



Rural Livelihood of Nurpur and Supur, Birbhum District, West Bengal

**Survey Report Submitted to the Department of Economics, St. Xavier's University,
Kolkata**

By

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The survey was conducted on 20th of January, 2024.
- This study conducted in two villages named Nurpur and Supur of Sriniketan block in Birbhum district of West Bengal has identified the determinants and constraints to the rural livelihood.
- Overall sample size comprises of 104 households and 447 individuals, excluding the migrants.
- A procedure of random purposive sampling was followed all along.
- The study, examined on the basis of religion and caste has shown that household-head experience (age), various socio-economic dimensions of rural subsistence such as employment, asset ownership, migration trends, educational level, rural infrastructure, agro-climatic condition and the overall level of economic development of a region are the main driving force towards rural livelihood.
- The research aimed to shed light on the intricate socio-economic realities that exist within these villages. This research attempts to contribute to the field of rural livelihood studies, by offering an analysis of livelihood practices based on the current socio-economic landscape in Nurpur and Supur, highlighting the challenges and opportunities faced by residents of these villages.
- In key findings of the survey it was being found that, majority of the population belonged the category of general and religion Hindu. Also, 73% of the entire population in our survey belonged to low wealth category with basic amenities present in their home, such as safe drinking water availability, LPG gas stoves, etc.

2. INTRODUCTION

We have conducted a primary survey on 20th January, 2024 where we have selected two representative villages in Birbhum district, at Sriniketan block, namely Supur and Nurpur. The main story line of our report delves around studying the socio-economic structure of the two respective villages, understanding their pattern of occupation, witnessing the kind of life they are leading, structure of family, facilities available to them, if they are benefitted by the basic government schemes, overall understanding the livelihood pattern of the region. However, the complex relations within the village society could not be fully captured effectively by the data generated by the survey.

A similar survey was conducted last year (2023) by PG4 students, department of Economics, St Xavier's University, where Supur and Nurpur were selected, where various factors related to livelihoods and other relevant aspects were observed. Based on this initial groundwork, a plan has been proposed for conducting similar surveys in these villages, with the goal to create a longitudinal dataset that can capture various socio-economic dimensions of these communities.

Each village, composed of various communities residing in contiguous areas, undergoes a unique developmental journey, resulting in distinct experiences. As India's economy predominantly relies on its rural areas, villages serve not only as crucial testing grounds for the effective implementation of government policies and schemes, but also acts as the preliminary building block of the socio-economic and cultural ingredient of the country.

Rural surveys are generally conducted with diverse aims concerning rural communities worldwide. Based on specific objectives, the target population or sample is determined, and surveys are conducted using different methods such as personal interviews, mail, or telephone. For our study, we have aimed at carrying out a purposive sampling, collecting data from 104 individuals, consisting of 447 individuals (excluding the migrants). Due to shortage of time, it was only possible to visit a limited number of households.

Historical Significance of Birbhum

Birbhum, the northernmost district of the Burdwan Division, West Bengal covers an area of 4545 square kilometres and is bordered by Santhal Parganas to the north and west, Murshidabad and Burdwan to the east, and Burdwan to the south, separated by the Ajay River.

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature on livelihood surveys in India has been listed as follows:

- **Village Survey Study in West Bengal (Sahajpur village in Birbhum district), Bidhan Chandra Roy, Debanshu Majumdar(2021)**

The report shows how Sahajpur village undergoes significant social and economic transformations in health and education. However, the village economy lacks substantial rehabilitation, particularly in employment generation and agricultural advancement. A prevalent disinterest among the youth towards agriculture and entrepreneurship was observed which the need for development schemes to shift focus towards long-term employment generation for educated youth.

- **District Survey Report of Birbhum District, West Bengal; preparer by RSP Green Development & Laboratories PVT. LTD. (October, 2019)**

Emphasizing the importance of mineral paragenesis, and remote sensing data utilization, the report talks about a strategic approach to sustainably manage stone and gravel mining projects while addressing environmental concerns for economic growth and environmental quality preservation. This Survey Report aims to identify areas suitable for mining and those where it should be prohibited, using both secondary and primary data. In West Bengal, the DSR plays a crucial role in managing mineral resources, with the state contributing 3.8% of India's mineral production and hosting a variety of economically important metallic and non-metallic mineral deposits across different districts.

- **AERC STUDY No. 50: Village Survey Study. Village: Sohian, Block: Jagraon, State: Punjab (2021)**

The baseline survey of Sohian village in Ludhiana district, Punjab, reveals a predominantly Sikh community with decent literacy rates and infrastructure. While farming and allied activities are the main occupation, a declining trend in dairy farming and stagnation in agricultural income has been noticed. Major concerns highlighted by villagers include groundwater depletion, increased drug/alcohol addiction, and the need for addressing employment availability and the menace of stray animals on a priority basis. The village survey's second phase involved group discussions with villagers, revealing no significant natural disasters in the past five years, aside from a decreasing trend in rainfall.

2.2 STUDY AREA

We surveyed the villages of Nurpur and Supur in Sriniketan Block, Birbhum District, West Bengal.

TABLE 1: Demographic composition of Supur

Particulars	Numbers
Number of families	446
Population	1803
Male population	910 (50.471%)
Female population	893 (49.529%)
(0-6yrs) children	220 (12.02%)
Literacy rate	69.24%
Male literacy rate	74.91 %
Female literacy rate	63.49 %
SC population	960 (53.24%)
ST population	420 (23.29%)

Source: Census data, 2011

Supur is a medium size village located in Bolpur Sriniketan Block of Birbhum district, West Bengal. Supur village has lower literacy rate compared to West Bengal. In 2011, literacy rate of Supur village was 69.24 %, **lower literacy rate** compared to **76.26 % of West Bengal.**

TABLE 2: Demographic composition of Nurpur

Particulars	Numbers
Number of families	337
Population	1781
Male population	942 (52.90%)
Female population	839 (47.10%)
(0-6yrs) children	294 (16.51%)
Literacy rate	83.46%
Male literacy rate	89.17%
Female literacy rate	76.91%
SC population	132 (7.41%)
ST population	0

Source: Census data, 2011

Nurpur is a medium size village located in Nanoor Block of Birbhum district, Nurpur village has **higher literacy rate** compared to West Bengal. In 2011, literacy rate of Nurpur village was 83.46 % compared to **76.26 % of West Bengal**.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study the various socio-economic patterns of the rural livelihood of Nurpur and Supur village of under Sriniketan block, Birbhum, West Bengal.

Supur and Nurpur, two villages, have been chosen as the primary locations for our survey. In 2023, postgraduate students from St. Xavier's University conducted a survey in these villages. During their study, they observed various factors related to livelihoods and other relevant aspects. Now, building upon this initial groundwork, it has been decided to conduct similar surveys in these villages annually, starting this year. The primary objective is to establish a longitudinal dataset that encompasses various socio-economic dimensions of these villages. These dimensions include gender ratio, asset ownership, educational attainment, average household income, and overall socio-economic conditions. This ongoing effort will provide valuable insights over time.

The report in hand unveils the results of a pilot survey conducted this year. This initial survey serves as a foundational reference point for subsequent annual surveys. Employing consistent methodologies, the study specifically targets the same households. By doing so, it ensures precise tracking of changes over time. The longitudinal approach adopted in this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics within Supur and Nurpur villages. These insights contribute significantly to informed analysis and potential policy interventions aimed at enhancing the socio-economic well-being of these communities.



4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Methodology Used

- The methodology we used to collect data for our study was conducting a primary survey. A primary survey, often referred to as a primary data collection method, is a research method where data is directly collected from the source using methods like interviews, questionnaires, observations, experiments, or a combination of these approaches for a specific research purpose.
- The purpose of our survey questionnaire was to gain insights into the various socioeconomic patterns of livelihood of these two villages. Our survey questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section of our questionnaire consisted of questions related to the identification of the respondent from each household and their relationship with the head of the household whereas, the second section consisted of questions related to household-level information such as the total monthly expenditure of the household, availability of electricity connection, ownership of various assets, land or pond and livestock, their primary source of drinking water, primary fuel for cooking, etc.
- The third section of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to information about each member of the household such as their names, ages, sex, educational qualifications, and if they benefitted from any government schemes, etc whereas, the fourth section of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to employment status and their primary and secondary occupation in the past few months.
- The fifth section of the questionnaire consisted of questions related to the migration details of the household such as their reasons and type of migration. If an individual from the household has migrated for work or education or marriage and doesn't presently live in the same household, then we haven't considered them as a member of the household.

4.2 Sampling Design

- The sampling design selected for our survey is purposive random sampling. Purposive random sampling is a sampling technique where researchers purposefully select specific individuals or elements from a population to be included in the sample, but the selection process maintains a random component. Researchers choose participants or elements based on specific criteria relevant to their research objectives. This means they intentionally select individuals who they believe will provide valuable information or represent certain characteristics or perspectives important to their study.
- Despite the purposeful selection of the population for our survey, we ensured that the final selection process included an element of randomness. This randomness helps us to reduce bias and increase the likelihood that the sample chosen for our study is representative of all the sections of the population which is categorized based on caste (general, scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, other backward classes), religion (Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Others) and gender (male, female and others).
- We selected Nurpur and Supur villages in the Birbhum District, West Bengal as the primary study area for our survey. The reason is that in 2023, the postgraduate students of the economics department from St. Xavier's University, Kolkata conducted a survey in these villages, during which they observed several factors related to livelihoods and other socio-economic aspects. Based upon the key findings of their study, it has been decided to conduct similar surveys in these villages annually aiming to establish a longitudinal dataset encompassing various socio-economic dimensions of these villages, including gender ratio, asset ownership, educational attainment, average household income, and overall socio-economic conditions, etc.
- Another reason for selecting these two villages as the primary study area for our survey was that we had the support and guidance of the local people arranged by the Visva Bharati University, Shantiniketan which helped us in conducting the survey smoothly.

5. KEY FINDINGS

5.1 Demographic composition of survey area

TABLE 3 : Demographic Composition of Survey

Particulars	Total	Male	Female
Houses	104	-	-
Population	447	218	229
Child (0-10yr)	61	34	27
Adolescents (11-19yr)	68	28	40
Adults (20-60yr)	293	141	152
Adult Senior Citizen (61yr +)	25	15	10
Social Category			
General	142	64	78
Schedule Caste	155	80	75
Schedule Tribe	82	41	41
Other Backward Class	68	33	35
Religion			
Hindu	208	106	102
Muslim	180	80	100
Christian	0	-	-
Others	59	32	27

The survey was conducted in 104 households in two villages of Birbhum district namely Supur and Nurpur. The total population of these households was 447 of which 218 were males and 229 females. The total population was classified into four age- groups: child (0-10 year), adolescents (11-19 years), adults (20-60 year) and adult senior citizens (60 and above year). The total population of the children (0-10 year) was 61.

The total population was categorized into four social categories namely General, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. Among them, the General category consists of 142 individuals of which 64 were males and 78 were females. Scheduled Castes accounted for 155 individuals, including 80 males and 75 females. Scheduled Tribes consisted of 82 individuals, equally

divided between males and females. Lastly, Other Backward Classes encompassed 68 individuals, with 33 males and 35 females.

The two villages Supur and Nurpur are composed of Hindus, Muslims, and Others. The demographic breakdown by religion indicates 208 Hindus, with 106 males and 102 females, 180 Muslims, comprising 80 males and 100 females, while the Christian category has no

recorded data. The "Others" group includes 59 individuals, consisting of 32 males and 27 females.

TABLE 4 : Primary source of drinking water

	Type	No. of Households
Primary Source of Drinking Water	Tap	24
	Tubewell	28
	Public Tap	15
	Public Tubewell	31
	Public Open Well	2
	Public Pond/Tank	3
	Others	1



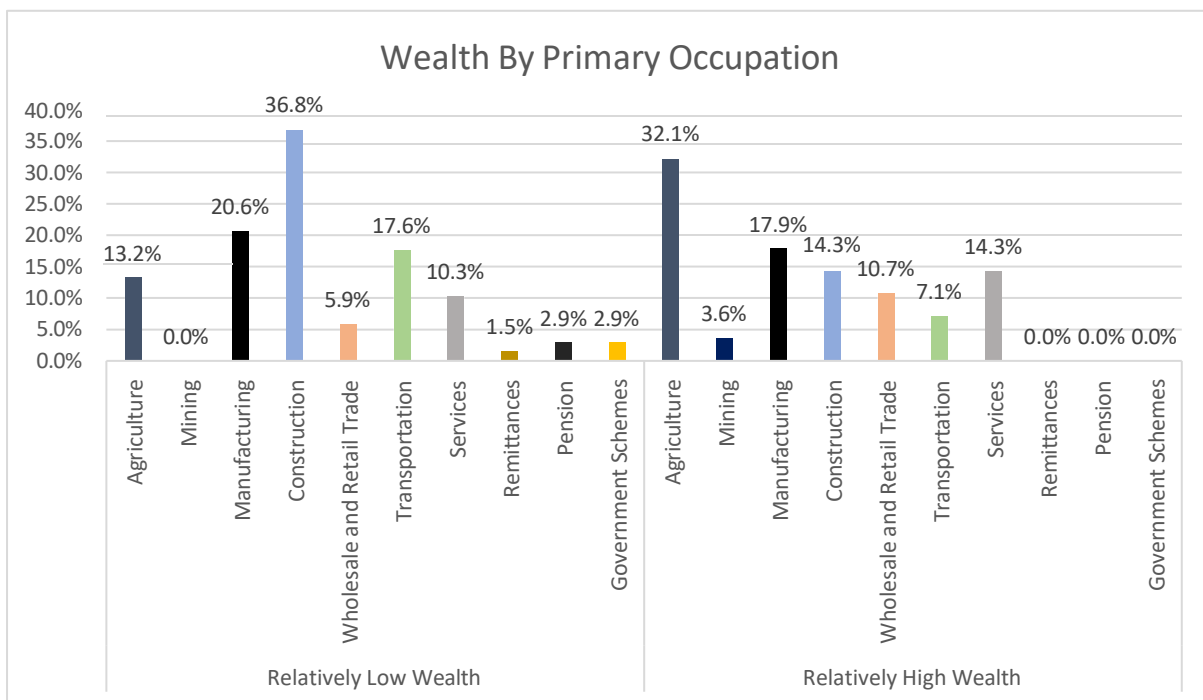
The survey was conducted to find out the types of the primary sources of drinking water in these two villages. The primary sources of the drinking water are tap, tubewell, public tap, public open well, public pond/ tank. According to survey findings; 24 households, 28 households, 15 households, 31 households, 2 households, 3 households and one household have access to taps, tube wells, public taps, public tubewells, public open wells, open ponds/tanks, and other means respectively.

TABLE 5 : Wealth Index

Wealth Index (Based by Asset count)	
Relatively high wealth	28 households
Relatively low wealth	76 households

The community comprises 28 households with relatively high wealth and 76 households with relatively low wealth.

FIGURE 2 : Wealth By Primary Occupation



Agriculture, Mining, Manufacturing, Construction, Wholesale and retail trade, Transportation, Services, Remittances, Pension, Government Scheme are sectors/occupation from which household’s primary source of income came from in the last 3 month. After cross-tabulating the primary occupation of the household with the Wealth Index, we observe the following,

Among the low wealth household, the construction sector showed the highest followed by manufacturing, transportation, and agriculture. There was no household in the sample data that had its primary occupation in the mining sector for low wealth households.

Among the high wealth household, we see that agriculture sector is the highest and there was no households that got remittances, pension or government scheme under this category.

TABLE 6: Ration Card Types

	Ration Card	No. of Households
Ration Card Type	AAY	1
	APL	7
	BPL	19
	PHH	24
	RKSY	25
	SPHH	28



By the survey we come to know about the Public Distribution System and various types of Ration Cards. According to the survey findings, 1 household takes the benefit of Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY); 7

household holds comes under Above Poverty Line (APL); 19 households are listed Below Poverty Line (BPL); 24 households are listed under Priority Households (PHH); 25 households hold Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Yojana (RKSY); and 28 households hold State Priority Households (SPHH).

5.2 Employment of the households

TABLE 7: Employment Rate in Percentage

Employment Rate (in percentage)	
General	36%
SC	29%
ST	45%
OBC	38%
Total	62%

The households' members who were above the age of 14 and was involved in an income earning activity (self-employed, salaried, casual labour) for the last 3 months was taken as employed.

The above table shows that 62% of the sample population above the age of 14 was employed. It is observed that the highest employment rate was scheduled tribe with 45% and lowest was scheduled caste, with only 29%.



TABLE 8: Employment Status based on Gender

Gender	Employment Status	Percentage
Male	Self Employed	21%
	Salaried	25%
	Casual Labour	42%
	Unemployed	13%
	Attend Educational Institution	0%
Female	Self Employed	0%
	Salaried	5%
	Casual Labour	35%
	Unemployed	60%
	Attend Educational Institution	0%

We see that Casual labour is highest among male 42%, whereas we see that majority of the female weren't involved in any income earning activity for the past 3 months, among the employed females casual labour was the highest 35%



TABLE 9: Percentage of Main Earning Source

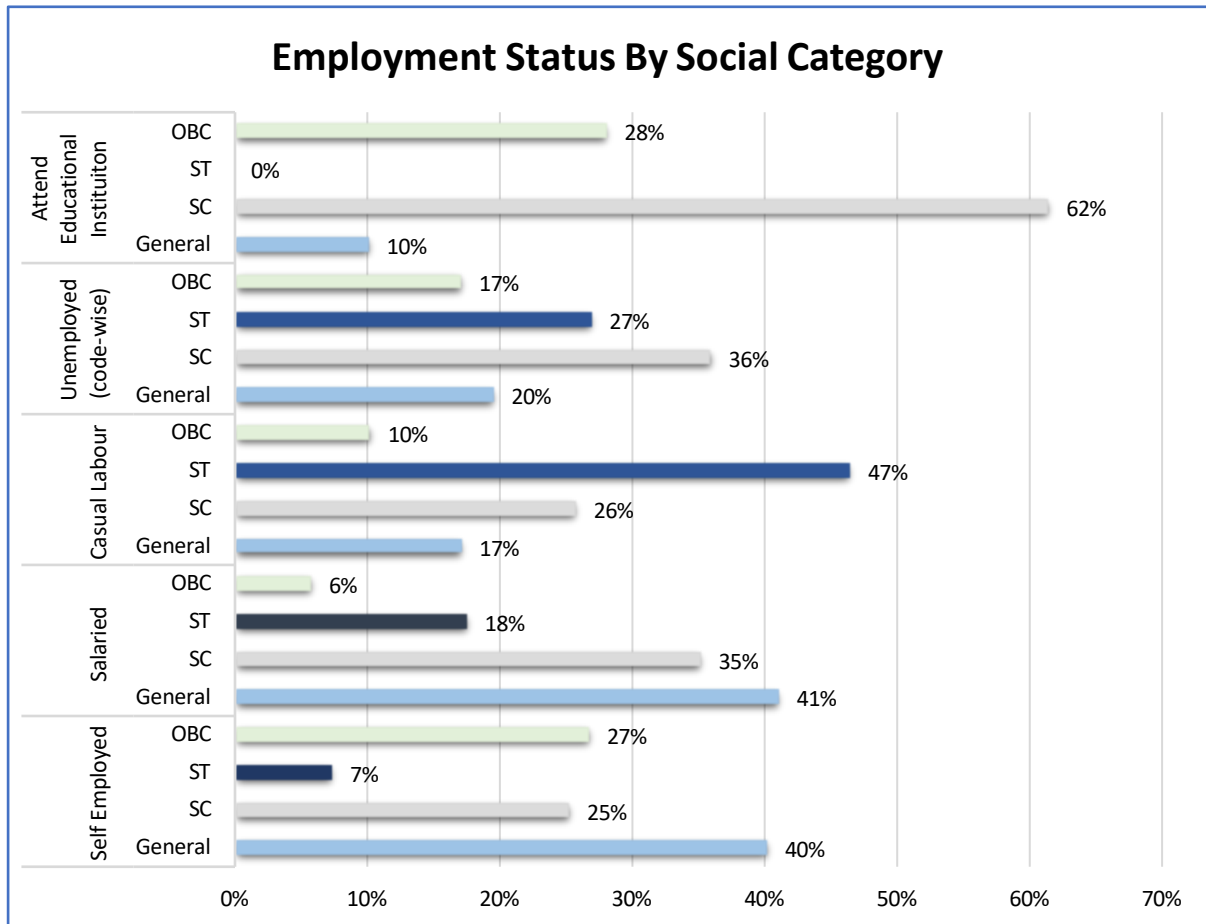
Main Source of earning	Percentage
Agriculture	27%
Mining	4%
Manufacturing	16%
Construction	20%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	12%
Transportation	10%
Services	8%
Remittances	0%
Pension	2%
Government Schemes	1%



27% of the employed sample population are employed in agriculture followed by construction (20%) and manufacturing (16%). we observe that in the sample population very few relied on pension and government scheme and there was none receiving remittances.

The above table shows the employment rate under social category where the highest was scheduled tribe where 45% are employed and lowest was scheduled caste, where only 29% of them were employed.

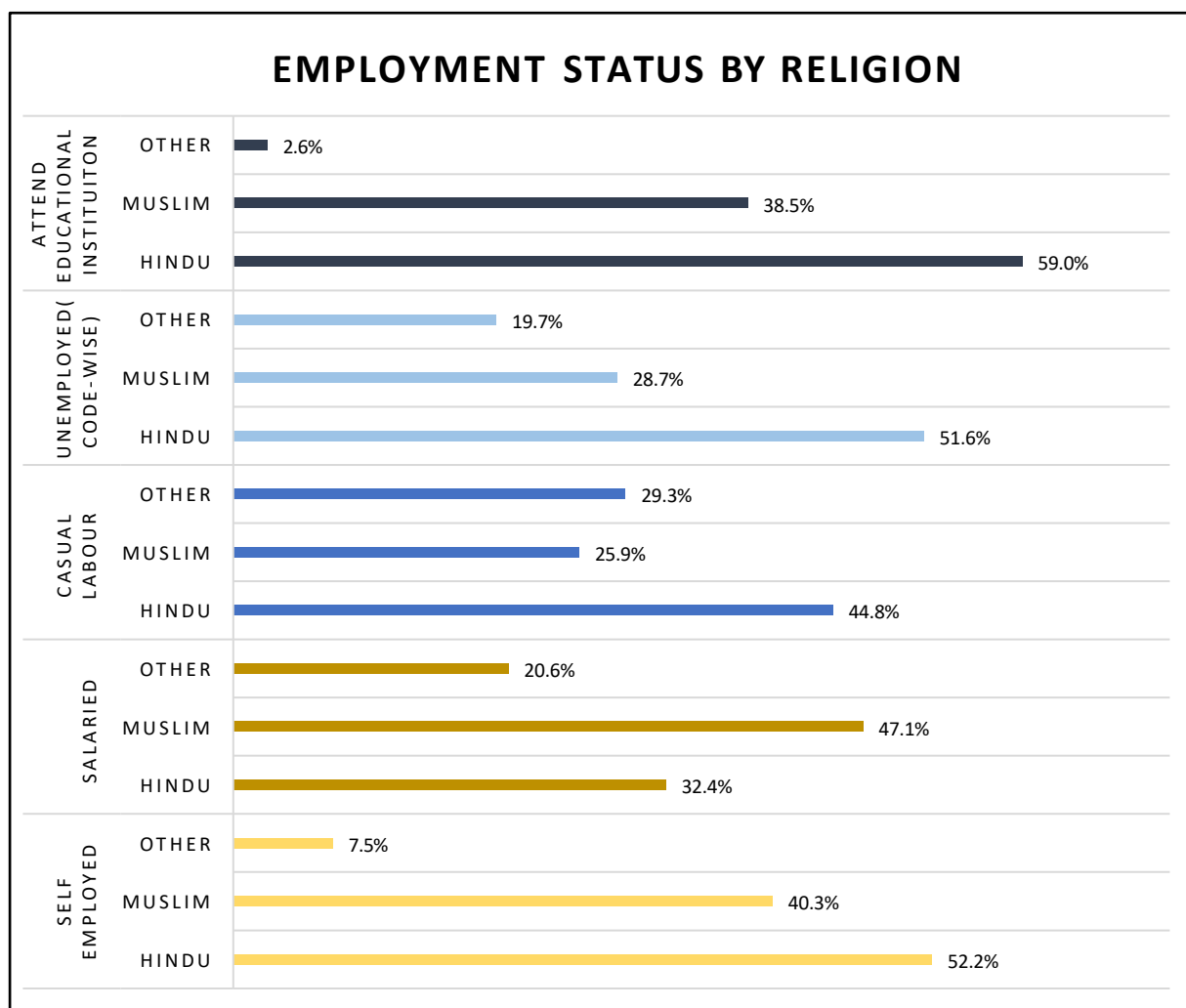
FIGURE 3 : Employment Status by Social Category



**The Unemployed status is just a code for those individuals who are above 14 years and have not taken part in any income earning activity for the last 3 months. It cannot be taken as a proper representative for unemployment as various factors have to be considered to calculate unemployment.*

Above is a cross-tabulation of employment status and social category where each employment status is further categorized by social category. We observe that among the Self Employed and Salaried, general category is the most. Whereas among the casual labour Scheduled Tribe is highest and among the unemployed Scheduled Caste is highest.

FIGURE 4 : Employment Status by Religion



The above table is a cross tabulation between Religion and Employment Status. We observe the following, Among the Self-employed Hindu is the highest population, among the Salaried Muslim is highest, Hindu is highest for Casual labour, Unemployed and those that's attending educational institution.

5.3 Migration

Individuals who do not eat and sleep under the same roof was not consider part of the household. Therefore, during the survey, the members of the household – family members who were working or getting the education outside the study area were taken in as migrants and also those who went to another family due to marriage was also consider as migrants during the analysis of the data. From this definition we have survey **32 migrants**.

The following table shows the result found:

TABLE 10: Migration

Migration According To							
Religion		Education		Types of Migration		Reason for Migration	
Hindu	11	Literate	27	Permanent	18	Employment	17
Muslim	9	Illiterate	5	Seasonal	12	Marriage	15
Other	12			Transitory	2	Education	0

We observe that among the 32 migrants, 11 of them were Hindu, 9 were Muslim, 12 were Santhas therefore were put in others category. 27 of the migrants had at least 1 year of schooling or knew how to read and write, whereas 5 of them were illiterate.

18 of the migration was permanent, 12 was seasonal and 2 transitory. When we check the reason for migration, we see that 17 was for employment, 15 was for marriage and no data was found for education.

6. CONCLUSION

This study analyses data from a survey conducted in Nurpur and Supur, encompassing a total of 447 individuals from diverse sociodemographic backgrounds. The sample incorporates individuals from various social categories (General, ST, SC, OBC) and religious affiliations (Hindu, Muslim, Others).

Educational Attainment: The survey reveals a higher educational attainment among males compared to females, with 81% of males and 75% of females completing at least one year of schooling. Interestingly, the average years of education vary across religious groups, with Muslims exhibiting the highest average (7.2 years), followed by Hindus (5.8 years) and individuals categorized as "Others" (5.4 years). Similarly, the average years of education differ by social category, with the OBC category demonstrating the highest average (7.6 years), followed by General (6.9 years), SC (6.4 years), and ST (3 years).

Employment: The overall employment rate within the sample is 47%, with individuals from the General category constituting the largest proportion of employed individuals (33%). Examining employment types, Hindus represent the majority within the self-employed category (52.2%), while Muslims hold the highest share in the salaried category (47.1%). Hindus also form the largest group among casual labourers.

Migration Patterns: The survey findings suggest limited migration patterns, with only 3.7% of Hindus and 4.8% of Muslims migrating primarily for employment purposes.

7. REFERENCES

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- AERC STUDY No. 50: Village Survey Study. Village: Sohian, Block: Jagraon, State: Punjab (2021)