SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF DEBBARMA TRIBE OF TRIPURA IN NORTHEAST INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Tripura, a small hilly state, is situated in the southern most part of North-East India. It is a land-locked state and its geographical limits touch International boundaries with Bangladesh and national boundaries with Assam and Mizoram. The total area of state comprises only 10491 km^2

Of 0.32 percent of India geographical area. The state of Tripura is inhabited by 19 tribes, namely Jamatia, Chakma, Halam, Munda, Mog and Tripuri. Most of these tribal communities live in and around dense forests, and have maintained their own culture, language, food habits, and socio religious traditions (Deb et al.,2013, Sharma et al.2013).The tribes of Tripura have great knowledge of religion and culture (Sharma et al.,2014).Most of the tribal communities consider trees and bamboos as the symbols of Gods and Goddesses in their culture. Out of 19 tribal communities found in this state,Tripuri, Reang, Noatia, Jamatia, Halam, Kuki, Chaimal and Uchoi are known to have migrated to this state from outside in the historical period, and are regarded original settlers of Tripura (Das et al.,2009).Of 19 tribes, Tripuri is the largest tribal community. Ethnically the Tripuris are of Indo-Mongoloid origin and linguistically belong to the Tibeto-Burman family. They are mainly Hindus and use different plant parts in religious ceremonies to drive away the spirits or defeat any malicious forces that might affect the well being of the family. The Debbarma, also known as "old Tripuris," were the first to migrate to this territory. They have however experiences the largest transformation in all spheres of life, especially agricultural practices, socio-cultural life, economic life, education and health consciousness, and are now treated as superior tribal community among the tribes of Tripura.
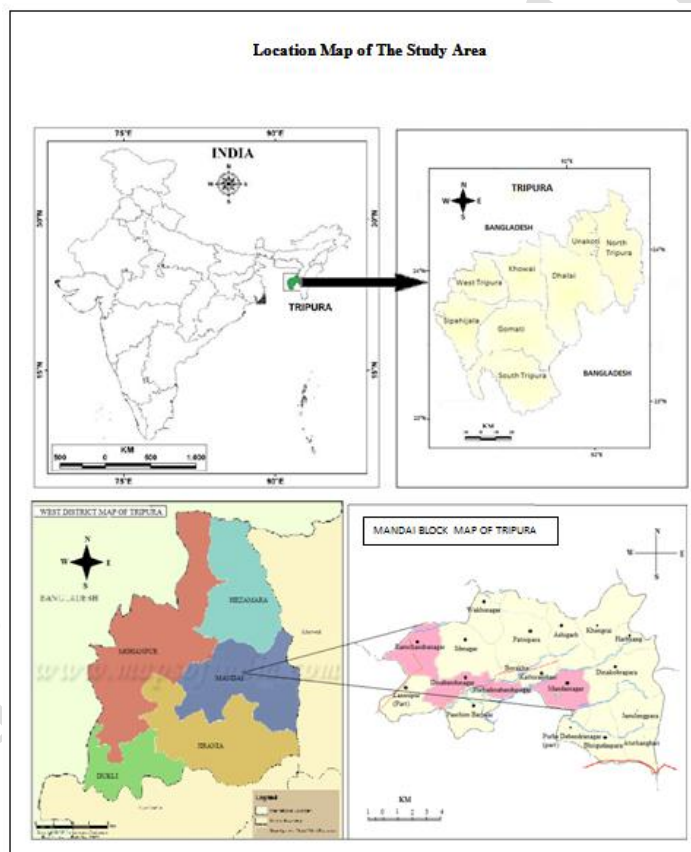
KEYWORDS: Debbarma Community Tribe, Public Distribution System, Below Poverty Line, above poverty Line.

INTRODUCTION :
OBJECTIVE: Major focus of this study is to analysis the socio-economic dimension of Debbarma/Tripuri community.

STUDY AREA: The geographical extension of Tripura is 23° 45'N latitude and 91° 30' E longitude. The length of its international border is 856 km. It covers an area of 10,491.69 sq.km with a total population of 36, 73,917 as per Census 2011. The Literacy rate of the state is 87.8 percent (as recorded in 2011 Census). The state is connected with the rest of India by NH44. The state is presently bifurcated into 8 districts of which West District is one among it. The Debbarmas are the majority communities of a state called Tripura till the Princely state Tripura merged with Indian Territory.Debbarma/Tripuri is the surname of Tripuri Clan from

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Tripura or the title generally used by the kokborok -speaking (Tibeto-Burmese) Borok (Tripuri) people. They are indigenous people of Tripura, This is one of the cases where use of a surname reflects ethnic or tribal membership. The variations of "Debbarma" include: Debbarman, Dev Barman, Dev Burman, Deb Barma, DebBurman, Dev Verma, Dev Varman. The common references to these people are found as "Kiratas" in the early Sanskrit texts of India and their kingdom is known as "Kirata kingdom". The Debbarma/Tripuri clan has a rich historical, social and cultural heritage which is totally distinct from that of the mainland Indians. Their distinctive cultures are well reflected in their dance, music, festivals, management of community affairs, dress and foot habits and language. Their original culture, tradition and realm are presently endangered because of the impact of westernization and influx of Bengali immigrants. Thus there is found the presence of Acculturation. The existing study works are documented to get a clear idea of the socio cultural characteristics of Debbarma/Tripuri in rural areas in respect to the manifestation upon space. Under Mandwi Block there are 26 village panchayat of which Mandainagar, Dinabandunagar, Purbadinabandunagar and Ramchandranagar village are taken as the Study area .The study area is about 24km distance from the capital city Agartala.The Mandainagar village has 1021 of houses as per 2011 census whereas Dinabandunagar village has 457 of houses, Purbadinabandunagar has 670 of houses and Ramchandranagar has 899 houses out of which 10 percent samplings of each villages are taken for the research work.

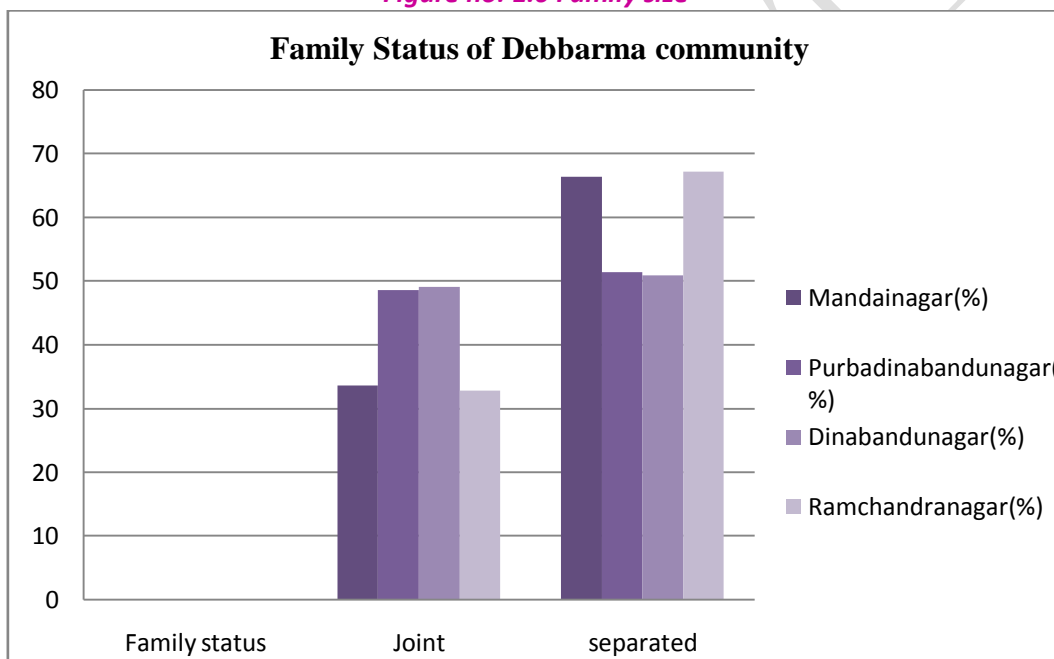Location Map of The Study Area

METHODOLOGY:

        The research work has been generated in terms of both primary and secondary data that are being entirely carried out from the extensive field survey and visit to different offices of concerned department. The field study has three different stages it includes selection of the study area, Questionnaires preparation, Collection of information from various resources such as books, journals, published and unpublished government reports etc. Primary data were collected from the Heads of the Debbarma families by direct personal interview with the help of framed questionnaire and Secondary data were collected from various government department, official agencies and organization, observation method and group discussion were

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also adopted, Questionnaires was tabulated and the data was arranged, preparation of the maps, diagrams and analysis has been done.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS:

FAMILY STATUS: Family status is defined as being in a parent and child relationship, involving care, responsibility and commitment, not limited to just parent/child by blood or adoption and adults caring for aging parents or other relatives with disabilities. The figure no 3.13 shows family status of different villages. Here the researcher has observed that most of the families are separated with Ramchandranagar 67.14 percent, as the highest in terms of percentage followed by Mandainagar 66.33 percent, Purbadinabandunagar 51.42 percent, and Dinabandunagar 50.90 percent, respectively.However the percentage of joint family is highest in Dinabandu with 49.09 percent, followed by Purbadinabandunagar 48.57 percent, Mandainagar 33.63 percent, percent, Ramchandranagar 32.85 percent, respectively. It can be assumed that most of the family sizes are nuclear in nature and members are found less than 5 persons in each family.
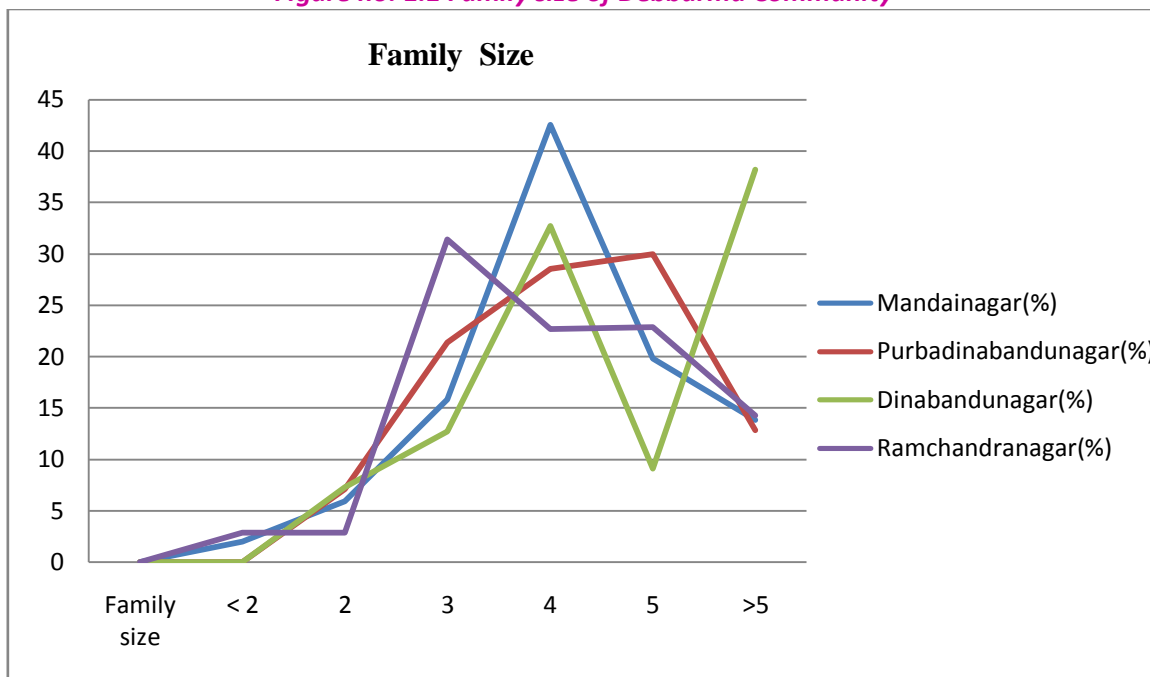
Figure no: 1.0 Family size

Source: Field Work

FAMILY SIZE: It represents the total number of individuals comprising a family unit. It is an indicator of societal structure that may vary over time, with concomitant implications for individual development and social relations in different cohorts. Family has a significant effect on the interrelationships among its members and can play a major role in the formation of a child's personality. However other factors also play significant role to the formation of child's personality.

In the study area, the researcher has observed that most of the villages have 4 members in each family. In Mandainagar village out of 101 families, the highest family size is 4 members in each family with 42.57 percent whereas the lowest family size is less than 2 members with only 1.98 percent. On the other hand in Purbadinabandunagar village out of 70 villages the highest family size is 5 members in each family with 30 percent and the lowest family size is 2 members with 7.14 percent. There is no presence of less than 2 members in this village from the sample taken. In Dinabandunagar village out of 55 families, the highest

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family size is above 5 members with 38.18% whereas the lowest family size is 2 members with 7.27 percent .There is also no presence of less than 2 members in this village from the sample taken. In Ramchandranagar village, from the sample taken out of 70 family the highest family size is 3 member with 31.42 percent whereas the lowest family size are less than 2 and 2 member with 2.85 percent and 2.85 percent respectively.

Figure no: 1.1 Family size of Debbarma Community

Source: Field Work

Age –Sex Structure: The age sex structure or composition of a population is the distribution by age and sex. It may be described in terms of absolute numbers or in percentages. It is important because the age sex structure of a population is a fundamental determinant of the numbers of demographic events that will occur, as well as determining the types of services a population will need. The researcher has observed that between 30-60 years age group occupy the highest male-female population concentration in all the villages with 37.03 percent and 42.04 percent respectively. Second dominant male-female age group is 18-30 with about 24.53 percent and 32.85 percent where as the age group above 60 is the lowest male-female population concentration with only 7.40 percent and 3.33 percent respectively. It is revealed that 18 to 30, 30 to 60 age group female populations are found to be the dominant comparing male population in this village.

Thus we can conclude that in the selected study area a fair amount of working age people have the potential to be productive and contribute to growth of the economy. The rest of the age group people would be student and dependant categories like infant and old people etc.
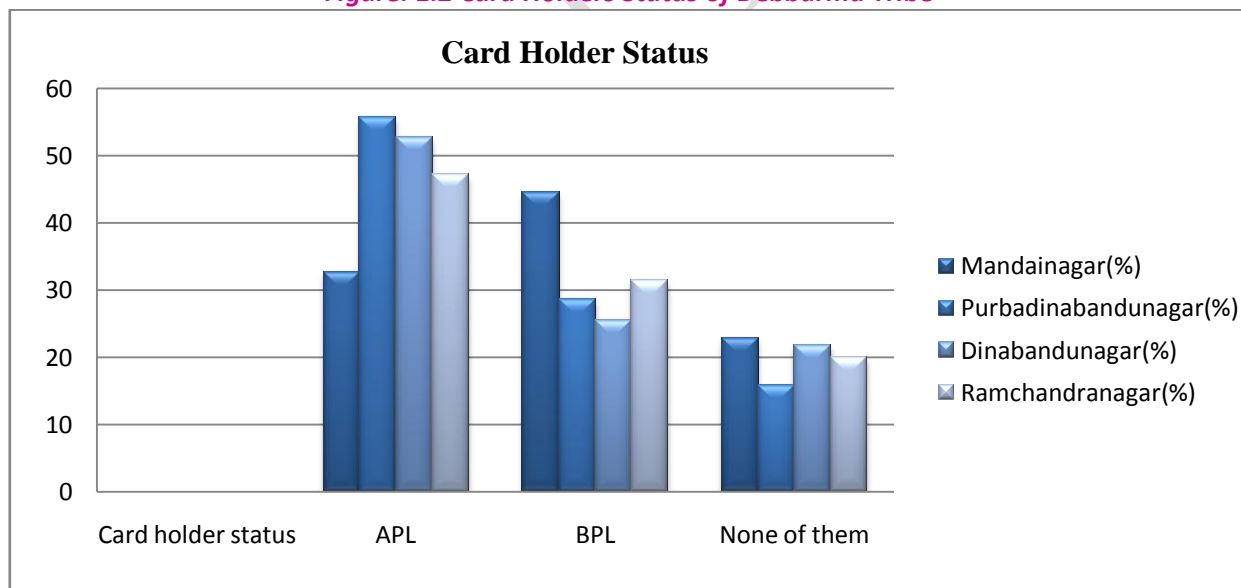
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Table: 1.0 Age-Sex Structure of Debbarma tribe in Percent

Village	Mandainagar			Purbadinabandunagar			Dinabandunagar			Ramchandranagar		
Sex Age	Male (%)	Female (%)	Sex	Male (%)	Female (%)	Sex	Male (%)	Female (%)	Sex	Male (%)	Female (%)	Sex
<5	9.25	3.80	9.25	5..84	5.62	5.84	5.46	5.07	5.46	7.09	10.41	7.09
5-18	21.75	20.95	21.75	20.12	22.46	20.12	23.43	22.46	23.43	21.27	20.13	21.27
18-30	24.53	32.85	24.53	23.43	26.81	23.43	21.87	26.81	21.87	22.67	26.38	22.67
30-60	37.03	39.04	37.03	40.90	36.95	40.90	39.06	36.95	39.06	40.42	34.72	40.42
>60	7.40	3.33	7.40	11.68	8.69	11.68	10.15	8.69	10.15	8.51	8.33	8.51

Source: Field work

CARD HOLDERS STATUS: This is necessary to examine the socio-economic conditions of poor or BPL ration card Holders (sample households) in the study area before examine the impact of PDS on their food security. Ration card holders are the beneficiaries who receive the subsidized food grains through fair price under PDS.

Figure: 1.2 Card Holders Status of Debbarma Tribe

Source: Field work

The figure no 1.2 shows different card holder status of the selected study area. The researcher has observed that in Mandainagar village BPL card holder is found to be the highest in terms of percent about 44.55 percent, second highest is APL card holder with about 32.67 percent and only about 22.77 percent of families does not belong to none of the group.

In Purbadinabandunagar, Dinabandunagar and Ramchandranagar villages APL card holder is found to be the highest with about 55.71 percent, 52.72 percent and 47.14 percent respectively whereas second

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highest is BPL card holder in all the three villages with about 28.57 percent, 25.45 percent and 31.4 percent respectively and only 15.71 percent in Purbadinabandunagar, 21.81 percent in Dinabandunagar and 20 percent in Ramchandranagar does not belong to any of the group.

EDUCATION STATUS:

Education plays an important role in studying the socio-economic and cultural aspects of a region. The length of schooling has often been considered as a basic of distinguishing a literate and illiterate. It is largely determined by the political situation, cost of education, standard of living, government policies, availability of schools/colleges, and mental capability of people to learn something new.

Table no: 1.1 Education status of study area in Percent

Village name	Mandainagar (%)		Purbadinabandunagar (%)		Dinabandunagar (%)		Ramchandranagar (%)	
Education	male	Female	male	Female	male	Female	male	Female
No education	6.12	13.94	4.13	9.93	5.78	12.21	3.05	13.95
Primary	24.48	25	15.86	20.52	19.83	19.08	20.61	21.70
Secondary	52.04	51.92	50.34	49.66	52.89	53.43	45.03	47.28
Higher secondary	10.71	3.84	15.17	7.28	9.09	7.63	22.13	13.17
Graduate	4.08	2.40	11.72	9.27	8.26	6.87	6.87	1.55
Post graduate	2.55	13.94	2.06	3.31	4.13	0.76	1.52	2.32
Ph. D	0	0	0.68	9.93	0	0	0.76	13.95

Source: Field Work

From the given table(1.1), it is revealed that out of samples collected, all 4 selected study regions have an education qualification of secondary level which is found to be the highest in term of percentage with Mandainagar 52.04 percent, Purbadinabandu 50.8 percent 6 , Dinabandu 52.89 percent and Ramchandranagar percent respectively. PhD is found to be nil in Mandainagar and Dinabandu village respectively. But in Purbadinabandu and Ramchandranagar village, PhD is found to be the lowest in term of percent with only 0.68 percent and 0.76 percent respectively. A fair percent of primary, secondary level of education and graduate have been observed. Thus we can conclude that the male literacy percentage of Mandainagar, Purbadinabandu, Dinabandu and Ramchandranagar villages are 93.86 percent, 83 percent ,94.2 percent ,96.92 percent from the sample collected simultaneously female literacy percent is 90.04 percent in Purbadinabandu village which is found to be the highest followed by Dinabandu 87.77 percent, Ramchandranagar 86.02 percent and 83.16 percent in Mandainagar village.

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE:

Occupation structure plays an important role in the study of socio economic status of any region. The table no 3.34 and figure no 3.40 shows occupation structure of male of the selected study area. It is observed that out of the sample collected highest percent of the male population is found to be dependant where Dinabandunagar shows highest percent with about 41.40 percent followed by Mandainagar 39.81, Ramchandranagar 39.71 percent and purbadinabandunagar being the least about 35.71 percent.

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Table no: 1.2 Occupation Structure of Debbarma Tribe

Village name	Mandainagar (%)		Purbadinabandunagar (%)		Dinabandunagar (%)		Ramchandranagar (%)	
Occupation name	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Dependant	39.81	64.28	35.71	75	41.40	78.98	39.71	81.94
Farmer	21.75	15.23	19.48	6.87	18.75	7.24	18.43	7.63
Labour	14.35	10	7.79	3.75	1.56	2.17	3.54	3.47
Govt service	8.33	1.42	18.18	6.25	17.18	6.52	10.63	3.47
Pvt.service	6.01	2.38	7.14	1.25	3.90	0.72	7.09	0
Business	6.94	4.28	8.44	4.37	12.5	2.89	15.60	1.38
Self employee	1.85	1.90	0	2.5	0.78	0	4.25	1.38
Social work	0.46	0.47	1.29	0	1.56	0.72	0	0.69
Theology	0	0	0.64	0	0.78	0	0.70	0
Retired	0.46	0	2.59	0	1.56	0.72	0	0

Source: Computed by Researcher

The reason could be due to present of infant, aged man, student etc. Second highest occupation structure is farmer and labour due to presence of agricultural land and nearby rubber and other plantation whereas very few numbers are engaged in government sector. On the other hand, it is observed that large section of female population is found to be dependent. It could be due to the presence of housewife which runs the household, infant, female student, aged women and widows. Rest of the female population is found to be engaged as farmers, labours, government service, private service, business, Self employee and social work but the percentage of involvement is very less.

CONCLUSION:

In the study area the researcher has observed that average family size is 4 members; dominancy of 2 male members is found there. Thus we can conclude that in the selected study area a fair amount of working age people have the potential to be productive and contribute to growth of the economy, a very few percent of respondents are involved in governments service, Private Service and business. And majority are found to be farmer and engaged in other primary activities and a large section of female population is found to be dependent. The rest of the age group people would be student and dependant categories like infant and old people, aged people and widows etc. They weave cloth, take care of pigs, fowl etc and run the household. It is also observed that there is presence of various kinds of extra source of income generation. However since the economy system of Debbarma/Tripuri people are generally self sufficient economy so very few percent are found to be engaged for commercial purpose but in times of need the common people depends on their various kinds of extra source of income generation for the necessity of the family.

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