


The Livelihood of the Santals in the Context of Declining CPR in Dinajpur

**A Dissertation
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Declaration

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Dedicated To

My Loving Daughters

**Fairud Rudaba
&
Fairud Rubaba (Ahona)**

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Abstract

Bangladesh is a small country with rich varieties of cultural dimension. Our culture, economy, society are enriched not only with the Bengalis (plain land people) but also with the several hundred tribal communities of the country who live in the Hill areas as well as in the plain districts of Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Sylhet and in the plains forests in Dhaka, Tangail, Mymensingh and Jamalpur. Bangladesh had to go under a several political, social, economical and natural changes during the last three hundred years. The plain land Bengalis could better accommodate the changing situation than the tribal communities. As the land was ruled by the leader of the plains, state policy went in favor of them. The plain land Bengalis, the state itself, sometimes the nature also were the hostile host of the tribal. Land grabbing is one of the major problems faced by tribal people all over the country. Land is taken by force, fraud or bribery. In many cases, powerful locals in the regions have muscled out illegally acquiring tribal-owned land, through pillage, murder and fire. Successive governments have carried out successive re-settlement programs, ousting the tribal populace from their settlements and agricultural land and bringing in Bengalis from the plain land.

The tribal people are very friendly with nature for their shelter and food. The nature is exposed with its plenty of resources to the tribals. The common pool resources like the forest, jungle, hills, haors, baors, rivers, bills, and marshland were the main sources of their food. They could easily collect their livelihood without depending on others. Due to multi-sectoral industrial advancement the nature is being destroyed. Every sector's performance is measured with market economy, not with ethical and traditional value. That is why the forest, jungle, hills, haors, baors, rivers, bills, marshland are used for commercial purpose. The tribals are losing their sources for living. The plain land tribal; Santal, Hajong, Dalu, patro, Mahatro, Khashi, pahan, Oraon were basically dependent on bills, forest, marshland, jungle to collect food. Now they are passing a crisis hour as their area of living gets shrunken rapidly. They are to shift their age old profession and face livelihood crisis. Now it is very urgent for the government to give attention to the plain land tribal and take time bound steps for their professional and economic rehabilitation. Special arrangements are to be made for the tribal so that they can continue their way of living restoring own culture which will also enrich the national cultural heritage. Thus the constitutional guarantees will be ensured that all citizens of Bangladesh are equal in the eyes of the law and that there shall be no discrimination against any person.

List of Tables

- Table 2.1 : District wise Santal population**
- Table 2.2 : Upazilla wise santal population in Dinajpur district**
- Table 4.1 : Comparative profession of past and present**
- Table 4.2 : The livelihood and the adaptation capability of the santal in the context of declining CPR as observed by the key informants**

List of Figures

Figure 2.01	Livelihood Frame work by DFID
Figure 2.02	Poverty situations (%) among plain land adibasi in 2008
Figure 2.03	Household Assets among <i>adibasi</i>
Figure 2.04	Deprivation situations among <i>adibasi</i>
Figure 3.01	Map of Dinajpur district
Figure 3.02	Analytical Frame work
Figure 4.01	Age and Sex division of the respondents
Figure 4.02	Schooling statuses of the respondents
Figure 4.03	Schooling levels of the respondents
Figure 4.04	Comparative profession of past and present
Figure 4.05	Knowledge on school assistance program and Sending children to school
Figure 4.06	Use of CPR past and present
Figure 4.07	Comparative use CPR- past and present
Figure 4.08	Respondents' opinion on declining CPR
Figure 4.09	Affordability to meet the shortage of CPR
Figure 4.10	Way to manage of alternative items for CPR
Figure 4.11	Access to CPR by the respondents
Figure 4.12	Obstacles to use CPR
Figure 4.13	Daily earning of the respondents
Figure 4.14	Meeting the basic needs by daily earning
Figure 4.15	Way to meet the crisis
Figure 4.16	Availability of jobs and use of off day
Figure 4.17	Savings by the respondents
Figure 4.18	Starvation during critical season: Past and Present
Figure 4.19	Frequency of meeting doctor by the respondents
Figure 4.20	Sanitation Coverage
Figure 4.21	Household assets

- Figure 4.22 Ratio of land assets
- Figure 4.23 Purchase and Sell ratio of land assets
- Figure 4.24 Information of livestock.
- Figure 4.25 Participation in election

List of Acronyms

AC (Land)	Assistant Commissioner (Land)
B.C	before Christ
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka
CPR	Common Pool Resource
CRC	Conventions on Child Right
DAE	Department of Agriculture Extension
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DFID	Department for International Development
DFO	Divisional Forest officer
DPHE	Department of Public Health Engineering
EBSATA	East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act
FWA	Family Welfare Assistance
FWV	Family Welfare Visitor
GR	Grant Relief
ILO	International Labor Organization
LG	Local Government
NGO	Non-Government Organization
SSP	Social Safety net Program
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UNO	Upazilla Nirbahi Officer
VGd	Vulnerable Group Development
VGf	Vulnerable Group Feeding

Table of Contents

<i>Declaration</i>	i
<i>Dedicated To</i>	ii
<i>Acknowledgement</i>	iii
<i>Abstract</i>	iv
<i>List of Tables</i>	v
<i>List of Figures</i>	vi
<i>List of Acronyms</i>	viii
Table of Contents	ix
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Problem Statement	2
1.3 Research Questions	2
1.4 Objectives of the Study:	3
1.5 Significance of the Study	3
1.6 Scope of the Research	4
1.7 The Key Concepts Used in the study	5
1.8 Organization of the Report.....	6
CHAPTER TWO	7
THE SANTALS: ORIGIN, CULTURE AND THEIR LIVELIHOOD	7
2.1 The Santal Community in Bangladesh.....	7
2.1.1 Arrival of the Santal Community in Bangladesh	7
2.1.2 The Santal Community in the British Period (1757-1947)	7

2.1.3 The Santal Revolutions	8
2.1.4 The Santals in Pakistan Period (1947-1971).....	9
2.1.5 The Santal People in Independent Period (1971, 9 months).....	9
2.1.6 The Santal People after Liberation (1971 to 2009).....	10
2.1.7 The Santal Population in Bangladesh	11
2.1.8 The Santal Community in Dinajpur	12
2.2 The Santal Community: Origin and Culture	13
2.2.1 Origin	13
2.2.2 Language.....	13
2.2.3 Religion.....	14
2.2.4 The Santali Festival and Amusement.....	14
2.2.5 Judicial System	15
2.2.6 The Customs of the Santals.....	15
2.3 Livelihood of the Santal Community	16
2.3.1 The DFID Livelihood Framework	16
2.3.2 Livelihood Assets/ Capitals of the Santal Community	18
2.3.3 Vulnerability Context for the Santals.....	26
2.3.4 Structure and Processes.....	31
2.4 Legal Status of the Santal Community.....	32
CHAPTER THREE	35
THE METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAT FRAMEWORK.....	35
3.1 The Study Area and Sample Size	35
3.2 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection	36
3.2.1 Research Method	36
3.2.2 Data Collection Techniques	37

3.3 Limitations	37
3.4 Analytical Framework.....	38
CHAPTER FOUR.....	40
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	40
4.1 Profile of the Respondents	40
4.2 Nature and Manifestation of Changes in the Selected Assets of livelihood of the Santal community due to the Dwindling of CPR:.....	41
4.2.1 Changes in Human Capital and Findings.....	41
4.2.2 Changes in Natural Capital and Findings:	44
4.2.3 Changes in Financial Capital and Findings.....	49
4.2.4 Changes in Physical Assets and Findings:	55
4.2.5 Changes in Social Capital and Findings:	57
4.3 The Local Coping and Adaptation Strategy of the Santal Community.....	58
4.3.1 Adaptation in Human Capital	58
4.3.2 Adaptation in Natural Capital	59
4.3.3 Adaptation in Financial Capital	59
4.3.4 Adaptation in Physical Capital.....	60
4.3.5 Adaptation in Social capital	60
4.3.6 Findings on the Adaptation Strategy of the Santals	60
4.4 Observation from Key Informants on the Adaptation Capability of the Santals and Findings.....	61
CHAPTER FIVE	66
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONs AND RECOMMENDATIONS	66
5.1 General Findings of the Study.....	66
5.2 Conclusions	67
5.3 Specific Recommendations	68

5.3.1 Policy Level Recommendations.....	68
5.3.2 Implementation Level Recommendations.....	69
5.4 Implications for Future Research	70
References.....	70

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to highlight the research background, problem statement, scope and significance of the research. To have the idea of the research area, this chapter gives the research questions and the objectives of the study. Finally, the concept of the key words used in the title and the outline or composition of the dissertation is included here.

1.1 Background

The Santals who are largely concentrated in the districts of Rajshahi, Naogaon, Nawabganj, Dinajpur and Rangpur are one of the oldest tribal groups in Bangladesh. The Santals have to face multidimensional changes in their economic, financial, religious and cultural life due to the expansion of education, market penetration, technology, bad political culture and increasing interaction with the mainstream population. They are mainly hunters and gatherers. They largely depend on the common pool resources (CPR) like forests, *beels* and *haors* and above all on agro-economy for their livelihood. Because of the technical and industrial development and increasing in populace, the area of forest, *beels* and *haors* is reduced as well as the mode of agriculture is changed to technology based methods replacing human labor. As a result the Santal community gets a limited access to the common pool resources and their sources of collecting food are squeezed. They have to find out alternatives for existence. Furthermore, frequent political changes, malpractices of politics, rising of muscle men and bustle of land grabbers compel them to lose their minimum land property. It makes them helpless and they seek after assistance from anywhere. The Christian missionaries take the advantage and expand their assistance to them and the Santals, a larger ethnic community of our country, have to change their age old traditional religious belief to get the financial support. The Christianization process has brought tremendous changes in their religious beliefs, traditions and life styles. Thus the Santals are losing their religion, culture as well as the areas of livelihood. As they are the citizens of this state, they deserve adequate and time bound attention from the government. It is now important to know how much attention and steps the government offers for them to cope with the changed situation.

1.2 Problem Statement

The Santal community among other tribals is not an insignificant member in our country. In almost eighteen districts they have been living for a long time. They came in our country only in search of food. The then landlords used them for their own interest as the Santal labor was very cheaper. Still they sell their labor in cheaper rate in compare with the plain land Bengalis. The Santal community is less dependent on day labor as they have the habit of collecting food from the nature. They organize their community near forest, jungle and *beel* area so that these become very easy sources of their livelihood. Due to industrialization and increase in population, the area of unused land decreases. Ultimately it decreases the moving space of the Santal community. The common pool resources have got characterization of private goods. Displacement of nature also displaces the normal way of living of the Santal community. Though constitutionally every citizen deserves equal attention from the state, the Santals are still treated as *adibasi* ignoring their basic demands of education, health care, employment, etc. During the past few decades the plain land Bengalis could improve their financial condition remarkably, whereas the tribals including the Santal community are losing their moveable and immoveable properties gradually. There is rare example where the Santal community people have improved their financial conditions. There is provision for quota system in recruitment to take the backward section of the society on the main track but the Santals are not qualified enough to reach the level of getting quota facilities. That is why the Santals including some other tribals need more extended cooperation to walk together with the mainstream population. It demands special attentions to spread education among them and create special employment generating scopes for them. The government should take policy which will eliminate social discrimination and provide equal opportunity for the Santals to avail all the benefits the state offers. To ensure the future existence of the Santal community, they should be given the favorable area of income generation with appropriate training and motivation. In addition special measures need to be taken to preserve their culture as well as our national cultural heritage.

1.3 Research Questions

Considering the above problem statement, the research has been carried out with a view to answering the following questions:

1. What are the impacts on the livelihood pattern of the Santal community due to the decline in common pool resources?
2. How is the Santal community growing capability to cope with the change?

1.4 Objectives of the Study:

The present study pursues the following objectives:

- 1) To find out the scale and manifestation of change in the life of the Santal community due to the decline in common pool resources in the study area.
- 2) To identify how the studied community is adapting to the changing situation.
- 3) Based on the overall observation of the study, to furnish recommendations towards improving the situation.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Since the independence of Bangladesh, the country's achievements have been substantial:

Bangladesh has all the potentials to become a middle income country by 2021. According to The Guardian, the national daily at London, Bangladesh will surpass the western countries in terms of economic growth by 2050. ... Bangladesh is now almost self-sufficient in food production, 35.7 million tons produced per year which is three times as those of 1971. ... In terms of inward remittance Bangladesh is the seventh largest country in the world and the second largest in South Asia. .. Rate of poverty has decreased significantly. It was more than 70% four decades ago which has come down to only 31.5% in 2010 and is below 29% at present. ... The per capita income was about US\$100 before independence which has now reached to US\$ 850 (Rahman, 2013).

Most of these advancements and achievements have benefitted the mainstream population. The small and indigenous communities here remain in the margin. The economic development has become possible at the cost of environmental damage. The CPR decreases due to the industrialization, urbanization and technological development. Because of the increasing pressure of population, they are compelled to clear the jungle and forest for habitation. The '*beels*' and '*haors*' are leased out and used as commercial fishery grounds. Because of using insecticide many insects and animals like crab, tortoise snail, decreases rapidly. So a great store

of natural food is about to be closed for the Santals. The ethnic community is an important part of our population. Development without addressing the ethnic inhabitants is not sustainable and holistic. The constitution of Bangladesh and international treaty and convention give the ethnic people sufficient attention. But in practice the issues are neglected. The government should formulate effective policies and strategies to address the need and practical situation. So the present study is clearly significant for the following reasons:

- The Santal community, comprises of the most disadvantaged sections of the country, deserves more attention.
- More researches/studies need to be done on the life and culture of the Santal community in the present context to find out the complexities they are suffering from, and also the opportunities they can avail to overcome the complexities.
- This research may inform and help the government and the other central authorities to formulate appropriate policy regarding the common pool resources and the indigenous communities.

1.6 Scope of the Research

The research is focused on the impact of declining common pool resources on the profession and lifestyle of the Santals. The profession of the Santal people is an important factor in our GDP. So undoubtedly it has a significance to go deep into the live and livelihood of this part of people. In Bangladesh, so far the availability of research works, it is deemed that there is scope of research more in the field of nature and the life related to nature. The Santal people of Dinajpur district are selected for this study. One of the main reasons of selecting the study area is that a total of around 50 thousand Santal people, which is one third of total Santal population of this country, live in this district, whereas the total Santal population in Bangladesh is around 140 thousand living in 18 districts. Another intention in selecting the study area is that the northern part of Bangladesh faces a great change in climate due to deforestation which impacts on ecosystem as well as on the livelihood of this area. Again as this district is not advanced in industrialization there is a little scope for especial employment generation. These factors lead to more research which may focus on alternative solutions to the problems and contribute to poverty reduction. So the selection of the study area deserves strong justification.

1.7 The Key Concepts Used in the study

Decline

The word ‘decline’ means a continuous decrease in the number, value quality, etc of something (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary). It also means to become or cause to become smaller or less or fewer in size, amount, intensity, or degree (www.thefreedictionary.com/livelihood as on 04 February, 2014).

Common Pool Resource (CPR)

Common pool resource/good is a type of good consisting of a natural or human-made resource system which does not exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from it and which has rivalries. Examples of common resources include irrigation systems, fishing grounds, pastures, forests, water, etc. Common resources are permitted to use by all but excessive use decreases the scope of use by others. A pasture, for instance, allows for a certain amount of grazing occurring each year without the core resource being harmed. In the case of excessive grazing, however, the pasture may become more prone to erosion and eventually yield less benefit to its users. A major concern with common resources is overuse, especially when there are poor social-management systems in place to protect the core resource (<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/common-resource.asp>, as on 04 February, 2014).

Livelihood

The word livelihood refers to ‘a means of securing the necessities of life’. It indicates the financial means whereby one lives covering; occupation, work, employment, job, maintenance, subsistence, sustenance, (means of) support, (source of) income. A person's livelihood refers to their ‘means of securing the basic necessities of life -food, water, shelter and clothing’. Livelihood is defined as a set of activities, involving securing water, food, fodder, medicine, shelter, clothing and the capacity to acquire above necessities working either individually or as a group by using endowments (both human and material) for meeting the requirements of the self and his/her household on a sustainable basis with dignity (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Livelihood> as on 04 February, 2014).

The Santals

The Santals (also spelled as *Santhal*, formerly also spelt as *Sonthal* or *Sontal*) is one of the largest communities living in the northern district of Bangladesh especially in Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Naogaon and Nawabganj. They first came in the Bengal from India in 12 century. They are still the largest tribal community in the state of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha and Assam of India (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santhal_people as on 03 February, 2014).

1.8 Organization of the Report

The dissertation Report is organized into four chapters.

Chapter One- Introduction: It explains the background of the study, the research problems, significance of the research, scope of the research and the objectives. The concept of the key words and organization of the report are also focused in this chapter.

Chapter Two- The Santals: Origin, Culture and Their Livelihood: This chapter highlights the history of the Santal people in Bangladesh. It also focuses on their anthropological background, culture, livelihood pattern and the challenges they face.

Chapter Three- The Methodology and Analytical Framework of the study: This chapter is about the research method, tools and techniques of data collection, sources of data, and data analysis techniques applied in the research work. It also explains the analytical framework indicating independent variable, dependent variable and the measuring indicators.

Chapter Four- Data Analysis and Discussion: This chapter presents the survey data analysis in accordance with the research objectives and the appropriate arguments with findings.

Chapter Five- Summery, Conclusions and Recommendations: The final chapter summarizes the whole findings of the study by suggesting some recommendations classifying the policy level recommendations and the functional/ operational recommendations on the basis of field observation and finally draws attention to the scope of further research.

So, the first chapter gives us a clear concept of why the study will be done. We come to know the research questions and the objectives that the study takes in consideration. Moreover, this chapter clarifies the meaning of the key words used in the research title.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SANTALS: ORIGIN, CULTURE AND THEIR LIVELIHOOD

This chapter attempts to present the idea about the Santal community on different aspects. We will come to know when they arrive in the Indian sub-continent especially in Bangladesh. It covers the origin, culture, religious customs, food habit, language and the festivals the Santal community celebrates. The financial and social condition of the Santals in different political regimes is highlighted here. The chapter has also provided the concept of livelihood pattern covering vulnerability context and the physical assets of the studied group.

2.1 The Santal Community in Bangladesh

2.1.1 Arrival of the Santal Community in Bangladesh

The Santals came to the agricultural-rich Indian sub-continent for their livelihood. Exactly when the Santals landed in the territory of present Bangladesh is not accurately known. Some people believe that the *Kherwars* (Santals) reached the land of Bengal immediately after the first clashes with the invading Aryan tribes (2500 B.C.). It is probable that the Santals scattered throughout Bengal at the time of the Muslim invasion of this region during the last decades of the 12th century or at the beginning of the 13th century. The Santals retired progressively toward more calm regions or where it was easier to defend (themselves) from the invaders... (Pussetto, 2003). In 1836 the British government selected an area for the Santals to live peacefully, later on the area was known as Santal Pargana (*Adibasi Janogoshi, Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2007*). The zaminders used to employ them as laborers to their advantages in agriculture and agriculture related activities.

2.1.2 The Santal Community in the British Period (1757-1947)

The Bengal region was ruled by the British from 1757 to 1947. It is believed that between 1840 and 1940, the Santals came to Bangladesh from Bihar and Santal Pargana of India for settlement. During British period they migrated to different areas including Bangladesh in search of

employment, such as agricultural laborers, laborers for installing railway tracks, laborers for clearing forest and reclamation of agricultural land (Anwar, 1984). During that period, the Santals were hired as construction laborers when the British government took initiative to build a railway communication in this area. Some anthropologists and researchers state that the Santals inhabited the plain land of north Bengal, mainly in the districts of greater Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra, Rangpur, and Dinajpur of Bangladesh. The Santals worked under Zaminders, *Jotedars* and *Mohajons* (the agents of British administration) and had to clean the forest for cultivation and for which they were permitted to live in ‘their’ (administrators) land without tax. Therefore, the Santals became settlers through the cultivation in that particular land as they fulfilled the land owner’s requirements (Bleie, 2005). In this period all land reforms and land rights laws by the British, for instance The Permanent Settlement Regulation of 1793, The Bengal Tenancy Act 1885, The State Acquisition and Tenancy Act 1950, and so on, went against the interest of the Santals (Rahman, 2002). Subsequently the Santals moved forward to rebellion to establish their rights over their lands.

2.1.3 The Santal Revolutions

The Santals, a peace loving community, have never been found interested in politics. They have always reacted at the last moment when things went severely painful, they were pushed against the wall, and they could not bear anymore. Baba Tilka Majhi was the first Santal leader who raised weapons against the British rule in 1789. It was due to the great famine in 1770 and the consequences of “Court of Directors” orders influenced by British Prime Minister Pitt the Younger. Baba Tilka Majhi made bold step to kill one of the British lieutenants with arrows from the top of a banyan tree. Later Baba Tilka Majhi was hanged till death from the same tree to show exemplary punishment for such deeds. The historic Santal Revolution in 1855-56, the *Tebhaga andolon* (share croppers’ movement) in 1945, and the *Nachol Bidroho* (farmers’ revolution) in the year 1950 are the concrete examples of the Santal revolutions. The Santals were the first who fought against The Permanent Settlement Act of Lord Cornwallis during 1855. During 1850 some of the then Santal leaders- Sidhu Murmu, Kanhu Murmu, Chand Murmu and Bhairo Murmu hoarded around 85,000 Santals to wage a war against the British to object all the laws which were against to their interest. The Santals with their entire musical instrument (like *Tumdak*, *Tamak*, *Banam*, and *Trio*) and weapons (*Aag-Saar*, *Kapi*, *Tarwade*)

started moving towards Kolkata. But they had to face the British Army on the way and could not able to reach Kolkata.

2.1.4 The Santals in Pakistan Period (1947-1971)

In 1947 indigenous people had various kinds of rights under the Zaminder Act. The Zaminder Act was eliminated in 1951 and The East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act (EBSATA) were enacted, but the indigenous people did not get their tenurial rights. The State Acquisition and Tenancy Act aimed to abolish the rent receiving Zamindery system. Many indigenous people or *Adibasi* were partially or fully unsuccessful in gaining ownership rights in 1951/52 and the actual reasons were found to be the absence of the required legal deeds (Bleie, 2005).

During this period, many Bengali Hindus and Santal people directly or indirectly were threatened by the new Muslim East Bengal/ Pakistan and hastily sold off all fixed property and fled. The Santal leaders and other indigenous people and Bengali cultivator activists who joined the uprising were cruelly killed by the police and their local collaborators. Knowing that the risk of legal prosecution was minimal, some Muslims targeted indigenous individuals and households with brutal attacks, land grabbing, and more subtle forms of legal trickery. It is almost impossible to document quantitatively the massive losses of indigenous land in the Pakistan period. (Bleie, 2005)

Indigenous people realized that their life would never be peaceful in Pakistan (Uddin, 2008). Consequently, many indigenous people fled from their homes to India in 1950.

2.1.5 The Santal People in Independent Period (1971, 9 months)

The Santal people too played an important role in liberation war even at the cost of their lives and wealth. During the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971 against Pakistan, the Santals, like other indigenous people, took part in liberating their country. Being indigenous people and being non-Muslim, they were against the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and hoped for a secular independent country. The Santal participated with the freedom fighters of Bangladesh; Pakistani forces had been used by other Bengali Muslims against the indigenous people at the village areas

by identifying them as supporters of the Liberation Force and as pro-Indian, and took the advantage of looting their houses and occupying their lands (Uddin, 2008).

2.1.6 The Santal People after Liberation (1971 to 2009)

The birth of a new Bangladesh could not bring something good for the Santal people. They had to face new obstacle losing land and labor. After the Liberation War in 1971, people of this country dreamt for a new secular Bangladesh where '*rule of law*', fundamental human rights and freedom, and equality and justice within political, social and economic conditions, would be secured for all citizens without discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth (Rahman, 2002). But within a very short time the truth came out in front of the country. Like other aboriginal people, the Santals have not been recognized by the state as "indigenous people" of the country. They are basically recognized as a "backward section" of the people. The indigenous people, including the Santals, experienced displacement from their traditional lands in the name of development without receiving any compensation for the damages sustained.

They are deprived of in all areas, including within the spheres of social status, economic power and culture, and are ignored by the mainstream people. The realities of social, economical and political aspects of Bangladesh have forced them to try to merge with the mainstream Bengali population. They became poorer among the poor people and feel helpless in every step of their lives (Kamal, et al 2003).

In the period between 1971 and 1997, the debt relationship through mortgages was commonly first mode of land transfer by the Santals. The miserable situation of the Santal community began with debt relationships through mortgages of land and it came to an end with the total loss of land by grabbing. Historically the Santals have had a close relationship with their land around which their entire lives revolve. Therefore these gradual and steady processes of land grabbing are not only an obstacle against their entire lifestyle but are also a grim human rights infringement.

2.1.7 The Santal Population in Bangladesh

The People of the Santal community are found mostly in the northern districts of Bangladesh. Around one third of the Santal population lives in Dinajpur district. They are also found in the districts of Tagoregaon, Panchagarh, Rangpur, Bogra, Rajshahi, Nawabganj, Natore, Naogaon, Sirajganj, Joypurhat, Nilphamari, and Gaibandha.

Table 2.1: District wise Santal population

Sl. No.	Name of the Districts	Santal Population (as on census 2011)
01	Dinajpur	49,861
02	Rajshahi	26,469
03	Nawabganj	6,228
04	Natore	2,496
05	Naogaon	24,409
06	Sirajganj	621
07	Joypurhat	2,689
08	Bogra	881
09	Gaibandha	3,087
10	Nilphamari	9
11	Panchagarh	920
12	Rangpur	5,645
13	Tagoregaon	6,382
14	Hobigonj	6,450
15	Moulavibazar	6,245
16	Meherpur	8
17	Chuadanga	590
18	Satkhira	105
Total		1,43,425

(Source: Population Census 2011, BBS)

According to the census of 2011, the Santals resulted present also in the southern districts of Meherpur, Chuadanga, and Satkhira. Some population of them have been living in Hobigonj and Moulavibazar as they, saying is there, migrated from the northern area to work in tea gardens. According to the census of 2011 the total ethnic population is 15, 86,141 (1.10% of our total population). The total ethnic household is 3, 56,175 (1.11% of total household). The Santal population living in the said 18 districts is 1, 43,425 (8.96% of ethnic population and 0.09% of our total population (BBS, 2011).

2.1.8 The Santal Community in Dinajpur

The total population of Dinajpur district is 29, 90,128 whereas the number of the Santal population living here is 49,861 which is 1.67% of the district's total population (Population census 2011). It is already said that one third of the total Santal population live in Dinajpur district. This population spread all the Upazilas of the district.

Table 2.2: Upazila wise santal population in Dinajpur district

Sl. no.	Name of upazila	Santal Population
1	Birampur	5605
2	Birganj	6880
3	Biral	3257
4	Bochaganj	2322
5	Chirirbandar	2478
6	Fulbari	3956
7	Ghoraghat	4929
8	Hakimpur	1868
9	Kaharole	3305
10	Khansama	386
11	Dinajpursadar	4191
12	Parbatipur	3180
13	Nawabganj	8496
Total		49861

(Source: Population Census 2011, BBS)

2.2 The Santal Community: Origin and Culture

2.2.1 Origin

The Santals also spelled as Santhal (formerly also spelt as Sontal or Sonthal)), is one of the largest tribal communities in Bangladesh. The Santals belong to the Proto-Australoid group, who arrived in Indian sub-continent soon after the Negritos. The Santals are short in stature, having broad flat nose with a sunken nose ridge, wavy and curly hair. They share all these characteristics with other primitive tribes in the same group. The tribal structure of the Santals is totemistic and the clans are patrilinear. The issue of the Santal's historical origin and settlement is a controversial one (Bleie, 2005). The name of the community is SANTAL. SAN means partner, company or friends. The community has been given such name because it is believed that they would like to live and move from one place to another all together (Barkat et al, 2002). On the other hand, some of the anthropologists think that they are from 'Saoot' or 'Samantoral' (plain land) and thus they are recognized as Santal and some other believe that their previous name was 'Kherwar' (*Adibasi Janogoshti, Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2007*). Despite different names from different anthropologists, the word 'Santal' has now become the standard form in English literature (Pussetto, 2003).

2.2.2 Language

The language spoken by the Santals is Santali. The Santali language is a part of the Austro-Asiatic family. The Santali script is a relatively recent innovation. The Santals did not have a written language until the twentieth century and it used Latin/Roman, Devnagri, Oriya and Bangla writing systems. Paul Olaf Bodding, (born at Gjøvik, Norway on 2 November 1865, died Odense, Denmark on 25 September 1938) who was a Norwegian missionary, linguist and folklorist serving in India for 44 years (1889–1933), created the first alphabet of Santali language and wrote the first grammar for the Santali-speaking native people in eastern India (*Adibasi Janogoshti, Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2007*). In Santal inhabited rural areas, they speak to each other in Santali language. But when they speak to others, they speak in Bengali. Their children generally learn both the languages at their early ages.

2.2.3 Religion

The Santal people thinks the soul is immortal as well as the creator is immortal. The Santal religion worships *Marang buru* (big hill) or *Bonga* as supreme deity. The weight of belief falls on a court of spirits (*Bonga*), who handles different aspects of the world and who must be placated with prayers and offerings in order to ward off all evil influences. They believe that *Marang Buru* first looked after them, feed them, clothed them, gave them sex and taught them brewing of rice beer. A yearly round of rituals connected with the agricultural cycle, along with life-cycle rituals for birth, marriage and burial at death, involve petitions to the spirits and offerings that include the sacrifice of animals, usually birds. Religious leaders are male specialists in medical cures who practice divination and witchcraft (*Adibasi Janogoshi, Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2007*).

2.2.4 The Santali Festival and Amusement

The Santal community mainly prefers group performance than solo. Group dancing and singing is the most important medium to express their joy and happiness. The most well known dance form of the Santals is a group of women with interlocked hands forming a semicircle, encircling a relatively smaller group of male percussionists at the centre. The *Dasai* dance is performed only by males of the community on festive occasions. *Langre*, *Guluri*, and *Humti* are danced all the year round, whereas *Baha* and *Sohorai* are only for festive seasons. In social ceremonies like marriage, *Dong* is danced. The Santali songs also have similar variety like their dance. The Santali word for song is "*Sereng*". The Santali culture is depicted in the paintings and artworks in the walls of their houses.

The Santals celebrate loads of festivals in different occasions. The Santals follow cycle of nature and agricultural term to celebrate festivals accordingly. They celebrate these festivals to invoke the nature for increase their wealth and free them from all the enemies. They celebrate festivals like *Sohorai*- from the end of *Paush* up to the entire month of *Magh*, *Karam*- in *Aswin* (September- October) in order to have increased wealth and progeny and to get rid of the evil spirits, *Disumsendra*- to celebrate hunting on the eve of *Baishakhi Purnima*, *Ero*- Paddy sowing festival, *Jamtala Bonga*- festival to celebrate when the ear of paddy hangs downward exclusively in the year when crop is destroyed due to scanty rainfall, *Makar Parva*- the prime

festival of the Santal celebrated with pomp and grandeur in the month of *Paush* (January) when the paddy reaping is half done and the mind is free from all lures and anxieties (*Interview, on 15 March, 2014, Nicholas Murmu, Khattapara, Hakimpur, Dinajpur*).

2.2.5 Judicial System

The Santal community traditionally had an organized judicial system for the management and solution of the various problems within the community. They make every effort to solve the social problems arising within their community by themselves. The Santali system of governance is known as *Manjhi– Paragana* which may be compared to Local Self Governance. This body is responsible for making decisions to restructure the village's socio-economic condition. The head of the Santal community is called *Manjhi Hadam* (headman of village). He is the chief of the executive, judicial and all other functions within the society. He is assisted by other office bearers like *Paranik, Jagmanjhi, Jagparanik, Naike, Gudit*, etc.

2.2.6 The Customs of the Santals

Birth is regarded as a very joyous occasion in the society of the Santals. After the birth of a child, the Santal midwife or *Gaasibudhi* cuts the umbilical cord of the child with an arrow and buries it near the door. The child is named on the day of the birth or on any odd numbered day following birth. The first-born son is given the name of his grandfather; and the second male child will be named from maternal side. He is also given another name for calling him. After birth of the child the family has to provide feast to the villagers. Kinship and Social Network, the Santals are a patrilineal ethnic group where descent is reckoned through male lines. They have a patrilineal society where father is generally the household head. But females are also given significant importance as they also contribute economically in the household. The ritual of marriage generally comes in the life of all boys and girls of the Santals. Monogamy is the usual form of marriage. Bigamy is also allowed. Levirate and Surrogate marriage are possible depending on the situation. Premarital relation within lineage group is not allowed. The death during old age is taken good because it brings occasion of transformation of body and soul of a person. The dead body is buried or cremated. Only male members participate in death rituals. The dead are cremated as well as buried. The entire village has to mourn the death. After seven days the Santals purify themselves by bathing in a river. Family is the smallest unit of social organization

in the Santal society. Family is nuclear, husband-wife and their unmarried children. Married son established their own family and married daughter leave the house to lead a family with their husband. The Santal tribe is divided into 12 clans or Parish. They are (1) *Kisku* (rulers) (2) *Hasda*, (3) *Murmu* (priest)) (4) *Hambrom* (judges) (5) *Mardi* (businessman) (6) *Sauren* (soldiers) (7) *Tudu* (musician) (8) *Baski* (9) *Besra* (10) *Pauria* (11) *Gua Soren* (12) *Chaure* (*Adibasi Janogoshti, Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2007*).

2.3 Livelihood of the Santal Community

The present study attempts to focus the impacts of the declining CPR on the livelihood of the Santals. So it requires to highlight the concept of livelihood as well as to draw an outline of the Santals' lifestyle in a recognized framework. Here the DFID livelihood framework is presented and different livelihood components of the Santal community are discussed in brief.

2.3.1 The DFID Livelihood Framework

The livelihood framework developed by DFID is a comprehensive approach towards poverty assessment and reduction. This framework does not measure poverty with traditional or narrow set of indicators like income and productivity. It consists of five major components.

1. Vulnerability Context: It describes the external uncontrollable factors that influence people's assets and livelihood opportunities. These factors are classified as; **Shocks**- environmental and manmade imbalances, **Trends**- resources and technology, **Seasonality**- price fluctuations, employment opportunities.

2. Livelihood Assets: The DFID framework outlines assets in terms of five categories necessary for the pursuit of positive livelihood outcomes:

- a) **Human Capital:** Amount and quality of knowledge and labor available in household.
- b) **Natural Capital:** Natural resources ranging from fisheries to airy quality.
- c) **Financial Capital:** Savings and regular inflows of money.
- d) **Physical Capital:** Infrastructure, tools and equipments used for productivity.
- e) **Social Capital:** Networking for cooperation, mutual trust and support.

3. Transforming Structure and Processes: In this framework structure refers to the organizations that create and enforce legislation, provide the necessary requirements for acquiring and capitalizing assets.

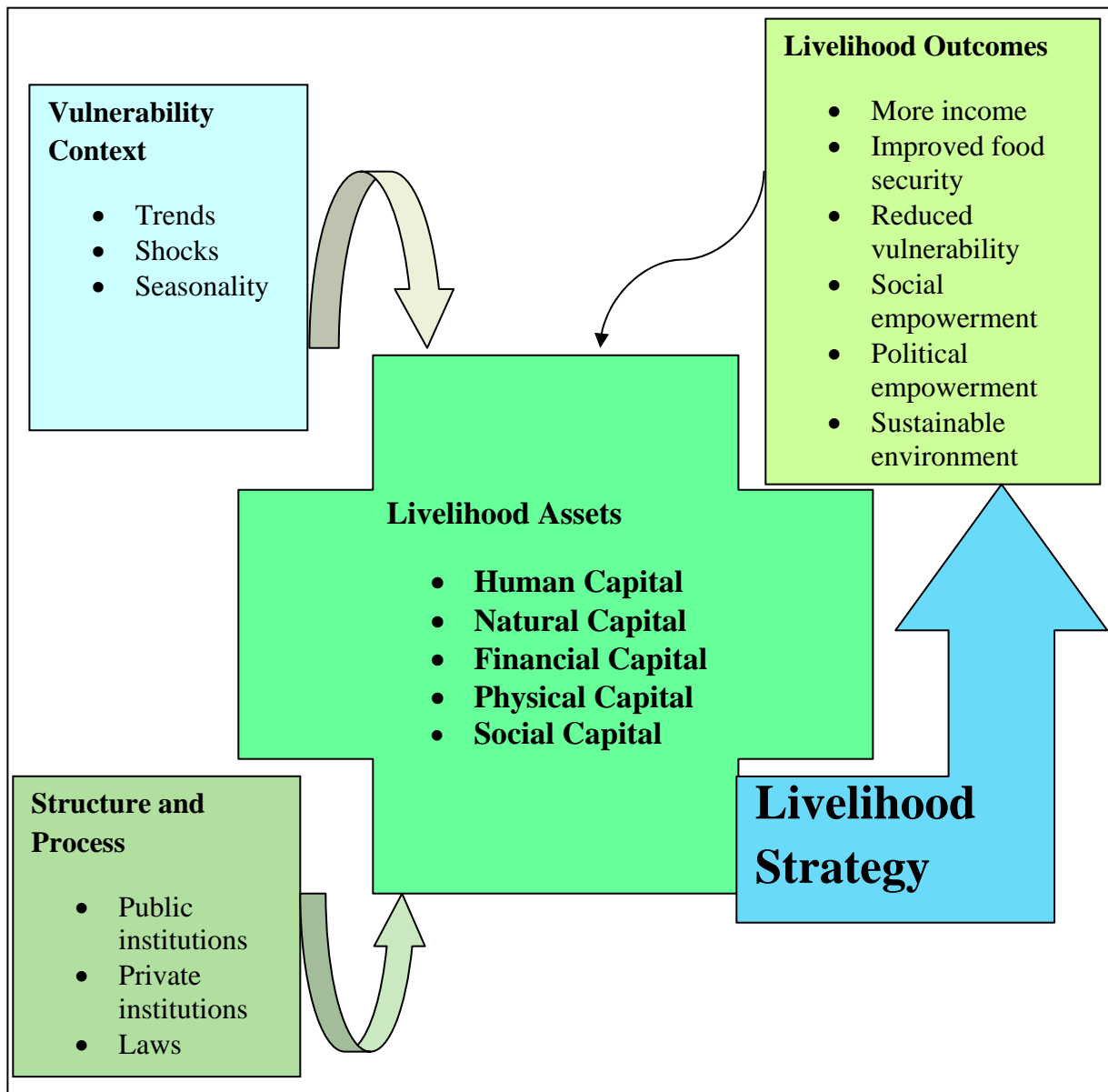


Figure 2.1 The Livelihood Frame work (as suggested by DFID)

Source: Adapted from <http://www.eldis.org/vfile/upload/1/document/0901/section2.pdf>, viewed on 15 August, 2014).

4. Livelihood Strategies: Livelihood strategies concern the individual's available and implemented options for pursuing livelihood goals. The greater the diversity of livelihood strategies, the higher the household's resilience to the shocks, trends, and seasonality conditions within the vulnerability context.

5. Livelihood Outcomes: Livelihood outcomes refer to the outputs of livelihood strategies. Achievements may include higher income, self-esteem, physical security, political empowerment, reduced vulnerability, greater food security, improved environmental sustainability.

Due to the poverty reduction initiatives taken by the government, the household takes the benefit to utilize their different capitals and change their economic and financial conditions. It depends on the capability of the users to maximize the capitals. The household poverty remains or shifts in the four categories.

- **Never Poor-** This type of household is always rich or never poor as they possess all the capitals.
- **Ascending Poor-** This type of household could shift their condition from poor to non poor or solvency through better use of capitals.
- **Descending Poor-** This type of household could not better use of capitals because of vulnerability context and so they shift from non poor to poor.
- **Always Poor-** This type of household always remains in the box of poverty as they do not have much capitals/ Livelihood assets.

2.3.2 Livelihood Assets/ Capitals of the Santal Community

1. Human Capital of the Santals

The Santals are generally not literate. They cannot acquire such level of education that may enable them to get job competing with the mainland people though there is a quota provision. Illiteracy, absence of organizational set up and lack of genuine leadership have kept the Santals far from achieving any end result. In recent years, some of the Santals have been found to take active role in the local politics by their participation in the local election.

The Santals are often victims to frauds due to illiteracy. Sometimes the social leaders and the government officials are instrumental in the rise of this kind of frauds. The illiterate Santal people are informed one thing and the written deed contains another. The differences between the verbal agreements and the written ones about the sale-and-purchase of their lands remain unknown to them. Once upon a time it is revealed to them and they are displaced. Some of the government officials in the Department of Land and Registration are accomplices in this kind of fraudulent documentations. Most of the *adibasi* are not aware or even do not know the way to protect their properties. Though literacy rate among the Santals is generally very low, recently changes are apparent.

Christian Missions have established schools in and around the Santal villages that the Santal children get inspiration to go to schools. Christian Missionaries make routine visits to villages for motivating the parents to send their children to schools where they can have free education, free books and other facilities.

The Santals who are adopted and educated by the Christian missionaries were in a better position. It is observed that the Santals who are converted were more attracted by the prospect of social advancement and political protection (generally promised and/or offered by the Christian Missions) than by the promise of spiritual salvation (Anwar, 1984).

The Christian missionaries, along with spreading education and advocating for education, try to motivate the Santals to get converted into Christianity saying that if they become converted Christianity; they will have better prosperity and socio-economic security. Interestingly enough that the third/fourth generation converted Christian children usually do not even know the Santali language.

The Santal laborers were considered very efficient and they easily found employments in coal mines. They were relocated to less colonized parts of greater Bengal and to north-eastern regions where cheap labor was urgently needed such as in indigo and tea plantations. Some were resettled and turned into peasant, others became day laborers. However, when they migrated to

Bangladesh, they were engaged primarily as agricultural laborers. These people are very poor as they do not generally own land for cultivation. As a result they still work as laborers in agriculture and agriculture related activities. The Santal community has to sell their day labor with cheaper wage.

2. Natural Capital of the Santals:

The Santal community is comfortable with the nature. As they have less ability to buy food from market, they take the benefit to collect food from the nature. They usually live beside jungles and *beels*. These are the major natural sources of food of the Santals.

The Santals and the forest are inter-related. The Santals used to collect their food from the jungle/ forest. The *Shal* and the *Mahua* trees have become a symbol of Santal life. The vast *Shal* dominated forests have provided numerous generations of the Santals with an abundance of wild foods and medical remedies that were available without large labor inputs. The forest was of a great significance to both the livelihoods and the overall well-being of the Santals as it was a source of food supply, medical herbs, grazing grounds and recreational areas. Flowers, fruits, leafy vegetables, roots, fungi and honey were collected from the forest. The many varieties of wild potatoes also substituted rice in situations of severe crop failure. Wild food collected from the forest plays an important role during the critical "hunger season", the slack season from October to December, when many people are unemployed. The reptiles and game were hunted with bow and arrow and these were their main source of protein. They used to catch birds, rates, rattles, and many other wild animals from the jungle. The Santals possess the unique skills in making the musical equipments, mats and baskets out of the plants. This talent is safely passed on from one generation to the other. The vast, open forests also provided nutritious food for the domesticated animals of the Santals. They also had to face the risks and challenges of the wild forest. The awe, fear and general fascination, experiences from the forest were sources of inspiration and motivation for collective cultural expressions in religious and social life of the Santals.

The evidence of the Santals' coexistence with the forest environment is the Santals' song and dance tradition. The forest with all its life forms is a recurrent theme and the source of a wide range of metaphors in their songs:

“When the Sal trees are in leaf

On the mountain

How lovely they look

Wealth in the House

A door in the doorway

But without a child

There is no beauty”

Source: *Field Interview, on 17 March 2014, Martheus Hembrom, Khattapara, Hakimpur, Dinajpur*

In this song, they express their joy relating the forest/ nature and their life together and urge to the *Bongas* (their God) to be blessed with offspring and prosperity. As they are dependent on forest, their religious beliefs are centered to the forest. They celebrate the *Baha* festival every year in March to awaken the nature with prosperity. They consider the trees as the abode of deities and spirits which help them to survive.

The Santals maintain a vegetable and animal based diet from ancient times based on gathering and hunting from forests as well as from marshes, rivers and flooded lands. The *beels* and marshlands provided them with various kinds of natural food all the year round. Fish and shellfish were caught with indigenous nets and traps. Many fruits and leafs like *shapla*, *shaluk*, *padma*, *panifal*, etc. grown in water were important sources of food for the Santals. They are expert in fishing. They catch fish as well as collect crab, snail, and other insects as their food. The *beels*, ponds, *haors* have provided the santals with fish, crab, snail, reptiles and many other faunas to meet the demand of food.

3. Financial Capital of the Santals

Economic situation of the plain land Santals in Bangladesh is significantly worse than that of the overall Bangladesh scenario. A 59.9 percent of the plain land *adibasi* people in Bangladesh are absolute poor, whereas 39.9 percent people in rural Bangladesh are absolute poor. Hardcore poverty is also more pronounced among the plain land *adibasi* than that of the rural Bangladeshis.

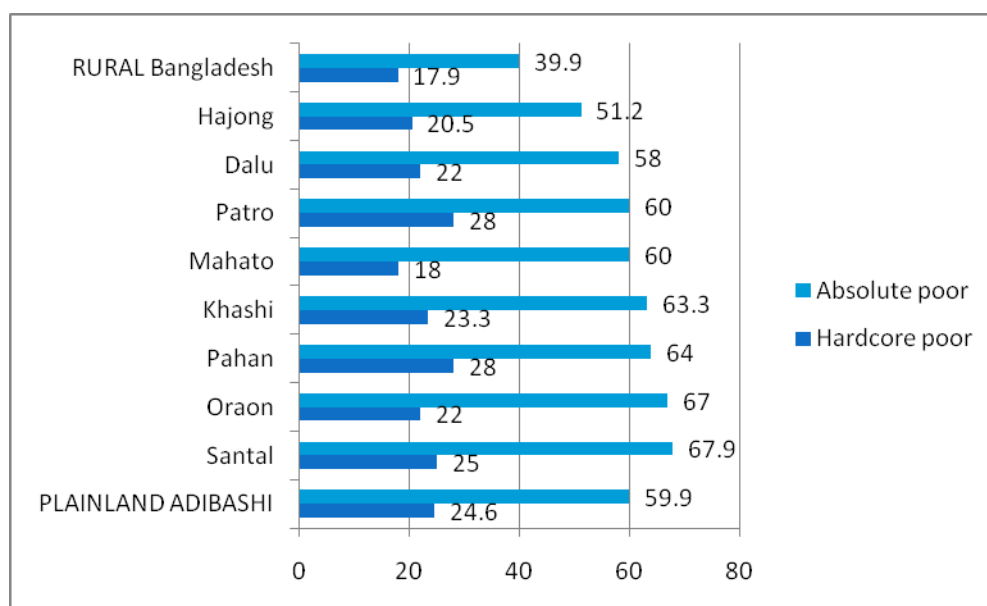


Figure 2.2 Poverty situations (%) among plain land *adibasi* in 2008

Source: Barakat et al 2008

A 24.6 percent of the plain land *adibasi* are hardcore poor which is 7 percentages higher than the hardcore poverty (17.9%) in rural Bangladesh. However, there are variations in the prevalence of poverty in the *adibasi* groups. Poverty situation is much worse among the *Oraon*, *Santal*, *Pahan* and *Khashi* communities than among the other plain land *adibasi* communities of Bangladesh. In case of Santals population 67.9% are absolute poor which is higher than any other plain land *adibasi*. 25% of the Santal population is hardcore poor. Both the rates are higher than that of rural Bangladesh and plain land *adibasi*.

Food poverty is highly pronounced among the Santal people in Bangladesh. They basically consume rice as their staple food. In addition, they can afford only small amounts of vegetables and potatoes. They rarely consume fish or meat. More than thirty percent of the plain land *adibasi* people have reported agriculture related activities (farming and farm labor) as their primary occupation. Around a half of the household income of the plain land *adibasi* come from agriculture related activities, followed by livestock. A negligible portion of the income comes from salaried jobs or business. Both male and female *adibasi* people work as daily laborers. Those who are engaged in wage labor are mostly discriminated against as compared to the Bengalese in the *adibasi* localities. The Santal women are deprived and discriminated in all the

phases of life. It is interesting to note that among the Santals both men and women work for wages in agriculture and related activities in rural areas.

A research conducted by Barakat et al (2008) also finds out that:

As the overall economic situation is poor among the plain land *adibasi* people, they possess small assets at their households. On average, the current market price of household assets of the plain land *adibasi* is Tk. 6150 BDT. The *Hajong*, *Garo* and *Khashi* communities possess relatively more household assets than the other plain land *adibasi* communities. The *Dalu*, *Patro*, *Pahan* and *Santal* communities possess fewer household assets (in terms of current market price) than the other plain land *adibasi* communities do. Thus, the ‘real’ possession of household assets is very small among the plain land *adibasi* in Bangladesh” (Barakat, et al 2008).

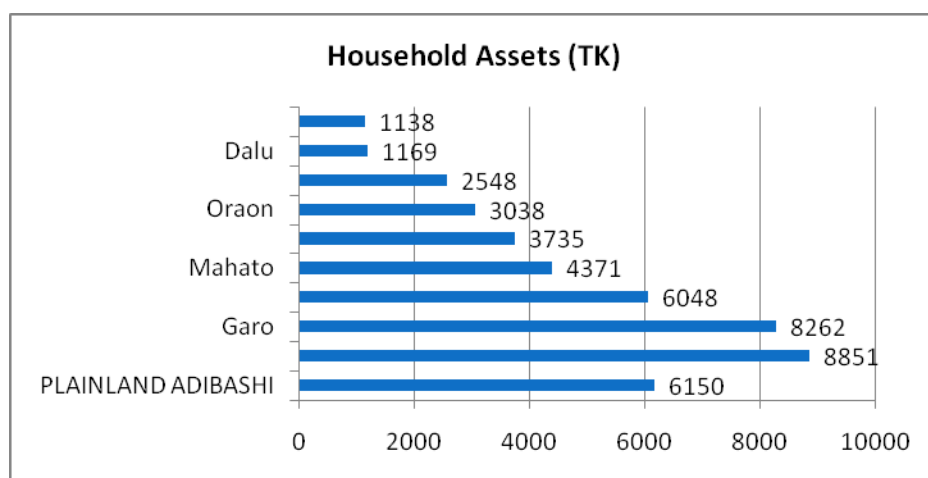


Figure 2.3 Household Assets among *adibasi*

Source: Barakat et al 2008

The study done by Barakat. et al stated that:

It has been found that the plainland *adibasi* of Bangladesh are deprived of many basic necessities for life. In one-fourth of the plainland *adibasi* households in

Bangladesh, all household members do not regularly drink arsenic-free water.

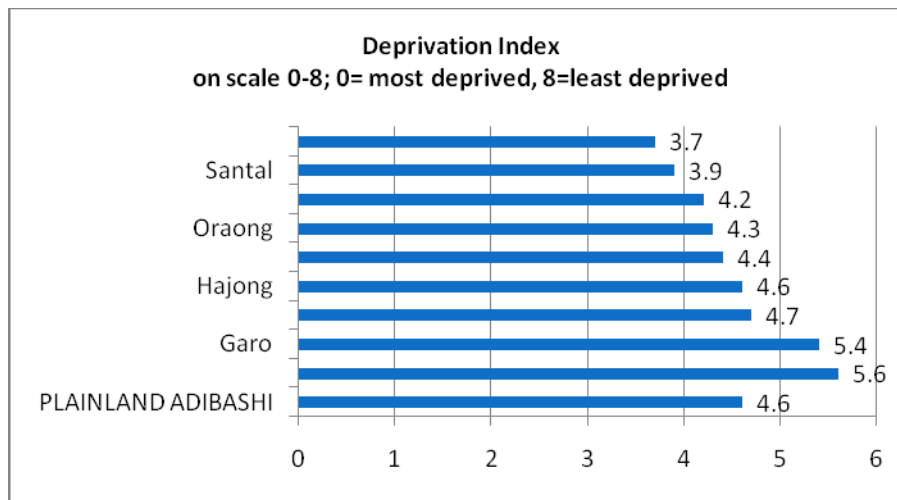


Figure 2.4 Deprivation situations among *adibasi*

Source: Barakat, et al 2008

In around one-third plainland *adibasi* households, all children are immunized. In two-fifths of the households, there are no hygienic latrines. In 44 percent *adibasi* households, all Indicators of Deprivation Index includes five or more household members do not live in one room, all household members sleep on a cot/bed at night, presence of hygienic latrine in household, household's access to information (Radio/TV/Newspaper), all household members have three square meals all the year round, all the children of 6 years or above go to school, all the children have completed the doses of vaccination, and all the household members regularly drink arsenic-free water (Barakat, et al 2008).

4. Physical Capital of the Santals

Physical Capital which includes infrastructure, tools and equipments used for productivity is fewer among the Santal community. In the past the majority of the Santals were landowners, but due to the increase in population, exploitation by money lenders and landlords, grabbing of their land, poverty and illiteracy, natural calamities, they become poorer of the poor. The loss of land by the Santal people was and is a great threat to them. The state cannot claim a fare stand in protecting Santals' land. The vast majority of the Santals in Bangladesh have lost their land properties. At present, nearly 80% of the Santals are land-less, forcing them to earn their

livelihood depending on the mercy and availability of work in the fields of their Muslim or Hindu neighbors for their mere subsistence (Barakat et al 2008).

According to Article 14 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 (Convention Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries):

The rights of ownership and possession of the peoples concerned over the lands which they traditionally occupy shall be recognized. In addition, measures shall be taken in appropriate cases to safeguard the right of the peoples concerned to use lands not exclusively occupied by them, but to which they have traditionally had access for their subsistence and traditional activities.

Again article 14 (2) of the same states that:

The Governments shall take steps as necessary to identify the lands which the peoples concerned traditionally occupy, and to guarantee effective protection of their rights of ownership and possession.

A non-government organization 'Trinamul' finds that:

This is so despite the restrictions contained in the constitutionally protected EBSAT ACT, 1950, regarding transfer of aboriginal lands to non-aboriginals. Theoretically, an aggrieved aboriginal could go to court, but the impecuniosities of the dispossessed prevent any action to obtain legal redress. There are no viable alternatives to sue motto state action to implement this law (<http://trinamulcht.org>/Viewed on 05, October 2013).

The Santals are an agricultural tribe, from time immemorial they have cleared forests, toiled the land, and produced food for subsistence. Beside agriculture they also domesticate animals like cows, buffaloes and pigs. They are also well versed in the art of fishing, hunting, where their exceptional skills with bow and arrows is noticeable.

The Santal community cannot avail the opportunity of getting loans from different banks and financial organizations. They, being illiterate, do not know clearly the terms and conditions of getting loan. Sometimes they are cheated by some dishonest people. Moreover, they cannot

manage collateral to fulfill the condition for getting loans. As a result they appear before the local '*Mohajans*' who produce false documents of land transfer in the name of lending. Land grabbing through forged documents and forgery during monetary transactions has been reported in many instances. Many of those dispossessed were unable to initiate legal procedures because of the lack of resources or awareness of the legal procedures involved. Many Santal people lost their lands to dishonest money lenders who used forged documents or other deceptions to dispossess them.

5. Social Capital of the Santals

The Santals today are no more confined within their own community. The situation is totally changed as the nature is displaced due to industrialization and technological development. Their mobility and interaction with the mainstream population have increased due to the expansion of market mechanism and employment opportunities outside their own villages. They often go outside their own areas for employment, they go to different nearby market places as well as distant urban market places for buying necessary goods. Females also do the same for buying their necessary items. The government and non-government organizations recently have undertaken different development programs (such as education, infrastructural development, rural electrification, and health facilities) in most of the tribal inhabited areas of Bangladesh (Shelly, 1992). These programs are aimed at social and economic development of the ethnic minorities of Bangladesh and integrate them socially and economically with the mainstream population of Bangladesh though these steps are sporadic. They do not have participation in local government as well as in social decision making. It requires a holistic attempt to take the Santal population on our economic march.

2.3.3 Vulnerability Context for the Santals

The stay of the Santals in Bangladesh has not been smooth and easy. They have been facing many obstacles since their first entrance in Bangladesh to maintain their living standard. Natural and manmade vulnerability has made their path of living uneven. They cannot best use of their physical assets due to those vulnerabilities. The livelihood of the Santals is affected by the following vulnerability context.

(1) Decrease in Common Pool Resources

The above discussion makes it clear that the resources used by the Santal community is either shared by others or decreased due to manmade or natural change. As the Santals are agro based society, technological progress in agriculture has also pushed them into vulnerability.

The biodiversity of the forest has been seriously reduced in the last 20 to 25 years. The variety of forest foods available in the 1990s to the Santals is limited or no more. Many species of trees, bushes, creepers, tubers, birds and carnivores have already disappeared completely. Wild honey and edible flowers are no longer available. Fungi have become a rarity due to the deforestation. Same situation goes with the marshland. All *beels*, *haors*, ponds are not used naturally. These water bodies which are of government properties are leased out by the government and are used commercially. The marshland is used for growing paddy or other agricultural products by using insecticide which also hampers the living organisms in the water body. Thus a main source of food for the Santals is vanished.

The Santals are mainly hunters and gatherers. They largely depend on forests, *beels* and *haors* and above all on agro economy for their livelihood. Because of the change in ecology and development of technology the area of forest, *beels*, and *haors* is reduced as well as mode of agriculture is changed to technology based method replacing human labor. (Bleie2005)

Brox (1999), comments that Freedom in the commons ruins to all and it is condemned for ignoring appropriate factors. Due to absence of rules about the use of common property, it has a great chance to exploit common resources.

(2) Unfavorable Government Policy

Numerous land laws were enacted over time keeping special provisions for the protection of the “tribal” land. But the special provisions in these laws never secured the ethnic communities including the indigenous people. The chief protection of the plain land ethnic group was provided by the Chota Nagpur Tenancy Act of 1908 which prohibited the transfer of tribal lands to non-tribals without the permission of the Deputy Commissioner. Post independence, the state

continues to formally recognize the special tenurial status of lands falling within the traditional domain of aborigines, pursuant to Section 97 of The East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act 1950. Section 97 empowers the Government to declare by notification any aboriginal castes or tribes as “aboriginal” for the purpose of the section (but does not define the term “aboriginal”). Sub-section 2 of Section 97 of The East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act 1950 further provides that: “no transfer by an aboriginal *raiya* of this right in his holding or in any portion thereof shall be valid unless it is made to another aboriginal domiciled or permanently residing in Bangladesh. In cases where the recipient is not an aboriginal, prior written permission of the Revenue Officer would be required”. This provision cannot protect the land of the Santal people, as they sometimes are compelled to sell land due to poverty, sometimes they are compelled to do so being trapped by influential groups. This provision can also be seen as undermining their right to property by imposing restrictions on free transfer of the same.

The Santals also lost land due to the operation of the Enemy Property Act 1965, and later the Vested Property Act 1974 as they were deliberately categorized as Hindus (by virtue of possessing similar family names) or as peasants who failed to pay their taxes in time on their return from India as returnee refugees after 1971. The distribution of *khas* land is one of the top priorities of every government for poverty reduction and it is done following *The Krishi Khas Jomi Bondobostho Nitimala*, 1995. There are *khas* lands in areas where the Santal people live, but a very few *khas* land has been allotted to the Santals who is landless or a marginal landowner. The influential Bengalese has rather taken possession of such *khas* lands from the Santals in some cases.

The Sarkari Jalmahal Babosthyapona Nity, 2009, *The Acquisition of Immoveable Property Act*, 1982, *The Wildlife (Preservation and Security) Act* 2012, create obstacle to use CPR by the Santals. The Santal people have to surrender land due to the government’s development policy. The government sponsored land dispossession has been taking place in places where the *adibasi* people reside with. Governmental acquisition of land in the name of arrangements for a ‘reserve forest’ and an ‘Eco park’ displaced the Santals from their homes making them poorer to the poorest. But no alternative arrangements were made for them. Brutal

measures were adopted to uproot the Santals from some of their ancestral forested territories in order to implement new grand settlement schemes.

(3) Political Unrest

The land dispossession phenomenon among the Santal community started basically in 1947. Most cases of land dispossession among the plain land *adibasi* people took place in 1964/65 when a riot between Hindu and Muslims broke out. At that time, a number of *adibasi* people fled to India to save their lives. When they returned, many of them found that their lands were grabbed by local influential Bengalese. In addition, huge amounts of their lands were declared as ‘enemy property’. Later, the ‘enemy property’ was renamed as ‘vested property’. They have not yet got the right of those lands. “Around 23 percent of all dispossessions took place in between 1961 and 1970. After the 1980s, this rate of land dispossession decreased” (Barakat et al, 2008). However, dispossession of land has been continuing till day. After independence of Bangladesh in 1971, those Santals who went to India for shelter and security returned home. Then many of them could not get back their lands which were grabbed by the local influential Bengalis. At that time, the occurrences of land dispossession among the Santals reached its peak. Some of the Santals, who had small amount of cultivable land before, leased them out to Muslim landowners for immediate need of cash and eventually they lost their land. This happened because they could not repay the money in due time. Undue political influence and local class-based hegemonic culture, in addition to the simplicity and ignorance of the Santal people have been considered the reasons for land dispossession of the Santals. Rahman (2002), states that the Santals are deprived of in all areas, including within the spheres of social status, and economic power. The realities of social, economic and political aspects of Bangladesh have forced them to try to merge with the mainstream Bengali population. They became poorer among the poor people and feel helpless in every step of their lives.

The local interested group using undue political influence dispossessed the Santals from their land. As there is a difference in culture and religion the main stream common people do not come in their help easily. The simplicity and ignorance of the *adibasi* people in Bangladesh had been the major reasons for their land dispossession and deprivation. There is no accountability of local politicians to the central level. Even they get support from the local administration. That is

why the criminalized political-economy in this region is the key reason behind this inhuman act of forced land dispossession. The local influential people like politicians also take the advantage of weakness of the Santal. They take political back up and sometimes use force to grab their land.

(4) Hostile Social Power

As the sources of collecting food get squeezed, they have to find out alternatives for existence. Furthermore, Due to frequent political changes in national level, abuse of politics, rising of muscle men and land grabbers they lose their minimum land property. The Santal people have to come in conflict with the local people for some both immediate causes as well as long term for the debate over the use of common resources. The immediate causes are merely triggering incidents which mark themselves in violent battle, arduous litigations or a never ending cycle of possession and repossession of land and water bodies. One of the causes of conflicts the Santal faces is due to existing power configuration. Local power elites are the main perpetrators of conflict. They gain their support by establishing links with local government authority, local politicians and also relations with local Bengalis. They deprive the *adibasi* by doing it and the conflicts begin.

The local people is not respectful and sensitivity to the Santal people. Discrimination towards the situation of indigenous communities arises from the unawareness of indigenous rights. This attitude leads to the exploitation of the *adibasi*. A quote by an influential Bengali is illustrative of this “They come from the *jungle!* Why do they need land?” This also typifies the complete estrangement of Bengalis.

(5) Unfavorable Legal Framework

Though the Santals have been living in Bangladesh on specific areas and lands for generations, many of them do not possess proper land-right documents. No government has properly acknowledged the traditional land right system of the *adibasi* communities in Bangladesh. Due to this problem, the Santals have always been facing serious problems in continuing possession of their lands.

The delay in judicial system is another cause of conflicts with the Santals. It becomes impossible to address huge number of complex land cases because of insufficient and inefficient legal infrastructure and judicial system. Rather waiting for the verdict from the court the parties use arm power to get the possession of land. Again access to local courts is both expensive and arduous for the poor people, ethnic or otherwise. But even when they do take the trouble to approach them, they are hardly ever ensured of quality service. So the parties; the Santals and others, locally get engaged in conflict to get possession of land. Roy (2000), comments that though the constitution of Bangladesh has sought to emancipate the toiling masses and to protect the rights of the peasants, workers and the backward section of the citizens, there is doubt whether justice has been given to the *Adibasi* peoples in the Constitution.

(6) Weak Land Management

Corruption in land records and management also promotes land dispossession and conflicts between the Santal and the influential. Corruption in the Land Registration offices of Bangladesh and Land Record and Survey department as well as in Land Management department makes many people, either *adibasi* or native, landless and poor. Even in cases of recorded land, where *adibasi* people actually have title deeds to their land, they may nevertheless lose possession of the same, when powerful local individuals or economic interests obtain false registration papers from the Land Registration office, or obtain predated titled deeds procured illegally. Lack of sufficient documentation and records in the case of petitions by ethnic community in the case of unrecorded land (including common lands such as forests, graveyards, cemeteries, and privately owned lands), the non-recognition of the prescriptive rights of *adibasi* communities or individuals of such land results in its being misclassified by the concerned authorities as *khas* (government owned) land.

2.3.4 Structure and Processes

The structure and processes that directly and indirectly affect the livelihood of the santal community include the local government institutions; Union Parishad, Upazila Parishad, Pourosova, Zilla Parishad, the central government offices like; DC's office, UNO's office, AC (land)'s office, DPHE's office, DFO's office, DAE's office, the financing institutions like; Bank, NGOs, etc. All these organizations create and enforce legislation, provide the necessary requirements for acquiring and capitalizing assets for the Santal community.

2.4 Legal Status of the Santal Community

The Santal people as an ethnic community have every human right in different legal framework both nationally and internationally, but they cannot enjoy it in practical aspects. It is the state who will safeguard the ethnic minority to protect their language, culture, profession, religion above all every right of the citizenship. In case of ethnic minority this point has been clearly stated in our constitution. Article 28(1) of Bangladesh's constitution declares "The state shall not discriminate against any citizens on grounds of only religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth." We are the signatory member of the international conventions, protocols or treaties where it is clearly defined how and what steps the state shall take for the existence of the ethnic minority as well as for their development. No policy should be taken that may endanger the culture, profession, livelihood of the ethnic minority, rather favorable atmosphere to be created so that they can easily continue their life without interruption. According to Article 1 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and linguistic Minorities, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1992 "States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories, and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity".

Article 2 of the same declaration reads "Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life" (Sub clause 2).

According to ILO Convention No: 169 (Article-1)

Tribal people in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations; people in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions (ILO convention, 169, 1989).

In normative aspects our state could not reach the point where all classes of people are equally benefitted. If the total population remains out of the target or they are not included as the hands of development, we cannot develop the country sustainably. In case of the Santal community what steps Bangladesh has taken, whether the national policy goes with them, what social safety net program is taken to save them need to be analyzed. The constitution of Bangladesh and international organizations put emphasize on the right of the ethnic minority. The concerned country is directed to take special steps for them. It is obligatory for the state to assist the ethnic minority to promote their culture, language, education, and livelihood. The state should not create discrimination either by policy or actions.

Like other aboriginal people, the Santals have not been recognized by the state as “indigenous people” of the country. They are basically recognized as a “backward section” of the people. The Bangladesh Constitution has not given any definition of the term “backward section” and they are always compared as backward with other groups, and treated as “minority communities”.

Even the Convention on the Rights of the Child declares that:

The State Parties (of which Bangladesh is one) agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin (Article 29).

Article 30 of the same CRC states that:

in those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Unfortunately, contrary to the above mentioned CRC Article, tribal children face language problems in our primary schools. Text books are in Bangla, which is not their mother tongue. We have promulgated the right to information act to empower the people. They are to be given the opportunity to know the law through education and that education should be through their own

language. We should look into the matter with holistic approach. If they are not taken under the single umbrella of social safety net program or poverty reduction policy, only laws will not bar them to sell their belongings. Actually hunger compels them to sell their minimal.

Thus, the above discussion in this chapter depicts clearly the origin and cultural aspects of the Santal community as well as it also give the perception regarding their economic vulnerability. That there is legal rights nationally and internationally of the Santal community as ethnic minority is also conveyed to us here. Ultimately the livelihood pattern is shown in a theoretical structure.

CHAPTER THREE

THE METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAT FRAMEWORK

This chapter gives the outline of how the research has been drawn out and conducted in following the standard guidelines of academic investigation. The study area, tools and techniques of collecting data and the limitations to accomplish the research work are put in brief here. An analytical framework has been developed to facilitate the analysis and presentation of the study findings and observations.

3.1 The Study Area and Sample Size

The study was conducted in Dinajpur, the northern district of Bangladesh. This area is selected for research because one third of the total Santal population, the studied community, lives in Dinajpur.



Figure 3.1 Map of Dinajpur district

This area, far from the capital city of Bangladesh, is still away from broad industrialization and technological advancement. Agro based livelihood is prevailing here. Alternative profession is not so available. After decrease in common pool resources in the study area, how the Santal community adapt themselves in the changing situation demands investigation. For this reason with a view to get an empirical look at the Santal livelihood this district is selected as the study area. The respondents were selected randomly from four Upazilas of Dinajpur district. 100 respondents of different age and sex were interviewed. I have asked them 45 questions to get the data in respective study area. They have shown much patient to answer the question. I have also conducted informal interview session with 15 key informants of different Upazilas.

3.2 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

3.2.1 Research Method

Research method is the functional action strategy to carry out the research in the light of theoretical / analytical framework and guiding research questions and or the proposed hypothesis (Aminuzzaman 1991). There are three broad types of methodology to carry out any research; quantitative method, qualitative method and mixed method. Both qualitative and quantitative research is carried out in this study on the basis of primary and secondary data.

Sources of Data:

The data of this study has been collected basically from two sources;

- a) Primary and b) Secondary sources.

Primary Data

Primary data are collected with the help of a questionnaire, focused group discussion and personal interviews with the respondents. Information was collected from the Santal community- both male and female. I also made interview with the key informants; local UP member, UP chairman, local elite, and people from other communities who are living with the Santal people for generations. Information was also given by concerned Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Mayor, Pourosova and other related government officials. For this I arranged semi structured interview.

Secondary Data

Secondary data are mainly used to understand the studied community with their earlier history, culture, livelihood, economic condition, etc by analyzing different research works done by various scholars. The basic sources of secondary data for this study are previous studies, journals, books, reports, and different websites. To have secondary, data various books, journals, periodicals, magazines, newspaper and article through web-sides are consulted. Anthropological history, culture, religion, tradition of the Santal people is known through these secondary sources. A detail literature review is done to know the profession, habit and economic ups and downs of the Santal community of the studied area. Many published documents on the Santal people have been discussed for literature review.

3.2.2 Data Collection Techniques

The present study is done on the basis of data collection through survey, observation, discussion, limited participation and structured and unstructured dialogue with the Santal community. Like other survey research a standardized questionnaire is used to collect information. I prepared simple and appropriate questionnaire and tried to convey the matter understandable to the respondents. I informed them that the collected data will be used only for research work, their identity, if they want, will not be disclosed and they will never be responsible for the given answer. Sample of respondents are selected from the affected community randomly and they are interviewed through structured questionnaire. The key informants were also interviewed through semi-structured questionnaire. Two sets of questionnaire are developed- one set for affected community and another set for key informants.

3.3 Limitations

The study is an outcome of “MA in Governance and Development 5 Course” in the Institute of Governance Studies, BRAC University, Dhaka. It is a program of 09 credit hours out of 36 credits of total academic course. From the academic point of view the importance of the research work is high but due to the prevailing limitations it becomes a bit difficult to meet the end smoothly. Every attempt is taken to complete this work successfully in existing environment minimizing the prevailing limitations.

- (a) For a quality research work it requires sufficient time, but this research has to suffer from time constraint.
- (b) For want of sufficient related books and journals in the library the research faces difficulty.
- (c) There was a lack of interest of the informants and key informants to answer the questions.

3.4 Analytical Framework

The discussion in chapter 2 clearly depicts the past and the present living way out of the Santal community. That they are passing through some challenges due to some social, geographical and economic change is crystal clear. The changing situation has left some adverse impacts on the economic as well as on the social life of the Santal. The present study tries to measure the livelihood outcomes (**Dependent Variables**) like higher income, health security, social security, food security, self-esteem due to the decrease in common pool resource. Physical assets such as human capital, financial capital, natural capital, physical capital and social capital are used as indicators to measure the manifestation of change in profession, financial capability, food habit, and household assets, land asset, access to health, education, nature and building self awareness. Here **Independent Variable** is less in common-pool resources. By using these variables and impact measurement indicators the following analytical framework can be drawn to carry out this research.

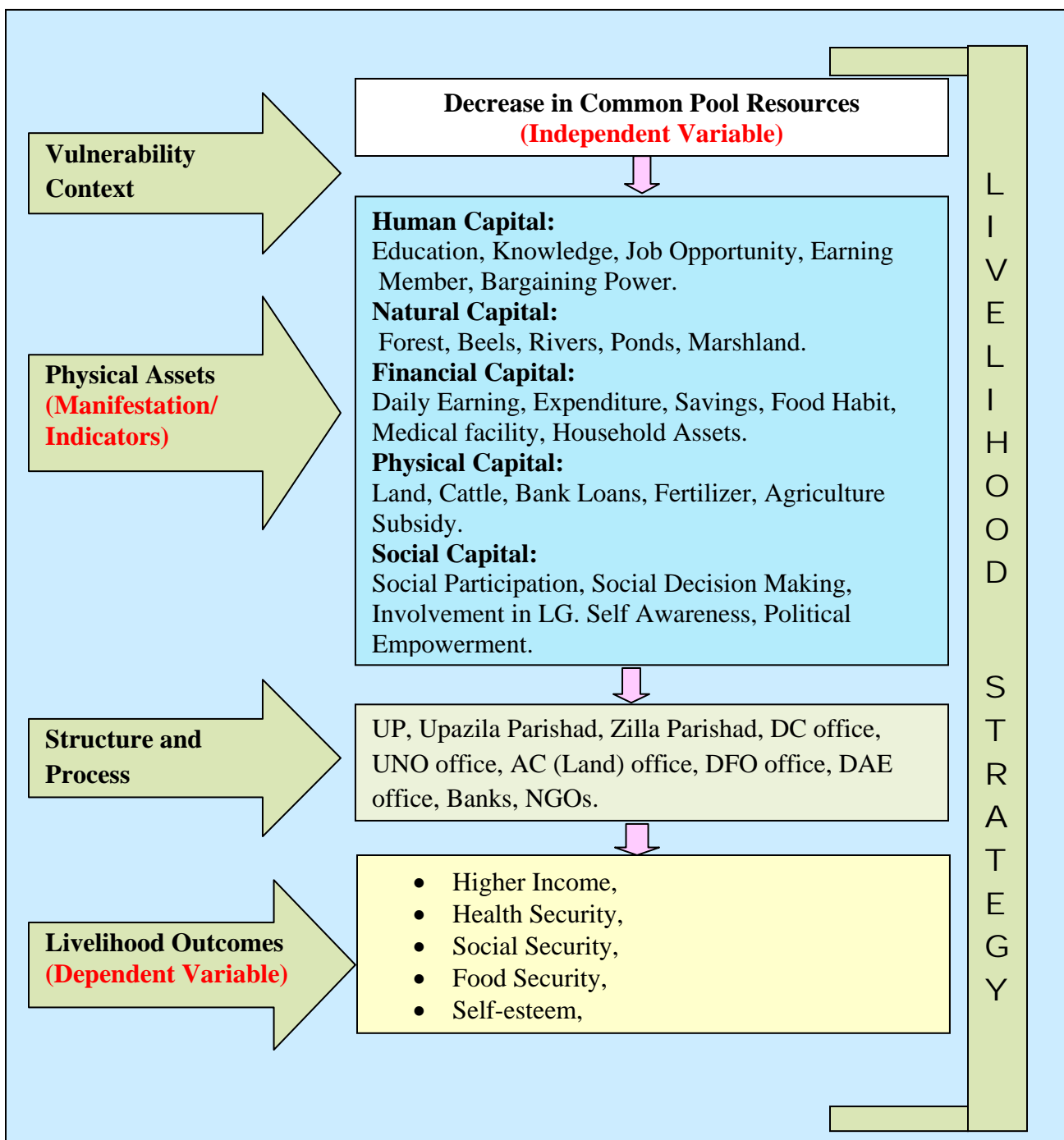


Figure 3.2 Analytical Frame work

Source: Developed by the author

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter the findings of the survey have been analyzed to assess whether there is any impact of declining CPR on the livelihood of the Santal community; if there is any, to what extent it affects the livelihood of the studied community. To fulfill the research objectives mentioned in the chapter one, data have been collected from the research area. The respondents were selected randomly from four Upazilas of Dinajpur district. I have interviewed 100 respondents of different age and sex. I have asked them 45 questions to get the data in the respective study area. They have shown much patient to answer the question. I have also conducted informal interview session with 15 key informants of different Upazilas.

4.1 Profile of the Respondents

The profile of the respondents includes here age and sex. The age of the respondents are categorized into 5(five) groups (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and above 60). Their age limit shows that 19 persons are between 20 to 29 years, 34 persons between 30 to 39 years, 28 persons between 40 to 49 years, 15 persons between 50 to 59 years and 4 persons are 60 and above. Out of 100 respondents 59 were male and 41 were female.

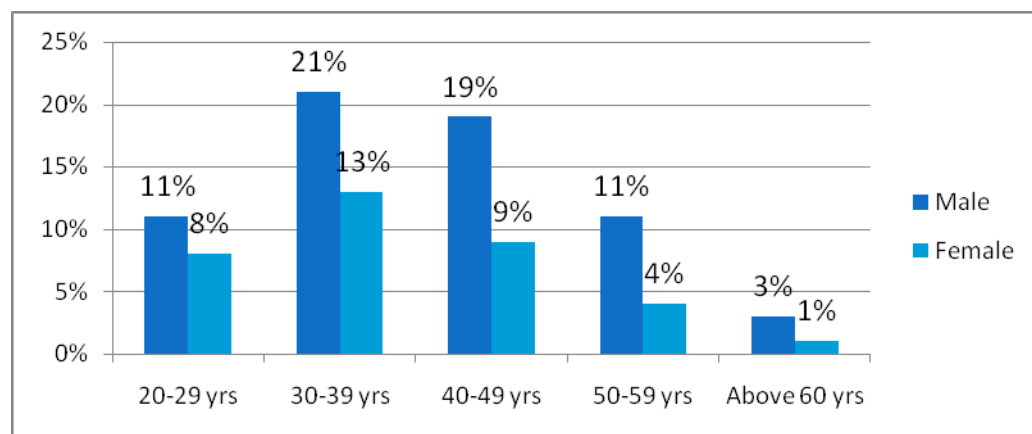


Figure 4.1 Age and sex division of the respondents

4.2 Nature and Manifestation of Changes in the Selected Assets of livelihood of the Santal community due to the Dwindling of CPR:

4.2.1 Changes in Human Capital and Findings

The livelihood of the studied group is determined by human capital of the respondents. To know the quality and capacity regarding income generating activities, they are asked about their education, profession and future human resource.

- ***Schooling***

Whether they went to school or not is asked to know the quality of their human capital as education determines more or less the livelihood pattern and expectation of the respondents. 56% respondents reply that they went to school and 44% persons reply in the negative. Through discussion it reveals that though earlier they did not have the tendency to send their children to school, presently the Christian missionaries persuade them for education with some incentives in the community. That is why the ratio of school goers is increasing now.

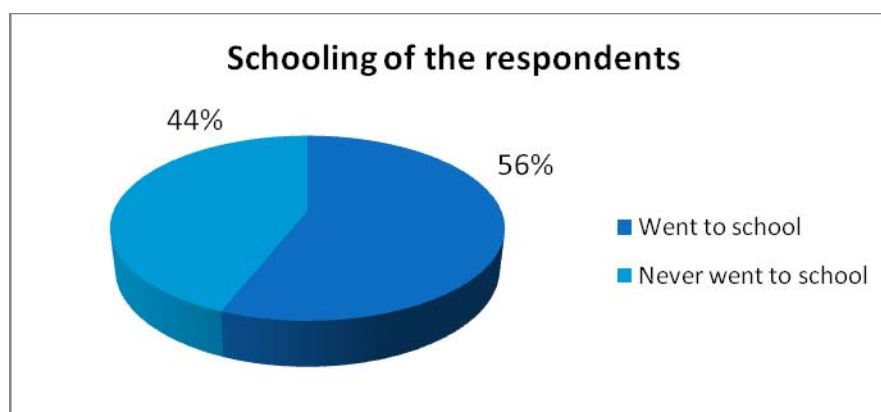


Figure 4.2 Schooling statuses of the respondents

- ***Education***

It is observed that education is an increasing tendency in the Santal community due to the Christian missionaries' motivation. A question is there to know how long they can continue their education. 56% respondents who got the chance to go to school had to stop their academic life at different level. Close observation and discussion reveal that financial crisis lead them to leave

school for earning. Out of 56 respondents 33 (60% of school goers and 33% of total respondents) have primary school education.

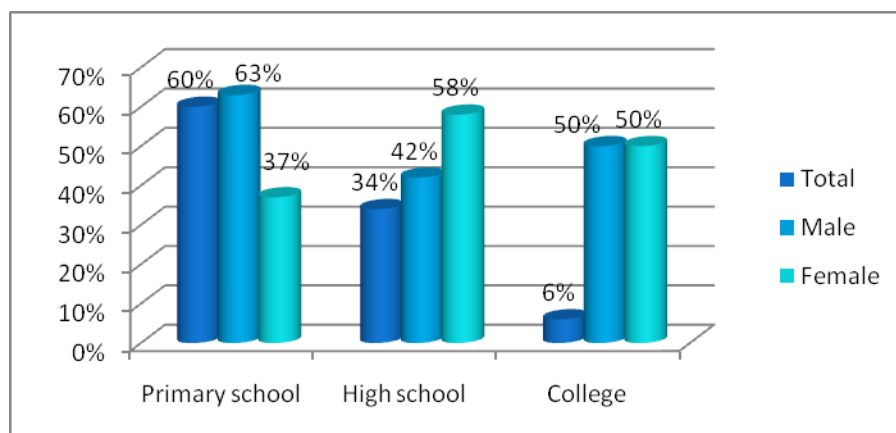


Figure 4.3 Schooling levels of the respondents

19 respondents (34% of school goers and 19% of total respondents) have up to high school education and only 4 respondents (6% of school goers and 4% of the total) get the opportunity to avail higher secondary education. So, only 6% students admit to college.

- **Profession**

What did they do for livelihood a decade back is a question to them. 89% respondents say that they were day laborer 10-15 years back, 06% say hunting as profession. 02% respondents had official job and 03% were unemployed after completing SSC. To see the dimension of change in course of time in their profession they are asked about their present profession.

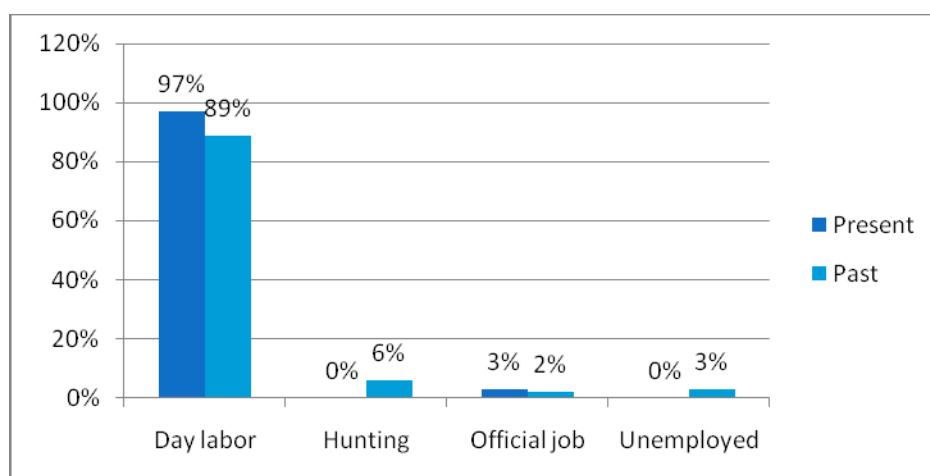


Figure 4.4 Comparative professions: Past and Present

A remarkable change is found in their pattern of profession. 97% respondents say they live on day labor where as only 03% are engaged in official job. From the above data it is clear that there is a trend of changing of profession among the Santal community. Previously they had to take hunting as profession either because of the availability of prey in the nature or because of the scarcity of other means of earning. Now no respondents are found who is hunter or unemployed. It is remarkable that no female respondents claim themselves as housewife. They are also asked whether they are satisfied with their changed or unchanged profession as there is lots of income generating activities. 81 respondents reply that they are satisfied and 19 reply in the negative. It is found that the persons who got the opportunity to go to primary school or high school work as day laborer with dissatisfaction being failed to manage better job with little qualification.

- ***Future Human Capital.***

To know whether they can make the best use of education in preparing future human resource they are asked whether their children go to school or not. A positive trend is seen that children of 76% respondents go to school and 24 % respondents do not send their kids for education. From the data it is observed that the Santal community is also aware of the education assistance program of the government. 91% respondents are informed about this program and 9% do not know about it. So it is a positive indication of change in education sector which will help build future generation of the Santal community. They are becoming aware due to the change in the surrounding atmosphere.

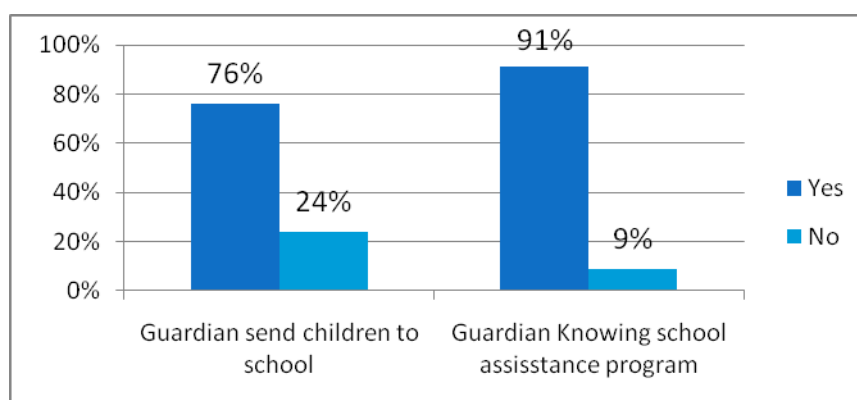


Figure- 4.5 Knowledge on school assistance program and sending children to school

So, it is hopeful that this community is becoming increasingly aware of education. The data tell that 76% guardians send their children to school but 91% guardians are informed of

education assistance program. 24% guardians do not send their children to school of which 9% do not know about education assistance program. It seems that their tendency of sending school is more but this may not be influenced by education assistance program.

- ***Extra Earning Member***

In terms of human capital a question is used to know whether the respondent has another earning member in the family. Alternative earning member increases the bargaining power of a laborer. Expectedly 87% respondents say they have other earning family members and 13% have no extra earning members in the family. As both husband and wife of a Santal family work as day laborer, almost every family has two earning members. So a Santal family has greater scope of earning.

Findings on Human Capital in the Changed Situation

After analyzing the collected data we find the following information about human capital of the Santal community;

- The rate of school going tendency is increasingly more and the rate of female education level is higher than the male.
- Higher education rate is very lower (7%) than primary education enrollment.
- Future human capital is developing increasingly with education.
- They have left uncertain profession like hunting.
- They are mostly engaged on agro based profession and very few number getting place in official job, though not in higher rank.
- Every family has earning member as both husbands and wives work as day labor.

4.2.2 Changes in Natural Capital and Findings:

The natural capital includes the natural resources like water, water bodies, *beels*, forest, marshland, ultimately the all common pool resources. The natural capital or CPR is a major factor which affects greatly the rural life, especially the life of the Santal community. Now we can analyze the data to see how much the livelihood of the Santal people is influenced by CPR.

- ***Use of Common Pool Resource***

The Santal community is more or less dependent on common pool resources like forest, *beels*, marshlands, ponds in the neighborhood to collect their food. 89% respondents report they did go to the CPR for collecting food whereas only 11% say ‘no’ to the question. The Santal people also go to the CPR for collecting food at present though the number of people decreases in compare to the past. Now 69% respondents still go to CPR which was 89% earlier. 31% respondents do not take help from CPR now which was 11% earlier. So, the collected data reveals that dependency on CPR is decreasing gradually.

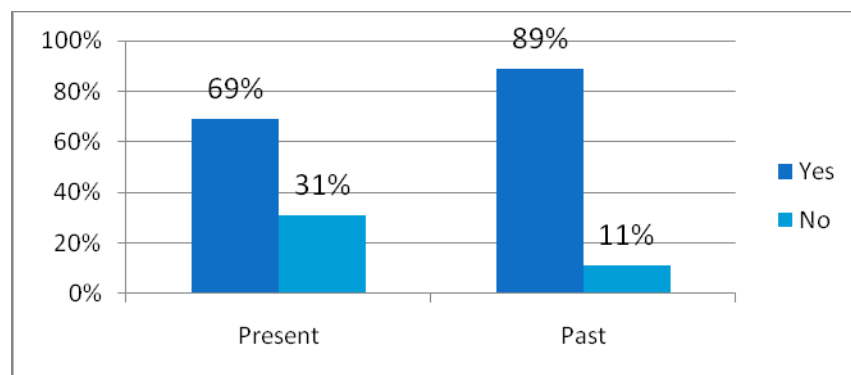


Figure 4.6 Use of CPR: Past and Present

- ***Frequency of Collecting Food from CPR , Past and Present***

How frequently did they collect food from CPR earlier are also asked. 63% respondents used to go to CPR once a day for food, 5% say they used to go to CPR twice a day and rest 32% used to go twice a week. Presently the frequency of collecting food from CPR decreases too. 47.5% respondents still go to CPR once a day for food, 1.5% say they go to CPR twice a day and rest 51% visit CPR twice a week.

The data show that frequency of using CPR decreases gradually comparing with earlier one. More than 50% respondents now visit the nearby CPR twice a weak whereas 10 years back 63% respondents went to the CPR once a day. Only 1.5% go to the CPR twice a day that percentage was 5 earlier. The causes of decreasing dependency on CPR may be the alternative options or the decline of CPR.

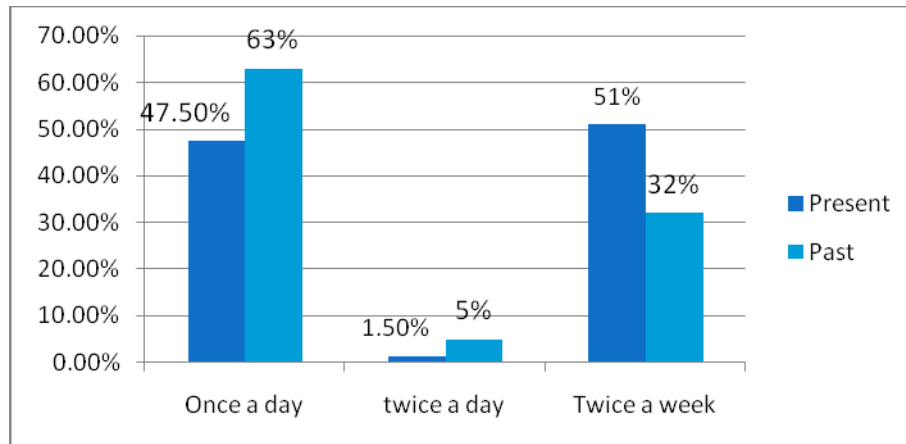


Figure 4.7 Comparative use CPR: Past and Present

- ***Decrease of Common Pool Resource***

In answer to the question about decreasing CPR, it is observed that 79% respondents think the resource of CPR has decreased and 21% do not think so.

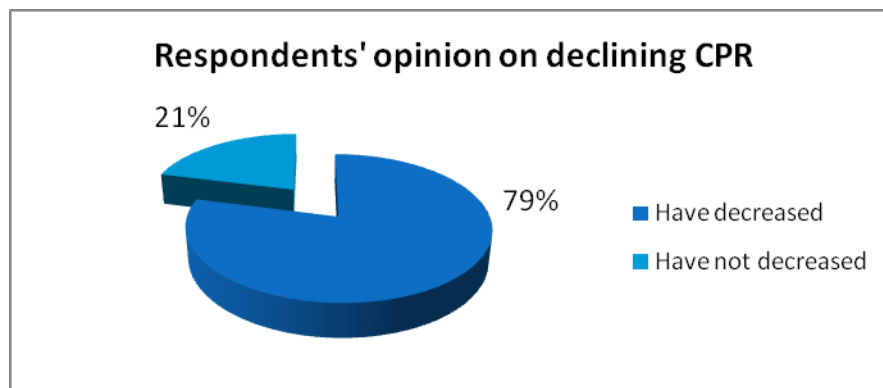


Figure 4.8 Respondents' opinion on declining CPR

- ***Alternative Item for CPR***

After decreasing of CPR whether they can meet the shortage of the item provided by CPR, 62% respondents say they can meet the need with alternative options. 48% reply they cannot afford alternative items.

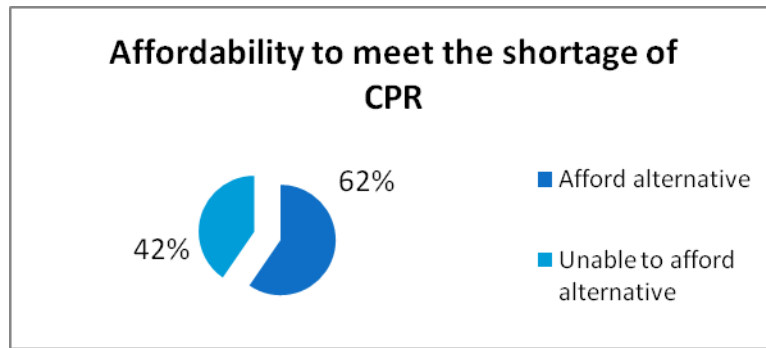


Figure 4.9 Affordability to meet the shortage of CPR

- ***How to Manage Alternative Item.***

In case of managing alternative item for CPR, 66% (41 respondents) answered they buy it from market and 34% (21 respondents) use alternative items for CPR.

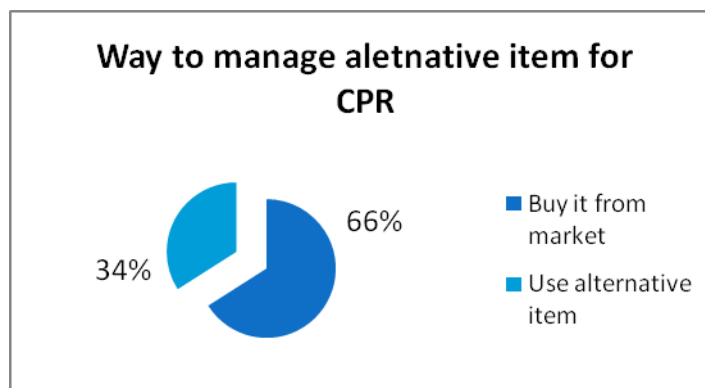


Figure 4.10 Way to manage of alternative items for CPR

- ***Restriction to Access to CPR***

More than 50% Santals think they have restrictions in easily access to CPR. Among the interviewed people 54% say they cannot easily use forest, *beels*, marshlands, ponds now a days and 46% find no barrier to CPR.

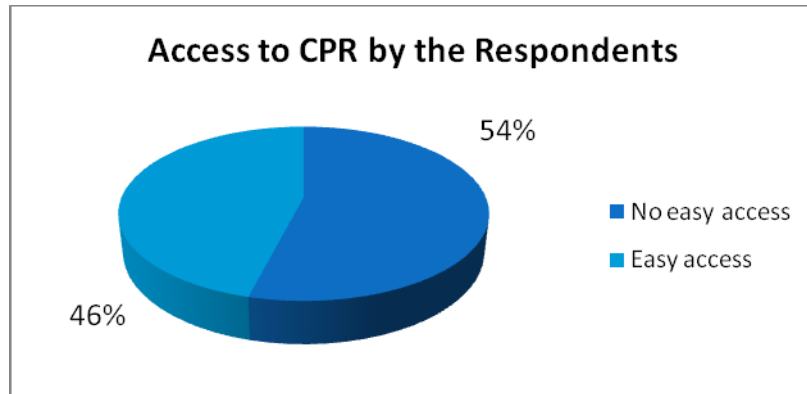


Figure 4.11 Access to CPR by the respondents

- ***What Restricts the Access to CPR?***

The Santal community thinks they have to face some obstacles in using CPR. The obstacles include the external e.i. rules and regulations, social barriers and the internal e.i. decline of CPR itself. 16% respondents think different rules and regulations of the government such as; *The Sarkari Jalmahal Babosthyaapon Nity, 2009, The Krishi Khas Jomi Bondobostho Nitimala, 1995, The Acquisition of Immoveable Property Act, 1982, The Wildlife (Preservation and Security) Act 2012*, create obstacle to use CPR, 13% say they are politically barred from using CPR. A maximum of 71% respondents think they have to lessen the frequency of using CPR as the resources of CPR itself decreases.

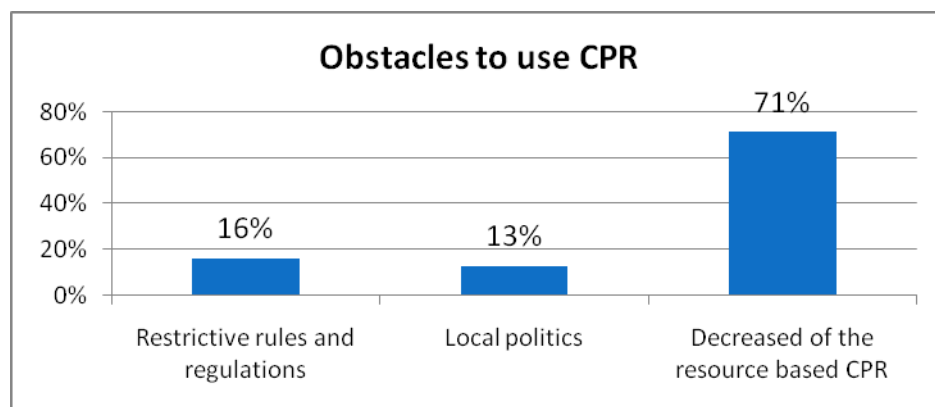


Figure 4.12 Obstacles to use CPR

- ***Findings on Natural Capital in the changed situation***

The above data analysis discloses some information regarding the contribution of CPR in the livelihood of the Santal community. It also shows the result of changing situation both in CPR and human capital of the Santal people. The following findings can be drawn from the above discussion.

- Most of the Santal community people used to go to the nearby CPR for collecting food.
- The CPR is decreasing.
- Dependency on CPR is decreasing.
- The Santal people is shifting to alternative item for CPR.
- More than half of the community people is able to afford the alternative and the rest cannot.
- The Santal community has been compelled to change his traditional taste and profession.
- The Santal community is also restricted to use CPR.
- Though decline of CPR discourages the Santal community to CPR, the government policy and local interest are also there which stop the Santal community to use CPR.

4.2.3 Changes in Financial Capital and Findings

The field survey data give the financial capital of the studied group. It presents before us the daily earnig, expenditure, saving, lifestyle, etc.

- ***Daily Earning***

Both male and female members earn equally in the Santal community. 94% respondents earn 150-200 taka daily. 4% people earn 201-250 taka per day and 2% respondents earn 251-300 taka per day.

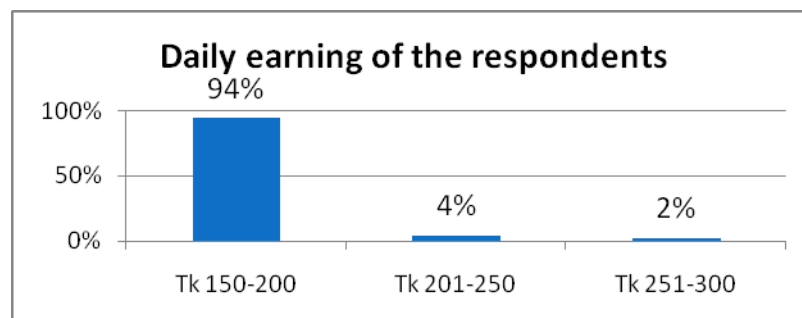


Figure 4.13 Daily earning of the respondents

- ***Does Their Earning Meet Basic Needs?***

72% respondents reply their daily earning meet their basic need and 28% say 'no' to the question. They can afford their family expenditure with daily income of 150-200 taka because maximum family have more than one earning members (husband-wife) and their living expectation is lower.

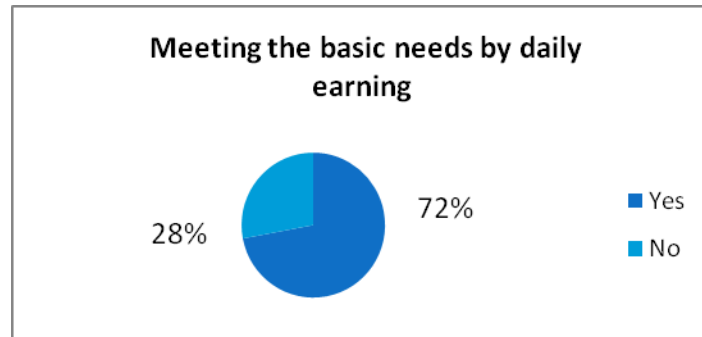


Figure 4.14 Meeting the basic needs by daily earning

- ***How to Meet the Crisis***

The respondents who can not meet their basic need with their earning has to find alternative options to survive. 53% (15) respondents has to depend on CPR, 10% (3) over come the crisis by taking loans from others and 37% (10) have to triumph over the situation through self adjustment.

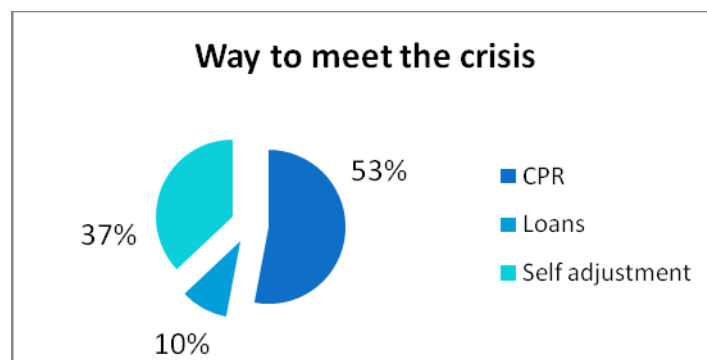


Figure 4.15 Way to meet the crisis

- **Availability of Job/Employment**

The people of the Santal community cannot work seven days a week always because jobs in the rural area are not always available. 18% respondents inform that they get job in all the days of the week but 82% respondents say they do not get job in all the days of a week.

The people of Santal community cannot manage job everyday of a week. They are asked how they pass the day when there is no job. 53% (44) respondents reply that they go to the nearby CPR to collect food and 47% (38) say they do not go.

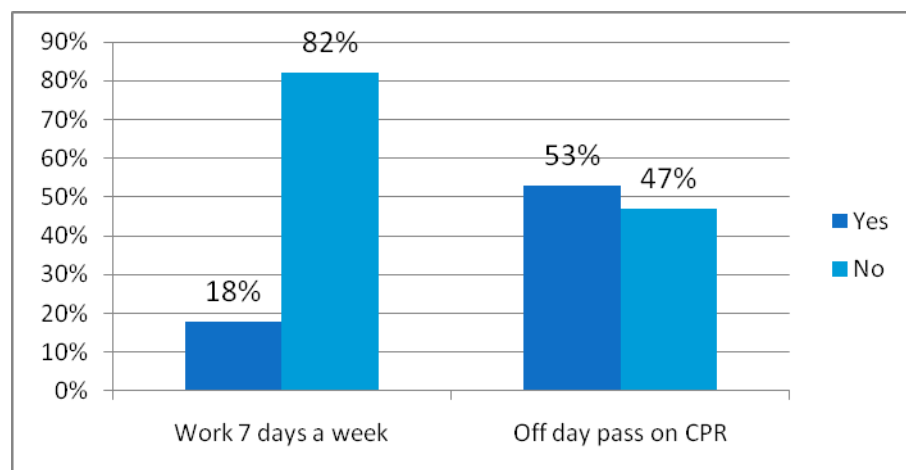


Figure 4.16 Availability of jobs and use of off day

- **Savings**

The data show that 57% respondents can save from their earning after expenditure and 43% cannot save for future.

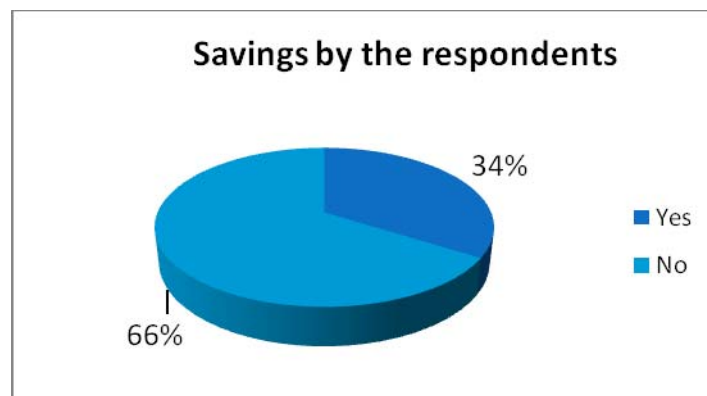


Figure 4.17 Savings by the respondents

- ***Effect of Critical Months***

During the critical months of the year like (Arshin-kartic/ September-October) 76% respondents had to starve as they did not have job or extra resource, and 24% say they did not starve during critical months in the past.

The financial condition of the Santal people has improved a bit. At present, as revealed in the answer, 17% (76% in the past) respondents have to starve during critical months and 83% (24% in the past) donot have to starve now as they have greater scope for jobs.

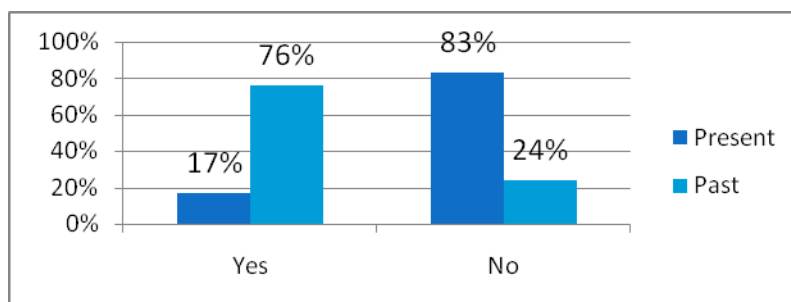


Figure 4.18 Starvation during critical season: Past and Present

It is revealed from data that among the respondents who had to starve in the critical months of the year in the past, 90% respondents went to the nearby CPR for food and 10% reply in the negative.

- ***Medical Facility***

The Santal community donot get proper medical facilities regularly. 19% respondents meet doctor once a month, 16% meet doctor quarterly, 33% say they meet doctor once a year and 32% repondents report they never meet a doctor.

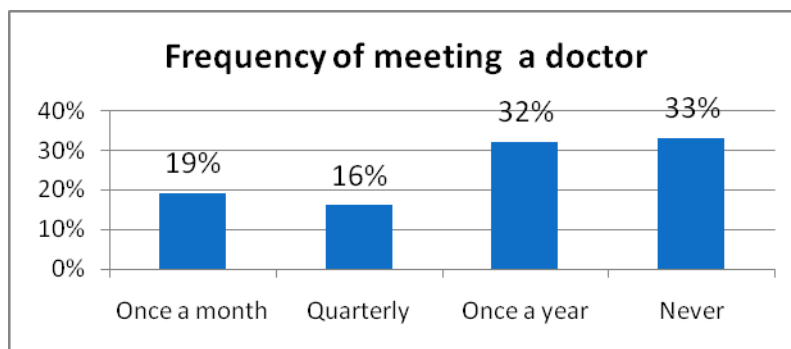


Figure 4.19 Frequency of meeting doctor by the respondents

Health workers' service to the Santal community is remarkable. 77% respondents say they are visited by the government health workers and 23% inform they are not visited by health workers. A remarkable result is seen about the maternal health among the Santal community. 81% respondents reply that the pregnant mother of the Santal community meet doctor/ FWA/FWV. 19% answered negatively.

- ***Sanitation***

The sanitation coverage is not satisfactory among the Santal community. 61% respondents use sanitary latrine and 39% do not. 03% of the used latrines are pacca and 97% latrines are kacha. 44% respondents say they got sanitation support from union parishad, and 66% say they did not.

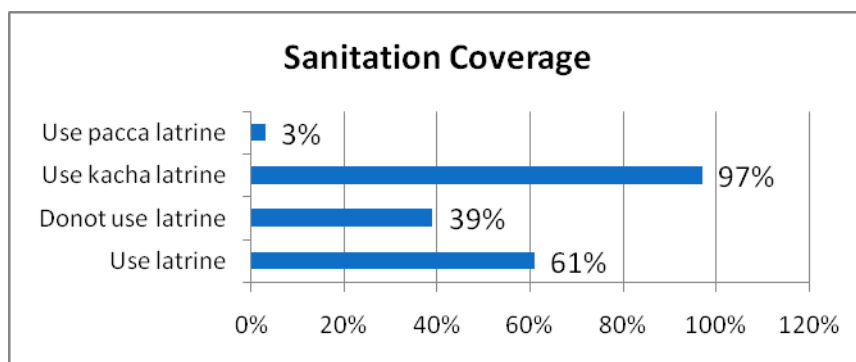


Figure 4.20 Sanitation Coverage

- ***Household Assets***

The financial condition is seen also from the total household assets of the Santal people. The total assets as they assess are very minimum in present market price. The total household assets containing in the data are categorized into 9 groups. Maximum 33% have assets amounting approximately taka 10000 to 20000.

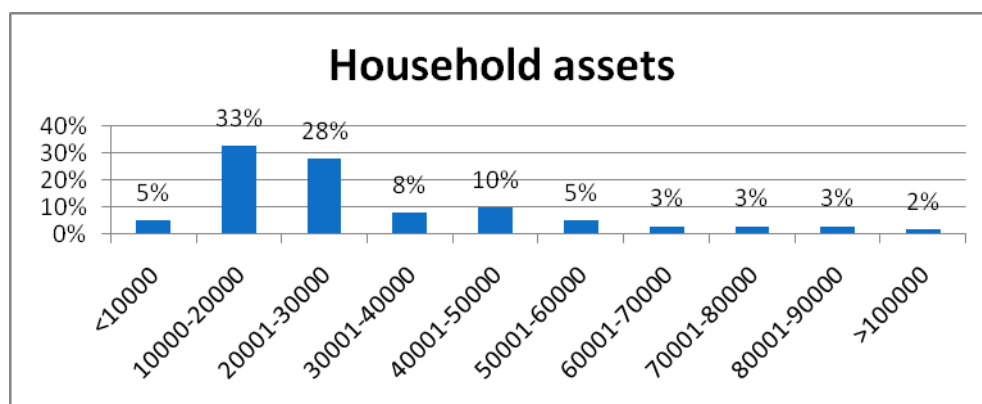


Figure 4.21 Household assets

Findings on Financial Capital in the Changed Situation

The above discussion on the data of financial capital helps to come to the following findings that the Santal community faces.

- Daily earning of a Santal laborer is very low and both male and female get equal wage.
- Around one third of the respondents can meet their need with this low income as almost every family has more than one earning members, and their living standard and expectation is lower.
- Maximum Santal laborer cannot manage work everyday of the week.
- The people who cannot meet their need with the daily earning have to take help from CPR.
- The Santal community has grown capability to address unexpected situation and for this starvation rate during critical season has reduced from 74% to 17%.
- A Santal people meet a doctor less frequently, sometimes never.
- Because of regular visit of the government health workers' awareness on maternal health is improving.
- Sanitation coverage is unsatisfactory and the local governments' initiative is not so encouraging.
- A Santal family has very minimum household assets which indicates they only can survive with their low income.

4.2.4 Changes in Physical Assets and Findings:

This part of data analysis is about the physical assets of the studied Santal community. It will be observed whether this community has the infrastructure and equipment for productivity. Physical assets help the Santal community to better accommodate the livelihood pattern contesting the vulnerability context.

- ***Land Assets***

To know about the physical assets of the Santal community, information is collected on their land. 9% of the respondents say they have land asset without homestead land, and 81% respondents reply they do not have.

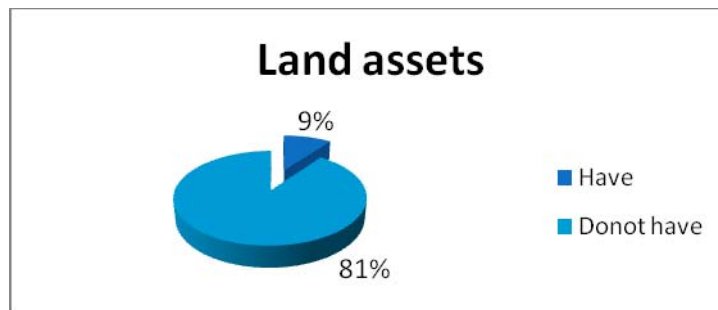


Figure 4.22 Ratio of land assets

- ***Sell and Purchase of Land***

4 respondents (44% of land owner, 4% of total respondents) reply that they have sold their land within 15 years. No respondents have been found who bought land within 15 years. It indicates that they could not increase their physical assets through saving.

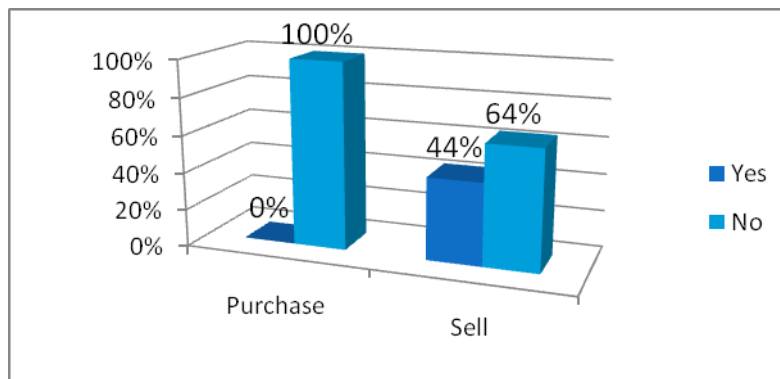


Figure 4.23 Purchase and Sell ratio of land assets

- ***Beneficiary of Khas Land***

The landless population in the Santal community is comparatively more than the plain land Bangalis. But in distribution of *Khas* Land the Santal community does not get priority. In this study only 5% respondents are the recipients of government's *Khas* Land distribution program. 95% did not get any land from the government.

- ***Cattle and Livestock***

The Santal people are agricultural tribe. They rear livestock and poultry which help them to meet financial crisis. Almost all respondents have cattle and livestock though the number is not enough. The Santal community has no land. It also requires CPR to rear their livestock. Previously there was sufficient unused area where everybody could rear livestock. Now that area is limited. In answer to a question, 19% respondents say they get free area for rearing their livestock and 81% say there is no such free area now.

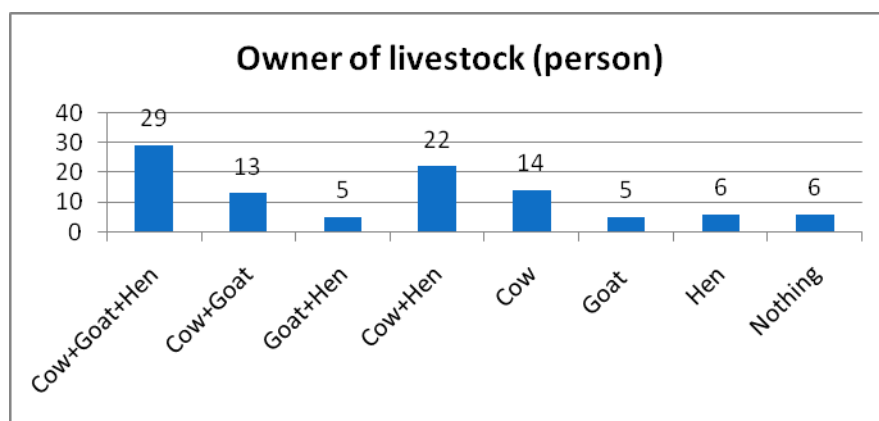


Figure 4.24 Information of livestock.

- ***Credit from Financial Institution***

To create income generating activities, 58% respondents get credit support from bank/NGO. 42% do not get any support.

- ***Social Safety Net Program***

The government social safety net programs (GR, TR, VGF, VGD Old Allowance, Widow Allowance, and Disable Allowance) cover a few section of the Santal community. 10%

respondents report they get support from social safety net program whereas 90% do not get any support under this program.

- ***Findings on Physical Capital in the Changed Situation***

After analyzing the data the following findings are found about the physical capital of the Santal community.

- More than 80% of the Santal community people do not have agricultural land.
- They are selling their land to meet the need.
- No person has acquired the solvency to buy land.

The rate of *Khas* Land settlement among the Santals is lower.

- The Santal people still rear cattle and livestock.
- CPR for Livestock also decreases.
- Around 50% people do not get credit support from Bank/NGOs.
- The social safety net programs do not address this community properly.

4.2.5 Changes in Social Capital and Findings:

The social capital of the studied group is explored by focusing on the group's participation in selected political and official activities. It also can be seen in their involvement in awareness program. The data may give us an idea about the social empowerment of the Santal people.

- ***Participation in Election***

93% respondents are found who vote in election but 3% do not take part in election by voting. No respondents are found who compete in election to be elected as public representative.

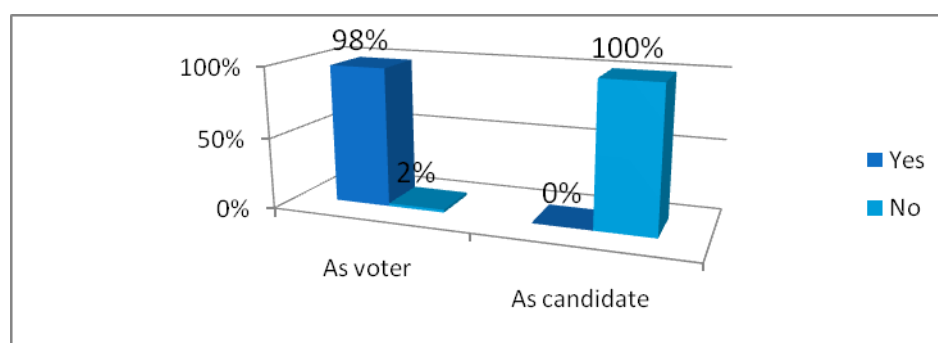


Figure 4.25 Participation in election

- ***Participation in Official Events***

Participation of the Santal people in official activities is an indicator of their social empowerment. Their participation in the local government bodies is very low. Only 2% respondents report that they attended Union Parishad meeting, and 98% did not take part in such meeting.

- ***Use of Media***

The Santals have less connection with media. More involvement with media will ensure more social and political awareness. They get less chance to watch TV or listen to radio. 27% respondents regularly watch TV and listen to radio. 73% do not get any chance to do so.

- ***Findings on Social Capital***

The above discussion on the social capital gives the following findings.

- The Santals have no participation in election as public representative. They do not think themselves so empowered to compete in local election.
- They have negligible participation in social and official gathering.
- They cannot use media which may enhance their social awareness as well as social empowerment.

4.3 The Local Coping and Adaptation Strategy of the Santal Community

Despite faced with serious pressure and challenges in the context of dwindling CPR, the Santal community is seen to have adapted several coping and adaptation measures and strategies to increase their capability in the concerned capitals.

4.3.1 Adaptation in Human Capital

The human capital is the main stick to combat any crisis of livelihood. The Santal people are seen to change their profession to meet the present context of decreasing their sources of natural food. The collected data report that previously they were engaged in hunting and gathering from

nature. They were also unemployed. At present no respondents is seen as hunters or unemployed, so it is easy to say that they are coping with the changed situation by choosing suitable profession.

Profession	Past	Present
Day laborer	89%	97%
Hunting	6%	0
Official Job	2%	3%
Unemployed	3%	0

Table 4.1 Comparative profession of past and present

It is also seen that 76% respondents send their children to school. In future these human resources will easily accommodate themselves in any adverse situation.

4.3.2 Adaptation in Natural Capital

The studied community has also managed alternative of the traditional food or profession to adapt the situation as the natural resources are squeezing due to various reasons. The Santal people are seen to collect the item from the natural source less frequently than they did earlier, rather they buy it from market or they use alternative items by changing taste. They have lessened the frequency of visiting CPR to collect food. It is revealed that more than half of the Santal community can afford the alternative items for CPR.

4.3.3 Adaptation in Financial Capital

The financial condition of the Santal community is lower than the average of the plain land Bengalis. The decrease of CPR which is an important source of food has put them in a more critical position. They have accommodated the crisis of financial vulnerability through self adjustment. 34% respondents report that they can save a lump sum amount from their earning which help them to rise above the crisis and to develop the capability to address unexpected

situation. The starvation rate during critical seasons has reduced from 74% to 17% through managing jobs.

4.3.4 Adaptation in Physical Capital

The Santals are now accommodative enough to the vulnerability context as their physical assets are also increasing. They are getting support from outside and sometimes they themselves are building their capacity. Around 50% of the respondents say they get credit support from the state owned banks like; Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank, Sonali Bank, Agrani Bank, Karmasangsthan Bank, etc. and also from NGOs like; BRAC, Grameen Bank, ASHA, KARITAS, BEDO, etc. Again the government has some social safety net programs like; GR (Grant Relief), TR (Test Relief), VGF (Vulnerable Group Feeding), VGD (Vulnerable Group development), Old Allowance, Widow Allowance and Disable Allowance, etc. where the Santals are also beneficiaries though very few number of them are addressed by these SSP. The Santal people still rear cattle and livestock which also help them to adapt in the odd situations.

4.3.5 Adaptation in Social capital

The social capital of the Santals is not so strong. But it is hopeful that there is an increasing trend in the social capital of them. They watch and listen to the social media, take part in election and, though negligible, they have started to attend political and official gatherings. They will be more able to cope with any unfavorable situation if their social awareness is increased.

4.3.6 Findings on the Adaptation Strategy of the Santals

The above discussion highlights how the Santals are gradually coping with the changing livelihood surroundings that have been resulted due the decline of CPR. The adapting strategies may be summarized as below;

- ✓ The Santals have started to shift their professions.
- ✓ They are getting a developed human resource through education for better coping with any adverse situation in future.
- ✓ The Santals are lessening their dependency on the CPR by choosing alternative items for the CPR.

- ✓ They have developed a bit financial capability to buy substitute foods rather going to the CPR.
- ✓ They have started to change their traditional habit of food.
- ✓ The Santal community has grown the habit of saving for future critical moment.
- ✓ The Santal people get collateral free credit from different organizations to create alternative income generating activities. They still continue cattle and poultry rearing.
- ✓ A social change is remarkable among the studied community which increases their social empowerment to cope with the future adverse position.

4.4 Observation from Key Informants on the Adaptation Capability of the Santals and Findings

The Santals pass their lives surrounded by the mainstream people who more or less influence their activities. The government officials, public representatives, teachers, local elites come close to the Santals' livelihood directly or indirectly. The government's development programs and social safety net programs are implemented by these personnel. What their thinking is about the Santals regarding the dwindling of CPR, what they are doing for them, what, according to them, the possible solutions are to the problem was also investigated in this study. Fifteen (15) key informants from different group have made their observation and opinion about the studied group. These are presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.2: The livelihood and the adaptation capability of the santal in the context of declining CPR as observed by the key informants

No. of key informants	Type of key informants	Observations of the key informants on the dwindling of CPR and the Santal's coping capacity with the Change
KI-01	Upazila Chairman	i) They are working mainly in agriculture. ii) They are changing profession for different reason and need, iii) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. iv) No such steps by the government. v) Extra steps may be taken. vi) No such development is found among them. vii) CPR has decreased a lot. viii) CPR needs to be reserved for the Santals as well as for all. ix) Training and credit should be given to them.

KI-02	Upazila Chairman	i) They are changing profession for different reasons. ii) They are working in agriculture, rice mills. iii) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. iv) No such steps by the government. v) Extra steps may be taken. vi) No such development is found among them. vii) CPR has decreased a lot. viii) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. ix) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-03	UNO	i) Government has extra steps for the santal. ii) Taken steps are not sufficient. iii) They are changing profession for different reason-need, iv) They are working in agriculture. v) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. vi) No such steps by the government. vii) Extra steps may be taken. viii) No such development is found among them. ix) CPR has decreased a lot. x) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. xi) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-04	UNO	i) Government has extra steps for the santal. ii) Taken steps are not sufficient. iii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iv) They are hard working v) They are working in agriculture. vi) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. vii) No such steps by the government. viii) Extra steps may be taken. ix) No such development is found among them. x) CPR has decreased a lot. xi) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. xii) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-05	UNO	i) Government has extra steps for the santal. ii) No quota or extra facility from this office iii) Taken steps are not sufficient. iv) They are changing profession for different reasons, v) They are working in agriculture and others. vi) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. vii) No such steps by the government. viii) Extra steps may be taken. ix) No such development is found among them. x) CPR has decreased a lot. xi) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. xii) Training and credit should be given to them.

KI-06	Mayor, Pourosova	i) The santal people are hard working and they are in different professions. ii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iii) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. iv) No such steps by the government. v) Extra steps may be taken. vi) No such development is found among them. vii) CPR has decreased a lot. viii) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. ix) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-07	Upazila Officer	i) The santal people are agriculture based tribe. ii) No extra direction for the santal in this department. iii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iv) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. v) Extra steps may be taken. vi) No such development is found among them. vii) CPR has decreased a lot. viii) No special training arranged for them. ix) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. x) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-08	Upazila Officer	i) No extra direction for the santal in this department. ii) The santal people are agriculture based tribe. iii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iv) Decrease of CPR is one of the reasons. v) Extra steps may be taken for them. vi) No such development is found among them. vii) CPR has decreased a lot. viii) No special training arranged for them. ix) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. x) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-09	Teacher	i) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. ii) Extra steps may be taken for them. iii) No such development is found among them. vi) CPR has decreased a lot. v) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. vi) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-10	Teacher	i) Decrease of CPR one of the reasons. ii) Extra steps may be taken for them. iii) No such development is found among them. vi) CPR has decreased a lot. v) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. vi) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-11	UP Chairman	i) The santal people are hard working and they are in different professions. ii) They are changing profession for different reasons,

		iii) Decrease of CPR is one of the reasons. iv) Extra steps sometimes by the government. v) More extra steps may be taken. vi) No such development is found among them. vii) CPR has decreased a lot. viii) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. ix) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-12	UP Chairman	i) The santal people are hard working and they are in different profession. ii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iii) Extra steps sometimes by the government. iv) No such development is found among them. v) CPR has decreased a lot. vi) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. vii) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-13	UP Chairman	i) The santal people are hard working and they are in different professions. ii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iii) Extra steps sometimes by the government. iv) No such development is found among them. v) CPR has decreased a lot. vi) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. vii) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-14	UP Chairman	i) The santal people are changing profession for different reasons, ii) Decrease of is CPR one of the reasons. iii) Extra steps sometimes by the government. iv) More extra steps may be taken. v) No such development is found among them. vi) CPR has decreased a lot. vii) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. viii) Training and credit should be given to them.
KI-15	UP Member	i) The santal people are hard working. ii) They are changing profession for different reasons, iii) Decrease of CPR is one of the reasons. iv) Extra steps sometimes by the government. v) No such development is found among them. vi) CPR has decreased a lot. vii) CPR needs to be reserved for santal as well as for all. viii) Training and credit should be given to them.

Findings from the observations of the key informants:

- The government officers, local government representatives, local elites are more or less informed of the Santal community but no extra initiatives by themselves are found.
- The government initiative is insufficient and not holistic.
- Everybody thinks CPR has an impact on the livelihood of the Santals and the CPR has decreased.
- No positive change in the life of the Santals.
- Extra initiative is needed for the Santals and it may change their livelihood as they are hard working.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter intends to draw general findings, conclusion and suggest some recommendations which may illustrate the process of some pragmatic policy making and implementations.

5.1 General Findings of the Study

The overall discussion of the collected data and the findings that has been drawn on each capital highlights the very fact that the CPR plays an important role on the livelihood of the Santal community. Decline in CPR compels the studied community to find out alternative solutions for sustenance. The people being hard working are capable enough to cope with the changing situation. There is an increasing trend of education among the Santal that will help them to survive the situation. The general findings of study can be summarized as following:

- *The CPR on which the Santal community depends is declining and correspondingly the access to the CPR by the Santals is getting squeezed.*
- *Dependency on the CPR is decreasing but when the people cannot manage to find any other substantial means of livelihood, they still resort to the local CPR.*
- *More than half of the studied community people is unable to afford the alternative of CPR.*
- *44% respondents of the Santal community who have land are losing land assets and the area for livestock grazing and pastorage has also drustically decreased.*
- *Although the process and pace are slow and limited, a clear tend is visible in the study are regarding the gradual shift of the Santal community to alternative profession and exploration of their avenues beyond CPR.*
- *No remarkable development is observed in the financial and social aspects of the Santal community because still they have to depend on nature when they are unable to manage any job. Moreover, they cannot yet involve themselves in the public and local government institutions.*

- *The government's support in health and education sector for this community is worth mentioning.*
- *Economic rehabilitation either by credit or social safety net program is inadequate.*
- *There is a positive change in human resource development as the community shows a increasing tendency and interest to invest in educating their children.*
- *The capability of the Santal community people to cope with the change is gradually developing.*

5.2 Conclusions

The Santal community is a significant member in our country living in almost 18 districts. They differ from the mainstream population in terms of origin, culture, food habit and financial capability. They have organized their community near forest, jungle, *beels* area so that they can easily use the natural sources for their livelihood. At the very outset they were used by the land lords as the Santal labor was very cheaper. Still the Santals sell their labor in cheaper rate in compare with the plain land Bengalis. They basically depend on the agro-based professions and the nearby CPR for livelihood. Because of industrialization and increase in population, the area of unused land decreases, ultimately it decreases the moving space of the Santal community. The common pool resources have got characterization of private goods. Though constitutionally every citizen deserves equal attention from the state, the Santals are still treated as *adibasi* ignoring their basic demands of education, health care, employment, etc. During the past few decades the plain land Bengalis could improve their financial condition remarkably but there is rare example where the Santals have improved their financial solvency. The tribal communities including the Santals are losing their moveable and immoveable properties day by day. There is provision for quota system in recruitment to take the backward section of the society on the main track but the Santals are not qualified enough to reach the level of getting quota facilities. That is why the Santals including some other tribals need more extended cooperation to walk together with the mainstream people. The normal way of living of the Santals being hampered, it demands special steps to create employment generation for them. The government should take policy which will eliminate social discrimination, provide equal opportunity for the Santals to avail all the benefits the state offers. To ensure the future existence of the Santal community,

they should be given the favorable area of income generation with appropriate training and motivation and special measures need to be taken to preserve their culture as well as our national cultural heritage.

The present study is mainly an attempt to examine the impacts and the implications of the CPR on the livelihood of the Santals. From the observation it is clear that the Santal community is different from the mainland people in terms of their habit and culture. Their economic, social, and political ability is lower than the average of the mainland people. Decline in CPR is obvious but the alternative options for CPR are not provided for them. They should be given alternative professions with training so that can continue their livelihood following their own pattern. The government should come with special programs and initiatives to upgrade their standard of living.

5.3 Specific Recommendations

Based on the field observations and findings the following recommendations are put forwarded so that the Santal community can easily accommodate them combating the adverse impacts of declining CPR.

5.3.1 Policy Level Recommendations

- i) **Amendment in Existing Law:** There are some laws which hamper the right of the ethnic community. The laws such as *The Sarkari Jalmahal Babosthyaapon Nity, 2009*, *The Krishi Khas Jomi Bondobostho Nitimala, 1995*, *The Acquisition of Immoveable Property Act, 1982*, *The Wildlife (Preservation and Security) Act 2012* should be amended ensuring the right of the ethnic community.
- ii) **CPR Reservation:** The common pool resources should be reserved for future use. The CPR is important not only for the Santal community but also for the balance of echo system. The reservation of CPR will ensure the echo system and the easy access of the dependent people to CPR. Policies to prevent the transformation of the CPR and the commercial use of CPR are to be enacted. No development projects diminishing the CPR should be taken.

iii) **Maintain Quota in Local Government:** Local Government is a vital organization for social empowerment. Local government institutions ensure local development. But the local government institutions do not reach the ethnic community in the plain land as much as expected. This is because the ethnic groups in the plain land cannot represent in the local body through competition. For this reason a quota for the ethnic people as public representative in the rural local government institutions should be introduced for the development of the ethnic community.

5.3.2 Implementation Level Recommendations

- iv) **Provide Subsidy:** The Santals should be provided with alternative professions so that they become less dependent on CPR as the excess use of CPR may disrupt the balance of eco system. During the gap of transferring to a new profession, special subsidy programs need to be introduced for them. It will lessen the frequency of CPR use and make space to accommodate with new profession.
- v) **Provide Training:** The Santal community should accommodate them with modern and mainstream profession as early as possible, as their traditional area of movements is squeezed. They should be given proper training in suitable income generating activities. Besides collateral free credit to be arranged for them by both the government and non government organizations.
- vi) **Maintain Quota in SSP:** The Santal community is still financially insolvent. Extra care and attention is essential for them. The government has different social safety net programs where this people are not taken in consideration appropriately. The public representatives are also careless about them. There should be a quota system in SSP for the Santals until they are developed.
- vii) **Promote Education:** Education is the basic platform of all developments. The Santal community is already on the track of education. But owing to financial crisis they cannot continue it to the end. If they are supported from outside, they will be able to continue education. So there should be especial assistance programs in education for the Santal community or the ethnic groups.

5.4 Implications for Future Research

The study has examined the impacts of declining CPR on the livelihood of the Santals. The findings that have been drawn from the field survey are identified in the context of the challenges the studied community faces. The identified problems and the recommendations are not enough to easily make a solution to the problems. Therefore, it is recommended for in-depth research on this area. Further research may explore some more important guidelines which will help to upgrade the life standard of the Santals. More especially the following avenues of research may be explored-

- Exploring, identifying and studying the feasibility of alternative forms of income generation and livelihood.
- Identifying the weakness of the laws which obstruct the rights of the Santal community and suggesting specific recommendations for revising the laws.

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