

**COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ST/SC WOMEN THROUGH THE LENS OF  
EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL PARTICIPATION IN JHARKHAND, 2001****Rajeev Ranjan Shrivastava**

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**Abstract:** Jharkhand after being carved out of Bihar on the 15th of Nov, 2000 set to become an independent state having great provisions and privileged to Schedule caste and Schedule Tribe populations. However, entire Indian states have seen enormous marginalisation of this community so far specifically to women in general. Women are socially and economically marginalized throughout the world even after humanity is outstretched to a neo-liberal modern society. In India, SC or in common parlance Dalit women particularly being unnoticed in the first place, suppressed their after, and their contribution unmarked, since time immemorial in comparison to General or OBC women is often noted. In parallel, the centre point of this paper is a small comparison between the educational status of ST and SC women through the education gap and occupation gap and the same with their gender counterparts. The data are taken from the census of India,2001 to compare the two communities s women's status in society which brings ST women on a higher pedestal than SC women in each scale of measurement in Jharkhand.

**Keywords:** Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Marginalisation, Neo-liberal, OBC, Education gap, Occupation gap

**Introduction:**

There are tremendous hues and cry on the reservation provision of Schedule caste and schedule tribe of India. The concern however must be on their hitherto progress is unmarked as to how far they have reached and come out of marginalization on the creation of the newly carved State of Jharkhand. The state of Jharkhand was realized on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2000 after prolonged efforts and demands for the creation of a new state. The educational progress rate of SC and ST of Jharkhand is also lower than the national level SC and ST progress. The study has found a quality crisis in the education among SC and ST of Jharkhand, although seen high gender parity from primary to secondary school in both communities Jharkhand state, which is primarily considered as a tribal state, is not an exception in realizing this fact. However, universal primary education for tribals is one of the major challenges, the Jharkhand state is facing. Universal primary education for tribals is an important issue because they were denied equal opportunity in the past by the government and the policymakers. It is crucial and important for the development of the tribal communities, the state, and the nation. This 'mainstream' has been defined by the dominant capitalist class and is therefore characterized by the capitalist and socialist value systems of the urban, educated, middle, and upper classes of society. They want to exploit natural resources to the maximum in order to make the greatest profits at the quickest possible time. In the present context, 'development' means making additional income to meet the increasing needs created by modern society. These are not just the basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, health, education, transport, etc. but also the

specialized needs born out of consumerism. (Shailee, 2002) The Scheduled Castes (SC) occupy the bottommost step of the social ladder. They form most of the depressed classes. Scheduled Caste signifies those groups of people who were out of the caste system or varna hierarchy in the past. These two communities have been discriminated against by the upper castes for ages and they never had any kind of social acceptance from most of the people who belonged to the upper caste. The gender-differentiating ideology is frequently identified only at the level of the gender system's impact on women. Women are central, not marginal to the making of society and to the building of civilization. Women have been part of preserving the past, which has taken the form of cultural traditions that provide the link between generations and connects, past and future. This past is kept alive in poems, myths, and symbols, which both men and women created and preserved in folklore, art, and rituals. For a long, what women have done and experienced has been neglected, left unrecorded, and ignored in interpretation. Gender is to be seen in totality in understanding and analysing women's subordination. The term subordination of women is wider in its usage and focuses more specifically on describing the condition of women. Every society is characterized by a culture of its own, code, social discipline, and clear perceptions of dos and don'ts for the women segment. Strong tribal culture as well as non-tribal jointly forms a cohesive culture of its own kind in Jharkhand. According to the 2001 census, the total population of the state is 2.69 crore, with an average annual exponential growth rate of 2.1%. About 28% of the state population is tribal and 12% belongs to schedule caste. The data are taken from the census of India, 2001 to compare the two communities' women's status in society.

#### **Literature Review:**

The lack of social, political, and economic involvement of disadvantaged groups (STs and SCs) is one of our country's major challenges in this state and India itself. This deficiency leads to more backwardness among the underprivileged section of society. It creates a frame of hierarchy based on religion, culture, economics, caste, and ethnicity. It is perhaps most clearly in the matter of population growth that the tribal people of Jharkhand (and of course Bihar) appear to have fared worse than the SCs and other general populations. (Maharatna & Chikte 2004) Jharkhand along with Bihar has the lowest female literacy rate of 39.98%. More males are literate than women (67.94% compared with 39.38%). Variation in literacy of male and female is evident. However, a large no. of girls belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribes remain unreached, due to physical, economic and social inaccessibility. Furthermore, Scheduled Caste women have very limited access to education, which leads to insecurity and lack of access to other resources. Girls from SC and ST tend to get the least access of basic amenities to cater to education and employment of dignity. Status of women is measured by using indicators such as education, health status, employment status and household decision making power. Indigenous communities of India are commonly referred to as tribal or Adivasi communities and are recognised as Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution of India. Although the Constitution does not define Scheduled Tribes as such, it designates these communities as those which are scheduled in accordance with Article 342 of the Constitution. According to Article 342 of the Constitution, the Scheduled Tribes are the tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within these tribes and tribal communities which have been declared as such by the

President through a public notification. The criteria followed for specification of a community, as scheduled tribe are indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness. Education is the backbone to develop a nation. During the drafting of our Constitution, special provision was introduced to promote equality, social justice for all citizens among disadvantaged section like SC and ST. Articles 46 propose that the State should take an interest in the educational and economic advancement of SC, ST shall defend it from social inequality and all forms of exploitation. (Bakshi, 2006) Literacy is one of the most basic parameters for the success of democratic system of governance. But in Jharkhand, education statistics depicts a very pathetic situation, particularly in terms of providing primary education to tribals. The 2001 census shows that among the five numerically larger tribes, Bhumij, Ho, Lohra, Santhal and Kharwar have over all literacy rates lower than that of the national average. They were excluded from equal opportunities in all socio-economic sectors, including education. They were supposed to believe that they are contemptible. Later, the term includes the order of the Government of India (Scheduled Caste) of 1936 (Ghurye, 1969). Literacy is an important tool for improving the status of women among the Scheduled Castes. SC women, approximately three-fourths live in rural areas where they face systematic oppression, social exclusion, and direct and structural violence from within their own community as well as from 'upper' castes Scheduled Caste women generally have limited access to education. It is due to the lack of education the Dalit women are not able to come out of their poverty and marginalized situations. Being illiterate they are not aware of their own rights and thus so called "upper-caste" people can easily exploit and oppress them. Mitra (2007) has analyzed the status of women among schedule tribes in India with comparison to main stream Hindus, in term of social and cultural practices. Bhasin (2007) has carried out her study about tribal women in different geographic region i.e. Ladakh, North Eastern Region, Rajasthan and she found that tribal women possess a lot of importance in tribal communities. Meanwhile, Female literacy is considered as significant indicator of educational development within any social group. Research studies have shown the importance of female literacy and education in uplifting the socio-economic parameters of a given society. In the context of tribal women in Jharkhand, illiteracy is so highly prevalent that their engagement with mainstream society is seriously limited. Education is a critical input in human resource development and is essential for the country's economic growth. (Kumar, 2008) It is due to the lack of education the Dalit women are not able to come out of their poverty and marginalized situations. Being illiterate they are not aware of their own rights and thus upper-caste people can easily exploit and oppress them. Mitra (2007) has analyzed the status of women among schedule tribes in India in comparison to mainstream Hindus, in terms of social and cultural practices. (Bhasin (2007) carried out her study about tribal women in different geographic regions i.e., Ladakh, North Eastern Region, and, Rajasthan and she found that tribal women possess a lot of importance in tribal communities. An empirical study on caste inequality and development in India by Borooah (2005) showed at least one-third of the average income generation differences between upper caste and SC/STs were due to unequal treatment of the latter.

**Objective:**

- To compare the educational status of ST and SC women through academic qualifications so far.
- To assess the educational and occupational gap between ST Women & SC women compared to their men counterparts.

**Educational Gap:**

Education_Status ST	%Male	%Female	Gap
Total	69.91	30.09	39.82
Illiterate	60.27	39.73	20.55
Literate	84.83	15.17	69.67
Literate but below matric/ secondary	85.70	14.30	71.40
Matric/ secondary but below graduate	84.57	15.43	69.14
Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	74.98	25.02	49.96
Graduate and above other than technical degree	80.80	19.20	61.60
Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	54.65	45.35	9.29

Source: Census of India,2001

Education_Status SC	%Male	%Female	Gap
Total	78.16	21.84	56.32
Illiterate	68.67	31.33	37.35
Literate	94.58	5.42	89.16
Literate but below matric/ secondary	94.33	5.67	88.66
Matric/ secondary but below graduate	96.34	3.66	92.68
Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	98.69	1.31	97.38
Graduate and above other than technical degree	96.56	3.44	93.11
Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	92.46	7.54	84.92

Source: Census of India,2001

Education_Status	ST_Gap	SC_Gap
Total	39.82	56.32
Illiterate	20.55	37.35
Literate	69.67	89.16
Literate but below matric/ secondary	71.40	88.66
Matric/ secondary but below graduate	69.14	92.68
Technical diploma or certificate not equal to degree	49.96	97.38
Graduate and above other than technical degree	61.60	93.11
Technical degree or diploma equal to degree or post-graduate degree	9.29	84.92

Source: Prepared by the author

Socio-cultural and traditional patriarchal societies, discourage ST women's working outside the house. The perception that women have a domestic role to play, leads to low female participation in formal and informal employment. Whereas, Tribal women are independent regarding economic status. In the tribal society, the birth of a girl is not looked down upon because they are considered as an economic asset. They participate in all agricultural operations (except ploughing) and work in all sectors of indigenous cottage industries, tribal, art, and, the production of art crafts. Women in tribal communities enjoy lots of freedom before and after marriage. The wife may divorce her husband on the grounds of cruelty, impotency, incompatibility, poverty, infidelity, or negligence. The role of women is not only of in social and economic activities, but her role in non-economic activities is equally important. The tribal women work hard and in some cases even more than the men. (Bhasin, 2007) They do household activities like cooking, cleaning, collection of fuel and fodder, looking after the child and old members of the family. They also manage to work outside the house as labour in farm as well as in construction work, brick kiln etc. They are free and independent in marketing of agricultural products. This disparity is even more remarkable among Scheduled Caste women, who have the lowest literacy rates in the State. Thus, the Dalit women often face the problem of food insecurity, malnutrition, lack of access to health care services and education and the victim of domestic violence and rape. Unlike, the other well-organized modern communities, the Dalit women and their communities are far behind in social networking.

**Occupational Gap:**

Tribe	%Male Worker	%Female Worker	Gap
Asur	69.53	30.47	39.06
Baiga	72.98	27.02	45.96
Banjara	56.02	43.98	12.05
Bathudi	66.44	33.56	32.88
Bedia	73.56	26.44	47.12
Bhumij	74.70	25.30	49.40
Binjhia	66.28	33.72	32.56
Birhor	63.89	36.11	27.78
Birjia	63.98	36.02	27.97
Chero	78.66	21.34	57.31
Chick Baraik	66.26	33.74	32.52
Generic Tribes etc.	71.11	28.89	42.22
Gond	70.64	29.36	41.29
Gorait	70.28	29.72	40.57
Ho	67.86	32.14	35.73
Karmali	81.02	18.98	62.04
Kharia	64.50	35.50	29.00
Kharwar	76.85	23.15	53.70
Khond	69.49	30.51	38.98
Kisan	68.94	31.06	37.88
Kora	78.16	21.84	56.33
Korwa	73.20	26.80	46.40
Lohra	71.73	28.27	43.46
Mahli	62.08	37.92	24.15
Mal Pahariya	70.81	29.19	41.63
Munda	66.45	33.55	32.89
Oraon	66.42	33.58	32.84
Parhaiya	73.56	26.44	47.12
Santhal	74.06	25.94	48.12
SauriaPaharia	64.93	35.07	29.86
Savar	66.19	33.81	32.38

Source: Census of India, 2001

Caste	% Male Worker	% Female Worker	Gap
Bantar	76.47	23.53	52.94
Baurri	81.57	18.43	63.14
Bhogta	74.41	25.59	48.81
Bhuiya	73.34	26.66	46.68
Chamar etc.	81.59	18.41	63.18
Choupal	88.14	11.86	76.27
Dabajar	71.86	28.14	43.73
Dhobi	82.53	17.47	65.06
Dom etc.	73.29	26.71	46.58
Dusadh etc.	84.71	15.29	69.42
Generic Castes etc.	81.92	18.08	63.85
Ghasi	72.97	27.03	45.94
Hair etc.	78.34	21.66	56.68
Halalkhor	85.83	14.17	71.67
Kanjar	57.83	42.17	15.66
Kuraiar	76.83	23.17	53.66
Lalbegi	73.22	26.78	46.44
Musahar	73.87	26.13	47.75
Nat	82.16	17.84	64.32
Pan etc.	72.44	27.56	44.89
Pasi	84.77	15.23	69.53
Rajwas	82.44	17.56	64.89
Turi	72.14	27.86	44.29

Source: Census of India,2001

Work participation	Male worker %	Female worker %	Gap
ST	69.70	30.30	39.39
SC	77.51	22.49	55.02

Source: Prepared by author

According to Census 2001, there are 32 tribes in Jharkhand, among which Santhals are most numerous accounting for one-third of the total tribal population followed by Munda, Oraon, and Ho contributing more than 10 % to the total tribal population. Other tribes of share as Lohra, Kharwar, Bhumij and Kharia have share of less than 3% each while Mahili, Mal Paharia, Chero and Bedia have share of 1-2 % each. The tribes Karmali, Gond, Chick Baraik, Kisan, SauriaPaharia, Korwa, Kora, Pahaaria, Binjhia, Asur an Birhor constituting less than 1 percent. The most marginalized tribes with less than 0.01 % are Savar, Birjia, Gorait, Baiga, Bathudi, Banjara, and Khond (Census 2001). Eight out of 32 tribes of Jharkhand fall under the Primitive Tribal Group (PTG). They are Asur, Birhor, Birjia, Korwa, Savar, Paharia, Mal Paharia and SauriaPaharia.

In the case of SC women, they are burdened to carry through a double whammy of caste and gender segregation shown through 22.4% participation as compare to men with 77.5% participation. As evident from the table the total Pasi, Nat and dhobi sub caste 69.5, 64.3, and 65.06 of gap in compare to to their male counterpart. The representation of chaupal women being 11.86% and that of males being 88.14 % of the gap of 76.2. These figures indicate a comparatively lower work participation of women with compare to men.

#### **Conclusion:**

While considering the status of occupation of ST/SC women in Jharkhand, it is important to consider a few trends to conclude. In Jharkhand, the possibility of Gender Disparity cannot be ruled out completely in ST women but is often regressive when it comes to Dalit women. It is true that, the Tribal women being economically poor and socially backward live at a low level of scale of quality-of-life. Women's unemployment rate is higher than that of men and far more men are part of formal and informal sectors for both ST and SC women. These tribal women are mostly illiterate and work in various sectors on a subsistence wage rate and comparatively more in education than SC women regressively marginalised in education qualification as well as occupational participation. Education is the single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. It is observed that the tribal women of Jharkhand have larger social and economic power and high status than the scheduled caste women.



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