Chapter 3

PROFILE OF THE COMMUNITY

The preceding chapter has discussed in detail about the state of Rajasthan and elaborated on the regions historical, physical, social, cultural, and economic features. In the present chapter the researcher endeavours to identify the research sample area on all the above mentioned factors. Thus the present chapter looks into the demographics of the respondents who are the part of the sampling plan from the selected three villages, their socio-economic factors, their lifestyle, their cultural practices and their aspirations are of special significance here.

The location of the study is spread across three villages namely Jhai, Kalwara and Bhambhoriya in Sanganer Tehsil of Jaipur district, which is approximately 25 kms away from the state capital. These villages have had hundred percent of their agricultural land acquired for the establishment of the Special Economic Zone called Mahindra World City (MWC). Luckily the location of the living accommodations of these three villages has been approximately 3 kms or more away from their agricultural lands, as such their residences were not directly impacted by the project acquisition, and it was their agricultural land which was acquired. Everyone in these villages was associated with agricultural activities prior to the beginning of the land acquisition process in the year 2006. The project was announced in July 2005 and the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA), the State government body responsible for the land acquisition, notified about the acquisition of the land by end of that year, the handover of the
titleholders documents to the authorities began in late 2006. Interestingly, the Executing Agency (RIICO &MWC) offered an innovative compensation to the affected people, which was 25 percent of their acquired land will be returned to them in the developed form (“Land wars,” 2011) which helped in silencing any kind of dissent from the affected people leading to an almost peaceful and professional transaction(Levien, 2011).

Out of the three villages, only one village, namely Jhai, in unison refused to participate and filed for an injunction from the honourable Court claiming that all the villagers were actively engaged into agriculture as their primary source of livelihood and did not have any other alternate source of livelihood and would not be able to provide for their families without cultivation. The honourable Court stayed the land acquisition process for all the patches of land of farmers from this village but upon further reflection identified the futility of the exercise as all the surrounding land were getting acquired and the project required all the land for the establishment and development of the Special Economic Zone in the area, thus ordered the Executing Agency, namely RIICO and the MWC to provide for compensation in both cash and kind, jobs to at least one member of the household, along with land for land compensation. The terms were agreeable for the community and thus in 2007 they handed over their land documents to the authorities. Interestingly, the other two villages did not share similar fate. In the village Kalwara, the then Sarpanch misinformed the actual affected parties when they enquired about the compensation process etc. and as way of sparing them the hassle, offered to buy their land at market value, which almost 75 percent of the villagers did, most of them were the poor andmarginalised ones. As a result of this dealing, the Sarpanch and his family
became one titleholder of a large proportion of land in the project, which gave them multiple dividends; not only did they get a way large package of compensation than they could have expected, they would also be getting 25 percent of these total lands returned to them in developed form at a later stage.

In Bhambhoriya, the third and the furthest village, there were initial objections, as it was a semi-fertile land and “even though produce was not huge, but at least our annual grain requirements were met, but then our Sarpanch told us that a nation needs to develop we would be given market value for the land and that it is our responsibility to support the government and so we gave away our land at nominal prices.” (Excerpt from the FGD conducted with the elderly women in Bhambhoriya, May 25, 2013). This village was first to handover the land documents; and as majority of the people are uneducated and poor, they sold off the 25 percent promised land deeds soon after and used that money for other purposes. Interestingly, though the women are not even aware of this (25 percent land return deal) information and shared categorically that no such compensation was ever there. During the near completion of the FGD, the women called out an elderly man passing by, their earlier Sarpanch, and enquired with him about the land deal and he confirmed that everyone was provided the 25 percent land-for-land deal which unfortunately no one in this village has kept and have sold away almost immediately to the land sharks.

3.1 Demographic Details

3.1.1 Population
According to the Census of India 2011 data, Jhai or Jhanyee village and Bhambhoriya village are part of the Bhambhoriya Gram Panchayat in Sanganer Block. And Kalwara or Kalwada is a village as well asa Gram panchayat with one separate village called Suratpura in it.

Jhai is spread across a land area of 274.31 hectares with a population of 742 people, of which women comprise about 48.11 percent of the population at 357 people and men comprise about 51.8 percent at 385 people of the total population. The total household in this village is 127 houses. The household has been the unit of research for the present study. The researcher has been able to interact with 43 women from these many (43) households which are about 12.04 percent of their population in the village.

While Bhambhoriya village covers 533.58 hectares with a population of 2443 people, of which women comprise about 46.4 percent of the population at 1135 people and men comprise 53.5 percent at 1308 people of the total population. The total household in this village is around 358 houses. The household number being the unit of research, the researcher has been able to interact with 67 women which are about 5.90 percent of their population in the village.

In case of Kalwara village, it is the largest village among the three and covers an area of 1497.05 hectares with a population of 3579 people living in 605 households. The population ratio here is comparatively similar to the smaller village Jhai in percentile, with women at 48.19 percent with 1725 people while the men are at 51.8 percent with 1854 people. The household has been the unit of research for the present study. The researcher has been able to interact with 101 women which are about 5.8 percent of their population in the village.
Table 3.1: Total Population and Women respondents in the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>JHAI</th>
<th>KALWARA</th>
<th>BHAMBHORIYA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>3579</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>1308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>1135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Present study data and Census data compilation, 2015

3.1.2 Health

The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) introduced in the year 2005 in India under which the health of the women and child in the rural setting was facilitated through their first call of port, the Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) community volunteers are majorly instrumental in changing the mindset of the rural population across the nation. Another emergency service specially introduced in Rajasthan in the year 2008 for addressing the movement of pregnant women from villages to nearest medical hospital has immensely helped the rural women in accessing and adopting the institutional delivery system known as the ‘108 Ambulance Service Project’ (Singh, Campbell, Rao & Murthy, 2016). The rural health awareness is an extensive programme run under the central government which has benefited all over the country with special focus on far-fetched regions (Iyengar, Iyengar & Gupta, 2009).
In the present study location too, the ASHA workers have been operating with untiring zeal and dedication and incidence of 100 percent institutional delivery is achieved because of their efforts, the cash transfer scheme which covers the travel costs for travel of the poor from their home to the nearest medical facility in an ambulance is also a big help (Singh, et al, 2016). The SEZ Project did not have any health rehabilitation programme and whatever the changes are visible in the study area are consistent efforts of the ASHA workers in the area.

Among the 211 women participants in the study, 150 of them were part of the interviews that the researcher conducted with the adult married women between the age group of 25-45 years and all of them (100 percent) shared that they have had institutional delivery each time of their pregnancy. Almost every women interviewed has already undergone tubectomy or plans to go for it in near future. There were no incidences of vasectomy of any of their spouses, it was shared that as men need to do more physical labour, the women voluntarily propose to go for it and have actually never even considered the other way.

Other empirical studies focusing on the women’s health status conducted in Rajasthan (Iyengar et al., 2009; Patel, 1994; Singh, Fotedar & Lakshminarayana, 2008) have pointed out that the rural women are consistently in a nutritional-deficient status that begins from their time of early marriages that causes growth impediments, and even premature deaths among the young pregnant women. The rural Rajasthani women have low access to food intake leading to their ill-health and malnourishments (Iyengar, et al., 2009; Singh, et al., 2008).
In the present study, when asked about their overall wellbeing, almost every one of them answered that they are doing fine, the researcher’s supplementary probing made only 14 women out of the 150 share that they take some kind of medication for their ailments that they purchase over-the-counter from the local chemist’s shop; although the rest of the women shared that their health is well but they do take home remedies for any issues from time to time. Upon further delving, the researcher could gather the kinds of health issues the women were facing and the reason for not seeking any medical help - the most common were severe joint pains, body feels numb and weak, insistent headaches and inability to face the sunlight during those times; and the reason for not seeking any professional help was unanimously the following:

‘...hum kisiko pareshan nahin karna chahte, akhir koi waisi badi baat toh hain bhi nahin, gharelu nuske toh bana/laga hi lete hum sab aur nahin toh koi goli le lete hain dawai-dukaandar se’ (‘...we do not want to trouble anyone, after all it’s not much of a big issue as such, and we do prepare/apply some kind of home remedies or else we buy some pill from the pharmacy/chemist over the counter’)

The researcher identifies the sharing of the participants in the present study on the entrenched conditioning of women in the patriarchal societies at large which makes them not to take their physical wellbeing at priority but rather focus all their energies on the other members in the family (Patel, 1994). Majority of the women are not very particular about their nutrition and hence are malnourished and anaemic (Iyengar, et al, 2009). Arthritis is a common condition among the older women for which they are taking medication as they get no relief from the unbearable joint pain. As Tulsi Patel (1994) in her seminal work on the health of
the women in Rajasthan had pointed out that young women are more concerned about their fertility behaviour because the ability and the actual birth of children provides them a position of respect and power in the family and in the general sphere of the patriarchal society she lives in, where the fear of natapratha looms large upon her head at all times. As she cites that ‘motherhood integrates the daughter-in-law in the conjugal household’ the pressure for a women to bear a child within the 4-5 years of her marriage is crucial, the repercussions are detrimental for the health and survival of the young brides under such pressure, both physical and psychological (Patel, 1994).

Hundred percent of the respondents in the present study have had institutional delivery. They have learnt their child caring skills from their mothers and mother-in-law (MIL). All the three villages practice KuaPujan on the delivery of their boy children, along with Annaprashan and Mundan ceremony for them. The birth of the girl children is celebrated by performing their Annaprashan ceremony which is also used for christening the child.

Although women are not particular about their health condition however they are almost adamant about their children’s health. They try to provide the nutritional requirement as per their capacities, all the children are taken regularly for vaccination,

“... bacho ki sehat ke saath koi samjhauta nahin, hum toh tike bhi SMS mein hi lagwakar late hain jyadatar” (“...we do not take healthcare of our children for granted, in fact for most of the vaccinations we generally take them to SMS”) [Sawai Man Singh Hospital (colloquially called SMS) is the largest government hospital in Jaipur].
Upon enquiring about the medical expenses, 80 women shared it was not more than Rs. 500 in a month and in all of the instances the medication was for some other member in the family – in-laws, husband, children; 5 women shared that their family medical bill was more than Rs. 500 and within Rs. 1500 and all of them were for the in-laws; rest of the 65 participants shared that the expenses were not regular and were based on requirement among the family members as and when needed. Other than the ante-natal care and child birth related assistance, these women are not used to visiting any medical facilities to undergo medical check-ups for their medical complications. These women prioritise their health in the last level in the family system as has been observed by other studies conducted in Rajasthan (See Iyengar, et al., 2009; Singh, et al., 2008).

3.1.3 Caste

According to Ghurye (1969) the Hindu community in the Indian society is ‘divided into groups, known as castes, with varying degrees of respectability and circles of social intercourse.’ (As cited in Shah, 2002). In the modern urban society, there is a mixture of caste groups living together, enjoying commensality and exogamy which is a welcome improvement however the rural India is generally strict about following customs and traditions, therefore limited interaction is found among the caste groups (Kumar, 2016). Social mobility is the upward movement of caste groups, facilitated by quota reservation that acts a means for the marginalised and lower caste people to access resources such as education, employment, health services, etc. Although there does not seem to be much exponential changes in the rate of social
mobility in current times than from the period during British rule which may be on account of the general marital endogamy practiced still (Clark, 2013).

In the present study area, among the participants from the three villages, Scheduled caste population was the largest, followed by Scheduled Tribes and few general population groups as reflected in Table 3.2 below. Among the Scheduled castes community, Regars were more in number at 56 percent and held position and power, while another scheduled caste community called the Balia were also present but lesser in number at 14.7 percent and held no position or power. Among the scheduled tribes, 26 percent Meenas were found present in Bhambhoriya, although there are some Meenas in the other two villages as well but they did have land in the project location and as such were left out from the study sample. Agarwals, Jains, Brahmins were merely 3.3 percent of the sample from all the three villages.

Table 3.2: Total Caste composition of the participants in the Study (In percentile)
The inter-caste relationships between the Regars and the Balias is peculiar in all the three villages because although both are from Dalit community but the Regars treat the Balias as inferior and in fact during two of the FGD’s in the study, the researcher was able to discern a subtle distance maintained between the two communities women and their seating arrangements were also somewhat distant and separate. The women from the Balia caste needed constant motivation and encouragements to share their views as they looked hesitant to speak in front of the other caste’s women. As has been recorded by earlier works in Rajasthan on the situation of violence against women, the women from the lower caste suffer from multiple oppressions of their situation – as poor, as woman, and as Dalit woman (Varma, 2007). A Dalit woman not only has to face discrimination and *untouchability* from the higher caste men and women, she also has to bear the scorn from the higher sub-caste of Dalits and are thus widely marginalised and subjugated (Mathur, 2004; Varma, 2007).

Another unique and interesting observation in the study area was the presence of exogamy which was also inter-faith marriage as the boys are Muslim and the girls are Hindus in one of the villages. There is only one Muslim family found in all the three villages under study and it was shared during the FGDs that the only Muslim family has been living in this village since two generations when the participant’s great grandfather-in-law was gifted this land by the Rajputana family where he was their family butcher in Jaipur. This participant has two sons and both of them have married Regar girls from their village itself. During the first alliance, objections were raised however the families accepted when the Panchayat supported the relationship. In case of the second marriage no objections arose at all and both the couples are living peacefully in the village
now. The participant shared that both the girl’s mothers are her good friends and they have no problem whatsoever. Although an isolated case yet it is significant finding for the study because of the various levels of social barriers it has shattered. The element of social mobility where the individual desire to associate with another individual is so resilient that difference in culture creates no doubts in the minds of the respective parties. Another striking aspect is that in Indian society such filial relationships among younger generations have generally been trampled by the cultural heads or headmen in the Panchayat, branding them anti-social and outright boycotts and at times deaths but in this village such a relationship has been celebrated and repeated.

### 3.2 Social Details

#### 3.2.1 Education

When Dr. James Emmanuel Kwegyir- Aggrey in his efforts to influence women’s education in Africa implored to their parents saying ‘If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)’ (Nyamidie, 1999) he made a universal statement that held true for every woman in every continent. When women are educated they ensure their immediate surrounding is also able to avail the resources that ultimately impacts in the performance of a country at large. Education among the women results in good health, higher productivity and equality among each other (Ramachandran, 1998).

Rajasthan is among the lower literacy rate States in India ranking at 33rd position. It has 66 percent overall literacy rates, while the national level is 74.04 percent. In case of the literacy rate of women, Rajasthan is in a deplorable 47.76
percent while the national average is 65.46 percent. In the present study area according to the Census Report of 2011, the level of literacy among women is higher than the average States level at 60.54, 54.50 and 57.7 percent respectively in Jhai, Kalwara and Bhambhoriya. This is positive social progress which will result in overall development of the people in the area.

In the present study, the education level of majority of the participants in the present study is found to be of primary level at 41 percent, while 36 percent are found to be secondary level educated, there is 4 percent each in the higher secondary and graduation level as well; there is 15 percent of the participants who are completely illiterate; as reflected in Table 3.3 below.

### Table 3.3: Total education level of the participants in the study (In percentile)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Secondary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar Chart showing education levels](image-url)
3.2.2 Role of Elderly

The number of older people is increasing exponentially and it is estimated that between 2015 to 2030, the number of people in the age group of 60 years is going to grow to 56 percent which would be around 1.4 million from current 901 million (United Nations, 2015). In case of India, according to the latest data published by Ministry of Statistics in April 2016, there is a 35.5 percent rise in the elderly in the age group of 60 years and above, while the decadal rise was 10.3 crores in 2011 from 7.6 crores in 2001 (“Record 35 percent jump”, 2016). The elderly in India are facing a wide array of problems ranging from social, economic and physical issues, with the gradual movement of youth to different geographical locations for employment opportunities the elderly are residing all alone back home, financial dependence is also high among the elderly upon their children, with deteriorating health conditions they are left alone or around the support network of relatives and neighbours living nearby (Siva Raju, 2011).

In case of the study area, the elderly in all the three villages are living in joint families and 121 are regarded as the Head of the Household in their families. The 29 participants who shared that their husbands are the head of the households mentioned categorically that as both their in-laws have died that is the only reason their husbands are forced to become one; they consider their elders as their guiding force and are very happy to have them in that pedestal. Unlike general trend in India where elder parents are being subjected to neglect, ill-treatment and even abandonment, the researcher witnessed utmost respect, care and active involvement of them in the household activities. The elderly women are considered the torch-bearers of the family traditions and the younger
women in the family are constantly referring to their experience, knowledge and skills to educate themselves. The elderly women themselves were part of the FGDs which reflected active involvement and mature understanding and often acceptance of the societal realities and evolving changes. To illustrate, during the discussions: the elderly women pointed out more than once by way of explaining their role in ensuring women’s status in the household that some of their daughter-in-law’s with young children have refused to allow their children to get married at early age leading to a gradual change in attitude; among the villagers now there are unmarried teenage girls and boys found busy acquiring education for themselves, and engaging in other extra-curricular activities which was never ever the case in these villages until a couple of years back,

“…our younger generation pointed out the demerits of child marriage to us, so now gradually we’re not allowing it to happen in our houses; everyone has not accepted it wholeheartedly but we are on the way to achieving it in a couple of years. Our village has not seen an incidence of child marriage in the last 2-3 years, so we can say safely that we are on the way to adopting a new age thinking...’”[Excerpt from the FGD with elderly women in Bambhoriya village, May 25, 2013]. Similar thoughts were reflected by the women in the other two villages as well.

3.2.3 Community living

The women participants pointed out that they or their in-law’s families have been living in these villages since many generations and most of their neighbours are their kin and kith, by sheer association for more than one generation or so. It was observed that after the land acquisition many women in
the families were forced to take up jobs of different nature to contribute to the family resources and they are required to stay out of their houses for long hours, which impacts their children. The women shared that one positive outcome of the project they feel is that the bonhomie among each other has grown fonder with the crisis as the neighbours have taken up responsibilities that they were not pressurised to do but are doing it voluntarily to help each, for example the women who stay at home now look after their neighbours children’s after they return from school while the other women are out working for a livelihood for her family, they support each other in other ways as well, such as the following narration reflects,

“...abhi jo saathine kaam per jati hain na SEZ mein, ya phir Sanganer aur Jaipur rozana, kabhi kabhi woh ‘Tanker’ wale din mein samay per nahin pahuch pati hain, toh hum log uske pani ke dabbe aur baltiya bhar kar rakh lete hain (...sometimes the working women who go to SEZ, or Sanganer or Jaipur for daily work are not able to return on time to store the drinking water from the tankers (that come twice weekly), so in such days we help in storing the water in their cans and containers...)”[ Excerpt from the FGD discussion with the younger women in Kalwara village, 15 June, 2013]

Another example of caring and considerate community living was found in sharing’s of the women in another village where they pointed out that there is a family of an old mother living with her disabled son who has never been seen purchasing anything from the shops and operates in a barter system where she gives her home grown vegetables in exchange for basic essentials,
We also have an amma (very old lady) who lives with her disabled son and she maintains a patch of land in her backyard for growing vegetables, we have never seen her buying anything, she gives us her vegetables and we give her groceries like sugar, salt, edible oil, etc. [Excerpt from discussion with the elderly women in Bhambhoriya village, 25 May, 2013]

The researcher looked for the abovementioned woman in the village next day and was able to interact with her, following is the transcript from the field notes she made of the conversation with the woman:

The researcher searched for the old lady spoken about yesterday in the discussion and was able to locate the hutment near one of the corners of the village, she looks very old but she tells me she is only 57 years old widow living with her 29 years old polio-affected son. She shares she has had seven children before this son but not one survived more than 2 years of age. Her husband who was a daily wage labourer died almost 15 years back in 1998-1999. Her son is severely paralysed and stays in the bed mostly, he is frail and disoriented. She says that during his childhood, they tried to get him treated but even after 3-4 years of treatment in SMS Hospital, he did not get well, she has been taking care of him ever since at home.

She tells me that the villagers have been extremely helpful and she doesn’t even go to collect her ration from the shop as her neighbours do it for her always. She loves to grow vegetables although water is a problem in the village, she has identified some green leafy vegetables that grow with nominal water and she has made bamboo creepers for them to grown on, she also grows some tomatoes, some potatoes, etc. Many of her neighbours come by to pluck some
vegetable whenever they need urgently and in small quantity, she loves to share with them always. The researcher was able to understand that she receives widow pension as well as disability pension of Rs 1000 (Rs 500 each) every month that the Postman gives her in cash. [Excerpts from the field note, 26 May 2013]

Although not a direct identified respondent of the study, but owing to the flexible nature of the mixed method adopted by the researcher for the study, this finding is shared as it pertinently reflects the communities bonding and association among the village life even in today’s fast paced, detached twenty-first century.

3.2.4 Housing

In any kind of infrastructure development project, land and house of the affected people are directly physically impacted due to the acquisition, however when the agricultural land is at some distance and the village is in a different location, possibilities of hearth getting physically affected is safely avoided. In case of the present study area as well, all the three villages were not impacted by the acquisition as their houses were in a different location than the agricultural lands.

All the respondents had pucca or semi-pucca structure of houses. Almost 45 percent of those were having more than three room houses, without cattle shed; about 50 percent of the respondents were living in houses with more than four rooms and cattle shed, while 4 percent of them had double –storied houses with more than 4 rooms on each floor with cattle shed. Interestingly, it was found that among the 54 percent of the respondents who were having a cattle shed in
their yards only 2 houses had cattle in their shed presently, rest of them do not have any cattle in their shed as they have sold off their cattle after the acquisition. The primary factor for doing so was their lack of access to the grazing fields that were now within the fences of the SEZ site and totally beyond their reach. The food requirements for the cattle was met in the grazing field and with the loss of the field, affording food for the cattle was not feasible in their limited resources at that point of time.

All the households except two have their own toilet and bathroom. There were two houses in the entire sample set who did not have their own toilet and bathroom and were practicing open defecation. The sewage and drainage connections along with water supply is yet to reach any of the three villages, although it was shared by the participants that they have heard that by the year end these facilities will be made available.

Another aspect enquired about in the study was the length of their stay or residence in this location. And 93.3 percent of the participants shared that they have been residing in this particular village for the last four generations and in some cases their great-great-grandparents-in-laws had settled here from different regions of Rajasthan.

Interestingly 95.3 percent of the participants shared that they loved their neighbourhood and were fond of each other and were always there for each other, the 4.7 percent of the participants who shared that they were fine with the neighbourhood but not fond of it were all from the Balia community in Kalwara and they shared that commensality becomes a hindrance at times for them to get along with their neighbours from the Regar community. The caste-based
discrimination is evidenced in this case although 10 percent of the Balia women participant did not feel any such issues and were friends with their neighbouring other caste women.

### 3.3 Occupation

The division of labour according to one’s gender is evident in Rajasthan where household as well as community role in labour is starkly decided on the gender of the person, with entire household chores befalling on the women (Mathur, 2004). The son preference in the region results in the young girls and women taking up the entire work load while the young men are free to strive for their educational pursuits (Mathur, 2004). As Ghosh (2015:85) points out, ‘All women are usually workers, whether or not they are defined or recognised as such’ and all the work they do it crucial for society to function smoothly. In case of women from poor families, the burden is doubled as they have to perform all the household work along with the work they take up to earn some money, they are marginally relieved if they have daughters or elderly MILs to support them in the house work (Ghosh, 2015).

The majority of the women participants in this study were *housewives/homemakers* although all of them were engaged in the agricultural activities in their own farmlands before land acquisition. The nature of work that some of the women have joined after the acquisition are as *maid servants* in houses around Sanganer and Jaipur, they return home every day and women from all the three villages are in this work; the other work that have been created post-displacement is *gardening work in the SEZ*, this is a contractual work that some women from Kalwara and Bambhoriya have joined, no women from Jhai has
however joined this work as the contractor for this job is a villager from their village and they do not want to approach him although it was pointed out that they are not in desperate need for such work anyways as their husbands and other family members are doing well; they have joined the cut-piece work that is stitching parts of clothes for local designers and outlets, it is also contractual but the assignment is dropped and picked from them by the contractors themselves, they are only required to have their own sewing machines and thread boxes. There are a few Anganwadi helpers among the participants who are working in and around their villages; few helpers in Play Schools are also found who are working in the newly opened English-medium schools around the SEZ; there is one play school teacher who is a graduate in Hindi literature and is a daughter-in-law of Jhai village, there are a few daily wage labourers who work in petty jobs in and around their respective villages, works like cooking for ceremonies, massaging infant children, etc. as shown in Table 3.4 below.
Table 3.4: The occupations of the participants of the study

Among the participants’ husbands and other male members in their families, the general caste men are owners of all the grocery stores in the three villages, majority of the men in all the three villages were engaged into daily wage labour like porters work from storage into trucks or vice versa, labour work in construction sites and so on for which they go to Sanganer and Jaipur and they were from all the three villages, some of the men in Kalwara have taken up business in the real estate sector and are engaged in building shopping complexes, residential buildings, etc. in many parts of Rajasthan and adjoining states; some of the men are working as salesman in clothes store in Jaipur; while some others are working as plumbers in the real estate projects; few of them are working as security guards in the SEZ.
When enquired about the migration trends among the villagers, most particularly in case of the participants themselves, the response was that almost 58 percent of they and their family members practiced migration-based employment. While 42 percent did not have to leave their villages to earn their livelihood. However, among those that went to another place to earn livelihood, it was found that about 73 percent of them went only up to Jaipur and travelled on a daily basis to and from their respective villages; around 16 percent of those who engaged in migratory employment were required to travel around Rajasthan and were able to visit their homes every fortnight; only 11 percent of the people who earned their livelihood outside of their village were required to travel outside of Rajasthan, which was mostly in the adjoining states like Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi etc.

Therefore the frequency of their travelling from their villages to the point of employment was on daily, fortnightly, monthly, seasonal basis. Almost two thirds of them were commuting on a daily basis; while 14 percent of them were able to visit their home in the village on a fortnightly basis, also another 14 percent would visit their home from worksites on a monthly basis. Another 13 percent of the people were those who did not have a fixed schedule for taking leave to visit home.

Out of these people who were going out of the village to earn their livelihood were the women themselves, their spouse and their spouse and brother-in-law; 7 percent of the women in the present study sample were going of their village to earn a livelihood, while almost 86 percent of the women shared that their spouses were going out of the village in different work profile to earn a livelihood for the family; another 7 percent shared that their spouse and their
brother-in-law were both going out of the village to earn their livelihood for themselves and their families back in the village.

The nature of work that they engaged into when they went out of their villages to earn a living are as follows (Table 3.5 below) - all the 6 women going to work outside of their villages were working as maid servant, while among the men – 25 of them were working as Salesman, 4 of them were working as accountants in private companies, masonry work was done by 14 of them, 21 worked as plumbers, while 16 of them were working as contractors involved in the real-estate market.

Table 3.5: Nature of work among those going out of the village to earn their livelihood
3.4 Cultural Details

3.4.1 Language spoken, festivals celebrated

All the participants speak Rajasthani dialect also known as Marwari among themselves, and Hindi with anyone who is not from their region. The researcher was able to communicate with each of them in Hindi.

All the festivals that were listed in the previous chapter are observed by the villagers here, in case of the fairs, all the nearby ones are frequented by the villagers at least once a year. They follow the Hindu calendar and perform all the festivals with great obeisance. It was pointed out that in general Shradh is almost a forgotten ceremony with some observing it during the navratras however it is an extremely important ritual that all the three village’s observe and perform during the month of pitrupaksha (during the month of October in English calendar) and it is 15 days of fasting and prayers performed by all the adults of the family. During this period everyone prays for their respective deceased ancestors and pray for their [deceased person’s] moksha and blessings from them for the existing and upcoming generations. Teej, Holi, Diwali, Dussehra are the other major festivals that every one of them observe. In case of Bhambheroiya, Ramzan, Moharram and Eid were also observed and celebrated by the one Muslim family. Everyone pointed out that the food, especially the Sewai [sweet dish] was everyone’s favourite. The community was until recently an agrarian community guided completely by agricultural festivals and cultures which are completely gone now. In these village they have been following the festival of Gangaur religiously where they need to erect a clay statue of shiv-parvati in their agricultural fields where they offer prayers over a span of 15
days, but now that their farmlands are gone, they erect the statue in the village temple as a group where they offer their prayers.

3.4.2 Marriages

As marriages are considered an important and compulsory *sanskaras* among Rajasthani culture, (Bhatt & Bhargava, 2005; Harlan, 1992) every able-bodied person undertakes this custom. Marriage as an institution brings together two individuals who vow to look after each other, take care of each, take care of their offspring in future, build an amicable honest relationship that respects and loves each other (Bhatt & Bhargava, 2005).

In the present study location as well evidence are found of the same as the marriages were performed according to the Hindu Vedic rituals. Although this region is known for the prevalence of Child marriages, the participants pointed out that almost for the last 2-4 years, no *VivaahSammelan* (Marriage Communion) has taken place in their villages and child marriages have been stopped, although one has happened last year through a *Panchayat* order but the young married women, mostly the daughter-in-law (DILs) have been instrumental in sensitizing the elders in their individual families and over a period of time, they have been able to achieve this change,

... *we have been following child marriage traditionally since generations however with time we have realized the demerit of the process and have stopped practicing since a couple of years now... our DILs were adamant and consistently kept advocating for it... there were only two child marriages that took place last year in the village and it was allowed in the same family because the children, a 14 year old girl and a 16 year old boy had lost both their parents*
in a road accident the year earlier and it was decided by their joint/extended families and the entire village that the children would be able to adjust with the loss if a new milestone is achieved by them. Otherwise child marriages have not taken place in the village for almost 4-5 years now. [Excerpt from FGD with the senior women in Jhai village, April 12, 2013]

The younger women during their discussion shared their wish to formalise the stoppage of Child Marriage in their village in near future and are planning to work out a strategy to go about it. Interestingly almost all the child over the age group of 12 years are married although most of them are pursuing their studies. However, once a girl goes away or comes to her in-laws after her menarche these girls do not continue their education. They are required to look after the household along with their mother-in-law (MILs). The husband, if young like her continues his education.

3.4.3 Last rites performing norms

They follow all the Hindu Vedic rituals pertaining to death in their families. It was shared that Antyeshthi was done by the upper caste people in the villages, Tiya and Mausar are carried out by them. They perform the Tiya ceremony and observe a small feast for near and dear ones. Almost all the nearby houses which generally are there relatives as well come during the Tiya ritual. Mausar is not performed often by them as splurging that amount of huge cost is mostly avoided however some of the families who can afford the extravagance of Mausar organise it in a big way where villagers from two-three adjoining villages and their own village people are all invited for a grand feast, it is observed for only the elderly people’s death in all these villages. Some
participants pointed out that the last *Mausar* was held in the year 2011 in Kelwara village, where four villages were cordially invited. It is felt among the other villagers that this custom was made in a period when there was not poverty and almost everyone could afford a lavish treat according to their reach. However over the period of time, the pomposity of the ritual was rendering the poor and the middle class all over the state of Rajasthan into penury and sometime suicides as well. The State government had to ban the custom in order to address this ill-practice that was adding unnecessary pressure of the family of the dead.

The researcher concludes this chapter by observing that in the study area the demographics show the absence of certain social evils otherwise prevalent in Rajasthan like sex-selective abortions and female infanticide. The education level is also higher than the overall State level for both men and women and there is a sensitisation among themselves about the significance of education and their interest to encourage their children to pursue the same. The land acquisition and consequent crisis has made the community bond stronger than ever where they are voluntarily helping each other out of immediate crisis. The women are slowly but surely acting as catalyst to make certain social changes like the stopping of child marriages in the villages which is highly commendable and encouraging. The elderly are wise enough to give chance to new thoughts alongside ensuring that the customs and rituals are learnt and practiced by the next generation.

The nature of work engagement among the women and men are varied and it involves sometimes travelling outside of their villages as well. The migration trend reflects that the men are going further away from their villages as they
have taken up new professions and skills such as the masonry worker or the plumbing worker as well as the real-estate contractors. The accountants were all from Jhai village and they were working in different firms and enterprises within Jaipur city. The wage labourers were working as porters and construction site workers.

The next chapter specifically looks into the impact of displacement on women and how it has influenced the pattern and systems of lifestyle, and its culture.