

Gender Inequality in Work Participation among Paraja Tribe of Koraput District in Odisha

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Abstract:

If we look at global society today, the term social inequality is a worldwide phenomenon to understand human relationship in this progressive world. India is not an exception to it and it is one of the important areas of the study to understand Indian Society. There are various forms of inequality continue to exist in Indian society even after several reformations and gender inequality is one of the most atrocious. In India, inequality towards either sex has existed since several centuries and transformed from generation to generation. It affects the lives of both male and female in different aspects of their social life. The Constitution of India has the provision of equal rights for men and women but gender disparity is mostly in favour of men than the women in different walks of social life. Even among the tribal communities where there was absence of inequality are now prominently found gender inequality due to several reasons and impact of modern development. This paper is an attempt to study existing gender inequality among the Paraja tribes the largest tribal communities of Koraput district in Odisha. The discriminatory practices are taking place at an alarming rate affecting the lives of many women.

Keywords: *Gender, Paraja, Tribe, Inequality, Women, Development, Disparity*

1. Introduction:

Generally, a tribe is a group of distinct people, dependent on their land and forest for their livelihood, who are largely self-sufficient and not integrated into the national main stream society. The Oxford Dictionary states that, "Tribe is a group of people in a primitive or barbarous stage of development acknowledging the authority of a chief and usually regarding them as having a common ancestor". [1] Odisha state is one of the backward states of India with large numbers of tribes constituting about 22.8% per cent of state's total population. According to

2011 census, there are 62 scheduled tribe groups reside in Odisha out of which 13 of them are primitive vulnerable tribal groups. In order to understand gender inequality at village level it has been purposively chosen a Paraja tribe majority Rajapalama village of Semiliguda block, Koraput district as field area of investigation. For the purpose of the study total 51 respondents are selected for the interview, among them male 25 and female 26 from the Paraja tribes.

Like other tribes, the Paraja tribes are socio-economically, educationally backward, poor and marginal groups in the society. Most of the designated tribes are included in the 5th and 6th schedule of the Indian Constitution. They are popularly known as the Scheduled Tribe, Adivasi (original inhabitants), Mulnivasi, Indigenous people, Anusuhita Janajati, Girijans and Depressed Class people. They are being recognized as indigenous people for their geographical isolation, poor socio-economic status and their own distinctive culture. The tribal people are considered as the earliest among the present inhabitants of modern India who have survived here with their unchanging ways of life styles for several centuries. Many of them still live in a primitive stage and are far from the impact of modern civilization. The Scheduled Tribes (STs) constitute 8.2% of its total population of India. They are found in almost every state of India and the Union Territory except Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Puducherry. In Odisha state scheduled tribe population constitute 22.8% of its total population. Mayurbhanj district is having the highest tribal population with 58.72% of its total population. There are 50.56% tribal population live in Koraput district. [2] In reality, tribal women are working hard than the men. As women are responsible for both economic and household activities the division of work heavily loaded upon them. But, after fulfilling all these activities, she is an unpaid servant to man whose labour is never measured in economic terms. The study would like to address the gender inequality among Paraja tribe in relation to work participation. [3] Women are carrying baby in the back is a common sight in the tribal areas in times of working in the field. In the market place, tribal women are seen as vender as well as buyers especially in the weekly market. [4]

The Paraja Tribe of Koraput

Paraja is a Dravidian race and heterogeneous group forming the major part of the population. Their literacy rate is very low, and these tribal are poor, ignorant and highly backward, main livelihood is agriculture, use simple agricultural implements, forest collection, hunting, fishing and livestock rearing are the other livelihood. They live in near hills and valleys. There is some impact on their traditional way of life due to some developmental programme, but by all standard and parameter they still remained socio- economically backward compared to the national mainstream. They are poor, ignorant, illiterate, traditional and highly backward. [5] In India Paraja are found in the states of Andhra Pradesh, undivided Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Assam and Orissa. In Odisha with the largest chunk found in Koraput district followed by Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Kalahandi and Rayagada districts in the descending order. Koraput has the highest Paraja population in the district. It constitutes highest 221828 number of Paraja tribal population, out of 374628 Paraja tribes inhabiting in the state Odisha. [6] In Koraput they are mostly found in large concentration in Blocks of Koraput, Lamtaput, Semiliguda, Potangi, Nandapur, Dasamantpur, Laxmipur, Jeypore, Kundra, Borigumma and Boipariguda.

The Paraja tribe in Rajpalama village mainly depends upon daily labour and forest produce collection. Some Paraja tribes are engaged in CUO and HAL as a worker. Most of the Paraja tribe has agricultural land, but due to lack of water facilities they are unable to depend on agriculture. However, Electricity and drinking water facilities providing to these villages but due to lack of proper maintenance people were in trouble.

2. Methods of Study

The Field Site

The data has been collected as part of the research carried out for researchers doctoral work through intensive fieldwork conducted during April 2019. This study is based on a field study method and for the purpose of study village Rajpalama is chosen. Rajpalama village is surrounded by Central University of Odisha (CUO), the Hindustan Aeronauts Limited (HAL) Company and COBRA battalion; and also dense forest with hilly terrain. It is one of the adopted villages of Central University of Odisha. But the village is very poor condition in regards to

infrastructure system mainly i.e. communication. In this village, there are no regular public transport systems. People had to walk long distance to reach the market, hospital or other public facilities. Health center, high school, markets are not available in this village, so they depend on HAL. There are few Scheduled Caste, Other Backward Castes are living in this village along with Paraja tribe. For the understanding of gender inequality in work participation among the Paraja tribes Rajpalama village of Semiliguda Block is identified as field study. Based on the concentration of the Paraja tribes the said village is chosen. The rationale for selecting the place for study is that there are about half of the total population belonging to Paraja tribes and female literacy rate is very low because of gender discrimination. Both primary and secondary sources of data collected through both qualitative and quantity methods. Primary data collected in 2019 through structured interview schedule and case studies, non-participant observation and group discussion from 51 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Out of total 51 respondents 25 were males and 26 were females.

3. Results

Gender Inequality

It is found that in Rajpalama village gender inequality exist in relation to work participation. Gender inequality refers to health, economy, education, socio-cultural and political differences between male and female in the society. It resulted from biological differences and socially constructed gender roles. [7] In terms of women's basic rights, resources and opportunity; they are deprived, marginalized, debarred and disadvantaged in their private as well as public realm. In compare to male counterpart women are segregated, their voice as well as visibility always low in the society. [8]

Gender Inequality in Work among Tribes

When an activity recognized according to gender is called gender work. It can be economic and non-economic in nature. A distinction is made between men and women work in the society. The important characteristics of gender work are: any activities done by a man is called work but by woman within the house were not considered as work, rather than her duty. There work is

invisible and unpaid. But men work is visible and paid. So, they were treated as dependents on men. When women carried forward and became workers outside the home it is rated low, poorly paid and also termed as feminine work, because they are preferred. They preferred for highly repetitive, male disinterested job, unskilled or less skilled job, low wages, unorganized and vulnerable job. Because they are highly productive, task oriented and their work is considered as secondary. Whenever a new technology is introduced it is the men who are encouraged to take training and upgrade their skills but women are not encouraged to take this. When modern technology is used, they are removed from the agricultural activities. Family economic condition forced them to work outside for supplement the earnings of their family. When labour shortage they were employed in large number, but when the demand for labour contracted they were first to be retrenched.

Tribal woman occupies an important place in their society. They enjoy more freedom than general women in the mainstream society. Because they play an important role in economic activities as well as decision making in household activities. They are working very hard and equal with men or harder than men. In almost all the tribal communities the family economy and income depend on them. [9] But this does not mean that they are not facing problem of inequality. The position of tribal women in their society largely based on the aspects is patriarchal, matriarchal and polyandrous forms of society. Women position in a matrilineal society is better than the patrilineal society. [10]

Review of Literature

A study conducted by Dhar (2015) in eight North-East states of India observed that comparison to men there is low representation of women in labour force. The gender inequality in labour force participation is more pronounced in urban areas than rural areas. Women work participation rate is very low in both rural and urban areas. Unemployment rates are high among women than men mostly found in urban areas than the rural areas. Tripura has the highest female unemployment rates. [11]

Naresh (2014) highlighted that the tribal women are shouldering greater responsibility to meet the daily needs of urban survival. High gender disparity states include U.P, Bihar, Punjab, Kerala, W.B and Odisha. Women are more participate in rice cropping than wheat, field pea and black gram. Tribal women earned average days of employment in forest produce, they exclusively engaged in collection of minor forest produce, its storage, processing and marketing. Now they are most affected because government control over forest increases. So, they migrated to urban area and face a number of problems in language, residential accommodation, employment, education and adjustment. Due to poverty, unemployment, education they faces financial, physical and sexual exploitation. They work in the agricultural fields and forest for long hours, work continuing even during pregnancy, natal and post- natal stages. They have a negative energy balance; high morbidity rate and low child survival rate suffer from taboos and superstition and remain deprived of the benefits from existing development and welfare programme. [12]

Roy and Madhu (2014) found that in employment or economic condition maximum Lepcha women are engaged as agricultural activities in primary sector. In secondary sector they are not involved but involved in making local handicraft and in tertiary sector both men and women are engaged less where they are engaged as teacher, driver, guide etc. Female incomes are lower than the male in the study site. Lastly they concluded that although Lepcha women enjoy equal right in society, but they are deprived in every respect like employment, income, work participation, education, life span, health condition than their male counterpart and they are leaving home for poverty supports their miserable situation. [13]

Findings of the Study

Socio- economic Condition of the Paraja Tribal Respondents

The analysis of the socio-economic profile of the respondents is the most basic in any social science research. Socio-economic profile presents a picture of the social and economic status of the clients. An individual background plays a significant role in the formation of their attitude, belief, commitments to their work and it makes up their personality. In fact it is the socio-

economic background of the respondent which determines their status, occupation and particular in economy. Here total number of respondents are 51 i.e. 100% among them Male 25; i.e. 49% and females are 26; i.e. 51% of the total respondents.

Table No.1
Socio- economic Condition of the Paraja Tribal Respondent

Socio- economic Condition	Category	Male F (%)	Female F (%)
Age	15-24	5 (9.80)	6(11.77)
	25-34	6(11.76)	5(9.80)
	35-44	9(17.64)	10(19.60)
	45-54	3(5.88)	4(7.85)
	Above 54	2(3.92)	1(1.98)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Marital Status	Married	24(47.02)	23(45.10)
	Unmarried	1(1.98)	1(1.98)
	Widow	Nil	2(3.92)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Educational Qualification	Illiterate	2(3.92)	21(41.18)
	Just know Signature	10(19.60)	4(7.84)
	Literate	13(25.48)	1(1.98)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Types of Family	Joint	5(9.79)	7(13.73)
	Nuclear	20(39.21)	19(37.27)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Head of Family	Male	25(49)	25(49)
	Female	Nil	1(1.98)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Occupation	Job	7 (13.72)	2(3.92)
	Kuli	9 (17.64)	1(1.98)
	Labourer	6 (11.76)	8(15.68)
	Homemaker and own land cultivator	Nil	14(27.45)
	Others (farmer, student, non-worker, street vender)	3 (5.88)	1(1.98)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Monthly Income	1000-5000	8(15.68)	11(21.58)
	5001-10000	10(19.60)	13(25.50)
	Above 10000	7(13.72)	2(3.92)

	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Monthly Expenditure	1000-5000	4(7.84)	5(9.80)
	5001-10000	19(37.24)	20(39.22)
	Above 10000	2(3.92)	1(1.98)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)

Source: *Field Survey Report*

The sample size (N) = 51, Male= 25 (49%), Female= 26 (51%)

From the above table, it is represents that socio- economic conditions of the respondents. Age group of the respondents divided into 5 categories. It is found that among the male respondents out of 49% maximum 17.64% are belonging to the age category of 35-44. In case female also, out of 51% highest 19.60% respondents are belong to same category. When we looks into the marital status of the respondents, it shows that highest number of both male 47.02% and female 45.10% respondents are married. Educational status of the respondents divided into three categories. Illiteracy rate are very high 41.18% less among the female respondents than the male 3.92% respondents. It indicates that illiteracy rate high among the female. Medium numbers of male respondents 19.60% are known to write their name either in Odia or English. 7.84% female respondents are just knew their signature in Odia language. It revealed that 25.48% male respondents are literate, among them 17.64% are up to lower primary, 3.92% are upper primary and 1.98% secondary and also 1.98% studied in class 10th. Only 1.98% respondents are completed lower primary class. It shows that males are more literate than female. Types of family of the respondents indicates that highest numbers of both male 39.21 and females 37.27% are belong to the nuclear family than the joint family. Especially after marriage Paraja tribal people are prefer to live in neo local family. Among the respondents 49% male and 49% female are belong to the family which is male headed, i.e. patriarchy in nature. But only 1.98% female Paraja respondent's family is headed by a female member, because her husband died no male members are there in the family. It does not mean that it is a matriarchy family. Maximum numbers of 17.64% Paraja male respondents are daily wage worker, but few 1.98% female respondents are kuli. 13.72% males and 3.92% females occupations are job categories i.e. CUO sweeper and cooker; HAL driver and attendant 3.92% females are belong to CUO sweeper.

11.76% males and 15.68% females are belonging to daily labourer category. Maximum number of 27.45% females are belong to homemaker along with own land cultivators. 5.88% male respondents belong to farmer, student and non-worker category. 1.98% female respondents are venders in weekly market. Maximum both male 19.60% and female 25.50% monthly family income has 5001-10,000. Monthly expenditure also high in male 37.24% and female 39.22% has 5001-10,000.

Gender Inequality among Paraja Tribe in relation to Work Participation

The analysis of Gender Inequality among Paraja Tribe in relation to Work Participation presents a picture of the work participation of the Paraja tribe in the study area. The table no-2 analyse gender inequality in work participation on the basis of engaged in work, paid work, gave monthly income, continuity in work, work duration per day and any difference between men and women at work place. Here total number of respondents are 51 i.e. 100% among them Male 25; i.e. 49% and females are 26; i.e. 51% of the total respondents.

Table No.2

Gender Inequality among Paraja Tribe in relation to Work Participation

Gender Inequality in Work Participation	Category	Male	Female
Engaged in any work	Job	7(13.72)	2(3.92)
	Daily wage worker	9(17.64)	1(1.98)
	Labourer	6(11.76)	8(15.68)
	Homemaker and own land cultivator	Nil	14(27.45)
	Others (farmer, student, non-worker, street vender)	3(5.88)	1(1.98)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Paid work	Yes	22(43.12)	12(23.52)
	No	3(5.88)	14(27.48)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Gave monthly Income	Spouse	2(3.92)	6(11.76)
	Father	1(1.98)	1(1.98)
	Self	19(37.25)	5(9.80)
	Not Applicable	3(5.88)	14(27.48)

	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Continuity in Work	Regular	7(13.72)	3(5.88)
	Seasonal	1(1.98)	14(27.48)
	Occasional	15(29.40)	9(17.64)
	Not Applicable	2(3.92)	Nil
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Work Duration per day	Less than 7 hrs	15(29.40)	9(17.64)
	7 hours	7(13.72)	3(5.88)
	More than 7 hrs	1(1.98)	14(27.48)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)
Any difference between men and women at work place	Wage	15(29.40)	9(17.64)
	Work	6(11.76)	14(27.48)
	No difference	4(7.84)	3(5.88)
	Total	25(49%)	26(51%)

Source: Field Survey Report

The sample size (N) = 51, Male= 25 (49%), Female= 26 (51%)

Maximum numbers of 17.64% Paraja male respondents are engaged as daily wage worker, but few 1.98% female respondents are daily wage worker. 13.72% males and 3.92% females respondents are engaged in job like CUO sweeper and cooker; HAL driver and attendant 3.92% females are belong to CUO sweeper. 11.76% males and 15.68% females are engaged in daily labourer. Maximum number of 27.45% females are engaged as homemaker along with own land cultivators. 5.88% male respondents engaged as farmer, student and non-worker category. 1.98% female respondents are engaged as venders in weekly market. 43.12% male and 23.52% of females Paraja respondents are engaged in paid work. 5.88% males and 27.48% females are engaged in non-paid workers. High number of female respondents 11.76% and only 3.92% males gave their monthly income to their spouse. 37.25% male and 9.80 female keep their income by themselves. 13.72% males and 5.88% female's work are regular in nature throughout the year. But only 1.98% male and more female 27.48% is seasonal workers because they are depend on agriculture. 29.40% and 17.64% males and females respectively engaged as occasional workers. Maximum 29.40% male respondents and 17.64% female respondents works less than 7 hrs in a day. 13.72% male and 5.88% female are works 7 hrs per day. But maximum 27.48% female compare to male 1.98% are works more than 7 hrs in a day along with household works. 29.40% male and 17.64% females are said wage difference present in their work place among male and

female. 11.76% male and 27.48% female gave their view, there are work difference exists and only 7.84% and 5.88% said there is no differences at their work place.

4. Conclusion

Study reveals that women wage per day are much lower than men of all the states of India. It indicates wage differences exist between male and female workers of the studied village. Rajapalama village is a tribal dominated village under study. It is identified that there is a huge gender inequality among the Paraja tribe in Rajapalma village in relation to work participation. It is found that males are more literate than the females and illiteracy are more found among the females. Among the respondents maximum males and females are married. Most of them preferred to live separate from their parents after marriage. Paraja tribal family is patriarchy in nature. Majority males are daily wage worker, but more females are homemaker as well as own land cultivators. Maximum numbers of family monthly income and expenditure lies between 5001-10,000. More males are engaged in paid work than the females. Maximum male workers work throughout the year but seasonal workers are more among the females. Females are working more than 7 hrs in a day along with household works. There are work and wage inequality exist among males and females daily wage earner, labourer, and agriculture workers in the Paraja tribes.

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