

# DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RANCHI TOWN IN JHARKHAND

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*The present paper is an attempt to explore the different dimensions of women empowerment in Ranchi town. The broad objective of this study is to compute women empowerment indices by using a pre-framed questionnaire. The study views women empowerment both as a process and out come of the process and accordingly identifies 5 dimensions namely decision making, access to and control over resources, mobility, security and gender awareness and the index of each women empowerment dimension (lying between 0 and 1 after dichotomizing the obtained score) are denoted by YS1, YS2, YS3, YS4, and YS5 respectively. While computing Y the composite women empowerment index, each dimension indices are assigned equal weight. In the present study 5 dimension indices for 200 respondents ( $5 \times 200 = 1000$  indices) and composite women empowerment index for each ( $1 \times 200 = 200$  indices) have been computed. The findings indicate that women in Ranchi are least empowered in access to and control over resources dimension YS2 and more empowered in gender awareness dimension YS5, the index values being 0.47 and 0.73 respectively. The composite women empowerment works out to be 0.58 indicating a medium level of overall status of empowerment in Ranchi town. Differences in women empowerment levels have also been observed across social groups and regions.*

**Keyword:** Stereo Typed, Multidimensional, Dimension Indices, Composite Women, Empowerment Index

## INTRODUCTION

Women account for half of the world's population, 48% of India's and 47% of total population in Ranchi town. They are integral part of socio-economic life of any country. But the socio-economic profile of women across the world is precarious. "Women make up 30% of the official labour force, perform 60% of all working hours, receive 10% of the world's income and own even less than 1% of world's property." (Sushma Sahay, 1998). Not only this, they constitute the majority of the poor and illiterates. This is also true of Indian women and for women in the study area.

The stereotyped notion of gender rules, male dominated social structure, women's strong attachment to socio-cultural norms, are some of the factors responsible for women's low status vis-à-vis to men. This low women's status is perpetuated from one generation to the next via preferences for boys, higher rate of female infant mortality, less health seeking behaviour for girls, less food given to girls and lower educational investment in girls. These deeply rooted gender ideology are taken for granted in establishing social positions and hierarchy, which provide men with access to resources, inheritance, skills, productive employment and superior status. While women, as a gender category are subjected to discrimination and to a greater victimization of violence. The result is evident at the end of 64 years of Indian independence; continued inequality and vulnerability of women in all sectors (economic, social, political, education, healthcare, nutrient and legal) prevails. As women are oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all walks of life.

Empowerment of women and improvement of their economic, social and political status is a highly important end in itself. Women's Empowerment is not only about their economic betterment and reduction in dependency but also about gaining greater control over lives and claiming the rights and entitlement for them. It has become widely accepted that promoting empowerment of women and ending violence against women is essential to achieve poverty eradication, human development and inclusive growth.

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## CONCEPTUALIZATION OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Reviewing the literatures it has been observed that there are numerous views and perceptions on the concept of empowerment. To some it is challenging the gender power relations (Batliwala, 1994), getting greater control over resources (Jejeebhoy, 2000), increasing self confidence (Gita Sen and Batliwala, 2000) or reducing socio-economic vulnerability and dependence on husbands (Dilruba Bano et al, 2001). To others it is enhancement in the ability of exercise choices (Kabeer, 2001) or expansion of capabilities (Deepa Narayan, 2002). Thus there are many 'dimensions' of empowerment, the important of which need to be identified. To make women empowerment studies meaningful it is more important to quantify these dimensions which may be consolidated to give a composite women empowerment index.

The present study is carried out at micro level. Household are taken as the unit of study. Women's empowerment at the household level is conceptualized as "developing capabilities to strengthen their power, to make choices and influence decisions which affect women's lives". This study takes a broader view of empowerment. What constituted empowerment depends on how it is viewed. The literature reviews, suggest that empowerment has been viewed both as a 'process' and 'outcome' of the process. The process approach emphasizes capacity building through development of personal skill and exercising choices independently; while the outcome approach emphasizes 'increased access to resources' and 'challenging the gender power relation'. The present study, while selecting the indicators or dimensions of empowerment observes that contextual factors are more important in exercising women's choices, power, freedom and control over their lives, than their personal (age related, education, work status) and household related (type and size of households) characteristics.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify and examine the dimensions of women empowerment in Ranchi town.
- To compute women empowerment indices in its various dimensions.
- To compute a composite women empowerment index based on all 5 dimension indices.
- To find out women empowerment dimension indices across the two social group (tribal and non-tribal) and among various religion within each social group.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Literature review suggests that a women's position or power at the household level may be operationalized in terms of her economic, social and political performances ranging from capacity to get access to and control over resources, decision making regarding household expenditure, saving and investment, children's education, marriage, financial help to parental family and so on ... to socializing, active participation in public arena, freedom of movement and having the courage of protest against discrimination or injustice done to her.

It is not necessary that a woman must possess all the characteristics simultaneously. For example, a woman having access to and control over resources need not necessarily possess the capacity to decide how to allocate resources between different needs. Even if she has the access to resources and the capacity to make decision, she may not have the voice to protest against any discrimination and she may have restricted mobility. It is thus, evident that the nature of women's empowerment is multidimensional and a woman may not be empowered equally in all dimensions.

From review of various literatures, several efforts by researchers (Morgan and Niraula, 1995, Hashmi et. al., 1996, Mason, 1996, Kabeer, 1999, Jejeebhoy, 2000, Malhotra et.al., 2002) to develop various dimensions have been noticed. These writers suggest to measure empowerment by selecting the important dimensions.

Morgan and Niraula (1995), using data from Nepal, have studied measures of women empowerment along 3 dimensions – women's control over resources, decision making power and mobility. Hashemi et. al. (1996) defined empowerment of women in 6 spheres - sense of self and vision of the future (including resisting negative behaviour of husband); mobility (including how women are treated when they are traveling), economic security including cash income, acquiring new skills and knowledge, status and decision making power within the household (including making purchases on their own), and ability to interact effectively in the public sphere, such as joining credit program and participation in non-family groups. Mason (1996) by using data from a five country study analyzes 3 dimensions of autonomy – economic decision making, mobility and free from fear of violence.

Kabeer (1999) has attempted to construct the indicators of women empowerment by using three dimensional framework – 'resource' as part of the precondition of empowerment, the 'agency' as an aspect of process and the 'achievement' as a measure of outcomes.

In Jejeebhoy's study, various dimensions of women's autonomy at the household level have been explored. They are women's decision making autonomy, mobility, power relation with husband, access to and control over economic resources. These indicators are closely related in all settings irrespective of regional and religion divide. She stated that the extent to which women enjoy autonomy is shaped by social institutions and found that Tamilian women enjoy more autonomy than their North-Indian counterpart in almost every index of autonomy.

The various dimensions identified by Malhotra et. al. (2002) are domestic decision making, finance and resource allocation, social and domestic matters, child related issues, access to and control over resources and freedom of movement.

The present work recognizes multiple responsibilities of a woman in the household ranging from maintenance of the household to looking after children's day-to-day needs and the well being of all members of the family. It further assumes that in spite of women's pivotal role, they are controlled by men and traditional norms, which allot women a lot of responsibilities with less access to resources and opportunities, restricted mobility and limited participation in decision making.

## **IDENTIFICATION OF DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT**

The study argues that, for women, to be empowered at household level, they at first have to enhance their power from within (by gaining self confidence, feeling of worthiness) so that they can challenge the unequal gender relation and institutional norms which inhibit their activity space.

Thus, the multidimensional nature of women's empowerment makes it necessary to measure empowerment in its various dimensions. The present study identifies 5 dimension of women's empowerment at the household level, also known as dimension indicators, on the basis of various studies suggested in related literature. Each dimension indicator represents women's power, control on capability to influence decision and exercise of choices in that dimension. The 5 selected dimensions for this study are mainly 'decision making' dimension, 'access to and control over resources' dimension, 'mobility' dimension,

‘security’ dimension and ‘gender awareness’ dimension.

Among these 5 dimensions, decision making, access to and control over resources and mobility dimensions have been frequently used in various studies. The present study identifies security dimension on the assumption that for women to be empowered in true sense feeling of security is of utmost necessity. The study also recognizes the reality that unless women are freed from traditional norms and gender power structure, they will not be able to utilize their potentials fully and contribute towards their family, society and nation at large. Thus in the present paper, by including security and gender awareness dimensions, the concept of empowerment at the household level becomes complete.

## METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

The present paper is based on secondary as well as primary data sources. Secondary data sources include ward-wise final population totals of Ranchi Municipal Corporation 2001, Mohalla-wise ward list 2001 of Ranchi Town and Census 2001. Primary data has been collected by stratifying the total female population (3,96,366) of Ranchi town (Census 2001, Ranchi Municipal Corporation) into two social groups mainly tribal and non-tribal, as tribal female constituted a significant size (86,549) and proportion (21.8%) of total female population in Ranchi town.

For selection of two hundred households to be included in the sample for study, first proportion of tribal female to total female in each ward was computed from the ward list. Thereafter wards were categorized into two groups – Tribal wards and Non-tribal wards. Tribal wards are those, constituting representation of tribal female more than 21.8%. 10 wards were randomly selected, 2 from ‘tribal wards’ group and 8 from ‘non-tribal’ wards group representing the proportion of tribal female to total female (22:78 percent) in Ranchi town. From selected 10 wards one mohalla from each ward was randomly selected by lottery method. A list of relevant households in each mohalla was prepared considering the proportion of religious community across the 2 social groups.

Finally, by proportionate random sampling a list of 200 household comprising of 121 Hindu, 27 Muslims, 8 from other (Sikh, Christian and Jain) community from 8 non-tribal wards and an equal number of Christian and Non-Christian (22 each) from 2 tribal wards was prepared. A woman fulfilling the eligibility criteria (senior most, married, 18-60 years) from each household was interviewed face to face.

## COMPUTATION OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDICES

Women Empowerment Indices or mean score value have been constructed based on information obtained by interviewing the selected sample respondents personally with the assistance of a pre-designed questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 40 questions covering the 5 dimensions of women empowerment. Fourteen questions on ‘Decision making dimensions’, Seven questions each on ‘Access and Control over resources’ and ‘Gender Awareness dimension’, six question each on ‘Mobility’ and ‘Security dimensions’ were asked to each sampled respondent.

A detailed description of the questions and various dimensions of women empowerment is presented in the table below:

### COMPUTING “DECISION MAKING INDEX” (YS<sub>i</sub>)

Women’s decision making power is measured by constructing index from women’s self reported responses in the scale of 4,3,2,1 in decreasing order of power, to a series of survey questions on who within

the household makes decision on matters that range from day-to-day expenses, big purchases, children's education and health, savings and investment ... to respondents' own health, participation in paid work, number of children to have, social visits and participation in politics. Scores were dichotomized by merging score 4 and 3 into 1 (more or full power) and score 2 and 1 into 0 (no or less power). A total of 14 questions were asked to each respondent. The gross score in decision making dimension of each respondent ranges between 0 (no power) to 14 (full power). Thereafter, decision making index ( $S_i$ ) of a respondent has been constructed by simply adding the scores of the  $i^{\text{th}}$  woman and divided by total number of questions (14). Each respondent's average index value will lie between 0 and 1. The closer the value to 0, less will be the empowerment level and nearer to 1 will indicate high level of empowerment. For example, if a respondent scores 6 in decision making dimension, then her empowerment index in the said dimension will be  $6/14 = 0.42$ .

Symbolically, Decision Making Index for the sampled women has been denoted by  $Y_{S_i}$ . The formula for computing index is

$$Y_{S_i} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n s_{i1}}{n}$$

Where  $Y_{S_i}$  stands for decision making index  
 $i$  stands for individual respondents  
 (where  $i = 1, \dots, n$ )

$s_{i1}$  stands for obtained score of a particular respondent in decision making dimension

$n$  stands for total no. of women in the sample (200).

**Table – 1 : Dimension Wise Relevant Questions, Coding and Measurement Scales**

Sl. No.	Dimensions	Description	Coding	Measurement Scale
1.	Decision Making Index ( $Y_{S_i}$ )	Who in your family takes the following economic decisions : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• day-to-day household expenses</li> <li>• Large expenses</li> <li>• Child related decisions</li> <li>• Savings and Investment decisions</li> <li>• Financial help to parental family</li> <li>• Decision regarding your education</li> <li>• Marriage</li> <li>• Pregnancy decision</li> <li>• Own health related decision</li> <li>• Socialising</li> <li>• Active participation in any social organization</li> <li>• Voting decision</li> <li>• Taking interest in politics/ attending campaign</li> <li>• Organising and mobilizing for redressal of problems in your locality.</li> </ul>	4 = Respondent alone  3 = Jointly (Respondent & husband)  2 = Husband Alone  1 = Someone else	3,4 = 1  1,2 = 0

2	Access to and Control over resources  Index ( $Y_{s_2}$ )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have access to bank a/c in your own name ?</li> <li>Do you have access to own earnings or husband's earnings</li> <li>Access to own house or land in your own name</li> <li>Any saving in your own name</li> <li>Access to time saving electronic gadgets</li> <li>Access to news paper</li> <li>Access to politics (Political activities by close relation/ own involvement.</li> </ul>	Yes/ High Access = 4  Medium Access = 3  Low Access = 2  No Access Or very few = 1	3,4 = 1  1,2 = 0
3	Mobility Index ( $Y_{s_3}$ )	Can you go to the following places without accompanied by someone. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Day-to-day shopping</li> <li>Mall or Jewelry shop</li> <li>Friend's or Relative's house</li> <li>Doctor or Clinic</li> <li>Attending Social function or meeting (parent teacher)</li> <li>Free to visit and interact with public official.</li> </ul>	Yes/alone = 4  With husband = 3  Accompanied By some one = 2  No = 1	4 = 1  1,2,3 = 0
4	Security Index  ( $Y_{s_4}$ )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you have knowledge about your husband's financial position ?</li> <li>Do you have freedom to spend without permission ?</li> <li>Do you feel secure outside home ?</li> <li>Do you feel dignified and worthy at home?</li> <li>Are you aware about Laws and rights?</li> <li>Have you ever experienced domestic violence?</li> </ul>	Yes/fully = 4  Very much = 3  Very Little = 2  No = 1  Yes = 0; No = 1	3,4 = 1  1,2 = 0
5	Gender Awareness Index ( $Y_{s_5}$ )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is your perception about equality in education and employment among sons and daughters</li> <li>About nominee in property &amp; bank balance</li> <li>About equality in house work division.</li> <li>About male child preference.</li> <li>1st preference – daughter's marriage (or employment).</li> <li>Do you support same caste marriage</li> <li>Do you support women's participation in politics</li> </ul>	Yes = 1; No = 0  Yes = 1; No = 0  Yes = 1; No = 0  Yes = 0; No = 1  Yes = 0; No = 1  Yes = 0; No = 1  Yes = 1; No = 0	For the first three and last question Yes = 1  For the remaining questions No = 1

Total 40 questions.

### COMPUTING ACCESS TO AND CONTROL OVER RESOURCES INDEX (YS<sub>2</sub>)

The second dimension, ‘access to and control over resources’, is frequently considered as a key aspect of women’s decision making power and is measured in terms of women’s ability to access their own or husband’s earning, having bank account on own name, property or savings in own name that they can utilize whenever necessary. In this study a set of 7 questions were asked to the sample women. Answer to each question is assessed using a 4 point scale in which 4 for ‘full access’, 3 for ‘medium access’, 2 for ‘less access’ and 0 for ‘no access’ is assigned. Later on the scores are dichotomized into 1 and 0 by merging score 4 and 3 into 1 and 1 and 2 into 0. Empowerment Index in “Access to and Control over resources” dimension is computed by the formula

$$Ys_2 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n s_{2i}}{n}$$

Where  $Ys_2$  stands for access to and control over resource  
 $s_{2i}$  stands for obtained score of a particular respondent  
 $i$  in ‘access & control’ dimension.  
 $n$  stands for total no. of sampled women (200).

### COMPUTING MOBILITY INDEX (YS<sub>3</sub>)

The third dimension “Mobility Dimension” is measured by asking 6 questions regarding women’s ability to go unaccompanied to a no. of places like shopping, jewellery shop or malls, friend’s or relative’s house, doctor or clinic, meeting or social function, visit and interact with public officials. Women who can go without accompanying anyone were assigned score 4, whereas if husband accompanies 3, someone 2 and a score 1 is assigned to those women who are unable to go to any one of the place alone. Score 1, 2, 3 are merged into 0 and score 4 is treated as 1. Index for Mobility Dimension is

$$Ys_3 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n s_{3i}}{n}$$

Where  $Ys_3$  stands for mobility index.  
 $s_{3i}$  stands for score obtained by a particular respondent in ‘mobility dimension’.  
 $n$  stands for total no. of sampled women (200).

### COMPUTING SECURITY INDEX (YS<sub>4</sub>)

The study identifies ‘Security Dimension’ as the fourth dimension on recognition of the fact that feeling of security is of utmost necessity for women. The study assumes that without security there is no empowerment in real sense. The index value for security dimension was measured by asking 6 questions regarding women’s knowledge about husband’s or family’s financial position, her spending freedom, her feeling of security outside the home, feeling of dignity and worthiness at home, experience of domestic violence and awareness about legal rights. Answer to each question was assigned 4 values. Score 4 was assigned to answer ‘Yes’ except the question regarding experience of domestic violence. Women, who reported experience of domestic violence, were assigned 0 and 1 for those who never experienced domestic



violence. Score 3, 2 and 1 were assigned to answer category very much, very little and no respectively. Score 1 and 2 were merged into 0 and score 3 & 4 into 1. The Empowerment Index for Security Dimension was computed by formula :

$$Ys_4 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n s_{4i}}{n}$$

Where  $Ys_4$  stands for security index  
 $s_{3i}$  stands for obtained score of a particular respondent in security dimension.  
 $n$  stands for total no. of sampled women (200).

### COMPUTING GENDER AWARENESS INDEX ( $Ys_5$ )

The Gender Awareness Dimension Index was constructed on basis of women's responses to 6 questions regarding their perception about gender equality in education, employment opportunity, their views regarding equality in nomination in property & bank balance, whether they support gender division of work, male child preference, priority to daughter's marriage over her employment, same caste marriage and women's participation in politics. Answers to the question of women supporting equality in education, nomination, housework and participation in politics were assigned score 1 (otherwise 0) and supporting male child preference, priority to daughter's marriage and same caste marriage are assigned score 0 (otherwise 1). The Index for Gender Awareness Dimension is computed as

$$Ys_5 = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n s_{5i}}{n}$$

Where  $Ys_5$  stands for gender awareness index  
 $s_{5i}$  stands for obtained score of a particular respondent in gender awareness dimension.  
 $n$  stands for total no. of sampled women (200).

### COMPUTATION OF COMPOSITE WOMEN EMPOWERMENT INDEX (Y)

Finally, with the help of all 5 dimension indices, a Composite Women Empowerment Index (Y) has been computed. While computing the Composite Index, all the 5 dimensions measures were assigned equal weight.

$$Y = 1/5 [Ys_1 + Ys_2 + Ys_3 + Ys_4 + Ys_5]$$

Where :  $Y$  stands for Composite Women Empowerment Index

$Ys_1, Ys_2, Ys_3, Ys_4, Ys_5$  stand for Decision Making Index, Access to and Control over Resources Index, Mobility Index, Security Index and Gender Awareness Index respectively.

Alternatively the women empowerment index, with identical values as above, can also be computed as the simple average of Composite Women Empowerment (C.W.E.) indices of each respondents, where the C.W.E. index of  $i^{th}$  women is



$$Y_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^5 s_j}{5}$$

Where  $S_j$  stands for obtained scores in 5 dimensions.

For example, if a particular respondent's mean score of each dimension index are 0.42, 0.57, 0.50, 0.50 and 0.28, then her Composite Women Empowerment index will be

$$\frac{1}{5} [0.42 + 0.57 + 0.50 + 0.50 + 0.28] = 0.45$$

For the sampled women, in the study area the Composite Women Empowerment index will then be calculated in the following manner:

$$Y = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n Y_i}{n}$$

Where  $Y$  stands for Composite Women Empowerment Index of the sampled group.  
 $\sum Y_i$  stands for summation of Composite women empowerment index score of 200 women  
 $n$  stands for total no. of women in the sample.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Minimum empowerment and maximum empowerment index value of individual respondents in the various dimensions, together with the resulting women empowerment indices ( $Y_{s1}$ ,  $Y_{s2}$ ,  $Y_{s3}$ ,  $Y_{s4}$ ,  $Y_{s5}$ ) of the sampled women are indicated in the table below. The Table also gives the range of individual composite women empowerment index and the composite women empowerment index of the sampled women.

**Table - 2 : Descriptive Statistics of Dimensions of Women Empowerment Index in Ranchi Town**

Sl.No.	Women Empowerment	Individual Minimum Value	Individual Maximum Value	Average Score of 200 Women
1	Decision Making Dimension $Y_{s1}$	0.12	1	0.54
2	Access & Control Dimension $Y_{s2}$	0	1	0.47
3	Mobility Dimension $Y_{s3}$	0	1	0.64
4	Security Dimension $Y_{s4}$	0	1	0.52
5	Gender Awareness Dimension $Y_{s5}$	0	1	0.73
6	Composite Women Empowerment Index $Y$	0.17	0.94	0.58

All 200 sampled women's 1000 (5 x 200) dimension empowerment indices and 200 (1 x 200) composite women empowerment index have been computed based on face-to-face interview of the respondents. The results indicate the following findings:

A wide gap exists between minimum and maximum empowerment index value of individual respondents in all dimensions of women empowerment. In decision making dimension, the empowerment index range (1-.12) is 0.88 while in all other dimensions it is 1.

The individual composite women empowerment index scores indicate a maximum value of 0.73 in gender awareness dimension while a minimum index value of 0.47 in access to and control over resources dimension.

**Table – 3 : A Comparative Analysis of Women Empowerment Dimension Indices by Social Groups & Religion**

		TRIBAL		NON-TRIBAL		
DIMENSION	Overall	Christian	Non-Christian	Hindu	Muslim	Other
Decision Making Index $Y_{S1}$	0.54	0.68	0.65	0.51	0.51	0.55
Access & Control Index $Y_{S2}$	0.47	0.43	0.39	0.46	0.51	0.66
Mobility Index $Y_{S3}$	0.64	0.78	0.93	0.58	0.50	0.74
Security Index $Y_{S4}$	0.52	0.49	0.48	0.53	0.47	0.67
Gender Awareness Index $Y_{S5}$	0.73	0.80	0.73	0.73	0.65	0.85

Source : Field Survey

The composite women empowerment index score of the sampled women in the study area shows a wide difference between the maximum index value (0.94) and minimum index value (0.17). The composite women empowerment index range in the study area is  $(0.94 - 0.17) = 0.77$ .

The composite women empowerment in the study area works out to be 0.58, indicating a medium level of empowerment status among women in Ranchi.

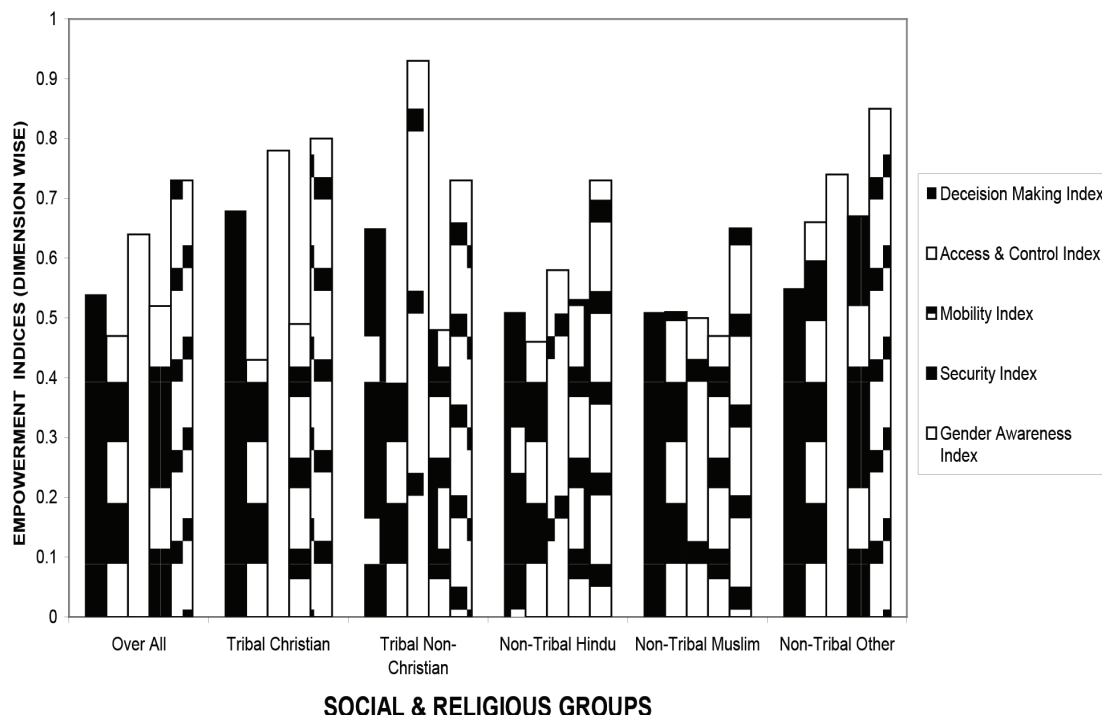
Results of the comparative study of women empowerment dimension indices across the two social groups (tribal and non-tribal) with religious breakup (Christian and Non-Christian among tribal and Hindu, Muslim, Others from non-tribal) are presented below in tabular and graphical form.

Results suggest an overall picture of empowerment status in the study area which reflect the intrinsic characteristic of each social / religious group and are useful for policy making.

1. Tribal women are more empowered in Decision making ( $S_1$ ) and Mobility ( $S_3$ ) dimension as compared to their non-tribal counterparts, but less empowered in Access to & Control over Resources ( $S_2$ ) and Security ( $S_4$ ) dimension.
2. Among Tribal, Christians are more empowered in Decision making ( $S_1$ ), Access and Control ( $S_2$ ) and Gender Awareness ( $S_5$ ) dimension than Non-Christian; while Non-Christian tribal are more empowered in Mobility ( $S_3$ ) dimension.

3. Among Non-tribal women belonging to the category 'others' are more empowered in all 5 dimensions than the Hindu and Muslim women.
4. Muslim women are least empowered than Hindu women in Mobility ( $S_3$ ), Security ( $S_4$ ) and Gender Awareness dimensions ( $S_5$ ); but more empowered than Hindu women in Access and Control ( $S_2$ ) dimension.

### A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT DIMENSION INDICES BY SOCIAL GROUPS & RELIGION



### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The major objective of the study was to identify the dimensions and compute indices in its various dimensions as well as in composite form for measuring women empowerment in Ranchi town. The startling result indicating the low levels of women empowerment should serve as an eye opener to all government. and non-government. organizations advocating the cause of women upliftment, to improve the socio-economic profile of the country where women constitute nearly half population.

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