

## Chapter – Five

### Empirical Findings of the Study

Table 1.

#### Awareness towards Women Empowerment and its Content: Female Respondents

Age	Low In %	Medium	High	No. of Women aware of Women Empowerment	Total No. of Women Interviewed
15-20	23.80			15	63
21-30	76.92			10	13
31-40		50		03	06
41-50	-	-	-	-	02
51-60	-	-	-	-	01
61 & Above	-	-	-	-	01
Total No.				28	86

While doing survey of 86 women from the hills of Darjeeling, it was found that, only 28 women out of 86 were familiar with the term 'Empowerment' in town areas of Darjeeling hills. In Rural areas most of the women does not know anything about 33% reservation of quotas

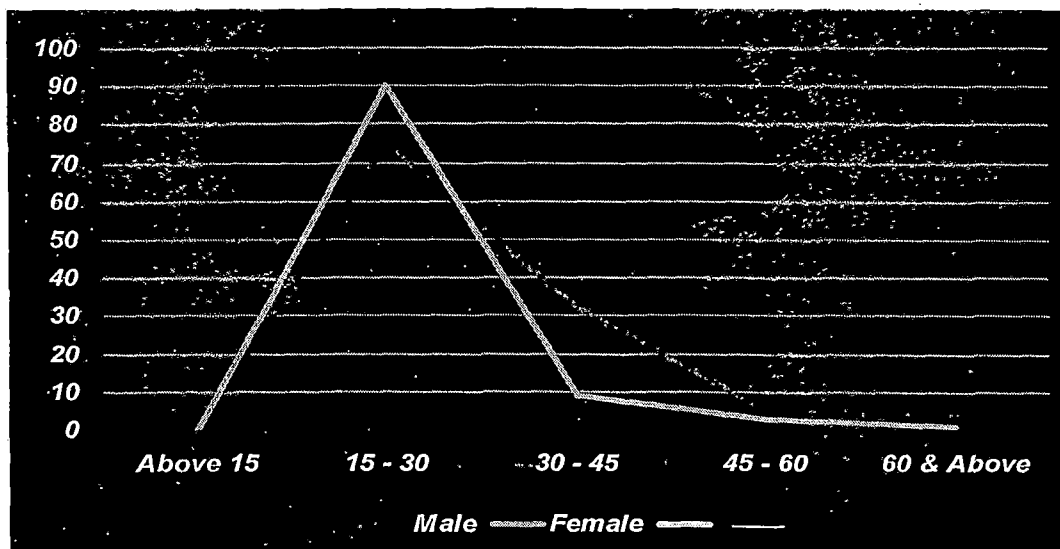
for women at Grass root Level and they have never heard the term 'Empowerment of Women.' Only 32.5% Urban Women in Darjeeling Hills are aware of their own Rights and Legislation passed by the Constitution of India towards the upliftment of the Indian women.

**Table 2.**

**Awareness Towards Women Empowerment and its Content: Male Respondents**

Age	Low In %	Medium	High	No. of Men aware of Women Empowerment	Total No. Men Interviewed
15-20	25			20	80
21-30		45.45		05	11
31-40	29.16			07	24
41-50	-	-	-	-	13
51-60	-	-	-	-	03
61 & Above				02	03
Total				34	134

In case of men respondents regarding Women Empowerment, it was found that, out of 134 men only 34 are aware of it. Only 25.3% of men are conscious and interested in 'Women Empowerment.' 75% of the men in Urban area of Hills are found either not interested and they have nothing to do with the term 'Empowerment'.



The graph shows that in Darjeeling Hills the men and women of 15 to 30 years of age group said that family related decision and budget of the house should be run by mother.

But when the further surveys were done and asked open ended questions to men and women of both rural and urban areas most of the urban women themselves are not aware of 33% reservation quotas for women in grassroots level. Socially and even economically women are found to be better in their status and position and the reason is matriarchal society of Hills both in nature and in majority but politically women themselves are ignorant regarding their own rights.

**Table 3.**

**Martial status & attitude towards women's participation in politics:  
Female Respondents**

Marital status	Low in %	Medium	High		Total No. Women Interviewed
Married		54.54		12	22
Unmarried		21.42		15	70
Total				27	92

While surveying 22 married women in Darjeeling Hills, it was found that, only 54% of Women are aware of their rights and legislation passed by the Indian Constitution towards women. The percentage of unmarried women as compared to married women is significantly less regarding the meaning and the content of 'Women Empowerment'

**Table 4.**

**Martial status and attitude towards women's participation in politics:  
Male Respondents**

Marital status	Low	Medium	High		Total No. Men Interviewed
Married	46.6			14	30
Unmarried	30.6			30	98
Total				44	128

When married men from the urban areas of Darjeeling Hills were surveyed and asked questions, it was noticed that, married men are more interested and aware of the term 'Women Empowerment.' Nearly 50% out of 30 married men who were interviewed believes in empowering women and for their better condition in the society.

**Table 5.**

**Family income and attitude towards women's participation in politics: Male: Female Respondents**

Family Income in Rupees per month	Low	Medium	High	Total No. of Men and Women
Upto 1000	√			10
1001-5000		√		40
5001-10,000			√	80
10,001-15,000		√		20
15,001-20,000				25
20,001-25,000	√			15
25,000 & Above	√			30

Table 5. shows family income on monthly basis and the attitude of men, women towards women's participation in politics.

Family whose income is upto 1000 rupees per month are those who are kullis(labor), cultivators, small vendors. Most of them are illiterate and they are unaware and cannot comment anything regarding participation of women in politics. Family, whose income is between five to fifteen thousand a month are from Middle class

background in Hills. They are educated, mostly working either in Schools or Office. But most of them are working in a temporary basis and in so called ad-hoc basis under Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) and they are not State Government employees on regular basis. So, these group of people whose family income is between five to ten thousand a month, said that they like political power and interested in Women Empowerment and the social, political, economic development of Darjeeling Hills. Those who earn more than twenty thousand and above a month, are mostly Outsiders or who have migrated to hills for business purpose, government service from other states or from plains of West Bengal are businessmen, doctors, professors, civil servants, bankers etc. are not interested in commenting on political development and the participation of women in Politics.

**Table 6.**

**Various Categories and their attitude towards women's participation  
in politics: Female Respondents**

Categories	Low	Medium	High	No. of Women
General	✓			46
Schedule Tribe			✓	36
Schedule Caste		✓		05
Other Backward Class		✓		14
Total No.				101

From the Tables 6, categories like, General, Schedule Tribe, Schedule Caste, Other Backward Class were surveyed and compared, the attitude of both male, female regarding women's participation in political field,

Surprisingly out of 101 female respondents who were interviewed through questionnaire, 36 tribal women of all the three subdivisions of Darjeeling district said that they like to have political power for the development of the country, Hills of Darjeeling. Women from backward classes seemed to be more interested in retaining political power as compared to higher Castes Women.

**Table 7.**

**Various Categories and their attitude towards women's participation  
in politics: Male Respondents**

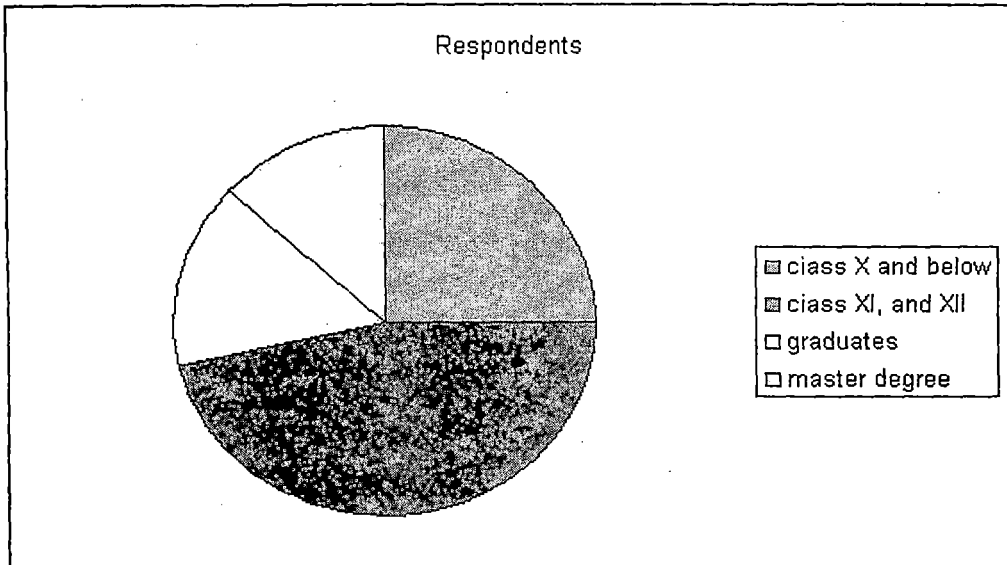
Categories	Low	Medium	High	No. of Men
General	✓			40
Schedule Tribe		✓		47
Schedule Caste		✓		08
Other Backward Class		✓		24
Total No.				99

Like, female respondents from backward classes, male respondents from the same category seem to be more interested in giving political power to women as compared to Higher Castes Men.

**Table 8.**

**Education and their attitude towards women's participation in politics: Male:Female Respondents**

Qualification	Low	Medium	High	Male	Female	M/F Total
Class (Up to Class X)		✓		25	30	55
Class XI, XII			✓	50	52	102
Graduate Degree			✓	14	20	34
Post Graduate			✓	09	20	29
Total				98	122	220



In course of field work, it was found that out of total 220 persons, who were interviewed and asked open ended questions to the various categories of hill people like, students, teachers, petty businessmen/businesswomen, government servants, housewives, retired personals, the students of class XI, and XII, showed more interest in giving house hold decision making power and maintaining family budget to mother of the house.

**Table 9.**

**Various occupations and its attitude towards women's participation in politics: Female Respondents**

Occupations	Low	Medium	High	No. of Women	Percent
Student		✓		63	71.5
Teacher			✓	15	17
Business	✓			02	2.2
Housewives	✓			06	6.8
Retired	✓			02	2.2
Total				88	100

In Table 9, except from people those who are from education field (Teacher, Student) showed more interest and believed in women empowerment. Out of 100 percent, more than 70 percent of women associated with education department of Hills, were found to be

interested in politics, empowering women on various social, political and economical areas of their society.

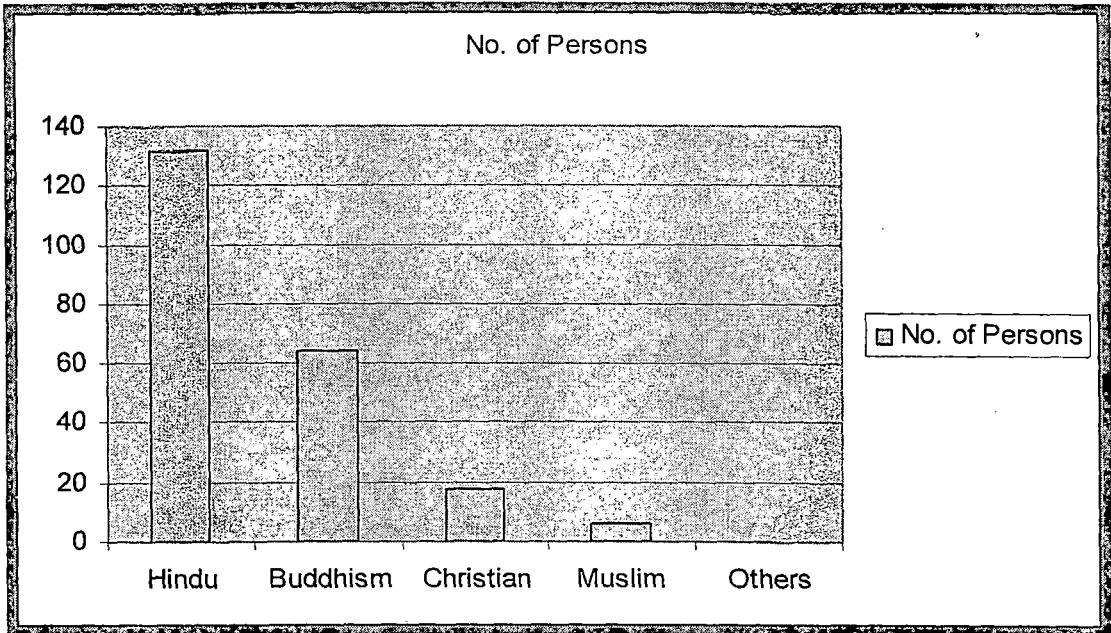
**Table10.**

**Various occupations and its attitude towards women's participation in politics: Male Respondents**

Occupations	Low	Medium	High	No. of Men	Percent
Student		✓		80	60.6
Teacher			✓	30	22.7
Business		✓		12	9
Govt. Employees		✓		07	5.3
Unemployed		✓		01	0.7
Retired		✓		02	1.5
Total				132	100

In table 10, as compared to women from various fields of work, men seemed to be more interested in political power, and the development of women and their participation in politics. Like, women from education department, men from the same are highly interested in women in politics as compare to men having other occupations.

**Table 11**

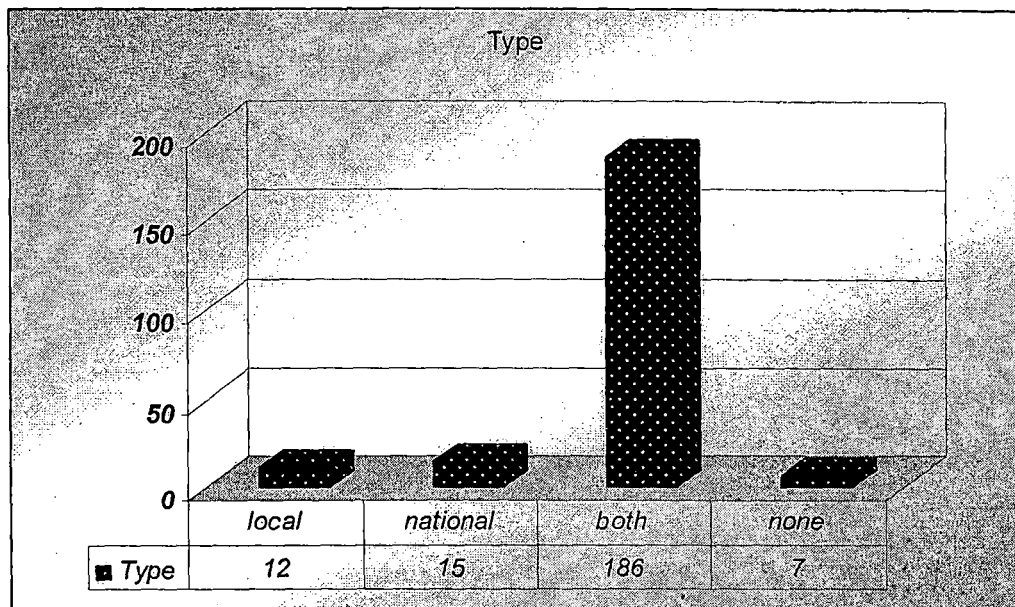


The majority of population in Darjeeling Hills are Nepali hindus, Marwaris, who are mostly into Garment Business and Gold Smiths are migrated from Rajasthan, Beharis and Upians are from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, they are mostly Grossers, Hawkers, owns Ration Shops, Vegetable, Fruit Vendors, owns Sweet Parlors etc. Native tribe like, Lepchas are either Buddhist or Christians, the small portion of Muslim who are mostly Tailors, Butchers were migrated from neighborhood state like, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and from the plain areas of West Bengal. Others are Punjabis, are into Hotel Business are Hindus, Chinese either Beauticians and Cobblers are Christians or Buddhists have migrated and settled mostly in Darjeeling Sadar, kalimpong subdivision of Darjeeling district.

Three subdivisions of hill areas of Darjeeling district represents significant place for various linguistic, religious, ethnic, or cultural groups of people from various part of the country and the political ideologies among the citizen of this region are carried mostly by small regional parties like, GNLF, GJMM, Gorkha League, Pranta Parisad etc.

**Table 12.**

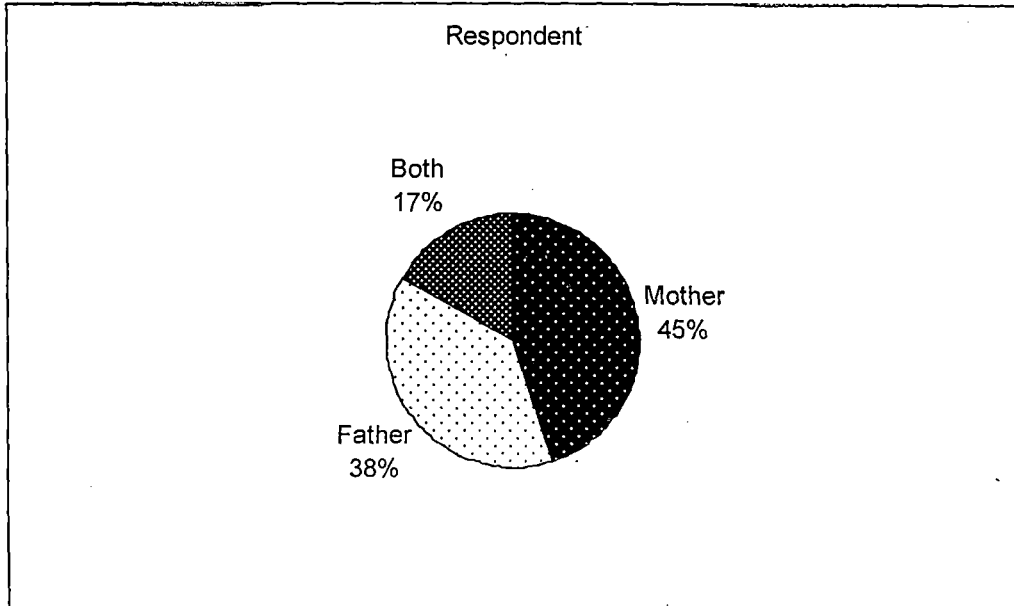
**Data for News read and watched**



Out of 220 men and women of Darjeeling hills who I surveyed only 7 people said they do not like to read neither watch news in television.

Table 13.

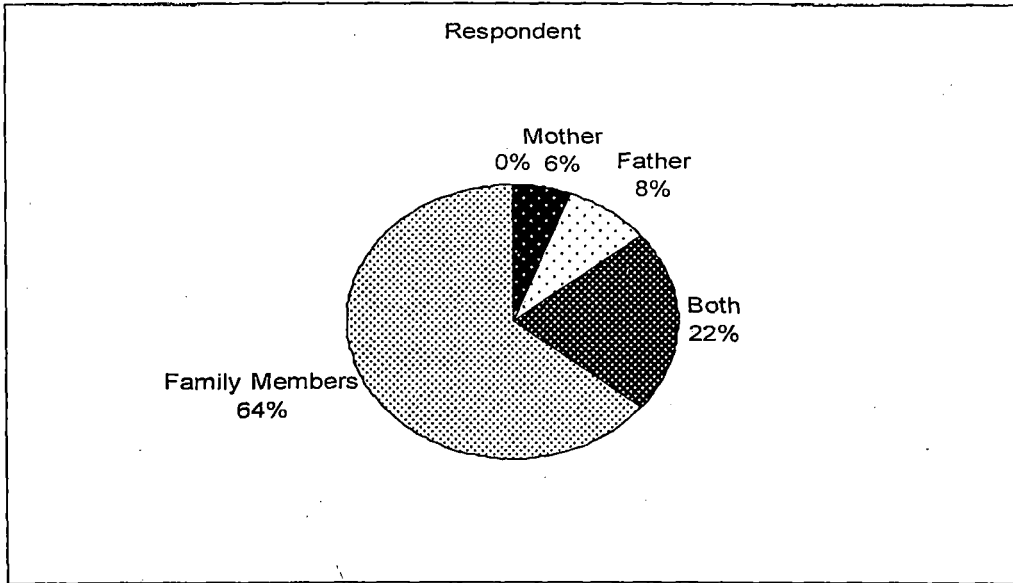
**Data for Family Budget**



Almost 50% people in Darjeeling hills said, women runs the family budget. 17% of hill people prefer family budget should be run by both mother and the father and 37% said they prefer father to run the house & family budget.

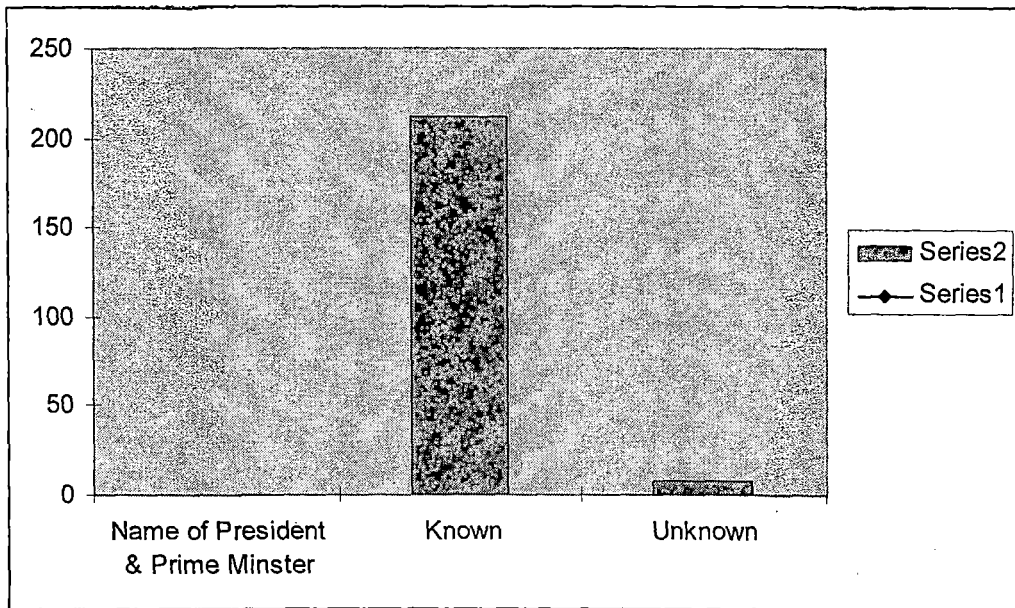
Table 14.

**Data for family related decision**



64% people in hills said family related decision should be take by all the family members which proves that, in hills people are liberal in their nature and there is less sign of patriarchy in their society.

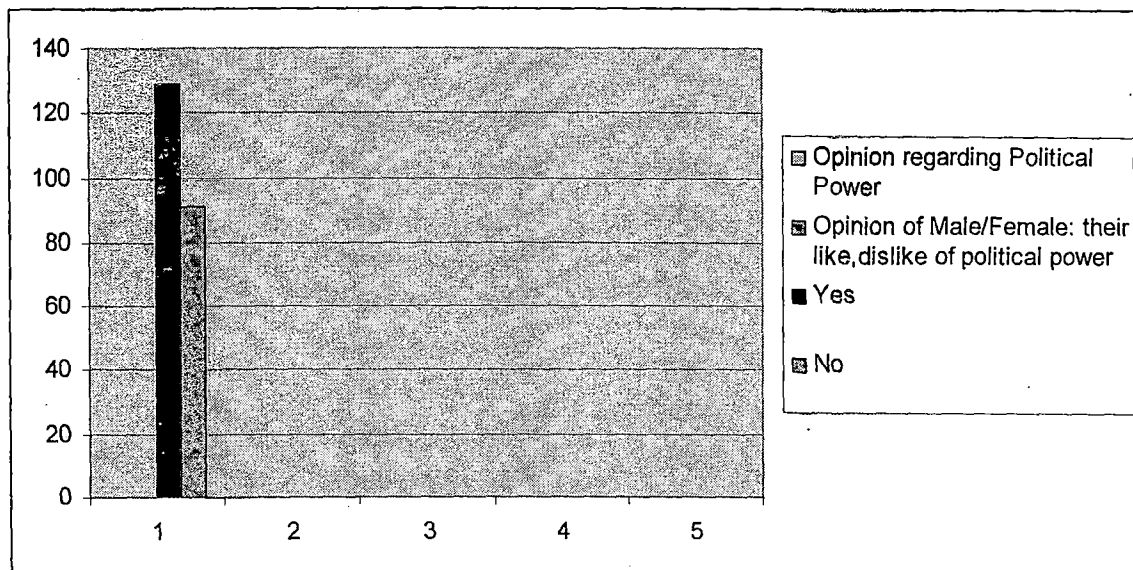
**Table 15.**



Out of 220 male, female respondents only eight said, they do not have any idea about the name of India's president and prime minister.

Table 16.

**Data for opinion regarding political power**



58 % of people in hills prefer political power whereas 41% disagree. If they are given political power, most of them would like to utilize it for the development in Darjeeling Hills for example, roads, water, health, poverty, education, sanitation, and they would also like to resolve the unemployment crisis.

**Census of India 2001**  
**Final Population Totals, West Bengal**  
**Table - 1**

Population, Decadal Growth Rate, Density and General Sex Ratio by  
Residence and Sex, India / West Bengal / District / Sub District, 1991-2001

T	R	Area in Km <sup>2</sup>	Population						Decadal Growth Rate 1991-2001	Density 2001 (Persons per km <sup>2</sup> )	Sex Ratio of Females per 1000 Males		
			1991 \$			2001					1991	2001	
			Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female					
U	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
		India											
T		3065027.00	838583988	435216358	403367630	1028610328	532156772	496453556	22.66	336	927	933	
R		2910161.61	622812376	321279405	301532971	742490639	381602674	360887965	19.22	255	939	946	
U		64026.39	215771612	113936953	101834659	286119689	150554098	135565591	32.60	4469	894	900	
		West Bengal											
T		88752.00	68077965	35510633	32567332	80176197	41465985	38710212	17.77	903	917	934	
R		85427.26	49370364	25442210	23928154	57748946	29616009	28132937	16.97	676	940	950	
U		3324.74	18707601	10068423	8639178	22427251	11849976	10577275	19.88	6746	858	893	
		Darjeeling District											
T		3149.00	1299919	679323	620596	1609172	830644	778528	23.79	511	914	937	
R		3073.77	903859	467324	436535	1088740 151	556633	532107	20.45	354	934	956	
U		75.23	396060	211899	184061	520432	274011	246421	31.40	6918	868	899	

**Table 2**  
**Kalimpong I and II**  
**Town**

Kpg I	Area in Km <sup>2</sup>	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Decadal Growth Rate 1991-2001	Density 2001 (Persons per km <sup>2</sup> )	Sex Ratio No.of Females per 1000 Males 1991	Sex Ratio No.of Females per 1000 Males 2001
Town	360.46	53641	27445	26196	67680	34382	33298	26.17	188	954	968
Kpg II											
Town	241.26	51411	26905	24506	60263	31309	28954	17.22	250	911	925

**Table 3**  
**Kurseong**  
**Town/ Rural**

Area in Km <sup>2</sup>	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Decadal Growth Rate 1991-2001	Density 2001 (Persons per km <sup>2</sup> )	Sex Ratio No.of Females per 1000 Males 1991	Sex Ratio No.of Females per 1000 Males 2001
Town 372.30	80489	41372	39117	85867	43330	42537	6.68	231	945	982
Rural 354.31	66917	34344	32573	72204	36425	35779	7.90	204	948	982

**Table 4**

**URBAN UNITS**

	Area in Km <sup>2</sup>	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Decadal Growth Rate 1991-2001	Density 2001 (Persons per km <sup>2</sup> )	Sex Ratio No.of Females per 1000 Males 1991	Sex Ratio No.of Females per 1000 Males 2001
1.	2.20	-	-	-	1633	-	-	-	742	-	1026
2.	10.57	73062	37763	35299	107197	55963	51234	46.72	10142	935	915
3.	8.68	38832	19973	18859	42998	22296	20702	10.73	4954	944	929
4.	6.50	7022	3585	3437	9141	4619	4522	30.18	1406	959	979
5.	5.05	26758	13989	12769	40019	20410	19609	49.56	7925	913	961
6.	17.99	13572	7028	6544	13663	6905	6758	0.67	759	931	979
7.	1.63	12064	6432	5632	15774	8236	7538	30.75	9677	876	915
8.	2.51	4703	2619	2084	5405	2881	2524	14.93	2153	796	876
9.	20.10	216950	118938	98012	284602	151895	132707	31.18	14159	824	874

- 1. Pattabong Tea Garden (CT)**
- 2. Darjeeling (M)**
- 3. Kalimpong (M)**
- 4. Mirik (NA)**
- 5. Kurseong (M)**
- 6. Cart road (CT)**
- 7. Upper Bagdorra (CT)**
- 8. Bairatsal (CT)**
- 9. Siliguri (Municipal Corporation)**

CT – Census Town

M – Municipality

NA – Notified Area

CT – Census Town

In census it is very important to have clear demarcation of administrative boundaries so that the data can be tabulated and presented in line with existing administrative units. It is also crucial to have detailed segregation of rural and urban units down to the lowest level. Census data is universally presented in separate rural urban frames for comparisons as well as gauging development patterns.

In West Bengal rural units comprise of villages as the lowest unit which are coming under a Community Development Block or, simply, Block. Total number of Blocks in a district make up the total rural frame of the district. There are 341 Blocks in W. Bengal under the rural frame as in Census of India, 2001. The largest number of Blocks are in Medinipur district with 54 while Dakshin Dinajpur has the lowest number of 7 Blocks. The urban units consist of statutory towns like Municipal Corporations, Municipalities, Notified Areas and Cantonment Boards. In West Bengal there are 6 Municipal Corporations, 113 Municipalities, 3 Notified Areas and 1 Cantonment Board. Apart from statutory towns there are also non statutory urban areas which are basically census creations according to certain geographic and economic parameters. Such urban areas are called Census Towns (CT). As per the urban frame of West Bengal for 2001 there are 252 Census Towns with highest number of 55 in Bardhaman district. There is another urban concept in Indian census called an urban Outgrowth (OG) which is basically extension of the urban facilities beyond the statutory limits of a Municipal Corporation or Municipality. In West Bengal there are 30 such urban outgrowths attached to equal number of statutory towns with the highest, 9, in Nadia district. Finally the urban frame in Indian census also has the concept of Urban Agglomeration (UA) which is a continuous and unbroken urban spread cutting across municipal or other urban limits and can be a combination of more than one statutory towns / census towns / outgrowths. There are 21 Urban Agglomerations in West Bengal with the highest number of 5 again in

Nadia district. But it is the biggest and largest Kolkata UA that cuts across the district boundaries of North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Haora, Hugli and South 24 Parganas while other UAs are restricted to within the district boundaries.

### **Major Findings of the Study**

From Census 2001, there is a small gap between male and female education population in Darjeeling. In urban Units of Darjeeling it was 48929 male, and 41080 female. The ratio between male and female literates in Darjeeling in 2001 was 54.36 % to 45.63 respectively. In kalimpong urban units the literacy ratio of male and female was 55.12 and 44.87%. In Kurseong urban unit it was 53.31 and 46.68 respectively.

In Siliguri Municipal Corporation area which was noted 56.38 % to 43.61% in the same year. As in case of India, the ratio of male and female literacy rate in urban areas was found 56.82% and 43.17% respectively. So, when it comes to education of men and women in India, the state of West Bengal and Darjeeling Hills women are still backward and lagging behind as compare to male population of the country.

Through the Census of india, 1999, 2001 it was found that, out of 537 Health Centers of rural West Bengal, Darjeeling Sadar have 24, Darjeeling Pulbazar 1, kalimpong-I 1, kalimpong-II 4, Mirik- 2, Kurseong- 2 and out of 708 villages in 2001, Only 385 have paved

roads. 11 such villages in Darjeeling hills enjoy small kind of profit because they are connected to rail lines. In case of Kurseong 2 villages out of 71 have their rail connectivity within their villages. Kalimpong does not have any such facilities.

When it comes to Bus connectivity in rural hills, again out of 708 villages, 55 of Darjeeling I are in 10 kms of distance from the nearest Bus Stand, 5 villages out of 55 are in the same distance of rural Kalimpong II. Out of 71, 9 villages in Kurseong have their nearest 10kms connectivity to bus stand. In Mirik 1 out of 21 villages have its connectivity to bus stand which is 10kms in distance and in Kalimpong I, 51 village people have to face chronic transport problems for attending schools, college, health centers and for other purposes.

The main problem of Hills, drinking water, in 2001, it has been recorded 249 taps, 260 tube wells, and 333 wells, other sources were recorded 54 in 1991 and 18 in 2001 in Darjeeling I. Kurseong have 54 taps, 4 tube wells, 15 wells, and other sources of water were found. In Kalimpong I, and II have 36 taps, and 29 taps respectively and not a single tube wells, wells and other sources of water was found in both this regions.

There are 472 primary schools, 153 middle schools 69 secondary schools and 5 colleges in Darjeeling I. 31 primary schools, 81 middle schools 5 secondary schools and 1 college in Kalimpong I. 53 primary schools, 13 middle schools 7 secondary schools and 1 college in Kurseong as per Census 2001. The numbers of schools, colleges have

substantively increased in Darjeeling. Only in the field of education Darjeeling Hills shows positive progress.

When it comes to hotel business, like education the number of hotels have increased from 785 in 1991 to 1271 in 2001 but with the closing of Tea gardens in this region the number of factory, workshop and work shed have decreased from 3950 in 1991 to 2382 in 2001 in urban Darjeeling and from 1735 in 1991 to 1255 in 2001 in rural Darjeeling causing huge number of unemployment in this region.

Female illiterate percentage is 58.5% and male was 41.5 in Darjeeling in 2001, in municipal area of Darjeeling out of 33214 labours the male labour percentage was 75.6 and the female labour percentage was comparatively low and which is 24.3% but when it comes to male and women cultivator and men, women agriculture labour they share 50 to 49% and 60 to 40 percent respectively.

From the various data taken from census 2001, it is clear that when it comes to physical labour women in hills beside rearing children, cooking, doing other household work, they work equally and in almost 50:40 ratios with men of this region.

So, as compare to women of plain areas the burden of hill women is more. Their social status may be high due to the fact of the nature of existing matriarchal society among Nepalese but when it comes to enjoying education right, economic and political rights women are still deprived in this region. The women of this region are

so much into social obligations both inside and outside the family they themselves do not know anything about the rights which has been given to them by the Constitution of india. So far, only two women have become the MLAs(Member of Legislative Assembly) from kalimpong and kurseong. Girl child may be treated equally and the sign of dowry, killing of girl children are absent in Neplese community but women in Darjeeling Hills however work harder than men yet! They barely enjoy political and to some extent economic power of their society. Its not that men are suppressing them from enjoying their power and rights which has been given to them but women herself have to come out of her shell and redefine her existence not only in social aspect but also in economic, and political level of their society and her country ultimately.

**Table 1.**

**Sex ratios by district per 1000 males**

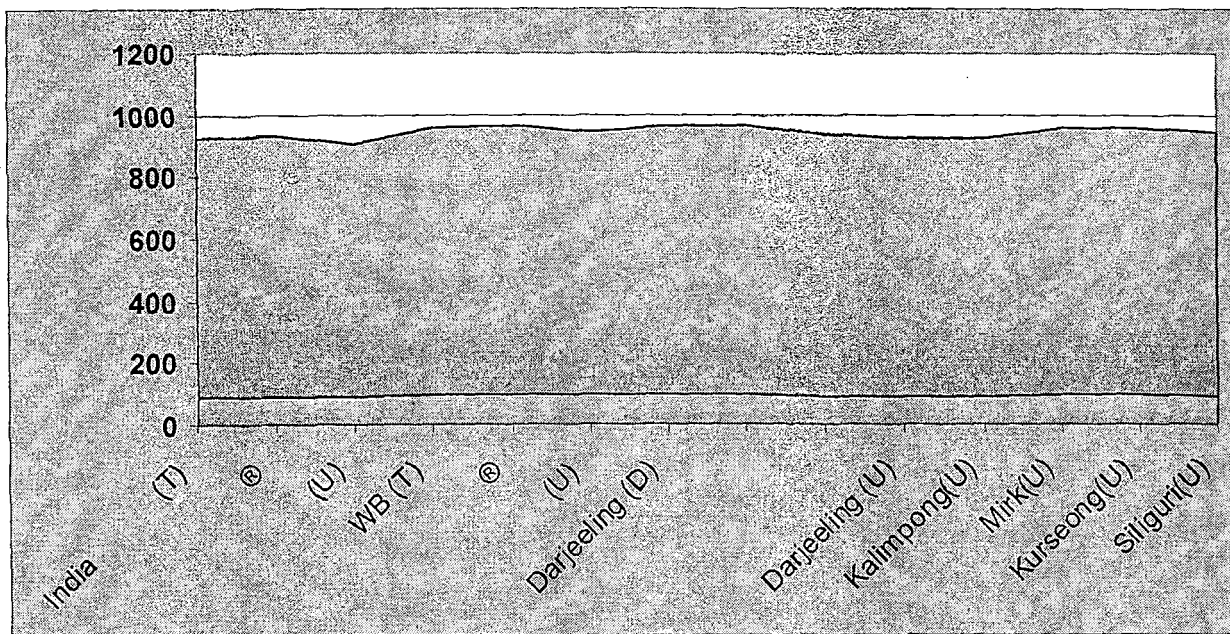
	1991	2001	%
Darjeeling	914	943	3.2
Jalpaiguri	927	941	1.5
Cooch behar	935	949	1.5
Uttar Dinajpur	921	937	1.7
Dakshin Dinajpur	944	950	0.6

<b>Malda</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>948</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Murshidabad</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Birbhum</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>0.3</b>
<b>Bardhaman</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Nadia</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Kolkata</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>828</b>	<b>3.6</b>
<b>North 24 Parganas</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>2.2</b>
<b>Hoogli</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>Bankura</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Purulia</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Medinapur</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>1.2</b>
<b>Howra</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>2.8</b>
<b>South 24 parganas</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>West Bengal</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>India</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>0.6</b>

Census, 2001

# Child Sex ratio (% of Females as per 1000 Males)

## 2001 Census



of Darjeeling Hills.

Table 2.

**Life Expectancy at birth (estimated at 2001)**

**Source: Guha Roy (2003)**

Districts	Female	Male
Darjeeing	71	67
Jalpaiguri	63	61
Kooch Behar	57	53
Dinajpur	63	61
Malda	55	54
Murshidabad	60	58
Birbhum	58	56
Burdawan	71	68
Nadia	65	63
Kolkata	75	74
North 24 Pargana	71	66
Hoogli	73	69
Bankura	68	62
Purulia	63	60
Medinapur	67	65
Howarah	73	70
South Pargana	70	65

West Bengal- 69/65(F/M)

India- 65/64(F/M)

**Table 3.**

**WOMEN MLAs FROM WEST BENGAL, 1971-96**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>TOTAL NO. OF SEATS</b>	<b>TOTAL NO. OF WOMEN MLAs</b>	<b>% of women MLAs in state legislative assembly</b>
<b>1971</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2.14</b>
<b>1973</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1.74</b>
<b>1977</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.36</b>
<b>1982</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2.38</b>
<b>1987</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4.08</b>
<b>1991</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7.82</b>
<b>1996</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7.40</b>

**SOURCE: COMPILED FROM THE DATA AVAILABLE WITH THE WEST BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

Table 4.

**WOMEN MINISTERS IN WEST BENGAL  
GOVERNMENT**

YEAR	CABINET MINISTER	MINISTER OF STATE	DEPUTY MINISTER	TOTAL NO. OF WOMEN	TOTAL NO. OF MINISTERS	% OF WOMEN MINISTERS IN THE STATE GOVT.
1952	1	-	1	2	30	6.66
1957	-	1	1	2	30	6.66
1962	2	-	3	5	37	13.51
1967	-	-	-	-	19	0
1967	-	-	-	-	3	0
1968	-	-	-	-	17	0
1969	1	1	-	2	31	6.45
1971	-	-	-	-	26	0
1972	-	-	1	1	28	3.57
1977	-	1	-	1	30	3.33
1982	-	2	-	2	45	4.44
1987	1	-	-	1	32	3.12
1991	1	3	-	4	44	9.09
1996	1	3	-	4	48	8.33

SOURCE: COMPILED FROM THE DATA PROVIDED BY THE GOVT. OF WEST BENGAL.