

Empowerment of Adult Ho women's in Family Roles: A Case Study of Thakurmunda Block, Mayurbhanj District, Odisha

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Abstract-This paper attempt to analyze status of tribal women and decision making empowerment in Odisha highlights in the issues and challenges of tribal HO women empowerment. The status of women in a society is a significant reflection of the level of social justice in that society. Women's status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as their roles within the family, the community and society. In Tribal communities, the role of women is substantial and crucial. For the accelerated socio-economic development of any community, the active participation of women is essential. In Indian society, their participation must be ensured through tangible measures, taken at various levels, which results in their empowerment in the real sense. Empowerment of women is one of the concepts that have developed in connection with improving their status. Empowerment includes higher literacy levels, education, better healthcare, equal ownership of productive resources, and increased participation in economic and commercial sectors, awareness of rights and responsibilities, improved standards of living, self-reliance, self-esteem and self-confidence. Raising the status of tribal women is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic one. This study aims to explore the women's movement has had a positive impact on gender equality, as in many countries wives hold a n equal position with their husbands when making decisions about family (married women) of Ho tribe, the total 180 women from four villages in the Mayurbhanj region by assessing their gender role empowerment. Today adult women's Ho in family role or decision making power is very important to the society. The decision making of the Ho women's they are increasingly involved in household and community decisions, bringing diverse perspectives that lead to more effective development. Also they often manage crucial resources like water, fuel, and food, ensuring family and community wellbeing. The focused primarily on women's suffrage and legal rights, particularly voting rights. Tribal women are one of the central issues in the process of development all over

the world. It is a multifaceted, multi-dimensional and multi layered concept. Women empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over material, human and intellectual resources as well as control over decision-making in the home, community, society and nation. However, the tribal women faced many problems in our society. There is basic cultural and psychological tendency on the part of men to dominate the women, which is also seen among the tribal men. The tribal women of Odisha have been enjoying honorable position in their respective communities, they play important role in socio-cultural, political as well as economic life. Tribal Women are constituted with 62 categories of Odisha. Out of them 15 tribal are major categories. They have various role perceptions in different issues on livelihood programs, the development and major irrigation projects, etc.

Keyword: Adult, HO women, Family role, Empowerment, Decision making, Mayurbhanj, Thakurmunda, Odisha.

I. INTRODUCTION

Empowerment of tribal women, especially in terms of economic independence and self-reliance, is an important concern in the broader discourse on inclusive development in India. The Ho tribes of Odisha, who live mainly in the Mayurbhanj region, provide an interesting case study among other tribal populations due to their unique socio-cultural practices, economic hardships, and the changing role of women in community development. The Ho tribe, which falls under the Scheduled Tribe (ST) category, has a strong sense of cultural identity and traditional lifestyles that are deeply connected to the natural environment. However, tribal women in this category have historically had limited access to formal employment, healthcare, education, and decision-making opportunities, like many other

tribal groups. Despite their important role in agriculture, forest-based livelihoods, and household management, their contributions are often overlooked or undervalued. In recent years, government and non-government efforts have attempted to address the economic vulnerability of tribal women through skill development programs, Self-Help Groups (SHGs), microfinance initiatives, and livelihood promotion schemes. In patriarchal tribal communities, women's representation in tribal councils and village assemblies remains severely limited. Traditional governance structures often prioritize male authority, excluding women from decision-making and leadership roles due to entrenched cultural norms and gender biases. Women's voices are frequently side-lined in matters of resource allocation, community development, and conflict resolution, perpetuating inequality.

Women empowerment mainly refers to the practices of making women independent so that they can make their own decisions as well as handle their lives without any familial or societal restrictions. In simple terms it entitles women to take charge of their own personal development. Since women have always been the oppressed ones in a patriarchal society, the main motive of women empowerment is to help them stand equally with men. It is a foundational step to ensure the prosperous growth of a family as well as the country. Empowering women, the world would definitely witness gender equality and help women from every stratum of society stand on their own and steer their lives as per their own wisher.

Women empowerment is the process of giving women the ability to live a happy and respected life in society. Women are empowered when they have unrestricted access to chances in a range of domains, such as education, profession, and lifestyle among tribes it involves things like education, awareness, literacy, and training to help them improve their position it also involves decision-making authority. A woman feels powerful when she takes a significant decision. Empowering women is the most important factor in a country's overall growth. If a household has just one earning, who will have a better standard of living the solution is straightforward; a household in which both men and women work. As a result, a country where men and women work together grows more quickly.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Manna, A. (2024), the report explores the status and functioning of tribal women in India, with a focus on gender equality and their empowerment. It draws attention to persistent problems such as low literacy, ill health and restricted access to essential services. The authors emphasize the need for proactive measures to ensure equal participation and economic empowerment of tribal women, including women from the Ho tribes. In addition, the report highlights legal gaps and makes recommendations to enhance the socio-economic status of tribal women in India and advance gender equality.

According to Singh, R. K. (2024), education plays a fundamental role in the economic empowerment of tribal women, in particular among marginalized communities like the Ho tribes of Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The study emphasizes that education not only develops the personal empowerment of women but also contributes to broader socio-economic development and nationwide growth. Singh noted that tribal women face several barriers in accessing education, including low literacy levels, socio-cultural barriers, financial poverty and boundless institutional support. The research shows that the educational status of tribal women is appreciably lower than that of men and other social groups, which limits their participation in economic and developmental processes. Overall, the study highlights the need for complete educational policies and empowerment programmes to address gender inequality among tribal communities and support sustainable development.

According to Jena, S.K., (2024), this examines menstrual understanding, sanitation and information difficulty surrounded by young girls in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. The research opens that due to customary beliefs and cultural taboos, teenagers with low educational achievement face major challenges in menstrual sanitation organization. These barriers regularly limit girls' involvement in education and group of people activities, so touching their generally well-being and social growth. This study highlights the urgent need for under fire intervention in education and health knowledge to support and empower youth girls in tribal areas to accept good menstrual sanitation organization.

According to Shinde, A. A. I. and Rajdeep, S. (2022), women enjoyed a high social and spiritual status in ancient Indian culture during the Vedic period, where they were accorded respect and strong commitment from their husbands before marriage. However, in later times, women became dependent and were subjected to various forms of discrimination and oppression, including social, physical and psychological hardships. The authors argue that women's empowerment is essential for national and economic development, including increased self-confidence, awareness of rights and the ability to affect change. They distinguish between political empowerment, which ensures women's right to vote and participate in governance and economic empowerment, which enables women to participate in and benefit from the development process. The study emphasizes that in the 21st century, achieving a truly egalitarian society requires removing barriers that limit women's participation in the family, social change, entrepreneurship, leadership and political representation, thereby promoting inclusive and sustainable progress.

According to Panda (2021), tribal women face more neglect and rejection than men despite shouldering more household responsibilities. The exclusion of women from traditional knowledge systems and economic activities, coupled with their limited access to and control over resources, negatively impacts the overall development of tribal societies. This study emphasizes the need to restore agro-based value chains to ensure sustainable livelihoods by creating supportive institutions and functional frameworks for environmentally friendly growth. Using the cashew model, it shows that there is considerable potential to increase the economic and social inclusion of tribal's and other marginalized groups in Nabarangpur district by revitalizing the cashew value chain and promoting small business development. This potential is supported by the fact that more than one-fourth of the land area of the district is covered by forests.

According to Choudhury, A., Rawal, S.K., and Mete, J.K. (2021), the empowerment of Indian tribal women is closely linked to their socio-economic status. Education forms the foundation on which the entire fabric of a nation's thinking and action is built. A society can be considered truly educated only when it achieves linguistic development. Tribal

leaders understand the important role of education in improving the lives of their people. Education plays a vital role in shaping the economic status of individuals. While 15 to 20 percent of India's non-tribal population lives in poverty, about 50 percent of the tribal population remains poor. Historically, for nearly six centuries, the traditional tribal education system served the evolving economic and political needs of India.

According to Mana R. (2017) in the book "Women's Empowerment in a Changing Indian Society: A Challenge for the 21st Century", edited by Mallick, Choudhury and Sarkar, the author claims that educating a woman leads to the education and advancement of the entire family, while educating a man benefits only the individual. This perspective emphasizes the broader understanding that women's empowerment is essential for social progress, as it expands women's access to education, economic opportunities, healthcare and decision-making power. Empowering women strengthens families, enhances community well-being and promotes inclusive development by enabling women to participate fully in social, economic and political life.

STUDY OF OBJECTIVE

1. To empower the Ho tribe women to actively participate in family roles.
2. To improve awareness of women's rights and responsibilities within the family.
3. To promote equal roles and mutual respect between men and women in the family.

METHODS: The researcher is based on primarily field work. Ultimately both primary and secondary sources in nature empowerment of the adult ho tribal women's in Mayurbhanj district Odisha.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION: Present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through a structured self-administered questionnaire from the respondents and external secondary data obtained from the outside sources.

SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION METHODS: Secondary data collection involves analyzing existing data to provide context, validate primary findings and situate the study within broader research and policy frameworks. Government reports, NGO documents and journals are key sources for understanding the socio-economic landscape of Ho tribal women.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Table-1: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	23	12.7%
26-30	43	23.8%
35-40	62	34.4%
45-50	52	28.8%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

The table -1: the age distribution of the tribal women in four villages, Mandajari, Badbalipasi, Chirupada and Keshadiha (Galasahi) of Mayurbhanj district. Age is an important factor in this research because it often affects the level of social roles, responsibilities, and economic empowerment among the women of tribal communities. Age 20-25 group are 12.7% of respondents, 23.8% are (26-30) groups respondents, and the 34% are respondents (35-40) groups, and 28.8% respondents are (45-50) groups.

Table-2: Education of the Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	60	33%
primary	78	43%
Higher secondary	40	22%
graduate	1	0.5%
Post- graduate	1	0.5%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

Education equips individuals from varied backgrounds with essential resources, fostering confidence and problem-solving abilities to navigate life's challenges. This study examines the impact of educational attainment on economic empowerment among Ho tribal women in the villages of Mandaljari, Badbalipasi, Chirupada and Keshidiha (Galasahi) within the Thakurmunda block of Odisha. Mayurbhanj district. Based on respondents' educational attainment, this ranges from no education to graduation, Table-2 Illiterate are the 33% respondents, 43% are the respondents primary, and 22% respondents are the Higher secondary 0.5% respondent is the graduate, and 0.5% is respondents post-graduate

Table-3: Income of the Respondents

Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below-10,000	57	31%
10,001-20,000	70	39%
20,001-30,000	31	17%

30,001-40,000	14	8%
Above-40,001	8	4%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

Distribution of income among tribal women respondents this table provides an insight into the annual household income of the respondents, showing significant variation: the role of financial access in influencing entrepreneurship, particularly among tribal women. Here is a clear explanation: The Impact of Financial Resources Access to finance is critical to starting and running a business. High-achieving entrepreneurs are in a better position to deal with day-to-day challenges and promote the growth of their ventures. 31% respondents are (below-10,000), 39% respondents (10,001-20,000), and the 17% respondents are (20,001-30,000), 8% of women's respondents (30,001-40,000), and the 4% is the very lowest above-40,001 respondents of the Ho tribes.

Table-4: Occupation of the Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Housewife	10	5.5%
Farmer	47	26%
Daily Labour	30	16%
Petty Business	41	23%
Govt. Job	15	8%
Self-employed	37	20.5%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

Table-4: offers an in-depth analysis of occupations that support the economic empowerment of women in the Thakurmunda block of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha. The data demonstrate how various roles and levels of professional experience allow women to contribute economically, utilizing their skills and knowledge across different empowerment activities. Only small 5.5% of women were categorized solely as housewives with no additional income generating activities. 26% women's are respondent's farmer is highest, and the 20.5% respondents are self-employed, 23% respondents are the petty Business of the Ho tribe, and 16% respondents are the Daily labour and the lowest participate in Govt. Job 8% respondents Ho tribe women's in Odisha.

Table-5: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status	frequency	Percentage
Married	157	87%
Unmarried	13	7%
Others	10	5%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

The table analyzes in the relationship between tribal women from Thakurmunda Block in Mayurbhanj District, Odisha and their marital status and economic empowerment. As to research, marriage can provide social acceptance and security, which could help indigenous women become more economically empowered. Women often contribute to the economic activities of their spouses or family members, enhancing their own financial potential. The clearly known 87% respondents are the married women's and 7% respondents are unmarried women's 5% respondents are the others (widow, separate).

Table-6: Family Size of the Respondents

Family Size	Frequency	Percentage
1-3	48	26%
4-6	87	48%
7-9	45	25%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

The importance of the family as the main social unit is highlighted by Table-6, which shows the family structure among women of the Ho tribe. According to the data, 48 people or 26% of the respondents are part of small families with 1-3 members. On the other hand, the most frequent family size was between 4-6 members, accounted for by 48% (87 people) of all families, with nuclear families being preferred over traditional joint families. Additionally, 25% of households include 7-9 people (25 people), which is the second highest category in various areas. Overall, the shows that the Ho tribe of Odisha is showing a change in family size, with a marked improvement in family structure and a trend towards unclear families.

Table-7: Involved in SHG Group status of the respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	103	57%
No	77	43%
Total	180	100

Sources of the field studies

It is noted that the data in Table-7 shows the extent of participation in self-help groups in a particular study on Ho tribe women of Thakurmunda block of Mayurbhanj district. (SHGs). For example, it indicates that 57% of respondents are members of self-help groups, showing strong interest in these groups that focus on empowering women and improving their socio-economic status. On the other hand, 43% of respondents are not included, which suggests that a significant segment of the population

may not benefit from the benefits these groups offer. Further research is needed to identify the origins of these disparities in participation and the potential impact on livelihoods and community dynamics.

Table-8: Who Decides the Selection of Bride/ Bridegroom?

	Frequency	Percentage
You	33	18%
Head of the family	80	44%
Only husband	16	9%
Both of you	51	28%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

Based on the information provided it seems that among the sample of 180 respondents, Table-8 presents the data on who makes the decision regarding the choice of bride. 18% of the decisions about the choice of bride are made by the respondents themselves. 44% head of the family are taken by the head of the household only. This indicates a strong influence of family elders in the selection process. In 9% cases, only the husband (probably the respondent) is involved in making the selection decision. For 28% of the respondents both the (respondent) and the head of the household are involved in decision making. It adds up to 100% response, detailing how decisions are distributed among different family members.

Table-9: Who decides in the household whether children to be education?

	Frequency	Percentage
You	70	39%
Only husband	29	16%
Both of You	62	34%
Head of the family	19	10%
Total	180	100.0%

Sources of the field studies

Tribal households 'impacts on children's education is included in Table-9, along with the part that women play in making decisions about education. The results show that 39% of mothers who responded feel they have a good deal of control over their children's education. In addition, 34% of participants said their parents work together to make decisions. 16% of respondents stated that the leader of the household (mainly male adults) makes the primary decision, while 10% stated that only the spouse makes educational decisions for their children. This research demonstrates that women, either individually or with their husbands are frequently crucial to educational decisions,

emphasizing a positive trend of mothers actively participating in supporting their children's education

within tribal communities.

FIELD STUDY PHOTO



Figure-1: Diri dul sunum Traditional rituals play by women's



Figure-2: Bride Price of HO Tribe



Figure-3: Cutting the food for by mother



Figure-4: The Ho women participate homework



Figure-4: clear the paddy by HO Tribe Women



Figure-5: Collecting the paddy of land



Figure-6: Jema go to forest with goat



Figure-7: Discuss the Ho Origin of Respondents



Figure-8: Leaf plate making of the respondents

IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study enclosed decision-making in the tribal women's Odisha families in order to purchase the family members. Women are both family finance managers and family household managers. The women are positioned an inferior to man member, they did not have the choice to reject the tasks. They arrange the family incomes which not enough to cover a month of half month for family expenses. These also make men feel superior to women, the purchasing of family. Finally, this chapter is useful for future research, particularly to investigate the comparison between east and west women in the decision-making to purchase a holiday whether for herself or for families.

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