

4.

**Occupation Structure And Its
Changing Character**

CHAPTER IV

OCCUPATION STRUCTURE AND ITS CHANGING CHARACTER

A. OCCUPATION STRUCTURE

Occupation plays a vital role in fixing the status of individuals in social hierarchy (Misra, 1980)¹. 'Occupation refers to the kind of work done by the persons employed (or performed previously by the unemployed) irrespective of the branch of economic activity or the status (as employee, employer etc.) in which the persons should be classified' (U.N. 1958)². The study of economically active population or labour force is important because of the socio-economic development of a nation depends on the number of economically active population, and the quality of their work (Bhande and Kanitkar., 1978)³. Economically active population are those who remain engaged in productive employment and also those who are employed temporarily. Economically non-active population comprise children, old people, house-wives and retired persons (Trewartha, 1969)⁴.

The occupational structure of any society is related to a number of factors such as (i) the nature and variety of natural resources like agricultural land, forests, minerals etc. and (ii) commercialisation in the use of these resources which diversifies the occupational structure (Chandna & Sidhu, 1980)⁵.

Work is defined as participation in any economically productive activity and such participation is physical and mental in nature. Work does not only involve the actual work, it also includes supervision and direction. In regard to the work engaged in the entire population can be divided into three categories: (i) the main workers, (ii) the marginal workers, and (iii) the non-workers. The main workers are those who are engaged for more than 183 days a year. Those who are engaged for less than 183 days called marginal workers (Census, 1981)⁶.

The composition of working force of a society varies by sex, age and also the residence as in the rural or the urban area. Participation of males among the non-tribal and tribal population is more than females, but the variation between male and female workers is comparatively lower among the tribal people (table-48). Among the non-tribal and tribal population , the percentage of male main workers is more than the female workers. Naturally, among the non-workers reverse is the case. The percentage of female non-tribal workers in both the rural and the urban areas is negligible. Because of the more engagement of females in work both in the rural and urban areas, the percentage of female main workers is higher than that of the non-tribal female population. As a result, percentage of non-worker females naturally becomes lower than that of the non-tribal females. Among the tribal people the participation

Table - 48

Distribution of male and female main workers, marginal workers and non-workers, among the non-tribal & tribal population in rural and urban area of Birbhum district
(in %) , 1981.

Caste	Main workers		Marginal workers		Non-workers	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Non - Tribal	Rural 50.3	5.6	1.7	3.4	48.0	91.0
Tribal	Urban 45.2	5.1	0.7	0.6	54.1	94.3
	Rural 58.1	31.2	1.8	10.8	40.1	58.0
Tribal	Urban 57.0	41.2	4.1	7.1	38.9	51.7

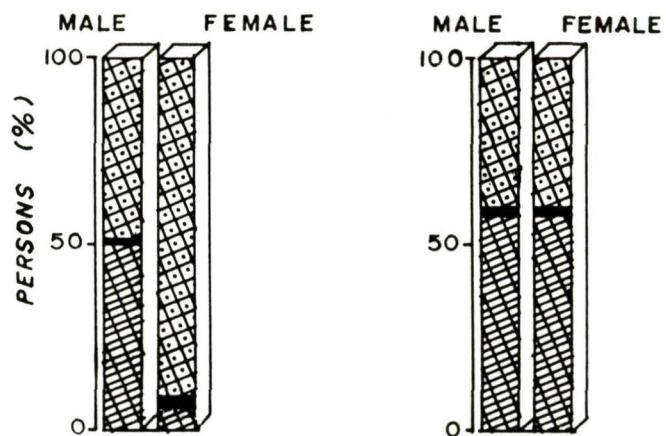
Source: Census of India, 1981, West Bengal,
Part XIII-B, Birbhum district.

of children and old people increases the percentage of marginal labour. The percentage of female marginal labour is more than the males in both community except among the urban non-tribal people where participation of the females in permanent jobs is more than in temporary jobs (Fig. 37).

The Santals, as the most hard-working people remain engaged in work throughout the year if they get that opportunity. The occupation they are engaged in, are in many instances seasonal in character for which they have to take diversified jobs. In this community the participation

WORKERS AMONG THE TRIBAL AND
NON-TRIBAL POPULATION OF BIRBHUM
DISTRICT, 1981

RURAL



URBAN

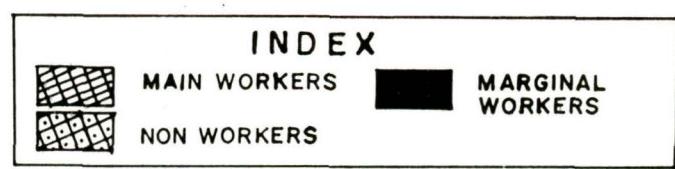
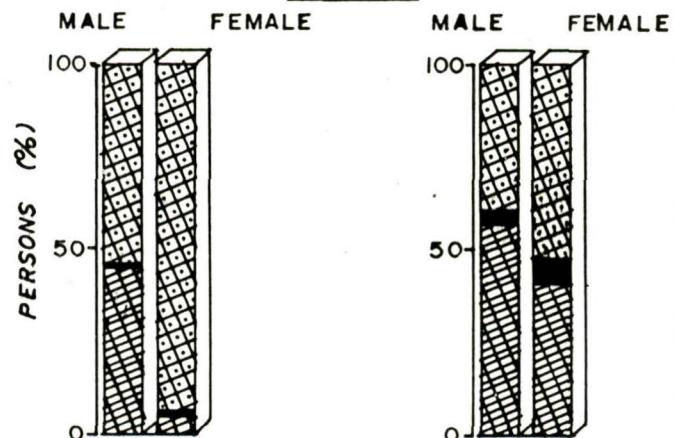


FIG - 37

of males and females is high. The children above 12 years and some old people also get themselves engaged in some work which normally increases the participation rate (table-49).

Table - 49

Santal male and female main workers, marginal workers and non-workers in Birbhum district, 1961-81.
(in percentage)

Year	Main workers		Marginal workers		Non-workers	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1961	R 59.3	40.9	N. A.	N.A.	40.7	59.1
	U 67.5	59.0	N.A.	N.A.	32.5	41.0
1971	R 55.1	15.4	N. A.	N.A.	44.9	84.6
	U 68.0	36.0	N. A.	N.A.	32.0	64.0
1981	R 58.1	31.9	1.8	10.6	40.1	57.5
	UU 56.6	43.0	5.2	9.0	37.2	48.0

Source: Compiled from: (i) Census of West Bengal, 1961. Birbhum District Census Hand book.
(ii) Census of India, 1971. West Bengal, Part - VA, Spl. Tables on SC & ST.
(iii) Census of India, 1981. West Bengal, Part-IX (iii) Spl.Table on ST (Table 1 + 3).

In 1961 and 1971, the percentage of marginal workers was not shown separately which conceals the significance of the

prevalence of marginal workers. In Birbhum, the percentage of male main workers is found to be higher than that of the females in all the three decades. The percentage of workers is more in the urban area than in the rural areas. In the rural areas, the percentage of workers for both males and females decreases between 1961 and 1981 (table-49). It is, however, important to note that the percentage of female marginal workers is more than that of the males, being 1.8 per cent and 5.2 per cent for the males and 10.6 per cent and 9.1 per cent for the females respectively in the rural and urban areas (Fig.38).

Among the Santals of this district the participation as temporary, hired labour forms the main occupation of the people. They often get engaged in work at subsistence level and in that way nobody remains idle which happens to be the most characteristic feature of the Santals. The Census of India records nine types of economic activities. These are as follows : (i) cultivator, (ii) agricultural labourer, (iii) mining, quarrying, forestry, fishing plantation etc. (iv) household industry; (v) other than household industry and manufacturing; (vi) construction; (vii) Trade and commerce, (viii) transport, storage and communication ; (ix) other services. The proportion of workers engaged in different categories varies from region to region because of the occupational structure of a region depends on the availability and the utilisation of the resources as guided by

WORKERS AMONG THE SANTALS OF BIRBHUM DISTRICT, 1961-1981

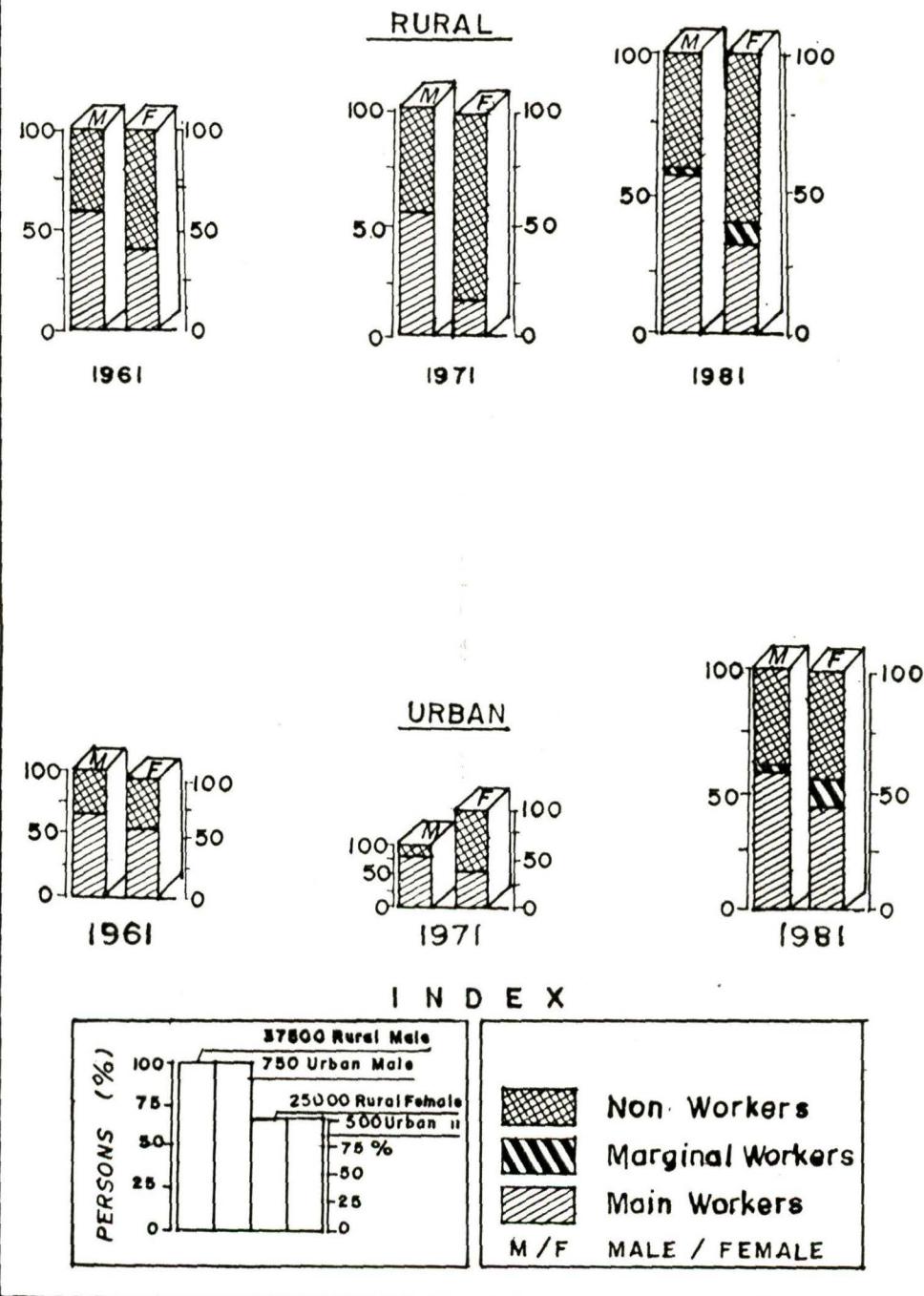


FIG - 38

many other factors. In Birbhum, land is the main resource. Besides, there is a small number of minerals available in the district. The Santals are primarily engaged in agriculture. Activities other than agriculture in which they find occupation, comprise the collection of leaves, fishing and animal husbandry, construction, quarrying, jobs, mills, offices and other establishments, and the manufacture of bricks. In most cases they are engaged as temporary labour. Among the Santals the males find employment in more diversified jobs than the females but employment of the females is larger in volume in the organised sector (Pal, 1983)⁸. They are engaged in mills, quarries and other industrial units. The males and the females also find opportunity in schools, banks, the railways, the forest department, medical services and in government offices. The females are particularly engaged in teaching and nursing. If the nine categories of activities, as defined by the Census of India, are classified into primary, secondary and tertiary (table-50) sectors, it will show that the major section of the workers are absorbed in the primary sector though in 1961, the percentage of tertiary workers was more than those absorbed by the other sectors. In the rural area, the percentage of male workers in the primary sector is higher, being 82 per cent to 97 per cent than in the other sectors. But in the urban area, it has increased between 1961 and 1981 from 35 per cent to 67 per cent. The females also show the similar trend. The overall predominance of primary sector

as a source of living is undeniably true in all the three decades. What is however discernible is that the proportion of female workers engaged in the secondary and the tertiary sector, particularly in the urban areas, is quite substantial, being larger than the male counterpart in the secondary sector for each of the decades. In the primary sector as well the females go almost neck to neck with that of the males in

Table - 50

Distribution of primary, secondary and tertiary workers among the Santals of Birbhum district (in %) 1961-81.

Year	Primary		Secondary		Tertiary	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
1961	R 92.2	89.9	2.4	4.8	5.4	5.3
	U 34.8	59.6	21.0	21.6	44.2	18.8
1971	R 82.2	92.2	6.3	3.6	11.5	3.5
	U 49.2	30.9	19.6	46.9	31.2	22.2
1981	R 96.6	96.4	1.6	3.1	1.8	0.5
	U 63.6	63.2	10.4	23.2	26.0	13.6

Source: Compiled from- (i) Census of West Bengal, 1961, Birbhum, District Census Hand Book
(ii) Census of India, 1971, West Bengal, Part VA. Spl. Tables on SC and ST,
(iii) Census of India, 1981, West Bengal, Part IX(iii), Spl. Table on Scheduled Tribes (Table 1-3).

all the three decades for the rural areas and it is only in the tertiary sector that the males have a supremacy in both the rural as well as the urban areas (Fig. 39).

The activities under these categories are given in detail below (~~table~~ - 51).

I. Primary Activity:

This sector includes agriculture, mining, and quarrying, fishing, forestry, plantation etc. But the major percentage of the working population is engaged in agriculture.

(a) Agriculture : Agriculture is the main activity of the Santals in Birbhum district though this activity is far from profitable in many instances. They practise it at subsistence level. In the rural area, nearly 90 per cent and in the urban area 60 per cent of the working people get a living from agriculture as cultivator and agricultural labour. At the same time the percentage of agricultural labour is more than the cultivator. But the most interesting thing is that the female agricultural labourers are larger in number than the males in both the rural and the urban areas.

(i) Cultivator : In this connection it may be worthwhile to mention that the cultivators are those who are engaged in land without any wage, which means that they depend on the sale of the produce as a means of living. The percentage of

**OCCUPATION STRUCTURE OF THE SANTALS
OF BIRBHUM DISTRICT, 1961-81**

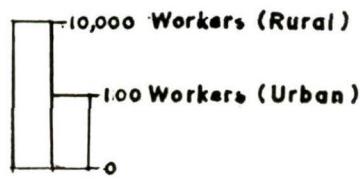
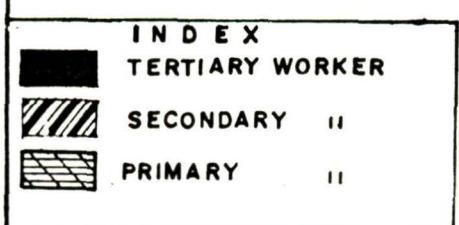
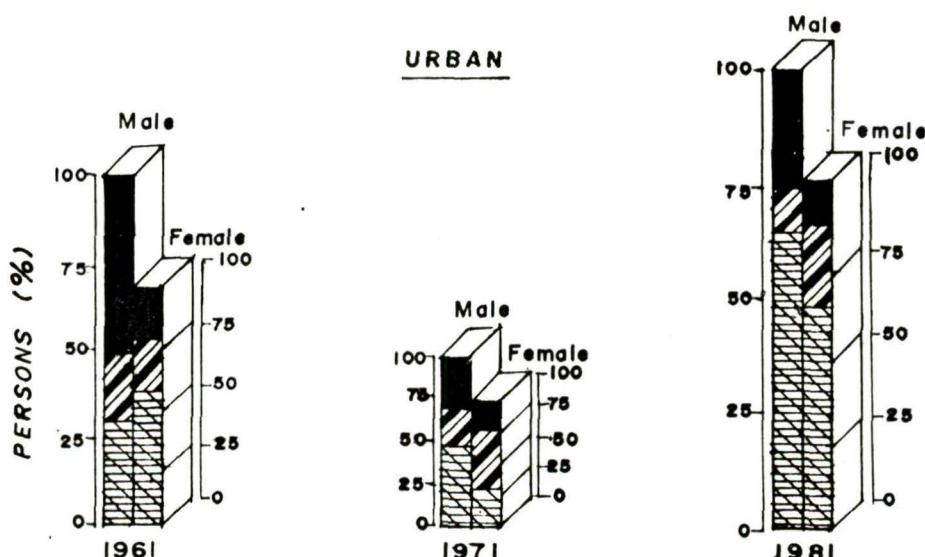
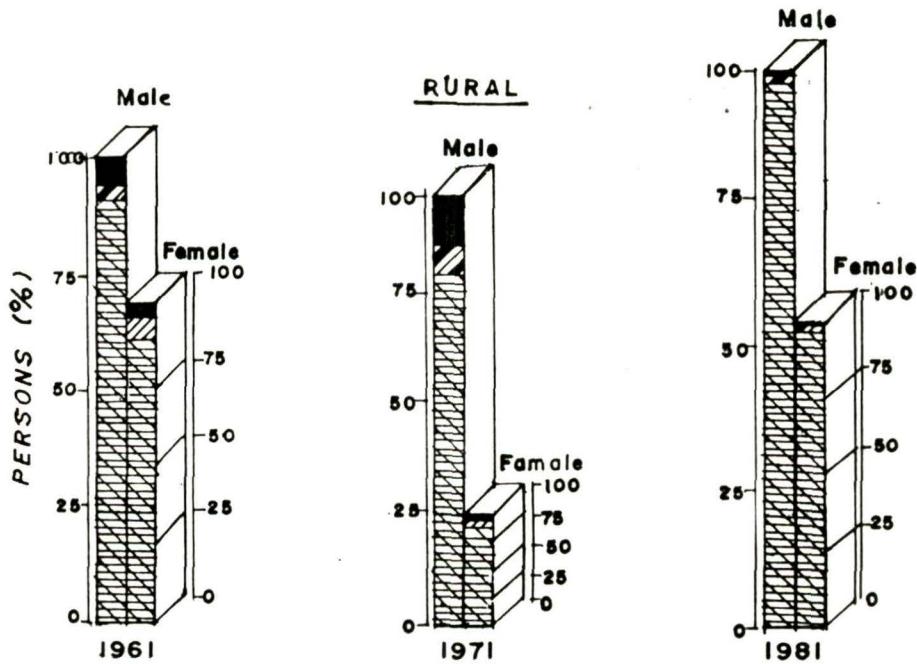


FIG - 39

Table - 51

p.129

Percentage of males and females among the Santals in different Occupational group in Birbhum district, 1961-81 (in percentage)

Occupational Category.		1961		1971		1981	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
I. Cultivator:	Rural	45.87	38.29	18.28	11.69	37.73	21.26
	Urban	4.19	-	2.07	-	9.39	1.71
II. Agricultural Labourers	Rural	43.40	51.10	62.18	80.72	57.73	73.98
	Urban	24.61	57.78	45.65	30.86	52.91	61.62
III. Mining, Quarry- ing, Fishing, Hundint, Plan- tation.	Rural	2.92	0.41	1.76	0.52	1.10	1.13
	Urban	6.03	1.90	0.30	0	1.29	0
IV. Construction:	Rural	1.07	1.70	3.67	2.56	0.20	0.31
	Urban	10.47	0	0	0	0	0
V. Household In- dustry:	Rural	1.22	3.21	2.33	1.00	1.32	2.55
	Urban	7.85	21.27	19.57	45.68	9.39	19.19
VI. Other than household Industry:	Rural	0.10	0.04	0.34	0.04	0.12	0.20
	Urban	2.62	0.32	0	1.24	0.97	4.05
VII. Trade & Com.	Rural	0.07	0.05	2.20	0.28	0.18	0.02
	Urban	6.54	0	0.45	0	1.62	4.48
VIII. Transport, Sto- rage & Communica- tion.	Rural	0.10	0	0.87	0.18	0.39	0.02
	Urban	15.18	1.27	20.43	8.64	10.03	0.21
IX. Other Services:	Rural	5.25	5.20	8.37	3.01	1.23	0.53
	Urban	22.51	17.46	10.43	13.58	14.40	8.74

Source: Compiled from- (i) Census of West Bengal (1961) Birbhum District. (ii) Census of India (1971), West Bengal, Part VA, Spl. Tables on SC & ST; (iii) Census of India (1981), West Bengal, Part IX(iii), Spl. Tables on SC & ST (Tab. 1-3).

cultivators in the rural area is naturally more than in the urban areas. In the rural area, however, the percentage of cultivators shows a declining trend, decreasing from 45.9 per cent in 1961 to 15.4 per cent in 1971, but an opposite trend is observed in the urban area where it has increased from 4.2 per cent in 1961 to 9.4 per cent in 1981. The female cultivators also show a similar trend.

The cultivators, in general, practise agriculture on two types of land, (i) the barge or the land attached to the dwelling, and (ii) the Khet or open fields. They cultivate maize, different types of oil seeds and vegetables on barge land (Datta Majumdar, 1955) and in Khet, paddy, potato, sometimes wheat and vegetables after harvesting paddy. Surplus production is rare except with the large farmers. The scope of agriculture depends on the size of the holding, the fertility of soil and the supply of irrigation water. The soil in the south-eastern part of this district is alluvial with dark clay or clay and sand, while in the western part it is mostly laterite. The porous nature and low water retaining capacity make irrigation essential.

There are the two types of cultivators, i) the cultivator with land and ; (ii) the cultivator without land, or the share-cropper. The percentage of share-cropper is more among the cultivators (32.4%). In share-cropping system, the expenditure and production are shared on an equal basis (50:50) between the owner of the land and tiller of the

soil (share-cropper). If the tiller after a long time succeeds some rights on land, he becomes a 'bargadar'. The bargadari system varies in different places. When the tiller provides all the inputs, the land lord gets $\frac{1}{3}$ th of the produce. In opposite cases, the production is shared at the rate of 3:2 that is, tiller gets two-thirds of the produce. Without the consent of the tillers, the land-owner can not sell the land. In some cases the land-lord has sold the land to the tiller at a low price. The introduction of bargadar system has caused a reduction in the number of share-croppers according to the respondents. Among the Santals only 41.8 per cent of the farmers hold land. The major percentage of land holders have less than 2.5 acres of land, who represent 82.0 per cent of the total number of land holders (table-52). The small

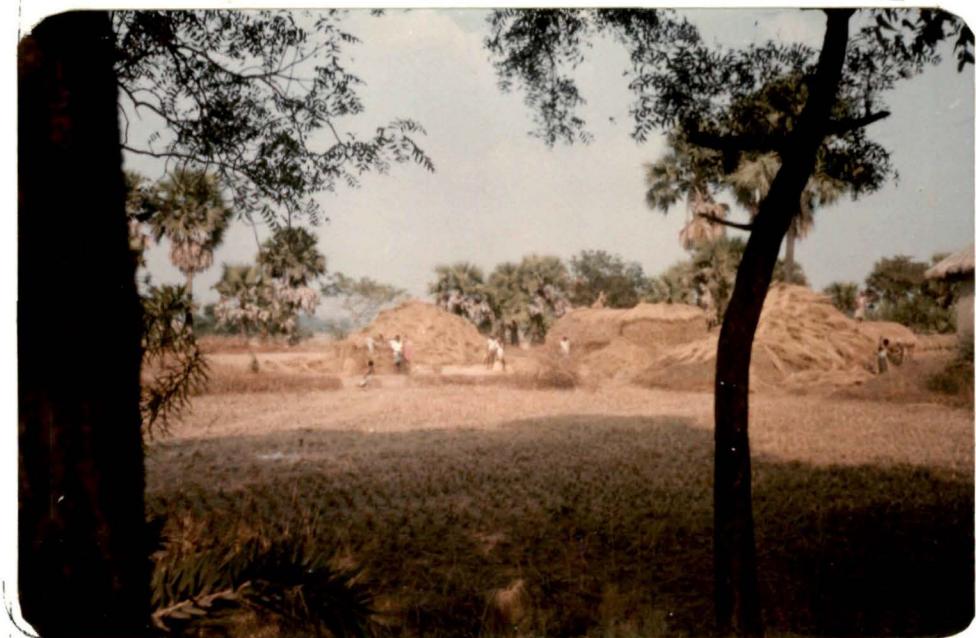
Table - 52

Percentage of families according to holding size among the Santals of Birbhum district, 1989-90.

Size of Holding	/	Percentage of family
Less than 2.5 acres (7.5 bighas)		82.0
2.5 " to 5.0 (7.5 "		16.2
to 15 ")		
5.1 to 7.5 acres (15.1		1.7
bighas to 22.5)		
More than 7.5 acres (more than		
22.5 bighas)		0.1



4. RICE CULTURE BY THE SANTALS



5. AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES-THRASHING

LAND HOLDING AMONG THE SANTALS OF
BIRBHUM DISTRICT, 1989-90

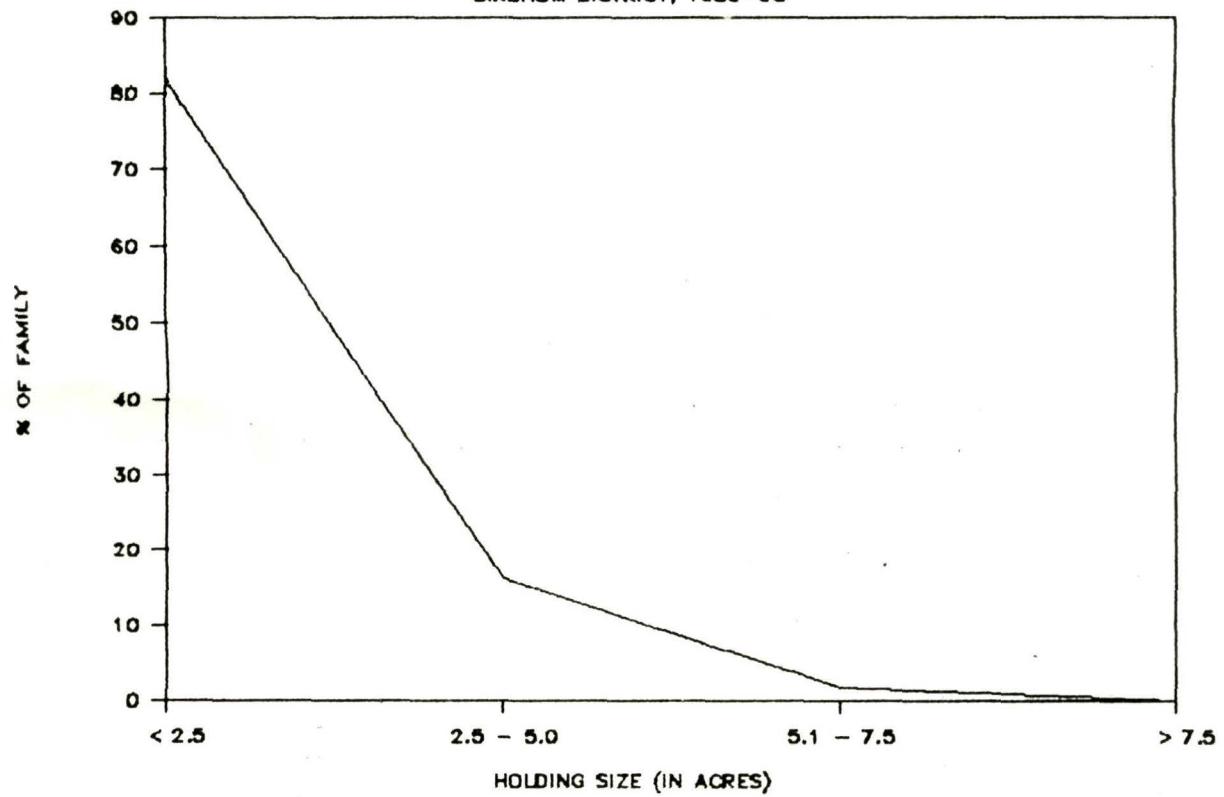


FIG - 40

farmers holding 2.6 acres to 5.0 acres of land occupy second rank among the land owning classes, representing 16.3 per cent. The medium and big farmers are negligible in number (Fig.40). In a family, all the members contribute their labour according to their ability. Hiring of labour is a rare case. In Santal society the barter system is in vogue and at the time of need, the neighbour offers labour in exchange of a meal. In case of the rich farmers or where the number of family members is not sufficient, the hiring of labour, however, becomes a compulsion. Besides, those practising agriculture, as a supplementary occupation also hire labour.

Agriculture is practised by indigenous method, using indigenous seeds and cow-dung as manure. For ploughing, buffaloes and bulls or cows are used. The implements they use are the wooden plough, the spade, the axe, the leveller and the sickle. Many farmers have no plough and animals and these are hired at the rate of Rs. 30 per day during the sowing and the harvesting seasons. Most of the land is mono-cropped because of (i) non-availability and irregular supply of water where dependence on monsoon makes production uncertain, and (ii) porous soil needing continuous supply of water, (iii) and non-perennial rivers.

II) Agricultural Labourer :

Agricultural labour is the most important source of employment among the Santals. It is not a stable

occupation and the need of labour fluctuates from season to season. It also depends on the financial condition of the farmers as well as the environmental conditions (Bhardwaj and Harvey, 1975)⁹. Because of illiteracy, participation as labour is more among the Santals as the primary occupation than among other tribes. In the rural area, the percentage of agricultural labour is higher, representing nearly 60 per cent for the males and 75 per cent to 80 per cent for the females. In the urban areas, the percentage of the males and the females is respectively 25 per cent to 52 per cent and 31 per cent to 62 per cent. In the rural area, again, the percentage of agricultural labour has increased between 1961 and 1981. Due to alienation caused by the transfer of land from the tribal to the non-tribal population, there has been marked decrease in the number of Santal cultivators which resulted in an increase of the agricultural labourers (Duyker, 1982)¹⁰.

Agricultural labourers are normally engaged in various jobs, but there is a division of labour based on sex. For instance, the males take the heavy jobs as ploughing, embanking, harrowing, manuring, harvesting, threshing and females take sowing, transplanting, etc. The agricultural labourers are of two types. They are composed of the causal labour, and the attached labour. The causal labourers are those who are employed for a day or for a sequence of days. They are engaged in both farm and non-farm work employed on time-wage or price wage basis (Chatterjee, 1986)¹¹. Their payment is made in cash or

in cash and kind both. The wage varies with sex. It is Rs.16 to Rs.18 for the males and Rs.14 to Rs.16 for the females per day. In the case of payment made in cash and kind, it is Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 with 1.5 kgs of rice for the males and Rs. 6 to Rs. 8 with 1.5 kgs of rice for the females per day. It, however, varies from place to place. On the other hand, the labour is employed on contract basis usually for a whole year, or sometimes for few months (Saxena, 1964)¹². The causal labours are larger in percentage than the attached labour in all the places. A causal labour has freedom to work anywhere. The attached labour in this region is of two types known as the 'Kishani' and the 'Mahindar' whose percentage is negligible. A 'Mahindar' is employed often for a year and is paid daily as well as monthly wages in terms of both cash and kind for doing both the farm and non-farm activities of his employer. The Krishani System denotes a labour contact in which a person is employed for a year for all the labour operations of farming (Chatterjee, 1986)¹³. Only the big farmers are in a position to employ them. It may be observed that the Santals are engaged in non-tribal and tribal land in most of the cases. Only the males are employed as permanent labour on fixed wage which is very small to maintain the family. The working hour for them is generally 8 - 9 hours per day, remaining in the field from early morning to evening. But the attached or permanent labour have no fixed time for work.

- b) Plantation, Forestry, Fishing, Mining & Quarrying:
In early period, hunting and forest

gathering were the principal occupations of the Santals. They take to fishing for subsistence when they have no food. A small percentage of the males and the females is engaged in fishing today which is decreasing in both the rural and the urban areas. In the rural areas, 2.9 per cent of the males were engaged in this occupation in 1961 which decreased to 1.1 per cent in 1981. Similarly, the female participation in this activity is also decreasing, going down from 0.4 per cent in 1961 to 1.1 per cent in 1981. In the urban areas females engaged in this work represented 1.9 per cent in 1961 when male participation was more than 6 per cent. At present, a small percentage of the working population is engaged in fishing which forms a supplementary occupation. The Santals are found working in the quarries as labour and as mechanics where females as well as the children find employment as labour, mostly employed for making stone chips. In this job, the male-female participation is more or less equal. They have to spend 8 hrs. a day in the work. The wage rate is Rs. 12 per day for the young labour, Rs. 14 per day for the male and the female both and the mechanics get Rs. 20 per day. The type of work varies with sex and age. Apart from collection wood from the adjoining forests wherever available, the Santals do not find any effective employment either in the forests or in mining activities.

B. Secondary Activity

- a) The secondary activities include household industry, manufacturing industry and construction.



6. PLATE MAKING WITH SAL LEAVES



7. MALES AND FEMALES ENGAGED IN DIGGING EARTH

Industrial activity is not predominant among the Santals of the rural and the urban areas of Birbhum. They are engaged in industrial activities, mostly as part-time workers belonging to the labour class, and having the same position in constructional work as well. As regards the household industries, the Santals make a living on knitting sal leaf into plates containers etc., carpentry, sericulture, mat knitting and kunchi making and the manufacture of fishing nets. A small percentage of them are employed in carpentry, manufacturing of carts, ploughs etc. as their primary occupation. The earnings from these different types of industrial activities vary widely. For instance, while knitting sal leaves into plates brings on an average Rs. 200 to Rs. 250 per month per head, one can derive as much as Rs. 1000 to Rs. 1500 per month from carpentry. On the whole, the total employment in household industry is very small. For instance, in 1961, 10.5 per cent of the working population was engaged in household industry in the urban areas. In the rural areas, the percentage of males and females engaged in household industry has decreased from 1.07 per cent in 1961 to 0.2 per cent in 1981 for the males and from 1.7 per cent to 0.3 per cent for the females during the same period.

b) Other than Household Industry & Manufacturing:

In the urban sector, employment in the manufacturing industries has increased from 7.9 per cent to 19.6 per cent for the males between 1961 and 1981 and from

19.2 per cent to 21.3 per cent for the males. In the recent years some efforts have been made to introduce some new industries like sericulture, blacksmithy, carpentry, for the males and stone quarrying, making of Ghooting lime for the both the males and females. Table-53 shows the percentage of the male and the female workers engaged in these units. Making of ghooting lime provides self employment for the female workers which forms an important source of their occupation. They are also engaged in mining industry (Khari Company) where the both males and the females are employed. Percentage of engagement are equal. Among all the workers ^{engaged,} Santal share 50 per cent. The types of works varies with sex. The wage is Rs. 16 per day.

Table - 53

Nature of employment of the Santals in industry in Birbhum district.

Name of Industrial Unit	Male Proprietor (in %)	Female Proprietor (in %)
Carpentry	47.3	-
Stone Quarry	21.1	-
Tailoring	10.4	-
Tube well Repairing	5.3	-
Blacksmithy	5.3	-
Cycle Repairing	5.3	-
Bricks	5.3	
Bag Making	-	66.7
Ghooting Lime	-	33.3

MEN AND WOMEN ENGAGED IN QUARRY FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK



8a. A QUARRY (CHALK)



8b. MALES AND FEMALES ENGAGED IN MINING

(c) Construction: Construction* is another source of occupation particularly for the female workers. The females prefer engagement in construction to agriculture because of greater security and stability in earning though, may be, for a short period. In construction, the females work mostly as helpers and the males as helpers and masons. The wage of labour, like an ordinary helper is Rs. 15 to Rs. 17 per day and it is Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 per day for a mason. Besides, some of the Santals are absorbed as permanent labour by the P.W.D. (Public Works Department of the State Government).

C. TERTIARY ACTIVITIES

The tertiary activities include trade and commerce, transport, storage and communication. The secondary data show that in the rural areas engagement of males and females in this sector is less than 1 per cent. But in the urban areas the scope for employment in secondary sector becomes wider.

(a) Trade & Commerce :

In the urban areas, the male workers in trade and commerce amounted to 6.5 per cent of the total working force in 1961 which, however, decreased to 1.6 per cent in 1981. Nearly 4.5 per cent of the females are engaged in this activity in the year 1981.

* Construction of roads, bridges and buildings etc.



8c. BREAKING INTO PIECES BY MALES



8d. BREAKING INTO PIECES BY FEMALES

(b) Transport, Storage & Communication-

There is still a large contingent of the Santal workers engaged in different types of activities connected with communication. Almost 15.2 per cent of the males in the urban areas of Birbhum was engaged in this field in 1961 which increased further to 20.4 per cent in 1971 because of the movement of workers from the primary sector. The number of females workers was rather less in 1981.

(c) Other Services

In the service sector, the percentage of male and female Santals is higher than in Transport etc. They are absorbed as teachers in schools, in clerical jobs in offices, in banks, in post offices, as guard in forests, banks, in the police department and as nurse in the Medical Department. They also work as permanent labour in mills and brick fields. In the rural areas the male service holder constituted 5.0 per cent to 8.0 per cent of the working population in 1961 and 1971 which declined to 1.0 per cent in 1981. The percentage of female workers in the service sector coming from the rural areas was 5.2 per cent in 1961 which also decreased to below 1.0 per cent in 1981. In the urban areas , the overall percentage of male and female workers engaged in the service sector was larger, 17.5 per cent but this also decreased, coming down to 9.0 per cent in 1981. The movement



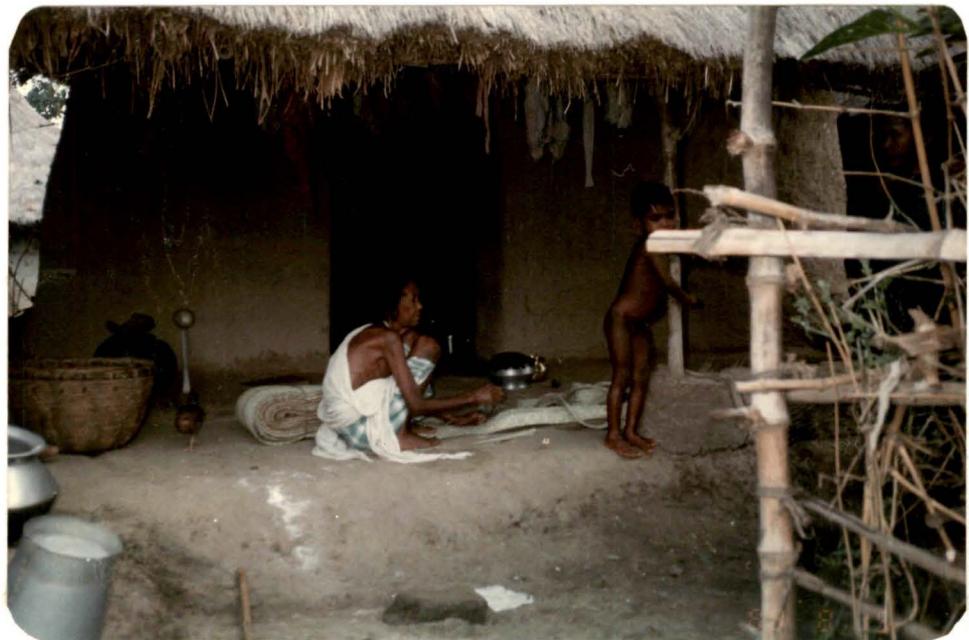
8e. RAW CHALK STORED IN THE FIELD



8f. FEMALES ENGAGED IN COLLECTING THE RAW MATERIALS FOR PROCESSING

of more people to agricultural activities had an effect on lowering the percentage of workers in service sector during this period. In case of male service holders, it was 10.4 per cent in 1971 (Fig. 41). The land reform act and less employment opportunities have combined together resulting in a decrease in the percentage of workers in the activities mentioned above.

The occupation structure of the Santals in Birbhum district shows that besides the service sector, they are also engaged in different types of jobs which are changing quite often since most of them are seasonal. Thus, while majority of them work in the agricultural sector either as cultivator or as agricultural labour, many of them are engaged in stone quarry, household industry, construction works and in administrative and other services (Table-54). The data collected through personal interviews show that the percentage of the cultivator and the agricultural labour is overwhelmingly more than that in other occupations in all the police stations. Among the cultivators, 34.0 per cent of the males and 32.0 per cent of the females work as share-croppers. Suri records the highest percentage of the males and the females as cultivators, comprising 67.9 per cent and 69.9 per cent respectively. Rajnagar, Illambazar and Bolpur have a record of 51.0 per cent of the male cultivators and in the remaining police stations the percentage of male cultivators varies from 31 per cent to 50 per cent. On the other hand, Rajnagar, Bolpur



9. MAT MAKING AND TRADITIONAL LADIES WEAR



10. A PERSON WITH HIS SHOP (Grocery)

OCCUPATION STRUCTURE OF THE SANTALS
OF BIRBHUM DISTRICT, 1961-81

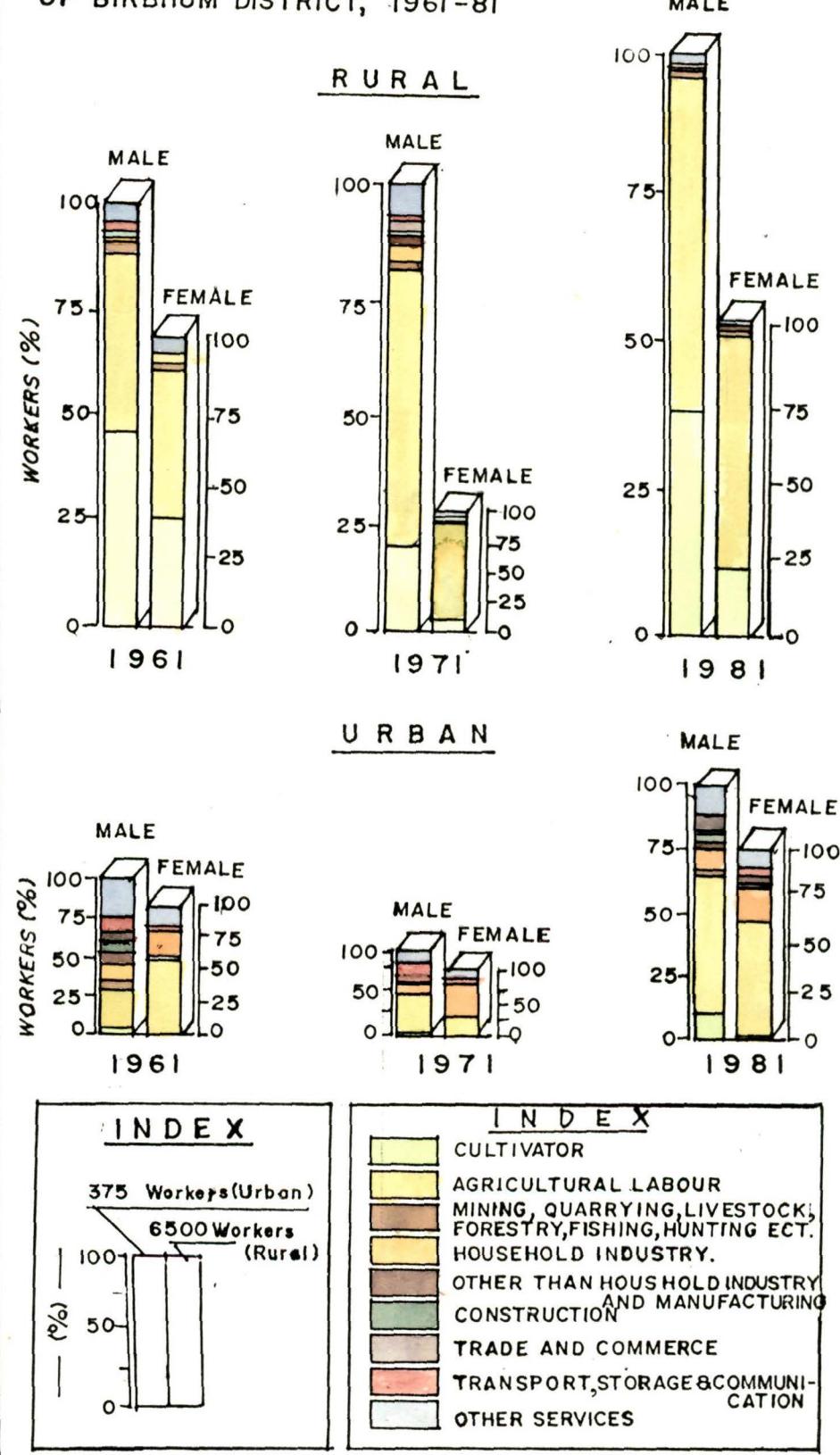


FIG - 41

Table - 54

Employment of Santals in Birbhum district(in percentage), 1989-90.

Police Stations	Cultivator		Agricultural labour		Quarry		Household Industries		Construc- tion		Service	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Muraroi	18.2	18.2	81.8	81.8								
Nalhati	42.1	31.3	39.5	65.6							18.4	3.1
Rampurhat	34.1	43.3	40.2	37.8	4.5	10.0			7.6	4.4	13.6	4.5
Mayureswar	41.1	42.0	46.9	50.4			2.1	2.8			9.9	4.8
Md.Bazar	30.8	47.8	38.4	29.8	7.7	9.0	1.9	4.4			21.2	9.0
Rajnagar	57.1	59.3	40.0	37.0							2.9	3.7
Khoyrasole	40.0	50.0	50.0	50.0							10.0	0
Dubrajpur	44.2	42.9	23.3	28.6			8.5	23.2	17.1	9.3	2.9	
Suri	67.8	69.9	26.0	19.4			1.9	3.1	4.9	3.1	3.9	
Illambazar	51.7	41.0	45.0	59.0							3.3	0
Sainthia	41.3	46.9	46.5	48.0					3.9	5.1	8.3	0
Bolpur	59.4	60.0	32.5	34.6							8.1	5.4
Labhpur	40.7	52.6	51.9	47.4							7.6	-
Nanur	46.2	57.1	46.2	42.9								

Source: Field Investigation.

Labhpur and Nanur have 51 per cent to 61 per cent female cultivators which declines to 31 per cent to 50 per cent in the remaining police stations.

According to Table-54, agricultural labour holds the second position in all the police stations. In Mura-roi, the percentage of agricultural labour is the highest, having nearly 82 per cent of the total male and female workers. But the lowest percentage of agricultural labour to total workers was recorded in Nalhati, Md.Bazar, Dubrajpur, Suri and Bolpur for the males and in Rampurhat, Md.Bazar, Rajnagar, Dubrajpur, Suri & Bolpur for the females, varying from 23 per cent to 39 per cent because of the engagement of labour in other sectors. The remaining police stations record 40 to 60 per cent male and female agricultural labour to total workers.

The service sector holds the third important position as a source of living for the Santals. The percentage of males employed in school, different administrative offices and police department is higher than in other services. Most of them were found to be engaged in primary schools and in administrative offices where they serve as peon or in other low categories. In Bolpur police station one person was found working as a Bank Manager. The females are mostly engaged in schools as teachers. Besides, they also work as labour for mills and factories, brick fields, as nurse in the railway and

university hospitals. Because of the presence of the lime factory engagement of females in them is more in Md.Bazar rising to 9 per cent. The percentage of females engaged in services of various types of organisation in the remaining police stations varies from 2.9 per cent to 5.4 per cent. In case of the males in the service sector, Nalhati, Rampurhat and Khoyrasole record 10 per cent to 18 per cent, which drops in other police stations.

There are some stone quarries in Rampurhat and Md.Bazar and also in the adjoining state of Bihar. Almost 4.5 per cent and 7.7 per cent of the males and 10 per cent and 9 per cent of the females are absorbed in the stone quarries of Rampurhat and Md.Bazar respectively.

The construction^{work} of the 'Bakreswar Thermal Power Plant' in Dubrajpur provides job opportunities on a wider scale. This, along with other constructional works, employs as much as 23.3 per cent of the male and 17.1 per cent of the female workers in Dubrajpur. In Rampurhat, Suri and Sainthia the percentage of male and female workers engaged in construction varies from 0.3 per cent to 7.6 per cent for the males and 4.9 per cent to 5.1 per cent for the females.

As mentioned earlier, Carpentry and Knitting of sal leaves, which are taken as household industrial work, provide employment mostly in forest villages or villages near the forests. About 1.9 per cent to 2.1 per cent of the males

are engaged in Carpentry in Mayureswar and Md.Bazar. And in Mayureswar, Md.Bazar, Dubrajpur and Suri the percentage of female workers in these industrial activities varies from 1.9 per cent to 8.6 per cent (Fig.42).

It is necessary to mention here that agriculture which is the employer of the major part of the working population, being mostly mono-cropped in nature, keeps them engaged only for 5 to 7 months in a year and for the remaining part they have to find another supporting occupations.

This is more frequent with the agricultural labour many of whom find part-time work in the brick fields, quarries etc. A look at Table-55 gives an idea about the extent and nature of part-time occupations in which the Santals become absorbed mostly in the lean season as well as those who finding no berth in the agricultural sector, have drifted to such occupations to work mostly as unskilled labour. Md.Bazar has a record of the highest percentage (75%) of workers engage in agriculture and Muraroi has the lowest percentage (40%). Except Khoyrasole, the remaining police stations record 41 per cent to 71 per cent of male workers engage in agriculture as supporting occupation. In case of the females, Labhpur record the highest (100%) percentage of workers engaged in agriculture and Suri the lowest (29.2%). Except Khoyrasole, the remaining police stations have 36.8 per cent to 60 per cent of the workers engaged in agriculture.

OCCUPATION STRUCTURE OF THE SANTALS OF
BIRBHUM DISTRICT
1989 - 90

INDEX

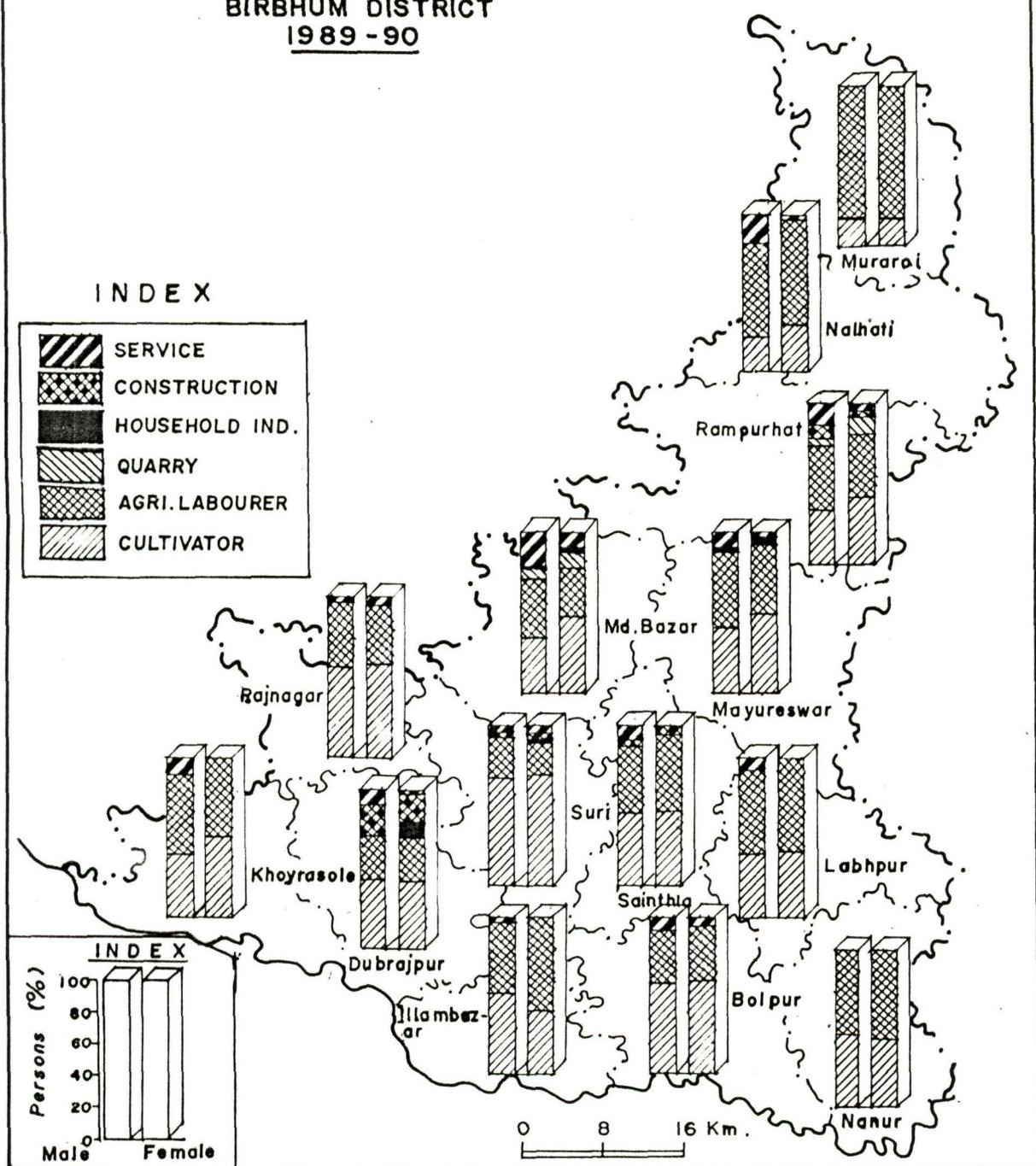
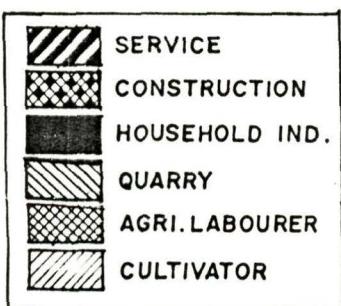


FIG - 42

Table - 55

Part-time occupation for Santals in Birbhum district,
(in %), 1989-90

Police Stations	Agricultural		Construction		Fishing		Household Industries	
	labour							
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Muraroi	40.0	50.0	60.0	50.0				
Nalhati	41.7	71.4	58.3	28.6				
Rampurhat	57.1	58.8	28.6	41.2	14.3			
Mayureswar	71.4	60.0	22.9	24.0			5.7	16.0
Md.Bazar	75.0	36.9	25.0	10.5				52.6
Rajnagar	52.6	61.5	47.4	30.8				7.7
Khoyrasole	-	-	100.0	100.0				
Dubrajpur	50.0	38.5	45.5	19.2			4.5	42.3
Suri	44.4	29.1	55.6	41.7				29.2
Illambazar	60.0	55.6	40.0	25.9				18.5
Sainthia	58.7	55.6	25.0	22.2	5.0	0	11.3	22.2
Bolpur	56.2	37.7	43.8	56.6				5.7
Labhpur	85.7	100.0	-		14.3	-		
Nanur	60.0	61.0	40.0	28.6				1.4

Source : Field Investigation

In construction work most of the males and females have a part time occupation, particularly in the season when they are released from agricultural activities in a region where

agriculture is mostly a mono-crop culture. They are engaged in digging earth, and construction of houses etc. Khoyrasole recorded the highest percentage (100%) of males and females engaged in such activities that is construction work. Muraroi, Nalhati and Suri recorded 50 per cent to 60 per cent of the workers engaged in this field. Except Labhpur, in the remaining police stations the percentage of males and females is 10 per cent to 50 per cent. Fishing is practised by only 5.0 per cent to 14.3 per cent of the males in Sainthia and Labhpur and Rampurhat police stations : respectively.

In household industry, the percentage of females is higher. They are mainly engaged in s*le-leaves knitting. In forest villages or villages near the forests, this activity is practised more for which engagement of females in this job in Md.Bazar and Dubrajpur rises to 52.6 per cent and 42.3 per cent. In Mayureswar, Suri, Illambazar and Sainthia the percentage of females engaged in this occupation varies from 16 per cent to 29 per cent. Nanur, Dubrajpur and Sainthia, Rajnagar, show a very poor record, which varies from 1 per cent to 11 per cent.

Engagement of males in household industry is less and is recorded only in Mayureswar (5.7%), Dubrajpur(4.5%) and Sainthia. In Mayureswar males are mainly engage in carpentry (Fig.43).

PART-TIME OCCUPATION OF THE
SANTALS OF BIRBHUM DISTRICT
1989-90

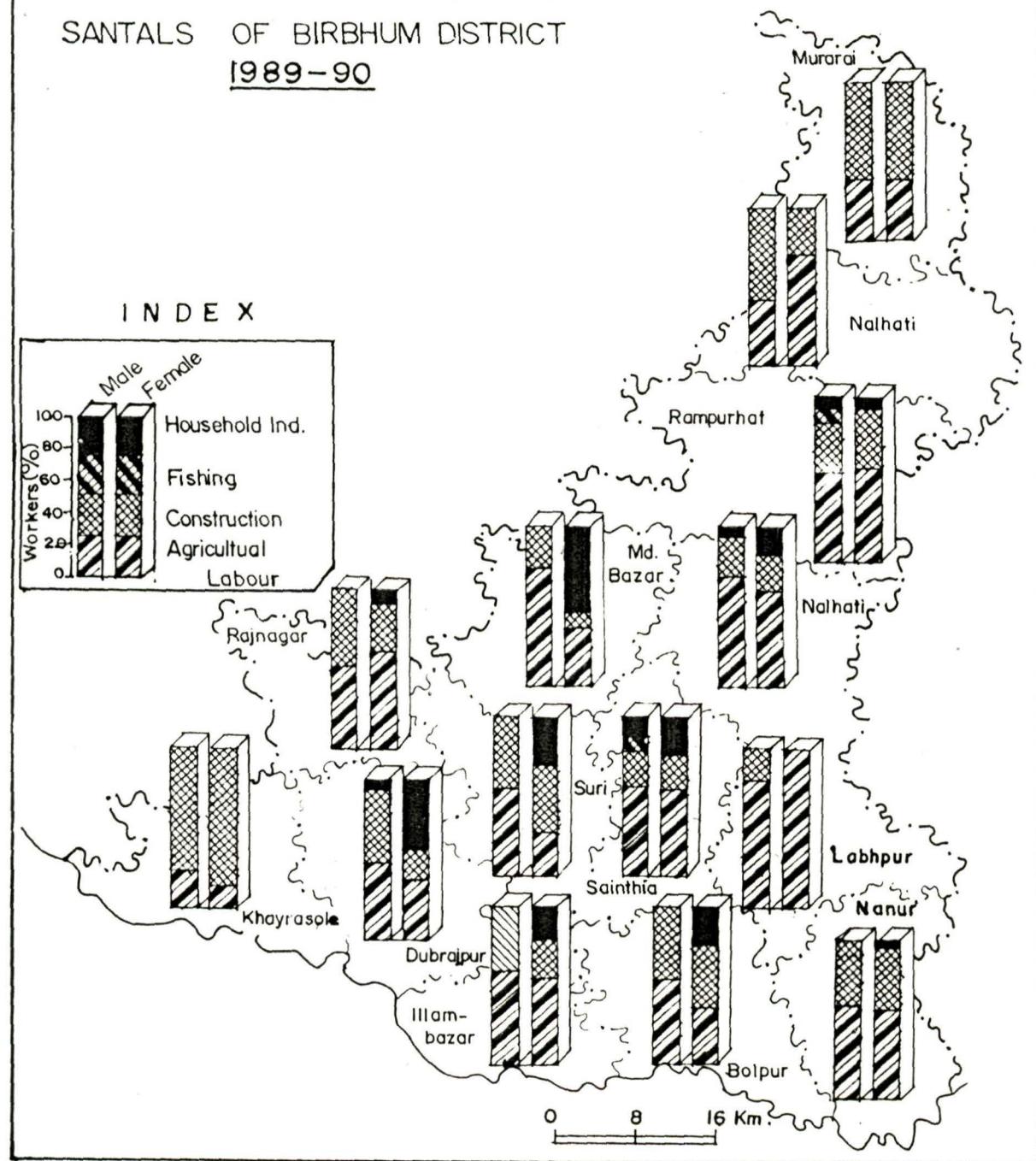


FIG - 43

B. CHANGES OF OCCUPATION

The most important problem the tribal people facing is gainful employment (Singh, 1986)¹⁴. Leaving their migratory habits the tribals turned settled agriculturist long ago the independence of this country. The large areas they converted into agricultural land by reclaiming forests provided them with an occupation, keeping themselves self-sufficient in a self-contained economy. During the British period, different regulations and restrictions hit hard on their socio-economic condition (Basu, 1989)¹⁵. This chapter deals with the changes of occupation occurring since when the Santals started to engage themselves in diversified jobs which changed their traditional activity and thus adapting them with a new economic environment. The present activities of the Santal in this district is the result of different types of socio-economic pressure commensurate with the implementation of laws and acts during pre- and post-independence era and a number of development measures as well as migration.

At present, the Santals in the district of Birbhum are by and large engaged in agricultural activities and about 80 per cent of the total workers are absorbed in agriculture among which the majority of them, representing 58 per cent males and 74 per cent of females, are engaged as agricultural labourers while the smaller portion as cultivators (1981). Among the cultivators 38 per cent comprises males and 21 per cent

females. All of them do not posses land. Share-croppers and Bargadars are also found among the cultivators which means that a sizeable section of the cultivators work on land belonging to others and have to share their produce with them while another section who are recorded as Bargadar, share the produce at different ratio as mentioned earlier. Most of the agricultural labourers are engaged in the land of non-tribal farmers. A small percentage of the workers is engaged in secondary and tertiary sectors as daily labour or as permanent labour. Another small percentage of them, who received higher education are engaged in various professions. Among the job holders the percentage of school teachers, mainly working in primary schools, is comparatively higher than those engaged in other professions. A detailed picture of occupation about the Santals has already been given in an early part of this chapter and in this part emphasis has been laid on the changes in occupation affecting a change in their economy that has taken place during the preceding period in rural Birbhum.

(i) Changes of Occupation since Early Period

The Santal settlers living in the district of Birbhum by and large migrated from the neighbouring Chotanagpur area of Bihar. It has already been mentioned earlier that they migrated mainly in connection with seeking opportunity

for cultivation sometimes in the end of the 18th Century. They settled in the western margin of the district, forming the border between Chotanagpur plateau and the plains of Bengal. The Permanent Settlement Act of 1793 resulted in general extension of agricultural land with the conversion of forest and waste land and the Zamindars (landlord) during this period encouraged Santal migration into the district (Hunter, 1883)¹⁶. In 1790, the British Government pledged itself not to lay any further tax on reclaimed lands' (Hunter, 1883)¹⁷ which encouraged further the extension of cultivated land ~~by~~ cutting down forests and reclaiming waste land and for that particular job the Santals were invited from their neighbouring home-land (Chotanagpur area). They were given land, along with 'exemption from the ordinary course of law and from all taxes' (Hunter, 1883)¹⁸. The art of agriculture was known to them though the technology was very poor in comparison to the settled cultivators of the district. The shortage of labour for cultivation since the great famine of 1770 on the one .. hand and the extension of cultivated land on the other, jointly encouraged Santal labours to migrate at that time.

In the beginning they used to migrate annually as daily labour (Gupta, 1984)¹⁹ and gradually they started to settle down permanently. In case of annual movement, migration used to take place during the winter harvesting season when they became jobless in homeland and hunting also stopped.

This type of seasonal migration started from the end of 18th century 'but as late as 1820's it was not easy to persuade the Santals into the plains' (Gupta, 1984)²⁰. Initially, they were reluctant to leave their homeland where they lived in thick jungle having ample scope for hunting excursion with small cleared patches of ground for cultivation. But constant deforestation during the 1820s and the 1830s in their homeland forced them to move to the plains (Gupta 1984)²¹. By that time they have been acquainted with the plains of Birbhum, particularly the western part where they found land for cultivation and also forest for hunting. The majority of the Santal villages in the north and western part of the district started appearing from 1820 to 1830 and by 1880 it stopped though the extension of cultivation, for which they had originally been brought to the district, had not been completed till the beginning of 20 th century (Mc Alpin, 1981)²². There was 49 per cent increase of cultivated land recorded during the period from 1802 to 1852 (Cupta, 1984)²³ and most of this land was reclaimed with the help of the hard-working Santal migrants. The landlord would give on lease the entire land to the majhi or the headman which the latter would sublet to the Santal settlers who in turn would reclaim it for cultivation. In this way the semi-agriculturist Santals became totally converted into settled cultivators in the northern and western part of Birbhum district. On the contrary, the Santal settler of the eastern part of the district migrated in the latter part of the

19th century. The Santal settlement pattern of the eastern part of Birbhum district clearly shows the nature of migration of these landless tribal people where they became settled at the periphery of the non-tribal villages giving rise to labour colonies. Initially, they became settled as purely agricultural labourers, share-croppers and share-cropper-cum-agricultural labourers. The process of land transfer from the Santals to the non-tribal population began in the later part of the 19th century when the Zamindar or the landlord had taken their land or raised their rents (Ma Alpin 1981)²⁴. Transfer of land from these illiterate, simple minded tribal population was very easy ~~at~~ that time and they gradually lost which once they re-claimed with hard labour. By this transfer, they were gradually converted into landless agricultural labourers.

The general increase of population, both the tribal and non-tribal, gradually decreased the man-land ratio in the rural areas of Birbhum which created problems of employment during the non-agricultural season. Besides, plantation of Indigo drew away a large number of Santal labour during the early nineteenth century, being engaged both in plantation as well as in the factory for the process of Indigo. Besides cultivation, a good number of the Santals were engaged in the construction of the railway lines during the later part of the 19th century and a number of labour colonies are still found along the railway lines. During the post-independence period they took active part in the construction of canals (Mayurakshi

river Project) and roads and still they take the leading part in any constructional work in this district.

Thus, the semi-agriculturist tribal population initially settled for agricultural activities, by clearing jungle and waste land and converting them into good plots of cultivating land, lost most of the plots and were gradually converted into daily labour taking part both in the agricultural and the non-agricultural activities during the period prior to the independence of the country.

(ii) Changes of Occupation during last few decades

In the rural areas of Birbhum district, the structure of Santal occupation of both the males and the females remained almost unchanged during last three decades (1961-81). A very little change has occurred which is predominant among the cultivators and the agricultural labourers for both males and females (Table-56).

In 1971, the percentage of cultivators reduced to 18.3 per cent from being 45.9 per cent in 1961, thus resulting in a negative change. The reverse case occurred in the case of the agricultural labourer, showing an increase of 14.3 per cent during these three decades. Participation of male workers in mining, quarrying, fishing etc. seem gradually to have decreased which shows negative shift of male workers to the extent of 1.8 per cent. Except in the service sector changes in all types of activities, however, is negligible

Table - 56

Changes of occupation among the Santals: rural males and females in Birbhum district
(1961-81) in percentage.

Occupation	Category	Males			Changes			Females			Changes		
		1961	1971	1981	during 1961-81	1961	1971	1981	during 1961-81				
Primary Sector	Cultivator	45.9	18.3	37.3	- 8.6	38.3	11.7	21.3	- 17.0				
	Aq. Labourer	43.4	62.1	57.7	+14.3	51.1	80.7	74.0	+22.9				
	Mining, Quarrying,	2.9	1.8	1.6	- 1.8	0.4	0.5	1.1	+ 0.7				
	Fishing, Forestry, Plantation.												
	Total:	92.2	82.2	96.6	+ 3.9	89.8	92.9	96.4	+ 6.6				
Secondary Sector	Household Industry	1.1	3.7	0.2	- 2.4	1.7	2.6	0.3	- 1.4				
	Other than Hld. Industry	1.2	2.3	1.3	+ 0.1	3.2	1.0	2.6	- 0.6				
	Construction	0.1	0.3	0.1	0	0	0	0.2	+ 0.2				
	Total:	2.4	6.3	1.6	-0.8	4.9	3.6	3.1	- 1.8				
Tertiary Sector	Trade & Com.	0	2.2	0.2	+0.2	0.1	0.3	0	- 0.1				
	Transport, Sto- rage & Communica- tion.	0.1	0.9	0.4	+0.3	0	0.2	0	0				
	Other Services	5.3	8.4	1.2	- 4.1	5.2	3.0	0.5	- 4.7				
	Total:	5.4	11.5	1.8	-36.0	5.3	3.5	0.5	-4.8				

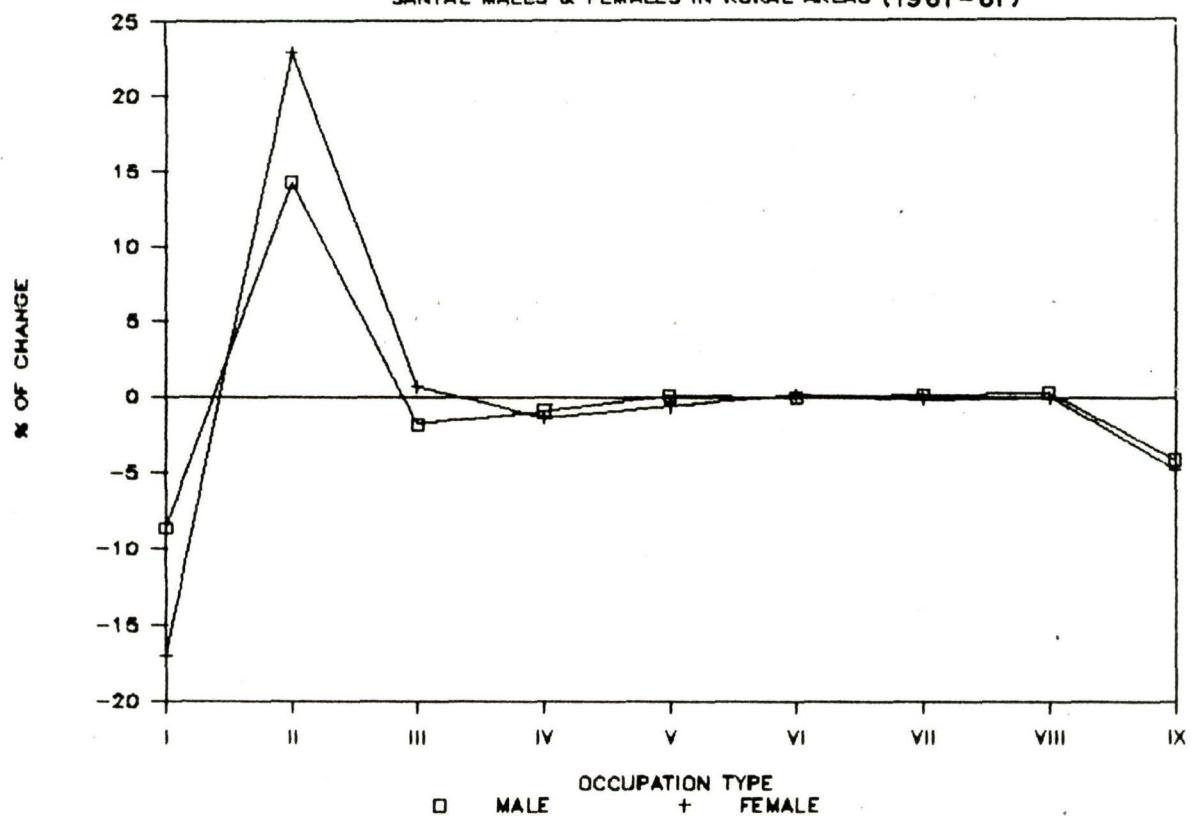
Source: Compiled from - i) Census of West Bengal, 1961. Birbhum, District Census Hand book.
ii) Census of India, 1971, West Bengal: Part VA, Spl. Tables on SC and ST.
iii) Census of India, 1981, West Bengal, Part IX (iii), Spl. Tables on Scheduled Tribes (Table 1- 3.)

which is below 1 per cent. In contrast, in service sector the participation of males in 1971 is more as 8.4 per cent more than during the earlier and later period, thus resulting in a negative change to the tune of -4.1.

Similar types of changes in the occupational sphere have been found for the female workers. It is more in the agricultural sector which is -17.0 per cent because of the decline in the percentage of cultivators in 1971. Decrease in the percentage of cultivators in 1971 has a corresponding increase in the percentage of agricultural labourers rising to 80.7 per cent which is an indication of positive change in occupation. On the other hand, increase in participation of female workers in mining, quarrying and construction works results in a positive change. Similarly, the service sector as well shows the same trend among the females (Fig.44).

Intersectoral changes show a discouraging situation. Among these sectors, the secondary and tertiary sectors show negative changes. The most interesting thing is that, the female workers show changes more than the males, whether it is positive or negative in all the sectors. The deteriorating condition of the cultivators as recorded in 1971, bring changes, making it as high in the primary sector as 3.9 per cent for the males and 6.6 per cent for the females. One of the reasons for the decline in the number of cultivators in the tribal work force during the last decade (1971-1981)

Change of Occupation among
SANTAL MALES & FEMALES IN RURAL AREAS (1961-81)



- I CULTIVATOR
- II AGRICULTURAL LABOUR
- III MINING, QUARRYING, LIVESTOCK, FORESTRY, FISHING, HUNTING ECT.
- IV HOUSEHOLD INDUSTRY.
- V OTHER THAN HOUSEHOLD INDUSTRY. AND MANUFACTURING .
- VI CONSTRUCTION.
- VII TRADE AND COMMERCE
- VIII TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATION.
- IX OTHER SERVICES.

FIG - 44

is that tribal land has gone into the hands of the non-tribals and this process is going on since British period (Roy, 1977)²⁵. On the other hand, because of this transfer of land, the number of workers engaged as agricultural labourer has increased which in turn increases the volume of secondary and tertiary workers in 1971. For this shifting, the change becomes negative in these two sectors which provide little employment opportunities in the rural area while the number of people engaged in cultivation gradually increases.

Generational Occupational Change

The changes in occupation is regarded as occupational mobility by which we know about the changes of socio-economic status, income level, social status and personal satisfaction of the people involved (Singh, 1986)²⁶. A family is taken as a unit because the occupational changes are found between and within the unit. In the Santal society the family takes an important place, because all the members of a family above 11/12 years of age are engaged in work in most of the cases. The present study made for the **rural** areas, shows the changing pattern of occupation for three generations (Table- 57 & 58). For this study 25 years have been taken as limit in considering a generation. These three generations include the respondent's father, the respondent and the respondent's son.

Table-57 shows the change of occupation of the respondent's father and the respondent. In this case, changes mainly occur in the agricultural sector, from the position of a cultivator to an agricultural labourer. Muraroi records no change in this respect for these two generations. In Rampurhat, Mayureswar, Md.Bazar, Khoyrasole, Dubrajpur, Suri, Illambazar and Bolpur, 55 per cent to 67 per cent respondents are engaged in their fathers occupation while the remaining percentage has changed their occupation. Rest of the police stations have a record of 78 per cent to 89 per cent of the respondents having continued their father's occupation. It is noted that agricultural labourers change their occupation going to construction, cultivation, service and work in the quarries. In Mayureswar, Md.Bazar, Suri and Dubrajpur 6 per cent to 22 per cent of the respondents changed to constructional work leaving the previous occupation as agricultural labourers. In all police stations a small percentage of the respondents became engaged in cultivation leaving their father's occupation as agricultural labourers. They become owner cultivator and share cropper. In case of such changes in occupation as from being agricultural labourer to cultivator, nearly all the police stations show changes. The change varies from 4 per cent to 10 per cent except in Khoyrassle (16.7%) and Illambazar (19.4%) where it is higher. Changes in occupation in the recent decades are generally found taking place from primary to the tertiary sector. For instance,

Table - 57

Santal occupational change (respondents' father & respondents) in Birbhum district (in %), 1989-90

Police Stns.	Persons having no change	Ag.labour	Ag.L to Ag.L + fishing	Ag.L.to cultiva- tor	Ag..to Service	Ag..to Quarry	Culti- vator to Ag. + Cons.	Cult.to Service	Cul+L to Cul + fish- + Cul Labour	Cul+L to Cul + H.I.	Cul+L. Serv
Muraroi	100.0										
Nalhati	88.5			3.8					7.7		
Rampurhat	60.3		5.4	6.8	10.5	10.2			6.8		
Mayureswar	65.0	6.2		6.3			7.4	3.3	6.3	5.5	
Md.Bazar	56.3	5.5		5.5	7.2	18.2		5.5			1.8
Rajnagar	82.6			8.8			4.3	4.3			
Khoyrasole	66.6			16.7			16.7				
Dubrajpur	59.3	22.2		7.4	11.1						
Suri	60.8	13.5		8.1	1.4		4.0	5.4	6.8		
Illambazar	64.5		\	19.4	5.2			6.5		4.4	
Sainthia	78.9			10.9	6.4				3.8		
Bolpur	66.0			7.1	9.0		7.1	8.0		2.8	
Labhpur	87.0			8.8				4.2			
Nanur	88.9						11.1				

Source: Field Investigation,

Ag.L. = Agricultural Labour

Cul. = Cultivator

Cons. = Construction

H.I. = Household Industry.

some people got engaged in mills, factories, brick kilns in permanent positions, classified as service holders. Nearly 50 per cent of the police stations of this district has records of this change. For instance, the setting up of quarries in Rampurhat and Md.Bazar resulted in the employment of 12 per cent and 18 per cent of the workers in them who left their father's occupation (Fig.45). In case of cultivators, similar trend is observed, that is people leaving parental occupation are growingly becoming more interested in jobs in the tertiary sector. In case of share-croppers, the workers are shifting to construction jobs which is due to the appearance of the Bargadari system when the land-owner is afraid to give their land on lease. Another reason for the shift of workers from cultivation to service is mainly due to the effect of education. Some respondents are found to practise fishing as, a secondary occupation. At the same time, in Iitlambazar and Md. Bazar changes from service to the work of labour have been recorded though of a negligible percentage.

Table-58 shows the change of occupation between the respondent and his son. In this generation change is negligible. In Nalhati and Sainthia police stations there is no change. Except in Khoyrasole (55.6%) the remaining police stations show that almost 70 per cent to 90 per cent of the sons do not change their occupation which means that the son carries on the same occupation as his father does. In case of agricultural labour the change is recorded in some police stations

CHANGES IN OCCUPATION AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS OF SANTALS IN BIRBHUM DISTRICT 1989-90
 (FATHER TO RESPONDENT)

INDEX

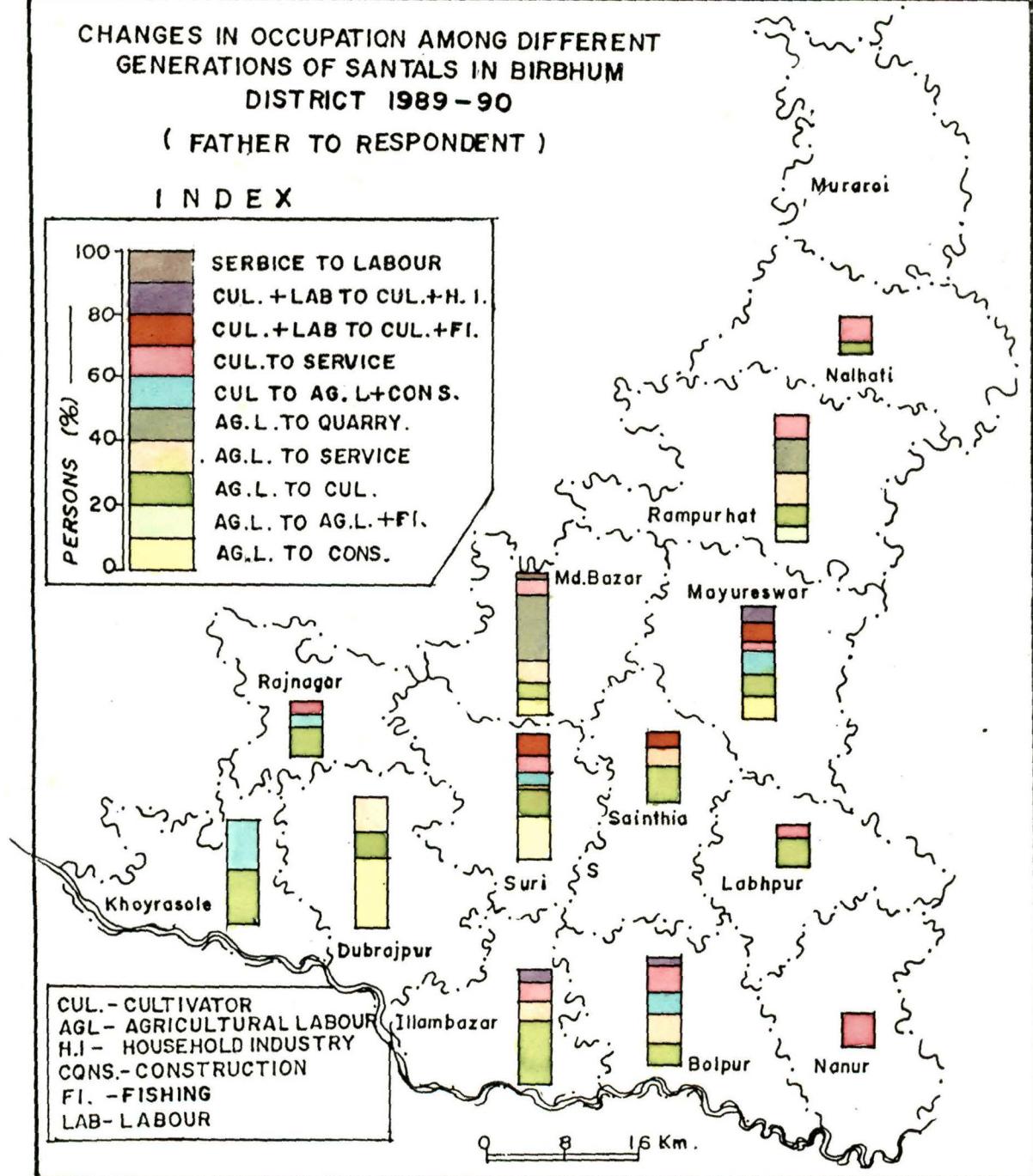
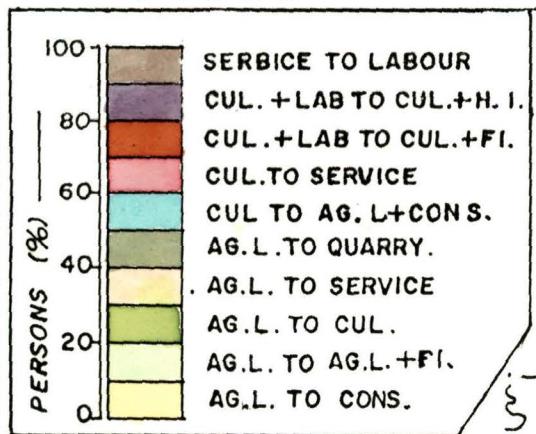


FIG - 45

Table-58

Changes of Occupation among respondents and his son among the Santal of Birbhum district (in %), 1989-90

Police Stations	Persons having no change	Ag.L. to Quarry	Ag.L. to Cul.	Ag.L. to Service	Cul. to Ag.L.	Cul. to Service	Cul. to Cul.+ fish	Service to Lab.	Carpentry to Labour
Muraroi	87.8					12.2			
Nalhati	100.0								
Ramphrhat	64.4	7.0	6.0	4.7	7.0	2.3	4.3	4.3	
Mayureswar	81.7			2.7	3.1			9.4	3.1
Md.Bazar*	81.0	8.0	5.0		1.7	4.3			
Rajnagar	87.0		4.5	3.5		5.0			
Khoyrasole	85.0				15.0				
Dubrajpur	80.9			4.8	9.5	4.8			
Suri	86.7				6.0	7.3			
Illambazar*	79.8				6.8	6.7		6.7	
Sainthia	69.6		10.0		16.1	4.3			
Bolpur	75.0		8.2	6.4		5.7		4.7	
Labhpur	69.8		11.1		19.1				
Nanur	75.0				16.7	8.3			

Source: Field Investigation

Ag.L. = Agricultural labourer, Cul.= Cultivator,
Lab. = Labourer

as compared with that of service holders and others. Rampurhat, Dubrajpur and Bolpur show this type of change (Fig. 46). Improvement in educational qualification enable the youngest generation in getting jobs in offices, schools, police departments, banks etc. The change of occupation from being cultivator to agricultural labourer, occurs because of division of the family due to several factors and the prevalence of share-cropping system etc. In 9 police stations change in occupation of this nature has taken place. In Bolpur it is the highest because of the share-cropping system, division of family etc. The change from cultivation to service is also recorded in most of the police stations.

Causes of Changes in Occupation:

The changes in occupation of the rural population is the result of several reasons and the latter may be classified into two broad groups such as (i) changes in agrarian system in general, and (ii) implementation of tribal development programmes. In the agricultural sector, land reform is one of the major reasons. Land reform in traditional sense is the redistribution of lands for the benefit of the small farmers and agricultural workers (Sengupta, 1981)²⁷. The land reform measures enacted in India are most important and it affects millions of cultivators and a vast area of the country. Under the Indian constitution, land reform is a state legislation and previously the Zamindary system was the most important one among different forms of land ownership. From time to time a number of land reform policies have been introduced as already mentioned. The Bengal Tenancy Act failed

CHANGES IN OCCUPATION AMONG DIFFERENT GENERATIONS OF SANTALS IN BIRBHUM DISTRICT, 1989 - 90
(RESPONDENT TO RESPONDENT'S SON)

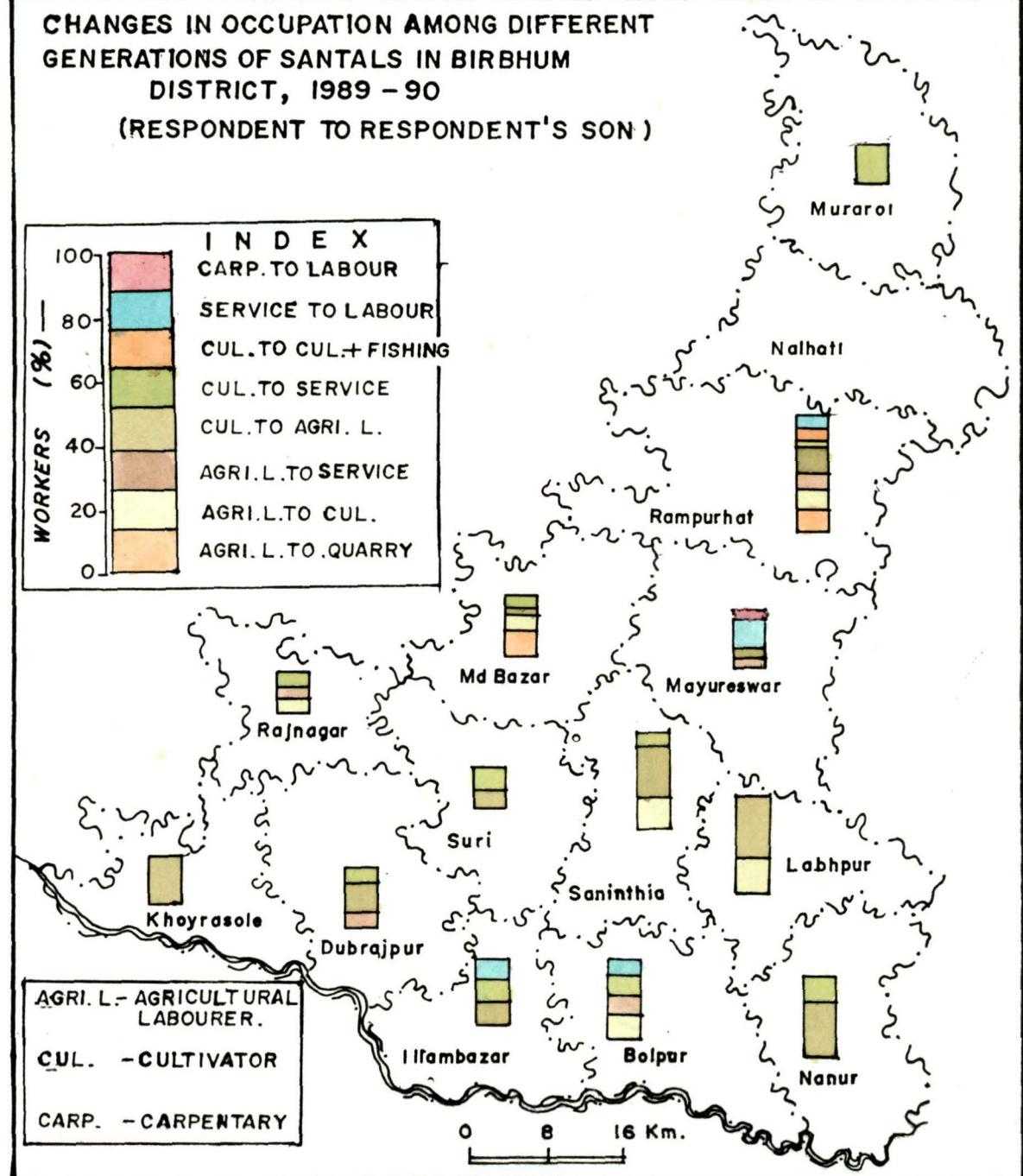


FIG - 46

to consider share croppers as tenants whereas post-independence 'Zamindary Abolition Act' of 1953 with its lack of ceiling provisions, enabled the jotedara to evict the tenants. Similarly, the 'Land Reforma Act' of 1955 permitted eviction of tenants on the ground of self-cultivation. Under these circumstances, the Santals continued to remain extremely vulnerable to the rapacious forces of exploitation, and thus proletarization became inevitable. Thus, between 1961 and 1971, the number of Santal owner-cultivators decreased, making an increase in the number of agricultural labourers. A Survey conducted among the Santals of 6 villages of Birbhum (Suri Police Station) in 1946, shows that 86 per cent of the families owned land but the average size of holding was 0.8 acre. In 1956, another survey made in Bolpur, shows 70 per cent of the Santals were landless, having no share in production. The survey in 1961-62 for Bolpur (later a Naxalite straon-ghold) shows only 1 Santal owner cultivator and that about 95 per cent have no land (Duyker, 1982)²⁸. Because of this gradual dispossession of land, the tribal folk has turned into agricultural labour or working as labour in brick kilns, and various other fields. However, except in agricultural sector, there is hardly any remunerative occupation where they can be employed (Basu, 1989)²⁹.

The two main objectives of the land reform programme of the State of West Bengal are (i) recording the names of bargadars in the record of right and (ii) distribution

of ceiling surplus vested lands among the weaker section of the community. In spite of several legal problems and operational difficulties the programme is still in operation with significant achievements. At the end of June 1981, the total number of bargadars in the record of right was 1,089,500 out of which 196,000 (18%) were scheduled tribes. The total number of assignees of vested lands (patta holders) at that time was 1,284,856 out of which scheduled tribes constituted 2,46,340 (19.2%). (Report Tribal Sub Plan, 1982-83)³⁰. In 1987-88, the amount of vested land among the scheduled tribes in West Bengal was 3,38,345 hectares of which about 11,115 hectares were in Birbhum district (Report, Tribal Sub Plan, 1987-88)³¹.

The recorded bargadar and the assignees of vested land are economically backward and are very poor to utilise their land. To make them self-reliant and properly settled, the state government launched a programme as 'Barga Finance Scheme' for the bargadars and the assignees of vested land, meant for both the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes (Report, Tribal Sub Plan, 1982-83).³²

Table-59 shows that the amount of money sanctioned was more in the year of 1987-88 than in other years between 1984-85 and 1989-90. In 1984-85, the amount of money was the lowest for which the number of beneficiaries also was the lowest. The increase in the number of beneficiaries means greater involvement of people in agriculture. The loan helps

Table-59

Money sanctioned and number of beneficiaries of Barga
Finance Scheme in Birbhum.

Year	No. of Beneficiaries	Money sanctioned & released
1984 - 85	499	3,08,204
1985 - 86	974	3,99,948
1986 - 87	1285	5,82,118
1987 - 88	2562	13,74,479
1988 - 89	1178	7,74,178
1989 - 90	670	7,28,064

Source; West Bengal Scheduled Castes and
Scheduled Tribe Development and
Finance Corporation, Birbhum
District Branch, Suri.

them in using the land during both the kharif and the rabi seasons and thus have a longer period of work, contributing to the improvement of their economic condition by selling more produce.

Since independence a number of plans and programmes have been adopted to improve their economy with changes in their traditional activities (Bose, 1989)³³. A programme of community development which was multisectoral was launched in the first five year plan period and by the end of the second plane, the community development approach applied equally to the tribal areas. But the fruit of development did not reach the tribal settled areas with their

sparsely distributed population, poor communication and infrastructural facilities in hilly and undulating terrains. To obviate these difficulties, 'Special Multi-purpose Tribal Development Projects' covering a few blocks were taken up in 1954 (Planning report, 1984)³⁴. The objectives of this programme:: was to promote an all-sided development of the village community including their economic, political, social, cultural and moral development. These blocks came into existence where tribal population is predominant, covering 25,000 persons. In West Bengal there were 2 tribal development blocks (Commission Report, 1961)³⁵. The tribal development block strategy was an improvement over the general community development approach but it also did not prove to be a very effective instrument for tribal development because of its administrative and protective aspects regarding economic development. Hence, during the fourth plan period a series of programmes have been taken up for specific target group areas like small farmers, agricultural labourers, drought prone areas etc. for development (Planning Report, 1984)³⁶.

The 'Dehbar Commission' and 'Shilu Ao Committee' keep an eye on planning and implementation of tribal development programmes. They observed that because of inadequate investment and slow implementation, these programmes do not show their desired results in spite of the provision in constitution for the protection of educational and economic development. Hence, during sixth plan period

the Tribal Sub-Plan strategy continued giving emphasis more on (i) raising the productivity level and lift the people above the poverty line; (ii) development of human resources and upgradation of education; (iii) elimination of exploitation of tribals in the field of alienation of land, money lending, debt bondage, trade, ex~~ise~~, forest; and (iv) development of adequate infrastructure. The amount of financial investment increased for Tribal Sub-Plan Programme in different Planning period (Planning Report, 1984)³⁷. Table-60 shows

Table - 60

Investment in the tribal areas from 1980-81 to
1989-90 in West Bengal

Year	Annual Requirement in Rs. (crores)
1980 - 81	3.5
1981 - 82	4.1
1982 - 83	4.7
1983 - 84	5.4
1984 - 85	6.2
1985 - 86	6.8
1986 - 87	7.8
1987 - 88	8.6
1988 - 89	9.5
1989 - 90	11.2

Source : Tribal Sub-Plan of West Bengal, 1990-91.

that amount of money went up to 11.2 crores in 1989-90 from 3.5 crores in 1980-81. The tribal sub-plan has three components, like (a) Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP); (b) Tribal Concentrated Modified Area Development, Agency Pockets; and (c) Projects for Primitive Tribal groups. Among these three programmes, the functions of the ITDP have been found to improve Santal economy by way of introducing new occupations. In Birbhum district, for instance, there are 4 ITDP areas out of a total of 33 such programmes for the State (West Bengal) in operation. The four project areas involved in the programme are as follows : (i) Project no. 10 covers Rajnagar Police station; (ii) Project no. 11 covers Illambazar, Suri, and Sainthia police stations; (iii) Project no. 12 covers Bolpur and Labhpur police stations; and (iv) Project no. 13 covers Md. Bazar and Rampurhat police stations; Altogether, the total area covered by four ITDP programmes involve 232 maujas (Fig. 47) of 8 police stations. In order to increase the cropped area and the intensity of land utilisation through the improvement of irrigational facilities , several programmes have been implemented in these areas which include (a) reexcavation of tanks, (b) sinking and repairing of water supply field channel etc. A detailed picture about these schemes may be obtained from the following Table-61.

Further, particular emphasis was laid on animal husbandry by the ITDP, giving rise to the practice of cattle rearing, piggery, duckery, poultry and sheep rearing.

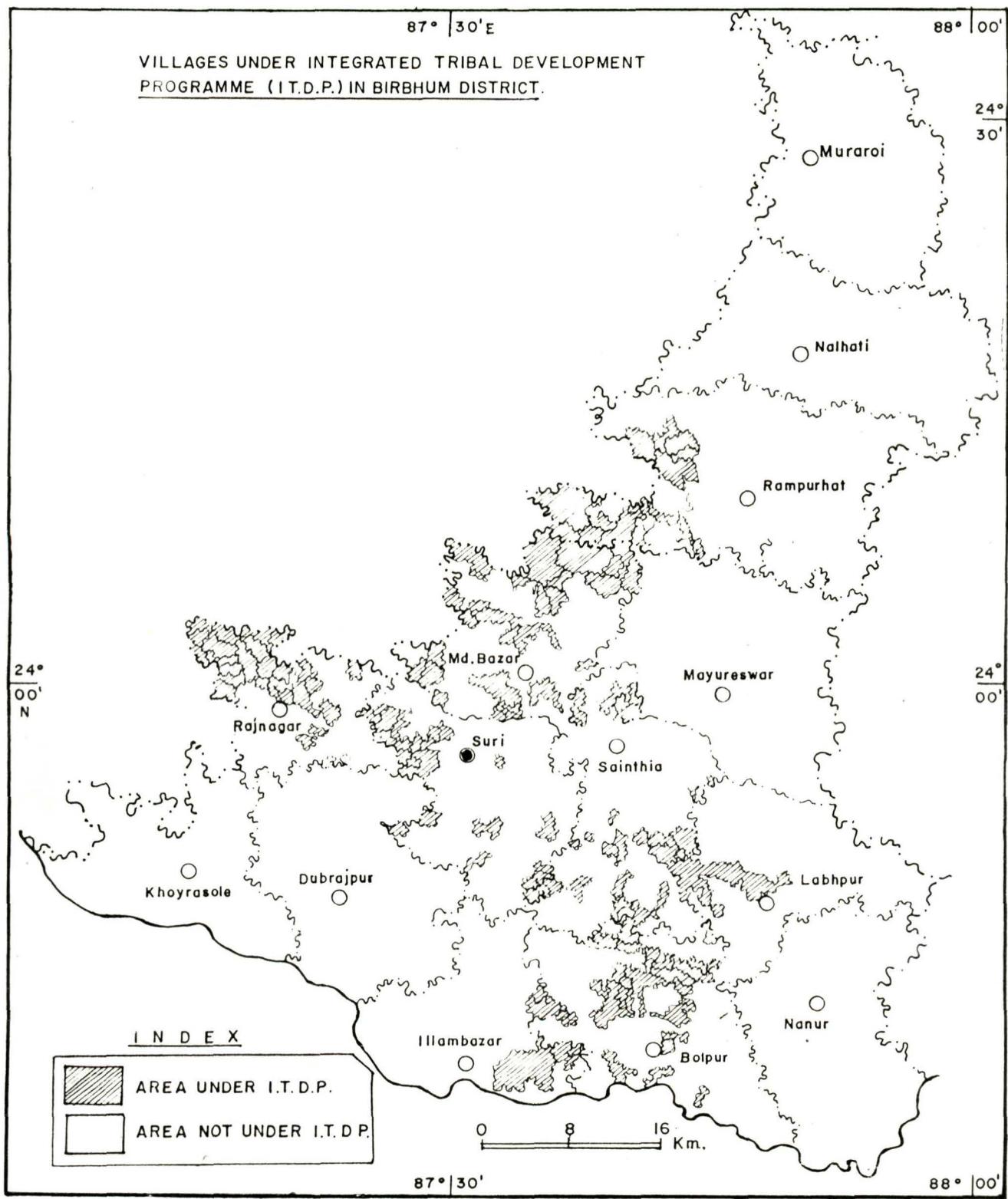


FIG - 47

Table - 61

Schemes implemented under Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP) in Birbhum district, 1981-82 to 1989-90.

Name of the scheme with location.	Year	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Area (with number of families) benefited.
A. 1. Re-excavation of tanks			
(a) One in Bolpur Police station.	1981-82	79,847.0	12 acres (36 families)
(b) two in Suri and two in Rajnagar police station.	1982-83	1,50,000.0	40 acres (120 families)
(c) three in Rampurhat police station.	1983-84	64,500.0	36 acres (108 families)
(d) One in Bolpur police station.	"	20,000.0	10 acres (30 families)
(e) One in Rajnagar Police station.	1984-85	1,02,987.0	12 acres (36 families)
(f) two in Suri police station	1986-87	94,390.0	22 acres (66 families)
(g) one in Bolpur police station.	1989-90	1,14,527.0	5 acres (50 families)
(h) re-excavation of Kora bund of Rajnagar.	"	86,162.0	5 acres (10 families).
2. Re-excavation of bund			
(a) two in Rajnagar police station	1983-84	39,885.0	14 acres (42 families)
(b) one in Rampurhat police station.	1983-84	33,872.0	12 acres (36 families).
B. Sinking and repairing of water supply scheme.			
(a) four masonry wells	1982-83	40,000	127 families

Contd..

Name of the scheme with location.	Year	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Area (with number of families) benefited.
(b) sinking of deep tube wells at Illambazar police station.	1983-84	3,20,000.0	56 acres
(c) sinking and repairing of water supply schemes in Bolpur, Illambazar, Suri, Sainthia, Labhpur, Md.Bazar and Rajnagar police stations.	1984-85	90,000.0	256 families
(d) sinking and repairing of water supply schemes in Bolpur, Md.Bazar, Rampurhat, Suri, Sainthia, Labhpur police stations.	1985-86	1,00,000.0	156 families
(e) sinking and repairing of seven masonry wells at Md.Bazar, Suri (I & III) and Rampurhat (I) police stations.	1986-87	1,25,000.0	130 families
(f) sinking and repairing of seven well (six completed) in Rampurhat (I & II), Suri(I), Rajnagar and Illambazar police stns.	1987-88	1,00,000.0	126 families
(g) sinking and repairing of twenty-nine masonry wells (seven have been completed), three tube well in each ITDP block, three tube well in	1989-90	675,000.0	540 families.

contd...

Name of the scheme with location.	Year	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Area (with number of families) beneftited.
Sainthia police station, one well in Rajnagar police station, one well in Rampurhat police sta- tion.			
C. Construction of bund, field channel etc.			
(a) construction of weir bund at Kandar in Rajnagar.	1983-84	1,59,781.0	100 acres
(b) construction of field channel at Suri police station	1986-87	178,581.0	150 acres
(c) -do-	1987-88	92,189.0	200 acres
(d) Construction of Braja- ^{bund} durga _h in Rampurhat police station.	1989-90	729,426.0	150 acres (532 families)
(e) Dug well at Rampurhat police station.	1989-90	42,087.0	12 acres (10 families))
(f) Construction of Kalika- pur bund at Suri Police station.	1989-90	308,446.0	50 acres (50 families).

Source: Office of Integrated Tribal Development
Project, Suri.

Among them cattle rearing, poultry and piggery are becoming a more common feature among the Santals. Among the beneficiaries 44.5 per cent took loan for cattle rearing, 22.4 per cent for goat rearing, 6.6 per cent for poultry and 11.0 per cent for sheep rearing and 2.7 per cent for duckery according to secondary information (ITDP Office, Suri, 1989-90).

The Fishery Department of the government of West Bengal has taken initiative to introduce pisciculture and the programme includes 5 schemes as follows -

(i) the scheme for expansion of the extension wing; (ii) the scheme for imparting training to tribal people to take up pisciculture; (iii) state contribution for development of tank fisheries in ITDP areas; (iv) the scheme for subsidy and loan for the purchase of different equipments like fishing nets and fishing requisites; (v) the scheme for intensive development of tank fisheries in community development blocks. The programme may have an important role in improving the economic level of the Santals. This practice is mostly at the subsidiary level. Table-62 shows the number of beneficiaries and the amount of money sanctioned for this occupation for 1982-83 to 1989-90 which will give an idea about the trend of engagement in this occupation.

The self-employment programme is also being launched through LAMPs. Under this scheme the members are provided with short term loans, long term loans and consumption loan for the improvement of their economy by changing

Table - 62

Financial aid provided under Integrated Tribal Development Programme for
Santals in Birbhum district.

Year	Total		Agricultural Small Irrigation		Animal Husbandry		Fishery		Cottage & Small Scale Industry.		Trade & Business		Rural Transportation.	
	/ A	/ B	/ A	/ B	/ A	/ B	/ A	/ B	/ A	/ B	/ A	/ B	/ A	/ B
1982-83	1416522	306	39350	14	13985	11	-	-	1362587	281	600	1	-	-
1983-84	769447.75	256	115245	26	504185	190	1200	6	120544	29	6920	7	21353.75	14
1984-85	1541020	499	514200	113	956045	353	-	-	34400	16	23960	7	12415	8
1985-86	1999740	974	790585	192	900180	612	61555	11	84670	68	28800	6	133950	85
1986-87	2910590	1285	1103450	267	1583725	918	34800	5	66050	53	84955	23	32600	19
1987-88	9225710	2562	4479345	418	4202045	1868	36700	6	223940	171	207580	60	76100	39
1988-89	3870671	1178	1642704	338	1844747	695	25055	5	236375	102	104000	27	17790	11
1989-90	5745109	1184	2050140	426	2615276	532	-	-	765803	154	285090	59	28800	13

Source: Integrated Tribal Development Project office, Suri, Government of West Bengal, 1989-90.

A = Allotment

B = No. of Beneficiaries

occupations. The subsidy is available for a large number of activities giving quite a wide choice for the tribal people for making a living. The activities include retail business such as grocery and maintaining other types of shops, cycle repairing, blacksmithy, leave plate making etc. Sericulture has also been introduced recently at Rajnagar police station providing job opportunities. A programme on the training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) has also been launched by Government to introduce them with new areas of activities.

The implementation of the tribal development programmes has started in this district since 1981-82 and the Santals share the major portion of benefit derived from them as they represent almost 90 per cent of the total tribal population. The number of beneficiaries and the amount of money sanctioned (Table-62) for different types of jobs show an increasing trend on both counts which indicate that engagement in diversified jobs is on the increase and among all such activities animal husbandry takes a leading role, being practised by many of them as evidenced the primary and secondary information (Fig.48).

Lastly, it can be said that the different policies, laws and development programmes adopted in recent decades motivate them to get engaged in new jobs, leaving their traditional activity. The overall change, however, is not very significant so far as the primary information

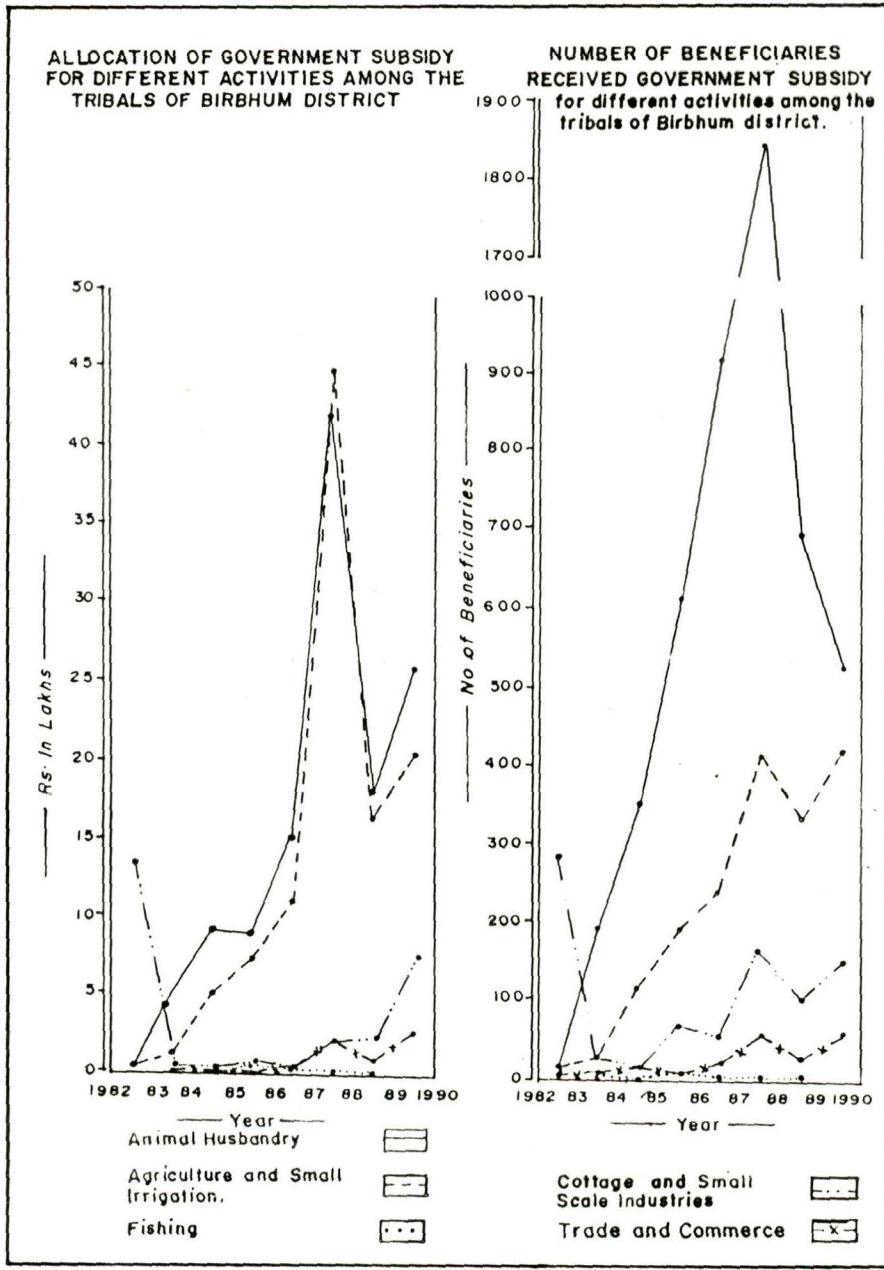


Fig - 48

collected through personal investigation indicate. The reasons behind this slow progress may be summarised as follows :

(i) In most cases the people are very conservative and keep to traditional activities as long as they are not compelled to leave that; (ii) Lack of proper education on the one hand; and (iii) disarticulation and decentralisation of money on the other, are the important reasons keeping progress rather slow in modernization.