

**BASELINE SURVEY
ON
DALITS COMMUNITY 2009,
FOR
RECOGNITION, ESTABLISHMENT AND
PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR
THE DALIT COMMUNITY PEOPLE
PROJECT**



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Chapter One: Introducing the Study

1.1 Introduction:

A study on Dalits community is very much linked with the caste system in Indian subcontinent. Therefore an understanding on caste system will assist us to know the roots of social problems of Dalits. From historical period in our subcontinent caste system spread out. Regardless the religions, we find the caste system almost every part of the society. It is important to mention that, South Asia castes are mostly controlled by religious rules and regulation. In fact, of course, all castes do not work same way in the society. One of founding texts on caste system says caste system as the pattern of social classes in Hinduism¹.

‘Caste’ is of Portuguese and Spanish origin, ‘Casta’, means properly something not mixed. The word seems to have been used in the sense of race by the Spaniards, and to have been applied to India by the Portuguese in the middle of the fifteenth century. Regarding these discussion one question come forward, “what is the function of the ‘caste’ system?”. In the text of Dumont (1999, New Delhi)² we find a great discussion on it. The caste system divides the whole society into a large number of hereditary groups, distinguished from one another.

In caste system, there are several characteristics and the first one is the endogamy, meaning that people marry within the same caste exclusively. Mobility is another important character of caste system. In caste based society mobility is extremely rare, one cannot transform from wage earner to a scholar. Although, situation is changing but the rate is very low. From the constitutional point of view, caste status is not allowed in modern Bangladesh and India. However, the remains of the caste system can still be found in the way of interaction and mobility within the societies.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, a brief discussion on ‘Caste’, ‘Caste System’, ‘Varna’ and ‘Jati’ is essentially needed if we want to understand contemporary Dalits community. The appearance of the term ‘Dalits’ is not sudden or magical. There is a brief history behind this term. In a straight word ‘Caste’ is a system, which allows some religious

¹ For detail, browse <http://www.friesian.com/caste.htm>

² For detail, see ‘Homo Hierarchius. The Caste System and it’s implication’, 1999, by Louis Dumont, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

groups and within Hindu religious system people's are segmented in four basic groups, which is called 'Varna'. The four varnas are as follows, Brahmin (Brahmana): 'Mature, evolved soul', the scholarly, pious souls of exceptional learning; Kshatriya: "Governing; endowed with sovereignty", lawmakers and law enforcers and military, also known as rajanya; Vaishya: "Landowner, merchant", those engaged in business, commerce and agriculture; Shudra: "Worker, servant", skilled artisans and laborers.³ It is in keeping with Varna dharma that sons are expected to follow the father's occupation, means occupation chosen prior to birth.

These are all about 'Varna'; but 'Jati' is quite different. Jati, more than Varna, is the specific determinant of one's social community. Traditionally, by the rules of 'purity' and 'impurity', Jati is excluded from social interaction with the others, especially from intermarriage.

Along with Shudra, there are a large number of population in our subcontinent; called scheduled caste, untouchables, Jatihita ('outcaste'), Chandalas (especially those who handle corpses) and Harijan. It is important to mention that most of the people of contemporary Dalits were known as 'Harijan'. The name 'Harijan' is given by Mahatma Gandhi, meaning 'children of god'. Gandhi said that this word was first used by a Gujrati poet.⁴ In 1915, after returning from South Africa, Ghandiji wanted to make the nationalist movement an all Indian movement. Part of his initiatives, one was to establish human right and development of the socioeconomic condition of the 'untouchables' small ethnic groups. He was succeeded to form 'Nikhil Bharot Osprissota Nibarok Shongoh' ("All India Untouchable Abolishing Organization") for keeping interest of the 'Harijans' and included them with the nationalist movement. But there were some political problems and the British Government took initiatives to break this solidarity. On 16 August 1932, British Government declared Communal Award and segmented the Hindu Society into two groups, 'Hindu Varna' and 'Under Developed Class'. For protesting this resolution, Ghandiji started hunger strike from form Jadabpur Jail. Under that situation, two leaders, from higher caste and schedule caste, Madan Mohan Malabba and B. R. Ambedkor, came to a decision and signed a contact; this is called 'Puna Contact'. This Puna contact may help in the nationalist movement in India but it could not change the fate of lower caste people. A discussion on social roots of these lower castes may help us to understand the situation of Dalits.

3. For detail, browse <http://www.experiencefestival.com/a/Varna/id/62758>

4. Form an unpublished dissertation. "The socioeconomic condition and development potentiality of Harijan Community: An Anthropological observation." By: Hawa Binte Sohorawardi, 2001-03 session's student of Jahangirnagar University.

It is seen that there are two divisions within the Shudar, first one is 'Jal Chal⁵ Shudar' and another one is 'Jal Achal Shudar'. Brahmins didn't drink the water from and even didn't use those ponds or water sources which are used by 'Jal Chal Shudar'. But other castes took their services. These 'Jal Chal Shudars' are Kaibart, Baisma Saha, Subarna Banik, Shuttradhar, Khnshari, Shadagop, Mahimma, Rajak, Tambuli, Teli etc. But 'Jal Achal Shudar's are those, whose touched water even didn't 'Jal Chal Shudar'. Basiclly they are known as untouchables. Ever they touched; others had to be purified through religious system. In the previous paragraph we are talking about 'Harijans' and no question about this, these 'Jal Achal Shudars' are the 'Harijans'.

'Who are today's Harijans?'- Such question can be raised when we see the term 'Dalits' everywhere. No academic reference, but one of my key informants of Dalits community told that 'Harijan' is a Ghandian term and they use it before using the term 'Dalits'. But when they identified that Mahatma Ghandhi used this term to make social recognition of bastard children, they decided to abandon this term. He explained 'Harizan' is a very insulting term; there had a system in our subcontinent, Brammeyan had their co-wife ('Sheba Dashi') in 'Asrom'. These women were not married or recognized wife of 'Purohit', but had sexual relation with the Purohits. These women conceived and gave birth of children, who were identity less in the society. When Ghandhi visited such an 'Asrom' of this group of children, they asked Ghandhi, what will be their identity. Then he answered, "From today you are 'Hari's' (God's) child".⁶ For such meaning of the word 'Harijan' they abandoned this word and received the term 'Dalits'.

Now, I am going to talk about the recent term 'Dalits'. From Wikipedia⁷ we get an idea about Dalits. It is saying that, Dalits is a self-designation for a group of people traditionally regarded as low caste or untouchables (outcastes). Dalits are a mixed population of numerous caste groups all over South Asia, and speak various languages. The word 'Dalits' came from the Sanskrit Language, which means 'ground', 'suppressed', 'crushed', or 'broken to pieces'.

5. The word 'Jal Chal' means, some ones touchable water, which is drinkable an 'Jal Achal' are those, whose touched water is forbidden.

6. This part is from the discussion with Asok Das, ED of Dalits Empowerment Foundation, a local NGO of Manirampur Upozial. He has also written a book named "LANCHITA DALITS SHOMAJ" (The Insulted Dalits Community).

7. For detail, briwse <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dalit>

At first this word used by Jytirao Phule in the nineteenth century, in the context of the oppression faced by the erstwhile “untouchable” castes of the twice-born Hindus.⁸

We have to understand one thing very carefully, that the term ‘Dalits’ is not equivalent to the term ‘Harijan’ or the term ‘untouchables’, rather for make understandable, it can be said all ‘Harijan’ or ‘untouchables’ are ‘Dalits’, but all ‘Dalits’ are not ‘Harijan’ or ‘untouchable’. Now a day, there is not any specific religious identity of ‘Dalits’. A Dalits can come from any religious group and form any location of South Asia. From my fieldwork, I observed some Muslim community, named Tanti, Dai, Dhopa, Nikari, Shikari, Behara are Dalits. Out of 64 districts, Dalits Community people live almost every district and township of Bangladesh. In Bangladesh ‘Dalits’ is an integrated form of about 36 communities.⁹ These communities are basically Rishi, Muchi, Dhopa, Dom, Methor, Paroi, Kaiputtar/Kawra, Behara, Nikari, Shikari, Kapali, Hari, Pod, Kulu, Chamar, Bawri, Bagdi, Nomo, Shiali, Koibaart, Kahar, Keshra, Nolua, Dhani, Bagol, Bachar, Mecho, Kotal, Vogmene, Chandal, Antaja, Namashudar, Bashpuri, Tea Laborer, Domar, Lalbegi, Maithal, Balmiki, Fashi, Mala, Magdi, Chakali, Dewani etc.¹⁰ At different geographical location and in different languages they are also known as Kanpuri, Telegu of Madrazi. Before the census of 1891 (when introduced as Namashudar) these ethnic groups were generally known as Chandal of Chamar.

The conclusion of this discussion on the term Dalits can be drawn this way, like other terminology the term ‘Dalits’ is not so simple, rather the complexity of this term made it a political term. From different literature, it is clear that the activists and scholars of Dalits movement are not even clear about the barrier of Dalits community. What ever the complexity; on basis of this baseline survey, it is clear that, regardless the religious territory; Dalits are those people, who are leading a very poor socio-economic life. Lack of government facilities like health, education, shelter support; dominant group’s oppression; lack of political power; religious vulnerability or shifting religion; exploitation of labor by the landlords or higher castes; early marriage and dowry in the marriage; poor literacy rate; lack of employment opportunities; poor living condition; lack of proper sanitation system; evicted from own land; women’s highest vulnerability in and out side of the community are the basic signifying characteristics of Dalits and Dalits community.

8. From Wikipedia

9. From the group discussion with community leaders, Ashok Das provided this information.

10. Form the press release of 5th September of Bangladesh Dalits and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM)

1.2 Background of the Study:

'Recognition, Establishment and Protection of Human Rights for the Dalits Community People', following titled project is supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation and implementing by Parittran. 'Parittran', a local level NGO, established 21st March 1993, is located in southwestern Satkhira district of Bangladesh. It's vision to establish a society of equality free from social, gender and class discrepancy having equal rights and opportunities for the people. In 1993 Parittran was simply a small Students' Association. The Bengali meaning of the word 'Parittran' is 'liberation of salvation'. Parittran is a promise and a movement. Parittran wants to assist neglected ethnic out caste groups for their empowerment through participatory way by developing community based people's institution.¹¹ Parittran has signed a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) as 2nd phase partner on January 2009 for implementing this project. Its working area is 32 villages under eight unions of Monirampur upazila of Jessore district and other 8 districts under Khulna division and this baseline survey is part of this project. This baseline survey is the starting point of this project, which will assist to measure the output of the project.

1.3 Study Purpose and Objectives:

The study has some special features to bring out from the field. Basically the terms of reference has cleared about the objectives of the study. The main focus of the study is to collect and analyse pre-intervention data describing situation of goal and objectives of the project. Finally, there have some area of this study, which were base of data collection and analysis and those are:

- Explore overall socio –economic condition of the project participants and their family
- Determine the social problems and their cause-effect relationship
- Describe the status of poverty or well-being of the Dalits community people targeted in the programme considering multi-dimensional context
- Identify the overall situation of rights issue in the project area and explore the awareness on rights of the community
- Explore the status of access to the services by the Dalits community
- Describe the skill level of the Dalits community and income opportunity of them
- Identify the influential stakeholders, relevant service providers and government agencies and their perception on this project

11. For detail: "ABOUT PARITTRAN" an unpublished paper prepared by Parittran.

- Make an snapshot of the accountability, role and sensitiveness of the govt. agencies and other stakeholders addressing the rights
- Highlight the need of project participants and their expectation from the project
- Identify key opportunities, constraints and development initiatives needs for promoting rights of the Dalits people
- Find out the Human Rights of the men, women, child of the Dalits community people
- Violation issues of the project working area for two years.
- Make some recommendations and interpretation for future development of the project.

1.4 Ethics of the Study:

Research ethics is one of the basic parts for all kind of study. In our study, we were very careful about the ethics of the study. Recorder was one of our research tools. Mainly we used recorder in Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KII). Whenever we used it, we took permission from the respondents. We used these records only for better research. It's not possible to write all from the discussion and sometimes many important things remain untouched and recorder helps us to recover these lacking.

Another important thing of our study is maintaining the times. The time of conducting FGDs or KIIs were fixed before and special thanks to the staffs of Parittran for fixing the time. We always tried to meet with our respondents at pre-fixed time and whenever we had to spend much time with any group we informed other groups.

In our report writing, we used different case studies. In this case, sometimes we do not use the true name of the respondents because of their privacy and safety. Not only about the case studies but also other cases, when we saw any thing could be harmful for the respondents we were extra careful about that.

1.5 Organization of different Chapters:

This report consists of five chapters covering four major parts: 1. introductory discussion, 2. quantitative data analysis, 3. qualitative data analysis and 4. recommendations.

In the First Chapter we have tried to keep up terminological discussions on Dalits. The background of the study, study purpose and objectives and ethics of the study are also chronological parts of first chapter.

The second chapter is basically on study approach and methodological discussion. Here we have talked about the methodology of the survey, sources of information, survey unit etc. Geographical location of the study area, field experience and limitation of the study are another parts of this chapter.

We have analyzed quantitative data which we gather through questionnaire survey in Chapter three. Chapter four will discuss on qualitative data, which will be the findings from FGDs, KIIs and experiences form our different field visit. We also added different case studies here.

Finally, in the fifth chapter we added the recommendations on the basis of total baseline survey and drawn the conclusion of the report.

Chapter Two: Study Approach and Methodology

2.1 Introduction:

In this chapter, we will discuss about the methodology and the survey area of the baseline study. It is important to note that, both qualitative and quantitative methods are being used in our survey. Quantitative approach contributes to get a statistic of the socio-economic conditions of Dalits, where as qualitative methods assist to find out intensive nature of the social existence. However, both methods are essential to find out the scenario of everyday life of Dalits community.

2.2 Methodology of the Survey:

We used different methodologies in this baseline survey. Basically, we tried to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. For quantitative data, we have depended on questionnaire survey and for qualitative FGDs, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were the main tools. Beside these data collection initiatives, we have visited Dalit communities in different villages and have talked with community people.

2.1.1 Questionnaire Survey:

For the development of questionnaire, we have depended on the objectives of the studies. The quantity of the sample size was determined depending on total number of community people that Parittran is working with. We took 12 percent of total population. The questionnaire survey basically was conducted by the staffs of Parittran. We conducted a training session on the questionnaire that how to fill it and they worked field level for seven days. Everyday, we have visited the fields and at the evening, we all seat together and shared every day's field experiences. Through random sampling, we checked the quality of 12-15 questionnaires everyday and informed the data collectors, if there any major mistake occurred. Our total number of questionnaire was 204 and Parittran staffs successfully worked on these sample size within seven days.

2.2.2 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs):

We have used FGDs to collect qualitative data. We have conducted eight focus group discussions with different groups of community people. The distribution of these eight FGDs was community leaders to young Dalits. The groups were community leaders, Rajbongshi young generation, Ranbongshi women group, Rishi community male and female groups, Tanti female group and Kaiputtar male group. We used the information from FGDs in the qualitative part of the report.

2.2.3 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs):

As part of qualitative study, we have conducted few key informant interviews of different stakeholders. We developed different checklists for different stakeholders and used it when we have talked with the selected persons. We have selected the stakeholders and representative from Parittran has made the appointments with them. Our key informants were six in number and they were Dalit Community Leader, Executive Director of Parittran, Thana Nirbahi Officer of Monirampur, Local NGO Representative, School Teacher, Union Health Complex's Doctor and Union Parishod Chairman.

Beside these we have visited different fields and talked with community people, mainstream community people and tried to find out their attitude toward Dalits community people. Finally, observation was vital in this baseline survey, its help us to have the experiences on dignity questions.

2.3 Survey Tools:

The survey tools that we used are not anything extraordinary. For questionnaire survey tools were pencil, rubber, sharpener and clipboard. We did not use any pen for filling up the questionnaire because it would tuff for us to erase for correction. Other tools were a voice recorder and a digital camera and I cordially thank Parittran authority for providing a digital camera. I have personally used note book to take notes and diary to write every day's field experiences.

2.4 Sources of Information:

In this report, we have depended on two sources of information. The first one is primary sources of information and these were community people and different stakeholders. The second sources of information were different literature review; for which we took the help of different books, booklets, previous reports, unpublished research works.

2.5 Survey Unit:

For this baseline survey, the major tool was questionnaire survey and, where household was survey unit. We used household as our survey unit just because of a better understanding about the Dalit community. We were also careful about gender difference, which are there in the household.

2.6 Geographical Location of the Study Area:

Our study area was Monirampur upazilla. It is one of the largest upazillas of Bangladesh with an area of 444.72 sq.km. It is 12 miles away from the district town, Jessore. It is bounded by Jessore sadar upazilla on the north; Kolaroa, Jhikorgacha upazillas on the west; Abhaynagar upazilla on the east and Dumuria and Keshobpur upazila on the south. Monirampur has 17 Unions, 9 wards, 246 mouzas and 249 villages. It has 132 bed Upazilla health complex and 2 Union sub-centers, one at Nehalpur and the other one is at Rajgong. Low lying areas Monirampur are Jhealdaha Bill, Kedaria Bill, Monaharpur Bill and Moshihati Bill. The main rivers are Hari and Vodra. As of the 1991 Bangladesh census, Monirampur has a population of 326093. The density of population is 1644 per sq km. Males constitute 51% of the population, and females 49%. This Upazila's 18+ population is 168903. Manirampur has an average literacy rate of 29.1% (7+ years), and while the national average of 32.4% literate.



This image is taken from www.jessore.info/content.php?id=63

Main occupations of this area are Agriculture 45.6%, agricultural labourer 28.36%, transport 2.44%, wage labourer 1.99%, business 9.51%, service 3.94%, industry 2% and others 6.16%. Main crops Paddy, wheat, jute, potato, mustard.

There is a folk in Monirampur area that Monirampur is named before the name of King Shitaram Roy's lawyer Moniram Roy. As an area Monirampur is known since 1785. There have 11 colleges, 77 high schools, 37 secondary schools, 163 madrasas, 120 government primary school and 146 non government primary school in Monirampur Upozila. In Monirampur the number of Mosques is 520, 58 Mandirs and 6 Charches. The amount of total cultivable land is 109894 acres. The main agricultural products of this area are paddy, wheat, jute, potato, maize and different kinds of vegetables. Main fruits are mango, jackfruit, papaya and banana.¹

1. For detail please visit www.jessore.info

The roads of Monirampur are much better in contrast the roads of other areas of Bangladesh. There have 44 km. carpeted road, 32 km semi pacca (made of bricks) and 786 km. kancha (made of soil) road in Monirampur Upozila. The main industries of this area are rice mills, wheat mills and ice mills. Handlooms can be considered as mini industry. The famous handicrafts of Monirampur are handlooms, pottery, blacksmiths, jewelry etc. There are about 60 Hat-Bazzars in Monirampur. Among these Nehalpur, Monirampur, Dhakuria and Chinatola are most important business spots. The main cash crops of this area are sugar, jute and banana. The biggest NGOs working in this area are BRAC, ASA, Grameen Bank etc.²

2.7 Field Experience:

On 28 October 2009, we entered in the field for our baseline survey. It was first time in Monirampur both for me and my research assistant. We have conducted a day long training session on questionnaire survey for the Parittran staffs. Later, these staffs worked for questionnaire survey. Before the final questionnaire survey, we did a field test by the Parittran staffs, so that they can have a practical experience. Visiting fields in Monirampur was really amazing. When we have gone from one field to another field the landscape of both side of the road was mind blowing. Thousands of trees, green paddy fields, carpeted roads, low vehicles, and the silence of the nature, all were with us. We have visited the TNO office and conducted a KII with TNO. We went to Haridaskati and visited a Union Health complex and conducted a KII with the doctor of the complex and also visited a high school and conduct a KII with the Headmaster of that high school. We have also visited a Rishi community in second day and conducted a KII with a Rishi community leader.

We were not always busy in the field; sometimes we have visited some places which were really interesting and important to realize social problem. As for example, the tree where people hang the piece of brick to fulfill their desire, that tree is not only simply a tree, but the sign of local belief system. Another interesting place is the west bank of Damdam Pier Dighi where two linked trunk of the tree is another supernatural thing to local people. We all watched a ‘Jatra’ (local form of theater) show during the time of our stay in the field. We have seen the story of the Jatra Pala was giving the message about the way to over come the existing social problems. We think these have also enriched our work.

2. Form ‘Jessore Etibrittya’ by Monoranjan Biswas.

2.8 Limitation of the Study:

Though we were hundred percent dedicated, sometimes it seemed a more intensive ethnographic work would be the perfect one to understand the existing Dalits community. During our field visit we heard one thing very often, “If you want to understand us stay with us for two of three months”. We have also realized such, because sometime community people were unwilling to say about some social problems, but we guessed there are some serious problems. We have visited a community which is economically very poor and local landowners take the chance of their economic condition. They hire this community women for work and sometimes force them to make unsocial relations with them. Truly, these are not such problems, which we easily can know form questionnaire survey or from FGDs or KIIs. In these cases we realized staying with the community can be a better way to understand the existing social problems.

Chapter Three: Socio-Economic Condition of Dalits

3.1. Demographic Background:

It is important to look into the households of the respondents for look up their socio-economic and demographic background. There are several ways to analyse socio-economic and demographic background through several variables. The neutral variables that have been taken into consideration here include sex distribution, types of the households, caste distribution, religious distribution of the respondents, etc.

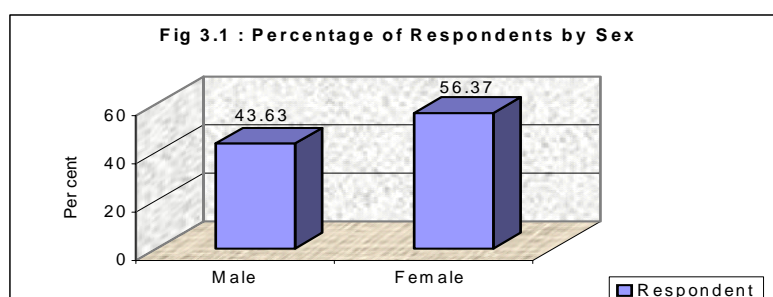
3.1.1. Age, Sex Distribution and Marital Status:

The sample consisted of 204 respondents in Monirampur Upa-zilla of Jessore district. Among which 89 (43.63%) were males and 115 (56.37%) were females (See Figure 3.1). The data shows that total 204 households comprise total 1059 members. Out of this household members 535 are (50.52 %) male and 524 (49.48%) are female.

The age distribution of the respondents shows that significant numbers of respondents are come from 26-35 age group. Data shows that respondents come from 14-25 age group comprised 35.78 per cent and those in the 35-50 year group comprised 5.88 per cent of all respondents. 26-35 year group comprised 58.33 per cent of all respondents. Age distribution of family members shows similar trends. One forth of the total populations are belongs to 21-35 age group (Table 3.1). It is observed that there are relatively more young people in the sample than the elderly people (See Figure 3.2).

Table 3.1: Age group of the family member of respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percent
1-5	86	8.12
6-12	206	19.45
13-20	215	20.30
21-35	265	25.02
36-50	182	17.19
>50	105	9.92
Total	1059	100.00



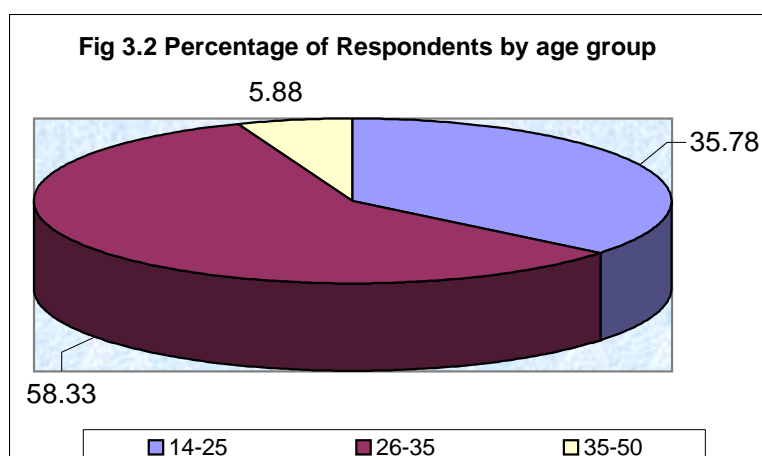


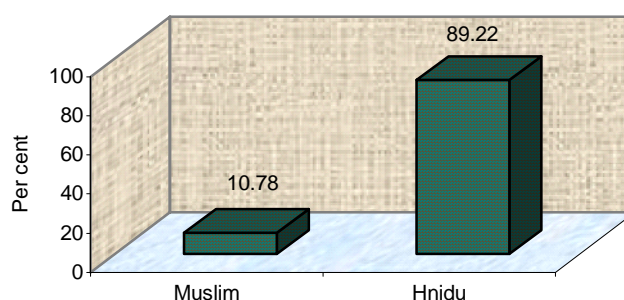
Table 3.2: Marital Status of the family member of respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Unmarried	496	46.84
Married	526	49.67
Widow	31	2.93
Divorced	4	0.38
Separate	2	0.19
Total	1059	100.00

Table 3.2 shows marital status of the surveyed households. In Dalits, a greater proportion of family members are unmarried (46.84%). About 47 per cent are married following 2.93 per cent widow. The proportion of divorce and separation is not significant. This data reveals that there is family cohesion and finer conjugal environment in Dalits community.

3.1.2. Religion and Caste:

The social stratification or division of society into various ranks is a characteristic of most social system. All societies have same system of hierarchy in which its members are placed in positions that are higher or lower, superior or inferior, in relation to each other. Caste hierarchy can be seen all over the world that arises from cultural variations in the society. These variations have created social status carrying different prestige and social work of value. Thus in some societies occupations, income and wealth may be the most important criteria that determine social status.

Fig 3.3: Religious background of Dalit

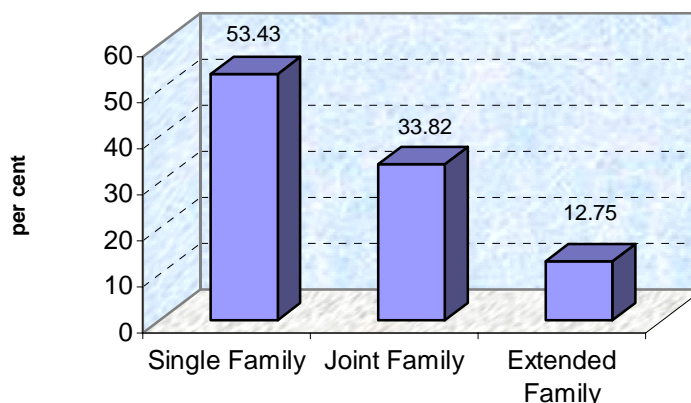
In Bangladesh, the Dalits are treated by their occupational engagement. The survey data shows that 89.22 per cent respondents are Hindu and 10.78 per cent respondents are Muslim (Figure 3.3). Although caste is a major identical issue in light of religious perspective, it becomes trembling in respect of occupation. The interesting thing is that, some surveyed communities' identity work through their occupation. The survey data shows that most of the Dalit come from Rishi (71.08 %) following Kaiputro (10.78 %), Weaver (9.8%) and Fisherman (7.84%). Very few are come from black smith (0.49%), which is not significant (table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Caste of the Dalit

	Respondent
Fisher Men	7.84
Black Smith	0.49
Rishi	71.08
Weaver	9.8
Kaiputro	10.78
n=204	

3.2. Household Composition:

Figure 3.4 shows that more than half of the respondent households are single-family household. About 34 per cent live in joint households and about 13 per cent households are extended family. About 58 per cent of the respondents' households were composed of five to eight members. About 36 per cent respondents consist maximum four members and about 6 per cent households have more than eight members. This household composition shows significant difference from national scenario. While the national mean of average household member is about 5, it is more than 5 in the surveyed community (Annex Table 1).

Fig 3.4: Household composition of the respondents

3.3. Educational Attainment:

Studies have shown that education is one of the major socio-economic factor that influence a person's behaviour and attitudes. Education is an important human development outcome that helps households to accumulate better human capital, which in turn contributes to ensure better livelihoods for them. In general, the greater a person's educational attainment, the more knowledgeable he/she is about livelihood, the use of health services, civic rights, and the access to service and health care.

Table 3.4. A: Educational Qualification by gender of the respondent

Level of Education	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate	6 (6.74)	6 (5.22)	12 (5.88)
Up to Class Five	21 (23.59)	26 (22.61)	47 (23.04)
Class Six-Nine	22 (24.72)	20 (17.4)	42 (20.58)
SSC	9 (10.11)	2 (1.74)	11 (5.39)
HSC	4 (4.49)	1 (0.87)	5 (2.45)
Graduate	1 (1.12)	0 (0)	1 (0.49)
Can sign only	26 (29.21)	60 (52.17)	86 (42.16)
Total	89 (100)	115 (100)	204 (100)

There is a substantial variation in the education level among the sample respondents. Table 3.4.A reveals that about 94 per cent of all respondents are literate and about 6 per cent have not literacy at all and about 42 per cent respondents can sign only. While more than half of

the female respondents can sign only, it is about 30 per cent for the male respondents. 23 per cent are educated up to primary level, about 21 per cent are educated up to class nine, about 2 per cent are HSC pass and only 0.5 per cent completes their graduate level education. Data shows that males are more educated than females among the respondents. Moreover, Annex table 2 shows that younger generation have an interest in education more than older generation which indicate social development of the Dalits.

Table 3.4.B Educational Qualification of the family members' of respondent

	Male	Female	Total
Illiterate	46	55	101
	8.60	10.50	9.54
Primary	204	186	390
	38.13	35.50	36.83
Secondary	132	92	224
	24.67	17.56	21.15
Higher Education	16	3	19
	2.99	0.57	1.79
Can Sign Only	96	143	239
	17.94	27.29	22.57
Under age	41	45	86
	7.66	8.59	8.12
Total	535	524	1059
	100	100	100

Their family members' education shows the similar trend. Out of 1059 family members of the respondents about 37 per cent of the family members are educated up to primary level, which consist 35.5 per cent female and 38.13 per cent male. About 2 per cent family members are educated SSC and over consisting 3 per cent male and only 0.57 per cent female. About 23 per cent family member can sign only consisting 18 per cent male and 27 per cent female (Table 3.4.B). Male literacy rate is higher than female. Educational data shows that there is an urgent need for initiate education programme for the respondents' community as well.

3.4. Occupation:

There are differences in occupational distribution in Dalits community as well. The results are presented in table 3.5, which show the distribution of employed men and men by occupation according to background characteristics. The data shows that 12.25 per cent are craftsman, 7.35 per cent are self-employed in cottage industry followed by weaver (5.88 %), cobbler (2.94%), farmer (2.45 %), Kai putro (1.47 %), day labour (1.96%), agricultural labour, cottage industry worker (1.47 %), rickshaw/van puller (1.47). Besides these occupational

groups, student (10.29%), disable people (0.49%) are also interviewed. Data shows that Dalit's are concentrated on some selective occupations only. Their family occupation also depicts the same trends (Annex table: 3). These occupations are cobbler, craftsman, weaver, cottage industry and alike.

The majority of the female respondents are housewives (69 %). Among working women, 6.09 per cent are self-employed, 3.45 per cent are weaver, 3.48 per cent are craftsman, and 2.61 per cent are agricultural labour and day labour respectively. A notable finding is that women are more likely to be engaged in factory work, home-based manufacturing activities and day labouring.

Among employed men, 23.60 per cent are craftsman, 9 per cent are self-employed in cottage industry, 7.87 per cent weaver, 6.74 per cent cobbler, 5.62 per cent farmer (Table 3.5). As expected, men are more likely to be engaged in traditional business and professional services.

Table 3.5: Occupational Status by gender of Respondents

	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Farmer	5	5.62	0	0.00	5	2.45
Agricultural Labour	1	1.12	3	2.61	4	1.96
Day Labour	1	1.12	3	2.61	4	1.96
Cobbler	6	6.74	0	0.00	6	2.94
Craftsman	21	23.60	4	3.48	25	12.25
Weaver	7	7.87	5	4.35	12	5.88
Kai Putro	3	3.37	0	0.00	3	1.47
Private Job	1	1.12	1	0.87	2	0.98
Government Job	1	1.12	0	0.00	1	0.49
Self Employed in Cottage Industry	8	8.99	7	6.09	15	7.35
Cottage Industry Worker	2	2.25	1	0.87	3	1.47
Small Business	2	2.25	0	0.00	2	0.98
Business	2	2.25	0	0.00	2	0.98
Rickshaw/Van Driver	3	3.37	0	0.00	3	1.47
House Wife	0	0.00	79	68.70	81	39.71
Student	15	16.85	6	5.22	21	10.29
Disable	1	1.12	0	0.00	1	0.49
Self Employed	3	3.37	0	0.00	1	0.49
Child Worker	1	1.12	0	0.00	1	0.49
Others	6	6.74	6	5.22	12	5.88
Total	89	100.00	115	100.00	204	100.00

3.5. Professional Training:

Occupational data shows that Dalit's are concentrated on some selective occupations only. These occupations are cobbler, craftsman, weaver, cottage industry worker and alike. About 75.49 per cent respondents (154 respondents) stated about their family members' professional skills. Most of the professions are traditionally linked with the Dalits (Annex Table 4 and 5). They develop their skills from various sources such as vocational training, NGO, traditionally and from community people. Data shows that three-fourth of the respondents' get professional training traditionally following 20.78 per cent from community people and 3.25 per cent from NGOs (Table 3.6).

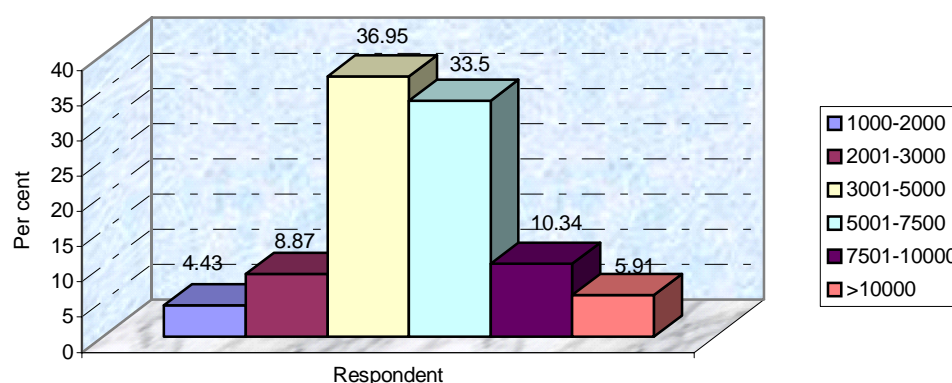
Table 3.6: Sources of Professional Training

	Frequency	Respondent
Vocational Training provide by Government	3	1.95
Form nongovernmental organization	5	3.25
Traditionally	114	74.03
Learn from community people	32	20.78
n=154		

3.6. Income:

An attempt has been made here to analyse monthly household income of the respondents' households. Result shows that total monthly household income is significantly belong to 3001-5000 Taka. Only 5.91 per cent households have earnings more than 10000 Taka. About 10 per cent household income is 7501-10000 Taka. About 34 per cent household income is 5001-7500 Taka. Data shows that about 13 percent households live below poverty level. Most of the household income range is to 3001-5000 Taka. The mean of the income of the households is 5728 Taka only. The median of household income is about 5000 Taka and the mode is about 4000 Taka (Figure 3.5). This data shows that the income level of the Dalits community is below than national average income. This indicates that Dalits community is poor and anti-poverty programme should have to initiate to overcome to alleviate poverty.

Fig 3.5: Income Distribution of the Respondent Household



3.7. Land and Non-Land Asset Ownership:

The survey data collected information on household ownership of selected assets. Some of these are used along with other indicators to assess household socioeconomic status and generate a wealth index. Table 3.8 shows the percentage of households that possess various durable goods, land, and livestock. Land ownership status demonstrates the socio-economic condition of the Dalits. There is significant difference between the respondents ownership. Survey data shows that out of 204 respondents, most of the respondents (194 i.e. 95.1 %) respondents possess their own homestead but more than half of the respondents have not any cultivable land for cultivation. Only 42.16 per cent respondents have their own cultivable land (Table 3.7). This indicates that most of the respondents are dependent in market for their staple food. The survey data shows that the Dalits have not been able to accumulate agricultural land and that's why they are now in a worse situation in respect of agricultural land holding compared to their homestead.

Table 3.7: Possession of Agricultural land and Homestead

	Agricultural Land		Agricultural land by lend		Possess Home	
Have	86	42.16	32	15.69	194	95.1
Have not	118	57.84	172	84.31	10	4.9
Total	204	100	204	100.00	204	100

Asset is now considered as an important factor for ensuring households' economic security as well as social security. It also helps the households to cope with crisis and emergency need. Asset accumulation is therefore considered as an important outcome in any intervention. Data were collected here on a number of assets including livestock and poultry, household durables, and productive and other assets. Results show significant differences in asset ownership of respondents. Just to mention, while ownership of pond/garden is 32.84 per cent it is only 2.94 per cent who have pond/garden through lend. About 48 percent have cattle, about 38 percent have ornaments and cash money about 31 percent have poultry and only 3.43 per cent have goat/ sheep. This indicates that the Dalits are very polarized in terms of asset.

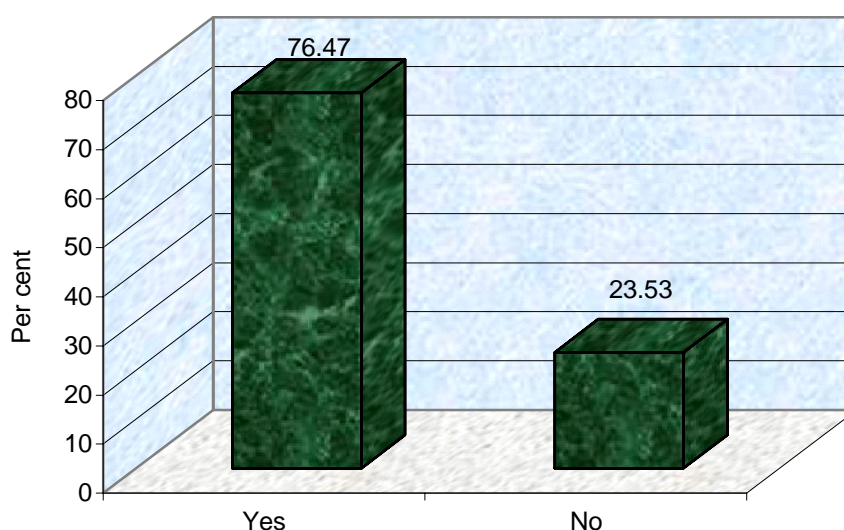
Table 3.8: Ownership of Different Types of Assets

	Percent
Pond/Garden	32.84
Pond/Garden by lend	2.94
Cattle	47.55
Poultry	30.88
Ornaments/Cash Money	38.24
Goat/sheep	3.43

3.8. Earnings from Safety Net Programme:

Social safety net is an essential requirement for the vulnerable people and marginal community. Government provided different safe net assistances through local government. Although there is no elected member in local government level from Dalits community, they got some social and government benefits from Union Council. Respondents were asked to answer about what types of services get from Union Council. In reply, about 76 per cent respondents stated that they get services from Union Council in various aspects like widow allowance, old age allowance, VGD/VGF, relief, health support and seeds for cultivation. Along with these they get birth registration, voter registration and marriage registration support from Union Council.

Fig 3.6: Status of Services get from Union Council



The respondents get 50 Taka to 500 Taka through safety net assistance. Table 3.9 shows the distribution of safety net allocation of the beneficiaries in respect of BDT from Union Council. Data shows that, about 45 per cent beneficiaries get assistance up to 100 Taka following 19.15 per cent 201-300 Taka, 14.89 per cent up to 200 Taka and 10.64 per cent get 301-400 and 401-500 Taka respectively.

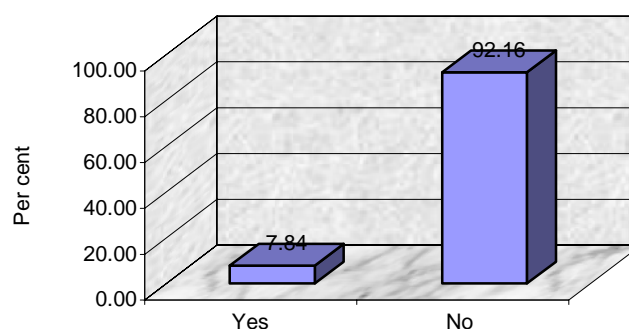
Table 3.9: Social Safety net Allocation

Social Safety net (by gender)	Response	Percent
50-100	21	44.68
101-200	7	14.89
201-300	9	19.15
301-400	5	10.64
401-500	5	10.64

3.9. Savings and Credit:

Savings has an enormous implication during crisis period. But due to low-income level more than half of the respondents have not scope to save their earnings. Figure 3.7 shows that only 8 per cent respondents can save any money for future need and rest 92 per cent respondents can not save earnings for future need or during crisis period. As a result they have to go to different kin and non-kin personnel for debt or loans in institutional form and informal form during crisis.

Fig 3.7: Saving Status of Respondents



Access to credit is an important financial resource that helps the beneficiaries to engage themselves in various income-earning activities, which ultimately help them to achieve better livelihoods. In addition, access to credit also assists them to cope with any crisis relatively smoothly. A significant amount of money is expended due to load installment. Following table 3.10 shows the loan expenditure status of the respondents. Most of the respondents spend money to provide installment from 501 Taka to 2500 Taka.

Table 3.10: Loan installment of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
100-250	17	11.97
251-500	18	12.68
501-750	29	20.42
751-1500	40	28.17
1501-2500	20	14.08
2501-4000	11	7.75
>4000	7	4.93
Total	142	100.00

3.10. Expenditure:

An attempt has been made here to analyse monthly household expenditure of the respondents' households. Result shows that, about 43 per cent households' total monthly expenditure is 4001-6000 Taka. About 8 per cent household expenditure is lower than 2500 Taka (table 3.11). The mean of expenditure of the households is 5580 Taka. The median of household income is about 5065 Taka and the mode is 3200 Taka. The Dalits spend their

most of the money for food consumption. While the expenditure mode is 3200 Taka, it is 3000 Taka for food consumption. The Dalits expend their rest of the money for clothing, education, health, house rent and loan installment. Data shows that, most of the people expend maximum 300 Taka for clothing, 200 Taka for children's education and only 50 Taka for health expenditure (Annex Table 8.1-8.6). Expenditure data shows that, although most of the family income is about 4000 Taka, most of the income of those families is used up for family expenditure especially for food. So their others expenditure (i.e. health, clothing, education) is very little. Moreover to meet up their emergency need or crisis they have to borrow money in different form. As a result, after certain time they have to carry the burden of loan installment.

Table 3.11: Family expenditure of Dalits

Amount to Taka	Frequency	Percent
700-1500	3	0.99
1501-2500	14	6.90
2501-4000	33	16.26
4001-6000	87	42.86
6001-10000	56	27.59
>10000	11	5.42
Total	204	100.00
Mean 5579.828		
Median 5065		
Mode 3200		

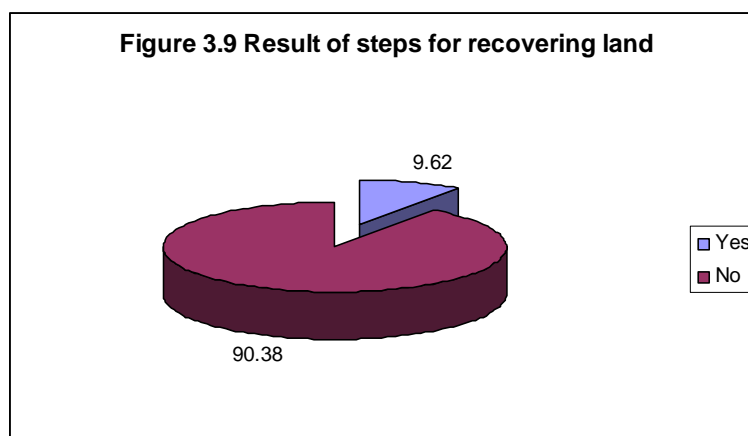
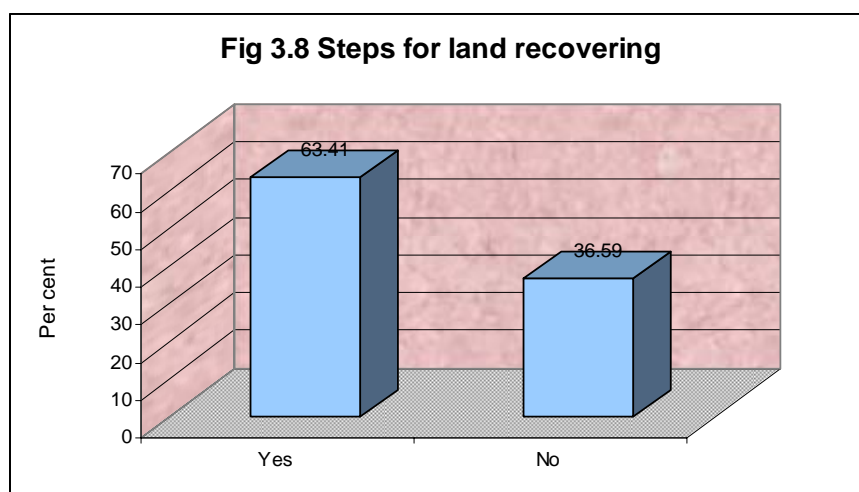
3.11. Land Disposition:

Bangladesh passes through significant socio-political ups and downs. As a result, numbers of people were thrown out from their homestead and land. The Dalits are not beyond from this trend as belonging as minority community. Survey data shows that, out of 204 respondents' 40.2 per cent Dalits are thrown out from their land for several causes (Annex table 9). Out of 82 respondents, more than half of the respondents were evicted by the influential people (57.32 %) from their land following 33.93 per cent evicted by their relatives, 3.66 per cent by government and about 6 per cent unable to possess their land (table 3.12).

Table 3.12: Cause of land disposition

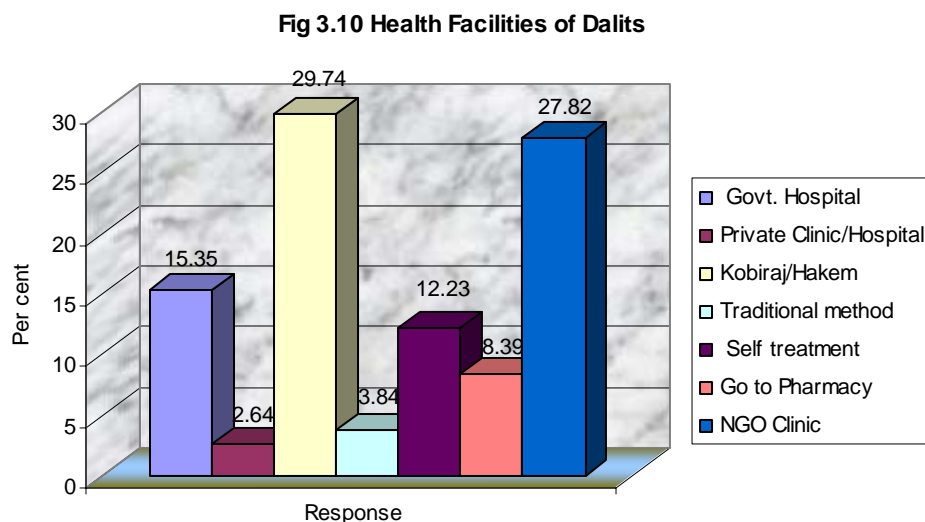
	Frequency	Percent
Evicted by the influential persons	47	57.32
Evicted by Relatives	27	32.93
Evicted by Government	3	3.66
Unable to take possession	5	6.10
Total	82	100.00

Dalits have taken steps to recapturing their land but have not succeeded most of the times. Data shows that, out of 82, 52 respondents (about 63 %) victims have claimed but most of them can not recover their land. Out of 52 claims only 9.62 per cent regain their land from disposition (figure 3.8 and 3.9).



3.12. Health Scenario of Dalits:

This section is concerned with the analysis of health services available to the Dalits. It is also related to the economic status of the people. Out of 204 households the surveyed people provided 417 responses. The survey data shows that 27.82% respondents receive health support from NGO clinic, 15.35 % from government hospital, 2.64% from private clinic/hospital and 8.39% go to Pharmacy for their treatment. The striking feature is that 29.74% receive health support from Kobiraj or Hakem and 12.23% did not go to any kind of physician and treated by themselves (figure 3.10). This indicates the poor condition of health support of the Dalits community and need substantial intervention both from GO and NGO health care.

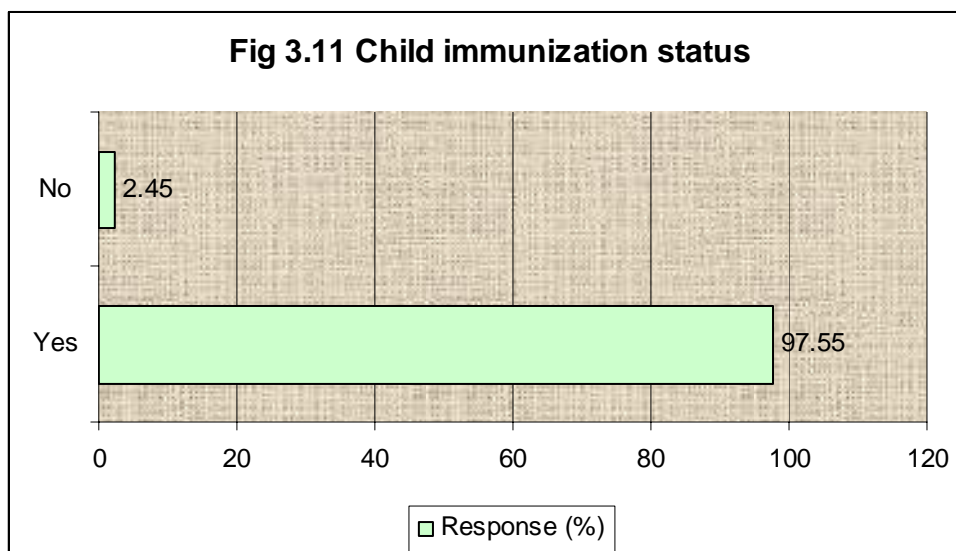


The social attitude toward Dalits is not positive. Mainstream people treated them as backward, low caste and untouchable. This reflects during receiving health care support from hospital. The survey data shows that about 56% face misconduct in hospital. Dalits are facing discriminatory attitude to get any bed in hospital. More than half (51.09%) of the respondent stated that they have not got permission for hospital bed during their needs. About 14 per cent stated that Doctor/ Nurse were not willing to communicate with them and 21.74 per cent stated that Aya and ward boys also misbehave with them (table 3.13). More striking thing is that, those health care givers are not willing to provide adequate support to them. To ensure their health support, there is an urgent need for aware the health care giver to provide health support to the Dalits.

Table 3.13: Discriminatory attitude in Hospital

	Percent
Do not want to admit	6.52
Do not permit bed	51.09
Doctor/Nurses do not willing to communicate	14.13
Other patients make objection.	6.52
Aya/Ward boy behave unfair.	21.74
Doctors do not willing to touch	3.26
Total	100
*multiple response	

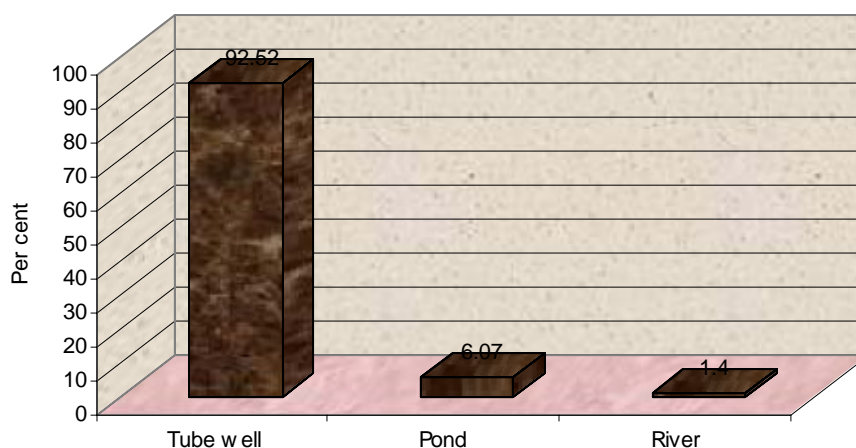
Survey data shows that Dalits children got government immunization support adequately. 97.55% respondents stated that they got support from government immunization support for their children. Only 2.45% respondents stated that they had not got immunization support from government (fig 3.11).



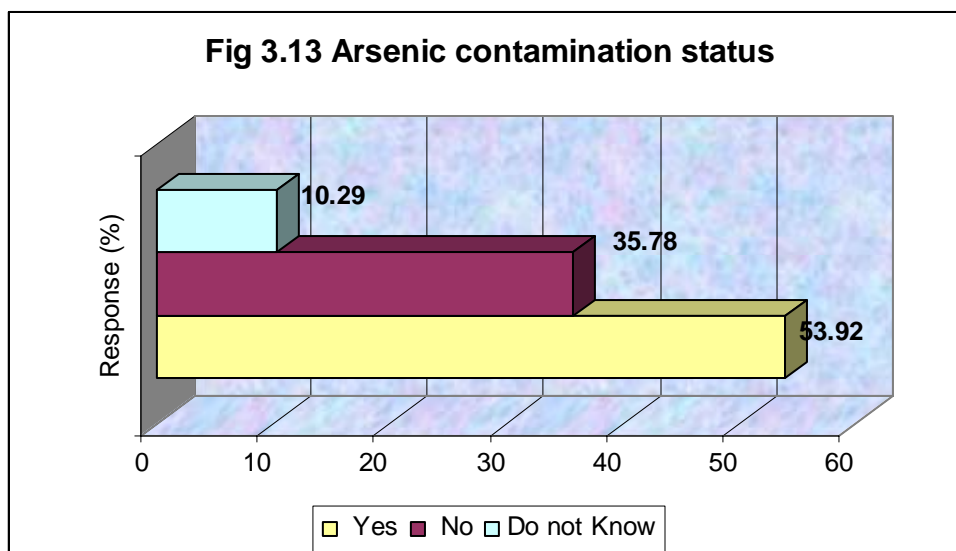
3.13. Water and Sanitation:

In addition to other facilities, the drinking water and toilet facilities were also recorded during field study. The availability of these facilities are discussed and analysed below. The number and percentage of available drinking water source are shown in the Figure 3.12.

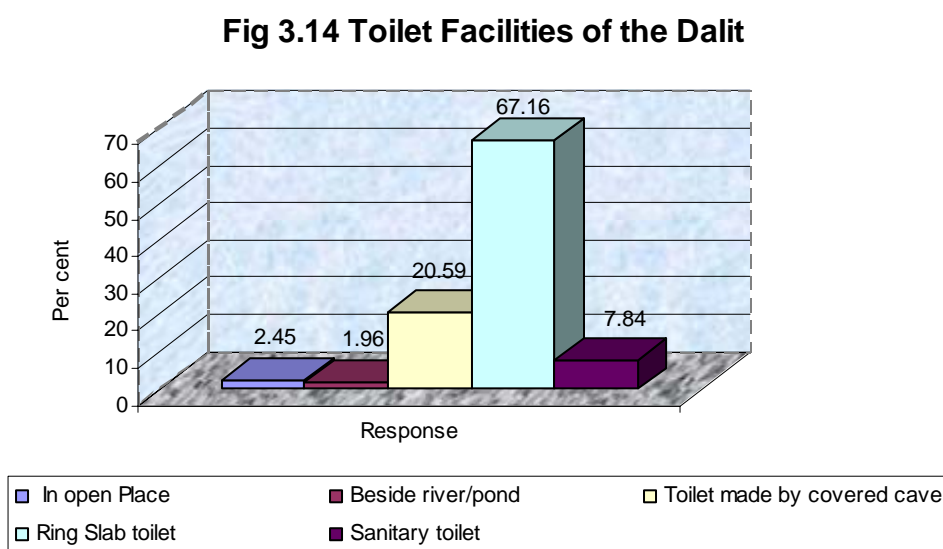
Fig 3.12 Sources of Drinking Water



The study shows that the total number of tube well users is 198 (92.52%) following pond (6.07%) and river water (1.4%) users. In addition, 53.92 per cent respondents stated that they use arsenic free water. While 35.78 per cent reported that they use arsenic contaminated water, it is 10.29 per cent who don't know about the purity of water (fig 3.13).



The data shows that, unlike other areas of Bangladesh, the surveyed area tube-wells' water is arsenic contaminated. This should be taken into consideration to fulfill the MDG goal and vision 2021 goal for make arsenic free Bangladesh.



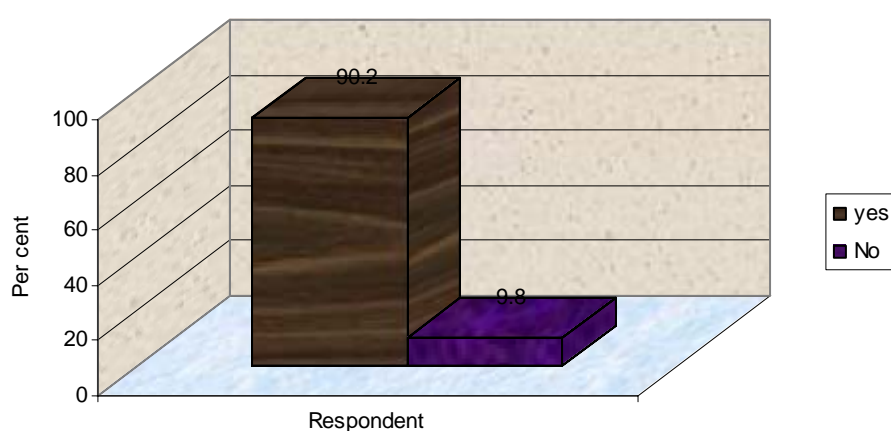
Alike, drinking water, toilet facility of the Dalits is not adequate. The survey data shows that 67.16 per cent respondents use toilet made with ring and slab and 20.59 per cent use covered toilet. Only 7.84 per cent use sanitary latrine following 2.45 per cent using open place/field

(figure 3.14). The result shows that sanitation coverage is quite worse compare to other region and community of Bangladesh.

3.14. Human Rights:

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly declared "Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN, 1948). Accordingly, UDHR further stated, -"all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brother hood" (Ibid, Article 1). The proposition of human rights is rooted in our historical and cultural heritage and also based on the reality of our situation. But people are not well aware about their rights. The survey data shows that people are well aware about their civil rights. About 90 per cent respondents know about their civil rights and about 10 per cent respondents do not know about their rights (figure 3.15). Data shows that Dalits' are well known about eight types of rights.

Fig 3.15 Awareness about rights



They are predominantly aware about voting rights (29.92 %), free education (22.91%), racism free society (15.63%), health and treatment facilities (12.94%). Some of the respondents know about rights to government job (5.39%), rights to politics (5.12%), social safety net (5.66%) and legal assistance (2.43%) (table 3.14).

Table 3.14: Awareness on civil rights

	Response	Percent
Rights of Govt. job	20	5.39
Right of the participation in politics	19	5.12
Free Education	85	22.91
Become candidate in Election and Voting rights	111	29.92
Legal assistance	9	2.43
Racism free society	58	15.63
Health and treatment facilities	48	12.94
Social safety net	21	5.66
Total	371	100

Awareness has an enormous impact on gaining civil rights. The data shows that about 60 per cent respondents and their family members face difficulties to gain their rights. According to the deprived respondents, more than half (56.35) opined that they are not getting salary according to their productivity. Owners and employers discriminate them in workplace through low paid salary. About 20 per cent respondents have not get government assistance by their expectation level. About 10 per cent respondents could not caste their vote for their identity. About 7 per cent respondents victimize in near by tea stall or hotel and restaurant. About 3 per cent claim that they are not allowed for grazing pig/selling pork (table 3.15).

Table 3.15: Rights violation of Dalits

	Reponse (%)
Do not have the rights of land	1.59
Under age marriage	0.79
Does not get work/salary according to my ability	56.35
Do not get any govt. assistance	19.05
Could not able to cast my vote	10.32
Face problem to go into mandir.	1.59
Become the victim of racism in local tea stall	7.14
People do not permit us to use road fro pig driving/selling pork.	3.17
Total	100

Although their rights are violated many people from Dalits have not bring attention for this matter. Survey data shows that to solve any discriminatory deed they are not willing to bargain with others. About 36 per cent respondents have not taken any steps to solve their assault action. On the other hand some respondents act according to their connection with the local community, political leaders and local governments. About 35 per cent respondent bring

the issue into *Gram Panchayet*. About 13 per cent try to solve the problem through rural community and political leader respectively. Very few people (2.21 %) go to Union Parishad to solve their problem (table 3.16). Although Dalits are trying to solve their problem through community, political leader and local government, they have not got positive response on that issue. About 66 per cent respondents notice that complain have not cordially taken for justice. About 30 per cent have got response on that matter but judgment was not satisfactory. Only 5 per cent problem was solved according to complain (Annex table 10 and 11). This data indicate that there is a neglecting attitude and practice exists towards Dalits rights.

Table 3.16 : steps taken for ensuring civil rights

	Per cent
Try to solve problem by our local community	12.71
Raised the issues in Gram Panchayet.	35.36
To go to political leader.	12.71
To go to influential persons	1.1
To go to UP	2.21
No steps	35.91
Total	100

3.15. Gender Perspective:

In Bangladesh, society entertains strong traditional values in favour of males. However, interestingly enough in the case of Dalits community women are also bread earners in some respect and active decision-makers. Survey data shows that, about 93 per cent girls go to school and 76.47 women actively participate in family decision-makings (table 3.16). They hold high status in the family although they lack social prestige due to their sex work in wider society. As most of the Dalits community members are systematically integrated in Hindu caste structure, their social and economic status is much lower to that of males.

Table 3.16: Gender Perspective

	Girls go to school		Women participate in decision making	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Frequency	190	14	156	48
Percent	93.14	6.86	76.47	23.53

3.16. Discrimination and Socio-cultural Attitudes towards Dalits:

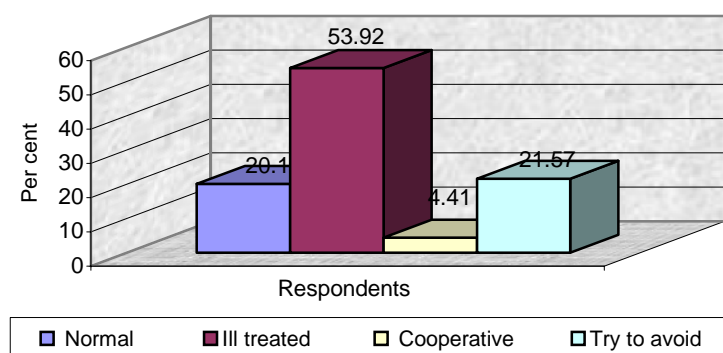
The political participation of Dalits women at the ward and union parishad level is zero. Women as well as most of the men have not sufficient education as they are qualified to do any job. More over they face discriminatory attitude and behaviour in different social settings such as school, market, hospital, market, religious institutions and nearby shops or stalls. Survey data shows that about 62 per cent respondents family members' face differential behaviour in school, about 44.12 per cent face differential behaviour in hospital, about 44 per cent faces price discrimination during selling their crops and product, about 47 per cent faces problem to buy or selling products, about 56 per cent have not get chance for participating in "Gram Panchayet", about 53 per cent face problem for sitting in tea stall, about 36 per cent can not use common glass in restaurant or tea stall, about 58 per cent can not get chance to take part in religious activities with others and about 68 per cent can not get chance to go to mosque, temple and church for prayer and other religious activities (table 3.17). These data reveals that there is an enormous discriminatory attitude and practice towards the Dalits for their identity.

Table 3.17: Discriminatory attitude and behaviour of different social settings

	Response		
	Yes	No	No response
Faces differential behaviour in school	126 (61.76)	126 (37.75)	-
Faces differential behaviour in hospital	90 (44.12)	114 (55.88)	-
Faces price discrimination during selling products and crops	87 (42.65)	77 (37.75)	40 (19.61)
Faces problem to buy or sell goods	96 (47.06)	108 (52.94)	-
Get no chance to take part in "Gram Panchayet"	115 (56.37)	89 (43.63)	-
Faces any problem for sitting in tea stall	108 (52.94)	96 (47.06)	-
Can not you use common glass/cup in restaurant or tea stall	73 (35.78)	131 (64.22)	-
Get no chance to take part in religious activities with others	118 (57.84)	86 (42.16)	-
Get no chance to go to Mosque, temple and church	138 (67.65)	66 (32.35)	-

Along with this, there are socially ill-treated in society and community level. The data shows that about 54 per cent Dalits felt that they are ill treated in social settings; about 22 per cent felt that others try to avoid them. Only 4.41 per cent felt that others are cooperative with them (fig 3.16). This data reveals that, there is an urgent need for campaign and awareness building for reducing discriminatory attitude and practice.

Fig 3.16 Behave towards Dalits



The respondents identified a number of obstacles for overcome discriminatory attitude and practice towards them. The data shows that, about 34 per cent respondents felt that the main obstacle to achieve their social rights is ill-treated, about 19 per cent felt that lack of education and awareness is the main obstacle, about 18 per cent felt that communal integrity is not sufficient and about 16 per cent felt that local political leader and influential people's attitude and deeds are the main obstacle for achieving their social rights (table 3.18).

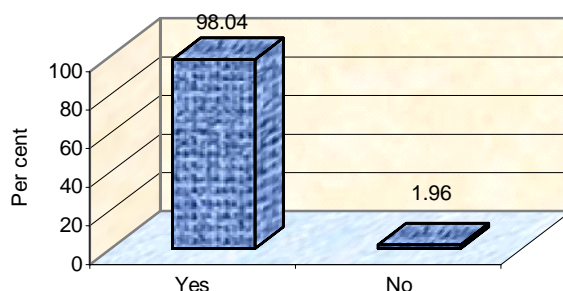
Table 3.18: Main obstacle to achieve social rights

	Response (%)
Ill-treated	34.12
Unfair judgment in <i>Gram Panchyet</i> .	1.76
Not to get the sufficient govt. support	2.06
Tortured by local political/influential persons	16.47
Lack of communal integrity.	17.65
lack of education and awareness	19.12
Economic problem	8.82
Multiple response	

3.17. NGO Involvement:

Previous sections clearly indicate that Dalits are vulnerable in terms of livelihood, social attitude and behaviour. And hence, to overcome and alleviate their present situation they are involved different NGOs for their betterment. Survey data shows that about 98 per cent respondents are involved with NGO activities (figure 3.17).

Fig 3.17 NGO involvement Status



Data shows that most of the respondents are involve with NGOs for awareness building (41.21%) programme and micro credit (38.32%) following 14.70 per cent for education facilities and 3.67 per cent for health facilities (table 3.19).

Table 3.19: Type of NGO involvement of the Dalits

Type	Involvement (%)
<i>Micro Credit</i>	38.32
<i>Education</i>	14.70
<i>Health</i>	3.67
<i>Family Planning</i>	0.79
<i>Training</i>	0.52
<i>Property rights</i>	0.79
<i>Awareness programme</i>	41.21

To know about their NGO involvement, the survey team asked them, what kind of facilities they got from NGO. The facilities they got from Paritran are shown in Table 3.20. The data shows that, their involvement is for developing their knowledge about human and civil rights (41.59 %) and educational assistance (35.47%).

Table 3.20: Facilities get from NGOs

Facility type	Frequency	Percent
To get educational assistance	116	35.47
To become aware about the under age marriage	27	8.26
To become aware about the racism	32	9.79
To become aware about our national rights	136	41.59
Get legal assistance	5	1.53
Health awareness	11	3.36
Total	327	100

Although the respondents get some educational, health and loan assistance and awareness building facilities from NGOs, they expect more benefit from NGOs as marginal community

members. They expected to develop in the area of education, health and human rights (Annex table 12-15).

3.18. Conclusion:

The main purpose of this chapter is to present survey findings on various issues relating to the Dalits community of selected areas. The key factors affecting the whole community –such as demographic, economic, social, cultural, political, gender, poverty and legal -have been analysed. It is reported during the study that most of the Dalits have not possesses enough land for agriculture except few households. Landlessness and ignorance are the major constrains for their better livelihood. It is an undeniable fact that poor economic position of Dalits community is one of the major hurdles for achieving social rights, justice and social security in the society, because they are regarded as untouchable groups.

Chapter Four: Findings from Qualitative Study

4.1 Education: Discrimination, Dropout and Unemployment Issues:

Among the Dalits the literacy rate is very low. From the focus group discussions we got that the main reason for this low rate of literacy is their economic condition. The significant number of Dalits children dropout from different institutions every year. Here one thing is very important to mention, the reason of dropout is not same among all Dalits. Among the Kaiputtar the dropout rate is the highest and their profession is one of main reasons of dropout. Because the Kaiputtar boys go to work with their fathers or elders at their early age. Again, from gender perspective the dropout rate of the girls is much more higher than the boys and the main reason of dropout is early marriage. Regardless the religion or caste, early marriage is the ultimate reality for Dalit girls. From our weeklong field visit we didn't get any Dalit girl who passed the S.S.C exam.

This dropout occurs few stages; the first one occurs before finishing the primary education and a large number of dropouts occur after finishing the primary education. In rare case Dalit students go to college or go for higher education. The lack of this higher education created unemployment problem among the Dalit young generation. Even after completing graduation they do not get a satisfactory job. From a FGD among the Rajbongshi students we learnt, one of them after his S.S.C exam tried for army and failed. Now he is trying for a police job. They said they don't know anything about government driven training program. They think, after getting proper education they are not getting any job only for lack of information. We have seen same depression among Rishi and Tanti young educated people. Facing all the limitations they are trying to survive their own way.

Case of Partha Asim

Partha Asim a 26 year Rishi. He got married and has a 2 years old daughter. This self motivated Youngman is a businessman and has a shop in his own community. It won't be false to say, his shop is the reflection of his talent. It is really a specialized shop with three parts. The main part of the shop is a grocery. Under the platform of the grocery he has poultry for sell. There is also another compartment for his rabbit there. The other part of the shop is a saloon, decorated with a big mirror and a

wooden chair. The third part of the shop is a shoe shop with other necessary things. There is another thing to him for sell and that is his skill. He is a artist and professionally writes name plates, sign boards etc. He thinks of his community and can identify the problems of his community. From his perception the main problem is out side of the community. Some greedy people is controlling the community, if any one try to be self dependent, they soil all initiatives. They invest money in this community and the poor community people lend this money of high interest from them. Here most of the young people are dropped out from school. Partha Asim also one of them. He tried with his best, but the economic condition of his family did not allow him to continue his study anymore. Now he thinks of his community and hope his future generation will not be deprived like his generation.

One thing is Dalit children's family condition compel them to dropout from the school. But there are other realities for those who are continuing their school. The teacher's attitude to the Dalit children is not similar as their attitude toward general students. We have got one such case from our field visit.

Case of Four Friends

Rina, Mala, Nila and Nishi are four friends and studying in same class. They are all the student of class four of Babupara Govt. Primary School. There has another similarity within these four; they are all from Kaiputtar community. In the school there have two latrines for the teachers and one for the students; but there is not any sweeper in the school. Teacher's use to clean up these latrines assigning the students, but they are not the 'General Students'. They are these four kids from Kaiputtar community. These little kids even can not resist their teacher's order, they even did not say it to their guardians. When we were talking with a Kaiputtar housewife, her daughter was also with her. When we asked her, "Do your children discriminated at the school?", she answered, "No". Then her daughter resisted, "Why you are telling lie, Maa?" Then this eleven years old child told us about this scenario of her school.

4.2 Religion and Religious Transformation:

Among the Dalit community people, most of them are from Hindu religion. 10-15 percent Dalits is Muslim. Our quantitative data shows that there is not any Christian respondent out of 204 households. However our focus group discussions show that now a day a significant number of Dalits are from Christian community. ‘Who are these today’s Christian Dalits?’- such questions can be raised. The answer is today’s Christian Dalits are the result of religious transformation, the transformation from Islamism and Hinduism to Christianity. What ever the theoretical explanation of this transformation, we intended to identify the reasons of religious transformation from grassroots level.

Religion is the most sensitive issue in people’s everyday life. One can sacrifice his/her life, but can not change the religious identity. Then how these transformations are happening? If we see from the dipper zone, we will find those people, who are economically totally crack downed are being transforming from one religion to another religion. We will find much missionary activities on those areas where people are mostly from Hindu lower caste and economic condition is most vulnerable. These people refuse the support from missionaries for several times, but once they compel to take the supports from missionaries. What are the after affects of these transformations, or what are the local people doing to resist these transformations?

The case of Missionary School

We talked with the manager of a missionary school. It is not like the ordinary school. About one hundred students are under this missionary school. This school feed these students. The school is like a program and the program does not allow more than hundred students. From the words of the manager, 11 countries donate this project and 17 countries take this grant to implement. In Bangladesh they have 97 project schools. The school feed the children 6 days a week. The school program is like a coaching center. These children are student of different schools, but they take coaching here and take their breakfast and lunch here. There have some playing instruments for the children here. Out of three class rooms one class room is specialized; it is the biggest one and class room come church. Beside the academic learning here have the arrangement of religious learning. Here have instruments for singing religious songs.

The general people's perception about this school is different. They think that the school is working for religious transformation. From a FGD we learnt that the children, who are going to this missionary school is maintaining Christian religion in lieu of their religion. One of the discussants said that his nephew did not learn the alphabets, but 'he can pray the Jesus prayer'. Another one said their religious identity is blurring through this missionary school. For the first time, when this missionary school established the school authority negotiated with the local people. They promised to the local people no religious lesson will be taught here. But they had broken their promise. They told the students not to wear the '*chandan mala*' (religious necklace of Hindus). Even they said to their students not to go to the *Mandir* during evening period. One of the discussant said with full of sorrow, "Our religion is not able to provide any support to its people; so these people are changing their religion." Because the missionary fathers visit the poor houses very often, they call for religious meeting every evening at different houses. There, they say about the benefit of religious transformation. The discussants said with sorrow that at first they allowed this kind of institution for the betterment of their community, but now this institution is cheating with them.

4.3 Family Patterns within Dalits:

Among the Dalits the family pattern is changing in recent times. Few years ago they had combined family structure. But now most of the families are nuclear family. They said, their present economic condition is the under lying truth of this structure. Few years ago they had cultivable lands, but now most of the Dalits are landless, few have only their houses and few do not have even the land of house. They live someone's land like tenant. From our visit to a Kaiputtar Para¹ we have seen few families have taken shelter to a local union council member's land. It is beside a linked road and only few huts. But the member and his people are creating pressure to leave the land as soon as possible.

Most of the Dalits people do not have any cultivable land and it impacts on their profession. They are mostly involved with making handicrafts, mainly the work of bamboo. They make different local products with bamboo. From child to aged, everybody of the family is working; each hand is a working hand. But they are always fighting with poverty. What they

1. 'Para' is the part of a village. A village can have several Paras. Most of the times Paras are named after a caste, or a significant part of the village (like eastern, western etc.)

earn, the major part goes to NGOs and Mahajans² hand. Most of the cases these people are unable to pay the high interest of NGOs and Mahajans. In this situation an extended family day by day become weaker and one day brake to a nuclear family.

4.4 Marriage and Dowry:

Among the Dalits the marriage system is intra communal. Although in case of Muslim Dalits there is not such barrier, but they can not set up any marital relation with higher caste Muslims. Among the Hindus the marital barrier is very strict; here marriage is intra caste marriage. A Rishi can not marry a Kaiputtar, Kaiputtar can not Rajbongshi.

Regardless religious position, dowry is a very common culture in Dalit marriages. Sometimes it takes some dangerous tern. From a FGD with Rajbongshi Women we have learnt that most of their guardians have to pay their husband's family. The demand depends on the economic condition of daughter's father. If any father truly unable to pay any dowry in his daughter's marriage, no one will come to marry her daughter. We have found one such case in our field,

Case of Mamata Biswas.

Kumari Mamata Biswas. A 25 years old lady. Here two thing need to explain. The first name 'Kumari' means the woman is unmarried. If the middle name is 'Rani', it means she is married. Again 'Biswas' is the title only used in the name of Rajbongshis. Mamata Biswas's father is aged and can not do any work. Mamata do not have any brother either. It is too age among the Rajbongshi for not being married. But dowry is essential in a Rajbongshi marriage. Mamata's father does not have the ability to arrange the dowry for her daughter. So she is still at her father's house.

4.5 Pig, Swine flu and the issue of purity:

The food habit of the Dalits people is not anything universal; even it varies from caste to caste, from people to people. Within these variations there have some similarities, most of the Dalits are from Hindu community and they are fond of bacon. Most of the cases it is seen that Muslim community people are living just beside the Dalits community. We were talking with different stakeholders in the field. In a key informant interview we talked with a union

2. Mahajans are those people who invest money to the community people in a high interest.

council woman member. She is from Muslim community. She was expressing, *“The most dirty work that they (Dalits people) do, slain pig here and there.”* She said that if they change this habit the relation between Hindu and Muslim will be improved. It is a very interesting matter the root of religious negligence is in food habit of the people. The most favorite food for the Muslim is beef and the cow is God to the Hindus. Again Hindus favorite food beacon is totally forbidden (*Haram*) for the Muslims. Both of them neglect each other through their food habit. Though the Hindus are minority group in Bangladesh, they are facing a lot of problems.

We have talked with some Kaiputtars. They rear pig and face a lot of problems when they go through the Muslim community with their pigs. Some times in some area Muslims do not allow any pig in their community. It is very common for the Kaiputtar pig businessmen quarrelling with the mainstream Muslim community people. One pig businessman said that not only this problem, their have created a greater problem, which is destroying their by generation business. He talked about the swine flue. He said, *“By the name of swine flu some people are destroying our business. If this situation continues we have to leave this profession. We lend thousands of monies from NGOs and Mahajans and invested in this business. But now the rate of pig and beacon is very low. Day by day it is becoming impossible for us to survive with this business. We are always with pig. We are eating beacon. No one of our community people suffer from any fever at all. It is truly fake that swine flu spread from pigs. Some people intentionally are trying to demolish our business”*.

What ever the reality, we should think of the economic condition of these people. If this business collapses, a community will be collapsed. Kaiputtar people live only on pigs. Their whole family depends on this business. Some are directly with business, some are working monthly basis with the big pig businessmen.

4.6 Health and Healing Condition:

Among the Dalits the tendency to go to the government hospitals is very low. When we talked with the doctor of a Union Health Complex, he assured us a lot of patients visit this complex everyday. Here has also a family planning wing. The doctor said that now Dalits are much conscious about their health. When he first joined there; the situation of the Dalits was very poor. According to him, one could not enter in any Dalit community for any purpose due

to dirty situation. But now the situation has changed and Dalits are much conscious about their health.

Though, the doctor claim about betterment in health care facilities; but Dalits told about a different scenario. In a group discussion with male group, we have informed that they do not get any treatment from the Union Health Complex. That's why they go to the Union Health Complex very rarely. In case of general diseases they take local medicines. This group explained us with examples; for example, when fever stayed for two or three days, they go to the registered doctors, but never go to the union health complex. We have talked with a family planning worker. We have asked her regarding the family planning attitudes in Dalits communities. According to her explanation, a good number of Dalits women are having family planning. However, she could not show us the statistics. On the other hand, Dalits females claimed that they did not get regular suggestions from the family planning office and the field family planning worker is not frequent there in the community.

Among the Dalits, the belief of supernatural healing is very strong. They pray to their God for healing. There have some places where they pray to the *Devatas* for healing. We have visited such two places during our field work. From one field visit, we have got an interesting case,

Case of Monoranjan Das

53 years old Monoranjan Das. Two years ago he was totally paralyzed from a major stroke. He sold fish at local market. The economic condition of his family did not allow him to take better treatment from the modern hospital. He and his family member both were known about the Paglar Darga. "The Shai never refuse anyone. Everybody gets his help. I am sure one day Shai will help me. I will be cured again. I will work again" Monoranjan Das saying and crying. He has been staying here for six months. His family members provide food for him. Sometimes visitor's give some money.



Photo: Monoranjan Das on street home. He is living here permanently, during the day, night, cold, rain, hot summer.

Monoranjan Das is not the only one. Here people come from all Dalits and non Dalits communities. Even people from India also come here to get rid of their problems. Mainly, the women, who have pregnancy problem, visit the place to get baby. They hang a piece of brick with cord in the branch of a banyan tree. They believe such weight will come to their womb soon. When one conceives a baby, she again visits the place and cuts the cord of the brick which she has hung. Here we are providing one picture of the tree,



Another such place, we have got at the west bank of DamDam Piuer Dighi, where the branch of a mango tree and a shimul tree linked together. The Hindu community people believe that there is something supernatural here. They consider these linked trees as their Devta (God). They pray here to the God. Even in these trees have small prying place. The pictures are provided here,



The linked branch of the mango and shimul tree.



The small praying place beneath the tree.

4.7 Occupational Transformation:

Once upon a time the Dalits' professions were bound with the name of their caste. But the situation has changed. Now they are involved with various works. For the Rishi it was believed that they would involve with the leather works. But in present, Rishis are agricultural labourer, handicrafts maker etc. The transformation need is increasing; the family structure is breaking; nuclear family is creating and people are involving with versatile job sectors. From one key informant interview at Parala Tanti Para we have got such a case.

Case of Abul Kashem

Md. Abul Kashem, the community leader of a Tanti community. He has handloom, but his son is working at Gazipur in a garments factory. Another son is working in a loom industry at Shirajgong. Abul Kashem said that now a day it is tuff for them to make money from handlooms. He has five children. Few years ago he and his wife was the earning member of the family. But when two of their children grown up, they sent them to close to Dhaka to make their own livelihood and support the

family. Abul Kashem said with sorrow, one of his sons was brilliant, but he was unable to support educational expense of his son. His son was an under graduate student. But now he is working in a garments factory as an operator.

The same situation is there in case of the Jele community. The Bills, Bawors, Hawors are occupied by few people, who are having political power. So the fishermen do not have open water body for catching fish anymore. They are now working as wage laborer. When the big farmers call, they go with their net. For the limited space of fishing they can not fully dependent on catching fish. Though, they are involving with second or third jobs. Normaly they are working as agricultural laborer, migrant laborer, part time businessmen etc. The same thing is true for the other Dalits community people. The basic thing behind this occupational transformation is their previous professions are not enough able to support their need.

4.8 Political Involvement:

Political power has a universal character that is political power transmitted from one generation to another generation. This is such a power which people acquire inherently. The Dalits people were political powerless form the historical period and this political powerlessness has transmitted from generation to generation. The socioeconomic condition of the Dalits is closely related to their political power. When we were talking with some Youngman from a Rishi community, they said, “For political involvement people need some leisure times, economic solvency. But when there have hunger in the stomach, people need food for it, not the political power. We are always struggling for the food.”

During the period of election, the political leaders visit these Dalits communities very often. They promise to provide different facilities for the community people; but when election is over they totally forget their promises. Even after the election they are harassed by the politicians. The winner group said, “You people are cheat. You did not cast your vote for us. We got vote form other areas” and the looser team said, “Only for you people, we loose in the election”. Shorola Das’s case study provides us such an example of harassment.

Case of Shorola Das,

Shorola Das, is a local Awami League's assistant general secretary. She is about 45 years old. She is the only one from Dalit women, who reached such a political position. She has a social status and her community people obey what she said. The local political leaders know about the social position of Shorola Das. They assumed that if they able to manage Shorola, they would get all votes from this community. Three groups of politicians proposed money for their canvassing. But Shorola strictly refused to do that. Then, they try to create pressure over Shorola. To save herself from these dirty politicians, Shorola finally took ask for the help of the police. She said that she has a social position, but who did not have such identity they suffered much in that election. Some people could not able to stay their own home during the night. To save themselves from the grasp of the politicians they stayed in the forest, fasten themselves with the bamboo with towel and stayed there all through the night to save their lives.

In recent times Parittran is trying to involve these Dalits community people with the mainstream politics. They are inspiring people to participate in the up coming Union Council election. The political powerlessness of Dalits people made them politically deprived and for the proper elevation of Dalits community people the political empowerment is essential one.

4.9 Micro Credit and Local Trends:

The tendency of taking micro credit is a common phenomenon among the Dalit community people. Basically there are two types of credit among the Dalits. One is micro credit and another one is Credit form the Mohajans. One who takes micro credit, also take money from the Mohajans. The NGOs are distributing these micro credits. Like the national level NGOs many local level NGOs are working among the Dalits. The interest rate of these NGOs is more of less 20-35 percent. Most of the Dalit adult people are involved with NGOs and they take micro credits form these NGOs. Most of the NGO members are involved with more than one NGO. When, they unable to pay the weekly money of one NGO, then they take loan from another NGO to pay the first one. When the way of taking money form the NGOs is closed they lend from the Mohajans. The complex net of micro credit and Mohajani Credit has spread out among all Dalit communities. In case of Mohajoni credit the interest rate is two or three times more than the NGO interest.

We were talking with a group of women at *Parala*. All of them were giving high interest to the NGOs and Mohajans. What they earn, they can not save anything of their income. They have skills, manpower, handlooms; but they do not have solvency in their life. Their skills and active hands are bound with micro credit and Mohajani credit. They desire, if they get any interest less loan from the government or from any NGO, they will be able to comeback in the rhythm of the life.

4.10 Savings and Future Thought for Income generating activities:

We have discussed in previous paragraph about the savings of the Dalit community people. Most of the cases they do not have any savings. They are bound with the net of micro credit and Mohajoni credits. They want to recover the present condition of their life. From the most of the FGDs, we have got they do get the proper price of their products. Among the Tantis, the middle men are taking main benefits. In case of Rishis, they do not have proper market for their products. Sometimes they are cheated by the Mohajans. The following case of Romesh will show the situation.

Case of Romesh Chandra

Romesh Chandra Das is a 'Mora'³ maker and his professional skill is there. He is about 35 years old. Now his economic condition is very poor. He said, "We eared a lot. But the interest of our work goes to NGOs and Mohajans hands." He said about his present economic condition. Two years ago a Muslim businessman came to their village and visited his works. He liked his work and gave him advance money to make Mora. It was only three thousand taka. But Romesh wanted to make big business dill with that businessman. He lends money from the NGOs and Mohajans to make huge amount of Mora. He made, but the businessman did not come. All of his Moras were spoilt by the insects. He thinks, this loss has ruined his previous socioeconomic condition.

During the key informant interview and focus group discussion most of the Dalits people said if government or NGOs arrange some trains for the young unemployed people the situation of the Dalit community will be improved. Most of the women want to be trained with new home

3. Mora is the local name of one kind of armless seat, made of bamboo sticks.

based works. They think of a center from where they can get works. They also demand for the proper marketing of their products. They think NGOs and government should work together for changing the present socioeconomic condition of the Dalit people.

4.11 Heterogeneity Among Dalits (Dalit Within Dalit):

It we think of 'the Dalit', that will be a great mistake; because, Dalit is not a homogenous category. Among the Dalits, there also have hierarchy. Form one of our Kaiputtra fields, we have learnt, Rishis think of themselves upper than that of Kaiputtar. They think Kaiputtars are dirty, because the rear the pigs. Many of the Rajbongshi do not think that they are same as other Dalits. They think that, they are good enough and do not need any change. This hierarchical sense has weakened the Dalits community movement.

In all Dalits community the women's condition is Dalits within Dalits. In their own society they have less decision making ability. Even they are tortured by their husbands and husband's family people. Sometimes they committed to suicide to get rid of this inhuman torture. We have got one such case from a Kaiputtar community:

Case of Maloti Rani

Maloti Rani, was a 21 years old house wife from Kaiputtar community. Three month ago she committed to suicide at her husband's house. One of our respondents informed us, it was not a suicide; her husband intentionally killed her. Maloti's father was at his work place along way from his home. When he arrived home; Maloti was buried. The fellow villages told him to go to the police. But he wanted to avoid the police. One of the villagers asked for the help from Parittran. They tried, but the lack of interest of Maloti's family made them disappointed.

This scenario is a common among the Dalit community people. Women are vulnerable within their own family. They are like a production machine within the family. They have to take care of their children and also take part in income generating activities with the other family members. But on the other hand, they are having proper appreciation from their male partner.

4.12 Touch and Untouchable Issues: The Question of Dignity:

Hindu religion's touched and untouched issue is the most important dignity factor for the Dalits. Most of our respondents said that seven-eight years ago, this problem was a severe problem for them. An aged man from Rishi community said they had to eat in the banana leaf at higher caste Hindu households. They had to sit in the yard and when they left the higher caste housewives cleaned the place with cow dung and mud. The Dalits even could not take tea from local tea stalls. However the situation has changed in present times. We have heard about aged women from Saha community who even avoid the road used by the Dalits. One thing is important here. The religious believes and bindings are important in this case. Through the religious rules and regulation it has imposed to the mind of the higher caste Hindu's that lower caste people are impure, they are dirty and untouchable. In the tea stalls the discrimination still exists and we have visited two such tea stalls where the cups are different for the Dalits community people. The touch and untouched issue is coming from the main streams attitudes towards Dalits community. In the following section, we will discuss more on the issue.

4.13 The Mainstreams: They are not Enough Clean!

A tendency exist among the mainstreams that the Dalit community people are not clean enough. We have talked about a woman member of a local Union Council who think that Dalits are dirty because they eat bacon and slain pig here and there. Such attitude toward Dalits is prominent. We have talked with a mainstream's school boy, asked him about the Dalits. He said, "They live in small huts. The huts are very concentrated and the surroundings environment is very dirty". When we visited that community then we came to the decision that they boy have learnt these from their elders; because, the particular community was very nit and clean.



The pictures are from a Kaiputtar community, who are thought the ‘dirtiest’ among the Dalits by the mainstreams. These pictures show that these are nothing but rumor, the negligence of the mainstream’s mind.

4.14 The Officials’ Perspectives:

In our key informant interview session, we have talked with different stakeholders. We have talked with the Upozila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Monirampur Upozela. He has said that there is not any discrimination at institution level regarding Dalits issue. Constitutionally there is not any scope of discrimination by the government officials. He said that the discrimination exists in the local level and it is tuff for them to work within the societies. He thinks that the communities living juxtaposition the Dalits communities have to be changed. He thinks NGOs need to work on that level.

We talked with the Chairman of Haridaskati Union Council. He said that the discriminations do not exist anymore. The same explanation we got from the doctor of Union Health Complex’s doctor, what we mentioned above. The NGO representatives think that the situation is not changed enough and we have to work a lot to change the present situation. We talked with Asok Das of Dalits Empowerment Foundation. He thinks that everybody should work together for the establishment of dignity of the Dalits people.

4.15 Migration

Though the tendency of migration is very low among the Dalits, it is not true for all Dalit groups. Within the Kaiputtar, the rate of migration is very high. The nature of their profession is different than that of other Dalit groups. Most of the Kaiputtar males work as migrant laborer; through the whole year they stay outside from home. Kaiputtars rear pig that is why they do not stay a particular place for long time. They frequently change places with their cattle. Mainly the low laying areas are the main attraction for the pig growers. They walk through the whole country with their pigs. It is seen among the Kaiputtars that the boys go to the work of pig rearing at their very age, which even hamper their education life. These migrant Kaiputtars sometimes have their own pigs and sometimes work under big pig businessmen monthly or yearly basis. Every two or six months they visit their family members. It is important to clear, we did not hear about any Dalits who permanently migrated from his/her own land. The nature of migration that we got from our fieldwork is temporary migration.

The tendency of temporary migration also has seen among the Tanti community people. In their cases, they migrate for new economic sources. It is very interesting that their new working sources are not far different than their by traditional profession. From the FGD and KII we see that as a migrant laborer they are working at loom industries or garments factories, which are closely related with their previous profession.

Among the Rajbongshi or Jele community the tendency of temporary migration is seen, but the rate is very low. Mainly this community people worked as migrated wage laborer. They migrated only during the extreme economic crisis, when other sources of income are totally sopped. In case of Rishi community, the tendency of migration is the lowest. Among the Dalits they are also the largest group. We have talked with the Rishi community people regarding migration issue. They said that they have their main sources of income in their own communities that is why migration is not a common phenomenon for them.

4.16 Division of Labor:

Division of labor exist is every society, but the nature of division of labor is not same for all societies. Among the Dalits community people it is far different than that of mainstreams people. Dalits women are not only the housewife. They compulsorily have to perform income generating activities. We have seen at all Dalits communities, women are working. The boy or the girl, who is studying in the primary or high school, is helping their parents during their leisure.

Case of Rina Das

Rina Das is a six years old school going girl. She is from Rishi community. Making 'Mora' is her family profession. After school she helps her parents. Rina said that she learnt to make it from her parents. There was no special training for Rina. Like Rina, the other children of the community become skilled from the elders of the community. This scenario is seen at all Dalits communities. The professional skill that they gain, gain inherently and such child labor is a common scenario among the Dalits. The economic condition of Rina's family has pushed her in this child labor.



Picture: Rina is working

The gender difference of the Dalits also works in division of labor, like the younger. In our observation, we have seen the leisure time is not same among all Dalits. Among the Rishi and Tanti women, they do not have much leisure time. But Kaiputtar and Rajbongshi women have much leisure time. This is due to nature of labor they have engaged. Rishi and Tanti women are involved within the household based income generating activities, on the other hand Kaiputtar and Rajbongshi communities are involved with external sourcing.

4.17 Religious and Social Events:

The religious rituals of the Dalits are not same. The rituals of the Hindu Dalits differs form the rituals of Muslim Dalits. What ever the difference, they both deprived in their religious rituals by the mainstream people.

The higher caste Hindus do not think the schedule caste as the part of Hindu religion. But the rituals of the schedule caste or Dalits are same as higher caste Hindus. They have also Mandir in their own community. One of our key informants said that last year they have collected money from their community people for Durga Puja⁴ and gave it to the biggest Mondop of their area. They did it from their own religious sentiment. But this year the Puja organizing committee even did not invite this community people. However there is also a positive changing going on.

Charak puja, another big religious festival of the Hindu community people, is the example.

When we were in the field, the charak

puja was going on. To observe the participation of Dalits community people we went at a charak puja. There was not any difference between Dalit and non Dalit there. Even religious barrier was blurred. From long distance people came visit the Puja spot. Once upon a time



these religious festivals were forbidden for the Dalit community people. They could not go to the same Puja spot where the higher caste Hindus participated. But the situation is changing.

From a FGD with Rishi community men group we have heard about a religious conflict. In the area the Shoshan⁵ is same for the higher caste and lower caste Hindus, but there is not any road for the Dalits community people to go to the Shoshan with deceased body. This conflict was happened few months ago when Dalits community people went to the Shoshan across the higher caste Hindu households. The higher caste Hindus stopped them. Then this two groups fight against one another and the body was just beside them. This case shows, the religious rules and regulation is feeding the child of discrimination.

4. Durga Puja is the biggest religious festival of Hindu community people.

5. The Shosahan is a place where the Dade body of the Hindu religious people is brunt.

Through some social events local young generation is trying to recover the religious gaps. We have attended one such social event during the period of our field. It was a Jatra Pala⁶. The story of that Jatra Pla was based on the existing social problems and the context was historical. The Jatra is very famous among the people of that area and working illusively for social change.

4.18 Institutional Involvement:

The institutional involvement of the Dalits is not satisfactory. It is seen that the institutional involvement and the educational qualification is closely related. Among the Dalits the literacy rate is very poor. For this reason, they do not have much institutional involvement. In the recent days, a few of the young generation are going for higher education. But they are suffering form depression, because they are confused about getting job after finishing their education. We did not get anyone from our fields that have institutional/ official identity apart from the officials of Parittran of Dalit community.

4.19 Conclusion:

In the third chapter we have discussed about demographic, economic, social, cultural, political, gender, poverty and legal issues in Dalits communities. We have also seen that poor economic position of Dalits community is one of the major hurdles for achieving social rights, justice and social security in the society. In this chapter, we have seen the implicit context of these discriminations. It is important to understand that the situation is changing and it will be really important to have a support from the mainstream for the dignity issues of Dalits communities. Dalits are encountering social injustice due to mainstreams attitudes. Therefore it is important to change mainstreams attitudes towards Dalits communities. Political involvement of Dalits can contribute in many ways for the betterment of Dalits, therefore a strong political involvement is essential for future development of Dalits. It will raise the rights awareness among Dalits and at the same time it will contribute to achieve those rights.

6. Jatra Pala is the local form of Theatre.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendation

In this study, an effort is made toward the analytic description of 'Dalits' community and their major issues. The available data and information poses open questions to community. The constitutional rights have not been properly practiced. The dynamic character of this community is also praiseworthy in comparison of other caste. However, at this time, the perception of high caste towards lower caste (Dalits) is not as negative as before. In fact, the issue needs more discussion and interactions with various agencies as well as local and central level.

The realizations of various issues provide the ground for mutual understanding between other communities and open the door for implementing the new policies. In order to cope with the Dalits community, long-term plan should be arranged. The following directions are suggested:

1. The legal rights guaranteed by the laws and act and the Constitution of the People Republic of Bangladesh should be adopted and implemented effectively.
2. Technical education such as vocational education should be focused to Dalits community to create productive employment.
3. Protection from all kinds of exploitation and social discrimination is needed.
4. Social security to be guaranteed as fundamental rights of the Constitution of the People Republic of Bangladesh
5. Anti poverty focused right-based program should be carried out to address the social inequity and injustices as per the need and priority of the Dalits community as identified by them.
6. Child-focused program should be lunched to ensure the child rights as the Convention on the Rights of Child.

7. Health facilities, awareness and health education program should be focused to ensure health security especially for controlling and preventing from the infectious diseases.
8. Programs need to change mainstreams attitudes towards Dalits communities.
9. Political involvement of Dalits can contribute in many ways for the betterment of Dalits, therefore a strong political involvement is essential for future development of Dalits.
10. It is important to ensure the political leadership from the Dalits communities. Therefore political capacity development programs should be initiated from government and non-government part.

Annex Tables

Annex Table 1: Family size

Number of Family Members	Respondents percentile
1-4	35.78
5-8	58.33
>8	5.88

Annex Table 2: Age and education of the family member of respondents

Age Group	Illiterate		Primary		Secondary		SSC and over		Can Sign Only		Under age		Total	
1--5	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	86	100	86	8.12
6--12	5	4.95	191	48.97	10	4.46	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0	206	19.45
13-20	6	5.94	80	20.51	116	51.79	6	31.58	7	2.93	0	0	215	20.30
21-35	14	13.86	76	19.49	67	29.91	11	57.89	97	40.59	0	0	265	25.02
36--50	22	21.78	31	7.95	22	9.82	1	5.26	106	44.35	0	0	182	17.19
>50	54	53.47	12	3.08	9	4.02	1	5.26	29	12.13	0	0	105	9.92
Total	101	100	390	100	224	100	19	100.00	239	100.00	86	100	1059	100

Annex Table 3: Occupation of the family member of respondents

Name of Occupation	Male		Female		Total	
Farmer	13	2.43	1	0.19	14	1.32
Agricultural labour	10	1.87	4	0.76	14	1.32
Day Labour (non-agricultural)	8	1.50	3	0.57	11	1.04
Fisher Man	10	1.87	0	0.00	10	0.94
Cobbler	21	3.93	0	0.00	21	1.98
Craftsman	68	12.71	15	2.86	83	7.84
Weaver	21	3.93	12	2.29	33	3.12
Kai Putro	20	3.74	0	0.00	20	1.89
Leather Worker	2	0.37	0	0.00	2	0.19
Private Job	8	1.50	3	0.57	11	1.04
Government Job	4	0.75	0	0.00	4	0.38
Self Employed in Cottage Industry	27	5.05	13	2.48	40	3.78
Cottage Industry Worker	8	1.50	4	0.76	12	1.13
Small Business	15	2.80	2	0.38	17	1.61
Business	7	1.31	0	0.00	7	0.66
Professional (Doctor, Engineer, Lawyer, Teacher)	1	0.19	0	0.00	1	0.09
Rickshaw/Van puller	23	4.30	1	0.19	24	2.27
Vehicle Driver	2	0.37	0	0.00	2	0.19
House Wife	6	1.12	198	37.79	204	19.26
Student	150	28.04	160	30.53	310	29.27
Maintaining Livelihood by Pension.	1	0.19	0	0.00	1	0.09
Disable	8	1.50	34	6.49	42	3.97
Unemployed	12	2.24	12	2.29	24	2.27
Unemployed	2	0.37	3	0.57	5	0.47
Self Employed	2	0.37	0	0.00	2	0.19
Child Worker		0.00		0.00		0.00
Others	4	0.75	1	0.19	5	0.47
Under Age	41	7.66	12	2.29	53	5.00
Self Employed	41	7.66	46	8.78	87	8.22
Total	535	100.00	524	100.00	1059	100.00

Annex Table 4: Professional skills of Dalits

Professional Skills of Dalits		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	154	75.49
No	50	24.51
Total	204	100

Annex Table 5: Area of Professional skills

Area of Professional skill	Respondent
Cobbler	10.39
Craftsman	57.79
Weaver	12.99
Vehicle Driver	5.19
Wood works	3.9
Mason	9.74
n=154	

Annex Table 6.1: Income by salary

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
500-1000	5	3.09
1001-2000	26	16.05
2001-3000	48	29.63
3001-5000	56	34.57
5001-10000	27	16.67
Total	162	100.00

Annex Table 6.2: Income by Business

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
500-1000	8	12.12
1001-2000	9	13.64
2001-3000	18	27.27
3001-5000	15	22.73
5001-10000	11	16.67
>10000	5	7.58
Total	66	100.00

Annex Table 6.3: Income from Agriculture

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
500-1000	37	18.14
1001-2000	18	8.82
2001-3000	9	4.41
3001-5000	3	1.47
5001-10000	4	1.96
No Income	133	65.20
Total	204	100.00

Annex Table 6.4: Farming without Food grain.

	Frequency	Percent
500-1000	35	17.16
1001-2000	4	1.96
2001-3000	3	1.47
3001-5000	2	0.98
>10000	1	0.49
No Income	159	77.94
Total	204	100.00

Annex Table 6.5: Rent and grant

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
70	1	16.67
300	1	16.67
500	1	16.67
1200	2	33.33
6000	1	16.67
Total	6	100.00

Annex Table 7.1: Sell of Land/Properties

Kind of Properties	Yes	No	
House	6	188	194
Cultivable Land	1	85	86
Pond/Garden	14	53	67
Cattle	68	31	97
Goat/sheep	51	12	63
Poultry	16	62	78
Total	156	431	585

Annex Table 7.2: Mortgage of Land/Properties

Kind of Properties	Yes	No	Total
House	32	162	194
Cultivable Land	29	56	86
Pond/Garden	14	53	67
Ornaments/Cash Money	13	65	78
Total	88	336	425

Annex Table 7.3: Mortgage of Land/Properties Cause of sell/Mortgage

Causes	Frequency	
Food	20	11.98
Treatment	28	16.77
Social Activities	6	3.59
To buy agricultural instruments	8	4.79
To buy Poultry	13	7.78
To by/rent Tube well	11	6.59
To Buy land	4	2.40
For Dowry	19	11.38
To buy House	7	4.19
To repayment the NGO Loan	14	8.39
To repayment others Loan	29	17.37
To invest in business	8	4.79
Total	167	100.00

Annex Table 8.1: Family expenditure for Education

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
50-100	50	29.76
101-200	72	42.86
201-500	21	12.50
501-1000	15	8.93
>1000	10	5.95
Total	168	100.00
Mean 370.5417, Median 200, Mode 200		

Annex Table 8.2: Family expenditure for Health

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
50-100	32	18.50
101-200	42	24.28
201-500	75	43.35
501-1000	14	8.09
>1000	10	5.78
Total	173	100.00
Mean 254.4884 Median 170 Mode 50		

Annex Table 8.3: Family expenditure for house rent and maintenance

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
50-100	13	30.23
101-200	14	32.56
201-300	7	16.28
301-500	4	9.30
>500	5	11.63
Total	43	100.00

Annex Table 8.4: Family expenditure for the loan installment

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
100-250	17	11.97
251-500	18	12.68
501-750	29	20.42
751-1500	40	28.17
1501-2500	20	14.08
2501-4000	11	7.75
>4000	7	4.93
Total	142	100.00

Annex Table 8.5: Family expenditure for Festival

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
50-100	85	57.05
101-200	55	36.91
201-300	6	4.03
301-400	3	2.01
Total	149	100.00

Annex Table 8.6: Family expenditure for Pan, Bidi, Cigarette, Tea etc.

Amount of Taka	Frequency	Percent
50-100	64	41.29
101-200	61	39.35
201-300	5	3.23
301-400	14	9.03
401-600	11	7.10
Total	155	100.00

Annex Table 9: Status of Land disposition

	Frequency	Respondent
Yes	82	40.2
No	122	59.8
Total	204	100

Annex Table 9.1: Steps taken to recover discarded land

Steps	Frequency	Percent
Appeal to UP	28	53.85
Filing Case	14	26.92
Apply to Thana land office	2	3.85
Through family/Village meeting	8	15.38
Total	52	100.00

Annex Table 10: Response of Judgment

Result	Frequency	Percent
The problem has solved	6	4.92
Did not get satisfactory judgment	36	29.51
No result	80	65.57
Total	122	100

Annex Table 11: How the problems can be solved

Responses	Frequency	
1. To develop the self awareness	78	20.86
2. To organize national movement.	25	6.68
3. To raise the rate to literacy.	75	20.05
4. To develop the awareness of local influential persons	35	9.36
5. To develop the communal integrity.	73	19.52
6. To increase the NGO activities	7	1.87
7. To aware the other community	53	14.17
8. To create the employment opportunity	28	7.49
Total	374	100.00
Multiple Responses, n= 204		

Annex Table 12: Expectation for develop the status to the cast

Expectation	Frequency	
1. Help to communicate with different govt. offices	36	12.68
2. Arrange seminar/discussion between civil society and dalit community to ensure there human rights.	74	26.06
3. Work for dissolving the racism.	60	21.13
4. Influence other NGO to work among the dalit community	9	3.17
5. Help to develop the communal integrity	95	33.45
6. Create alternative job opportunity	10	3.52
Total	284	100.00
Multiple Responses, n= 204		

Annex Table 13: Expectation for Education

Responses	Frequency	
1. Continue the educational assistance and increase the support.	179	61.09
2. Create especial quota in University or government job for dalit community	29	9.90
3. Communicate with school authority that they can get scholarship or other facilities	5	1.71
4. Establish night school for adult education.	5	1.71
5. Arrange stipend for the students.	58	19.80
6. Establish and operate school	17	5.80
Total	293	100.00
Multiple Responses, n= 204		

Annex Table 14: Expectation for human rights

Responses	Frequency	Percent
1. Establish communication between civil society and dalit community to ensure their human rights.	34	11.81
2. Help for getting govt. assistance.	50	17.36
3. Create awareness among other society.	30	10.42
4. More awareness programme will be operate into dalit community	101	35.07
5. Increase legal assistance.	26	9.03
6. Organize national movement to ensure the rights of dalit.	47	16.32
Total	288	100.00
Multiple Responses, n= 204		

Annex Table 15: Expectation for Economic development

Responses	Frequency	Percent
1. Vocational Training	57	19.52
2. Interest free loan	117	40.07
3. Help for establishing cottage industries where women will be employed	33	11.30
4. Increase transport facilities	22	7.53
5. To establish small industry	34	11.64
6. Dissolve social superstition toward the dalit	2	0.68
7. Help to get the government aid.	18	6.16
8. Ensure electricity and pure drinking water.	9	3.08
Total	292	100.00
Multiple Responses, n= 204		