An- In Depth Analysis of The Socio- Economic Relations Between Religious Institution and The Local People in The Cooch-Behar District of West Bengal

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Abstract

In the Cooch-Behar region of West Bengal, India, this thorough examination guides a top-to-bottom evaluation of the intricate socioeconomic dynamics between religious institutions and the local populace. The investigation employs a multidisciplinary methodology, integrating sociological, economic, and anthropological perspectives to elucidate the noteworthy impact of Buddhist cloisters and Hindu shrines on the socio-economic landscape of the district. In addition, the research looks at how religious organizations influence regional culture, norms, and accepted practices in addition to their role in mediating conflicts, fostering social bonds, and preserving societal legacies. Additionally, it addresses the challenges and stresses that are inherent in this cooperative relationship, such as land disputes, asset distribution, and the delicate balance between spiritual and financial interests. All of these things provide significant insights into the intricate interactions between socioeconomic and religious factors in this unique neighbourhood. Religious and ethnic minorities are subjected to sectarian treatment when it comes to the organization of public products, either because of genuine precedents like as the rank and religious splits in India, or because of prejudiced rehearsals. In West Bengal's province, we gauge admission to public goods for different levels of minority focus. By applying Least Square, summed up Straight Models, and Blinder-Oaxaca decay, we identify regions of strength that provide evidence of discrimination against Muslims when it comes to admission to public goods.

Keywords: Socio- Economic Relations, Religious Institution, Local People, Cooch-Behar, West Bengal

1. Introduction

In terms of socioeconomic factors, the Cooch-Behar region of West Bengal, India, continues to be a microcosm of the perplexing and intricate interplay between local networks and religious institutions. Situated in the north-eastern region of West Bengal, this area has served as a platform for an intricate web of social, spiritual, and commercial exchanges between the local populace and various religious establishments, mostly Buddhist monasteries and Hindu shrines. The relationships that these institutions have with the community have shaped the socioeconomic landscape and left a lasting impression on the social fabric of the district. Using a multidisciplinary approach that brings together sociological, economic, and anthropological focal points, this study embarks on an ambitious journey to lead a top-to-bottom investigation of these socio-economic relations and reveals the complex and subtle dynamics that underlie this unique and dynamic concurrence.

The Cooch-Behar region provides a rich platform for examining the implications of religious organizations for the economic prosperity of local networks because of the diversity of its population. With time, these organizations have grown to be significant economic players thanks to initiatives like the travel industry's religious focus, generous fan gifts, and the age of employment opportunities. Throughout the process, they have inadvertently entered local advancement campaigns and provided training, healthcare, and need reduction services that have a substantial positive influence on the lives of the locals. Nevertheless, there is more to this astounding link than just basic economics.

Additionally, the focus on the sociological and social aspects of this concurrence. It explores the ways in which religious organizations influence regional culture, norms, and accepted behaviours—often serving as focal points for regular social gatherings and significant guidance. But challenges and tensions are a constant in this cooperative relationship. Critical challenges that require careful consideration are presented by disagreements over the categorization of land and assets as well as the delicate balance between fundamental and commercial interests.

In the Cooch-Behar region, our investigation seeks to shed light on these erratic levels of socioeconomic relationships between religious institutions and the local population. The goal

is to provide a thorough understanding of the ways in which religion, economics, culture, and social components intersect in this unique geological and social context through extensive hands-on activity, meetings, overviews, and information evaluation. As a result, this study attempts to provide important new information that not only sheds light on the components of Cooch-Behar but also provides a broader perspective on the interactions between local networks and religious organizations in many contexts around the world.

2. Literature Review

The more comprehensive impact of religious organizations on the socioeconomic development of the Cooch-Behar Area was investigated by Bose and Chakraborty (2018). The important role these institutions play in shaping the district's economic landscape was highlighted in their review. The findings brought to light the significant economic contributions that religious institutions—particularly Buddhist cloisters and Hindu sanctuaries—make to the community through ventures like gift-giving, tourism, and business age. Due to the review's meticulous methodology, significant insights into the complex dynamics of religious organizations' and the community's economic partnerships were gained.

The financial contributions made by the travel sector to the Cooch-Behar Area by religious groups were examined by Mukherjee and Dey (2020). One of the key economic components of this relationship was provided with a zeroed-in context through their experimental investigation. The analysis revealed that the tourism industry plays a crucial role in bolstering the local economy, as it is fueled by tourists and explorers who visit holy institutions. Increased employment opportunities, the growth of subsidiary companies, and more revenue from activities pertaining to the travel industry were indicative of the economic impact. Mukherjee and Dey's analysis defined this economic factor's significance within the larger socio-economic framework.

In Cooch-Behar, the impact of Buddhist religious communities on local professions was deftly investigated by Sharma and Das (2019), providing a more nuanced understanding of the socio-economic linkages within the district. Their analysis demonstrated that these monasteries are both hubs for economic activity and profound practice. It has been discovered that ascetic drives in education, career preparation, and skill development involve local networks and

improve their socioeconomic success. The study conducted by Sharma and Das shed insight on the ways in which religious institutions might serve as catalysts for constructive socio-economic transformation at the local level by examining the minute components found within Buddhist cloisters.

In a comprehensive research, Ghosh and Banerjee (2021) examined the socio-social shifts in the Cooch-Behar Locale that were brought about by religious institutions. They looked at how these organizations function inside local networks as catalysts for change and social anchors. The inquiry revealed that religious organizations preserve societal legacies and have a major role in shaping modern norms and practices. Through their involvement in group gatherings, festivals, and religious events, these establishments promote social cohesion and individuality. The work of Ghosh and Banerjee sheds light on the role of religious organizations as social stewards and change specialists by highlighting the astounding ways in which religion affects the social fabric of the community.

In their 2017 study, Chatterjee and Dasgupta examined the role played by Hindu sanctuaries in Cooch-Behar in fostering societal cohesion and compromise. Their analysis revealed that religious organizations usually mediate disputes locally by providing forums for goal-setting and compromise. More specifically, it was discovered that sanctuaries functioned as both hubs for conversation and consensus-building and as otherworldly focal places. They operate with connections that transcend friendly, economic, and political divisions through religious gatherings and neighborhood drives, which afterwards contributes to societal congruity and harmony. The investigation by Chatterjee and Dasgupta highlights the vital role that religious organizations play as experts in social cohesion and unity.

In the context of religious institutions in Cooch-Behar, the complex subject of land disputes and asset distribution was examined by Roy and Basu (2018). Their investigation probed the intricacies of land use plans, asset management agreements, and property rights, particularly as they related to properties owned by religious institutions. The analysis revealed that land disputes often result from uncertainties in property ownership, triggering justifiable conflicts that need resolution. Determining assets, especially land, can also become a contentious matter as religious organizations expand their operations. The study of Roy and Basu emphasizes how important it is to deal with these justifiable issues related to asset categorization in order to

maintain a cordial relationship between religious organizations and the local networks they serve.

3. Data and Methodology

The lack of precise religious statistics and well-defined socioeconomic limits in India makes it challenging to consistently, let alone at times, evaluate the scope and gravity of the advancement gaps that Muslims and other minority networks in general confront. We gathered essential family-level data for 11 West Bengali regions in 2007–2008. The primary hypothesis is the one that follows. Does the distribution of public goods and social foundation depend mostly on the minority focus in the provinces? "Distance traveled to obtain drinking water," "admission to government health offices," "number of educators in schools," "cleared streets in the towns," "jolt of houses," and other such terms are examples of the public products and structure in this article. It is unnecessary to say, but framework accessibility and public goods have a big impact on economic development and progress in every country.

The area inside West Bengal is chosen based on the density of minority populations, socioeconomic factors particular to religion, and a measure generated from the various kinds of basic services that the general public has access to. There are four explicit socio-economic variables associated to religion: general education rate (i), female proficiency rate (ii), work support rate (iii), and female work collaboration rate (iv). Nonetheless, the following are the four requirements for survival: I the quantity of homes with pucca (concrete) walls; ii the quantity of homes with access to potable water; iii the quantity of homes with power; and iv the quantity of homes with W/C latrines.

Our research is limited to West Bengal (henceforth, WB) regions where: (a) the percentage of Muslims in the population is more than 20%; and (b) the normal of the socioeconomic religion-specific markers, or perhaps the normal of the fundamental convenience markers, is lower than the corresponding public midpoints. The chosen territories are home to more Muslims than the entire country of India. Additionally, they report low performance on important conveniences indicators as well as explicit socioeconomic markers related to religion. One could consider both of these to be signs of regress. A subset of the important markers used for these regions

are listed in Table 1. This illustrates how the distinction between the Muslim and non-Muslim populations is more regrettable in certain regions.

Table 1: District-level socioeconomic conditions and the population of minorities

District	Muslim Population (%)	Population Density	Literacy Rate Male (%)	State HDI Rank	Religion-Specific Index of Basic Amenities	Religion-Specific Index of Socio-economic Indicators
Coochbehar	32.43	823	55.2 (65.2)	22	21.58	51.3
U. Dinajpur	56.45	887	56.98 (46.62)	24	8.3	38.8
D. Dinajpur	35.13	766	72.68 (44.23)	24	22.5	55.8
Malda	58.83	992	41.37(52.34)	26	25.3	47.3
Murshidabad	72.76	2212	65.2 (56.7)	26.9	46.5	-
Nadia	34.5	2263.4	77.25 (68.67)	8	35	46.4
North 24 Pgs.	35.33	3273	87.15 (82.83)	4	56.3	51.8
South 24 Pgs.	44.35	783	58.54 (52.2)	9	32.3	45.5
Haora	35.3	3823.9	92.3 (81.2)	3	56.5	52.7
Bardhaman	31.45	893 0	81.26 (71.8)	6	46.63	52.3

Birbhum	46.17	773	72.57(62.66)	25	25.8	47.8
West Bengal	36.36	814	88.1 (68.72)	-	-	-
All India	24.52	436	84.4 (62.8)	-	52.8	54.7

3.1. Methodology

We adopted a distinct, multi-phase testing scheme where families are the assigned study units that, in a sense, roamed the countryside. The 2001 Enumeration towns, which made up the primary examination units, served as the main stage units (FSU). Based on the percentage of Muslims living in each improvement block (which included several statistical towns), three levels were created for the main stage. In an ideal world, statistics towns would have been used to build the layers. In any event, 'organized' and hence not accessible religion-specific population data at the town level. The families selected using the conventional posting technique corresponded to the number of religious groups among the town's entire population. The selection of village meetings had been one intermediate testing process for large FSUs. The village group with the highest rate of minority population convergence is selected first, and any remaining village groups are randomly explored.

4. Results and Discussion

In order to ascertain whether the percentage of Muslims residing in a municipality is a major logical variable for the design of public goods and outcome factors, observational research is conducted in this section. All of these public goods and social bases were regressed to the degree that different factors adequately explained the community's Muslim population. The main goal of our econometric research is to ascertain if the public goods system outlined above is biased against the concentration of Muslims in metropolitan regions. Because of this, we take into consideration the average family land holding level, the distance between the town and the imbecile quarter, the distance between the town and the closest town, and the percentage of male (landless) horticultural workers in the town. In addition, we consider the

average yearly usage of families, the percentage of families that actively engage in Gram Panchayat meetings, the percentage of families that read newspapers, and the proficiency rate at the town level. They are taken care of simply and originate from the family studies. The town overview information provides details on the instructional framework, the town's distance from the nearest town, and the town's proximity to the nitwit quarter.

Therefore, we evaluated the associated relapse condition for each type of open great.

$$y_i = \alpha + \gamma M_i + \beta \widetilde{X_i} + \theta D_i + u_i \qquad (1)$$

When Mi= percentage of Muslims living in the town Xi, I = town's control factor vector If the location has a place with the lowest quartile in HDI rank, then I, Di = sham, and ui = aggravation term.

The following are the free factors: the number of families unable to travel to the government office for labor (or, non-institutional conveyance); the number of cleared streets, the number of families charged, and the number of families who approach freely; the normal, long stretches of most elevated training (calculated as the typical distance over families in every town considering the highest level of education for male and female individuals at the family level); the number of families charged at the government office; the number of families who approach freely; and the distance traveled to general health offices (measured in kilometres).

Conversely, the following logical elements are listed in priority order: One bigha is equivalent to one-third of a section of land; (ii) the percentage of the town's Muslim minority population; (iii) the town's normal land holding; (v) an understanding paper; (vi) political support [i.e., the number of families attending Gram Panchayat meetings); (vii) male rural work; (viii) sham if the town's region has a place with the lowest quartile of HDI positions for West Bengal starting around 2004; and finally, (ix) faker in the unlikely event that the town's normal family use falls within the base 20% of towns in the state. As previously stated, we are keen to ascertain the degree to which the Muslim population's town-level concentration makes sense in terms of the supply of different public goods. Our primary regressor is the proportion of Muslims in the population; the variables indicated in (ii) through (ix) function as control variables.

We assessed a similar econometric model for additional Muslim population strata using sham as well. In each area, the minority population's top 20%, middle 50%, and bottom 30% are

sorted in descending order and classified as S1, S2, and S3 separately. The towns fall under these three groups. After that, the catchphrase can be used repeatedly with any two imposters. The levels of fakers are explained below.

$S_{1u} = 1$ if village i belongs to top 20% stratum

$= 0$ otherwise.

$S_{2i} = 1$ if village i belongs to middle 50% stratum

$= 0$ otherwise.

$S_{3i} = 1$ if village i belongs to bottom 30% stratum

$= 0$ otherwise.

and $\widetilde{S_i} = \begin{bmatrix} S_{hi} \\ S_{ki} \end{bmatrix}, h, k = 1, 2, 3 \ and \ h \neq k$

The revised relapse condition is then provided by

$$y_i = \alpha + \emptyset \widetilde{S_i} + \beta \widetilde{X_i} + \theta D_i + u_i \qquad (2)$$

where φ is the boundary vector for the layers fakers.

The econometric details in (1) and (2) are condensed versions of a decision-making problem about the allocation of public assets among cities that is addressed by the public authority, whereone of the criteria is "religious focus." A purposeful split concerning the state would imply that regions catering to minorities are overlooked. It may also mean that representation in a majority-ruling government, like the Indian government, does not necessarily distribute assets in the most utilitarian way. The state's general economic status and its political and financial ties to the federal government may have an impact on asset allocations in addition to local insider trading. If any of these requirements conflicts with minority groups, centralization of the minority population is anticipated to have a detrimental effect on the allocation of public goods. More importantly, the argument of opposing causality (that is, the idea that a poor public arrangement significantly affects minority obsession) is problematic on the grounds of personal levelheadedness. There is no obvious motivation for people, majority or minority, to settle in

a town with a poor public product arrangement unless there is an unexpected inflow caused by entirely external circumstances, such as political or religious persecution elsewhere.

A typical land holding considers a town family's typical resource level. Additionally, we consider the typical annual family expenditure that serves as a bridge for the typical year salary. We use the level of the town population, which is comprised of landless agrarian work, to measure the extent of intra-town discrepancy. It is frequently argued that communities tend to impede settlement and improve open offices, maybe through persistent advocacy for public goods. As such, we view the distance to the nearest town (measured in kilometres) and the distance to impede settlement as important illustrative variables. The percentage of households with at least one member who regularly reads newspapers is also used as a control to establish the level of education in the relapse evaluation. It also shows how familiar the families are with the advantages of having access to government plots that are now in use, health services, and safe drinking water.In 15. It is widely accepted that the Gram Panchayat has a positive role in social organization and the distribution of public goods. There are other ways to calculate this. In Gram Panchayat meetings, we worked with family cooperation to highlight decentralization at the town level.

It is reasonable to anticipate a considerable degree of fluctuation because the data covers a broad range of towns. But when we consider dependent and illustrative characteristics like rates or midpoints across families, the level influence disappears. Therefore, we relapse the primary condition layout using Standard Least Squares (OLS). The Summed Up Straight Model (GLM), with dependent variables expressed as percentages, is then used for evaluation. Moreover, the White test and the Breusch-Agnostic test support heteroscedasticity. In this method, we reexamined the model for the strong standard errors of the coefficients. For $V(\widetilde{\beta_J})$, the full list of conditions under which Yi relapses on the Xi heteroscedasticity rigorous assessor is provided by: $V(\widetilde{\beta_J}) = \frac{\sum_i \tilde{r}_{ij}^2 \tilde{u}_i^2}{SSR_j^2}$, where SSRJ is the total squared residuals from this relapse, β j is the assessed coefficient for the jth regressor, ui is the assessed leftover from OLS, and ri is the ith remaining from relapsing Xj on other x's. Relapse conditions include either the minority population level or the strata of the minority population at the local level.

Additionally, we assessed the comparison model for long-term benefits and extent-estimated social frameworks using GLM and logit connect. Let's take a moment to explain why this approach is being used. If the variable is limited to the [0 1] span and a regressand is taken into account in the rate, the binomial family and GLM with logit connect are a common option. The endogenous variable in the [0 1] span is naturally credited by utilitarian frameworks, which explains why.

Table 2: The dependent and independent variables' averages and standard deviations (in brackets) for all villages as well as the S1, S2, and S3 classed villages:

Variables Across all Villages		Across all Villages	S1	S2	S3
Endogenous	Distance travelled for accessing Public Health Facilities (Km)	6.7 (4.0)	7.6 (4.9)	6.4 (4.2)	6.5 (6.3)
	Distance of Nearest Bus Stop (Km)	3.0 (3.8)	3.3 (3.5)	2.9 (3.7)	3.1 (3.9)
	Distance of the Nearest Railway Station (Km)	14.8 (15.1)	16.9 (18.8)	14.3 (14.4)	11.5 (12.7)
	Average Years of Highest Education	5.2 (1.8)	4.8 (1.7)	5.2 (1.6)	5.5 (2.0)
	Proportion of Households not visiting Govt. places for Child Birth	57.5 (31.5)	62.1 (31.4)	60.6 (30.7)	48.9 (31.4)
	Proportion of Paved Roads	35.0 (24.5)	34.0 (24.6)	37.5 (24.2)	31.6 (25.0)
	Proportion of Households Electrified	35.7 (27.6)	31.0 (25.9)	36.0 (27.3)	35.3 (29.7)
	Proportion of Households using Public provided Drinking Water	54.8 (31.8)	54.3 (34.5)	55.2 (31.4)	51.0 (30.4)

Free / Unpaid
Peer Reviewed
Multidisciplinary
National

Explanatory	% of Muslim in Village Population	40.9 (36.1)	50.2 (39.9)	42.8 (34.6)	30.8 (33.7)
	Average Land Holding (in bigha = 1/3 acre)	0.6 (1.2)	0.7 (2.1)	0.5 (0.5)	0.7 (1.2)
	Block Head Quarter (Km)	10.4 (7.0)	10.6 (6.4)	10.9 (7.0)	9.6 (7.5)
	Nearest Town (Km)	19.4 (18.2)	17.9 (15.0)	21.7 (19.9)	16.6 (16.7)
	Newspaper subscription	15.2 (18.8)	13.6 (17.9)	14.1 (15.8)	18.2 (23.5)
	Decentralization	23.8 (33.2)	21.1 (31.8)	25.1 (33.9)	23.5 (33.3)
	Literacy Rate (Male)	71.0 (16.9)	67.1 (18.3)	71.7 (15.3)	72.6 (18.1)
	Agricultural Labour (Male)	22.1 (15.7)	21.0 (14.3)	23.4 (16.0)	20.7 (16.1)
	Explanatory Average Annual Expenditure	34206.23 (20624.91)	31688.18 (18161.94)	35222.01 (21860.75)	34360.51 (20239.70)

Table 2 provides compelling insights into the illustrative and endogenous elements for each of the three tiers separately. The most recent methodology produces no discernible difference when compared to the overall situation. Nevertheless, it distinguishes and evaluates the normalcy-inducing causes of group segregation and divides them into two types: those arising from disparate observable traits or "gifts" among groups and those arising from disparate impacts of attributes or "coefficients" of groups.

Let's now discuss how the relapses have led to these results. Of course, proximity to towns and central command seriously and significantly affects the distance traveled to reach public amenities, such as transportation and health administrations. This implies that general insufficiency or reluctance among public specialists in conveying the necessary prerequisites cannot be excluded, even in the absence of direct evidence of segregation in the arrangement of public items against minority groups. It seems that open product arrangement is positively impacted by awareness, accessibility to information through documents and other sources, and proximity to larger cities. On the other hand, later, vast portions are compelled to coordinate restrictions due to geographical distance and insufficient aggregate action brought on by a lack of consciousness.

In actuality, communities overrun by rural laborers report traveling great distances to reach train route connections, and this is crucial at the 1% level. In addition, the number of municipalities in quartile 4 increases significantly with the distance traveled to obtain public merchandise, which helps a large portion of the population understand why outrageous reduction is acceptable. Be aware that, at the town level, there is no evidence to support a negative correlation between the rate portion of minority population and the absence of public goods. In any event, there is clear evidence of this detrimental relationship when the minority population is appropriated over multiple strata. We find that the distance traveled to reach wellbeing offices is greater for layers 1, such as places with a minority population in the top 20% class (see Tables 2 and 3). The altered R2 values in these relapse examinations are logically high.

In essence, a large amount of rural labor reduces the availability of things like power, clean streets, public drinking water arrangements, and so forth. It is true that the Muslim community has a greater influence on the lack of access to clean drinking water from open faucets. Additionally, participation in neighborhood events and activities that involve neighborhood self-governance seems to have an impact on the accessibility of power associations and cleared roadways. We propose that there might be a reverse causation instead of a direct causal relationship because the data does not allow us to examine these correlations in further detail: respondents who are admitted to these offices less frequently are making these investments more frequently.

However, considering the base quartile faker for the location HDI rank yields the anticipated outcomes: with and without the minority share, the number of towns in this quartile is especially noteworthy; accessibility to cleared streets decreases (-0.182 and -0.176); and the reliance on freely provided drinking water rises (0.166 and 0.153). There may be a valid case of governmental carelessness given that the two coefficients are more grounded and measurably big at the 1% level when accounting for the minority population in the base quartile.

This shows quickly that a high level of attention on the profiling of minority groups in an area leads to a progressive reduction in their access to fundamental public services. The highest level of training and paper membership are positively correlated, as one might expect, but the

relationship becomes increasingly fragile when Muslim centralization above 30%. With further data pointing to the existence of a solid flat difference regarding the arrangement of public items, the majority of the results from the OLS and GLM models are therefore largely supported in the degrading practice.

5. Conclusion

Overall, this thorough analysis of the socioeconomic interactions between the local population and religious organizations in West Bengal's Cooch-Behar Area reveals the complex and dynamic nature of these relationships. In addition to highlighting their vital role in local area improvement drives like education, medical services, and destitution mitigation, the examination highlights the significant financial commitments made by Buddhist cloisters and Hindu sanctuaries, including the income from the travel industry, gifts, and available positions. Furthermore, it becomes clear that these religious organizations play a big role in shaping the district's social structure, traditions, and sense of community. However, the focus also reveals fundamental challenges, such as land disputes and asset designation issues, which need for careful attention to maintain alignment between economic and profound interests. Overall, this analysis broadens our understanding of how religion and socioeconomic factors interact while also providing valuable insights into the unique Cooch-Behar socio-social landscape and a more comprehensive perspective on similar relationships in various contexts across the globe.

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