

TRIBAL PEOPLE AND THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS IN RANGAMATI SADAR THANA

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ABSTRACT

Bangladesh is a densely populated country of South East Asia that has a rich tribal presence. There are about 58 tribes living in different parts of the country. Bangladesh has 1.2 million tribal people, which is just above 1 percent of the total population. Whatever the population they differ in their social organizations, marital customs, rites and rituals, food and other customs from the people of the rest of the country. Most of the tribal people speak in Tibeto-Burman tongues. This paper presents a brief description of the socio-economic characteristics of the Tribal people of Rangamati Sadar Thana on the basis of data collected through a field survey. The survey covered a random sample of 200 households. This paper reveals that the tribal people are lagging behind the mainstream population with respect to economical, political, social and technological standings and still going on with outmoded lifestyle and ideology.

Introduction

Humankind originates from a unique root. The United Nation as well has approved this very truth (Team, 1992). But racial discrimination keeps this reality far from its existence in today's world. Bangladesh, emerging as one of the 203 independent countries of the world, has also brought this concept in question at the moment the tribal issue is considered. Although we like to introduce ourselves as homogeneous national entity, a considerable part of the total community could not converge to a single point. There is no way left open to think for those who stepped here in the fallow land thousand years before and made it a cultivatable and living land, as outsider. But it is their irony of fate that led them to be deprived even from obtaining a dignity of complete citizenship and has affected them in poverty, malnutrition, starvation and so on.

The moment when the blessing of science has reduced the circumference of the world in a great extent, the aborigines are tending to loose their

distinctive feature, their culture, their inherited knowledge and language and expectations from life very ruthlessly.

There are many acute problems of the tribal peoples in our country that needs immediate attention and early solution. The problems relate to various aspects of tribal peoples viz. social, economical, educational, health, religion, land, law and order situation, self-centered tendency and so on. Many of these problems cannot be well-understood due-to lack of necessary and adequate information.

The present study is an attempt to collect factual information about the life style of the tribal people in our country. It is obvious that such information is essential before we can discover the needs of the tribal peoples and suggest means of providing practical solution to their problems.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to supply

Socio-economic profile of the tribal people of Rangamati Sadar Thana.

The specific objectives are:

- To give a description of the tribal people in Bangladesh.
- To provide a description of the socio-economic characteristics of the tribal population of the sample household in the study area.
- To compare the result with that of the national label.

Limitations of the study:

Every research has some limitations. This research is not an exception of this rule. Firstly, for this study we have collected data from the Rangamati Sadar Thana only. Beside this, only nine groups of tribal people were included in the study population. There are many tribal people of different races that are scattered in many places of Bangladesh.

Thus data are only for nine tribes of Rangamati Sadar Thana that does not represent the whole tribal people of this country and the results cannot be generalized.

Secondly, here data were not collected proportionately for different races. Time was not enough to conduct the research properly. Finally, this was a self-financed study, which limited the various scopes along with the scope of extending the study area and increasing the sample size.

Methodology

The materials of this study were collected through literature review and field survey. The study considered both quantitative and qualitative method of data collection. To improve the quality and reliability of the information collected from the sample survey, a number of persons from different races were chosen for in-depth interview.

Study Area and population

The study considers Rangamati Sadar Thana of Rangamati District as the study area; a hilly district of Bangladesh that has a significant number (2,23,292) of tribal people and is the most populous Thana among the other Thanas. All the tribal people of Rangamati Sadar Thana have been considered as study population.

Sample size and Sampling Procedure

The sample of 200 households has been selected proportionately from urban and rural areas of Rangamati Sadar Thana by using ‘Two stage stratified cluster sampling’, where the areas rural and urban are considered as strata’s and the Mauzas are considered as clusters. To achieve the objective of the study a comprehensive interview schedule was used to collect data. Also for in-depth interview a guideline of questions was used to keep the respondents on track and a tape recorder was used to record the conversation.

Socio-economic Characteristics of the Tribal People Surveyed

Introduction

This paper provides information on social and economic characteristics of the household population and the individual survey respondents. This information is essential for interpretation of survey findings and can provide an appropriate indication of the representative ness of the survey.

Caste/Race of Household Population

Caste/Race is one of the fundamental issues of one’s identity in any territory. The distribution of the tribal household and household population covered in this survey is shown in Table-1 by caste/race, according to rural-urban residence

Table 1: Tribal household and population by race

Race	Percentage	
	Household	Population
Chakma	81.0	79.8
Tanchanga	4.5	4.5
Tripura	12.0	12.8
Others	2.5	2.9
Total	100.0	100.0
Number	200.0	1055.0

Out of 200 selected households covering a population of 1055, about 81 percent are Chakma, 13 percent are Tripura, 5 percent are Tanchonga and the remaining 3 percent are from different races.

Housing Characteristics

Information on the characteristics of sampled households is shown in Table-2 and 3. The physical characteristics of the households have an important effect on the peoples' environmental exposure to disease and reflect the household's economic conditions.

Table 2: Housing Characteristics-I

<i>Characteristics</i>	Residence		Total	Num-ber
	Urban	Rural		
Electricity				
Yes	45.0	0.0	13.5	27
No	55.0	100.0	86.5	173
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200
Roof Material				
Bamboo/Straw	26.7	78.6	63.0	126
Tin	65.0	21.4	34.5	69
Cement/Concrete	8.3	0.0	2.5	5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200
Wall Material				
Bamboo/Straw	53.3	57.1	56.0	112
Wood	8.3	16.4	14.0	28
Cement/Concrete	21.7	0.7	7.0	14
Soil	10.0	20.7	17.5	35
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200
Floor Material				
Wood	8.3	4.3	5.5	11
Cement/Concrete	45.0	5.0	17.0	34
Soil	46.7	90.7	77.5	155
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200

The results indicate very poor coverage of electricity in the study area. Although the study area is a district head quarter, only one-seventh (about 14 percent) of households have electricity.

There is potentially significant difference in coverage of electricity between rural & urban areas; 45 percent of urban households have electricity compared with 0 percent of rural households.

Bamboo/straw is the most common roofing material of the tribal household, accounting for 63 percent of the households and this proportion vary substantially in rural and urban areas. 79 percent of rural households have bamboo/straw as roof material, compared with 27 percent of urban households. Similarly, urban and rural households vary widely in the use of other types of roofs.

About six in ten households in the study area live in structures with walls made of natural material such as bamboo or straw only 7 percent live in houses built with concrete or cement. The most commonly used floor material is soil, followed by cement. 45 percent of urban households have cement floors; Soil flooring is almost universal in rural areas (91 percent).

Table 3: Housing Characteristics-II

<i>Characteristics</i>	Residence		Total	Number
	Urban	Rural		
Source of water for Household work				
Pond/Tank/Lake	41.7	71.4	62.5	125
River/Stream	0.0	10.7	7.9	15
Tube well	23.3	17.9	19.5	39
Piped water	35.0	0.0	10.5	21
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200
Source of Drinking water				
Pond/Tank/Lake	6.7	40.7	30.5	61
River/Stream	1.7	3.6	3.0	6
Tube well	61.7	55.7	57.5	115
Piped water	30.0	0.0	9.0	18
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200
Sanitation Facility				
Septic Tank/Modern Latrine	33.3	5.0	13.5	27
Water Sealed/Slab Latrine	10.0	1.4	4.0	8
Pit Latrine	15.0	17.9	17.0	34
Open Latrine	0.0	23.6	16.5	33
Hanging Latrine	31.7	9.3	16.0	32
No Facility/Bush/Field	10.0	42.9	33.0	66
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200

Pond/Tank or Lake is the major source of water for household work. Overall six in ten households obtain their water for household work from Lake or Tank and urban & rural households vary widely in this case.

About 71 percent of rural households use pond/lake or Tank water for household work while this percentage is 42 percent for urban households. About 20 percent depend on Tube-well water for household work and this percentage in rural and urban areas varies slightly.

Mainly the rural households use river/stream water for household work. Piped water is available only in urban areas.

Tube wells are the major source of drinking water. Overall six in ten households obtain their drinking water from tube wells with little variations between rural and urban areas. About 31 percent depend on surface water such as ponds, tanks and lakes. Pond/Tank or Lake Water is mostly used for drinking in rural areas compared to urban areas.

About 67 percent of tribal households in the study area have some type of toilet facilities, however only 35 percent have hygienic toilets (Septic tank/modern toilets, water sealed/slab latrine and pit toilets). As expected, Sanitation facilities vary widely between the households in rural and urban areas. Moreover, 43 Percent of rural households have no facility at all, compared with 10 percent of urban households.

Household possessions and availability of food

The possession of durable goods is another indicator of a household’s socioeconomic level, although these goods may also provide other benefits. Possession of household durable goods is not common in Bangladesh as well as in the study area; since most families cannot afford them. Table-4 shows the ownership of durable household goods and level of food consumption.

Table4: Household durable goods ownership and level of food consumption

Characteristics	Residence		Total
	Urban	Rural	
Durable Good			
Watch/Clock	70.0	22.9	37.0
Radio	43.3	20.0	27.0
Television	26.6	5.0	11.5
Bicycle	1.7	2.8	2.5
Motorcycle	15.0	2.1	6.0
Sewing Machine	36.7	9.3	17.5
Handloom Machine	60.0	62.1	61.5
Telephone	15.0	0.0	4.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Food Consumption			
Deficit in whole year	18.3	47.9	39.0
Sometimes deficit	21.7	39.3	34.0
Neither deficit nor surplus	30.0	7.1	11.0
Surplus	30.0	5.7	13.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table-4 shows that, overall, a large percentage of 62 percent own one or more handloom machines, 37 percent of households own a watch or clock, 27 percent of households own a radio, 12 percent own a television, 3 percent own a bicycle, 18 percent of households own a sewing machine, 5 percent own a Telephone and surprisingly 6 percent own a motorcycle.

In this survey, respondents were asked whether they thought their household was a surplus or deficit household in terms of food consumption. Only 13 percent of household respondents indicated that they have a surplus of food, while 11 percent of household mentioned that they have neither a deficit nor a surplus of food and 39 percent of the households mentioned that they have a deficit. Food deficits are more common in rural households (87 percent) than in urban households (40 percent).

Household Cultivable Land

The cultivable land ownership patterns of the tribal households are not that encouraging. Table- 5 shows the percent distribution of the tribal household surveyed by the amount of cultivable land ownership according to urban-rural residence.

Table.5: Household cultivable land ownership

Cultivable Land (in decimal)	Residence		Total	Number
	Urban	Rural		
No land	48.3	57.9	55.1	110
01-17	3.3	20.0	15.0	30
18-34	25.0	12.1	16.0	32
35-50	16.7	4.3	8.0	16
51-66	1.7	1.4	1.5	3
67-82	0.0	1.4	1.0	2
83+	5.0	2.9	3.5	7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200

Mean: 13.8 Minimum: 0.0 Maximum: 125.0

Overall a large proportion of households (55 percent) have no cultivable land and this proportion varies between urban (48%) and rural (58%) areas. In this study, the average amount of cultivable land per household is 13.8 decimal.

The Essence of the Interview on Land & its Problems taken In-depth from the persons

With a view to produce electricity from the water of river Karnopholy, a project of constructing a barrier was launched on 1954 first in 'Chilardak' of Sublong and then later in Kaptai. They consider this barrier to have caused tremendous problems for the locality.

For the construction of this barrier, an artificial lake of big size has been excavated, as a result of which near about 54000 acre of cultivable land have been submerged under water. So is the case for all the forest resources. So, nothing is left as cultivable land for agriculture. It is normally laborious to make a cultivable land up above the relatively higher hill. But the land, which resurfaces when the water of the lake recedes during the dry season a good quality of crops can be grown.

Fiscally, this land is called 'FRINGE LAND'. According to their opinion, the 'KAPTAI ELECTRICITY POWER PLANT' produces only 250 M.W. of electricity. People from the surrounding places get the advantage of fishing. Now, comparing between the amount of forest resources and cultivable lands damaged and the advantages brought about by the project the loss is seen to be more significant. Because little electricity is actually obtained by the affected people of that area.

Education

Education is the key determinant of the lifestyle and status an individual enjoys in a society. Educational attainment has strong effects on reproductive behavior, family planning and AIDS knowledge, occupation, income, sanitation system and issues related to family health and hygiene.

Table-6 provides data on educational attainment of household population listed in the survey.

Education has become more widespread over time in the study area. This is apparent from the differences in the levels of educational attainment by age groups. A steadily decreasing percentage of both males and females have never attended school

in each younger age group. For men, the proportion that never attended school decreases from 88.7 percent in the oldest age groups (60 years or more) to 40 percent among ages 10-14. For women the decline is more sharp-from 99 percent to 38 percent (Fig. 1).

Despite considerable improvement in the spread of education in Bangladesh, levels of educational attainment is still very low amongst the Tribal people, with a strong differential persisting between males and females. Generally, educational attainment is higher for males than for females, although this varies substantially by age. 54 percent of men and 62.6 percent of women age six years and above have not received any formal education.

In almost every age group, there are smaller proportions of men than woman with no education and more men than women with secondary & higher education. However, over time, the sex differential is narrowing. For example, at age group 6-19, differences in educational attainment between boys and girls are insignificant. Substantial urban-rural gaps in educational attainment persist.

Seventy one percent of rural men have never attended school, compared to less than 50 percent of urban men. The differences are also striking for woman- 76 percent of rural women have never attended school compared with only 62 percent of urban women. Conversely, the proportions of men and women with some secondary and higher education are almost 8 times and 4 times as high respectively in urban areas as in rural areas.

Communication Problem concerning dialect and the national language

The survey unearths the evidence that every race has its own language. In this survey questionnaire included questions about the language used for providing primary education. All the respondents answer that mainly Bengali is used for this purpose.

The respondents were also asked whether they thought their children faced any language problem in school or not. Table-7 shows the percentage distribution of tribal household who are facing language problem in school.

Table 6: Educational level of the male and female household population

Level of Education							
	No education	Primary incomplete	Primary Complete	Secondary	HSC+	Total	Number
Male							
6-9	45.7	54.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	63
10-14	39.9	23.8	7.8	28.5	0.0	100	73
15-19	44.9	15.1	11.4	28.6	11.2	100	52
20-24	50.7	6.9	10.1	17.5	14.8	100	45
25-29	62.9	4.8	8.9	14.2	9.2	100	44
30-34	67.2	8.2	7.6	11.4	5.6	100	31
35-39	69.1	9.3	7.9	8.6	5.1	100	32
40-44	69.8	5.7	6.8	6.7	11.0	100	25
45-49	75.9	1.1	6.9	9.4	8.9	100	29
50-54	80.3	2.8	8.1	10.7	3.7	100	14
55-59	85.6	1.7	9.3	3.9	2.9	100	9
60+	88.7	1.1	4.6	3.3	1.3	100	9
Residence							
Urban	50.2	6.9	6.8	21.4	14.7	100	135
Rural	71.1	19.8	3.9	2.9	2.8	100	291
Total	54.3	18.0	7.4	15.2	5.1	100	426
Female							
6-9	44.3	55.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	65
10-14	38.1	21.9	6.3	33.7	0.0	100	81
15-19	49.4	17.1	9.7	18.6	5.2	100	68
20-24	64.2	6.9	3.8	11.9	13.2	100	57
25-29	72.6	7.7	5.8	6.8	6.1	100	54
30-34	78.3	7.8	5.6	7.1	1.2	100	41
35-39	82.6	9.7	4.1	3.6	0.0	100	28
40-44	85.7	4.2	3.8	3.2	3.0	100	23
45-49	90.9	1.3	2.7	1.1	4.0	100	25
50-54	96.1	2.4	1.5	0.0	0.0	100	11
55-59	98.3	1.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	100	9
60+	99.1	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	8
Residence							
Urban	62.0	11.8	8.3	7.2	10.5	100	145
Rural	76.3	19.4	2.8	1.5	0.0	100	325
Total	62.6	19.0	5.5	12.7	2.2	100	470

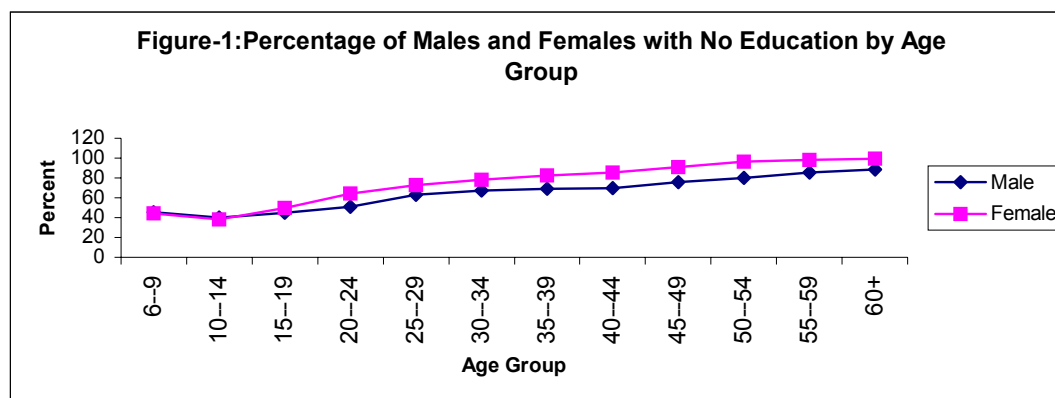


Table 7: Facing language problem in education

Characteristics	Facing Social Problem		Total
	Yes	No	
Residence			
Urban	30.0	70.0	100.0
Rural	45.7	54.3	100.0
Race/Caste			
Chakma	38.9	61.1	100.0
Tanchanga	66.7	33.3	100.0
Tripura	45.8	54.2	100.0
Others	40.0	60.0	100.0
Total	41.0	59.0	100.0

Table-7 shows that, 41 percent of the household heads opine that their children face problem for providing education in Bengali language and 59 percent deny this. The proportion of household head is much higher (46 percent) in rural areas, compared to 30 percent of urban areas giving opinion that their children are facing problem for not getting education in their own language. However race differential is also slightly significant regarding this issue. About 67 percent of the Tanchanga household head says that begetting education in Bengali language create a problem whereas the percentage of the household head from other races do not vary significantly on this issue.

The Essence of The Interview On Education And Its Problems Taken In-depth From The Persons:

Many of them consider Bengali in primary education is an impediment to learning. Some however, differ with this view. They state that although it is right that everybody has his own language but no one has the in-depth conception when they do not know how to write in the alphabetical order. So, some people (specially village residents) who have the intention to take their education in their own mother tongue undergo the problem that because they don't know very well how to read and write in their own language, and because the secondary education is to be taken in Bengali, so they are to develop their education in both the language which steps up the burden on learners. Since the tribes can communicate well in Bengali, so it does not cause a significant problem for them to continue their education in Bengali.

About the educational institution, they opine that-

Although the number of primary schools is adequate, they are not well managed. They really suffer from the lack in number of teachers, let alone good teachers. The school facilities are shanty and the communications to the schools are not good. The presence of teachers in their respective schools depends upon their willingness since they may draw their salaries without being there. For the schools are often far from their homes, teachers usually do not go to school except for the day when they have to draw their salaries.

About the development of the education, they state that-

Although many seminars have demonstrated now and then, it contributed little to the actual improvement to their conditions. A lot of money is wasted in conducting surveys and commissioning projects. But in lieu of appropriating the money in the name of projects and seminars, were it utilized for the institutions, it would have ensured better results.

Finally, since the one who develops the lay out of the overall development of the area do not come from that area of interest, the policy made by him becomes useless.

For the development of the education of the tribe, the opinion of many people about the Govt. Quota system is-

Those students, who are being provided with the least facilities sit for the competitive tests, and are considered to have utilized the Quota. As a result the students having less potential cannot avail the Quota.

Besides, corruption is another factor to worsen the case. For instance, some sort of lobby on the part of Bengali employee in the hill tracts for any employment opportunity also deprives the tribes.

Even if they get a chance by the Quota system, they find themselves that they have missed half of the semester whereas the admission procedure is yet to be finished.

The unemployed consist of all persons who, during the reference period, were not working but who

were seeking work for pay or profit, including those who never worked before and students.

Table-8 shows the percentage distribution of male and female household population by employment status and urban-rural residence.

Employment and Occupation

The employed comprises all persons, including family workers, who worked during the time of the reference period established for data on economic characteristics or who has a job in which they had already worked but from which they were temporarily absent because of illness or injury, industrial dispute, vacation or other leave of absence, absence without leave, or temporary disorganization of work due to such reasons as bad

weather or mechanical breakdowns.

It is interesting to see that men and women are equally to be employed and in fact, a slightly higher proportion of women than men are employed. Overall, 71 percent of men are employed, compared to 72 percent of women without any existent variation between urban and rural areas. The percentage of total employee is 71 percent whereas only 29 percent are unemployed.

Occupation Types of the Employee

Occupation means the various ways by which one earns his living by engaging him or herself. Table-9 shows the percentage distribution of currently employed male and female population by type of occupation according to urban-rural residence.

Table 8: Employment Status

Employment	Urban			Rural			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Employee	64.7	66.7	65.7	73.3	73.6	73.5	70.8	71.6	71.2
Not employee	35.3	33.3	34.3	26.7	26.4	26.5	29.2	28.4	28.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	356	390	746	150	159	309	506	549	1055

Table 9: Occupation types of the employee

Occupation	Urban			Rural			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture									
Worker	10.3	29.2	20.2	40.6	53.3	47.3	32.4	46.8	40.0
Fishing	29.9	0.9	14.8	11.5	4.9	8.0	16.5	3.8	9.8
Business	23.7	1.9	12.3	11.9	0.7	6.0	15.1	1.0	7.7
Service	30.9	18.9	24.6	6.5	3.5	5.0	13.1	7.6	10.3
Day Labor	3.1	0.0	1.5	19.9	5.2	12.2	15.4	3.8	9.3
Handloom	2.0	13.2	7.9	0.8	14.6	8.0	1.1	14.2	8.0
Wood cutter	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.8	0.7	4.6	6.4	0.5	3.3
Housewife	0.0	35.8	18.7	0.0	17.0	9.0	0.0	22.1	11.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	97	106	203	261	287	548	358	393	751

Table-9 reveals that among the total employee population about 47 percent women and 32 percent of men are agricultural workers. Women are much more present than men in agricultural work in both urban and rural areas.

About 10 percent of the employed population lives on fishing and this proportion is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Mainly men are engaged

in this job as compared to women. Eight percent of the employed population is engaged with their traditional handloom.

Household Income

Income is an important indicator of socio-economic condition of a community. A community with higher income level can meet their basic needs and

enjoy their livelihoods. As a poor country Bangladesh has a low level of monthly income. Most of her people live under poverty line. The tribal undergoes a worse case.

Table 10: Household Monthly Income

Monthly income (in Tk.)	Residence		Total	No.
	Urban	Rural		
<=1000	26.7	66.4	54.5	109
1001-2000	6.7	25.7	20.0	40
2001-3000	21.7	0.7	7.0	14
3001+	45.0	7.1	18.5	37
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200

Mean: 2279.0 Min: 800.00 Max: 16000.00

Table-10 shows that the monthly income of most of the families (about 55 percent) is less than or equal to Tk. 1000. The proportion of households having this income is much higher in rural areas compared to urban areas.

On the other hand overall one fifth of the household's monthly income is in the range Tk. 1001-2000. About 19 percent of the households monthly income is more than Tk. 3000 and as expected the percentage of urban households belonging to this income range is about six times higher than rural households. The average monthly income of the households is Tk. 2279.

Main Source of household income

Information on the main source of household income is shown in Table-11.

Table-11 shows that the main source of household's income is agriculture and service accounting for 23 percent of both. 30 percent of households depend on agriculture in rural areas while this proportion is less (5 percent) in urban areas. Consequently, about 47 percent of households depend on services in urban areas as compared to 12 percent in rural areas. A significant number of household's main source of income is day labor.

Table 11: Main Source of Household Income

Source of Income	Residence		Total	Number
	Urban	Rural		
Day Labor	3.3	24.3	18.0	36
Handloom	1.7	2.1	2.0	4
Agriculture Worker	5.0	30.0	22.5	45
Fishing	23.3	11.4	15.0	30
Business	20.0	11.4	14.0	28
Service	46.7	12.1	22.5	45
Woodcutter	0.0	8.6	6.0	12
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	200

Social and political problems

Social stability and understanding amongst the people are very important for any locality. Information on the social or political problem faced by sampled households is shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Facing Social or Political Problem

Characteristics	Facing Social Problem		Total
	Yes	No	
Residence			
Urban	18.3	81.7	100.0
Rural	47.9	52.1	100.0
Race/Caste			
Chakma	39.5	60.5	100.0
Tanchanga	44.4	55.6	100.0
Tripura	37.5	62.5	100.0
Others	20.0	80.0	100.0
Total	39.0	61.0	100.0

It is found that overall 39 percent of the households face Social or political problems whereas 61 percent do not.

Household facing social problems are higher in rural areas (48%) in comparison to urban areas (18%) and these proportions are indistinguishable for different races.

Types of social or political problem face by tribal people

Types of social or political problems faced by sampled tribal households have shown in table-13.

Table 13: Types of social or political problem face by tribal people

Types of Problem	Count	% of responses	% of cases
Land Spout	14	16.1	18.2
Robbery/Theft	38	43.7	49.4
Threat	9	10.3	11.7
Extortions	2	2.3	2.6
Divorce/ Separation	2	2.3	2.6
Communal violence	21	24.1	27.3
Others	1	1.1	1.3
Total Responses	81	100.0	113.0

Total Cases: 78

Table-13 reveals that among the households who are facing social problems about 49 percent have experienced robbery/theft, 27 percent are involved in communal violence, 18 percent are concerned with land related problem and 12 percent are terrorized (threatened). Only a small percentage of households are facing personal problems like divorce/separation and the same percentage of people get affected by Extortions.

The essence of the interview on Social Problems taken in-depth from the persons

Why is Shantibahini?

In response to this question, some responded angrily that it is a long history. They continued, "Say, in your village, there are 500 Muslim families out of which 50 are Non-Muslim families. Now, if some new 600 Non-Muslim families enter your village, what will be your reaction then?" In 1947, 97 percent of the total population here were tribes

and the rest of the 3 percent were Bangali and others. . In 2000, the number suddenly changed to 49 percent and 51 percent respectively.

The reason that the percentage significantly changed is- in the year 1977/78, around 0.1 to 0.2 million (some say 0.2 to 0.4 million) Bangali entered into the tribal locality.

The tribes were forced to sacrifice their lands as the govt. ordered then. The tribes had to face many oppression and suppression when they tried to decline to give up their land. Today, this is Bengalis, who are governing us now. Bengalis are now dominating the businesses while the tribes are lagging behind", they continued." Why did Bangladesh demand independence from Pakistan? Isn't it because lawmakers unequally treated them? During that transition, all the mills and factories were constructed in West Pakistan; almost all the senior officials were the West Pakistanis. Very few were there, who could represent East Pakistan being benefited by Quota system. If, for that inequality, the then East Pakistan can demand independence, then, why is it illogical for the tribes to fight for the same issue? This conception gives birth to Shanti Bahini and the implicit defiance that they nurture helps to grow the force bigger," they added.

About the peace treaty, they state that-

Although, the peace treaty provided some power and some facilities to some people, and little of the great purposes are actuated since most of the distressed people still remain so.

The Comparative Situation Between Tribal and General People

The comparison of the socio-economic characteristics between the tribal people of the study area and general people has given in the Table-14 to realize at a glance.

This comparison clearly demonstrates that, almost in every aspect of their lives concerning the socio-economic characteristics the tribal peoples are lagging behind the common peoples of Bangladesh. Especially in the average cultivable land owned per household, educational level of the population, school attendance of the population age 6-15, safe drinking water, safe water for household work, sanitary latrine, food consumption etc they are suffering more.

Table 14: The Comparison Between Study Result and National Result

Sl No.	Indicator	Figure of the study population	National figure	Ratio= Study figure / National figure	Comparative situation of the study population
1	Average land owned per household (decimal)	13.8	100.0	0.14	More Lower
2	Education level of the population				
	No education	58.5	33.0	1.77	Lower
	Primary complete	6.4	7.4	0.86	Slightly smaller
	Secondary +	16.1	30.0	0.53	Lower
3	School Enrolment age 6-15 (percent)				
	Total	51.5	73.5	0.70	Lower
	Male	61.0	72.6	0.84	Lower
	Female	41.5	74.5	0.55	Lower
4	School drop out age 6-15 (percent)				
	Total	29.1	Data is not available		
	Male	20.8			
	Female	37.2			
5	Household access to (percent)				
	Safe drinking water	66.5	96.3	0.69	Lower
	Safe water for household work	30.0	39.3	0.76	Lower
	Sanitary latrine	14.5	35.8	0.40	Lower
6	Housing Characteristics (percent)				
	Bamboo/straw as Roof	63.0	20.5	3.10	More higher
	Bamboo/straw as Wall	56.0	61.3	0.91	Slightly smaller
	Soil as Floor	77.5	84.2	0.92	Slightly smaller
7	Food Consumption (percent)				
	Deficit in whole year	39.0	17.7	2.20	More higher
	Sometimes deficit	34.0	41.8	0.81	Lower
	Neither deficit nor surplus	14.0	30.1	0.46	Lower
	Surplus	13.0	10.1	1.28	Higher
8	Employment (percentage)				
	Employee	71.2	Data is not available		
	Not employee	28.8			

Sources of National Data:

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics: Bangladesh Health and Demographic Survey, 1995-1996.

National Institute of Population Research and Training (NIPORT): Summery Report, Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey 1999-2000, Dhaka, May 2001.

Summary and Conclusion

This study has investigated 200 households in the study area and 10 were interviewed who were well known to the tribal people of the study area.

The total household population is 1055. It is found that Chakma is the leading race in terms of population both in urban and rural areas.

Bamboo/straw is the most common roofing material of the tribal people and about six in ten

households live in structures with walls made of natural material such as bamboo or straw.

The most commonly used floor material is soil, followed by cement. Earthen flooring is almost universal in rural areas.

Pond/Tank or Lake is the major source of water for household work whereas tube wells are the major source of drinking water.

Overall only 35 percent of tribal households in

study area have hygienic toilet facilities.

In terms of ownership of watch/clock, radio, TV, bicycle, sewing machine and telephone, the condition of tribal households is not satisfactory at all. However, most of the households have their own handloom machines and surprisingly have their own motorcycle.

Only one-seventh (14 percent) of households in the study area have electricity whereas this is absent in rural areas.

Only 13 percent of households indicated that they have surplus food. Food deficits are more common in rural households (87 percent) than in urban households (40 percent).

Overall a large proportion of households (55 percent) have no cultivable land and this proportion vary for the households in urban and rural areas.

Generally, educational attainment is higher for males than females, although this varies substantially by age. Majority of population have not received any formal education. Substantial urban-rural gaps in educational attainment persist.

The study result shows that, 41 percent of the household heads opine that their children faces problem for providing education in Bengali language and 59 percent deny this.

Employment status shows that men and women are equally to be employed and in fact, a slightly higher proportion of women than men are employed.

About 47 percent women and 32 percent of men is agriculture worker. Women are much more frequent than men in agriculture work in both urban and rural areas. People are also engaged in service, fishing, daily labor, traditional handloom, business and woodcutting.

Income of the households of the study population shows that the average monthly income per household is Tk. 2279.

The monthly income of the most of the families (about 55 percent) are less than or equal to Tk. 1000. The main source of the household's income is agriculture.

It is found that overall 39 percent of the households facing social or political problems. Social problems are higher among the household in rural areas in comparison to urban areas.

In our country the socio-economic status of the tribal people are substantially lower than the general people. All the governmental and non-governmental organizations working for the tribal people could take the significant steps to improve the above-mentioned status of the concerned people.

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