CHAPTER-III

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF DARJEELING DISTRICT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the various socio-economic and socio-demographic determinants which influences the pattern of participation in household decision-making in Darjeeling district. The analysis helps to illuminate the circumstances that encourage discriminating practices against female members within the household. Demographic and Socio-economic profile of Darjeeling district measures indirectly the status of men and women. Demographic attributes such as birth rate, infant mortality rate, life expectancy, and other demographic variables are all related to gender inequality. Further, the socio-economic characteristics also measure the social and economic status of women.

Studies have shown that women's status and the variables considered in this chapter are closely related. The status of women is a multidimensional concept and therefore a difficult concept to quantify. Previous studies have typically measured married women's autonomy using education, employment status, and age differences between spouses as proxies (Rammohan and Johar, 2009).

Women's participation in the labor force reduces the established gender inequalities. Their participation in agricultural production reduces poverty and enhances economic growth. General models of gender inequality tend to emphasize the importance of women's economic roles in determining their position in other spheres, from household bargaining to representation in state governance. Empirical research has found that women's labor force participation is associated with less bias against girls in child mortality and better health for girls and with more say in some household decision-making. (Sundaram and Vanneman, 2008). *It has by now been established through various studies in different parts of the world that literacy has beneficial effects for women in all crucial areas of life.*

Household decision-making being one of the aspects of women's status is related to many factors. Further, the socio-economic status of women has a significant bearing for both the quality of women population and ability to make decisions within the household. Nadel (1969) asserts that that the socio-economic status of women generally refers to the

life style that a woman is entitled to lead within the family or society. The economic status of women and the system of social organization in it can be understood by considering the nature and characteristics of economic activities, precisely for women and their occupational pattern in different regions of the economy. There is a positive correlation between an individual's participation in household decision-making process and his/her economic contribution to household income in addition to 'pure gender bias'. In other words, a person makes various household decisions not only because the person is a male or female, but because he/she contributes more to the household income. That is, if a person contributes more household income he/ she participates more in household decision-making irrespective of his/her gender.

Demographic attributes such as birth rate, death rate, infant mortality rate and life expectancy at birth indicate both the physical quality of human population and the socio-economic development of any region. These attributes are also important to understand the physical well-being of women population of a region. Further, an understanding of the demographic profile of women in the region is essential to understand the relationship between women empowerment and the participation in the household decision-making. Sex-role norms impact on almost all aspects of family consumption behavior including the buying process tasks, finance handling, purchase behavior, brand specification, store choice, and types of products purchased. The examination of sex roles and their relationship to family purchase behavior of complete families have received relatively little emphasis in consumer-behavior issues. The sex-roles influences the factors which influences household decision-making (Buss and Schaninger, 1983). Further, we find that as female contribution rate to household income increases, their participation in household decision making also increases almost proportionately (Alam,1998). Paid work has attained a prominent position among a handful of policy measures advocated for enhancing women's wellbeing in India and the Asian countries in general – is partly related to, among other things, their lack of direct access to an independent income and decision-making freedom. It has been therefore argued, that women's participation in paid work, by offering them access to an independent income and bestowing them some decision-making, would enhance their well-being. The work participation rate, the employment indicators like female work participation rate and proportion of female main and marginal workers and literacy rate of state/ district and chosen blocks and the prevalent gender disparity in different economic pursuits definitely reveal the economic

status of women. In this chapter, the attempt has been made to study the demographic and socio-economic profile of the Darjeeling district in terms of indicators discussed above.

Darjeeling district is the northernmost district of West Bengal. It is located in the lap of the Himalayas. For administrative and revenue purposes, the district has four sub-divisions namely, Darjeeling Sadar, Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri. Further, the district has 12 development blocks. Darjeeling Himalaya forms a part of eastern Himalayan ranges and is bounded by Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan on the north, west and east respectively. The district occupies a geographical area of 3149sq.Km. In 2001 census, Darjeeling had a population of 1,609,172 of which males were 83,0644 and remaining 77,8,528 were females. The initial provisional data released by Census of India 2011, shows that density of Darjeeling district for 2011 is 586 people per sq.km. The sex ratio in Darjeeling is 937 females per thousand males. Rural population of Darjeeling according to Census 2011 is 11, 23,859. Darjeeling's urban population according to Census 2011 is 7, 18,175. The total population living in rural area is 1,118,860 of which males and females are 566,965 and 551,895 respectively. As per 2011 census, 60.58 percent population of Darjeeling district lives in rural areas of villages. Out of the total Darjeeling population for 2011census, 39.42 percent lives in urban regions of district. In total 727,963 people lives in urban areas of which males are 370,294 and females 357,669. In 2011 census, the male and female literacy rate in Darjeeling was 80.05 percent and 62.94 percent respectively. Total workers were 5, 69,442 and non- workers were 10, 39,730 (Census of West Bengal, 2001). The district has a sizeable SC and ST population and the present study attempts to explore the differential household decision-making status of men and women of such households.

3.2: Physical, Demographic and Socio-economic profile of the surveyed villages

Darjeeling district is bounded by Nepal in the West. In the south, the district is bounded by Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal. In the north are the Himalayas. Eastern part of Darjeeling is bordered by Bhutan. The study was based on the primary and secondary data for the chosen villages in the district of Darjeeling, which represents substantial proportion of SC and ST population.

Darjeeling district has thirteen blocks. Thus, in the first stage two blocks –namely, Phansidewa and Mirik have been selected purposively on the basis of high female work participation rate. In the second stage, two villages have been selected from each block

purposively based on the same criteria i.e., high female work participation rate. Each list was collected from farm households and non-farm households from concerned Block Office. Then, 30 sample households were selected at random from each group of farm and non-farm households.

Four villages namely, Chikenmati, Bandiachaat, Panthabari and Lohaghar of Phansidewa and Mirik blocks of the district were chosen for the study since the female literacy rate were very low with high female work participation rate. The survey was conducted in the months of October, November and December, 2009, and the sampling procedure adopted was a stratified, purposive random sampling. One hundred and twenty households belonging to this district were surveyed. Stratification was necessary to represent the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in the sample villages. The Gram Panchayat members were interviewed for general information about the social and physical infrastructure of these villages. From the sample households surveyed, information regarding their social status, demographic characteristics, living conditions has been collected.

Sufficient knowledge about the villages is necessary to understand the socio-economic perspective and demographic of the respondents. Knowledge about the infrastructural, geographical and environmental characteristics of these villages would be the backdrop against which the households may be placed and analyzed. Among the four villages surveyed, the Chikenmati village is connected with the Block Head Quarters by the road which is used during all weather, via Bithannagaar police station outpost, which is situated by the side of National High way No. 31. The village is 8 km away from Bidhannagar which is again away from Phansidewa Block Development office. The village is situated in the border of two Gram Panchayats-Bidhannagar and Chaater Haat Bosgaon and it belongs to Chaater Haat Bonsgaon Panchayat. As per the jurisdiction list no. of the village is 121.The village is comprised of 600 people belonging to different religion and groups.

The metalled road connects Chikenmati village with Bidhannagar. The village is also surrounded by fair weather roads only. An all weather road actually connect the village with other villages of Chatter Haat Bonsgaon Gram Panchayat via Teesta Barrage road. Although the village is not far away from Bidhannagar, transportation facility is not adequate. During rainy season this facility cannot be availed. As small bridges over the stream on the main road is damaged.

The village is inhabited by the Hindu Rajbhansis, the Santhal Tribal and the Muslims. The study has considered only the two communities-Rajbansis and Santhals. The SC and ST communities inhabit the villages. The origin of Rajbansis has been traced and history reveals that they have migrated from Bangladesh and Santhals from Bihar and Chhotanagpur. The village has been supplied with electricity connection. There is only one primary school in the village. The nearest high school is at Bdthannagar. The students of this high school face lot of difficulties during rainy season. There are no Post office, Bank and Health Centres within the village. The nearest and only Primary Health Centre is at Bidhannagar. Sanitation is not adequate, but the drinking water is supplied through tube wells which are sufficient in number.

Bandiachaat is the second village which was surveyed. This village is under the Gangaram Tea Estate. Bandiachaat is extended to Dulaarchaat village. The actual demarcation of the village reveals more than 30 households. The Bandiachaat village is connected with the block Head Quarters by the road which is used during all weather, which also connects the village to Siliguri city. The village is inhabited mostly by the Oroan, Munda and Santhal Tribal, (Christians) and a few Bengali community. The village has been supplied with electricity connection. There is one primary school. There is no Post office, but SBI Bank has been established. The nearest and only Primary Health Centre is at Bidhannagar. The tea garden supplies drinking water and each household has a tube well.

Loha Ghar (also known as Girmit commonly) which comprises of 375 households is under the Mirik Block. It is under Loha Gar Forest area. Loha Gar is a forest village and is connected to Siliguri city by the metalled road. The distance from the state highway is around 2 km.

Naya Busty was the last village surveyed. It is under Panthabari Forest. Naya Busty is also a forest village and comprises of 154 households. This village has been newly established in little out of the Pankhabari forest after the establishment of Gorkha Autonomous Territory. Mostly Nepali community dominates the village. It is connected to the main highway from Siliguri to Panitanki. It is 5 km from the North Bengal University Campus. There was no electricity connection. It did not have primary school, or post office, bank and health centre. In comparison with the broad patterns of literacy and education in North Bengal and specifically the Darjeeling district, the level of female literacy was by far the lowest among these chosen villages. The population of the

state,/district, block and villages show whether the population is increasing or decreasing or has stabilized. Table 3.1 depicts distribution of percentage population.

3.3: Distribution of population

Table-3.1: Distribution of population by sex in West Bengal, Darjeeling, Phansidewa and Mirik blocks and villages (in percent)

	2001					2011			
State / District / Blocks	**No.Hhs**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Sex Ratio**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Sex Ratio**
West Bengal	15872083	51.72	48.28	100	933.54	51.28	48.72	100	949.96
Darjeeling	318737	51.61	48.38	100	937.25	50.75	49.25	100	970.45
Mirik	8804	49.98	50.02	100	1000.6	50.45	49.55	100	982.30
Lohaghar Forest	4	85.71	14.29	100	166.67	52.78	47.22	100	894.74
Panthabari Forest	154	48.38	51.62	100	1067.00	49.64	50.36	100	1014.49
Phansidewa	32443	51.28	48.72	100	950.17	50.71	49.29	100	971.89
Bandiachaat	24	51.61	48.39	100	937.50	46.93	53.07	100	1130.82
Chikenmati	121	52.44	47.56	100	906.98	51.69	48.31	100	934.48

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001, 2011

It has been observed from the Table- 3.1 that the male population is higher than the female population in 2001. The percentage of male population in Bandiachaat is equal to district average but marginally lower than the state average. The percentage of male population in Chikenmati is higher than both the district and state average. The percentage of female population in Bandiachaat is close to district and state average. The percentage of female population in Chikenmati is lower than the district and state average. In 2011, the percentage of male population in Bandiachaat and Chikenmati has decreased, while the percentage of female population in Bandiachaat and Chikenmati has increased. The percentage of male population has decreased during 2001-2011 while the percentage of female population has increased during 2001-2011. The percentage of female population is closer to district and state average in Bandiachaat and Chikenmati villages. The percentage share of population is less by 4.35 percent point for males against 4.35 percent more for females from the state average during 2011.

3.4: Sex Ratio

The ratio which is defined as number of females per thousand males, as defined by the state of India is important in population study in many ways. Sex ratio has three basic components: sex ratio at birth, sex ratio at death, and sex selective migration. Sex ratio reveals the socio-economic condition of the population in an area. As far as socio-economic indicator is concerned, it has a profound impact on demographic structure of any region such as growth of population, working force and employment pattern. Further, an imbalance in sex ratio may lead to the emergence of many evils in the society. Moreover, differentials in sex ratios are connected to variations in well-being are vitally related to biological and social reproduction and also economic production (Townsed, 1987). It is in this respect that an analysis of the pattern of sex ratio in West Bengal in the light of national average is analysed to reveal the status of women population in the region.

Table-3.2: Percentage of female population and sex ratio

Year	West Bengal	India	West Bengal	India
1951	46.4	48.48	946	946
1961	46.7	48.52	941	941
1971	47.1	48.17	930	930
1981	47.7	48.27	934	934
1991	47.8	48.25	926	926
2001	48.3	48.26	933	933
2011	48.71	48.54	950	943

Source: Census of India, West Bengal 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2001.

The data relating to the trend in sex ratio from Table 3.11, for West Bengal during 1951-2001 shows that it has always been lower than the national average. The prevalence of higher rate of mortality among females than that of males and the immigration of males in excess of females from outside the state may be the reasons behind the shortage of the females throughout the period 1951-2011.

3. 5: Birth Rate, Death Rate and Infant Mortality Rate

Fertility which is expressed in different ways is one of the important measures of natural increase of population in any region. It may be expressed in terms of general fertility rate, age-specific fertility rate, marital fertility rate and crude birth rate. The fertility rate is also considered as an important indicator of physical well-being of women population. It is closely associated with the health conditions of child bearing women, and

educational advancement, economic condition and socio-cultural background of the population of a region.

Like fertility, mortality is another important determinant of natural increase of population of any region. It has also been considered as an indicator of physical well–being of the population. As fertility rate is very closely associated with the mortality rate, the physical well-being of the women particularly of the child bearing age is also indicated by the mortality pattern of population of any area. However, the influence of other associated socio-economic factors in this regard cannot be overlooked. In similar way, the quality of human population and health status of women population can be judged by looking into the infant mortality pattern. It is because the fertility rate of any population is directly related to the infant mortality pattern. The data obtained from Sample Registration Bulletin published by the Registrar General of India (Table-3.2) depicts some features about the trend in birth and death rates, and infant mortality rate in the state.

Data presented in the Table 3.2 indicate that the birth rate of West Bengal is lesser than all India average during the period 2005-2009, but there has been a gradual decline of birth rate from 2005 to 2009. According to SRS Bulletin, 2009, the birth rate of West Bengal as 17.2 is higher than the birth rate of many states.

Not only that the birth rate is high, it has remained almost stable at a high level during the five years period from 2005 to 2009. In five years or since 2005 onwards, there has not been significant decline. For example, it fell from 18.8 in (2005) to 17.2 in 2009. There is a fall in the birth rate during these periods. High birth rate in any region is a typical feature of under development. There are many economic and non-economic factors accounting for this high birth rate. But among them, the important ones are poverty, marriage at early age, illiteracy and a large ignorance of family planning.

Table-3.3: Birth Rate, Death Rate and Infant Mortality Rate of India and West Bengal

	Birth Rate		Death Rate		Infant Mortality Rate	
Year	**West Bengal**	**India**	**West Bengal**	**India**	**West Bengal**	**India**
2005	18.8	23.8	6.4	7.6	38	58
2006	18.4	23.5	6.2	7.5	38	57
2007	17.9	23.1	6.3	7.4	37	55
2008	17.5	22.8	6.2	7.4	35	53
2009	17.2	22.5	6.2	7.3	33	50

Source: Sample Registration Bulletin, R.G.I., New Delhi, Demographics of India

The birth rate and death rate has registered a decline that also resulted in the natural growth rate of population in West Bengal as well as in India during 2005 -2009. But, the birth rate exceeded the death rate in the whole period.

The infant mortality rate which is an index of health status of women has been declining in West Bengal and in India during the period 2005 to 2009. But, the rate of decline of IMR in West Bengal is slower than the national level during this period. During 2005-2009, the IMR in West Bengal fell from 38 to 33 per mil. There is thus a fall of only 5 per mil as against 8 per mil at all India level. However, the IMR has remained lower than the national average during the period 2005 to 2009 indicating high health status of women population of West Bengal than the national level.

3.6: Total Work Participation and Economic Activity

Table-3.4: Male-Female work participation rate in West Bengal, Darjeeling district, selected blocks and villages, 2001 and 2011 (percentages)

	2001		2011	
State/District/Blocks/Villages	Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal	22,388,044(54)	7,093,646(18)	26,716,047(57)	8,040,308(18)
Darjeeling (T)	402,970(49)	166,472(21)	479,586(57)	204,140(22)
Darjeeling (R)	266,736(48)	136,503(26)	285,007(50)	143,571(26)
Darjeeling (U)	136,234(50)	29,969(12)	194,579(53)	60,569(17)
Mirik(T)	9,131(43)	9,131(33)	10,453(45)	6,900(30)
Mirik(R)	9,131(43)	6,962(33)	10,453(45)	6,900(30)
Lohaghar Forest	11(92)	0(0)	47(62)	6(9)
Panthabari Forest	178(44)	69(16)	156(57)	9(3)
Phansidewa	43,483(49)	18,725(22)	52,599(51)	23,962(24)
Bandiachaat	32(50)	19(32)	206(46)	211(41)
Chikenmati	184(48)	54(15)	612(48)	252(41)

Source: Census of West Bengal 2001 and 2011

Table 3.2 depicts male-female work participation rate in West Bengal Darjeeling district, and selected blocks and villages under the chosen blocks. The female work participation rate of Darjeeling district as is evident from Table-3.3 is lower than half of the male work participation rate. Similar feature is also observed in case of female work participation rate in West Bengal in 2001.The table also indicates that female work participation rate of total Darjeeling district is greater than the state average. The female work participation rate of Mirik block is still higher than by 12 percent than the average figure of Darjeeling district in 2001. The female work participation rate of Panthabari Forest village is lower than the block and district average.

The female work participation rate of Phansidewa block is higher than the total district and state average. The female work participation rate of Bandiachaat village is higher than the block and district average in 2001, while the female work participation rate of Chikenmati village is lower than the block and district average. Moreover, the female work participation rate of West Bengal state remained same against 1 percent increase in Darjeeling district in2001-2011.Although the female work participation rate of Darjeeling district increased by 1 percent during 2001-2011, the female work participation of Mirik block decreased by 3 percent.

Few reasons maybe ascribed for high work participation rate of females in Darjeeling district during both the period. Darjeeling district has many tea gardens which give work access to women primarily for field activities.

3.7: Male-Female work participation rate of main workers in West Bengal, Darjeeling and chosen blocks and villages

The census of India defined main workers as those who had worked for the major part of the year preceding the date of enumeration, i.e., those who were engaged in any economically productive activity for 183 days (or six months) or more during a year.

Table-3.5: Male-Female work participation rate of main workers in West Bengal, Darjeeling district, chosen blocks and villages (in percent)

	2001			2011		
State/District/Block/Village	Male	Female		Male	Female	
West Bengal(T)	19,494,971(87)	3,528,612(50)		21,678,279(81)	4,008,351(50)	
Darjeeling(T)	359,110(89)	119,741(72)		396,341(83)	136,514(67)	
Darjeeling(R)	229,942(86)	93,481(68)		219,497(77)	89,538(62)	
Darjeeling(U)	129,168(95)	26,260(88)		176,844(91)	46,976(78)	
Mirik(T)	7,245(79)	4,829(69)		7,169(69)	5,054(73)	
Mirik(R)	7,245(79)	4,829(69)		7,169(69)	5,054(73)	
Lohaghar Forest(R)	8(73)	0(0)		46(98)	5(83)	
Panthabari(R)	167(94)	61(88)		5(3)	0(0)	
Phansidewa(T)	38,780(89)	12,910(69)		44,510(85)	14,958(62)	
Phansidewa(R)	38,780(89)	12,910(69)		44,510(85)	14,958(62)	
Bandiachaat(R)	27(84)	11(58)		160(78)	156(74)	
Chikenmati(R)	129(70)	17(31)		551(90)	171(68)	

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

Table-3.3 reveals that the percentage of male main workers decreased, while the female main workers remained the same during the period 2001-2011. But there were huge male –female gap of main workers. It was almost 37 percent in 2001 which had declined by 6 percent in 2011. Area wise, the percentage of female main workers to the total population was higher in rural and urban districts of Darjeeling in comparison to average figure of West Bengal. The percentage of female main workers to the total female workers of Darjeeling district is higher than the state average. The percentage of female main workers to the total female workers of Mirik block was higher than the state average but lower than the district average. The percentage of female main workers to the total female workers population has increased during 2001-2011 period and was higher than the state and district average. This could be due to location of the village near forest where mostly male are engaged in activities. While

Chikenmati village under the Mirik block had the least percentage of female main workers and lower than both the district and state average. In Bandiachaat and Chikenmati villages, the female work participation increased during 2001-2011 period. This could be possible because pineapple orchards and tea gardens have proliferated, demanding more labour in the nearby villages.

3.8. Male-Female work participation rate of marginal workers in West Bengal, Darjeeling and chosen blocks and villages

Table-3.6: Male-Female work participation rate of marginal workers in West Bengal and selected blocks and villages, 2001 and 2011 (in percent)

	2001		2011	
State/District/Block/Village	Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal(T)	19,494,971 (13)	3,528,612 (50)	5,037,768 (19)	4,031,957 (50)
Darjeeling(T)	359,110(11)	119,741(28)	83,245(17)	67,626(33)
Darjeeling(R)	229,942(86)	93,481(68)	65,510(23)	54,033(38)
Darjeeling(U)	129,168(95)	26,260(88)	17,735(9)	13,593(22)
Mirik(T)	7,245(79)	4,829(69)	3,284(31)	1,846(27)
Mirik(R)	7,245(79)	4,829(69)	3,284(31)	1,846(27)
Lohaghar Forest(R)	8(73)	0(0)	1(2)	1(17)
Panthabari Forest(R)	167(94)	61(88)	151(97)	9(100)
Phansidewa(T)	38,780(89)	12,910(69)	8,089(15)	9,004(38)
Phansidewa(R)	38,780(89)	12,910(69)	8,089(15)	9,004(38)
Bandiachat(R)	27(84)	11(58)	46(22)	55(26)
Chikenmati(R)	129(70)	17(31)	61(10)	87(32)

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

Figures from the census show that among women, the percentage of "marginal workers" has increased Darjeeling from 28 percent in 2001 to 33 percent in 2011. During the same period,there was a fall in the percentage of main workers. The figures thus indicate a casualisation and feminization of the work force, with the number of marginal women workers growing significantly. Blockwise, the percentage of female marginal workers in Mirik and Phansidewa blocks were same 69 percent which was higher than both the district and the state average, although it decreased to 42 percent in Mirik block over the period 2001-2011. During the period

2001, the percentage of marginal women workers in Lohaghar Forest village was zero, which was lower than both the district average and state average. The percentage of marginal women workers was highest by 88 percent in Panthabari Forest village which was higher than both the district and state average. During the same period there was rise in the percentage of marginal women workers by 17 percent in Lohaghar Forest village, and by 20 percent in Panthabari village. The percentage of marginal women workers was 58 percent in Bandiachaat, which was higher than both the district average and state average. The percentage of marginal women workers reduced by 32 percent in Bandiachaat over the period 2001-2011. The percentage of marginal women workers was 31 percent in Chikenmati which was higher than the district average but lower than the state average. The percentage of margianal women workers reduced by 1 percent over the period 2001-2011. It shows variation among the chosen villages in female marginal women workers and also possibility of higher incident of female marginal workers.

3.9. Distribution of main workers by industrial categories of West Bengal, Darjeeling and selected blocks and villages. (in percent)

Table-3.7: Distribution of main workers by industrial categories of West Bengal, Darjeeling and selected blocks (in percent)

		2001		2011	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal	Cultivators	4,182,888 (21)	373,138 (11)	3,940,399 (18)	263,368 (7)
	Agri- Labors	3,744,905 (19)	778,029 (22)	4,943,086 (23)	926,412 (23)
	Household Industry	778,046 (4)	658,332 (19)	869,039 (4)	649,089 (16)
	Others	10,789,132 (55)	1,719,1113 (49)	11,925,755 (55)	2,169,482(54)
Darjeeling	Cultivators	50,347(14)	18,318(15)	41,632(11)	10,352(8)
	Agri- Labors	23,877(7)	7,411(6)	23,372(6)	8,715(6)
	Household Industry	7,810(2)	3,127(3)	7,863(2)	2,654(2)
	Others	277,076(77)	90,885(76)	323,474(82)	114,793 84)
Mirik	Cultivators	1,502 (21)	482 (10)	1,274 (18)	403 (8)
	Agri- Labors	348 (5)	166 (3)	802 (11)	663 13)
	Household Industry	166 2)	77 (2)	133 (2)	41 (1)
	Others	5,229	4,104	4,960	3,947

		(72)	(85)	(69)	(78)
Lohaghar Forest	Cultivators	0(0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Agri- Labors	0(0)	0(0)	27 (59)	3 (60)
	Household Industry	0(0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Others	8 (73)	0 (0)	19 (41)	2 (40)
Panthabari Forest	Cultivators	137 82)	54 (89)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Agri- Labors	0(0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Household Industry	6(4)	2(3)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Others	24 14)	5 (8)	5 (3)	0 (0)
Phansidewa	Cultivators	7,654 (20)	1,080 8)	7,299 (16)	688 (5)
	Agri- Labors	7,950 (21)	1,417 (11)	7,632 (17)	2,093 (14)
	Household Industry	628 (2)	283 (2)	739 (2)	192 (1)
	Others	22,548 (58)	10,130 (78)	28,910 (65)	11,985 (80)
Bandiachaat	Cultivators	0(0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Agri- Labors	0(0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Household Industry	0(0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Others	10 (100)	3 (100)	160 (100)	156 (100)
Chikenmati	Cultivators	37 (29)	4 (24)	174 (32)	4 (2)
	Agri- Labors	79 (61)	8 (47)	191 (35)	115 (67)
	Household Industry	3 (2)	2 (12)	5 (1)	7 (4)
	Others	10 (8)	3 (18)	181 (33)	45 (26)

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

The population concerning workers in West Bengal, Darjeeling district and chosen blocks and villages have been grouped into four occupational classes. Changes in occupational distribution and development are related. With the gradual process of economic development, the dependence on agriculture as cultivators and labourers would diminish and greater percentage of women workers is expected to be found in other activities.

The Table-3.5 reveals that cultivation alone provides employment to nearly less than one -third of the workers both for males and females in Darjeeling district during 2001 -2011 period. Similar feature is revealed in West Bengal state. The percentage of female cultivators to the main workers was higher than the males by 3 percent in Darjeeing district during 2011, but also declined by 7 percent during the period 2001-2011. The percentage of both male and female cultivators are higher than the district average but closer to state average. In Phansidewa block , the percentage of male cultivators is higher than the district average but closer to the state average. The percentage of female cultivators to the main workers are higher than males by 7 percent in Panthabari Forest village. The percentage of both male and female cultivators in Panthabari Forest village are far higher than the district and state average. The cultivation-transplanting and harvesting may be mainly done by the female main workers, which may be due to the migrant husbands who go out of the district or state in search of work. In Bandiachaat, there are no cultivators and agricultural labour, while in Chikenmati village under Phansidewa block, the percentage of female cultivators to the man workers was less than males by 30 percent in 2011, but also declined by 22 percent during 2001-2011. Further, the percentage of both male and female cultivators and agricultural labour are higher than the district and state average. Chikenmati village is close to Bidhannagar and Chaathat Towns (greater Siliguri city). Also, there may not be much of cultivation work in the fields since the region is of peri-urban nature with tea gardens. Mostly women are engaged in tea plucking activities.

It may be observed from Table-3.5 that the percentage of female agricultural laborers to the main workers remained stagnant during 2001-2011 as against 1 percent increase at state level. During the same period however, the percentage of female agricultural laborers increased by 10 percent in Mirik block during 2001-2011 with a high proportion of female workers engaged in other activities than the district and state average. Thus, most of the active female main workers in Panthabari Forest village and Chikenmati vlillage are engaged in agricultural activities which emphasizes about engaged in home based or family farm work.

3.10: Literacy Rate

Education plays a fundamental role in improving man's physical and mental skills and thus enhances his ability to work and produce. But the very fact that women were living within the closed circles of their families prevented them from acquiring a broader

education. Education plays a fundamental role in improving physical and mental skills and thus enhances his ability to work and produce. This was also one of the reasons why they could not make their way into all spheres of human activity either and why they were forced to concentrate on traditionally women's work. These conventions were overcome only by the most deserving women.

Table-3.8: Literacy Rate of West Bengal and India by sex (in percent)

	West Bengal			India		
Year	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1951	34.2	12.2	24	24.9	7.9	18.3
1961	40.1	17	34.5	34.4	12.9	28.3
1971	42.8	22.4	33.2	39.5	18.7	34.5
1981	59.9	36.1	48.6	56.4	29.8	43.6
1991	67.8	46.6	57.7	64.1	39.3	52.2
2001	77	59.6	68.6	75.3	53.7	64.8
2011	82.7	71.2	77.1	82.1	65.5	74

Source: Census of India

Literacy and educational attainment are considered as indication of progress in the modern society. The development of society such as urbanization, industrialization and modernization are closely related with the level of literacy and education. In addition, the aspect of educational development is so basic and fundamental to human life that its different level of achievement results in disparities among people and places (Desai, 1991). Sharma and Ford (1987) asserts that countries like India view literacy and education as necessary and basic ingredients of economic and social development planning. Major parts of West Bengal lags behind in respect of literacy and education than many other parts of the country. This is even more so in the case of female population of West Bengal. Further, spread of women's education is not only important for balanced socio-economic development of any region but also as a factor of women empowerment. Again literacy and educational attainment would help to remove regional inequality as well as gender discrimination.

Table -3.6 depicts literacy rate of males and females during different census period. It has been observed from Table-3.6 that the total literacy rate has been increasing in West Bengal and India, with sharp increase in the last 1991 to 2001. The female literacy rate in West Bengal and India has been much lesser during 1951-2011 period. The female literacy

rate in West Bengal has been greater than the female literacy rate in India from 1971 to 2011.

As per Census Report of 2011, the literacy rate at 71.2 in West Bengal and 74 in India marks around 11.5 percent rise in West Bengal and 9.2 percent in India over the previous rate of 2001. Although female literacy rate in West Bengal, is higher than the national level since 1991, yet there is male-female differential of literacy rate. However, the male –female differentials of literacy rate have been reducing over the period 1951-2011 both in West Bengal and India. Government has taken a step to expand the educational facilities and right attitude towards girl children. These are some of the important factors behind the reduction of gender gap in literacy rate.

Table-3.9: Male and Female Literacy Rate of West Bengal, Darjeeling district, selected blocks, and villages, 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011	
State/District/Block	Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal(T)	27,452,426(77)	19,743,975(60)	33,818,810(82)	27,719,471(71)
Darjeeling(T)	581,420(80)	426,868(63)	71,7673(86)	597,912(73)
Darjeeling(R)	364,483(76)	252,990(55)	410,782(82)	326,042(67)
Darjeeling(U)	216,937(88)	173,878(79)	306,891(91)	271,870(83)
Mirik(T)	15,305(82)	11,538(62)	18,873(88)	15,461(73)
Mirik(T)	15,305(82)	11,538(62)	18,873(88)	15,461(73)
Lohaghar Forest(R)	12(100)	1(100)	59(86)	35(60)
Panthabari Forest(R)	176(54)	81(25)	178(78)	136(57)
Phansidewa(T)	44,539(62)	25,465(38)	64,890(73)	64,890(56)
Phansidewa(T)	44,539(62)	25,465(38)	64,890(73)	64,890(56)
Bandiachaat(R)	52(96)	35(61)	578(76)	400(54)
Chikenmati(R)	54(16)	30(10)	890(57)	48,682(42)

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

It has been observed from Table-3.7 that the male and female literacy rate has been increasing in Darjeeling district and West Bengal during 2001-2011. The percentage of female literacy rate in Darjeeling district increased by 10 percent against 11 percent increase in West Bengal state. The percentage of female literacy rate increased by 11 percent in Mirik block which is higher than the district average but same as state average. The percentage of female literacy rate increased by 16

percent in Phansidewa block, which is higher than both the district and state average**.** In Lohaghar Forest village, the female literacy rate decreased by 40 percent during 2001-2011 period, against 40 percnet decrease in male literacry rate. In Panthabari Forest village, the female literacy rate increased by 32 percent during 2001-2011, which is higher than the district and state average. In Phansidewa block, the percentage of female literacy rate increased by 32 percent during 2001-2011 period, which is much higher than the district and state average. In Bandiachaat, the female literacy rate decreased by 7 percent during 2001-2011 period. In Chikenmati village, the female literacy rate increased by 32 percent, which is much higher than both the district and state averages.

3.11: Illiteracy

Table- 3.10: Male-Female illiteracy rate by sex of West Bengal, Darjeeling and selected blocks and villages, 2001

	2001		2011	
State/District/Blocks	Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal	14,013,559(39)	18,966,237(57)	12,990,217(31)	16,747,617(43)
Darjeeling	249,224(34)	351,660(52)	219,586(26)	311,652(38)
Mirik	5,807(31)	9,587(51)	4,521(21)	7,519(36)
Lohaghar Forest	0(0)	1(100)	17(25)	33(57)
Panthabari Forest	227(69)	349(106)	98(43)	144(61)
Phansidewa	43,406(61)	58,098(86)	38,829(43)	52,121(60)
Bandiachaat	12(22)	25(44)	155(40)	266(58)
Chikenmati	333(101)	321(110)	704(69)	798(83)

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

It has been observed from the Table3.8 that the female illiteracy rate of West Bengal has decreased from 2001 to 2011 period. West Bengal records 57.51 percent of female literacy rate during 2001 and 56.32 percent during 2011. However, the trend of Darjeeling district is reversed, the illiteracy rate of female has increased from 2001 to 2011 period. The female illiteracy rate of Mirik block has declined. The female illiteracy rate of Mirik block is lesser by 23.69 percent than the district average. Lohaghar Forest village records the female illiteracy rate at 66 percent which is higher than the block average illiteracy rate. Panthabari forest village has similar trend. In Phansidewa block , the female literacy rate has increased marginally. The Bandiachaat village records lower female illitreracy rate in 2011 period. While in Chikenmati village the female illiteracy rate has increased. This is due to less educational infrastructure. In addition to this factor, the village is far away from Siliguri city. The reason for increasing female illiteracy rate of female members is due to lack of spread of educational facilities and negative attitude about education towards girl child.

3.12: Distribution of SC and STs Populations

Table-3.11: Percentage distribution of SC male-female population In West Bengal, Darjeeling and Blocks, 2001 and 2011

	2001		2011	
State/District/Block/Village	Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal	9,469,659(23)	8,982,896(23)	11,003,304(24)	10,459,966(24)
Darjeeling	132,858(16)	126,023(16)	161,495(17)	155,780(17)
Mirik	1,483(7)	1,591(8)	1,761(8)	1,858(8)
Lohaghar Forest	2(17)	2(100)	2(3)	0(0)
Panthabari Forest	40(10)	53(12)	14(5)	22(8)
Phansidewa	27,748(32)	25,624(31)	31,321(30)	29,383(29)
Bandiachaat	0(0)	0 (0)	6(1)	4(1)
Chikenmati	157(41)	165(47)	220(17)	220(18)

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

As per the percentage distribution of SC population is concerned, the Table-3.9 shows that percentage of SC male and female were same in Darjeeling district. Similar feature is observed in West Bengal state during 2001 period. In Mirik block the percentage of female SC was higher by 1 percent. While in Phansidewa block, was lesser by 1 percent. In Lohaghar Forest village, the percentage of female SC was higher by 83 percent. In Panthabari Forest village, the percentage of female SC was higher by 2 percent than males during the same period.

Table-3.12: Distribution of Scheduled Tribe by sex, 2001and 2011

	2001		2011	
State/District/Block/Village	Male	Female	Male	Female
West Bengal	2,223,924(5)	2,182,870(6)	2,649,974(6)	2,646,979(6)
Darjeeling	102,287(12)	101,880(13)	197,251(21)	200,138(22)
Mirik	89,740(7)	89,138(8)	7,190(31)	7,090(31)
Lohaghar Forest	0(0)	0(0)	23(30)	0(22)
Panthabari Forest	124(31)	140(33)	80(29)	75(27)
Phansidewa	26,898(31)	26,756(32)	30,744(30)	31,851(32)
Bandiachaat	25(39)	27(45)	359(80)	409(80)
Chikenmati	205(53)	165(47)	293(23)	274(23)

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001 and 2011

Table-3.10 depicts the percentage distribution of ST population. The percentage of female population in Darjeeling district is higher than the males during 2001. Similar feature is observed in West Bengal state. The percentage of ST female population in Mirirk block is higher than the district average but lower than the state average. While the percentage of female population in Phansidewa block is higher than the district and state average during 2001 period. The percentage of ST female population in Bandiachaat is higher than both the district and state average. While the percentage of ST female population in Chikenmati village is much more higher than the district and state averages. The percentage increase in ST female population is by 9 percent against stagnant rate in Darjeeling district during 2001-2011 period. The percentage of female population decreased by 9 percent against 9 percent increase in Darjeeling district during the same period. The percentage increase in female population was by 35 percent in Bandiachaat during 2001-2011, while in the percentage of female population decreased by 24 percent in Chikenmati during 2001-2011 period.

3.13: Health Infrastructure

Health Facility: Medical Facilities available in West Bengal are given in Table.3.11. A hospital is a healthcare institution which delivers treatment to patients with trained staffs and equipment. General hospital is known to be best as far as delivering of services is concerned.

A healthcare centre is one of a network of clinics provided with staff to deliver healthcare services to people in a certain area. The healthcare services can be accessible to all individuals and families in a community.

Table-3.13: Health Facilities in West Bengal, 2001

Year	Hospitals	Health Centres	Sub-Centres	Total
1995-96	402	1263	1263	
1996-97	404	1263	1263	
1997-98	405	1263	1263	
1998-99	406	1262	1262	
199-00	415	1268	1268	
2000-01	416	1269	1269	
2001-02	429	1266	1266	
2002-03	434	1268	1268	
2003-04	434	1268	1268	
2004-05	433	1268	1268	
2005-06	2016	1256	1256	
2006-07	2081	1269	1269	
2007-08	2290	1273	1273	
2008-09	2291	1272	1272	
2009-10	2311	1257	1257	
2010-11	2312	1257	1257	

Source: State Bureau of Health Intelligence, Govt of West Bengal

It has been observed from Table- 3.11 that the number of health centres and sub-centres were more till 2004 -2005 in West Bengal, while the number of hospitals increased during the period 1996 to 2004-2005. The Table-3.11 revealed the dependence of the chosen population mostly on the health centres and sub-centres. The high degree of dependence on the public health care system might be due to the poor economic condition of sample population. Also, this indicates greater reliance on public health care system due to low subsistence level of living for sample population.

Table-3.14: Blockwise distribution of Health Infrastructure in Darjeeling district, 2001

Blocks	Hospitals	Health Centres	Clinics	Dispensaries
Darjeeling- Pul-bazar	0	2	0	2
Rangli-Ragliot	0	3	0	2
Jorebunglow-Sukhiapokhri	0	4	0	1
Kalimpong-I	0	3	0	2
Kalimpong-II	0	3	0	1
Gorubathan	0	3	0	3
Kurseong	1	4	0	4
Mirik	0	2	0	0
Matigara	1	2	0	2
Naxalbari	1	1	0	2
Khoribari	1	2	0	1
Phansidewa	0	2	0	1

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001

Medical Facilities available at block level in Darjeeling district is given in Table-.3.12. Table-3.12 shows the distribution of hospitals, health centre, clinics and dispensaries for the sample population in respective blocks. These health institutions serve as healthcare services. Moreover, 7.14 percent of hospitals were available for the sample population to seek medical healthcare, followed by 55.14 percent of health centers and 37.5 percent of dispensaries.

3.14. Educational facilities.

Table-3.15: Educational institutions in the Darjeeling district, 2001

Blocks	Primary	Middle	Secondary	Higher Secondary
Darjeeling-pul-Bazar	192	9	6	2
Rangli-Ragliot	112	7	4	2
Jorebunglow-Sukhiapokhri	157	8	7	4
Kalimpong-I	108	6	5	1
Kalimpong-II	91	6	7	1
Gorubnathan	99	4	4	2
Kurseong	163	3	13	3
Mirik+Mirik Municipality	77	2	6	1
Matigara	115	5	5	3
Naxalbari	120	8	5	4
Kharibari	96	6	5	1
Phansidewa	152	3	7	6

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001

Table-3.13 shows the distribution of educational institutions in the Darjeeling district. In respect to the above educational institutions it is found that there has been uneven distribution of institutions in the district under different blocks in Darjeeling. The number of primary schools is more in respective blocks than the middle, secondary and higher secondary schools. Amongst the blocks, Mirik block records the lowest number of primary schools followed by Kalimpong. While the number of primary schools in the Phansidewa are 152 followed by relatively lower number of secondary and higher secondary schools.

3.15: Life Expectancy:

Life expectancy reflects the physical well-being of population in a region. The life expectancy at birth is influenced by number of demographic and health factors. It is also related to infant mortality rate of any population. It is generally negatively correlated related with infant mortality rate. Also in most of the cases, the life expectancy is directly associated with the level of economic development. The infant mortality rate of West Bengal is lower than the national average during the 2005-2009 periods.

Despite the improvement of medical facilities and significant fall in the infant mortality rate, the life expectancy at birth (LEB) in West Bengal has been as low as 64.2 as against 65.8 years at national level for the same year (Table 3.14).

Table-3.14 depicts the life expectancy at birth in India and West Bengal. It has been observed from Table-3.19 that there exists a male –female differential in the projected levels of LEB during (1999-2003), the female life expectancy was higher than males in West Bengal. In subsequent period, West Bengal as well as India has witnessed higher female LEB as compared to males.

Table-3.16: Life Expectancy at Birth in India and West Bengal

	1999-2003		2000-2004		2001-2005		2002-2006	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
India	63.5	65	63.7	65.2	63.9	65.5	64.1	65.8
West Bengal	61.8	63.5	62.1	63.7	62.3	63.9	62.6	64.2

Source: SRS, based Abridge Life Tables, 2002-06

It is evident from the Table-3.14 that there exists a male-female differential in life expectancy. In the period (1999-2003) the female life expectancy of West Bengal was higher than the male. The male-female gap in life expectancy was 1.6 during 2000-2004 period. However, the life expectancy increased by 1.6 percent during 2001-2005. The life expectancy was lower in West Bengal than national level during all the periods considered.

3.16. Distribution of population by percentage as per the blocks under different sub-divisions

Table-3.17: Distribution of population by percentage as per the blocks under different sub-divisions

Sub-Divisions	Darjeeling-Sadar				Kalimpong	Kurseong			Siliguri			
Blocks	**Dar-Pul- bazar**	**Rangli-Rangliot**	**Jorebunglow**	**Kalimpong-I**	**Kalimpong-II**	**Gurubathan**	**KurSeong**	**Mirik**	**Matigara**	**Naxalbari**	**Khoribari**	**Phansidewa**
%age of population to district population	7.2	4	6.26	4.21	3.74	3.37	5.34	2.62	8.04	9.01	5.48	10.66
%age-of female pop to district population	5.1	2.9	4.5	3	2.6	2.4	3.8	1.9	5.4	6.2	3.8	7.4

Source: Census of West Bengal, 2001

Table-3.15 shows the distribution of population as per the bocks under four sub-divisions of Darjeeling district. It has been observed from the Table-3.15 that Darjeeling-Pulbazar block records 7.2 percent of population. This is the highest population among the blocks considered for the study while Mirik block records the lowest population, which is 2.26 percent. As far as the distribution of female population is concerned, Phansidewa block records the highest 7.4 percent under Siliguri block.

Conclusion

The higher percentage of female population in Bandiachaat than the percentage of female population in Chikenmati is close to district and state average. In 2011, the percentage of male population in Bandiachaat and Chikenmati has decreased, while the percentage of female population in Bandiachaat and Chikenmati has increased. The work participation rate of females in Chikenmati is closer to the district average, but lesser than the state average.

The above analysis of several indicators is a pointer to the existing status of women. Literacy rates among women in the blocks are lower than the males and the female workforce participation is also lower than males. Women have much lower representation in the main workers' category indicating the lack of work opportunities for greater part of the year and also their burden of household responsibilities that restrict them to access work opportunities throughout the year. Similar exercise is carried out in the following chapter for Jalpaiguri District and its selected blocks and villages for the present study.

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