Chapter- Five:

The Individual Case Study of the Birhor tribe of Jharkhand (ICS-1):

5.1 About the Birhor tribe:

The word Birhor means “forest-dweller” and as the name suggests this tribe is a foraging, hunting and gathering community who prefer to live in forests. They are primarily a semi-nomadic community whose most natural setup is in the forests. Birhor men and women are excellently skilled hunters specializing particularly in hunting monkeys, rabbits and small birds called Titars. Birhors’ methods of hunting are markedly different compared to neighboring tribal communities. They rely on nets and snares, their weapons are axes, bows and arrows. Axes have always been used by Birhors as the preferred method of dispatching larger animals – bears, tigers, boar, and deer – that get caught in their nets. They consider hunting to be sacred and not merely a means of getting food. It is therefore not surprising that Birhors not only worship their axes, bows and arrows but also each hunted animal. They speak the languages of the wild as well. They are well versed with the knowledge and the methods to exist in the forests successfully. The proof of this can be observed in their existence in as many as 120 villages within the Palamu Tiger Reserve in north Jharkhand which has the highest population of Asiatic tigers where hardly any casualties have been reported on either side - tribals or tigers. The Birhors hunt only for food and they believe in maintaining the nature and character of the forest habitat they live in.

The Birhors are one of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs) of the state of Jharkhand found in the districts of Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Lohardaga, Koderma, Palamu, Dhanbad, Singhbum, Garhwa, Gumla and Giridih. They claim to have descended from the Sun whom they worship as Singbonga (Sun god) however Anthropologically they belong to the Proto-Austroloid stock and they speak the Birhori which linguistically belongs to the Austro-Asiatic (Mundari group) however they have a positive attitude towards other languages of the region (particularly Hindi) which they are not averse to adopt as required. They are of short stature, have a long head, wavy-curly black hair, a
Photograph 5.1- Depicting Birhor Features (Researcher with a Birhor Woman)

Photograph 5.2- A resettled Birhor Tanda
broad nose and deep dark brown color skin (see photograph- 5.1 on page 2). Ethnologically they are akin to the Santhals, Mundas and the Hos.

Besides hunting Birhors are experts in gathering honey and making ropes from a particular species of vine. They sell these products in the weekly markets to generate some money to buy other necessities particularly rice.

Birhors live in small groups or clusters in temporary settlements or bands called the Tanda. Usually a *tanda* consists of atleast half-a-dozen conical shaped huts called Kumba, made out of leaves and branches but such huts are now seen only in dense forests because the huts have been replaced by brick structures provided by the state government while resettling them out of their forests (see photograph- 5.2 on page 2). Their household possessions traditionally include earthen utensils, digging, hunting and trapping implements, rope making implements and baskets etc. however metal ware of aluminum and steel have now replaced the earthen utensils.

Each Birhor Tanda has a headman known as the Naiyya. The Naiyya used to be the social, political, and religious head of the Tanda. The Naiyya usually has an assistant called Kotwar or Diguar whose main work is to inform people about the day and time of the Panchayat which all heads of families in the Tanda take part in. The tanda often has a witch doctor called the Maiti who performs rituals for appeasing the spirits and the ancestors to ward-off any evil. The Tanda Panchayat looks after the customary laws on cases related to rape, adultery, divorce, cruel behavior, etc. With the establishment and interference from the modern Gram Panchayat, the police, the courts, and the latest entrant- the church, the Birhor tanda panchayat has lost its importance and relevance altogether in recent times.

Birhors follow the rules of tribal and clan endogamy i.e. a Birhor boy is supposed to marry a Birhor girl but belonging to a different Birhor clan. A tanda may have families belonging to different clans however the rule of tanda exogamy is observed i.e. a boy from a tanda is not eligible to marry a girl from the same tanda even if she belongs to a different clan. The practice of bride-price is followed in marriage. The previously negotiated bride-price is paid by the boy’s family to the girl’s family during marriage.
The family is the smallest unit of the Birhor society however they are also identified by their totemic clans named after plants, animals, birds and rivers etc. The traditional inheritance follows the patriarchal hierarchy. There are two types of Birhors namely the Uthain Birhors who are nomads depending purely on foraging, hunting and gathering for their subsistence and the Janghi Birhors who are semi nomadic practicing shifting agriculture along with hunting and foraging. With the ban on shifting cultivation by the government the Janghis have been forced to adopt the Uthain way of life.

Birhors follow a magico-religious belief system worshipping the Creator (luminous as the sun) and his wife (beautiful, comforting and mother-like as the moon) as their main deities called the Sing Bonga and Chandu Bonga respectively.

Next in the hierarchy of reverence are the ancestral spirits called the Hapram. Their socio-religious systems and beliefs are largely influenced by the Hindu culture and customs. Their dressing is also similar to the contemporary Hindu way.

5.2 Field visits to Birhor villages

Numerous field visits were made to Birhor villages of Koderma and Hazaribagh between 2011 and 2014 to collect data through Observation and Informal interviews for the study. Twenty-one Birhor tandas visited are listed in table 5.1 below, whereas the names of hundred interviewed Birhor tribals are listed in Appendix-2A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gajhandi</th>
<th>Jharnakund</th>
<th>Lokai</th>
<th>Phulwaria</th>
<th>Chitarpur</th>
<th>Nalva</th>
<th>Nawadih</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inderva</td>
<td>Mariampur</td>
<td>Bariardih</td>
<td>Madwatand</td>
<td>Vanpok</td>
<td>Bendi</td>
<td>Jarga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theswa</td>
<td>Gariadeeh</td>
<td>Khawasdh</td>
<td>Masaundha</td>
<td>Dudhimati</td>
<td>Teliamaran</td>
<td>Gajhad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Birhors are shy and apprehensive. They usually refuse to come out from the forests where they spend their day-time hunting and foraging unless they are promised and given some inducements. The researcher distributed blankets to motivate them to participate in the informal interviews and discussions see photograph– 5.3.
Photograph 5.3- The Researcher distributing blankets to the Birhors

Photograph 5.4- Depicting impoverished condition of Birhors
5.3 Step-1 of the Algorithm-for ICS of Birhors

Determination of the presence / absence of Indigenous leadership (IL) in the Birhor tribe

5.3.1 Observations on status of indigenous leadership in Birhors:

During the various visits made to the Birhor villages it was observed that there was no evidence of any Birhor indigenous leadership (IL). The Birhor tandas did have a Naiyya who is their traditional priest cum headman but the Naiyya was found to be ignorant, self-centered and completely oblivious of the needs, challenges and requirements of the community. The only knowledge the Naiyya possessed was regarding the practice of witchcraft or worship of the ancestral spirits-Hapr-am- for curing the ailments and warding-off evil. At best he would lead the tanda into hunting and sharing the spoils. He would be the one to facilitate the negotiations for the bride price for fixing marriages for which he would get a share too. Whatever authority the Naiyya enjoys is limited to the tanda he belongs-to and when it came to taking up any cause on behalf of the tanda, he would either evade the situation or let the individual or the family concerned, fend for themselves. Gradually the Birhors have lost much respect for their traditional leadership except for their traditional, religious or customary requirements mainly during the festivals, spiritual practices, rituals and the marriages. Some Birhors have converted to Christianity and they prefer to follow the church rather than the Naiyya. The authority of the Naiyya in dispute-resolution and socio-economic and political matters has also been greatly compromised in view of the influence and interference by the erstwhile gram-panchayat, the police as well as by the increasing influence of the church.

The helpless Naiyya alone cannot be blamed for the absence of an effective leadership role on his part. The institution of the Naiyya enjoys no formal authority or recognition from the state hence his voice and his role remain inconsequential in protecting his people from the harassment and exploitation meted out to them from all quarters. The Naiyya’s leadership role does not get any support from the social environment rather it is discouraged, as a result of which the Naiyya’s leadership role is dying or already dead within the tribe. The most critical factors which have led to the loss of the institution of indigenous leadership in the Birhors are as follows:-
a) The Birhors have been largely uprooted from their forest habitat and resettled in unfamiliar locations while their shifting agricultural practice has been banned by the government thereby making them economically weak and vulnerable to all forms of exploitation. They are harassed by the policemen, the forest officials and other government officials as well as by the wily contractors and petty traders who exploit the Birhors to the hilt in multiple ways but the Naiyya remains either helpless or he becomes an accomplice in the crime for petty gains.

b) Being very few in numbers approximately mere ten thousands in all and that too spread in groups of twenty to thirty over large tracts, the Birhor community has no political significance in a democracy that goes merely by numbers. It is thus not surprising that the Birhors have no political representation at any level or in any socio-political welfare body where they can raise their concerns and participate in the decision making process related to their own welfare.

c) The Birhor community suffers complete social exclusion, even by the scheduled castes who themselves are at the bottom of the majority Hindu social order and who themselves suffer exclusion of various kinds. Having lived and led such a life of exclusion and disdain for many years Birhors have lost their sense of self respect and dignity which has crystallized as an acceptance of their subjugation to almost every other social group. This further diminishes any trace of self-confidence thereby adversely affecting the development, growth and sustenance of any form of indigenous leadership within the Birhor community.

d) The lack of any formal education has also been instrumental in the overall backwardness of the community and their total despondency. They have excellent knowledge of the forests, animals and plants particularly scarce herbs of medicinal value but they do not have the knowledge of the modern ways and crafts. This lack of knowledge of the modern socio-political structures and systems also comes in the way of the development and nurturing of an effective indigenous leadership in the community.

As per the observations during the interactions with the Birhors the criteria questions (a) to (g) of step-1 of the algorithm, can be answered as follows:-
Answer to question (a)-Almost all Birhors recognize the Naiyya as their tanda’s leader;

Answer to question (b)-Except for matters related to marriage, festivities and spiritual practices the Naiyya is not considered relevant;

Answer to question (c)-The Naiyya’s advice is not followed in all cases by the community;

Answer to question (d)-The Naiyya is not always available for guidance;

Answer to question (e)-The Naiyya is selected by the tribe by following the existing community rules and rituals.

Answer to question (f)-The Naiyya is not especially concerned for the welfare of the community. He is usually only as much concerned as any other member of the Birhor community.

Answer to question (g)-The Naiyya limits himself to playing his role as stated in answer to question (b) and does not prefer or wish to change the status quo within the Birhor community.

5.3.2 Documentary Evidence on status of indigenous leadership in Birhors:

Not much documentary evidence is available on the assessment of the quality and effectiveness of indigenous leadership within the Birhors particularly in the context of development except for the description of the traditional roles of the Naiyya, the Kotwar and the Maiti. There are a few references to the political irrelevance of the Birhors in the modern socio-political context and their inability to stand up against harassment and exploitation or to assert themselves against social exclusion, territorial alienation and resettlement etc..

(A)- In the most detailed account of the Birhors till date, Raibahadur Sarat Chandra Roy in his 1925 book named “The Birhors” has stated (on page 63)-

“Although he (the Naiyya) is regarded as the malik or lord of the settlement, his position is only that of a chief among equals. On the death of a Naiyya, the will of the spirits as to
his successor is known through the medium of a ghost-doctor or Maiti---------The Maiti frantically swings his head from side to side and works himself up into a state of ecstasy, and in that state of obsession reveals the will of the spirits. The spirits, however, appear invariably to prefer a son of the late Naiyya, so that the post of the Naiyya in every Birhor tanda is practically hereditary.”

Roy states further (on page 88)-

“The Birhors have no tribal organization in the sense of an association of the different clans of the entire tribe, of which every member or family is regarded as a unit. Even each separate clan making up the tribe can hardly be said to have attained any consolidation or to maintain a feeling of solidarity. The scattered groups or families of any particular clan never come together as units in one clan organization.”

The findings of Roy indicate that historically the Birhor tradition did not have a centralized pan-Birhor community-level indigenous leadership structure instead the leadership used to be loosely dispersed at the band or the tanda level which was definitely appropriate and was better suited for the day to day needs of the tribe in the ancient times however it has worked against the interests of the Birhor community in the present era since the dispersed and localized leadership becomes weak and is unable to withstand the various socio-economic and political pressures which are destroying the very foundations of Birhors’ existence. The Naiyya of one tanda representing at the most 20 to 30 Birhors is definitely not positioned strongly enough to throw his weight around for protecting his community’s interests even though he may be the lord of his tanda. However, whatever be the strength of the Naiyya, he is selected and appointed by the traditional process.

(B)- In his 1995 article “The Birhor Universe” Ashim Kumar Adhikari has observed-

“There is no central authority to regulate band-formations among the Birhors. The band has no territorial affiliation, and its formation is not seasonal. It is a regular phenomenon and the Birhors always move and live in bands of several related households.”

Adhikari’s observations only confirm the observations of Roy and are consonant with the universal phenomena for band leadership found in foraging tribes.
(C)- Karl-Erik Sveiby in his April 2009 article “The First Leadership? Shared Leadership in Indigenous Hunter-Gatherer Bands” describes band leadership in the following words-

“Leadership in prehistoric and contemporary bands represent a ‘pure’ horizontal leadership-followership paradigm ‘untainted’ by the vertical paradigm---Band refers to a society of lowest known complexity. The band has no formal institutions, such as formal laws; it has no leaders with positional powers and no other regular economic specialization except by age and sex. It has no permanent single base of residence, but moves regularly around a territory with defined borders; its members live primarily from hunting and gathering. Social anthropologists regard hunter-gatherers in bands as the oldest of all organizations going as far back as humanity, several hundred thousand years.”

Sveiby’s description of the band as a form of indigenous community and the existence of the horizontal leadership in such bands fits the Birhors as much.

From the observations of Roy, Adhikari and Sverby it emerges that the type of indigenous leadership found in bands such as Birhors’ is at complete variance with today’s leadership notions and therefore it is less appreciated and is often taken as the absence of any formal or credible leadership within the indigenous community which makes such societies vulnerable to exploitation since their leadership is not accustomed and therefore ill-equipped for handling the dynamics of the modern socio-political environment.

(D)-Badshah Singh observes in his November 2014 article “Endangered: the Birhor tribe struggles to maintain traditional lifestyle in the face of government intervention” as-

“The Birhor do complain, however, of harassment from forest and government officials who they claim are trying to exploit them. The government has been intervening in Jharkhand’s forests for the purposes of starting mining and forestry projects in the name of development. From the perspective of a tribe who relies solely on the forest for survival, this “development” adversely affects the ecology of the region—the natural habitat of the tribe.”
It is evident from Badshah Singh’s observation that not only the Birhors suffer harassment and exploitation due to their inability to protect themselves, they also suffer problems of subsistence endangering their very survival as their opinion or consent is not taken into account by the authorities while they are forcibly dislocated from their forest habitats. It is an indication of the absence of any credible indigenous leadership in the Birhor community.

Another observation made by Badshah Singh has a reference to the social exclusion of the Birhors which is as follows:

“Discrimination by the rural population is also a concern for the Birhor. Not surprisingly, the tribe lives isolated in their open area, and have no communication with the rural people nearby--The Birhor tribe has difficulty communicating with those outside their tribe--.”

The social exclusion is both a cause and effect of the absence of an effective indigenous leadership within the Birhor community.

On the basis of the documentary evidences presented here-in-above the answers to the criteria questions (a) to (g) of step-1 of the algorithm are being presented here-in-below:

Answer to question (a)-The Naiyya is the traditional leader of a Birhor tanda;

Answer to question (b)- Birhors follow their Naiyya in all traditional matters but they remain unorganized centrally under one leader who could take up their cause and protect them from harassment from the police, forest and other government officials.

Answer to question (c)-The Naiyya is as helpless as any other tanda member and therefore on matters relating to the external transactions with authorities or other communities his advice has no relevance;

Answer to question (d)-The Naiyya is not always available for guidance in matters other than for traditional issues;

Answer to question (e)-The Naiyya is selected by the tribe by following the existing community rules and rituals.
Answer to question (f)-The Naiyya is unfit and incapable for finding solutions for the challenges faced by the community. He is usually only as much concerned as any other tanda member.

Answer to question (g)-The Naiyya limits himself to playing his role as stated in answer to question (b) and does not prefer to work for changing the status quo within the Birhors.

5.3.3 Informal Interviews taken of a sample of one hundred Birhors regarding the status of indigenous leadership in their community:

Responses of the Birhors to the criteria questions ‘1 to 7’ of algorithm’s step-1 are presented in the order of the questions in question-answer form:

Question-1: Who is your community’s leader?

Answer to question-1: Ninety-two (92) respondents identified their tanda’s Naiyya as their leader whereas eight (8) others identified the priest of a church as their leader. This answer is placed below in table 5.2:

Table-5.2 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-1 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents identifying Naiyya as leader</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents identifying the priest / pastor of a church</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-2: Do you follow your leader?

Answer to question-2: Ninety-two (92) of the respondents stated that they followed the Naiyya in matters related to their tradition however only thirty-two (32) stated that they followed their leader in matters not related to traditional practices. Table 5.3 presents this answer-
Table-5.3 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-2 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who follow the leader in their customary traditional matters</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who do not follow the leader in any matter</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-3: Do you seek the advice of your leader in all matters and follow the same?

Answers to question-3: 92 respondents replied that they sought and followed the Naiyya only for traditional issues but did not approach him in other matters. The answers to this question are depicted in table 5.4 given below:

Table-5.4 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-3 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who follow the leader only for traditional issues</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who do not follow the leader in any matter</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-4: Is your leader always available and prepared to guide you in all matters?

Answers to Question-4: Sixty three (63) respondents felt that the Naiyya was not keen or responsive to take up their non-traditional causes with the forest and other government officials when they harass the community members. Seventeen (17) of the respondents felt that the Naiyya was not capable to help them against exploitation or harassment and in fact he himself was a victim in many cases. Rest of the twenty (20) respondents stated that their Naiyya was available and helpful in all matters. The answers to this question are presented in table 5.5 given below:
Table 5.5 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-4 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who feel their Naiyya is unresponsive for non-traditional issues</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who felt that their Naiyya incapable of protecting them from harassment</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who felt that the Naiyya was supportive and helpful in all matters</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-5: How is your leader selected or appointed?

Answers to question-5: Ninety-two (92) of the respondents were in agreement that the Naiyya was duly selected as per their age-old custom and instituted through the appropriate rituals. Those converted to Christianity however did not comment on this. Table 5.6 given below reflects the pattern of the answers to this question.

Table 5.6 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-5 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who say their Naiyya is selected as per tradition</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who did not comment on this question</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-6: Do you feel your leader is concerned about important matters other than the traditional issues which affect you and your community?

Answers to question-6: Seventy-six (76) respondents stated that the Naiyya was concerned about non-traditional issues like any other member of the community. The remaining twenty-four (24) felt that he did not bother for issues other than the traditional ones. The answers to this question have been presented in table-5.7 given below.
Table-5.7 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-6 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who feel the Naiyya is concerned for non-traditional issues affecting them</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents feel the Naiyya is unconcerned for non-traditional issues affecting them</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question-7: Is your leader prepared to take responsibility for initiating social reforms to meet the exigencies of the changing environment and to remove or modify obsolete or irrelevant existing social norms?

Answers to question-7: Ninety-two (92) respondents stated that the Naiyya did not feel the necessity of any change in the status quo with respect to their tradition and therefore did not initiate any social reforms. Answers to this question are given below in table 5.8.

Table-5.8 Responses of the sample of hundred Birhors to Question-7 of Algorithm Step-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who felt that their Naiyya was disinterested in social reforms</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents who had no comments on this question</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.4 Consolidation of the data collected in sections 5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 and derivation there-from, of the final answer to criteria questions of algorithm step-1:

Data collected to determine the presence or absence of the indigenous leadership in the Birhor tribe by Observation (in section 5.3.1), through Documentary-evidence (in section 5.3.2) and by Informal Interviews (in section 5.3.3) is being consolidated in this section in order of the algorithm-step-1 criteria questions to arrive at the final answer after the corroboration of the consolidated data. The consolidated statement reflecting answers from the three sources to the criteria-questions and the final answer derived as per step-1 criteria is presented in table-5.9 given below:
Table 5.9 Derivation of final answers to Algorithm Step-1 criteria questions for ICS of Birhors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s. no.</th>
<th>Criteria questions</th>
<th>col. 3</th>
<th>col. 4</th>
<th>col. 5</th>
<th>col. 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do the majority of respondents recognize someone as their leader?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Does the majority follow the leader?</td>
<td>Selectively</td>
<td>selectively</td>
<td>selectively</td>
<td>Selectively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Is the leader’s advice always followed?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Is the leader’s guidance always available?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Is the leader selected as per tradition?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Is the leader concerned for tribe’s issues?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Is the leader ready for social reforms?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:- The language of criteria questions is modified without changing intent or content to facilitate tabulation.

Table 5.9 shows that the data collected from the three sources are in complete agreement thereby making the derived final answers the final answers truly valid and reliable.

5.3.5 Analysis of the findings derived in section 5.3.4:

Final answers from table 5.9 indicate a positive response for all but three criteria questions i.e. for questions 2, 3 and 7. The algorithm’s step-1 sets the criteria for determination of presence / absence of indigenous leadership in a tribal society as under:-

If the final answers to all the above questions (a) to (g) are in the affirmative, it shall be presumed for the purpose of this study that the concerned tribe has an Indigenous Leader.

All the answers to criteria questions (derived in table 5.9) have not been found to be Affirmative hence as per the criteria indigenous leadership does not exist in the Birhor tribe of Jharkhand.
5.4 **Step-2 of the Algorithm for ICS of Birhors**

Determination of the Current Status of Development of the Birhor tribe:

The nine constituents of tribal development brought out in section 2.7 of the Literature Review (chapter-2) need to be individually evaluated by the three-fold method of Observation analysis, Documentary evidence analysis and analysis of responses to Informal Interviews for ascertaining the development status (whether developed or under-developed) of the Birhor community as per the algorithm’s step-2 criteria.

5.4.1 **Observation on the status of development in the Birhor community**:

The observations made during the various visits to the Birhor tandas of Koderma and Hazaribagh generally indicate that the Birhor community has been left in the lurch and they have neither moved forward nor they are in their original mould. In fact it can be said that they are stuck in the no-man’s land. They have been uprooted from their natural habitats; they have lost their means of subsistence; they are marginalized and socially excluded; they live in unhygienic conditions suffering poor health and malnourishment; they are extremely poor; they are uneducated and completely unaware of the ways of the modern world; they are harassed and exploited; they are incapable of reforming themselves as a community and they have lost all sense of self-dignity. The Birhors have become vulnerable to all kinds of pressures right from pressure to convert to other religions to joining the rebel ranks of the anti-establishment forces like the Naxals or the Maoists. In fact the whole Birhor community has suffered the disastrous consequences of the so called development process being pursued by the Corporates, the Business houses and the government. They are caught in the cross-fire of the bloody conflict between the Naxalites or the Maoists and the police and other security forces.

5.4.1(a) It was observed that nearly all the Birhor tandas which were visited were in reality resettlement colonies of the Birhors dislodged from their forest habitats by the forest and other government officials in the name of wild-life and forest protection or to make way for mining, industrial or infrastructure projects-all in the name of development. In one stroke the life of Birhors was completely devastated. They not only were removed without their consent from their only means of subsistence but were
reduced to penury in unfamiliar surroundings. Birhors way of life is rooted in the forests - the life-line for their entire existence - and when removed from their natural habitat where they had lived-in for hundreds of years, not only their very existence as a community but also their culture and tradition were threatened and challenged. Therefore the very first indicator of development for tribal communities “Freedom to exist in and to use their ancestral habitat and forests” has been undone for the Birhors.

5.4.1(b) The dispossession of the natural, ancestral and traditional habitat of the Birhors has led to the disruption of their lives. They are socially excluded by the communities living around their new settlements. There is hardly any communication between the Birhors and the outside world as they live in complete isolation. Other communities who live in their neighborhood despise and look down upon them and their way of life. The Birhors are unwelcome neighbors for the majority of the people. The Birhors therefore suffer the worst kind of social exclusion which disables them in all possible ways. The second development indicator for tribal communities- “Freedom from social exclusion” is entirely absent in their case.

5.4.1(c) Another debilitating fall out of the dislodging of the Birhors from their forest habitats has been their impoverishment (refer photograph – 5.4 on page 5) depicts the impoverished condition of Birhors). Semi-nomadic in nature, used to hunting and gathering in one part of the forest till their needs were met and moving to another section of the forest as the availability of resources got exhausted in one place, the Birhor community maintained a sufficient-enough subsistence level and was able to generate enough surplus for bartering with the outside world to beget their other necessities. The raw material for some of the goods that they produced and bartered or sold was available only in the forests they inhabited. They were not only self sufficient economically but were contented in their lives. Thus the forests were their main support base and source for subsistence however now, having been pushed out of the forests their main source of subsistence has been denied to them and with no other means to fall back upon they have been relegated to the state of extreme poverty. The uprooted Birhors walk miles to go back to their forests on a daily basis even today to be able to hunt and gather whatever little they can. Another factor that has contributed to their misery is the rapid
deforestation by the timber mafia with the connivance of forest officials as also by the
government to provide land to the mining and infrastructure projects in the name of
development leading to the shrinking of the forest cover thereby reducing the resource
base for the Birhors to forage. The impoverishment of the Birhors is so extreme that they
are reduced to the level of beggars in their own backyard where they lived like the lords
of the forests. The third development indicator of development within the tribal
communities “Alleviation of poverty” is completely missing in the case of the Birhor
community.

5.4.1(d) Their loss of habitat, their social exclusion and their penury are not the only
impediments to the Birhors’ development. Their loss of habitat has also pushed them into
a state of extremely unhygienic and unhealthy existence. The forest was not only their
provider for subsistence but it also provided them with a clean, serene and healthy
environment which was free of disease and pollution. The forest provided them regularly
with supply of fresh food, air and water as well as with rare medicinal herbs for curing
any sickness or injury. Moreover existence in the challenging environs of the forest made
them physically fit, strong and resilient to survive in the most difficult and challenging
conditions which often tested the limits of their physical endurance. In other words the
community enjoyed a healthy and hygienic existence when they lived in the care and
comfort of their forest habitat. Now, ever since they have been moved out of their forest
habitat, they have been resettled in open areas on the outskirts of the towns often polluted
by the mining activities carried out in close vicinity with no drainage system or facilities
for fresh drinking water in poorly constructed brick structures many of which are
incomplete and are already broken or falling (see photograph 5.5 on page 22). There are
no medical facilities in or around their tandas so that they have to go to other far-off
locations for any medical help which is only meager, insufficient and not readily
provided to them. Their witch doctor has been rendered helpless, ineffective and
redundant due to the non-availability of the medicinal herbs as well as due to his
unpreparedness to handle forms of diseases not encountered by the tribals earlier and
hitherto unknown to him. Added to this is the fact that the tribals are undernourished and
even malnourished due to poverty and lack of proper food forcing them to exist on
whatever they can find. To sum up it can only be said that the Birhors are compelled to
live in the most deplorable conditions that human beings can exist. This also highlights that the fourth condition or constituent for development—“Ability to stay healthy and live in hygienic conditions”—too remains unfulfilled in the case of the Birhor community.

5.4.1(e) Another tragedy that has befallen on the Birhors has far reaching consequences for their future existence as Birhors and that is the aspect of education. Since they have been moved out of their natural habitat the Birhors have little opportunity to pass on their ancestral knowledge of their way of life, their culture, their tradition, their environment, their hunting skills, their knowledge of herbs, plants and animals and their understanding of the cycles of nature to their next generation. Even if they do pass on their folklore, their newer generation is unable to connect most of what they hear with actual reality and experience which they would have got during their hunting expeditions with their elders. On the other hand the government has opened many schools close to their resettled tandas where an attempt is made to impart modern education to the Birhor children which is completely alien to them and to which they are unable to connect at all. As a result the upcoming generations of Birhors are a generation of cultural blanks. They neither have an appropriate rooting in their ancient ancestral tradition and culture nor do they belong to the modern world; in the process losing on both the counts. At the school their children suffer social exclusion and learn that they are backward and unworthy of any association. The Birhor children mostly therefore go to school only for partaking the free mid-day meals and run away to their homes thereafter (see photograph-5.6 on page 22) depicts Birhor children gathered for partaking the mid-day meal outside an Anganwadi). These schools are manned by unworthy teachers who are neither qualified nor compassionate to promote or provide any form of learning to the children. Thus the fifth indicator of development for tribal communities—“Freedom to pursue traditional education with appropriate modern education” too is not getting fulfilled for the Birhor community.

5.4.1(f) The Birhors have become weak in all respects as is obvious from the foregoing observations and this has led to their complete marginalization. The Birhor tanda usually has about twenty to thirty adults and therefore they do not matter to the political process. They are a widely dispersed community which further adds to their socio-political insignificance. It leaves them unrepresented at any level in any socio-political forum and
therefore they have no say in matters of importance to their community. They remain isolated and marginalized thereby becoming vulnerable to all types of harassment and exploitation. This marginalization also exposes them to pressures of assimilation from the other communities to convert to other religions or to join the ranks of anti-establishment forces such as the Maoists who are engaged in bloody conflicts with the police and other security agencies. In both cases they are the losers. The process of assimilation weans them away from their own tradition and culture. The process of acculturation leads to loss of their identity as Birhors and ultimately to the loss of their sense of belonging to their own community which ends in complete psychological chaos making them unable to stand up for themselves. Their marginalization and assimilation are also offshoots of their removal from their natural habitat. Thus the sixth indicator of development—“Freedom from pressures of assimilation”—too remains unfulfilled in the case of the Birhors.

5.4.1(g) That the Birhors are thoroughly deprived, marginalized and traumatized who have lost any sense of self belief and ability to live and lead a dignified life is amply proven. Moreover they have yet to settle down in their new habitats after being pushed out of their forests. Moreover they do not have an in-built system of a collective pan-Birhor leadership which can ponder over the challenges being faced by them and try to reform the age-old beliefs and traditions to prepare the community to face the challenges so as to transform itself into a vibrant and self-sufficient and self-respecting society. There is a great danger of extinction of the Birhors or else of their total assimilation if they do not reform themselves soon enough. At present they are weak, dispersed and disorganized for initiating any social reforms. Thus the seventh indicator of development for tribal communities—“Freedom to carry out social reforms” remains unfulfilled.

5.4.1(h) The Birhors have lived a life of economic self sufficiency till they were moved out of their natural habitat. Their economy has changed color from self sufficiency to a helpless dependence on meager subsidies from the government which is usually siphoned off by unscrupulous officials atleast partially if not entirely. The Birhors are illiterate and unaware of their rights and even if they approach or demand what is due to them, they are just turned away. Banks do not lend money to Birhors hence they are unable to enhance their forest produce based processing capacity.
Photograph 5.5- Depicts poorly constructed and falling dwellings of Birhors

Photograph 5.6- Depicts Birhor children gathered at an Anganwadi for a mid-day meal
They have been encouraged to take up agriculture but that has not worked for want of knowledge, skill, proper guidance and supply of proper and regular inputs; moreover agriculture has never been their mainstay as their culture and way of life are not in line with an agriculture based society. It has been an unrealistic approach doomed for failure from its very conception. The government provides them with a fixed quantity of rice per family each month but they prefer to sell the rice to the wily traders for a pittance to get some money to meet exigencies. The whole scenario is debilitating and disheartening. Is it not a subtle form of economic exploitation where the exploiter is the State itself? There is a deeper conspiracy of the business houses, the unscrupulous politicians and corrupt officials to push them out of the forests to make way for mining and other projects, for the business houses to make money from the mineral and other resources which traditionally belonged to the Birhors. The Birhors do not get any share from the huge profits made by the state or the businesses. Thus the eighth indicator of development of tribal communities that is-“Freedom from economic exploitation” remains a challenge for the Birhors.

5.4.1(i) The Birhors are socially, politically and economically weak and therefore are unable to protect themselves from the onslaughts of modernization and globalization taking place at a relentless pace. In fact the most critical of the causes for their debilitation is the dispossession of their traditional habitat which is a direct consequence of the forces of modernization and globalization. It is to primarily facilitate and provide for the resources needed for the modern economic development process that the Birhors have been uprooted from their forests. They could not resist the process since they were weak, disorganized and unprepared for such a calamity. In other words they could not withstand the pressures of modernization and globalization. They became the proverbial sacrificial lambs for the process of modernization. Thus the ninth indicator of development of tribal societies-“Ability to survive the pressures of modernization and globalization” also proves to be a non-starter for the Birhor community.

Foregoing observations highlight that none of the nine development indicators are placed favorably for Birhors. The key factor for their misery is their alienation from their habitat.
5.4.2 Documentary Evidences on the status of development in the Birhor society:

The documentary evidence on the development status of the Birhor tribe is being presented individually for each of the nine development indicators with appropriate correlation with the observation made in section 5.4.1 here-in-before.

5.4.2(a) The first constituent for tribal development is "Freedom to exist in and to use their ancestral habitat and forests".

(A) In one of the most detailed accounts on displacement of tribals from their forest habitats and lands, Prof. B K Roy Burman (former Chairman, Study Group on Land Holding System of Tribals, Planning Commission, Government of India) states in his article “What has driven Tribals of central India to political extremism?” (Mainstream, vol. XLV11, no.44, Oct. 2009) -

“---the most important issue (is) the systematic dispossession of the tribal people from their land resources, which they have been holding from generations” and that “Displacement is the unwanted outcome of particular type of development”. He states further that “As against involuntary displacement, in many predominantly tribal areas the tribal people are deliberately dispossessed of their lands and resources thereon in a meticulously planned manner.” He says “Massive dispossessions of the tribal peoples from their life support resource base had taken place because of the government policy of treating tribal possessions beyond 10 per cent slope in the hills----- as encroachment.” And “No attempt has been made to obtain the consent of the population concerned” therefore he says “It is obvious that as a sequel to non-recognition of communal rights, the embedded rights of the tribal individuals also failed to be recognized. The operation for preparation of record of rights turned out to be operation denial of tribal rights in respect of their land resources.---On being questioned “Official sources---justify the government approach by telling-- that the real intention of the government in derecognizing the rights of the tribal people beyond 10 per cent slope was to discourage shifting cultivation” to prevent soil erosion whereas on enquiry it was revealed “that no scientific data had been collected- on the extent of soil erosion caused by shifting cultivation.” Thus “in the absence of a clearly formulated policy, dispossessio
tribal people from their life support resource base is going on” however “dispossession is currently taking place in other forms also, frequently under the cover of the economic development program” as well as by categorizing some tribes like the Birhors as primitive which “provides rationale for intervention in the affairs of the people thus categorized by--the state. As the German philosopher, Herder (1874), observed that by stigmatizing a people as primitive, invasion and conquest of lands across the oceans were legitimized.” Reporting about his visit to a Birhor hamlet Prof. Burman states “As a part of the Primitive Tribe Development Program, a good number of them (Birhors) were removed from their forest abodes and made to stay in small hamlets in the outskirts of settled agricultural villages. But while in the forest environment they harmoniously fitted into the rhythm of life—they tell the story of distant approximation, of condensed accommodation of homeless shelters. Primitive development planning of a modern state snatched away from the so-called primitive people their home and whatever had been given was a caricature of dignified living.”

The notes of Prof. Burman are sufficiently relevant to corroborate the observations made in the section 5.4.1(a) and to establish that the first indicator of tribal development is not fulfilled in the case of the Birhor community.

5.4.2 (b)The second development indicator for tribal communities is “Freedom from social exclusion”. The documentary references to this aspect are as follows:-

(A) “The British policy of segregation created a wide gap between the tribals and the rest of the Indian people” (Lahiri-Dutta, Kuntala 1997).

(B) “Discrimination by the rural population is also a concern for the Birhor. Not surprisingly, the tribe lives isolated in their open area, and have no communication with the rural people nearby”. (Singh, Badshah 2014).

(C) Indra Munshi (2012) states “This systematic alienation, however it is not a modern-day phenomenon”
“The Birhor are despised by the Hindu people because they eat the flesh of monkeys” and are also “looked down upon by the low-caste Hindu peasants who live around them. They accept their lower status and manage their neighbor’s impressions effectively.” (Adhikari, Ashim Kumar 1995).

Foregoing documentary evidence corroborates the observations made in section 5.4.1(b).

5.4.2(c) The third development indicator for tribal communities is “Alleviation of poverty”. The documentary evidences to the state of poverty in Birhors are as follows:-

(A) “Scheduled Tribes have been known for their high level of poverty and deprivation. When compared to the rest of India, poverty level seems to be higher in case of Jharkhand. Poverty is generally found to be higher in regions of scheduled tribe concentration” (Roy, Debjani 2012).

(B) For the Birhors “Priority----still happens to be to make both ends meet. They are poor with no permanent occupation (as) Agriculture is not rewarding” and with “the tribe members on the verge of extinction (they) have started working as daily wage laborers.” (Salman, Ravi 2004).

(C) “Numerous news reports from India focused on the extreme poverty of the Birhor, such as an analysis of the tragic deaths of the Birhor people in a remote village (due to starvation and), their precarious food situation; (due to) the lack of results from government programs—“, (The journal of Peaceful Societies- Alternatives to Violence and War 2008, Web).

(D) In the report of the Comprehensive Development Program for Birhors of Giridih district of the government of Jharkhand it has been stated

“Birhors are way behind in almost all indicators of development including education, poverty, nutrition, employment and health. They live according to their traditional primitive lifestyle and deprived of basic amenities hence, suffer from stark poverty, starvation, illiteracy and poor health. Due to lack of literacy and education, Birhors live in oblivion of their basic rights and unable to express their feeling before society”.

The above stated evidences corroborate the observations made in section 5.4.1(c).

5.1.4.2 (d) The fourth constituent of development for tribal communities is their “Ability to stay healthy and live in hygienic conditions.” Documentary evidences regarding the health and hygiene of Birhors are as follows:-

(A) “Health problem is one of the major risks among the Birhors. The risk is increasing day-by-day with extensive deforestation, frequent climatic calamities, change in traditional economy and other socio-economic factors” (Sinha, Ashish Kumar 2014).

(B) “Deforestation has a great effect on (the) nutritional status of Birhor community” (Das, Subal, Mileva Mahata and Kaushik Bose 2012). Photograph 5.7 shows the widespread deforestation in and around the Birhors’ habitat.

(C) “Recent study on the Birhors, observed that health and nutrition are major problems faced by the community. They drink water from the Darhi which is muddy, open and dirty. This causes a number of waterborne diseases.” (Salman Ravi 2004). Photograph-5.8 shows one such Darhi.
Photograph 5.8- Depicts a Darhi.

(D) “While about 4 lakh tribal families in the country have been covered under the Jan Shree (medical) insurance scheme, Asur, Kokha, Birhor and other tribes have not been able to avail themselves of its benefit. There is not a single mobile medical dispensary in any tribal cluster “ (Bannerji, Shoumoiit 2009).

(E) “Approaching the cluster of worn-out concrete houses, the structures appeared unstable, with vegetation growing on the surface. There is no sanitation, and the entire colony seemed disorganized. The quarters were unsanitary, so it is no surprise that the tribe chooses to build their traditional leaf and branch houses, right next to the government-issue housing.” (Singh, Badshah 2014).

(F) “The vital reasons of short life expectancy of Birhors’ are poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, absence of safe drinking water and sanitary living conditions, poor maternal and child health services and ineffective coverage of national health and nutritional services” (Newsjharkhand.com 2015).

Documentary evidences quoted above corroborate the observations of section 5.4.1(d).
5.1.4.2(e) The fifth indicator of the development of tribal communities is “Freedom to pursue traditional education with appropriate modern education”. The documentary evidences to the educational patterns in the Birhor community are presented as follows:

(A) “The standard of education of the Birhor is very low. Generally they are illiterate. At present we are seeing the ‘first generation learner’—they are reluctant to continue—their education as—parents do not wish to send them to school” (Ghosh, Aritra and Gargi Biswas 2012).

(B) “In Jharkhand there are 30 tribes. Of the 30 tribes, eight are under PTG (primitive tribal group)-Asur, Birhor etc. The literacy rate among PTG is just 16.87 percent against the state average of 54 percent.” (Nityanand Shukla 2008).

(C) In the report of the Comprehensive Development Program for Birhors of Giridih District of the government of Jharkhand it has been stated as follows:

“Birhors are way behind in almost all indicators of development including education, poverty, nutrition, employment and health. They live according to their traditional primitive lifestyle and deprived of basic amenities hence, suffer from stark poverty, starvation, illiteracy and poor health. Due to lack of literacy and education, Birhors live in oblivion of their basic rights and unable to express their feelings before society”.

(D) “It is interesting to note that the Birhors have the lowest percentage (0.47%) pursuing Intermediate or Higher Secondary education. This implies that there is a high dropout rate amongst the Birhors. The percentage of graduates amongst the Birhor is also the lowest only 0.19%. Hence it can be concluded that educational deprivation is the highest amongst the Birhors” (Roy, Debjani 2012).

(E) In the undated report on Birhors by Tribal India Group on their blog it has been stated: “The Birhor children are enrolled in the schools started for their education. But due to their wandering economy the children of the Uthalu Birhor do not get education. Many of them are not enrolled due to their wandering habit. The children of the Jaghi Birhors are enrolled in the school. They also go to attend the school. But incidence of
non-attendance and drop-outs appear due to their struggle for food----As a result they are still backward educationally---”.

(F) “The uniform structure and transaction of curriculum has put tribal children at a disadvantage. Apart from all this, (the) lack of awareness of the teachers about tribal culture and environment also force the tribal students to withdraw from education. All these issues are emerging in their primary and high school levels. These constraints force them to drop-out their education at very early levels and higher education will be only a dream for them” (Haseena, V.A 2014).

Foregoing evidences only partly corroborate observations made in section 5.4.1(e) since no reference is available to confirm observations on current status of traditional learning in Birhors.

5.1.4.2(f) The sixth indicator of tribal development is their “Freedom from pressures of assimilation”. Documentary evidences on this aspect are presented here-in-after:-

(A) “In India, the creation of linguistic states, disregarding the ethnic identity of the indigenous peoples, resulted in each state trying to impose its language and culture, directly or indirectly, on these peoples’----national integration essentially attempted to assimilate the adivasis. The plans were formulated by outsiders and the problems viewed from their perspective----this reflects a persisting colonial attitude----As development proceeds, the tribals tend to become assimilated into the mainstream----With the alienation of tribal land; the erosion of indigenous cultures has accelerated. Tribals have mostly been bypassed by modern society, and even where they are a part of it, they have achieved a position only on the very lowest stratum” (Lahiri-Dutta, Kuntala 1997).

(B) “The discourse of marginality forcefully articulates the history of the region as the one in which the indigenous inhabitants of Chhotanagpur (present day Jharkhand) were alienated from their lands and forests----and subjected to the whims of the state. In this context, the institutions of the courts and the police are seen as bolstering the interventions----predominantly” (Damodaran, Vinita 1997).
(C) “Despite--- special provisions, tribes are among the poorest and most marginalized sections of Indian society. The issues that the--(various)--Committees have dealt with, fall broadly into two categories development and protection. And yet, on both these issues, the outcome for tribal communities has been mixed. Through the last six decades, the State has emphasized development while doing little to enhance the protections provided in the Constitution through the everyday practice of statecraft. Rather, the protective measures have been violated by the very State which is supposed to ensure the enforcement of these protections. It is this which largely explains the marginal status of tribal communities. However, it was development (of a particular kind) that became the primary thrust of the State’s agenda, with minimal regard for protections and safeguards. What the State is actually pursuing in tribal areas is assimilation rather than integration, contrary to what is claimed. However, these provisions are precisely what are under threat of erosion through the process of cultural domination and more importantly, the prevailing development paradigm” (Report of the high level committee on Social, Economic, Health and Educational status of Tribal communities of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India 2014).

(D) “---it must be noted that the growing Christian influence and the activities of the missionaries did not result in the revival of tribal traditions, rather there occurred a distancing from tribal ways of life, which began to be seen as primitive. Many of the Christian (Birhor) tribals embraced the language of modernity with zeal” (Damodaran, Vinita 1997).

(E) “They accept their lower status and manage their neighbors’ impressions effectively, yet they adopt some of the Hindu ideas in order to keep relations stable” (The journal of Peaceful Societies- Alternatives to Violence and War 2008, Web).

Documentary evidences cited above corroborate the observations of section 5.4.1(f).

5.1.4.2(g) The seventh development indicator for tribal societies is their “Freedom to carry out social reforms”. There is no direct documentary evidence on this aspect of the
Birhors existence as no study has been carried out in this regard. Therefore the evidence has to be derived from generalized evidences covering all indigenous people as a whole.

(A)- During the changing times certain customs of Adivasis have become void and are proving to be against their interests. Adivasi traditions which were good have now become bad customs and are outdated. It is necessary to remove them otherwise they will be converted into Adivasi law and harm their interests, (anonymous, www.ambedkar.org, 2000).

(B)- The reforms to remove the irrelevant, redundant or even unnecessarily burdening customs and practices within the adivasi cultures is classified as the third type of social movement by Mahapatra (1972) who applies the typologies widely used for social movements to tribal movements: (1) reactionary; (2) conservative; (3) revisionary or revolutionary. The reactionary movement tries to launch a movement to bring back ‘the good old days’, whereas the conservative movement tries to maintain the status quo. The revisionary or revolutionary movements are those which are organized for ‘improvement’ or ‘purification’ of the cultural or social order by eliminating ‘evil’ or ‘low’ customs, beliefs or institutions.

(C)- The process of social change leading to reforms has been explained by Das, Madhushree (2013) in her article Pattern of social change and development among the tribal women in Assam, India in the following words- “But for a change to be termed development (Reform), it must occur continuously in a desirable and desired direction (Jena and Mahapatra, 2002). These desired goals (Reforms) are specified by the values and needs of the society concerned. And hence, development in comparison to change is more value loaded and ethical. While change results in modification or alteration or replacement of the old by new ones, development aims to achieve human well being and enhance the quality of life.”

(D)- Reasons as to why tribal communities need to carry out social reforms have been brought out by Alfred, Taiaiake in his 2009 book Peace, Power and Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto wherein he declares that traditionalism is not the same as it was two hundred years ago, when the tribals’ ancestral systems were functioning at their full
Collectively, the tribals have been weakened by (internal) colonization: their language, culture, understanding of history, sense of trust, their wholeness, their relationships, the power they possess as individuals and as family, their ability to work together, their unity that is the foundation of everything for them, their understanding of their relationship to nature and their communication with the spirit world have all been lost. Disconnection is the root of the problem. Colonization is a process of disconnecting them from their responsibilities to one another and their respect for one another.

A community which finds it difficult to make its two ends meet and lives on the brink of extinction can hardly apply itself to social reforms howsoever urgently and critically necessary. Moreover the declaration of a tribe as a PVTG-particularly vulnerable tribal group-(as done for the Birhor tribe) allows the state to interfere in their affairs and to impose reforms thereby diminishing any move by the tribe to carry out the social reforms independently as per their own understanding and agenda. Acculturation by conversions and assimilation weans away the converts from their own flock making the community further incapacitated to carry out reforms.

The foregoing citations though not specifically for the Birhors do corroborate the observations made in section 5.4.1(g)

5.4.2(h) The eighth indicator of tribal development is “Freedom from economic exploitation”. The documentary evidence in this regard are as follows:-

(A) “Because of the government and corporate interest in a massive mineral reserve beneath the forest, it seems clear why many might perceive the Birhor and other tribes as an obstacle” (Singh, Badshah 2014).

(B) “Deprived of their traditional livelihoods, an alarmingly large number of adivasis have been displaced to make way for development projects” (Munshi, Indra 2012).

(C) “Displacement is the unwanted outcome of particular type of development-----As against involuntary displacement, in many predominantly tribal areas, the tribal people
are deliberately dispossessed of their lands and resources thereon in a meticulously planned manner” (Burman, Prof. B.K.Roy 2009).

(D) “With regard to mineral resources, three States with substantial tribal populations – Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand - have considerable mineral reserves---70 per cent of India’s coal reserves, 80 per cent of its high-grade iron ore, 60 per cent of its bauxite and almost 100 per cent of its chromites reserves. Indeed, according to the Centre for Science and Environment, about half of the top mineral-producing districts are tribal districts – and these are also districts with forest cover of 28 per cent which is larger than the national average of 20.9 per cent-----much of this forest land has been diverted for mining purposes resulting in environmental degradation, loss of livelihood, and displacement of tribal communities--- Dams have been another source of displacement for tribes since Independence, with India being one of the largest dam-building nations in the world. It is estimated that dams are the biggest causes of displacement in the country” (Report of the high level committee on Social, Economic, Health and Educational status of Tribal communities of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India 2014).

(E) ”The government attempts to settle them into permanent agricultural villages. Despite decades of resettlement efforts they still abandon their settlements early in the morning to wander in what’s left of the forests, only to return mostly empty handed in the evenings” (The journal of Peaceful Societies- Alternatives to Violence and War 2008, Web).

The documentary evidences cited above corroborate the observations of section 5.4.1(h).

5.4.2(i) The ninth development indicator for tribal societies is “Ability to survive the pressures of modernization and globalization”. Documentary evidence in this regard are:

(A) “Globalization is not merely a question of marginalization for indigenous peoples it is a multi-pronged attack on the very foundation of their existence and livelihoods. New trade and investment agreements, have forced indigenous peoples to defend their homelands under an invasion of unprecedented rate and scale. The new economic regime has led to privatization and marketization of economy and thus it has been treated as powerful threat to the survival of tribal communities’ vast indigenous knowledge, rich
culture and traditions, and any hope of preserving the natural world, and a simpler, more holistic way of life for future generations---This process has had profound effects on less powerful cultures. Development planners (in India) seem uncomfortable with ethnic diversity because it challenges the homogenizing tendency of economists to reduce populations to quantifiable groups” (Pratheep, P.S. 2012).

(B) “A common feature---of the tribal people is their remoteness and marginal quality of territorial resources. In the past, exploitation of such poor regions was found both difficult and uneconomic. But, the recent rapid technological advancement and unrivalled economic and political strength of world capitalism, and the rising power of neo-colonialism through the G-8 directly and the IMF, WB, IBRD, etc. ---, have created favorable conditions for the evasion and extraction of natural resources from the ecologically fragile territories of tribal people. Thus, forced evictions of tribals to make way for mammoth capital-intensive development projects have become a distressing routine and ever-increasing phenomenon---- About 40 per cent of the tribals of central India (including Jharkhand) supplement their income by participating in this distorted and over exploitative capitalist sector. Many more are slowly crushed into oblivion in their homeland or in urban slums. This is nothing short of ethnocide. Their economic and cultural survival is at stake” (Fr. John Felix Raj. S.J. undated).

(C) “---the three primary reasons for the existence of the modern state in India have become the maintenance of national security, the implementation of development and the acquisition of and subsequent management of modern science and technology. Together, these functions have modernized and transformed the Indian economy and society. They have also facilitated the state’s securing control over natural and financial resources; consolidated the power of those directing and benefiting from the state apparatus; and callously destroyed indigenous cultures with their own ethnic science and technology, defining resistance to development as cultural lag or false consciousness” (Nandy 1984).

Documentary evidence cited above corroborates the observations of section 5.4.1(i).
5.4.3 **Informal Interviews regarding status of development in Birhors:**

Responses of hundred Birhors to algorithm step-2 criteria questions are given in table-5.10. Final responses given in Col.-6 are the responses given by more than fifty respondents. The scores of the responses to the questions split into (a) and (b) shall be combined and the average of the two parts shall be the final score for the response.

Table-5.10 Response of hundred Birhors during Interviews to questions of Algorithm Step-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s. no.</th>
<th>Criteria Questions</th>
<th>col-1</th>
<th>col-2</th>
<th>col-3</th>
<th>col-4</th>
<th>col-5</th>
<th>col-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Are you free to exist in your ancestral habitat?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Do you feel that you are socially excluded?</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Have you become poorer?</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(a)</td>
<td>Are you satisfied with your hygiene condition?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(b)</td>
<td>Are you and your family as healthy as earlier?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(a)</td>
<td>Do your children learn your tradition &amp; cultural?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(b)</td>
<td>Do your children go to school regularly?</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Have you been approached to change your religion?</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7(a)</td>
<td>Is there need for reform in your social practices?</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7(b)</td>
<td>If so then whether it can be done?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(a)</td>
<td>Have you experienced economic exploitation?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8(b)</td>
<td>Is that the main cause of your present misery?</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Are you incapable to cope with modernity?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* The language of criteria questions is modified without changing intent or content to facilitate tabulation.
5.4.4 Consolidated Statement of Data collected in sections 5.4.1, 5.4.2 and 5.4.3

The data collected for exploring the development status of Birhors through Observation, Documentary evidence and Informal Interviews have been consolidated in table 5.11 and the final answers have been derived there-from and stated in column 6. The answer appearing in atleast two sets of data is taken as the final answer for each criteria question.

Table-5.11 Derivation of final answers to Algorithm Step-2 criteria questions for ICS of Birhors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s. no.</th>
<th>Criteria questions</th>
<th>Data from 5.4.1</th>
<th>Data from 5.4.2</th>
<th>Data from 5.4.3</th>
<th>Final answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Are Birhor free to live in their ancestral habitat?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Is the Birhor community free of social exclusion?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Is there alleviation of poverty for Birhor?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Do Birhor have the ability to stay healthy?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Are Birhors able to pursue traditional with modern education?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Are Birhors free of assimilation pressures?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Are Birhor free to bring social reforms?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Are Birhor free of economic exploitation?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Can Birhor face modernity/globalization?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:- The language of criteria questions is modified without changing intent or content to facilitate tabulation.

It can be seen from the table 5.11 that the data collected from the three sources are in complete agreement therefore the information given as final responses in Col.-6 are truly valid and reliable. This information can now be used for any analysis, interpretation or for drawing any dependable inference.

5.4.5 Analysis of the findings from table 5.11:

The final result as per the consolidated statement in table 5.11 indicates a negative response in the final answers for all the nine criteria questions of the step-2 of the algorithm. The criteria set in step-2 for determining tribal development status (developed or under-developed) on the basis of the final answers obtained from the ICS is being reproduced here-in-below for perusal:-
The tribal community, in which two or more of the nine indicators of development (derived from the literature review in section 2.7 of chapter-two) shall score negatively, shall be labeled as “Under-developed” for the purpose of this study. Similarly a tribal community which scores favorably on eight or more of the nine development indicating factors shall be labeled as “Developed” for the purpose of this study. For any other score, the development status of the tribal community shall be labeled as Transitory.

In the ICS of the Birhor tribal society of Jharkhand, the final answers for all the nine development constituents has been found to be negative in Table-5.11 hence it is evident that the Birhor tribal community of Jharkhand is an Under-Developed tribe.

5.5 Step-3 of the Algorithm for ICS of Birhors

Selection of the next step of the algorithm to be followed in the ICS of Birhors

Algorithm’s step-3 sets the criteria for selecting the ICS step for exploring the possibility of correlation between the outcomes of the ICS processes of algorithm’s step-1 and 2. It has been established that IL is ‘absent’ in Birhor society and their development status is ‘under-developed’ thus as per algorithm’s step-3 the applicable process for investigating the possible correlation between the two findings shall be as per step-5 of the algorithm. The criteria statement to this effect from algorithm’s step-3 is reproduced below:

If as per step-1 process it is found that indigenous leadership is absent in a tribal community and simultaneously as per step-2 process that particular tribal community is found to be under-developed then follow Step-5 of this algorithm;

5.6 Step-5 of the Algorithm for ICS of Birhors

Determination of the correlation between the absence of Indigenous Leadership in the Birhor community and their state of Under-development

5.6.1 Observations for algorithm’s step-5 for the ICS of Birhors:

Observation with respect to the correlation between the absence of indigenous leadership and the under-developed status in Birhors is being narrated with respect to each of the nine development constituents in the order of the algorithm’s step-5 criteria-questions.
a) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (a) is - *Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to loss of their traditional habitat and forests?*

It has been observed that the main reason for the meek surrender of Birhors, to comply with and to given in to the forces destabilizing and displacing them, has been their dispersed existence in small numbers in individual tandas and the absence of a centralized organizational structure of their community under one leader. They could not therefore assert their point of view and resist or protest their displacement thereby losing the rightful possession of their ancestral, traditional and historical habitats as a consequence. The absence of a central and credible indigenous leadership has severely undermined their strength, making them vulnerable to manipulation. The answer to the criteria-question (a) as per the foregoing observation analysis is in the affirmative.

b) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (b) is - *Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the community vulnerable to social exclusion and discrimination?*

It has been observed that as long as the Birhors lived in their natural habitat, they were away from other communities. Their interactions with other communities was limited to the weekly markets where they went occasionally for bartering or selling their products such as ropes, animals’ skin or medicinal herbs etc. and to purchase their requirements. There never arose a problem of discrimination or exclusion as they were never formed a part of the mainstream society. Even if their way of life was despised by the mainstream, the Birhors never had to face any discrimination in their day to day living. However since they have been resettled close to the villages or on the edges of towns, they are being discriminated against as described in sections 5.4.1(b) and 5.4.2(b). It is evident that social exclusion has manifested more for Birhors after their displacement. If there would have been a credible indigenous leadership of the Birhors, they would probably not have been displaced or they could have bargained for a settlement in a distant secluded place in another part of the forest to avoid being discriminated against for their way of life. Moreover a strong leadership would deter other communities to look down upon them or take advantage of them by excluding them which would enable the Birhors to live with dignity. Thus the answer to the criteria question (b) too is in the affirmative.
c) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (c) is- *Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to poverty?*

Impoverishment of Birhors is a direct result of their dispossession of their land and forest habitats. As stated in (a) of this section, their displacement is a direct consequence of the absence of an effective and credible indigenous leadership within their community. It follows therefore that the absence of a credible and effective indigenous leadership is not only the cause for their abject poverty, it also undermines their capacity to bargain for a better economic compensation which would appropriately make up for their losses. Hence not only their impoverishment but its continuation without any redressal has plagued the Birhor tribals mainly due to the absence of an indigenous leader. The answer to the criteria-question (c) too is in the affirmative.

d) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (d) is- *Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to unhygienic and unhealthy existence?*

Birhors have existed in the best of hygienic conditions and enjoyed good health. However since being moved out of their habitat they have been resettled in dingy and unhygienic conditions. They are malnourished and lead an unhealthy life. Their displacement and their subsequent resettlement in shabby conditions has been a consequence of the absence of a strong and credible indigenous leadership. A strong indigenous leadership would either have refused to move out of their habitat or would have bargained for a more conducive resettlement package which included a suitable and healthy locale for resettlement. Thus the poor hygiene and health conditions of Birhors is a consequence of the absence of a concerned and credible indigenous leadership within their community. The answer to the criteria-question (d) too therefore is in the affirmative.

e) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (e) is- *Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to loss of traditional knowledge and has failed to motivate for modern learning?*

Having been pushed out of their habitat the Birhors have lost the connection to their intangible cultural heritage and knowledge. They now find it difficult to pass on their
knowledge to their children in the same way that they received it from their elders. Birhor children are being motivated to go to the nearby government schools to which they find difficult to connect in the absence of any attempt by the teachers of these schools to blend the Birhors’ traditional knowledge to the modern educational content. Another problem is the medium of education which creates barriers to learning. The displacement of the Birhors by the state has been the main cause for destabilizing the learning process of the Birhor children who are left in the no man’s land thereby neither getting their traditional knowledge nor the modern one. The presence of a strong indigenous leadership would have disallowed the displacement of the community as also it could have ensured that the process of modern education was tailored to the requirements of the Birhor children. The answer to the criteria-question (e) too is therefore in the affirmative.

f) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (f) is- Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to assimilation?

Birhors who are few in numbers are dispersed in small groups of twenty- thirty members, over eight districts in four states. Their problems and issues therefore are not taken seriously either by the state or the other societies. They are completely deprived and marginalized as they do not matter to the socio-political process of a democracy which goes by demographic strengths. The state on its part has launched a policy of their assimilation into the main stream giving little respect or regard to their ethnicity and vulnerability. The weakness of Birhors and lack of support to them by the state has encouraged other religious groups to lure them into converting to other religions. This process of acculturation is endangering their very identity as Birhors. A strong leadership makes a community strong and a strong community is not vulnerable to assimilation. The marginalization and assimilation of the Birhor community as also the loss of their habitat, the resultant social exclusion, poverty, poor health and living conditions and lack of awareness of their rights due to poor education are a product of the absence of a strong and credible indigenous leadership in their community hence the answer to the criteria-question (f) is also in the affirmative.

g) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (g) is- Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community incapable of initiating social reforms?
In the absence of a strong centralized indigenous leadership, the Birhors find it difficult and challenging to consolidate and become collectively aware of the need to identify and change or reform some of their age-old customs and traditions, counter-productive, obsolete and debilitating to progress. It makes them incapable to transform themselves for existing successfully in the fast changing modern socio-political and economic environment. Thus the answer to the criteria-question (g) is in the affirmative.

h) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (h) is - Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to economic exploitation?

The absence of a representative, concerned, credible and strong indigenous leadership capable of integrating the Birhor community and generating self-confidence in the Birhors to live with dignity has led to an inherent weakness in the very psyche of the Birhors. They are not able to protect themselves from or to protest against any form of injustice or exploitation at the hands of the administration or the other social groups. The basis for all their ills today has been the greed of the state and businessmen, who have colluded in the name of economic development to uproot the Birhors from their habitats. Moreover the Birhors have not been the beneficiaries of the so called huge profit generating developmental activities carried out on their collectively held lands. This is the worst form of economic exploitation that the innocent Birhors have suffered resulting due to the absence of any form of a strong indigenous leadership. The answer to the eighth criteria-question therefore is in the affirmative too.

i) Algorithm’s step-5 criteria-question (i) is - Whether the absence of indigenous leadership has made the tribal community vulnerable to pressures of modernization and globalization?

In the current dynamics of the world the process of modernization indicates moving away or rejection of all that is old or traditional which goes against the tribal philosophy of existing or wishing to exist by the tenets of that which is historically traditional. The process of modernization is anti-indigeneity. Similarly globalization is the process of imposing “sameness” on all human beings so that the needs, likes and dislikes, ways of life of all humans become identical for converting the whole of humanity into a large
homogenous market for the multi-national corporations to exploit. Any variance in the way of life and the needs is seen as an unwanted impediment that needs to be wiped out. So far as the indigenous communities are concerned both modernization and globalization are destructive for them, particularly with respect to their uniqueness and ethnic identity. This onslaught is happening in a subtle manner and is difficult to challenge. If the indigenous communities like the Birhors do not become aware and alert to the complexities of these forces, their existence as a community shall be in danger. To become prepared for facing the twin destructive forces of globalization and modernity, a strong and visionary indigenous leadership is necessary. As long as the indigenous leadership is absent the tribal communities like the Birhors shall remain vulnerable to the debilitating consequences of modernization and globalization thus the answer to the ninth criteria-question also happens to be in the affirmative.

5.6.2 **Documentary evidence for algorithm’s step-5 for ICS of Birhors.**

Not been much study has been carried out on the relationship between indigenous leadership and tribal development therefore only some indirect derivations can be made from available documentary evidences. The available evidence on the criteria-questions is being presented here-in-after in the same order as in the foregoing section:

a) “Massive dispossession of the tribal peoples from their life support resource base had taken place because of the government policy---No attempt has been made to obtain the consent of the population concerned” (Burman, Prof. B K Roy 2009).

From the above documentary evidence it is clear that the government did not feel it necessary to take the consent of the tribals prior to dispossessing them of their lands. If the tribals had any form of indigenous leadership within their community, it would have not been easy to dispossess the tribals of their lands against their wish. It therefore signifies that if a tribal community has been displaced from its habitat without their consent being taken as has been the case with Birhors, then it is a clear indication that the tribal society in question does not have a credible and strong indigenous leadership.

b) No documentary evidence could be found to establish any link between the absence of indigenous leadership and the social exclusion of tribals.
c) In the case of the Birhor community, poverty has been a direct result of their displacement from their forests and lands which in itself has been a direct fallout of the absence of a strong and credible indigenous leadership as derived in (a) above hence it can be also derived by the same documentary evidence that the impoverishment of the Birhors is linked to the absence of a credible indigenous leadership.

d) The Birhor community enjoyed a hygienic and healthy existence until they were removed from their natural forest habitat and resettled which as mentioned in the foregoing point (a) and repeated in point (c) has been a fallout of the absence of any strong and credible indigenous leadership. It is justified to infer therefore that one of the main the cause for the deterioration in the hygiene and health too can be linked to the absence of a strong and credible indigenous leadership in the Birhor community.

e) There has not been any study to link indigenous leadership to the problems faced by the Birhor community children in learning their traditional knowledge along with receiving modern education. However a connection can be established indirectly through the following documentary evidence-

(A) The Birhors “are the bearers of extensive local ecological knowledge that revolves around the forests of the area. This knowledge could be an extremely useful tool not only in forest management and development programs, but (also) in ensuring long term local ecological services for sustainable management of forests. A first step in this direction is to acknowledge that such indigenous knowledge exists and is useful” (Kumar, Sanjay 2004).

The Birhors are aware of the importance of preserving and passing on this knowledge to their next generations which is best possible only in the traditional way of existence in their forests. The absence of an indigenous leader within the community has compromised their position vis-à-vis existence in their habitat and forests which in turn has robbed them of the very foundation of their traditional knowledge. The Birhor children have suffered a double blow as they have lost their traditional knowledge and they are unable to avail the modern knowledge. At present despite the best of efforts of
the state the acceptance of modern education in Birhors is low as they are not yet convinced about its importance as is evident from the following evidence-

(B) “The standard of education of the Birhor is very low. Generally they are illiterate. At present we are seeing the ‘first generation learner’—they are reluctant to continue—their education as --- parents do not wish to send them to school” (Ghosh, Aritra and Gargi Biswas 2012).

This dichotomy occurs because there is no community leader having influence on the whole community to convince the members on the importance of retaining traditional knowledge and upgrading it with modern education. Absence of the indigenous leader also rules out the possibility of interaction with the educational authorities for necessary modification of curriculums to facilitate learning for Birhor children. The above evidence indirectly links the absence of indigenous leadership to the difficulty in passing on their traditional knowledge and providing their children with modern education.

f) Birhors suffer tremendous pressure of assimilation. They lack the confidence to stand up to these pressures, since as quoted here-in-below:-

(A) “Only with confidence can people find the common grounds of assimilation and integration with others while maintaining and celebrating diversity” (Campbell, Perri, Peter Kelly and Lyn Harrison 2012).

(B) “Administrators of welfare programs on a nation-wide scale are confronted with the task of locating genuine leadership and enlisting it in the service of tribal and rural reconstruction. The wide-spread failure to do this has been partially responsible for the malaise” (Aiyappan, A 1965).

Confidence to resist pressures due to marginalization and assimilation can be provided by a strong indigenous leader alone who can take up the cause as quoted below:-

(C) “He (the indigenous leader) should be frank and fearless in dealing with outsiders, particularly Government officials” (Aiyappan, A 1965).

Failure to withstand assimilation is due to absence of indigenous leadership in Birhors.
g) There is no documentary evidence available to prove the link between absence of indigenous leadership in Birhors and their inability to carry out social reforms.

h) It has been established in section 5.4.4 that the Birhors continue to suffer extreme poverty and economic exploitation which has led to their removal from their natural habitat leading to their further economic exploitation. As stated in (a) here-in-above there is documentary evidence linking absence of a strong indigenous leadership in Birhors’ to their removal from their lands and forests and to their consequent impoverishment. The same documentary evidence is proof of such a link.

i) Globalization is a result of modernization which has caused irreparable damage to the process of localization of the tribal communities. One of the motives of modernization or modern development is to maximize profits through the process of promoting increased consumption for which maximum production is essential. To maximize production more natural resources are required. The major deposits of not-yet-exploited mineral and other natural resources lie within and beneath the forests of the world which are inhabited largely by tribals hence it is for this reason that the tribals are dispossessed of their lands and forests with the collusion of the state to make way for the unbridled exploitation of the natural resources lying in their forests and lands. Modernization and globalization have affected the Birhors in the same way making them suffer in every possible manner due to their displacement from their forests. Absence of an effective indigenous leadership in Birhors as documented in (a) here-in-above, has led to this injustice. There is a direct link between the absence of indigenous leadership and the inability of Birhors to protect themselves from the devastating effects of modernization and globalization.

Observations of 5.6.1 get corroborated by documentary evidences -except in (b) & (g).

5.6.3 Informal Interviews for algorithm’s step-5 for ICS of Birhors.

Step-5 criteria-questions were asked to hundred Birhors and their responses are placed in table 5.12. Final response in Col.-6 is the response given by at least fifty percent of respondents.
Table-5.12 Response of hundred Birhors during Interviews to questions of Algorithm Step-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s. no.</th>
<th>Criteria questions</th>
<th>col-1</th>
<th>col-2</th>
<th>col-3</th>
<th>col-4</th>
<th>col-5</th>
<th>col-6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors vulnerable to loss of their habitat &amp; forests?</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors vulnerable to social exclusion?</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors poorer?</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors’ life unhygienic and unhealthy?</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors lose on both traditional and modern education?</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors vulnerable to assimilation?</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors incapable of initiating social reforms?</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Whether absence of IL has made Birhors vulnerable to economic exploitation?</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Whether absence of IL has made Birhors vulnerable to modernity and globalization?</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* The language of criteria questions is modified without changing intent or content to facilitate tabulation.

5.6.4 Consolidated Statement of Data collected in sections 5.6.1, 5.6.2 and 5.6.3.

The data collected for exploring the possibility of a correlation between the absence of indigenous leadership and the under-developed status in Birhors through Observation, Documentary evidence and Informal Interviews have been consolidated in table 5.13 and the final answers have been derived there-from and stated in column 6. The answer appearing in atleast two sets of data is taken as the final answer for each criteria question.
Table-5.13 Derivation of final answers to Algorithm Step-5 criteria questions for ICS of Birhors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s. no.</th>
<th>Criteria questions</th>
<th>Data from</th>
<th>Data from</th>
<th>Data from</th>
<th>Final answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors vulnerable to loss of their habitat &amp; forests?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors vulnerable to social exclusion?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors poorer?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors’ life unhygienic and unhealthy?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors lose on both traditional and modern education?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors vulnerable to assimilation?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Has absence of IL made Birhors incapable of initiating social reforms?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not available</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Whether absence of IL has made Birhors vulnerable to economic exploitation?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Whether absence of IL has made Birhors vulnerable to modernity and globalization?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:- The language of criteria questions is modified without changing intent or content to facilitate tabulation.

It can be seen from the table 5.13 that the data collected from the three sources are in complete agreement and the information given as final answers in column-6 is valid and reliable which can form the basis for a credible analysis.

5.6.5 Analysis of the consolidated data presented in Table 5.13

As per the step-5 criteria of the algorithm - *If the results on at least eight of the nine criteria questions are positive then it can be inferred that there is a definite link between absence of indigenous leadership of the tribal community in question and its status of under-development.*
The consolidated statement given in table 5.13 indicates that there is complete agreement on all the nine questions between the observations, documentary evidence and the responses from the informal interviews. All the answers to the criteria-questions are in the affirmative (positive) therefore as per the above mentioned criteria there is a definite correlation between the absence of indigenous leadership and the status of under-development within the Birhor tribal community.

5.6.6 Findings from the Individual Case Study of the Birhor tribal community of Jharkhand: The findings from the individual case study of the Birhor tribe confirm unambiguously that:-

a) the Birhor tribal community does not have any form of Indigenous Leadership;

b) the Birhor tribal community is Under-Developed;

c) there is a definite correlation between the absence of Indigenous Leadership in the Birhor tribal community of Jharkhand and their Under-Development.

The findings of the ICS of the Birhor tribal community shall be combined with the findings from the ICS of the other three tribal communities as per the criteria set in step-6 of the algorithm to reach the conclusive findings of the composite case study.
Diagram 5.1 Flow Chart: Outcomes of ICS-1

IL – Indigenous Leadership                  CCS- Composite Case Study                  D- Development
ILP- Indigenous Leadership Present          DT- Developed Tribe
ILA- Indigenous Leadership Absent           UDT- Underdeveloped Tribe

Step 1
Actual outcome - ILA

Step 2
Actual outcome – UDT

Step 3
Actual outcome – Proceed to Step 5

Step 5
Actual outcome:
ILA consequential for UDT
Proceed to Step 6 for CCS

Step 6-CCS