

Socio- Economic Profile and Quality of Life Among the Birjia Tribe

(A Case Study of Sirsi Village, Mahuadanr Sub-Division of Latehar District, Jharkhand)

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Abstract

Survival and Social identification is the most problematic question in any given time. Today Primitive tribal groups are still surviving on their own ethnic way of living. Birjia one of the primitive tribes of Jharkhand, is struggling to cope up with the questions like development, status-quo of society and empowering themselves through economy. The present study analyses the situation of social-economic profile of Primitive tribal group, Birjia.

Key Words – social, economic, primitive tribe

Universe of the Study

Sirsi village is located in Mahuadanr sub-division of Latehar district, Jharkhand state. The total geographical area of the Sirsi village is 1375 hectares. Gram panchayat of the sirsi village is Netarhat and community development area and Sub- District Headquarter is Mahuadanr which is thirty-five kilometre away from the village. Parliamentary constituency is Chatra.

Statement of the Problem

Birjia primitive tribe is on the verge of extinction. The community's problems need to be outspoken by government and non-government agencies for the upliftment of Birjia Tribe urgently. The present study is an attempt to see the socio-economic profile and quality of life among the Birjia Tribe.

Objectives

- To study the social-status of primitive tribe of Birjia community.
- To study the awareness about their traditional administrative system.
- To examine the government schemes implementation in Sirsi village.
- To study the economic status of primitive tribe of Birjia community.

Research Methodology

The paper is descriptive in nature, primary and secondary data collection has been done through survey and interview method by the student of St. Xavier's College, Mahuadanr, Latehar, Jharkhand at Sirsi village. Journals and books have been used for secondary data.

Tools used for the study

A Questionnaire was prepared for the survey. The students of Political Science honours conducted the survey as well as interviews of Sirsi villagers in Mahuadanr sub-division of Latehar district, Jharkhand.

Introduction

Jharkhand has total 36 schedule tribal community out of which eight are primitive tribal communities. Primitive tribal community are those who are practicing ancient method of agriculture, diminishing in population, poor health, dependency on forest, economic deprivation, low or zero literacy rate. Sir. Herbert Risley was the first who made a comprehensive study of Birjia Primitive tribe through census of India in the year of 1931 (Gupta 2005).

It should be kept in mind that Primitive tribal groups are known as Primitive vulnerable groups (PTVs) ever since 2006 (Sahu. 2019). Dhebar Commission was the one who raised the voice for the upliftment of these groups.

During the sixth five year plan the special fund was allotted for the welfare of Birjia primitive tribe. Special central assistance was given to Birjia primitive tribe by granting aid under the article 275(1) of the Indian Constitution (kumari. 2006). Seventh year plan focused mainly to uplift tribal families in terms of making financially independent but all efforts and schemes failed (Kumari.2006) Still Government projects, non-government organizations and other groups are attempting to document the situation.

Birjia is one of the primitive tribes of Latehar district of Jharkhand state, India. Mainly found in Latehar, Palamu, Gumla district of Jharkhand state. Birjia tribe whole solely resides in hilly areas. The total population of Brijia primitive tribe is seven hundred and thirteen. Growth and declination of population is the subject to study which is directly connected to their development and availability of basic needs.

Discussion

Saving the primitive tribal groups are challenging as it has been noticed that due to lack of health facilities and availability of food and population has declined as the dependency lies on forest. on the other hand, some census shows that condition has been improved through government schemes.

Table: 1. Population Growth of Primitive Tribes in Jharkhand

Sex Ratio of Primitive Tribes in Jharkhand	Sex ratio		Child sex ratio	
	2001	2011	2001	2011
	962	991	992	998

Source: Office of the Registrar General and Census commissioner, GOI

Table, 2: Population Distribution of Birjia Primitive tribe of Sirsi village, sub-division Mahuadanr

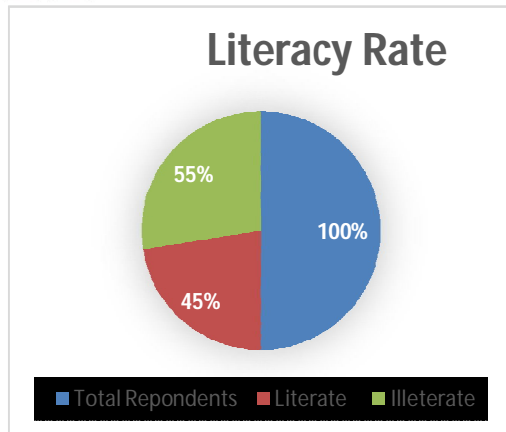
Male	Female	Total
354	359	713

Source: Field Survey, conducted by ST. Xavier's college Mahuadanr, 2023

Education

Sirsi village has the privilege of having only one primary school. Primary school teacher comes at 10 am in the morning and leaves the village at 11am, a serious issue needs to be addressed. It is one of the reasons that literacy rate is so lower. Therefore, village people do not get motivation for study and acquiring knowledge. The villagers cover one-hour uneven road to sub-division Mahuadanr to study further.

The total respondents were one hundred and twenty out of which 45 percentages are literate and fifty-five percentages are illiterate.

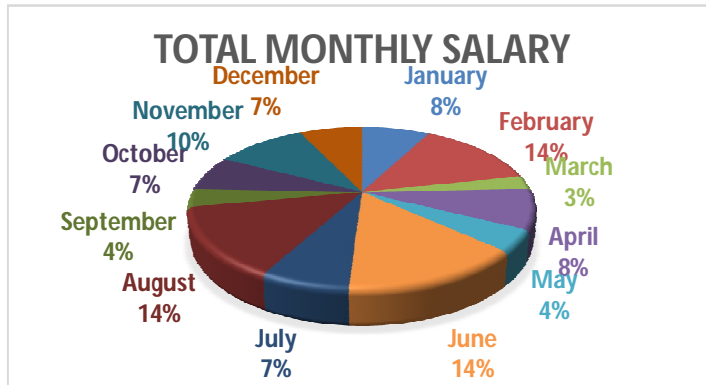


Societal organization

Birjia primitive tribe is very close knitted to their society. Their village head is known as 'Baiga', traditional mediator who performs rituals is known as 'Devar'. Birjia community does believe on traditional administrative system. Till now no case or disputes has been taken to police. Disputes are being resolved among the villagers through traditional administrative system. Sarhul, Karma, Kartak and Christmas are being celebrated by Birjia community. Different marriage practices are prevailed and re-marriage is also common in the community that shows the modern time practices. Separation from marriage costs to both parties. Labour offering is being practised by the society in village functions, for construction such as roads, dams and at the time of harvesting that shows the community bonding.

Economic Status

Primitive tribe of Birjia community mostly depends on forest produce and shifting agriculture that takes a lot of efforts and time and sometime outcome is not up to the expectation. In the present time economic strengthens is necessary to survive. Some villagers sometimes move towards cities to earn money however that is very minimal. Kachha road (no concrete road) make the situation worst to move outside of the village. The present diagram denotes the monthly and yearly percentage of salary.

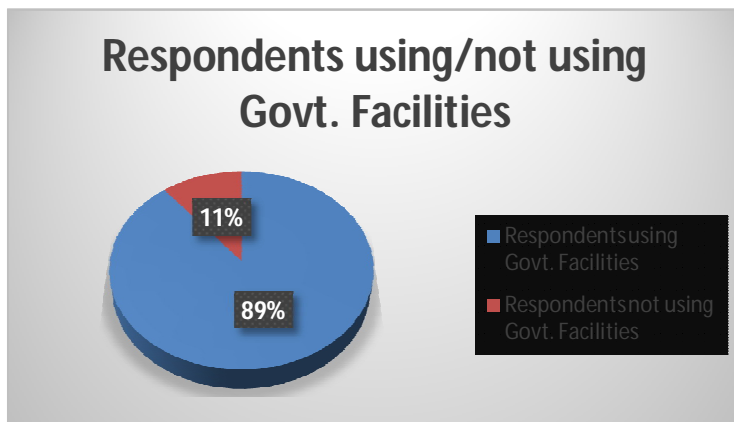


The average monthly salary of Birjia primitive tribe is very much minimal. Birjia primitive tribe mainly resides in forest areas. So Birjia’s dependency on forest leads them to poor economic status. Location is another main reason for lower level of economic access.

Table: 3, Beneficiary of government schemes

Total no of Respondent	No. of Respondents using Government Facility	No. of Respondents not using Government Facility
120	107	13

Source: Survey, conducted by ST. Xavier’s college Mahuadanr, 2023



Birjia community of Sirsi village avail facilities such as monthly ration that is meagre and not sufficient to survive. Only twenty households are benefiting from Indira Awasht yojna (house scheme), while others are having mud houses.

Findings

The growth in population has taken place since the census of 2011. Unavailability of middle and high school in the village are the main issues that of which villagers are not able to connect themselves with the outside world. Due to that new ideology or behaviour pattern are still same since decades. Socially Birjia community's behaviour is well democratic. Lack of survey in the formulating of schemes and dependency on middleman for development is the main reason of the failure. Unavailability of basic infrastructure such as roads, community health clinics, water well and transport facility is also the main reason of poor economic situation of Birjia primitive tribe.

Conclusion

Socially Birjia primitive tribe is developing and does not want to have connection with others but gradually change is taking place. Communication with outside world is necessary for social and economic changes. Several government projects have been run to uplift the primitive tribe of Birjia but off course not much difference has been made till date. Secondary schools are needed so that the awareness would take place regarding social and economic growth for the betterment of the primitive tribe of Birjia.

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