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## Comparative research on the economic profile of the tribal and non-tribal farming communities in Chhattisgarh

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**Abstract**

Chhattisgarh state is predominated by the farming communities mostly practicing farming in general and rice farming in particular using different methods and practices. Out of the total demography, more than one third of the state population is constituted by the tribes. These sizeable chunks of the society are usually concentrated in the north and southern part of the state having wide range of forest lands. The non tribes are residing considerably in the central part of the state. Both of these communities are practicing farming but the returns are varying due to which their economic status shows wide difference. With this hypothesis the present study was carried out in the Tribal and non-tribal areas of Chhattisgarh state, relied on the responses collected from the 240 tribal and same no of non-tribal farm families. The findings also reported that both of these communities were practicing agriculture mostly in small to medium size of land holdings but the further details shows that non tribal farming communities are significantly better in terms of income and socio-economic status. Such situation indicates for immediate strategical interventions especially for the tribal farmers so as to minimize the gap and equitable development. Also, it is evident that the status of marginal farming communities is at par irrespective of communities so they also need special attention for any further extension planning and technology dissemination activities.

**Keywords:** Tribal and non-tribal farmers, socio-economic status, farming communities

**Introduction**

In Chhattisgarh state, the tribal population is spread in almost all the districts but their dominance is more in Northern hills and Bastar plateau areas where forest areas are wide spread. The ST, SC and OBC population of the state constitutes around 37, 22 and 14 per cent of the total population, respectively and the population density is less than 132 person sq km<sup>-1</sup>. More than 85 per cent population of the state is mainly dependent on agriculture but the productivity of most of the crops is far behind than the national average. The state has less than 30 per cent irrigated area that too for seasonal cropping particularly in kharif season. Rice is the main crop, cultivated on more than 75 per cent area. The average annual rainfall is about 1500 mm and the state has more than 44 per cent of the total area under forests. The state has 146 developmental blocks and more than 19720 villages. As per the secondary information sources, both the tribal and non-tribal communities are depended mostly on agriculture and allied activities in the state. In addition to agriculture tribes are dependent on minor forests while the non tribes are engaged in other labour activities. The sustainability of livelihood amongst tribes is more self-sufficient in most spheres as compared to non-tribal farmers. Various development programs were executed in more numbers for tribes since long with the objective to enhance their economic profile and living standard at least according to other communities but the results obtained are not much satisfactory. These situations compel us to know the exact situation and gap between these communities to plan better and execute well for gaining equity and sustainable development.

**Materials and Methods**

The present study was carried out in the Chhattisgarh State. Out of 156 total blocks in the state, 10 per cent i.e. 16 blocks (8 tribal and 8 non-tribals) was considered in the present investigation. In order to have proper representation of the whole region, stratified sampling method was applied for the selection of required number of blocks. For this study a total of 8 each non-tribal and tribal blocks were selected using the proportionate stratified sampling method. Out of the total villages in each selected blocks, a random sampling method was adopted to identify two villages for the purpose of this investigation. In this way, a total of 16 non-tribal and 16 tribal villages were incorporated in this study.

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Out of the total farm families of each selected village, representative samples of 15 farm families were selected randomly for the study in proportion of existing farmers' categories in the village. In this way a total of 240 non-tribal and 240 tribal farm families were incorporated in this study to make a total of 480 respondents for the collection of primary data.

## Results and Discussion

The findings of this investigation are discussed as under in different sub heads:

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents according to their occupation

Particulars	Tribal (n=240)		Non-tribal (n=240)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Occupation</b>				
Agriculture	240	100.00	240	100.00
Animal husbandry	219	91.25	201	83.75
Labour work	103	42.92	52	21.66
Forest products	94	39.17	29	12.08
Service	11	4.58	23	9.58
Liquor Preparation etc.	40	16.67	09	3.75

### Land holding

The tribal and non-tribal respondents were categorized into four groups according to their size of land holding. About 32 per cent of tribal and 28 per cent of non-tribal respondents were categorized under marginal farmer having less than 1 ha of land holding. Among the tribal and non-tribal respondents,

### Occupation

In addition to agriculture, tribal respondents were primarily engaged in animal husbandry, labour work and collection of minor forest products. While, non-tribal farmers were engaged in animal husbandry and labour activity. Thus, the secondary occupations were the major source of livelihood in tribal areas (Table 1).

The tribes were also actively involved in liquor preparation and different other business in comparison to non-tribal farmers.

more than 19 and 17 per cent had more than 4 ha of agricultural land and the remaining percentage of respondents had land holding between 1.1 to 4 ha (Table 2). That shows quite similar status of both the category of respondents with respect to practicing land for farming.

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents according to land holding

Farmers' category	Tribal (n=240)		Non-tribal (n=240)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Marginal (up to 1 ha)	76	31.67	67	27.92
Small (1.1 to 2 ha)	54	22.50	59	24.58
Medium (2.1 to 4 ha)	63	26.25	71	29.58
Big (above 4 ha)	47	19.58	43	17.92

As far as land utilization pattern is concerned, the data compiled in Table 2, reveals that out of the total land holding (482 ha) of tribal respondents, 405 ha were used for cultivation in which 87.25 per cent were under rainfed situation and only 24 ha of land were utilized for taking

second crop. The average cultivated area was 1.68 per family. Similarly, non-tribal respondents had 493 ha of cultivated land with an average of 2.06 ha per family. The rainfed area in non-tribal region was about 68.4 per cent.

**Table 3:** Land utilization pattern among the respondents

Particulars	Total land holding	Cultivated land	Average cultivated holding	Rainfed land	Irrigated land	Cropped area	
						Wet season	Dry season
Tribal	482	405	1.68	353	52	404	24
Non-tribal	532	493	2.06	364	131	493	93

### Irrigation availability

The irrigation availability and its allied factors are given in Table 4. It was found that only 19.17 and 40.42 percentage of tribal and non-tribal respondents respectively had irrigation facility out of which only 30 and 26 percentage respondents had assured source of irrigation.

This irrigation facility when studied according to cropped area, the findings showed that amongst the irrigated farmers more than 62 per cent of both tribal and non-tribal respondents had irrigation facility in less than 50 per cent of their cultivated land. Very low percentage of respondents had cent percent-irrigated area. In addition to this, majority of

respondents had irrigation facility for Kharif season and few respondents had perennial irrigation source. Wells were the major source of irrigation in tribal areas followed by tube wells and tanks, which might be due to undulating topography. In non-tribal areas, canal was the major source of irrigation followed by tube wells.

It is clear from the findings that non tribal farming communities had more area under irrigation but it is made available through canal. Such facility is provided mostly for wet season crop viz. rice farming. For second crop, the irrigation availability is meager in both the areas.

**Table 4:** Distribution of respondents according to the Irrigation facility

Irrigation facility	Tribal (n=240)		Non-tribal (n=240)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Irrigation water</b>				
A. Not available	194	80.83	143	59.58
B. Available	46	19.17	97	40.42
<b>B<sub>1</sub> Type of irrigation</b>				
Protective/limited	32	69.57	71	73.20
Assured	14	30.43	26	26.80
<b>B<sub>2</sub> Irrigated area (%area)</b>				
Up to 25	20	43.48	19	19.59
26 - 50	09	19.57	42	43.30
51 - 75	11	23.91	21	21.65
More than 75	06	13.04	15	15.46
<b>B<sub>3</sub> Irrigation availability</b>				
Occasional	09	19.57	38	39.18
Kharif only	19	41.30	27	27.84
Kharif and Rabi	07	15.22	13	13.40
Whole year	11	23.91	19	19.58
<b>B<sub>4</sub> Irrigation sources</b>				
Well	15	32.61	14	14.43
Channel/Tank	08	17.39	12	12.37
Lift pump	03	6.52	07	7.22
Tube well	13	28.26	21	21.65
Canal	07	15.22	43	44.33

**Annual family income**

The distribution of respondents according to their annual family income is given in Table 5. The findings revealed that majority of tribal farm families earned less than Rs 50000 per annum. About 7.5 and 0.83 per cent of tribal respondents earned Rs 1 lakh to two lakhs and more than 2 lakh,

respectively. In case of non-tribal respondents, about 47 per cent respondents had their income below Rs 50000 per annum and only 3.33 per cent had more than 2 lakh annual income. These findings clearly indicated that non-tribal farmers had more family income than the tribal farmers.

**Table 5:** Distribution of respondents according to their annual family income

Annual income (Rs year <sup>-1</sup> )	Tribal (n=240)		Non-tribal (n=240)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 25000	34	14.16	27	11.25
25001 - 50000	103	42.93	85	35.42
50001 - 75000	69	28.75	74	30.83
75001 - 100000	14	5.83	23	9.58
100001 - 2 lakh	18	7.50	23	9.58
More than 2 lakh	02	0.83	08	3.33

**Difference between selected characteristics of tribal and non-tribal respondents**

To assess the difference between tribal and non-tribal respondents with regards to their selected socio-economic characteristics, 'Z' test was applied and the results are shown in Table 6. The data indicates significant difference between the tribal and non-tribal respondents regarding the irrigated land holding and annual family income at 1 per cent level of

probability, while, size of land holding were showing non-significant difference between the tribal and non-tribal respondents. This shows a clear difference between both the categories of farmers. To overcome this alarming situation prevailing in tribal areas, intensive extension efforts is required to update them at least up to the level of non-tribal farmers.

**Table 6:** Differences between tribal and non-tribal respondents with regards to their selected characteristics

Characteristics	Tribal (n=240)		Non-tribal (n=240)		Mean difference	'Z' value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Total land holding (ha)	2.94	3.64	2.61	2.39	0.33	1.17
Irrigated land holding (ha)	0.24	2.64	0.81	1.28	-0.57	3.05**
Annual income (Rs'000 family <sup>-1</sup> )	23.60	13.40	40.40	32.50	-16.80	7.40**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

**Socio-economic status**

To assess the socio-economic status of both the tribal and non-tribal respondents a socio-economic status index has been calculated and accordingly the respondents were categorized in to five categories (Table 7). It was found that majority of tribal respondents had poor to low level of socio economic

status. About 25 per cent of tribal respondents belonged to medium socio economic status category.

The percentage of respondents had high socio economic status was only 5.83 in tribal areas and 12.08 in non-tribal area. About 43 per cent of non-tribal respondents were also belonged to poor and low socio economic status.

**Table 7:** Distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic status

Socio-economic status	Tribal (n=240)		Non-tribal (n=240)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Poor (Below 10 SESI)	78	32.50	51	21.25
Low (11 to 25 SESI)	52	21.67	52	21.67
Medium (26 to 50 SESI)	62	25.83	43	17.92
High (51 to 75 SESI)	34	14.17	65	27.08
Very high (Above 75 SESI)	14	5.83	29	12.08

The data compiled in Table 8 revealed that there is significant difference (at 1% level of probability) between the medium farmers of tribal and non-tribal area with regards to their socio-economic status. The overall difference between both the categories of respondents was also found significant at 1 per cent level of probability. But this difference was found non-significant in case of marginal farmers. The overall relationship shows that non tribal farming communities were having better socio-economic status in comparison to tribal farming communities

**Table 8:** Category wise difference between tribal and non-tribal farmers with regards to their socio-economic status

Farmers' category	Tribal (n=240)			Non-Tribal (n=240)			'Z' Value
	Respondents (%)	Mean	SD	Respondents (%)	Mean	SD	
Big	19.58	48.2	14.0	17.92	61.6	30.6	2.75*
Medium	26.25	36.0	10.0	29.58	45.6	20.8	3.34**
Small	22.50	26.4	10.2	24.58	32.0	13.6	2.43*
Marginal	31.67	24.0	7.8	27.92	26.2	11.4	1.36
Over all	100.00	32.0	14.0	100.00	39.0	23.4	3.97**

\* Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

## Conclusion

The findings of the study reveal that both the tribal and non-tribal farming communities were dependent on farming with small to medium size of land holding. The economic profile of non tribes was found better than the tribal farmers. The tribal farming community of the state and the marginal farmers of both the categories were needed special attention for equity and sustainable development.

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