

Education and Economic Dimension of Tribal Women Empowerment in Mayurbhanj

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Abstract:

The study aims to study the empowerment of tribal women in relation to their education and economic aspects. 110 working women from a tribal community in Mayurbhanj district were selected and their data was collected using the regression method. The results showed that age and health status were significant at 5% level, while education, vocational training, occupation, amenities in the house, economic status, and individual property were significant at 1% level. This indicates that the empowerment of tribal women is determined by their age, health status, education, and vocational training, and occupation, amenities in the house, economic status, and individual property. However, family size indicates a negative significance of women empowerment. The study highlights the need for economic empowerment of tribal women to overcome inequality, discrimination, and exploitation, and achieve their overall development in society. The findings underscore the importance of empowering tribal women to overcome inequality and promote their overall development. The study examines the education and economic aspects of tribal women empowerment in Mayurbhanj, a district in Odisha, India, primarily inhabited by Scheduled Tribes. The study reveals challenges such as low literacy rates, poor access to quality education, and socio-cultural barriers. Despite government interventions, enrolment, and retention of tribal girls in schools remain problematic. Economically, tribal women are primarily engaged in agriculture, forest-based activities, and manual labour, often under precarious conditions. Government initiatives like Self Help Groups and income-generating schemes often fall short due to implementation gaps and cultural barriers. The study emphasizes the importance of improving access to quality education and economic opportunities for tribal women's empowerment.

Keywords: Education, Economic Dimensions, Tribal Women.

Introduction:

The empowerment of tribal women in Mayurbhanj, a district in Odisha, India, is a critical issue that intertwines education and economic dimensions, shaping their social and economic status. Mayurbhanj, with its diverse tribal communities, faces unique challenges in uplifting these women, who often grapple with systemic barriers and socio-cultural constraints.

Education serves as a fundamental pillar in the empowerment process. Historically, tribal women in Mayurbhanj have had limited access to quality education due to geographical isolation, socio-economic barriers, and traditional norms. The lack of educational opportunities not only hampers their personal development but also restricts their ability to participate meaningfully in the economic sphere.

Recent initiatives aim to improve educational access through scholarships, community schools, and awareness programs, which are crucial for breaking the cycle of poverty and ignorance.

Economically, tribal women in Mayurbhanj are often engaged in subsistence farming and traditional crafts. While these activities are vital for their survival, they are usually characterized by low productivity and limited market access. Economic empowerment strategies, therefore, focus on skill development, microfinance, and market linkages to enhance their income and economic independence. Programs aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, improving agricultural practices, and facilitating access to financial services are vital in transforming their economic landscape.

The intersection of education and economic empowerment is essential for the holistic development of tribal women. Educated women are more likely to engage in productive economic activities, advocate for their rights, and contribute to their communities' development. Thus, a synergistic approach that enhances both educational opportunities and economic conditions is key to fostering sustainable empowerment for tribal women in Mayurbhanj.

The empowerment of tribal women in Mayurbhanj, a district in Odisha, India, is crucial for social and economic development. These women have historically faced marginalization due to gender and ethnic discrimination. The process involves improving access to education, economic opportunities, healthcare, and decision-making power. Education is a foundational tool for tribal women, enabling them to gain knowledge, develop skills, and increase self-confidence. However, challenges such as inadequate access to schools, cultural norms prioritizing domestic responsibilities, and early marriage necessitate targeted policies and programs. Economic empowerment is another critical dimension, improving the standard of living and decision-making power within the household and community. Initiatives focusing on skill development, access to credit, and entrepreneurship can significantly enhance the economic prospects of tribal women. The intersection of education and economic empowerment is particularly important in Mayurbhanj, as educated and economically independent women are more likely to advocate for better health, education, and social services, leading to overall development.

Literature Review:

Literature on the basis of educational dimensions:

Devendra Bhukya (2013) The literacy rate of Scheduled Tribal's in Andhra Pradesh is low, particularly among tribal women. To improve their social position and ensure inclusive growth, government, NGOs, and voluntary organizations must implement policies and provide means to improve their social position, particularly through

education. Access to education widens social participation and contributes to inclusive growth.

Dr. G. Sahya Leoni(2022) Tribal women in rural and interior areas face low literacy due to remoteness, poverty, and lack of education. Economic and educational constraints limit their capacity for exploitation of resources. Empowerment and development for tribal women can only be achieved through education, and creating conducive environments for their participation in educational programs and economic development is necessary.

Literature on the basis of Economical Demand:

Dr. B. Suresh Lal (2016) The text emphasizes the need for improved educational facilities in tribal areas to eradicate illiteracy. It suggests strengthening government schools, discourages dropouts through incentives, and encourages interest in education. It also addresses discrimination between sons and daughters, dowry, and early marriages. It also calls for government hospitals to provide infrastructure and doctors to protect tribal households. The text also emphasizes the importance of women in society, stating that discrimination between men and women has been a problem for centuries. It calls for a holistic approach of 'live and let live' for the welfare of both genders.

G. Pushpalatha(2023) The study examines the empowerment of tribal women in Visakhapatnam district using regression statistical tools. The results show that age and health status are significant independent variables, while education, vocational training, occupation, house amenities, economic status, and individual property are significant independent variables. This suggests that the empowerment of tribal women is influenced by these factors.

Significance of the Study:

The study on the education and economic dimension of tribal women empowerment in Mayurbhanj, a district in Odisha, is crucial for understanding their status, opportunities, and barriers in education and economic development. It will provide insights into their current status, opportunities, and barriers in education and economic development. The impact

of education on empowerment will be assessed, highlighting its role in increasing literacy rates, promoting awareness, and developing decision-making abilities. The study could also assess the effectiveness of government policies aimed at improving educational opportunities for tribal women. Economic empowerment through employment, entrepreneurship, and financial inclusion is crucial for lifting tribal women out of poverty. The economic dimension may also focus on microfinance, self-help groups, and access to land. Understanding the cultural and traditional influences on tribal women's social roles and economic participation is essential for sustainable empowerment. The study could also highlight gender-based discrimination and social barriers faced by tribal women, such as early marriages, limited access to healthcare, and restrictions on mobility. Assessing the effectiveness of government initiatives aimed at empowering tribal women will provide valuable feedback for policymakers. The study will contribute to academic literature on gender studies, tribal development, and rural sociology, and influence policy decisions by highlighting effective pathways for empowering tribal women in marginalized communities.

Objectives:

1. To analyse the economic perspectives and level of satisfaction of tribal women engaged in the workforce.

2. To find out the association between the Education and economic aspects of tribal women with their selected demographic variables.

Hypothesis:

H_1 - There is no significant relationship between the economic perspectives and the level of satisfaction among tribal women engaged in the workforce.

H_2 - There is no significant association between the educational level of tribal women and their economic aspects with respect to selected demographic variables.

Methodology:

The study is based on primary data, the present researcher has selected four blocks from Mayurbhanj district, namely Bisoi, Bijatola, Rairangpur, and Tiring. four Blocks have a sizable presence of ST populationas per 2011 census Bisoi block (51723),Bijatola block (48627) ,Rairangpur block (32420) and Tiring block(42559) . These blocks were identified on the basis of a purposive random sampling basis and in further analysis. Since this study is aimed at the education and economic status of tribal women with reference to their empowerment in selected, 110 respondents comprised of tribal working women generally between the age group of 18-60 are considered. This study has adopted the following demographic criteria while selecting the required number of respondents from the sample demarked, for the purpose of this study:

Table-1: Frequency and percentage distribution (Age wise)

Age	f	%
18-25	5	4.54
26-33	20	18.19
34-43	56	50.91
>45	29	26.36
Total	110	100

The age distribution of the sample reveals that the majority of tribal women engaged in the workforce are in the 34-43 age range, accounting for 50.91% of the respondents. This suggests that women in this age group, likely with more experience and stability, dominate the workforce. A significant proportion

(26.36%) are aged 45 and above, indicating that older women also contribute to the workforce, possibly with years of experience. Fewer women fall into the younger age groups, with only 4.54% in the 18-25 range and 18.19% in the 26-33 range, highlighting lower participation from younger women.

Table-2: Frequency and percentage distribution (Religion wise)

Religion	f	%
Hindu	98	89.10
Christian	12	10.90
Total	110	100

The religion distribution in the sample shows that a significant majority, 89.10%, of the respondents identify as Hindu, while 10.90% are Christian. This

indicates that the sample is predominantly Hindu, which may reflect the religious composition of the community from which the respondents were drawn.

Table-3: Frequency and percentage distribution (Educational status wise)

Educational Status	f	%
Illiterate	23	20.90
Primary	22	20
Secondary	24	21.82
Undergraduate	7	6.37
Graduate	27	24.55
Postgraduate	7	6.36
Total	110	100

The educational status distribution reveals that a significant portion of the respondents has limited formal education. The largest groups are **illiterate** (20.90%), **primary education** (20%), and **secondary education** (21.82%), collectively accounting for over 60% of the sample. This indicates that many tribal women in the workforce have not completed higher levels of education. A

smaller percentage, 6.37%, have reached the **undergraduate** level, while 24.55% have attained **graduate** status, suggesting a relatively low but noteworthy level of higher education among some respondents. Interestingly, only a small portion (6.36%) has **postgraduate** qualifications, indicating that advanced education is less common in this group.

Table-4: Frequency and percentage distribution of vocational training

Vocational training	f	%
Yes	40	36.36
No	70	63.64
Total	110	100

The vocational training distribution indicates that 36.36% of the respondents have received vocational training, while a larger proportion, 63.64%, have not. This suggests that a significant number of tribal women in the workforce have not had access to or

the opportunity for vocational skills development, which could limit their employment options and economic mobility. On the other hand, the 36.36% who have received vocational training may have more specialized skills that could enhance their job prospects and contribute to higher job satisfaction.

Table-5: Frequency and percentage distribution profession

Profession	Frequency	Percentage
House wife	30	27.27
Government employee	10	9.10
Private employee	15	13.64
Labour	20	18.18
Business	30	27.27
Self employee	5	4.54
Total	110	100

The profession distribution reveals the diverse roles of tribal women in the workforce. The largest groups are **housewives** and those involved in **business**, each comprising 27.27% of the sample. This suggests that many tribal women either do not participate in formal employment or run their own businesses. **Labourers** represent 18.18% of the sample, indicating a significant portion of women are engaged in manual labour or informal work. A smaller percentage, 13.64%, work as **private**

employees, and 9.10% are **government employees**, reflecting a lower proportion of women in formal sector jobs. Finally, 4.54% of the women are **self-employed**, indicating that a small but notable group has entrepreneurial roles outside of traditional business structures. This distribution highlights that while some tribal women are involved in formal and self-employed professions, a significant number remain in traditional or informal sectors like housework, labor, and small businesses.

Table-6: Frequency and percentage distribution of type of family

Type of Family	f	%
Nuclear	35	31.82
Joint	50	45.46
Extended	25	22.72
Total	110	100

The distribution of family types shows that the majority of respondents, **45.46%**, live in **joint families**, suggesting that extended family systems are still prevalent in the community. This setup may offer additional support networks, though it could also influence women's roles and responsibilities

within the household. **31.82%** of the women live in **nuclear families**, indicating a significant portion of the population experiences more independent family structures, where decision-making might be more autonomous. The remaining **22.72%** belong to **extended families**, which are larger than nuclear families but not as expansive as joint families.

Table-7: Frequency and percentage distribution of type of house

Type of House	f	%
Pucca	15	13.64
Kacha	40	36.36
Tile	25	22.72
Thatched house	30	27.28
Total	110	100

The data on the type of houses shows that a majority of the surveyed households live in kacha houses, accounting for 36.36% (40 households). Following this, thatched houses represent 27.28% (30

households), suggesting that a significant portion of the population resides in more temporary or less durable housing. Tile houses make up 22.72% (25 households), indicating a smaller proportion of households with partially durable housing. The

smallest group is those living in pucca houses, comprising 13.64% (15 households).

Table-8: Satisfaction Level of tribal women towards Empowerment

Education and Economic aspects	Highly satisfied		Moderately satisfied		Not Satisfied	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Education facilities	95	86.36	10	9.09	5	4.55
Employment Status	40	36.36	60	54.55	10	9.09
Entrepreneurship Rate	75	68.18	20	18.18	15	13.64
Economic status	68	61.82	35	31.82	7	6.36

The table illustrates the satisfaction levels of tribal women regarding empowerment in education and economic aspects, focusing on education facilities, employment status, entrepreneurship rate, and economic status. A significant majority (86.36%) of women are highly satisfied with educational facilities, indicating substantial progress in this area, while a small percentage (9.09% moderately satisfied and 4.55% not satisfied) highlights minor gaps. In contrast, only 36.36% of women are highly satisfied with their employment status, with a majority (54.55%) moderately satisfied, and 9.09% dissatisfied, reflecting challenges such as limited job opportunities or skill gaps.

Entrepreneurship appears to be a relatively empowering area, with 68.18% of women

expressing high satisfaction, though 18.18% are moderately satisfied, and 13.64% are dissatisfied, likely due to issues like access to resources and mentorship. Regarding economic status, 61.82% of women are highly satisfied, suggesting improved financial conditions, while 31.82% are moderately satisfied, and 6.36% are dissatisfied, indicating persistent challenges for some. Overall, the findings reveal high satisfaction with education and entrepreneurship but moderate to low satisfaction with employment and economic opportunities, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to address barriers and enhance empowerment in these areas.

Table-9: Correlation between the economic perspectives and the level of satisfaction among tribal women

Correlations			
		Economic perspective	Level of satisfaction
Economic perspectives	Pearson Correlation	1	0.501
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.004
	N	110	110
Level of satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.501	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	110	110

The table highlights the correlation between economic perspectives and the level of satisfaction among tribal women. The Pearson correlation coefficient is **0.501**, indicating a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This implies that improvements in economic perspectives are associated with higher levels of satisfaction among tribal women.

The significance value (**Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.004**) is well below the standard threshold of 0.05, confirming that the observed correlation is statistically significant and not due to chance. With a sample size of 110, this analysis underscores the critical role of economic empowerment in enhancing satisfaction levels. It suggests that initiatives aimed at improving economic opportunities, financial security, and entrepreneurship could significantly

impact the well-being and satisfaction of tribal women.

Table-10: Association between the educational level of tribal women and their economic aspects with respect to selected demographic variables.

Demographic Variable	Chi-square	DF	p-value	Significance
Age	17.622	15	.000	Significant
Religion	20.143	5	.001	Significant
Vocational training	5.50	25	.000	Significant
Profession	7.018	25	.005	Significant
Type of family	18.305	25	.000	Significant
Type of house	12.959	15	.085	Not Significant

The analysis reveals significant associations between the educational level and economic aspects of tribal women and key demographic variables such as age, religion, vocational training, profession, and type of family. Age (Chi-square = 17.622, $p = 0.000$) and religion (Chi-square = 20.143, $p = 0.001$) significantly influence their economic and educational outcomes, reflecting the role of cultural and life-stage factors. Vocational training (Chi-square = 5.50, $p = 0.000$) and profession (Chi-square = 7.018, $p = 0.005$) are also strongly associated, emphasizing the importance of skill development and occupational status in enhancing economic empowerment. Family type (Chi-square = 18.305, $p = 0.000$) further highlights the influence of household dynamics. However, the type of house (Chi-square = 12.959, $p = 0.085$) does not show a significant association, suggesting that housing conditions alone are not a strong determinant of educational or economic status. These findings underscore the need for interventions that address these demographic factors to foster the empowerment of tribal women.

Conclusion

The educational and economic dimensions of tribal women empowerment in Mayurbhanj highlight the intricate interplay between demographic factors and their empowerment. Significant associations are observed between age, religion, vocational training, profession, and family type, demonstrating the critical influence of these factors on educational and

economic outcomes. Vocational training and professional opportunities emerge as pivotal contributors to economic empowerment, while cultural and household dynamics significantly shape access to education and economic stability. However, housing conditions do not show a significant impact, indicating that infrastructure alone may not drive empowerment. These findings underscore the need for targeted, multi-faceted strategies that address age-appropriate interventions, cultural sensitivities, skill development, and occupational support to enhance the empowerment of tribal women in the region.

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