

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE
IN MAL SUBDIVISION OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT,
WEST BENGAL: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS**

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in
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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled "SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MAL SUBDIVISION OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS" has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Ranjan Roy, Professor, Department of Geography & Applied Geography, University of North Bengal. No part of this thesis has formed the basis of award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Sri Bipul Chandra Sarkar has prepared the thesis entitled “SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MAL SUBDIVISION OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS” for the award of Ph. D degree in Geography & Applied Geography of University of North Bengal, under my supervision. He has carried out his research work at the Department of Geography & Applied Geography, University of North Bengal and the thesis has been prepared based on the extensive field study and secondary sources of information.



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ABSTRACT

The term 'Tribe' has been defined as a group of indigenous people having common name, language, and territory tied by strong kinship bonds, having distinct customs, rituals and believes. The present popular term 'Tribe' or 'Scheduled Tribe' in India refers to a category of people included in the list of Indian Constitution for their socio-economic promotion. The Study region, Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district, shares about 40% tribal population to the total population as per 2011 census. The subdivision is situated between 26°36' and 27° 0' North latitudes, and 88°14' and 88°40' East longitudes. Presently, Mal subdivision consists of Mal municipality and three community development blocks, namely, Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata consisting of 22 gram panchayats (GPs). The subdivision spreads over the foothill regions of the Himalayas so the relief is undulating to plain bounded by 300 meter and 66 meter contour lines in north and south respectively. The climate is characterised by tropical monsoon.

Over the years, population has been increased in the subdivision. Tribal population presently living in the subdivision belongs to two broad ethnic groups, namely, the Mongoloid who are indigenous tribal people of the Dooars region like Limbu, Garo and Mech; and the Dravidian groups who are migrated from the Chhotonagpur plateau region after the introduction of tea plantation in the second half of 19th century as workers. Ten major tribal groups have been identified in Mal subdivision. They are arranged as per descending numeric strength: Oraon, Munda, Santal, Lohar, Mahali, Kharia, Tamang, Limbu, Malpaharia, and Mech. Oraon is the largest tribal community in the subdivision followed by Munda, Santal and Lohars. The Oraons are mainly tea garden workers; hence they are in absolute majority in tea garden based GP areas. Maximum concentration of Munda people occurs at GPs of Champaguri, Rangamatee and Odlabari. The Santals are admirer of nature, and never fell down any useful or ornamental tree. In non-tea garden based GP areas, Santals' concentrations are remarkable such as Chapadanga (64%), Moulani (51%) and Kranti (36%). The Santals usually have large family to accommodate in a house. They are not only dependent on tea gardens for earnings. Rather, a considerable amount of Santal people are now engaged in agriculture, and different secondary economic activities. The Lohar tribes are at present forced to leave their traditional occupation of ironsmith and some of them have migrated to nearby towns in the house building activities, and grill factories. They are skilled in making and repairing agricultural implements. Majority of the Lohars are now engaged in tea garden in the study area. In the GPs of Sulka para (22%), Angrabhasa-II (22%) and Looksan (19%) -the Lohars are major tribal communities. The economy of the Mahali people

is based on basketry, collection of forest produces, agriculture and tea garden. Maximum concentrations of Mahalis in respect of total tribal households are found in Tesimla (14%), Changmari (12%), and Matiali-Batabari-I (11%) GPs. The other tribal communities like Kharia, Tamang, Limbu, Malpaharia, and Mech are concentrated in some specific places of Mal subdivision. The Mech and the Limbu people are the indigenous tribal communities but with the arrival of other tribal communities from the Jharkhand region, they moved eastwards. Now they are mainly living in Alipurduar district as well as in the Dhupguri block of Jalpaiguri district. Among the ten major tribal communities, on the basis of HDI scores, Mundas occupy top most rank followed by Santals, Meches, and Limbus. The Mundas are the most educated among the above tribal groups and many of them are now engaged in different govt. jobs as well as secondary and tertiary economic activities. The Santals mostly depend on agriculture of their own land, hence their income is noteworthy. The Kharias, Oraons and Lohars are at the bottom of the HDI list.

The tribal people are unique in respect of customs, traditions, believes, and other social dimensions. There is no system of dowry, no caste division, even divorcee and widow remarriages are socially accepted among them. The tribal sex ratio in Mal subdivision is very high (1004 female against 1000 male), compared to the non-tribal sex ratio (954) as per 2011 census. The tribal sex ratio is very high in GPs of Looksan (1058), Indong Matiali (1045), Damdim (1041) and Matiali Hat (1036). Early age of marriage is very common among the tribes. Before attaining the prescribed age of marriage, 30% tribal people, on an average, get married. Mutual divorce system is there among the tribal people. 2% records of mutual divorce were recorded during sample field survey. There are 33% tribal people who are belonging to the age group of below 15 years, 62% tribal people has the age group of 15-59 years and only 5% are 60 years and above. Fertility rate of the tribal people in Mal subdivision is 28 per thousand people as per sample data collected from the field in 2015 which is higher than the state (16) and national (20) averages. Crude death rate of the tribal people is 10.5 per 1000 population as per primary data which is also higher than the state (6.3) and national (7.6) averages. Infant mortality (66.3 per thousand) and maternal mortality (1.17 per 1000 live births) rates are also high among the tribal people in the subdivision of Mal with compared to the state and the country. The IMR for the state and country were 48 and 33 in 2011 census respectively. Tribal male literacy rate is 65% and female literacy rate is 53% as per household survey data. Overall school dropout rate for tribal children is 40% in Mal subdivision. However, dropout rates are lower for tribal girls (28%) than the boys (46%). *Sandri* is the communicative language commonly used (61%) by the tribal communities.

Tribal people generally believe in Animism. At present a considerable amount of tribal people have been converted to Christianity but most of them think that they are Hindus. As per sample data collected during field survey among the tribes, there are 66% Hindus, 31% Christians and 3% believing in Animism in the Mal subdivision. By analysing inter regional disparities on educational and demographic indicators in GP level, it is found that tribal people living in Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri and Bidhannagar are in advanced positions in comparison to the others. The GPs of Changmari, Tesimla, Damdim, and Bagrakot are in weak position as regards the social development.

On an average, the crude activity rate for the tribal people in Mal subdivision is 44% and for the non-tribe it is 39.3% as per field survey. Average tribal female workforce participation rate is 33.5% while the non-tribal female workforce participation rate is 23%. This proves that both tribal men and women are more employed in economic activities than the non-tribal people. In spite of their high rate of engagement in economic activities, they are very poor due to their poor daily wage in tea garden i.e. only Rs. 128. Many of them are temporary workers who are employed during plucking period only. On an average, 30% tribal families' monthly earning is \leq Rs. 2500 per month, only 6% tribal families earning is \geq Rs. 10,000, while for the non-tribal families the share is 15%. So the tribal people are poorer than the non-tribal people in every block of the Mal subdivision. Housing conditions depicts that, on an average, 13% tribal families live in one compartment house, while the non-tribal single room families are only 4%. Three and more than three compartment houses are fewer for the tribal people (21%) compared to non-tribal families (80%). So, tribal people are in distressed condition in question of shelter compared to the non-tribal people. Similarly, household assets of the tribal people are also very much limited. On an average, there are 51% tribal houses in Mal subdivision who have separate kitchen, 50% have latrine within the premises and 46% have water facilities. But the non-tribal counter parts are in better condition.

Modern technology, modernisation and communication technology have cast their influence on the tribal economy and society. The performances of dances and songs are influenced by the modern rhythmic instruments replacing many of their age old handmade instruments. Culture of tribal people is gradually languishing due to modernisation and change of religious believes from animism to established religions. Traditional shifting cultivation has been abolished today. Use of tractors, irrigation pump sets, sprayer machines, rice hullers, rotary tillers are now found to be increasing in number. On an average, 38% tribal farmers are using such technologies along with chemical fertilisers and HYV seeds. The chi-square statistical test confirms that, there are changes in respect of impact of modern

agricultural tools with a slight fluctuation in different GPs. Pearson's product moment correlation analysis concludes that, impact of modern economic activities on the traditional livelihood pattern of tribal people is insignificant. Tribal people in the study area are also habituated by modern means of communication technology like mobile phones, televisions, refrigerators and computers. The use of such technology by the tribal people is still insignificant because the percentage share for the same for non-tribal people is more than the tribal people. Finally, it may be stated that modern technology has played a significant role to change tribal society but upon the economy it is quite insignificant.

Main social problems of the tribal people are illiteracy, problems of assimilation, erosion of their unique identity and drug addiction etc. Illiteracy and formal primary education prevails among the tribal people. The indigenous tribal people are assimilated with the in-migrated tribal people in this region. As a result, the rich self-governing culture of each community has been demolished today. Due to influx of non-tribal people and continuous mixing of different tribal communities the unique identities of each tribal community have been lost. Consumption of rice beer or *hariya* is a daily routine of the male people. In addition to that, the young and new generations are addicted to other country and foreign liquor. The main economic problems of the tribal people are poverty and exploitation, land alienation, subsistence economy, unemployment etc. Starvation and deaths are very common due to malnutrition, hunger and disease when the tea gardens remain closed for longer periods. Land of the tribal people has been ceased by the tea planters. Now, they are landless labourers. Many young people and couples are working in different provinces as masons, construction workers, boulder lifting labourers etc. Due to unemployment, driven out of home by poverty, hundreds of tribal girls mostly teenagers have gone missing. Health and hygienic conditions are below the average.

For the tribal people living in Mal subdivision, the suggestive measures adopted are: improvement of literacy rate, circulation about government schemes laid down for tribal development, assurance of job securities, eradication of drug addiction problems, and reproductive health care facilities etc. Growing awareness among the tribal people can remove many problems. It is found that, there is a strong negative relationship between literacy and drug consumption ($r=-0.77$). Assurance of job securities in the tea gardens by the government is a vital step to stop starvation and premature deaths. Alternative job opportunities can help them to earn more. In implementing the developmental and other schemes, the planers and the administration should have good will to serve the poor tribal people; otherwise, the benefits will not reach up to the grass root levels.

PREFACE

The thesis on **“Socio-Economic Status of Tribal People in Mal Subdivision of Jalpaiguri District, West Bengal: A Geographical Analysis”** is the outcome of my research work carried on during the years 2011-2017. This is an honest attempt to highlight the gram panchayat level spatial distribution of different tribal groups and their social, economic and cultural conditions based on the data obtained from the extensive field survey and secondary sources of information. This study focuses on some of the neglected areas of research because not much work has been done on the spatial organizations of tribal society living in Dooars region and their social structure as expressed in identities such as economic conditions, community, language, custom, education and religion at the grass root levels. The scholars from Sociology, History and Anthropology studied more about the tribal people rather than the Geographers.

There are historical and sociological backgrounds of the socio-economic pursuits of the study region. Attempts have been made in the present thesis to discuss the historical legacy of plantation economy and migration of the Dravidian tribal people from Chhotonagpur plateau region. For these interpretations, outcome of different historical and sociological researches are incorporated to draw a clear picture of the tribal society of the region.

In handling spatially-disaggregated data, I realized the limitations of census data as well as other official data, especially when the areal unit of study is gram panchayat (GP). It was, therefore, necessary to generate primary data from the field to establish the ground truths about the economic and socio-cultural information. In the present study, in order to focus on socio-economic status of tribal people of Mal subdivision, three social variables such as demography, health, education and three economic variables such as farming systems, employment conditions and infrastructural facilities are studied. I have tried to use statistical techniques in cause-effect analysis to solve the problems of tribal people by Pearson’s product moment correlation, chi-square test and HDI indices to assess the status of different tribal groups. The hypothesis assumed in the thesis has been proved by acute statistical techniques and analysis.

The present study is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter is aimed to discuss the introductory part of the research and location details of the study region. The second chapter briefly traces the physical and cultural background of the study area. Third chapter is concerned with the spatial distribution of major tribal groups living in the study region. This chapter describes the individual tribal communities in the light of their socio-economic

conditions. Chapter 4 deals with the social status of tribal people. Similarly, chapter 5 elaborates the economic status of tribal people. These two chapters are most vital in the thesis where comparative analyses are also made between the tribes and non-tribes to evaluate the status of tribal people. Sixth chapter in the thesis focuses the impact of modern technology upon the tribal society and economy above all tribal livelihood. Seventh and eighth chapters describe the problems and probable solutions of the tribal people respectively. All the above discussed aspects have been dealt within the thesis in a holistic manner. Attempts have been made to give most recent and up to date data and examples in each chapter.

For the proper presentation of this long pursuit, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Ranjan Roy for his guidance and active co-operation without which it would have become exceedingly difficult for me to accomplish this research work. I express my gratitude to him for the real autonomy he has given to me, so that I could explore the topic and enrich my own ideas. I sincerely thank all the faculty members for their valuable suggestions which greatly helped me in understanding my research needs and also other staff members of the Department of Geography & Applied Geography, University of North Bengal for their cooperation.

During my field works it was often very difficult to understand tribal language. Mr. Sribash Roy, an enthusiast man and Mr. Nilkamal Barai, a panchayat member of Lataguri Gram Panchayat accompanied me throughout the field work as translator and interpreter. I am very much thankful to them. My sincere thanks goes to the tribal and non-tribal educated ones and the aged people of various GPs who helped me to gather information those could not be found in books. What I owe to them is the cooperation with simplicity. Some of the innocent people met me in their villages with complain of their needs. I wish my thesis to come to their benefit. I would like to thank my ex-students Mr. Ershad Ali and Mr. Debarshi Ghosh for digitizing the map works in the thesis. I must also acknowledge the help rendered by Sri Sujoy Kanti Tarafder, my friend who helped in checking the language and grammatical details in the composition of thesis.

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(Bipul Chandra Sarkar)

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Chapter-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The term 'tribe' is derived from the Latin word 'tribus'. Earlier, the Romans used this term to designate the divisions in society. The present popular meaning in English language was acquired during the expansion of colonialism particularly in Asia and Africa. Tribe has been defined as a group of indigenous people having common name, language and territory tied by strong kinship bonds, practising endogamy, having distinct customs, rituals and beliefs etc.

D. N. Majumdar (1961) defines that "a tribe is collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations".

The present popular meaning of 'Tribe' in India refers to a category of people, included in the list of 'Scheduled Tribes'. The people who have been listed in the Constitution and mentioned in successive presidential orders are called Scheduled Tribes. Article 366 (25) defined scheduled tribes as "such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution". Article 342 says that the President may, with respect to any State or Union territory, and where it is a state, after consultation with the Governor there of by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall, for the purposes of this constitution, is deemed to be scheduled tribes in relation to that state or Union Territory, as the case may be.

As these communities are presumed to constitute the oldest ethnological society of the Indian society, the term '*Adivasi*' ('*adi*' means oldest and '*vasi*' means inhabitants) is commonly used to designate them (Mann, 1996). The list of Scheduled Tribes is State/Union Territory specific and a community declared as a Scheduled Tribe in a State need not be so in another State. The inclusion of a community as a Scheduled Tribe is an ongoing process. In context of Scheduled Tribe, G. S. Ghurey in his book 'The Scheduled Tribes' (1963), writes: "The Scheduled Tribes are neither called the 'Aborigines', nor the '*Adivasis*', nor are they treated as a category by themselves. By and large, they are treated together with the Scheduled Caste and further envisaged as one group of the Backward Classes." This is the quintessence of the constitutional provision about the Scheduled Tribes.

Hence, it is clear from the above definitions that tribe is a separate group of persons having their own identity and cultural traits. The tribals have their own mode of management to control their group or society. They have customary laws, which are unwritten, but they obey them strictly.

The essential characteristics, first laid down by the Lokur committee, for a community to be identified as the tribal communities are:

1. Primitive Traits: They prefer primitive religion known as '*Animist*' in which they worship ghost and spirits; have primitive occupations of hunting and gathering of forest products; have nomadic habits.
2. Geographical isolation: They live in cluster, exclusive remote and in hospitable areas like hills and forests.
3. Distinct culture: They have developed community wise their own distinctive culture, language and religion.
4. Shyness of contact with the community at large: They have marginal degree of contact with other cultures and people.
5. Backwardness: Their backwardness occurred due to livelihood based on primitive agriculture, low cost closed economy based on level of technology which caused of poverty. They have a low level of literacy and poor health.

Tribal communities live in diversified ecological and geographical conditions ranging from plains and forests to hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development. The tribal people are economically backward but they have rich cultural diversity. In tribal life the principal links for the whole society are based on kinship. The kinship is the principle of inheritance, division of labour and distribution of power and privileges (Mandelbaum, 1972).

The constitution of India incorporates several special provisions for the promotion of educational and economic improvement of scheduled tribes and their protection from social injustice and all forms of social exploitation. In order to give more focussed attention to the development of scheduled tribes, a separate Ministry, known as the Ministry of Tribal Affairs was constituted in October, 1999. The new ministry carved out of the Ministry of Social Justice and empowerment, is the nodal ministry for overall policy, planning and coordination of programmes and schemes for the development of scheduled tribes.

The Dooars area of Jalpaiguri district is densely populated by different tribal communities. Up to the first half of the nineteenth century the area were sparsely populated. The indigenous tribal people of Mal subdivision, the Mech, Rabha and Garos were

traditionally dependent on village economy of agriculture, weaving, and fishing and often hunting. The Britishers started tea plantation in Dooars and Terai region. There were necessities of labourers for that purpose. After the treaty of Sinchula in 1865 the British Government encouraged the immigration of the Nepalese in order to populate the sparsely inhabited zones of Dooars down the Bhutan hills (Debnath, 2013). Again a considerable number of tribal people were borrowed by the British East India Company to grow tea gardens, cut jungles and related activities from Chhotonagpur region. Oraon, Munda, Chik Baraik, Mahali, Santal, Koroa communities are now mainly engaged as tea garden workers. These people are mostly illiterate, simple and poor. Frequent lock out of tea gardens causes starvation and death in these tea gardens.

1.2 Historical Background of the Study Area

Jalpaiguri district before its inception in 1869 was part of Koch kingdom, founded by Haria Mandal, a Mech leader in Chikna hill. First powerful king of the Koch kingdom was Bisu, who take the title 'Singha'. Biswa Singha as a Koch king took recognition from his mother's genealogy as a custom of the tribes; because the predecessors from his father's side were Mech and from mother side were Koch (Das & Majumdar, 1990). Twelve kings ruled the kingdom near about four hundred years which was a glorious sign in the history of North Bengal (Roy, 2006). Since the reign of Upendra Narayan (1714-1763) the majestic power of Koch king began to decay gradually, as a result of which the Bhutanese occupied the Dooars. In 1773, Koch Behar became a part of Bengal Presidency. The *Bhutia* Kings were very aggressive over the Dooars. Then, there occurred Anglo-Bhutan war which ended with the treaty of Sinchula in 1865.

As the large areas of the Dooars were without people or proprietorship, the Britishers easily occupied the tract and became the proprietors of the land. They divided the land into three parts- land for agriculture, land for tea cultivation and land for reserve forest. The land of the hills and foot-hills of this tract was suitable for tea cultivation and the land was under proprietorship of the British Government, so, some portions of the lands of the Dooars were given to the planters for tea cultivation, which was hugely profitable, by lease because the Govt. could not grant land to the planters for tea cultivation in the permanent settled portion as the land of these areas were under '*Zamindars*' or landlords (Sutradhar, 2013). In this context, Gruning (1911) writes, "It was soon found that the soil and climate of the Western Dooars was suitable to the growth of tea; Government offered land to investors on favourable terms and the industry developed rapidly."

For tea garden labourers, the tribes of Chhotonagpur region were borrowed by the planters through the Britishers. Beside tea cultivation, Britishers introduced *jotdari* system creating *jotes* and giving to the '*jotdars*'. A *jotdar* is a person who holds lands directly under Government and his holding is called a *jote* (Sunder, 1895). The *jotdars* cultivated their whole lands by the '*adhiars*' or sharecroppers. They were very poor because they had no right on land and they could be evicted from land at any time. In the decade of 1930s *adhiars* and agricultural labourers started a movement called '*Hat tola*' or '*tolagandi*' movement. At the time of selling any kind of goods, the sellers had to give *tola* (sale tax) to the *Zamindars*. The sharecroppers refused to pay such tax. Ultimately the toll rate was reduced and in small hats the toll collection came to be stopped. Being inspired by the '*Hat Tola* movement' the *adhiars* started another movement called '*Adhiars movement*'. Different levies were introduced for share croppers to pay by crops for different reasons. In 1946, '*Tebhaga* movement' was started in Dooars against the oppressed *Jotdars* by the share croppers. The movement had spread in the seven police stations including Mal and Matiali. Share croppers, jointly, were harvesting and possessing crops from the land of *jotdars* on condition to give one third shares for the *jotdars* by getting receipt from *jotdars* (Ghatak, 1987). Everyday hundreds of Peasant-volunteers enrolled their names for the struggle against *jotdars*. The *tebhaga* movement as elsewhere in Bengal had significant role to organise the peasants including *bargadars* and labourers against all sorts of oppressions of the *jotdars*, *zamindars* and intermediary tenure holders. Ultimately, the movement became failure to settle the problem of share croppers.

1.3 The Study Area

The study area, Mal subdivision also known as Malbazar, is a subdivision of the Jalpaiguri district in the state of West Bengal, India. It is a newly created subdivision (1990s) and earlier it was part of Jalpaiguri Sadar subdivision. Presently Mal subdivision has three community development blocks namely, Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata consisting of 22 gram panchayats and Mal municipality. The subdivision has its headquarters at Malbazar. The subdivision is situated between 26°36' and 27° 0' North latitudes, and 88°14' and 88°40' East longitudes. The study area is bounded in the north by the Darjiling district, in the east by Dhupguri block of Jalpaiguri District, in the south by Jalpaiguri Sadar and Maynaguri block and in the west by Darjiling district and Rajganj block of Jalpaiguri district. The total geographical area of Mal subdivision is 1150.84 Sq. Km. Following are the census villages under each gram panchayats spread over in three blocks:-

LOCATION MAP

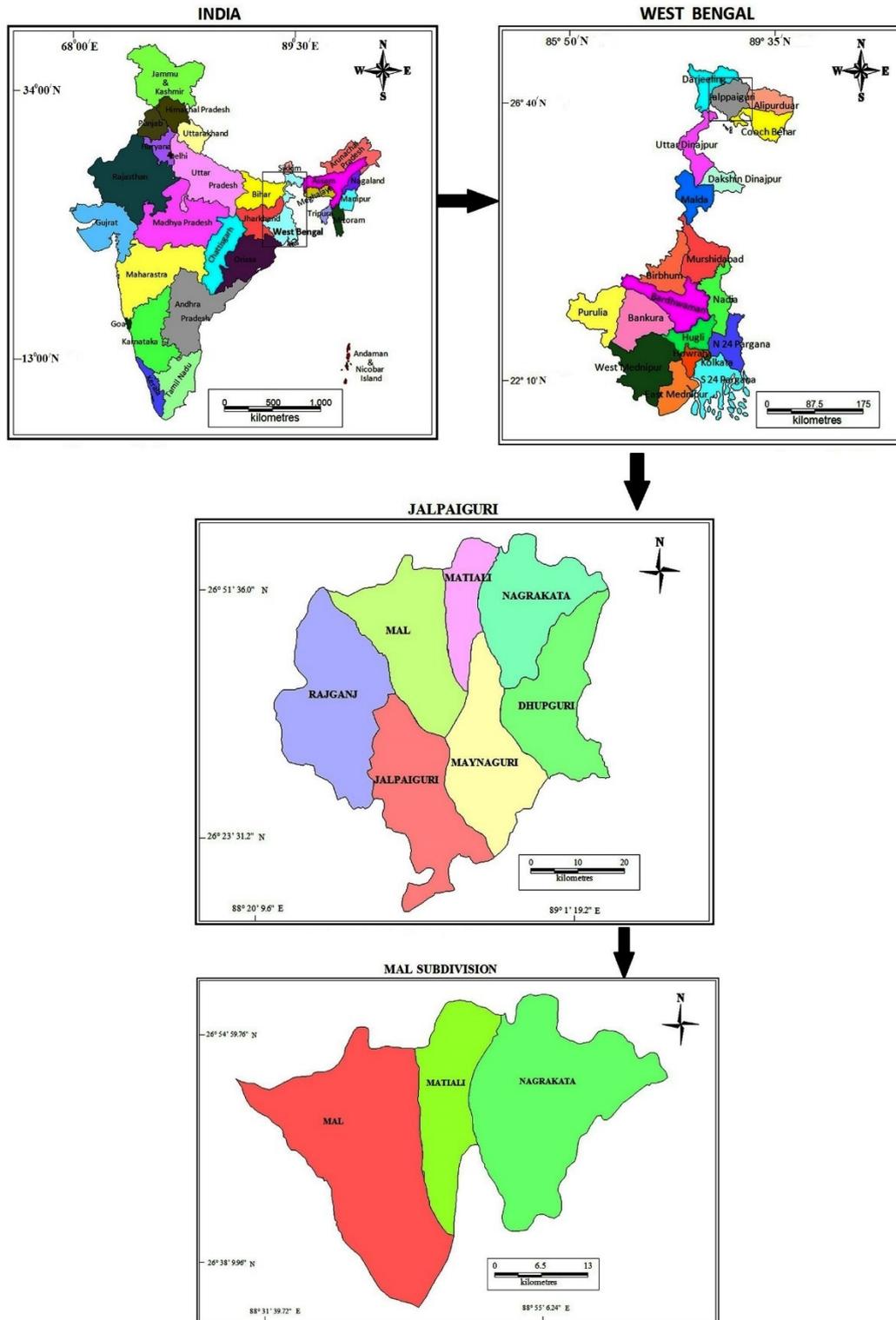


Figure 1.1 Location Map of the Study Area

Table 1.1 List of Census Villages of Mal Subdivision**Mal Block**

Census Villages	Area (Hectare)	Census Villages	Area (Hectare)
1. Bagrakot Gram Panchayat			7280.8
Bagrakot Tea Garden	999.2	Kalagaity	419.7
Paschim Totgaon	311.6	Kalagaity Tea Garden	209.9
Purbba Totgaon	482.4	Saogaon	1003.2
Sundaribasti	452.4	Saogaon Tea Garden	475.2
Ellenbury Tea Garden	406.3	Lishriver Tea Garden	940.6
Washabari Tea Garden	511.4	Bainguri Tea Garden	1068.9
2. Odlabari Gram Panchayat			6555.2
Uttar Phulbari	279.8	Manabari Tea Garden	492.6
Dakshin Phulbari	526.0	Manabari	607.9
Hanskhali	724.5	Turibari	591.3
Gojaldoba Tea Garden	208.0	Patharjhora Tea Garden	879.0
Targhera	444.3	Odlabari (CT)	927.7
Odlabari Tea Garden	272.9	Dakshin Odlabari (CT)	601.2
3. Rangamatee Gram Panchayat			5678.4
Menglass Tea Garden	683.5	Rangamati Tea Garden	1475.1
Dalingkote Tea Garden	414.0	Syli Tea Garden	760.8
Malnadi Tea Garden	146.5	New Clenco Tea Garden (P)	508.1
Gurjang Jhora Tea Garden	330.3	Haihai Pathar Tea Garden I(P)	565.4
Tunbari Tea Garden (P)	298.3	Haihai Pathar Tea Garden II	136.3
Nidam Jhora Tea Garden	360.1		
4. Rajadanga Gram Panchayat			9194.1
Rajadanga	358.9	Apalchand Forest	5231.8
Bara Gharia	473.0	Uttar Chengmari	151.0
Anandapur	415.1	Uttar Majhgram	450.5
Anandapur Tea Garden	371.1	Dhalabari	453.7
Uttar Hanskhali	235.1	Kodalkati	390.7
Dakshin Hanskhali	663.2		
5. Damdim Gram Panchayat			4826.5
Khasjangan-II	51.1	Paschim Damdim	685.5
Sisubari Tea Garden	651.1	Damdim Tea Garden	1401.8
Damdimhat	24.2	Kumlai Tea Garden	607.0
Khasjangan-I	6.2	Ranichera Tea Garden	1126.2
Betbari Tea Garden	273.4		
6. Tesimla Gram Panchayat			1851.7
Tesimala	555.4	Demkajhora	438.2
Haihaipathar	858.1		
7. Kumlai Gram Panchayat			4025.6
Purba Damdim	498.2	Nichchalsa	424.4
Nipuchhapur	528.2	Kantadighi Kumarpara	446.3
Nipuchhapur Tea Garden	356.6	Neora	330
Kumali	406.3	Neoranadi Tea Garden	654.8
Purba Kantadighi Kumarpara	77.3	Dakshin Kantadighi Kumarpara	303.5

8. Changmari Gram Panchayat			4312.2
Chengmari Forest	371.7	Chengmarihat	320.7
Chengmari Dangapara	335.6	Purbba Dolaigaon	460.9
Gochimari	431.4	Paschim Dolaigaon	311.2
Apalchand	184.4	Mal Hati Forest	129.5
Neolabasti	546.0	Golabari	344.3
Jogesh Chandra Tea Garden	522.7	Sidabari	353.8
9. Chapadanga Gram Panchayat			4157.6
Basusuba	621.8	Paschim Mauamari	289.3
Dakshin Saripakuri	445.5	Paschim Premganj	329.9
Chapadanga	429.7	Premganj Majhiali	354.3
Paschim Sangapara	323.8	Purbba Premganj	270.4
Dakshin Chengmari	486.2	Purbba Sangapara	323.8
Purbba Mauamari	282.9		
10. Moulani Gram Panchayat			1912.7
Chak Maulani	443.1	Dakshin Matiali	567.4
Dakshin Chak Maulani	374.7	Adabari	297.3
Bidurerdanga	230.2		
11. Lataguri Gram Panchayat			1607.8
Lataguri (CT)	302.7	Jhar Matiali	742.9
Uttar Matiali	562.2		
12. Kranti Gram Panchayat			3130.5
Kranti	669.5	Uttar Saripakuri	582.2
Dakshin Majhgram	343.8	Jhar Majhgram	251.8
Uttar Khalpara	547.1	Chikanmati	287.0
Dakshin Khalpara	449.1		

Matiali Block

Census Villages	Area (Hectare)	Census Villages	Area (Hectare)
1. Matiali Batabari-I Gram Panchayat			3940.5
Aibhil Tea Garden	728.2	Batabari Tea Garden	393.2
Kilkote Tea Garden	670.4	Chalsa Mahabari (CT)	298.4
Sathkaya Tea Garden	974.5	Mangalbari (CT)	651.0
Khariarbandar	224.8		
2. Matiali Batabari-II Gram Panchayat			6712.6
Uttar Dhupjhora	405.5	Bara Dighi Tea Garden	743.8
Dakshin Dhupjhora	566.8	Bara Dighi	237.9
Paschim Batabari	132.2	Chhaoaphali	274.6
Purbba Batabari	539.2	Nimna Tandu Forest	3812.6
3. Bidhannagar Gram Panchayat			3285.8
Nakhati Tea Garden	502.4	Salbari	830.3
Mathachulka	589.0	Son Gachhi Tea Garden	963.1
Neora Majhiali	401.0		
4. Matiali Hat Gram Panchayat			3168.8
Yongttong Tea Garden	523.3	Samsing Tea Garden	773.8
Matiali Tea Garden	1060.8	Chalauni Tea Garden	779.0
Matiali Hat (CT)	31.2		

5. Indong Matiali			3414.7
Engo Tea Garden	161.80	Chalsa Tea Garden	626.9
Juranti Tea Garden	779.8	Indong Tea Garden	862.2
Nagaisuri Tea Garden	952.8		

Nagrakata Block

Census Villages	Area (Hectare)	Census Villages	Area (Hectare)
1. Angrabhasa-I Gram Panchayat			2284.8
Kalabari Tea Garden (N)	566.5	Upur Kalabari (N)	464.3
Kalabari (N)	765.7	Hridaypur (N)	488.30
2. Angrabhasa-II Gram Panchayat			2848.7
Jaldhaka Altadanga Tea Garden (N)	571.2	Angrabhasa (N)	629.2
Khayerkata (N)	366.0	Dhouda Simla (N)	482.6
Dhumpara (N)	514.8	Uttar Nunkhawa Danga (N)	284.9
3. Champaguri Gram Panchayat			6383.1
Jiti Tea Garden	1055.2	Hila	47.0
Hope Tea Garden	729.6	Nagrakata Tea Garden	941.4
Naya Saili Tea Garden	811.5	Bhagatpur Tea Garden	1389.7
Hila Tea Garden	618.0	Kurti Tea Garden	790.7
4. Sulkapara Gram Panchayat			16037.1
Nagrakata	69.3	Khairbari	691.2
Sukhanibasti	356.1	Tandu	424.4
Ghasmari	317.8	Tandu Tea Garden	261.5
Chhar Tandu	432.6	Bamandanga Tea Garden	945.0
Sulkapara	419.2	Upper Tendu Forest (M)	12120.0
5. Looksan Gram Panchayat			12193.9
Gatia Tea Garden	866.0	Chengmari Tea Garden	2539.8
Luksan Tea Garden	938.2	Grassmore Tea Garden	1036.5
Caron Tea Garden	592.1	Deana Forest (N)	6221.3

Source: Census of India, 2001 & 2011

1.4 Scope of the Study

Concentration of tribal population is very high in the Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district. About 40% of the total population of Mal subdivision belongs to tribal population. The study area is home of few rare and many other tribal groups of people in India. They depend on tea garden based employment and some traditional agricultural practices. Many tea gardens have been closed or abandoned or sick. Unemployment prevails in tribal dominated blocks. On account of immigration from Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan and in-migration from Chhotonagpur plateau region the density of population in the study area has substantially increased. Infrastructural facilities like transport-network, degree of urbanization, industry, and medical facilities are very poor in the area. Recent uprising of the

tribal people due to underdevelopment causes many conflicts among the tribes and other groups of people in the study area concerned inviting problems for strategic insecurity.

Large number of tribal people in the country contributes to a major share of wide-spread poverty. Society, culture and economy of tribal people are quite different from the rest of the non-tribal people. In addition to this, the level of socio-economic development varies considerably between tribal and non-tribal people, between one tribe and another tribe and even among different subgroup of tribal groups. The present study at grass root level is conducted to give a rigid way for micro-level planning of the overall development of the tribal people.

1.5 Hypothesis

The hypotheses for the study have been adopted are:

1. Tribal group of people in the study area are socio-economically backward.
2. Their culture, ethical values are quite different from the rest of the non-tribal people.
3. Impact of modern economic activities on the traditional livelihood pattern of tribal people is insignificant.
4. Increasing population, immigration and infiltration have squeezed their traditional values and cultures.

1.6 Objectives

The following objectives have been taken in to considerations:

1. To find out the nature of spatial distribution of tribal people in the subdivision.
2. To examine the social status of tribal people.
3. To examine the economic status of tribal people.
4. To examine the impact of modern technology in their traditional livelihood processes.
5. To examine the status of major tribal groups.
6. To find out their problems in the present context.
7. To suggest remedial measures to solve the problems of tribal people.

1.7 Database

In order to carry out the study, two types of data have been used: a) primary and b) secondary.

- a) Primary sources include schedule and questionnaire methods to acquire data from the field. A size of 2-5% tribal households has been randomly selected for that purpose.

b) The secondary sources are District statistical handbook, District census books, District Gazetteers, published and unpublished journals etc.

The primary sources of data are household survey collected from the field. The following are the sample data sources from the field for the tribal households.

Table 1.2 GP-Wise Sample Sizes of Tribal Households

Sl. No.	GP Name	Number of Tribal Households		Total Pop	Area Covered for sample data
		Total	Surveyed		
1	Bagrakot	4000	125	622	Bagrakot TG, Saogaon TG
2	Odlabari	2100	50	249	Odlabari TG, Targhera
3	Rangamatee	4500	125	637	Rangamatee TG, Menglass TG, Syli TG.
4	Rajadanga	2300	50	249	Anandapur TG, Uttar Chengmari, Apalchand Forest
5	Damdim	3500	75	452	Damdimhat, Damdim TG
6	Tesimla	550	25	152	Tesimla
7	Kumlai	2200	75	329	Neora Nudy, Nipuchapur TG.
8	Changmari	1000	50	230	Neolabasti, Jogesh Ch. TG.
9	Kranti	400	25	125	Uttar Khalpara, Kranti, Chikanmati
10	Chapadanga	50	25	125	Chapadanga, Basusuba
11	Moulani	150	25	123	Dakshin Matiali, Chak Moulani
12	Lataguri	250	25	145	Uttar Matiali, Lataguri(CT)
Mal Block Total		21000	675	3438	
1	Matiali Batabari-I	3300	75	350	Aibhil TG, Batabari TG
2	Matiali Batabari-II	1800	50	222	Purba Batabari, Uttar Dhupjhora, Baradighi TG.
3	Bidhannagar	1500	50	220	Nakhati, Mathachulka
4	Matiali Hat	1600	50	217	Matiali TG, Matiali hat (CT)
5	Indong Matiali	2800	75	341	Nagaisuri TG, Chalsa TG, Indong TG.
Matiali Block Total		11000	300	1350	
1	Angrabhasa-I	900	50	211	Kalabari TG, Hridaypur (N)
2	Angrabhasa-II	650	50	267	Angrabhasa (N), Dhouda Simla
3	Sulkapara	2350	75	329	Sulkapara, Sukhani Basti,
4	Champaguri	4700	125	605	Jiti TG, Hila TG, Nagrakata TG
5	Looksan	4400	125	600	Luksan TG, Gatia TG, Grassmore TG, Caron TG.
Nagrakata Block Total		13000	425	2012	
Mal Subdivision Total		45000	1400	6800	

Data have also been collected from the non-tribal households to compare the social and economic conditions as well as the differences among the tribal and non-tribal people. From every GP area 30 non-tribal households were randomly selected for survey. Out of these 30 households, 5 households in each GP were from the households of scheduled caste category inhabitants.

Table 1.3 GP-wise Sample Sizes of Non-Tribal Households

Sl. No.	GP Name	Households Surveyed		Total Population		Area Covered for Sample Data
		SC	Gen.	SC	Gen	
1	Bagrakot	5	25	22	98	Sundaribasti, Saogaon TG
2	Odlabari	5	25	22	100	Odlabari CT, Targhera
3	Rangamatee	5	25	20	90	Rangamatee TG, Syli TG.
4	Rajadanga	5	25	25	110	Anandapur, Dakshin Hanskhali
5	Damdim	5	25	28	90	Damdimhat, Paschim Damdim
6	Tesimla	5	25	30	104	Tesimla, Demkajhora
7	Kumlai	5	25	10	102	Neora Nudy, Kumlai
8	Changmari	5	25	19	103	Neolabasti, Gochimari
9	Kranti	5	25	24	102	Uttar Khalpara, Kranti
10	Chapadanga	5	25	25	112	Chapadanga, Basusuba
11	Moulani	5	25	25	115	Adabari, Bidurer Danga
12	Lataguri	5	25	26	120	Uttar Matiali, Lataguri CT
Mal Block Total		60	300	276	1246	
1	Matiali Batabari-I	5	25	25	106	Chalsa Mahabari, BatabariTG
2	Matiali Batabari-II	5	25	23	100	Uttar Dhupjhora, Baradighi
3	Bidhannagar	5	25	24	101	Salbari, Mathachulka
4	Matiali Hat	5	25	22	104	Matiali TG, Matiali hat (CT)
5	Indong Matiali	5	25	25	110	Nagaisuri TG, Chalsa TG
Matiali Block Total		25	125	119	521	
1	Angrabhasa-I	5	25	25	106	Kalabari TG, Hridaypur (N)
2	Angrabhasa-II	5	25	25	103	Khayerkata, (N), Angrabhasa
3	Sulkapara	5	25	25	97	Sulkapara
4	Champaguri	5	25	25	112	Jiti TG, Bhagatpur TG
5	Looksan	5	25	40	100	Caron TG, Changmari TG.
Nagrakata Block Total		25	125	140	518	
Mal Subdivision Total		110	550	535	2285	

So, a total number of 660 non-tribal households were surveyed in Mal subdivision of which 110 households were from scheduled castes and 550 were from General category households. Finally, total number of households surveyed are 2,060 including SC, ST,

General category, and total population covered were 9620, of which 6800 were Tribes, 535 Scheduled Castes and 2285 from General Category.

1.8 Methodology

In order to study socio-economic status of tribal people of Mal subdivision six variables have been taken into consideration. The social variables are demographic indicators, health indicators and educational indicators while three economic variables are farming systems, employment conditions and infrastructural facilities.

The methodologies applied in the present study are:

1. The unit of Study is Gram Panchayat. There are 22 Gram Panchayats in The Subdivision of which 12 in Mal, 5 in Matiali and 5 in Nagrakata block. For sample survey, two to four mouzas in each GP have been selected.
2. Stratified random sampling for collection of primary data has been adopted. 2-5% tribal households have been surveyed in each Gram Panchayats by scheduled-questionnaires. Depending on the number of tribal households in each Gram Panchayat, slab of 25 households were randomly selected e.g. 25, 50, 75, 100, 125. Representations of all major tribal communities living in the study region have been incorporated.
3. Besides, for purpose of comparison of socio-economic status, in each GP 5 Scheduled Caste households and 25 General Category (including OBC) households were surveyed.
4. Primary and secondary data have been represented by tables, diagrams and index marks. For tabulation, analysis and diagrammatic representation of data, the MS Excel has been used.
5. Selected socio-economic parameters of the conditions of tribal people that includes demographic indicators, health indicators and educational indicators, farming systems, employment conditions and infrastructural facilities have been assessed with the help of linear relations, co-relations, time series analysis etc.
6. Inequalities in distribution of socio-economic parameters have been shown by Lorenz curve and Development index with the help of average deprivation method to determine disparities within the study area.
7. To show the distribution of population Choropleth mapping by normal distribution methods have been adopted.

8. The GIS softwares (Global Mapper, Map Info) has been used for preparing the necessary maps and data relating to location and distribution of socio-economic parameters to represent the results and field information. The photographs relating to field survey are edited and arranged using Office Picture manager and Photoshop software.

1.9 Review of Literatures

For a long time, the tribal people have been the focus of study for social scientists. A bulk of description is available about the different socio-economic aspects of tribal people. Indian tribes have been studied by the scholars of different disciplines from different points of view. The scholars from Sociology, History and Anthropology studied more about the tribal people rather than the Geographers. However, a review based earlier literature is presented here.

The present Mal subdivision is a part of western Dooars of Bhutan and Britishers. The historical information is required to understand the socio-economic development through the passage of time. But there are very limited writings about the history of Dooars. However, significant contributions are made in this context by William Wilson Hunter (1875), Alexander Mackenzie (1884), D.H.E. Sunder (1895), J.F. Gruning (1911), and Shubhojit Ray (2002).

Hunter's (1875) 'Statistical Account of Bengal', consisting with ten volumes, is a pioneer work about the history of British ruled Bengal. The tenth volume is described about the Dooars of Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Princely Cooch Behar state. Physical, socio-economic and anthropological aspects are analysed in descriptive way in Hunter's work. Agriculture of the people inhabiting in the Dooars region are minutely described in this book.

Mackenzie's (1884) book 'History of the Relations of the Government with the Hill Tribes of the North-East Frontier of Bengal' is a pioneer writing on tribals of Assam and Bhutan borders. In the second chapter of the book there are descriptions of Bhutanese aggression to the tribes living in India-Bhutan boarder. The oppression of Bhutan Raj upon the tribal people and aggression towards Dooars has vividly been described in this book. The Koch Raj was unable to protect his area from Bhutanese and the East India Company invades to tackle Bhutanese aggressions by Anglo-Bhutan war which comes to an end with the treaty of Sinchula in 1865.

Sunder's (1895) book 'Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars in the District of Jalpaiguri 1889-1895' is a minute description of land revenue system of Dooars. Actually,

Sunder was appointed as a settlement officer for the Himalayan foot hill region. Mr. Sunder was able to conduct the land survey by classifying the lands in different categories for revenue purpose. In the mean time, the tea plantation has started in Dooars. In his book, he has described land revenue and related activities in the Dooars.

Gruning, John F. (1911) in his district Gazetteer of Jalpaiguri elaborated details picture of the district. The author depends on Sunder's report (1895) as references regarding land revenue administration. The chapters of this book is deals with physical aspects, history, the people, public health, agriculture, forests, natural calamities, land revenues, occupations, manufactures and trade, and general administration.

Shubhojit Ray (2002) historically describes the colonial character of Dooars and North Bengal in his book 'Transformations on the Bengal Frontiers: Jalpaiguri 1765-1948'. Main themes of the book are political economy, tribal economy, struggle against oppressions of *Zamindars* and Britishers by the local people. The book is an analytical history of the socio-economic changes brought about by colonial ruler in a frontier area of Bengal.

To understand the geographical environment of the region several publications of researchers were reviewed. Heim and Gansser (1939) describe the central Himalayan geological observations. This is a geological analysis of the region. Nakata (1972) deals with the geomorphic events of the foothill regions. K.Bagchi and K.N.Mukherjee (1983) describe the physiographic characteristics of North Bengal in their devoted study entitled 'Diagnostic Survey of West Bengal (North)'. The authors did their works through primary data collection, dumpy level survey and other soil sample analysis.

There are many authoritative descriptions of Indian tribes by the eminent scholars. The Sociologists and Anthropologists are pioneer in this field. Mention may be made about the works of G.S. Ghurey (1963), N.K. Bose (1971), L.P. Vidyarthi (1976), S.C. Dutt (1984), A.R.N. Srivastava (1991), Shereen Ratnagar (2004), P.C. Mehta (2006), and K.L. Sharma (2007).

Ghurey (1963) in his book 'The Scheduled Tribes' discusses religion or occupation or racial features which prove inadequate when one attempts to distinguish tribes from non-tribes in India. According to him purest of tribal groups resisting accumulation or absorption, possess certain features which can be considered as common features if possessed by all tribal groups. They are as follows: They live away from civilised world in most inaccessible part of both forest and hill; They belong either to one of three stocks-Negrito, Austroloid or Mongoloid; They speak same tribal dialect; They possess a primitive religion known as

Animism in which worship of ghosts or spirit is the most important element. He thought tribals are Hindus.

Nirmal Kumar Bose (1971) in 'The Tribal Life in India' discusses about different aspects of tribal life in India. He analyses society, economy and culture of tribes in different parts of India including tribes of North East, Andaman and Nicobar Islands. He also enlightens different means of livelihood of tribes in India including their social organization, religion, art, music and dance.

L.P.Vidyarthi and B.K.Rai (1976) describe the tribes from the anthropological view points in their book 'The Tribal Culture of India'. All sorts of livelihood have been focused in this book. Economic systems, Social organisations, development of Indian tribes, their cultural changes are described in this book. The authors are very solvent to find out the tribal problems in Indian perspectives. Different government plans for their development as well as failure of the plans has been lucidly described in this book.

S.C. Dutt (1984) in his book 'The wild Tribes in India' deals with the different wild tribal communities of India who are retreated to every inaccessible jungles, hill-tract and fenland of the country. The book is a classical works in the tribal field where the author beautifully illustrates these people's origin, growth and status. In his opinion, the aboriginal tribes formed the servile and impure castes of the Hindu community, amalgamating either wholly or partially with their conquerors. He further established that without them there would be no traces of habitation on the hills, no hopes of clearance and settlement in the jungles.

Srivastava (1991) studied the value-orientation of the Indian Tribes. The study comprises a comparative study of two different ethnic groups of Munda and Oraon, puts to test the assumption that culture is one of the sources of value-orientation.

Ratnagar (2004) looks to rural tribal societies on the basis of subsistence livelihood. In his three essays, he deals with hunter-gatherers, animal-breeder pastoralists, and agricultural groups.

Mehta (2006) edited the volume of 'Development of Indian Tribes'. Tribals constitute a share of about eight percent of the country's population and spread over about 1/5 part of the country's land. The term development has been used in wider sense in this book. Developments of tribals are in very slow process, it requires increasing opportunities to all the people for better life. Special focus about the tribal development has been given for Madhya Pradesh state in this book.

K.L. Sharma's (2007) 'Indian Social Structure and Change' highlights the hierarchy and inequality prevail in Indian society based on caste, kinship and religion. After the independence, the scheduled castes and tribes have been benefitted a lot in the fields of education and employment. The author has analysed the drawbacks of the hierarchical society.

Different social scientists, organisations are involved in active research on specific tribal communities, their origin, growth, diffusion, and development. The Nagas of the Indo-Burma borderlands were among the first Indian tribes to become the subjects of detailed investigations. During the first quarter of the 20th century British officials such as J. F. Hutton, and J. P. Mills, who spent many years of their career in the Naga Hills and deeply attached to the people in their charge, undertook intensive studies of the economic, social and religious aspects of Naga culture, and a series of monographs, including such standard works as the *Angami Nagas* (1921) and *Sema Nagas* (1921) by J. H. Hutton and the *Rengma Nagas* (1937) by J.P.Mills laid the foundation for the exploration of tribal societies in India. D.N. Majumdar (1937) enlightens the reader in his book 'A Tribe in Transition: A Study in Culture Pattern' as to how the *Ho* tribal community has preserved his tribal and regional culture pattern, while reacting by suitable but not too violent changes to influences of culture contact. Dutta-Majumder (1956) deals with primitive Santal people living in India. He has presented the transformations of Santal people from primitive to assimilated conditions. M. Ganguli (1984) has presented the Naga tribes inhabited in the steeply ridged and wild forested country between the Brahmaputra valley of Assam and the Boarder of Burma in his authoritative work 'A Pilgrimage to the Nagas'. The narrative is based on her intimate knowledge of the land and its people, history and culture, its problems and progress. Purkayastha, N. (2012) deals with the Oraon people living in Barak Valley of Assam. In his doctoral thesis he has described the origin of Oraon tribal group, their engagement in tea estates, government policies and transformation of subsistence economy to market economy. Das, Roychoudhury & Raha (1966) deal with the tribal people of Malpaharias living in West Bengal in their monogram 'The Malpaharias of West Bengal'. This study is dealt with the Malpaharia culture of plains of West Bengal and plateaus of Bihar (present Jharkhand). The study focuses on changes of their livelihood from the original place of Jharkhand to the plains of West Bengal. Das and Raha (1967) also describe on Rabha tribal group in another volume 'The Rabhas of West Bengal'. The authors illustrated about the cultures of the Rabha people, a little known Scheduled Tribe community of West Bengal. In Jalpaiguri (including present Alipurduar

district) the Rabhas are mainly settled. The study mainly braces and presents the life and activities of the agriculturist Rabhas living in the villages.

A few researchers also work on the tribal health status though most of their outcomes are publishing papers. Bala & Thiruselvakumar (2009) made intensive researches on tribal health care facilities and communicable diseases spread among the tribal people in India. Their research focuses on sickle cell trait, respiratory tracts, sexually transmitted diseases, malaria, falciparum and diarrheal diseases. They made suggestions to overcome the diseases by promoting health infrastructure and promoting doctors from the tribal intelligent students. Toppo (2016) discusses about the Changing food pattern of tribal women of Jharkhand state mainly of Gulma district.

The tribal people of Dooars are mainly engaged as plantation workers. Coming to a review of works on tea plantation in particular, it may be mentioned that scholars of various disciplines other than Geography have contributed significantly to this field of study from their own angles. In this regard references may be made to the works of few devoted scholars. S.K. Bose (1954) has dealt with both the aspects of capital and labour in the Indian tea industry in his book 'Capital and Labour in the Indian Tea Industry'. The author observed that the total monthly remuneration of worker fell far short to what should have been a minimum living wage. Awasthi (1975) in his book 'Economics of Tea Industry in India' has presented a detailed account of the history, growth and development of tea plantation and manufacturing with special reference to Assam. The author has made attempt to study the economic aspects of the tea industry and tried to present a coordinated analysis of different economic aspects of tea industry in India. Das Gupta (1986) has examined the historical process of evolution of plantation labour system in parts of Assam. Dwibedi (1999) discusses on different factors which are related to growth and fluctuation on tea production in Dooars, causes several unemployment of tea labourers during low production. The book also offers a scope for identifying different economic and technical factors which influence the production of tea and thus help in evolving appropriate strategies for development of tea industry. Sharma & Das (2008) made valuable discussions on the socio-economic agonies of tea garden workers of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Darjeeling. The workers are mainly in-migrants from various parts of the country and immigrants of Nepal. After joining the jobs of tea plantations, they have been barricaded within the plantation enclaves only having little exposure outside the plantation world. The authors thought that the plantation workers agonies have been hardly known to the civilized world of human society.

A few geographical researches have been done regarding the tea plantation and tribal people in general and labour in particular. Banerjee (1954) in his paper seeks to analyse the physiography of West Bengal to determine its role on the concentration of the tea gardens in the northern part of the state, mainly in the Darjeeling and Himalayan foot hills. Phangsho (1989) in his doctoral thesis describes the Karbis, a group of tribal people living in the hills, plateaus and plains of the central part of North-East India, especially in Assam. The author highlighted the rapid changes of political and socio-economic fields among the Karbi-Anglong and he thought that under the privileges offered by the District Council, the economic condition of the Karbi-Anglong district has improved to a greater degree than that of the Karbis living outside it. Gouri Bardhan (1991) presented the tribal communities living in Tripura. She discussed in her doctoral thesis about the tribal demography, social characteristics and other economic activities. Housing standards, farming practices, food habits, marriage, festivals and musical performances are described by her in lucid manners. Dutraj (2014) studies the livelihood shifts of tribal plantation workers in his research works. In his works the development of tea plantation activities and its gradual changes have been focused. He analysed the determinants and consequences of such shifting of occupations.

So far very limited works has been done on socio-economic conditions of tribals of North Bengal in general and Dooars in particular. However contributions are made by Charu Chandra Sanyal, Bimalendu Majumdar, Sanjay Kumar Ray and Mahendra Debnath. Charu Chandra Sanyal was the son of soil and a social reformer of Jalpaiguri. He has written research monographs on tribes living in Dooars. His focuses on Mech, Toto and Limbu are fundamental research works. Charu Chandra Sanyal's (1973) authoritative writing on Mech and Toto, two primitive tribal groups was published by North Bengal University. Their livelihood, activities, cultures, customs are the main works of this book. The author personally investigated and surveyed the households of the Meches and Totos. Similar writing is found in his another monograph on Limbu people, published posthumously (2011). Limbu people are the inhabitant of lower Himalayas from the Punjab to the eastern end of Assam is a Mongolian tribe.

Bimalendu Majumdar (1998) focuses on the Totos, a primitive tribal group concentrated only in Totopara, a tiny Himalayan-hamlet located in the Indo-Bhutan border of Alipurduar district of West Bengal. Till the fifties of the last century the village was isolated from the rest of the District and was mono-ethnic in nature. During the past few decades the village has been converted into a multi-ethnic one with the settlement of the exotic communities due to encroachment of land of the Totos, causing constant threat to the culture

and economy of the Totos. The traditional village administration system has also been destabilised. This study is an attempt to depict the process of adaptation, which has been followed by the Totos to cope with the changed socio-economic and demographic situation. In another study on Totos, Majumdar (2013) focuses on tremendous changes of their folklore due to their close contact with the outer world and exotic communities. Their oral traditions, especially the folk tales, have almost been extinct due to the absence of the traditional tale-tellers. Twenty-four folk tales of the Totos were painstakingly collected by the author and those are presented in the book including five tales in Toto language with English rendering. Dr. Majumdar, a devoted folklorist, has analysed the reflections of all the aspects of their oral tradition, particularly the folk tales, upon the plinth of sociological information.

Sanjay Kumar Ray (2008) in his monograph gives an outline of the work participation trend among the tribal population in North Bengal and highlights the areas of gender gap and gender discrimination in the use of women labour. It argues that feminization of some occupations like agricultural labour and casual labour in tea, and decline of women's share in the cultivator category are the clear indications of economic marginalization of tribal women.

Debnath (2014) becomes successful to interpret the marginalised tribal communities living in North Bengal, especially in Dooars in a single Bengali medium volume. Rabha, Bodo, Garo, Toto, Dukpa, Sherpa, Limbu, Rai, Bhutia, Lepcha, Munda, Lohara, Santal, Turi, Oraon, Dhimal, Chikbaraik, Nagesia, Tamang, and Mongor- these all tribal communities have been discussed in his book from the point of view of society and economy.

The above survey of literature shows that the geographic study on tribes in general and Dooars in particular is still in its formative stage. Very little has been done so far. Research work on this topic relevant to that of the researcher of this thesis, probably, has not been done so far by any geographer.

1.10 Conclusion

Tribes are generally backward, economically as well as educationally. But they have rich cultural heritage. To protect against injustices done to them and to bring them up with other sections of society, the constitution of India has granted them special concessions for their promotion. Tribal people have been victims of exploitation by non-tribals for centuries. A strong sense of identity is prevalent among the tribes of India. Language, religion and magical belief and practices, food habits, styles of dress, patterns of habitation and dependence upon forest produce are important features of their life which make them distinct from non-tribal groups (Sharma, 2007). Their main problems are of poverty, unemployment,

indebtedness, backwardness and ignorance. In the perspectives of Mal subdivision of Dooars region, tea garden based tribal economy and society has the solidarity in all India phenomena. Here indigenous and immigrated tribes face a new challenge of their survival from subsistence to market economy.

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Chapter-2

PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY AREA

2.1 Introduction

The study area, Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district is geographically spread over along the foothill of the Himalayas. Historically, once it was the part of the Western Dooars during the British rule. The area bears the diversity in geology, soil, topography, climate, society, language and all other aspects. There are many rivers, terraces, alluvial fans, geological formations and forests. Immigration from the neighbouring countries and in-migration from the Chhotonagpur region causes mixture of different ethnic and socio-cultural groups within same administrative set up over the years.

2.2 Physical Background

From the geographical point of view, the region belongs to the Himalayan foothill. There are slight ups and downs; some areas are low and inundated by rivers during the monsoon period; others are slightly higher and remain always above water even when the rivers are in flood. The GP of Indong Matiali in Matiali block; Champaguri and Looksan in Nagrakata block are in higher locations. The GPs of Chapadanga, Lataguri and Moulani are even plain.

2.2.1 Geology

The foot hill area of Dooars is formed of comparatively recent rock formations. Hard rock is exposed along the northern border of Mal subdivision. Gneiss is exposed in Jiti-Bhutan boundary area. The steep lower Himalayan slopes composed of Daling series represented by phyllite, slate, schist and quartzite (Godwin-Austen, 1868). Near Nagrakata tea garden, red soil covers one metre thick black humus beds, develops extensively overlying the younger fluvial deposits of 5-6 meter thick composed of quartzite and gneiss boulder gravels. Sudden change of slope in this area, there formed alluvial fans and terraces. An anticlinal ridge at Chalsa and a synclinal valley at Matiali have a geological phenomenon in the Matiali block (Heim & Ganesser, 1939). The interfluves area between the rivers Mal and Murti is an alluvial fan composed of quaternary sediments characterised by clay, sand, pebble and boulders beds. There are four major terrace surfaces. Two East west scarps named Matiali and Chalsa that cut across the fan represent traces of the Main Boundary Thrust (MBT) and the Himalayan Frontal Thrust (HFT). There are two other NNW-SSE and NNE-SSW lineaments which partially guided the course of the Neora and Murti rivers (Goswami et al., 2013). The

Rangamati surface is covered with huge gneissic boulders which form a large fan-shaped surface around Samsing to the north of Matiali. These boulders were derived from the outlets of the Neora and Murti rivers from the mountains. This is known as 'Samsing Surface'. The entire area can be grouped into five geological formation units, namely: Shaugاون and Baikanthapur formations of un-oxidised weathered zone. Chalsa formations have yellow coloured sediments, Matiali formations have orange coloured sediments and the Samsing formation has red coloured sediments (Das & Chattopadhyay, 1979). The present Mal river course was fixed only after the formation of the higher terraces of the Neora and old Mal rivers, for while the higher river terrace was being formed. The Mal River joined the Neora river near Nakhati tea garden. In Bagrakot area the boundary between the mountain and foot-hill zone is well marked by the Main Boundary Fault which is clearly exposed along the banks of the Chel and Patharjhora rivers. Due to overridden the old and higher surfaces are not recognizable in this area (Nakata, 1972).

2.2.2 Relief

The relief characteristics of Mal subdivisions are undulating to even plain. There are tilted plains at the base of the Himalaya and is bounded in the north and south by 300 meter and 66 meter contour lines respectively (Bagchi & Mukherjee, 1983). Pronounced development of conjugal alluvial fans, produced by diverging drainage systems in the catchment areas of Tista and Jaldhaka is very much conspicuous in this section. Between the Neora and Murti rivers, there is a row of small mounds with steep escarpments to the south in the E-W direction around Matiali. These mounds are considered to have been initially a narrow strip of upheaval zone which was disintegrated by stream dissection into small mounds rising 60-90 meter above the surrounding surface to the south and 30-60 meter to the north. There is a tendency that the relative height of the surface from the river beds increases downstream from the outlets of rivers at mountain front ((Nakata, 1972). The Nagrakata upward block occupies between 200 meter and 400 meter in the Jiti Tea estate to the north between the river Diana and Jaldhaka. Asymmetrical topographic and geological features around Matiali and Chalsa have taken place as flexure cliffs. The Chalsa cliffs become steeper in the west than the east. Towards the south of the Mal block the area is homogeneous plain.

2.2.3 Soil

Soil of the region is mainly the product of the weathering materials in the upper area and fluvial deposits in the lower reaches. They have developed in the quaternary period. The Shaugاون formation is without soil cover, the Baikanthapur formation is black soil cover, the

Matiali is reddish brown, Chalsa is brown and the Samsing formation is Chocolate soil cover. The soil is mainly sandy-loam to loam and as such considered to have low water holding capacity. They are characterised by low fertility as are evidenced from their low nitrogen and potash contents.

Table 2.1 Classification of Soil Types in Mal Subdivision

Block	Cultivable area in hectare	Predominant Type		Other type(s)	
		Type	% of Area	Type	% of Area
Mal	18,340.0	Sandy-Loam	68.18	Sandy	31.82
Matiali	3852.8	Sandy	59.50	Sandy-Loam	40.50
Nagrakata	3478.0	Sandy	58.11	Sandy-Loam	41.89

Source: Annual Plan on Agriculture, 1984-85, Jalpaiguri.

2.2.4 Drainage

There are many rivers, streams and channels flowing through the region. The main rivers are the Tista and the Jaldhaka, The Tista is in west of Mal subdivision while the Jaldhaka divides the Nagrakata block in the east from the Mal and Matiali blocks on the West. From west to east the Gish, Lish and Chel rivers have joined the Tista. Mal, Neora, Juranti, Kurti, Diana and Murti are other rivers. The Mal and the Nor have joined to form the Neora which with the Chel, later on, has continued as the Dharta (Bagchi & Mukherjee, 1983). The rivers are flowing south eastward. The streams which are coming out from the lesser Himalaya are entirely rain fed and are generally non perennial. The area between the Mal and the Murti rivers is defined as a distinct alluvial fan with a radial drainage pattern and convex upward transverse profile (Goswami, Mukhopadhyay & Das, 2013). There are parallel drainage patterns in the foothills. There are some anomalies in the drainage pattern in the area, such as the E-W directed stream which interrupts the N-S directed parallel stream courses at Jiti, Baradighi areas etc (Nakata, 1972). This area is drained by the Mal, Neora, Juranti, Kurti and Murti rivers. The Neora and Murti rivers originate in the lesser Himalayas while the other rivers originate within the piedmont itself. Terraces are found along the banks of the rivers Neora, Murti, Kurti and Juranti. Some seasonal jhoras are there like Jiti, Patharjhora, Ghatia, Kuji Diana, Sukhani, Balujhora, Rangati, Tanatani etc.

2.2.5 Climate

The climate of the region is almost similar to the other parts of the state. But rainfall is higher due to proximity to the hills. There is a notable extremity in temperature and rainfall. The climate of the district as a whole is characterized by tropical monsoon. The cold season is from mid-November to February. This is followed by the hot season from March to May. The

period from June to September is the south west monsoon season. October to the mid-November is the post monsoon season. There is only one meteorological observatory in the district, located in the district headquarter. So the statistical records are related to the district headquarter.

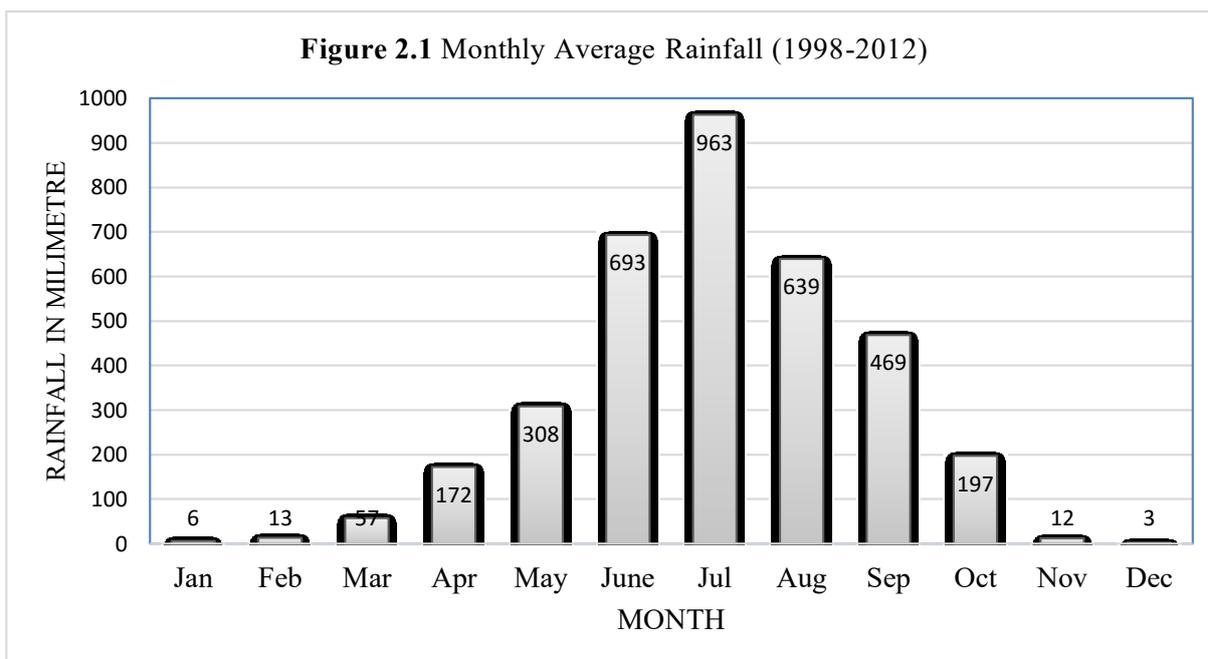
2.2.5.1 Rainfall

Long term rainfall data identify Jalpaiguri as one of the rainiest district in West Bengal with mean annual rainfall reaching more than 3500 millimetre of which 85% descends during the monsoon months between May and October. Most of the rainfall occurs at June to September. July is generally the rainiest month. Average annual rainfall is above 3500 mm. The variation of rainfall from year to year is not large. During the fifty year period, 1901-1950, the highest annual rainfall amounting to 147% of the normal occurred in 1921 while 1947 was the year with the lowest rainfall which was 58% of the normal. More than 25% rainfall occurs in the month of July. November to February is the driest season. Rainfalls in these four months are very little. December is the driest month in the year. The atmosphere is highly humid throughout the year. During the months from December to March, the relative humidity is less, being only between 50 percent and 70 percent. During the period from February to April, the afternoon relative humidity is comparatively lower, being only between 40 and 50%. During October to April, the sky is generally clear or slightly cloudy. The cloudiness increases from the month of May. On an average there are 116 rainy days in a year.

Table 2.2 Monthly Rainfalls in Jalpaiguri (1998-2012)

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
1998	0	8	112	153	205	1042	1169	1296	538	160	15	0	4698
1999	2	0	8	167	394	590	1060	948	250	313	4	0	3736
2000	3	17	15	152	400	1021	818	694	414	141	58	0	3733
2001	2	0	42	112	385	529	473	626	523	473	35	5	3205
2002	26	0	94	244	167	471	1319	145	343	117	2	5	2932
2003	8	61	103	202	260	630	1234	432	550	314	24	24	3842
2004	15	8	35	208	416	647	1307	436	668	171	9	4	3924
2005	17	5	132	207	230	438	782	648	254	353	7	0	3073
2006	0	7	17	98	404	625	760	242	637	201	15	11	3017
2007	0	63	45	201	222	511	946	717	701	2	0	0	3488
2008	15	06	64	173	251	678	967	987	291	99	0	0	3531
2009	0	0	27	163	254	670	715	738	250	336	0	2	3155
2010	0	2	74	159	396	900	1044	688	539	70	10	0	3882
2011	3	8	78	184	321	552	889	562	508	39	2	0	3146
2012	5	6	5	150	310	1096	1043	429	575	168	0	0	3787
Mean	6	13	57	172	308	693	963	639	469	197	12	3	3543

Source: IMD, Govt. of India



2.2.5.2 Temperature

The cold season starts by the November when temperature begins to drop. January is the coldest month with the mean daily minimum temperature at 10.7° C and the mean daily maximum temperature at 22°C. In association with cold spells in the wake of western disturbances moving eastwards, during January and February, night temperature may drop to a couple of degrees above the freezing point of water and frosts may occur. Temperature begins to rise by about the beginning of March; April and May are the hottest months. The mean daily maximum temperature in these months is 32°C and the mean daily minimum temperature is 21°C. The maximum temperature in summer months may sometimes reach 40°C or above.

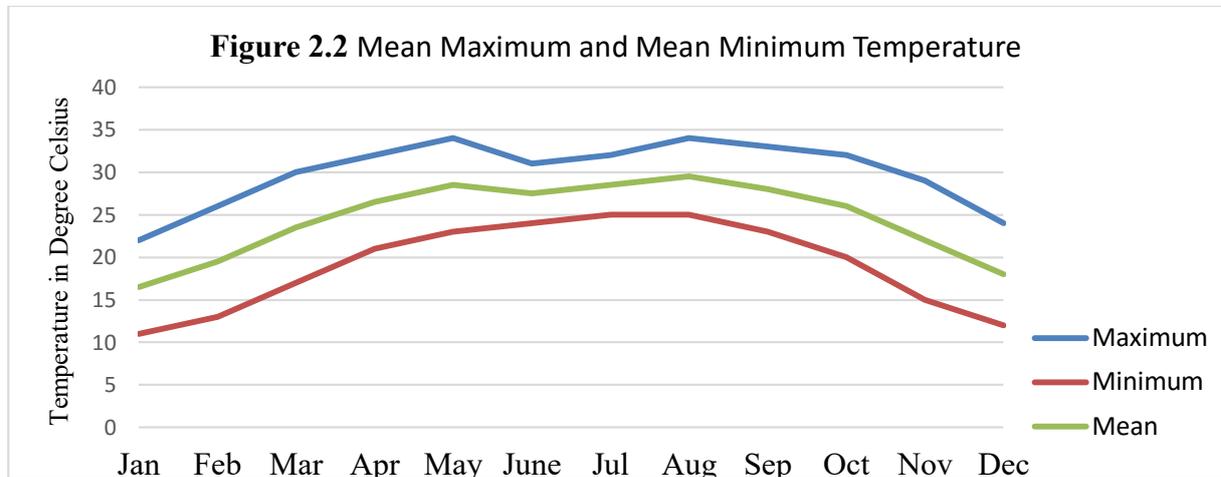
Table 2.3 Mean Maximum and Mean Minimum Temperature (Degree Celsius)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max	22	26	30	32	34	31	32	34	33	32	29	24
Min	11	13	17	21	23	24	25	25	23	20	15	12
Mean	16.5	19.5	23.5	26.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	28.0	26.0	22.0	18.0

Source: IMD, Govt. of India

Winds are generally light, except for short spells during thunder storms in the period from March to May, when they are stronger. During the post monsoons and winter months the direction of winds is variable. In the pre-monsoon months from March to May, winds blow mainly from north-easterly to easterly directions. In the monsoon months, the winds are

mainly from directions between north-east and south. Some of the cyclonic storms and depressions which originate in the Bay of Bengal in the south-west monsoon and post-monsoon seasons move in a northern direction and affect the area causing widespread heavy rain. Thunderstorms during the months from April to May are occasionally associated with squall and hail (District Gazetteer, 1981-82). These are actually the nor'westers. Fog occurs in winter months.



2.2.6 Natural Vegetation

The climatic condition has influenced the vegetation. The forests are mainly of three types, namely, tropical evergreen, mixed deciduous riverine scrub and sub tropical deciduous. Heavy rains and hot summer days have made the climate damp and warm, favouring the growth of wet and evergreen forest. Such forests are there in the region. Tropical semi-evergreen, moist sal, riverine khair-sissoo and the savannah are the different types met within the area. The silt deposits on the river beds nurture tall grasses followed by a few herbaceous and shrubby plants and scattered trees. These plants cover the waste land with savannah type vegetation. In riverine forests, as the trees increased in number the grasses got eliminated and other deciduous species of trees grew up, e.g. *Wrightia tomentosa*, *Dillenia pentagyna*, *Terminalia crenulata*, *Shorea robusta* (Sal) etc. The Sal here is one of the best qualities in India. In the south of Mal block mixed deciduous riverine scrub has been developed with trees like *Teak*, *Siris*, *Sal*, *Palash* etc. But now the forests have degraded because of settlement and agricultural expansion.

The Gorumara and Chapramari wild life sanctuary are two important forests in the study area. The Gorumara Wild Life Sanctuary covers an area of 5.32 sq. Km., abounding rhinoceros, elephant, tiger, bison, leopard, sambar, barking deer, wild buffalo etc. It was declared as wild life sanctuary in 1949 and spreads over lower Tandu, upper Tandu and Diana

forest ranges. The Chapramari Wild Life Sanctuary covering an area of 9.60 sq. Km., is declared as Sanctuary in 1941.

2.3 Socio-Cultural Background

The geographical boundaries of the district of the present day had been under the administrative control of various dynasties or countries either in fragments or as a whole during the different phases of history. This land, commonly known as Dooars had often been included in the kingdoms of Bhutan and Cooch Behar. The present Mal subdivision is the part of western Dooars of the Britishers earlier. The name Dooars may have evolved from the word 'Doors' or passages used by the Bhutanese to communicate with the riverine peoples of the south for trade and barter. It had seen the arrival of various Indo-Mongoloid tribes, who came to settle in this fertile land. Most of them continued to live on even today. The majority of the Indo-Mongoloid class are the Rajbanshis. Apart from them there are the Meches, the Rabhas and the Limbus who had immigrated crossing Mech river. Then the Britishers came. Many forest areas got cleared for tea plantation and agricultural lands. The planters were brought by the Britishers from Chhotonagpur plateau area. They are the Oraons, the Nageshias, the Mahalis, the Santals, the Malpaharias, and the Mundas etc. After Independence the Bengalese from present Bangladesh immigrated to this region. A considerable number of Namasudra people along with different Hindu caste groups have entered in this area from Bangladesh in order to defend themselves from Muslim dominance there (Dasgupta, 2013).

2.3.1 Population

Dooars area was sparsely populated before the introduction of tea plantation. The Koch-Rajbanshi, Mech or Bodo, Rabha and the Lepchas were the indigenous people in this region. After the introduction of tea plantation, the number of people has increased significantly by immigration from Nepal and Bhutan as well as from the Chhotonagpur areas. Thus the region grew into a new hub of multi-racial and multi-lingual people (Roy, 2002). In the plain areas infiltration of Bangladeshi people took shelter after independence.

As per 2011 census, Mal subdivision has a total population of 5, 69,711 distributing in three blocks of Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata and in a single town namely Mal. The rural area composed of 5, 44,493 populations. Average density of population is 474 per sq km. Among the three blocks highest density of rural population is found in Matiali block while the least density is in Nagrakata block. Among the GPs, highest density is in Lataguri (985/sq.km) followed by Moulani and Kranti. Minimum density is found in Sulkapara (157/sq.km). In Sulkapara, the upper Tendu forest is the largest Mouza where most of the area is uninhabited.

Table 2.4 GP-wise Density of Population of Mal Subdivision, 2011

Sl.	Name of GP	Population	Area (in Sq. Km.)	Density /Sq.Km
1	Bagrakot	35318	72.81	485
2	Odlabari	40294	65.55	615
3	Rangamatee	34072	56.78	600
4	Rajadanga	35374	91.94	385
5	Damdin	28037	48.27	581
6	Tesimla	14078	18.52	760
7	Kumlai	24252	40.26	602
8	Changmari	19020	43.12	441
9	Kranti	23826	31.31	761
10	Chapadanga	14583	41.58	351
11	Moulani	14857	19.13	777
12	Lataguri	15845	16.08	985
Mal block total		299556	545.35	549
1	Matiali Batabari-I	27211	39.41	690
2	Matiali Batabari-II	19848	67.13	296
3	Bidhannagar	23758	32.86	723
4	Matiali Hat	24407	31.68	770
5	Indong Matiali	22316	34.15	653
Matiali block total		117540	205.23	573
1	Angrabhasa-I	9335	22.85	409
2	Angrabhasa-II	16974	28.49	596
3	Sulkapara	25169	160.37	157
4	Champaguri	39391	63.83	617
5	Looksan	36528	121.94	300
Nagrakata Block total		127397	397.48	321
Mal subdivision (Rural)		544493	1148.06	474

Source: Computed by the Researcher based on Census 2011 data

The share of Scheduled Tribes total population of this subdivision is 40% with a varying degree of concentration across the blocks. The maximum concentration is found in Nagrakata block (49.16%) followed by Matiali (44.06%) and Mal (34.50%) blocks. Maximum concentrations of scheduled tribe population are found in Dandin (66.79%), Rangamatee (66.17%) and Indong Matiali (58.95%) gram panchayat areas. The areas of tea gardens are mostly crowded by tribal people. Very little amount of Scheduled Tribes population are noticed in Chapadanga (1.45%), Moulani (1.89%), Lataguri (6.6%) and Kranti (8.26%) gram panchayat areas. Following table will highlight the population figure as per 2011 census.

G.P-WISE POPULATION DENSITY MAP OF MAL SUBDIVISION IN 2011

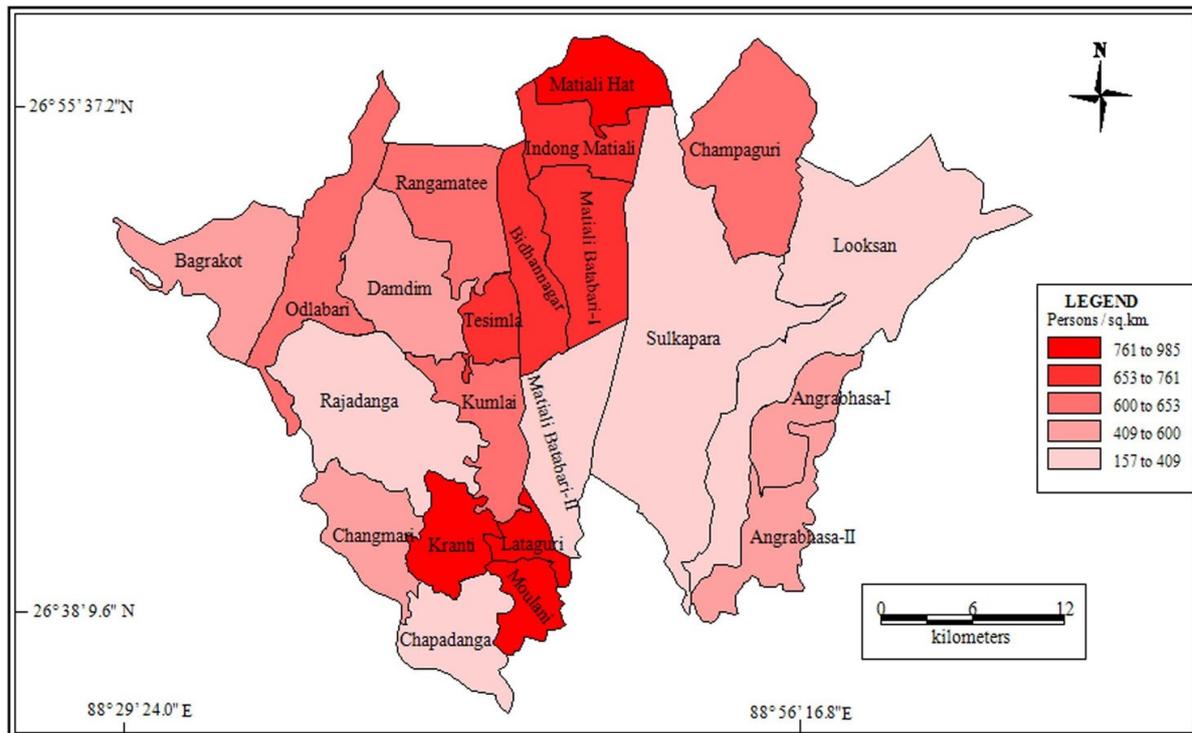


Figure 2.3 GP-wise Density of Population

Table 2.5 Block-wise Growth of Population, Mal Subdivision

Block	Population				Growth rate (%)			
	1981	1991	2001	2011	1981-91	1991-01	2001-11	Annual
Mal	183766	220093	265392	299556	19.8	20.6	12.9	2.1
Matiali	74649	93253	105906	117540	24.9	13.6	11.0	1.9
Nagrakata	70148	101782	115907	127397	45.1	13.9	9.9	2.7
Total	328563	215128	487205	544493	26.3	17.4	11.8	2.2

Source: Computed by the Researcher based on Census 2011 data

Over the years population has been increased in different blocks of Mal subdivision. Overall decadal growth in the subdivision was 26.3% in the decade 1981-1991, 17.4% in 1991-2001 and 11.8% in 2001-2011. So, the growth rate is gradually decreasing. Highest decadal growth was found in 45.1% in 1981-1991 at Nagrakata block and same has been declined to 13.9% in the next decade 1991-2001. Annual growth rate of the population is 2.2% in 30 years span period of 1981-2001 in rural areas of the subdivision.

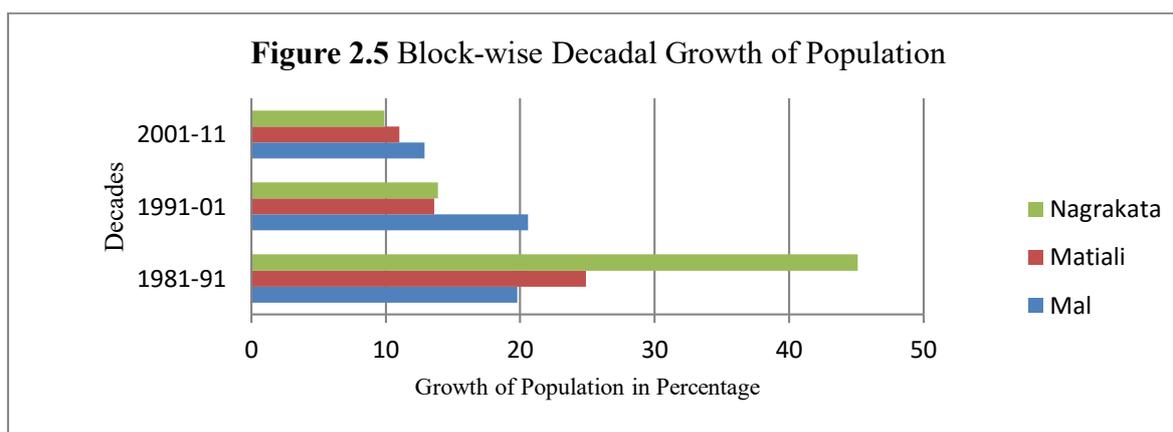
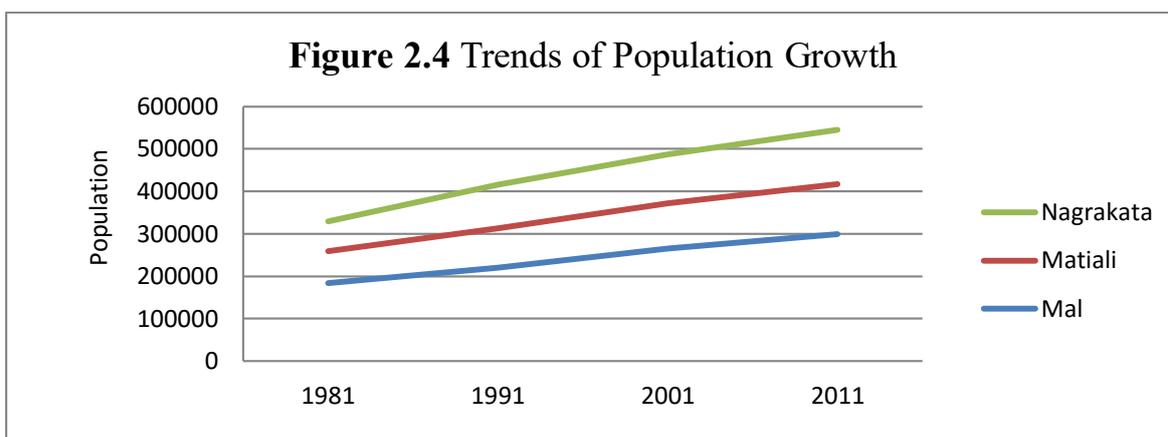


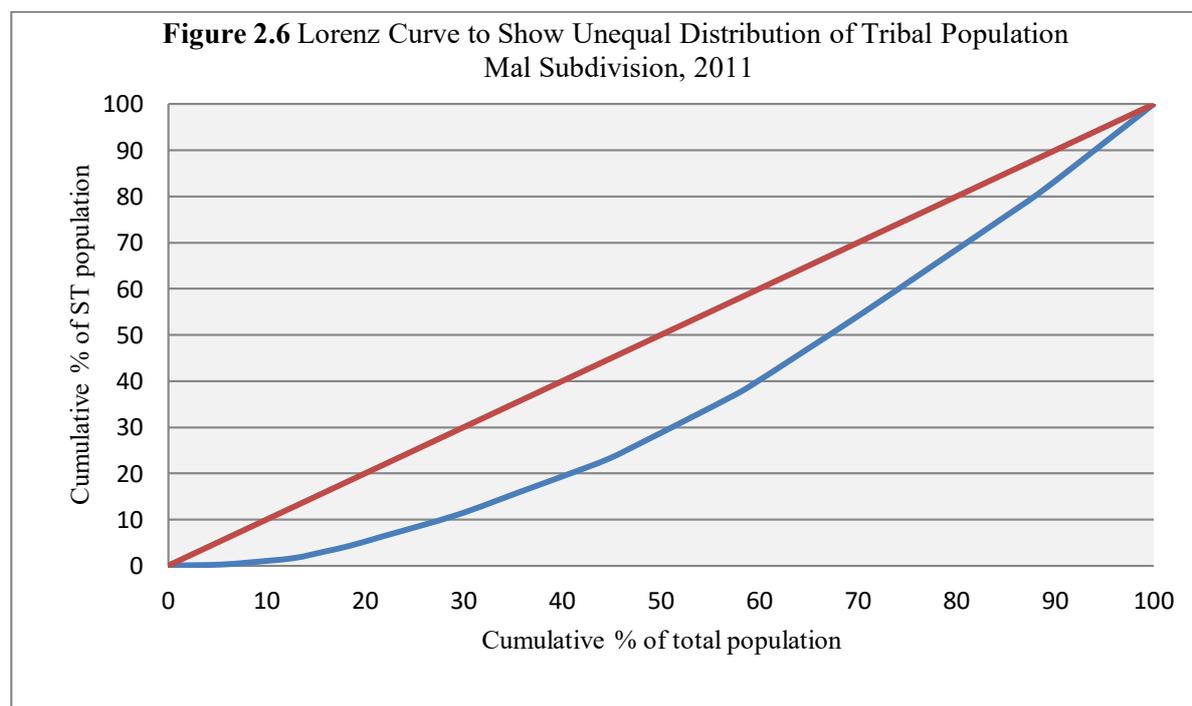
Table 2.6 Gram Panchayat-wise Distribution of Population in Mal subdivision, 2011

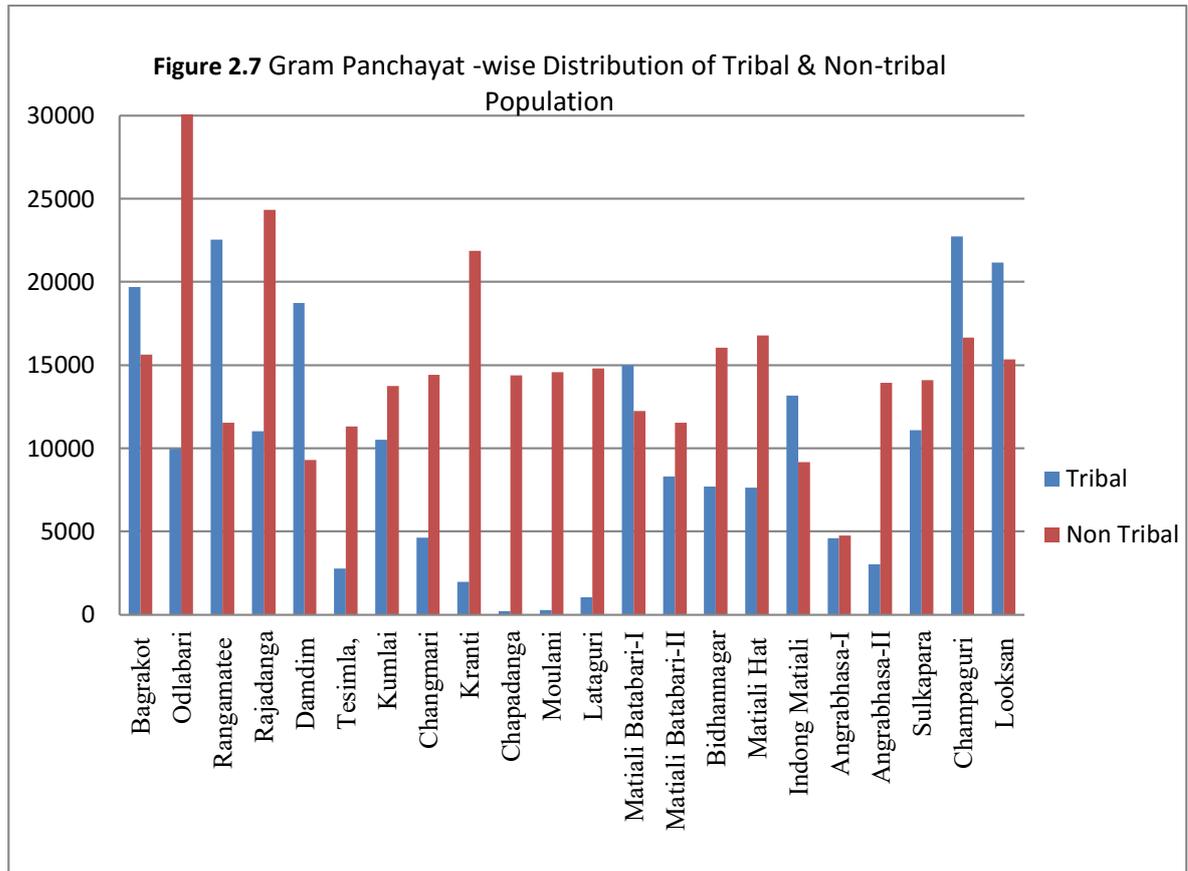
Sl No	Name of Gram Panchayat	Total Population	Scheduled Tribe (S.T) Population	Others (Non-tribal) Population	% of S T. Population to total Population
Mal Block					
1	Bagrakot	35318	19694	15624	55.76
2	Odlabari	40294	9973	30321	24.75
3	Rangamatee	34072	22546	11526	66.17
4	Rajadanga	35374	11028	24346	31.18
5	Damdim	28037	18727	9310	66.79
6	Tesimla,	14078	2765	11313	19.64
7	Kumlai	24252	10497	13755	43.28
8	Changmari	19020	4620	14400	24.29
9	Kranti	23826	1967	21859	8.26
10	Chapadanga	14583	212	14371	1.45
11	Moulani	14857	281	14576	1.89
12	Lataguri	15845	1046	14799	6.60
Mal block total		299556	103356	196200	34.50

Matiali Block					
1	Matiali Batabari-I	27211	14984	12227	55.07
2	Matiali Batabari-II	19848	8316	11532	41.90
3	Bidhannagar	23758	7704	16054	32.43
4	Matiali Hat	24407	7630	16777	31.26
5	Indong Matiali	22316	13155	9161	58.95
Matiali block total		117540	51789	65751	44.06
Nagrakata Block					
1	Angrabhasa-I	9335	4583	4752	49.09
2	Angrabhasa-II	16974	3039	13935	17.90
3	Sulkapara	25169	11081	14088	44.03
4	Champaguri	39391	22742	16649	57.73
5	Looksan	36528	21179	15349	57.98
Nagrakata Block total		127397	62624	64773	49.16
Mal subdivision total		544493	217769	326724	39.99

Source: Census of India, 2011

The inequality in distribution of Tribal population to total population has been shown by Lorenz curve below. However, the degree of inequality is mathematically measured by Gini co-efficient. A Gini co-efficient is a measure of inequality of a distribution. It is defined as a ratio with values between 0 (perfect equality) and 1 (complete inequality): the numerator is the area between the Lorenz curve of the distribution and the uniform distribution line; the denominator is the area under the uniform distribution line. The calculated value for the distribution is 0.28; that is there are 28% inequalities in the distribution of tribal population.





Following are the five tribal density zones in the subdivision based on percentage share of total population in each GP.

- a) Very high tribal concentrated GPs ($\geq 50\%$): There are three GP areas in Mal block namely Damdim, Rangamatee and Bagrakot; two GPs in Matiali i.e. Matiali Batabari-I, Indong Matiali and two GPs in Nagrakata i.e. Champaguri and Looksan belong to this category. So out of 22 GPs in the subdivision 7 have a concentration of more than 50% population share of tribal people. Most of such GPs are located in the maximum tea garden concentrated areas.
- b) High tribal concentrated GPs (35%- 49%): Kumlai, Matiali Batabari-II, Angrabhasa-I, Sulkapara- these four GPs are belonging to this group.
- c) Moderate tribal concentrated GPs (20%- 34%): Odlabari, Rajadanga, Changmari, Tesimla, Bidhannagar and Matiali Hat are belonging to the moderately tribal concentrated zone.
- d) Low tribal concentrated GPs (5%- 19%): Kranti and Lataguri have low tribal concentration of population.
- e) Very low tribal concentrated GPs ($< 5\%$): Tribal concentration is very low in two GP areas namely Chapadanga and Moulani.

2.3.2 Social Structure

Different social groups and religious groups can be termed as the base of social structure. In Mal subdivision, on an average 21.2% people belong to scheduled caste, 40% people belong to scheduled tribe and 38.8% people are belonging to general category as per 2011 census. Scheduled caste proportion is high in Mal (26.8%) block and lowest in Nagrakata block (13.8%). There are 21.2% people in rural areas of Mal subdivision who are belonging to scheduled caste. There are 49.2% people of Nagrakata block who belong to scheduled tribe category. Share of scheduled tribe population is lowest in Mal block (34.5%). Average ratio of scheduled tribe is 40% in the subdivision.

Table 2.7 Block-wise Distribution of Social Groups of Population

Block	General		SC		ST		Total	
	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%	Population	%
Mal	115800	38.7	80400	26.8	103356	34.5	299556	100
Matiali	48129	40.9	17622	15.0	51789	44.1	117540	100
Nagrakata	47147	37.0	17626	13.8	62624	49.2	127397	100
Total	211076	38.8	115648	21.2	217769	40.0	544493	100

Source: Computed by the Researcher based on Census data

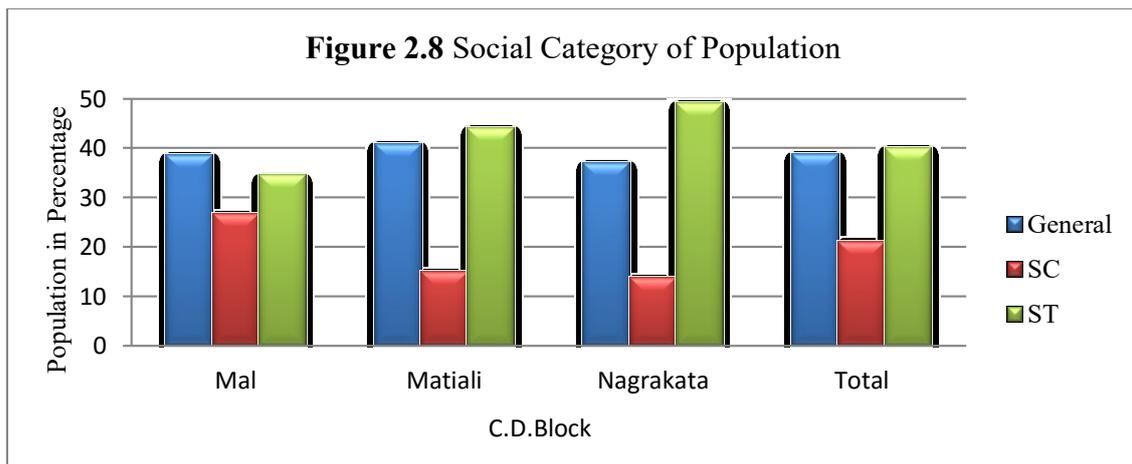
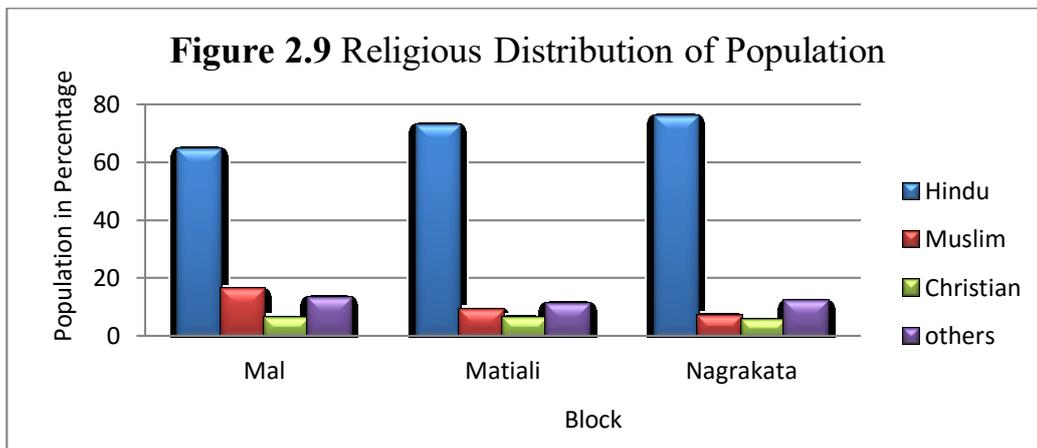


Table 2.8 Block-wise Distribution Religious Groups of Population in Mal Subdivision

Block	Hindu		Muslim		Christian		Buddhist		Others		Total
	Popn.	%	Popn.	%	Popn	%	Popn	%	Popn	%	
Mal	193471	64.6	48337	16.1	18811	6.3	3182	1.1	35755	12	299556
Matiali	85651	72.9	10797	9.2	7575	6.4	1736	1.5	11781	10	117540
Nagrakata	96828	76.0	8881	7.0	6944	5.5	2567	2.0	12177	10	127397
Total	375950	69.0	68015	12.5	3330	6.1	7485	1.4	59713	11	544493

Source: Census 2011 data Computed

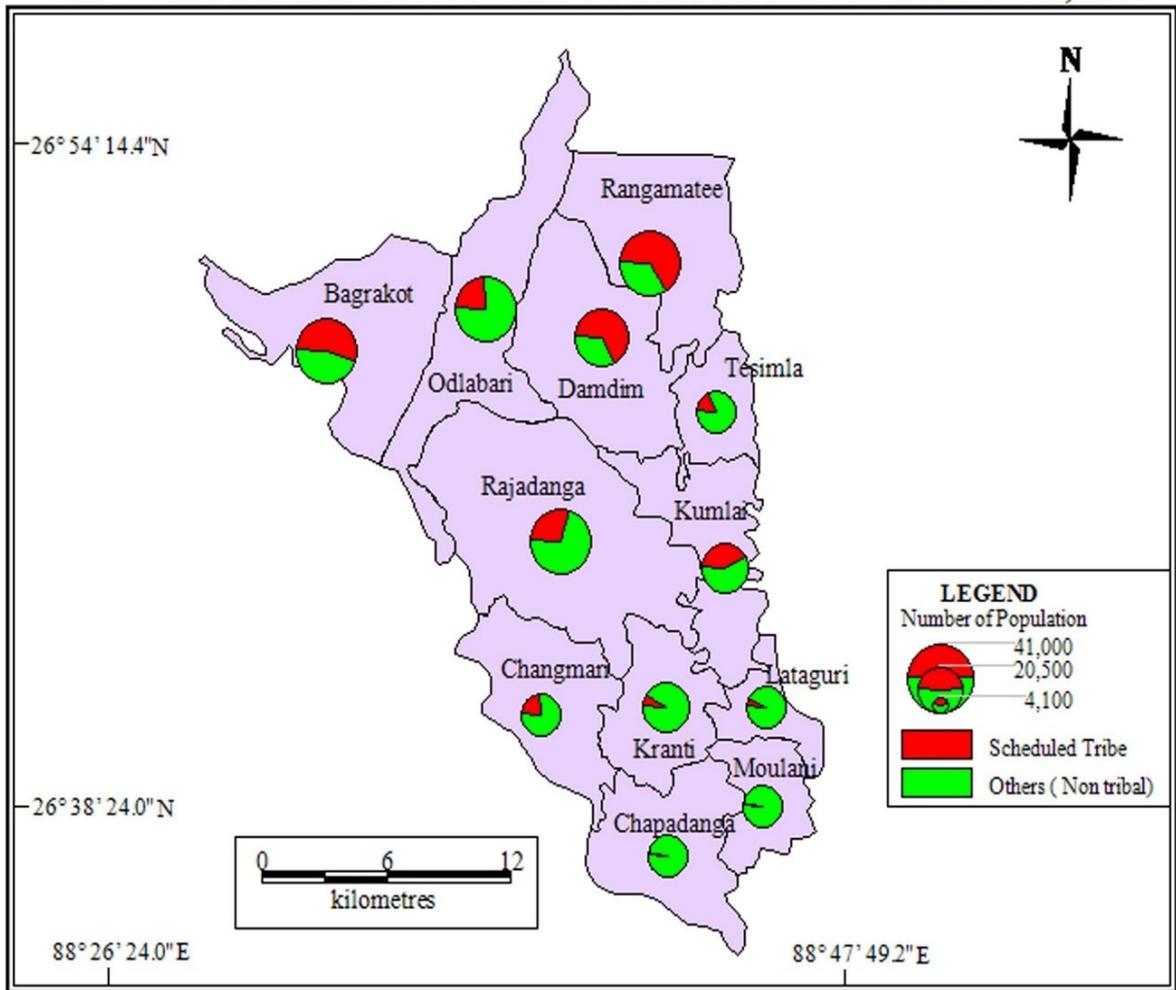
Hindus are majority in number among the religious groups of people. 69% people of the subdivision are belong to Hindu, 12.5% are Muslims, 6.1% are Christian, 1.4% are Buddhist and 11% are others or have not any specific religious believes. Hindu share is highest in Nagrakata block; Muslim share is highest in Mal block among the three community development blocks. Christianity is gradually increasing among the tribal people by influence of missionary activities.



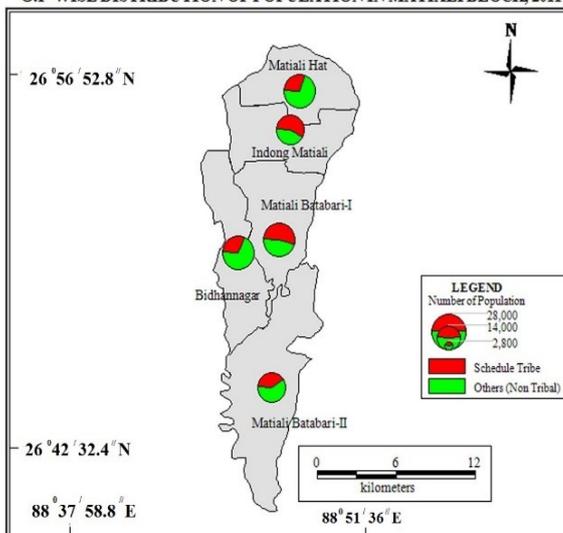
2.3.3 Culture

Though different varieties of races and their cultures got intermingled in the same land; each individual race retained their individual culture and heritage over the ages. Thus the phenomenon of 'Combined Culture' never got a chance to bloom here. In the serenity of the forests, beyond the misty curtain of the hills or by the gushing streams here and there developed and prospered various culture like - the Bhotia Culture, the Rajbangsi Culture, the Nepali Culture, the tribal culture, the Bengali culture together. Majority of Tribal Cultures are Folk Cultures. Folk Dances, Folk songs and Folk Lore forms are integral part of these cultures. And then comes the variety of festivals. Apart from the major festivals like the 'Durga Puja' and the 'Kali Puja', there is the '*Teesta Burir Puja*' epitomising the Life Line of this region the Teesta River; an occasion observed by the local Rajbanshis. '*Manosha Puja*' or the worship of the Serpent Goddess is another important festival of this region. '*Bhawaiya*' the folk song of the Rajbanshis, depict the love of both God and Man. It depicts the confrontation of Man and God. *Karom*, *Bishua*, *Jitia*, *Bandna* and *Gaburdeb* are some of the festivals of other tribes. Moreover, the rich tribal culture of Dooars associated with marriages are very notable.

G.P- WISE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN MAL BLOCK, 2011



G.P- WISE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN MATIALI BLOCK, 2011



G.P- WISE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK, 2011

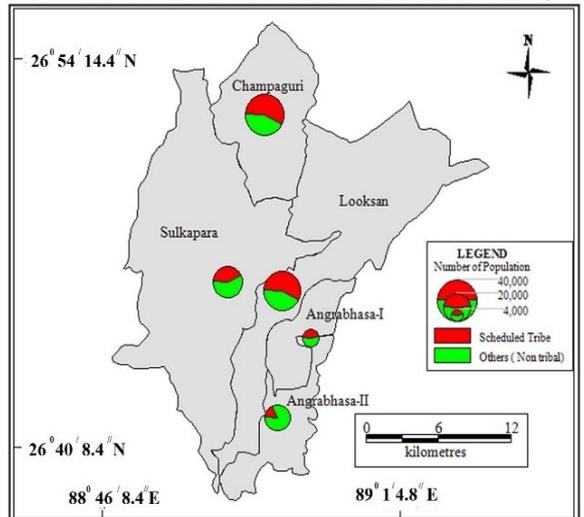


Figure 2.10 GP-wise Distribution of Population in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

2.4. Economic Background

Economy of the area largely depends on agriculture and tea garden. Tribal people are basically dependent on tea garden while the others are on agriculture. The traditional agricultural practices gain importance as the status of farming. A considerable amount of people depend on livestock farming, i.e. cattle and buffalo rearing, sheep, goat and pig rearing, poultry and allied activities etc.

2.4.1 Occupational Structure

As per census 2011 data, 39.02% people are in the category of workers in the subdivision. Matiali has the highest workers (42.71%) and Mal block has lowest workers ratio (37.94%). Among the workers, cultivators are 9.15%, agricultural labourers are 16.18%, household industrial workers are 1.65% and other workers are 73.02% in the subdivision. Agricultural labourers are more in Mal among the three blocks. In Matiali block maximum workers (83.04%) are engaged other than the three specific activities followed by Nagrakata (75.82%). The shares of other workers are lowest in Mal block (65.33%). This difference is due to maximum tea garden based economic activities in Matiali and Nagrakata block. Again, the non workers' shares are low in Matiali and Nagrakata as maximum tribal people are economically active in these two blocks. Among the workers, 28.65% are main workers and 10.37% are marginal workers.

Table 2.9 Block-wise Distribution of Population over different categories of workers

Block/Sub division	Total Workers (%)	Class of Total Workers (%)				Type of Workers (%)		
		Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind.workers	Other workers	Main workers	Marginal workers	Non Workers
Mal	37.94	12.09	20.88	1.70	65.33	27.94	10.00	62.06
Matiali	42.71	4.77	10.76	1.43	83.04	30.74	11.96	57.29
Nagrakata	38.12	8.50	13.99	1.68	75.82	27.09	11.03	61.88
Mal Subd.	39.02	9.15	16.18	1.65	73.02	28.65	10.37	60.98

Source: Census of India, 2011

2.4.2 Tea Plantation

Economy of this region is deeply much influenced by the tea garden based economic activities. Tea cultivation became possible and the tea gardens grew up in Dooars on account of appropriate soil, favourable climatic conditions and above all availability of land since the areas were declared non-regulated and the Government can acquire land for its purpose. In Terai, James White established the first tea garden in 1862 near Khaprail More of Matigara in Darjeeling district. The first tea garden in Jalpaiguri district was planted in Gazoldoba in the

year 1874 by Dr. Brougham (Grunning, 1911). Dr. Brougham appointed R. Hagauhton as manager who was a pioneer of tea plantation in Dooars region. First tea garden of Mal subdivision was established in Bagrakot in the year 1875.

The British Government declared the Dooars as non-regulated area for the purpose of using the land for colonial economy. In 1871 under the supervision of Mr. Becket the lands were divided in three categories viz. (1) Land for agricultural purpose, (2) Land for reserve forest and (3) Land for tea cultivation. As lands for tea estates were demarcated and acquisition of land were being continued the indigenous people of the study area, the Mech, the Rabhas and the Koch-Rajbanshis faced problems as they were dependent on their traditional village economy of subsistence agriculture, weaving, fishing and often hunting and were accustomed in living in the community-clusters of houses together. The tea planters then were forced to depend on outside labours. The majority of people in the southern and eastern Nepal were very poor. The British planters' eyes fell on the half-fed and famished people of Nepal. The British Government encouraged the immigration of the Nepalese in order to populate the sparsely inhabited zones of Dooars. But this was not enough supply for the the demand of labourers in Dooars, the tea planters in collusion with the Government decided to bring labourers from the Santal Parganas and Chhotonagpur plateau areas of the then Bihar (now Jharkhand) where large number of tribal as well as poor people namely Santals and Oraons lived without fixed and settled economy. These people for generations were dependent on jungles but the new forest policy of the British Government whereby felling of trees in reserved forests were prohibited and declared punishable by law, deprived them of their traditional ways of living in the forest enclaves. It was for that reasons, thousands of labourers emigrated from Chhotonagpur to the tea gardens of Dooars (Sunders, 1895).

There are many age old tea gardens in Dooars occupied by merchants, traders and rich businessman or multinational groups. In this context some important tea estate owners' name may be mentioned: Goodricke group, Duncan's group, Diana group, Bijoynagar tea Company, Ellenbari tea company etc. Besides, there are many small tea gardens planted by small farmers and local people in their own land. Some small grower gardens were similarly established in Dooars area. According to the Tea Board of India, small growers are those whose plantation area is having 20 acres of land. They took tea cultivation because of assurance of better income over what they used to get from traditional agricultural practices (Sharma & Das, 2009). There are 84 big tea gardens in Mal subdivision. Among these, Chengmari tea garden is the largest tea garden having an area of 4577.53 acre of land located in Nagrakata block.

Table 2.10 List of Tea Gardens in Mal subdivision

Sl. No.	Name of the Tea Garden	Area (in acre)	Sl. No.	Name of the Tea Garden	Area (in acre)
1	Anandapur	1550.34	44	Toonbari	641.45
2	Bagrakot/ III & IV	1407.50	45	Upper Neora	318.41
3	Bagrakot/I	308.49	46	Washabarie	1131.15
4	Bagrakot/II	287.30	47	Aibheel	1596.40
5	Baintbari	879.54	48	Baradighi	2128.73
6	Baintgoorie	2628.72	49	Chalauni	1917.38
7	Balabari/Ranichera	1113.67	50	Chalsa/I	1456.14
8	Barron/I	754.44	51	Chalsa/III	88.29
9	Barron/II & III	1310.45	52	Engo	397.91
10	Barron/IV	474.87	53	Indong	1829.52
11	Chaity (Ranichera)	198.18	54	Batabari	29.22
12	Chel(Ranichera)	391.10		Batabari	1175.64
13	Dalimkot	986.04	55	Killcott	1572.06
14	Damdim/I	766.45	56	Nagaisuree	2324.60
15	Damdim/II	58.16	57	Matiali -I	2436.07
16	Ellenbarie	946.26		Matiali -II	148.69
17	Gendavil	768.90	58	Nakhati	1063.92
18	Gurjanjhora	805.43	59	Samsing	1861.09
19	Haihaipathar-I/	505.12	60	Satkhaya/I & II	1743.04
20	Haihaipathar-II & III	977.07	61	Satkhaya/IV	290.81
21	Kalagaiti	592.99	62	Satkhaya/V	94.77
22	Kumlai	1195.69	63	Soongachi	1535.82
23	Malhati/Jogeshchandra	1383.43	64	Yong Tong	1244.03
24	Malnuddy	327.75	65	Zurantee	1925.86
25	Manabari	1329.07	66	Bamandanga	1228.65
26	Meenglass	1308.44	67	Bhagatpur	2413.19
27	Moneyhope / Leesh River	399.65	68	Carron	1435.60
28	Needam	881.95	69	Chengmari	4577.53
29	Neoranuddy	1365.99	70	Dharanipur)	1140.59
30	Nepuchapur	914.46	71	Ghatia	1868.35
31	Newglenco	1358.97	72	Grassmore	1893.45
32	Oodlabari	1539.83	73	Hilla	1640.29
33	Patharjhora	1398.05	74	Hope/ Thaljhora	1680.25
34	Patibari	509.10	75	Jiti	2308.12
35	Phulbari-I /Leesh River	615.97	76	Kurti	1647.16
36	Phulbari-II/Leesh River	250.17	77	Looksan	1846.48
37	Rangamatee	3526.59	78	Nagrakata	2281.50
38	Ranichera-I	774.63	79	Naya Sylee	1915.28
39	Ranichera-II & III /	548.15	80	Tondoo	584.85
40	Saogaon/Sonali	1054.92	81	Kalabari/I	767.90
41	Sishubari /Goodhope	1560.47	82	Kalabari/II	225.36
42	Sylee	1674.58	83	Kalabari/III	221.35
43	Kailashpur	705.57	84	Kalabari/IV	134.15

Source: www.jalpaiguri.gov.in

2.5 Infrastructural facilities

Infrastructures are the backbone of any development. Transport- communication, educational institutes, health facilities are the basic components of infrastructure. Without these facilities, socio-economic development is impossible. Mal subdivision provides the following infrastructure for the people living there.

2.5.1 Transport and Communication

Throughout the subdivision in rural areas of Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata, there are different govt. agencies to maintain the roads. These are P.W.D, Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samity, Gram Panchayat and central sponsored Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. The state PWD maintained 116.03 kilometre road in the subdivision, of which there are only 8 km road in Matiali block. Zilla Parishad has a total surface and un-surface roads of 287.63 kilometres and 170.42 kilometres respectively. Gram panchayat and Panchayat samity has 488.88 kilometre and 144.28 kilometres of surface and un-surfaced roads respectively. In the recent years Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana scheme has covered 144.28 km surfaced road in the subdivision. Besides, National Highway No. 31 has crossed Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata connecting places like Jalpaiguri, Maynaguri, Siliguri, Dhupguri, Coochbehar and Alipurduar etc. nearer destinations.

Table 2.11 Length of Roads maintained by different agencies, 2011-12 (in Km)

Name of Block	P.W.D.	Zilla Parishad		Gram Panchayat & Panchayat Samity		Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
		Surfaced	Unsurfaced	Surfaced	Unsurfaced	Surfaced
Mal	45.40	165.87	78.14	109.90	276.66	73.62
Matiali	8.00	53.44	40.08	108.55	156.80	53.18
Nagrakata	62.63	68.32	52.20	36.35	55.42	17.48
Total	116.03	287.63	170.42	254.8	488.88	144.28

District Statistical Handbook, Jalpaiguri, 2012

Due to high concentration of forests and tea gardens in some GP areas of Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata block, road connectivity is relatively poor than other parts of the subdivision. A large railway tract of North-east Frontier railway connecting New Jalpaiguri-Guahati is within the dense forest area. Important railway stations are New Mal, Chalsa, Nagrakata, Bagrakot etc. A new railway route has presently been activated between Changrabandha and New Jalpaiguri connecting the places of Maynaguri, Lataguri, Moulani, Chalsa, and New Mal.

2.5.2 Education

Educational institutes in the subdivision are fewer than the sadar subdivision of Jalpaiguri district. There are 281 primary schools, 22 middle schools, 17 high schools and 16 Higher Secondary schools in the rural area. The Matiali block has 3 higher secondary schools. Matiali and Nagrakata block has no general degree college. The only degree college of the subdivision is Mal Parimal Mitra Smriti Mahavidyalaya situated in the Mal block. There is no professional or technical institution in the subdivision. So the educational infrastructures in these blocks are poorer than the other blocks of Jalpaiguri district.

Table 2.12 Educational Institutes by Number in Mal Subdivision

	Primary School	Middle School	High	H.S. School	General College	Technical School/College
Mal	156	13	10	8	1	-
Matiali	69	6	4	3	-	-
Nagrakata	56	3	3	5	-	-
Total	281	22	17	16	1	0

District Statistical Handbook, Jalpaiguri, 2012

It is one of the important concerns to determine the ratio of educational institutes to the total population of an area. The ratio of primary school to total population in Mal block is 1:1920, Matiali 1:1703, Nagrakata 1:2275. The average ratio of Primary school to total population is 1:1938 in Mal subdivision. In case of number of High schools to total population in the blocks are 1:9663 in Mal, 1:9042 in Matiali, 1:11582 in Nagrakata. Average ratio of three combined block is 1:9900 in Mal subdivision.

2.5.3 Health

Health is one of the important keys of infrastructure. There are 95 sub-centres throughout the subdivision of Mal. In Mal and Matiali there is no any rural hospital. There is only one rural hospital in Nagrakata block. In Mal and Matiali block there are block primary health centres. There are seven primary health centres. So, the govt health centres are limited in the blocks of the Mal subdivision. There are 19 non-governmental hospitals in the subdivision. A few of them are run by the Christian missionaries.

Table 2.13 Medical facilities available in Mal Subdivision

Block	Sub-Centres	Rural Hospitals	Block Health Centres	Primary Health Centres	NGO/ Nursing Home	Total no. of beds	Total no. of doctors
Mal	51	-	1	3	10	214	14
Matiali	22	-	1	2	3	87	07
Nagrakata	22	1	-	2	6	140	12
Total	95	1	2	7	19	541	33

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Jalpaiguri, 2012

Number of health centres in a region not always speak about the health status rather there are considerations of number of hospital beds and number of doctors. There are 33 doctors and 541 beds in the hospitals of the subdivision. Considering the ratio of doctor and population, it is found that in Mal block the ratio is 1:21397, Matiali 1:16791, Nagrakata 1:10616. Average ratio of doctors and population is 1:16500 in Mal subdivision. It means that a doctor is deployed for more than 16500 population. The ratio of hospital beds to population in the Mal block is 1:1400, in Matiali 1:1351, in Nagrakata 1:910. The average ratio of hospital beds to total population in the subdivision is 1:1006. District health condition is better in Sadar subdivision than that of Mal subdivision in respect of above two ratios. Doctor to population ratio is 1:941 and hospital bed to total population is 1:7050 in Sadar subdivision.

2.5.4 Drinking water

Clean drinking water is a basic human need. Unfortunately, more than one in six people still lack reliable access to this precious resource. The problem is particularly acute in the developing world. Water is a fundamental human need. Each person on Earth requires at least 20 to 50 liters of clean, safe water a day for drinking, cooking and simply keeping themselves clean. Polluted water is not just dirty, it's deadly. The United Nations considers universal access to clean water as a basic human right, and an essential step towards improving living standards worldwide (Global Health and Education Programme).

Table 2.14 Sources of Drinking Water in Mal Subdivision (Households in %)

	Tap Water	Well	Hand pump	Tube well	Spring/canal	others
Mal	18.7	59.6	3.9	4.6	0.2	13.0
Matiali	16.1	58.6	8.6	4.9	1.9	9.9
Nagrakata	26.6	45.4	7.1	3.9	2.9	14.1

Source: Census of India, 2011

2.5.5 Electricity

As per census data, kerosene is the main source of lightning in the rooms in two blocks of Mal (61.46%) and Nagrakata (61.11%). Electricity is the main source for Matiali block (63.17%). Solar source of lighting is very limited in the area. The tea gardens are mostly electrified but the people use kerosene for low cost and rationing of kerosene.

Table 2.15 Households having sources of Lightning in Mal Subdivision (in %)

Block	Electricity	Kerosene	Solar	Other Oil	Any other	No lighting
Mal	37.42	61.46	0.58	0.05	0.01	0.47
Matiali	63.17	35.77	0.66	0.15	0.03	0.21
Nagrakata	38.02	61.11	0.29	0.09	0.03	0.46

Census of India, 2011

2.6 Conclusion

The Mal subdivision shows variation in all three aspects of physical, socio-economic and infrastructural facilities. Physical characteristics are quite diverse in respect of topography, drainage, geology, natural vegetation etc. The social behaviours are diverse in respect of ethnicity, language, culture and religion. The infrastructural facilities i.e. health, education, electricity, transport-communication and source of drinking water are limited in the area. In conclusion it can be said that the diversity of these three aspects deserve more studies to understand the region properly as well as for the development of the living standard of the people of the region.

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Chapter-3

MAJOR TRIBAL GROUPS AND THEIR SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

3.1 Introduction

Man and Society has been the subjects of study in India from time immemorial. The *Manusmriti* gives an exhaustive social and structural account of the people of India. The main principles of the social structure presented by Manu are many but mention may be made of some, like i) the principles of *varna*, ii) all human beings are born unequal in their capacity of execution but all are equal in their capacity of enjoyment, iii) that society must be based on division of labour and so on (Vidyarthi & Rai, 1976). The tribal people in India live in the forests, hills and naturally isolated regions. On the basis of above three principles, the tribal life of of Mal subdivision can be highlighted.

3.2 Major Tribal Groups

Andre Beteille (1974) following N. K. Bose's classification, mentions language, religion and the degree of isolation as the main bases of classification of tribes. Beteille, however, considers the manner in which they make their living as the simplest way to arrange them into categories. Bose (1972) classifies the tribal people into three main groups: (1) hunters, fishers and gatherers; (2) Shifting cultivators; and (3) Settled agriculturists, using the plough and plough cattle.

B.K. Roy Burman (1972) opined that tribal communities are divided into five territorial groupings, taking into account their historical, ethnic and socio-cultural relations. These are: (1) north-east India, comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Tripura; (2) the sub-Himalayan region of north and north-west India, comprising hill districts of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh; (3) Central and East India, comprising West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Chhattishgarh, Andhrapradesh and Jharkhand; (4) South India comprising Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka; and (5) Western India, comprising Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharastra.

With the establishment of the Kamta-Koch kingdom in the 16th century Indo-Mongoloid group of people began to pour in North Bengal. Lepcha, Bhutia, Rabha, Garo and Mech who belongs to tribal community are mainly found in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts. Later on the Santal people began to pour in North Bengal immediately after the suppression of the Santal Rebellion (Choudhury, 1982). Later on when Britishers started tea plantations the Oraons, Malpahari, Kharias, Mundas, Lohars were bought from Chhotonagpur

region. The tribes of Dooars may be conveniently classified on the basis of their features and physique into two broad types- Dravidian and Mongoloid. The Oraons, Malpaharis, Kharias, Mundas, Lohars and Santals may be put under the Dravidian group while Mech, Rabha, Garo and Toto belongs to Mongoloid. H.H. Risley (1891) describes the Dravidians as “the form of head usually inclines to be dolichocephalic, but all other characters present a marked contrast to Aryans. The nose is thick and broad, and the formula expressing its proportionate dimensions is higher than in any known race, except the Negro. The facial angle is comparatively low; the lips are thick; the face wide and fleshy; the features coarse and irregular. The average stature ranges in a long series of tribes from 156.2 to 162.1 centimetres; the figure is squat; and the limbs sturdy. The colour of the skin varies from very dark brown to a shade closely approaching black”. The most important character of the later group are “a relatively short (brachycephalic) head; a broad face; a short wide nose, very low in the bridge, and in extremely cases almost bridge less; high and projecting cheek bones, and eyelids peculiarity formed so as to give the impression that the eyes are obliquely set in the head”.

The major tribal groups of the Mal subdivision are Oraon, Munda, Santal, Lohar, Mahali, Kharia, Tamang, Limbu, Malpaharia and Mech. In the present context, the mentioned tribal groups are discussed in respect of their identity, socio-economic conditions and spatial distribution over different Gram Panchayat areas of Mal subdivision.

3.2.1 The Oraons

Oraon, differently known as Uraon, Oran or Oram, is an aborigine inhabits in various states across in India as well as in Bangladesh. Majority of them living in Chhotonagpur region of Jharkhand are known as Kurukh. Earlier they used to live at Rohta plateau but dislodged by other people and accordingly migrated to Chhotonagpur where they settled in the vicinity of Munda-speaking tribes. Historians indicate this may have occurred around 100 BC. This tribal community in India is also known worldwide as they still believe in following age old custom of human sacrifice. These sacrifices are carried out during the famous Sarhul festival celebrated before cultivation of crops, as a mark of respect to please the local deity. Traditionally, Oraons followed ‘*Sarna*’ Dharma but due to influence of Hinduism, they started their religious beliefs as Hindu. *Sarna* followers perform religious rituals under shade of *sacred grove*. Christian missionaries found depression and starvation in the Oraons and influenced many of them to accept Christianity. Among Christian Oraons, there are both Roman Catholic Oraons and protestant Oraons (Purkayastha, 2012). Common

surname of the Oraons are Oraon, Minj, Lakra, Kujur, Tirkey, Kerkatta, Bhagat, Toppo, Ekka, Tigga, Beek and Xalxo.

Social Structure

There are total of 14 clans in Oraon tribal community like, Gari, Lakra, Kispotta, Runda, Tirky, Toppo, Linda, Ekka, Kuzur, Bek, Kerketta, Bandi, Minz and Khalkho. They are of dark complexion, and have projecting jaws and thick lips, while their forehead is low and narrow, and their eyes are meaningless and vacant (Dutt, 1984). The Oraons opted Christianity during British rule by missionaries. During the agrarian troubles the Oraons turned to Christianity, in order to gain protection from oppressions of their landlords and the money lenders (Dhan, 1967). Oraons prefer to marry an Oraon only. Christian Oraon often marry non communities like Munda, Kharia and Santal due to influence of Christianity. Some Oraons prefer marrying within Oraon following tradition. Marriage is arranged by guardians but opinion of bride and groom are respected. Child marriage is not allowed. S.C. Roy (1970) has listed a number of groups in an Oraon village in terms of their different occupations. The Oraons have also been classified on the basis of their tenure status. They have a rich and vast range of folk songs, dances, tales as well as traditional musical instruments. Both men and women participate in dance which is performed at social events and festivals. They pass their time in music and dance. They sing folk songs in which their life style emerges. Their dances and songs are deeply rooted in their social and cultural life. Mandar, drums, Nagra and Dholak and flute are main musical instruments they use.

Economic Activities

Oraons are primarily agriculturists. Both man and wife live as labourers, and the race is known as chief labouring class of Bengal. They believe that they were created for labour, and have a natural relish for it (Dutt, 1984). Many of them go out as emigrant coolies to various parts of the world. In Dooars of North Bengal, they are basically tea garden workers. There are two types of workers: permanent workers and seasonal workers. Their usual diet consists of rice, *dal* and vegetables. Fish and meat are occasionally consumed. What is striking, however, is that leave, flower, seed, root and fruit are an integral part of Oraon diet.

Spatial Distribution

Distributions of Oraons are noticed almost in all tea gardens and all villages of the Subdivision. Oraons are the major tribal group of the Dooars. In Mal subdivision about

40.31% of total tribal households are occupied by Oraons. In Mal block the share of Oraons to total tribes are maximum (44.71%) among the three blocks. In tea garden areas they are absolute majority in number. Maximum concentrations are to be found at Rangamatee GP (57.89%) followed by Bagrakot (52.80%) and Bidhannagar (52.20). Total share of Oraons households to total tribal households are very poor in non-tea garden areas e.g. Moulani (8.67%) and Lataguri GP (21.20%). Highest share of Oraon households to total Oraon households of the Mal subdivision are found in Rangamatee GP (14.36%). The next position goes to Looksan GP (12.49%) of Nagrakata block. Only 0.07% of the total Oraon households of the subdivision are found to live at Moulani GP. Similarly in Chapadanga and Kranti this community is very poor in concentration.

Table 3.1 GP-Wise Distribution of Oraon Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Oraon Households

GP Name	Oraon Households			GP Name	Oraon Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Oraon Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Oraon Hslds
Bagrakot	2112	52.8	11.64	Matiali Batabari-I	955	28.94	5.26
Odlabari	589	28.05	3.25	Matiali Batabari-II	876	48.67	4.83
Rangamatee	2605	57.89	14.36	Bidhannagar	783	52.2	4.32
Rajadanga	907	39.43	5.00	Matiali Hat	393	24.56	2.17
Damdim	1497	42.77	8.25	Indong Matiali	1026	36.64	5.66
Tesimla	325	59.09	1.7	Matiali Block	4033	36.66	22.23
Kumlai	803	36.5	4.43	Angrabhasa-I	385	42.78	2.12
Changmari	325	32.5	1.79	Angrabhasa-II	225	34.62	1.24
Kranti	145	36.25	0.80	Sulka para	822	34.98	4.53
Chapadanga	15	30	0.08	Champanguri	1022	21.74	5.63
Moulani	13	8.67	0.07	Looksan	2265	51.48	12.49
Lataguri	53	21.2	0.29	Nagrakata Block	4719	36.3	26.01
Mal Block	9389	44.71	51.76	Mal Subdivision	18141	40.31	100.0

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.2 The Mundas

Munda is the tribal community of South East Asia. The Munda Tribes are highly respected people from the time of pre-Independence of India. Birsa Munda is the most respected Munda person who turned into a Prophet and was freedom fighter in the Indian freedom struggle. The Munda are an ethnic tribal group originating in the Chhotonagpur plateau. They originally spoke the Mundari language, which belongs to the Munda sub group of the Austro-Asiatic languages (Ricchio et al, 2011). They are likely descended from the Austro-Asiatic migrants from Southeast Asia. The Munda are found across Assam, Orissa,

West Bengal, in addition to Jharkhand. They are also found in Bangladesh. This tribal ethnic group is one of the largest tea tribes in India. Common Munda surnames in the Dooars are Munda, Horo, Nagesia and Baxla.

Social Structure

Social arrangements of Mundas are in basic pattern and thereby very simple. Munda People follow their own indigenous India religion referred to as Sarnaism. Sarnaism reveals the belief in a God called Singbonga, the God of Mundas, who is neither the sun nor a God that would dwell in the sun, though he is in the Heaven of *Sarnaism*. With the arrival of British colonialism, Christian missionaries came to preach to the tribals. A large number of Mundas accepted Christianity. But still, the majority of Mundas saved their religion from annihilation. Today, because of their efforts and strength from their beliefs, the Majority of Mundas adhere to the indigenous religion of their ancestors. The surname of Mundas defines their identity. Many surnames are common among other tribes with minute variations. Some of the surnames are: Aind/Dungdung, Dhan/Baba, Bading, Bage, Bagsuri, Bajrai, Balmuchu, Barha, Barla, Barjo, Baru, Budu, Mundu, Linda, Kandır, Jatrom etc. Munda people are involved in agriculture. For this reason Munda people continue to show respect to the seasonal festivals of Mage, Phagu, *Karam*, *Sarhul*, and *Sohrai* etc.

Economic Activities

Since the primitive times Munda people have been wandering and hunting, later they became settled agricultural cultivators. Munda people are excellent in Basket work and weaving. With the help of reservation policy of Government of India listing Munda people in Scheduled Tribes plentiful of them have been now employed in various government sectors especially Indian Railways. In Dooars of Jalpaiguri district Mundas are engaged in agricultural activities. Most of them have no lands. So they use to cultivate others' land as *bargadars*. Traditional adhiary system is dominated there. Among the tribal groups in this region, the Mundas are mostly educated hence they are engaged in different govt. services. Administrative ranks are also occupied by them.

Spatial Distribution

Mundas are second major tribal groups in the Mal subdivision of Dooars. In Mal subdivision about 10% households of the total tribal households are occupied by Mundas. Maximum concentrations of Mundas in respect of total tribal households are occurred in

Sulkapara GP (53.32%) followed by Looksan (40%) and Odlabari (20%). There are eight such GPs where the Munda households are more than 10% of the total tribal households. Highest share of Munda households to total Munda households of the Mal subdivision are found in Champaguri GP (27.76%). The second and third position goes to Rangamatee (11.12%) and Odlabari (9.33%) respectively. Huge concentration of Mundas occur in Indong Tea Garden mouza and Juranti Tea Garden of Indong Matiali GP; Matiali Tea Garden mouza of Matiali Hat GP.

Table 3.2 GP-Wise Distribution of Munda Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Munda Households

GP Name	Munda Households			GP Name	Munda Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Munda Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Munda Hslds
Bagrakot	211	5.28	4.68	Matiali Batabari-I	215	6.52	4.76
Odlabari	421	20.05	9.33	Matiali Batabari-II	121	6.72	2.68
Rangamatee	502	11.16	11.12	Bidhannagar	88	5.87	1.95
Rajadanga	206	8.96	4.56	Matiali Hat	225	14.06	4.99
Damdim	312	8.91	6.91	Indong Matiali	150	5.36	3.32
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	799	0.47	17.70
Kumlai	167	7.59	3.70	Angrabhasa-I	52	8.33	1.15
Changmari	103	10.30	2.28	Angrabhasa-II	75	12.00	1.66
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	78	53.32	1.73
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	1253	6.43	27.76
Moulani	7	4.67	0.16	Looksan	302	40.00	6.69
Lataguri	25	10.00	0.55	Nagrakata Block	1760	13.54	39.00
Mal Block	1954	9.30	43.30	Mal Subdivision	4513	10.03	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.3 The Santals

The Santals are a nomad race, believed to have emigrated from the northern parts of India. The Santals are absolutely the best specimen of the wild tribes in India. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee thought that the word 'Santal' came from *Samantapal* meaning border security. Grierson opined that the word is derived from *Kherwat*. The Santal Parganas of present Jharkhand state is mostly inhabited by the Santals. They spread out in all the districts of West Bengal from there. In Dooars of Jalpaiguri district Santals are found almost everywhere. They are short heighted, well-made, and active man, having a round face, and the thick lips, high

cheek-bones, and spread nose, straight haired. Common Santal surnames are Murmu, Tudu, Hansda, Hembrom, Soren and Santal etc.

Social Structure

The tribal divisions of Santals are: the Saran, Murmu, Marli, Kisku, Besara, Hansda, Tudi, Baski, Hemroo, and Chorai; but they do not materially differ from each other in any respect. The chief God of all these groups is *Sing Bonga*, the Sun-God. The women pay great respect likewise to the elephant, and touch the earth with their foreheads before him, praying him to bless their children, who are seated in perfect confidence at his feet. The Santals are admirer of nature, and never fell down any useful or ornamental tree, which gives them clearings a park-like and unmistakable appearance; and they enjoy life better than other people of their same grade, being immensely fond of music and dancing. Their flute is a simple instrument made of the bamboo, but gives out deep, rich tones; and every village has a dancing ground where the youths and maidens meet in the evening to dance and sing. All marriages in the traditional Santal society are love matches. The selection is said to be preceded by a beastly festival, named *Bandana* which is held in the month of January, and lasts for six days. Polygamy is permitted, but seldom has recourse to; and the wife is always treated with kindness. Divorces are allowed in case of maladjustment. The chief ornaments in use among both sexes are flowers and feathers, and also cowtail-hair necklaces, which are very neatly manufactured. The women also wear on their arms, ankles, and throats ornaments made of brass and bell- metal, which are excessively heavy; and the love of the husband is in this sense, a sore burden to the wife (Dutt, 1984).

Economic Activities

Santals are good hunters, good herdsman, and good agriculturist, and thereby self dependent in everything. But they are mostly settled agriculturalists (Sharma, 2007). Santals always reclaim the jungle they come to inhabit, carefully collect all their products. In Dooars areas the Santals are either agriculturalists or agricultural labourers. The hut of the Santal is well made, and well raised. Its walls are made of matting, or hurdle, or thin sticks smeared over with mud; and owing to his love of colours, a grey appearance is often given to them by their painting with different shades of red, white, and black, according to the owner's fancy. The Santals usually have large family to accommodate in a house.

Spatial Distribution

The Santals are the third major tribal community of the Mal subdivision. In every GP areas of the three blocks of the subdivision, the presence of the Santal households have been noticed. In Mal subdivision about 8.43% of the total tribal households are occupied by Santals. Maximum concentrations of Santals in respect of total tribal households occurs in Chapadanga GP (64%) followed by Moulani (51.33%), Kranti (36.25%) and Lataguri (18.40%). Almost in all GPs, shares of Santal households to total tribal households are significant in number. Highest numbers of Santal households are found in Damdim (440) followed by Matiali Batabari-I (422). Highest share of Santal households to total Santal households of the Mal subdivision are found in Damdim GP (11.63%). The second and third position goes to Matiali Batabari-I (11.13%) and Rajadanga (7.96%) respectively. In Damdim Tea Garden mouza of Damdim GP and Jogesh Chandra Tea Garden mouza of Changmari GP, the Santals are densely concentrated. So, it may be said that the distribution of Santal households are found both in tea garden based GP areas and non-tea garden based GP areas.

Table 3.3 GP-Wise Distribution of Santal Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Santal Households

GP Name	Santal Households			GP Name	Santal Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Santal Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Santal Hslds
Bagrakot	202	5.05	5.33	Matiali Batabari-I	422	12.79	11.13
Odlabari	141	6.71	3.72	Matiali Batabari-II	75	4.17	1.98
Rangamatee	103	2.29	2.72	Bidhannagar	221	14.73	5.83
Rajadanga	302	13.13	7.96	Matiali Hat	60	3.75	1.58
Damdim	440	12.57	11.60	Indong Matiali	160	5.71	4.22
Tesimla	75	13.64	1.98	Matiali Block	938	8.53	24.74
Kumlai	275	12.50	7.25	Angrabhasa-I	149	16.56	3.93
Changmari	125	12.50	3.30	Angrabhasa-II	21	3.23	0.55
Kranti	145	36.25	3.83	Sulkapara	157	6.68	4.14
Chapadanga	32	64.00	0.84	Champaguri	297	6.32	7.83
Moulani	77	51.33	2.03	Looksan	267	6.07	7.04
Lataguri	46	18.40	1.21	Nagrakata Block	891	6.85	23.50
Mal Block	1963	9.35	51.77	Mal Subdivision	3792	8.43	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.4 The Lohars

The term 'Lohar' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'lauha-kara', meaning 'a worker on iron'. Lohars are the working group of tribal people in Jharkhand-Bihar region who depends

on the work of ironsmith. *Gadia Lohars* are a nomadic community of Rajasthan. They are also known as Viswakarma and Panchal in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. At present Lohars are forced to leave their traditional occupation and some of them migrated to nearby towns to involve in the house building activities in grill factories etc. A section of the Lohars in Bihar is brought to Jalpaiguri district for plantation works. In Dooars they are subdivided in three groups namely: Birbhumia, Gobindapuria, and Shersaria. A section of the Lohars has come from Nepal who are known as Kamia (Debnath, 2014). They used to prepare wheels of the bullock carts.

Social Structure

The Lohars are primarily Hindu by faith, though some are Sikh and Muslim. They carry with them a small image of Goddess Kali in a cupboard where small stores and valuables are kept on their cart. They marry only other within their community but select spouses another clan to their own. All marriages are arranged for them by their parents when they are still children but officially marry when they are older. Monogamy is the norm although a second wife is permitted in exceptional circumstances (such as barrenness of the first wife). Divorce is rare but sanctioned as is the remarriage of widows, widowers and divorcees. The number of subgroups varies from region to region. The Lohars are also divided into a number of exogamous gotras or clans of equal status.

Economic Activities

Lohars are traditionally iron workers and blacksmiths, along with a subsidiary occupation of agriculture. They are skilled at making and repairing agricultural implements like the sickle, spade, hoe, axe and plough, as well as buckets, pans, knives, scissors, grills and cages. They also fix iron shoes on the hoofs of bullocks. Some of those living in cities work in government and private service or industrial work. The landless among them are increasingly migrating to urban centres in search of employment. In Dooars of Jalpaiguri the Lohars are engaged in tea garden as labourers. Some of them are associated with their traditional economic activities cited above. Agricultural labours are there due to lack of their own land. A section of Lohars are doing their traditional activities in neighbour towns, states.

Spatial Distribution

In Mal subdivision about 6.51 % households of the total tribal households are occupied by Lohars. Maximum concentrations of Lohars in respect of total tribal households occurs in

Sulkapara GP (22.21%) followed by Angrabhasa-II (21.85%) and Looksan (19.45%). All these three GPs are belonging to Nagrakata block. Highest share of Lohar households to total Lohar households of the Mal subdivision are found in Champaguri GP (17.81%). The second and third position goes to Odlabari (12.38%) and Kumlai (9.28%) respectively. In Tesimla, Chapadanga, Moulani, Kranti and Bidhannagar the Lohars are very rare or totally absent. Huge concentrations of Lohars occur in Tandu Tea Garden mouza of Sulkapara GP; Jogesh Chandra Tea Garden mouza of Changmari GP; Elenbury Tea Garden and Lishriver Tea Garden of Bagrakot GP.

Table 3.4 GP-Wise Distribution of Lohar Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Lohar Households

GP Name	Lohar Households			GP Name	Lohar Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Lohar Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Lohar Hslds
Bagrakot	225	5.63	7.68	Matiali Batabari-I	226	6.85	7.71
Odlabari	363	17.29	12.38	Matiali Batabari-II	125	6.94	4.26
Rangamatee	144	3.20	4.91	Bidhannagar	25	1.67	0.85
Rajadanga	57	2.48	1.94	Matiali Hat	72	4.50	2.46
Damdim	232	6.63	7.92	Indong Matiali	215	7.68	7.34
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	663	0.55	22.62
Kumlai	272	12.36	9.28	Angrabhasa-I	60	6.33	2.05
Changmari	86	8.60	2.93	Angrabhasa-II	57	21.85	1.94
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	142	22.21	4.84
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	522	1.60	17.81
Moulani	4	2.67	0.14	Looksan	75	19.45	2.56
Lataguri	29	11.60	0.99	Nagrakata Block	856	6.58	29.21
Mal Block	1412	6.72	48.17	Mal Subdivision	2931	6.51	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.5 The Mahalis

Mahali is an indigenous tribal community of India, Nepal and Bangladesh. They mostly reside in areas adjacent to Santal Parganas of Chhotonagpur plateau. In Uttar Dinajpur and Rajshahi of Bangladesh they are much primitive than the communities of tea belts of Jalpaiguri district. After tea plantation, the Mahalis were brought to Jalpaiguri district. Mahali people form a difference which is clubbed together with the Munda tribe. They are famous for

some special activities like sweeping, bamboo works, removal of dead bodies, uprooting of trees and jungles etc.

Social Structure

Mahalis are considered to be untouchable to other tribal people. There are five sub-tribes of the Mahali tribe: these are Bansphor Mahali, Patar Mahali, Sulukhi Mahali, Tanti Mahali and Munda Mahali. In Nagrakata block they are confined within a few areas. The material culture of the Mahali tribes reveals their existence-oriented economy. They erect their houses with mud, bamboo, wood, *kosi* grasses and tiles. The houses are rectangular in shape. The houses do not have windows. The Mahali follow monogamy in their married life. But bigamy and tri-gamy are also allowed in case of barrenness, widowhood and widowerhood. Cross-cousin marriage and parallel-cousin marriage are not allowed in Mahali society. The Mahalis believe in nuclear family, the joint family is rare. The nuclear family consists of the father, mother and their unmarried children. The married children establish their own family. Mahalis worship the gods of *Dharambonga*, *Garowa* and *Singbonga*.

Economic Structure

The Mahali economy is based on basketry, collection of forest produce, agriculture, carrying of palanquins and labour. The main means of Bansphor Mahali has been basket making, Patar Mahali-basket making and cultivation, Sulukhi Mahali-cultivation and labour, Tanti Mahali-carrying palanquins and Munda Mahali-cultivations. In Mal subdivision, the Mahalis were brought by the Britishers to clear the jungles for tea plantation and spread of railway lines. They are efficient to do such works. Now they are engaged in basketry activities in Mal subdivision and tea gardens labours. Some of the Mahalis are engaged in sweeping activities in Mal Municipality town. Economically they are very poor.

Spatial Distribution

Except in some non-tea garden based GP areas, in every GP areas of the three blocks, the Mahalis are to be found to live. In Mal subdivision about 5.70% of the total tribal households are occupied by Mahalis. Maximum concentrations of Mahalis in respect of total tribal households occurs in Tesimla GP (14%) followed by Changmari (12.10%) and Matiali Batabari-I (11.48%). Highest share of Mahali households to total Mahali households of the Mal subdivision are found in Champaguri GP (15.05%). The second and third position goes to Matiali Batabari-I (14.78%) and Champaguri (9.09%) respectively. Huge concentrations of

Mahalies are found in Lishriver Tea Garden mouza of Bagrakot GP and Jogesh Chandra Tea Garden mouza of Changmari GP. In Chapadanga, Kranti, Moulani and Lataguri GPs the Mahali settlements are totally absent. Their numbers are also insignificant in the GPs of Odlabari, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II.

Table 3.5 GP-Wise Distribution of Mahali Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Mahali Households

GP Name	Mahali Households			GP Name	Mahali Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Mahali Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Mahali Hslds
Bagrakot	162	4.05	6.32	Matiali Batabari-I	379	11.48	14.78
Odlabari	29	1.38	1.13	Matiali Batabari-II	75	4.17	2.93
Rangamatee	75	1.67	2.93	Bidhannagar	156	10.40	6.08
Rajadanga	47	2.04	1.83	Matiali Hat	124	7.75	4.84
Damdim	169	4.83	6.59	Indong Matiali	127	4.54	4.95
Tesimla	77	14.00	3.00	Matiali Block	861	7.83	33.58
Kumlai	151	6.86	5.89	Angrabhasa-I	21	2.33	0.82
Changmari	121	12.10	4.72	Angrabhasa-II	23	3.54	0.90
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	209	8.89	8.15
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	386	8.21	15.05
Moulani	-	-	-	Looksan	233	5.30	9.09
Lataguri	-	-	-	Nagrakata Block	872	6.71	34.01
Mal Block	831	3.96	32.41	Mal Subdivision	2564	5.70	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.6 The Kharias

The Kharias are one of the largest indigenous ethnic groups of India. This tribal ethnic group is one of the largest tea tribes in India. They mainly inhabit in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Assam and Tripura. All Kharia speak their traditional dialect. The language spoken by them is a branch of Munda language which is similar to Khmer language. They are very close to the nature and the culture of the tribe is influenced by its ecological and cultural surroundings. Common Kharia surnames are Kharia, Kerkatta, Surin, Dongdung etc.

Social Structure

The whole of Kharia tribal societies are segregated into three broad segments, each having different occupations. These are namely the Dudh Kharia, Dhelki Kharia and Hill Kharia. Most of the Kharia tribal families are nuclear. The general trend is that the children of Kharia tribes live separately after getting married. The Kharia tribes adapt to part lineal and patriarchal family. There is wide prevalence of clan system. Popular clans of Kharias are *Badya, Gulgu, Bhuiya, Jaru, Tesa, Soren, Hansda and Hembrom* etc. The whole of the Kharia tribe has been rightly identified by their kinship to a common object, known as totem. They protect these totemic objects being injured. In order to curtail the huge expense of bride price, often it has been found that two Kharia brothers marry the two sisters of the same family. The popular practice is not to marry, within the clan, which is taboo in the Kharia society.

Economic Activities

The Kharia family is an economic grouping: it provides food, shelter and clothing for its members, irrespective of their contribution towards the economic activity. Husband and wife both contribute to the maintenance of the family, but there is division of labour based on sex between them. Thus, the husband goes out for hunting game and fishing, whereas the wife collects fruits, tubers and edible herbs. In Dooars of Jalpaiguri district they basically depend on tea garden as labourer. Some of them also depend on small forest products. Houses are built, constructed and repaired by men; and women maintain them. The women also draw water and cook food. Domestic animals are looked after by men but children are of the responsibility of women.

Spatial Distribution

In Mal subdivision about 5.26% households of the total tribal households are occupied by Kharias. Maximum concentrations of Kharias in respect of total tribal households occurs in Lataguri GP (18%) followed by Moulani (16.67%) and Matiali Batabari-I (13.15%). Highest share of Kharia households to total Kharia households of the Mal subdivision are found in Matiali Batabari-I (18.32%) followed by Champaguri GP (10.47%). In Tesimla, Chapadanga, Kranti, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II Kharias are very rare or totally absent. In spite of their overall poor concentration, Kharias are scattered and distributed throughout the subdivision.

Table 3.6 GP-Wise Distribution of Kharia Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Kharia Households

GP Name	Kharia Households			GP Name	Kharia Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Kharia Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Kharia Hslds
Bagrakot	130	3.25	5.49	Matiali Batabari-I	434	13.15	18.32
Odlabari	31	1.48	1.31	Matiali Batabari-II	155	8.61	6.54
Rangamatee	143	3.18	6.04	Bidhannagar	106	7.07	4.47
Rajadanga	103	4.48	4.35	Matiali Hat	65	4.06	2.74
Damdim	145	4.14	6.12	Indong Matiali	183	6.54	7.72
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	943	0.35	39.81
Kumlai	145	6.59	6.12	Angrabhasa-I	39	1.33	1.65
Changmari	113	11.30	4.77	Angrabhasa-II	12	9.23	0.51
Kranti	22	5.50	0.93	Sulkapara	60	10.55	2.53
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	248	3.51	10.47
Moulani	25	16.67	1.06	Looksan	165	11.91	6.96
Lataguri	45	18.00	1.90	Nagrakata Block	524	4.03	22.12
Mal Block	902	4.30	38.08	Mal Subdivision	2369	5.26	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.7 The Tamangs

Tamang is the very ancient tribe of the Himalayan regions of Nepal and India. The Tamangs are original people of Yambu valley (Kathmundu). They had self-rule and autonomous roughly two centuries ago. Systematically displaced during the expansion period of Gorkha Kingdom and this practice continues even to the present day. Now Tamang people are settled in Darjeeling district and Mal community development block of Jalpaiguri district. In plains of Dooars they use to do horse riding for better animal husbandry.

Social Structure

The Tamangs are divided into different clans. Main clans are *Dong, Henangan, Moktang, Comba, Lopchan, Thing, Bhasur, Lo, Morpa, Tupa, Blon, Singor, Borjyu, Lungpa, Syapa and Thokor* etc. Most of the Tamang people now are moulded with the Nepali speaking people. Once they used separate language and scripts, now they have lost these and speak Nepali language. There are five main worshipping among the Tamang people: *Khyappa Sung, Bhumipuja, Gotpuja, Makar Sankranti, Gurupuja* etc. Tamangs are Buddhist or Hindu in religion. They were considered low caste automatically in the dominant Hindu state and

system, and thus, there is exploitation, marginalization, and oppression of Tamang people. Very peculiar to Tamang people is that there are complex marriage restrictions within their community.

Economic Activities

Most of the Tamangs are farmers, engaged in agriculture as small holders and day labourers. In Dooars of Jalpaiguri district Tamangs are depended on tea garden. They mostly act as tea garden car/ cart drivers of three to four wheelers. A large section of male workers are working as guard or *choukidar* in the factory of the tea gardens. They also work as tourist guide. Female workers are engaged in plucking and processing of tea leaves.

Spatial Distribution

Tamangs are very poor in number in the Mal subdivision of Dooars. In Mal subdivision they account 4.43% households of the total tribal households. Maximum concentrations of Tamangs in respect of total tribal households occur in Matiali Hat GP (26.44%).

Table 3.7 GP-wise Distribution of Tamang Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Tamang Households

GP Name	Tamang Households			GP Name	Tamang Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Tamang Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Tamang Hslds
Bagrakot	182	4.55	9.12	Matiali Batabari-I	85	2.58	4.26
Odlabari	85	4.05	4.26	Matiali Batabari-II	75	4.17	3.76
Rangamatee	103	2.29	5.16	Bidhannagar	-	-	-
Rajadanga	-	-	-	Matiali Hat	423	26.44	21.20
Damdim	175	5.00	8.77	Indong Matiali	400	14.29	20.05
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	983	8.94	49.27
Kumlai	10	0.45	0.50	Angrabhasa-I	-	-	-
Changmari	-	-	-	Angrabhasa-II	-	-	-
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	65	2.77	3.26
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	257	5.47	12.88
Moulani	-	-	-	Looksan	135	3.07	6.77
Lataguri	-	-	-	Nagrakata Block	457	3.52	22.91
Mal Block	555	2.64	27.82	Mal Subdivision	1995	4.43	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

Maximum concentrations of Tamang peoples are found in the adjacent to hills where Nepali speaking people are more in number. Such GPs are Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Damdim, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali, Champaguri and Looksan. Highest share of Tamang households to total Tamang households of the Mal subdivision are found in Indong Matiali (21.20%) and Matiali Hat (20.05%). Bagrakot Tea Garden and Indong Tea Garden are two densely Tamang populated mouzas in the Subdivision. They are insignificant or absent in Changmari, Chapadanga, Kranti, Tesimla, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II GPs.

3.2.8 The Limbus

A Mongolian tribe, called the Limbus, a constituent of the great *kirata* race that once inhabited in the lower Himalayas, from the Punjab to the eastern end of Assam, to Burma and Cachar, floated down from the high Himalayas as the great human stream to settle in the South Eastern portion of modern Nepal, Bhutan and Darjeeling district (Sanyal, 2011). The term Limbu is generally used to indicate the people living within the Dud-Kosi and the Mechi river. The Limbus and the Lepchas were the oldest inhabitants between the Tamra and the kosi up to the Mechi. The limbus now live in Darjeeling, eastern Nepal and Sikkim States. Some of the Limbus has settled in the tea estates as tea labourers in Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata areas of Jalpaiguri district.

Social Structure

Limbus are Buddhist but their customs are more inclined towards Brahmanism. Limbus are also Saivas. They worship Mahadeva (Kirateswar) and his consort Gouri. They also worship a host of spiritual beings good or bad by slaughtering buffaloes, pigs and fowls. They worship the god of the forest named *Himareya*. They have two types of Gods – domestic and forest. Domestic Gods are associated with women. Whenever a girl is married she carries her domestic gods with her to her husband's house. The forest god is a stone placed at the foot of the tree worshiped outside the residence. Limbus also rationalise their religious customs in terms of Hindu belief. They eat pork, fowls, buffaloes etc. They are mostly rice eating people. They have no caste system so far as eating is concerned. Drinking is an integral part of Limbu social life. They prepare homemade wine; the Millet beer and distilled liquor. Dancing in social programme is compulsory among the Limbu people. Brothers and sisters of the same parents and cousins should not hold hands during dancing. That is those who cannot be married should not hold each other's hand during dancing. Risley (1891) says that Limbus are

divided into thirteen endogamous sub tribes. A few of them are *Tambling, Nembek, Chongbung, Kambos, Fadopia, Fagurai, Tamarkhota, Samba, Horha* etc. There are three types of marriage amongst the Limbus, 1) by arrangement (*magibiha*) 2) by theft of an unmarried girl (*charibiha*), 3) by absconding with another man's wife (*Jari biha*). Marriage by negotiation is common. The Limbus buy their wives. Sometimes pigs are given to the bride's family in lieu of cash. Widow re-marriage is allowed in Limbu Society.

Economic Activities

Limbus are cultivators with plough and oxen in Nepal. They cultivate Rice, Millet, and Maize etc. They are good poultry keepers. On the hills they resort to terraced cultivation where they use water of the nearby stream to irrigate the land. In Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata block the Limbus are also engaged in tea gardens as labourers.

Spatial Distribution

In Mal subdivision Limbus account for 2.23% households of the total tribal households. Maximum concentrations of Limbus in respect of total tribal households occur in Angrabhasa-II GP (35.23%) followed by Sulkapara (8.3%).

Table 3.8 GP-wise Distribution of Limbu Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Limbu Households

GP Name	Limbu Households			GP Name	Limbu Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Limbu Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Limbu Hslds
Bagrakot	77	1.93	7.18	Matiali Batabari-I	97	2.94	9.05
Odlabari	30	1.43	2.80	Matiali Batabari-II	-	-	-
Rangamatee	29	0.64	2.71	Bidhannagar	-	-	-
Rajadanga	-	-	-	Matiali Hat	85	5.31	7.93
Damdim	98	2.80	9.14	Indong Matiali	195	6.96	18.19
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	377	3.43	35.17
Kumlai	12	0.55	1.12	Angrabhasa-I	25	2.78	2.33
Changmari	-	-	-	Angrabhasa-II	229	35.23	21.36
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	195	8.30	18.19
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	-	-	-
Moulani	-	-	-	Looksan	-	-	-
Lataguri	-	-	-	Nagrakata Block	449	3.45	41.88
Mal Block	246	1.17	22.95	Mal Subdivision	1072	2.38	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

Highest share of Limbu households to total Limbu households of the Mal subdivision are found in Angrabhasa-II (21.36%), Indong Matiali (18.19%) and Sulkapara (18.19%). In 50% GPs Limbus are traceless. They are completely absent in Rajadanga, Changmari, Chapadanga, Kranti, Tesimla, Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, Champaguri and Looksan.

3.2.9 The Malpaharias

Regarding the origin of the name of Malpaharia, none of the Malpaharias could throw any light. A few of them opined that the name 'Malpaharia' might have been derived from the term 'Mayala' a dirt which came out of the sweating body of '*Sree Rama*' the heroic character of the epic *Ramayana*, during his enquiry of *Sita* kidnapped by *Ravana* (Das, Roychoudhury & Raha, 1966). Chhotonagpur plateau, Malwa or the central India may be their original homeland. They were quite well to do in their parent land where they undisputedly used the forest products at their will and need and used to cultivate the land on the hills as per their requirements. For these activities, they had to pay a little tax to their king. For these easy, plentiful economic resources, they did not face poverty. But when the land and forest were requisitioned by the British authorities, the Malpaharias lost the privilege of using the land and the forest at their own will as in the past. Gradually, a notable percentage of them began to migrate to the adjoining states. Some of them migrated to the foot hills of Northern Bengal. For the reclamation of the forest land and tea plantation they were used by the Britishers. The tea garden labourers were provided with houses in the tea gardens colonies for generations together.

Social Structure

There are three tribal groups of Paharias namely Malpaharia, Kumarbag Paharia and Souria Paharia. The former two groups consider themselves as superior to the third. The Malpaharias consider themselves as belonging to an endogamous stock prohibiting their marital bond with other communities except the Kumarbag Paharias. Monogamy is the general profile of the society and polyandry is prohibited to the Malpaharias. Divorce is not favoured by the Malpaharias and so the frequency is not so high. Due to the dominance of the males in the Malpaharia society, the succession of property is inherited to the masculine line. Among the Malpaharias no clan system has been found among them. The societal profile of the present day family pattern among the Malpaharias is of nuclear type i.e. a family consisting of husband, wife and unmarried or of only married couple having no children. The

religion of Malpaharias may be described as a mixed form built out of amalgamation of tribal animism with Hindu Puritanism. Though at present they have borrowed some Hindu Gods and Goddesses and rites and rituals and though some brahminical concepts have found way into their religion, still they are possessed with more regards and fear towards their own spirits. Christianity spreads among the Malpaharias at present. The Sun (Surya) is considered as supreme deity. They pay their homage to this Supreme God through Surya Puja. For the welfare and protection of the domestic animals such as bulls, cows, calves, goats etc. the Malpaharias perform *Gorbhu or Goalpuja* on the first day of *Jeth* (May-June).

Economic Activities

The Malpaharias of Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district are basically engaged as tea garden workers. A significant amount of female workers are engaged as plucking labourers. It is found that every adult person of the Malpaharia family of the tea garden area is earning his livelihood through his labour in this industry. This is so because of the non-existence of the division of labour in the family. Besides tea garden working, few of Malpaharia people are also engaged in agricultural land as labour, and cultivators through *Adhiary* system.

Spatial Distribution

Malpaharias are not found in all GP areas of the subdivision. In Matiali block they live in every GPs. In Mal subdivision about 2.16% of total tribal households are occupied by Malpaharias. In Mal block the share of Malpaharias are maximum (44.28%) among the three blocks. Maximum concentration of Malpaharias in respect of total tribal households occurs in Odlabari GP (9.95%) followed by Angrabhasa-II (8.46%) and Sulkapara (5.56%). In the Patharjhora Tea Garden mouza of Odlabari GP they are in absolute majority. Malpaharia households are totally nil in GPs of Tesimla, Changmari, Chapadanga, Kranti, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar and Matiali Hat. Again the shares of Malpaharia households to total tribal households are very poor (Less than 1%) in Rangamatee (0.64%), Damdim (0.63%) and Looksan (0.57%). Highest share of Malpaharia households to total Malpaharia households of the Mal subdivision are found in Odlabari GP (21.52%). The next position goes to Champaguri (13.39%) of Nagrakata block.

Table 3.9 GP-Wise Distribution of Malpaharia Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Malpaharia Households

GP Name	Malpaharia Households			GP Name	Malpaharia Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Malpaharia Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Malpaharia Hslds
Bagrakot	54	1.35	5.56	Matiali Batabari-I	74	2.24	7.62
Odlabari	209	9.95	21.52	Matiali Batabari-II	23	1.28	2.37
Rangamatee	29	0.64	2.99	Bidhannagar	-	-	-
Rajadanga	91	3.96	9.37	Matiali Hat	-	-	-
Damdim	22	0.63	2.27	Indong Matiali	42	1.5	4.33
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	139	1.26	14.32
Kumlai	25	1.14	2.57	Angrabhasa-I	35	3.89	3.60
Changmari	-	-	-	Angrabhasa-II	55	8.46	5.66
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	130	5.53	13.39
Chapadanga	-	-	-	Champaguri	157	3.34	16.17
Moulani	-	-	-	Looksan	25	0.57	2.57
Lataguri	-	-	-	Nagrakata Block	402	3.09	41.40
Mal Block	430	2.05	44.28	Mal Subdivision	971	2.16	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.2.10 The Meches

The Bodos of Jalpaiguri call themselves Mech because they settled on the banks of the river Mechi, a river between Darjeeling and Nepal border (Grierson, 1903). Gait (Census of India, 1891) describes that the Bodos debouched from Patkoi hills into Assam in 1228 A.D. They then spread to Goalpara and Jalpaiguri under the name Mech. In the census report of 1891 Gait describes the Mech of Dooars as an aboriginal tribe. It is said that these tribal people were driven out from the north-eastern corner of India, Burma and Tibet probably by the Chinese. They fled in the Terai-Dooars areas and established their permanent settlement (Sanyal, 1973). However, there are differences in opinion. From the Mech river bank they again shifted towards east crossing Balason and Mahananda, Teesta and Sankosh later. The colonies of Mech, big and small, are now found in all the tracts of Dooars. Common Mech surnames are Saiba, Basumata, Karjee, Narjinary, Brahma and Mochari.

Social Structure

Marriages are usually settled by mothers. A day before the date of marriage, a party from the boy's house goes to the girl's, pay the bride price and bring the girl to the boy's house. Marriage is done in the boy's house. Nobody can marry outside his own tribe and a contravention is punishable. Widow re-marriage is allowed by the society. Son only inherits father's property. Their religious rites consist of sacrifice of animals and birds. The prayers consist of invocation of protection of the people, the crop, and the domestic animals and from all other misfortunes. Offerings are –milk, honey, puffed or flattened rice, eggs and flowers. Sacrifice is generally of hogs, goats, fowls, ducks and pigeons. Fermented liquor is a must in all rituals. Like most of the *Vedic* Hindus, they worship many gods and perform many religious rites. The Meches believe that the tree has souls like their own, every tree is a sort of emblem of life. So tree worship is an important popular custom. They live in joint families.

Economic Activities

More than a century ago the Mech people practised jhum cultivation. The Mech were then nomadic people, and hence permanent cultivation was out of question. Now they are rooted to the soil. They have taken to the permanent cultivation in all seriousness with bullocks and the plough. After the Second World War, economic devastation occurred on them. They had to run into debt and the liabilities increased by leaps and bounds. They were compelled to sell their land. During the household survey through the villages of the Mech, some families were found who are wage-earners in the air fields and the tea estates in the neighbourhood. Many of them are depended on hunting. They are very good-tempered and cheerful and so inured to labour that no amount of work ever make them unhappy.

Spatial Distribution

Though the Mech are the indogenous tribe of Dooars, now they are not found in all GP areas of the Mal subdivision. The Mech are rather concentrated in Alipurduar district. In Dhupguri block of Sadar subdivision of Jalpaiguri district, the Mech villages are to be found. In Matiali block they are totally absent. Besides, in Rangamatee, Damdim, Tesimla, Kranti, Lataguri, Angrabhasa-I, Champaguri and Looksan they are also not present. In Mal subdivision only 1.05% of total tribal households are occupied by the Mech people. Maximum concentrations of Mech people in respect of total tribal households occurs in Angrabhasa-II GP (18.92%) followed by Moulani (7.33%), Rajadanga (6.64%) and Chapadanga (6.00%). In all other GPs shares of Mech households to total tribal households

are very poor or insignificant. Highest share of Mech households to total Mech households of the Mal subdivision are found in Rajadanga GP (32.78%). The second and third position goes to Angrabhasa-II (26.00%) and Sulkapara (11.63%) respectively.

Table 3.10 GP-Wise Distribution of Mech Households, Percentage to Total Tribal Households, and Percentage to Total Mech Households

GP Name	Mech Households			GP Name	Mech Households		
	Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Mech Hslds		Total Hslds	% to Total Tribal Hslds	% to total Mech Hslds
Bagrakot	33	0.83	6.98	Matiali Batabari-I	-	-	-
Odlabari	53	2.52	11.21	Matiali Batabari-II	-	-	-
Rangamatee	-	-	-	Bidhannagar	-	-	-
Rajadanga	155	6.74	32.78	Matiali Hat	-	-	-
Damdim	-	-	-	Indong Matiali	-	-	-
Tesimla	-	-	-	Matiali Block	0	0.00	0.00
Kumlai	15	0.68	3.17	Angrabhasa-I	-	-	-
Changmari	25	2.50	5.29	Angrabhasa-II	123	18.92	26.00
Kranti	-	-	-	Sulkapara	55	2.34	11.63
Chapadanga	3	6.00	0.63	Champaguri	-	-	-
Moulani	11	7.33	2.33	Looksan	-	-	-
Lataguri	-	-	-	Nagrakata Block	178	1.37	37.63
Mal Block	295	1.40	62.3679	Mal Subdivision	473	1.05	100.00

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

3.3 Salient features on Spatial Distribution of Tribal Groups

The GP-wise distributions of major tribal people focus the following points:

- The shares of tribal populations to total populations are very high (more than 50%) in Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Damdim, Matiali Batabari-II, Indong Matiali, Champaguri and Looksan GPs.
- The Shares of tribal populations to total populations are very poor (less than 10%) in Kranti, Chapadanga, Moulani and Lataguri.
- All major tribal groups are found in Bagrakot, Odlabari, Kumlai, Sulkapara and Champaguri GPs.
- Oraons and Santals are the two tribal groups found in every GPs. For the agricultural base GPs like Lataguri, Chapadanga, Moulani the Santals are more in number than the

Oraons. Mundas are also found to settle in most of the GP areas and possess second position in number of households.

- e) The Lohars, Malpaharia, Kharias and Mahalis are found to live in most of the GP areas. These are the moderately concentrated tribal groups of the Mal subdivision of Doars.
- f) Meches, Limbus and Tamangs are not found in every GP. Their total shares are also less significant than the other tribal groups.

Table 3.11 GP-wise Distribution of Major Tribal Households, Mal Subdivision

GP Name	Oraon	Munda	Santal	Lohar	Mahali	Kharia	Tamang	Limbu	Malpaharia	Mech	Others
Bagrakot	2112	211	202	225	162	130	182	77	54	33	612
Odlabari	589	421	141	363	29	31	85	30	209	53	149
Rangamatee	2605	502	103	144	75	143	103	29	29	-	767
Rajadanga	907	206	302	57	47	103	-	-	91	155	432
Damdim	1497	312	440	232	169	145	175	98	22	-	410
Tesimla	325	-	75	-	77	-	-	-	-	-	73
Kumlai	803	167	275	272	151	145	10	12	25	15	325
Changmari	325	103	125	86	121	113	-	-	-	25	102
Kranti	145	-	145	-	-	22	-	-	-	-	88
Chapadanga	15	-	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Moulani	13	7	77	4	-	25	-	-	-	11	13
Lataguri	53	25	46	29	-	45	-	-	-	-	52
Matiali Batabari-I	955	215	422	226	379	434	85	97	74	-	413
Matiali Batabari-II	876	121	75	125	75	155	75	-	23	-	275
Bidhannagar	783	88	221	25	156	106	-	-	-	-	121
Matiali Hat	393	225	60	72	124	65	423	85	-	-	153
Indong Matiali	1026	150	160	215	127	183	400	195	42	-	302
Angrabhasa-I	385	52	149	60	21	39	-	-	35	-	159
Angrabhasa-II	225	75	21	57	23	12	-	-	55	123	59
Sulka para	822	78	157	142	209	60	65	25	130	55	607
Champaguri	1022	1253	297	522	386	248	257	229	157	-	329
Looksan	2265	302	267	75	233	165	135	195	25	-	738
Mal Block	9389	1954	1963	1412	831	902	555	246	430	295	3023
Matiali Block	4033	799	938	663	861	943	983	377	139	0	1264
Nagrakata Block	4719	1760	891	856	872	524	457	449	402	178	1892
Total	18141	4513	3792	2931	2564	2369	1995	1072	971	473	6179

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

Figure 3.1 Share of Major Tribal Households in Mal Subdivision

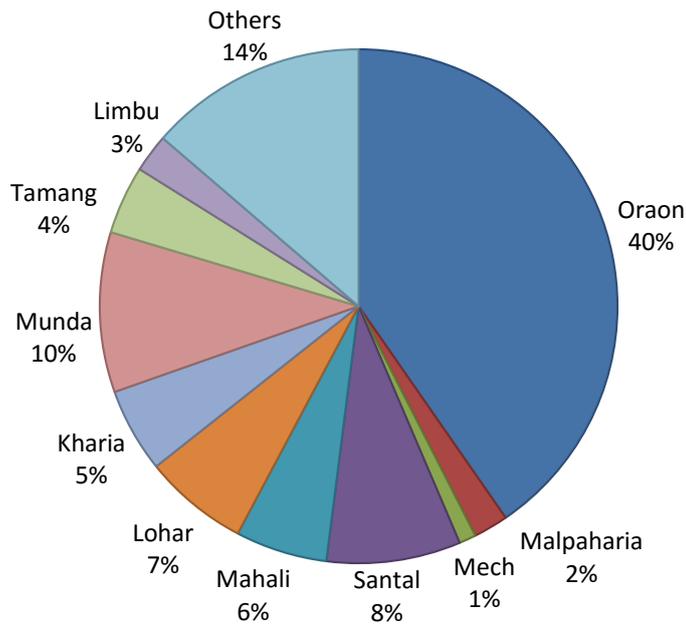
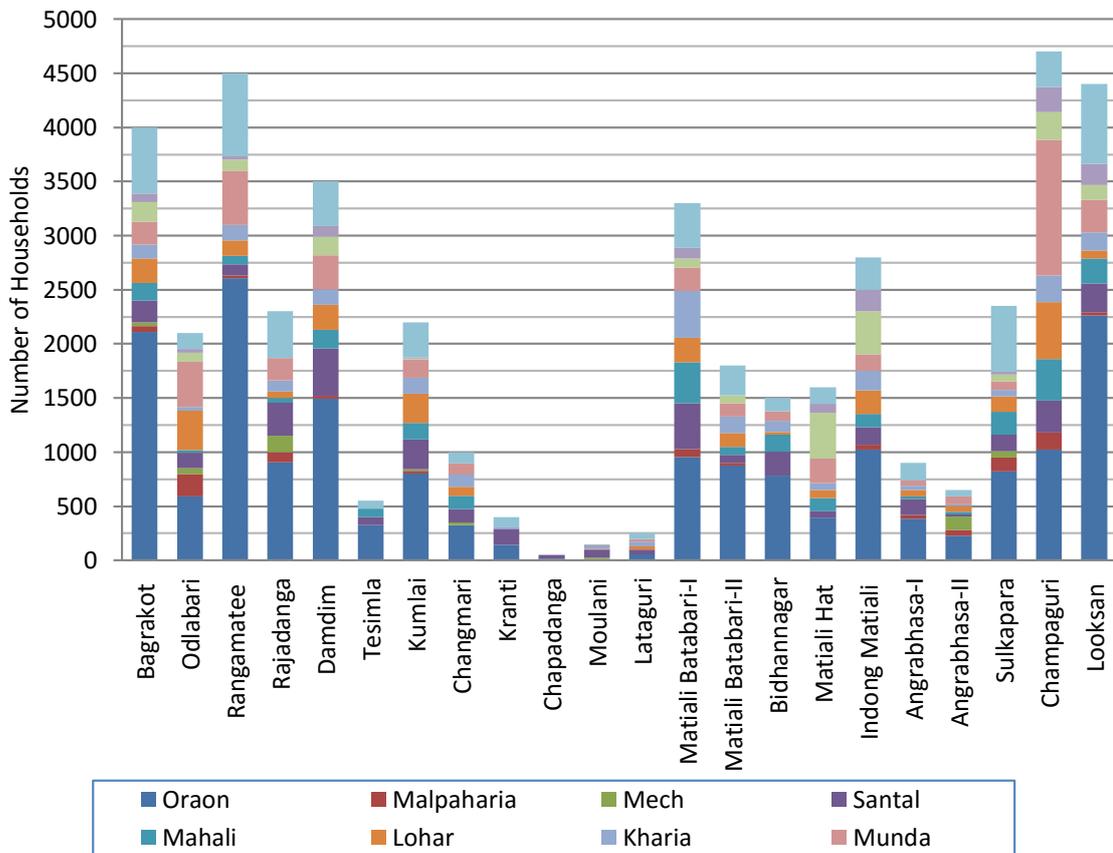


Figure 3.2 Gram Panchayat-wise Distribution of Different Tribal Households



3.4 Inter-community Human Development Index

The Human Development Index developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is based on three indicators: longevity, education and standard of living. Very often income is considered as the expression of standard of living. Rajasthan was the first state in the country to start ‘Panchayati Raj’. They first introduced to determine HDI values in Panchayat Samiti (block) level by adopting indepth studies of national parameters (Joshi, 2008). In west Bengal the the government wing of Development and Planning Department very often studies the block level HDI.

In the present study, ten major tribal groups have been identified. There are differences of their level of development. Attempt has been made to determine level of their development among themselves. Each community in the Subdivision is considered as unit of study in this context.

3.4.1 Methodological framework of HDI

According to UNDP methodology, generally we take three indicators in order to construct HDI. These are health, educational attainment and standard of living. For health we take life expectancy at birth as an indicator. For educational attainment, mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling has been considered. For standard of living income per capita acts as an indicator. Four individual indices are constructed from the primary data base. Following two steps are required to find out HDI values.

Step-1. Creating the dimension indices: Minimum and maximum values are set in order to transform the indicators into indices between 0 and 1. Having defined the minimum and maximum values, the sub-indices are calculated as follows: Dimension index (Di):

$$D_i = \frac{\text{actual value} - \text{minimum value}}{\text{maximum value} - \text{minimum value}}$$

Table 3.12 Goalposts for Human Development Index Indicators and values for Oraons

Indicators	Observed Maximum	Minimum	Indices for Oraon
Life expectancy (Years)	67 (Santal)	20	55
Mean years of Schooling	10 (Munda)	0	6
Expected years of Schooling	15	0	11
Combined education index	0.780	0	
Per capita Income	2000 (Munda)	500	700

Step-2. Aggregating the sub-indices to produce the Human Development Index:

The HDI is the geometric mean of the three dimension indices. Calculations are done for Oraons (as example).

$$HDI = I_{Life}^{1/3} \cdot I_{Education}^{1/3} \cdot I_{Income}^{1/3}$$

$$\text{Life expectancy index} = I_{Life} = \frac{55-20}{67-20} = 0.745$$

$$\text{Mean years of schooling index} = I_{Schooling} = \frac{6-0}{10-0} = 0.6$$

$$\text{Expected years of schooling index} = I_{exp.schooling} = \frac{11-0}{15-0} = 0.733$$

$$\text{Education Index} = I_{education} = \frac{\sqrt{0.6 \cdot 0.733 - 0}}{0.780} = 0.468$$

$$\text{Income Index} = I_{income} = \frac{700-500}{2000-500} = 0.133$$

$$\text{Human Development Index for Oraon Community is} = \sqrt[3]{0.745 \times 0.468 \times 0.133} = 0.359$$

3.4.2 Findings on Inter Community HDI

By applying the above methodologies the values of each community in three aspects and averages are gained which is tabulated below.

Table 3.13 Inter-Community HDI Values and Ranks

Rank	Community	I_{Life}	$I_{education}$	I_{income}	HDI Average
1	Munda	0.695	0.662	1.000	0.772
2	Santal	1.000	0.456	0.845	0.728
3	Mech	0.875	0.585	0.565	0.661
4	Limbu	0.810	0.543	0.565	0.629
5	Tamang	0.802	0.542	0.345	0.531
6	Malpaharia	0.456	0.405	0.550	0.467
7	Mahali	0.555	0.445	0.225	0.382
8	Lohar	0.565	0.425	0.221	0.376
9	Oraon	0.745	0.468	0.133	0.359
10	Kharia	0.656	0.435	0.110	0.315

Computed by the Researcher from the primary data

From the above table it is found that, there are variations in the three parameters among the tribes; but there are acute variations among the tribal communities. However Mundas are top among the tribal communities because of their higher standards of every three aspects. This tribal group is most educated among the tribes and many of them are engaged in different govt jobs and secondary and tertiary activities. The Santals who occupies 2nd position

involved in agricultural practices or non-tea garden based economic activities. Mahali, Lohar, Oraon and Kharia people of the Dooars are very poor and mostly engaged in tea gardens as labourer. So their position on the basis of HDI is least among the tribes. Oraonssshare majority among the tribal groups. So average HDI values of tribal people in Dooars has fallen down.

3.5 Conclusion

From the above analysis of the spatial distribution of tribal people it can be concluded that almost 16-17 GPs out of 22, the tribals possess a significant share. In every GP most of the tribal communities settled. There are variations in their life styles and development among different tribal groups. Their traditional values are also gradually squeezing. With the advent of tribals of Chhotonagpur plateau some of the aboriginal tribes of Dooars gradually shifted eastwards. So, their presence is very poor in the Subdivision.

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SOCIAL STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

4.1 Introduction

The tribal people are generally backward classes of our country. The surprising fact is that Indian tribes are not socially backward — as many of us might assume; instead their beliefs and thinking resemble the city people. There is no system of dowry, no caste division, even divorce and widow remarriages are socially accepted among them. They are an exemplary society when it comes to social practices yet they live a life of poverty and discrimination. Even before the British took over our country, the tribal population were looked upon as wild, barbaric and unruly. They were treated as untouchables and this practice still exists in many parts of our country (Paswan, 2004).

4.2 Demographic Profile

Demography is the quantitative study of human population. Demographic data, in their simplest form, refer to six different dimensions: births, deaths, migration, age, sex, spatial distribution etc. Accurate demographic data are often difficult to gather. The tribes of Mal subdivision are not much aware of their demographic records i.e. birth, death, history of their migration, age structure etc. Primary data regarding demography has been collected during household survey which are tabulated and analysed to give it a clear idea of the demographic pattern of tribal people. The present study focuses five indicators for demographic profiles of the tribal people: sex ratio, marital status, age-sex composition, fertility and mortality.

4.2.1 Sex ratio

The sex ratio is the ratio of male to female in a population. Normally sex ratio is expressed as number of female population per 1000 male population. An inverse enunciation of the ratio (i.e., the number of males per 1000 females) is also given sometimes. There are different methods to calculate sex ratio. Primary sex ratio is the sex ratio at the time of conception, secondary sex ratio is the ratio at the birth, and tertiary sex ratio is the ratio found at the time of enumeration (Qazi & Qazi, 2006). In Mal subdivision among the tribes sex ratio is comparatively more than the male. The Gram Panchayats (GPs) which are very much concentrated by scheduled tribes are showing higher sex ratio than the least tribal concentrated GPs. Highest concentrations of tribal population are found in Looksan, Damdim,

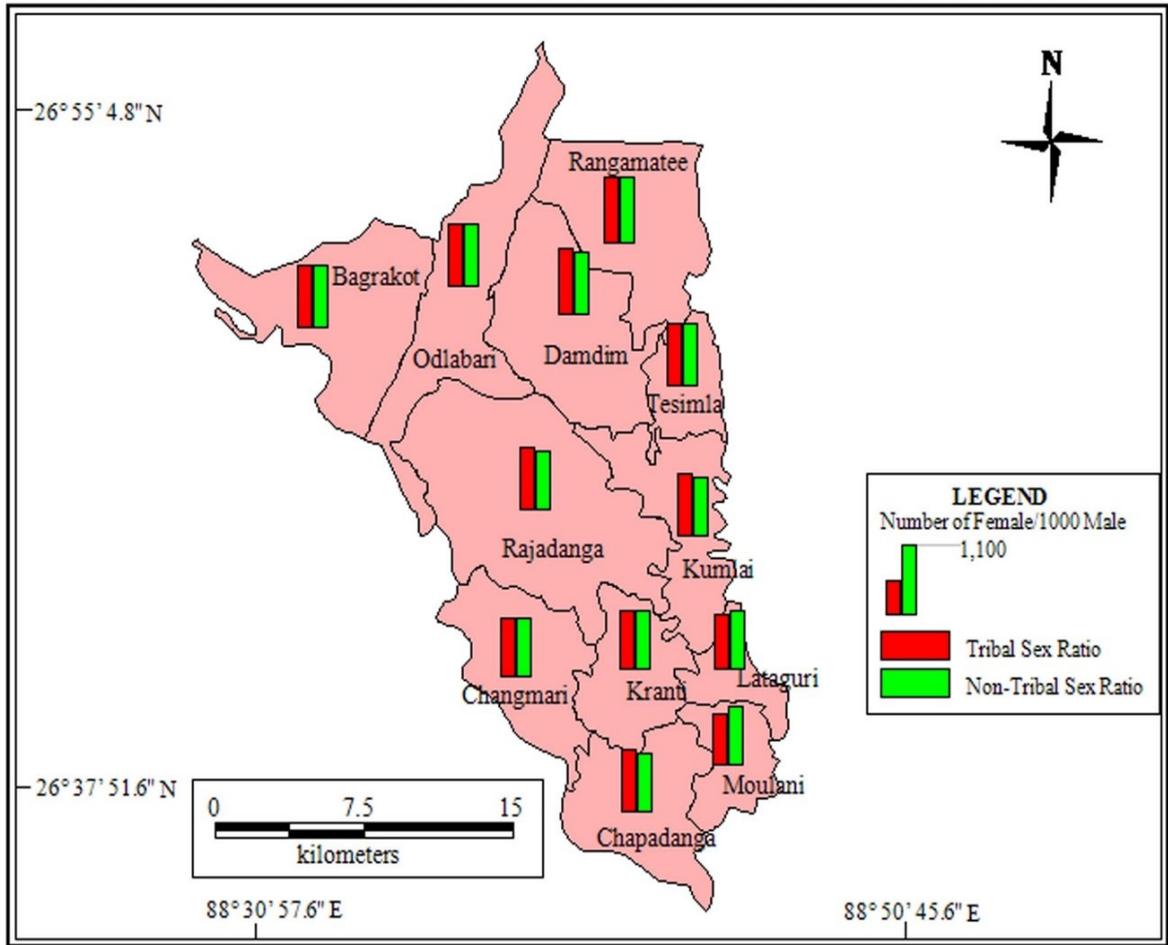
Indong-Matiali and Matiali Hat. Highest sex ratio is found in the GP of Looksan (1058 female per 1000 male population) followed by Indong Matiali (1045), Damdim (1041), Matiali Hat (1036), Rangamatee (1026), Matiali Batabari-I (1013) and Odlabari (1000). These 7 GPs out of 22 share more female than the male.

Table 4.1 GP-wise Tribal Sex Ratio of Mal Subdivision, 2011

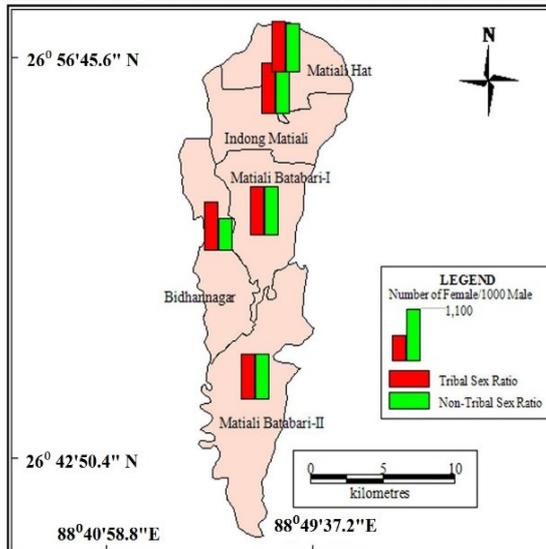
Sl No.	Name of GP	Total Population	Scheduled Tribe Population				Non-tribal Sex ratio
			Total	Male	Female	Sex Ratio	
1	Bagrakot	35318	19694	9795	9899	1011	987
2	Odlabari	40294	9973	4986	4987	1000	978
3	Rangamatee	34072	22546	11128	11418	1026	1019
4	Rajadanga	35374	11028	5610	5418	966	955
5	Damdim	28037	18727	9174	9553	1041	993
6	Tesimla	14078	2765	1410	1355	961	964
7	Kumlai	24252	10497	5329	5168	970	944
8	Changmari	18820	4620	2408	2212	919	942
9	Kranti	14583	212	1016	951	936	951
10	Chapadanga	23826	1967	108	104	963	932
11	Moulani	15845	1046	376	308	819	922
12	Lataguri	21350	684	540	506	868	927
Mal Block		305849	103759	51880	51879	1001	959
13	Matiali Batabari-I	26531	13263	7442	7542	1013	1008
14	Matiali Batabari-II	27211	14984	4215	4101	973	973
15	Bidhannagar	19848	8316	3869	3835	991	685
16	Matiali Hat	24407	7630	3747	3883	1036	1003
17	Indong Matiali	23758	7704	6493	6770	1045	1005
Matiali Block		121755	51897	25766	26131	1015	911
18	Angrabhasa-I	9335	4583	2332	2251	965	956
19	Angrabhasa-II	16974	3039	1581	1458	922	944
20	Sulkapara	25169	11081	5631	5450	951	1013
21	Champaguri	39391	22742	11271	11471	968	922
22	Looksan	36528	21179	10292	10887	1058	996
Nagrakata Block		127397	62624	31107	31517	1001	978
Mal Subdivision		555001	218280	108753	109527	1004	954

Source: Census of India, 2011

TRIBAL & NON-TRIBAL SEX RATIO OF MAL BLOCK IN 2011



TRIBAL & NON-TRIBAL SEX RATIO OF MATIALI BLOCK IN 2011



TRIBAL & NON-TRIBAL SEX RATIO OF NAGRAKATA BLOCK IN 2011

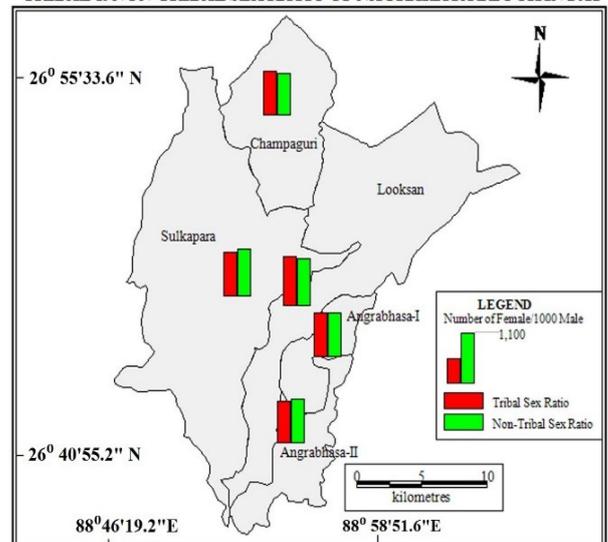
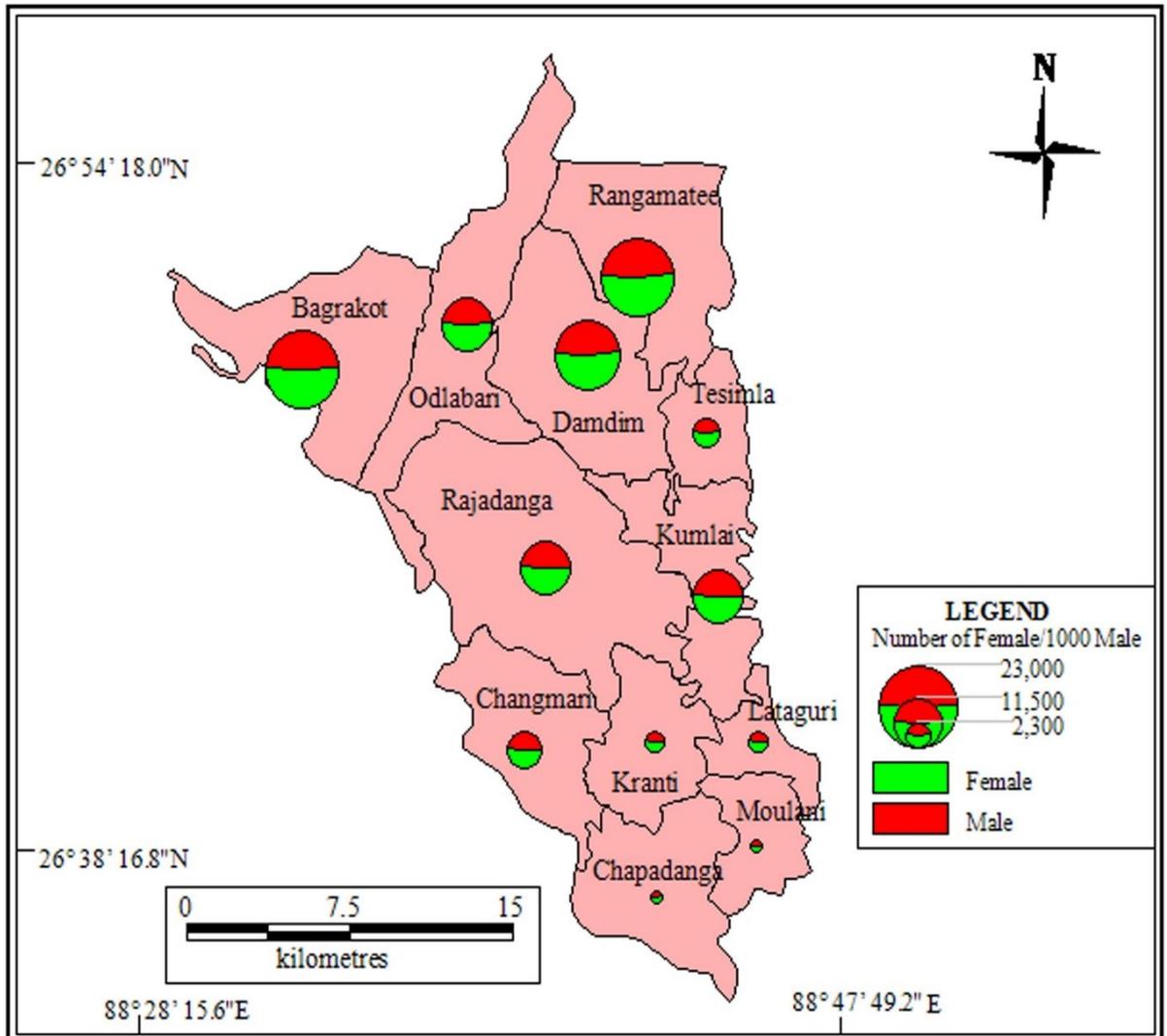
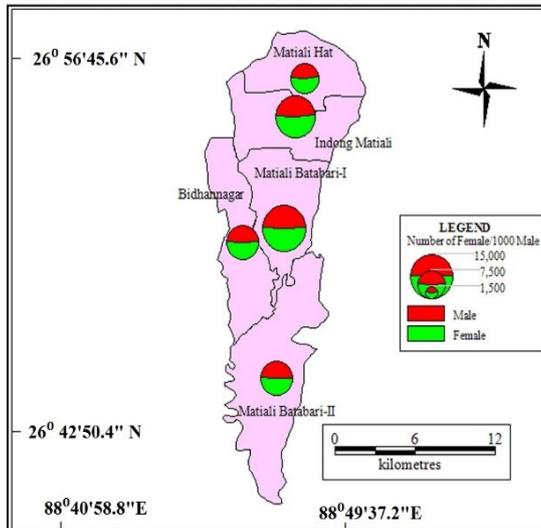


Figure 4.1 Tribal & Non-tribal Sex Ratio of Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

G.P-WISE TRIBAL SEX RATIO OF MAL BLOCK IN 2011



G.P-WISE TRIBAL SEX RATIO OF MATIALI BLOCK IN 2011



G.P-WISE TRIBAL SEX RATIO OF NAGRAKATA BLOCK IN 2011

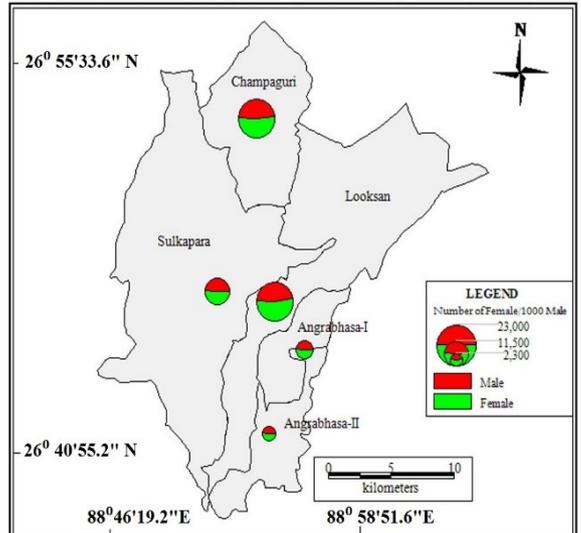


Figure 4.2 GP-wise Tribal Sex Ratio of Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

The GPs where the concentrations of tribal population are very low have poor sex ratio. Such GPs are Chengmari, Rajadanga, Moulani, Tesimla, Angrabhasa-II etc. Among these, Lataguri and Moulani has exceptionally lower sex ratio among the tribal people. The reason behind this is that they have smashed their culture with contact to the non-tribal people and many of male people live outside their home for better earning. Again the tribal people are actively engaged in agriculture and allied activities like the non-tribal people.

All blocks have higher sex ratio and Matiali block has the maximum sex ratio (1015 female per 1000 male). As a whole the subdivision of Mal shows sex ratio of 1004 which is higher than the district as well as state and national average. Average tribal sex ratio in the state of West Bengal and India was 990 and 1000 as per 2011 census respectively. It is computed that the non-tribal female ratio in all the GPs and the subdivision is very much lower than the tribal female ratio. However a few exceptions are there. In Moulani, Lataguri, Changmari, Tesimla, Kranti, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-II are such exception where tribal female ratio is slightly lower than the non-tribal sex ratio.

4.2.2 Marital Status

Marital status is the state of an individual being married or unmarried. Normally there are four classes or components of marital status: married, unmarried, divorced (separated) and widow. From the table (4.2) it is found that nearly 45-50% tribal people are married and same percentage share accounts for unmarried population. Uniformity in ratio of married and unmarried population is found in all the GPs. In all the GPs which are mostly tribal dominated has more widow than the widower. Tribal widower ratio is 3% while widow ratio is 6% among the married tribal people in the study region. The incident of divorcee is very rare. However the concept of legal divorce is not popularised among the tribes. Those who are separated has not any legal separation rather has a mutual separation established by the society. As a whole less than 2% tribal people has recorded such incident of mutual divorce in Mal subdivision. Early age of marriage is a popular custom among the tribal people. From the table (4.3) it is found that before attaining the age of 20 years as a whole, about 30% tribal people go for marriage. Female marriage ages below 20 years of ages is very common among the tribal people. In the tea garden based GP areas where tribal concentration is high; nearly 55% female get married before the age of attaining 20 years. Prescribed ages of female marriage i.e. above 18 years are not followed at all in the areas. The child marriages for female as well as male are very common in the tea gardens. Combined rate of male and female child marriage is 60% in Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district. The age group of 20-25 years are most common for male marriage. However the GPs where tea gardens are less and

tribal population are less concentrated, the lower age marriages are fewer in numbers compare to the tea garden based densely tribal concentrated areas. Kranti, Lataguri, Chapadanga, Moulani are such GP areas in Mal block where lower age marriages are fewer in number. Besides, Bidhannagar of Matiali, Angrabhasa-I & Angrabhasa-II of Nagrakata block are such GP areas where under age marriages are fewer in number. For these GP areas the maximum male marriage occurs in the age group of 26-30 years instead of 20-25 years. The age group of above 30 years are not for female marriage among the tribal people. A few percentage of male marriage occurs in this age group.

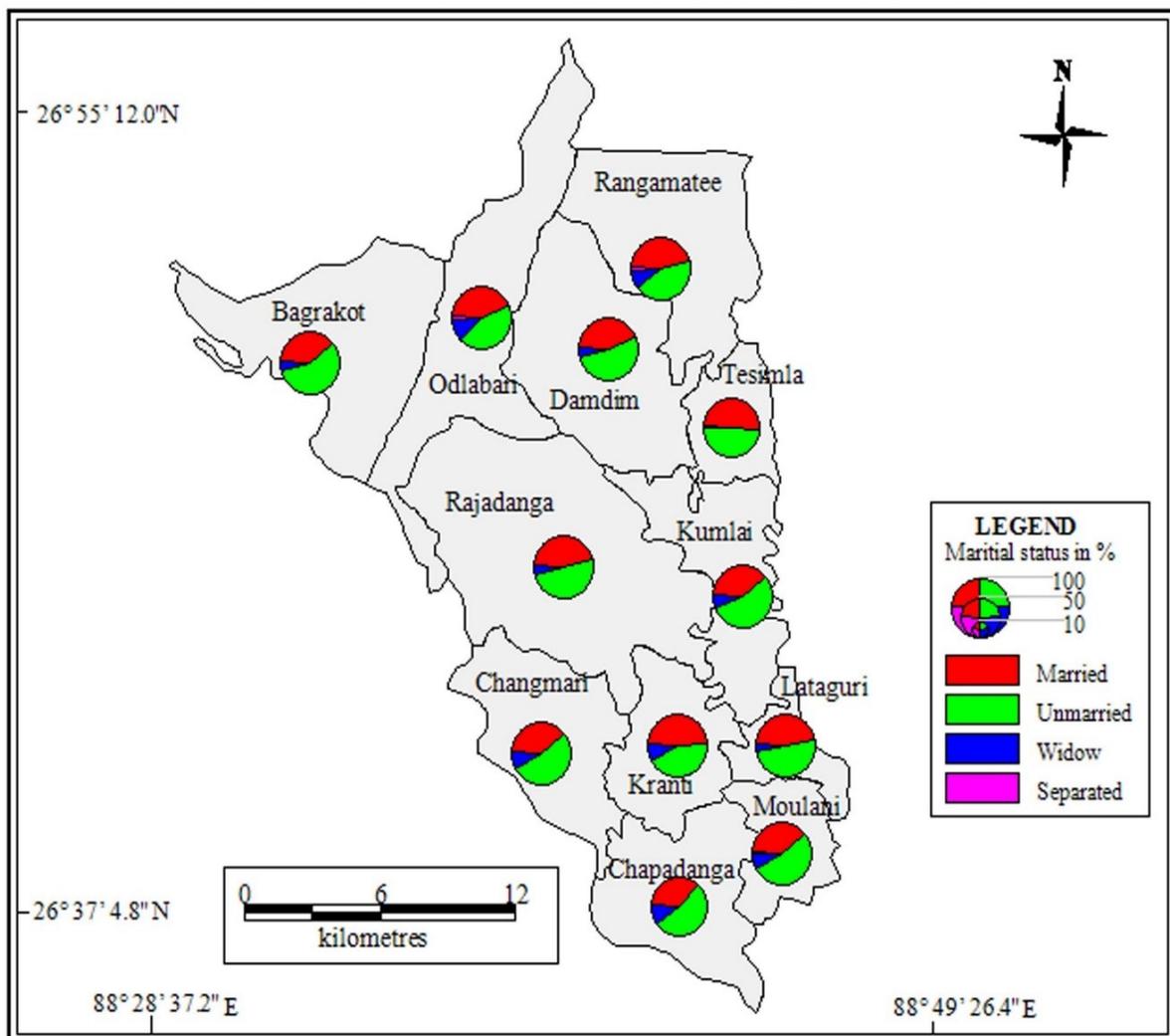
Table 4.2 GP-wise Marital Status of Tribal people (in Percentage)

Sl No.	Name of GP	Sample Population			Married		Unmarried		Widow		Separated	
		Total	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Bagrakot	622	312	310	20	20	25	30	0	5	0	0
2	Odlabari	249	125	124	20	25	25	16	5	7	1	1
3	Rangamatee	637	317	320	21	26	25	16	2	8	1	1
4	Rajadanga	249	122	127	28	19	24	24	2	3	0	0
5	Damdim	452	222	230	25	20	25	25	0	5	0	0
6	Tesimla	152	74	78	20	30	20	25	0	4	0	1
7	Kumlai	329	165	164	20	20	26	27	0	7	0	0
8	Changmari	230	112	118	25	15	24	26	3	7	0	0
9	Kranti	125	63	62	30	20	20	20	0	10	0	0
10	Chapadanga	125	64	61	15	20	25	30	4	6	0	0
11	Moulani	123	61	62	15	25	30	20	2	7	0	1
12	Lataguri	145	73	72	23	25	23	25	0	4	0	0
Mal Block Total		3438	1710	1728	22	22	24	24	2	6	0	0
1	Matiali Batabari-I	350	170	180	20	22	25	24	2	7	0	0
2	Matiali Batabari-II	222	107	115	30	20	20	20	2	8	0	0
3	Bidhannagar	220	112	108	20	20	25	25	3	6	0	1
4	Matiali Hat	217	111	106	20	20	20	27	3	3	2	5
5	Indong Matiali	341	171	170	25	25	20	20	5	5	0	0
Matiali Block Total		1350	671	679	23	21	22	23	3	6	0	1
1	Angrabhasa-I	211	110	101	25	27	12	13	7	11	3	2
2	Angrabhasa-II	267	138	129	34	20	20	18	3	5	0	0
3	Sulkapara	329	163	166	24	24	25	22	1	2	2	0
4	Champaguri	605	298	307	20	20	18	23	6	6	5	2
5	Looksan	600	290	310	25	23	20	22	3	7	0	0
Nagrakata Block Total		2012	999	1013	26	23	19	20	4	6	2	1
Mal Subdivision Total		6800	3380	3420	23	22	22	22	3	6	1	1

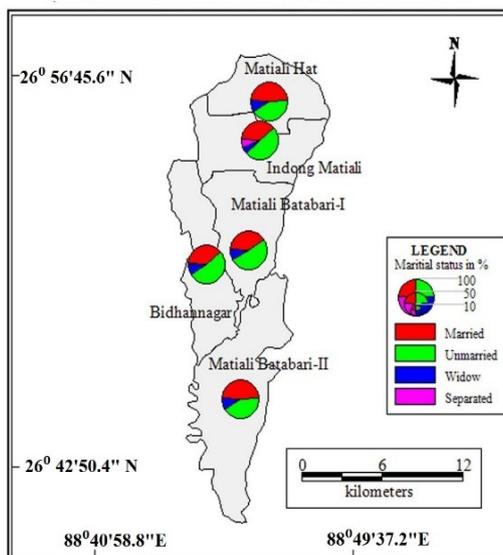
M=Male, F=Female

Source: Field survey 2015

G.P-WISE MARITAL STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MAL BLOCK



G.P-WISE MARITAL STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MATIALI BLOCK



G.P-WISE MARITAL STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

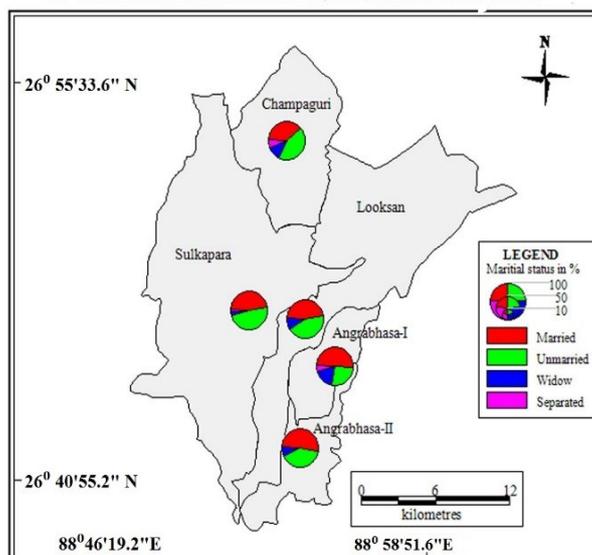


Figure 4.3 GP-wise Marital Status of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Table 4.3 GP-wise Statistics on Ages at Marriage of Tribal People

Sl No.	Name of GP	Married Population			< 20 Year		20-25 Year		26-30 Y		> 30 Year	
		Total	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Bagrakot	374	156	218	10	30	15	20	10	8	7	0
2	Odlabari	137	77	60	10	22	15	20	10	2	9	0
3	Rangamatee	337	178	159	5	22	22	20	25	5	1	0
4	Rajadanga	132	65	67	4	22	20	20	24	7	1	2
5	Damdim	249	113	136	8	18	15	30	15	5	7	2
6	Tesimla	76	30	46	11	25	4	20	15	13	9	3
7	Kumlai	198	86	112	12	22	14	22	15	12	2	1
8	Changmari	138	62	76	11	18	14	25	13	10	7	2
9	Kranti	63	25	38	3	15	22	32	10	10	5	3
10	Chapadanga	81	36	45	5	18	17	25	12	11	10	2
11	Moulani	73	39	34	7	15	20	21	16	10	10	1
12	Lataguri	75	33	42	8	22	18	22	14	12	4	0
Mal Block Total		1928	894	1034	10	22	16	22	12	9	8	1
1	Matiali Batabari-I	204	95	109	12	25	20	22	12	6	3	0
2	Matiali Batabari-II	111	49	62	18	22	22	22	4	10	0	2
3	Bidhannagar	132	62	70	7	20	22	25	16	6	2	2
4	Matiali Hat	130	54	76	15	25	18	22	7	10	2	1
5	Indong Matiali	170	85	85	10	25	22	20	12	5	6	0
Matiali Block Total		751	343	408	12	23	21	23	10	7	3	1
1	Angrabhasa-I	101	46	55	8	18	18	22	15	10	5	4
2	Angrabhasa-II	122	61	61	5	15	20	20	15	10	10	5
3	Sulkapara	171	92	79	10	20	20	20	20	5	4	1
4	Champaguri	363	175	188	10	22	21	22	15	7	2	1
5	Looksan	312	138	174	5	28	18	22	20	5	1	1
Nagrakata Block Total		1038	503	535	8	22	22	22	15	7	3	1
Mal Subdivision Total		3701	1732	1969	8	22	20	22	12	8	7	1

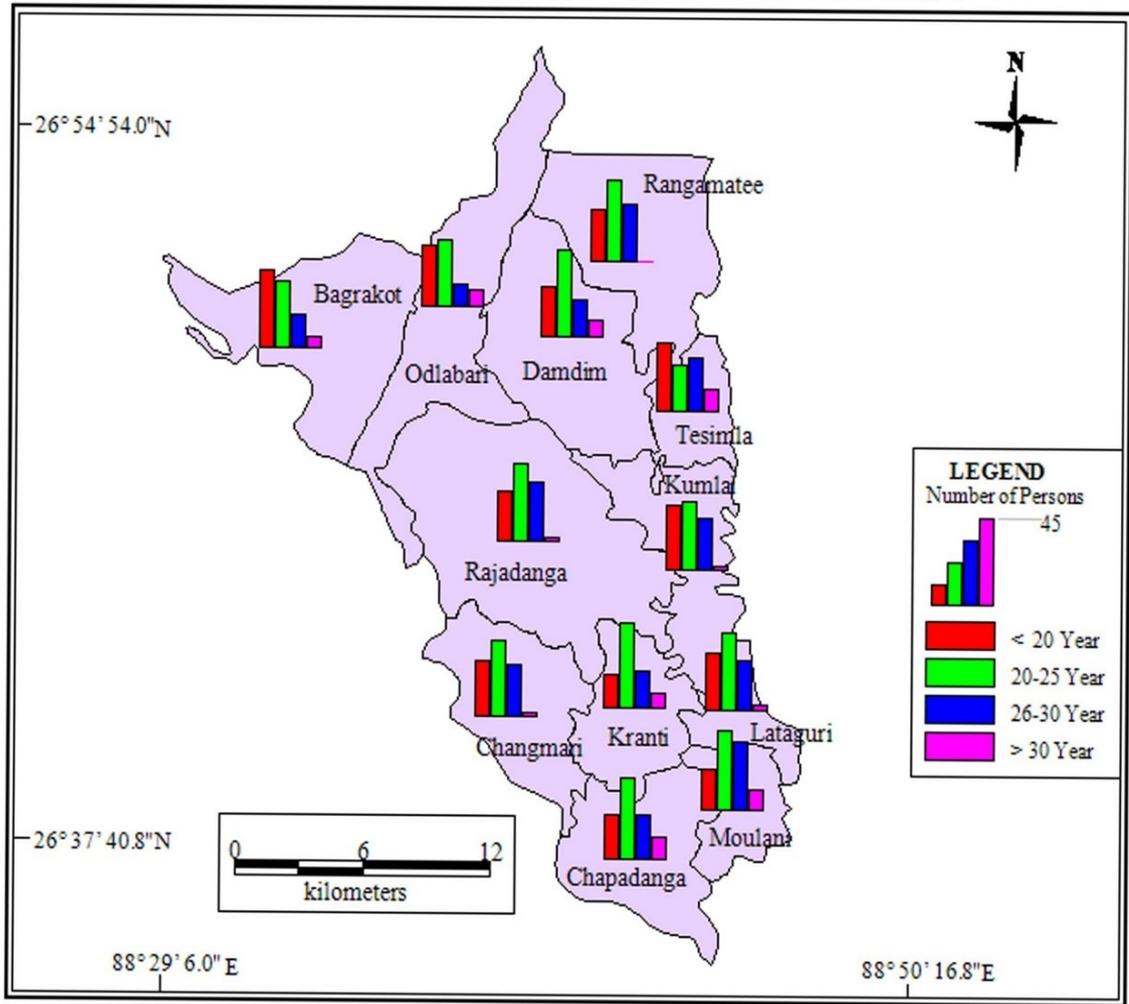
M=Male, F=Female

Source: Field survey, 2015

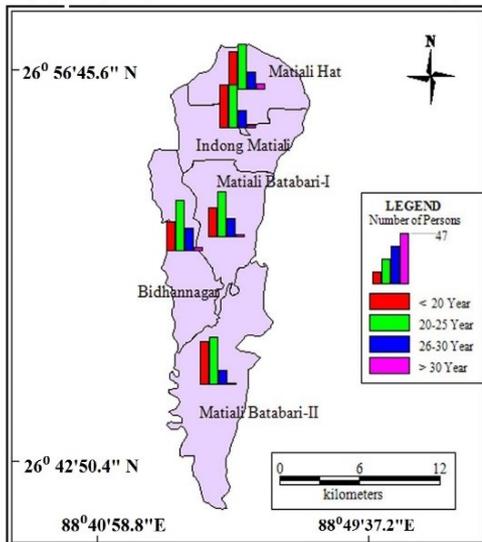
4.2.3 Age-Sex Composition

Among various elements of population, age and sex composition hold a prime place for population geographers. The separate data for males and females are important for various types of planning and for the analysis of other demographic characteristics such as mortality, migration, marital status, economic characteristics etc. The balance between two sexes affects the social and economic relationship within a community as the two sexes play partly contrasting and partly complementary roles in the economy and society (Sharma, Dhamai, & Lakshman, 2007). Social scientists have special interest in the study of age composition as social relations within a community are affected considerably by the age structure.

G.P-WISE AGES OF MARRIAGE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MAL BLOCK



G.P-WISE AGES OF MARRIAGE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MATIALI BLOCK



G.P-WISE AGES OF MARRIAGE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

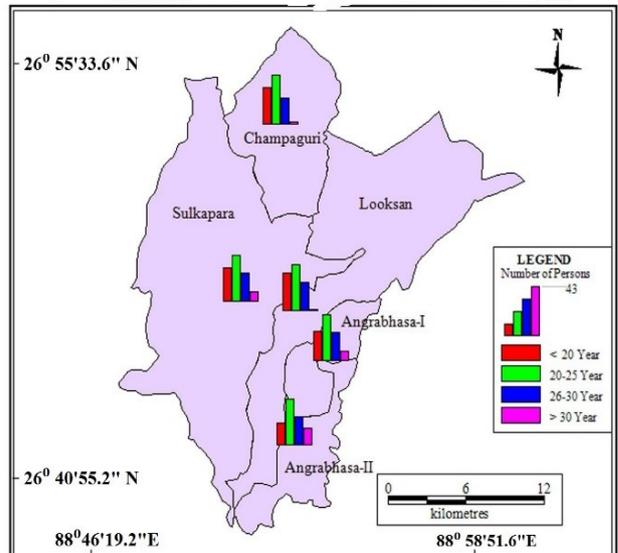


Figure 4.4 GP-wise Ages of Marriage of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Age is an important variable in measuring potential school population, potential voting population, potential manpower, future population projections for teacher, doctor, armed personnel, technical hands and so on (Chandna, 1986). The combination of age and sex is represented by the Age-sex composition. Generally the population is categorised into three broad age groups: (i) the young, (ii) the adults, and (iii) the old. The breaks at 15 years and 60 years are the most commonly used to categorise the each group. Thus, the three broad age groups that emerge are 0-14, 15-59 and 60 above. The social and economic implications of these three age groups and the geographical variations in their distribution are worthy of serious considerations (Clarke, 1972).

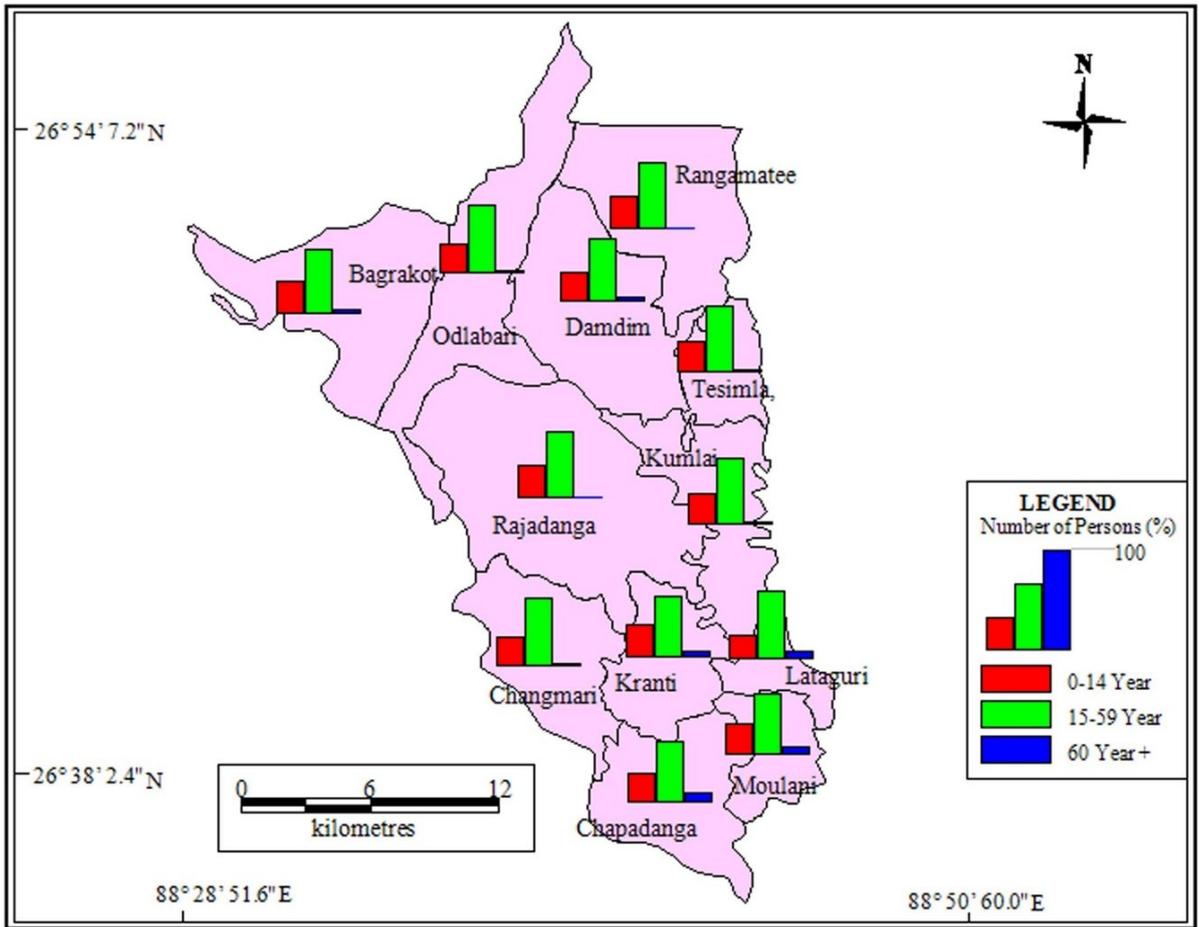
Table 4.4 GP-wise Statistics on Age-sex composition of Tribal People (in percentage)

Sl. No.	Name of GP	0-14 Year			15-59 Year			60 Year +		
		M	F	Combined	M	F	Combined	M	F	Combined
1	Bagrakot	16	16	32	30	33	63	2	3	5
2	Odlabari	15	14	29	35	32	67	1	3	4
3	Rangamatee	15	17	32	33	33	66	1	1	2
4	Rajadanga	16	16	32	34	32	66	0	2	2
5	Damdim	15	15	30	31	31	62	2	4	6
6	Tesimla,	14	17	31	32	33	65	3	1	4
7	Kumlai	15	16	31	32	33	65	2	2	4
8	Changmari	15	14	29	34	34	68	0	3	3
9	Kranti	16	17	33	30	30	60	4	3	7
10	Chapadanga	13	16	29	31	30	61	5	5	10
11	Moulani	17	14	31	30	30	60	3	6	9
12	Lataguri	11	13	24	33	35	68	5	3	8
Mal Block Total		15	16	30	32	32	64	2	3	5
1	Matiali Batabari-I	14	15	29	32	36	68	1	2	3
2	Matiali Batabari-II	15	16	31	33	34	67	0	2	2
3	Bidhannagar	19	17	36	26	29	55	5	4	9
4	Matiali Hat	21	22	43	26	28	54	0	3	3
5	Indong Matiali	13	13	26	31	36	67	4	3	7
Matiali Block Total		16	17	33	31	31	62	2	3	5
1	Angrabhasa-I	20	20	40	28	26	54	3	3	6
2	Angrabhasa-II	16	17	33	33	28	61	2	4	6
3	Sulkapara	16	13	29	31	33	64	3	4	7
4	Champaguri	16	18	34	33	29	62	1	3	4
5	Looksan	17	17	34	31	31	62	1	3	4
Nagrakata Block Total		17	18	34	30	30	60	2	4	6
Mal Subdivision Total		16	17	33	31	32	62	2	3	5

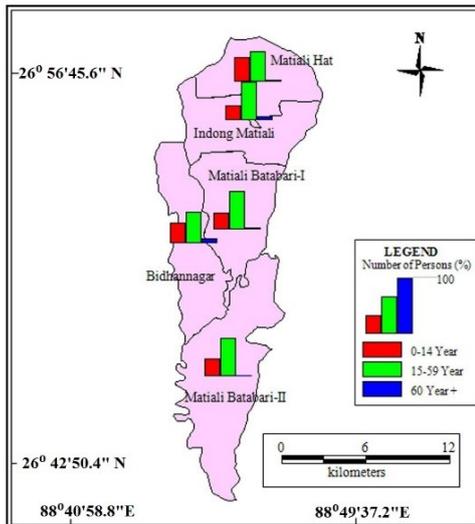
M=Male, F=Female

Source: Field survey, 2015

G.P-WISE AGE COMPOSITION OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MAL BLOCK



G.P-WISE AGE COMPOSITION OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MATIALI BLOCK



G.P-WISE AGE COMPOSITION OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

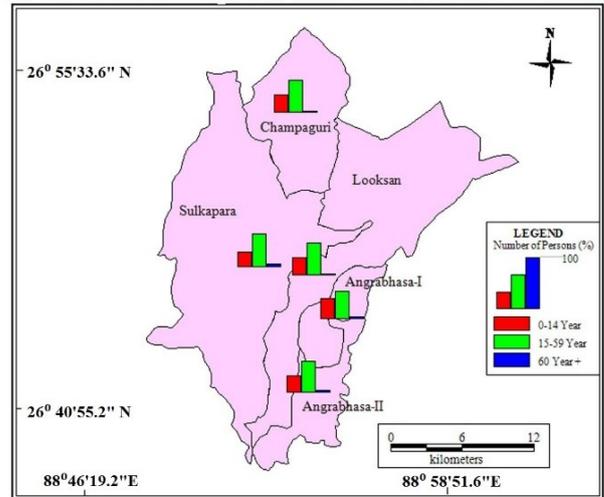


Figure 4.5 GP-wise Ages Composition of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

In analysing age-sex data it reveals that on an average there are 33% people belonging to the age group of below 15 years, 62% people has the age group of 15-59 years and 5% people are above 60 years of age. Young age group is significantly low in GPs of Lataguri and Indong Matiali. The rates of these distributions vary from one GP to another GP. Young age group proportion is above the average rate in GPs of Matiali Hat, Angrabhasa-I, Bidhannagar, Champaguri and Looksan. Significantly high proportion of Adults group is found in the GPs of Lataguri, Changmari, Odlabari, Matiali Batabari-I and Indong Matiali.

Share of adult age group is comparatively low in GPs of Angrabhasa-I (54%), Matiali Hat (54%) and Bidhannagar (55%). In this age group there is no notable difference between male and female shares. Old age group share is significantly low among the tribal people of Mal subdivision. As a whole in this subdivision there are 5% old people whose ages are above 60 years. In Chapadanga GP old age people share is highest (10% of the total tribal people of this GP). The share is also significant in GP of Moulani, Lataguri and Kranti. In these block tribal concentration is low and they are economically solvent than the other GPs. For this age group there is a difference between male and female old people. Female old people are more in number than that of male people. In GP of Matiali Batabari-II, Rajadanga and Changmari male people are nil or very few in number.

4.2.4 Fertility

Fertility, Mortality and migration constitute the three basic components of population growth. Fertility is the natural capability to give birth. In humans, fertility means that the parent can produce babies. More precisely, fertility is the capacity of an individual or population to produce viable offspring. As a measure, fertility rate is the number of children born per couple, person or population. There are various measures of fertility. These include: crude birth rate, general fertility rate, fertility ratio, age specific birth rate, total fertility rate etc.

a) **Crude Birth Rate (CBR):** CBR is the simplest and most common measure of human fertility. It is expressed in terms of number of live births in a year per thousand of the mid-year population.

$$CBR = \frac{\text{Number of live birth during a year}}{\text{Estimated mid year Population}} \times 1000$$

b) **General Fertility Rate (GFR):** It measures the number of live births in a year per thousand women of normal reproductive age.

$$GFR = \frac{\text{Number of live births in a year}}{\text{Number of women in normal reproductive age(15 – 49 year)}} \times 1000$$

c) **Fertility Ratio (FR)/ Child Women Ratio:** It is expressed in terms of number of children below five years of age per thousand females of reproductive age group (15-49 years).

$$FR = \frac{\text{Number of children under 5 years of age}}{\text{Pf15 – 49Number of women of child bearing age}} \times 1000$$

d) **Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR):** It measures the number of births in a year to women of a given age group per thousand women in that age group. This type of measure of fertility permits detailed comparisons between populations and is helpful in revealing the differences in the fertility rates of women belonging to different age groups.

$$ASFR = \frac{\text{Number of births to women of a given age group}}{\text{Total female population of that age group}} \times 1000$$

e) **Total Fertility Rate (TFR):** TFR is the total number of children a woman would bear during her lifetime if she were to experience the prevailing age-specific fertility rates of women. TFR indicates the average number of children expected to be born per woman during her entire span of reproductive period assuming that the age specific fertility rates, to which she is exposed to, continue to be the same and that there is no mortality. The TFRs worked out on the basis of the ASFRs.

$$TFR = \text{Sum of Age specific Fertility rate} \times \text{Magnitude of Age group}$$

Total fertility rate is easy to compute and is an effective measure of fertility of population. Separate total fertility rates can be computed for different categories of population which may be significant tools for understanding the fertility behaviour of groups of population.

Human fertility depends on factors of nutrition, culture, instinct, economics, way of life, and emotions. Among the tribal society the fertility rate is relatively higher than the other society. Mal subdivision has a unique characteristic of fertility ratio among the tribal people. Early age of marriage, lack of knowledge of family planning, illiteracy, and customs causes high birth rate among the tribal people. From the table (4.5) different important fertility measures are understood at gram panchayat levels among the tribal population. The fertility rate in all aspects is higher than the general rate of the subdivision, district, state and the nation. The crude birth rate (CBR) of the country was around 22 per thousand in 2011 census and same was 16 in West Bengal. But the CBR in the Mal subdivision was 28 for tribal

people as per sample data obtained during primary survey. However the CBR is not uniform throughout the subdivision for the same social group. Data ranges from 22 to 33. CBR more than 30 per thousand populations are in the GPs of Bagrakot, Damdim, Chengmari, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga and Changmari. Lowest rate of CBR (< 25 per thousand population) are found in the Gram Panchayats of Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar and Angrabhasa-II. The concentrations of tribal population are lesser than the former GPs. They are not traditionally engaged in tea gardens, rather there are different activities. The tribal population who are very much close to the non-tribal people are now educated and became conscious about the bad impact of high birth rate. Moulani, Chapadanga and Lataguri GPs are like that.

Table 4.5 GP-wise Statistics on Fertility Rates of Tribal People

Sl. No.	Name of GP	Sample Population			CBR	GFR	TFR
		Total	Male	Female			
1	Bagrakot	622	312	310	33	90	4.0
2	Odlabari	249	125	124	32	93	3.6
3	Rangamatee	637	317	320	33	96	3.8
4	Rajadanga	249	122	127	32	87	3.4
5	Damdim	452	222	230	30	90	3.4
6	Tesimla	152	74	78	28	83	3.9
7	Kumlai	329	165	164	29	91	3.3
8	Changmari	230	112	118	31	92	4.0
9	Kranti	125	63	62	26	78	3.0
10	Chapadanga	125	64	61	24	76	3.0
11	Moulani	123	61	62	22	68	2.8
12	Lataguri	145	73	72	23	70	2.8
Mal Block Total		3438	1710	1728	30	90	3.4
1	Matiali Batabari-I	350	170	180	22	70	3.0
2	Matiali Batabari-II	222	107	115	22	70	3.0
3	Bidhannagar	220	112	108	23	75	3.1
4	Matiali Hat	217	111	106	26	82	3.2
5	Indong Matiali	341	171	170	26	82	3.5
Matiali Block Total		1350	671	679	25	80	3.2
1	Angrabhasa-I	211	110	101	26	75	3.0
2	Angrabhasa-II	267	138	129	24	76	3.0
3	Sulkapara	329	163	166	27	85	3.2
4	Champaguri	605	298	307	29	85	3.5
5	Looksan	600	290	310	30	93	3.5
Nagrakata Block Total		2012	999	1013	26	85	3.2
Mal Subdivision Total		6800	3380	3420	28	88	3.3

Source: Field Survey, 2015

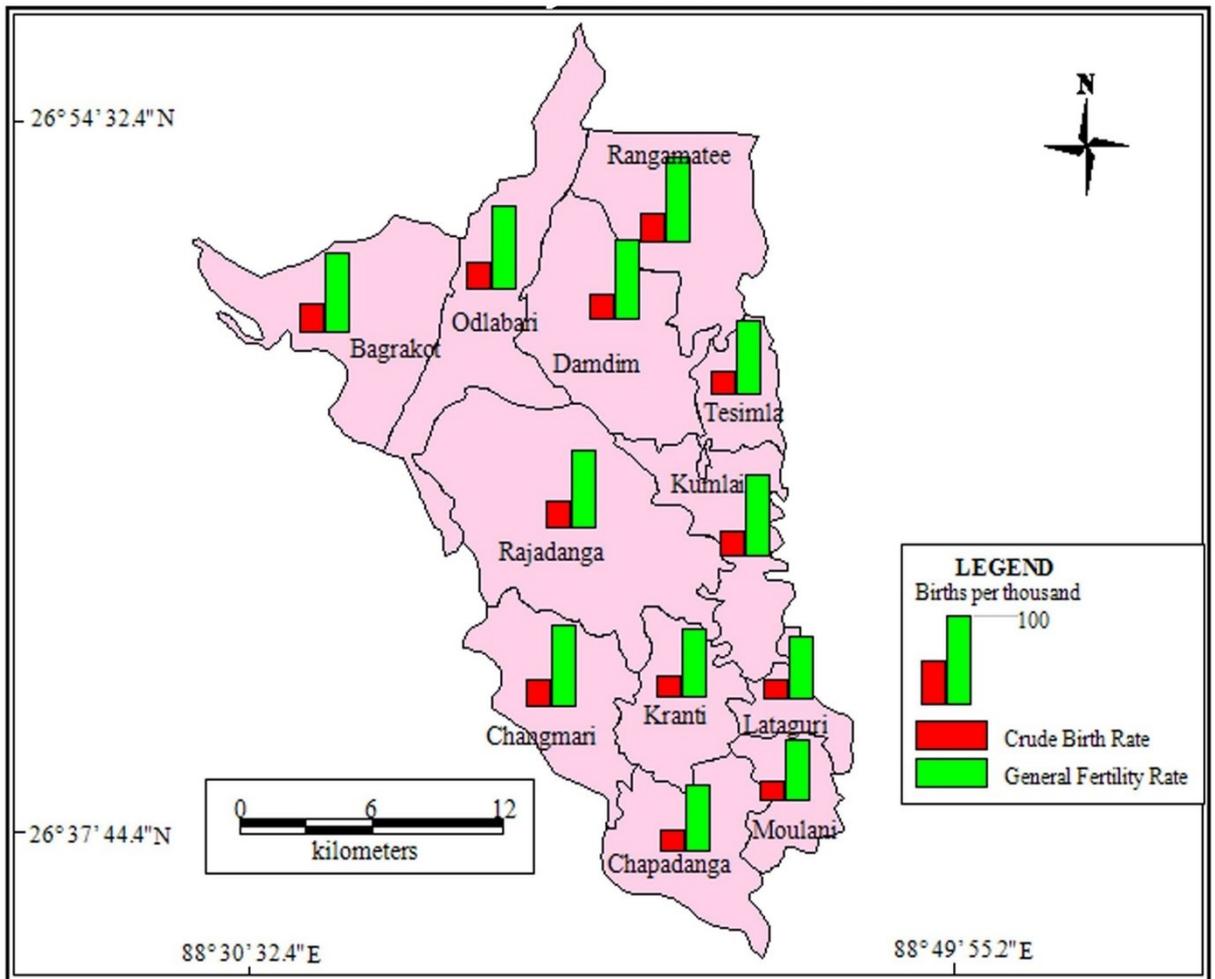
The General fertility rate of the tribal people is also higher than the non-tribal people. In Mal subdivision it is 88 per 1000 female for tribal population and 60 for non-tribal population. Among the GPs there are also disparities in the ratio. It is maximum in Rangamatee TG and minimum in Moulani GP of 96 and 68 respectively. More than 90 births per 1000 female population are found in the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Damdim, Rangamatee, Kumlai, Changmari and Looksan. Less than 75 births per 1000 female population are found in the GPs of Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar and Angrabhasa-I.

Table 4.6 GP-wise Statistics on Age-specific Fertility Rates of Tribal People

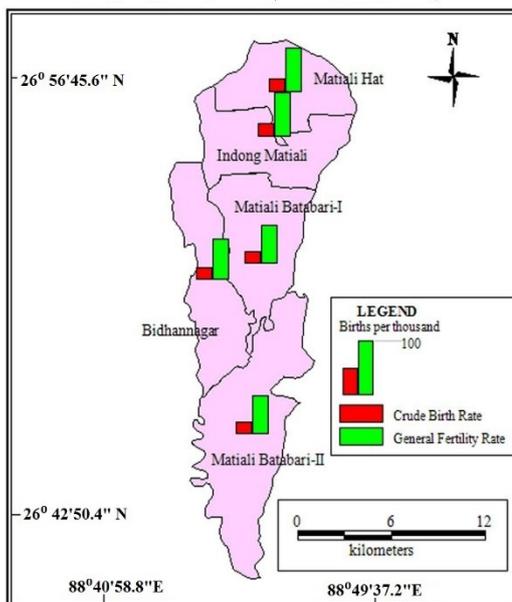
SL No	Name of GP	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
1	Bagrakot	172	200	100	200	55	37	15
2	Odlabari	350	454	245	170	150	85	25
3	Rangamatee	294	303	156	200	110	40	15
4	Rajadanga	220	360	272	150	150	150	21
5	Damdim	181	250	157	100	150	66	21
6	Tesimla	150	278	150	125	65	61	15
7	Kumlai	200	250	100	125	65	50	10
8	Changmari	220	350	170	150	120	50	20
9	Kranti	150	225	155	110	65	25	00
10	Chapadanga	150	220	170	105	52	50	20
11	Moulani	150	250	200	95	60	56	00
12	Lataguri	155	165	150	125	50	67	00
Mal Block Total		195	282	175	145	90	60	22
1	Matiali Batabari-I	155	250	186	94	60	56	00
2	Matiali Batabari-II	122	176	170	95	56	66	10
3	Bidhannagar	125	200	175	100	95	85	10
4	Matiali Hat	100	205	225	225	45	55	00
5	Indong Matiali	175	222	129	129	56	16	10
Matiali Block Total		135	210	180	130	64	56	06
1	Angrabhasa-I	150	220	180	105	52	50	12
2	Angrabhasa-II	155	250	200	95	60	66	00
3	Sulkapara	165	225	120	129	56	16	10
4	Champaguri	150	266	150	124	65	41	15
5	Looksan	220	350	170	150	120	50	0
Nagrakata Block Total		168	262	164	120	70	45	7
Mal Subdivision Total		166	255	173	141	75	56	12

Source: Field Survey, 2015

G.P-WISE FERTILITY RATE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MAL BLOCK



G.P-WISE FERTILITY RATE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN MATIALI BLOCK



G.P-WISE FERTILITY RATE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

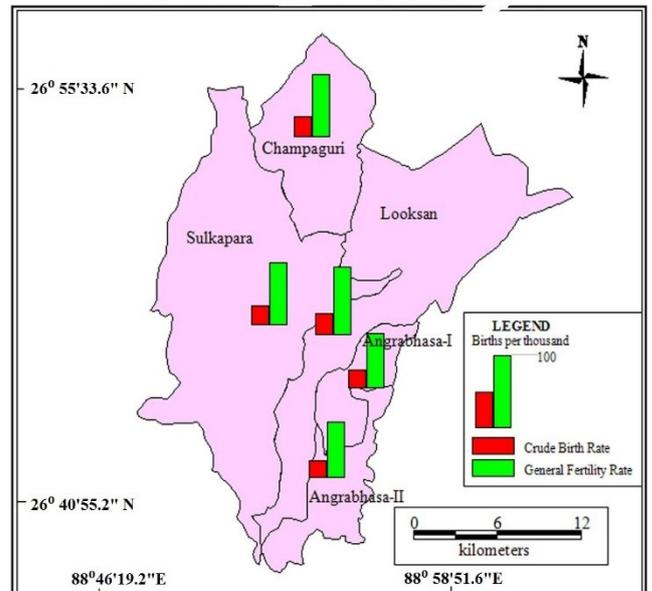


Figure 4.6 GP-wise Fertility Rate of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Total fertility rate for the state and country was around 1.7 in and 2.4 in 2011 respectively. For the tribal people in Mal subdivision it was 3.3 per woman of her reproductive span period as per sample data. In all GPs of the subdivision of Mal this is higher than the state average. Maximum TFR is 4.0 and minimum is 2.8. Again same natures of distribution are found to occur like CBR and GFR of the above facts. From the record of the fertility data it can be concluded that, rate of fertility among the tribes are higher than the non-tribal people. The areas where literacy spreads, economic activities are developing and contact of non-tribal population are maximum, fertility have been reduced remarkably. Average fertility from the past days has been gradually decreasing.

4.2.5 Mortality

Mortality is synonymous to death rate. Death is defined as the permanent disappearance of all evidence of life at any time after birth has taken place. A death can occur only after a live birth has occurred. The definition of “death” excludes deaths prior to (live) birth. These are so-called fetal deaths (Shyrock & Siegel, 1980). In some countries like Equatorial Guinea and Morocco, infants who die within 24 hours of birth are classified as still births. Mortality rate is an important indicator of changes of population. In a primitive society where birth rate was high but due to excessive death rate the increase of natural population growth was limited. The 1st phase of demographic transition experiences such change of population. There are different measures of mortality:

a) **Crude Death Rate:** The Crude Death rate is the number of deaths per 1000 people in a particular year in relation to the total population. It is expressed as:

$$CDR = \frac{\text{Number of deaths in a year}}{\text{Estimated mid year population of the year}} \times 1000$$

b) **Age and Sex Specific Death Rate:** The age and sex specific mortality rates are, in fact, crude death rates for a particular age and sex group. It can be estimated as number of deaths during a year of persons of a given age and sex per thousand of that age and sex. These can be calculated as under:

$$ASDR = \frac{\text{Number of deaths in a specific age group of population}}{\text{Total mid year population in that age group}} \times 1000$$

c) **Infant Mortality Rate:** A child below one year of age is called an infant. In terms of demography their age group is described as “Zero”. The formula for computing infant mortality is;

$$IMR = \frac{\text{Number of deaths of children under one year of age}}{\text{Number of live births in the year}} \times 1000$$

Mortality or death is affected by a variety of factors. The factors of deaths may be either biological or physiological and environmental. Due to advancement of medical facilities the mortality rate has been reduced throughout the globe. The Mal subdivision is dominated by the tribal population. Due to primitive social customs, illiteracy, economic backwardness and traditional believes the area shows higher mortality rates compared to the other areas.

Table 4.7 GP-wise Statistics on Mortality Rates of Tribal People

Sl No.	Name of GP	Population sample	Male	Female	CDR	IMR	MMR
1	Bagrakot	622	312	310	14	85	2.3
2	Odlabari	249	125	124	12	82	1.4
3	Rangamatee	637	317	320	10	80	1.5
4	Rajadanga	249	122	127	9	76	1.6
5	Damdin	452	222	230	11	78	1.5
6	Tesimla	152	74	78	9	79	1.4
7	Kumlai	329	165	164	10	65	1.5
8	Changmari	230	112	118	10	64	1.7
9	Kranti	125	63	62	8	63	1.3
10	Chapadanga	125	64	61	7	60	1.3
11	Moulani	123	61	62	7	45	1.2
12	Lataguri	145	73	72	7	53	1.0
Mal Block Total		3438	1710	1728	11	72	1.7
1	Matiali Batabari-I	350	170	180	9	70	1.5
2	Matiali Batabari-II	222	107	115	8	72	1.4
3	Bidhannagar	220	112	108	8	60	1.3
4	Matiali Hat	217	111	106	9	71	1.6
5	Indong Matiali	341	171	170	8	65	1.7
Matiali Block Total		1350	671	679	9	65	1.5
1	Angrabhasa-I	211	110	101	9	60	1.3
2	Angrabhasa-II	267	138	129	8	61	1.2
3	Sulkapara	329	163	166	8	62	1.6
4	Champaguri	605	298	307	11	64	1.7
5	Looksan	600	290	310	10	61	1.6
Nagrakata Block Total		2012	999	1013	10	62	1.6
Mal Subdivision Total		6800	3380	3420	10.5	66.3	1.7

Source: Field survey, 2015

The crude death rate among the tribal people of Mal subdivision is 10.5. However the rate is much higher than the district, state and nation. The crude death rate in the country in 2011 census was 7.6 per 1000 rural population and same was 6.3 for West Bengal rural people. Crude death rate is very high among the tribal people in Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Damdim, Kumlai, Chengmari, Champaguri and Looksan. Malnutrition, starvation, ill health causes high death rate in the tea garden areas. Ageing within 40-45 years age group are very common. The crude death rate is comparatively lower in the GP areas of Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri and Bidhannagar. The reason is that a significant number of people in these areas are involved in economic activities other than the tea garden.

Average death rate per 1000 tribal population in a year is 11 in Mal block, 9 in Matiali block and 10 in Nagrakata block. This is 10.3 per 1000 tribal population in Mal subdivision as a whole.

Infant mortality rate i.e. death rate of infants below 1 year of age is also higher among the tribes of the Mal subdivision in comparison to district, state and nation. The Infant Mortality rate was 48 per 1000 population in 2011 for the Country in rural areas and for the state of West Bengal it was 33. The infant mortality rate in Mal subdivision is 66.3 per 1000 children in 2015 as per the collected sample data. Highest infant mortality rate of 85 is recorded in Bagrakot followed by Odlabari, Rangamatee, and Tesimla. However comparatively lower rate of death of infants are recorded in GPs of Moulani, Lataguri, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II. Among the GPs maximum infant mortality rate is 85 in Bagrakot and minimum is 45 in Moulani. Average rate of Infant mortality for the subdivision is 66.3 per 1000 infants. Malnutrition of foetus and mother, lack of medicines, poor custom of child delivery in home causes high infant mortality rates among the tribal people. According to the sample data collected from the field, institutional delivery rate for the tribal people is 40% only. Rest 60% people depend on local '*dhai*' or old women in their own houses. Maternal mortality rate is high among the tribal people compared to the state ratio. The maternal mortality ratio is 1.17 per 1000 live births as per 2011 census. In Mal subdivision, the ratio is 1.7. However the highest MMR is found in Bagrakot GP followed by Changmari, Champaguri, Rajadanga and Sulkapara. The lowest MMR occur in Lataguri GP preceded by Moulani and Angrabhasa-II.

MORTALITY RATE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

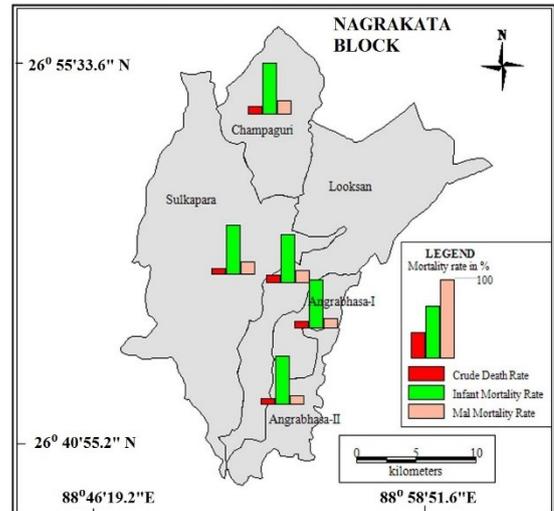
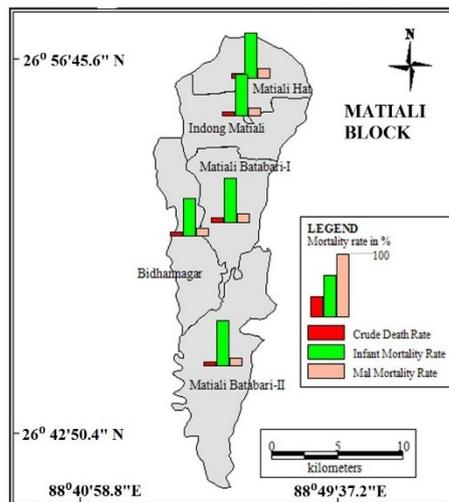
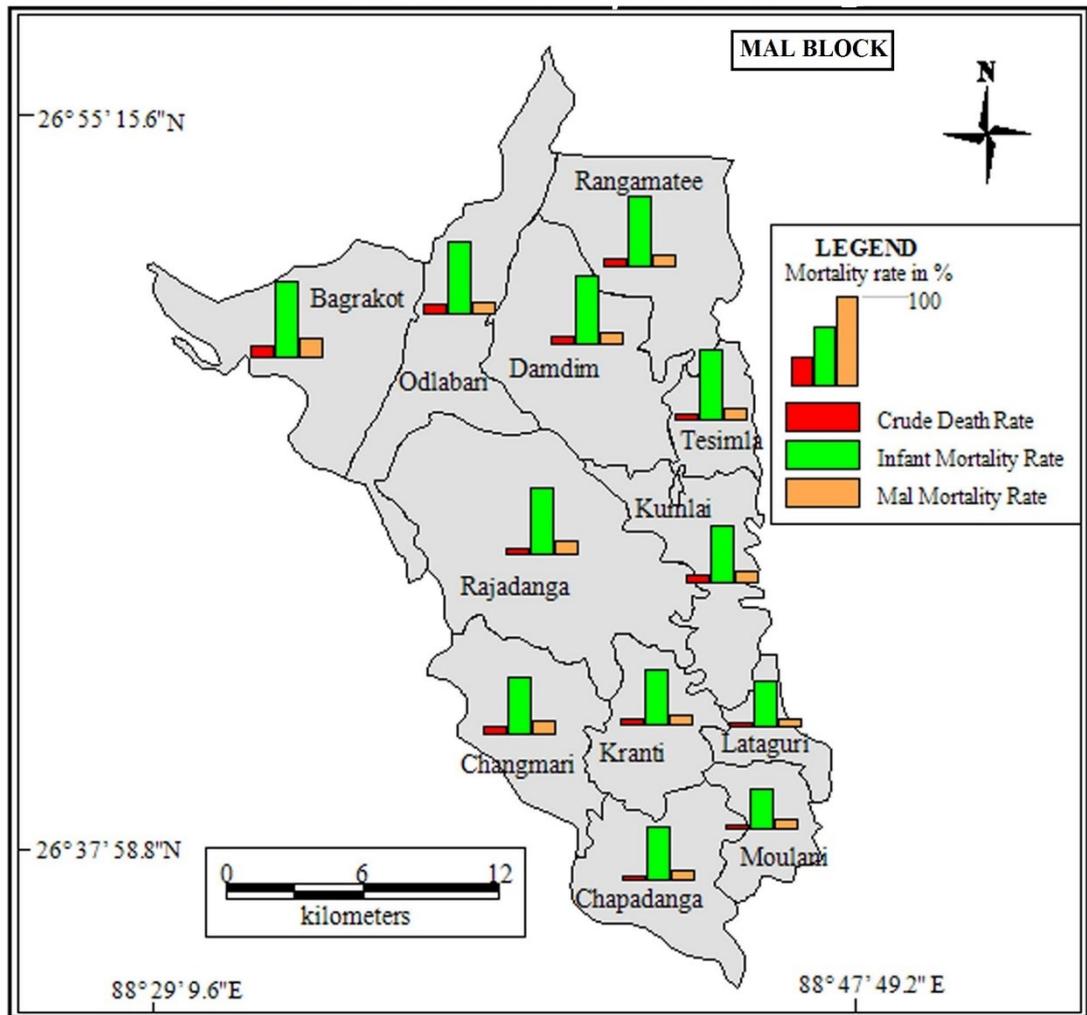


Figure 4.7 Mortality Rate of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

4.3 Literacy

Literacy is traditionally understood as the ability to read, write, and use arithmetic. The modern term's meaning has been expanded to include the ability to use language, numbers, images, computers, and other basic means to understand, communicate, gain useful knowledge and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines literacy as the "ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society". Literacy is a key for socio-economic progress. Illiteracy among the tribal people is very common. In addition to that there are dropout problems, problems of communicative language etc.

In the present context, the level of literacy among the tribal people, female literacy, school dropout rate have been focused.

4.3.1 Level of literacy

The tribal children are born with talent equal to that of the upper-caste-upper class children, yet the tribal communities are economically and socially backward because they have little access to material resources and because the issue of the development of their human resource has always been neglected. Inadequate education infrastructure, early participation of children into work, abject poverty, and a lack of supportive education culture at home and in the community have contributed to the high incidence of illiteracy and very high rate of early dropout among the tribal population in the region (Roy, 2007).

In the present context, level of literacy means degree of formal education that is gained by the tribal people living in the area. The categories or classes considered are Illiterate, Primary or elementary, Secondary, and Graduation. Effective literacy rate is counted for the people above 7 years of ages. Mass illiteracy and literacy with elementary education are the basic characteristics of education in this region. Combination of these two shares are more than 75% of general literacy figures.

From the table it is found that literacy ratio is very poor among the tribes in Mal subdivision. Spatial distributions of literacy in the GPs are remarkable and very contrasting. Illiteracy rate are maximum in the relatively developed GPs. Chengmari, Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II GPs have more illiterate people compared to Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Tesimla, Kumlai, Champaguri. The reason

behind this is due to spread of Christianity and missionary schools in the later groups. As a result the children are going schools. Batabari-I and Batabari-II GP of Matiali block has relatively poor illiteracy ratio. The main cause behind the poor illiteracy of these GPs is close association of tribal with the non-tribal and presence of Bengali medium school thereon. Highest illiteracy among tribes is found in Changmari GP e.g. 65%. The GP is very badly connected with the modern transport and communication system. The overall tribal literacy rate is 58% which is very close to national (58%) and state average (57.9%) of 2011 census.

Table 4.8 GP-wise Statistics on Literacy Rates of Tribal People

Sl No.	Name of GP	Sample Population	Number of people in Percentage				
			Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Graduation	Total
1	Bagrakot	622	37	45	16	2	100
2	Odlabari	249	38	46	16	0	100
3	Rangamatee	637	40	50	10	0	100
4	Rajadanga	249	45	40	10	5	100
5	Damdin	452	45	30	25	0	100
6	Tesimla	152	35	50	15	0	100
7	Kumlai	329	37	40	19	4	100
8	Changmari	230	65	25	10	0	100
9	Kranti	125	46	44	9	1	100
10	Chapadanga	125	48	32	15	5	100
11	Moulani	123	47	23	20	10	100
12	Lataguri	145	44	29	15	12	100
Mal Block Total		3438	43	38	16	3	100
1	Matiali Batabari-I	350	45	40	14	1	100
2	Matiali Batabari-II	222	30	40	24	6	100
3	Bidhannagar	220	32	30	28	10	100
4	Matiali Hat	217	35	30	25	10	100
5	Indong Matiali	341	43	27	30	0	100
Matiali Block Total		1350	36	35	25	4	100
1	Angrabhasa-I	211	48	25	20	7	100
2	Angrabhasa-II	267	42	22	28	8	100
3	Sulkapara	329	40	30	25	5	100
4	Champaguri	605	35	35	28	2	100
5	Looksan	600	33	34	30	3	100
Nagrakata Block Total		2012	42	27	26	5	100
Mal Subdivision Total		6800	42	34	20	4	100

Source: Field survey, 2015

LITERACY RATE OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

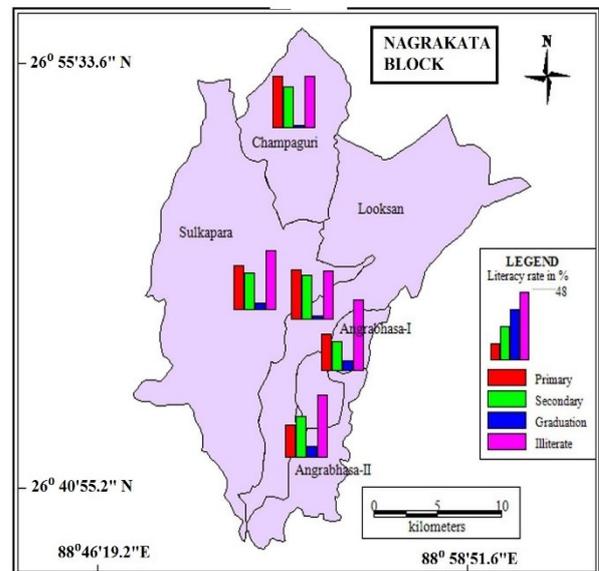
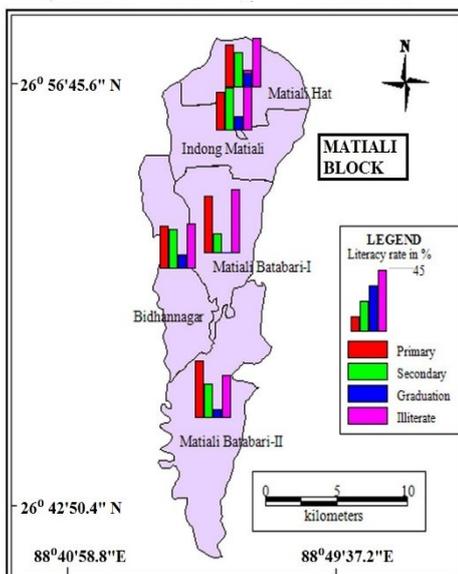
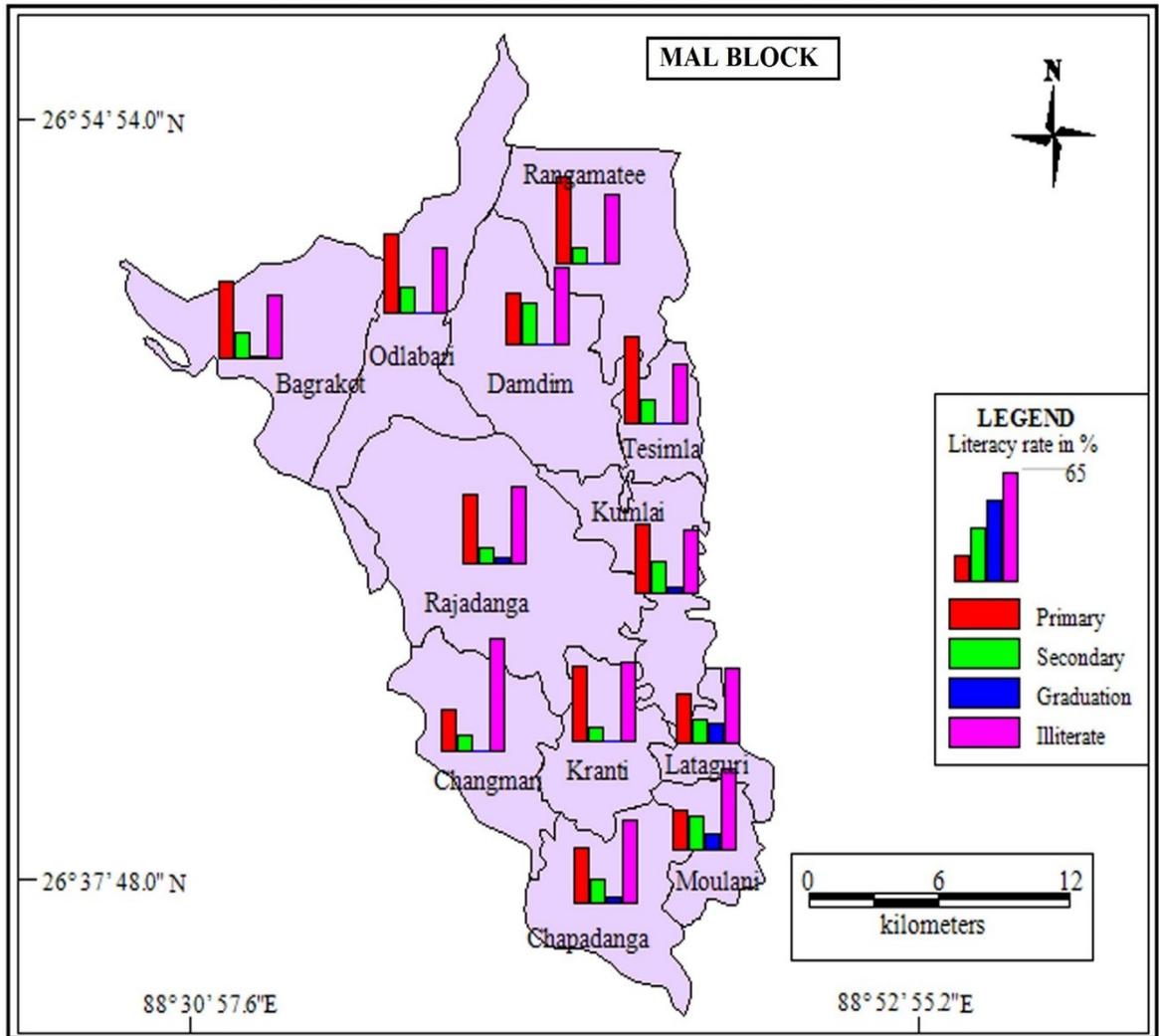


Figure 4.8 Literacy Rates of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Among the literates, most of the people have formal primary education. The old age people are either illiterate or have primary education. The percentage shares of literates are filled by the young age group of people. Spread of missionary activities has changed the literacy rate among the children to some extent. In non-tea garden based GP areas, rate of higher education is comparatively more than the tea garden based GP areas. Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II are examples of such GP. As a whole on an average Matiali block has lowest illiteracy in the subdivision while the Mal block has highest illiteracy rate. Higher education rate is scarce in the area among the tribal people. On an average, there are 4% tribal people who have higher education i.e. graduate or post graduate. The graduate tribes are nil or insignificant in GPs of Odlabari, Rangamatee, Damdim, Tesimla, Changmari and Indong Matiali-I.

4.3.2 Female Literacy

The overall scenario of educational development emerged during the last sixty years reflecting gender bias. The educational programmes have not contributed to the desired extent, but whatever have been the achievements, those have been more or less on male side. Females have been incidental in the process of educational planning. Women in general and tribal women in particular are far behind the educational ladder as compared to their male counterparts.

There is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in all the provinces of India: effective literacy rates (age 7 and above) in 2011 were 82.14% for men and 65.46% for women. In the tribal society, woman is a main component of economic activities. She runs the family. She manages domestic household activities, rear the child and outside the house, she also earns wages, collects fuel wood and minor forest produce, fetch water and look after the domestic animals. Thus, she discharges multiple roles and is overburdened with drudgery (Srivastava, 2006).

From the table it is found that on an average, gender disparity in literacy rate is 12%. The gap is lower than the national and state average. All India average gender gap in literacy disparity is 19% as per 2011 census. Average tribal literacy rate for Mal block is 56% while the female literacy is 52% and male literacy is 62%. The gap in gender disparity is 10%. In Matiali the figure estimated are 63%, 70% and 55% respectively. The Nagrakata block has the figures of 60%, 65% and 55% respectively. Highest female literacy rate is estimated in Kumlai and Bidhannagar GP i.e. 64%. Lowest female literacy occurred in the GP of Changmari i.e. 31%. Average literacy as well as female literacy rate is comparatively higher in the GPs of Christian missionary dominated areas. Matiali Batabari-II, Tesimla, Looksan,

Champaguri, Bagrakot, and Odlabari has more than 60% literacy rate. For such underdeveloped areas 60% tribal literacy rate is no doubt a significant indicator. Changmari, Chapadanga, Kranti, Moulani, Angrabhasa, Matiali Batabari-I has comparatively poor literacy rate in spite of their non-tea garden based economy and association of non-tribal people. The reason is that lack of Christian missionary activities and language problem in Bengali medium school as well as their non colonial settlement. The low female literacy rate has had a dramatically negative impact on family planning and population stabilisation efforts in India. The figures for Mal subdivision among the tribes are similar to the nature of gender disparity in any other society too.

Table 4.9 GP-wise Statistics on Gender-wise Literacy Rates

SL No	Name of GP	Sample Population	Literacy rate in percentage			Gender Gap
			Male	Female	Combined	
1	Bagrakot	622	66	60	63	06
2	Odlabari	249	70	56	62	14
3	Rangamatee	637	69	53	60	16
4	Rajadanga	249	60	51	55	09
5	Damdin	452	62	50	55	12
6	Tesimla	152	71	60	65	11
7	Kumlai	329	62	64	63	-02
8	Changmari	230	45	30	35	15
9	Kranti	125	60	51	54	09
10	Chapadanga	125	53	51	52	02
11	Moulani	123	60	49	53	11
12	Lataguri	145	61	51	56	10
Mal Block Total		3438	62	52	56	10
1	Matiali Batabari-I	350	66	43	55	17
2	Matiali Batabari-II	222	79	57	70	22
3	Bidhannagar	220	73	64	68	09
4	Matiali Hat	217	70	60	65	10
5	Indong Matiali	341	62	51	57	09
Matiali Block Total		1350	70	55	63	15
1	Angrabhasa-I	211	60	43	52	17
2	Angrabhasa-II	267	62	53	58	09
3	Sulkapara	329	64	56	60	08
4	Champaguri	605	70	59	65	11
5	Looksan	600	71	62	67	09
Nagrakata Block Total		2012	65	55	60	10
Mal Subdivision Total		6800	65	53	58	12

Source: Field survey, 2015

4.3.3 School Dropout Rate

The Government of India has initiated a number of programmes to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) among which the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is the most recent one. The phenomenon of students discontinuing studies and repeating grades before completing elementary level of education is a major impediment in achieving Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). In order to assess its impact on achievement of UEE, it is necessary to estimate dropout and repetition rates at primary and upper primary stages as well as transition rate from primary to upper primary. But incident of School dropout is a main problem to fulfil the target of education for all. In general sense dropout means a student who leaves school after enrolment without completing his or her studies. Dropout may be from school at primary, upper primary and secondary level or from college or university level. However, here the dropout is considered for those who left school before promoting class eight standards at primary or upper primary school.

In the constitution of our country, up to class eight level studies is considered as free and compulsory for all. The school enrolment level of tribal people of Mal subdivision is very low but dropout rate is comparatively lower in respect to other parts of the district. The following table will highlight the school dropout rate in Mal subdivision.

Overall dropout rate for the tribal children of Mal subdivision is 40%. The boys' dropout rate is 46% while the girls 28%. In all the GPs there is high dropout rate for boys and lower for girls. More than 50% school dropout is recorded in Tesimla GP. Near about but more than 40% dropout rate has been recorded in the GPs of Bagrakot, Rajadanga, Damdim, Changmari, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II and Angrabhasa-I. Boys' dropout rate is high almost in all GPs. More than 50% boys' dropout rate has been recorded in GPs of Rajadanga, Damdim, Tesimla, Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II and Angrabhasa-I. Highest girls' dropout rate is recorded in Tesimla (45%) followed by Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II (40%). Dropout rate is very low in the GPs of Kranti, Chapadanga and Looksan. The causes of high dropout rate in boys' are due to engagement in economically productive activities and disinterest in studies.

The cause of lower dropout rate for girls' is due to respect to girls and women in the tribal society. However, the dropout rate of tribal student in Mal subdivision is lower than the National average for tribal students. It was 55% in 2010-11 (Tribal Census, 2013).

Table 4.10 GP-wise Statistics on School Dropout Rates of Tribal Students

SL No	Name of GP	Sample Population	Boys Drop out rate (%)	Girls Drop out rate (%)	Combined Drop out rate (%)
1	Bagrakot	622	49	25	40
2	Odlabari	249	37	24	35
3	Rangamatee	637	45	25	35
4	Rajadanga	249	60	30	44
5	Damdin	452	50	30	41
6	Tesimla	152	55	45	51
7	Kumlai	329	43	23	35
8	Changmari	230	45	33	40
9	Kranti	125	35	20	28
10	Chapadanga	125	37	19	33
11	Moulani	123	45	21	34
12	Lataguri	145	45	20	38
Mal Block Total		3438	46	26	40
1	Matiali Batabari-I	350	50	40	44
2	Matiali Batabari-II	222	50	40	46
3	Bidhannagar	220	45	35	40
4	Matiali Hat	217	43	30	37
5	Indong Matiali	341	41	26	35
Matiali Block Total		1350	46	37	42
1	Angrabhasa-I	211	50	25	40
2	Angrabhasa-II	267	45	25	36
3	Sulkapara	329	43	25	35
4	Champaguri	605	35	23	30
5	Looksan	600	40	29	34
Nagrakata Block Total		2012	44	26	37
Mal Subdivision Total		6800	46	28	40

Source: Field survey, 2015

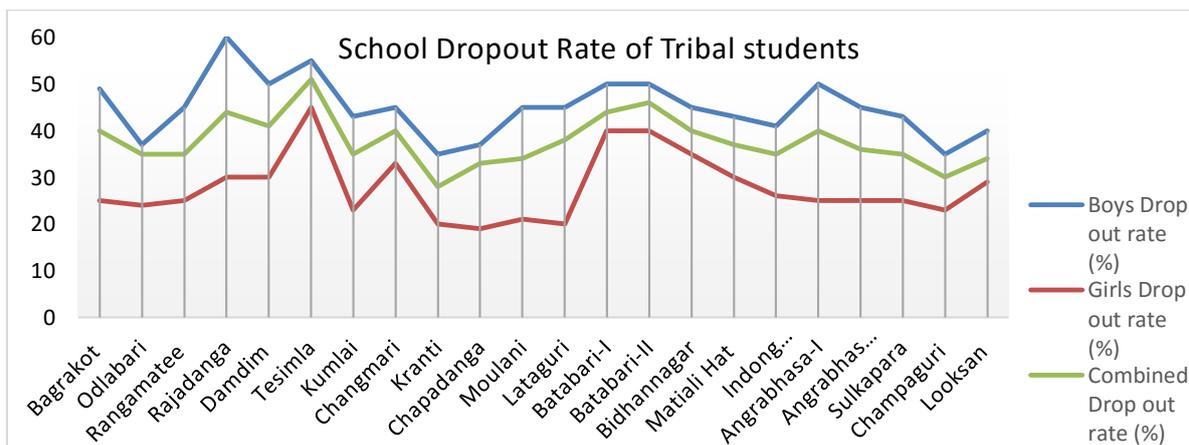


Figure 4.9.A School Dropout rate of Tribal students

G.P-WISE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE OF TRIBAL STUDENTS

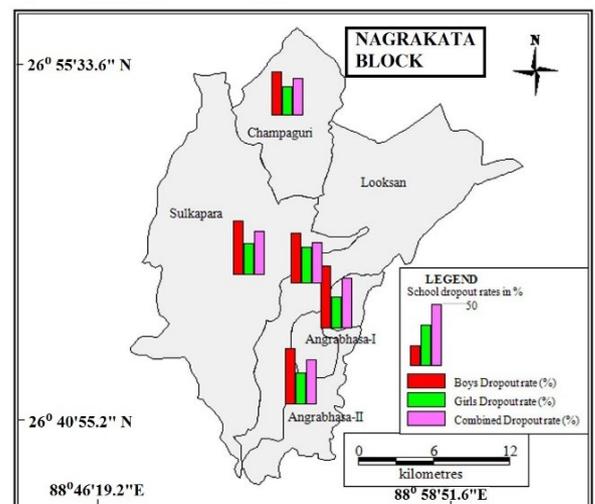
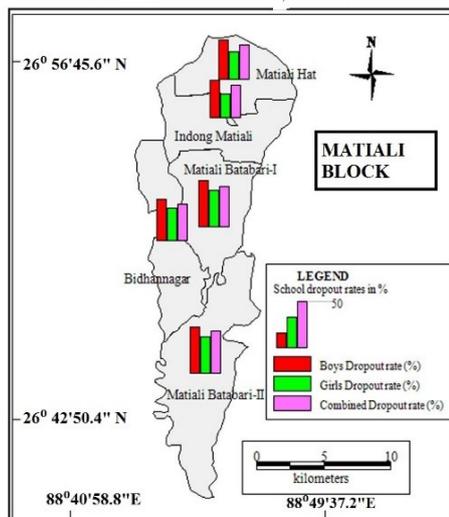
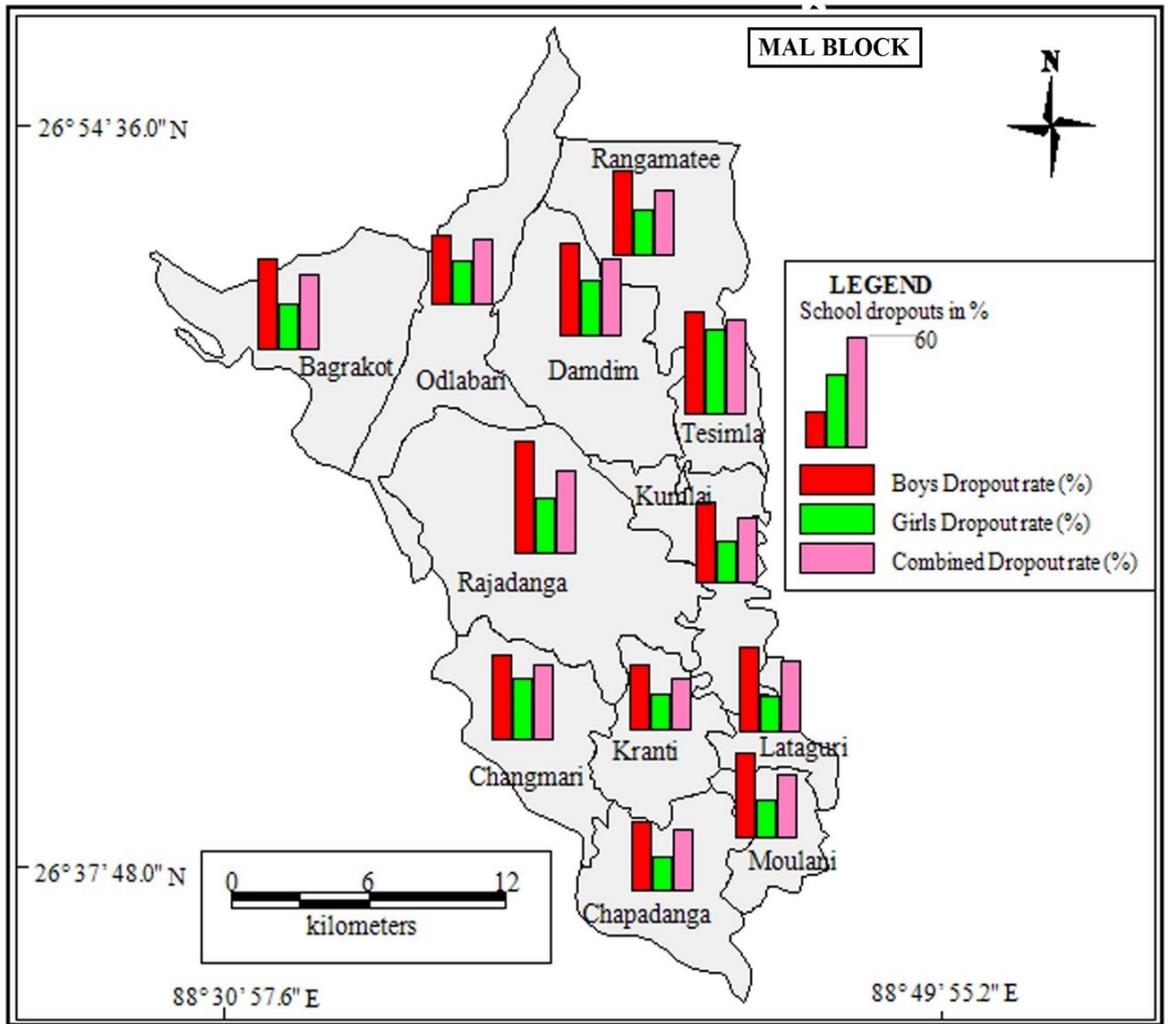


Figure 4.9.B GP-wise School Dropout Rate of Tribal Students in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

4.4 Ethnicity

Ethnicity refers to cultural traits that are shared by a category of people such as language, religion, and origin. When people integrate ethnicity as part of their identity and create a specific cultural, religious or national community, they self-consciously constitute an ethnic group. An ethnic group deliberately invokes ethnicity as part of its members' identity and engages in cultural rituals that generate a sense of peoplehood: the sense that members of the group have common characteristics to belong together. Most of the tribes of Mal subdivision are not the son of soil of the Dooars rather, they are in-migrated from the Chhotonagpur plateau.

4.4.1 Language

There are different languages spoken by the people of Dooars mainly in tea garden. A section of people use Hindi as their communicative language. A considerable amount of people use Nepali languages that are basically Nepalese. Again Bengali is spoken there by the owner, manager of the tea garden as well as permanent dwellers. Besides, different dialects are spoken by the different tribal groups. The Santals, Koras, Rabhas, Munda, Oraos have their separate dialects. For close association of different language speaking people living in the Dooars the communicative language of the tribal people have influence all the languages. A local dialect popularly known as *sandri* is used as communicative language among the tribal people of Dooars. *Sandri* is actually combination of Hindi, Nepali and Bengali.

From the table (4.10) given below, it is clear that *sandri* is popular among the tribes in Dooars. For their communication, the tribal people use this language in their family as well as with other outsiders. *Sandri* speaking people are densely located in the GPs which are very rich by tea gardens as well as non-tribal people are fewer in number. Bagrakot, Odlabari, Tesimla, Damdim, Rangamatee, Changmari, Indong Matiali, Champaguri, Looksan etc area have more than 65% share of *sandri* speaking people. However *sandri* has lost popularity in the GPs of Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II. Less than 50% people use *sandri* as their communicative language. On an average, 61% tribal people in Mal subdivision use *Sandri* as their communicative language.

Table 4.11 GP-wise Statistics on Language Spoken by the Tribal People

SL No	Name of GP	Language spoken for communication (%)				
		Sandri	Bengali	Hindi	Nepali	Others
1	Bagrakot	68	4	8	10	10
2	Odlabari	70	8	7	5	10
3	Rangamatee	68	7	8	5	12
4	Rajadanga	60	22	10	3	5
5	Damdim	69	10	6	5	10
6	Tesimla	69	6	9	5	11
7	Kumlai	64	10	11	5	10
8	Changmari	70	10	8	5	7
9	Kranti	60	30	5	3	2
10	Chapadanga	48	43	5	0	4
11	Moulani	45	41	5	4	5
12	Lataguri	43	43	5	4	5
Mal Block Total		61	20	7	5	8
1	Matiali Batabari-I	53	30	6	3	8
2	Matiali Batabari-II	58	24	7	8	3
3	Bidhannagar	64	16	5	8	7
4	Matiali Hat	63	12	6	8	11
5	Indong Matiali	67	5	8	10	10
Matiali Block Total		61	17	5	8	8
1	Angrabhasa-I	50	25	20	3	2
2	Angrabhasa-II	51	22	20	3	4
3	Sulkapara	65	8	9	7	11
4	Champaguri	67	7	6	11	9
5	Looksan	69	5	10	11	5
Nagrakata Block Total		60	13	13	7	6
Mal Subdivision Total		61	17	8	7	8

Source: Field survey, 2015

Bengali language is used by a considerable amount of people in the mentioned GPs. These GPs are closely associated with the Bengali speaking people. The children do study in Bengali language. So, the transformation process from *Sandri* to Bengali is going on there. Hindi language is very popular among the tribal people. They use Hindi language to communicate with outsiders. Hindi medium schools are very much popular in Nagrakata area. However in their day to day communication within the family on an average 8% people use Hindi. Hindi learning process is increasing day by day by the younger age groups due to Hindi medium schools and colleges. Maximum Hindi speaking people are concentrated in Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II GP (20%) followed by Kumlai (11%), Rajadanga and

Looksan (10%). Hindi is not so popular in Kranti, Lataguri, Chapadanga, Moulani and Bidhannagar GP due to dominance of Bengali. Only 5% people use Hindi as their communicative language in these GPs. Nepali speaking people are evenly distributed in the GPs. On an average, 7% tribal people use Nepali language. Maximum concentrations of Nepali speaking people are in GPs of Looksan and Champaguri (11%) followed by Indong-Matiali and Bagrakot (10%). The numbers of Nepali speaking people are insignificant in the GPs of Chapadanga (0%), Rajadanga, Moulani, Kranti, Lataguri, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II. Less than 4% people use Nepali language for their day to day communication. Other than these four major languages, the tribal people also use their traditional dialects. The outsiders cannot understand such languages. Oraon, Kora, Munda, Santals have their separate dialects. On an average 8% people use such languages. Dominance of other languages is found in the GPs of Rangamatee, Damdim, Bagrakot, Odlabari, Tesimla, Kumlai, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali, and Sulkapara. These local dialects are gradually decreasing and combination of all languages increasing the *sandri* speaking people. However, the other dialects are already insignificant in GPs of Kranti, Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri and Matiali Batabari-II Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II.

4.4.2 Religion

In India, the religious concepts, terminologies, and practices are as varied as the hundreds of tribes, but members of these groups have one thing in common: they are under constant pressure from the major organized religions. Some of this pressure is intentional, as outside missionaries work among tribal groups to gain converts. Most of the pressures, however, come from the process of integration within a national political and economic system that brings tribes into increasing contact with other groups and different, prestigious belief systems. In general, those remain geographically isolated in desert, hill, and forest regions or on islands are able to retain their traditional cultures and religions longer. Those tribes that make the transition away from hunting and gathering and toward sedentary agriculture, usually as low-status laborers, find their ancient religious forms in decay and their place is filled by practices of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, or Buddhism. Both the depressed classes and early tribes were placed in the category of Hindu as opposed to Muslim, Christian, or Parsi. This implied that a Dalit or Adivasi was not a Muslim, Christian etc., by origin of nature (Hardiman, 2014).

One of the most studied tribal religions is that of the Santal of Orissa, Bihar, and West Bengal, one of the largest tribes in India. According to the Santal religion, the supreme deity,

who ultimately controls the entire universe, is *Thakurji*. The weight of belief, however, falls on a court of spirits (*bonga*), who handle different aspects of the world and who must be placated with prayers and offerings in order to ward off evil influences. These spirits operate at the village, household, ancestor, and sub clan level, along with evil spirits that cause disease, and can inhabit village boundaries, mountains, water, tigers, and the forest. A characteristic feature of the Santal village is a sacred grove on the edge of the settlement where many spirits live and where a series of annual festivals take place.

A yearly round of rituals connected with the agricultural cycle, along with life-cycle rituals for birth, marriage and burial at death, involves petitions to the spirits and offerings that include the sacrifice of animals, usually birds. Religious leaders are male specialists in medical cures who practice divination and witchcraft. Similar beliefs are common among other tribes of northeast and central India such as the Kharia, Munda, and Oraon. Smaller and more isolated tribes often demonstrate less articulated classification systems of the spiritual hierarchy, described as animism or a generalized worship of spiritual energies connected with locations, activities, and social groups. Religious concepts are intricately entwined with ideas about nature and interaction with local ecological systems. As in Santal religion, religious specialists are drawn from the village or family and serve a wide range of spiritual functions that focus on placating potentially dangerous spirits and coordinating rituals. Unlike the Santal, who have a large population long accustomed to agriculture and a distinguished history of resistance to outsiders, many smaller tribal groups are quite sensitive to ecological degradation caused by modernization, and their unique religious beliefs are under constant threat. The Munda, Oraon and Kharia are heavily influenced by Hindu concepts of major deities and the annual Hindu cycle of festivals.

The tribes of Mal subdivision mostly obey their traditional beliefs. But they demand that they are Hindu. Differences in religious rituals are there among the Bengali Hindu and the tribes. Though there are no basic principles associated with the Hindu religion. The traditional belief and worshiping of nature and God differs to Hindu belief from one place to another. After independence, a group of Catholic Christian missionary activities spread all over the Dooars among the tribal people. Boarding school has been set up to teach modern education in the area. As a result of constant efforts of missionary activities among the poor people, a section of people got attracted to Christianity. As a result, many people have been converted to Christianity. The average ratio of Hindu, Christian and tribal religion is 66%, 31% and 3% respectively. Following table will highlight the religious beliefs of the area.

Table 4.12 GP-wise Statistics on Religious Beliefs of the Tribal People

SL No.	Name of GP	Religious Beliefs (%)		
		Hindu	Christian	Tribal*
1	Bagrakot TG	40	55	5
2	Odlabari	46	50	4
3	Rangamatee TG	43	52	5
4	Rajadanga	55	40	5
5	Damdim TG	52	45	3
6	Tesimla	52	44	4
7	Kumlai	55	42	3
8	Changmari	60	39	1
9	Kranti	48	48	4
10	Chapadanga	80	20	0
11	Moulani	90	10	0
12	Lataguri	80	20	0
Mal Block Total		58	39	3
1	Matiali Batabari-I	55	40	5
2	Matiali Batabari-II	89	10	1
3	Bidhannagar	80	18	2
4	Matiali Hat TG	70	30	0
5	Indong Matiali TG	65	31	4
Matiali Block Total		72	26	2
1	Angrabhasa-I	88	11	1
2	Angrabhasa-II	82	16	2
3	Sulkapara	72	26	2
4	Champaguri TG	60	37	3
5	Looksan TG	73	25	2
Nagrakata Block Total		75	23	2
Mal Subdivision Total		66	31	2

* Not mentioned any special religion.

Source: Field survey, 2015

Christianity has spread in many areas. As a result Christian gained majority in the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee and Kranti. Besides, more than 40% tribes have been converted to Christian in the GP of Rajadanga, Damdim, Tesimla, Kumlai and Matiali Batabari-I. More than three quarter people think that they are Hindus in GPs of Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II. On an average 3% tribal people of the Mal subdivision think that they are neither Hindu nor Christian. They think their belief is separate than the other believess. In the tea Garden based GP areas, Christian missionary activities are more common than that of non-tea garden based GPs.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN FOR COMMUNICATION BY THE TRIBALS

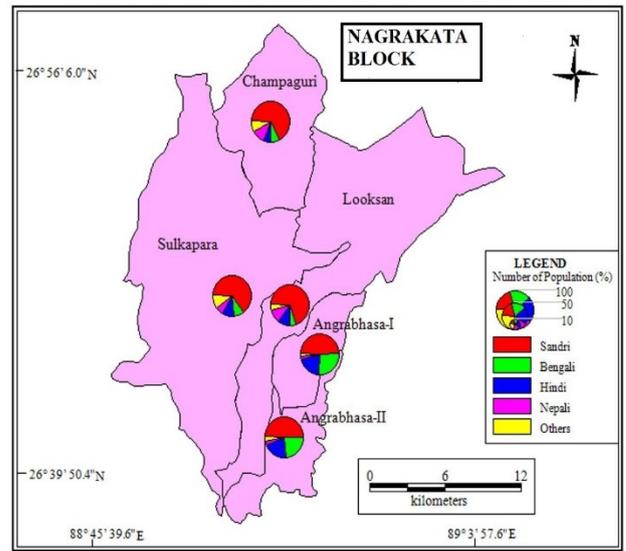
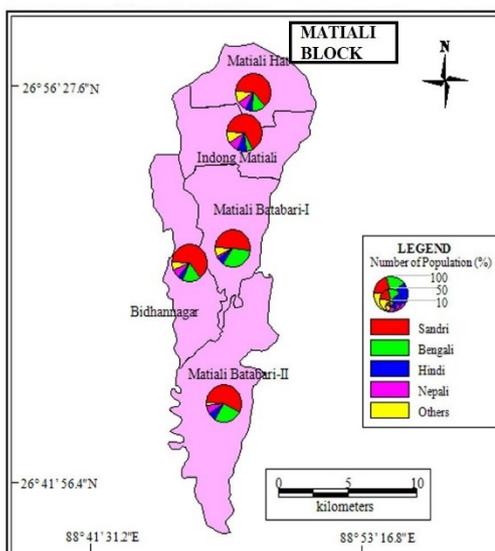
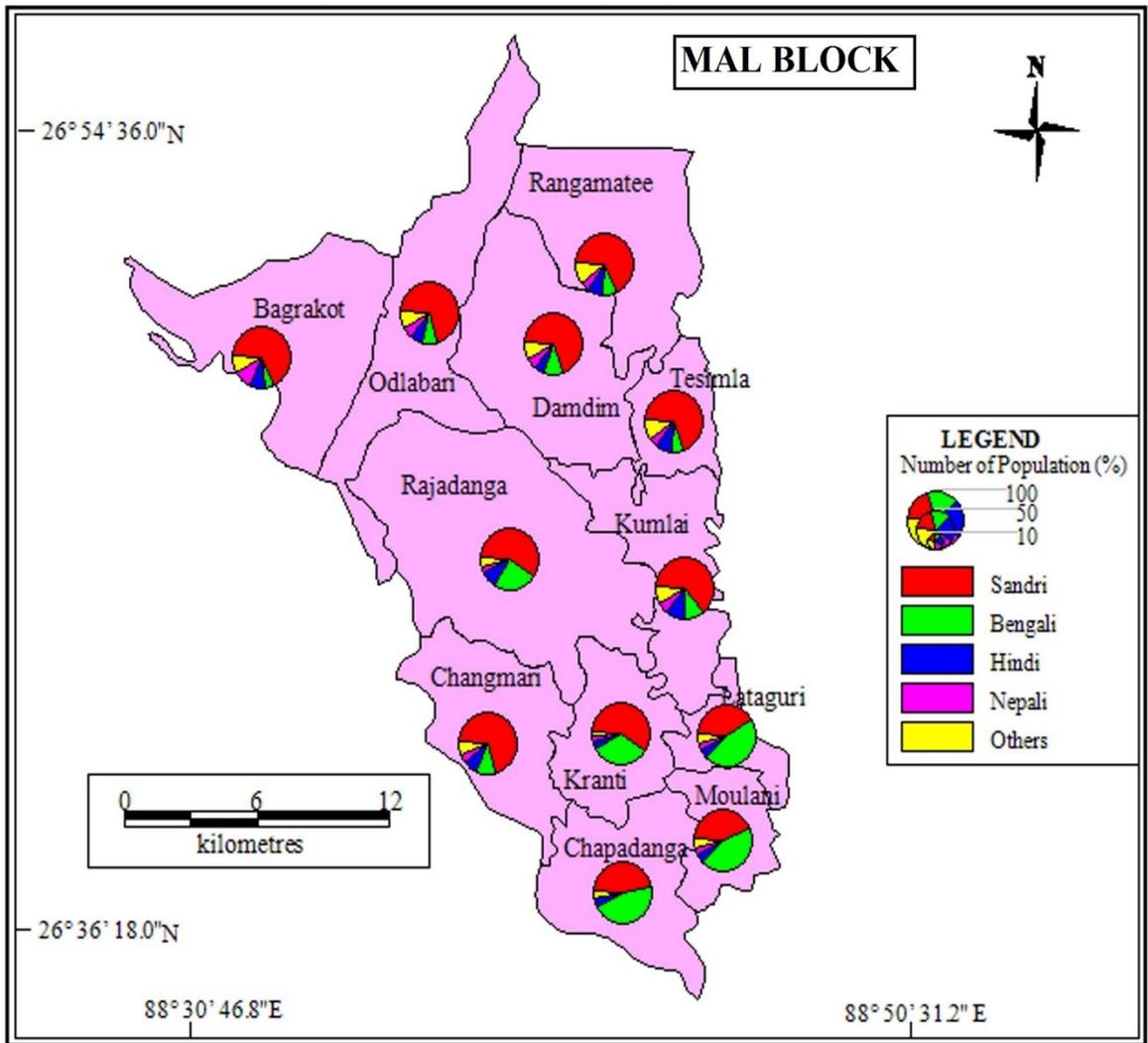


Figure 4.10 Language Spoken for Communication by Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

RELIGIOUS BELIEVES OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

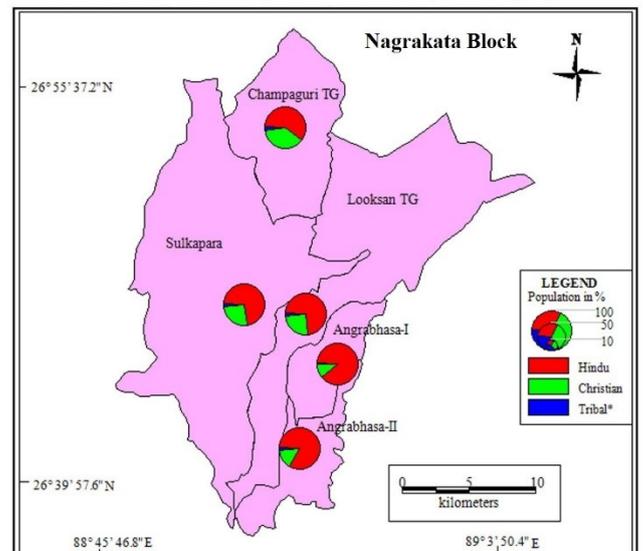
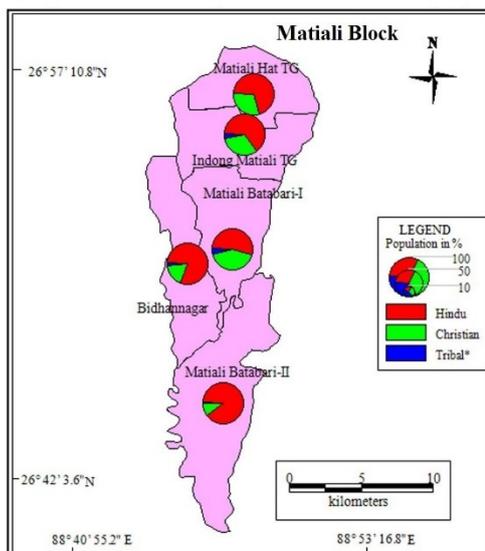
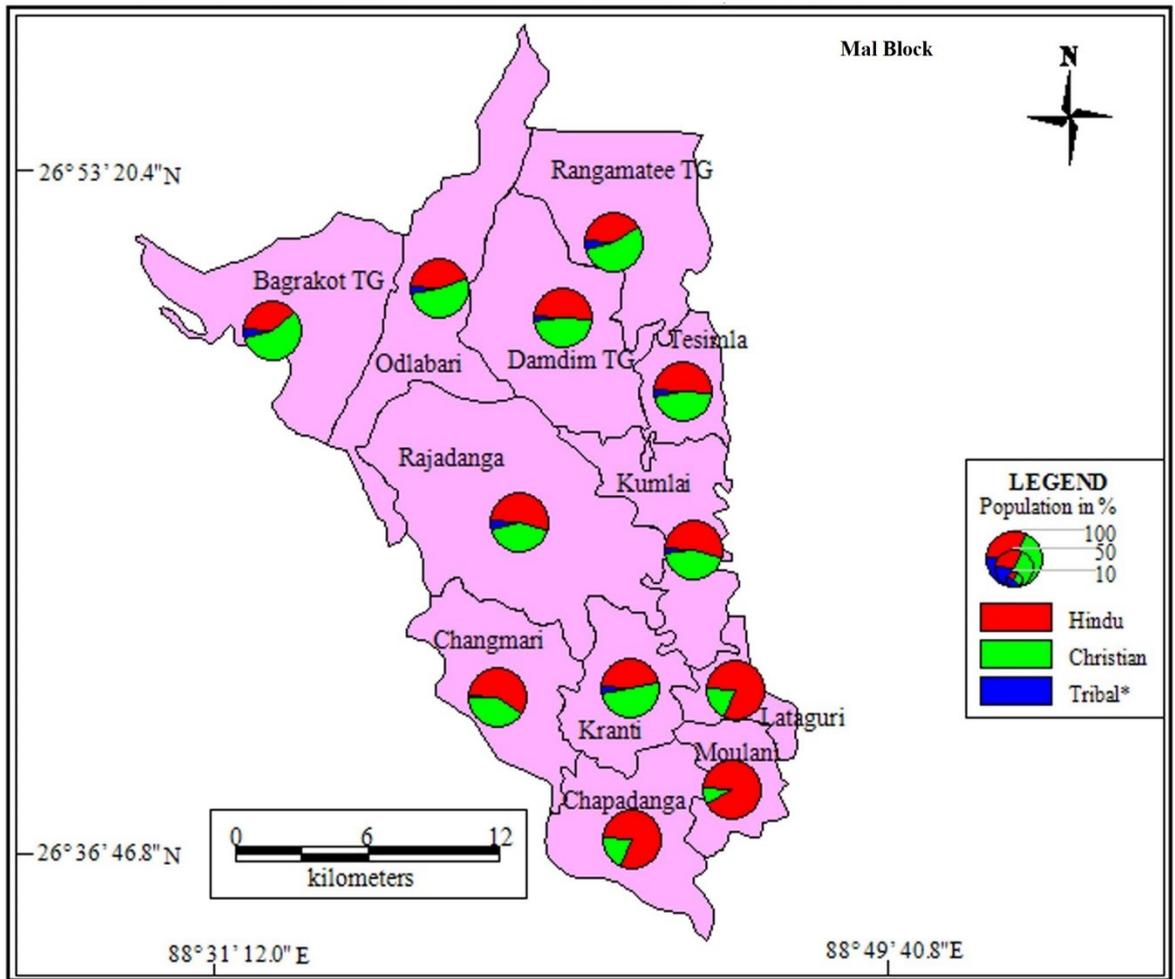


Figure 4.11 Religious Believes of Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

4.4.3 Customs

On the gradual march of the Human civilization on earth, the human races faced various problems and environment around them had a direct impact on them. In their day to day life they became used to certain conducts. When such conducts and behaviours were found to be beneficial to their interest and followed by the rest of the society, these conducts turned into certain regular social norms. These regulatory norms came to be known as customs (Pathak, 1991). Important forms of tribal customs are marriage, rituals, worshipping to nature etc.

Marriage is a custom in the tribal society where different rituals are observed. *Minoying* is a name of such practice. After giving proposal of marriage the parents of the boy consult all the elders of his clan and if they agree, an elderly woman is selected as mediator. She goes to the house of the girl to give formal proposal to girl's parents. If they agree then the bridegroom is sent to the girl's house for adjustment. After a long period of staying and adjustment, the marriage is fixed. After marriage the girl may stay at her father's house till the construction of new house of their own by the husband. The maximum period allowed for keeping a wife to her father's house is generally up to the birth of the third child. A man can marry his wife's sister after her death but a woman can not marry her husband's brother after his death. Dowries in marriage are not allowed in tribal society.

Different rituals are very common in ceremony and social programmes. *Karampuja* is very common among the Oraon people. *Karam* is one kind of tree. A branch of karam tree is planted in the house to start the rituals by the unmarried girl. The programme is continued up to one month up to Dasera. *Kalipuja* and *Xmas* day celebration are very common. *Fagua* is a ceremony observed in the month of Falguna is just like holy of north India. The festival is known as *Baha* among the Santals. The Mech people are very much interested to celebrate *Bathou* and *Maina o Burui* who are regarded as divine of nature and rice respectively. *Garja puja* is group celebration of the Mech community. A hallow land or forest area is chosen for the land of *Garja*. *Sohoroi* of Santals is the important festival of prosperity. Now the ritual is very common among the Oraon, Munda, Bhumij, Ho and Kharia. *Singbonga* is a ritual observed by the Mahali people. *Singbonga* is actually goddess of the Sun. For the welfare of cattle, the Mahali people observe *Goroya* festival (Nath, 2008). Another important worshipping in Dooars among all tribal and non-tribal communities is *Mahakal puja*. The wild elephants of Dooars are worshiped as the *Mahakal*. The *Karampuja* and the *Mahakal puja*- these two can be considered as worshipping of local nature. The tribal people differ from other recognised

religion as regards the point of view of worshipping. Their gods and goddesses resembles to nature. All the rituals are celebrated with full of enjoyment and enthusiasm.

4.5 Disparities and Developments in Social Indicators

Disparities are considered within a region considering one unit as ultimate level of development and comparing with that unit deprivation level is measured for the other units. So, regional disparities are basically intra-regional. Development and deprivation are just two opposite sides. To analyze level of disparities, statistical information is analysed. The GP level study of the subdivision focuses in following way.

- a) **Deprivation Index:** Following deprivation method, with the selected variables, level of deprivations are identified in each GP mathematically as:

$$I_{ij} = \frac{Maxi - X_{ij}}{Maxi - Mini}$$

Where, I_{ij} indicates deprivation index of the i th variable at j th unit of study. $Maxi$ and $Mini$ denotes maximum and minimum values of i th variable in the series respectively. X_{ij} denotes original value of i th variable at j th unit of study. The value ranges from 0 (absence of deprivation or best condition) to 1 (Highest deprived or worst condition).

In case of negative indicators, the lowest value (0) indicates highest deprived (worst) and highest value (1) indicates absence of deprivation (best). One such negative indicator is IMR (Infant Mortality Rate). To equalise the figures with the positive indicator, the value of I_{ij} is again subtracted from 1 (maximum value).

- b) **Average Deprivation Index:** Average deprivation index is calculated by taking simple averages of all indicators in a group of study. The equation is:

$$I_j = \frac{\sum I_{ij}}{n}$$

Where, I_j is Average Deprivation Index of j th unit of study, n is the number of indicators under consideration in a particular group.

- c) **Developmental Index:** Finally development index (D. I) is made as the absence of deprivation with mutual relation among the GPs. Mathematically it is expressed as:

$$DI = (1 - \frac{\sum I_{ij}}{n})$$

DI is actually Development in j th unit of study. 1 is absolute developed condition and deviation from that is developmental index.

4.5.1. Disparities in Demographic Indicators

Five demographic indicators have been taken into consideration to show inter regional disparities in GP level. These are:

- I. Women sex ratio per 1000 male population (X1)
- II. Crude birth rate per 1000 population (X2)
- III. Total fertility rate per woman (X3)
- IV. Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births (X4)
- V. Maternal mortality rate per 1000 women (X5)

Table 4.13 GP Level Disparities in Demographic Indicators, Mal Subdivision

GP Name	Demographic Indicators					Disparity in Demographic Indicators(Ij)					Average Disparities (Ij)
	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	
Bagrakot	1011	33	4.0	85	2.3	0.20	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.64
Odlabari	1000	32	3.6	82	1.4	0.24	0.91	0.67	0.93	0.31	0.55
Rangamatee	1026	33	3.8	80	1.5	0.13	1.00	0.83	0.88	0.38	0.57
Rajadanga	966	32	3.4	76	1.6	0.38	0.91	0.50	0.78	0.46	0.51
Damdim	1041	30	3.4	78	1.5	0.07	0.73	0.50	0.83	0.38	0.43
Tesimla	961	28	3.9	79	1.4	0.41	0.55	0.92	0.85	0.31	0.55
Kumlai	970	29	3.3	65	1.5	0.37	0.64	0.42	0.50	0.38	0.39
Changmari	919	31	4.0	64	1.7	0.58	0.82	1.00	0.48	0.54	0.58
Kranti	936	26	3.0	63	1.3	0.51	0.36	0.17	0.45	0.23	0.30
Chapadanga	963	24	3.0	60	1.3	0.40	0.18	0.17	0.38	0.23	0.23
Moulani	819	22	2.8	45	1.2	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.20
Lataguri	868	23	2.8	53	1.0	0.79	0.09	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.22
Matiali Batabari-I	1013	22	3.0	70	1.5	0.19	0.00	0.17	0.63	0.38	0.20
Matiali Batabari-II	973	22	3.0	72	1.4	0.36	0.00	0.17	0.68	0.31	0.24
Bidhannagar	991	23	3.1	60	1.3	0.28	0.09	0.25	0.38	0.23	0.20
Matiali Hat	1036	26	3.2	71	1.6	0.09	0.36	0.33	0.65	0.46	0.29
Indong Matiali	1045	26	3.5	65	1.7	0.05	0.36	0.58	0.50	0.54	0.30
Angrabhasa-I	965	26	3.0	60	1.3	0.39	0.36	0.17	0.38	0.23	0.26
Angrabhasa-II	922	24	3.0	61	1.2	0.57	0.18	0.17	0.40	0.15	0.26
Sulka para	951	27	3.2	62	1.6	0.45	0.45	0.33	0.43	0.46	0.33
Champaguri	968	29	3.5	64	1.7	0.38	0.64	0.58	0.48	0.54	0.42
Looksan	1058	30	3.5	61	1.6	0.00	0.73	0.58	0.40	0.46	0.34

Source: Computed from the Primary data

From the above table it is found that in case of tribal women sex-ratio, Looksan GP of Nagrakata block has the highest position in subdivision of Mal followed by Indong Matiali GP of Matiali block and Damdim GP of Mal block. Moulani GP of Mal subdivision has the

lowest sex ratio of tribal people in Mal subdivision preceded by Lataguri, Changmari and Kranti GP of Mal block. Considering sex ratio, the good condition areas are Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Damdim, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali and Looksan. The bad condition areas are Changmari, Tesimla, Kranti, Chapadanga, Lataguri, Moulani, Angrabhasa-I, Angrabhasa-II and Sulkapara.

Crude birth rates are high throughout the area. So, lower birth rate is considered as a good indicator of society. Considering crude birth rate, the Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga, Damdim, Tesimla, Changmari, Indong Matiali, Champaguri and Looksan shows bad condition i.e. higher birth rates in the subdivision for tribal people. The good condition GPs i.e. lower birth rates are found in Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar and Angrabhasa-II. Among the GPs in the subdivision lowest birth rate is in Moulani, Batabari-I and Batabari-II and highest birth rate is in Bagrakot and Rangamatee. Considering total fertility rate, the advanced areas are Lataguri, Moulani, Batabari-I, Batabari-II, Kranti, Chapadanga, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II. Bagrakot and Changmari are in the worst condition while Moulani and Lataguri are in the best condition.

Infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate are two important parameters of demographic factors. Inter-area disparities are found in different gram panchayat areas. Bagrakot is in the worst condition and Moulani is in the best condition. However, the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Damdim, Tesimla are bad condition GPs in respect of IMR. The good condition GPs are Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I, Angrabhasa-II and Chapadanga. Maternal Mortality is another indicator of health condition of mothers. MMR is absolute high (100%) among the GPs in Bagrakot followed by Changmari, Indong Matiali and Chapadanga. However the absolute low (0%) MMR is found in Lataguri preceded by Moulani, Angrabhasa-II, Angrabhasa-I and Bidhannagar. Average disparities of these selected five demographic indicators show that tribal people in Matiali Batabari-I and Moulani are in advanced position among the GPs while Bagrakot is in the worst condition. Three categories can be prepared on the basis of disparities:

- a. Below average condition GPS (Value ranges 0.51 and above): In this group, there are Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga, Tesimla and Changmari (total: 6). Demographic profiles of these GPs are low among the GPS in subdivision.
- b. Average condition GPS (0.30 to 0.50): Damdim, Kumlai, Kranti, Indong Matiali, Sulkapara, Looksan and Champaguri –these GPs (total: 7) are in medium conditioned or average condition in demography in the subdivision.

- c. Above average condition GPs (< 0.30): Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari –I, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, Matiali Hat, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II are in this group (total: 9).

4.5.2 Disparities in Educational (Literacy) Indicators

Five indicators have been selected to show regional disparities in educational indicators. These are:

- I. Illiteracy rate in percentage among the tribal people (X6)
- II. Female literacy rate in percentage (X7)
- III. Combined dropout rate in percentage (X8)
- IV. Girls' dropout rate in percentage (X9)
- V. Percentage share of higher education (Graduation or above) (X10)

Table 4.14 GP Level Disparities in Educational (Literacy) Indicators

GP Name	Educational Indicators					Disparity in Educational Indicators (Ij)					Average Disparities (Ij)
	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	
Bagrakot	37	60	44	25	2	0.20	0.12	0.52	0.23	0.83	0.38
Odlabari	38	56	46	24	0	0.23	0.24	0.30	0.19	1.00	0.39
Rangamatee	40	53	40	25	0	0.29	0.32	0.30	0.23	1.00	0.43
Rajadanga	45	51	37	30	5	0.43	0.38	0.70	0.42	0.58	0.50
Damdin	45	50	35	30	0	0.43	0.41	0.57	0.42	1.00	0.57
Tesimla	35	60	40	45	0	0.14	0.12	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.65
Kumlai	37	64	36	23	4	0.20	0.00	0.30	0.15	0.67	0.26
Changmari	65	30	35	33	0	1.00	1.00	0.52	0.54	1.00	0.81
Kranti	46	51	30	20	1	0.46	0.38	0.00	0.04	0.92	0.36
Chapadanga	48	51	34	19	5	0.51	0.38	0.22	0.00	0.58	0.34
Moulani	47	49	44	21	10	0.49	0.44	0.26	0.08	0.17	0.29
Lataguri	44	51	46	20	12	0.40	0.38	0.43	0.04	0.00	0.25
Matiali Batabari-I	45	43	40	40	1	0.43	0.62	0.70	0.81	0.92	0.69
Matiali Batabari-II	30	57	37	40	6	0.00	0.21	0.78	0.81	0.50	0.46
Bidhannagar	32	64	35	35	10	0.06	0.00	0.52	0.62	0.17	0.27
Matiali Hat	35	60	40	30	10	0.14	0.12	0.39	0.42	0.17	0.25
Indong Matiali	43	51	36	26	0	0.37	0.38	0.30	0.27	1.00	0.47
Angrabhasa-I	48	43	35	25	7	0.51	0.62	0.52	0.23	0.42	0.46
Angrabhasa-II	42	53	30	25	8	0.34	0.32	0.35	0.23	0.33	0.32
Sulka para	40	56	34	25	5	0.29	0.24	0.30	0.23	0.58	0.33
Champaguri	35	59	44	23	2	0.14	0.15	0.09	0.15	0.83	0.27
Looksan	33	62	46	29	3	0.09	0.06	0.26	0.38	0.75	0.31

Source: Computed from the Primary data

In illiteracy, maximum value of 1.0 (100%) is found in Changmari and minimum value of 0.0 (0%) is found in Matiali Batabari-II. It means that in Changmari GP highest illiteracy is prevailed and in Matiali Batabari-II lowest illiteracy rate is prevailed among the 22 GPs in Mal subdivision. In illiteracy the bad condition GPs are Changmari, Chapadanga, Moulani, Rajadanga, Matiali Batabari-I, Damdim and Lataguri. The GPs having lowest illiteracy are Matiali Batabari-II, Champaguri, Looksan, Bidhannagar, Matiali Hat and Tesimla. Female literacy rate is highest in Kumlai and Bidhannagar (0% deprived) followed by Looksan, Bagrakot and Matiali Hat. Female illiteracy is highest in Changmari, followed by Matiali Batabari-II and Angrabhasa-I.

Dropout from school before reaching eight standards is highest in Kranti and lowest in Tesimla. The GPs which are good in this indicator are Kranti, Chapadanga, Moulani, Champaguri and Looksan. The GPs which are bad i.e. high in dropout rates are Tesimla, Rajadanga, Matiali Batabari-II and Matiali Batabari-I. In Girls' school dropout rate bad condition GPs are Tesimla, Bidhannagar, Changmari, Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II are the worth to be mentioned. Good condition GPs are Chapadanga, Kumlai, Kranti, Lataguri, Champaguri and Odlabari. Higher education in tribal area of Mal subdivision is of very poor velocity. Highest numbers of graduates are found in Lataguri GP followed by Moulani, Matiali Hat and Bidhannagar. Considering Lataguri as absolute condition in higher education most deprived (100%) GPs are Indong Matiali, Changmari, Tesimla, Damdim, Rangamatee and Odlabari.

After averaging the above five indicators, the value can be divided in three categories mentioned below:

- a) Below average condition GPs (≥ 0.50): Changmari, Tesimla, Matiali Batabari-I, Rajadanga and Damdim.
- b) Average condition GPs (0.35 -0.49): Rangamatee, Matiali Batabari-II, Indong Matiali, Angrabhasa- I, Bagrakot, Odlabari and Kranti.
- c) Above average condition GPs (<0.35): Kumlai, Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-II, Sulkapara, Champaguri and Looksan.

4.5.3 Development in Social Indicators

In this chapter in the study of Social status of tribal people three indicators were taken into consideration: demography, education and ethnicity. The ethnicity indicator cannot be comparable to study in the light of deprivation and development among different regional

units. So, the first two indicators are considered to determine the relative regional social development of the study area.

Table 4.15 GP Level Development Index of Social Indicators

Sl No.	Name of GP	Average Deprivation (Ij)		Developmental Index (DI)		Overall Development
		Demography	Literacy	Demography	Education	
1	Bagrakot	0.64	0.38	0.36	0.62	0.49
2	Odlabari	0.55	0.39	0.45	0.61	0.53
3	Rangamatee	0.57	0.43	0.43	0.57	0.50
4	Rajadanga	0.51	0.50	0.49	0.50	0.50
5	Damdin	0.43	0.57	0.57	0.43	0.50
6	Tesimla	0.55	0.65	0.45	0.35	0.40
7	Kumlai	0.39	0.26	0.61	0.74	0.68
8	Changmari	0.58	0.81	0.42	0.19	0.31
9	Kranti	0.30	0.36	0.70	0.64	0.67
10	Chapadanga	0.23	0.34	0.77	0.66	0.72
11	Moulani	0.20	0.29	0.80	0.71	0.76
12	Lataguri	0.22	0.25	0.78	0.75	0.77
13	Matiali Batabari-I	0.20	0.69	0.80	0.31	0.56
14	Matiali Batabari-II	0.24	0.46	0.76	0.54	0.65
15	Bidhannagar	0.20	0.27	0.80	0.73	0.77
16	Matiali Hat	0.29	0.25	0.71	0.75	0.73
17	Indong Matiali	0.30	0.47	0.70	0.53	0.62
18	Angrabhasa-I	0.26	0.46	0.74	0.54	0.64
19	Angrabhasa-II	0.26	0.32	0.74	0.68	0.71
20	Sulkapara	0.33	0.33	0.67	0.67	0.67
21	Champaguri	0.42	0.27	0.58	0.73	0.66
22	Looksan	0.34	0.31	0.66	0.69	0.68

Source: Computed by the author

From the Developmental Index, the computed table shows that highest development occurs jointly at Lataguri and Bidhannagar (0.77) and, lowest social development occurs at Changmari (0.31) among the 22 GPs. So there are remarkable intra-regional variations among the social parameters under considerations. The GPs can be categorised under three heads:

- a) Developed GPs (> 0.70): Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Matiali Hat and Angrabhasa-II.
- b) Moderate Developed GPs (0.55 to 0.70): Kumlai, Kranti, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Indong Matiali, Angrabhasa-I, Sulkapara, Champaguri and Looksan.

- c) Least Developed GPs (> 0.55): Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga, Damdim, Tesimla and Changmari.

4.6 Conclusion

There are many scheduled tribe groups in India and not all of them are in similar objective conditions of life. However, the tribes of North Bengal, who had their origin in central India i.e. in Chhotonagpur plateau, have gone similar historical and socio-economic processes. These tribes, despite having internal social divisions, have a glorious history of fighting against colonial and other forms of oppressions (Roy, 2008). The women enjoy a higher status in society. The tribes as a whole are not much different from their Scheduled Caste counterparts in terms of such socio-economic indicators as land ownership, per capita income, or incidence of poverty; they are the most deprived in education and health care provisions. Despite these acute absolute deprivations, an overall socio-cultural superiority of the tribal community is manifested in some key female characteristics, consistent with more balanced gender relations, least gender gap in literacy and greater female autonomy than their Scheduled Caste counterparts (Maharatna, 2005).

History, heritage and culture of the tribes demand higher status of tribal people among the all social classes living in Mal subdivision. Availing the education support system offered by the state and the catholic mission, a significant amount of tribal people are now going for higher education and jobs. It is most significant that few girls have been engaged in teaching and different office jobs after getting higher education. These young girls became iconic who are widely respected and are projected as models for next generations.

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ECONOMIC STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

5.1 Introduction

Traditionally, the tribes in India pursued an economy, which was closer to nature, and used indigenous technology. Some tribal communities have adopted a way of life, similar to the neighbouring non-tribal communities; there are other tribal groups, whose livelihoods are characterized by (a) forest-based livelihoods, (b) pre-agriculture level of technology, (c) a stagnant or declining population (d) extremely low literacy and (e) a subsistence level of economy (Chaudhury & Sen Chaudhury, 2005). Traditional tribal economy was largely a combination of several types of activities. For examples, hill cultivators and plain agriculturalists were also occasionally hunting and gathering to supplement their income. Similarly, pastoralists were engaged in agriculture to meet their basic food requirements. There are certain tribes who depend on folk arts such as dancing, singing, tattoo making etc. A number of tribes subsist on crafts and cottage industries like basket and rope making, tool making (iron and wooden), spinning and weaving, metal work, iron work, etc. The Gujjar and Kinnaur (wood work), the Irula, Thoti, Kanjar and Kolam (basket and rope making), the Lohar and Karmali (iron agricultural implements), the Chik-Barik (hand woven cloth), the Mahali (basket and bamboo products), the Godulia Lohar, Mahali, Asur and Agaria (iron smith) and many other artisan groups largely manage their livelihoods as crafts persons (Vidyarthi & Rai, 1976).

Several attempts were made for the economic developments of the poor sections of the tribal and non-tribal communities had benefitted the better-off-sections – the peasants and landlords of the non-tribal community only and, the traders and middlemen. Despite tribal self sustaining lifestyles, the government fails to protect their right to use resources on their lands in a sustainable way (Sundaram, 2006).

The story for the tribal people of the Dooars differs from other parts of the country. They are mainly tea garden workers and landless agricultural labourers. To understand and realize the economic status of the tribal people three economic indicators have been taken into considerations: economic activities, housing conditions, and agricultural practices.

5.2 Economic Activities

Economic activities are those efforts which are undertaken by man to earn income, money, wealth for his life and to secure maximum satisfaction of wants. Economic activities create economic or financial gain by producing goods or services. Economic consideration is paramount in these activities because human beings want to satisfy their biological needs like food, shelter etc. Economic activities are undertaken with an economic motive.

5.2.1 Measurement of Active Population

The economically active population are those who participate in gainful activities. So, total population of a society are not the part of economic composition. There are different methods to determine the economically active population. These are:

a) **Crude Activity Rate:** The proportion of economically active population to total population is generally known as crude activity rate (C.A.R.) The crude activity rate is influenced by the age structure in some extent.

$$C.A.R = \frac{\text{Economically Active Population}}{\text{Total Population}} \times 100$$

b) **General Activity Rate:** The proportion of economically active population to the working age population is known as general activity rate (G.A.R.). In our country the children below 18 years of age have no legal sanction to work. So, the working age population are the population above 18 years of age.

$$G.A.R = \frac{\text{Economically Active Population}}{>18 \text{ years age Population}} \times 100$$

c) **Dependency Ratio:** The dependency ratio (D.R) is generally the ratio of the number of children plus old people to the number of adults.

$$D.R = \frac{\text{Population of (<18 years + >60 years age group)}}{\text{Population of ages 18-60 years}} \times 100$$

d) **The Sex and Age-Specific Activity Rate:** The Sex and Age-Specific Activity Rate are calculated for various age groups by calculating the percentage of active males/ females in a specific age group to the total males and females in that particular age group.

Work-force participation rate for rural scheduled tribes is highest in the country as well as in the state among the all social groups. Mal subdivision is not an exception. Following table of sample data can well explain the situation.

Table 5.1 GP-wise Economically Active Tribal people

Sl No.	Name of GP	Crude Activity Rate	General Activity Rate	Dependency Ratio
1	Bagrakot	46	68	58
2	Odlabari	49	71	55
3	Rangamatee	44	68	66
4	Rajadanga	48	71	64
5	Damdim	50	70	50
6	Tesimla	42	65	52
7	Kumlai	45	63	45
8	Changmari	47	70	57
9	Kranti	43	67	56
10	Chapadanga	38	65	64
11	Moulani	36	60	65
12	Lataguri	45	67	63
Mal Block Total		44	67	58
1	Matiali Batabari-I	36	65	71
2	Matiali Batabari-II	45	65	64
3	Bidhannagar	40	69	62
4	Matiali Hat	43	72	67
5	Indong Matiali	45	73	53
Matiali Block		42	69	64
1	Angrabhasa-I	40	65	66
2	Angrabhasa-II	36	66	65
3	Sulkapara	45	65	53
4	Champaguri	46	69	57
5	Looksan	50	75	58
Nagrakata Block		43	68	60
Mal Subdivision		44	68	60

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

Workforce participation rate or Crude Activity Rate (CAR) for tribal population in Mal subdivision is 44% on an average. Workforce participation of tribal population of Mal subdivision is comparatively higher than the State (38.08%) and National (39.8%) averages in 2011. However, the CAR for the rural areas is higher than the above rate which was 38.7% for the State of West Bengal and 41.8% for India. The CAR is very low in Moulani (36%), Angrabhasa-II (36%), Chapadanga (38%), Angrabhasa-I (40%) and Bidhannagar (40%). The CAR is very high in GPs of Damdim (50%), Looksan (50%), Odlabari (49%) and Rajadanga (48%). Normally, the higher workforce participation rate GPs are located in tea garden concentrated areas while the GPs of poor workforce participation rate are located in non-tribal

and non-tea garden based areas. The reason of higher proportion of workforce participation is that the people are forced to get job for their livelihood.

Average General Activity Rate (GAR) among the tribal people is 68% in Mal subdivision. The rate is slightly higher in Matiali Block i.e. 69%. The higher rates are found in the GPs of Moulani (60%), Looksan (75%), Indong Matiali (73%), Matiali Hat (72%), Rajadanga (71%) and Odlabari (71%). Lower rates of GAR are found in the GPs of Kumlai (63%), Sulkapara, (63%), Tesimla, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Angrabhasa-I and Chapadanga (65%).

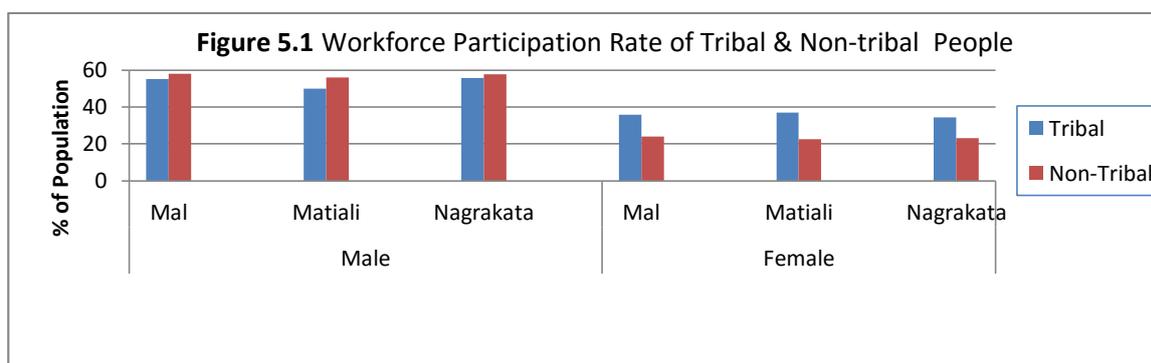
Dependency Ratio (DR) for tribal people in Mal subdivision is 60%. The ratio is highest in Matiali Block (64%) and lowest in Mal block (58%). The GPs which has high dependency ratio are Matiali Batabari-I (71%), Matiali Hat (67%), Rangamatee (66%) and Angrabhasa-I (66%). Lowest rate of dependency ratio are found in Kumlai (45%) followed by Damdim (50%), Sulkapara, Indong Matiali (53%) and Odlabari (55%). So there is a wide gap (26%) in dependency ratio among the GPs.

Table 5.2 Block-wise and Gender-wise Workforce Participation Rate

Block	Tribal People			Non-tribal People		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Mal	55.2	35.8	44.0	58.0	24.0	40.0
Matiali	50.0	37.0	42.0	56.0	22.4	38.0
Nagrakata	55.6	34.4	43.0	57.8	23.0	39.0
Total	53.5	35.5	44.0	57.3	23.0	39.3

Source: Primary data, 2015

From the above table it is clear that workforce participation rate for tribal people are better than the non-tribal people in every blocks of Mal subdivision. The tribal workforce rate is 44% while the non-tribal workforce rate is 39.3%; average tribal female participation rate is 35.5% while the non-tribal female ratio is 23% only. This proves that the tribal women are skilled and more employed in tea garden based activities.



5.2.2 Workforce Composition

Work has been defined in the census of India as participation in any economically productive activity. In practice such participation may be physical or mental. The work also includes unpaid work on a farm or in family enterprises. Work also includes supervision and direction. According to the census 2011, following classification has been made:

a) Main workers are those who have worked for six months or more or more than 183 days. The main workers are again subdivided as:

- I. **Cultivators:** A person is classified as cultivator if he or she is engaged in cultivation of land owned or held from Government or held from private persons or institutions for payment in money, kind or share.
- II. **Agricultural Labourers:** A person who works on another person's land for wages in money or kind or share is regarded as an agricultural labourer.
- III. **Household Industry Workers:** Household Industry is defined as an industry conducted by one or more members of the household at home or within the village in rural areas and only within the precincts of the house where the household lives in urban areas. Household Industry relates to production, processing, servicing, repairing or making and selling of goods.
- IV. **Other Workers:** All workers, i.e., those who have been engaged in some economic activity during the last one year, but are not cultivators or agricultural labourers or in Household Industry, are 'Other Workers (OW)'. All government servants, municipal employees, teachers, factory workers, plantation workers, those engaged in trade, commerce, business, transport banking, mining, construction, political or social work, priests, entertainment artists, etc. are 'Other Workers'.

b) Marginal Workers are those who have worked for less than six months or less than 183 days.

c) Non-workers are those who have not worked at all. A person who did not at all work during the reference period is treated as non-worker. The non-workers broadly constitute students who does not participate in any economic activity paid or unpaid, household duties who are attending to daily household chores like cooking, cleaning utensils, looking after children, fetching water etc.

Table 5.3 GP-wise Workforce Composition for Tribal People

Sl No.	Name of GP	Total Workers	Class of Total Workers				Category of Workers		
			Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind. Workers	Other Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Non workers
1	Bagrakot	46	4.1	11.0	1.8	83.1	25.0	18.0	57.0
2	Odlabari	49	7.2	16.1	1.4	75.3	26.8	17.1	56.1
3	Rangamatee	44	5.2	12.6	0.7	81.5	25.0	19.0	56.0
4	Rajadanga	48	6.9	15.1	1.1	76.9	21.8	19.1	59.1
5	Damdim	50	5.0	14.7	1.1	79.2	26.1	19.1	54.8
6	Tesimla	42	5.8	12.4	1.7	80.1	25.5	19.5	55.0
7	Kumlai	45	5.9	11.6	1.1	81.4	26.9	20.1	53.0
8	Changmari	47	7.4	15.2	1.5	75.9	26.0	21.0	53.0
9	Kranti	43	10.1	14.3	1.1	74.5	30.1	12.1	57.8
10	Chapadanga	38	17.5	33.2	2.2	47.1	29.5	11.5	59.0
11	Moulani	36	14.8	32.6	3.1	49.5	28.7	11.3	60.0
12	Lataguri	45	11.2	36.5	2.1	50.2	30.0	12.0	58.0
Mal Block Total		44	8.5	18.7	1.6	71.2	26.8	16.6	56.6
1	Matiali Batabari-I	36	7.5	19.5	1.1	71.9	27.2	12.8	60.0
2	Matiali Batabari-II	45	14.5	25.3	1.2	59.0	30.5	12.5	57.0
3	Bidhannagar	40	15.3	27.3	1.2	56.2	30.2	10.7	59.1
4	Matiali Hat	43	3.2	12.5	1.3	83.0	28.2	13.5	58.3
5	Indong Matiali	45	2.2	11.4	1.2	85.2	28.2	14.8	57.2
Matiali Block Total		42	8.5	19.2	1.3	71.1	28.9	12.9	58.2
1	Angrabhasa-I	40	11.5	23.5	2.2	62.8	30.2	11.8	58.0
2	Angrabhasa-II	36	9.7	15.4	1.4	73.5	30.5	12.6	56.9
3	Sulkapara	45	9.2	18.0	1.1	71.7	28.5	14.5	57.0
4	Champaguri	46	4.5	16.3	0.8	78.4	27.4	16.5	56.1
5	Looksan	50	3.5	11.5	1.2	83.8	25.4	17.5	57.1
Nagrakata Block Total		43	8.0	16.7	1.3	73.9	28.4	14.6	57.0
Mal Subdivision Total		44	8.5	18.5	1.5	71.5	27.5	15.0	57.5

Source: Compiled from the primary data

In the above table, work-force composition classification mode has followed the census of India pattern. Engagements as cultivators are not so significant for the tribal people. Average rate of cultivators are 8.5% among the tribal people in Mal subdivision. In highly tea garden concentrated GPs the cultivators are very poor in number. The GPs of Bagrakot, Damdim, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali, Champaguri and Looksan have less than 5% workers who are cultivators. However in non tea garden GPs the proportions of cultivators are comparatively high. These are Kranti, Moulani, Chapadanga, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I,

Bidhannagar and Angrabhasa-I. More than 10% workers of that GPs belong to the category of cultivators. The farmers of these GPs are either cultivating in their own lands or engage themselves in agricultural activities as traditional *adhiary* system. Similarly, in non-tea garden based GPs; the agricultural labourers are significant in number. The GPs of Chapadanga, Lataguri, Moulani, Matiali Batabari-II and Bidhannagar have more than 25% person who belong to the category of agricultural labourers. On an average 18.5% tribal people of the subdivision are agricultural labourers.

Household Industrial workers are very insignificant in number. On an average 1.5% workers are belonging to this category. However, the ratio is sound in GPs of Moulani, Chapadanga and Lataguri of Mal block and Angrabhasa-I GP of Nagrakata block. Bamboo, cane industry and *bidi* are important household industries of the area.

It is evident that tribal people are mostly belongs to the category of 'other workers'. Nearly 71.5% workers are belongs to this category. The rate is significantly higher than the normal rate of the district, state and the national average. The reason is that plantation workers are belonging to this category. As tea industry is a labour-intensive industry, tea plantations in Dooars provide direct employment to a large number of persons accounting for around 16 per cent of the one million strong labour force employed in tea plantations in India, which constitutes around 8 per cent of the total population of the Dooars region (Dwibedi, 1999). In the GPs where tribal concentration is more than the other GPs and where the tea gardens are maximum, there are higher proportions of other workers. The GPs of Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Tesimla, Kumlai, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali and Looksan have more than 80% workers belonging to the category of other workers. The workers in this group are mainly tea garden workers and tea factory workers, tea garden drivers, carpenter, outside workers who are engaged as mason, carpenter, and construction workers in other provinces of the country. On the other hand, the ratios of other workers are comparatively lower in the GPs of Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar and Matiali Batabari-II.

The ratio of main workers, marginal workers and non workers are as 27.5: 15: 57.5 as a whole among the tribal people of Mal subdivision. The Kranti GP has the highest proportion of main workers (30.5%) while the Rajadanga has the lowest proportion (21.8%). The absolute variations among the GPs are as little as 9%. Marginal workers are comparatively higher in the subdivision of Mal. Highest ratio of marginal workers are found in the GP of Changmari (21%) while the lowest proportion of the same are found in the GP of Bidhannagar (10.7%). The tea garden based GPs have higher proportion of marginal workers than the non-tea garden based GPs. Because a large number of plantation tribal workers are

seasonal workers who are employed during the plucking period only. Both male and female proportions are higher in this case. So the highest concentrated tea garden and tribal GPs have higher ratio of marginal workers. The GPs are Rajadanga, Odlabari, Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Kumlai, Changmari, Damdim, Tesimla, Indong Matiali, Sulkapara, Looksan and Champaguri. The other GPs which are located in non-tea garden based areas have considerably lower rates of marginal workers. The non-workers ratios are similar in all GPs. The highest proportion of tribal non-workers are found in GPs of Moulani and Matiali Batabari-I (60%) while the least concentrated non workers GPs are Kumlai and Changmari (53%).

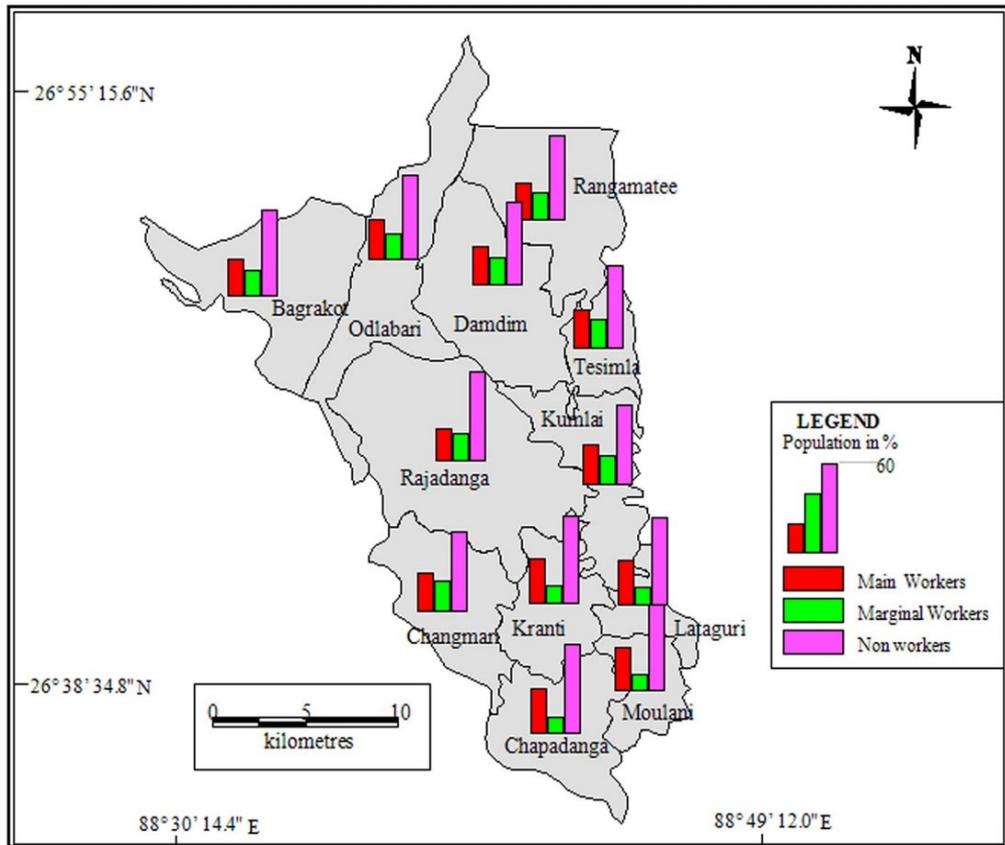
Table 5.4 Block-wise Workforce Composition Rate of Tribal & Non-tribal People

Block	Tribal People				Non-Tribal People			
	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind. Workers	Other Workers	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind. Workers	Other Workers
Mal	8.5	18.7	1.6	71.2	23.2	16	1.1	59.7
Matiali	8.5	19.2	1.3	71.1	14.1	5.5	1	79.4
Nagrakata	8	16.7	1.3	73.9	14.2	7	0.7	78.1
Total	8.5	18.5	1.5	71.5	16.7	9.1	1.1	73.1

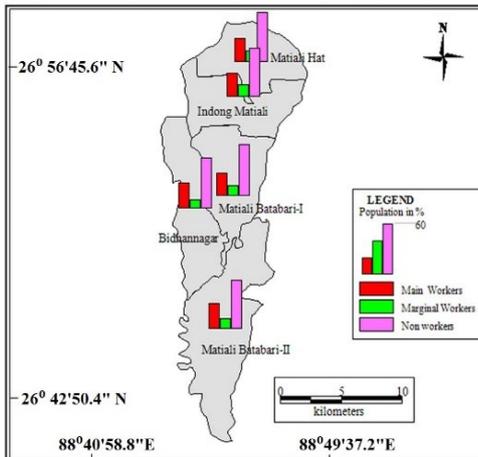
Source: Field survey, 2015

It is transparent from the above table-5.4 that among the cultivators the non-tribes are more in number than the tribal people. Average tribal cultivators ratio is 8.5% in Mal subdivision but the same for the non-tribal people is 16.7%. Agricultural labourers are less in non-tribal people than the tribal people. The rate of Agricultural labour ratio for tribal people (18.5%) is double than the non-tribal people (9.1%). The ratio of agricultural labourers is significantly higher for tribes than the non-tribes in Matiali and Nagrakata blocks; but it remains the same in Mal block. The reason behind such incident is that the tribes of Mal block in the GPs of Chapadanga, Moulani and Lataguri possesses agricultural lands, while the landless labourers are more in number in Matiali and Nagrakata block. Household industrial workers for both tribes and non-tribes are insignificant in number. In case of other workers the ratio is different in different blocks. However, the ratio is higher for tribals than the non-tribals due to engagement of tribal people as plantation workers.

CATEGORY OF WORKERS IN TRIBAL POPULATION OF MAL BLOCK



CATEGORY OF WORKERS IN TRIBAL POPULATION OF MATIALI BLOCK



CATEGORY OF WORKERS IN TRIBAL POPULATION OF NAGRAKATA BLOCK

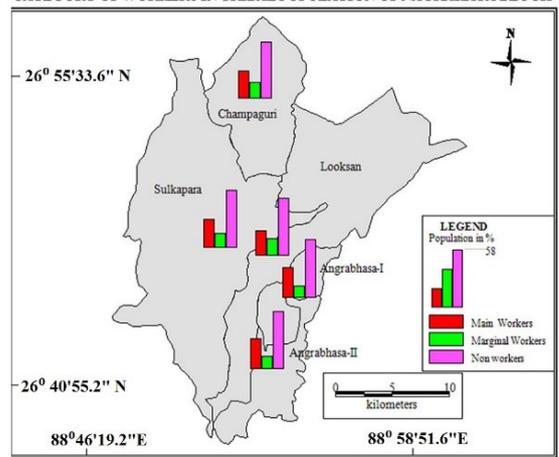


Figure 5.2 Category-wise Workers in Tribal Population of Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

5.2.3 Monthly Family Income

Income is money that an individual or business receives in exchange of providing goods or service. Income is consumed to fuel day-to-day expenditures. Most people aged 65 and under, receive the majority of their income from a salary or wages earned from a job. Monthly income means the wages that can be earned by an adult people in a month.

Table 5.5 GP-wise Monthly Family Incomes of Tribal People

Sl No.	GP Name	Monthly Income in Rs. (No of family in Percentage)				
		≤ 2500	2501-5000	5001-7500	7501-10000	≥ 10000
1	Bagrakot	38	42	10	8	2
2	Odlabari	31	42	12	8	7
3	Rangamatee	25	35	15	15	10
4	Rajadanga	30	28	22	16	4
5	Damdim	34	44	10	6	6
6	Tesimla	40	35	12	8	5
7	Kumlai	25	35	15	15	10
8	Changmari	41	45	5	4	5
9	Kranti	33	44	12	6	5
10	Chapadanga	25	32	21	12	10
11	Moulani	32	42	12	10	4
12	Lataguri	35	39	11	10	5
Mal Block Total		33	39	13	10	6
1	Matiali Batabari-I	25	45	15	10	5
2	Matiali Batabari-II	14	36	31	12	7
3	Bidhannagar	35	36	11	10	8
4	Matiali Hat	30	35	15	10	10
5	Indong Matiali	32	45	10	11	2
Matiali Block Total		27	40	16	10	6
1	Angrabhasa-I	25	40	15	14	6
2	Angrabhasa-II	29	31	25	11	4
3	Sulkapara	30	40	15	10	5
4	Champaguri	20	29	27	18	6
5	Looksan	25	30	20	15	10
Nagrakata Block Total		26	34	20	14	6
Mal Subdivision Total		30	38	16	11	6

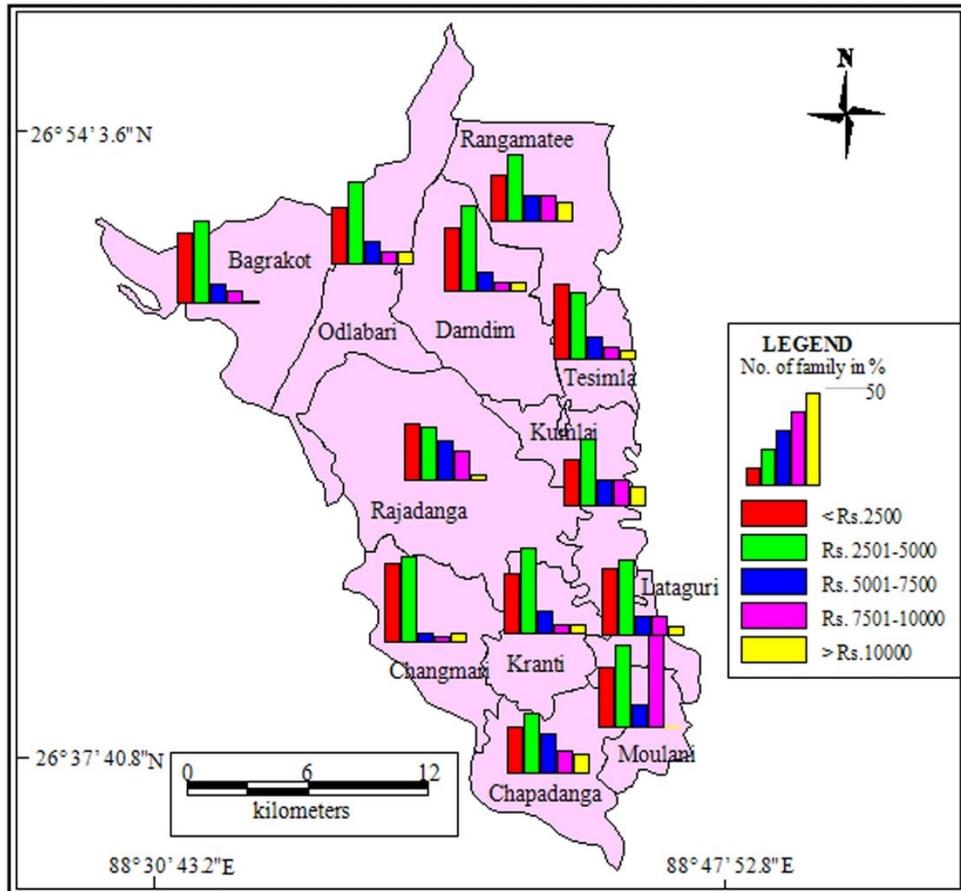
Source: Compiled from the primary data

The tribal people in Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata are generally involved in tea garden and their salary is earned every fortnight at a rate of Rs. 128 per day. No work, no pay system

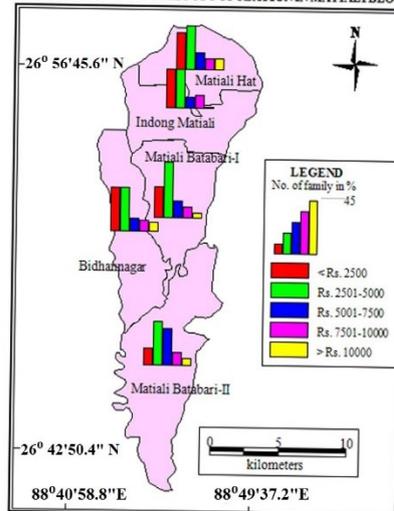
is prevailed in the tea gardens. There are two types of workers in the garden: permanent, those who are engaged throughout the year and temporary workers, locally called '*bigha*'. The temporary workers are employed during the plucking season. Permanent workers are hereditary engaged in the garden. One employee is engaged from a household. Chronologically one after another member is employed in the tea garden. Rest of the workers are either agricultural labourers or work outside the state. A considerable number of workers are engaged in construction works in Kerala, Tamilnadu and Gujarat state. In GPs of Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I, Angrabhasa-II, Moulani, Chapadanga, Lataguri people are engaged in agricultural activities.

From the above table (5.5) it is found that monthly family income for tribal people are very low in all GPs. On an average, 30% family have monthly income below Rs. 2500. In Changmari (41%), Tesimla (40%), Bagrakot (38%), Lataguri (35%), Damdim (34%) and Kranti (34%) GPs there are more than 1/3rd family whose income per month is below Rs. 2500. However, the low income group people are lowest in Nagrakata block. The tea gardens are relatively better in condition there. Rs. 2501 to Rs. 5000 per month income slab is for maximum people in all GPs. Normally where more than one people are engaged in tea garden, their income is in this slab. On an average, there are 38% families whose income is Rs. 2501-5000 per month. On an average, there are 68% families whose income is below Rs 5000. More than 75% families have monthly income below Rs. 5000 in the GPs of Changmari (86%), Bagrakot (80%), Damdim (78%), Indong Matiali (77%) and Tesimla (75%). Monthly income over Rs. 5000 is found in 32% families. Of these, maximum share is in the GPs of Nagrakata block (40%) and minimum in Mal block (29%). If we look for the GP level condition it is found that Champaguri (51%), Looksan (45%), Angrabhasa-II (40%), are in better condition. Incomes above Rs. 10,000 per month are noticed in few families. Average rate is 6%. Those who are in outside the state i.e. in Kerala, Maharashtra, and Gujarat have higher income recorded in the last category. A few people are also in Govt. jobs. From the above income structure (Table-5.5), it can be said that, except the GPs of Nagrakata the other GPs family income are very low compared to the standard income. A family consisting of 5 to 6 members with that sum amount is very negligible. Sometimes, the tea gardens remain closed for a long time and then there is no income of the members. During the survey in 2015 such closed or abandoned tea gardens were noticed in Bagrakot, Damdim and Matiali Batabari-II GPs. Absolute misery, malnutrition, starvation, ill health and death were recorded in the areas mentioned above.

MONTHLY FAMILY INCOMES OF POPULATION IN MAL BLOCK



MONTHLY FAMILY INCOMES OF POPULATION IN MATIALI BLOCK



MONTHLY FAMILY INCOMES OF POPULATION IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

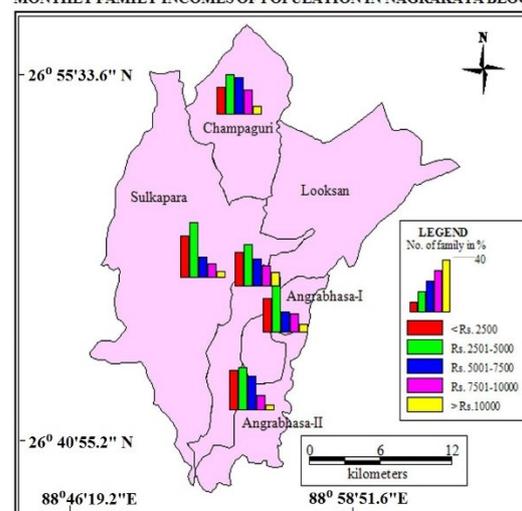


Figure 5.3 Monthly Family Income of Tribal Population in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Table 5.6 Block-wise Monthly Family Incomes of Tribal & Non-tribal People

Block	Monthly Income in Rs. (No of families in Percentage)									
	Tribal People					Non Tribal People				
	< 2500	2501-5000	5001-7500	7501-10000	≥ 10000	< 2500	2501-5000	5001-7500	7501-10000	≥ 10000
Mal	33	39	13	10	6	10	22	25	25	18
Matiali	27	40	16	10	6	15	25	23	25	12
Nagrakata	26	34	20	14	6	20	28	22	15	15
Total	30	38	15	11	6	16	25	24	20	15

Source: Computed from the primary data

A clear distinction may be made about the income between the tribes and non-tribes. In every block the non-tribal people have higher income than the tribal people. 16% non-tribal families are there whose income is below Rs. 2500, while this share is 30% for tribal people. There are 68% tribal people in the subdivision whose income is below Rs. 5000 per month against the figure for non-tribal people which is 41%. Income of more than Rs. 5000 per month is earned by 32% tribal people and 59% non-tribal people. Again, there are 6% tribal families earning above Rs. 10,000 per month, the share is 15% for non-tribal families. So, the tribal people are poorer than the non-tribes in every block of Mal subdivision.

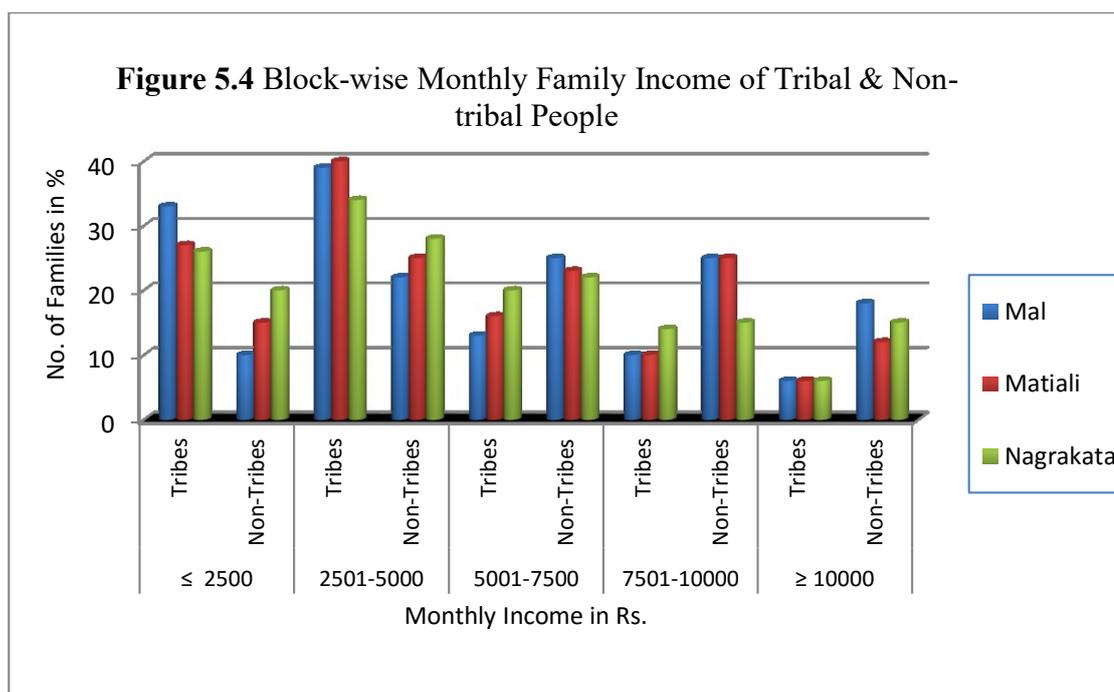
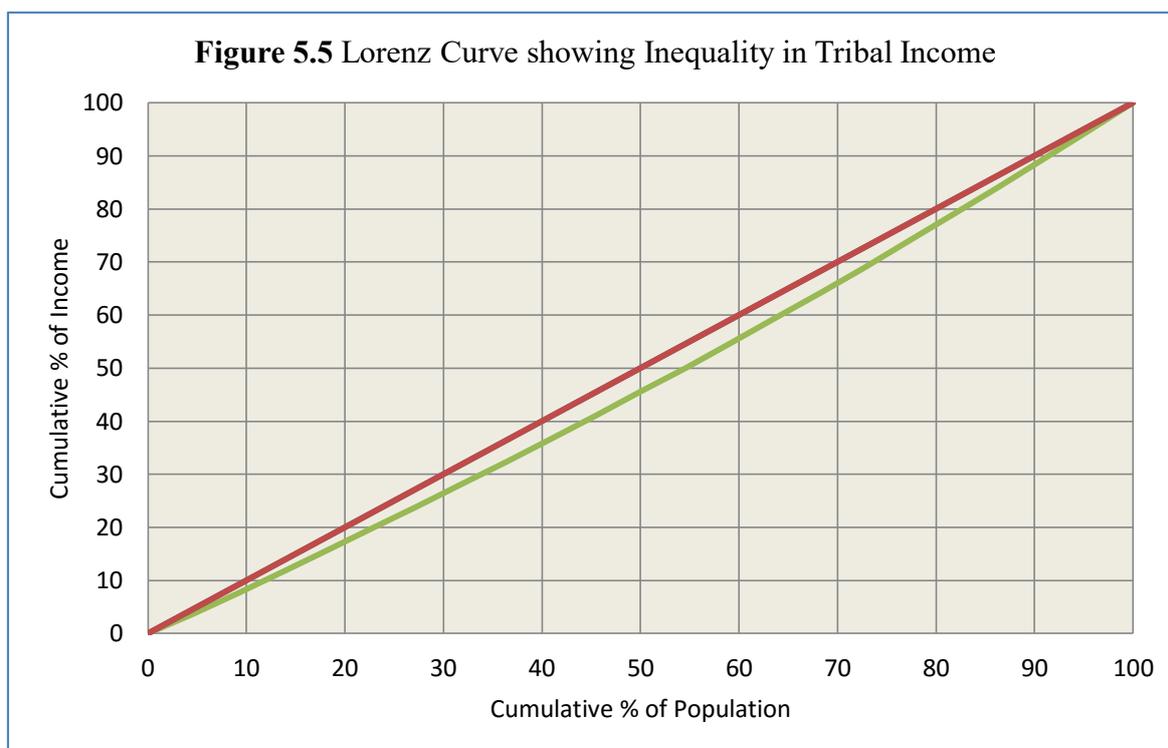


Table 5.7 Determination of income inequalities among tribal people by Lorenz Curve

GP	% of Population (X)	% of Income (Y)	Cumulative % of Population (XI)	Cumulative % of income (YI)	Columns for Gini Co-efficient	
					XI (YI+1)	YI (XI+1)
Changmari	4.55	3.69	4.55	3.69	0	0
Bagrakot	4.55	3.85	9.09	7.54	34.3	33.5
Tesimla	4.55	4.08	13.64	11.61	105.6	102.8
Indong Matiali	4.55	4.09	18.18	15.70	214.1	211.2
Damdim	4.55	4.09	22.73	19.79	359.9	356.8
Kranti	4.55	4.09	27.27	23.89	542.8	539.8
Lataguri	4.55	4.22	31.82	28.11	766.6	760.0
Moulani	4.55	4.23	36.36	32.34	1028.9	1022.1
Odlabari	4.55	4.35	40.91	36.69	1334.2	1322.9
Sulkapara	4.55	4.41	45.45	41.10	1681.3	1667.8
Bidhannagar	4.55	4.43	50.00	45.53	2069.3	2054.9
Matiali Batabari-I	4.55	4.49	54.55	50.01	2500.5	2483.2
Angrabhasa-II	4.55	4.66	59.09	54.67	2982.2	2955.2
Angrabhasa-I	4.55	4.74	63.64	59.42	3511.0	3479.3
Matiali Hat	4.55	4.75	68.18	64.16	4083.2	4051.1
Rajadanga	4.55	4.81	72.73	68.97	4702.5	4666.5
Rangamatee	4.55	5.06	77.27	74.03	5384.2	5329.5
Kumlai	4.55	5.06	81.82	79.09	6111.9	6057.2
Chapadanga	4.55	5.08	86.36	84.17	6886.9	6830.9
Looksan	4.55	5.19	90.91	89.37	7718.0	7652.1
Matiali Batabari-II	4.55	5.31	95.45	94.68	8606.8	8530.4
Champaguri	4.55	5.32	100.00	100.00	9545.5	9467.5
Total	100	100	-	-	70169.5	69574.6

Source: Computed by the Researcher

The Gini coefficient is a measure of inequality of a distribution. It is defined as a ratio with values between 0 and 1: the numerator is the area between the Lorenz curve of the distribution and the uniform distribution line; the denominator is the area under the uniform distribution line. It was developed by the Italian statistician Corrado Gini in 1912. The Gini coefficient is often used to measure income inequality (Arnold, 2008). Here, 0 corresponds to perfect income equality (i.e. everyone has the same income) and 1 corresponds to perfect income inequality (i.e. one person has all the income, while everyone else has zero income).



From the Lorenz curve it is seen that the income variation of tribal people in different GPs of Mal subdivision is very limited. The mathematical equation of Gini coefficient is:

$$GI = \frac{1}{100 \times 100} |XI(YI + 1) - YI(XI + 1)|$$

By applying the above equation, the mathematical value of Gini co-efficient is calculated is 0.6 only; means there is 6% inequality in income distribution of the tribal people. So, in all GPs the tribes are more or less bearing same economic conditions.

5.3 Housing conditions

Housing is a basic need of man. In importance, it is third after food and clothing. The importance of housing was universally accepted from the dawn of history. Even the Neolithic man who lived between 10,000 and 2000 B.C. built durable habitation (Varghese, 1980). However, its functions increased manifold over the years. Primitive men sought some kind of protection against wild animals and natural calamities. Housing protection is also sought against enemies as well. With the development of knowledge and the advancement of civilization, people became particular about sanitation, environment, privacy, location of house, etc. He becomes more conscious of better facilities, which make his life easy and very comfortable. With the invention of electricity and other facilities, the development of housing became more important. Then man began to bring electricity, toilet, bath, washbasin etc.

within the walls of his house. Houses become useful in various ways (*Kalkundri, 2015*). When a tea garden worker dies in the service of the employer or retires or goes on transfer or resigns or goes on leave or when his services are terminated, he or she or his or her family retains the house up to the period as detailed below:

1. In case of death, transfer or termination of services, a period of not exceeding two months;
2. In case of retirement or resignation, a period of not exceeding one month;
3. In case of leave for the period of leave and;
4. In case of where the discharge or dismissal of a worker is disputed and the matter has been referred for conciliation or has been taken to an industrial tribunal or court, for so long as the case is not finally disposed of (*Sharma & Das, 2008*).

If we analyse the provisions of West Bengal Plantation Labour Rules, 1956 as modified in 1959 and 1972, it is seen that the Rules are mainly concerned with the workers and not with the family members of the workers.

5.3.1 House Types

House type is one of the good indicators of nature of living habitat. Different indicators are there to identify livable house like number of rooms inside, *kacha or pacca* house, rented house or own house etc. Empirical research has shown that room stress has a significant effect on households' assessment on housing conditions. The required number of rooms is calculated using a simple rule: two rooms for a prime adult or a couple in a household, with an extra for additional adult age of above 18 years or for each pair of young age between 10 years and 17 years (*Carswell, 2012*).

The table-5.8 shows that on an average in Mal subdivision, 13% tribal households live in one room house, 29% in two rooms, 42% in three rooms, 11% has four rooms and 6% has more than four rooms. In some tea gardens, the tea garden labourers live in garden quarter. There the numbers of rooms include 2 bed rooms and one kitchen or corridor. Most of such quarters are semi *pacca*. Besides, the tea garden labourers are in *kachha* building prepared by them. In the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Tesimla two rooms' houses are more in number. Most of the GPs show that 3 rooms' households are more in number. Number of four or more than 4 rooms in a household are very limited. In GPs like Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri and Bidhannagar comparatively better livelihood of tribal people are found in respect of housing conditions. Single room houses are fewer in number in these GPs.

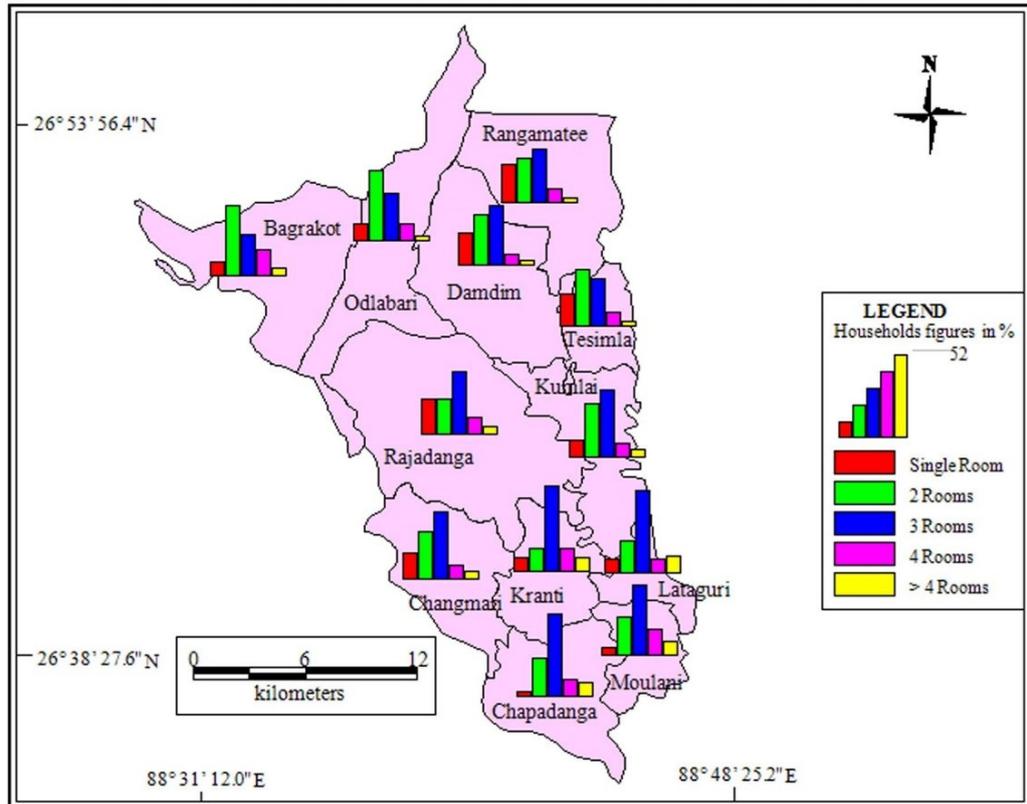
Table 5.8 Gram Panchayat-wise Statistics of Number of Rooms in Households

Sl No.	Name of GP	No. of Rooms (Households figures in Percentage)				
		1 Room	2 Rooms	3 Rooms	4 Rooms	> 4 Rooms
1	Bagrakot	10	42	26	17	5
2	Odlabari	12	43	30	12	3
3	Rangamatee	25	27	34	10	4
4	Rajadanga	22	23	39	11	5
5	Damdim	21	32	37	7	3
6	Tesimla	21	35	30	10	4
7	Kumlai	12	33	40	10	5
8	Changmari	16	29	40	10	5
9	Kranti	10	15	52	14	9
10	Chapadanga	4	25	50	11	10
11	Moulani	6	25	43	16	10
12	Lataguri	9	20	51	9	11
Mal Block Total		14	29	39	11	6
1	Matiali Batabari-I	13	34	41	8	4
2	Matiali Batabari-II	11	33	39	11	6
3	Bidhannagar	6	29	47	12	6
4	Matiali Hat	13	30	41	12	4
5	Indong Matiali	16	29	42	8	5
Matiali Block Total		12	31	42	10	5
1	Angrabhasa-I	11	25	50	8	6
2	Angrabhasa-II	10	25	43	15	7
3	Sulkapara	10	35	45	7	3
4	Champaguri	11	22	50	9	8
5	Looksan	9	25	51	10	5
Nagrakata Block Total		10	26	48	10	6
Mal Subdivision Total		13	29	42	11	6

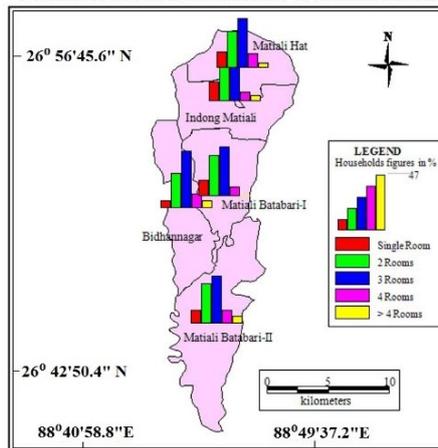
Source: Compiled by the Researcher

A distinction is found among the tribes and non-tribes in respect of housing condition. There are 13% tribal houses of single room while the non-tribal single room is only 4%. Similarly, 29% tribal houses are consisting with two rooms but same for the non-tribal people is 16%. Three or more than three compartment houses are fewer for the tribal people (21%) while for the non-tribal houses the same is very high (80%). So, it is clear that the tribal people are very much distressed in their shelter compared to the non-tribal people. The houses of the tribal people are mostly colony of the garden, hence, very much compact and unhealthy. During the rainy season, water pours from the roof of the house and workers have to sit under umbrellas throughout the night. There are domestic animals in their houses which are kept in their single or double rooms (in bed rooms).

NUMBER OF ROOMS IN HOUSEHOLDS OF MAL BLOCK



NUMBER OF ROOMS IN HOUSEHOLDS OF MATIALI BLOCK



NUMBER OF ROOMS IN HOUSEHOLDS OF NAGRAKATA BLOCK

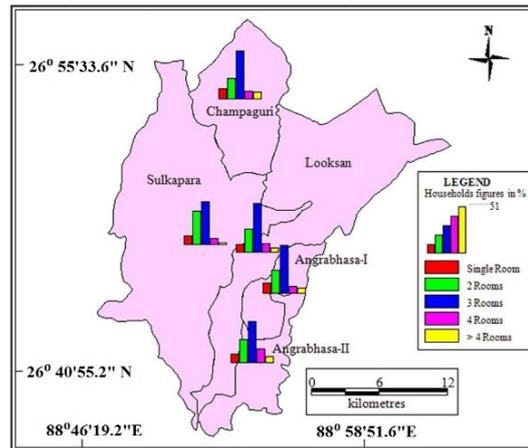


Figure 5.6 Number of Rooms in Tribal Households in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Table 5.9 Block-wise Number of Rooms in Households for Tribes and non-Tribes

Block	No. of Rooms (Households figures in Percentage)									
	Tribal Households					Non-Tribal Households				
	Single Room	Two Rooms	Three Rooms	Four Rooms	Four Rooms >	Single Room	Two Rooms	Three Rooms	Four Rooms	Four Rooms >
Mal	14	29	39	11	6	5	15	31	25	24
Matiali	12	31	42	10	5	4	16	26	24	30
Nagrakata	10	26	48	10	6	3	17	25	27	28
Total	13	29	42	11	6	4	16	27	26	27

Source: Field survey, 2015

There are three basic types of houses in Mal subdivision: *kacha*, *semi-pacca* and *pacca* houses. A *kacha* house is muddy in floor and wall is either prepared by local materials of bamboo, tin etc, while the roof is of tree leaves, tin etc. A *pacca* house is a concrete house, in a semi *pacca* house, the roof is not of concrete. As per the sample data collected from the field, on an average the ratio among *kacha*, semi *pacca* and *pacca* houses of tribal households are 58:37:05, while the same for the non tribal people are 49:40:11. The *kacha* houses are more in number for the tribal households. The *pacca* houses are more for the non tribal houses. Tea garden quarters are mostly semi *pacca*. So, considerable shares of semi *pacca* houses are seen among the tribal houses. In Mal block, the share of semi *pacca* houses are less than the other blocks because the GPs of Lataguri, Chapadanga, Moulani, Kranti have less amount of tea garden quarters. In Matiali and Mal block, the share of semi *pacca* houses is more. Looksan, Champaguri, Sulkapara, Indong Matiali have more amounts of tea garden quarters.

There are three basic types of nature of living on the basis of house ownership: own, rented and quarter provided by the employer. In most of the tea gardens there are quarters for their employees. Those who are not engaged in tea garden, have their own house in their own land. Rented house are rare incident in every Indian rural area. On an average 55% tribal people live in their garden quarters. The quarters are in their possession generation after generation. Nagrakata block has the highest (63%) labour quarter followed by Matiali block (57%) in the subdivision. 42% tribal households are their own property in Mal subdivision. In Mal block this figure is 50% because of less number of tea gardens in some GP areas. Only 3% tribal people live in rented house. Among the non-tribal people the rate of own house is very high i.e. 91%, rented 4% and quarter 5%. So, the non-tribal people have their own houses in most of the cases.

Table 5.10 Block-wise Statistics on Nature and type of Houses (Tribes and Non-tribes)

Block	No. of Households in Percentage													
	Tribal Households						Non-tribal Households							
	House type				Nature of living			House type				Nature of living		
	Kacha	Semi Pacca	Pacca	Pacca	Own	Rented	Quarter	kacha	Semi Pacca	Pacca	Pacca	Own	Rented	Quarter
Mal	63	32	05	05	50	03	47	52	34	14	91	04	05	
Matiali	55	39	06	06	41	02	57	51	38	11	92	04	04	
Nagrakata	56	38	06	06	33	04	63	45	46	9	89	05	06	
Total	58	37	05	05	42	03	55	49	40	11	91	04	05	

Source: Field survey, 2015

5.3.2 Basic House Amenities

Census 2011 illustrates that in terms of basic amenities such as housing conditions, availability of drinking water, sanitation facility, type of fuel used, electricity, communication facilities and percentage of households possessing bank account and few durable assets, the Scheduled Tribes are lagging behind the general population. Basic requirement of a house in rural areas are separate kitchen, latrine, water facility, electricity etc. Data has been collected for these four items.

Separate kitchen is very important and an indicator of health and hygiene. On an average, there are 51% tribal families in Mal subdivision who have separate kitchen in their dwellings. The ratio is slightly lower than the national average (53.7%). The GPs of Kranti (70%), Moulani (68%), Lataguri (65%) and Chapadanga (63%) have significantly higher ratios of separate kitchen in their dwellings. These are mainly non-tea garden areas and the people have their own dwellings. In Rangamatee (36%), Damdim (41%), Tesimla (43%), Sulkapara (43%), Changmari (44%), Rajadanga (44%) and Kumlai (45%) GPs, separate kitchens are in lower rates than the earlier. These GPs are either in maximum tea garden concentrated areas or in very poor condition.

Latrine is essential in every dwelling unit. In Mal subdivision there are 50% tribal families consisting with latrine. In this case complete opposite condition occurs in the GPs than the previous indicator. The tea garden based GPs have more amount of latrine than the non-tea garden based GPs, because, in the quarters, the latrines are made by the garden authorities. Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Kranti, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa –II have very low ratio of latrine in the house premises. All India average of latrine facility among the tribe is 22.6% as per 2001 census. So, the tribes of Mal subdivision are better than the national average of the tribes.

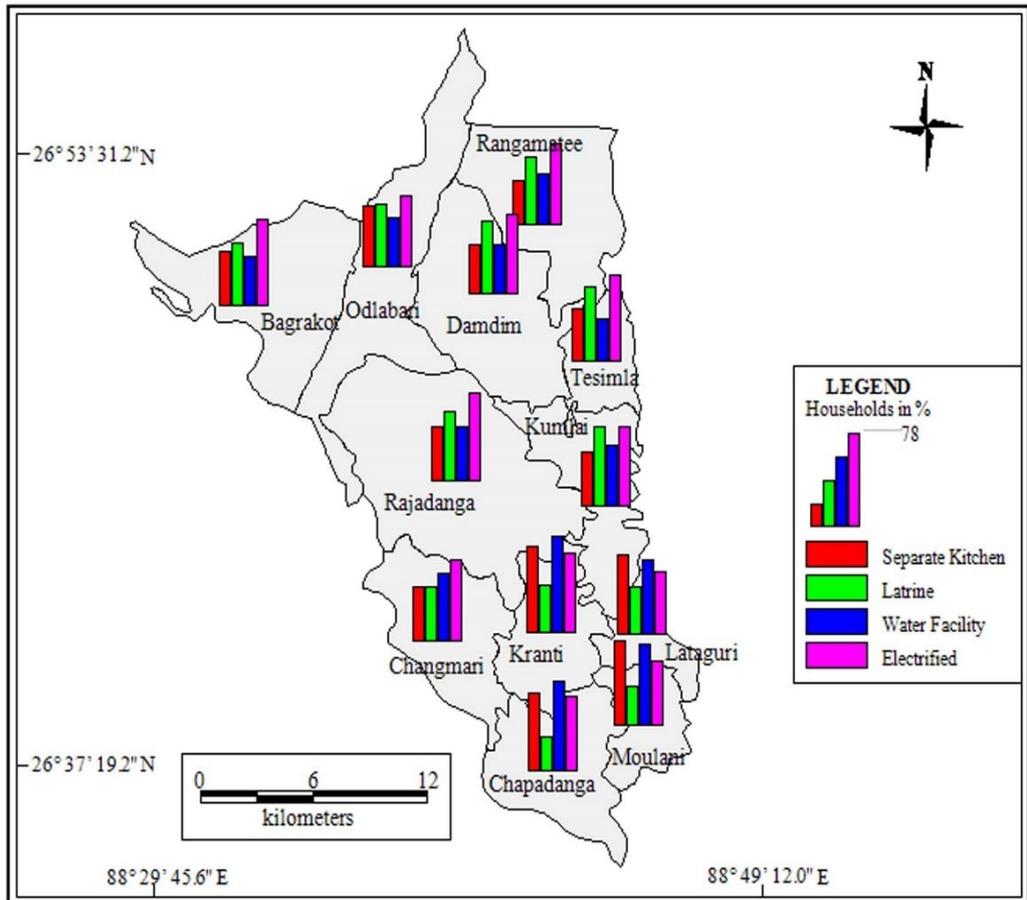
Table 5.11 GP-wise Statistics on Basic House Amenities (Households in %)

Sl No.	Name of GP	Separate Kitchen	Latrine	Water Facility	Electrified
1	Bagrakot	45	51	40	70
2	Odlabari	50	51	41	58
3	Rangamatee	36	55	42	66
4	Rajadanga	44	57	45	71
5	Damdim	41	59	40	65
6	Tesimla	43	61	35	70
7	Kumlai	45	65	50	64
8	Changmari	44	45	55	66
9	Kranti	70	39	78	65
10	Chapadanga	63	28	73	60
11	Moulani	68	32	66	53
12	Lataguri	65	39	60	51
Mal Block Total		51	47	55	63
1	Matiali Batabari-I	49	46	42	67
2	Matiali Batabari-II	54	47	71	59
3	Bidhannagar	52	51	42	57
4	Matiali Hat	43	61	35	58
5	Indong Matiali	54	54	41	58
Matiali Block Total		50	52	47	60
1	Angrabhasa-I	52	44	56	92
2	Angrabhasa-II	51	47	50	78
3	Sulkapara	43	61	35	87
4	Champaguri	51	52	23	88
5	Looksan	53	50	22	72
Nagrakata Block Total		50	51	37	83
Mal Subdivision Total		51	50	46	68

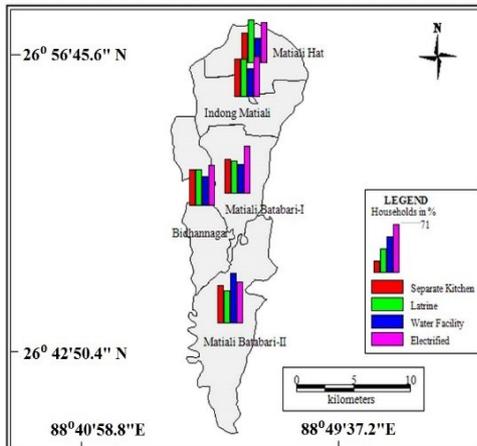
Source: Compiled from the primary data

Water scarcity is very pronounced in the GP areas which have higher elevation. Looksan (22%), Champaguri (23%), Sulkapara (35%), Matiali Hat (35%), Bagrakot (40%), Damdim (40%), Odlabari (41%), Indong Matiali (41%), Rangamatee (42%) and Matiali Batabari-I (42%) have very low proportion of water facilities in the house premises. These GPs are highly elevated than the other GPs. So, there are scarcities of waters in these GPs. Ground water is very much down. So in every household there is no scope of tube well or anything else. In the garden quarter, a well is dug for a group of habitants in these areas. On the other hand, Kranti (78%), Chapadanga (73%), Matiali Batabari –II (71%), Moulani (66%), Lataguri (60%) and Angrabhasa-I (56%) have more than half of the dwelling facilitate water facility in their houses. On an average of 46% tribal household in Mal subdivision has drinking-water facilities within their house premises.

AVAILABILITY OF BASIC HOUSEHOLD AMENITIES IN MAL BLOCK



AVAILABILITY OF BASIC HOUSEHOLD AMENITIES IN MATIALI BLOCK



AVAILABILITY OF BASIC HOUSEHOLD AMENITIES IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

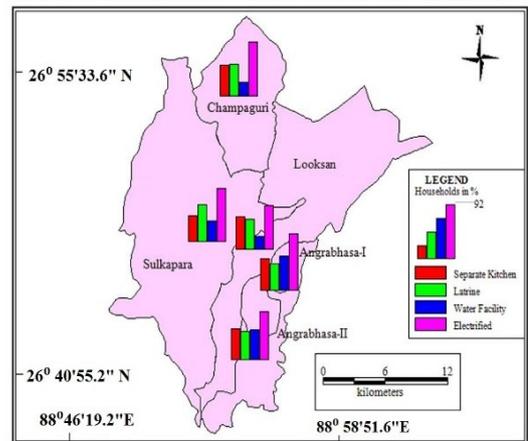


Figure 5.8 Availability of Basic Household Amenities in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Rate of electrification is 68% on an average in the tribal households in Mal subdivision. The rate of electrification in tribal households is better than the national average (51.7%). Electrified dwellings are very much high in Nagrakata GP (83%). Angrabhasa-I (92%), Champaguri (88%), Sulkapara (87%), has very high rate of electrification. Lowest electric connections are found in the GPs of Lataguri (51%) and Moulani (53%).

Table 5.12 Block-wise Available Basic House Amenities (Tribes and Non-Tribes)

Block	Tribal Households (in %)				Non Tribal Households (in %)			
	Separate Kitchen	Latrine in the House	Water Facility in the House	Electrified house	Separate Kitchen	Latrine in the House	Water Facility in the House	Electrified house
Mal	51	46	55	63	79	65	56	75
Matiali	50	52	47	60	77	67	54	78
Nagrakata	50	51	37	83	71	62	44	85
Total	51	50	46	68	76	65	52	78

Source: Field survey, 2015

If we compare the data of house amenities between the tribes and non-tribes it is found that all the facilities are more in number in the houses of the later group. In case of separate kitchen, 51% tribes occupy separate kitchen while 76% non-tribes have their kitchen. Latrine facility enjoyed by the tribe is 50%, non tribes 65%. 46% tribes have water facilities in their houses, 52% non tribes enjoy the same facility. Electrified houses are 68% and 78% respectively for tribes and non tribes. So, tribes are poorer than the non-tribes in these perspectives.

5.3.3 Household Assets

An asset is a resource with economic value that an individual, corporation or country owns or controls with the expectation that it will provide future benefit. Household assets are resources or wealth of a family. The essential assets of a family, now a day, are banking services, communication facilities i.e. mobile phone, important durable assets i.e. TV, motor cycle, bi-cycle, computer/ laptop, LPG connection etc.

The table-5.14 shows the basic household assets of different GPs in Mal subdivision both for tribes and non-tribes. On an average 43% tribal households are there who enjoy the banking facilities. Among the non-tribal social groups the ratio is 61%. In most of the cases these are non-operative accounts. The bank accounts were opened to get govt. schemes from the Panchayats. After getting the facilities, the account in banks remains non-operative. So, in

the true sense, most of the tribal households are not related to the banking operation. However, the ratio is slightly higher in Moulani (61%), Lataguri (60%), Bidhannagar (59%) and Chapadanga. The tribal people are connected with the non-tribal people in the above GP areas; as a result awareness has been developed.

Table 5.13 GP-wise Available Household Assets (Households in %)

SI No.	Name of GP	Banking Services availed		Mobile phone Connection		Television/ Motor Cycle/ Computer/Laptop		LPG connection	
		Tribes	Non-Tribes	Tribes	Non-Tribes	Tribes	Non-Tribes	Tribes	Non-Tribes
1	Bagrakot	30	51	47	85	40	55	10	20
2	Odlabari	28	55	55	83	40	56	11	18
3	Rangamatee	25	52	56	85	39	57	10	17
4	Rajadanga	33	57	61	84	39	59	09	16
5	Damdim	35	58	51	82	38	54	07	15
6	Tesimla	31	52	45	78	38	56	08	18
7	Kumlai	38	49	61	82	40	60	11	20
8	Changmari	36	47	43	84	35	60	12	20
9	Kranti	49	70	49	90	37	65	15	25
10	Chapadanga	56	71	55	90	38	65	11	22
11	Moulani	62	75	58	92	39	64	15	25
12	Lataguri	61	76	60	93	36	65	14	25
Mal Block Total		40	59	53	86	38	60	11	20
1	Matiali Batabari-I	56	65	62	80	31	55	11	16
2	Matiali Batabari-II	51	66	60	82	31	52	10	15
3	Bidhannagar	59	67	62	78	32	53	08	14
4	Matiali Hat	44	67	60	81	35	52	09	20
5	Indong Matiali	35	55	65	75	36	51	12	18
Matiali Block Total		49	64	62	79	33	53	10	17
1	Angrabhasa-I	46	62	64	81	35	44	13	19
2	Angrabhasa-II	49	65	63	84	36	45	11	18
3	Sulkapara	36	56	67	85	39	55	12	20
4	Champaguri	39	56	68	89	39	56	10	20
5	Looksan	40	65	67	80	40	52	13	20
Nagrakata Block Total		42	61	66	84	38	50	12	19
Mal Subdivision Total		43	61	58	84	37	56	11	19

Source: Compiled from the primary data

Mobile phone is an important tool for modern means of communications. It is noted that on an average 58% tribal family occupy at least a single mobile set. Champaguri (68%) has the highest share of mobile phones followed by Looksan (67%), Sulkapara (67%) and Indong Matiali (65%). Changmari has the lowest mobile phone access i.e. 43%. Nagrakata

block has the highest mobile phone access by the tribal people in the subdivision. Non-tribal access of mobile phone is obviously higher than the tribes. Average access is 84%.

Three basic items i.e. television, motor cycle and computer/laptop have been considered as durable assets. 37% tribal households of the subdivision occupy at least one item mentioned here, while the non-tribals have 56% of such commodities. Throughout the area among all GPs, the variation is very less. Highest occupancy is carried by Bagrakot, Odlabari and Looksan (40%) while the lowest is in Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II (31%). People of the Mal subdivision use smoke emanating fuels for cooking: fire wood, crop residue, cow dung and tree leaves etc. There are many forest areas in the locality. People depend on such forests. LPG connections are very rare. On an average 11% tribal and 19% non-tribal households use LPG for their fuel source. In Kranti, Moulani and Lataguri LPG connections are relatively higher in number.

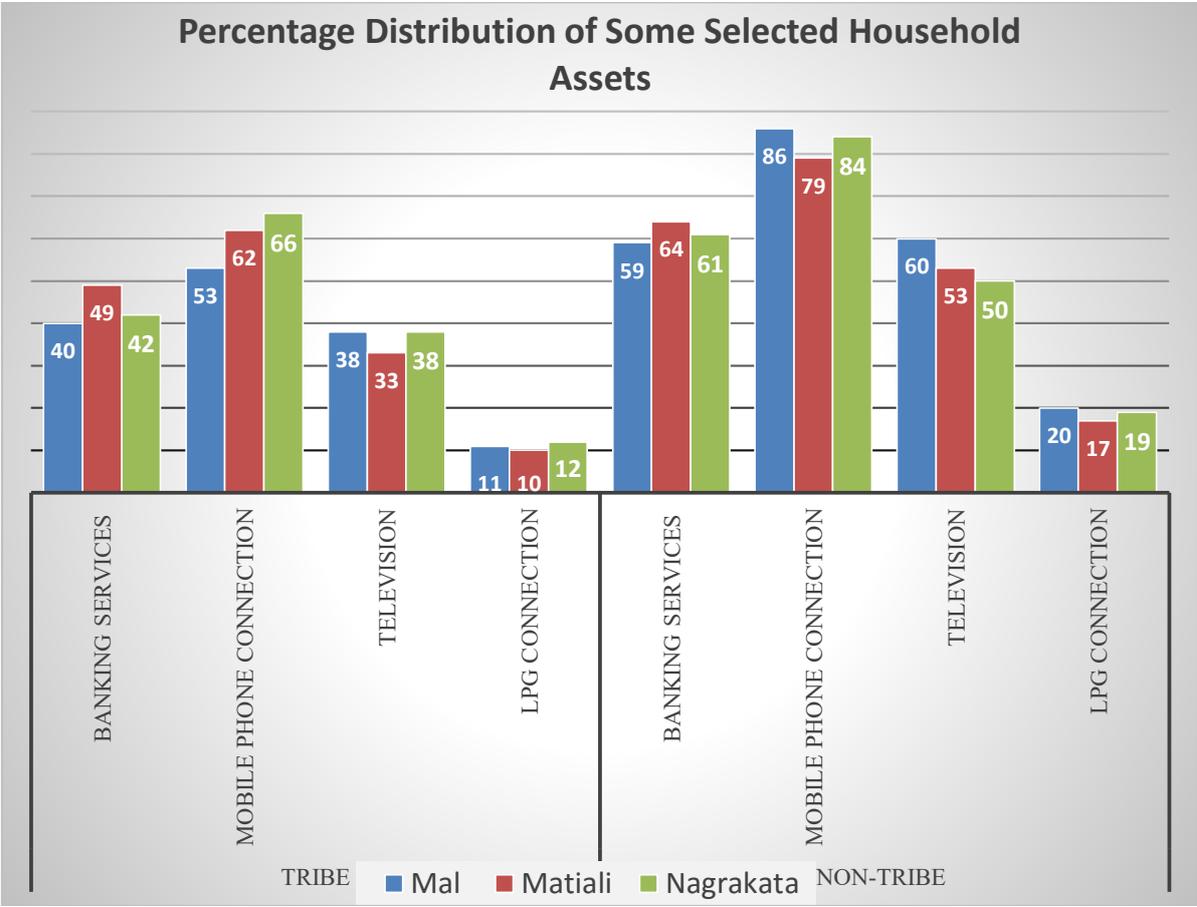


Figure 5.8 Blockwise Distribution of Household Assets for Tribes and Non-tribes

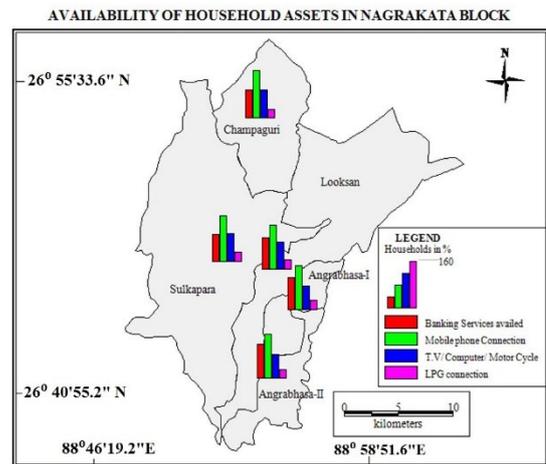
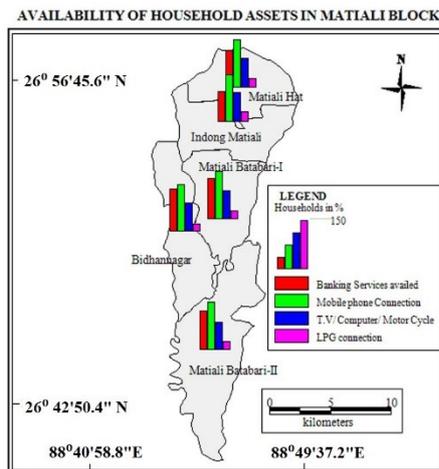
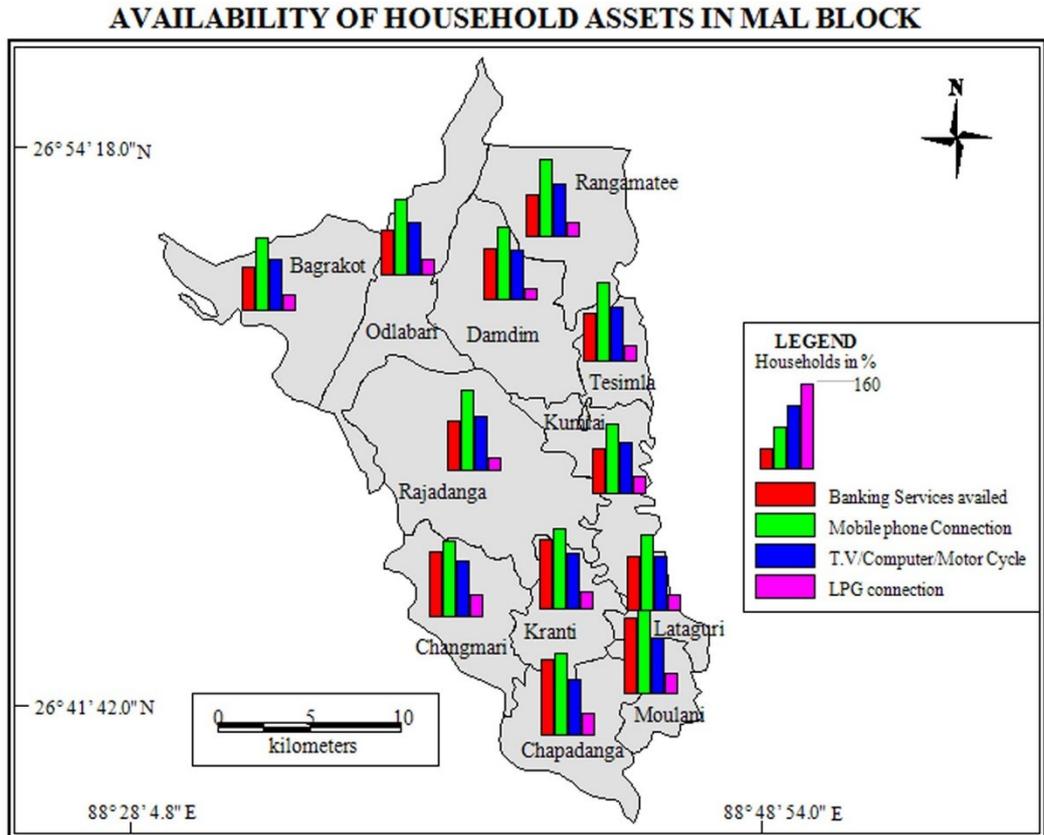


Figure 5.9 Availability of Household Assets in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

5.4 Agricultural Activities

Historically, the economy of most tribes in India was based on hunting and food gathering and then subsequently based on subsistence agriculture. Tribal people living in Dooars are exception to it. They are basically brought by the Britishers for plantation farming mainly. However, a section of people engaged themselves in agricultural activities now. They are mainly landless labourers and those who are cultivators depend on *adhiary* agriculture i.e. a piece of land is borrowed from the landlord in a condition to share half of the agro products between them.

5.4.1 Agricultural land

The GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Changmari, Kumlai, Looksan and Champaguri, agricultural lands for tribal people are very limited. In the GP areas of Lataguri, Moulani, Chapadanga, Kranti, Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II, the tribal people possesses agricultural land.

From the table (5.15), it is found that land less tribal peoples share is majority group in the study area. 41% tribal households in the subdivision are landless who are either landless agricultural labourers or tea garden workers. There are 11% non-tribal households in the subdivision who are also landless. However proportions of landless people are very much higher among the tribal people. In Indong Matiali it reached to 70%. Landless tribal people are very lower in the GPs which are dominated by agriculture rather than cultivation. Angrabhasa-II (20%), Lataguri (27%), Chapadanga (30%), Moulani (30%) and Kranti (31%) are such type of GPs. There are 29% households who possess land below 2 bigha. These households are basically cultivating the land of tea garden which is spare or low land. Such lands are distributed among the tea garden labourers. 19% and 11% people have lands within 2-4 bighas and above 4 bighas respectively.

In some areas outside merchants has occupied land of local tribes for plantation purpose which are gradually forfeited in view to provide permanent job opportunity. The illiterate and simple tribal people have been cheated in such a way. Such incidents are noted in Rajadanga, Bidhannagar, Kumlai, Changmari areas. Non-tribal people have more lands than the tribal people in every GP.

Table 5.14 Gram Panchayat-wise Statistics on Land Ownership (in %)

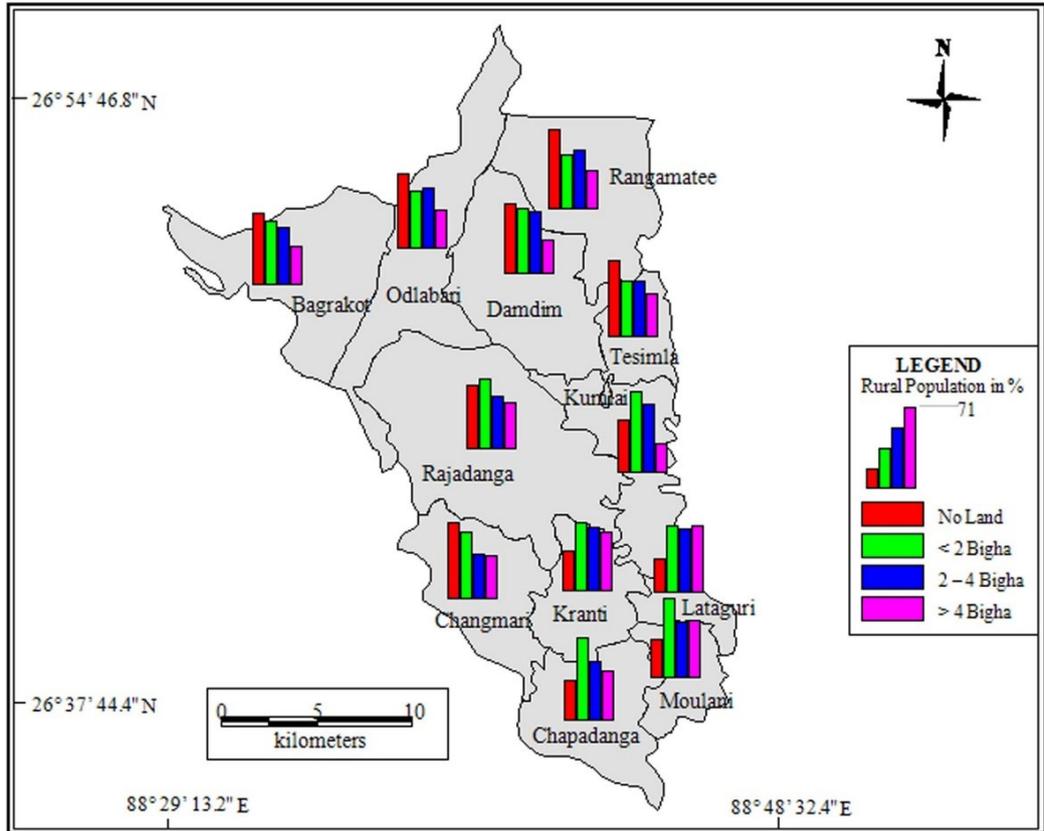
Sl No.	Name of GP	No Land		< 2 Bigha		2 – 4 Bigha		> 4 Bigha	
		Tribes	Non-Tribes	Tribes	Non Tribes	Tribes	Non Tribes	Tribes	Non Tribes
1	Bagrakot	50	12	25	30	20	30	5	28
2	Odlabari	52	12	22	28	21	31	5	29
3	Rangamatee	53	15	20	27	20	31	7	27
4	Rajadanga	41	14	31	29	18	27	10	30
5	Damdin	50	10	25	31	21	33	4	26
6	Tesimla	55	11	15	33	22	26	8	30
7	Kumlai	36	10	34	36	24	35	6	19
8	Changmari	55	10	21	37	17	22	7	31
9	Kranti	31	4	34	25	20	35	15	36
10	Chapadanga	30	5	39	32	19	32	12	31
11	Moulani	30	4	40	28	18	30	12	38
12	Lataguri	27	3	33	25	20	35	20	37
Mal Block Total		43	9	28	30	20	31	9	30
1	Matiali Batabari-I	35	4	36	27	17	35	12	34
2	Matiali Batabari-II	32	15	34	31	19	30	15	24
3	Bidhannagar	30	7	42	32	18	28	10	33
4	Matiali Hat	48	20	25	31	20	31	7	18
5	Indong Matiali	70	20	15	28	12	32	3	20
Matiali Block Total		43	12	30	30	17	32	9	26
1	Angrabhasa-I	35	7	28	28	22	35	15	30
2	Angrabhasa-II	20	8	31	27	25	36	24	29
3	Sulkapara	40	20	30	29	17	24	13	27
4	Champaguri	42	15	28	31	20	36	10	18
5	Looksan	45	15	27	27	17	32	11	26
Nagrakata Block Total		36	13	29	28	20	33	15	26
Mal Subdivision Total		41	11	29	30	19	31	11	28

Source: Compiled from the primary data

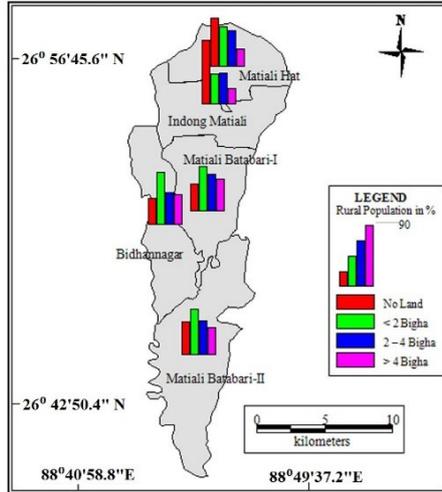
5.4.2 Types of Agricultural Practices

Traditional subsistence agriculture is the main way of agricultural practices. As a result food grain production got prime importance. Main crops are rice, potato, wheat etc. Tribal farmers are mainly landless labourers and those who are cultivators are dependent on agricultural lands which are borrowed from the landlord in a condition to share the agro products between them. In Matiali Batabari-II, Moulani, Bidhannagar, Lataguri the *adhiary* system is a popular agricultural practice. In Chapadanga, Kranti, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II, the farmers have their own land to cultivate the crops.

LAND OWNERSHIP BY THE RURAL POPULATION IN MAL BLOCK



LAND OWNERSHIP BY THE RURAL POPULATION IN MATIALI BLOCK



LAND OWNERSHIP BY THE RURAL POPULATION IN NAGRAKATA BLOCK

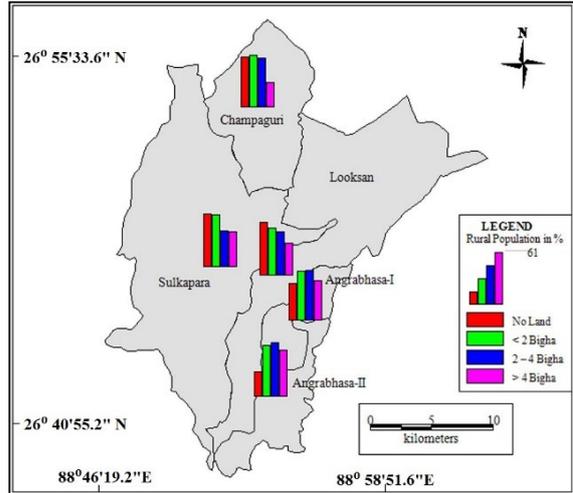


Figure 5.10 Land Ownership by the Tribal People in Mal, Matiali & Nagrakata Block

Table 5.15.a Block-wise Area of Principal Crops, 2011-12 (in Hectare)

Block	Rice	Wheat	Maize	Jute	Potato	Mustard
Mal	12559	988	201	1133	1968	340
Matiali	3152	163	131	260	233	123
Nagrakata	3432	235	548	246	325	172

Table 5.15.b Block-wise Production of Principal Crops, 2011-12 (in '000 Metric Tonne)

Block	Rice	Wheat	Maize	Jute	Potato	Mustard
Mal	24	1.472	0.389	10.843	55.362	0.121
Matiali	5	0.179	0.254	3.06	3.692	0.062
Nagrakata	7	0.542	1.061	4.138	8.812	0.057

Table 5.15.c Block-wise Yield Rate of Principal Crops, 2011-12 (in Kg/ Hectare)

Block	Rice	Wheat	Maize	Jute (Bales/Hectare)	Potato	Mustard
Mal	2013	1490	1936	9.57	28131	356
Matiali	1740	1098	1936	11.77	15847	507
Nagrakata	1865	2308	1936	16.82	27115	331
Jalpaiguri Dist.	2091	2492	2553	12.5	26531	650

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Jalpaiguri, 2012

Above tables (5.16 a, b &c) show that rice, wheat, Jute, maize, potato and mustard are main crop produced in three blocks of Mal subdivision. It is found that yield rate of rice, potato, wheat and maize are lesser than the district average in Mal subdivision especially in Matiali and Nagrakata blocks. The productions of jute in these two blocks are more than the district average. Cropped area for each crop in Matiali and Nagrakata blocks are also very little.

5.5 Disparities on Economic Status of the Tribal People

Disparities are considered within a region considering one unit as ultimate level of development and comparing with that unit deprivation level is measured for the other units. So, regional disparities are basically intra-regional. Development and deprivation are just two opposite sides. In the previous chapter the methods of deprivation/disparities and development has been analysed. Here, in this section disparities in economic indicators are analysed with some selected indices. Two indices are taken into considerations:

A) Economic indicators: Five indicators have been taken into consideration includes:

- I. Crude activity rate (X1)
- II. General activity rate (X2)
- III. Ratio of total workers to total population (X3)

IV. Ratio of main workers to total workers (X4)

V. Households having income above Rs. 5000 per month (X5)

Table5.16 GP Level Disparities in Economic Indicators for Tribal People

GP Name	Economic Indicators					Disparity in Economic Indicators (I _{ij})					Average Disparities (I _j)
	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	
Bagrakot	46	68	46	25	20	0.29	0.47	0.29	0.67	0.84	0.51
Odlabari	49	71	49	27	27	0.07	0.27	0.07	0.47	0.65	0.30
Rangamatec	44	68	44	25	40	0.43	0.47	0.43	0.67	0.30	0.46
Rajadanga	48	71	48	22	42	0.14	0.27	0.14	1.00	0.24	0.36
Damdim	50	70	50	26	22	0.00	0.33	0.00	0.54	0.78	0.33
Tesimla	42	65	42	26	25	0.57	0.67	0.57	0.61	0.70	0.62
Kumlai	45	63	45	27	37	0.36	0.80	0.36	0.46	0.38	0.47
Changmari	47	70	47	26	14	0.21	0.33	0.21	0.56	1.00	0.46
Kranti	43	67	43	30	23	0.50	0.53	0.50	0.10	0.76	0.48
Chapadanga	38	65	38	30	43	0.86	0.67	0.86	0.17	0.22	0.55
Moulani	36	60	36	29	26	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.26	0.68	0.79
Lataguri	45	67	45	30	26	0.36	0.53	0.36	0.11	0.68	0.41
Matiali Batabari-I	36	65	36	27	30	1.00	0.67	1.00	0.42	0.57	0.73
Matiali Batabari-II	45	65	45	31	50	0.36	0.67	0.36	0.00	0.03	0.29
Bidhannagar	40	69	40	30	29	0.71	0.40	0.71	0.09	0.59	0.50
Matiali Hat	43	72	43	28	35	0.50	0.20	0.50	0.31	0.43	0.39
Indong Matiali	45	73	45	28	23	0.36	0.13	0.36	0.31	0.76	0.38
Angrabhasa-I	40	65	40	30	35	0.71	0.67	0.71	0.09	0.43	0.52
Angrabhasa-II	36	66	36	31	40	1.00	0.60	1.00	0.06	0.30	0.59
Sulkapara	45	65	45	29	30	0.36	0.67	0.36	0.28	0.57	0.45
Champaguri	46	69	46	27	51	0.29	0.40	0.29	0.40	0.00	0.27
Looksan	50	75	50	25	45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.62	0.16	0.16

Source: Computed by the Researcher

GP level analysis of some selected data on economy indicates that within Mal subdivision, there are regional disparities or imbalances. Considering crude activity rate (CAR), Damdim and Looksan GP are in the most advanced position. Considering Damdim and Looksan GP as absolute developed, the least developed (100%) GPs are Angrabhasa-II, Moulani and, Matiali Batabari-I where crude activity rate is lowest among the GPs. Tesimla, Chapadanga, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I are backward in CAR.

Among the 22 GPs in the subdivision Looksan is in optimum position in General activity rate (GAR) and Moulani is in least of the list. Considering these two as two poles, the deprived GPs are Tesimla, Kumlai, Kranti, Chapadanga, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Angrabhasa-I, Angrabhasa-II and Sulkapara.

Ratio of total workers to total population varies considerably among the GPs. Most backward GP is again Moulani and advanced GP is Looksan. Less than 50% deprivation values are found in the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga, Kumlai, Changmari, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-II, Indong Matiali, Sulkapara and Champaguri. In most of the cases in tribal dominated GPs, total workers of tribal population are more than the least concentrated tribal GPs.

The tribal people are mainly workers of tea garden but all are not permanent workers, rather temporary workers are there. Ratio of main workers to total workers is a good indicator to determine economic status of a community. Within the study area optimum GP in that respect is Kranti and highest deviated GP is Matiali Batabari-II. The other GPs which are highly deviated from relative optimal condition are Bagrakot, Tesimla, Damdim, Changmari and Looksan.

For simple livelihood of the tribal people it may be assumed that monthly income above Rs. 5000 can be considered as standard level. Champaguri GP is in optimal condition and Changmari is highest deprived from the level of Champaguri. More than 50% deviation from relative optimal condition is found in Bagrakot, Odlabari, Damdim, Tesimla, Kranti, Moulani, Lataguri Matiali Batabari-I, Bidhannagar, Indong Matiali and Sulkapara.

On the basis of above 5 indicators, average disparities have been computed. Looksan is least dispersed and Moulani is most dispersed GP on economic indicators of tribal people. The result may be categorised as under:

i) Least deprived GPs (< 30%): Looksan, Rajadanga, Matiali Batabari-II and Champaguri.

ii) Moderate deprived GPs (30% to 50%): Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga, Damdim, Kumlai, Changmari, Kranti, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali and Sulkapara.

iii) Most deprived GPs (>50%): Bagrakot, Tesimla, Chapadanga, Moulani, Matiali Batabari-I, Angrabhasa-I and Angrabhasa-II.

B) Basic household indicators: Following five indicators are considered in the present study these can be considered as consequences of economic activities or economic conditions.

- I. Households having more than three rooms (X6)
- II. Households having separate kitchen (X7)
- III. Households having latrine facilities (X8)
- IV. Households having water facilities in the premises (X9)
- V. Households having electrification (X10)

Table 5.17 GP Level Disparities in Basic Household Indicators

GP Name	Basic Household indicators					Disparity in Household Indicators (Iij)					Average Disparities (ij)
	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	X6	X7	X8	X9	X10	
Bagrakot	22	45	51	40	70	0.25	0.74	0.38	0.68	0.54	0.52
Odlabari	15	50	51	41	58	0.69	0.59	0.38	0.66	0.83	0.63
Rangamatee	14	36	55	42	66	0.75	1.00	0.27	0.64	0.63	0.66
Rajadanga	16	44	57	45	71	0.63	0.76	0.22	0.59	0.51	0.54
Damdim	10	41	59	40	65	1.00	0.85	0.16	0.68	0.66	0.67
Tesimla	14	43	61	35	70	0.75	0.79	0.11	0.77	0.54	0.59
Kumlai	15	45	65	50	64	0.69	0.74	0.00	0.50	0.68	0.52
Changmari	15	44	45	55	66	0.69	0.76	0.54	0.41	0.63	0.61
Kranti	23	70	39	78	65	0.19	0.00	0.70	0.00	0.66	0.31
Chapadanga	21	63	28	73	60	0.31	0.21	1.00	0.09	0.78	0.48
Moulani	26	68	32	66	53	0.00	0.06	0.89	0.21	0.95	0.42
Lataguri	20	65	39	60	51	0.38	0.15	0.70	0.32	1.00	0.51
Matiali Batabari-I	12	49	46	42	67	0.88	0.62	0.51	0.64	0.61	0.65
Matiali Batabari-II	17	54	47	71	59	0.56	0.47	0.49	0.13	0.80	0.49
Bidhannagar	18	52	51	42	57	0.50	0.53	0.38	0.64	0.85	0.58
Matiali Hat	16	43	61	35	58	0.63	0.79	0.11	0.77	0.83	0.62
Indong Matiali	13	54	54	41	58	0.81	0.47	0.30	0.66	0.83	0.61
Angrabhasa-I	14	52	44	56	92	0.75	0.53	0.57	0.39	0.00	0.45
Angrabhasa-II	22	51	47	50	78	0.25	0.56	0.49	0.50	0.34	0.43
Sulkapara	10	43	61	35	87	1.00	0.79	0.11	0.77	0.12	0.56
Champaguri	17	51	52	23	88	0.56	0.56	0.35	0.98	0.10	0.51
Looksan	15	53	50	22	72	0.69	0.50	0.41	1.00	0.49	0.62

Source: Computed by the Researcher

Most of the tribal households are with one or two rooms. For proper livelihood more than three rooms in a house are very essential. In this indicator Moulani occupy relative optimum position among the GPs while Damdim and Sulkapara are in the worst condition. However maximum deviations from the relative optimum level GPs are Rangamatee, Kumlai, Changmari, Matiali Batabari-I, Indong Matiali, Angrabhasa-I and Looksan.

Households having separate kitchen are maximum in Kranti and maximum deviation from this is found in Rangamatee followed by Damdim, Tesimla, Matiali Hat and Rajadanga. Again Latrine in a house is a good health and hygiene indicator. Among the GPs, Kumlai is in relative optimal condition followed by Sulkapara, Matiali Hat, Tesimla and Damdim. Considering Kumlai as optimum level, the most deprived GP is Chapadanga followed by Moulani and Kranti.

Water facility within the premise is considered as an indicator of basic household item. In this perspective Kranti is in optimum condition followed by Chapadanga, Matiali Batabari-II. The most deprived GP is Looksan along with Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rajadanga, Rangamatee, Damdim, Tesimla, Matiali Batabari-I, Bidhannagar, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali, Sulkapara and Champaguri. Most of the tribal quarters of tea gardens are electrified. There are many tribal houses which are yet to have electrification. Angrabhasa-I is in the best position and Lataguri is in the worst condition. Chapadanga, Moulani, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, and Matiali Hat are also deprived from electrification. In most of the cases, the non-electrified tribal households are agricultural dependent.

After averaging all the five basic household indicators, it is noted that Damdim is in the worst position and Kranti is in the best position followed by Moulani, Chapadanga and Angrabhasa-II. Odlabari, Rangamatee, Changmari, Matiali-Batabari-I, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali and Looksan are deprived GPs.

5.6 Development in Economic Indicators

After putting the values of average deprivation of economic and household indicators, development index (DI) is calculated. Opposite of deprivation is the development. On the basis of development index of above two, overall development is determined. 0.61 is the highest DI value occupied by four GPs namely, Kranti, Matiali Batabari-II, Champaguri and Looksan. The value indicates that these are the relatively developed areas among all GPs. The lowest value of DI is 0.31 which is occupied by Matiali Batabari-I.

On the basis of the DI values (after table: 5.19), the GPs can be categorised in three groups; though the groups are based on the calculated values of relative average disparity and development. The following are the groups of development index:

- a) Developed GPs (> 0.50): Odlabari, Rajadanga, Kumlai, Kranti, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-II, Indong Matiali, Angrabhasa-I, Champaguri and Looksan.
- b) Moderate Developed GPs (0.40 to 0.50): Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Damdim, Tesimla, Changmari, Chapadanga, Moulani, Bidhannagar, Matiali Hat, Angrabhasa-II and Sulkapara.
- c) Least Developed GPs (> 0.40): Matiali Batabari-I

Table 5.18 GP Level Development Index of Economic Indicators

GP Name	Average Deprivation (Ij)		Development Index (DI)		Overall Development
	Economic Indicators	Basic Houseld Indicators	Economic Indicators	Basic Houseld Indicators	
Bagrakot	0.51	0.52	0.49	0.48	0.49
Odlabari	0.30	0.63	0.70	0.37	0.54
Rangamatec	0.46	0.66	0.54	0.34	0.44
Rajadanga	0.36	0.54	0.64	0.46	0.55
Damdin	0.33	0.67	0.67	0.33	0.50
Tesimla	0.62	0.59	0.38	0.41	0.40
Kumlai	0.47	0.52	0.53	0.48	0.51
Changmari	0.46	0.61	0.54	0.39	0.47
Kranti	0.48	0.31	0.52	0.69	0.61
Chapadanga	0.55	0.48	0.45	0.52	0.49
Moulani	0.79	0.42	0.21	0.58	0.40
Lataguri	0.41	0.51	0.59	0.49	0.54
Matiali Batabari-I	0.73	0.65	0.27	0.35	0.31
Matiali Batabari-II	0.29	0.49	0.71	0.51	0.61
Bidhannagar	0.50	0.58	0.50	0.42	0.46
Matiali Hat	0.39	0.62	0.61	0.38	0.50
Indong Matiali	0.38	0.61	0.62	0.39	0.51
Angrabhasa-I	0.52	0.45	0.48	0.55	0.52
Angrabhasa-II	0.59	0.43	0.41	0.57	0.49
Sulkapara	0.45	0.56	0.55	0.44	0.50
Champaguri	0.27	0.51	0.73	0.49	0.61
Looksan	0.16	0.62	0.84	0.38	0.61

Source: Computed by the Researcher

5.7 Conclusion

There are many scheduled tribe groups in India and not all of them are in similar objective conditions of life. However, the tribes of North Bengal, who had their origin in central India i.e. in Chhotonagpur plateau, have gone similar historical and socio-economic processes. The tribes as a whole are not much different from their Scheduled Caste counterparts in terms of such socio-economic indicators as land ownership, per capita income, or incidence of poverty. The economic lives of the tribes of Dooars as a whole are in very distressed condition. They require more income, more job security and above all economic sustainability to live peacefully.

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IMPACT OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY ON TRIBAL PEOPLE

6.1 Introduction

Technology can be defined as the purposeful application of information in the design, production, and utilization of goods and services, and in the organization of human activities. It is the use of scientific knowledge for practical purposes or applications, whether in industry or in our everyday lives. Modern technology is the improved product of the application of science. The human beings started to use technology with the conversion of natural resources into simple tools. Discovery of wheels in early civilisation was the premier invention of technology of mankind. With the passage of time, technology has become very vital to human beings for survival and development of knowledge.

Indigenous people across the world have been affected by the introduction of technologies from foreign cultures for hundreds of years. Some have not dramatically changed their ways of life, while others have completely changed self-identities, entire societies and worldviews. Modern technologies, especially telecommunication and computer technologies, allow indigenous groups to participate in the larger societies and economics around them.

The tribal people of Dooars were originally a floating settler migrating from place to place for land and employment. At early period they (Lepcha, Garo, Mech, Rabha) were migrated from north and north-eastern states and settled in the forest and hill areas of Dooars and Terai region and Santal, Oraon, Malpahari, Mahali, Munda, from eastern, central states and Chhotonagpur region and settled in Dooars and many other places of West Bengal. The tribal communities in Dooars are mainly engaged in tea garden as labour and small amount of them are engaged in agriculture and small industrial activities. Gradually, they started to accustom themselves with the new ecological condition. But they remain isolated from other caste community. This isolation makes them underdeveloped and backward. After independence, the situation has been changed due to modernisation which includes industrialisation and urbanisation and implementation of some tribal welfare schemes taken by the central and state governments. To make them advanced and integrated with other people and to introduce themselves with modern world many development programmes have been taken. The welfare schemes inspired them to accept new and modern technology and changed their attitude of thinking.

6.2 Social Impact of Modern Technology

A tribal society is a primitive society living in early period of human history. There has not been any change of tribes in their belief, life style and religion which prevent them from mixing with any outsider or educated community whom they greatly dislike. They have their own social functions and festivals where they sing and dance in characteristic body movements in the same dress by girls, the males playing on musical gadget like drums, metallic gongs, flutes etc. A tribe is an endogamous group, as distinct from a clan who is exogamous. All tribe members are related by blood, have their own political organization which has a chief who exercises authority over all the members, even recommending marriage of young boys with girls whom they have found suitable for marriage. Each tribe is guided by their own religion which is based on totemism, magic and fetishism i.e. believing in god being embedded in a special tree or a peculiar strange animal.

Modern technology and modern means of communication technology changed the social customs, religious behaviours, demographic structure of the societies of the tribal people.

6.2.1 Impact on Religion and Customs

Tribes were animism in religion which is very much separate from all the other traditional religions of the world. Most of the tribes in Dooars believe that they are Hindus. The tribes of Mal subdivision now are gradually being converted to Christianity by the influence of welfare activities of the missionaries. From the field study it is clear that 66% are believers of Hinduism, 31% are Christianity, and 3% are animists. With change of religion, the associated characteristics of religious behaviours of tribal people have also been changed. The performances of dances, songs are influenced by the modern rhythmic instruments replacing many of their age old handmade instruments. The traditional tribal musical instruments are simple and produce rhythmic sounds. Following are few examples of tribal traditional musical instruments (Deogaonkar, 2003):

- a) ***Tirio bamboo flute***, a bamboo flute with seven holes. It is viewed as symbols of love and seduction.
- b) ***Dhodro banam*** bowed instrument, a bowed instrument carved out of a single log wood of a tree. It consists with a belly covered with an animal skin on which rests the bridge (sadam, lit, horse), an open chest (korom), a short neck (hotok) and a head (bohok).

- c) **Madol or tumdak** is a double-sided barrel drum, a two faced drum with body brunt clay. Both heads the left one broader than the right are covered by bullock hide and are beaten by the left and right hand.
- d) **Junko**, an onomatopoeic description of sounds of the ankle bells which are caste in metal in the shape of buds and tied to the feet of dancers from where they produce rhythmic sounds.
- e) **Singa**, an S-shaped wind instrument played in pairs in weddings. Made of brass of copper, it is usually constructed in the three pierces with mouthpiece at the blowing end and a conic opening at the other.
- f) **Bansuri**, a classical instrument from which melodious sound produces.
- g) **Ghungroos**, musical bells producing musical sound. Bells of different sizes are used while dancing fitted with waist or on feet ankles etc.
- h) **Ghangli**, looks like a veena.
- i) **Nagara**, a drum of most widespread and lead instrument in folk ceremonies and weddings of the tribal people.

The Santals and Oraons have their rich traditional folk cultures. Most of the times, the women perform the dancing and ceremonial rituals and the males play the rhythmic sets. Now the question arises, are the tribal people changing their traditional age old customs and musical instruments after advent of many modern instruments? In a study, Purkayastha (2012) opined about the Oraon tribes in Barak valley of Assam that, traditional belief and practice as a whole have been losing its appeal particularly among young tribal people, rather, they prefer to participate in national as well as regional festivals like Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Laxmi Puja, Holi etc. Now many of the tribal musical instruments are accompanied by the modern instruments. Wooden *Ghangli* of the tribes are replaced by violin; piano is used instead of bamboo made *tirio flute*. The earlier open mouth tribal songs are abolished in many cases, instead of it, there could be found modern sound system. The Santals men and women are very fond of music and dance. Archer (1946) rightly called them a ‘musical people’. They have elaborate song cycles for festival occasions and for the various stages of agricultural cycles.

Traditional Santal women dances are modernised by modern musical instruments, sound devices etc. in Dooars areas. With the impact of westernisation coupled with industrialization and urbanisation, the Santals have yielded a significant change in their life style (Mohsin, 1964). Santals’ culture is gradually languishing due to modernisation in religious believes and

modern technology (Prasad, 1971). They are now in a state of flux and in a process of putting on a new social identity and image over their crumbling norms. However, the Santals still retain the essential core of their unique socio-cultural background notwithstanding the diverse influence on them. Same incident has occurred for all other tribal groups living in Dooars.

6.2.2 Impact on Arts and Crafts

Indian tribal arts and crafts are almost entirely functional and had great utilitarian or social significance. There is very little art for art's sake in a tribal village. Art is an integral part of Santal's life. Either it is of building houses, painting it or making bowl, plate out of 'Sal' leaf or help of some braiding technique making brooms and mats, everywhere there are artistic views. The way of building of the houses, thatching the roof, decorating the floor, carving the doors and painting the walls signify a lot about the artistic skills and creativity of Santals. The Mahali tribes have a rich source of cane and bamboo materials in their arts and crafts. The items are meant for household uses. Baskets of different kinds have significant place in the tribal houses. Mahali people in Dooars use to prepare bamboo crafts. There are wood crafts popular among the tribes. The religious product includes images of familiar gods. Some craftsmen carve a single piece of wood to form an object. Clay pottery is an ancient craft in India. In some places of Dooars it is found that clay pottery has shaped the home utensils.

Modern technology has influenced the arts and crafts of the tribal people. Tribal art began gaining recognition in the late 19th century. Modern communication technology, media has nurtured their way of thinking in the broader world. As a result, the age old traditional ideas of the tribal people are well known throughout the world. Research wings are attached with their thinking and several developmental strategies are taken to promote tribal arts and crafts in every country. In modern days, as for example, various forms of decorative items are made of canes and bamboos instead of simple baskets by the Mahali tribes.

In the Dooars area, the tribal arts are not so much enlightened by the modern technology. Because they have lost their own identity due to change of their own traditional occupational practices, rather they are now mostly tea garden labourers. Besides, a significant amount of them are working in as cultivators or agricultural labourers.

6.3 Economic Impact of Modern Technology

Technology has affected the economy through direct job creation, creation of new services and industries, workforce transformation and business innovation. Compared to the

industrialised economies, the technology adopted in tribal economy is much simpler and crude. Tools are either made of user himself or are acquired for a fee from craftsmen or from manufacturing groups.

6.3.1 Impact on Occupations

The tribals have indigenous occupations. Most of the forms of occupations were subsistence in nature. The tribes of Dooars were used to practice several occupations before the introduction of modern technology or globalization. The main occupations of the primitive people were shifting cultivation, animal husbandry, basketry, fishing, hunting and gathering, and weaving. Later on in-migration from Chhotonagpur region of the tribal people took place in this region. A large section of the people of this region became tea garden labourers in different forms i.e. plucking tea leaves, harvesting, planting tea sapling, processing, driving cars and others. Besides tea garden activities, the Mahali people depend on basketry, collection of forest produce, agriculture, carrying of palanquins; the Lohars are traditionally iron workers and blacksmiths; the Mundas were used to hunting in the forests.

Modern technology and modernisation has influenced the occupation of tribal people. They have given up many of their traditional occupations being influenced by the modern technology. Shifting cultivation of this region has been abolished today; fishing, weaving and hunting are now not occupations at all for tribal people. The specialised activities of basketry occupation of the Mahali people and blacksmith activities of the Lohars are now in the verge of abolition. The occupations of the tribals were based on customs and traditions. There were specific customs stressing participatory functions and specific roles to be played by each member of the family and community. They took care to preserve the ecological balances with the nature to sustain their livelihood. But exposures to modern economic practices teach them to exploit the nature and consume its products. As a result, the traditional tribal leaders often face a dilemma while accommodating modern influences (Dey, 2013). Modern communication technology- the mobile phones, internet services, newspapers, and Medias have influenced many young people to alter their traditional occupations. To earn more or to work with leisure many tribal people now-a-days engaged in diversified activities. From the field observation, it is noticed that a few household industry has been established in the tribal areas like biscuit factory, furniture houses etc. So, a few people are engaged there. Many tribal young male workers now work in other provinces who are mostly engaged in construction works. A few people are now working in nearby Siliguri or Jalpaiguri town as carpenters or masons.

There has been a change of income generating activities in the rural non-farm sectors both of tribes and non-tribes. These include the following:

- a) Training of youth in masonry, carpentry, smithy, repairs of cycles and motor cycles, tractors, pump-sets, and electrification etc.
- b) Bamboo crafts and utility articles
- c) Production of housing materials
- d) Embroidery and tailoring
- e) Establishment of grocery shops and food stalls.

The above mentioned activities are found among the tribes in areas adjacent to market, but in tea garden areas, the impact is very insignificant.

6.3.2 Impact on Agricultural Economy

The aboriginal tribes of Dooars, namely, the Mech, Garo, Rabha, and Lepchas were the jungle dwellers who used to habituate with shifting cultivation. They settled in a place for few years, cultivated in the land in their own way, after few years they shifted into another place and settled there and their life was cycling in such a way. Some tribes of Bhutanese lived there but before coming of rainy season, they left the place to save themselves. Surgeon Rennie (1970) comments, “The inhabitants chiefly consist of a tribe called the Mechis who appears to be the only people so constituted as to be capable of permanently enduring the climate.” After introduction of tea plantation, large amount of tribal people in-migrated to this region. They were basically engaged as labourers of the tea garden. However, the aboriginal tribal groups and a section of later tribal groups are now engaged in agricultural practices either in their own lands or in share cropping system to others’ land. Some of the traditional agricultural implements still persist. They are axe, hatchet, sickle, yoke, plough, crowbar, wooden hammer, flat basket etc. They get these implements either from the nearby local market and some of the implements are also made by them.

The success of technology transfer is dependent on various factors, particularly the infrastructure for providing motivation, training, finance, processing and marketing. As our target groups, who are semi-literate and economically backward, it is difficult for them to search for appropriate technologies on their own for enhancing their income. There is a need for facilitating organizations which can identify various technologies and modify them to suit the local needs before transferring them to the beneficiaries (Hegde, 2011). The farmers at present are encouraged to use scientific methods of agricultural operations and trying to produce more crops from the same piece of land. Earlier, paddy and wheat were main crops of

agriculture. But now paddy, jute, oilseeds, pulses and vegetables are cultivated. Modern technology and modernization has influenced the agricultural systems of the tribal people in some extent. Modern agriculture depends heavily on engineering, technology and the biological, physical sciences. In the field study, following information were asked to the tribal farmers about implementation of simple modern technology for agricultural field.

- a) Use of tractors or power tillers instead of traditional plough driven by bullocks for cultivating soil.
- b) Use of Pump set machines for irrigation during dry season.
- c) Use of Sprayer machine to spray insecticides and pesticides.
- d) Use of Rotary Tiller to dig soils by means of rotating blades.
- e) Use of Rice huller to remove the outer husks of grains of rice instead of foot operated rice pounder
- f) Use of Chemical fertilisers, insecticides and pesticides etc for bumper production
- g) Use of High Yielding Variety Seeds in agricultural fields

Following implements were noticed in agricultural fields of selected GPs done by the tribal farmers:

Table 6.1 Modern Agricultural Tools used by the Tribal Farmers in Mal Subdivision (%)

Name of GP \ Tools	Tractors	Irrigation Pump sets	Sprayer machines	Rotary tiller	Rice hullers	Chemical Fertiliser	HYV seeds	Average
Odlabari	20	51	32	25	30	60	60	40
Tesimla	20	40	31	21	26	60	62	37
Kranti	25	42	34	22	17	58	65	38
Chapadanga	30	42	46	19	15	67	44	38
Moulani	25	60	47	23	19	70	70	45
Lataguri	22	60	48	25	29	71	72	47
Matiali Batabari-II	20	42	32	24	33	44	71	38
Bidhannagar	21	45	36	27	32	41	69	39
Angrabhasa-I	22	68	39	18	21	56	65	41
Angrabhasa-II	20	67	41	19	18	54	64	40
Total	20	50	38	20	20	58	59	38

Source: Field survey, 2015

From the above table it is found that in three cases i.e. use of pump sets, chemical fertilisers, and HYV seeds, there are more than half of the tribals' uses these. Traditional plough is still popular among the tribal farmers rather than tractors or power tillers for ploughing purposes which are driven by the bullocks. Similarly, rotary tiller and rice huller

are not popular than the traditional hoe and rice pounder respectively. Sprayer machines are important to spray insecticides, the uses of such machines are gradually developing, and it is an indication of using habits of pesticides too. On an average, based on above seven parameters it can be said that modernisation has got 38% impact on agricultural economy. The above seven parameters are not sufficient to be a modern technology based agriculture. The subsistence economy still prevails in the agricultural economy among the tribals in the study area. But it has been changed dramatically for tribals in Dooars from migratory subsistence farming to permanent agriculture with little bit modernisation. The GPs of Lataguri, Moulani, and Angrabhasa-I are technologically more advanced in agriculture both for tribal and non-tribals than other GPs of the subdivision.

6.3.3 Test Statistics on Impact of Modern Technology on Economy

How far the modern technology and modernisation affect the economy of tribal people should be statistically tested. There are different parameters to test significance.

Test 1. Distribution of use of modern agricultural tools: The Chi-square statistic is basically a method to test the correspondence between certain observed and estimated frequencies. In case of close correspondence between the two, the statistics chi-square (χ^2) as given below will be statistically insignificant (Mahmood, 1998).

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \left[\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i} \right]$$

Where, O_i and E_i are the observed and estimated frequencies respectively of the i th class. The shape of the distribution will vary with $(n-1)$ which is known as its degrees of freedom.

Assumption: The Chi-Square goodness of fit test has been used to determine whether the distribution of average modern agricultural tools used by the tribal people is even or not. We make a null hypothesis that the average number of modern agricultural tools in each GPs to be equally distributed. The null hypothesis (H_0) framed is as under:

H_0 (Null Hypothesis) = There is no significance difference between the observed and expected number of modern agricultural tools in each selected GP.

H_a (Alternative Hypothesis) = There is significance difference between above two variables i.e. distribution is not even.

Df= Degree of freedom is $(10-1) = 9$

Significance level: 0.01, 0.05, 0.10

Table 6.2 Chi-Squared Test of Distribution of Modern Agricultural Tools

Selected GP	Average number of tools (O _i)	Expected value (E _i)	Residuals (O _i - E _i)	(O _i - E _i) ²	$\frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$
Odlabari	40	40.3	-0.3	0.09	0.002
Tesimla	37	40.3	-3.3	10.89	0.270
Kranti	38	40.3	-2.3	5.29	0.131
Chapadanga	38	40.3	-2.3	5.29	0.131
Moulani	45	40.3	4.7	22.09	0.548
Lataguri	47	40.3	6.7	44.89	1.114
Matiali Batabari-II	38	40.3	-2.3	5.29	0.131
Bidhannagar	39	40.3	-1.3	1.69	0.042
Angrabhasa-I	41	40.3	0.7	0.49	0.012
Angrabhasa-II	40	40.3	-0.3	0.09	0.002
Total	403	403	0	96.1	2.385

Source: Computed by the Researcher

Results: Since the result indicates that the estimated value of χ^2 is 2.385 which is too much smaller than that of the critical values. For (n-1) degree of freedom the tabulated value of chi square at 1% level of significance is 21.67, at 5% level of significance is 16.92. So, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected at 0.05 and 0.10 significance level. It confirms that there are changes in respect of impact of modern agricultural tools with a slight fluctuation.

Test 2. Impact of modern economic activities on tribal livelihood: There is another decision to be inferred that how much the modern economic activities influences the traditional livelihood pattern of tribal people. Their traditional occupation i.e food gathering and hunting is now a day's abolished. People are now dependent on tea gardens who were immigrated from Chhotonagpur plateau region. So, considering their past occupation certainly there is significant change of livelihood pattern. But if it is considered from the present position of habitation their livelihood pattern remain traditional and change is insignificant. In other way they are illiterate, poor and deprived throughout the passage of time.

Assumptions: Impact of modern economic activities on the traditional livelihood pattern of tribal people is insignificant.

Following table will highlight the conditions of their livelihood patterns and changes of traditional livelihood patterns. Samples were collected in respect of changes of primitive occupations and changes after independence. Similarly questions were asked about changes of food habits and income.

Table 6.3 Changes of Livelihood patterns as per respondents opinion

GP	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents has given opinion		
		Occupation changed in respect of primitive occupation	Occupation changed since independence	Income & Food habit changed since independence
Bagrakot	125	75	05	05
Rangamatee	125	80	04	11
Rajadanga	50	70	08	14
Changmari	50	82	07	11
Lataguri	25	55	10	19
Bidhannagar	50	65	11	10
Indong Matiali	75	71	07	6
Angrabhasa-I	50	61	06	7
Sulkapara	75	65	09	8
Champaguri	125	76	08	7

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Pearson's product-moment correlation formula (r) is concerned with the measurement of the strength of association between variables (Das, 1997). For the purpose of correlation, Percentage changes of occupation in respect of primitive occupation is considered as independent variable (x); and Percentage of income and food habit changed since independence as dependent variable (y).

Table 6.4 Correlation coefficient between changes of occupations and livelihoods

GP	x	y	$x-\bar{x}$	$y-\bar{y}$	$(x-\bar{x})^2$	$(y-\bar{y})^2$	$(x-\bar{x}).(y-\bar{y})$
Bagrakot	75	5	5	-4.8	25	23.04	-24
Rangamatee	80	11	10	1.2	100	1.44	12
Rajadanga	70	14	0	4.2	0	17.64	0
Changmari	82	11	12	1.2	144	1.44	14.4
Lataguri	55	19	-15	9.2	225	84.64	-138
Bidhannagar	65	10	-5	0.2	25	0.04	-1
Indong Matiali	71	6	1	-3.8	1	14.44	-3.8
Angrabhasa-I	61	7	-9	-2.8	81	7.84	25.2
Sulkapara	65	8	-5	-1.8	25	3.24	9
Champaguri	76	7	6	-2.8	36	7.84	-16.8
Sum	$\bar{x}=70$	$\bar{y}=9.8$			662	161.6	-123

Source: Computed by the Researcher

In equation form, the Pearson's product moment correlation is:

$$r = \frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Where, r = Pearson's product moment correlation, \bar{x} and \bar{y} = Mean values of x and y respectively.

Correlation co-efficient for table-6.4 is:

$$r = \frac{-123}{\sqrt{662 \times 161.6}} = -0.38$$

Results: Negative correlation between the variable indicates that there is direct negative relationship between X and Y . Although there is negative relationship but the relationship between the variable is weak. However, without applying the test of significance, we can not generalize this relationship for all GPs, as the number of observations in in the present case is very small. The test is carried in the following manner:

$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{n-2}{1-r^2}} = 0.38 \sqrt{\frac{10-2}{1-(0.38)^2}} = 1.16$$

The tabulated value of t for 8 (10-2) degrees of freedom is 3.36 at 1%, 2.31 at 5% and 1.86 at 10% level of significance respectively. The computed value (1.16) is not greater than even the 10% tabulated value of t , hence the correlation coefficient is quite insignificant. Thus it may be concluded that impact of modern economic activities on the traditional livelihood pattern of tribal people is insignificant.

6.4 Impact of Modern Technology on Tribal Livelihood

Tribal people of Dooars are also being habituated with the modern means of communication technology now-a-days. The field study shows that 58% households have at least single set of mobile phones.

With increasing literacy, newspaper are easily gone through by the young people; there are few motor bikes by which transportation become easier, so, many people can afford the nature of livelihood that deals by the other people. Many old people are there who were confined within their habitat and working place but now the young people visits many places outside their habitats. Once, dropout in school was very common, but now after the establishment of Parimal Mitra Smriti Mahavidyalaya in Mal town area, pupils are becoming educated, that influences the rapid growth of communication technology. These manifold influences have impacts a little bit on occupation structures among the tribes. Following are

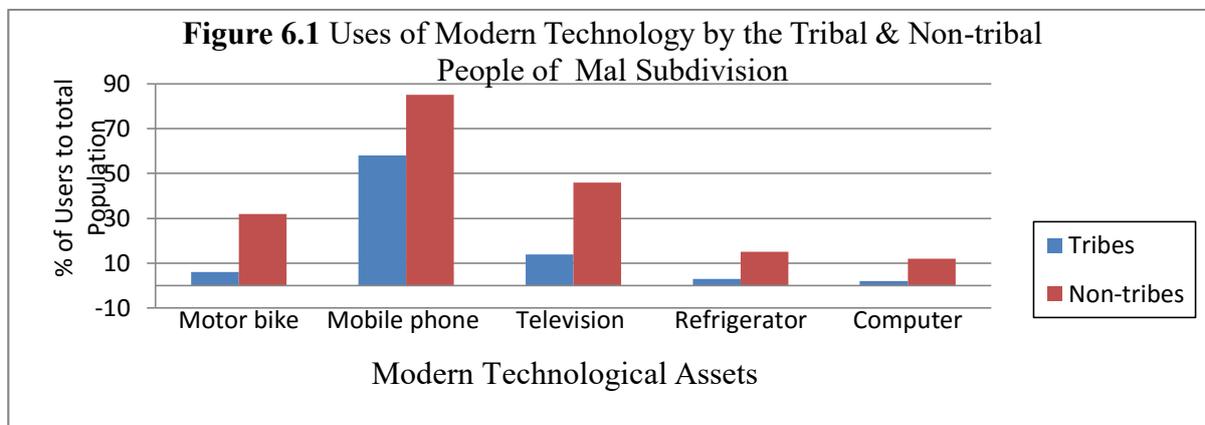
the statistical information about the use of modern means of communication technology adopted by the tribal people in Dooars area of Mal subdivision:

Table 6.5 Use of Modern Amenities by the Tribal & Non-tribal Households by Percentage

GP Name	Motor Bike		Mobile Phone		Television		Refrigerator		Computer	
	Tribe	Non-Tribe	Tribe	Non-Tribe	Tribe	Non-Tribe	Tribe	Non-Tribe	Tribe	Non-Tribe
Bagrakot	4	22	43	80	9	40	1	10	1	9
Rangamatee	4	28	41	78	10	38	2	10	1	10
Rajadanga	6	29	55	77	12	44	3	9	1	11
Lataguri	8	44	67	90	19	49	5	22	3	15
Bidhannagar	7	22	63	88	16	46	2	19	3	12
Matiali Hat	8	25	60	90	16	47	3	18	2	14
Champaguri	7	27	51	85	13	49	2	18	2	11
Looksan	5	28	50	80	14	45	3	11	2	10
Total	6	32	58	85	14	46	3	15	2	12

Source: Field survey, 2015

From the above statistics, it is clear that mobile phone has become the most important communication tool in tribal society too. All other assets are very limited in their possession. The non-tribal people of the study area access more technology than that of tribal people. So, there is little impact of modern technology among the tribal people living in Mal subdivision.



6.5 Conclusion

Major occupational and techno-cultural changes have taken place in both forthe tribal and non-tribal people society. Tribal arts, crafts, customs and values have been changed by

modern technology rapidly. The ethnic cultures of tribes are thus dying. The tribal groups draw their livelihood primarily from agriculture and tea plantation. Over the years, they have remained labour or worker and have not done much to effect occupational diversification. Modification due to modern technology has occurred, but it is very limited for the tribes. The neglect of the task of development of the human resources by not acquiring general education has kept them as labour and has prevented their entry into the white-collar jobs. In their occupation, there is very limited change incorporating modern means of technology. In agricultural sectors sum short of influences is there by adopting modern means of technology in agricultural field. So, it can be concluded that modern technology has played a significant role to change tribal society but upon the economy it is quite insignificant.

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PROBLEMS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

7.1 Introduction

Tribes are generally backward, economically as well as educationally. The situation is not uniform in all the parts of India. In the north-east, the situation has been disturbed for several years, whereas in the mainland (central India) problems related to poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, backwardness and ignorance are acute. The tribes of the north-east have a high level of politicisation, literacy and a high standard of living compared to their counterparts in other parts. The tribes were alienated from their own lands. The landlords and moneylenders of the plains gradually replaced the tribal landowners. The survey done by B. K. Roy Burman (1972) shows that the tribals are the most backward as because of their low literacy and primitive economy.

Since tribal people are at different social, political, economic and ecological levels, their problems also differ in degree from each other. These differences can be seen in terms of hill tribes and plainsmen; between those who are engaged in forest-based economic pursuits and the ones who are employed as settled agriculturists; or between those who are Hinduised or converted to Christianity; and those who are adhering to an unadulterated tribal way of life (Sharma, 2008). Despite these distinctions, some common problems of the tribal people are:

- 1) Poverty and exploitation.
- 2) Economic and technological backwardness.
- 3) Socio-cultural handicaps.
- 4) Problems of assimilation with the non-tribal population.

S.M. Dube's five-fold classification of the Indian tribes provides a clear picture of the problem of tribes in India. Dube (1982) mentions: (1) aboriginals living in seclusion; (2) tribal groups having an association with the neighbouring non-tribal society and also maintaining their distinctiveness; (3) tribals living in village along with caste groups, sects and religious groups and maintaining their identity; (4) tribals who have been degraded to the status of untouchables; (5) tribals who enjoy high social, economic and political status. Such a classification is based on the nature of cultural contacts of tribals with non tribals.

With the establishment of the Kamta-koch kingdom in the 16th century Indo-Mongoloid group of people began to pour in North Bengal. Lepcha, Bhutia, Rabha, Garo and

Mech who belong to tribal community are mainly found in the Dooars of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts. From the second half of 19th century immigration of Nepalese started in the Dooars with that a large number of people in-migrated from Chhotonagpur plateau for the plantation works. Thus gradually the region became densely populated by the tribal communities. The Britishers introduced a kind of 'enclave economy' in the tea industries (Debnath, 2013). The tribals of the aboriginals as well as the immigrants face social and economic problems in daily life and long run.

7.2 Social Problems

Tribes in India differ from one another in racial traits, language, social organisation, cultural patterns, etc. The dominant racial type among tribes is the proto-Australoid. In the sub-Himalayan belt, the Mongoloid type is preponderant. Several anthropologists have observed social stratification among the members of a specific tribe. However, today, a paradoxical situation exists. Protective discrimination isolates the tribal people from the non-tribesmen, but in course of time this very policy would bring the tribals at par with the non-tribals. The dominant thinking today is in favour of assimilation of the tribal people into the national mainstream without any disruption. It is not easy to have both dissolution and assimilation at the same time (Roy, 1970).

In the Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district, the problems are sometimes general in nature of all Indian phenomenon and some are unique. Following are the social problems found in the study region:

7.2.1 High Incidence of Illiteracy and Gender Gap

Early participation of children into work, abject poverty, lack of supportive education culture at home and in the community have contributed to the high incidence of illiteracy and very high rate of early dropout among the tribal population in the region. The reservation in educational institutions and in government jobs and the provision for education stipend for the tribal children remain under utilized. In very recent years, the spread of primary schools and Sarva Siksha Kendras (SSKs) down to the villages, and the introduction of mid-day meals have contributed to the increase of enrolment of children enormously. The catholic missions too have set up schools in remote areas and have been encouraging the tribal children to go for higher education with economic and other infrastructure support. Some positive results are being noticed in recent years, yet the tribal communities in the region are way behind the students of upper caste groups in the field of education.

From the primary household survey data, it is found that in Mal subdivision 42% tribals are illiterate. Only 4% tribals' possess the degree of undergraduate or post graduate. These graduates are the new generation learners. Among the literates, most of the people have formal primary education. The old aged people are either illiterate or have only primary education. Those who have completed 4th or 5th standard in schools hardly can write or read a simple sentence.

There are 22 GPs in three blocks of Mal subdivision. The GPs can be categorised as Tea garden based GPs and non-tea garden based GPs. The 12 GPs fully are tea garden based while the 10 GPs are non-tea garden based or tea gardens are in little amount. In tea garden based GPs, tribals are maximum in number while in non-tea garden based GPs the tribals are minorities and assimilated with the non-tribals. In a study in the literacy and dropout rates of the GPs following information were observed.

Table 7.1 Illiteracy, Dropout, and Gender Gap in literacy (%)

Group	GPs	Illiteracy rate	Dropout rate	Gender Gap in Literacy
Tea garden based GPs	Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Rajadanga, Damdim, Tesimla, Kumlai, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali, Sulkapara, Champaguri, Looksan	34.50	35.00	9.50
Non-tea garden based GPs	Changmari, Kranti, Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I, Angrabhasa-II	43.50	38.50	12.50

Source: Field survey, 2015

The above table shows that in tea garden based GPs, illiteracy rate, dropout rate and gender gap in literacy are lower than the Non-tea garden based GPs. The influence of Christian missionaries in spreading education in the former group is noteworthy. In the non-tea garden based GPs the tribals are engaged in agricultural activities with the non-tribes. The persistence of gender discrimination as reflected in the engagement of girls in the domestic chores, particularly in families where the mothers go out for work, is the prime reason for the gender gap in the field of education, which is higher in non-tea garden based GPs. As the tribal population is generally living in abject poverty, primarily surviving by selling their physical labour, working in agriculture or in the tea gardens, the children can hardly cross the

boundary of school. The rate of enrolment has increased significantly in recent years but there are drop out in large numbers first after passing out of primary school, and then at the junior high school level. Those few who find entry into the high schools cannot cope with the pressure of Madhyamik examination and drop out before the commencement of the examination. With illiterate parents struggling to earn a living, it is very difficult for the children to sustain their interest in education for long, particularly when the pressure of subsistence economy demands early introduction of children to labour. In the non-tea garden based GPs, girls and boys of the Munda, Santal, Mahali families are engaged as agricultural labourer or construction worker to support their education and family. The presence of the missionary schools in tea garden based GPs has some significant difference. The missionary schools take special care of the children of their faith; they motivate them to enrol in schools, arrange for hostel accommodation and put them under the direct supervisions of the nuns, subsidize their cost on education. The tribal boys and girls work alongside their education- the girls as agricultural labourers and boys mostly as construction labour, particularly on week-ends, holidays, and vacations. The mission too employs wage labourers from amongst its followers in construction work and in other services.

7.2.2 Problems of Assimilation with the Non-tribal Population

The tribals have largely come under the impact of the dominant cultural streams of India. New divisions have been created among the tribals due to cultural change in their ranks. Stratification in tribal society in India has its roots in British policy, unevenness due to the impact of economic development, and varied cultural contact with the wider society. Modernisation and industrialisation has apparently reduced the gap between the tribals and the non-tribals, but it has also created new problems. The tribals, who have been uprooted from their lands, have not been absorbed in the new system. Hence, they are facing a new form of pauperisation without a traditional support base. The indigenous people of the Dooars were the Koch-Rajbanshis, the Mech, the Rabhas and the Lepchas. They were well dependent on their traditional village economy of agriculture, hunting, fishing, and forest based economy. After the introduction of tea plantation in Dooars, the planters encouraged the immigration of the Nepalese in order to populate the sparsely inhabited zones of Dooars down the Bhutan hills. The intention of the Government was towards off the Bhutanese by the settlement of a mountainous people like the Nepalese in Dooars and Darjeeling. As a result the Nepalese are populated in the GPs of Odlabari, Bagrakot, Damdim, Indong Matiali, Matiali Hat, Champaguri, and Looksan. But as the Nepalese were not enough to man the

demand of labourers in the tea industry in Dooars, the tea planters decided to bring labourers from the Santal Parganas and Chhotonagpur plateau. In the second part of nineteenth century, a large number of tribals mainly of Oraons, Santals, Mundas and Malpaharis in-migrated to the Dooars. Again after the partition of the country in 1947, and emergence of Bangladesh in 1971, streams of immigration or infiltration from East Pakistan and Bangladesh occurred in the areas. The immigrated Bangladeshi people occupied a vast areas in almost everywhere specially the GPs of Kranti, Lataguri, Moulani, Matiali Batabari-I & II, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I &II. Thus the Dooars grew into a new hub of multi-racial and multi-lingual people, and of course, this led the demographic and cultural environment to be too complex for the future. The Santals and the Oraons were, of course, not much in preference to the Nepalese. The indigenous people of the Dooars were reluctant to work in the tea industry, the government as well as the tea planters too were not instrumental in recruiting them in fear of the capability of local labourers in protesting against exploitation as would be entailed with the industry.

Sahlin (1966) writes that the term 'tribal society' should be restricted to 'segmentary systems'. The segmentary systems have relations on a small scale. They enjoy autonomy, and are independent of each other in a given region. We may observe this about the Santals, Oraons and Mundas of Jharkhand. But same tribal groups in Dooars behave in different way due to assimilation with other tribes and non-tribes. So, the conditions of tribal people in respect of demography and ethnicity are not unique throughout the Dooars. Continuous assimilation has resulted different problems in the area. The rich culture of the different communities has been demolished. Rituals relating to marriage, worshipping to God and nature gradually were lost. Marriage outside his or her own community was restricted in most of the tribal communities, now this has been in the verge of demolishing. Social bonding has been loosened. Impact of modernisation and impact of multi-cultures affected the tribal culture and heritage in the region. Tribals themselves have started a number of social movements to bring about socio-cultural, economic and political change. Tribal identity has been asserted for revival of tribal cultures, scripts and languages. Demands for the formation of states for tribal people, and for exclusion of non-tribals from tribal areas are some of the issues taken up by leaders of various tribal movements.

7.2.3 Erosion of Identity

Most of the Indian tribes have been in contact with other populations since time immemorial. In some cases, the contact has been very intimate. As a consequence identity of

tribal communities in respect of society and culture has been eroded gradually. It is practically not possible to specify the zero point of culture change. It is also not easy to say definitely which culture traits were taken by the tribals from non-tribals and vice-versa (Majumder, 1937). In Indian context, the impact of Hindu society on tribal culture has immensely been observed. As Hindus are dominant in larger society except for North-Eastern region, emulation of lifestyles and thinking process carried with it great amount of prestige. Consciously or unconsciously, tribal people began to imbibe Hindu ideas and observe festivals and worship some Hindu Gods. In certain areas, a social stratification system resembling those of Hindu caste system evolved. Srinivas (1966) conceptualised this process and gave the name 'Sanskritization'.

Due to influx of non-tribal people and continuous mixing of different tribal communities, each individual community has lost their own identity. The indigenous people of the Dooars, the Mech, the Rabha, the Garo and Totos were originated from Indo-mongoloid race. They were simple in habit, habituated with shifting cultivation treating the lands and natural resources as the property of God which was not saleable or transferable. These communities lived out of the ambit of civic society, governed by their own leaders called 'Morol' or 'Mondals'. They would never go out of their own ethnic society for any kind of necessity. They had their own culture, own system for treatment; own system of judgment or solution of any kind of problem among them. It was the ethnic culture. But after increasing of population the indigenous tribes face an identity crisis because they had been losing their rights and liberty in the Dooars. Now, they had been transferred to settled cultivation from shifting cultivation. They had to pay revenue to the government which they did not pay earlier.

Apart from this socio-economic crisis, they also faced a cultural crisis because of losing their ethnicity for entering into the civic society. Many of them had been converted into Hindus, some converted into Islam and many tribes had been converted to Christian. Spread of Christianity is continuing among the tribals in Dooars areas by the catholic missionaries. While the missionaries have been pioneers in education and opened hospitals in tribal areas, they have also been responsible for alienating tribals from their culture. These tribal communities having their ethno-cultural identity crisis because of their conversion into other religions, now-a-days, many of them are going to forget their mother tongue and their traditional customs, usages etc. By entering into global world and global culture the young generations are going to forget many things of their own traditional culture. So, lot of discontents and grievances have been accumulated in the minds of the tribal people as a result

of which socio-political tensions are going on in the soil of Dooars, sometime it has been bringing violence and destroying the environment of peace and integrity.

During the field survey among the tribal people, a few questions were asked about their identity, origin and culture. But in most of the cases the respondents were not able to answer such questions. Seven such questions were asked, and statistics of such answers are tabulated below.

Table 7.2 Statistics of Identity Crisis in the Tribal Society in Mal subdivision

	Questions asked	Answered by the respondents (%)		
		Unknown	Wrong	Right
1	Which was your predecessor's place of origin?	63	22	15
2	What is your mother tongue?	75	10	15
3	What are the main festivals of your community?	46	20	34
4	What are the names of your community God?	47	30	23
5	What is the name of your clan?	80	14	06
6	What is the name of your community totem?	60	30	10
7	Which religious system do you follow?	30	20	50

Source: Field survey, 2015

It is surprising that on an average more than 60% respondents do not know the answers, 15% answered wrong and about 20% has rightly answered. Regarding their predecessors' original place, 63% have no ideas, 22% respondents think that they are native, 15% has rightly answered that their original place was in Jharkhand. Regarding their language of mother tongue only 15% know the right answer. Every tribal group have their own festivals and God or Goddesses. When questions were asked most of them either did not answer or wrongly answered. Those who answer wrong mentioned the name of Hindu Gods/ Goddesses and Hindu festivals. In tribal society clan and totem are two important considerations. These are the symbol of identities. Most of the respondents do not know these two. However 50% respondents know their religion. So, from the above survey data, it is very much clear that tribals in Dooars are gradually eroding their identities.

7.2.4 Drug Addiction

Consumption of alcohol is a part of social rituals among the tribal communities. At the national level it is noted that about half of Scheduled tribe men (51%) consume some form of alcohol. The prevalence of alcohol consumption was found to be much lower among non-Scheduled Tribe men (30%). Therefore, such a pattern of drinking alcohol among Scheduled

Tribe men has negative effect on their health. The estimated prevalence among Scheduled Tribes is found to be higher in the eastern states like Assam (70%), West Bengal (70%), Orissa (69%), and Jharkhand (67%). In a few exceptional cases like Sikkim, Manipur, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Goa, a higher proportion of urban Scheduled Tribe men drink alcohol as compared to their rural counterparts (Indigenous Women's Network, India, 2017).

The tea garden labourers enjoy themselves with their folk songs, dances after taking *hariya* (local wine or rice beer made of decomposed rice) and *chulai* and observe different festivals forgetting the intensive life of sorrow and pain. Diet is inadequate to them, both qualitatively and quantitatively observed among them. They spend a lot of money on alcohol. *Hariya* or rice wine is a type of alcoholic beverage substitute to alcohol. Their earning money mostly goes for buying *hariya* (Sengupta, 2009). Traditionally, wine is made through the process of fermentation made from grapes or other organic fruits. Rice wine, when compare to other regular wine, contains a higher level of alcohol content. Regular wine usually contains 10%-20% alcohol but rice wine contains 18%-25%. Unsurprisingly, it has way more alcohol content than beer which only contains about 4% -8% of alcohol. The tribal people are very much addicted with the decomposed rice *hariya*, made in the house too. The *hariya* is available in every rural local market during afternoon. The tea garden labourers are collectively drowned in *hariya* in everyday. Guests in the houses are welcomed by *hariya*. Few people also run their livelihood by selling this drug. After addiction, they behave like mad, unable to do work for a while. Rice wine has the side effects such as nausea, hangover, blurry vision, lost balance, and lost muscle control.

The young and new generations of the Dooars are being now addicted to other country and foreign liquor. The areas which are familiar with the tourism activities, the local young people of tribal community who perform as guides or other ways, now use to take such liquors. Chewing of tobacco is another form. In the primary survey it is noted that nearly 80% tribal male people of the Mal subdivision are addicted to drinking habits. In the GPs of Bagrakot, Damdim, Indong Matiali, Matiali Batabari-I, the problems of rice beer is more, while, in Tesimla, Kumlai and Bidhannagar the problem is less. In Moulani, Angrabhasa-I & II, young people are familiar with the foreign liquors.

7.3 Economic Problems

The tribal people had strong sense of community life before the British rulers and Hindu zamindars and moneylenders intruded into their lives. Exchange of goods and transactions at weekly markets and fairs was the basic mode of economic relations. However,

the British took over the forests on which they depended for their livelihood. The money lenders brought them under their control by extending loans at exorbitant interest rates and then by mortgaging their lands, alienating them from land they cultivated. Indebtedness led to exploitation and pauperisation of the tribal people. Hinduisation has also contributed to indebtedness and exploitation, as the tribals adopted Hindu ways of life and rituals which forced them to spend life as the Hindus did. Tribals occupied a very low rank in Hindu society after they copied Hinduism.

7.3.1 Loss of Control over Natural Resources

Before the coming of the British, the tribals enjoyed unhindered rights of ownership and management over natural resources like land, forests, wildlife water, soil, fishes etc. Collection of forest based products and living with forests; dependent on nature were the basic features of tribal resources. Indigenous peoples have an intuitive relationship with nature, a wealth of traditional knowledge, and have used natural resources for their livelihood. They have their own knowledge about management practices for centuries to preserve their lands. But, after the introduction of plantation farming in the Dooars, livelihood has been changed. Jungles were cut, forests disappeared in large amount, and control over natural resources has shifted from tribal people to the Government. Once, the primitive tribes of the Dooars were used to practice shifting cultivation, which is stopped today. With the concept of protected forests and national forests, the tribals felt themselves uprooted from their property of forests. Even the concept of earlier forest village is abolished recently by the notification of the government. The forest villages of Apalachand forest under Mal block, namely, Gajoldoba, Mech Basti, Magurmari and Sologharia etc have been converted to revenue mouza. Same fate of conversion also occurred at Nima Tandu forest village under Matiali block, namely, Baradighi, Bamni, South Indong, Bicha Bhanga, Saraswati, Murti, and Uttar Dhupjhora (Kolkata Gazette, 29/09/2014). Hence the right of forest is abolished today.

7.3.2 Poverty and Exploitation

Poverty refers to the condition of not having the means to afford basic human needs such as clean water, nutrition, health care, clothing and shelter. This is also referred to as absolute poverty. Relative poverty is the condition of having fewer resources or less income than others within a society or country, or compared to worldwide averages. Generally poverty is measured by Below Poverty Line (BPL) indices in rural areas. Below Poverty Line is an economic benchmark and poverty threshold used by the government of India to indicate

economic disadvantage and to identify individuals and households in need of government assistance and aid. It is determined using various parameters which vary from state to state and within states. In tenth five-year plan (2002-2007) survey, BPL for rural areas were based on the degree of deprivation in respect of 13 parameters, with scores from 0-4: landholding, type of house, clothing, food security, sanitation, consumer durables, literacy status, labour force, means of livelihood, status of children, type of indebtedness, reasons for migrations, etc. The nature of poverty in rural areas of Mal subdivision can be viewed from the following table:

Table 7.3 Block Level Poverty Ratio in Mal Subdivision (2006-2007)

Blocks	No. of total household	No. of BPL Families	Poverty Ratio (%)
Mal	57451	27030	47.04
Matiali	21987	8536	38.82
Nagrakata	22791	8578	37.63

Source: Annual Employment Report- 2006 - 2007, Jalpaiguri

From the starting of the plantation in the Dooars, there was no legal time-table for working of the labourer. Sunder wrote, “In the cold weather and rains plucking work was done from 7 am till about 6 pm with two hours leave. The wages of the labourer was very miserable. That was not more than 4 *annas* a day or Rs. 7-8 a month, the garden-coolies earned double of this.” Official report shows that in the years between 1893 and 1908 there was a 66 percent rise in the price of rice, food of the tea garden labourers and more than that of wheat, but the wage rates remained unchanged (Dasgupta, 1992). There are many evidences of the oppressions of the labourers. Traders and shopkeepers used to cheat them during buying something. There were many seasonal hats in the Dooars which held in one or two days in a week near the garden where no rules and regulations were practically, no price control policy, as a result, the labourers were cheated by purchasing essential things by double or re-double rate than the original rate. The local political leaders took the role of agent for oppression of the labourers. Public health and education of the labourers were not satisfactory. The life of the labourer always had on risk fighting against the ferocious animals, on the other hand, they had to suffer dangerous diseases like Malaria, Kalazar, Disentry etc, in addition with these they had to tolerate the intensive oppression of the Manager and the officials without any protest or objection. They had no way to flee from the confined life in the garden as they were always guarded by Chaukidar. If anybody tried to flee, he had been caught and

given punishment. Besides the mental and physical torture, the tendency among the sahib to sexual enjoyment with the tribal women had also been occurred (Tirki, 2001).

Presently, the tribal people in Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata are generally involved in tea garden and their salary is earned every fortnight at a rate of Rs. 128.50 per day. A family consisting of 5 to 6 members with that sum amount is very negligible. No work, no pay system is prevailed in the tea gardens. One employee is engaged from a household. The temporary workers are employed during the plucking season. Chronologically one after another member is employed in the tea garden. Permanent workers are hereditarily engaged in the garden. Sometimes, the tea gardens remain closed for a long time and then there is no income of the members. During the survey in 2015 such closed or abandoned tea gardens were noticed in Bagrakot, Damdim and Matiali Batabari-II GPs. Absolute misery, malnutrition, starvation, ill health and death were recorded in the area mentioned above. Rests of the workers are either agricultural labourers or work outside the state. A considerable number of workers are engaged in construction works in Kerala, Tamilnadu and Gujarat state.

Starvation and death are very common in the tea gardens when the gardens remain closed for long periods. There are frequent locks out problems of tea gardens in North Bengal. One of the important tea garden in Mal block is Bagrakot tea garden run by Duncan group. From April, 2015 to November, 2015, the Bagrakot estate has seen 25 deaths. The management owes workers salary since March, 114 weeks of ration and over Rs 3 lakh in provident funds. Half of Bagrakot's 2,976 workers have left for other states; electricity and water supply was disconnected" (Roy, 2015).

The tea labourers had been accommodated as serfs long before the independence. Only a small room was their dwelling place. There was no right of any trade union leaders or political leaders to enter into the line of labourers dwelling place. The manager of the tea garden was all in all (Sarkar, 1970). Housing conditions of the tribal people were very pathetic. From the primary household survey it is found that on an average in Mal subdivision, 13% tribal families live in one room house, 29% in two rooms, 42% in three rooms, 11% has four rooms and 6% has more than four rooms. In some tea gardens, the tea garden labourers live in garden quarter. There, the numbers of rooms are like 2 bed rooms and one kitchen or corridor. Most of such quarters are semi *pacca*. Besides, the tea garden labourers are in *kachha* building prepared by them. In the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Tesimla two rooms' houses are more in number.

7.3.3 Land Alienation

Under the reign of Koch kings, there were two kinds of lands in accordance with revenue systems, namely – (1) Revenue free land and (2) revenue paying land. Revenue free lands were given some special cases to the tenures namely *Brahmattor*, *Devottor*, *Pirpal*, *Lakheraj* and *Petbhata*. *Brahmattar* lands were those which would be given to the Brahmans for their livelihood so that they could pursue knowledge and were hereditary from generation to generation. *Devottor* tenure was granted for religious purpose such as worship of idols etc. *Pirpal* tenure was same as *Devottor* but it would have been granted for the Muslims. *Lekhraj* tenure was granted as a satisfactory service to the royal kings, *Petbhata* tenure was granted to the members of the royal family or relatives only for their maintenance of livelihood. Huge amounts of such revenue free lands were converted to revenue paying holdings by the Britishers. There were five kinds of revenue paying land namely, *Khalsa*, *Khangir*, *Khasbas*, *Sairati* and *Baje Mahal*. Government possessions' lands were *khalsa*. *Khangir* was a demesne land of the king. *Khasbash* and *Bajemahal* were two distinct parts of *khangir*. *Sairati* lands were those which were covered by tanks (Sutradhar, 2013).

During the time of Bhutanese rule in the Dooars, no uniform system or law was introduced in the field of land and land revenue; they mainly collected revenue by their officials with the help of local leaders of different communities. Out of their systematic collection of revenue, the Bhutanese attacked at any time on the people of the Dooars and for that aggressive attitude of the Bhutanese, the people of the Dooars had been living in intolerable and panic circumstance (Rennie, 1866).

After possession of the Dooars in 1865 by the treaty of Sinchula, the Britishers cast their commercial eyes on the whole areas of Dooars, because it was full of natural resources with forests and others. The British Government declared the eleven Bengal Dooars as a non-regulated area for the purpose of using the land in accordance with the design of colonial economy. For that purpose land settlement was started in 1871 under the supervision of Mr. Becket. The purpose of this settlement was to divide the lands of Dooars into three categories viz. (1) Land for agricultural purpose which could be given on lease to willing *jotdars* and *Chukanidars*, (2) Land for reserve forest and (3) Land for tea cultivation. Somewhere the soil was appropriate for tea-cultivation and somewhere it was appropriate for agrarian purpose. Grunning (1911) pointed out that as the soil and climate of the western Dooars was suitable to the growth of tea; Government offered land to the investors on favourable terms and the industry developed rapidly. As lands for tea estates were being demarcated and land

acquisition for tea plantation continued, the Mech people of Dooars faced the trouble of being evicted from their land which they inhabited for generations.

For tea gardens entrepreneurs could get land on lease on the basis of certain rules framed by the Government and all such rules initially were published in the Calcutta Gazette on 2nd May, 1894 (Sunder, 1895). Under the lease rules for tea gardens, lands were granted to any capable entrepreneur for a term of five years, after expiry of that if the conditions of lease fulfilled all terms and conditions be renewed for a period of thirty years and so on for similar periods in continuity. Areas covered by houses of the tea garden would be charged as homestead land, good land as '*rupit*' and fallow land as '*faringati*'.

The Indians were not silent regarding the tea cultivation in the Dooars region; rather they came forward beside the European proprietors of the tea estates and invested in the tea cultivation. In 1877, Dam Dim, Kumlai, Washerbari, tea estates were started by the Indian entrepreneurs. Later on Gurjanjhora and Diana tea estates were established in Mal subdivision by the Indian entrepreneurs. As a result of immigration, the population of different castes and classes had been increasing gradually in Dooars but the population of Mech, Rabha and Garos who were indigenous and lived independently, decreasing gradually. Separate colonies were established for the protection of the Mech, Garo and Santals. But due to identity crisis, they left the place and moved towards east. Dr. Charu Chandra Sanyal (1973) writes, "Analysis figures of the census report it appears that there was a large exodus of the Mech from Bengal towards Assam and then further eastwards". A number of Garo tribe still remain in the forest village, but none in the colony, because they never patronized the colony to any extent (Miligan, 1919).

This is the history of land alienation in Dooars. After independence, in the present time, tribal lands are gradually transforming to tea gardens due to the ignorance of the tribal people. During our field survey it is learnt, that for the tea gardens different private entrepreneurs have borrowed land from the farmers in a condition that one or two members of each family would be permanently employed in the tea garden. But after agreement, they were cheated, no one is employed in the garden, or the garden is abandoned after few years. Hence there is no production as well as no employment. Land of tribal people is forfeited in such a way. A large section of contingent of tribal workforce, comprising of men and women, was brought to construct rail lines in different parts of Bengal. After the laying of lines was over, many of these migrant labourers preferred to stay back; they loved their new role as cultivators. The cleverer non-tribal neighbours took their land away following the market rules and by manipulating rules the provisions of the land laws. Refugees coming from

Bangladesh have also contributed to alienation of tribal land. The inheritance related land division has largely contributed to marginalisation of family holdings; many of the tribal families are actually becoming landless in the process.

7.3.4 Lack of Awareness about Government Schemes

In the Indian context, scheduled tribes have the special provisions, constitutional rights for their social, economic and educational promotion. Recent tribal welfare schemes are: a) Pre-metric and post-metric scholarship for scheduled tribes students, b) Boys' and girls' hostel for tribal students in tribal dominated areas, c) Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme for tribal students in higher studies, d) Establishment of Ashram school in tribal sub-plan area, e) Vocational training in tribal areas, f) Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojana g) Tribal forest Dwellers Empowerment Scheme, h) National Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation (NSTFDC) self employment scheme, i) Eklavya Model Residential School for tribal students, j) Sikshashree for tribal day scholars, k) Old age pension scheme for tribal people from BPL families with age of 60 years or above l) Development of particularly primitive vulnerable tribal groups etc. Besides, there are other general social and economic developmental schemes.

In the field survey in different Gram Panchayat areas of Mal subdivision, it is found that most of the tribal people are very much poor, but they could not manage BPL ration card, job cards for 100 day works etc. Most of them hardly know the name of BPL ration card. As a consequence, they remain deprived from such benefits. Due to illiteracy and lack of awareness many families remain in dark about the assistance laid down for them by the Government. Government officers and supporting staff misbehave with them. More than 70% tribal households have no any banking facilities simply having no bank account.

7.3.5 Subsistence Economy

Tribal economy is characterised as subsistence oriented. The popular forms of subsistence economy are that of collecting, hunting and fishing or a combination of hunting and collecting with shifting cultivation. Even the so-called plough using agricultural tribes do often, wherever scope is available, supplement their economy with hunting and collecting. Subsistence economy is characterised by simple technology, simple division of labour, small scale units of production and no investment of capital.

The tribal labour force in Dooars area, engages itself predominantly as small cultivators, agricultural labourers, and plantation labourers which require minimum education

and skill and produce minimal returns. Overwhelming participation in the agricultural sector, mostly as labour, and in the tea gardens as permanent and casual workers, where income or wages are invariably low prevented the tribal population from causing any noticeable economic and social mobility. The work participation rate is generally higher among the tribal population compared to other communities in the region because the tribal groups have to cope with the pressure of subsistence economy.

The main problems of subsistence economy is that if the system fails, and it can no longer meet the needs of those who exist within the economy, then it is difficult to obtain resources from elsewhere. A subsistence economy is wholly reliant on nature to provide for their needs, if a crop fails, or their resources be damaged in some way, then they do not have access to alternatives. A subsistence way of earning cannot afford good livelihood as profit or earning is limited. The tribes in Mal subdivision depending on tea gardens or in agriculture are of no savings, so, hardly can survive without job in the tea gardens or low productions in agricultural field accordingly.

7.3.6 Unemployment

Tea gardens are the main employment source of tribal workers in Mal subdivision. A few people are dependent on agriculture. One most critical period happens during the closing of tea gardens. Incident of closing of tea gardens are nothing new in this region and it happens suddenly. The tribal labourers loose their job during the closing of the gardens. There are two types of workers in tea gardens permanent and temporary (locally termed '*bigha*'). The permanent workers work in the garden throughout the year while the seasonal employees are engaged during plucking period. Both the workers loose their jobs if tea gardens remain closed for longer periods. There are many abandoned tea gardens from which the labourers shifted to another profession after a long waiting. Abandoned tea gardens are those in which yields start to decline when bushes become more than 100 years old. There was no arrangement made by the management to replace old bushes and plant new bushes. Kathalguri, Bamandanga and Samsing tea estates are the example of such abandoned gardens. The gardens which remain frequently closed are Samsing, Nagiasuree, killkott and Bagrakot Tea estates run by Duncan Company; Bawandanga- Tondu tea garden run by S.P. Agarwala Company; Aibhil Tea Garden of C.A. Goodricke Company etc. From the closed tea gardens a few male labourer force to migrate to the different western states of the country, the women and young age workers are employed in different construction works such as lifting and breaking stones from the river beds etc.

Due to unemployment in tea gardens every year, hundreds of tribal girls mostly teenagers have gone missing over the past few years from the poverty-stricken dying tea estate areas of the Dooars. Driven out of home by poverty and because of the dream of a better life, these girls have fallen prey to human trafficking. They have been trapped by local agents promising lucrative jobs in big cities of the country. After leaving home, however, these girls have become untraceable (Sumati, 2013).

7.3.7 Health and Nutrition

Public health and nutrition of the tribal people were not satisfactory during the colonial rule. It was in the year 1912 the Dooars labour act was passed but it was concerned with government inspection only in the matters of sanitation and public health. The enactment was promoted by the high incidence of sickness resulting in absenteeism and heavy death toll among the workers due to various diseases, particularly malaria and black water fever. Even after the independence the labourers had not been provided modern facility of the treatment. In most of the diseases were concerned, they had to depend on the local process of treatment by *ojha* or *kabiraj*, apart from this they had to depend on charlatan or quack, as because there was no qualified doctor, as a result, the patients had to expire for the wrong treatment.

The infant mortality rate in Mal subdivision is as high as 66.3 per 1000 children in 2015 as per the collected sample data. Highest infant mortality rate of 85 is recorded in Bagrakot TG followed by Odlabari, Rangamatee, and Tesimla. Malnutrition of foetus and mother, lack of medicines, poor custom of child delivery in home cause high infant mortality rates among the tribal people.

According to the sample data collected from the field, institutional delivery rate for the tribal people is only 40%. Rest 60% people depend on local '*dhai*' or old women in their own houses. The maternal mortality ratio is 11.7 per 10,000 live births. In Mal subdivision, the ratio is 17. However the highest MMR is found in Bagrakot GP followed by Changmari, Champaguri, Rajadanga and Sulkapara. The tea gardens of Bagrakot, Gurjanjhora, Ranichera, Aibhil, Kilkote faces acute problems of malnutrition and healthcare problems. There is lack of sources of drinking water in almost all tea gardens, proper sanitation problems are there. Among epidemics, cholera is most prevalent. Labourers contacted it in insanitary detention depots in Dooars.

Regarding health and sanitation, primary data were collected from some selected mouzas of 9 gram panchayat areas. The result or outcome of the data obtained from the field is tabulated below.

Table 7.4 Health and Nutrition Status on some Selected Mouzas

Name of Mouzas	Health Indices (Figure in percentage)									
	Separate Latrine	Separate Kitchen	Safe Drink- ing Water	Water facility within Premise	Treatment by Doctor	Sufficient Nu - trient foods	Institutional child Delivery	Sleeping Mos quito net	Without Drinking Habits	Average
Bagrakot TG	50	30	19	8	25	10	38	32	8	24
Targhera TG	45	25	21	9	27	11	39	43	7	25
Tesimla TG	44	25	20	14	28	15	39	36	10	26
Jogesh Ch TG	40	27	21	20	25	12	39	29	12	25
Lataguri	60	32	25	40	42	25	48	36	11	35
Aibhil TG	60	28	25	20	21	14	37	37	9	28
Jiti TG	45	21	22	10	28	15	39	33	8	25
Indong TG	55	27	21	10	29	23	41	37	11	28
Looksan TG	45	29	29	7	27	19	36	32	8	26
Average	49	27	23	15	28	16	40	35	9	27

Source: Compiled from Primary data

From the above table it is found that on an average 27% of all summed up indices of Mal subdivision fulfilled the good health and sanitation criteria. So, there are 73% lacks of health and sanitation indices. Health and sanitations are suffering in very worst way in the study area.

7.4 Environmental Problems

The study area Mal subdivision faces different environmental constraints consisting with rough topography, dense forests, and wildlife. Once, the area was breeding ground of mosquitoes. Malaria, black water fever and Kalazar were very common among the tribal people. Presently two important problems faced by the tribal and non-tribal people in Mal subdivision are Man-animal conflicts and physical constraints of the region.

7.4.1 Man-Animal conflicts

Man-animal conflicts are very common in the Dooars. Earlier entire Dooars area was covered by forest and all forests were connected, population were very poor in number. Wild animals were very common to wander through the thick jungles. But after thinning of jungles, the wild animals' habitat has been degraded rapidly. In recent years man-animal conflict has gone up steeply owing to the increase in human population; land use transformations,

developmental activities; species habitat degradation and fragmentation; growth of eco-tourism and also increasing wildlife population as a result of conservation strategies. Human population and its growing demands for land and biological resources affected this landscape to great extent. Fragmentation of habitat has primarily occurred as a result of infrastructure development, widening of road, conversion of railway line to broad gauge including heavy traffic, river training works through large scale construction of embankments, deposition of dolomite in rivers in the foothills bordering Bhutan and particle containing dolomite in the flowing river coming from Bhutan hills. Tea plantations have taken heavy toll on adjoining grasslands and also the industry has produced huge amount of unplanned human settlements. Decrease in appreciation and increase in negative attitude towards wildlife has serious detrimental potential to impact the natural system of coexistence. All these factors led to an increased level of human-animal conflict.

In Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district, there are Wild life sanctuaries and national parks that include Chapramari Wild life Sanctuary and Gorumara National park. Elephant is the main wildlife in the Dooars which harms the people's life and property. Habitat fragmentation or obstruction to migration path brings about human-elephant conflicts resulting in damage to agricultural crops, property, household and injury and mortality to both humans and elephants. Cultivated crops are easy forage source for elephants and more easy accessible as well. On an average, they annually destroy crops over an area of 0.8 to 1 million hectares which in turn affect the livelihood of at least 5,00,000 cultivators (Sukumar & Murali, 2010). The Dooars region perhaps experiences one of the highest levels of human-elephant conflicts in Asia. They not only damage large areas of agricultural crops but also kill on an average 50 people each year.

Elephants being animals with wide range of movement have biological requirement of migration from one forest to another. This process has been carried out for hundreds of years through tracks passed down the generations through hereditary system. However, fragmentation of these time-tested corridors took place after establishment of tea estates, forest villages, and other human settlements, commercial harvesting of woods etc. During field survey in Nipuchapur Tea Garden, I came to know from the local residents that elephants frequently attack their habitat. Anu Kharia, a 45 years old garden worker of Nipuchapur Tea garden of Kumlai GP informed, "In the winter season the attack of 30-40 elephants in a group towards the village is not very rare incident. We never go outside after sun sets. Leopards are there in the tea garden which frequently attacks the garden labour early

in the morning times.” Similar incidents are common in many forest attached tea gardens e.g. Gajoldoba TG, Targhera TG, Baradighi TG, Changmari Forest etc.

Another ferocious animal of the Dooars is Bison which has a steady growth in north Bengal forests. In the Dooars, during November to April, Bison come out of forests and tend to graze in adjacent crop fields where they are surrounded by people and stoned or driven. Then the animals violently attack the people. In most cases the animals are so excited and exhausted due to continuous disturbance by people that they are prone to cardio-respiratory failure soon after immobilization.

The Indian leopard (*Panthera pardus*) is a subspecies of leopard, widely distributed on the Indian subcontinent. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (ICUN) has declared the Indian leopard as near threatened animals. Leopard is highly protected species in India as it is included in schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. Leopard’s natural traits e.g. high adaptability and ability to live in wide range of habitats bring it close to the human settlements, mostly in search of prey, resulting in human-animal conflicts. Tea garden act as chief place for conflicts as Leopards can prey upon cattle reared by tea garden workers (Chakraborty, 2015). Leopards consume boars, deer, birds and rodents mostly. They enter into village to attack the domestic animals like cow, goat, dogs, cats etc. Sometimes they attack human beings.

7.4.2 Physical Constraints

Traditionally, tribal people are interested to live in remote places of jungles and mountains. In Mal subdivision, there are forest areas, tea gardens, remote hilly tracts etc. Transportation and way of communications are very hard with the civilised society. Climate is not healthy mainly during rainy season in many tea garden areas. There are many such villages in Mal subdivision where population density is very low, road connectivity is nil. At night, it seems that this is another world of habitations. The forest and tea garden areas of Apalachand, Tandu, Targhera, Aibhil, Totgaon, Menglass, Nipuchapur, Khasjungle, Changmari, Kilkote, Chaophaoli, Jiti, Bhagatpur and Grassmore are very remote villages. The people in these villages are isolated in many aspects from the rest of the world. There are many old aged people who never had a visit to the district headquarters once in their lifetime.

7.5 Conclusion

The tribals of Dooars are carrying so many problems from the colonial period to the present era. Many discontents and grievances have grown up in the minds of neglected and

depressed people. They have been feeling cries of losing their lands, ethnicity, cultural heritage and freedom of identity for centuries. Economic oppression, subjugation and deprivation threatens the people every time. A considerable amount of tribal people steps in western provinces of the country to earn more money. Several times, the tribes are cheated by the middle man, civilized people. The tradition is going on and there is no positive sign of development. Different political leaders in different regimes use them as vote banks, even the tribal political leaders are there for their ethnic origin and identity, but not known among the tea garden workers. The tea garden workers expend their time in very pathetic conditions when the tea garden remains closed for several months to several years. No single article is sufficient to discuss their miserable conditions.

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SUGGESTIVE MEASURES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TRIBAL PEOPLE

8.1 Introduction

The Constitution of India envisages that ‘the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation’. In the context of improving the conditions of backward people in the country, the development of tribal people deserves special attention as these aboriginal people have remained outside the mainstream of socio-economic conditions. Though majority of the tribal people are no longer dwellers of forest, many still reside in the areas which are completely isolated and covered by forests and hilly tracts. They continue to live in their age old tradition. They are normally poor, neglected, exploited and educationally backward. In the Mal subdivision, there are many unique problems which require special care and attentions.

8.2 National Approaches for Tribal Development

The British rulers used to isolate the tribal people from the general mass and separate the tribal areas from the purview of the normal administration. This administrative segregative adjustment was not at all realized by the rest of their countrymen as they were either too subdued or too ignorant to understand what was happening. In isolated tribal areas, a very small number of people were allowed, i.e., some contractors, government officials and a few businessmen. This isolation led to much exploitation by non-tribal money-lenders, contractors, zamindars and middlemen (Vidyarthi & Rai, 1976). The area wise isolation began with the enactment of the Government of India Act of 1870 and a few tracts were specified as ‘scheduled tracts’. Elwin (1939) advocated for the establishment of a sort of ‘National Park’ for the isolation of tribal people. Elwin’s ‘national park’ policy keeping the tribals as ‘museum specimens’, became the model for the administration.

Since independence, India has been actively thinking for the uplift of her tribal people. Pandit J.L. Neheru, the first prime minister of India sought the tribes to develop along the lines of their own genius and in no case should there be any imposition in the name of their development. However after independence, there have been three main approaches or policies about tribal people:

- I. Policy of Segregation/ isolation,
- II. Policy of Assimilation and
- III. Policy of Integration

Segregation

The 'national park' policy of Elwin has continued after independence to segregate or isolate the tribal people from the rest of the people of the country. The declaration of 'a few particular areas of tribal concentration as scheduled Areas and Tribal Area' is again an example of isolation. The old British approach of keeping them in isolation would solve two problems: a) the tribals would be in a position to maintain their independent identity; b) they would be free from the exploitation of outsiders. But, there are many negative ideas developed due to isolation. The enlisting of the Scheduled Tribe also creates the wrong impression of the tribals being under a special law. The old British concept of 'excluded area' was applied in a modified form where the ethnic groups were the basis rather than the area. Moreover, the Constitutional safeguards and the inclusion of tribes in the fifth Schedule created Constitutional gaps between general population and tribal population.

Assimilation

Assimilation of the tribal people with non tribal population is a continuous process. According to this approach, we cannot deal with tribal problems on the basis of tribal culture and life but by changing them into the frame of new community. In India, the tribal people have come in contact with different Hindu and other communities and situations have different degrees of culture contact leading to assimilation in different parts. Some tribals have gradually accepted the Hindu way of life and others have converted to Christianity. Assimilation of the tribals attracted a number of scholars. Dube (1960) classified the tribal population into five categories considering the present habitation and behaviour of the new communities which come in contact. According to this classification they are a) aboriginals living in seclusion, b) tribal group with some village folk association, c) tribals living in mixed villages, d) tribals who have been forced to live as untouchables, and e) tribals enjoying a high social status. M.N. Srinivas (1957) considers the process as '*Sanskritization*'. Ghurey (1963) opined that the tribals are the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society. The tribes of the north-west and central Himalayan regions have assimilated themselves into frame of Hindu castes. This approach has its own limitations. Complete

assimilation is a difficult task, partly because of their isolation and partly because of their traditional indigenous cultures and limited world view.

Integration

The ultimate way in which the tribals were approached is the integration one. The policy of isolation is neither possible nor desirable, and that of assimilation would mean imposition. Hence integration alone can make available to the tribes for the benefits of modern society and yet retain their separate identity. The policy of integration which aims the base of Indian culture, i.e., 'unity in diversity' got its due importance through developing a creative adjustment between tribes and non-tribes has been supported by thinkers and writers like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Pandit Nehru in his foreword to the second edition (1958) of Verrier Elwin's "The Philosophy of NEFA" has laid down in five principles, that is, "Panchsheel", the policy of integration. The principles are as follows:

- I. People should develop along the lines of their own genius and we should avoid imposing anything on them. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.
- II. Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.
- III. We should try to train and build up a team of their own people to do work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will, no doubt, be needed, especially in the beginning. But we should avoid introducing too many outsiders into tribal territory.
- IV. We should not over-administer these areas or over-whelm them with multiplicity of schemes. We should rather work through, and not in rivalry to, their own social and cultural institutions.
- V. We should judge results, not by statistics or the amount of money spent, but by the quality of human character that is evolved.

From the experience of the working of the 'Panchsheel' for the tribals we find that we should not force tribals to do things, the tribal rights aim at saving tribals from exploitation which can be possible only by integrating them with their neighbouring people.

In the post- independent period several efforts have been made to improve the lot of the weaker sections of the Indian population. The Government of India is keen on helping the tribals and is going ahead with her programmes to sustain the constitutional safeguards given to them. Various steps, programmes or schemes that the Government took or launched for implementation can be broadly grouped into five: economic, educational, health and

sanitation, communication and housing, socio-cultural and political. Following major schemes are taken for tribal development:

- I. **Representation in Legislatives and Panchayats:** Under article 330 and 332 of the Indian Constitution seats are reserved in both union and each state legislative for the scheduled tribes. Following the introduction of Panchayati Raj, Suitable safeguards have been provided for proper representation of the members of the Scheduled Tribes by reserving seats for them in the Gram Panchayats, Block Panchayats, and District Panchayats etc.
- II. **Reservation in the Service:** Government has made provisions for their adequate representation in the government services. To facilitate their adequate representation certain concessions have been provided, such as: exemption in age limits, relaxation in the standard of suitability, inclusion at least in the lower category for purpose of promotion is otherwise than through qualifying examinations.
- III. **Administration of Scheduled and Tribal Areas:** ‘Scheduled Areas’ have been declared in the different states. The scheme of administration of Scheduled Areas under the Fifth Schedule visualises a division of responsibility between the State and Union Governments. The State Governments are responsible for framing rules for the prevention of exploitation of the tribals by the money-lenders. They implement schemes for the welfare of the tribal people living within its boundary.
- IV. **Tribes’ Advisory council:** The Fifth Schedule of the Constitution provides for the setting up of a Tribes’ Advisory Council in each of the States having Scheduled Areas. The duty of these Councils is to advise the Government on such matters concerning the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and development of Scheduled Areas.
- V. **Commissioner for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes:** Under Article 338 of Indian Constitution a Commissioner has been appointed by the President of India. The main duty of the Commissioner is (i) to investigate all matters relating to the safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes under the Constitution and (ii) to report the President on working of these safeguards.
- VI. **Educational Facilities:** Measures to provide educational facilities have been taken by the Government. Emphasis is being laid on vocational and technical training. According to these measures, concessions, stipends, scholarships, books, stationery and other equipments are provided. Residential schools have been set up for them.

- VII. Scholarships:** The Central Government awards scholarships to deserving students for higher studies in foreign countries. Seventeen and half per cent of the merit scholarships are granted by the Centre, to deserving students of lower income groups.
- VIII. Tribal Research Institute:** Tribal Research Institutes, which undertake intensive studies of tribal arts, cultures and, customs have been set up in different states. The Central Government and State Governments have made incessant efforts in the direction of tribal welfare. The Tribal Development Blocks were introduced for the developments of tribal areas. These Tribal Development Blocks were expected to have their role in matters of economic developments, education, health and communication.

8.3 Suggestive Measures for Development of Tribal People of Mal Subdivision

The tribes in Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district and adjacent areas of Dooars are facing some common problems as it is in state and national level and some unique problems which require strategic solutions. In the previous chapter, the problems are focused, here in this chapter, some remedial solutions are sought to overcome or diminish such problems, though it is very hard to follow the suggestions properly.

8.3.1 Social Development

The tribal cultures are very rich, but their societies are very reluctant to receive education and modern means of social livelihood. Following suggestions may be done to remove their social backwardness on the basis of field study.

8.3.1.1 Improvement of Literacy Rate

Literacy rate of the tribal people are very poor compared to the rest of the non-tribal people in the subdivision of Mal. School dropout rates are also high. Although there are many schools established by the government as well as by the Christian missionaries. But language or communication problems are there between teachers and students. In the government sponsored schools most of the teachers are from Bengali background while the students are not able to understand Bengali properly in the tea garden based GPs. As a result, the students lost their interests on studying. Hindi medium schools may be opened, as most of them understand Hindi better than Bengali. *Sandri* being main communicating language, teachers may be appointed from the sections who understand *Sandri* properly. Most of the high

schools in the areas are also of Bengali medium. There is only one Government sponsored college in Mal subdivision, Parimal Mitra Smriti Mahavidyalaya, which is also of Bengali medium. So, students who are not able to understand Bengali, face problems to continue their further studies. Recently, one Hindi medium full Government college has been established in Banarhat which shows a ray of hope to the students. The missionary schools focus English language as medium of study. Eklavya model govt residential school has been established in Sulka para of Nagrakata for tribal students but this cannot fulfil the demands of tribal students as infrastructures are very limited there. Children can study if they remain free from hard work in their early life for earning. Such a situation can be developed if there is sufficient income in the family.

8.3.1.2 Maintenance of Tribal Culture and Development

The tribal art, dance, music and song have greatly enriched the composite culture of Indian national life. The routine work is an act of art and joy. They sing and dance in forests, fairs, rites and festivals and in the evening hours in the village. They have their own way of curing disease by specific herbs which have high medicinal values. The tribals worship natures and trees. In most of the tribal villages, there are “sacred groves” which are believed to be the abode of their deities. They never cut a single branch of a tree within this sacred grove. The women enjoy high status in the society. All the tribal communities not only retain rich cultural heritage but also have unique traditional system of social control. The discipline in social life, dignity of labour, the collective and cooperative support in the socio-economic activities, the hospitality and friendship and above all honesty and simplicity are some of the finer cultural values of tribal society (Samal, 2006).

Tribal culture should be nurtured and maintained. Imposition or assimilation will surely erode their identity. But for ecological point of view and for sustainability of tribal people it required special attention to take developmental efforts not to harm their social structure but to cope with this. Government and administration should encourage the tribals to nourish their cultures.

8.3.1.3 Continuous circulation about Government Schemes

The tribals are not aware about the government schemes framed for their benefit and development. Given the low level of literacy and general ignorance most tribal people are not aware of the various schemes launched for their benefit. No doubt that there are wonderful schemes of the Government of India, built for progress of the tribal people. Most

unfortunately these do not reach to them but are siphoned away by miscreants. The benefits are mostly acquired by the more advanced among the tribal population (Joseph, 2003). It is a pity that these classes of people of our country are not served well at all despite the resolve of the Government towards these people. During field survey, it is found that many tribal poor people lacks BPL cards, EPICs, NREGS cards etc. Many old people cannot cast their democratic rights i.e. votes due to non-enlisting in the Voters' list. Government officials often misbehave with them. They hesitate to come forward to any government offices. Following steps can be taken to upgrade them about their rights:

- I. Continuous efforts of broadcasting about tribal development programmes, schemes etc to be taken by the administration through local governments. Door to door communication is necessary.
- II. The Government officials to be friendly with the tribals during discussion of different schemes.
- III. Workshops, conferences to be arranged in tribal areas to make them aware about the social and economic schemes taken for them.
- IV. Above all, spread of education can aware the tribals to understand their rights. So, children as well as elders are to be educated if possible.

8.3.2 Economic Development

Economic Development is the process of securing a higher level of productivity in all the sectors as the economy which primarily depends upon the technological advances the community is able to make. Tribal people of Dooars are economically backward. The close of tea gardens adds serious economic problems among the tribes of hunger, starvation, malnutrition etc. It is urgently required to develop their economic conditions. Job securities, employment generation, solution of land alienation are must for their economic development.

8.3.2.1 Assurance of Job Securities in Tea Gardens

In tea gardens, tribal people are mainly works as labourer. Their daily wage is as little as Rs.128.50 only. The permanent workers get this wage in two instalments per month while the temporary workers are involved in works during peak season. It is very hard to maintain the family expenditures with these little earnings. Problems become more serious when the tea gardens remain closed for months even for year after years. Sometimes provident fund moneys of the retired tribal workers are forfeited by the tea-garden authorities. Government should take care so that tea gardens remain open throughout the year. Job securities for tea

garden workers are very essential for stable economic sustainability. Recently, the state government has announced to construct a Tea Directorate for the wellbeing of the tea garden workers.

8.3.2.2 Creation of Job Opportunities through Alternative occupations

Alternative occupation facilities can change the situation of the tribals in Dooars, so that extra labour burden may not obstruct the garden authorities. Many young people are now doing works in different states of the country as construction labourers but they are often cheated by the middlemen. In this circumstance, many young people are willing to work in any other alternative fields of economic activities. Following alternative occupation facilities can be generated for up gradation of economic condition of the area:

- a) To initiate small economic programmes for women through the creation of Self Help Groups (SHGs). This is the best way to raise the socio-economic status of tribal women (Sundaram, 2006).
- b) To mobilise different segments of the society, particularly the youth for attraction of other jobs than the tea garden.
- c) To organise discussions, meetings, environmental festivals, exhibitions, cultural programmes, and to conduct tours for tribal people to acquaint them with successful development efforts.
- d) To open different household industrial units in some places to attract the poor people like masonry, carpentry, tailoring, food processing etc.
- e) Multipurpose co-operatives for giving marketing and easy credit facilities should be started. Loan can be granted for business and other activities to the poor tribals with easy recovery system of long term instalments and minimum interest rate.
- f) Those who are tribal farmers, agricultural modern machineries may be supplied by the government to them.

8.3.2.3 Solution of Land Alienation

A considerable area of tribal land has gone to money-lenders, superior farmers and for industrial projects. The clever neighbours and money-lenders entangled the poor people in their monetary deals and finally grabbed the land. The government has specific acts, statutes to safeguard the interest of the tribals. West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955 is a safeguard of the tribal lands. In 2010, the west Bengal state assembly amended the earlier act to protect tribals' right to land ownership. Linked with the alienation of land is the problem of

indebtedness. The tribals have pledged their lands to obtain agricultural inputs and to meet the cost of social obligations in cash and kind to the money-lenders (Vidyarthi & Rai, 1976). In Mal subdivision such problems are very common in Kranti, Odlabari, Lataguri, Bidhannagar, Moulani, Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II GPs where there are many tribals who depend on agriculture. Land alienation problems can be solved through awareness of the tribals and strict invigilation by the government over such situations.

8.3.3 Improvement of Health care facilities

The specific health care problems of the tribal people could be solved in the following ways:

8.3.3.1 Solution of Drug and Alcoholism

The poor and ignorant tribal people are regularly taking the rice beer '*hariya*', and then start meaningless jabber in raving on account of being drunk in their houses or indulge in gossiping with the drunken partners for a long time. For this purpose they spend, a part of amount of earned money and it directly affects economy of their family and badly affects the children's education (Duary, 2010). Due to modernisation now tribals have been addicted *tomahua* liquor prepared from *mahua* flowers. *Mahua* liquors selling in the market are not good. They add urea fertilizer and some tablets to make the liquor more intoxicating. Excess intake of *mahua* liquor results in loss of appetite. The loss of appetite results in malnutrition (Toppo, 2016). A considerable amount of younger generation people are now addicted with modern alcohols due to the increased availability of cheap intoxicating drinks, invasion made by the electronic media into the villages, migration of the tribal people to non-tribal areas for work and the treatment they receive from the non-tribal people. Blood-borne diseases like Hepatitis B virus infection are likely to be high in the tribal population because of the common social practice of tattooing. This together with alcoholism may result in increased number of chronic active hepatitis and cirrhosis of liver cases.

Only growing awareness among the tribes can remove the problems of drinking habits. In the field, survey it is experienced that educated tribals are hesitant to have rice beer. Many of them only occasionally have with *hariya* or rice beer. Administrative control over rice beer and gradual process of band in selling can solve *hariya* taking problems among the tribes. It is found that in the GPs where tribal literacy rate is high, *hariya* taking habit is significantly low. A product moment correlation of Karl Pearson can analyse relationship between two variables.

For the purpose of the correlation coefficient a few high and low literacy tribal GPs are selected as 'x' variable and percentage of *hariya* addicted tribal population of the concerned GPs as 'y' variable.

$$r = \frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

Where, r= Pearson's product moment correlation, \bar{x} and \bar{y} = Mean values of x and y respectively.

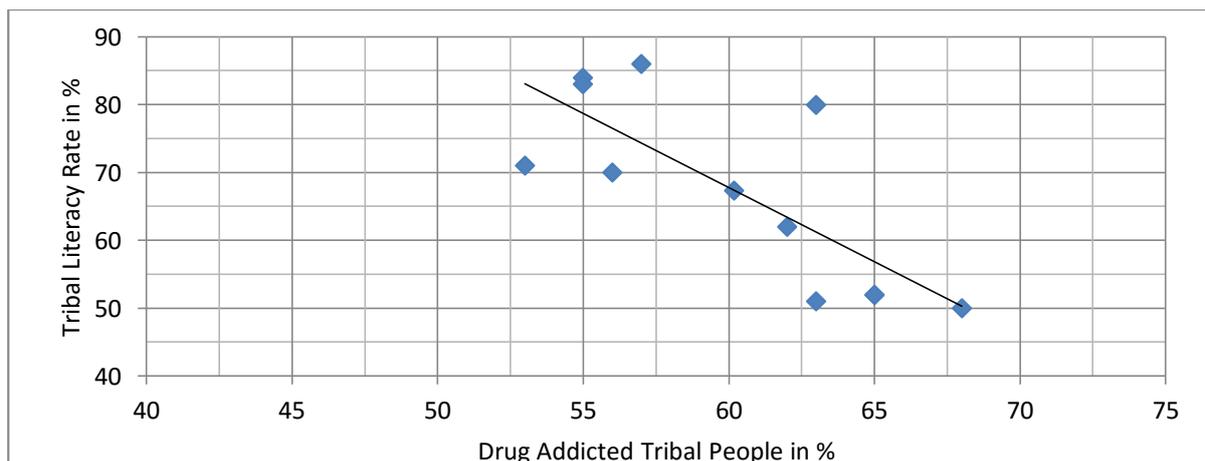
Table 8.1 Correlation Coefficient for Tribal Literacy Rate & Alcoholism

GP	Literacy Rate (%) (x)	Drug Addicted (%) (y)	$x - \bar{x}$	$y - \bar{y}$	$(x - \bar{x})^2$	$(y - \bar{y})^2$	$(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})$
Bagrakot	63	80	3	13	9	169	39
Odlabari	62	62	2	-5	4	25	-10
Damdin	55	84	-5	17	25	289	-85
Tesimla	65	52	5	-15	25	225	-75
Kumlai	63	51	3	-16	9	256	-48
Moulani	53	71	-7	4	49	16	-28
Lataguri	56	70	-4	3	16	9	-12
Matiali Batabari-I	55	83	-5	16	25	256	-80
Bidhannagar	68	50	8	-17	64	289	-136
Matiali Hat	65	52	5	-15	25	225	-75
Indong Matiali	57	86	-3	19	9	361	-57
Sum	Mean=60	Mean= 67			260	2120	-567

Correlation co-efficient for table-8.1: is:

$$r = \frac{-567}{\sqrt{260 \times 2120}} = -0.77$$

Figure 8.1 Correlation Coefficient for Tribal Literacy & Alcoholism



The value of 'r' = - 0.77. This is a strong negative correlation, which means that high x variable scores go with low y variable scores (and vice versa). From the analysis it can be recommended that only growing education and literacy can reduce the *hariya* taking problems in tribal society.

8.3.3.2 Solution to Health Hygiene Problems

Malnutrition and Ageing are two major problems of tribal health in Dooars. Some tribal groups are also at high risk for sickle cell anaemia. Generally tribal diets are seen to be deficient in protein, iron, iodine, and vitamins.

Table 8.2 Nutritional parameters among tribes and non-tribes

Parameter	Scheduled tribes (%)	General population (%)
Malnutrition in children	54.5	33.7
Anaemia in Children	76.8	70
Anaemia in Women	68.5	51.3
Underweight among women	46.6	29.4
Vitamin A deficiency in women	30	18.5

Source: India: National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), 2005–06; 2007. Vol: I

Doctors and paramedical workers from the general population are reluctant to work in backward tribal areas. Further, there are not sufficient medical personnel hailing from the tribal communities, who will have a better understanding about the needs of their people and who may be more willing to work in such areas. Out of the available doctors who pass out of medical colleges every year, there are not more than 3.9%, who belong to the ST group (Bala & Thiruselvakumar, 2009). This is insufficient. There is urgent need of more doctors from the backward communities. A closely knit, Public Distribution System has to be developed, covering every interior pocket of the tribal areas, with a well-supported supply network. Free distribution of both raw and fresh rations has to be implemented on a time frame, say for two generations; subsequently, this can be upgraded to the subsidized and later the fully paid strategy. The positive food fads of any given tribal community have to be addressed in this type of the public distribution system.

8.3.3.3 Reproductive Health care facilities

The infant mortality rates (per 1000 live births) are very high among the tribes in Dooars. Institutional deliveries are poor till now. Maternal mortality rate are also high. The unhygienic and primitive parturition practices were mainly responsible for high maternal mortality. For effective child and mother care facilities can be generated in tribal areas for their development. Following steps may be suggested for that.

- I. A complete Mini Hospital or health unit (including a medically qualified doctor, a laboratory technician, a pharmacist and a staff nurse with required medicines and basic laboratory testing set up, etc.) in a Mobile Van should be set up which will cater to the health needs of the tribal community in a group of adjacent villages fixing a date at least weekly or preferably in the weekly tribal market to minimize the tribal sufferings.
- II. A mass awareness and preventive programme about common prevalent diseases should be launched at weekly markets in tribal areas with increased interaction of health workers with the participation of local population.
- III. Providing Genetic/Marriage Counsellor to affected tribal communities and families for the prophylactic guidance and future reproductive decisions.
- IV. Providing social and economic incentives and support for combating the common prevalent communicable and non-communicable diseases in the tribal community.

8.4 Overall Development

For the welfare of the tribal people, several schemes were implemented and have been proposed by the government. Some of the schemes have shown good results while as few of them did not serve the purpose. Following suggestions may be made for overall development of the tribal people and area of their habitation in Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district:

- I. The Christian Missionaries have been active in tribal areas of Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata blocks. They have been primarily interested in conversion of tribes to a new religious faith. They should emphasis more on welfare works of educational, economic, hygienic and social values.
- II. Voluntary social service organisations have done considerable humanitarian work in the tribal areas to uplift them; their idealism and spirit must reach up to their need.
- III. There are many remote villages in three blocks of Mal subdivision which are far away from the main road. Physical as well as social connectivity of these villages are very poor. Transport network of these areas should be increased.

- IV. Drinking water facilities, electricity, housing infrastructures are very poor in many areas which are to be developed.

8.5 Conclusion

The tribal people have to be taught to learn self-help. There is an erroneous impression that tribal development should be brought out without disturbing the existing socio-cultural practices. This is not possible. We should aim at change amongst the tribal people so that they themselves jettison irrelevant practices (Shrivastava, 1995). The development practices should be based on the cultural characteristics, environmental peculiarities and traditional skills of the tribal people. This is necessary to prevent out migration of tribals towards other provinces. Tribal welfare programme should be based on the felt needs of the people. Planners should be well acquainted with these needs. In implementing the development schemes, the local political leaders and administration should have good will to serve the poor tribals, otherwise the benefits will not reach up to the root level.

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Chapter-9

CONCLUSION

The Mal subdivision of Jalpaiguri district is highly inhabited by the different tribal communities. The immigrated tribal communities i.e. the Oraons, Mundas, Santals, Malpaharias, Lohars, Mahalis, Kharias are majority in the tribal society of the Dooars. Except a few GPs, almost in all GPs the tribals possess a significant share of population. In every GP most of the tribal communities inhabit. Such habitation of tribals as well as other non-tribals in same villages has created a unity in diversity in Dooars.

Tribes are economically backward in every corner of the country like India. In the perspectives of Mal subdivision of Dooars region, tea garden based tribal economy and society has the solidarity in all India phenomena. Here indigenous and immigrated tribes face a new challenge of their survival from subsistence to market economy. They are mainly engaged in tea gardens as labourers. In spite of their high workforce participation rate, their income is very low. Those who are agriculturalists are landless agricultural labourers. Over the years, they have remained labour or worker and have not done much to effect occupational diversification. A considerable amount of tribal people steps in western provinces of the country to earn more money. Several times, the tribes are cheated by the middle men and civilized people. The tea garden workers expend their time in very pathetic conditions when the tea garden remains closed for several months to several years. The economic lives of the tribes of Dooars as a whole are in very distress conditions.

The tribals have rich cultural heritage. The women enjoy higher status in the society. In most of the tribal dominated GPs, women sex ratio is very high. The rich social values, language, religion, magical belief and practices, food habits, styles of dress, patterns of habitation are important features of their life which make them distinct from the non-tribal people. They are the most deprived sections in education and health care provisions. Among the tribes of Dooars school dropout rate is very high mainly for boys due to engagement in economically productive activities. The cause of comparatively lower dropout rate for girls' is due to respect to girls and women in the tribal society. Boarding school has been set up to teach modern education in the Dooars by the Christian missionaries. The tribes as a whole are not much different from their Scheduled Caste counterparts in terms of such socio-economic indicators as land ownership, per capita income, or incidence of poverty.

With the introduction of modern technology and globalisation, tribal arts, crafts, customs and values have been changed gradually. But their traditional values are gradually squeezing. The rich ethnic cultures of tribes are thus dying. In the Dooars area the tribal cultures are not so much influenced by modernisation as they have lost their own identities due to their own traditional practices. Modification due to modern technology has occurred in economic sectors, but it is very limited for the tribes. In their occupation, there is very limited change incorporating modern means of technology. In agricultural sector sum short of influences is there by adopting modern means of technology in agricultural field. So, it can be said that modern technology has played a negative role to change tribal society but upon the economy it is very insignificant.

The tribes of Dooars are carrying so many problems from the colonial period. They have been feeling cries of losing their lands, ethnicity, cultural heritage and freedom of identity for centuries. The rich culture of different tribal communities has been demolished. Rituals relating to marriage, worshipping to God and nature have been gradually lost due to assimilation with non-tribals. Starvations, mal-nutrition and deaths are very common phenomena in tea garden areas mainly when the gardens remain closed for a long period. Due to illiteracy and lack of awareness the tribals cannot reach to Government for different developmental schemes laid down for them. Most of the male members of the tribal families expense their earning in drug addiction.

All the tribal groups are not in similar socio-economic conditions. There are variations of believes, traditions, cultures and transformations. Intra-regional and inter-community variations are noticed in economy, education and other spheres. Tribes of the tea-garden based GPs and non-tea garden based GPs behave differently.

However, in conclusion it may be recommended that tribals of Mal subdivision require more income, more job securities and above all economic development. Alternative job opportunities can improve their earnings. Education can be a tool for their development. Growing education can remove different bad habits of the tribal people including drinking habits. Tribal language based school education is essential for them. A closely knit, public distribution system has to be developed, covering every interior pocket of the tribal areas. The development practices should be based on the cultural characteristics, environmental peculiarities and traditional skills of the tribal people. This is necessary to prevent out migration of tribals towards other provinces. In implementing the development schemes the local political leaders and administration should have good will to serve the poor tribals, otherwise the benefits will not reach up to the root level.

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Appendix-A
PLATES



Plate 1 An Oraon family members in front of their house, Kalabari tea garden



Plate 2 A tribal Colony: Aibhil tea garden



Plate 3 A kacha house in a tribal village at Pathorjhora tea garden



Plate 4 Starvation due to close of tea garden, Bagrakot



Plate 5 Starving tea garden workers, Bagrakot



Plate 6 Santal dance in Gorumara National Park



Plate 7 A Santal farmer ploughing land at Bidurer Danga of Moulani GP



Plate 8 Tribal women working in Grassmore tea garden



Plate 9 Mahali women working for bamboo crafts



Plate 10 A Church in Matiali hat GP



Plate 11 Odlabari Tea Garden



Plate 12 A Mahali Couple in their house at Nagaisuree tea garden



Plate 13 A tribal girl with her mobile handset



Plate 14 A tractor cultivating land in Matiali Batabari-II GP



Plate 15 Spraying Pesticides in Chengmari tea garden

Appendix-B
GLOSSARY

1. Adhiar : Sharecropper
2. Adivasi : Tribal People
3. Animism : Tribal religion that beliefs in nature
4. Anna : Currency unit formerly used in India equal to 1/16th rupee
5. Bargadar : Sharecropper
6. Bhawayā : A folk song of north Bengal
7. Bigha : Temporary tea garden workers
8. Dooars : Alluvial deposits in the foothills/ gateways between India and Bhutan
9. Gotras : Clan
10. G.P. : Gram Panchayat, smallest unit of local self government
11. Hariya : Rice beer drunk by the tribal people
12. Hattola : Sale tax in rural market
13. Immigration : International movement of people into a territory
14. In-migration : Movement within a country into a place
15. Jotdar : Landlord
16. Kachha : Made of local natural materials
17. Karampuja : Tribal festival of sisterhood, friendship and cultural unity
18. Koch : A primitive group of people inhabiting in princely Kochbihar
19. Magibiha : System of arrange marriage of tribal people
20. Mahakal : Wild elephant worshiped by the people inhabiting in Dooars
21. Ojha : Rural spirit healer
22. Pacca : Made of concrete
23. Sacred groove : Groove of trees that has special religious importance
24. Sandri : An eastern Indo-Aryan communicative tribal language
25. Sing bonga : Sun God worshiped by tribal people
26. Sohoroi : Festival of prosperity celebrated by the tribal people
27. Tebhaga : One third share
28. Totem : Symbol that serves as an emblem of a tribal group of people
29. Zamindars : Landlords

Appendix-C
SCHEDULE QUESTIONNAIRE

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF TRIBAL PEOPLE IN
MAL SUBDIVISION OF JALPAIGURI DISTRICT**

1. a) Name of the Village: b) GP.....c) Block:.....
2. a) Name of Household owner/ Respondent:.....
 - b) Caste: ST/SC/Gen..... c) Community/ Sub-caste :.....
 - d) Religion..... e) Mother tongue :
 - f) Language use for communication.....
3. Individual Demographic Information for family members:

Sl.	Age	Sex (M/F)	Marital status (M/U /D/W)	Age at marriage	Education (Ill/Pr/ Sec/ HS/ UG/PG)	Drop out (Y/N)	Occu patio n	For married women	
								Children born	Children survive
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
Total									

4. a) Number of children go to school/ college:
- b) Number of children left studies:
- c) Reasons of drop out:
- d) Number of children staying in hostel/ boarding for education:
5. a) No of person died in the last calendar year: Total..... Male:..... Female:.....
- b) If any expectant mother died pre-delivery or during delivery.....

- c) Children died below 1 year of age: Total.....Male: Female:
 d) Reason of death of children: Malnutrition/ disease/ others.....

6. a) Monthly family income (Rs.): b) Family is- BPL/APL
 c) Family type- joint/ nuclear: d) No. of earning members:
 e) Number of dependents: f) Child labour- Y/N
 g) If yes to (f) no. of child labour:
 h) No. of people who goes outside for earning:
 i) If goes outside, mention the name of place:
 j) Mention the type of activities he/she is engaged:
 k) Mention other economic activities (if any):
 l) Mention the no. of people engaged in different type of economic activities:
 i) Primary..... b) Secondary..... c) Tertiary.....
 m) Traditional family occupation
 n) If traditional occupation changed how many years ago

7. a) Amount of land under occupation:
 i) Used for homestead.....
 ii) Used for production of food crops.....
 iii) Used for production of cash crops.....
 iv) Lying fallow.....
 v) Lying unused.....
 b) Type of agriculture: Own land/ bargadar
 c) Main crops: according to priority:
 1..... 2..... 3.....
 4..... 5..... 6.....
 d) Utensils used for agriculture:
 i) Axe..... ii) Hatcher..... iii) Sickle.....
 iv) Yoke..... v) plough..... vi) Crowbar.....
 vii) Others (specify).....

- f) Use of Modern Technology on Agriculture:

Tractor	Irrigation Pump Set	Sprayer Machine	Rotary tiller	Rice huller	Chemical Fertiliser	HYV seeds

8. a) Domestic animals: Goat/Cow/ Pig/others

b) No. of animals:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Number</u>
1.....		2.....
3.....		4.....
5.....		6.....

c) Animal keeping place: Bedroom/ Separate room

9. a) House ownership: Own/Rented/Quarter ... b) House types: pacca/semi pacca/kachha

c) No. of rooms:.....

d) No of rooms used for sleeping:

e) Separate kitchen: Y/N

f) Latrine: Y/N

g) Electrified: Y/N

h) Source of drinking water:

i) Water facility within the premise: Y/N.....

j) Distance of drinking water source from house:

10. a) Basic household assets: ('Y' for yes and 'N' for no)

Bank Accounts	Cell phones	Refrigerator	Television	Motor cycle	Computer/ Laptop	LPG Connection

11. a) For how many years they are living there:

b) Whether migrated: Y/N..... c) If migrated, from where:

d) Reason(s) of migration:

12. a) Frequency of having foods in a day: b) Main foods:

c) Vegetarian: Y/N

d) Food habits: milk/fish/meat/ others:....

e) Drinking habits: Y/N

f) Drinking item: hariya/wine/others.....

13. a) Main festivals (according to priority):

1..... 2..... 3..... 4.....

5..... 6..... 7..... 8.....

14. a) Frequency of visiting periodic market:

a) Daily

b) Twice in a week

c) Weekly

d) Periodically

15. Main mode of transportation:

a) Walking

b) Cycling

c) Biking

d) Bus

16. a) Questions for the identity crisis:

- i) Which was your predecessor's place of origin?
- ii) What is your mother tongue?.....
- iii) What are the names of your community Gods?
- iv) What are the main festivals of your community?
- v) What is the name of your clan?.....
- vi) What is the name of your community totem?.....

17. Govt. subsidy/ facilities available

- i) 100 days work.....
- ii) Hostel facilities for students.....
- iii) Free rationing.....
- iv) Free housing.....
- v) Others (specify).....

18. a) Common diseases:

b) Treatment made by: Doctor/Kabiraj

c) Treatment at health centre/ hospital

d) child diseases:

e) Child delivery: Hospital/ home/.....

f) Frequency of washing clothes.....

g) Whether family planning/ birth control measures taken?

h) Whether immunisation is done for children?

19. Public Distribution System (PDS):

Sl. No.	Items	Quantity	Rate	PDS Provided By Govt./Tea Management
1.	Rice			
2.	Wheat			
3.	Kerosene			
4.	Tea			
5.	Others			

20. Monthly expenditure/ income/savings:

Income	Food	Cloth	Health	Education	Leisure	Residence	Others	Savings

21. Nature of diseases among the tea labourers:

Worker	Diarrhea	Dysentery	Fever	Tuberculosis	Typhoid	Hepatitis	Snake Bites	Others
Male								
Female								

22. a) Does every member of the household have at least two sets of clothes? Y/N
 b) Does every member of the household have at least one pair of shoes? Y/N
 c) How safe is your household from crime and violence? Very safe/ unsafe/ Safe.
 d) Is there any social crime?
 e) Does govt. or local authority take action against violence?
 f) Relationship between authority of tea garden and workers.....
 g) Whether the household owner visited the district headquarter: Y/N

23. Problems of the family:

- i)..... ii)
 iii)..... iv).....

24. Problems of the area/ society:

- i)..... ii)
 iii)..... iv)

25. Solutions/ Suggestions given by the respondent:

- i)..... ii)
 iii) iv)

PUBLISHED ARTICLES

1. *Economic Status of Tribal People in Mal Subdivision of Jalpaiguri District-* Bipul Chandra Sarkar & Ranjan Roy, **Geographical Thoughts**, (ISSN 2229-466X), University of North Bengal, Vol. 14, 2016, pp. 32-41.
2. *Tribal Livelihood in Mal Sub-Division of Jalpaiguri District: A Socio-Economic Perspective-* Bipul Chandra Sarkar, In Mandal, Bipul & Roy, Manadev (ed.), **The Tribes of North Bengal and Sikkim: A Changing Scenario in the Twentieth Century**, (ISBN: 81-87121-22-X), Academic Enterprise, Kolkata-700131, 2016, pp. 142-149.

Economic Status of Tribal People in Mal Subdivision of Jalpaiguri District

Bipul Chandra Sarkar* & Ranjan Roy**

Abstract

The Dooars regions of Jalpaiguri district are inhabited by different tribal communities. Most of them were hired by the British East India Company to grow tea gardens, cut jungles and related activities from Chhotonagpur region and a small portion of the tribal groups in the subdivision belongs to aboriginal. A few of them are associated with agriculture and allied economic activities. During the past few decades frequent lock out of tea gardens in this region has become a cause of starvation and death in these tea gardens. Illiteracy, simplicity, unemployment and poverty are the common features of tribal people in this region. There are disparities between tribal and non-tribal people and even among different subgroups of tribal people in this region. In this paper, attempts have been made to bring out economic status of tribal people through micro-level study.

Keywords: Livelihood, Economic Composition, Dependency Ratio, Marginal Workers.

Introduction

Traditionally, the tribes in India pursued an economy, which was closer to nature, and used indigenous technology. Some tribal communities have adopted a way of life, similar to the neighbouring non-tribal communities; there are other tribal groups, whose livelihoods are characterized by (a) forest-based livelihoods, (b) pre-agriculture level of technology, (c) a stagnant or declining population (d) extremely low literacy and (e) a subsistence level of economy. The story for the tribal people of the Dooars differs from other parts of the country. They are mainly tea garden workers, cultivators and landless agricultural labourers. The nature of work is mainly marginal and wage rates are very low. The frequent incidence of stagnation and closing up of tea garden has a devastating impact on the tribal life.

Database

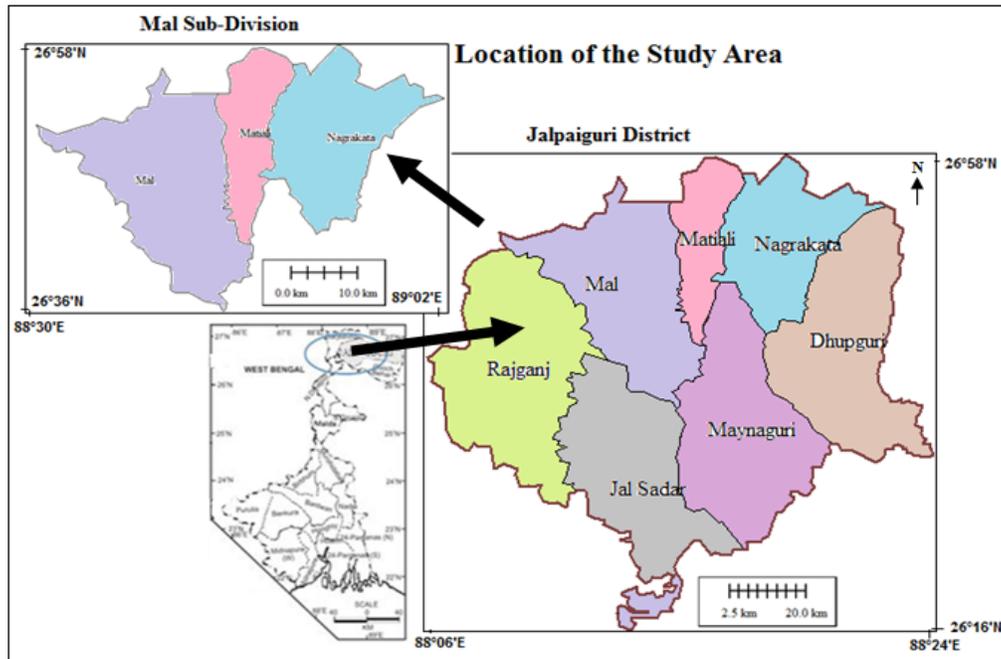
The present study is based on primary data. A size of 2-5% random sample has been collected for tribal household. On the other hand for each gram panchayat, 30 non-tribal households were selected to gather the same information for comparison purpose

Study Area

The study area, Mal subdivision is a subdivision of the Jalpaiguri district in the state of West Bengal. Mal subdivision consists of Mal municipality and three community development blocks: Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata. The three blocks contain 22 gram panchayats. The subdivision has its headquarters at Malbazar. The subdivision is situated between 26°36' and 27° 0' North latitudes and 88°14' and 88°40' East longitudes.

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Economic Composition

The economically active population are those who participate in gainful activities. There are different techniques to determine the economically active population. These are:

- a) **Crude Activity Rate:** The proportion of economically active population to total population is generally known as crude activity rate (C.A.R.).
- b) **General Activity Rate:** The proportion of economically active population to the

working age population is known as general activity rate (G.A.R.).

- c) **Dependency Ratio:** The dependency ratio (D.R) is generally the ratio of the number of children plus old people to the number of adults.

Generally, work force participation rate for rural scheduled tribe is highest in the country as well as in the state among the all social groups. Mal subdivision is not an exception. Following table of sample data can well explain the situation.

Table1 Economic Composition of Tribal people

SI No.	Name of GP	Crude Activity Rate (%)	General Activity Rate (%)	Dependency Ratio (%)
1	Bagrakot	46	68	58
2	Odlabari	49	71	55
3	Rangamatee	44	68	66
4	Rajadanga	48	71	64
5	Damdim	50	70	50
6	Tesimla	42	65	52
7	Kumlai	45	63	45
8	Changmari	47	70	57
9	Kranti	43	67	56
10	Chapadanga	38	65	64
11	Moulani	36	60	65
12	Lataguri	45	67	63
Mal Block Total		44	67	58
1	Matiali Batabari-I	36	65	71
2	Matiali Batabari-II	45	65	64
3	Bidhannagar	40	69	62
4	Matiali Hat	43	72	67
5	Indong Matiali	45	73	53
Matiali Block		42	69	64
1	Angrabhasa-I	40	65	66
2	Angrabhasa-II	36	66	65
3	Sulkapara	45	65	53
4	Champaguri	46	69	57
5	Looksan	50	75	58
Nagrakata Block		43	68	60
Mal Subdivision		44	68	60

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Workforce participation rate or Crude Activity Rate (CAR) for tribal population in Mal subdivision is 44% on an average. Workforce participation of tribal population of Mal subdivision is comparatively higher than the State (38.08%) and National (39.8%) averages in 2011. However, the CAR for the rural areas of Mal subdivision is higher than the above rate (44%) which accounts for 38.7% for the State of West Bengal and 41.8% for India. There is a spatial variation of CAR at GP level in the study area. The CAR is low in Moulani (36%), Angrabhasa-II (36%), Chapadanga (38%),

Angrabhasa-I (40%) and Bidhannagar (40%). The CAR is very high in GPs of Damdim (50%), Looksan (50%), Odlabari (49%) and Rajadanga (48%). Normally, the higher workforce participation rate GPs are located in tea garden concentrated areas while the GPs of poor workforce participation rate are located in non tea garden based where concentration of tribal population is not significant. The reason of higher proportion of workforce participation is that the people are forced to get job for their livelihood.

Average General Activity Rate (GAR) among the tribal people is 68% in Mal subdivision. The rate is slightly higher in Matiali Block i.e. 69%. The higher rates are found in the GPs Looksan (75%), Indong Matiali (73%), Matiali Hat (72%), Rajadanga (71%) and Odlabari (71%). Lower rates of GAR are found in the GPs of Kumlai (63%), Sulkapara, (63%), Tesimla, Matiali Batabari-I, Matiali Batabari-II, Angrabhasa-I, Chapadanga and Moulani (60%).

Dependency Ratio (DR) for tribal people in Mal subdivision is 60%. The ratio is highest in Matiali Block (64%) and lowest in Mal block (58%). The GPs which have high dependency ratio are Matiali Batabari-I (71%), Matiali Hat (67%), Rangamatee (66%) and Angrabhasa-I (66%). Lowest rate of dependency ratio are found in Kumlai (45%) followed by Damdim (50%), Sulkapara, Indong Matiali (53%) and Odlabari (55%). So there is a wide gap 26% in dependency ratio among the GPs.

Table 2 Gender wise and Category wise Workforce Participation Rate (%)

Block	Tribal People			Non Tribal People		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Mal	55.2	35.8	44	58.0	24.0	40.0
Matiali	50.0	37.0	42	56.0	22.4	38.0
Nagrakata	55.6	34.4	43	57.8	23.0	39.0
Total	53.5	35.5	44	57.3	23.0	39.3

Source: Compiled by the authors

From the table No. 2 it is clear that workforce participation rate for tribal people are better than the non-tribal people in all blocks of Mal subdivision. The tribal workforce rate is 44% while the non tribal workforce rate is 39.3%. Again, female participation rate is significantly high in all blocks in comparison to non tribal people. For Matiali block it is highest as 37%. Average tribal female participation rate is 35.5% while the non tribal female ratio is 23% only.

This proves that the tribal women are skilled and more employed in tea garden based activities.

Work force Composition

Work has been defined in the census of India as participation in any economically productive activity. In practice such participation may be physical or mental. The work also includes unpaid work on a farm or in family enterprises. Work also includes supervision and direction.

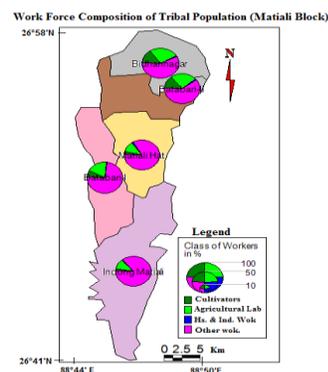
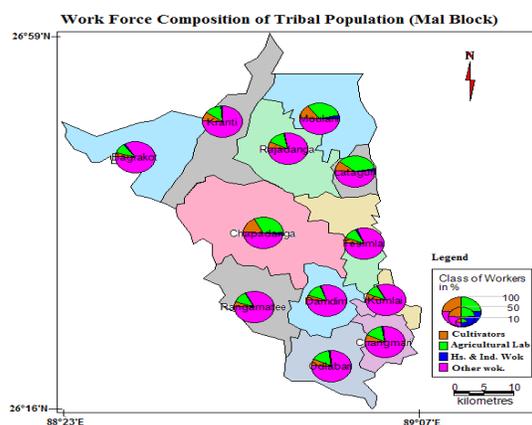


Table 3 Workforce Composition for Tribal People (%)

Sl No.	Name of GP	Total Workers	Class of Total Workers				Category of Workers		
			Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind. Workers	Other Workers	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Non workers
1	Bagrakot	46	4.1	11.0	1.8	83.1	25.0	18.0	57.0
2	Odlabari	49	7.2	16.1	1.4	75.3	26.8	17.1	56.1
3	Rangamatee	44	5.2	12.6	0.7	81.5	25.0	19.0	56.0
4	Rajadanga	48	6.9	15.1	1.1	76.9	21.8	19.1	59.1
5	Damdim	50	5.0	14.7	1.1	79.2	26.1	19.1	54.8
6	Tesimla	42	5.8	12.4	1.7	80.1	25.5	19.5	55.0
7	Kumlai	45	5.9	11.6	1.1	81.4	26.9	20.1	53.0
8	Changmari	47	7.4	15.2	1.5	75.9	26.0	21.0	53.0
9	Kranti	43	10.1	14.3	1.1	74.5	30.1	12.1	57.8
10	Chapadanga	38	17.5	33.2	2.2	47.1	29.5	11.5	59.0
11	Moulani	36	14.8	32.6	3.1	49.5	28.7	11.3	60.0
12	Lataguri	45	11.2	36.5	2.1	50.2	30.0	12.0	58.0
Mal Block Total		44	8.5	18.7	1.6	71.2	26.8	16.6	56.6
1	Matiali Batabari-I	36	7.5	19.5	1.1	71.9	27.2	12.8	60.0
2	Matiali Batabari-II	45	14.5	25.3	1.2	59.0	30.5	12.5	57.0
3	Bidhannagar	40	15.3	27.3	1.2	56.2	30.2	10.7	59.1
4	Matiali Hat	43	3.2	12.5	1.3	83.0	28.2	13.5	58.3
5	Indong Matiali	45	2.2	11.4	1.2	85.2	28.2	14.8	57.2
Matiali Block Total		42	8.5	19.2	1.3	71.1	28.9	12.9	58.2
1	Angrabhasa-I	40	11.5	23.5	2.2	62.8	30.2	11.8	58.0
2	Angrabhasa-II	36	9.7	15.4	1.4	73.5	30.5	12.6	56.9
3	Sulkapara	45	9.2	18.0	1.1	71.7	28.5	14.5	57.0
4	Champaguri	46	4.5	16.3	0.8	78.4	27.4	16.5	56.1
5	Looksan	50	3.5	11.5	1.2	83.8	25.4	17.5	57.1
Nagrakata Block Total		43	8.0	16.7	1.3	73.9	28.4	14.6	57.0
Mal Subdivision Total		44	8.5	18.5	1.5	71.5	27.5	15	57.5

Source: *Compiled by the authors.*

In the table No. 3, workforce composition classification mode has followed the census of India pattern. Engagements as cultivators are not so significant for the tribal people. Average rate of cultivators are 8.5% among the tribal people in Mal subdivision. In highly tea garden concentrated GPs the cultivators are very poor in number. The GPs of Bagrakot, Damdim, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali, Champaguri and Looksan have less than 5% workers who are cultivators. However in non - tea

garden GPs, the proportions of cultivators are comparatively higher. These are Kranti, Moulani, Chapadanga, Lataguri, Matiali Batabari-I, Bidhannagar and Angrabhasa-I. More than 10% workers of that GPs are belongs to the category of Cultivators. The farmers of these GPs are either cultivating in their own lands or engage themselves in agricultural activities as traditional adhiary system. Similarly, in non-tea garden based GPs; the agricultural labourers are significant in number. The

GPs of Chapadanga, Lataguri, Moulani, Matiali Batabari-II and Bidhannagar have a more than 25% person who belongs to the category of agricultural labourers. On an average, 18.5% tribal people of the subdivision are belongs to agricultural labourers.

Household Industrial workers are very insignificant in number. On an average 1.5% workers are found in this category. However, the ratio is sound in GPs of Moulani, Chapadanga and Lataguri of Mal block and Angrabhasa-I GP of Nagrakata block. Bamboo and cane industry and bidi industry are important household industries of the area.

It is evident that tribal people mostly belongs to the category of 'other workers'. Nearly 71.5% workers are belongs to this category. The rate is significantly higher than the normal rate of district, state and the national average. The reason is that workers engaged in tea plantations are included to this category. There are higher proportions of other workers in those GPs where the tea gardens are maximum with higher concentration of tribal population. The GPs of Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Tesimla, Kumlai, Matiali Hat, Indong Matiali and Looksan where more than 80% workers belongs to the category of other workers. The workers in this group are mainly tea garden workers and tea factory workers, tea garden drivers, carpenter, outside workers who engaged as mason, carpenter, and construction workers in other provinces of the country. On the other hand, the ratios of other

workers are comparatively lower in the GPs of Chapadanga, Moulani, Lataguri, Bidhannagar and Matiali Batabari-II.

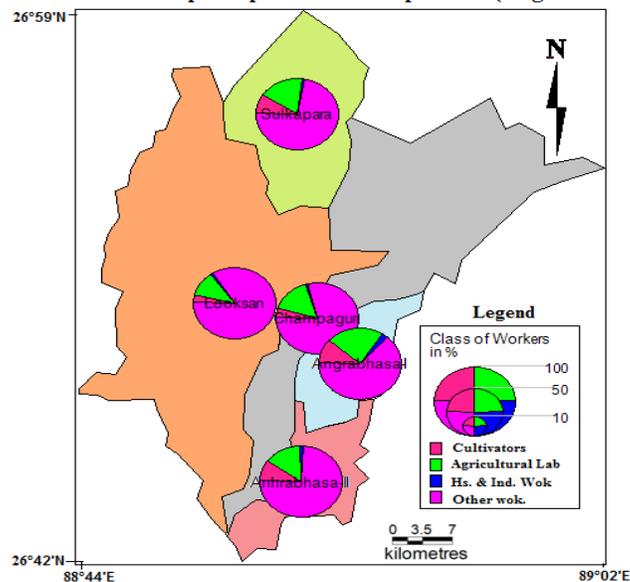
The ratio of main workers, marginal workers and non workers are as 27.5: 15: 57.5 as a whole among the tribal people of Mal subdivision. The Kranti GP has the highest proportion of main workers (30.5%) while the Rajadanga has the lowest proportion (21.8%). The variations among the GPs are as little as 9%. Marginal workers are comparatively higher in the subdivision of Mal. Highest ratio of marginal workers are found in the GP of Changmari (21%) while the lowest proportion of the same are found in the GP of Bidhannagar (10.7%). The tea garden dominated GPs have higher proportion of marginal workers than the GPs identified as non tea garden based. Because a large number of plantation tribal workers are seasonal workers who are employed during the plucking period only. Both male and female proportions are higher in this case. As a result the GPs having maximum numbers of tea gardens with higher concentration of tribal population show higher ratio of marginal workers. The GPs such as Rajadanga, Odlabari, Bagrakot, Rangamatee, Kumlai, Changmari, Damdim, Tesimla, Indong Matiali, Sulkapara, Looksan and Champaguri belong to this category. The rest of GPs located in non-tea garden based areas have considerably lower rates of marginal workers.

Table 4 Category wise Workforce Composition Rate (%)

Block	Tribal People				Non Tribal People			
	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind. Workers	Other Workers	Cultivators	Agricultural Labourers	Household Ind. Workers	Other Workers
Mal	8.5	18.7	1.6	71.2	23.2	16	1.1	59.7
Matiali	8.5	19.2	1.3	71.1	14.1	5.5	1	79.4
Nagrakata	8	16.7	1.3	73.9	14.2	7	0.7	78.1
Total	8.5	18.5	1.5	71.5	16.7	9.1	1.1	73.1

Source: *Compiled by the authors.*

Work Force Composiopn of Tribal Population (Nagrakata Block)



The non workers ratios are similar in all GPs. The highest proportion of tribal non workers are found in GPs of Moulani and Matiali Batabari-I (60%) while the least concentrated non workers GPs are Kumlai and Changmari (53%).

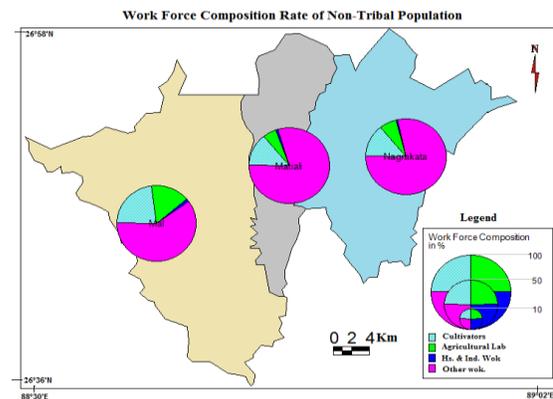
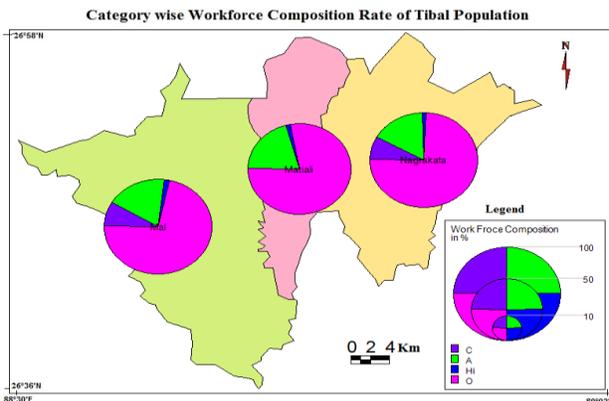
From the table No. 4, it is found that among the cultivators the proportion of non tribal people is higher than the tribal people. Average size of

Cultivators of tribal people is 8.5% while the size for the non-tribal people is 16.7% in the subdivision. Coming to the category of agricultural labourers, it is also found that the picture is reverse. That is to say that the proportion of agricultural labourers of non tribal people (9.1%) is lower than that of tribal people (18.5%). In the case of other workers the proportion of tribal and non tribal people varies in different blocks.

Table 5 Land Ownership by the Tribal People (%)

Block/ Subdivision	No Land		< 2 Bigha		2 – 4 Bigha		> 4 Bigha	
	Tribes	Non Tribes	Tribes	Non Tribes	Tribes	Non Tribes	Tribes	Non Tribes
Mal Block	43	9	28	30	20	31	9	30
Matiali Block	43	12	30	30	17	32	9	26
Nagrakata Block	36	13	29	28	20	33	15	26
Mal Subdivision	41	11	29	30	19	31	11	28

Source: Compiled by the authors



Agricultural Activities

Presently a sizeable portion of tribal people are engaged in agricultural activities. They are mainly landless labourers and those who are cultivators are dependent on adhiary agriculture i.e. a piece of land is borrowed from the landlord in a condition to share half of the agro products between them. Agricultural lands for tribal people are very much limited in the GPs of Bagrakot, Odlabari, Rangamatee, Changmari, Kumlai, Looksan and Champaguri. On the other hand the GPs where the tribal people possess agricultural land are Lataguri Moulani, Chapadanga, Kranti, Matiali Batabari-I and Matiali Batabari-II.

From the table No. 5, it is clear that the proportion of land less tribal people is higher than the tribal having agricultural land in the study area. About 41% tribal households in the study area are landless who are either landless agricultural labourers or tea garden workers. In comparison with this only 11% non tribal households who are also landless in the study area. Hence proportions of landless people are very much higher among the tribal people. In Indong Matiali it reached to 70%. Landless tribal people are very lower in the GPs which are dominated by agriculture rather than plantation. Angrabhasa-II (20%), Lataguri (27%), Chapadanga (30%), Moulani (30%) and Kranti (31%) are such type of GPs. There are 29% households who

possess land below 2 bigha. These households are basically cultivating the land of tea garden which is spare or low land. Such lands are distributed among the tea garden labourers. 19% and 11% people have lands within 2-4 bighas and above 4 bighas respectively. In some areas, land of local tribal people have occupied for plantation purpose which were gradually forfeited in view to provide permanent job opportunity by outsider merchants. The illiterate and simple tribal people have been cheated in such a way. Such incidents were noted in Rajadanga, Bidhannagar, Kumlai, Changmari areas. Non tribal people have more lands than the tribal people in every GP.

Monthly Family Income

Income is money that an individual or business receives in exchange for providing goods or services. Income is consumed to fuel day-to-day expenditures. Monthly income means the wages that can be earned by an adult people in a month. The tribal people in Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata are generally involves in tea garden and their salary is earned every fortnight at a rate of Rs. 122 per day. No work, no pay system is prevailed in the tea gardens. There are two types of worker in the garden: permanent, those who are engaged throughout the year and temporary workers, locally called 'bigha'. The temporary workers are employed during the plucking season. Permanent

workers are hereditary engaged in the garden. One employee is engaged from one household. Chronologically one after another member from generation to generation is employed in the tea garden. Rest of the workers are either agricultural labourers or work outside the state. A considerable

number of workers engaged in construction works in Kerala, Tamilnadu and Gujarat state. In GPs of Matiali Batabari-II, Bidhannagar, Angrabhasa-I, Angrabhasa-II, Moulani, Chapadanga, Lataguri people are engaged in agricultural activities. The following table will highlight about the monthly income of tribal people.

Table 6 Monthly Family Income.

Block/ Subdivision	Monthly Income in Rs. (No of family in Percentage)				
	≤ 2500	2501-5000	5001-7500	7501-10000	≥ 10000
Mal Block	33	39	13	10	6
Matiali Block	27	40	16	10	6
Nagrakata Block	26	34	20	14	6
Mal Subdivision	30	38	16	11	6

Source: *Compiled by the authors.*

Table 7 Category wise Distribution of Monthly Family Incomes.

Block	Monthly Income in Rs. (No. of family in Percentage)									
	Tribal People					Non Tribal People				
	≤ 2500	2501-5000	5001-7500	7501-10000	≥ 10000	≤2500	2501-5000	5001-7500	7501-10000	≥ 10000
Mal	33	39	13	10	6	10	22	25	25	18
Matiali	27	40	16	10	6	15	25	23	25	12
Nagrakata	26	34	20	14	6	20	28	22	15	15
Total	30	38	16	11	6	16	25	24	20	15

Source: *Computed by the authors*

From the table No. 6 it is found that monthly family income for tribal people are very low in all blocks. On an average, 30% family has monthly income below Rs. 2500. Gram Panchayat level data shows that in Changmari (41%), Tesimla (40%), Bagrakot (38%), Lataguri (35%), Damdim (34%) and Kranti (34%) GPs there are more than 1/3rd family whose income per month is below Rs. 2500. However, the percentage of low income group people are lowest in Nagrakata block. The tea gardens are relatively better in condition there. Rs. 2501 to Rs. 5000 per month income slab is for maximum people in all GPs. Normally where more than one people are engaged in tea garden, their income is in this slab. On an average, there are 38% family whose income is Rs. 2501 - 5000 per month. On an average, there are 68% families whose

income is below Rs 5000. More than 75% families have monthly income below Rs. 5000 in the GPs of Changmari (86%), Bagrakot (80%), Damdim (78%), Indong Matiali (77%) and Tesimla (75%). Monthly income over Rs. 5001 is found in 32% families. Of these, maximum share is in the GPs of Nagrakata block (40%) and minimum in Mal block (29%). If we look for the GP level it is found that Champaguri (51%), Looksan (45%), Angrabhasa-II (40%), are in better condition. Incomes above Rs. 10,000 per month are noticed in few families. On an Average this figure is only 6% whose monthly income is above Rs. 10,000. Those who are in outside the state i.e. in Kerala, Maharashtra etc have higher income recorded in the last category. A few people are also in Govt. jobs.

A clear distinction has been observed in connection with the income between the tribes and non tribal people. In every block the income of non tribal people is higher than the tribal people. The study shows that nearly 16% non-tribal families have income below Rs. 2500, while this share is 30% for tribal people, almost double. Again, there are 6% tribal families earn above Rs. 10,000 per month, the share is 15% for non-tribal families. So, the tribal people are poorer than the non tribal people in every block of the Mal subdivision.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is clear that economic condition of tribal people living in Mal subdivision is very poor. Except the GPs of Nagrakata in all the other GPs of subdivision, the family income is very low compare to the standard income. A family consisting of 5 to 6 members with that sum amount is very negligible. Sometimes, the tea gardens remain closed for a long time which adversely affect income of the family. During the survey in 2015

such closed or abandoned tea gardens were noticed in Bagrakot, Damdim and Matiali Batabari-II GPs. Absolute misery, malnutrition, starvation, ill health and death were recorded in the area mentioned above. So there is urgent need to take fruitful steps for their overall development.

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Chapter-9.

Tribal Livelihood in Mal Subdivision of Jalpaiguri District: A Socio-Economic Perspective.

Bipul Chandra Sarkar.

Introduction: India ranked the second largest tribal population countries in the world. Right from the first five year Plan the Government has undertaken numerous programmes through various Five Year Plans for development of tribal areas and for improving the socio-economic conditions of tribal people. However, the results so far have not been encouraging as large number of tribal people in the country contributes to a major share of wide-spread poverty. In addition to this, the level of socio-economic development varies considerably between tribal and non-tribal people, between one tribe and another tribe and even among different sub group of tribal groups.

Location: Mal subdivision also known as Malbazar, is a sub-division of the Jalpaiguri district in the state of West Bengal, India. It is a newly created subdivision (1990s) and was earlier part of Jalpaiguri Sadar subdivision. Presently Mal Sub-division consists of Mal municipality and three community development blocks: Mal, Matiali and Nagrakata. The three blocks contain 22 Gram Panchayats. The subdivision has its headquarters at Malbazar. The sub-division is situated between 26°36' and 27° 0' North Latitudes and 88°14' and 88°40' East Longitudes. The study area is bounded in North by Darjiling district, in the east by Dhupguri block, in the south by Jalpaiguri Sadar and Maynaguri block and in the west Darjeeling district and Rajganj block. The total geographical area of Mal subdivision is 1150.84 Sq. Km.

Geography: The Mal subdivision is mainly hilly. Nagrakata and Matiali blocks are consisting with undulating and rough topography but Mal block is mainly plain. The land is sloping from North and North-west to South. Due to its proximity to the hills, the rainfall of

the region is much heavier and the temperature is seldom excessive. The cold season is from mid-November to the end of February. This is followed by the hot season from March to May. The period from June to about the beginning of October is the South West monsoon season. October to mid-November constitutes the post monsoon season. The atmosphere is highly humid throughout the year. Average rainfall received by the region is 330 cm. Maximum rainfall occurs from June to September. Heavy rains and hot summer support the growth of wet and evergreen forests. The sal (*Sorea robusta*) trees dominate the forests. There are mixed jungles, deciduous trees and bamboo grooves. The forests are mainly of four types, namely, riverine, plains hills and savannah. The forests and tree gardens create good natural scenic beauties. The major rivers are the Tista and Jaldhaka, The Tista is the largest river of the region as well as largest in North Bengal. The Tista, after entering the plains near Sivok again joined by several tributaries, namely, Lish, Gish, Chel and Neora from the North East.

In Mal Sub-division proportions of backward classes are highly concentrated (55.54%). It is nearly 20% for the scheduled Castes and 40% for the scheduled tribes. It is found that undivided Jalpaiguri district ranks 1st position in concentration of Scheduled Tribe population within West Bengal. According to 2001 census, 5.50% people of the state of West Bengal belongs to ST, while in Jalpaiguri district it was 18.87% and 14.56% total ST population of the State. Many of rare tribal communities live in the subdivision and their numbers are incalculable. Anthropologists believes that they are mainly Mongoloid arrives through the thick jungles of Bhutan or eastern Himalayas. Density of tribal population occurred maximum in Matiali followed by Mal and Nagrakata block. Some of the dominating tribal communities in the Sub-division are *Oraon*, *Munda*, *Santal*, *Lodha*, *Mech*, *Kora*, and *Kharia*. Distributions of individual tribes in different administrative blocks show that Oraons (19% of total *Oraons* of the district), *Mech* (2.8%), *Mahal* (13%), and *Koras* (63%) are maximum in Mal block. In Matiali, *Mundas* (14%) and

Lodhas (13%) are highly concentrated, In Nagrakata *Santals* (6%) and *Rabhas* are concentrated.

Concentration of Tribal population: There are 22 Gram Panchayats in the subdivision- 5 each in Matiali and Nagrakata and 12 in Mal block. There are 46 tea gardens in Mal block, 19 in Matiali block and 19 in Nagrakata block. Chengmari is the largest forest in the subdivision of 4578 acre followed by Rangamatee, Meteli, Nagusari, Baradighi, Zurantee etc. The tribes are mostly concentrated in these tea garden areas as labourer or related employment. The historical evidence proves that Britishers brought them from the Chhoto Nagpur area as tea garden labourers. People living in the areas are mainly peace loving, grouped and heterogeneous.

Following table will highlight the concentration of tribal people in the gram panchayats.

Mal Block						
Sl. No.	GP Name	Total Population	No. of Tribal Population	% of Tribal Population	Growth rate (2001-'11) in %	
					Population	ST Popn.
1	Bagrakot	25347	16780	66.20	13.31	20.76
2	Odlabari	40294	9973	24.75	11.70	11.88
3	Rangamatee	26803	18061	67.38	11.71	13.73
4	Rajadanga	35374	11028	31.18	8.34	26.73
5	Damdin	28037	18727	66.79	9.26	13.81
6	Tesimla,	14078	2765	19.64	17.23	9.55
7	Kumlai	24252	10497	43.28	11.37	12.76
8	Changmari	18820	4620	24.55	14.35	2.85
9	Kranti	23826	1967	8.26	15.86	2.93
10	Chapadanga	14583	212	1.45	29.98	17.78
11	Moulani	21350	684	3.20	14.30	14.19
12	Lataguri	15845	1046	6.60	13.94	-1.32
Block Total		288609	96360	33.39	13.05	13.29

Contd.....

Matiali Block						
13	Matiali Batabari-I	27211	14984	55.07	7.33	7.07
14	Matiali Batabari-II	19848	8316	41.90	6.85	7.78
15	Bidhannagar	23758	7704	32.43	44.70	67.62
16	Matiali Hat	24407	7630	31.26	-1.40	-9.00
17	Indong Matiali	26531	13263	49.99	4.94	-4.75
Block Total		121755	51897	42.62	10.30	6.75
Nagrakata Block						
18	Angrabhasa-I	9335	4583	49.09	12.61	14.09
19	Angrabhasa-II	16974	3039	17.90	20.92	15.73
20	Sulka para	25169	11081	44.03	13.29	13.27
21	Champaguri	39391	22742	57.73	4.20	9.52
22	Looksan	36528	21179	57.98	8.84	5.16
Block Total		127397	62624	49.16	9.91	9.23
Sub-division Total		555001	218280	39.33	11.71	10.50

- **Source: Census of India data and computed by the author.**

From the above Table it is found that concentration of tribal people is very high in all the blocks. Their concentration is very high in the Gram Panchayats which are tea garden based. More than 60% of total population belongs to tribes in gram panchayats of Bagrakote, Damdim and Rangamatee. 40% to 60% concentration of tribal people is noticed in Kumlai, Matiali Batabari-II, Indong Matiali, Angrabhasa-I, Champaguri, Sulka para and Looksan Gram Panchayat areas. The blocks which are even plain and agricultural areas are belongs to poor concentration of tribal people e.g. Chapadanga (1.45%), Moulani (3.2%), Lataguri (6.6%), Kranti (8.2%) etc. So, the GPs of Mal block has irregular concentration of tribal people. This is due to

Geographical variation of the GPs. The highly concentrated blocks are mostly located in close proximity to forest, uneven topography and tea garden based areas. Matiali and Mal block are mostly tea garden based. So, maximum concentration of tribal people in these blocks. In case of growth rate of tribal people again there are irregular character in different blocks. However, overall growth rate in the Sub-division is relatively lower than the normal growth of average population. Significantly negative growth rate is also noticed in few GPs like Matiali Hat (-9.0%), Indong Matiali (-4.75%), and Lataguri (-1.32%). High rate of growth is observed in the Gram Panchayats of Bidhannaagar, Bagrakote and Chapadanga. Negative growth causes due to lock out of tea gardens and job insecurity in the tea gardens.

Demography: Male female ratio is better among the tribes. It is 1000 female per 1000 male in Mal block, 1014 in Matiali block and 1013 in Nagrakata block. In Mal subdivision the overall ratio is 1007 female per 1000 male. This share is above the district, State and National average. Spread of Christianity and traditional livelihood of the people. The traditional belief about God i.e. worshipping of nature makes the tribal people an independent thinking of religion. However most of the tribal people recognise themselves as Hindu. However missionary activities of Roman Catholic group converted many tribal people to Christian. When a family falls in danger or suffers for acute diseases, missionary workers rush to help them. There are many missionary schools, churches in Doors region of the district. Such welfare activities popularised Christianity among tribal people. People of this region suffer from malnutrition and hard working. As a result live expectancy is low. If one enquired of about the age groups it will be found that 60 year+ age group people are rare. Average fertility rate per women varies 6 to 9. Maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate both are higher.

Economy: The tribal people basically depend on tea garden. There are two types of worker- permanent and temporary known as 'bigha'. The permanent workers get salaries in every fortnight. Present wage is Rs 122.00 per day. Sunday or any other day is weekly holiday. No work no pay system is there. Working duration is eight hours per day. Right to employment is carry forward in generation to generation. The temporary or *bigha* workers are seasonal workers generally involved in plucking of tea leaves. It is difficult to manage the family expenditure with these little earnings. In areas of Mal blocks like in Rajadanga, Lataguri, Chengmari, Bidhannagar land has been occupied by the rich merchants to develop tea garden in condition of job opportunity. One people will be engaged for every 3 bigha of land and this will be continued generation to generation. The land is forfeited from the farmers by the merchants. Illiteracy and simplicity of the people are the causes of such cheating. In a household where 5 to 6 family members are there, only 1 to 2 members are engaged in occupation in the tea garden. Cheap rationing systems are there in some tea gardens. Some tea garden has quarter system for the staffs of two to three rooms of semi pacca, tin shades with a latrine outside. Hence, many young age people go to western provinces for earning. In the GPs of Matiali Batabari-II, Lataguri, Chapadanga, Moulani, Angrabhasa-I and II tribal people are engaged in agriculture. Traditional adhiary system is still prevails in the area. There are many workers who engaged as agricultural labourer. A few people are engaged in govt. services.

Live is very hard for the tribal people. A family which earns less than Rs.1000 per head per month cannot even manage a BPL ration card. Every people should be BPL category. But practices are different. Ignorance of the local government is there. There are many dwellers that cannot enjoy the democracy because of absentee in Voters' list. Consciousness is fully absent in the gardens. Malnutrition, hunger, starvation and death are serious threat to the people. At least

50% of the tribal people cannot manage 2nd meal in a day for surviving. 60% people has not second set of clothes, 30% has not a pair of shoes and 40% lacking 2nd pair. The people who live in their own house have not latrine and kitchen in 60% cases. The information are gathered during a survey of the author. Drinking water facilities are there in the tea garden quarters but it is absent in other areas. Aibhil, Nagasuree- these gardens suffer from source of drinking water because of high relief. Those who are non-vegetarian cannot have fishes once in a week. But 'harira', a drink is very popular among the tribes.

Society: Most of the tribal people are lives in groups. There society is traditional. Nature is worshiped in many places. Tree is symbolic in all the cases. However, people enjoy the facility of collective lives. Hierarchical system of races is there. Santals are above the top of the society. *Oraons, Mahali, Koras* are bottom group of the society. Marital activities are allowed only within the same community. But marriage within same gotra is prohibited and punishable. Marriage ceremony is done after the couple live together one to two year at a home. This rule is for adjustment of bride and bridegroom. However, in the present context marriages within different communities are allowed because of love and affectionate among the boys and girls living among the same village as neighbour. At present they are involved in democracy by electing in the local bodies, panchayats etc. Different political activities are found among the tribal people. *Adibasi Bikas Parishad* is a recent uprising group sometimes demand for separate territorial identity. Conflict among tribes and *Gorkhas, Nepalese* are very present phenomenon.

Conclusion: Tribes are aboriginal people. But they are deprived in the society. Colonial legacy is still prevails upon their livelihood. Spread of education can aware them. A lockout problem of tea garden is very dangerous evil for them. Starvation and death are very common. If local government, NGOs and political

representatives act for them, the tribal society will be developed. Otherwise a burning situation may call the strategic insecurity in the area in near future.

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