

CHAPTER 4

OUR NAXALBARI STUDY

- **INTRODUCTION**
- **DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY**
- **DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN OF TOTARAMJOTE VILLAGE**
- **DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN OF SOUTH RATHKHOLA VILLAGE**
- **STATE OF EDUCATION IN DARJEELING DISTRICT AND WEST BENGAL IN 2001**
- **EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF TOTARAMJOTE VILLAGE**
- **COMPARING ECONOMIC STATUS OF TWO VILLAGES**
- **SOCIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES**
- **SUMMING UP**

CHAPTER-4

OUR NAXALBARI STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Naxalbari is a block in the region of Northern part of the State of West Bengal. Naxalbari is under the jurisdiction of Darjeeling District with its sub-divisional headquarters at Sillguri. The district has headquarters at Darjeeling Hill Town which is approximately 7000 feet high above the sea level.

Table 4.1 shows that the district shelters a population of 16, 09,172 and the volume of the area is 3149 km² with an average density of 511 persons per km² and it has sex ratio (females per 1000 males) of 937. According to 2001 Census, 67.66 percent of the population lives in rural areas while 32.34 percent live in urban or semi-urban settings. Decadal growth rate during 1991-2001 stands at 23.79 percent. Muslim population in the district are around 85,378 out of the total population of 16,09,172 i.e. Muslims constitute 5.31 percent of the district's population. Literacy rate of Darjeeling District is 71.79 percent and the reported literacy rate in rural areas is 66 percent of which 76.12 percent are males and 55.39 percent are females.

Table 4.1: Demography and socio-economic profile of Darjeeling District

Category		1991	2001
1. Demography			
a) Population	Total	1299919	1609172
	Male	679323	830644
	Female	620596	778528
b) District's share of the state population[%]		1.91	2.01
c) Urban population [%]		30.47	32.34
d) Rural population [%]		69.53	67.66
e) % Share of religious communities :			

Hindus		77.95	76.92
Muslims		4.55	5.31
Buddhists		11.95	11.02
Christians		5.05	6.17
Jains		0.06	0.07
Sikhs		0.10	0.14
Others		0.35	0.39
f) % Share of Scheduled Caste (SC)		16.15	16.09
g) % Share of Scheduled Tribe (ST)		13.78	12.69
h) % Share of children (0 - 6)		15.49	12.72
i) Sex- ratio :	All	914	937
	SCs	917	949
	STs	952	996
	Children	976	962
j) Population density (per sq. km.)		413	511
k) Decadal growth rate (%)		26.91	23.79
2. Literacy (%)		57.95	71.79
(i) All	Total	57.95	71.79
	Male	67.07	80.05
	Female	47.84	62.94
(ii) Gender Gap.		19.23	17.11
(iii) Rural (Male 76.12%, Female 55.39 % in 2001)		49.17	66.00
(iv) Urban		76.82	83.34
b.(i) Hindus :	All	-	72.55
	Male	-	80.78
	Female	-	63.67

(ii) Gender Gap.		-	17.11
(iii) SC	Total	46.30	62.43
	Male	58.14	73.91
	Female	33.25	50.31
(iv) Gender Gap.		24.89	23.60
(v) ST	Total	39.38	55.48
	Male	47.54	65.07
	Female	30.77	45.85
(vi) Gender Gap.		16.77	19.22
c.(i) Muslims:	All	-	50.38
	Male	-	60.86
	Female	-	37.92
(ii) Gender Gap.		-	22.94
(iii) Rural (Males 56.6%, Females 30.9%)		-	44.46
(iv) Urban		-	62.98
3. Health - Life expectancy	Male	-	67
	Female	-	71
4. Employment		-	
(i) Work Participation Rate (WPR) Rural :	Male	-	47.9
	Female	-	25.7
(ii) Urban	Male	-	49.7
	Female	-	12.2
(iii) Per Capita Income (2003- 04) at current prices (in Rs.)		-	23967
(iv) % of BPL families (P & RD, 2002)		-	46.43

Sources: Census Reports, B.A.E & S, Econ. Review (West Bengal)

Literacy among the Muslims in 2001 is 50.38 percent of the Muslim population in the district in which male literacy rate stands at 60.86 percent and females at 37.92 percent. Literacy among the rural Muslims in the district is 44.46 percent of which males are 56.6 percent and the females are 30.9 percent

Work participation rate of rural males in the district is 47.9 percent and the females are 25.7 percent in 2001.

Naxalbari, a block in Darjeeling District, is located at 26° 49' North, 26° 38' South, 88° 22' East and 88° 10' West has an average elevation of 501 feet at a distance of around 28 km from the sub-divisional headquarters at Siliguri, around 20 km from Bagdogra Airport and approximately 580 km from Kolkata towards the North. The stretch of land, where Naxalbari is situated, lies on the Terai region at the base of the Himalayas. The entire stretch of the land surrounding Naxalbari is covered by farmlands, tea estates, forests and small villages. It consists of a geographical area of 182.46 km². Naxalbari is bounded by Mirik Block on the North, Khoribari and Phansidewa Block on the south, Matigara Block on the East and across the border-river Mechi lies Nepal on the West.

It has several important rivers like Mechi, Manjha, Chel, Bataria, Hulía, Buri Balason, Khemchi etc. The communities live in this block are Bengali, Rajbanshi, Tribals, Mech, Kol, Dhimal, Nepalis etc.

Naxalbari Block is formed with rural and urban agglomeration. It has two national highways (31 & 31C) and is connected with railway with Naxalbari Station.

Paddy, wheat, jute, maize etc. are the main crops and potato, tomato, cabbage, cauliflower, zinger etc. are the principal vegetables produced in these areas. Other bases of economy of Naxalbari are rice husking mill, tea factory, trunk factory, and hosiery factory etc.

Naxalbari is famous for being the site of revolutionary peasant uprising, which began with the "Land to tiller" slogan and inspired similar revolts in other parts of India, popularly known as 'Naxalite Movement'.

It was almost 42 years ago in May 1967 that a minor clash between a police force and a group of armed peasants took place in an obscure corner

of West Bengal which is popularly known as 'Naxalbari Movement' – the germination of a new political situation in West Bengal. Naxalite Movement derives its name from Naxalbari. The movement which began as a violent peasant resistance to landlords at Naxalbari Village in May 1967 on the basis of the 'land to the tiller' slogan under the leadership of Charu Majumdar, Kanu Sanyal and Jangal Santhal had acquired a larger appeal in about two months on account of the open support it evidences from sections of the state units of the CPI (M) in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. These units had a formal meeting in November 1967, though the uprising itself had been crushed by August.

In May 1968, All India Coordination Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR) was formed. One of the first decisions of the body was to adhere steadfastly to armed struggle and not to participate in election. The AICCCR went ahead with the formation of the Communist Party of India (Marxist- Leninist) in May 1969. The CPI (ML) had its first congress in 1970 in Calcutta (Kolkata) and Charu Majumdar was formally elected its general secretary. CPI (ML) continued with respective forms of armed struggle for the next two years. In the process, Charu Majumdar acquired a kind of cult status among Naxalites. The negative aspect of the development of this personality cult revealed itself shortly when Charu Majumdar was arrested in Calcutta on July 16, 1972. His death, less than a fortnight later, in the lock-up virtually led to the collapse of central authority in the CPI (ML).

Table 4.2 depicts that the block has a population of 144915 in 2001 having males 75831 (52.3 percent) and the females being 69084 (47.6 percent). Decadal growth of Naxalbari was found at 22.65 percent during 1981-1991 and had a tremendous growth during 1991-2001 at 54.6 percent. The Population pattern of this block is Hindus 87.25 percent; Muslims 5.5 percent and other Minorities are 7.24 percent. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population have been reported as 19,006 and 27,076 with decadal growths of 41.3 percent and 30 percent respectively during 1991-2001. Decadal growth of ST at 1.7 percent during 1981-1991 has made a

large growth and increased to 30 percent during 1991-2001 which shows a rise of 28.3 percentage points.

Table 4.2: Demographic pattern of Naxabari Block

Year of Census	Population			SC population			ST population			Literacy (%)			Density of population (Per sq. km)	Sex ratio
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	All	Male	Female		
1981	76419	41035	35384	18486	9787	8699	20473	10682	9791	30.42	39.9	19.42	418	862
1991	93731 (22.7%)	49163	44568	26073 (41%)	13806	12267	20818 (1.7%)	11616	9202	46.59	57.52	34.27	516	907
2001	144915 (54.6%)	75831	69084	36851 (41.3%)	19006	17845	27076 (30%)	13575	13501	67.86	78.35	56.28	798	911

Source: Census reports of India- 1981, 1991 and 2001

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate decadal growth

The block has 69 primary schools, 6 secondary schools, 5 higher secondary schools, 2 central schools, 1 army school, 59 sishu shiksha kendras, 2 madhyamik shiksha kendras and 2 degree colleges. At a distance of around 15 kilometers, there is a state university.

Health facilities are available in this area as 01 rural hospital, 01 primary health centre, 15 sub-centers and 16 health centers at tea gardens. Water sources of this block are ring wells, tube wells and river water.

There was no significant study on the socio-economic status of the inhabitants of Naxalbari. This study is a modest attempt to acquire knowledge about the socio-economic plight of the Muslims and Hindus of the two villages in this block.

Totaramjote, the entire Muslim living village and South Rathkhola, around 99 percent Hindu living village under Naxalbari Gram Panchayat in Naxalbari Block of Darjeeling District have been taken for our survey. Totaramjote is nearer to Naxalbari Bazar and South Rathkhola is around 3 km from Naxalbari Bazar towards the South.

The basic objective of this study is to analyze the socio-economic profile of the people of these two villages for making an assessment and to give suggestion on the improvement of their socio-economic conditions.

The economic bases of this region are tea estates and factories, cultivation, rice husking mill, petty trades and household jobs. The people of these villages under study are used to speak in Bengali, Rajbangshi, Nepali and different Adibashi languages.

4.2 DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

Primary data have been collected through questionnaires at the household level based on complete enumeration of the villages under survey. Questionnaires have been prepared to collect the information through interviews with the inhabitants for making an assessment and give fruitful suggestions for their socio-economic improvement. The inhabitants of these areas are divided into four categories based on their income ranges.

The classifications have been made for generating information in order to draw meaningful conclusion. Secondary data have been collected from the Census Reports, National Sample Survey Organization, Human Resource Planning Dept., and Reports from concerned Block Development Office, Panchayat Office and Siliguri—Jalpaiguri Development Authority.

For having knowledge about the socio-economic condition of the inhabitants, per capita income is one of the important variables associated with many more variables which have been analyzed with a view to determine the socio-economic status of the inhabitants of two villages and the results of the correlation have been divided as positively correlated and negatively correlated.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN OF TWO VILLAGES

4.3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN OF TOTARAMJOTE VILLAGE

Entire Totaramjote Village is represented by Muslim population. Table 4.3 shows 110 families having total population of 613 of which males 312 are males and 301 are females. The population of Totaramjote Village represents 0.42 percent of the block's population and 7.68 percent of the

Muslim population in the block. Sex ratio (females to 1000 males) in the village is very encouraging at 965 compared to the block sex-ratio at 911, district sex-ratio at 937 and the state sex-ratio of 934.

Table 4.3: Population of two villages under survey in Naxalbari Block in 2007

Village	No. of family					Population			Sex ratio
	Total	General	SC	ST	OBC	Total	Male	Female	Females to 1000 males
Totaramjote (Entirely Muslims)	110	110 (100 %)	-	-	-	613	312 (50.9%)	301 (49.1%)	965
South Rathkhola (99% Hindus)	119	78 (65.5%)	26 (21.8%)	13 (10.9%)	2 (1.7%)	514	276 (53.7%)	238 (46.3%)	862

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate %age to total

The people of this village were occupationally segmented into two groups, one group belongs to 'Abdal' (cultivators) and another group has their identity as 'Kasai' (Butcher). Kasai group, Momin/Ansari (Weaver) sect and Paharia Muslim are included in the list of 'Other Backward Categories' (OBCs) in West Bengal.

Table 4.4 shows, 10 families were originally of Kasai sect., 1 family belonged to Ansari/Momin group and 1 as Paharia Muslim. All these 12 families are eligible for getting the benefits of OBC but not a single family is found as such (Table 4.3). It is also evident that the inhabitants of Totaramjote have made a major shift from their original occupations. Ninety two families were engaged in agricultural activities but presently 13 families only are engaged in their traditional occupations.

Table 4.4: Distribution of inhabitants by occupation of Totaramjote and South Rathkhoa village

Village	Total families	Present occupation	No. of families
Totaramjote	110	Cultivator	13 (92)
		Butcher (Kasai)	8 (10)
		Petty trade	51(-)
		Agricultural labour	13 (5)
		Van-Rickshaw puller	12 (-)
		Mason	5 (-)
		Tailor	5 (1)
		Service (home guard – 1, Govt. service – C group – 2)	3 (-)
		Ansari/Momin (Weaver)	- (1)
		Paharia Muslim	- (1)
South Rathkhola	119	Adibasi such as Santhal, Oraon, Majhi, Tirkey, Kujur (original occupations were cultivation, procuring food products from forests.	- (10)
		Business (Petty)	71 (15)
		Workers (masons, carpenters, drivers, day wage workers etc.)	24 (-)
		Service (school teacher)	14 (-)
		Cultivation	10 (94)

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate the number of families with traditional occupations

4.3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERN OF SOUTH RATHKHOLA VILLAGE

Another village, South Rathkhola in Naxalbari Block, has been studied. Around 99 percent inhabitants of this village have Hindu identity. A high degree of differentiation on linguistic and religious lines is noticed in the village.

The village has 119 families of which 65.5 percent are in general category, 21.8 percent belong to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes

(STs) are forming with 10.9 percent and OBC population is of 1.7 percent. Total population of the village is 514 of which 276 are males and 236 are females. The population share is 0.35 percent of block's population. Sex ratio of this village is very disproportionately low and it stands at 862 compared to 937 of the district rural sex ratio and 934 of the state sex ratio. Sex ratio of this village (862) is much lower than even Totaramjote Village (965) in the same area under Naxalbari Block.

4.4 EDUCATIONAL STATUS

4.4.1 STATE OF EDUCATION IN DARJEELING DISTRICT AND WEST BENGAL IN 2001

The share of Muslims in Darjeeling District is small at 5.31 percent of the total population of 16,09,172. According to the 2001 Census, literacy rate of the district is 71.79 percent of which males' share is 80.05 percent and the females are 62.64 percent compared with the state literacy of 68.64 percent, 77.02 percent and 59.61 percent respectively. Though the literacy status of Darjeeling District is fairly good in the state but the educational status of the Muslims in the district shows a gloomy picture. Literacy amongst the Muslims in the district is 50.38 percent of which males have a share of 60.86 percent and the females' share being 37.92 percent. Muslims in the district are lagging behind all SRCs by (71.79 percent - 50.38 percent) 21.41 percentage points, males are falling behind the males of all SRCs by (80.05 percent-60.86 percent) 19.19 percentage points, and percentage lag of female Muslims against females for all SRCs stands at (62.64 percent-37.92 percent) 24.72 points. The above data substantiate the deplorable condition of the state of Muslim education in the district (source: Census of India- 2001).

4.4.2 EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF TOTARAMJOTE VILLAGE

It is evident from Table 4.5 that the literacy among Muslims in Totaramjote Village stands at 59.4 percent in 2007. Literacy among the male Muslims is 63.4 percent and the female Muslims are 55.2 percent. According to Census-2001, 6 years before our survey in 2007, literacy among all SRCs of the district was 71.79 percent compared with the education among Muslims in the village is 59.4 in 2007 which is lowered by (71.79 percent-

59.4 percent) 12.39 percentage points and the male literacy in the village is lower than the district male literacy (80.05 percent-63.4 percent) 16.65 percentage points and females are less by (62.94 percent-55.2 percent) 7.74 percentage points.

Table 4.5: Educational status of the inhabitants of two villages in Naxalbari Block in 2007

Village	Totaramjote (100 % Muslims)			South Rathkhola (95 % Hindus)		
Category/ Gender	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1.Total population	312	301	613	276	238	514
2.Educational status						
a) Income up to Rs.2000 (No):						
Population (6+age groups)	155	140	295	36	35	71
Up to class VIII	83(53.5)	60(42.9)	143(48.5)	25(69.4)	20(57.1)	45 (63.4)
Class IX – XII	8 (5.2)	4 (2.9)	12 (4.1)	3 (8.3)	2 (5.7)	5 (7)
Graduates	*2 (1.2) (*1PG)	0 (0)	2 (0.7)	0 (0)	1 (2.9)	1 (1.4)
%age within group	60	45.7	53.2	77.8	65.7	71.8
b) Income within Rs.2001-3000(No):						
Population (6+age groups)	67	66	133	76	70	146
Up to class VIII	37(55.2)	34(51.5)	71 (53.4)	40(52.6)	40(57.1)	80 (54.8)
Class IX – XII	7(10.4)	7 (10.6)	14 (10.5)	24(31.6)	12(17.1)	36 (24.7)
Graduates	-	-	-	1 (1.3)	2 (5)	3 (2)
%age within group	65.7	62.1	63.9	85.5	77.1	81.5
c) Income within Rs.3001-4000 (No):						
Population (6+age groups)	25	37	62	73	57	130

Up to class VIII	16 (64)	18(48.6)	34 (54.8)	35 (48)	25(43.9)	60 (46.2)
Class IX – XII	1 (4)	6 (16.2)	7 (11.3)	26(35.6)	12 (21)	38 (29.2)
Graduates	2 (8)	*2 (5.4) *(1 PG)	4 (6.5)	6 (8.2)	1 (1.8)	7 (5.4)
%age within group	76	70.3	72.6	91.8	66.7	80.8
d) Income of Rs.4000 above (No):						
Population (6+age groups)	28	27	55	71	57	128
Up to class VIII	15(53.6)	7 (25.9)	22 (40)	29(40.8)	21(36.8)	50 (39.1)
Class IX – XII	5 (17.9)	7 (25.9)	12 (21.8)	26(36.6)	11(19.3)	37 (28.9)
Graduates	1 (3.6)	*4(14.8) *(1 PG)	5 (9.1)	7 (9.9)	4 (7)	11 (8.6)
%age within group	75	66.7	70.9	87.3	63.2	76.6
3. Overall Education (No):						
Population (6+age groups)	275	270	545	256	219	475
Up to class VIII	151(54.9)	119(44.1)	270(49.5)	129(50.4)	106(48.4)	235(49.5)
Class IX – XII	21 (7.64)	24 (8.9)	45 (8.3)	79 (30.9)	37 (16.9)	116(24.4)
Graduates	5* (1.8) *(PG- 1)	6* (2.2) *(PG-2)	11 (2.0)	14 (5.5)	8 (3.7)	22 (4.6)
Percentage of overall literacy	63.4	55.2	59.4	86.7	69	78.5

Source: Field Survey,2007

Note : Figures in parentheses indicate %ages of literacy (6+age group)

It appears from Table 4.5 that a positive correlation exists between the degree of incomes and the state of education of the inhabitants of both the villages (except income group Rs.4000 above).The inhabitants under income group up to Rs.2000 has literacy rate of 53.2 percent of which literacy of males is 60 percent and female represents 45.7 percent, a gap of 14.3 percentage points. Income group of Rs.2001-3000 shows a higher literacy rate of 63.9 percent which is more by (63.9 percent-53.2 percent) 10.7 percentage points, and the males and the females literacy stand at 65.7 percent and 62.1 percent respectively which are higher than the preceding income group up to Rs.2,000 by 5.7 percentage points and 16.4 percentage points respectively i.e. a great achievement is made towards the education of females. The literacy rates of income group Rs.3001-4000 are found for overall Muslims at 72.6 percent, for men at 76 percent and for women at 70.3 percent comparing with 63.9 percent, 65.7 percent and 62.1 percent under income group of Rs.2001-3000 respectively. Thus, increasing rates for income group Rs.3001-4000 are more than the preceding income group of Rs.2001-3000 by (72.6 percent-63.9 percent) 8.7 percentage points for overall Muslims, for male Muslims by (76 percent-65.7 percent) 10.3 percentage points and for female Muslims by (70.3 percent-62.1 percent) 8.2 percentage points. Therefore, educational progress is on with the increase in income and is comparatively better for males than females in the income group of Rs.3001-4000.

Table 4.5 depicts the literacy for income group Rs.4000 above has marginally decreased. It has seen that literacy rates up to class VIII have 54.1 for males and 44.1 percent for females with an over all of 49.5 percent compared to 8.3 percent for class IX – XII of which males at 7.64 percent and females at 8.9 percent. Graduates attainment rate (GAR) is found at 2 percent with males GAR at 1.8 percent and females at 2.2 percent. It is very encouraging to note that out of six female graduates, two female graduates have achieved post-graduate degree and out of five males, one male graduate has completed post-graduate course.

Thus, the poor performance of Muslims in the field of education is one of the basic causes for their economic plight in the region.

Drop-out rate of school going children in Totaramjote Village is very high. It appears from table 4.5 that 49.5 percent of the schools going children up to class VIII have been registered while only 8.3 percent have been continued for class IX – XII. Therefore, the rate of drop-out is very high as (49.5 percent - 8.3 percent) 41.2 percentage points and a meager of 2 percent only has registered for under-graduate and post-graduate courses. We have surprisingly taken a note that males' drop out is more than females. Drop out for males from up to class VIII to class IX – XII is (54.9 percent - 7.64 percent) 47.26 percentage points while for females, the rate is (44.1 percent - 8.9 percent) 35.2 percentage points. For doing under-graduate (UG) and post graduate (PG) courses, the females are ahead of males.

4.4.3 EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF SOUTH RATHKHOLA VILLAGE

Table 4.5 reveals the state of education amongst other religious communities, predominantly of Hindus in South Rathkhola Village. The literacy among the populace of this village is fairly good at 78.5 percent, which is more than Totaramjote Village (entirely Muslims occupied village) in the same block by (78.5 percent - 59.4 percent) 19.1 percentage points. Literacy rate of this village (78.5 percent) is even more than the district's literacy rate of 71.79 percent. Literacy of both the male and female Muslims of Totaramjote are significantly lower than literacy among the inhabitants of South Rathkhola.

The populace of Totaramjote is educationally backward and lagging behind the populace of South Rathkhola by (86.7 percent - 63.4 percent) 23.3 percentage points for males and by (69 percent - 55.2 percent) 13.8 percentage points for females.

We find the positive correlation similar to Totaramjote Village between the earning capacity and the achievement rate of education of the inhabitants of South Rathkhola up to the income range of Rs.3001 – 4000. Moreover, we have surprisingly noted that the education among the populace of South Rathkhola has been decreased akin to Totaramjote in the income group of Rs.4000 above.

Table 4.5 shows that the literacy among the males has been consistently increased up to the income range of Rs.3001 – 4000. The literacy amongst the females has a tremendous growth from income group up to Rs.2000 to income group Rs.2001 – 3000 by (77.1 percent - 65.7 percent) 11.4 percentage points but we find a decreasing trend for the income group Rs.3001 – 4000 and onward.

It depicts comparatively a better picture for drop out of school going children. Drop out rates from up to class VIII to class IX – XII are (49.5 percent - 24.4 percent) 25.1 percentage points as against Muslims in Totaramjote of 41.2 percentage points. Drop out for male and female school going children of South Rathkhola Village for the above stated classes stands at (50.4 – 30.9) 19.5 percentage points and (48.4 percent–16.9 percent) 31.5 percentage points respectively as against 47.26 percentage points and 35.2 percentage points respectively at Totaramjote Village. It exhibits that the people of Totaramjote are immensely lagging behind the populace of South Rathkhola Village in relation to drop out of school going children.

Graduate Attainment Rates (GAR) of South Rathkhola are far higher at 4.6 percent for all, of which males are at 5.5 percent and females are at 3.7 percent comparing with the inhabitants of Totaramjote at 1.8 percent, 2.2 percent and 2 percent respectively. None of inhabitant in two villages have undergone technical, professional or vocational courses.

We further observed that the Muslims of Totaramjote are falling behind on educational front not only from national or district level but also lagging behind the Hindus of the nearby South Rathkhola Village in the same block.

4.5 COMPARING ECONOMIC STATUS OF TWO VILLAGES

Table 4.4 exhibits that Totaramjote Village has been formed with 110 families of all Muslims who were classified by their traditional occupation with cultivation of 92 (83.6 percent) families, Kasai (butcher) of 10 (9.1 percent) families, agricultural workers of 5 (4.5 percent) families and tailor, Ansari/Momin (weaver), Paharia Muslim of 1 family each.

Majority of the families in Totaramjote have shifted their traditional occupations. Presently 51 families (46.4 percent) of 110 families have been engaged in petty trade. Most of them are in unconventional trade like commission agent and carrier of foreign goods, 13 families (11.82 percent) are working as agricultural workers, 12 families (10.9 percent) are earning from pulling rickshaw van, 8 families (7.3 percent) are working as Kasai, only 13 families of 92 families are associated with their traditional occupation as cultivator, 3 people (2.72 percent) are engaged in government/semi-government jobs and few families are engaged as mason, in tailoring works etc.

The inhabitants have changed their inherited occupations because they failed to procure means from such occupations. Cultivation of land does not give much profit as the cultivable land is converted into small pieces due to distribution amongst coparceners. 8 families out of 10 Kasai families are still somewhat able to stick to their traditional occupation.

It is observed that South Rathkhola Village has 119 families of which around 99 percent are Hindus. The distribution of their present and traditional occupations is represented in table 4.4. The inhabitants of this village are also compelled to shift their traditional occupations to some other occupations for similar causes like the populace of Totaramjote Village. Now-a-days only 10 families among 94 families are cultivating land, 71 families are engaged in petty trade, the inhabitants belong to Adibasi class are working as day wage workers, 24 families are engaged as workers (like mason, carpenters, drivers & helpers, day wage workers etc.)

In fact, most of 71 families engaged in petty trade are working as carriers of unauthorized goods either on wage basis or on commission basis. We have observed that 14 persons in South Rathkhola have been engaged in teaching profession in different government aided schools.

It is evident from table 4.6 that mean per capita income (MPCE) of Muslims in Totaramjote stands at Rs.435 per month and the MPCE of Hindus in South Rathkhola appears at Rs.759 per month. The MPCE of Muslims in Totaramjote (Rs.435) is significantly lower than the MPCE of all SRCs of the state of Rs.576 and even lower than the Muslim's MPCE

(Rs.501) of the state. There is a great variation of MPCEs of the two villages. The mean per capita income of Muslims in Totaramjote is extremely lower than the Hindus of South Rathkhola by (Rs.759 – Rs.435) Rs.324 (i.e. lower by almost 75 percent). The low MPCE of the population of Totaramjote is due to the fact of cumulative effect of two variables – low income per family (p.m.) Rs.2,436 against Rs.3,265 of South Rathkhola and large household size of 5.6 against 4.3 of South Rathkhola.

Table 4.6: Average household size and income distribution of inhabitants of Totaramjote and South Rathkhola Village

Category	Totaramjote	South Rathkhola
1. No. of families	110	119
2. No. of members	613	514
3. Average household size	5.6	4.3
4. Income per family (p.m. /Rs.)	2,436	3,265
5. Mean Capita Income/Expenditure (MPCE) (p.m. /Rs.)	435	759

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Note: $MPCE = \frac{\sum (\text{Average income of each group} \times \text{No. of families in each group})}{\text{Total families} \times \sum \text{Average family size}}$.

This study reveals that the inhabitants of Totaramjote have per capita income (p.m.) Rs.409 with an average household size of 4.89 under the income group up to Rs.2000 while the per capital income is becoming Rs.389 for household size of 6.42 under the income group of Rs.2001 – 3000. Thus, the income per family is high for higher income group but low per capita income is registered because of the fact of large household size for high-income group.

Thereafter, we find a positive correlation of per capital income with household size. The income pattern of South Rathkhola also behaves in the similar manner. It depicts that more members of large sized families contribute to their family incomes.

Our study further reveals that each inhabitant of 102 families (92.7 percent) out of 110 families of Totaramjote cannot even earn Rs.15 a day.

The inhabitants of South Rathkhoa are in better position in this regard. Around 85 percent of the inhabitants of South Rathkhola can earn at least more than Rs.20 a day on average.

Table 4.7 presents that entire 110 families in Totaramjote Village are under general categories. 10 Kasai families, 1 Ansari family and 1 Paharia Muslim family (i.e. 12 families in total) are included in the state list for OBC (Table 4.4). 12 families (10.9 percent) out of 110 families in Totaramjote are included in the OBC list but none is receiving certificate to this effect because these families are also lacking proofs for receiving OBC certificate like title deed of land mentioning their specific segmentation. Therefore, some alternative ways for proving their segmentation must evolve out so that the poor people at least can avail the benefits of affirmative action. The inhabitants of South Rathkhola are in better position in this regard. Entire 26 families under SC categories and 13 families entirely under ST categories have received caste certificates and are enjoying the benefits of affirmative action.

Table 4.7: Caste classification, holding below the poverty line (BPL) cards and awareness about Government aids of the inhabitants of Totaramjote and South Rathkhola village.

Category	Totaramjote		South Rathkhola	
	No. of families	% to total families	No. of families	% to total families
1. Total families	110	100	119	100
2. Religion	Islam		Hindus	99
3. Socio-Religious Categories :				
General	110	100	78	66
SCs	-	-	26	22
STs	-	-	13	11
OBCs	-	-	2	1.7
4. BPL Card holding families	72	65	40	34
5. Awareness about Govt. Aids (%)	76	69	94	79

Source: Field Survey, 2007

Around 101 families of Totaramjote live below the poverty line. But 72 families of the 101 families (71 percent of BPL families & 65 percent of the total families) have received BPL cards. Forty families (34 percent) of 119 families in South Rathkhola Village are the holder of BPL cards. Regarding awareness about the Government aids, 79 percent of the inhabitants of South Rathkhola have the awareness against 69 percent of the people of Totaramjote. Thus, 31 percent of the inhabitants of Totaramjote do not have any idea about the different schemes for governmental aids. Hence the populace of Totaramjote is more deprived than the inhabitants of South Rathkhola by (31 percent - 21 percent) 10 percentage points.

Table 4.8 presents the quantum and classification of land holding by the inhabitants of Totaramjote Village with vested land of 0.75 acre, leasehold land being 1 acre and owned land of 46.3 acres shared by 25 families with an average holding of 1.85 acres. Vested lands have been distributed to the 3 poor families for constructing residential houses and for producing vegetables. Owned land and leasehold land are being cultivated for producing crops like paddy, wheat, maize etc., vegetables like potato, tomato, cabbage, cauliflower etc. and legume (mustard).

Table 4.8: Distribution of land and status of loan taken by the inhabitants of Totaramjote and South Rathkhola

Category	Totaramjote	South Rathkhola
(a) No. of Families	110	119
(b) Land holdings (in acre):		
(i) Patta		1.85
(ii) Vested	0.75	3.7
(iii) Lease—in land	1	2.67
(iv) Owned	46.3	17.3
Total land in operation	48.05	25.52
Average operational land(acre)	0.44	0.21

(c) Loan taken :		
(i) Private sources :		
No. of families	23	4
Amount of loan (Rs)	1,36,200	19000
Average loan amount per family (Rs)	5,922	4,750
(ii) From Government sources :		
No. of families	7	5
Amount of loan (Rs)	20,57,000	1,54,000
Average loan per family (Rs)	2,93,857	30,800

Source: Field Survey, 2007

The inhabitants of South Rathkhola Village have 1.85 acres of patta land, 3.7 acres of vested land and 2.67 acres of lease-in land with 17.3 acres of owned land. 1.85 acres of land have been given as patta (possession) to 14 families (average of 0.13 acre per family), 3.7 acres of vested land have been distributed to 45 families (an average of 0.08 acre) by the State Government and 11 families have ownership land of 17.3 acres. Patta and vested land have been used for the purpose of constructing houses and cultivation for growing crops and vegetables of the similar types to Totaramjote. Owned land have been used for growing crops, vegetables and legume alike Totaramjote. Distribution of patta land and vested land (acquired by the state government) to the poor families of South Rathkhola is very encouraging and is far better than the inhabitants of Totaramjote.

Our study depicts the nature and the amount of loan taken by the people of two villages. Loans have been arranged from two sources – private sources and government sources. 'Bandhan Bank', a Kolkata based NGO, is only the private source and government sources consist of Gramin Bank, Scheduled Banks and District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). Bandhan Bank provides loan for cultivation and petty trade. Loans have been taken by the inhabitants of Totaramjote Village from government

sources as seed capital and for working capital for business (particularly for buying cattle and for constructing cattle houses), for agricultural purposes and for the purpose of construction of residential houses.

The loan of Rs.1,36,200 has been taken by 23 families of Totaramjote from private sources (an average of Rs.5,922 per family) for the purpose of cultivation and for petty trade. Loan of Rs.20,57,000 have been taken by the inhabitants of this village by 7 families at an average of Rs.293,857 from the government sources for the purpose of cattle business of buying cattle, for the construction of khatahs (cattle house), for cultivation and for the construction of pucca residential houses. Loan for such a large sum has been taken by seven well off families.

The 4 families of South Rathkhola have taken loan of Rs.19,000 (Rs.4,750 per family) from private source (Bandhan Bank) for petty trades and Rs.1,54,000 have been taken from Government sources (scheduled banks) by 5 families at an average of Rs.30,800 per family for businesses like grocery shop, for buying auto rickshaw, for transport business etc.

We have observed that the benefits under Antodaya Scheme and the benefits for BPL cardholders are negligible to the poor people of these two villages. Microscopic number of families was allotted job cards till 2007 under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), but they have not been provided any job under the scheme.

4.6 SOCIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES

It appears in table 4.9 that almost 12 villages within 7 km. of the studied two villages have population at around 7,500. The 12 villages including two villages under survey have been provided with 8 primary schools and 4 shishu shiksha kendras. As per our empirical studies, 75 percent of the inhabitants of 7,500 (i.e. 5,625) are within 6 + age group eligible for formal education and half of them (i.e. approx. 2,800) are eligible for enrolment at primary level education.

Therefore, prospective seekers per school for enrolment in elementary level come to around 230. Twelve schools (8+4) are not sufficient to cater even the elementary education to the children of these

areas. In fact, no school for providing primary education is available in these two villages under survey.

Table 4.9: Social and infrastructural facilities available to the inhabitants of Totaramjote and South Rathkhola

a) No. of village (within 7 km.)	12
b) Inhabitants (approx.)	7500
c) No. of primary school (within 4 km.)	8
d) Shishu shiksha kendra (within 4 km.)	4
e) No. of high school (secondary) (within 7 km.)	3 (including one Hindi and one Nepali school)
f) No. of higher secondary school, 10+2 (within 7km.)	2 (one for girls)
g) No. of degree college (within 15 km.)	2 (co-education)
h) No. of university (within 15 km.)	Nil
i) No. primary health centre (within 7 km.)	Nil
j) No. of primary health sub-centre (within 4 km.)	1
k) No. of rural hospital (within 10 km.)	1 (within 3 km.)

Source: Field Survey, 2007

The table shows that 3 high schools including one each for Hindi and Nepali, and the other for Bengali medium students are available within 7 km. for the children of 12 villages. 2 higher secondary schools (one for girls) and 2 co-educational degree colleges and 1 university are available in this region.

Our study shows that the situation is fair in health care front. One primary health sub-centre within 4 km. and one rural hospital are available for the care of 7,500 people. In addition, they can also avail one sub-divisional hospital and a medical college & hospital at a distance of around 25 km. Trained Medicare Personnel are available to a short distant place for ante natal care (ANC) of the pregnant ladies and for vaccination of children.

The inhabitants of Totaramjote Village have been provided with some pucca (concrete) and somewhat kutcha approach roads but South Rathkhola is connected by pucca approach roads. Road transport is the principal

means of movement of the people and substantial number of buses originates and terminates in the core area. One bus terminal without modern amenities is found in the area. The inhabitants of this area depend on ring-wells, tube-wells and river for water. The sources are not hygienic for using drinking water. Both the villages have electric connections.

4.7 SUMMING UP

Muslims in Naxalbari constitute 5.51 percent of block's total population of 1,44,915 in 2001. We have studied two villages namely Totaramjote (Muslim concentrated) and South Rathkhola (95 percent Hindus) having population of 613 and 514 respectively in 2007. Sex ratios (1000 males to females) of the two villages are 965 and 862 respectively compared to the district ratio of 937.

Literacy among the populace of Totaramjote stands at 59.4 percent in 2007 of which males' representation is 63.4 percent and the females are 55.2 percent and literacy rate of the inhabitants of South Rathkhola is fairly good at 78.5 percent of which males' share is 86.7 percent and females being 69 percent. The Muslims in Totaramjote are significantly lagging behind the Hindus of South Rathkhola on the educational front.

The Mean Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) per month of the population of Totaramjote (Rs.435) is far lower than South Rathkhola and is less by (Rs.759 – Rs.435) Rs.324. Household size of Totaramjote and South Rathkhola is 5.6 and 4.3 respectively. Household size and per capita expenditure have negative correlation up to the income group of Rs.2001 – 3000 but a positive correlation is found from income range of Rs.3001 and above.

Majority of the people of both the villages have engaged themselves in petty trades and some are engaged in cultivation. The inhabitants of South Rathkhola are far better than Totaramjote regarding engagement in government or semi-government service.

Seventy two families (65 percent of total families) out of 110 families are holding BPL cards in Totaramjote against 40 families of 119 families have got BPL cards in South Rathkhola. 69 percent of total families in

Totaramjote have some knowledge about different governmental aid schemes compared to 79 percent of total families in South Rathkhola. Large proportion of families might have heard about the government schemes but they do not have fair knowledge about the process of getting such benefits. Neither the government machineries nor NGOs are active to assist them in order to get such facilities.

Social and infrastructural facilities have not been adequately provided to the people of these villages. There are 12 (8+4) primary schools within 4 km of two villages for the prospective learners of elementary education of around 2,800 (7500 x 37.5 percent). Three secondary and 2 higher secondary schools (one for girls) are there for the studies of around 2100 students (2800 less estimated drop out at 25 percent) within 7 km at a high average enrolment rate of 420 per school. The schools are not in a position to register all the students because of shortage of infrastructural facilities.

Two degree colleges have been established within 15 km (one within 3 km) and a university is set up in 1962 within a distance at around 15 km. Our study reveals an encouraging representation in health care front. One rural hospital is within 3 km., one primary health sub-centre is within 4 km and one sub-divisional hospital and a medical college & hospital are available at a distance of 25 km. Medicare unit is used to visit once a week for ANC to pregnant ladies and vaccination for children.