

**WORK PARTICIPATION RATE AND DEVELOPMENT STATUS OF BONGAON, BASIRHAT AND BARASAT
SUBDIVISIONS OF NORTH 24 PARGANAS DISTRICT, WEST-BENGAL, INDIA.**

Rajat Halder

Department of Geography, Basirhat College, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal, India.

Abstract

The changing pattern of demography characterized with different types of economic characteristics i.e., size and growth of working population, changing pattern of occupational structure, shifting of worker from primary to other economy, level of income etc. Statistics relating to the occupational structure seldom indicate the actual amount of employment of manpower in the different occupation. The size of worker and the work participation rate, including that of female population, have increased gradually in the study area which is comprises the blocks of Sundarban area, Border area (Bangladesh) and grater Kolkata region. The work participation rate (WRP) increased from 28.18 percent in 1961 to 33.66 percent in 2001. For male population the WPR increased from 49.93 percent in 1981 to 54.21 percent in 2001. A radical change had taken place for the female WPR which has registered by 11.90 percent in 2001 and twenty years back (1981) it was only 3.99 percent. The study area has various types of economic functions and of which there may be dominant one but the dominance of workers in different economic activities varies from decade to decade in the study area. Modern economic development consisted mainly in a continuous transfer of population from agriculture activities to those connected with industries and services. The percentage of 'other than Primary workers' to total main workers had increased from 31.44 percent in 1961 to 62.20 percent in 2001 due to lack of work in agricultural sectors and pressure of land, low wage rate of primary workers mainly of agricultural workers, rapid rate of urbanization as well as industrial development.

Key words: Size of workers, work participation rate, occupation, development, other than primary workers.

INTRODUCTION:

The concept of demographic transition organizes a variety of population data into an orderly and coherent pattern with a view to integrating the spatial processes of change and the dimensions of time (Trewartha, 1969). Demography generally concerning the change in population characteristics is closely related to social and economic development of the concerned people. According to

Cassen (1978), the impact of population growth on development often 'generates more heat than light'. The basic contradiction between economy and demography emerges due to the population's natural reproduction and the functioning of socio-economic structures. According to Souza (1985), it is generally assumed that economic development and population growth are negatively related. The typical demographic pattern in low income areas thus has

two salient features: (1) A young population with a high ratio of dependent to earners; and (2) an actual or incipient high rate of growth, with a few centuries a constant geometric increase at 2 or 3 percent per year would produce absurdly high numbers-for example, more than one person per square foot (Coale and Hoover, 1958).

The total population comprises of two sections mainly (a) economically active and (b) economically inactive. To the first group belong the workers who are producers of economic goods or services, hence they are said to be gainfully employed. They are the bread winners or livelihood earners. Other terms such as "work force", "gainfully employed" or Labour force" are used to refer to the "economically active" portion of population (Bouge, 1969). The size of active population in relation to total population is determined not only by purely demographic factors such as age structure, but is also greatly influenced by economic and social considerations (Knowles and Wareing, 1986). According to *Devi* (1981: 270), labour force participation is generally affected by the volume and composition of the available of job opportunities, the sex-age structure of population, the propensity of the population to take part in the labour force, their level of education and their place of education.

The population growth of the study area has been quite varied form decade to decade of the 20th century. Till 1951 it was relatively low, but thereafter, a large number of people came from the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in various part of border district of 24 Parganas. High population density along with a high rate of increase in population is indeed a problem for the study area as well as district. Illegal immigration from Bangladesh, mainly along its eastern border and expansion of the State Capital i.e. Kolkata in the western part of the district is aggravating the threat of high population pressure. Demographically the study has relatively much young population (below 15 years of age) of its total population in against of the district and the dependency ratio is now also high in the study area.

According to the Census 2001, there are variations of work participation rate (WPR) among the different blocks in the study area. The WPR

varies between 30.41 in Minakhan and 39.70 Hingalganj. The lowest percentage of main workers to total workers is seen in Sundarban Area (SA) with 75.47 percent. It is the highest in the Other area (OA) with 88.47 percent. For the female, the share of main workers to total workers is relatively low. The lowest share is also seen in the Sundarban area (40.02 percent). It is the highest in Other Area with 66.47 percent.

STUDY AREA:

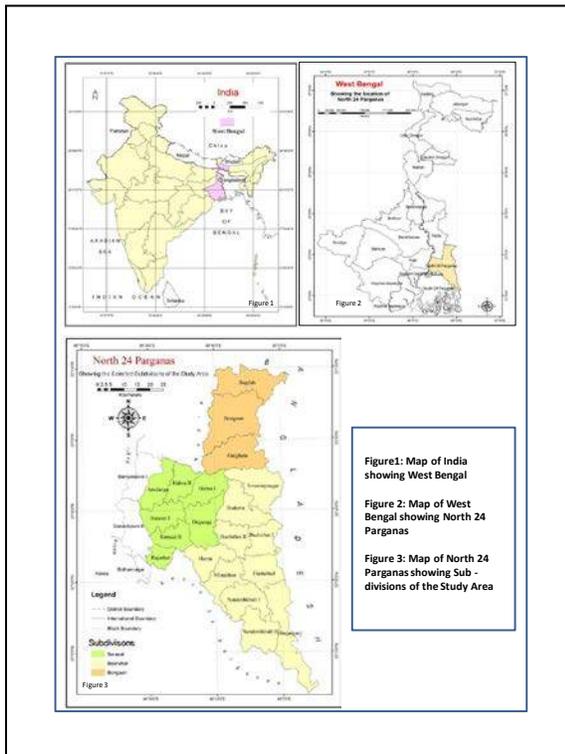
The study area comprises of 20 Community Development (CD) Blocks of Bangaon, Basirhat and Barasat Subdivisions of North 24 Parganas District of West-Bengal and there are 22 police stations with District Head Quarter at Barasat. Latitudinally it extends from 22°11'6" North to 23°15'22" North and longitudinally from 88°25' East to 89°5' East (approximately). It covers 90 percent of total area i.e., 3617.67sq.km and 60 percent of total population i.e. 5214020 of the district, (Census of India, 2001). There are 1507 inhabited villages distributed over 20 development blocks. The study area has 20 Panchayat Samities and 186 Gram Panchayats with 2715 Gram Sansads. There are 10 municipalities and 10 Census Towns in the study area (Source: District Statistical Handbook, North 24 Parganas, 2008). In the study area eight C.D. Blocks share international border with Bangladesh and six C.D. Blocks included with in the *Sundarban* region.

The study area is bounded by the Hooghly-Industrial belt of Barackpur-Kolkata in the west. In the east, the international border is formed by the river Ichchamati. To the north, it is bounded by the southern boundary of Nadia district, and to the south it is bounded by the northern boundary of South 24 Parganas district. Lying at the apex of the funnel shaped the Bay of Bengal and serving as the immediate hinterland of Kolkata urban-industrial region, this sensitive border district commands a vital strategic area not only for West Bengal but also for India, in war as well as peace (De, 1994).

Geomorphologically the study area as well as North 24 Parganas is a deltaic region of West-Bengal. It embraces the moribund delta in the north, mature delta in middle, and active delta in the south. The

active delta still growing southwards is a system of innumerable tidal rivers, canals and creeks, saline soils, swamps and marshes. A part of this active delta contains forest, known as Sundarban.

Geographically the study area can be divided into three regions namely Sundarban Area (SA), which includes six C.D. Blocks of Basirhat Subdivision i.e. Haroa, Minakhan, Sadeshkhal-I&II, Hasnabad and Hingalganj. Sundarban is the littoral fringe of west Bengal. The littoral fringe of West-Bengal is economically backward area (Chattopadhyay, 1980). Border Area (BA), which includes six blocks i.e. Bongaon, Bagdah, Gaighata of Bongaon Subdivision and Baduria, Basirhat-I, Swarupnagar of Basirhat Subdivision and Other areas (OA), which includes eight blocks i.e. Habra-I&II, Barasat-I&II, Amdanga, Deganga, Rajarhat of Barasat subdivision and Basirhat-II of Basirhat Subdivision. It should be mentioned that Hasnabad and Hingalganj blocks include both in Sundarban areas as well as border areas.



OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study seeks to fulfill the following objectives:

- To find out the nature of the variable growth of size of worker along with the analysis of the causes of such variations.
- To trace the changes that is taking place in the pattern of work participation rate.
- To assess the nature of changes in the occupational structure owing to the changes in the economy through decades.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study has been made under a detailed methodology. The subject of the present study requires field data as well as secondary data and other related materials. The methodology used for this study to understand the subject clearly and make a comprehensive study of it is as the following. Present research work has been carried out into three different stages.

Pre-field Works:

To understand the nature and characteristics of demography and development in the study area secondary data are collected from different government reports and records, maps and also from different public organization. Such as -

- i. Office of the Directorate of Census Operation, Government of India.
- ii. Office of the District Statistical Officer, Barasat, North 24 Parganas, West-Bengal.
- iii. Office of the District Industries Centre (D.I.C), Barasat, North 24 Parganas, West-Bengal.
- iv. Office of the Labour Commissioner, Government of West-Bengal, Cuhrch Lane, Kolkata-01.
- v. National Library, Alipur, Kolkata.
- vi. Indian Statistical Institute Library, B. T. Road, Kolkata-35.
- vii. British Council Library, Camac Street, Kolkata-017.
- viii. Central Library, Calcutta University, Kolkata.

Field Works:

During the period of field work, the present researcher has endeavored to collect suitable data

on demographic characteristics and socio-economic conditions of the people of the study area using questionnaire. An interview survey was conducted for primary data collection.

A separate set of questionnaires have been framed for survey work of the 305 households and families in a random method for interview with an aim and trace the economic characteristics of the household such as type of occupation, place of work, type of employment, family income etc of individual households.

Post- field Work:

The study incorporates different methods and cartographic techniques used for data compilation, data analysis and data representation through various statistical, qualitative, quantitative and cartographic techniques.

Quantitative and Statistical Methods:

The various statistical methods used include the calculation of simple percentage, ratios, growth rate, spatial distribution and frequency distribution. The quantitative methods used for demographic and development analysis are related to the methods of identifying the size of workers or work participation rate (WPR), their distribution, spatial concentration etc. The formula of WPR is $(100 / \text{Total population}) \times \text{Total workers}$.

GROWTH OF SIZE OF WORKERS:

In 1961, the percentage of total workers to total population i.e., Work Participation Rate (WPR) in the study area was 28.18. Inter-block variation in WPR was not very high at that time. The WPR Varied from 24.35 percent in Habra to 33.88 percent in Sandeshkhali. For the male population, the variation in WPR was 12.46 percent and the female it was quite low in the study area with 3.29 percent. The inter-block variation in female WPR in 1961 was 6.64 percent. Female WPR was the highest in Sandeshkhali block with 8.37 percent because Sandeshkhali C.D.Block is inhabited by a remarkable percentage of backward class people mainly Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population, and among the all blocks of the study area the highest percentage of Scheduled Tribe population is found in Sandeshkhali block i.e., 24.10 percent to its

total population. In the bottom levels in rural hierarchy, women do both intramural and extramural work (Desai and Krishnaraj, 1990). The women of the backward class in Sandeshkhali Block as well as rural Sundarban area are compelled to do wage paid outside work for their poor economic condition. This area is characterized by seasonal agricultural activities and people have meager scope for economic activities. So, generally men and women both are compelled to engage in different types of works (magnal or main) for a relatively better livelihood.

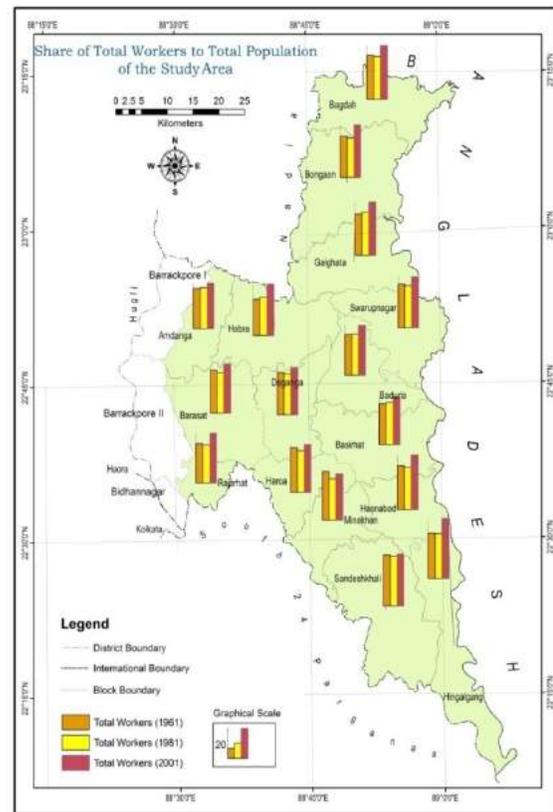


Fig.4: Total workers to total population of the study area.

After two decades, in 1981, the percentage of total worker to the total population had been decreased. The WPR had been registered as 27.58 percent in 1981. After getting the political power in West Bengal in 1977, the Left Front Government has been largely successful in implementing the programme of agrarian reform which involved redistribution of economic claims from the well-off

to the poor. In spite of that the WPR of the study area did not increase, because the growth of total population was faster than the growth of total working population (Sengupta and Gazdar, 1996).

During the liberation of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971 people continued to pour into the district of 24 Parganas of West Bengal almost uninterruptedly throughout the subsequent decades. The administrative regimes of the then Bangladesh with their strong leanings on religious fundamentalism have further accentuated the process of ethnic cleansing and large infiltration of Hindu population into the border districts and states of India. West-Bengal shares its border with Bangladesh stretching to about 2,216.70 Km covering about eleven districts of the state, and nine blocks of the study area of North 24 Parganas district. The scope of legal or illegal infiltration increased to a considerable extent. This cross-border infiltration play a crucial role in literacy, gross enrolment ratio, female literacy rate, life expectancy at birth based on ethnic and economic composition of population. The percentage of WPR decreased due to international migration in both 1971 and 1981 (Mukherjee, 2009). The WPR varied between 25.07 percent in Rajarhat to 33.25 percent in Sandeskhali. For the male population the WPR in 1981 was 49.93 percent, which was lower than that of 1961; and the variation of WPR was 8.36 percent. For the female population the WPR in 1981 had increased, and it was only 3.99 percent in the study area. The percent of female WPR was comparatively higher in Hingalgañj (5.69 percent) but very low in Deganga (1.81 percent).

The 2001, Census recorded 1754787 workers in the study area of North 24 Parganas district. Twenty years back, i.e. in 1981, the study area had 869414 workers. The WRP in respect of total population increased from 27.58 percent in 1981 to 33.66 percent in 2001. According to Knowles and Wareing (1986), this percentage of workers indicates the study area is being developing. Because, the active proportion of the total population ranges about 30 percent in developing countries. For male population the WPR also increased from 49.93 percent in 1981 to 54.21 percent in 2001. A radical change had taken

place for the female WPR which has registered by 11.90 percent in 2001. Twenty years back in 1981 it was only 3.99 percent. The highest WPR is 57.22 percent in Hingalgañj for male, and 21.25 percent also in Hingalgañj for female in 2001. But till now, the female work participation rate in the study area as well as district is relatively very low than male. As a social system the customs and tradition in some caste and religious group are such that they prescribe women's participation in the work out of the home and in time-bounded activities. In modern sector employment, it is expected a lower level of participation from rural women, because, it is believed that the roots of traditional norms are difficult to remove from women in a rural setting (Devi, 1981). According to Desai and Krishnaraj (1990), women still suffer social and economic operation. In small towns and villages, upper caste women even today are confined to home bounded activities and involved in responsibilities and interests limited only to their kith and kin. The growing instances of suffering socially and economically by women of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes generate despair, frustration and expose the inter-twining of caste, class and gender forces. The back-bearing drudgery of housework by women as well as the long hours spent in activities like fetching water and brining of firewood in the rural areas is known to all.

In 2001, there was a positive correlation (0.34) between the total male workers to total male population, and the percentage of main workers to total male workforce. In the female, the scenario is just the reverse. The correlation coefficient between the female WPR to total female population and the percentage of main female workers to total female workforce was negative (-0.25). The female population in the district remained underemployed. If the WPR of the female was found to be high in a block, the possibility was that the female are driven to the workforce mainly as marginal workers.

SHIFTING OF WORKERS FROM PRIMARY SECTOR TO OTHER SECTORS:

Sectoral transformation of economy is a major factor of economic development (Souza, 1985).

Modern economic development consisted mainly in a continuous transfer of population from agriculture activities to those connected with industries and services (Elizaga, 1980). Trewartha (1969) observes that an increasingly relative high proportion of workers engaged in secondary activities which is typical of modern world, is a symbol of economic metamorphosis in which there is an increasing use of machine and mechanical power. He also points out that while the growth of secondary sector represents mainly a strengthening of economic potential of a country, a large increment of tertiary activities leading to a well-balanced tertiary group, points to a high degree of national sophistication and a flowering of national prosperity. In 1961, 67.91 percent of the total workers were engaged in primary activities such as agriculture, fishing, plantation, forestry, livestock rearing etc; and 32.09 percent were engaged in 'other than primary activities' such as household industry, manufacturing, construction, trade and commerce, transport and other services in the study area. Most of the workers of the primary sector were engaged in agricultural pursuits. The ratio between the cultivators and the agricultural laborers in the study area in 1961 was 2.1: 1.

Table-1: Share of Workers to Total, Male and Female Population in the Study Area in 2001.

C D Blocks	% of Total workers to Total population	% of Total male workers to Total male population	% of Total female workers to Total female population
Bongaon Subdivision	35.28	55.48	13.87
Bagdah	35.83	55.53	15.11
Bongaon	34.84	55.19	13.16
Gaighata	35.51	55.87	14.01
Barasat Subdivision	32.86	54.03	10.41
Habra-I & II	34.15	54.92	12.30
Deganga	31.18	53.23	7.99
Amdanga	30.41	53.48	5.59

Rajarhat	33.06	54.57	10.09
Barasat- I &II	32.84	53.46	10.94
Basirhat Subdivision	33.78	53.80	12.65
Basirhat-I&II	31.90	53.51	9.24
Swarupnagar	33.88	55.13	11.61
Baduria	33.32	55.12	10.57
Haroa	31.82	52.07	10.18
Minakhan	30.70	50.59	9.49
Hasnabad	36.65	54.45	17.61
Hingaljanj	39.70	57.22	21.25
Sandeskhali-I&II	34.86	52.49	16.23
Study Area	33.66	54.21	11.90

Source: District Census Hand Book of 24 Pgs.(N).2001

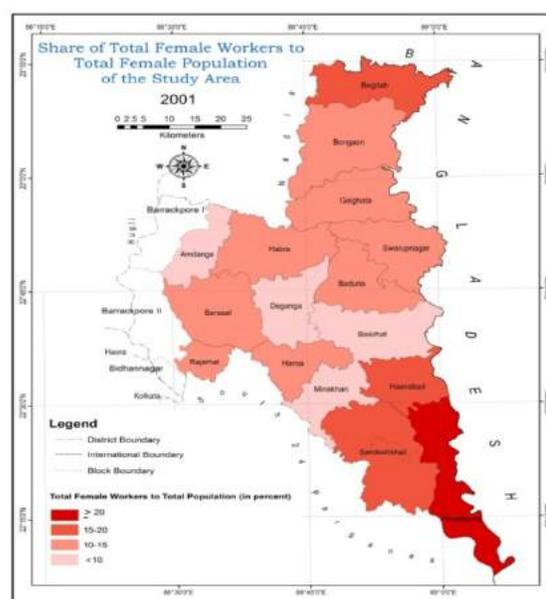


Fig. 5: Total female workers to total female population of the study area.

The percentage of 'other than Primary workers' to total main workers had increased from 32.09 percent in 1961 to 35.99 percent in 1981. Generally this transformation is the result of continuous population growth and shrinking in agricultural land as well as source of primary activities gradually. In 2001, the main workers

of 'other than primary sector' have increased to 62.20 percent in the study area. The general trend in the movement of workers was higher in 'other than primary sector' than the primary sector, because of the following reasons:

(1) Indian economy is small farmers' economy with limited land and other resources (Banerjee, 1977). They generally depend on agricultural labour for their income. But, they face social and economic problems because family members partially work in their own fields, and spend the rest of time in others' farms to earn wages. One of the another reasons for the decrease of the agricultural labourers is that the nature of employment in agriculture is highly seasonal with a cycle of peak and slack seasons owing to labour intensive subsistence type of agriculture practiced in the most of West-Bengal (Chattopadhyay, 2001). The availability of limited available land for cultivation among the households is compelling to its workforce to participate in different non-farm employment (Mehta, 2003).

(2) The wage rate of agricultural labourers is relatively less than the wage rate of the workers in hosiery, ceramic, tailoring, building constructions, road maintenance, public transport, and even in the shop-keeping. Population growth increases the supply of labourers relative to land and capital and thus reduces wage rates (Report of the Expert Group on Population, Resources, Environment and Development, International Conference on Population, 1984).

(3) The study area is located in North 24 Parganas district of West-Bengal, and is one of the biggest industrial areas of the state. Manufacturing industries play a vital role in the economic life of North 24 Parganas district. Labour participation in the manufacturing

sectors has been quite impressive in the nearly Barrackpur industrial region.

Table 2: Monthly Wage Rate (in Rs) of the Different Type of Workers and Their Increase (In %) in Respect the Base Year, 1980.

Year	Public Transport (driver)	Construction (skilled)	Tailoring (skilled)	Ceramic (skilled)	Agri. Labourer (adult)
1980	289.26	258.4	273	261	244.26
2010	4885.4	3825	4029	4067	3615
Increase	1588.9	1380.58	1375.82	1458.24	1379.98

Source: Labour of West-Bengal from 1980 to 2010.

(4) The process of urbanization in the study area has been taking place in a faster rate, and urban workforce is increasing day by day. This workforce finds their livelihood in non-primary economic activities which are growing with the neo-liberal economic scenario.

(5) The development of transport and communication system is another factor for the growth of workers in 'other than primary economy'. Commuting with the Kolkata Metropolitan region is now quite easier due to good railway transportation. The development of transport and communication system gives the scope for employment and income generation for its population in 'other than primary sector'.

6) Most of the primary activities, mainly agriculture, are sufferer from seasonal characteristics but the secondary, tertiary and other economic activities usually do not suffer due to seasonal factors.

(7) The progress of literacy and education in the study area is responsible for shift in the economy from the primary activities to secondary and tertiary activities.

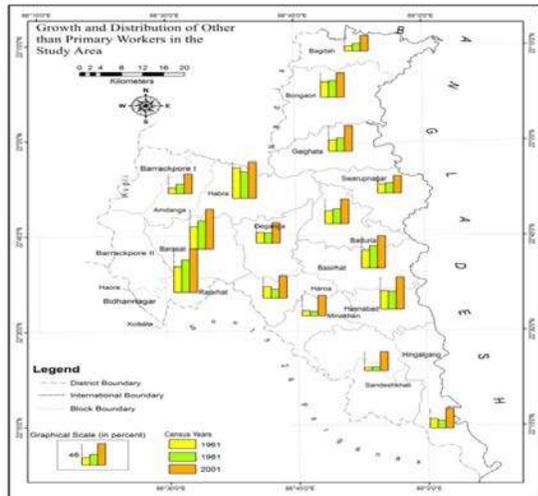


Fig. 6: Growth and distribution of other than Primary workers in the study area.

Considering the Census of India data of 2001, at the block level distribution of main workers, it is observed that the percentage of main workers in ‘other than primary sector’ was the highest in Rajarhat (91.88 percent) followed by Barasat (84.23 percent), and Habra (76.81 percent). Even the blocks which consist of municipal towns such as Bangaon, Baduria, Basirhat and Hasnabad, accounted for more than 50 percent of main workers in ‘other than primary sectors’.

Generally the blocks which are fully rural (no urban area) and share with international border of Bangladesh and Sundarban areas, their cultivators and agricultural labourers as well as primary workers constitute more than 50 percent of total main workforce. In 2001, the share of primary workers in these block are 67.07 percent in Bagdah, 63.04 percent in Swarupnagar, 59.7 percent in Sandeskhali, 58.1

percent in Hingaljanj, 55.97 percent in Minakhan and 52.76 percent in Haroa. The scenario was the reverse in Gaighata.

WORKFORCE PERTICIPATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

Work force participation is considered as the index value of livelihood opportunity which is important indicator of human development index. Government of West-Bengal does not also provide any information at the block level with regard to (aggregate) income or expenditure. So, to construct the index value of livelihood opportunities the present researcher has followed the method, which was developed by the Development & Planning Department of West Bengal Government, in order to address the income related issue of Human Development Index (HDI). It is, therefore, considered necessary to process in terms of an available proxy variable. The proxy in this regard was constructed by considering the Work Participation Rate (WPR) and the percentage of main workers in the workforce in the C D Blocks of the study area. The quantity of WPR was calculated on the basis of the percentage of other workers among the main workers. A simple weighted average of this percentage would somewhat capture the livelihood opportunity in a block.

The block level data on WPR was collected from Census of India 2001. It also provided the information on the number of main workers, and the number of other workers among main workers. These data were utilized for constructing the livelihood opportunity index (LOI) for each block of the study area. Index values were calculated by assigning equal weight to WPR, percentage of main workers among total workers, and percentage of other workers among main workers.

Table 3: Share of Primary Workers and Other than Primary Workers to Total Main workers in different C D Blocks of the Study Area.

CD Blocks	1961*		1981		2001	
	Other than primary workers	Primary workers	Other than primary workers	Primary workers	Other than primary workers	Primary workers
Bongaon Subdiv.	24.95	75.05	28.61	71.39	48.18	51.82
Bagdah	10.38	89.62	15.63	84.37	32.93	67.07
Bongaon	32.84	67.16	34.75	65.25	51.69	48.31
Gaighata	23.50	76.50	29.28	70.72	54.07	45.93
Basirhat Subdiv.	24.54	75.46	26.77	73.23	52.64	47.36
Basirhat I & II	38.35	61.65	47.38	52.62	67.81	32.19
Swarupnagar	19.30	80.70	21.51	78.49	36.96	63.04
Baduria	27.21	72.79	31.10	68.90	51.68	48.32
Haroa	24.95	72.05	19.00	81.00	47.24	52.76
Minakhan	11.47	88.53	9.5	90.5	44.03	55.97
Hasnabad	38.65	61.35	38.22	61.78	69.49	30.51
Hingalganj	19.79	80.21	15.63	84.37	41.9	58.1
Sandeshkhali-I & II	7.84	92.62	7.74	92.26	40.3	59.7
Barasat Subdiv.	45.28	54.72	50.40	49.60	76.18	23.82
Habra I & II	64.02	35.98	56.25	43.75	76.81	23.19
Deganga	22.66	77.34	21.72	78.28	43.34	56.66
Amdanga	12.09	87.91	20.25	79.75	41.56	58.44
Rajarhat	53.68	46.32	68.92	31.08	91.88	8.12
Barasat I & II	46.72	53.28	58.52	41.48	84.23	15.77
Study Area	31.44	68.56	35.99	64.01	62.20	37.80

*Including mining, fishing, plantation, quarrying, livestock, and forestry; Data source: District Census Hand Book of 24 pgs and North 24 pgs.

Table 4: Ranking of the C D Blocks in Terms of Livelihood Opportunity Index (in 2001).

C.D Blocks	Popula-tion	Total Worker	% of WPR	% of MWATW*	% of OWAMW**	Livelihood Opport. Index	Rank
Bagdah	219814	78757	35.83	84.26	29.01	0.50	17
Bangaon	344044	120681	35.08	83.94	33.88	0.51	16
Ghighata	285122	101333	35.54	86.91	45.69	0.56	5
Swarupnagar	226608	76768	33.88	82.92	31.67	0.49	18
Habra-1	165270	56723	34.32	86.13	52.64	0.58	3
Habra-II	134361	46498	34.61	82.47	46.99	0.55	9
Amdanga	165792	50416	30.41	87.14	39.64	0.52	12
Barasat-1	218199	72522	33.24	85.03	69.44	0.63	1
Barasat-II	169098	52067	30.79	83.40	53.93	0.56	6
Deganga	275350	85855	31.18	86.95	39.64	0.53	11
Baduria	247638	82759	33.42	86.11	41.38	0.54	10
Basirhat-1	147741	40644	12.93	85.91	51.55	0.57	4
Basirhat-II	189850	59571	31.38	85.95	49.44	0.56	7
Haroa	182522	58074	31.82	81.58	43.52	0.52	13
Rajarhat	138652	42054	30.33	86.99	68.88	0.62	2
Minakhan	168965	51866	30.70	81.50	42.11	0.51	14
Sandeshkhali-1	140476	47040	33.49	75.69	44.41	0.51	15
Sandeshkhali-II	136810	49460	36.28	61.76	31.02	0.43	20
Hasnabad	177521	65765	37.05	81.67	47.60	0.55	8
Hingalganj	156400	62090	39.70	68.96	33.21	0.47	19
Study Area	197752	65217	32.95	82.65	42.39	0.53	
MWATW* = Main workers Among total workers ; % of OWAMW** = Other workers among main workers							

The findings are reported in Table-7.8. In terms of livelihood opportunity in the study area Barasat-I is the best among 20 blocks of the study area. Rajarhat comes next with index value of 0.62 (the difference between Rajarhat and Barasat-I in terms of livelihood opportunity index is just 0.01). Habra-I with an index value of 0.58 ranks the third. The worst is the scenario in Sandeskhali-II, a backward block in the lower deltaic riverine area of the district. The index value is also very low in Hingalganj, another backward block of district. The differences in livelihood index between the worst and the best block is 0.20 in the study area.

CONCLUSION:

Different aspects of the current demographic problems are particularly acute in the developing countries. Among them there is an aggravation of the employment problem- a major social problem at the current stage of overcoming backwardness (ibid). Despite the small proportion of economically active persons in their population a considerable part is unable to participate in socially useful labour. Such as in 1991, there were 2.9 percent workers to total workers in the study area as marginal workers, and in 2001 it was 14.9 percent to total workers. So the participation rate of marginal workers increased by 12 percent during 1991-2001. As well as people have been crowded into low income work. Sometimes this takes the form of additional adults working on family farms, which can barely support the present number. But, often it involves large numbers flocking into the cities, adding to the proliferation of badly paid jobs.

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