

**Out-Migration of the Nepali Community from the  
Dooars Region of Alipurduar District: A  
Sociological Study**

A Dissertation Submitted

To

**Sikkim University**



In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the

**Degree of Master of Philosophy**

By

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Department of Sociology

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February, 2020



समाजशास्त्र विभाग  
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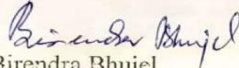
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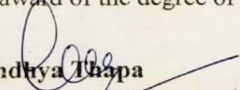
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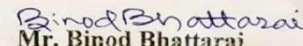
  
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This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**Out- Migration of the Nepali Community from the Dooars Region of Alipurduar District: A Sociological Study**” submitted to Sikkim University for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** in the Department of Sociology embodies the result of bona fide research work carried out by **Birendra Bhujel** under my guidance and supervision. No part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other Degree, Diploma, Association and Fellowship.

All the assistance and help during the course of the investigation have been duly acknowledge by him.

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**Dedicated to my Parents**  
**Mrs. Indra Kumari Bhujel**  
**&**  
**Mr. Bishnu Prasad Bhujel**



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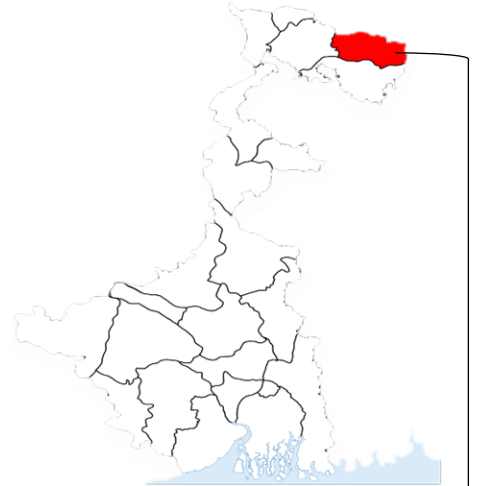
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Birendra Bhujel

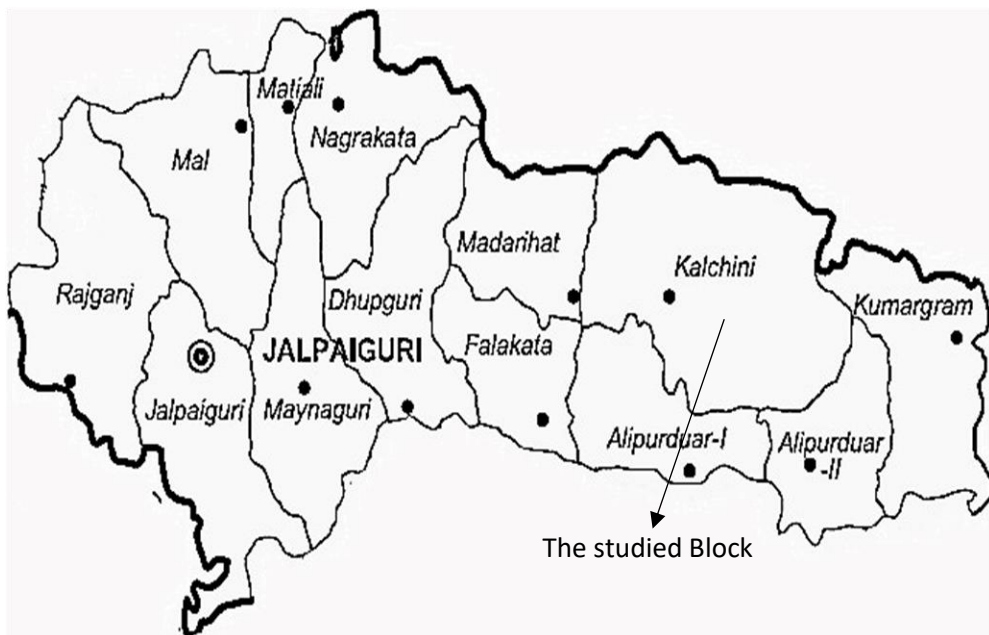
## Geographical location of the study villages



India



West Bengal



Alipurduar District

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# CHAPTER- I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction

Most of the literature on migration defines human migration based on the geographical location as it is a movement of people within two physical spaces. However, migration is not only a movement within two geographical spaces but also between two socio-economic and politico-cultural localities. People move from a particular sociological locality to another sociological locality for certain reasons. Based on the willingness of the people, the movement can be both voluntary and involuntary. Similarly, based on the national boundary, it can be in and out-migration which is also known as internal and external migration. While, in an international situation, it can be classified into immigration and emigration. There are several streams of migration such as rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban, and urban to rural lead by different causes such as social, economic, environmental, political and cultural. When people willingly move from rural hinterland to urban areas for employment purpose it is called the voluntary rural-urban out-migration for employment reason. Therefore, the voluntary rural-urban out-migration is caused by economic factors in which the place of origin does not offer the natives much economic hope while the place of destination does (Dutta, 1981). It is not necessary to consider the movement is always initiated by the poor people. However, the migration itself is a selective movement in nature in terms of age, gender, caste and class as it is a sociological movement of the potential people for materialist reasons. It is a sociological movement because, people do not move with their biological embodiment but, also with their socio-cultural possession. The migration as a process is not very simple to understand what it

seems to be. It starts very before actually, it starts in the mental make of the potential migrants where desirability is not sufficient, the supportive attributes become very crucial. Although it is undoubtedly an economic movement, socio-cultural faculties are inseparable elements to understand the process properly. The researcher such as Datta (2003), see the determinant role of social factors in voluntary human migration. He goes on to claim that voluntary migration is a social phenomenon rather than entirely an economic phenomenon (Datta, 2003). The social network and kinship ties are some crucial sociological attributes which play a significant part in the process of migration both in origin and place of destination. The potential migrants, before their movement, try to get information about the destination using their social network which has become more important where modern information and communication technology has been playing a great role. The potential migrants not only get information about the possibility in the destination but, also get monetary assistance from the experienced migrants. It helps them to figure out the destination and the journey itself. Similarly, the kinship as a sociological variable contributes to the migratory movement in both a positive and negative manner. Kinship tie refers to be a stimulating and inhibiting force in the process of migration. Much kinship attachment to family and/ or native place may inhibit or encourage the migrants to stay or to move out as it is said that families with more community investment are more integrated at the place of origin and less likely to migrate (Davis & Jong, 2019). It facilitates out-migration giving materialistic as well as non- materialistic incentives at both places of migration. Therefore, people despite the same structural condition few of them meet the courage to migrate and many of them do not migrate. In this context, Mishra says that Post reform India has opened up new economic opportunities for a certain section of the

population at the same time it has also created barriers to entry for some other (Mishra, 2016). Therefore, the entire process of out-migration right from the identification of the migrants, their characteristics to the role of sociological factors in choosing the migration destination has a crucial implication to understand the pattern of out-migration. Although there has been trying to understand the voluntary rural-urban economic out-migration in term of push-pull factors which is nothing but the predetermined structural conceptualization of the phenomenon, the interpretative understanding has been a cry for the sociology of migration where personal perception for their movement will be interpreted as the reasons of out-migration. Similarly, though the journey of migrants ends at the place of destination, the process of migration never ends up there. Because the consequences of the movement starts right from the place of destination. The consequences do not have its economic dimension but, it also has tremendous socio-cultural and political influences over the migrants themselves, gradually on their family and ultimately on the whole social structure of the migrants' native places. With gradual but steady internalization of the urban ideology may impact the socio-economic and cultural- politico life process of the migrants and community. The economic incentive to the left behind often alters the socio-cultural behavior of the family members. It encourages people to participate more in the socio-cultural life process of the community. Social institutions such as family, marriage, caste, and kinship as a social system also may get transform structurally, ritually and functionally which ultimately bring in the social changes at the community level. At present times, the Dooars region of West Bengal has been becoming very important in terms of rural-urban (interstate) out-migration among the Nepali communities for employment reasons which need to be understood in the sociological point

of view. In this chapter, the researcher has tried to explain the phenomenon of rural-urban migration in a simple and has problematized in the connection of the Nepalis of Dooars in general and Alipurduar district in particular. He has not only presented out-migration with the help of both theoretical and empirical literature. Also, he has explained the theoretical implication of the phenomenon. Similarly, he has explained the entire methodology of his research while making clear about the research questions and his objectives of the study. Furthermore, the second section of the chapter provides a brief description of the studied villages.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Dooars region is a colonial construction. It is a tea plantation region of the state of West Bengal. The word Dooars has no political implication but only has geographical relevance. Dooars is correspondence to the word Door, door to Bhutan. The British under the leadership of Captain Hedayat Ali annexed the Dooars region in 1865 from the Bhutanese kingdom (Gruning, 1911). Datta (1991), stated that the Nepali population comprises 50% of the total population of the Dooars region. Historically, the area was divided into two parts, the eastern portion which later was merged with the Goalpara district of Assam and the western part became the new district of Jalpaiguri in 1869 as an administrative unit (Gruning, 1911). At present, the Dooars region, politically constitutes the plain of Darjeeling district, the whole Jalpaiguri district, Alipurduar district, which came into being as a new district on 25th June 2014 carved out of the Jalpaiguri district for the administration purpose and the upper region of Cooch Behar district. More than 80% of its total population belongs to SC/ ST community. It is a hometown of various ethnic groups; the Nepali community is one of them. Although there is no community wise segregated

data on population composition, the Nepali community comprises a major section of the population of the region. As per the 2011 census, the largest population of Nepali communities can be found in West Bengal and district with the largest Nepali population in Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri/Alipurduar district (Wikipedia contributors, 2019). Several other studies also substantiated this argument by stating that the concentrations of Nepali populations are in the hilly pockets of the state of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Northeastern states and Darjeeling Hill of West Bengal (Khawas, 2009) and also in some pockets of Dooars region. Historically, the Nepalis were there in different parts of India since the very beginning. The Nepali population has been settled in Dooars as tea labourers since the 19th century. Writing on the Indian Nepalis, A. C. Sinha (2009) mentioned that “from the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the British opened up Darjeeling, Sikkim, Dooars, Bhutan, and Assam for the Nepalese settlement”. The Nepali communities in Dooars of Alipurduar district have their socio-economic features shaped by the plantation system and have their own preserved ethnic identity and distinctive cultural peculiarity. Bhowmik (1980), pointed out that isolation tends to help the workers preserve their link with their social organization. Socio-economically and culturally, Nepalis of Dooars region are deprived and marginalized communities compared to Nepalis of other parts of the country. The pilot survey, as well as the newspaper reports (The Telegraph, The Statement), revealed that they have been migrating to different parts of the country. At present times, out-migration has become a significant feature of the Dooars region of Alipurduar district among the Nepali community as it has become an everyday reality for them. Although the migration is a normal phenomenon, when the majority of people from a community migrate, it has to understand (as a social fact; Durkheim) as a whole in the

context of the community and the time and space. People migrate from one place to another for livelihood, is a normal social phenomenon and so in case of the Nepali community. But migration is a complex process of movement and It not only provides livelihood to a community but also impacts the community socio-culturally as a feedback effect. Since, the Nepali community as a heterogeneous group having a homogenous cultural binding with its specific family, marriage, kinship, and caste system, directly and indirectly, may get influenced by their migratory movement which need to be understood in a sociological holistic manner while giving equally importance to the subjective as well as objective reasons.

### **1.3. Review of literature**

There are two typologies of the literature on rural- urban migration 1) Theoretical literature and 2) Empirical literature.

#### **1.3.1. Theoretical literature**

Ravenstien, 1885<sup>1</sup> in this law of migration, he has talked about the three basic categories of migration i) Reasons: There should be certain reasons/ motives for migration ii) Distance: How far is a person willing to migrate? And iii) Characteristics of the migrant: Who are the migrants in terms of age, gender, marital status, etc. He has understood migration in terms of stream and steps. If there is a movement of the mass is called the stream movement directly from the rural hinterland to the urban places. Whereas, when people move not directly from rural to big metropolitan cities rathe into a small town, city and then to big

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<sup>1</sup> Ravenstein, E. G. (1885). The Laws of Migration. *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 48(2),167-235



metropolitan cities is called step migration which follows by almost all migrants. In his eleven laws, he considered migration as the major reason for growing towns and the volume of migration increase with the development of industries, commerce, and transportation. Furthermore, according to him except for industrial and commercial people, most of the migrants do not move over a long distance. He also hypothesized that there is the production of a counter stream as a result of rural-urban migration. He further says that females are more mobile than males for the shorter migratory movement and the rural population is most migratory compared to urban people. Similarly, according to him, economic motivation is the major cause of migration. Stouffer, 1940<sup>2</sup> tries to explain that the number of trip that a person is willing to make is directly proportional to the numbers of opportunities at destination. However, it is inversely proportionate to the number of intervening opportunities. The higher numbers of intervening opportunities would discourage the trip of a person to the destination. Lewis 1954<sup>3</sup> claims in his model of migration that rural-urban migration is the result of the lack of employment at the place of origin (rural hinterland) and availability of employment opportunities at the destination (urban centers). He suggested that migration as a mechanism brings equality on wages while supplying the labours to urban centers (characterized by high wages possibilities). Similarly, Sjaastad 1966<sup>4</sup> understands the migration as a means of maximizing the utility.

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<sup>2</sup> Stouffer, S. A. (1940). Intervening Opportunities: A Theory Relating Mobility and Distance. *American Sociological Review*, 5(6), 845–867.

<sup>3</sup> LEWIS, W. A. (1954). Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour. *The Manchester School*, 22(2), 139–191

<sup>4</sup> Sjaastad, L. A. (1962). The Costs and Returns of Human Migration. *Journal of Political Economy*, 70(5), 80–93.

According to him, individuals are the rational actors and decision to migrate is an investment from the part of migrants and profit of moving must outweigh the cost of movement. Lee 1967<sup>5</sup> said that there are two reasons for people to migrate. The push factors at the place of origin that helps people to move out such as poverty, political instability, structural crisis, etc. and the pull factors at the destination that pull people towards the destination. He considered the push factors as the negatives factors that push the migrants from the place of origin and pull factors as the positive factors that pull the people from the rural areas to the urban centers. However, his theory has only focused on the desire of the people, it has ignored the ability of the people/ migrants. Todaro 1969<sup>6</sup> understands migration as an outcome of cost- benefit of migration. If there is expected possibilities at the destination for maximization of his/ her profit, then only he/ she migrate. He say that migration happen on the basis of expected profit rather than the actual gain. According to him people migrate on the basis of the migrant's subjective assessment of opportunities at both the palces of migration. Actually, his theory is the extension of Sjaastad cost and benefit model of migration. Mabogunje 1970<sup>7</sup> says that the push-pull factors are not reliable for understanding the rural-urban migration. He considered migration as a system and explained how the subsystem of the family, the local community has control over the migration and the same subsystems help the migrants in urban settings.

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<sup>5</sup> Lee, E. S. (1967). A THEORY OF MIGRATION. *Ekistics*, 23(137), 211–216.

<sup>6</sup> Todaro, M. P. (1969). A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries. *The American Economic Review*, 59(1), 138–148.

<sup>7</sup> Mabogunje, A. L. (1970). Systems Approach to a theory of rural urban Migration. *Geographical Ananysis*, 2, 1–18.

Massey et al.1993<sup>8</sup> show the importance of the social network in the migration process. They say that how after the migration of the family member, the gain knowledge by them (the previous migrants) support the other family member to migrate in the future. After understanding the theoretical literature on the migration, it can be seen that no single theoretical model is sufficient to understand the process of rural-urban migration in its completeness.

### **1.3.2. Empirical literature**

There are several empirical studies on rural- urban migration, some of them have been reviewed. These are:

Datta, 2003<sup>9</sup> Dutta in his book he has given much emphasis on the social aspect of the phenomenon as migration is essentially a social process. The book is a product of a compressive study based on empirical analysis of the role and importance of social factors in human voluntary migration. Datta claims that voluntary migration is more a social phenomenon rather than an economic phenomenon. Mishra, 2016<sup>10</sup> edited book is a compilation of dense study on internal migration. Latest data reveals 37% of the people in India are internal migrants and there are two reasons for it one is marriage and second is search for better livelihood. The book focus to evaluate the impact of migration on the contemporary society by linking it to individual, society and the state. It also critically analyses different policies and schemes affecting migration in the contemporary Indian

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<sup>8</sup> Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J. E. (1993). Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal. *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), 431–466.

<sup>9</sup> Datta, A. (2003). *Human Migration: A Social Phenomenon*.

<sup>10</sup> Mishra, D. K. (2016). *Internal Migration in Contemporary India*

landscape. Murphy, R. 2002<sup>11</sup> provides a different approach to analyze migration. The focus of her study is on the socio-economic impact of migrates workers on their home countries. She comparatively assesses the migrants and their villagers. The major argument of the book is the impact of migration is not always negative. Rural economies are being affected by increasing industrialization of the agricultural economy which reduces the labourers for farming and increasing efficiencies of township and village enterprise. The book provides a concert assessment of migrant labourers and their effects on resource allocation in the redistribution of money, labour, and land within and among households. It also analyses the impact of migration on the rural economy in the context of enterprise development. Davis, B., & Jong, G. F. De2019<sup>12</sup> in their article have analyzed how the non- economic factor like religion plays an important role in the migration process. How religion can be considered one of the factors determining the migratory movement of people. Oberai; Singh, 1983 <sup>13</sup> in their book try to understand the rural-urban internal migration, not based on the push-pull factors but, also providing the case-specific root causes. The major reason for migration, they found out the possibility of real income gain. The focus also has given on the diffusion- dualism debate and found out that it is the diffusion through which the migrants have gone through the process of modernization in terms of their fertility behavior. They also found out that remittance has a relatively greater impact on the poorer migrant households in Panjab. How there has been the growth of informal unorganized sectors with the growth of migration which differs from the old

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<sup>11</sup> Murphy, R. (2002). *How Migrant Labor is Changing Rural China*. Cambridge University Press

<sup>12</sup> Davis, B., & Jong, G. F. De. (2019). *Population Investigation Committee Family Migration in a Developing Country*. Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd. on behalf of the Population Investigation Committee, 45(2), 221–233

<sup>13</sup> Singh, J. P. (1986). Marital status differentials in rural to city migration in india. *genus*, 42(3/4), 89–

patterns of western- industrialization. Joshi, 1957<sup>14</sup>, Gist, 1954<sup>15</sup> and Bora<sup>16</sup> in their studies brought the relationship between the caste and the pattern of out-migration as mostly, the people belong to high caste migrants greatly tend to migrate than the low caste people from the rural hinterland. However, scholars such as Saxena, 1977<sup>17</sup>, Muktiar, 2018; 2019 and Zinkin, 1958<sup>18</sup> understood the migration patterns in terms of both upper and lower caste as they found out that both castes have the equal participation in migration. While understanding the gender aspect of the migration. Zachariah, 1964<sup>19</sup>, Saxena and Singh, 1983 have brought in light that migration has been the male selective. It has been a logical understanding that most of the migrants belong to the larger family size. The member of the joint family migrates the most because of their necessity. The study of the scholar such as Mehta, 1991<sup>20</sup> has supported the same observation in his study. Regarding the marital status of the migrant, it has brought by Singh, 1986<sup>21</sup> that the tendency of an unmarried person is greater than the married people from rural places. The educational level of the people is another attribute of the migrants. Research such as Todaro 1976<sup>22</sup>, Zachariah 1968

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<sup>14</sup> Joshi, V. R. (1957). Patterns of rural mobility. *Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 12(4), 32.

<sup>15</sup> Gist, N. P. (1955). Selective Migration in South India. *Sociological Bulletin*, 4(2), 147–160.

<sup>16</sup> Bora, R. S. (1996). Himalayan migration: a study of the hill region of Uttar Pradesh.

<sup>17</sup> Saxena, D. P. (1977). *Rurban Migration In India: Causes And Consequences*.

<sup>18</sup> Zinkin, T. (1958). *India Changes!*

<sup>19</sup> Zachariah, K. C. (1964). *A Historical Study of Internal Migration in the Indian Sub-continent, 1901-1931*

<sup>20</sup> Mehta, G. S. (1991). *Socio-Economic Aspects of Migration*.

<sup>21</sup> Singh, J.P. (1986). marital status differentials in rural to city migration in india. *Genus*, 42(3/4), 89–106.

<sup>22</sup> Todaro, M. P. (1969). A Model of Labor Migration and Urban Unemployment in Less Developed Countries. *The American Economic Review*, 59(1), 138–148.

and Paul 1989<sup>23</sup> found that the positive relationship between the educational level of the migrant and the mobility. Similarly, since the migration also is an age selective, most of the migrants are the potent, young and productive. Most of the young people are most mobile population of the society which has also been supported by the studies conducted by Zachariah 1968, Todaro, 1976 and Bulsara, 1964<sup>24</sup> in their studies on rural- urban migration in Indian context. Social network as a non- economic factor play a very crucial role in migration process. The potent migrants get information regarding the destination through the social contact. Basically, the social network of friends (Facebook friends and face- to face friends) and relatives are significantly helpful to the new migrants regarding their choice of the destination and monetary help. The scholars such as Prabhu, 1956<sup>25</sup> and Mongwe, 2003<sup>26</sup> have claim the significance of the social contact in the rural- urban migration. Similarly, the study conducted by Gulati, 1995<sup>27</sup> among the migrants in Kerala has observed the significant role of social network in helping the migrant through collection of the fund for migration, flow of information etc. Understanding the reasons for rural- urban migration, most of the studies observed the economic reason as the major motivation for the migration from the rural areas (De Jong & Gardner, 2013). However, several non-economic factors are crucial to understand in the entire process of out- migration (Datta,

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<sup>23</sup> Paul, R. R. (1989). *Rural-urban migration in Punjab: an economic analysis*.

<sup>24</sup> Bulsara, J. F., & Committee, I. P. C. R. P. (1964). *Problems of Rapid Urbanisation in India*.

<sup>25</sup> Prabhu, P. (1956). Social Effects of Urbanization on the Industrial Workers in Bombay. *Sociological Bulletin*, 5(1), 29–50.

<sup>26</sup> Mongwe, R. (2003). Rural Migrants and Their Social Networks in an Urban Setting: The Case of Joe Slovo Park, Cape Town.

<sup>27</sup> GULATI, L. (1995). Migration and Social Change in Kerala. *India International Centre Quarterly*, 22(2/3), 191–202.



2003). Shah, 2006<sup>28</sup> in her study on seasonal migration from Jharkhand discovers that though, the general reason for migration was economic, the case-specific reason was love. The migrants have migrated to avoid the village restrictive custom regarding the marriage. In search of freedom, people have migrated. The migration as one of the crucial forces of social change, it brings many changes at the place of origin within the households. Most importantly, the out-migration of a male not only shoulder more responsibilities on females/ wives left behind but also help women to become more independent and confident without their male folk. In her study Gulati, 1995 has observed the short- term and long-term impact of migration on their left behind. She found out that the female members/ wives of the migrants have become more mobile and gained acquittance with the impersonal institutions of the bank, post office without her husbands. How the economic status of a household increases, how the attachment between husband-wife relationship improve and how the educational value become significant among in the migrants' households discovered by her. Liang and Sun, 2014<sup>29</sup> have tried to understand the impact of migration on fertility behavior among Chinese. He found that rural-urban migration has contributed to fertility negatively. While the urban-rural migration has increased the fertility among them. Haddad and Lam, 1994<sup>30</sup> in their study on twenty immigrants couples belong to working-class, residing in Toronto found that there is the impact of migration on the gender division of labor in the family. The women are engaged in their stereotyped

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<sup>28</sup> Shah, A. (2006). The labour of love: Seasonal migration from Jharkhand to the brick kilns of other states in India. *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 40(1), 91–118.

<sup>29</sup> Liang, Y., Yi, Y., & Sun, Q. (2014). The Impact of Migration on Fertility under China's Underlying Restrictions: A Comparative Study Between Permanent and Temporary Migrants. *Social Indicators Research*, 116(1), 307–326.

<sup>30</sup> HADDAD, T., & LAM, L. (1994). The Impact of Migration on the Sexual Division of Family Work: A Case Study of Italian Immigrant Couples. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 25(2), 167–182.

gender roles such as cooking, child caring, laundry, etc. while, the males are engaged with the works such as household repairing, garbage disposing of, etc. Slany et al, 2018<sup>31</sup> studied the relationship between the migration and the unequal distribution of gender roles among the Polish families. The study focuses on the impact of migration on the extended family size and widening the greater gender inequality in the family. Muktiar, 2018<sup>32</sup> in course of his study among the Nepali out-migrants in Assam found that there is a negative impact of out-migration on the caste system of the community. He has mentioned that the caste system has been mostly confined within the marital behavior of the community. Similarly, he also has observed that out-migration has fragmented the traditional family structure and also increased woman participation in both the private and public spheres. Muktiar and Sharma 2019<sup>33</sup> in their article observed the impact of out-migration on the migrant's society in terms of remittance. They also have observed the relationship between the physical features of a migrant from northeast India and the job at the destination. Most of them are engaged in the work such as security guards in the mall, hotels, private schools, etc. While the migration has increased their income, at the same time out-migration has impacted the vulnerability of the women in the village as due to migration the violence against women has increased. Also, they have discovered the operation of the recruitment agencies in urban centers for the out-migrants. It has been concerned with many scholars that the out-migration of the male would make the migrants' households go through the

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<sup>31</sup> SLANY, K., White, A., Grabowska, I., Kaczmarczyk, P., & Slany, K. (2018). Family relations and gender equality in the context of migration. In *EU Mobility and Social Change. The Impact of Migration on Poland* (pp. 108–130).

<sup>32</sup> Muktiar, P. (2018). Rural Out-Migration and its Impact on Caste, Family and Gender: A Study in a Nepali village in Assam. *E-Journal of the Indian Sociological Society*, 2(2), 80–90.

<sup>33</sup> Muktiar, P. S. Kumar C. (2019). In Search of a Better Future: Nepali Rural Out-migration from Assam. *Sociological Bulletin*, 68(3), 307–324

process of feminization of the family. The research Hoodfar, 1993<sup>34</sup> has investigated the unskilled labour migration from Egypt to the Arabian countries and discovered that many of the migrants' households have transformed into female-headed families where the female members of the family have acquired the greater decision-making authority. Rao, 1981<sup>35</sup> also claims that there is a greater implication of migration on the place of origin as the migrants keep contact with the place of origin may influence the place of origin socio-cultural and politically. The studies conducted by Osella and Osella, 2003<sup>36</sup> have revealed the impact of out-migration on the ritualistic practices among rural people in Kerala. They also have observed the commoditization of the particular practice accelerated by migrants having the invention of the numbers of new kind of religiosity. It has created the modern-orthodoxy debate among the followers. While understanding the empirical works of literature on rural-urban migration, it is clear that migration is not necessarily an economic phenomenon. It has ample sociological dimension which needs to deal with a holistic sociological perspective.

#### **1.4. Theoretical Perspective on Migration**

The phenomenon of migration is not exceptional to the questions of i) Why people migrate and to which direction? ii) What kind of patterns do they follow? iii) What are the reasons and consequences of their migration? These are certain necessary questions which are to

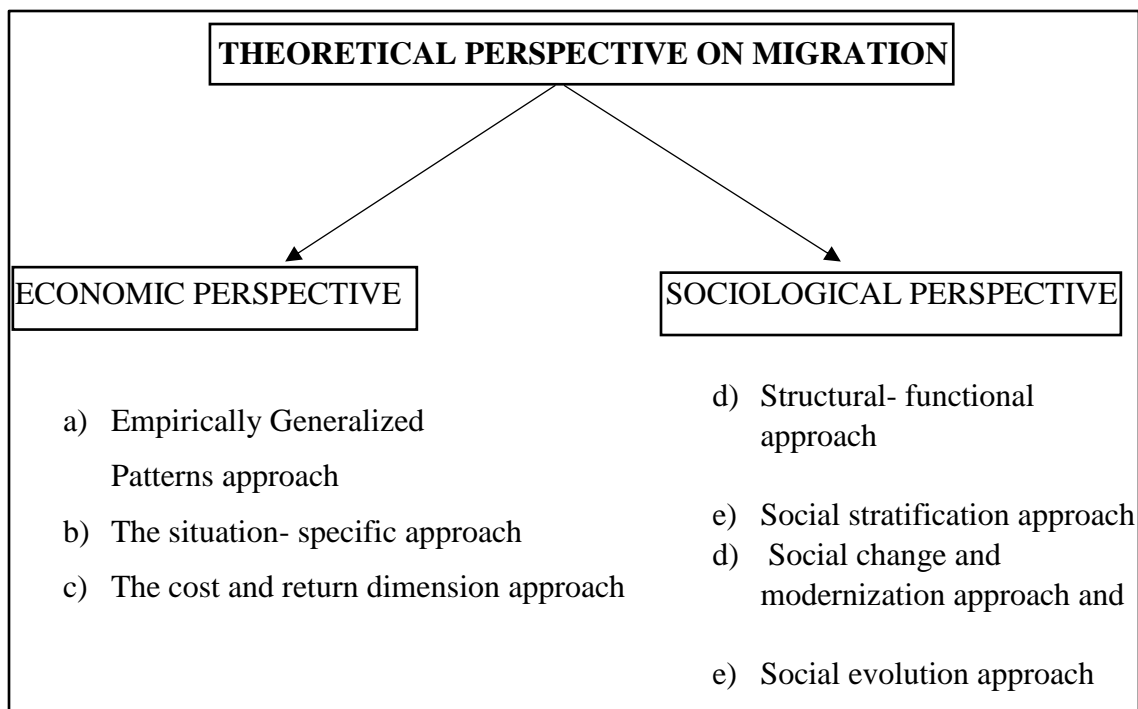
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<sup>34</sup> Hoodfar, H. (1993). The Impact of Egyptian Male Migration on Urban Families: 'Feminization of the Egyptian Family' or a Reaffirmation of Traditional Gender Roles. *Sociological Bulletin*, 42(1–2), 113–135.

<sup>35</sup> Rao, M. S. A. (1981). Some aspects of sociology of migration. *Sociological Bulletin*, 30(1), 21–38.

<sup>36</sup> Osella, F., & Osella, C. (2003). Migration and the commoditisation of ritual: Sacrifice, spectacle and contestations in Kerala, India. *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 37(1–2), 109–139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/006996670303700106>

be answered with some of the theoretical perspectives. There are two broad theoretical perspectives in understanding the migration. These are 1) Economic Perspective on migration and 2) Sociological Perspective on migration. Under economic perspective certain approaches are there such as the a) Empirically Generalized Patterns approach b) The Situation- specific Push- Pull factors approach and c) The cost and return dimension approach. Similarly, under a sociological perspective there are four approaches such as d) Structural- functional approach, e) Social stratification approach, f) Social change and modernization approach and g) Social evolution approach. It is noteworthy to mention that there is no conception about the exclusiveness in the economic perspective of migration. However, sociology understand the migration in holistic perspective by looking into the several factors of migration rather than single factor. Sociologist considered migration as one of the demographic processes motivate by the social basis. The whole theoretical perspectives and approaches may be understood in the following manner:



a) Empirically Generalized Pattern approach understands the process of migration from a generalized point of view. The approach generalizes the patterns of migration based on eleven laws given by E.G. Ravenstein (Haq, 2007). The laws such as the process of migration are primarily dominated by short- distances, the patterns of migration determine by the available opportunities at the destination, etc. Although, the genesis of the approach made by Ravenstein, credit of standardized theoretical composition goes to Everett Lee.

b) The situation-specific approach is a socio-economic comparison approach between the place of origin and destination by the migrants. It is a particularistic theoretical approach, unlike the Generalized patterns approach. According to this approach, migration is nothing but, a result of prevailing opposite socio-economic conditions of the place of origin (push) and destination (pull). It explains both the objective and subjective aspects of the migrants and/or migration. Lee, a sociologist has given this model of migration discharging the shortcomings of empirically Generalized approach.

c) The cost and return dimension approach of migration also give the economic factor of prime importance in the process of migration. It explains migration as a profit-maximizing action by the calculative people. The theorist M. P. Todaro is associated with this model of migration.

d) The structural-functional approach explains migration as a phenomenon determined by the socio-economic condition of the social system. The migration is the cause and effect of socio-structural and cultural conditions of society. The pattern of migration is not determined by the calculative minds of the people, but it is the outcome of the existing socio-economic structural condition of a particular society that conditioned the process. In this approach, pattern variables of Talcott Parsons may be a significant guideline for

understanding the mobility of the population. It explains the possible social situation under which people may or may not move. His effectivity and effective- neutrality explain the migrant's emotional attachment to their family and the place of origin.

e) The social stratification approach explains migration as a process for maintaining the class in a particular society. The social status or the component of class operates as a push factor to push the people for improving the social status. At the same time, it also functions as a pull factor as the class factor help migrants to hold at the destination.

f) The social change and modernization approach tries to explain migration with a cultural point of view. It explains migration as an act of cultural change. The patterns of migration depend on the types of culture one has in their family and society. For instance, the type of perceptions people have regarding the urban lifestyle, the value orientation of the family, the level of education, etc. determine the process of migration which ultimately, changes their cultural value further influencing people with the urban culture of living.

g) The social evolution approach explains migration as the result of the linear evolutionary process of human society. The theorists believing the approach assumes that there is instability in the society because of its homogenous nature. Therefore, to maintain harmony and stability in society, it pushes people into urban centers and transforms homogenous into heterogeneous society through a linear evolutionary process. Under this evolutionary process, every component of society gets changed and adjust with each other to achieve a higher order of stability. The Durkheimian version of social evolution may be the most significant in this case where the process of migration plays a significant role to push the process of social evolution from homogenous to heterogeneous nature of social order (Haq, 2007: 180).

## **1.5. Rationale of the study**

Historically, due to relative isolation of the Dooars region of West Bengal, the Nepali communities therein are socially and culturally isolated and their interactions with the outside world are limited. Although the community comprises a significant section of the population in the region, they are marginalized in terms of socio-cultural, economic and political aspects in the region. The absolute Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy is some of the realities of the community of the region. The Nepali community is socio-cultural and linguistically a distinct community in Dooars. They have their own cultural space. It has rigid traditional socio-cultural institutions characterized by the community. Rigid caste hierarchy (Subba, 2018), family patterns, marriage and kinship system make the community more distinctive among the rest of the communities in the region. The current scenario in the Dooars is marked by the out-migration of Nepalis into different cities of the country has been created inquisitiveness such as what is their patterns of out-migration? What are the reasons for their out-migration? How their socio-economic and cultural lifeworld has been affected by their migratory movement? Which has to be investigated in its micro perspective. Similarly, there are various studies and literature available in the Dooars region. However, the kinds of literature and studies have not been sufficiently dealing with the particular problem of out-migration. Therefore, to fill up the research gap, the present study attempts to make a sociological exploration of the problem of the out-migration of the Nepali community and its dynamics.

## **1.6. Research questions**

1. What is the historical background of the Nepali community in India in general and in the tea garden villages of the Dooars in particular?

2. What are the patterns of the out- migration among the Nepali community and what are the factors that determine their place of destination?
3. 1. What are the factors that push the Nepali community out to migrate from the Dooars region?
4. Has the migration led to any kind of socio-cultural changes among the Nepali community? If so, what are the socio- cultural changes that have taken place among the Nepali community?

### **1.7. Objectives of the Study**

Sociological analysis should recognize the complexity and the multidimensional aspects of the problem and seek not to isolate variables. Several academic disciplines are studying the process of migration within their confined disciplinary boundaries. The sociological study of migration has its intensity and flavor of inquiry which differentiate sociology with other social science in investigating the process of out-migration of the Nepali community. The objects of the research are:

1. To explore the Nepali settlements in the Dooars Tea garden villages in its historical perspective.
2. To understand the patterns of the out- migration among the Nepali community in the Dooars.
3. To analyze various socio-economic factors for the out- migration.
4. To study the feedback effects of the out-migration on the social institution (caste, family, marriage and kinship system) of the Nepali community.



## **1.8. Methodology**

The sociology of migration is not a closed, well-defined field of research but is rather open and diverse and characterized by often intense conceptual and methodological debates (Matsumoto, 2013). Migration research is also a distinctly multi-methodological field. Generally, sociology studies any sociological issues with the objective/ generalized and subjective/ particularized with objective intensities. In simple words, the researchers understand the sociological phenomena whether with applying the researcher's understanding (understanding the problem with researcher's point of view which is basically, an objective understanding) and understanding it with point of view of the researched which is a subjective understanding or according to Weber is an interpretative understanding of social action (Weber, 2017). In this research, both methodologies were applied.

### **1.8.1. Research Design**

It is an explorative as well as descriptive research where the out-migration of the Nepali community was explored descriptively. The research aimed primarily to have an insight into the patterns(nature), socio-economic reasons and impact of rural-urban out-migration of the Nepalis on the rural villages (place of origin) in general and on the community in particular.

### **1.8.2. Location of the research**

The locations of the research are two tea garden villages (viz. Gangutia tea garden and Mechpara tea garden village) of Kalchini Block in Dooars of Alipurduar district, West Bengal.

### **1.8.3. Universe of the research**

The universe of the research is the Nepalis migrants /population of the Gangutia tea garden village and Mechpara tea garden village of Kalchini Block, Dooars, Alipurduar district.

### **1.8.4. Sampling**

In this study, the purposive, as well as snowball sampling methods, were followed by the researcher. Two tea garden villages of the Dooars had selected applying the purposive random sampling method followed by the snowball sampling method for the identification of the Nepali migrants' households in the villages. Total sampled Nepalis households from both the villages were 95. 56 households from Gangutia village and the remaining 39 households were from Mechpara village. Gangutia tea garden village had total 1,239 households (comprising Nepalis, Tea tribes/ Adivasi, Muslim, Bihari, Bengali) where 46 percent of the total households were of Nepalis' i.e. 569 households. Whereas, Mechpara tea garden had total 1,309 households (comprising Nepalis, Adivasi, Muslims, Bihari). The Nepalis household constitutes 30 percent of the total households of the village i.e. 392 households. Although all most all households were having at least one migrated family member, 10% of the total Nepalis households from each village were sampled, 56 households from Gangutia and 39 households from the village Mechpara. The total surveyed migrant from both the villages were 122, (76 from Gangutia and 46 from Mechpara) 104 male (64 from Gangutia and 40 from Mechpara) and 18 female (12 from Gangutia and 6 from Mechpara) migrants. It can be put in the following manner:

**Table No. 1.1 Sample size of the Gangutia tea garden village**

Total households	1239
Nepali households	569
Sampled households	56 (10% of Nepali household)

Source: Field survey

**Table No. 1.2 Sample size of the Mechpara tea garden village**

Total households	1039
Nepali households	392
Sampled households	39 (10% of Nepali household)

Source: Field survey

### **1.8.5. Selection of the villages/ Sample**

There is no tea garden village as such in Dooars of Alipurduar district from where people are not out-migrating to urban centers of the country. However, there is no record of the exact numbers of the migrants found from the villages. Therefore, the researcher decided to select two tea garden villages from Dooars of Alipurduar district which come under the Kalchini Block (Tehsil). The criteria for selection of the villages are a) Running tea garden village and b) The majority of the Nepali households of migrants. Therefore, a pilot survey was conducted to figure out all the criteria before the selection of the villages. Based on the pilot survey, the villages were selected. The selected villages under the criteria were two running tea garden villages viz. Gangutia tea garden village and Mechpara tea garden village under the tehsil of Kalchini, Dooars of Alipurduar district. After the selection of the village, the next step was the selection of the samples to get the required primary data. Since there was no record of the exact numbers of the households of the Nepali migrants. Therefore, again based on the conducted pilot survey, the sample was selected. Therefore,

the actual size of the research consists of 95 families (56 from the Gangutia and 39 from the Mechpara) and 122 migrants (76 from Gangutia and 46 from the Mechpara). In this study, the household census survey was conducted supplemented by the case studies and narratives of at least 10 percent of the total number of migrants from each village. Total 11(7 from Gangutia and 4 from Mechpara village) migrants were the cases for the case study in this research.

### **1.8.6. Tools/ Techniques of Data Collection**

Since the researcher had no idea about the educational level of the migrants, therefore instead of using the questionnaire, the schedules were used to collect the data. To get detail information on the socio-economic condition of the migrants' households, the household census survey was conducted with the help of schedules. The schedule was made dividing into five parts. The first part was contained questions regarding the detail socio-economic condition of the migrant's family. The second part of the schedule was consisting of the questions related to the detail information of the migrant. The third part was containing the questions regarding the pattern/ nature of the migration. Similarly, the fourth and fifth parts were containing the question regarding the socio-economic reasons for migration and its consequences respectively. Each household of the migrants was surveyed. And migrants/ family members of the migrant were interviewed with the help of the interview scheduled. The interview schedule was the kind of semi-structured, structured and unstructured. Generally, the questions were in the English language and the researcher made the respondents clear about the question in their vernacular language i.e. Nepali. Also, narratives and case studies of the migrants/ family members/ wives/parents were collected. Except for this, for the collection of data the non- participant observation method was also

applied to supplement the primary data about the village and the villagers. Also, the videos and audios were recorded using a mobile phone.

### **1.8.7. Rapport building**

The study was done on the Nepali community to which the research also belongs. Therefore, despite the fact of being a stranger to the villagers, there was not so much difficulty to build a rapport with them. To avoid the difficulties during the field survey, he approached a local person's assistance known to him in the villages who had helped to make further understand the villagers about the intentions and importance of the study.

### **1.8.8. Sources of the Data Collection**

In this research, the data were collected from the place of origin of migration only. The researcher used both primary and secondary data giving equal preference to quantitative as well as qualitative data. The primary data used in this research are from the field survey, district gazetteer, census report, etc. Similarly, the secondary data used in the research were collected from books, journal articles, magazines, and newspapers, etc. And the perception of the members of the civil society (school teachers, members of NGOs, journalists, research scholars) were collected and then some of the managers of Gangutia tea garden and Mechpara tea garden were also collected. In the first stage, the researcher identified some of the Nepali migrant households known to him (during the researcher's pilot survey) and then, the migrants/ family members/ villagers themselves had identified the other migrant's households which had helped the research very much.

### **1.8.9. Tabulation/ interpretation of data**

After the collection of primary data from the field, the researcher tabulated the data based

on classified variables and information. Then, the analysis of data was completed in SPSS Statistics software.

After the above description of the research framework, it is necessary to understand the socio-economic and politico- geographical profile of the studied villages.

## **1.9. Village Profile**

In this research, the researcher had studied two tea garden villages in Dooars of Alipurduar district, West Bengal. Both the villages (viz. Gangutia tea garden and Mechpara tea garden village) are running tea garden villages. The former tea garden is own by Suraj Govind Estates Pvt. Limited and later owned by Darjeeling Dooars tea Plantations Limited. The social ecology of each village is as follow:

### **1.9.1. Gangutia tea garden village**

The village is located at 5.1 km far from the town Kalchini via NH12. The geographical area of the village is spread over the area of 646.87 hectares (Indikosh, 2019). It's an interior of the town, comes under the Garopara Gram Panchayat, Kalchini Block of Alipurduar district, West Bengal. The name of the village was "Rangate" before the present name "Gangutia". There are many controversial assumptions among the villagers regarding the logical history behind the name of the village. According to an assumption, during the British period, the village was covered by dense forest and several rivers streams. The villagers (especially the Nepalis) used to hunt the crabs on those rivers. The Nepali version of the crab is "Gangata". Thus, the name of the village came after the name "Gangata". It is a historic village situated at the foothills of Bhutan. The village is divided into two divisions viz. Dima out division and Chinchula out division and six lines viz. Gumba line, Dada line, Godown line, Hospital line/ pacca line/Newline/Muslim line,

Girza/church line/Adivasi line, and Chouri line. According to an aged villager, it was in the year 1962 when the tea factory at the village got demolished in the labour- owner riot, the factory works were transferred from Gangutia tea garden to Dima and Chinchula tea gardens. Thus, all the factory works of Gangutia tea garden had divided into two factories of Dima and Chinchula. Therefore, it became an out division of Dima and Chinchula. People live in the village are from the five communities viz. Nepali, Adivasi, Muslim, Bihari, and Bengali. There is a straight division of each community's locality. Nepalis have their lines such as Dada line, Gubma line and Chouri line, Adivasis has their Girza line/Church line, Muslims have their hospital line or pacca line and Bengalis have their Godown line. Biharis have their households in the Nepali lines. The Bengalis (Babu) lines are far away from the rest of the labour lines. The Nepali sub-lines are also found within the village based on their caste as higher caste people are having their own sub- line far from the lower caste people lines. Bahun, Chhetri, Mangar, Thapa, Bhujel, Pradhan/ Newar, Rai have their houses together in the same sub-line distinct from caste people of Kami, Damai, Sarki and Lama/ Tamang. The majority of tea garden labour in the village comes from the Nepali and Adivasi community and the negligible number of tea garden labour are from the Muslim community. People in the village do not have an association with the caste-based occupation. They depend on the nearby Sunday market and fortnight market for their required things right from shoes, knife, households' utensils, clothes to food items. Bengalis are babu groups in the village and the Biharis are professional hairdressers and the Grocery shop owners of the village. At present, there are total 430 workers<sup>37</sup>, (175 males and 255 females) working in different Kamjari<sup>38</sup> levels including

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<sup>37</sup> The information is extracted from the Kamjari sheet made available by a Babu in the garden office.

<sup>38</sup> Section of the work in tea garden.

plucking, tipping, weeding, sickling, fencing, sprayers, water supply, messengers, chowkidars, carpenter, etc. Most of the villagers are dependent on the tea garden earning. Although, the number is negligible at present many children of the villagers are doing services in various government sectors such as the Indian Army force, West Bengal police, School, Colleges, university and Court. According to the 2011 census, the total population of the village is 5360 (2674 male and 2689 female). The sex ratio of the village is 1004 which is comparatively higher than the state 950. The literacy rate of the village is 70.11% (79.03% male and 61.09% female) (Indikosh, 2019). While talking about the infrastructure of the village, it has kuccha roads within the village but, a metal road is built which connects the village to Kalchini town. There is a closed tea garden hospital in the village. The villagers visit the government hospital (in case, they need medical attention) situated in Nimti nearly 1 km away from the town Kalchini. And in case of a more serious medical emergency, they go to the Alipurduar government hospital, 25.5 km away from the village. The village has five ICDS schools for pre-primary education, one Hindi medium government primary school, and one English medium private school. After the completion of their primary level school, the children go to different Hindi, Bengali, Nepali government high schools available in Kalchini and Hamiltonganj. Except for this, there are some English medium private schools in the town. The transportation facilities of the village are considered to be good as many auto and e- auto rickshaws are available there in the village, the drivers of which are mostly from the Muslim community of the village. Private water supply and electricity connections have been availed by a few of the villagers and the rest of the villagers get water from the tea garden running water tap time to time (7 am to 10 am and 3 pm to 5 pm) every day. There is no electricity facility



in the village provided by the tea garden company. A fortnight market held there in the outskirts of the village to cater to the basic need of the people. The Nepali people called the market “Thute Bazar” and the Adivasis called it “Gudri Bazar”. The meaning of both words is a small market. Except these people go to the Sunday market in Hamiltonganj nearly 10 km away from the village. Mostly all the Bengali Babus go to the Sunday market once in a week for their diversified needs. Although the people in the village are from different communities, they live peacefully. A villager says – “I was born here in the village and now, I am 70 years old I never saw or heard that there is any fight in the name of the community and religious group”. However, people are found to be very rigid regarding their socio-cultural values. The Nepalis are more rigid on their traditional values of marriage and caste system. They promptly excommunicate their son or daughter in case they get married to Adivasis, Muslim and lower castes within their community. People do not invite each other at the community level during their cultural celebration in the village. However, they invite on a personal basis to their friends from the other community. But the participation of a person from one community in the cultural function of other communities is not restricted. The researcher had observed during the field survey that the male people from the Adivasi community were celebrating the Nepali’s cultural “Dhewsi”<sup>39</sup>. An old person in the village says – “now- a- days the Adivasis are more excited for our Dhewsi than the young generation of our community. We have been forgetting our own culture. The young people are not interested in their cultural values, they are modern people”. The inter-community relationship has found peaceful and non-interfering. There are three Shiv temples, one Monastery, one church and two mosques in

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<sup>39</sup> Is a cultural celebration during Diwali, in Nepali they called it Bhai Tika celebration. It is meant for the male people only. However, it has become unisexual now- a- days.

the village and each community has its cremation ground in the village. However, some of the people go to the river bed of Basra River situated in the interior of Hamiltonganj town. It is noteworthy to mention that during Durga puja, the villagers celebrate in a huge manner doing monetary contributions. However, it has noticed by the researcher that some of the communities who do not follow Hinduism, were not in the favor of monetary contribution in the Durga puja celebration from next time.

### **1.9.2. Mechpara tea garden village**

The village is a tea garden village 7.2 km away from the town Kalchini, spread over the area of 1016.26 hectares. It comes under the Chuapara Gram panchayat, Kalchini Block of Alipurduar district, West Bengal. Regarding the name of the village, it has been found that the village was the residence of the Mech people in the past who were sifted to the Hamiltonganj busy area during the British period. Therefore, the name of the village came after the name of the Mech people. The village is divided into many lines viz. Gumba line, Pakka line, Tanki line, Road line, Club line, Pari line and wari line. The people in the village are mostly from two communities viz. Nepali and Adivasi and very few families are of Muslims and Bengali. Unlike the Gangutia village, the settlements in Mechpara tea garden village are not separately divided based on community and religion rather there is a mixture of Nepali, Adivasi settlement in the village. However, the Bengali settlements are far from the labour line. Most of the people in the villages are tea garden labour except some of the young boys who are employed in other different occupations, especially in the Indian Army force. Among the Nepalis, Lama/ Tamang are the dominant people in their numerical strength. According to the 2011 census, the total population of

the village is 6,112 of which 3,012 are males and 3,100 are females. The sex ratio is 2,004 per 1,000 male and the literacy rate in the village is 70%, the male literacy rate is 79% and 61% is of the female. Similar to the Gangutia village Mechpara village is also not having any electricity facilities given by the tea company but, they have their private electricity connection. There is water supply from the company side time to time in the morning the timing of water supply is 7 am to 10 am and in the evening the timing is from 3 pm to 5 pm every day. But the company supply has been insufficient for the villagers. Therefore, few of the households have collaborated on private water supply connections. Most of the houses in the village found concrete among which some of the houses were given from the tea garden company in the past. However, at present, the company does not provide them such houses. The labourers do not get the house repairing materials too from the company. One finest metal road is there which connects the village to the town. However, the roads within the village were also in a process to be metal until the field survey of the village by the village Gram panchayat. A market in the Chuapara held every fortnight for the villagers as the garden labour get their payment in every fortnight where most of the shop's keepers come from the nearby town (mostly Bengali and Bihari) and few of the villagers keep their meat (Pork, buff, and chicken) shops there in the market. But the fish and mutton shopkeeper come from the town itself. Except, the village market, people go to the Sunday market and Kalchini to purchase the further requirements of their lives. Regarding the inter-community relationship, it is found that they do not interfere with each other community's matters but, they help each other in need. However, during the Gorkhaland movement of the year 2007, a certain section of people of both the communities were having a contradictory relationship. A Nepali villager says – "Adivasi

and the Nepalis are brothers to each other; we enjoy each other's company in every socio-cultural festival. They invite me to their festivals and I also invite them to my festivals. Although we do not prefer, many of the Nepalis people have married Adivasi and vice versa". There are several religious places in the village viz. two Shiva temples, two churches, one mosque, and one monastery to cater to the religious needs of each religious community of the village. It has been observed that there two ICDS pre-primary schools, one Nepali medium government primary school, one government Hindi medium school and one English medium private school in the village. The children of the village go to the high schools situated in the town like the children of Gangutia tea garden village after completion of primary education from the village schools. Regarding the cremation ground, each community of the village has its separate place for the graveyard. Mechpara village has a preliminary hospital from the tea garden company. However, for serious medical needs, they go to the government hospital situated in Nimti near Kalchini town. And some of the villagers prefer to visit the private clinic in town. And during the serious medical emergency, the people go to the Alipurduar government hospital. Some of the villagers have a motorcycle as the major means of transportation. While most of the people have a cycle. Mostly, male members of the village use their motorbike and cycle to go to the town for any work. Similarly, few females have their scooty for their personal uses. The majority of the people use public transportation means such as auto-rickshaw and tata sumo etc.

It is noteworthy to say that both the villages have been in the transition of the modernization process because of the developed transportation system the villages are no longer have that socio-cultural captivity as before. Almost all modern technologies such as

a computer, internet, micro- bank, smartphone, the motorbike have been accessed and handled by the villagers. Also, the children of the tea garden labourers have been acquiring modern education in many schools situated in Kalchini, Hamiltonganj, and Hashimara. But among all the community people, the Nepalis are found to be more modernized in terms of modern education, technologies, dressing sense and house patterns in the entire villages. The Nepali people of the villages have been residing there for very long. According to villagers, they were born there in the village itself. They do not know where did their forefathers have come to the villages (both Gangutia and Mechpara). Most of the people from both the villages do not have any blood relatives neither in Nepal, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Assam nor in Sikkim and Bhutan. However, they have marital relationships with the Nepalese of Nepal and Nepalis of other parts of India i.e. Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Assam, Sikkim, etc.

## **1.10. Chapterisation**

**Chapter I: Introduction:** The chapter contains the statement of the problem; Review of literature; theoretical perspectives on migration; Rationale of the study; Research questions; Research objectives; Methodology; village profile, and Chapterisation.

**Chapter II: Nepali settlement in Dooars Region: A historical Perspective.** The chapter has examined the historical backdrop of Nepali community in India in general and the Dooars region in particular.

**Chapter III: The pattern of the Out-migration of the Nepali Community from Tea Garden Villages: A Micro-Level scenario.** The chapter has tried to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data to highlight the pattern of migration of the Nepali community in the villages of the Dooars region empirically.

**Chapter IV: Socio-economic factors for the out-migration of the Nepali community.** The chapter analyzed the various socio-economic factors for the out-migration of the Nepali community, in the Dooars region of Alipurduar district. The chapter is based on the empirical finding from the field.

**Chapter V: Socio-Cultural Consequences of the out- migration on the Nepali community.** The chapter analyzed both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the feedback effects of out-migration to the Nepali community.

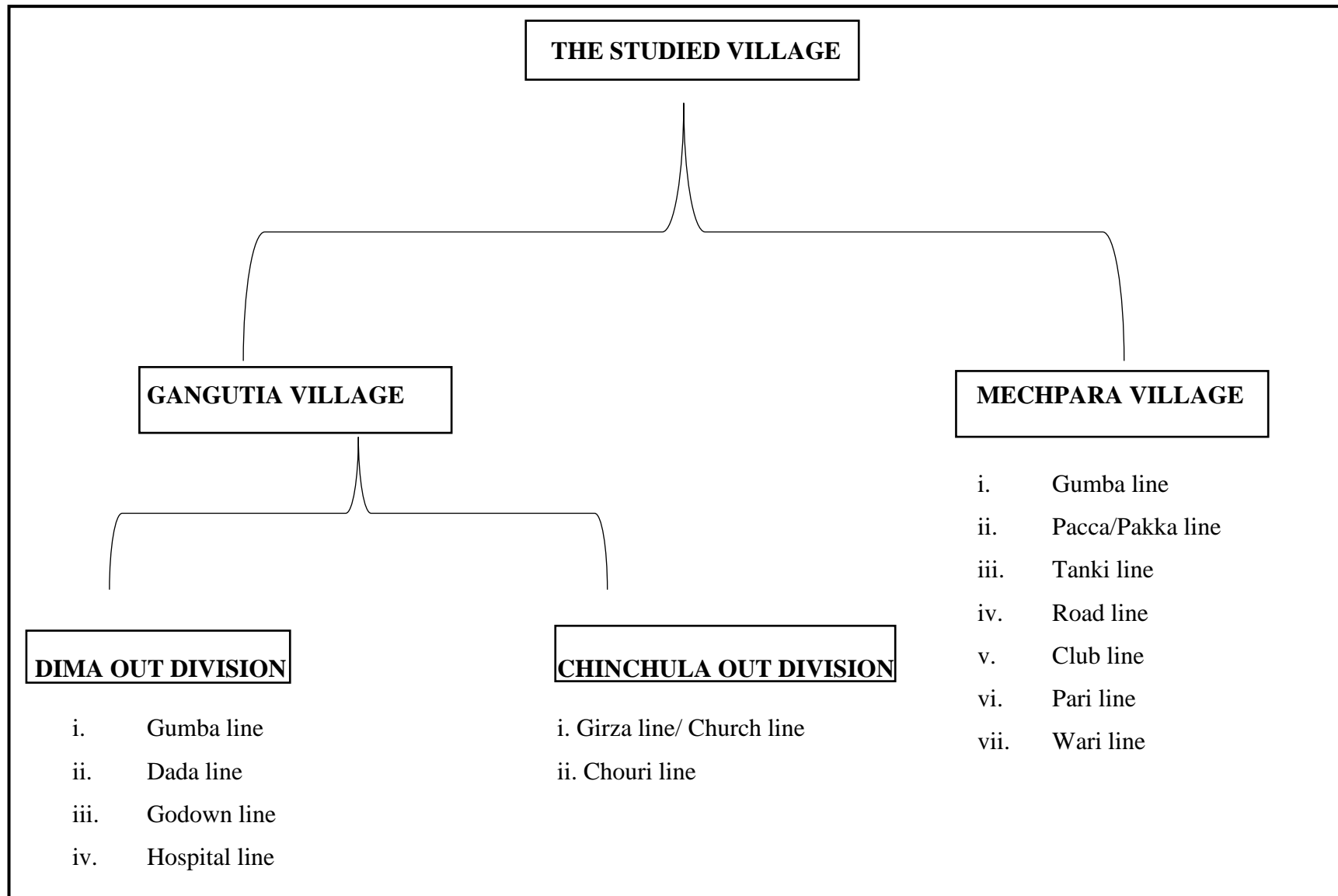
**Chapter VI: Conclusion.** The chapter has concluded the study in the light of previous chapters.

### **1.11. Limitations of the study**

The study mainly focused on the interstate rural-urban out-migration of the Nepali community from the Dooars for employment reasons. Therefore, the study does not cover the other section of the population of the region. The study mainly tried to understand the nature, the macro and micro causes, and the consequences of the out-migration for the Nepali community. It has only tried to understand the socio-economic macro, as well as the micro (case-specific), causes for the out-migration of the Nepali community. The findings of the study are not the ultimate. It is merely a point of view to look into the phenomenon.



**Fig. No. 1.1**



**Source: Field Survey**

**Outline of the study villages**

## **CHAPTER- 2**

### **NEPALI SETTLEMENT IN THE DOOARS REGION: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

The Indian Nepalis are scattered almost all over India. They have a sizeable population in Northeastern states including West Bengal. Darjeeling of West Bengal is one of the districts where they constitute about 52 percent of the district population (Khawas, 2009). Except for this, the Nepali population is there in the Dooars region of West Bengal. Alipurduar district (Newly formed out of Jalpaiguri district in 2014), is another district of the state having a sizable population of Nepalis. Based on observation, experiences and understanding level it is noteworthy to differentiate Indian Nepalis into two broad categories, the hills Nepalis and the plains Nepalis. The hills Nepalis are the Nepalis, residing in the hilly regions of the country (Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Sikkim, etc.) and the plain Nepalis comprises those Nepalis who are the inhabitants of the plain regions including Siliguri Terai and Dooars region of West Bengal which is also popularly known as Western Dooars. Based on the geographical variation of habituation, Nepalis of plains region are popularly known to the hills Neapolis as ‘Madhise’ (Whose abode is in the plain. In Nepali language ‘Madhes’ meaning plain and ‘se’ denotes as ‘from’. Therefore, ‘Madhise’ refers to ‘from the plains’). Similarly hills Nepalis are popularly known to plain Nepalis as ‘Pahade’ (In Nepali language ‘Pahade’ refers to those who reside in mountainous regions). The chapter tries to locate the Nepali community as a distinct ethnic community in India while examining the issues has been facing by the Nepalis in recent times. Also, the chapter tries to understand the paradox of its very nomenclature. Moreover,



the present chapter also rediscovers the Nepali historicity in India in general and Dooars in particular with special reference to the tea plantations of Dooars.

## **2.2. Nepali: A Heterogenous Ethnic Community/ Group in India**

An ethnic group is a group of individuals with a shared sense of peoplehood (Gordon, 2010). There are several ways of classification of the human group; ethnicity is also one among them. While conceptualizing the ethnic group, Barth tries to codify the anthropological cultural yardsticks of possession of cultural characteristics of an ethnic group. He says “ My quarrel is not so much with the substance of these characteristics, though as I shall show we can profit from a certain change of emphasis; my main objection is that such a formulation prevents us from understanding the phenomenon of an ethnic group and their place in human society and culture” (Barth, 1998: 11). According to Barth (1998), It is not possession of cultural characteristics that make social group distant but rather that there is nothing as such the cultural stuff to do with ethnicity, the possession of cultural element does not make a group differ from another social group; however, the social interaction with other group make difference qualified (Barth, 1998). An ethnic group is a collectivity of people who share the same patterns of normative behavior and form a part of a larger population, interacting with people from other collectivities within the framework of a social system (Cohen, 2014). Thus, the Indian Nepali community is one of the distinctive groups comprises of several ethnic groups (having its ethnic boundary) in the country interacting with several other social groups has been preserving its ethnic boundaries and maintaining a separate identity, is the proud citizen of the republic country and a part of the diverse Indian cultural fabric. Rai (1994) rightly states that those who claim to be delvers into the past and yet describe Indian Nepalis as settlers or

immigrants betray their blatant ignorance of the history of this region (I. B. Rai, 1994). The term Nepali community is an umbrella term which is composed up of several ethnic groups such as Tamang/ Lama, Gurung, Mangar, Thapa, Rai, Bhujel/ Khawas, Newar, Limbu, etc. Therefore, it is a heterogeneous group with the same cultural and linguistic attributes, but having their own specific ethnic identity of each ethnic group. Dhakal (2016) defines Nepali as a conglomeration of culturally and linguistically heterogeneous, yet economically and politically rather homogenous entity variously known as ‘Gurkha<sup>40</sup>’, ‘Paharis’ and ‘Nepalis’(Dhakal, 2016: 93). The Nepalis came originally from a variety of Tibeto- Burman ethnolinguistic groups that have traditionally inhabited a specific section of the eastern Nepalese hills and have their ancestral language and traditions. They were followed by other Tibeto- Burman speakers (Gurung, Magars, Sunuwars), by high caste Hindus (Bahun and Chhetris) who had Nepali as their mother- tongue and by many Newar traders. The Indian Nepalis are now unified by their use of Nepali as a common tongue and the shared experiences of living as a minority community in states where they are ever likely to be categorized as foreigners (Hutt, 2009: 29). Nepali is an Indo- Aryan language of the Indo- European family which is a national and an official language of Nepal while it is a lingua franca for the Indian Nepalis scattered all over the world. The word Nepali has several connotations, such as a national of the country Nepal, a language (the national language of sovereign country Nepal and one of the languages included in eight scheduled of India in 1992) and a community. The word Nepali is appropriate in three contexts firstly, it refers to language secondly, it denotes the citizen of Nepal and has the political implication and thirdly, it refers to a specific community within and/ or outside of Nepal

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<sup>40</sup> The term basically denotes the population belong to the Shah’s state ‘Gurkha’ of medieval Nepal. However, the term has been using variously for Indian Nepalis too.

(Pradhan, 1982: 1-2). During the 20th century, Nepali political leaders sought to establish an identity for Indian Nepalis that established them as a distinct group within India and also distinguished them from the Nepalis of Nepal. The prime example of political activism designed to meet the end was the Gorkhaland movement (Hutt, 2009: 29). Historically, the Nepalis were divided into different ethnic groups with their ethnic dialects such as Rais used to have their specific dialect and socio-cultural understanding differ from that of Tamangs, Mangars, Limbus, Newars and other ethnic groups which are integral subgroups of the Nepali community. At present times, the term Nepali has become a controversial understanding as who are the Nepalis? And it has become more complex after the cultural revivalism of several Nepali ethnic groups such as Tamang, Rai, etc. especially in the Hills of the Darjeeling and Kalimpong districts.

### **2.3. Crisis of Nomenclature of the Community**

The word Nepali means a community, a national, a language (National language in Nepal and lingua franca for other Nepalis of all over the world, Nepali language is a modern form/ name of Khas- Kura entered Nepal from India. Thus, Nepali is an Indian language. Khas- Kura/ language was the language of Khas people in the Mahabharata period (Pradhan, 1977). How to denote a citizen of India, but belong to Nepali community?

Nepalese of Indian origin?

Indians of Nepal origin?

or Nepalese/ Nepalis?

Form the very nomenclature of the community; they are not having a clear identity. In all the above cases Nepal is connected unintentionally with Indian Nepalis. It has been realized

that nomenclature itself becomes the reason for the mass criticism of Indian Nepalis who have to hear the allegation of being the citizen of Nepal, Illegal immigrants, and the foreigners. The term Gorkha<sup>41</sup> has also been used to identify the Indian Nepalis. However, the term is also not free from criticism. The term 'Gorkha' had been used to refer to the people (later on only the military men of Gorkha kingdom) of the Gorkha Kingdom in Nepal. The Gorkha military were brave and skilled fighters. Therefore, the British had recruited them into the British Indian Army. These people are later settled in different parts of the world, a large number in India. However, the population of Nepali is not only the composition of the Gorkha Army men. Thus, the term 'Gorkha' is not appropriate to use to understand Indian Nepalis who do not belong to the Gorkha kingdom, but India. However, in the year 1949, the word 'Gorkha' was adopted by the Indian Army. Eden Vansittart while defining the term Gorkha, it is a generic name refers to Nepalese employed in Indian Army and strictly should apply to those who came from the region around Gorkha (Thapa, 2013). There has been a controversy over the nomenclature in the community. A.C Sinha made an effort in the past to find a more appropriate term that would largely be acceptable to all, 'Indian of Nepal origin' (INOs). However, it is questionable why to use that Nepal origin because the people who had come to India during the early decade of the 19th century already die. All the Indian Nepalis have their origin in India itself. A similar effort was made by Prof. T.B Subba, introducing the term 'Bharogoli' and 'Bharpali'. But they could not catch the imagination of the people. He further referred to two more terms: Gorkha and Nepali and has also described their context, exponents, and opponents. There is no mutual agreement over one particular term to be used to denote perfectly the Indian

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<sup>41</sup> The term is little exclusively used to refer to Indian Nepalis after Feb. 1949. In Independent India, the word Gurkha got changed to Gorkha by the Indian Army. Also see (Thapa, 2013) pg- 25.

Nepalis. Therefore, the term the Gorkha, Gurkha, Nepalis, Indian of Nepal origin, (however, whose ancestors had not migrated from Nepal and they had been residents of the region for centuries) Bhargoli, Bharpali have been controversial till date. There is also a perception among the scholars that the term Gorkha should be used in place of Nepali to make Indian Nepalis differ from that of Nepal. Because it is felt that Indian Nepalis are often criticized and have a bad impression because of Nepali nationals Nepalese as people cannot make differentiation among the Nepali and Nepalese. Khawas (2009) writes in a book edited by Subba et al. that to stress the distinction between the Indian Nepalis and Nepalese of Nepal the term ‘Gorkha’ and Gorkha Bhasha’ were increasingly used in place of Nepali and Nepali language, respectively. The nomenclature itself is problematic because of the Nepali of India or Nepalese of Nepal? the lingua franca of Indian Nepalis or the national language of Nepal? T.B Subba went on to plead for a new name “Sakha” to identify the Indian Nepalis as he believes the term is free of ambiguity, it needs to be used voluntarily for symbolizing all Indian Nepalis. In the defense of his new nomenclature Subba (2009) says “it (‘Sakhaa’) is free from any geographical, cultural and territorial identities like Pahadi, Madhesi, Nepali, Gorkha, Manipuri, Mizo, Bengali, Marathi, etc. and that is, to my mind, its biggest strength. Truly speaking, Indian Nepalis need to de-territorialized and de-ethicized identity for they are not only themselves de-territorialized in India but also have frequently experienced ethnic anger of the locally dominant communities. A Sakhaa has no nation and no territory. He can be anywhere and from anywhere- Manipur, Mizoram, Darjeeling, Sikkim, Dehradun, Bhagsu, Mumbai, Delhi or Karnataka (Subba, 2009: 392). However, Nepalis may not always be a citizen of Nepal; they may be the citizen of India, China or other countries. Therefore, the nomenclature

such as the Nepali community can be used to denote the Indian nationals and Nepalese for the nationals of Nepal exactly like the Bengali community to Indian nationals, but not Bengalese nationals.

## **2.4. Identity Issues of the Community**

Identity is not only vital for any ethnic group/ Community but also very much necessary to be recognized in human society. Without an identity or with an ambiguous identity an ethnic group/ community stigmatized as illegal citizens of the country. While understanding the 'identity' issue Eric Erikson went on to say that in the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity (Bendle, 2002). The question of identity is becoming very crucial in society under high modernity. Classical theorist, C.H Cooley introduced the term 'the looking glass self' in his work "Human Nature and the Social Order' in 1902. He says that we see ourselves through the eyes of other people (Cooley, 1983). How other people perceive the identity of a community. Leela D' Souza (2003) mentioned classical theorists like C.H. Cooley speak of 'the looking glass self' where identities are formed based on what the individual thinks he/ she is perceived by others. On the other hand, G. H. Mead introduced the concept of 'I' and 'Me'. It is 'I' who reacts to the historical situation as it is perceived by 'I' than seen objectively and assessed by the object 'Me' and consequently internalized and incorporated into the formation of 'Self' and ' identity' (D'Souza, 2003). The identity issue is not new to the Nepali community in their own nation India; it is something that has been for generations. The Manifestation of the lack of political identity of Indian Nepalis was first seen in the Assam riots of 1979. It was the treaty of 1950 with Nepal which allows Nepalese nationals to India for livelihood considered to be a reason for the humiliation of Indian

Nepalis as in Assam riot the target were the foreigners from Nepal. The Nepalese from Nepal and Indian Nepalis are difficult to distinguish both culturally and physiologically (Thapa, 2013). In this context, Khawas (2009) try to make clear that there are two sets of Nepali speaking people in India, the first set of Nepali speaking people are the permanent inhabitants and citizens of India. They are there in different parts of India with their major concentrations in hilly pockets of the Northeastern states residing for almost two centuries. The second sets of Nepali speaking people comprise those who are citizens of Nepal but are residing in India on a temporary basis for their livelihood. Furthermore, he dragged the attention to the 'Treaty of Peace and Friendship' of July 31, 1950. Article 7 of the same treaty grants the privileges of residence, ownership of property, participation in trade and commerce, movement and privileges of a similar nature to both nationals. The treaty is, however, silent concerning the impact of such agreement on the Indian Nepalis (Khawas, 2009: 178). Sometimes people tease Nepalis people considering them from China (because of chinky eyes). Similarly, it has been heard saying go to Nepal, if you need your identity. The identity of the Nepali community has been assassinated in such a way considering the measurement of physical looks and the language. However, the nationality of an ethnic group and community cannot be determined using such yardsticks. A person or group of people may look like a Chinese or British and may speak Bengali, Chinese or Nepali. But a Bengali speaking people don't need to be from Bangladesh, a Chinese speaking person is from China and similarly, a Nepali speaking person is from Nepal. Bengali speakers and the Nepali speaking people can be a citizen of India. In this context, it is relevant to mention Goley's (2009) states that when an individual as a being of the world is unable to locate himself in the categories available to him in any satisfactory way; the question of identity

is raised. It's spanning a period of over two hundred years and the emergence and the formation of Gorkha/ Nepali identity in India its continuing crisis (Golay, 2009: 74). Identity has its two processes to be constructed, firstly it is self-constructed and secondly, it is constructed by others. In this sense, there is a difference in the manner in which the Nepalis conceived their identity and conceived by the other for very long. Their weak intellectual pedigree and their ambivalent national identity left them high and dry. Their knowledge about themselves was based on the writings of British and Bengali intellectuals and officials. Such writings, barring a few, painted them all as 'immigrants' and 'foreigners' from Nepal, ignoring their complex history of migration, 'movement of borders' and relationship with India people (Dhakal, 2016: 97). Are you from Nepal? Is the question every Indian Nepali encounter from a fellow India? I like to bring here my own experience while I was traveling on a train to Farakka (Malda district of West Bengal) in the year 2014. A Bengali co-traveler asks me "Tumi ki Nepal theke tai na"? (You are from Nepal, right?). I replied him "Ar apni Bangladesh theke tai na?" (And you are from Bangladesh, right?). Of course, my replied was not so gentle to him. However, my emotion was very gentle. In the above incident, it has not been understood that while someone speaks Nepali language having a different look among the majority of people why they are often considered a Nepali citizen and treat like a foreigner (as if not an Indian citizen) is it just because he/ she is speaking the Nepali language. However, a person speaking Bengali language never considered being a citizen of Bangladesh. There is a huge misunderstanding has been established regarding the nationality of Indian Nepali among the general mass and it is the installation of the British and the biased academic practices. History speaks more than the present. To understand the Nepali settlement in India in general and



particular in Dooars of West Bengal one has to engage with the canonical texts and it is possible only through going back to the womb of history.

## **2.5. Nepalis in India: A Historical Perspective**

Socio- cultural diversity is a peculiar feature of India. One cannot disagree with the fact that India is a multi- ethnic, multi- cultural and multi- lingual country. Nepali community is one among them in India. Regarding the existence of majority of Nepalis in India, it has been found that the ‘Treaty of Segauli’ December 1815 is the juncture point as the British had opened door to India for Nepalese/ Gurkha basically for the recruitment in British Indian Army (See Rai, 2009; Subba and Sinha, 2016; Goley, 2009). However, regarding the historicity of Nepalis in India it can be said that the historicity is pre- colonial intervention. The claim can be supported with several scholars like, Risley, 1996; Dhakal, 2016; Rai, 2009; and Sinha, 2009. Furthermore, A. C Sinha says “it must be accepted that Kirati elements that now speak Nepali and are identified as Nepali were already in Sikkim, which then included the present district of Darjeeling under West Bengal, before an extensive immigration of the Nepalese to India occurred after the treaties of Segowli and Titaliya. Prior to the British colonization of India, Nepalese traders, pilgrims, roving holy men and sundry marital partners moved from Nepal to India and via- a- vis. There were seasonal migrants in search of manual work during agriculturally lean months of year, who returned home after a short stay in India” (Sinha, 2009). The same statement has been given by R. Dhakal (2016) he says “Many Gorkhas of Darjeeling claim that they came here (Darjeeling/ West Bengal/ India) ‘with land’ when the district of Darjeeling was ceded by Nepal to East India Company. Moreover, they represented various ethnic groups belonging to the Tibeto- Burman language family, such as Rai, Limbu, Tamang, Gurung, Magar,

Sunwar, Thami, and so on and other Indo- Aryan family speakers such as Bahun, Chhetri, kami, Damai and Sarki. Among them, Limbu and Magar are regarded as indigenous to both Nepal and Sikkim. Many of them settled in the region when Nepal overran and occupied Sikkim, which once included the present Darjeeling, in 1788 and ruled over it till the treaty of Segowli was sign in 1816, when Nepal had to return these territories to Sikkim”(Dhakal, 2016: 93). Almost same account is found in A.C Sinha’s writing, he says “There is predominance of what is known as Kirati ethnic groups in Sikkim, Darjeeling, Bhutan Duars and North- eastern region of India. Eastern Nepal has been traditional home of the Kirati communities, which naturally extended to erstwhile Bhutia principality of Sikkim. So the Kiratis like Limbus and Magars claim to be indigenous settlers of Sikkim”(Sinha, 2009: 371). The Nepal had ruled over Sikkim from 1788- 1816, the existence of the Nepalese in the region was a logical and obvious phenomenon. If this claim is true, it was a case of what Roger Brubaker calls ‘migration of border over people’ and not migration of people over borders (Brubaker, 2005). However, the history of Nepalis in India can be trace from the following historical events:

## **2.6. The Recruitment of the Nepalese/ Gurkhas in the Army of Ranjit Singh: Finding of the Brave Army Men**

The Gorkhas General named Jahar Singh while following the Gorkhas’ king Prithivi Narayan Shah around 1788-89 (Fifteen years after the death of Raja Prithivi Narayan Shah) made a raid on Rabdantse. In the process of the same expedition, the Nepali force attacked Raja Sansar Chand of Kangra in 1805. Jahar Singh won the war and extended their kingdom up to the Kangra valley (Kangra Valley is situated in the western Himalayas in the state of Himachal Pradesh in India). Sansar Chand to take the revenge and to regain,

the valley took the help of the king Ranjit Singh of Punjab. In 1809 he retaliated by attacking the Nepalis force. Seeing the fighting skills and bravery of the Gorkhas, the king Ranjit Singh recruited them in his army (Timsina, 1992: 15). Before (1814-15) British king Ranjit Singh recruited the Nepalis in his army and for that, a sizeable number of Nepalis/ Gurkhas migrated in India. However, there is no clear picture of the volume of their recruitment in his army (Dhakal, 2016: 94). There is no agreement on whether it was before or after the treaty of Sugouli as Bandana Rai says “ Bir Bhadra Kuwar had left Nepal to join the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Punjab (Indian) just after the treaty of Sugauli in the year 1816” ( Rai, 2009:2). However, another scholar Thapa (2013) mentioned Bal Bhadra Singh Thapa (Kunwar) of aged 35 could escape to Punjab to join the Ranjit Singh’s court. While understanding the nature of Raja Prithivi Narayan Shah, he never well come people who had left the pure land Nepal. It indicates those who were serving Indian kings did not have a chance to return back to Nepal. Later on, the term ‘Lahure’ was used for them. Even today the word is using to refer Nepalese who serve Indian Army when they go back to their home, the neighbor says ‘Lahure dai kahile palnu bho’ in Nepali- You, soldier when did you come). Furthermore, the word ‘Muglan’ is often found in the literature of Indra Bahadur Rai and other Nepali writers. The word is related to the land of the Mughal in India. It is noteworthy that Nepalese people used to serve with the Mughals. They were known as ‘Munglane’- those who left Nepal and went to the land of Mughals. These people were not allowed to enter Nepal again. They had to face the punishment of banishment from the Raja Prithvi Narayan Shah.

## **2.7. The Recruitment of the Nepalese/ Gurkhas in British Indian Army: 'Martial Race', - a Myth**

The recruitment of Gorkhas in the British Indian army occurred to the British during the war of Indo- Nepal of 1814. The British were afraid of the expansionist Gorkhas as it was creating a threat to the company's territories. Therefore, Anglo- Gorkha war (1814-1816) and the treaty of Sugauli aimed to stop the Gorkhas. During the war, the British who were very much impressed by the bravery and brilliant fighting qualities of Gorkhas desired to augment their military power by enlisting them in their service. They also wanted to weaken the military power of Nepal by enlisting her brave fighting men into their own rank (Rathaur, 2001). Then, the recruitment of Nepalese started soon after General Amar Singh Thapa surrendered the fort of Malaun on 15<sup>th</sup> May 1815 (Timsina, 1992: 16). The British already formed four Gorkha battalions first Nasiri, second Nasiri, Sirmoor and Kumaon battalions in 1815 (Rathaur, 2001). A scholar like Thapa (2008) mentioned the name of the four battalions variously, for instance, Malaun battalion, the Sirmur battalion, the Nusseri battalion, and the Kumaun battalion, the first and the fourth battalions were based in the hills of Punjab, the second based in Dehradun, and third in Simla. Most of them brought their families to be settled in the Gurkha colonies. They developed their settlement there while adopting the local environment (Rana, 2008). Later on, the sub- identity has been formulated as 'Martial Race' for Gorkhas/ Nepalese. The same guiding principle of the martial race has been following still in the recruitment process in the Indian Army. Evidently, hundreds of Nepalis still die for their country India. The myth of martial race is a construction of colonial imperialists. It had been created by the British to shoulder the burden of military Whiteman's. Moreover, they were cheaper and the natives too.

Although, the folk tells were there to encourage the Gorkhas like “Bir Gorkha” (in Nepali brave Gorkhas), the British gave it a blow intentionally. The British wanted the simple; honest and without religious mentality type brave Army who could work under their legitimate authority without any complaints. Consequently, the Gorkhas were their discovery as a martial race. However, the concept of Martial race evolved more after the mutiny of 1857. After the mutiny, the Britishers became clear about the religious sentiment among soldiers that almost troubled them. Therefore, the company wanted to curtail down the number of army whoever were having the Brahmanical prejudices as there was the great threat of Russia to the British Empire (Golay, 2009). The architects of this concept were Field Marshall Lord Roberts and Lt. General G.H Macmun, Robert (Comander- in Chief of the Indian Army from 1885-1893) (Gurung, 2014). The scholar like Dirks, (2002) says that the identity of martial race is a discourse produced by British. Dirks say “The Gurkha “identity as a “martial race” is a ‘discovery’ of the ethnographical knowledge of the colonial. The discovery marks shift in British emphasis from the brutal modes of conquests to cultural technologies of rule, the knowledge production”(Golay, 2006). Furthermore, in one of the paradoxes of history, it was the surrender of Amar Singh Thapa that led to the creation of the Gorkha soldiers. The Gorkhas in British Indian Army was a political recruitment rather than the military as it was a remarkable event under planned ball game. While understanding the term ‘ Martial Race’ Caplan (2006) says the theory of martial race did not emerge sui generis to meet specific military needs, rather it was a deeper manifestation of the wider European doctrine of biological determinism or scientific racism’ (Caplan, 2006). In Foucauldian sense “by fixing the meaning of text and by pre-determining the categories of reason by which statements are accepted as knowledge, a

discourse creates an epistemic reality and becomes a technique of control and discipline” (Foucault, 1981). In simple words, it was the awe of Gorkhas/ Nepalese that indirectly threaten the colonial power, resulted in the emergence of a new ‘Discourse’ of the ‘Martial Race’ which was the production of power-knowledge relationship. Contextually, in every society, the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its power and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality (Foucault, 1981). The war of 1814 of Indo- Nepalese ended with the surrender of Gurkha soldiers after the treaty of Segauli. Although technically the Gurkha did not lose the war, the surrendered soldiers were nowhere to go and they were not at all wanted in Nepal anymore by the King. The British promptly recruited them (Most of them were surrendered prisoners belong to the ethnic group of Magar, Gurung and Khas people) in their British Indian Army understanding their valor. However, it was the finest expansionist policy of the British as they thought the Gorkha soldiers would immensely helpful to British colonial expansion in the subcontinent. There were several impediments in front of the British’s expansionist of Nagas, Abors, Manipuris in the east. In the north and northwest, Sikhs, Pathans, Afghan who were fully capable of putting up a resistance for the British. Thus, the British felt the scarcity of the military. Gurkhas were a source of cheap, reliable military manpower (Pahari, 1991). In the later period, they started to settle down in various parts of India and adopted the local environment. The reality behind their settlement in India was also the banishment policy from the king of Nepal for instance during the rule of Jang Bahadur, he issued an order against those who were leaving Nepal without the authority of Durbar; no one could go beyond Noakote and the Trisuli Ganga

river. Similarly, Gurkha in the British Indian Army was not having permission to go back to Nepal which results in a settlement in various Cantonment with their families (Rana, 2008). It was not easy for Nepalese to leave Nepal and settle in India far from the motherland. Some of them took their families to India and settled. Pahari (1991) has mentioned in his article 'Ties that Binds; Gurkhas in History' the socio-economic factors behind becoming the plowmen to riflemen. It was not only the soldiering skills and zeal for becoming a rifleman encouraged the thousands of (especially, Magar, Gurung, Rai, etc.) people to go to the recruiting centers of East India Company. It was the socio-economic factors in Nepal that pushed them. By the end of eighteenth-century Nepal was declining with her economy. On the other hand, early eighteenth-century Nepal was divided into two broader social categories, the Tagadharis and the Matwalis. The Matwalis were marginalized with the prevailing social structure of the century. Unequal distribution of resources under a feudal arrangement made Matwalis more marginalized and after the treaty of 1816 with British, made Nepal abandon to expansionist design made them (Nepalese soldiers) unemployed (However, the Raja of Nepal did not give those cash, but kind of minimum). That is why Matwalis ( Magar, Gurung, Thapa, Rai, etc.) got the immense push from Nepal and went to serve the British in India (Pahari, 1991).

## **2.8. The Recruitment of the Nepalese/ Nepalis in the British Indian tea Industry: A Shift of 'Paradigm'**

Following the principle of imperialist capitalism, the British East India Company not only expanded their territorial boundary but also experimented and later on established tea

industry in India to persuade monopoly in tea market and both Nepalese<sup>42</sup> and Nepalis<sup>43</sup> fulfilled the dream of British planters by becoming the source of the cheap labour force in entire tea plantation regions of British India. It was Sir Joseph Banks, who advocated the cultivation of tea in India in 1778 (Griffiths, 1967: 33). The history of tea in India is a long journey from recognition, experimentation and finally production. Rather, it was a scientific endeavor of more than half-century. During this long period of experimentation regarding the suitable area, seeds (Wild/ China seeds), recruitment of cheap, but honest and fit labourers the British had to practice the ‘Normal Science<sup>44</sup>’, solving the puzzles. Ultimately, in 1839 tea passed its experimentation period and started producing for the market in Assam with the successful manufacture of tea through the application of the Chinese method (Griffiths, 1967:53). The main concern of the British planters was the labour supply. They could not rely on the local labour force as Bruce was unsatisfied by the ‘Opium- smoking Assamese’. To solve the scarcity of labourers, the ‘Assam Company’ agreed upon the decision to import labourers from Chota Nagpur. However, it was a failed importation as an outbreak of cholera made it impossible to recruits/ reached the gardens. Thus, the tea garden in Assam was still in want of labourers. In the year 1992, Royal Commission on Labour has stated that “the scarcity of the tea labourers in Assam has been the outstanding problem in the whole history of tea planting in Assam for the employer”. It is, therefore, to sort out the problem of shortages of tea labourers, the British planter imported thousands of labourers from Chota Nagpur as well as foreign labourers from upcountry. But it proved to be failed; the reasons were from recruitment policy to the

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<sup>42</sup> The Nepal nationals who were facing socio- economic crisis in Nepal.

<sup>43</sup> Indian Nepalis, India- born Nepalis. Descendants of British Indian Army who had already settled in various parts of the country.

<sup>44</sup> See book(Kuhn, 1970) ‘ The structure of scientific revolution’



method of import by the contractors. While stating the problem of importation of labour in Assam, manager of Sylhet tea plantation in 1868 says “Coolies were imported at great expense and risk. A large proportion of the earlier batches of coolies were up- countrymen, who, if survived, lost the health and unusable for tea garden”(Griffiths, 1967: 94). The above citations formally proved the statement that there was a huge number of Nepalese teas labourers in Assam tea plantation regions from the 60s of the nineteenth century. Similarly, till the end of the nineteenth century, the Nepalese labourers got recruited in every region of the plantation, especially in the entire northeastern region of tea plantation including Western Dooars. In the ‘paradigm theory’, it is believed that in course of ‘Normal Science’, butter- bread science the agents of science just pass days while solving a puzzle under an established ‘paradigm’ (Paradigm is nothing but a fixed way of thinking at a particular historical period. It works like a model of thinking in a specific period). The entire community engaged in puzzle solving activity until and unless markable event dawn suppressing the era of ‘crises’ that considered being the revolution. The revolution, a new hope and ‘understanding lens’ of knowledge. This revolution changes the entire world view through a ‘shift in paradigm’. The discovery of tea in Assam (India) was not less than a revolution (Scientific revolution) during the second decade of the nineteenth century. This particular revolution has changed the previous paradigm of the ‘Martial Race’ of Nepalese into a cheap and best coolie (best because Nepalese labourers were honest and could survive even the worse situation of the tea industry). Due to shift in paradigm, the Nepalese were no longer merely a martial race, but also a source of supply of coolie to tea plantation region of Assam and later on to the entire northeast region of tea plantation. The concept of the line boys came into existence which denoted the boys for tea plantations and not fit

for the British Indian Army (Subba & Sinha, 2015). In his own words, Kuhn (1970) says “Scientific revolutions are here taken to be those noncumulative development episodes in which an older paradigm is replaced in whole or in part by an incompatible new one”(Kuhn, 1970). This how the British did not find the India- born Gorkhas (T.B and Sinha, 2016), the line- boys suitable in their Army rather suitable for tea plantation labour. Till the end of the nineteenth century, the British imported thousand to thousands of Nepalese labourers in entire tea plantation regions. Whereas, the later generations of the British Indian Army proved to be instrumental in fulfilling the left shortage of labour in tea plantations. The recruitment of Gorkhas/ Nepalese in the British Indian army had given them a new land of occupation in India (in Nepali ‘Karm Bhumi’). They were recruited in the provinces of Bengal, Assam, and Burma. Subsequently, the British adopted a policy to settle the retired Gorkhas near armed cantonments in northeast India. The Indian- born Gorkhas, called line boys and were not considered suitable for recruitment to the British Army, rather they were encouraged to settle in the eastern part of India. That is why there is a concentration of the Nepalis population in Northeast India (Subba and Sinha, 2016). Therefore, it can be said that almost all Nepalis population in North- east India is either the generations of those migrated in India being the British Indian Army or the immigrant labourers of tea plantations. However, it cannot be denied with the fact that many among them are not genuine Indian Nepalis, but illegal migrants and foreigners. The recruitment of thousands of Nepalis labourers in tea gardens of Darjeeling, Dooars region and other parts of the country gave the Nepalis common belongingness in their new land. The most importantly, the use of the Nepali language by all the Nepalis in India could bring the feeling of nearness

and belongingness in entire India in general and Darjeeling- Dooars tea plantation region, in particular, led them organized into a homogenous cultural community.

## **2.9. Darjeeling as a Sanatorium and the Tea Plantation District: The Emergence of the Nepalis Settlements in the Darjeeling Hills**

In the year 1828 certain disputes as to the frontiers between the Nepal and Sikkim emerged resulted in captain Lloyd dispatched to the Sikkim for normalization of the dispute. He became impressed with the natural beauty of Darjeeling (the old Gurkha garrison of Darjeeling) (Malley, 1999). He wanted to make Darjeeling a sanatorium for Europeans and concerned with the importance of its strategic significance. Those days Darjeeling itself was a village before the desertification took place due to the cruelty of the Raja of Sikkim. After the confirmation from the part of the then Governor-General William Bentinck, Lloyd initiated the formality with the Raja of Sikkim. In 1835, the transfer of present-day Darjeeling district completed by the Raja to East India Company (Griffiths, 1967:85). One year later, both Lloyd and Dr. Campbell (a remarkable man of the Indian Medical Science) visited Darjeeling in 1836. Being a superintendent of newly occupied territory Darjeeling, he had to do a lot more to make it a sanatorium. Consequently, the Nepalese imported as labourers in Darjeeling to build the roads, bungalows, etc. ( Subba, 2008). Within the year 1840, a road had been built from Pankhabari; two hotels had been started in Kurseong and Darjeeling respectively. Some of the thirty private houses had been established and many other locations had been taken till Lebong (A valley, 300 m bellow Darjeeling town) (Malley, 1999). However, the most challenging task for Dr. Campbell was to attract population in Darjeeling, but he was so successful in his mission as almost ten thousand population had come from Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan till 1849 (Griffiths, 1967:86). In the

year 1852, an inspecting officer while reporting about Darjeeling says that under the superintendent -ship of Dr. Campbell alone, the experimental cultivation of Coffee and tea had been accomplished in Darjeeling. However, Dr. Hooker (1855) had mentioned in Himalaya Journal the habit of the local inhabitants of making a kind of tea (Hooker, 1855). Regarding the proper starting point of tea plantation in Darjeeling Hills, Dr. Campbell had planted the China seeds in his residence at Darjeeling in 1841 which was badly destroyed during spring season due to hailstorms. In the same writing of Dr. Hooker it can be known that during the later period of 1848, Campbell had succeeded growing the tea in Lebong (Griffiths, 1967). It was by 1856 the tea plantations had been completed and grew at Takvar and Kurseong by Captain Masson and Mr. Smith respectively. Similarly, with the efforts of the Kurseong and Darjeeling tea Company, the Alubari tea Garden was opened successfully. Subsequently, Lebong tea garden by the Darjeeling Land Mortgage Bank, The Dhutaria tea garden was established by Dr. Brougham in 1859. Between 1860- 1864 another four tea gardens were started at Takdah, Phubsering, Ging and Ambuti by the Darjeeling tea Company. In the same manner, Lebong tea Company started the Badamtam tea garden. Among other tea gardens started in the early period in Darjeeling were the Makaibari, Pandam and Steinrhal tea estates (Griffiths, 1967). To work in those tea gardens the Nepalese labourers had been continuously migrated from East Nepal and in 1874 it is estimated almost nineteen thousand and a steady increasing Nepali population from Eastern Nepal had been found in Darjeeling tea plantation.

## **2.10. Nepalis Settlements in the Dooars of West Bengal With Special Reference to the Tea Plantation**

The Dooars is a geographically descriptive name. The word Dooars/ Duar means the door like the door to Bhutan, plain, etc.). The Dooars/ Duar is a Sanskrit word 'Duar', the gateway. The region is the lifeline to the northeastern states of India as it links the whole northeast states through National Highway 31(Directorate of Census operation West Bengal, 2011). Historically, there were a total of eighteen Dooars including both eleven Dooars in Bengal and the remaining seven Dooars in Assam. The Bengal Dooars is also popularly known as the Western Dooars. It is noteworthy to mention the names of those Bengal Dooars, the names are:

1. Dalimkot
2. Chamurchi
3. Zumerkot/
4. Luckee/ Lakshmi
5. Buxa or Baxa
6. Bhalka/ Bhulka
7. Gommar
8. Reepoo
9. Bagh
10. Sidli and
11. Maynaguri

These total dooars of Bengal is extended to the foot of the Himalayas between Tista and the Manas River. Physically, western Dooars down the hills of Bhutan having an average

breadth of 30 K.M and 350 K.M lengths in West Bengal, India were between the Manas River in the east and Tista on the west. Historically, Morang area between the river Tista and Mechhi too had been a part of the Bengal Dooars (Debnath, 2010). These total dooars of Bengal is extended to the foot of the Himalayas between Tista and the Manas River. Physically, western Dooars down the hills of Bhutan having an average breadth of 30 K.M and 350 K.M lengths in West Bengal, India was between the Manas River in the east and Tista on the west. Historically, the Morang area between the river Tista and Mechhi too had been a part of the Bengal Dooars (Debnath, 2010: VIII). During the later decade of the eighteenth century, Koch of Cooch Behar and Bhutanese got engaged in conflict for the possession of Bhutan. It was in the year, 1772, Bhutan occupied Cooch Behar which led dispatch the soldiers of East India Company for intervention based on the treaty with Cooch Behar's Prime Minister, Dewan Deo. The intervention of the Company made the situation complicated and unsolved. However, after almost a century, the British government for the sake of the trade relation decided to possess the Dooars (Both Bengal and Assam Dooars) in 1864 resulted in the second Anglo- Bhutan war followed by the treaty of Sinchula in 1865. Now, the East India Company has the entire Dooars including Darjeeling hills and Terai of the portion of Sikkim (the British annexed in 1850 because of the aggressiveness of the Sikkim. The Sikkim had captured Dr. Campbell and Dr. Hooker while returning from Bhutan) (Griffiths, 1967:87). After the annexation of a strip of land the Dooars, at the foot of the Himalaya the Western Dooars between the River Sankos and Tista were included in the District of Jalpaiguri of West Bengal the British initiated the tea plantation in the Dooars land. During the middle of the eighteenth century almost the whole tract was covered by jungle, was the inhabitant of primitive tribes such as Garos, Mechis, Totos.

Many of them used to live in trees or crude huts and survived with hunting and fishing. After the recommendation for tea cultivation in Dooars region, Dr. Brougham opened a tea garden at Gazeldubi in the year 1874 (Griffiths, 1967). Immediately after that, other gardens were opened at Fulbari and Bagrakot. It was by the year 1876 another thirteen gardens had been opened. To fulfill the demand of the required labour in the early phase of the garden, Nepalis labours were employed (However, it is not clear about the Nepali labourers, whether they imported from uphill Darjeeling or Nepal itself). However, very soon it was realized by the planters the shortage of labour. Therefore, they recruited labour from Chota Nagpur and the Santhal Parganas. In the year 1879, the Jalpaiguri Tea Company was established which was the first Indian- managed tea Company in Bengal managed by a few enterprising Bengali layers and clerks (Griffiths, 1967). In the later period, several other tea gardens had been established where the Nepali labourers found rampant. In this regard, it can be claimed that the Nepali settlements in Dooars have their historical roots in tea plantations. However, there are several mythological descriptions for the existence of Nepalis in Dooars region though; they were not known as the Nepalis, but the 'Kirata' since long historical periods (Earlier to colonial period). The Kiratas were the mongoloid tribes, the wild living in the northeastern areas of India (Mishra, 2006). Generally, the Kiratas are Limbu, Rai, Sunuwar, Lepcha, Yakkha etc.(Subba,1999, Wikipedia, 2011) some of whom are considered to be the Nepalis at present. The Kiratas were situationally had come under the umbrella of the Nepali or Gorkhali nation<sup>45</sup>(T.B Subba, 1999). As per the District Census Handbook of Jalpaiguri, 2011, during the tenth century B.C king Bhagadutta, the ruler of present western Assam had participated in the

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<sup>45</sup> Nation here, is not indicating the Nation- State, but the people.

battle of the Kurukshetra (in Mahabharata) with his Chinese and Kirat soldiers while supporting the Kauravas. In such a case the Nepalis of Dooars are the early inhabitant of the region despite the fact the Nepaliness among them had developed during the early part of the twentieth century while sharing the same historical situation in tea gardens. At present, the Nepalis are found all over India. Table no. 2.1 gives us a clue about the present Nepalis population in India.

**Table 2.1: State Wise the Nepali Population in India**

State/ Union Territory	1961	1971	1981	2001	2011
Andra Pradesh	1,283	3,860	3,051	8,233	11,551
Assam	32,213	3,53,673	-	5,64,790	5,96,210
Bihar	29,282	45,912	20,197	18,763	5,727
Gujarat	2,657	5,803	4,790	17,123	25,142
Haryana	-	1,778	2,643	20,362	19,914
Himachal Pradesh	9,184	20,229	40,526	70,272	89,508
Jammu & Kashmir	281	2,588	2,468	8,199	22,138
Kerala	276	1,454	621	2,715	3,668
Madhya Pradesh	7,670	10,923	11,904	10,920	8,724
Maharashtra	12,002	19,828	23,428	63,480	75,683
Manipur	13,571	26,381	37,046	45,998	63,756
Meghalaya	-	44,445	61,259	52,155	54,716
Karnataka	725	1,605	2,543	10,038	19,274
Nagaland	10,400	17,536	24,918	34,222	43,481
Orissa	1,878	5,554	7,775	9,927	8,654



Punjab	11,680	2,576	3,654	19,778	22,061
Rajasthan	1,820	2,534	2,758	10,569	7,636
Sikkim	74,319	1,34,235	1,92,891	3,38,606	3,82,200
Tamil Nadu	1,325	2,354	2,585	4,328	7,575
Tripura	1,682	2,107	2,109	3,377	2,787
Uttar Pradesh	69,118	48,877	29,570	2,63,982	18,743
West Bengal	5,24,284	6,15,544	7,11,584	10,22,725	11,55,375
Andaman & Nicobar	164	250	254	782	949
Arunachal Pradesh	-	30,912	45,508	94,919	95,317
Chandigarh	-	252	641	5,390	6,546
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	-	-	32	1,030	1,152
Delhi	3,347	8,126	10,947	44,367	37,468
Daman & Dui	8	312	460	1,407	1,401
Mizoram	-	-	5,983	8,948	8,994
Pondicherry	-	188	198	411	431
Uttaranchal/ Uttarakhand	-	-	-	91,047	1,06,399
Lakshadweep	-	-	-	3	4
Goa	-	-	-	2,135	2,600
Jharkhand	-	-	-	17,326	16,956
Chhattisgarh	-	-	-	3,424	3,431
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,09779</b>	<b>14,19,835</b>	<b>12,52,444</b>	<b>28,71,749</b>	<b>29,26,168</b>

Source: Census of India, 1961, 1971, 1981, 2001 and 2011; Timsina, 1992.

1. The above population is based on person who returned the Nepali language as their mother tongue.

2. The population is not inclusive of ethnic groups such as Limbu, Tamang and Rai. These three ethnic groups returned non- Scheduled languages as their mother tongue.

**Table 2.2: The number of Limbu, Tamang and Rai in India who returned non-Scheduled language as their mother tongue**

Ethnic Group	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Tamang	-	10,059	-	17,494	20,154
Rai	-	-	-	14,378	15,644
Limbu	-	20,258	28,174	37,265	40,835
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>30,317</b>	<b>28,174</b>	<b>69,137</b>	<b>76,633</b>

Source: Census of India 2001 and 2011

## **2.11. Structural Crisis in the Tea Plantation System and the Nepalis out-Migration: A Brief Analysis**

Tea is the most worldwide popular beverage after water. India is one of the producers; it produces almost 30% of the global tea production in which Dooars has a significant contribution. In the Dooars region of West Bengal, after the year 1874, the growth of tea plantation was at its peak. With the passing time, the small tea gardens of Dooars became the largest tea estates (Mitra, 2010). The tea industry in Dooars has been providing direct employment to thousands of people and at the national level, it employs more than a million labourers, while another more than two million people earn their living doing work associated with the tea production, marketing, etc. (Mitra, 2010: 1). Mostly, the tea plantations have given the livelihood to the remote and isolated areas. However, over the last few years, the plantation as a social system has been in a crisis. Its worst impact has been reflected in the tea gardens of Dooars. Though the crisis in Dooars' tea gardens is not because of the crisis in the tea garden of the region itself, but the crisis is the result of the

collapse in tea plantation system as a whole which has disabled the entire socio-economic structure of the tea plantation system in India in general and in Dooars in particular. Since the post Globalization period, the Indian tea industry has become the highest-cost producer comparing to the stagnant sale price. The real-world market price has declined; the production cost has unprecedentedly increased. The removal of the trade barrier has proven the worse enemy for the Indian tea Industry as the tea has been imported greatly from countries like Srilanka, Vietnam, and Indonesia. While there has been decreased export of the tea from the country. Besides this, the new economic policy of the country has allowed many multinational companies (Coca Cola, Pepsi, Thumbs Up and many more) in its domestic market (Mitra, 2010). It has influenced the domestic market for tea in India. However, the statistics reveal that there has been a 60% growth in production from the year 1991, but the export remained very low (Bose, 2018). It has been mentioned in the opinion section of the Hindu newspaper of March 8, 2018, that in the absence of the export potential of the tea, the domestic market has been the sole target of the planters, but India's per capita drinks is much less than that of Pakistan. There has been diminishing of the interest of the corporate in tea as the top marketers like Tatas and Unilever have almost withdrawn to the tea business. Similarly, the high production of cheap tea by the small growers over the past 25 years has been affected the tea market very significantly which has been supported by the bought- leaf factories since the year 1980. Very soon the tea growing region was full of the bought- leaf factories. Most importantly, the breakdown of the USSR in the year 1991 was also one of the major reasons for the crisis in the Indian tea Industry because Russia used to buy tea from India at a very high price. However, due to the collapse of the Russian unions, India lost its international market. Tea planter argues that all 195 tea

gardens of West Bengal in the plain region are suffering from low yield with high production cost except 5 of them hardly produce a profit (Bose, 2018). The crisis in the tea plantation system as a whole has also been affected by the tea gardens of Dooars region. Therefore, the tea companies have curtailed down all the facilities of the labourers such as ration, medical allowance, and housing facilities. Tea garden labourers are being paid merely their dry wages of 168 per day. Assistant manager of Gangutia tea Garden Mukesh Mahato while explaining the present condition of tea garden of Dooars in general and Gangutia, in particular, says – “the owners are facing losses as the production cost is high. Most of the tea bushes of Dooars are aged old; they cannot produce tea in both qualitative and quantitative manner. The owners are not ready for re-plantation of the tea bushes as they are afraid of the high production cost. He further says that the quality of tea produced by Dooars tea gardens is not qualitative, it does not get high prices in the market. The market is also full of artificial tea bags, which discouraged the people to buy our tea. At present times, the labourers are not ready to put their effort into their work. They hardly work for 3-4 hours and would sleep inside the tea garden. If we say to do work properly then they come with a trade union leader and threaten us for the strike. So, how to provide them the high wage as the companies are in losses. While talking on the minimum wage agitation among the tea workers, he says it is not possible to implement the law because soon the labourers get much money, they do not work properly in the tea garden and that is not acceptable to the owners of the plantation. On the other hand, there is a shortage of male labour- power. We need a male labour force for khalasi, driver, and dabaipani (spraying). Most of the male labourers have migrated to outside. Therefore, to makeover the shortage, we have been hiring the labour force from nearby areas such as Totopara,

Madharihat, Hashimara, and Hamiltonganj”. Thus, it’s not predetermined to say the crisis of the plantation system has been encouraging the out-migration from tea garden villages of Dooars in recent times. Therefore, for a sociologist, it becomes significant to understand the phenomenon of migration in a holistic manner. What is the pattern of migration the Nepali people have been following? Has to bring to understand the phenomenon. The next chapter will deal with the pattern of out-migration among the Nepali people describing every dimension such as who are the migrants? What is the gender of the migrants? What is the age structure of the migrants? What kind of family structure they have? How the destination of migration they choose? What is the occupational diversification the migrants have? And so, on and so forth.



## CHAPTER- 3

### THE PATTERN OF OUT- MIGRATION OF NEPALI COMMUNITY FROM TEA GARDEN VILLAGES: A MICRO LEVEL SCENARIO

#### 3.1. Introduction

Migration<sup>46</sup> is a multidisciplinary subject to be studied. Today, the study field of migration has become the green grass for almost all disciplines of the social sciences. Sociology is not exceptional in this haste. Internal migration is related to a process of change in the social system. Thus it has significance in the process of change and development of the country (Rele, 1969). Generally, migration is a geographical movement of a person/ group of people between the place of origin and the destination. However, sociologically, migration is not only a geographical movement; it is a socio-cultural movement. It refers to an alteration in dwelling place (The 'habitus') of person/ people and social group (Startup, 1971). The process of migration is a complex social phenomenon and the people are the main players of the process. To identify the migrant, the Census of India defined the 'migrant' "when a person is enumerated in the census at a different place than the place of birth, he/ she is considered a migrant'. There are two types of data on migration the place of birth (POB) and place of the last residence (POLR) data. The later data relatively provides different dimensional information on migration. When migration takes place, it does not take place arbitrarily especially in- voluntary migration. It has a complex but systematic process to understand. Firstly, it has a place of origin<sup>47</sup> and a place of

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<sup>46</sup> Here the migration refers to 'voluntary migration' rather than other types of migration.

<sup>47</sup> Here the place of origin is rural areas

destination<sup>48</sup>. Secondly, it is characterized by the migrant/migrants at the place of origin. Thirdly, there are several pushes/ pulls factors or either factors in both places of origin and destination such as employment, education, marriage and so on so forth (here the concern of the study is on the migration for employment reason). Fourthly, the migrant is not an individual entity rather it has social, cultural, and economic and many other relations with his/ her family. Fifthly, the acceptability of the migrant/ migrants and for the migrant at the place of destination (it also determines the duration of the migration) and lastly the characteristic/ capacity of the migrant/ migrants in terms of gender, age, education, caste/ class and so on so forth. On top of all these, the migrant/migrants himself/ herself/themselves has/have to be convinced with the push and pull motivations of both places of origin and destination. Thought, the migration for employment reason is economic, economic needs of the migrant are the major motivation to determine the nature of migration, several non- economic attributes always play a significant role in initiating the migration process actually to happen. The chapter tries to understand the nature of interstate, rural to urban migration for the employment reason in the context of India and try to explore the patterns of out-migration among the Nepalis communities in Dooars of Alipurduar district, West Bengal in micro-level. Generally, the chapter is divided into two sections, i) Section one analyses the rural-urban migration at macro-level and section two tries to understand it at a micro level based on the field survey of tea garden villages in the Dooars.

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<sup>48</sup> The place of destination is urban areas. Here the concern is on the Rural- Urban migration steam as the concern of the research is Rural- Urban migration steam.

### **3.2. Migration in the Indian Context**

Migration (for employment reason and rural-urban migration) is an outcome of the scarcity of livelihood for increasing rural population at the place of origin on the one hand and probability of opportunities in urban areas as the result of technological inventions and industrial development on the other hand. Migration occurs out of the interplay of uncomfortable and hostile living and comfortable living and fruitful opportunities in urban places (Singh, 1980). It is a transformation of homogenous to the heterogeneous population. It is a movement of people from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity and a foremost factor for the division of labour and functional specialization (Durkheim, 1993). In the Indian context, migration has a long past and history. Though the volume of migration for employment was very minimal, the notions of the rural and urban cities were there at the very beginning of the civilization in India. Gradually, the increase in population and scarcity in livelihood in rural hinterland people started to migrate into urban centers for employment. Kingsley Davis had argued that Indians were less mobile based on interstate migration which was merely 3.6% in 1931 in India comparatively 23% in the United States in 1940 (Davis, 1968). The hold of Indians upon the tradition and inconsistency of urban lifestyle with rural ways of life proved to impede rural-urban migration in India. This is why Tumble (2018) argued that India was and is a land of less spatial mobility (Tumble, 2018). In this context, Saxena (1977) says 'the Indians are famous for their attachment with native, therefore, were less mobile in the early days before independence (Saxena, 1977). Categorically, Indian migration history can be classified as pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. The post-colonial migration also can be classified into pre-90s and post 90s. In shaping and development of the Indian socio-economic and



cultural heritages migration has a great contribution. During the pre-colonial period, the people used to move from one place to another mainly for religious and trade purposes (McNeill, 1984). Similarly, there are ample pieces of evidence regarding the migratory movement (interstate) of the people (labourers) during the colonial period into plantations, ports, and industrial regions. Whereas, after the independence of the country people greatly attracted to just industrialized cities. However, migration has been often a round trip for Indians (Saxena, 1977). Between the census years, 1981- 1991 and NSS years 1983 and 1993 revealed the discouragement for migrants as India was suffering from an economic crisis. However, post-1990, after the adoption of new economic policy by the Indian government there was an increase in the rate of migration (Interstate, rural-urban migration) which was revealed by both the census and NSS data of 2001 and 2000 respectively (Bhagat, 2015:9). The growing diversification of economic opportunities industrialization, commercialization, transportation facility and increasing level of modern education has always been boosted the rate of rural-urban migration in India. Rural-urban migration steam is considered to be important than the other migration steams such as rural-rural, urban-rural and urban- urban in terms of its socio-cultural and economic dynamism. This particular migration steam has always been a male dominance in India. Therefore, it is also called a male migration while contrary to female migration for rural- rural migration. Female migrants have outnumbered the male migration in rural- rural migration steam because of a social reason for the patriarchal system after marriage. However, there are incomparably very fewer numbers of female rural-urban migrants to male migrants, especially for employment. it is argued by Sovani (1965) rural-urban migration takes place during productive age (Sovani, 1965) as it is employment migration. Females are still very

less mobile compared to their counterpart male migrants into urban sectors particularly for employment in India. The reason is the existence of the patriarchal mentality of the society and several responsibilities of females in such a patriarchal society. The urban-urban migratory stream, on the other hand, has been characterized by the middle-class migrants (Singh, 1981). People from a small town and urban areas to metropolitan cities migrate for wider employment opportunities. In every migration stream, but particularly rural-urban migration stream the existence of control sub-systems<sup>49</sup> (the family, the village communities in rural area and city administration in an urban setting) are always play their part as an operating system in determining the volume of migration (Mabogunje, 1970). In today times every minute many people migrate to urban cities for their different reasons and employment reason is one of the dominant reasons. A very simple observation for such a migration can be made of railway stations and airports during Diwali, and Eid, Holi that how much migrants return to villages for festivals celebration (Pranav, 2018). In the year 2017, a statistic has been revealed by the Economic Survey of India on internal migration, in the country, the magnitude of annual migrants were almost nine million during the year 2011-2016. While, the level of urbanization in India, it has increased to 31.16% in 2011 it was 27.81% in the census decade of 2001. The reason for this increase is not only the natural growth of the population but also the rural-urban migration basically for employment reasons (Sharma, 2017). The temporary (seasonal) migrants who migrate for employment purposes into the urban centers largely engage with the low-paying jobs like

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<sup>49</sup> See Mabogunje, A. . L. (1970). Systems Approach to a theory of rural urban Migration.

*Geographical Analysis*, 2, 1–18.

construction, hotel, manufacturing, transportation, domestic works, etc. They work as unskilled labourers with fewer opportunities for upward mobility stuck in poorly paid and hazardous sectors of a job for life long. Although the proportion of the urban population to the rural population is 31.14% (Wikipedia, 2019), the level of urbanization has been increasing rapidly in recent decades due to movement millions of population into urban centers for employment and other purposes. This moving population stays in rural hinterland permanently. Interestingly, Indian cities do not have ample opportunities and hardly appropriately accommodate the migrants, results in the emergence of the slums. The Indian government in the year 2015 had launched the mission of a hundred smart cities mission to deal with the increasing issue of urbanization (Sharma, 2017). However, the problem of urbanization without sufficient features in urban centers has been a very big and challenging issue in the country. The number of migrants is certainly bigger than that shows in the data of the National Sample Survey (NSS) and the population census. There is an upsurge in the migrants for employment reasons in recent years in the country. Based on the data on place of last residence (POLR), it was 232.5 million in 1991, 314.5 million in 2001 and 453.6 million in 2011 census decades. Thus, the decadal growth of migrants during 1991- 2001 was 35.5% which was gone up to 44.2% during 2001-2011 (Kundu, Amitabh; Mohanan, 2017). The major destination states who housed the migrants are Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala. Whereas, the major source states of these migrants are Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and West Bengal (Sharma, 2017). The source states of migration are not much industrially sound and facilitated in recent years; the existing industries have not been smoothly running in the states. West Bengal is also not exceptional on it. West Bengal has

been facing male out-migration almost from all regions<sup>50</sup>. However, some of the regions have a greater intensity of migration proved economically very depressed regions such as entire Rarh plain, South Bengal plain, Hills and Terai regions in both census decades of 1991 and 2001 respectively for employment reason (Debanath, Manoj; Nayak, 2018). it is necessary to discuss certain points in connection to migration in the light of the General system theory of rural-urban migration. The general system of Mabogunje is to be considered useful to have a crystal clear understanding of migration in the Indian context (Singh, 1980). The approach not only questions why but also how the process of migration takes place. What are the operative mechanisms involved in the migration process? What are the institutional elements that encourage and discourage the volume of migration? What could be the general pattern of migration and what mechanism are decisive for the pattern? What would be the feedback effects do the migrants bring in? These questions are very much significant in understanding the pattern of migration. In today's times, there is a great improvement in transportation and communications which made it possible to break down the isolation and remoteness of the villages. Today almost all villages are directly connected to the urban centers through different means of communication. The pace has been rapidly increasing after the invention of the internet. The world has become a global village (McLuhan, 2017). The decreasing isolation and increasing socio-economic and cultural integration of rural hinterland and urban centers have been spreading awareness to a great extent among the villagers result in the emergence of expectations and desires for a

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<sup>50</sup> See Debanath, Manoj; Nayak, k. D. (2018). Male Out-Migration In West Bengal Regional Pattern and Determinants. *Trans. Inst. Indian Geographers*, 40(1), 119–130.

so-called ‘good life<sup>51</sup>’ which urban centers are expected to provide. Consequently, the villagers move into urban areas and enter into a direct exchange of labour and wage. However, the operation of the migration system is not easy and arbitrary. In the system of migration, the potential migrant age, gender educational qualification, religion, and ethnic orientation are important categories on the basis of such categories the migration process selects the appropriate migrants. This selection process determines the patterns of migration and the control subsystem present in both places of origin and the destination maintains the volume of migration (Mabogunje, 1970). In a simple word, a certain section of the population only migrates in terms of sex, age, educational level, marital status, professional qualification, caste, class, religion and social category, etc. It is because of the nature of human reaction as they react differently in the same structural settings (Singh, 1980). Regarding the migration selectivity, Zachariah says “ in India migration is highly male selective compare to the west”(Zachariah, 1964: 261). In light of the above enlightenment, the pattern of migration among the Nepali community in Dooars will be explored.

### **3.3. Patterns of Out- Migration Among the Nepali Community in the Dooars: A Micro- Level Analysis from the Field**

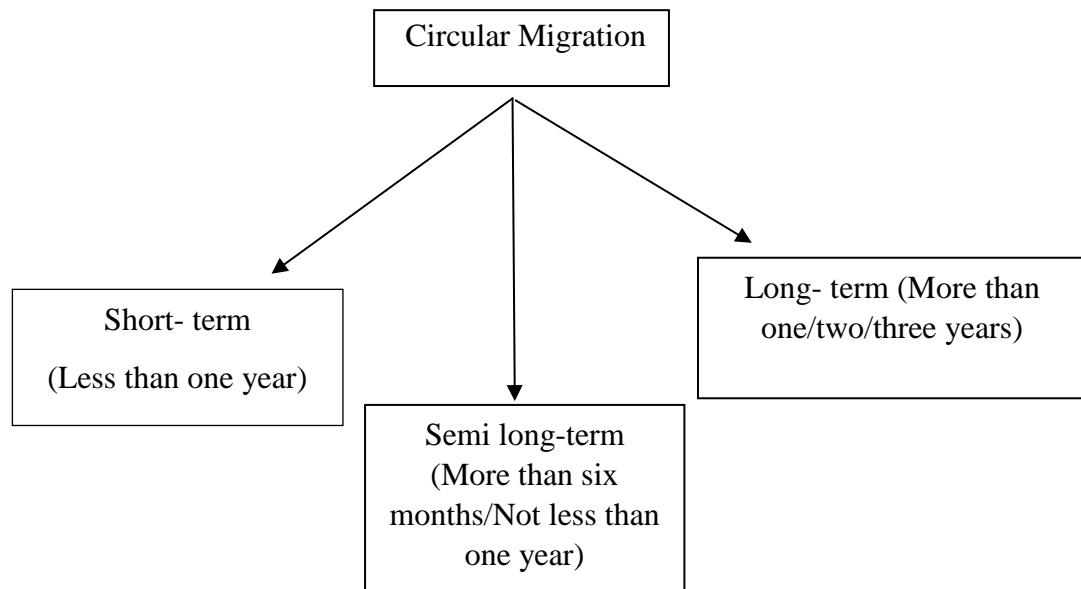
The present section of the chapter will be focused on the pattern of out-migration in the Dooars region of West Bengal in a general manner then, it explores every attribute and aspects of out-migration in its microscopic perspective. The chapters not only understand the age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, family type and monthly income

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<sup>51</sup> Better than what the rural people were living. The better wages, facilities etc.

of the migrants but also analyze interrelationships among them. It has been found that each household of both Gangutia and Mechpara tea garden village is characterized by at least one-member circular migrants for employment (in some cases even more than single members have found migrated). The pattern of out-migration can be categorized in the following manner:

### 3.4. Circular Migration among the Nepalis of the Dooars



The circular migration is a temporary movement by the people usually it is short term, repetitive and cyclical nature (Hugo, 1982). The people in the village generally migrate for a temporary basis. The duration of staying at the destination varies from less than one year (short –term circular migration), more than one year (semi- long term) and more than two years (long-term circular migration). The table No. 3.1 display the nature of migration among the Nepalis in Dooars. Generally, the migrants follow the circular pattern of migration. On the basis of their duration of migration 18.9% of the total migrants are of short-term circular migrants, 7.4% of them are semi- long-term circular migrants and

73.8% are long term migrants which is seen to be prominent among the Nepalis migrants in Dooars. Renuka, the wife of a migrant says – “my husband work in Kerala for more than six years. He visits us once in a year and if it is necessary, he comes to visit us in-between also. The last time it was my delivery (child) time. He had come to visit me and after 15 days he again went to his workplace”. It has been found that the people generally visit their family during their great Dashera/ or Bhai tika/or Panchayat election. A migrant says – “Once I could not manage to come to my home during Dashera, it hurt me lots. Further, he says, because I felt like an orphan. The Dashera is our great festival and we get blessings of our elders on that day”. Generally, the tendency of the married migrant has been found more temporary comparing to the unmarried migrants in the villages. Although the migrants follow the circular pattern of migration, some of the migrants do not visit the village frequently. The unmarried, divorce (especially male) and scoundrel types of people fall under this category. Father of an unmarried migrant explains – “my son has been a scoundrel type when he was here in the village. He used to drink liquor and had made our life hell. Somehow, we could send him outside four years ago, and still today we are not in touch with him. Some people say that my son has lost himself somewhere”. In the same manner, the nature of the migrants’ occupation also determines the nature of the migration. A married migrant says – “I hardly can visit my family frequently because I work in a restaurant in Bangalore as an assistant of a cook. I have several facilities there say provident fund, possibilities of promotion and medical insurance, etc. Therefore, I get a holiday for 15days in a year (sometimes no guarantee). Thus, the temporality of the migration also depends on the types of migrants, the nature of the job of the migrant, etc. Similarly, 10% of the migrants have followed the pattern of step migration as the movement in step is the

movement of the people stepwise. In this movement, people move first into a town, city, and metropolitan cities in a sequential manner rather than directly jump into the metropolitan city (Ravenstein, 1885). Bishwash Thapa (30 years old) a migrant from Gangutia tea garden village explains – “I used to work in Jaigaon (a small town near Bhutan border, 35 K.M from the Gangutia tea garden village in Alipurduar district, West Bengal) in a hotel for three years. After that, I went to Siliguri (a city in Darjeeling district, West Bengal) for one year in a guest house and then I went to Bangalore (at present place of destination) four years ago”.

### Visit to the native village

**Table No. 3.1**

Duration	Gangutia tea garden ( <i>t</i> )	Mechpara tea garden ( <i>t</i> )	Total	%
Once in six months	12	11	23	18.9
Once in one year	61	29	90	73.8
Once in two-three years	3	6	9	7.4
Total	76	46	122	100

Source: Field survey, *t*= total

In the course of understanding the pattern of migration from the villages, it is necessary to understand each and every aspect of the migration in a very microscopic manner for which



it has been realized to mentioned the characteristics of the migrants in terms of its age, gender, educational qualification and so on and so forth.

### 3.5. The Characteristic of the migrants

The migration is itself a selective process. Who are the migrants and what features they are characterized by? What is the gender of the migrants? What qualifications do the migrants have? What occupation do the migrants opt for? What is the place of destination do the migrants select? become significant while understanding the patterns of migration. The following points will be explored the various characteristics of the migrants in Dooars in its field view:

**Table No. 3.2** **The migrants**

Category Of migrant	Gangutia tea garden			Mechpara tea garden			Total			%		
	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	(t)	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	(t)	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	(t)	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	(t)
School drop-out	14	9	23	19	8	27	33	17	50	27.06	13.94	41
College drop-out	5	0	5	1	0	1	6	0	6	4.9	0	4.9
Tea garden labour	24	0	24	13	0	13	37	0	37	30.3	0	30.3
Neither drop-out nor tea garden labour	23	1	24	5	0	5	28	1	29	22.97	0.83	23.8
<b>Total</b>	66	10	76	38	8	46	104	18	122	85.25	14.75	100

Source: Field survey *t = total, M= male, F= female*

The table No. 3.2 depicts the migrants' identity in terms of their previous occupation before they migrate. Who are the migrants? Because everyone cannot be part of the process of migration. In both villages of the Dooars, it has been found that there are four types of the migrants i) school drop- out ii) College drop- out iii) Tea garden labourers and iv) Neither drop- out nor tea garden labourers. Predominantly, the migrants are the school drop- out student constitutes 41 % of the total migrants of which 27.06% is male school drop- out student and 13.94% is female drop- out students. It is very much noticeable from the data that the majority of the migrants are the school drop-out student who left the school in their secondary level of studies. whereas the college drop- out student comprises 4.9% all-male. Another most important category of the migrants is that of the tea garden labourers. All of the migrants in this category are male constitutes 30.3% of total migrants of the villages. It has been found from the field that Most of them (male migrants) have transferred their tea garden name to their wives/ relatives and few of them have kept their garden job pending (those, whose wives/ relative denied to accept the name as they did not want to work in tea garden). Similarly, people neither the drop- out students nor the tea garden labourers from the villages constitute 23.8% of the total migrants out of which 22.97% is of male and 0.83% is of female migrants. It is found that the drop- out students (The children of the tea garden labourers) are more mobile (irrespective of their gender) from the villages which form the major section of the migrants. The male migrants over numbered the female migrants even among the school drop- out migrants where the participation of female migrants is 13.94%. There is no female participation in the migration from the categories of college drop- out and tea garden labourers. Although, 0.83% of migrants are female who are neither from the drop -out and tea garden labourers categories, the participation of

female in the migration for employment reason is significantly very less than male migrants in the villages. The school-going children have been developed a tendency to migrate into different cities from the villages of the Dooars as they have developed a mentality of alienation from the studies due to their daily basis of want.

**Table No. 3.3 Gender of the migrants**

Gender	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i> t	<i>Mechpara tea garden</i> t	Total	%
Male	64(52.45%)	40(32.75%)	104	85.2
Female	12(9.33%)	06(5.47%)	18	14.8
Total	76	46	122	100

Source: Field survey, *t = total*

Similarly, on the other hand, most of the tea garden labourers are not physically potent so that they would be able to migrate. Therefore, the children of the tea garden labourers found themselves selective and migrate leaving their studies half. Regarding the gender of the migrant, it is a reality from many of the migration studies and also from the census of the country that male migrants are over numbered the female especially, for employment reasons. The table No. 3.3 depicts that there is the domination of male migrants in the villages (Gangutia and Mechpara) of the Dooars. Male migrant constitutes 85.2% of the total migrants in the villages, the Gangutia tea garden village has 52.45% male migrant compare to its female migrants 9.33%. Similarly, Mechpara village has 32.75% male migrant comprising 5.47% female migrants. In the cases of both the villages, the female

migrants are very less compared to their counterpart male migrants. The out-migration from the villages shows the male dominating pattern. It has been found that mainly, two kinds of mentality work for this male-dominated migration patterns in the villages. Firstly, for the unmarried female – people in the villages understand that the cities are not safe enough for the girls and secondly, for the married/ widow female – They believe that they (women) have the entire responsibilities toward the management of the households, children and the family members. Gender prejudice has been in operation in the villages. Gyanu Thapa says – “The boys are made for the earning outside and female are for the households. We too have to suffer from earning in the cities, there is very little chance for the women. He further adds that the cities will spoil the girls”. Although, the female migration for employment reason has been detected from the villages, either because of the male members are not present who are potentially fit for the migration or the female are the only hope for the families in the villages. Sobha Lama (26 years old) a migrant explains – “I had to migrate to earn money because my husband is drunken. He never thought about his children, being a mother, I have had thought about my children”. It is found that migration has its two types of relationship with gender, positive in terms of males and negative in terms of females in the villages. Wife of a migrant, Rita Lama has been rejected by her husband whenever she shared her desire to migrate to Delhi for earning. Her husband always replied to her that if she also would migrate, who would be looking after the households, children, and parents? Such experiences show the gender biases of the process of migration in the villages. However, the perception of gender is not only one-sided among the males in the villages but, also found more or less the same among the females themselves. Wife of a migrant says – “I am happy that my husband earns money outside

and I look after the family. She adds – Chora Manche haru bar ko ghocha ho, meaning the males are the person who is for earning money outside”. Most of the female is having the same stereotypical perception regarding their gender role that males are for outside and female are for inside. Therefore, the male-dominant pattern of out-migration is also one of the outcomes of such a kind of gender division of labour in the villages. Although, the females of the new generation do not have the same sort of perception regarding the gender role in the villages, the participation of females in the process of migration has been found significantly less from the villages. A young girl while sharing her experience explains – “I also wanted to go to the city for earning money. But my parents do not permit it unlike my brother went to Bangalore without their consent. Further, she says that my parents considered the cities are not for the girls as it may spoil my life. They, often give me references to the rape cases happened in the cities. And after understanding all this I also have developed a fear deep inside towards the cities”. The age shows the biological fitness of the migrants. However, the biological requirement is not enough in course of the process of migration, the desire of the people has its importance unlike Lee’s push-pull explanation of the migration. He has focused on the desire of the people while ignoring the ability of the people (Lee, 1967). Although, the migration itself selects the potent migrants in terms of age. A particular age group shows the tendency of being affected by migration significantly compare to other age groups. The table No. 3.4 illustrates the age of the migrants in the tea garden villages of Dooars concerning the gender variation. The age group (26-30) is the most migrating population constitutes 36.9% of the total migrants (where the male migrant comprises 29.50% while only 7.38% migrants are female) followed by the age groups of (21-25), (31-35) and (41-45) having 18%, 17.2% and 11.5%

migrants of the total migrants respectively. The most affected age group has been (26-30) both for males and females. It is a productive age group in terms of energy, encouragement, aspiration, and sustainability.

**Table No. 3.4** **Age of the migrants**

Age group	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i>			<i>Mechpara tea garden</i>			Total			%		
	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F
16-20	4	4	-	1	1	-	5	5	-	4.1	4.1	-
21-25	16	10	6	6	4	2	22	14	8	18.0	11.45	6.55
26-30	27	22	5	18	14	4	45	36	9	36.9	29.52	7.38
31-35	13	12	1	8	8	-	21	20	1	17.2	16.38	0.82
36-40	8	8	-	4	4	-	12	12	-	9.8	9.8	-
41-45	5	5	-	9	9	-	14	14	-	11.5	11.5	-
46-50	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	.8	.8	-
51-55	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1.6	1.6	-
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.15	14.75

Source: Field survey *t = total, M= male, F= female*

Rupesh Lama (28 years old) a migrant from Gangutia village says – “Two more years I would be earning outside as after that I would open a grocery shop in my village. Further, he says that till 30/35 years one needs to earn using physical force, after that we cannot depend much on our physical power”. Interestingly, below the age of 26 and above the age of 30 the rate of participation of the migrants (both male and female) has been continuously lessened down in the villages. It can be said that there is a direct relationship between the

age and the volume of migration irrespective of the desire of people<sup>52</sup> especially in voluntary (employment) migration. Regarding the female migrants, the most crucial and migrating age group is (26-30) in which 7.38% has been the female migrants which is very less than that of male migrants. Except for the age group, other age groups have a very negligible rate of female migrants i.e. 6.55%, 0.82% in the age group of (21-25) and (31-35) respectively. Whereas, the age between 36 to 55 no female has participated in the process of migration from the villages. A woman (45 years old) a mother of a migrant says – “A girl is free till her marriage, after that she has to look after everything in the household and cannot leave the home till the death”. It has been found that female immobility increases with the increasing age group whereas male mobility has not been much affected by the increasing age in the village as at least till the age of pre 50 years old. Noticeably, in the age group of (51-55) 1.6%, male migrants have been found whereas no female migrant has been found under the age group. Migrants who fall under the age range between 16 to 30 years old are the drop- out students Both school and college drop- out) are the major migrating population from the villages. Similarly, the migrants those who fall between the age of 31 to 55 years old are either the tea garden labourers or the people who are neither drop- out students nor the tea garden labourers. Thus, the young population generally, the males are the most migrating population from both villages. Father of a young migrant from the Gangutia village while explaining the situation of migration says – “ You (referring to the researcher) could find the young people in the village as this is the time of Dashera (most of the migrants come back to the village during Dashera and

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<sup>52</sup> Here desire has been used in the context of Lee’s theory of migration. For detail, see Lee’s theory of migration.

Panchayat election) otherwise, the entire village would remain youth less<sup>53</sup>. Only old people are there in the village who are not eligible for migration”. During the field survey, the researcher also has observed the majority of the female and aged (older) population in both villages. The researcher also has observed the accessibility of the personal mobile phone, almost everyone has a smartphone in their hand, it is basically for communication purpose to their migrant boyfriend/ husband or near and dear one. This is how modern communication technology has grace on the migrants and their families in the villages. During the field survey, the researcher asked a young girl (16 years old who was holding a Samsung’s smartphone) that is that mobile her? Who has given it to you? The girl says – “this is my mobile given by my boyfriend (from the same village) who works in Bangalore. He has sent me ten thousand rupees through google pay in my best friend’s google pay account and later I took money from her and I bought it. Now, I can talk to him whenever I want to talk to him”. This is how it has been cleared that how the girls get their mate in the village if almost all young boys have migrated to another state. Interesting, an old man in Gangutia tea garden village while illustrating the lack of young boys in the village says – “When someone dies in the village, we need young people to fulfill the ritual of funeral (for cutting the bamboo, to dig the grave or to carry the wood for fire to the graveyard and several other works). Now-a- days, we do not find them in the village. Everyone has gone for earning and our village is full of children, female and old aged people”. Coincidentally, during field survey, the research had also witnessed the death ceremony and observed that the majority of girls (comparing to the male) were going to the graveyard (generally, earlier

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<sup>53</sup> Here, generally the youth has been referring to the boys.



only the male could participate in such ceremony, they called it MALAMI<sup>54</sup>- the people from the village go with the dead body to cremation ground with the male family members of the deceased person, because no female members were allowed to go to cremation ground).

### Marital status of the migrants

**Table No. 3.5**

Marital Status	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i>			<i>Mechpara tea garden</i>			Total			%		
	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F
Married	46	44	2	23	22	1	69	66	3	56.6	54.14	2.46
Unmarried	29	19	10	22	17	5	51	36	15	41.8	29.5	12.3
Divorcee	1	1	-	1	1	-	2	2	-	1.6	1.6	-
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.24	14.76

Source: Field survey *t=total, M= male, F= female*

Table No. 3.4 display the marital status of the migrants with their gender. The majority of the migrants are married. It comprises 56.6% of the total migrants of which 54.14% is of the male and only 2.46% is of the female. Comparatively, Gangutia tea garden has the majority of the married male migrants than the Mechpara tea garden village. Kishor Pradhan (29 years old) a married migrant from the Mechpara village says – “It’s been more than five years of our marriage. Earlier when I was unmarried, I used to do work here and there in the village as I was under my parents. However, after marriage, I had a kind of pressure of responsibilities as a husband and father. I also had to build another house”. It

<sup>54</sup> The participants in the death ceremony, those who go with the family of the deceased person to perform the ritual in cremation ground, in the Nepali language they called it Malami.

has been found in the villages that most of the children of the tea garden labourers do not have an extra source of income except their parents' graces. And if they get married either they create an additional burden for the parents or they migrate for earning, sometimes husband alone (the most cases) or together. Regarding unmarried migrants, sometimes they get married there at the place of destination with their female co-workers from the same village or same block/or district and sometimes the unmarried couple migrate for getting married as the parents do not agree to accept them in the village for several socio-cultural reasons. Although the married migrants crucially dominated the migration pattern, unmarried migrants also constitute 41.8% of the total migrants comprising 29.5% male and 12.3% female. Similarly, 1.6% of the total migrants are the divorcee where there is no female participant has been found from both the villages.

### **3.6. The Educational level of the migrants and the type of occupation**

There have been seven categorical classification of the educational level of the migrants on the basis of the field data. These are from primary (up to class iv), upper primary (iv to viii), secondary (ix to x), higher secondary (xi- xii) to degree level (Graduation/ B. A/B.Sc./B. Com) and literate (those who are not having formal education. However, can read/write any constitutional language) and the illiterate. Most of the migrants have secondary level of education constitutes 36% which is dominant migrants among all migrants followed by the upper primary (25.40%), primary (19.7%), higher secondary (6.55%) and degree level educated migrants. Except these categories, there are 2.5% literate and 3.3% illiterate as well among the migrants. Most of the migrants from the both villages are having either secondary or upper primary level education which over numbered the other migrants. While, the migrants from Gangutia village are characterized more by

the higher secondary and degree level educated out- migrants compare to Mechpara village. Many of the migrants from both the villages are drop- out students who left their school/ college due to their inconvenience family socio- cultural and economic situations. Bikash Lama a college drop- out migrant says – “If I had normal circumstances, I would have had completed my graduation (B. A, pass course). Unfortunately, I could not study while fighting with my socio- cultural and economic condition. There was no normal environment in the family for studies as on the one hand my father used to drink every day and we had only one tea garden’s earning which was not at all enough to meet our basic needs”. The table No. 3.5 illustrate the educational qualification of the migrants and depict the relationship between their occupation and educational level. It has been found that most opted Occupation is waiter in hotel/ restaurant (26.22%) and assistant of cook/cook in hotel/restaurant (18%) followed by tea factory in Tamil Nadu (14.75%), beauty parlor (13.93%), various factory labour (10.65%), fast food shop (6.55%), sales person in mall (5.73%) and security guard in different places (4.09%). The migrants having primary level education mostly work as the tea factory labour in Tamil Nadu (Ooty) comprises 8.20% of total migrants having primary level education. Besides tea factory labour they work as labour in various factories, waiter in hotel/ restaurant, assistant of cook in hotel/ restaurant and security guard which comprises 4.10%, 3.28%, 0.82% and 3.28% respectively. Bijay Tamang (35 years old) a migrant says – “I have primary level education and I do not have much job opportunities like an educated person. I work as a labour in tea factory. Here in Ooty tea factory they pay a labour five hundred rupees per day and give an opportunity to earn over time”. Similarly, the migrants having up to upper primary level (v to viii)

### Educational qualification of the migrants

**Table No. 3.6**

Educational Level	V <sub>1</sub>	Occupation								V <sub>2</sub>	Occupation									Total	%
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	(t)	
Primary (up to iv)	14	-	-	-	2	2	6	-	4	10	-	1	-	2	2	4	-	-	1	24	19.7
U.Primary (up to viii)	17	5	10	-	-	2	-	-	-	14	-	5	-	-	7	2	-	-	-	31	25.4
Secondary	29	-	3	5	1	13	3	4	-	15	3	-	1	-	5	2	4	-	-	44	0
H.S	5	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	8	36
Degree	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	6.55
Literate	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	6.55
Illiterate	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4	2.5
Total	76	13	16	5	3	17	9	4	9	46	4	6	2	2	15	9	4	3	1	122	3.3
																					100

Source: Field survey t=total, V<sub>1</sub>= Gangutia tea garden, V<sub>2</sub>= Mechpara tea garden

1=Asst. in beauty parlor, 2=Asst. of cook in hotel/ restaurant, 3= Sales person in a mall, 4=Security guard in various places, 5=Waiter in hotel/ restaurant 6= Factory labourers in tea garden factory in Ooty, 7= fast- food shop, 8=Labour in various factory (wood, steel, soap, sleeper etc.) 9= house maid

education constitutes 25.40% of total migrants from both the villages. Among them the predominantly opted occupation is of assistant of the cook in hotels/ restaurants. They constitute 12.29% of the total migrants having upper primary level education followed by the occupation of waiter in hotel/ restaurant (7.37%), beauty parlor (4.09%) and tea factory labour (1.61%). The migrants having secondary level education are found predominantly opted the occupation of waiter in hotels/ restaurants constitute 14.72% of total migrants having secondary level education. They are also found working in beauty parlor, sales person, helper of cook, tea factory labour and in fast food shops as well which comprises 2.45%, 4.9%, 2.45%, 4.09% and 6.54% respectively. 1.63% migrant having higher secondary level education are found working as an assistant in beauty parlor and some among them work as an assistant of cook constitute 2.45% and the same percent (2.45%) work as labour in various factories in the cities. Regarding the degree level educated migrants, most of them work in beauty parlor in various position constitutes 5.73% while, 0.81% of them opted sales person as their occupation in various cities of the country. Similarly, tea factory labour and waiter are mostly opted occupations among the literate migrants (not having formal education) constitutes 1.7% and 0.8% respectively. While, 2.47% and 0.82% among the illiterate migrants work in various factories (steel, soap, cement) and tea factory as the labour. It can be said that there is no positive relationship between the migrants' educational qualification and the occupation they are involve in rather the arbitrary relationship has been seen. In a simple word, the migrants are unskilled and the most of the occupation they are involved in do not have much value of formal educational level, but skills. Those who work in beauty parlor, some of them have diploma and a particular specialization such as hair stylist, beauty therapist etc. Adesh Gurung a

graduate (B. A) migrant says – “I have completed my graduation and knowing the competition for a government job, I did my diploma for six months in hairstyle from Siliguri and moved to Kerala. Further, he says that there are many people working in beauty parlor who do not have a diploma, they get less money than people have the official evidence of their skill”. Similarly, Umesh Lama a migrant works as an assistant of the cook in a restaurant in Bangalore explain – “I have been working there in a restaurant for more than five years. They asked me to learn everything from the cook as there is a possibility for me to get a promotion from assistant to a third or second cook. They have a hierarchy in cook on the basis of skill whether one has formal education or not”. While a migrant having a higher secondary education says – “I work as a waiter in a hotel in Karnataka. They do not value you on the basis of your formal education rather they see your skill”. Understanding the field view of the villages it can be said that the job market for migrants having a certain skill is more attractive than those who have formal education. Some of the migrants those who worked as an assistant of cook earlier also promoted as a third cook in their workplace on the basis of their experience and work skills. A migrant says – “recently they have promoted me to the third cook from a working boy as they liked mine honestly in work. Now I will have the facility of provident fund and yearly holiday too. It has been more than four years working there in a restaurant in Bangalore. Several people came and went, but I have not left the place”. The village Mechpara has sent the female migrant to Jammu and Kashmir as a housemaid.

### **3.7 Social Category of the migrants**

Regarding the social category of the migrants on the basis of their caste, both the villages are composed up of various castes that come under various constitutional social categories

such as General, OBCs, STs, SCs, etc. The migrants belong to the social category of STs constitute 43.4% Of the total migrants from both the villages. Whereas the least migrating social category of the village is General, constitutes 6.6% of the total migrants. it is because the Bahun and Chhetri (General) are not much dependent on the tea garden earning. Although, both castes belong to the general social category i.e. Bahun and Chhetri have work in tea gardens, they have several other sources of income such as cattle, agricultural land in nearby khas<sup>55</sup> busy and priesthood occupation as well particularly for the Bahuns in the Gangutia village. Whereas, STs, SCs, and OBCs are greatly dependent on the tea gardens and found to be having the least other sources of income. Interestingly, there is no migrant belonging to the General category from the Mechpara village whereas it has the highest percentage of STs (27.02%) migrants which over numbered the migrants belong to other (General, OBCs and SCs) social categories. The table No. 3.5 depicts the social category of the migrants while showing its micro caste categories. The caste composition of the migrants from both the villages basically are Sharma/ Bahun, Chhetri, Thapa, Bhujel, Rai, Limbu, Mangar/Magar, Chepang, Lama/ Tamang, Kami/ Biswakarma/ Biswa/Bareilly, Darjee/Damai/ Nawbagh/ Sarki and Newar/ Pradhan. Caste such as Sharma/ Bahun, Chhetri come under the General category, Thapa, Bhujel, Rai, Limbu, Mangar/Magar, Chepang, Pradhan/Newar are OBCs and Lama/ Tamang belong to STs whereas caste such as Kami/ Biswakarma/ Biswa/Barailey, Darjee/Damai/ Nawbagh/ Sarki are SCs in constitutional social category. The caste Lama is the most migrating people from

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<sup>55</sup> There is a Khas land in interior of the Gangutia tea garden village. They called it Khas Busty where some of the people have agricultural land. Khas land is a land where nobody has their property right. Generally, it is a land belong to the Government.

### Caste Category of the migrants

**Table No. 3.7**

Social Category	V <sub>1</sub>	Caste												V <sub>2</sub>	Caste												Total		
	(t)	A	A <sub>1</sub>	A <sub>2</sub>	A <sub>3</sub>	A <sub>4</sub>	A <sub>5</sub>	A <sub>6</sub>	A <sub>7</sub>	A <sub>8</sub>	A <sub>9</sub>	A <sub>10</sub>	A <sub>11</sub>	(t)	A	A <sub>1</sub>	A <sub>2</sub>	A <sub>3</sub>	A <sub>4</sub>	A <sub>5</sub>	A <sub>6</sub>	A <sub>7</sub>	A <sub>8</sub>	A <sub>9</sub>	A <sub>10</sub>	A <sub>11</sub>	t	%	
Gen	8	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	6.6
OBCs	22	-	-	3	5	2	4	5	1	-	-	-	2	10	-	-	2	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	2	32	26.2	
STs	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	-	-	-	53	43.4	
SCs	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	11	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	29	23.8	
Total	76	2	6	3	5	2	4	5	1	20	15	11	2	46	-	-	2	-	3	-	3	-	33	-	3	2	122	100	

Source: Field survey t = total, V<sub>1</sub>= Gangutia tea garden, V<sub>2</sub>= Mechpara tea garden

A= Sharma/ Bahun, A<sub>1</sub>= Chhetri, A<sub>2</sub>= Thapa magar<sup>56</sup>, A<sub>3</sub>= Bhujel, A<sub>4</sub>= Rai, A<sub>5</sub>= Limbu, A<sub>6</sub>= Mangar/Magar, A<sub>7</sub>= Chepang, A<sub>8</sub>= Lama/ Tamang, A<sub>9</sub>= Kami/ Biswakarma/ Biswa/Barailey A<sub>10</sub>= Darjee/Damai/ Nawbagh/ Sarki A<sub>11</sub>= Newar/ Pradhan.

<sup>56</sup> There are different types of Thapa in the Nepali community, here Thapa has been referring to Thapa Magar. Again, Thapa Magar is different sub- caste than that of the Magars themselves.



both the villages followed by Thapa, Bhujel, Rai, Limbu, Mangar/Magar, Chepang, Pradhan and Kami/ Biswakarma/ Biswa/Barailey, Darjee/Damai/ Nawbagh/ Sarki. However, caste such as Bahun and Chhetri have been found the least migrating people. A villager belongs to Chhetri caste says while explaining the reasons for their least mobility explains – “I have work in tea garden which I have given to my wife very earlier after I got married and I do the job of a milkman in the village. I supply the collected milk from the village or nearby village to the hotels situated in the Kalchini (town). I have more than enough earning for my family”. Similarly, a person belongs to Sharma caste explains – “By profession, I and my only son are the priests. However, my daughter- in- law has work in the tea garden which I had bought in 25,000 rupees while the tea garden was smoothly running. Although, the malfunction of the garden has affected our income but, not that much as both (me and my son) of us earn little bit whatever money by doing birth, death, marriage, and other rituals is enough for survival”. Understanding the context, it is clear that those who are directly got affected by malfunction of the tea gardens are most migrating people such as STs, SCs, OBCs. Contextualizing the statement of the Sharma and Chhetri above the villagers can remain empty stomach, they cannot avoid the socio-cultural rituals such as birth, death, and marriage. Although most of the upper caste people have not migrated from the village, they constitute 6.6% of the total migrants. A migrant belongs to Sharma caste says – “though I belong to upper caste, I do not have an extra source of income except tea garden earning which has not been sufficient to meet my family's increasing needs. I had to migrate”. It is found that the migrants belong to STs (Lama) and SCs (Kami, Damai, Sarki, Nawbagh, Barailey, Biswakarma from the Gangutia

villages migrated mostly to the destination of Kerala, Ooty (Tamil Nadu), Karnataka, Bangalore, and OBCs (Thapa, Magar, Rai, Pradhan, Bhujel, etc.) migrants have mostly opted the destinations of Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana whereas, the female General(Sharma) migrants have gone to Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, the Mechpara village has sent its STs and SCs migrants to Meghalaya, Chennai, Uttarakhand.

### **3.8. Family size of the migrants**

Tea garden villages of Dooars are characterized by both joint and nuclear families. However, the structure varies from family to family. Some of the families have members of three/four generations together with one single hearth. However, earning members are very less. Similarly, some families have members of only two generations formed nuclear families. While some families are there having two members (husband-wife, father-son/daughter, mother-son/ daughter or brother-sister, sister-sister, brother- brother, mother-in-law- daughter- in- law, etc.) sometimes formed single parents' family. Both villages have a predominance of the nuclear family constitutes 54.73% while, joint family and single-parent family 34.73% and 10.52% respectively. Almost every family whether it is joint, nuclear and single-parent family has at least one migrant and many families have more than one and sometimes more than two migrants. In the villages, 74.73% family has single migrant members while 24.31% family has two members migrated and 1.05% family had three members migrated to different cities. Almost all families have not more than single breadwinner so they have one hand and five-six mouths. The number of the size of the families is not always large because of the avoidance of the government family planning in the village but, the size increase because most of the families have an additional member in form of married but separated daughter/ sister/ aunt and their children, etc.

Mother of a migrant from the Gangutia tea garden villages says – “my son (unmarried) works in Rajasthan. He sends money every month and the money had enough if the additional family members would have had not been there in our family. We have our married but separated daughter with us and it would be no problem if she had the only one but, she has her three children with us”. In the villages, every joint family has the same type of cry as each family has a broken relationship and its silent burden.

**Table No. 3.8** **Family Size of the migrants**

Family type	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i> (t)	<i>Mechpara tea garden</i> (t)	Total	%
Joint	20	13	33	34.73
Nuclear	30	22	52	54.73
Single parent	06	04	10	10.52
Total	56	39	95	100

Source: Field survey, *t = total* Table No. 3.7 depict the family types of the migrants.

### **3.9. Destination of the migrants**

There are many destinations opted by the migrants. Out of the total twelve migration destinations, Kerala is the most popular destination among the migrants from the villages. Of 122 migrants 51(41.80%) have migrated to Kerala, 17(13.13%) to Bangalore, 20(16.39%) to Tamil Nadu, 10(8.19%) to Delhi, and Rajasthan, 8(6.55%) Andhra Pradesh 1(0.81%), Uttarakhand 1(0.81%), Meghalaya 1(0.81%), Chennai 2(1.63%), Haryana

5(4.09%) and Mumbai 4(3.27%) respectively. Regarding the gender variation, table No. 3.8 displays both the village have sent 49.03% of total male to Kerala which has given employment to 44.44% of the total female migrants from both the villages. While the destination Kerala has accepted 25.96% male and 22.22% female migrants from the Gangutia village which is 15.38% and 22.22% respectively in the case of the Mechpara village. The table also depict the destinations such as Bangalore, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Chennai, Haryana, and Mumbai are the male-centric migration destination where no female migration has been detected while these destinations have accommodated 16.34%, 0.96%, 9.61%, 0.96%, 0.61%, 1.92%, 4.80% and 3.84% of male migrant. Whereas, female migration has been concentrated into the destinations of Kerala, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu (Ooty). These destinations constitute 44.44%, 11.11% and 44.44% of female migrants respectively. The migrants who have migrated to Kerala are employed in the beauty parlor, hotels, restaurants, and shopping malls. Out of total migrants to Kerala males are over numbered from both the villages. People have migrated to Bangalore are mostly employed in Hotels/ restaurants as the helper of the cooks or as the cook. Similarly, those who opted Tamil Nadu as their destination are employed (almost all of them) in the tea factory in Ooty where both males and females are employed as the daily labour. However, the number of females is very less than that of males. While at the rest of the destinations people employed as the security guard, salesperson, and the factory labourers in various factories. Migrants from the Gangutia village have migrated to Kerala significantly. Of 76 migrants, 31(40.8%) migrants have opted Kerala as their destinations followed by Bangalore 13(17.10%) and Tamil Nadu Ooty 10(13.15%). Whereas the least opted destination from the Gangutia villages is the Chennai constitute merely 1.31% of the

total migrant of the village. The people from the Mechpara village have also predominantly migrated to Kerala accounts for 43.47% followed by another destination Ooty of Tamil Nadu constitutes 21.73% of the total migrant. Similarly, other destinations that people from Mechpara village have opted are Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Chennai, Haryana and Mumbai comprising 2.17%, 6.52%, 2.17%, 2.17%, 2.17%, 6.52%, and 4.34% respectively. A migrant says – “I have migrated into almost, every state of the country, I got Kerala a good place for earning. What I like about the state is the nature of the people out there, their good behavior towards their employees”. Similarly, a female migrant explains – “I work in a beauty parlor in Kerala. What I like about Kerala is its peaceful environment. Although the wage may be less, I feel Kerala is a good place for females compare to another state like Delhi, Bangalore, etc. The behavior of the employer is very nice there in Kerala”. It is found that the female migrants have migrated to a certain destination only. They have opted either Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala or Ooty in Tamil Nadu as their destination and the rest of the destinations are male-dominated. Mechpara village has sent 4(66.66%) female migrants to Kerala, 2(33.33%) to Tamil Nadu Ooty. Except for these two destinations the village has not sent female migrants to any of the destinations. Those female migrants who have opted Rajasthan and Ooty as their destination have moved with their respective husbands, while Kerala has accommodated only the unmarried female migrants. The migrants have selected different destinations asymmetrically from the villages under investigation. Therefore, questions such as How a migrant opted for a particular destination? Is it the wage factor? does the distance matter? Is it available for opportunities? Or is it the social network of the migration? Which determines the destinations? Although all of these questions are important to understand,

the role of social networks has more implications to investigate sociologically. Because, it is not always the economic factor that explains the growth of migration (Massey & España, 1987).

**3.10. Social network and migration:** The role of the social network in the process of migration has been assumed by most of the researchers as it is a sort of stimulation in increasing migration from the place of origin to the destination (de Haas, 2010).

**Table No. 3.9 Migrants and their destinations**

Destinations	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i>			<i>Mechpara tea garden</i>			Total			%		
	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F	(t)	M	F
Kerala	31	27	4	20	16	4	51	43	8	41.80	35.24	6.6
Bangalore	13	13	-	4	4	-	17	17	-	13.93	13.93	-
Tamil Nadu (Ooty)	10	4	6	10	8	2	20	12	8	16.39	9.83	6.6
Andra Pradesh	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	0.81	0.81	-
Delhi	7	7	-	3	3	-	10	10	-	8.19	8.19	-
Uttarakhand	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	0.81	0.81	-
Meghalaya	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	0.81	0.81	-
Chennai	1	1	-	1	1	-	2	2	-	1.63	1.63	-
Haryana	2	2	-	3	3	-	5	5	-	4.09	4.09	-
Mumbai	2	2	-	2	2	-	4	4	-	3.27	3.27	-
J&K	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1.63	1.63	-
Rajasthan	8	6	2	-	-	-	8	6	2	6.55	4.91	1.6
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.15	14.8

Source: Field survey  $t = \text{total}$

Douglas et al. (1987) defined the social network in migration as “the webs of social ties that link eligible migrants from the place of origin to the place of destination” (Massey & España, 1987). Therefore, how the social network has its implication in determining the place of destinations has been investigated including the other factors. Of 122 migrants 97(79.5%) have selected their destination due to the social network of either relative or friends accounting 14.75% and 64.75% respectively. In the case of the Gangutia village of the total of 76 migrants, 54(71%) migrants have opted for their destinations due to the social network of relatives and friends which comprises 43(56.57%) males and 11(14.47%) female. Similarly, the Mechpara village has a total of 43(93.47%) migrants chosen their destinations influenced by the social network of either relative or friend of which 39(84.78%) are male and 4(8.69%) are female. Chandraman Kami of Gangutia village says – “when I was migrating very first-time inexperience, I went to Karnataka, where my elder brother, Suryaman was working. However, now I am in Kerala. When I was working in Karnataka, I was in touch with my friends over mobile, Facebook who were working in Kerala. I wanted to leave Karnataka, because I got a quarrel with my brother. Therefore, I asked my friends about the job opportunity and others require information about Kerala. One month later I went to Kerala”. Explaining her reason for selection of the destination Maity Barailey says – “My husband was working there in Rajasthan. My husband wanted me to go with him as he was saying that if both of us work, we could save more money for the building of our house and future children. I went because my husband said”. Table No. 3.9 also depicts the other factors for the selection of the place of destination except the social network. The second significant factor because of which the migrants have selected their destination is the agent. Of 122 migrants from both the villages of Dooars, a total of

14(11.47%) migrants have opted for their destinations of migration because of their agent send them into those destinations. Out of 14 migrants, 11(9.01%) are male and 3(2.45%) are of female migrants who have migrated to a particular destination due to agents from both villages. The Gangutia village alone has sent a total of 12 migrants out of 76 migrants to a particular destination by the agents which comprises 15.78% of the total migrants of the village. Regarding the gender variation in the village Gangutia 14.47% of males have opted for their destination due to the agent while the proportion is 1.31% for female migrants in the village. Sobit Tamang, a migrant from Gangutia village says – “I did not have money at the time of my migration, there is an agent in our village, I went to Haryana in her expenses. At that time, she was taking labourers from different villages to Haryana as she was saying there was a demand for labour from the state. She had a deal with me that she would be bearing all the expenses and also take care of my job but, I had to give her the entire salary of one month. I agreed with her. He further says that I had to suffer a lot there in the destination. I was a servant in a bungalow where I had to work like an ass and they hardly used to pay the monthly salary. They used to say that they would give me altogether during returning time to my village. I just ran away from that place without having my salary. Now, I would never go from any agent’s channel”. Sita Sharma while sharing her experience says – “I am an unmarried woman; all my brothers have their own families. My parents already died. Now, it’s difficult to survive under such a circumstance. Therefore, I requested agent didi to get me a job anywhere. She sent me to Jammu and Kashmir for the job of a housemaid in her all expenses. I had to give my one-month salary to her. I work in a house as a caretaker of the child and the households work”. Similarly, understanding the wage as a factor for the selection of the destination, the table displays



that out of 122 migrants from both the villages, 11(9.01%) migrants are there who have selected the destination for the wage factor, all are male. 10(8.19%) from the Gangutia village and 1(0.81%) from the Mechpara village. Interestingly, there is no female migrant who has selected their destination for the reason for the wage variation from both the village. Raju Darjee, a migrant says – “I have been migrating for many years and have visited into several places (cities and state) too. The state such as Delhi, Rajasthan, Bangalore, Karnataka, Haryana, Guwahati and lastly, I am in Kerala. I left all most all the previous destination because of the problem of wages. The owners do not want to give our salary on time. They always, give excuses. In, Rajasthan I used to get a salary on the 15th day of the month whereas my wife used to call me for money within the first week of the month. I had to send money to my family but, the owner used to delay every month. Therefore, I left Rajasthan. In Bangalore, the wage was not appropriate as work was hard (night security guard) and wage was not appropriate. Similarly, in other destinations also some or other sorts of problem-related to wages were with me. Now, I work in Kerala in a beauty parlor, I get salary in time plus appropriate amount”. He informed that he got to know about the destination through his Facebook friends. The migrants have opted for the destination either due to the social network of relatives or the friend as the data show that most of the migrants had their social network at the place of destination before they migrate. Many of the migrants made their network through Facebook social media. However, many migrants have migrated to a particular destination because of the agent in operation in the villages while understanding the distance factor for selecting the destination, it is found that no migrants have selected their destination for the matter of distance. Min Bahadur Kami a migrant while replying the question does distance matters

to him, says – “I can go anywhere far place if the wage is enough with the presence of my friends”. Although the other several factors determined the movement of people, the social network plays a crucial role in determining their destinations for the migrants of both the villages.

### Determining factors for the destination of migration

**Table No. 3.10**

Factors	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i>			<i>Mechpara tea garden</i>			Total			%		
	t	M	F	t	M	F	t	M	F	t	M	F
Wage factor	10	10	-	1	1	-	11	11	-	9.01	9.01	-
Relative	7	1	6	11	9	2	18	10	8	14.75	8.19	6.55
Friend	47	42	5	32	30	2	79	72	7	64.75	59.01	5.73
Distance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Agent	12	11	1	2	-	2	14	11	3	11.47	9.01	2.45
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.22	14.73

*Source: Field survey t = total*

### 3.11. Socio- economic background of the migrants

The villages of Dooars under investigation are the tea garden villages. Therefore, the socio-economic condition of the region has been shaped and influenced by the tea economy. The people of the villages are tea garden employees. They are tea garden labourers and tea garden sub- staffs. Some children of the tea garden labour and sub- staff could have become the employees of government services. However, their number is less, some of them have become teachers of schools and colleges. Many of the children of the tea garden employees have been trying harder to get any of the government jobs such as Army (Indian Army), West Bengal police, primary school teachers. Although in recent decades diversification

of the economic activities has been noticed among the young generations, the majority of the families are still significantly dependent on the tea gardens. Noticeably, Mechpara village has many of the young people who are Indian Army. It had also observed by the researcher that many of the young boys and girls were taking preparation for recruitment in the India Army in the evening at the village ground. A young boy says – “Soon there will be a rally for recruitment of the Indian Army in Salugarha Siliguri. Therefore, we (pointing out another friend) come here to practice twice in the morning and evening time. Regarding the required documents he says that they need to make the Gorkha certificate (for certain facilities such as concession in height etc.) the caste certificate (STs, SCs, OBCs, etc. from the subdivision office, Alipurduar) and most importantly, the physical fitness”. The Indian Army is also one of the desired services among the young generation in Gangutia village too. Most of the parents inspire their son to join the Indian Army by giving an example of a nearby boy who is an Indian Army. Regarding the economic situation of the villages, it has been found that of 122 migrants, 99(81.14%) have their monthly income between 2,000- 5,000 rupees, 16(13.11%) have monthly income between 5,001- 8,000 rupees while 4(3.27%) and 3(2.45%) migrants have their monthly family income between 8,001- 11,000 and 11,000- above respectively. The majority of the family member of the migrants are tea garden labourers who earn 3,720 rupees a month and if the family has two members employed in tea garden earn between 5,000- 6,000 rupees per month. Those families which have sub- staff in the tea garden earn rupees 5,400 per month. The Gangutia village has 59(48.36%) migrants whose family’s monthly income is between 2,000 to 5,000 rupees, 12(9.8%), 3(2.45%) and 2(1.63%) migrants out of total 122 migrants’ family has (5,001-8,000), (8,001- 11,000) and above 11,000 rupees monthly

income in the Gangutia village. Table No. 3.10 display the family monthly income of the migrant in both the villages. It also reveals that the family of the migrants having their family income between (8,000- 11,000) and above 11,001 rupees are because one family member has a government service in primary school, Indian Army or the West Bengal police, etc. It is found that those who are having a government service job in the villages are either from the social category of STs or SCs. Goutam Magar (35) years migrant from Gangutia village says – “My younger brother and his wife both have government service in higher secondary school. However, I am an unemployed person and I need to migrate to manage my household”. Out of 122 migrants from both the villages, a total of 3(2.45%) households have monthly income of more than 11,000 rupees as one of their family members is the government service employed either in school, Army or police force. The percentage of such households is more in the Gangutia tea garden village. The younger brother of a migrant who is a school teacher says – “we do not have any economic problem as such. But my elder brother has been migrating. He comes home for ten days and again goes somewhere at least for three months and again comes. We do not ask him for money and he also had never asked me for money. It’s his wish whether to migrate or stay, there is no economic pressure upon him”. It has been found that most of the migrants belong to the lower-middle-class family. 81.14% of total migrants’ families are tea labour family and 13.11% of them are the family of the sub- staff of tea garden whereas, a very negligible percentage of the migrants’ family has a strong economic source of income for having a government service job of its family member.

### 3.12. Monetary help to the migrants: Focusing the mechanism of agent<sup>57</sup>

Regarding the monetary support to the migrants, it is found that most of the migrants got monetary help from their friends, relatives, and agents. However, some of the migrants have managed money by themselves as they used to work here and there in the village and some of them have saved some of the money while they have returned from the destination.

#### Monthly income of the migrants' family

**Table No. 3.11**

<i>Monthly Family income</i>	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i> t	<i>Mechpara tea garden</i> t	Total	%
2,000- 5,000	59(48.36%)	40(32.78%)	99	81.14
5,001- 8,000	12(9.83%)	4(3.27%)	16	13.11
8,001- 11,000	3(2.45%)	1(0.81%)	4	3.27
11,001- Above	2(1.63%)	1(0.81%)	3	2.45
Total	76(62.29%)	46(37.7%)	122	100

*Source: Field survey t =total*

Wife of a migrant from the Mechpara village says – “what I do is that when my husband returns from the destination (Rajasthan), I keep some of the money safely, hidden from him as he does not care for money and do extravagance. The same money he uses for going back to his workplace”. Table No. 3.10 depicts the source of the monetary help, it shows that most of the migrants from both the villages got help from their friends which constitute 58.19% of the total migrants. Similarly, 17.21% of migrants got support from their

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<sup>57</sup> Here agent refers to the person who supply the labours from the village to the different cities of the country.

relatives. While 16(13.11%) migrants were supported by their family and 21(17.12%) were supported by their relative while, 2(1.6%) migrants have been found supported by the agent. Raju (32 years old) a migrant from the Gangutia village says – “When I was first migrating to Ooty then my family had given me the sum of money 2000, that money was borrowed from my neighbor which I had paid back within three months of my migration and work. However, now I manage by myself”. The table also displays how the agent helped the migrants. It was observable that the agents were in operation especially in the village Gangutia. It is found that the people get exported through the channel of the agent to different urban destinations. It is noteworthy to mention that the labour migration through the agents is an organized way of labour exportation to the urban centers for different employment purposes such as housemaid/ servant, security guard, and labour for different firms. Lakhi Magar an agent while making understand the whole process of the migration through the channel of the agent says – “I was also a migrant housemaid in Jammu and Kashmir ten years ago. I had gone there through an agent. Now, I am an agent. I collect the labours from different nearby villages as I operate from my village Gangutia. My job is to supply the labourers from the village to the office (situated in Jammu and Kashmir). Usually, I take responsibility to take the labourers from the village to the office by the train in an unreserved (general) ticket. I handover the labourers and take commission 10,000-15,000 rupees for each labour from the office plus I take the salary of one month from the labourers. Then, the office will supply those labourers to the clients according to their demand. During the entire process, I invest money starting from the village until the destination is reached. Further, she says that there are very possibilities of wastage of my money as many people at the last minute say that they do not want to go, they cry at the

railway station. I have to counsel them, make them understand and encourage them to go to the destination. There, many agents are working in a different village for different destinations. I am one of the agents working in the Garopara Gram panchayat area especially, for the destination of Jammu and Kashmir for the past seven years". She also informs that she has married a Kashmiri guy and lives in her village Gangutia at present while having a child. While observing her concrete house with the availability of many luxurious things inside the house plus the two pulsar bikes (later on got confirmation from her too) has been indicating that her job has been going on smoothly. Understanding the process of migration through the agent's channel, it has been found that it is an organized way of labour export mechanism from village to different cities of the country. There are different layers (without hierarchy) of the agents according to the accessibility of direct contact to the labour and the employers. The agent who operate from the village level (most of them are from the village and also some of them are former migrated labour) spread the news that a particular destination needs labourers with details of the job and gender preference among the villager (the agent roam in the village and ask the people if, they want to go for earning or tell to a tea shop about the details and the tea shop keeper do their job). The needy people who do not have financial support to migrate (both male and female) come to the agent and its agent who shortlist the labour among those people. Until and unless the agent has the required numbers of the labour, the agent does not move to take the incomplete person to the destination. After the agent shortlisted the people, she/he contact the office situated in the city (depends on to which city the agent is sending the labours). The green signal from the office activates the process of migration. Then, the agent decides the date for moving and tell to the shortlisted migrants. Some of the agents

themselves take the people with them to the office (the agent would have a reserved ticket basically, in the sleeper class by train. While, the labourers have to go by unreserved train ticket). However, some of the agents send another helper with the people. Throughout the journey, the agent provides food, water to them and take care till they reach the office. Once they reach the office the responsibility of the agent ends. And the agent returns to their village waiting for another consignment. The dealing of the money, how much and who will get what, the office will decide everything and the agent get their commission accordingly. It is found that the agents are of two types inside and outside agents. The inside agents are those who are from the villages and themselves were the former migrated labours, gained experiences and became an agent. While the outside agents are those who are from nearby urban places. The inside agents are from both the genders female agents are most popular among the villagers for her trustworthiness than the male agents. Similarly, the agents from the same village are more trustworthy for the people of the village compare to the outside agents (from a different village and the urban places both). Therefore, the agents have dealt with each other only to focus on their village. The outside agents are not so much popular among people nowadays. The villagers have several complaints against the outside agents for making their children missing somewhere in the urban forest. The parents of a missing girl migrant explain – “it’s been more than seven years that my girl child got missing from the place where she used to work as a servant in Delhi. The agent who had taken her was also does not come to the village. We, lodge a missing report in Kalchini police station, but there is no progress on it. Several girl migrants came back to the village (Gangutia) one by one while got pregnant last year from their workplace in different cities. Now, hardly female goes to the cities and hardly the outside



agent enter the villages says a villager. During the fieldwork, the research could observe a quarrel in the village Gangutia. Inquiring the fact, it has been found that the quarrel was between the family of migrants and the agent. The agent has given shelter to a married woman in her house as the woman wanted to go to Jammu and Kashmir for employment through the agent' channel as her husband does not give her any happiness. The woman was from the nearby village. The agent was hiding her in the house till the date of going to Jammu and Kashmir. But the information went on to the ear of her husband who immediately came to the agent's house with hundreds of people from his village. Although there are very fewer people trust the agent in the village, few people (who do not have anyone for monetary support) get ready to migrate through the mechanism of an agent. Many of the people have been missing, many of them are becoming the victims of human trafficking. While hundreds of people died in different cities. A widow of a migrant (who had died one month ago) cries while explaining about the dead husband. She says – “He used to work in Ooty (in a tea factory). He was ill during those days before he died. I was not there with him for taking care of him. He was having his friends there, but they also had to go for work. Therefore, he did not get that care what he should have given during his illness. Suddenly, I got to know that he was no more. Now, I do not have money as whatever, he had earned we had built our house with that money. I am a housewife”. Now, she has two young girl children studying in school. Similarly, Rajesh Sharma (42 years old) an unmarried migrant from Gangutia village had died six months ago in a factory in Karnataka. He had slipped his foot from the upstairs inside the factory. The family says – “we did not get his dead body too. They burnet his dead body in an electric machine there only. Because it would be very costly to bring a dead body from Karnataka”. In the Dooars

tea garden region, the migration has been often linked with the deaths of hundreds of migrants even the reason has been different for their deaths in the destinations. Many women have become widows, several children have become fatherless and many parents have been becoming the childless in the villages of Dooars.

### **3.13. Types of migrants**

The out-migration is not a new thing to the villagers of both the villages. Out-migration has been an issue for decades in the villages. Thus, the migrants have been classified into two categories a) Experienced migrants who are not first-time migrants but, they are interval migrants for several years and b) Unexperienced migrants who are first-time migrants. It is found that among the total migrants in the villages under investigation, many of them are migrants for many years. They have been repetitively migrating. However, they make a gap for at least one/ two years. They try something in the village and after they fail to establish their work in the villages, they go for earning into different states of the country. Therefore, they are experienced migrants compared to first-time migrants. Riway Rai, a migrant from Mechpara village says – “I have been migrated to different states of the country. It’s been three years that I am in my village. I had started a liquor shop here in my village. Here in the village, most people consume alcohol irrespective of their age and economics condition. For the first two years, the business ran very profitably. I used to sell liquor start from local (what they called it TUK- TUK RAKSI), beer, rum (XXX rum, they called it KALO RAKSI) to whiskey. But the problem has started in the latter year. Because people started to drink in credit. It led my business worse as whenever, I used to ask them for money, they used to say that they would give it after some days. Later on, they have a stop to come to my shop. Now, I have closed the shop and thinking to go to Ooty for work.

Because I cannot earn enough money in the village”. The person in narration is an experienced migrant who had already migrated but, for some years he is in the village. Table No. 3.10 depicts the category of migrants based on their experience of migration. It shows that most of the villagers are experienced migrants. Of 122 migrants from two villages, 98(82.78%) migrants are found to be under the category of experienced (who had already migrated) migrants and 15(17.21%) migrants are the fresh migrants, the first-time migrants. At the same time, Gangutia village has 62(51.57%) of total migrants who are not fresh migrants and 14(18.42%) migrants are fresh migrants (first-time migrants) out of 76 migrants of the Gangutia village. Similarly, from Mechpara village of 46 migrants, 38(82.60%) migrants come under the category of who had already migrated and 7(15.21%) migrants are the fresh, first time migrants. Regarding the gender dimension of the category of the migrants, of total 18 female migrants, 3(16.66%) female migrants are experienced migrants comparing 2(11.11%) and 10(55.55%) migrants in the village of Gangutia and Mechpara village respectively. Ritu Subba, a (married) migrant from Gangutia village says – “first I had migrated in the year 2005 to Delhi with my husband where I used to work as a housemaid. We had migrated leaving my children with their grandparents. We built a concrete house with the money we had earned there. Next, we had migrated to Kerala and at present, we are in Ooty and our target is for saving money for the future of our children”. The migrants go to other states keeping a particular target and after fulfilling that, another aim becomes the next motivation for them to go outside for earning. Atish Gurung, a very first-time migrant says – “when I saw the other people building their home, buying several things for their home, I used to compare my house, our condition with them. I used to get complexion. Then, I decided to migrate to build a house and to have a good life exactly

like them”. The first-time migrants refer their previously migrated people from the village. Man, Bahadur Kami says – “I got inspiration from my neighbor to earn outside as they had built their concrete house. They have been enrolled their children in a good English medium school and they never worried about the medical expenses for their family members. While I had to think to enroll my children in a normal school.

### Category of migrants on the basis of experience

**Table No. 3.12**

Category of migrants	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i>			<i>Mechpara tea garden</i>			Total			%		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Already had migrated	62	60	2	39	38	1	101	98	3	82.78	80.32	2.45
First time migrated	14	4	10	7	2	5	21	06	15	17.21	4.91	12.29
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.23	14.74

Source: Field survey, T= total, M= male, F= female

When someone used to fall ill, I had to think about the money and I did not have the thing in my house except the dilapidated two-room structure of the house. Therefore, I had decided to earn money and make everything available which was not available in my house”.

### 3.14. Number of the family member migrated

It has been found that each family of the villages under investigation has at least one migrated member. However, some of them have more than one. A few of the family has

three migrated family members. It is noteworthy to mention here that mostly the joint families have multiple migrated members in the villages. The table No. 3.11 implicitly shows the number of family members migrated from the same household. Of the total 95 families of both the villages under investigation 71(74.73%) families have single migrated members and two migrated members are characterized by 23(24.21%) families. However, three members migrated families have been found in the village Gangutia comprising 1(1.05%) single-family. Of 56 investigated families in the Gangutia village, 39(69.64%) families have a single migrated member which goes to 16(28.57%) families in case of double member migration in the village and the three members migrated family constitutes only 1.78% in the village of the total families. Regarding the Mechpara village, the table shows 32(82.05%) families have single-member out-migration which accounts for 7(17.94%) families regarding the two-member migration out of total 39 families under investigation in the village. While there is no family found having three migrated members in Mechpara village. The father of the three-member migrated family says – “My youngest son had migrated earlier, later on, he called his two brothers to Karnataka as he planned to earn together and do something for the future of the family. Further, he says that three of my sons spend money of one brother for living there in Karnataka and they send money earn by remaining two brothers to us”. Showing his new concrete house, he says that the house was built with their money otherwise he couldn't do so. Similarly, a migrant explains – “my brother lives in Kerala, he never sends money for us. Therefore, I had to go to Haryana for my family as someone has to think for the family unlike my younger brother”. It is found that everyone migrates for the sake of the family. However, they may have different case- specific reasons for their migration.

### 3.15. Migrants and total duration of their migration since the first move

The migration is not a new phenomenon for both the villages. The villagers have been out-migrating for many years to different cities of the country. It is found that some of the migrants have spent half of the life in migration.

#### Number of migrated members from the same family

**Table No. 3.13**

Number of migrated family member	Gangutia tea garden (t)	Mechpara tea garden (t)	Total	%
One member	39(69.64%)	32(82.05%)	71	74.73
Two members	16(28.57%)	7(17.94%)	23	24.21
Three members	1(1.78%)	-	1	1.05
Total	56(100)	39(100)	95	100

Source: Field survey, (t)= total

The table No. 3.11 display the duration of migration among the studied villagers. Of 122 migrants from both the villages of Dooars 10(8.19%) migrants have been migrated for six months to one year while for the duration of one year one month to three years, there are 41(33.60%) migrants in both the villages. Similarly, 24.59% migrant has been found who have been migrating since past three years one month to six years and it account 18.03% for the migrants those who have been in the movement for six years one month to nine years from both the villages. A migrant from the Gangutia village says – “I have been migrating since the year 2010, exactly one year later of my marriage. After getting married

I had to earn for my wife and future children. Now, I have two children (one boy and another girl). Sometimes, I realized that if I had not gone outside and had dependent on the tea garden, I could not give anything to my family. Many of my friends' children do not get fortunate to study in a school but, my children are studying in a school (not English school)". It is also found that some of the migrants have been migrating since the year 2008. It constates 9.06% of the migrant out of the total migrants in the studied villages. While it comprised 6.55% of the total migrants who have been migrating since the year 2000. Shyam Thapa (40 years old) a migrant from the Gangutia village says – "I am migrating since the year 2000 when our tea garden first became malfunction". The Gangutia village has 8(10.52%) of its total 76 migrants come under the category of the migrant who has been migrating for one year and its 35.52% migrants are those who have been continuously moving for livelihood for one year one month to three years from the village to the different destinations. Similarly, the people who are migrating for three years one month to six years, six years one month to nine years, nine years one month to twelve years and more than twelve years constitutes 26.31%, 17.10%, 3.94%, and 6.57% respectively. Regarding the Mechpara village, the table depict that the majority of the migrants are those who have been migrating since one year one month to three years duration which constitutes 30.43% of the total migrants of the village followed by those migrants whose duration of the movement is three years one month to six years which comprises 21.73% migrant. While at the same time the village has migrants having experience of six months to one year, six years one month to nine years, nine years one month to twelve years and more than twelve years respectively 4.34%, 19.56%, 17.39% and 6.52% of the total migrants of the village Mechpara.

### 3.16. Monthly income of the migrants at the destination

People from the villages have migrated to different destinations and employed in various economic activities. It has already been mentioned that people's education has no such gravity to attract the employment opportunities at the destinations but, one's work skills or the experience on a particular work has value regarding the migrants' occupation.

#### Total duration of the migration since first migration

**Table No. 3.14**

Duration	<i>Gangutia tea garden</i>			<i>Mechpara tea garden</i>			Total			%		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
I	8	3	5	2	2	4	10	5	9	8.19	4.09	7.37
II	27	21	6	14	12	2	41	33	8	33.60	27.04	6.55
III	20	19	1	10	10	-	30	29	1	24.59	23.77	0.81
IV	13	13	-	9	9	-	22	22	-	18.03	18.03	-
V	3	3	-	8	7	-	11	10	-	9.01	8.19	-
VI	5	5	-	3	-	-	8	5	-	6.55	4.09	-
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.21	14.73

Source: Field survey, T= total, M= male, F= female

Code: I= Six months to one year  
 II= One year one month to three years  
 III= Three years one month to six years  
 IV= Six years one month to nine years  
 V= Nine years one month to twelve years  
 VI= Twelve years one month to above

Similarly, people engage in a similar kind of occupation also have different salary structure based on a person's skills or experience irrespective of their gender and sometimes it depends on the bargaining quality of the migrants. People employed at the same workplace and occupation from the villages have no similar monthly income. The table No. 3.12



depicts the structure of the monthly income of the migrants at the place of destination. Based on the range of the monthly income of the migrants five classifications of the income have been developed. I= 6,000-9,000, II= 9,001-12,000, III= 12,001-15,000, IV= 15,001-18,000 and V= 18,001-21,000. The table illustrates that of 122 migrants 67(54.91%) migrants earn between 6,000 to 9,000 rupees per month which is the predominant one among the migrants followed by the income range of 9,001-12,000 rupees. Similarly, 11(9.01%), 5(4.09%) and 2(1.63%) migrants fall under the category of (12,001 to 15,000), (15,001 to 18,000) and (18,001 to 21,000) monthly income. The Gangutia village has migrants those who earn between the range of (6,000 to 9,000) predominantly constitutes 47.36% of the total 76 migrants of the village followed by (9,001 -12,000)32.89%, (12,001-15,000)6.57%, (18,000 -21,000)7.89% and (15,001 -18,000)5.26% respectively. Also, it has been found that of total 18 female migrants of the Gangutia village 9(11.84%) earn between the range of (6,000- 9,000) which is predominance among the female of the village. While it is found only one female migrant has her monthly income under the range of (18,000 – 21,000) rupees. At the same time majority of the migrants of the Mechpara village have their monthly income between (6,000- 9,000) comprises 67.39% of the total migrants of the Mechpara village followed by the migrants those who earn between (9,001-12,000) constitutes 26.08%, (12,001- 15,000) constitutes 4.34% and (15,001- 18,000) constitutes 2.17% of the migrant in the village. Regarding the female migrants of the Mechpara village, it has been found that the majority of the female has their income between (6,000- 9000) constitutes 22.22% (9,001- 12,000) constitutes 11.11% of the total female migrant. Bima Lama (33 years old) married migrant says – “I work in a beauty parlor in Kerala. I went there with my husband. I get 19,000 rupees in a month as I am a

trained beautician. Further, she says that if a person is not trained, he/she gets not more than 9,000 per month until the person gets that skill in their work”. The person has more skill, experience/ certificate, they would have more salary. Similarly, Arjun Lama (35 years old) migrant from Gangutia village explains – “I did diploma in an institution situated in Siliguri (North Bengal) for six months and went to Kerala as many of my friends were there working in beauty parlor then. Since I was having a diploma certificate, they offer me rupees 15,000 per month for initially and after one year according to my improved skill, they had increased my salary. Now, I get rupees 21,000 rupees”.

### Monthly income of the migrants

**Table No. 3.15**

Monthly income	Gangutia tea garden			Mechpara tea garden			Total			%		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
I	36	27	9	31	27	4	67	54	13	54.91	44.26	10.65
II	25	24	1	12	10	2	37	34	3	30.32	27.86	2.45
III	5	4	1	2	2	-	11	6	1	9.01	4.91	0.81
IV	4	4	-	1	1	-	5	5	-	4.09	4.09	-
V	6	5	1	-	-	-	2	5	1	1.63	4.09	0.81
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.21	14.72

*Source: Field survey, T= total, M= male, F= female*

Code: I= 6,000-9,000

II= 9,001-12,000

III= 12,001-15,000

IV= 15,001-18,000

V= 18,001-21,000

### 3.17. Religion of the migrants

Generally, the villages of the migrants are characterized by two kinds of religion Hinduism and Buddhism. Both religious groups are equally mobile. Table No. 3.13 depicts that of total migrants, the majority of the migrants are from the Hindu religious group. Of 122 total migrants, 70(57.37%) migrants are from Hinduism while 52(42.62%) migrants belong to Buddhism. The table also shows the religious composition of the Mechpara village. 76.31% of its total migrants belong to Hinduism while 23.68% of the migrant is from the religious group of Buddhism. However, Gangutia village has the majority of migrants from Buddhism comparing to its Hindu migrants. 26.08% of its total migrants are Hindu and 73.91% of migrants are Buddhist. The major Buddhist migrant in the village is Lama/ Tamang and Thapa, Rai, Mangar, Chhetri Sharma/ Bahun, Kami, Damai, Sarki, Pradhan, Bhujel, Limbu, etc. are Hindu migrants. Although the villages under investigation also have Christian and Muslims, the migrants are only from the Hindu and Buddhist among the total migrants under investigation.

**Table No. 3.16 Migrants on the basis of their Religion**

Religious Group	Gangutia tea garden (t)	Mechpara tea garden (t)	Total	%
Hindu	58(76.31)	12(26.08%)	70	57.37
Buddhist	18(23.68%)	34(73.91%)	52	42.62
Total	76	46	122	100

Source: Field survey, t= total

The migrants from both the village have migrated to the urban places which have already been mentioned above. There may be economic reason apparent for their migration (especially in terms of migration for employment), each individual may have his/ her understanding of their movement. Rural-urban migration has been understood severally in terms of push-pull attributes. On the other hand, rural out-migration has been understood basically in binary condition i.e. structural point of view and the agent's perspective (in the word of Weber interpretative understanding) the former perspective agreed upon the structural determinism where the structure subordinate the voice of the agent (the individual perception/ understanding) and the later try to bring the micro-level understanding of the migration where the emphasis was given to the individual, the migrant's interpretation of his/ her action. Therefore, the next chapter will be on the reasons for migration which try to understand the motivation of the out-migration in terms of structuration perspectives. It neither gives importance to the structural determinism nor the individualistic interpretation of the phenomenon of migration but, it understands the rural-urban out-migration in the confluence of both. Similarly, the perception of civil society and the viewpoint of the tea garden management also become significant in understanding the out-migration as it provides a different aspect than that of the migrants themselves.



## CHAPTER- 4

### SOCIO- ECONOMIC REASONS OF OUT- MIGRATION

#### 4.1. Introduction

The voluntary rural-urban human migration for employment may directly correspond with the materialistic gain as the migrants move for earning at the place of destination. Thus rural-urban migration for employment is concerned with poverty at the place of origin. However, participation in the migration (rural-urban) is always from poor households is not entirely true. Most people migrate to urban places to get employment for livelihood<sup>58</sup> and not for better employment<sup>59</sup>. Similarly, people migrate into urban centers for employment and not for the livelihood. The relatively rich people from rural hinterland migrate to urban centers for better employment opportunities that they would not get at the place of origin. Thus, the reason is employment for both categories of migrants (poor or rich migrants). Thus, the materialistic (economic) predominance of the migration always defines the factor for rural-urban migration for employment. However, non- materialistic (non- economic) factors provide sufficient motivation to migrants for migration (Rao, 1981). In social science in general and especially, in Sociology, there are ample probabilities not to understand any social phenomena in terms of its objective reality (generally, before the dawn of the postmodern perspective in sociology) but, in terms of subjective (where the opportunity to extend the perspective of the individual agent) reality (reality varies from subject to subject). The subjective understanding produces the realities

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<sup>58</sup> Is the condition where the migrants are not having any alternative, but to migrate for survival reason.

<sup>59</sup> It is the situation where the migrants have employment at the place of origin, but they desire to move for relatively better employment opportunities. Here, the question of survival does not come.

beyond the statistic and universal truth. In the context of migration, the structural settings of a particular social system (respective of time and space) determine the motives of migratory movement of people of those particular structural settings where the agents are like mere the puppets and follow the structure and migrate. However, the agents play a significant role in restructuring the structural features, it is because of the active nature of the agent who ultimately decides to conquer his/ her circumstances and migrate or stay. It is the structure that conditioned the situation for migration, but it is always an individual to manifest action upon it. This is why, people belonging to the same structural feature, some of them migrate and many of them remain immobile supported by several socio-economic and cultural variables. The chapter will focus on the socio-economic causes of migration for employment in a broader sense while dealing with the data from the field in its micro perspective. It not only tries to understand the migration in terms of the existing structure of the tea garden in the Dooars region but also analyzes the migration from the active agent's perspective<sup>60</sup> of the region. The chapter also reveals the duality of the structure as proposed by Anthony Giddens (Giddens, 2013). In his structuration theory, Giddens has emphasized actor/ agent who is not merely a follower of the structure, but also a creator of the same structure (Doshi, 2003). In simple words, the chapter tries to understand the reasons of out-migration from the Dooars region in terms of both objective analysis of structural perspective (because the issue<sup>61</sup> of migration is of structural(Mills,

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<sup>60</sup> See Giddens, A. (2013). *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*.

<sup>61</sup> See Mills, C. W. (1961). *The Sociological Imagination*.

1961:9) and subjective analysis of narrative in its agent's perspectives. Also, it tries to explain the push- pull factors for migration.

## **4.2. Background for Out- Migration from the Dooars**

The story of migration noticeably begins in tea gardens of Dooars region between the years 2000- 2001/2002, especially for employment purposes. Although, the socio-political, economic-cultural and environmental problems have been affected the industry by the 80s of last century (Banerjee, 2010), during the years 2000- 2002 the tea gardens of the region had become mal- functional. Estimating the death of people in tea gardens after the malfunctioning and closed<sup>62</sup>/ abandoned<sup>63</sup> tea gardens Sharit Bhowmik (2015), says in his article that since the year 2000 several thousand tea garden workers and their family members died (Bhowmik, 2015). According to the West Bengal report, the largest number of death was recorded from Kalchini block tea gardens (Banerjee, 2010). A large number of people from tea gardens of Dooars had to migrate into different states of the country which is still in a process (Migrants have been tea garden workers themselves, the young school-going student, of tea garden workers). Thus, the crisis in the structure (i.e. tea plantation) had/ has been compelled people to migrate. Sarita, one of the respondents says “Bagan bandh bhaye pachi pema ko bua bahira janu bhayo, ra nai hami bachim, tispachi uni bahira ko bahirai cha. Bagan ko kam pani malai dinu bahyo” (He had migrated firstly when tea garden became closed, since then, he has been migrating. He migrated so that we could survive or we would have died. Now, he has given his tea garden job to me).

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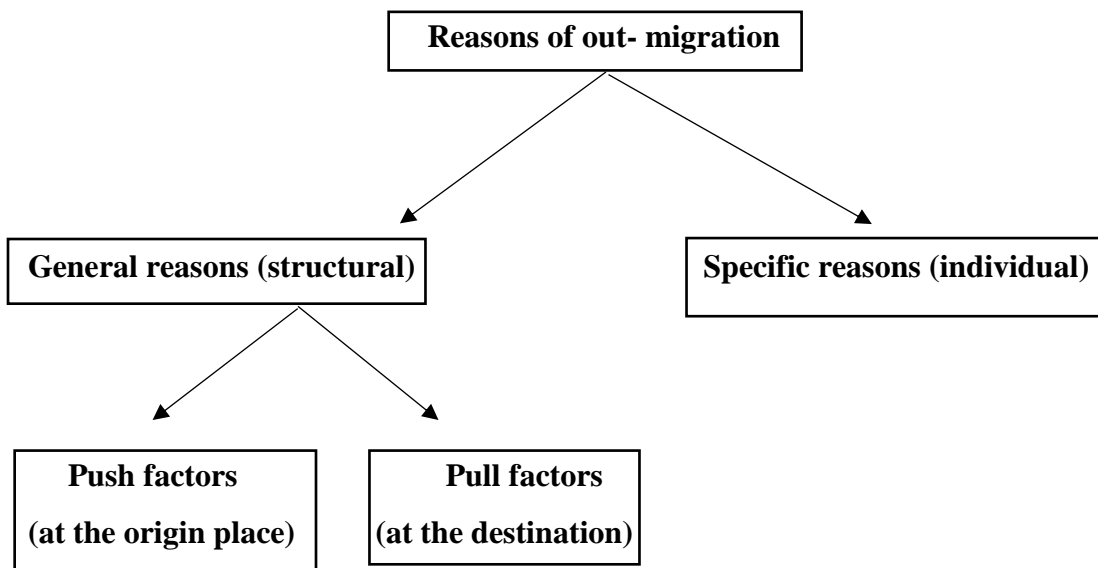
<sup>62</sup> The gardens which were abandoned by the management following the laws, giving the lock out notice to the concern people and the labour department.

<sup>63</sup> Abandoned the gardens by the management without following the laws and without the pre notice to the unions and government.

Although, at present times most of the tea gardens of Dooars region especially of Alipurduar district are functioning/ running by the private limited companies such as Suraj Govind private limited in case of Gangutia tea garden (studied village) and Darjeeling Dooars Plantations limited in case of Mechpara tea garden (studied village), most of already migrated tea workers do not find that attraction towards the tea plantation work than what they found to work in different cities of the country. However, some of them have rejoined their work in their respective tea gardens. But some of them are still working in urban centers in different sectors after transferring the tea garden work to their dear and near one (wife, unmarried sister, sister- in- law, daughter- in law, etc.). This is what exactly argued by C. Wright Mills (1961) in his own words “the biography of an individual is always influenced by the historical sequence; as he is a product of society and historical forces”(Mills, 1961:6). Many children of the tea workers have been migrating from the tea garden taking the already migrated people as their reference group (Merton & Storer, 1973) and considering migration as a part of their socialization. It is known from the field that at present time the tea garden labourers (leaf pluckers) get rupees 168 per day wage, fortnightly they get rupees 1,860 rupees which accounted for per month 3,720 rupees after deduction of provident fund (P.F). Most of the gardens of the Dooars have been curtailed down all extra incentives (medical allowance, house repairing/ making facilities, ration, umbrella, sleepers and many more) which a tea company supposed to provide them. They get only dry wages (they called it “sukha Hazri). They have to manage everything out of it right from the food, school of the children, medical service, social ceremonies such as marriage, death, birth, etc. Tara Barailey, a 32 years old tea garden labour says “Marda pani, parda pani yehi sukha hazri le tarnu parcha” meaning, whether it is death, marriage,



and birth or if someone gets sick in the family, we have to manage everything from the dry wage. Under such a structural background, people found out the migration as an alternative / major source of income as they have been migrating for employment purposes. Although they migrate for employment reasons, different sub- reasons always support their migratory movement. The following interpretation will reveal the different causes of out-migration in the Dooars region. To understand the various socio-economic reasons of out-migration of the Nepali community, two-fold broader classification of the reasons has been done based on the collected data, these are 1) General reasons and 2) specific reasons. General reasons are further classified into push and pull factors.



N.B: General reasons are also considered to be the structural reasons which are the features (perceived by the migrants) of a particular geographical location for instance poverty, unemployment, low wages and less job opportunity at the place of origin i.e. tea gardens of Dooars. Similarly, in the case of the place of destination high wages, possible job opportunities, employment, etc. The general reasons for out-migration will be understood

in terms of push-pull factors. While the specific reasons for out-migration are those reasons through which an individual interpret his/ her migratory movement subjectively.

### **4.3. Push factors operating in the villages**

There are several push factors of out-migration operating in rural areas. Regarding the push factors in tea gardens of the Alipurduar district in the Dooars table No. 4.1 depict the structural factors responsible for the out-migration of people from the region under investigation. The majority of the migrant i.e. 48(39.3%) out of total 122 migrants have given poverty as the push factor for their out-migration from both the villages. Similarly, 33(27%), 23(18.9%) and 18(14.8%) migrants have migrated for the push factors such as lack of job opportunity, unemployment, and low wage respectively. While, of 18, 15(12.29%) female migrants have given poverty as their push reason for the migration from both the villages followed by the push factor unemployment constitutes 2.45% of the total female migrants. Also, the table reveals the village Gangutia has 35(46.05%) migrants migrated out of its total migrants 76 due to poverty. Kanchi Maya Mangar, the mother of a migrant from the Gangutia village says – “I get only 1,860 rupees fortnight (they called it Panraya ko hapta) that is also if I can go to work without absenteeism. I am an old lady; I cannot be regular in my work. Sometimes, I receive 8,00 rupees and sometimes 1,000 rupees as because of illness and weakness, I cannot go for work regularly. We (the family) do not have proper clothes and the problem increases in the winter season. We are very poor and no one hears the voice of poor neither the government (they call it Sarkar) nor the company (tea company). We get the house neither from the government (she was referring to the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana scheme) nor from the company. We do not have a proper house; it leaks during the rainy season. Without going outside (another state) we

had to die”. The Gangutia village has 25% migrant who has out- migrated due to unemployment followed by lack of job opportunity and low wages at the place of origin which constitutes 18.42% and 10.52% of the total migrants of the village respectively. Of 76 migrants in the village Gangutia, 12(15.78%) migrants are the female majority of which has migrated due to poverty push factors. It constitutes 34.21% of the total female migrants. A noteworthy feature of the table is that there is no woman migration from the village to push factors such as low wages and employment opportunities. Whereas, 16(21.05%) women migrated because of their unemployment. The Mechpara village has sent a total of 46 migrants, 40(86.95%) male, and 6(13.04%) female to different urban places. The people have given different reasons as their push factors for migration such as 10(21.73%) migrants have moved due to low wage at the place of origin, 13(28.26%) due to poverty, 19(41.30%) for lack of desired employment opportunity and 4(8.69%) migrants have migrated for their unemployment in the village. Similarly, in the village, 9(75%) migrants of the total female migrants have moved due to poverty among them and 3(25%) female have given unemployment as their push factor for migration. A, 45 years old man (from the Mechpara village) the father of a graduated (B.A) migrant says “I am a sub- staff; a watchman (promoted from labour category) in the tea garden, my job is to look after the tea garden and save it from the cattle. I get rupees 5,400 per month as we get a monthly salary. I could graduate my son, the only son while facing hardship throughout my life. We could hardly eat meat frequently during those days when my son was in school and college. I sacrificed my whole life merely to educate my son. Now, he is in Kerala and earns a good amount of money. If there would be an opportunity in the tea garden? If, the wage would be good enough in garden work! There was no necessity to migrate to anywhere else. There

is no certainty of the future in tea gardens. My son works in a beauty parlor in Kerala and visits us once in a year, during Dashera". There have been found several push factors of out-migration in both the villages, poverty has been the most significant among them followed by unemployment, meager tea garden wage, lack of diversifying employment opportunity, etc. which indicate the structural features of the region. Also, these features specify the crisis in the tea garden region of the Alipurduar district of Dooars. The underdevelopment has been its fundamental structural characteristic of the region since the colonial period. The British planter had kept the region underdeveloped for different reasons (Xaxa, 1985). However, after independence also the region could not progress much in every aspect of development as the Indian planters and the existing government (contemporary as well as the previous) has not been given much concern for the people of the region. Several governments have come but, the problems of the region are still found vulnerable and unsolved. Therefore, various push factors are in operation in the region for out-migration. At present, tea companies neither provide ration nor any other facilities such as clean drinking water, medical facilities, electricity, etc. As per the basic needs are concerned in the villages, tea labourers can hardly get fulfill. The poverty is rampant there in both villages of Dooars of West Bengal. According to a report released by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), West Bengal ranked 8th position among the 17 states in Indian State Hunger Index (ISHI) 2008 which had shown an alarming level of the hunger issue in the state. Similarly, the National Sample Survey Organization 2004-2005 report reveals that West Bengal had the highest percentage of rural households not getting enough food and not getting enough food daily. Thus, the rural households facing the issue of hunger is 12% of the rural households of the state

(Bandhopadhyay, 2007). If the situation of poverty is to be calculated then, 850 calories per day are the minimum calories for survival, the tea garden labourers do not get to consume these minimum calories too in the Dooars region (West Bengal Advisor to the Commissioner of the Supreme court, 2004). A survey conducted by the Siliguri Welfare Association in the year 2004 found out the lowest i.e. 14 body mass among the tea garden labourers. According to the estimation of WHO, less than 18 BMI constitutes the famine-affected population. In tea gardens of Jalpaiguri district (now, Alipurduar) 42% of the population had a BMI of less than 18.5 while it is 23-24 at the national level (Mitra, 2003). Because of the severe poverty in the tea gardens, thousands of hunger deaths have occurred in the Dooars region which have been frequently reported by the media and journals. Due to no alternative job opportunities and source of income, people in tea gardens struggle to survive daily (Roy, 2017). The plantation region of Dooars is not having an alternative source of income. Though, the region is to be famous for 3T, Tea, Timber and Tourism, tea is the backbone of the region. Almost thousands of people depend upon the tea economy and now, the tea gardens are not providing much support for their living. The entire tea belt of the Dooars region of Alipurduar is in crisis. It has been observed from the field especially in Gangutia village that most of the young people go to the forest (Gangutia forest) and cut the trees to sell it to the wood merchant from Hamiltonganj (basically the Bengalis merchant) for alternative support of the family. Due to such intervention in the forest, the forest has become a desert. A villager says – “Many people had died of the bullets of the forest department and in elephant’s/ Tiger’s encounter in the forest. Now, they have finished the forest and are migrating outside in search of livelihood”. Regarding the low wages, the issue of the wage of tea garden labourers is a lingering issue for the tea labourers

for a very long time. Earlier in the year 2014, the labourers of the Dooars tea garden used to get rupees 95 per day. But, the issue of out-migration among the tea garden labourers due to low wages had been raised by the worker's unions, the wage had been raised 132.50 per day for the year 2015-2016. Now, after several efforts over the years, the tea garden labourers are getting paid rupees 168. However, the wage is at the cost of the other several incentives (ration, medical allowance, housing facilities, water facility, electricity facility, etc.). However, the labourers have been demanding for the implantation of the minimum wage Act. Although several meetings on the matter of minimum wage have been met up, the negotiation between plantation owners' associations and trade unions have not come into any conclusive result. It is a fact that due to low wages (even the new wage) in the tea garden and on the other hand the increasing inflation and growing living cost have been created the question of survival of the labourers. According to the India Express newspaper, December 23, 2018, it revealed the reality of increasing out-migration among the tea labourers(Express News service, 2018). Similarly, the problem of unemployment in the region is also rampant. The region has neither alternative industry nor other economic generation employment for the increasing population except the mal- functioning tea gardens. Due to mal- functional gardens, people are not able to live their lives with dignity. Majority of the school going children of the labourers have been leaving the school. The majority of the students of the region have been drop- out which is making the problem of unemployment more vulnerable.

**Table No. 4.1****Push factors of out-migration**

Push factors	Gangutia tea garden (t)			Mechpara tea garden (t)			Total			%		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Low wage	8	8	-	10	10	-	18	18	-	14.8	14.75	-
Poverty	35	26	9	13	7	6	48	33	15	39.3	27.04	12.29
Lack of desired Job opportunity	14	14	-	19	19	-	33	33	-	27.0	27.04	-
Unemployment	19	16	3	4	4	-	23	20	3	18.9	16.39	2.45
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.22	14.74

Source: Field survey, t/T= total, M= Male, F= Female

#### 4.4. Pull factors operating in the villages

The pull factors are the structural features of the place of destination about which the potential migrants get to understand due to the information supply by the previous migrants to the village and share the lived experiences with the villagers (through mobile and social media) or they get to know from the migrated people while visit. General structural features of Indian urban place are comparatively high wages, availability of diversified jobs in unorganized sectors. Similarly, it gives people socio-cultural and economic freedom and other urban facilities. Thus, the pull factors of migration are the structural feature of a particular urban area. There are some of the pull factors operating in the villagers which are not necessary to have existed in the city but their imagination. The table No. 4.2 depicts the pull factors of out-migration showing of 122 migrants, 67(54.91%) migrants have given job opportunity as the major reason for migrating to different urban places among which 52(42.62%) are male and 15(12.29%) are female. 47(38.52%) migrants have moved to the

cities because of the possibility of the high wage comprising only male migrants and 8(6.55%) migrants have migrated for the hope of socio-economic freedom at the destinations which constitutes 5(6.55%) male and 3(2.45%) female from both the villages. The Gangutia village has sent 44(57.89%) out of its 76 migrants to different urban centers because they considered the destination would provide them various job opportunities. It comprises 34(44.73%) male and 10(13.15%) female migrants of the total migrants of the village Gangutia. The other crucial information one understands is that 27(35.52%) migrants pulled to the urban places because of the high wages expectation of which all migrants are male and no female migrants have been detected. Whereas 5(6.57%) migrants have migrated from the village understanding the urban place provides them the socio-economic freedom compare to the village, of which 3(3.94%) are male and 2(2.63%) are female migrants. The table reveals that Mechpara village has sent 23(50%) migrants 18(39.13%) male and 5(10.86%) female perceiving the urban destinations provide them diversified job opportunities than the place of origin. 20(43.47%) migrants have migrated for high wages where there are no female migrants who have migrated for the same reason. Similarly, socio-economic pull factors have operated for 3(6.52%) migrants of which 2(4.34%) are male and 1(2.17%) migrant is female. The pull factors are the mental make-up of the migrants on which basis they move to a particular destination. Regarding the job opportunity at the urban destination, a migrant says – “It’s very difficult to get a decent job in cities. When I had moved to the city for the very first time, I did not get a job for at least one month. My friends were there in Bangalore where I got shelter in their rented room”.



#### 4.5. Push- pull factors and the process of migration: a critical view

The out-migration of the Nepali community from the tea gardens of Dooars cannot be understood in terms of merely push and pull factors. Because the destination (Kerala) where 41.80% of the total migrants have migrated has the push elements. it pushes the pool of unemployed population either into another state or another country. Kerala itself has a push

#### Pull factors of out- migration

**Table No. 4.2**

Pull Factors	Gangutia village (t)			Mechpara village (t)			Total			%		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
Various job opportunity	44	34	10	23	18	5	67	52	15	54.91	42.62	12.29
High wages	27	27	-	20	20	-	47	47	-	38.52	38.52	-
Socio-economic freedom	5	3	2	3	2	1	8	5	3	6.55	4.09	2.45
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.23	14.74

Source: Field survey, t/ T= total, M= Male, F= Female

push element in operation that has already pushed its population into the Gulf countries since the 1970s in millions (Panicker, 2018). Thus, migration is not the result of the opportunities the cities are providing, it could be the result of the absence of the opportunity that place of origin is characterized by. It is noteworthy to mention that whatever job the local people denied to work, those jobs have been available for migrants in every city in

which they (migrants) too would have denied to work in their native places. For instance, Samir Mangar (an illiterate migrant from Mechpara) works in a hotel (in Bangalore) as a service boy, he has to clean the table, plates. He has been doing the work for three years. While giving his answer to the question that if he would have done the same work at his native place? He clearly says “no”. Thus, migration is not just the result of the push-pull factors; it is all about living with dignity. The same pull factors for the migrants can be the push factors for the native people of the destination. Regarding the push-pull hypothesis, Chandrasekhar says there is no region in the entire sub-continent where the living condition is higher than the rest. He further goes on to say that during last thirty years, the internal migration has been a result of not the pull forces in the urban centers, but push factors have been more responsible for it such as low wage payment, the economic crisis of the rural origin (Chandrashekar, 1949). The level of urbanization in India is contradictory to the facilities an urban center provides. In the Indian context of urbanization, the role of the push element is greatly contributed rather than the pull elements (Singh, 1980). The push factors have a major contribution to the rural-urban migration in India than the pull factors (Bhargava, 1971). In the light of data collected from the field, it can claim that basically, the crisis at the place of the origin is the major reason for the out-migration of the villagers. Because, the high wage, decent employment, so-called good life, and freedom in urban centers are just an imagination of the migrants’ minds. Bikash Lama, (an ex- tea garden labour of Mechpara) while explaining his migratory movement says – “I was not getting proper employment and the life was not stable with my earning in the tea garden. I thought it’s better to go outside in a hope that I might get a good wage at least more than what I was getting in the garden. It was not because of the attraction of the job in the city rather it

was because of the lack of opportunity in my village, I had to migrate. I do not find the city provides a good opportunity, it has a more complex lifestyle and I do not want to go to the city, but what to do? if our tea garden were good enough to provide us a little more wage than own place is the best for living”. It is very much relevant to mention that the push-pull factor hypothesis in explaining the rural-urban migration has its validity at the cumulative level (Mabogunje, 1970). It does not provide the individual-level understanding of rural-urban out-migration. However, understanding the reasons or reasons for migration at an individual level is very crucial in sociology. Although the migrants do not reveal easily the actual reason of their movement (Mair, 1954), the individual level of analysis not only reveals the subjective understanding of the migration but also gives a microscopic insight of the phenomenon more greatly in agent’s perspective. What is the migrant’s interpretation of his/ her out-migration? How do the migrants justify his/ her movement? How does the agent- structure negotiation accomplish in the migration process? These are some of the sociological questions which are very crucial while studying sociology of migration.

#### **4.6. The Specific Reasons of out- migration**

The specific reasons for out-migration refer to the individual reasons for their out-migration perceived by an individual migrant. Although push-pull factors are operating in the villages, the individual has a specific personal reason for his/ her migratory movement. In a simple word, it is the agent’s interpretation of their action. The table No. 4.3 depicts the subjective reasons for the out-migration. It illustrates, of 122 migrants, 60(49.18%) have given the reason for their migration to give economic support to their respective families. It comprises 48(39.34%) males and 12(9.83%) females from both the villages.

The Gangutia village has 38(50%) migrants, 31(40.78%) male and 7(9.21%) female migrants who have migrated to support their family. While 22(47.82%) migrants have migrated for the same reason. While the Mechpara village has. It is noteworthy to mention that tea gardens are the only source of income for the people of the region. All the migrants belong to the tea gardens families who are completely dependent upon the gardens. The earning from the gardens are considered to be very negligible to fulfill the basic needs too. Furthermore, the difficulty more increases in the joint family where the dependent members are larger than the earning members. A family member of a migrant says – “we have a total of six family members, we eat together. But the earning member is only my husband. Sometimes, we eat food with salt and water. My elder son has gone outside for earning, he sends money then only we have been managed even then, it’s very difficult to feed so much of family members in this world (expensive world)”. It has been found that If someone falls ill in the family, they would not be able to offer good treatment rather; they treat the patient with the village sorcerer as it costs minimum. They do not have a hospital provided by Tea Company. If they go to the government hospital located in Nimti (the only government hospital in the Kalchini Block, they call it Lothabari hospital), they do not get much attention from the doctors unless the patients go for private treatment in their private chamber. Explaining his reason for out-migration Raja Lama says – “We are family of five members, me, my younger brother and my parents. My father is a tea garden labor who earns 1,860 rupees fortnight. My younger brother has a hole in his heart. It is not possible to treat him with the tea garden earning as the money is not sufficient for food too. Therefore, I decided to earn outside, so that I could support my family economically”. Understanding another reason for their out-migration the table depicts 25(20.49%) of the

total 122 migrants from both villages have migrated because they wanted to build a concrete house in the village. It comprises 20(16.39%) males and 5(4.09%) females. While both the Gangutia and Mechpara villages have sent 20(26.31%) of its total 76 migrants and 5(10.86%) of its total 46 migrants respectively for the same reason of house building. Generally, in the tea garden, all houses are made of bamboo thatch with only two rooms. However, nowadays the tea garden companies do not provide the housing facility to the labourers in tea gardens. Although, the law wise the tea company is supposed to provide the tea labourers the housing facility, three tea estates of the Dooars, have not given any single house to their labourers (Mitra, 2003). In the case of tea garden villages, almost all those who work in tea gardens are having very deteriorated houses which is insufficient to accommodate their increasing family members in a proper way. Most of the labourers have a very old and almost residual structure of houses. Some of them have covered their house with a big plastic provided by gram panchayat to avoid the water leakage inside the house during the rainy season. Those houses become more vulnerable when the elephants enter into the village, as those houses do not have the strength that bears the elephant's touches. Niran Chhetri explains – “The elephants often enter into the village (there is a forest nearby the village) and eat whatever they get. Sometimes, when they are so much hungry and do not get anything to eat, they crush the houses, kill the people”. It has been the problem for the tea garden villages since long as different news channels and newspaper reports about the killing of the people in the Dooars tea gardens. Recently, it has been reported by the ‘Telegraph’ newspaper that three people were killed by an elephant in Dooars (Telegraph; 30 Oct 2019). Therefore, migrants are very much concerned about the problem of housing in the village. They wanted to make a concrete house with modern structural features so

that their family members would not have to worry during the rainy season. Bipul Mangar, a migrant says – “Almost all my friends have built their concrete house nearby my old and dilapidated two-room bamboo made the house (they called it Chitra ra Tali ko ghar). I never invite my friends from nearby villages because I do not have a proper house. I feel very embracement about my house. I do not have a separate room; we do not have a separate kitchen. Therefore, I wanted to build my house at any cost. I am earning only to make my concrete house”. While showing his under the constructed concrete house he says that within this year I would be able to complete my house. Tara (wife of migrant- Jang Bahadur) explains her grievance regarding not having a good and secured house, she says – “secured and the concrete house is compulsory especially for those who have children and whose husband has migrated. My house is not secure in the sense anyone can enter and kill us at night. He further says- recently there has been a rumor in the village (Gangutia tea garden) that at night nine feet people come and robs the house and steals the minor children. I am so scared that I also have two minor children, therefore I with my two children have been taking shelter in my neighbor’s house at night”. In the same manner Sourav Thapa (35 years old) a migrant of Gangutia tea garden says – “in today’s time we need a good and concrete house. After, I got married the major problem for me was a good house, we should have privacy at home. Therefore, I decided to make my house as everyone in the village is building their house out of the money which they earn outside. Therefore, in the year 2015, I went to Ooty for employment with many of my previously migrated friends. Pointing out his under- constructed concrete house, he says that this house is the result of money from Ooty”. Similarly, Amir says – “I saw my friends are earning money and making houses and people around the village appreciated them for their progress. I do

not have a proper house. We all sleep in a single room. When I saw my friends are having their separate room which they have made with the money earned outside. Therefore, I had migrated to Rajasthan to earn and make a proper house”. Of 122 migrants, 15(12.29%) migrants have migrated because they do not want to work in tea gardens. The proportion of those people who have migrated because they do not want to work in the tea garden is 13.15% in the Gangutia village whereas, it accounted for 32.60% for the Mechpara village. It is found that people do not want to work in the garden. It is because of the nature of the work in gardens and the meager amount of money they get. It has also been found that the young generations are not want to go to the garden to work many of the tea garden labourers have been transferring their tea garden job into their near and dear ones. While some of the tea labourers have kept their work pending and have migrated into different cities. Interestingly, a respondent, Thuli Lama says – “there is a rumor in the village from the company side that there is a possibility to ask the people to leave the place those who do not go to their work in the tea garden. Therefore, many tea garden labourers those who have migrated to Delhi, Mumbai, Kerala etc. leaving their tea garden job pending have been called by the family member”. Shekhar, a migrant from Mechpara tea garden says – “I used to work in the tea garden. Now, I have transferred my tea garden work (they called it ‘Bagan Ko nam’) into my wife’s name. In the tea garden, I used to work for more than 8 hours in a day from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (in-between a break is there at 11 a.m.- 1.30 p.m.) I used to get 168 rupees wage for one day. Now, I work for 8 hours in a day at a hotel in Bangalore (as a helper of a cook) I get 500 – 550 rupees wage. Comparatively work in the city is far and far better and lavish than the work in tea garden”. A young migrant from Gangutia village says – “I would do a coolie/ a bus conductor or any other work in the city

but, I would not do work in tea garden”. Vikash Chhetri (25 years old, class xii pass boy) a migrant from Mechpara tea garden says – “My mother will get retired after one year from her work in tea garden and she is insisting me to take over her job otherwise get married soon so that her job would be taking over by my wife. I replied to her to keep pending the work or do whatever she wants; I would neither do work in tea garden nor I will allow my wife to do so. In fact, who will be ready to work in a tea garden especially modern girls”. Marriage responsibility is another specific reason for out-migration among the people from both the villages. 14(11.47%) migrants have migrated after their marriage and for their marriage. Gangutia village has sent 6(7.89%) of its total 76 migrants for the reason of marriage responsibility. The table has shown interestingly that there are no female migrants under this category of reason from the village. At the same time, the Mechpara village accounted for 8(17.39%) male migrants with no female migrants. It is found that people have migrated to fulfill the socio-economic responsibilities they experienced after they got married from both the villages. It has been observed from both villages (Mechpara village showed little less tendency in early marriage) that they are having the tendency of early marriage among the young people. They get married soon they reach the age of 17-19 years old. The minimum average age at marriage of the male in the villages is 18 years and that is 16 years for females. The tendencies among the young people for marriage is found that when a boy could not pass his board exam, he gets married by elopement and almost same lucid tendencies have been found among the girls that if parents scold their daughter for her fault, the parents would found their daughter get married within one week with her boyfriend (in most cases with nearby neighbor’s son). So, at a very young age they experience the pressure of responsibility being a father, mother and the parents can't look



after them. Therefore, they (especially male members) migrate to the cities as the only alternative for the fulfillment of their responsibilities. Rupshing Lama, father of a migrant from Gangutia tea garden village says – “I had scolded my son while he got failed in his board exam (they called it Madhyamik pariksha). I had told him now; you take my tea garden work and feed us. After one month he got married (They call it keti Bhagaunu) with a girl from the same village. It is not so easy to get married; several responsibilities have to accept the marriage. Therefore, he had to migrate to earn money so that he could fulfill the responsibility of a husband”. Which the migrant confirmed as his major reason for migration. Similarly, a school drop- out from the Mechpara village, Rajesh Darjee (32 years old) a migrant says “I used to do small work in Siliguri when I was unmarried. But when I got married in the year 2017. I realized after the marriage that the money I was earning was not sufficient. I have to give good clothes and food to my wife and in the future, I would become a father then it would be very difficult to arrange for their education, medical and other expenses. Therefore, I decided to go to Kerala. I am working in a parlor in Kerala and trying to save money for the future”. It has found out in the villages that marriage responsibility is one of the motives for people to migrate for employment so that they would be able to fulfill their socio-economic responsibilities attached to marriage. However, people have not only migrated because of marriage, but also for marriage. Explaining his main reason for migration, Gobina Manger (30 years old) a migrant (a school drop- out) of Gangutia tea garden village says – “It has been more than three years of my migration to Kerala. I had decided to get married. But for marriage, I had to have a proper home, enough income so, that I would be able to keep my wife happy. Taking this aim in my head, I had gone to Kerala for employment”. Kancha Chhetri (20 years old)

migrant from Gangutia village says – “I had migrated to get married to my girlfriend Renuka Darjee. My family was against my love affair with a low caste girl. I decided to elope her. Therefore, I told my family that I will go to Ooty (Tamil Nadu) for employment. My parents had arranged money (they borrowed 3000 rupees money from my aunty) as they thought that I was going to assist them to run the household. I eloped with my girlfriend to Ooty. Now, my parents have ex- caste (they called it Jat bata hatak) me. Therefore, I have been residing in my in- law’s house”. It has been found that 8(6.55%) out of the total 122 migrants from both the villages have migrated to become self-dependent (especially, economic). It comprises 7(5.73%) male and 1(0.81%) female migrants. Understanding the village wise proportion, The Gangutia village constitutes 2(2.63%) migrants 1(1.31%) both male and female. While, the Mechpara village has 6(13.04%) migrants (all male) who have migrated to become self- dependent. Riway Newar (school drop- out, 20 years old) one of the first-time migrants from Gangutia tea garden village says – “I saw many of migrated (young people) people carrying a smart mobile phone and wearing sports shoes. They used to spend money as they like. I never went to a picnic from my school as we need to contribute 300 rupees for that. I never get a ranger cycle I was found of which. Therefore, I decided to earn money by myself so that I would be able to do whatever I wanted to do”. Similarly, Rachna Sarki (a special abled girl with her one eye, 35 years old, class xii passed) a migrant from Mechpara village says – “I am an unmarried girl because of my eye no one wanted to get married to me. I am still in my parent’s house. My sister- in- law considered me a burden on them. Therefore, I wanted to be self- dependent. It’s been three years of working in Kerala in a beauty parlor. I also send money to my parents when they need and saving money for my future security.

Understanding the specific reasons for out-migration it has been implicitly clear that the individual as a rational and active agent has migrated on their reflexivity<sup>64</sup>. They have migrated for the fulfillment of their aims and desires irrespective of the structural condition of both place of origin and destination or push-pull factors.

**Table No. 4.3 Case- Specific reasons of out- migration**

Pull Factors	Gangutia village <i>t</i>			Mechpara village <i>t</i>			Total			%		
	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F
For the economic support to the family	38	31	7	22	17	5	60	48	12	49.18	39.34	9.83
For house building	20	16	4	5	4	1	25	20	5	20.49	16.39	4.09
To avoid the tea garden work	10	10	-	5	5	-	15	15	-	12.29	12.29	-
Marriage and responsibility	6	6	-	8	8	-	14	14	-	11.47	11.47	-
To become self-dependent	2	1	1	6	6	-	8	7	1	6.55	5.73	0.81
Total	76	64	12	46	40	6	122	104	18	100	85.22	14.73

Source: Field survey, *t*/ T= total, M= Male, F= Female

<sup>64</sup> See Giddens theory of Structuration

#### **4.7. Civil society and the out- migration from the Dooars: An analysis**

It has been felt that the perception of the migrants' gives the research a partial understanding of the phenomenon out-migration. Fifteen sets of questionnaire schedules (containing two questions) have been given personally to the members of the civil society, expecting their viewpoint regarding the reasons for the out-migration of the Nepalis from Dooars (Alipurduar district). Out of fifteen nine (60%), respondents have responded to the questions. Most of the respondents are teachers. Among the responded respondents 88.88% have agreed upon the poor condition of management of the tea gardens as the major cause for the out-migration of Nepalis from Dooars. Whereas 11.12% of them argued that it is not only the poor condition of the tea gardens, but it is the whole system of the captivity of the region by both the state government and the tea companies which are responsible for the present out-migration of the people. Bikash Biswakarma (30 years old) a school teacher explains – “The structure of Dooars tea garden region is such which has been created for the labourers. It has a closed structure in which people cannot rise above the vicious cycle of poverty. It has been given importance neither by the government (both state and the central government). Even the state government does not consider the people of the region as their citizens. The government considers people of the region as second citizens. At present times, the new generation has been able to attain education and have become a little conscious. They have compared their life with the nearby outside society and came to know that they are deprived, exploited and under captivity (socio-economic, cultural and political). Some of them try to raise their voice against the system. But the system (the government/ tea companies) itself wants them to remain illiterate, poor, deprived and exploited so that they would easily be ruled. He, further says that the out-migration of

Nepalis is the result of the unfair treatment by the government and the overexploitation from the tea planters. They want to free themselves from the vicious cycle of poverty, illiteracy, deprivation, and exploitation. It is a silent protest against both the government and the tea plantation system”. Abir Kumar Rai (52 years) a senior school teacher says – “Nepali community is a very much neglected society in India in general and in Dooars in particular in terms of socio-economic, cultural and political aspects. Tea gardens have made the condition pathetic. Illiteracy, poverty is rampant among the Nepalis in the region. The prevailing deprivation, exploitation, poverty are the major factors for out-migration of the community”. Similarly, Shyam Thapa (40 years old) school teacher says – “Socioeconomic deprivation of the community in the Dooars region is the crucial reason for their out-migration. Further, he questioned in a sarcastic manner that even after the 70 years of independence, the tea industry has not been implemented the minimum wage Act! The industry brought a huge foreign exchange has been supported by neither by the central nor by the state government! There is no separate tea ministry for the tea industry under neither the central government nor the state government! He argued that this is a strategy; ‘the poor wage rate strategy’ so that there would be continuous labour supply to run the industry, pay poorly to the labourers and make them deprived and dependent on tea garden and get ample labour force”. Bikram Bhujel (59-year-old) senior-most teacher says – “It is the structure of the society in Dooars which makes people deprived of socioeconomically. The students leave their education in the halfway and migrate outside. If the structure of the society of Dooars would have given them the sufficient opportunity of education, employment, then they would have never migrated. Educational opportunity is not available for them because of their poor economic condition and employment opportunities

are not available in the region because the region itself is in crisis where tea gardens are only the source of income and they do not want to do that at any cost because of its nature of exploitation and captivity”. Rupesh Das, (an active member of NGO) an activist work in the issues of the tea garden says – “Out-migration of the people from the region is the major consequence of the underdevelopment of tea gardens areas. The region does not give multiple opportunities and hopes to the people. People living in the tea garden area do not get clean water facilities, medical services, protection from the wild animals’ attack and both tea companies and the concerned government has not been doing anything about it. The ineffectiveness of the government and the exploitative policy of the tea companies are very much responsible for the present out-migration of the Nepalis. Similarly, a Journalist of a regional newspaper says – “tea industry will run smoothly if it’s all organs cooperatively and interactively work together. The management, the labour, and the trade unions are the major organs of the tea gardens. Today, what is happening in the tea gardens of Dooars is that the management does not think about the labourers, the labourers do not understand the management and the trade unions are looking after the interest of a certain political interest rather than the interests of the labourers. Because of this misunderstanding and antagonism, the gardens are mal-functional. Ultimately, the labourers are suffering. The young generation of tea labourers is not ready to work in the tea gardens. The tea gardens do not have the fresh and young labour force. The management has been facing more production cost and the expected profit could not produce by the weak labour force and the old tea bushes as well. The trade union leaders are not able to negotiate neither with the labourers nor with the management. There is no cooperative among any of the organs of the tea gardens. Therefore, potential people have been out-migrating from the

region leaving the malfunction tea gardens in a search of hope, dream and bright future”. Understanding the viewpoint of civil society, it has been clear firstly, there has been severe socio-economic crisis in tea plantations of the region secondly, the exploitative policy of the tea companies, the nature of work and meager wage has discouraged the young generation for joining the tea garden work thirdly, the negligence from the part of the government has worsened the condition and fourthly, the antagonism between the tea companies and trade unions altogether have converted the region hopeless and distress zone. The out-migration from the region is merely a rational act of an individual to deal/ negotiate with the existing structural socio- economic and political situation of the region.

#### **4.8 The Process of Out- Migration: A negotiation between agent and the Structure**

In order to understand the process of out-migration among the Nepalis in the village under investigation, the following narratives have been very significant. It not only depicts the whole process of migration but, also illustrates the agent- structure negotiation. A young migrant (Biswash Newar 28 years old) of Gangutia tea garden village while giving his interview says “I wanted to study in English medium school, I also wanted to wear a necktie while going to school. It is not true that my parents were not willing to put me in English medium school; it was my financial situation which was not willing. My father was a tea garden labour, who could hardly earn sufficient money, it was not sufficient to feed five family members of the household. Medically, we all were suffering from malnutrition. Consequently, I had to get admission to a Nepali medium school (Shankar Nepali High School, the only Nepali school in Kalchini block). It was very tough for me to study with empty almost stomach. However, it was not only me suffering from that situation but other

children of the tea garden labourers were also had the same situation. It was the dream of my parents for me to be an educated person and become a big man. My father always said to me that if I did not study well, his tea garden job was waiting for me. The condition of my family was not allowing me to study well with sufficient study material and satisfaction. It was during my board exam; somehow, I wanted to fulfill my parents' dream and also wanted to avoid my father's tea garden work, because I still hate this work. Therefore, I always tried to study harder and harder even without the facility of electricity. I used to study in the light of a hand -made lamp (They called it "Dhibri Batti" – hand -made kerosene lamp) avoiding the disturbance by my drunken father (I had heard to him murmuring that, we are not human beings, but a slave and if he were an educated person, he had not to live the life of an insect kind). The quarrel between my father and mother was every day scheduled for those days. But I was quite and was quietly losing all my patience. Somehow, I gave my class x board exam in the winter of January 2007, in the same winter, which was an enemy for all of us without sufficient warm cloth during those days. My exam was finished and after three months of an interval, the result was to be published. However, I knew my result as without foolproof preparation, without tuition and without sufficient explanation of the school teacher I was sure that I could be failed in the examination. It was 5:30 evening of 20th February 2007 exactly after 25 days later of completion of my board exam, I was thinking something about my family and my responsibilities, one of my friends came into my home to meet me. Suddenly, he said to me that let's go to Guwahati, as he had a good friend there and had already asked him to find out the job for both of us. He also showed me 1000 rupees; he did not tell me the source of that money. I was scared of his proposal and I ask him to go from my home. I



could not sleep the whole night as if someone was taking me away from my dear mother and the rest of the family members. My mind was agreeing with my friend's proposal and my heart was disagreeing with my mind as my mind was faded off with the day- night's quarrel of my parents and the economic situation of my family. I was afraid of the coming consequences too both for my family and me in that unknown place. Although I had believed in my friend, I was unknown whether Guwahati was well-coming me? I was also thinking of the situation of my mother without my presence as she used to be beaten by my father for very little and minor things, I was only her (family's) expectation. My two sisters were very minor and naïve. However, I was convinced by myself that I would send money to my mother and would change the situation of my family after I had a job in the city. In fact, some of the villagers had also gone to the city of Guwahati who could make the situation of their family somewhat good compared to the earlier. After self-convinced, I had decided to go with my friend. One day earlier of our migration, my friend and I met and decided to go to Guwahati, he had given me rupees 50 for the time being and decided to meet there at the railway station. On the evening of 28th February 2007, I went to the Alipurduar railway station without giving any hints to my family. I did not take any extra clothes neither I took any bag so that nobody had any clue about my migration. Intentionally, both of us went to the railway station separately. Those days, there was no any transport facilities like today in the village, some of Rickshaw's pullers used to be there, but I did not hire any of these because neither I wanted them to know about my plan with my friend nor I had much money. I took a bus for Kalchini from Dima Bich Line and then I took one more bus from Kalchini to Alipurduar railway station (then the fare of a bus from Kalchini to Alipurduar used to be not more than three-five rupees). My friend

was waiting for me. At Alipurduar, we had chapatti and vegetables for five rupees each. My friend paid the bill and we asked a person the timing of train for Guwahati. Then, it was already 6 p.m. We were waiting for the train to Guwahati, the timing of the train was 7 p.m. I was missing my mother, my family and I wanted to cry, in fact, cried. My friend said to me that do not worry. The train arrived on time; both of us get into the train and set on a corner. Today, I realized that it was a general compartment. After, reaching Guwahati I had to suffer very much hardship. Now, it's been almost twelve years of my migration and still, I am in movement. Now, I am in Kerala and earn relatively good money, I could build my home and could provide a good life for my family. Today, we are three of us in the family as my father is no more; he died in the year 2012. My elder sister has eloped. My mother is working in the tea garden as after the death of my father, mother took over his work. My younger sister is still unmarried. Most importantly, when I first migrated, I was 16 years old, now I am 28-year-old. He further, says that during these 12 years I went to several states like Delhi, Karnataka, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Punjab". The above narrative tells about the structural circumstances of a person to become a migrant, even though, he was not willing to leave his mother, family, sisters.

Similarly, Gobind Lama (25 years old) a migrant to Bangalore city from the Gangutia says – "I am I watchman of a company in the destination. It's been three years of my migration. I usually visit home to my only family (wife and one child) once in a year (basically during Dashera). And after staying for 10 days, again I go to the destination. While he recalling his story of the migration he explains – "I used to work as an assistant of a carpenter in the village. I was alone then, therefore the earning was sufficient to survive. However, I got married in the year 2016 (They met on Facebook) through elopement marriage. Gradually,

I realized that the money was not even sufficient for meeting the basic needs (food). After six months of our marriage, I got to know that my wife was pregnant with my child. I was in a big worry about my responsibilities as a husband and as a future father. Because, neither I had any means to provide my wife, whatever she needed during pregnancy nor I had any savings for my future child. On the other hand, I did not want to go outside for earning while leaving my wife in such a situation. One day I heard the news that a wife of my neighbor had died during her childbirth as she could not get proper medical attention in a government hospital. Because due to the lack of money her husband could not take her to a good private nursing home. I could not sleep that night thinking and sympathize with the situation. My mind was provoking me to go outside to earn money and my heart was stopping me to leave my wife alone in the village. Therefore, I searched for a good-paying job nearby town. But I did not get it. I consulted with my wife regarding my plan for earning outside<sup>65</sup>. Although she said to me to go for it, I was very much worried about my wife. If I would have got some well-paid job nearby, I would have not migrated. The situation was very crucial for me to decide whether to stay in the village and to see the suffering of poverty or to control emotion and migrate for earning. Taking a deep breath, he further says that hiding tears to each other, we both were crying that night. After some days, I borrowed rupees 2000 from Kailey didi promising to return it very soon. I went to Alipurduar and bought a sleeper class train ticket for 840 rupees (New Tinsukia Express) to Bangalore where some of my friends were working. I got a ticket two months later. Ultimately, I went to Bangalore, when I reached there I had only 100 rupees in my pocket. I was in dilemma, on the one hand, the problem of money and on the other hand the future

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<sup>65</sup> Here, outside means the inter- state migration/migration to different states of the country.

of my child and all of us. We (both husband and wife) sacrificed our present for the future of our child. Now my child is 2 years old took birth in a private nursing home". The above narratives of the migrants show that despite the structural crisis the migrants have their case-specific reasons for migration. The case-specific reasons always come to negotiate with structural reasons. It encourages people to move. However, it may discourage the movement of the people. Thus, it can be said that rural-urban out-migration is a socio-economic movement manifested as a result of the structure- Agent's negotiation.

It is noteworthy to make clear that the above-mentioned reasons of out- migration may not be the fixed and the only operating factors for out-migration of the Nepalis in the villages. However, the study has given more importance to the above-mentioned factors.



## **CHAPTER- V**

### **SOCIO- CULTURAL CONSEQUENCES OF OUT- MIGRATION**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

Migration is the movement from particular socio-cultural settings to a certain socio-cultural setting. The movement always has its impact on the migrants, family of the migrant and the place of origin. Interestingly, people do not migrate their physical bodies only; they migrate with their structural given socio-cultural baggage. The socio-cultural practices and the way of living are some of the inseparable elements of a given society that migrate together with the migrants. However, in the pace of living at the destination while continuously interacting with the people of the destination (characterized by their society specific socio-cultural practices) the process of acculturation takes place. Unconsciously, they start exchanging certain socio-cultural elements of each other. In this process, many of the socio-cultural elements of the migrants get faded and replaced by another set of elements given by the place of destination. With the increasing exploration of the place of destination, the migrants develop their way of looking at the things, as an active agent, they silently questioned the irrelevant aspects of the culture, ritual of their native place and try to discard them unconsciously. However, the internalization of socio-cultural elements are not always a positive process, it has both positive and negative cause and effect relationship. Although, migration is an economic movement (especially in the case of voluntary migration for the employment reason,) it has tremendous socio-cultural aspects to be explored and analyzed. Migration is one of the forces of social change, has a great implication in the social transformation of both the place of origin and destination.

It is very significant in the case of circular migration as the migrants continuously keep in touch with their family members and so with their native places. It is not only remittances that transform the socio-economic aspects of the migrant's family, but also with new socio-cultural values of the destination that continuously supply by the migrants impact the family and on a very gradual process it impacts on the community and societal level. The manifestation of internalized socio-cultural values by the migrants at the destination can be seen through the social institutions of the community. It reflects in the way of thinking, acting and understanding the process of the migrants and the migrant work as an agent of social change for the family and his/ her society. Present chapter deal with the socio-cultural impact of out-migration on the Nepalis family, marriage, caste, and kinship system at the place of origin.

## **5.2. The family system among the Nepalis in the studied villages**

The villages under investigation are characterized by three types of family i.e. joint, nuclear and single-parent families. While understanding the history of the Nepali community in the plantation region of the Dooars in the previous (second) chapter, it can be said that the development of a joint family system among the plantation labour is of the recent phenomenon at least in plantation region of the Dooars. Because when they have migrated as plantation labour in the 19th century, they could not migrate with their all family member, but in most cases alone or with their wives and children. Most of the plantation families are of nuclear type family. Table No. 5.1 depicts the structural characteristics of the family among the Nepalis in the studied villages. The table shows that there are 95 families under investigation in both the villages. Of 95 families, 33(34.73%) families are joint families and 52(54.73%) families are nuclear families. While 10(10.52%) families are

of single-parent families. The Gangutia village has 20(35.71%), joint families, 30(53.57%) nuclear and 6(10.71%) single-parent families out of 56 families under investigation. Whereas, the Mechpara village has feature of having 13(33.33%), 22(56.41%), and 4(10.25%) joint, nuclear and single-parent families respectively out of its total 39 families under investigation.

### Family System in the Villages

**Table No. 5.1**

Type of Family	V <sub>1</sub>	V <sub>2</sub>	Total	%
Joint	20(35.71%)	13(33.33%)	33	34.73
Nuclear	30(53.57%)	22(56.41%)	52	54.73
Single parent	6(10.71%)	4(10.25%)	10	10.52
Total	56	39	95	100

Source: Field survey, V<sub>1</sub>= Gangutia village, V<sub>2</sub>= Mechpara village

The out migration of many people, mostly male members from both the villages has influenced the families in a certain way. The impacts have both positive and negative dimensions. The researcher has divided such impacts into two broader categories i.e. 1) The immediate impact and 2) The gradual impact. The immediate impact of out- migration on the family system is those impact which are very immediate after the migrant leaves the family. It includes i) Changing family structure, ii) Changing role of the family members/ role of wife/women, iii) Changing fertility behavior. Similarly, the gradual impact is those impacts which reflect over the years of out- migration, it is a steady and continuous impact consciously and unconsciously. It includes i) Impact on socialization patterns of the

children, ii) Impact on the status of women, iii) Impact on socio- economic condition of the family.

### **5.3. Changing family Pattern in the villages**

It has been found that most of the families in the villages have one and three family members migrated to urban centers. They have impacted their respective families accordingly. There has been a structural change in the families in the villages. After the migration of a migrant, the family size changes. The family fragmented into multi-locational households (Muktia, 2018). It has been observed that the single parent families have turned into single member family due to out- migration. Maya says – “Since, this is Dashera time, my son is in the home. After, Dashera festival, he goes to his work place (i.e. Ooty) and I would become alone in the house”. There is 23.15% of total household in both the villages that become a single member household. There are 12(12.63%) married couple who do not have children yet. Therefore, after migration of their husband the left behind wives become alone and so turned into single member households. The left behind family member in those households have been facing several problems without their migrated children/ husband. It has been found that they face problems for instance, if they fall ill then, they do not have anyone in the houses for taking care of them. These households are dependent on the mercy of the neighbor. Similarly, they are dependent upon the outside people for simple works i.e. for filling up the gas cylinder, for cutting the firewood with axe, for going to bank and take the money, for buying something from the nearby town etc. for which they have to give monetary reward to the person who has helped her. Babita, wife of a migrant says – “Without husband it’s very difficult to manage alone. I have to depend upon the outside people for certain work which I am not capable to do.



Also, I feel very lonely as I do not have child yet. So, I go to my neighbor for gossip”. It has also been observed that many families in the villages have become female headed households.

#### **5.4. Out-Migration and Changing work Patterns of wives/ family members**

It is clear to understand the out-migration of the family member leave his/ her certain roles upon the other family members. All the responsibilities of migrated members go to another person whether to his/ her brother/ sister/ father/mother/ wife/ children. It has been observed in both villages that after migration of husband almost all wives in a nuclear family have felt the increase in their responsibilities. Because they have to manage their role both in private as well as public places. The study found that those who have work in the tea garden with minor children in houses have bigger responsibilities to fulfill. Maity (32 years old), a tea garden labour and wife of a migrant husband with two children says – “I have two children, one daughter, and one son. My daughter studies in English medium school and my son is a minor, he does not go to school. I get up early at 4 am. I have to make breakfast for all of us and lunch for my daughter for school. I need to prepare my daughter for her school on the one hand and at the same time, I have to look after my son too. After I send my daughter to school, I rush to my work in tea garden while having my son on my back in the cycle. At first, I leave my child in creche house and then, go to the garden for plucking tea leaves. But when my husband comes to visit us once in a year for fifteen days, I get relief from some of my household chores”. The researcher took the case studies of 20 women, 10 married women from nuclear families, 5 married women from joint families (with and without children and tea garden job) and 5 unmarried women from

joint families. Almost all married women from nuclear families reported that they have to take the double burden of responsibilities after their husbands migrate. Out of 5 married women from joint families, 3(60%) women do not feel an increase in their responsibilities as they have to take care of the household's chore as before. The other male members are there to take the extra responsibilities given by the migrated member. However, 2(40%) women have reported that they have to look after many other extra tasks after the migration of their husbands of which they do not take care when their husband is there in the family. Mostly, it is because their parents-in-law are much older and the other family members are not that mature so that they can handle the responsibilities. The extra tasks are from going to panchayat meeting, bargain with the merchant for the price of betel nut, going for marketing, bank, to the searching the carpenter for house repairing. In general, the changing patterns of work left behind family members especially wives have been observed in both the villages. Sharing her grievances Sarita (30 years old), wife of a migrant and mother of 3 years old child says – "I work right from the morning till the night. Household chores- myself, look after the children- me, go to tea garden work- myself, arrange the carpenter for house building- myself if someone falls ill myself have to look after. Sometimes I feel to leave all and go somewhere and live alone. But, what to do without doing work outside there is no future". Similarly, Rupa Magar (35 years old) wife of a migrant says – "I have to manage everything right from household's chore, taking care of the parents-in-law, going for marketing, going for birth- death, marriage ceremonies in the neighbor. When I fall ill without in absence of my husband no one care for me even, my son does not care for me. I miss my husband badly and sometimes I think to ask him not to go outside for earning and look for some job here in the village".

## **5.5. Changing Fertility Behavior**

The study found that the migrant husband visits to their native place mostly once in a year. It has been observed that fertility has been under control among the migrant couples. The childbearing patterns of the migrant couple have been found something different than non-migrant's couples in both the villages. They have either one or two children but, not more than that. Khusboo lama (29 years old) wife of a migrant with a minor child says – “There is no secured future of us as my husband earns outside for our living, there is no certainty of his job. In this situation how to manage more child”. It has been found that many of the couples have a limited number of children because they do not want to have more responsibilities. Whereas, some of the couples have not more than two children because they do not get the opportunity to bear another child as their husbands do visit once in two years only for 15 days. In general, out-migration has greatly influenced the childbearing patterns of the villages.

## **5.6. Out- Migration and vulnerability of Child Socialization**

Socialization of the migrant's children in the villages has been greatly influenced because of the out-migration of their father/ mother. A child grew with the nurture of both parents. Socialization helps children's future to a great extent which begins from the home itself. Without strong and mutual socialization of parents, children may divert into wrong paths. Out-migration harms the child socialization patterns among the Nepalis (Bhujel, Birendra; Bhattarai, 2019). It has been observed in this study that Many of the school-going children have engaged in bad habits such as smoking, consumption of alcohol, use of abusive language, etc. Kanchimaya Chepang (39 years old) a wife of migrant says – “My son has

gone into the wrong path as he started drinking alcohol, sometimes he has beaten me too asking money. His father is in Bangalore for earning. It has been more than ten years, comes once in a year. Therefore, my son does not obey me as he does not have the fear of his father”. Similarly, the study found that children of out- migrant’s mothers are also have gone in wrong paths because the father does not care for their children rather, they are themselves have been alcoholic. Seeing their fathers, the children have been learning their bad habits of drinking alcohol, gambling, and smoking, etc. in both the villages. Some of the families of the villages are such where both of the parents have migrated for earning leaving their teenage/ minor children with their grandparents and other members of the family. Therefore, the children are not getting the socialization which they needed at their tender age. Due to which the vulnerability increases among the children to take the wrong paths and wrong peer group. An old villager says – “the children of today are used to with every bad habit. They go to school for namesake only, they consume what not! Their parents are outside and who will teach them good behavior. Their parents send money for their school, tuition after doing so much hard work. But their sons have become scoundrel”. Although the impact has been different in case of girl children, the equal intensity has been found on the daughters of the migrant father/ mother in the villages as they do not have a proper way of socialization from both parents mutually.

### **5.7. Out-Migration of Male - A way to the women Empowerment**

The rural-urban out-migration of husband especially, from the nuclear family in the villages has its positive connection with the empowerment of women in several ways. After the migration of their husbands, the household becomes the female-headed household where the female gains socio-economic autonomy. The autonomy is greatly seen among

the newly married wives and those wives who have tea garden jobs transferred by their husbands before they migrate. The economic control directly comes in the hands of wives of migrants. How to spend and on what has to decide by themselves in the households without direct interference by their husbands. Thus, they have been getting economic autonomy. And at the same time wives have to manage everything with the money their husbands send them monthly. Similarly, wives have to take care of socio-cultural participation with their relatives and neighbor in case their husbands do not send them money too. The study also found that there is greater exposure of women with the public spheres due to the out-migration of the male member. They have learned to deal with institutions such as banks, schools, and markets. Some of the women go to ATM for cash withdrawal. Some of the women have learned cycling for their convenience. Santa Gurung (33 years old), wife of a migrant says – “recently, I had to learn cycle. Because I have to go to many places for several works. The children could not be available right there at the time of need. Therefore, I have learned cycling. Now, it’s very easy to go around the village for any work purposes”. However, many of the married women, especially in a joint family, do not have their economic autonomy compare to other women the nuclear families. The other members of the family such as brother- in- law, father- in- law directly control their socio-economic and cultural autonomy in the villages. The study also found that husbands of many women do not send money properly and frequently which makes them worry to manage the household’s expenses. It is noteworthy to mention here that wives of migrated husbands also have familiar with modern technology such as smartphones and internet accessibility for Facebook and WhatsApp. However, few wives can handle the social network system. The majority of the new generation has such a social network system for

sharing their photos, videos and video calls with their husbands. Thus, out-migration not only have necessitated the accessibility of modern technology and means of communication but also it has enriched the left behind family members with modern means of communication. It has been observed that- migration, especially of the male, has paved the way for the empowerment of the women in the villages. Rukmani Thapa 40 years old says – “I did not know to handle the smartphone and social network. But my son taught me to handle the phone. Now, I can receive a video call for my husband. My son shares my photos with his father frequently”. Therefore, the study found some of the elements of the women empowerment in the villages in terms of socio-economic and technology. Simply, women gain the independency and take an independent decision which encourages to live independently.

### **5.8. Changing Socio- Economic Status of the Family**

It has been found that the remittance has become the major source of income for the migrants' households. The migrated family members send money to the left behind every month which they spend for various purposes for instance for house building, education, medical and other household expenses. Because of monetary support from the migrant, almost every household has gained socio-economic stability except some of the households in the villages. Of 95 total households, 82(84.21%) households have experienced the socio-economic stability in both the villages. Remaining 15(15.78%) households have not to get socio-economic gain from out-migration. Rita Lama (56 years old), mother of a migrant says – “Every body's son/ daughter/ husband send money to their family every month, my son does not send nowadays. He used to send before, but now he does not”. It has been observed in the villages that 50(52.63%) families of the migrants are having concrete

houses. However, some of these houses are completed and some are under- constructed. The remittance has changed the family's consumption and spending patterns as well It also has increased their socio- cultural participation in the village as the migrants' families do not have to worry about the money needed in socio- cultural festivals. The researcher has observed and heard the conversation of a group of Nepali women. One lady was saying that how she had closed the door at early 8 pm to avoid the Dhewsi group<sup>66</sup>. Similarly, another lady was saying that she was waiting for the Dhewsi group till 11pm. Further, she was saying that it was their culture and they need to celebrate it without greediness for money. Later on, when the researches asked them about the household of a migrated person for the survey. It was the later lady's households from where both her husband and son were migrants. This makes a clear understanding of the socio-economic status of the migrant's family compare to the non-migrants household in the village. The remittance has helped to increase the socio-economic status of most of the migrants' families. However, it does not apply equally to some of the migrant households. Because it is found in this study that 15.78% of total migrant households do not get monetary support from the migrated family members. Brother of a migrant says – “It's been more than five years for migration of my elder brother, he never sent money remembering us. He spends all the money on himself only. When he comes home, we have to manage money for him to return. He does not work at a place with stability. All people who had migrated later than him have done so many things for their families. But my brother has not built home even, for him and his future wife”. The study finds that it is not that all migrant families have achieved

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<sup>66</sup> Dhewsi group is a group of males during Diwali (Bhai Tika for Nepalis) they celebrate it playing Dhewsi (collection of some traditional songs) by visiting every households in the villages. The host households have to provide the group with money and the other items which they have prepared for the festival.

socio-economic stability. Many households are there in the villages have the same condition as it was before the out-migration of their family members which accounted for 15.78% of the total migrant's households.

### **5.9. The caste and marriage System in the villages: continuity and changes**

Traditionally, the Nepalis community is a caste-ridden society (Sinha & Subba, 2003). However, the Nepalis of Dooars especially from the Alipurduar district has its regional flavor of caste system and hierarchy which is different from other parts of the Nepali dominated region of West Bengal. It has been found that there are several caste groups in both the villages under investigation. The migrants of the Gangutia tea garden village belong to different sub-castes such as Sharma, Chhetri, Thapa<sup>67</sup>, Bhujel, Rai, Limbu, Mangar, Chepang, Lama, Darjee, Sarki, Nowbagh, Biswakarma, and Gurung. Whereas, the migrants of Mechpara tea garden village dominantly belong to the sub-caste Lama/Tamang. It has been found that in the villages there is no clear-cut division of upper and lower caste people. Because the tea plantation region did not give them much scope to follow their caste system rigidly because of its nature of work. However, the plantation has allowed them to follow and preserve their socio-cultural elements privately (Bhowmik, 1981). The caste hierarchy among the migrant Nepalis in Alipurduar district of Dooars can be understood in the following manner:

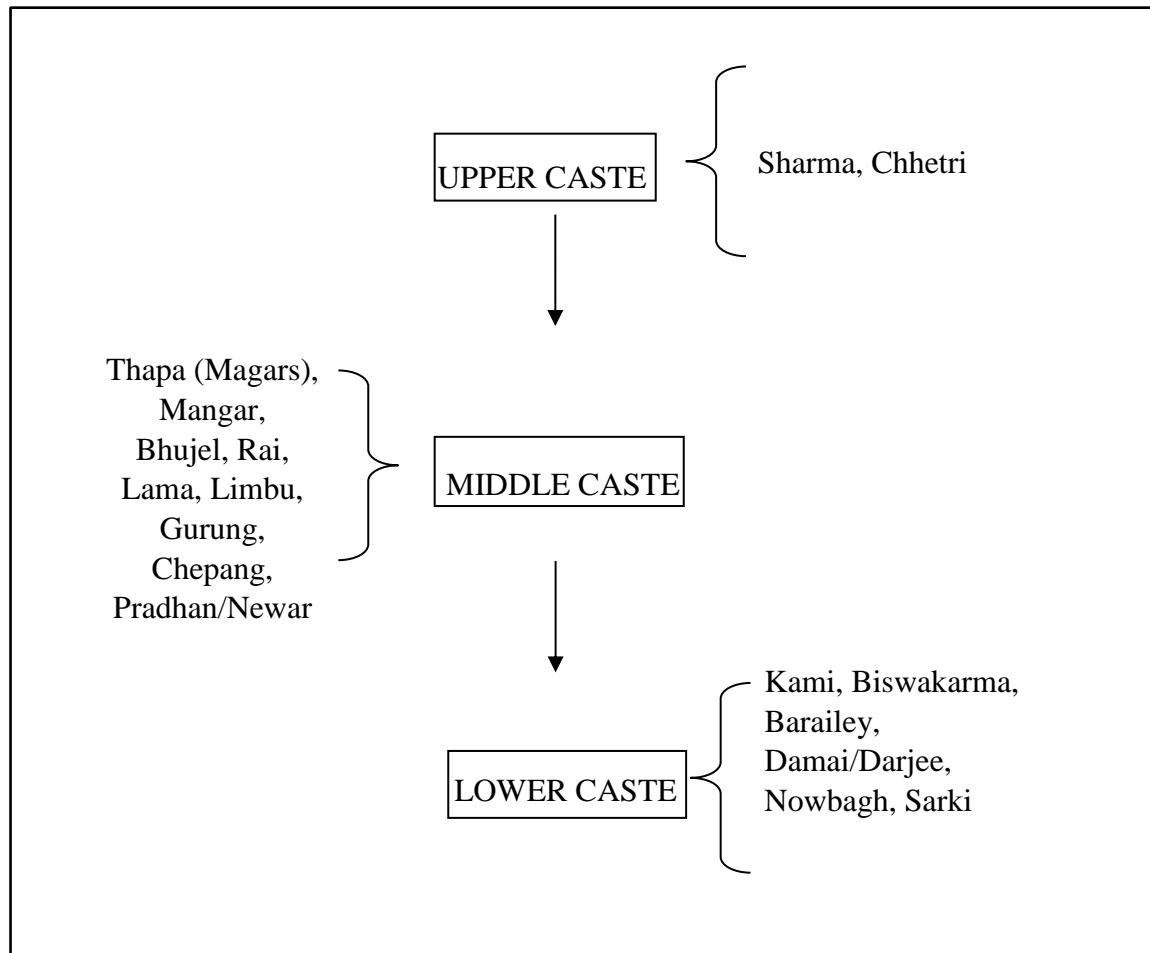
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<sup>67</sup> In the Nepali community, there are two kinds of Thapa sub-castes i) Thapa -Magar and ii) Thapa Chhetri. Here, Thapa denotes to Thapa Magar specifically. However, the Thapa- Magar are different than that of Magar/Mangar.



**Fig. No. 5.1**

**Caste Category in the Study Village**



Source: Field Survey

It has been found that the upper castes in the Gangutia village are Sharma/ Bahun, Chhetri, and its associated sub-caste. Similarly, the lower castes are Kami, Damai and Sarki and its associate sub-castes such as Nowbagh, Biswakarma, etc. The people of sub-castes fall in between the upper caste and the lower caste can be termed as the “middle caste” people. Therefore, people belonging to sub-castes such as Thapa, Magar, Lama/ Tamang, Gurung, Chepang and Pradhan/ Newar are neither considered to be an upper caste nor the lower caste. Therefore, the researcher has termed them as “middle caste” people. In both the villages under investigation, it has been observed that the caste system reflects only on

certain socio-cultural practices i.e. marriage, birth, and death. In marriage, they follow the concept of “Pani- Chalne<sup>68</sup>” and “Pani- Nachalne<sup>69</sup>”. In other words, it can be understood in terms of marriage preference. All sub-castes people of the upper caste are Pani- Chalne castes to each other. For instance, a Chhetri can marry to Sharma and vice versa. And all sub-castes people of the middle- caste are also Pani- Chalne castes to each other for marriage. For example, a person from Thapa can marry a person belonging to Rai, Bhujel, etc. and vice versa. Similarly, the middle- caste and the upper caste people are also considered to be Pani- Chalne caste to each other. For instance, Thapa can marry Chhetri/ Sharma and vice versa without any socio-cultural restriction from society. However, certain preferences would always be there in the marital relationship among the Pani- Chalne caste and sub-castes too. For instance, the Chhetri/Sharma sub-castes people do not prefer to have a marital relationship with Lama/ Tamangs rather than they prefer people from Thapa, Bhujel, Rai, Mangar, etc. sub- caste people. Because they considered them as Buff eater (they called it Goru Khane Haru). However, some of the upper caste people considered all the sub-castes of the middle caste as Buff and pig eaters (Goru/ Sungur Khane haru). However, after the marriage within the Pani- Chalne castes and sub-castes also, they practice a social ritual of caste mingling, they called “Jat Ma Leunu<sup>70</sup>”. For example, if a boy belongs to Thapa get married to a girl from Rai sub-caste, the family of the boy practice the “Jat Ma Leunu”/ Caste mingling ritual to mingle that Rai daughter- in- law into their sub-caste i.e. in Thapa. In this ritual what they do is that the family of boys invite their Samaj and offer them a kind of feast including the liquor, they called it

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<sup>68</sup> Preferential sub- caste people within or outside the same caste hierarchy for marriage.

<sup>69</sup> Non- preferential sub- caste people within or outside the same caste hierarchy for marriage.

<sup>70</sup> It is a social ritual for bringing the inter -caste daughter- in- law into the caste of the boy/ husband

“Raksi<sup>71</sup>”/ “Jad<sup>72</sup>”, “Masu- Bhat<sup>73</sup>” etc. The same procedure has to follow in case of the marriage done between the upper caste and middle caste, within middle sub-castes and within upper sub-castes, unless the marriage is not done between the same sub-castes but different “Gotra”/clan i.e. Between Chhetri and Chhetri, Thapa and Thapa, Sharma and Sharma, etc. If in case the procedure has not been done by the family of the boy for some reason then, later on, the Samaj will create a problem during the death of someone in the family. It would not permit to do the death rituals even in some worse cases it would not allow the dead body to be picked up from the house unless and until the procedure is done. Sangdan Saila (77 years old) villager says – “Now- a- days the Samaj has lost its authority. It is involved in many social offenses. In our time, every one of us used to get fear of the Samaj. Once what happened is that one of my neighbors had not done with the ritual of the Caste mingling. The Samaj knew it. The Samaj did not remain him and was waiting for the right time. One day his father died. After a few hours, the Samaj came and created the problems. It was not permitted to pick the dead body up from the house unless and until the ritual of the caste mingling had done by the deceased family”. Similarly, the lower caste people (including its all sub-castes) are Pani- Nachalne castes both for upper and middle caste people. There is no chance for the marital relationship with them by both the upper and middle castes. Interestingly, within the lower caste people also the concept of Pani- Chalne and Pani- Nachalne caste has been there among themselves. For instance, sub- caste such as Kami/ Biswakarma/ Barailey/ Rasailey considered people belonging to sub- caste such as Damai/ Darjee/Nowbagh and Sarki as Pani- Nachalne castes. While, the sub-caste

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<sup>71</sup> It refers to a local liquor in Nepali language

<sup>72</sup> It is also a kind of local liquor made by the rice. it is also known as rice beer.

<sup>73</sup> It refers to meat and rice.

Damai/ Nowbagh/ Darjee considered the sub- caste Sarki as Pani- Nachalne castes. While, the sub-caste Damai/ Nowbagh/ Darjee considered the sub- caste Sarki as Pani- Nachalne. It is noteworthy to mention here that people belonging to Adivasi, Bihari, Muslim, Bengali all are Pani- Nachalne community to entire Nepalis including the upper, middle and lower castes. In case the marriage is done between the Pani- Chalne and Pani- Nachalne caste i.e. between the person belong to Chhetri/ Sharma/ Thapa/ Mangar/Rai/Bhujel etc. to the person belong to Kami/ Damai/ Sarki/Adivasi/Muslim/ Bengali then, the family has to go through a major complication. Sangdan Saila explains – “If a boy from the Chhetri caste gets married to a girl form the Kami. Firstly, the family of the boy does not allow them to enter the house. Secondly, after certain days, the father has to inform his Samaj<sup>74</sup>. On the decided day the Samaj comes to his house for a meeting. At that meeting, he has to apologize in front of them and then, the Samaj would demand the monetary fine for his son’s socio-cultural offense. This social ritual followed by a religious ritual of Patya<sup>75</sup>/ Kirya. In this religious ritual, the father has to save his hair and become bald. A priest comes and chants the mantras of the funeral rite and the father does a Pinda Dan<sup>76</sup> to his living son considering him a dead person. After completion of both socio-cultural rituals, he offers a feast to his Samaj and to himself/family, they called it Chora ko Kirya Khanu<sup>77</sup>. From that day the son is dead for the entire family. The boy considered being a part of the family of his wife. He does not have permission to come to his family neither during death/

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<sup>74</sup> It a traditional authoritative body within the caste groups. Each caste group has its own Samaj. E.g. the Chhetri Samaj, the Thapa Samaj, the Bhujel Samaj etc.

<sup>75</sup> When the Nepalis do the funeral of a living person due to his/ her socio- cultural offense of non-preferential marriage. E.g. Between the high caste- lower caste/ with Pani- Nachalne Jat/ caste

<sup>76</sup> Offering oblation to the Manes during a funeral

<sup>77</sup> To eat food in the funeral of their own living son. Generally, in Nepali society no father/Mother eats food in their own son’s funeral.

birth nor their need. They called it Na Marda lai- Na Parda lai<sup>78</sup>. The social ritual of the caste mingling would be followed by the family of the girl to bring the boy/ son-in-law into their Caste and Kul<sup>79</sup>". Further, he says that the same procedure has to be followed by the girl's family if the girl is from the upper caste and the boy is from the lower caste. However, they considered son and daughter unequally in this regard because the daughter has to go to another's house and does not affect the parents' house much compare to the son. At the same time in course of understanding the socio-cultural ritualistic similarities and dissimilarities of the three caste rungs of the hierarchy, It has been discovered that the middle- caste people have more or less similar kind of socio-cultural behavior with that of upper caste people except, people belonging to sub- caste Lamas/ Tamang. For instance, at the time of the death of the father/ mother in the family, the children of both upper and middle caste (especially, the male child) perform the thirteen days separated and restrictive socio-cultural rituals. They cook their simple food without using salt, oil, and spices. They have to take a bath twice in a day (morning and evening), they should wear unstitched white open clothes. They should not touch people from outside even, they do not touch people from the same family and caste. During those thirteen days of ritual, they should not talk to the lower caste people. The whole procedure of this kind, they called it Kuri Basnu<sup>80</sup>. The Lamas/ Tamangs do their death-related rites only for 5-7 days without following the Hindu rituals and priest but, they follow the Buddhist ways of death rituals. It is found in both the villages that the Lamas/ Tamangs have stopped to celebrate the great festival of the Nepalis i.e. Dashera. The Tamangs have been started to identify themselves

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<sup>78</sup> Neither during death nor during birth and need, a kind of unknown person.

<sup>79</sup> The family having a particular socio- economic and cultural attributes differ from the other family.

<sup>80</sup> It is a Nepali term referring to the ritual related to death. It is the thirteen days socio- cultural restrictive death ritual among the Nepalis.

as non-Nepali as a part of cultural revivalism among them. Therefore, they have started to follow their “Sonam Lochar<sup>81</sup>”. Amit Lama (36 years old) villager says – “We (the Lamas/Tamangs) do not follow the caste system, in Buddhism, there is no concept of the caste. The Dashera and the caste system are related to Hinduism. We are Buddhist. Therefore, our community has stopped celebrating the Dashera”. Regarding the death ritual of the lower caste people, they do the rites for 3/5 or 7 days accordingly with the help of the Hindu priest of their caste. Similarly, they have different ways of celebrating the birth ceremony among all three caste hierarchical people. E.g. both the upper and middle caste people (except the Tamangs) usually celebrate the birth of a child after the eleven days of his/ her birth. They give the feast to their caste members on the day and give a name to the child with the help of a priest. This childbirth celebration is known as Nwaran<sup>82</sup> among them. At the same time, the same celebration is done after seven/ nine days among the lower castes people following the same ways of ritual with their caste priest. It has been found that the major basis for such caste differences has not been the occupation but the socio-cultural practices of the people. Because in the tea plantation region people are not engaged with their traditional caste occupation. But all of them have been involved in the tea garden laborious occupation where they do not have the caste-based division of occupations. They considered the socio-cultural practices of the upper and the middle caste is the purer than the lower caste people. It is noteworthy to mention that both the upper and the middle caste people (except Lamas/ Tamangs) have the same priest for their socio-cultural and religious practices. Although the caste system of the community has been its

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<sup>81</sup> Is a festival of Tamang community in the month of January to February lasts for five to fifteen days in spring season.

<sup>82</sup> It is a socio- cultural birth celebration of a new born child after the thirteen days of his/ her birth. In this ritual the parents/ family members give a name to the child.

reflection on certain socio-cultural aspects in the villages, the out-migration has been shadowing those remaining reflections too. It has been observed that the increasing cost of living and their day -to- day struggle for survival, the concept of a rigid caste system has become insignificant. Most of the young out- migrated people have a low caste life partner in the village living together in the same households with their parents. Most of them got married at their destination of work and some of them have eloped from the village and started working at the destination. The parents are also not showing objection regarding the marriage because they are the only support at their old age. It has been observed in the villages that everyone is participating in everyone's marriage, death and birth rituals irrespective of their caste. Mother of a migrant says – “We belong to the Chhetri sub-caste. My son had eloped with a low caste girl from the same village last year. Both of them are earning outside and send money for house building and support us in need. There was an objection from our Samaj regarding the marriage. We had gone through the procedure of caste purification too. But we have the same hearth and live together”. It has been found that they follow the caste system for namesake only. No rigidity has been found in their caste system and out-migration has been playing its role in it. A villager says – “Now- a- days who follow the caste system. Now, who is from the lower caste and who is from the upper caste has no significance. The only significance is that who will lead their lives peacefully and properly. The young boys and girls go outside for earning and they do love marriage irrespective of their caste and sub-caste”. A 45 years old lady says – “Jat le Bhat Didaina- meaning the caste does not provide you the food”. However, it is also found that the arranged marriage of a Pani- Chalne caste is not allowed with the Pani- Nachalne caste person in the village. An old villager explains – “If a boy belongs to upper caste and a girl

from lower caste eloped and get married it's acceptable. But if a boy belonging to a lower caste proposes an upper-caste girl for an arranged marriage, then it is not acceptable at any cost". It has been observed that the young people and the young migrants of the villages do not follow any kind of caste-based discrimination in any terms and the parents' also do not show any interest on it nowadays because, if the parents excommunicate their children who got married to Pani- Nachalne caste then, they would lose their all kind of support system at their old age. Father of a migrant says – "My son eloped with a lower caste girl from the nearby village. He had just returned from Kerala. He came home after three days to fulfill the traditional practice of Chor Ko Sor <sup>83</sup>. I was in a dilemma. I called my Samaj for consultation regarding the situation. The Samaj suggested me to accept them and follow the purification procedure for namesake (because most of the members of the Samaj has accepted the Pani- Nachalne daughter- in – law by themselves)". The traditional authorities Samaj has lost its authority. But still, people do not directly prefer the Pani- Nachalne person as their daughter- in- law/ son- in- law. There is a prevailing phrase among the villagers (it is a kind of warning to their children as a part of child socialization) that do not marry people who belong to a lower caste and Adivasis, Muslim, Bihari, etc. Try to marry within own caste and if not possible, marry at least with the Pani- Chalne castes. This study finds that the caste system has been losing its rigidity even in the marriage practices among the Nepalis of Dooars. Most of the earning members are the young generation who have been migrated into different destinations, they support their family. The migrant families have been able to build their concrete houses with money sent by their son/ daughter/family members. The remittance sent by the migrants also helped the

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<sup>83</sup> It's a social practice which has to be fulfilled after the three days of elopement of the couple. In this practice, the boy has to go to surrender and apologize with the parents/ family of the girl.



households to increase their socio-economic status. And when the migrated son/ daughter gets married to some lower/ Pani- Nachalne castes, then the parents are bound to accept the marriage socio-culturally. Because the parents cannot ask their children to leave the home which has been built by themselves. The tradition has seen to be insignificant in front of everyday reality in the villages. This is how rationality has been working in the villages and broken the traditionality. In the words of Weber, Rational legal authority has replaced the traditional authority (Aron, 1999). The changes in the caste and marriage system is not a sudden change. It is the result of the gradual but steady internalization process of the urban values system. The people have been out-migrating since the year 2000 from the tea gardens villages (Gangutia and Mechpara) in the Dooars of Alipurduar district. Also, their exposure to the modern values system both through experiences and the internet has given them the practicality of life and made them understood the non- functional insights of the caste system. Interestingly, the only thing about the Nepali marriage system which has not been changed is the age at marriage of both male and female. In traditional Nepali society also the age of marriage was very early of 16 to 18 years old and the same tendency has been seen in the village at present times. It is very difficult to understand whether it is so, because of the out-migration or it is because of the early marriage that leads to out-migration. However, one can find the causal relationship between out-migration and marriage. It has been found that many of the young people have migrated due to their marital responsibilities. Whereas, some of them had migrated first and then got married. Bhagwati (17 years old), wife of a migrant says – “She was reading in the class xi. She had met her husband on Facebook who was working in Karnataka then. He comes back from his workplace and got married to me”. The out-migration allows teenage migrants to

become economically independent. This economic independence gives them the confidence to get married. Similarly, the marriage responsibility makes the teenage mature and encourage them to migrate. Few of the migrants from the villages have also married to the inter-community people. Mother of a migrant says – “My daughter had gone to Jammu and Kashmir for employment. She got married to the local boy of the destination, the Muslim boy. Now, she has one child. They reside with us in the village”. However, it has been found that still in the villages some of the traditional people do not look into such kinds of (inter-caste, inter- unanimity, inter-religious) marriages with a good eye. They say such kind of marriage as “Akardhak Gareko Biha”- meaning the arbitrary marriage. An old (80 years old) villager explains – “Now- a- days, people do not care about the caste and age of a person before they marry. People in the village have been marrying with Adivasi, Muslims, Kami, Damai at the very teenage. They do not listen to us. But because of such a mixture of several people belonging to different castes, communities, they do not know their original culture. People of today, do everything according to the internet. Young boys and girls go outside for employment and buy a mobile phone and they chat with girls and boys. They fall in love on the internet and suddenly, they get married by themselves irrespective of their caste and age. I am not saying the lower caste people are bad. We all are human beings but it does not mean that we forget our caste and Samaj. We should preserve our culture and should follow our caste system”. After understanding the various dimensions of the caste and marriage system and its dynamisms it can be said that the out-migration has been its crucial role in bringing certain alteration in the caste and marriage system among the Nepalis of the tea garden villages.

## **5.10. Out- Migration and the changing kinship Relationship in the villages**

The asymmetrical kinship system has been the characteristic of the community in the villages. The consanguineal kinship has its greater implication in the community compare to the affinal relationship. The family of the father has its greater socio-economic and cultural value than the family of the mother. Its implication is reflected during many socio-cultural rituals of the community. One has more responsibilities towards the primary consanguineal relatives in various ways and vice versa. The primary consanguine relations are most significant for the community and rest secondary and tertiary relations are not considered to be so much important. However, their presence during the festivals and socio-cultural ceremonies may become valuable. The primary consanguineal relations are compulsory and investable during marriage, death, and birth of the family. The Out-migration of the family members has greatly increased the dependency of the left-behind family members on their relatives especially on the primary consanguine. Such dependency has given the primary consanguine kinship relations indestructible. The migrants frequently get into contact with their primary relatives. Many of the migrants could migrate because of the monetary support of their kin people. At the same time, the kinsmen frequently contact migrants, sometimes for monetary help and sometimes regarding the job search for their son/ husband, etc. Raju Sarki an unmarried migrant says – “After I go to my work destination, my mother becomes all alone. However, my uncle’s family is nearby to my house. I could leave her alone here as I am relaxed because my uncle’s house is

there. I call (audio and video) my uncle and mother every day to know whether everything is all right. When my mother falls ill, they take her to the doctor and also help for other household's works". Because of the increasing dependency of the migrant on the relatives has significantly increased the importance of kinship relationship. The primary kinship relations have become very significant in the villages whether it is primary consanguine or the primary affinal relations. A migrant says – "my wife's father had provided monetary help when I had first migrated. My wife asked her father for money which was needed during my migration". It has been observed in this study that out-migration has affected the husband-wife relationship very greatly. It has affected the relationship in two manners positively and negatively. Firstly, some of them migrated husbands and left behind wives appear to have improved communication and better understanding with each other. They communicate through mobile; they talk to each other both in audio and video calls whenever they get free time. It has been found that some of the husbands contact their wives more than ten-twelve times in a day. However, the frequency of the contact depends on the duration of their marriage. The frequency found to be more in the case of the newly married couples and the decreasing frequency has been found among those couples who are married for several years. Ranjana (19 years old), wife of a migrant says – "It been only six months of our marriage. He called me frequently and sometimes, I could not receive his call for some reason, he got angry". Similarly, Pinky (36 years old), wife of another migrant says – "He called me twice in a day, once in the morning and once at the night". It is also found that those husbands and wives who never had a conversation properly at home, they nicely talk to each other and understand each other's problems after the husband migrated. Most of the wives of the migrants reported that their husbands understand and

listen to them in many matters which had not been possible when their husbands were there at home. A wife of a migrated husband says – “we used to fight a lot with each other at home. But when he had migrated, since then we understood the value to be together. Therefore, whenever he comes to visit me, we do not fight”. However, it is found that out-migration has negatively affected the husbands- wives' relationship in the villages. Few of the migrants hardly contact their left behind wives. They contact their wives once in a week and sometimes, once in a month that is too if it is necessary. Tara Biswakarma (33 years old), wife of a migrated husband says – “My husband does not call me frequently. He calls me when his mood is good and only asks about the children. When I call him, he does not respond to my calls. And when he comes home, he hardly talks to me nicely. Earlier he was not like this, now he has completely changed person. What do I eat? how am I? he does not care”. Similarly, Akriti (35 years old) explains – “Whenever he calls me, we fight only. He always asks me about the money he sent me. He keeps on saying that what did I do with that money? To whom do I give money? He accuses me of having affairs with another boy. We often fight”. Some incidents of broken marriages have also been observed in the villages. Of the total 104 male migrants from both the villages, 3(2.88%) have left their wives and went for second marriage at the destinations. Few of the extramarital affairs of the migrant’s wives are also observed in the villages. A villager says – “Many women in the village have extramarital affairs. Six months ago, a woman was caught red-handed with a guy at her house. Husbands do work at the destination for the wives and the families and the wives are having affair with another person. After that incident, we called her husband. He came and take her with him at his work destination. Many women are there in the village, husbands have bought a mobile phone and they are busy on Facebook,

chatting with unknown people. They do not have other work as they are housewives. They are busy day- night with their mobile. I do not know what is there in mobile?”.

At the same time, it has been found that many of the family/household- quarrels also have occurred. Basically, in the joint families, the wives of the migrated husbands try to dominate the other family members of the households as their husbands earn money for the entire family. Therefore, the contradictory relationship has been found among the family members. Therefore, many joint families have been broken into nuclear families in the villages. Many of the migrated people do not contact their relatives at the native place. Similarly, many migrated families do not care about their relatives as now, they have money and their relatives do not have. Bali (52 years old), mother of a married son says – “We were having our hearth together a few months ago. But, my daughter- in- law keep defaming about us to her husband (my son). Therefore, my son said over the phone to his wife to cook separately and his wife has separated with us. Now, he does not call me. He got his parents, brother everything in her”. Uncle of a migrant says – “My brother does not talk to us nowadays, his son is in Kerala, works in a beauty parlor. Therefore, they have become rich now. They are building a new house. Their entire family does not talk to us”. A migrant says – “My maternal uncle does not talk to me as he had told me to search work for his son. I had tried to help his son but, I could not get time from my work. Now he is angry with me. Therefore, I did not go to his house during Dashera and he did not come to our house for Bhai tika<sup>84</sup>”. Regarding the relationship between migrated fathers and their children, it has been observed (especially in the case of their children are minor) that the

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<sup>84</sup> It is a traditional custom among Hindu Nepalis during the Diwali (Tihar in Nepali language) festival. On the last day of Tihar, sisters put Tika over the forehead of their brothers, praying their wellness and long lives. This is celebrated in Dooars, West Bengal and other parts of the country among the Nepalis.

children do not find their father frequently with them in the village. It is their mother who stays at home with them. Therefore, most of the children do not easily talk to their fathers whenever their mother tells them to talk with their father over the mobile phone. When the migrated fathers come home, the children hesitate with their father for three-four days. A migrant father says – “My younger son is five years old. Whenever I called her mother and wanted to talk to my son. He did not want to talk to me. Sometimes, I afraid that he does not recognize me as his father. Now, I have come to my home for Dashera, for the first three-four days, he was hesitant and got shy of me. He does not follow me if I go somewhere but, he follows her mother wherever, she goes. He always asks for his mother if he did not see her for a minute too”.



## **CHAPTER- VI**

### **CONCLUSION**

Rural-urban out-migration is a movement of the people from the rural push ridden areas to the urban centers, especially for the employment reasons. Internal out-migration has been a trending phenomenon in the country in the recent decade on which many studies have gravitated in which sociology is not exceptional. In this era of globalization, the movement of the people from one geographical area to another has become a matter of a slight time. The developed nature of means of transportation and communication technology has greatly contributed to reducing the gap between time and space. Therefore, migration is not a matter of big deal today. However, it has become a major problem for developing countries like India. On the one hand, rural people are running out of the means for their survival. The existing industries, agricultural lands, available but limited opportunities have been not able to accommodate the people into rural areas. The existing means of economic activities have been proven to fail to cater to the increasing basic needs of rural people. Similarly, on the other hand, the urban centers are not having that powerful and real pulls so that it can provide the rural people employment without any trouble. Because the studies show that there is a pool of unemployed people in Indian urban places themselves. Therefore, the rural-urban out-migration has not become a complex transaction but also has become a selective differently. As the process out-migration is a complex phenomenon right from the place of origin to the place of destination. It is as one of the factors of social change has significant socio-economic and cultural implication to the migrants from the community to the societal level. The study has observed that at present



times, the dilapidated tea plantation regions have been sending the people in different destinations of the urban places. Many people from the Nepali community of the Dooars region have greatly in rural-urban mobility, especially for employment reasons. The Nepali community in India being a heterogenous group is not easy to understand. In the recent past, many questions have occurred such as are the Nepalis people foreigner to India? Are all the Nepalis residing in the country the Nepalese National? Etc. Many people from the community had to go through several verbal lashes during the Gorkhaland movement. Understanding the lineage of the community in India, they have a history of the long past of India in general and the Dooars region in particular. The history can be traceable with the recruitment of the Gurkha Army in the Rana Ranjit Singh military force as the brave men, the recruitment in the British Indian Army as a martial race and the recruitment in the tea plantation as suitable labourers or the line boys. There is no doubt considering the community as migratory in the past as many of the ethnic groups within the community were the grazers. They used to migrate place to place with their cattle in search of the pastoral lands as there was no concept of the political boundary, unlike today. Therefore, the illegality of the migration had no measurement then. The migration is a natural phenomenon unless it is illegal migration. The study shows that the paramount paradox with which the community is living in their own Country is their identity issues. To some extent, it is because of their very nomenclature and almost the same lingua franca with that of the nationals of Nepal. They do not have any means to make people convinced that they are different than that of Nepalese nationals. Historically, soon the tea production started especially for the market in Assam in 1839, the planters were more concerned about the suitable labour- force as they could not rely on the local labourers of the Assam. Therefore,

they needed suitable labourers. They recruited the Nepalis from upcountry in the tea plantations of the Assam which we can understand in terms of the paradigm change from the martial race to the cheap and suitable labourers or the line boys. Similarly, the research has been found that in the year 1874 when the first tea plantation was established in Dooars, the British planters were not worried about the labour supply for their newly established tea plantations. Because it has been found that thousands of the Nepalis had been there as the source of tea plantation labour- force. The British planters had encouraged the immigration of the Nepali people giving them false promises (i.e. “Chiya ko Bot Ma Sun Falcha” meaning, the tea bushes produce the gold) in the plantation considering them not suitable for their military recruitment. They have rather encouraged family migration into the plantation regions. It was legal immigration in today’s term. We can understand that the British East India Company had fully taken advantage of the socio-economic disabilities of the community to harness the vested interests of the company. After the independence of the country also the situation has not been changed for the community as thousands of the Nepalis are serving their country as military men and martyred. At the same time, thousands of them are working in the tea plantations. Hundreds of them are dying for poverty, starvation in the tea plantation regions. The study has observed that the contribution made by the community for the country has to be evaluated with the unbiased coin considering the long-past history of the community in India. All the Indian Nepalis are the descendants of those martial men and the tea labourers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The Nepalis are there in many parts of the country including the tea gardens of Dooars of West Bengal. The community formed the main source of labour force in the tea plantations of the Dooars.

In present times a major section of the Nepalis (especially the male) has been out-migrating to different urban centers for employment. The study has been found that the structural crisis of the tea plantation system has been pushed to the urban sectors. They are engaged in different informal sectors for earning. It has found in the study that women are not much mobile compared to male migrants from the villages. The children of the tea garden labourers and some of the tea garden labourers themselves are the migrants. The study shows that the Nepalis migrants from the villages follow the circular pattern of migratory movement. They earn at the destination, come and again go to different destinations for a certain period. The migrants are characterized significantly by the married tea labourers, drop- out students (married and unmarried) and the unemployed young people dominantly belong to the age group of the (26- 30) years old. Mostly, they have a secondary level of education. However, there is no positive relationship between the educational level and the nature of their work at the destinations. From the study, it has been observed that the STs are the most mobile people opted many occupations such as the security guards, assistants of beauticians, factory labourers, etc. The migrants are dominantly from the nuclear poor families of the villages among whom the fresh migrants are very few. At least one member of the household is a migrant followed by the two members migrated households. The study also has observed that almost half of the migrants earn 6,000 to 9,000 rupees per month. Most of them send money to their households every month and few among them who are not married send money as they wish.

The study shows that the historical socio-economic and political underdevelopment of the tea gardens in the Dooars has been pushed people greater than the urban pull into different cities of the country. Unemployment, the low wage of the garden, lack of diversifying

economic opportunities is greatly decisive for their migration than the imaginary pull of high wages, diversified employment opportunities, high wages, etc. However, findings of the study show that it is not always the push-pull factors that determine the migratory movement of the people, it is necessarily the specific reasons that ultimately stimulate the process of migration from the rural hinterland. There are case-specific reasons for their out-migration such as for house building, for providing economic support to the family, marriage and its responsibilities and for self-sufficiency, etc. It is found that the most case-specific reason for the Nepalis migrants is to support the family economically. The migrants do not have merely the structural determined reasons for their migration but, they have specific reasons which they perceived the motivations for their movement. Because it is not always the structural determined economic reasons but it is always the social goals that fortify the movement of rural people into urban places. The rural-urban migration cannot be understood merely from its economic point of view even if the people have migrated for employment reasons. Because, the study shows that some specific circumstances are always lying behind such movement of the people which maybe his/ her reason for the movement whether it may be for social responsibilities toward wife/ family, children or for becoming progressive among the other. There are always several realities behind any apparent reality for migration. It has found in this study that the Nepalis have migrated significantly because of the structural crisis of the tea plantation system in the Doars. However, they always motivated to migrate by their specific socio-economic reasons for migration which they have perceived their causes for the movement. There is a difference between what the migrant perceives for their movement and what the other has the perception of their migration.

The study shows that the perception of the civil society has been that the Nepalis migration from the Dooars is the result of the crisis in the tea industry in general and specifically because of the negligent roles of the tea companies and the government. Therefore, it has observed that the out-migration of the Nepalis is the interplay of the structural crisis and the case-specific reasons of the people.

The out-migration of the Nepalis has its socio-cultural consequences which are manifested on the social institutions such as the family, marriage, caste and kinship system of the community to some extent. It is found that the size of the family has been significantly affected and some of the family have reduced to the single-member family and the female-headed households. The status of the Nepali women in terms of increasing roles has helped to some extent for their improvement both in private and public domains. At the same time, the study has observed the fertility behavior among the migrants has also been affected due to the out-migration in the villages. Many of the families could improve their socio-economic status. While some aspects of the caste system have also been influenced by their migratory movement. The study shows that the migrants do not have much rigidity regarding mate selection and marriage preference in terms of such as Pani Chalne Jat<sup>85</sup> and Pani Nachalne Jat, etc. Many young migrants have married to the Pani Nachalne castes and Pani Chalne Jat without any discrimination in the villages. Out-migration has been able to make many young migrants confident in terms of economic assistance which has encouraged them to get married at an early age. Similarly, the study found that out-migration has both negative and positive influences on the kinship relationship of the

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<sup>85</sup> Jat means the sub- caste in the Nepali language. However, sometime the caste and sub- caste used interchangeably in the Nepali language.

community. The husband-wife relationship has been found greatly affected by the out-migration. Also, the changing patterns of the child socialization are some of the noticeable impacts of the phenomenon of migration on the community. The rural-urban out-migration may be a substitute earning for the running of the households. However, it may become the major source of livelihood at a certain point in time for the migrant and their family. It has found that out-migration has become a major source of livelihood for the Nepalis in the villages. It has become an everyday reality for the community. The study shows that the out-migration not only has influenced the community materialistically but also has its non-materialistic sway upon the community. It has challenged the existing patterns of the marriage system of the community. As a force of social change, migration has affected the community in both negative and positive ways. Thus, one can summarize the phenomenon of the out-migration in light of the findings of the study in the following points:

- I. Rural-urban migration has selectivity mechanisms in terms of age, gender, marital status, etc.
- II. Rural-urban out-migration for employment cannot understand with economic gain. It has enormous sociological dimensions.
- III. Rural-urban out-migration is not the only interplay of push-pull factors. However, the decisive role always plays by the push forces at the place of origin, especially in the Indian context.
- IV. Rural-urban migration is a result of continuous negotiation between the structure and agent.
- V. Rural-urban out-migration has both materialistic and nonmaterialistic consequences in both the community and societal level, the manifestation of

which can be spotted through the revising of the social institutions such as family, marriage, caste and kinship system.



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