## CHAPTER - II

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Chapter - II

Theoretical Framework of the Study

"A society gets the kind of education system that it deserves, and change will come only if society at large is not just willing to but actively wants to make that change. The impulses that guide the conduct of school and colleges emerge not from what government decrees but from what society wants. People, who are simultaneously products of the education system and its users, must want changes and want it badly enough to actively participate in that change. Unless this realization goes home, all policy changes put together will result in little more than superficial, and a new education culture will remain a distant dream."

"Learning reform"
Comment: India Today,

2.1.0. The Retrospective Analysis on Tribal Research

At the very outset of the independence of India, tribal-societies throughout the country draw the attention of the researchers and now at the eve of the new millennium it is probably the most widely delved field of research where huge number of research has been carried out by the researchers from various disciplines. Anthropologists, Sociologists, Economists, Historians, Language experts, Biologists, Demographers, Philanthropists and Administrators carried out researches from their respective point of view, centering round the very field. Educationists are not the exception in the sphere and good number of research – studies has already been carried out by the educationists which helped to evolve a special dimension of ‘Tribal studies’, popularly known as ‘Tribal education’. The studies on tribal education can broadly be classified under specific four contexts, viz., Institutional – context, Curricular – context, Psycho-educational – context and Socio-educational – context. Irrespective of these different contexts, all the research-studies in education encompassed the ‘STUDENT’ as the basic factor of concern and till the date not a single study has been carried out which consider the ‘TEACHER’ from the tribal communities as the basic factor in Indian context. 1 Though very few in number, however some such studies has been reported from abroad. It is mostly the African-American
countries where studies are in progress centering round the 'teacher' from the ethnic communities there in.

On the other hand, 'teacher-education', which entirely hinges on the 'teacher', is already an established dimension of 'Education' and up till fifth survey of research in education, report not less than five hundred doctoral and post-doctoral research on 'teacher-education'. All these studies reported by various 'survey of research in education' were carried out in between the early forties till late nineties decadal period of the last century (i.e., the twentieth century). That is why the retrospection reveals and consider teacher-education and tribal-education as two different and too different areas of educational research.

Zooming the view over the present research, it can be observed that the present research bears uniqueness in terms of the 'area of the study'. The approach taken may be considered as a combining force between the 'tribal education' and 'teacher-education'. That is why it is essential to justify the approach, so that it can be accepted by each and every hand as a rational approach of educational research and can overcome every form of retrojection. Here it is worth-noting that apart from the approach adopted for the study, the study follows a common method of educational research, widely known as 'status-survey'.

2.2.0. The Present Approach

To meet the demand of the specific objectives considered for the present study and to collect required data, a composite approach has been adopted which can be termed as "Anthropological approach in Educational Research". The approach is, in fact, a combination of educational, ethnographic and psychographic approaches.

2.3.0. Emergence of The Anthropological Approach in Educational Research

Education is a continuous process from birth to death – the means and method may differ. It is concerned with the whole life in it's manifestation.
The purpose of education is to stimulate and guide the self development. The real meaning of education is an approach for the harmonious development of the individual in the context of the culture of the community to which he belongs. Since education has an intrinsic relation with culture the need for an anthropological approach to the education of the tribals is essential. Educational sociology and educational anthropology have developed out of this fact. Applied anthropology with respect to education can only operate within very clearly, rather narrowly defined limits, unless the anthropological engineer or the agency for whom he is planning, first operates upon the fundamental ordering of the socio-cultural entity in question – that is, upon the basic technological, economic and social organizations, and second, has the means to enforce the changes recommended and is willing to exercise those means. The definite aims of educational anthropology are

(i) To understand the status and role of teacher in community and of the school as an instrument of social progress and social factors affecting schools.
(ii) To understand the democratic ideologies, culture, economic and social trends in relation to both formal and informal educational agencies.
(iii) To understand the social forces and their effects upon individuals.
(iv) To socialize the curriculum and
(v) To use the techniques of research and critical thinking to achieve these aims.

In fact the task of an educo-anthropologist is two fold. He can show whether modern educational institutions cause unnecessary dislocation in the lives of the families whose children pass through them; and from what he knows of the life that the adult native will have to lead. He can draw conclusion as to the type of education will be of most real value to him. Another line of approach would be study of school and modern teaching as factors of change in tribal society. Mass education and social education
cannot, in the true sense of the term, be imparted unless educators know the culture and social values of the tribal societies in which such education is being imparted. On the other hand, the race of teacher is a significant variable in determining the relationship with students. The best teacher for the tribal communities can be only those educated people who belong to the very community.

2.4.0. Rational of the Anthropological Approach for Educational Research

For as long as they have been on earth, people have needed answers to questions about who they are, where they came from, why they are acting in that way they used to do? Throughout most of their history though, people had no extensive and reliable body of data about their own behaviour, background and status, that is why they relied on myths and folklore to answer the questions. Anthropology over the last 210 years has emerged as a more scientific approach to answer the questions. Similarly stated, Anthropology is the study of human kind and primarily concerned with the species—Homo Sapiens. In fact, Anthropology is the study of humankind, seeks to produce useful generalizations about people, their status, attitude and their behaviour to arrive the fullest possible understanding of human diversity in general and the same of a certain human group in particular. However, anthropology is not the only discipline that studies human groups. In this context, it shares it's objectives with the other social and natural sciences. Like Education (i.e. the process through which Homo-sapiens gain knowledge), a social science, anthropology do not think of their findings as something quite apart from those of sociologists, psychologist, economists, biologists and social-work professionals, rather share and welcome the contributions of the disciplines to understand and to interpret the findings.

Anthropology is traditionally divided into four branches Physical/Biological anthropology and three branches of cultural anthropology, viz., Archeology, Linguistic anthropology and Ethnology. Ethnology is often termed as socio-cultural anthropology. Ethnography is the systematic study
method and description of a culture-group (or ethnic group as a whole or a part of the group) based on first hand observation. Ethnology concentrates on the socio-cultural aspects of the contemporary social groups and study their mind set, their attitude towards various dimensions, their way of thinking, their interest, creative abilities, their flexibility, their problem and so on. In fact, ethnography is a descriptive approach, which cover the broader spectrum of the status of a group or a part of the ethnic group. It is only the anthropological approach in education (and to be more specific, ethnographic approach in educational research) which provides the researchers the tool like participatory observation technique for pooling their data from the various ethnic group about their feelings, their consideration and their perception about their group members engaged in teaching profession. The very approach as it is termed as “Anthropological approach in educational research” does includes the sequels of factors which simultaneously come under the purview of the status profile of a status group, viz., age, sex, marital status, socio-cultural status as well as the religious, linguistic and psychographic status. The psychographic status is in fact treated as a common sign or symptom of the psychological makeup of a certain status-group and to further study and classify the group members according to their various psychological abilities, viz., attitude towards various dimensions, mental readiness to adopt with the certain situation (flexibility), to produce and reproduce unusual ideas (originality) and capacity to accommodate and assimilate with others.

The foregoing discussion of the concept of anthropological approach in educational research justify itself as the best among the available approaches and can be adopted for the educational research which exactly fitting with the objectives and required data for the present investigation. Hence, the very approach is adopted for the present study.
2.5.0. The Approach Model.

EDUCATION

PHILOSOPHICAL BASES
DIFFERENT SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHTS & IDEOLOGY

SOCIOLOGICAL BASES

LEARNING EXP.
KNOWLEDGE/CURRICULUM

PSYCHOLOGICAL BASES

STANDARD OF BEHAVIOUR

VALUES
CUSTOMS
BELIEFS
NORMS
LANGUAGE
MORAL

SOCIAL ASPECTS

CULTURAL ASPECTS

ARTHEOLOGY
LINGUISTIC
ETHNOLOGY

CULTURAL

ANTHROPOLOGY

PSYCHOGRAPHY
2.6.0. Illustration of the Concepts

The concepts on which the present model hinges on are illustrated as follow:

2.6.1. Status

The concept of status once referred only to inherited status, a fixed, usually hereditary position within the social order.¹² Such was the usage of the writers like the distinguished evolutionists, Sir Henry Maine (1822 - 1888) and two other wide-known American sociologists, Robert E. Park (1964-1944) and Ernest W. Burgess, who in 1921 co-authored the still valuable book “Introduction to the Science of Sociology”.

With the development of modern anthropology and sociology, status has been broadened to encompass all culturally prescribed rights and duties inherent in a social positions, irrespective of the origin of a social atom. The individual is viewed as having a cumulative or total status which generally combines large number of subsidiary statuses. The eminent American Anthropologist, Ralph Linton (1893 - 1953) distinguished between ascribed (or inherited) status – which would have been a redundancy to the earlier theorists like Maine, Park and Burgess, and achieved status – which results from personal; attainment of goals set forth by the culture. This distinction has been all but universally accepted in social science.¹³ As such there are certain irreducible bases for the determination of status. Among them those mentioned by Linton are: age, sex and occupation. Further more, status, whether the byproduct of effort or the result of birth, carries with it the image of exemplary behaviour, a model of collective expectations.¹⁴ Infact, the role of an individual is a more dynamic aspect of status.

According to the Encyclopedia of Social Science, status is a marked of by the fact that distinctive beliefs about and expectations for social actors as organised around it.

In fact, the term status stands for role and position. It signifies the “... sum total of various currently ascribed roles” one has to play and rights and duties inherent in a social position.¹⁵
Oxford dictionary defines the concept of status as a rank or social position in relation to others and person's legal standing which determines his right and duties.

Encyclopedia Britannica (Vol. 10, p. 924) reads that the status is the relative rank that an individual holds with attend rights, duties and life style in a social hierarchy, based upon honour or prestige. It accept the classification of status as done by Ralph Linton as follow:

$$\begin{align*}
\text{Status} & \quad \text{Ascribed} \quad \text{(Assigned to individual at birth without reference to any innate abilities)} \\
& \quad \text{Achieved} \quad \text{(Requiring special qualities and filled through competition and individual effort).}
\end{align*}$$

Status is often ascribed on the basis of sex, age, family relationships and birth placing one into a particular social group. Achieved statuses normally based on education, occupation, marital status and other factors.

The word status implies social stratification on a vertical scale. The special analogy covers several meanings. A person may be said to occupy a higher position when he is able to control, by order or by influence, other people's conduct; when he or she derives prestige or when somebody's conduct has earned esteem of the fellows. Relative status is a major factor determining the behaviour of people toward one another and competition of status seems to be a prime pursuit.

Status of an individual tends to vary with social context. For example, the position of an individual in his keen-group helps determine his position in the community.

The foregoing discussion is sufficient enough to accept the concept of status as a relative-rank, that an individual or a status-group (here the tribal teachers) holds with attendant rights, duties and life-style in a social hierarchy, based upon honour or prestige - which they achieve (through their individual capability) and ascribe through their birth. In fact, the status is a social phenomenon which is based upon sex, age, family, class, relationship and also birth - placing one into a particular social group.
An individual or a group can acquire social status basically through education and occupation apart from other previously mentioned factors.

In the present study the concept of 'status' goes in consonance with its illustration to explore the status profile of the tribal teachers which includes various components of status like sex, marital status, cultural status, experience, professional status, linguistic status, religious status, political status, social upbringing, family status, housing status, sociability, social mobility, economic status, educational status, academic status, community status, level of knowledge, aspiration, professional relationship and psychographic status etc. which denotes a holistic perspective or a profile of the tribal teachers. Some of those are illustrated as follow:

2.6.1.1. Sex

Sex is the basic factor on which the entire living beings are divided. It is a basis of ordering. The social life of human beings consider 'sex' as a component of status and in oriental societies like India, expected role of an individual strictly based on the very component. It is normally the culture which determine the gender-role and 'role model' guides the individual in a certain way. Sex is the ascribed identity and hence a component of ascribed status.¹⁹

2.6.1.2. Marital Status

It denotes the status of an individual, based on his sexual relationship with the spouse. Human society consider an individual, more matured, if having sexual experience, which an individual can achieve only through some social-process. Certain maturity can only be achieved with chronology and thus system of role performance differs in terms of this very criteria. It is a bordering status which can be changed by desire of an individual and reverse-change is hardly possible.

2.6.1.3. Cultural Status

Culture consists of the abstract values, beliefs and perceptions of the world that lie behind people's behaviour and that their behaviour reflects. These are shared by the members of a society, and when acted upon, they produce behaviour considered
acceptable within the very society. Cultures are learned, largely through the medium of language, rather than inherited biologically and the parts of culture function as an integrated whole. Within a society, different communities may follow sub-cultural variations. Culture is one of the important component of the status profile.  

2.6.1.4. Experience

Experience denotes the knowledge or skill resulting from actual or practical acquaintance with facts or events, which determines the role or position of an individual within the society and hence considered as a component of status.

2.6.1.5. Linguistic Status

Language is a system of communication, using sounds that are put together in meaningful ways according to a set of rules. As a component of culture, it determine the position of an individual by virtue of command to communicate in a certain linguistic-environment.

2.6.1.6. Religious Status

Religious status may be regarded as the beliefs and patterns of behaviour by which human try to deal with what they view as important and thus the concept incorporates the role of the individual and hence it is to be considered as a component of status. It serve a number of psychological and social function and control the human-conduct by providing notions of right and wrong – and also used to enhance the learning of oral traditions. Finally, it play an important role to maintain social soliderity.

2.6.1.7. Political Status

No form of political organization can function in a democratic country without the loyalty and support of those it governs. The present study consider the role of the respondents in terms of participation in various political organization as their political status.

2.6.1.8. Psychographic Status

Psychographic status deals with the psychological attributes of the individual which determine his role in a certain social setup. Psychographic status may also be termed as the distinctive way a person thinks, feels and behaves and in this sense it is the reflection of the psyche of an individual. Every sort of psychological traits to a greater extent or less – determine the psychographic status however for the present investigation, the level of creativity, attitude towards some selected dimensions and interest are the factors taken into consideration.
2.6.1.8.1 Creativity

Creativity is one of the most highly valued qualities of human beings which enormously affect all spheres of life. Those nations which learn best how to identify, develop and encourage creativity in their people, may find themselves in an advantageous position. Creativity, at its highest level, has probably been as important as any human quality in changing history and in re-shaping the world. Creativity essentially relates to potential of an individual for generating new ideas, forms and practices. The degree and quality of creative expression is however relative. It varies from individual to individual and from age to age, as one grows in years, experience and maturity and thus enhance the status of an individual.

Guilford (1950) in his approach defined creativity as a staunch exponent of cognitive functioning. His sole emphasis was on the model of structure of intellect. Morgan (1953) in his approach, emphasised on the uniqueness of the ability, either one or a combination of four aspects - process, person, press and product-to define creativity. The continuous work of Guilford (1959) help to evolve the structure given as follow which starts with a vibration in the brain cell (stimulie) and product occurs following the process.

![Creativity Diagram]

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Apart from Guilford, Taylor (1959), Kundu (1996), Maslow (1962), McKinnon (1961), Wallas (1962), Wertheimar (1945), Cattel (1970) and Eysinck (1972), also defined creativity in various ways encompassing the thought process. Torrance (1965) conceives creativity as a composed of constellation of general abilities, personality variables and problem solving traits, which he considered, can be enhanced through memory, adaptability, self discipline, introversion, divergent thinking ability and supportive climate.

However Indian schools of philosophy, Viz., Jainasism, Buddhism, Nyaya Vaisesikam, Yoga and Vedanta agree that creativity is a process of a “superior thought level”, which help the individual to eliminate the obstacles in the thought process, viz., passion, instincts, desire, impulses, etc. Ahimsa (non-violence), Sattya (truth), Astaya (honesty) and Brahmacharya (sexual continuance) are the steps to be followed to obtain perfection in knowledge, reasoning and reflection upon environment and upon the person himself which make him creative.

The present study consider the term ‘creativity’ as a composite ability of originality, flexibility and fluency as it was defined by Torrance.

2.6.1.8.2. Attitude

Attitude is the way of thinking of an individual which guides his behaviour. It is a measurable psychological factor which may be overt or covert. It denotes some total of man’s inclination and feelings, prejudices or pre-conceived notions, ideas or convictions about certain thing. Individual, object, etc. For the present study the term attitude is considered as a component of the psychographic status of the tribal teachers which is measured in six specific dimensions – viz., towards their profession, students, colleagues, government, society and working environment.

2.6.1.8.3. Interest

Interest is just a complex as an amalgam of subjective feelings and objective behaviour – the tendencies, which varies in intensity and from object to object. It has close relation with culture and effort. The important component of psychographic status, interest is established sets of dispositions, resulting from experience and determine resulting behaviour.

2.6.2. Tribe
Anthropologically, tribe is a social group, a number of which live in a community, have a common dialect, uniform social organization and cultural homogeneity with common ancestor, political organization and religious pattern.

The specification of tribes and tribal communities as 'Scheduled Tribe' arose after the constitution came into force. In the Government of India Act, 1935, a reference has been made to the 'backward tribes'. As per the thirteenth schedule to the Government of India (Provincial Legislative Assemblies) order, 1936, certain tribes were specified as 'backward' in the-then provinces of Assam, Bihar, Bombay, Bengal, Central Provinces, Madras and Orissa.

The first serious attempt to list up the 'primitive tribes' was made as the case of deprived classes in the census of 1931. The term 'Scheduled tribe' was standardized in Article : 342 of the Constitution of India. In the list of scheduled tribe, prepared in 1950, primitiveness and backwardness were the tests and criterions applied for specifying the scheduled tribe communities.

The most common feature of the scheduled tribes can be found in terms of their habitation and language. They generally live away from so called civilized world in the remote parts of the forests and hills. They belong to one of the three stocks – KEGRIOTS, AUSTRALOIDS and MONGOLOIDS.

The tribal communities use their own tribal dialects. They follow primitive occupations, primitive way of life and are largely carnivorous. They have nomadic habits and love for drink and dance.

Mr. L.M. Srikant, the-then commissioner of Scheduled Casts and Tribes during nineteen-fifties, divided the tribal communities in India into four broad categories —such as Tribals, Semi-Tribals, Acultured Tribals and Assimilated Tribals. He defined the scheduled tribes in the following ways:

'The groups which are outside the Hindu fold, suffer from economic, social and educational backwardness and are isolated in the hills and forested tracts are to be considered as scheduled tribes.' Scheduled tribes are distributed all over the India except a few parts; and in different parts of the country have different characteristics. The tribe differ in racial stocks, dialects, life styles and show considerable variation in their basic economy. The tribal culture in India were primarily oral. Out of about 400 tribal languages in India, only very few languages have scripts of their own.

In our country India, here are about four hundred and sixty-one communities including sub-tribes. In the state of Assam twenty-three communities and in the state of West Bengal thirty-eight communities are specified as scheduled tribes.
In the study the term 'tribal' denotes the concept of 'scheduled tribe' accepting the state list of the scheduled tribe communities of the respective states.

2.6.2.1. Tribal Teachers

The person who belong to the scheduled tribe-community according to the respective state-list of scheduled tribes and are engaged in teaching profession in the schools of Assam and West Bengal with any of the class-grades VIII to XII, are denoted as 'tribal teachers' for the present study.

2.6.3.1. The List of Scheduled Tribe Communities from Assam

2.6.3.1.1. In the autonomous districts:

1. Chakma
2. Dimasa Kachari
3. Garo
4. Hajong
5. Hmar
6. Khasi, Jaintia, Syntong, Pnar, War, Bhoi, Lyngngam
7. Any Kuki Tribes including
   i. Biate, Biete
   ii. Changsan
   iii. Chongloi
   iv. Doungel
   v. Gamalkhou
   vi. Gangte
   vii. Guite
   viii. Hanneng
   ix. Haokip, Haupit
   x. Haolai
   xi. Hengna
   xii. Hongsungh
   xiii. Rangkhwal
   xiv. Jongbe

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xv. Khawchung
xvi. Khawathlang/Khothalong
xvii. Khelma
xviii. Kholhou
xix. Kipgen
xx. Kuki
xxi. Lengthang
xxii. Lhangum
xxiii. Lhoujem
xxiv. Lhouvun
xxv. Lupheng
xxvi. Mangjel
xxvii. Misao
xxviii. Raing
xxix. Sairhem
xxx. Selnam
xxxi. Singson
xxxii. Sitlhou
xxxiii. Sukte
xxxiv. Thadu
xxxv. Thangngeu
xxxvi. Uibuh
xxxvii. Vaiphel

8. Lakher
9. Man (Tai Speaking)
10. Any Mizo (Lushai) Tribe
11. Mikir
12. Any Naga Tribes
13. Pawi
14. Syntheng

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2.6.3.1.2 In the state of Assam excluding the autonomous districts

1. Barmans in Cachar
2. Boro, Borokachari
3. Deori
4. Hojai
5. Kachari, Sonwal
6. Lalung
7. Mech
8. Miri
9. Rabha

2.6.3.2 List of Scheduled Tribe Communities from West Bengal

1. Asur
2. Baiga
3. Bedia, Beidya
4. Bhumij
5. Bhutia, Sherpa, Toto, Dukpa, Kagatay, Tibetan, Yolmo
6. Birhor
7. Birjia
8. Chakma
9. Chero
10. Chik-Baraik
11. Garo
12. Gond
13. Gorait
14. Hajang
15. Ho
16. Karmali
17. Kharwar
18. Khond
19. Kisan
It should be worth noting that the rate of participation in teaching profession from various tribal communities is not homogenous at all.

The present study includes teachers from various ethnic communities. The nature of the sample group of tribal teachers reveal that while a good number of teachers are representing a certain tribal community, none such teachers was found available from some other ethnic communities. The following section deals with the ethnographic description of such tribal communities to which the sample respondents of the present investigation belong.

2.7.1. Ethnographic Description of the Tribal Communities from Assam
2.7.1.1. Kachari

Gait, E (1926) reported that the 'Kachari' is a aboriginal-group, ruled the entire Assam up to the 25th Century A.D. and moved towards the North Cachar Hills and the plains of Cachar during 16th Century, A.D. to evade the Ahom onslaught. As per Ghosh (1977) the Kachari are closely related to the Koch, however in terms of language they were close to Chutia, Lalung and Morang. Their mother tongue is Kachari which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family of language.

Infact Kachari is a generic term for a number of groups, having common mythical ancestry. The Kachari are now represented by the Dimasa and the Hojai in the North-Cachar Hills and by Barmans in the plain of Cachar ; and also by some other tribes in the other part of Assam. Almost one fifth of the Kacharis of Assam are engaged in various modern occupations viz. service at government offices, teachers in schools and colleges, trade and business, contract-works and entrepreneurs and also in large scale weaving and cane-trade.

2.7.1.2. The Barmans

Barmans, a Kachari Community, is mainly distributed in the Barak Valley – of Assam, and are notified as scheduled tribe in the state, excluding the autonomous districts. The total population during 1971 Census was 13,210 and at present, can be estimated as 23,117. Their mother tongue is Dimasa which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman Language-family. Bengali scripts are used by them. They speak with the others in Selletee, Hindi, Asamise, English and Bengali. The community is devided into eight clans viz Hojaisa, Bairaima, Bangma, Banglaima, Daulagupusa, Halfongpara, Hasnusa & Ranima. Common surnames are Hajger, Thaosen and Barman. Adult marriage is preferred. Endogamy at the community level and exogamy at the clan-level are maintained during marriage. The modes of acquiring mates are through negotiation, elopement and mutual consent. Monogamy is general practic. Women use a virmillion mark in the forehead as the symbol of marriage ; and wear a skirt generally coloured.
The Burman are non-vegetarian; rice is their staple food; *Shutki or shidol* - a sort of dried and semi-dried fish are their favorite items. Rice beer and distilled beer are common drinks. Bride price is paid during marriage which may be in the form of Cash or Kind. Patrilocal residence is preferred after marriage. Divorce is permissible and either spouse can ask for thee; widow/widower remarriage is permitted. The nuclear family-type is predominant. Though they are a patrilineal community, the mother's property is inherited by the daughters. Woman has a predominant role in agriculture. Animal husbandry, fishing, collection of fuel are the other economic activities. A specific duration of pollution is followed after death and child birth. The communal as well as individual proprietorship of land and cultivation is observed. Shifting and wet-cultivation is followed.

Apart from agriculture, business and service – both government and private – are the other kind of occupation. *Kharora* – a traditional village council settles the disputes. Most of them are Hindu however a tendency of conversion to Christianity is increasing. The Hindu Barman's Worship some household and village level deities. The sacred specialists serve them from the other communities who perform birth, marriage and death rituals. The Barman are proud of their own music, dance, folk songs, folk tales and traditional dress.

So far the education is concerned, boys and girls are keen to study and the spread of education among the community is quite satisfactory. The literacy rate of Barman is 52.35% which includes 63.02% of male and 41.68% of female population as estimated during 1995-96. A tendency among the 'well-to-do' from Barman Community to migrate in the urban areas is quite significant. Their attitude towards various sorts of medicinal-treatment and family planning measures is also favourable. In the rural belts, a large number of villages have derived various sorts of benefits initiated by government through rural development programmes.

### 2.7.1.3. Boro-Kachari

According to Endle (1911) the *Boro Kachari*, a community of Kachari, constituting a largest group among the tribal population of Assam, migrated in Assam from Tibet; *Roho* Language, which belongs to the *Tibeto-
Burman family of languages is their mother tongue. Bodo and Assamise are the languages, used for conversation apart from English by this group of people.

The Bodo are of bellow medium stature, with a round head–shape and a high forehead; The face is round or tends to be broad with a moderately broad nasal profile. Anthropologically they belong to Mongoloid group.

Bodos are generally non-vegetarians; pork is a delicacy with them. Rice is their staple food; rice-beer as well as milk is consumed. They use to smoke bidi and cigarettes.

The Bodo are divided into a number of clans like Sargawari, Basumatari, Musahoni, Brahma, Narjari, Sibirgri, Doimari, Gaya and Brahmar which are used as their surnames. Adult marriage is preferred; endogamy at the community level is observed by them. The common modes of acquiring mates are by negotiation, mutual consent, elopement and intrusion. Bride price is paid in various kinds. Either spouse can seek divorce and anybody with a broken marital tie can remarry. The Hindu women use vermilion as the symbol of marriage. A rise in the formation of nuclear families has been reported. Residence after marriage is patrilocal and both inheritance and succession are through the eldest son. Woman play significant role in agriculture, fishing, animal husbandry, collection of fuel and other economic activities. Among the Boro, a woman is considered unclean for about a mouth or six weeks after giving birth to a child. The dead are either cremated or buried, Daha – a post-funeral ceremony is performed after ten days.

The function of the Traditional Bored Village council is to settle disputes – which further plans and implements welfare and development activities. The Bodo belong to different religions faith; almost 13.61% of them are Christian.

Both male and female from the community wear a scarf called patani, which has diverse geometrical forms on the borders in an ensemble of branching floral stems, sometimes with butter flies between them. Their fabrics have charming designs.
The Boro Rachari live in close contact with the Assamise and Selleties, having socio-economic linkage with these communities; marriage with those communities is also taking place. The community has political leaders in national and state level, scholars, teachers, doctors, engineers, administrators and artists. Bodo possess favourable attitude towards education and rate of Literacy among the community is even higher than the over all Literacy percentage of the tribals in the state. The enlightened section of the community are mostly inhabiting in Urban areas.

2.7.1.4. Kachari Dimasa

The Kachari Dimasa, who are notified as Dimasa, Kachari in the autonomous districts of Assam are mostly centralized in North Cachar Hill-District and in Karbi-Auglong district of Assam. They are short in stature with a round head and a broad and high forehead. Their mother tongue, Dimasa belongs to the Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman family of languages. Assamise and English are the medium through which they communicate with the outsiders.

The ‘Dimasa’ means the son of the great river. The Dimasa are devided into forty-two sengphong-the patrilineal clans and equal number of Julu—the matrilineal clans, all of which are exogamous. Barman and Sengphong are the common surnames.

Cross-Cousine-marriage is permissable among them. Monogamy is the rule of society. Accepted way of marriage are either through negotiation—The disingba or by mutual consent. Bride price is to be paid. Divorce—as a mutual consent is permissible; Remarriage of widow/widow-er/divorcee is permitted. Family is predominantly nuclear in nature; ancestral property is inherited by all the sons. Pollution is observed for ‘child birth’ and ‘death’; They cremate the dead.

'Slash-and-burn' is the traditional way of cultivation; the land is owned by the common. The Khunana— is the traditional village head-man, assisted by dilek, daulathaurao and habaisagao. The Kharaorao are the older councillors, assist and advice the Khunana. The Zonthai— the village priest perform the rituals. Gerban and Basu are the important festivals.
Though the 1971 census records 84.54% as Hindus and 15.46% as Christian but the present ratio has been changed in favour of Christianity and as much as 27.02% of the Kachari Dimasa are now the follower of Christianity. The Dimasa are having a rich heritage of folk songs, ballads and mythology.

The Dimasa are socially, moderately conservative and prefer to maintain a distance with most of their neighbours like Zeme, Assamese, Kuki, Karbi and Shellette. The Dimasas are well represented in the state and district level politics. The community is having a good number of scholars, doctors, teachers, and large-scale business man.

The literacy rate among the Dimasa community is as much as 60.11%. A trend of modernization has changed their lifestyle a lot. Attending educational institution is a part of life at young age. English medium schools are prefered by the parents. Enrollment rate of students at different level of institution is quite satisfactory.

2.7.1.5. Kachari, Hojai

Hojai is a Scheduled tribe in the state of Assam excluding the autonomous districts, falls within the Bodo-linguistic group. Though they are concentrated over the Nowgong district, however a subclan of the Hojai are segregated in the different districts of Southern Assam. Dimasa is the language commonly used by them for intera-group-communication. Rice is the staple food and rice-beer, brewed at home is the common drinks.

The group is following both their traditional religious faith-known as Adi or Asangskari and the Hindu religion-known as Sangakari. Intermarriage between these sections is allowed. the community is further divided into eighty-two clans. The clan names—such as Hayaisas, Bodosa, Langthasa Khersa, Haflong barsa are commonly used as their surnames. Inter-community marriages are quite common. Monogamy is the common trend, usually takes place through negotiation Kalti – The bride price is prevailing. The married woman from Hinduised fold use vermillion mark over forehead as a symbol of marriage. Siran—the divorce and remarriage is
permitted. Family is mostly patriarchal. The Hinduised section follow customs in terms of death, birth, naming ceremony, first feeding of baby etc. 55

Earlier, Agriculture was the prime occupation however the extent of education bring them under several white-collar jobs like service in govt. sectors, teaching, business etc. The contact with the outside world and the urban influence have resulted a significant change in their socio-economic life. The declining rate of Hindus is increasing rapidly which is enhancing the number of hojai, holding christian religion to avail several facilities.

2.7.1.6. Karbi

The majority of the Karbi (who where earlier known as Mikir are inhabiting in Karbi-Anglong district of Southern Assam and also in some pockets of the neighbouring districts of North Cachar Hills. Their mother tongue is Mikir, which is a member of Tibeto-Burman-family of languages. The Roman script is used. According to Pakrasi (1953)56 and Lall (1908), 57 the Karbi are short-statured, long-headed and possess a mesorhine nose form. They exhibit Mongolid features.

They are divided in four broad clans viz – Chinthorg, Ronghang, Amri and Dumrali which are further divided in various exogamous clans, like Inghty, Inghy, timang, Tehran and Terang and sub clans viz Terror, Timung etc.

In the Karbi society marriage beyond the community presently achieve the social approval; monogamy is preferred. Adult marriage is practiced and mate are acquired through negotiation, service and elopement. Mother's brother's daughter is preferred as a spouse. Patrilocal rural residence is followed. Divorce and remarriage is permissible. The family is nuclear in nature. Succession goes to the eldest sons. Deads are cremated and an elaborate death right – Chomangkan is performed.

Apart from shifting cultivation of paddy, their economy also depends on weaving, basketry, rearing of livestocks, fishing and service. Mei – the traditional village council is also in practice. A ballanced proportion of the Karbi of Assam are the follower of Christianity and Hinduism. Both the Hindu and Christian Karbis are following their respective religious festivals.
The Karbi are quite conscious about their culture and within a short period the organization gained momentum and took up the demand of the creation of an autonomous district for the people and took action for the preservation and protection of their culture.

Response of the present generation towards formal education is quite encouraging and a good number of Karbi show excellence in their respective fields. A good number of the Karbies are engaged in various white-collar profession. Modern facilities are extended to the Kabies through various government-initiated programmes. The rate of literacy among the Karbi is 53.22% with a little variation among the male and female literacy rate.

The Karbis are having a rich culture and they are fond of songs and music which are performed during most of their ceremonies.

2.7.1.7. The Lalung

The Lalung, preferred to term themselves as Tiwai (means-superior water) are inhabiting in the Karbi-Anglong district in southern Assam and are also concentrated in Kamrup, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur districts. Their mother tongue is Dowyan – belong to Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman-family of Languages. However they are also familiar with Shyletee in southern Assam and Assamise in the other part of Assam. The Lalung are having light-brown skin, smooth to wavy hair, a moderately broad nose-shape and mesocephalic head (Das, et.al. 1980).

The Lalungs are non-vegetarians; rice is the staple food; in addition, they consume milk or milk products and are fond of home-brewed rice-beer, commonly known as Shu.

The Lalung had their traditional matrilinial society. They are divided into twelve exogamous clans, viz. Monrong, Darphong, Madun, Moloi, Hukai, Amehi, Kush, Chalong, Kakhor, Amchong, and Lorom. The common surnames are Daka, Raja, Bordoloi, Dauri, Sanapati, Konwar, Doloi, Bharali and so on. Inter-community marriage is common. Monogamy is the rule and adult-marriage is the norm. ‘Lavirate’ and ‘Sororate’ – both are practiced. Cross-cousin marriage is preferred. The highlanders follow the post-marital matrilocal residence. Pre-birth ritual and birth pollution are
observed. Dead are either cremated or buried and a period of pollution is observed. They are having family-blacksmiths and carpenters.

Earlier, the *bura-khel* was the local-village-administration which is presently replaced by *adarsh gaon samity*.

While 90% of the population among Lalung in Karbi-Anglong follow hinduism, rest are Christian. They are fond of dance and music. They have a rich heritage of folk tales and folk songs. *Dakhra-pala* – the dance with two lengthy piece of bamboo, *hakhel* – the plough dance and *Tomere-Kowa* – the circular dance are quite worth-noting.

The Lalung, the agricultural tribe, familiar with both hoe and plough cultivation with a varied agricultural product are now conscious about the importance of education. A good number of the community-people are engaged in various white-collar jobs including teaching at different levels of educational institutions. The literacy rate in the North-Cacher hill district is 62%. Students from the community are anxious for education and are trying their level best for the improvement of their educational status.

### 2.7.1.8. The Rabha

The community is distributed in the states of Meghalaya as well as in Assam and West Bengal. Linguistically they belong to the Bodo group of Tibeto-Burman family of language having their own language *Rabha*. However the community in Assam and West Bengal are well conversant with Assamese and Bengali. They have a number of exogamous clans (*barai*) such as *Tara, Bhanto, Bantho, Dipha, Hato* – which are the names of plants, animals, fish, hills or rivers.

Monogamy is the norm and polygamy, though permissible, is not favoured. Adult marriage, post marriage-patrilocal family, marriage through negotiation and intrusion are general norm. Presently Rabha have retain the matrilineal line of descent. Both – extended and nuclear family is prevailing. Females are more active than male from the Rabha community. The various clans differ in terms of family and social rituals. The mechanism of social control functions through a three tier systems.
In Assam, Rabha are concentrated in the districts of Kamrup and Goalpara however marginally available in the southern Assam. Most of the people are either Christian or Hindu. Educational participation is quite marginal and extent to educational facilities are heterogenous even among various clans.  

2.7.1.9. The Naga

The term Naga, according to the popular view, has been derived from the local words nok or noka and nog, which according to Naga languages means folk—men. They are usually called by the Assamise as Noga (Elwin, 1961) – which is having some linage with the Sanskrit term Loka. Actually Naga is a generic term given to a cluster of tribal communities whose earlier habitation was in Nagaland and in the latter period, they are migrated to various parts of Assam. Ethnically they belong to mongoloid group. In Assam the three major Naga tribes are the Jeme in N.C. Hill district, the Kabui in the Cachar district and the Seema in Dibrugarh district. Land and forest are the primary economic resources of the Naga people. About 80% of the them in Assam are engaged in agricultural activities. The mode of production has sustained them in the environment they live. It is interesting to note that the Naga have four types of land, namely family land, clan land, village land and land owned by the chief. The tribal judge settees their disputes according to the traditional law.

The gorgeous Naga-head-dress of the men worn during war–dance is spectacular with its great circular ornamental top of bamboo and the plumage forming magnificent halo. They also wear heavy armlets, ear-rings and bracelets. They wear necklaces, use bamboo pipes and mugs. The crafts of the community now acquired high commercial value which includes colourful ceremonial dress, ornaments, house design, wood craving, tattoo paintings, engravings, and making of bamboo and cane baskets and furnitures. The institution of bachelor’s dormitory — the morung for boys & girls occupies a pivotal position in Naga life. In terms of their participation in education, the Nagas of Assam made a makable improvement if compared with the Nagas from the other north eastern states.
2.7.1.10. The Mizo

*Mizo* is a generic term, which denote several major and minor tribal groups. The word Mizo means the *people from highlands in the cold region*, some where in the state of Mizoram. They are spreaded over various corners of North-Eastern India, having a varied clans-names. Some of them are also settled in the Cachar and Karimgang district of Assam. They are broadly classified into three groups – viz. the *Chakma*, the *Magh* and the *Rins*. They are mostly Christian by faith. Their language 'Mizo' varries in it's nature and mostly follow roman script. The present study includes teachers from *Mara-mizo*, *Ralte-mizo* and *Lushai-mizo* communities.

Mizo are inhabiting in the Laxmipur subdivision of Cachar district of Assam. Their language *Lakhar* belongs to the Kuki-chin group of the Tibeto-Burman family of languages. Roman script is used by them. Apart from Lakhar, they are also conversant with shylltexe, Bengali and Assamese languages. Mara are non-vegetarians; rice is the staple food and the house-made beer made up of fermentation of banana and rice is their common drink.

Mara are devided into various higherarchical clans on the basis of their descent and socio-economic status. They are endogamous. Family is patrilinial ; inter community marriage is permissible. Adult marriage is prevalent and partners are acquired through courtship or negotiation. Bride price in the cash form is paid during marriage. Divorce and remarriage are socially acceptable. The families collectively participate in agriculture, hunting and in other socio-economic events. Only 0.01% of them follow Hinduism while majority follow Christianity. Mara maintain close relationship with the other Mizo communities. The extent of education among them is quite satisfactory and almost all of them are educated.

2.7.2. Ethnographic description of the Tribal Communities from West Bengal

2.7.2.1. The Santhals

A handful number of respondents from the state West Bengal are from Santhal Community. It is The Third Largest tribal community in India,
numbered around 4260842, distributed in Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa and Tripura. Their common titles in West Bengal are Buna, Manjhi, Sardar, Pradhan, Baske, Bedea, Hansda, Hemrom, Kisku, Marndi, Soren, Tudu, Adeb and Bansdeo. According to known history, their traditional home land was in chattanagpur plateau and the surrounding plains in the south of the river Damodar. The migration of the Santhals started after the famine of 1770 AD into Birbhum and Santal Pargana—their present homeland. Their highest concentration is in the Rajmahal hills of Bihar and in the neighbouring areas. They are having their own language 'Santhali' in Bengali scripts. The Santhals are the largest, most integrated and possibly the most resilient tribe in eastern India (Singh, K.S. (1984) : Introduction to Tribal Law and Justice, in "A Report in the Santal" by W.G. Archer ed; Concept publishing Co ; New Delhi ). The establishment of colonies in Damin-I-Koh, and their rebellion -- Hul of 1855 are two great important events in their history. The Bengali Devanagari and Olchiki are used by them. Most of them are bilingual with Bengali as their second language in West Bengal. Their estimated population in West Bengal is 472330.

The Santhals are divided in twelve patrilinial totemic clan, namely Hasdak, Murmu, Kinku, Hambram, Soren, Marandi, Tudu, Baske, Besra, Pauria, Charrey and Bedia. Settled agriculture is the main occupation. They also work as labourers, school teachers, doctors, nurses and government employees. Only 6.89% them are engaged in different white-collar occupations, numbered around 32543. Majority of them are following their traditional religion within Hindu fold. However the percentage is decreasing. In the other hand, the christianity is becoming popular with an increasing rate of 1.79% during 1961 to 3.84% in 1991.

The Santhals has multifaced relationship with the outsides — the diku. They depend on Lohar for iron impleiments and on Mahali for baskets. Their active interest in political affairs is evident from their representation in the state legislature, statutory village and regional councils. And political leadership has emerged from among them at the regional and state level through participation in different political movements.
Their general literacy rate is low but there are some well qualified Santhal persons, who have excelled in their respective fields. Rate of Literacy is 15.34%, which is even lower than the average literacy rate of the tribal population. While the 25.83% of the male are literate, the literacy percentage among the female is as low as 4.85%.

In physical features, the Santals of West Bengal are characterized by such features as short or of below medium height, have a long head shape, a broad facial profile and a short and moderately broad nose.

They are non-vegetarians and eat fish and meat including pork and meat of rats; but they do not eat beef and buffalo meat. Seasonal vegetables are also consumed by them. Milk, however, is not a part of their diet. Mustard or rapeseed oil is used for cooking, though often they roast or smoke the meat and fish. 'Rice-beer' is the traditional beer – generally known as 'haria' which they brew at home. Rice is the staple food.

The clan-names are used by them as their surname. According to the Santals, the world is divided into the Hor and the Diku, or into the Santhal and the non-Santhal. Spouses are acquired through negotiation, elopement and capture. A negotiated marriage is preferred. A married Santhal woman wear vermilion in the parting of her hair. Marriage mostly takes place between 15-18 years for girls and 16-22 years for boys. There was a custom of paying bride price among them, but now a days, the practice of dowry has become popular among the well-to-do Santals. After marriage, the bride lives at her husband's home. Divorce is permitted with the approval of indigenous village-council. Society is patrilineal. Women are not discriminated against. Men and women are almost equal partners in the economic activities of the family.

Bapla — The marriage is the most important ritual of their life cycle, which involves dancing, singing and drinking. The dead are cremated and a period of pollution is observed for five days.

The primary occupation of the Santhal Community was hunting and gathering. Now the cultivation and wage labour is taking the place of primary occupation.
Their traditional village council consists of the 'majhi-haram' — The headman, the 'Jog-majhi' — the assistant headman, the 'nache' — the priest, the 'godet' — messenger and one adult member from each household.

The Santal who follow the traditional religion have their gods represented in nature. 'Thakur-jiu' is their god and 'Maran-Buru' is their guiding spirit.

Inter-ethnic lineage maintained by them are often restricted to the economic sector and the picture that often emerges is that of a one-sided relationship, where the Santhalas are the employees and the 'dikus' are the employers. Other than this, there is very little evidence to indicate any other form of inter-ethnic lineages. The active areas of inter-community-linkages may be limited, but it can't be denied that no tribe, other than the Santhal, has contributed so much to enrich the culture of the neighbouring people, or for that matter, of the country as a whole.

2.7.2.2. The Bhumij

The term Bhumij means 'sons of the soil' (Risley, 1891). They are basically concentrated in the districts of Midnapore, Purulia and 24 Parganas of West Bengal. Their language is 'Bhumij' — an Austro-Asiatic language, however Bengali is the communicating medium to converse with the people from other communities. They use the Bengali scripts.

The Bhumij are medium stature having dark brown complexion with plenty of body hair and flat noses. Ordinarily they are non-vegetarian but don't eat pork or beef. Rice is their staple food. Rice-beer and 'toddy' are the drinks, commonly consumed by them. 74

The 'Bhumij' are divided into different exogamous clans like chalki, chapra, Ghugushyama, Hemrom, Hemla, Khatu, Kachchhayap, Saral, Tesa, etc. The Bhumij are mostly Monogamas. Marriages are commonly arranged by negotiation and bride-prices is customarily paid. Marriage rituals are performed at the bride's natal-residence and the wife lives in her husband's house after marriage. Divorce is allowed on the grounds of adultery. Re-marriage is permitted to divorcee, widower and widows and a widow is allowed to marry her late husband's brother. Nuclear families are becoming a
common feature to the present generation however extended families are also exist. The family structure is patrilinial. Women are mostly deal with family management and observe various taboos and prohibitions during pregnancy in connection with their food and movements. A pregnant woman is fed with delicacies on a certain day termed as 'Sadh'. Burth pollution is observed. The name giving and first rice-feeding ceremonies are performed. They follow the practice of cremating the dead. Offering various material goods to the departed soul are made every day during the pollution period which lasts up to ten days. A prist is engaged for making these offerings.  

The Bhumij, who are basically agriculturists, also hunt and trap birds and animals in the jungles. The landless among them work as labourers. The estimated population of Bhumij in West Bengal at present (1999) is 2,49,822 and almost 90% of them are residing in rural setup. Out of their total population majority (almost 70%) engaged in agriculture and only 7.00% are engaged in different services. They prefer to send their children to schools but due to economic constraints the children at the school age are suppose to work and earn. The participation of this children in education is not up to the level of satisfaction.

Bhumij are having their community-councils headed by pradhan who settle the inter-community disputes.

The Bhumij profess Hinduism and simultaneously continue to propitiate some traditional deities. The village tutelary deity called 'Baram' is worshipped by the village priest – 'Lava'. Goats and fowls are generally sacrificed to appease the deity. 'Dharma Deuta, ' 'Singh bonga' and 'Jahuburu' are the other deities worshipped. They take part in all regional festivals and fairs, especially in 'Bandana' -- a cattle caressing festival celebrated on the new-moon day in 'Diwali'. The 'Tusu' festival is held on the last day of 'Paush' (January) and 'Karam' in the mouth of 'Bhadra' – (ie. August-September) – when songs and dances are performed.

The 1991 census records almost 98% of them as Hindus however the number of Christians are increasing day by day due to different socio-religious causes. While during 1971, only 0.19% of them reported following Christianity, today it is around 01%.  

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The literacy rate of the Bhumijs is 16.12%. The male and female literacy rates are 27.22% and 5.01% respectively, which reveal that the female among them are lagging behind in education. A sizeable number of them have opted for white-collar jobs. The present study covers 54 secondary school teachers from this community in West Bengal. However the Bhumijs are yet to avail the facilities extended to them by the government through the Tribal-Welfare Department. They use various means of communication. Few of them received assistance from employment-generation schemes. They avail the facilities of the PDS.

2.7.2.3. The Asur

The community is the descendants of the ancient people, associated with the art of working in iron-smelts and were the makers of the metal-relics discovered from the Asur sites in Chotanagpur. They are short-statured, dolichocephalic with medium nasal and facial profiles. The common title used by them are Majhi, Parja and Mahato.

Adult marriage is practiced in the indigenous society. They choose mates through negotiation, mutual consent, exchange, elopment and service. Usually they are monogamous but polygamy is not uncommon. Marriage with late elder brother's wife and late wife's younger sister is permissible. Varmilion mark on the forehead of the married women is not strictly followed. Divorce is permitted and remarriage is allowed. Eldest son is the successor of parent's property and ancestral-worship. Birth pollution, cereal-feeding ritual, marriage, death pollution are the different occasion associated with the Asur-life.

Majority of them are engaged in primary sector in tea plants and a grand majority follow Hinduism. The literacy percentage among the Asur is only 14.21% including 16.59% of male and 11.70% of female. However attitude towards education is to some extent favourable -- which is effected mostly by economic hardship.

2.7.2.4. The Bedia

Basically Bedia is a tribal community of Bihar, migrated to West Bengal and are concentrated in Purulia, Jhalda, Jhargram, Manik para,
Naya gram and in some other part of the state. According to Risley (1891), the Bedia, Bedea, Bajea were small agricultural tribe of Chotanagpur who were the maternal cousins of the Kurmis. Panchpargania is their original mother tongue which belongs to the Indo-Aryan family of languages. 79

The Bedia in West Bengal are broadly classified in three clans viz – Bedia-Kudmi, Choto-Kudmi and San-Kudmi. They evolved their present language -- Kurmali which is used for conversation at home. Bengali is also adopted by Bedia for inter-group-communication. Devnagary and Bengali scripts are used by them.

They are non-vegetarians but abstain from taking beef. Their diet consists of cereals like rice, maize, mandua, wheat etc. and pulses like urad, ghangelra, Kurthi and Arhar. Mahua liquor and rice-beer are the common drinks. Men chew tobacco and woman smoke a hookah.

They are having so-many exogamous clans. Marriage take place as early as 15–19 years, may be arranged through negotiation and mutual consent. Polygamy is permitted though monogamy is prevalent. Vermilion mark in the forehead and iron bangles are the marriage symbols for women. Payment of bride price is compulsory. Family is patriarchal. Divorce is permitted in Bedia society on the grounds of adultery, barrenness, mal adjustment, cruelty and laziness. Remarriage – the ‘sagai’ is permitted for widows and divorcees. Both nuclear and extended families are prevalent. Sons inherit parental property in equal share and the eldest son succeeds to his father’s authority. Women has the right to contribute and control the family expenditure. Marriage rituals are performed in the bride’s natal house and consummated at the bridegroom’s house. The dead is buried. 80

As per Risley (1891), the Bedia of West Bengal were paddlers, acrobats, conjurers, hunters, fowlers, snake-charmers, hawkers, makers of fish hooks, zinc-workers and cultivators. Society is devided in Babajiya, lar or Patwa, Bazigar, Kaburtari, Bhanumati, Dorabaz, Mal or Pankwah, Mirshikar – the chairman etc. Out of the total population of 34698 during 1991, only 13.28% are involved in service – either in government or in private sectors. Grand majority are the followers of Hinduism. The educational achievement is satisfactory – compared to other tribal groups. 20.02% of them
are literate including. 33.54% of male and 6.50% of female. The government Welfare programmes are too some extent helping the very tribal group in West Bengal.

2.7.2.5. The Lohara

The Lohara in West Bengal are mostly centralized in the districts of Nadia and North 24 Parganas – migrated from Chottonagpur, to work as labourers on the indigo-plantations. Their total population in West Bengal is around 35000. Bengali is adopted by Lohara as their mother-tongue. The common surnames of the Lohara are *Tirki, Toppo, Hor, Manja* and *Sardar*. Common occupations are cultivation, horticulture, animal husbandry, rickshow pulling, petty business and wage labour. Most of them are Hindu.

The Lohara have some exogamous totemic clans. The community name is used as their surname. Rice is their staple food but wheat or maize are also taken. Beef, pork and carrion are taken as food and *Tari* – the rice – beer and distilled liquor is taken as common drinks.

Child-marriage was the norm of Lohara society but the practice is now given up by adult marriage. Besides negotiation, other modes of acquiring mates are courtship, capture, elopement, intrusion and exchange. Monogamy is the common form of marriage but polygamy is also sanctioned. Marriage symbols for the women are glass-bangles and vermilion mark in the forehead. Divorce can be sought by either spouse but the offender has to pay a compensation to the aggrieved party. The children of a divorced couple are the liability for the father. The remarriage of a divorcee, widow or widower is permissible. Lohara used to prefer to leave in nuclear family. The eldest son is the claimer of major part of ancestral property. In the community, a pre-birth-ritual is performed during the seventh month of the pregnancy. At the end of birth pollution a purification ritual is performed. Other childhood rituals are related to tonsure, naming, the first feeding of cereals and ear-piercing. Previously the marriage was performed at the bride's house, being officiated by an elderly male member of the community. Now a days they prefer *doli-biya* where the bride is taken to the bridegroom's house and the marriage is performed their.
They bury the deceased and do not cook food in the house for three subsequent days. Death-pollution is observed for ten-days. On the eleventh day, purificatory rituals are performed and a feast is hosted.

Among them, 5.50% are engaged in government or privet sector services. Almost 96% of them in Bengal are the follower of Hinduism; only 2.5% are following Christianity. The Rate of Literacy among the Lohara in not satisfactory. Only 15% of them are literate which includes 22% of male and 7.9% of female population from the community.

2.7.2.6. The Munda

In West Bengal, the Munda also known as Manki, have several groups such as Kharia Munda, Munda Majhi, Kol-Munda, Bhumij-Munda, Mahali-Munda, Nag-bansi-Munda, Savar-Munda and Manki Munda. They are distributed in the districts of Midnapore and Purulia in the south-Bengal and some other districts in north-Bengal. Their estimated population in West Bengal is 246222. They use to speak the Austro-Asiatic Language-‘Mundari’ at home. Bengali and Hindi are spoken with the others; Bengali scripts are often used.

According to Roy, S.C. (1912), the Munda were originally inhabitants of North-West India, who latter moved to Chotanagpur plateau of Bihar and settled their in the forested tracts. Such a view is now considered and the migration of the Austro-Asiatic people from the North-East, as a part of such movement is suggested. However nothing definite is known till now. Their present day home-land comprises Chotanagpur plateau and Ranchi districts and Khunti subdivision of Bihar, where from they migrated to the West Bengal.

A handful number of Munda in West Bengal subsist on forest-based economy, agriculture and also absorbed in government and privet firms of the organized sector. Almost 40% of the Munda population in West Bengal are workers incorporating 51.66% of male and 28.34% of female. Of them, 25.80% are engaged in the collection of forest product, Basketry, rearing live stocks and hunting. 44.30% are agricultural labourers, 20.68% are cultivators and the remaining 9.22% are absorbed in other services. The present study
includes eight secondary school teachers from West Bengal who reported belong to Munda Community.

The Munda in West Bengal follow their traditional council for maintaining social order, which is headed by 'morol' or 'majhi'. This post is hereditary. Other members of this council are elected by a voice-vote. They follow their indigenous religious beliefs within the Hindu-fold; Some of them possess Christianity. The indigenous deities are the Karam, Dhuria, Sitala, Shavur etc. The common festivities are 'Ashari', 'bandhna-Parab' and Tusu Parab. A constant change in their religion is visible in favour of Christianity and there is decline in the population of those who follow Hinduism.

Mundas are quite efficient in weaving. Both the male and female gather in festivals and rituals where dances is a common phenomenon. They share the sources of drinking water and all public places with their neighbours and participate in the local festivals with them. Economic transaction with the others are mostly agrarian in nature. The literacy rate of this indigenous group of people is 12.23% (incorporating 20% of the male and 4.46% of female). However, increasing tendency is observed among the parents to send their words in schools.

2.7.2.7. The Parahia

The Parahia, a preponderantly rural based community, are the oldest residents of the forested tracts of the districts of Palamu of Bihar, consider themselves as the descendants of Pandavs. Their mother tongue is Parhaiya or Baigani which belongs to Indio-Aryan family of language. The Parahias are divided into several hierarchical groups and further in several exogamous lineages. Parhaiya and Baiga are the common surnames. The group is Monogamous in nature and adult marriage is practiced which is followed by negotiation, exchange, courtship and elopement. The marriage symbol for women is a vermilion mark on the forehead. Bride price is to be paid during marriage and the group follows partilocal residence. Divorce is permissible which can be initiated by either of the mates; remarriage is allowed. The eldest son is the successor of father's right of ancestor-worship. 83
Birth pollution is observed on the nineth day and death pollution for ten days. On the eleventh day a communal procession is arranged.

The main occupations among the parahias was slash and burn-cultivation; apart from seasonal cultivation they also engaged in hunting, gathering, agricultural labourers, basketry and hunting.

The parahias are having their traditional councils to administer the social life. Their supreme deity is ‘mother-earth’ and they also worship their ancestors. The posts of their prists – ‘baiga’ – are hereditary and he officiates the community-festivals.

Grand Majority of them are Hindus, by religion however the percentage is declining. The parahias are having their heritage of oral tradition. Various musical instruments are played by them in various religious and social festivals, where the women perform traditional dances.

During their life-cycle, they are served by barbars, Brahmins and prists. All public places are shared by them; apart from that, they have commercial relationship and ceremonial friendship with their neighbouring religions.

Povery is a factor which hinder their education. Even though children are send to school. Their estimated literacy percentage is 18.76%. Huge difference is visible between the literacy percentage of boys and girls among parahias. Both Modern and indigenous medicine is used by them. The effect of modernization is to some extent utilized by them.

2.7.2.8. The Oraon

Oraon in West Bengal are distributed in the districts of Midnapore, Bankura, 24 Paraganas and also in some other parts of West Bengal. They are migrated over Bengal from Orissa and Bihar. Bengali is the mother-tongue, and Bengali scripts are used by them. There estimated population in the state in 481334. Their earlier inhabitation Chotonagpur plateau – was thickly dotted with hills and hillocks.

Generally Oraon are short and below medium hight, with an ablong head with a tendency towards round shape.
The staple cereal is rice, supplemented with maize, wheat etc; they are non vegetarian and are fond of drinks and dance. Child-marriage was an early-practice; spouses are generally acquired through negotiation or with mutual consent. Though polygamy is permitted, monogamy is usual practice. Bride price, consisting of a token cash and new garments are paid by them. Divorce is permissible in the society. The children of a divorced couple live with their father. Widows, widowers and divorcees can remarry.

The Oraons are having vertically extended partilocal families. Parental property is inherited by the sons of the deceased. The eldest gets larger share.

The newly-mother cannot cook food and fetch water until 'Chhati' – a post birth – purification ceremony is performed after the umbilical scar dries up; Dead are either buried or cremated. Women use to tattoo their body.

In West Bengal, the Oraon follow their primary occupation – agriculture but some of them also work as tea-garden labourers, Wage labourers and collect various types of forest-products. Only almost 12% of them are engaged in some other occupations including service in government and non-government sectors.

Majority of the Oraons of West Bengal are followers of Hinduism. Christians are almost 16% of the total population. Census data reveals a declaiming trend of the Hindus; however the population following Christianity have increased.

The Oraon maintain ceremonial friendships and many economic relations as landlords, share croppers, cultivators and wage labourers with the Santhal, Munda, Nepali and other communities.

The literacy rate is found to be as low as 14%. Huge gap is prominent among the rate of literacy of male and female Oraon population. While 22.22% of male, it is only 5.78% of female Oraon population who are literate. However the need of education of the community people is realised and they are, to their level best, trying to send their words to the schools.

2.7.2.9. The Birhor

The etimological meaning of the word 'Bir-hor' is 'The man of Jungle.' The tribe was a nomad tribe came over West Bengal from the
Chotanagpur plateau of Bihar. Their mother tongue is 'Birhor', which comes under Austro-Asiatic linguistic-family. Inter-group communication takes place by 'Sadri' and 'Bengali' language. They are also familiar with Debnagari scripts as well.86

The 'Birhor' are non-vegetarian and use to eat beef, pork and carrion. The staple food is rice, supplemented with various types of pulses. Rice-beer and distilled liquor - 'daru' are the regular drinks.

The Birhors are divided in two clans - the Uthlus (wanderers) and the Jaghis (the settlers) and are endogamous and totemic in nature. Both Child and Adult marriage is practiced; spouses are acquired through negotiation, mutual consent, exchange (golat) and intrusion (dhuku). Birhors are mostly monogamous; However, polygamy is also permitted. A widow is allowed to remarry her late husband's younger brother and a man can marry his late wife's younger sister. Though not mandatory but the married women use to put a vermilion mark as a marriage symbol though it is not strictly observed. 'Dali-Paisa' - the bride price is practiced during marriage. Society of the Birhor is patriarchal. Divorce in the society is sanctioned by the village council - the 'Panch', 'Sagai' - the remarriage is allowed. They used to prefer nuclear family. Property is divided equally among the sons. The eldest son is the successor having the right of ancesoral worship. Women perform all the house-hold activities and take part in various socio-economic programmes.

After the birth, pollution is observed for one week which ends with the observance of tonsure and the name-giving ceremony - 'Chhetti'. The first rice-feeding ritual - 'mujhutti' is observed when the child is six-months of age. Marriage rituals are solemnized with the help of elderly members. Dead are buried and a ten-days pollution is observed after which the Kin (Kutumayet) are given a "gami" - feast.87

In West Bengal, the Birhor are numbered even less than 2000. Bengali is the language adopted by them. Cultivation has become the major way of their lively-hood. Rope-making is another way for earning. Apart from that, Birhors are engaged in various type of jobs and occupations. Majority of them are Hindus. The Literacy rate among the Birhors is 22.74% including 32.2%
male and 13.27% female. Their attitude towards family planning is positive however the education is yet beyond the reach of the majorities.

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