



MIGRATION PATTERNS AND CHALLENGES IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES OF JHARKHAND, INDIA

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Abstract: The research investigates the intricate landscape of migration patterns and the ensuing challenges prevalent within the tribal communities of Jharkhand, India. Utilizing a multidimensional approach encompassing interviews, surveys, and ethnographic observations, this study elucidates the complexities and multifaceted nature of migration in this region. The findings unveil a nexus of socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors acting as catalysts for migration among Jharkhand's tribal communities. Factors such as land dispossession, limited livelihood opportunities, inadequate infrastructure, socio-political marginalization, and the allure of urban life emerge as key drivers compelling both internal and external migrations. In urban settings, tribal migrants encounter formidable challenges. These encompass socio-economic adversities including limited access to quality education, precarious employment in low-paying occupations, housing insecurities due to the high cost of living, and inadequate healthcare facilities. Moreover, the process of assimilation into urban societies poses a threat to the preservation of cultural identities, potentially resulting in disconnect from traditional heritage amid the dominance of urban culture. This research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of migration dynamics within Jharkhand's tribal communities, shedding light on the myriad challenges faced by these marginalized groups.

Keywords: Migration, Tribal communities, Jharkhand, Socio-economic, Cultural identity

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Introduction

Jharkhand, carved out of the southern part of Bihar in the year 2000, is a state located in eastern India. It is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, vibrant traditions, and diverse tribal communities that have resided in the region for

centuries. The name “Jharkhand” itself translates to “The Land of Forests,” signifying its lush greenery and abundant natural resources¹. Home to a significant proportion of India’s tribal population, Jharkhand boasts a mosaic of indigenous groups, each with its distinct languages, customs, and cultural practices. In the culturally rich and diverse state of Jharkhand, the demographic landscape encompasses a tapestry of 32 distinct tribal communities, each contributing unique traditions, languages, and cultural practices to the region’s vibrant heritage. Among these communities, Jharkhand also recognizes the presence of eight Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)², denoting specific indigenous groups facing severe socio-economic and developmental challenges, often requiring specialized attention and support for their upliftment and preservation of their unique cultural identities. These tribal communities have historically maintained a deep connection with their ancestral lands, relying on subsistence agriculture, traditional handicrafts, and forest-based livelihoods. The state’s terrain is characterized by dense forests, rolling hills, and fertile plains, providing a backdrop to the unique way of life embraced by its tribal populace. The region’s natural wealth has been both a source of sustenance and a point of contention, as it has often been subject to industrialization, mineral extraction, and developmental projects. Despite its natural bounty, Jharkhand faces socio-economic challenges, including poverty, limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure in many tribal-dominated areas. Moreover, issues like land dispossession, displacement due to development projects, and socio-political marginalization have had a profound impact on the lives of these indigenous communities. Their cultural heritage, characterized by vibrant festivals, music, dance forms, and traditional art, forms an integral part of Jharkhand’s identity. The resilience, rich cultural diversity, and symbiotic relationship with nature make Jharkhand’s tribal communities an essential aspect of the state’s social fabric. Understanding their way of life, challenges faced, and their contributions to the state’s cultural richness are crucial for comprehending the complexities of migration patterns within these communities.

Methodology

To explore the migration patterns and associated challenges within the tribal communities of Jharkhand, this study employed a scientifically grounded and methodologically rigorous approach. The norms of the scientific method

were strictly followed to ensure neutrality, reliability, and analytical depth throughout the research process. A total of 80 tribal respondents were purposively selected from five key tribal-dominated districts Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum who have migrated to Ranchi, the state capital. The purposive sampling technique was chosen to identify individuals whose migration experiences were directly relevant to the study's objectives. This approach facilitated a diverse and meaningful representation of various tribal communities, each with unique migration histories and socio-cultural contexts. Data collection was conducted using a mixed-method strategy combining both structured interviews and non-participant observation. The structured interviews were guided by a pre designed schedule focused on uncovering the Migration Pattern in Tribal Communities in Jharkhand.

Migration Patterns in Tribal Communities of Jharkhand

Seasonal Migration

Seasonal migration refers to the temporary movement of people from one place to another, usually triggered by changes in seasons or periods of economic inactivity in their home regions. This type of migration is often cyclical and recurrent, linked closely to agricultural calendars or climatic conditions. People move during certain months to seek employment or better livelihood opportunities elsewhere, typically returning home once the season changes or when work becomes available again locally³. In rural and tribal communities, seasonal migration is a survival strategy that helps families cope with the lack of continuous income, especially during off-harvest times or lean agricultural periods. Migrants often take up short-term jobs in sectors like construction, brick kilns, agricultural labor in other regions, or informal urban employment. This movement not only provides essential financial support but also connects remote areas to broader economic systems. Unlike permanent migration, seasonal migration is temporary and does not usually involve a change of residence or severance of ties with the place of origin. However, it can have profound social and economic impacts on both the migrants and their communities, influencing household structures, local economies, and cultural practices. Thus, seasonal migration is a vital, though often challenging, adaptive mechanism for marginalized populations facing fluctuating economic and environmental conditions.

Distress Migration

Distress migration refers to involuntary or compelled movement undertaken by individuals or communities due to extreme socio-economic vulnerabilities. Unlike voluntary or strategic migration driven by aspirations for better living standards, distress migration is typically a last resort. It is often the outcome of persistent poverty, chronic unemployment, landlessness, illiteracy, natural disaster and the absence of basic amenities such as healthcare, education, and social security⁴. In the context of Jharkhand, especially among its tribal population, distress migration has emerged as a critical concern. Present study, which focuses on 80 tribal respondents who migrated to Ranchi from five key tribal-dominated districts Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum highlights how economic desperation and social marginalization continue to uproot tribal lives from their ancestral villages. Many tribal families from these regions depend heavily on rain-fed agriculture and forest-based livelihoods. When faced with crop failures, land alienation, or lack of irrigation, their traditional means of survival are disrupted. With no alternative income sources and minimal support from institutional safety nets, migration becomes an inevitable coping mechanism. The absence of non-farm employment opportunities in rural areas further exacerbates the situation.

During the study, a significant portion of respondents reported that their migration to Ranchi was not out of choice but a matter of survival. They described leaving behind their villages due to acute poverty, inability to secure jobs locally, and inadequate access to education and healthcare. Several noted that their native villages lacked functioning schools, health centres, or road connectivity. Basic entitlements such as ration cards, pensions, or job cards under schemes like MGNREGA were poorly implemented. Once in Ranchi, these migrants often end up in informal sectors, working in construction sites, roadside vending, domestic work, or as daily wage labourers. Living conditions remain precarious, with many residing in slum-like settlements lacking clean water, sanitation, and stable shelter. Their urban life, although seemingly offering employment, introduces new vulnerabilities including exploitation, job insecurity, and the erosion of social and cultural networks. The findings from this research underline the structural nature of distress migration in Jharkhand's tribal belt. It is not merely an individual decision but a reflection of systemic deprivation and policy failures that leave rural tribal communities with no viable options. Addressing distress migration, therefore, requires a

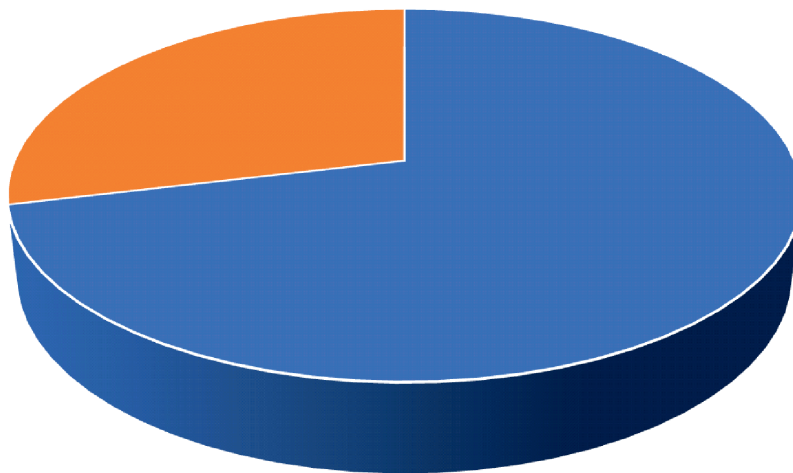
multidimensional approach: improving rural livelihoods, ensuring effective implementation of welfare schemes, expanding access to quality education and healthcare, and protecting land and forest rights of tribal communities. This form of migration is a symptom of deeper inequalities and developmental neglect. As long as the root causes remain unaddressed, tribal families will continue to be pushed into cities like Ranchi under dire circumstances, struggling not just for economic survival but also for the preservation of their identity, dignity, and rights.

Female Migration

Female migration, particularly among tribal communities in Jharkhand, presents a distinct narrative within the broader patterns of mobility. It is shaped not only by economic imperatives but also by social, cultural, and familial dynamics. For tribal women, migration is often tied to both livelihood strategies and social customs, reflecting a complex interplay of necessity and tradition. In the present study, out of the 80 tribal respondents who migrated to Ranchi from the districts of Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum, 23 were female, accounting for 28.75% of the sample (as shown in Table 1.2). While this percentage may appear relatively low compared to male respondents, it underscores significant gendered patterns within the tribal migration framework. A major factor contributing to female migration in Jharkhand is their engagement in urban domestic labor. Many tribal women migrate to cities like Ranchi to work as housemaids, caregivers, or cooks, often in middle- and upper-income urban households. This type of migration is typically individual, though in some cases, it occurs as part of family migration units, where entire households relocate in search of better economic prospects. Another prevalent cause of female migration is marriage, which is commonly categorized as social migration. In many cases, economic and social drivers converge, with women migrating both for work and to accompany migrating husbands or family members. For example, women from Gumla or Khunti may travel with their spouses to Ranchi, taking on informal sector work or unpaid domestic responsibilities while their husbands engage in daily wage labor. In these situations, their contributions remain largely invisible in formal economic records, despite being essential to the sustenance of migrant households.

Female tribal migrants in Ranchi face multiple challenges. These include low wages, lack of job security, vulnerability to exploitation, and limited

access to social services. Moreover, the urban environment often exerts pressure on traditional gender roles and cultural identities. Migrant women may experience social isolation, disruption in community support systems, and restricted mobility, especially in unfamiliar and sometimes hostile urban neighborhoods. The data and observations from this research reveal that female migration in Jharkhand is both a response to hardship and an assertion of agency. While women are undoubtedly pushed by socio-economic constraints, they also actively seek out avenues for financial independence and family support. However, the lack of institutional support, absence of skill development programs, and minimal attention to the specific needs of female migrants continue to marginalize their roles in both policy and practice. Addressing these issues requires a gender-sensitive approach to migration and development policies one that recognizes women not merely as dependents or social migrants but as active economic contributors facing distinct challenges. Empowering tribal women through education, vocational training, and legal protections can significantly alter the migration experience, turning it from one of compulsion into one of opportunity and resilience.



Graph 1.1: (Gender)

Table 1.1

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	57	71.25
Female	23	28.75
Total	80	100

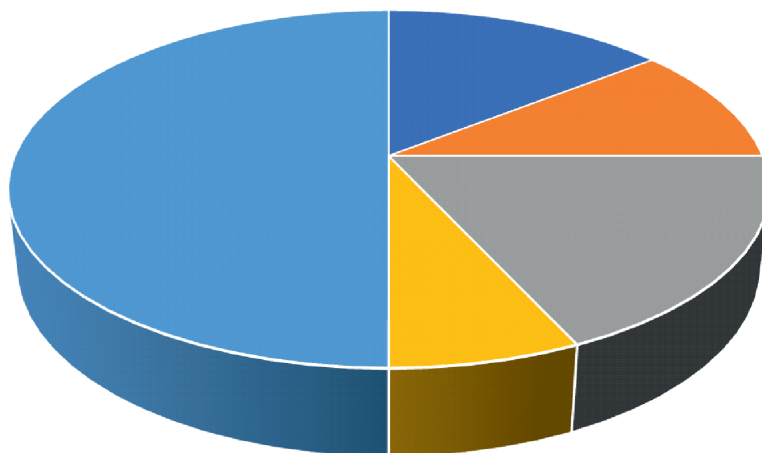
Youth Migration

Youth migration has emerged as a significant trend among tribal communities in Jharkhand, particularly as young individuals seek to reshape their futures in response to changing socio-economic dynamics. In the present study, out of 80 respondents who migrated from Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum to Ranchi, 29 were youths, reflecting 36.25% of the total migrant population. This notable share underscores a growing pattern of mobility among tribal youth driven largely by aspirations for economic advancement and educational attainment. Unlike traditional migration patterns shaped predominantly by distress or seasonal factors, youth migration is increasingly influenced by ambition, exposure, and access to information. The new generation of tribal youth is more connected with the outside world and more aware of the opportunities that urban centers like Ranchi offer in terms of jobs, skill development, and higher education. Many of these young migrants are either semi-educated (having completed secondary or higher secondary education) or graduates. With limited scope for employment in their native villages where agricultural dependency and economic stagnation prevail youth are compelled to move toward cities. Ranchi, being the state capital and an emerging urban hub, serves as a central destination for tribal youth seeking employment in retail, service sectors, call centers, construction, transportation, and hospitality industries. A significant portion also migrates to pursue higher education, enrolling in universities, technical institutions, and vocational training centers located in Ranchi. These young individuals view education as a pathway to stable employment and upward social mobility. However, despite their qualifications, many face underemployment, working in roles that do not align with their skillsets due to a mismatch between education and job market requirements. The migration of youth also entails a shift in cultural orientation. Exposure to urban lifestyles leads to changes in dress, language, food habits, and social interactions, often resulting in a generational gap between migrants and their families who remain in the villages. This transition, while opening doors to new experiences, can also cause a sense of cultural dislocation and identity conflict, especially when youth struggle to balance traditional values with urban norms. Challenges are abundant. Housing insecurity, financial instability, lack of guidance, and psychosocial stress frequently affect young migrants in urban settings. For those without strong social networks in Ranchi, navigating life in the city becomes even more

daunting. Some fall into exploitative work conditions or informal employment without legal or health protections. Despite these difficulties, youth migration from Jharkhand's tribal areas reflects a transformational shift in how the younger generation perceives development and self-empowerment. The urge to break the cycle of poverty, access better education, and secure meaningful employment drives these youths beyond their ancestral lands. This trend, if supported with appropriate policy measures, such as job-oriented training, career counseling, and scholarships, can lead to a more equitable and skilled tribal workforce contributing to both regional and national growth.

Circular Migration

Circular migration represents a distinct and recurring pattern of mobility observed within the tribal populations of Jharkhand. It refers to short-term, cyclical movement where individuals or families migrate temporarily for work and return to their native villages after the end of a particular employment season, only to migrate again when the need or opportunity arises⁵. This form of migration is highly prevalent among tribal communities, particularly those engaged in agricultural, construction, and informal labor sectors. In the present study, 11 out of 80 respondents (13.75%) reported engaging in circular migration, especially from the districts of Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum to Ranchi. These individuals typically do not intend to settle permanently in the city. Instead, their migration is driven by immediate economic needs such as debt repayment, family sustenance during lean agricultural periods, or sudden financial emergencies. Circular migration is deeply connected to the seasonality of employment in rural areas. During non-harvest months or drought-affected seasons, there is minimal income-generating activity in the villages. As a result, many tribal laborers move to Ranchi to take up temporary work in construction sites, roadside vending, domestic labor, or daily wage jobs in markets and factories. Once the work season ends or rural labor is again in demand (especially during planting or harvesting), they return home. This pattern has both advantages and limitations. On one hand, it allows tribal households to diversify their income sources without completely severing ties with their land and community. On the other, the repeated movement disrupts children's education, strains family cohesion, and leaves migrants without the benefits of long-term urban residence, such as proper housing, identity documents, or access to urban welfare schemes.



Graph 1.2: Migration Pattern

Table 1.2

<i>Migration Pattern</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Seasonal Migration	23	28.75
Distress Migration	17	21.25
Youth Migration	29	36.25
Circular Migration	11	13.75
Total	80	100

The analysis of migration patterns among tribal communities in Jharkhand, based on responses from 80 individuals who migrated to Ranchi from districts such as Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum, reveals a complex interplay of socio-economic and demographic factors influencing mobility. A significant portion of the respondents (36.25%) belonged to the category of youth migration. This pattern reflects a growing trend among tribal youth seeking better educational opportunities, skill development, and employment in urban areas. The migration of young individuals often occurs independently, driven by aspirations for upward mobility and the perceived inadequacy of opportunities in their native regions. This shift also signals a gradual cultural transformation within tribal societies, as traditional occupational ties weaken and individual agency becomes more prominent. Seasonal migration accounted for 28.75% of the total, indicating that many tribal households continue to rely on periodic movement to supplement their livelihoods. Typically aligned with agricultural lean periods, this form of

migration involves temporary relocation to work in construction sites, brick kilns, or farms in neighboring states. Such mobility is often cyclical, with migrants returning to their villages post-harvest or during the sowing season. It underscores the persistent dependency on external employment due to limited local livelihood options.

Distress migration, comprising 21.25% of the responses, reflects the harsher realities faced by tribal families. Triggered by acute poverty, land alienation, unemployment, and displacement, such migration is often involuntary and marked by urgency. Respondents in this category cited inadequate social safety nets, crop failure, or sudden economic crises as primary drivers. This pattern is particularly concerning as it highlights systemic failures in rural support structures and deep-rooted developmental disparities. Circular migration, though less prevalent (13.75%), emerged as a unique adaptive strategy. These migrants tend to oscillate between their villages and the city, maintaining rural-urban linkages. Circular migration allows them to engage in urban wage labor while still participating in traditional agricultural or cultural activities at home. While this model offers flexibility, it often results in fragmented social support systems, inconsistent income, and vulnerability to exploitation in both settings.

Overall, the migration patterns observed reflect both adaptive and survival strategies employed by tribal communities amidst changing socio-economic landscapes. While youth and seasonal migration suggest evolving aspirations and traditional continuity respectively, distress and circular migration point to structural inadequacies and socio-economic instability that compel movement. These findings highlight the need for integrated rural development policies, targeted skill programs, and social protection mechanisms that can address the root causes of involuntary migration while enhancing the agency and dignity of tribal populations in transition.

Challenges Faced by Tribal Migrants

The challenges encountered by tribal migrants, particularly when transitioning to urban areas or non-native environments, encompass a spectrum of socio-economic, cultural, and discriminatory hurdles:

Socio-economic Challenges in Urban Settings

Tribal migrants, arriving from rural areas with limited educational opportunities, often face significant barriers when seeking employment

in urban settings. Their educational qualifications may not align with the demands of the urban job market, leading to their confinement in low-paying, informal jobs. These jobs often lack stability, offering meager incomes that are insufficient to cope with the high cost of living in urban areas. The disparity in educational qualifications and skill sets between tribal migrants and urban residents plays a pivotal role in shaping their employment prospects. Limited access to quality education in rural regions hinders the development of necessary skills that are marketable in urban settings. This mismatch between available skills and job requirements confines them to menial jobs, perpetuating their socio-economic marginalization. The economic constraints faced by tribal migrants are compounded by the high cost of living prevalent in urban areas. The meager incomes earned from informal jobs are inadequate to meet the expenses associated with urban life, including housing, food, healthcare, and transportation. As a result, tribal migrants often face housing insecurities, residing in overcrowded or substandard accommodations due to financial constraints. Limited financial resources impact the ability of tribal migrants to access adequate healthcare facilities. The costs associated with healthcare services in urban areas act as a deterrent, forcing many migrants to forgo or delay seeking medical attention when needed. This lack of access to healthcare exacerbates their vulnerability to health risks and leaves them without adequate medical support⁶.

The tribal communities of Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum, upon migrating to urban settings, encounter a myriad of socio-economic challenges that significantly impact their lives. They face challenges in securing stable and well-paying jobs in urban areas. Their skills may not align with the demands of the urban job market, resulting in their engagement in low-paying, informal sectors that offer minimal job security and financial stability. Access to quality education remains limited for many tribal migrants in urban settings. Their previous educational backgrounds and the urban education system's disparity often hinder their academic advancement, leading to lower educational attainment and reduced opportunities for better employment. The high cost of urban living contributes to housing insecurities among tribal migrants. Affording adequate and safe housing becomes a significant challenge, forcing many to live in overcrowded or substandard accommodations, which negatively impacts their quality of life. Urban life's higher cost exacerbates financial hardships for tribal migrants. Inadequate

incomes from irregular jobs make it challenging to meet basic needs, including food, healthcare, education, and transportation, leading to financial stress and insecurity. These socio-economic challenges collectively contribute to the marginalization and vulnerability of tribal migrants from Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum in urban environments. Addressing these issues necessitates targeted policies and interventions focusing on equitable access to education, employment opportunities, affordable housing, healthcare services, and measures to combat social exclusion and discrimination to ensure the socio-economic well-being of these marginalized communities.

Cultural Identity Issues and Assimilation

The journey of tribal migrants from rural hinterlands to urban centers ushers in a struggle to balance the preservation of their cultural heritage with the pressures of assimilating into a vastly different urban milieu. This juxtaposition of cultures presents formidable challenges, encompassing adaptation to dissimilar norms, languages, and lifestyles, which, in turn, poses a threat to the retention of their traditional identities. The adaptation to urban societies necessitates tribal migrants to navigate through a maze of cultural disparities. The shift from closely-knit, traditional communities to the anonymity of urban life often leads to a profound sense of displacement and disconnection. The urban landscape, with its diverse cultural amalgamation, can overwhelm migrants, contributing to a detachment from their roots and a sense of estrangement from their native customs and traditions. Maintaining indigenous customs, languages, and traditional practices amid the dominant urban culture presents an uphill battle for tribal migrants. The allure of urbanization and the imposition of a mainstream culture challenge the continuity of their cultural practices. As they grapple with new cultural influences and societal norms, there arises a risk of dilution or loss of their unique cultural heritage, eroding the richness and significance of their traditions over time. The clash between the indigenous way of life and the urban lifestyle raises concerns about the preservation of cultural roots and identities among tribal migrants. The pressure to conform to urban norms often overshadows the importance of preserving their distinct cultural identities. This tug-of-war between assimilation and preservation creates a dilemma, potentially leading to an identity crisis and a loss of connection with their ancestral heritage⁷.

The pervasive influence of urban culture, coupled with the complexities of adapting to a new way of life, heightens the risk of a gradual erosion of

tribal identities. The younger generations, exposed to urban influences and education, might distance themselves from their cultural roots in pursuit of integration, contributing to the dilution of indigenous languages, customs, and traditional practices. The dichotomy between preserving cultural heritage and assimilating into urban societies poses a formidable challenge for tribal migrants. The complexities of adapting to new cultural norms and lifestyles threaten the continuity of their indigenous identities. Addressing these challenges demands initiatives fostering cultural awareness, preserving linguistic diversity, and promoting cultural education both within tribal communities and within the broader urban context. Efforts aimed at fostering pride in indigenous cultures, facilitating cultural exchange programs, and creating spaces for the expression and celebration of tribal heritage are imperative to ensure the continuity and vibrancy of the rich cultural tapestry of tribal migrants amidst the urban milieu.

Access to Basic Services and Discrimination

The transition of tribal migrants from rural to urban landscapes often unfolds against a backdrop of systemic discrimination, compounded by restricted access to fundamental services crucial for their well-being. Discriminatory practices entrenched within urban societies perpetuate social stigmatization and prejudice, creating formidable barriers that impede their access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and adequate housing. In urban settings, tribal migrants frequently encounter systemic discrimination, thwarting their access to vital services. This discrimination, deeply rooted in societal biases, erects barriers hindering their integration into mainstream services. Discriminatory practices entrenched within institutions often impede their access to quality education, restrict their healthcare options, and exacerbate their housing insecurities, perpetuating their socio-economic vulnerabilities. Tribal migrants confront numerous challenges in accessing quality education due to discrimination prevalent within educational institutions. Biased attitudes, lack of cultural sensitivity, and stereotyping create an unwelcoming environment, hindering their educational advancement. This discrimination manifests in limited opportunities for academic growth and impediments to enrollment in educational institutions, depriving them of access to learning opportunities available to other urban residents.

The dearth of awareness about government welfare schemes and bureaucratic complexities accentuates the marginalization of tribal migrants.

Limited knowledge about available support systems and bureaucratic hurdles prevent them from accessing essential resources and support mechanisms. This lack of access perpetuates their socio-economic vulnerability, restricting their ability to avail themselves of the assistance provided to other urban residents. Confronting systemic discrimination and overcoming these barriers necessitates comprehensive policy interventions addressing societal biases, fostering cultural sensitivity within institutions, and ensuring equitable access to essential services. Efforts to raise awareness, eliminate discriminatory practices, and simplify bureaucratic processes are essential to mitigate the marginalization faced by tribal migrants, enabling their integration into urban societies with dignity and equitable access to opportunities and services.

Impact on Social Fabric and Traditional Customs

The migration of tribal communities from rural to urban settings or across regions engenders significant transformations in the social fabric and traditional customs, leading to notable shifts in community structures, kinship networks, cultural practices, and livelihoods. Migration disrupts the established community structures and kinship networks prevalent in rural tribal settings. The cohesive bonds forged within close-knit communities in native villages undergo considerable strain when individuals or families migrate to urban areas. This dispersal alters the dynamics of traditional kinship networks, leading to geographical dispersal and weakening the interconnectedness among family members and community elders. The absence of these crucial support systems can lead to a sense of isolation and a decline in mutual aid and solidarity among the community. The process of migration often precipitates changes in cultural practices and traditional livelihoods. The move from agrarian-based economies to urban settings prompts a shift from traditional occupations reliant on agriculture, forestry, or artisanal crafts to wage-based employment in industries or service sectors. This transition alters the lifestyle and livelihoods of tribal migrants, necessitating adaptation to unfamiliar urban work environments and economic pursuits. Consequently, traditional customs, cultural rituals, and practices that were once integral to their way of life might undergo adaptations or decline due to the challenges of sustaining them in urban settings. The migration experience significantly impacts the intergenerational transmission of cultural values and traditions within tribal communities. The younger generation, exposed to urban influences

and educational opportunities, might gradually distance themselves from the traditional cultural practices and languages of their ancestors. As they assimilate into urban cultures, there is a risk of losing the richness and depth of their indigenous knowledge, eroding the continuity of cultural heritage across generations. Migration brings about a reconfiguration of social identities within tribal communities. As individuals or families migrate and settle in diverse urban environments, their social identities undergo transformation. The complexities of navigating urban societies and adapting to new cultural norms challenge their traditional social identities, leading to a recalibration of their sense of belonging, roles, and social statuses within the community.

Conclusion

Present research presents a detailed understanding of the socio-economic and cultural factors driving migration pattern among tribal populations. Based on responses from 80 tribal individuals from Simdega, Khunti, Lohardagga, Gumla, and West Singhbhum districts who have migrated to Ranchi, the research highlights the depth and complexity of tribal migration experiences. Among the respondents, Youth Migration accounted for 36.25%, suggesting that a growing number of tribal youth both educated and semi-educated are leaving their native places in search of better employment and educational opportunities. Seasonal Migration, comprising 28.75% of respondents, reflects patterns linked to agricultural cycles, where individuals seek temporary employment during non-harvest periods. Distress Migration made up 21.25%, underlining how poverty, job scarcity, and lack of essential services force people to move, often under unfavorable conditions. Circular Migration, reported by 13.75% of respondents, shows a recurring movement between rural homes and urban job sites, especially for unskilled laborers in construction and farming. Gender-specific data show that female migrants formed 28.75% of the total, with migration prompted by work in urban households, family migration, and marriage. Their experiences add another dimension to tribal mobility, especially as they often face dual challenges of economic struggle and social vulnerability in unfamiliar urban spaces. The research identifies significant structural causes behind migration: lack of employment in native areas, poor access to healthcare and education, and land alienation. These push factors are intensified by the attraction of urban life, which appears to offer a better standard of living. Upon reaching Ranchi, migrants confront a new

set of difficulties low-paying, informal jobs, lack of secure housing, expensive living costs; and limited access to essential services. Many also face social isolation and cultural displacement, as traditional tribal values and customs struggle to survive in a fast-paced, urbanized environment. This research also brings to attention the need for targeted intervention. Employment generation within tribal regions, development of rural infrastructure, and effective access to government welfare schemes are essential to reduce forced migration. At the same time, urban centers like Ranchi must evolve to support incoming tribal populations by ensuring dignified employment, affordable housing, educational access, and cultural inclusion. Tribal identity must be preserved alongside economic development, allowing communities to sustain their heritage while improving their living conditions. Addressing the migration challenges of Jharkhand's tribal population requires a balanced and inclusive policy framework that is sensitive to the historical, economic, and cultural contexts of these communities. A focus on sustainable development and urban planning that includes migrant voices is essential to foster both resilience and opportunity.

Notes

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