Preliminary Analysis of Jharkhand Assembly election 2019 results

The Jharkhand Assembly election results were announced on Monday, December 23with the JMM-Congress-RJD alliance winning a clear majority of 47 seats out of 81 seats (ECI). In the run up to the elections studies showed that forest rights issues could be a decisive factor in influencing election outcomes in more than 62 of the 81 assembly constituencies. This analysis was drawn on the basis of the number of ST and SC voters eligible for getting forest rights under FRA, voting pattern and margin of votes in the last assembly election. About 70 percent of the population in the assembly constituencies in Jharkhand belongs to the ST, SC category.
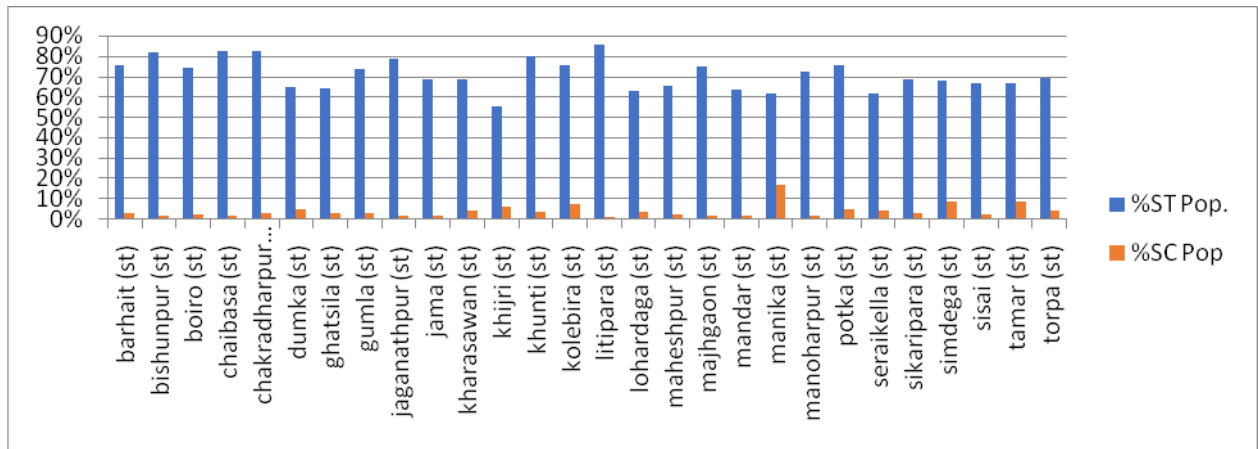
Methodology

This note presents a preliminary analysis of the election results which is based on three sources of data- the election commission data on 2014 Assembly Constituency (PC) results, the election commission data on 2019 Assembly Constituency results and the Assembly Wise FRA potential based on census data. The FRA Potential data is based on Census 2011; and includes all forest areas located inside village boundaries. The assumptions made during calculating FRA potential are in the footnotes[1].

The Assembly constituencies have been categorized in three categories as per the value of FRA as potential influencing factor in the elections, namely Critical Value; High Value and Good Value. The underlying assumption was that Assembly Constituencies falling in the three categories[2] have Forest Rights Act as a core issue, which can significantly influence winning margins in these constituencies.

Jharkhand state has around 26 percent tribal population as per the Census 2011 and 28 Scheduled Tribes (ST) Constituencies.

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[1] All inhabitants of villages having forest areas inside the village cadastral boundary are treated as forest rights holders (for Community rights, especially Community Forest Resource Rights which provides power to govern and manage CFRs). The community rights are also applicable to most of the forests outside village boundaries- however making an estimation of such forest areas is relatively more difficult. This is the reason why we use the term minimum FRA potential.

[2] AT least 20% of the eligible voters are also potential Forest Rights Act rights holders, mainly collective rights
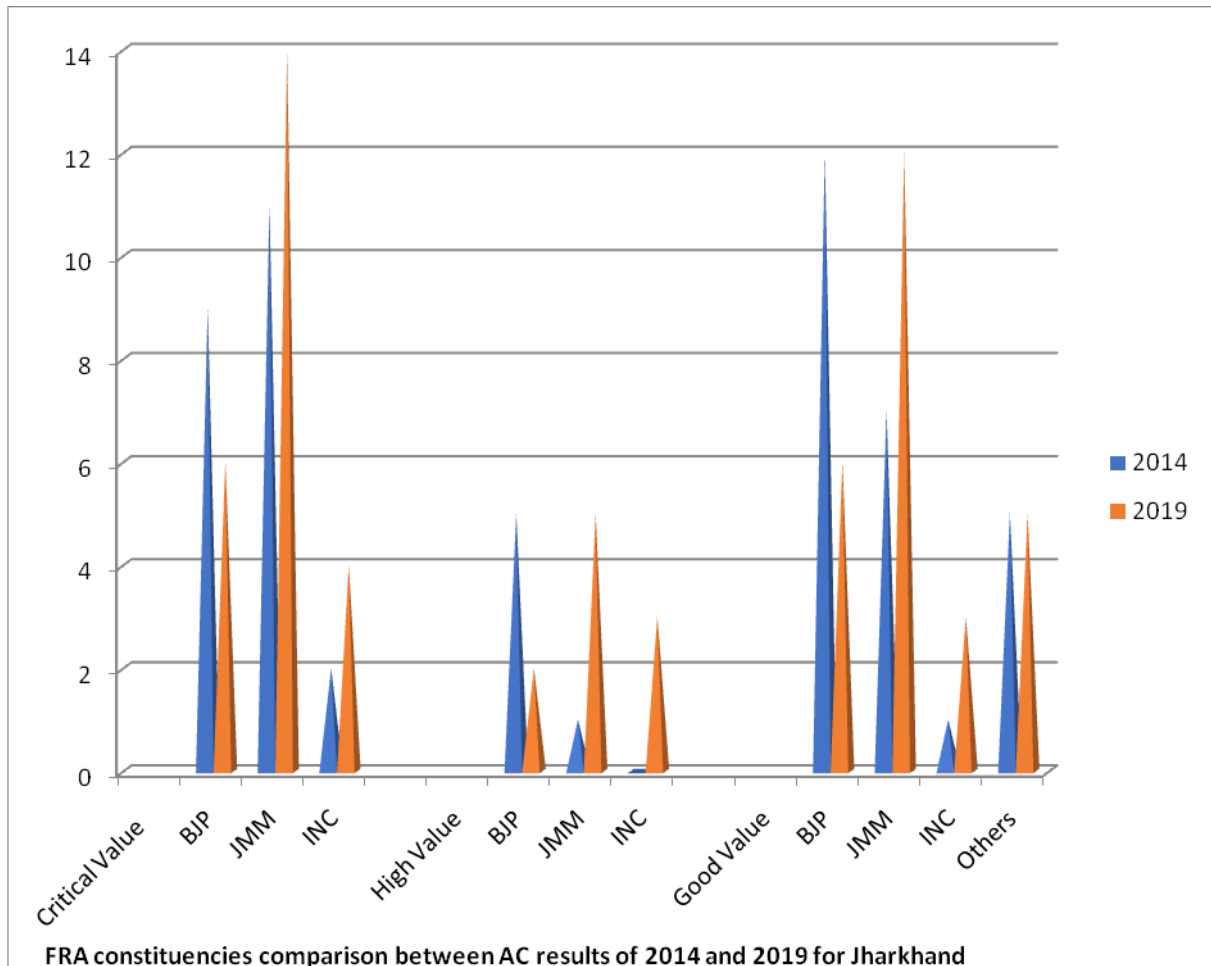
Percentage representation of ST and SC communities in ST Constituencies in Jharkhand. (These Constituencies are crucial for forest rights.)

Overall analysis of Critical value, High value and Medium value Constituencies with respect to FRA,

	2014 Election Results	2019 Election Results
Critical Value		
BJP	9	6
JMM	11	14
INC	2	4
High Value		
BJP	5	2
JMM	1	5
INC	0	3
Good Value		
BJP	12	6
JMM	7	12
INC	1	3
Others	5	5

In critical value constituencies, JMM and INC have made significant gains in 2019 elections securing 14 and 4 seats respectively which is an improvement of 5 seats compared to 2014. BJP has won 6 seats losing out on its total of 9 seats in 2014. In high value constituencies JMM won 5 seats, marking an improvement of 4 seats from last time, while INC which couldn't secure any seats in 2014, secured 3 seats. BJP, on the other hand faced losses here

as well. Compared to the 5 seats secured in 2014, it could only secure 2 seats this time. In constituencies with good value, BJP lost as many as half of its previous seat share, It could only secure 6 seats compared to the 12 from 2014. JMM secured 12 seats this time, an improvement of 5 seats from last time. INC also performed better than before securing 3 seats compared to 1 in 2014.

FRA constituencies comparison between AC results of 2014 and 2019 for Jharkhand

It shows that that BJP has done badly as compared to its performance in 2014, while JMM led alliance has done significantly well. While the JMM and alliance were able to increase its hold in all the three categories, critical value, high value and good value constituencies, BJP has lost seats in all the three categories.
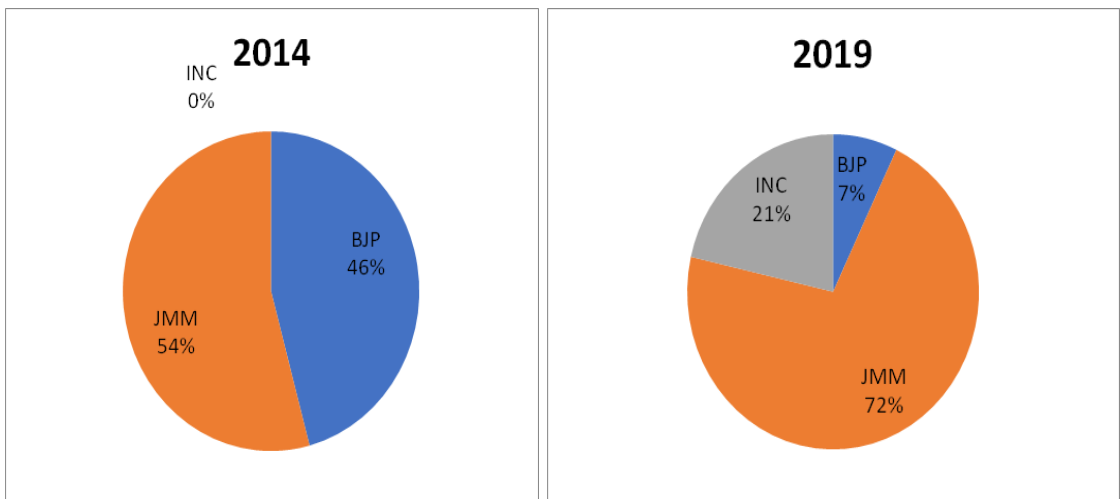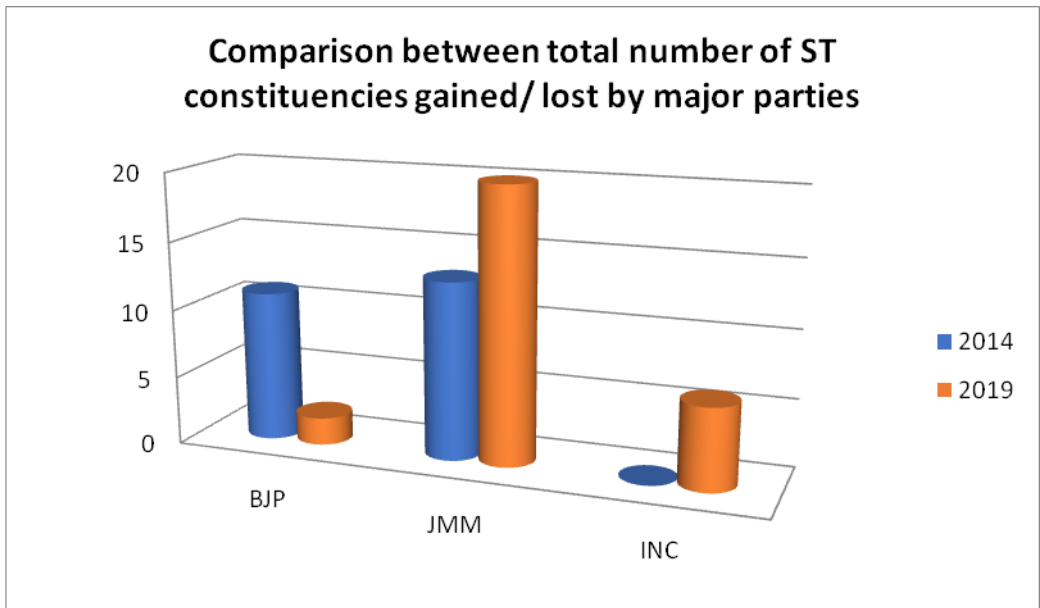
Analysis of ST constituencies is particularly important by comparing election results of 2014 and 2019.
Overall analysis of ST constituencies wrt AC Election 2014 and 2019

Assembly Constituency name	Winning Party of AC Election of 2019	Losing Party of AC Election of 2019	Winning Party of AC Election of 2014	Losing Party of AC Election of 2014
Barhait (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Bishunpur (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Boiro (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	JMM
Chaibasa (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Chakradharpur (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Dumka (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	JMM
Ghatsila (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	JMM
Gumla (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	JMM
Jaganathpur (st)	INC	JVMP	JBSP	BJP
Jama (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Kharasawan (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Khijri (st)	INC	BJP	BJP	INC
Khunti (st)	BJP	JMM	BJP	JMM
Kolebira (st)	INC	BJP	Jharkhand Party	BJP
Litipara (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Lohardaga (st)	INC	BJP	AJSU Party	INC
Maheshpur (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Majhgaon (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	JBSP
Mandar (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	AITMC
Manika (st)	INC	BJP	BJP	RJD
Manoharpur (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Potka (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	JMM
Seraikella (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	BJP
Sikaripara (st)	JMM	BJP	JMM	JVMP
Simdega (st)	INC	BJP	BJP	Jharkhand Party
Sisai (st)	JMM	BJP	BJP	JMM
Tamar (st)	JMM	AJSU	AJSU Party	IND
Torpa (st)	BJP	JMM	JMM	BJP

ST Constituencies and comparison of their performance in 2014 and 2019 Assembly election results

The tribal seats have shown a clear shift. In 2019, BJP could only secure two seats as compared to 11 in 2014 Assembly elections. The JMM secured 20 seats compared to the 13 earlier, while INC secured 6 seats-a significant improvement from last election as it did not win any seats in 2014.

Charts reflecting the percentage vote share for ST constituencies in 2014 and 2019 elections

The election outcomes in the FRA potential constituencies and the ST constituencies could be attributed to the importance of forest rights issues in the state's political discourse with the **Mahagathbandhan** (alliance of JMM-INC-RJD) raising issues having direct impact on land and forest rights of tribals, dalits and other marginalised communities. The prominent issues which were raised in the manifestos and election campaign of the JMM alliance were the anti tribal land and forest policies implemented by the BJP govt such as the proposed amendments to the Indian Forest Act[3], the threat of eviction of tribals due to the supreme

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https://www.dailypioneer.com/2019/state-editions/jmm-stages-protest-against-meddling-in-indian-forest-act.html

court order[4], illegal diversion of forests for projects as well as the non implementation of FRA (particularly community forest resource rights) in the state. Other major issues were the dilution of customary laws protecting tribal land rights (the CNT and SPT Acts), repression against the *Pathalgadi* movement, creation of land banks out of community lands for allocation to industries and forest dept's plantation programs[5], illegal land acquisitions.

Jharkhand now joins other major states of Chhattisgarh, MP, Rajasthan and Maharashtra where the issues of land and forest rights, agrarian distress have dominated the state elections in 2018-19 and have led to major upsets for the ruling party.

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[4] https://www.huffingtonpost.in/entry/jharkhand-bjp-govt-adivasis-fra_in_5df0dcaee4b0b75fb5356345, https://www.outlookindia.com/magazine/story/india-news-18-lakh-tribals-stand-to-get-displaced/301377

[5] https://scroll.in/article/946981/in-jharkhand-the-digitisation-of-land-records-stripped-many-villagers-of-their-farms-overnight