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Impact of the Movement

4.1 Introduction

The domestic life of tribal society is generally understood in terms of its family types, marriage rules, relational pattern among the members, and the relational pattern with the other ethnic groups living together. The concept of social organization simply encompasses all these aspects. The very concept refers in other words, according to Duncan Mitchell (1979), the interdependence of the constituting parts of any society. Various *adivasi* or tribal groups show some broad similarities in their social organization. Still there are significant differences among them. As an ethnic group each one has a bond of relationship among its members by blood, belief in real or putative common ancestry or marriage. And, at the same time, each group normally develops certain kind of interdependency or mutual trust with its neighbouring groups. But the pattern of interrelationship or interdependency may be shattered by an internal and/or external intervening factor such as a socio-political issue, for example. Given this situation, the Maoist extremism and the retaliatory counter-insurgency measures adopted by the Government of West Bengal and the Union Government across the Junglemahal area

have had far-reaching impact on the pattern of intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic relationships. Within a situation of arms conflict between the Maoists, on the one hand, and the security forces aided by the hired goons, on the other, the members of the engaging ethnic groups became divided into three noticeable camps: the pro-Maoist, the anti-Maoist but not pro-counter insurgency forces, and the pro-counter insurgency. The members comprising such camps came from cross-cutting their ethnic orientation. However, most of the tribal and other disadvantaged people were the pro-Maoists. Economically better off persons, mostly non-tribal ones, were the supporters of the counter insurgency forces. Some tribal and non-tribal persons made up the second camp. But their role was very critical and ambiguous. During the phase of violent movement and thereafter, no group could trust upon the others or even upon the members of the same group. This was because the standpoint of every engaging person was changing suddenly in the interest of safety and security of his/her own and the concerned family. Moreover, the tricky roles of the security forces, leaders of the then ruling political party and the Maoists were complicating the situation. From this theoretical approach, I have tried to assess and substantiate the impacts of the Maoist violence and the counter-violence perpetrated by the security forces, sometimes with the help of hired goons, on the various social institutions and cultural life of the people under study.

4.2 Social impact of the Movement

Though the Maoist movement at Junglemahal area has become weak at present, the violence and counter-violence during and after the so-called 'Lalgarh movement' has left serious impacts on the economic and socio-cultural life of the tribal and other

disadvantaged people of the Junglemahal area. The deep-rooted consequences of the violent activities have been given in the Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Consequences of the Maoist violence and counter-violence in the villages

Sl. No.	Type of Incidence	Chhotopelia	Kashitoria	Shimuldanga	Aushabandhi	
1	No. of untimely loss of any life during 2007-2011 in the village	05	01	04	-	
2	Average number of times atrocity occurred on a family	20-25	18-20	25-26	12-14	
3	No. of times atrocity perpetrated on a family by	Maoist activists	15-20	12-14	10-12	10-11
		Joint forces	22	15-16	10-12	14-15
		Hired goons	5-6	25-26	5-6	14-16
		Unknown person	-	5-6	3-5	-
4	Incidence of family breaking	01	01	02	01	
5	Average number of times relative(s) visited a family during 2008 - 2012	7	10-12	10-11	20-22	
6	Approximate number of times a family member(s) visited relative's house	22	30-32	40-42	15-20	
7	Average number of incidences of marital and other social ceremonies held in the last 5 years in a family	03	02	02	05	
8	Incidence of ritual ceremony held in the last 5 years in the village	04	05	06	10-12	
9	No. of days family members remained out of home during 2008 - 2012	>100	>30	60-65	20-25	
10	Forced disappearance (individuals)	04	-	06	-	

The number of times of various incidences has been mentioned as declared by the respondent(s) in a family. There was no official record to verify such data. In the following discussion, I have tried to understand these impacts.

4.2.1 Homelessness and Joblessness

The Santals and other poor people extensively depend upon the forests for their daily affair of life and livelihood. They depend extensively on collection of forest produces. Moreover, the *Jaherthan*, the coveted place for religious activities, of the Santals is located generally within forest. So they require a free access to the forest area. But, there was continuous threats of torture and harassment to the local residents by security forces during the movement and afterwards. It only created a situation full of fear and insecurity for people in their own villages. As a result, villagers could not enter into the forest or the *Jaherthan*. It was also reported that there were cases at Chhotopelia and Shimuldanga villages that women were forcefully stripped off in the name of search operation for the Maoist cadres. Such cases were reported to be more if security forces saw the villagers in abandon places like forest. They were mentally and physically harassed, including sexual abuses. On the other hand, they were also suspected as police informers by the Maoist activists. Thus, the villagers were the point of suspicion and target of the both of the conflicting forces, and ultimately, became the victims of the movement.

Under such circumstance many villagers, specially the males, opted to flee their villages. At Chhotopelia one or more family members had to remain out of home for

approximately more than 100 days. Such incidence was reportedly high at Shimuldanga also. Here even the *majhi* (headman) had to leave the village. At Kashitoria and Aushabandhi such incidences were comparatively less (Table 4.1). Thus, many villagers became homeless. At the same time, there was no work for the day labourers in and around the villages. Ration shops were remained closed. The Panchayat offices were shut down. The work under the MGNREGA, locally called as 100 days' work, was stopped. The women use to perform as agricultural day labourers in the surrounding villages could not go outside. Sometimes the women of the study area were hired as contractual labourers in the works related to road construction and in agricultural activities at Purba Medinipur and Burdwan districts. But during the movement Shamser Ali, a labour contractor who used to take labourers from Chhotopelia and its surrounding villages, was arrested by the police. After this incident no outsider wanted to visit this area. The people of this area were, thereafter, not getting works outside of the village. Thus, the people under study became jobless and many of them even homeless.

4.2.2 Physical torture

The most crucial impact of the Maoist extremism and the counter-insurgency measures was the physical torture, including sexual abuse, over the tribal and other disadvantaged people at Junglemahal. The people of the villages under present study faced regular harassment and cruelty from both the conflicting groups. Some case studies in this connection may indicate the nature of such violence (*Case V – VII*).

Case-V	Informant: Monimala Hembram (name changed) Age: 35 Sex: Female Ethnic group: Santal Village: Shimuldanga
<p><i>She used to live at the end of the village. Her husband was a Naik of the village when Salboni incidence occurred. Police used to visit her home frequently in search of her husband and other suspected persons. In order to save his life, her husband ultimately left for Andhra Pradesh. But her old father-in-law and only son, a minor, could not go somewhere. Police tortured them several times and her father-in-law lost his frontal teeth. Police used to say that they would come and offer the same treatment until her husband would surrender before them. Police searched her house forty to fifty times. At that time, she was thinking to commit suicide, but could not do that for her son only. Still her husband in an absconder.</i></p>	

Case VI	Informant: Sarala Hembram (name changed) Age : 38 Female Ethnic group: Santal Village: Chhotopelia
<p><i>She was the only earning member in her poor family. She used to work as daily labour, in addition to her routine daily chores. She could still remember at one early morning suddenly she heard a man's shouting. She rushed from her house and saw that it was their labour contractor Samsher Ali. Police was trying to get him out of the village.</i></p>	

Sarala along with others tried to save him from police. But police hit her at the abdomen portion. That blow incidentally made her physically unfit. She could not do any heavy work thereafter. No government help or compensation was offered to her ever.

<i>Case VII</i>	<p>Informant: Manimala Murmu (name changed)</p> <p>Age: 58 Female</p> <p>Ethnic group: Santal</p> <p>Village: Shimuldanga</p>
<p><i>She was an elderly woman who lived in a mud house. Her husband died two years ago. During the movement, she had two minor sons. She was the only earning member. She faced regular search in her house by the security forces and was subject to physical assault. This was the Maoist activists who helped her to counter that situation, and she also extended her support to take revenge against the police and Government authority. At that time, she had no other way but to believe the Maoists. However, But, after some days, the Maoist also forced her to attend their meeting and to take part in their rallies. As per the dictum of the Maoists, she had to stop cook at day time. Her sons had to spend the day without food. She had to send cooked food for the Maoists in Jungle. If she did not obey them, they would have been killed by the Maoists. She had no way to retreat from the Maoists but to do their work.</i></p>	

The average number of atrocities faced by a family was more or less 20 times as reported at Chhotopelia, Shimuldanga and Kashitoria (Table 4.1). This was relatively less at Aushabandhi since a camp of the Joint Forces was located close the village. It was also found that the number of times of atrocity of various nature perpetrated by the security forces was higher than that of the Maoist activists at almost all the villages. Moreover, the villagers of Kashitoria and Aushabandhi in particular had to face torture by the hired goons for considerable times.

4.2.3 Ritual Life

The Santals are very religious minded people. They use to perform some rituals every day. But during the Maoist movement, the Santals and other people involved could hardly perform their rituals and ceremonies or festivals. They could manage to perform ritual rites only about 4 – 6 times in the last 5 years as reported at Chhotopelia, Kashitoria and Shimuldanga (Table 4.1). The situation at Aushabandhi was relatively better (10 - 12 times). The impact on the ritual life of the ethnic groups concerned is illustrated in the Tables 4.2 - 4.3. Amidst the violent conflict, they had to struggle for their life and livelihood.

Table 4.2: Festivals of the Santals and impacts of movement on ritual performances

Sl. No.	Name of the Festivals	Time/ Month	Place of worship	Participants	Purpose	Impact of movement
01	<i>Magh Sim</i>	<i>Mag Chando</i>	<i>Jaherthan</i>	Both male and female members	When thatching grass is being cut	Not performed during the movement
02	<i>Bahaporob</i>	<i>Baha Chando</i>	<i>Jaherthan</i>	Both male and female members	Betterment of the villagers	Not performed during the movement
03	<i>Dishom Sendra</i>	<i>Pata Chando</i>	<i>Jaherthan</i>	Male members	Hunting	Irregularly performed
04	<i>Mak more</i>	<i>Sendra Chando to Jhent Chando</i>	<i>Jaherthan</i>	Both male and female members	As a result of promises made at times of distress	Not performed during the movement
05	<i>Arok Sim</i>	<i>Ersid Chando</i>	<i>Jaherthan</i>	Male members	Betterment of the villagers	During the movement, they could not perform this ritual because they were not allowed to assemble at <i>Jaherthan</i> due to promulgation of CrPC 144
06	<i>Dasai</i>	<i>Danshay Chando</i>	<i>Majhithan</i>	Male members	Betterment of the villagers	During the movement, they could not perform this ritual because they were not allowed to assemble at <i>Majhithan</i> due to promulgation of CrPC 144
07	<i>Soharay</i>	<i>Soharay Chando to Sakrat</i>	<i>Got tandi</i>	Both male and Female members	Harvest festival and for encouragement	Only females could perform this ritual during the movement in absence of male members
08	<i>Sakrat</i>	<i>Push Chando</i>	<i>Home</i>	Both male and Female members	Betterment of everything of the family	Only females could perform this ritual during the movement in absence of male members

Table 4.3: Impact of the Maoist movement on the festivals/*puja* of the Hari and Teli communities

Sl. No.	Name of the Festival/ puja	Day/ month	Place of worship	Participants	Purpose	Impact of movement
1	<i>Kali puja</i>	<i>Kartik</i>	<i>Home and Club ground</i>	Both male and female members	Well-being and prosperity of the village community	No such puja was performed during the movement.
2	<i>Manasa puja</i>	<i>Agrahayana</i>	<i>Home and Club ground</i>	In home only female member and in Club both male and female members	To appease the Goddess <i>Manasa</i> to avoid her wrath that may invite snakebite.	No such puja was performed during the movement
3	<i>Prayer before Tulshi</i>	<i>Everyday</i>	<i>Home</i>	Only female member	Well-being of family and to maintain purity of household environment	Irregular propitiation.

In this connection, some case studies expressing the people's internal crisis over non-performing of their traditional rituals may be cited here (*Case VIII - X*). The Santals of Kashitoria took a definitive initiative. Their *Jaherthan* was located in the forest of the neighbouring village. Since it was not possible to go outside the village in the fear of security forces and the Maoist activists, they shifted their *Jaherthan* to their own village (*Case -IX*).

Case VIII	Informant: Mamoni Saren (name changed) Age: 38 Sex: Female Ethnic group: Santal Village : Chhotopelia
<p><i>She didn't go to forest or Jaherthan during the movement. There was no strict restriction on that but she was very scared about the presence of large number of security forces in forest. There were also many security forces in and around the village. They were perceived as very cruel to them. Even though the Jaherthan was their sacred place to perform rituals, she didn't have the courage to go there and opted to abstain from performing ritual prayer and worship. She was about to forget the schedule of their traditional ceremonies, festivals and rituals. At the same time, she was also very scared about the bonparty (i.e., the Maoists). There was strict warning of police against assembling of three or more persons together.</i></p>	

Case IX	Informant: Jyotshna Murmu (name changed) Age: 42 Sex: Female Ethnic group: Santal Village : Kashitoria
<p><i>It was not possible to conduct and perform their religious ceremonies and rituals at Jaherthan, the abode of peace of mind. This was mainly due to the location of the Jaherthan. They had to travel a long distance to reach there. But she was scared to enter into the forest as it became the den of the bonparty and</i></p>	

the security forces. She was feeling extreme insecurity within a chaotic situation in which anything could happen at any time. Even she was not ready to let her children to go to the forest or Jaherthan. They were hesitant to come with the bonparty. But the latter seemed to be their well-wishers. They helped them a lot in their fight against police. The Majhimahal also allowed them to support them. They got in some emotional attachment to the bonparty that was very sympathetic to them. But, later on, the bonparty also appeared equally dangerous. It was tremendously hard to fulfil their instructions. Otherwise, they had to face their cruelty. The villagers, therefore, decided to shift the Jaherthan to a nearby forest site in order to avoid the both. But, the bonparty used to visit their village at night and to pressurize them to obey them, particularly to attend the meeting and to take part in the rally. During day time again police used to come and torture to reveal the whereabouts of the bonparty. Within this situation they had lost their sleep and peace of mind.

Case X	Informant: Mangala Saren (name changed) Age : 49 Sex-Male Ethnic group: Santal Village- Chhotopelia
<p><i>At the time of the Maoist movement he was a Jogmajhi at Chhotopelia. Police raided his house a number of times to arrest him. This was because police always thought that the officials of their traditional political organization were not only supporting the Maoists but instigating the common people to support the Maoists also. That is why he used to stay at his relative's house outside the village for long time, except a few short visits at nights. Section 144 of CrPC was declared at the village and its surrounding areas. During the period of intense conflict between the Maoists and the village people, at one side, and police on the other, they could not perform their daily rituals at home or at Jaherthan. Their normal life was completely shattered at that time.</i></p>	

4.2.4 Family, marriage and kinship

The Santals are a patrilineal group, i.e., their relationship is traced through the father's line. A Santal family is the smallest consanguinal kin group and their family members have belief in a common ancestry.

Every member in a family has a specific role in relation to the others in the family. Generally, the male members do the heavy works, e.g., climbing and cutting a

tree, etc., whereas a woman do the domestic chores. The females and children are also found to be busy in collection of forest produces in the jungle. But during the Maoist movement there was serious role shifts since most of the male members fled their house. The women had to perform all works for the family.

The Santals are very closely attached to their kin groups and relatives. They use to visit each other's houses regularly. But during the Maoist movement, relatives and kins hardly visited their houses in fear of police and/ or the Maoist harassment or *vice versa*. During 2008 – 2012 the average number of times relatives from outside the village visited a family at Chhotopelia, Kashitoria, Shimuldanga and Aushabandhi was only 7, 10-12, 10-11 and 20-22 respectively. On the contrary, the people from these villages visited their relatives' houses outside the concerned villages for comparatively higher number of times (Table 4.1). This was because they had to take shelter in their relatives' houses during the troublesome time. In some cases, some families left their own villages after their elders were murdered during the movement as found at Chhotopelia, for example. There were significant cases of untimely loss of family members during 2007-2011 due to violence and counter-violence at the villages. There were 5, 1, and 4 cases of killing at Chhotopelia, Kashitoria and Shimuldanga respectively. The concerned families sometimes even witnessed family breaking (Table 4.1).

Frequency of early marriage, particularly of the girls, was reportedly increased in all the villages during the movement. There were 19, 7, 5 and 13 cases of early marriage at Chhotopelia, Kashitoria, Shimuldanga and Aushabandhi respectively during the study period (Table 4.4). These were the cases where the girls had left the villages after marriage. These cases were reported by their respective parents. The parents took

initiative for such marriage in order to let their girls go outside the villages that were extremely disturbed. And, for them, the teen age girls were the most vulnerable to the conflicting groups. So, their physical safety was the most important to their parents.

Table 4.4: Early marriage of the female population of the studied villages

Age (in year)	Chhotopelia	Kashitoria	Shimuldanga	Aushabandhi	Total
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
12	-	-	01 (20.00)	-	01 (02.27)
13	01 (05.26)	-	-	-	01 (02.27)
14	-	01 (14.29)	02 (40.00)	02 (15.38)	05 (11.36)
15	04 (21.05)	-	-	01 (07.69)	05 (11.36)
16	05 (26.32)	-	-	04 (30.77)	09 (20.45)
17	03 (15.79)	02 (28.57)	02 (40.00)	01 (07.69)	08 (18.18)
<18	06 (31.58)	04 (57.14)	-	05 (38.46)	15 (34.09)
Total	19 (100.00)	07 (100.00)	05 (100.00)	13 (100.00)	44 (100.00)

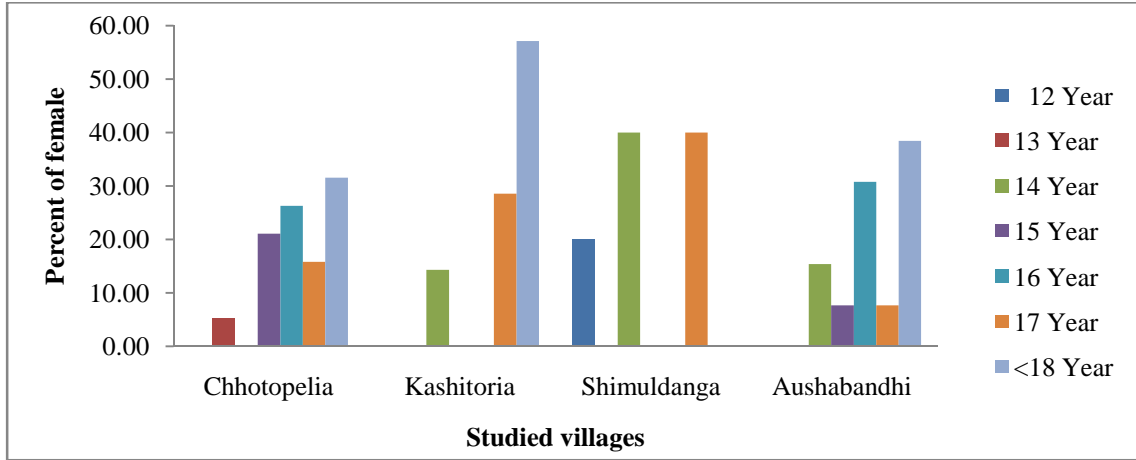


Fig.4.1: Column chart showing the pattern of early marriage of girls in the villages

Cases of early marriage were also high among the women, who were married within the villages under study (Fig. 4.1). These women were married within ones' own village (i.e., village endogamy) or came in these villages after their marriage. Interestingly, the marriage pattern in the villages also shows ample cases of late marriage. This was mainly because of poverty. The Santals have to offer a marriage feast to the villagers at the time of marriage. Those who were too poor to afford this could not complete their social marriage. Sometimes they complete their marriage even after becoming parents. Such cases were reported at Chhotopelia, Kashitoria, Shimuldanga and Aushabandhi for instance (Fig. 4.2 - 4.4).

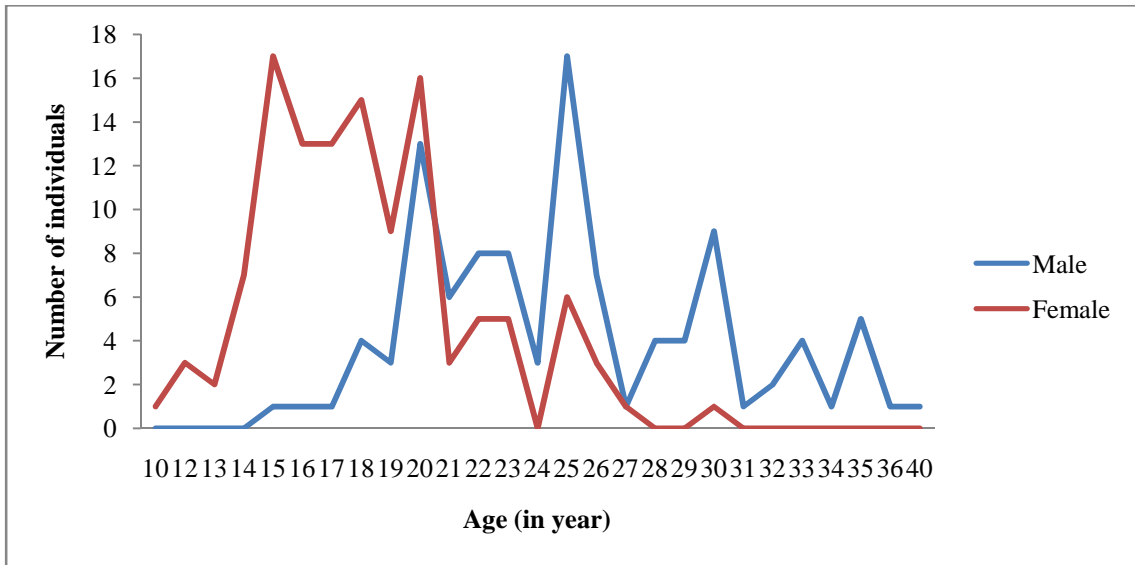


Fig.4.2: Line graph showing the distribution of married population at Chhotopelia on the basis of age at first marriage

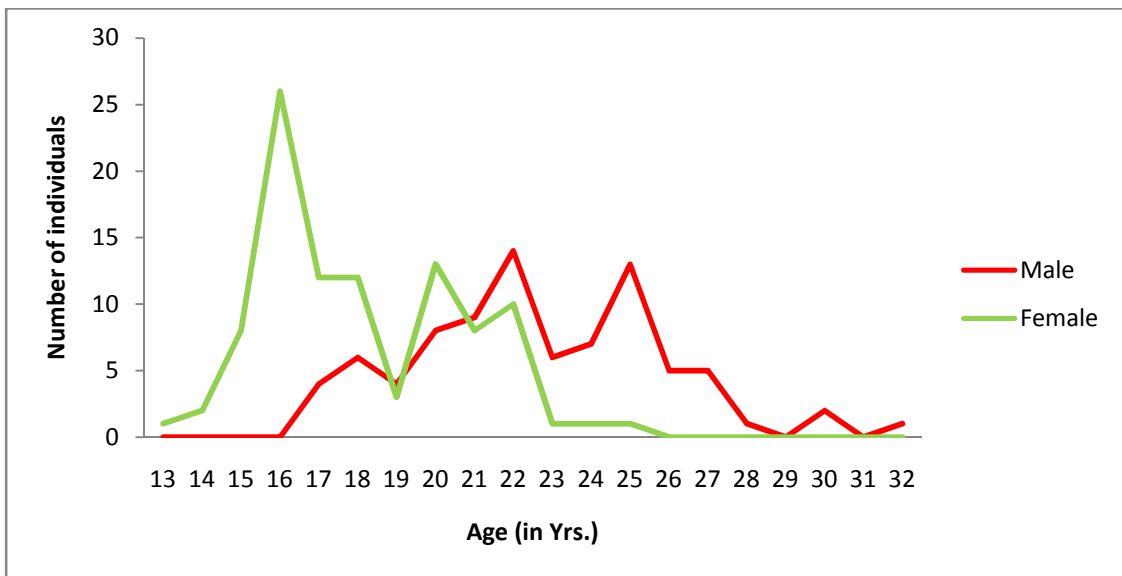


Fig.4.3: Line graph showing the distribution of married population at Aushabandhi on the basis of age at first marriage

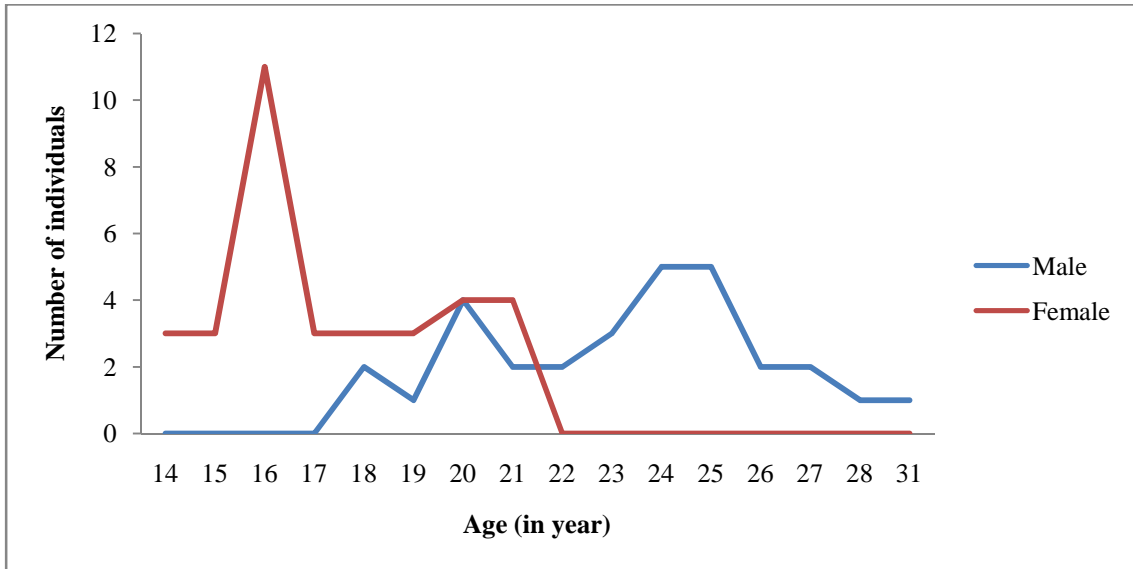


Fig.4.4: Line graph showing the distribution of married population at Shimuldanga on the basis of age at first marriage

4.3 Political Organization

Political organization is one of the very important parts of social organization. It specifically refers to the individuals or groups that manage the affairs of public policy or seek to control the activities of members of a society (Fried, 1967). In the villages under study, only the Santal community has two types of political organization: traditional and statutory, and the other two communities have only statutory political organization as in the country (Fig.4.5).

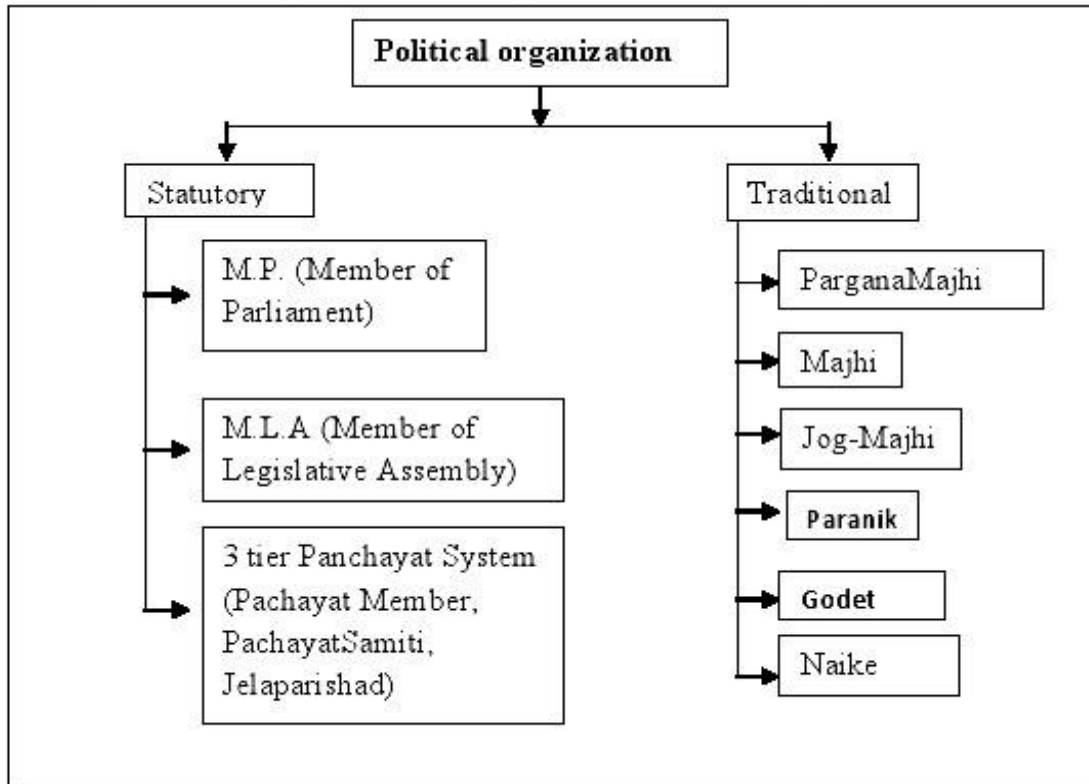
4.3.1 Traditional Political organization

The traditional political organization and administrative unit of the Santal villages are mostly governed by the councils of elders who regulate the life of the people living within the village. Their political organization is normally democratic in nature. Santal societies are governed by their own laws and have their own methods of or deals of different kinds of offences. However, many posts of the office bearers of the organization are generally hereditary and patrilineal. Now-a-days, the office bearers are sometimes selected on the basis of their political affiliation as well.

The traditional political organization is known as the *Soloaana*. It functions in the true sense of Gandhiji's idea that a self-government is better than good-government. The *Soloaana* is the real self-government. In a society or community, the advantages of self-government are that it can learn many things from its own mistakes. But, a good government has little scope to learn from the mistakes. In the traditional system, all the Santals directly participate in the self-management system of the *Soloaana*, the village council. In this, each and every individual of the community has equal rights to take part in the council and to share their thoughts. In the studied villages, the *soloaana* is responsible for managing various situations or problems that happen in and around the village. If in any case the council cannot take decision, a general meeting of the entire village is held where all adult male members participate. The meeting of the council is normally held at the *majhithan* or any other common place within the village. Decision of these meeting is taken through consensus opinion of all the members present there. In some rare cases, the decision is taken on the basis of majority opinion. Again, inter-

village dispute is solved by the higher body over a region. This is called as *Pargana*, headed by the *Parganamajhi*.

Figure 4.5: Diagram showing the political organization of the study area



4.3.1.1 *Soloaana* (Village council)

The village council of the studied villages consists of following officials:

- i. *Majhi* (village headman)
- ii. *Jogmajhi*(an observer of village moral)
- iii. *Paranik* (deputy to the village headman),
- iv. *Godet* (a messenger of the council)
- v. *Naike* (the priest)

i. Majhi

The Majhi is the headman of a Santal village. There cannot be any public occasions or rituals without the consent and presence of the *majhi*. He attends all major occasions such as the name-giving ceremony, initiation, marriage and death rituals. He also decides, in consultation with others, the date for the festivals of their village and also the nature of the *Sohrae*. He also looks after law and order situation of the village.

ii. Jogmajhi

He is considered to be the guardian of village with regard to the moral behavior. He is the responsible person to observe the rules of tribal endogamy and clan exogamy. He is invited to investigate any allegations of immoral behavior, if any. The *Jogmajhi* also acts as the master of ceremonies at the birth, marriage and funeral ceremonies. He is assisted by a person called *Paranik*.

iii. Paranik

Paranik is the assistant to *majhi*. He is normally called as the deputy to the *majhi*. Under the guidance of *majhi*, he summons the meeting of the village council. He also sometimes carries the message of birth, death and marriage to the villagers. *Paranik* officiates the meeting in the absence of *majhi*. But, his main duty is to assist the *majhi* in the process of justice and decision making. If *majhi* resigns from his post or died suddenly, he will be the acting *majhi*.

iv. *Godet*

Godet acts as a messenger in the village. Under the consent of village headman, he summons the villagers to discuss regarding any problems of the village or individuals. The *Godet* also act as a prosecutor of the village council. He also carries the messages to the villagers about any marriage, death, birth etc.

v. *Naike*

The *Naike* (priest) and the *Kudam Naike* (assistance priest) are the elected officials of the community to perform religious rites and ceremonies. The most important function of the *Naike* is to maintain a good relationship between the villagers and the spirits at the *Jaherthan*. His main role is to satisfy the bongas at the *Jaherthan*.

The members of the Santal society traditionally have great respect for their elder members and ancestors. The women are given high value in the society. The Santals never accept humiliation of or torture over women in the society. The *soloana* is very vigilant and strict in this regard. The members are also very responsible and sincere in their duties. They do this without any remuneration. But the Junglemahal violence has greatly shattered this traditional regulatory and judicial system. Most of the male members could not stay in their village during day time. Some even had to flee their village. The villagers could not go to the *Jaherthan* or perform their rituals. The village officials were the main target of the hired goons and security forces. All these have weakened their social system. A case study in this connection may illustrate how the village council or its officials were affected during the movement (*Cases XI*).

<i>Case XI</i>	Informant: Chunaram Murmu (name changed), position: <i>Majhi</i> Age: 62 Sex: Male Ethnic group: Santal Village: Chhotopelia
<p><i>When the movement started at Chhotopelia in 2008, police suspected him as one of the brains behind the explosion. They raided his house and harassed him several times. He was threatened to be put in jail if he did not give details of the Maoist cadres operating in the area. Police used to search his house now and then. His family life was completely spoiled. When the PCPA became weak, he supported the Maoists for a mere survival. Not a single meeting of their council was held as meeting or assembling was not allowed by the police.</i></p>	

4.3.2 Statutory political organization

The Statutory political organization, having direct connection with the village, consists of the three-tier Panchayat system as in the whole country. The three-tier panchayat system comprises the Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Jelaparishad. The people of the villages had representatives to all the tiers in one way or other. Moreover, there were Member of Legislative Assembly (M.L.A.) and the Member of Parliament (M.P.). But, the villagers had no idea about the working and responsibilities of the three-layered panchayati system, whether their representatives got elected from their own or neighbouring villages. The role of the MLA or MP was not known to them

since they had never been benefitted by such representatives. During the Maoist violence and counter-violence at Junglemahal the Gram Panchayat offices remained closed for long time. Their then representatives never came to help them. Rather, they fled the area.

4.4 Effects on education

Majority of the arrested persons in connection with the mine explosion near Midnapore, Lalgarh agitation and the Maoist movement at Junglemahal were the students of the area. A large number of students stopped going their educational institutions in fear of violence or police atrocity. These students never came back to schools. They became drop-outs permanently. Most of the schools were housed by the counter-insurgency forces or in a few cases by the hired goons engaged for retaliation. Many schools remained closed for a longer period of time. Many teen age boys left the area in search of work outside. Many even fled the area to avoid police torture. A few even joined the Maoists to take revenge. Many teen age girls were married off at an early age beginning from 10 years. All these increased drop-out rates in the area (Tables 4.5 - 4.8).

A few case studies may substantiate how extremism and the police retaliation have promoted drop-outs (*Case XII*).

<i>Case XII</i>	Informant: Sukhen Tudu (name changed) Age: 23 Sex: Male Ethnic group: Santal Village Name: Shimuldanga
<p><i>Sukhen is a young man presently working as a Masson at Andhra Pradesh. At the time of movement he was only fourteen years old. Then he used to read at class VIII in a school in the neighbouring village. His father also wanted to send him to work in a hotel at Midnapore. But he was studying in school because of his mother's choice. His father, always a habitual drunker used to torture his mother on the issue of his son's school going. His mother used to work at other's house neighbouring village to run her family affairs. During this situation he used to attend his school. One day when he was returning from his school with his friends, a police van stood in front of them and asked them about the Maoist. They told them that they had no idea about the Maoists; the police arrested them and put them to the jeep. After some days, they were released. After the incidence, he was scared of police and used to skip the school. Ultimately, he left the school for ever.</i></p>	

The total cases of drop-out at Chhotopelia during the Maoist movement were reported as 69. Out of this, 49.28 per cent cases were due to poverty and 17.39 per cent cases were due to the extremism. Thus, the extremism seemed to have made the people more vulnerable economically. And, the two factors had a tremendous impact in favour of drop-out of the students.

Table 4.5: Percentage distribution of population on the basis of drop-out reasons at Chhotopelia (n= 69)

Age group (in yrs.)	Poverty		Family matter		Marriage		Lack of infrastructure		Extremist movement		Total		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		T
<5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10-14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
15-19	8.70	4.35	1.45	1.45	0.00	2.90	1.45	0.00	4.35	0.00	15.95	08.70	24.65	
20-24	5.80	7.25	4.35	2.90	0.00	8.70	1.45	0.00	4.35	2.90	15.95	21.73	37.70	
25-29	4.35	7.25	1.45	1.45	0.00	2.90	0.00	0.00	4.35	0.00	10.15	11.59	21.75	
30-34	5.80	2.90	0.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.45	0.00	07.25	04.34	11.60	
35-39	2.90	0.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	04.35	0.00	4.35	
40-44	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
45-49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
50-54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
55-59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
60-64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
65-69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
70-74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
All age groups	27.54	21.74	8.70	7.25	0.00	14.49	2.90	0.00	14.49	2.90	53.65	46.35	100.00	

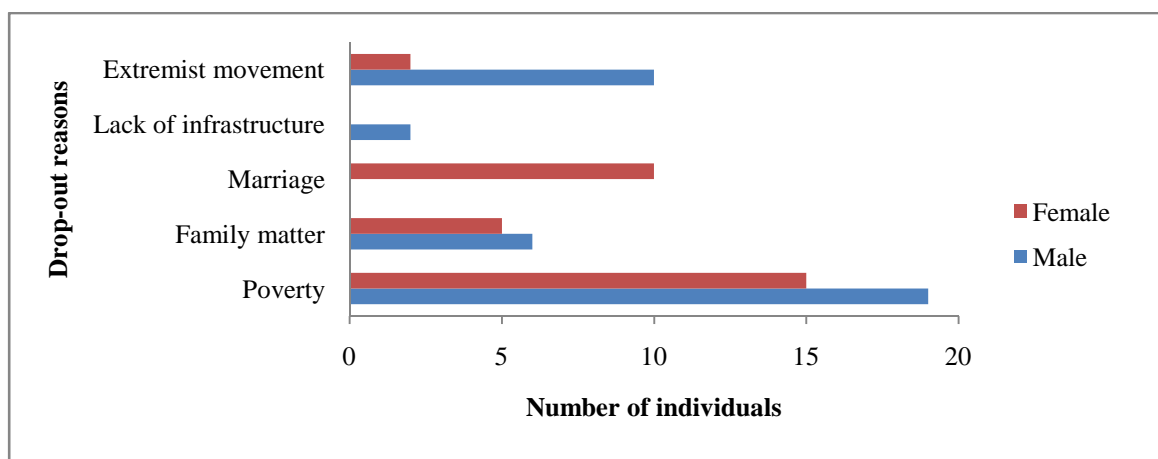


Fig 4.6: Bar Chart showing the distribution of population on the basis of Drop-out reasons at Chhotopelia

Similarly at Kashitoria about 33 per cent of the total drop-outs were due to poverty and about 28 per cent of such cases were because of the extremist movement (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Percentage distribution of population on the basis of Drop out reason at Kashitoria (n=21)

Age group (in yrs)	Poverty		Family matter		Marriage		Extremist movement		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	T
<5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10-14	0.00	4.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.76	4.76
15-19	4.76	0.00	9.52	0.00	0.00	4.76	4.76	4.76	19.04	09.52	28.57
20-24	4.76	4.76	4.76	4.76	0.00	9.52	9.52	4.76	19.04	23.80	42.86
25-29	9.52	4.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.76	4.76	0.00	14.28	09.52	23.81
30-34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
35-39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
40-44	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
45-49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
50-54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
55-59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
60-64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
65-69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
70-74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
All age groups	19.05	14.28	14.28	4.76	0.00	19.05	19.05	9.52	52.36	47.64	100.00

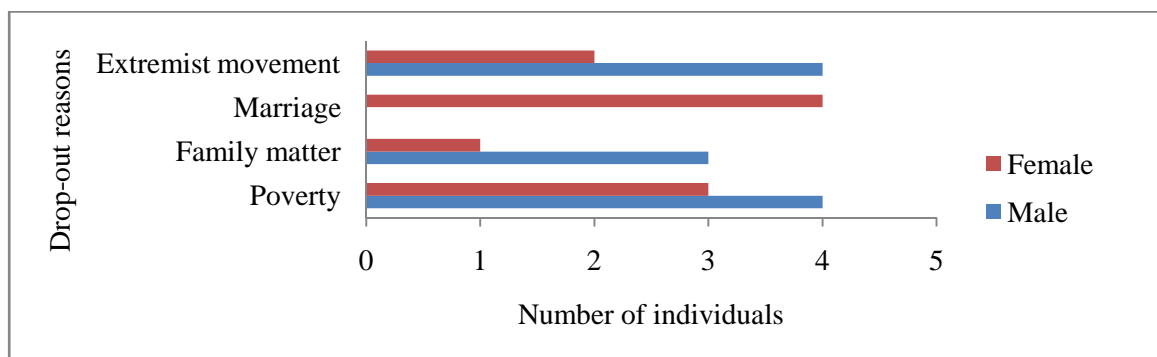


Fig 4.7: Bar Chart showing distribution of population at Kashitoria on the basis of Drop-out reasons

At Shimuldanga also, nearly 64 per cent of the total drop-outs was due to poverty (Table 4.7). However, about 6 per cent students became drop-outs due to extremism.

Table 4.7: Percentage distribution of population on the basis of drop out reason at Shimuldanga (n=36)

Age group (in yrs)	Poverty		Family matter		Marriage		Extremist movement		Total		Total (M+F)
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
<5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		0.00
5-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	02.78	2.78
10-14	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	02.78	2.78
15-19	8.33	5.56	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.78	2.78	2.78	11.11	11.11	22.22
20-24	2.78	5.56	5.56	2.78	0.00	5.56	0.00	0.00	08.34	13.88	22.22
25-29	13.89	8.33	0.00	2.78	0.00	5.56	0.00	0.00	13.89	16.67	30.56
30-34	11.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11.11	0.00	11.11
35-39	8.33	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	08.33	0.00	8.33
40-44	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
45-49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
50-54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
55-59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
60-64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
65-69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
70-74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
All age groups	44.44	19.44	5.56	8.33	0.00	16.67	2.78	2.78	52.78	47.22	100.00

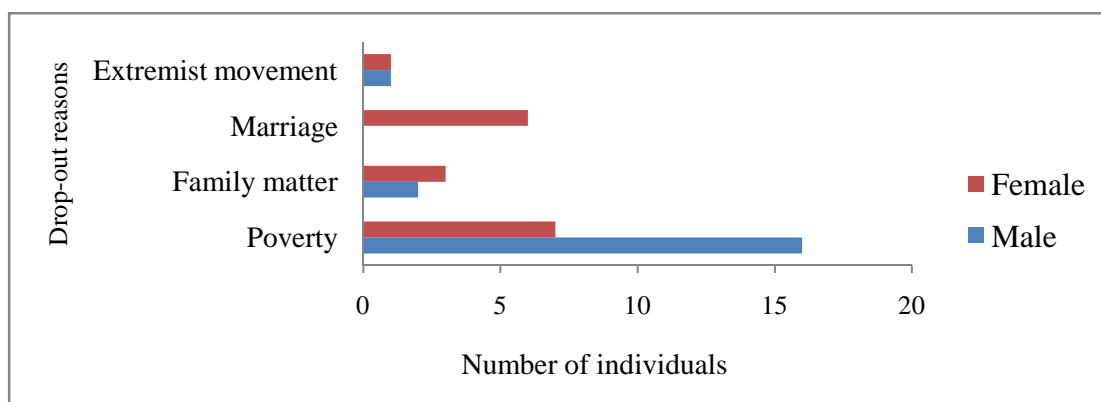


Fig 4.8: Bar Chart showing distribution of population at Shimuldanga on the basis of Drop-out reasons

There were reportedly about 51 per cent cases of drop-outs at Aushabandhi. The extremism added about 23 per cent to it (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Distribution of drop-outs on the basis of the drop-out reasons at Aushabandhi (n=47)

Age group (in yrs.)	Poverty		Distance		Family matter		Marriage		Extremist movement		Total		Total (M+F)
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
<5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10-14	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.13	0.00	02.13	2.13
15-19	6.38	2.13	0.00	0.00	4.26	0.00	0.00	6.38	10.64	2.13	21.28	10.63	31.91
20-24	12.77	6.38	0.00	0.00	2.13	2.13	0.00	8.51	4.26	0.00	19.16	17.02	36.17
25-29	17.02	6.38	2.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.26	0.00	23.41	06.37	29.79
30-34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
35-39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
40-44	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
45-49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
50-54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
55-59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
60-64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
65-69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
70-74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
All age groups	36.17	14.89	2.13	0.00	6.38	2.13	0.00	14.89	19.15	4.26	63.85	36.15	100.00

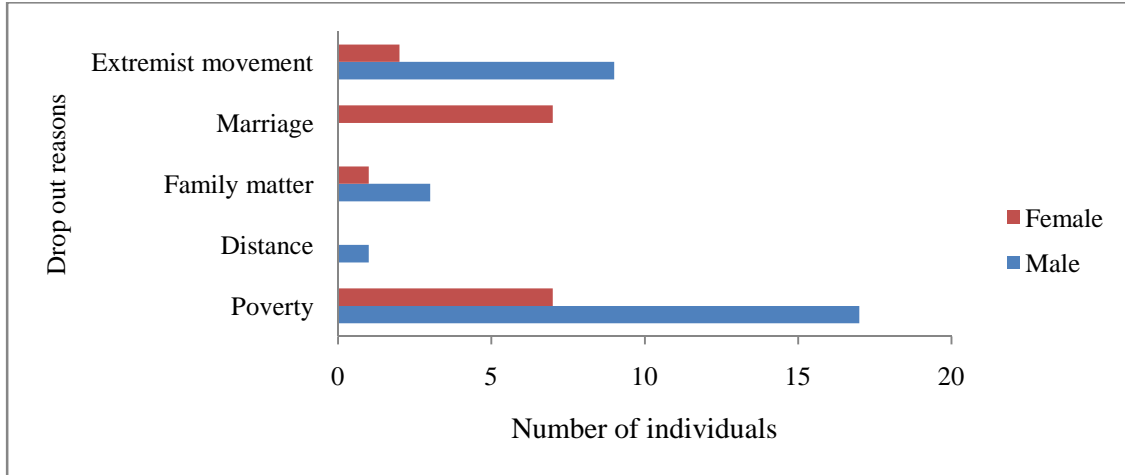


Fig 4.9: Bar chart showing the drop-out reasons at Aushabandhi

Furthermore, the extremist violence and the counter-violence in the study area have made the students more vulnerable (Das and Midya, 2018: 2144). Rampant violence certainly led to poverty increase that in turn caused more drop-outs. Regular violence and counter-violence also favoured early marriage particularly among the girls. Thus, poverty and early marriage have been the twin causal factors that were principally responsible for high rate of drop-outs (Tables 4.5 – 4.8).

4.5 Movement and Children

The hierarchical insurgency is often organized following the ‘line and block’ charts of military with vertical chain of commands. The Maoist insurgency operates along both the military and political lines. It fields both military and political wings. Children are very significant players in their extremist operation since children are not generally suspected by others. At Junglemahal area, children were basically used as

informers who were spotted not only against the Joint Forces but against the villagers and other fellows also. They were also used as messengers and carriers of food and raw materials required for extremist activities. In the present study, there were some children who were used by the Maoists for the purposes. Their parents were not willing to disclose their name and whereabouts.

Children had been the worst victim of atrocities of the police and Joint Forces. The retaliatory action of the police in reaction to the mine explosion in the convoy of the then Chief Minister was started with torture and arrest of the school children near Dalilpurchawk at Chhotopelia. Police had two objectives behind this act: first, to get some clue about the suspected; and second, to threaten the local people. Students generally have the most curious mind and have a tendency to keep various information, and are most likely to be involved with thrilling activity. They may, therefore, know the information about the explosion or be involved with such acts.

There are a number of drop-out cases where the students stopped to attend school on various grounds. The right to education is one of the six priority human rights principle, (along with individual's rights, dignity, equity, non-discrimination and participation) set out by the National Economic and Social Rights initiative (NESRI), an independent organization working as human rights. The children's right to education is protected under various national and international acts¹. There are several Articles is our

¹These include Article 13 & 14 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights; Articles 28, 29 & 40 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; Article 5 of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Articles 10 & 14 of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; Article 12 of American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man

Constitution (e.g., Articles 3, 17, 23, 24) which guarantees education for the children. But in a conflicting situation when most of the educational institutions were closed or housed the Joint Forces and the people were living under extreme life risk, protecting children's rights was practically a non-issue. Thus, the students were the worst victims, possibly next to the women, of the Junglemahal violence of recent past.

4.6 Issue of Human Rights

Under the above circumstances, the issue of protecting human rights is an exaggeration. The life of tribal and other disadvantaged people in the villages are extremely uncertain with regard to the availability of food, safe shelter, health care and safety. The Maoists have already built up their guerilla bases in the forest and hilly area of Junglemahal and been very active at the villages under the present study. They have achieved in the meantime a positive impact in the mind of the tribal and other poor people of the area through their struggle against deprivation and against the police atrocities. They had targeted the ration shops and the corrupt political leaders. The political leaders were accused of taking decisions without considering the interest and democratic rights of the tribal and other disadvantaged people of the area. By the time, police atrocities on the villages on Nandigram and Singur in West Bengal became headlines in 2007. The Maoists capitalized these facts to mobilize public support in favour of them. However, in later phase as already mentioned the Maoists were found to losing grounds in the event of some anti-people agenda like delivering instant judgment through setting up of *gana adalat*, compelling at least one person from each and every

family preferably a woman, to participate in night-rallies, extortion of money and indiscriminate killing of poor people in the name of ‘annihilation of class enemies’. They even killed many on mere suspicion of a prospective informer to police. Women were forced to cook and supply food to the Maoist within forest. There were also allegations that some activists were involved in sexual abuse of poor village women. The Maoists used children as informers against police and the hired goons also. Thus, they never took care of protecting the human rights of the poor tribals. Similar observation has also been reported earlier (Midya and Das, 2015).

Likewise, the counter-insurgency measures adopted by the State by means of deployment of the Joint Forces and the armed goon backed by the Joint Forces resorted to harassment, physical torture and rampant killings of the village people. The forces suspected that the villagers were either Maoist activists or Maoist supporters. Two case studies may substantiate how far the human rights of the tribal and other people of the affected areas were violated (*Case XIII & XIV*).

<i>Case XIII</i>	Informant: Kabita Hembram (name changed) Age: 36 Female Ethnic group: Santal Village: Shimuldanga
<p><i>A poor woman should not think of her self-esteem. Since she is a tribal that is a proof enough to be a Maoist, she aggrieved. They are living in the forest area. So’ they are taken for granted to be Maoist informers who use to sleep with the Maoists. The forces used to raid her house now and then, more particularly in the late night. So she asked, who thinks of our rights? Who consider us as human beings?</i></p>	

<i>Case XIV</i>	Informant: Tapan Hembram (name changed) Age: 52 Sex: Male Ethnic group: Santal Village: Chhotopelia
<p><i>He was a day labourer. He used to visit namal for the past few years. After Samsher's arrest nobody was willing to hire us. Here was no work under 100 day's scheme. So, how he could arrange for food for his family members. Moreover, he had to join the Maoist michhil (rallies) at night and peace marches of police during day time. Nobody was thinking of his work. Nobody thought of their rights.</i></p>	

Thus, under a violent situation neither the Maoists nor the police and administration were thinking about protection of human rights of the people of the area under study, as elsewhere at Junglemahal in West Bengal. There was rampant violation of human rights across the areas. However, there was no record of this violation. Junglemahal was a dangerous chapter in the history of human rights violations in West Bengal.

4.7 Movement and Women

The Maoist and the counter-insurgency violence at Junglemahal area witnessed two important phenomena with regard to the role and position of women in resistance movement led actually by the tribals. Firstly, it was the women of Chhotopelia and its adjoining villages who first made a protest against police atrocities over the women (with reference to Chhitamoni Murmu incidence, *Case I*) and other innocent people (with reference to Samsher Ali's arrest and arrest of some school going students at

Dalilpurchawk, e.g. *Case XII*). Secondly, when PCPA was formed with representatives from about 35 villages, 50 per cent representatives were the women. This was probably for the first time in the history of protest movement. This was actually the reverse case of women's subordination into political struggle. In the arms conflict² at Junglemahal the tribal women were subjected to torture and violence from three groups: (i) the Maoist activists, (ii) the Joint Forces and (iii) the *harmads*, the hired armed goons.

In every phase of the violent movement that occurred during 2007 to 2011 in particular, the women faced all sorts of challenges: (i) they had to look after their family in absence of their husband and other male members; (ii) they were forced to participate in the nights rallies of the Maoists; (iii) they were used as the human shields by the Maoists and the Joint Forces; (iv) they had to cook food for the Maoist activists and, in some cases, for the *harmads* in their camps; (v) they had to face the police torture during raid in their house; (vi) they had to visit police stations for release of their near ones, and (vii) they had to render sexual exploitation into silence. Thus, the women, as found in the villages under study, appeared to be the strongest shock absorbing entity in the society. But they were not ready to talking on their exploitation. Their tears only expressed their experiences. Their tears seemed to be the tip of the iceberg. Many of them lost their husband or children or near one(s) in the conflict (or experienced forced disappearance of the family member), but still they were trying to make their family survive.

² According to Sollenberg (1999:15), it refers to prolonged use of armed force between the military forces of two or more Governments, or one of one Government and at least one organized armed group. The Junglemahal conflict is also sometimes referred to as such since it was also a battle-like conflict between the Joint Forces and the Military wing of the Maoists.