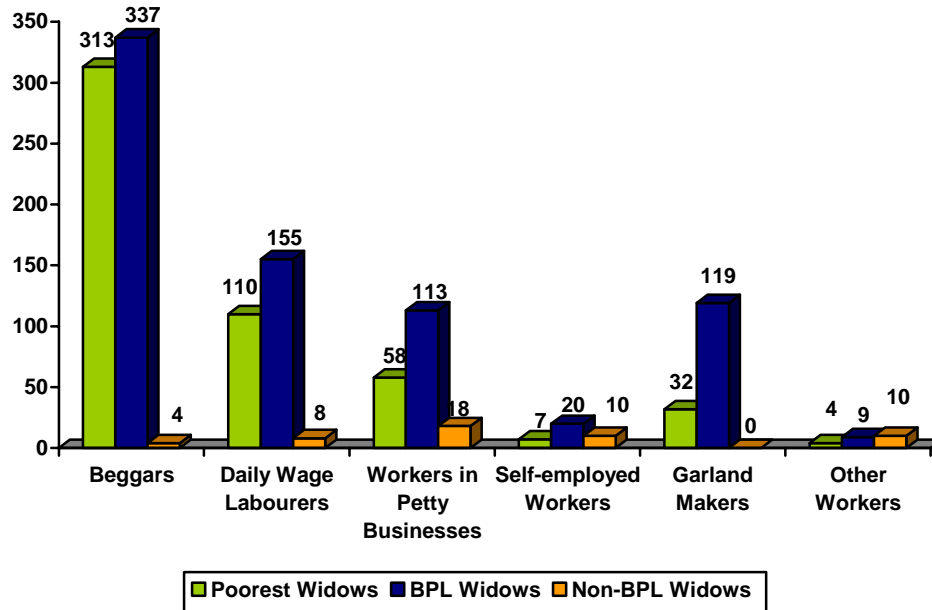
Among daily wage labourers, poorest widows constitute 47.2% and BPL widows constitute 66.5%. Among workers in petty businesses, poorest widows constitute 28.7% and BPL widows constitute 56%. Among self-employed workers, poorest widows constitute 13.7% and BPL widows constitute 39.2%. Among garland makers, poorest widows constitute 25.6% and BPL widows constitute 95.2%. Among other workers, poorest widows constitute 10.5% and BPL widows constitute 23.7%. Finally, among all widows, poorest widows constitute 52.4% and BPL widows constitute 75.3%.

The distribution of sample widows based on their poverty levels showing economic activities on horizontal axis and the number of widows on vertical axis is depicted in Graph 5.2.

The above analysis on the daily incomes of widows concludes that most of the widows involved in begging and daily wage labour activities are in the poorest income group and are more disadvantaged than those widows involved in self-employment, petty business, garland making and other works in Tirupati. Further, the analysis concludes that most of the widows involved in begging, garland making and daily wage labour activities are in the BPL widows group and are more disadvantaged than those widows involved in self-employment, petty business and other works in Tirupati. On the other hand, it is clear from the Graph that in the case of self-employed and other workers, most of the widows

are in non-BPL income group. Therefore, there is need for providing self-employment opportunities or employment in the organised sector to the widows in order to empower them.

FIGURE 5.2 Distribution of sample widows based on their poverty levels



5.1.3.2 Distribution of the sample widows based on their monthly income

In this section, the study considered that monthly income of Rs.1000 and Rs.1500 as poverty lines respectively for the poorest of the poor and BPL widows in Tirupati. The distribution of sample widows based on their monthly income is given in Table 5.3.

It is clear from the table that nearly 50% of the sample widows earn less than Rs.1000 per month and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that more than 68% of sample widows earn less than Rs.1500 per month and hence they are considered as poor.

TABLE 5.3 Monthly income of the sample widows

Monthly income (Rs.)	No. of respondents	Percent to total	Cumulative percentages
1 to 500	58	5.8	5.8
501 to 1000	440	44.0	49.8
1001 to 1500	184	18.4	68.2
1501 to 2000	37	3.7	71.90
2001 to 2500	96	9.6	81.50
2501 to 3000	125	12.5	94.00
3001 to 3500	2	0.2	94.20
3501 to 4000	0	0.0	94.20
4001 to 4500	12	1.2	95.40
4501 to 5000	3	0.3	95.70
Above 5000	43	4.3	100.00
Total	1000	100.0	-----

5.1.3.3 Distribution of the sample widows based on their annual income

In this section, the study considered that annual income of Rs.10000 and Rs.20000 as poverty lines respectively for the poorest of the poor and BPL widows in Tirupati. The distribution of sample widows based on their annual income is given in Table 5.4. It is clear from the table that about 26% of the sample widows earn less than Rs.10000 per annum and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that more than 67% of sample widows earn less than Rs.20000 per annum and hence they are considered as poor.

TABLE 5.4 Annual income of the sample widows (frequency in number)

Annual income (Rs.)	No. of respondents	Percent to total	Cumulative percentages
1 to 5000	58	5.80	5.8
5001 to 10000	207	20.70	26.50
10001 to 15000	303	30.30	56.80
15001 to 20000	107	10.70	67.50
20001 to 25000	67	6.70	74.20
25001 to 30000	82	8.20	82.40
30001 to 35000	4	0.40	82.80
35001 to 40000	127	12.70	95.50
40001 to 45000	2	0.20	95.70
45001 to 50000	0	0.00	95.70
Above 50000	43	4.3	100.00
Total	1000	100.00	-----

5.1.4 Expenditure

5.1.4.1 Distribution of the sample widows based on their monthly expenditure

Expenditure pattern of widows is a prism through which one could visualize the level of living of widows. All the sample widows undertake monthly expenditure. In this section, the study considered that monthly expenditure of Rs.1000 and Rs.1500 as poverty lines respectively for the poorest of the poor and BPL widows in Tirupati. The distribution of sample widows based on their monthly expenditure is given in Table 5.5.

TABLE 5.5 Monthly expenditure of the sample widows

Monthly expenditure (Rs.)	No. of respondents	Percent to total	Cumulative percentages
1 to 500	191	19.10	19.10
501 to 1000	313	31.30	50.40
1001 to 1500	195	19.50	69.90
1501 to 2000	60	6.00	75.90
2001 to 2500	56	5.60	81.50
2501 to 3000	32	3.20	84.70
3001 to 3500	27	2.70	87.40
3501 to 4000	70	7.00	94.40
4001 to 4500	25	2.50	96.90
4501 to 5000	15	1.50	98.40
Above 5000	16	1.60	100.00
Total	1000	100.0	-----

It is clear from the table that about 50% of the sample widows spend less than Rs.1000 per month and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that nearly 70% of sample widows spend less than Rs.1500 per month and hence they are considered as poor.

5.1.4.2 Distribution of the sample widows based on their annual expenditure

In this section, the study considered that annual expenditure of Rs.10000 and Rs.20000 as poverty lines respectively for the poorest of the poor and BPL widows in Tirupati. The distribution of sample widows based on their annual expenditure is given in Table 5.6. It is clear from the table that about 36% of the sample widows spend less than Rs.10000 per annum and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that more than 73% of sample widows spend less than Rs.20000 per annum and hence they are considered as poor.

TABLE 5.6 Annual expenditure of the sample widows

Annual expenditure (Rs.)	No. of respondents	Percent to total	Cumulative percentages
1 to 5000	131	13.10	13.10
5001 to 10000	231	23.10	36.20
10001 to 15000	274	27.40	63.60
15001 to 20000	100	10.00	73.60
20001 to 25000	34	3.40	77.00
25001 to 30000	56	5.60	82.60
30001 to 35000	32	3.20	85.80
35001 to 40000	21	2.10	87.90
40001 to 45000	47	4.70	92.60
45001 to 50000	30	3.00	95.60
Above 50000	44	4.40	100.00
Total	1000	100.00	-----

5.1.4.3 Expenditure pattern of sample widows in Tirupati

Having analysed the monthly and annual expenditure levels of sample widows in Tirupati, it is important to look into the expenditure levels on each item to elicit the status or levels of living by the widows. For this purpose, the study made an attempt to collect information about the expenditure on each item of spending made by widows in Tirupati. The major expenditure items include food, clothing, health, shelter (housing), education, entertainment, pan eating, drinking and smoking. The disaggregated expenditure on each item is shown as expenditure classes with class interval of Rs.500 and the number of sample widows covered in each class of expenditure is given in Table 5.7.

TABLE 5.7 Item wise monthly expenditure of sample widows

Items of expenditure	Number of widows spending in each group				Non-spender widows	Total widows
	1 to 500	501 to 1000	Above 1000	Total spenders		
Food	498	316	177	991	9	1000
Health	775	27	7	809	191	1000
Clothing	748	26	7	781	219	1000
Shelter	363	105	0	468	532	1000
Entertainment	114	16	1	131	869	1000
Education	108	8	0	116	884	1000
Pan eating	52	0	0	52	948	1000
Drinking alcohol	1	4	0	5	995	1000
Smoking	1	0	0	1	999	1000
Money saving	19	0	0	19	981	1000

It is clear from the table that out of a total sample of 1000 widows, 991 widows spending on food, 809 widows spending on health, 781 widows spending on clothing, 468 widows spending on shelter (housing), 131 widows spending on entertainment, 116 widows spending on education, 52 widows spending on pan eating, 5 widows spending on drinking of alcohol and single widow spending on smoking. It is also inferred that only 19 widows have been saving smaller amounts of money for future unforeseen expenditure. This expenditure pattern proves that food and health are the predominant items of expenditure in the case of most of the sample widows. Even housing expenditure is unimportant in the case of more than 50% of widows.

a) Expenditure on food

Table 5.7 shows that 991 sample widows spend on food and only nine sample widows said that they are taking free food on Tirumala daily. Among sample widows, 49.8% of the sample widows spend less than Rs 500, 31.6% of the sample widows spend between Rs 501 and Rs.1000 and 17.7% of sample widows spend more than Rs.1000 per month on food.

b) Expenditure on health

Table 5.7 shows that 809 sample widows spend on health and 191 sample widows said that they are visiting free health care centers and hospitals. Among sample widows, 77.5% of the sample widows spend less than Rs 500, 2.7% of the sample widows spend between Rs 501 and Rs.1000 and 0.7% of sample widows spend more than Rs.1000 on health.

c) Expenditure on clothing

Table 5.7 shows that 781 sample widows spend on purchase of cloths and 219 sample widows did not spend on clothing. Among sample widows, 74.8% of the sample widows spend less than Rs 500, 2.6% of the sample widows spend between Rs 501 and Rs.1000 and 0.7% of sample widows spend more than Rs.1000 on clothing.

d) Expenditure on shelter/ housing

Table 5.7 shows that 468 sample widows spend on house rents and 532 sample widows did not spend on housing. Among sample widows, 36.3% of the sample widows spend less than Rs 500 and 10.5% of the sample widows spend between Rs 501 and Rs.1000.

e) Expenditure on entertainment

Table 5.7 shows that 131 sample widows spend on purchase of entertainment and 869 sample widows did not spend on entertainment. Among sample widows, 11.4% of the sample widows spend less than Rs 500 and 1.6% of the sample widows spend between Rs 501 and Rs.1000. Further, only one widow spends above Rs.1000.

f) Expenditure on education

Table 5.7 shows that 116 sample widows spend on the education of their children and 884 sample widows did not spend on education. Among sample widows, 10.8% of the sample widows spend less than Rs 500 and 0.8% of the sample widows spend between Rs 501 and Rs.1000. This indicates that many widows are not able to send their kids to schools.

g) Spending on pan eating, alcohol drinking and smoking

In addition to the spending on necessary and basic needs of consumption analysed above, some widows have the habit of pan eating, alcohol drinking and smoking, which are injurious to health and not advisable. Table 5.7 shows that there are 52 pan eating widows and their spending on pan eating is below Rs.500 per month; there are 5 alcohol drinkers – one widow spending less than Rs. 500 and four widows spending between Rs.501 and Rs.1000 on drinks per month and only one widow spending less than Rs.500 on smoking per month.

h) Saving habit of the sample widows

Being analysed the income and spending pattern of sample widows that exhibits lower standards of living in Tirupati, it is impossible to assume and even think about their saving levels. Table 5.7 also shows that only 19 widows have savings, but their savings are below Rs. 500 per month.

5.1.5 Ownership of property

The survey of this study collected the information about the property owned by sample widows. The details of property owned by widows are given in Table 5.8.

TABLE 5.8 Ownership of property (No. of respondents)

S.No.	Particulars	Purchased before migration	Purchased after migration	Total
1	Land	0	0	0
2	House	1	0	1
3	Livestock	0	0	0
4	TV	76	16	92
5	Fridge	0	0	0
6	Telephone	0	0	0
7	Others	0	0	0
	Total	77	16	93

It is clear from the table that the sample widows did not have any immovable property except one widow and this widow has purchased the building before migrating to Tirupati. This shows that she might have purchased it with the savings of her husband. Among the movable properties, only Television (TV) appears to be the attraction for widows in Tirupati. Further, it is clear that 76 widows out of 92 widows purchased TVs before migrating to Tirupati and only 16 widows have purchased TVs after migrating to Tirupati.

Therefore, it is inferred that not even ten percent of sample widows have owned the properties of even movable nature. The value of those properties as given in Table 5.9 indicates that they have lower values suitable for below poverty line people. The highest property value is Rs.10,000 and this is the value of a small house, which may be a hut.

TABLE 5.9 Value of property

Value of property (Rs.)	No. of respondents
2500	24
3000	7
5000	29
7000	32
10000	1
Total	93

5.1.6 Taboos expressed by sample widows

The enumerators of the survey tried to probe the sample widows at the time of data collection to express their taboos and the collected information about the taboos has been summarized and provided in Table 5.10.

TABLE 5.10 Taboos expressed by sample widows

S.No.	Particulars	No. of respondents
1	Worked as sex worker in the past, but stopped at present	6
2	Participated in illegal activities like burglary	5
3	Participated in illegal sexual activities with selected people	25
4	Working as sex worker in addition to the normal works	33
5	Participated in sex work, but living with S.T.D.	2
6	Participated in sex work, but living with HIV/AIDS	7
7	Tobacco chewing	127
8	Habit of alcohol drinking	8
9	Smoking	3
	Total widows expressed taboos	216
	Total sample widows	1000

It is obvious from the table that only 216 sample widows out of 1000 have expressed taboos in which they have involved. Of them, 127 widows informed that they have the habit of tobacco chewing, 33 widows said that they have been working as professional sex workers in addition to their normal duties, 25 widows told that they have participated in illegal sexual activities with selected people, 8 widows have the habit of alcohol drinking, 7 widows participated in sex work but living with HIV/AIDS, 6 widows worked as Sex Workers in the past but stopped at present, 5 widows have participated in illegal activities like burglary, 3 widows have smoking habit and 2 widows have participated in sex work and but living with S.T.D. Therefore, it is inferred that most of the sample widows involved in taboos have participated in illegal sexual activities in Tirupati and the major cause for this is to earn sufficient money for living a comfortable life. It may also be inferred that poverty of sample widows lead them to involve in such taboos.

The data analysis on economic status of sample widows in Tirupati brought out the following conclusions.

6. The economic activities of the sample widows indicate that beggars are the highest number followed by daily wage workers, workers in petty businesses, self-employed workers, garland makers and other workers in that order. This distribution of sample widows based on their works indicate that they have been involved not only in lower income generating occupations, but also in insecure occupations. There is no guarantee that they will have continuous secured employment and income in these occupations throughout the year.
7. Begging is the lowest income generating activity among the six groups of economic activities performed by sample widows in Tirupati. The distribution sample widows based on income indicate that about 89.2% of widow beggars have been earning less than Rs.30 per day and they are considered as the poorest among poor and about 96% of widow beggars have been earning less than Rs.50 per day and they are in the Below Poverty Line group. Among daily wage labourers, poorest widows constitute 47.2% and BPL widows constitute 66.5%. Among workers in petty businesses, poorest widows constitute 28.7% and BPL widows constitute 56%. Among self-employed workers, poorest widows constitute 13.7% and BPL widows constitute 39.2%. Among garland makers, poorest widows constitute 25.6% and BPL widows constitute 95.2%. Among other workers, poorest widows constitute 10.5% and BPL widows constitute 23.7%. Among all widows, poorest widows constitute 52.4% and BPL widows constitute 75.3%.
8. The analysis on the daily incomes of widows concludes that most of the widows involved in begging and daily wage labour activities are in the poorest income group and are more disadvantaged than those widows involved in self-employment, petty business, garland making and other works in Tirupati. Further, the analysis concludes that most of the widows involved in begging, garland making and daily wage labour activities are in the BPL widows group and are more disadvantaged than those widows involved in self-employment, petty business and other works in Tirupati. On the other hand, most of the widows involved in self-employed works and other workers in the organised sector are in non-BPL income group. Therefore, there is need for providing self-employment opportunities or employment in the organised sector to the widows in order to empower them.

9. The study considered that monthly income of Rs.1000 and Rs.1500 as poverty lines respectively for the poorest of the poor and BPL widows in Tirupati. The distribution of sample widows based on their monthly income indicate that nearly 50% of the sample widows earn less than Rs.1000 per month and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that more than 68% of sample widows earn less than Rs.1500 per month and hence they are considered as poor.
10. The distribution of sample widows based on their monthly expenditure shows that about 50% of the sample widows spend less than Rs.1000 per month and hence they are considered as the poorest among the poor. Similarly, it is observed that nearly 70% of sample widows spend less than Rs.1500 per month and hence they are considered as poor.
11. The major expenditure items include food, clothing, health, shelter (housing), education, entertainment, pan eating, drinking and smoking. The survey results shows that out of a total sample of 1000 widows, 991 widows spending on food, 809 widows spending on health, 781 widows spending on clothing, 468 widows spending on shelter (housing), 131 widows spending on entertainment, 116 widows spending on education, 52 widows spending on pan eating, 5 widows spending on drinking of alcohol and single widow spending on smoking.
12. The expenditure pattern proves that food and health are the predominant items of expenditure in the case of most of the sample widows. Even housing expenditure is unimportant in the case of more than 50% of widows.
13. The study also inferred that only 19 widows out of 1000 sample widows have been saving smaller amounts of money for future unforeseen expenditure.
14. The sample widows did not have any immovable property except one widow and this widow has purchased the house before migrating to Tirupati. This shows that she might have purchased it with the savings of her husband. Among the movable properties, only Television (TV) appears to be the attraction for widows in Tirupati. Further, it is clear that 76 widows out of 92 widows purchased TVs before migrating to Tirupati and only 16 widows have purchased TVs after migrating to Tirupati. Therefore, it is inferred that not even ten percent of sample widows have owned the properties of even movable nature. The values of those properties indicate that they have lower values suitable for below poverty line people. The highest property value is Rs.10,000 and this is the value of a small house, which may be a hut.

15. Among 216 sample widows that expressed taboos, 127 widows informed that they have the habit of tobacco chewing, 33 widows said that they have been working as professional sex workers in addition to their normal duties, 25 widows told that they have participated in illegal sexual activities with selected people, 8 widows have the habit of alcohol drinking, 7 widows participated in sex work but living with HIV/AIDS, 6 widows worked as Sex Workers in the past but stopped at present, 5 widows have participated in illegal activities like burglary, 3 widows have smoking habit and 2 widows have participated in sex work and but living with S.T.D. Therefore, it is inferred that most of the sample widows involved in taboos have participated in illegal sexual activities in Tirupati and the major cause for this is to earn sufficient money for living a comfortable life. It may also be inferred that poverty of sample widows lead them to involve in such taboos.

In fine, the above analysis on the economic status of widows concludes that most of the sample widows have been chosen low paid economic activities that require lower skills and earn lower incomes, which made them to live under poverty conditions. Their expenditure pattern also shows that they have been spending mostly on basic necessities of their consumption and some of them are not even able to spend for their children education. They did not have any income generating properties and they are not able to spend on the purchase of properties. Most of the sample widows did not save at least for their future unforeseen consumption expenditure. Therefore, it can be said that most of the sample widows are poor, backward and living in miserable conditions.

Being analysed the economic status of sample widows in Tirupati in this section, the following section of the present chapter reviews and analyses the case studies of some of the sample widows in order to assess the role of the Government programmes, Authorities of Temple/Trust/Ashramas, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Social Workers in the empowerment of sample widows in Tirupati.

VI. Case studies

6.1 Overview

This chapter deals with an assessment of the economic performance of widows through Case Studies from different economic activities, which also exhibit the role of the Government programmes, Authorities of Temple/Trust/Ashramas, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Social Workers in the empowerment of sample widows in Tirupati

The survey team of the study selected six sample widows and one focus group of widows for doing intensive case studies in Tirupati Municipality, Tirumala and Thiruchanoor towns.

The case studies given below indicates that if women widows are provided with some financial support they can earn even with small business and able to live a happy life by enhancing their social as well as economic status.

Case study 6.1: Rajamma migrated from Pamidi, Anantapur District to Tirupati



Figure 5.1: Rajamma (right side) giving information to the Enumerator

Rajamma is a widow, presently, staying at Short Stay Home run by People's Action for Social Services (PASS), an NGO at Tirupati.

Her husband was addicted to drinking and died with Asthma. She became widow and doesn't have any support both from her in-laws and parents, after death of her husband. In this helpless condition, she left in-laws home and came to Tirupati with her small two children two years ago, without knowing what to do for survival of her children and herself. She was staying at Tirupati Railway Station and feeding the children some food collected through begging.

In that condition, the women volunteers of PASS identified her and brought her to the short stay home for providing temporary shelter for her and her children. They further consoled her and provided some work for her in their organisation. She gained confidence to live a comfortable live with the help of PASS volunteers. Presently she is working continuously in that organization as a cook, just for food and accommodation, but without salary. However, she is working as a house maid in two-three houses in Tirupati during the leisure hours and earning money.

Now she is sending her children to school – the girl is in fifth standard and the boy is in first standard. She is happy now, because her children are in the school. She has been taking the children of others to the school and bringing them back to their homes and earning some money for this work also. She has cleared the debts of her husband, who had spent the borrowed money for drinking, at Pamidi. Now she has a saving of Rs.2000 in the Bank.

Case Study 6.2: Chengamma and Lakshamma, two good friends at Tirumala



Two middle aged widows selling fried ground nut seeds and mango pieces in Tirumala

Chengamma (front) and Lakshamma (back) are very good friends in Chandragiri town near Tirupati and have common problems in their in-laws' families. They used to meet and discuss about their problems and sufferings. They have become members of the Self Help Group and decided to live independently. They have started to sale biscuits and chocolates in Chandragiri bus stand with the help of micro credit given to the Self Help Group. But they found it very difficult to earn subsistence level of income in Chandragiri.

Once they visited Tirumala and observed the business activity there and they found that there is sufficient demand for fried Groundnut seeds and Mango Pieces from visitors. Then they got permission from their group leader to shift their business to Tirumala and to pay their loan installments on monthly basis. They also decided to sit together on the streets of Tirumala and sale fried groundnut seeds and mango pieces.

They are taking free food daily in TTD Nithya Annadana Programme and sleeping under the corridors of TTD Cottages in Tirumala. They have cleared their loans in Chandragiri and living independently. They have applied for widow pensions, but they were not sanctioned so far. Their have married children, but it was not possible for them to adjust with children's family members peacefully. They have faced quarrels with family members and spent sleepless nights. Now, Chengamma and Lakshamma living together happily and they are sharing together their problems and happiness.

They are now looking for help from either the Government or any NGO to provide a small house for living and widow pension in the old age.

Case Study 6.3: Venkatamma, an old widow, selling flowers in Thiruchanoor



Venkatamma is 65 years old, but living independently in Thiruchanoor. She is getting old age pension and she has a small thatched house in the outskirts of Thiruchanoor.

Being a hard working woman, she was not able to tolerate the domination of her daughters-in-law. However, her husband used to suppress the quarrel. But he died twenty two years back. The problems in the family have aggravated after the death of her husband and her sons failed to control their wives and hence she came out from the family. Her children also deserted her twenty years back, due to some quarrel with daughters-in-law.

She used to go to the agricultural labour works for ten years and earn income for herself. Since she was alone and able to earn sufficiently for her spending and also saved some money and finally she purchased a small thatched house in Thiruchanoor.

Due to old age, she was not able to attend agricultural labour works and then she decided to start flowers selling business near the Temple. Later she applied for widow pension and it was sanctioned two years back. Presently she is getting widow pension and also earning some money through sale of flowers. She is living happily with her own sources of income and she is living independently. However, she used to take help from distant relatives and friends, when she has some health problems.

Case Study 6.4: Jayamma, an old widow, working as sweeper in Tirupati Municipality



Jayamma belongs to an agricultural labour family in Bhakara Peta village of Chittoor district. She became widow at the age of 35 years, due to sudden death of her husband with snake bite. Her in-laws treated her properly when she used to earn money by doing agricultural labour work daily.

She had health problem with stomach pain at the age of 40 years. She had suffered with that problem for almost one year and she was not able to do hard work, particularly agricultural work on par with other labourers. Then the farmers decided not to provide work for her and hence she became unemployed and sick person in the family. The problems then started in the family. The members started ill-treatment with her and her two sons.

Then she shifted to Tirupati and got the job of sweeper with the help of a well wisher and she is now living happily along with another widow.

**Case study 6.5: P. Chengamma, middle aged widow
selling papaya pieces on the road of Tirumala**



P. Chengamma of Andhra Pradesh and her husband made a livelihood from collecting firewood from nearby forest and selling them in adjacent village. It was a tenuous task even to make both ends meet, let alone provide for their four children. They had a dream of opening a small shop providing minimum necessities to the 50 odd families in their village. But finding finance was a major problem.

It was at this stage that Chengamma got involved in SHGs promoted by Rashtriya Seva Samiti (RASS). With a contribution of Rs.30 per month, she took a revolving fund of Rs.500 from the group, and started street vending of fruits and vegetables. Thus, she not only repaid her loan but also provided for family to lead a respectable life.

Case Study 6.6: A old widow selling rangoli design sticks on the roads of Tiruchanoor



T. Pushpanjali, a old woman from a very poor economic background lived in a thatched roof cottage, and did framework to eke out a very modest living. When RASS started formation of SHGs in their small village, she joined it as a member and saved Rs.30 every month. She then applied for a loan of Rs.2000 and purchased a cow. She could increase her earnings substantially through renting out the cow, since she is not able to maintain the cow.

However, she is continuing her own business of selling Rangoli Design Sticks on the roads of Tiruchanoor. Today, she can afford to eat three times a day and also save some money for future expenditure.

VII. Conclusion & recommendations

7.1 Introduction

The Following are the major conclusion & recommendations, which have been drawn from the results of the interviews & interactions with the widow women/ key personnel and field observations by the research team. No doubt, a joint venture and effort of the various government departments and other agencies could bring about a marked change in their lives.

The general awareness for the physical and mental well-being of widows will greatly improve the image of widows. A special scheme for the socio-economic upliftment of widows should be set up. The status and rights of widows could be promoted and raised when their economic rehabilitation is made possible.

The analysis on the daily incomes of widows concludes that most of the widows involved in begging and daily wage labour activities are in the poorest income group and are more disadvantaged than those widows involved in self-employment, petty business, garland making and other works in Tirupati. Further, the analysis concludes that most of the widows involved in begging, garland making and daily wage labour activities are in the BPL widows group and are more disadvantaged than those widows involved in self-employment, petty business and other works in Tirupati. On the other hand, most of the widows involved in self-employed works and other workers in the organised sector are in non-BPL income group. Therefore, there is need for providing self-employment opportunities or employment in the organised sector to the widows in order to empower them. Hence the specific measures/ strategies to be carried out/ implemented by those concerned are scripted below:

7.1.1 Central Government

- Plan and implement location specific programmes/ projects for the overall development of the widows with the active involvement of the local Non Governmental Organisations

- Provide financial assistance for establishing community based aid centres and rehabilitation centres for the widows
- Provide reservation for educated widows in Government jobs
- Establish strong networks between the government departments/organizations/institutions working for the welfare of the widows
- Sponsor location specific studies for designing appropriate programmes for the welfare of the widows
- Ensure strict enforcement of the laws on dowry and atrocities against widows

7.1.2 State Government

- Introduce special loans and schemes for widows and popularize them through banks and panchayat
- Establish vocational training centres for the widows
- Provide scholarship to the children of widows for pursuing higher studies
- Enhance the pension amount for the widows and distribute the pension amount on time
- Gender training packages for the administrative and law order machinery

7.1.3 Local Self Government Departments

- Establish an association for widows and provide a platform for sharing their problems
- Formulate special programmes, which could ensure economic independence of the widows
- Allocate an amount for the welfare of widows in the plan fund
- Form advocacy groups to work as pressure groups for the well- being of widows

7.1.4 NGOs

- Organize a series of awareness programmes for building up their confidence
- Conduct vocational training programmes for the widows
- Sensitization programmes to bring out an attitudinal change of the society towards the widows
- Form more self-help groups and organize special programmes for widows through Kudumbasree Mission

- Organize awareness generation on the rights of widows in terms of employment, education, family sphere legal and political rights etc.,
- Mobilizing women for political participation and governance which has met with stiff opposition from patriarchal forces