A Realist Review of the Status of Higher Education and Livelihood in Jharkhand Through The Lens of Adivasi Agency

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Abstract

This article presents a realist review of the status of higher education and livelihood among Adivasis in Jharkhand, emphasizing the role of Adivasi agency. The review begins by examining the intricate identities of Tribes in India, highlighting how terms like "Adivasi" and "Indigenous" have been shaped by colonial and post-colonial narratives. The study critically analyzes the historical and ongoing challenges that Adivasis in Jharkhand—a state with a significant Tribal population—face in accessing higher education and economic opportunities. Employing the CIMO (Context, Intervention, Mechanism, Outcome) framework, the research assesses the effectiveness of government interventions aimed at enhancing Tribal education and livelihoods. Despite numerous initiatives, the findings reveal persistent disparities in educational attainment and economic development among Adivasis, particularly in rural areas. The study argues that Adivasi agency in higher education remains constrained by systemic barriers, including marginalization within educational institutions and insufficient recognition of Tribal identities within policy frameworks. It shows that while education does contribute to the development of agency among Adivasis, the process is challenging and lacks adequate support within the academic environment. The article concludes by advocating for more nuanced, context-specific policies that empower Adivasis through education and foster their agency in shaping their futures. Education is recognized as a crucial avenue for broadening worldviews, leading to the overall well-being of Tribal individuals. Thus, the development of Tribal agency is likely to progress with increased participation in higher education. However, given the currently low rate of Tribal participation in higher education, this progress will be slow, and the critical mass required to effect change will take time to achieve. Therefore, it is imperative that universities engage in community outreach beyond the traditional "ivory tower" approach, enabling the broader Tribal community to become stakeholders in the higher education system.

Introduction-The Complexities of Tribal Identity and Agency in India

The term 'Tribe' is frequently used in the context of colonialism and post-colonialism, yet it often lacks a precise definition. Social anthropologists, administrators, lawyers, tribal activists, politicians, and organizations have all noted this ambiguity. While efforts in India have focused on identifying Tribes, defining the term has received less emphasis. During colonial rule, Tribes were conceived as a category to understand Indian society's divisions with families having a shared name, tradition, culture and language, and defined territory, not typically endogamous (Beteille 2018; Hasnain 1991). Terms such as 'Tribes', 'Scheduled Tribes', 'Indigenous

people', 'Vanjati', 'Adivasi', and 'Jana' are often used interchangeably, each carrying different meanings and histories (Sharma 2001).

Internationally, no official definition of 'Indigenous people' has been adopted by the United Nations due to their immense diversity, but they are broadly considered as those with a historical connection to pre-colonial societies, distinct from dominant groups, preserving and transmitting their territories and identities (UN-DESA, 2017). In recent decades, the term Adivasi has gained widespread popularity as a way to self-identify with their land and sacred totems, highlighting Tribes' exclusion and subaltern status (Sundar 2016; Xaxa 1999). 'Adivasi', translated as 'Indigenous people' or 'original inhabitants', comes from Hindi words meaning 'earliest resident'. In this paper, the terms Tribe, Adivasi, and Indigenous have been used interchangeably.

The State and Tribal discourses often reject the term 'Adivasi' or 'Indigenous peoples' as divisive and potentially harmful to the unity of the Indian nation (Chopra 1988). This makes the role of education in fostering Tribal voices for preserving their identities and Indigenous knowledge very critical (Agrawal 2002; Moitra 2017). Tribal agency involves individuals or communities voicing their concerns and influencing their environment (Hay 2002; McAnnulla 2002). Social conditions shape tribal agency and can be a response to structural constraints (Batty 2005; Page and Petray 2016). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights also ensures Indigenous people's right to education (UN-DESA 2017). Education that reflects their culture while providing access to modern knowledge aligns with Amartya Sen's (2009) idea of fostering agency.

Tribal, higher-educated youth can imagine futures using traditional knowledge, intersecting with sustainability and universalism in Indigenous Knowledge Systems. However, education alone does not ensure agency; influences from other groups also shape it (Shirazi 2016). Tribal autonomy in essential domains of education could be a missing prerequisite for Tribal economic development (Cornell and Kalt 1994). Thus, Tribal participation, agency, and assertions need exploration in education (Xaxa et al. 2014). A proxy to understand the agency of Adivasis could be their participation in education in general and higher education in particular, performance in the livelihood sector, and participation and assertions in politics of Tribal identity.

In the context of 5th Schedule areas, Adivasi voices have led to policies for separate local self-governance, assertions by implementing land laws, and agitations around their identity through the domicile policy. However, enough has not been explored to understand their assertions in the domain of education.

The present paper seeks to understand the status of higher education amongst the Tribes in the 5th Schedule State of Jharkhand. It is divided into four sections, following the introduction. The second section of the paper details the problem and related literature on the agency of Tribal communities in higher education. The third section talks about the research methodology, using the context, intervention, mechanism, and outcome (CIMO) framework (Pawson et al. 2005) to analyse the educational outcomes amongst Tribals of Jharkhand and identify the analysis at the intersection of agency. The fourth section discusses the status of Tribal education and livelihood. The fifth section concludes how complex challenges we face require complex solutions and describes how universities could employ collective responses through policy pathways to enhance Tribal agency in education.

2. Tribal development in India

Tribes experienced limited autonomy under political suzerainty during pre-British rule, retaining limited control over economic, social, and cultural life. British rule introduced alien administrative structures, land revenue systems, and forest laws, encouraging non-Tribals to settle in tribal regions, leading to resistances (Xaxa 2011). These resistances, expressions of Tribal agency, were seen as revolts by the British. In post-independence India, underdevelopment and repression led often to armed civil conflict by Adivasis termed as 'naxalism'. Although a sort of developmental assertion by Adivasis, such conflicts have not led to the enhancement of Adivasis' educational status in the 5th schedule areas. Scholars who have examined state policies toward tribes have highlighted how these policies have worked against the interests of the Tribes (Xaxa 2016). Due to prejudice against Tribes within the educational institutional framework coupled with a lack of Tribal participation, the Tribes experience double marginalisation. At the time of Independence, certain governing rules ensured that the Tribal peoples' educational demands were satisfied. The conditions of Tribal education in independent India were improved by a number of committees and commissions that recognised the pedagogical components in Tribal culture and recommended the use of Tribal language and cultural resources, such as folklore, songs, and history. Tribals have been encouraged to pursue higher education, particularly in technical, professional, and paraprofessional fields, through incentives like scholarships, remedial classes, and other initiatives to overcome psycho-social barriers. However, the educational situation of the Tribes only improved marginally with significant dropout rates, particularly at the higher education levels.

2.1. Operational area of research and disparity within the state

The State of Jharkhand, a 5th Schedule State selected for the study has 26.21 percent Scheduled Tribe (ST) population with 32 different notified Tribes (Census, 2011). Jharkhand has 16 districts under 5th Schedule (13 fully covered and 3 partially covered) of 24 districts. The very conception of Jharkhand rests in its Tribal identity. This was explicitly recognized by the State Reorganization Committee, 2000, following the recommendations of which, the new state got carved out of Bihar. Laying the foundation of Jharkhand on 15 November, 2000, commemorating the anniversary of the iconic Tribal leader, Bhagwan Birsa Munda, established the Tribal identity of the State further. The struggle for a 'Jharkhandi' identity of the people of Jharkhand can be traced back to several revolts against the British Raj since the late 18th century. Revolts such as the Manjhi revolution in 1784 much before the first war of independence, Munda revolt in 1837, Hul movement in 1855, Ulgulan in 1895-1900, the Tana Bhagat movement between 1914-1920 and others in the late 20th century prove that the Adivasis have not remained passive receivers of colonial tyranny.

Modern education of Tribal youth in Chotanagpur, supported by British western educationists and Missionaries, led them to question colonial domination and assert their distinct identity by forming Adivasi Sangathans (Bara 1997). The enactment of Chotanagpur Tenancy Act in 1908, following Birsaite revolt to protect and preserve the integrity of community-owned Tribal land in Jharkhand is an excellent example of their dare. In fact, the state of Jharkhand is an outcome of the incessant efforts of the 'Adivasi

Mahasabha' established in 1938 by the merger of the Chotanagpur Improvement Society (Unnati Samaj), the Chotanagpur Catholic Sabha and the Chotanagpur Kisan Sabha. In recent times, the Tribal population of the State has asserted their agency through protests against domicile policy, land tenancy acts and 'pathalgadi' movement. Jharkhand has 29 universities spread across five administrative divisions viz Palamu, North Chotanagpur, South Chotanagpur and Kolhan. Although the signs of progress have touched the state, the extent of benefits accrued by Tribes has been the least in Jharkhand, educational achievement of the Tribes being a major concern (Sen & Khanna 2007).

Jharkhand has several paradoxes. It is a state which has almost 40 percent of the mineral reserves of the entire country but also has the highest number of people below the poverty line in the country (Planning cum Finance Dept 2017). It is the first state in India to have started industrialization (as early as in 1907 by an industrialist J.N. Tata and to have established an industrial township), however, Jharkhand still has one of the largest rural population in India (Census 2011). For a state which began as a mining and manufacturing hub with both private and public sector participation (government run coal mining in Dhanbad), Jharkhand still lags in the manufacturing sector. With some of the largest public sector enterprises in the country operational in Jharkhand (like the Bokaro Steel Plant or the Heavy Engineering Corporation in Ranchi), the state is still lagging at rank 34 amongst 36 States/UTs in terms of the human development index (UNDP 2019). While the state has the country's premier Institute of Forest Productivity and Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums, the Tribes who are the indigenous stakeholders of the natural resources do not stand adequately benefitted from these specialized institutes. One reason for the development deficit of Tribes is the consistent struggle for their own identity. Unlike the caste census of 1941, which recognized 'Animism' as a separate religion, the recent socio-religious census clubs one of the major religions practiced by the tribes of Jharkhand 'Sarna' into 'other' religious groups. As Xaxa (2016) argues, it is essential to recognize the Tribes as a distinct ethnic group to help them bolster their self-identity and thus, enable them to utilize the benefits of the education system.

Jharkhand's per capita income is the lowest compared to the rest of the nation. Poverty in Jharkhand is amongst the highest in the country, particularly in the southern and eastern districts (World Bank, 2016). According to a composite index of developmental indicators published by the Institute for Human Development, state's north-eastern districts and north-western regions are typically less developed than those in the state's central and western regions. Ironically, the social group-wise distribution map of the state reveals that the south-western and north-eastern districts of Jharkhand are the major Tribal dominated areas as well while the western part has a higher scheduled caste population (Census 2011). The tribes of Jharkhand, along with Odisha, Uttar Pradesh (including Uttarakhand), and Madhya Pradesh (including Chhattisgarh) have the highest poverty intensity, which is higher than Tribes of other Indian states (GoI 2013).

3. Methodology: A realistic review

This research synthesis uses a realist approach to elucidate how interventions (I) function in contexts (C) with a better understanding of the generative mechanisms (M) producing the outcomes (O). Wong (2018) explains that realist reviews are employed to determine under different circumstances, what works, how and for whom. According to Rycroft-Malone et al. (2012), realist reviews are especially suitable for analyzing the effects of complex interventions because they are based on the premise that understanding how and why interventions work in different contexts is crucial. Wong (2018) also notes that the popularity of realist reviews is steadily increasing. Secondary literature and data reviewed from critical national level surveys and reports such as census survey, NSSO reports, AISHE reports etc have been used to prepare a framework that analyses the context- the present status of education and employment in Jharkhand; the intervention-policies and practices of the government to address the current status of Tribal education and employment; mechanism- the specific initiatives and components of the intervening programes and outcome-how has it affected the agency of Tribals in the present situation.

3.2. The CIMO framework

The CIMO (context, intervention, mechanism, outcome) method has been used in this paper to understand the participation and assertions of Tribals in education and livelihood in the state of Jharkhand (Pawson et al. 2005). The CIMO framework below (Figure 1) has been developed to understand the context-inadequate Adivasi agency in higher education represented through the data on participation of Tribals in higher education and livelihood opportunities; intervention-government efforts through schemes and policies in education and livelihood initiatives for Adivasis with the idea of affirmative action poilcy; mechanism-scholarships and other facilities as tools to enhance Tribal participation in higher education and meaningful employment opportunties; outcome-how has this influenced Adivasi agency and what needs to be further done.
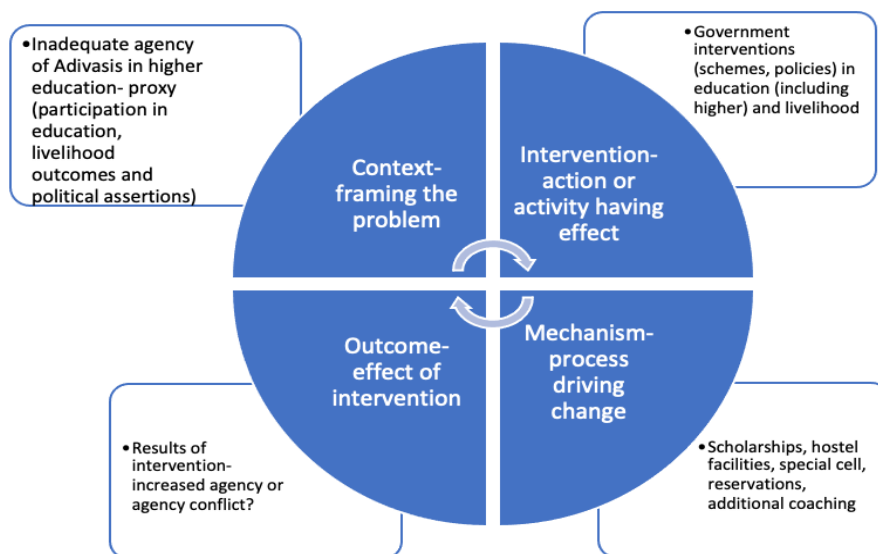

Figure 1: Framework used for understanding Adivasi agency viz-a-viz education and livelihood

4. The context: Adivasi education, labour and livelihood

This section explores the the context of higher education amongst Adivasis with a brief about the socio-economic conditions and the status of their livelihood. It is pertinent to highlight that there have been many studies that focus on the various aspects related to the participation and performance of Tribal students at the school level (Sujata 2000); (Ekka and Soy 2013); (Nambissan 1994). However, very few studies have extensively focused upon the participation of Tribes at the higher education level (Desai and Kulkarni 2008). Some studies like (Bhatnagar and Dwivedi 2013) analyse census data between 1991 to 2001 and suggest that gains in literacy levels for the Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribes are not behind those of non-Schedule people. However, the SC, ST and OBC fare far behind the non-schedule and backward classes at the higher education level. Interestingly, the Scheduled Tribes of urban India outweigh the performance of Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled castes, other backward classes, and Muslims in rural areas, indicating rural inhabitants as a probable impairing factor for the Tribes. However, the agency of Tribes in the domain of higher education is yet to be explored adequately. Data from AISHE reports, Census 2011 and NSS reports has provided a firm ground to the analysis of the status of Adivasis in the domain of higher education and livelihood generation and helps conclude what are the missing prerequisites for Tribal agency to flourish in the significantly Tribal populated State of Jharkhand.

4.1. Status of Tribal literacy and school education-Jharkhand viz-a-viz India

In Jharkhand, 75.95% of the population lives in Urban areas and 24.05% lives in Rural areas. There are 12.08% Scheduled Castes (SC) and 26.21% Scheduled Tribes (ST) while 46% belong to Other Backward Categories (OBC). Government interventions in the form of Right to Education Act, 2005, outreach and extension activities of government functionaries have ensured that 65.27% of age-appropriate ST children attend school in Jharkhand. However, at the national level 70.54% of all age appropriate ST children are attending schools (Census 2011). The NSSO, 71st round (2014) demonstrates a positive picture (Table 1), whereby the overall literacy gap between India and Jharkhand has reduced to 5.1 percent from 7.63 percent (Census 2011). While the urban districts of Jharkhand, East Singhbhum, Ranchi, Ramgarh, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Hazaribagh perform better in terms of literacy, the eastern and southern districts (also predominantly rural and Tribal populous), show an alarmingly low level of literacy.

Table 1: Literacy Levels in Jharkhand

Comparison	2001			2011			2014		
	Literacy Rates								
	Male	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
Jharkhand	67.30	38.87	53.56	76.84	55.42	66.41	79.6	59.9	70.3
India	75.26	53.67	64.84	82.14	65.46	74.04	83.2	67.1	75.4
Gap	7.96	14.8	11.28	5.3	10.04	7.63	3.6	7.2	5.1

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, and NSSO 71st round survey, 2014

Despite an increase since 2001, Jharkhand's female literacy rate at 59.9% in 2014 was much lower than India's total female literacy rate (67.1%) and Jharkhand's male literacy rate (79.6%). There is a greater than 25% gender difference in literacy in some districts, with West Singhbhum, Koderma, Giridih, Deoghar, Jamtara, and Dumka having lowest rates. There is also an observable difference between rural and urban literacy levels. According to Census 2011, the literacy rate of STs in urban areas of Jharkhand (75%) is higher than the ST literacy rate in rural areas of Jharkhand (55.0%). Despite the overall growth of literacy rate, the inter-district growth has been unbalanced. Ranchi district has highest literacy rate at 76.06 percent followed by Purbi Singhbhu at 75.49%. Dhanbad (75.52%) and Ramgarh (73.17%) follow suit, whereas Godda, Sahibganj, and Pakur districts have the least literacy rates of 48.82%, 52.04%, and 56.40% respectively. In terms of the rate of yearly literacy's growth, Giridih, Pakur, Garhwa, and Palamu have had a growth rate greater than 4% in the last decade. The districts with high literacy level (such as East Singhbhum and Ranchi) had a low literacy growth rate (0-2%), while the district with lesser literacy levels had higher literacy growth rate (3-5%) (Govt.of Jharkhand, 2017) (Census, 2011). The Oraon tribe has a literacy rate of 67.0 %, which is the highest among STs in the state. When compared to the 2011 national average of literacy rate (74.04%), this is still relatively low. A literacy level of less than 50 % was observed for 10 of the state's 32 Scheduled Tribes. The highest documented male literacy rate among the Scheduled Tribes of Jharkhand is 76.9% among the Karwar Tribes whereas the national average for male literacy is 82.14%. The female literacy rate has seen a jump of almost five percent, while the male literacy has seen an increase of around three percent. However, the deficient female literacy percentage is a reason for worry. The female literacy percentage in 25 of the 32 Jharkhand's Scheduled Tribes is less than 50%. There is a considerable disparity between male and female literacy rates among Tribes. The highest Tribal female literacy rate is 58.1% amongst the Oraon tribe which is lower when compared to the female literacy rate (65.46%) at the national level.

4.2. Status of Tribal higher education-Jharkhand viz-a-viz India

The GER for all other categories except SC and ST in higher education stands at 20.9 in 2019-20 in Jharkhand. In comparison, the GER for SC is 16.1 and ST is 15.6 in Jharkhand (Table 2).

Table 2: GER in Higher Education in Jharkhand

GER for Jharkhand	ALL			SC			ST		
	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
2019-20	20.9	21	20.9	16.1	17	15.1	15.6	14.7	16.5
2018-19	19.1	19.5	18.7	15.9	17	14.8	13.7	13.4	14
2017-18	18	18.4	17.6	13.8	15.1	12.5	12.5	12.1	12.8
2016-17	17.7	18.4	17	13.4	14.6	12.1	12.6	11.7	13.3
2015-16	15.5	16.2	14.8	11.9	13.1	10.6	10.5	10.2	10.8

Source: AISHE 2020

In higher education, when compared with age appropriate population at the national level, the STs fare poorly and so does the STs of Jharkhand, with only 4.9% of the ST population between 15-19 years attending college. The sharp existing contradiction

between rural and urban population of the country is observable within the ST population at the national level as well as in the state of Jharkhand (Table 3) (AISHE 2020).

Table 3: Percentage Attending College (U-Urban; R-Rural)

	India-All			India-ST			Jharkhand-All			Jharkhand-ST		
Age	Total	U	R	Total	U	R	Total	U	R	Total	U	R
18	21.3	30.5	17.3	6.0	13.7	5.0	18.6	32.5	13.7	11.3	26.4	9.5
19	24.4	34.0	19.5	4.7	10.9	3.8	23.3	38.8	16.8	14.8	33.4	12.2
15-19	9.2	13.5	7.3	2.6	6.4	2.1	8.0	14.3	5.8	4.9	11.9	4.1
20-24	14.2	20.6	10.9	1.9	5.1	1.5	14.9	26.4	10.5	10.6	25.9	8.7
25-29	2.8	4.3	2.0	0.6	1.8	0.5	3.8	7.3	2.5	3.0	8.4	2.4
30-34	1.1	1.8	0.7	1.0	1.2	1.1	1.2	2.5	0.8	1.0	2.9	0.8

Source: AISHE, 2020

The rural Tribal male and Tribal female percentage for graduates and above are 2.2% and 1.10% respectively while for urban Tribal male and Tribal female they are 12.59% and 11.89% respectively. Hence, there is a similarity in the gap between Tribal male-female higher education levels in Jharkhand as it is in literacy levels (Census 2011). Approximately, 25% of the rural Tribal persons and 32 % of the urban Tribal persons in relevant age groups are attending educational institutions in Jharkhand. There is a difference of 32% between the Tribal eligible population attending schools and colleges in the age groups of 15-19 and 20-24. Thus, while 52% of the eligible population attend school, only 20% are transitioning to colleges. The participation in vocational education is at 2.5 percent compared to a national average of 6.8 percent. Hence, the Tribal participation in decent employment in Jharkhand is marred heavily by educational factors. Tribal female graduates and above percentage is lower than males in Jharkhand despite a higher GER than male Tribal students. This could indicate that fewer females are completing their higher educational journey.

4.2.1. Tribal student enrollment in higher education in Jharkhand

According to AISHE 2019-20, the number of private colleges in India is almost three times the number of government colleges in India. A similar trend is to be noticed in Jharkhand. The number of private universities in Jharkhand is higher than that of state public universities. A larger chunk of these private Universities are established in rural areas compared to the State Public Universities, primarily in urban areas. A snapshot of the universities, location, management, special courses offered, and affiliated/ constituent colleges provide an exciting observation that more private aided colleges, private un-aided colleges, and standalone institutions are present in rural Jharkhand. Though beyond the scope of this research, it would be interesting to explore who is attending such institutions, how is the land being acquired and what advantages accrue to the area where such universities are coming up. Analysing the number of private and government colleges under the different universities of Jharkhand reveals that several

government universities have private aided and unaided colleges under their affiliation. In fact districts like West Singbhum (under Kolhan University) having a considerable population of Tribals, have some of the highest number of private unaided colleges. There is a similar situation in Binod Bihari Mahto Koyalanchal University, Dhanbad, Vinoba Bhave University, Hazaribagh, Nilamber-Pitamber University, Palamu and Ranchi University, Ranchi. This analysis, thus requisites the exploration of category wise data on student enrolment to understand who are accessing these private universities and what percentage of Tribal population is going to these universities.

According to data from AISHE 2019-20, 20% of the total male population and approximately 27% of the total female population enrolled in private aided colleges across Jharkhand are Scheduled Tribes and 11% male and 20% female enrolled in private unaided colleges in Jharkhand. While the trend is that ST female enrolments are greater than ST male enrolments for private aided and un-aided colleges, ST female enrolments in private un-aided colleges are almost double the male enrolments. The major courses that females have preferred are nursing, arts and education. Some private universities, Jharkhand Rai University, Jharkhand Raksha Shakti University, Ramchandra Chandravansi University and YBN University have a higher percentage of ST participation. One of the reasons inferred for this is that these universities provide technical courses in polytechnic, nursing, education, etc which is a major pull-factor for the ST students seeking early employment opportunities. On the contrary, ST participation in Government Universities providing technical education is lesser when compared to their enrollment in universities providing generic degrees (arts, commerce). The data on Programme and Discipline wise student enrolment reveals a stark contrast between the nature of courses that the ST population are enrolling into versus other categories of students are enrolling. The STs have the lowest participation percentage in technical and science related subjects except Agriculture, where the participation is high. ST enrolment is highest in generic subjects (Arts/Humanities and social sciences) with the highest being anthropology followed by philosophy.

4.2.2. Representation of Tribal teachers in higher education in Jharkhand

While male Adivasi teachers comprise around 5% of the total number of teachers in all categories (general, SC and ST combined), 18% of female teachers are Adivasi. The district and category wise male and female teacher percentage gives a picture of the limited participation of Adivasis as teachers in the higher education system in the country and in Jharkhand in particular. However, Jharkhand shows the highest number of female ST teachers amongst the fifth schedule states. This corroborates with the fact that the enrolment of ST females in education programs is high in the state. East Singhbhum and Ranchi districts register the highest number of ST teachers in HEIs. At the university level, the average ST male teachers, combining all the universities, is 3.1% of the total male teachers while the average female ST teachers are 11.7% of the total female teachers. In State Public Universities, there are 12.7% of ST teachers. A university-wise analysis of ST male and female teachers in government versus private universities present a clear picture of the lack of ST teachers in private universities. The highest percentage of ST male and female teachers in private universities is 2% and 7 % as compared to 28.6% and 51.9% in government universities in the State. The major chunk (more than 70%) of both male and female teachers are from the general category

in private universities. In Jharkhand, the percentage of ST teachers in private aided colleges is 7.6%, and 24% are males and females, respectively. The percentage of male and female ST teachers in private unaided colleges of Jharkhand is 2.7% and 14%, respectively. In comparison, the ST share of male and female teachers in state government colleges is 10.6% and 20% respectively. Thus, the share of ST male teachers in private colleges is lesser in comparison to ST female teachers, in private aided colleges. Overall, the participation of female ST teachers is higher than the SC female teachers in Jharkhand. There appears to be a constant bias against Tribal teachers in private institutions of higher education. However, both private aided and unaided colleges having a missionary background show a higher employment rate for Tribal teaching faculties. While participation of ST teachers in State Public Universities may be driven by the affirmative policy initiatives, their representation in the State's private university system is extremely poor. It is almost at par with the SC community and way below the participation rate of the OBC and other non-Schedule communities. ST teachers find less representation in the HEIs in comparison to other groups, despite the fact that ST students are highest in number in some of these state public universities. Inadequate representation of Tribal faculties in HEIs could be a reason for lack of Tribal agency in higher education.

4.2.3. Tribal non-teaching staff in higher education in Jharkhand

According to AISHE 2019-20 data, 370 male and 526 female ST staff are there in Jharkhand's affiliated colleges out of 6200 and 2893 male and female staff respectively in all colleges. But the number of ST male and female staff in State public universities is 79 and 24, where females are less represented. However, the overall representation of females in group D staff is lesser at 97 as compared to the male staff at 328. The representation of male and female STs in group C in state private universities is lesser at 5% and 9% respectively. All non-teaching staff (including contractual staff, library staff, non-teaching staff and physical education staff) comprise of 17.8% of STs, 11% SCs and OBC 33.3% if all colleges are combined (AISHE, 2020). The percentage of ST Group C staff is higher in State Public Universities as compared to Private Universities. The percentage of ST Group D staff is more or less similar in the public and private universities (Table 17). While Kolhan region has a higher percentage of Tribal population and has higher ST student enrolments in the university, the percentage of group D and C staff in Kolhan university is considerably lower than in Ranchi University (Table 4).

Table 4: ST Staff in Higher Educational Institutions

ST Staff	State Public University	State Private University	Ranchi University (All colleges)	Kolhan University (All colleges)
Group D	24.2	27.4	34.7	21.7
Group C	24.7	6.3	37.1	14.8

Source: AISHE, 2020

4.3. Livelihood of Tribals in Jharkhand

While massification of primary education has taken place, there still seems to be a void in the pathways to higher education for the Schedule Tribe. This mass, the bottom of the pyramid is a huge chunk that the university system cannot neglect. Designing innovative offerings to cater to the ST population is required. Historically, successful universities have changed the face of cities they have been established in. Good universities can attract global talent, lead to development of knowledge and national economy, and build international relations at the same time. A major role of universities besides teaching has to be research for technological innovations and social change. Similarly, university curriculum needs to create pathways for vocational education for those who do not wish to undergo regular higher educational courses and wish to join the labour market early through professional training or skill training. The situation of Tribals with regard to labour force participation and vocational education in Jharkhand is precarious as described below.

4.3.1. Labour force participation and vocational education in Jharkhand

Only 7 of the state's 32 Scheduled Tribes have labour participation rates of more than 50 percent (Table 5) (Govt.of Jharkhand 2017).

The national status of participation of the ST population in vocational education is not satisfactory. In Jharkhand, there is a significant difference between the ST participation in vocational education at the rural and urban levels.

Table 5: Percentage Attending Vocational Education (U-Urban; R-Rural)

Age group	India-All			India-ST			Jharkhand-All			Jharkhand-ST		
	Total	U	R	Total	U	R	Total	U	R	Total	U	R
18	2.7	4.7	1.8	0.4	1.3	0.33	0.8	2.0	0.3	0.3	1.4	0.2
19	4.0	6.6	2.7	0.4	1.2	0.29	1.6	4.1	0.6	0.6	2.6	0.4
15-19	1.3	2.3	0.9	0.4	1.1	0.27	0.4	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.8	0.1
20-24	2.8	4.8	1.8	0.2	0.8	0.34	1.7	4.6	0.5	0.7	3.4	0.4
25-29	0.8	1.4	0.5	0.2	0.4	0.26	0.7	2.0	0.3	0.4	1.9	0.2
30-34	0.3	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.25	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.7	0.1

Source: Census 2011

Jharkhand has a high percentage of marginal workers and individuals seeking work. Despite the high percentage of marginal workers, the participation in vocational education is low which means that more unemployed or partially employed people are not yet availing the benefits of vocational education systems.

Developmental projects that displaced Tribals also led to immigration from villages causing urbanization. As a result, there has been a continuous fall in Tribal population over the decades. This might lead to the development of a 'negative identity' of the tribes as they are increasingly getting placed in subordinate positions in their own homeland, losing their forests, jobs, political control as well as the ethnic identity (Xaxa, et al. 2014). This situation is now giving rise to political turmoil within the state such as the recent movement for 'domicile policy'. Although non-farm employment is increasing in the state, half the work-force is still occupied in the farm. There has been

negative job growth since 2005, with the maximum jobs having been created in the construction sector.

Change in wage employment since 2005 has also been meagre and only about a tenth of the working adults have a salaried job, which is one of lowest amongst all other developing states of India. A skill-gap study for Jharkhand, conducted by the National Skill Development Corporation, 2012 mentions that the state has only 16 institutions for the course of engineering or architecture with a total annual intake capacity of about 6400 students. Similarly, for medical education, there are only 3 institutes in the state with an intake capacity of 190 students only. According to All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), (2019) the participation rate of Tribals in technical courses is dismal at 11.6% only. The lack of adequate quality infrastructure in education has led to a slower adoption of technical education in Jharkhand's university education as compared to other states in India. The major chunk of graduates (and above) amongst the Tribals of Jharkhand can be found in non-technical courses. Participation of tribes in technical courses like engineering, medicine, agriculture and dairies, veterinary, teaching is amongst negligible in rural areas with none of the courses attracting a participation of more than one percent (Census 2011).

Most educational institutes are located in urban districts and industrial centres of the state such as Ranchi, East Singhbhum, Bokaro, and Dhanbad. This concentrates the intake capacity of technical and higher educational institutions to only a few districts of the state. Only eight districts in the state have engineering colleges, with Ranchi having the maximum. The number of universities offering Agricultural courses are also only three. Despite the huge dependence of the state on agriculture, a lack of focus on agriculture education is confusing. The rich bio-diversity and major forest cover of the state has resulted in establishment of two premier forest research institutes in the state but they have no special courses that could benefit the Tribal youth educationally. In fact, these institutions offer only short-term training on forest products to the tribes.

While the world has acknowledged the importance of indigenous knowledge through programmes like 'Man and Biosphere Reserve, UNESCO', the state fails to exploit such indigenous knowledge bases adequately (Atal 2012). Although there are several elite private institutions in Jharkhand like Xavier Institute of Labour Relations, Jamshedpur; Birla Institute of Technology, Mesra; Xavier Institute of Social Sciences amongst a few more, however, the Tribal population attending such prestigious institutions is bare minimum as these are specialized institutions with tough intake processes requiring specific skill sets to crack the admission process. Such challenges in access to vocational and professional training and education poses serious barriers to higher and technical education amongst the deprived sections. This gets reflected in the Tribals performance in higher education in the state.

The scenario of employment in Jharkhand is such that cultivators constitute a major chunk of the total workers in the rural areas of Jharkhand (Census 2011). Self-employed in agriculture and non-agriculture activities comprise of 57% and 8.1 percent of the rural households. Regular waged or salaried earners are 3.2 percent of the rural households and casual labourers in the agriculture and non-agricultural sector are 7.1% and 16.7% (Census 2011). The salaried Scheduled Tribe households in Jharkhand (6.12%) comprise of government (3.92%), public (0.95%) and private (1.65%). When

compared with the total population of Jharkhand in salaried employment, ST households have a meagre (1.02%) government, (0.27%) public and (0.48%) private sector representation respectively.

Around 80% of the total Tribal households earn less than INR 5000 a month, while only 14% earn between INR 5,000-10,000 and a meagre 5.11 percent earn above INR 10,000 (Census, 2011). Hence, the percentage of decent employment for Tribals seems to be poor. Also, while the total salaried Tribals are around 6.12%, the percentage of Tribals earning more than 10,000 is only 1.5% indicating that not all the salaried employed are in adequately remunerative work.

The low GER in higher education in Jharkhand, low percentage of graduates in Jharkhand and low number of colleges available per lakh population in Jharkhand has a significant negative bearing on the developmental status of Scheduled Tribe population. Similarly, the stagnant economy of the Scheduled Tribes due to non-diversifications in occupations, with agriculture still their dominant occupation promotes the vicious cycle of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. The Tribes' role in tertiary economy needs to be further explored if they are to receive their due share in a growing economy. This requires a review of the government policies and schemes that could address loopholes if any.

5. Intervention and mechanism- Government Initiatives for Adivasis of Jharkhand

This section elaborates the outcome of the analysis of intervention and mechanisms in the context of agency of Adivasis in education. Tribal progress in higher education is increasingly becoming an urban phenomenon. This contradiction needs to be removed by percolating the benefits of the modern education system further to the Tribal masses in rural areas. Naxalism as an outcome of development deficiency, exploitative capitalistic practices and an alien education system further leading to unemployment is an established reality (Ramana and Choudhary 2021). The poignant question is what has been done so far to address this concern, and what needs to change? It is imperative that the educationists take into account the Tribe's societal context while planning or implementing educational and employment generation programmes for them. The analysis of secondary data and documents on various commissions indicate that policymakers focus on primary education of the Tribals, ignoring the voices of the community whose aspirations have transcended beyond school education now. While the affluent communities can avail private education for their children, the marginalized depend solely on the government. However, the marginalized community is unable to voice its concern in this regard. Studies show that the community at large, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, is now asking for opportunities beyond school education, employment generation, and skill education, but this does not seem to exert adequate pressure upon the policymakers. If their voices are to be ignored for long, we will not reap the benefits of our still increasing demography.

Besides the fundamental rights to every citizen of India, the articles 15, 16 and 335 make special provisions for the Scheduled Tribes through educational and employment opportunities that is generally termed as 'affirmative action policies'. A National Commission for Scheduled Tribes has been established under Article 338A that

considers various matters of significance to Tribes. Articles 330, 332, 243D also ensure political safeguards for the tribes through reservation of seats in the lower house, state legislative assembly and Panchayat respectively. In addition to the Directive Principle of State Policy (Article 46), and the Right to Education Act 2005 which promote the education and economic interests of disadvantaged groups such as Scheduled Tribes and protect them from social injustice and exploitation, there are also specific state-level provisions that address these issues.

The state government of Jharkhand has also taken up several initiatives for the Scheduled Tribe youths for supporting them with higher education and employment opportunities. The state welfare department provides scholarships in pre-matric, post-matric and fellowships in higher education including support to pursue M.Phil and Ph.D in India and abroad under schemes such as 'Marang Gomke scholarship'. Government runs 116 Residential Schools for the SC, ST and BC students and 400 hostels for the SC, ST, BC and Minority students studying in schools and colleges including Eklavya and Kasturba Gandhi residential schools have been established across the state to cater to the modern educational needs of marginalised communities. The Department also provides bi-cycles to students of class eighth for SC, ST, BC and Minority students belonging to below the poverty line families. throughout Some special schemes on skill education like Pilot training, Airhostess training, B.Sc in nursing, four years advance mechanic course, computer course are also part of the governmental agenda. Twenty two Government ITIs and 136 private functional ITIs with a sanctioned capacity of nearly 7,247 and 21,250 seats respectively, are imparting vocational training to the young people of the state in order to prepare them for the employment market. New ITIs, including 16 women ITIs, have been established too. In addition to this, 10 ITIs in ten naxalism affected districts have been sanctioned under the 13th Finance Commission (GoJ, 12th Plan Document for Jharkhand, 2011). Divyayan Krishi Vigyan Kendra (DKVK) and PAN-IIT Alumni Reach for India (PARFI) have started vocational training under the Kalyan Gurukul initiative in collaboration with Government of Jharkhand.

Followed by the creation of the new state, two new universities Nilamber-Pitamber and Kolhan University have been established in Educationally Backward Districts (EBD) of Palamu and West Singhbhum respectively. An Indian Institute of Management (IIM) and two private Universities namely, ICFAI University, Ranchi and Jharkhand Rai University have also come up in the Ranchi district. The National University of Study and Research in Law has also started functioning from October 2010. The state already had some of the premier central government institutes like IIT (ISM), Dhanbad; National Institute of Technology, Jamshedpur; Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi.

However, the 14th Finance Commission Report of the state mentions that further expansion of colleges is required in the Educationally Backward Districts of the state. The premier institutes have a limited availability of seats, which limits the admission of the Scheduled Tribes. The need to improve regional imbalances and the quality of research, the modernisation of libraries, and the strengthening of laboratories are also mentioned in the report. In order to encourage the female participation into higher education and bridge the overall literacy gender gap, a scheme for free education to girl students up to Post Graduate level was launched in 2005. Initiatives towards distance

learning system for improvement of access to students in remote areas have taken place in the state. During the 12th Plan period, women colleges were to be established in districts having female literacy rate below 35 percent but not enough progress has been made on this front.

Employment assistance for the unemployed youth is provided through 47 operational employment exchanges in the state (GoJ 2017). One employment exchange each for the females and the Scheduled caste and Tribes has also been exclusively established in Ranchi to provide special impetus to their employment. The employment exchanges are also acting as centres for dissemination of ideas about career opportunities to the youth. Career Study Centers, Professional and Executive Job Exchanges, Employment Information and Guidance Bureau, as well as District Employment Exchanges have been established in the six sub-regional employment exchanges. These facilities offer informational materials on several career paths as well as expert help and counselling to young people. Additionally, Rojgar Melas, or job fairs, are periodically hosted in all districts to connect employers with the needs and goals of young people without jobs.

6. Conclusion-outcome of interventions in the sphere of Adivasi agency

This research explored the context of Tribal agency by using the proxies- Tribal participation in higher education, performance in livelihood generation and political assertions. Tribal agency of individuals as a representative of an ethnic community (any Tribal community) and their participation in higher education was explored. In an interconnected world today, the complex challenges that we face require complex solutions and collective responses, that universities can best do through creating critical young minds in collaboration with communities. The outcome of governmental efforts for enhancing Tribal agency in higher education has been bleak.

The Tribal community holds knowledge, resource and human resource but this agency has never been well established in higher education. Political movements centring the cause of education are rare in India. Student movements on issues pertaining to community outreach hardly take place. On the other hand, experience of community agency in educational development has not revealed exceptional results so far. Indigenous groups operating their own councils and administering educational governance in the north-eastern parts of India have also been only partially effective unlike Tribal colleges in the west. Interestingly, the fifth and sixth Schedules that grants special rights to Tribals in the central and north-eastern parts of the country do not mention higher education as a domain of the Tribal agency. Clearly, the policymakers have misjudged the aspirations of marginalized communities by assuming them to be limited to basic education only.

The higher education sector has a complex and complicated structure of governance which is probably the first barrier to community agency. Policies, leadership, financial constraints, procedural limits, time constraints, lack of incentives and prejudice could be some of the factors in the higher education system which prevents universities from reaching out to the communities and prevents the community agency from contributing to higher education. The community may have its own set of issues such as hierarchies, lack of information, inadequate incentive, poor confidence among others. Enough

researches to understand this issue is not taking place. Neither is the higher education sector trying to enhance community agency which can only be done through further community involvement and acknowledging their importance in governance.

According to Fielden (2008) there is a trend internationally towards increased substantive autonomy of higher education institutions (curricula design, research policy) and procedural autonomy (financial administration, non-academic staff appointments). This also raises questions about who participates in governance bodies: who takes decisions with regard to Tribal issues within the university, how often do Tribal faculties and administrators participate in decision making processes and to what extent are Tribals or Tribal empathisers represented in decision making positions? The secondary data analysis reveals that participation of Tribals in higher education has been limited both as students and as teaching faculty. In the non-teaching positions, Adivasis mostly find representation in the group D and C positions which are not positions of authority. Despite an exceptional level of participation in school education, the transition levels to higher education for the Tribals are extremely low. Empirical data from the field supplemented the conclusion that while governmental policies of compulsory school education has brought the Tribal population to the doorstep of school education, their actual attainments and future pathways remain in doldrums. Even when they are transiting to higher education, these are mostly non-technical or non-STEM courses providing very little employment opportunities. Female participation in self-financed courses is a reflection of preferene for 'female centric' jobs like nursing and teaching. Christian missionary affiliations influence the employment market with higher employment rate for Tribal teaching faculties in private aided and unaided colleges. Although it provides employment, changed religious affiliations impacts the Tribal culture and identity.

Adivasi politics in Jharkhand has mostly been synonymous to social movements around jal (water), jangal (forest) and jamin (land), the key natural resources which invaders and rulers have threatened to usurp from the Tribal community. Despite the fervour towards ownership of natural resources by the Adivasis and policies addressed towards protection of Tribal lands from alienation, the representation of Tribal communities in the livelihood sector remain marginal. A lower labour force participation rate of the Adivasis is heightened by their low participation in vocational education and subsequent low employment in salaried sector.

The traditional control of the Tribals on resources were severely eroded by British colonial policies that considered these resources as a source of income for their constituencies. Tribal areas saw many revolts and resistance movements against the government's repression, money lenders' exploitation and domination by non-Tribal landlords through land grabbing. These reforms led to significant changes in how Britishers interpreted the need for local laws to govern Tribal areas. The colonial imperialist policy disrupted the communal, communitarian production system in the Tribal areas. Numerous surveys were conducted on lands. Individual property rights on land were established where it they were not present. This led to the disintegration of the communal way of organizing livelihood. Land was jointly occupied in the Tribal territories prior to the 19th century's establishment of the capitalist system. Ownership was not a concept; only user rights existed. The colonial government debated and passed regulations that marked the beginning of converting natural resources into

marketable commodities. The need for raw materials increased as the industrial revolution changed Europe, colonialism spread, the industrial era began, and the capitalist system emerged. The resolutions fuelled resource looting, which the state frequently supported and sanctioned. These resources served as the foundation for the manufacture of a variety of items that were both exported to the west as well as consumed domestically. Education can be a platform, providing agency to the Tribes to understand their history and biography and also helping them acknowledge what is right or wrong in their present way of life and what can be improved or revived.

In conclusion, when Tribes and non-Tribes do a sociological imagination and trace their history, they realize the background of Tribal knowledge systems and mythologies. Tribals could acknowledge that their ethos of universalism need to amalgamate with the modern education system while non-Tribals could acknowledge that their ideas about Tribals are a by-product of non-Tribal socio-cultural influences in their lives. Discriminatory influence has disabled non-Tribals from acknowledging the classic Tribal philosophies, relegating them as quaint believers and practitioners. Such sociological imagination, if done by both Tribals and non-Tribals in educational policies will be reflected in the curriculum, pedagogy and training of teachers leading to enhancement of Tribal agency (Mills, 1959). The research shows that education does lead to agency development of tribes although it is a difficult process with limited support systems within academia. Education does provide opportunity for expansion of world view leading to the overall well-being of Tribal individuals. Thus, Tribal agency development is bound to happen with increased participation in higher education. However, given the present low rate of Tribal participation in higher education, this will be a slow process and the critical number for bringing about change will be slow to achieve. Thus, it is imperative that the university engages in community outreach, beyond the traditional ivory tower approach so that the larger Tribal community could become stakeholders of the higher education system. In order for state public universities to thrive they should take into consideration, the demands and needs of their immediate communities. There is a need to design partnerships with Tribal communities for co-production of new scientific knowledge using local knowledge for solving local problems and using global knowledge for enabling new capacities in systems transformation. This could address the dream of a futuristic, embedded university system to design environments that sustainably disrupt historic inequities and enhance tribal agency.

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