

Journal of Adivasi and Indigenous Studies (JAIS)

(A bi-annual peer-reviewed online journal posted on Academia.edu)

Vol. XII, No.1, February 2022:1-15

©2022JAIS, ISSN (online) 2394-5524

An Assessment of Gender Inequality in Educational and Occupational Participation among Displaced Adivasi Population in Rourkela, Odisha

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Abstract

In India, the indigenous communities are not part of the caste system and are hence considered to be more egalitarian than others. Compared to the women in other caste groups, Adivasi women enjoy relatively greater independence and rights in their community. Development-induced displacement as a part of the nation-building process in the post-independence period has largely constrained Adivasis', especially Adivasi women's access to traditional livelihood sources. This process, on the other hand, exposed them to the dominant socio-economic system and consequently reshuffled the gender relation. This is quite evident among the displaced Adivasi population of Rourkela, an industrially prosperous city in the state of Odisha. Our study shows that a substantial gender disparity in educational and occupational status has emerged in the resettlement colonies of the displaced Adivasi population. This disparity among Adivasis is largely attributed to the gender-based prejudices, developed among them as they interacted with the dominant socio-economic structure; and the existence of labour market discrimination in those areas.

Keywords: *Adivasis, displacement, Adivasi women, education, employment*

Gender relation in Adivasi Society

The caste system has been an integral part of Indian society since time immemorial. Under this system, people are divided into various socio-economic hierarchical groups based on their birth in various communities. The rights movements since the colonial period and the structural changes in the economy allowed some fraction of the population at the bottom of the caste ladder to progress economically. However, they could not move up the ladder since the social stratification under this system is characterised by endogamy and hereditary transmission of social position. Besides, this caste system also embraces patriarchal norms which must be followed by women irrespective of caste groups.

The indigenous¹ society does not come under the purview of the caste system. Their society is less affected by caste norms and thus is regarded as a relatively more egalitarian society. Moreover, Adivasi women enjoy relatively more freedom and rights in their society vis-à-vis women in other caste groups. Nevertheless, in indigenous society, the roles of male and female are also defined and demarcated like in non-indigenous society. For instance, in an agricultural Adivasi household, while the male member is assigned to carry out the ploughing job, the female member is involved in sowing and weeding. Within agricultural activities, ploughing holds higher occupational position compared to the other agricultural activities. It can be easily observed in the Adivasi areas in particular and rural India in general, wherein the wage for ploughing is relatively higher than that of the sowing and weeding (Reddy 2018). But the gender relation in Adivasi society differs from that of non-Adivasi society. This difference can be made in two ways. Firstly, although Adivasis primarily engage in agricultural activities, the food crops just meet a fraction of their livelihood demand. This is because they largely own non-arable land and their crop production depends on the seasonal rainfall (Nancharaiah 2000; Kujur et al 2020). The forest contributes a substantial portion to their economic living. In the forest economy, Adivasi women increasingly participate and their significant contribution to the household income is visible unlike in the agricultural activities (Ramdas 2009). Therefore, Adivasi women's contribution is well recognised in the household as well as in society. Secondly, unlike non-Adivasi society, the valorisation of domestic work is not prevalent in the Adivasi society. Although Adivasi women increasingly carry out domestic work, they are not

¹ In this paper we use terms indigenous people, Adivasis, and Scheduled tribe interchangeably. The term 'Adivasi' or 'indigenous people' is used as a word of self-esteem and pride contrast to the term 'tribe' or 'tribal' which is an insulting and demeaning word. For more details visit Xaxa (1999) and Omvedt (2011).

forbidden or demotivated to work outside their home. This differing gender relation in Adivasi society provides relatively greater rights and freedom to Adivasi women (Kujur 2017; Boserup et al 2007). However, it would not be feasible to generalise the degree and extent of conceived gender parity in the indigenous society unless it is studied more deeply and thoroughly. There are 705 ethnic communities notified as Scheduled Tribes (STs) residing in different parts of India (Census of India 2011). These communities are heterogeneous in terms of their languages, livelihoods, cultural aspects and demographic characteristics. Therefore, the social status and position of a woman in indigenous society are not likely to be the same across all the communities.

Virginius Xaxa (2004) explicitly reviewed various studies on the status of women in the indigenous society. While reviewing some crucial literature on both the high and low status of women, he delineated that scholars have conceived the status of women from two viewpoints. The first one deals with women's role, which refers to their rights and duties. Second refers to social status in terms of prestige and honour, which have been studied on the basis of prevalent dominant value system or European Enlightenment values i.e. liberty, equality and fraternity. However, he claims that the status of Adivasi women is hardly studied with reference to the values prevalent in indigenous society. Land right to women in indigenous society is one of the much discussed topics in the dominant pedagogy. In many indigenous communities, land was not considered private property but rather owned by lineage. However, over time, the form of land ownership was transformed into private property, but women were denied a share over it. Such rules are prevalent in the indigenous society and it is believed to have been adopted to prohibit the transfer of land to the non-Adivasi communities. There were legal provisions both in the British period and post-colonial period such as Chhotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908, Santhal Pargana Tenancy Act, 1876, Excluded and Partially excluded area in the Government of India Act, 1935 and the Fifth and Sixth scheduled areas which were passed between September 5-7, 1949. These provisions prohibit the transfer of land from Adivasis to non-Adivasi people. Therefore, historically, non-Adivasis used the tactic of concubines to usurp Adivasis' land which eventually compelled the indigenous society in certain regions such as Chhotanagpur and Andhra Pradesh to deny land rights to the women (Singh 1988; Bhukya 2012; Jayakumar 1995). Further, to cease such land transfer practices, Adivasi communities are believed to have prohibited their own community from marrying non-Adivasi people.

Displacement and gender relations in Adivasi society

The gender inequality in Adivasi society was deepened when the modern governance system was introduced and non-Adivasis migrated to the Adivasi regions. This process was accompanied by the establishment of various development projects and other economic activities. Resultantly, Adivasis had to be relocated from their traditional places mostly to the urban periphery where they were subjected to acculturation and assimilation process. The acculturation and assimilation of them occurred in two stages. At the outset, their lifestyle, culture, traditions, ethos, social norms and regulations were defined as outdated and primitive. This process demonised the indigenous way of life and subsequently persuaded them to emulate the dominant culture. The second step is, altering and preventing them from accessing their traditional space and the material world that shape their socio-economic relations and ethos and societal norms. The relocation of Adivasis due to development projects constrained their access to traditional livelihood and socio-economic setup, and spurred their interaction with the dominant society. This brought forth a socio-economic configuration in the Adivasi society.

The assimilation and acculturation process has led to an immense loss of their culture, social norms and way of life (Padel & Das 2008). Adivasi women, on the other hand, were forced to relinquish their relative autonomy in society as their roles and contribution to society and the economy were redefined based on the dominant perspective. The impacts of relocation especially on Adivasi women can be described in two ways. Firstly, Adivasi women faced ill effects of inter-sectionality in the non-traditional modern labour market. Hence, their work activity was constrained to either unpaid domestic work or low paid casual work in the labour market (Mazumdar 2016; Mosse et al 2010; Chatterjee 2001; Besky 2014; Thakur 2018). Secondly, their limited participation in economic activities and internalisation of dominant culture i.e. dowry, humility to husband, etc. strengthened the patriarchal norms among them (Fernandes & Raj 1992; Sahoo 1996; Kujur 2017).

The change in gender relations after their relocation is reflected in terms of their socio-economic participation. The status of women in the Adivasi society is often analysed through the assignment of property rights, physical mobility, choice of marriage and divorce, decision-making process and access to resources. However, their equal access to opportunity is often relegated. Their access to education, workplace and modern occupation in relation to men is sidelined while analysing the gender equality in their society. To address this lacuna, the

current study attempts to specifically analyse the educational and occupational differences between Adivasi female population and Adivasi male population in the post-displacement period. The study also attempts to specify how the dominant socio-economic structure influences the gender relations in the Adivasi society in the post-displacement period. The paper discusses the issue under three sections. In the first section, we review some relevant literature to understand the impact of displacement on Adivasi women. In the second section, we discuss the educational and occupational differences among male and female Adivasis, and then we analyse the improvement in occupational status in association with their educational participation. The last section summarises the findings and generates a discussion on it and finally offers some policy measures to improve the socio-economic conditions of female Adivasis in the post-displacement period.

An Overview of Literature

It is believed that development-induced displacement costs women more than it does to their male counterparts. Its impact is felt not in the economic living alone but also in the social arena as well (Fernandes 2008). The impact of alienation from natural resources on Adivasi women is manifold. Fernandes and Menon (1987) in their study in Odisha and Chhattisgarh observed that due to deforestation Adivasi women were forced to bear an extra workload because of the increasing distance of the forest. In those states, the distance has increased from around one km from the village in the 1960s to more than five km in the 1980s. This put more workloads and stress on Adivasi women since it has resulted in longer work hours. In contrast, Fernandes and Raj (1992), in their study on Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Jharkhand, Kerala, and Odisha delineated that the alienation of natural resources resulted in a decline in their workload. However, this also has a negative impact on them. That is, it has affected their morale as much as the additional workload since they ceased to be economic assets of their family. Thus, their economic contribution to the family has declined which led to the deterioration of their social status.

The integration of the Adivasi areas with the urban areas due to development projects brings forth manifold impacts on the lives of Adivasi women. It is also noted that the urban environs have influenced Adivasis in both upper and lower economic stratum differently. A study by Punalekar (1988) on Adivasis in Gujarat explicates that Adivasi women from well off sections managed to acquire good education and emulate the urban way of living, and norms and practices of women from other dominant caste groups. They also simultaneously de-

emphasised their traditional customs and practices. The emulation of dominant culture and improvement in economic condition together induced the withdrawal of Adivasi female labour force participation from the labour market (Burman 1988). Particularly, their withdrawal from the labour market was more pronounced in places where Adivasis formed minority in terms of demographics and ethnicity or where the multi castes existed since in such places Adivasi society dissolved into the dominant socio-economic structure (Xaxa 2004).

Antithetically, these factors did not necessarily always force Adivasi women to withdraw from the labour force. For instance, the Bhagat community in eastern India who were relatively more influenced by the dominant culture did not witness withdrawal of women from agriculture and allied activities. Further, the male members although were employed in high paid jobs, Adivasi women did not desist themselves from their usual agricultural works. On the other hand, Adivasi women particularly from the lower stratum were forced to discontinue their education in order to join the labour force to earn for the family. They also developed a sense of insecurity and dependence, and their choice of work and wage were mostly decided by their fathers and husbands apart from other external factors (Xaxa 2004).

Besides these, Adivasi women encountered gender discrimination in the labour market after relocation. Although access to work declined for both males and females, it was the female population who faced work constraints. Firstly, after displacement, wherever the project affected families were provided with employment opportunities, it was mostly the male members of the family who were exclusively granted the job as the head of the household. Secondly, the females who wanted to join the outdoor work were left with no alternatives other than undertaking unskilled low paid manual jobs. Thirdly, the alienation from land and natural resources put an extra burden on them as they were required to attend to their traditional household activities with limited resources. Because of the extra burden, they also relinquished their wish to be self-employed and involved directly in the production process (Thekkekkara 1993; Fernandes 2008).

Furthermore, dispossession of land and natural resources engendered a decline in the number of Adivasi cultivators which is gendered in nature. On account of dispossession, the rate of decline in female cultivators was higher than that of the male cultivators-indicating female farmers and female-headed households faced a greater degree of vulnerability. Consequently, the rate of increase in the female agricultural labourers and female casual workers is higher than that of the male (Prasad 2014).

Gender Inequality in Educational and Occupational Participation

There is a paucity of research on how gender differences arise among Adivasis in terms of educational and occupational participation once they are forcefully relocated into other areas. Although gender inequality among Adivasis in the post-displacement period is studied well from different perspectives, the determinants of their educational and occupational differences were overlooked. Therefore, in the current study, we attempt to map the gender inequality in educational and occupational participation and changing preferences for both the male and female participation among the displaced Adivasis.

Study Area, Data Source and Methods

The minerals, the primary needs of the industries are abundantly available in the Adivasi dominated areas. This is the reason why the Adivasi areas are targeted for land acquisition for development projects. The state of Odisha is one of the most resource-rich states and contains the largest number of Adivasi communities i.e. 62 compared to other states/UTs. Adivasi population constitutes about 22 per cent of the population in the state (Census of India 2011). Sundargarh district in the state of Odisha occupies a prominent position in the mineral map of India. Most essential minerals such as iron ore, manganese ore, lead ore, limestone, dolomite and quartz are found in this district. Other valuable minerals like fireclay, coal and bauxite are also found in the district. The district has six industrial areas: Rourkela, Commercial Estate, Kalunga, Mandiakudar, Rajgangpur and Sundargarh. The district has 11,171 total industrial units, out of which only 4,182 are registered.

Moreover, among the large and medium scale industries only 75 are registered (Ministry of MSME 2016). There are a total of 605 mining leases in Odisha. The largest numbers of mining leases i.e. 130 (21.5 per cent of total mining leases) are in Sundargarh district covering an area of 20,017.210 ha (Murty and Rao 2006). Besides all these, the district also consists of five medium and four small dams. Rourkela is situated on the bank of rivers Koel and Brahmani in this district. The population of the city is around 5.36 lakhs (Census of India 2011). Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) is the oldest integrated steel plant in the public sector in India. It was set up with West German collaboration with the capacity of 1 million tonnes in the late 1950s and went into operation in the 1960s. Now it is operated by the Steel Authority of India. Mandira Dam was also constructed over the river Sankh to meet the water requirement of the Rourkela Steel Plant. The giant Rourkela Steel Plant invited many ancillary industries in the area and thereby dispossessed thousands of Adivasi population from their land. The industrial expansion thus created a situation of de-peasantisation among Adivasis by turning them merely into casual

labour in the urban areas. Further, the pro-market reforms by means of privatisation and globalisation gave rise to the predicament of labour (Strumpell 2014). Adivasis who were initially hoped to be absorbed by the industries in the newly developed city ended up working as unskilled manual labourers in the city's informal sector (Oraon 2012).

To capture the pernicious impact of dispossession by Rourkela Steel Plant, we collected data through a field survey in the resettlement colonies in Jhirpani, Jaydega and Lachada. All the available displaced Adivasi households (HHs) in these resettlement colonies, that is 94 HHs (698 individuals), 55 HHs (432 individuals) and 19 HHs (162 individuals) were surveyed in Table 1.

Sex	Jhirpani	Jaydega	Lachda	Total
Male	334 (47.85)	219 (50.69)	80 (49.38)	633 (48.99)
Female	364 (52.15)	213 (49.31)	82 (50.62)	659 (51.01)
Total	698 (100.00)	432 (100.00)	162 (100.00)	1292 (100.00)

The primary survey data collection was based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were collected through the survey interview method. We have also conducted semi-structured interviews, hold focus group discussions and made field observations as part of qualitative data collection. We purposefully selected Rourkela in our study because in this area one of the earliest public projects Hindustan Steel Limited² (HSL) was established. Rourkela before industrialisation was a small Adivasi village surrounded by hills and rivers. The industry was hoped to bring development in the areas and especially among the local people by providing large-scale employment. However, the industries did not do justice to the local people as they failed to realise the purpose.

For the convenience of the analysis, we have divided education level into 16 categories and occupation into nine categories. Education levels are categorised into illiterate, below primary, primary, upper primary/middle, secondary (Under Matric), matriculation, higher secondary, matric+diploma/certificate, graduate, postgraduate (PG) and above, matric+technical, higher secondary+technical, matric+others, higher secondary+others, graduate+others, and not joined (kid). Occupations are categorised into professional, white-collar, self-employed (Business & Trade), blue-collar (skilled), blue-collar (unskilled), owner cultivator, household work,

² Later it was renamed as Rourkela Steel Plant.

unemployed, and not in labour force. To derive inferences from the survey data we have used simple descriptive statistics.

Educational and Occupational Disparities

The major factors that determine living conditions and egalitarian social values of the displaced population are education and occupational opportunities available and accessible in the post-displacement period. Educational and occupational segregation leads to further degradation of gender equality in society. Therefore, analysing the gender inequality in the post-displacement period in terms of educational and occupational distributions is necessary. It is observed from Table 2 that illiteracy among female Adivasis is much higher i.e. as high as 10 percentage points than the males. They also lag behind the males in secondary education (under matric) and matriculation. In the case of post-matric education, they seem to have gender parity as both have the same percentage i.e. 19 per cent of their respective population. However, an obvious disparity is observed between them in terms of their educational participation. It is observed that while the males attended mostly technical education, the females were enrolled in formal education and nursing education (others) after their matriculation. Such male-female disparity in educational participation is attributed to the family's behavioural discrimination. Since the households lost their means of livelihood due to displacement, they started considering male children as permanent income earners of the family. Moreover, Rourkela city has provided decent job opportunities to its residents because of its industrial base which could be possible due to growing mining and industrial activities in the areas and its milieu. The industries mostly employed male members due to security reasons³. The Adivasi households in the resettlement colonies in the interest of grabbing the job opportunities for their family induced their male children for technical education just after their matriculation and intermediate. The females on the contrary were not seen as permanent income earners and thus were allowed to pursue the formal education and education of their choice. Moreover, females' education was considered as only a status addition to the bride useful for their marriage. That is, the educated female was more likely to marry a man from an economically well-off household. Although the households provided them free choice, their

³ Women were not allowed to work within the plant area for security reasons. However, for contract labour jobs, this restriction did not apply. Contractors freely employed women even for the most hazardous jobs in the plant (A group of researchers, 1986). https://www.jstor.org/stable/4376383?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

behaviour towards the females as non-contributor has created a space for gender discrimination in the family in particular and Adivasi society in general.

Education Levels	Male	Female	All
Illiterate	17.33	27.39	22.69
Below Primary	11.88	11.3	11.57
Primary	2.23	2.39	2.31
Upper Primary/Middle	13.86	9.78	11.69
Secondary (UM)	16.09	13.04	14.47
Matriculation	15.1	11.52	13.19
Higher Secondary	4.95	7.39	6.25
Matric+Diploma/Certificate	0.74	0.87	0.81
Graduate	2.72	6.52	4.75
PG and Above	0.25	0.65	0.46
Matric+Technical	5.94	1.09	3.36
Higher Secondary+Technical	4.21	0.65	2.31
Matric+Others	0	0.43	0.23
Higher Secondary+Others	0	1.09	0.58
Graduate+Others	0.25	0.87	0.58
Not Joined (kid)	4.46	5	4.75
All	100	100	100

Source: Field survey data

The occupational distribution of male and female workers is also an important aspect to examine the gender disparity in accessing the opportunities in the current market world. From Table 3, a sharp gender disparity in the labour market is observed. The Adivasi population is observed to be vulnerable in terms of employment in the labour market. That is a large proportion of the population is involved in precarious occupations. On the gender side, around 39 per cent of the male population is employed in blue-collar (unskilled) jobs. Females, on the other hand, are largely involved in unpaid household core activities i.e. 44 per cent, and about 16 per cent of them are involved in unskilled labouring occupations. Further, while 12 per cent of the Adivasi males are engaged in cultivation, no female Adivasi was reported as owner cultivator. Their involvement in blue-collar (skilled) and self-employment jobs is also abysmal. Surprisingly, the percentage of white-collar employees among them is very low but higher than that of the male Adivasis.

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Occupations	Male	Female	All
Professional	0.25	0.22	0.23
White collar	0.74	1.3	1.04
Self-employed (B & T)	3.22	0.65	1.85
Blue collar (unskilled)	38.86	16.3	26.85
Blue collar (skilled)	13.37	4.78	8.8
Owner cultivator	12.13	0	5.67
Household work	0.74	43.91	23.73
Unemployed	9.41	8.91	9.14
Not in labor force	21.29	23.91	22.69
All	100	100	100

Source: Field survey data

Furthermore, it is pertinent to examine whether females have attended the occupations as per their educational qualifications compared to their male counterparts. It is observed from Figures 1a & 1b that the proportion of unemployed population among both males and females is higher at the higher educational levels. However, at the same time, the proportion of males and females involved in blue-collar (unskilled) jobs and household activities is declining as the education level is increasing. On the other hand, females are observed to be not at par with males with regard to the improvement in occupational categories when we consider higher education levels. For instance, among the female matriculates only 15 per cent are employed in blue-collar (skilled) jobs, while the males registered as high as 29 per cent in the same category jobs and six per cent in the self-employed (business and trade). Likewise, the females in the successive higher educational levels such as higher secondary, graduates and others are found to be not very satisfactory achievers in entering into the higher occupational ladder as compared to the male population. Illustratively, about 63 per cent of the male graduates are involved in higher paid jobs viz. white-collar, business & trade, and skilled occupations; and the rest are either engaged in unskilled labour or remained unemployed. On the other hand, only 37 per cent of the female graduates are engaged in higher-paid occupations. Moreover, about 27 per cent female graduates are unemployed, while for male graduates the figure stands at 18 per cent.

Figure 1a: Male Occupational Participation w.r.t. Their Educational Level

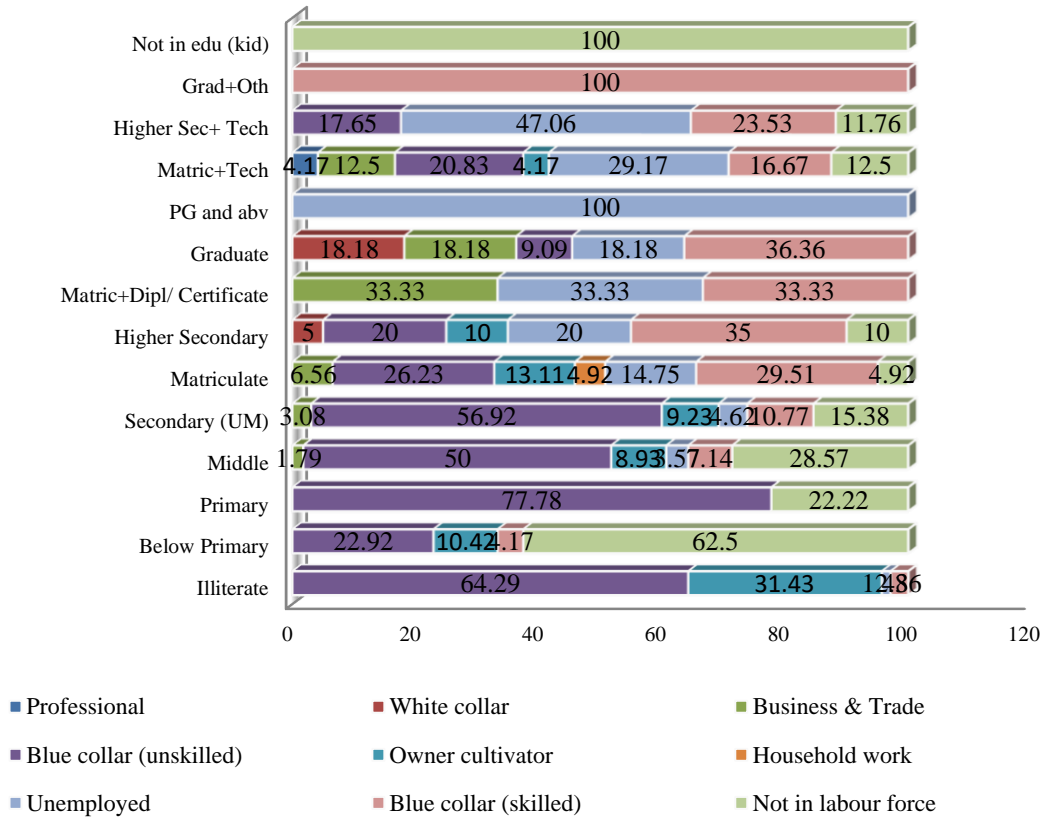
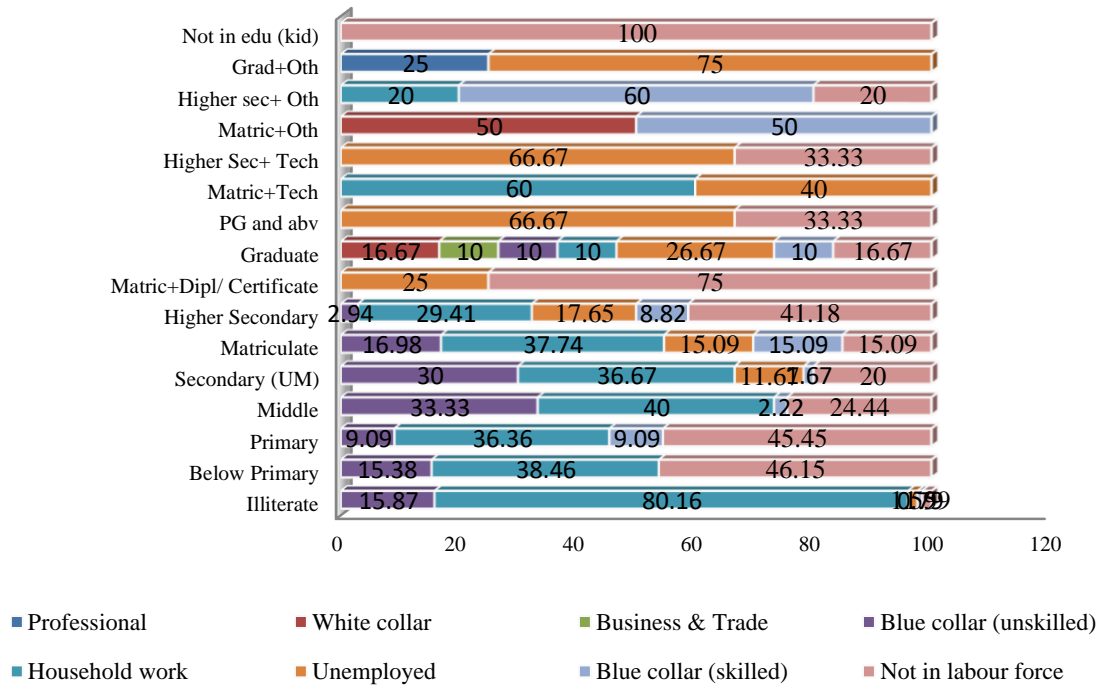


Figure 1b: Female Occupational Participation w.r.t. Their Educational Level



Gender Inequality in Educational and Occupational Participation

The gender disparity in occupational status of Adivasis is largely attributed to both social and economic factors. Since most of them were relocated to the urban periphery after displacement, they were exposed to the lifestyle of the non-Adivasis, who migrated to the area over time in search of employment. The higher economic and educational status of the latter's population has redefined the indigenous and traditional ways of living as outdated and uncivilised. This has persuaded Adivasis to emulate the dominant socio-cultural system. On the other hand, non-Adivasi migrants happened to acquire most of the higher paid jobs in the plant since the contractors and managers were of their own countrymen. Their better educational qualification has also enabled them to get employment in the higher paid jobs in the industry. Thus, they have formed socially and economically privileged sections in the Rourkela region. The labouring class, on the other hand, mostly consisted of Adivasis were involved in precarious occupations. Among the non-Adivasi migrants, particularly the higher caste population, working outside the house in a low-paid or low-skilled occupation is perceived as low profile job. On the other hand, women working within the households and their involvement in service activities were considered status-producing activities⁴ for the family. Such gender notions have influenced the employment pattern of Adivasi community as they have appropriated the gender norms of the dominant non-Adivasi community. Adivasi women who joined the labour force out of economic compulsion have dissuaded their daughters from getting employed in low-skilled and low-paid occupations. The increase in the educational qualification among the female Adivasis also demotivated them to participate in precarious occupations. Moreover, the labour market characteristics such as working-class composition, unfamiliarity with migrant contractors and sexual harassment etc. have discouraged them from participating in the low profile labour work in the job hierarchy. The caste composition in the workplace, dominant caste contractors and managers, and unequal gender composition have given the place for caste slur, wage discrimination and sexual harassment. This was not prevalent in their traditional workplace where they could participate in work without facing such evils of social discrimination.

On the demand side, women were merely allowed to work in the plant due to security reasons. However, contractors both inside and outside the plant employed women mostly in the head loading and sweeping jobs. The preference for these occupations among Adivasi

⁴ Woman expending more time in domestic activities such as child care, health care, religious activities etc. is increasingly believed to produce status for family in the patriarchal societies (Abraham 2013). <https://www.epw.in/journal/2013/31/special-articles/missing-labour-or-consistent-de-feminisation.html>

women was contracted as their education level increased. The male members, however, continued to engage in unskilled jobs even though their educational qualifications improved. Illustratively, Adivasi males with higher secondary education (20 per cent), graduation (9.09 per cent), matriculation+technical education (20.83 per cent) and higher secondary+technical education (17.65 per cent) have taken up unskilled labouring work (Fig 1a). On the other hand, a declining trend can be figured out in the participation of Adivasi women in unskilled jobs with respect to their improvement in educational qualifications (Fig. 1b). Out of the total Adivasi women with middle level of education (7th std.), about 33 per cent are involved in unskilled labouring work. Among the secondary (UM) attendees, the percentage has declined to 30 per cent and then further to 17 per cent among matriculates. Eventually, the participation turned out to be zero among the attendees of higher studies. These figures of the labour force participation demonstrate the differences in preferences for work with respect to educational qualification among the male and female Adivasis.

Conclusion and Discussion

In terms of gender equality, Adivasi women had a reasonably better socio-economic situation compared to other social groups in the society. Gender inequality in Adivasi society arose due to their relocation from their native surroundings to a caste-based society where their social values were influenced by the dominant patriarchal norms.

Our present study found a gender disparity among Adivasis in their educational and occupational participation following their displacement from their traditional living space. Females were enrolled in formal education and nursing education (others) after matriculation, whilst males mainly were into technical education. Apart from that, there emerged a significant gender gap in the labour market. The Adivasi community, in terms of employment, is vulnerable, i.e., a substantial section of the population is engaged in low paid occupations. With respect to gender, a sizable proportion of the male population is unskilled workers. On the other hand, females are disproportionately involved in unpaid household activities. Female owner cultivators are entirely missing. Their participation in blue-collar (skilled) and self-employment jobs is likewise abysmally low, far below males. Their educational participation has also influenced their occupational status. Higher education levels increased the share of the unemployed population among them. However, as education levels rose, the share of male and female workers in blue-collar (unskilled) occupations and household core activities declined. On the other hand, females are not on a level with males in terms of progress in occupational

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categories with higher education. Similarly, females in consecutive higher educational levels such as higher secondary, graduates, and others have witnessed slower progress in the occupational ladder than the male population.

According to the findings of the study, gender disparity in educational participation is shaped by familial prejudice. This is because the households have lost their means of livelihood due to the eviction and the male children were seen as the family's permanent income earners. As a result, families encouraged their male children to pursue technical education to grab employment opportunities in the plant. On the other hand, females were not considered permanent income earners and were allowed to pursue their formal education. Even though the families gave them freedom, their treatment of the females as non-contributors has created a space for gender discrimination within the family.

Forced displacement brings forth a torturous transition in society. Often the marginalised sections of the society which largely depend upon nature for their livelihood encountered the adverse effects of it. On the other hand, Adivasi women who are already a vulnerable group in society become the most victims of these effects. Although they achieved some progress as reflected in the recent developmental indicators i.e. education and paid employment, however, this is at the cost of their relative egalitarian values in their traditional abode. Adivasi women who were once considered active earners of their families are now recognised as status producers in their spouses' homes. In the pre-displacement period, they actively participated in many economic activities since they accessed the working space in their traditional setup. In the post-displacement period, however, they cease to be the earners as they lose their access to the workplace and are mostly confined to undertaking household work. Their education is merely considered a way to marry a male from economically better off family. This change in the social values of the Adivasi society is the consequence of their interaction with the dominant socio-economic structure after their relocation. No doubt the dominant socio-economic structure helps many of them to improve their literacy rate, but it meagrely helps them to enhance their occupational status. On the other hand, the dominant culture injects many patriarchal norms into the Adivasi society which degrade their relative egalitarian values.

On account of such gendered impacts of displacement, many curative measures may be suggested. First of all, the Adivasi settlements need to be protected from the influence of non-Adivasi migrants. Since Adivasis are economically and socially marginalised they are more likely to be exploited by the migrants and lose their socio-economic status and values due to

the assimilation. Secondly, women-friendly employment opportunities need to be generated in the urban and settlement areas. It may help Adivasi women to continue their earning potential from various activities after their relocation. Thirdly, the quality of education may be improved so that the educated may not remain unemployed or be employed in low-paid occupations. Finally, credit system and skill development programmes should be introduced for the empowerment of displaced Adivasi women in particular and displaced Adivasis in general. This study has the potential to be replicated in other Adivasi resettlement areas in India and outside. If it turns out with similar or different results, broader public policies can be designed for the welfare of this affected community for a balanced development of the society as a whole.

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