

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

**Title of Research Paper:** Socio-Economic Profile and Quality of Life Among the Birjia Tribe:  
A Case Study of Sirsi Village, Mahuadanr Sub-Division of Latehar District, Jharkhand

**Avinash Yadav\* Shilpi Junita Mary Horo\* Vikram Rajat Dungdung**

\*Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Mahuadanr.

**Abstract:** Tribal communities constitute an integral part of India's social fabric and cultural diversity. Among them, the **Birjia tribal community** is one of the important **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** and ethnic groups of Jharkhand. According to the **Census of India, 2011**, the total population of the Birjia tribe is **6,276**, accounting for **0.07 per cent of the total Scheduled Tribe population** of the state. The Birjia community predominantly inhabits the **inaccessible and densely forested regions** of the Palamu division in the **Chotanagpur Plateau**. These areas are characterized by poor infrastructure, socio-economic backwardness, isolation, and limited integration with the mainstream development process, resulting in a low standard of living and persistent deprivation. This paper attempts to examine the **social status, socio-economic conditions, and implementation of government welfare schemes** among the Birjia PVTG in the selected study area. The research is based on both **primary and secondary sources of data**, enabling a comprehensive analysis of their living conditions. Issues related to **survival and social identity** remain among the most critical challenges faced by tribal communities across different time periods. Even today, **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups** continue to survive largely through their traditional lifestyles and indigenous practices. The Birjia tribe, one of the primitive tribal groups of Jharkhand, continues to struggle with challenges related to development, social status, and economic empowerment. The present study seeks to analyze the existing **socio-economic profile** of the Birjia community

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

and assess their efforts and constraints in adapting to contemporary development processes while maintaining their ethnic identity.

**Keywords:** PVTGs, Backwards, Poverty, Cultures, Forest Dwellers,

## Introduction

Tribal communities constitute an integral part of India's social fabric and cultural heritage. The term **Jharkhand** literally means "*the land of forests*", and the tribal population of the state has historically maintained a close association with **jal (water), jangal (forest), and jameen (land)**. Jharkhand is home to **32 Scheduled Tribes**, comprising **24 major tribes and 8 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**. The PVTGs of Jharkhand include **Asur, Birjia, Birhor, Korwa, Parhaiya, Mal Pahariya, Savar, and Sauria Paharia**. According to the **Census of India, 2011**, the total population of PVTGs in Jharkhand is **292,359**, accounting for **3.38 per cent of the total Scheduled Tribe population** of the state. The majority of these groups have inhabited forested regions since ancient times, with forests forming the backbone of their economy and livelihood systems. Jharkhand's PVTGs are characterized by the practice of traditional forms of agriculture, declining or stagnant population growth, poor health conditions, heavy dependence on forest resources, economic deprivation, and low or negligible literacy levels. **Sir Herbert Risley** was among the first scholars to conduct a systematic study of the **Birjia primitive tribe** during the **Census of India, 1931** (Gupta, 2005). It is noteworthy that since **2006**, Primitive Tribal Groups have been officially re-designated as **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)** (Sahu, 2019). The **Dhebar Commission** played a significant role in highlighting the need for special attention and welfare measures for these vulnerable communities. During the **Sixth Five Year Plan**, special financial allocations were made for the welfare of the Birjia tribe, and **Special Central Assistance** was provided under **Article 275(1) of the Indian Constitution** (Kumari, 2006). The **Seventh Five Year Plan** focused on enhancing the economic independence of tribal households; however, many of these initiatives did not achieve the desired outcomes (Kumari, 2006). Despite these challenges, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and researchers continue to document and address the socio-economic conditions of these communities. The **Birjia tribe**, one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of Jharkhand, is predominantly found in the **Latehar,**

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

**Palamu, and Gumla districts.** The tribe largely inhabits hilly and forested terrains. The total population of the Birjia primitive tribe in the study area is **713**. The patterns of population growth and decline among the Birjia community remain a critical subject of study, as they are closely linked to development processes and access to basic necessities such as healthcare, education, and livelihood opportunities.

## **Geographical Profile of the Study Area:**

Mahuadanr is one of the most backward in terms of Educational level, health and infrastructure development and tribal dominant habitats (ST community) blocks of Latehar district in Jharkhand state. The latitudinal extent of Mahuadanr is 23.3965° North and 84.1066° East longitude. There are many tourist places in this areas such as Lodh waterfall, Mirchia waterfall, Netarhat hills station and forest area etc. There is a total number of 106 villages situated in this block. There are various rivers such as Koel river, Burha river, Kanhar river Aksi river are flowing. In this block Hindi, Kurukh, Nagpuri, Santhali are major language of peoples. According to 2011 census total 74,732 populations are found among them 37,915 males and 36,817 females and literacy rate is 69.62 percent and sex ratio is 971.

Sirsi village is located in Mahuadanr sub-division of Latehar district, Jharkhand state. The total geographical area of the Sirsi village is 1375 hectares. Gram Panchayat of the Sirsi village is Netarhat and community development area and Sub- District Headquarter is Mahuadanr which is thirty-five kilometer away from the village. Parliamentary constituency is Chatra.

## **Statement of the Problem:**

The identification of the **Birjia Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)** for the present research is based on several distinctive socio-economic, cultural, and demographic characteristics. The Birjia community continues to depend largely on **hunting and food gathering** for daily subsistence and practices agriculture using **pre-agricultural and traditional technologies**. The level of literacy among the Birjia is extremely low, and the community remains **geographically and socially isolated**, residing in **dense, remote, and inaccessible forest areas**. Socio-economically, the Birjia are among the **most backward, marginalized, and**

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

**deprived tribal communities**, characterized by **extreme poverty** and subsistence-level economic activities. The Birjia tribe represents one of the original **indigenous populations** inhabiting forest, hill, and plateau regions. The community exhibits a **declining population trend**, strong faith in **supernatural forces**, and deep adherence to traditional socio-cultural beliefs and taboos. Their livelihood system is primarily subsistence-oriented, and their social life is marked by **nomadic tendencies**, rich **oral traditions and folk songs**, and limited interaction with mainstream society. A significant proportion of the community remains **unaware of central and state government welfare schemes**, further deepening their exclusion from development processes. Traits such as **innocence, shyness, and lack of exposure** also contribute to their vulnerability. Unemployment rates among the Birjia community are alarmingly high due to **low educational attainment, language barriers, and lack of vocational skills and training opportunities**. Living in close harmony with nature, the Birjia primitive tribe is presently **on the verge of extinction**. Their critical socio-economic challenges require immediate attention from **government and non-government organizations** for their survival, empowerment, and sustainable development. The present study attempts to analyze the **socio-economic profile and quality of life** of the Birjia tribe in order to highlight their pressing issues and contribute to informed policy formulation for their upliftment.

## Major Research Objectives

- To study the social-status of primitive tribe of Birjia community in Mahuadanr block of Latehar district.
- To study the awareness about their traditional administrative system.
- To examine the government schemes implementation in Sirsi village of Mahuadanr block of Latehar district of Jharkhand.
- To study the socio-economic status of primitive tribe of Birjia community in Mahuadanr block of Latehar district.

## Database and Research Methodology:

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

The paper is descriptive in nature, primary and secondary data collection has been done through survey and interview method by the students of St. Xavier's College, Mahuadanr, Latehar, Jharkhand at Sirsi village. Journals and books have been used for secondary data. A Questionnaire was prepared for the survey and 120 respondents have been selected based on purposive random sampling method. The students of Political Science honours conducted the survey as well as interviews of Sirsi villagers in Mahuadanr sub-division of Latehar district, Jharkhand.

## Result and Discussion

Saving the primitive tribal groups are challenging as it has been noticed that due to lack of health facilities and availability of food and population has declined as the dependency lies on forest. On the other hand, some census shows that condition has been improved through government schemes.

Table: 1. 1: Population Growth of Primitive Tribes in Jharkhand

Sex Ratio of Primitive Tribes in Jharkhand	Sex-Ratio		Child Sex- Ratio	
	2001	2011	2001	2011
	962	991	992	998

Source: Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, GOI

Table 1. 2: Population Distribution of Birjia Primitive tribe of Sirsi village, sub-division Mahuadanr

Male	Female	Total
354	359	713

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

Source: Primary Field Survey Data, 2023

## **Education status**

Sirsi village has the privilege of having only one primary school. Primary school teacher comes at 10 am in the morning and leaves the village at 11am, a serious issue needs to be addressed. It is one of the reasons that literacy rate is so lower. Therefore, village people do not get motivation for study and acquiring knowledge. The villagers cover one-hour uneven road to sub-division Mahuadanr to study further. The total respondents were one hundred and twenty out of which 45 percentages are literate and fifty-five percentages are illiterate.

## **Societal organization**

Birjia primitive tribe is very close knitted to their society. Their village head is known as 'Baiga', traditional mediator who performs rituals is known as 'Devar'. Birjia community does believe in traditional administrative system. Till now no case or disputes have been taken to police. Disputes are being resolved among the villagers through traditional administrative system. Sarhul, Karma, Kartak and Christmas are being celebrated by Birjia community. Different marriage practices have prevailed and re-marriage is also common in the community that shows the modern time practices. Separation from marriage costs both the parties. Labour offering is being practiced by the society in village functions, for construction such as roads, dams and at the time of harvesting that shows the community bonding.

## **Economic Status**

Primitive tribe of Birjia community mostly depends on forest produce and shifting agriculture that takes a lot of efforts and time and sometimes the outcome is not up to the expectations. In the present time economic strengthen is necessary to survive. Some villagers sometimes move towards cities to earn money however that is very minimal. Kachha roads (no concrete road) make the situation worst to move outside of the village. The present diagram denotes the monthly and yearly percentage of salary. The average monthly salary of Birjia primitive tribe is very minimal. Birjia primitive tribe mainly resides in forest areas. So Birjia's dependency on forest leads them to poor economic status. Location is another main reason for lower level of economic access.

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



*Volume- 01, Issue-01  
January 2026*

**Table 1. 3: Beneficiary of Government Schemes**

Total No. of Respondent	No. of Respondents using Government Facility	No. of Respondents not Using Government Facility
120	107	13

Source: Primary Field Survey Data, 2023

Birjia community of Sirsi village avail facilities such as monthly ration that is meager and not sufficient to survive. Only twenty households are benefiting from Indira Awas Yojana (house scheme), while others have mud houses.

### **Major Findings of the Study:**

The growth in population has taken place since the census of 2011. Unavailability of middle and high school in the village are the main issues due to which villagers are not able to connect themselves with the outside world. Due to that new ideology or behaviour patterns have been the same for decades. Socially Birjia community's behaviour is well democratic. Lack of survey in the formulating of schemes and dependency on middleman for development is the main reason of the failure. Unavailability of basic infrastructure such as roads, community health clinics, water well and transport facility is also the main reason of poor economic situation of Birjia primitive tribe.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Socially, the Birjia primitive tribe is undergoing a slow process of change; traditionally, the community has preferred limited interaction with outside groups, but gradual transformation is now becoming evident. Communication and interaction with the outside world are essential for bringing about meaningful social and economic change. Although several government schemes and development projects have been implemented for the upliftment of the Birjia tribe, their impact has so far been limited and insufficient. One of the major constraints to socio-economic development among the Birjia community is the lack of adequate educational infrastructure. The

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**

# XAVERIAN QUINTESSENCE

(An International Multidisciplinary Subjects and Peer- Reviewed Journal)

Website: [www.sxcma.co.in](http://www.sxcma.co.in) Email: [editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in](mailto:editorxqjournal@sxcma.co.in)

Biannual Online Journal



**Volume- 01, Issue-01**  
**January 2026**

establishment of **secondary schools** is particularly necessary to create awareness, enhance literacy, and promote social and economic advancement. Improved access to education would play a crucial role in empowering the Birjia tribe and improving their overall quality of life.

## References:

Gupta, S. (2005). Human Rights and Primitive Tribes An Anthropological Perspective Primitive Tribes in Contemporary India, SK Chaudhuri & SSChaudhuri(eds.),Mittal Publication, New Delhi , pp.17-34

Sahu, S. (2019).Demographic trends and occupational structure of particularly vulnerable tribal groups of Jharkhand, International Journal of Reviews and Research in Social Sciences, Vol. 8, Issue 2, pp.316-322.

Lakra, J.E., Kumar, S. (2017). Predicament of Hunger, Poverty and Food Security among the PVTGs of Jharkhand, IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (IOSR-JHSS), Vol. 2, Issue 7, pp. 8-12.

Kumar, V. (2024). Indigenous practices and cognition for sustainable habitat of Birjia: An Anthropological Analysis, International Journal of Current Research, Vol. 16, Issue 05, pp. 28422-28427.

Kumari, P. (2006). Development of Primitive Tribes a Critical Appraisal, *Development of Indian Tribes*, Vol 14, Issue 5 pp. 240 - 245.

Pandey, S., Kumar, P. (2025). The Birjia community of Jharkhand: A study of Geographical distribution, societal framework and Household Economics, International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research (IJFMR), Vol. 7, Issue 1, pp. 1-11

**Published by**

**St. Xavier's College (Autonomous) Mahuadanr, Latehar, PIN-822119, Jharkhand, INDIA**