

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL LIFE OF THE STONE CRUSHERS

Society can be looked upon as a process, as a series of interactions between human beings; each person stimulating another person and responding to the stimuli from the other person. No social life is possible without such interaction. Thus the whole human society and each group in the society can be viewed as the manifestation of the social processes between the interacting members. Ultimately a society is no more than a union of individuals, all of whom have their own special needs and interests. If a society is to survive it must succeed in balancing the self interests of its members against the demands of a society as a whole (Haviland, 1970:48). From Anthropological consideration of societies, the culture of a society is comprehensive not in the sense that includes the totality of human culture, but in the sense that it contains cultural pattern sufficiently diversified to enable the group to fulfil all the requirements of social life. Society emphasizes the human component, the aggregate of people and the relations between them. Culture emphasizes the component of accumulated resources, immaterial as well as material which the people inherit, employ, transmute, add to and transmit (Dash, 2004: 42-43).

The economic organization of the studied people was completely depended on the stone based occupation. The said occupation was intimately related with the maximum utilization of river based natural resources. On the other hand duration of work was a very crucial aspect related to the studied occupation. Thus the entire family even the children worked as a production unit irrespective of any age and gender biasness. The stone based occupation was associated with a number of works like collection of stones, sand and boulders from the river, isolation of different materials, breaking up of stones according to the demand of requirement, loading them to the vehicles etc. It could be noticed that both the males and females were equally associated with the work and any division of labour related to this arduous work could not be noticed. Among the studied people more working hand could generate better scope of earning and for that purpose they were involved in every aspect of the stone based work. However, their level of earning was very poor and in most of the families more than two

children were dependent upon two earning members. Obviously it had reduced their scope to provide the livelihood requirements for the family members at proportionate level. Poverty was an integral part of their livelihood and it might have certain impact on the socio-cultural aspects of their livelihood.

It was observed that the stone based occupation and the concerned working environment was significantly associated with the socio-cultural life of the concerned people. The studied people awoke early in the morning and after refreshment the concerned male folk took a very little breakfast and went to the river bed to start their daily work. On the other hand, the concerned women folk got involved in their household courses. Such involvement with the household courses was completed by them very soon and readily went to the river bed to start the work. Along with the parents, the concerned children also went to the river bed for the same. During the field study it was seen that often the studied people took their bath and washed their clothes in the tide of river water. Even in many cases they took their lunch and washed their utensils on the river bed. The new occupational involvement incorporated different iron implements to their material cultural aspects. Meanwhile, their traditional occupational pursuit and allied technological implements were completely obsolete. It is to be mentioned here that the socialization of the children primarily occurred with the help of their parents. When a child often went to work with his parents in the river bed, he gradually got acclimatized with the working environment. Further, with the passage of time he started to develop different level of interactions with different types of people who were affiliated with stone crushing work and had a regular interaction with the concerned workers. It was observed that the social behavior of a child was quite influenced by the activities of their parents. In this regard, their occupational involvement had a major role in their socialization process. In the studied families the concerned parents culturally assimilated their children with the working environment and social environment. The cultural expressivity of the studied people actually configured the expressivity of their learned behaviour and result of behaviour. On the other hand their cultural practices and modes of social behaviour would ultimately reflect that how far their rights to social life were secured. It would reveal the fact that upto what extent the concerned people could meet up with their basic needs to sustain their common minimum livelihood. These aspects will be discussed one after another.

Social structure and social organization of the studied people

A society is an organized, interacting aggregate of individuals who follow a given way of life (Herskovits,1955:305). A society is no more than a union of individuals, all of whom have their own special needs and interests. If a society is to survive it must succeed in balancing the self interest of its members against the demands of the society as a whole (Haviland, 1970:48). It is composed of a population, organized on the basis of time, place and interests. Ultimately human being collectively forms the social life. It is based upon family, marriage, kinship, economic organization, political organization and religious organization. Each of them has their own standardized role in the life of human being. All these aspects are interrelated to each other.

Family: The Human family is a group composed of a woman, her dependent children, and at least one adult male joined through marriage or blood relationship. The particular form taken by the family is related to particular social, historical and ecological circumstances. Households are task oriented residential units within which economic production, consumption, inheritance, child rearing and shelter are organized and carried out (Haviland, 1970:246). The family fulfils vital functions that cannot be carried out as efficiently by other groups. The basic functions of the family may be performed with varying degree of effectiveness from culture to culture, and the details of the ways in which families within different culture systems carryout these functions produce remarkably differing results in the individual personalities of children and adults (Hoebel and Frost, 1976:319). Family is the smallest unit of every society throughout the entire world. In a family, the children were nurtured with love and compassion. It is the smallest unit of production and reproduction. Unless there is family, the continuation of society would be impossible. There are wide variations in the structure of families all over the globe; however the most common family type is composed of husband, wife and their offspring. In this regard, the following case study will help us to know about the family structure and its function among the studied people.

Case Study 1: Sri. Jaguna Barman aged 75 years was an inhabitant of the studied area lived with his wife, Asobala Barman aged 70 years. They were earlier settled

in the Pabna district of Bangladesh. His father had five brothers and he had four brothers and three sisters. They were well established agricultural family. They had a joint family and in their household total 32 members were dwelling during that period. He remembered that during those days they had nothing of their own or personal belongings. Everyone had to share every object with each other to live peacefully. Their prime occupation was agriculture and all the family members collectively did the work. The entire production was the common resource of sustenance for them. None of the member had any scope to claim their personal sharing from the agricultural produces. His father was the eldest male member of the family and his opinion was the last word for every member to obey. Even after his death, they maintained their joint family system. However, when the political turmoil started during 1970s, his kin members decided to leave the native land Bangladesh for the sake of survival. He lamented to state that it had broken their joint family and from common sharing they became focused on individual sustenance. They got separated from each other and started to find about their individual settlement separately. He came to the Balasan colony in 1973 along with his two sons and a daughter. A few days latter his younger brother Jagalu also came in the studied area and established his own settlement with his wife and three sons. He stated that although they were settled in close vicinity but their struggle for the sake of resettlement had provided a very little scope for regular communication among them. None of them could have any affiliation to share their economic resource or to live altogether. Even their children who had played together in the courtyard, gradually started to forget about their close kin relatives because onwards from resettlement, they became an allied working hand for their parents. Mr. Barman stated that he worked very hard for the sustenance of his family members and in such economic scarcity he gave the marriage of his daughter. Further, he had also established the family of his two sons. He remembered with sorrow, that just after a month of marriage, on both the occasions his sons expressed their desire to establish their own settlement and particularly they had shown an utter reluctance to bear the unnecessary economic expenditure of Jaguna and Asobala. At that time Jaguna became much aged to conduct hard manual labour. He stated that both of them worked together everyday and whatever they earned; it could provide a little scope of sustenance for them. Sri. Barman lamented that when he was young, he had a number of near

and dear ones on whom he could depend; then in the fag end of his life except his wife, he had no one else to whom he could trust.

Among the studied people, generally a family was constituted by the husband, wife and their unmarried children.

Table 5.1: Distribution of family according to family type

Family Type			Total family
Nuclear	Joint	Extended	
234	82	9	325
72.00	25.23	2.77	100.00

Source: Field Study

Table 5.2: Distribution of family according to family size

Family Size (in number)			Total family
1-4	5-8	9 and above	
136	179	10	325
41.85	55.08	3.07	100.00

Source: Field Study

In the studied area most of the families (72 per cent) were nuclear in nature while one fourth of them were the joint families and a very few were extended families (Table 5.1). Considering to the family size it was observed that in most of the cases (55.08 per cent) the families were comprised of five to eight members and there were nine or more members in certain (3.07 per cent) cases (Table 5.2). The average family members were five in number. Further, on the basis of mode of formation the studied families had a range of variation.

Table 5.3: Distribution of the families according to their mode of formation

Mode of family formation			Total
Entire family migrated	Remarried	First married	
57	34	234	325
17.54	10.46	72.00	100.00

Source: Field Study

It was a fact that the studied families were displaced and migrated from their early settlement. Among the total studied families, the familial head of around 18 per cent families had the scope to bring away his every family member in the new settlement and in certain (10.46 per cent) cases, the head of the family came alone to the Balasan colony for initial settlement. In such cases, they kept their other family members to the residences of in-laws and were supposed to take them to the new settlement within a shorter duration. However, with the passage of time,

after getting re-settled in the Balasan colony and initiation of a new economic pursuit, they had hardly found any further mental affiliation to their early settlement as well as family members. Latter on, they got remarried in the Balasan colony and started a new familial life. In case of 72 percent families the concerned individuals got married in the Balasan colony and started their familial life accordingly. In most of the cases those individuals were child when they came to the Balasan colony along with their parents. Latter on, they grew up in the studied area and started their own familial discourse (Table 5.3).

Basically the families were task oriented residential units within which economic production, consumption, inheritance, child rearing and shelter were organized and carried out. In the studied area, the natural resource was the only source of income which could provide the basic requisites related to the common minimum livelihood of the studied people. However, with the gradual decrease of natural resources as well as continuous increase of population in the studied area, an economic scarcity among the studied people got increased. It affected their family structure very much. During the study it has been reported that when the young generation of the families got married and thereafter they had a few children, the economic burden of the concerned families got increased more. It might be due to the fact that the said generation was the prime earning member of the concerned families while as their parents gradually got aged, so they could not work much harder as they did earlier. Ultimately, it reduced the level of monthly familial income among the studied people. Such economic scarcity had raised the thought in the mind of the young generation that they should earn only for their wives and children; while they showed a reluctance to bear the livelihood burden of their aged parents or of any other family members. It made the younger generation to establish a separate family, while their aged parents were left to manage their livelihood by own means.

Table 5.4: Distribution of change in family type

Mode of change				Total family
Always joint	Earlier nuclear but now joint	Became nuclear after migration	Got nuclear after marriage of son	
6	76	102	132	325
1.85	26.15	31.38	40.62	100.00

Source: Field Study

From the field study it can be revealed that among the total studied families only a very few (1.81 per cent) families remained joint in nature even after their migration and resettlement. Further, many (26.15 per cent) of the families, came to the Balasan colony as a nuclear family after their migration. Later on, the parental generation of the said families gave birth to their children in the studied area; further their children got married and during the study, they were co-habiting with each other. Meanwhile, displacement and migration had a serious impact on the family structure in the studied area. It has been reported that many (31.38 per cent) of the families were joint in nature before their migration. The parental generation used to stay along with their brothers as well as with a number of their married children. Both primary and secondary kin members resided in a common shelter as well as shared a common hearth and purse. However, due to sudden political turmoil and thereafter the displacement had forced every member to look after the alternative means of sustenance in a quick succession. In such cases an individual had the chance to think about only for his wife and children instead of any other family members. As a result, their traditional joint family system was broken up and they started to live in a nuclear family after their migration. After the marriage of their sons, familial consensus was disturbed very much regarding the fulfilment of familial requisites and source of income. The married sons felt their prime responsibility to accumulate the livelihood requirements of their spouses and children. However, their little working and less earned aged parents often became a liability for them and mostly married sons became quite reluctant to manage the common minimum livelihood for their aged parents. In this regard, they got separated from their parents after marriage and formed their own nuclear family. Such cases could be observed among a greater section (40.62 per cent) of families (Table 5.4).

Every society has its own socio-cultural fabric which is sometimes influenced by extraneous factors. Social and cultural aspects consist of different institutions of the society which works within the network of broader society. Institutions include family, marriage, kinship, economic, political set up, religious institutions etc. Socio-cultural aspects of the society influence upon many human action, on the other hand, many extraneous factors such as political turmoil also acts upon the socio-cultural aspects of a given society. In the studied area, displacement, migration and its consequent factors may seriously affect the social and cultural

aspects of the studied people particularly in case of their families. It is to be mentioned here that the traditional culture of the studied people was primarily folk based. In their traditional joint family system face to face interpersonal relationship hold the major base for the familial structure. In such families an individual had the scope for first hand contact with their parents and grand parents. The familial and allied socio-cultural traditions gradually carried forward from the grand-parental generation to the generation of the descendants. Ultimately through family their socialization process, enculturation and personality formation gradually developed. The eldest male member was the supreme authority of the family. Due to the practice of joint family system, there were senior male members who could make discussion with the eldest male member over different familial matters. All the other family members were supposed to obey his decision. It would have maintained a strict familial discipline and if any of the members had disobeyed it then it would be regarded as an offence. As a result, the juniors had to obey and depend on the seniors or their parents for different concerned matters. Parents were the decision maker of their children in every perspective while the children had no scope to disregard the decisions or to oppose them. Due to parental authority the teenage or the younger generation almost had no scope to commence any illegal offence or anti community activity like alcoholism, gambling etc. If the people had committed such offence then the concerned person even his entire family would have been socially segregated. The joint familial income was collectively spent for the fulfilment of common minimum livelihood of all the family members. Their basic needs were properly maintained and everyone had the social security related to daily livelihood. In this regard, the universal function of the family was maintained very much when the studied people or their parents were in their earlier settlements. However, just after their displacement, migration and resettlement a major change could be noticed in the familial aspect. The scarcity related to their economy and livelihood, had made the people self centric irrespective of thinking about their brothers, sisters and many other kin members. It made the social bondage and inter-personal attachment, affection much looser. After resettlement the concerned people started to earn by themselves. With their own earning, the people had to fulfil their common minimum livelihood by themselves. The collective familial income and its collective distribution among

the family members got reduced to a lot. As every body was a self earner here, so they were least bothered on the decisions and desires of their most elderly and other senior family members. They were much interested to take their decisions own. Their income gradually became separate and it was no more a common resource rather it became their individual accessibility only. It made the concerned people, to provide more emphasis to their individual aspirations. It made them to spend their money according to personal desire in multifarious ways. The authority and role of the senior family members gradually started to loss its rigidity and justification. The younger generation could have the provision to get much affiliated with a number of illegal and anti community activity like alcoholism, gambling etc. However, in a number of cases the senior male members of the concerned families had also an affiliation with such activities. Thus, when the elderly members of the family and locality had done mischievous things then he hold a very limited social position to advice the younger generation for their betterment. Ultimately, a total social disintegration was raised after their displacement, migration and resettlement in the studied area. It was noted that the family size of the studied people got reduced due to displacement and complete breakdown of traditional agriculture based economy. It is to be mentioned here that due to economic scarcity and lack of proper settlement, their traditional joint family system might get started to change rapidly into nuclear family system. So, the number of nuclear families gradually got increased. Due to displacement, they had lost their prime source of income that is land. Thus the scope to pursue traditional agricultural occupation became very much reduced which also affected the value system of the traditional joint family system. Meanwhile, most of the parents advised their children to join with them in the stone crushing work instead of their regular education, rejoice and merriment. Even poverty and economic scarcity had snatched the rejoice, cheerfulness and smile of the studied people. It was telling upon the socialization and personality formation of the children as well as of other people too. These inconvenient social circumstances and severe economic crisis altogether had created a mental distress as well as psychological pressure upon them.

Marriage: Marriage is the institution that defines the interpersonal relationships that determine the form and pattern of the mating pair in the association we know as the family. Marriage is therefore culture complex (Hoebel and Frost,

1976:301). It is a relatively more universal and major social institution, because it fulfills one of the most important function of the society that is reproduction with some degree of social regulation over sex relationship. Marriage and family are complementary concepts- marriage is an institution; family is the association that embodies the institution. Marriage and family are the cultural superstructure upon a biological foundation (Lowie, 1950:87). Marriage is a transaction and resulting contact in which a woman and a man are recognized by society as having a continuing claim to the right of sexual access to one another and in which the women involved is eligible to bear children (Haviland,1970:219). There are two principal motives for marriage- the universal object of forming a family and the constant need for co-operation in the daily routine of life. Marriage is a communion of adult male and female who by reproduction assist in continuation of the society. Every society permits adult male and female to get married so that societal norms may not be violated. Except this system, there would emerge social disorder; so it is an essential union for the continuation of society and social order. It is the recognition of connubial relationship between men and women.

Table 5.5: Distribution of male population according to marital status

Age group	Unmarried	Married	Widower	Total
15-19	75 100.00	-	-	75 100.00
20-24	39 53.42	34 46.58	-	73 100.00
25-29	-	68 100.00	-	68 100.00
30-34	-	51 100.00	-	51 100.00
35-39	-	46 100.00	-	46 100.00
40-44	-	47 97.92	1 2.08	48 100.00
45-49	-	31 96.88	1 3.12	32 100.00
50-54	-	39 97.50	1 2.50	40 100.00
55-59	-	15 100.00	-	15 100.00
60-64	-	18 94.74	1 5.26	19 100.00

65-69	-	8 100.00	-	8 100.00
70 and above	-	7 87.5	1 12.5	8 100.00
Total	114 23.6	364 75.36	5 1.04	483 100.00

Source: Field Study

Table 5.6: Distribution of female population according to marital status

Age group	Unmarried	Married	Widow	Separated	Total
15-19	23 48.15	28 51.85	-	-	54 100.00
20-24	-	70 98.59	-	1 1.41	71 100.00
25-29	-	63 100.00	-	-	63 100.00
30-34	-	54 98.18	-	1 1.82	55 100.00
35-39	-	35 97.22	1 2.78	-	36 100.00
40-44	-	36 78.26	8 17.39	2 4.35	46 100.00
45-49	-	33 89.19	4 10.81	-	37 100.00
50-54	-	20 80.00	5 20.00	-	25 100.00
55-59	-	13 86.67	2 13.33	-	15 100.00
60-64	-	8 57.14	6 42.86	-	14 100.00
65-69	-	3 75.00	1 25.00	-	4 100.00
70 and above	-	1 25.00	3 75.00	-	4 100.00
Total	26 6.13	364 85.85	30 7.08	4 0.94	424 100.00

Source: Field Study

It was revealed that in between the age group of 15-19 years, near about 52 percent female got married. It may be because of the fact that the concerned parents were quite worried about the social security of their daughters. On the other hand, the demand of dowry was a great matter of concern for them. So whenever they had a little bit of economic convenience or favourable circumstances, the marriage ceremony was conducted. On the other hand, the

male population had attained their marital life in cent percent cases, only after attaining the age of 25 years. It was primarily because, the age of the concerned male folk became fully affiliated with the stone based work and became a self earner. In due course of time only through own earning capability he could establish his own nuclear family after marriage.

Among the total studied families except very few (1.23 per cent) families, most of the (98.76per cent) families had at least one couple. So far as religion is concerned, the studied families were married within their own religious group. Among the total studied families the instances of inter caste marriage could be noticed in case of a few (6.15per cent) families. In this concern, except few love marriages, all the mates were selected within own caste group in case of negotiation marriages. Meanwhile, in case of inter-caste marriages, the couple had selected themselves. In such cases all the brides were from the studied families and they fled along with their mate belonging to other caste, community or ethnic group. Among such cases they were married in the families who came from Bihar and Nepal in case of 5 (25 per cent) families each. Further, in case of 10 (50 per cent) families they were married in the families of Pal (potter) community of Palpara located adjacent to their locality, whose traditional occupation was to make different earthen materials as well as idol of Hindu Gods and Goddesses. The age at first marriage of the concerned people is represented through the following table.

Table 5.7.: Distribution of ever married population according to age at first marriage

Sex	Age group (in years)				Total
	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	
Male	--	16	330	23	369
		4.34	89.43	6.23	100.00
Female	89	225	54	--	368
	24.18	61.14	14.67		100.00
Total	89	241	384	23	737
	12.08	32.70	52.10	3.12	100.00

Source: Field Study

Data revealed that among the ever married population, the most attainable age of marriage for the males were in between the age group of 20-24 years, whereas in case of females it was 15-19 years (Table 5.7). However, there were a few

emerging problems related to their marriage. A few case studies were discussed below in detail-

Case Study 1: Smt.Santi Rani Barman aged 65 years was an inhabitant of Balasan colony since 1980. Her husband passed away four years ago and during the study she was living along with her daughter, Malati aged 20 years. Smt. Santi Rani Barman could not work much due to her ill health condition and their monthly income was only Rs.1, 200/- per month. She stated that for the sake of common minimum livelihood she had taken a public loan of Rs.5,000 from a local money lender and was yet to repay it in full. Her daughter had attained the marriageable age but her economic scarcity created as a great hindrance in this regard. Even she had tried to develop her daughter's marital relation outside of her locality. However, those people were quite reluctant to develop any sort of affinal relationship along with them. It was primarily because of the fact that the outsiders knew very well that such poverty stricken people had not the capability to arrange their desirable amount of dowry. She also tried to give marriage to her daughter in the Balasan colony but the related marital expenditure and the required amount of dowry became a hard task for her to manage. Ultimately it had created an acute frustration and mental depression on her.

Case Study 2: Sri. Aashina Barman aged 57 years had a five membered family in the studied area. He had a monthly income of Rs. 2,000/-. He stated that he had a public loan of Rs. 3,000/- from the *Sardar* which he was unable to repay till date. Under that severe economic crisis he had arranged the marriage of her daughter Jharna (22years) in the year 2007. The family of the groom demanded the dowry of Rs. 6,000/-. On the day of marriage he had managed to pay an amount of Rs. 4,000/- to the father of the groom and promised to pay the rest amount within a year. However, he was unable to keep his words within the stipulated schedule. On the other hand the in laws of Jharna started to misbehave with her and even she was frequently beaten up by her husband. Further, in the year 2009, they left Jharna back to her parental house along with a daughter and told Aashina that they would not except her as a daughter-in-law in near future.

Case Study 3: Sri. Jogina Barman aged 60 years had a six membered family in the studied area. He had a monthly income of Rs. 1800/-. He stated that even to

earn a fold of rice was a very difficult task for them. Often he had to take loan from the *Sardars* and other local money lenders. His elder daughter Rita (22 years) had attained the age of marriage and he was trying to do the ceremony in a quick succession. However, in earlier for four times she was preferred for marriage by different families but latter on those processes were withheld because Jogina was unable to accept their demand of dowry due to his poverty. Further, his next daughter Gita (19 years) had also attained the age of marriage. Ultimately such burden had created an acute frustration and mental depression on him.

Case Study 4: Sri. Suren Barman aged 57 years had a four membered family in the Balasan colony since 1985. His wife was ill and so he along with his two daughters had to do a lot of hard work on the river bed to collect a fold of rice. His elder daughter, Mala (22 years) had attained the age of marriage. However, with a mere monthly income of Rs. 1,800/- , it became a hard task for Suren to arrange her marriage. On the other hand on the river bed a number of outsiders used to come from different regions. Once a truck driver of Bihar had proposed Mala to go along with him but she refused and complained the matter to the *Sardar*. He advised Mala and Suren to mutually solve the problem. Again, the concerned person had threatened Mala to abscond if she did not accept his proposal. Suren was very much frightened in this matter and he was quite frustrated also due to the bitter truth that he was not in a position to arrange her marriage quickly.

Case Study 5: Sri. Bhola Barman aged 56 years was an inhabitant of the studied area since 1990's. He had a three membered family and his monthly income was Rs.2,200/-. He was very much interested to educate his son Dipen (25 years) and educated him upto XIIth standard. He had a preference to bring her daughter-in-law outside from the locality. He expressed his view that the women folk of the colony were uneducated and it would also make their future generation uneducated. However, a number of his marital proposal was refused by different families dwelling outside the colony. The parents of the bride were quite well aware of the fact that the people of Balasan colony were quite economically distressed. They knew very well that their daughters would have to do the same laborious work in near future if they were married in the Balasan colony. They

were more cautious to prevent the life of their daughter to get spoiled. It created a major problem for Bhola to find a suitable bride for his son.

Case Study 6: Sri. Bishnu Barman aged 60 years was dwelling in the Balasan colony since 1980. He was able to arrange the marriage of his eldest daughter Gita two months ago. He exclaimed with sorrow that twice in earlier her marriage was almost finalized but due to severe economic crisis and co-related issues it could not be materialized. He further took a loan of Rs. 3,000/- from the neighbouring money lender and somehow organized it. He stated that in earlier a marriage ceremony was associated with numerous rituals. All kin members and neighbours used to get assembled even before three to four days before marriage to conduct the rituals properly. The material cultural items related with such marital rituals were quite abundant within their village and those were easily available. However, after their displacement and further resettlement most of the material cultural items particularly certain plant resources were absolutely unavailable within their colony or adjacent areas. He had to purchase them from the market and those were quite expensive. In that circumstance he decided to reduce the marital rituals to a certain extent to minimize the expenditure as much as possible. Again, his economic condition was absolutely unfavourable to arrange warm reception of their kin members and neighbours for a number of days. During the marriage ceremony he invited a few kin members and neighbours to avoid undesired expenditure.

From the above studies it may be noted that a number of obstacles were intimately associated with their marriages. The probable reasons behind such emerging problems related to the marriage were primarily due to economic scarcity and un-documentation of the studied people. In this context, their acute economic crisis and uncertainty of livelihood had forced them to give first priority to survive rather than to execute value system. Meanwhile, it has been reported from the separated women that they failed to provide the dowry to the grooms' family. Even sometimes the husband had left their wives because he could not provide her common minimum livelihood due to economic paucity. The situation was so worse that quarreling was a regular phenomenon between a wife with her husband and in-laws. Further, the parents of the bride were facing a severe hindrance to fulfil the demand of dowry of the grooms' family due to their

poverty. Again, the parents of daughter were very much interested to settle her marital life outside of their locality to save her from laborious stone based works. Unfortunately, there was more demand of dowry which was beyond their capability. Ultimately, their dream was far to meet up with the reality. On the other hand, the parents of the bride who were dwelling outside of Balasan colony were also not interested to establish any sort of affinal relation with the families inhabited within the colony because of the fact that they were well known about the poverty of the stone crushing people. They knew very well that if their daughter was married in Balasan colony then she had to do such works which she had done never before. Further, social insecurity created a major hindrance related to the marriage of their daughters. The senior members of colony opined their view that the younger generation paid a very little attention to the opinion of their parents. They select their mates by own and often they get fled with each other. Ultimately it had created severe social insecurity for the young girls who had attained their marriageable age. Again, in the concerned work field a number of people belonging to different caste communities and ethnic groups had to come regularly from different regions. On the other hand the young girls of the studied families had to work regularly on the river bed. Often they had to face a number of indigent proposal from the outsiders. Although they informed the matter to their *Sardars* but they could not take any serious step. The Sardars had the fear if the outsiders became unhappy due to their behaviour then it would worsely effect their entire economic pursuit. Under such circumstances the parents of the girls always tried to arrange their marriage at an early age. Even in many cases it was before their attainment of 18 years. It was known from the senior members of the colony that such marriages were not abided by the governmental regulations. They told that the government would not protect their girls from any untoward incidence. Even a few days ago, some unknown women trafficking rackets had attempted to kidnap a girl from the locality but it was somehow prevented. So they were primarily aware about the security of their daughters. It is to be mentioned here that the concerned parents did not bothered about any sort of discussion about the matter with their daughters. In most of the cases their teenage daughters were not physically or mentally matured enough to start a marital life. Still such an important decision was imposed upon them by the male folk without any sort of their consensus.

Table 5.8: Distribution of ever married female population according to the pregnancy

Yet to become pregnant	Presently no children due to death of early child	Mother of one or more child	Total married female
16 4.02	12 3.02	370 92.96	398 100.00

Source: Field Study

It is to be mentioned here that among the total married female, most of the (92.96 per cent) females had one or more children while a very few (3.02 per cent) female had no children due to death of their children (Table 5.8). The number of children among the studied mothers are mentioned below.

Table 5.9: Distribution of studied mothers according to number of their present children

1-2 children	3-4 children	5-6 children	More than 6 children	Total studied mother
185 50.00	149 40.27	32 8.65	4 1.08	370 100.00

Source: Field Study

Further out of total 370 studied mothers more than 90 per cent had 1 child to 4 children and the remaining had more than 4 children (Table 5.9). Meanwhile it is to be specifically mentioned here that as per the Government regulation, age of 18 years had been standardized for the marriage of a girl. However, among the total 370 ever became mother, 85.42 per cent female gave birth of their first child even before attaining 18 years of her age. It is to be mentioned here that they had a desire of more children as it might generate more workforce for them to support their families. Due to economic scarcity they were not much sure whether a child would survive or not; thus they always preferred to procreate more work force for heir familial income.

It is noteworthy to mention that the male folk had imposed their sexual right over the concerned female folk. It was the fact that, the female folk had to silently abide by and entertain all the desire of their husbands. Although the females were also an earning member of their families but the males were the prime earners. The female had no authority to keep their earned money into own hand. In every aspect of livelihood they were dependent upon the male folk of the society. It was also noticed that due to economic scarcity and insecured livelihood, the ritualistic

performances related to the marriage got reduced a lot. On the other hand, in the past, during any marriage ceremony, almost the entire village community celebrated with rejoice and merriment. However, due to their displacement and gradual economic scarcity they were not in a position to bear the expenditure of the ceremony so elaborately after their resettlement. The concerned family head could arrange the marriage of their adult sons and daughters with utter difficulty on account of continuous crisis in the family both in economic and relational terms. In the marriage ceremony the gathering of the kin members and neighbours as well as altogether merriment were no more observed and it remained confined only with in a few families. Ultimately, the institution of the marriage was not only deviated from its functional aspect rather the social foundation of it became very feeble.

Kinship: Kinship is a matter of social organization and it is not instinctive. It is a social relationship based on real and putative consanguinity. All kinship derives from the existence of one or more families (Dash, 2004:88). By a kinship system Radcliffe- Brown (1959) meant “a network of social relations of the kind just defined, which thus constitutes part of the total network of social relations”, which he calls social structure. In its kinship network the rights and duties of relatives to one another are defined by social relations. In different stages of life cycle kinship has an important bearing as an individual to carry on his activities (Dash, 2004:89). Basically, kinship is relationship of individual within a group and it is a larger organization than family. Kinship may be blood related or maritally established. Kins are the members who are nearest to the family. Kin members generally play a crucial role in the Right-de-Passage and the allied social ceremonies associated with it. The kinship based social relations helps an individual to get rid from many social difficulties in his daily livelihood. In this concern, in the studied area, except a few love marriages, generally the affinal kinship relation was mainly confined within the families of their own caste group. In this regard both consanguinal and affinal kin members of the studied people were mainly scattered at the Balasan colony or adjacent areas. In most of the cases, the studied people of the Balasan colony were known to each other and there persisted a cordial relationship among them. Most of the studied people had their early settlement in Bangladesh and they felt proud regarding this identity.

Every studied family was mostly busy with their own earning and they were very much reluctant to tolerate the interference of neighbourhood in the familial matters. In the studied area, the relationship among the family members and the kin members were more or less peaceful and friendly but they had no in-depth informal interaction as it was in earlier. On different familial and social occasions their very close kin members and adjacent neighbours used to come. While in earlier days a mere household festival or occasion like first rice giving ceremony or marriage would turn up almost into a community matter. During the study such occasion had remained only within the domain of a very few kin members and relatives. The obvious reason behind this situation was displacement, economic scarcity and lack of social security as had been noticed among the studied people.

Case Study 1: Sri. Monglu Barman aged 69 years was residing in the studied area since 1975. He had a four membered family and the monthly income was Rs. 2000/- per month. He stated that he had three brothers and two of them were also settled in Balasan colony while another one was in adjacent place. He explained that he had a number of kinsmen but the mere scope of income and little space in the house was a major hindrance for him to allow the kin members to pay a regular visit at their house. It was quite impossible for him to share the same room along with the kinsmen. So the adequate maintenance of kinship based social relations was hardly possible for him. Again for the sake of livelihood they had to spend their entire day in work. So, it was also rather not possible for him to accompany the kinsmen. He mentioned very specifically that with a mere source of income they could hardly manage a square meal for themselves. So, to provide food for the guests was nothing but an additional burden for them. He further stated that they had no authorized settlement and they were dwelling their livelihood as an undocumented migrant. So, in such a mental distress and social insecurity, their maintenance of social relationship with the kin members was nothing but a liability for them.

Case Study 2: Sri. Jagat Barman aged 67 years had a five membered family and he was dwelling in the colony since 1973. He had three uterine brothers and one sister. Earlier they were settled in the Pabna district of Bangladesh and they had a joint family of 18 members. His father was the eldest brother. All his other uncles

and cousin brothers shared a common hearth. They grew up altogether and they had a very strong kinship bondage. However, during the political turmoil of 1971 His father, one uncle and two cousin brothers were kidnapped. Somehow the others members fled from there with lives in their hands. They lost their sister on the way because she was also kidnapped by unidentified people. At first they came to Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal in the house of their relative but soon they found difficult to be a burden over them. For the sake of survival he came to the Balasan colony with his mother and gradually got resettled. Two of his brothers went to Cooch Behar for the scope of work. The struggle for survival almost separated them from one another. They last met with each other around ten years ago when their mother demised. During the study they had no communication in between. Even when Jagat Barman organized the marriage of his son and daughter, he could not find the justification to invite his brothers. He stated that after some fearful experience some how he got the scope to earn a fold of rice. According to him in earlier the agricultural occupation was sufficient for their familial sustainability. However, the stone crushing work was not at all profit generating and through it they could hardly manage their common minimum livelihood. Thus he had given the priority to hard working and possibilities of more earning rather than focusing much attention on kin members. Particularly due to displacement, migration as refugees and economic scarcity, the rituals related to different socio-cultural functions and festivals were reduced a lot. Even in many cases it did not allow them to invite their kin members even for a shorter duration. Different familial and community occasions, festivals, cultural functions were also decreased. As a result, not only the kin members but the villagers also had a mere scope to gather altogether on such occasions. Further, in earlier they used to assemble in every ceremonial occasions of their kin members and neighbourhood. There they could share their will and woe altogether and they had a fellow felling. During the study, it was observed that such earlier spirit of enjoyment and common sharing was reduced to a large extent. In the past, mostly they lived in joint family but due to economic scarcity and individual means of livelihood it got broken and turned into a nuclear one. During the study almost every individual had their affiliation with the work and everyone could earn something. Particularly, the young males were also earning equally along with their parents. They could manage their personal means of livelihood in any way

with such earning. They were quite less bothered to abide by the decisions and dislikes of their parents. In this way, the senior most male members lost their authority over the family while the younger members could take their personal decisions by own means. Even during the establishment of their affinal relations in some cases the opinion of the parents were completely ignored. In many families the youths and adult children were affiliated with a number of illicit activities but their guardians had nothing to say as they were not bothered about their dislikes.

It is to be mentioned here that the prime emphasis of the studied people was focused to utilize the natural resources at the utmost level. Among them economic value became the prime one instead of social value. Further, it had also told upon their conjugal life. In many cases the males who were staying outside from their residence got engaged in extramarital sexual affairs. The kinship based relations which execute the affection, integrity and closeness among the relatives are important and very essential part of social organization. Its violation tells upon the social organization and their function as a whole. Ultimately, due to economic scarcity they had to struggle hard for their earning and it had forced some of the studied people to stay away from their family quite often. The important relationships which were essential for a rejoiced social life were disrupted very much in the studied area. In this context, particularly the children were getting debarred from the development of emotional responses like love, affection and security from their family. On the other hand, the younger generation was unable to execute their conjugal life properly. The aged persons were often neglected and even they did not get proper protection, co-operation and security from their family members and other kin relatives. The familial kinship bondage which was treated as the place of psychological relief station was getting deviated from its functional aspect. Both the productive and reproductive functions were not being fulfilled. In the overall context the entire situation was telling upon the function of their social structure and social organization as a whole.

Political life of the studied people

A culture is the integrated sum total of learned behaviour, characteristic of the members of a society embracing their total way of life- technological and ideological. Law is one aspect of culture, just as are kinship, subsistence patterns, language and art. Specifically, it has been stressed that in every society, human society must be narrowed down from its full range of potential variety to a moderately limited body of norms. Social control is exerted to guide the learning process of all members of society in the development of the appropriate behavioural customs. Custom consists of social norms and all social norms are sanctioned. Behaviour in accord with norms is usually narrowed. Social control consists of the entire gamut of rewards and dissuasions. Most societies include law within their systems of social control which is designed to achieve this end. Law is merely one aspect of culture, which employs the force of organized society to prevent, redress or punish deviations from prescribed norms. There are three basic features of law which denotes-

1. The legitimate use of economic deprivation or physical coercion.
2. The allocation of official authority.
3. The element of regularity or consistency. (Hoebel-Frost, 1976:286-287)

Radcliffe Brown (1940:1) speaks of political organization as “that aspect of the total organization which is concerned with the control and regulation of the use of physical force.” According to Hoebel and Frost (1976:304), in every society, there must be an administration to maintain minimum law and order. In rural society, the concerned people form an administrative unit, in order to maintain the rules and regulation of the society, which ultimately forms political organization. These organizations may be elected bodies or it may be voluntarily selected.

In the studied area, it was known that in earlier they had their own traditional village Panchayat. It had the power and authority to control over different social issues as well as to maintain the village solidarity. However, after displacement and resettlement, the concerned people were not in a position to reform their traditional village Panchayat. It might be because of two prime factors, first the concerned people were primarily looking for their means of survival; and secondly, their issue of resettlement and alternative occupational pursuit was very much dependent upon the influence of contemporary political party. Certain

political factors forced the studied people to get displaced from their earlier settlement. Further, they came to the studied area as completely roofless and almost resource less in condition. By that time their caste and community based identity became completely insignificant and they were treated as undocumented and unwanted refugees by the local people. However, the contemporary local political wing provided them a scope of resettlement and involvement in a new occupational pursuit. It provided them a new way of hope and gradually they started to get resettled. However even after such prolonged duration most of their settlements remained unauthorized and during the study they were the undocumented refugees from the administrative point of view. Most of the families were devoid of *patta* or legal authorization about the ownership of their settlement. Meanwhile, it can be noted that if local administration desires to vacate the occupied land then it would not be possible for the studied people to legally establish any demand or right over their settlement. Further, only a very few section of them had individual ration card. Although the voter cards were issued against their names but most of them were meeting up with numerous errors. Thus, if their identity is concerned then they would be considered only as undocumented and unauthorized settlers who hardly had any legal right to their settlement. During the study it was found that most of the people had to face a lot of hardship in different Governmental official sectors particularly related with the admission of their children to high school or to get any beneficiary from modern medical institutions. It was only due to their lack of identity as an authorized citizen of this country and state.

Naturally, their obligations made themselves bound to abide by different local political influence. Consequently, the local political parties had played a major role to look after the existence of their settlement as well as they tried to provide minimum scope for common minimum livelihood to the concerned people. During the period of study it was noticed that the political organization of the studied area was under the control of Statutory Panchayat system. In the studied village, there were four Panchayats. They kept regular communication with the member of Panchayat Samiti. It was reported that the village administration particularly to the social matters were the prime concern of the local Panchayat and the senior members of the village. The traditional village Panchayat which was earlier comprised by senior members got merged within the authorization of

Statutory Panchayat system. The local administration of the village was controlled and different conflicts were solved by the Panchayat through rural *salishi* (rural court). In such meetings the decision making body was comprised of ten members, which included four village Panchayats, members of Panchayat samiti and the senior most members of the studied area. They listened the arguments of both the offenders and victim or justice seeker. The concerned decision of such body was taken as ultimate and it was to be abided by both of the concerned parties. Generally, the political organization of the studied village looked after the overall social administration. It is to be mentioned here that the Rajbanshis had their traditional political organization and the role of village head man was quite significant in it. However after displacement it was completely abolished and they came under the influence of modern political organization.

During the period of the study it was observed that the village Panchayat had a major role and functions in the context of social matters like marriage, death, funeral and village festivals as well as on the issues related to the implementation of different governmental schemes for the betterment of livelihood of the studied people. It was observed that the villagers foremostly brought their problems into the notice of local Panchayat, irrespective of going to any other senior most member of the society. Meanwhile, during the study, it was found that the studied people were supposed to be quite familiar with several modern political parties under Indian democracy. Ever since the formation of the colony its different social aspects were controlled by the modern political system. The different aspect of local political organization in the studied area was known from Sri. Bijoy Krishna Roy, Sri. Phanibhusan Roy, Sri. Jiten Barman and Sri. Ukil Barman. Among them the first two members were the local Panchayats and the last two persons were the senior most members of the studied area. Meanwhile, along with the local Panchayat, there were some allied sections which kept a close look on the local socio-political aspects. They were under the authority of local Panchayat. These organizations were local women forum (*Mahila samiti*), youth forum, village education committee comprised of eleven members, women education forum (*nari shiksha samiti*) comprised of seven members and two local village committee or *Gram Sansad*, each comprised of fourteen members. Among them there was Gram Panchayat, opposition member, secretary, president and senior, locally respected members. A different political party also existed in the

political domain of the studied village but they were not elected for Panchayat membership. Ever since the formation of the colony its different social aspects were controlled by the modern political system. These aspects are discussed below in brief.

When the people came to the studied area earlier, there were immense crisis to survive. People even lived under the tarpaulin on the river bed. The contemporary local political authority provided them the scope to get involved in the stone crushing work. Even they supplied them the stone crushing implements. The density of population at Balasan colony was quite higher than their earlier settlement in Bangladesh. In this regard the local Panchayat played a major role in the establishment of the present settlement. It was established on the basis of stone based occupation. The entire operation of work and the selling of raw materials were under the authorization of the State Government. They called the tender within certain duration of time. Accordingly the official authorization was provided to the elected person. Every such tender had the duration of 10-15 years. The region of Balasan colony was under the tender of two persons. They had involved a few persons who conducted the work in the studied area and were popularly known as the *sardars*. The entire work was conducted along with the consensus of local Panchayat. They collected the royalty and deposited it to the Government as levy. The first official survey of this area was done in 1992 and the *patta*¹ was distributed to the land owners. However, all the houses were not provided with *patta* and the official works were going on. In this concern, the *Sardars* who dealt with the stone crushing work played a major role in it and in the formation of Balasan colony. Adjacent to the studied area in other settlements the people belonging to the Hindu, Muslim, Nepali and Bihari community were dwelling. They were living in a harmonious manner. No such incidence of ethnic conflict had been noticed among the concerned communities till date. The entire working environment of the Balasan colony was very much dependent upon social co-operation. The total work on the said river bed was conducted by the *Sardars*. Although they had a certain working area, but there was no permanently demarcated regional specifications or territorial occupancy. They conducted the work with mutual understanding. The other workers also conducted their work in

¹ *Patta*: The documents necessary for the ownership of a residential land is called as *patta*. It is a title deed.

a certain place. However, they could also work in a distinct zone but that should be done after the adequate discussion with the concerned *Sardars*. The workers primarily conducted the work with each others mutual consent. However, in many cases conflicts arose regarding their work. Often the said problems turned into their familial arguments. In such cases the local Panchayat and the concerned judgement body declared their decision. Certainly they punished the offender with a little amount of economic penalty or they had to do the stone based manual labour work in favour of the judgement seeker.

One of the major activities of the modern political organization in the studied area was to provide the beneficiaries of different Central Government schemes to the concerned people in the studied area. However, even before five years ago those beneficiaries were beyond the reach of the required persons and there occurred some other mismanagements. Afterwards, the contemporary Statutory Panchayat took the initiative to distribute the beneficiaries accordingly. The concerned Panchayat implemented the schemes like Indira Awas Yojana, Swampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana, Kutir Jyoti Prokalpo, Rural Sanitation Mission, Mid Day Meal programme in primary school, Sishu Shiksha Kendra, Sishu Pathokrom, Integrated Child Development Service, Water supply, Road Repairing, Annapoorna Antordaya Yojana for the betterment of common minimum livelihood of the studied people. It was reported that during the study, under Indira Awas Yojana 20 houses were made and distributed to the people. Further, through the said scheme the houses of 25 families were repaired. The said huts were belonging to the families who were particularly belonging to the below poverty line (B.P.L.). The Kutir Jyoti Prokalpo was implemented since 2005. Through the said scheme, 130 families were facilitated with electricity.

The Statutory Panchayat was quite aware to redress the environmental pollution in the colony. In this regard, it seriously took the scheme of Total Sanitation Programme since 2005. Before that there were mere some small scale drive regarding the sanitation issue. The scheme was sanctioned on for the families belonging to the B.P.L. category. The Panchayat would select such a family and the concerned materials were provided to them readily. During the study 150 families were covered under the schemes among whom the base pan were supplied to 100 families. Some of them were also under reconstruction. Altogether total 40 families were fully covered under modern sanitation facilities.

It was realized by the Panchayat that during the summer an acute crisis of drinking water often arose. At that time the level of drinking water fell down rapidly. By the initiative of Panchayat 50 wells, five tube wells and two taps were established. Mainly the wells were established just in front of the lanes in most of the cases, which provided the scope for every family to use the water for household courses. Meanwhile, the Panchayat was trying their level best to provide purified drinking water to the common mass. The purification was mainly done before the start of monsoon or just on set of monsoon. Even the surroundings of every household and muddy drains of the colony were also purified on frequent basis.

One of the major initiatives of the concerned Panchayat was to increase the awareness of literacy among the common mass. It took the initiative that in every family the children belonging to the five years of age should come under regular schooling. The enrollment of students was gradually on progress since 2001. But the incidence of drop out was also quite common. It was supported by the Panchayat pradhan that the rate of drop out had reached to an alarming situation. The Panchayat took a serious measure to reinstate the children into academic domain. The village educational committee was also very much involved in redress the educational drop out of the children. On the other hand the Nari Siksha Samiti was trying to build up the educational awareness among the womenfolk. They were also trying to influence the women to send their children regularly to the school. Further, the local Panchayat was very much focused to regularize the schemes of Integrated Child Development Schemes (ICDS). The concerned members informed that they were trying to strengthen the ICDS which could bring a major impetus to educate the child. On the other hand the Statutory Panchayat was also very much interested to regularize the Mid Day Meal scheme in the primary school of the studied area. In this concern, the supply of rice and other particulars reached to the local Panchayat from Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad², through the Block Development office. Further, they sent it to the primary school. On the other hand the expenditure details was submitted from the primary schools to the local Panchayat. They officially submitted it to the Block

² Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad: It is the administrative body at the Subdivisional level of Siliguri. It was formed in 1986-87 period after the formation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council.

Development Office and finally to the State Government. It is to be mentioned here that the youth federation in the village was also very much focused to prevent the irregular school attendance of the children.

The local Panchayat member informed that they were very much aware to improve the health situation of the studied area. He stated that the pregnant women were completely dependent on household treatment and they gave birth to their children in the houses. During that period the rate of child mortality was at an alarming stage. The Statutory Panchayat along with the local health sub center took a joint venture to create a mass awareness over the reproductive mother-child health issues. During the study it was noticed that the pregnant women went for the immunization of herself as well as for her children to the local health sub center or to the Primary Health Center or to the Medical College. The pulse polio camp was regularly organized in the studied area at more than one center. In this concern the concerned campaign was jointly organized by the local Panchayat and the local health sub center. The local Panchayat had organized a few health camps in the colony. There the members of Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad, medical practitioners came and tried to increase the level of health awareness of the common mass.

The Panchayat did not interfere among the marriage decision between the two concerned families. However if some problem emerged regarding the demand of dowry then the local Panchayats, with a few senior members of the village went for a joint discussion along with the concerned families to find out a solution. Even the local Panchayat took the initiative to collect subscription to help the father of the bride to conduct marriage ceremony. Such initiative of the local Panchayat could also be noticed to organize the funeral ceremonies and allied purification rituals for the family members of a deceased person. Besides these, it was reported that the local Panchayat played a major role to organize major religious festivals in the colony. Further, the social discipline during the said period was also the prime concern of the local Panchayat.

However, the chaos and conflict were a frequent occurrence among the members of the studied families. The prime causes were the gambling and alcoholism of the males in the studied families. Often it resulted in a number of incidences where violences occurred frequently against the female. A number of such cases were reported to the Mahila Samiti. They identified the persons who were

involved in the illegal selling of country liquor and hemp. To redress the problem they frequently brought the matter to the police and requested them to arrest the offender. However, the appeal was not taken into consideration for most of the cases. Even if arrested, they were discharged within a day or two. As usually, they started the same offence. The Mahila Samiti reported the incidence to the local Panchayat. He extended his co-operation and advised the head of Mahila Samiti to organize a mass protest. During the study, all of the members of Mahila Samiti ransacked five country liquor shops and beaten up the males who were playing. The overall incidence had created a social awareness among the children and female folk of the studied area against such illegal practices. However, after a few days the said activities started to occur again but it was executed behind the close door inspite of publicly practiced. The pradhan (head) of Mahila Samiti had reported that they had a plan to do the same once again.

It was reported by the local Panchayat member that in the forthcoming period they would try to facilitate the people more with implications of Government schemes. They had a plan to start a couple of ICDS. In the health sub centre, Panchayat took the initiative to provide the facilities of child birth to the reproductive women. The Statutory Panchayat had accepted the truth that the provisions of Government facilities were quite disproportionate according to the requirements of the people. It is to be mentioned here that the concerned people were very peaceful, harmonious and co-operative to their fellow neighbours in their early settlement. The entire community celebrated the village festivals and other occasions with great enthusiasm. Apart from these, the people of adjacent villages also participated and contributed donations whole heartedly. However, with the changing dimension of time the scenario started to change rapidly. During the study it was reported that the younger generation expressed a very little respect to their elders. Intra familial conflicts became a common occurrence. Every family was very much focused for the sake of their own means of survival. Such personally vested interests were ultimately creating a less harmonious and non co-operative neighbourhood relationships. As a result, inter-familial conflicts became almost a regular phenomenon. Meanwhile, in almost every household issues of domestic violence like wife battering, oral separation and dowry related problems had become almost a regular phenomenon. Moreover, due to displacement and further insecured economic pursuit, different chaos and conflict

started to take place. Gradually it reached beyond their household confinement and ultimately it affected a lot to their traditional value system.

It was reported that in different cases the Government facilities were not properly distributed among the needy families. Even in some cases the fund was not adequately utilized due to lack of unanimous decision among the Panchayat members and it became unexpended. Political organization is the prime aspect to maintain the social solidarity and community consensus. In the studied area, the modern political organization had played the major influential role over the entire social situation. After displacement and loss of traditional occupational pursuit they got a scope of resettlement in the studied area. However, till date their habitation was unauthorized and they were not getting enough support from higher administration or regional polity. Continuously increased level of workers and competition related to work had enhanced their poverty into manifold. Their common minimum livelihood became very much insecure. Even the sanctioned government facilities were quite disproportionate according to their requirement. The entire situation had severely told upon their intra-familial and neighbourhood relationship. Frequent quarrel, conflict and chaos took place of peace, co-operation and harmonious relationship. Ultimately all these factors had collectively told upon their mental peace to a large extent and the studied people were far away to from a joyful life.

Religious life of the studied people

All societies have possessed beliefs that can be grouped under the term religion. These beliefs vary from culture to culture and from time to time. Yet despite their variety, religion can be defined as any set of attitudes, beliefs and practices pertaining to supernatural power, whether that power be forces, goals, spirits, ghosts or demons (Ember and Ember,2002:439).

A social function of religion is to sanction a wide range of conduct. In this context, religion plays a role in social control. Another social function of religion is its role in the maintenance of social solidarity. One other area in which religion serves a social function is education, like initiation rites one can serve to enhance learning and so help ensure the perpetuation of a non-literate culture (Haviland, 1970:383). However, the religious aspects of a society changes a lot if the other social factors get altered due to different circumstances. Such a situation could be

noticed among the studied people. After displacement and loss of traditional occupational pursuit, the matter of survival emerged as a major challenge for the studied people. Further, though they got a scope of resettlement but they had no opportunity to pursue their caste based traditional agricultural occupation. Gradually as the time went on, their livelihood in a new environmental circumference and their affiliation to a new occupational pursuit brought a number of remarkable changes to their traditional socio-cultural practices. It had a deep co-relation with their material cultural aspects and allied religious practices. After their resettlement and involvement in the stone crushing work, a number of religious festivals related to agriculture and cattle wealth became obliterated. Earlier their livelihood was very much dependent upon several nature based products. In this way, their rituals expressed a tune of devotion to the nature. The entire community celebrated the festivals for safety, security, prosperity and protection for all of their members. Such festivals were not at all an individual matter, rather the entire community sentiment became affiliated with those. In this regard, their worship for agricultural land, crop production and river bore a special significance. However, after displacement their scope to access nature based products from the surroundings became almost seized. Consequently after resettlement, religious festivals related to nature, its production and community sentiment had no more significance and justification for them, as it was in earlier. Gradually as the time passed on, a number of such festivals became completely obliterated from the domain of their traditional cultural practices. Even, the younger generation of the studied society had never heard of such festivals. On the other hand, the aged people could no more remember clearly about the rituals related to those. However, during the study it was observed that they had a number of religious festivals throughout the entire year which are discussed below in detail-

In Balasan colony several *pujas*³ were performed throughout the year. Those were performed in different months according to the months of Bengali calendar⁴. Those were conducted on a certain auspicious day as per the Bengali alumnac. In the month of Baisakh (April-May), on the very last day all the people took

³ Puja: The method of religious worship according to Hindu ritual is known as Puja.

⁴ Bengali calendar: It has twelve months namely Baisakh(April), Jaistha(May), Ashar(June), Shraavan(July), Bhadra(August), Ahwin (September), Krartik(October), Aghrayan(November), Pous(December), Magh(January), Phalgun(February), Chaitra (March).

vegetarian diet and offered the same to *Lord Sri. Krishna*⁵. In the month of *Jaistha* (May-June) *Janmastami*⁶ was performed. Any family could conduct the festival if they had any previous mental offering. On the other hand community worship was conducted on the school ground for two days. In the same month *Loknath*⁷ puja was done in home and a community ceremony was done in the local temple. In the month of *Asar and Shravan* (July-August), the *Jamaisasthi*⁸ ceremony was performed. Then came the *Rath yatra*. The holy Chariot moved throughout the entire colony and several rituals were performed. In the month of *Asar Amathi*⁹ puja was done on the auspicious day of *Ambubachi*¹⁰. Again in the month of *Shravan Jhulan* yatra was celebrated. In the same month *Manasa puja*¹¹ was performed by them to keep the family members safe from the poisonous snakes. In the month of *Bhadra* (August-September), the *Rakhi*¹² festival was celebrated in every household. In the same month *Bishwakarma puja*¹³ was celebrated both in certain houses and community wise. In the month of *Ashwin* (October), holy *Durga puja*¹⁴, *Laxmi puja*¹⁵ and *Kali puja*¹⁶ were celebrated by the entire community. During such festivals local fairs were organised as well as a number of games, including open gambling were played. At the end of *Kartik* (November) month, *Shitala puja* was organised community wise. It was also celebrated in every household. It is to be mentioned here that in the studied area measles, pox had much prevalence. So the common mass had a compulsion to obey the rituals of *Shitala puja*¹⁷, with the prayer to keep the evil forces away from the child which might cause such diseases. In the month of *Agrahayan*

⁵ *Lord Sri. Krishna*: According to Hindu mythology he is the God who protects the Earth from evils forces.

⁶ *Janmastami*: According to Hindu mythology on this very day Lord Sri Krishna took birth.

⁷ *Loknath*: According to Hindu mythology he was a saint.

⁸ *Jamaisasthi*: It is the occasion where mother in law performs certain rituals yearly for the prosperity of son in law.

⁹ *Asar Amathi*: According to Hindu mythology it is the worship of Goddess Kamrup Kamakhya.

¹⁰ *Ambubachi*: According to Hindu mythology it is the pollution period of Goddesses related to menstrual cycle.

¹¹ *Manasa*: According to Hindu mythology she is the Goddess of snakes.

¹² *Rakhi*: According to Hindu mythology it is the sacred tie of brotherhood.

¹³ *Biswakarma Puja*: According to Hindu mythology he the God of engineering works.

¹⁴ *Durga Puja*: According to Hindu mythology she is the Prime Goddess and it is the biggest festival for the Bengalis.

¹⁵ *Laxmi*: According to Hindu mythology she is the Goddess of wealth.

¹⁶ *Kali*: According to Hindu mythology she is another form of Goddess Durga.

¹⁷ *Shitala*: According to Hindu mythology she is treated as pox Goddess.

(December) *Nabanna*¹⁸ was performed but it was in a very small scale. In the month of *Pous* (January) the *Pous sankranti*¹⁹ festival was celebrated along with sweet dishes, rice cakes but in a very small scale. Further, in the month of *Magh* (February) a local village festival, named as *Naba Brindaban*²⁰ puja was conducted for four days in the colony school ground and there the sacred Hindu scripture was enchanted. Then, in the month of *Falgun* (March) *Holi*²¹ was celebrated. In the month of *Chaitra* (March-April), the *Chaita Devi* or *Basanti puja*²² was performed. On the day of *Chaitra Sankranti Charak puja*²³ was celebrated. In the same month one of their major festivals named as *Teesta Buri puja*²⁴ was celebrated. It was the worship of Balasan river and working implements, with the prayer for regular production of natural resources and security of livelihood for the family members as well as entire community.

Meanwhile, in earlier during most of their religious festivals community feast and *yatra* (drama/theater) were quite common. However, the entire scenario was started to get changed with the consequence of migration and reduction of earning sources. It was known that the frequencies of religious festivals and the merriments related to those festivals as well as social and cultural functions at household and village level were decreased considerably due to financial constraints of the concerned people. They were not in a position to bear the expenses of any recreation and merriment. It was reported that many of their traditional religious festivals were not celebrated in their present settlement; although some of the festivals were celebrated but it had lost its earlier importance. In most of the cases, the vested interest of a few had created distinctive opinion regarding the organization of the community festivals. Even the cultural programmes like *yatra* and annual games event had become completely obliterated from their contemporary livelihood.

¹⁸ *Nabanna*: It is a Bengali harvest celebration, celebrated with food, music and dance on the cultivation of new crops.

¹⁹ *Pous sankranti* According to Hindu mythology it marks the transition of Sun into Capricorn sun shine on its celestial path. Traditionally it has been one of many harvest days in India.

²⁰ *Naba Brindaban* According to Hindu mythology it is the worship of Lord Krishna and Devi Radha.

²¹ *Holi* According to Hindu mythology it is a spring religious festival of colours.

²² *Basanti puja* According to Hindu mythology she is another form of Goddess Durga.

²³ *Sankranti Charak puja* According to Hindu mythology it is a folk festival of West Bengal and Bangladesh to worship lord Shiva.

²⁴ *Teesta Buri puja* : According to Hindu mythology it is the worship of rivers.

Earlier the rituals related to agricultural land, *Gostho puja*, *Gajan* and *Charak mela* had a very special social significance among the studied people. Particularly the celebration of *Gostho puja* had the note of devotion for the prosperity of their cattle wealth. In their early settlement, along with the abundance of grazing land, domestication was quite common in every household. However, after getting resettled in the studied area, the concerned people could not find a separate grazing land around their close vicinity. Ultimately their scope of domestication was lost. Further, in earlier *Nabanna* and *Poush parban* were related to the harvestion of paddy and new rice consumption ceremony after harvesting the crop. On the contrary, after their displacement and resettlement, their traditional agricultural occupation became altered and consequently such affiliated festivals had lost their grandeur and many of them were completely abolished. It is to be mentioned here that the festival of *Rath Yatra* were celebrated in their earlier settlement with utter enthusiasm. On the other hand, in the studied area, although it was celebrated but it had lost its community participation and social rejoice. The worship of Goddess Durga took place in two different places within the studied area. It was primarily due to the fact that the community consensus was divided into distinct groups. Both of them were motivated by the vested interest of the common mass. Ultimately, it severely told upon the social solidarity related to the celebration of different religious festivals. In their earlier settlement, the celebration of Goddesses Laxmi was common to every household and it became almost a community festival. However, in the studied area, it was performed only by a few families while the others had faced acute financial constraints to execute it year after year. Again, the *Kali puja* also bore social significance for them. In the studied area, the youths' and youngs' were the prime organizer of the said religious festival. Under the domain of rituals, often they got involved in a number of illegal offences like gambling, alcoholism etc. Ultimately it told upon the community sentiment related to such festivals. To redress the said illegal activities, almost in every year there took place hot exchange of words between the puja organizers and the local political authority. Earlier their religious festivals and other social ceremonies were accompanied by a number of entertaining mediums and cultural programmes. In such occasions, close kin members and friends also joined from near and distant places. However, owing to their poor economic condition and lack of purchasing capacity for common

minimum livelihood, the studied people were not in a position to afford the expenditure of social occasions and religious festivals.

During the study, it was noticed that on Republic Day, birth day of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, birthday of Rabindranath Tagore and Independence Day mere cultural celebrations took place only at the primary school of the children but on the said occasions no community celebrations were commonly organized in the village by the studied people. As a consequence, their feeble economic backbone had created a lot of hindrance on their social interaction. Ultimately, it had told upon their social solidarity and community consensus. On the other hand, after resettlement their houses were not spacious enough, where a few guests could be accommodated for a day or two during the festive periods. As a result, most of the religious occasions were merely confined within the courtyard of the studied families. Meanwhile, it could be significantly noted that most of the studied families were lacking a separate consecrated space to regularly worship their household deity. In this regard, their traditional cultural value related to it was seriously violated. It is noteworthy to mention that the studied families were quite busy in very hard manual labour, for their sake of survival. In such a situation, they were not in a position to bore the extra liabilities and financial expenditure related to different religious festivals. The stone based occupation had become their prime source of earning. So, during this period, a few rituals had an affiliation with the said occupation. Their religious performances related to the *Teesta Buri* festival, had the devotion and prayer, that the Balasan river should become more resourceful and it might ensure a fold of rice in their daily livelihood.

Again, in the studied area there were a few small scale grocery shops. Their economic transactions were also very limited because their owners had a very little purchasing capacity. Such businessmen had a mere chance to celebrate the rituals related to *Akshaya Tritia* or *Poela Baisakh* (Mid of April) in a larger context with community participation. It had also seized the scope of social solidarity, unity and cohesion. The threat of severe economic crisis, poverty, insecure livelihood and probability of further displacement had always haunted their mental peace. It might have severely reduced the scope of social and cultural interaction among themselves and with others. They had a mere opportunity to share their emotions with neighbours. It was known that they often felt quite

lonely. Particularly the old aged people became more alone because displacement had detached them from their close kin members and neighbours. Their personal interaction and kinship based affinity were no more prevalent as it was in earlier. Further, their inability to bear the financial burden and lack of social solidarity had cumulatively reduced the scope of community merriment related to religious festivals and other social occasions. Moreover, the religious belief and practices had certain norms and value systems which played a key role for the cohesion of a society. However, overall socio-economic uncertainty had bounded the people to give prior importance to accumulate their common minimum means of survival, instead of being confined within the bindings of social norms, values and customs.

Educational scenario of the studied people

Education is regarded as the cradle of every society. It enlightens the knowledge of human being to lead a peaceful life. Education helps an individual to gain a good personality. It brightens the opportunity of an individual to achieve social and economic mobility. However, the achievement of education at the grass root level certainly needs the support of a stronger economic backbone which could meet up with the fundamental educational requirements of an individual. From the earlier discussions, it was revealed that the studied people were economically poor-in condition. Their monthly income could hardly fulfil their common minimum livelihood requirements. In this regard, for sustenance they became bound to lend money from local money lenders and other persons.

Table 5.10: Distribution of families on the basis of debt taken to deal with familial needs

Debt taken			Source			Amount (in Rs/-)		
Yes	No	Total	Sardar	Grocer	Total	Upto 1,000/-	More than 1,000/-	Total
307	18	325	250	57	307	13	294	307
94.46	5.54	100.00	76.92	23.03	100.00	4.23	95.77	100.00

Source: Field Study

During the study, it was revealed that around 94 per cent families got enmeshed into the web of debt in different times. The concerned families had a mere scope to ask for loan from their neighbourhood, rather they could approach to the *Sardars* or local grocers. Significantly it was noticed that they hardly approach to

any neighbour for debt. It was because of the fact that they were well known about each others constraints and most importantly subjugation to any neighbour was quite humiliating for them. Meanwhile, they used to return the loan to *Sardars* by breaking up additional amount of stone and to the grocers by returning in cash. In the cases where loan was taken, it has been reported that around 96 per cent families took loan of more than Rs.1,000/- (Table 5.10). Under such financial array, it might be a certain factor that the concerned people would have to face educational constraints. The following case studies can be taken into account to know about the situation in details.

Case Study 1: The family of Sanjay Barman aged 14 years, was comprised of his parents, two brothers, one sister. He was involved in the stone crushing work from the age of five years. He had a very keen interest to study and during the study he was the student of class VI of Shivmandir Atharokhai High School. However, he had to face several constraints to carry on the studies. As they had a larger family so he had to play the role of an additional earning member. Due to such involvement he could not attend school regularly and he was gradually lagging behind from daily academic curriculum. Lack of books was an additional criterion in his academic hindrance. He told his father for money to purchase the books; alas! his father replied that he would not bear any unnecessary expenditure from the mere familial purse. He had a private tutor last year but as they could not remunerate him monthly, so, he paid a least interest to guide Sanjay any more. On the other hand as he was a very irregular student, so his class teachers also became much reluctant to take any special care for him. Meanwhile, he was already disqualified for once in class IVth and once in class Vth standard. Again, his father regularly cursing him for wasting the time behind education irrespective of doing the stone based work primarily and often it created an issue of quarrel between them. He expressed with grief sorrow that he might leave up the study very soon.

Case Study 2: Mamoni Barman aged 13 years, had two younger sisters and parents in her family, at Balasan colony. During the study she was studying in the class Vth standard of Shivmandir Atharokhai High School. Simultaneously she had to look after the regular household courses and she was involved in the stone based work from her age of five years. Such working involvements reduced her

scope to attend the school regularly. The basic educational requirements like books, school dresses and writing materials were much lacking in her case. Again if she asked for those to her father, he clearly stated his annoyance for any worthless expenditure. Her parents stated clearly that with such a mere income they would not be able to manage the entire marital expenditure of their children. In this regard, she was advised to get involved as a full fledged worker inspite of wasting time behind studies. However, Mamoni had secured good marks year after year and on such basis she had applied for some Governmental assistance for her studies. But the entire procedure was quite complex and much time consuming. Meanwhile her proper identity became a matter of interrogation for a number of times on the said issue. Till the period of study she had not received any such assistance and gradually she became less interested. Even she could not get any help from her class mates if she got absent from the classes. During the study she grievously expressed that with such multifarious inconveniences it became quite impossible for her to continue her studies and she planned to drop her studies from the next session.

Case study 3: Subho Barman aged 5 years had a 3 year old sister and parents was dwelling at Balasan colony. He was admitted in the primary school of the Balasan colony. During the study he was in the 1st standard. He had a few books but those were mostly torn up by the earlier users. In the morning his parents used to take him in the river bed and often they forgot about the schedule of school hours. During the study it was known that the parents of Subho could not guide his studies at home because of their illiteracy. It was known that they send their child to the school for having the food provided through mid day meal scheme, which could redress his hunger to some extent. He told that in most of the days just after the food he used to come back from the school and went to the river bed to work along with his parents. At the school in most of the time he could not properly understand the words of the teachers, even if he asked them to repeat once then they got angry. Due to lack of books, pencils, dress and school bag he could not generate much interest on the studies. Again, if they played loudly or speak loudly then the teachers used to beat up them with canes. All such circumstances never attracted him very much in the fore fold of education.

Case study 4: Jonaki Barman aged 5 years had a 3 year old brother, 1 year old sister and parents. During the study she was admitted in the primary school of the Balasan colony and was in the 1st standard. During the study she was yet to get any book from the school. She had only one pencil and one exercise book. However, she had no school bag; on the other hand she had only one set of dress which she wore both in her house and for the school. She told her father to give another copy and pencil. But he was quite reluctant for such expenditures, as he thought that poverty would not generate them adequate scope to continue her studies in near future. He emphasized gradually to get affiliated with the stone based work, which would ultimately provide the scope to accumulate a fold of rice for the family. She found it very difficult to follow the words of the class teachers. Again, she had not the scope to revise her studies in the home because her parents were illiterate and were unable to guide her. On the other hand if she went for mere enjoyments with their friends then the teachers cursed her a lot. All such factors created major hindrances for her future progress in education.

Thus from the above case studies it may be summarized that among the studied families multifarious socio-economic factors had much reduced their scope of education. Again in some cases the issue of their identity became a matter of concern for them as well.

From the field study, it was revealed that except 0-4 years of age group, among the studied population of Balasan colony, around 54 per cent were literate and 46 per cent were illiterate (Table 5.11).

Table 5.11: Educational background of the people

Sex	Educational feature		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Male	296 44.18	374 55.82	670 100.00
Female	292 48.99	304 51.00	596 100.00
Total	588 46.45	678 53.55	1266 100.00

[Excluded 0-4 year. age group] Source: Field Study

According to Census 2011, the literacy rate of India was 74.04 per cent, while in West Bengal, it was 77.08 per cent. Meanwhile, in the studied area the literacy level was quite low (53.55 per cent). Among the total population, belonging to the age group of 15 years to more than 70 years of the studied area, only 42.11 per cent were literate while the rests were illiterate (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12: Educational background of the youth and adult

Sex	Educational background		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Male	267	216	483
	55.28	44.72	100.00
Female	258	166	424
	60.85	39.15	100.00
Total	525	382	907
	57.88	42.11	100.00

[Excluding 0-14 year age group] Source: Field Study

It was also revealed that among the adult, majorities were illiterate and it was more in case of females. It might be due to the fact that along with the stone based work, the female folk had a regular affiliation with their household courses. It provided them hardly any time to continue the studies regularly.

The educational status of the population belonging to 15-19 years of age group revealed the fact that in most of the cases (90.67per cent) their educational status was confined in between class Vth to VIIIth standard while in a few cases (4.00per cent) it was only upto the maximum level of IVth standard. However, in some mere cases (5.33per cent) they were educated upto secondary standard or more than that. Meanwhile, in the said age group there were no illiterate individual (Table 5.13). It is to be mentioned here that familial responsibility had forced the population belonging to the age group of 15-19 years to look after their bread and butter. In this regard, they had merely any scope to continue their studies regularly or to attend the school in its according schedule. They mostly got involved in different occupational pursuit throughout the entire day. In the studied age group, the concerned individuals had found it mere impossible to continue their studies regularly or to work accordingly for survival. Among the said age group, most of the people were dropped out from educational mainstream. Again, among the adult population it was noticed that the rate of illiteracy was on a gradual decrease. It might be due to the fact that the adult male members were the prime earner of their concerned families. It forced them to get focused more on their working involvement rather than to get affiliated with higher educational involvement. Particularly from the age group of 25 years, the adult male population of the studied families had a very minimum educational affiliation. After sudden political turmoil and displacement, they rather had a mere oppurtunity to get affiliated with the education either by themselves or by involving their children. Accordingly, the adult male population of the studied

area had a very little educational involvement. Most of the concerned male populations (55.28 per cent) were illiterate and only a certain section (44.72 per cent) was literate. Again, among the total literate population only a few (6.94 per cent) people had the educational qualification upto secondary standard or more. Most of the literate people had the educational confinement between class V to class VIII standard (Table 5.13).

Table 5.13: Distribution of the males on the basis of level of education

Age Group	Illiterate	If Literate			Total
		I-IV	V-VIII	IX- XII	
15-19	-	3 4.00	68 90.67	4 5.33	75 100.00
20-24	37 100.00	11 30.56	18 50.00	7 19.44	36 100.00
25-29	61 100.00	-	6 85.71	1 14.29	7 100.00
30-34	38 100.00	4 30.77	9 69.23	-	13 100.00
35-39	28 100.00	7 38.89	11 61.11	-	18 100.00
40-44	24 100.00	13 54.17	8 33.33	3 12.50	24 100.00
45-49	22 100.00	4 40.00	6 60.00	-	10 100.00
50-54	24 100.00	7 43.75	9 56.25	-	16 100.00
55-59	12 100.00	1 33.33	2 66.67	-	3 100.00
60-64	12 100.00	3 42.86	4 57.14	-	7 100.00
65-69	4 100.00	1 25.00	3 75.00	-	4 100.00
70 and Above	5 100.00	2 66.67	1 33.33	-	3 100.00
Total	267 100.00	56 25.93	145 67.13	15 6.94	216 100.00

[Excluded 0-14 years age group] Source: Field Study

Further, in the studied families the females also had major working involvements. It has been already mentioned that the concerned female both had to work in the household as well as in the stone based work and it could be noticed from their teenage. The educational status of the 15-19 year age group revealed the fact that in most of the (74.07 per cent) cases they were literate and in some (25.93 per cent) cases they were illiterate. Even among the literate population, the educational qualification got confined within the primary level. It was quite

evident that to earn a fold of rice they already gave up to continue their studies regularly or to attend the school in its according schedule (Table 5.14).

Table 5.14: Distribution of the Females on the basis of level of education

Age group	Illiterate	If Literate		
	Total	I-IV	V-VIII	Total
15-19	14 100.00	40 100.00	-	40 100.00
20-24	27 100.00	36 81.82	8 18.18	44 100.00
25-29	34 100.00	26 89.66	3 10.34	29 100.00
30-34	22 100.00	29 87.88	4 12.12	33 100.00
35-39	34 100.00	2 100.00	-	2 100.00
40-44	44 100.00	2 100.00	-	2 100.00
45-49	31 100.00	6 100.00	-	6 16.22
50-54	15 100.00	10 100.00	-	10 100.00
55-59	15 100.00	-	-	-
60-64	14 100.00	-	-	-
65-69	4 100.00	-	-	-
70 and Above	4 100.00	-	-	-
Total	258 100.00	151 90.96	15 9.04	166 100.00

[Excluded 0-14 years age group] Source: Field Study

Further, the rate of literacy gradually got decreased among the population belonging to the age group of 20 years and more. Particularly the adult female population of the studied families had a very nominal educational affiliation. Even in between the age group of 35-39 years, 40-44 years and 45-49 years, only two females were literate in first two age groups and six females were literate in the last age group respectively. Even their educational involvement was totally confined upto primary level. The aged female population belonging to the more than 55 years of age were completely illiterate and they even could not sign their name. Among the concerned female population a certain section (39.15 per cent) was literate and mostly (60.85 per cent) they were illiterate. Most of the illiterate women (68.22 per cent) even could not sign their names. On the other hand most the literate (90.96 per cent) had the educational involvement upto primary level only (Table 5.14). It was primarily because of the fact that quite from an early age the girl child used to play a crucial role in the economic perspective of the family.

On one hand she was directly involved in the household courses; on the other hand her earning played a crucial role to steam the vessel. Meanwhile, through self earning she helped her father to accumulate the amount gradually required for the forthcoming marriage. Again, after the marriage she had to continue the work along with her husband for the sustenance of a newly established family. Thus, poverty, necessity of livelihood and struggle for survival had collectively snatched almost every opportunity from the female folk of the studied area to give up their education and to conduct the stone based work regularly.

It deserves a special attention to mention here that among the adult females no one had the educational qualification upto secondary or higher secondary level in the studied area. Among the studied male population the feature of educational drop out was quite common. Even from their teenage and early adulthood, working involvement as well as familial duties and responsibilities had forced the male children to get dropped out from the educational mainstream even at the primary level. In between the age group of 20 -24 years, the concerned males became a full time bread earner for their families and even in many cases they had to start their own familial life. Regarding such affiliation the concerned males were dropped out from education in below class- I level and primary level respectively (Table 5.15).

Table 5.15: Educational dropout of the male

Age group	Status of Educational Drop out					Total
	Below	I-IV	V-VIII	IX -XII	Presently in education	
5-9	-	-	-	-	-	
10-14	-	-	-	-	85 100.00	85 100.00
15-19	-	3 4.00	-	-	72 96.00	75 100.00
20-24	37 50.68	11 15.07	-	-	25 34.25	73 100.00
25-29	61 89.71	-	6 8.82	1 1.47	-	68 100.00
30-34	38 74.51	4 7.84	9 17.65	-	-	51 100.00
35-39	28 60.87	7 15.22	11 23.91	-	-	46 100.00
40-44	24 50.00	13 27.08	8 16.67	3 6.25	-	48 100.00
45-49	22 68.75	4 12.50	6 18.75	-	-	32 100.00
50-54	24 60.00	7 17.50	9 22.50	-	-	40 100.00
55-59	12	1	2	-	-	15

	80.00	6.67	13.33			100.00
60-64	12 63.16	3 15.79	4 21.05	-	-	19 100.00
65-69	4 50.00	1 12.50	3 37.50	-	-	8 100.00
70 and Above	5 62.50	2 25.00	1 12.50	-	-	8 100.00
Total	267 47.00	56 9.86	59 10.39	4 0.70	182 32.04	568 100.00

Source: Field Study

It is to be mentioned here that in between the age group of 25- 49 years the concerned males were affiliated with formal education. However, their displacement and further inconvenient circumstances had created an acute hindrance to continue their studies. The concerned parents were more involved in find out an alternative means for survival rather to look after the education of their children. Even after their resettlement, lack of educational institution in the studied area and their bizarre economic condition were the major hindrance to continue their studies. Meanwhile, it was noticed that among the parental generation of the egos, particularly beyond the age group of 50 years, in some cases, the concerned males had the educational involvement upto the junior high school (class VIII) level. However, due to several inconvenient situation and unfamiliar socio-political circumstances they could not achieve higher education. Further, among the studied male population most of the (47 per cent) people were dropped out in primary level. On the other hand, except the children and teenage population, only a mere section (0.70 per cent) had attained the educational standard upto secondary level but before its formal completion they were dropped out from the educational mainstream (Table 5.15).

Among the female population of the studied area, the feature of educational drop out was quite common at an early age. During their teenage and early adulthood i.e. in between the age group of 15-19 years, the feeble economic backbone of the families and allied household activities had forced them to get involved as a production unit for her family rather to get confined only in the education. Further, in between the age group of 20-49 years the concerned families were involved in the education either in the below primary level or in the primary level. Afterwards the political turmoil and further displacement had seized every opportunity from them to continue their education. Even after resettlement they were also involved in the source of earning rather to restart the education.

Table 5.16: Educational dropout of the female

Age group	Status of educational drop out					Total
	Below class I	I-IV	V-VIII	IX -XII	Presently in education	
5-9	-	-	-	-	-	-
10-14	-	-	-	-	63 100.00	63 100.00
15-19	14 25.92	-	-	-	40 74.08	54 100.00
20-24	27 38.03	36 50.70	8 11.27	-	-	71 100.00
25-29	34 53.97	26 41.27	3 4.76	-	-	63 100.00
30-34	22 40.00	29 52.73	4 7.27	-	-	55 100.00
35-39	34 94.44	2 5.56	-	-	-	36 100.00
40-44	44 95.65	2 4.35	-	-	-	46 100.00
45-49	31 83.78	6 16.22	-	-	-	37 100.00
50-54	15 60.00	10 40.00	-	-	-	25 100.00
55-59	15 100.00	-	-	-	-	15 100.00
60-64	14 100.00	-	-	-	-	14 100.00
65-69	4 100.00	-	-	-	-	4 100.00
70 and Above	4 100.00	-	-	-	-	4 100.00
Total	258 52.98	111 22.79	15 3.08	-	103 21.15	487 100.00

Source: Field Study

The aged female population of the studied area was dropped out from the educational mainstream mostly in their Nursery level (Table 5.16). It was primarily due to the fact that the concerned parents were quite reluctant to educate their girl children. Economic constraints and existing political turmoil were an additional criterion which reduced their scope of further studies. It is to be mentioned here that in comparison with the males, concerned females had least educational affiliation in the studied area. It was primarily due to the fact that quite at an early age, the girls became involved both in the stone based occupation as well as they had to look after the household courses and caring of their younger. After such multifarious working involvement, a mere time was left for them to carry on their studies. Ultimately, it was better to get dropped out the educational mainstream and to become primarily affiliated with the assigned works. Particularly among them, there were not a single individual who had attained the secondary level of education. It was mainly due to the fact that they

had a very little moment left for the studies after completion of their daily assigned works. It created an acute academic irregularity among them and they became bound to getting dropped out. However, their poor economic condition was also a crucial factor in this concern. They had a mere scope to bear the overall educational expenditures associated with the higher classes. Further, in between the age group of 20-34 years, very few (3.08 per cent) individuals had the educational affiliation in between Vth to VIIIth standard; but they were dropped out before attaining at least the secondary level. Although among them a few (21.15 per cent) individuals were involved in education during the period of study but it was not assured that they whether they could continue it for the next day or not. Among the studied female most (52.98 per cent) of the individuals were dropped out from education only in the primary level (Table 5.16). From the field observation it can be stated that for the poverty stricken families, education became next to luxury.

From the above all discussions it is quite evident that the rate of educational drop out was very high in the studied area. A number of factors were emerged as prime issues for their educational drop out. Due to emerging socio-political factors, they were forced to loss their early settlement and stable economic pursuit. It severely made them economically insecure. On the other hand, after their resettlement and involvement in a new occupational pursuit, the necessity of common minimum livelihood became their major area of emphasis. Their acute economic scarcity had hindered them even to accumulate their common minimum livelihood requirements. In this regard, it was quite unaffordable for the concerned people to bear the expenditure of education for their children. Moreover, during their earlier days of settlement, the studied area was devoid of any educational institution. If any one had the desire to study then he had to travel a distance of 5 kilometer to reach in Siliguri. It was reported that the studied people were dropped out from the educational mainstream mainly due to severe economic constraint of their concerned families (Table 5.17). However, it was more in case of males than the females.

Table 5.17: Cause of educational drop out

Age group	Cause of Drop Out								Total	
	Less economic opportunity		Guardians not interested		Self reluctance		Other factor		M	F
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
15-19	3 100.00	6 42.86	-	8 57.14	-	-	-	-	3 100.00	14 100.00
20-24	45 93.75	45 63.38	-	18 25.35	-	-	3 6.25	8 11.27	48 100.00	71 100.00
25-29	27 39.71	36 57.14	32 47.06	26 41.27	2 2.94	-	7 10.29	1 1.59	68 100.00	63 100.00
30-34	15 29.41	19 34.54	30 58.82	30 54.54	1 1.96	-	5 9.80	6 10.91	51 100.00	55 100.00
35-39	22 47.83	17 47.22	18 39.13	19 52.78	3 6.52	-	3 6.52	-	46 100.00	36 100.00
40-44	37 77.08	22 47.83	9 18.75	21 45.65	-	-	2 4.16	3 6.52	48 100.00	46 100.00
45-49	13 40.62	16 43.24	8 25.00	18 48.65	9 28.12	-	2 6.25	3 8.11	32 100.00	37 100.00
50-54	18 45.00	9 36.00	10 25.00	10 40.00	2 5.00	-	10 25.00	6 24.00	40 100.00	25 100.00
55-59	12 80.00	10 66.67	2 13.33	3 20.00	-	-	1 6.67	2 13.33	15 100.00	15 100.00
60-64	16 84.21	8 57.14	-	4 28.57	-	-	3 15.79	2 14.29	19 100.00	14 100.00
65-69	6 75.00	1 25.00	2 25.00	3 75.00	-	-	-	-	8 100.00	4 100.00
70 and above	3 37.50	1 25.00	3 37.50	3 75.00	1 33.33	-	1 33.33	-	8 100.00	4 100.00
Total	217 56.22	190 49.48	114 29.53	163 42.45	18 4.67	-	37 9.59	31 8.07	386 100.00	384 100.00

Source: Field Study

In case of 114 (29.53 per cent) males and 163 (42.45 per cent) females, the concerned guardians were quite reluctant to continue their studies. They had the notion that inspite of educational attachment if their children could work along with them then it would operate as an additional working hand for their families to enhance their monthly income. Such circumstances had intended the parents to acclimatize their children with the working environment and work organization from an early age. Even 10 years ago the studied area was devoid of any primary school. For minimum educational involvement, the concerned students had to travel a long distance. Such regular economic expenditure for traveling was quite unaffordable for the studied families. Ultimately it had reduced their scope of education. Again, when the concerned people were resettled in the studied area, the local issues and local people were quite familiar with them. It had hindered them to send their teenage daughters and wives outside from the studied area.

Accordingly, the guardians had a consensus that further education of their girl child would certainly be stopped. It has also been reported that certain males (9.59 per cent) and females (8.07 per cent) started to continue their education after re-settlement (Table 5.17). However, they were unable to become familiar with the social environments of their new educational institution. Cultural interaction and medium of communication also created a lot of hindrances for them during the earlier periods of their resettlement. It created all sorts of inconveniences for them to understand the lesson in the class. On the other hand, the teachers also had a little attention and affection for the children of displaced and migrated people. Ultimately the concerned people found it rather difficult to continue their education and very soon they were forced to get dropped out from the educational mainstream.

With the passage of time, the studied people gradually became familiar with the socio-cultural milieu of their new settlement. A primary school was built up in the studied area in the year 2000. The continuous effort of local Panchayat and implementation of different Government schemes had created educational awareness among the studied people. During the study it was observed that the studied people knew very well that the stone based work was their only source of choice to sustain the livelihood. However, they knew very well that the said natural resources would not be much abundant in near future and ultimately their occupational pursuit would have to face a severe constraint. Thus if their children had to look after some other occupational pursuit in near future, then education would be a very essential requirement for them to find out some better job opportunity. Meanwhile the reality was absolutely dissimilar from the earnest requisite. In the studied families most of (82.45per cent) the concerned children were literate and only a certain section (17.55per cent) were illiterate (Table 5.18).

Table 5.18: Educational background of the children

Sex	Educational Feature		Total
	Illiterate	Literate	
Male	29 15.51	158 84.49	187 100.00
Female	34 19.77	138 80.23	172 100.00
Total	63 17.55	296 82.45	359 100.00

(Excluded 0-4 Years age Group) Source: Field Study

Meanwhile all the children belonging to the age group of 5-6 years had the nursery level of education which was operated by the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), operating in the studied area. However, the educational continuation at the high school level was very less among them. From the study it was found that mere income of the parents could not meet up with the expenses related to educational requirements, transportation to school, remuneration for the private teachers etc. On the other hand sometime valid documentation of identity during enrollment of children was also not in their hand. Collectively such issues might have reduced their further academic progress.

Table 5.19: Distribution of the male child on the basis of educational status

Age group	If literate		
	I-IV	V-VIII	Total
5-6	17 100.00	-	17 100.00
7-8	37 100.00	-	37 100.00
9-10	13 81.25	3 18.75	16 100.00
11-12	10 90.91	1 9.09	11 100.00
13-14	74 96.10	3 3.90	77 100.00
Total	151 95.57	7 4.43	158 100.00

Source: Field Study

Table 5.20: Distribution of the female child on the basis of educational status

Age group	If Literate		
	I-IV	V-VIII	Total
5-6	20 100.00	-	20 100.00
7-8	24 100.00	-	24 100.00
9-10	7 58.33	5 41.67	12 100.00
11-12	3 33.33	6 66.67	9 100.00
13-14	7 9.59	66 90.41	73 100.00
Total	61 44.20	77 55.80	138 100.00

Source: Field Study

At the initial stages enroll their children. All the children in the studied families were enrolled in the formal schooling in class I level. However, in the latter phases of schooling, the number of regular students gradually started to get decreased. Further, in the secondary level, there occurred frequent educational drop out and they could hardly complete their formal schooling upto secondary or higher secondary level. During the field study it was observed that in the studied families, concerned children had to face several inconveniences to continue their education. These are discussed below in brief-

Problems associated with education

1) Impact of Working Involvement: In the studied area for the sake of common minimum livelihood the entire family worked as a production unit. The concerned children also had a working involvement along with their parents. Usually, they went to the river bed early in the morning and started to work. In the morning when they used to work along with their parents often their school hours would pass away. They could hardly remember it regularly or they had a least attention on it. Even during the school hours, they were least bothered and they merely had the patience to attend the full session of the school. For most of the days, after the completion of a period or two, the children hardly used to attend any further classes. They used to come directly to the river bed and again started to do the work along with their parents. Among the concerned families, all of the children were either had an irregular attendance at the school or they frequently used to flew away from the school during mid session (Table 5.21). Again, the concerned children were regularly involved in the work for quite a longer duration, thus, they got a mere chance to regularize their studies. It had ultimately resulted in poor academic performances in classes and examinations.

2) Economic constraints of the concerned families: The economic constraint of the studied families had resulted in an adverse impact on the education of their children. In the studied families, the parents were quite unable to provide adequate educational requirements to their children. The parents were quite unable to provide adequate educational requirements to their children (Table 5.21).

Table 5.21: Major constraints related to education

Monitoring of children		Attendance in school	Provision of educational material	Accessibility of private tuition			Total
Regular	Irregular	Irregular	Lacking	Yes	No	Discontinued	253 100.00
17 6.72	236 93.28	253 100.00	253 100.00	15 5.93	113 44.66	125 49.41	

Source: Field Study

The students were devoid of books, exercise books, pencils, erasers and school bags to meticulously organize their regular studies. Although according to government schemes the school provided them books in the primary level but in most of the cases those were torn and even did not contain all the chapters. In this regard, it became rather impossible for the students to study those books in their daily courses. Again, when a student could get the promotion in higher classes, it was necessary for him to submit the earlier books in the schools. In most of the cases they often lost one or two books; even whichever they returned, those were not in a proper condition to be academically utilized in further. In this regard, at the primary school of Balasan colony, the scarcity of books often emerged out. In most of the cases the students could not get their full set of books and it obviously hampered their studies a lot. On the other hand, after the primary level the students were needed to purchase their books from the market. The studied families who had to face an acute economic scarcity for their common minimum livelihood, found it almost impossible to secure the educational desire of their children. Although the children were also a secondary earning member of the families but with that mere income it was completely impossible for them to purchase the books for their studies. To conduct regular studies they must needed other educational requisites like exercise books, pencils etc. but their parents were economically not in a position to satisfy the concerned desires to all of their children. Most of the families had more than one student. Usually the parents used to buy a single copy of exercise book, a pencil and so on which they equally divided among their children. Ultimately, it would hardly provide educational requisites of the concerned children. Again, when the children further asked their parents for the educational needs within a few days, they got angry. Due to lack of purchasing capacity they could not provide the same to their children. It would seriously hamper the regular studies in a meticulous fashion. Again, as the students

had no school bags of their own, so during rainy season their educational materials often got wet and damaged in condition. In most of the cases, they could hardly use it in future for their studies. Even within their huts the penetration of water through the thatched roof and wall often drenched the educational materials severely. Meanwhile, it is to be mentioned here that in the high schools, students often became unable to pay their fixed annual fees and for that they were debarred from appearing in the examination. So, they were not promoted to higher classes. It severely told upon their desire of education and practically they became quite reluctant to bear the expenditures in the same class for another year. Ultimately they were dropped out from the educational mainstream and started to work permanently in the stone field.

3) Lack of monitoring to the students: In the studied area, lack of monitoring to the students emerged as a major constraint for their education. The head master of the Balasan colony primary school opined his view that regular practices of study in the household was the most essential factor from the educational perspective of a student. In this regard, the concerned parents would have to play a prime role to monitor their student children regularly and to practice their studies in the household. However, it created a major problem in the studied area. The concerned parents were very busy in the work and to accumulate a fold of rice for their families. They had a mere scope to think seriously about the studies of the children. Whenever, a little scope was managed, they would look after the studies of their children. However, it was a very seldom happening factor as well as it was totally irregular which was noticed only in case of 6.72 per cent families (Table 5.21). Ultimately, it would not help at all in case of the studied families to provide the educational requirements of their children. On the other hand, illiteracy of the parents and their educational inability created the major hindrance in the regular educational practices of the children which could be noticed among 93.28 per cent families (Table-5.21). In such cases, the illiterate parents had no capability to guide their children for the studies. Even they had a least desire to look after whether their children were studying or not. If they did not go to the school for a day or two then their parents would not curse them but if they did not go to the work for a day then the parents became quite dissatisfied with them. In some cases the concerned parents were earlier educated from Bangladesh but their old

educational curriculum was totally distinct from the educational contents of their children. In such cases, the parents became completely unable to guide the studies of their children. Particularly after the primary level, the students regularly faced such hindrances. To redress that problem private tuition could be an alternative solution. In this regard, the economic scarcity was their prime hindrance. In the studied area, very few (5.93 per cent) families had managed to provide a private tutor for their children while around 45 percent families were not capable enough to facilitate their children with such provision. Again, though the parents of nearly 50 percent families provided a private tutor for their children, but their economic scarcity reduced the scope to provide his monthly remuneration. In such cases, the concerned tutors had shown their reluctance to continue the coaching. Ultimately, the students became the worst victim. The head master of local primary school had admitted the fact that the concerned children had very poor educational responses in the classes. He committed the truth that with only three teachers it was almost an impossible task for them to regularize the lessons for every student. On the contrary, the student had no scope to learn the same from their parents or neighbourhood. In such cases, they could not properly complete their studies at all and they had no idea about the courses. Ultimately, they showed a very poor performance in the school examination. It was noticed from the primary school attendance registrar book that from class I to class IV, there was a continuous numerical decrease of the student year after year. Meanwhile from the I.C.D.S. centre it was reported that the parents enrolled their children in the primary school only to redress their hunger through mid day meal scheme. It could ultimately secure their desired requirements of food to some extent. Even often the mothers send their children to the I.C.D.S. centre just before their feeding, while the children did not participate in the academic activities for most of the time. Although the parents had an interest to educate their children but they had no capability to redress the emerging hindrances in this connection. It became quite evident that alike their parental generation, the youths and the children were also unable to achieve any formal educational degree. Their lack of education and lack of knowledge did not fulfill the desired requirements against which they could get involved in any urban based white collar government jobs by discarding their contemporary occupational pursuit. As a result, inspite of several inconveniences they had to do the same work generation after generation. Meanwhile, Article 21-

A, as inserted by the Constitution Act 2002 (Eighty- sixth amendment), facilitated for free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of six to fourteen years, as a fundamental right (Shukla, 2008:211). Consequently the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, was enacted by Indian Parliament in the year 2010 (<http://www.childlineindia.org.in>). However, in case of the present studied area, such regulations would be unable to meet up with successful implementation, until the concerned children were relaxed from the burden to accumulate a fold of rice for the sake of their survival. On the other hand, the studied families should also have an economic backbone which could provide minimum educational requirements to their children.

Social problems in the studied area

Social life is the essence of Human life. It grows out of constant patterning of social interactions and relationships among human being as such. The economic life is a sub system of society (Nash, 1968:359). Economy is an important constituent of community life and plays a deciding role in the formation of societal and cultural structure of society (Vidyarthi, 1976:93). Thus if any sort of turmoil emerges in the society then it would ultimately result a serious impact upon the socio-cultural framework of the concerned society. In such circumstances, a number of social problems would be created. Actually a social problem has been defined as “a situation confronting a group or a section of society which inflicts injurious consequences that can be handled only collectively” (Reinhardt, 1952:14). Raab and Selznick (1959:32) stated that a social problem is “a problem in human relationships which seriously threatens society or impedes the important aspirations of many people (see, Ahuja,2003:2-3).” In this context, the studied area deserved a special resemblance from multidimensional aspect. Displacement, migration, unauthorized resettlement and struggle for survival seriously affected the economic life of the studied people in various ways.

Certain unwanted socio-political turmoil forced the studied people to get displaced from their permanent settlement and stable economic pursuit. Further, they got resettled in the Balasan colony and their struggle for survival began. Earlier they had horizontal and vertical pattern of joint family system with siblings as well as filial generations. Unwanted circumstances forced them to get

displaced suddenly. In a number of cases they had lost their spouses, siblings or became scattered from one another. Further, a number of people established their families in the studied area. During the study most of the families were of nuclear type. Their hard manual labour could generate a very little amount of earning. The concerned people were hardly interested to spend their precious earning for a number of persons except their wives and children. Economic constraint had made them reluctant to take some undesired familial responsibilities of aged parents or unmarried brothers, sisters. In the studied area, economic scarcity emerged as a major obstacle to conduct the marriage ceremony of their children. Particularly, to conduct the marriage of a girl was a major challenge for their parents. In one hand, it was the huge expenditure related to rituals and co-related feast; on the other hand it was the heavy demand of dowry from the side of the groom. In a number of cases even after finalization of words economic constraint hindered it to get materialized. It is to be mentioned here that the parents of adjacent areas were quite reluctant to arrange the marriage of their girls in a stone crushing family due to their poverty. On the other hand they also do not prefer their girls because her parents were not in a position to satisfy the demand of dowry claimed by the grooms' family. Further, due to displacement the kin members of the studied people became scattered from one another. After resettlement they became primarily affiliated with the stone crushing work. However, their hard manual labour generated a very poor level of income. It could hardly manage their common minimum livelihood expenditure and economically they were very poor in condition. Thus to maintain kinship based social relation and to perform different social rites frequently was an undesired economic burden for them. It had forced them to maintain minimum affiliation with their kin members. Again, to earn a fold of rice the children used to work regularly with their parents. It had reduced their scope to continue their studies regularly. Poverty was a major obstacle for the studied families to provide educational requirements for their children. Moreover, illiteracy of parents could not guide the academic courses of their children. Ultimately after a certain period of time due to economic scarcity and lack of infrastructural support they had to give up their studies. Thus, in the studied area the social problems had multidimensional aspects and different factors are co-related to one another in this concern.

Due to displacement remarkable changes were noticed in their economic organization. Their traditional agricultural occupation had no scope to get pursued. The purchased cereals could hardly accumulate their daily demands of food required for every members of the family. Again, they had a least opportunity to catch different types of fishes from the Balasan river due to its rocky surface and continuous activity of human being on the river for the collection of raw material required for the stone crushing work. Again, after displacement they were devoid of any agricultural land possession and in the resettled area any grazing land could hardly be noticed. Owing to these consequences, scope of domestication for studied people was reduced to a great extent. Ultimately it had seized the opportunity of getting animal protein and nutrition. On the other hand due to poverty most of them could not manage to purchase market based nutritious food. It is to be mentioned here that when the studied people were agriculturists, the produced crop fulfilled their prime source of daily food requisite while by selling the surplus amount they could manage to purchase other requirements. However, after resettlement they became totally depended only on the natural resources. Even in a number of occasions, to fulfil the requisites of common minimum livelihood, the concerned people became supposed to take loan from the local money lenders. It was also noticed that a number of government facilities were allotted in the studied area. However, those were not adequately constructed and equally distributed. On the other hand, they had a little scope to make adequate household infrastructure by their own expenditure. During the study, it was observed that the concerned people were almost roofless in condition. They were facing the agony ever since their resettlement. They were unable to get any sort of safety, security and protection which had ultimately made their survival totally insecure and on the threshold of obliteration.

Socio-political turmoil and poverty was the prime result of displacement. It worsen their permanent settlement, social and cultural life to a great extent. In this process, their traditional joint family pattern was broken up and it turned into nuclear in nature. The function as well as responsibilities and duties of the family members were forced to get changed. It was noticed that their disastrous economic situation also affected their marriage institution. The involvement of the kin members, community rejoices and social merriments got reduced to a large

extent. On the other hand, often in many cases the concerned parents missed the chance to finalize the marital relations of their daughters. It was primarily due to their economic inability to fulfil the demand of dowry and other material requirements of the groom. Further, limited scope of earning made it very difficult for the prime earner of the studied families to fulfil the common minimum livelihood requirements of every family member. So they failed to provide adequate economic and social security to their family members. Ultimately, the essential organizational part of the family, marriage and kinship were on the threshold of acute crisis and were repeatedly losing their functional importance. It means that the functional aspects of the society were getting changed which told upon their social structure and social organization. They lost the earlier value system of their society. For the sake of survival the concerned people were in a severe competition to access the minimum available natural resources. Their efforts were almost in vain and it gradually increased their poverty into manifold. Further, it can be noted that the concerned people earlier had their own traditional political organization. The village headman played a significant role in it and the oral verdict of such body was recognized as an ultimate decision for social control. However after displacement and resettlement it was completely abolished and during the study they were completely under the affiliation of modern political organization. It was noticed that always they had to obey the decision of the influential political persons in every circumstances otherwise it might be detrimental for them in certain ways. During the study it was reported that their local administration, economic organization, certain livelihood amenities, social occasion, religious festivals were controlled under the influence of modern political organization in a number of ways. It is to be mentioned here that due to displacement and alternation of traditional economic organization remarkable changes could be noticed in their religious organization. The studied person does not practice agriculture and agricultural land related rituals any more. On the other hand they had started to worship the river for regular supply of natural resources to sustain their occupation.

Keeping in view of the above all consequences it may be said that the customary rules, regulations, norms, customs and obedience lost their earlier importance and the entire social solidarity became disintegrated. Even in a number of occasions, oral discussions were made by the higher administrative authorities to vacate the

studied undocumented settlement. In such incidences several uncertain questions were raised about their future settlement, livelihood safety, security and alike. In most of the cases, they failed to redress the constraints in each and every sector of their common minimum livelihood. As a result, the above all repeated situations had created an acute mental and psychological pressure on them and sometimes it might have turned into a stage of depression and they got psychologically weakened. These circumstances sometimes forced them to get involved in different social problems. Ultimately it created a number of chaos and conflict in case of the studied families. Among the studied families only very few families (3.69 per cent) stated that they were not involved in any sort of familial or neighbourhood conflict. On the other hand, majority of the families (96.31 per cent) were involved in multifarious conflict and chaos both within their families as well as with neighbourhood (Table- 5.22).

It has been reported that there were multifarious causes related to the conflicts among the studied families. Among those causes economic scarcity had emerged as the major cause of conflict which was noticed in case of around 60 per cent families. The studied families had a very poor level of monthly income. There average family members were five in number. Due to lack of natural food resources like kitchen garden, agricultural food products and fresh water fishes, all the concerned families had to depend on market based food products. However, with that mere source of income they could not purchase enough amount of food which was proportionate to redress the hunger of all the concerned family members. So, in most of the cases they were hand to mouth in condition and the flame of hunger ever persisted in their stomach. Along with that their mere economic backbone provided a very little opportunity for them, to accumulate other common minimum livelihood like dress, shelter, education and health accessibilities. Although the females were also a major earning member of the concerned families but they had a very little authority over their own earning. The males were the prime earning members of the studied families and they also had the authority over the earning of their concerned female folk. Even, whatever the children also earned that was deposited under the authority of their father. So, ultimately the adult male members were the prime earning member of the studied families and they had the complete authority of entire familial income. All the other members depended on him for the sake of their common minimum

livelihood. However, the poor economic backbone was a great hindrance for them to provide the security of common minimum livelihood of every family member. In this regard, all of the family members always demand their daily livelihood needs and requirements to the adult males. On the other hand the adult males were not in a position to provide the same. It had always created an acute mental distress and depression for them. Again, the demand of common minimum livelihood and their lack of fulfilment always created chaos, conflict and quarrel between the prime earners with other family members. In many cases, the married females used to come back to her parental house along with her children because her husband could not provide minimum social security for themselves. The second major cause of their familial conflicts was the addictive nature of the adult male members in the concerned families (Table 5.22). It has been reported that even from early teenage the concerned children had a number of addictions like smoking, chewing of tobacco and pan masala (Table 5.23).

Table 5.22: Distribution of the families on the basis of conflicts

Cases of conflict		Cause of conflict				Total
Yes	No	Acute poverty	Illegal affairs	Addiction of husband	Others	
313	12	187	27	86	13	325
96.31	3.69	59.74	8.63	27.48	4.15	100.00

Source: Field Study

It is to be mentioned here that quite at an early age, the children of the studied families had a direct involvement in earning. Although they submit their lions' share of earning to the parents, but they kept a little amount in their own hand. With this amount they found their own way of mental refreshment. They were quite well known that their parents had not enough time and desire to keep a close watch over their daily activities. So, they could utilize their economic involvement in an adverse manner to some extent. Another major addiction of the studied people was gambling. During the field study, it was observed that on set of the adulthood, a male person of the family became very much fond of gambling. Again, as soon as the concerned people got older, they were not only confined to a certain type of addiction; rather they were addicted to diversified objects. It was noticed during field study that in between the age group of 10 years to more than 70 years, out of total 568 males, more than half (50.35 per cent) of the people were involved in a number of addictive practices like

consumption of alcohol, smoking, tobacco and pan masala chewing and gambling (Table 5.23).

Table 5.23: Distribution of the male population on the basis of addiction

Age group	People addicted to							Total
	Alcohol	Smoking	Alcohol, Smoking	Tobacco	Pan masala	Alcohol, smoking, Tobacco	Alcohol Smoking Pan masala	
10-14	-	13 15.29	-	29 34.12	43 50.59	-	-	85 100.00
15-19	-	29 38.67	7 9.33	13 17.33	26 34.67	-	-	75 100.00
20-24	-	16 21.92	33 45.21	-	24 32.88	-	-	73 100.00
25-29	12 17.65	26 38.24	28 41.18	-	2 2.94	-	-	68 100.00
30-34	-	-	26 50.98	-	-	7 13.73	18 35.29	51 100.00
35-39	-	-	29 63.04	-	7 15.22	-	10 21.74	46 100.00
40-44	-	-	27 56.25	6 12.50	4 8.33	-	11 22.92	48 100.00
45-49	-	-	23 71.88	-	-	3 9.38	6 18.75	32 100.00
50-54	-	-	29 72.50	-	-	4 10.00	7 17.50	40 100.00
55-59	-	-	7 46.67	-	3 20.00	2 13.33	3 20.00	15 100.00
60-64	-	-	6 31.58	-	3 15.79	-	10 52.63	19 100.00
65-69	-	-	2 25.00	-	3 37.50	3 37.50	-	8 100.00
70 and Above	-	-	1 12.50	-	1 12.50	3 37.50	3 37.50	8 100.00
Total	12 2.11	84 14.79	218 38.38	48 8.45	116 20.42	22 3.87	68 11.97	568 100.00

Source: Field Study

It is to be mentioned here that throughout the entire day the males were involved in arduous manual labour works. Despite that their disastrous economic condition could hardly provide any opportunity to fulfil their common minimum livelihood upto the desired level. Such inability had created an acute mental depression and frustration among the males of the studied community. Temporarily to get rid of such agony, consumption of alcohol and playing of gambling were found as the best possible alternative. In the studied area such incidences became a regular phenomenon. Those activities used to create the situation more aggravated. The prime earners of the families spent most of their earnings for such addictions. Even in a number of occasions they forcefully snatched the earning of their wives. When their wives asked for money to run the familial hearth then their husbands had

nothing in the hand to meet up with the requisite. It could create an acute quarrel between husband and wife because the wives often blame their husbands for the misuse of money behind such addictions inspite of providing a fold of rice to the children. However, the words of bitter truth did not sound nice to the concerned male folk. To express the anger they often started to apply violent physical force upon them in a drunken condition. Even their children could also have the same fate. In such incidences, often the males used abusive languages and illicit physical expression indicating to their wives and children. Such familial conflict and chaos became a regular phenomenon among every family which tremendously violated the healthy environment of a family. Another major cause of familial and neighbourhood conflict was the illegal affairs were reported from some (8.63per cent) families. Due to poverty and addictions the quarrel between husband and wife became a regular occurrence and such day to day phenomenon could create an adverse impact upon the affectionate bondage between husband and wife. In such cases, the males often used to express their less desire to stay with their wives any more. Often he used to share his feelings with some other women of the locality or with his younger sister-in-law. Ultimately, it was not entertained by their wives and familial quarrel broke out. However, the husbands paid a mere attention to the words of their wives. Either they almost separated them verbally or they used to forcefully drag her out from the houses. The victimized and humiliated wives further had no option inspite of returning back to her parental house along with one or two child. Again, the males who were involved in the night shift of work at a longer distance, used to keep their wives in the households. In such cases, the women folk could not share their emotions with their husbands as well as it had adversely affected on their conjugal life. In such cases, often they became emotionally weak to their brother-in-laws or other male members of their neighbourhood and gradually got involved in extra marital affairs. Their husbands soon became aware about such incidences and it turned into severe familial conflict. Moreover, if certain tender emotional attachment took place with some third person then obviously it had crossed beyond the familial courtyard and ultimately a severe chaos, quarrel broke out between two families of the locality. Here the elder member of the concerned families and the local Panchayat often played a major role. They would prefer to settle up the entire matter behind the close doors and it was completely hushed up within their own territory. Further, in

case of a few families (4.15 per cent) some other causes were responsible to create quarrel and conflict. In such cases, it has been reported that often a people used to steal the broken up stone of other people or they used to occupy the working area of other people. It could create a quarrel between two stone crushers. However, in a quick succession such personal exchange of words turn up into familial conflicts with frequent utterance of abusive languages and even physical assault (Table-5.22). In the studied area, the local Panchayat and its women wing took a major initiative to redress different familial and neighbourhood conflict. But their continuous struggle for survival and mental depression related to poor income level had severely hampered their mental peace. Even for a very simple reason they expressed tremendous anger and restlessness. In the studied area, familial and neighbourhood conflict became a regular phenomenon. In such cases, the children became the worst victim. Ever since their birth, they could notice poverty and hunger in every perspective of their livelihood. Moreover the unsocial activities like open gambling and alcoholism of their parents could create an adverse impact upon their tender mind. Almost regularly, they could see either his father or any one in the neighbourhood was violently beating his wife and uttering abusive languages. Their simple mind could easily catch up the words and in many cases they used such words ever since their childhood. Particularly the girl child quite from an early age knew very well that their social security would be challenged in a number of occasions and the studied area was not a secured one for a gradually grown up child. Quite from an early age the concerned children knew that their guardian had some other activities. In such cases they could grow up with a wrong notion about different kinship based social relations. Such familial and social intricacies could create an adverse impact upon the simple tender mind of the children. Gradually their simple psychology became more complex and slowly but steadily they got enmeshed into the nexus of multifarious social problems.

On the other hand, it is noteworthy to mention here that the genesis of the psychological problems of children is to be traced from the disturbance of parent-child relationship, at any stage of development of the children. The psychological or emotional stability of a child is dependent upon feelings of security provided by the parental love and affection. Another fact which has been stressed in recent times is emotional needs of the child, the fulfilment of which not only helps in physical development but also in the development of an adjusted personality of

the child. His behavioural pattern as a child and also as a grown up individual is molded by the emotional environment at home and outside the home, when parents, brothers, sisters and other kins may support the making up of stable personality of the child or produce aberrations in his total personality. Parents are the giving end for the child and by virtue of their age and experience they give the child different form of tender, love, affection, security, recognition, appreciation and facilities for games. Generally, children fulfill the emotional needs of love and affection, sense of belonging, sense of responsibility towards others, sense of sacrifice and protection, sense of security in their future life (Singh and Pothen, 1982: 44-45 and 81-82). In the studied area, the livelihood conditions of the concerned people were quite poor. The economic status of the parents was mostly below poverty line and it resulted in the lack of parental attention towards the children. Even though the parents might like to devote time with their children, they were unable to do so due to pressure for earning the daily bread. The deviant behaviour of the children was quite common under these circumstances, which was accepted by the parents also as a normal pattern. In the studied area only 22.13 per cent families could look after the daily cleanliness of their children. It is to be specifically mentioned here that only in case of 42.29 per cent families the children were regularly fed by their mothers; on the other hand 14.23 per cent families they were fed by their elder brother and sister while in 43.48 percent the concerned children managed to fed by themselves. As the concerned parents were mostly involved in hard manual labour, throughout the entire day, so the care of their children during the said period was a major issue of concern for them. It has been reported that in case of around 19 per cent families the concerned children were not monitored by their parents during working hours. Further, in case of around 54 per cent families the concerned children were taken to the river bed by their parents. Still they remained busy with their work and their children could roam about carelessly. Even in few cases (5.14per cent), the parents used to keep their children under the monitoring of their neighbours (Table 5.24).

Table 5.24: Issues related to the rearing of the children

Category			Total
Daily cleanliness	Parents do regularly	56 22.13	253 (100.00)
	Mostly by elder children	103 40.17	
	Children manage themselves	94 37.15	
Regular feeding of child	Regularly done by mother	107 42.29	
	Mostly done by elder children	36 14.23	
	Children manage themselves.	110 43.48	
Care of the children during work	Parents take to the river bed	136 53.75	
	Under the monitor of grand parents	56 22.13	
	Under the monitor of neighbours	13 5.14	
	No monitoring at all	48 18.97	

Source: Field Study

Meanwhile from the field study it was noticed that during illness only the parents of around 2 percent families had the scope to remain with the child. Around 94 percent families could not provide adequate food and medicine regularly to their children. It is to be specifically mentioned here that none of the concerned families could provide regular medical consultancy to their children during illness (Table-5.25).

Table 5.25: Care of the child during illness

Remain with the child for most of the time		Provide adequate food and medicine regularly		Regularly Provide medical consultancy		Total
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	253
5	248	16	237	-	253	100.00
1.98	98.02	6.32	93.68		100.00	

Source: Field Study

In the studied area, the poor economic condition of the concerned families and their regular struggle for survival created a major hindrance to look after the desire of their children. It was reported that after day long manual labour. Most of the parents (81.82 per cent) were often felt a lot of mental irritation to tolerate even the little mischief of their children. During the study, the concerned families

having children, accepted the truth that the familial chaos, conflict and quarrel as well as their neighbourhood conflict resulted in an adverse impact upon the tender mind of their children. It has been reported that the children of around 74 per cent and 86 per cent families had a mere scope to get proper affection from their grandparents and from neighbourhood respectively (Table 5.26).

Table 5.26: Issues related to the children

Category			Total
Fulfillment of Desire	Yes	--	253 100.00
	No	253 100.00	
Mischievous of the Child	Harshly Beaten	207 81.82	
	Affectionately advised	46 18.18	
Familial conflict has an adverse impact upon children	Yes	-	
	No	253 100.00	
Social surrounding has an adverse impact upon children	Yes	-	
	No	253 100.00	
Affection from grand parents	Yes	187 73.92	
	No	66 26.09	
Affection from grand neighbourhood	Yes	36 14.23	
	No	217 85.77	

Source: Field Study

Thus from the overall discussion it can be revealed that in the studied area multifarious social problems were persisted. Poverty lack of fulfilment of common minimum livelihood and severe struggle for survival were the major hindrances of their livelihood. In that circumstance, their familial peace was violated seriously and it severely told upon the socialization process and personality formation of their children. It is noteworthy to mention here that familial and social environment plays a major role in the gradual mental development of a child. However, in the studied area, ever since the birth, a child could notice severe economic crisis, familial quarrel, exchange of abusive languages, unsocial activities as well as conflict with neighbourhood. All the circumstances had told upon their proper social-psychological development. Ever

since childhood they had lost cheerfulness, joy and merriment while they became quite arrogant as well as ill tempered.

The dimension of time is always changing and along with that the livelihood of the human being cannot remain static. Today with the rapid influx of globalization we are progressing towards the threshold of a new era of advanced techno-economic development, modern livelihood accessibilities and a number of other conveniences which will collectively pave our way for overall societal betterment. But on the other hand, there are a huge section of people who are poor, marginalized and are struggling in every perspective of their livelihood. The studied families of the Balasan colony were in such a situation. Their present livelihood condition was not emerged in a day or two but there were a number of factors which had forced them to remain in such a condition. In Bangladesh they had their own land, settled means of livelihood and stable economic pursuit. They were not economically wealthy but their livelihood was quite protected in the lap of nature. By accumulating the natural resources they could easily avail their right to food, shelter and to live in a healthy and safe environment. In early settlement, they had the right to nationality, individual dignity and pursuance of social and cultural practices. However, displacement and migration had left a major impact on their right to social security, individual dignity and right to life. The overall adverse circumstances forced them to leave the settlement as a roofless and resourceless migrant. Further, they started to resettle in the Balasan colony with new hopes and aspiration. However, after the resettlement in the Balasan colony they were gradually enmeshed into a number of inconveniences and still now struggling for their survival. The concerned people had no legal right to their settlement. They were the undocumented refugees and had no authentic administrative identity at all. They were simply known as an occupational group among the common mass but they were not known on the basis of their own individual social or cultural identity.

Due to displacement mostly they became separated from their siblings and cousins. It broke their traditional joint family system and after resettlement mostly they preferred the nuclear family type. On the other hand during the period of migration and further uncertainty of resettlement they became scattered from their kin members and their kinship bondage reduced a lot. Earlier they had a strong kinship affiliation which played a significant role in different familial occasions.

However, after displacement it could be hardly noticed. Meanwhile poor level of earning had made them quite reluctant to pursue any unwanted economic expenditure related with kinship based rights and social obligations. Even in most of the cases poverty emerged as a major obstacle for them to conduct the marriage ceremony. It was noticed that the parents of the girls were least interested to establish any marital relation with a stone crushing family because they were well known about their poverty and economic insecurity. On the other hand, the parents of a girl among the studied families were also unable to establish any marital relation outside because they could not fulfill the demand of dowry claimed by the parents of the groom. Thus they had to face a number of obstacles to conduct any marriage ceremony. Poverty had reduced their scope to organize the marriage ceremonies within a minimum limit which is confined mostly among the family members and by reducing certain rituals. It is to be mentioned here that earlier the studied people had their own traditional political organization and the village headman had a significant role in it. However after their displacement it was completely abolished. Again during the study they were associated with the modern political organization and their socioeconomic livelihood was markedly controlled under the modern political influence. Due to displacement they had lost agriculture based occupation. Significantly different rituals and religious festivals related to agricultural land and cattle were no more practiced by them. On the other hand they used to worship the river for a regular availability of natural resources for their livelihood sustainability.

Further, after the resettlement a strong economic backbone was their prime need. But the stone based occupation was unable to provide them the concerned requirement. From the studied settlement they had no scope to accumulate the natural food resources related to their daily livelihood. On the other hand economic scarcity was a great hindrance for them to depend on expensive market based food products. They had to face severe struggle for their survival. Poverty and the pressure of familial requirements forced the children to get involved in the stone crushing work from an early age. It severely told upon their education. Along with that the economic scarcity had hindered the parents to provide adequate educational requisites to their children. Meanwhile, secondary level of educational institution was absent in the settlement and it became a co-related factor responsible for the rapid educational drop out. Due to several

inconveniences and particularly economic fragile had confined their educational development mostly within primary and secondary level, and in this regard, the situation of the females was very grim. With the help of education and appropriate familial guidance as well as through the enculturation and socialization, a child can learn to obey the social norms, values, customs and obedience. It helps to develop his personality and humanitarian quality, but here it was seriously affected. Intra familial and inter familial conflicts, addictions, offensive activities were a common occurrence in the studied area. By birth a child observed acute poverty, undesired activities, addiction, conflict and serious competition for survival which affected on their mind. It turned them out as adamant in nature and involved them as frequent practitioner of those activities, which did not get any social sanction or could not be entertained by the society. The personality formations of the children had got diverged. They became less responsible to their familial as well as social obligations and duties. Again, most of their traditional cultural practices were changed.

Form the overall circumstances it can be stated that due to displacement a severe socio-economic and socio-cultural crisis were emerged out among the studied people as well as it exposed them into an insecure circumstance. The studied people were completely devoid of from the basic attributes of fundamental human rights related to their settlement, nationality, standard of living and basic right of education which they should deserve simply by virtue of a human being. They were dwelling in a close proximity from the biggest urban centre of North Bengal, Siliguri but they were far away from the modern urban accessibilities. Their labour was the prime raw material for the continuous urban flourishing, but they were debarred from the basic attributes of human rights in every perspective of their livelihood. If the present situation gets continued then only the forth coming period will tell us about their fate and mere chances will be left even for their survival.

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