



Socio-Cultural Transformation in Santal Communities: A Study of the Northern Parts of Alipurduar District, West Bengal, in Particular

Subrato Narjinary

M.A. (Alipurduar University), NET & SET qualified

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70798/tgjct/010400013>

Abstract

The Indian subcontinent is home to numerous tribal communities, called 'Adivasi', who lead a life different from modern world society. Despite the era of globalization, the extent and intensity of deprivation of these tribal groups has increased. According to the 2011 census, India has the world's largest tribal population, with over 10.40 crore individuals constituting 8.6 per cent of the total population. In particular, West Bengal recognised 40 scheduled tribes (STs) in 2011, whose primary concentration was observed in the southern, western, and northern regions of the state. The state's tribal population, as per Census Report 2011, was 5,296,953 (5.8 per cent of the total population), the vast majority of whom (91.6 per cent) live in rural areas. The state recorded a 20.6 per cent increase in the tribal population between 1991 and 2011.

The Santal, or Santhal, tribal community is particularly notable, representing about 51.8 per cent (more than half) of the tribal population of the state. The majority of the Santals are concentrated in the districts of Purulia, Bankura, West Midnapore, Burdwan and Hooghly, although some pockets are also found in the Alipurduar district. Moreover, the Santals live not only in India but also in the adjoining countries. This paper analyses the living conditions of the Santal community in the Gram Panchayat area of the Alipurduar district, in particular.

Keywords: Santal, Education, Culture, Occupation

Introduction

The Santals belong to the Munda people. They mainly live in the states of Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Odisha and Assam. Large and small groups of Santals also live in neighbouring Bangladesh and Nepal. In West Bengal, they are mostly concentrated in the districts of Purulia, Bankura, West Midnapore, Burdwan and Hooghly, but some are also found in the district of Alipurduar. They are also known as *Majhi* and are a dominant tribal group in India. The Santals live a simple life close to nature. They meet their basic needs from the plants and trees of the forest. They are also involved in fishing and subsistence farming. Their language is "Santal" or "Olchiki". The Santali alphabet was created by Pandit Raghunath Murmu in 1925. They have no written history, so their knowledge is passed down through oral tradition. According to their oral tradition, Thakur *Jiu Marang* ordered *Buru* to prepare land for a duck and a drake. The duck laid two eggs, from which Pilchu Haram and Pilchu Budhi, the first human couple, were born, and all Harhopans (humans) are their descendants. They are from the pre-Aryan era and were great warriors against the British. They fought against the British under the leadership of their father, Tilka Majhi, in 1789 and opposed the permanent settlement of Lord Cornwallis in 1855 (Sunny Baskey, 2019).

Review of Existing Literature:

Most research papers and books on tribal communities are about the Santals and other tribes. Pradip Chattopadhyay, in his work, namely, *Redefining Tribal Identity: The Changing Identity of the Santhals of South - West Bengal* (Chattopadhyay, P. 2014), looks at the Santals' language, ethnic identity, social and political identity, and movements. Parimal Chandra Mitra, in his *Santhali: A Universal Heritage* (Mitra, P.C. 1991,), has nicely discussed the language, culture, and history of the Santali people. Arpita Raj, in her *Revisiting Indigenous Identity in Santhal Folktales: A Critical Study* (Raj, A. 2025,), examines identity formation among the Santals through particularly literary and anthropological perspectives. Other authors who have written about the Santal community include Sutanu Dutta Chowdhury, Tarun Chakraborti and Tushar Kanti Ghosh (jointly), Anirban Roy, Sumona Mondal (jointly), Moupriya Dutta and Vishwambhar Prasad Sati (jointly). They have written about things like health and nutrition, eating habits, and child development and many other aspects of the community.

Several research articles have also been published in reputed journals such as the *Economic and Political Weekly*, *Man in India*, *the Indian Anthropological Society Journal* and many others. But these mostly look at general studies of tribals and Santals in West Bengal or in certain districts of the region. For instance, Manosanta Biswas (2018) looked into the social and cultural problems that the Santals of West Bengal face and talked about government projects that are meant to help them grow all over the country, such as initiatives aimed at improving education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for the community. Sujit Kumar Paul and Anindita Gupta (2016) studied the changing cultural patterns of the Santals in the Birbhum district. Sunny Baskey (2019) did an impressive job analysing the Santal people's social and cultural background in West Bengal and how it has changed over time. According to him, changes in technology have had a big impact on the growth of Santal society.

But it seems few studies focus on the Santals of Alipurduar district, which was part of Jalpaiguri district. The district has a rich historical context and diverse tribal communities that inhabit it. Alipurduar district is important for both strategic and historical reasons. It is known for having many tribes and castes living together under different governments, such as the Cooch Behar Kingdom, the Bhutanese government, British rule, and its eventual establishment as a district. Most of the Santals who live in Alipurduar moved there from other parts of India. As noted by Sunder (Sunder, D H E. 1895), they were settled in a colony "between the Gaddadhar and Rydak rivers, east of Alipurduar," suggesting that this colony was likely established in Saontalpur, Samuktala, which is near the current area of study—Turturi Khanda. Consequently, a comprehensive study of the Santals in this area, their existence, and their transformation is essential, yet it remains uncharted. An attempt has been made in this study.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this article are to highlight the changes in the socioeconomic conditions of Santals, their housing conditions, their educational status, their religion and religious practices, their food habits and drinking patterns, their clothing and ornaments, and their culture and festivals, including their marriage system in the rural area of Alipurduar district, especially in the Turturi Khanda Gram Panchayat.

Methodology

I spent considerable time with the Santal tribes in the study areas, closely observing how they lived and earned a livelihood. I engaged in conversations with local residents, participated in their daily activities, and noted how they lived, worked, and interacted with one another. This hands-on experience greatly enhanced my understanding of their beliefs, social structures, and challenges. To investigate the transformation of their traditional lives, including living conditions, dietary practices, health, educational attainment, etc. direct observation proved to be essential. Furthermore, we investigate and obtain valuable insights into their adjustment of traditional cultural identity and values with the challenges of the modern world.

In addition to this fieldwork, all secondary data and supporting information were collected from various reputed journals, articles, research papers and books to strengthen the analysis and ensure the accuracy of the research. Hence, both primary and secondary data have been consulted and analysed for fulfilling the object of the study.

Alipurduar District – a short Profile:

Alipurduar district (created on June 25, 2014), in the Western Dooars, is the easternmost district of West Bengal. It has a geographical area of 3383 square km. This district is strategically the most important place since it has borders with Assam and Bhutan and is very close to Bangladesh. Its northern side is surrounded by Jainti Hills, Buxa Tiger Reserve Forest, and Buxa Fort. It is full of several natural resources. It has a significant number of tea gardens within its geographical area. Naturally, the district is full of resources, like tea, timber, forest animals, medicinal plants, tourist spots, etc. It also has a railway division, namely Alipurduar Railway Division. The existence of the Railway Division and the traces of the British colonial rule imply that strategically, Alipurduar has been an important place since and before Independence, serving as a key transit point for trade and movement of people in the region. Multi-religious and multi-ethnic peoples, with less developed industries, generally inhabit the district. The various ethnic communities are Rajbangshi, Rabha, Santal, Dukpa, Bhutia, Gurung, Lepcha, Sherpa, Bhujel, Sarki, Mech, Madasai, Bodo, Tamang, Toto, Chettri, Khas, Oraon, and many others. The Santal are important because they were mainly brought from various parts of the country, viz., Chota Nagpur, Bihar, Orissa, and even Nepal, for working in the British tea gardens. According to DHE Sunder's report in 1891, there were only 1385 (male 872, female 513) Santal in Dooars (Sunder, D H E. 1895).

After their arrival in Dooars, they have, for various reasons, settled in various parts of the present Alipurduar District. Some communities of Santals have been living in the Turturi Khand, Gram Panchayat area, which is close to Jayanti and the Bhutan Hills, for a long time, and the present study focuses on these communities. In fact, the multi-religious and multi-ethnic people of this region are mainly dependent on agriculture, which serves as their primary source of livelihood and sustains their diverse cultural practices.

Occupation of Santals

The Santals have been going through many changes in recent times, both in their traditional living style and in the district's economy and society over the years. The Santals used to rely mainly on the forest ecosystem for their food, which included hunting, gathering, and using things from the forest. The Santals began working in tea gardens, where they mostly picked the leaves. Additionally, many Santals work as labourers in tea gardens, which have emerged as a significant employment source in the region. The Santals relied heavily on the nearby tea gardens and forests for food and shelter. This way of daily life was based on their beliefs and cultural habits. However, over time, various factors—such as deforestation, government policies, modernisation, and increasing integration with wider society, alongside the challenges facing tea gardens—have significantly altered their reliance on both the forests and tea gardens, leading to a decline in traditional practices and a shift towards alternative livelihoods. Today, the livelihood situation of the Santals has diversified considerably. Most have left the forest for farming, where they grow crops and do rural work. Their participation in agricultural labour has provided them with more stable incomes, new routines and connections with non-tribal communities. This change is not only a transformation but also a sign of the larger changes in the economy and gives people a chance to learn new skills. Some people of the community have started small businesses in addition to working in agriculture and tea gardens. This trend has made them more financially independent. Some people have also gone to school and used affirmative action policies to get jobs in both the public and private sectors. These changes show that they are very different from their past when they depended on forests. They show that they are adaptable and strong and are making slow but steady progress in their social and economic lives as situations change (Paul & Gupta, 2016).

Housing System of the Santal

The Santal's traditional homes were both places of their living and symbols of their rich cultural history. They used to decorate and build their homes in ways that showed how much they loved art, nature, and their communities. The Santals were very proud of how creative they were with their wall paintings, which were often very colourful and filled with details. In preparing the colour, they often relied on and collected the plants, soils, and flowers that they found in nature. The beautiful mud wall art shows their traditional beliefs, their lifestyle, and also their activities, such as farming, hunting, and community gatherings that are integral to their identity. Their houses reflected their artistic style and showcased their cultural heritage. But as time goes on and surroundings are getting more modern, this beautiful cultural practice is becoming less common. In modern societies, bricks and cement are very commonly used to replace traditional mud houses. These modern houses they used to build have tin roofs. These are classified as either semi-*pucca* or fully *pucca*. This change is certainly possible for their increasing flexibility and willingness to adapt to modern living styles, which may be for practical reasons. It also demonstrates that traditional artistic styles are gradually becoming obsolete in favour of modern methods of preparing homes and lives. The modern houses, built by modern techniques and materials, show that they are willing to accept new styles and methods. This also shows that they want to include what people need and want right now. These changes are certainly a shift toward modernisation. A few wealthy Santals have been putting up big, modern buildings that show how important modern values are. Their construction in response to shifting conditions demonstrates how the economies and social lives of their communities have evolved over time, particularly with regard to the new jobs and technologies that influence their lifestyle choices, such as the adoption of modern construction techniques and the integration of contemporary amenities that reflect changing societal values. Mud houses were constructed in a very different way in the past, with their own techniques and natural materials, than they are now. Common materials used in contemporary homes that complement contemporary building and living styles include concrete and other materials. Even though Santal architecture has improved, its decline is an indication of a cultural shift that must be acknowledged, particularly as traditional building methods are replaced by modern materials and techniques that may not reflect the community's heritage (Paul, S K. & Gupta, A. 2016).

Education of Santals

In the past, most Santals were thought to be illiterate because they couldn't get an education easily. But things have been slowly getting better over the last few years. Literacy rates are going up a lot in the Santal community these days, especially in places like Alipurduar. A lot of Santal parents now realise how important school is, so they are sending their kids there. More kids are going to primary school and then college. More Santal girls are being told to go to college, which will make them stronger and more independent. Young people from Santal are also getting jobs in the government and other fields, which is a good sign for their social and economic status. The Indian Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Scheduled Tribes have started a number of programs to support this progress, such as ITDP (Integrated Tribal Development Project), LAMPS (Large Area Multipurpose Societies), AMSY (*Adivasi Mahila Sashaktikaran Yojana*), and many others. This programmes' goal is to make life better by improving jobs, education, and the quality of life in general. The government also offers scholarships for students who have already graduated from high school and those who are still in high school, as well as hostels for tribal students, coaching and talent development programs, and fellowships for higher education, like M. Phil.s and Ph.Ds. A lot of Santal students are now taking advantage of these programmes, which will help them have a bright, educated future (Paul, S K. & Gupta, A. 2016).

Santal Religion

The Santal community in the Alipurduar district is heavily influenced by two main religious groups. The first is their traditional religion, which they call "*Sarnadharma*." They reject idol worship and do not have a place

of worship, like a temple. They have loved and worshipped nature for a long time. People of this religious group believe that nature is sacred and worship nature and natural things like the sun, moon, rivers, and forests as gods. They have great regard for their traditions and the environment, which they practice in their daily lives. This relationship showcases the transmission of these beliefs across generations. These beliefs certainly influence significantly their daily lives, rituals, festivals, and various activities that demonstrate their respect for the environment, such as sustainable farming practices, community clean-up events, and eco-friendly celebrations. This connection points to the value of preserving natural areas within their culture.

The rising trend of individuals converting to Christianity is the second significant development. A considerable number of Santals are turning away from their traditional *Sarna* religion and embracing this new faith. This trend understandably raises concerns regarding the preservation of their cultural identity and traditional practices. The shift may result in the loss of unique rituals, languages, and community bonds that are essential to their heritage, which could lead to a diminished sense of identity and belonging among the Santals (Biswas, M. 2018).

This change often happens in families. If the head of the family changes, the rest of the family usually do too over time. Christian Missions' support plays a crucial role in this conversion. These groups run schools where Santal's kids can go to school for free. They also often give them books and even places to stay. Missions help people in need with money in addition to education. They help families in need pay for things like fixing their homes, getting medical care, or sending their kids to school. They also give clothes and other important things to people who need them. Missionaries also work hard to get to know locals personally, which may be equally important. They often visit the homes of Santals to see how they are doing, hear about their problems, and offer them help and advice. This mix of real, caring help and practical, material help builds a strong bond of faith. For many Santals, this wide range of help is an important safety net that makes the benefits of conversion very clear and speeds up the community's shift to Christianity (Paul & Gupta, 2016).

Santals' Food and Beverage Patterns

The Santals' food culture reflects their past and present. The Santals used to eat things like rice, millets, pulses, vegetables, fish, and meat that were simple to find and came from nature. These foods gave them the nutrients they needed and showed how close they were to nature and farming. They used to cook their food in simple ways, like boiling, frying, or fermenting, which kept the natural taste of the ingredients. Recent studies have shown that the modern Santal community's eating habits have changed a lot. They still eat a lot of rice, but they also eat bread, cookies, fast food, and packaged foods that are easy to find at nearby stores and markets (Baskey, S. 2019).

With the change of time, the younger Santals are eating more and more modern foods, like noodles, fried foods, cold drinks, and many others, as they are available in the markets. This behaviour shows that they are changing their lifestyle and daily diet. The Santals are also changing the way they eat by trying new foods and cooking styles from other tribes and communities. The Santals used to make a lot of "*Hariya*" or "*Haand?*", which is a traditional rice liquor made at home. This *Hariya* plays a significant role in their religious and social lives, serving as a traditional beverage during ceremonies and gatherings that strengthen community bonds. But in the past, drinking too much caused a lot of health and social problems, like more alcoholism, fights in the family, and liver disease. Over time, programmes that educate people and make them more aware have helped them drink less. Many Santals have decided to abstain from drinking (Personal communication with local people). This indicates that they are acquiring the skills necessary to lead a healthy lifestyle in the current circumstances. Despite retaining some dietary practices, like using local ingredients and traditional cooking methods that promote their well-being, the Santal community is progressively embracing a more health-conscious and balanced, alcohol-free lifestyle, as shown by this transformation. However, this trend is limited to a small number of young people with

modern education. By encouraging better nutrition, maintaining traditional practices, and building social cohesiveness, these programmes may improve the Santal community's health and cultural identity.

Santals' Clothing and Ornaments

The Santals of Alipurduar, like those in other regions, have been changing their clothing styles and appearances. This shift in their dresses is due to the impact of modern society and city life. Naturally this shift results in a decline of traditional attire such as the *dhoti* and turban that Santal men and women once proudly wore, leading to a loss of cultural identity and heritage among the Santals of Alipurduar, as many now opt for Western-style clothing that does not reflect their cultural roots. In the past, Santal men and women were proud to wear their traditional clothes every day. Men usually wore a *dhoti* and a turban around their necks. Women usually wore hand-woven cotton sarees that are mostly white with red borders. But these days, they wear both traditional and modern clothes as much as possible. In their festivals and important events like *Baba Parab*, *Sobrai*, weddings, and other cultural celebrations, people often dress in traditional clothes. In this way, they used to honour their ancestors and cultures. Some Santals now like to wear modern clothes every day because they are simple to wear and comfortable. Men usually wear shirts, trousers or jeans, while women wear sarees, *nighties* and sometimes salwar suits.

Among many festivals, *Bosbi*, one of the Santal festivals, is a religious and social festival of the tribal community. Through this festival, the Santals express their gratitude to the gods (*Banga*) and the forces of nature and pray for peace and prosperity in the village. But usually, men wear clean shirts and trousers, and women wear colourful saris that fit the festival mood. The younger generation likes to dress in modern styles because of the towns and cities. Some Santals who have become Christians often wear Western clothes, especially to Church events or weddings. Men wear suits, and women wear gowns or modern dresses. Jewellery is also an important part of Santal culture, but its use has changed over time. Earlier, Santal women wore ornaments made of silver, brass, beads, and other local materials. They adorned themselves with earrings, bangles, necklaces, and *nupurs*, made mainly of silver, which had cultural significance. Today, only a few financially strong women wear gold jewellery. Most Santal women like cheap ornaments made of silver, metal, or plastic that they can easily find at the local market. These low-cost ornaments are still lovely. Thus, the Santals of Alipurduar continue to hold their cultural traditions and heritage. However, modernisation has influenced their dressing styles and perceptions of fashion. They proudly follow their cultural roots by wearing traditional clothes and jewellery on special occasions, festivals and holidays. Today, their dressing reflects a harmonious blend of modern influences and traditional cultural styles. Their attire shows that even though times have changed, the heart of Santal culture is still alive in their community (Baskey, S. 2019).

Santals' Culture and Festivals

The festivals and Santal culture demonstrate their closeness to traditional social life, love of music, and the natural world. The Santal people in Alipurduar are mostly split into two religious groups: those who have become Christians and those who still follow their traditional tribal beliefs. But both groups have a strong cultural identity that is based on peace, happiness, and simplicity, which is reflected in their communal activities and the way they celebrate their respective beliefs. Christian Santals are very devoted to their faith and their celebrations. During this festival, they show their faith by dancing and singing hymns with enthusiasm. They also go to church and pray to God for health, wealth, and happiness. Christian Santals go to church every Sunday. Music and dance are important parts of their worship and socialisation. The *Karam* festival is one of the most important and respected holidays in their culture. The Santals who follow the *Sarna* Dharma (religion) celebrate it. Normally, the *Karam* festival takes place during the months of September and October. It is celebrated to appease the gods and goddesses and seek their blessings for wealth, prosperity, and protection from evil. During the festival, after the purification ceremony, *Karam* trees are planted in front of the house, which symbolise fertility, prosperity, and

divine grace. The entire village comes together with traditional songs, drums, and dances that continue until the night. Apart from *Karam*, other important Santal festivals include *Maghe*, *Baba Bonga*, *Sabarai*, *Ero*, *Asaria*, and *Namah* (details in the reference section, below), each with its own unique customs and rituals that reflect the cultural heritage and community values of the Santal people.

Through these celebrations people come together and remind themselves of their traditional customs. They also celebrate a special hunting festival known as *Disum Sendra*. This ceremony happens on the night before *Baisakhi Purnima*. The entire community comes together to pray to their ancestors and celebrate their connection to nature on this exciting and unifying day (Biswas, 2018).

Santal Marriage System

In the Santal language, marriage is called '*Bapla*'. Marriage is considered one of the most important social institutions in the Santal Community, symbolising the unity of two families rather than just two individuals. Studies have shown that child marriage was very common among the Santals in the past. Increased education, awareness, and strict government rules have nearly eliminated child marriage, leading to a significant decline in its prevalence and promoting healthier family structures within the community. Santals today follow the law and the rules set by the government about the legal age to marry. However, certainly there are exceptional cases in many places. The government ensures that marriages take place in a manner that is both legal and socially acceptable. There are Christians and *Sarna* followers in the Santal community. Those who follow Christianity usually get married in churches according to Christian rituals. On the other hand, those who follow the *Sarna* religion perform their marriages at home following traditional rituals. Santal wedding ceremonies are filled with songs, dances, and festive celebrations that strengthen social bonds (Baskey, S. 2019).

Sunny Baskey has said that the traditional Santal community practices seven different types of marriages (*Bapla*):

- a) *Kirin Babu Bapla*: This kind of wedding is the most common and socially acceptable type of arranged marriage. It happens between a man and a woman who have never been married before. The families of both parties get together and talk about the marriage until they all agree on it.
- b) *Tunki Dipil Bapla*: In this kind of marriage, there is no dowry or money given. A bamboo basket called a '*Tunki*' stands in for the real thing during the ceremony. This kind of marriage shows that the two families are equal and simple.
- c) *Ghardi Jatan Bapla*: This type of marriage takes place when the bride's father has no sons, only a daughter. The groom then lives with his wife's family and takes care of his in-laws. This type of marriage helps in preserving the family name and property.
- d) *Itut Bapla*: This is a marriage by capture. Traditionally, the man would capture the woman, and later, after negotiations, both families would accept the marriage. Although it is not common these days, it was once a traditional practice among the Santals.
- e) *Sotho Goth Bapla*: This marriage occurs when both the man and the woman want to get married, but due to lack of time or money, a proper ceremony cannot be held. The girl is sent to live with her future husband's family, and the marriage ceremony is held later if the circumstances are favourable.
- f) *Khardi Jawaye Bapla*: In this type of marriage, the groom resides with his in-laws for the remainder of his life. This arrangement is often referred to as a son-in-law marriage. It is accepted by both families and is considered socially acceptable. Such unions are often preferred as they allow the couple to remain close to the bride's family and provide them with a supportive living environment. This is also called a son-in-law marriage. This kind of marriage is accepted by both families and is socially acceptable. This type of union is often because it lets the couple stay close to the bride's family and gives them a supportive place to live.

g) *Edigos Agu Gono Bapla*: This form of marriage is a simple and informal marriage that both families agree to. Most of the time, couples do this because of their financial problems, as they can't afford the costs of a full ceremony. Marriage registration in a government office is still very rare to them, which reflects the cultural significance of traditional practices over formal legal recognition in their community, indicating that many couples prioritise familial and community approval over legal formalities. But people in society accept marriages following tradition. Both parents' agreement demonstrates their broad mind and thinking and how much the Santals value their family, community, and social ideals, as evidenced by their *Bapla* system, which is a traditional marriage arrangement among the Santal people.

Thus, different customs and practices serve the needs of various social groups and individuals within the community, and a variety of marriage types demonstrate the adaptability and cultural richness of Santal society. These include arranged marriages, love marriages, and those that blend both elements, thereby reflecting the varied values and preferences present in the community (Baskey, S. 2019). The Santals of Alipurduar adhere to all of these various types of marriage systems within their community and uphold their traditional values.

Conclusion

It is clear that the Santal community is gradually adapting to the modern world. In the past, the forest and nature had a major influence on their way of life. They mainly relied on forest fruits, roots and hunting animals for their food and livelihoods. However, with the passage of time and the impact of modernisation, many Santals have changed their way of life. Today, most of them depend on agriculture and farming in their villages in addition to working in tea gardens for their livelihood and food collection. Their housing patterns have also changed a lot. In the past, Santals mostly lived in simple mud houses made of natural materials. But now a large number of Santal families live in *pucca* (permanent, brick-built) or semi-*pucca* (partially permanent) houses. Government developmental programs and economic development have helped improve their living conditions.

Education has also played a crucial role in bringing about change in Santal society. Earlier, the literacy rate among Santals was very low, but now many Santal children are going to school and college. As a result, many educated Santals have started working at government offices, private companies, and other organisations, including taking teaching professions. This has improved their social and economic status. Their clothing and way of life have also changed a lot. Santals used to wear clothes that were traditional and cultural for them. But these days, a lot of young Santals like to wear modern clothes, like shirts, trousers, and other trendy things. Their way of life has also become more modern. Santal is living and interacting with people of different religions, castes, and communities in today's world. They participate in social and economic activities with the mainstream society. Due to education, urbanisation, and modern technology, their lifestyles are gradually changing. Given the pace of this change, it is clear that the Santal community will continue to undergo further social, cultural and economic transformations in the future. Some of their traditional ways of doing things may fade away over time, but these changes can help them get a better education, a better quality of life, and more chances in today's world, such as improved access to healthcare and job opportunities that were previously unavailable. It is important to acknowledge that the Santal community still has much work to do, both on their part and from others, to be fully included in mainstream society; if they receive sufficient opportunities, they can become good citizens of the nation.

References

- Baskey, S. (2011). Socio-cultural Background and Changes of Santal Society in West Bengal, *International Bilingual Journal of Culture, Anthropology and Linguistics (IBJCAL)*, VOL-1, ISSUE-2-3, Pp. 55-60.
- Biswas, M. (2018, July). Scheduled Tribes in India: Socio-cultural Change of Santal Tribe in West Bengal, *International Journal of Applied Social Science Volume - 5 (7)*, Pp. 1090-1100.
- Govt. of India, (2011). Census Report, 2011, *Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner*, New Delhi.

The Global Journal of Contextual Thought

(A Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Quarterly, Multidisciplinary Journal)

Volume: 1, Issue: 4 Feb'26 - Apl'26 Home Page: www.tgjct.org Email: editor@tgjct.org ISSN: 3107-7528 (Online)

Paul, S. K. & Gupta, A. (2016). The Changing Cultural Pattern among the Santals of Birbhum, West Bengal, *South Asian Anthropologist*, 16 (1): Pp. 7-18.

Personal Communication/Interview and discussion with the local people.

Sunder, D H E. (1895). *Survey and Settlement of the Western Duars, in the District of Jalpaiguri 1889-95*, Calcutta, 1895, Pp. 46-47.

