

CHAPTER FIVE

5. INTERPRETATION FROM THE FIELD: SITUATING THE ROLE OF THE NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE DOOARS REGION SINCE 1991.

5.1. INTRODUCTION

We begin the chapter dedicated to the interpretation from the field with an introduction in section (5.1). Section (5.2) deals with the methodology used in conducting the field survey. Section (5.3) provides an overview of the survey area while section (5.3.1) is dedicated to the summary of the non-governmental organizations working in the area. Section (5.4) case studies on the role of the non-governmental organization in tribal development of the Dooars region since 1991. Section (5.5) provides us with the consolidated data analysis and section (5.6) discusses the micro level analysis: case studies. The statistical explanation is provided in section (5.7). We have attempted to provide the suggestive measures under section (5.8) and finally the present chapter ends with a conclusion under section (5.9).

This chapter is dedicated to the field survey and the significant findings from the field that proves to be of immense value for the academic world, providing us food for thought to ponder over the hidden areas that need to be attended with sincerity. Before directly starting off with the data analysis, it is important for us to understand the background of the area in which the research has been conducted. The Bengal Dooars region of North Bengal covers up a large geographical area of three major districts of Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar. Conducting an in detail field survey in all the three major districts can be regarded to be a major hurdle because of the territorial vastness of the area. This region is generally inhabited by the people of diverse communities, religions, languages, dialects, and economic categories and most important of all social structures and stratifications. Tracing the inhabitants from their ethnic identities, people from the Bengali, Rajbanshi, Adivasis (Santhal, Horo, Munda, Oraon, Asur, Nagbansi), the Jhumias (Mechia, Rabha, Garo, Drukpa, Toto), and the Nepali communities practicing Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Animism are the major residents of the area. From amongst this varied salad bowl, we have focused on our area of research i.e. the scheduled tribe population of the Dooars region. Therefore, acknowledging the contribution of Krishnapriya Bhattacharya (2007), and realizing the diversities of the heterogeneous tribes clubbed under the banner of the Scheduled tribes and at the same time

seriously disassociating it from an ethnographic study, we have broadly categorized the scheduled tribes of the region into two main groups. The first group comprises up of the indigenous inhabitants of the region who are famous for their practice of shifting cultivation under the banner of the **Jhumias** and the second being the migratory tribes who were brought to work in the region as tea plantation labourers, commonly referred to as the **Adivasis** or the **Madhesias**. It is interesting to note that in the local dialogues, the term Jhumias and Adivasis stand to denote two completely different types of people thereby hinting on the heterogeneity of the Scheduled tribe communities – that which the people of the grassroot level have well understood and accepted but which the decision making authorities have failed to make any sense of.

From amongst the two groups, the second group i.e. the Adivasis or the Madhesias who work as plantation labourers have completely out numbered the first group i.e. the shifting cultivators comprising up of heterogeneous communities such as the Rabhas, Mechias, Garos, Totos, Bodos and the Drukpas. Sadly, these people of the second group have lost their hold over the areas which were once completely under their domain.

With regard to their economic profile, the Adivasi scheduled tribe communities of the Dooars region (Santhals, Asurs, Nagbansis, Mundas, Bhumij, Mahali, Chik Barai, Oraon) in general, largely depend upon the tea plantations, with a very small percentage of them working in the government and private sectors for their livelihood. On the other hand, the indigenous tribes of the Dooars (Garo, Mechia, Rabha, Totos, Drukpas) practice that what can be generally termed as a self reliant model of sustainable livelihood; not to forget the educated sections being absorbed in the private and government ventures under respectable positions. However, after conducting the field survey it must be pointed out that not a single person belonging to the Jhumia clans work in the tea plantations – a job that was not accepted by them right from the British era till date. Trans-migratory jobs outside West Bengal such as Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana, Kerela and Bangalore are an attractive source of income for both the groups. However, here as well one can clearly witness that the Adivasi section generally opt for jobs in the plantation zones of Kerala, as carpenters in Bangalore, as labourers in the marble industry of Rajasthan, as farmers in Haryana and as domestic servants in the rest of India. On the other hand, due to a slightly better education level amongst some of the Jhumia tribes, the young folks of these communities move off to the metropolitan cities often employed in the private companies.

Keeping the diversified socio-economic structures of the two major groups of the scheduled tribe communities of the Dooars region in mind, it is very interesting to analyze the role of the non-governmental organizations contextualizing it with the role of the state organs in bringing about the development of these sections of the Indian population.

Since the 1990's, the non-governmental organizations in Dooars have definitely risen in number but at the same time the focus of attention (subject) has also witnessed a change in its target from charity missions to welfare, development and empowerment. However, to what extent have they achieved their target goals is also a subject of debate. Case studies conducted in the field make us believe that we cannot generalize the role of all the non-governmental organizations in bringing about development on a single platform. The areas that they cover also vary from place to place and from institution to institution. There are some non-governmental organizations that are non-functional and are found only in writings and official websites, the traces of which could not be found. On the other hand there are the others that have worked with sincere devotion in order to stand true to the reasons behind its formation. Mention must also be made about such non-governmental organizations that stand in between the functional and non-functional institutes often occupying the place of grey i.e. in between black and white. Therefore, one can clearly point out that in terms of their work pattern, functioning and dedication towards their service of reaching the grass root people, the non-governmental organizations of the Dooars region can be compartmentalized into three specific categories – *the dedicated working group, the half hearted semi working group and the non-functional/ non-working group*. We shall elaborate about this categorization in detail from our explanations and analysis drawn from individual case studies.

5.2. METHODOLOGY USED IN CONDUCTING THE FIELD SURVEY

The present study is a qualitative research work with a certain amount of quantitative analysis for which we have resorted to take the help of Chi Square test. The research methodology adopted here is snowball sampling survey method with multilayered sample survey research design. The selection of proper sample size is done using the following formulae as proposed by Bryman and Cramar.

Sample Size = (Distribution of 50%) / ((Margin of Error% / Confidence Level Score) Squared)

or

$$ss = \frac{Z^2 * (p) * (1-p)}{c^2}$$

or

$$\text{True Sample} = (\text{Sample Size X Population}) / (\text{Sample Size} + \text{Population} - 1)$$

Although, the formula provides us with 21.551 sample size, we have taken up 25 samples from each village adding up to 150 respondents as the total sample size from the six areas of Totopara, Buxa, Mendibari, Mechia Busty, Mechpara and Kumargram. We have started by drawing out a clear theoretical knowledge of the area concerned by deeply delving into the available texts, literature reviews, news paper readings, census reports and other vital documents that were necessary. In-depth interviews were conducted taking the help of designed schedules and voice recorders for gaining the true picture of the study area. The findings of the research have been presented with the help of empirical diagrams and charts for drawing a better understanding about the area, and the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development of the area along with the meaning of development to the scheduled tribes of the Dooars region.

5.3. OVERVIEW OF THE SURVEY AREA

The Dooars region of North Bengal is a home to many scheduled tribe communities of India. The British induced migration of the Adivasis from Chotanagpur region for transforming the area from unorganized cotton plantation to a well organized capitalist tea plantation has had a serious impact upon the drastic rise in the number of Adivasi scheduled tribes in the region thereby outnumbering and endangering the indigenous scheduled tribes of the area. This led to the further more drifting of the indigenous groups from the main land Dooars to the interiors often leaving them untouched by external intervention and modernity. This shifting pattern practiced by them, often working as shifting cultivators have definitely helped them protect their cultural diversities, but at the same time they have also been debarred of the basic necessary tools of modern day living. This cultural preservation is also not done in its

purest form. Due to the process of mainland acculturation, these indigenous tribes have lost and are losing their age old traditional practices of bamboo product making, weaving clothes, medicinal knowledge, political structures, religious beliefs and their own social practices thereby leaving them at the threshold of neither prismatic nor fused model of development. The stories of the Adivasi tribes are no better. Working in the tea plantations for generations have made them accept the age old colonial practice of master slave relationship that makes them fail to dream of a better livelihood not to forget the contribution of chronic alcoholism leading to negative development.

These areas inhabited by majority scheduled tribe population have been comparatively left untouched by the modern amenities of life that can be considered to be basic for human development and empowerment in the long run. Somewhere or the other due to the negligence on the part of the decision making authorities, the unawareness of the beneficiaries accompanied by a negative attitude of the outside world have left them in the middle of nowhere. In this regard one must not confuse the idea of development and modernity. By portraying an empathy with the scheduled tribes of the study area with regard to their desire of economic well being followed by socio political development, the researcher nowhere believes in making this heterogeneous group a sample of survey for the researchers and academicians; the reason for which the anthropological approach to the study of tribal development was greatly criticized for. Unless and until the marginalized scheduled tribe population of the country is lifted up to a platform that provides them economic, social and political security thereby making them competent enough to choose and decide the best for themselves (as propounded by the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development), the meaning of development stands to be futile.

Trying to address this pertinent question of tribal development in bringing them to a common platform with the rest of the mainland citizens of the country has always been a major challenge to the ever changing governments of the nation. Due to the emergence of an era of specialization, a massive growth in the rise of the third sector of development commonly referred to as the non-governmental organizations, alongside the State has been witnessed. The non-governmental organizations have also largely interfered in the process of development of the scheduled tribe population of the country.

Dedicated field work surveys have been conducted in the following areas of the Dooars region –

- i. Totopara, Madharihat Block, Alipurduar District (Former Jalpaiguri District).
- ii. Uttar and Madhya Mendibari, Nimti Chowk, Kalchini Block, Alipurduar District.
- iii. Buxa Fort/ Dara goan, Lapchakha, Buxa Tiger Reserve, Alipurduar District.
- iv. Mechia Busty inside Torsha Tea Garden, Jaigaon, Alipurduar District.
- v. Mechpara Tea Garden, Kalchini Block, Alipurduar District.
- vi. Uttar and Madhya Haldibari of Kumargram Block, Alipurduar District.

Apart from these major areas, we have also conducted informal survey in areas like Jayanti, Salsalabari, Barabhuia, Bolburi, Uttar Dhalkor, Sankos, Panbari, Gadhodhar, Shivkatha, Chuapara Tea Garden, Garopara etc.

In each village we have attempted to address the core question of our research area i.e. tried to understand the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development in the present era especially since 1991. In an attempt to extract virgin first hand information, the researcher has dedicated serious attention and labour to the fact of making the respondents comfortable with the questionnaire in hand for which the help of voice recorders were used realizing the reluctance of the respondents to open up in a formal manner for the interview. It was a challenging job on the part of the researcher to convince the respondents about the importance of their participation in the interview promising them security and assurance of not naming them in person in the survey.

5.3.1. OVERVIEW OF THE NGOS WORKING IN THE AREA

Although the official counting of the number of non-governmental organizations stand to be more than three thousand two hundred and eighty six working for the tribal developmental affairs in India at large and two thousand six hundred and twenty one non-governmental organizations working in West Bengal in all the areas of development (www.ngo.india.gov.in), yet if one conducts a serious survey, it is very disheartening to find only a hand few of them working in the area. This leaves a serious question in the mind of a researcher as to why have the authorities remained silent in addressing this vital criminal offence against humanity. This leaves open a debate about the role of the non-governmental

organizations in tribal development keeping in mind the major variable of its existence, semi existence, pseudo existence and non-existent nature. However, taking up an optimistic understanding and reviewing the hand few of the working non-governmental organizations, it becomes our ardent responsibility to note down a few points about their functional specialization. We have numbered the names of the non-governmental organizations in a chronological order in accordance to the opinions of the respondents whom they consider to be working in the area. Therefore the initial four non-governmental organizations are the ones voted to be the serious workers and the bottom most are the ones that we have found confined to their offices the existence of which the people are unaware of.

The **major non-governmental organizations** working in the Dooars region of North Bengal stand to be as follows:-

Tufanganj Anwasha Welfare Society- Tufanganj Anwasha Welfare Society is a non-governmental organization that basically specializes in horticulture and research of agricultural produce. It portrays itself to be one of the primary resource organizations of West Bengal working under the project of State Urban Livelihood Mission. At present Anwasha has been working on numerous projects both of national and international stature. Assisting the World Bank project Anwasha has been functional in the solar power irrigation system (GIZ Project) thereby helping the farmers with irrigation from the solar energy drawn from this project. Apart from irrigation the extra solar energy is used for other purposes such as RO water plants, sewing machines for vegetable bags, animal fodder machines etc. For the scheduled tribes in particular, this non-governmental organization has been helping out with the organization of farmers for the cultivation of lime, guava, Erica plant and other forest plants by providing them necessary technical knowledge with the help of specialized horticulturalist. For the landless scheduled tribes, rearing of pigs have been granted with time to time proper vaccination, diet chart and fodder being provided by the organization. Three pigs per individual tribal family is distributed and taken care of by the organization with the help of technical assistance. The tribal family is to learn the art of rearing pigs by taking these three pigs as samples for understanding the possibility of starting up pig farming at a commercial scale. NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) is the main funding agency distributing major developmental projects for the empowerment of the scheduled tribe communities of the area. Technically, NABARD provides seventy percent of

financial assistance while the beneficiary is expected to invest thirty percent of aid generally in the form of manual labour.

Vasundhara Enviro Welfare Society - Vasundhara Enviro Welfare Society, specializes in skill development in the field of animal husbandry by opening up training centres and also imparting practical field based knowledge. This non-governmental organization primarily works in the health sector by training people to work in the health centres where ultimately they are provided with job opportunities in such health based areas. Seventy two members work in this organization with most of them focusing on field based activities. Vasundhara Welfare Society generally acts as an alternate assisting non-governmental organization to Tufangunj Anwasha Welfare Society and in most of the cases they are seen working in collaboration.

Benoy Dream Academy- This non-governmental organization happens to be one of the chief patrons of alternative source of livelihood for the tribal people who are basically engrossed in tea plantation as labourers. The major financing agency is the NABARD that sanctions loans and grants for tribal welfare. Handloom machines, piggeries and poultries alongside beetle nut cultivation, lime and guava cultivation, Erica plantation is encouraged and assisted by these non-governmental organizations with the help of specialized horticulturists. This has definitely helped the tribal families to earn an alternate source of living but because land ownership is primarily on the male line of inheritance, not much is done for the tribal women in particular. The handlooms have definitely given the tribal women a boost where they weave cloth and the self help groups do the marketing of such products. Large companies from Delhi and Bangalore also employ these tribal women in cloth weaving thereby fetching a sustainable source of livelihood ultimately leading to their empowerment.

Family Planning Association of India- The Family Planning Association of India focuses on the sexual and reproductive health of the people of the rural areas of the Dooars region. The Family Planning association of India devotes its attention to the empowerment of women through safe delivery techniques saving the lives of both the mother and the child, imparting education about adolescence and the importance of reproductive health care through rural awareness camps etc. by running in close collaboration with the non-governmental organizations and the government.

Since the geographical area is a predominantly a tribal belt, this organization has been successful to a very large extent in enhancing the belief of the tribal women from traditional orthodox medical practices to modern scientific medicine.

Video Volunteer- This non-governmental organization is an international media based non-governmental organization that focuses upon human rights violations and the right to live with dignity in the rural areas of India and abroad with its head office located in New York. They operate with the help of community reporters who are trained in the field of short video making where the epicenter of the videos generally revolve around gender sensitization, justice and the protection and promotion of human rights. The reality based videos that they run in India are circulated under the banner of Unheard India. The community reporters are recruited and paid on the basis of their video and its relevance.

This non-governmental organization has helped in drawing the attention of the views or the ordinary concerned masses of not only India but on a larger global scale. In the process of the video making, most of the problems get solved in the due process which is also reported in the video itself. Therefore, one can well imagine the power and impact that this media based non-governmental organization has upon the bureaucrats, the common people as well as the scheduled tribes in being able to secure a life with dignity. Harihar Nagbansi, a person with a Masters in Social Work degree belonging to the Nagbansi scheduled tribe community in the interiors of the Bhatkhawa Tea Garden of Garopara happens to be one of such community reporter of this non-governmental organization.

Lok Kalyan Parishad- The Lok Kalyan Parishad operates in the Dooars region with its office situated at Hamiltanganj, Kalchini Block in Alipurduar district with Ms. Neela Chettri as the District Project Manager. This non-governmental organization with its Dooars branch focuses upon the empowerment of women by educating them about the meaning and importance of participating in the local self governance under the banner of the Panchayati Raj Institution in India. The Lok Kalyan proudly boasts about its achievement in the successful launching and running of the women's self help groups that facilitate the empowerment of women through economic betterment, social upliftment and political participation. A project on Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Yojana has also been run by this non-governmental organization. They believe in demanding and delivering the job cards to the women of the rural areas alongside providing them with strong technical knowledge and training in the field of sustainable agriculture in and around the surrounding areas. The office

bearers of the Lok Kalyan Parishad believe that the main reason for bringing this non-governmental organization in the region was because of a rise in the number of sick and closed tea gardens for which an alternative source of livelihood for the plantation labourers posed a serious problem. In order to address the immediate demands of the people of such sick and closed tea gardens, the Lok Kalyan Parishad came to the fore front. They believe in the proper utilization of the available natural resources by taking the help of resource person in the field of better agricultural techniques, health insurances for the beneficiaries and even vaccination programmes for the domesticated cows for better yielding of results.

Save the Child- This is a non- governmental organization that claims it to be operative in the area. The main objective of this organization is to save children from child abuse, torture and trafficking. This organization also looks into trafficking of children, girls and women of the rural area. Apart from this, Save the Child takes up efforts to reinstate child drop outs back to school, encourages them to achieve standard education and makes them aware about the various monetary schemes announced by the government for school going children such as mid day meal, Shikshashree Yojana and Kanyashree Yojana. They also form children group to educate them and make them aware about their rights and duties.

According to Mr. Pradip Sarkar, Secretary of Save the Child, they work in collaboration with another non- governmental organization named **Rural Aid** in accomplishing bigger projects. He believes that since the area of operation is large, one cannot work in isolation. It requires a team work for which they work in collaboration with other such organization. However the real meaning of Mr. Sarkar still fails to be understood by the researcher.

Dooars Pratibandhi Samiti believes to work for anti trafficking projects of the government. It organizes awareness camps to educate young adults both male and female about the risks and dangers of trafficking in the area. They also work in close collaboration with the Sashtra Seema Bal (SSB) in derailing trafficking from the Indo Bhutan border via Sankosh.

Apart from the above mentioned active non-governmental organizations in the Dooars region, we also were informed about the existence of other such non-governmental organizations not by the respondents but unfortunately only by the office bearers of these organizations themselves. Therefore, it is left open to the discretion of the readers to decide about the role of such pseudo existent non-governmental organizations, the names of which are definitely many more than that as listed below -

Dooars Lok Sanskriti Sanstha, Mechpara Dooars Welfare Society, Rural Aid, Karuna Memorial Health Care Society, Alipurduar Rural And Tribal Development Kalyan Samiti, World Health Organisation, Alipurduar New Town Dooars Star Seba Samiti, Alipurduar Shadow Welfare Organisation, Save the Child, etc. It is however very important to note the fact that the researcher does not intend to take sides either in favour of any of the above mentioned non-governmental organization or discard any one of them. Relying completely on the field based knowledge gathered from the respondents, the researcher has placed the chronological sequence of such non-governmental organizations. The names of those non-governmental organizations that have completed their projects and left the areas such as the *Child in Need Institute, the UNICEF, the CASA* and the like have not been discussed on purpose because they are no more present in the area. Whatever information has been gathered from the respondents, have been jotted down and prioritized as according to the schedule, leaving the researcher to be completely objective cutting down on her subjectivity.

5.4. CASE STUDIES ON THE ROLE OF THE NGOS IN TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOOARS REGION SINCE 1991

As mentioned earlier, six major areas of the Dooars region co-incidentally falling in the Alipurduar districts have been carefully chosen as the area of survey. The rationale behind choosing these six integral locations is very much significant. This is because we have carefully divided the scheduled tribe communities of the Dooars region of North Bengal into two major groups depending upon their origin of existence. The first group comprises up of the sons of the soil i.e. the indigenous scheduled tribe populations that are commonly referred to as the Jhumias. These groups are comprised up of the Garos, Mechias, Drukpas, Rabhas and the Totos. These communities are found to be settled in the outskirts and often untraceable locations such as extremely mountainous regions with no roadways, untraceable river beds and the extremes of the interior forestry. Therefore, we have taken up the areas such as Daragaon and Lapchakha of the Buxa Hills, The Mechia Busty, Mendibari or the Rabha busty and the Totopara to address the Jhumia tribes.

The second group of the scheduled tribe communities basically thrive on the tea plantations by working as the tea plantation labourers earning a wage of one hundred and thirty two rupees and a fifty paise per day who are generally referred to as the Adivasis or the

Madhesias that have migrated from Bihar and Chotanagpur regions to work as labourers in the tea plantations of the Dooars region. These groups are comprised up of the Santhal, Munda, Horo, Kerketta, Nagbansi, Asur, Oraon, Lakhra, Beck etc. In order to gather the valuable opinions about the role of the existing non-governmental organizations in the area we have conducted surveys in the Bhatkhawa Tea Garden of Garopara (where unfortunately not a single Garo can be found today) and the operating Tea Garden of Mechpara Tea Estate near the Chuapara Tea Zone of Kalchini Block under the Alipurduar District.

There are some regions where we find a mixture of both the Adivasi and Jhumia scheduled tribes living together probably due to the adoption of Christianity and the acculturation of Christian life styles of living as brothers and sisters of the Cross. One such interesting area happens to be the Uttar and Madhya Haldibari of Kumargram Block of Alipurduar District where we find the existence of the Rabhas, Subbas, the Oraons, the Santhals, the Rajbansis, and the Bodos of Assam alongside few well off Bengalis and Biharis. To draw the idea of development of the scheduled tribes with accessibility to the outside world we have conducted a field based survey in this area as well.

From amongst the above mentioned six integral zones, we have collected a total of one hundred fifty samples with twenty five each from every location. Each area has a different story to narrate thereby enriching us in our understanding about the dimensions of development by incorporating the meaning of development as perceived by the respondents themselves and their analysis about the role of the third sector of development i.e. the non-governmental organizations operating in the area.

Let us now devote our attention to the micro level understanding of the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development of the Dooars region initially from a consolidated perspective and then taking up each case individually for a better understanding, thereby unfolding the series of layers of interesting findings from the survey conducted in these significant areas.

5.5. CONSOLIDATED DATA ANALYSIS

This section of the chapter tries to make an analysis of the consolidated figures gathered from all of the above mentioned six survey areas with one hundred and fifty respondents out of which 100 respondents are male while the rest 50 are females. As has been mentioned above, due to the absence of the non-governmental organizations in the Mechia Busty, we have sketched a different schedule for this particular survey area alone. Therefore, keeping it separate under 5.4, our consolidated findings will be based on the rest of the five areas namely Totopara, Mendibari, Buxa, Mechpara Tea Garden and Kumargram with 125 respondents out of which 85 are male and 40 are female. Each finding shall be substantiated with a proper table alongside a pie chart to make the readers understand the significance of every vital question put forward to the respondents. For further reference one may refer to the questionnaire that has been placed towards the end of the thesis. Along with the questionnaire we have also placed the raw data for those interested in delving deeper in the virgin data.

The main focus of attention that this research work tries to focus is on the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development of the Dooars region of North Bengal for which we have taken six vital areas that proudly represent the Jhumia Scheuled Tribe settlement, the Adivasi Scheduled Tribe settlement and mixed settlement comprising up of the tribals alongside the non-tribals in general. The **major questions** that we intend to answer with the help of this survey are as follows –

- **Has the government been successful enough to develop the tribals of the area with the help of the local self governments?**

The parameters that we have adopted in addressing these questions are as follows:

(Who gets the priority in receiving the contracts of road construction, drainage, bridge etc.? Are the tribals informed about the area development projects? Do you see a friendly approach on the part of the non-tribal officials and neighbours? etc.)

- **What is the meaning of development to the scheduled tribes of the region and does it have any association with the Right to Development as a Human Right as propounded by the United Nation Organization?**

(Is economic growth alone sufficient for your area to develop? What about education, status of women, health etc.? Do you witness domestic violence, police atrocities, harassment from any one? Do you report to any NGO or village head or the police if

such incidents take place in the village? Do you consider the right to choose for yourself important? What are the criteria that need to be filled up for your village to be termed as a developed village?)

➤ **Have the non-governmental organizations justified their existence by playing a role of a facilitator between the tribals and development?**

(Do you see the NGOs helping the tribal villagers in the hour of crisis? Do they present a friendly attitude towards the tribals? Are the NGOs approachable? Do they visit the area on a regular basis? Do you ask the NGOs for help if you require? Do the NGOs update the tribal villagers with the tribal policies of development? etc.)

And lastly,

➤ **What kind of developmental approach do the scheduled tribes desire for the tribal development in the Dooars region of North Bengal?**

(Are you consulted when the projects or schemes are sent or planned by the Panchayats in your area? Do you regard your participation to be important in the process of policy formulation and implementation? Are the NGOs in your area assisting you in any form? If so what? What is the role of the NGOs in your area? Are you satisfied? etc.)

These vital questions have been divided into serious sixteen questions with some sub-questions to make the respondents clear about the question alongside the objective of research i.e. to gain the true picture of tribal development and the role of the non-governmental organizations in it. The following pages contain some of the important tables and charts that reflect the opinion of the respondents on few of the important areas questioned by the researcher and the concluding pages of the thesis may be consulted for raw data if required. Let us now try to understand the major consolidated findings of the overall survey.

5.5.1. Socio Economic Character of the Sample

The following table 1, 2 & 3 depicts the socio economic profile of the respondents. Due to the diversified sources of livelihood, it posed a serious drawback to present the economic profile of the respondents graphically. Therefore, we have pointed out the job profile of the respondents and their sources of income to present their economic status in the following sequence –

Carpenter & Helper – 04, Farmer – 47, Weaver – 05, Church Assistant – 04, Domestic Helper – 03, Electrician – 01, Driver – 05, Fish Vendor – 01, Former Pradhan – 01, Housewife – 18, Labourer – 07, Local Contractor – 01, Local Politician – 01, Business – 19, Tea Garden Workers – 09, Teacher – 01, Unempolyed – 18, Student – 05 thereby clubbing up to 150 respondents. This makes it clear that the respondents of the study area are primarily dependent upon primary sources of livelihood with a few exceptions that are engaged in the secondary sources. The work distribution is largely dependent upon each area of study where the Jhumia scheduled tribes are seen to be on a better platform as compared to the Madhesia scheduled tribes. This has been clarified in the individual case studies accordingly.

Let us understand the opinions of the respondents from the following illustrations provided in the charts, tables and the graphical explanations.

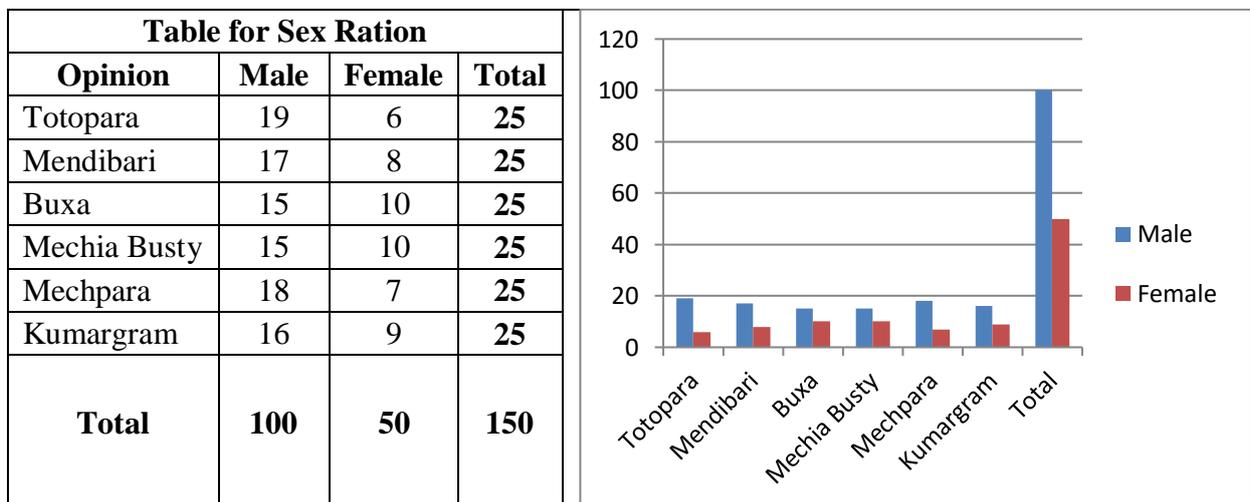


Table No. 1. Sex Ratio of the Sample of Study. Source: Field Survey

In the survey, it was found that comparatively more numbers of male respondents were comfortable in participating in the interviews conducted for the research thereby outnumbering the women respondents.

Area	Age Group										Grand Total
	(18 - 30)		(31 - 40)		(41 - 50)		(51 - 63)		Total		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Totopara	3	1	5	3	9	2	2	0	19	6	25
Mendibari	3	1	8	4	6	3	0	0	17	8	25
Buxa	2	2	6	2	4	6	3	0	15	10	25
Mechia Busty	1	5	3	2	5	2	6	1	15	10	25
Mechpara	2	1	5	5	8	1	3	0	18	7	25
Kumargram	4	3	5	2	2	3	5	1	16	9	25
Total	15	13	32	18	34	17	19	2	100	50	150

Table No. 2. Source: Field Survey

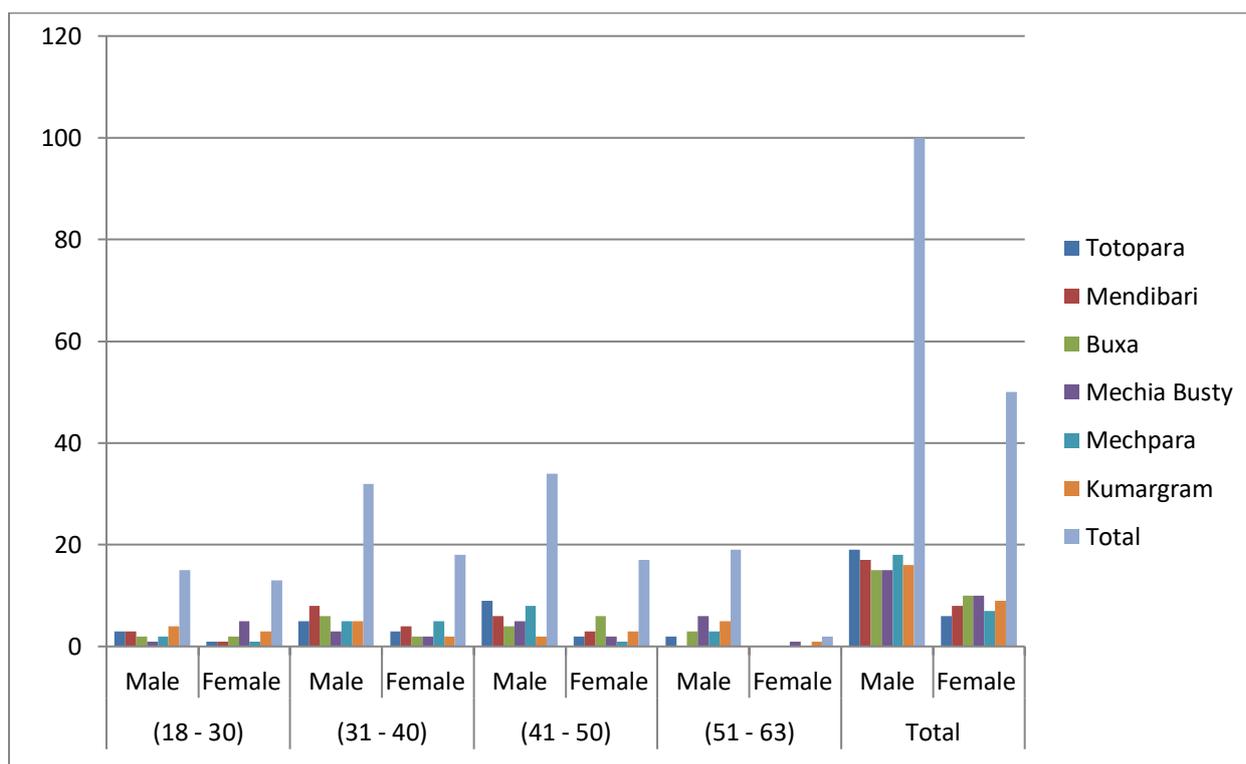


Chart for Table No. 2

Table for Educational Status										
Opinion	0 - 5		6 - 8		9 - 12		Graduation		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	11	4	2	0	6	2			19	6
Mendibari	13	6	1	0	3	1	0	1	17	8
Buxa	9	2	2	2	3	6	1	0	15	10
Mechia Busty	10	4	3	1	2	5			15	10
Mechpara	10	3	2	3	6	1			18	7
Kumargram	6	5	1	2	7	2	2	0	16	9
Total	59	24	11	8	27	17	3	1	100	50

Table No. 3. Source: Field Survey

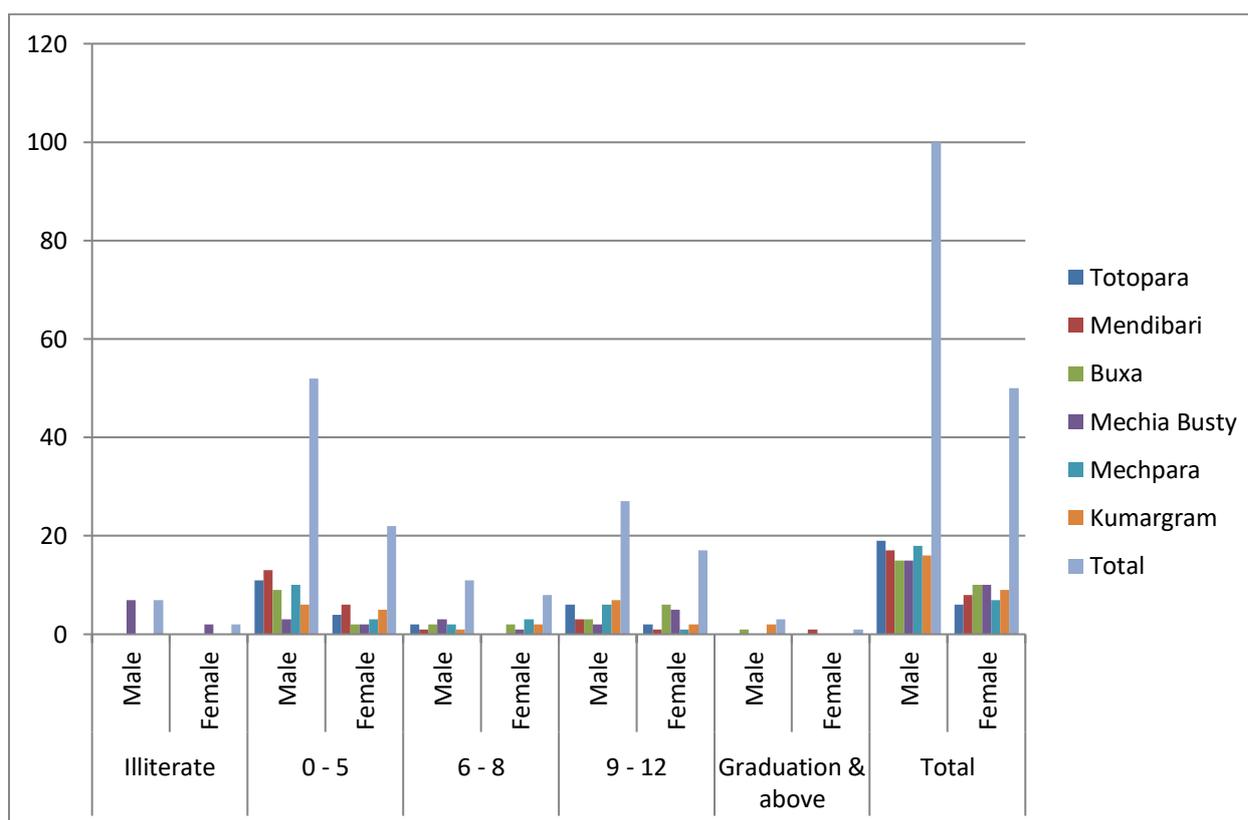


Chart for Table No. 3

Table number 3 indicates that a majority of the respondents from the six major areas have a degree only up to the primary level and that too the males outnumber the female respondents.

Opinion	Yes		No		Partially Aware	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	3	1	2	0	14	5
Mendibari	0	1	0	1	17	6
Buxa	7	4	1	0	7	6
Mechpara	3	0	0	0	15	7
Kumargram	9	1	0	2	7	6
Total	22	7	3	3	60	30

Table No.4. Source: Field Survey

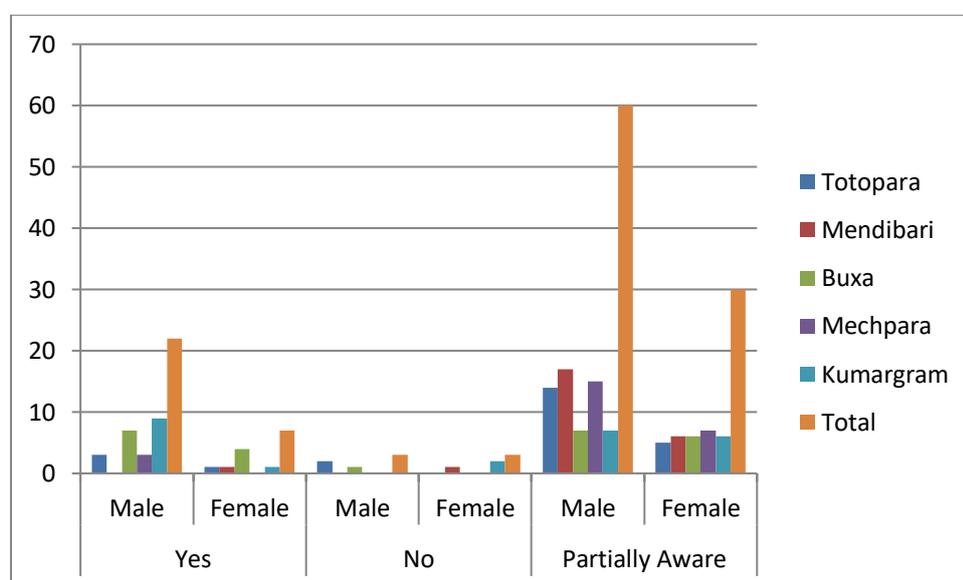


Chart for Table No. 4

The above provided table and chart number 4 indicates the opinion of the respondents from the five major areas accounting to one hundred and twenty five respondents. The rest twenty five from Mechia Busty have been surveyed with a different set of questionnaire because of their wide variations from the rest. Henceforth, in this section of the consolidated figures we have excluded Mechia Busty. 23.2% claim themselves to be aware of such schemes while 4.8% state their unawareness. Interestingly 72% of the respondents believe that they are only partially aware about the governmental schemes for their development because of many inbuilt reasons such as illiteracy, corruption, ignorance, poverty etc.

Opinion	Very Good		Good		Average		Bad		Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	0	0	2	0	13	4	1	1	3	1
Mendibari	0	0	1	1	12	7	0	0	4	0
Buxa	0	0	3	0	9	8	1	0	2	2
Mechpara	0	0	4	3	12	4	1	0	1	0
Kumargram	0	0	1	1	12	6	1	0	2	2
Total	0	0	11	5	58	29	4	1	12	5

Table No. 5. Source: Field Survey

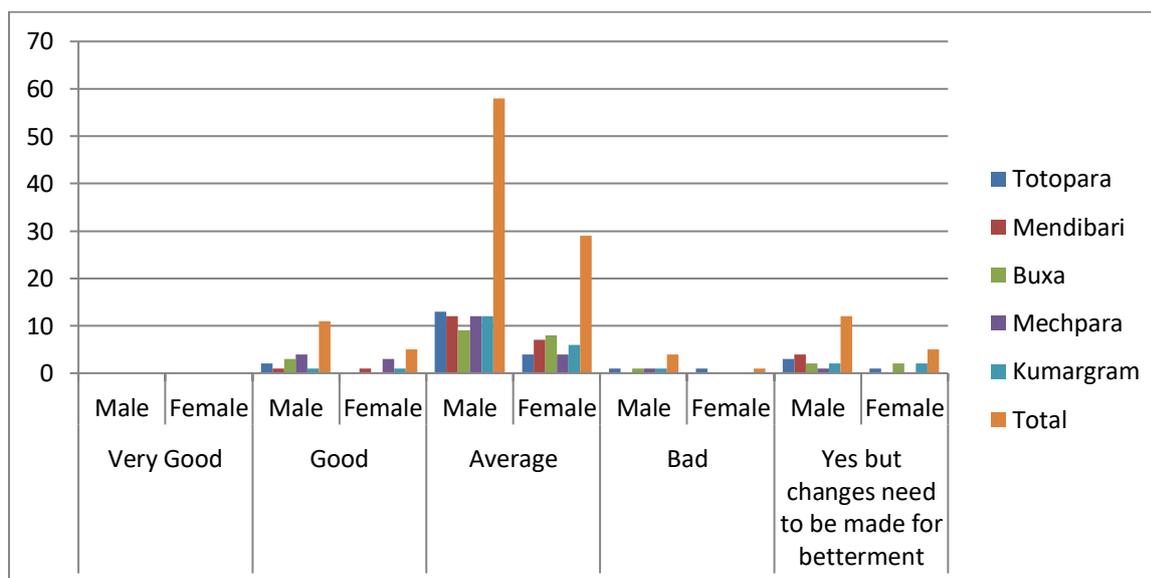


Chart for Table No. 5

Table number5enquires the respondents about the implementation of the developmental schemes by the government where 12.8% regard it to be good, 69.6% think it is average, 4% discard it while 13.6% think that there is much scope for betterment in the functioning of the government for the betterment of the tribal communities of the area.

Opinion	Very Good		Good		Average		Bad		Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	0	0	0	0	2	0	14	3	3	3
Mendibari	0	0	0	0	6	2	0	0	11	6
Buxa	0	0	0	0	5	2	1	2	9	6
Mechpara	0	0	0	0	7	5	1	0	10	2
Kumargram	0	0	2	1	8	3	1	1	5	4
Total	0	0	2	1	28	12	17	6	38	21

Table No. 6. Source: Field Survey

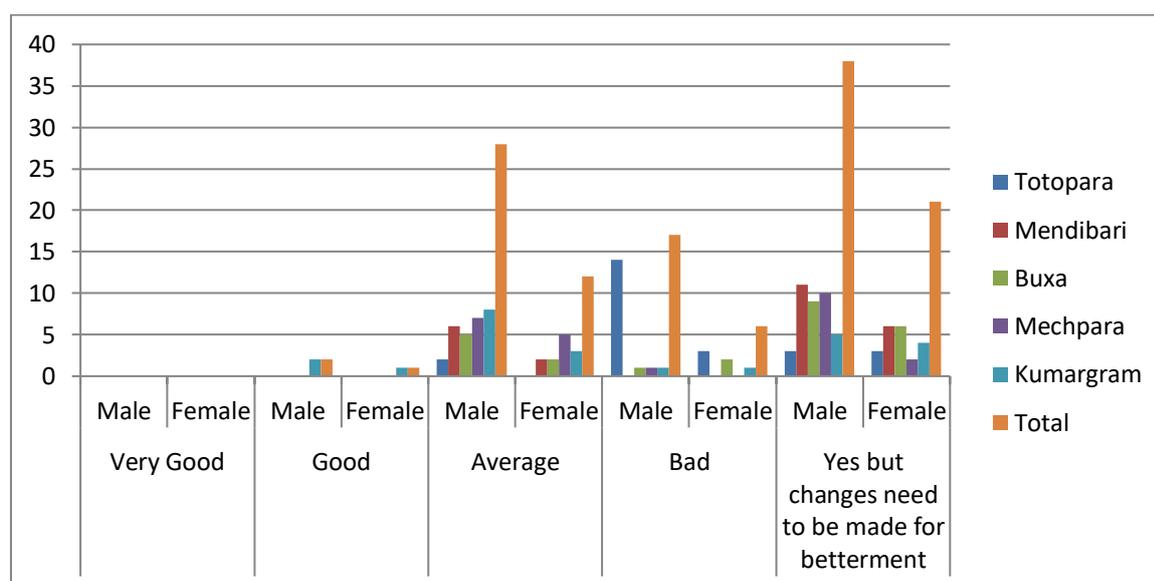


Chart for Table No. 6

Table number 6 enquires the respondents as to whether the governmental policies are really helpful in the development of the scheduled tribes of the area where we fail to find people who regard such policies to be very helpful. 2.4% of the respondents consider these policies to be good, 32% feel it to be average. 18.4% regard such policies to be bad while 47.2% are still positive enough to see a scope for betterment with a little more effort.

Opinion	Very Good		Good		Average		Bad		Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	0	0	0	0	4	2	15	4	0	0
Mendibari	0	0	0	0	17	8	0	0	0	0
Buxa	0	0	0	1	4	6	2	1	9	2
Mechpara	0	0	0	0	18	7	0	0	0	0
Kumargram	0	0	1	1	7	5	5	2	3	1
Total	0	0	1	2	50	28	22	7	12	3

Table No. 7. Source: Field Survey

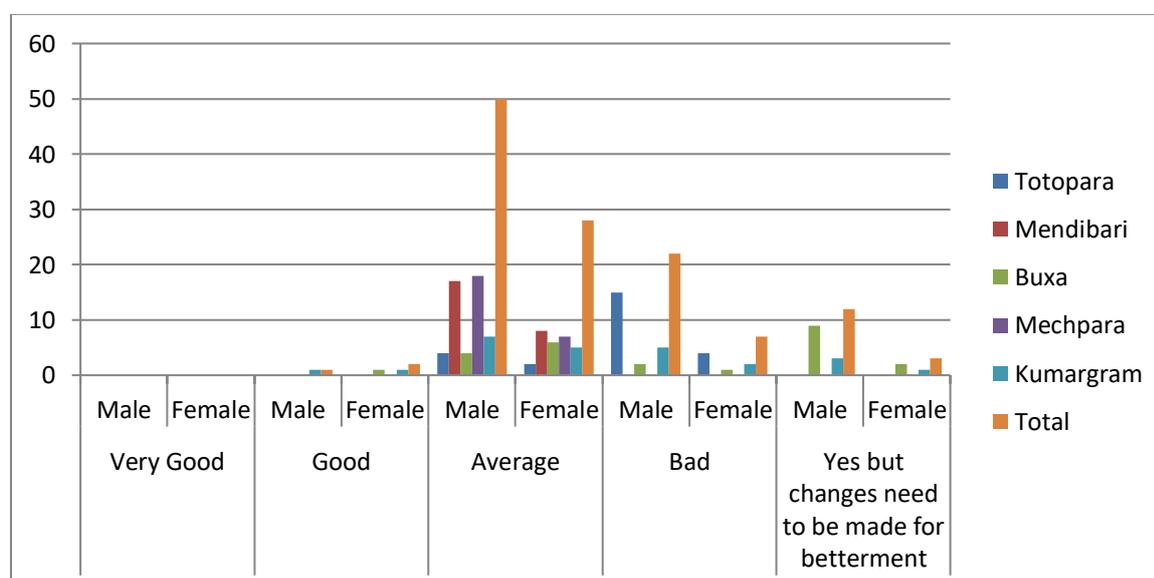


Chart for Table No. 7

Table number 7 enquires the respondents with regard to the level of empowerment of the scheduled tribes by such governmental policies where nobody considers to be very good, 2.4% regard it to be good, 62.4% feel it to be average while 23.2% of them outwardly reject such policies to have empowered them. 12% of the respondents are optimistic with a view that betterment or empowerment can be brought about if enacted properly.

Opinion	Yes		No		Scope for betterment	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	18	6	1	0	0	0
Mendibari	17	7	0	1	0	0
Buxa	12	9	3	1	0	0
Mechpara	10	4	8	3	0	0
Kumargram	14	8	2	1	0	0
Total	71	34	14	6	0	0

Table No. 8. Source: Field Survey

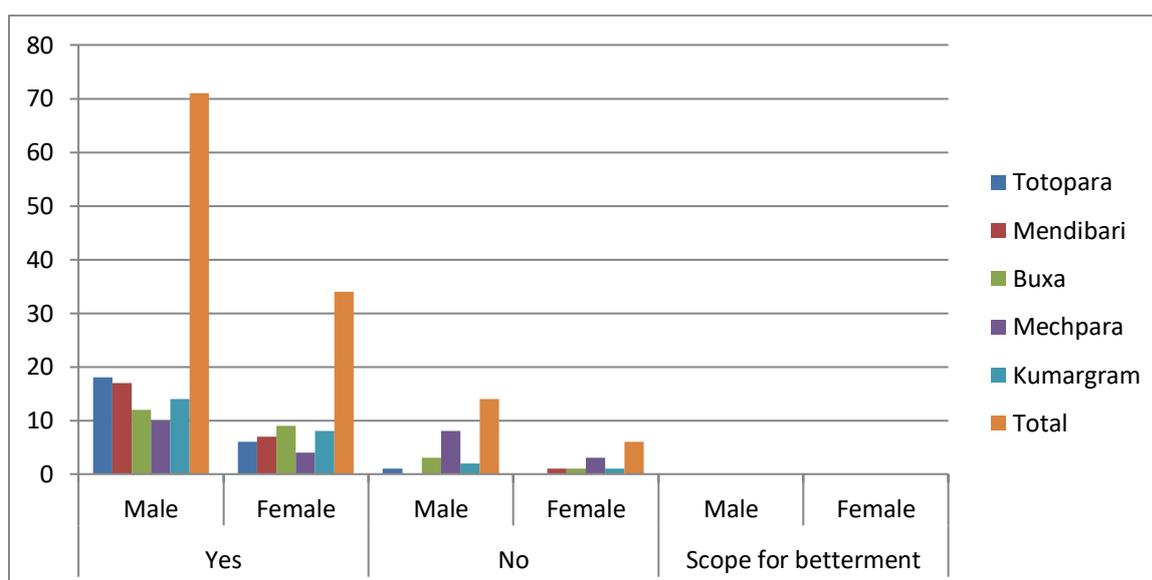


Chart for Table No. 8

Table number 8 is very important for us to understand as to what opinion do the respondents hold about prior consultation with them before the formulation of Tribal Development Policies. An alarming rate of 84% of the respondents believe that prior consultation of the law making authorities with the scheduled tribes of the area is very much important for the formulation of better designed policies for them that will be able to address the core areas in a much better manner. On the other hand 16% of the respondents do not regard prior consultation before the formulation of tribal developmental policies to be necessary and hence, seem to be happy with the existing system.

Table No. 9: Assumption of the Presence of NGOs in the area				
Opinion	Yes		No	
Area	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	4	2	15	4
Mendibari	17	8	0	0
Buxa	14	8	1	2
Mechpara	13	6	5	1
Kumargram	14	9	2	0
Total	62	33	23	7

The respondents do not appear to be confident enough to answer this question because they are made to believe about the existence of the NGOs in the area by the elites, which is why the word Assumption is used in the table.

Table No. 9. Source: Field Survey

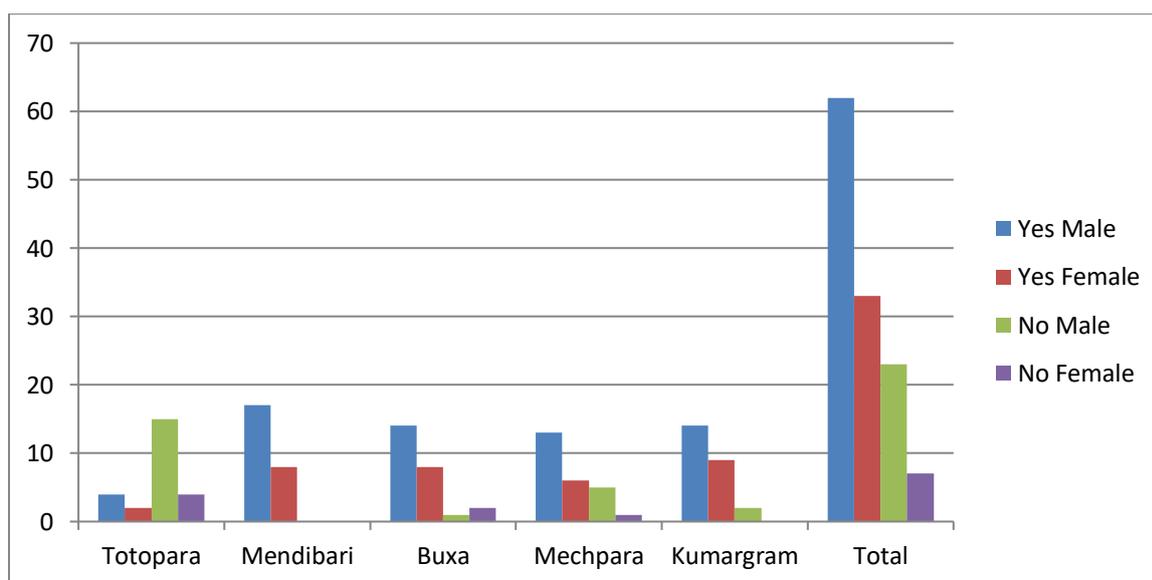


Chart for Table No. 9

Table number 9 enquires the respondents about the *presence* of non-governmental organizations in the area which however must not be *confused* with the number of *working non-governmental organizations* in the area. 76% of the respondents believe the presence of the non-governmental organization in the area while 24% do not think on the same lines. It appears that most of the respondents who have answered in the favour of the presence of non-governmental organizations narrate it to have heard from someone but in most of the cases have never seen them working in person.

Opinion	Developmental- charity works, relief aids, crisis management		Empowerment oriented- site some examples (Livelihood, Health, Education)		Detrimental by making them dependent on them?		I don't see them working	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	3	1	0	0	0	0	16	5
Mendibari	2	1	15	7	0	0	0	0
Buxa	2	1	7	6	1	0	5	3
Mechpara	2	0	3	2	0	0	13	5
Kumargram	3	2	5	0	0	0	8	7
Total	12	5	30	15	1	0	42	20

Table No. 10. Source: Field Survey

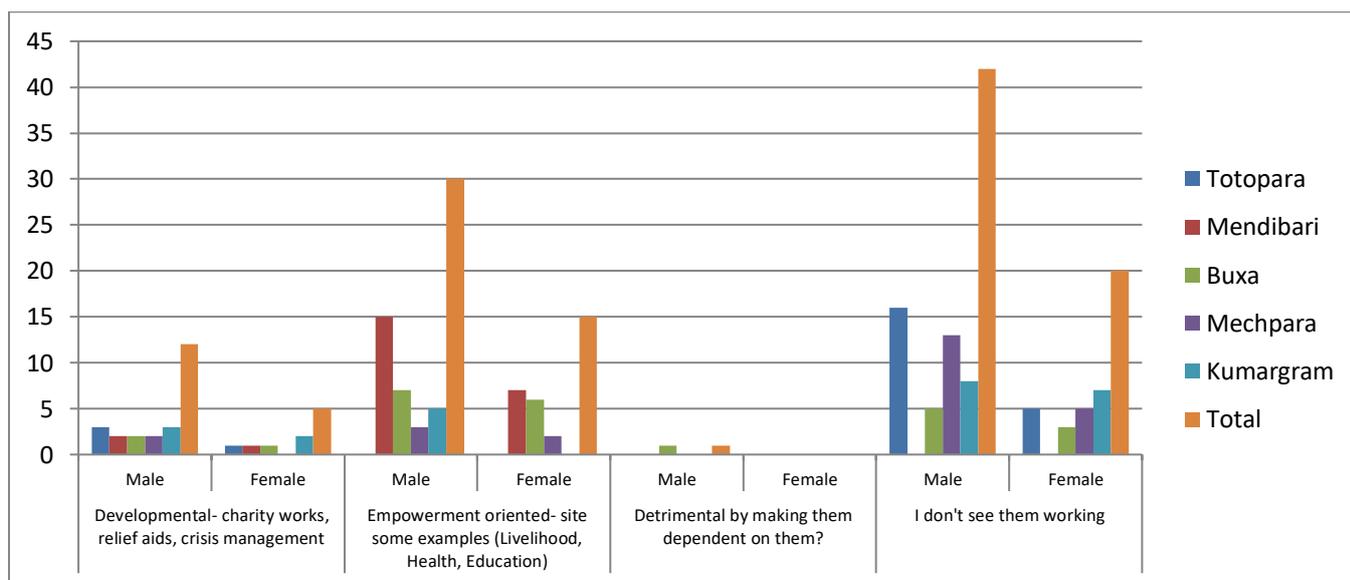


Chart for Table No. 10

Table number 10 enquires the respondents about the role performed by the NGOs by the work that they deliver for which they have placed four different categories of work which can be seen in the table. 13.6% of the respondents feel that the NGOs work for Developmental purpose in the form of charity works, relief aids and crisis management. 36% of them regard the NGOs to be working for the empowerment of the local people in the livelihood, education and health sectors. 0.8% respondents feel that the NGOs play a Detrimental role by making the scheduled tribes further more dependent upon them for external assistance. Interestingly,

a majority of 49.6% of the respondents state that they do not see the NGOs working in the field in person. This makes the picture clear about the difference between theory and praxis on the role of the NGOs in tribal development of the Dooars region.

Opinion	Yes		No		I don't think so	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	0	0	17	4	2	2
Mendibari	17	8	0	0	0	0
Buxa	5	7	4	1	6	2
Mechpara	4	1	10	4	4	2
Kumargram	8	2	4	5	4	2
Total	34	18	35	14	16	8

Table No. 11. Source: Field Survey

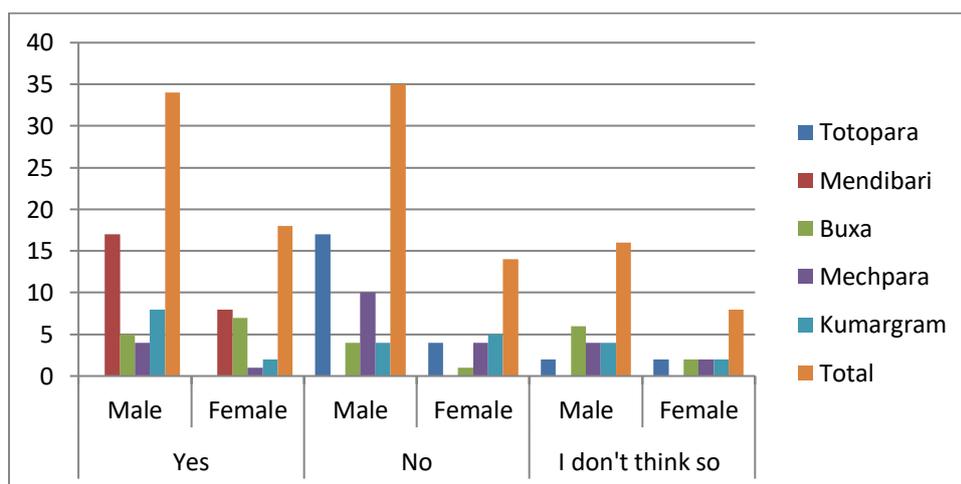


Chart for Table No. 11

Table number 11 enquires the respondents as to whether after the intervention of the non-governmental organizations in the area any positive change has been brought about. In this regard 41.6% of the respondents believe that the area has witnessed some positive change after the NGO intervention. However the consistency of the respondents varies from case to case for which individual cases have already been provided in the chapter. This is because in some areas the non-governmental organizations have definitely boosted up development while in some they stand miles away from the desired expectation. Therefore the researcher urges the readers to lay importance to individual case studies that will help us understand cases closely at a micro level. 39.2% of the respondents do not sense any positive change

after the NGO intervention while, 19.2% regard themselves unknown to any changes either positive or negative in the area after the intervention of the non-governmental organizations.

Opinion	Yes		No		I don't know	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	10	1	9	5	0	0
Mendibari	11	4	6	4	0	0
Buxa	9	10	6	0	0	0
Mechpara	8	3	10	4	0	0
Kumargram	12	7	4	1	0	1
Total	50	25	35	14	0	1

Table No. 12. Source: Field Survey

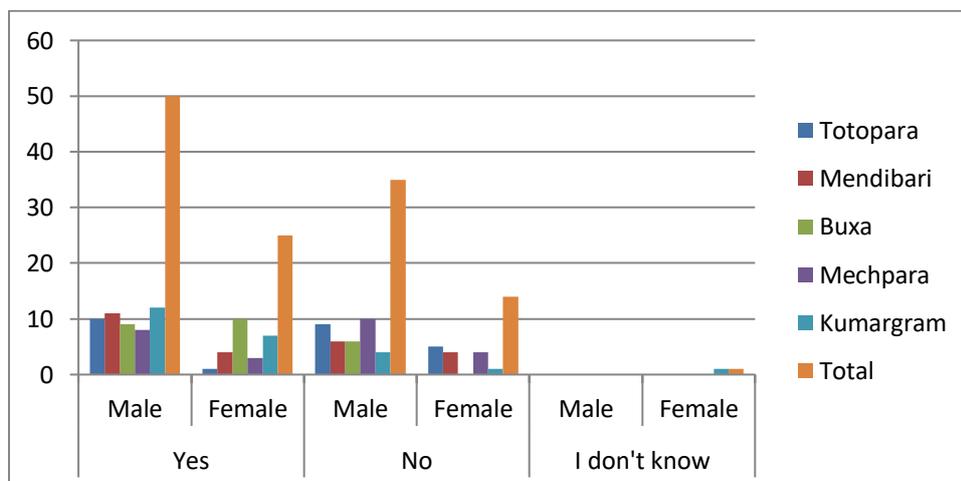


Chart for Table No. 12

Giving due recognition to the Right to Development as Human Right, table for question number 12 enquires the respondents about the awareness of their Human Rights where 60% of them claim themselves to be aware about their human rights while 39.2% deny about their awareness in this regard. 0.8% of the respondents assume themselves to be completely alien to the subject.

Opinion	Yes		No		I don't know	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	0	0	19	6	0	0
Mendibari	0	0	17	8	0	0
Buxa	0	0	15	10	0	0
Mechpara	0	0	18	7	0	0
Kumargram	4	1	12	8	0	0
Total	4	1	81	39	0	0

Table No. 13. Source: Field Survey

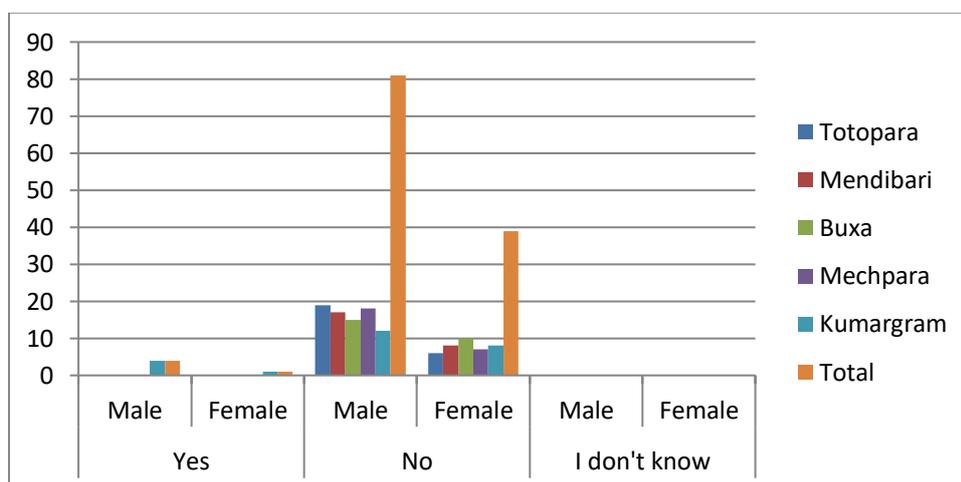


Chart for Table No. 13

Table number 13 makes us understand that only 4% of the respondents have seen the existence of non-governmental organizations working for the protection of Human Rights while a majority of 96% deny the existence of any non-governmental organization for the protection and promotion of Human Rights.

Opinion	The Government		The NGOs		Both		None	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	7	3	0	0	0	0	12	3
Mendibari	13	6	0	0	0	1	4	1
Buxa	1	0	1	2	4	4	9	4
Mechpara	15	7	0	0	2	0	1	0
Kumargram	3	2	3	2	4	2	6	3
Total	39	18	4	4	10	7	32	11

Table No. 14. Source: Field Survey

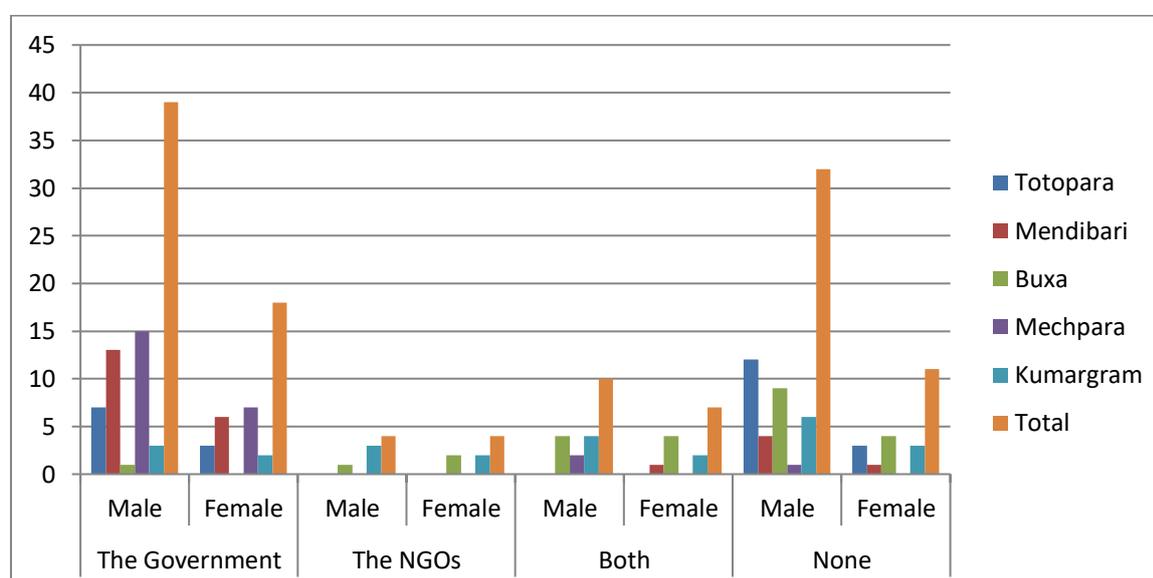


Chart for Table No. 14

Table number 14 provides an insight as to which organ do the respondents regard to be working better for development of the Scheduled Tribes - State/Non-Governmental Organizations. It is interesting to note that 45.6% of the respondents believe in the State as a body that works for the development of the area as compared to 6.4% of the respondents who feel that it is the non-governmental organizations that work better in this regard. 13.6% of the respondents give credit to both the organs i.e. the State and the non-governmental organization to be the facilitator of development while 34.4% of them feel that none of the institutions are worthy of boosting themselves as the agencies of tribal development in the Dooars region of North Bengal.

Table No. 15: Understandings about development										
Opinion	Economic well being		Political Awareness and empowerment		Social equality and liberation		All of the above		Any other criteria	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	9	2	0	1	0	0	9	2	1	1
Mendibari	5	3	0	0	0	0	12	5	0	0
Buxa	9	4	0	0	1	0	5	6	0	0
Mechpara	8	5	1	0	0	0	9	2	0	0
Kumargram	7	4	1	0	0	0	2	1	6	4
Total	38	18	2	1	1	0	37	16	7	5

Table No. 15. Source: Field Survey

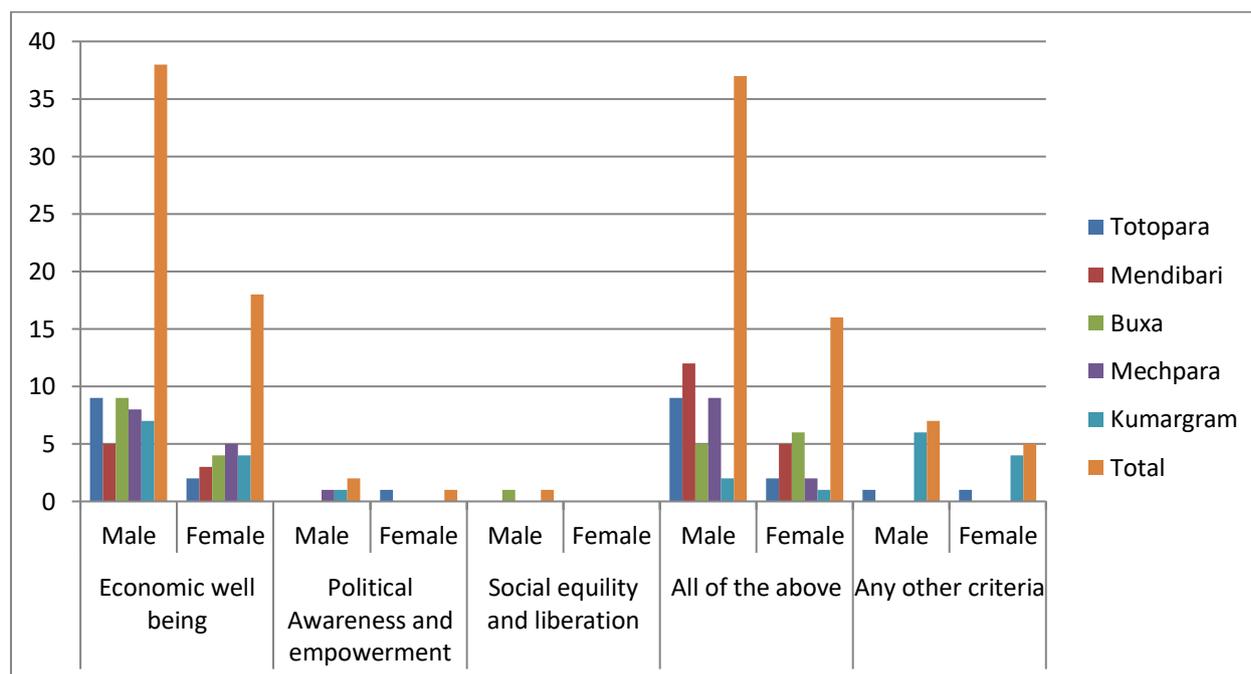


Chart for Table No. 15

Table number 15 tries to delve deeper into the meaning of development to the scheduled tribes of the region. 44.8% of the respondents regard Economic wellbeing to be the primary element of development, while 2.4% of them consider Political awareness and empowerment to the primary characteristics of development. 0.8% regards Social equality and liberation as

development while a handsome group of 42.4% of the respondents regards all of the above mentioned criteria to be the core elements of the multi dimensional idea of development. 9.6% of the respondents suggest another criterion of Educational development to be the chief element of development which shall be followed by the above mentioned three subsidiary characteristics of development.

Opinion	Participatory approach		Top down approach		Bottom up approach	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Totopara	13	5	1	0	5	1
Mendibari	14	7	3	0	0	1
Buxa	6	7	1	1	8	2
Mechpara	8	4	7	3	3	0
Kumargram	9	3	1	3	6	3
Total	50	26	13	7	22	7

Table No. 16. Source: Field Survey

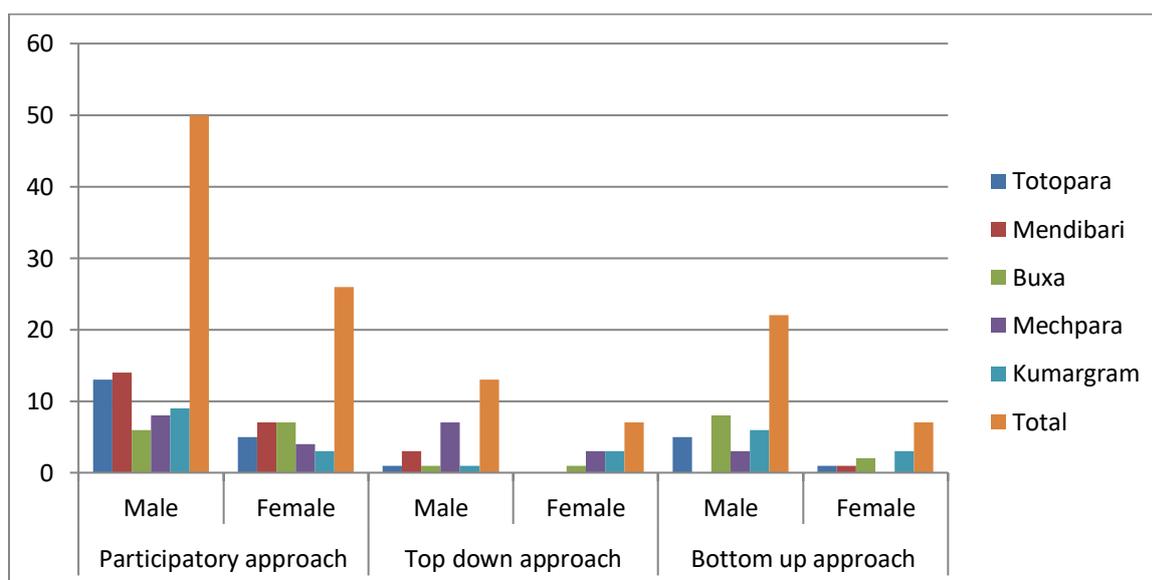


Chart for Table No. 16

Table number 16 enquires the respondents about an alternative model of development to be adopted by the state for the scheduled tribes of the region to bring them abreast with the existing model of development. Probably this finding shall be an eye opener for the policy framers that desire to bring about meaningful development for the scheduled tribes the target which has remained unfulfilled for seven long decades. 60.8% of the respondents suggests Participatory approach to be the best developmental model where there should be participation of the people, the non-governmental organizations and the government in the decision making process. 16% of the respondents seem to be satisfied with the traditional practice of Top-down developmental approach where decisions are implemented by the State on the scheduled tribes where the latter has no role to play. 23.2% of the respondents regard the Bottom-up approach to be useful for tribal development. In this case it would be the scheduled tribes who would be the policy planners for themselves that would be sent up to the government for their rectification and recognition.

In order to understand the intricacies linked with the issue we have undertaken an intensive case study based micro level analysis of the study area and the population. The following sub section presents the rationale behind our decision to undertake a case study of the sample study area.

5.6. MICRO LEVEL ANALYSIS: CASE STUDIES

The consolidated data that we have discussed above is actually the outcome of the individual case studies made by the researcher in the survey area. Since heterogeneity and variations in all walks of life be it social, cultural or economic patterns happen to be the key word that needs to be taken note of while making a study on tribal development; the researcher expresses her ardent responsibility of pointing out the heterogeneous qualities of each area that differentiates it from the other alongside strictly drawing the vulnerable line of not making the study an ethnographic one. Each area has been carefully discussed below with an effort to maintain its diversities and not to make it a homogenous study. However, it must be understood that due to the similar economic patterns, most of the cases do share similarities with each other the mention of which is also equally important to understand it better.

5.6.1. CASE NUMBER ONE-TOTOPARA

Totopara is an exclusive geographical location that is a home to one of the most primitive scheduled tribe community of India or for that matter of the entire world called the Totos. The Totos are not only a scheduled tribe community but also is one amongst the primitive groups, the population of which is very much meager and if not taken proper care of, is on the verge of acculturation and complete extinction. It is believed that the Totos are found nowhere else except in the Totopara which is located inside Madarihat Block of the Alipurduar District. According to Mr. Khagen Toto who was once the Pradhan of Totopara Gram Panchayat, there are about sixteen hundred Totos living in Totopara which however according to the 2001 census is only one thousand one hundred and eighty four Toto populations. Totopara falls at the foothills of the southern Bhutanese borderline sharing its boundary with West Bengal however keeping it aloof from the mainland settlement by the western bank of the Torsa river. As a matter of fact if any individual desires to visit Totopara, then the person has three clear options in hand. The first is a pocket pinch of reserving a hired jeep that has the capacity of cutting across rivers and the rough terrain which will definitely charge a handsome amount. The second option is to wait till eleven in the morning for one lonely shared vehicle with the will power to climb up to the hood of the jeep and cling tight for the rest of the bumpy journey to reach the destination. Since this is the only ferry that connects people from Totopara to Madarihat, it becomes very difficult to get hold of a seat to sit down. The last option is to ply by an auto rickshaw up till Hantupara and then cover the rest of seventeen kilo meters by foot. The third option was used by the researcher in conducting the survey in Totopara. Totopara is at a distance of twenty two kilo meters from Madarihat where in between one needs to cut across eight river beds of the majestic Torsha river which becomes extremely dangerous during the monsoon season.

The common language used for communication in Totopara is Toto and Nepali because alongside the Totos we also find the presence of some Nepali speaking population primarily settled in the small market place of Totopara. The nearest police station is located at Madarihat but because of its close border and ties with Bhutan, the constant patrol team of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) is witnessed twenty four hours marching up and down the Totopara hills. The rough landscape that acts as a major hindrance in reaching Totopara has actually acted as a curse in the due course of development of the area. This has strictly restricted tourism because of a lack of proper transportation, communication and lodging

facilities. However, the Totos believe that they are on purpose being neglected by the governmental authorities who prefer to keep this tribe segregated, underdeveloped and marginalized forever. They substantiate their allegations by stating that although many of the political figures visit Totopara during the pre election campaigning with the promise of building an overhead bridge is the eight major river banks of the Torsha river, yet after the declaration of result completely deny of any such promises and in turn discourage people of dreaming about the possibility of a proper communication between the mainland and their village. This has led to a serious backwardness of the area in all walks of life be it education, economic development, social up gradation or political emancipation.

Due to the absence of any developmental infrastructures, young Toto adults have started moving out in search of better job opportunities and a descent standard of living. Back home, the only source of livelihood of the Totos at present happen to be beetle nut cultivation and small scale farming just enough to feed oneself and his family. The Totos have their unique religious system that falls in between Hinduism and Buddhism with the consumption of beef and at the same time offering animal sacrifices that give them a unique animist structure. However due to poverty and scarcity approximately thirty percent of the Toto population have gradually converted themselves to Christianity in order to have a share in the relief aids distributed by the Christian missionary.

With regard to the presence of the non-governmental organizations, it appears that the people have never seen any consistent non-governmental organization to be working in Totopara. At times relief measures are distributed but the people fail to figure it out as to who is the distributor – is it the government, the non-governmental organizations or the Christian missionaries? No active non-governmental organization is witnessed to be working at the field level for which those that claim themselves to exist shall definitely blame the roadways connecting the mainland with Totopara for their absence on a regular basis in the field. Realizing the need to develop the area alongside the futility of the governmental assurances and the expectation of any third sector of development to interfere in the area with the possibility of socio-economic and political development, the people of Totopara have interestingly decided to launch a non-governmental organization of their own under the banner of *Toto Debo Group* which means a developmental group for the Totos. This marks a historic act on the part of this primitive group to become self reliant rather than expecting any sympathy from the non Totos be it in the form of the non-governmental organizations, the

governments or any other such organs like the Christian missionaries. This can be regarded to be a huge leap on their part seeking for emancipation and development. Somewhere or the other, the need to open up a non-governmental organization with its membership restricted to the Toto community clearly reflects a lack of faith and trust on the earlier existing non-governmental organizations. The registration of the Toto Debo Group and the opening up of a bank account is already completed. They look forward to the completion of the rest of the formalities within a short span of time. The respondents are equally happy in coming to know about the launching of an all Toto non-governmental organization because they believe that the problems faced by the Totos can be best understood and addressed by another Toto. The expectations of the Toto community on this non-governmental organization are high thereby opening up a new room for research probably after five years of its functioning. At present let us simply focus on the understanding of the meaning of development to the Totos and their analysis about the role of the State and the non-governmental organizations in their development. It is to be noted down that we are not taking up the case of Toto Debo Group because it would be unjust to judge an infant non-governmental organization that has not even started its operation in the area.

5.6.1.a. DATA INTERPRETATION

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	3	1	4 (16%)
2. No	2	0	2 (8%)
3. Partially Aware/ Yes	14	5	19 (76%)
Total	19	6	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. a shows us the opinion of the respondents about their level of awareness with regard to the schemes of development launched by the government for them and their

response of availing them. 16% of the Toto population believes that they are completely aware about the developmental policies launched by the government for tribal development, while 76% are apprehensive and think that they are partially aware about the policies. 8% of them believe that they are not at all aware about the policies of the government.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1. Very Good	0	0	0	0%
2. Good	2	0	2	8%
3. Average	13	4	17	68%
4. Bad	1	1	2	8%
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	3	1	4	16%
Total	19	6	25	100%

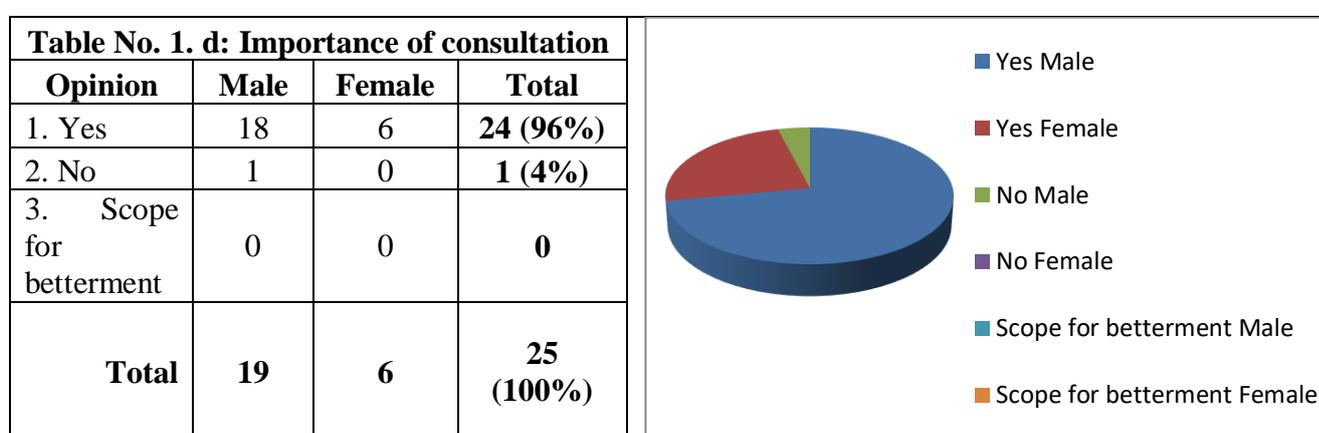
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. b enquires the respondents about the manner of implementation of the policies by the local self government. 8% of the total sample believes that the panchayats have been able to provide good service. 68% of them however do not seem to be very happy with regard to the implementation of developmental schemes by the panchayats for which they have opted for the average option denoting something average. 8% believe that the panchayats have not succeeded at all in their job, while the remaining 16% are optimistic enough to believe that there is scope for betterment and that the panchayats can do much better with a little more effort.

Table No. 1.c	Utility of the governmental policies in development			Empowerment of the people		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Average	2	0	2 (8%)	4	2	6 (24%)
4. Bad	14	3	17 (68%)	15	4	19 (76%)
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	3	3	6 (24%)	0	0	0
Total	19	6	25 (100%)	19	6	25 (100%)

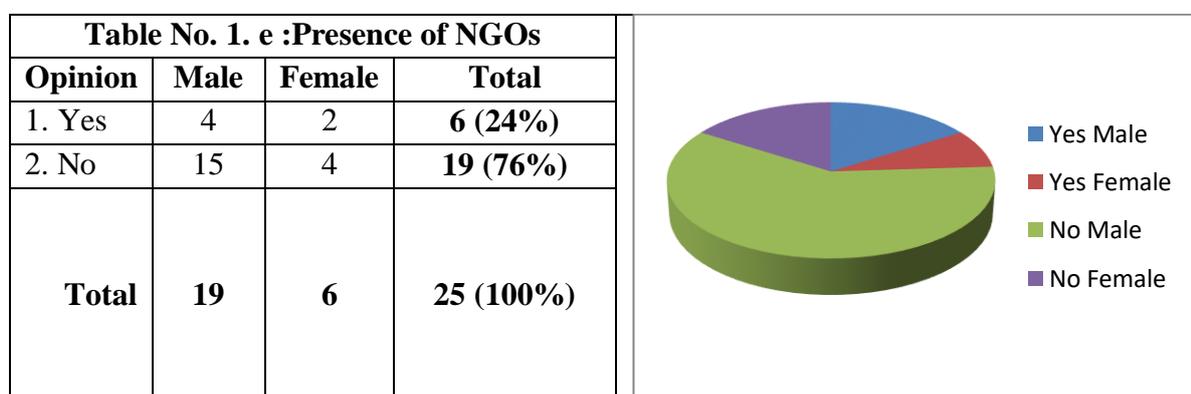
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. c enquires the respondents about whether the governmental policies have been helpful enough in developing the scheduled tribe communities of the area, and to what extent have they been able to empower them. 8% of the Totos believe that the governmental policies have had an average utility with nothing specific as good or bad. However, 68% of them believe that the policies do not have any utility to them. On the other hand 24% assume that changes need to be made for a better utilization of the governmental policies to make it meaningful. Similarly, 24% of the Totos regard the policies to be average in terms of empowering the people while 76% believe that the governmental policies have failed to empower the people of Totopara.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. d enquires about the importance of consultation of the beneficiaries by the government before the formulation of tribal development policies. 96% of the respondents opine that it is very important to consult the people first before formulating any policies for them because most of the time the demand of the people do not match the supply of the government. However, 4% of them believe that such consultations are not required.



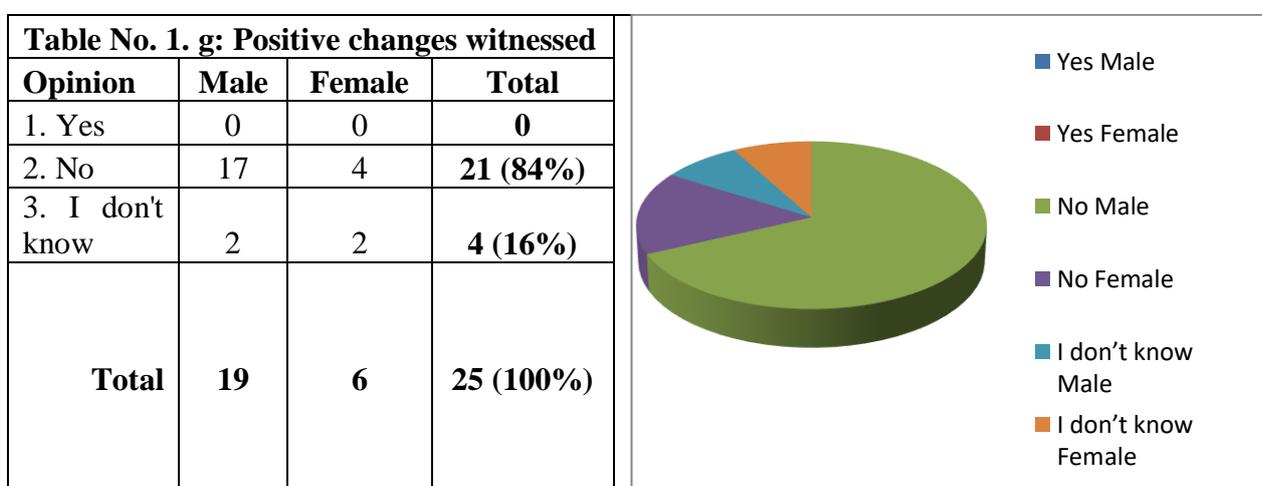
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. e enquires the respondents of whether they see the presence of any non-governmental organization in the area. However the presence of such non-governmental organizations does not mean that they function equivalently. 24% of the Totos think that the third sector of development called the non-governmental organizations are present in the area while 76% of them deny the existence of the non-governmental organizations.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Developmental- charity works, relief aids, crisis management	3	1	4 (16%)
2. Empowerment oriented- site some examples (Livelihood, Health, Education)	0	0	0
3. Detrimental by making them dependent on them?	0	0	0
4. I don't see them working	16	5	21 (84%)
Total	19	6	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. f tries to locate the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development by providing four different sections. Charity works, Relief aids and Crisis management have been included under the broad category of Development Oriented, while Health, Livelihood and Education are included under the banner of Empowerment Oriented. 16% of the Totos say that some organizations are seen during rare occasions distributing some relief and aid measures, while 84% of the respondents state that they do not see any non-governmental organization working in the area.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. g tries to know whether some positive changes have been brought about after the coming in of the non-governmental organizations in the area. 84% of the Totos strictly deny of any positive role to have been witnessed after the intervention of the non-governmental organization, while 16% of the respondents are not aware about the matter.

Table No. 1. h Opinion	Awareness about Human Rights			NGOs working for Human Rights		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	10	1	11 (44%)	0	0	0
2. No	9	5	14 (56%)	19	6	25 (100%)
3. I don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	19	6	25 (100%)	19	6	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. h tries to find out the awareness of the people about their basic Human Rights and whether they see any non-governmental organization working in this regard. 44% of the Toto tribes regard themselves to be aware about Human Rights while 56% consider themselves to be unaware about this subject. However, none have seen any non-governmental organization to be working in this regard.

Table No. 1. i: Meaning of development			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Economic well being	9	2	11 (44%)
2. Political Awareness and empowerment	0	1	1 (4%)
3. Social equality and liberation	0	0	0
4. All of the above	9	2	11 (44%)
5. Any other criteria	1	1	2 (8%)
Total	19	6	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. i. tries to understand the meaning of development to the Toto tribes for which we have placed five categories as listed below. 44% of the respondents regard economic wellbeing to be the basic crux of development while 4% consider political awareness and empowerment to be equally important. Another 44% regard every component ranging from

economy to polity to social equality to be essential for development. However 8% of them feel that some other criteria are also important for development. They regard educational development to be the core element of development which would facilitate other elements of development naturally.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Participatory approach	13	5	18 (72%)
2. Top down approach	1	0	1 (4%)
3. Bottom up approach	5	1	6 (24%)
Total	19	6	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 1. j tries to gather the idea of developmental approach for tribal development for which we have provided three strong parameters. 72% of the Toto tribe respondents regard the Participatory approach to be helpful for tribal development where there would be equal and positive participation of the government, the non-governmental organizations and the public in terms of decision making at large. 4% seem to be satisfied with the existing Top-down approach while 24% of them think that decision making should be left in the hands of the tribes themselves that need ratification only at the end in the hands of the government. They feel that this would address their grievances to the fullest.

5.6.1.b. MAJOR FINDINGS

- Totopara is a homeland to one of the primitive scheduled tribes of the world who are not found in any other location, yet the government has not been able to reach out to this area in terms of providing basic essential facilities of survival such as proper roadways, hospitals, drinking water, sanitation and good schools.
- Totopara suffers from the serious problem of roadways and bridges for connecting the area to the main town of Madarihaat which is located at a distance of 22 kilometers,

for which the local residents need to cross eight large river beds making the situation worse during the monsoon season.

- The respondents of Totopara believe that there are no non-governmental organizations that are seen to be sincerely working for the development of the Toto community. They look forward to living self-reliant lifestyles for which non-governmental organizations are important.
- At times the Totos do see some organizations that bring in some aid by distributing relief materials but they are not satisfied by the pattern of functioning of such non-governmental organizations which they prefer to term as proxy non-governmental organizations.
- The people of Totopara are dependent upon agriculture and beetle nut cultivation for their source of livelihood. A good number of the Toto populations have also converted themselves to Christianity for better living.
- Realizing the importance of self-involvement through self-realization, the people of Totopara have come together to form a non-governmental organization named ***Toto Debo Group*** that intends to work for the betterment of the Toto community on the lines of sustainable development alongside the preservation of Toto culture and identity.
- With regard to the alternative approach to tribal development in the area, a majority of the Totos believe participatory approach to be best suitable for them, indicating a reexamination on the part of the policy framers to suitably address the developmental dynamics of the region in a better manner.

5.6.2. CASE NUMBER TWO-MENDIBARI

Uttar and Madhya Mendibari which is situated in between Alipurduar and Hasimara highway bypassing the Kalchini town is a predominantly Rabha tribe village with its sole population belonging to the Rabha tribe. As stated earlier the Rabhas are one of the indigenous scheduled tribe communities of the Dooars region that refused to work in the tea plantation sector thereby earning the title of the Jhumias which mean the ones that practice shifting cultivation. The respondents confirm to this fact and state that their fore fathers have been moving to and forth from the Dooars region of West Bengal and that of Assam freely in the past where the entire community would settle down to a particular geographical area and then move to the other generally after the death of any reverent personality of the tribe taking it to be as an omen. With the passage of time and the scarcity of land this tribe has gradually settled to those areas where we find them at present and now show no interest of shifting somewhere else at the moment. The primary occupation of the Rabha tribes is weaving of cloth, bamboo product making and agriculture not for market purpose but simply for one's own consumption. The Rabha tribes of Mendibari have been successful enough to grasp hold of their age old traditional practices of weaving and the production of art pieces out of natural products that today they have been blessed with the practice of a self reliant model of development where they do not need to depend upon any third agency or the capitalist market for their survival cutting down on the rate of exploitation that comparatively other tribes face.

Mendibari comprises up of two geographical territories namely Uttar Mendibari and Madhya Mendibari that is separated from each other by a clean serpent of black tarred national highway connecting the Bhutan border with that of Alipurduar district. Towards the midland side we find the practice of alcoholism, gambling and comparatively lower standard of living from the Rabhas of Uttar Mendibari. On the other hand the people living in Uttar Mendibari are seen to be much better off, disciplined and duty oriented often engrossed in their own works. In trying to find out the reason behind this disparity in the same tribal group, the researcher was mesmerized to understand the impact of Christianity on this tribal group. It was found out that the people of Madhya Mendibari practice their own age old traditional religion of animism where drinking of alcohol, and dining in every little occasion occupies a prominent place in the socio-religious structure. Therefore, the Rabhas of Madhya Mendibari are seen to be happy go lucky without any tension for tomorrow making them economically much weaker than the Rabhas of Uttar Mendibari. On the other hand, hundred percent of the

Rabha tribes of Uttar Mendibari practice Christianity not leaving a single household unconverted to the Protestant sect of Christianity precisely following the Bethal Church that was established in the year 1977. Sunday prayers are compulsory for all the Christian Rabhas that is conducted in the church where alongside the reading of the Holy Gospel, people are also enlightened by the Pastors about the essence of empowerment through the importance of education, self discipline and hard work. Interestingly, the religious dimension has had a major role in deciding the destiny of the Rabhas of Uttar Mendibari. They discard and condemn the consumption of alcohol as something degraded and also abstain themselves from gambling, merry making and laziness as a sin of wasting a precious human life granted to them by Jesus Christ.

The immediate place of minor marketing which involves buying and selling of materials take place at the Nimti Chowk that connects Kalchini town and Alipurduar town bypassing the national highway to Hasimara. The nearest police station is located at Kalchini although Jaigaon police station is also not very far for them. For getting access to a larger market, the Rabhas of Mendibari visit Hasimara instead of going to Kalchini or Hamiltongunj or even Alipurduar for that matter.

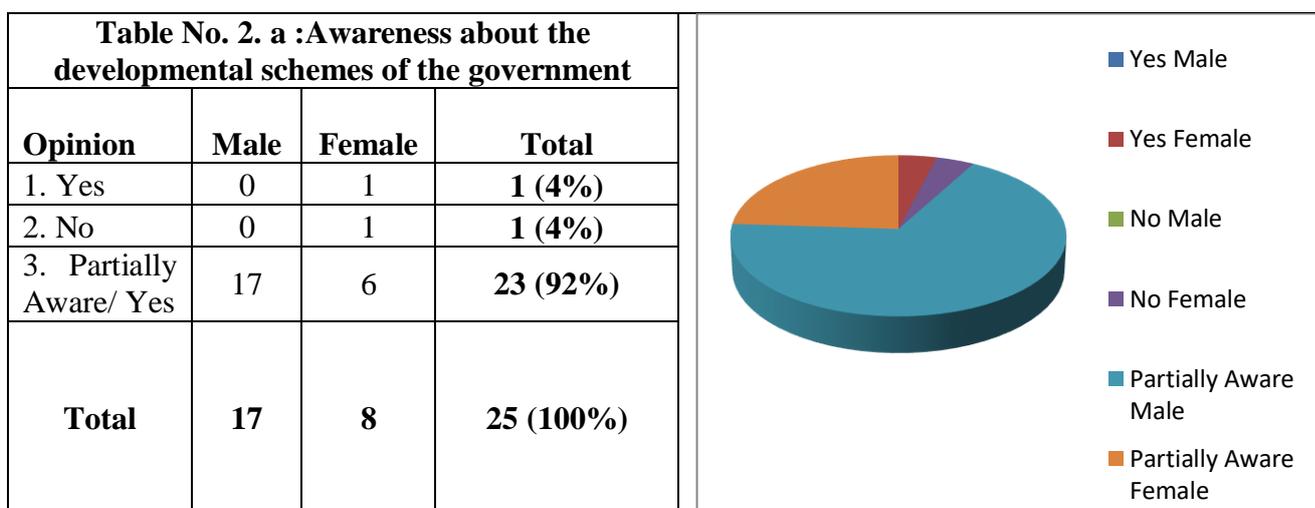
The nearest hospital is located at Alipurduar main town and the nearby colleges for any interested aspirant are to visit either Jaigaon College or Alipurduar College or Alipurduar Women's College. However, due to the degree of distance between Mendibari and the colleges, very few desire to go for higher education.

The major non-governmental organizations working in Mendibari are Benoy Dream Academy and Vasundhara Enviro-Welfare Society. Apart from these non-governmental organizations there is a strong body of local self governance that operates in Mendibari Gram Panchayat.

Due to the practice of their age old traditional cultural art of weaving that is generally done by the women folk of the region, the economic sustainability has always been preserved by this particular tribe. Weaving of cloth was considered to be the basic criteria for any women to fulfill before the solemnization of marriage formalities in the earlier days. This has definitely helped them to practice a self sufficient and a self reliant model of sustainable development. Today, with the help of Women's Self Help Groups, the Rabha tribes have been successful enough to find a market for their efforts. They are paid a handsome amount

of six hundred rupees for a full length saree and three hundred rupees for half the size of the former. It requires four to five days on an average to complete a full length saree not to forget the time spent is only after the completion of their household chores, gardening and after devoting time to their infant children. The payment that is made to the weavers is simply an acknowledgement for their effort put in weaving. The raw materials are also provided by the contractors which may be in any form be it the Self Help Groups or the large companies from cities. Colour combinations and the sample designs are also provided to them. The representatives of large companies and handloom showrooms come to them directly with the raw materials and the sample designs, the completion of which fetches an international market via such outlets. While the women folk are busy managing their households, their professional lives and their children, the Rabha men are found to be assisting them in their venture often pretending to be the man of the house.

5.6.2.a. DATA INTERPRETATION



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. a shows us the opinion of the respondents with regard to their level of awareness about the schemes of development launched by the government for them and their response of availing them. **4%** of the Rabha population believes that they are completely aware about the developmental policies launched by the government for tribal development, while **92%** are apprehensive and think that they are partially aware about the policies. **4%** of them believe that they are not at all aware about the policies of the government.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0
2. Good	1	1	2 (8%)
3. Average	12	7	19 (76%)
4. Bad	0	0	0
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	4	0	4 (16%)
Total	17	8	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

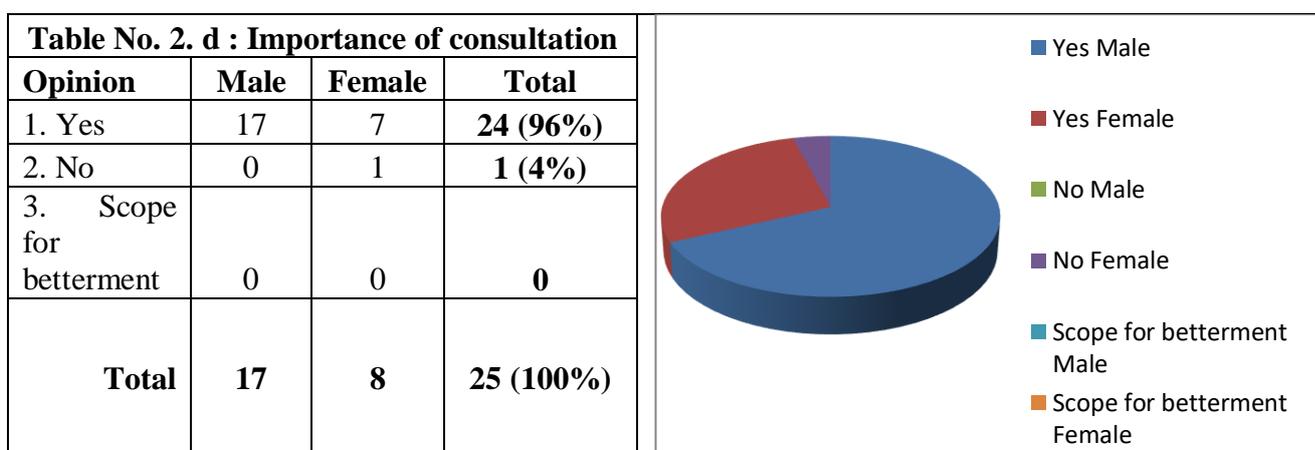
Table No. 2. b inquires the respondents about the manner of implementation of the policies of the government by the local self government. 8% of the total sample believes that the panchayats have been able to provide good service. 76% of them however do not seem to be very happy with regard to the implementation of developmental schemes by the panchayats for which they have opted for the average option denoting something average, while the remaining 16% are optimistic enough to believe that there is scope for betterment and that the panchayats can do much better with a little more effort.

Table No. 2.c	Utility of the governmental policies in development			Empowerment of the people		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Average	17	8	25 (100%)	6	2	8 (32%)
4. Bad	0	0	0	0	0	0
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	0	0	0	11	6	17 (68%)
Total	17	8	25 (100%)	17	8	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

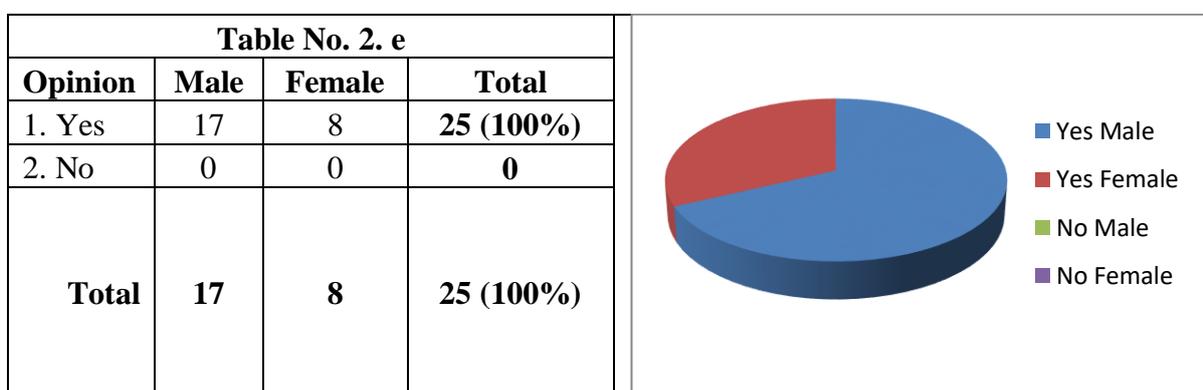
Table No. 2. c enquires the respondents about whether the governmental policies have been helpful enough in developing the scheduled tribe communities of the area, and to what extent have they been able to empower them. It is very interesting to note that 100% of the

respondents believe that the governmental policies have had an average utility with nothing specific as good or bad. They assume that the governmental policies have not been able to bring about the economic well being in their lives. On the other hand 32% of the respondents consider the policies to have been empowering them on an average rate while 68% believe that these policies have to some extent empowered the people of Mendibari and are hopeful that the government will bring changes by granting or providing suitable policies for the betterment of the people and the area.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. d enquires about the importance of consultation of the beneficiaries by the government before the formulation of tribal development policies. 96% of the respondents opine that it is very important to consult the people first before formulating any policies for them because most of the time the demand of the people do not match the supply of the government. However, 4% of them believe that such consultations are not required.



Source: Field Survey

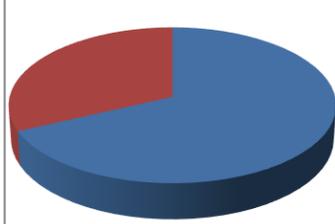
Table No. 2. e enquires the respondents of whether they see the presence of any non-governmental organization in the area. However the presence of such non-governmental organizations does not mean that they function equivalently. 100% of the respondents think that the third sector of development called the non-governmental organizations are present in the area and almost all of them are aware and are obtaining facilities from the non-governmental organizations.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Developmental- charity works, relief aids, crisis management	2	1	3 (12%)
2. Empowerment oriented- site some examples (Livelihood, Health, Education)	15	7	22 (88%)
3. Detrimental by making them dependent on them?	0	0	0
4. I don't see them working	0	0	0
Total	17	8	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. f tries to locate the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development by providing four different sections. Charity works, Relief aids and Crisis management have been included under the broad category of Development Oriented, while Health, Livelihood and Education are included under the banner of Empowerment Oriented. 12% of the respondents say that the works carried out by the non-governmental organizations are Developmental Oriented, while 88% of the respondents proclaim that the non-governmental organizations working in the area are Empowerment Oriented.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	17	8	25 (100%)
2. No	0	0	0
3. I don't know	0	0	0
Total	17	8	25 (100%)



- Yes Male
- Yes Female
- No Male
- No Female
- I don't know Male
- I don't know Female

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. g tries to know whether some positive changes have been brought about after the coming in of the non-governmental organizations in the area. 100% of the respondents have witnessed positive changes after the intervention of the non-governmental organization in the area and they are content with the kind of work that the non-governmental organizations are executing in their area.

Table No. 2. h	Awareness about Human Rights			NGOs working for Human Rights		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	11	4	15 (60%)	0	0	0
2. No	6	4	10 (40%)	17	8	25 (100%)
3. I don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	17	8	25 (100)	17	8	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. h tries to find out the awareness of the people about their basic Human Rights and whether they see any non-governmental organization working in this regard. 60% of the respondents regard themselves to be aware about Human Rights while 40% consider themselves to be unaware about this subject. However, none have seen any non-governmental organization to be working in this regard.

Table No. 2. i			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Economic well being	5	3	8 (32%)
2. Political Awareness and empowerment	0	0	0
3. Social equality and liberation	0	0	0
4. All of the above	12	5	17 (68%)
5. Any other criteria	0	0	0
Total	17	8	25 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. i tries to understand the meaning of development to the tribes of Mendibari for which we have placed five categories as listed below. 32% of the respondents regard economic wellbeing to be the basic crux of development while 68% regard every component ranging from economy to polity to social equality to be essential for development.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Participatory approach	14	7	21 (84%)
2. Top down approach	3	0	3 (12%)
3. Bottom up approach	0	1	1 (4%)
Total	17	8	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 2. j tries to gather the idea of developmental approach for tribal development for which we have provided three strong parameters. 84% of the respondents regard the Participatory approach to be helpful for tribal development where there would be equal and positive participation of the government, the non-governmental organizations and the public in terms of decision making at large. 12% seem to be satisfied with the existing Top-down approach while 4% of them think that decision making should be left in the hands of the tribes themselves that need ratification only at the end in the hands of the government. They feel that this would address their grievances to the fullest.

(5.6.2.b) MAJOR FINDINGS

- Uttar and Madhya Mendibari is predominantly a pure Rabha tribe village situated in between Alipurduar Hasimara National Highway with its Nimti Kalchini bypass very close by.
- The Rabhas of Uttar Mendibari are all converted to the Baptist Mission Christian sect and are economically far better than the Rabhas of Madhya Mendibari who still practice animism and tribal lifestyle.
- The Rabha tribes are dependent on the age old traditional practice of weaving for their ultimate source of livelihood and also gain support from kitchen garden and are lately learning the art of beetle nut cultivation.
- The major non-governmental organizations working in the area are Benoy Dream Academy, Vasundhara Enviro Welfare society and not to forget the presence of the active Women's Self Help Groups.
- The respondents believe that the intervention of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development have definitely helped in the upliftment of the Rabha

communities specially in the maintenance of their age old traditional practice of weaving clothes and in their marketing.

- The attitude of the Rabha tribe is also much more optimist as compared to the tribes of the other with the belief in isolated settlements from the mainland people alongside economic self reliance and sustainable development.
- Mendibari has definitely stood as an example of successful self reliant model of development where there is the presence of a healthy relationship between the government, the non-governmental organizations and most important of all the people of the area with the burning zeal for development.

5.6.3. CASE NUMBER THREE-BUXA

OVERVIEW OF THE AREA.

The Buxa Tiger Reserve Forest which henceforth shall be referred to as the Buxa falls thirty kilo meters away from Alipurduar main town towards the north. The Buxa Fort which is situated at an altitude of 2844 feet in the Buxa Tiger Reserve acts as a major tourist attraction especially for the Bengali tourist from in and around West Bengal because it is believed that this fort was constructed by the Bhutanese King to protect the famous Silk Route that once connected India with Tibet via Bhutan. Apart from this it is also believed that the famous freedom fighter Subash Chandra Bose was kept hostage in this famous Buxa Fort. Although we now find only the ruins of the once so called historic fort, yet because of its historical legacy accompanied by the natural geographical beauty, domestic tourists flock in huge numbers to pay visit to the Buxa Fort and some even go higher above to spend quality time in the tiny home stays run by the local Drukpa tribes. This place is also famous for its peaceful environment making it a heavenly abode for the people from the town running away from hustle and bustle to experience the natural thrill.

The area of survey that we have selected is Buxa which in the Bhutanese language or Dzongkha means Buk – carry + sha – eat i.e. carry your own luggage in order to survive. The meaning of Buxa still holds its significance till date because in spite of one's economic status of either rich or poor, the local inhabitants need to physically carry their luggage along with their bodies to reach their homes irrespective of their gender. Therefore, one can see both men and women of the Drukpa tribe working really hard to reach their destinations with all their belongings loaded in a bamboo basket that is hung to their head with the help of a strong rope. The idea of looking down upon a porter as someone of a lower strata is absent in the Buxa because everyone there needs to carry their own luggage at one point of time or the other in a day.

The reason behind this excessive hard work is because there is complete absence of motorable roads in the area. If one desires to visit the Buxa Fort or for that matter Rupang Valley or Dara gaon or Lapchakha, one can find vehicle from Raja Bhatkhawa to Santhalabari and that too on reserve basis only. One can find Maruti vans from Santhalabari to Zero point which is just at a distance of one kilo meters that charge you one hundred rupees per head. From the place called zero point starts the hard reality of trekking uphill for

five kilo meters up till Buxa fort and then kilometers after kilometers to reach the Drukpa Busty where the Drukpa tribes are settled down. For a tourist from a busy city, this divine idea of trekking may appear to be extremely beautiful but for the common residents of the area this non-motorable road which is at its worst of condition stands to be the major blockage between them and development. Due to the rough geographical landscape, the local inhabitants complain about the fact that no government employee prefers to be posted in the Buxa region. This is the reason why the people have remained backward since ages and will continue to remain so if proper attention is not provided to the area.

In between Santhalabari and Daragaon, we find the presence of Nepali speaking population to a large extent where Christianity is spreading at a rapid rate. From Daragaon onwards up till Rupang Valley which of course means even more uphill trekking, we find the presence of only the Drukpa scheduled tribe community. Not even a single household apart from the Drukpa tribe is found in these hilly regions. The Drukpa tribe does not prefer to mix up with the other communities openly and believe in maintaining their traditional practices of living aloof from the rest of the mainland population. Although they are fluent in speaking the Nepali language, yet at some junctures of life they prefer to abstain themselves from being acculturated as a part of another community. Probably, this is the very reason as to why they do not desire the people from other communities to settle down in their area.

The nearest police station and other official administrative works are all conducted in Kalchini Block of Alipurduar district for which they need to trek down till Santhalabari and then reserve a car till Raja Bhatkhawa, from where they can get hold of local transportations to reach Kalchini Block. However, because of its close ties both physical as well as emotional with Bhutan because of a border between India and Bhutan bringing them inside the Indian domain, we find the existence of SSB camps where the personnel of the Sashastra Seema Bal constantly patrol for twenty four hours a day. With the change in time it appears that some Drukpa tribe women are getting married to the SSB personnel belonging to South India, Uttar Pradesh and other areas. This act of moving out from one's own tribal community to that of the alien world is highly criticized and looked down upon by the other members of the community. The Drukpa tribes worship the Vajrayana sect of Tibetan Buddhism and are highly religious and serious about their traditions, cultures and practices. The common language spoken in the area is Dzongkha or Bhutanese and Nepali.

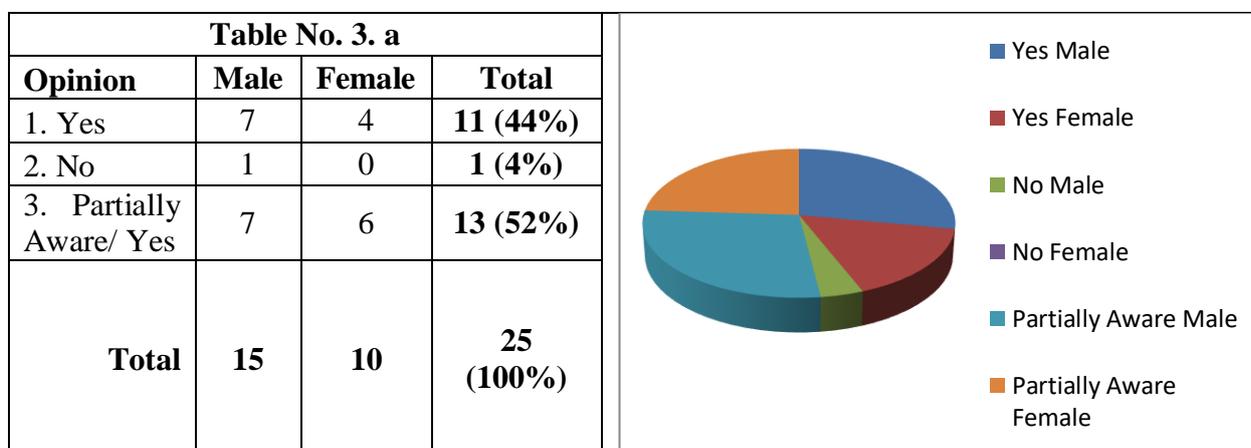
The primary source of livelihood of the Drukpa tribes of Buxa region is running of home stays in their own houses. However, this is a completely seasonal source of employment because during the off seasons such as the monsoons and harsh weather conditions they do not find even a single visitor in the area because of the bad landscape. The Drukpas also practice subsistence agriculture, cultivating basic requirements in the kitchen garden for their families. They also keep cattle, cows, goats, pigs, chicken and sheep for milk and meat. Apart from these the Drukpa tribes are also highly dependent upon cardamom cultivation as cash crops. The picture of agriculture was completely different two decades ago where oranges were found everywhere in the area so much so that this was the reason how the name of the place Santhalabari is actually derived from. Santhalabari is referred to by the local people as Sentalabari or the land of oranges. However, due to human intervention in the forests leading to man-nature conflict, the forest officials slashed down all the orange trees and orchards falling inside the forest zones. This triggered vigorous anger amongst the Drukpa tribe that the area remained disturbed for quite a long time because of the antagonistic relationship between the government and the local tribal population. Therefore in search of alternative source of livelihood, these tribal people carry their shops every day downhill to the banks of the Jayanti river which is twenty two kilometers downwards cutting across the forest to earn a living by catering to the tourists that come to pay visit to both Choto Mahakaal Mandir and Boro Mahakaal Mandir. Interestingly, the sale of liquor is high amongst the Shiva devotees. This business too only lasts for two to three months of the year when the river is dry and the temple is left open for the devotees.

Apart from the local level self governance, the Drukpa tribes enjoy the facilities provided to them by the Bhutia Development Board that work sincerely in the area by constructing houses for the needy families. Interestingly, this Board has been successful enough to uphold the matrilineal pattern of social structure division because the houses that are distributed are registered in the names of the female member of the family. Here, the Bhutia and the Drukpa terms are used synonymously.

Buxa also is lucky enough to have an active non-governmental organization working in the area making constant efforts to upgrade them. Although the area is still left untouched by proper electricity services yet the people alongside the efforts of the Development Boards and the non-governmental organization are trying their level best to empower the Drukpa scheduled tribes. Let us look into the major findings from the area.

5.6.3.a. DATA INTERPRETATION

In interviewing the Drukpa tribes of Buxa we have been able to collect the following important figures.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. a shows us the opinion of the respondents as their level of awareness about the schemes of development launched by the government for them and their response of availing them. 44% of the Drukpa population believes that they are completely aware about the developmental policies launched by the government for tribal development, while 52% are apprehensive and think that they are partially aware about the policies. 4% of them believe that they are not at all aware about the policies of the government.

Table No. 3. b			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0
2. Good	3	0	3 (12%)
3. Average	9	8	17 (68%)
4. Bad	1	0	1 (4%)
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	2	2	4 (16%)
Total	15	10	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

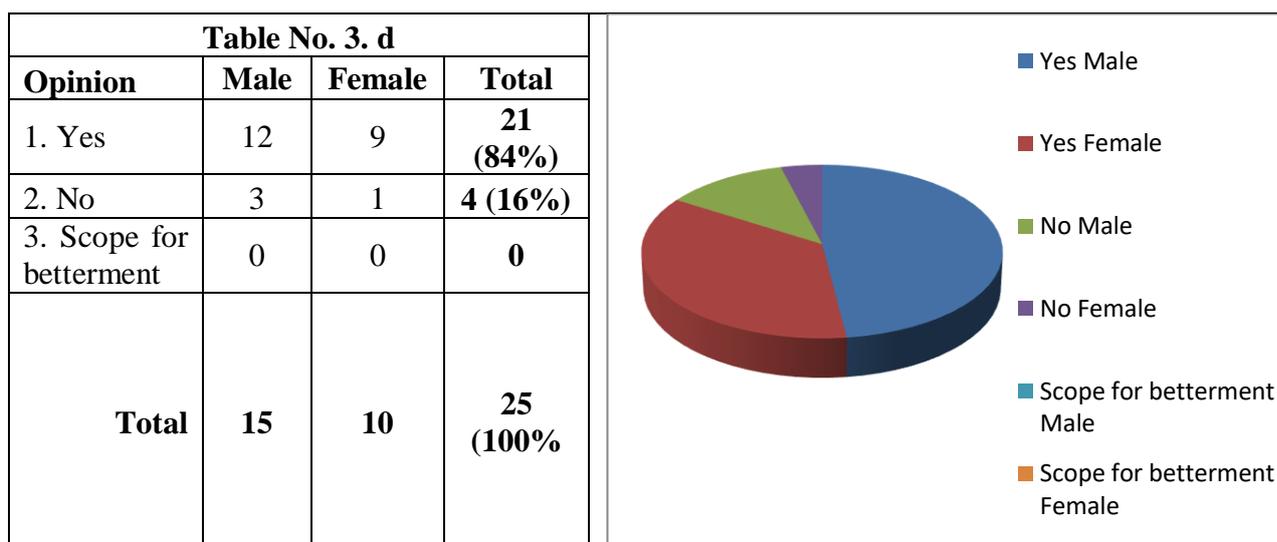
Table No. 3. b inquires the respondents about the manner of implementation of the policies of the government by the local self government. 12% of the total sample believes that the

panchayats have been able to provide good service. 68% of them however do not seem to be very happy with regard to the implementation of developmental schemes by the panchayats for which they have opted for the average option denoting something average. 4% of the respondents are at all not satisfied and consider the service to be bad while the remaining 16% are optimistic enough to believe that there is scope for betterment and that the panchayats can do much better with a little more effort.

Table No. 3.c	Utility of the governmental policies in development			Empowerment of the people		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Good	0	0	0	0	1	1 (4%)
3. Average	5	2	7 (28%)	4	6	10 (40%)
4. Bad	1	2	3 (12%)	2	1	3 (12%)
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	9	6	15 (60%)	9	2	11 (44%)
Total	15	10	25 (100%)	15	10	25 (100%)

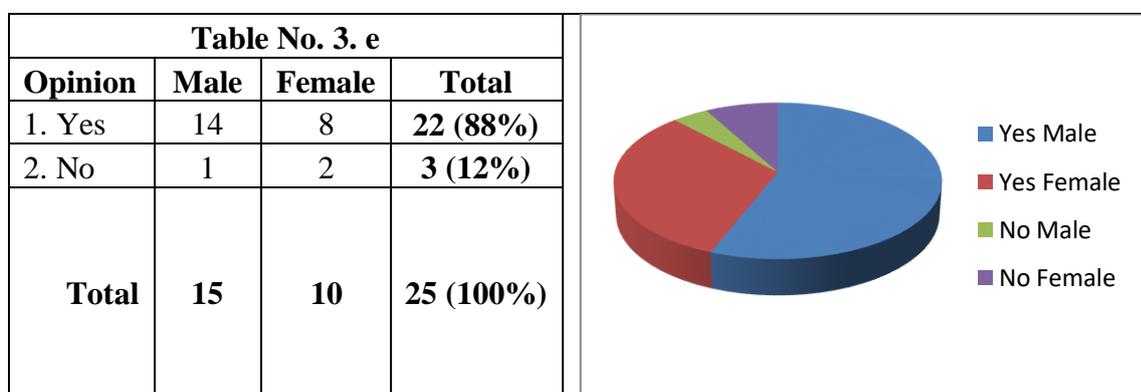
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. c enquires the respondents about whether the governmental policies have been helpful enough in developing the scheduled tribe communities of the area, and to what extent have they been able to empower them. 28% of the respondents believe that the governmental policies have had an average utility with nothing specific as good or bad. 12% assume that the governmental policies have not been able to bring about positive impact in their lives and regard it to be bad policies while 60% of the respondents are hopeful for betterment. On the other hand 40% of the respondents consider the policies to have been empowering them on an average rate while 44% believe that these policies have to some extent empowered the people of Buxa and are hopeful that the government will bring changes by granting or providing suitable policies for the betterment of the people and the area. 4% of them are happy with the progress on empowerment and 12% of the respondents regard it to be bad as these policies of the government do not empower them at all.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. d enquires about the importance of consultation of the beneficiaries by the government before the formulation of tribal development policies. 84% of the respondents opine that it is very important to consult the people first before formulating any policies for them because most of the time the demand of the people do not match the supply of the government. However, 16% of them believe that such consultations are not required.



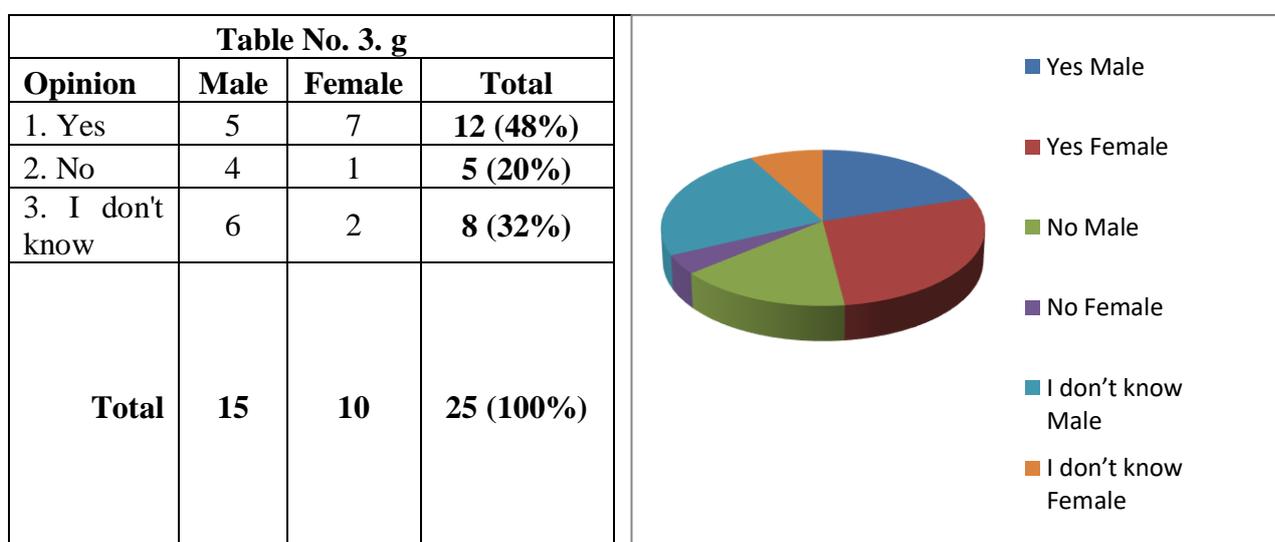
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. e enquires the respondents of whether they see the presence of any non-governmental organization in the area. However the presence of such non-governmental organizations does not mean that they function equivalently. 88% of the respondents think that the third sector of development called the non-governmental organizations are present in the area and almost all of them are aware and are obtaining facilities from the non-governmental organizations while 12% of them do not see the presence of non-governmental organizations working in their area.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Developmental- charity works, relief aids, crisis management	2	1	3 (12%)
2. Empowerment oriented- site some examples (Livelihood, Health, Education)	7	6	13 (52%)
3. Detrimental by making them dependent on them?	1	0	1 (4%)
4. I don't see them working	5	3	8 (32%)
Total	15	10	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. f tries to locate the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development by providing four different sections. Charity works, Relief aids and Crisis management have been included under the broad category of Development Oriented, while Health, Livelihood and Education are included under the banner of Empowerment Oriented. 12% of the respondents say that the works carried out by the non-governmental organizations are Developmental Oriented, while 52% of the respondents proclaim that the non-governmental organizations working in the area are Empowerment Oriented. 4% of the respondents think that the non-governmental organizations are Detrimental Oriented and 32% of them are not aware of the role of non-governmental organizations.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. g tries to know whether some positive changes have been brought about after the coming in of the non-governmental organizations in the area. 48% of the respondents have witnessed positive changes after the intervention of the non-governmental organization in the area and they are content with the kind of work that the non-governmental organizations are executing in their area. 20% of the respondents feel that there have not been any positive changes and 32% of them are completely unaware and have no idea.

Table No. 3. h	Awareness about Human Rights			NGOs working for Human Rights		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	9	10	19 (76%)	0	0	0
2. No	6	0	6 (24%)	15	10	25 (100%)
3. I don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	15	10	25 (100%)	15	10	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. h tries to find out the awareness of the people about their basic Human Rights and whether they see any non-governmental organization working in this regard. 76% of the respondents regard themselves to be aware about Human Rights while 24% consider themselves to be unaware about this subject. However, none have seen any non-governmental organization to be working in this regard.

Table No. 3. i			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Economic well being	9	4	13 (52%)
2. Political Awareness and empowerment	0	0	0
3. Social equality and liberation	1	0	1 (4%)
4. All of the above	5	6	11 (44%)
5. Any other criteria	0	0	0
Total	15	10	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. i tries to understand the meaning of development to the tribes of Buxa for which we have placed five categories as listed below. 52% of the respondents regard economic wellbeing to be the basic crux of development while 44% regard every component ranging from economy to polity to social equality to be essential for development. 4% of the respondents believe that Social equality and liberation is one of the essential factors for development.

Table No. 3. j			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Participatory approach	6	7	13 (52%)
2. Top down approach	1	1	2 (8%)
3. Bottom up approach	8	2	10 (40%)
Total	15	10	25 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 3. j tries to gather the idea of developmental approach for tribal development for which we have provided three strong parameters. 52% of the respondents regard the Participatory approach to be helpful for tribal development where there would be equal and positive participation of the government, the non-governmental organizations and the public in terms of decision making at large. 8% seem to be satisfied with the existing Top-down approach while 40% of them think that decision making should be left in the hands of the tribes themselves that need ratification only at the end in the hands of the government. They feel that this would address their grievances to the fullest.

5.6.3.b. MAJOR FINDINGS

- The Daragaon and Lapchakha villages of the Buxa Fort under the Buxa Tiger Reserve of Alipurduar district is a home to the Drukpa tribe that are predominantly found in the hilly and non motor able locations of the area sharing a close border with Bhutan.
- The major problem faced by the area is the rough geographical terrain alongside the absence of ply able motor roads because of which the people need to walk a long distance along with their belongings to reach their village. The absence of roadways is the major problem that has culminated into other vital problems such as proper

electrification of the area, absence of hospitals, good schools and other essential criteria of a modern day living.

- The Drukpa tribes are largely dependent upon eco tourism for their livelihood along with erstwhile orange cultivation, kitchen garden and massive cardamom cultivation. Those who do not practice farming put up tea stalls in the Jantia hills on the bank of the Torsha River for their survival.
- The major non-governmental organization working in the area is the Family Planning Association of India which too is based on the lines of Public Private Partnership that focuses upon health issues of the local people especially reproductive health of the women of the area.
- The dedicated service rendered by such non-governmental organization is highly honoured by the local people who believe that the NGO intervention has definitely marked a positive change in their health and overall lifestyle not to forget the uselessness of the other non-governmental organizations that exist only for name sake.
- Apart from the intervention of the non-governmental organization, the Buxa region appears to be contended with the operating **Bhutia Development Board** that has been working for the welfare of the Bhutia community, the presence of which has been felt by the local people in a positive sense.
- There are multiple areas that need to be addressed immediately by the government alongside serious non-governmental organizations in order to bring the Drukpa tribe on a single platform with the mainland non tribal population in terms of the developmental ladder.

5.6.4. CASE NUMBER FOUR-MECHIA BUSTY

Mechia Busty under Jaigaon police station of Alipurduar district provides us with a new dimension of understanding development without the intervention of the third sector i.e. the non-governmental organizations. This area of research gives us a unique lense of understanding the developmental process of the scheduled tribes with the successful aid and attention of the government without the NGO intervention in development. The reasons behind the lack of NGO intervention are multiple in number but our major focus of attention remains in analyzing the meaning of development of the scheduled tribes without any external assistance. To gain a better understanding, the questionnaire had to be modified in order to fit the requirement of the area.

The Mechia Busty that derives its name from its Mech tribe settlers who are commonly referred to as the Bodos in Assam, is a small village comprising up of roughly 110 Mechia households in the interiors of the Jaigaon Alipurduar highway blocked by an operating tea garden referred to as the Torsha Tea Garden along with the Torsha River majestically demarcating the land of this particular tribe. It is very difficult to locate the Mechia Busty because of the de-populated number of the Mechia tribe followed by the rough geographical terrain that has completely isolated them from the exterior world. An interesting fact that needs to be pointed out here is that there is no proper roadway connection connecting the Mechia tribes to the outside world. Therefore, very few people can exactly state as to where this particular tribe still exists fighting all odds against what modernity have to provide. The nearest neighbours of the Torsha tea garden are also not aware about the presence of this endangered tribe, making it useless to inquire them about the Mechi as whom they refer to as the Guawalas (Beetle nut suppliers) or Guapara (Land of Beetle nuts). Therefore, in order to reach Mechia Busty one needs to be willing enough to walk right across the Torsha tea garden and towards its edge we find a massive cultivation of beetle nuts marking the presence of the Mechia tribes on the banks of the mighty river Torsha visible.

Mechia Busty today is a home to the Mechias, the Nepalis and a few Bengali and Bihari shopkeepers who exists as if to keep an eye on the beetle nut cultivation so that they may be the first bidders during the sale of this rich crop. Governmental projects and policies have successfully reached Mechia Busty because one can see the existence of government health centres, toilets constructed by the government, hand pumps distributed by the government and also a primary government school located in the vicinity of the area. Operative

Panchayati Raj Institutions are also seen to be actively functioning in the area. As a matter of fact, the panchayats have played a major role in developing the socio-economic status of the local people in the area. It is interesting to note a fact that not even a single non-governmental organization operates in the Mechia Busty, thereby, making the area vulnerable to economic exploitation, social degradation and political manipulation of the local tribes in the hands of the non-tribal traders and businessmen. This is because Mechia Busty is very closely located to the neighbouring country Bhutan and Assam whereby the presence of a grassroots friendly institution to protect and advise them is important. However, the tribals themselves do not feel the requirement of a non-governmental organization because they consider themselves to be self-reliant, happy and prosperous without any external agency. The question that arises here is to what extent is the model of sustenance of the Mechia tribe sustainable? Apart from beetle nut cultivation, is there any other alternative source of livelihood for this particular tribe? These questions require a serious attention of the governmental authority and other developmental agencies.

The sole source of income of the Mechia tribe is dependent upon the beetle nut cultivation that which was sown by their great grandparents and that which does not require any labour at the present hour. Without a handsome investment on the plant, the cultivator can expect a handsome return year after year. This has somehow or the other made the entire tribe reluctant to carry on with their age-old practices of weaving, forest collection and other innovative mode of production. The need to work hard has been replaced by alcoholism, educational backwardness and overall degraded social existence which they may possibly feel only after decades from this date. This is because the beetle nut plants have started losing their crop production fertility and an unknown disease is grasping the plants which if not cured right now may lead to a complete distortion of the future of the Mechia tribes. Every Mechia household owns on an average 80 matured beetle nut trees, providing an average income of 1.5 to 2 lakh rupees per year. This is enough to feed a family, alongside the maintenance of cattle and pigs. However, mother-nature does not appear kind to this particular tribe. It has been witnessed that every year due to the overflowing flood of the Torsha river during the monsoon season, a large chunk of land is washed away thereby reducing the size of the beetle nut farm smaller and smaller year after year. Realizing this unforeseen danger, young Mechia adults have now been happily migrating to other parts of the country in search of better job opportunities thereby leaving the responsibility of cultivation on the shoulders of their aged parents.

5.6.4.a. DATA INTERPRETATION

The following tables and charts have been derived after a serious survey conducted in Mechia Busty, the only region where we find a good number of Mech tribe settlement in the entire Dooars. The questionnaire for this particular area of study had to be changed because the questions that were devised to cater to the opinion of the respondents about the role of non-governmental organizations in development could not meet the demand of the situation. As has been pointed above, there is complete absence of any existing non-governmental organization in Mechia Busty because of which slightly different questions had to be framed for this region. The following provides an insight about the major findings of the survey area.

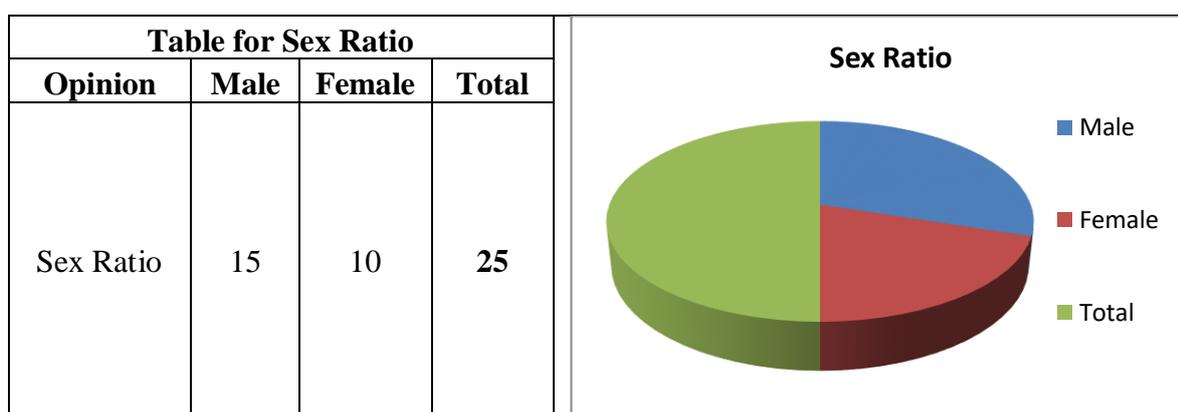


Table No. 4. b. Source: Field Survey

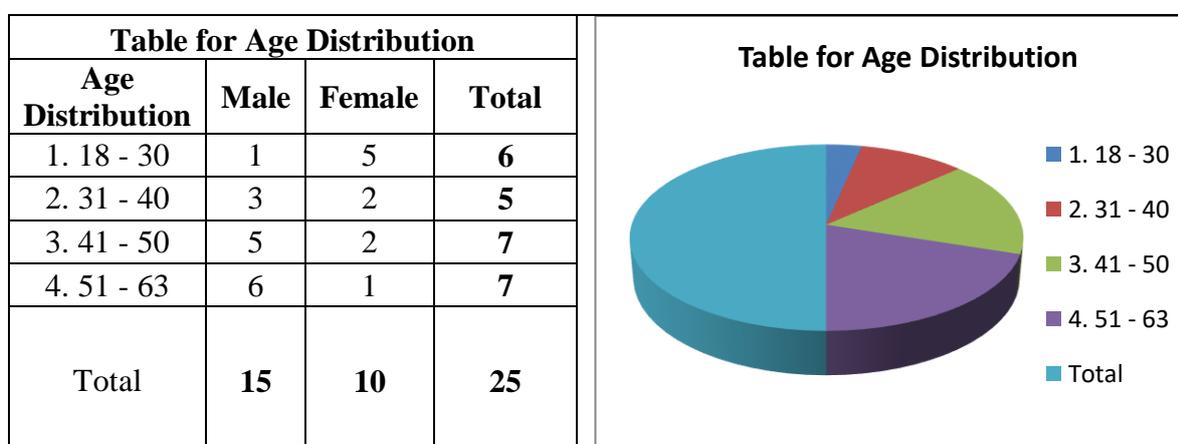


Table No. 4. c. Source: Field Survey

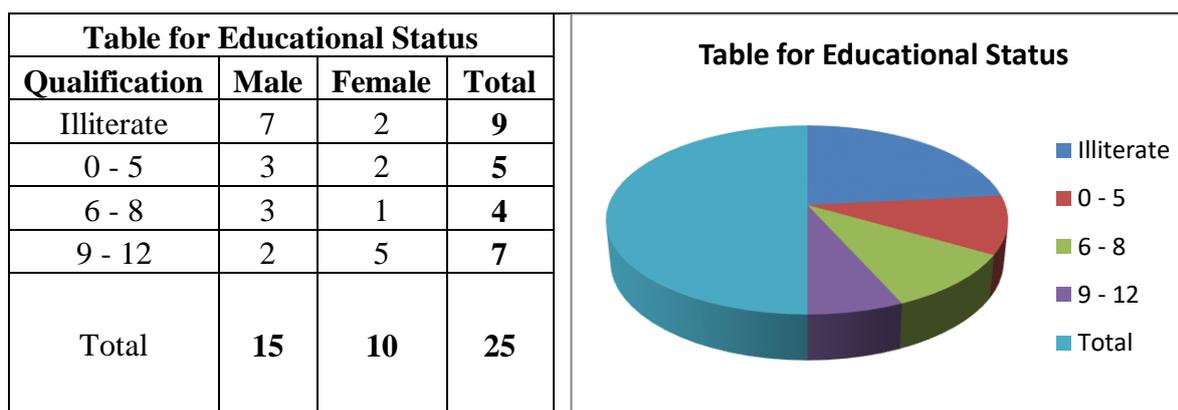


Table No. 4. d. Source: Field Survey

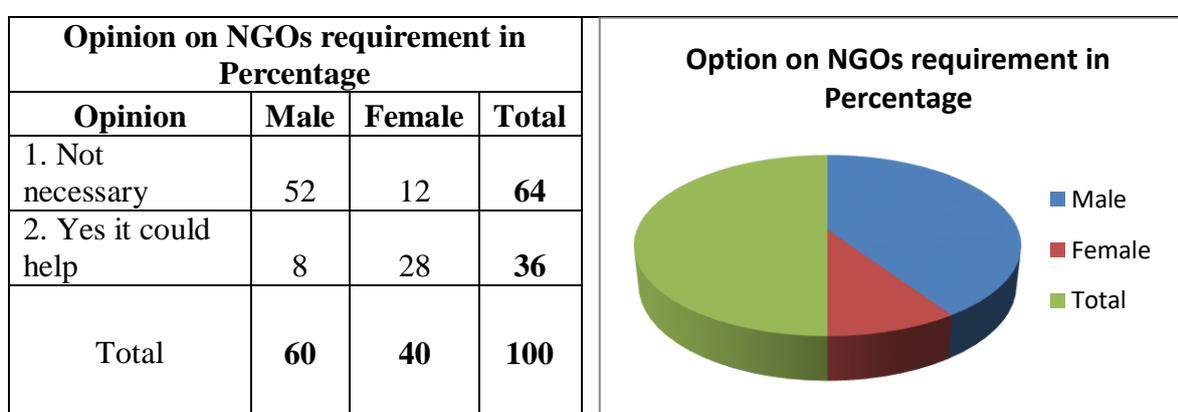


Table No. 4.e. Source: Field Survey

Table No. 4. e. directly enquires the respondents about their opinion as to whether apart from the government, a third sector of help in the form of non-governmental organizations are required in the area for their development. 64% of the respondents out of which 52% male and 12% female regard the future intervention of the non-governmental organizations to be unnecessary while 36% with 8% male and 28% female are positive about the utility of the non-governmental organizations and hence show willingness to have them in the area.

(5.6.4.b) MAJOR FINDINGS

- Mechia Busty is a small hamlet comprising up of approximately one hundred and ten Mechia tribe families living alongside the Nepali speaking population under Jaigaon police station of Alipurduar district, very much untraceable to locate.

- The Mechia tribes completely depend upon the governmental aids for their overall development that is trickled down from the higher authorities to the grass root level via the local self government or the panchayats.
- There is complete absence of any third sector of development in the forms of either charity missions, private organizations or the non-governmental organizations. The people of the area are also not much enthusiastic about the intervention of the non-governmental organizations in their area which they feel would make them dependent on them.
- The primary source of Mechia livelihood in the Mechia Busty is beetle nut cultivation which fetch them a good amount of income that is enough to maintain the families throughout the year. Apart from this, there is an absence of alternative livelihood which can be taken by the government or the non-governmental organizations to work on as a probable area of development.
- It is interesting to note that the people of Mechia Busty have a strong faith in the functioning of the government and regard this institution on a higher platform. One of the primary reason behind this respect towards the government is because of the fact that the art of cultivating beetle nut was actually introduced and taught to the local people by one such member of the governing agencies who is still adorned posthumously.
- The Mechia tribes are also seen to be very much duty bound to contribute to the social welfare activities by maintaining the infrastructural development generated by the government such as public toilets, dispensaries and government schools. This aspect is something very unique not found in common in the other areas of survey.

5.6.5. CASE NUMBER FIVE-MECHPARA

Bearing its registered office at Nicco House, 4th Floor in 2nd Hare Street, Kolkata, the Mechpara Tea Garden with its membership of the Darjeeling Dooars Plantation Tea Limited is one of the successfully operating tea gardens of the Dooars region of North Bengal. The Mechpara Tea Estate is located in the Kalchini Block next to the Chuapara Tea Garden that operates itself under the banner of Mc.Leod Russel India Ltd. which is now run by the Williamson Magor Group Enterprise. To reach Mechpara one needs to take an auto rickshaw from the Kalchini town and then walk across the Chuapara tea garden to reach Mechpara that shares a border with Hamiltongunj. There are a total of two hundred and ninety families comprising up of the Adivasi Scheduled Tribes, Nepali speaking people and also some people of the Bihari and Muslim communities. There are four government schools in and around the area where children attend their basic education. For higher studies the Jaigaon College is the nearest one to cater to their needs. Like other operating tea gardens, the Adivasi Scheduled Tribes are the largest communities of people that work in the tea plantation as labourers with a wage of one hundred and thirty two rupees and fifty paise per day as a reward for their dedicated hard work. Alcoholism accompanied by illiteracy and poverty happen to be the major barriers that restrict local people from attaining the targets of development. Although the spread of Christianity on a large scale have helped in controlling this menace, yet the picture still appears to be dismal. This serious problem of addiction to the unhealthy, cheap and harmful local made liquor has been posing as a major threat in the survival of the people with the right to a dignified life. The problem of alcoholism is not alien to the survey area although the consumption of liquor in all social norms is definitely one of the primary traits of a tribal lifestyle. Yet the researcher brings forward the fact that those scheduled tribe adivasis that have been working in the plantation as labourers have been the worst affected ones as compared to the indigenous Jhumia Scheduled Tribes of the area i.e. the Dooars region. The major reason behind this problem is that alcohol consumption is encouraged indirectly by the management so as to produce a next set of labourers for the successful running of the tea plantations in the area. The local outlets commonly referred to as the *Thekas* that are generally run by the non-*adivasi* people definitely have a cognizance as well as a positive nod from the high command and the local law bearers. This is very important because if the people are made capable enough to choose and decide the best for themselves, then it is obvious that the next generation would not prefer to stick in the tea gardens as

labourers. Therefore, the vital question of who would run the labour market arises which is why people are not given the opportunity to think by giving way to alcoholism.

However, the impact of this life threatening addiction is felt by the entire family right from the womb till ones tomb. It has grasped into its hold the people of all the ages from infants till the old that witness poverty, deprivation, distress, domestic violence, crime, undignified lifestyle and in the long run frustrations. However, the people do not seem to look at this problem with a serious vision because of which development is a farfetched dream that have remained unfulfilled for ages.

Although reservation for women seats are made in the local level self governments or the panchayats, yet it has been noticed that the real decision makers are either the husbands, the father-in-laws, the brother-in-laws or any of the male members of the family. Women simply act as dummy rubber stamps who give their consent over the matters that are argued, solved and diluted by the men folk. The problem does not lie with the female politicians alone. The entire system has accepted the men to be the torch bearers of the society because whenever anyone needs the assistance of the lady chieftain, the people instead of approaching her, address their problems to her man who has the final say in all the decision making activities of the area. Therefore the meaning of reservation for women at the grass root level is itself left for a complete re-evaluation in both its conceptual as well as contextual sense of the term.

A nexus between the village headman, some of the non-governmental organizations and few active yet corrupt people of the area is witnessed by any external element. The rest of the village are controlled by them to forcefully believe that there are some alien bodies in the name of the non-governmental organization working in the area alongside the panchayats for the development of the people. However, a stronger interrogation of the respondents make it clear that such organizations do not operate in the area but because of the pressure levid upon them by elite sections of their society, they are forced to believe in the existence of such non-governmental organizations.

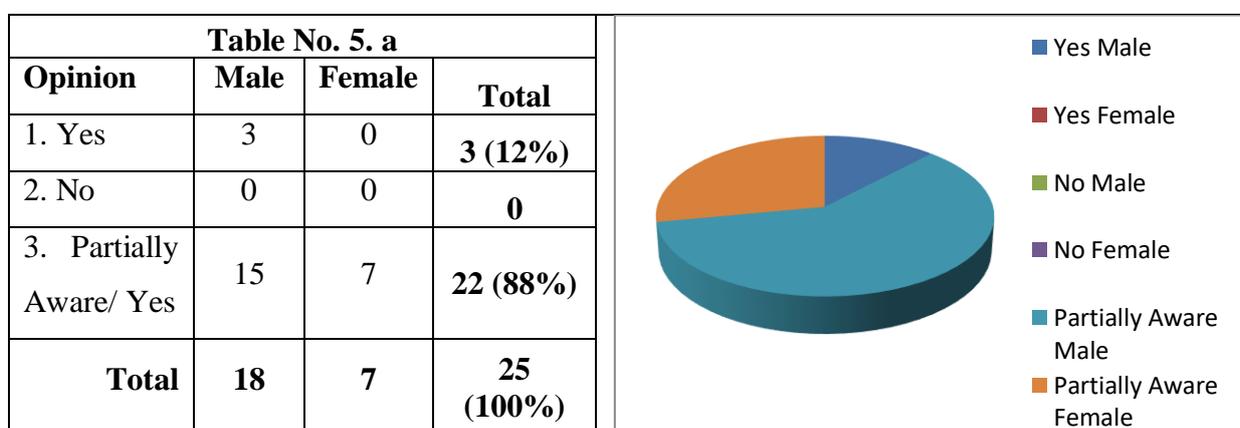
The so called non-governmental organization that exists in the area is the Rural Aid and the Mechpara Dooars Welfare Society. However, the role of these non-governmental organizations in the development of scheduled tribes of the area stands to be a big question mark that fails to provide a reliable explanation.

Apart from the tea plantation, there are no alternative sources of livelihood for the people because of which large scale migration is witnessed in the area. The overall picture of Mechpara does not provide us with happy conclusions about the people and their level of development which of course is one just example of the many tea gardens where the adivasi scheduled tribes are employed as the tea plantation labourers. Illiteracy, ignorance, depression and fear on the part of the poor tribals alongside acculturation, corruption and betrayal on the part of the elite scheduled tribes of the same area working as politicians and members of the tea plantation unions have added more sorrow to the everyday life of the adivasi scheduled tribe plantation workers. It is to be noted that the adivasi scheduled tribes working in the plantation do not own land which makes them property less and dependent upon the management for almost everything right from livelihood, health, education and even justice. In such a situation, it leaves open the widest possible gate for any organization under the banner of a non-governmental organization to work in any deserving area right from livelihood, health, education, legal awareness, trafficking, child abuse, prostitution, skill development etc. The only required element is a strong burning desire to sincerely work for the common people, which unfortunately is absent in the area. The role of the non-governmental organizations for tribal development is strongly questioned in such area where they are actually needed in the truest sense of the term.

Let us look into the major findings of the survey conducted in the Mechpara Tea Garden of Kalchini Block in the Alipurduar district of North Bengal.

5.6.5.a. DATA INTERPRETATION

In interviewing the Mech tribes of Mechpara we have been able to collect the following important figures.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. a shows us the opinion of the respondents as their level of awareness about the schemes of development launched by the government for them and their response of availing them. 12% of the Mechpara population believes that they are completely aware about the developmental policies launched by the government for tribal development, while 88% are apprehensive and think that they are partially aware about the policies.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0
2. Good	4	3	7 (28%)
3. Average	12	4	16 (64%)
4. Bad	1	0	1 (4%)
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	1	0	1 (4%)
Total	18	7	25 (100%)

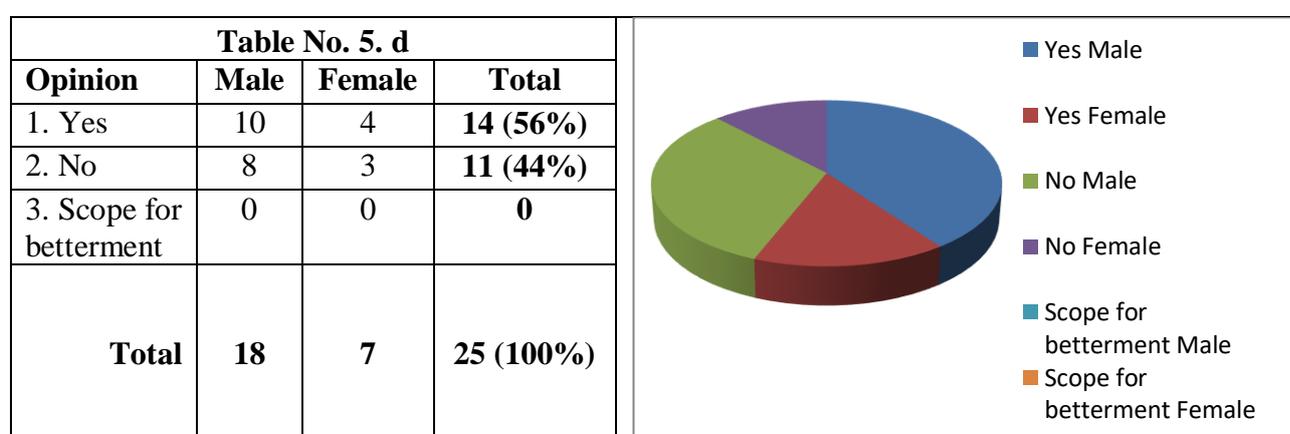
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. b inquires the respondents about the manner of implementation of the policies of the government by the local self government. 28% of the total sample believes that the panchayats have been able to provide good service. 64% of them however do not seem to be very happy with regard to the implementation of developmental schemes by the panchayats for which they have opted for the average option denoting something average. 4% of the respondents are at all not satisfied and consider the service to be bad while the remaining 4% are optimistic enough to believe that there is scope for betterment.

Table No. 5. c	Utility of the governmental policies in development			Empowerment of the people		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
3. Average	7	5	12 (48%)	18	7	25 (100%)
4. Bad	1	0	1 (4%)	0	0	0
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	10	2	12 (48%)	0	0	0
Total	18	7	25 (100%)	18	7	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. c. enquires the respondents about whether the governmental policies have been helpful enough in developing the scheduled tribe communities of the area, and to what extent have they been able to empower them. 48% of the respondents believe that the governmental policies have had an average utility with nothing specific as good or bad. 4% assume that the governmental policies have not been able to bring about positive impact in their lives and regard it to be bad policies while 48% of the respondents are hopeful for betterment. On the other hand 100% of the respondents consider the policies to have been empowering them on an average rate.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. d enquires about the importance of consultation of the beneficiaries by the government before the formulation of tribal development policies. 56% of the respondents opine that it is very important to consult the people first before formulating any policies for them because most of the time the demand of the people do not match the supply of the government. However, 44% of them believe that such consultations are not required.

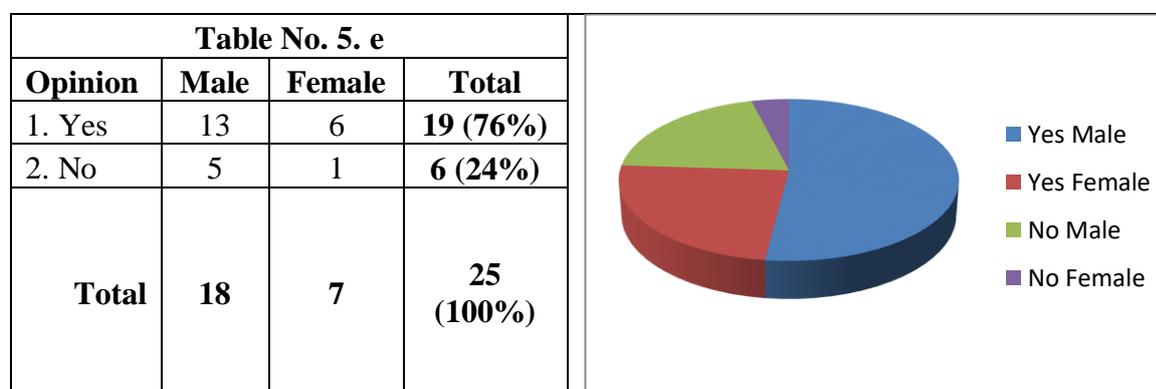


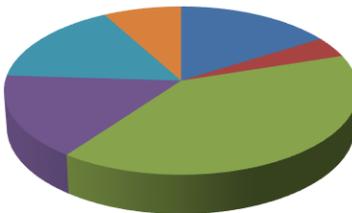
Table No. 5. e enquires the respondents of whether they see the presence of any non-governmental organization in the area. However the presence of such non-governmental

organizations does not mean that they function equivalently. 76% of the respondents think that the third sector of development called the non-governmental organizations are present in the area and almost all of them are aware and are obtaining facilities from the non-governmental organizations while 24% of them do not see the presence of non-governmental organizations working in their area.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Developmental- charity works, relief aids, crisis management	2	0	2 (8%)
2. Empowerment oriented- site some examples (Livelihood, Health, Education)	3	2	5 (20%)
3. Detrimental by making them dependent on them?	0	0	0
4. I don't see them working	13	5	18 (72%)
Total	18	7	25 (100%)

Table No. 5. f tries to locate the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development by providing four different sections. Charity works, Relief aids and Crisis management have been included under the broad category of Development Oriented, while Health, Livelihood and Education are included under the banner of Empowerment Oriented. 8% of the respondents say that the works carried out by the non-governmental organizations are Developmental Oriented, while 20% of the respondents proclaim that the non-governmental organizations working in the area are Empowerment Oriented. 72% of them are not aware of the role of non-governmental organizations and they do not see non-governmental organizations working in their area.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	4	1	5 (20%)
2. No	10	4	14 (56%)
3. I don't know	4	2	6 (24%)
Total	18	7	25 (100%)



- Yes Male
- Yes Female
- No Male
- No Female
- I don't know Male
- I don't know Female

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. g tries to know whether some positive changes have been brought about after the coming in of the non-governmental organizations in the area. 20% of the respondents have witnessed positive changes after the intervention of the non-governmental organization in the area and they are content with the kind of work that the non-governmental organizations are executing in their area. 56% of the respondents feel that there have not been any positive changes and 24% of them are completely unaware and have no idea.

Table No. 5. h	Awareness about Human Rights			NGOs working for Human Rights		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	8	3	11 (44%)	0	0	0
2. No	10	4	14 (56%)	18	7	25 (100%)
3. I don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18	7	25 (100%)	18	7	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. h tries to find out the awareness of the people about their basic Human Rights and whether they see any non-governmental organization working in this regard. 44% of the respondents regard themselves to be aware about Human Rights while 56% consider themselves to be unaware about this subject. However, none have seen any non-governmental organization to be working in this regard.

Table No. 5. i			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Economic well being	8	5	13 (52%)
2. Political Awareness and empowerment	1	0	1 (4%)
3. Social equality and liberation	0	0	0
4. All of the above	9	2	11 (44%)
5. Any other criteria	0	0	0
Total	18	7	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. i tries to understand the meaning of development to the tribes of Mechpara for which we have placed five categories as listed below. 52% of the respondents regard

economic wellbeing to be the basic crux of development while 44% regard every component ranging from economy to polity to social equality to be essential for development. 4% of the respondents believe that Political Awareness and empowerment is one of the essential factors for development.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Participatory approach	8	4	12 (48%)
2. Top down approach	7	3	10 (40%)
3. Bottom up approach	3	0	3 (12%)
Total	18	7	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 5. j tries to gather the idea of developmental approach for tribal development for which we have provided three strong parameters. 48% of the respondents regard the Participatory approach to be helpful for tribal development where there would be equal and positive participation of the government, the non-governmental organizations and the public in terms of decision making at large. 40% seem to be satisfied with the existing Top-down approach while 12% of them think that decision making should be left in the hands of the tribes themselves that need ratification only at the end in the hands of the government. They feel that this would address their grievances to the fullest.

5.4.5.b. MAJOR FINDINGS

- Mechpara Tea Garden is a home to the Madhesia Adivasi scheduled tribes, Nepali speaking population of the Dooars, Bihari and Muslim communities, all of whom are dependent upon the tea garden for their livelihood with the scheduled tribes working as plantation labourers.
- Poverty and acute alcoholism are the two major problems that have tightly grasped the scheduled tribes of the area making the situation worse especially for the women folk who are expected to manage both their work as well as family keeping in mind their alcoholic family members including themselves at times.
- Some of the non-governmental organizations that are assumed to be working in the area are The Family Planning Association of India (FPI), Mechpara Welfare Society

and the Rural Aid. However, the pictures of the activities of most of the non-governmental organizations are dismal.

- Some of the non-governmental organizations such as the Rural Aid with its Secretary Mr. Manik Dhar appear to be least bothered about the field work because of which deny sharing any information about the organization often misleading the common people about crucial facts with regard to the working of the organization.
- Seventy two percent of the respondents of the Mechpara Tea Garden deny the positive role of the non-governmental organizations in the area and believe that they do not see such organizations working in the grass root level. This marks a deviation from the theoretical understanding about the role of the non-governmental organizations in the area.
- A strong nexus is witnessed between the elites of the tea garden along with the members of the non-governmental organizations for their individual benefit by misguiding the ordinary people about the existence of such non-governmental organizations in the area which although is definitely present in theory, the reality shows a different picture at the ground level.

5.6.6. CASE NUMBER SIX-KUMARGRAM

Under the Kumargram block, we have selected Uttar and Madhya Haldibari as our survey area because of its diverse pattern of settlement of the tribes alongside with the non tribes. To visit this place, one needs to take a bus from Alipurduar bus stand up to Salsalabari, from Salsabari till Barobisa and from Barobisa up to Kumargram town. After reaching Kumargram, one can take an auto rikshaw to reach Madhya Haldibari wherefrom one needs to walk for another twenty minutes to reach Uttar Haldibari. Kumargram is at a distance of 49 kilometers from Alipurduar and is more of a rural area with the Assam and Bhutan border via the Sankosh River at a close by distance. Haldibari falls furthermore interior of Kumargram. With regard to its strategic significance, the Indo Bhutan border through Sankosh River is thirteen kilometers from Kumargram and the Bengal Assam border is at a distance of three kilometers away.

Madhya Haldibari has a majority of Scheduled Caste communities (Rajbansis) with some scattered Jhumia scheduled tribes, Nepali speaking households, and Bihari families. Uttar Haldibari has a larger number of Adivasi scheduled tribes alongside the Rajbansis, Nepali and Bihari households. The Seventh Day Adventist Church marks a point of separation between Madhya Haldibari and Utttar Haldibari. As a matter of fact, this church also acts as a unifying bond between the Christian Scheduled tribes with the rest of the society, mostly between the indigenous and the adivasi scheduled tribe communities.

The chief source of livelihood of the scheduled tribe families of this area is farming, minor forest collections from the nearby Buxa Reserve Forests and casual labour in Bhutan via the Sankosh border. Since the Indo Bhutan border via the Sankosh River is very close to Kumargram, most of the labourers prefer to take shortcuts via the forests and the Sankosh tea garden. The Assam Bengal border is at a distance of half a kilometer from Madhya Haldibari where the dried up Sankosh river and the Buxa Reserve Forest acts as a border demarcating West Bengal and Assam. However, the job opportunities in Assam are very much restricted because of which we can see the influx of the Assamese people to Bengal narrating a different angle to the story. Apart from Bhutan where from they return back home at night, the Scheduled Tribes of the area (mostly the Madhesias) alongside the Rajbansis migrate to the bigger cities like Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kerela for a better source of livelihood. Tea plantation is absent in both Uttar and Madhya Haldibari because of which people have to generate their own source of livelihood either through agriculture, migration or by working in

the riverbeds as labourers under some alien contractors (most of whom are Bengalis or Marwaris). The Haldibari Chowpathi is decorated by some shanty shops that are mostly owned by the Biharis and Rajbansis. We do not find even one single shop or any business unit owned by the scheduled tribe communities. The social dejection by the other communities alongside poverty marks to be one of the prominent reasons behind it.

From a bird's viewpoint, Uttar and Madhya Haldibari appear to be a peaceful, underdeveloped backward village with a mixed population composition of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the unreserved categories of people in the form of the Rajbansis who generally prefer to call themselves Bengali, Bihari, Rabha, Bodo, Santhal, Munda, Oraon and Nepali. The economic standard of living of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes is more or less similar with both dependent upon agriculture, cattle keeping, pig farming and physical labour. The Biharis are comparatively better off than the rest because they are the controlling force deciding on whom the boon of credit facility should be bestowed and who should be debarred when people approach their shops for commodities on credit basis.

An interesting finding that the researcher has made is that the people from most of the Scheduled Caste communities, not to forget the better off in the social hierarchy consider the Scheduled Tribes as someone of a lowly stature. This is not just in terms of the economy. They regard them as someone ostracized from the society, someone to be looked down upon and probably as dirty and untouchables. Supporting Ghurye's theory, the local inhabitants consider the Scheduled Tribes as Backward Hindus who still live the lives of savages and needs to be civilized by the society, granting themselves (Scheduled Castes) a better social status than the Scheduled Tribes. When inquired, the Scheduled Tribes are well aware about this social distinction and often express their anger over such ill logical issues giving them a reason to migrate for jobs outside to prove their economic capabilities or convert into Baptist sect of Christianity to achieve a higher social ladder free from socio economic disparities. However, this has only led to the disintegration of their tribal culture.

The workers of the non-governmental organizations working in the area also share similar opinion with the rest of the society and consider the Scheduled tribes as a frustrated group of people completely plunged into alcoholism, laziness and futility. The common terminology used to address the Scheduled tribes by the rest is ST and most of the people when they pronounce the term ST make such derogatory facial expressions symbolizing something

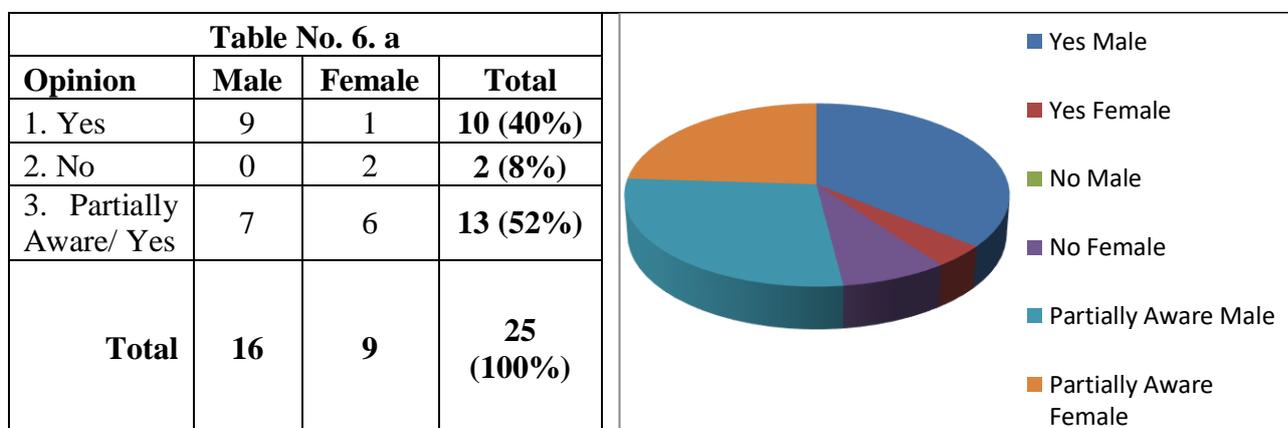
menial and lowly. This social dejection of some communities by forcefully placing them into the caste hierarchy in spite of not belonging there is something very much dangerous because the scheduled tribe communities do sense a feeling of hatred and disgust towards them by the non tribal communities. This area demands for a complete re-examination of the sociological understanding of tribal lifestyles, their religious practices, social ties and affinities, political structure and most important of all their tribal identities. This is because the scheduled tribes have remained backward not only from the economic dimensions of development but also from the forceful and intentional placement of these communities in the degraded rungs of the social hierarchical ladder. Therefore, the idea of development itself stands challenged because the scheduled tribes seem to be losing out on all their components of development be it on the basis of economy, health, education or their unique social identities. In such a situation, it is very interesting to find out the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the scheduled tribes of the area.

The major non-governmental organizations working in Uttar Haldibari and Madhya Haldibari of Kumargram Block are Tufangunj Anwasha Welfare Society that works for the alternative sources of livelihood for the local residents; the Benoy Dream Academy that looks into educational development; Save the Child Foundation that works for Child's Rights and the Karuna Memorial Health Care Society – the work area of which is left unknown to the respondents. From amongst the above mentioned non-governmental organizations, it appears that the Tufangunj Anwasha Welfare Society seems to be the most active non-governmental organization that have helped in transforming barren piece of land into lush green orchard with Erica, lime, guava and turmeric cultivation. They are also seen to be working in the field of skill development of the local people by teaching them how to produce earthworms and manures by natural decomposition, bee keeping, pig farming etc.

Let us look into the valuable opinions of the respondents with regard to the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development of the area.

5.4.6.a. DATA INTERPRETATION

In interviewing the tribes of Kumargram we have been able to collect the following important figures.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. a shows us the opinion of the respondents as their level of awareness about the schemes of development launched by the government for them and their response of availing them. **40%** of the respondents believe that they are completely aware about the developmental policies launched by the government for tribal development, while **52%** are apprehensive and think that they are partially aware about the policies. **8%** of them believe that they are not at all aware about the policies of the government.

Table No. 6. b			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0
2. Good	1	1	2 (8%)
3. Average	12	6	18 (72%)
4. Bad	1	0	1 (4%)
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	2	2	4 (16%)
Total	16	9	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

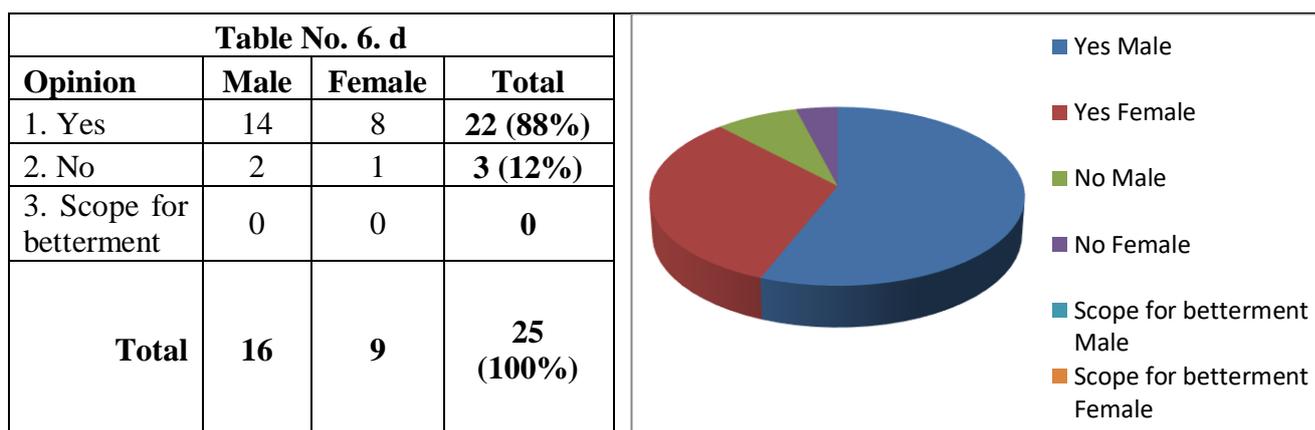
Table No. 6. b inquires the respondents about the manner of implementation of the policies of the government by the local self government. **8%** of the total sample believes that the

panchayats have been able to provide good service. 72% of them however do not seem to be very happy with regard to the implementation of developmental schemes by the panchayats for which they have opted for the average option denoting something average. 4% of the respondents are at all not satisfied and consider the service to be bad while the remaining 16% are optimistic enough to believe that there is scope for betterment and that the panchayats can do much better with a little more effort.

Table No. 6. c	Utility of the governmental policies in development			Empowerment of the people		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Very Good	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Good	2	1	3 (12%)	1	1	2 (8%)
3. Average	8	3	11 (44%)	7	5	12 (48%)
4. Bad	1	1	2 (8%)	5	2	7 (28%)
5. Yes but changes need to be made for betterment	5	4	9 (32%)	3	1	4 (16%)
Total	16	9	25 (100%)	16	9	25 (100%)

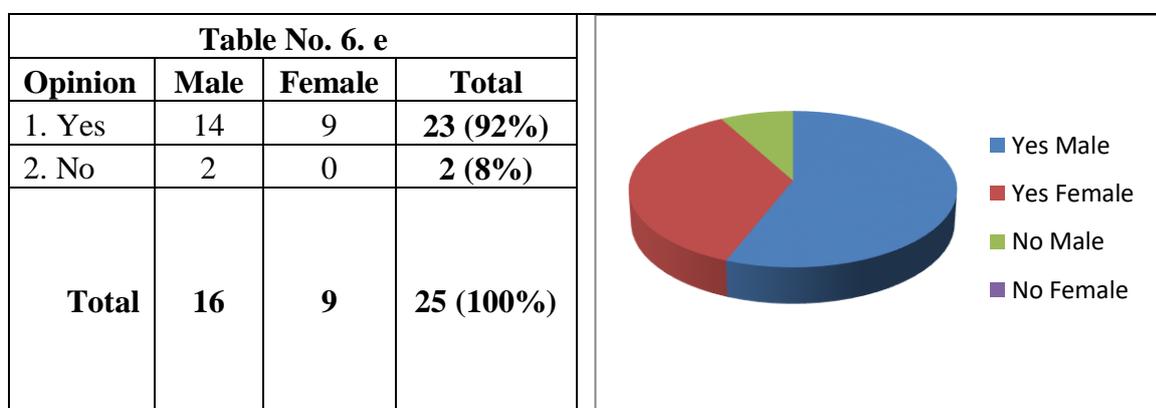
Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. c. enquires the respondents about whether the governmental policies have been helpful enough in developing the scheduled tribe communities of the area, and to what extent have they been able to empower them. 12% of the respondents regard the governmental policies to be good while 44% of the respondents believe that the policies have had an average utility with nothing specific as good or bad. 8% assume that the governmental policies have not been able to bring about positive impact in their lives and regard it to be bad policies while 32% of the respondents are hopeful for betterment. On the other hand 48% of the respondents consider the policies to have been empowering them on an average rate while 16% believe that these policies have to some extent empowered the people of Kumargram and are hopeful that the government will bring changes by granting or providing suitable policies for the betterment of the people and the area. 8% of them are happy with the progress on empowerment and 28% of the respondents regard it to be bad as these policies of the government do not empower them at all.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. d enquires about the importance of consultation of the beneficiaries by the government before the formulation of tribal development policies. 88% of the respondents opine that it is very important to consult the people first before formulating any policies for them because most of the time the demand of the people do not match the supply of the government. However, 12% of them believe that such consultations are not required.



Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. e enquires the respondents of whether they see the presence of any non-governmental organization in the area. However the presence of such non-governmental organizations does not mean that they function equivalently. 92% of the respondents think that the third sector of development called the non-governmental organizations are present in the area and almost all of them are aware and are obtaining facilities from the non-governmental organizations while 8% of them do not see the presence of non-governmental organizations working in their area.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Developmental- charity works, relief aids, crisis management	3	2	5 (20%)
2. Empowerment oriented- site some examples (Livelihood, Health, Education)	5	0	5 (20%)
3. Detrimental by making them dependent on them?	0	0	0
4. I don't see them working	8	7	15 (60%)
Total	16	9	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. f tries to locate the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development by providing four different sections. Charity works, Relief aids and Crisis management have been included under the broad category of Development Oriented, while Health, Livelihood and Education are included under the banner of Empowerment Oriented. 20% of the respondents say that the works carried out by the non-governmental organizations are Developmental Oriented, while 20% of the respondents proclaim that the non-governmental organizations working in the area are Empowerment Oriented. 60% of them are not aware of the role of non-governmental organizations.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	8	2	10 (40%)
2. No	4	5	9 (36%)
3. I don't know	4	2	6 (24%)
Total	16	9	25 (100%)

- Yes Male
- Yes Female
- No Male
- No Female
- I don't know Male
- I don't know Female

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. g tries to know whether some positive changes have been brought about after the coming in of the non-governmental organizations in the area. 40% of the respondents

have witnessed positive changes after the intervention of the non-governmental organization in the area and they are content with the kind of work that the non-governmental organizations are executing in their area. 36% of the respondents feel that there have not been any positive changes and 24% of them are completely unaware and have no idea.

Table No. 6. h	Awareness about Human Rights			NGOs working for Human Rights		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1. Yes	12	7	19 (76%)	4	1	5 (20%)
2. No	4	1	5 (20%)	12	8	20 (80%)
3. I don't know	0	1	1 (4%)	0	0	0
Total	16	9	25 (100%)	16	9	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. h tries to find out the awareness of the people about their basic Human Rights and whether they see any non-governmental organization working in this regard. 76% of the respondents regard themselves to be aware about Human Rights while 20% consider themselves to be unaware about this subject. 4% of the respondents don't know the term at all. On the other hand, 80% of the respondents have not seen any non-governmental organization to be working in this regard while 20% consider that the non-governmental organizations are working for the protection of Human Rights of the common people.

Table No. 6. i			
Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Economic well being	7	4	11 (44%)
2. Political Awareness and empowerment	1	0	1 (4%)
3. Social equity and liberation	0	0	0
4. All of the above	2	1	3 (12%)
5. Any other criteria	6	4	10 (40%)
Total	16	9	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. i tries to understand the meaning of development to the tribes of Kumargram for which we have placed five categories as listed below. 44% of the respondents regard economic wellbeing to be the basic crux of development while 12% regard every component ranging from economy to polity to social equality to be essential for development. 4% of the respondents believe that Political Awareness and Empowerment is one of the essential factors for development while 40% of the respondents are with the other criteria and regard Education as the ultimate pillar for development.

Opinion	Male	Female	Total
1. Participatory approach	9	3	12 (48%)
2. Top down approach	1	3	4 (16%)
3. Bottom up approach	6	3	9 (36%)
Total	16	9	25 (100%)

Source: Field Survey

Table No. 6. j tries to gather the idea of developmental approach for tribal development for which we have provided three strong parameters. 48% of the respondents regard the Participatory approach to be helpful for tribal development where there would be equal and positive participation of the government, the non-governmental organizations and the public in terms of decision making at large. 16% seem to be satisfied with the existing Top-down approach while 36% of them think that decision making should be left in the hands of the tribes themselves that need ratification only at the end in the hands of the government. They feel that this would address their grievances to the fullest.

5.6.6.b. MAJOR FINDINGS

- Uttar and Madhya Haldibari under the Kumargram Block of Alipurduar district has a mixed settlement of the Adivasi scheduled tribes, Jhumia scheduled tribes, Nepali speaking population, Bodo tribe migrants from Assam, Bihari shopkeepers, Rajbansi community etc. The scheduled tribes are dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood.

- In comparison to the Adivasi scheduled tribe, the Jhumia scheduled tribes are in a much better economic background because of multiple reasons such as alternative livelihood in the form of weaving and bamboo product making still retained by the Jhumia scheduled tribes, conversion from animism to Christianity ultimately leading to a complete disassociation from alcohol abuse and not to forget a higher educational achievement as compared to the former.
- The scheduled tribes in general are looked down upon as the savage, the backward and the untouchables by most of the people living in the area. This social degradation has acted as a barrier between the scheduled tribes and the non-tribal population. As a matter of fact the scheduled castes such as the Rajbansi community also regard themselves to be better off and at a higher social ladder as compared to the scheduled tribes whom they regard to be the untouchables.
- The major non-governmental organizations working in the area are Tufanganj Anwasha Welfare Society, Vasundhara Enviro Welfare Society, Benoy Dream Academy etc. apart from the many such non-governmental organizations that are untraceable in the field.
- The intervention of the non-governmental organizations in the area for development has definitely brought about a positive change in the lives of the beneficiaries. However, it is to be noted that the non-tribals have benefitted in a much better manner as compared to the tribal people from such NGO intervention.
- The respondents consider participatory approach for tribal development to be much better for the betterment of the tribal community at the larger scale.

5.7. STATISTICAL EXPLANATION

In order to give meaning to the above provided data, we shall be using the help of statistical explanations using Chi Square Test to either accept or reject the proposed Null Hypothesis (Ho).

Let us place our hypothesis of the research bearing the title –**STATE, NGOS AND TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY IN DOOARS REGION OF WEST BENGAL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ROLE OF THE NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS SINCE 1991.**

Ho- NGO intervention in the tribal areas of Dooars is successful enough in bringing about sustainable and self reliant participatory development of the beneficiaries i.e. the tribal population. The policies adopted need not require changes and the target of implementing the right to development has been satisfactorily implemented on the tribal population of the Dooars region.

HA/H1- NGO intervention in the tribal areas of Dooars has not been able to secure a sustainable, man- nature friendly self reliant development of the beneficiaries of the area. The principles and policies of development adopted by the State as well as the NGOs stand to be inadequate to suffice the need of the hour which is not just economic self sufficiency but cultural, environmental and social protection of the tribal population of the Dooars region.

The *Level of Significance* that we have chosen is 5%

As have been stated in the introductory remarks of the first chapter about using mostly qualitative analysis and a few quantitative explanations as and when required in the interpretation of the data. Since the area of study fully depends upon qualitative analysis, we still take the help few quantitative data analysis for a better understanding. Taking few important questions into consideration, we shall place them to be the sample for the following Chi Square tests.

- ❖ Introspection about the awareness of the respondents about the developmental schemes of the government provides us with the **P value** of **2.288** which is much lower than the level of significance.

- ❖ With regard to the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the scheduled tribes of the area, the **Pvalue** that we derive is **1.524**.
- ❖ An enquiry about the positive changes that has been witnessed in the area after the NGO intervention provides us with the **P value** of **0.003**.
- ❖ The co-relation between the developmental policies of the government and the level of empowerment thereby brought about by it is indicated by the value of **0.490**.

Apart from the value of the co-relation co-efficient provided by the statistical calculation, we find that the P values that are derived at with the help of Chi Square Test are all less than the chosen Level of Significance, this makes us reject the Null hypothesis and thereby accept the Alternative hypothesis. Since, the **P values** $2.288 < 5$; $1.524 < 5$; $0.003 < 5$ or in other words, since the P Values are less than or equal to the Significance value,

The Null Hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (HA) is accepted.

Therefore, we can safely **conclude** that the NGO intervention in the tribal areas of Dooars has not be able to secure a sustainable, man- nature friendly self reliant development of the beneficiaries of the area. The principles and policies of development adopted by the State as well as the NGOs stand to be inadequate to suffice the need of the hour which is not just economic self sufficiency but cultural, environmental and social protection of the tribal population of the Dooars region. Much needs to be done for bringing about a qualitative betterment in the lives of the scheduled tribe population of the area. The importance of the improvement in the quality of life signifies a balanced and true form of development of the entire nation which in itself is the core crux of the welfare model of development.

5.8. SUGGESTIVE MEASURES: TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

Compartmentalizing tribal development in India is a herculean task because of its multiple variations in terms of culture, language, social structure, economic standards and various other factors that lead to its heterogeneity in terms of its identity. However, the most crucial parameter of understanding the level of development of the tribes of India can definitely be done in terms of two broad economic categories on the basis of their ownership over the natural resources and the production of valuable commodities out of these resource bases. The first category of tribals can be done in terms of their economic status that is drawn from

the hills and forests as most of them are forest dwellers. The second group is generally found in the plains or valleys that are dependent on settled cultivation, horticulture and maintenance of life stock as alternate source of livelihood. In the Dooars region of the study area, we find the presence of both the forest dwelling scheduled tribes as well as the plain and valley settled scheduled tribes that are dependent on forest resources and tea plantations respectively for their source of survival.

During the post independence era, the tribal development projects have been interpreted as monitory investments in the tribal areas for their development which has been done under two specific categories. The first category involves such programs for the underdeveloped scheduled tribes at the cost of the exploitation of natural resources for the establishment of industries, factories, mega projects such as shopping complex, the construction of dams and hydro projects etc. This has no doubt led to a negative impact on the scheduled tribes of the area in the form of displacement, deprivation of community owned property and an overall tribal lifestyle. Although, the economic audit and account may definitely prove such investment as an economic venture with a positive return in terms of the growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), yet if we understand it from the social scale of measuring qualitative human development then this definitely marks out to be a disaster in terms of quality development of the scheduled tribes.

On the other hand, the second type of economic investment made by the government on the scheduled tribe areas focuses upon the empowerment of these groups of people by providing them employment opportunities, subsidies and loans and other such avenues of betterment that has definitely succeeded in bringing about a significant level of human resource development. In understanding such crucial subject one cannot only confine ones idea to the objectified data analysis of economic gains and losses but on the other hand must take into consideration the sensitive area of human development from a qualitative perspective granting the beneficiaries the right to choose the best for them as that what has been prescribed in the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. Such a model can be regarded to be the centre of any qualitative welfare model of development.

Prof. Rath (2006) has rightly summarized the last five decades of tribal development in India under three responses: positive, negative and suggestive. The positive responses highlight on the achievements of the ongoing development process and at the same time also attempts to predict the future of development in the days to come. Haimendorf (1990) happens to be one

such advocate of the positive response group where he believes that the tribes of India had gradually started to intricate themselves into the mainstream effects of developmental policy propagated by a welfare state in terms of its quality, society, culture and economy. Apart from Haimendorf, Srinivas (1990) is of the opinion that reservation alongside democratic political setup has definitely been the major facilitator of tribal development in India.

The positive response is out rightly rejected by the second group that believe in the negative response of the ongoing tribal developmental policies in the country because they believe that although reservation has been of help to very few individuals, yet on a larger scale, this has led to the exploitation of the tribal masses. The areas of induced displacement of the scheduled tribes for bringing about development of the mainstream cannot be regarded as a positive impact on these groups of people. Advocates such as Amar Singh Choudhury have remained loyal to their stand of negative response of the ongoing tribal developmental policies.

Similar to the negative response, the suggestive response does not appear to be very much optimistic about the impact of the tribal developmental policies on these sections of the nation. However, the major line of distinction between the two is that the suggestive response in spite of criticizing the negative aspects of the policies, make it a point to articulate a series of remedies for them which if incorporated shall make some positive changes in the lives of the scheduled tribes. Baviskar (1994) criticized the ongoing policies to be of help only to the bureaucrats suggesting an integration of tribal development programs with environmental conservation in order to generate sustainable self reliant livelihoods for the scheduled tribes. Criticizing the large scale privatization process with its negative impact on tribal development, Nathan and Kelkar (2003) suggests the distribution of land on equal terms on the basis of gender equality so as to bring about the preservation of environment and sustainable development.

After having clearly understood the socio-economic and political ground realities of the scheduled tribe communities of the Dooars region of North Bengal, it becomes pertinent that there are some major loopholes that need to be addressed immediately so as to bring about a qualitative change in the human development of the tribal communities. As has been stated earlier, the economic scaling may definitely show a remarkable economic rise in the tribal livelihood yet one cannot confine the idea of development to economic growth alone. Fr. Tirkey regards such empirical studies hinting towards economic betterment of the scheduled

tribes of the area as an impact of the trickle-down effect of the country's overall development thereby adding no extra benefit to the beneficiaries. He considers the scheduled tribe tea plantation labourers of North Bengal to be at the lowest rung of the economic ladder.

The social scaling of tribal development in the area shows a completely different picture that requires an immediate re-examination in order to bring about qualitative human development of the scheduled tribes; that which has been rightly advocated by the declaration on the Right to Development by the United Nations Organisation.

From amongst the three major responses propounded by Prof. Rath, the researcher feels that taking the area of research into consideration, one need to think beyond the three specific categories of understanding tribal development in the area. Compartmentalization definitely confines our idea and forbids us from thinking outside the directed opinion box. The case studies conducted in the research cannot be purely placed under any of the three categories. Since, one cannot feel the complete success of the governmental policies in the area, it would be wrong to place it under the positive response. At the same time one cannot choose to remain a critic of all the governmental policies to regard it to be negative because in areas such as Mechia Busty, Mendibari and Buxa region, we do find the governmental agencies playing a positive role. The researcher cannot take the suggestive response to be apt for the case studies because there is no scope of pointing out the positive impact of the government in this category. Most important of all, the area of research does not only confine itself to the policies of the State alone in the development of the scheduled tribes of the area, but at the same time tries to assess the role of the third agency of development under the banner of the non-governmental organizations.

The case studies clearly reflect upon a mixed response on the role of the governmental policies and the working of the non-governmental organizations in implementing these policies and reaching out to the grass root scheduled tribes. Therefore, this demands for a complete new approach to tribal development in the area. The consolidated findings of the field survey makes us understand that the scheduled tribes regard economic wellbeing to be the major criteria of development and also believe the government to be the prime facilitator of development. In achieving this target, a majority of approximately seventy percent of the respondents believe **participatory approach** to be the most suitable approach for tribal development of the area. It has been witnessed that most of the policies of the government stand to be inappropriate that do not address their core issues of requirements. On the other

hand, the non-governmental organizations that are expected to fulfill this gap are generally seen to be absent or pseudo-present in the area making the situation worse. A strong field based audit is the most important requirement of the hour to bring things in order. Therefore, the sample of the universe suggests participatory approach where there would prevail a strong decision making nexus between the scheduled tribes, the government and the non-governmental organizations to address the core areas in a much better manner because the freedom of choice would then be granted to the scheduled tribe communities.

Such an approach would definitely deviate from what senior political scientist like Prof. Rumki Basu believes in that a country like India with its vast population cannot have a micro level policy formulation which in turn would disturb the entire socio-economic and political system. However, the researcher strongly feels that in order to uplift the 8.6% of the Indian population that have been left backward since ages, such macro level policies have failed to fruitfully address them and if not taken serious note of shall create a disturbance in the Indian federal structure and the existing set up.

5.9. CONCLUSION

The present chapter dedicated to the field based understanding about the role of the non-governmental organizations in tribal development of the Dooars region is completely dedicated to the collection and analysis of field based data trying to address the significant practical questions about the three core elements separately taken up as the role of the State policies in tribal development, the role of the non-governmental organizations in the development of the tribes of the Dooars region and most important of all the understanding of the scheduled tribes themselves about their interpretation of the meaning of development and the approach towards empowerment of their communities. We begin the chapter with a general introduction about the survey area and the respondents living there with the cultural diversities, heterogeneous economic standards, linguistic variations and not to forget their religious affinities. The researcher has made every possible effort to theoretically conceptualize the different types of scheduled tribes living in the area.

A strong detailed analysis has been made about the methodology to be adopted in the field for the collection of data from the survey area. This is accompanied by the explanation of problems faced by the researcher in the collection of the data from the field.

Each of the six surveyed area is taken up one at a time to reflect on the significance of micro level understanding of the survey area. This is done to recognize the heterogeneous diversities of one tribal community from the other thereby respecting the very essence of heterogeneity imbibed in each tribal community deep down its roots. This is also an attempt to discard the idea of generalization of all the scheduled tribes as one single community facing one single problem under the diverse area thereby respecting the important characteristics of heterogeneity enjoyed by each scheduled tribe community.

After having closely analyzed each micro case study of the survey area, the researcher has provided an analysis of the consolidated field survey data as a sample to represent the scheduled tribe population of the Dooars region of North Bengal. Every attempt has been made to note down and explain the meaning of each question along with the diverse responses received from the end of the respondents with the help of mathematical tables and charts. The consolidated data is further more tested statistically and explained with the help of the Chi-Square Test where the Null Hypothesis (Ho) stood rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis is accepted.

The major finding has been summed up with the acceptance of the Alternative Hypothesis which states that the NGO intervention in the tribal areas of Dooars has not been able to secure a sustainable, man- nature friendly self reliant development of the beneficiaries of the area. The principles and policies of development adopted by the State as well as the NGOs stand to be inadequate to suffice the need of the hour which is not just economic self sufficiency but cultural, environmental and social protection of the tribal population of the Dooars region.

The concluding note discusses at length the alternative approach to tribal development in the Dooars region of North Bengal that may be taken as an alternative model at large for the scheduled tribes of the entire nation. This section shall be dealt at length in our next chapter.