

CHAPTER - 4

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE MUSLIMS

4.1: Introduction

Muslims in Darjeeling town, as in any other part, are far from homogenous, coming from different ethnic and national backgrounds with divergent attitudes and practices in their occupations. Muslims of the town represented some fundamental economic and cultural types. And in due course of time these typified economy resulted into formation of distinct Muslim ethnic groups. The ethnic groups are commonly called as caste or *jat* or *biradari* by them. In early days of the town Darjeeling i.e. of its urbanization, the need of marginal occupations viz. butcher, barber, cook, mechanic, petty business men, vegetable sellers etc. were required. The development of the town also required labours both skilled and unskilled. As Muslims are mainly self employed marginal entrepreneurs, took migration to Darjeeling since the very formation of the town.

Since 1838 there was no permanent market place at Darjeeling. Only a weekly *hatt* was supplied the daily needs of the people. Many Muslim petty traders were then frequently participated at there with their shops. However, Dr. Campbell for the first time established a market at Darjeeling for the native traders. Dozey, a reputed early historian on Darjeeling acknowledged the fact that the native market was dominated by Kashmiri traders and Punjabi traders (might be from *Peswar* of present day Pakistan who were commonly called as *Peswaris*) of silk, skin, meat and dry fruit trade.

The development of Darjeeling hill station as a new setting led to encourage the migration of many such crafts and occupations whose principle objective was to cater to the requirement of the elite, particularly of the ruling European classes and their native

companions. Specialization among the Muslim marginal occupational groups which is an important character of their economic activity helps them to create business monopoly in many industries viz. tailoring, bakery, repairing works, petty trading, curio items and etc. There were some specific places where these groups were found. Still some of them are in the same places. The present *Darogabazar*, which leads from the east of *Chackbazar* to Mount Pleasant road were dominated by the tailoring shops of Muslims and even today all the tailor masters and shop owners are Muslims. The repairing shops of watch, spectacles and household utensils near two side of the road *Chackbazar* are owned by Muslims. Beef, Mutton and fish market was controlled by the Muslims yet some non Muslims are seen in the same occupations at present days. Although bakery industry at Darjeeling was initiated by the European entrepreneurs but the labour or master chef or *karigar* was always a Muslim. Even today there are some famous bakeries run by Muslim families since colonial times. Kashmiri Muslim families are all the traders of curio items and valuable antic items. Their shops are seen at Mall, *Chourasta*, Ladenla road, Nehru road and etc. The famous Habib Mallick's shop at Mall is seen since 1890. And the Tibetan Muslims, who took refugee shelter after Chinese occupation at Tibet, are all traders of cloth, shoe and hotel. The most striking feature of the Muslims in Darjeeling is self employment. Like other urban areas Muslims of the town are self employed in marginal enterprises. Besides a large number of them are employed as casual labourers in beef market, fish market and various shops.

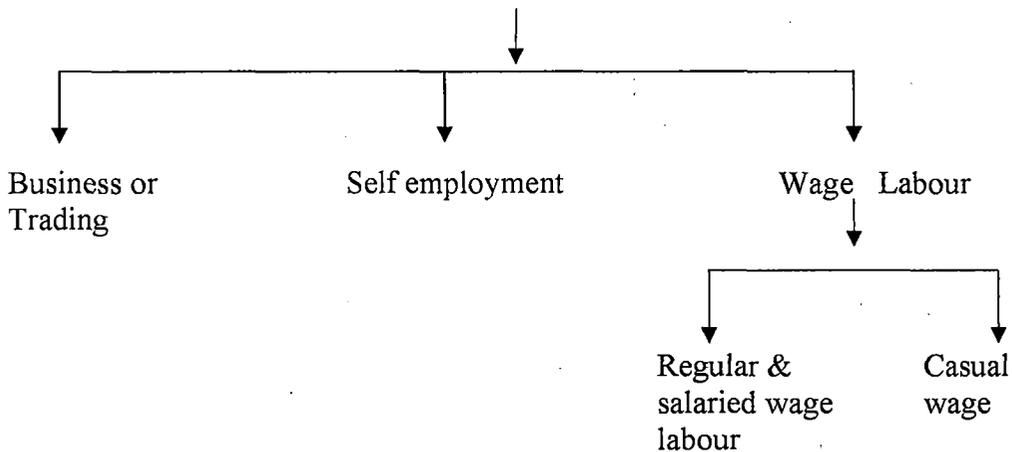
4.2: Major Economic Activities

It is ubiquitous that the availability of employment and economy provides an individual and his family with purchasing power, enabling him to acquire subsistence as well as consumption goods to satisfy the basic needs, comfort and leisure. The most striking feature of the Muslims of Darjeeling town is the relatively high share of self

employment activity and wage labour. This is particularly a typical feature of urban Muslim inhabitants. Education has no doubt a progressive impact on occupation patter but the marginal people always think about the positive return of education and non availability of employment may often results the withdraw from education. However, except some few government servants, the occupational activities of the Muslims of Darjeeling town are categorized into three broad categories viz.

Fig: 4.1

Occupational Activities of the Muslim Groups



The Tibetan and Kashmiri Muslim families are all businessmen and considered as a trading community. Kashmiris are all in the business of curio items and handicrafts. The Tibetan Muslims are in the businesses of cloth, shoe and hotels. Some Bihari and Nepali Muslim families have also big businesses or trading but their number is almost negligible. The category self employment includes self employed occupations of both established and marginal type. Except the Kashmiri and Tibetan Muslims, the majority of the Muslims of Darjeeling are in marginal type self employed business like grocer shop, tailor, utensils repairing shop, watch & spectacle repairing shop and meat supplier. They have no worker or helper. They are the only man of their business. Category wage labour has two types one is regular waged labour means labourers who received regular salary or wage from their employer. Like helpers in various grocer shops,

various other shops or businesses. A good number of them are found in Darjeeling beef market. Casual waged labour means the category without any fixed or permanent appointment. They are usually unskilled workforce without any permanent work.

The economic activity of the Muslims in Darjeeling is highly stratified on the basis of their ethnic and national background. Muslims migrated from Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are all self employed in marginal occupations or enterprises. Majority of the hybrid Nepali Muslims are engaged in beef and fish market of the town as wage labour or butcher. Tibetan and Kashmiri Muslims are all in the trade of curio items and hotel industries. However, a large number of these Muslim families were identified by their traditional occupations indeed some of them were already quit their generation wise occupation. But still most of the Muslim families are trying to survive through the economic activities of their forefathers. Occupational mobility is hardly happened as lack of employment scopes and education entails them or forced them to keep continue their businesses.

Table: 4.1
Major Economic Activities of the Muslims of Darjeeling Town

Occupations	Nepali Muslim		Bihari Muslim		Tibetan Muslim		Kashmiri Muslim		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Butcher	25 (20.49%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25 (9.76%)
Business	34 (27.86%)	1 (11.11%)	36 (54.54%)	1 (100%)	25 (65.78%)	1 (33.33%)	16 (94.11%)	-	114 (44.53%)
Govt. service	10 (8.19%)	1 (11.11%)	1 (1.51%)	-	1 (2.63%)	2 (66.66%)	-	-	15 (5.85%)
Regular wage labour	29 (23.77%)	6 (66.66%)	9 (13.63%)	-	2 (5.26%)	-	1 (5.88%)	-	47 (18.35%)
Casual wage Labour	17 (13.93%)	1 (11.11%)	5 (7.57%)	-	-	-	-	-	23 (8.98%)
Tailor	4 (3.27%)	-	10 (15.15%)	-	1 (2.63%)	-	-	-	15 (5.85%)
Mechanic (watch & spect.)	3 (2.45%)	-	5 (7.57%)	-	-	-	-	-	8 (3.12%)
Hotel	-	-	-	-	9 (23.68%)	-	-	-	9 (3.51%)
Total	122 (100%)	9 (100%)	66 (100%)	1 (100%)	38 (100%)	3 (100%)	17 (100%)	0	256 (100%)

Out of total sample population 34.73 percent are working and the rest 65.26 percent are dependent. The category non working includes housewife, student and persons of minor and old age group. Out of total working population 9.76 percent are butcher either in beef market or independent. All of them belong to Nepali Muslim category. The highest concentration is in business and mostly all of them are self employed of both established and marginal type. The percentage is very high among the Kashmiri, Tibetan and Bihari Muslim categories respectively. 94.11 percent among the Kashmiris are in businesses of curio and handicrafts. Only 5.8 percent out of total workforce are in government services. Here out of 15 total government servants, 10 are from Nepali Muslim families. There are 18.35 percent regular wage labours working mainly in beef market, fish market and various shops. And the percentage is high among the Nepali Muslim families in compare to other Muslim groups. The tailors are also very few, total 5.85 percent. And the number is large among the Bihari Muslim group which is 10 out of total 15 numbers. There are also some few mechanic basically self employed who repair watch and spectacles. All these repairing shops are in the two side of the road of *Chackbazar*. There are total 9 hotels and all are operated and owned by Tibetan Muslims.

4.2.1: Major Economic Activities of the Nepali Muslims

The group Nepali Muslim is a conglomeration of diverse occupational categories or *biraderies*. From the present study it is to be curved out from the available data that majority of the Nepali Muslims are from *Kureshi* and *Ansari biradery*. Animal slaughter was the traditional occupation of the *Kureshis* and weaving of cloths was the traditional occupation of *Ansaris*. It is to be noted here that occupational specialization is not an inherent character in the principles of Islam. But during the course of time occupations remains hereditary as a particular group or family's sticks to a particular occupation generation after generation. At butcher *basti*, from the

name we can clearly understand that initially the Muslims butchers were the resident of that area, the majorities Muslims (total 37.7 %) of these groups are engaged in beef market or fish market either as a regular wage labour or casual wage labour. Table number 5.2 clearly showed the occupational specializations of the Nepali Muslims. However, the following diagram is showing the major concentration of occupations of the Nepali Muslim group.

Table: 4.2

Major Economic Activities of the Nepali Muslims

Occupations	Nepali Muslim		
	Male	Female	Total
Butcher	25 (20.49%)	-	25 (19.08%)
Business	34 (27.86%)	1 (11.11%)	35 (26.71%)
Govt. service	10 (8.19%)	1 (11.11%)	11 (8.39%)
Regular wage labour	29 (23.77%)	6 (66.66%)	35 (26.71)
Casual wage Labour	17 (13.93%)	1 (11.11%)	18 (13.74%)
Tailor	4 (3.27%)	-	4 (3.05%)
Mechanic (watch & spect.)	3 (2.45%)	-	3 (2.29%)
Total	122 (93.12%)	9 (6.87%)	131 (100%)

Out of total 362 Nepali Muslim persons only 131 persons have the above said occupational activities. And among these 131 persons, 93.12 percent are male and 6.87 percent are female. Economic participation out side the households among the females are restricted by the elderly males which is the major reason behind the low percentage of females in earning activities. The majorities of these Muslims have the occupation of animal slaughter, small scale business and wage labour. These occupations are being practiced generation

after generation and the family members do not have idea as how their ancestors got involved in these occupations by which they are identified with. Very few among the Muslims abandoned their traditional occupation. There are 25 butcher and all are working in the beef market of Darjeeling town near old taxi stand. There are 35 persons engaged in business activities and out of them only one is female. The businesses are all small scale in type and are found in *chackbazar* and butcher *basti*. Only 11 persons are in government services and out of 11 only one is female. There are 35 wage labour and out of them 6 are female. There are only 4 tailor and 3 mechanic found to be available in occupations.

4.2.1.1: Business or Trading

Though the percentage of business is around 27 percent but majorities of the Nepali Muslims are fall in the category of self employment rather business or trading as their economic activities are small scale marginal type where both the investment and return is nominal and uncertain. However, only two families among them are found to be suitable for the category business or trading as their business is expended through out the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling district. They are mainly general suppliers along with some other business activities where they invest a large number of money and 2-5 wage labour of both regular and casual are working.

4.2.1.2: Self Employment

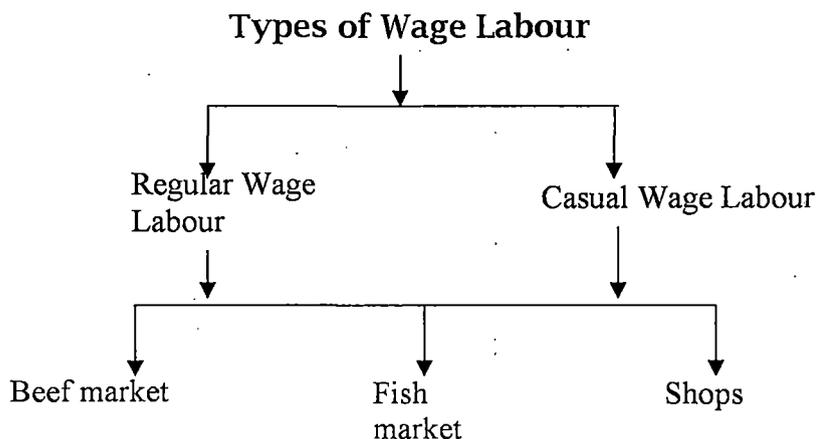
The category business is synonymous as self employment for the Nepali Muslims. A good number of Nepali Muslims are in the reliance of self employment or self trade. It is an established fact that the Muslims are interested in such type of small scale marginal occupational activity since history past. However, they are mainly in small scale self trade of woolen garments, Utensils repairing (*shan wala*), mechanic, grocer and etc where no helper or *jogari* is required. Often they don't need any type of permanent accommodation for their

businesses. A good number of them are suppliers of meat and garments to various educational institutions of Darjeeling and its adjoining towns or villages. Basically these occupational specializations only helped them in subsistence and in fact occupational mobility is almost impossible due to meager surplus for extension of business. Society often creates barrier in search for a new occupation where occupations of parents directly passed on to their children. However, by being a member of a specific occupation they hold an occupational identity along with their other identities such as regional, caste or *jati*, linguistic, etc.

4.2.1.3: Wage Labour and Others

Among the Nepali Muslim families a good number of them are in the occupation of wage labour either in a regular or casual basis. There are altogether 37.7 percent wage labours among the working population of this group. And the percentage of regular wage labour is much which is 23.77 percent. These labours are found in either beef market or fish market and various shops and restaurants.

Fig: 4.2

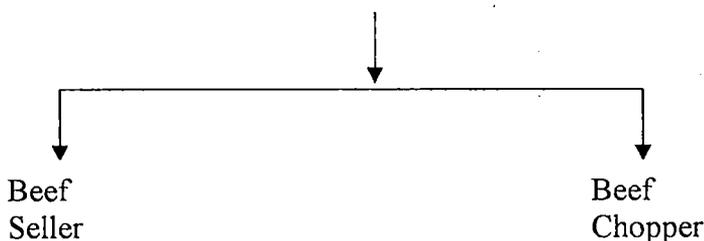


Regular wage labours means who received daily or monthly wage for their work from their employee. And the casual wage labour means who received money or work irregularly. Due to lack of access of regular work the Muslims youths of this group tend to join as labour in either beef market or fish market and shops. These are

specific industries for them since their early generation. Though the level of literacy is quite satisfactory yet they opt for work as labour because of unemployment and economic vulnerability.

The regular supply of flesh to the dwellers of Darjeeling was supplied by the Muslims from the very formation of the town. Even today the flesh of cow and goat is monopolized by the Muslims in Darjeeling urban or semi urban areas. The beef market at Darjeeling near old motor stand was built by Darjeeling Municipality approximately during the last decade of the last century. But the market was then wholly built of wood and thatched by tin. However, the present brick building was built before independence by the municipality which continues to serve its purpose till date. Recently the whole market is being upgraded into a two storied big modern market complex by Darjeeling Municipality where the beef market is in the down stairs of the building. There are total 26 stalls for selling only beef in the market and these entire stall owners are from Nepali Muslim groups of *Kureshi* brethren except of three stalls which are belongs to Nepali *Sarki* caste groups. Among these 26 stalls 14 are under the roof of a same building and rest 12 along with 4 Nepali caste Hindu stall outside of the building. Each stall has three persons and their division of labour is one man as a flesh seller and 2 men as chopper. The seller is appointed by the stall owner as daily wage basis and earns Rs.60 in a day. The rest two men earn Rs.5 per kg from the buyers for chopping flesh (*kima*). If he chop 5 kg *kima* in a day, he will earn ($5 \times 5 = \text{Rs.}25$) in a day.

Fig: 4.3
Category of workers in a Beef Stall
Beef Stall



Cow is not slaughtered in the beef market. Since colonial times the slaughter is done in the slaughter house at below Butcher *basti*. It is a brick built two storied building. Cow and goat is slaughtered here. The main butcher, who slaughtered the cow as per Islamic rule or *halal-jabai*, is a Muslim. Besides all the workers and carriers are belongs to *Sarki*, *Sherpa* and *Thami* caste of Nepali caste Hindu groups. Every day the slaughter house is opened from 6.30 to 8.00 am. And the cow and goat is sacrificed during the time. A man from *Kureshi* brethren slaughter all the animals and earn Rs.10 per cow and Rs.5 per goat. Every day approximately 15-20 cows and 15-16 goats are slaughtered. Generally all the cow and goat are supplied from Nepal and the stall owners pay tax to the municipality for using the slaughter house.

Goat meat or mutton is sold in another place which is just opposite to present beef market and also very old as like the beef market. Presently only a few seller are Muslim. The present day fish market building is established in the year 1936 by the Municipality but the market is also very old as like the beef market. Some Muslims are also working there as regular wage labour and some are as stall owner.

4.2.2: Major Economic Activities of the Bihari Muslims

Bihari Muslim Group is a trading community like other Bihari Hindu families in Darjeeling town. A large number of them are engaged in various business activities like stationary goods, grocery items, bakery, order supply and etc. And the rest are engaged in various self trade or employment like tailor and mechanic. This group has a great necessity in the daily life of Darjeeling town as their specialized services are necessary for urban life. The term Bihari Muslim is an umbrella term where diverse occupational groups are accommodated. They are known for their specialized skills which is the only capital for their self employment.

Table: 4.3
Major Economic Activities of the Bihari Muslims

Occupations	Bihari Muslim		
	Male	Female	Total
Business	36 (54.54%)	1 (100%)	37 (55.22%)
Govt. service	1 (1.51%)	-	1 (1.49%)
Regular wage labour	9 (13.63%)	-	9 (13.43%)
Casual wage Labour	5 (7.57%)	-	5 (7.46%)
Tailor	10 (15.15%)	-	10 (14.92%)
Mechanic (watch & spect.)	5 (7.57%)	-	5 (7.46%)
Total	66 (98.5%)	1 (1.49%)	67 (100%)

4.2.2.1: Business

Basically they are well to do section of Muslim society of Darjeeling. If you go through the cart road near *Chackbazar*, the shops located two sides of the road are all previously owned by Muslims. Even now, majority of the shop owners are Bihari Muslims. Shops like utensils of steel and brass are all owned by Muslims from Moradabad of Uttar Pradesh though they are known as Bihari Muslims. These are all very old famous shops. Majority of these shops are erected during the early part of last century. However, some are established after the independence.

Though the bakery industry was initially initiated by the Europeans but the labours were all Muslims by faith. Later some Muslims from Patna, Bihar came here and established bakery for the preparation of bread and cake. Initially they prepare only bread but gradually they started to prepare cake and other sweet confectionary items. Hazi H.S. Gura Mia was one of the pioneers in bakery industry among the Indians of Darjeeling town. He came to the town in the

early days of twentieth century and established his bakery in the year 1928. The factory was at the butcher basti, but the sells counter was in *Chackbazar*. Initially he only supplied the bread and confectionary items to the government offices and educational institutions. But later he opened the sells counter. He was the most famous confectioner in his days and published pamphlets of his items in Christmas days which were circulated to the offices and dwellers. But after his death his business was broken into two halves among his wife's brother as he had no successor. However, still a bakery shop named H.S. Gura Mia & Sons is selling bakery items near old taxi stand of *Chackbazar*.

Hazi Nurul Huda and Samsul Huda jointly established the famous Walis Bakery in the year 1947. Since then Walis is a popular name in the peoples mind. Originally they were from Patna and well experienced in bakery business. Since its establishment Walis make challenges to the Glanarese which is a European controlled shop initially. If you got to Darjeeling town, you will find so many outlets of Walis but named as Old Walis and New Walis. Actually the business is now divided because of familial problems. Presently the Old Walis is controlled by Sahid Kamal and his brothers and the New Walis is by the sons of Hazi Nurul Huda.

4.2.2.2: Self Employment

It is earlier told that this Muslim group is of diverse occupational backgrounds and mostly engaged in generation wise occupations where search for a new occupation is considered improper. Traditionally, they have been associated with artisan, mechanical and tool work. There are tailors, *hazam* (barber), *dhunia* (cotton carder), and mechanics or repairs of various objects. Tailoring is a common occupation of self employment among them. These tailors are famous in Darjeeling. Even some of them are very famous and our British top officials used to make their cloths in these shops. Hazi Sekh Samsuddin was one of them who was popularly know as

Samsu tailor. Still the shop is present in *chourasta* which is run by his son Sekh Nizam Uddin. There are also some other tailors and tailoring shops mostly concentrated in Darogabazar which is near to *Jama masjid*.

Mechanics or a repair of various objects is a popular occupation among them. The two sides of the present Cart Road near *Chackbazar* is dominated by the shops of watch and spectacle repairs. The shops are all in rented and the owners have no helper or assistant for their work. They are the most skilled artisan for watch and spectacles. The household utensil repairing shops are also found near these shops.

Hazam or hair cutting is a caste based occupation where a particular *zaat* or *birathery* is responsible for such work. Though there are Hindu *hazam* or barbers at the town, but the Muslim *hazam* are most popular in hair cutting. They are basically migrated from *Chapra* of Bihar but only a few are permanently settled in the town.

4.2.2.3: Wage Labour and Others

A small number of the members of this group are working as wage labour in various sectors. Altogether more than 20 percent are wage labour of both the regular and casual types. The regular wage labours are mostly skilled and working as helper or *jogari* in various shops of tailoring and beef stall where they earned a fixed amount of money either weekly or monthly. Where as, the casual labours are mostly unskilled and working in various shops, hotels, houses, beef and fish market as porter and earned money at per their work in daily basis. The casual wage labours are often working in others farm enterprises and getting in return salary or wages for their labour on time basis and not on the basis of daily.

4.2.3: Major Economic Activities of the Tibetan Muslims

The Tibetan Muslims in Darjeeling are primarily a small trading community who migrated from Tibet during the early sixties of twentieth century as of the Chinese occupation there. They were

treated as 'Ornaments of Lashes' as because of their specialized business activities. However, their numbers of families are very small in Darjeeling town. Traditionally all the Tibetan Muslim families are from the trader and merchant background. Almost all the families have business here. But some few members of them are in services. As all of the families were come from Tibet after Chinese occupation, they received some compensation from the Indian Government to settle trade and businesses because of their Indian ancestry. There are only 26 Tibetan Muslim families in the town and all these families major earning source is business.

Table: 4.4

Major Economic Activities of the Tibetan Muslims

Occupations	Tibetan Muslim		
	Male	Female	Total
Business	25 (65.78%)	1 (33.33%)	26 (63.41%)
Govt. service	1 (2.63%)	2 (66.66%)	3 (7.31%)
Regular wage labour	2 (5.26%)	-	2 (4.87%)
Tailor	1 (2.63%)	-	1 (2.43%)
Hotel	9 (23.68%)	-	9 (21.95%)
Total	38 (92.68%)	3 (7.31%)	41 (100%)

Among them 26 (around 64 percent) are businessmen. They have a business of cloth and other materials. Some of their shops are in *Mahakal* Market near Darjeeling GPO and some are in *chourasta*. There are only 3 government service men and woman. There are only 2 wage labour among them who are basically helpers in shops and received wage regularly. There are 9 hotels owned by Tibetan Muslim families. All these hotels are quite big and popular tourist's destination. The famous Society Hotel of Darjeeling is also owned by a Tibetan Muslim family.

4.2.4: Major Economic Activities of the Kashmiri Muslims

Kashmiri Muslims are a very small but powerful Muslim group in the Darjeeling town. Their traditional occupation was selling kashmiri sawls, handicrafts, gems, woolen garments and curio items. Almost all the curio shops around the Darjeeling mall are owned by the Kashmiri families. The famous Habib Mallik curio shop at the mall is also owned by a kashmiri family and it was the first curio shop at the town. Habib Mallik himself was the first kashmiri who set a curio shop during the 1890. Except the Habib Mallik's family, all other kashmiri families are close relative to each other. Since 1880s the Kashmiris used to visit Darjeeling for business purpose.

During the late fifties of seventeenth century Darjeeling was abruptly changed into an affluent urban centre as of its colonial importance. Businessmen from various corners of the country set their business. Kashmiri Muslim families were traditionally a trading community. They are a mobile community and seen almost all corners of the country during the winter season to sell door to door woolen garments and handicrafts particularly pashmina and shawl. But in Darjeeling town the monopoly of this business was gradually hijacked by the Tibetans or Bhutias as they also sell their woolen handicraft items by hacking. At present the Kashmiris only confined themselves in selling curio items to the tourists. Some very old Kashmiri families of the town confirmed that during 1880, a considerable kashmiri businessmen came the town as of its commercial importance and started their business by hacking. After the establishment of Zudge Bazar which was dominated by the Muslim traders, a number of kashmiri businessmen also opened shops there. But these shops were basically sold the kashmiri shawls and other pashmina items. It was late Habib Mallik who established a curio shop at Zudge bazaar in the year 1890. He sold kashmiri handicrafts, pashmina, traditional masks and gems. During that time the Muslim shops were around the Zudge bazaar. Later when the chourasta was prepared the Habib Mallik's

shop was transferred to there and later shifted to the famous mall where still it standing. Almost all the families are of Butt lineage except the late Habib Mallik's family.

Table: 4.5

Major Occupations of the Kashmiri Muslims

Occupations	Kashmiri Muslim		
	Male	Female	Total
Business	16 (94.11%)	-	16 (94.11%)
Regular wage labour	1 (5.88%)	-	1 (5.88%)
Total	17 (100%)	0	17 (100%)

Previously there were 5 curio shops owned by the Kashmiri Muslims and the famous Habib Mallick's shop is the first but at present there are 8 Kashmiri Curio and Handicraft shops in Darjeeling town. The name and address of these shops are given below —

Table: 4.6

Curio Shops owned by Kashmiris and their Location in Darjeeling Town

Shops Name	Area or Locality
Old Shops	
Habib Mallick	Chourasta (Mall)
Art Emporium	Laden La Road
Asian Art Palace	Nehru Road
Jolly Art	Chourasta
Arts Craft	Chourasta
New Shops	
Jewel Box	Laden La Road
Sikkim Art Palace	Gandhi Road
Kashmir Art Gallery	Laden La Road

4.3: Economic Status and Economic Condition of the Muslim Groups

The economic condition of the Muslims of Darjeeling town has shown a dismal picture though all the Muslim communities have some superficial similarities among themselves. This is because of the fact

of their ethnic and occupational diversity and the contemporary historicity of their socio-economic backwardness. Muslims in Darjeeling are therefore, known as indefatigable workers and keen businessmen. They are mostly in small scale marginal occupations except some well to do Bihari, Kashmiri and Tibetan Muslim families. Their economic structure is more or less superficially similar with the rest of the Muslims of India and the occurrences of working and dependent population among themselves have a high gap. However, their education status is satisfactory as against of National and state level which is 90.97 percent but the level of education is not satisfactory or favourable to get medium and high cadre government jobs. Hence, there are only 5.85 percent population engaged in government services and except some few all are in third grade job responsibilities.

The earning status of the Muslims of Darjeeling town has show a very large gap as the percentage of dependent population is big. There are total 65.26 percent dependent population where as the earning population is only 34.73 percent. And among this total earner population, 32 percent are in the category of earner dependent i.e. this 32 percent population are dependent to their familial income for their survival which indicates either they are casual labour or engaged in marginal services or service women. Here, it is usual that the dependent population is large in case of women which are total 46.40 percent and the male dependent is 18.86 percent.

However, table 3.17 and Figure 3.14 of the Chapter 3 demonstrated the community wise total earning status of the Muslim in a comparative basis. Here it is clearly shown the earner and dependent scenario of the Muslim population. In most of the cases the earner dependents spend their whole earning exclusively for the benefit of their families. Most of the cases the earnings of the head of the family hardly cater to the basic needs as the dependents in their

families are large. The total Dependency ration of the Muslims of Darjeeling town is 39.05.

Table: 4.7

Dependency Ration of the Muslim Groups

Nepali Muslim	Bihari Muslim	Tibetan Muslim	Kashmiri Muslim
39.23	38.50	53.93	10

Table 5.7 is showing the dependency ration of the Muslim groups of Darjeeling town. The ration is calculated by the sum of population below 15 years and population above 60 years and then divided by population between 15 years and 60 years which is multiplied by 100. It is a fact that the females are mostly dependent, yet a very few females are earner but dependent to the principal earnings of their families as their earnings hardly enough to provide the basic needs.

The Muslims of Darjeeling town are belongs to very crudely in the category of low to moderate income range. As of their marginalization their income hardly increased to the level of high group although small portions among them are in the high earning groups.

Table: 4.8

Income wise distribution of households/Families

Monthly Income Ranges	Number of Households/Families				Total
	Nepali Muslim	Bihari Muslim	Tibetan Muslim	Kashmiri Muslim	
< Rs.2000	7 (9.33%)	-	-	-	7 (4.63%)
Rs.2001- Rs.5000	35 (46.66%)	15 (36.47%)	-	-	50 (33.11%)
Rs.5001- Rs.8000	11 (14.66%)	8 (21.05%)	4 (15.38%)	-	23 (15.23%)
Rs.8001- Rs.10000	11 (14.66%)	7 (18.42%)	1 (3.84%)	2 (16.66%)	21 (13.90%)
> Rs.10001	11 (14.66%)	8 (21.05%)	21 (80.76%)	10 (83.33%)	50 (33.11%)
Total	75 (100%)	38 (100%)	26 (100%)	12 (100%)	151 (100%)

Majority of them belongs to the category of wage labour (see table 6.1) and the rest are in small scale marginal business activities. Except some few families almost all the families have some members in the occupation of wage labour. In the table 6.5 out of total 151 families only 4.63 percent have a monthly income of Rs.2000/- or below and all these families are in Nepali Muslim group. There are 33.11 percent families who have a monthly income ranging between Rs.2001-Rs.5000. And the largest numbers of families of Nepali Muslim families are in this income group which is 46.66 percent. The majority of Bihari Muslim families are also in this income group which is 36.47 percent. There are total 15.23 percent families who are in the income range between Rs.5001-Rs.8000 and the percentage of this income within the Muslim groups are 14.66 percent among the Nepali Muslim families, 21.05 percent are Bihari Muslim families and 15.38 percent are Tibetan Muslim families. The percentage of the income range Rs.8001-Rs.10000 is also shows a low frequency and the families are all belongs to moderate income range of business activities. Most of the Kashmiris and Tibetan Muslim families are in the high income range which is 83.33 percent and 80.76 percent respectively.

Fig: 4.4A

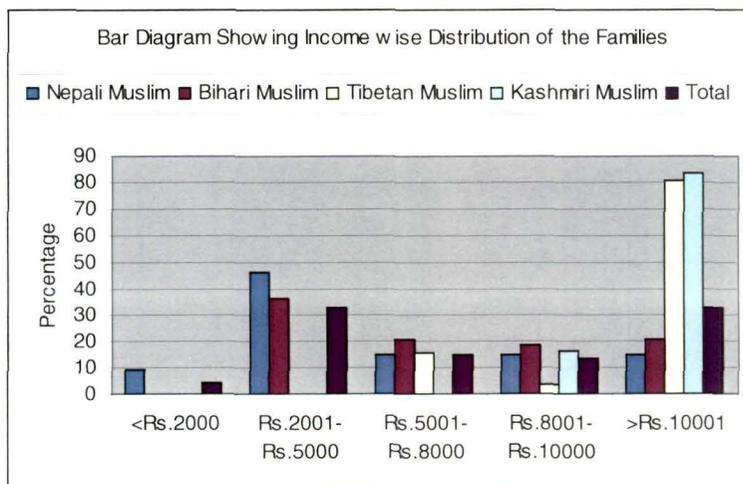
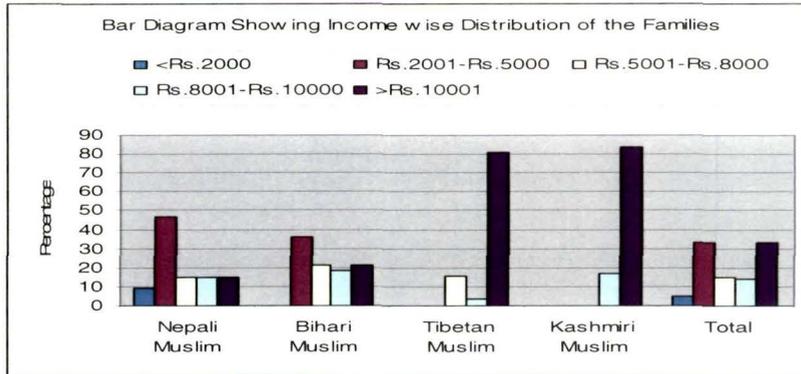


Fig: 4.4B

The bar diagram clearly shows the income wise distribution of the Muslim families. The highest concentration of the Nepali Muslims is in the range between Rs.2001-Rs.5000 and considered as a low income group. Where as the Bihari Muslim is considered as a moderate income group. And lastly the Tibetan and Kashmiri Muslim families are considered as high income group which is more that Rs.10001 in a month.

However, the last month expenditure details of the total 151 families reveals that though there are 33.11 percent families earns Rs.2001-Rs.5000 but majority of their expenditure falls in the range between Rs.2001-Rs.5000. It means their earning and expenditure is same and for this there is no surplus money to the families.

Table: 4.9
Distribution of Households/Families on the basis of last monthly expenditure

Monthly Expenditure Ranges	Number of Households/Families				Total
	Nepali Muslim	Bihari Muslim	Tibetan Muslim	Kashmiri Muslim	
< Rs.2000	5 (6.66%)	-	-	-	5 (3.31%)
Rs.2001-Rs.5000	43 (57.33%)	19 (50%)	3 (11.53%)	-	65 (43.04%)
Rs.5001-Rs.8000	19 (25.33%)	11 (28.94%)	12 (46.15)	1 (8.33%)	43 (28.47%)
Rs.8001-Rs.10000	3 (4%)	3 (7.89%)	5 (19.23)	1 (8.33%)	12 (7.94%)
> Rs.10001	5 (6.66%)	5 (13.15%)	6 (23.07%)	10 (83.33%)	26 (17.21%)
Total	75 (100%)	38 (100%)	26 (100%)	12 (100%)	151 (100%)

Among the Nepali Muslims only 6.66 percent families expenditure falls in the range of Rs.2000 and below. There is no Bihari, Tibetan and Kashmiri family in this group. After that the second largest range of expenditure among Nepali Muslims is 25.33 percent. Only 4 percent Nepali Muslim families expenditure falls in the range of Rs.8001-Rs.10000. Where as among the Kashmiris it is 83.33 percent which also indicates that these Kashmiri families are most affluent among the Muslims of Darjeeling town.

Fig: 4.5A

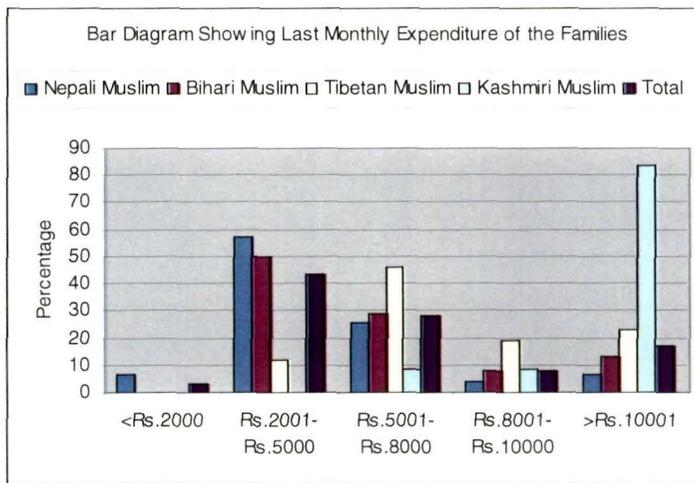
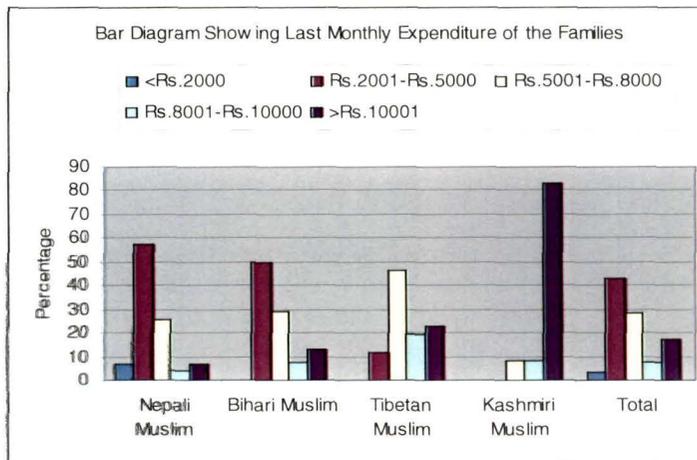


Fig: 4.5B



The bar diagram clearly shows the community wise monthly expenditure of the studied families. The minimum range of expenditure is only present among some Nepali families and there are no other community members. Their economic condition is the worse

among themselves but they don't have any BPL cards or other extra facilities provided by government.

4.4: Findings

It is to be said that The Muslims of Darjeeling Himalaya are a mosaic of diverse ethnic groups and the 'Muslim Society' is made up of various elements drawn from diverse origins. Their social diversity is perhaps the most powerful manifestation of their economic structure. The occupational activities of the Muslims of Darjeeling are categories into three broad categories viz. business or trading, self employment and wage labour. The businesses are all small scale marginal type except Tibetan and Kashmiri Muslim families along with few Bihari Muslim families. The majorities of Nepali Muslims are in the occupation of self employment and wage labour in beef or fish market. They are the most marginal section among the Muslim community in Darjeeling town. Their economic condition is considered them as a low income group. The next Bihari Muslims are in small scale petty business activities of self employed category. Majority of them have grocer shops, utensil shops tailoring shops and repair shops. Small portions have some large and expended businesses of order supply and building construction. They are considered as an economically moderate group although some wage labours also found among themselves. The Tibetan Muslims are considered as a trading community as traditionally they are all businessmen from present Tibet (after the Chinese occupation there). In the town they have hotels, cloth shops and shoe shops. Economically they are considered as a high income group. The small Kashmiri Muslims are all in the business of curio and handicrafts. Actually, they are the sellers of precious ancient items and handicrafts of Tibet and Kashmir. They are economically well off and considered as high income group. However, it can thus be said that the occupational diversification of the Muslims of Darjeeling town is the only reason of social assimilation in broader sense.