

ISSN: 2455-457X

Vol. 1, No II

July - December 2016

JOURNAL OF RURAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Published by

Research & Publication Committee

Tufanganj Mahavidyalaya

Tufanganj, New Town.

Dist. Cooch Behar

West Bengal

Website: www.tufanganjmahavidyalaya.net

The views and assessments expressed by the Contributors are their personal opinion and are not necessarily of their institutions and the Publisher.

Subscription Rates

For Individual:

Single Issue Rs. 400

Annual Rs. 600

For Institution :

Single issue Rs 400

Annual Rs 800

Published by

Research & Publication Committee

Tufanganj Mahavidyalaya

P.O. Tufanganj New Town.

Dist. Cooch Behar

West Bengal (India).

PIN 736 160.

Ph. 03582-244263

Website: www.tufanganjmahavidyalaya.net

www.tufanganjmahavidyalaya.in

The Journal of Rural and Community Affairs - one peer reviewed bi-annual journal - is committed to and engrossed with study, research and reflection on important issues, problems, challenges and roadmap for rural India where India really lives and which merits concerted academic attention and policy intervention.

The Journal of Rural and Community Affairs intends to be one important academic forum engaging with anything and everything which sways, impinges and influences the socio-economic and political structure and process of rural India.

The Journal of Rural and Community Affairs invites *research* contributions from academics, activists and others who are intensely and actively concerned with important facets of Indian rural people and society.

Editor-in-Chief: **Amal Mandal**

Assistant Editor: **Sidhartha Sankar Laha**

Editorial Board

Ananda Mukhopadhyay, Professor, Department of Zoology,
University of North Bengal

Anil Bhuimali, Vice Chancellor, Raiganj University,

Bipul Malakar, (former), Professor of Economics, Jadavpur University

Md. Yasin, Professor of Political Science, University of North Bengal

Mozammel Huq, Professor of Economics, Strathclyde University,
Scotland

Sibranjan Misra, (former) Professor of Economics, Viswa Bharati

Members of Research & Publication Committee

Amal Mandal, Associate Professor of Political Science, Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya

Bijoy Behar Som, Associate Professor of Sociology, Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya

Debashis Das, Associate Professor of Zoology, Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya

Ramprasad Mukhopadhyaya, Associate Professor of Botany, Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya

Sanghamitra Choudhury, Assistant Professor of Political Science,
Tufanganj Mahavidyalaya

Shyamal Chandra Barman, Department of Political Science, Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya

Sidhartha Sankar Laha, Assistant Professor of Economics, Tufanganj
Mahavidyalaya

Journal of Rural and Community Affairs

ISSN: **2455- 457X**

Vol. I No II

July- December 2016

Contents

<i>Women in Agrarian Movement: With Special Reference to North Bengal</i>	5-25
MADHUPARNA MITRA GUHA	
<i>Socio-Economic Status of Women Flower Vendors in Purba Medinipur District: A Sociological Analysis</i>	26-50
LABANI DEY & S.A.H.MOINUDDIN	
<i>Woman and Double Burden of Work</i>	51-65
M. YASODA DEVI & A.C.R.DIWAKAR REDDY	
<i>Situation of Girl Child in West Bengal: Some Reflections</i>	66-81
SONEL SOM	
<i>Working Status of Rural Women: A Study of Tufanganj Block-I, Cooch Behar</i>	82-106
PINKU DAS	
<i>Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace: An Overview</i>	107-127
ANANYA GUHA ROY	
<i>The Brothel - A Refuge for Idle Child</i>	128-148
HARASANKAR ADHIKARI	
<i>Elementary Education for Poor Girls in West Bengal</i>	149-159
SOMA KUNDU	
<i>Poverty and Deprivations in Rural India: With a Reference to Women in Arunachal Pradesh</i>	160-178
SUKAMAL DEB	

WOMEN IN AGRARIAN MOVEMENT: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTH BENGAL

Madhuparna Mitra Guha

The contribution of Bengali women in diverse fields is not a new phenomenon. Apart from social domains, their role in political movements especially in peasant movements is no less insignificant: the womenfolk came forward unhesitatingly brushing aside their age long tradition and bondage of patriarchy. The Tebhaga Movement, 1946 marked a turning point in the history of the women's movement in Bengal. Afterwards the women also participated in the revolutionary Naxal movement. But in North Bengal region their profile is somewhat contrasting. The political consciousness of the women in North Bengal could not attain the similar height like that of the women in other parts of Bengal. And their participation in peasant movements was not as proactive or assertive.

The women's movement that developed as an integral part of the struggle of all sections of the Indian people for Independence was linked with agrarian movements. Their movements were radicalized under the influence of these agrarian movements. The Tebhaga movement of 1946 opened a new chapter in the history of women's movement and tens of thousands of peasant women became politically and socially conscious. Though the women's movements were basically dominated by the urban middle class but did not fail to

understand the cause of the poor and the downtrodden. In recent years women's studies had shown much interest to the problems of women in agrarian society. They had brought into light the copious economic and social disabilities that the women suffered. But the women question today is no longer an issue confined to the position of women within their families; it is a part of the total far broader question regarding the direction of change of that process. Far reaching economic, political and social changes took place during that post colonial era. They were linked to the problem of women all over the globe and they had a great impact upon the third world countries. In the seventies it was realized that the process of general development could not be accelerated in the third world. Yet, there is no shadow of doubt that the consciousness of Bengali women started right from the Tebhaga movement and afterwards through the Naxalite movement their newly aroused consciousness got a new dimension.

Objective and Methodology

The prime objectives of this paper are:

- * To reveal the contribution of those women participants in agrarian movement in North Bengal about whom the academic historiography maintained a silence.
- * To study the consciousness of womenfolk of the region in political and social aspect arising from discontentment.
- * To examine their active initiative in agrarian sectors

* To discuss the tireless efforts of the women in establishing their separate entity in patriarchal set up.

It is a qualitative analysis on the contribution of women of North Bengal in the late and post colonial agrarian movements. The sources of procurements of data in regard to this paper are secondary sources like authentic books and esteemed leading journals. Some information also collected from different websites.

Tebhaga and Women of North Bengal

Women's participation in different movements in India was not a new phenomenon. During the non-violence movement sponsored by Mahatma Gandhi, a significant change had taken place in the nature of women's participation in national movement in the first half of 1930s. The change categorized as the beginning of mass mobilization of women as against the individualistic approach to national politics at that juncture. Afterwards in Quit India movement of 1942 the women of the peasant and tribal communities actively participated. This active participation brought a gradual political consciousness among the women of Bengal. The paper dealt with some events of pre partition North Bengal, so some districts of undivided Bengal had automatically entered into the purview of my discussion.

The dispute and conflict between the land owners and its producers is a chronic and long standing problem of Bengal so far as India is concerned. The Tebhaga movement of undivided Bengal was not an

exceptional one. This peasant uprising erupted cantering round the inhuman torture and exploitation of the Jotedars and Zamindars over the unarmed, uneducated, unprivileged, innocent peasants of Bengal. Taking the advantage of their ignorance, illiteracy and simplicity the Jotedars used to exploit them. Their accumulated grievances got expression through the Tebhaga movement. It was such an upsurge which erupted in 1946 in undivided Bengal on the eve of the withdrawal of the British colonialists. The uprising never the less stands out as the most important event in the twentieth century Bengal. The Bengali word 'Tebhaga' means division in three parts. The objective of this peasant movement was to get two-third of the total yield out of three parts, while the rest one part would go to the owner of the land. The young communist leaders took active part to mobilize the peasants and organize them to strengthen their demand. They woman community spontaneously participated in the movement.

The consciousness of the fair sex reflected in the Tebhaga movement of Bengal. The Women did not lag behind compared to her male counterparts in support of the movement of Tebhaga. The joint venture of men and women got a new momentum in the movement which is still remarkable and unforgettable. It may be mentioned in this connection that out of twenty six districts twenty four were involved more or less in Tebhaga uprising, among them the districts of Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Malda, Jossore, Midnapur, 24-Parganas were immensely influenced. The communist led Mahila Atma Raksha

Samity (MARS) had a pivotal role in mobilizing the urban women. Efforts were being made to organize the middle class women in the urban areas of Bengal from the second half of 1930s by the communists. They also mobilized the women politically irrespective of age, religion economic or social status. Rani Mitra Das Gupta, Manikuntala Sen, Renu Chakraborty and other women had worked as active volunteers of the MARS during the famine tried to involve the rural women into the movement. They realized it well that continuous struggle and movement were urgently needed against the oppression and exploitation on the peasants.

The Tebhaga movement was an important phase in the twentieth century Bengal. It swept through the rural areas of Bengal. From Duars the movement spread in different corners of Bengal. Dinajpur, Rangpur, Malda, Jessore, Khulna, Mymensingh, Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapore, Howrah, Hooghly, Kakdwip, and Sonarpur of undivided 24 Parganas were under the purview of the uprising. The peasants both men and women whole heartedly took part in the movement. They voiced the slogan "Jan debo tabu dhan debona" (They will sacrifice their lives but not the paddy). In the first stage of the movement the strife continued among the peasants and Jotedars. The women took arms now. The women leaders viz. Lila Sen, Rani Dasgupta, Mahashweta Devi, Manikuntala Sen, Gita Mukherjee, Kanak Mukherjee dictated the agitators to the right direction so that they could reach their goal. Manikuntala Sen was an outstanding organizer

and political thinker of that time. She was the first woman of Bengal to join the Communist party of India. She wrote her memoir "Sediner Katha" where she praised those courageous women who took active participation in mobilizing the women towards the Tebhaga movement (Sen, 1982). The peasant women used to keep constant touch with the MARS.

The movement eventually marched towards Jalpaiguri district. The influence of the movement was found in Debigunje, Boda, Pachara areas. Then it gradually spread in Mal and Meteli area. It is worth noting in this connection that the peasants of this locality posed a movement since 1938. This movement gradually turned into a massive Tebhaga movement. Despite illiteracy, both men and women of the peasant community took active part in the movement. This is for the first time that the women involved themselves whole heartedly in the upsurge. The contribution of Punyeswari Barman popularly known as Burima in the said movement cannot be lost sight off though her works would not be found in the pages of history. She was the poorest of the poor, yet she had a golden heart for which she was very popular. She directly or indirectly helped the revolting peasants a lot. Under her able guidance the local comrades viz. Makri, Ujani, Vidya along with some women faced the rifles of the police bravely. The women of the locality also helped in founding the Mahila Atma Raksha Samity. To avoid police atrocities they alerted the local comrades so that they can flee.

Sikha Nandi, Tilaktarini Debi and others offered stubborn resistance against the mass arrest. The police ultimately was compelled to take to their heels. Comrade Madhab Dutta was injured in an encounter with the Jotedars at Boda. These women took the responsibility of his treatment braving the red eyes of the police. In Sundardighi, women ultimately made a resistance against police attack. Nagari (wife of Vidya), wives of Khen Barman and Pohalu, mothers of Yatra and Sukaru and above all Burima offered fierce resistance against police atrocities. Under her efficient and able guidance atleast fifty volunteers voiced slogan 'Jan dibo tabu dhan dibona' (A. Das, 2013). They had the courage to bring paddy in their own farm. Their dogged Perseverance, undaunted courage, firm determination, singleness of purpose and leech like tenacity helped them to materialize their dream into reality. On the contrary the Mahila Atma Raksha Samity (MARS) and female workers of Communist party showed their organizational excellence. Those workers from urban sector always maintained close contact with the Tebhaga agitators. Activists like Saraju Sarkar, Amiya Ghosh, Mrinalini Talapatra, Sushama Dutta extended their helping hands towards these agitators. In Duars the movement first took place in Odlabari, Kranti regions. Naihari Orani gave leadership of the female agitators. Poko Orani and Maharani Orani also united the women for Tebhaga upsurge. Though the Tebhaga movement was a movement of peasants but in Dooars tea labourers also joined hands with them, because the movement was against exploitation, imperialism and

injustice. It was a movement against the Jotedars who were loyal to the British. So the peasants both male and female involved themselves in the movement.

The Tebhaga movement of Dinajpur district was primarily started under the leadership of Sunil Sen. The volunteers of Dinajpur district went to harvest the paddy from the area of local bargadar named Fuljhari Singh, following which Sunil Sen was arrested. From that time onwards the movement spread like a wild fire in the neighbouring Thakurgaon region. Within a month the movement spread in twenty two thanas (Police stations) out of thirty. The common demand was voiced "Nij kholane dhan tol". Thakurgaon became the centre of the movement. This movement became strengthened particularly in Thakurnagar and Birganje areas. In order to suppress the uprising the Jotedars with the help of the police administration began to arrest the leaders, assault the peasants and torture the women both mentally and physically. Though the movement of Dinajpur was started by the kisan Sabha and the communist party of India but very soon the women participated in it. A peasant woman named Dipari played a very significant role (S.Sen, 1985). She chased the police with stick. The volunteers also accompanied her to fight with the police. It was said that a Rajbansi lady named Polia Barmani showed the courage to seize the rifle from the police and broke it into two pieces placing it on her knees. This incident puzzled the police. The incident created tremendous sensation among the peasants as well as women. Another

rebel named Joshoda came forth to repel police in khapur region of Dinajpur (Chowdhury). She was tortured and brought undressed in front of S.I. to disclose the whereabouts of her husband Nilkantha who became fugitive. But Joshoda was adamant in her attitude. She was ultimately killed. This incident turned into a fury. In protest against the incident the santal peasants became involved in conflict with the police. A peasant woman Koushalya became martyr.

The women of Chiribandor also got involved in the Tebhaga movement. Their weapons were their domestic tools. Their movement had immensely influenced the peasants to fight against the police. Sunima Singh and Phoko Barmani of Dhumnia embraced a heroic death (Ghatak,2011). Jaimoni was undoubtedly the most important female worker of Tebhaga movement in Baliadangi. Her husband Spostaram Singh was a leader of the movement. Under his influence Jaimoni became aware of the then prevailing situation and gave inspiration to the local women. Under her initiative a large number of female workers came out. The names of Shia Barmani, Brindabani Barmani, Mati Barmani, Jaya Barmani may be mentioned in this connection. They accompanied Jaimoni in her every step. Jaimoni got assistance from Rani Mitra to translate her revolutionary programme into action. Another courageous lady was Bhandani who gave leadership to a voluntary organization of Ranishangkoil region. The members of the organisation showed the courage to seize rifles from the police personnel. Phuleswari of Birganj, Rani Basanta of Rampur,

Rohini Barmani of Ranishangkoil revolted against the Jotedars. They become united not only against the Jotedars but also against the patriarchal form of society.

The wave of Tebhaga movement touched Nachol, a police station under Rajshahi district became a centre of Tebhaga movement. Ila Mitra deeply got involved in the movement being encouraged by her husband Ramendra Nath Mitra, son of a zaminder family of Ramchandrapur of Malda. She ultimately became 'Ranima' among the peasants of the region. She was a member of the Communist party of India (CPI) and an organizer of peasant movement of Nachol. Ila Mitra toured a number of villages to make the demand popular. She arranged peasants meetings in remote corner of the villages to inspire the peasants for materializing the demand of tebhaga. The Hindus as well as The Muslims and the Santals took part in the movement. The Santal community provided the main element of force. The implementation of the principle of the movement of Tebhaga started from the own zamindari of Ila Mitra. The family had accepted the doctrine of distribution of production. The leaders tried to implement this principle on other zamindar families. By 1950 almost every Zamindar and Jotedar was forced to accept the doctrine of tebhaga. But the Government considering it as illegal promptly imprisoned the activists. The leaders of the movement were also arrested. Even subsequently Ila Mitra was arrested for her revolutionary activities. She had a bitter experience of horrible torture

in the police custody. Actually the rural poor women suffered a lot under the feudo-patriarchal rule of absentee landlords. For those long-standing exploitation they showed unparalleled militancy in their activities. Their position in the society as outcasts motivated them towards the uprising. In Rangpur the movement was confined to Nilphamari subdivision (Sen,1985). Rani Mukherjee, a dynamic school teacher mobilized the mass movement. There was an organization of women named Gainbahini played a significant role in this uprising.

The massive movement sponsored by the peasants and the Communist party of India could not succeed in the long run. Owing to the adverse political circumstances the movement could not reach its goal. The weakest point of this movement was that in spite of apparent heroic achievement of the participants it was evident that the leaders had lost a golden historical opportunity. Few leaders of the movement opined that if the Communist party would have followed the revolutionary policy, the result of the movement could have been otherwise. The movement could not involve itself with the struggle of Independence and with the democratic movements, so it detached itself from the main stream of the national movement. The main drawbacks on the part of the leaders were also responsible for the failure of this movement. So the movement failed to reach to its destination, the women were also compelled to stop the agitation. Once the women took a bold stand against the Landlords and Jotedars, so they tried to take revenge on the women. Physical torture and molestation became

rampant. Naturally it dammed the vigour, energy, courage and enthusiasm. There was another link between the spontaneity of a struggle with the coming out of village women both proletarian and semi proletarian to the fore front. The Tebhaga movement marked a spontaneous 'class transition' in the history of Bengal (Custers,1986). Earlier the MARS had rendered a valuable service to the cause of deprived women of rural and urban areas. They also expanded their cooperation and assistance to the destitute and famine stricken women. Apart from this they had a vital role in politicizing and socializing their attitude. Peter Custers addressed them as 'semi-militia' force was doubly oppressed. They came from scheduled caste Hindu and tribal families. They were mostly agricultural labourers. They joined the Tebhaga movement since they expected revolutionary changes as many of them had lost their land during the famine. Outwardly it appeared to be the movement to materialize the demand of tebhaga, but if we go deep into the matter we find that the movement was the strong protest against the supremacy of patriarchal society. In the social canvas of Bengal it was noticed that the women were the worst victims of injustice, deprivation and exploitation. They were tortured at home and abroad. Moreover they witnessed the miserable plight of the common people when a devastating famine broke out.

The female members of the peasant community had to face various social prejudice, superstition, economic and social exploitation. The women folk of our society were generally vulnerable from three-edged

weapons of subjugation; firstly, the subjugation to class discrimination; secondly, suppression due to gender inequality and lastly the social coercion etc. It was a Himalayan task to bring them out of such a yoke (Das, 2010). The Tebhaga movement was a protest against social injustice and inequality which acted as a platform of their social consciousness. The peasant women now started thinking in line of gender equality. This self realization of women did not appear suddenly at the time of Tebhaga, it had its origin from the forty's of twentieth century. The satyagraha movement, Hat tola movement and the famine made them strengthen both physically and morally to combat all evils. It is fact that at the initial stage MARS played a significant role in the growth of political consciousness of the peasant women to protest against the social backwardness and patriarchal system.

The women of rural areas were more influenced by the doctrine of Tebhaga compared to the women of middle class. One of the main reasons behind it was that the rural women used to live an independent life than that of middle class women. They used to enjoy such liberty which the women of middle class could not even think of. Beside this the rural women realized it well that they were the mouthpiece of their own sufferings. This self realization altogether changed their philosophy of life. Peter Custers in his 'Women in the Tebhaga uprising' opined that as the peasant women were poor, they started movement for survival (P.Casters, 1986). Actually the women

started movement not only to save themselves from acute poverty; it was also a movement of self assertion. They searched a way out to redress their grievances and above all it was a movement to establish their self identity. Women's participation in the Tebhaga movement had a great and far reaching impact on the future role of women in the field of politics. The awakening of the women of rural sectors opened a new horizon. It showed a way to women empowerment which was long been remained dormant and suppressed. The most powerful impact of Tebhaga was that the ruling class which came to power in the wake of the uprising in both the undivided parts of Bengal forced to make legal concessions for the peasantry. It served as a genuine source of inspiration for preparing a new agrarian movement in Bengal.

Women in Naxalite Movement

After the attainments of Independence some states in India witnessed some peasant and tribal movements, among them Naxalbari of North Bengal was one of the breeding place of peasant uprising. The movement had gained a lot of acclaims as a peasant movement. The name 'Naxal' derived its antecedence from the movement that emerged in 1967 at Naxalbari areas of Darjeeling district. The insurrection started on 24, 1967 in Naxalbari village when a peasant was attacked by hired hands over a land dispute. The women belonging to the peasant families got themselves involved in the movement. They became the inseparable part of the insurrection. Some

members of the Communist party in 1967 splintered away from the Communist movement shifting their loyalty towards the Maoism and tried to build 'red bases' in the remote villages of India. In 1969 they formed the CPI (ML) which adopted a programme in May, 1970. A new political problem cropped up after the formation of the CPI (ML). The persons who believed in the militant movement Charu Sanyal was one of them. He formulated eight deeds containing some programmes that favoured militant struggle and seizure of power through agrarian revolution. Those deeds consisted of strategy for the elimination of the feudal order in countryside to emancipate the poor from the clutches of oppressive landlords and replace the old order with an alternative one.

In the post independent period under the leadership of the CPI (ML), the Naxalbari movement erupted in Naxalbari, Kharibari and Fasideoa areas of North Bengal and also in some parts of Bihar (Bandopadhyay, 2009). From the very outset the womenfolk of the lower strata of the society mainly the peasants and landless peasants involved themselves with a number of protest movements, but they were made invisible in the mainstream historiography of the movement. Their activities and participations in those movements revealed their political consciousness. The women community vehemently opposed the eviction of bargadars. They with the assistance of male members forcibly reaped the harvest, helped the peasants to occupy the land and property of jotedars and supported the rebels to hide under disguise. The female activists used to make contacts with the rebels in different

areas. They also made fierce resistance using easily available weapons like stone, hot water, chili powder etc. The young girls were trained in guerilla tactics of warfare in the aforesaid regions. The trained female rebels confronted the jotedars and police personnel with undaunted courage. Some of them embraced heroic death. A huge number of tribal women fought with bows and arrows to face the zaminders. The accumulated grievances of the subaltern people got expression through various peasants' movement and the Naxal movement was of no exception. Leaders like Kanu Sanyal, Charu Majumdar, Jongal Santal, Sontosh Rana, Joyasree Rana, Asim Chattapadhyay came forward to support the cause of the peasants.

Women have participated in the revolutionary Naxalbari movement since its genesis. The women played various roles as combatants, peace builders, activists and politicians. This movement which espoused the cause of the oppressed class had adopted an inclusive approach towards women still remains to be analyzed. Charu Majumder himself had written that the women should not be involved in squads "because women need a place to stay at least for the night". This view reasserted the patriarchal mindset etched in the very ethos of the movement. In the initial phases of Naxalbari movement several women especially from the middle class joined the movement under the influence of their male counterparts or relatives. This movement brought about a new ray of hope for self transcendence from their everyday life to a 'heroic' one. However even at the peak of the movement women were only

recruited to assist men in ordinary and courier tasks. For most part of the 1970s many women limited their efforts to the class struggle and did not seek to explore the larger role other marginalized women could play in the movement. Like the Tebhaga movement the main claim of the Naxal movement was 'Langal jar jami tar'. The female members of the peasants' families spontaneously participated in different meetings to implement their dream (Das, 2013).

After the arrest of Wangdi the male activists managed to escape, while the women activists tried to organize a meeting on 25 May.1967 where police fired indiscriminately on the violent mob. In a mammoth gathering seven women including two children were gunned down. when they were staging massive demonstration. The names of the deceased were Dhaneswari Singh, Sonamoti Singh, Phulmati Singh, Surubala Barman, Nayaneswari Mallik, Samsari Saibani etc. In the movement the Rajbanshi women of North Bengal joined hands with the tribal women (Sen,1985). A wave of militant movement swept over the region bringing a radical change over the illiterate, ignorant womenfolk. Suniti Biswakarmakar, a tribal woman took part in the movement along with her family members. She mobilized a number of tribal women to participate in the movement. Krishnamaya, a Nepali girl was recruited in the movement by Charu Majumder. She ran a wine shop and used to give shelter to the absconding activists. Dhaneswari though illiterate became a leading cadre. Samsari Saibani was a brave tribal girl and a leading organizer (Sen, 1985) Nayaneswari

was a share cropper who gave leadership of the local women in their movement died in Police firing. So it was evident that women martyrs exhibited their intrepidity and organizational capability. Coming out from their age old social obstacles they ventured to take active participation in the Naxalite movement.

Unlike Tebhaga movement the women could not enroll themselves through an organized organization. Some female students and literate women came forward to welcome and joined hands to expedite the movement of rural women in Naxalbari and adjoining areas. Social activists like Asima Podder, Krishna Bandopadhyay, Jaya Mitra, Archana Guha etc. maintained constant touch with the rebel women (Das, 2013). Most of the women in villages were illiterate and they were the worst victims of exploitation in the hands of Jotedars and Mahajons. Being oppressed for years together they became violent and took part in the movement. Gradually the movement spread like wild fire. The intensity of the movement felt in different parts of Bengal and so far as India was concerned. Around 1971 the Naxalites gained a strong presence among a radical section of student movement in Calcutta. Charu Majumder to entice more students into his organization declared that revolutionary warfare was to take place not only in the rural areas as before, but everywhere and spontaneously.

The Naxalite movement promised women a chance to redefine gender relations in Indian society. Women from the middle class as well as

peasant and tribal communities were drawn into this radical Left movements despite lack of formal space for the women in the CPI(ML) and the absence of gender in the Naxalite class analysis(Sinha Roy,2011).Subsequently the Naxalite women had realized their involvements in the movement as a source of empowerment. They also realized the patriarchal workings of the party including its leaders. The Naxal uprising produced its patriarchal notion of masculinity and femininity, where an idealized male revolutionary subjectivity and idealized women participants struggled to inhabit this subjectivity (Roy,2012). Middle class women's participation was acceptable to men but only a few of these women moved beyond doing secondary tasks. This also tied up with the way in which communist masculinity had been constructed within Left parties in India. It was also stated that communist definition of masculinity in Bengal emphasized upon 'bhadralok' ideals of modesty, humility, sober reasoning, genuine social concern and self reflection. In the Naxalite movement this masculinity was manifested through the tolerance of womenfolk in the upsurge. But it nevertheless relegated them to supportive roles. An effort was made to romanticize women as mothers, wives and widows of revolutionary males.

Conclusion

Naxal movement could not reach to its goal due to merciless oppression upon the militant Naxalites. A good number of Naxalites including women were put into prison. Physical and mental tortures

especially upon the women became rampant. Actually the struggle for land which was a prominent feature of Naxalbari struggle had slipped into background. The old activists had become passive while new activists showed interest in the developmental works of Panchayets etc. and also established Nari Mukti Samity to undertake some prospective activities (Sen, 1985) The Naxalite movement promised women a chance to redefine gender relations in Indian society. It was a platform on which one could interpret gendered constructions of self identity, self-perceptions and self representation of women within the gendered structure of power in society. As a matter of fact the agrarian struggle made deep impact on the peasant women, notably on Rajbanshi and tribal women of North Bengal. Being an integral part of West Bengal the social structure North Bengal was dissimilar to that of the rest of Bengal. The political consciousness of the women community of North Bengal could not attain the similar height like that of the women of Bengal as a whole. As a matter of fact their contributions in respect of agrarian movement were not satisfactory but hopeful; not enough but encouraging.

References

- 1 .Bandopadhyay, Kalyani (2009), *Rajniti o Narishakti*, Kolkata, Progressive Pub.
2. Custers, Peter.(1987), *Women in the Tebhaga Uprising: Rural Poor, Women and Revolutionary Leadership, 1946-47*, Kolkata, Naya Prakash.

3. Custers, Peter.(1986), "Women Role in Tebhaga Movement", *Economic and Political Weekly*, October, 25 Vol. xxi no-434 (Review of journal Women Studies)
4. Chowdhury, Sarama Jakaria, 'Tebhaga Andolone Dinajpurer Krishak Narir Bhumika', in Chowdhury Kamal (ed), *Banglae Gana Andoloner Chhoi Dashak*, Kolkata: Patra Bharati
5. Das, Amal (2013). *Bharat Itihase Nimna Barger Nari Shramik*, Kolkata: Progressive Pub.
6. Dasgupta, Manoranjan (2000), 'Taraier Tebhaga Sangramer Katha', in Roy, Dhananjay (ed), *Tebhaga Andolone*, Kolkata: Ananda Pub.
7. Das, Susnata (2010), 'Left Wing Women in Colonial Bengal: Quest for a New Identity', in Ghosh Arunabha (ed), *Women in India*, Kolkata: Mitram,
8. Ghatak, Moitreya (2011). 'Kakdwip', in Ghosal, Shukla (ed), *Bange Nari Nirjatan O Narir Utthan*, Kolkata: Ananda Pub.
9. Sen, Manikuntala (1982), *Sediner Katha*, Kolkata: Naba Patra.
10. Sen, Sunil (1975), *The Working Women And Popular Movements In Bengal*, Kolkata: K P Bagchi & Company
11. Sen, Sushil. (2000), 'Abismaraniya Adhinar bidraha', Roy, Dhananjay (ed). *Tebhaga Andolone*, Kolkata, Ananda Pub
12. Singha Roy, Debal Kumar (1992), *Women in Peasant Movement: Tebhaga, Naxalite and After*, New Delhi: Manohar
13. Sinha Roy, Mallarika (2011), *Gender and Radical Politics in India: Magic Moments of Naxalbari (1967-75)*, Abingdon and New York: Rutledge.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN FLOWER VENDORS IN PURBA MEDINIPUR DISTRICT: A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Labani Dey

S.A.H.Moinuddin

The paper seeks to analyse how the socio-economic conditions faced by the women flower vendors act as an influential dynamic of empowerment. It is observed that the flower vending business affords relatively subsistence level of income to the women flower vendors. The income generating activities allow them to make economics as well as household decisions. The saving pattern makes them psychologically secure and the debt pattern reduces dependence on money lenders. However, for achieving such kind of transformation and security women are to grind themselves for five to six hours per day in the flower market.

West Bengal is India's third largest flower producer after Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The production of cut flowers increased over the years to attain a production of 1,952 million flowers during 2002-07 from 615million cut flowers in 1992-97. West Bengal is a leading state

that produced maximum number of flowers over the last decade. Flowers like rose, tuberose, champak, jasmine, china box, marigold, gladiolus, gardenia, carnation, gerbera, chrysanthemum, a significant portion of which is produced in West Bengal, have vast scope of its external and internal demand. Floriculture has emerged as a fast growing sector recently in West Bengal for diversification employment generation and value addition in the primary sector. West Bengal is a potential state blessed with highly conducive agro-climate conditions for floriculture. Though the history of growing flowers and ornamental plants is too old, the commercial trade on these have generated recently. These have been made possible for the boost of its exports, recent expansion of joint ventures by corporate sectors for exemption from custom duties on imported plant materials, reduction of duties on materials for green house, high subsidy on airfreight etc. due to impact of economic reform (1991-92), trade liberalization and global impact within the framework of WTO (World Trade Organization). Following these reforms, West Bengal has started commercial farming on a large scale from the mid 90's of the last century. As per the data available from the Directorate of food processing industries and Horticulture, Government of West Bengal(Sarker, 2001 and 2004), it is observed that the area under flower crop in West Bengal was 9.8 thousand hectares in 1996-97, but in 2002-03, it stood at 17.33 thousand hectares, registering around 9.8 per cent increase of compound growth rate per annum between 1996-97 and 2002-03, whereas production growth was around 16.54 per cent during that period (Sarker and Chakraborty.2005;66).But

the commercial flower farming is restricted to certain districts of the state (Government of West Bengal, 2001, cited in Chakraborti and Sarker, 2011): 5 districts- Midnapore (East), Howrah, Nadia, 24 Parganas (North), 24 Parganas (South)- mainly produce commercial flower crops in West Bengal in alluvial zone and Darjeeling district produces commercial flower crops in Hill Zone.(Sarker and Chakraborty.2005; 67; Chakraborti and Sarker, 2011;199).

In West Bengal, Purba Medinipur District flower markets have taken a leading role in the commercialization of flower vending. These markets tries to satisfy the local demand which has been used for worshipping and occasions such as marriage etc as well as in the others state and international markets greatly. Flower vending started to emerge as a reliable economic option mainly in Panskura I and Kolaghat (Panskura II Block) of Purba Medinipur District. In its early stage of development, flower vending used to be practiced in combination with agriculture along infertile banks of river Kasai and Khirai (a tributary of River Kasai).Later the practice gradually spread over the whole Purba Medinipur District as the flower vendors become attracted to it due to its lucrative return Many others types of vendors came into this field. Major types of flower produced are Jasmine, Rose, Chrysanthemum, Aster, Tuberose, Gladiolus, Jarbera, Juhi, Beli , and Marigold etc., which have large demand in national and international market. This tremendous growth of flower vending in the Purba Medinipur District has strengthened the economic base and quality of flower vendors' life.

In this backdrop, this paper seeks to analyse the socio-economic status of women flower vendors of the Purba Medinipur District.

Overview of Vending

An important feature of the informal sector in India is vending. Vendors are those traders who operate from the streets or occupy legally distributed stalls at a given area selling different goods (Mitullah, 2003; Cohen et al., 2000). These range from traders in fruit and vegetables, to those selling crafted products, traditional herbs, pottery, sculpture, fabrics, cosmetics, flowers, kitchen-ware etc.

The market for vendors is largely the pedestrians. In a few cases, especially when they have done business in one spot for a long time, customer relations develop, thereby expanding the market beyond the general pedestrians.

Some vendors look for customers in offices, homes and beyond the urban areas where they are based. This is quite dominant among those who have invested substantially in street trade, especially those who use trucks, pick-ups and bicycles. Such vendors trade in cooked food, fruits, vegetables and clothes. Overall, however, high transport costs and low profits prohibit street traders from accessing alternative and better markets (Mitullah, 2003; Motala, 2002; Cohen et al., 2000). Market relations are usually mutual, except in cases where there is

intense competition among street vendors. Poor location of business, low purchasing power among customers and unreliability of customers who take goods on credit also affects the market. In addition, low levels of professionalism due to low technical education among vendors and low access to modern information communication technologies on productivity information hinders their performance in business marketing (Motala, 2002).

In this regards, flower vending turns as an important source of Income for the women where the spatial conditions are in favour of floriculture. Though there exists gender earnings differentials in which women usually receive lower wage/income than man in the same occupation, and this is true across all occupations. However there is a little research on gender difference in work performance and empowerment issues and this is true across all occupation. Some recent studies in West Bengal (Sarker, 2004; Sarker and Chakrabarti, 2005; 2006; 2011a; 2011b; 2013) lends credence to the fact that the trade market of flower crop in West Bengal, which employ a large section of women marketing agents in all types of flower markets in West Bengal, receive annual net real income compared with their male counterpart, though all the reasons of lower income for the former is not tested directly. The present study is undertaken to assess the economic empowerment of women through vending of flowers in East Midnapore district of West Bengal ,where a large section of women are engaged in vending flowers in the urban areas of East Midnapore, Howrah and

Metropolitan Kolkata. This study seems to be important in that successful entrepreneurship for rural women in floriculture, who are almost still in the informal sector and remain invisible in the official national statistics, is very crucial to the agricultural development of the economy in general and empowerment of women in agriculture in particular.

“Gender equality and women’s empowerment is one of the eight United Nations Millennium Developments Goals. (UN, 2008). According to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, women are not just the target of special measures to promote development. They are also the driving force to overcome poverty, reduce hunger, fight illiteracy, heal the sick, prevent the spread of disease and promote stability (UN, 2008). Gender equality and women’s empowerment are considered to be a desirable by product of human development. Therefore, to achieve these goals, it is essential to close the gender equality and empowerment gaps in education, employment, and political participation (Kabeer, 2005).

CARE which was founded in 1946, originally was dedicated to helping poor people overcome suffering by sending packages of basic necessities. Now CARE also focuses on the causes of poverty and seeks its eradication by eliminating its underlying causes (e.g., lack of education, ownership of property, and power to make decisions). So now CARE focuses on the human-conceived systems that exclude,

marginalize, and discriminate against certain groups of people. Throughout many countries, CARE builds partnership with other organizations and works to eliminate exclusion and social injustices. Also, CARE seeks to encourage gender equality and women empowerment.

Gender equality is considered an important issue for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) because gender inequality is an obstacle to progress, a roadblock on the path of human development (UNDP, 2002, pp.6). Gender equality can be achieved by providing visibility and support to women's contributions in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs for the equal benefit of men and women (Economic and Social Council, 1997).

The Millennium Summit of 2000 proposed four dimensions in which to achieve gender equality i.e., poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and environment and sustainable development. Also, there is a need to remove internal barriers to women's advancement into senior management, including assistance for women to participate from developing countries (<http://www.undp.org>, 2007). Gender equality implies concern for men and women, and the relationships between them.

Gender inequality can result in disadvantages and differentials for females in terms of life expectancy and children's nutrition, denial of choice, lack of political representation, and lack of empowerment (Kabeer, 1999). The inequality for females exists in contrast to the equality for males. However, in many places, this scenario is so much an integral part of the culture that neither men nor women consider the inequalities unjust. Kabeer (1999) suggests that in those cases (women) have internalized their social status as persons of lesser value" (p.440). As a result of the internalization, women would acquiesce to male violence, male dominance in decision making, the discrimination against daughters, and other inequalities. Perhaps these women are victims of learned helplessness (Hiroto, 1974; McGrath, 1994; Overmier and Seligman, 1967; Pryor, White and Toombs, 1998, 2007). The essence of learned helplessness is that people continually find that a task cannot be accomplished, they feel helpless. When they feel helpless, they stop trying to accomplish what they perceive to be impossible even after the task or environment has changed and success is possible. Perhaps some women have experience the society (i.e., people, rituals, rules, and regulations) that so constrained them that even when society changes, they still feel helpless and of lesser value. Martinko and Gardner (1982) indicate that this is Organizationally Induced Helplessness when it is caused by an organization. We suggest that in the case of gender inequality and the lack of empowerment for women this is society-induced and culturally induced learned helplessness.

Though several studies have been made on the ground of women empowerment in India or in state level, but those studies are not specific of the particular domain of our analysis i.e. not specific to women flower vendor. Now, flower vending as a source of income as well as a source of informal employment and a source of empowerment, studies must be made on this ground. In our study, we looked into various journal papers and books, but it is interesting that we can't find a single paper which either explained or indicating the flower vending business may be act as a profitable tool of women empowerment. Thus, it is quite significant step to find out the unexplored link of women empowerment in association with flower vending business.

Objectives and Methodology

Major objectives of the study are: i) to study the socio-economic pattern of the women flower vendors and ii) to analyse how socio-economic status helps women flower vendors to be empowered.

To carry out the research, my selection of the three major flower markets, namely, Kolaghat, Deulia & Keshapat of Purba Medinipur district is guided by the market size, women participation rate and familiarity. Though the impression of women's empowerment has long been legitimized by international development agencies, what actually comprises empowerment, how it is measured, and which dimension it comprises is debated in the development literature. There has

consequently been a proliferation of studies attempting to measure empowerment, some seeking to facilitate comparisons between locations or over time, some to demonstrate the impact of specific interventions on women's empowerment and others to demonstrate the implications of women's empowerment for desired policy objectives. However, not everyone accepts that empowerment can be clearly defined, let alone measured (Kabeer, 2001). Different authors and researchers define and measure empowerment according to the need of their work, place and socio-cultural situation of the area under study.

Now, to assess socio-economic status of women flower vendor, cross sectional sampling survey method is used through scheduled questionnaire. In drawing of samples, the simple random sampling without replacement technique has been used in our study.

A simple random sample from finite population is a sample selected such that each possible sample combination has equal probability of being chosen. It is also called unrestricted random sampling. Now, in simple random sampling without replacement technique the population elements can enter the sample only once i.e., the units once selected is not returned to the population before the next draw.

In this backdrop, total 200 women flower vendors are surveyed through our scheduled questionnaire from the above mentioned three

major flower markets. Our observatory findings help us to choose proper sample size of women flower vendors from each market on the basis of their participation rate. We found that in Kolaghat and Keshapat flower market the participation rate of women is very high when compared with the Deulia flower market. So we choose 80 samples from each of the two markets (i.e., Kolaghat & Keshapat) and only 40 samples were drawn from Deulia flower market of Purba Medinipur District.

Survey Results and Revelations

Given the dominance of economic thinking within the World Bank, it is not surprising it was one of the first agencies to explicitly adopt the language of women's economic empowerment: 'Economic empowerment is about making markets work for women (at the policy level) and empowering women to compete in markets (at the agency level)' (World Bank 2006: p.4).

Now, those women who enter into the market with minimum level of investment must rely on their physical labour & luck to meet their daily needs. They are seldom in a position to negotiate the price of their flower products or opt for leisure if they do not receive their asking price. Those with considerable investment in the flower vending business, on the other hand, are not only better able to determine the price at which they will engage in market transactions and to take advantage of any new opportunities that may emerge, they

are also in a position to close off such opportunities to less fortunate groups. In this backdrop, in our study, the socio-economic status mainly comprises five aspects. First; monthly income of the flower vendor, second; saving pattern of the vendor, third; debt status, fourth, property holding & living conditions and lastly the working hour per day in the flower market by them.

Monthly Income: Generally, women who working in the informal sector like the flower vending business earns less than their husband and sometimes when she plays the role of family head (in case of divorcee or widow women) they have to fight for their subsistence. Though in both cases, those women gets significance in the family as they are also earning members too. Working in the vending business generally adds more workload on women as they also have to perform the household chores. Nevertheless, it helps them to gain respect and provide them scope for active participation in the process of decision making.

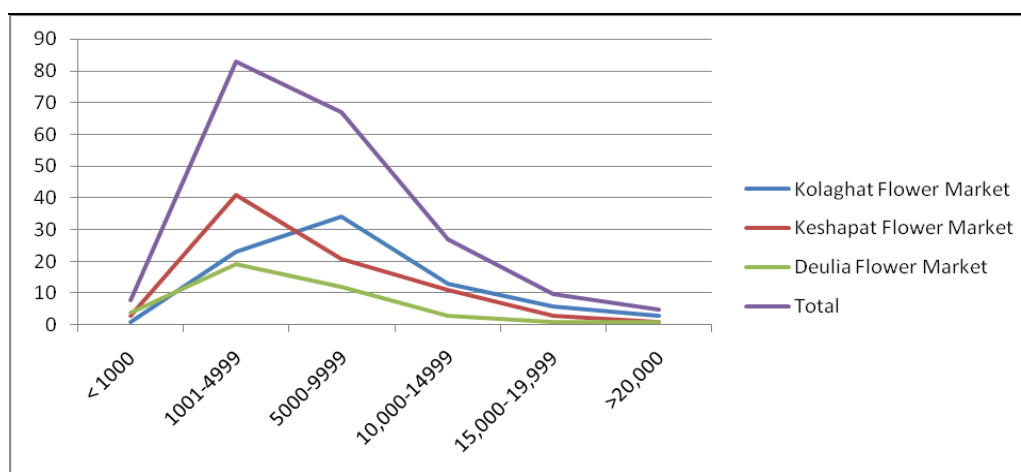
In this regard, though the data on the income through flower vending business cannot perfectly reflect their original standard of living structure but it can help us to understand the basic livelihood status of the women flower vendors.

Table 1
Level of Monthly Income of the Flower Vendors

Monthly Saving (Rs.)	Kolaghat Flower Market	Keshapat Flower Market	Deulia Flower Market	Total
<1000	1	3	4	8
1000-4999	23	41	19	83
5000-9999	34	21	12	67
10000-14999	13	11	12	17
15000-19999	6	3	1	10
>20000	3	1	1	5
Total	80	80	40	200

Chart 1

Pattern of Income Distribution of the Flower Vendors



From, the above table as well as from the diagram of income distribution status, we found that around 75 percent women flower vendors income fall within the range of 1000 to 9999 rupees. From our study, we also found that the 13.5 per cent women earning in the range of 10000 to 14999 rupees. While only 7.5 % women earn more than rupees 15 thousand.

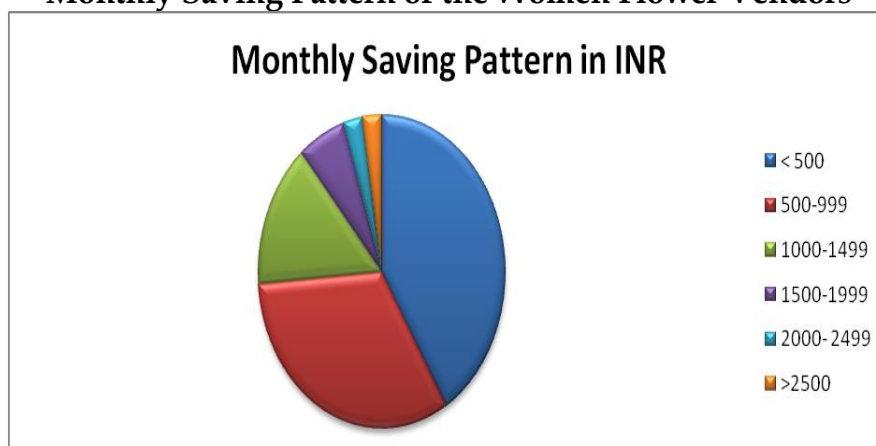
Therefore, we may say that, for most of the women, with a fair monthly income may be the reason that attracts them to this business. Their earnings though not sufficient but it helps them to live a decent standard of living and to make choices in life. The choices includes how to spend their earnings on which they want to spend, to make decision on daily food intake by them and lastly to make decision to take proper steps to make a healthy life. Therefore, from our study we may state that the increase in income leads to make better choices on the economic decision taken by the women flower vendors of Purba Medinipur district.

Monthly Savings: Our study reveals that savings act as a vital ingredient of investment in the flower vending business. Table 3.2, depicts that 47 per cent of women flower vendors saves less than 500 rupees per month. 28 per cent women flower vendors save rupees 500 to 999 rupees per month while only 24 per cent of women flower vendors saves more than one thousand rupees. We found that the respondents in our study whenever they earn some extra amount through this business. In this regard, they also use their savings for future precautions. Generally, maximum women flower vendors save their money in rural banks & post office.

Table 2
Saving Pattern of Flower Vendors

Monthly Saving (Rs.)	Kolaghat Flower Market	Keshapat Flower Market	Deulia Flower Market	Total
<500	33	39	22	94
500-999	26	21	11	58
1000-1499	12	9	4	25
1500-1999	5	3	1	9
2000-2499	2	5	1	8
>2500	2	3	1	6
Total	80	80	40	200

Chart 2
Monthly Saving Pattern of the Women Flower Vendors



Therefore, in the flower markets of Purba Medinipur district, the high percentage of flower vendors using their own savings seems to be possible because their incomes have increased rapidly since they got the security of vending zone. In flower markets of Purba Medinipur district, it is possible that their turnover was fairly high therefore they could invest from their own savings. However, in all cases, the flower vendors were not really large scale business persons. So it was possible

to refinance their micro business through their own savings. It also helps them in being psychologically secure.

Debt Status: As far as finance for their business was concerned, in most of the flower markets, a majority of the vendors either dipped into their own savings as mentioned earlier or by taken money on interest from money lenders to do their business.

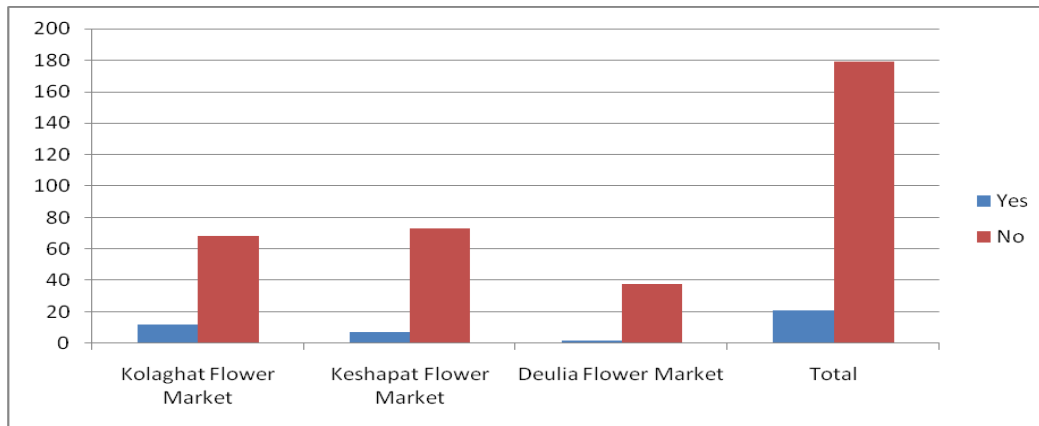
The alternative sources of funding carry high rates of interest, which often ruin the vendors or as is the case of the female vendors in the flower markets, they live from hand to mouth and not able to alleviate themselves from poverty. The most frequent source is from moneylenders. From our study, we found that, in these flower markets of Purba Medinipur districts, a majority of the vendors relied on their own sources. We found that the reliance on money lenders is much lower.

Table 3
Debt Burden Status of the Flower Vendors

Debt Status	Kolaghat Flower Market	Keshapat Flower Market	Deulia Flower Market	Total
Yes	12	7	2	21
No	68	73	38	179
Total	80	80	40	200

From the above table we found that only 10.5 per cent women flower vendors rely on the debt-based flower vending business.

Chart 3
Pattern of Debted and Non-debted Flower Vendors



So we can say that majority of the women flower vendors are empowered as they do not rely on the borrowing to make their business.

The Working Hour: We can now turn to discussing the number of hours that the women flower vendors spent on vending. Most of the vendors in these flower markets said that the longer number of hours in the morning phase they worked would in turn mean more income. Hence we find that in most cases, vendors work more between five to six hours in morning phase of a day. In the case of flower, this exercise of cleaning is extremely important as very few clients would prefer to buy unwashed flowers. Hence, the number of working hours increases because the cleaning time ranges from one to one and a half hours a day. In Kolagahat, Deulia & Keshapat flower market, we find that vendors work for more than five hours a day plus one hour in

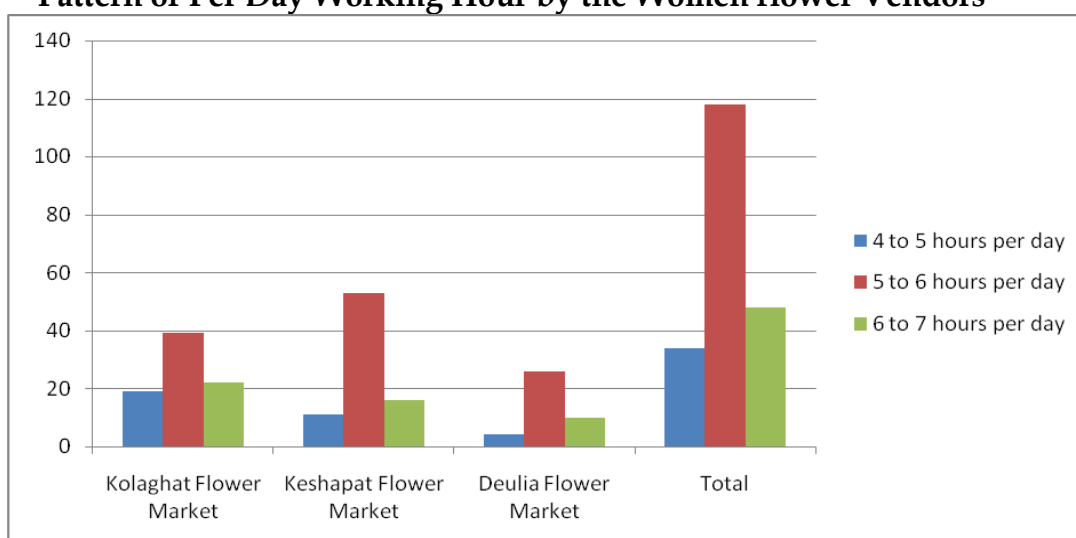
cleaning. So each vendor spends approximately between six to seven hours a day.

In the concerned flower markets of Purba Medinipur District, we found that women workers work less than the males because they are engaged in other activities at home which include cleaning, cooking and childcare. Hence their income too, is lower than that of men.

Table 4
Working Hour of the Women Flower Vendor

Working Hour	Kolaghat Flower Market	Keshapat Flower Market	Deulia Flower Market	Total
4-5 Hour per day	19	11	4	34
5-6 Hour per day	39	53	26	118
6-7 Hour per day	22	16	10	48
Total	80	80	40	200

Chart 4
Pattern of Per Day Working Hour by the Women flower Vendors



From the above table as well as chart on the working hour per day by the women flower vendors shows approx 59 per cent flower vendors work five to six hours in the flower markets. While only 17 per cent of women vending their flowers by just four to five hours in the markets. 24 per cent women flower vendor engaged themselves at about six to seven hours per day to achieve more income from the flower markets.

Conclusion

The lives of women have been changing through the participation in flower vending business in Purba Medinipur district. Their high self-worth to decision is a sign of growing consciousness. Over time, women have been increasingly involved in decision making. Their mobility is unconvincing, but is close to our expectation. We hope that the mobility of women will increase along with the improvements in facilities, such as reserved seats for women in public transport and law enforcement to stop sexual harassment against women. We found that the women do well in regulating and controlling their lives as the overall performance is at the highest satisfactory level.

Thus, we can conclude that the women related to flower vending business in flower markets of Purba Medinipur district achieve and increases their level of empowerment through this job. The main factor affecting their level of empowerment is mainly the power to make economic decisions in their life as well as in the society.

Using the results of this study, we recommend certain steps to improve the power practice of women. Women have perceptions about their rights and abilities. Sustained support from the state and society is necessary to motivate their perceptions. The education of women should not be compromised, and the ongoing support for women's education should be intensified. Involvement in income-generating activities should be expanded because of its supportive role in women power practice and because it has a correlation with their empowerment. Support to women should be provided in the form of income-related activities to make them active stakeholders of the economy. A good working environment, as well as reliable traffic and security systems, should be provided to encourage the mobility of women related to the flower vending business.

References

- Ali, R. (2013). 'Empowerment Beyond Resistance: Cultural Ways of Negotiating Power Relations'. *Women's Studies International Forum* (in press). Retrieved on July 24, 2013 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.05.019>.
- Alsop, R., & Heinsohn, N. (2005). *Measuring Empowerment in Practice: Structuring Analysis and Framing Indicators*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3510. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Anand, S., & Sen, A. K. (1994). *Human Development Index: Methodology and Measurement*. Human Development Report Office, Occasional Paper No. 12. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

- Basu, A.M., & Koolwal, G. B. (2005). 'Two Concepts of Female Empowerment: Some Leads From DHS Data on Women's Status and Reproductive Health'. In S. Kishor (Ed.), *A Focus on Gender: Collected Papers on Gender Using DHS Data* (pp. 15-53). Calverton, MD: ORC Macro. Retrieved on August 14, 2013 from <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/OD32/3.pdf>
- Bennett, L. 2002. *Using Empowerment and Social Inclusion for Pro-poor Growth: A Theory of Social Change*, Working Draft of Background Paper for the Social Development Strategy Paper, Washington, DC: World Bank
- Dixon, R. 1978. *Rural Woman at Work*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Govindasamy, P. and A. Malhotra. 1996. "Women's Position and Family Planning in Egypt", *Studies in Family Planning* 27(6): 328-40.
- Haddad, L. 1999. "Women's Status: Levels, Determinants, and Consequences for Malnutrition, Interventions, and Policy", *Asian Development Review* 17(1, 2): 96-131.
- Haque, M. M., Tareque, M. I. and Mostofa, M. G. 2010. "Women's Empowerment and its Impact on Fertility in Bangladesh", *Demography India* 39(1), forthcoming.
- Jejeebhoy, S. J. 2000. "Women's Autonomy in Rural India: Its Dimensions, Determinants, and the Influence of Context", in H. Presser and G. Sen, (eds) *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving Beyond Cairo*; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kabeer, N. 1998. *Money Can't Buy Me Love? Re-evaluating Gender, Credit and Empowerment in Rural Bangladesh*, IDS Discussion Paper 363.
- Kabeer, N. 2001. *Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment in Discussing Women's Empowerment- Theory and Practice*, SIDA Studies no 3. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

- Keller, B. and D. C. Mbwewe. 1991. "Policy and Planning for the Empowerment of Zambia's Women Farmers", *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 12(1):75-88.
- Kennedy, G., Nantel, G., Brouwer, I. D., & Kok, F. J. (2006). Does Living in an Urban Environment Confer Advantages for Childhood Nutritional Status? Analysis of Disparities in Nutritional Status by Wealth and Residence in Angola, Central African Republic and Senegal. *Public Health Nutrition*, 9(02), 187-193.
- Kishor, S. (2000). 'Empowerment of Women in Egypt and Links to the Survival and Health of Their Infants'. In H. P. and G. Sen, ed. *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving Beyond Cairo*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kishor, S., & Gupta, K. (2004). 'Women's Empowerment in India and Its States: Evidence from the NFHS'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(7), 694-712.
- Krishnakumar, J., & Nagar, A. L. (2007). 'On Exact Statistical Properties of Multidimensional Indices Based on Principal Components, Factor Analysis, MIMIC and Structural Equation Models'. *Social Indicators Research*, 86(3), 481-496.
- Lawn, J., Cousens, S., & Zupan, J. (2005). Neonatal Survival 1 - 4 Million Neonatal Deaths: When? Where? Why? *Lancet*, 365(9462), 891-900.
- Mahmud, S., Shah, N. M., & Becker, S. (2012). 'Measurement of Women's Empowerment in Rural Bangladesh'. *World Development*, 40(3), 610-619.
- Malhotra, A. and S. Shuler. 2005. "Women's Empowerment as a Variable in International Development", in D. Narayan (ed.) *Measuring Empowerment: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*, Washington DC: World Bank,

- Malhotra, A. and M. Mather. 1997. "Do Schooling and Work Empower Women in Developing Countries? Gender and Domestic Decisions in Sri Lanka", *Sociological Forum* 12(4): 599-630.
- Mason, K. O. and H. L. Smith. 2003. "Women's Empowerment and Social Context: Result from Five Asian Countries", Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Study and Conference Center.
- Mason, K. and H. L. Smith. 2000. "Husbands' versus Wives Fertility Goals and Use of Contraception: The Influence of Gender Context in five Asian Countries", *Demography* 37(3):299-311.
- Mason, K. O. 1998. "Wives' Economic Decision-making Power in the Family: Five Asian Countries", in K. O. Mason (ed.) *The Changing Family in Comparative Perspective: Asia and the United States*, pp.105-133. Honolulu: East-West Center.
- Parveen, S. and I. U. Leonhauser. 2004. "Empowerment in Rural Women Bangladesh: A Household Level Analysis" Paper presented at Conference on Rural Poverty Reduction through Research for Development and Transformation, Berlin, Germany (5-7 October).
- Reeves, H. and S. Baden. 2000. "Gender and Development: Concepts and Definitions", BRIDGE Development-Gender Report No. 55.
- Singh, S. and R. Samara. 1996. "Early Marriage among Women in Developing Countries", *International Family Planning Perspectives*, 22(4): 148-157 & 175. United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW)
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs. 2001. "Empowerment of Women Throughout the Life Cycle as a Transformative Strategy for Poverty Eradication", Report of the Expert Group Meeting, New Delhi, India (26-29 November).

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 1999) "Human Rights for Children and Women: How UNICEF Helps Make Them a Reality", Retrieved from <http://www.unicef.org/pubsgen/humanrightschildren/index.html> (accessed 11 November 2007)

UN. (1995). *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, 1995. The Fourth World Conference on Women, 4-15 September 1995, Beijing, China. Retrieved on July 26, 2013 from

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf>

UN. (2009). *2009 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, Women's Control Over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources, Including Microfinance*. New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for the Advancement of Women,

United Nations. Retrieved on February 6, 2014 from

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/WorldSurvey2009.pdf>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2005), *Human Development Reports 2005*: New York and Oxford : Oxford University.

UNDP (2010): *Human Development Report, 2010*,

World Economic Forum. (2005), "Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap", Switzerland

UNFPA (2005a). *Culture Matters to Development: It is the "how" and not the "why" and the "what"*. New York: UNFPA, UN Population Fund. Retrieved on August 13, 2013 from <http://www.unfpa.org/public/News/pid/2469>

UNFPA. (2005b). *Cultural Programming: Reproductive Health Challenges and Strategies in East and South-east Asia*. Bangkok, Thailand: UNFPA Country Technical Services Team for East and South-East Asia. Retrieved on August 13, 2013 from

http://unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/533_filename_bkculture.pdf

- UNFPA. (2008). *Negotiating Culture: Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering Women*. In UNFPA, *State of world population 2008* (pp. 27–41). Retrieved on August 14, 2013 from http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2008/includes/images/pdf_swp/03_promoting_gender.pdf
- UNICEF.(2013).*Early Marriage*. New York: UNICEF. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/children_4866.htm
- UNPOPIN. (1994). *Gender Equality, Equity and Empowerment of Women*. In: UNPOPIN, *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development* (Chap. 4). New York: United Nations Population Information Network (POPIN), UN Population Division. Retrieved on August 14, 2013 from <http://www.un.org/popin/icpd/conference/offeng/poa.html>
- Varghese, T. (2011). 'Women Empowerment in Oman: A Study Based on Women Empowerment Index'. *Far East Journal of Psychology and Business*, 2(2), 37–53.
- Williams, S., Seed, J., & Mwau, A. (1994), *Oxfam Gender Training Manual*. Oxford: Oxfam Publication.

WOMAN AND DOUBLE BURDEN OF WORK

M. Yasoda Devi

A.C.R.Diwakar Reddy

Double burden, or 'the second shift' implies the workloads of working men and women and their role in unpaid domestic chores or labour. Where both family partners have paid jobs, women often spend significantly more time on household chores and caring work. This outcome is largely determined by traditional gender roles that have been accepted by society. Labour market constraints also play a role in determining who does the bulk of unpaid work. Due to an increase in the number of women participating in the labour market, efforts have been made to document the effects of this double burden on couples. This paper traces the effects of the gendered division of labour and the difference between the time men and women contribute to unpaid labour.

One of the most cited obstacles to women's advancement is the so-called "double burden" of career and responsibility for the home and/or children. This double burden is not necessarily a result of

macho men refusing to do their share of domestic duties. More often, it is the outcome of a man's career demands taking precedence over women. Examining the domestic set-ups of the FT's top 50 global women chief executives, Lucy Kellaway could not find a "single one with an alpha male husband".

Kellaway argues that high-flying women get there because the men in their lives agree to soft-pedal their own careers, and she cites as an example Gregg Ahrendts, "who wound up his construction business so Angela could be chief executive of Burberry". In a talk posted on the TED website, Sheryl Sandberg, Chief Operating Officer of Face Book advises: "making your partner a real partner" so that you approach your two careers and your joint responsibilities for home and family as a joint enterprise. The advantage of this approach is that it places the pressure to compromise equally on both partners. Men benefit by taking a bigger share of childcare and home life, while women are not left carrying the responsibilities of home life exclusively.

In a recent interview, Janice Chaffin, group president at Symantec, said that when her daughters were young, her software-architect husband chose jobs that involved no travel because her career demanded it. He picked the kids up from school, and the couple employed a live-in nanny to help create practical stability at home. The home/work dynamic does not have to be a zero-sum game where one member of

the domestic partnership has the career while the other supports domestically. It may be possible, with the support of more flexible employment practices and a good deal of advance planning, for both men and women to achieve high-octane careers without forcing their partners out of the game.

Busiest world has been synchronizing us very busy. All of us are facing troubles in accomplishing the existing tasks and some are about to darken our door. In this regard women are facing great misery, suffering and tribulation. In work environment, offices, and some other work places where she does her occupation. In this corporate world and contemporary times woman prioritized but assigning tasks to her is highly insignificant.

Predominantly in her work places she has been forced by superiors to get it done soon. Mismanagement by subordinates, aggressive touch by top management squeezes her utterly. Indeed her efforts to become good employee and finishing successive tasks are becoming delayed due to above mentioned reasons.

Woman as homemakers are quintessential to experience absolute bedlam every time. School going children's demands, needs and wants shall be looking after by her. Providing essentials to the husband and doing accoutrements to everyone is really risk taking. In absence of her

at home for sometime everything will be at sixes and sevens. There is no escape from opening cans of worms.

Problems are no stranger to woman but double work and burden is a new complication which distracts and slowly takes her into despondency. As a student she is highly determined to complete her courses. But there are some intangible reasons and troubles that make her desperate and effects over her future progress. There is no sign of curbing these sorts of problems in near future. Slowly it spreads like virus and deteriorates the entire spirit.

Women are conditioned by system. There is one default mechanism in them that allows multitasking fulfilment more often. In parallel with they cannot contain stress and emotion either. The arrest of anti-elements in them will be done successfully by collective work.

Bosses who micromanage assign surreptitious tasks indirectly and pressurize woman to look into the cases and ask her to solve it at the earliest. Avalanche of criticism will follow her when she fails and she enormously dissatisfies.

More burden and critical problems are regular occurrences to women. As a social worker she has to go along with scum of the society that will be like everyone in the same boat. She tries to get rid of them and insists on justice.

So, regular work burden must be less on her, so that she can perform repetitive resounding tasks and creates rejuvenation timely. There must be a room for plethora of opportunities to women; there by the new breakthrough will come into light.

Because of women's expanded roles in the workforce have generally not been accompanied by any relaxation of expectations for their family and domestic activities, many women today face the "double burden" of home and work responsibilities. Women take on the largest portion of the domestic obligations of the home.

Evolution and Goals

Sometime in 1920s, feminism died in the United States. It was a premature death. Feminists had only recently obtained their long sought for tool, the vote, with which they had hoped to make an equal place for women in this society. But it seemed like a final one. By the time the granddaughters of the women who had sacrificed so much for suffrage had grown to maturity, not only had social mythology firmly ensconced women in the home, but the very term "feminist" had become an epithet.

Social fact, however, did not always coincide with social mythology. During the era of the "feminine mystique" when the women was dropping, their absolute numbers were rising astronomically. Their

participation is also increasing even while their position within it was declining.

Opportunities to work, the trend toward smaller families, plus changes in status symbols from a leisured wife at home to a TV, all contributed to a basic alteration of the female labour force from one of primarily 25 to one of married women and mothers over 40. Added to these developments was an increased segregation of the job market, a flooding of traditional female jobs (e.g. teaching and social work) by men, a decrease of women's percentage of the professional and technical jobs by a third and a commensurate decline in their relative income. The result was the creation of a class of highly educated, underemployed women. In the early sixties feminism was still an unmentionable, but its ghost was slowly rising from the dead. The new life came with the establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women by President Kennedy in 1961.

The traditional female homemaker-male breadwinner model characterized female employment prior to World War II. At the turn of the 20th century in the United States, "only 18 percent of women over the age of 13 participated in the labour force". These women were typically young, single, white, and native-born. In contrast, married women in the labour force were "predominantly blacks or immigrants and very poor." Working mothers often exited the labour force once their children were old enough to earn money. The

outpouring of occupational opportunities in the early 1920s, such as in “cafeteria, nurseries”, laundries and other facilities seemed to release women from domestic chores and freed them to participate fully in the sphere of production.”

The post-World War II period is marked by relatively high levels of female participation in the workforce, particularly in industrialized countries. Although a large proportion of women exited the workforce immediately following World War II, the idea of working class women was able to take root and normalize. "In 2001, 47 percent of U.S. workers were women, and 61 percent of women over the age of 15 were in the labour force." Besides an increased demand for women's labour, other factors contributed to the growth of their participation, such as more educational opportunities and later marriage and childbearing ages. The idea of the double burden is more evolved with the times concerning both sexes and their newfound roles. The role of a provider and care giver is sometimes expected of women, but as more women enter the workforce, an 'independent' ideology seems to take effect and forces some women to decide between a career and family. Some may choose strictly one or the other; others may choose to carry the burden of both lifestyles. Some "modern men tend to believe in the principle of equal sharing of domestic labour, but fail to actually live up to that belief. The constant tug of war regarding one's time and where it could, should but will be spent creates a new speed bump that is a little bit higher than the previous ones. Modern times

illuminate the dilemma that many dual-income couples face when trying to reconcile unpaid domestic work and paid employment. The burden of encompassing ideologies plays a toll on both sexes in today's societies.

This was accomplished by, among other disciplines, women's studies, feminist studies, feminine literary criticism, gyno-criticism, socialist feminism and the feminist art movement and the feminist art movement. The call for "abortion on demand" is often misunderstood. Leaders of the women's liberation movement were clear that women should have reproductive freedom and safe access to legal abortion. Feminists helped spark debate over assumptions embedded in our language that reflects the assumption of a male-dominated patriarchal society.

Many women went to college and worked professionally in the early 20th century, but the mid-20th century myth of the middle-class suburban housewife downplayed the importance of women's education. Feminists knew that girls and women must be encouraged to seek an education, and not just as "something to fall back on," if they were to become, and be seen as, "fully" equal.

Feminists worked for the Equal Rights Amendments, the Equal Pay Act and the addition of Sex Discrimination to the Civil Rights Act and other laws that would guarantee equality.

Although not all feminists called for collective mothering or went so far as to urge “seizing the means of reproduction,” as Shulamith Firestone wrote in *The Dialectic of Sex*, it was clear that women should not have to bear the sole responsibility for raising children.

Mitigating Measures

Legal

- i. Enacting laws such as sexual offences and domestic violence making various forms of violence against women clearly defined crimes, and taking appropriate measures to impose penalties, punishment and other enforcement mechanisms for the prevention and eradication of violence against women and children;

- ii. Adopting legislative measures to ensure the protection and removal of all forms of discrimination against, and empowerment of women with disabilities, the girl-child, the aged, women in armed conflict and other women whose circumstances make them especially vulnerable to violence;

- iii. Reviewing and reforming the criminal laws and procedures applicable to cases of sexual offences, to eliminate gender bias and ensure justice and fairness to both the victim and accused;

iv. Introducing, as a matter of priority, legal and administrative mechanisms for women and children subjected to violence, effective access to counselling, restitution, reparation and other just forms of dispute resolution;

v. Adopting such other legislative and administrative measures as may be necessary to ensure the prevention and eradication of all forms of violence against women and children;

Social, Economic, Cultural and Political

vi. Promoting the eradication of elements in traditional norms and religious beliefs, practices and stereotypes which legitimize and exacerbate the persistence and tolerance of violence against women and children;

vii. Introducing and supporting gender sensitization and public awareness programmes aimed at eradicating violence against women and children;

viii. Encouraging the media to play a constructive role in the eradication of violence against women and children by adopting guidelines which ensure sensitive coverage of the issue and avoid the perpetuation of stereotypes;

Services

ix. Providing easily accessible information on services available to women and children victims/survivors of violence, including women and children with disabilities;

x. Ensuring accessible, effective and responsive police, prosecutorial, health, social welfare and other services, and establishing specialized units to redress cases of violence against women and children;

xi. Providing accessible, affordable and specialized legal services, including legal aid, to ensure the just and speedy resolution of matters regarding violence against women and children;

xii. providing easily accessible, affordable and, where possible, free social, and administrative services for the empowerment of women and children victims/survivors of violence;

Education, Training and Awareness Building

xiii. Introducing and promoting gender sensitization and training of all service providers engaged in the administration of justice, such as judicial officers, prosecutors, police, prison, welfare and health officials;

xiv. Undertaking and sharing research of the gathering of statistics and other information on the causes, prevalence and consequences of violence against women and children;

xv. Encouraging the exchange of national, regional and international best practices for the eradication of violence against women and children;

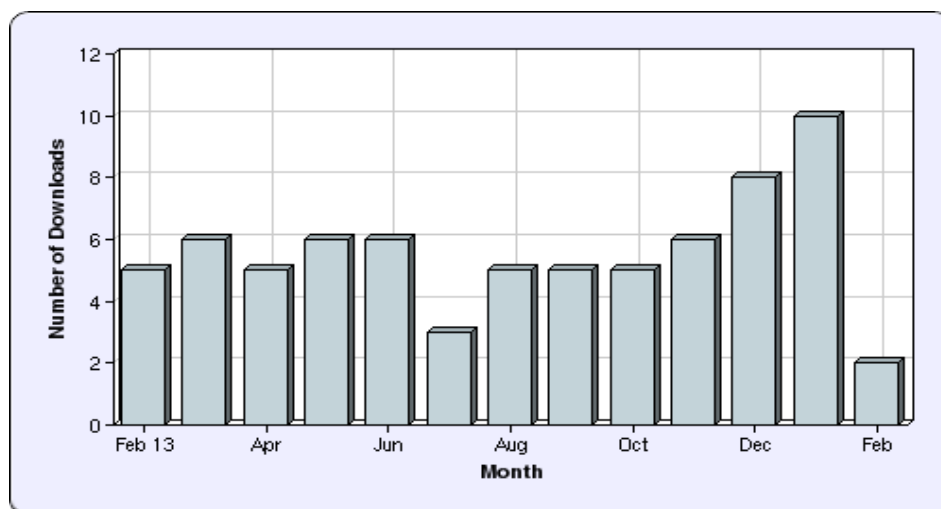
Armed Conflict and Women

Understanding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls requires attention to four specific themes. First, women and girls tend to experience conflict differently than men and boys. There is growing awareness of the gender differences and inequalities during war and in post-conflict reconstruction. Yet it is misleading to set up a dichotomy that locates women and men in totally different spheres. Women and men share experiences and are intimately connected to each other through their families and communities. Women often see their needs and interests as interwoven with the needs and interests of their male partners and other family members.

Second, women (just like men) are both actors and victims in armed conflicts. Women participate in armed forces as combatants and through playing supporting roles. They may assume these roles willingly or be forced to play them. Between 1990 and 2002, girl soldiers were among fighting forces and groups in at least 54 countries, and fought in conflicts in 36 of those countries. Women and adolescent girls may also support fighting forces and prolong the conflict in numerous other ways. They may infiltrate opposition groups for the purposes of passing information, hide or smuggle weapons, support or

care for fighters. For example, in Sierra Leone, women supporting the rebel forces smuggled weapons through checkpoints in baskets of fish, under their clothing and via their children. They also infiltrated governmental and peacekeeping forces using social contacts. Individual women combine various roles at once, such as displaced person, community activist, small business owner, soldier and Homeless person.

Graph 1
Month-wise Double Burden of Women (2013).



In many conflict situations, local civil society groups, including women's organizations and networks, actively work to halt the fighting, or address some of its worst effects. Their activities may be limited in countries where women do not have full and equal rights or are considered the property of their husbands and fathers. Although these restrictions are usually tightened during armed conflict, women

and adolescent girls continue to organize for change. Women and girls are also peace activists, working to heal communities and bring about sustainable peace.

Extensive increase and mounting risk of Double Burden can be guessed from the graph 1.

Conclusion

Double Burden for women refers to the practice whereby one sex is given preferential treatment over the others. The practice of giving social importance to the biological differences between men and women is there everywhere. In some societies, these differences are very much pronounced while in others, they are given less importance. Even the Indian society is not an exception to this trend.

In our socialization process female children are becoming victims of discrimination. In the Indian social context even today male children are preferred to female children. Hence, female children are subject to discriminatory treatment. Male preference and female negligence has almost become a working policy especially in the rural areas. Discrimination between male and female children is made in matters relating to food, dress, health, education, domestic work etc. The policy of male preference and female negligence has led to what is known as "female disadvantages". In India, mothers show preferences for male children. They give them importance because males are wanted during

their old age to offer protection, males have greater scope than women and occupational avenues are also wider for males than for females.

SITUATION OF GIRL CHILD IN WEST BENGAL: SOME REFLECTIONS

Sonel Som

The paper focuses on increasing masculinity among child population and its present situation in West Bengal, the state having a declining child sex ratio since 1991 as thousands of girl child are being killed before or at birth and seeks to account for the regional inequality of child population among the districts of West Bengal.

West Bengal has undergone significant economic and social changes in last decade. But why are female children still at risk despite marked progress in female literacy and increased participation of women in economic and political life? This remains one critical question. In South Asia sons are generally preferred over daughters for a number of economic, social and religious reasons, including financial support, old age security, property inheritance, dowry, family lineage, prestige and power, birth and death rituals and beliefs about religious duties and salvation. The declining number of females compared to number of males in Indian population has been a cause for concern during the past three decades, brought to attention the growing gender discrimination by analysing male female sex ratio.¹ The results of 2011 census further intensify the debate.

West Bengal is now the 3rd most populous state in India, with a population density of a little more than 900 persons /km². The state continues to attract a large number of migrants from neighbouring states as well as neighbouring countries. Its topography is dominated by the alluvial plains of the Ganga and its tributaries except for the hilly terrain of North Bengal, extending into Himalayan foothills. During the last few decades West Bengal has recorded high rates of agricultural growth. It also has a strong industrial base which needs to be further strengthened and diversified. A study on state level GEM values in India has placed West Bengal in the 7th position in a list of 16 states.² Recently, in the inauguration ceremony of the *Call To Action Summit 2015*, New Delhi, Prime Minister declared 184 districts of India which are vulnerable to child mortality. Among them four are from West Bengal. They are North and South 24 Parganas, Maldah and Murshidabad.³

The main focus of this paper is on increasing masculinity among child population and its present situation in West Bengal. West Bengal has a declining child sex ratio since 1991 as thousands of girl child are being killed before or at birth. This paper tries to explain the regional inequality of child population among the districts of West Bengal.

Objectives & Methodology

The main objectives of the paper are:

- i. To find out the pattern and trend of child birth in West Bengal and male female differentials.
- ii. To find out the spatial variation of female child growth rate.
- iii. To identify the vulnerable districts in this connections.
- iv. To draw awareness among population for the protection of girl child.

As the present paper is based on situation of children, the study is based on secondary data drawn from Census of India and national level demographic surveys. All data are computed and represented by Ms excel and some other software.

Children in West Bengal

India ranks 132 out of 187 countries on the gender inequality index lower than Pakistan (123), according to the United Nations Development Programmes Human Development Report 2013. The report found all countries in South Asia, except Afghanistan, were a better place for women than India with Sri Lanka (75) topping them all. India with 1.21 billion people is the second most populous country in the World and West Bengal ranks 3rd in population among the states of India. Every year an estimated 26 millions of children are born in India. The total population in West Bengal during 2011 was 91347736 among which 46927389 (51.37%) were male and 44420347 (48.63 %) were female and the decadal growth rate was 13.93%. There is a reduction of 11.40% of child population (0-6 years) during this period. The total child population in

2011 was 10112599 among them 5187264 (51.30%) are male and 4925335(48.70%) are female. The share of children (0-6 years) in the total population has showed a decline of 3.17 points in 2011 compared to 2001 census. The total share of children to the total population was 11.07% whereas the corresponding figures of male and female children are 5.67% and 5.39%.

Table 1
(0-6 years) Population in West Bengal, 2011

<i>Total population (2011) in %</i>		<i>Child population (2011) in %</i>		<i>Share of child population to total population (%)</i>	
Male	Female	Male	female	Male	Female
51.37	48.63	51.30	48.70	5.67	5.39

Source: Census of India 2011

The decadal decline of child population was (-11.40%). It was (-11.89%) for female children and (-10.94%) for male children. 11 (58%) districts out of 19 have declining female child decadal growth rate more than the state average. These districts are Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Kochbehar, Dakshin Dinajpur, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Nadia, South 24 Parganas, Paschim Medenipur, Hugli and Bankura. Rural female child decadal growth rate is -17.96 and urban is 12.02. During 2001-2011 the share of children to total population has been declined and the decline is sharper for female than male children.

Table 2
Proportion in Age Group 0-6 years to Total Population

	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Decline in share of children to total population</i>		
				<i>Persons</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Census 2001	14.24	14.05	14.44			

Census 2011	11.07	11.05	11.09	-3.17	-3.00	-3.35
-------------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

Source: Census of India 2011

Infant Mortality rate for Girl Child in West Bengal: According to WBHDR (2001) the IMR (Infant mortality rate i.e. the death of infants in 0-1 age group per thousand live infants) for the state is 49 per 1000 live births compared to India's 68 per thousand. West Bengal has a low IMR than India as whole. The IMR for male child is 65 and for female it is 69. Female infants are supposed to die more than male. Taking into account all the 19 districts of West Bengal, only 3(16%) are below the state average and 16 (84%) are above state average. In case of female IMR 8 (42%) districts are below state average and 11(58%) districts are above state average. The districts having female IMR more than State average are Jalpaiguri, Koochbehar, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Nadia, North and South 24 Parganas, Medinipur, Kolkata. Female IMR for Malda is highest (106). This indicates that female infants are more subjected to death than male because of desire for son and adverse socio economic situations. Community wise IMR in the state shows that SC population has more IMR and the General castes have the less. In both rural and urban area IMR for SC population is high.

The Child Mortality rate- i.e. (1-5 year) children mortality per 1000 live births- indicates that West Bengal is lower than India. West Bengal has child mortality rate of 19.9. Male child mortality rate was 84. Female child

mortality rate for West Bengal was 92 compared to India 103. 9 (47%) districts out of 19 have female child mortality above the state average. They are Jalpaiguri, Kochbehar, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Nadia, South 24 Parganas. Lowest child mortality rate in female is found in Kolkata (31) though it is higher than male child mortality rate (28).

The missing daughters in West Bengal: The National Plan of Action for SAARC Decade of the Girl Child (1991-2001) seeks to ensure the equality of status for the girl child by laying down specific goals for her dignified survival and development without discrimination. India is known to be one of the few countries with a female-male ratio (FMR: females per 1000males; or sex ratio/SR) that has continued to be adverse to women. The disadvantages surrounding Indian women and the capacity to survive that leads to this imbalance, are rooted in a complex web of socio cultural factors. While gender-based differentials in mortality are seen by some as the main cause behind low FMRs, others have traced the roots of these differentials to an ethos of discrimination against women, which is manifested in their unequal access to life supporting resources such as food, nutrition and health care, especially during childhood. ³ Child Sex ratio (CSR, i.e. sex ratio in a definite age group of 0-6 years) for West Bengal has been adverse for women to a greater extent.

Child sex ratios are recognised to be a better indicator of women's position, because it is very unlikely that they would be vitiated by sex-

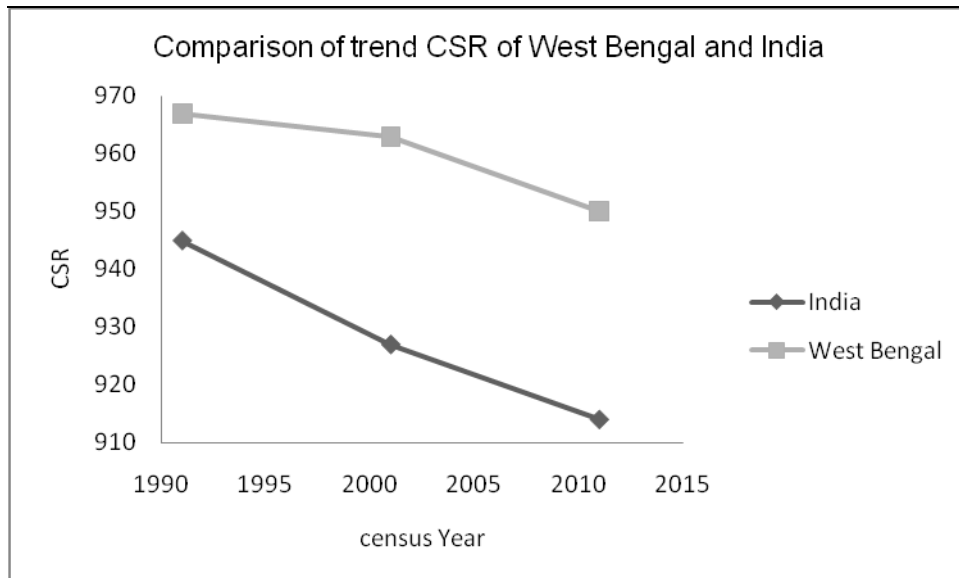
selective migration trends. In a population unaffected by Bias against girl children (as evident, for example in female infanticide and foeticide), the CSR would favour girls since they are endowed by nature to be the stronger sex. This indeed was true for West Bengal till 1971. It is a cause for concern that in West Bengal the SR for children aged up to six years has declined from 1007 in 1971 to 963 in 2001. “The imbalance that has set in at this early age group is difficult to be removed and would remain to haunt the population for a long time to come” ⁵The size of child population in the age group 0-6 years is declining with decline in the share of children in total population; the share of girls in this age group is declining faster than that of boys of the same. This process has led to missing of nearly over 3 million girl children in 2011. Though the overall sex ratio of the country is improving, the child sex ratio of the country as well as West Bengal is declining. During the period of 1991 to 2011 there is a monotonous decline in child sex ratio.

Table 3
Child Sex-ratio West Bengal and India (1991-2011)

	1991	2001	2011
India	945	927	914
West Bengal	967	963	950

Source: Hassan, Mohammad, Izahar;

Population Geography, p143



West Bengal has 2nd position in terms of CSR during 2011, after Kerala (959). The CSR is higher than national average in the state. It has gradually fallen down since 1991. In earlier decades the situation were better for girl children, but afterwards there was an improvement regarding literacy rate, medical facilities and infrastructure the survival rate of girl children became less i.e. the CSR started falling. Child sex ratio has gone down by 13 points in last decade.

The state's average child sex ratio is 950. Out of the 19 districts in the state 13 (68.44%) are below the state average CSR and 6 (31.58%) are above that. The districts having CSR more than state average are Murshidabad, Birbhum, Nadia, Howrah, South 24 Parganas and Paschim Medinipur. Rest of the districts such as Darjiling, Jalpaiguri, Kochbihar, Uttar and

Dakshin Dinajpur, Maldah, Bardhaman etc. are in vulnerable condition. The highest CSR is in Haora (964) and lowest in Kolkata (930).

But the situation for rural area is somewhat different in many aspects. The average CSR for rural area is 952. 10 (52.63%) districts have CSR more than state rural average and 9 (47.36%) has lower than state average. This demonstrates that rural areas are better in situation for girl child in rural Bengal. The districts which are dominating in CSR are Darjiling, Maldah, Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Nadia, Haora, South 24 Parganas etc. The districts which have CSR less than the state average are Jalpaiguri, Kochbihar, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, North 24 Parganas, Hugli, Bankura, Puruliya, etc.

In case of urban CSR the state average is 943 and 8(42.10%) districts have below the state average and 9 (47.36%) have more than state average. The districts having urban CSR more than state average are Dakshin Dinajpur, Murshidabad, Nadia, Bankura, and South 24 Parganas etc. The districts with urban CSR lower than state average includes Darjiling, Kochbihar, Maldah, Birbhum, Bardhaman, Puruliya, Kolkata etc.

Analysing the data and spatial variation in survival of girl children (0-6years) the districts that need attention both in rural and urban areas are Kochbihar, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur Maldah, Bardhaman, Bankura, Puruliya. The districts which are in better situation are Nadia,

Murshidabad, Haora, South 24 Parganas and rest are in average condition for the girl children to live their life.

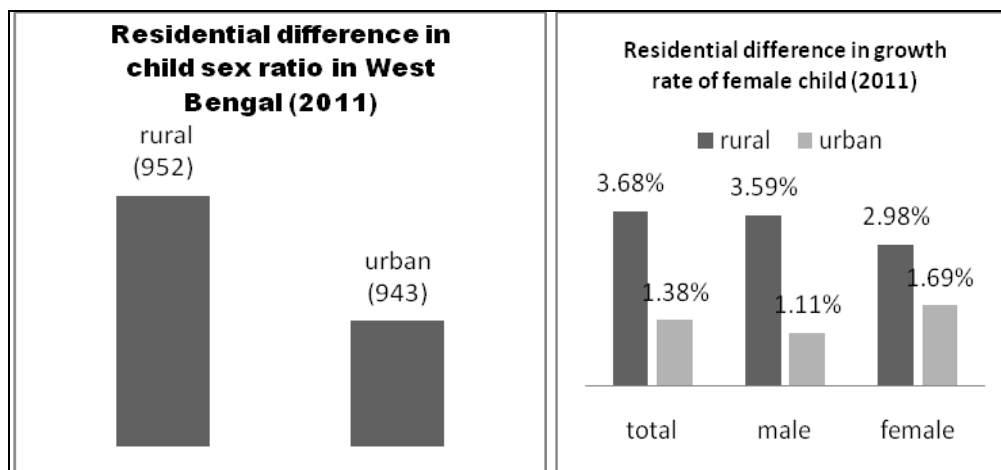
Residential Difference in Situation of Children in West Bengal

A comparative study of rural and urban children especially girl children reflects some striking features. The number of total children enumerated in rural Bengal in 2011 was 7535228, among which 3860958 (51.24%) are male and 3674270 (48.76%) are female. In urban areas total number of children are 2577371 among them 1326306 (51.46%) are male and 1251065 (49.16%) are female. Rural areas in Bengal have less numbers of child populations.

The decadal growth rate for rural child population is -17.37. The male decadal growth rate for male child population was -16.89 and female is -17.86. Whereas in urban areas the decadal growth rate was 12.29 and considering male children it was 12.55 and for female it was 12.02. This indicates a positive growth rate of female children in urban areas.

The percentage of child population has declined by 3.17% during 2001-2011. In rural areas it was 3.68 % and in urban areas were 1.38%. Male female difference in percentage share in rural areas was 3.59% and 2.98% respectively. But in urban areas male female differentials were 1.11% and 1.69% respectively. So the condition for girl child is adverse both in rural and urban areas.

As we have observed, the percentage share of rural and urban male and female child population in 2001-2011 is not favourable for female child in urban areas. This is also reflected by the Child Sex Ratio of the state and rural urban areas. The urban areas are not safe for girl children. The figure shows the CSR is 952 for rural area and 943 for urban area. A decline in CSR during 2001-11 for rural area was 11 points and for urban areas were 5 points. It is because of the availability of medical facilities near by hand and desire of killing female foetus.



Considering the HDI and GDI of West Bengal in 2001, the situation for girl child can be determined. As these indices includes life expectancy at birth, literacy levels, per capita income, differentiated for women and men, to be converted into a specific score that indicates the extent of gender-based disparities prevailing in a given country. West Bengal ranks 8th in terms of HDI (0.472) and 28th in GDI (0.676).

Table 4
HDI, GDI, Infant Survival Index of West Bengal (2011)

	<i>HDI</i>	<i>GDI</i>	<i>Infant Survival Index</i>
1st five ranking districts	Kolkata, Howrah, N 24 Prganas, Darjilling, Bardhaman	Kolkata, Darjilling, Haora, Hugli, Medinipur, North 24 Parganas	Kolkata, Haora, Hugli, Puruliya, Darjilling
Last five ranking districts	Jalpaigur, Kochbihar, Bankura, Uttar Dinajpur, Birbhum, Murshidabad	Birbhum, Murshidabad, Malda, Puruliya, Koochbehar	Kochbehar, Malda, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, Birbhum

Source: WBHDR, Annexure Tables

Thus the districts having the top rank in terms of HDI, GDI, and Infant survival index have a better situation for children including girl children. The districts with low ranking are not relatively better. Girl child mortality rate is low in these districts.

Key Observations

By way of summarising some major conclusions can be made on girl child population of West Bengal. They are:

- There is disproportion in the total number of girl and boy children (0-6years) in West Bengal.
- The decline in share of child population to total population is more severe for the girl children and it is more prominent in urban areas.

- Decadal growth rate for rural girl child is negative and for urban areas though it is positive but it is less than the boys.
- Child sex ratio is higher in rural areas and less in urban areas.
- Kolkata being a cosmopolitan city has the lowest Child Sex Ratio, though its HDI, GDI, and Infant survival Index is at the top ranking.
- The Muslim dominated districts like Murshidabad, Malda, Dakshin Dinajpur have a very low CSR and very high infant or child mortality for female child.
- The districts having adverse situation for girl child are Malda, Murshidabad, Uttar and Dakshin Dinajpur, Kolkata, Puruliya, Coochbehar and Birbhum.
- The districts having better position for girl children are Darjilling, Haora, Hugli, Medinipur, North and South 24 Parganas and Bardhaman.
- The low CSR for the districts are due to backwardness of some socio economic conditions, such as low literacy rate, maximum number of population below poverty level, access to medical facilities and illegal abortion of female foetus etc.

Conclusion

Both the States and Central Government are trying to improve the situation of girl child in West Bengal by implementing some services and schemes. Some of them are: ICDS (Integrated child Development

Services)- centrally sponsored scheme, implemented by State government; Balika Samridhi Yojana, offering post delivery grant Rs.500/- in the form of a bank deposit in the name of girl child born after 1997 in a BPL family; Kishori Shakti Yojana- to improve the health and nutrition status of the adolescence girls. It is being implemented in Jalpaiguri, Malda, Murshidabad and Puruliya; Free immunisation of children; Supply of free iron, vitamin dose to girl children in rural areas; Kanyashree Prakalpa- to ensure a sum of rupees to the girls over 18 years taking education to any institution and Child Line, a toll free 24 hour telephone line (1098) responding to children concerning shelter, protection from abuse and medical assistance.

The discriminations for girl child reflects the patriarchal structure of the society and the desire for boy child, killing of female foetus, death of girl child due to under-nutrition, and some other related causes. The codified laws consider human life as sacred and specific legal provisions have been devised to protect the life of the born and the unborn. However, the objective of the law gets defeated due to lacunae in the law itself and lack of proper implementation. Even though the law is a powerful instrument of change, yet law alone cannot root out such social problem. The girls are devalued not only because of the economic considerations but also because of socio-cultural factors, such as the belief that son extends the lineage, enlarges the family tree, provides protection safety and security to the family and is necessary for salvation as he alone can light the funeral pyre and perform other

death related rites and rituals. Evidence indicates that the problem of female foeticide and infanticide is more prevalent in orthodox families.⁶ The districts identified to be in an alarming situation needs attention regarding government policies and proper planning by regional planning and development to eradicate these problems and bring a better situation for survival of girl child and future women too. These socio cultural factors should be tackled by changing the thought process through awareness generation, mass appeal and social action. Moreover, the religious and social leaders, voluntary organisations, women's groups, socially responsible media, the doctors; the Medical Council/Association (by enforcing medical ethics and penalties on deviant doctors) and the law enforcement should come forward and extend help and support so that the women can find a better space for their living not only in West Bengal but also elsewhere.

References

- 1) Ryhal Chand Piar & Palam Sashi; "A Study of Human development Indicators and Decline Child Sex ratio in Himachal Pradesh"; *Journal of family Welfare*.
- 2) Mehta Kapur Asha; "Recasting Indices for Developing Countries: a Gender Empowerment Measure", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 26 October 1996, p 84.
- 3) Aananda Bazar Patrika, Friday 28th August , 2015
- 4) Agnihotri, Balaram Satish; *Sex Ratio Patterns in the Indian Population: A Fresh Exploration*, New Delhi , 2000, p. 33.
- 5) Hassan Izahar Mohammad, (2005); *Population Geography*, Rawat Publications, New Delhi.

- 6) Bose, Ashis . 'Census of India and After'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 19 May 2001, p. 1687.
- 7) Srivastava, S.P. (2001). The Perils of Pre-Birth Murder - A Sociological Analysis of Female Foeticide. *Journal of Social Welfare*, Vol. 47, No. 10 January 2001. pp. 7-12
- 8) Census of India 2011
- 9) Chandana , R.C; (2012); *Population Geography*; Concept Publishers, New Delhi.

WORKING STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN: A STUDY OF TUFANGANJ BLOCK-I, COOCHBEHAR, WEST BENGAL

Pinku Das

In India female participation in labour market has increased. Women are increasingly coming out of their homes and from their traditional roles. The entry of women in labour market has fundamentally changed the status of women in the family as well as in the society. However, women in general and rural women in particular are facing many challenges: gender inequality, limited access to credit, health care and low level of education. This paper, with help of survey data and information, explores some dimensions of rural women workers of an administrative block.

Rural women play a key role in supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income and improving rural livelihoods and overall well being. They contribute to agriculture and rural enterprises and fuel local and global economies. As such they are active players in achieving the Minimum Development Goals (MDGs). Yet, around the world rural women and girls everyday face persistent structural constrains those prevent them from fully enjoying their human rights and hamper their efforts to improve their lives as well as those of others around them.

In most of the countries work participation rates are lower among women than the men. The activity rates of women differ from country to country and also between the different regions of the large countries. Within India the variation is from 9.4% in West Bengal to 43.9% in Madhya Pradesh. The distribution of female workers among different occupations also depends upon the structure of the economy, educational levels, attitude of women to different kinds of jobs and various social factors. The great majority of women work either in agriculture or in the traditional rural industries or in service activities.

In the post independent India, the number of women entering salaried remunerative occupations and professions is increasing substantially. At present women are getting absorbed in various occupations and enjoying more or less equal status with men. Women are working in almost all types of jobs such as technical, professional and non-professional in both, private and public sectors, residing in rural and urban areas with or without their kith and kin. The middle class women take greater interest to do lucrative jobs to cope up with the emerging economic compulsions and to escape the dowry problem. Many women serve gainful employment not because they are all educated but because they face economic strains and wife's income is considered as essential to the family's standard of living.

Now, women have entered into the technical, medical and teaching field. They are working as a pilots, taxi drivers, police women, ministers and head of the nations. In modern era women are mainly

entering into the paid jobs to enhance the family income and prestige and to utilize the education and the social status, rather than merely due to the economic constraints. Development of science and technology changed in attitudes and aspirations, in social structure and family living patterns have all concurred to relieve the burden of motherhood.

Objectives and Methodology

The major objectives of the study are-

- i) To find out distribution of women worker in different sectors.
- ii) To find out the working status of rural women in Tufanganj Block-I.
- iii) To highlight the socio economic status of working women in the study area.
- iv) And to suggest some strategies for the betterment of the working conditions.

The study has adopted a case study based research design. The data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from the field survey through the interview with rural working women within the study area. Secondary data were collected from various offices. In pre- survey stage information was collected from various articles and the internet. All the data so collected were classified and tabulated systematically and then these tabulated data have been analyzed and interpreted with

suitable statistical and cartographic technique. Maps and diagrams are prepared on the basis of collected data.

Tufanganj Block-I is located in Cooch Behar District of West Bengal and lies between latitude 26°12'50"N to 26°20'00"N and longitude 89°33'00"E to 89°37'03"E. It has 77 villages and 59091 rural households and 243256 rural populations. Out of which 125672 are male and 117584 are female. Total no. of rural women workers and non-workers of Tufanganj Block-I are 23735 and 93849.

Classification of Workers

The productive capacity of any area depends on the workers as well as on the proportion of populations in workers to total population. For improved productivity and economic growth the distribution of workers among rural, urban & regional distribution within an area is very important factors to be taken. Many difficulties arise to classify workers in India. Up to 1951 census the classification of workers & non workers was based on the dependency approach. The 1961 census was first classifying workers on the basis of work in seasonal activities such as cultivation, dairying & household industry. In 1971 the approach was once again changed & the population was classified into two categories. The first category consisted of those whose main activity was work i.e. participation in any economically active work by physical or mental labour. The other category covered mainly the non working persons. In 1981, 1991 & 2001 census the total population was

grouped in three categories namely main workers, marginal workers & non workers.

Table-1

Distribution of Different Category Workers in Tufanganj Block-I

Category	Main Workers		Marginal Workers		Total Workers (Main +Marginal)		Non Workers	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Rural	64679	11106	10058	12629	74737	23735	50935	93849
Percentage	26.02	4.47	4.05	5.08	30.06	9.55	20.49	37.75
Urban	1453	287	186	259	1639	546	1104	2050
Percentage	0.58	0.11	0.07	0.10	0.66	0.22	0.44	0.83
Total	66132	11393	10244	12888	76376	24281	52039	95899
Percentage	26.60	4.58	4.12	5.18	30.72	9.77	20.93	38.58
Grand Total	77525 (31.18%)		23132 (9.30%)		100657 (40.49%)		147938 (59.51%)	
	248595 (100%)							

Source: District Census Handbook (Census- 2011)

i) **Main Workers:** Those workers who had worked for 6 months or more during the last year are termed as main workers. In Tufanganj Block-I out of 9.55% rural women workers 4.47% are main workers.

ii) **Marginal Workers:** Those workers who had worked for less than 6 months are termed as marginal workers. Out of 9.55% rural women workers, Tufanganj Block-I has 5.08% marginal workers.

iii) **Non Workers:** A person who did not at all work during the reference period was treated as non workers. The non workers broadly constitute students who did not participate in any economic activity

paid or unpaid. Out of 47.30% rural female populations, Tufanganj Block-I has 37.75% non workers.

Table-2:

Distribution of Different Classes of Worker in Tufanganj Block-I

Class of Workers	Rural			Urban			Grand Total
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
Cultivators	22027	2771	24798	53	5	58	24856
Percentage	8.86	1.11	9.97	0.02	0.002	0.023	9.99
Agricultural Labourers	26152	8857	35009	136	31	167	35176
Percentage	10.52	3.56	14.08	0.055	0.012	0.067	14.15
Household Industry Workers	4002	5650	9652	247	108	355	10007
Percentage	1.61	2.27	3.88	0.099	0.043	0.143	4.03
Other Workers	22556	6457	29013	1203	402	1605	30618
Percentage	9.07	2.60	11.67	0.48	0.162	0.64	12.32
Total	74737	23735	98472	1639	546	2185	100657
Percentage	30.06	9.55	39.61	0.66	0.22	0.88	40.49

Source: District Census Handbook (Census- 2011)

i) **Cultivators:** According to Census definition, cultivators included persons engaged in cultivation of land owned or held from government or private persons or institutions for payment in money, kind or share of crop. It includes effective supervision or direction in cultivation. Cultivation involved ploughing, sowing, harvesting and production of cereals and millet crops such as wheat, paddy, jowar, bajra, ragi etc. In Tufanganj Block-I out of 9.55%, 1.11% rural women workers engaged in cultivation.

ii) **Agricultural Labourers:** A person who works on another person's land for wages in cash, kind or share is regarded as agricultural labourers. An agricultural labourer had no right of lease or contract on land on which he or she worked. The agricultural labourers are usually more economically and socially vulnerable group in our society. In Tufanganj Block-I out of 9.55% rural women workers 3.56% working as agricultural labourers.

iii) **Household Industry Workers:** A household industry is defined as an industry conducted by one or more members of the household at home or within the village in rural areas and only within the precincts of the house where the household lives in urban areas. The larger proportion of workers in the household industry should consist of household members. The industry should not be run on the scale of a registered factory, which would qualify to be registered under the Indian Factories Act. In Tufanganj Block-I Out of 9.55% rural working women 2.27% are engaged as household industry workers.

iv) **Other Workers:** All workers, i.e. those who have been engaged in some economic activity during the last one year, but are not cultivators, agricultural labourers or household workers are termed as other workers. It includes all government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers, plantation workers, those engaged in trade, commerce and business, political or social work. Out of 9.55% rural women workers of Tufanganj Block-I 2.60% are engaged as other workers.

Working Status of Rural Women in Tufanganj

According to the survey findings, women workers of the study area are engaged in the following sectors/works:

- i) In Brick Field
- ii) In Agricultural Sector
- iii) In Beedi Industry
- iv) In Cane Industry
- v) As a Weaver

Table-3:

Distribution of Women Workers in Different Sector

<i>Types of work</i>	<i>No. of Women Workers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Brick Labourers	23	20.91
Agricultural Labourers	15	13.64
Beedi Workers	20	18.18
Cane Workers	34	30.91
Weavers	18	16.36
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

i) **Brick Labourers:** Brick industry is one of the most important and oldest industries in India. The brick field is found in Deocharai village, adjacent with NH-31. In brick field 20.91% female workers of the study area are engaged. Even they are very much depending on it for their livings in winter season. Large numbers of migrant and local workers are engaged in brick field. In brick field everyday 200-300 workers are

worked and among them 70% are male workers and 30% are female workers. Women perform in various unskilled jobs in brick field like cleaning building sites, mixing water clay, its making by particular structure, carrying full making bricks, gravel or carrying broken bricks etc. They worked 3 months that is November, December and January. Those workers are engaged in main processing of brick they get 450 Rs. per day and those are engaged with chimney they get 150 Rs. per day. They get their wages after 6-8hrs work. Too much sunlight is very necessary for brick. As a result, women are physically affected for it. They worked here from long time and local workers are coming here from short distances or from besides villages. The women workers are affected by physical pain everyday due to high intensity of labour.

ii) **Agricultural Labourers:** Rural economy mainly depends on agriculture. In the study area 13.64% women workers are engaged in agricultural sector with various works like ploughing, levelling, sowing, seeding, spraying, harvesting and threshing. In our country agriculture is labour intensive and food grain is the main crop. Main crop of this region is paddy, maize, potato and various vegetables. Some women workers have their own land and some are works in people's land. They worked 6 hrs or greater than it and get wages. They faced various problems like irrigation, flood, drought, soil erosion, lack of marketing and storage facility etc.

iii) **Beedi Workers:** Beedi rolling is a traditional agro-forest based industry, spread over almost all major states in India. Beedi is a thin

Indian indigenous cigarette made of 0.2-0.3 gram of tobacco flake wrapped in a tendu leaf and secured with coloured thread at lower end. Over 800 million beedies are sold in India every year (Das-2012). In India about 53% tobacco consumption is in the form of beedies. It is cheap form of tobacco smoking especially for rural people. In Tufanganj Block-I 18.18% rural working women engaged in beedi rolling. The home based beedi workers are provided with 250-300 grams of tobacco flakes and 500-600 grams of tendu leaves to roll 1000 beedies by the contractors appointed through beedi merchants. Experience beedi workers rolling 1000 beedies per day and get 80 Rs. Wage Per 1000 beedies. The price of beedi is varying with variation of company. The task of beedi rolling is mainly done by the women and children. Continuous beedi rolling by sitting at a same body posture and fumes and dust of tobacco causes severe occupational health hazards to the active beedi workers.

iv) **Cane Workers:** Sitalpati, a kind of mat is the most notable and popular product among the handicrafts of Cooch Behar. In Cooch Behar District Barokodali, Mansai, Nakkati, Ghughumari are the most important centres of sitalpati production. In Tufanganj Block-I 30.91% rural working women engaged in pati making. The word 'Sital-pati' means cool-mat. The raw material of sitalpati is the Mutra Cane (Maranta Dichotoma). The green cane is kept soaking in water before it is slashed or sliced in to thin strips for making the pati. Then the fine strips are woven by skilfully joining and interlacing to shape into

beautiful mats. The quality of sitalpati is judged by its glossiness, smoothness and fineness of texture. According to survey report experienced women workers can complete a pati within a day. Various size of pati is made by them like single bed pati, double bed pati etc.

v) **Weavers:** 16.36% women workers of the study area are work as weaver. Some work in their own tant and some work as labour in any people's tant. It is one type of their family tradition. In houses both husband and wife engaged in weaving of saree. In such work women buy fiver from mahajan or market. Experienced workers can complete a saree within one day and inexperienced workers take two or three days to complete a saree. Various fiver likes Baine, Pathmoni, Tashar, Pokhayon, Bamper, Design paper, Jori, Tabol etc. are necessary for weaving. 25-30 piece sarees are completed by fiver of 3000 Rs. After completed the huge amount o f saree or mekhla they sold it to mahajan or in Guwahati market. Maximum sarees are goes to Guwahati for selling because the rate and demand of tantsaree in Guwahati market is higher than the Cooch Behar market.

Table-4
Work Duration

<i>Work Duration</i>	<i>No. of Women Workers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
3-5 hours	33	30
6-8 hours	71	64.55
9-12 hours	6	5.45
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

From the table 4 it is clear that maximum rural women worker of the study area worked 6-8 hrs per day that is 64.55% whereas 30% women workers worked 3-5 hrs per day and only 5.45% workers worked 9-12 hrs per day.

Table-5
Suitable Season of Work

<i>Suitable Season</i>	<i>No. of Women Workers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Summer	15	13.64
Winter	75	68.18
Rainy Season	12	10.91
Autumn	2	1.82
All	6	5.45
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

In five types of works various workers are comfortable in various seasons like for brick winter is ideal season, for agriculture rainy season is ideal and pati, weaver and beedi workers can do their job in whole years. But some workers prefer summer, some winter and some preferred autumn season for their works. Above figure shows that maximum rural women workers like winter season for their work that is 68.18% and 13.64% like summer season, 10.91% like rainy season, 1.82% like autumn season and 5.45% like all season for their work.

The information in table 6 shows that highest percentage of rural working women of the study area i.e. 23.64% has 11-15 years working experience and lowest percentage i.e. 16.36% has 0-5 years working experience. 22.73% has 6-10 years, 19.09% has 16-20 years and 18.18% has more than 20 years working experience.

Table-6
Working Experience

<i>Working Experience</i>	<i>No. of Women Workers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
0-5 years	18	16.36
6-10 years	25	22.73
11-15 years	26	23.64
16-20 years	21	19.09
>20 years	20	18.18
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Table-7
Occupational Health Hazard

<i>Health Hazard</i>	<i>No. of Women Workers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Eye problem	12	10.91
Breath problem	6	5.46
Headache	17	15.45
Weakness	8	7.27
Vomiting, fever	7	6.36
Chest pain	19	17.27
Neck pain	6	5.46

Full physical pain	35	31.82
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Beedi workers are mainly face breathing problem, headache for tobacco. Weavers are face neck pain, physical pain. Agricultural labourers faced fever, headache, chest pain for works in sunlight and rain, brick labourers faced physical pain and headache for works in sunlight and high intensity of labour and pati workers faced eye problem, headache, neck pain and weakness. Above figure shows the various occupational health hazards faced by women workers. Highest percentage of women workers i.e. 31.82% face physical pain and lowest percentage of women workers i.e. 5.46% face breath problem and neck pain.

Table-8

Income of Working Women

<i>Monthly Income in Rs.</i>	<i>No. of Working Women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<3000	58	52.73
3001-6000	23	20.91
6001-9000	10	9.09
>9000	19	17.27
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

In the study area most of the women workers work just for poverty and they earned very low wages. 52.73% workers earned less than 3000

Rs., 20.91% workers earned 3001-6000 Rs., 9.09% workers earned 6001-9000 Rs. and 17.27% workers earned more than 9000 Rs. Per month most of them working as a weaver. Lowest income earned by those who engaged in beedi rolling.

Table-9

Expenditure of Working Women (in Rs.)

<i>Monthly Expenditure in Rs.</i>	<i>No. of Working Women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<3000	60	54.55
3001-6000	19	17.27
6001-9000	21	19.09
>9000	10	9.09
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Monthly expenditure of 54.55% working women of the study area is less than 3000 Rs, 17.27% have 3001-6000 Rs, 19.09% have 6001-9000 Rs, and 9.09% have more than 9000 Rs. expenditure.

Table-10

Saving of Working Women

<i>Saving</i>	<i>No. of Working Women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	67	60.91
No	43	39.09
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

In the study area most of the workers are poor. According to survey report 60.91% workers have saving whereas 39.09% workers have no saving. In 60.91%, 39.62% workers preferred bank for saving and 21.29% workers preferred private agency for saving.

Socio-Economic Status of Rural Working Women

Men and women tend to have different socio-economic profiles within an economy in terms of the positions they occupy, the activities they engage in and their overall economic status. In this regard, economic growth and development will not obviously benefit men and women equally. In this context, gender inequality acts as a constraint to growth and poverty reduction.

Table-11

Age Composition of Working Women

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>20-30</i>	<i>30-40</i>	<i>40-50</i>	<i>50-60</i>	<i>60-70</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number	12	37	29	23	9	110
Percentage	10.91	33.64	26.36	20.91	8.18	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Percentage of rural working women is found to be highest in the age group of 30-40 i.e. 33.64% and lowest in the age group of 60-70 i.e. 8.18%. From the above figure it is also clear that half of the women workers of the study area working between the ages of 30-50 years.

According to 2011 census only 58.8% rural women in India attend school. In India parents are not aware about their daughter's education, because they think they will not get anything in return as ultimately they have to marry off their daughters paying huge dowry. In the study area, the overall literacy rate of women is 45.45% and 54.55% of women are illiterate.

Table-12

Literacy Rate and Level of Education of Working Women

<i>Literacy Rate</i>	<i>Number of Women</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Literate	50	45.45
Illiterate	60	54.55
Total	110	100
<i>Level of Education</i>		
Primary	8	7.27
Up to Class 8	32	29.09
Up to Class 10	6	5.45
Up to Class 12	4	3.64
Total	50	45.45

Source: Household Survey (2015)

The data estimated that 7.27% of working women studied primary, 29.09% are up to class 8, 5.45% are up to class 10 and only 3.64% of women have studied till class 12 or higher secondary. From the above data it can be concluded that very few female workers are higher educated.

Table-13
Caste Composition of Working Women

<i>Caste</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
S.C	52	47.27
S.T	11	10.00
O.B.C	32	29.09
General	15	13.64
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Highest percentage of rural working women of the study area belongs to Scheduled Caste (47.27%) and lowest percentage belongs to Scheduled Tribe (10%). 29.09% and 13.64% working women are belongs to Other Backward Class and General respectively.

Percentage of Muslim working women of the study area is very least i.e. 11.82% and most of the women workers are came from Hindu background i.e. 88.18%.

Table-14
Family Type of Working Women

<i>Type of Family</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Nuclear	81	73.64
Joint	29	26.36
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

From the above table it is clear that 73.64% working women belongs to nuclear family and 26.36% belongs to joint family.

Table-15
Family Size of Working Women

<i>No. of Family Member</i>	<4	4-6	6-8	>8	<i>Total</i>
Number	29	66	10	5	110
Percentage	26.36	60	9.09	4.55	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

The family size of the rural people is generally large. I found most of nucleated family in survey area. So the number of family members is very less there. The number of family members is less than 4 in 26.36% of households, 60% of the households have family members of 4 to 6, 9.09% have members of 6 to 8 and only 4.55% families have members above 8.

In study area it is found that out of 110 women workers 61.82% are APL and 38.18% are belongs to BPL.

Table-16
House Type of Working Women

<i>Type of house</i>	<i>Kutchra</i>	<i>Pucca</i>	<i>Semi Pucca</i>	<i>Total</i>
Number	84	9	17	110
Percentage	76.36	8.18	15.46	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Most of the houses of the study area are kutchha (76.36%) that is wall and roof both are by tin and floor is unmetalled. Whereas 8.18% houses are pucca that is wall made by brick, roof and floor both are made by concret. 15.46% houses are semi pucca i.e. roof is made by tin, wall and floor both are constructed by concrete materials.

In the study area 90% women use tube well to fulfil requirement of water and only 10% women used tap for drinking water.

It has been found that 83.64% households have electricity connection and 16.36% households have no electricity connection and people of these house use candles and lanterns as a source of light after sunset.

Table-17

Sanitation Facility

<i>Types of Sanitation</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Kutchha	37	33.64
Pucca	56	50.91
Nil	17	15.45
Total	110	100

Source: Household Survey (2015)

Most of the rural areas have lack of sanitation facilities. They use riverside, open fields, abandoned land as sanitary places. But in my study area out of 110 households' 93 households have sanitation facilities and only 17 houses have no sanitation facilities. 33.64% houses have kutchha sanitation and 50.91% have pucca sanitation facilities.

Findings of the Study

Occupational status of women is considered as an important aspect for improving their social and economic status. In this study area it is found that there are various sources of works for women. They are forced to do for this type of work due to poor economic condition. So poverty plays an important role for women's work.

Women works generally for 8 hours in their working place after completing their domestic work. Duration of work varied in different sectors: beedi labour, pati worker, weaver worked irregularly as per their convenience. But brick labour and agricultural labour worked on wage basis per day.

Age of working women indicates that they worked from 20 years to 70 years. The highest working women belong to 30-40 age category and lowest in 60-70 ages. So their working experience is also different in different sectors. Some workers are 15 and some are 20 years experienced. In beedi works the experienced women can roll 1000 beedi per day.

Suitable working season is different according to workers in different sectors. The agricultural labourers preferred rainy season, in brick field it is winter. But pati, beedi, tant workers can do their job in entire year and among them someone preferred summer season and some preferred winter season as per their comfort.

In occupational status it also found that the occupational problems vary. The brick labourers have wage problem and they are not satisfied with their wage. Agricultural labourers have irrigation problem, loan problem, marketing problem etc. Beedi, pati labourers and weavers have the same problem of wage and according to pati worker sunlight is very necessary for this industry, so rainy season is harmful for them.

Another important aspect is occupational health hazard for the women worker. Generally, women are physically less strong than men, so they do not work as hard as men and they are physically constrained for their hard work. Various workers affected by various physical problems: beedi labourers generally faced breathing problem, headache and eye pain due to tobacco material. Brick labourers worked whole day in sunlight, so they are affected by headache and physical pain and they regularly take pain killer which is very harmful for their body. Weaver and pati labour also affected by headache and physical pain. Agricultural labour faced fever, headache due to their work.

Recommendations

It is therefore essential to upgrade the socio-economic status of women for fulfilling their needs and constraints. Here are some recommendations that can help in the improvement of their status.

Most of the women workers are illiterate. So increase of education level is very essential to upgrade their socio economic conditions. If the education level is increased, women will become empowered.

Empowerment is an active and continuous process by which women can gain control over their material and intellectual resources that will assist them to increase their self reliance and enhance their independent rights.

Awareness should be spread among women so that they can identify their legal rights. Information regarding various schemes launched by the governments should be spread to them so that they can benefit from those schemes.

Ensure that the women labourers are not deceived from getting their correct wage. Wage rate is fixed and maintained by all, but it should be increased year by year.

Government should help to construct proper sanitation facilities so that the women and daughters of the households are benefitted from it.

Health facilities should be made approachable to women at low cost. Health centres should be set up at every possible settlement areas. Health centres should be equipped with good supply of medicines, treatment equipments, ambulances and doctors and trained nurses so that they get primary treatment as early as possible.

Poverty is the main cause or force factor to do such type of work with besides domestic work for women workers. About 38.18% of women in study area live below poverty line. Education is an important factor to solve this problem. An educated woman can get employed in any field

in which they are interested and in this way they can solve the economic problem of family and upgrade their socio economic status.

Voluntary organizations and NGOs should reach out to these marginalized women so as to understand their problems that they are facing. Intervention of the Government is essential to spread awareness among women to a large extent.

Conclusion

We may conclude with the observation that the women of the study area are very self dependent and concerned about population policy, child's education. Many workers are happy with their work and they have no problem about their work. Even it is one of rural area where agriculture is the only the source of economy, but also small industries are required which is blessing for rural men and women.

References

- Akhtar, T., 1992: A study into the socio-economic problems of career women with rural background, Department of Rural Sociology, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan
- Beneria, L., 1982: "Accounting for women's work," in women and development: The sexual division of labour in rural societies, Lourdes Beneria (Ed.), New York: Praeger.
- Boserup, E., 1970: Women's role in economic development. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Chant, S. and Pedwell C., Women, gender and the informal economy: An assesmet of ILO research and suggested ways forward. Geneva, International Labour Organization, 2008.

Chen, M.A., Rethinking the informal economy. Paper presented at *Footloose Labour*, a Symposium on livelihood and struggles of the informal workforce. November 2003 (<http://www.india-seminar.com:80/2003/531.htm>, accessed 30.03.08).

Das, C.K. (2012), "A Study on Occupational Health Hazards among Women Beedi- Workers of Murshidabad District of West Bengal", *International Journal of Research in Commerce & Management*, Vol.4, No.1, ISSN 0976-2183, pp.163-166

Derne, S., (1994), "Hindu Men Talk about Controlling Women: Cultural Ideas as a Tool of the Powerful", *Sociological Perspectives*, 37, pp. 203-227.

Ecevit, Yildiz, 1991: Shop floor control: The ideological construction of Turkish women factory workers, in: Nanneke Redcliff et.al. (eds.) pp. 56-78.

Hakim, C. (1994), "A Century of Change in Occupational Segregation 1891-1991", *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 7, pp. 435-454.

Kantor, P. (2003), "Women's Empowerment Through Home-Based Work: Evidence from India", *Development and Change*, 34, pp.425-445.

Mitra, A. (2008), "The Status of Women among the Scheduled Tribes in India", *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 37, pp. 1202-1217.

Papanek, H. (1979), "Family Status Production: The 'Work' and 'Non-Work' of Women", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 4, pp. 775-781.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKPLACE: AN OVERVIEW

Ananya Guha Roy

Among many types of exploitation against women, the incident of sexual harassment at the place of work results in violation of the fundamental right to gender equality and the right to life and liberty. Indian parliament has finally enacted the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (Act No.14 of 2013), effectively adopting and revising the guidelines laid down in the Vishaka judgement with added provision of rigour and compliance. The paper takes up the issue in both theoretical as well as practical way. It defines the concept of sexual harassment, looks into the various theories explaining the reasons for its occurrence and identifies certain loopholes in the provisions of the Act.

On 9th December, 2013 “The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013” [hereafter the Act] has come into force. The Act is based on the Supreme Court guidelines in the case of Vishaka vs. State of Rajasthan [1997 JT (7) 384]. During the 90s, the most controversial and brutal gang rape at the workplace involved, Bhanwari Debi, a Rajasthan state government employee who tried to prevent child marriage as part of her duties as a social worker of the Women Development Programme. The feudal patriarchs who were enraged by her (in their words: a lowly woman from a poor and potter community) ‘guts’ decided to

teach her a lesson and raped her repeatedly. Vishaka guidelines, as laid down by the Supreme Court put the onus of a safe working environment on the employer. The guidelines also state that it shall be the duty of the employer or other responsible persons in work places or other institutions to prevent or deter the commission of acts of sexual harassment and to provide the procedures for the resolution, settlement or redressal of acts of sexual harassment by taking all steps required. The guidelines also lay down a grievance redressal mechanism that mandates all companies, whether operating in the public or private sector, to set up Complaints Committee within the organisation to look into such offences.

Objectives and Methodology

This paper would explore the problems of working women regarding sexual harassment at their workplaces. Making the study more penetrating, the focus has been given not only to the types of sexual harassment, but also to the preventive measures related to it. The prime objectives of the study are:

- To make a clear concept of harassment and sexual harassment
- To identify and explain different theories regarding sexual harassment
- To study the extent and nature of sexual harassment
- To find out the strategies for preventing sexual harassment
- To discuss the penalties regarding sexual harassment and
- To criticise 'The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace

(Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013’.

The study is primarily descriptive in nature. It is based on analytical method to understand the nature of sexual harassment, the role of the state to protect the rights of the working women, and above all, the remedies to prevent such issues. For this study, secondary sources are used and examined. The findings of other scholarly studies on the same problem have also been taken into account. Different journals and the newspapers are considered as a source of data.

The Concept and Contour

Harassment is the application of aggressive pressure or intimidation. It covers wide range of behaviours of offensive nature and characteristically it is repetitive.

“Sexual Harassment” includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) namely –

- physical contact and advances; or
- demand or request for sexual favours; or
- making sexually coloured remarks; or
- showing pornography, or
- any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination composed of two forms of behaviour: quid pro quo harassment and hostile environment harassment. Quid pro quo harassment involves sexual threats or bribery that are made a condition of employment or used as the basis for employment decisions. Hostile environment harassment captures those behaviours, such as sexual jokes, comments and touching, that interfere with an individual's ability to do her/his job or that create an 'intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment'.

Catharine Mackinnon (1979) defines sexual harassment as 'an unwanted imposition of sexual requirements in the context of relationship of unequal power' ¹. Likewise, Kathleen Gallivan (1991) defines sexual harassment as 'any type of unwanted sexual or gender oriented behaviour that has adverse job-related effects'. Ultimately, sexual harassment is often about letting women know they are not welcome in certain workplaces and that they are not respected members of the work group. Sexual harassment continues to happen employment opportunities for many women and men.

Sexual harassment was first documented in 1908 ². It was recognised and labelled as problem and the first research in the area emerged during 1970s³. Sexual harassment is considered both a legal as well as a psychological phenomenon ⁴. Documenting the prevalence of sexual harassment has been one of the first research efforts made in the area ⁵.

Theories on Sexual Harassment

There are various theories as to why sexual harassment happens. We will look into these theories for our general understanding.

Natural /Biological Model: This model proposes sexual harassment is the natural outcome of men's stronger sex drive and men's role as the sexual aggressor ⁶.

The Socio-cultural Model: This model proposes that sexual harassment is a product of culturally legitimated power and status differences between men and women ⁷. Sexual harassment is perceived to be an outgrowth of the gender socialization process and is a mechanism by which men assert power and dominance over women both at work and in society ⁸. This model also emphasizes how individual- level correlates, such as age and marital status, mediate women's low status and lack of socio-cultural power. For example, single and young women may be viewed as more available for sexual interaction than do other women, and hence, they may experience higher levels of sexual harassment than other women. Some argue that age not only captures the 'impact of youth per se' but is also a proxy for low seniority or poor job status ⁹.

Formal and Informal Organization Power: Individuals with formal organizational power, such as managers, may use their position to harass subordinates. Organizational power must be broadened to

include interpersonal modes of power. For example, co-workers with individual or informal sources of power, such as personality, expertise and access to critical information, may be more likely to engage in harassment than others ¹⁰.

Numerical and Normative Dominance: Numerically skewed sex ratios in work situations, such as female-dominated and male-dominated work groups, play a prominent role in explanations of sexual harassment. Sex role spill over theory is considered one of the primary theories of sexual harassment. For example, women in male-typed jobs are more likely to experience sexual harassment than women in female-typed and integrated occupations ¹¹.

The Contact Hypothesis and Numerical Dominance: The contact hypothesis¹² views harassment as a function of the contact between men and women in the workplace, rather than emphasizing the gender role expectation associated with certain jobs. Here, numerical dominance is seen as distinct from, though interrelated to, normative dominance. For example, a female secretary who works in an environment numerically dominated by males and who has more contact with men will experience more severe harassment than her counterparts in integrated work-places or those numerically dominated by females ¹³.

The Feminist Theory: With the emergence of the Women's movement in the 60s and 70s people began to tell of their experiences of sexual assault and so a more accurate identification of the problem became possible. This approach is a sociological analysis which over the past three decades has focused on two important and previously largely ignored aspects of sexual assault-

- i) The unequal power relationships between men and women and adults and children.
- ii) The abuser responsibility for initiating and/or maintaining sexual assault.

This approach argues that the most adequate explanation of the motivation for, and incidence of, sexual assault is found in the complex interplay between existing social structures, conventional attitudes and the differential gender socialisation of males and females in patriarchal society. It does not focus exclusively on incestuous abuse within the family; rather it is able to broaden its focus to include the dynamics of extra-familial as well as intra-familial sexual and incestuous abuse, all of which rely on males exerting their sexual power over women. It shows that sexual assault is an extension of the current legal, social, economic and political systems in which we live which manifest and reinforce male dominance over female. Unequal power relationships between men and women are embedded in social organization like, in the areas of education, employment, health, income, security, law and decision-making, women come out second best ¹⁴.

Psychological Theory: It focuses on the abuses rather than the victim or the family. Their attentions are on: a) Identifying a personality profile of sex offenders. b) On isolating the motivations of abusers.

In terms of motivations for abuse, a common finding has been that alcohol or alcoholism contributes to a reduction in internal inhibitions to sex offences. Poor impulse control is also seen as a common problem. Abusers have also been found to be highly adept at rationalisation and displacing responsibility and blame onto others rather than the self. It has become clear that abusers come from all social backgrounds and are not confined to socially or economically deprived families. In addition, they do not suffer from any mental illnesses nor do they necessarily have other criminal tendencies. In fact, the sex offender is often an otherwise law-abiding 'guy next door' type¹⁵.

The Victim Precipitation Theory: This approach considers offenders and victims as mutually interacting partners where the victim, through signs, eye contact, gestures and words, or by being present at certain venues or being out alone sometimes encourages rape. Things like accepting a ride home, responding in a friendly manner in conversation, accepting a dinner invitation, visiting a male friend at home or inviting a male friend into her own home may be misread or intentionally rationalized by the perpetrator as a sign of consent to

sexual intercourse. In other words, a woman is raped because she failed to accurately communicate her desire not to have sex ¹⁶.

Some countries have criminalized sexual harassment in the workplace or have legislation that is considered to apply to workplace harassment. Criminal cases usually require a higher standard of proof than civil cases. In addition, women may be unwilling to report harassment when it is made a criminal offense, because although they want the harassment to stop, they do not want to subject the harasser to criminal prosecution. Finally, criminalizing sexual harassment may limit a victim's ability to recover damages, because an employer usually will not be liable for an employee's criminal conduct.

Psychoanalytic Theory: Freud was the first to postulate that the trauma of childhood sexual abuse resulted in later psychic damage. This was the basis of his 'seduction' theory which he presented along with detailed case studies at a major forum in 1896. The idea that fathers were sexually abusing their daughters caused such an outrage in conservative 19th century Vienna that Freud was ridiculed and shunned by his peers. In fact, Seduction Theory was so poorly received that Freud never again publicly referred to it. In 1933, in his Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, he stated: "I was driven to recognise in the end that these reports (of sexual abuse) were untrue and so came to understand that the hysterical symptoms are derived from fantasies and not from real occurrences."

Freud took the step of disbelieving the reports of his clients but he couldn't deny the traumatic effects or psychic damage he had observed. What he did to explain this is develop his now classic theories of psycho-sexual development in which the theoretical constructs of 'penis-envy' and the 'Oedipus Complex' are central. These theories claim that children pass through a stage of being sexually attracted to their parents (boys to their mothers and girls to their fathers). Freud argued that it is the inability to successfully resolve this psycho-sexual stage of development that gives rise to the psychic damage he observed in his clients who had reported childhood sexual abuse. In other words, he developed an elaborate theoretical framework to deny the reality of childhood sexual abuse and incest.

The same theoretical framework also serves to explain the behaviour of offenders in 'proven' cases of sexual assault or incest. For sexual assaults the theory goes that offenders' behaviour is the result of castration anxiety as a result of the failure to resolve the Oedipus complex which gives rise to feelings of sexual inadequacy and the need to be sexually dominant. Adult sex offenders are viewed as pathologically disturbed and sexually perverted as a result of poor psycho-sexual development. The distortions in the offenders' psycho-sexual development are seen as the result of failure in his mother's parenting¹⁷.

To explain incest, Freud's Oedipus complex casts the daughter as the active desiring agent who wishes her father to become her love object. The child is seen as 'seductress' while the father is seen as the passive, innocent object of his daughters' seduction: an overtly displayed invitation which he cannot help but act upon. This normalises sexual acts between parents and children by seeing them as NATURAL rather than ABUSIVE and places the responsibility clearly on the child 'victim'.

Women in non-traditional jobs may be subjected to gender hazing or baiting, in the forms of sexual inquiries, jokes, remarks or innuendoes. Such behaviour has 'the effect of reminding a woman that she is viewed as object of sexual derision rather than as a credible co-worker'¹⁸.

Types of Sexual Harassment: Gender harassment: Generalized sexist statements and behaviour that convey insulting or degrading attitudes about women. Examples include insulting remarks, offensive graffiti, obscene jokes or humour about sex or women in general.

Seductive behaviour: Unwanted, inappropriate and offensive sexual advances. Examples include repeated sexual invitation, insistent requests for dinner, drinks or dates, persistent letters, phone calls and other invitations.

Sexual bribery: Solicitation of sexual activity or other sex-linked behaviour by promise of rewards, the proposition may be either overt or subtle.

Sexual coercion: Coercion of sexual activity or other sex-linked behaviour by threat of punishment. Examples include negative performance evaluations, withholding of promotions and threat of termination.

Sexual imposition: Gross sexual imposition or sexual assault. Examples include forceful touching, feeling and grabbing.

Forms of Sexual Harassment:

1. Physical:

Touching

Unwanted massages

Patting, caressing, or fondling

Impeding or blocking movement

Standing closer than appropriate or necessary for the work being done,

Touching or rubbing oneself sexually around or in view of another person, or assault.

2. Verbal:

Sexual comments, slurs, jokes, or rumours

Verbal sexual advances, threats / propositions

Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
 Making sexual comments –clothing/ body/looks
 Sexually degrading words used
 Suggestive/obscene letters, notes/ invitations
 Turning academic discussions into sexual discussions
 Asking sexual fantasies, preferences, or history
 Asking questions about to social or sexual life,
 And insulting.

3. *Visual*

Leering (looking at someone in sexually suggestive manner)
 Making suggestive gestures
 Displaying pornography, sexually suggestive pictures, cartoons,
 posters or literature
 Having sexually suggestive software on a work or academic computer
 And suggestive or insulting sounds.

Women do not report harassment for a variety of reasons ranging from a fear of retaliation or disbelief to a fear of losing one's job or making the situation even worse. Survey on working women carried out by the National Commission for Women reveals that no doubt the number of cases filed for sexual harassment has risen but women employees are still reluctant to report the matter to concerned authority. Indeed women suffer it silently and avoid lodging report because she believes that her complaint would disadvantage her in connection with her

employment. They also face mental harassment caused by acts such as whistling, ogling, winking, passing of lewd remarks, reciting of obscene songs, abusing, unnecessary lambasting and sexual gestures.

Harassment Prevention Act 2013: Ambit and Inadequacy

Constitution of Internal Complaints Committee (ICC): Every Employer shall, by an order in writing, constitute an ICC in all Administrative units and offices [Section 4(2)]. The Committee shall consist of:

- i) Presiding Officer (Woman at a senior level in the organization).
- ii) Not less than two members from amongst the employees preferably with experience in social work or legal knowledge.
- iii) One member from NGO / persons familiar with issues of sexual harassment.
- iv) and 50% of total members shall be women.

Powers of ICC: ICC shall have the powers of a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 when trying a suit in respect of following matters;

- i) Summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
- ii) Requiring the discovery and production of documents; and
- iii) Any other matter which may be prescribed.

Local Complaints Committee (LCC): Provisions are provided under the Act to form LCC for every district for receiving complaints of

sexual harassment from establishments where the ICC has not been formed due to having less than 10 workers or if the complaint is against the employer himself.

Complaint procedure: The Act stipulates that aggrieved woman can make written complaint of sexual harassment at workplace to the ICC or to the LCC (in case a complaint is against the employer), within a period of three months from the date of incident and in case of a series of incidents, within a period of three months from the date of last incident. If the aggrieved woman is unable to make complaint in writing, reasonable assistance shall be rendered by the presiding officer or any member of the ICC (or in case the aggrieved woman is unable to make complaint in writing to the LCC, the reasonable assistance shall be rendered by the Chairperson or any member of the LCC) for making the complaint in writing.

As per the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013¹⁹, in case the aggrieved woman is unable to make a complaint on account of her physical incapacity, a complaint may be filed inter alia by her relative or friend or her co-worker or an officer of the National Commission for Woman or State Women's Commission or any person who has knowledge of the incident, with the written consent of the aggrieved woman.

Penalties for Sexual Harassment: When there are no Service Rules, the Committee can recommend if allegation proved to take any action which includes:

1. Written apology

Warning

Reprimand or censure

With-holding of promotion

With-holding of pay rise and increments

Termination of service

Undergoing counselling session or carrying out community service.

2. For false or malicious complaint or false evidence, the Committee may recommend to take any of the above seven actions against the Complainant or any other concerned person.

3. Mere inability to prove allegation, would not attract such action.

4. By way of victim's compensation the amount is calculated in view of:

i) sufferings

ii) medical expenses required

iii) income and financial status of the respondent

iv) feasibility in lump sum or in instalments.

5. An appeal to the Appellate Authority is allowed in case of non-implementation of such

The Act does not cover in its scope and ambit a very important community that are agricultural workers. The exclusion of armed forces too is an inexplicable gap. Women working in the armed forces suffer highly from sexual harassment which calls for their inclusion within the purview of the Act. What needs to be noted is that the Armed Forces sector is heavily male dominated and that the chain of command is in the lair of the males.

On the other hand, various recent studies and surveys over the last few years or so have shown that very often, workplaces also involve women initiating and engaging in acts of sexual harassment. The first and most glaring flaw of this legislation is the complete absence of gender neutrality. The Act is all about sexual harassment of women and does not cater to the opposite gender. While efforts to protect women in the workplace are commendable, there appears to be no such recourse to legislative action for sexually harassed men. In an era, where the force of the law thrives for creating equal opportunity and focuses on eliminating discrimination of every kind possible, this particular Act is not at all gender neutral. The Act provides protection against acts of sexual harassment only for women and not men. According to the law in place, no complaint may be filed by a male employee. There is a rising phenomenon of sexual harassment of

males, which, though considerably lower than females, cannot be ignored.

Although, this Act is a great step forward in protection for women, it however leaves a wide scope for false allegations. Individuals not involved in law making but who would rather be governed by this law feel, that its effect must be viewed not just on the individual in question but in totality including his family. This not only becomes a source of nuisance to the man so falsely accused and his family, it also tarnishes their reputation. This in turn becomes a great threat that a household may face ²⁰.

The employer's perspective holds equal importance as well. It has been pointed out, that in light of the increased number of complaints since the passing of this Act, the employers feel discouraged from hiring women all together. More and more employers shall not prefer the unnecessary risk of any such allegations and would in fact hire a male employee. This could result a great step backward in providing equal opportunity to women, ultimately hurting them in a perverse manner ²¹.

With the reducing trend of gender exclusiveness at various workplaces, more and more men and women are interacting with each other at workplaces. This trend has led to an indispensable need to create a freer and friendly environment for both genders to freely

interact and communicate. Humour within limits, can sometimes be stress reliever. However with the strict provisions of the new law, it appears as though this easy interaction will get curbed. With employees being much more careful with their jokes, it will ultimately create a hostile environment at workplace. Circumstances where casual relations are encouraged between men and women will be curbed due to fear of it being misconceived.

Conclusion

In most sexual harassment in the workplace cases, the victims are angry, annoyed, and embarrassed by the unwanted sexual attention. The victim may face psychological trauma, anxiety, nervousness, sadness, depression, and the feeling of low self - esteem. Some common effects of sexual harassment are decreased work performance, increased absenteeism, loss of job and income, having one's personal life offered up for public scrutiny (the victim becomes the accused), and their dress, lifestyle, and private life will often come under attack, being objectified and humiliated by scrutiny and gossip, and others. A worker who faces sexual harassment often chooses to resign as revealing it would tarnish and humiliate their image. As a result they suffer it alone and in silence. Sexual harassment in the workplace should be regarded as a serious matter and should be tackled more effectively. For these reasons, the researcher believe enacting a comprehensive and effective legislation on the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace is important because such legislation will

have a positive effect in stamping out sexual advancement in the workplace and eventually will create a more safe and healthy working environment.

Notes and References

1. Mackinnon, C.A. (1979): *Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination*. Vol-19, New Haven, Yale University Press.
2. Fitzgerald, L.F., Shullman, S., Bailey, N., Richards, M., Swecker, J., Gold, A., Ormerod, A.J., and Weitzman, L. (1988): 'The Incidence and Dimensions of Sexual Harassment in Academia and the Workplace'. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*. 32. 152-175.
3. Farley (1978): *Sexual Shakedown: The Sexual Harassment of Women on Job*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 9-18.
4. Fitzgerald, L.F. (1993): 'Sexual Harassment: Violence Against Women in the Workplace'. *American Psychologist*, 48, 1070-1076.
5. Fitzgerald, L.F., et al (1988): *opt cit*
6. Studd, M.V. and Gattiker, U.E. (1991): 'The Evolutionary Psychology of Sexual Harassment in Organizations', *Ethology and Socio-biology*, 12(4), 249-290.
7. Mackinnon, C.A. (1979): *opt cit*
8. Tangri, S.S., Burt, M.R. and Johnson, L.B. (1982): 'Sexual Harassment at Work: Three Explanatory Models'. *Journal of Social Issues*, 38(4), 33-54.
9. Gruber, J.E. (1992): *The Sexual Harassment Experiences of Women in Non-Traditional Jobs: Results From Cross-National Research*. In the Proceedings of the

First National Conference on Sex and Power Issues in the Workplace. Bellevue, WA.

10. Cleveland, J.M. and Kerst, M.E. (1993): 'Sexual Harassment and Perception of Power: An Under-articulated Relationship'. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*.
11. Gutek, B.A. and Morasch, B. (1982): 'Sex-ratios, Sex-Role Spill Over and Sexual Harassment of Women at Work'. *Journal of Social Issues*, 38(4), 55-74.
12. Gutek, B.A., Cohen, A.G. and Knorad, A.M. (1990): 'Predicting Social-sexual Behaviour at Work: A Contact-hypothesis'. *Academy of Management Journal*, 33, 560-577.
13. Gutek, B.A., Cohen, A.G. and Knorad, A.M. (1990): *opt cit*
14. www.secasa@monashhealth.org
15. www.secasa@monashhealth.org
16. www.secasa@monashhealth.org
17. www.secasa@monashhealth.org
18. Kathryn Abrams (1989): 'Gender Discrimination and the Transformation of Workplace Norms', *Vanderbilt L. Rev.*, Vol.42, 1207-1209.
19. Rule 6 (i) of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Rules, 2013
20. *Are Sexual Harassment Laws Enough?* available at <http://www.mid-day.com/articles/are-sexual-harassment-laws-enough/15077056>.
21. *Workplace Act Could End Up Hurting Women* available at <http://blogs.economictimes.indiatimes.com/SilkStalkings/entry/workplace-act-could-end-up-hurting-women>.

THE BROTHEL - A REFUGE FOR IDLE CHILD

Harasankar Adhikari

This paper examines the situation of children of brothel based female commercial sex workers (FCSWs). The brothel is a refuge for idle children. Children of 6-14 years of brothel of Kolkata had been studied to know their idleness and their future hood. Stigma of sex workers' children was the prime factor of their idleness and they had been confined themselves within their community. About 70% of FCSWs' children were idle and they used to assist their mothers from the age of 6 years for domestic chores and trade related help. They were in vicious cycle of stigma. There is need of inclusive programme to save these children from the abject situation.

The children who are neither in paid work nor go to school are called as idle children. These children generally enjoy their leisure or do household chores which are not considered as child work (Wells, 2015). According to the Oxford Dictionary (1884), idle means lazy, not working or unemployed or absence of significant activity or a person passes time without purpose. In poor family, poverty is a basic obstacle to send the children in school because poor parents do not able to invest for children education (Foster and Rosenzweig, 1996). But they send their children to the labour market for arrangement of minimal self of their family (Kochar, 2004). Several studies throughout globe state that the above factor is the common cause of children in work

force (Ersado, 2005). Similarly, it is evidence from the developing countries that number of idle children is also significant. In India, 19.87 % children are idle (Chamarbagwala and Tchernis, 2010). Deb and Rosati (2002) reported that girls were idler. In Philippines a significant portion of children are idle. Children's mental ability is attached with this (Bacalod and Ranjan, 2004). Thus, number of idle child is evident in various developing countries due to different reasons like lack of employment opportunity, ability of children, child's health conditions and importance of household chore activities to explain this phenomenon (Biggeri et. al. 2003). The presence of idle children is the cause of imperfect labour market and family makes idle child because schooling of children is costly to poor families. The amount of schools in their locality is also a determinant. But mental ability of children is always supportive to produce idle children (Basu and Van 1998). Various studies analysed that household income, household composition and educational attainment, costs of schooling, and proxies of cultural norms are prime factor of children idleness (Ersado, 2005). Further, schooling costs involve two main dimensions: the monetary costs of schooling, given by tuition fees, school supplies, uniforms, and other costs, and the opportunity costs of time, measurable by school availability (Cartwright 1998, Ersado 2005). In some cases, they involve in household chore activities and it is provision of credit to poor household. Further sometime, they help to expand the household business activity. Thus, studies revealed that

more children are idle than the children engaged in child labour (Chamarbagwala and Tchernis, 2010).

The idleness of children also depends on social norms and the social context within which the children grow up (Bongaarts and Watkins 1996; Rosero-Bixby and Casterline 1993, 1994; Montgomery and Casterline 1993; Watkins and Danzi 1995). Bongaarts and Watkins (1996) found that there were three distinct aspects (the exchange of information and ideas, the joint evaluation of their meaning in a given context, and social influence) determine social interactions which shape the behaviour and actions and it affects their mental cost and benefits. Regular interaction with others might change their own attitudes, certain perceptions, and preferences. It also influences their changing behaviour and activities.

There are many types of sex services throughout the globe considered as sex trade, a stigmatized female dominated profession. The brothel is known as whore house and it is oldest mode of sex service. The distressed and deserted female folks mainly from lower social and economic strata of the society are engulfed into the profession for their alternative livelihood (Adhikari, 2007). They are mainly victim of extreme poverty, gender disparity and gender discrimination. In brothel, these commercial female sex workers (CFSWs) set up their household in a rented/leased small and single room with their male counterpart (with whom an emotional tie up is established, but not

legally sanctified known as their self-declared husband) and their offspring. They deliberately bear their spring to testify their motherhood as cultural practice and emotional security. Their children (sex workers' children) grow up in a truncated stigmatized family known as 'line bari' with inappropriate control and strategies (Adhikari, 2007). In their family they do not get proper care and attention as a child desires for it up-bringing. CFSWs are dual (only earner and care-giver) services provider in their family. The husband/male counterpart is parasitic and the fatherhood of the child gets little recognition or absent so far as their role and responsibilities are concerned. Here, fatherhood might be 'costless'. CFSWs play dual role of expressive and emotional leader of their children. The social network of their family is restricted within their brothel community. The family as well as children's relation with paternal side is absent. When their any maternal kin is connected with the trade, they have thin maternal relationship (Adhikari, 2009).

Practically and particularly this stigmatized profession is not suitable for up-bringing of children otherwise to mainstream into the larger society. Due to their born stigma their physical, social and psychological states are confined within their own community. That's why, a vicious cycle of CFSWs - child - CFSWs exists generation after generation (Adhikari, 2012). In spite of various rehabilitative and welfare measures of governments and development agencies for these children, they are in almost same condition. Brothel's environment is

refuge for idle child. How and what circumstances were making this idleness was explored in this paper and secondly, how future of these children were shaping to be analysed.

Method

Out of eight brothels of Kolkata(only metro city of eastern India), Bowbazar brothel was selected for this study because- a) It is oldest brothel where household set up of CFSWs is prominent, b) The size of CFSWs' population is comparatively small. About 2200 CFSWs operate sex trade from congested, old and dump 45 houses of Prem Chand Boral Street and 11 houses of Nabin Chand Boral Street of central Kolkata under Muchipara Police Station jurisdiction and it falls under the ward no-45 of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, and c) The population is homogenous in terms of their occupation and income. The inhabitants of this area are involved directly or indirectly (selling alcohol, foods and others to the client or customers of CFSWs and community people) in the trade.

For the purpose of the study, a household survey was conducted to identify the children of CFSWs of 6-14 years of age. Out of total 374 children of 6-14 years, 260 children were idle. These children were not schooled, or dropped out within short period of their admission into the schools which was located within 200 metres of their community or they were assisting their mothers or other CFSWs residing in the same house for household chores(fetching water, cooking, sweeping,

marketing, sibling care, supplying food, liquor and so forth to the clients of their mothers or other CFSWs. But a small portion was in school.

An informal interview schedule was design and developed to collect information through interaction, discussion and observation with individual child and their mothers about the children's regular activities, view about education and future, their association within the community and outside, mothers' attitude regarding child's education and future, trade status and income, and prospects and challenges in child's care and development. Data collected for a period of 5 years and it included children's movement and activities from morning to night.

CFSWs Trade Status, Income and Children's Education

From collected data, it was found that 69.5% (out of 374, 260) of these children was idle within their age group of 6-14 years. Rest of them was either child workers or in school. The statistic showed that 16.5% of them were in school and most of them were in primary education and below 10 years of age. Of them, 14% children were in paid work within their community as helpers of liquor shops (unauthorized), eateries and tea stalls.

It was found that the trade status of CFSWs was determined by their involvement into the trade and it was three categories. The first

category was CFSWs who used to directly entertain/provide sexual satisfaction, second category was malkin(brothel owner) who used to let their rooms to the CFSWs and last category was CFSWs who withdrew from the trade, but living in the brothel. Their earning generally varied according to their trade status and the malkins' income was highest and handsome. The table 1 described the children's educational status according to their mothers' trade status and income.

Table 1
Children's Educational Status According to CFSWs'(mothers) Trade Status and Income

CFSWs' (mothers) Trade status	Children's educational status												Total (n, %)
	CFSWs' income per month within 4000 INR				CFSWs' income per month > 4000 INR - <8000 INR				CFSWs' income per month > 8000 INR & above				
	Not schooled (n, %)		Dropped out (n, %)		Not schooled (n, %)		Dropped out (n, %)		Not schooled (n, %)		Dropped out (n, %)		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
CFSWs directly in trade	22 (8.4)	26 (10)	14 (5.3)	16 (6.1)	18 (6.9)	20 (7.6)	22 (8.4)	26 (10)	4 (1.5)	2 (0.76)	6 (2.3)	4 (1.5)	180 (69.2)
Malkin (brothel Owner)	-	-	-	-	8 (3)	12 (4.6)	12 (4.6)	14 (5.3)	4 (1.5)	6 (2.3)	6 (2.3)	8 (3)	70 (26.9)
Withdrawal From the trade	-	-	4 (1.5)	6 (2.3)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10 (3.8)
Total	22 (8.4)	26 (10)	18 (6.9)	22 (8.4)	26 (10)	32 (12.3)	34 (13)	40 (15.3)	8 (3)	8 (3)	12 (4.6)	12 (4.6)	260 (100)

Source : Field work

It revealed from the table 1 that highest percent (69.2%) of these idle children's mothers was directly involved in the trade and among them,

35.16% children (including 18.36% female children) were not schooled and the rate of dropped out was also high (34.04%). The income (per month) of their mothers was within 4000 INR (29.8%), within the range of 4000-8000 INR (32.9%) and above 8000 INR (only 6.06%). According to the trade status of the FCSWs, second largest group of idle children's mothers were malkin (brothel owner). And 17.5% children mothers' income per month was within 4000-8000 INR and 9.4% of their mothers earned above 8000 INR per month. The rate of non-schooled children was 11.4% (including 6.9% girls), while 15.5% (including 8.3% girls) of them were dropped out. The children of FCSWs who had withdrawn from trade were 3.8% idle and they were dropped out. Among them, 2.3% were girls. Their income status was also lowest i.e. within 4000 INR per month. The above statistic showed that there was no such relation between children's education and FCSWs' income. Education as a developmental tool were not influenced them for their mainstreaming because there were others factors closely attached to their adverse milieu responsible for their idleness.

FCSWs' Assistance and Support to Their Children's Education

For children education what types of inputs the FCWSs provided was explored in the table 2. It described their mothers' attitude for their children educational development. It revealed that majority of these idle children i.e. 43% did not get any educational support and it was the cause of non-schooling. But they were lettered because they learned literacy and numerical skills from NGOs' run non-formal education

centre at their community. On the other part, 10% girls (out of 13.4% idle children) supported by their mothers with school fees, dress, books and educational materials, coaching and separate shelter(outside mothers' room where they used to operate their trade). But they did not continue their education. It was found that 8.4% children (including 3.8%) girl supported with school fees, dress, books and educational materials, and coaching. Of them, 3.4% children only provided school fees and 3.8% of them provided only dress, books and other educational materials for their education.

Table : 2
Nature of educational support and assistance by FCSWs

<i>Nature of assistance and support</i>	<i>Children as service receivers</i>		<i>Total (n, %)</i>
	<i>Male (n, %)</i>	<i>Female (n, %)</i>	
Only school admission/tuition and other fees (1)	5 (1.9)	4 (1.5)	9 (3.4)
Only dress, books and other educational material(2)	4 (1.5)	6 (2.3)	10 (3.8)
Only arrangement of coaching/ appointment of tutor(3)	-	-	-
Only separate shelter(4)	-	-	-
Altogether 1 + 2	12 (4.6)	10 (3.8)	22 (8.4)
Altogether 1 + 2 +3	26 (10)	36 (13.8)	62 (23.8)
Altogether 1 + 2 + 3 +4	9 (3.4)	26 (10)	35 (13.4)
Nothing above	56 (21.5)	66 (25.3)	122 (43)
Total	112 (43)	148 (56.9)	260 (100)

Source : Field work

Children's age and work pattern (household chores and assistance to mothers or other CFSWs): The study explored that the children in brothel were either not schooled or dropped out from school within a short while. There were various factors associated with the above fact. Stigma of a CFWS child and adverse milieu of their community were prime factors of their not schooled or dropped out. But these children were not paid worker/child labour. But they used to perform their household work. The table 3 described their work pattern according to their age.

Table 3
Children's Age and Their Work Pattern

Children's work pattern	Children's age				Total (n, %)
	6-10 years		10-14 years		
	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	M (n, %)	F (n, %)	
Household chores	12 (4.6)	18 (6.9)	14 (5.3)	8 (3)	52 (20)
Household chores & sibling care	8 (3)	22 (8.4)	6 (2.3)	20 (7.5)	56 (21.5)
Household chores, sibling care & assistance to mothers for trade	8 (3)	16 (6.1)	8 (3)	32 (12.3)	64 (24.6)
Assistance to other FCSWs	9 (3.4)	8 (3)	18 (6.9)	18 (6.9)	53 (20.3)
Nothing	8 (3)	6 (2.3)	21 (8)	-	35 (13.4)
Total	45 (17.3)	70 (26.9)	67 (25.7)	78 (30)	260 (100)

Source: Field Work

Statistic showed that highest percent (24.6%) of these children assisted their mothers in household chores, siblings care and also assisted for

their mothers' trade (i.e. supplying liquor, foods and beverages, etc for their customers). And 9.1% (including 6.1% girls) children were within the age bracket of 6-10 years and 12.3% (excluding 3% boys) children were within 10-14 years of age. Of them, 21.5% children used to perform the household chore and sibling care and among them, 11.4% (including 8.4% girls) children were 6-10 years of age and 9.8% (including 7.5%) children were 10-14 years of age. More children of 6-10 years (11.5%) of age had to assign the household chores and it was 8.3% for the children of 10-14 years. A significant portion (20.3%) of them used to assist other FCSWs because they used to enjoy some monetary gifts from these FCSWs. But it was not regular. It was also found that 13.4% children were doing nothing and majority of them (11%) was boys and out of which 8% children were 10-14 years of age. The work pattern of children reminded that traditional aspect of son preference in the family for which they were getting extra advantage than girls in their family.

Stigma and Children

Stigma of sex workers' child confines them within their community from their early childhood. Larger society consciously avoid with different remarks of their birth and residents. It is prime hindrance of their mainstreaming. Various rehabilitative measures by governments and development agencies (NGOs) do not meet with success. These programmes work as a machine-made and desired outcome is insignificant. The adverse milieu of their household as well as

community was imperfect for children rearing with proper control and strategies. Firstly, FCSWs played dual role of parenting i.e. expressive leader and instrumental leader. Inappropriate shelter/absent of separate shelter, micro world and social network of household, insignificant fatherhood, etc were invalid to this community. Secondly, their occupation was unsupportive to provide child care and psycho-social development of children.

From their infancy, the children suffered from lack of care and attention with detachment of their mothers and they had to stay outside their mothers' room. Education centre run by NGOs provided assistance to the children and their mothers because it provided pre-primary education to these children at local club (a platform of males of all ages in their locality and a rest house cum entertainment centre) daily for 2-3 hours. During this time FCSWs used to operate their trade without any obstacle by their children. The children developed peer relation and play mates within their community. When they admitted into formal school outside their community with the initiative of NGOs, they had to face problems relating to their residents and mothers' occupation. Their class mates and schools mates did not accept them. Secondly, due to poor performance in schools because of insufficient guidance, community structure and process and absence of FCSWs' monitoring and supervision; and behavioural problems, they withdrew from school.

This situation was the cause of their idleness. FCSWs' support for children's education was not effective because their involvement in trade was questioned by their off-springs. Absent /uninvolved /insignificant /parasitic fatherhood, change of babus (male partners), in some cases, rejection of children by FCSWs sudden migration with male partner were obstacle facing in their household. Emotional bonding of FCSWs with their children gave to pamper what they liked. As a consequence of this, they had to assist their mothers in household chores i.e. sweeping, fetching water, cooking, cleaning utensils, shopping and care of siblings, etc. Sometimes, they used to assist other FCSWs who used to provide money. But it was not fixed and regular. Thus, girls confined them within the house and boys confined them in their local club. Due to lack of work facilities in their community, they hardly involved in paid work (Fig.-1).

The Fate of Mothers and Their Children

The discussion with FCSWs revealed that involvement in to this trade was a punishment of their past life. And it was more responsible than poverty and gender discrimination or exploitation of males in their lives. Initially, they felt agony and depression. But after few months, they surrendered to the circumstances and they adjusted and adopted with their occupation and they started to enjoy everything of their dark world. They shared that they enjoyed freedom and liberty besides their occupational obstacles. They took crucial decision regarding settlement of household, bearing and rearing of child(ren) and enjoyment of

motherhood without bothering their stigma, trauma, trivialities and the paradox of existence, etc. They found a normal life within all abnormalities. According to them, "... Nothing lasts. Life goes on". They considered their life as a journey in which all "join the caravan only for a while". Their inability to provide proper care and attention to their children, community environment and imperfectness in their household and instable relation with male, etc did not change their mind set for giving birth of child(ren). So, their children born and grew with misfortune like them. Their fate was fixed with their mothers' fate. And obviously they were representatives of their vicious cycle and thus, idleness was shown as right path of their life.

Fig. : 1 **Idle child in brothel community** (cause and effect)

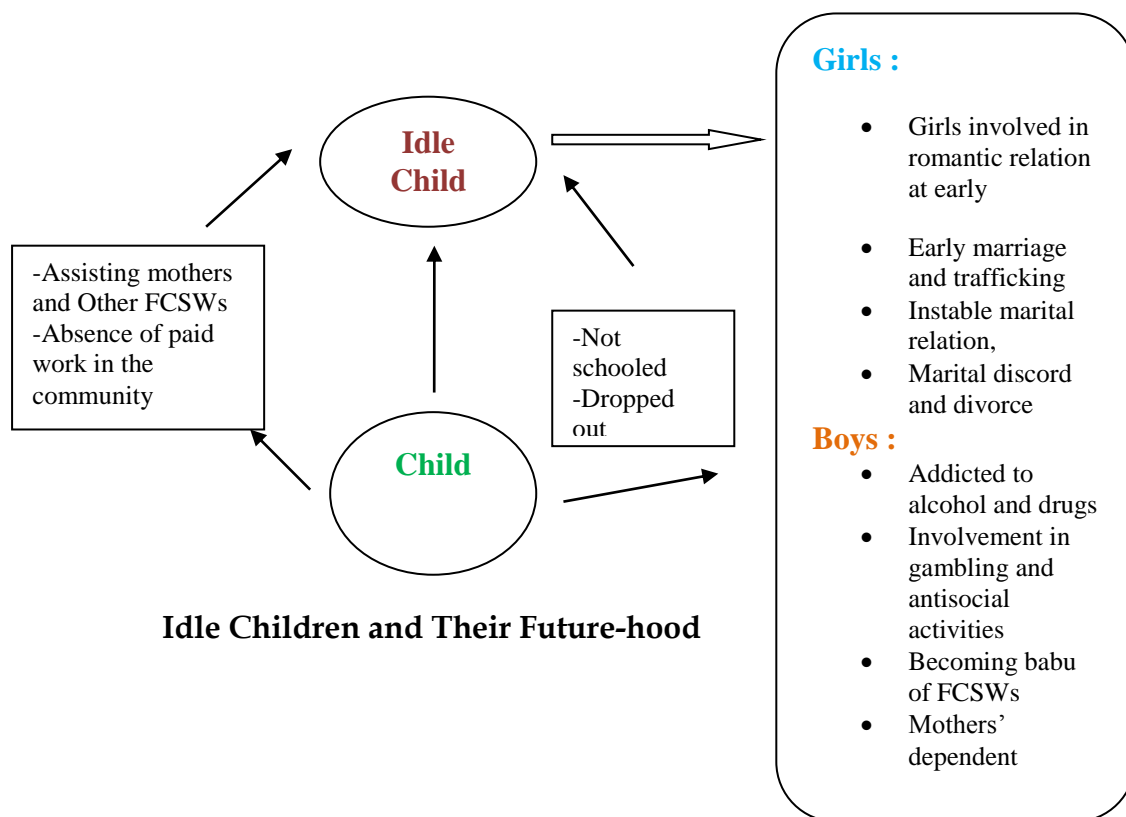


Fig.1 also described the idle children and their future hood in brothel. From the study, it had been seen that the children were the younger representatives of FCSWs' profession and their community. There was a little initiatives among FCSWs and also among their children to come out from their community. These initiatives did not also continue for long because of its failure within short period. On the other side, initiatives of governments and other development agencies (NGOs) had failed due to its strict schematic nature and funding variation. In addition to this, stigmatized profession, residents and other reasons in their brothel were also responsible to bring change in their lives of children. Although initially, it was delighted with some visible hopes among a very few children, but at large it was a failure and it was sustained only as publicity of effort to this community. Analysis of their future hood proved it.

The girls of FCSWs were involved in romantic relation at early teen with outsides (mother's client or visitors to this community). They also involved in sexual relation before getting married when they toured with them. Then they married and trafficked to unknown places with their partner without mothers' approval. Some of them returned to other brothels of Kolkata or even at mothers' place and sex trade was their earning. FCSWs of a little percentage arranged their girls' marriage either with their relatives or sons' of other FCSWs. But it was instable girls had to face marital discord or mutual divorced. Then they were depending on FCSWs and had to live with FCSWs. Instable

marital relation was due to their born stigma. Further, a significant portion of these married girls did not adjust with outside environment. So, they left their husband's place. Gradually, they used to enter into this sex workers' world.

The idle boys were unable to mix up with larger society and stigma worked in their psychology. It was an afraid and anxiety to their life. The local club used to provide them a platform of gambling, entertainment and hooliganism. It was an advantage to the political leaders regardless of their party affiliation and they used them for their very own purpose. Sexual development and sexuality was significant from their early teen when they developed romantic relation and involved sexually with other FCSWs of their community. They were becoming husband/babu mutually and there was hardly scope of its legalization of their marriage. They preferred this relation because of their survival and amusement. They were dependent of FCSWs. This was also an instable in nature because both of them used to alter their partners. About 28% of them were dependent on their mothers whose trade status was generally malkin. They used to look after their mothers' business as male brothel owners. Consumption of alcohol, merijunan and drugs were common practices. FCSWs who identified them as husband/babu developed their emotional relation because it was certain type of social and emotional security which saved them during crisis i.e. torture of customers, police and malkin. Sometimes, babu was 'costless' security of their children as uninvolved father.

Simultaneously, the study found out about 3-4% of male who were self-dependent. They worked outside their community as brokers of long distance bus tickets, courier delivery boys and worked with catering agencies. Majority of them settled at their community. But a few of them settled outside their community after hiding their mothers' occupation or birth place.

Conclusion

Idle child is the cause of poverty like many other issues relating to children development and welfare. Parents from poor families feel investment in child education as a bad investment. In large and poor families where the number of children more than two, they do not get scope of education. So, the children generally involve in paid work. But where the availability of paid work is low, the children usually assist their parents in domestic chores or they assist in their parental jobs for their survival. Thus, these children become idle and they have to lead a life in adverse situation. From various study, it had been seen that poverty, parental attitude, educational facilities and again the non-availability of paid work determined the population of idle children. In developing countries like India, these idle children are significant in number.

Apart from the above causes of idleness, stigma as well as parental occupation is important responsible factor of idleness of children. From

this study, it was revealed that brothel was a refuge of idle children and where the stigma of sex workers' children was fundamental cause of idleness. About 69.5% (out of 374, 260) children was idle within their age group of 6-14 years. Typical structure, process and functions of the brothel community did not support for children education as an instrument of their settlement outside their community or mainstreaming them into larger society. The female commercial sex workers were excluded from the larger society. While they felt as inclusive member and they had to follow the culture of family and child bearing and rearing. FCSWs had to face dual role of household management and economic assistance and husband/male's role was insignificant for child development. Their adverse milieu was inappropriate for children up-bringing. Mothers' income according to their status in the trade, attitude and other aspects were less responsible than stigma of sex workers' child. It confined them within the brothel community. So, overall process of idleness pushed them to their vicious cycle. From early childhood, they used to assist their mothers in domestic chores. Even they were helping their mothers for client entertainment.

In the brothel community, government and other development agencies are implementing various rehabilitative programmes like education. But it is non-formal based remedial coaching and it is schematic pattern. The continuation of these programmes is depending on during of funding. These agencies are not working for inclusive

development of children for which the children had to drop out from education due to mal-treatment by peers, class mates and even teachers. The brothel community does not provide proper environment for educational development. The safe and separate shelter for these children might be an important tool for their development. An all round initiative from all corners would surely save these children from stigma of vicious cycle.

References

- Adhikari, H. (2007), 'Growing Up in an Adverse Milieu: Education and Occupation of Sex Workers' Children', *Indian Journal of Social Work*, 68(2), 282-307
- Adhikari, H.(2009), 'Males' Role-Relations in the Life of Female Sex Workers', *Madhya Pradesh Journal of Social Sciences*, 14(2), 61-74
- Adhikari, H (2012), 'Attachment of Stigma in Sex Workers' Milieu (Family & Community): A Hindrance of Psychosocial Development of Their Children', *Atılım Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 1(2), 95-110
- Bacalod, M. and Ranjan R. (2004), *Why Children Work, Attend School, or Stay Idle: Theory and Evidence*, Working paper. Retrieved from http://hypatia.ss.uci.edu/faculty/bacolod/cebu_childlabor.pdf.
- Basu, K. and Van, P.H. (1998), 'The Economics of Child Labor', *The American Economic Review*, 88(3), 412-427
- Biggeri, M., Guarcello, L., Lyon, S. and Rosati, F.C. (2003), *The Puzzle of "Idle" Children: Neither in School Nor Performing Economic Activity: Evidence from Six Countries*, Understanding Children's Work Project, ILO-UNICEF-World Bank Group.

- Bongaarts J. and Watkins, S. C. (1996), 'Social Interactions and Contemporary Fertility Transitions'. *Population Development Review*, 22(4), 639-682
- Chamarbagwala, R. and R. Tchernis. (2010), 'Exploring the Spatial Determinants of Children's Activities: Evidence from India', *Empirical Economics*, 39(2), 593-617.
- Cartwright, K. (1998), 'Child labor in Colombia, in The Policy Analysis of Child Labor: A Comparative Study', ed. by C. Grootaert, and H. A. Patrinos, chap. 4. London : St Martin's Press.
- Deb, P. and Rosati, F. (2004), *Determinants of Child Labor and School Attendance: The Role of Household Unobservables*, Working Paper No. 02/9, Hunter College, Department of Economics.
- Ersado, L. (2005): 'Child Labor and Schooling Decisions in Urban and Rural Areas: Comparative Evidence from Nepal, Peru, and Zimbabwe', *World Development*, 33(3), 455-480.
- Foster, A.D, and Rosenzweig, M. R. (1996), 'Technical Change and Human-Capital Returns and Investments: Evidence From the Green Revolution'. *American Economics Review*, 86(4), 931-953
- Kochar, A. (2004). 'Urban Influences on Rural Schooling in India'. *Journal of Development Economics*, 74,113-136
- Montgomery, M.R. and Casterline, J.B. (1993), 'The Diffusion of Fertility Control in Taiwan: Evidence From Pooled Cross-Section Time-Series Models', *Population Studies*, 47, 457-479
- Oxford English Dictionary,(1884), UK : Oxford University Press,
- Rosero, Bixby L. and Casterline J.B. (1993), 'Modeling Diffusion Effects in Fertility Transition'. *Population Studies*, 47(1), 147-167
- Rosero, Bixby L and Casterline, J.B., (1994), 'Interaction Diffusion and Fertility Transition in Costa Rica', *Social Forces*, 73(2), 435-462

Watkins, S.C. and Danzi, A. (1995), 'Women's Gossip and Social Change: Child Birth and Fertility Control among Italian and Jewish Women in the United States', 1920-1940. *Gender Sociology*, 9(4), 469-490

Wells, K. (2015), *Childhood in a Global Perspective* (2nd edition), UK: Polity Press

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION FOR POOR GIRLS IN WEST BENGAL

Soma Kundu

The Right to Education Act, 2009 seeks to reach out to every child by widening access and providing necessary institutional facilities for quality elementary education. But the issue of quality education presents daunting challenge especially for children from poor, underprivileged and marginalized sections of society. This paper seeks to focus on empirical reality about elementary education and the problems and difficulties faced by poor and underprivileged girls in securing quality education as experienced in West Bengal.

Elementary education constitutes the most crucial stage of human learning system. In modern society primary school is the basic unit of state sponsored education system. Quality of education at primary school assumes enormous significance in the context of nation building as well as human development. It helps to build the foundation of human ability and skill for participation in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the nation.

United Nations has specified poor quality of school education in many developing countries as a problem of human development and urged

international community to work for necessary improvement in the situation. For attaining this goal it is necessary to move beyond providing primary education to all children in the age group 6- 14 years to ensuring quality education for the poor as a means of enhancing their capacity to compete in the job market with elite and privileged sections of society. In the Millennium Development Goal(MDG) of United Nations governments of member states including India committed to achieve universal access to free, quality and compulsory primary education for all children by the year 2015.

National Policy of Education 1986 with its amended version adopted in 1992 along with subsequent other programmes like Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) stressed upon universal elementary education. All these have focused upon bringing all children belonging to the age group 6-14 years under formal schooling system. Gender disparity, poverty and various other problems faced by girl child pose strong challenge to universal elementary education in India. Reaching out to every girl child is a central concern in the social, economic, cultural and gender context of a huge country like India for achieving UN formulated MDG of universal elementary education.

National Policy of Education called for special emphasis on removal of disparities and equal opportunity of education for both boys and girls including those belonging to backward, poor and marginalized communities. It laid stress on child centric approach in elementary

education, provision for more teachers and schools, incentive for poor families for sending their wards to schools. India's commitment for universal elementary education was reinforced following its acceptance of MDG adopted by United Nations. The programme of action has given unqualified support to universal enrolment of all children including girls in both urban and rural areas of the country.

Government of India has made free and compulsory primary education for all children a national mission and constitutional obligation by 86th Amendment to the constitution of India. In the year 2009 it enacted the Right to Education Act and recognized education as a fundamental right. The act seeks to secure right to education to every child in the age group 6-14 years. Its aim is to guarantee that all children in the age group 6-14 years receive at least elementary education irrespective of their socio- economic status and their ability to pay for education in a situation of continuous poverty and erosion of basic needs.

The Act has tended to transform the quality of schools specially government schools to enable children from poor, underprivileged and marginalized sections of society to acquire quality education. The Act seeks to reach out to every child by widening access and providing necessary institutional facilities for quality elementary education. But the issue of quality education presents daunting challenges especially for children from poor, under privileged and marginalized sections of

society. The 1992 Report of the State Education Commission made a number of adverse comments about the deteriorating standard of elementary education at public schools of West Bengal. These have been corroborated by subsequent Annual State of Education Report (ASER) and studies made by Pratichi Trust founded by Noble laureate Amartya Sen. This paper seeks to focus on empirical reality about universal elementary education in West Bengal with reference to the problems and difficulties experienced by poor and socially and economically backward girls for securing the right to education.

Rural poverty has been a pervasive problem in India and it is manifested in all the states. It is multidimensional in nature and has affected the life of the poor significantly. In India the ratio of rural poverty compared with urban poverty is higher resulting in further exclusion and backwardness of poor and socially and economically weaker sections in the countryside. Income poverty is still a matter of serious concern affecting the life process of the poor and backward in the rural areas. It lowers the level of human development. Various development programmes under successive five year plans have helped to reduce the incidence on poverty in the country. Still, India has significant segment of the rural poor who have experienced backwardness in economy, culture, education and development.

Poor people lack capacity to compete with the rich and well-off sections of society and they remain backward in various areas of life.

Per capita income of people is an important index for measuring the capacity of poor and marginalized who can not reap the benefits of development for their incapacity in the relevant field. The per capita income of poor and marginalized in West Bengal has increased but there is widespread disparity in income enhancement among people in different districts of West Bengal.

District wise per capita income figures show that it is highest in Kolkata and lowest in North Dinajpur. Disparity in income among people of different districts is quite obvious though per capita income has increased in all parts of the state in the post - reform period as a result of rise in prices of agricultural produces, prosperity of small and marginal farmers during left- front rule, expansion of rural market and introduction of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in the rural areas. According to Government of India official figure West Bengal has 28.80% BPL population with monthly per capita income Rs. 643.20 only (base year 2009-10).

Elementary Education in West Bengal

West Bengal has made significant progress in primary education. Earlier the rate of schooling of children from among the poor and economically weaker section of society was relatively lower as compared with the rich and well- off section of people. Apart from poverty, lack of awareness among people about the need for education hindered the progress of elementary education in the state. Literacy

Campaign followed by National Literacy Mission, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Mid Day Meal schemes collectively helped to raise popular awareness and demand for elementary education in the state. In the year 1997 there were more than 50,000 state run primary schools in West Bengal. Over the years the number of primary schools and teachers for imparting education in these schools has increased substantially. To provide quality education in these schools teachers training system has been strengthened. Good number of primary teachers training institutes has been established at different districts of West Bengal. With substantial increase in teachers` salary and other service benefits for primary teachers during Left- Front rule, the condition of teachers improved significantly. For further improvement in primary education teacher recruitment system was revamped. A state level eligibility test (TET) was introduced for further improvement in primary teaching system. But the quality of education at most state run primary schools more particularly in the rural and semi- urban areas did not improve as expected.

On 12th April 2012 the apex court of the country mandated by a ruling that all unaided private schools should reserve 25% of their seats for children from economically weaker sections of society. The government decided to provide funds to private schools to meet the statutory requirement of reservation for poor students. This will obviously be an additional burden on public exchequer. But why is such ruling by the apex court?

The matter of the fact is that government run primary schools (about 8 lakhs) spread over rural and urban areas of country far out-number unaided private schools (1.8 lakh). Most of the private schools are situated at urban and semi-urban areas. But the general standard of primary education as imparted in government schools is dismal. The majority of public primary schools suffer from a lack of essential physical infrastructure including toilets for girl students, absence of adequately qualified and sufficient number of teachers, high rate of absenteeism among teachers and a hopeless teacher-student ratio with one teacher addressing children from different grades in a single classroom. By and large, the primary teachers spend more time as the flag-bearers of political parties than on teaching and building up students with necessary education.

According to the Annual State of the Education Report 2011 compiled by Mumbai based NGO, Pratham, less than 50% of class 5 students are able to read a class 2 text book. In its nationwide survey the NGO found that only 30% students in class 3 were able to solve a two-digit subtraction problem. Central to the mess is the deplorable condition of government run primary schools spread across villages and peri-urban areas. Instead of focusing on upgrading the quality of these institutions the RTE act betrays an obsessive concern with the private schools (Mandal 2012 : 6).

Private Tuition

Private tuition among school children particularly those studying at primary schools has been an increasing practice in West Bengal. Annual State of Education Report 2014 (ASER) found that as many as 56% students studying at elementary level take private tuition. In Tamil Nadu it is only 6 to 7 per cent students of elementary level who opt for private tuition. These findings have been reflected at Indian Human Development Survey 2004- 5.

Children in private schools learn more than children in public schools for regular presence of teachers and their careful teaching. In spite of technological advance there is no substitute for well trained and motivated teachers. Children of the rich can get education at expensive private schools. But public schools are the mainstay in education for the poor. It is necessary to ensure that poor and economically weak also get some education from school. Children who go to private school perform better. On average, 69% of private school goers can read a subject paragraph properly while in public schools it is only 50%. Similar differences exist in arithmetic and writing skill. The growing preference for private schooling and the reliance on private tuition may be seen in the context of differences in skill acquisition of children at government and private schools. There are performance differences also among learners in terms of parental education and income (IHDR 2010 :83).

The Study Area; In the year 2001 there were 2616 primary schools in Nadia district (of West Bengal). In the next ten years the number of primary schools in the district has increased substantially. According to Annual Administrative Report 2012-13, the number of primary schools in the district has gone up to 3285 in the period. Mid- day meal has been introduced as centrally sponsored programme in the district. More than 7 lakh students have been covered under the programme in the period. Usually cooked mid- day meal is served to the students. Number of Sishu Siksha Kendras (SSKs) in the district was 740 in the year 2002-3 but these dwindled to 566 in 2006-7. The programme was launched in 1997 to provide access to basic education to poor and economically weak children in the age group 5-9 years. These are excluded segment of children who are unable to join formal education system for lack of easy access to formal education for unsuitable school timing, lack of communication and similar problem.

This study is based on participant observation and group discussion with parents and students in the neighbourhood. For necessary information 50 girl students attached to the ashram and some non-attached were interviewed to find actual state of implementation of RTE among poor and economically weaker section girl child. These 30 students come to the ashram for coaching as they have been given permission by the ashram authority for free coaching. The rest 20 students have been selected for proximity of their residence to place of study, their socio- economic characteristics and option for private

tuition. The ashram attending girls are from poor family background and maintain devotional relation with Ramkrishna Mission and its affiliate institutions. Non attached girls also belong to poor and low income families. Parental educational background of these students is not so good. Only 4 persons have read up to eighth standard. Others are either illiterate or have some formal education. Five persons are illiterate. Mother`s literacy among respondent girls is significantly lacking. Only 11 mothers out of the total sample of 50 students are literate have some formal education. Others are illiterate.

Family background, economic hardship, parental education and lack of time are the most compelling factors for these parents` recourse to private tuition. They do not think that their wards should take private tuition considering their hardship. At the same time they think about hard competition in modern life and pathetic condition of public school education nowadays. Even primary school education was better earlier and teachers very dedicated. They argue that they have little time to look after their wards and they have no option but to send them to private tutors. Those who have got admission at ashram coaching centre are satisfied.

Problems Galore

Parental education - Illiteracy and functional literacy are the common educational background in case of most of the respondents. Most of

them are not in a position to help their wards in study. This has compelled many to engage in private tutors.

Lack of time - Most of the parents do not find adequate time to look after the study of their wards. They go out of home for earning and return after hard work. They remain exhausted both physically and mentally after day`s hard work. Therefore helping children and take care of their educational need remain an impractical task for most of them.

Household chores - Girls of poor families usually do not enjoy enough freedom unlike their counterparts from rich and well- off families. For a substantial part of usual study time at morning and evening they need to help their mothers at household work.

POVERTY AND DEPRIVATIONS IN RURAL INDIA: WITH A REFERENCE TO WOMEN IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Sukamal Deb

Rural development in India is identified largely with poverty alleviation policies. Perhaps no country in the world has invested so much time and resources on poverty alleviation and achieved so little as India. This paper aims to assess the poverty level, resultant deprivations and helplessness as the poor is more often gets trapped in a vicious cycle, especially the ST women of Arunachal Pradesh. The paper seeks to introspect on the limitations of the poverty alleviation programmes.

Rural development in India is identified largely with poverty alleviation policies. Perhaps no country in the world has invested so much time and resources on poverty alleviation and achieved so little as India. Over the 25 year period 1973-74 to 1999-00, the poverty ratio was halved from 55 to 27 per cent. As per Economic Times Jul, 23, 2013 poverty declined to 21.9 per cent in 2011-12. The issue of poverty is a global concern especially since the last decade of 20th century. 72.18 per cent of the poor in India reside in rural areas making rural poverty a major threat on the way of county's aspiration for achievement and development.

As one of the first studies of poverty in India, Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-17) wrote a book "Poverty and Un-British Role in India" (1871) which indicated that India was a very poor country in comparison with Britain. In India census is conducted since 1872. So India is one of the first countries in the world to estimate people living below a clearly defined poverty line. As per Census 2011 the village population is 742,490,639 (72.18 per cent) spread over 6, 38,691 villages. Villages comprise the core of Indian society and represent the real India.

The perception of poverty differs from person to person and the human poverty expresses its deprivations in multiple dimensions. The broader dimensions of poverty are the shackles are poor health, malnutrition, illiteracy, social exclusion, vulnerability and lack of opportunities. There are 42 per cent Indians living on less than \$1.25 per day, around 50 per cent of our children are malnourished and 13 million out of school children & 52 per cent children drop-out before reaching 8th standard and so on. India has 2.4 per cent of world's surface area accounts for 17.5 per cent of its population which is 1,210, 569,573 persons (01-03-2011). India lags behind Bangladesh in educating the girl child and in many other social indicators although the GDP of India is three times to that of Bangladesh. Sri Lanka has better education system than India even though it has no private schools. An Indian village is unthinkable without the caste system while a Chinese village does not have castes. So Indian society is complex, the poverty is interconnected with multiple issues. Possibility

is abundant that a person or a family that may be non-poor today could fall into the trap of poverty in future. Precariousness not ruled out as vulnerability could arise from both expected and unexpected quarters. The poverty may be chronic under vitiating circumstances like drought, flood or earth quakes. The intensity culminates to impoverishment which may prompt to take extreme steps. Although the poverty ratio declined, the number of poor remained stable at around 320 million spread over two decades.

Table - 1
Estimates of Poverty

<i>Year</i>	<i>All India No. (Million)</i>	<i>Poverty Ratio (per cent)</i>	<i>Rural No. (Million)</i>	<i>Poverty Ratio (per cent)</i>	<i>Urban No. (Million)</i>	<i>Poverty Ratio (per cent)</i>
1973 - 1974	321	54.9	261	56.4	60	49.0
1977 - 1978	329	51.3	264	53.1	65	45.2
1983	323	44.5	252	45.7	71	40.8
1987 - 1988	307	38.9	232	39.1	75	38.2
1993 - 1994	320	36.0	244	37.3	76	32.4
1999 - 2000	260	26.1	193	27.1	67	23.6

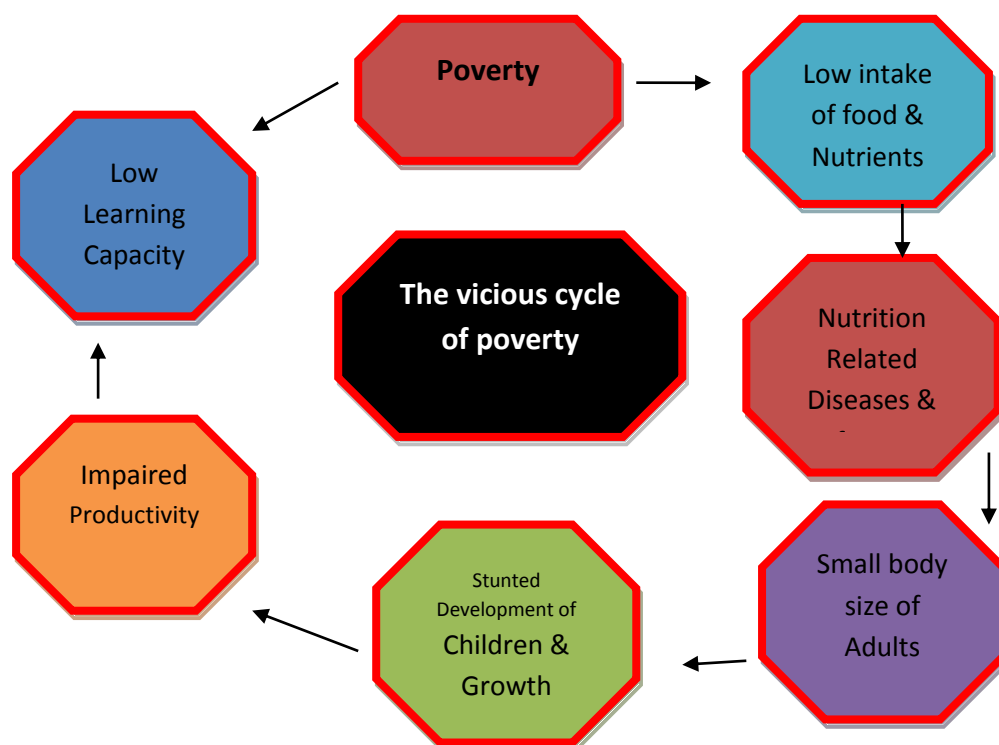
Source: Planning Commission

We know poverty is synonymous with poor life quality, deprivations, malnutrition and its eradication call for a crusade. A poor are more prone to diseases, adversely affecting their earning capacity. Lack of education compels people to take up low and menial jobs. Thus they get caught in a vicious cycle of poverty.

Another aspect of understanding consequences of poverty is migration. Migration is considered to be a function of labour reallocation in response to market demands. It has a strong connotation with the incidence of poverty. The developmental problems related to growth of population will not end with migration. An increasing population in the face of an already low supply of resources and land can only result in diminishing returns in the absence of other requirements such as more capital, better trained labour and technological innovations. "Many of our small towns and villages are in distress and that even though the unsettling of the countryside may be a national tragedy; it amounts to no more than a natural process will continue to occur over the next century" (John W Keller). The global economy is greatly affected by natural and human imbalances. Our rural areas as if meant to provide food, fuel and cheap workers. So unless the rural areas are revitalised the metropolitan centres must ultimately provide the rescue funds and resources to support the countryside.

Yet again, the women and their affliction due to poverty is a sensational issue. How the poor women fall in the vicious cycle of poverty can be realised from these two reports. A majority of young women belonging to the lower socio-economic group are undernourished. According to National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau, 1991 data, nearly 24 per cent of adult women in the reproductive period have body weight less than 38 kg and about 16 percent have

height less than 145 cm, girls approach adolescence without meeting the proper nutritional requirements. This does not allow them to achieve their optimum growth. Malnutrition resulted in stunted growth and affects the proper development of the pelvis. When a girl reaches puberty, she has around 4 per cent of height still to be gained and 12 - 18 per cent pelvic growth ahead of her (WHO, 1990). Early marriage and teenage pregnancy further interfere in her growth and development. Thus these women fall into the 'high risk' category. They are more likely to suffer obstetric complications and give birth to infants to low birth weight (LBW), adding to the risks of increased infant mortality and morbidity.



This paper is a diagnostic study, based on secondary data sources. The data are collected from the published books, journals, reports, newspapers, and gazetteer and statistical abstracts etc., wherever possible cross-verification of data is done. Bibliography containing the References, Websites and Reports is appended.

The study is made in respect of A.P. which is India's 13th geographically largest frontier State with population of 13, 82,611 (Census, 2011) and 1630 km international border with Bhutan, China and Myanmar.

The National Scenario

The NSSO data say the percentage of the country's BPL population declined from 37 per cent in 2004-05 to 22 per cent in 2011 - 12. Between 2005 and 2010, the country's GDP grew at an average of 8.5 per cent and the poverty rate (the proportion of the population below the poverty line) registered an average annual decline of 1.48 per cent. The 11th Plan (2007-08 to 2011-12) targeted reducing poverty by two percentage points by 2009-10, compared to 2004-05. It is also disclosed that the rural poverty has declined faster than urban poverty during this period. According to the data, the total number of BPL people in the country is 26.89 Crore as against 40.73 Crore in 2004-05. In rural areas, the number has reduced from 32.58 Crore to 21.72 Crore. The data also indicate that the steepest decline in poverty was in India's poorer states. "While there has been a national reduction of poverty by

two percentage points by 2009-10, compared to 2004-05, different states have performed differently. Bihar, Orissa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh have witnessed a sharp decline. Bihar shows the biggest decline” said Saumitra Chaudhuri, then Member Planning Commission to The Hindu. The summary result of large scale survey in 2011-12 (NSS 68th round) released in June 2013. As per the survey, the percentage of persons below the poverty line in India for the year 2011-12 has been estimated as 25.7 per cent in rural areas, 13.7 per cent in urban areas and 21.9 per cent for the country as a whole. Critics object in such rosy picture. It is criticised as gross unrealistic as the above levels used monthly poverty lines of ₹1000 for urban and ₹816 for rural, or ₹33.3 and ₹27.2 per day respectively. To the critics the Planning Commission’s spurious method shows a decline in poverty because it has continuously lowered the measuring standard. The official poverty lines give command over time to a lower and lower standard of living. “With a steadily lowered standard, the poverty figures will always show apparent improvement even when actual deprivation is worsening” (Utsa Patnaik, The Hindu, 30.7.2013).

In 2011-12, India had 270 million persons below the Tendulkar Poverty Line as compared to 407 million in 2004-05, that is a reduction of 137 million persons over the seven years period. The Planning Commission in December 2005 appointed a committee led by Suresh D. Tendulkar, then Member of the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council to review alternate concepts of poverty and recommend changes in the

existing procedures of official estimation of poverty. The poverty ratio was highest in Chhattisgarh at 39.93 per cent followed by Jharkhand 36.96 per cent, Manipur 36.89 per cent, Arunachal Pradesh 34.67 per cent and Bihar 33.47 per cent. Among the union territories, the Dadra and Nagar Haveli were highest with 39.31 per cent. The monetary measures of poverty have limitations as it fails to capture the deprivations and disabilities that poor suffer. The incidence of poverty in India has always been a matter of intense debate. There has been concentration of poverty in certain pockets, poorly governed and politically invisible areas are the most affected in that sense. This is also true in context of various social groups like ST and SC. Table 2 is self-explanatory.

Table-2
Poverty by Social Groups

Social Groups	1993-94	1999-00
<i>ST (Rural)</i>	51.96	45.86
<i>SC (Rural)</i>	48.32	36.25
<i>All Population (Rural)</i>	37.32	27.09
<i>ST (Urban)</i>	40.74	34.75
<i>SC (Urban)</i>	49.84	38.42
<i>All Population (Urban)</i>	32.28	23.62

Source: Planning Commission, 2002

In fact, those who are afflicted to poverty these statistical figures and debates hardly make a sense to them. The irony of poverty is best realised by those who are poor for generations. In the context of poor Indian Gandhiji said, "If India is not to perish, we have to begin with

the lower rung of the ladder. If that was rotten, all work done at the top or at the intermediate rungs is bound to ultimately fall" (*Harijan*, 13.4.1935, p. 68). To him, poverty of the people was not a statistical figure, he lived and moved among them felt the iron of their agonies in his own flesh. He found an echo of his sentiments in John Ruskin's '*Unto This Last*' and Leo Tolstoy's '*Bread Theory of Labour*'. Gandhiji's philosophy certainly timelessly relevant got echoed in the UNDP Report, 2005 saying "for achieving MDG by the 2015 deadline our most important effort has to be to put the last first". Gandhiji in '*Young India*' (1926) wrote "India is in danger of losing her soul. She can't lose it and live".

The concept of human poverty is considered to cover more than the word poor may convey ordinarily. The parameters include health, education, sanitation and other aspects that have an impact on person's living conditions. In October, 2000 UN Member Countries committed themselves to eradicate "poverty, promote human dignity and equality and achieve peace, democracy and environmental sustainability". The MDG were framed to achieve eight milestones by the year 2015. Extreme poverty and hunger identified as the threat and enemy, eradication of this remained the major goal. People cannot afford health care when they fall ill and when they fall ill they cannot work. With reduction of income the poverty goes deeper. The World Development Report, 2004 (World Bank) identified freedom from illness and freedom from illiteracy as the two most important ways the

poor can escape poverty. The poor are excluded from political decision making process and subjected to exploitations and discrimination. They do not possess the ability to fight the entrenched groups.

Poverty in Arunachal Pradesh (AP)

As per Planning Commission state's 0.35 million persons are in PBL category and is afflicted with less poverty in 2009-10 than in 2004-05 with 6 per cent fall. The figures were arrived by using the Tendulkar methodology (The Telegraph, 20.3.2012).

Table - 3
Poverty Ratio in A.P.

Year	Poverty Ratio, Rural (per cent)	Poverty Ratio, Urban (per cent)	Poverty Ratio, Combined (per cent)
1973 - 74	52.67	36.92	51.93
1993 - 94	45.01	7.73	39.35
1999 - 00	40.04	7.47	33.47

Source: Planning Commission (In the above Table the Planning Commission used the Poverty Ratio of Assam for A.P.)

The economic development and the decennial growth rate of population have important correlation. Let us briefly study the growth of population of the State here. It is sparsely populated predominantly by the indigenous population. During the census year 1961, they comprised 88.76% of total population. As per Census, 2001, the population was 10, 97,968 as against 1991 Census of 8, 64,558 persons and rose to 13, 82,611 as per Census, 2011. The decennial growth rate from 1991 to 2001 was about 26.21 per cent against an increase of 21.34 percent at all India level and that from 2001 to 2011 is 25.92 percent

against 17.64 percent at the national level. The density of population in the State as per 2011 Census is 17 persons / sq km (against national average of 382) which were 13 as per 2001 Census and 10 as per 1991 Census. The population density of the State is the lowest among all the States in India. According to 2001 Census, the tribal population of the State was 7,05,158 which was 64.22 per cent of total population. In the past the ethnic ST people purely inhabited the State. During 1961, the tribal people were 88.67 per cent. The ST population was 78.85 per cent in 1971, 69.82 in 1981, 63.66 in 1991 and 64.22 in 2001 (Table 4). It is observed that the percentage of ST population has continuously decreased since 1961.

Table - 4
Population Growth in A.P

Year	Persons	Males	Females	ST population	ST population as % of total population
1961	336558	177680	158878	298439	88.67
1971	467511	251231	216280	369408	78.85
1981	628050	335941	292109	441167	69.82
1991	864558	465004	399554	550351	63.66
2001	1097968	579941	518027	705158	64.22
2011	1382611	720232	662379	951821	68.78

Source: Statistical Abstract, 2012, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of A. P.

The ST people are concentrated in rural area. The outsiders are Government employees, businessman, service providers or wage workers who normally stay in towns. As Amitava Mitra observed, it is lamented that progress in health, education and connectivity has not

strengthened the State's economy and the State still remains a mere consumer of goods and services (Mandal, 2012, P.xxv). State's women folk are hard working their crusade against the poverty is vigour than the males.

Figure - 1

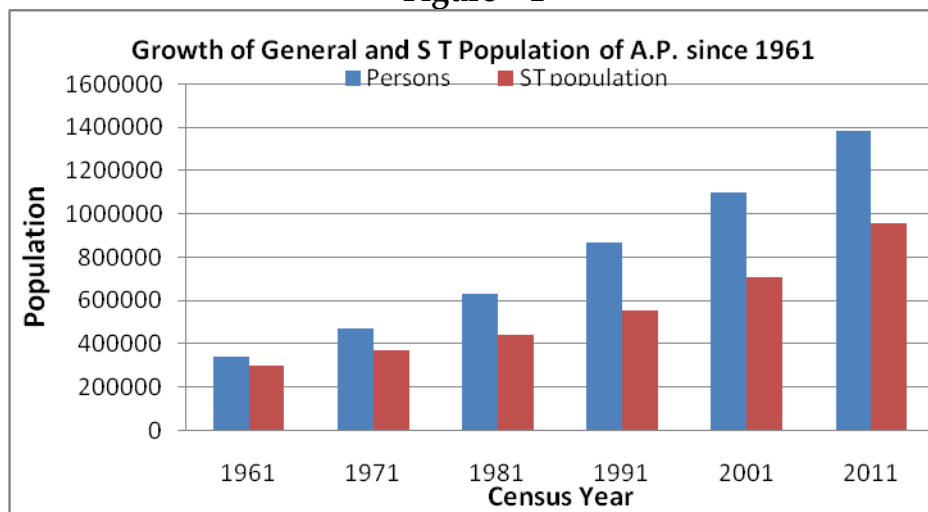


Figure - 2

Time Plot of Percentage of ST Population to total Population

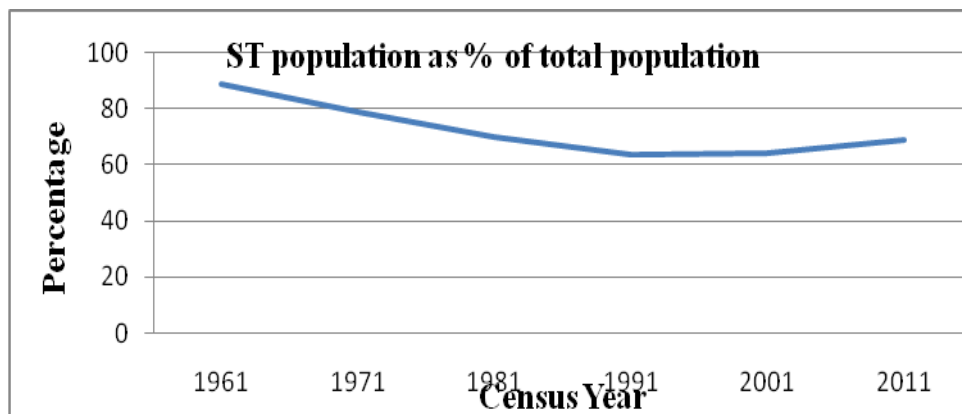


Table -5

Decennial Population Growth Rate

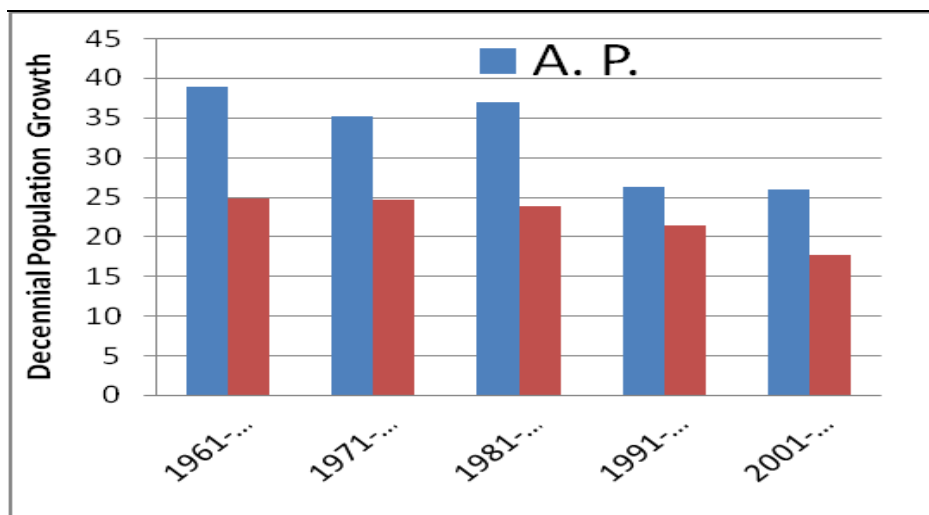
State/Country	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-01	2001-11
A.P.	38.91	35.15	36.83	26.21	25.92
India	24.80	24.66	23.86	21.34	17.64

Source: Census Report, A.P., 2001.

The decennial growth rate of population of the State and India since 1961 is shown in Table 5 and Figure 1 and 2.

Figure 3

Decennial Growth of Population: India and State since 1961



If we form a line diagram considering decennial population growth of the State and India along the 'Y' axis and Census Years along the 'X' axis, we see the line for the State standing always higher than that of India. It is observed from Figure - 07 and Figure - 08 that the decennial

population growth in the State can be divided into three categories: (i) Population growth rate was declining from 1961 to 1981; (ii) It was slightly increasing from 1981 to 1991; (iii) Again, it was declining from 1991 to 2001 very significantly. But, in context of India, it was declining smoothly during the period concerned. From Table-5, for the State, census figures earlier to 1961 are not available, during 1961-71, the population grew by 38.91 percent and during 1971-81, 1981-91 and 1991-01 it grew 35.15 percent, 36.83 percent and 26.21 percent respectively. But at the national level the growth was 24.80 percent in 1961-1971, 24.66 percent in 1971-81, 23.86 percent in 1981-91 and 21.34 percent in 1991-01 respectively. It is clear that the decennial growth of population in the State is very high as compared to that of the country as a whole. Therefore, the decennial growth rate of population of the State decreased in 1971-81 in comparison to 1961-71 and slightly increased in 1981-91 and finally decreased in 1991-01. But the decennial growth rate of population of India is continuously decreasing and remains always below the State for concerned census year. The reason of sliding down of the population growth rate in the State from census 1991 might be due to the reduction of labour force engaged primarily in extraction of forest and forest products after the imposition of ban on these by the Supreme Court of India. Because of this ban, almost all the saw mills, veneer mills and felling of logs throughout the State had been stopped functioning. Thereby, the labourers were forced to be employed in other sectors or to leave the State. This has also contributed to the incidence of poverty in the State. Again, the

consciousness of family planning and the advantages of small family norms are seen not only in literate couple but also in illiterate couple. However, overall the population has increased 4.11 times in comparison to that of 1961 Census within the span of 50 years. The population density was 4 in 1961 Census, 6 in 1971 Census, 8 in 1981 Census, 10 in 1991 Census, 13 in 2001 Census and 17 in 2011 Census showing a constantly increasing trend. In the remotest rural areas, which are comparatively invisible pockets there may be examples of absolute poverty that need to be addressed on priority. The State with 26 major tribes and 110 sub-tribes suffer geographical isolation coupled with inhospitable terrain, low levels of development although they have glorious heritage of arts and crafts, enchanting folksongs admired for simplicity, friendliness and hospitability.

The per capita income (GSDP) of A.P. at current prices was ₹24,976 during the year 2005-06 which was lower to per capita GDP of the country as ₹26,696 (Economic Survey, 2007-08) . 'The GSDP was lower mainly due to low productivity in its primary sector. The State is poorer than the rest of the country. The poverty is in many facets of life' (Bhattacharjee, 2008). With respect to HDI, A.P. is the least developed State among eight North Eastern States of India. Other than HDI, there are other indices to measure level of development from various angles these are GDI (Gender Development Index), GEM (Gender Empowerment Index), HPI (Human Poverty Index) etc. According to GDI development cannot be possible without the

development of female. The components of GDI are - (i) With respect to per capita income how much females are getting compared to male, (ii) With respect to education how girl students are progressing compared to boys, and (iii) the male-female ratio with respect to enrolment in school and average life expectancy of female compared to male etc. According to this index though high HDI implies high level of development, but it does not reflect the status of women of a nation. The GDI reflects the status of women and whose development is the true reflection of the development. Comparative HDI status of AP and India can be apprehended from Table 6.

Table - 6
Human Development Index

Country / States	HDI		
	1981	1991	2001
India	0.263	0.381	0.56
A. P.	0.228 (L)	0.328 (L)	0.49 (L)

Source: Human Development Report, A.P

In context of methodology applied to derive the Poverty Lines, there have been instances that over time lower and lower standard of living have been adopted. Apparently this may show an improvement whereas actually the situation may have worsened. This may manifest in worsening deprivation. This vital information should not be misleading as on these data so many Government policies are based. The lot of poor people will not improve unless real measures are in place to fight poverty. Poverty is a complex phenomenon. There are

certain areas which are remote and appears like invisible, various handicaps in the policy and half-minded efforts comes on the way of eradication of poverty, especially of the women folk, who bear the brunt more intensely, in real terms. This aptly fit for the case of A.P.

Conclusion

Perhaps, India is in a conflict of issues, over enthusiastic to eradicate the term poverty in paper hurriedly without real achievement of milestones. Analysis of the incidence of poverty does not reveal the complete picture of rural poverty. The States which have shown significant decline in poverty have followed different approaches to poverty alleviation. In Punjab and Haryana rapid agricultural growth while investment in human development in Kerala and effective PDS in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have contributed to the poverty reductions in the respective States. For Arunachal Pradesh an innovative approach is yet to be initiated.

The rural economy and social structure in most developing countries is characterised by widespread poverty, poor health, illiteracy, exploitation, inequitable distribution of land and other assets, lack of rural infrastructure and public utilities. In absence of sound social security schemes the vulnerable section like tribal has no hope of reduction in risk of vulnerability. An integrated approach covering the various dimensions of rural life is essential. Development is a sustained improvement in material welfare, particularly for those who

are poor and afflicted by poverty, illiteracy and poor health. Therefore, it involves a qualitative concept.

For A.P. core issue is development of large rural area. The correct approach seems to develop villages without disturbing their decentralised existence, their traditional institutions and systems. The women folk need special attention as its good effect will bring bigger outcome. The craze for material advancement and accumulation of personal wealth is creating problems and distortions. The rural-urban migration is a common phenomenon in recent time. A balanced and inclusive socio-economic development need to be realised. A.P. suffers acute deprivation from the time immemorial and this is main cause of poverty till date (Bhattacharjee 2001). Research on the spread and depth of poverty, its affliction on women may be encouraged.

References

- Bhattacharjee, R. P. (2001): *Economic Development of Arunachal Pradesh*, Himalayan Publishers, Delhi, pp.1-16.
- Bhattacharya, R.P. (2008): "Poverty Level in Arunachal Pradesh- a brief Study" paper presented in Seminar of the Department of Rural Development, Government of A.P. at Itanagar.
- Gandhi, M. K. (1935): Harijan (Weekly News Paper of Gandhiji published in between 1933 and 1940 in English.).
- Krishnan, G. Jegadeesanand and Santana, R. (2008): "Entrepreneurship in Rural India - An Introduction" in *Entrepreneurship and Rural Development in*

India, ICFAI University Press, Chennai. (www.Indiaonestop.com/unemployment.htm)

Mandal, R. K. (ed.) (2012): *Khadi and Village Industries in North-East India: Challenges and Opportunities*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, p.xxv

Shastri, Ranade Prabha (ed.): *Integrated Rural Development: A Roadmap*, The ICFAI Business School, Ahmadabad

Reports

Arunachal Pradesh Human Development Report 2005, (2006), Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, Department of Planning, Government of A.P., Itanagar.

Census Reports of 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011, India.

Human Development Reports, United Nations Development Programme, 2009.

National Sample Survey Organization, Government of India,

Planning Commission, Government of India,

The Assam Tribune, Guwahati, 30.06.2008

The Economic Times, New Delhi, 23.7.2013.

The Hindu, New Delhi, 16.7.2013.

The Hindu, New Delhi, 30.7.2013.

The Times of India, New Delhi, 30.6.2008.

About the Contributors

Dr. A.C.R. Diwakar Reddy, Lecturer in Political Science, Govt. College (UG&PG), Anantapuram, Andhra Pradesh,
Email: acr.dreddy@gmail.com

Ananya Guha Roy, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Political Science, Kamakhyaguri, Alipurduar,
Email: ananyaguharoy1982gmail.com

Harasankar Adhikari , Social Worker based in Kolkata
E-mail- : jaoya123@yahoo.co.in

Labani Dey, Research Scholar, Dept. of Sociology, Vidyasagar University, West Bengal, Email- labanidey@yahoo.com

Dr. M. Yasoda Devi , Lecturer in Hindi, SYTR Govt. Degree College, Madakasira, Andhra Pradesh,
Email- yasoda574@gmail.com

Madhuparna Mitra Guha , Assistant. Professor in History, University B.T & Evening College, Cooch Behar.
Email: madhuparna.mitra2011@gmail.com

Pinku Das, Assistant Teacher, Gitaldaha High School (H.S), Dinahata, Cooch Behar Email: geopinku100@gmail.com

Dr. S.A.H.Moinuddin, Professor of Sociology, Dept. of Sociology,
Vidyasagar University, West Bengal,
Email- sah.moinuddin@gmail.com

Soma Kundu, Assistant Teacher, Shri Sarada Ashram Coaching
Centre , Kalyani, Dist. Nadia, West Bengal ,
Email: somakundu2012@rediffmail.com

Sonel Som , Asst Professor in Geography, Saheed Kshudiram
College, Kamakhyaguri, Alipurduar

Dr. Sukamal Deb, Chief Executive Officer, Khadi & Village
Industries Board, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh,
Email: sukamal05@gmail.com

Guidelines for Contributors

1. The length of the articles including Notes and References should be between 4000 and 8000 words.
2. Two hard copies of the articles typed in MS Word and doubled spaced on one side of A4 size paper with adequate margin should be submitted along with its soft copy.
3. The first page of the article should contain Title of the article, the name of Author and designation and affiliation of the author(s).
4. The second page should start with the Title of the article, the name of Author(s) and an Abstract within 100 words.
5. Notes and references should be numbered consecutively and presented at the end of the article. In other words, it should contain End Notes and not Footnotes etc. The numbering of Notes and Reference must *not* be in the auto-format of MS Word.
6. The references cited/used in the text of the article should *only* be included in the Reference Section, if any.
7. Contributors should send articles, review articles, comment or research note etc. after careful revision of the type-script. Care must be taken to ensure that the type-script is free from typographical, grammatical and factual errors/mistakes. The Editorial Board will not be responsible for any sort of error whatsoever.
8. The submitted article must accompany a declaration that it has not been previously published elsewhere and has not been submitted for publication anywhere else.
9. Critical comments and additional discussion on articles already published in the Journal will also be considered for publication.
10. Book Review will be accepted *only* when accompanied by at least one copy of the book being reviewed.
11. The Journal will follow the reference styles such as i) title and initial of the author, ii) year of publication, iii) full title (in italics), iv) place of publication and name of publisher v) and page number.

For illustration:

a) Book:

Wade Robert, 1988. *Village Republic*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

b) Article in Edited Volume:

Ghosh B., 2000. 'West Bengal', in Mathew G. (ed.) *Status of Panchayats in the States and Union Territories*. New Delhi: Concept Pub.

c) Article in Journal:

Bradhan P & Mookherjee D, 2004. 'Poverty Alleviation Efforts of Panchayats in West Bengal', *Economic & Political Weekly*, 28 February.

d) Article from Newspaper:

Ghatak Roy A, 20015. 'Indian Economy'. *The Statesman*, 1 March (Kolkata).

e) Article/resource from Website:

Nayar Kuldip, 2010. 'Rural Mess'. <http://www.timesofindian.com>. Accessed on 2 January, 2014.

12. All corresponding relating to manuscript, subscription etc. should be addressed to:

The Editor,

The Journal of Rural and Community Affairs

Research & Publication Committee.

Tufanganj Mahavidyalaya.

P.O. Tufanganj New Town. Cooch Behar

West Bengal. PIN 736 160.

Phone & Fax (03582) 244263

Email: publicationtufanganj@gmail.com

Website- www.tufanganjmahavidyala.net

ISSN: 2455-457X
Vol. 1 No II
July - December 2016

JOURNAL OF RURAL AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Published by
Research & Publication Committee
Tufanganj Mahavidyalaya
Tufanganj, New Town.
Dist. Cooch Behar
West Bengal
Website: www.tufanganjmahavidyalaya.net