INTRODUCTION

A. Some facts about population in West Bengal

At present, West Bengal has become a poverty striken as well as an over populated cum congested state in India. This is due to its historical legacies. India achieved her independence in 1947 with two crippled sons like West Bengal and Punjab as these two suffered a serious set back due to partition and corresponding refugee problems. West Bengal had lost some of her most important and extensive economic zones and natural resources as well as some industries. Punjab resolved its problem through successful implementation of the principle of "exchange of property" and various administrative measures. But unfortunately, West Bengal has not yet been able to resolve this serious problem which has rather created a great strain upon the socio-economic and politico-cultural situation of India.

However, we should take note of the fact that, although "the bulk of the population of West Bengal is of mixed origin; yet they constitute a homogeneity and a type today which distinguishes them from the people of other states adjacent or remote and hybrid origin of Bengal has been reflected in the growth of the Bengali culture, Bengal's achievements in the fields of arts, aesthetics, science and social awareness".  

On the contrary, the tribals on the high altitudes of West Bengal have established their own cognitive organization of the
environment and recognized their cosmology on climatic conditions, rainfall, temperature and humidity and developed their own mythology connected with their surroundings. Thus their mode of thought and style of life and cultural atmosphere are different from that of the people living in the plain areas of West Bengal.

Table 1.1A: Density of Population (1980-81)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total area</th>
<th>Population (in Lakh)</th>
<th>Population per sq. km.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>3287 Thousand Sq. Kms.</td>
<td>6852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>89 Thousand Sq. Kms.</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 3

It reveals that West Bengal with only 2.71% of India's total geographical area possesses a more than double density of population per sq. km. as compared with that of India. Thus the tendency towards an increasing population pressure in West Bengal is clearly noticed.

Table 1.2A: Distribution of Population in West Bengal between the rural and urban areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Total area (sq. km.)</th>
<th>Population (Per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>40,133,926</td>
<td>86,106</td>
<td>73.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>14,446,721</td>
<td>2,646</td>
<td>26.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54,580,647</td>
<td>88,752</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 4
The table shows that a large number of population i.e. 73.53% live in rural areas which constitute 97% of the total area. However, the modernizing process is gradually affecting the rural population. Moreover, the modern means of communication and transportation are gradually connecting the rural areas with the urban areas in West Bengal. As a matter of fact, new ideas are penetrating into the minds of the rural people. They are usually found to go to the urban areas in search of works as well as to secure necessities. Thus the rural people are gradually being inducted into the modern ideas. They are now conscious enough about the process of articulating their interests in the urban style.

Table 1.3A: Caste Structure of West Bengal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Percentage to total Population</th>
<th>Percentage to rural Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>12,000,768</td>
<td>10,511,836</td>
<td>21.99</td>
<td>26.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Tribes</td>
<td>3,070,672</td>
<td>2,955,220</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>7.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Castes</td>
<td>39,509,207</td>
<td>26,666,870</td>
<td>72.38</td>
<td>66.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54,580,647</td>
<td>40,133,926</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 5

The table shows a preponderance of higher caste people and obviously a corresponding preponderance of them in the political arena.

However, the introduction of political democracy has led the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes population to get
themselves involved in politics and to achieve the position of political elites in the rural areas of West Bengal. Governmental assistance also helped them in gathering strength. The introduction of Panchayati Raj Institution has further facilitated this process.

Although it is true that caste and religion play an important role in our political system, this does not prevent massive united movements of people of all castes, religions and races for the total welfare of the rural areas of West Bengal which has been made possible only through universalisation of politics and education.

India is a secular state. So almost all the religious groups are found in the Indian States. In West Bengal, too, all the religions are found, although, the Hindus constitute the strong base of the entire religious structure in West Bengal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>% to total population</th>
<th>% to rural population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>42007159</td>
<td>29549353</td>
<td>76.9635</td>
<td>73.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>11743259</td>
<td>9975515</td>
<td>21.5154</td>
<td>26.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>319670</td>
<td>222521</td>
<td>5857</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>49054</td>
<td>5694</td>
<td>0899</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jains</td>
<td>38663</td>
<td>5855</td>
<td>0708</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>156296</td>
<td>111936</td>
<td>2864</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other religions and persuasions</td>
<td>263414</td>
<td>260217</td>
<td>4826</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>3132</td>
<td>2835</td>
<td>0057</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54580647</strong></td>
<td><strong>40133926</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 6
The table shows that in the rural areas two principal religious groups — the Hindus and the Muslims — are found to play the dominant role although there is a vast numerical gap between them. The other religious groups are negligible in percentage and thereby they have little importance in the religious structure of rural West Bengal.

Table 1.5A

Education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stratum</th>
<th>Persons 1971 - 1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33.20 - 40.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>25.72 - 33.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>55.95 - 62.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 7

The table shows that the percentage of literate rural population is much lower than that of the urban population. And in both the spheres there has been a slight improvement in the position in recent times.

Upto 1985-86, there were 50,811 primary and Junior Basic Schools, 3,890 Junior High Schools and 6,580 High and Higher Secondary Schools in West Bengal.

On the contrary, the Library facilities in West Bengal are rather discouraging. Upto 1986-87, 2262 Rural/Primary unit/Area
Library, 234 Sub-Divisional/Town Library, and 23 District Library have been established.

Thus the number of rural libraries indicates that the progress of literacy movement is not satisfactory, although an attempt has been made to make reading materials easily available to the village masses.

However a special emphasis has been given to spread elementary education among the weaker sections of the population like scheduled castes and scheduled tribes' children. In order to fulfil this objective, such steps as the establishment of schools, especially, in areas inhabited by scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, supplying text books, tiffin, etc., for the children enrolled in the elementary and junior high schools have been taken.

Moreover in order to provide at least functional literacy to the illiterate village masses, non-formal education system has also been given due importance. Thus in 1986-87, total enrolment for non-formal education was 6.26 lakhs. Besides this, significant progress has also been made in the field of adult education. Thus more than 5.77 lakh persons attended adult education courses in the year 1986-87.
Table 1.6A

Occupation:

Occupational structure of the rural society

Distribution of working population by broad categories and of non-workers in West Bengal as per 1981 census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Percentage to total population</th>
<th>Percentage to rural population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main workers</td>
<td>1,54,24,431</td>
<td>1,12,52,960</td>
<td>28.26</td>
<td>28.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal workers</td>
<td>10,40,134</td>
<td>9,06,477</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-workers</td>
<td>3,81,16,082</td>
<td>2,79,74,489</td>
<td>69.83</td>
<td>69.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,45,80,647</td>
<td>4,01,33,926</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 11

This table shows that out of both total and rural population, significant percentages (69.83 and 69.70) constitute non-workers respectively. On the other hand, the respective percentages relating to main workers in both cases are not satisfactory. Thus it indicates unemployment problem. This unemployment problem has created a serious complexity in the socio-economic and political life of West Bengal. Its reflection is clearly visible in society.

Main workers have been classified in the following manner.

The table shows that among the rural main workers both the cultivators and agricultural labourers jointly constitute the lion's share (73.78%) in rural main activity. This is due to fact that in our rural agrarian society, agriculture is the principal means of livelihood.
Table 1.7A: Distribution of the working force by main activity in West Bengal (1981 Census)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>% to total population</th>
<th>% to rural population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultivators</td>
<td>45,90,934</td>
<td>45,24,215</td>
<td>29.76</td>
<td>40.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural labourers</td>
<td>38,91,531</td>
<td>37,76,603</td>
<td>25.23</td>
<td>33.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household industry (manufacturing, processing, servicing and repairing)</td>
<td>5,42,932</td>
<td>3,99,062</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other workers</td>
<td>63,99,034</td>
<td>25,51,080</td>
<td>41.49</td>
<td>22.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,54,24,431</td>
<td>1,12,52,960</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 12

Consequently, the major share to the state's economy in West Bengal is contributed by agriculture. So West Bengal is mainly an agricultural society and its industrial position is weak since the number of registered working factories per 100 sq. kms. is only 6.33 (upto 1983-84) where only 1230 workers per lakh of population are employed daily (1983-84) 13. Thus agricultural land is the vital asset of the village masses. As a matter of fact, the ownership and control of agricultural land usually regulate the socio-economic relation of the rural masses, which invariably leads to the development of political relations. Thus, the political relations as well as development certainly may depend upon the consequence of change of the pattern of ownership and control of land in rural West Bengal.
West Bengal absorbs 8 per cent of the total Indian population containing less than 3 per cent area of land of India. About 80 per cent of population of West Bengal is dependent on agricultural and agro-based occupations\textsuperscript{14}.

In the agricultural sector weaker section refers to "small and marginal farmers with landholding of 5 acres or less and landless labourers. This also includes tenant farmers and share-cropers"\textsuperscript{15}. However, the predominance of this weaker section over agrarian structure is quite obvious as the tenant farmers and the marginal farmers comprise the most numerous groups in West Bengal whose condition may be depicted in the way that 87% of farm families are small and marginal farmers who control about 56% of the total cultivable land. Again, 62% of these families are marginal whose average per capita farm holding is one hectare (1 hectare) or less controlling about 27% of cultivable land\textsuperscript{16}.

Thus the obvious problem which is revealed in our agricultural sector is that a large number of farm families depend on small portion of agricultural land. On the other hand, ever-increasing growth of population as well as the huge refugee influx exerted a great pressure on agricultural field of rural West Bengal. The concentration of land in the hands of the few landlords accentuated the problem further. However, in order to solve this problem, the implementation of land reforms programmes has, at present, assumed an important dimension and going on satisfactorily in West Bengal.
Table 1.8A: Area of Vested agricultural land available for distribution and number of Beneficiaries in West Bengal (as on 30th June, 1986)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total area of land free for distribution (in hectares)</th>
<th>433525.98</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area of land distribution (in hectares)</td>
<td>335219.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No. of beneficiaries (in number)</th>
<th>Percentage to total beneficiaries</th>
<th>Total No. of beneficiaries (in number)</th>
<th>Percentage to total beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vested agricultural land</td>
<td></td>
<td>Homestead land</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled castes</td>
<td>6,31,458</td>
<td>76,494</td>
<td>41.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled tribes</td>
<td>3,23,743</td>
<td>36,461</td>
<td>19.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other castes</td>
<td>7,35,850</td>
<td>71,001</td>
<td>38.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutions and society</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>00.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,91,203</td>
<td>1,83,956</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 17A and B

This table reveals that both the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes jointly have got the maximum benefit from the scheme of the vested agricultural land and homestead land redistribution —— a part of land reforms programme of West Bengal government.

In West Bengal, the programme of operation barga is also going on side by side. Up to June, 1984 the total number of registered bargadars (share croppers) was 12,96,135. The purpose of this programme is to enable a share cropper to establish his right on the land which he at present cultivates. This programme has awakened the rural peasantry regarding their tilling rights.
B. Profile of Nadia district

"From time immemorial Nadia occupies a unique position in the cultural life of Bengal. The fame of Nadia rests upon its being an ancient seat of learning". It is also evident in the writings of Sir Roper, "In those days Krishnagar was the chief city in Bengal, and the principal seat of learning and civilization...". At the beginning, the district of Nadia had a special cultural tradition of its own. Once it was the heart and brain of Bengal enriched by spiritual, intellectual and cultural heritage.

The district of Nadia occupies almost a central place in the heart of West Bengal which is Watered by Jalangi river and Bhagirathi. "The entire district lies in the alluvial plain of the Ganga and its tributaries". The district has an area of 3,926 sq.km. having a population of 2,964,253 (2,324,348 rural and 639,869 urban) according to 1981 census and is predominantly rural.

The district lies between 22° 52' 30" and 24° 05' 40" parallels of north latitudes and 88° 08' 10" and 88° 48' 15" meridians of east longitudes. It is within the central plain of Gangetic West Bengal and an obvious impact on this district from all sides especially from north and south is clearly visible.

It belongs to Presidency Division bounded by the district of Murshidabad on the north and north west and by the districts of Rajshahi and Kushthia of Bangladesh on the north-east and east. The district of north 24-Parganas lies on the south and south-east
and the river Bhagirathi forms the Western side placing the remarkable town, the then Oxford like Navadwip (once it was the central area of Sanskrit learning) on the other side. But the remarkable town Navadwip is not the headquarter of Nadia district, Krishnagar (popularly known as Krishnanagar) is its headquarter, although we know that most of the district, of West Bengal have been named after their headquarters unlike Nadia. Probably, in order to honour the memory of Lord Srikrishna Chaitanya who was born in Nadia or Navadwip on 18th February, 1486 A.D., the district has been named after his birth place.

The district of Nadia is, politically, a very significant district as it faced the two great political turmoils like, 'the Battle of Palashi' and 'the Indigo Revolution'. Besides these, the movements like swadeshi, boycott, non-co-operation, civil disobedience, quit India and above all terrorist movements — all these took deep root in the soil of Nadia. After independence of India, this district has suffered much from partition. Before independence, the total area of this district was 2,300 sq. miles. As a result of partition of two areas — Kusthia and Chuadanga of the then Nadia district — went to East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh). Besides, Meherpur Sub-division excluding Karimpur and Tehatta was also offered to East Pakistan (Now Bangladesh).

It has three sub-divisions, namely Krishnanagar, Ranaghat and Kalyani. It is again divided into sixteen Community Development Blocks. Both the Hindus and Muslims are the prominent
religious communities. However, the Christian community is also found though it does not form a large part of the total population. A remarkable number of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes people is also found. However, a constant influx of refugees from Bangladesh has created an overwhelming pressure on the local political system of Nadia district of which the predominant factors, are at present, economic, social, religious as well as ethnic attitudes and behaviours. Thus the constant immigration from Bangladesh has changed the original cultural atmosphere. Consequently, rural political process has now become excessively complicated.

As a matter of fact a constant competition for influencing the socio-economic interests is found between the original inhabitants and migrated population along with the existing rivalry among its three fold original Communities — the Hindu, the Muslim, the Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The existence of these diversities in the social plain of the rural Nadia district has, in practice, widened the scope of politicization and political intervention in the rural areas. As a matter of fact, politics is found to be present in this conflict for its settlement because "... politics is a natural reflex of the divergences between the members of a society".

Thus politics has occupied a prominent place in the social life of rural areas of this district due to ever-increasing social diversities along with grass-root conflict of the multiparty system prevailing in the rural soil of this district.

Although literacy is not satisfactory, people's political orientation and enthusiasm are encouraging. Broadly speaking,
leftist attitude is found as one of the predominant forces as the refugees from Bangladesh are taking shelters under the flags of the Left parties which represent the proletariat. On the other hand, the original inhabitants are trying to preserve their special identities, especially, through conservative and non-leftist political ideas and attitudes. Thus a constant conflict of political ideologies is likely to be found in the process of instilling political knowledge into the minds of the rural people. Moreover, the spark of the Naxalite activities are to be found from time to time in the rural areas of this district.

Once Navadwip — the holy birth place of God Srikrishna Chaityanna, the then Oxford or the central area of Sanskrit learning has become, at present, a paradise of anti-socials and their activities. This is evident from the speeches of both Congress-I and C P I(M) in the West Bengal Legislative Assembly on 28th March, 1984. Its impact on the rural areas of this district cannot be overlooked.

However along with severe socio-economic and politico cultural problem, another problem has recently arisen, what is called ecological problem. In the issue of “The statesman”, February 8, 1985, it was found that “seven villages of Ranaghat sub-division in Nadia district, had been wiped out by the advancing Bhagirathi river during the past two decades, but there has been no government effort to rehabilitate the displaced persons. ... Erosion has been extensive in recent years ... Three hundred acres of agricultural land had already been submerged and fresh areas were threatened.”
From this perspective, we should undertake the study of political socialization process at the micro level (e.g., rural areas) which needs to be related to the wider and deeper socio-economic forces of the areas.

C. Facts about the sample

In the area of the present study, the rural families are predominantly agricultural and most of the families are excessively poverty-striken and belong to the group in poor housing condition.

It has been disclosed from the survey that among 500 householders, 250 householders' annual income does not exceed Rs. 6000. On the contrary, 125 householders' income always exceeds Rs. 12,000 per annum. However, the remaining 125 householders have been found to earn annually in between these two figures as mentioned above.

It is for this reason total householders have been categorized into three income groups, such as: Low income group (250 householders) per annum income not more than Rs. 6000; High income group (125 householders) yearly income above Rs. 12,000; Middle income group (125 householders) annual income in between Rs. 6000 to Rs. 12,000.

Our survey analysis presents a poor picture of education of the householders whom we interviewed in the rural areas of Nadia district.
Table 1.1B: Total No. of respondents 500

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>H I G</th>
<th>M I G</th>
<th>L I G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary education</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No education</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In India the rate of education among the low income group people is specifically low. However, among 250 householders 59.2% are illiterate. Moreover none is found to take higher education. Only 28.8% and 12% householders have got primary and secondary education of this low income group respectively.

The data of the survey present that 34.4% householders belonging to middle income group are illiterate. However comparatively greater percentages of the householders of this income group have received the primary (22.4%) and secondary (33.6%) education. The position of higher education (9.6%) of this group is not at all satisfactory.

The picture of education is somewhat bright in respect of higher income group householders, although 10% people among them are illiterate.

This table exhibits a rather discouraging picture in respect of education because after 41 years of independence
of India, besides 34.4% of middle income group, 59.2% householders of low income group are still illiterate in the rural areas.

But one thing is clear that income is related to education. In other words, these two variables are correlated.

In the high income group almost all have secured literacy. In the low income group there is the lowest percentage of literacy. The middle income group stands in between the two.

| Table 1.2B: Mass media facilities at the homes of the respondents |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
|                        | H I G  | M I G  | L I G  |
| Radio                  | 100%   | 58.4%  | 32.4%  |
| T.V.                   | 7.2%   | 0%     | 0%     |
| Newspaper              | 42%    | 6.4%   | 0%     |
| No mass media          | 0%     | 41.6%  | 67.6%  |

Regarding mass media facilities at home, the low income group suffers the most in the rural areas because 67.6% householders do not enjoy any mass media facility. Only 32.4% enjoy radio facility and the scope of utilizing T.V. and newspaper is nil to this section.

The middle income group is in a little better position in having and using mass media opportunities. But this group is totally debarred from the T.V. communications. 41.6% householders remain out of any mass media contact.
Radio is available at everyone's home in the high income group, although T.V. plays an insignificant role even in this income group. However, the role of newspaper is more or less satisfactory among the householders belonging to this income group.

In this sophisticated and scientific era, T.V., which is the most effective means of political communication remains unused in the rural areas of Nadia district. This is also the case in other parts of rural West Bengal.

However, in this case too, there is a correlation between income and the scope of mass media availability (just like income and education).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>H I G</th>
<th>M I G</th>
<th>L I G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-operative Society</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panchayat Institution</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Institution</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-involvement</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that a large percentage in each income group is found to be involved with the Co-operative societies.
Most of the people of each income group are involved with some kind of association or institution, (whatever may be its nature, may it be a co-operative society or a religious institution).

However, it is too clear here that in respect of such involvement, high income group secures the highest position and the low income group ranks the lowest position whereas middle groups stands in between the two.

Thus the group which is the highest in income secures the highest position in education too. Further this group achieves the highest position in having and using the mass media facilities. Consequently these factors, jointly, lead this group further to achieve the highest associational and institutional interests through the involvement with the latter.

So we can say that:

1) Income is related to education;

2) These two factors, i.e., income and education are, also, related to the having and using the mass media facilities;

3) Income and education, again, are also related to the question of associational and institutional involvement.

All these factors or variables uplift the social prestige and status, which again increase influential capacity automatically and generally within the society. Thus from this perspective, the people of high income group, exert influence on the society, the most.
Table 1.4B: Caste stratification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HIG</th>
<th>MIG</th>
<th>LIG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General caste</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>65.28%</td>
<td>46.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled caste</td>
<td>18.58%</td>
<td>26.29%</td>
<td>39.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled tribe</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>8.43%</td>
<td>13.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the high income group, 79.6% householders belong to general caste and 18.58% and 1.82% householders belong to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe respectively. Whereas in the low income group, both the scheduled caste (39.91%) and scheduled tribe (13.14%) together rank higher than the general caste (46.95%).

On the contrary, in the middle income group too, as in the high income group, general caste (65.28%) secures the top rank in comparison with both scheduled castes (26.29%) and scheduled tribes (8.43%) jointly.

Thus in caste stratification middle income group is more akin to high income group than the low income group. In other words, the general caste householders are found more in this group whereas scheduled castes and scheduled tribes householders are more in number in the low income group.

In respect of religious stratification, the Hindu householders hold the largest percentage in each income group as compared to the Muslims and the Christians. Moreover, the table presents the fact that the Christian householder does not belong
Table 1.5B : Religious stratification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>H I G</th>
<th>M I G</th>
<th>L I G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>90.4%</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
<td>85.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the high income group in the rural areas of Nadia, whereas the same is seen more (3.6%) in the low income group in comparison with middle income group (1.6%). The reason is that the christians in the rural areas are originally socio-economically deprived lower caste Hindus who have been (according to several local veteran persons' opinion) converted into christianity for receiving certain privileges from the Christian missionaries and now they have become the supporters of the Christian Democratic Party. The Muslim householders belong mostly to the low income group.

D. Review of Literature

Although the genesis of the study of political socialization is to be found in such writings as Aristotle's 'Politics', 'Plato's 'Republic', Rousseau's 'Emile' which contain discussion on citizenship training and civic education, etc., the acceptance of it as a field of investigation in Political Science is a recent phenomenon.
The intellectual ancestry of the political socialization may clearly be noted in Merriam's two publications i.e., The Moving of citizens: A comparative study of civil training (1931) and Civic Education in the United States (1934).27

Second World War and the post-second World War periods witnessed the intellectual query for psychological studies of national characters through comparative assessment to indicate the level of personality development of the nations concerned.28

Herbert Hyman successfully dealt with some scattered literature relevant to the effect of socialization on formulation of political behaviour. He became the source of inspiration to many subsequent researchers in this field.

Other efforts in the study of political socialization were found with the theoretical formulation of Easton and Hess, Almond and Verba and others and the propositional findings of Dawson, Patrick and Greenstein.29

Moreover, the efforts on the part of Dawson and Prewitt and others to make critical evaluation of the then-existing literatures and the modes of research helped the subsequent political scientists and psychologists for further in-depth studies in the field of political socialization.

A lot of quasi-longitudinal studies in journals on the part of Easton and Hess and Greenstein about the Children's perception, idealization and imagination of the political ideas heralded the advent of a new political approach to the political scientists,
sociologists and psychologists. Moreover, this helped them further to find out the developmental rate of political ideas and attitudes of the post elementary school children.

Most of these findings were found to be summarized in

(i) Greenstein's "Political Socialization" (1965)\textsuperscript{34},

(ii) Hess and Torney's "The Development of Political Attitudes in Children" (1967)\textsuperscript{35},

(iii) Easton and Dennis's "Children in the Political System: Origins of Political Legitimacy" (1969)\textsuperscript{36}.

Another attempt on the part of the scholars in this field was to analyze the process of political socialization throughout the individual's life-cycle. How does the political socialization process go on throughout the various stages of physical, mental and social development, that means, when does this process begin and with what rate and what are its most in-depth developmental phases of life-cycle and lastly when does it retrograde, if it so happens. Orville G. Brim's (Jr.) "Socialization Through the Life Cycle" \textsuperscript{37}, provides an example.

Another approach of the scholars consists in analyzing the generational similarity and dissimilarity as the result of the transmission of values in the process of political socialization. This phenomenon is an important aspect of political socialization process applicable to all kinds of stable and developing political systems as the historical events teach every generation age after age. Thus the historical experiences of one generation is bound to be different from another. Generational differences are also bound to occur
as the different members of society are born at different historical moments. However, these differential experiences are assimilated in the mainstream of political learning.

The nature of these different experiences and its impact on the political systems and the nature of discontinuities, if so arises, and its subsequent adaptation within the political system are the subject matter of discussion in this field of political socialization research.

S.N. Eisenstadt's "From Generation of Generation: Age Groups and Social structure" (1956), John Crittenden's "Aging and Party Affiliation" (1962), Robert Le Vine's "Political Socialization and Culture Change" (1963), are to be cited in this respect.

However it should be remembered that the mid 1960s appeared with a different research design involving interviews with parents, teachers, high school students at the Michigan University with a view to identifying the source of political ideas of the young people.

Cross cultural studies were undertaken by Almond and Verba (The Civic Culture, 1963) to indicate similarities and dissimilarities among nations and their consequences and the subsequent variations in the behaviour of the systems concerned if differences arise among them.

Some early efforts in cross-cultural studies were also found in the writings of Richard Rose, "Politics in England"
(1964), Kent Geiger, "Changing Political Attitudes in Totalitarian Society" (1965), etc.

The literature of political socialization includes the studies of subgroups of American population like the studies of the Blacks (Lyons, 1970; Rogers and Taylor, 1971; etc.), the Appalachian Youth (Herbert Hirch, 1971); studies of specialized role political socialization, especially called Elite Socialization (e.g., David Barber's "The Lawmakers" (1964); Eulau, Buchanan, Ferguson, Wahlke's "The Political Socialization of American State Legislators" (1959); etc.

Two books published in 1975 and 1978 respectively require mentioning.

The book entitled 'New Directions in the study of political socialization' edited by Schwartz and Schwartz (1975) represents an effort to identify the new perspectives in theory and research in political socialization with particular reference to the U.S.A. One of the interesting contentions of this book is that political socialization is not a one-way flow of information and the role of the individual — the influence of his needs and attitudes should also be given recognition as part of the process.

Secondly, it has been contended that certain new agencies of political socialization also need recognition. The effect of popular music on individual and importance of actual political experience constitute the subject matter of two chapters of the book. In the last mentioned one the data collected by the authors tend to show that the intensity of war experience does predict
political alienation levels. The incorporation of these approaches will certainly add new dimensions to the study of political socialization.

Barrie Stacey's book 'Political Socialization in Western Society' (1978) as its sub-title shows, provides an analysis of the process of political socialization throughout the life-cycle of an individual from childhood to old age in western society. The author has made an extensive study of literature on the subject and has given his interpretation of them. He has sought to relate the influence of such factors as family, education, election process, class to the process of political socialization. He does not accept the view that political socialization always results in maintaining the preference for the existing social order and from an analysis of the studies made in the field has come to the conclusion that political socialization is 'consistent with change even radical change'. He has admitted, however, that it is beyond the scope of his book to review the detailed findings of the literature on political socialization in the socialist countries.

Although direct studies on political socialization is scarce in India, works of a general nature having some relevance to the process can be found. U. Pareek's "Behavioural Science Research in India" (1966) express the fact that three hundred and sixty three published and unpublished works under titles: Socialization, Student attitude and youth have been done in this field.

I. P. Desai produced a useful study on High School Students of Poona in 1953 revealing the impact on them of social factors like
socio-economic condition, caste, occupation, place of residence of the family of the students, etc.

In S.K. Gupta's "Citizen in the Making" (1975), an earnest attempt, is found to focus on the study of political socialization in India. For this purpose 220 post primary students in one school in a town of U.P. were interviewed to evaluate the role played by the family and teacher in the formation of attitudes and the outlook of the students.

Several other studies relating to the study of attitudes and opinions in India have been made. A survey of research on attitudes and opinions was made in 1972.

An analysis of these studies reveals that attempts have been made to explore the attitudes and opinions of different groups of people towards the socio-economic and politico-cultural issues of the country during the last three transitional decades.

Several works relating to the study of attitudes may be mentioned, such as:

Social attitudes (Bhusan, 1968); Socio-political attitudes and prejudices (Bhusan and Singh, 1969); Attitude towards politico-economic issues (Rath, 1955, 1959; Singha and Roy, 1959); Social attitudes and voting behaviour (Ganguly and Ganguly, 1959); Attitudes towards Modernization (Sharma, 1962) and Traditional Values (Padma Devi, 1963) etc.

Maximum efforts have been devoted on the study of voting behaviour in elections in India and these are mainly attitudinal
studies conducted by the sociologists and political scientists and are mainly concerned with the explanation of social factors (like class, caste, religion, education, sex, etc.) responsible for influencing the voting behaviour.

Research in direct political socialization process is very insignificant. However, in recent times, some attempts have been made in this field.

S. Akinchan's "Urban Growth and Political Socialization in India" (1982) is a valuable contribution to the study of political socialization which attempts to highlight the relationship between the process of urbanization and the changing attitudes of people, which symbolize assimilation of modern values in social and political behaviour" (P. xvi).

Another significant contribution in this field is that of Haridwar Singh "Democratic Orientation of Students in India, 1983). The object of such study is to explore the pre-adult democratic socialization. In particular, it attempts to measure the extent of democratic attitudes of students. It wants to find out the students' sense of political efficacy, tolerance of minority dissent and support for competitive party-system. The researcher has studied 600 samples of school, college and university students of Gaya town in Bihar. This study attempts to formulate a scientific theory of democracy in order to discover how well the Indian democratic system is useful in socializing its future generations in the context of the existing and the changing state of values and institutions of democracy.
These studies on political socialization are carried on mostly in respect of urban areas. However, some attempts at discussing the problems regarding the rural areas can be found.

P. Saran’s "Rural Leadership in the context of India’s Modernization" (1978) although not directly relevant is an useful study in many respects. In this work the author has "explored the extent to which changes in the economic, political and social conditions in a modernizing society result in corresponding changes in the attitudes and values of rural Leadership" (P. 2). For this purpose the author has collected data from the sixteen representative villages on the Leadership patterns and these have been analysed in the context of conflict between traditionality and modernity in India.

A few of the studies may be mentioned which relate to rural problems doubtless but all of them do not possess direct relevance to the study of political socialization. These are the following:

A.R. Desai, Rural India in transition (1961); Rural sociology in India (1969); S.C. Dube, India’s changing villages (1959); S.C. Jain, Community development and Panchayati Raj in India (1967); I.H. Khan, Government in Rural India (1969); V.T. Krishnamachari, Pattern of Rural Government (1959); Oscar Lewis, Village Life in Northern India (1958); Groups dynamics in a north Indian village (1954); S.N. Mishra, Pattern of emerging leadership in rural India (1977); R.J. Retzlaff, Village government in India (1962); H.J. Singh, Village leadership (1968); K.N. Venkatarayappa, Rural society and social change (1973).
It is worthwhile to mention in this respect the pioneering research work on rural political socialization of S.N. Mishra entitled "Political socialization in rural India (1980) in which the researcher has tried to explain the nature of changes which have been brought in stratified traditional rural society by urban influence.

The author has sought to explain 'to what extent the agents of political socialization have politically socialized the rural masses, what revealing facts the breakdown of traditional stratification has brought to the surface' and has become clearly successful in establishing that the complexity of the traditional rural society is on the process of an on-going change. The fact that the common people of India are not apathetic but politically oriented is also coming to the surface.

E. Methodology

As stated earlier, some theoretical considerations of the matter and their validation have been sought to be made through empirical research. Thus for this purpose survey method of research based on some questionnaires has been adopted to collect data for the present study. Besides the collection of data through questionnaires, the methods of on-the-spot observations as well as close conversations and frank discussions with the rural people have also helped us to get some facts, news and views and thereby to draw some conclusions for the present study, although, the questionnaires were the main weapon for data collection. 'Structured interviews' have been conducted in 500 families.
Such families have been selected which provided four age groups (i.e. 6-10-children group; 11-18 - pre adult group; 19-24 - adult group; 25 and above - late adult group) along with the householders.

A separate questionnaire on political socialization was prepared for each age group except the householders' group in the present study. For this group the three questionnaires were projected on the following matters:

1. The statement of the head of the family (regarding the economic condition of his family and other social variables like caste, religion, etc.);
2. Political socialization and political participation;
3. Anomic behaviour and political socialization.

At first we have tried to find out the exact economic condition of a family on the basis of the statement of the householder based on questionnaire. Just after that, in perspective of such economic environment, the four age groups (already mentioned) of each concerned family were presented with four separate questionnaires to measure their political attitudes. Again the concerned householders were asked two questionnaires of different nature to measure their attitude towards political participation and their attitude towards anomic behaviour in politics. Thus we have taken the economic condition as the main factor round which the present study revolves.

We have used seven (7) questionnaires on five (5) heads. It is worthwhile to mention here that both sexes have been taken
into consideration. We have not shown categorically specific attitude of the specific sex in order to avoid cumbersome discussion, as the span of this present study has already assumed the shape of a large volume.

For the large size data collected by us we have adopted the method of normal distribution as the statistical tool for sample analysis. We have also taken the help of percentage distribution method for the present work.

The following formulas of normal distribution have been followed to produce statistical results and to reach some scientific precision.

(1) Consider the hypothesis

\[ H_0 : P_1 = P_2 \]

According to the hypothesis

\[ E ( \hat{P}_1 - \hat{P}_2 ) = 0 \]

and

\[ V ( \hat{P}_1 - \hat{P}_2 ) = p (1 - p) \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right) \]

where \( p \) is the common value of \( P_1 \) and \( P_2 \)

If, \( p \) were given by the hypothesis one would therefore use

\[ Z = \frac{\hat{P}_1 - \hat{P}_2}{\sqrt{p (1-p) \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}} \]

for testing \( H_0 \).
But, here, as usually the case, p is unknown and has to be estimated from the data. The proper estimate will be the proportion taken from the two samples together i.e.

\[ \hat{p} = \frac{f_1 + f_2}{n_1 + n_2} \]

To test \( H_0 \) one would therefore compute from the given samples

\[ T = \frac{\hat{p}_1 - \hat{p}_2}{\sqrt{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p})\left[\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right]}} \]

and compare it with the appropriate tabulated value of the normal deviate for the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis.

Consider the case,

(a) \( H_0 : \quad P_1 = P_2 \)

against \( H_1 : \quad P_1 > P_2 \)

We reject hypothesis (i.e. null hypothesis \( H_0 \)) at level \( \alpha \) if

\[ T > T_{\alpha} \quad \text{and accept otherwise.} \]

Again, consider the case,

(b) \( H_0 : \quad P_1 = P_2 \quad \text{against} \quad H_1 : \quad P_1 < P_2 \)

We reject \( H_0 \) at level \( \alpha \) if

\[ T < -T_{\alpha} \quad \text{and accept otherwise.} \]
Supposed it is required to test the hypothesis

$$H_0 : p = p_0$$

at the level of significance $\alpha$ under this hypothesis.

$$\gamma = \frac{\sqrt{n} (\hat{p} - p_0)}{\sqrt{p_0 (1 - p_0)}}$$

is approximately a normal deviate. To test the hypothesis one will, therefore, compute the above quantity from the given sample.

Consider the case.

(a) \(H_0 : p = p_0\) against \(H_1 : p > p_0\)
We reject \(H_0\) (i.e. null hypothesis) at level $\alpha$ if $\gamma > \gamma_{\alpha}$

(b) Consider the case

\(H_0 : p = p_0\) Vs \(H_1 : p < p_0\)
We reject \(H_0\) at level $\alpha$ if

$$\gamma < -\gamma_{\alpha}$$ and accept otherwise.

Note: $\gamma_{0.05} = 1.645$

Explanation

H I G = High income group
M I G = Middle income group
L I G = Low income group
$H_0$ = Null hypothesis
$H_1$ = Alternative hypothesis
$>$ = Greater than
$<$ = Less than
$\gamma$ = $\gamma$
\( \hat{\mathbf{P}}_H \) = Estimated value of observed respondents belonging to high income group

\( \hat{\mathbf{P}}_M \) = Estimated value of observed respondents belonging to middle income group

\( \hat{\mathbf{P}}_L \) = Estimated value of observed respondents belonging to low income group

\( n_H \) = Number of respondents belonging to high income group

\( n_M \) = Number of respondents belonging to middle income group

\( n_L \) = Number of respondents belonging to low income group

\( p \) = Probability of occurrence

\( q \) = Probability of non-occurrence

\( \mathbf{P}_H \) = Probability of respondents belonging to high income group

\( \mathbf{P}_M \) = Probability of respondents belonging to middle income group

\( \mathbf{P}_L \) = Probability of respondents belonging to low income group
References


18. Ibid.


23. The Statesman issue on 21st March, 1985, exposed that border districts of West Bengal were seriously affected by infiltration because in between 1971-81 there was a general increase of population by 22.96% of the whole West Bengal. As against this in the border districts like 24-Parganas 26%, West Dinajpur 29%, Cooch Behar 25%, Darjeeling 28%, Nadia 33% increase of population were to be found.

Thus this picture shows that Nadia is the worstly affected district by the disastrous population increase phenomenon, for which infiltration from Bangladesh is mainly responsible. This single phenomenon has aggravated the problems of Nadia district.


