

TITLE:

***SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF AGRICULTURAL
HOUSEHOLDS: A STORY OF TWO VILLAGES OF TRIPURA***

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Abstract:

Based on the primary field survey and secondary sources of data this study analyzes the scenario of the agriculture sector of Tripura and the socio-economic status of the agricultural households of two blocks of the North Tripura district of Tripura. The secondary sources of information shows that the state is facing the crisis of food grains and other crops due to increasing trends of population.

The primary filed survey data explores that most of the members of the agricultural households are primary school educated. The work participation rate is inversely related with different income group in both the study villages. We also see that middle income groups have commend over the livestock assets. From the field level analysis it is found that most of the agricultural households not survive with their tiny portion of cultivated land. Cultivation is not sufficient to maintain their family in proper way. Some members of the agricultural households are engaged with some small business, some other non-farm employment and government sponsored work like MGNREGA activity. For the improvement of the socio economic condition of the agricultural households this study suggests for government intervention to give credit facilities to the cultivators for their cultivation and other non-farm activities. This study also suggests for proper use of the unused land for the cultivation of some cash crops and use of proper water resources for fish cultivation. The study also provides recommendation for enhancing asset creation and sustainability of assets for wider benefit of the rural community through the MGNREGA activity of local Self Governments.

INTRODUCTION:

Since the economic liberalization in the early 1990s, the evidence suggests increasing as well as persistent poverty in the rural households of many states of India. After the seven and half decades of independent, regional disparities in terms of socio economic development are not disappear in India. The north eastern part of India is comparatively backward in terms of socio economic development comparing other parts of India.

Based on the primary field survey and secondary sources of information this study would like to analyze the scenario of the agriculture sector of Tripura and the socio-economic status of the agricultural households of two blocks of the North Tripura district of Tripura. In the rural area of Tripura around seventy four percent of people lives, forty two percent of total population are engaged in the agricultural activity and out of total land only twenty seven percent is cultivated where the main production of crop is rice. There are high rate of poverty, socio economic inequality and lack of industrial development in the state of Tripura.

From the information of National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16), we see that the Head Count Ratio (HCR) and Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of India were 25.01 percent and 0.118 respectively, the same for the rural area were 32.75 percent and 0.155 respectively, for urban area were 8.81 percent and 0.04 respectively. It was also found that the HCR and MPI of Tripura were 16.65 percent and 0.075 respectively. The same for the rural Tripura were 20.93 percent and 0.095. The HCR was highest in the North Tripura District and lowest in the West Tripura. In the rural area of the North Tripura 35.74 percent population were multidimensional poor and the MPI was 0.171.

Most of the farmers of Tripura are small and marginal farmers. The secondary sources of data shows that in Tripura ninety six percent of farmers are small and marginal. There is a demand supply gap in the production of food grains in Tripura. The percentage monthly income is highest for cultivation activity and then for wage salary. The percentage share of income from the non-farm business activity is lowest among the farm households.

Socio economic condition of an economy depends not only on income but also on level of education, occupations, wealth and other some factors. Based on the primary field survey and secondary sources of information this study attempts to find out the socio economic status of the agricultural households of two blocks and the state Tripura. We have the following plan of this

paper. The first section deals with the literature review and the gaps of literature. The second section deals with the methodological issues. We have described some features of the agriculture sector of Tripura from the secondary sources of information in the third section. On the basis of the field survey data the fourth section explores the ground level reality of the socio-economic conditions of two blocks of North Tripura. Concluding remarks are given in the section five.

I

Review Studies:

There are some studies regarding socio-economic status of agricultural households of different states of India. There are so many reasons regarding backwardness of agriculture sector in India, among them the most relevant cause is indebtedness of farmers. The study of Dutta (2012) reveals that farmers borrowed money from different institutional and non-institutional sources of credit due to the high cost of fertilizers for cultivation. The study of Kaur Rupinder and Kaur Karamjeet (2022) on the state of Haryana regarding the debt position of the marginal and small farm-size category farmers shows that eighty percent of the marginal and small farmers are under debt. The study of Patnaik (2004) shows that in the current era of globalization due to switch of production to commercial crops the level of indebtedness of the farmers increases.

On the other hand the study of Chattopadhyay M and Sen Gupta A (2001) on the state of West Bengal reveals that the efficiency for both owners and tenants increases due to the availability of irrigation resources. The study reveals that the medium-sized farms belonging to both owner and tenant categories are efficient. There are some studies on condition of the agricultural labours, Neela Multami and Sanghvi A.N (2017) states that the participation of the women increases quantitatively but their working condition not improved qualitatively. Sawant T.R (2017) opined that the condition of agricultural labours are not good in India. Venkateshwarlu & M. Ramakrishna Reddy (2017) argued that agriculture labourers of India are belongs to the unorganized sector. Farmers are very much insecure and uncertain for their earning.

The study of Paul Debabrata , Roy Bidhan Chandra and Mitra Arabinda (2018) emphasized on the production of such crops which can help to developed agro based industries and will also help for employment generation. The study of Mathur Ishita and Bhattacharya Prodyut (2018) on the state of Tripura analyses the current socio-economic status of resettled shifting cultivators. The study

finds that the local *jhumia* population has very much accepted the change from shifting to sedentary type of agriculture and their income increases due to cropping diversification.

Although there are many studies on socio-economic status done for India in general and other states including Tripura, yet there are many way areas which needs attention. Based on the primary and secondary sources of information the present study covers the scenario of the agriculture sector of Tripura and the socio-economic status of the agricultural households of two blocks (Kalacherra and Jubarajnaragar) of the North Tripura district of the state of Tripura. This study tries to compare these two blocks to find out the differences in the socio economic status of the agricultural households and the status of the agricultural households of the combined blocks.

II

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND THE STUDY OF THE VILLEGES:

This study is based on both the primary field survey and the secondary sources of information. We have purposively selected the North Tripura district for this study. We have selected two villages from two different blocks namely – *Kalacherra Block (Village - 1) and Jubarajnaragar Block (Village -2)* from North Tripura District of Tripura and collected information from 80 households taking 40 households from each blocks. The households have been selected on the basis of simple random sampling (without replacement). We have classified the households on the basis of different income groups.

The secondary data have been collected from different reports of the Government of India and Government of Tripura. Through primary field survey we have collected data on production, ownership of land and other assets & livestock, input use, educational status of the households, work participation rate, income of the households etc.

Scope, Relevance of the study:

The present study is based only two villages of two blocks (Kalacherra block and Jubarajnaragar block) of the district North Tripura. The findings of the study would be helpful to understand the socio economic status of the agricultural households of the two blocks. The results of the study will also reveal the various problems faced by the rural households in Tripura so that adequate steps can be taken to solve them and also improve the status of the households.

III

AGRICULTURE SECTOR OF TRIPURA- SOME EVIDENCES FROM SECONDARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Tripura has an agriculture-based economy and nearly seventy three percent of total land is uncultivated. On the other hand there is an increasing trend of population of the state. So the economy of Tripura can face the situation of the shortage of food grains and other crops in future. The Situational Assessment Survey of Agricultural Households (SASAH)-2013 shows that thirty percent of the rural households in Tripura depends on the agriculture sector. Ninety eight percent of the agricultural households of Tripura are directly associated with cultivation and twenty six percent households are associated with livestock rearing. Table- 2.1 shows the category wise monthly income of the agricultural households in Tripura. From the table we see that the average monthly income of agricultural households is Rs. 5,426, the same for the cultivators are Rs.2773, for the wage or salary earners the monthly income are Rs. 2182. The monthly income of the households engaged in livestock rearing are Rs. 307 and the for the households engaged in non-farm activity are Rs. 165.

Category	Monthly Income of Agricultural Household (In Rs.)	Percentage share of monthly income
Non-farm Business	165	3
Livestock Rearing	307	6
Wage/ Salary	2182	40
Cultivation	2773	51
Total	5426	100

Source: SASAH-2013 and National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE)-2018

Table-2.1 also shows the percentage monthly income which explores that cultivation activity contributes 51 percent and the share of other four activities are 40 percent for wage/salary, 6 percent for livestock rearing and 3 percent for non-farm business.

The percentage distribution of holding and operated area of the state is shown in the Table-2.2. In Tripura small and marginal farmers of total farmers are 82 percent and 13 percent respectively. The main agricultural crop grown in the state are paddy, maize, pulses, wheat oilseeds, Jute and mesta. Total cultivable land of Tripura is 2, 80,000 hectares and total irrigated land is 1, 27,000 hectares. Table-2.2 also explores the types of the operated land. Out of total operated area 44 percent are marginal holding, 31 percent are small holding and 25 percent land are medium and large holding.

Table- 2.2: Percentage Distribution of Holding and Operated Area:		
Sl No.	Holding	Percentage
1.	Number of marginal holding (Below 1.0 hec.)	82.00
2.	Number of small holding (1.0 hec- 2.0 hec.)	13.00
3.	Number of medium and large holding (above 2.0 hec.)	5.00
Sl. No	Operated Area	Percentage
1.	Marginal holding (in hec)	44.00
2.	Small holding (in hec)	31.00
3.	Medium and large holdings (in hec)	25.00
Source: - Revenue Department, Tripura		

Table 2.3 shows that the demand of food grains increases continuously from 1999-2000 to 2017-18 and production of food grains also increases side by side. There is a gap between food grain requirement and food grain production, but the gap between these two are decreasing overtime.

Table – 2.3: Food grain Requirement and Production			
Year	Requirement of Food grain (in lakh MT)	production of Food grains (in lakh MT)	Gap
1999-2000	7.18	5.13	- 2.05
2013-14	8.66	7.27	- 1.39
2014-15	8.79	7.62	-1.17
2015-16	8.92	8.23	-0.69
2016-17	9.05	8.53	-0.52
2017-18	9.18	8.55	-0.63

Source: - Agriculture Department, Tripura

To improve the economic condition of the agricultural households the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) has been distributed to the farmers in Tripura in 2004-05. Total 1.47 lakh farmers got benefit of KCC in 2014-15, and total credit disbursed to the farmers was Rs. 977.28 crore. Cropping pattern in Tripura are of two types - one is shifting cultivation or *jhum* and the other is settle farming cultivation. The State grows three seasonal rice crops (aush, aman and boro) in the settled farming areas. In the settle farming area vegetables and other non-food crops are also cultivated. Vegetable cultivation in the state is still not at a large scale, the production of vegetables are not sufficient to meet the demand of the people of the state. Major part of vegetables are imported to Tripura from Meghalaya, Assam, West Bengal. Irrigation facilities for cultivation are not properly developed in Tripura, irrigation facilities are more or less available only to the river banks. The secondary sources of information shows that average productivity of summer vegetables is 14.96 Metric Ton/ Hectare and the same for the winter vegetables is 19.85 Metric Ton/ Hectare.

IV

SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE AGRICULTURAL HOUSEHOLDS: THE GROUND LEVEL REALITY:

Based on the primary sources of information this study explores the social economic condition of agricultural households of the two villages of North Tripura district. The structured questionnaire has been used for collecting the primary data. Primary data were mainly collected from two different blocks of North Tripura taking 40 households from each block.

We have classified the households in five different income groups. Income group wise distribution of households is shown in the Table-3.1. The table shows that out of 80 households 29 or 36.25 percent households belong to the income group of below Rs.10000. 47.25 percent households belong to the income group Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 20,000. The percentage of households belong to the income group Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 30,000 is 8.75 percent and it is 6.25 percent for the income group Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 40,000. There is only one or 1.25 percent household belongs to the income group Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000. Table-3.1 also explores the distribution of households of two blocks separately.

Table-3.1 Income Group wise Distribution of Household			
Sl no.	Income Group	No. of Household	Percentage
ALL Blocks			
1	Below 10,000	29	36.25
2	10,000-20,000	38	47.5
3	20,000-30,000	7	8.75
4	30,000-40,000	5	6.25
5	40,000-50,000	1	1.25
	Total	80	100
Kalacherra Block			
1	Below 10,000	20	50
2	10,000-20,000	16	40
3	20,000-30,000	2	5
4	30,000-40,000	2	5
5	40,000-50,000	0	0
	Total	40	100
Jubarajnagar Block			
1	Below 10,000	9	22.5
2	10,000-20,000	22	55
3	20,000-30,000	5	12.5
4	30,000-40,000	3	7.5
5	40,000-50,000	1	2.5
	Total	40	100
Source: Field Survey			

The income group wise distribution of educational attainment of the age group 5 years and above is shown by the Table-3.2. In the combined block out of 374 members 210 or 56.15 percent are primary school passed and out of 374 members 150 or 44.11 percent are secondary passed and only .74 percent are passed higher secondary and above.

The income group wise distribution of educational attainment of two blocks are also shown by the Table-3.2. From the Table-3.2 we see the same picture but only two members of Jubarajnagar block are in the higher educated group, on the other hand in the Kalacherra block 12 members are in higher education group.

Table-3.2: Income Group wise Educational status of households							
S.I No.	Income Group	Illiterate	Just Literate	Primary	Secondary	Higher Education	Total
ALL Blocks							
1	Below 10,000	0	0	60	58	2	120
2	10,000-20,000	0	0	106	70	9	185
3	20,000-30,000	0	0	28	9	1	38
4	30,000-40,000	0	0	14	8	2	24
5	40,000-50,000	0	0	2	5	0	7
	Total	0	0	210	150	14	374
Kalacherra Block							
1	Below 10,000	0	0	40	45	2	87
2	10,000-20,000	0	0	30	22	8	60
3	20,000-30,000	0	0	9	1	1	11
4	30,000-40,000	0	0	7	1	1	9
5	40,000-50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	86	69	12	167
Jubarajnagar Block							
1	Below 10,000	0	0	20	13	0	33
2	10,000-20,000	0	0	76	48	1	125
3	20,000-30,000	0	0	19	8	0	27
4	30,000-40,000	0	0	7	7	1	15
5	40,000-50,000	0	0	2	5	0	7
	Total	0	0	124	81	2	207
Source: Field Survey							

According to the Census 2011 the work participation rate of the state Tripura was 39.99 percent which were 36.2 per cent in 2001 and 31.1 percent in 1991, respectively. The work participation rate among the rural population of the State was 41.14 per cent in 2011. We have arranged the number of household members and household workers and also the participation rate in the Table-3.3.

Table-3.3: Income Group Wise Work Participation Rate					
S.I No.	Income Group	No of Households	No of Members	No of Worker	Work Participation Rate
ALL Blocks					
1	Below 10,000	29	135	118	87.41
2	10,000-20,000	38	187	114	60.96
3	20,000-30,000	7	47	21	44.68
4	30,000-40,000	5	31	13	41.94
5	40,000-50,000	1	7	2	28.57
	Total	80	407	268	65.85
Kalacherra Block					
1	Below 10,000	20	95	82	86.32
2	10,000-20,000	16	57	48	84.21
3	20,000-30,000	2	15	6	40.00
4	30,000-40,000	2	13	5	38.46
5	40,000-50,000	0	0	0	0.00
	Total	40	180	141	78.33
Jubarajnar Block					
1	Below10,000	9	40	36	90.00
2	10,000-20,000	22	130	66	50.77
3	20,000-30,000	5	32	15	46.88
4	30,000-40,000	3	18	8	44.44
5	40,000-50,000	1	7	2	28.57
	Total	40	227	127	55.95
Source: Field Survey					

Work participation rate is the workers to members ratio multiplied by 100. The overall participation rate is 65.85, in the Jubarajnar block which is below the average rate (55.95) and in the Kalacherra block it is above the average rate (78.33). From the Table-3.3 it is clear that there is an inverse relationship between income group and work participation rate. Thus, the participation rate for income group-1 of Kalacherra block is 86.32, and it then decreases to 84.21, lastly decreases to 38.46 for the income group-4. Similarly in the Jubarajnar block the participation rate for income group-1 is 90, and it then decreases to 50.77, lastly decreases to 28.57 for the income group-5. The simple reason behind this tendency in participation is that as economic condition of the family improves it becomes possible for the adult as well as children to withdraw from work and enjoy leisure or to send children to school.

The distribution of own and operated land of the combined as well as the other two blocks are shown in the Table-3.4.

Table- 3.4: Land Distribution of Households					
S.1 No.	Income Group	Own Land (Acre)	Operated Land	Own Land Percentage	Operated land Percentage
ALL Blocks					
1	Below 10,000	12.66	10.2	15.61	17.00
2	10,000-20,000	50.04	38	61.70	63.33
3	20,000-30,000	9.8	6.6	12.08	11.00
4	30,000-40,000	7.4	4	9.12	6.67
5	40,000-50,000	1.2	1.2	1.48	2.00
	Total	81.1	60	100	100
Kalacherra Block					
1	Below 10,000	4.26	4.6	25.56	26.43
2	10,000-20,000	10.44	9.2	62.5	52.87
3	20,000-30,000	1.4	3.2	8.34	18.39
4	30,000-40,000	0.6	0.4	3.56	2.29
5	40,000-50,000	0	0	0	0
	Total	16.7	17.4	100	100
Jubarajnagar Block					
1	Below 10,000	8.4	5.6	13.12	13.14
2	10,000-20,000	39.6	28.8	61.49	67.6
3	20,000-30,000	8.4	3.4	13.04	7.98
4	30,000-40,000	6.8	3.6	10.55	8.45
5	40,000-50,000	1.2	1.2	1.86	2.81
	Total	64.4	42.6	100	100
Source: Field Survey					

The information of land shows that out of 81.1 acre owned land 50.04 acre or 61.70 percent land hold by Income Group-2 and percentage share of operated land of the same group is 63.33 percent.

The same trend has been found for the block wise percentage share of owned and operated land. In the combined block the percentage share of operated land at first increases from 17 percent to 63.33 percent, after that the percentage share of operated land decreases continuously as we move from towards the higher income groups. The operated land distribution of Kalacherra block shows the same trend with the combined block. The lethargic attitude of the higher income group is because, cultivation is not sufficient to maintain their family. Some members of the agricultural households are engaged with some business, private job and some other non-farm employment.

Table-3.5: Distribution of Production and Input Cost

Sl no.	Income Group	Production Percentage	Input Percentage
ALL Blocks			
1	Below 10,000	23.99	22.05
2	10,000-20,000	61.30	61.09
3	20,000-30,000	7.07	10.17
4	30,000-40,000	7.42	6.20
5	40,000-50,000	0.20	0.48
	Total	100.00	100.00
Kalacherra Block			
1	Below 10,000	37.84	32.32
2	10,000-20,000	54.91	57.23
3	20,000-30,000	2.78	6.73
4	30,000-40,000	4.45	3.7
5	40,000-50,000	0	0
	Total	100	100
Jubarajnagar Block			
1	Below 10,000	10.14	11.78
2	10,000-20,000	67.69	64.94
3	20,000-30,000	11.35	13.61
4	30,000-40,000	10.39	8.69
5	40,000-50,000	0.4	0.96
	Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey

The percentage distribution of production and input cost is shown in Table-3.5. From the table we see that the households of the 2nd income group have highest share comparing to the other income groups regarding production and input cost. The block wise production and input cost related information also explore the same trend. Thus, percentage of production and input cost of all blocks are 61.30 and 61.09 respectively, 54.91 percent and 57.23 percent for Kalacherra block, 67.69 percent and 64.94 percent for Jubaraj Nagar block. The contribution of production and input cost of different group of households are very much associated with operated land, higher the value of the operated land, greater the contribution of output and input.

The distribution of livestock and other assets of all blocks is shown in the Table- 3.6. We see an inverse relationship between income group and per holding livestock in the Kalacherra block. Thus, the per holding asset of the income group-1 of the Kalacherra block is Rs. 12010, for income group-2 it is Rs. 9456, for income group-3 it decreases to Rs. 5000. There is no clear trend of the per holding livestock asset in the Jubaraj Nagar block. Considering the information of two blocks per holding valuable asset we see that there is a direct relationship between income group and per holding valuable asset. Thus, in the combined block the per holding valuable asset for income group-1 is Rs. 508, for income group-2 is Rs. 555 and the same for income group-6 is Rs. 58000. The distribution of other assets of the Kalacherra block and also of Jubaraj Nagar block show more or less same trend.

Table-3.6: Income Group wise Distribution of Asset and Livestock								
S.I No.	Income Group	No. of Hlds	Live Stock (Rs.)	Asset (Rs.)	Live Stock Per Holding	Asset Per Holding	Livestock Percentage	Asset Percentage
ALL Blocks								
1	Below 10,000	29	427500	492360	14741	508	25.38	16.43
2	10,000-20,000	38	801890	1721380	21102	555	47.62	57.45
3	20,000-30,000	7	305500	516400	43643	6235	18.14	17.23
4	30,000-40,000	5	157200	239400	31440	6288	9.33	7.99
5	40,000-50,000	1	58000	26800	58000	58000	3.44	0.89
	Total	80	1684090	2996340	21051	263	100	100
Kalacherra Block								
1	Below 10,000	20	240200	431760	12010	601	60	28
2	10,000-20,000	16	151290	816980	9456	591	38	53
3	20,000-30,000	2	10000	143000	5000	2500	2	9
4	30,000-40,000	2	0	139000	0	0	0	9
5	40,000-50,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	40	401490	1530740	10037	251	100	100
Jubarajnagar Block								
1	Below10,000	9	187300	60600	20811	2312	15	4
2	10,000-20,000	22	650600	904400	29573	1344	51	62
3	20,000-30,000	5	295500	373400	59100	11820	18	25
4	30,000-40,000	3	157200	100400	52400	17467	12	7
5	40,000-50,000	1	58000	26800	58000	58000	5	2
	Total	40	1282600	1465600	32065	802	100	100
Source: Field Survey								

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The state Tripura had experienced with disturbance, extremism and insurgency which is directly related with economic development of the state. The State has come out from that disturbed phase arising out of insurgency since the 2005-06.

Based on the secondary sources of information this study analyses socio economic status of the agricultural households of two blocks and the state Tripura. In the section-1 we have discussed about the existing literatures related with this study and the methodological issues are discussed in the second section. The features of the agriculture sector of Tripura from the secondary sources of information has been described in the third section. Tripura has an agriculture-based economy and nearly seventy three percent of total land is uncultivated. On the other hand there is an increasing trend of population of the state. In Tripura the percentage monthly income is highest for Cultivation activity and then for wage/salary, whereas the percentage share of income from the non-farm business activity is lowest among the farm households

On the basis of the field survey data the fourth section have explored the ground level reality of the socio-economic conditions of two blocks of North Tripura. We have collected information on production, ownership of land and other assets & livestock, input use, educational status of the households, work participation rate, income of the households etc. We see that most of the members of the agricultural households are primary school passed. The work participation rate is inversely related with different income group in both the study villages. We also see that middle income groups have commend over the livestock assets. In the case of output and input distribution there is no clear result. From the field level experience it can be also found that most of the agricultural households not survive with their tiny portion of cultivated land. Cultivation is not sufficient to maintain their family in proper way. Some members of the agricultural households are engaged with some small business, some other non-farm employment and local government sponsored work like MGNREGA activity.

So for the improvement of the socio economic condition of the agricultural households some steps to be taken by the government to give credit facilities to the cultivators for their cultivation and other non-farm activities. Households to be awarded to use their unproductive land for the

cultivation of some cash crops or use of proper water bodies for fish cultivation or activities like goat farming and hatchery farm etc.

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