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AUTONOMY OF TRIBAL WOMEN IN INDIA

SUSMITA BHARATI*; MANORANJAN PAL**; PREMANANDA BHARATI***

*Sociological Research Unit,
Indian Statistical Institute,
Kolkata, India.

**Economic Research Unit,
Indian Statistical Institute,
Kolkata, India.

***Biological Anthropology Unit,
Indian Statistical Institute,
Kolkata, India.

ABSTRACT

Autonomy of tribal women in India is found in this paper through decision making power on purchasing household needs, going to relatives' house, getting healthcare facilities or getting access to husband's money or even having independent authority to spend their own income. Data from NFHS-3 Survey conducted in 2005-06 have been used for the analysis.

Besides getting zone wise variations we have examined whether levels of education, types of occupation, working status of women etc., and other characteristics of the households, like wealth index, sex of head of household etc., can influence the decision making. The results of the analysis clearly show that the degree of women's decision making power increases positively with the age of women, literacy and wealth index. This is also found to be more on female headed households and nuclear families. Women in high professional jobs may have more power in the household decision making on healthcare of members in the family and mobility to go outside, but it may not imply higher economic power. Literacy of women plays an important role in the decision making power of tribal women in India.

KEYWORDS: *Decision Making Power; literacy and wealth index; female headed households; Tribal women; India.*



INTRODUCTION

India is a democratic country and democracy implies equal opportunity to all and thus also implies gender equity. But in reality, gender based discrimination is a deep rooted social malice practiced in India in many forms since ancient times. If we just look at the sex ratio it will show the plight of women in India. It is the lowest in the world which is at around 933 per thousand male. Female literacy is just 54.16 percent as per 2001 Census¹. In Indian parliament and assemblies women have never represented more than 10 percent. Most of the women workers in India are outside the organized sector. Women administrators, managers, professionals combined together and technical workers are the lowest at 2.3 percent and 20 percent respectively. Now these figures give us an idea about the plight of women in Indian society.

Most of the states in India are patriarchal where women lack autonomy and have low status in the family as well as in the larger society. Since the mid 1980s, the term empowerment or autonomy has received considerable attention in the study of development, especially with reference to women. In the world conference on women in Beijing (1995)² priority has been given for empowering the women in the developing countries because the status of women has been found to be low in these countries.

According to Dixon³, autonomy means “the degree of women’s access to material resources (including food, income, land and other forms of wealth) and to social resources (including knowledge, power and prestige) within the family, in the community and in the society at large”. Dyson and Moore⁴ viewed female autonomy as “the capacity to manipulate one’s personal environment”. Measurement of female autonomy, according to Mason⁵ is “the degree of power of women to have over their own mobility, personal decision and decisions within the household”. So autonomy means the controlling power of women in their own lives as well as on their family members, authority to make independent decisions, freedom from constraints on physical mobility etc.

Autonomy has multi-dimensional aspect. So to measure the degree of autonomy, its associated factors have to be measured. Family is the smallest area where women can share or control over the resources. But gender inequality in the family level is manifested by the role of women in decision-making and control over resources and restrictions in physical movements. According to Jejeebhoy⁶ “.....while women’s autonomy is indeed multidimensional, at least three dimensions - decision making, mobility and access to economic resources- are closely related in all settings, irrespective of region or religion”.

The state policies regarding gender equality vary which lead to variations in autonomy in different states and regions of India (Jeffrey, 1993)⁷. India is a country inhabited by different castes, communities and religions. So autonomy has a great regional variation. Women in tribal society are thought to have an equal status with their men. With domestic activities, they perform many other activities contributing towards general well-being of their families. However, due to seclusion from general masses, due to illiteracy, economic and other backwardness, gender discrimination still exists in tribal society.



Women's autonomy is also dependent on social organization, kinship, marriage patterns etc. In India, due to patriarchal society, after marriage the brides usually go to a completely unknown family which ultimately affect the position of women though in tribal society, some tribal are matri-lineal or matri-local.

In India the study of women's autonomy among the tribal is scanty. The study on its regional variation is also very rare. On the basis of women's decision making power in different sphere of life, tribal women's autonomy has been judged by the following aspects: (i) whether women can decide on purchasing large and daily household needs, go to relatives house, get health care facilities or have accesses to husband's money and spend their own income independently, and (ii) how far these variables are dependent on the variation of the age of women, literacy, occupation, wealth index, sex of the head of the household, family type etc.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this study we have used the National Family Health Survey (NFHS – 3)⁸ data conducted by the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) Mumbai in 2005-06. The study is based on 16,537 ever married reproductive aged women of (15-49) years from all states in India (according to Census 2001)¹. The survey includes women in the sample households who were usually resident or who were visitors or who stayed in the sample households the night before the interview.

The variables for assessing the women's decision making power have been used in four ways. Household decision making power is seen through the final say on large household purchase and purchase on daily needs. It is seen whether women can take decision about her own health care. Decision making on mobility is assessed through the women's freedom of movement to relatives house and lastly economic autonomy are assessed through whether women can spend money of their husband's earning as well as spend their own earnings according to their wish.

The independent variables which are thought to influence the decision making power of women are type of places, age-groups of women, educational attainment of women, occupational and working categories of women, nutritional status of women through Body Mass Index (followed by WHO, 2003)⁹, wealth index (followed by NFHS –3)⁸, sex of head of house-hold and family type. Each of the four types of women's decision making powers namely on purchase, health, mobility and spending is regressed on these independent variables.

Since the study is based on the tribal women, it may not be suitable for statistical analysis state wise due to small sample size. Instead zone wise analysis has been done here. The classification of zones was sane as taken in the report of NFHS-3. Decision making power has been assessed among the currently married women. Divorced, separated or others have been excluded.

To see the differentials of women's autonomy in different zones of India, percentage distribution has been made over the categories of each of the variables. Categorical Logistic



regression of women's autonomy has also been carried out to see the simultaneous effect of covariates on decision making.

The reference categories for different independent variables are 'rural' residence, '15-30' age groups, 'illiteracy' of women, 'no occupation' of women, 'not working & unpaid' workers, 'malnourished (BMI is below 18.5)' women, 'low wealth index, male' household head and nuclear type. The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS, version 12.0) has been used for all the analysis. Significance of levels of 'p' values has been considered to see the degree of effect of each variable on the women's autonomy.

RESULTS

HOUSEHOLD LEVEL DECISIONS

Degree of Women's decision making power among tribal of different zones of India in domestic life is represented in Table 1a.

ON LARGE HOUSEHOLD PURCHASE

It is expected that tribal married women in India are most likely to participate in the decision about final say on large household purchase. However, joint decision making is found to be more than individual decision of either wife or husband. By comparison of different zones, highest percentage of women's autonomy is seen in the south zone followed by north-east zone. The lowest percentage is observed in the central zone, followed by east zone. Women's participation is found to increase with the age. Women's autonomy is found to be more among women involved in professional jobs, cash earnings, and among families belonging in the middle wealth index, with female heads and among nuclear families (Table 2). This result is statistically significant at one percent level of significance (Table 10).

ON DAILY NEEDS

The percentage of women who has final say on daily needs is the highest in north-east zone and the lowest in east zone followed by north zone. Older age, professional jobs, and nuclear families have a positive significant effect on the decision making power (Tables -2 & 10). Women in Female-headed households, especially the female heads, have more power in taking such a decisions (Tables 2 & 10).

ON SELF HEALTH CARE

Self health care is essential in the light of woman autonomy as she looks after the whole family. Zone-wise percentages (Table-1a) show that women who can decide about her own health care are the highest in the west zone and the lowest in the central zone. It is always seen that female in urban areas are more conscious than rural areas, which may be due to more accessibility to health infrastructure, awareness due to effective higher literacy etc. Normally we expect that working women are more aware of the health care and take decisions about health care compared to non-working women. But in actual practice, it is not found so except in the professional jobs



where women have very high percentage of autonomy on own health care (Table 2). It can be said that any kind of working status of women is not effective on autonomy of own health care. Only high income families and female headed households have a significant role in this respect (Table 10).

ON VISIT TO RELATIVES

Women's free movement can be considered as a fundamental measure of autonomy. If persons other than the women themselves determine whether women members in the family can or can not go outside their house, many areas of functioning may be closed to women. A tremendous fluctuation is found in case of mobility in different regions of India. South, north-east and west zones are quite free whereas least movement zones are central, east and north (Table-1b). Relationships between the decision making power and relevant independent variables are assessed using by some bivariate tables and linear regressions (Tables-2 and 10). It shows that there are significant effects of some independent factors like age, professional jobs, household living status and female headed households.

ON ECONOMIC ACCESS TO MONEY

Women's economic access to money has been measured through the final say on their husband's earnings as well as their own earnings. It is seen from Tables 1b and 3 that in both the cases, high percentages of joint decisions by both husband and wife are more prevalent than single decisions of either wife or husband. Women's autonomy on husband's earning is seen to be the highest in the south zone and lowest in the central zone of India. Women's autonomy on their own earning is the highest in west zone followed by south zone and the lowest zone is east zone followed by central zone. It is seen that women's autonomy on husband's earning is more effective in urban area, among aged women and families with female headed households (Tables 2 & 10).

Economic power of women can not be measured through the access of their husband's money, but can be measured through how they spend it i.e. whether they can spend it alone or consultations with others. Stages of development have significant roles in the percentages of women who can spend money of their own. Socio-cultural background is an important determinant of how money should be spent. Occupation and literacy are the most important regulatory factors on assessing the women's autonomy. Regarding occupation, it is seen that highest percentage of non-working women and women holdings professional job are found in the north-east zone. Again maximum percentages of highly educated women are found in the north-east zone. Thus high literacy rates are linked with the high-category jobs (Tables 7). It is also found that highest percentage of women earning in cash are found in the south zone and women earning in kind are found in the north zone (Table 8). The data also proves that autonomy among the cash earning status of women is directly related with the self health care, husband's earnings and mobility (Table 9).

Lastly, through the rank correlations between women's autonomy with different working categories and educational status, it reveals that there is a negative relation between women's autonomy and working status of women. Thus, it is not the earning status but the educational status which determines women's autonomy. (Tables 11 and 12).



DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study reveals the status of women's autonomy among the tribal through the decision making power in the households, self-health care, freedom of movement to relative's house and access to money. It covers 16,537 tribal women of reproductive age (15-49) of different zones of India. The study also provides socio-cultural and socio-economic variations in the level of decision-making power.

Our result indicates that there exists a great regional variation in the levels of women's autonomy. Though there is a great variation of Women's autonomy in different aspects of life but it is clear from our study that joint decision is more prominent than individual decision. But joint decision does not denote individual autonomy. To assess the women autonomy, one has to see how far women are able to take decisions in different categories of judgment.

The highest autonomy in household on buying large household purchase is found in the south zone and the lowest is seen in the central zone. Percentage of women who can take decisions on daily needs is the highest in north-east zone and the lowest in east zone. Zone-wise, the highest percentage is found in the west and the lowest is in the central in respect of decision making power on self health care. Greater freedom of movements is found in the south and the north-east zones and the lowest is in Central zone. Here women's autonomy in economic access has been assessed by two ways such as through husband's earnings and by own earnings. It is the highest on husband's earnings in the south zone and lowest in the central zone where as on their own earning, it is the highest in the West zone and the lowest in the east zone.

In India, only 57.1% of total tribal ever-married women are working and they earn either by cash or kind or by both. Among them, only 18.5% have their rights to make decision on spending their earnings though it varies over zones. It is very interesting to note that, among the working women, north-east India have the lowest percentage of working women, but among the working women, maximum percentages are found in the high ranking jobs and in highly educated families. Besides north-east India, women of west and south zones occupy the middle rank so far as professional jobs are concerned. But women of these two zones earn more in cash than the other zones of India and these two zones have high percentages of women in the decision making power on their own earnings. It is obvious that the paid workers has the natural advantage of taking decisions about how money should be spent along with taking decisions on other aspects of life compared to a non-earning woman. It thus indicates that earning in cash is one of the key factors towards decision-taking power of women.

Literacy is the other most important regulatory factor of women's autonomy. In the central and east zones, highest percentage of illiterate or low literate women is found. The highest percentage of laborers is found in east and central zones. So the data prove that illiteracy is the major cause of low categories of job which in turn is the reason for the expressivities of low women's decision making power. On the other hand, high rate of higher educated tribal women in north-east zone fetch more high ranking jobs. It is the literacy of women and not the high ranks in jobs that have positive impact on the women's autonomy among the tribal women of India.



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TABLE 1A ZONE WISE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN'S DECISION MAKING ON HOUSEHOLD AND OWN HEALTH CARE: STS OF INDIA

| Zones | Household | | | | | | | | | | Final say on own health care | | | | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|------|---------|---------|--------|--------------------------|------|---------|---------|--------|------------------------------|------|---------|---------|--------|
| | Final say on large household purchase | | | | | Final say on daily needs | | | | | N | self | husband | jointly | others |
| | N | self | husband | jointly | others | N | self | husband | jointly | others | | | | | |
| N-east | 5602 | 12.4 | 15.9 | 68.5 | 3.3 | 5602 | 54.1 | 10.0 | 32.4 | 3.6 | 5602 | 29.2 | 13.0 | 56.8 | 0.2 |
| East | 1348 | 5.3 | 31.6 | 53.3 | 9.7 | 1347 | 22.9 | 24.1 | 42.0 | 10.9 | 1348 | 28.9 | 32.4 | 34.9 | 3.7 |
| Central | 1548 | 3.2 | 37.3 | 47.4 | 12.1 | 1548 | 32.1 | 28.6 | 27.9 | 11.4 | 1548 | 17.7 | 42.7 | 33.7 | 5.9 |
| West | 933 | 6.1 | 29.4 | 55.9 | 8.6 | 933 | 34.3 | 22.8 | 33.9 | 9.0 | 933 | 30.9 | 31.7 | 34.7 | 2.7 |
| North | 743 | 6.1 | 48.2 | 33.0 | 12.8 | 743 | 28.4 | 37.3 | 21.1 | 13.2 | 743 | 22.2 | 47.9 | 23.8 | 6.1 |
| South | 633 | 18.2 | 37.6 | 36.0 | 8.2 | 633 | 33.6 | 30.6 | 25.9 | 9.8 | 633 | 22.7 | 34.4 | 36.8 | 6.0 |

TABLE 1B ZONE WISE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN'S DECISION MAKING ON MOBILITY AND ACCESS TO HUSBAND'S EARNING: STS OF INDIA

| Zones | Final say on visit to family or relatives | | | | | Final say on husband's earning | | | | |
|---------|---|------|---------|---------|--------|--------------------------------|------|---------|---------|--------|
| | N | self | husband | Jointly | others | N | self | husband | jointly | others |
| N-east | 5602 | 16.2 | 8.0 | 74.2 | 1.6 | 5602 | 5.8 | 11.5 | 81.9 | 0.8 |
| East | 1347 | 6.8 | 26.8 | 58.9 | 7.4 | 1348 | 5.1 | 22.3 | 68.8 | 3.8 |
| Central | 1548 | 3.3 | 33.8 | 51.6 | 11.3 | 1548 | 3.8 | 20.1 | 71.9 | 4.3 |
| West | 932 | 11.9 | 19.7 | 62.6 | 5.8 | 933 | 6.3 | 26.9 | 62.9 | 4.0 |
| North | 743 | 9.6 | 41.9 | 36.3 | 12.2 | 743 | 6.3 | 34.7 | 51.7 | 7.3 |
| South | 633 | 17.7 | 28.9 | 46.3 | 7.1 | 633 | 10.7 | 30.0 | 55.5 | 3.7 |



TABLE 2 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN'S AUTONOMY WITH RESPECT TO WOMEN'S HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS: STS OF INDIA

| | Large hh purchase | | Purchase n daily needs | | Health care | | See relatives | | Husband's earning | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------|------------------------|------|-------------|------|---------------|------|-------------------|------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Type of place | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rural | 8137 | 8.4 | 8137 | 37.8 | 8137 | 25.6 | 8136 | 11.6 | 7878 | 5.1 |
| Urban | 2670 | 12.9 | 2669 | 56.4 | 2670 | 30.6 | 2669 | 15.0 | 2584 | 8.0 |
| Age-groups | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15-24 | 2525 | 6.0 | 2524 | 28.7 | 2525 | 21.5 | 2523 | 10.0 | 2416 | 4.6 |
| 25-34 | 4277 | 10.5 | 4277 | 45.0 | 4277 | 27.2 | 4277 | 12.4 | 4164 | 5.9 |
| 35+ | 1740 | 11.3 | 1740 | 47.9 | 1740 | 29.0 | 1740 | 14.4 | 1695 | 6.6 |
| Respondent's education | | | | | | | | | | |
| Illiterate | 5225 | 8.2 | 5224 | 35.4 | 5225 | 25.4 | 5223 | 11.0 | 5084 | 5.7 |
| Primary | 1722 | 10.0 | 1722 | 43.4 | 1722 | 26.0 | 1722 | 13.9 | 1654 | 5.7 |
| Secondary | 3475 | 10.8 | 3475 | 50.6 | 3475 | 28.4 | 3475 | 13.5 | 3351 | 6.1 |
| Higher | 385 | 13.5 | 385 | 59.2 | 385 | 35.1 | 385 | 16.4 | 373 | 4.8 |
| Respondent's occupation | | | | | | | | | | |
| No occupation | 4221 | 9.9 | 4221 | 42.8 | 4221 | 26.9 | 4220 | 12.2 | 4106 | 6.4 |
| Agro-employee | 4443 | 7.7 | 4443 | 37.8 | 4443 | 24.8 | 4443 | 12.0 | 4283 | 5.0 |
| Skilled/unskilled/manual | 927 | 9.4 | 926 | 39.3 | 927 | 29.2 | 926 | 9.8 | 901 | 5.8 |
| Professional/sales/service | 1198 | 15.2 | 1198 | 60.7 | 1198 | 32.5 | 1198 | 17.0 | 1155 | 6.5 |
| Working status | | | | | | | | | | |
| Not paid | 2337 | 9.9 | 2337 | 38.7 | 2337 | 21.9 | 2337 | 10.0 | 2233 | 3.9 |
| Paid worker (kind) | 918 | 9.4 | 918 | 39.7 | 918 | 27.5 | 918 | 11.0 | 897 | 4.9 |
| Paid worker (cash & kind) | 652 | 9.2 | 652 | 41.7 | 652 | 29.4 | 652 | 17.6 | 636 | 6.9 |
| Paid worker (cash) | 2691 | 11.3 | 2690 | 46.3 | 2691 | 30.2 | 2690 | 14.3 | 2599 | 6.5 |
| Wealth index | | | | | | | | | | |
| Poorest | 2967 | 6.7 | 2966 | 28.3 | 2967 | 23.7 | 2965 | 8.0 | 2900 | 4.9 |
| Poorer | 2223 | 7.6 | 2223 | 38.5 | 2223 | 23.8 | 2223 | 12.0 | 2124 | 5.0 |
| Middle | 2014 | 12.0 | 2014 | 46.7 | 2014 | 26.9 | 2014 | 14.2 | 1944 | 6.1 |
| Richer | 1999 | 11.8 | 1999 | 51.9 | 1999 | 30.9 | 1999 | 16.7 | 1927 | 7.2 |
| Richest | 1604 | 11.5 | 1604 | 56.6 | 1604 | 31.7 | 1604 | 14.0 | 1567 | 6.3 |
| Sex of household head | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 9997 | 8.8 | 9996 | 41.2 | 9997 | 25.5 | 9995 | 11.5 | 9686 | 5.3 |
| Female | 810 | 18.6 | 810 | 57.5 | 810 | 43.5 | 810 | 24.3 | 776 | 12.2 |
| Family Type | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non-nuclear | 4779 | 8.1 | 4778 | 36.9 | 4779 | 25.7 | 4778 | 12.5 | 4588 | 5.4 |
| Nuclear | 6028 | 10.7 | 6028 | 46.7 | 6028 | 27.7 | 6027 | 12.4 | 5874 | 6.1 |



TABLE 3 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE EARNERS AND WOMEN'S DECISION MAKING REGARDING SPENDING MONEY OF THEIR OWN EARNING: ST OF INDIA

| Zones | Total no. of women | % of not-working women | % of workingwomen | Percentage involved in decisions making (only for paid –cash, cash & kind, earners) | | | |
|---------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---|---------|---------|-------------|
| | | | | who decides how money will be spent? | | | |
| | | | | self | husband | jointly | With others |
| N-east | 9574 | 51.6 | 48.4 | 18.2 | 5.3 | 75.5 | 1.0 |
| East | 1808 | 28.5 | 71.5 | 15.1 | 13.6 | 69.0 | 2.4 |
| Central | 2060 | 22.4 | 77.6 | 15.7 | 21.1 | 60.3 | 2.9 |
| West | 1272 | 35.1 | 64.8 | 23.6 | 16.5 | 56.5 | 3.4 |
| North | 1008 | 42.7 | 57.3 | 21.7 | 25.9 | 48.3 | 4.2 |
| South | 815 | 37.1 | 62.9 | 23.5 | 25.1 | 47.6 | 3.8 |
| India | 16537 | 42.9 | 57.1 | 18.5 | 13.1 | 66.3 | 2.2 |

TABLE 4 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN'S OCCUPATION IN RESPECT OF SPATIAL VARIATIONS: ST OF INDIA

| | Total no. of women | Not working | Agro-employee | Skilled/unskilled/manual | Professional/sales/service |
|---------|--------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| N-east | 9574 | 51.6 | 25.6 | 5.3 | 17.5 |
| East | 1808 | 28.5 | 52.1 | 14.7 | 4.7 |
| Central | 2060 | 22.4 | 54.9 | 18.6 | 4.1 |
| West | 1272 | 35.1 | 45.6 | 9.5 | 9.8 |
| North | 1008 | 42.7 | 44.4 | 8.9 | 3.9 |
| South | 815 | 37.1 | 43.6 | 12.0 | 7.4 |
| India | 16537 | 42.9 | 35.7 | 8.9 | 12.5 |

[Missing occupation 26]

TABLE 5 PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN'S DECISION MAKING POWER OF THEIR OWN EARNINGS ACCORDING TO THEIR VARIED OCCUPATION: ST OF INDIA

| | Agro-employee | Skilled/unskilled/manual | Professional/sales/service |
|---------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| N-east | 12.0 | 23.7 | 19.5 |
| East | 12.5 | 19.5 | 17.2 |
| Central | 15.2 | 13.8 | 26.8 |
| West | 17.6 | 23.2 | 44.4 |
| North | 19.2 | 15.7 | 47.4 |
| South | 20.6 | 28.2 | 30.0 |
| India | 15.0 | 19.8 | 22.2 |



TABLE 6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN'S LITERACY STATUS WITH WOMEN'S AUTONOMY REGARDING HUSBAND'S EARNING, OWN HEALTH CARE AND SPENDING MONEY OF THEIR OWN EARNING: ST OF INDIA

| Zones | Total no. of women | Illiterate | | | | Primary | | | | Secondary | | | | Higher | | | |
|---------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| | | % of illiteracy | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings | % of primary | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings | % of secondary | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings | % of higher | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings |
| N-east | 9574 | 21.4 | 5.2 | 28.5 | 16.0 | 17.9 | 5.6 | 28.5 | 15.5 | 53.1 | 6.3 | 29.8 | 19.0 | 7.7 | 5.2 | 37.1 | 22.3 |
| East | 1808 | 70.5 | 5.1 | 28.6 | 14.4 | 10.1 | 4.8 | 28.6 | 16.0 | 18.2 | 5.1 | 30.1 | 20.5 | 1.2 | 10.0 | 18.2 | 20.0 |
| Central | 2060 | 67.2 | 3.6 | 17.4 | 15.7 | 13.6 | 6.1 | 17.4 | 17.7 | 18.0 | 3.0 | 16.4 | 7.0 | 1.2 | 0.0 | 20.0 | 60.0 |
| West | 1272 | 41.4 | 6.4 | 34.2 | 19.8 | 13.8 | 6.7 | 34.2 | 22.2 | 40.2 | 6.5 | 28.4 | 34.5 | 4.6 | 0.0 | 23.5 | 22.2 |
| North | 1008 | 65.1 | 6.7 | 21.9 | 21.7 | 11.2 | 7.8 | 21.9 | 25.0 | 21.0 | 3.9 | 21.4 | 25.0 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 |
| South | 815 | 58.0 | 12.5 | 23.8 | 23.5 | 13.6 | 3.7 | 23.8 | 24.3 | 26.3 | 9.0 | 19.8 | 25.0 | 2.1 | 16.7 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| India | 16537 | 38.5 | 5.7 | 25.4 | 17.3 | 15.6 | 5.7 | 26.0 | 17.5 | 40.6 | 6.1 | 28.4 | 20.2 | 5.3 | 4.8 | 35.1 | 22.5 |

TABLE 7 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN'S LITERACY STATUS WITH WOMEN'S OCCUPATION: ST OF INDIA

| Zones | Illiterate | | | | Primary | | | | Secondary | | | | Higher | | | |
|---------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Not working | Agro-employee | Skilled/unskilled/manual | Professional/sales/service | Not working | Agro-employee | Skilled/unskilled/manual | Professional/sales/service | Not working | Agro-employee | Skilled/unskilled/manual | Professional/sales/service | Not working | Agro-employee | Skilled/unskilled/manual | Professional/sales/service |
| N-east | 36.8 | 47.9 | 9.1 | 6.2 | 44.7 | 39.6 | 4.9 | 10.8 | 61.2 | 15.5 | 4.5 | 18.8 | 42.0 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 55.3 |
| East | 21.7 | 58.2 | 17.3 | 2.7 | 30.1 | 54.6 | 10.9 | 4.4 | 52.9 | 30.1 | 7.3 | 9.7 | 40.9 | 9.1 | 4.5 | 45.5 |
| Central | 16.5 | 60.4 | 20.0 | 3.0 | 24.2 | 52.3 | 20.3 | 3.2 | 40.5 | 39.3 | 13.2 | 7.0 | 58.3 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 33.3 |
| West | 15.4 | 71.3 | 7.0 | 6.3 | 28.7 | 50.0 | 9.8 | 11.5 | 55.0 | 21.7 | 12.7 | 10.6 | 59.3 | 8.5 | 3.4 | 28.8 |
| North | 35.0 | 50.9 | 11.0 | 3.1 | 46.9 | 46.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 62.3 | 27.4 | 5.2 | 5.2 | 59.3 | 14.8 | 11.1 | 14.8 |
| South | 23.9 | 58.4 | 58.2 | 5.7 | 32.4 | 45.0 | 18.4 | 6.3 | 66.4 | 13.6 | 10.3 | 9.8 | 64.7 | 0.0 | 5.9 | 29.4 |
| India | 26.4 | 55.7 | 13.4 | 4.5 | 39.9 | 43.3 | 7.8 | 9.0 | 59.4 | 18.3 | 6.0 | 16.3 | 5.6 | 2.6 | 1.9 | 50.9 |



TABLE 8 ZONE WISE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EARNING CATEGORIES AMONG THE EARNER WOMEN OF TRIBAL INDIA

| Zones | Earn type | | | |
|---------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
| | Not paid | Cash | Cash/Kind | Kind |
| N-east | 33.6 | 44.8 | 12.0 | 9.6 |
| East | 29.8 | 41.0 | 19.4 | 9.7 |
| Central | 42.4 | 34.0 | 18.2 | 5.4 |
| West | 29.3 | 60.5 | 17.1 | 3.1 |
| North | 36.9 | 24.3 | 12.8 | 26.0 |
| South | 19.2 | 71.4 | 7.8 | 1.6 |
| India | 33.6 | 44.0 | 13.5 | 8.9 |

TABLE 9 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EARNING STATUS AND DECISION MAKING POWER IN DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF LIFE AMONG THE EARNER WOMEN OF TRIBAL INDIA

| Zones | Health care | | | | Husband money | | | | Relatives house | | | |
|---------|-------------|------|------------|------|---------------|------|------------|------|-----------------|------|------------|------|
| | Not paid | Cash | Cash/ kind | Kind | Not paid | Cash | Cash/ kind | Kind | Not paid | Cash | Cash/ kind | Kind |
| N-east | 33.9 | 42.8 | 11.1 | 12.2 | 25.9 | 47.5 | 10.8 | 15.8 | 30.5 | 39.6 | 12.3 | 17.6 |
| East | 18.0 | 50.4 | 20.7 | 10.9 | 29.4 | 37.3 | 17.6 | 15.7 | 23.5 | 50.0 | 23.5 | 4.4 |
| Central | 31.7 | 33.5 | 27.3 | 7.5 | 30.2 | 37.2 | 16.3 | 16.3 | 37.5 | 42.5 | 12.5 | 7.5 |
| West | 29.3 | 65.4 | 4.9 | 0.5 | 25.6 | 65.1 | 7.0 | 2.3 | 20.0 | 72.0 | 8.0 | 0.0 |
| North | 18.4 | 25.5 | 17.3 | 38.8 | 28.0 | 20.0 | 28.0 | 24.0 | 33.3 | 16.7 | 13.3 | 36.7 |
| South | 17.2 | 72.0 | 10.8 | 0.0 | 11.6 | 81.4 | 7.0 | 0.0 | 15.6 | 75.3 | 6.5 | 2.6 |
| India | 29.0 | 45.9 | 14.3 | 10.9 | 25.3 | 49.1 | 12.8 | 12.8 | 28.0 | 46.0 | 12.2 | 13.8 |



TABLE 10 LOGISTIC REGRESSIONS OF BINARY VARIABLES OF DECISION MAKING POWER OF WOMEN IN DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF LIFE BY DIFFERENT SOCIOECONOMIC VARIABLES: ST OF INDIA

| Independent variables | Large hh purchase | Daily needs | Health care | See relatives | Husband's earning |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| | Odd Ratio | Odd Ratio | Odd Ratio | Odd Ratio | Odd Ratio |
| Type of place | | | | | |
| Rural | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Urban | 1.29*** | 1.44*** | 1.03 | 1.11 | 1.62*** |
| Age-groups | | | | | |
| 15-24 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| 25-34 | 1.66*** | 1.74*** | 1.28*** | 1.21** | 1.26* |
| 35+ | 1.72*** | 1.99*** | 1.47*** | 1.39*** | 1.38** |
| Respondent's education | | | | | |
| Illiterate | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Primary | 1.09 | 1.19*** | 0.98 | 1.09 | 0.90 |
| Secondary | 1.03 | 1.32*** | 0.98 | 1.92 | 0.81* |
| Higher | 1.09 | 1.29** | 1.19 | 1.06 | 0.58* |
| Respondent's occupation | | | | | |
| No occupation | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Agro-employee | 0.89 | 1.20*** | 1.01 | 1.21** | 0.90 |
| Skilled/unskilled/manual | 1.03 | 1.16* | 1.21** | 0.93 | 0.92 |
| Professional/sales/service | 1.43*** | 1.52*** | 1.11 | 1.32*** | 0.96 |
| Wealth index | | | | | |
| Poorest | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Poorer | 1.09 | 1.49*** | 1.01 | 1.57*** | 0.98 |
| Middle | 1.60*** | 1.87*** | 1.14* | 1.81*** | 1.12 |
| Richer | 1.32** | 1.98*** | 1.33*** | 2.16*** | 1.18 |
| Richest | 1.07 | 1.90*** | 1.30** | 1.63*** | 0.97 |
| Sex of household head | | | | | |
| Male | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Female | 2.37*** | 1.97*** | 2.25*** | 2.41*** | 2.50*** |
| Family Type | | | | | |
| Non-nuclear | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Nuclear | 1.31*** | 1.44*** | 1.10** | 1.01 | 1.14 |
| Chi-square | 224.01*** | 944.31*** | 226.34*** | 221.16*** | 96.958*** |

@ Reference category

<0.01 : 1 % level ***

0.01 - 0.05 : 5 % level **

Above 0.05 to 0.1: 10 % level *



TABLE 11 RANK CORRELATION BETWEEN WOMEN'S AUTONOMY AND THEIR WORKING STATUS AND DIFFERENT OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES: STs OF INDIA

| Dependent variable | Working women | | Agro-employee | | Skilled/unskilled/manual | | Professional/sales/service | |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| | 'r' value | Significant value | 'r' value | Significant Value | 'r' value | Significant value | 'r' value | Significant value |
| Women's autonomy | -0.371 | 0.468 | -0.086 | 0.872 | -0.429 | 0.397 | -0.314 | 0.544 |

TABLE 12 RANK CORRELATION BETWEEN WOMEN'S LITERACY STATUS WITH WOMEN'S AUTONOMY REGARDING HUSBAND'S EARNING, OWN HEALTH CARE AND SPENDING MONEY OF THEIR OWN EARNING: STS OF INDIA

| Dependent variable | Illiterate | | | Primary | | | Secondary | | | Higher | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings | Husband's earning | Health care | Spending money of own earnings |
| Women's autonomy | -0.429 | -0.314 | -0.486 | 0.058 | 0.203 | -0.319 | 0.714 | 0.371 | 0.406 | -0.185 | 0.580 | 0.029 |

