

# Dynamics of Social Development in Jharkhand: A Regional Perspective

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## Abstract

*Jharkhand, comprising five divisions, is a region characterised by diverse social, geographical, and cultural landscapes. However, interactions between development policies and culturally heterogeneous populations have not produced uniformly positive outcomes, resulting in disparities in development outcomes across divisions. This paper adopts a regional perspective to analyse the socio-demographic profiles of Tribal and other social groups in Jharkhand, focusing on health and education, to reveal patterns of social development across the five divisions: Kolhan, North Chotanagpur, South Chotanagpur, Palamu, and Santhal. The results show that the Santhal region lags in all forms of development.*

**Keywords:** Immunisation, Social development, Child Marriage, Anaemia, BMI, Tribe, Wealth Index

## 1 Introduction

In general, social development refers to the progression of non-economic outcomes in society, including reduced vulnerability, greater inclusion, improved well-being, greater accountability, and people-centred approaches. It also concerns itself with greater human rights and the possibility of equality among individuals and groups within society, especially for indigenous and marginalised people. However, social development is rarely uniform across regions. Empirical studies on social

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development and disparity examine the interplay among geographic location, economic opportunities, and political arrangements.

Midgley (2014, 13) described social development as “a process of planned social change aimed at improving the well-being of the entire population within a complex 'multifaceted development process'”. It promotes a better quality of life by strengthening social structures, relationships, and institutions. Key concerns include education, health, and equality, to build inclusive societies that support social justice and unity. Social development became a recognised and specialised area within development studies in the 1950s (Midgley, 1995). Sharma defines “social development as normative and integrative upgrading of the social order”. In the Indian context, he identifies three conceptions: “social development as increase in social well-being; social development as transformation in an egalitarian direction; and social development as normative and integrative upgrading of the social order”.

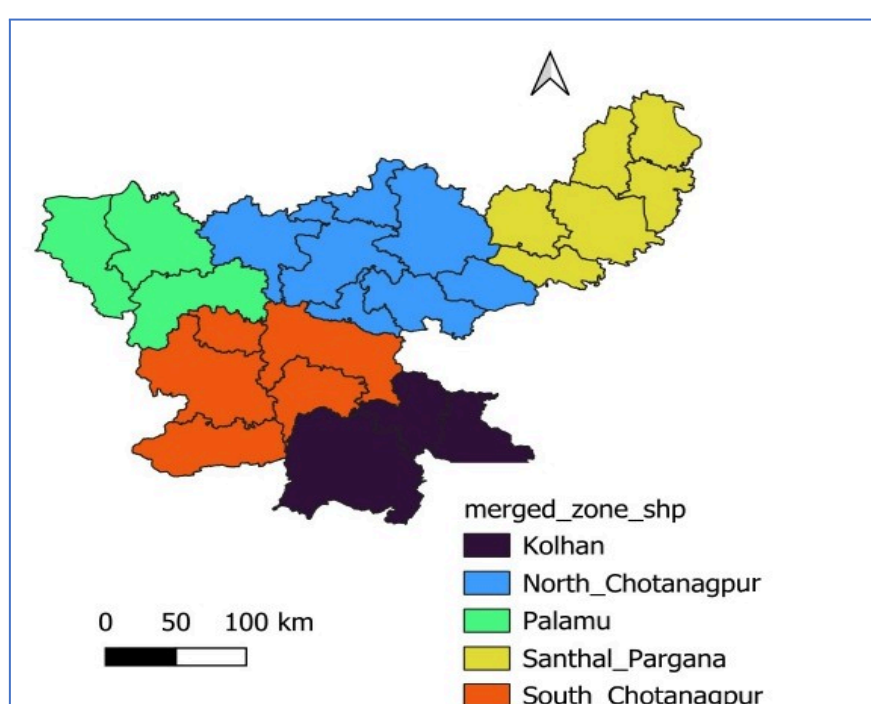
Historically, India has witnessed significant disparities in social indicators. Although India adopts a balanced regional approach, in reality, after 75 years of independence, development is primarily concentrated in a few states, especially the southern states (Kerala and Tamil Nadu) and the western states (Maharashtra and Gujarat). In recent years, despite pro-backwards areas policies and programs, central Indian states have been far behind in this race, especially in tribal-dominated areas of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand. According to the NITI Aayog Multidimensional Poverty Index report 2023, Jharkhand ranked second in terms of the multidimensional Poverty Index, with a headcount ratio of 28.8 per cent. The literature suggests that Jharkhand was separated from Bihar in 2000 and divided into five divisions—South Chota Nagpur, North Chota Nagpur, Santhal Pargana, Kolhan, and Palamu – for better administration and development. However, unfortunately, even after division and 25 years, Jharkhand still lags behind the national average.

This paper examines the level and pattern of social development across Jharkhand's five divisions by drawing on the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) rounds 5 (2019-21) to examine the status of Jharkhand after 25 years of separation.

## 1.1 Data Sources and Methodology

The paper is based on secondary data that is NFHS, National Family Health Survey 4<sup>th</sup> round 2015-16 and NFHS 5<sup>th</sup> round 2019-21. Based on the following socioeconomic indicators, data were compiled for analysis. A correlation matrix has been calculated using data from NFHS 4 to the 5th round to examine the association between indicators and growth rates, providing insight into the trend of development across districts. Division-wise development has also been analysed to assess the status of development within each division. This reflects regional development in the state.

**Fig: Regions of Jharkhand**



## 1.2 Outcome Variables:

The presents Study has selected total eight social development indicator such as (i) Women with 10 or more years of schooling (ii) Women aged 20-24 years married before age 18 years (iii) Women aged 15-19 years who already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey (iv) Institutional births (v) Children aged 12-23 months are fully vaccinated based on information from the vaccination card (vi) Children under 5 years who are stunted (height-for-age) (vii) Women whose Body Mass Index (BMI) is below normal (BMI <18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) (viii) All women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic.

## 2 Results

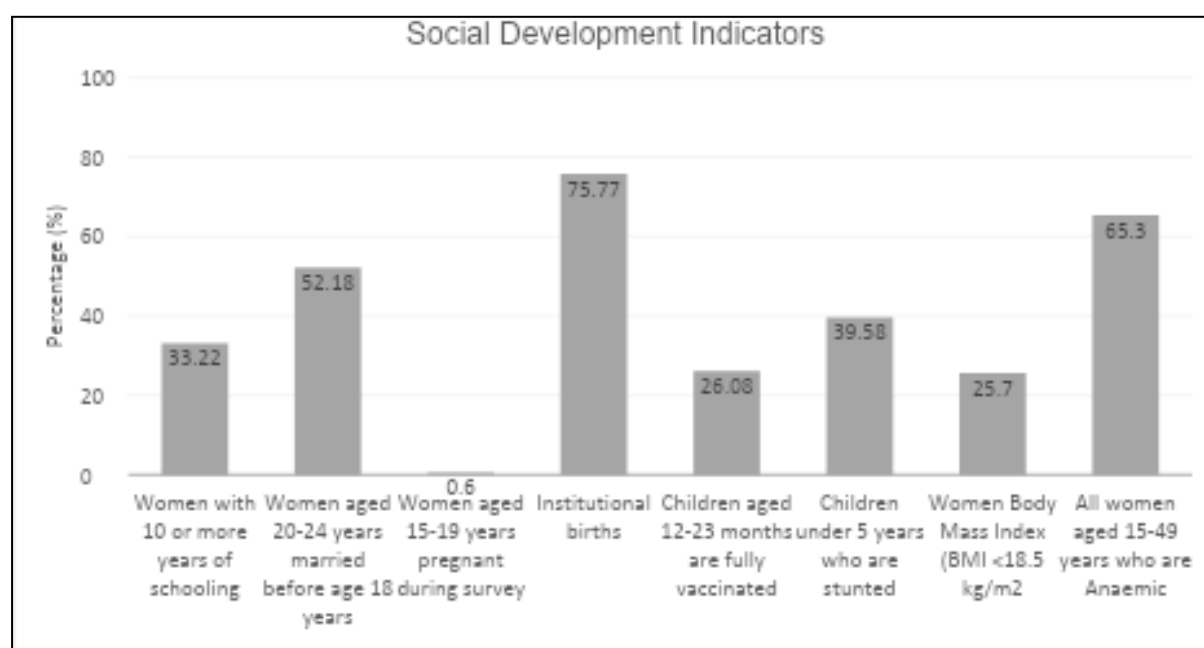
### 2.1 Background Characteristics of the Study Population

The socio-economic characteristics (Table 1) highlight a wide range of regional variation. Overall, Jharkhand is predominantly dominated by the Hindu community (77.2%); however, the Santhal division has a higher Muslim population. On the other hand, Chaibasa and South Chota Nagpur have significant populations from different communities. By social category, OBCs constitute the most crucial share across the region; however, Chaibasa, South Chota Nagpur, and Santhal are predominantly ST-dominated. Overall, around 66.02 per cent of the population is poor, while only North Chota Nagpur is relatively better off. Furthermore, 75.38 per cent of the Study population resided in rural areas; only Chaibasa and North Chota Nagpur had more than 30 per cent of their population living in urban areas.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic profile of Study area**

| Household Characteristics | Region   |                    |        |                    |         | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------|--------------------|---------|-------|
|                           | Chaibasa | North Chota Nagpur | Palamu | South Chota Nagpur | Santhal |       |
| <b>Religion</b>           |          |                    |        |                    |         |       |
| Hindu                     | 72.01    | 88.21              | 87.69  | 62.77              | 66.78   | 77.21 |
| Muslims                   | 4.49     | 10.43              | 7.58   | 9.26               | 22.51   | 11.52 |
| Others                    | 23.5     | 1.36               | 4.72   | 27.97              | 10.71   | 11.27 |
| <b>Social Category</b>    |          |                    |        |                    |         |       |
| SC                        | 11.31    | 21.31              | 27.75  | 10.37              | 11.71   | 16.91 |
| ST                        | 43.82    | 10.64              | 17.11  | 52.65              | 28.89   | 26.86 |
| OBC                       | 34.9     | 56.5               | 44.12  | 30.92              | 47.5    | 45.8  |
| Others                    | 9.97     | 11.55              | 11.03  | 6.06               | 11.9    | 10.43 |
| <b>Wealth Index</b>       |          |                    |        |                    |         |       |
| Poorest                   | 47.45    | 27.59              | 58.79  | 45.63              | 57.89   | 43.58 |
| Poorer                    | 14.69    | 27.04              | 21.71  | 18.41              | 23.49   | 22.44 |
| Middle                    | 11.16    | 21.54              | 9.35   | 14.89              | 10.83   | 15.21 |
| Richer                    | 12.25    | 15.6               | 6.4    | 11.69              | 4.86    | 11.1  |
| Richest                   | 14.46    | 8.24               | 3.74   | 9.39               | 2.92    | 7.67  |
| <b>Residence</b>          |          |                    |        |                    |         |       |
| Urban                     | 36.0     | 32.82              | 8.81   | 27.04              | 10.07   | 24.62 |
| Rural                     | 64.0     | 67.18              | 91.19  | 72.96              | 89.93   | 75.38 |

Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

**Figure 1: Social development indicators of Jharkhand**

## 2.2 Social Development Status of Jharkhand

Table 2 presents the status of social development indicators in Jharkhand, categorised by tribal and non-tribal populations. Results show that only 33.2 per cent of women in Jharkhand had 10 or more years of schooling, and 52.2 per cent were married before the age of 18. Overall, only 0.6% of women aged 15-19 were pregnant during the survey period. Although 77.5 per cent of live births were delivered at government or private institutions, only 26.08 per cent got fully vaccinated, and 38.6 per cent were stunted. On the other hand, data also revealed that one-fourth of women have a BMI below 18.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup>, while 65.3 per cent of women aged 15-49 are anaemic.

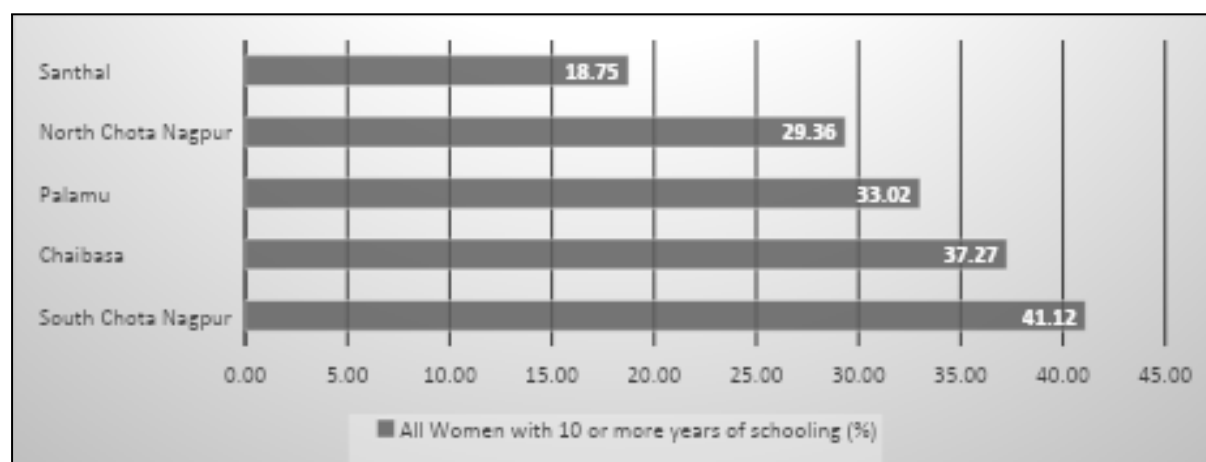
## 3 Regional variation in social development indicators

### 3.1 Educational Development:

Educational development in the region, as reflected by the indicator of 10 or more years of schooling, is the lowest among all women and among Scheduled Tribe women in Santhal Pargana. However, women with 10 more years of education are the highest in South Chotanagpur. District-wise analysis indicates that the proportion of women with 10 or more years of schooling is highest in Ranchi and lowest in Pakur (13.6%). Tribal Women with 10 or more years of education are the

least educated in the Deoghar District (6.59 per cent), and the highest in the Ranchi District (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Women with 10 or more years of schooling (%).**

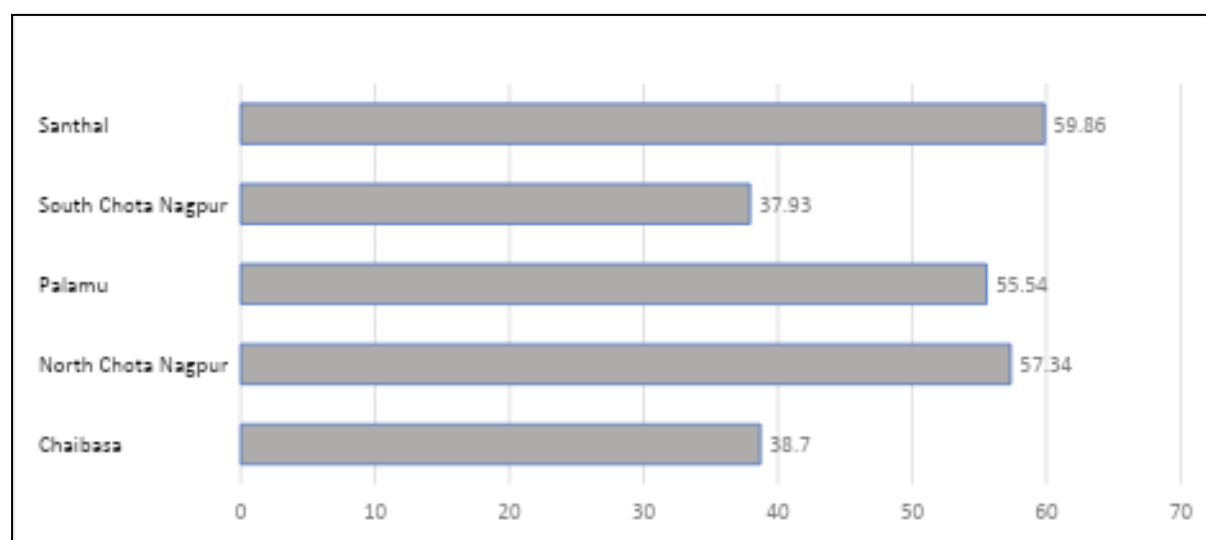


Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

### 3.2 Women aged 20-24 married before age 18 years

Figure 2 highlights that child marriage is prominent in Jharkhand. Regionally, 59.8 per cent of 20-24-year-old women in the Santhal division were married before completing 18 years of age, followed by North Chota Nagpur (57.3%) and Palamu (55.5%). However, North Chota Nagpur (37.9%) and Chaibasa (38.7%) have a relatively low level of child marriage.

**Fig: Women aged 20-24 married before age 18 years**

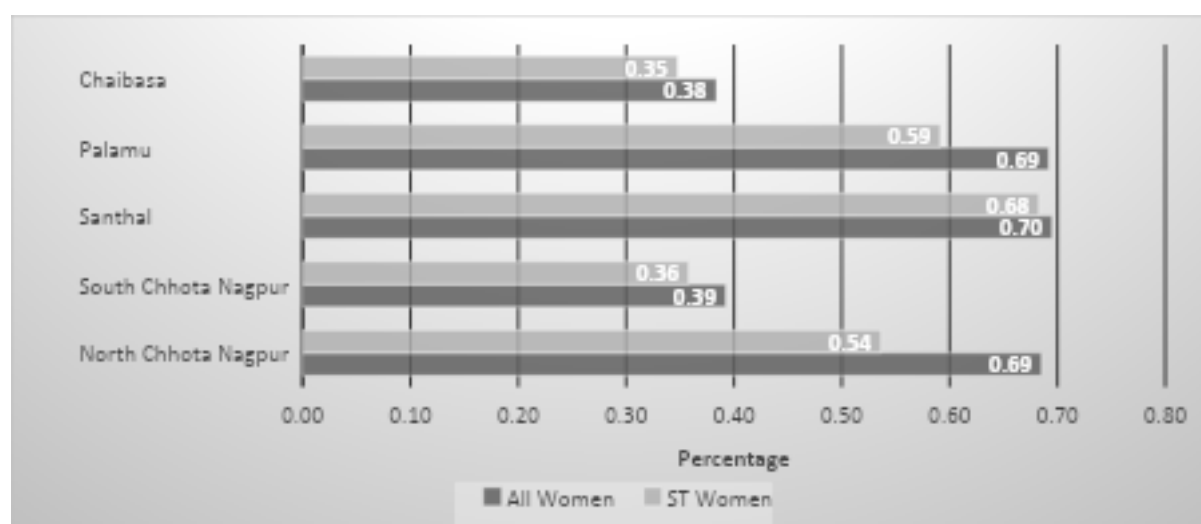


Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

### 3.3 Women aged 15-19 pregnant during the survey

Women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey (Figure 3). It reflects the early age of childbearing that may lead to anaemia among women and undernourishment among children. The survey indicates that the highest percentage of early-age pregnancy was reported in the Santhal division, whereas the lowest was in the Chaibasa division. District-wise data suggest that it is highest in Deoghar District, followed by Sahibganj, whereas it is lowest in West Singhbhum District. Among scheduled tribes, it is reported to be the highest. Godda.

**Figure 3: Women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey**



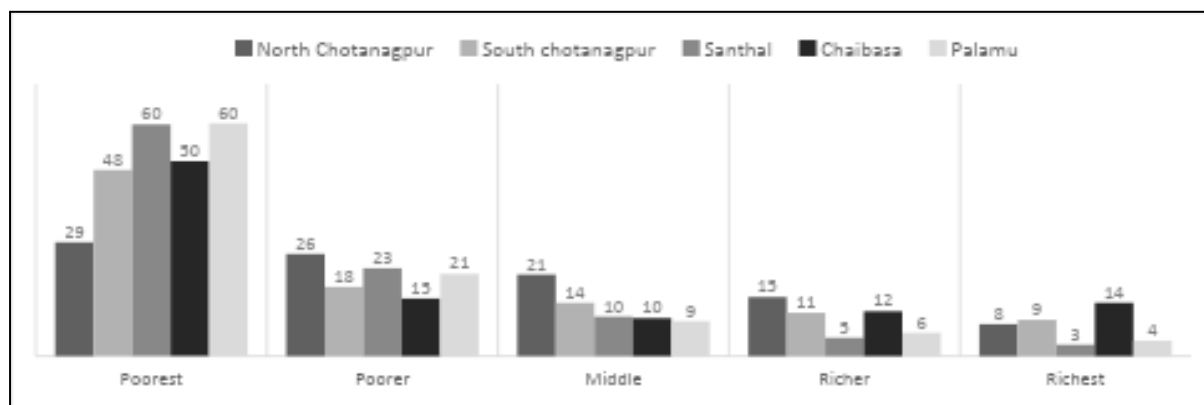
Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

### 3.4 Wealth Index

Most of the poorest people are found in the Santhal and Palamu regions, according to the wealth index. Middle-income people are found in North Chotanagpur, followed by South Chotanagpur. The Richer people are found in North Chotanagpur, followed by the Chaibasa division. The wealthiest people are found in Chaibasa, followed by South Chotanagpur. At the district level, the highest percentage of the poorest people is in West Singhbhum (79%), whereas the lowest is in Dhanbad (19%). Most of the wealthiest people were reported in East Singhbhum (26 per cent), while middle-income people were reported in Ramgarh.

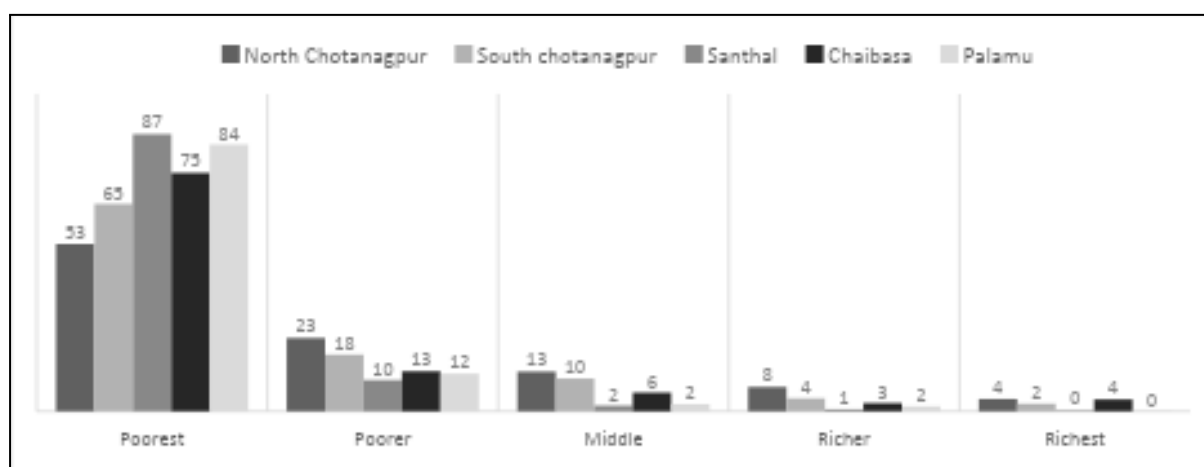
Among the tribes, the majority of the poorest people were reported in the Dumka and Deoghar districts (91%). Most middle-income tribal people are found in Ranchi District (19.9). The wealthiest tribes are found in East Singhbhum and Bakro District (10%).

**Figure 6. Wealth Index in the five divisions of Jharkhand**



Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

**Figure 7: Wealth Index in Five Divisions of Jharkhand by Scheduled Tribes**



Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

The poorest Tribal people are found in the Santhal division, followed by Palamu, while comparatively less poor people are found in North Chotanagpur. Poverty is more prevalent in North Chotanagpur than in South Chotanagpur. The middle-income Tribal people were also more numerous in North Chotanagpur than in South Chotanagpur. Richer tribals are more common in North Chotanagpur, followed by South Chotanagpur, while richer tribal people are very few in the Santhal divisions. The richest tribal people, based on the wealth index, are found



in the North Chotanagpur and Chaibasa divisions. In contrast, wealth index values are almost zero in the Santhal and Palamu divisions.

## 4 Child Health

### 4.1 Institutional Births

Almost 84 per cent of institutional births have been reported in South Chotanagpur, followed by the Chaibasa division (Figure 4). In contrast, they are lowest among the general and tribal populations in the Santhal division. It is the highest in East Singhbhum District (96%), whereas it is the weakest among the Scheduled Tribes in Dumka. Institutional delivery is reported at the highest percentage in East Singhbhum, whereas it is lowest in Giridih district (32 per cent). The Proportion of Children under five who were stunted is highest in the North Chota Nagpur division, followed by the South Chota Nagpur division; it is lowest in the Chaibasa division, both overall and among tribes. It is the weakest in the Ranchi district, while the percentage of stunted children was the highest reported in the West Singhbhum district (60%).

**Figure 4: Institutional Delivery in Jharkhand**

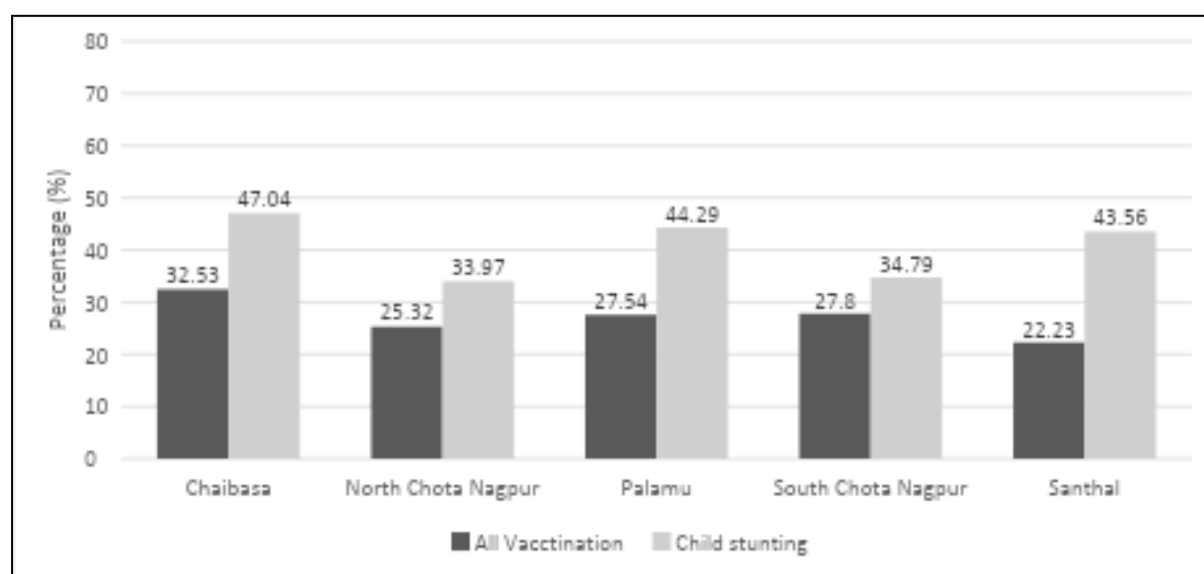


Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

## 4.2 Child Immunisation and Stunting

Figure 5 presents the regional variation in child immunisation and stunting. Results show that the level of full immunisation, as indicated on the card, is very low across the region. For instance, Chaibasa records the highest immunisation rate, whereas it is significantly lower in the Santhal divisions (22.2%). On the other hand, the Level of child stunting is much higher across the region, with only North Chota Nagpur and South Chota Nagpur showing a relatively lower level.

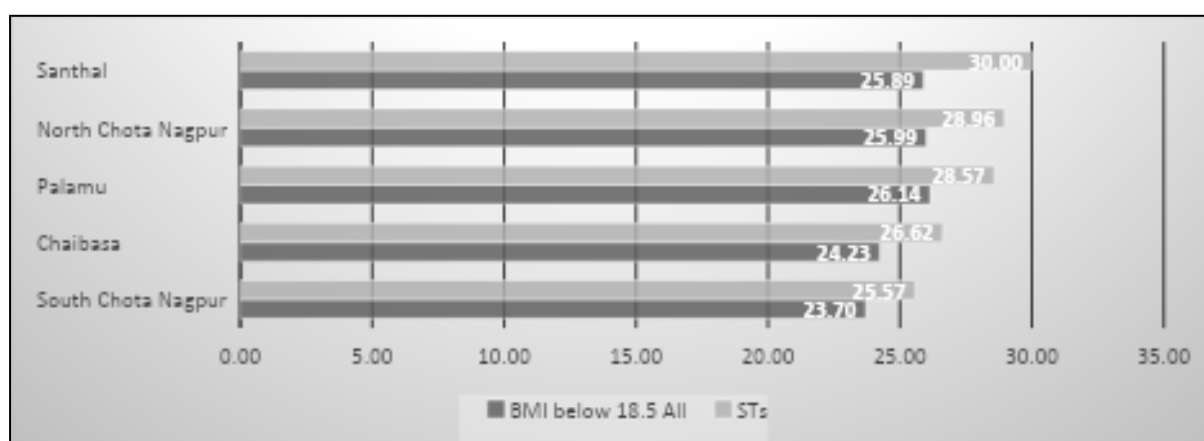
**Figure 5: Child Immunisation and stunting**



Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

## 5 Women's Body Mass Index

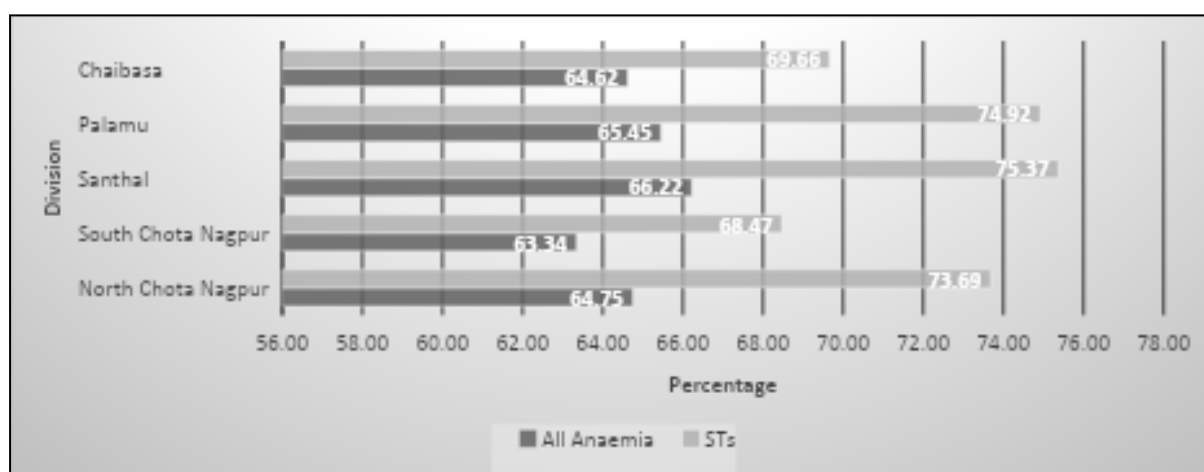
The Body Mass Index (BMI) is a key indicator of overall health status. The women with a BMI below normal are considered underweight. Regional disparity in BMI has been observed in the state. Among underweight women, the highest proportion is among Santhal women, whereas among scheduled tribes' women, the highest proportion is in the Palamu division. For all women, the rate is lowest in the East Singhbhum District and highest in the Pakur District; for Scheduled Tribe women, it is highest in Pakur, followed by Dhanbad. The proportion of underweight tribal women was reported to be the lowest in the East Singhbhum district (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Women whose Body Mass Index (BMI) is below normal (BMI <18.5)**

Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

### 5.1 Women Anaemia

Anaemia is a condition that develops when your blood produces a lower-than-normal amount of healthy red blood cells. Women in Jharkhand are highly affected by anaemia. It is reported to be the highest in the Santhal division and the lowest in the South Chotanagpur. For Scheduled Tribe women, it is highest in the Santhal region and lowest in South Chotanagpur. Almost 79 per cent of women in the Pakur district are affected by anaemia, and it is the lowest in the Chatra district. Eighty-seven per cent of scheduled tribe women in Pakur district are anaemic, and it is the lowest in Chatra district (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Division-wise Anaemia in Jharkhand**

Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

**Table 2: Percentage distribution of social development indicators by region and tribe**

| Social Indicators                      | Division |                    |        |                    |         |
|----------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|--------|--------------------|---------|
|                                        | Chaibasa | North Chota Nagpur | Palamu | South Chota Nagpur | Santhal |
| <b>More than 10 Years of schooling</b> |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 24.69    | 25.79              | 22.99  | 33.67              | 11.68   |
| Non-Tribe                              | 46.51    | 37.57              | 35.06  | 48.96              | 21.64   |
| <b>Pregnant 15-19</b>                  |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 0.34     | 0.48               | 0.27   | 0.17               | 1.05    |
| Non-Tribe                              | 0.13     | 0.72               | 0.38   | 0.31               | 1.18    |
| <b>Institutional Birth</b>             |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 72.32    | 57.04              | 65.14  | 78.33              | 53.78   |
| Non-Tribe                              | 89.78    | 80.89              | 78.94  | 89.97              | 69.31   |
| <b>Child Marriage</b>                  |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 40.77    | 56.34              | 54.87  | 35.78              | 56.03   |
| Non-Tribe                              | 37.29    | 57.45              | 55.67  | 40.11              | 61.39   |
| <b>All Vaccination</b>                 |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 31.92    | 27.4               | 26.11  | 26.16              | 22.85   |
| Non-Tribe                              | 33.72    | 24.99              | 27.85  | 29.84              | 21.88   |
| <b>Child stunting</b>                  |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 52.85    | 37.17              | 50.57  | 40.17              | 44.74   |
| Non-Tribe                              | 40.6     | 33.6               | 42.7   | 28.5               | 43.1    |
| <b>Women with low BMI</b>              |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 25.7     | 31.9               | 31.0   | 22.7               | 32.3    |
| Non-Tribe                              | 18.27    | 25.97              | 26.64  | 21                 | 27.91   |
| <b>Anaemic</b>                         |          |                    |        |                    |         |
| Tribe                                  | 72.6     | 74.0               | 70.2   | 65.5               | 80.5    |
| Non-Tribe                              | 64.8     | 61.7               | 60.3   | 57.3               | 69.3    |

Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021

## 6 Regional variation in social indicators by tribal and non-tribal status

Across all divisions, tribal populations exhibit poorer social and health outcomes than non-tribal populations (Table 2). For example, women's schooling (10+ years) is remarkably lower among tribal groups across the division, while the non-tribal population is relatively better but still lags behind the national average. Institutional birth rates are moderate across regions but remain far behind the 100% goal, especially among non-tribal groups. The tribal population in North Chota Nagpur reported the second lowest institutional delivery, and the Santhal region shows the lowest accessibility of institutional birth, both among tribal and

non-tribal groups. Child marriage is practised widely across all groups and areas, peaking in North Chota Nagpur, Palamu and the Santhal region.

Regarding child health and nutrition indicators, persistent areas of deprivation persist, with full vaccination rates significantly lower across divisions and only slight differences between groups. Compared to the non-tribal population, the level of child stunting among tribal groups is very high in Chaibasa (52.5 %) and Palamu (50.7%). Further, results highlight that undernutrition among women is higher among tribal groups than non-tribals, while anaemia is alarmingly higher everywhere.

**Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Key Social Development Indicators (NFHS 2019-2021)**

| Indicator of Social Development                                                                             | Women with 10 or more years of schooling (%) | Women aged 20-24 years who were married before age 18 years (%) | Women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey (%) | Institutional births (%) | Children aged 12-23 months are fully vaccinated based on information from the vaccination card, only 12 (%) | Children under 5 years who are stunted (height-for-age) (%) | Women whose Body Mass Index (BMI) is below normal (BMI <18.5 kg/m <sup>2</sup> ) (%) | All women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic (%) |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Women with 10 or more years of schooling (%)                                                                | 1                                            |                                                                 |                                                                                           |                          |                                                                                                             |                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                |
| Women aged 20-24 years who were married before age 18 years (%)                                             | -0.64                                        | 1                                                               |                                                                                           |                          |                                                                                                             |                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                |
| Women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey (%)                   | -0.73                                        | 0.8                                                             | 1                                                                                         |                          |                                                                                                             |                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                |
| Institutional births (%)                                                                                    | 0.81                                         | -0.5                                                            | -0.6                                                                                      | 1                        |                                                                                                             |                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                |
| Children aged 12-23 months are fully vaccinated based on information from the vaccination card, only 12 (%) | 0.47                                         | -0.5                                                            | -0.7                                                                                      | 0.6                      | 1                                                                                                           |                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                |
| Children under 5 years who are stunted (height-for-age) (%)                                                 | -0.57                                        | 0.1                                                             | 0.17                                                                                      | -0.4                     | -0                                                                                                          | 1                                                           |                                                                                      |                                                |
| Women whose Body Mass Index (BMI) is below normal (BMI <18.5 kg/m <sup>2</sup> ) (%)                        | -0.65                                        | 0.6                                                             | 0.51                                                                                      | -0.6                     | -0                                                                                                          | 1                                                           | 1                                                                                    |                                                |
| All women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic (%)                                                              | -0.62                                        | 0.3                                                             | 0.39                                                                                      | -0.5                     | -0                                                                                                          | 0                                                           | 0.3                                                                                  | 1                                              |

## 7 Correlation Matrix

The results indicate a strong negative association between the percentage of women with 10 or more years of schooling and the proportion of women aged 20-24 who were married before age 18. Meaning 10 or more years of education would help to reduce cases of child marriage. Women with 10 or more years of education and women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey also show a strong negative association. Institutional births and 10 or more years of schooling are strongly positively associated.

**Table 4: Growth Rate in Social Development Indicators from NFHS 4 to NFHS 5**

| District        | Women with 10 or more years of schooling (%) | Women aged 20-24 years married before age 18 years (%) | Women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey (%) | Institutional births (%) | Children aged 12-23 months are fully vaccinated based on information from the vaccination card, only 12 (%) | Children under 5 years who are stunted (height-for-age) 18 (%) | Women whose Body Mass Index (BMI) is below normal (BMI <18.5 kg/m <sup>2</sup> ) 1 (%) | All women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic 2 (%) |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Garhwa          | 11.31                                        | -27.45                                                 | -10.16                                                                                    | 26.17                    | -18                                                                                                         | 2.12                                                           | -2.95                                                                                  | 2.56                                             |
| Chatra          | 5.62                                         | -17.36                                                 | -1.49                                                                                     | 15.87                    | -9.9                                                                                                        | -7.41                                                          | -5.11                                                                                  | -0.68                                            |
| Kodarma         | 3.02                                         | -7.88                                                  | -3.37                                                                                     | 12.78                    | -40                                                                                                         | -7.85                                                          | -2.6                                                                                   | 3.13                                             |
| Giridih         | 5.95                                         | -6.96                                                  | -3.85                                                                                     | 7.46                     | -31                                                                                                         | -13.89                                                         | -7.32                                                                                  | -3.78                                            |
| Deoghar         | -4.79                                        | -3.1                                                   | -2.31                                                                                     | 3.32                     | -21                                                                                                         | -3.12                                                          | -5.48                                                                                  | 14.29                                            |
| Godda           | 1                                            | -14.96                                                 | -5.59                                                                                     | 12.69                    | -15                                                                                                         | -14.62                                                         | -11.95                                                                                 | -5.3                                             |
| Sahibganj       | 2.85                                         | 2.26                                                   | 5.4                                                                                       | 16.54                    | -24                                                                                                         | -1.16                                                          | -2.92                                                                                  | 9.62                                             |
| Pakur           | 1.53                                         | 2.28                                                   | -2.8                                                                                      | 15.2                     | -37                                                                                                         | -0.58                                                          | -3.37                                                                                  | 8.64                                             |
| Dhanbad         | 6.06                                         | -1.59                                                  | 3.85                                                                                      | 13.35                    | -46                                                                                                         | -11.48                                                         | -4.86                                                                                  | 0.27                                             |
| Bokaro          | 9.02                                         | -4.38                                                  | -0.4                                                                                      | 18.4                     | -39                                                                                                         | -3.58                                                          | -4.09                                                                                  | -3.57                                            |
| Lohardaga       | 3.01                                         | -6.67                                                  | -4.09                                                                                     | 12.34                    | -26                                                                                                         | -0.96                                                          | -10.76                                                                                 | -4.97                                            |
| Purbi Singhbhum | 3.44                                         | -6.29                                                  | -5.38                                                                                     | 12.33                    | -43                                                                                                         | -3.46                                                          | -4.74                                                                                  | -2.22                                            |
| Palamu          | 9.1                                          | -4.49                                                  | -5.45                                                                                     | 20.19                    | -24                                                                                                         | -1.68                                                          | -3.82                                                                                  | 7.4                                              |
| Latehar         | 6.49                                         | -4.95                                                  | 0.28                                                                                      | 19.03                    | -30                                                                                                         | -4.08                                                          | 1.08                                                                                   | 9.65                                             |
| Hazaribagh      | 4.66                                         | -2.22                                                  | 1.87                                                                                      | 5.51                     | -52                                                                                                         | -11.47                                                         | -7.06                                                                                  | -4.72                                            |
| Ramgarh         | 5.37                                         | -2.61                                                  | -5.01                                                                                     | 7.49                     | -38                                                                                                         | -3.44                                                          | -1.5                                                                                   | -5.3                                             |
| Dumka           | 3.25                                         | -4.3                                                   | 0.07                                                                                      | 6                        | -42                                                                                                         | -5.62                                                          | -7.66                                                                                  | 9.71                                             |
| Jamtara         | 6.3                                          | 6.69                                                   | -2.6                                                                                      | 14.79                    | -36                                                                                                         | -2.21                                                          | -5.39                                                                                  | 13.11                                            |
| Ranchi          | 4.7                                          | -6.91                                                  | -3.49                                                                                     | 10.41                    | -46                                                                                                         | -12.33                                                         | -7.88                                                                                  | -5.61                                            |
| Khunti          | 2.09                                         | -6.07                                                  | -2.06                                                                                     | 6.05                     | -42                                                                                                         | -1.61                                                          | -4.9                                                                                   | 5.91                                             |
| Gumla           | 4.46                                         | -3.15                                                  | -2.79                                                                                     | 14.5                     | -41                                                                                                         | -5.59                                                          | -2.28                                                                                  | -10.16                                           |
| Simdega         | 4.83                                         | 1.17                                                   | -0.34                                                                                     | 26.56                    | -38                                                                                                         | 2.99                                                           | -4.57                                                                                  | -7.57                                            |

|                     |      |        |       |       |     |       |        |       |
|---------------------|------|--------|-------|-------|-----|-------|--------|-------|
| Pashchimi Singhbhum | 2.37 | 3.04   | -2.45 | 30.5  | -13 | 1.2   | 0.7    | -0.22 |
| Saraikela-Kharsawan | 3.11 | -13.98 | -4.49 | 17.79 | -39 | -5.09 | -14.47 | -8.62 |

Data Source: National Family Health Survey 2019-2021 and NFHS 4 round 2015-16

Among children aged 12-23 months, complete vaccination, as indicated solely by the vaccination card, is positively associated. Children under five years who are stunted have a moderately negative association with women with 10 or more years of schooling. The association between Women with 10 or more years of education and women with a body mass index (BMI) below normal ( $BMI < 18.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ) is highly negative. All women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic also have a negative association with women who have 10 or more years of schooling. Women aged 15-19 years who are already mothers at the time of the survey.

## 8 Growth Rate in Social Development Indicators

Table 4 shows that in the Garhwa district, women with 10 or more years of schooling reported the highest growth rate from NFHS 4 to NFHS 5, whereas in Deoghar, the growth rate was negative (-4.79%) over the same period. The proportion of women aged 20-24 who were married before age 18 has decreased in Garhwa district, but increased in Sahibganj district. The percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married before age 18 has declined significantly in the Garhwa district, whereas it has increased by 6.69 per cent in the Jamtara district. The percentage of women aged 15-19 years who were already mothers or pregnant at the time of the survey decreased in Garhwa district during this period, whereas it increased in Sahibganj district. Growth in institutional delivery has been reported to be highest in the West Singhbhum district, whereas the least growth has been reported in Deoghar. Children aged 12-23 months are fully vaccinated, as indicated on their vaccination card. Only 12% has increased in Hazaribagh district, while the least growth has been reported in Chatra district. Children under 5 years who are stunted (height-for-age)<sup>18</sup> (%) have increased in Simdega district, while the highest percentage of decrement has been reported in Godda. The proportion of women with a Body Mass Index (BMI) below the reference range ( $BMI < 18.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$ ) has increased in the Latehar district. It has increased significantly in

Saraikela-Kharsawan. The proportion of women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic (22%) has increased in Deoghar. It has declined markedly in the Gumla district.

## 9 Discussion

The National Family Health Survey 2019-21 reveals that Jharkhand's social development is the least developed relative to the national average. Not only state-level but also within-state results showed divisional variations. The regional disparity is closely linked with economic vulnerabilities and social backwardness. The gaps are most visible in women's education across regions and tribal groups. Tribal women in Jharkhand are in a most disadvantaged position, shaped by not only economic conditions but also overall community status, which is clearly shown in other development and health indicators of themselves and their children.

For instance, a household's poor economic status, educational level, or social backwardness can lead to child marriage in North Chota Nagpur, Palamu, and Santhal divisions, suggesting deep-rooted social norms that cut across communities. Regarding maternal health service utilisation, Jharkhand is far from achieving 100 per cent institutional births. Consistent with other studies, the present Study also found that socio-economically backward people, especially tribal women and children, experienced significant health penalties and chronic deprivation in terms of nutrition. Further, the present Study found that child stunting is very high among tribal children in Chaibasa and Palamu, which is directly linked with poor economic conditions and low education of mothers. Although all vaccinations in Jharkhand are much lower among tribal children than non-tribal children, reflecting not only poor economic conditions, low female literacy and low awareness about immunisation, but also accessibility and structural barriers. Similarly, consistent with earlier studies, the present Study also found that women's nutritional status, particularly undernutrition, is primarily correlated with family economic condition and level of education.

Finally, the correlation results highlight that women with 10 years or more of schooling are highly associated with lower child marriage and higher institutional birth, and it is negatively associated with undernutrition, anaemia or stunting among women and children.



## 10 Conclusion

There is a regional disparity in social development in Jharkhand. The Santhal Pargana region lags across all forms of development, whereas South Chota Nagpur performs better than the other five divisions of the state. District-wise performance also indicates that the Shibganj, Jamtara, and Pakur districts are performing poorly. Similar patterns are observed among Scheduled Tribes. They are behind in the Santhal Division and ahead in South Chota Nagpur. There is a need to address district- and region-level social development problems across indicators. The results indicate regional disparities across the state's divisions. For instance, districts in South Chota Nagpur perform well, whereas most districts in Santhal Pargana are part of the state's less developed region. The percentage of women with 10 or more years of schooling is lowest in Pakur district and highest in Ranchi. The rate of women aged 20-24 years who were married before age 18 is highest in Jamtara district (Santhal Pargana) and lowest in Simdega. The percentage of women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic<sup>22</sup> is highest in Pakur district (Santhal Pargana) and lowest in Chatra district. Institutional delivery is lowest in Dumka (Santhal Pargana). The results show that, among the state's five divisions, Santhal Pargana lags in all social development indicators.

The findings of this Study not only underscore the existing disparities but also illuminate the potential for significant improvement in Santhal Pargana. This potential for growth serves as a beacon of hope, inspiring optimism for policy formulation and providing a crucial benchmark for monitoring demographic and health-related Sustainable Development Indicators in Jharkhand with a regional perspective.

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