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Socio-economic condition of the slums in Kolkata:

A case study of ward no: 82

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Abstract

In this paper an attempt has been made to analyse the socio-economic conditions prevailing among the slum-dwellers in Kolkata. A survey has been made of the two major types of slums in Kolkata- registered slums and unregistered. With the increase in the population in Kolkata over the years the number of slum dwelling population has also increased by leaps and bound. This paper is an attempt to study and analyse the social and economic conditions of the slum-dwellers and suggest suitable measures.

Key Words: *Registered slums, unregistered slums, Population, Slum Dwelling Population, Slum Dwellers.*

Aims and Objectives: The aims and objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To study the health status of the poor people.
- To highlight the educational standard of the people
- To create an income profile of the people surveyed in.

Methodology: The field report is based on both primary and secondary data. Necessary information has been collected from the 'Urban Health Centre' situated in Chetla. Series of questions have been asked to the people residing in the slum area in order to understand their health condition, place of their dwellings. Apart from the secondary and the primary survey information have also been gathered from several journals and books available in the internet and library. The survey has been carried out using some distinct methods. The first step in the methodology is collection, processing, analysing and presentation of data in a logical framework. The total number of households are 2569 according to 2011 census, out of which 250 households have been surveyed which makes 9.7%.

Study Area: Kolkata lies between the longitude of 88° 30'E - 22° 33' N. It is surrounded by the districts of Nadia, Hooghly, Howrah, South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas. Located on the east bank of the Hooghly River, it is the principal commercial, cultural, and educational centre of East India, while the Port of Kolkata is India's oldest operating port and its sole major riverine port. As of 2011, the city had 4.5 million residents; the urban

agglomeration, which comprises the city and its suburbs, was home to approximately 14.1 million, making it the third-most populous metropolitan area in India. As of 2008, its gross domestic product (adjusted for purchasing power parity) was estimated to be US\$104 billion, which would be third highest among Indian cities, behind Mumbai and Delhi. As a growing metropolitan city in a developing country, Kolkata confronts substantial urban pollution, traffic congestion.

The slums of Kolkata can be divided into three groups: the older ones, up to 150 years' old, in the heart of the city, are associated with early urbanization. The second group dates from the 1940s and 1950s and emerged as an outcome of industrialization-based rural–urban migration, locating themselves around industrial sites and near infra-structural arteries. The third group came into being after the independence of India and took vacant urban lands and areas along roads, canals and on marginal lands. In 2001, 1.5 million people, or one third of Kolkata's population, lived in 2011 registered and 3500 unregistered slums.

The 1956 Slum Act defines slums as *'those areas where buildings are in any respect unfit for human habitation'*.

The Calcutta Municipal Council Act of 1980 defines bustees as *'an area of land not less than 700 square metres occupied by, or for the purposes of, any collection of huts or other structures used or intended to be used for human habitation'*.

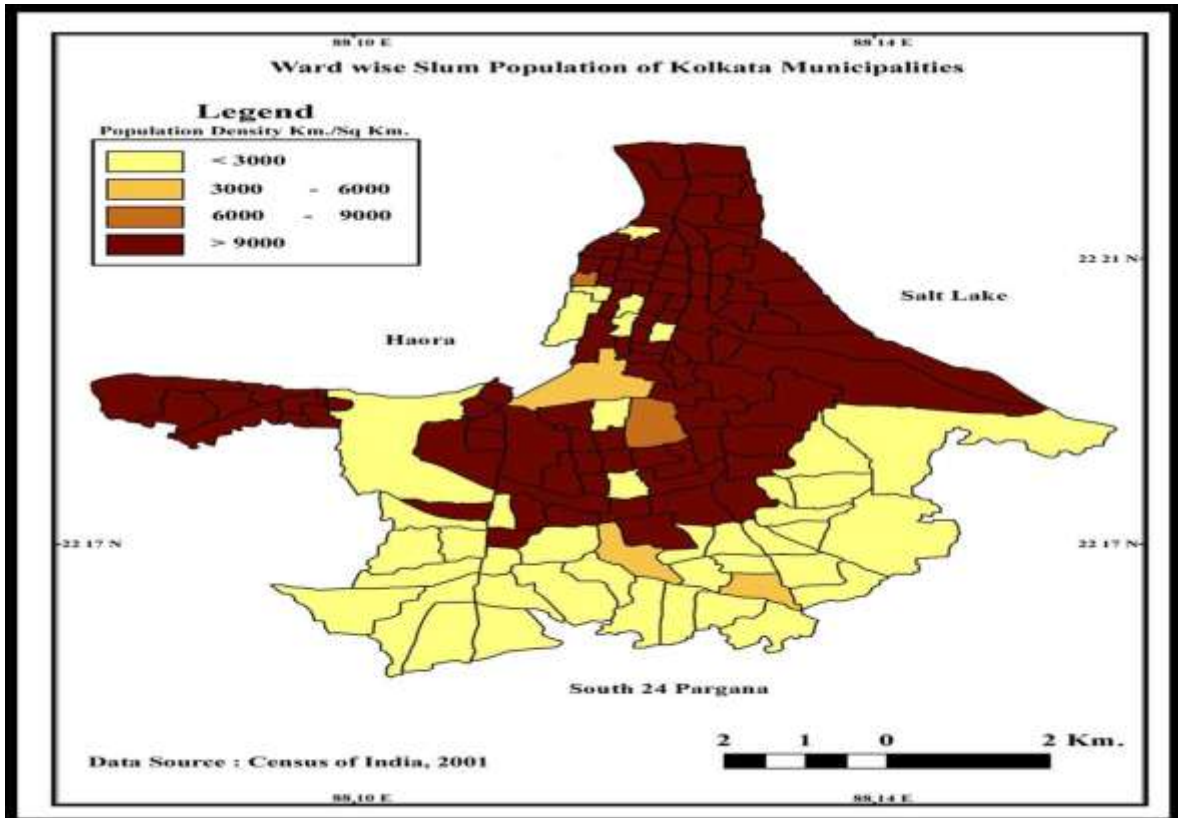
The Central Statistics Organization defines slums as an area *'having 25 or more katcha structures, mostly of temporary nature, or 50 or more households residing mostly in katcha structures huddled together or inhabited by persons with practically no private latrine and inadequate public latrine and water facilities'*.

There is a host of different slum categories in Kolkata, primarily divided into two categories:

Registered slums (bustees): these slums are recognized by the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) on the basis of land title; since 1980, they have been taken over by the KMC for letting/lease to slum dwellers.

Unregistered slums: this comprises slums on the land encroaching settlements. Identification of urban poor households is a necessary condition for more effectively targeting the beneficiaries under various poverty alleviation programmes being implemented by the Central and the State Governments. Programmes of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, SUCH as the Swarna Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojna (SJSRY) for Livelihoods, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) for services and the more recent ones like Rajiv Awas Yojna (RAY) for housing a slum free India, along with national programmes SUCH as food security, aim to ensure nutrition, livelihoods and decent shelter and services for the urban poor. In order to be able to plan and design appropriate interventions, and to ensure their targeted delivery, it is not enough only to know who the poor are and where they live, it is also important to know the precise nature of the vulnerability or deprivation that they face, as also the extent

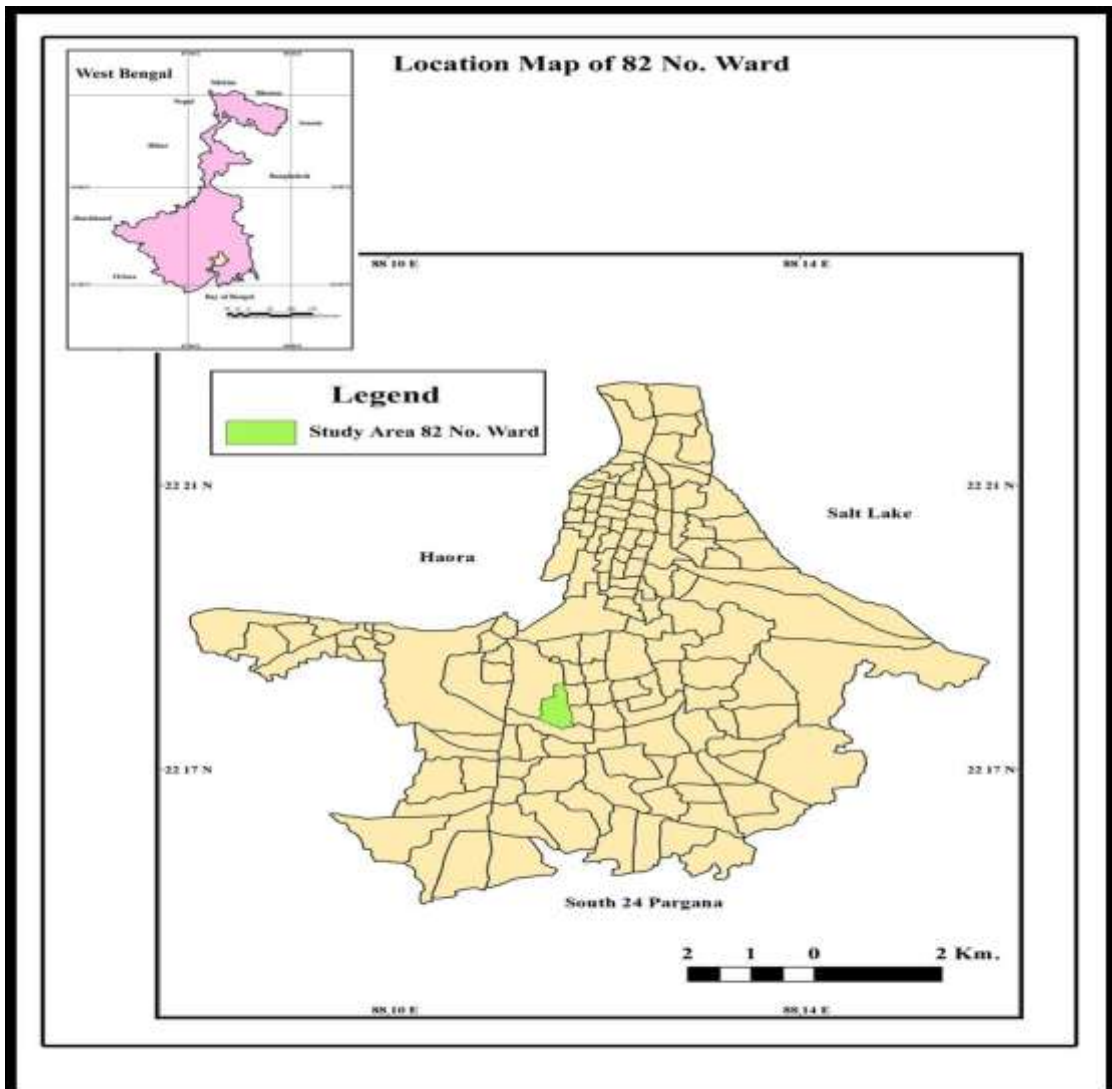
of such deprivation, both absolute and relative. Discussions over the future of development beyond the Millennium Development Goals have highlighted the need to ensure that improvements in human development and sustainability reach the most marginalised groups in society, 'leaving no one behind' that includes the millions of people living in slums. But to determine whether progress is really reaching these marginal groups, we need appropriate indicators and data.



According to provisional results of the 2011 national census, Kolkata district, which occupies an area of 185 km² (71 sq. mi), had a population of 4,486,679; its population density was 24,252/km² (62,810/sq. mi). This represents a decline of 1.88% during the decade 2001–11. The sex ratio is 899 females per 1000 males, lower than the national average. The ratio is depressed by the influx of working males from surrounding rural areas, from the rest of West Bengal, and from neighbouring states, mainly Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Orissa; these men commonly leave their families behind. Kolkata's literacy rate of 87.14% exceeds the all-India average of 74%. The urban agglomeration had a population of 14,112,536 in 2011.

Bengali people form the majority of Kolkata's population; Marwaris and Biharis compose large minorities. Among Kolkata's smaller communities are Chinese, Tamils, Nepalis, Odias, Telugus, Assamese, Gujaratis, Anglo-Indians, Armenians, Greeks, Tibetans, Maharashtrians, Konkanis, Malayalees, Punjabis, and Parsis. The number of Armenians,

Greeks, Jews, and other foreign-origin groups declined during the 20th century. The Jewish population of Kolkata was 5,000 during World War II, but declined after Indian independence and the establishment of Israel; by 2013, there were 25 Jews in the city. India's sole Chinatown is in eastern Kolkata; once home to 20,000 ethnic Chinese, its population dropped to around 2,000 as of 2009 as a result of multiple factors including repatriation and denial of Indian citizenship following the 1962 Sino-Indian War, and immigration to foreign countries for better economic opportunities. The Chinese community traditionally worked in the local tanning industry and ran Chinese restaurants.



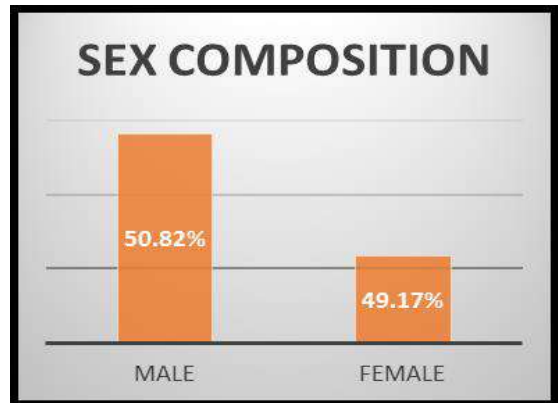
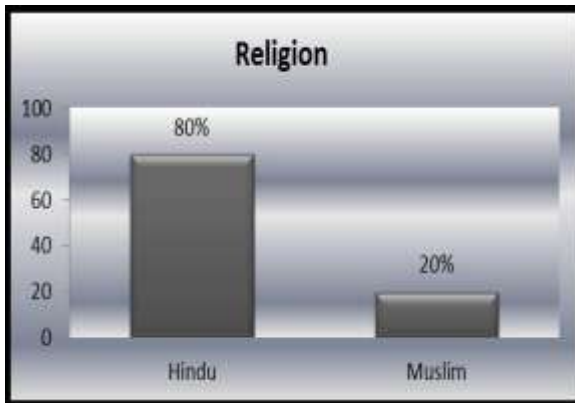
Ward No. 82, Kolkata Municipal Corporation is an administrative division of Kolkata Municipal Corporation in Borough No. 9, covering parts of Chetla neighbourhood in south Kolkata, in the Indian state of West Bengal. It forms a city municipal corporation council

electoral constituency and is a part of Bhabanipur (Vidhansabha constituency). The boundaries of the ward are Chetla Central Road, Gopalnagar Road and Judge's Court Road are in the north. Tolly's Nullah (Adi Ganga) is in the east. Boat Canal and Eastern Railway's Budge Budge line are in the south. Alipore Road is in the west. The Study area is administered under the Jurisdiction of Kolkata Municipal Corporation with the total area of 187. 33 sq. k. m. The present study area comprises the areal extension starting from 22 ° 37'N to 22 ° 39'N and 88 ° 18'E to 88 ° 23'E.

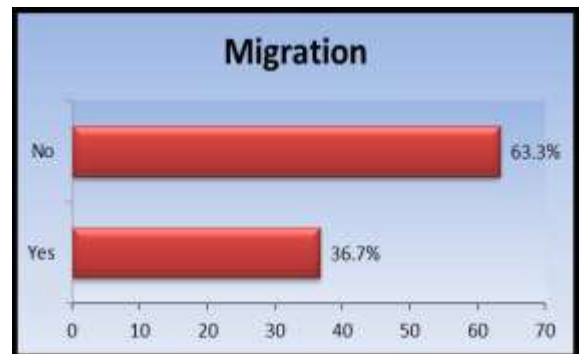
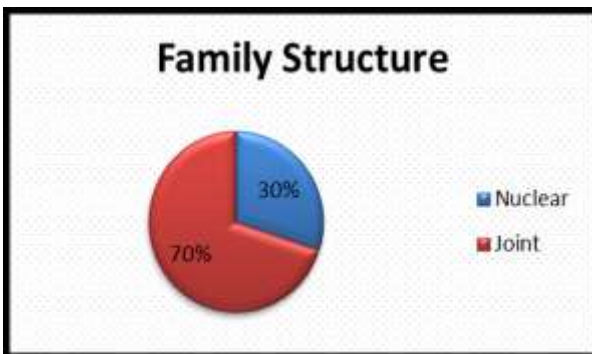


Satellite Image of Ward 82

The demography of ward number 82 shows a dominance of Hindu population. The sex composition of this ward is to a certain extent even. After surveying the ward it is clear that most of the inhabitants are nonmigrants. The majority of the families in this ward have been residing here for more than 15years which shows that the settlement is an old one. The population has been divided into three castes-general, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe. There is also presence of other backward classes.



The sex composition reveals that a balance is maintained between male and female population. The sex ratio is almost 1:1. Male comprises about 50.82% of the total population and female comprises about 49.18% of the total population. This shows that the discrimination against women is not much in this ward.



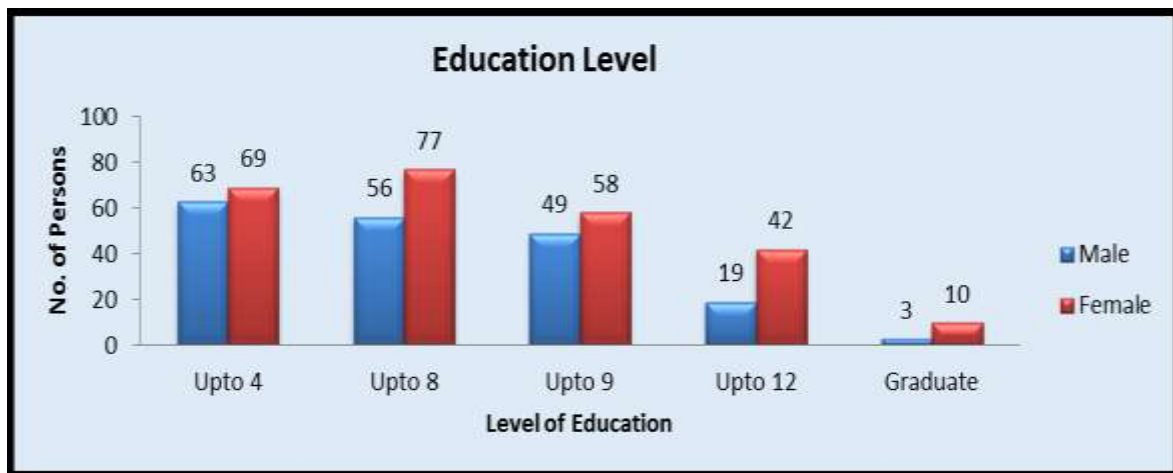
Source: Primary Survey

Most of the families in this ward is joint which is 70% and 30% of the families are nuclear. This proves that the households are densely occupied. Nuclear type of family structure is comparatively less in ward no 82.

There is a very small percentage of people who have migrated into this area. The percentage of non-migrant population is much higher than the migrant population. The above bar diagram shows that in this area the migrant population accounts for about 36.7% and the non-migrant population accounts for 63.3%.

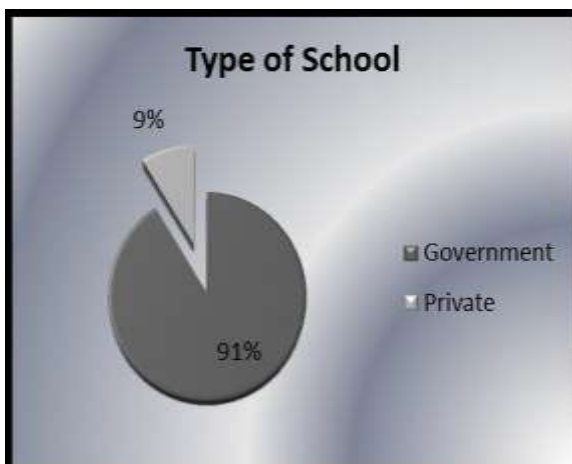
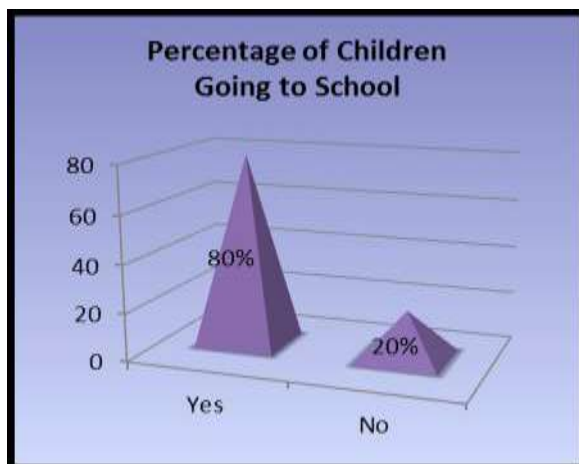
The general pattern shows that the level of education is higher among the women than men in this area. The number of male discontinuing education is much higher than female. This might be because the men have been compelled to take up various occupations in order to meet up the family expenditure. Most of the people have continued till class 8 level of education. With the increasing level of education the number of persons shows a declining

trend which reveals that people have enrolled in the preliminary classes but have gradually dropped out due to several causes.



The percentage of children going to school is high. Almost 80% of the children have been enrolled in schools. Only 20% of the children have not been enrolled in schools due to certain causes like financial crunch, to support the family by working etc.

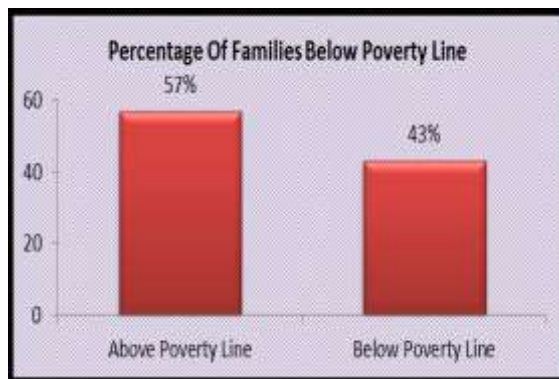
The primary survey shows that 91% of the children goes to schools run by the government. Only a meagre 9% of children are enrolled in private schools. It seems that the economy of the people forbids them from sending their children to private schools which are very expensive.



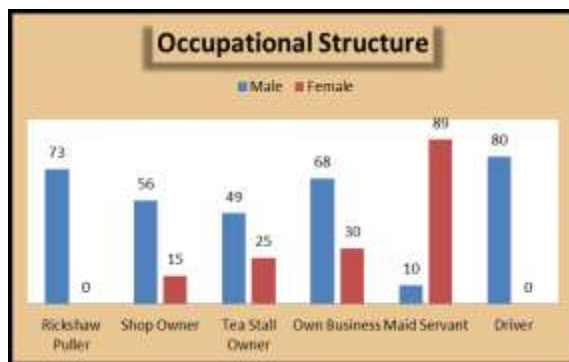
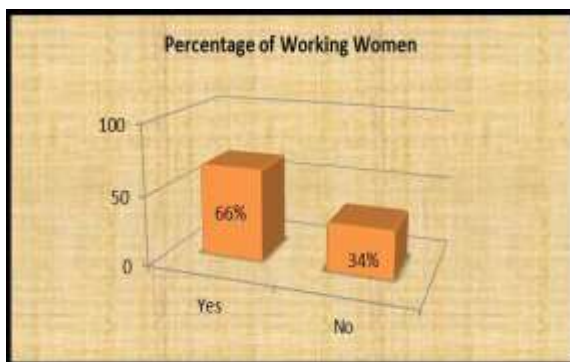
Source: Primary Survey

The following bar diagram shows the income of the households. It is seen that majority of the people have income ranging from Rs. 2000- Rs. 5000 which accounts for 90 households followed by 78 households having income between Rs. 5000 – Rs. 10000. Only

27 households have monthly income of more than Rs. 10000. 25 households have income of less than Rs. 2000.

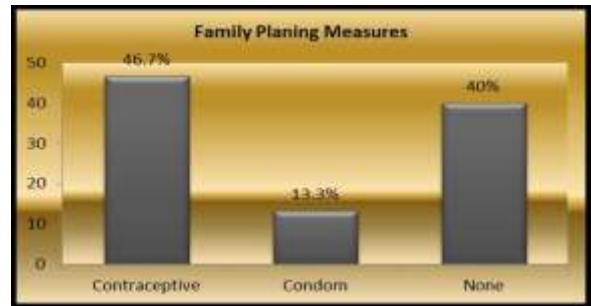


The above bar diagram shows that 57% of the families live above the poverty line while 43% live below the poverty line. The survey showed that about 66% of the female population are working in order to support the family financially. 34% of the women are not working. The occupational structure shows that most the male are employed as drivers which accounts for about 80 number of persons. There are 73 males who are employed as rickshaw pullers followed by 68 persons having own business and 56 having their shops. 49 work in tea stalls and only 10 work as maid servants. Among the women 89 work as maid servants. 30 have their own business. 25 are owners of tea stalls and 10 have their own shops.



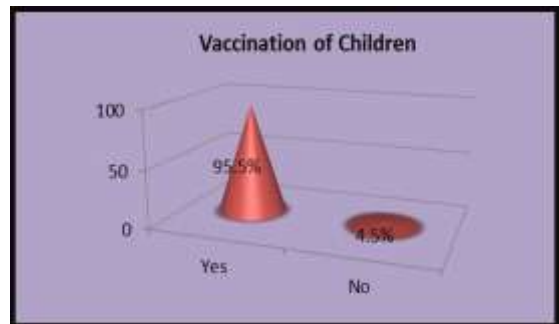
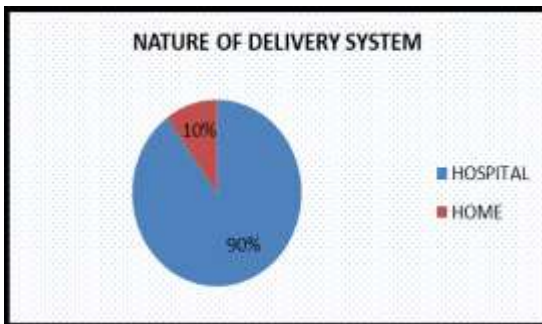
Source: Primary Survey

It is seen that 40% of the households do not take any measures of family planning. 46.7% use contraceptives while 13.3% use condoms. They are not much aware about the utility of contraception. Among the households surveyed it is found that 53.5% of children are malnourished who do not get proper food and often fall sick and also has less weight compared to their age. This is found in the households where the income is less than Rs 2000.



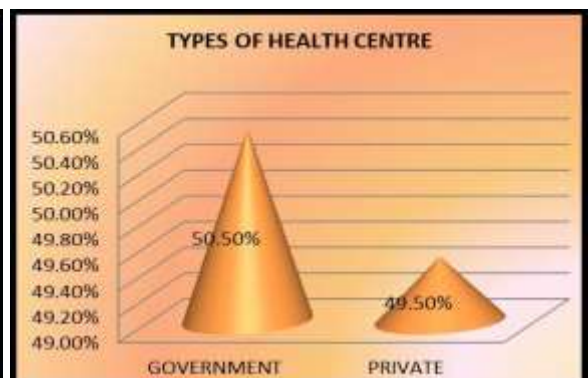
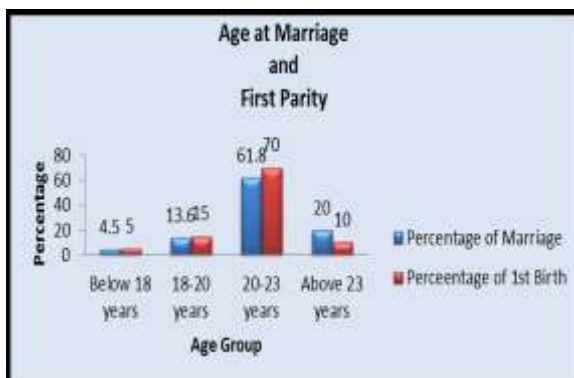
Source: Primary Survey

The deliveries of babies are mainly done in hospitals which accounts for about 90% whereas only 10% are done at home. Most of the children are vaccinated in this area. The vaccinations are done by the government. So it can be said that they aware of the health conditions of the children. About 95.5% of the children are vaccinated and only 4.5% are not vaccinated.



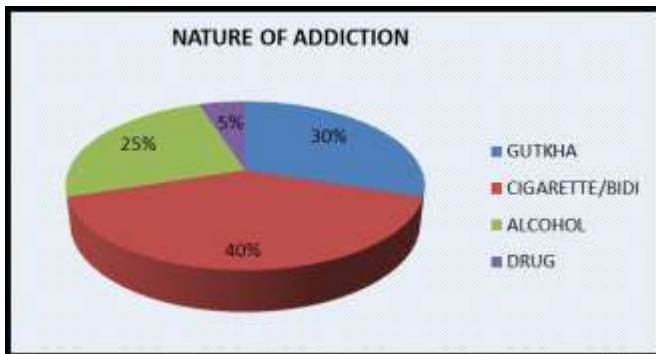
Source: Primary Survey

The survey reveals that 50.5% of the people receive their treatments from the government hospitals. They mainly avail Seth Sukhlal Karnani Memorial Hospital in most the times. The better off in this area avails private hospitals which accounts for about 49.5% of the total number of households. The following illustrates:



Source: Primary Survey

Most of the girls are married off in the age group of 20-23years which is about 61.8%.The percentage of first birth is highest among the 20-23years age group of girls. Only 4.5% of the girls are married off below 18years of age.5% of the girls attain their first parity below 18years of age. Between 18-20years of age 13.6% of the girls are married off and 15% give birth to their first child during this age. About 20% of the girls are married above 23 years and 10% attain first parity above 23years of age.The nature of addiction shows that 40% of the people are addicted towards smoking which includes mainly cigarette and bidi smoking. About 30% are addicted towards gutkha. The percentage addicted towards alcohol is 25%.About 5% are addicted towards drugs.



Source: Primary Survey

Conclusion: With the increase of urbanization in every corner of the world there is a growing inequality, among the privileged and the under privileged, In case of Kolkata also there is a similar scenario where with the increase in the levels of urbanization there has been a clear cut distinction between the have and the have not's. The privileged have access to better facilities of living in apartments or buildings, proper education, health care facilities and every aspect of socioeconomic and cultural stability. On the other hand the deprived ones live in the slums with poor housing, improper sanitation, degraded profession and face numerous socio-economic and cultural problems.

After a detailed study of ward number 82, it may be said that the growth of the urban poor and the poor living conditions can be to some extent blamed on the government's incapability in providing proper shelter and employment opportunities.

Although some considerable successes have been achieved, there is a long way to go for Kolkata in terms of addressing the issues related to urban poverty and slums. There is an urgent need to establish clear long-term strategies that address such issues as:

- Land titles in bustees;
- Unauthorized new slums around canal and roads;
- Greater effectiveness of urban poverty-eradication programmes;
- Public awareness-building programmes on slum population;
- The role of each actor and stakeholder;

- Poverty reduction approaches to slum improvement;
- Inadequate municipal institutional arrangements, including co-ordination of the activities of various actors.

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