

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN JARKADANGA: A SURVEY

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Social work in education prepares individuals to work with diverse communities and promotes social justice by advocating for vulnerable populations. Community engagement is a tool to develop communities, improve wellbeing, and solve socio-economic issues. It includes relationships, collaborations, meetings, events, and research projects. Communities aid education systems in achieving their goals through human resources. As a result, the researchers want to involve the community by learning more about Jarkadanga Village and its residents. In this qualitative study, unstructured interviews were conducted, including one with the villager with the highest level of education (XII pass). Data collected in-person from locals during researcher's hamlet visit. Findings of the study revealed that Jarka Danga's nature and culture blend, impacting the lifestyle and economy. Lacks of amenities, little awareness of government programs, lack of awareness about bad side of child marriage hinder the growth and development of the village.

Introduction

Community participation can be viewed as a special pedagogical tool that promotes community development in order to enhance the psycho-social health of individuals and families and to address socioeconomically related challenges in communities. Social work in education blends classroom instruction with practicum experiences in community settings to integrate social work into higher education students' courses and boost their involvement. Community engagement is the term used to describe long-lasting networks, collaborations, and communication projects between communities at the local, national, regional, and international levels. Activities for higher education community interaction might be formal or informal <http://mgncrc.org/U-administration.html>¹. Community involvement programs include making connections, working together, launching enterprises, co-sponsoring meetings, conferences, athletic events, research projects, and a wide range of other activities. Communities

contribute the human resources needed to support and accomplish the goals of higher education systems <http://mgncrc.org/U-administration.html>¹. College graduates are equipped with the knowledge and abilities to fill employment vacancies and start their own firms.

What is Community Engagement?

The phrase "community engagement" is frequently used to describe a wide range of strategies, although it can imply various things to different individuals <https://creatingthefuture.org/category/tools-to-use-now/>². The word can be used to express a wide range of activities, and it is occasionally interchangeable with words like "involvement" and "participation." It is primarily about the practice of moving towards communities for a better change through empowerment.

Working cooperatively with community organizations to address problems that affect their well-being is the practice of community engagement. It describes a collection of people who come together to create a group; as a result, community organizations focus on developing grassroots movements engaging local communities <https://socialmedia.events/event/global-community-engagement->

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day³. A proactive strategy for enacting change is practical community participation. The majority of modern marketing strategies are employed to encourage more passive forms of community engagement, such as the “8-step guideline created by Hildy Gottlieb” of Creating the Future, which entails actively adopting a specific process toward activism. The practice may resemble a contentious method of friend-raising, where the focus was on establishing sincere bonds for the benefit of the community rather than just making money (Lekha, 2010)⁴. The eight steps of community engagement according to Hildy Gottlieb as follow

1. Determine the goals of the plan
2. Plan out who to engage
3. Develop engagement strategies for those individuals you already know
4. Develop engagement strategies of those individuals you do not already know
5. Prioritize those activities
6. Create an implementation plan
7. Monitor your progress
8. Maintain those relationships

“Community engagement is the process by which community benefit organizations and individuals build a long term relationship with collective vision for the benefit of the community” <https://campaigneffectiveness.org/glossary/community-engagement/>⁵.

There are also programs that help communities build coalitions for participation. Communities That Care is one such initiative that assists communities in identifying their problems and presenting tried-and-true remedies. The governing boards of community projects are unable to persuade either themselves or the community to continue supporting the efforts they became involved in because of issues with the current administrative structure for community benefits. This may be due to “incorrect aiming of accountability for problems in the governing board, overzealous micromanagement of resources, a collectively dysfunctional board, poor board/staff relations or unsatisfactory organizational planning.” These overlapping challenges have an immediate impact on community people and, as a result, equally hinder change inside their specific growth regions.

Why Community Engagement?

- Everyone should be informed of the risks to their health and wellness.
- Lowering the health risks can be achieved by making decisions that are informed by culturally pertinent information.
- To lessen the risk to or issue with public health, affected individuals, families, and communities must take action.

Objectives of the Study

The Researcher personally visited and surveyed Baripukur Jarka Danga (a santal tribe village) under Bolpur Block and Sian-Muluk Grampanchayat to understand the following aspects:

- (i) To study the brief history of village and its population.
- (ii) To know the educational status of the study area.
- (iii) To know the socio-cultural-economic status of the study area.
- (iv) To find out the health and hygiene conditions of the villagers.

Methodology

This exploratory project used a qualitative research technique and used unstructured interviews to gather its data. The villager with the greatest degree of education among the villagers (XII pass) was also the subject of an interview. Rich observational data were also acquired by the researcher while he was in the hamlet and had the opportunity to interact with the residents.

Tools: Unstructured interviews, observation and door to door survey.

General Village Profile:

Name of the Village: *Baripukur Jarka Danga*

Address: Baripukur Jarka Danga, Sahajpur, Sian-Muluk Grampanchayat, Block- Bolpur, P.O- Sian, P.S- Bolpur, Pin- 731204, Dist. – Birbhum

Distance from Bolpur Railway Station: 7.6 km, 18 minutes by bike or car (approximately)

Population of the Village: 295 approximately (according to Paikar Hembram and as on door to door survey by Researcher)

Table 1 Distribution of Population on the Basis of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	162	54.91
Female	133	45.08
Total	295	100

History of the Village

The majority of the interviewees claimed that their ancestors had lived in Santhal Parganas in Bihar and Jharkhand. However, they claimed that when the East India Company passed Permanent Settlement in 1793, they lost their right to their own cultivation land, which they had prepared through years of arduous labor and given the name Damin-I-Koho, which is translated as “land beneath the mountain” or “land at the feet of the mountain.” There were many Zamindars and Mahajan/Diku, and they treated them horribly. Economically, physically, and by various forms of fraud, such as tax fraud, interest rate fraud, and deception when purchasing or selling goods, Diku’s were pillaged. Therefore some of them were forced to relocate to Murshidabad and Birbhum (Roy)⁶. A few of them arrived in Baripukur Jarka Danga and began to dwell there. (Santal inhabitate mainly in the sixteen districts of India namely 1) Sarguja 2) Palamou 3) Hazaribagh 4) Giridih 5) Santal Pargana 6) Ranchi 7) Dhanbad 8) Singhbhum (of Jharkhand State) 9) Purulia 10) Bankura 11) East Midnapore 12) West Midnapore 13) Birbhum (of West Bengal State) 14) Sundargarh 15) Mayurbhanj and 16) Keonjhar (of Orissa State).) Most of them in Baripukur Jarka Danga ancestors came there from that time. First they cultivate or farming corps under Zamindar or Raja of Sian name Golam Mia. Now they are work as daily labour in fields or under any construction contractor as mason labour (S. Mukharjee)⁷.

Educational Status and Related Issues

The most crucial element is the level of education in a population (Trewartha)⁸. Education is a crucial component in developing human resources. In addition to being crucial for socioeconomic advancement, literacy and academic success also contribute to the eradication of poverty

across all cultures. The indigenous people have historically been exploited and subjugated by intermediaries, traders, moneylenders, and other upper class individuals because of their illiteracy and ignorance (P. Ghosh)⁹. For ST students from Pre-Matric to Post-Matric, the Ministry of Welfare is conducting the aforementioned federally and state-sponsored programs, as well as other initiatives through state governments to close the literacy gap between tribal and non-tribal people.

Table 2 Accessible Educational Institution

Primary school (within 1 KM according to RTE 2009)		
Government	Private	Run by Charitable Organization
1	0	0
Upper Primary school (within 3 KM according to RTE 2009)		
Government	Private	Run by Charitable Organization
1	0	1
High School (within 5 KM according to RMSA 2009)		
Government	Private	Run by Charitable Organization
1	0	2
Higher Secondary School (within 7-10 KM according to RMSA 2009)		
Government	Private	Run by Charitable Organization
5	1	0
Higher Educational Institution School (within 15 KM)		
Government	Private	Run by Charitable Organization
3	0	0

The study discovered that there are about 55 tribal families living in Jarkadanga, and they are all members of the Santal tribe. Only 12 family heads and women have completed primary education, and there is no information on the education of the remaining 4 family heads and spouses. This leaves 39 families with family heads and wives who are illiterate.

P.E- Primary Education, U.P.E- Upper Primary Education, S.E- Secondary Education, H.S.E- Higher Secondary Education, H.E- Higher Education, I- illiterate, M- male, F- female

Table 3 Educational Status

I		P.E		U.P.E		S.E		H.S.E		H.E		Total
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
36	49	63	39	41	27	19	8	9	2	2	0	295
12.2%	16.6%	21.35%	13.2%	13.8%	9.1%	6.4%	2.7%	3%	.6%	.6%	0%	100%

Source- Door to Door survey by Researcher

Although the study region of Jarkadanga is entirely rural, its approximate literacy rate of 71.2% is significant when compared to the national literacy rate. Because of their level of poverty, the unequal distribution of educational institutions, their lack of knowledge of various programs and their facilities, and the lack of information provided to them, the majority of students were forced to work on farms or in other household chores.

However, at the present, due to the Right To Education Act of 2009, the Mid-day Meal Program, and Sarva Siksha Avian, people are expressing an interest in enrolling their children's names for educational purposes and sending their children to school..

Socio-Cultural-Economic Status

Jarkadanga village is situated on the south eastern part of Bolpur town. According to census handbook of Birbhum¹⁰, around 220 people are living and the growth is positive and it reached 295 at time of study during 2022-2023. Socially, 21 households were nuclear, while the rest were joint families.

Working with others is preferred by both men and women. Rice is the main food source in this neighborhood. They favor vegetarian cuisine in general. But they enjoy eating things like rats, squirrels, pigs, and birds. Three times a day, they consume rice. They have very strong social identification and togetherness. They support the concept of the nuclear family. Father is the Ultimate Family Property Authority. Wall paintings give people a way to both make use of their free time and express their passion for art and craft.

Material culture and eating habits are gradually evolving. They use metal jewelry, wear contemporary clothing, and apply cosmetics. The way people celebrate has also changed. The majority of families practice their native adivasi faith, but some families have converted to Christianity in order to gain access to certain economic benefits. However, these families did not actually receive what they had hoped for.

SantaI community of Jarka Danga celebrate very few festivals as compared to Hindu community. The main community festivals of the Santals are: i) Sohrai or Sarhool or harvest festival (December-January) ii) Sakrat (January) iii) Magsim (JanuaryFebruary) iv) Baha (February-March) v) Erok-sim (June-July) vi) Mamore (Between January to June, every third or fifth year). Festivals are followed by customary 'law and breach of religious rules is looked into by the Village Council.

Santal women are not allowed to prepare an oven (chula), cross a river, stream, or pond, attend a festival alone, go out alone at night, or go outside during a lunar or solar eclipse. These activities are also strictly forbidden during these times. After the birth of the child, they uphold

Table 4 Economic Status

Items	No. of Have family
1. Own House	55
a. Concrete brick wall and ceiling (Paca House)	1
b. Semi concrete House with canister	8
c. Mud house with canister	35
d. Mud house with straw roofing	11
2. Toilet and bathrooms	19
3. Crop land	
a. Less than 1 bigha (62 Decimal)	25
b. 1 bigha (62 Decimal) -2 bigha	5
c. 2 bigha -5 bigha	2
d. 5bigha-10 bigha	1
e. No land	22
4. Electricity	45
5. Submersible Pump for crop land	1
a. Tube well	1
b. Well	3
c. Pond	1
6. LPG connection	18
7. AAY/BPL card	25
8. Family Income/day	
a. 200-500 (Rupee)	37
b. 500-1000 (Rupee)	17
c. 1000-2000 (Rupee)	1
9. Domestic animal	
a. Cow	28
b. Goat	35
c. Duck and Hen	48
d. Others	8
10. Sources of income	
a. Own Cultivation	33
b. Daily labour	11
c. Gov. Service	1
d. others	21

As on December 2022, source-door to door survey

Researcher During Survey



1. Laxmi Tudu eating rice



2. Mud house under construction



3. Paikar Hembram



4. Cultural Programme

Courtesy: Sanatan Murmu.



5. Domestic Animals



6. Wall Culture

Health and Hygiene



7. Unused Well



8. Tube Well

some traditional customs, such as the following: i) throwing something on top of the house for bravery (called “Sarim daf” in Santali); ii) naval cutting is made by a bivalve mollusk for daughters and by a thin and tapering end of an arrow for sons; iii) the entire village is profane if any baby was born and no worship will be held in this period as Villagers visit the new baby’s home that day.

Naming of the Santal is very important. This is called ‘Chacho Chatiar’ in Santali language. It is important because this festival stands for social recognition and rights of the Santals. The dead body of the Santal is not burnt or thrown in the river before Chacho Chatiar.

Findings

1. People of this village are more deprived than the other rural areas of that block.
2. People of Jharkadanga are very much influenced by socio-economic structure of the society.
3. In today’s context, young generation used to go to the schools and colleges to get proper education.
4. The main sources of income of the people of this village are basically daily labour and agriculture.

Health and Hygiene

Santals are often robust and healthy people. Santals of Jarkadanga use tube wells or dug wells to get their drinking water. For drinking water, they neither boil the water nor use any sort of purifier. They are clean but indigent. For bathing, they use soap, mustard oil, and hair oil. They regularly bathe. They obtain medicine from staff members at anganwadi centers, multifunctional workers, or from Bolpur SD hospital. They also use Ayurveda (i.e., herbal) medicine, which is traditionally taken from plants and trees that are used as medicine (usually uncooked). They want to take advantage of the hospital’s potential to receive safe and effective care because they are somewhat conscious. Their conventional views on illness and its treatment have slowly changed. It has been shown that families typically have between 4 and 6 individuals. The study area’s healthcare facilities are subpar. Although Bolpur Sub division has a hospital 5 KM away. Water for drinking is often available. They are aware of communicable diseases like Corona as well as illnesses like chicken pox, typhoid, malaria, typhoid fever, and cholera. Due of this, they make an effort to avoid them.

Problems:

- The problem is mainly due to the underdeveloped of both natural and human resources.
- There is limited scope for extension of agriculture due to infertile soil and less rainfall.
- Scope of local employment is limited due to the absence of household industry.
- There is only one Anganwadi school, and primary school in this village. Therefore, the students have to travel more than 1.5 to 5 KM to get access of educational facilities.
- The general low productivity of agricultural land is due to a number of factors, including outdated agricultural techniques, a lack of public knowledge, the non-application of modern agricultural technologies, the use of pesticides, a lack of irrigation infrastructure, etc.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In Jarka danga, the natural and cultural environments are uniquely connected. The physical environment has an impact on the way of life of the villagers and the local economy. Due to inadequate amenities, economic development is somewhat limited. In connection to the student’s function as a citizen and human being, community involvement and social responsibility may be seen as future-focused. We may conclude from the discussion that this is a very backward adivasi area where the majority of the people are illiterate and unaware of the numerous government schemes and yozana for them. Since there is no adequate drainage system, they experienced numerous issues throughout the rainy season.

Even though the government offers several educational facilities, most people are unaware of them and hence do not take their children to school. Another issue is child marriage. Young people’s alcohol use and biri and tambaku addiction pose the biggest development challenges. They are also politically illiterate, which allows leaders to lead them astray frequently. Government-led economic development that encourages the use of contemporary science and technology by its citizens in a variety of economic sectors should result in development. Sustainable resource management may aid in the growth of the Jarkadanga village’s rural community. There are some recommendations as follow-

- It should need to distribute govt. facilities properly.
- Encourage them to send their child to school.

- Encourage them to avoid alcoholic drinking.
- Create job for them.
- Campaign should be needed in various things such as need of education, health and hygiene and so on. □

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