Demographic Profile of a Munda Village in Sundarban, West Bengal

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ABSTRACT: In this paper an attempt has been made to portray some of the micro-demographic features of a tribal village inhabited by the Mundas in the Satjelia island of Sundarban, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal. Here an attempt has been made to describe the demographic profile of the population in a hard environment and economic condition. The demographic data were collected through anthropological fieldwork by using household census, genealogy and interview. The study revealed a growing population with low longevity and balanced sex-ratio at higher age-groups. The child-woman ratio seemed to be lower than all India average for tribals as worked out by earlier macro-demographic studies. The dependence of the majority of the population on large and joint/extended families as well as prevalence of out-migration were revealed through this micro-demographic study.

INTRODUCTION

Demography is the empirical and statistical study of human populations. The basic demographic structure of any human population is formed by its (i) age-sex composition, (ii) sex ratio, (iii) child-women ratio and (iv) proportion of married and unmarried persons. Apart from demographic structure there are three important demographic processes, viz., fertility, mortality and migration. The demographic structure of a population is related with the demographic processes. Therefore, the dynamics of any human population can be studied with the help of the basic components of demographic structure which help us to understand the demographic processes.

Usually the demographers study large human populations, like countries and regions to understand the trends of change or stability of the demographic processes at the macro level. The anthropologists on the other hand study the demography of small populations, usually inhabiting in smaller geographical areas, administrative units or small communities in a region. Another element of the anthropological study of demographic processes and structure is the bio-cultural foundation of human populations. Anthropologists not only study the biological aspects of human populations but they also make attempt to link these biological processes with various socio-cultural factors.

In India, although numerous ethnographical and social anthropological studies have been published on individual tribes, castes and village communities, very few demographic studies were done on similar sociological entities. Micro-level demographic profiles of small populations were rarely done by the anthropologists with a few notable exceptions (Hu,'56; Mukherjee *et. al.*,'76, '95; Panda and Guha, 2015).

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In this paper we have made an attempt to present some basic demographic data collected through fieldwork in a Munda village in the Sundarban region in South 24-Parganas of West Bengal in order to understand the demographic structure of this small population in a specific socio-cultural context.

Objectives

i)   The main objective of this paper is to present a demographic profile of a Munda village in Sundarban.

ii) Under the demographic profile we will specifically describe the age-sex composition, sex-ratio, child-women ratio, the proportion of old age population and the proportion of married and unmarried persons of the village population.

iii) Finally, we will also present some quantitative data on the recent trends of out-migration of the Munda villagers in terms of age composition.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data for this paper were mainly collected as part of the general fieldwork of the M.Sc. second semester course in Anthropology at Vidyasagar University during the month of February 2014 by the students under the supervision of their teacher. The fieldwork was conducted in a team and direct observation and interviews of the villagers and the people of the locality were done for eleven consecutive days. Through direct observation information on village settlement pattern were collected and a not to scale map of the village was drawn collectively. Data on age, sex and family composition, literacy, marital status, age at marriage and economic activities were collected through household census. The other sources of data were the various books, papers and reports (published and unpublished) on Sundarban district. After the completion of the fieldwork the data were classified and tabulated both individually and collectively by the students and their teacher. At a much later period, the first author of the paper again conducted a fieldwork to recheck some of the demographic data collected in the previous fieldwork. This paper is written on the basis of the data collected through these two fieldworks. In these fieldworks we always gave

priority to the privacy of the informants and took consent of the informants while collecting data.

AREA AND THE PEOPLE

Sunderban

The Sunderban literally means 'beautiful forest' in Bengali. It is a huge archipelago situated between the vast Indian Ocean to the south and the fertile plain of Bengal to the north. Created by the confluence of the Ganges, Meghna and Bramhautra rivers and their innumerable distributaries, the Sunderbans constitute the southern end of both Bangladesh and West Bengal. It is the largest delta in the world measuring about 10,000 sq km of mangrove forest spread over India (approx. 4200 sq km of reserved forest) and Bangladesh (approx. 6000 sq km of reserved forest) is also the largest mangrove forest in the world. Sunderban is a vast area covering 4262 sq km in India alone with a large portion in Bangladesh. About 2585 sq km of the Indian Sunderban forms the largest tiger reserve and National Park in India. The river Hooghly marks the Western border of the Sunderban. The Sandwip channel, which runs west along the Chittagong Hills, acts as the eastern border. On the Indian side, the Sunderban is located within the North and the South 24-paraganas districts of West Bengal.

Satjelia

The island of Satjelia, shaped like a heart and is one of the southernmost inhabited island of the West Bengal Sunderban. It is one of the last islands to have been reclaimed and inhabited. The island Satjelia is situated under the district of South 24-Parganas, at the eastern side of Gosaba block of Sunderban. It is the largest island in the block of Gosaba with an area of 615 sq km inhabited by 42,000 souls (Jalais, 2010). The population density turns out to be 68.29 per sq km which is extremely low when compared with the population density of West Bengal, because most of this island is covered by the mangrove forest of Sunderban. There are two Gram Panchayats, named Lahiripur and Satjelia in the island. There are 14 villages under the Satjelia Pram panchayat and 11 villages in Lahiripur Gram Panchayat. The distance between Gosaba to Satjelia is 12.7 km and takes about 1 hour in a motorised launch through the rivers. The

village in which we have conducted our fieldwork is named by the Mundas as Sardarpara and it located in the Satjelia island of the South 24-Parganas of West Bengal.

Sardarpara: A Tribal Village

The village Sardarpara (official name of the village) is situated on the bank of a river and is close to the mangrove forest zone of Sunderban in the Satjelia island. The topography of the village presents the typical scenario of the region. The river called by the people is 'Dutta River' which encircle the village on the east and the south and it flows between the forest and the villages. The village has a high earthen embankment which protected the human habitation from the tidal waves of the river. The embankment formed a semilunar mud path around the village which is also the main road of the village (see Fig. I). The embankment rises up to 10-12 feet with a width of 5-6 feet and was found to be in a bad condition. The villagers expressed their grievances against the local Panchayat and the government for not undertaking the repair of the embankment since the devastations caused by the Aila cyclone in 2009. This field observation conforms to the findings of Amitesh Mukhopadhyay on the aid politics at Sunderban (Mukhopadhyay, 2009).
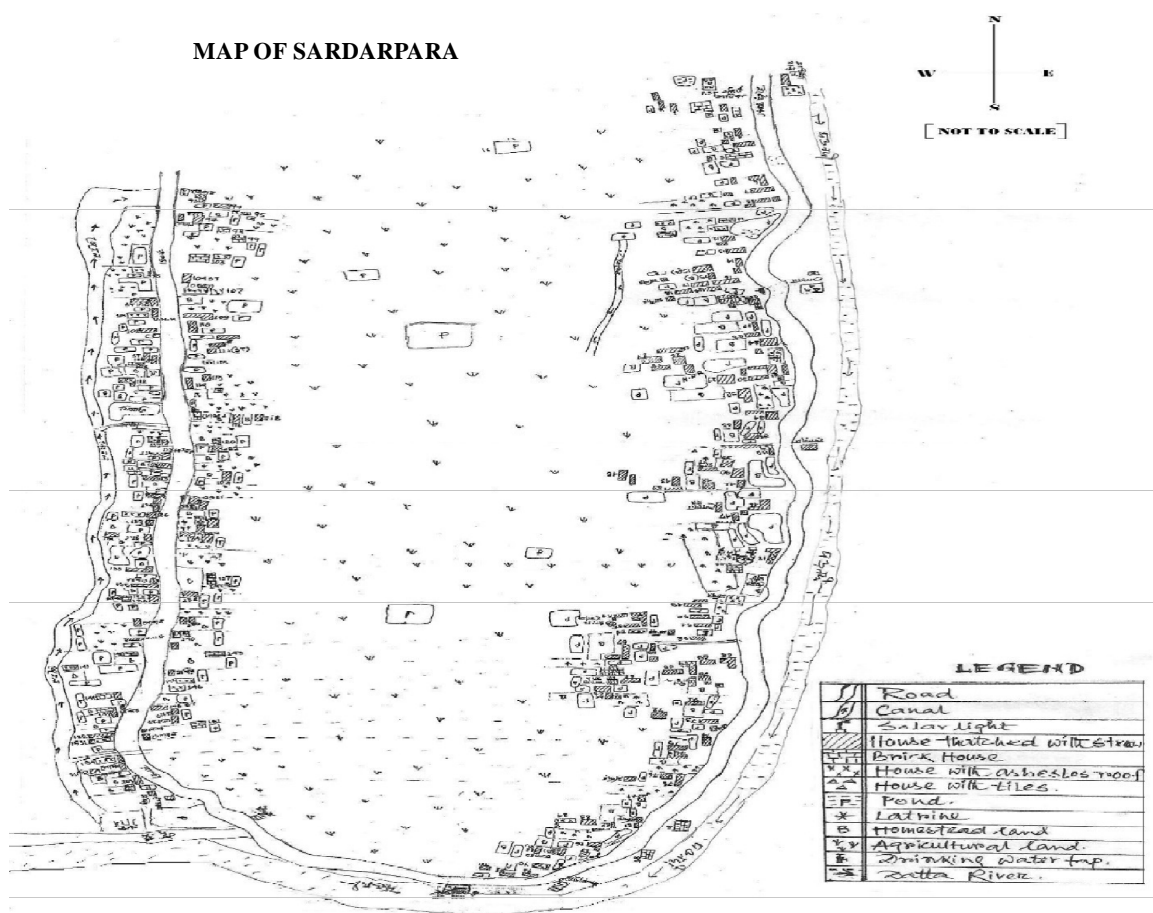

Figure 1: Sardarpara village map

The houses of the village are arranged in almost linear fashion below the embankment and the agricultural fields are situated on the western side of the village. A settlement inhabited by Namasudra caste (classified as a scheduled caste named Pod) is located on the north of the village along with a small marketplace named Tipligheri. Sardarpara is mostly inhabited by the Munda group of tribal people, who are enlisted under the scheduled tribe category of the government. According to the villagers the Mundas in Sunderban were known as 'Sardars', since during the British period they were the leaders in clearing the forest and building the embankments. 'Sardar' in Bengali language means the 'leader' or 'captain' of a team. The Mundas of this village speak Bengali in their day-to-day conversation and we did not face any difficulty in communicating with them in Bengali language. Officially, the village Sardarpara is a settlement of the scheduled caste population, which comes under the Sadhupur mouza bearing J. L. No.48 under the Lahiripur Gram Panchayat of the South 24-Parganas district of West Bengal.

The houses of the village presented the poor economic condition of the inhabitants. Most of the houses were built of mud walls having roofs thatched with straw. On closer enquiry, we have found that most of the Munda villagers did not own any agricultural land and many of them used to visit the nearby forest for the collection of crabs, fish, honey and some fuel wood. Most of the families who owned some agricultural land used to cultivate only one crop in a season which depended on rainwater. Some of the landowning Munda families were also found to lease out their land to the Namasudra neighbours on yearly contract basis. We have also found a number of villagers, particularly the men, who migrated from the village to work as non-agricultural as well as agricultural labourers in distant areas outside the village and again return to their home. With this general background we will now construct the demographic profile of the study village.

Demographic Profile of Sardarpara Village

The age-sex composition of the population constitutes one of the vital components of the demographic profile of any population. The following table and the population pyramid show the age-sex composition of the Mundas in Sardarpara village.

The table shows that only the first three young age-groups, i.e. 0-4 years, 5-9 years and 10-14 years,

TABLE 1
Age-sex composition of Sardarpara village

Age-group(in years)	Male	Female	Total
0-4	*(6.37) 16 [3.28]**	*(5.93) 14 [2.87]**	30 [6.16]**
5-9	(11.55) 29 [5.95]	(10.59) 25 [5.13]	54 [11.08]
10-14	(16.33) 41 [8.41]	(9.74) 23 [4.72]	64 [13.14]
15-19	(9.96) 25 [5.13]	(16.52) 39 [8.00]	64 [13.14]
20-24	(11.15) 28 [5.74]	(11.86) 28 [5.74]	56 [11.49]
25-29	(6.37) 16 [3.28]	(5.93) 14 [2.87]	30 [6.16]
30-34	(5.17) 13 [2.66]	(4.66) 11 [2.25]	24 [4.92]
35-39	(7.96) 20 [4.10]	(6.35) 15 [3.08]	35 [7.18]
40-44	(4.38) 11 [2.25]	(9.32) 22 [4.51]	33 [6.77]
45-49	(6.77) 17 [3.49]	(4.66) 11 [2.25]	28 [5.74]
50-54	(4.38) 11 [2.25]	(3.38) 8 [1.64]	19 [3.90]
55-59	(2.39) 6 [1.23]	(3.38) 8 [1.64]	14 [2.87]
60-64	(1.59) 4 [0.82]	(2.54) 6 [1.23]	10 [2.05]
65-69	(1.99) 5 [1.02]	(2.54) 6 [1.23]	11 [2.25]
70-74	(1.19) 3 [0.61]	(1.27) 3 [0.61]	6 [1.23]
75-79	(1.19) 3 [0.61]	(0.84) 2 [0.41]	5 [1.02]
80-84	(0.39) 1 [0.20]	–	1 [0.20]
85-89	(0.79) 2 [0.41]	–	2 [0.41]
90-94	–	–	–
95-99	–	(0.42) 1 [0.20]	1 [0.20]
Grand total	251 [51.54]	236 [48.45]	487

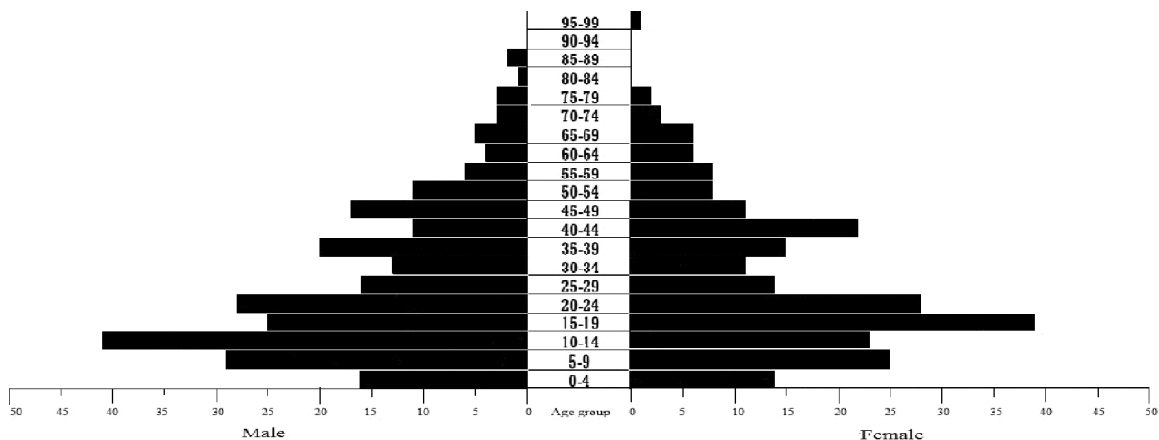(*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total

Figure 2: Showing population pyramid of village Sardarpara

constituted more than a quarter i.e. 30.38% of the total population out of twenty age-groups. This fact is also visible in the broad based population pyramid. If we add the next two age-groups, i.e. 15-19 and 20-24, then more than half of the population (55.01%) comes under the first five age-groups. So, this Munda village represents a growing and young population. The relative contribution of the two sexes in these young age groups shows that except two age-groups (10-14 years and 15-19 years) the other three age-groups show almost balanced sex-ratio pattern.

The contribution of the higher age-groups in terms of the number of individuals sharply declined from the age-group 25-29 years, and it never rose up to 8% of the total population in all subsequent age-groups. The second sharp decline took place from the age-group 50-54 years indicating high mortality of the population before reaching 60 years of age. When we compared the two sexes, we found that the sex-ratio in the age-groups, between 25-49 years showed a wide disparity at 35-39 years and 40-44 years, and interestingly males were more than the females in 35-39 year age-group whereas the females far outnumbered the males in the next age-group, i.e. 40-44 years. In the subsequent higher age-groups the difference in the number of individuals between the two sexes decreased and in three age-groups (55-59 years, 60-64 years and 65-69 years) the number of females was higher than males. It seemed that the number of females increased after the completion of the reproductive period and we found females in 75-

79 years and also in 95-99 year age-group, although there were no females in the age-groups 80-84 years, 85-89 years and 90-94 years.

The child-woman ratios of Sardarpara with women of 15-39 year and ever married women of the same age- group were found to be 280.37and 410.95 respectively[1]. These figures were much lower than all-India figures computed long ago by Kingsley Davis and subsequently cited by Moni Nag and Arup Maharatna for the tribes of India based on 1911, 1921 and 1931 Censuses which were 808 and 1023 respectively (Davis,'51; Nag, '73; Maharatna 2000).

The sex-ratio pattern across the age-groups in the population show some interesting features, which are presented below.

1. Although the overall sex-ratio shows that there were 940 women per thousand males, in at least five age- groups, i.e. 15-19, 40-44, 55-59, 60-64 and 65-69; the females outnumbered the males and in two age-groups (20-24 years and 70-74 years) the sex-ratio was found to be balanced.

2. The frequency polygon of the sex-ratio of all age-groups show three peaks at 15-19 years, 40-44 years and 60-64 years (see Fig. 3). The child sex-ratios between 0-14 years show much lesser number of females than males. Taken together the child sex-ratio turns out to be 720.93.

3. The lowest sex-ratios in the higher age-groups were found in 45-49 years and 50-54 years after which the ratio moved up in favour of females, and it declined only at 75-79 years and then remained balanced for the rest of the higher age-groups (see Table 3 and Fig. 4).

TABLE 2

Sex-ratio of the Mundas at Sardarpara in different age-groups

Age-group (in years)	Sex-ratio (F/M x 1000)
0-4	875
5-9	862.06
10-14	560.97
15-19	1560
20-24	1000
25-29	875
30-34	846.15
35-39	750
40-44	2000
45-49	647.05
50-54	727.27
55-59	1333.33
60-64	1500
65-69	1200
70-74	1000
75-79	666.66
80-84	–
85-89	–
90-94	–
95-99	–
Total	940.23

The number of old age persons in this population was found to be 36 which turned out 7.39% of the total population and the overall sex-ratio of the senior citizens was balanced and there were only 3 males and 1 female who belonged to the super senior citizen category. The dependency ratio of the population was found to be 59.38 which revealed that nearly 60% of the people were dependent on the working population [2].

The marital status of the males and females shows that few men and women remained unmarried beyond the age group 20-24 with some variation between the sexes and the proportion of ever married females was slightly higher than the proportion of ever married males. There were more widows than widowers and most of the widows belonged to post-reproductive period.

The figures of age at marriage of Mundas of the village (Table 6a) showed that irrespective of sex most of the marriages took place within 20-24 years and in case of females more than a quarter of the marriages were held in the age-group 15-19 years while majority of the males were found to be married at the age-group 20-24 years. No female was found to be married beyond 34 years but there were males who married even up to the age-group 40-44 years.
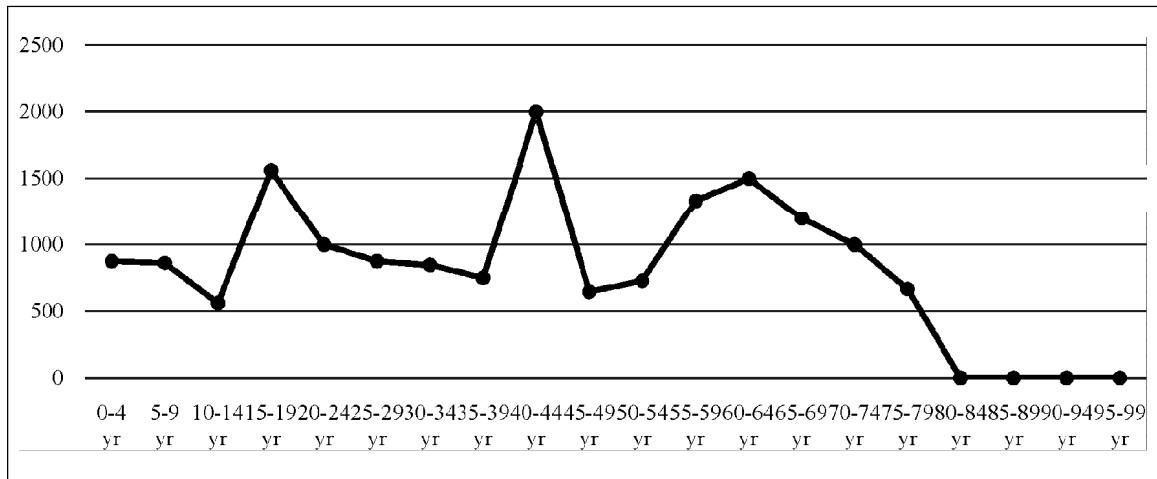

Figure 3: Sex-ratio in different age-groups of the Mundas at Sardarpara

TABLE 3

Age-sex composition of old age population of Sardarpara

Age-group (in years)	Male	Female	Total	Sex-ratio (F/M x 1000)
60-64	*(22.22) 4 [11.11]**	(33.33) 6 [16.66]	10	1500
65-69	(27.77) 5 [13.88]	(33.33) 6 [16.66]	11	1200
70-74	(16.66) 3 [8.33]	(16.66) 3 [8.33]	6	1000
75-79	(16.66) 3 [8.33]	(11.11) 2 [5.55]	5	666.66
80-84	(5.55) 1 [2.77]	–	1	–
85-89	(11.11) 2 [5.55]	–	2	–
90-94	–	–	–	–
95-99	–	(5.55) 1 [2.77]	1	–
Grand total	18 [50]	18 [50]	36	1000

Note: (*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total.
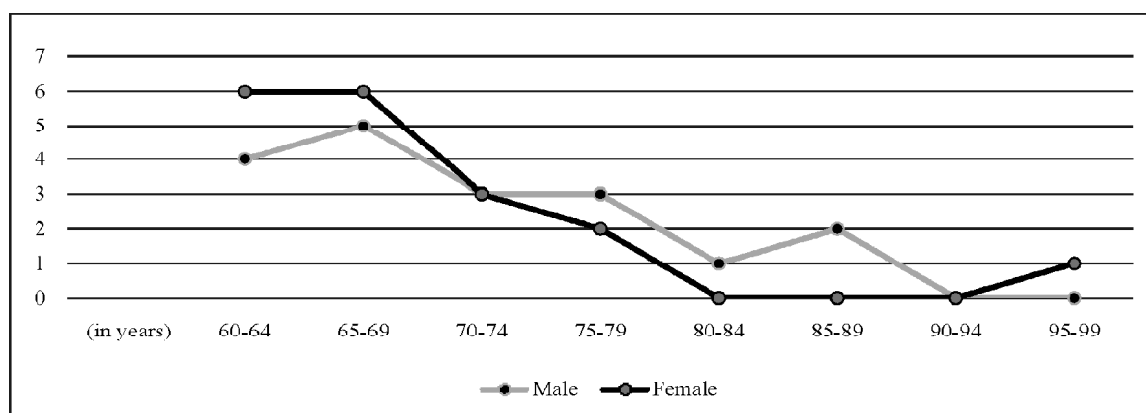

Figure 4: Age-sex composition of old age population of Mundas at Sardarpara

TABLE 4

Marital status of males at Sardarpara

Present age (in years)	Unmarried	Married	Widower	Separate	Total
0-4	*(11.76) 16 [6.37]**	–	–	–	16 [6.37]
5-9	(21.32) 29 [11.55]	–	–	–	29 [11.55]
10-14	(30.14) 41 [16.33]	–	–	–	41 [16.33]
15-19	(16.91) 23 [9.16]	(0.94) 1 [0.39]	–	(25) 1 [0.39]	25 [9.96]
20-24	(11.76) 16 [6.37]	(11.32) 12 [4.78]	–	–	28 [11.15]
25-29	(4.41) 6 [2.39]	(9.43) 10 [3.98]	–	–	16 [6.37]
30-34	(2.20) 3 [1.19]	(9.43) 10 [3.98]	–	–	13 [5.17]
35-39	(1.47) 2 [0.79]	(16.98) 18 [7.17]	–	–	20 [7.96]
40-44	–	(8.49) 9 [3.58]	(20) 1 [0.39]	(25) 1 [0.39]	11 [4.38]
45-49	–	(15.09) 16 [6.37]	–	(25) 1 [0.39]	17 [6.77]
50-54	–	(9.43) 10 [3.98]	(20) 1 [0.39]	–	11 [4.38]
55-59	–	(5.66) 6 [2.39]	–	–	6 [2.39]
60-64	–	(2.83) 3 [1.19]	–	(25) 1 [0.39]	4 [1.59]
65-69	–	(4.71) 5 [1.99]	–	–	5 [1.99]
70-74	–	(2.83) 3 [1.19]	–	–	3 [1.19]
75-79	–	(1.88) 2 [0.79]	(20) 1 [0.39]	–	3 [1.19]
80-84	–	(0.94) 1 [0.39]	–	–	1 [0.39]
85-89	–	–	(40) 2 [0.79]	–	2 [0.79]
Grand total	136 [54.18]	106 [42.23]	5 [1.99]	4 [1.59]	251

Note: (*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total.
Proportion of ever married males to total persons: 115/251 = 0.45
Proportion of ever married females to total persons: 138/236 = 0.58

TABLE 5

Marital status of females at Sardarpara village

Present age (in years)	Unmarried	Married	Widow	Separate	Divorced	Total
0-4	*(14.28) 14 [5.93]**	–	–	–	–	14 [5.93]
5-9	(25.51) 25 [10.59]	–	–	–	–	25 [10.59]
10-14	(23.46) 23 [9.74]	–	–	–	–	23 [9.74]
15-19	(30.61) 30 [12.71]	(7.69) 8 [3.38]	–	(20) 1	–	39 [16.52]
20-24	(5.10) 5 [2.11]	(19.23) 20 [8.47]	–	(60) 3	–	28 [11.86]
25-29	–	(12.5) 13 [5.50]	(3.70) 1 [0.42]	–	–	14 [5.93]
30-34	–	(10.57) 11 [4.66]	–	–	–	11 [4.66]
35-39	–	(12.5) 13 [5.50]	(3.70) 1 [0.42]	–	(50) 1 [0.42]	15 [6.35]
40-44	–	(15.38) 16 [6.77]	(14.81) 4 [1.69]	(20) 1	(50) 1 [0.42]	22 [9.32]
45-49	–	(8.65) 9 [3.81]	(7.40) 2 [0.84]	–	–	11 [4.66]
50-54	–	(4.80) 5 [2.11]	(11.11) 3 [1.27]	–	–	8 [3.38]
55-59	(1.02) 1 [0.42]	(4.80) 5 [2.11]	(7.40) 2 [0.84]	–	–	8 [3.38]
60-64	–	(0.96) 1 [0.42]	(18.51) 5 [2.11]	–	–	6 [2.54]
65-69	–	(0.96) 1 [0.42]	(18.51) 5 [2.11]	–	–	6 [2.54]
70-74	–	(1.92) 2 [0.84]	(3.70) 1 [0.42]	–	–	3 [1.27]
75-79	–	–	(7.40) 2 [0.84]	–	–	2 [0.84]
80-84	–	–	–	–	–	–
85-89	–	–	–	–	–	–
90-94	–	–	–	–	–	–
95-99	–	–	(3.70) 1 [0.42]	–	–	1 [0.42]
Grand total	98 [41.52]	104 [44.06]	27 [11.44]	5 [2.11]	2 [0.84]	236

Note: (*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total.
            (*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total.

TABLE 6a

Distribution of males and females according to their age at marriage at Sardarpara

Age at marriage	Males	Females	Total
10-14	*(0.93) 1 [0.43]**	(19.67) 24 [10.48]	25 [10.91]
15-19	(16.82) 18 [7.86]	(54.91) 67 [29.25]	85 [37.11]
20-24	(33.64) 36 [15.72]	(18.85) 23 [10.04]	59 [25.76]
25-29	(26.16) 28 [12.22]	(4.91) 6 [2.62]	34 [14.84]
30-34	(12.14) 13 [5.67]	(1.63) 2 [0.87]	15 [6.55]
35-39	(7.47) 8 [3.49]	–	8 [3.49]
40-44	(2.80) 3 [1.31]	–	3 [1.31]
Grand total	107 [46.72]	122 [53.27]	229

(*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total.
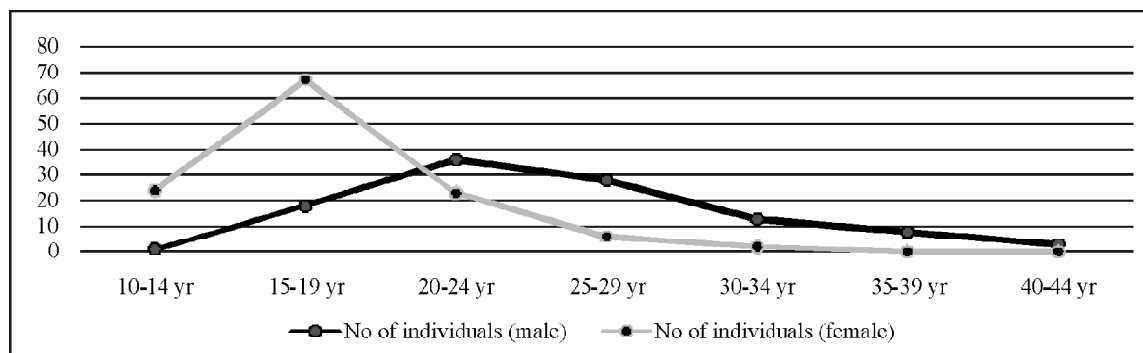

Figure 5: Graphical representation of age at marriage

The mean age at marriage of the males and females (Table 6b) were found to vary by eight years. Interestingly, the cross-tabulation of present age with mean age at marriage revealed a decline among the younger individuals over the years in case of both sexes. In other words, on an average, the older males and females were found to marry later than younger ones and the decline in the age at marriage among the younger generation was more marked among the males.

TABLE 6b

Relationship between present age and mean age at marriage at Sardarpara

Age-group (in years)	Mean age at marriage (male)	Mean age at marriage (female)
10-14	–	14 (n=1)
15-19	15 (n=1)	15.62 (n=8)
20-24	19.54 (n=11)	17.81 (n=22)
25-29	22.1 (n=10)	17.07 (n=14)
30-34	22.22 (n=9)	17.63 (n=11)
35-39	25.11 (n=18)	17.92 (n=14)
40-44	24.6 (n=10)	18 (n=17)
45-49	27.37 (n=16)	17.90 (n=11)
50-54	24.9 (n=10)	22.42 (n=7)
55-59	30 (n=6)	19.5 (n=6)
60-64	29.5 (n=4)	17.25 (n=4)
65-69	34 (n=5)	14.75 (n=4)
70-74	28.66 (n=3)	17.5 (n=2)
75-79	24 (n=2)	15 (n=1)
80-84	29 (n=1)	–
85-89	22 (n=1)	–
Overall mean	22.32 (N=107)	17.78 (N=122)

Note: n= Number of individuals in each age group. Data were not available on age at marriage of 8 males and 16 females.

The relationship between female literacy and age at marriage (Table 6c) is one of the most important socio-demographic components of a population. In this Munda village we have found that there were more illiterate women in the lowest group of age at marriage, i.e. 10-14, although there were some illiterate women (about 6%) who married after 24 years. We have not however found any literate woman who married after 24 years of age. (Table 6c).The age-group wise trend of literacy did not reveal much difference between the literate and illiterate females of this tribal village (Fig.7).

In this study we have followed the classification of family types done by Niranjan, Nair and Roy (2005) of the International Institute of Population Sciences, Mumbai. We have, however made some modifications in the aforementioned classification to accommodate our field data. The four types of family with their definitions are given in the following table.

The quantitative data on the types of families (Table 7a) in Sardarpara do not reveal the dominance of nuclear family. In fact, there were a substantial number of joint/extended families (44.32%) and the majority of the population (52.26%) lived in this type of family. The number of nuclear families on the other hand constituted 45.36% of the total number of families but only 38.68% of the total population was found to live in nuclear families.
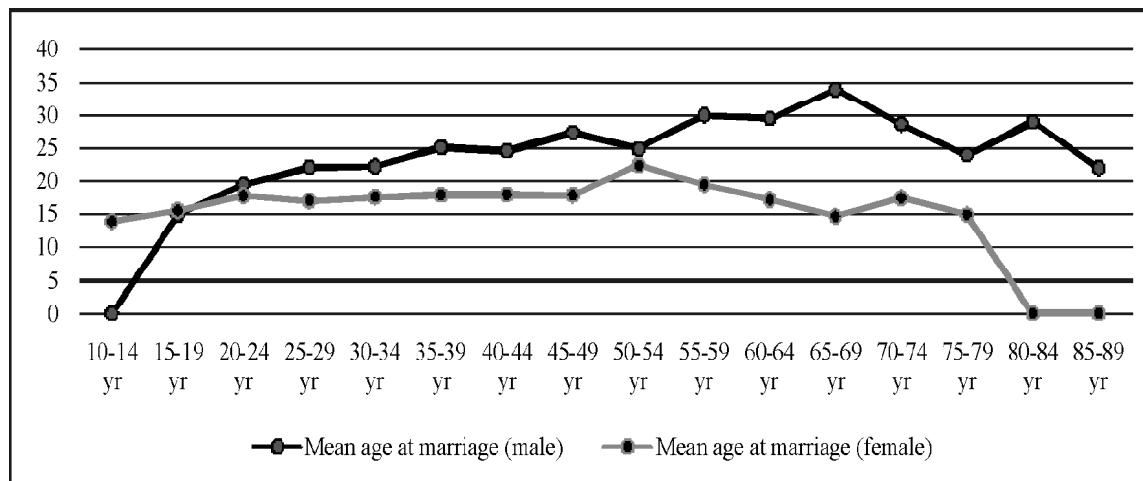

Figure 6: Present age and mean age at marriage of the Mundas at Sardarpara

TABLE 6c

Distribution of female literacy with age at marriage

Age at marriage (in years)	Illiterate	Total Illiterate	Up to Primary	Up to Secondary	Total Literate
10-14	*(23.52) 16 [13.11]**	16 [13.11]	(10.34) 3 [2.45]	(20) 5 [4.09]	(14.81) 8 [6.55]
15-19	(45.58) 31 [25.40]	31 [25.40]	(68.96) 20 [16.39]	(64) 16 [13.11]	(66.66) 36 [29.50]
20-24	(19.11) 13 [10.65]	13 [10.65]	(20.68) 6 [4.91]	(16) 4 [3.27]	(18.51) 10 [8.19]
25-29	(8.82) 6 [4.91]	6 [4.91]	–	–	–
30-34	(2.94) 2 [1.63]	2 [1.63]	–	–	–
Total	68 [55.73]	68 [55.73]	29 [23.77]	25 [20.49]	54 [44.26]

Note: (*) Percentage out of column total; [**] Percentage out of grand total. Total no of illiterate + Total no of literate =122. We have considered divorced and separated women in our sample.
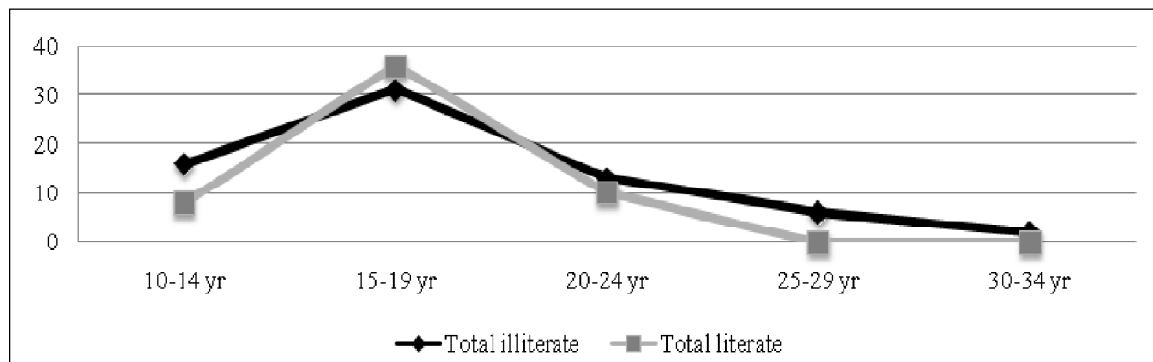
Figure 7: Relationship between age at marriage and literacy

TABLE 7a

Family types and their definitions used in the study

Types of family	Definition
Nuclear	Head and spouse with or without unmarried children
Supplemented nuclear	i) Head and spouse with married or unmarried children and other relations like divorced, separated, widow/widower children.
	ii) Either head or spouse surviving with married or unmarried children andother relations like divorced, separated, widow/widower children
Broken nuclear	Either head or spouse surviving but with or without unmarried children
Joint / Extended	i) Lineally extended family- Head and spouse with married son (s)/daughter(s) and their spouses and parents with or without other not currently married relation(s) (OR) Head without spouse but with at one or two married son (s)/daughter (s) and their spouses and/ or parents with or without other not currently married relations.
	ii) Collaterally extended family- Head and spouse with married or unmarried brother(s)/ sister(s) and their spouses with or without other relation(s) [including married relation(s)] (OR) Head without spouse but with at one or two married or unmarried brothers/sisters and their spouses with or without relations.
	iii) Mixed family - Lineally and collaterally extended family with or separated/divorced/ unmarried relative.

TABLE 7b

Distribution of the population under different types of family

Family types	Number of families	Number individuals	Mean family size	Range of family size
Nuclear	44 (45.36)*	188 (38.68)	4.27	5
Supplemented Nuclear	5 (5.15)	27 (5.55)	5.4	2
Broken Nuclear	5 (5.15)	17 (3.49)	3.4	1
Joint / Extended	43 (44.32)	254 (52.26)	5.90	8
Total	97	486	–	–

Note: (*) percentage out of column total.

Figure 8: Graph showing family types

TABLE 7c

Variation within nuclear and joint/extended family types in terms of the number of individuals

Family size	No. of families within nuclear family type	No. of family within joint/ extended family type
2	4 (9.09)*	–
3	8 (18.18)	2 (4.65)
4	14 (31.81)	6 (13.95)
5	11 (25)	12 (27.90)
6	4 (9.09)	10 (23.25)
7	3 (6.81)	6 (13.95)
8	–	4 (9.30)
9	–	2 (4.65)
12	–	1 (2.32)
Total	44	43

Note: (*) Percentage out of column total.

The table on household size also showed that more than one-third of the households belonged to the size category of 6-7 and above. The highest frequency of households were found under the size category 4-5. The upshot of the data presented in tables

There is only one family inhabited by one person and one house was uninhabited.

If we take into consideration the supplemented nuclear family, then nearly 58% of the population lived in large non-nuclear families. Another interesting fact is the variation in the number of individuals within nuclear family. Among the nuclear families, more than 40% have 5 and more individuals and more than 81% of the joint/extended families have 5 and more individuals. (Table 7b and 7c).
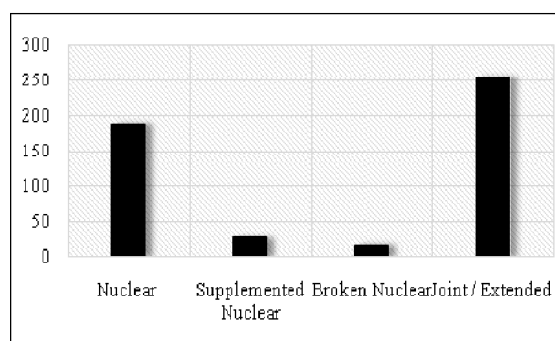

Figure 9: Distribution of population under different types of family

7b, 7c and 8 as well as Figures 8 and 9 was the inclination of the people of the village to live in large families. The mean household size of the village is also around 5. The typical nuclear family constituted by a married couple and two dependent unmarried children was found to be 31.81% of the total number of families (Table 7c).

TABLE 8

Household size of Sardarpara

Household size	Number of households	Number of individuals
1	1 (1.02)	1 (0.20)
2-3	17 (17.34)	47 (9.65)
4-5	47 (47.95)	212 (43.53)
6-7	26 (26.53)	165 (33.88)
8-9	6 (6.12)	50 (10.26)
10-11	–	–
12	1 (1.02)	12 (2.46)
Total	98	487

Note: (*) Represents percentage out of column total. Mean household size of the village is 4.96.

TABLE 9

The scenario of out-migration at Sardarpara

Age group (years)	Agricultural labourer	Non-agricultural labourer	Total
15-19	(14.28) 1 [1.47]	(14.75) 9 [13.23]	10 (14.70)
20-24	(42.85) 3 [4.41]	(18.03) 11 [16.17]	14 (20.58)
25-29	(14.28) 1 [1.47]	(9.83) 6 [8.82]	7 (10.29)
30-34	(14.28) 1 [1.47]	(8.19) 5 [7.35]	6 (8.82)
35-39	–	(21.31) 13 [19.11]	13 (19.11)
40-44	–	(4.91) 3 [4.41]	3 (4.41)
45-49	–	(3.27) 2 [2.94]	2 (2.94)
50-54	–	(9.83) 6 [8.82]	6 (8.82)
55-59	–	(6.55) 4 [5.88]	4 (5.88)
60-64	–	(1.63) 1 [1.47]	1 (1.47)
65-69	(14.28) 1 [1.47]	(1.63) 1 [1.47]	2 (2.94)
Grand total	7[10.29]	61[89.70]	68 (99.96)

(*) Represents percentage out of column total.   [**] Represents percentage out of grand total
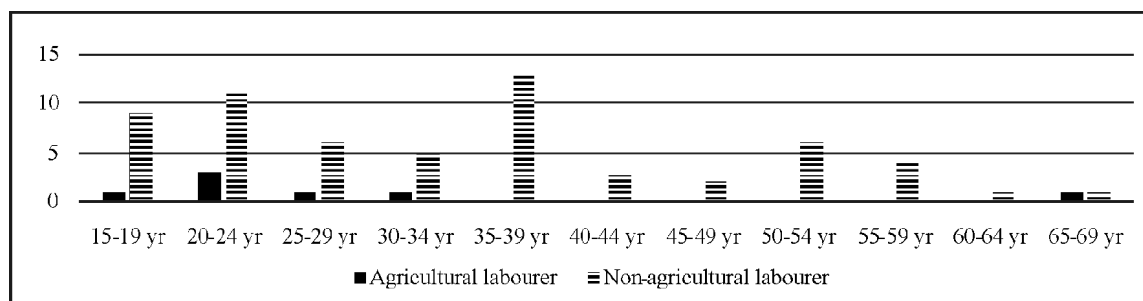
Figure 9: Bar graph of out-migration of Mundas at Sardarpara

The last important fact which we would like to include about the demography of this village was out-migration in search of livelihood. The fact first came to our notice when we collected the household census data. (Bandyopadhyay and Guha, 2017, forthcoming). In a number of households it was reported by the respondents that some of the adult male members were not present since they had gone out to distant places (no female out-migrant was found) to earn money by working as agricultural and non-agricultural labourers. In course of our fieldwork we have met persons who had just returned from some distant place after staying for 2-3 months outside their homes. The reasons for such out-migration were mainly lack of economic opportunities in and around the village and reluctance to undertake the risks involved in forest product collection. In Table 9, we have showed the scenario of out-migration of Sardarpara males in terms of the nature of work and age composition. It was found that as early as 15-19 years, the Mundas started to work as out-migrants in different places outside their

locality. About 73.5% of the migrant workers belonged to the age-group between 15-39 years. After crossing the age-group 35-39 years, the engagement of Munda migrant workers declined sharply and the decline was noticeable under the category of agricultural labourer, although quite a good number of the villagers (24.49% of the total migrant workers) were found to work as migrant non-agricultural workers beyond 39 years.

CONCLUSION

The demographic profile of this tribal village in a hard environmental and economic condition revealed certain interesting facts which are enumerated below.

1. The age-sex composition of the population showed that only the first three young age-groups, i.e. 0-4, 5-9 and 10-14 years constituted more than a quarter i.e. 30.38% of the total population out of twenty age-

groups. The contribution of the higher age-groups in terms of the number of individuals sharply declined from the age- group 25-29 years and it never rose up to 8% of the total population in all subsequent age-groups.

2. The overall sex-ratio of the population showed that there were 940 women per thousand males. But in at least five age-groups, i.e. 15-19, 40-44, 55-59, 60-64 and 65-69, the females outnumbered the males and in two age- groups (20-24 and 70-74 years) the sex-ratio was found to be balanced.

3. The marital status of the males and females shows that few men and women remained unmarried beyond the age-group 20-24 years with some variation between the sexes and the proportion of ever married females was slightly higher than the proportion of ever married males. There were more widows than widowers and most of the widows belonged to post-reproductive period.

4. The figures of age at marriage of Mundas of the village showed that irrespective of sex most of the marriages took place within 20-24 years and in case of females more than a quarter of the marriages were held in the age-group 15-19 years while majority of the males were found to be married at the age-group 20-24 years.

5. Quite interestingly, on an average, the older males and females were found to marry later than younger ones and the decline in the age at marriage among the younger generation was more marked among the males.

6. In this Munda village we have found that there were more illiterate women in the lowest group of age at marriage, i.e. 10-14 years, although there were some illiterate women (about 6%) who married after 24 years.

7. The quantitative data on the types of families in Sardarpara do not reveal the dominance of nuclear family. In fact, there were a substantial number of joint/extended families (44.32%) and the majority of the population (52.26%) lived in this type of family.

8. Finally, it was found that as early as 15-19 years, the Mundas started to work as out-migrants in different places outside their locality. About 73.5% of the migrant workers belonged to the age-group between 15-39 years.

The demographic profile of the studied tribal village revealed a growing population, with lesser number of old age people. The sex-ratio at higher age-groups was found to be more balanced than it is in the younger age- groups. Marriage was found to take place at lower age-groups, particularly among females and more illiterate females were found to marry at lowest age-group. A substantial number of large and joint/extended families were found in this tribal village and out-migration among males in search of livelihood was also found to be prevalent in the population.

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