

A Comparative Study on Changing Demographic Scenario of Tribal Population with Reference to Tripura's Population

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Abstract:

The present paper is an effort to highlight and compare the demographic scenario and behaviour of tribal and non-tribal people of Tripura (North-East India) by using various indicators based on secondary data collected from various sources and in some extent primary data (where not available). Topographically Tripura is hilly with inter-valley plainland between two hill ranges and most interestingly tilla-lunga features. The climate of Tripura is tropical sub-humid character with abundance rainfall. The study discloses that the non-tribal people in Tripura are increasing at faster rate than the tribal people and the share of non-tribal people in comparison with total population are mounting (near about 69%, 2011) decade by decade. Though Tripura is tribal dominated state as a nature in the past but due to 'Tripura's Kings Intervention', non-tribal people (Bengali) were started to come and settle here. This wave was continued in the time of partition (1947) also. After that this wave was also persistent in the time of 1971, at the birth of Bangladesh from Pakistan. That was the time when huge influx of population as refugees came to Tripura and ultimately settle here and at present also that wave is continuing as illegal migration is still taking place but Govt. doesn't have any documentation regarding this matter. With these reasons, the share of tribal population is decreasing (about 31%, 2011) in comparison with the total population of Tripura. Now Tripura is no more a tribal dominated state in North-East India. Moreover, the tribal culture and society is influenced and dominated by the non-tribal culture and society. Even the economy and political power is also in non-tribal hands. With these differences and unevenness, the tribal and non-tribal people are living in harmony and peace with the helping hands of Government of Tripura, so called Communist Government.

Keywords: demography, tribal and non-tribal, influx of population, culture and society, harmony and peace, Communist Government

1. Introduction: During the past decades there has been a significant change in population dynamics especially in developing countries like India. One of the significant changes in demography concerns about the individual level of behaviour as it plays an important role in population composition (UNO, 2004). With the combination of these individual events, shapes the population of a country. The study of population comes under the doctrine of

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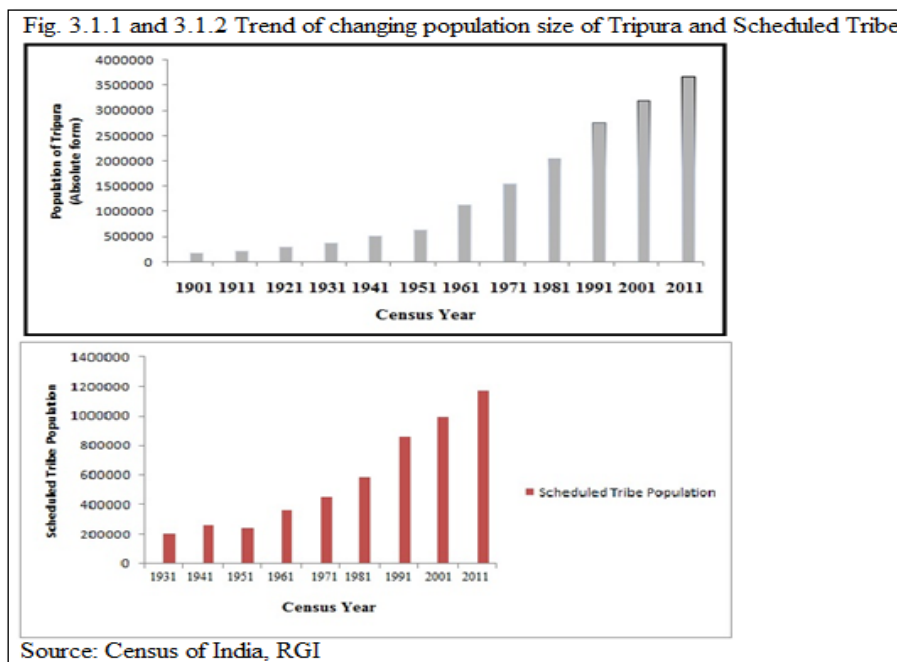
demography. Demography of a country changes with time through birth, death and migration. Population comprises of both tribal and non-tribal people. Tribal people usually call 'Scheduled Tribe' (ST). India is also having ST population and Tripura as a part of India, also having. There are 19 tribal groups in Tripura. Tripura in the past was a tribal dominated state but after partition between India and Pakistan (1947) and emergence of Bangladesh from erstwhile East Pakistan, there were huge influx of immigration in Tripura and after that Tripura is no more a tribal dominated state in India. Due to immigration, the demography of tribal people has changed and most interestingly the share of tribal people with Tripura's population is decreasing with time though last two decades has witnessed little bit increase in share but still the position is one-third. This land is a tribal land but now they are in the position of minority. Even the politics of Tripura is controlling by the non-tribal people except Autonomous District Councils (ADC). With this background, the present study is taken into consideration to highlight the demographic behaviour of tribal and non-tribal people in Tripura.

2. Area, People and Methods: Tripura is one of the border states of north-east India and is almost surrounded by Bangladesh except the north eastern part which is bounded by Assam and Mizoram. The state located at $91^{\circ}10'22.35''$ E to $91^{\circ}33'17.05''$ E longitudes and $23^{\circ}40'05.48''$ N to $23^{\circ}58'44.08''$ N latitudes. The total geographical area of the state is 10491.69 km^2 . The physiography of the state is hilly in nature with inter valley floodplains between two ridges and undulating lowlands and uplands locally called them tilla-lunga topography. The climate of the state is humid sub-tropical in nature with abundance rainfall from south-west monsoon. Both tribal (19 tribes) and non-tribal (majority Bengali) people are residing together since King's era. The tribal people are the original inhabitants of this state and non-tribal people were migrated from undivided India, erstwhile East Pakistan and Bangladesh. Tripura in the past was a tribal dominated state but at present it is a non-tribal dominated state and no more a tribal dominated state. Almost 69% of state's population belongs to non-tribal group. Tribal people usually reside in the forested and hilly parts of the state whereas non-tribal people generally live in the plain areas. To carry forward this study, secondary data regarding demographic aspects has been collected from the published reports of Census of India of various years, Economic survey of Tripura, Tripura Human Development report, other Government reports, books, articles, research papers and other related published and unpublished works etc. The data represented here through graphs and tables.

3. Results and Discussions of Demographic Aspects:

3.1 Population size: Population is primarily studied in the form of its size. The size of population portrays that how much people are having in an area or a region. Over time they grow or decline and their geographic distribution changes. Such changes are the cumulative effects of the events that people undergo during their lives, namely births, deaths and migrations (Preston, Heuveline and Guillot, 2001; cited from UNO, 2004). These processes lead to change in the size of population. According to Census of India (2011), the population size of India was 1.21 billion. In the context of Tripura, the population size was 36,73,917 (Census of India, 2011) which shares 3.3 percent of India's total population. Since 1951,

population of Tripura started increasing because of immigration in the time of Partition (India and Pakistan, 1947) and emergence of Bangladesh as a new Nation from Pakistan (1971) along with continuing illegal migration helps to boost up the figure. Now, in the context of ST population, they share only 31.3% (2011) of Tripura’s total population. The low share of ST population due to increase of non-tribal population at large scale due to above mentioned grounds. Another important reason for growing population in Tripura is lacking of awareness among non-tribal rural people regarding family planning. The Government of Tripura as well as Government of India introduced various means to check the population growth but the people don’t give any kind of attention to it as they are trying to continuously increase their family tree.



Both the graphs are portraying that population of Tripura as a whole and population of ST is undoubtedly increasing since past decades. But if carefully look into the share of ST population in Tripura through past decades, then it comes out that the share of ST population was decreasing and their position in Tripura is one-third according to 2011 census. Though in 2011, their share has been increased but is negligible if compares with the overall population of Tripura.

Table 3.1.1 Share of Scheduled Tribe population in Tripura (in %)

Census Year	Share of ST population in Tripura
1931	53.16
1941	50.1
1951	37.24
1961	31.53

1971	28.95
1981	28.44
1991	31.09
2001	31.13
2011	31.3

Source: Census of India, RGI

3.2 Population Growth: Population growth is a dynamic equilibrium between the forces of increment and forces of decrement. Continuously the population is being increased by the birth of infants, but it is simultaneously being diminished by the death of persons of all ages. Population growth is not a simple unitary phenomenon, but is comprised of four major components: fertility, mortality, in-migration and out-migration. There are only two ways in which a population can change in size - through reproductive change (natural change) and through net migration (Bogue, J., Donald, 1969, p. 37-38; Durand, 1977). Population growth is clear when one considers the timing of population increases (UNO, 2000). In India, the growth of population has been increasing since 1951 (13.31%) to 1971 (24.80%) but in the preceding years though the population of India is increasing but the growth of population is getting down (17.64%). The decadal population growth of India is certainly declining but the decadal growth is not equal among the states and union territories of India due to regional disparities i.e. maximum population of India is living in rural areas [69%, Census of India, 2011], (Dasgupta, 2012, p.149-150). Like India, population growth of Tripura is also declining as well. On the other hand, the decadal growth of ST population of Tripura is increasing steadily with declining sign. Though since 1971-1991 the decadal growth of ST population was increasing but 2001-2011, they portrayed a declining trend. This is because the ST people are gradually educating themselves and bring awareness among them and moreover the young generation of ST people is taking Christianity as a religion and follow the Western culture.

Table 3.2.1 Trend of Decadal growth of Tripura and ST Population

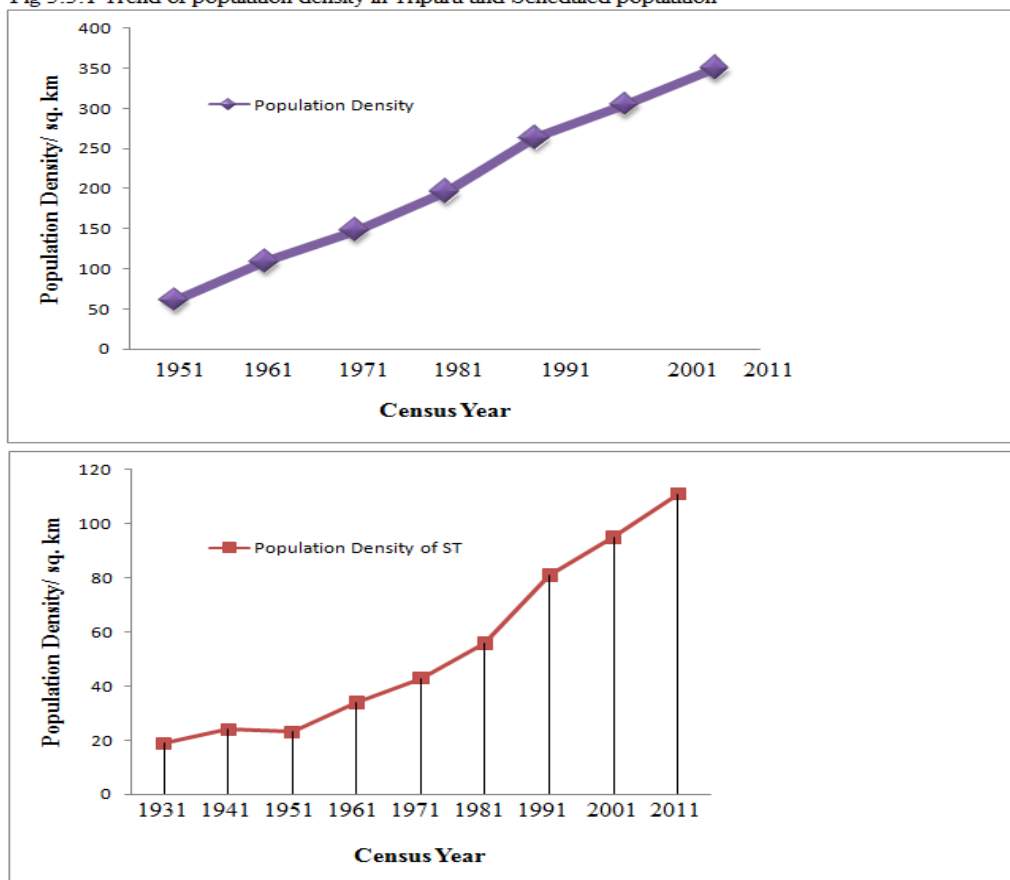
Census Year	Decadal growth of Tripura (%)	Decadal growth of ST (%)
1931	25.63	18.48
1941	34.14	26.39
1951	24.56	-0.07
1961	78.71	51.31
1971	36.28	25.12
1981	39.36	29.60

1991	34.30	46.14
2001	16.03	16.41
2011	14.84	17.45

Source: Census of India, RGI

3.3 Population Density: Population density is one of the imperative aspects of population concentration. It is defined as the number of persons per square kilometer. The density of population was increased in all States and Union territories through decades (Barakade, 2011) as population is increasing but area is constant. In Tripura the density of population is increasing since the partition of India and Pakistan (1947) and after the emergence of Bangladesh from erstwhile East Pakistan (1971) as data portray that in 1951 the population density was 61 persons/ sq. km and in 1981 the figure was increased to 196 persons/ sq. km and in 2011 the figure was further increased to 350 persons/ q. km which is higher than the national (India) average. On the other hand, the population density of Scheduled Tribes in Tripura was 19 persons/ sq. km in 1931 which jumped to 23 persons/ sq. km in 1951 and further increased to 56 persons/ sq. km to 111 persons/ sq. km in 2011 which reveals that non-tribal population is increasing at faster rate than the tribal population. The non-tribal people are increasing their number in such a way that within few decades’ non-tribal people will become minority in Tripura which is basically the land of tribal people.

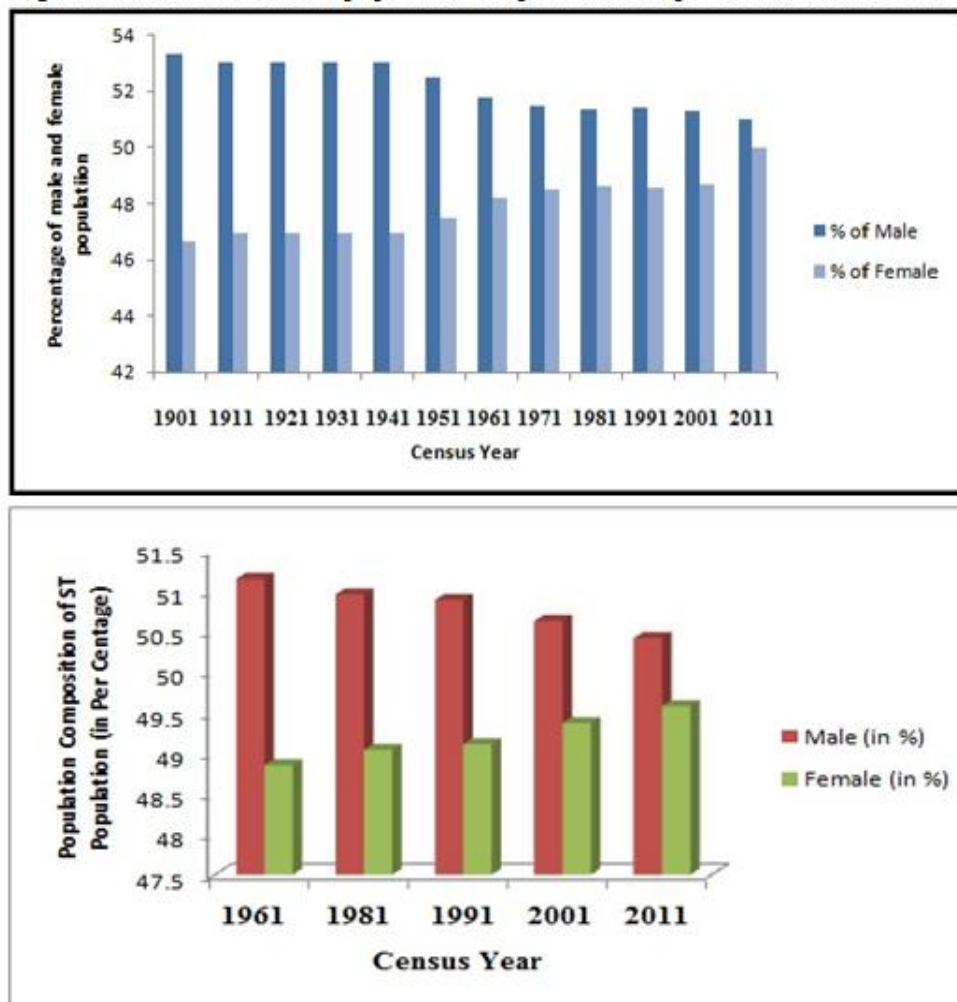
Fig 3.3.1 Trend of population density in Tripura and Scheduled population



Source: Census of India, RGI

3.4 Population Composition: Populations are dynamic entities. Over time they grow or decline, they become younger or older and their geographic distribution changes. Population composition is a vital parameter in an area to know the composition of male and female population of that area (World Population Prospects, 2004). The balance between the two sexes affects the social and economic relationship within a community. Population composition as social reactions within a community is affected considerably by the age structure. The population composition of Tripura in 1991 was 51.43% male and 48.57% female and in 2011, the composition was 50.95% male and 49.05% female means female population is growing through considerable years and is in quite balance position. Among the ST population, in 1961 the figure was 51.15% male and 48.85% female but since then female population is increasing and in 2011, the composition was 50.42% male and 49.58% female which indicates that the composition of ST population is quite stable because in tribal society, there is no difference between boy and girl as they treat them equally.

Fig 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 Trend of population composition of Tripura and Scheduled Tribe



Source: Census of India, RGI

In Tripura, the distribution of rural population in 1991 was 84.7% which has decreased to 73.77 in 2011 and in urban population; the share was 15.3% in 1991 which has got up to 26.23% in 2011 which indicates that the process of urbanization has started. Government of Tripura is reclassifying the rural areas as urban by providing various urban facilities and also

peoples those who were living in rural areas migrated to urban areas to sustainable livelihood opportunities. On the other hand, the share of Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in rural areas of Tripura were 97.4% (2001) which decreases to 95.78% (2011) and in urban areas, it increases from 2.6% (2001) to 4.22% (2011). This increase is due to migration educational facilities, employment in all spheres, marriage and to get better quality of life than rural areas.

Table 3.4.1 Trend of rural-urban population of Tripura and Scheduled Tribe

Census Year	Tripura		Scheduled Tribe	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
1991	15.3	84.7	-	-
2001	21.77	78.23	2.6	97.4
2011	26.33	73.77	4.22	95.78

Source: Census of India, RGI

3.5 Sex Ratio: Sex is an easily identifiable characteristic (Bhende and Kanitkar, 2010, ed., p.142). Generally, the sex ratio of population of most countries portrays the balance of male and female population (Population Reference Bureau, 2011). Franklin (1956, p.168) rightly observes that sex ratio was an index of economy prevailing in an area and was useful tool for regional analysis (Chandna, 2011, ed., p.259). Sex Ratio plays a vital role in the study of demographic condition country like India where population is too high. The sex ratio of Tripura is steadily increasing since 1961 (932) to 2011 (961) which is much better than the national average (940) because the enlighten of education reaches every nook and corner of this state (Tripura is declared first rank holder in literacy level, 96.65%, source: Govt. of Tripura, 2013). In the context of ST population, the sex ratio is also increasing since 1961 (955) to 2011 (983), much higher than the average sex ratio of Tripura as well as India.

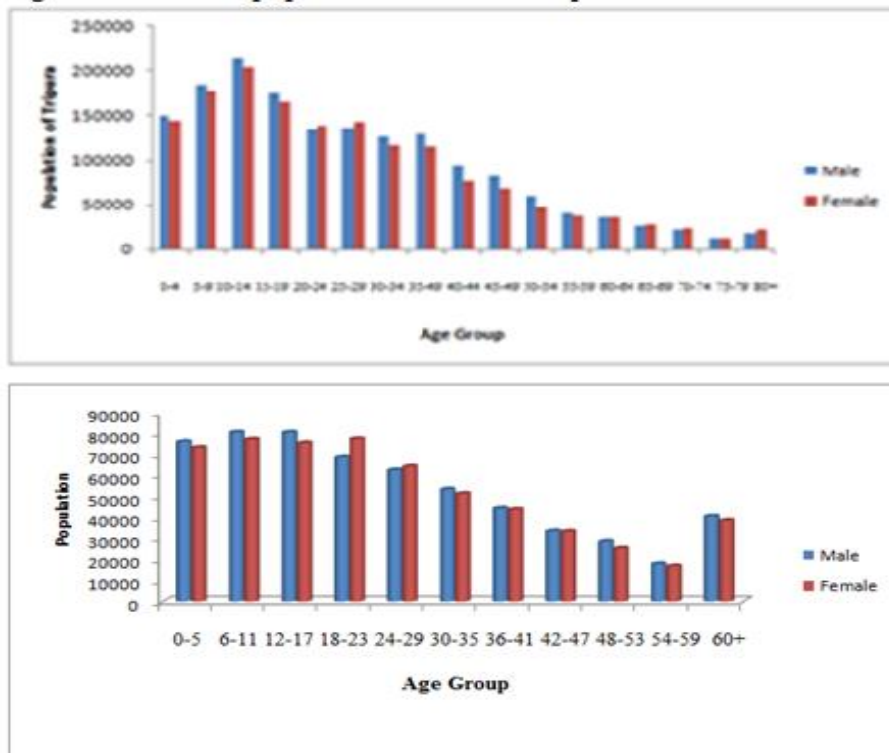
Table 3.5.1 Changing trend of sex ratio in Tripura and ST population

Census Year	Sex Ratio of Tripura	Sex Ratio of ST population
1961	932	955
1971	943	N.A.
1981	946	962
1991	945	965
2001	948	974
2011	961	983

Source: Census of India, RGI

3.6 Population Structure: Age and sex are the most basic characteristics of a population. Every population has a different age and sex composition. The number and proportion of males and females in each age group are different and this structure can have considerable impact on the population’s current and future social and economic situation. Age structure is the demographic “engine” that drives or retards population growth (Population Reference Bureau, 2011). In Tripura, the young and middle-aged population is likely to more than the population belongs to 40 and above aged population. The population belongs to age 0-39 traced the highest number of people than the age of 40 and above that means the population of young and middle age group of Tripura is high than the old age group. The people those who have already given birth, they are not willing to give birth new child as at present it is very hard to nourish a single child even. On the other hand, age-sex structure of ST population is almost similar but differences are there which is very negligible.

Fig 3.6.1 and 3.6.2 population structure of Tripura and Scheduled Tribe

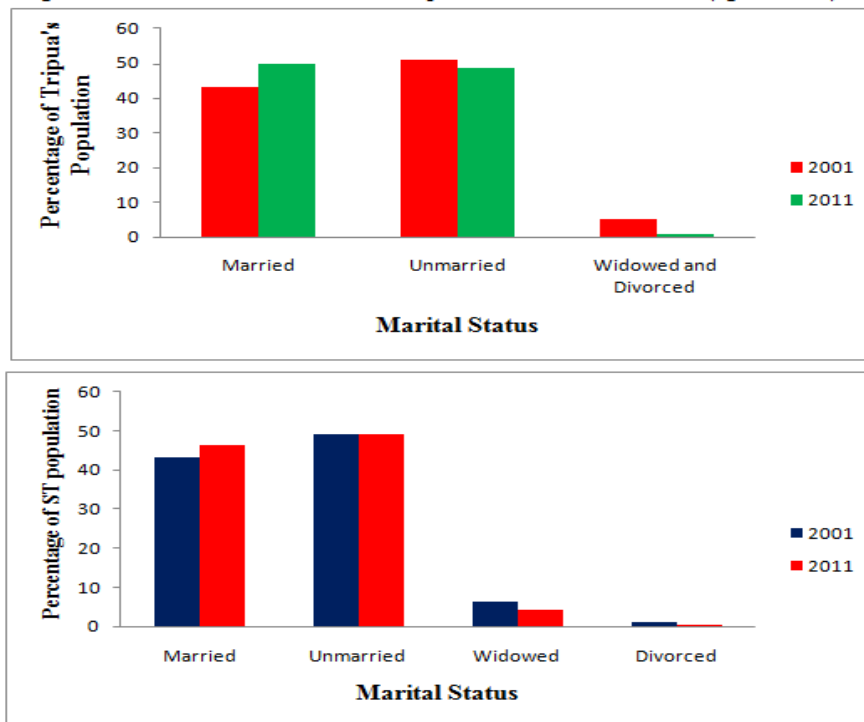


Source: Census of India, 2011, RGI

3.7 Marital Status: The study of the characteristics of a population includes the study of the distribution of persons according to their marital status (Bogue, 1969, p.623). Unlike, sex or age, marital status is not a biologically ascribed characteristic, but it is an acquired characteristic. The pattern of marital status distribution of any society is determined by the combined effect of various biological, social, economic, religious and legal factors that affecting marriage (Bhende and Kanitkar, 2010, edt., p.169-170). As we all know very well that India is a secular country though the people belong to Hindu religion is high and for that reason only, people tie themselves with the knot of marriage. In India, 45.56% persons are married. Among the married and unmarried persons in India, 47.8% are male and 43.32% are female and 48.9% male and 54.5% female. On the other hand, in Tripura 43.55% are married and 51.41% are unmarried. Out of total married persons, 43.21% are male and remaining

43.89% are female and among the unmarried persons, 53.46% male and 49.36% female. The share of widowed persons is 4.51%, which covers 1.91% male and 2.6% female.

Fig. 3.7.1 and 3.7.2 Marital status of Tripura and Scheduled Tribes (figures in %)



Source: Census of India, RGI

3.8 Labour Force: Economically active population or labour force occupies an important position in the field of population studies, and at present there is increasing interest in studying the various aspects of labour force of any nation (Bhende and Kanitkar, 2010, ed., p.443). Economically active population can be both employed and un-employed (Sharma, 2012, p.12). According to United Nations, the economic and social development of a nation depends on the number of economically active persons, the quality of their work and the regularity of their employment (Dasgupta, 2012, p. 188). India is large populous country and needs plenty of workers who contributed to the production of goods which has economic value. In Tripura also, as 69% of people living in the rural areas and remaining in the urban areas (Census of India, 2011), so generally people living in the rural areas engaged in primary activities and require profuse workers to fulfill the requirements. Male and female, both sexes participate in the work, though male is larger than female. In Tripura, out of total population, 40% people are worker and among them 29.32% were main workers and remaining marginal workers. Males are dominating in the category of main workers and females are dominating as marginal workers which mean that nowadays females are not lagging behind to earn for themselves and their family too. On the other hand, ST people are also not lagging behind from the overall average condition of Tripura. Out of total ST population, 43.75% were workers. Among those workers, 28.21% were main workers and 15.54% were marginal workers. By comparison, female ST population were more active in work participation than the Tripura as a whole and moreover ST people participation in works are much better than the Tripura as a whole work participation.

Table 2.8.1 Work force scenario in Tripura and Scheduled Tribe population

Category of Workers	Total Workers of Tripura's population		Total Workers of ST population	
	No. of Workers	Share in %	No. of Workers	Share in %
Main Workers	1077019	29.32	329205	28.21
Male	887881	82.44	246240	74.80
Female	189138	17.56	82965	25.20
Marginal Workers	392502	10.68	181307	15.54
Male	157445	40.11	55689	30.72
Female	235057	59.89	125698	69.28

Source: Census of India, 2011

Conclusion: From the above data and discussions, it is evident that the population of Tripura and Scheduled Tribes are increasing in their own pace but the share of tribal people on overall Tripura's population is one-third which comes down in minority in near future due to immigration of Bengali people at the time of partition between India and Pakistan (1947) and emergence of Bangladesh from erstwhile East Pakistan (1971) and continuous illegal migration from Bangladesh due to religious factor, livelihood sustainability, floods and relatives factor too though the growth rate of tribal people is increasing since last few decades. The gap between population density of tribal and non-tribal people is too high. The population is almost similar. The tribal people usually living in rural area as only 4.22% (2011, Census of India) is living in urban areas and on the other hand, in Tripura more than 25% of people living in urban areas which means modern facilities are taken by only non-tribal people. The sex ratio is higher among tribal people than the non-tribal people as in tribal society both boy and girl child are taken equally. The population structure is also quite similar. Among marital status, tribal people are in good position than the overall status of Tripura. Among the labour force, in the category of main workers, the performance of tribal people is not good enough in comparison to Tripura as a whole and in marginal workforce; females are performing well than the Tripura's overall female performance. So at the last the present study concludes that the demographic behaviour of non-tribal people in Tripura is increasing at a faster rate than the tribal people which is not at all sustainable for the future. If this trend goes like this way than Tripura will be fully dominated by non-tribal people and tribal people will lose their culture and heritage in the near future.

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