

Table 13: Data On Monthly Income of Brick Field Labourers:-

Monthly Income Categories(Rs./)	No. of Labourers	% of Labourers
Bellow 1500	14	1.13
1500-3000	32	2.58
3000-4500	208	16.76
4500-6000	749	60.35
6000-7500	235	18.94
Above 7500	03	0.24
Total	1241	100.00

From **Table-13**, it comes to our notice that the monthly income of 60% of the sampled women workers attached to the brick kilns under study lie between Rs.4500 and 6000. Only 19% of the interviewed women workers earn annually between Rs.6000 and above. **Table-13** records the sources of family income (Other than brick kilns) of the interviewed women workers in the brick kilns.

Table 14: Sources of Family Income (Other Than Brick Kilns) of the Women Workers

Female Workers	Sources of Family Income (other than Brick Kilns)						
	Agriculture	Agriculture Labourer	Labour	Small Trade or Business	Maid	Any work	No work
Number	214	385	508	21	28	68	17
%	17.2	31.0	40.9	1.7	2.3	5.5	1.4
TOTAL	1241=100%						

Our survey, as portrayed in **Table-14**, reveals that agriculture and agriculture labour are the major sources of livelihood of the family members of the women workers in the brick kilns. They are engaged in those activities to maintain the one square meal. They are to depend on other activities, as the brick kilns remain operative for 6 to 7 months in each year. So, all the workers cannot depend solely on the work of brick kilns round the year. During the remaining part of the year, they engage themselves either in agricultural activities or as maid, agricultural labourer etc.

are indebted to Thikadar or Mahajan. Only 7% are indebted to Kiln Manager. 49 out of 1241 women workers borrowed money from Relatives and Friends to meet the expenses connected with marriage, funeral, and other unforeseen circumstances.

Table-15 records land held by the women workers engaged in the brick kilns under study.

Types of houses the women workers possess are shown in **Table-17**.

Table 15: Land Holdings of the Sampled Women Workers in the Brick Kilns

Female Workers	Land Holdings of Women Workers (Bigha)				
	No Land	0-1	1-2	2-3	3 & above
Number	337	478	285	109	32
%	27.1	38.5	23.0	8.8	2.6
TOTAL	1241=100%				

Table 17: Types of Houses of the Sampled Women Workers

Female Workers	Types of Houses			
	Kantcha	Pucca	Semi-pucca	Total
Number	1033	02	206	1241
%	83.2	0.2	16.6	100
Total	1241=100%			

A perusal of **Table-15** indicates that 27% of the interviewed women workers have no land at all. 39% women workers have up to 1 bigha land. 23% of the women workers have 1-2 bigha lands and only 3% of women workers have 3 and more lands.

N.B. Kuchha House: House made of mud and Pucca House: House built by bricks.

As is evident from **Table-17**, an overwhelmingly majority of women workers (83%) lives in kuchha houses. Only 16% of the women workers have semi-pucca houses.

Responses of women workers with regard to indebtedness among the women workers of the sampled brick kilns are shown in **Table-16**.

C. Working Conditions Of Women Workers

Table 16: Indebtedness among the Women Workers in the Brick Kilns

Female Workers	Indebtedness to				
	Thikadar (Contractors)	Brick Kiln Owners	Kiln Managers	Relatives & Friends	No Indebtedness
Number	491	581	85	49	35
%	39.6	46.8	6.9	3.9	2.8
Total	1241=100%				

Table-18 gives us the responses of women workers regarding the years of engagement of women in brick kilns.

Table 18: Years of Engagement of Women in Brick Kilns

Female Workers	Years of Engagement						
	<1	1-3	3-5	5-7	7-9	9-11	11 & above
Number	31	107	263	401	349	71	19
%	2.5	8.6	21.2	32.3	28.1	5.7	1.6
Total	1241=100%						

We find in **Table-18** that 32% out of 1241 women workers have been working 5 to 7 years in brick kilns. 28% women workers are working 7-9 years in the brick kilns. Only 2% women workers are working in the brick kilns one to five years.

Looking at the **Table-16**, it is clear that 47% of the women workers are indebted to the brick kiln owners. About 40%

Reasons for doing brick factory works by the women are exhibited in **Table-19**.

Table 19: Reasons For Doing Brick Factory Works By Women

Female Workers	REASONS FOR DOING BRICK FACTORY WORKS BY WOMEN						
	Agriculture work not available all time	For more earning	For no other available employment	For 6 months work at a time	For Poverty	No use by sitting idle	For Helping Husband/Family
Number	58	235	44	83	729	55	37
%	4.7	18.9	3.6	6.7	58.7	4.4	3.0
TOTAL	1241=100%						

The analysis of the above **Table-19** reveals that 59% of the sampled women workers work in the brick kilns because of poverty. 19% of the women workers engaged themselves for more earning. Meager percentage of working women choose to do the brick kiln work because of non-availability of

agricultural work, opportunity of doing the work for 6/7 months in a year etc.

Table 20 shows the types of occupation of women before joining brick kiln works.

Table 20: Types of Occupation of Women Before Joining Brick Kiln Works

Female Workers	Types of Occupation							
	Transport Labour	Agricultural Labour	Cultivator in own land	Maid	Labour in Hotel/Restaurant/Shops/so on	Labour as in accessibility at own area	Any other work	No work earlier
Number	203	445	124	41	33	209	109	77
%	16.4	35.9	10.0	3.3	2.7	16.8	8.8	6.2
TOTAL	1241=100%							

The scan of the above **Table-20** shows that 36% of the women workers was engaged in agriculture as agriculture labourer and 33% of women workers was engaged simply as labourer. Only 10% sampled women workers get themselves engaged in cultivating their own land. Others were involved either in any other activities or in factory work from the start. 6% women workers did not do any work before joining brick kiln.

in wages may help them maintain their families. Only 10% of 1241 women workers demanded for bonus and advance that would meet the festival expenses. 8% out of sampled women workers opined with regard to job security. 2% of the working women demanded for clothing, shelter and foods.

Types of brick kiln works for women are shown in **Table-21**.

Table 21: Types of Brick Kiln Works Done By Women Workers

Number of Female Workers	Types of Works					Total
	Mud Cutting, Moulding & Carrying	Brick Making	Brick Drying & Arranging	Brick Carrying	Others	
	166 (13.38%)	51 (4.11%)	198 (15.95)	731 (58.90%)	95 (7.66)	1241 (100.00)

From the above **Table-21**, it appears that 59% of the sampled women workers were engaged in brick carrying activities followed by brick drying (16%), mud processing (13%) and other activities (16%).

Table 22 records the responses of the respondents about the types of demand of women workers to brick kiln owners.

Table 22: Types of demand of women workers to brick kiln owner

Female Workers	Types of Demands					
	Wage Increasing	Bonus & Advance	Job Security	Foods, Shelter & Clothes	Education & Health	No Demand
Number	979	123	102	23	14	0
%	78.9	9.9	8.2	1.9	1.1	0
TOTAL	1241=100%					

Table-22 clearly indicates that 79% of the total sampled women workers clamored for increase in wages as the hike

7. Findings and Concluding Observations

- Most of the women workers come from Hindu family and a few from Muslim families to do in the brick kilns.
- Most of the women workers belong to scheduled caste and tribe community.
- A large amount of married women are engaged in brick kiln activities.
- The women workers engaged in the brick fields got married at the age of 16 years.
- An overwhelming majority of the women workers and their children are illiterate.
- Migrant workers are large in number. Family sizes of them are large.
- Annual and monthly family incomes of the working women are not adequate to maintain for their livelihood.
- When the brick kiln works are not available, they engage themselves in other activities like agriculture and other works.
- Land holdings of them are very much minimal.
- Most of the workers live in kachha houses.
- Women workers work in the kilns due to severe poverty.
- Most of the workers are involved in brick carrying and brick making activities.
- Majority of the women workers clamor for wage hike as the wage they earn is not sufficient to feed the members of their families.
- Working women generally take advance from brick kiln owners.

8. Recommendations / Suggestions

Nation develops if the women are developed. So it is the first and foremost duty of our Government to pay attention for the well-being of the women community. A number of measures have been adopted by the Government for their welfare. But in some cases, women's interest is not protected. In case of brick industry, they live in the thatched huts close to kiln, which generally do not have electricity. The electricity should be provided in those huts by the owners of the brick kilns. Separate rest room should be arranged for the women workers engaged in the brick kilns. There should have a separate neat and clean toilet for the women workers. The eligible women workers should be given maternity benefit. Very often, some of the brick kiln owners do the little care for the same. In order to provide the maternity benefits to the women workers of the brick kilns, necessary amendments are required in the Maternity Benefit Act. Adult education programme for the women workers of the brick kilns should be implemented for making them literate. Exhaustive and comprehensive legislation is urgently needed for regulating working conditions, wage structure, welfare measures of the women workers in the brick kilns. The Labour Department should come forward to prevent physical-mental torture, sexual harassment and molestation of the workingwomen engaged in the brick kiln factories. For this, the Department should introduce special wing that can supervise the matter and take necessary action against the wrongdoers. Voluntary organizations of eminent personalities of the region (where brick kilns are situated) should be involved to see whether the different provisions and welfare measures are being strictly implemented. It is necessary to enforce the "Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act" and "Contact Labour Act" to check the bungling in the recruitment procedure and working condition. The parents of the women workers married at early stage should be aware of the fact that early marriage invites a lot of problems. Such workers are affected mentally and physically. So Government as well as NGO should make an awareness programme that will discuss about the ill effects of early marriage. The co-operation of brick kiln owners is urgently needed in this regard. Workers live in poverty. In order to alleviate poverty, they should be informed about different poverty alleviation programmes adopted by the Government from time to time. Due to lack of information and ignorance, they suffer from poverty.

9. Scope for Further Research

There are some specific limitations, which should be addressed as a means of improvement for further study. This study has equipped based on intensive literary survey and field ground truth information used for socio-economic data. Planning is never whole without local people's opinions incorporated. The study can be considered as the guideline or instruction for socio-economic planning. Yet, this research will expose opportunities for further research and investigation, and help decision makers to review what options exist for improving and humanizing the female worker's conditions in the brick kilns of not only my study area, but also of West Bengal as well as India.

There are many scopes for further research work on "Brick Industry". The researchers may do the research work on:

- 1) "Socio-economic conditions of women workers in Brick Kilns in Purba Medinipur, West Bengal, Bangladesh and India": A Comparative Study
- 2) Working Conditions of Brick Kilns in India: A Case Study of West Bengal
- 3) Labour Welfare in Brick Kiln Fields in India: A Study
- 4) Brick Industry and Environment Pollution: A Study
- 5) Problems and Prospects of Real Estate Sector in India: A Study in the light of Brick Industry.
- 6) Effectiveness of Labour Laws in Brick Kiln Industry: A Study
- 7) Qualitative Study On Clinico-Social Problems of Brick-Kiln Workers: A Study
- 8) Sociological Study of Brick kiln Workers: A Study
- 9) Morbidity profile of Brick Kiln women workers: A Study
- 10) Occupational & ergonomic health analyses of female construction Workers of West Bengal: a study, etc.

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Author Profile



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