

University of Rajshahi

Rajshahi-6205

Bangladesh.

RUCL Institutional Repository

<http://rulrepository.ru.ac.bd>

Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS)

PhD thesis

2012

Nature of the Political Participation of the Oraon Community of Barind in Bangladesh

Khan, Md. Mahfil

University of Rajshahi

<http://rulrepository.ru.ac.bd/handle/123456789/755>

Copyright to the University of Rajshahi. All rights reserved. Downloaded from RUCL Institutional Repository.

en 37410

Nature of the Political Participation of the Oraon Community of Barind in Bangladesh



Ph.D Dissertation

Researcher

Md. Mahfil Khan
Session: 2009-2010

Supervisor

Dr. Md. Ruhul Amin
Professor
Department of Political Science
Rajshahi University, Rajshahi-6205

**Institute of Bangladesh Studies
University of Rajshahi
Rajshahi, Bangladesh**

September 2012

Nature of the Political Participation of the Oraon Community of Barind in Bangladesh



Ph.D Dissertation

Researcher

Md. Mahfil Khan

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), Rajshahi University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D)

In

Political Science

**Institute of Bangladesh Studies
University of Rajshahi
Rajshahi, Bangladesh**

September 2012

Dedicated
To
My parents
Especially
To
The sacred
Memory of my beloved mother
Hazera Khatun
Who passed away when I was twenty four
And
My beloved wife Rozina Ahmed
Who is my spirit for research

ড. মো. রুহুল আমিন
অধ্যাপক
রাষ্ট্রবিজ্ঞান বিভাগ
রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
রাজশাহী- ৬২০৫, বাংলাদেশ।
ফোন: অফিস ০৭২১-৭৫১২৪৬
মোবা: +৮৮-০১৯১১৮৭২৩৬৪




Dr. Md. Ruhul Amin
Professor
Department of pol. Science
Rajshahi University
Rajshahi-6205
Bangladesh.
Phone: Off: 0721-751246
Mob: +88-01911872364

Certificate

I have the pleasure to certify that the dissertation entitled "Nature of the Political Participation of the Oraon Community of Barind in Bangladesh." is an original work done by Md. Mahfil Khan. He has completed the research work under my direct supervision. So far as I know, the dissertation has not been previously submitted to any university/ institute for any kind of degree or diploma.

I also certify that I have gone through the dissertation and found it satisfactory for submission to the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), Rajshahi University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science.

 17.09.2012

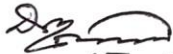
Dr. Md. Ruhul Amin
Professor
Department of Political Science
Rajshahi University, Rajshahi-6205

&

Supervisor

Declaration

I do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "Nature of the Political Participation of the Oraon Community of Barind in Bangladesh." submitted for the Ph.D. degree to the Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), Rajshahi University is an original research work carried out by me under the direct supervision and guidance of my learned supervisor Dr. Md. Ruhul Amin, Professor of Political Science, Rajshahi University, Rajshahi. No proof of the dissertation in any form has been submitted to any university/ institute for the award of any degree or diploma. This research is a fresh one and has not been contributed by anybody else. The sources incorporated in the thesis have been duly acknowledged and cited for clarity.


17.09.2012

Md. Mahfil Khan
Ph.D Research Fellow
Session: 2009-2010
Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS)
University of Rajshahi

Abstract

Political participation is an important aspect in the arena of political science. It ensures productive and durable changes and may also be conceived as an undeniable human right in the context of equality. The world is becoming enriched with different resources but human right is on the brink of danger. So, people's participation of all aspects is an imperative to recover the human rights. Most of the Bangladeshi is ethno linguistically homogeneous. Nevertheless, there is a distance among the more advanced or the civilized people and the tribal people though all are the citizens of Bangladesh whose different basic rights are ensured by the constitution of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh. There are 45 tribal communities in Bangladesh. Among them, the Oraon is one of the remarkable communities. Their number is more than one lakh and they live in the 16 districts of the north Bengal. So, as the citizen of Bangladesh, to know their nature of political participation is an imperative.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the 'Nature of the political participation of the Oraon community of Barind in Bangladesh.' Almost all of the Oraon community people live in the villages with other communities including the Bangalies. As compared with others, they are a little bit indifferent on political participation and they do not realize the importance of their individual vote. Therefore, to know their political participation is the demand of the present era. This thesis describes different aspects related with their political participation; nature of their leadership, participation in local politics, participation in national politics, pattern of their political party choosing and finally whether there any political discrimination is prevailing as compared with others of the country.

The study is based on data of two Oraon inhabited villages of Brind in Bangladesh based on Ninth national parliamentary election of 2008 and union council election of 2011. Against this background, the research study seeks to provide a wide description of how the political participation of the Oraon community people in the local as well as the national politics is. To investigate these questions, I employ both qualitative and quantitative research within a certain boundary of the Oraon community.

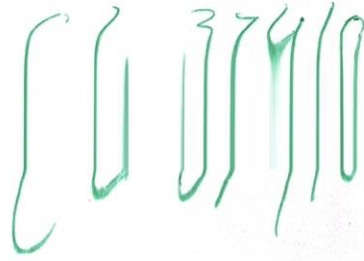
The average literacy rate of the Oraon in Rajshahi district is only 5.6%. Their social status, economic condition as well as annual income is also very negligible. They have a little bit communication as well as the competition with the more advanced people. Overall, they are backward in all aspects as compared with other communities of the country. However, no remarkable development steps for their rapid upliftment have been taken on behalf of the state or GOs and NGOs.

The study reveals that five tiers oriented leadership of the Oraon community is present in Barind. They elect their leaders in democratic way and most of them obey their leaders. Their leadership is conducive for the general Oraon people for procuring their different rights. It is proved that there is an indirect influence of these leaders upon them in local or the national election. It is remarkable that their political participation is better than that of other communities. The political participation of the Oraon male in local election is 96.15% and in the national election is 99.36%. On the other hand, the political participation of the Oraon women in local election is 97.44% and in national election is 98.72%. It is noteworthy that the political participation of the Oraon women is better than that of the Oraon male. All of them obey the election behavior. None of them violates the election law. It is also good sign that in spite of having different types of the influences upon them, approximately 31% Oraon community people change their political party if their chosen political party does not work well for them as well as the nation. At the same time, 47% of them also say that changing political party repeatedly creates the hindrances on the way to the political stability of the country. 40% Oraon people in local and 39% in national politics had no freedom of political activities that is the subject of thinking earlier. Besides; hindrances on the participation in procession and meeting, shortage of ability to vote the chosen candidate, lack of evaluation based on their worthiness in the political party, shortage of the political communication with the local chairman and MP, negation upon the importance of their different opinions, lack of having sitting capacity in a row like other of the political party, victims of different oppression for choosing their own political party, lack of participation in the decision taking process of the government development, shortage of position in local political committees, shortage of empowerment, shortage of free movement and so on are some of the remarkable political discriminations upon them.

The state should take the immediate initiatives to remove the above mentioned short comings of the Oraon community. They have also suggested that the political party should culture the democracy, mitigate the absolute power of the party head, make leadership from the root level, elect or select party head for a certain period of time, need at best 4/5 political parties in the country, include Adibasi in the management and leadership of the political party, perform regular worker conference and party's internal election.

If the state, political party, GOs and NGOs, different agencies of home and abroad, public-spirited persons of the country come forward to co-operate them on their different backward aspects, their entire betterment may be possible that make them educated and economically well to do. As a result, their nature of political participation both in local and national level will be more effective that may bring the entire and comprehensive political development and the nation may get freedom from the political chaotic situation and instability removing all sorts of the unconventional political participation.





Nature of the Political Participation of the Oraon Community of Barind in Bangladesh



Ph.D Dissertation

Researcher

Md. Mahfil Khan
Session: 2009-2010

**Institute of Bangladesh Studies
University of Rajshahi
Rajshahi, Bangladesh**

September 2012

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my boundless gratefulness to the omnipotent who has given me the effort to have a completion of the research. I express my sincere gratitude to my learned supervisor Dr. Md. Ruhul Amin, Professor of Political Science, Rajshahi University for his precious directions, advice and guidelines with care. He is an exemplary, inspiring and dedicated supervisor. Without his encouragement, enduring patience and rigorous attention to detail, I would not have completed this thesis. I expect his affection and guidance in my whole life.

I would like to convey my heartiest thanks and respects to Professor Dr. M Shahidullah, Director, IBS and Professor Dr. M. Zainul Abedin (economics), IBS. I convey my best regards to Dr. Swarochish Sarker, Associate Professor, Dr. M. Mostafa Kamal, Associate Professor, Dr. Zakir Hossen, Associate Professor, Dr. Moh. Najimul Haque, Associate Professor, and Md. Kamruzzaman, Assistant Professor, IBS, Rajshahi University who have given me guidelines on research and lesson on writing skill. At the same time, I convey my heartiest thanks to Md. Abul Kalam Azad, Secretary, Md. Abdus Salam Akan, Assistant Registrar, Md. Monirul Hoque Lenin, Assistant Secretary and other official stuffs of IBS, Rajshahi University.

I am profoundly grateful to my several friends and well-wishers especially those who were always with me giving guidelines, information and solving problems. They are M. Mahamudur Rahman, Associate Professor of Political Science, Rajshahi University, Dr. A H M Ismail Hossen, Dr. Sankar Kumar Kundu, Md. Shahidul Islam, Md. Mahbubur Rahman, Md. Rezaul Karim, Md. Shahidullah, Md. Nazrul Islam, Dr. Bishwas Shahin Ahmed, Md. Al-Mamun and other fellows of IBS.

I am also grateful to the Oraon leaders named Robi Kha Kha, Rampada Sarker, Bhuben Lakrha, Chittya Ranjan Akka and Gopi Hasda, Mokhlechhur Rahman, The Active Computer Centre, officer of ABIK, the Chairmen, Members, UP Secretaries of the Study Areas, and government officials who amidst their busy schedules, went out of their way to make time to be interviewed for this research. I was learnt much from them, value their openness and generosity and respect their dedication to their community. Without their support it would not be possible this thesis.

My special thanks go to my parents and my mother in law, brothers in law, sisters in law and their off springs for their unconditional love and encouragement, to my brothers and sisters for their concern and support.

Finally, I am indebted deeply to my wife, Rozina Ahmed and my off springs Mahi Khan and Nuhairi. They are my spirit for work.

Md. Mahfil Khan
Ph.D Researcher

Glossary

Agua	:	Communicator or Mssenger
Bangladesh Oraon Parhha / Raajee Parhha:		Digari National Council
Baigas	:	Male President
Baiga	:	Female President
Barind	:	Barind is derived from the Sonskrit word 'Brind' that means high land in English.
Be-Lar (Coordinator) Council	:	National Executive Council
Be-Las	:	Male President or Female President in national level
Bhaiyari Parhha	:	Digari District Council
Cabinet Member	:	The member of the organizational tiers of the Oraon community
Chilpi/ Fudna	:	The source of power i.e. these are the symbol of Darmesh, Pachoa A-Lar, and Panch.
Clan	:	A totemic group among the Oraon
Danda Katta/Farir of the Bheloa:		The symbol of the gratefulness
Darmesh, Pachoa A-Lar, and Panch:		The name of their supreme God
Dharti Urbas	:	International or Foreign Affairs Secretary in national level
Digari	:	The name of Oraon organization
Dudh Bhaiya or Digari Parhha	:	Upazila Digari Raja Council/ Digari Upazila Council
Illaqadars	:	Those who had been granted land by the Maharaja of Chhotanagpur for the services they rendered
Jurir	:	General Male or Femal Member
Kakragari	:	One kind of vehicle through which the rustic people transport their local goods
Karhsa Bhandra	:	The Symbol of the constitution of organizational tiers
Lahanti Akhrha	:	It is an organization of the Oraon. Each of the housewives credit the morsel rice from their daily rice for cooking and when it becomes a handsome amount, it is kept in this organization

	through an account that is run by the Ashrai, Gogram Brance, Godagari, Rajshahi.
Lar Edu	: Education, Culture, Research, and Publication Secretary
Lathial	: It means the Chowkidar
Mandal/Maral/Mahato/Headaman:	These are the title of Chief of the society
Nasimon	: One kind of vehicle through which the rustic people move from place to place
Padda Panch	: Digari Village Council
Parechar Urbas	: Publicity Secretary
Parhha	: A confederation of several villages
Parhha Panch	: Digari Union Council
Prodhan	: Next to the position of the headman of the society
Rickshaw	: One kind of vehicle that contains three wheels i.e. try-cycle through which the masses move locally from one place to another place.
Sangi Baigas	: Male President
Sangi Baiga	: Assistant Female President
Sangi Be-Las	: Assistant Male President or Female President in national level
Sangi Tisgu Urbas	: Assistant General Secretary
Tempo	: It is one kind of vehicle too through which the rustic people move from place to place
Tiba Kha-Pu	: Tressurer
Tisgu Urbas	: General Secretary
Van	: One kind of vehicle that contains three wheels through which the local goods are transported from one place to another place

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABIK	—	Adivasi Bikas Kendra
AC	—	Assistant Comissioner
AD	—	Another Development
AFF	—	American Freedom Fight
ASP	—	Ashrai Sathi Prokolpa
AUB	—	Adibashi Unnyan Board
BAL	—	Bangladesh Awamiligue
BC	—	Before Christ
ASA	—	Association of Social Advancement
ASEDO	—	Association for Social Economic Development Organization
ASP	—	Ashrai Sathi Prokolpa
BBMUP	—	Barendra Bahoo Mukhi Unnayan Prokolpa
BNP	—	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BORDA	—	Bangladesh Oraon Research and Development Association
BRAC	—	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CARE	—	Cooperation of American Relief Everywhere
CEO	—	Chief Executive Officer
CS	—	Civil Society
ESS	—	Encyclopedia of Social Science
FGD	—	Focus Group Discussion
FR	—	Frence Revolution
GOs	—	Government Organizations
HSC	—	Higher Secondary Certificate
ICCPR	—	International Convent on Civil and Political Rights
IID	—	International Indegineous Decade
ILO	—	International Labour Organization
IYY	—	International Indegineous Year
IR	—	Industrial Revolution
IT	—	Information Technology
LDCs	—	Least Developed Countries
LE	—	Local Election
LP	—	Local Politics
MDG	—	Millennium Development Goal

MP	—	Member of Parliament
NAP	—	National Adibashi Parishad
NE	—	National Election
NGO	—	Non Government Organization
NP	—	National Politics
OSOST	—	Oraon Social Organization Study Team
PGD	—	Post Graduate Degree
RDA	—	Rajshahi Development Authority
SES	—	Socio-Economic Status
SSC	—	Secondary School Certificate
TNO	—	Thana Nirbahi Officer
TSP	—	Third System Project
UCE	—	Union Council Election
UDHR	—	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNO	—	United Nations Organization
UP	—	Union Parishad
VGD	—	Vulnerable Group Development
VGF	—	Vulnerable Group Fund
WCEFA	—	World Conference on Education For All
WED	—	World English Dictionary
WV	—	World Vision

Map of Bangladesh



Contents

Certificate	i
Declaration	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgement	v
Glossary	vi
Acronyms and Abbreviations	viii
Map of Bangladesh	x
Contents	xi
List of Tables	xvii
List of Figures	xx
List of Maps	xxi
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
1.1 Prelude	1
1.2 Identity of the term 'Barind'	2
1.3 Identity of the Oraon Community.....	5
1.4 History of Political participation of the Oraon Community.....	6
1.4.1 Tana Bhagat Movement	7
1.4.2 Peasant Uprising	8
1.4.3 The Tebhaga Movement in Bengal, 1946-7.....	8
1.4.4 Language Movement in 1952 and the Oraon Community	9
1.4.5 The great Liberation War in 1971 and the Oraon Community.....	11
1.5 Statement of the Problem	12
1.6 Importance of the Study	14
1.7 Study Rationale.....	15
1.7.1 Literature Review	15

1.7.2	Key Terms of the Study	17
1.7.3	Rationality of the Research	19
1.8	General Objective of the Study	19
1.9	Research Approach	20
1.10	Research Design	20
1.11	Feasibility of the Research	30
1.12	Scope and Limitation.....	30
1.13	Chapter Outline.....	31
1.14	Conclusion	32
Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework.....		33
2.1	Introduction	33
2.2	Background of participation.....	35
2.3	Definition of political participation	36
2.4	Who Participate in Politics?.....	38
2.5	Why Do They Participate in Politics?	40
2.6	Bases of Political Participation	41
2.7	Forms of political participation.....	45
2.8	Factors of Political Participation	49
2.9	Importance of the political participation	53
2.10	Conclusion	56
Chapter 3 Socio-economic Condition: The Oraon Community.....		58
3.1	Introduction	58
3.2	A Brief Description of the Study Area.....	58
3.3	Household Size and Voters for Per Household	66
3.4	Marital Status.....	66
3.5	Education and Occupation of the Oraon Community	68
3.6	Religion.....	72
3.7	Skillness of the Oraon Community.....	73
3.8	Family Type and Houses	74
3.9	Sanitation, Health and Drinking Water	77
3.10	Land.....	79
3.11	Pattern of Crop Production of the Respondents.....	81
3.12	Number of Loan Taker among the Respondents from Different NGOs	81

3.13	Annual Income and Expenditure of the Respondents	83
3.14	Activities of Some Selected Institutions and 6 no. Matikata Union	86
3.15	Findings	87
3.16	Conclusion	90
Chapter 4 Nature of the Leadership of the Oraon Community		93
4.1	Introduction	93
4.2	Perspective of the Leadership	94
4.3	Meaning of the Leader & the Leadership	95
4.4	Definitions of the Leadership	97
4.5	The Democratic Leadership and the Oraon Community Leaders	99
4.6	Constitution of the Oraon Community in Bangladesh	101
4.7	The Nature of Electing or Selecting the Leaders of Padda Panch	107
4.8	Necessary Qualifications for the Leader to be Elected	109
4.9	The Leader and the General people of the Society of the Oraon Community	111
4.10	Activities of the Padda Panch Leaders of the Oraon Community	113
4.11	Cooperation of the General Oraon to the Cabinet Members	118
4.12	Timing, Participation and Discussion in the Meeting	120
4.13	Cooperation of the Auxiliaries to the Headman	121
4.14	Expectation to be the Headman	121
4.15	Cabinet Members as Political Supporter and Relationship with Others	123
4.16	General People & Liking the Leadership of the Cabinet Members	124
4.17	Activities in One's Absence of Cabinet Members	127
4.18	Problems in Election Period	127
4.19	Opportunity of Protesting against Partial and in Illegal Activities	128
4.20	Leadership of the Women	130
4.21	Importance of the Opinions of the Women	132
4.22	Opportunity of the women to be Elected or Selected	133
4.23	Leadership of the Headman and the Women	134
4.24	Influence on women empowerment	135
4.25	Way of Better Leadership	135
4.26	Findings	135
4.27	Conclusion	140

Chapter 5 Political Participation in Local Politics	141
5.1 Introduction	141
5.2 Participation in Local Politics of the Oraon Community	142
5.3 Way of Participation in Local Politics.....	144
5.4 Role of the General Members Regarding the Mandating of the Candidate	146
5.5 Necessary Qualities for the Candidate	147
5.6 Influence upon the Voters	148
5.7 Taking Part as Member Candidate.....	149
5.8 Pattern of Going to Vote.....	151
5.9 Alluring Proposal to the Voters and Causes of Giving Vote	151
5.10 Demand of the Voters	152
5.11 Devoted Worker and Position in Political Party	155
5.12 Participation in Political Discussion	156
5.13 Participation of the Women as Voter in Union Council Election	158
5.14 Findings	163
5.15 Conclusion	168
Chapter 6 Political Participation in National Politics	169
6.1 Introduction	169
6.2 Way of Participation in the National Election of 2008	170
6.3 Causes of Giving Vote to the Candidate	172
6.4 Role of the General People in Standing the Candidate in Election.....	172
6.5 Basic Worthiness of the Candidate	173
6.6 Influence upon the General Oraon People	174
6.7 Style of Going to Vote the Candidate	176
6.8 Alluring Proposal to the Oraon People	176
6.9 Demand of the Voters	177
6.10 Vote Worthy Environment in National Election	179
6.11 Problems in Voter List.....	180
6.12 Objection against Govt. Administrators	181
6.13 Opinion regarding the Result of Vote	182
6.14 Influence of the Political Party or Alliance	182
6.15 Justification of the Mega Political Alliance.....	183
6.16 Action of Surrounding Environment.....	184

6.17	Voting Behavior.....	185
6.18	Esteemation upon the Religion Oriented Political Party	186
6.19	Opinion Regarding the Free Fair and Transparent National Election	187
6.20	Causes of Doing Politics and Better Political Participation	188
6.21	Participation of the Women in the National Election.....	188
6.22	Findings	191
6.23	Conclusion	196
Chapter 7 Pattern of Political Party Choosing		198
7.1	Introduction	198
7.2	Pattern of Choosing Political Party of the Oraon in Bangladesh.....	201
7.3	Political Party Changing	205
7.4	Fast Changing Political Party and Hindrances	207
7.5	Suggestion Regarding the Chosen Political Party.....	208
7.6	Trust upon the Chosen Political Party	210
7.7	Political Party choosing for the women.....	212
7.8	Findings	215
7.9	Conclusion	219
Chapter 8 Pattern of Political Discrimination		220
8.1	Introduction	220
8.2	Direct and Indirect Discrimination.....	221
8.3	Discrimination of Bangladesh vs. Other Countries Perspective.....	222
8.4	Freedoms of Political Activities.....	223
8.5	Freely Participation in Procession and Meeting	224
8.6	Freely Voting to the Chosen Candidate.....	227
8.7	Evaluation of the Oraon Based on Worthiness.....	228
8.8	Political Communication	231
8.9	Importance of the Opinions	233
8.10	Sitting Capacity of the Oraon Like Other Leaders	234
8.11	Victms of Oppression	235
8.12	Decision Taking in the Govt. Development	236
8.13	Position in the Different Political Committees Based on Will	238
8.14	Obstacles on the Way to Political Participation	239
8.15	Political Right of the Oraon in Local / National Politics	240

8.16	Participation in Leadership.....	241
8.17	Gotten Opportunity of the Oraon from the Govt. Offices	243
8.18	Importance of the Empowerment	244
8.19	Victims of Political Zealousy.....	246
8.20	Way of Freedom of Discrimination	248
8.21	Poiltical Discrimination toward the Oraon Women.....	248
8.22	Findings	255
8.23	Conclusion	262
Chapter 9 Summery, Recomendation and Conclusion.....		264
9.1	Summery	264
9.1.1	Chapter One: Introduction	264
9.1.2	Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework	264
9.1.3	Chapter three: Socio-economic Condition: The Oraon Community	265
9.1.4	Chapter Four: Nature of the Leadership of the Oraon Community	266
9.1.5	Chapter Five: Political Participation in Local Politics.....	268
9.1.6	Chapter Six: Political Participation in National Politics.....	269
9.1.7	Chapter Seven: Pattern of Political Party Choosing.....	270
9.1.8	Chapter Eight: Pattern of Political Discrimination	271
9.2	Recommendations	272
9.3	Conclusion	277
Bibliography.....		282
Appendices		296
Appendix-1 Questionnaire		296
Appendix-2 Photographs and Natural Pictures of the Political Participation, Cultural and Social Events of the Study Area		303

List of Tables

Table 1.1	Table of Sample Distribution and Procedure	27
Table 3.1	Main Occupation of the Respondents	70
Table 3.2	Subsidiary Occupation of the Respondents	71
Table 3.3	Seasonal Occupation of the Respondents	72
Table 3.4	Skillness of the Oraon Community	74
Table 3.5	Family Type	75
Table 3.6	Number of House	76
Table 3.7	Type of Houses	77
Table 3.8	Health Status of the Respondents	78
Table 3.9	Sources of Drinking Water	79
Table 3.10	Use of Cultivable Land	79
Table 3.11	Ownership of the Land	80
Table 3.12	Pattern of Crop Production of the Respondents	81
Table 3.13	Annual Expenditure of the Respondents	85
Table 3.14	Annual Deficit of the Respondents	85
Table 3.15	Annual Savings of the Respondents	86
Table 4.1	Opportunity of the General People of being the Leader of the Society	111
Table 4.2	Accepting co-operation of the general people by the Headman or Mondal or Moral	118
Table 4.3	Leadership of the Headman & Conduciveness for the People	126
Table 4.4	Importance of the Opinions of the Women	132
Table 4.5	Opportunity of the women of being elected as well as selected	134
Table 4.6	Conducive Leadership of the Headman or His Cabinet Members ...	134

Table 5.1	Participation in Local Politics as well as Local Election.....	144
Table 5.2	Role of the General Members Regarding the Mandating of the Candidate in Union Council Election.....	146
Table 5.3	Taking Part in Union Council Election as Member.....	150
Table 5.4	Proposal of Anything to the Voters on behalf of Candidate in Union Council Election.....	151
Table 5.5	Demand of the Voters to the Candidate for Vote during Union Council Election.....	153
Table 5.6	Participation in Political Discussion among the Community Members.....	156
Table 5.7	Participation of the Women as Voter in Union Council Election.....	158
Table 5.8	Participation of the Women in Meeting and Procession.....	159
Table 5.9	Domination of the Dependency upon the Women in Respect of Voting During Union Council Election.....	162
Table 6.1	Role of the General People of the Oraon in Standing the Candidate in Election.....	173
Table 6.2	Whether the Oraon General People Felt Vote Worthy Environment in National Election.....	180
Table 7.1	Influence upon the Oraon in the arena of Political Party Choosing..	204
Table 7.2	Changeing in Political Party in the arena of Voting.....	205
Table 7.3	Hindrance in the Political Stability for the Fast Changing of Political Party.....	208
Table 7.4	Suggestion upon the Prevailing Political Party System of the Country.....	211
Table 7.5	Dimention of Political Activities of the Women.....	212
Table 7.6	Dimension of Priority Baseds on Opinion of the Women.....	214
Table 8.1	Freely Participation in Procession and Meeting in Local Politics.....	225
Table 8.2	Freely Participation in Procession and Meeting of the Oraon in National Politics.....	225
Table 8.3	Dimension of Freely Participation in Procession and Meeting in Local Politics.....	226

Table 8.4	Dimension of Freely Participation in Procession and Meeting in National Politics	226
Table 8.5	Evaluation Based on Worthiness by the Political Party in Local Politics	229
Table 8.6	Evaluation Based on Worthiness by the Political Party in national Politics	229
Table 8.7	Sitting Capacity Like Other Leaders in a Row in Local or National Politics	234
Table 8.8	Victims of Oppression for the Sake of Choosing Their Own Political Party	235
Table 8.9	Position in the Different Local Political Committees Based on Will ..	238
Table 8.10	Enjoying the Political Right of the Oraon in Local / National Politics	240
Table 8.11	Victims of Political Zealousy in the arena of Religion and Society in Local/National Level	246
Table 8.12	Victims for being Adibasi in Local/National Level.....	247
Table 8.13	Torture as a Woman for Choosing Own Political Party in Local/National Level	251
Table 8.14	Ability for Performing the Chosen Political Party in Accordance with Their Will in Local / National Level	252
Table 8.15	Male Persons as the Hindrance on the Way to the Oraon Women's Empowerment in Local /National Politics	253
Table 8.16	Influence upon the Political Decision Taking Process of the Oraon Women in Local /National Politics.....	254

List of Figures

Figure 3.1	Marital Status of the Respondents of the Concerned Study Area	67
Figure 3.2	Educational Qualification	69
Figure 3.3	Religion of the Respondents.....	73
Figure 3.4	Sanitation	77
Figure 3.5	NGOs Loan in Operation among the Respondents.....	82
Figure 3.6	Annual Income of the Respondents.....	84
Figure 4.1	Karhsa Bhanda.....	103
Figure 4.2	Organizational Flag of the Oraon Community.....	103
Figure 4.3	Pattern of Electing or Selecting the Leaders of Padda Panch Executive Council.....	109
Figure 4.4	Selection the Co-operative Persons through the General Meeting ..	120
Figure 4.5	Women Leadership as the Headman or other Members of the Society.....	131
Figure 5.1	Influence upon the Voters during Local Election	148
Figure 6.1	Participation in the National Election of 2008.....	171
Figure 6.2	Influence upon the General Oraon People.....	175
Figure 6.3	Demand of the Voters.....	178
Figure 6.4	Whether Justified the Mega Political Alliance for Political Participation in the National Election	183
Figure 7.1	Suggestion Regarding the Chosen Political Party	209
Figure 7.2	Trust upon the Chosen Political Party.....	210
Figure 8.1	Gotten Opportunity of the Oraon from the Govt. Local /National Offices	243
Figure 8.2	Free Movement of the Oraon Women in Local /National Politics	252
Figure 8.3	Dimension of the Hindrance of Male Persons in Local /National Politics	254

List of Maps

Map 3.1	Rajshahi District.....	59
Map 3.2	Godagari Upazila.....	60
Map 3.3	6 No. Matikata Union.....	61
Map 3.4	Chowduar.....	63
Map 3.5	Gopalpur.....	65

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Prelude

The term 'participation' is treated differently that can play a significant role in any arena of social activities including economic, political, managerial, religious, cultural or familial. People's participation ensures productive and durable changes. Participation may also be conceived of as human right in the context of equality and group rights ensure equal and full participation of a designated group of a society in any activity. In democracy, every citizen does not contribute directly to the governing of the state. The people participating in election elect the representatives who make decisions on behalf of them. For this reason, political participation is very significant. There are many forms of political participation in democratic system; voting, demonstrating, writing to the representatives, joining a pressure group etc. Generally political participation means any voluntary activity of the person for influencing the governmental decision making. The basic subject matter of the political participation is the political activity within a political party or an organization which regards itself as a pressure group.

In accordance with the census of 2001, the total population of Bangladesh is 123851120. Among them, urban population is 23.1% and rural population is 76.9%.¹ As the ethnic group, the Bengali are 98% and including its tribal people and non Bengali Muslims are 2% of the total population according to Bangladesh statistics of 1998.² 77% of the total populations live in the villages.³ About 30 lacks tribal people of approximately 45 tribes live in this country with this massive rural people. There are two types of tribal people in Bangladesh; the plain land's tribal people⁴ and the hill tract's tribal people⁵. About 33 tribes who live in the plain land are called plain land's tribal people and the rest of 12 tribes who live in the hill tract are called hill tract's tribal people. The plain land tribal people live in 16 districts of north Bengal.

¹ *Population Census 2001* (National Report, Provisional), Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Planning Division, Ministry of Planning.

² www.answers.com/topic/bangladesh, Accessed on July 24, 2010.

³ *Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh* (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 20th Edition, 2000), p. xxiii.

⁴ The plain land's tribal people of northwestern belt are the Santal, the Oraon, the Mahato, the Mahali, the Mundari, the Paharia, the Pahan, the Sing, the Rajoar, the Lohar, the Turi, the Murari, and Koar etc. Source: Mohammad Abdul Jalil, *Uttar Banger Adivasi Lokojibon O Lokosahitya: Oraon* (Dhaka: Bishya Sahitya Bhoban, 2001), p. 41.

⁵ The hill tracts tribal people especially of Chitgong are the Chakma, the Tanchonga, the Mog or Marma, the Kuki, the Lusai, the Murong, the Tipra, the Senduj, the Pankho, the Bonojogi and the Khumi. Source: Abdus Sattar, *Auronya Jonopode* (Dhaka: Nowroje Sahitya Sambhar, 2007), Acknowledgement page.

The Oraon are the plain land tribal people and the number of the Oraon in Bangladesh is approximately one lakh and fifteen thousand. In accordance with the census of 1991, the number of their population was shown only 11,296. But according to their claim, their actual population is more than one lakh.⁶ As an upazila, the number of the Oraon in Godagari, Rajshahi is more than any other Oraon inhabited upazila in Bangladesh. There, the number of the Oraon people is 6638.⁷ The tribes in Rajshahi district are 17. Among them the Santal, the Oraon, the Mahali, the Mundari, Paharhia and the Mahato are remarkable. The number of the population of Rajshahi District is 11, 90914 and among them, the number of the tribal people is 35578 which is 2.99% of the total population.⁸ These tribal groups are playing a significant role for the national development and the advancement of the country. The Oraon community of this country is not out of them. They along with the Bangalies actively participated in the different local and national rebellions and upsurges from the struggle against the British to the liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971.⁹ So it is crying need to know the nature of the political participation of the Oraon community and to comprehend the nature of their political activities from the perspective of the national interest.

1.2 Identity of the term 'Barind'

The archeologists opine that the entire Bangladesh is a Delta. In the pre-historian era, the entire belt was the bottomland of the ocean. In the time immemorial, this Delta named the Vangabhumi including the Himalaya slowly as well as gradually grew upward from the downward of the ocean and after that, the human civilization¹⁰ was developed. The Himalaya belts and its bottom lands at the very beginning grew upward from the downward of the ocean and the Northern part of Bangladesh was one of them. After that, the Southeast part of Bangladesh and at the extreme last,

⁶ Mazharul Islam Taru, "Oraon", *Adibasi Jono Gosthi* (the indigenous people), ed. by Mesba Kamal, Zahidull Islam, Sugata Chakma (Bangladesh Asiatic Society, 2007), p. 222.

⁷ Mazharul Islam Taru, *Bangladesher Adibasi Sangskriti* (The Culture of the Indigenous People in Bangladesh) (Dhaka: Katha Prokash, 2008), p. 92.

⁸ Mohammad Abdul Jalil, *Bangladesher Santal: Somaj o Sangakriti* (Dhaka: Bangla Academy, 2003), p. 91.

⁹ Mesbah Kamal, Ishan Chochroborti, and Jobaida Nasrin, *Nijbhume Parabasi: Uttarbanger Adibasir Prantikata Discourse* (Alien in Own Land: A Discourse on Marginalization of Indigenous People in North Bengal) (Dhaka: Dibyaprakash, 1st Edition 2006), p. 27.

¹⁰ It is very difficult to say from when the human civilization was inaugurated in Barind tract. The historians have found out a symptom of a developed civilization of approximately 1500 years back of the birth of Jesus Christ from the 'Mound' (Dhibi) of the king of Pandua which was situated on the southern bank of the river of Ajoy in the district of Bordhoman of West Bengal. It is noteworthy that in that time the Eastern India was aryanized. About most of the historians opine that this aryanization was spread out all over the Bengal including the Barind tract. The evidence of human civilization was got in the extreme last segment of the Vedic era or its immediate later when the Aryan colony or the civilization was spread out. The elaborate information as to it is available in the Bramhonnya literature like Puran, Mohavarat and so on. Source: Soiod Md. Mozaharul Islam, "Barendra Auncholer Lokosongit": *Alkap*, An Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation (Rajshahi University: Folklore Department, 2000), p. 9.

the low lands of the Southern part of Bangladesh grew up from the ocean bed. In accordance with this information, the extreme high and ancient land of Bangladesh is the 'Barind' which is proved by the history.¹¹ Barind is the synonym of Barindah, Varendra and Varendri, which is proved by the epigraphic and the literary records. Epigraphic sources have been got through the inscription of 967 A.D. in which a Brahmana immigrant has been described as Gauda Cudamant and Varendra dyotkarina, in the Telchar Grant of Gayada Tunga Deva, in the Silimpur Stone Inscription (in the Bogra district) of Prahasa and the Kamault Copper Plate of Vaidyadeva, king of Kamrupa, in the Tarpandighi (in the Dinajpur district) and Madhainagar (in the Pabna district), Copper Plate Grants of Laskmana Sena and in the Deopara (in the Rajshahi district) inscription and the literary sources have been got through Sandhaya Kara Nandi of the 12th century A.D. who mentioned Varendri as the Janakabho or the father land of the Polas, Minhaj- E- Siraj who came to Lakhnawati in about 1243 A. D. called the eastern wing of the Ganges as the Barind or Barindah, Lama Tartanatha of the 16th century A.D. mentioned that the Varendra was subjugated by Deva Pala in 850 A.D.¹² Besides, the term 'Varendra' or 'Varendri' has been used in the Kulajt and the Sangskrit literatures and even in Tabaqat-i-Nasiri.¹³ The geologists anticipate that the land of Barind was formed approximately 25000 years ago.¹⁴ So far as the knowledge goes the ancient Bengal was divided into different parts named the Pundra, the Gauda, the Rarho, the Sombho, the Bozro (Bromho), the Tamrolipi, the Samothot, the Horikel, the Bongo and so on and each of these parts was the separate kingdom.¹⁵ Among these, the Pundra with its crescendo turned into the Pundrabardhana in the fifth and sixth centuries and also turned into a remarkable administrative department named Bhukti of the empire of Gupto. This Pondrobordhon is also the synonym of the Barind.¹⁶ It is one of the traditional names among the ancient habitations of Bangladesh. Its relationship with the history of ancient Bengal is very close. The name of Barind which was mentioned as the 'Father land' of the Pal kings in the epic of 'Ramcharitam' by Sandhaya Kara Nandi and the name of Barind was also seen from the 9th or 10th century.¹⁷ In accordance with the research and the consideration of the history, Rajshahi, Chapainababgonj, Noagaon, Natore, Bogra, Rangpur, Dinajpur, and a small segment of Murshidabad and Maldoho districts of West Bengal, the belt consist of Drjiling and KuzBihar are treated as the 'Barind tract'.¹⁸ In accordance with

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Pp. 8-9.

¹² A.K.M. Yaqub Ali, *Aspect of Society and Culture of the Varendra, 1200-1576 A.D* (Rajshahi: Shalimar, 1998), Pp. 39-40.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Md. Abdul Karim, "Barendrer Koiborto Bidroho o Akti Bismrito Audhaya", *Bangladesh Asiatic Society Patrika*, 27th Volume (Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 2009), p. 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Pp. 1-2.

¹⁷ A K M Yaqub Ali, *Varendra Anchaley Musslim Itihas-Oitijho* (Muslim History and Heritage of Varendra) (Dhaka: Somoy Prakashan, 2002), p. 22.

¹⁸ Soiod Md. Mozaharul Islam, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

Sandhaya Kara Nandi, the royal poet of 12th century stated the riverian belts of Ganges in West (Mahanonda) and the Korotoa in East as the 'Varendri' (Boshudhashiro) and Pandronagore (Varendra Mondal Churamoni).¹⁹ He also stated that the greater Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Bogra, and even may be Pabna (Padumba) are included in Barind and praised that Varendri was the foremost place of the earth and Paundravardhana was its crest-jewel.²⁰ It is assumed that Varendra formed a component unit of the Gauda or Lakhnawati kingdom.²¹ Later on, Minhaj-i-Shiraj, the great historian uttered this Barin / Barind against the terms 'Varendra' or 'Varendri'. 'Barin' is the Persian word which means dryness. In the true sense, the Northwestern part of Rajshahi is dry and due to the consecutive dryness, this belt is offering the alarm of desertification. The word 'Barin' is very popular and familiar to the inhabitants of Barind.²² The term 'Barin / Barind' was found in the Ramayona of Krittibas, the renowned poet of fifteenth century. On the other hand, Mr. Raverty who is the translator and the annotator of the 'Tabakat-i-Nasiri' opine that Barind is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Brind' that means high land in English.²³ The land of Barind is higher and drier than any other lands of Bangladesh. In the meantime, the support of this meaning was got in the currently invented Arabic Shilalipi during the reign of Sultan Nasir Uddin Mahmud Shah (1442-1459) in the village Navagram of Tarash Upazila in Pabna.²⁴ The exact territorial jurisdiction of the Barind is very difficult to determine.²⁵ So far the knowledge goes; the mother land of the Bangla Language and the Bangla Literature is this Barin / Barind. Kanhupa, Shobaripa, Sorhupa, Luipa and so on, the writers of the Charjapada which is the ancient sample of the Bangla Language were the inhabitants of this Barind land.²⁶ The terms 'Barind, Varendra' and 'Varendri' are found in different sources and at the same time, it is difficult to say which of these terms emerged first and which of these came last. As to this, according to B.C. Sen, the term 'Varendri' was found from the epigraphically sources and the term of Varendra seems to have been later innovation, used mainly in the genealogical works, according to A.K. Maltra, the terms 'Barind, Barinda and Varendra' are the corrupted form of Varendri and according to N.N. Vasu, Barind was the earlier form which was later on transformed into its pure Sanskritized form of Varendri or Varendra and he added that over all parts of Rajshahi district, the old alluvial high land of late rite formation is called Barind which was Sanskritized by the Sena period and got the circulation.²⁷

¹⁹ *Ibid.*,

²⁰ Md. Abdul Karim, *op.cit.*, p. 2.

²¹ A.K.M. Yaqub Ali, *Aspect of Society and Culture of the Varendra*, p. 39.

²² A K M Yaqub Ali, *op.cit.*, p. 23.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁶ Md. Abdul Karim, *op.cit.*, Pp. 2-3.

²⁷ A.K.M. Yaqub Ali, *op.cit.*, Pp. 39-40.

1.3 Identity of the Oraon Community

The Oraon is one of the major plain land tribal communities in Bangladesh. There is no other name to identify them. The meaning of the term *Oraon* is yet unknown and unclear.²⁸ The Oraon are spelled differently as the Aurang, the Oran, the Oram, the O rao, the Uraon, the Urao and the Urang. There are contradictory opinions among the scholars of anthropology about the identity of the Oraon community. Generally the origin of the Oraon community is relatively obscure but it is clear that in past, their livelihood in the past clustered in and around the forests. At times, for food deficits, they used to get engaged in farming.²⁹ Anthropologically they are Austric and according to linguistic doctrine, they are Dravidian. Modern anthropologists opine that the Oraon, the Malpahari and the Santal are Proto-Australoid category. But their physical structure, dark brown complexion and semi curly black hair proved that they are Dravidian category.³⁰ The Oraon are the second largest tribal group of Dravidian category in India numbering 1,133,000 in accordance with the census of 1961.³¹ In Bangladesh, they are also the second largest tribal community of plain land. They call themselves Kurukh (Ploughman) in accordance with one of the name of their mythical hero-king Karakh.³² The name of their language is also Kurukh which is a language of Dravidian group. Some bodies say that there is no Alphabet of their language and their literature is cultured verbally. They also think that their Alphabet has been lost with the pressure of the historic cruelty.³³ But the researcher has found the book of the Alphabet of their language.³⁴ Kurukh belts of Barind in Bangladesh are Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, western part of Noagaon district and special part of Rangpur district.³⁵ Some of them are also called Sadri.³⁶ The name of their language is also Sadri which is included in the Indo-Irani language group, is comparatively simple to utter.³⁷ Sadri belts are a special segment of Rangpur district, Gaibanda,

²⁸ Abul Barkat et al., *Life and Land of Adibashis: Land Disposition and Alienation of Adibashis in the Plain Districts of Bangladesh* (Dhaka: Pathak Shamabesh Book, 2008), p. 165.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³⁰ Mazharul Islam Taru, *op.cit.*, p. 93.

³¹ Clarence Maloney, "Tribes of Bangladesh and Synthesis of Banglaid Culture", *Tribal Culture in Bangladesh*, ed. by Mahmud Shah Qureshi, IBS Seminar Volume (Rajshahi: IBS, University of Rajshahi, 1984), p. 19.

³² K.N. Sahay, "Oraon", *Encyclopedic Profile of Indian Tribes*, ed. by Sachhidananda R.R. Prasad, Vol. iii (L-P) (New Delhi: Discover Publishing House, 1996), p. 771.

³³ Dr. Mazharul Islam Taru, "Oraon Somprodaer Shikhha o Songskriti", *Sthanio Itihas*, 1st Volume (Rajshahi Heritage: Archives of Bangladesh History Trust, 2008), p. 62.

³⁴ Soinda, Narayan Oraon, KAILGA: *Tolodong Siko Mne Kurukh Probeshika*, (Ranchi: Sattya Bharati, 1998), Pp. 1-39.

³⁵ Mazharul Islam Taru, *op.cit.*, p. 97.

³⁶ Budla Urao, "Oraons Among the Bangladeshi Aborigines", *Tribal Culture in Bangladesh*, ed. by Mahmud Shah Qureshi, IBS Seminar Volume (Rajshahi: IBS, University of Rajshahi, 1984), p. 131.

³⁷ Dr. Mazharul Islam Taru, *op.cit.*, p. 62.

Bogra, Joypurhat, Sirajgonj, Natore, Rajshahi, Chapainababgonj and eastern part of Noagaon district.³⁸ Kurukh as a language is original and unmixed but Sadri is the conglomerate of different languages of Kurukh, Orya, Urdu, Hindi, French and Bangla. The dissimilarity between the Kurukh and the Sadri language is moulding the obstacles among the Oraon community. Though there is a difference between them in arena of conversation, their basic style of conversation is almost similar with each other. Besides, the Bangla as the third language is contributing a prime role among these two types of the Oraon community. All of them can speak and understand the Bangla language fluently. As a result, there is no problem in the arena of conversation among the Oraon of different belts of Bangladesh.³⁹ They are divided into three groups; I. Hathsangia, II. Upersangia, III. Katrio. There are 68 clans in the Oraon community.⁴⁰ Their surnames are Kachhua, Toppo, Tirki, Bandra, Kishpotta, Baroar, Dhanoar, Kujur, Minj, Back and Kawa.⁴¹ The Oraon being allured by the then British government, the Zamindars and petty Zamindars of North-Bengal came to this territory with the Munda and the Pahan from Orissa, Chotanagpur, hill tracts of Rajmahal due to make the fallow land into the cultivable land weeding the jungles in the seventeenth to eighteenth century.⁴² They also believe that they came from Ranchi, in southern Bihar.⁴³ The Oraon physically are characterized by dark brown complexion, even and blunt nose, thick lip, round skull in shape, black and semi curly hair, black eyes and medium stature.⁴⁴ They are patrilineal and like other general people of the country, the son of their family inherits his father's title, gotra and property.⁴⁵

1.4 History of Political participation of the Oraon Community

The Oraon are very significant segment of the tribal community in Northwestern part of Bangladesh. Though they were very few in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in this territory, now a remarkable number of the Oraon live here and their number is more than one lakh. They are very bright for their own behaviors, social customs and traditions. They have also the history of a lot of struggles and the upsurges. They are very patriot in spite of having their set back on education. They have also name and fame as a liberal community.⁴⁶ Some of the struggles and the upsurges of the Oraon community are stated below.

³⁸ Mazharul Islam Taru, *op.cit.*, p. 97.

³⁹ Mohammad Abdul Jalil, *op.cit.*, p. 44.

⁴⁰ ICDP- KARITAS Dinajpur, *Gothantantra: Bangladesh Oraon Parhha* (Constitution: Bangladesh Oraon Council) (Dinajpur: KARITAS, 2008), p. 7.

⁴¹ Budla Urao, *op.cit.*, Pp. 131-132.

⁴² Mohammad Abdul Jalil, *op.cit.*, p. 43.

⁴³ Budla Urao, *op.cit.*, p. 131.

⁴⁴ Mohammad Abdul Jalil, *op.cit.*, Pp. 43-44.

⁴⁵ Budla Urao, *op.cit.*, p. 132.

⁴⁶ Dr. Mazharul Islam Taru, *op.cit.*, p. 58.