

Gender Insecurity in the Borderlands- A Study of Northern Bengal

A Thesis Submitted
To
Sikkim University



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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May 2019

Date:

DECLARATION

I, **Anuradha Thapa**, hereby declare that the research work embodied in the dissertation titled “**Gender Insecurity in the Borderlands- A Study of Northern Bengal**” submitted to Sikkim University for the award degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is my original work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Thesis Titled "**Gender Insecurity in the Borderlands – A Study of Northern Bengal**" Submitted to the Sikkim University for partial fulfilment of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** in the Department of International Relations, embodies the result of bonafide research work carried out by Ms. Anuradha Thapa under my guidance and supervision. No part of the Dissertation has been submitted for any Degree, Diploma, Association and fellowship.

All the assistance and help received during the course of investigation have been duly acknowledged by her.

We recommend this dissertation to be placed before the examination for evaluation.

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Submitted by **Ms. Anuradha Thapa** under the supervision of **Dr. Manish, Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, School of Social Science, Sikkim University, Gangtok, India, 737102**

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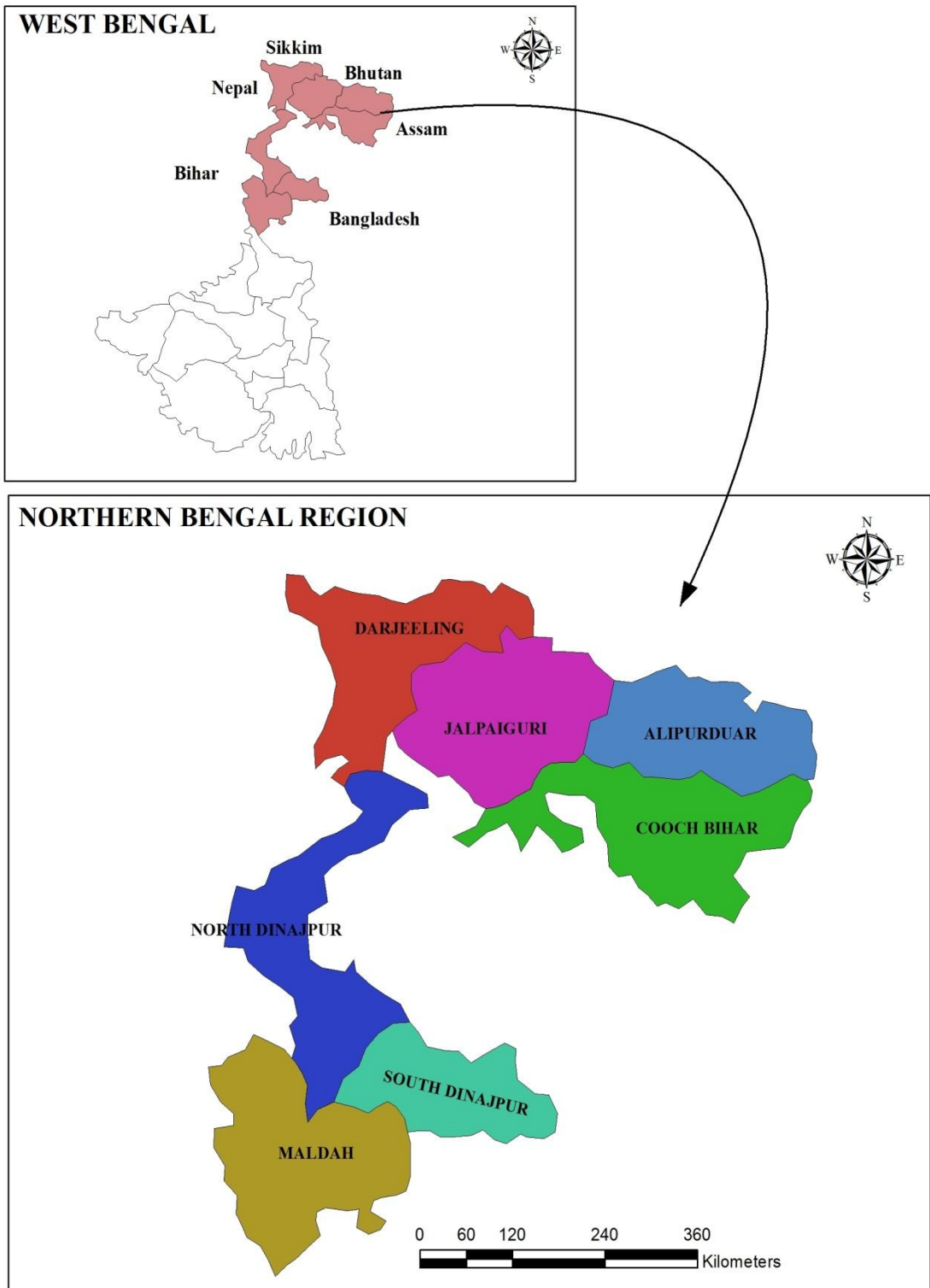
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Map 1: Northern Bengal Region



Source: Extracted From Google Earth Pro

Chapter-1

Introduction

CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Borders and borderlands have been understood from the framework of State and security but there are more to these regions than just fences and military. According to Vila (1999) “any border is an area where limits and differences are established, but it is also a place where different elements come together. For example, “commercial and cultural exchanges are continually taking place in border areas, where capital and culture are in constant movement” (p. 85). At the same time, border regions also have some major issues like human trafficking, illegal trade, migration, drug trafficking, food insecurity which are the part of the people living in the border region. Thus, the rise in such issues has led to genderization of the region itself, for example the issue of human trafficking (Moraczewska, 2010). Gender security theorists argue that the traditional line of understanding border has marginalized these aspects in particular. Accordingly, the traditional framework on borders and borderlands has neglected the aspect of lived experiences of people living in the border region. The aspect of rationalization of borders has not only made the lived experiences irrelevant but at the same time has failed to give attention to the gender securities in borders and borderlands. And this is because of the fact that geometrical, mathematical and statistical knowledge appear obviously applicable to linear borders, other geographies, such as those of lived experience and gender issues no longer seem necessary (Mayer et al., 2014).

The lack of emphasis on the people living in the border region has drawn much attention of gender theorist in analyzing borders and borderlands. Theorist of gender

security claim that borders cannot be understood separate from the bodies they affect and form. Similarly, the geopolitics of knowledge cannot be separated from the lived experience of borders (Moraczewska, 2010). The emphasis on the lived experiences of the people living in the border region thus brought in the concerns of gender security in the region. Such concern is also because of the fact that various debates on borders have highly neglected the issue of gender security in the region¹. At the same time gender theorist argue that gender interpretation on border matters, as it is through their interpretation that IR perception on the functionality of the State towards borders can be changed and hence corporation more than war, integration more than disintegration, development of people in border areas can be brought in general (Moraczewska, 2010).

The concern over security in border regions largely dwells around the perception of the State. Such perception has over emphasized the importance of military in the region. The impact of which could be felt in many aspects of the region. For example, there has been various debates over the understanding of 'borders' (see, Kurki,2014; Chavez, 2010; Chang; 2010) where national security has become the guiding principle for defining borders and borderlands. Such definitions about borders and borderlands have created a general perception for many where the region is imagined to be a place of fences and armies. Theoretically, the construction of borders identity is designed by people to define jurisdictional, administrative divisions, and have become important due the physically partitioned space, they have also mentally affected human beings in shaping the way people think....(Chang, 2010). However, there are other aspects as well in the region which requires an attention, such as the impact of surveillance on

¹The understanding of borders and borderlands has been highly from the paradigm of State security which emphasize on men and their domination over power game in International Relations. These form of construction on analyzing borders and borderlands has sidelined the aspect of individual security.

the people living in the region. The creation of border identity under the framework of national security in the same manner has influenced the daily activities of the people living in the region. It is with such understanding that the study here tries to locate the impact or the hindrances created by national security on the everydayness of the women living in Northern Bengal border region.

The study in this regard tries to bring in the issues of gender insecurity in the whole paradigm of security debates under the umbrella of critical security theory. As borders are considered to be an arena where the security of the State is at maximum, the study will thus take North-Bengal borderland as a case study where two different forms of borders exist. The study will thus try to answer the core questions like, what is gender insecurity issues prevalent in North-Bengal borderland? Following how does the security of the State influence/hinders security of women living in North-Bengal borderland? Thus with the help of these questions the study will try to analyze women insecurity issues in two different forms of border areas in Northern Bengal.

1.2 Review of Literature

In order to understand security, borderlands and women insecurity issues the study has referred various secondary sources. However there was no literature as such done on North-Bengal borderland or the comparative study done on India-Nepal and India-Bangladesh or for that matter India-Bangladesh and India-Bhutan borders.

On Security and Critical Aspects

David Campbell (1992), "*Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics Of Indentity*", Ken Booth and Steve Smith (1995), "*International Relations Theory Today*", Stephen J. Del Rosso Jr. (1994) "*The Insecure State: Reflections on*

"The State" and "Security" in a Changing World", Cynthia Weber (2001)

"International Relations Theory Today: A critical Introduction", Lipschutz (1995),

"On Security", Francis J. Schneider (1995), "Man The State and War, by Kenneth Waltz", Simon Dalby (1997), "Contesting an Essential Concept: Reading the Dilemmas in Contemporary Security Discourse", Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (1997), *From Strategy to Security: Foundations of Critical Security Studies*", Emma Rothschild (1995), 'What is Security', Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (1996), "Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods", *Towards a Critical Securitization Theory: The Copenhagen and Aberystwyth School of Security Studies*, Ali Diskaya (2013), *Critical Imaginations in International Relations* (ed) Aoileann Ni Mhurchu and Kioko Shindo (2011), Luckham, Robin and Tom Kirk (2013), "The two faces of Security in Hybrid Political Orders: A Framework for Analysis and Research", Abrahamsen, R and Williams, M (2009). "Security Beyond the State: Global Security Assemblages in International Politics", Colak, A A and Pearce, J (2009). "Security from Below' in Contexts of Chronic Violence", Soguk, Nevzat and Geoffrey Whitehall (1999), "Wandering Grounds: Transversality, Identity, Territoriality , and Movement", McSweeney, Bill, (2007), "Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School", Rothschild, Emma, (2007), "What is Security", Krause, Keith and Michael C. Williams, (1996), "Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods", Krause, Keith, (1996), "Insecurity and State Formation in the Global Military Order: The Middle Eastern Case", JR., Joseph S. Nye and Sean M.Lynn-Jones, (1988), "International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field", Walker, R.B.J, (1990), "Security, Sovereignty, and the Challenge of World Politics", Booth, Ken, (1991), "Security and Emancipation", Jones, Richard Wyn, (1995), "Message in a

Bottle'? Theory and Praxis in Critical Security Studies", Ullman, Richard, (2007), "Redefining Security", Buzan, Barry, (1991), "New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century", Baldwin, David A. (1997), "The Concept of Security", Anderson, Nicolas D. (2012), "Redefining International Security", Tickner, J.N, (1995), "Re-visioning Security", *I.R Theory today*, Roach, Steven C. (ed), (2008), *Critical Theory and International Relations: A Reader*, Buzan, Barry, (1991), *People, State and Fear: Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Azar, E. and C. Moon (eds), (1988) "National Security in the Third World", all these books and articles mentioned above basically reflect on security dimension of the State in International Relations. However at the same time they also reflect on the critical aspects on framing security purely in terms of State security. Hence, these sources have highlighted on non-traditional perspective that is present in International system that are challenging the role of the State as a security provider. These books and articles have emphasized on various debates of security. The above mentioned sources have well dealt with the forms of different dimension of security right from the traditional perspective till the non-traditional perspective. Mentioned books and articles have been well utilized in understanding the changing dynamics of security in international relations. The shift of paradigm in terms of security in international relations thus has been path developer for various other theories such as feminism and gender theories to put a mark in International Relations. This particular development also brought in the concept of people's perception into the larger debate of security and International Relations.

Gender and Criticism on Security

Christine Sylvester (1995), "Empathetic Cooperation: A Feminist Method for I.R",
Cynthia Enloe (1989), "Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of

International Relations”, Deborah L. Rohde (1994), “Feminism and the State”, Valerie M. Hudson, Mary Caprioli, Bonnie Ballif-Spanville, Rose Mc Dermott and Chad F. Emmett (2009), “The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States”, Laura Sjoberg and J. Ann Tickner (2001), “Feminist Perspectives on International Relations”, Laura Sjoberg (2010), “*Gender and International Security: Feminist Perspective*”, J. Ann Tickner (2001), “*Gendering World Politics*”, Nalini Persam (1994), “Politicizing the Feminine, Globalizing the Feminist”, Christine Sylvester (1997), “Feminism and International Relations or Encounters with the Wolves in the Woods”, Bernedette Muthien (2000), “Human Security Paradigms Through a Gendered Lens”, Tickner, J. Ann (1997), “You Just Don’t Understand: Troubled Engagements between Feminism and IR Theorists”, Tickner, J. Ann (1998), “Continuing the Conversation”, Weber, Cynthia (1994), “Good Girls, Little Girls and Bad Girls: Male Paranoia in Robert Keohane’s Critique of Feminist International Relations”, Enloe, Cynthia.H (1974), “Ethnic Conflict and Political Development”, Kavar, Mary (2003), “Gender and Migration: Why are Women more Vulnerable?”, Hume, Deborah L. (2017), “Human Trafficking of Women and Girls: Characteristics, Commonalities, and Complexities”, Doezema, J. (2002). “Who gets to choose? Coercion, consent, and the UN Trafficking Protocol”, Gupta, J., E. Reed, T. Kershaw et al. 2011. “History of sex trafficking, recent experiences of violence, and HIV vulnerability among female sex workers in coastal Andhra Pradesh, India”, Abdullah, H, Ibrahim, A and King, J (2010). “Women’s Voices, Work and Bodily Integrity in Pre-conflict, Conflict and Post-conflict Reconstruction Processes in Sierra Leone”, Richards, Tara N., Tammy S. Garland, Vic W. Bumphus and Roger Thompson (2010), “Personal and Political?: Exploring the Feminization of the American Homeless Population”, Peterson, Janice (1987), “The Feminization of

Poverty”, “ ‘The feminization of poverty’ women, work and welfare” , Bandarage, Asoka (1984), “Women in Development: Liberalism, Marxism and Marxist-Feminism, Development and Change”, Gulati, Leela (1984), “Technological Change and Women’s work Participation and demographic Behaviour: A Case Study of Three Fishing Villages”, Hudson, Valerie, (2008), “The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States”, Hacker, Barton C., (1981), “Women and Military Institutions in Early Modern Europe: A Reconnaissance”, “Gender analysis from the standpoint of women: the radical potential of women’s studies in development”, Evans, Mary and Carotyn H. Williams (eds), (2013), *Gender: The key concepts*, Aapola, S. Gonick, M. and Harris, A (2005), *Young Femininity: Girlhood, Power and Social Change*, Aaron,J. and Walby, S. (eds), (1991), *Out of the Margins: Women’s studies in the nineties*, Dobash, R.P. and Dobash, R.E. (eds), (1998), *Rethinking Violence Against Women*, these books and articles has helped in understanding the basic concept of feminism in International Relations. They at the same time also criticize on the scientific arguments placed by traditional theorist on security pattern and State behavior in International System. Further, these books and articles emphasize that the major debates in International Relations have neglected gender security at large. And this could only be corrected by incorporating gender related security issues into the larger framework of International Relations. Thus, these books and articles has also been insightful creating the platform for people’s narration on various fields such as State and security. This particular exercise would thus enable in creating knowledge from the ground level. Hence understanding of which has helped the study to analyze how security from the marginalized section such as women, as they are the most vulnerable in all societies.

On Border and Borderlands

Harry I Chernotsky and Herdi H. Hobbs (2013), “*Crossing Borders: International Studies for the 21st Century*”, David N. Gellner (2013), “*Borderland Lives: in Northern South Asia*”, William Van Schendel (2004), “*The Bengal Borderland*”, Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (eds) (2012), “*Border, Identities, Nation and State at International Frontiers*”, William I. Zartman (ed) (2010), “*Understanding Life in the Borderlands: Boundaries in depth and in motion*”, Thomas M. Wilson and Hastings Donnan (eds) (2012), “*A Comparison to Border studies*”, Alexander Neill (ed) (2010), “*Towards Cross Border Security*”, Peter Andreas (2003), “*Redrawing the Line : Border and Security in Twenty First Century*”, Eeva-Kaisa Prokkola (2009), “*Unfixing borderland identity: Border performance and narratives in the construction of self*”, Lamia Khalil Hammad (2010), “*Border Identity Politics: The New Mestiza in Borderlands*”, Jamwal, N.S (2004), “*Border Management: Dilemma of Guarding the India-Bangladesh Border*”, Banerjee, Paula, Sanjoy Hazarika, Monirul Hussain and Ranabir Samaddar (1999), “*Indo-Bangladesh Cross-Border Migration and Trade*”, Bhardwaj, Sanjay (2015), “*India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement: Ramifications for India’s Security*”, Bhardwaj, Sanjay K. (2016), “*India-Bangladesh Border Governance, Issues and Challenges*”, Schendel, Willem Van (2002), “*Stateless in South Asia: The Making of the India-Bangladesh Enclaves*”, Ranjan, Amit (2016), “*Migration from Bangladesh: Impulses, Risks and Exploitations*”, Datta, Sreeradha (2016), “*India-Bangladesh land Boundary Agreement: Follow –up Concerns Need a Fair Approach*”, Banarjee, Pallavi and Xiangming Chan, (2013), “*Living in in-between spaces: A structure agency analysis of the India-China and India-Bangladesh borderlands*”, Sen, Gautam. (2015), “*For Successful Implementation of the Land Boundary Agreement with Bangladesh*”,

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related to border and borderlands. The above mentioned books and articles have been vital in understanding the debates related to borders and borderlands. Furthermore, the sources emphasize on the forms of issues that are prevalent in border areas. From traditional aspect of security to various forms of non-traditional pattern of security in borderlands, these sources have brought in the other side of the debate in understanding borders and borderlands. In addition with the help of the mentioned sources the study has developed an understanding towards the concerns/problems of border areas. It has also helped in developing the understanding on the lived experiences of the people in borders and borderlands.

On Gender and Borders

Paula Banerjee and Ansua Basu (2011), "*Women in Indian Borderland*", Paula Banerjee (2010), "*Borders, Histories and Existences: Gender and Beyond*", Sonia Saldivar Hull(1991), "*Feminism on the Border: From Gender to Geopolitics*", Madina Tlostanova (2010), "*Gender, Epistemologies and Eurasian Borderlands*", Angela Davis and Gina Dent (2001), "Prison as Borders: A Conversation on Gender, Globalization and Punishment", Jennifer K. Lobasz (2009), "Beyond Border Security: A feminist approaches to Human Trafficking", Mary E. John (2001), "The encounter of Sociology and Women's studies: Questions from the borders", Denise A. Segura and Patricia Zavella (2008), "Gendered Borderlands", Todd R. Ramlow (2006), "Bodies in the Borderlands: Gloria Anzaldúa's and David Wojnarowicz's Mobility Machines", Barton C. Hacker (1981), "Women and Military Institutions in Early Modern Europe: A Reconnaissance", Caproli, Mary, (2000), "Gendered Conflict", Ramlow, Todd R.(2006), "Bodies in the Borderlands: Gloria Anzaldúa's and David Wojnarowicz's Mobility Machines", Castañeda ,Antonia , (2003), "Introduction: Gender on the Borderlands", Das, Satya Prakash, (2005), "A Gendered Perspective",

Segal, Mady Wechsler, (1995), “Women's Military Roles Cross-Nationally: Past, Present, and Future”, Ardent, H. (1998), “What the Border Hides: Partition and the Gender Politics of Irish Nationalism”, Stiehm, J. ,(1983), “*Women and Men's Wars*”, Aleyuz, (2013), “Ethnicity and Gender Dynamics of living in Borderlands: The case of Hopa-Turkey, Denise, A. & Patrica, Zavella (2008), “Gendered Borderlands”, these above mentioned books and articles have mostly highlighted on gender related issues that are prevalent in borderlands. They have also highlighted the rise of military/war or conflict thus, giving rise to gender insecurity in general and borderlands in particular. By doing so, they have also brought in various facets of gender security in the border areas. Further these sources have also contributed in incorporating the experiences of women in understanding security in borders and borderlands. This particular exercise has helped the study to develop the debate on border regions from the grass root level or for that matter from the marginalized section.

All these above mentioned books and articles have been used in developing the study. These secondary sources have helped in gaining clarity over various concepts related to security and borderlands. With their help the study has brought in the security concerns that are present in borders and borderlands. Further, it has also helped in gaining the clarity over the importance of gender security in borders and borderlands. In addition with the help of these sources the study has brought in the concept of everydayness in borders and borderlands and the perspective of the marginalized section in order to understand the forms of gender security in the concern areas for the study.

1.3 Framework of Analysis

Understanding gender security in borderlands is the prime focus of the study. International Relations as such have been a domain of men. Simultaneously, the understanding of borders and borderlands too has been from the perspective of men. Hence, borders in International Relations has been a symbol of various things such as State, security, inclusion and exclusion, territorial claim and the enforcement of laws over various bodies within its jurisdiction. Theories of International Relations have defined borders in various ways. For example, realists perceive borders as a zone where state's function of order and control is a prime factor and this according to them helps in maintaining peace both within and outside the State. Liberals on the other hand argue for the openness of borders where through integration process such as border corporation within the States peace can be maintained. In later analysis the role of the State gets diluted with the increasing role of non-state actors. Hence borders are perceived more as a bridge rather than barriers (Moraczewska, 2010). Though these theories differ regarding the role of the borders at large however, they share some similarity when it comes to minimal amount of understanding of issues concerning gender security in border regions. Thus, in order to gain clarity over issues such as security, border and gender, the following sections will try to bring in the theoretical debates of International Relations over these concepts.

1.3.a. Security and International Relations

Theorization of security and border in international relations has been through the prism of patriarchal understanding. Traditional theories like realism have always given importance to State security, national interest and militarization. Thus, the presence of military or the armed forces in the border areas has been justified as the

defense mechanism against the existential threat (Palfreeman, 2004), by the scholars of traditional security as a necessary strategy for the purpose of national security. As realists define security as a sharp boundary between domestic “order” and international “anarchy”, a state of nature where war is an ever present possibility (Waltz, 1979; 102). Eventually, the advent of two world wars and the cold war justified the realist way of understanding security and so the international system. Hence to understand conceptually, security was synonymized with the security of the State against external dangers, which was to be achieved by increasing military capabilities (Tickner, 1995).

The theory² by making State as a sole actor in international system has sidelined the other aspects of security that was brought into the debate during and after the cold war period³. According to Waltz (1991), non military phenomena are excluded on the grounds that their inclusion would destroy (the) intellectual coherence (of the field) and make it more difficult to devise solutions to any of these important problems and that it would be irresponsible to ignore the central question (of war and peace) that from the heart of security fields (Waltz, 1991: 213). Thus, the eruption of various environmental issues during and after the end of cold war, as a security threat to the whole human security at large made the debates on security to broaden its horizon. In this regard Peter J. Katzenstein (1996), has differentiated between traditional security and non-traditional security. According to him, those interested in the State and traditional security⁴ tend to favor established realist and liberal approaches developed during the last decades. In contrast to those interested in unconventional, broader

²Realism claims state to be the unitary actor in the international system whose security is at the heart of international system.

³The best example of this can be drawn from the nuclearization policy of British government during cold war. It was considered that in order to deter Soviet Invasion in Britain the policy was the only solution. However, Greenham women argued that “people could survive occupation by a foreign power but could not survive a nuclear war”.

⁴Traditional way of understanding security has been purely in the form of state and military where other factors like food, water or environment was given less attention.

definition of national security such as economic competitiveness, human welfare, as affecting not only States but also non-state actors tend to favor alternative analytical perspectives.

The deviation from traditional ways of understanding security paved way for many other aspects in the security debates as seen in the above paragraph. Rather than treating States, groups, or individuals as given that relate objectively to an external world of threats created by the security dilemma, these approaches stress the processes through which individuals, collectivities, and threats become constructed as “social facts” and the influence of such construction on security concerns (Krause, Williams, 1996). Thus, traditionally the subject of “citizen, is identified with (and guaranteed by) that of the State and by definition, those who stand outside it represent potential or actual threat (Nye Jr, Jonnes, 2007). It is in this regard that Ken Booth (1991), stress that individuals not States must be the fundamental referents of security. Thus, critical security theorist especially taking a step ahead of constructivist argues that security should be understood and be analyzed from the perspective of people. The United Nations Secretary General called in 1995 for a conceptual breakthrough going beyond armed territorial security towards enhancing or protecting the security of the people in their homes, jobs and communities.

Ken Booth (2007) in his article, “Security and Emancipation” further emphasizes that-

The pressures to broaden and update the concept have come from two sources. First, is the problem with the traditional narrow military focus of security has become increasingly apparent. The second set of pressures has come from the strengthening claim of other issue areas for inclusion on the security agenda.

Traditional way of framing security received its first set back with the rising environmental issues, that threatened not only State but the entire international system. It was hence understood that the problems concerning environment cannot be handled by the State alone and thus, there arose a need for international cooperation. It is under such understanding that even R.B.J Walker (1988), asserts the creative energy for reformulating security in less exclusionary terms is coming from social movements which operate across national boundaries and which grow out of concern for human security defined in economic and ecological as well as political and military terms. Similarly, Ken Booth and Wyn Jonas not only criticize traditional approaches but also offer a very clear view on how to re-conceptualize security studies by making human emancipation as their focus. For Booth and Jonas the traditional way or understanding security as power and order can never lead to true security, but one of the main causes of insecurity. Further, Booth rejects the claim that security is a 'contested concept' (Diskaya, 2013). In order to achieve security, Booth contends, 'we have to define it; and "the best starting point for conceptualizing security lies in the real conditions of insecurity suffered by the people and collectivities"' (Booth,2005). Taking these arguments as the focal point the study has analyzed security from the people living in the borderland, especially taking women as the target group as they not only form the marginalized section in the society but at the same they are genderized in the various discourses of International Relations and others.

1.3.b. Border in International Relations

Border in International Relations is one of the most fundamental aspect. It is through borders that both security of the State and foreign policy is mostly defined. Even though the turbulences of world politics either stabilizes or destabilizes international

borders but State and its borders remains an important actors in International Relations (Moraczewska, 2010). Borders are inherent to logics of inside and outside, practices of inclusion and exclusion and questions about identity and differences (William, 2012). It is in this regard that Micheal Foucher (1991) defines borders as a sites of division of space and time, where synthesis of political, economic and military relations and ideology takes place. Borders have been studied as a part of the analysis of many of the central concerns of IR. A brief list of these concerns include: the number and types of interactions among States; interdependence among States; within regional groupings and the level of interdependence within the international system as a whole; regional integration; the probability of war among States; the diffusion of war and other forms of international conflict; the diffusion of additional international phenomena such as the spread of democracy, understanding why and how territory affects the onset of war, the processes underlying the lack of war between the pairs of democracies; the affects of alliances, the question of international regimes and the structures of international system (Starr, 2000).

It can be rightly said that the existence of borders in international system is because of the thirty years of war which made the State to adhere to the principle laid by the treaty followed by the war. Borders, generally or particularly is understood as a line which demarcates states jurisdiction, maintains State's territorial space so and so forth. Thus even IR theorist like Prescott, Moraczawska perceives the State to manage its borders as a fundamental role of making peace and order in its inner and outer environment and the border to make the limits of state sovereignty (Moraczewska, 2010). Similarly, Michael Foucher defines borders as sites of division of space and time, where a synthesis of political, economic and military relations and ideology takes place (Moraczewska, 2010). However, borders are more than just a

line, or for that matter a parameter for maintaining inclusion and exclusion. Thus, the whole spectrum of dichotomy of inside and outside is very well placed in the formation of borders. Similarly, the identities of people as citizens are shaped and thus the idea of 'us' and 'them' comes into the fore play while understanding borders and borderlands. It is in this regard, Tod. M. Ramlow has rightly asserted that even though borders are understood as mutually exclusionary fields/makers of difference as in it is manifested in the hyphen between a number of political and cultural barriers at the same time it is also a hyphen among simultaneous markers of identity (Ramlow, 2006).

The other way of understanding border is through the principle of order that came simultaneously with its creation. The principle of ordering has become central in formalizing borders and borderlands in international system. And it is so because of the fact that the activities in these areas are particularly worrisome, can create uncertainty, and thus deserve attention. The notion that changes in bordering areas can create uncertainty because their proximity is based on theoretical and empirical arguments which reflects that, different types of borders might have differential impacts on both opportunity and willingness (Moraczewska, 2010). According to Lapid, although borders and orders are socially constructed, actors are contextually limited in their bordering practices by a variety of single/multiple, formal/informal, territorial/non-territorial principles of separability and individuation (Lapid, 2001). Thus, every State (mostly the European state) bonded by the treaty of Westphalia adhered to the non-interference policy which further guided the State for the principle of ordering. Thus the member states of international system till date follow the

principle of ordering in order to maintain peace⁵. However, it is a different issue that many States even after the peace treaty, continued to follow the mission of expansionism. The example of which can be said to be of period colonialism⁶. Eventually, the period of colonialism also made the principle of ordering profound in the colonial State and its borders. Borders thus became not only the marker of State's sovereignty but also a zone of orders and controls over the specified population in the territory as well. As has been argued by Lapid that borders more often, are the results of the conscious efforts for economic, political or social reasons to keep border transactions under control (Lapid, 2001). Thus, it can be argued that it is the principle of ordering that led to the augmentation of surveillance and the establishment of armed forces in borders. The ordering principle in borders not only led to the control of bodies within its territory but the bodies outside its realm as well. Through the constant surveillance in borders the inflow of population from the outside is strictly controlled as they are considered as security threat⁷ for the State as a whole and for the citizen in particular. Thus, with the above arguments it can be argued that the State is taken as the center of analysis in understanding borders and borderlands. However, recent developments⁸ have altered the perceptions of borders and borderlands in

⁵As it has been argued by the prominent theories in International Relations like realism and liberalism that, the international system is marked by anarchy outside and stability inside. According to these theories international system is marked by dualism and it is according to this that every state has to adhere and function.

⁶The period of colonialism is such that the European states in order to find new markets in Asia and Africa interfered in the domestic matters of the state for example in India British East India Company later on with the various developments became the administrators of India. Thus every policy regarding domestic and international was framed by them until 1947 when India finally gained its independence.

⁷Immigrants in the international state system have been considered as part of security threat because of the belief that these populations could bring in the issues of health, poverty, resource sharing, and also the recent issues like terrorism, drug trafficking, and so forth because of which immigrants, especially the illegal immigrants, are not allowed to enter the territory.

⁸During the end of the cold war has brought the major shift in understanding the international system. Hence the issues which were earlier given less attention found some space in analyzing the dynamism in the international system. As the earlier were tend to be weak in doing so.

International system. As a result, now the focus has shifted towards the people and issues such as environment, poverty, education, health so and so forth.

1.3.c. Traditional Framework in Analyzing Borders and Borderlands

The understanding of International Relations has largely been through the prism of traditional theories like realism and liberalism that retains State as the sole actor of every aspects dwelling around international system. The example of which could be that of security where it has been analyzed and carried forward, that State is the both ‘the security seeker and the security provider’ in international system. State and its security are given more priority rather than the issues such as health, education, poverty etc that caters individual development. Even William Van Schendel is of the view that, traditionally border studies have adopted the view from the center (Scehndel, 1997). Hence, it is with this framework that traditional theories understand or visualize borders and borderlands in International Relations. Like mentioned in earlier section the treaty of Westphalia has been used by the traditional theorist in formulating most of the aspects of International system. It is through this treaty that the nation States followed many principles in maintaining international peace and among many was the creation of borders, frontiers and boundaries⁹. The creation of which made the nation States not only have sovereign authority over its defined territory but also to respect the sovereignty¹⁰ of other States as well. Eventually, the

⁹According to William Van Schendel in his article, has mentioned that though these concepts “borders, boundaries and frontiers”, are used interchangeably but these terms imply conceptual difference. Boundary is often used in diplomatic discussions on the precise location of borders, but also has a more general meaning, pointing at the dividing line between different peoples or cultures. Frontiers commonly refers to the territorial expansion of nations or civilizations into empty areas. Whereas the term border is used for the political divides that were the result of state building, especially from the 18th century onward.

¹⁰The idea of sovereignty is well understood from Hobes’s account of Leviathan where the state becomes the sovereign head in order to maintain peace and order.

study of borders and borderlands traditionally has been concerned mostly with the legal, geographical and geopolitical questions (Preskot, 1987).

Thus, fenced zone or border was prioritized insecurity aspects of the States. Further, these aspects mostly dealt with the issues of war and determined the role and objective of borders as well. Accordingly, the most important objective of the border was from the aspect of the need for the collective survival of an entity vis-à-vis the possible aggressions coming from the entities of comparable nature¹¹ (Bigo, 2001). This eventually, made borderlands a major security arena in the debates of State security, foreign policy in International Relations. Thus, the focus was more in making borders secured and fenced as the very existence of borders was from the standpoint of war and peace. This particular understanding was a clear derivation of the whole dichotomy that identified international system (outside) to be in anarchic state and domestic (inside) to be at peace. This particular set of understanding created a series of legal and moral agendas¹² of the State towards its citizen and vice-versa. Hence the fencing of borders and the establishment of armed forces was considered as the simultaneous step by the traditional theorist and also as the part of the above stated agendas. The legal agenda of the State is very well understood as the State's imperative task of maintaining peace through its authority over its well defined territory and its population. On the other hand the morality agenda as put forward by

¹¹This particular statement generated from the article "The Mobius Ribbon of Internal and External Security(ies), by Didier Bigo, actually emphasize on arenas of insecurities that the traditional understanding on security and borders was not only limited but at the same time insufficient in explaining the robust nature of securities as well.

¹² The understanding of moral agendas of the states is taken from the book "Identities Borders Orders: Rethinking International Relations", edited by Mathias Albert, David Jacobson and Yusuf Lapid, 2001.

the traditional theorist reflects State to be a moral community¹³. These moral communities are based on principle of sameness which is distinguished from the otherness. Thus, these communities through the spectrum of moral obligations demarcate sameness and otherness through the construction of borders and simultaneously through identity. Thus, it is through this principle that traditional theorist justify the existence of borders and orders¹⁴ accordingly.

The principle of order in borders and borderlands is understood as a mandatory act, as it is considered that the violence existed in the outside realm. Therefore, strong military and surveillance pattern in borders became one of the moral responsibilities of the State in order to maintain peace and stability inside. At the same time, the increasing technological sophistication with which such controls on movement are performed, the diversity of geographical locations where these performances take place, and the speed at which decisions about ‘who’ ‘and’ ‘or’ ‘what’ is considered legitimate and/or illegitimate, are all factors commonly cited in support of the view that new border imaginaries are required. Thus borders have been reformulated in terms of mobile sites of pre-emptive risk assessment and identity management that facilitate the faster mobility of the trusted few at the expense of an array of suspicious ‘Others’ (Amoore, 2007); as a spatio-temporal continuum of controls on movement stretching between domestic/foreign domains and from now into the future (Bigo 2001; Walters 2002; Vaughan-Williams 2010; Bialasiewicz 2011); and as a set of sovereign rituals through which the fiction of the modern subjects, state and state

¹³State was constituted internally as moral community- a community of individuals bound by reciprocal moral obligations i.e civility while at the same time, in relations with on another states formed a kind of international moral community reflected in the concept of international law as the law among civilized nations (Mansbach, Wilmer, 2001).

¹⁴The relationship between borders and orders has already been discussed however it works on the principle of exclusion. It is through ordering in borders that peace has been maintained internally though the various measures like surveillance, fences and also the establishment of armed forces in border areas.

system is continually (re) produced, performed into being, and whose contingency is ultimately concealed over and forgotten about (Edkins 2003; Salter 2006; Walker 2010). Thus, borders in due course perform two major objectives, first as the definer of States territorial and authority claim and second as the wall towards the violence or anarchy that exist outside realm. However, the recent debates and developments of globalization¹⁵ have argued about the borderless¹⁶ world but the event of 9/11¹⁷ has once again shifted its focus towards making borders more concrete. Thus, even though the effects of globalization and other trans-boundary issues have diluted the role of the State but the existence of borders as a divider will always retain the phase of “inside as good and outside as bad”. Traditional debates on borders and borderlands have though been less prominent in analyzing the dynamism of international system but the importance of borders will remain prevalent as it has its foundation on State building process.

1.3.d. Non Traditional Framework in Analyzing Borders and Borderlands.

The term globalization can be associated with many issues i.e, from economy to culture, religion to technology, threats to environment so and so forth. Its effect can also be witnessed in the field of International Relations. Among many issues, security has been one such area where it has tremendously exhibited itself. Since the traditional debates on security were concerned more on State, other issues were given less attention. And International Relations according to Goettlich (2018), was

¹⁵Globalization as a phenomenon has affected international system to a very large extent. And sovereignty is one among many which has been critically examined in the process. As borders is considered as the pillar of the safeguarding state's sovereignty but globalization on the other hand has been challenging it through its agenda of open borders and borderless world.

¹⁶The concept of borderless world has come in effect with the rise in the issues like environment, diseases, migration so and so forth which were mostly trans boundary issues that borders no matter how much ever rigid and fenced could not stop the inflow of these threats into the state.

¹⁷The terrorist attack of September 9/11 in United States has tremendously effected the nation states both in terms of understanding insecurity and also identifying the lists that concerns state security.

invented just for that: to make possible and legitimize arrangements among sovereign states and expropriate territories, as can clearly be seen with the Berlin Conference of 1884. As a result the traditional framework was not able to explain the dynamics of globalization which had no centers or many centers¹⁸ for analysis. In the globalized world every issues from trade to culture started becoming global or transnational, thus security issues became transnational in character as well. With the shift in the nature of security¹⁹ the role of the State has diminished and eventually there has been a demand of cooperation among States and non states actors to the rising insecurity issues. Hence, all these concerns in International Relations bestowed the seeds of Non-Traditional framework that questioned the foundation of the former theories but also brought in several security issues into the realm of International Relations. Simultaneously, the understanding on borders and borderlands too has broadened up the dimension to analyze the region.

Various issues such as human trafficking, illegal trade, migration, drug trafficking, arms smuggling so and so forth have been polluting border region ever since its inception. Yet these issues were given less attention under the umbrella of State security. However, the impact of these issues impinged upon the security of the State in large and the people living in the region in particular. Thus, borders and borderlands was understood from these various angles and paved the way for the region to be analyzed from the non-traditional security paradigm. The depth of these

¹⁸The term ‘no centers ‘ or ‘many centers ‘ refers to end numbers of actors which can be analyzed in International Relations because of their influence in the dynamics of world politics. The particular understanding is influenced by the article of Bigo (2005) “Globalized in-security in the field and the Ban-Opticon” in J.Solomon and N.Sakai (eds) Translation, Philosophy and Colonial Difference, Traces: A Multilingual Series of Cultural Theory, Hong Kong University Press, where has given an example of the role of police and military force and has highlighted that there is a disappearance of opponents whose strength could be measured but instead there is the rise of invisible enemies who has less power and are numerous and well interconnected.

¹⁹Due to globalization many issues have come into the picture of International Relations which was earlier given very less attention. The earlier focus of security was only state but now security concerned almost all other aspects which is considered as threats to the individual existence.

issues in borders and borderlands could be analyzed from the fact that issues such as human trafficking, arms smuggling, drug trafficking so and so forth are considered as major security concerns in International Relations. At the same time these issues which have been affecting the lives of many in the border region should also be taken into consideration. Thus, it is in this regard that the study intends to bring in the perception of the women in particular living in the border region. And it is so because of the fact that these women are not only the part of marginalized section but are also a part of marginalized community. Thus, understanding their perception would enable the study to have a profound description on the issues of gender security and its impact on the border region.

1.3.e. Gender and Borderlands

The literature on gender identity suggest that gender is relational, based in the hierarchical association that relates male domination and female subordination in individuals, institutions, and representation of ideology (Brien, 2009). Gender cultural practices inevitably lead to gendered power relations, situating some groups into superior positions and others into subordinate positions as everyday practices are engaged with (Bradely, 1999). Thus a focus on differences reinforces dominant binary discourses which continue to marginalize specific groups, such as females (Hatchell, 2007).

The discourse on borders and borderlands also demonstrate various forms of gender discrimination. The act of raping ‘the nation’s women’ during war and conflicts has been one of the forms of gender discrimination in international system. This particular act not only demonstrates the violence against the individual women but is also regarded as the disempowered masculinity as constitutive of the identities of the

nation's men (Hansen, 2013). The interconnection between individual/collective and national/gendered might also be illustrated by the way that a women impregnated by rape can be represented as a passive 'national 'container of a child imagined to be the future bearer of the rapist's nationality (ibid). Hence, it can be stated that these forms of acts during wars and conflicts created gender insecurities around the globe. However, in the field of International Relations the issues of gender insecurities was rarely given importance in understanding security. Like in the context of war in Bosnia, where the realist discourse argued that western intervention should only be carried out if there were threats to western security. While at the same time it was considered that intervention merely in defense of the Bosnian government and Bosnian women would live up to the requirements of a sound foreign policy (Hansen, 2013).

Thus, through various research and analysis it was highlighted that the women in particular were the maximum victims during such wars and conflicts. It was found necessary to incorporate gender lenses in understanding security issues. And hence by doing so, a space has been created within the discourses of security for framing gendered violence as a security issue. While at the same time this particular development has also helped in broadening the conceptualization of 'national security' and considering gender security as one of 'international security' (Shepherd, 2013).

State security has been a major concern for analyzing borders and borderlands in International Relations. Eventually, this particular concern developed a form of culture in borders and borderlands where control over bodies and territories became a necessary factor. Such practices in borderlands ultimately sidelined various other aspects such as identity, gender, history which in a way demonstrated a new paradigm

in analyzing the region. It is in this regard that even Moraczewska, (2010) state that, some bordering practices are indeed made possible by certain operating logics that are always already both highly gendered and radicalized, and are structured by economic conditions of (im) possibility. However, according to Woons and Weier, (2017), contemporary IR would have to move from overemphasizing the macro-politics of interstate relations to include more prominently micro political contestations and reinventions of political.

Nevertheless, the shift in viewing borders and borderlands eventually brought in various dimensions such as the experiences of the people living in the region. But this particular shift required a fundamental departure from western epistemological paradigms such as of thinking (i.e. indigenous cosmologies) and different modes of knowing and being, such as the corpo-realities created through experiences of vulnerability (Icaza, 2017). Eventually, the initiative was put forward by Gloria Anzaldúa in her work, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The new Mestiza*, which burst into the feminist conceptual scene offering new ways of exploring relationships of power and domination resistance and agency, among women and men hitherto cast as marginalized “others”. Her theoretical formulation of “borderlands” expounds on the dynamics within material and discursive spaces that transcends geopolitical border areas, where women, men and youth, straight and queer, adapt, resist and develop new strategies to negotiate social inequalities (Segura & Zavella, 2018). At the same time, Lynn Stephen (2007), undertakes ethnographic research that weaves individual narratives and participation and observation in Mexico and the United States. She incorporates a gender analysis of women’s agency within patriarchal, hetero normative discourses and migration with indigenous migrants’ participation in the social field and “mesh works”. Stephen illuminates how structural forces and

surveillance by State agencies and citizen group limit subjects' transborder organizing activities (Segura & Zavella, 2018).

This new development of incorporating the voices of vulnerabilities in making sense of borders and borderlands made research in borderlands to grow in various range and complexity, explore women's agency in economic, political or socio-cultural activities that "deterritorialize", or span international boundaries (Candelario, 2007; Manijivar, 2006; G.Perez, 2004). Further, it conceptually tied borders to a global geometrical system of reference rather than concrete practices of rules. To which it is easier to imagine territorial politics as a distinct and autonomous sphere of politics. Thus, global linearization of borders gave rise to the question of division, an already identifiable and potentially conflict-engendering as a possibility.

While at the same time, feminist borderlands project explores identity constructions and expressions of agency within structural, discursive, and interactional settings or across geopolitical boundaries. When women's agency transcends geopolitical borders, they engage in what we refer to as "subjective transnationalism"²⁰ (Segura and Zavella, 2007).

This new wave of incorporating gender lenses in understanding borders and borderlands also highlighted the aspects of lived experiences. And it is because of the fact that, the place where people live, territory provides an important component of group identity and becomes endowed with extraordinary symbolic importance to people (Moraczewska, 2010). At the same time, 'cultural consensus' where patriarchal relationships are 'natural and valid', it is indeed mundane to note how relationships of

²⁰By subjective transnationalism we mean the range of women's activities and their sense of selves anchored in their relationships to material and discursive bases of power within and across international borders (Segura & Zavella, 2018).

domination take in gendered and eroticized meanings (Aleyuz, 2013). And this can be further enunciated by the statement of Ashish Nandy (1987), where he argues that the oppressed always hold a theory of their oppressor that includes multiple possible future. The example of which, could be that of Mexican migrant women and their paths to resist violence and assert their sexual subjectivity. This particular aspect was undertaken by Gloria Gonzalez-Lopez (2005, 2007) as a part of critical borderlands project. Her record on the interpersonal and emotional violence experienced by many Mexican women migrants, including kidnapping, sexual assault, sexual harassment, date rape and incest perpetrated by men, provides a critical lens through which, to view the migration process as one route is to escape gendered violence. These forms of experiences open up the floor for understanding gender insecurity in borders and borderlands and thus create a need for incorporating the experiences of women living in the region.

Therefore the study in this regard has brought in women's lived experiences and their understanding on security aspects on borderlands. As presence of borders by its definition not only creates a circle of control but a circle of insecurities as well and a close ethnographic research reveals that at the centre of these circles of insecurity are women who are constantly negotiating with borders for their survival (Banerjee, 2011). Following these line of arguments the study has analyzed the perception of women on security issues in North-Bengal borderland.

1.3. f. Understanding Everydayness

Bourdieu examines everydayness as a human determined system of everyday practices, which express the main human dispositions: socio-psychological preferences, tastes in relations to objects and values. Everydayness according to

Bourdieu is a reaction, manifested in preferences and actions of active subjects, a response to the repressive (standardizing) social reality. Starting from an analysis of the lived experience of the Mexican-American borderlands or from the constitutive connections between coloniality and modernity, authors such as Gloria Anzaldua, Anibal Quijano, and Walter Mignolo have pointed out that it is necessary to stop simply think an object of reflection; they shape and inflect subjectivities. Such approaches to borders as formations-of both politico-economic structures and subjectivities-challenge exclusively State or system focused approaches to studying borders for being insufficient (Woons & Weier, 2017). As a matter of fact, the geopolitics of knowledge cannot be separated from the lived experience of borders. And this particular method can be derived from an embodied experience of enslavement and racialization which invites us 'to think from the ground up, from the body. This set of framework averts the generalizations that are common to abstract modern/colonial thought' including dominant epistemologies in IR and global politics (Icaza and Vazquez, 2016; 69). People living in the border areas most of the time have to comply with the legal regulations of multiple states, participate into more than one economic and social structure, and are forced to re-establish their daily lives according to these relationships. First of all, border thinking implies dwelling in the border, not crossing borders. That is, border thinking is not an impersonal algorithm, but a conceptualization of the experience of living in the border.

1.4. Rationale and Scope of the Study

Northern-Bengal Borderland is situated in West Bengal and forms a strategic importance from the India's Foreign Policy point of view. It shares its border with three different countries i.e. Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. All these three borders have different historical background making North-Bengal borderland unique in its

own nature. Interestingly these borders give the clear picture of two kinds of borders that has been indentified in border debates i.e open border and closed border. Whether fenced or not these borders are not immune to border issues like illegal migrants, illegal trade, drugs, arms, human trafficking etc. More so, this borderland is also one of the major hub for trade and transportation for West Bengal and other north-Eastern states of India. It is under these issues along with the establishment of military in their surroundings that women of North-Bengal borderland live their life. Likewise this borderland also consist of issues like human trafficking, illegal trade, health issues like AIDs, (illegal) migrations, food, water, electricity, education, employment under which the understanding of women on security aspects in borderland becomes very important. Thus, this would give a different outlook in perceiving borderlands. Taking a critical stand the study will thus analyze the North-Bengal borderland examining it from the perspective of women insecurity issues in two different kinds of borders i.e open and closed border.

A number of studies have already been published on Borders and Borderlands. However, the study of border and borderlands so far has been very limited to nature and the securitization process of border at the maximum. It is only recently that the study has expanded its horizon and has started incorporating the experiences of people living in borderland. For example the work of Glorai Andalzua, David Gellner, Thomas M. Wilson, William Van Schendel has been very influential in understanding border from the people's experiences. Thus these studies have highlighted to the ground realities of borderlands shifting its focus from the State's security perspective to individual security. Paula Banerjee's work on Indian borderlands too has focused on these issues but has emphasized more on women insecurity issues present in India-Bangladesh border areas. Hence, she came up with the argument that the presence of

military creates insecurity for the women living in any conflictual areas ²¹. More so many feminist argue that the lack of women understanding and their experiences of border areas have made the study on borderlands a male study.

Following the above arguments the study thus will first find out the major insecurity issues that are prevalent in North-Bengal borderland, followed by examining the lived experiences of women in North-Bengal borderland under the circumstances of various insecurity factors that are present in the area. Most of the women of these particular border areas not only handle their household but are engaged in one or the other kind of economic activities as well, which makes them cross border, which again facilitate the study in understanding how the security of the State influence/hinders their everydayness.

1.5 Objective of the Study

The study seeks to examine women insecurity issues in the border areas. As the understanding of border gives an impression of military establishment, the study thus will try to seek the security issues of women in this context. The study will explore North-Bengal borderland first and analyze it from both critical security studies perspective and feminist perspective. Hence the objective of the study is as follows-

1. To examine gender insecurity issues prevalent in borderlands.
2. To study women's everyday experiences in the North-Bengal borderland.

²¹ See, Cynthia Weber, *Banana Beaches and Bases* also J. N Tickner, *Gendering World Politics*.

1.6 Research Questions

- What are the gender insecurity issues present in North-Bengal Borderland?
- How does the security of the state effects/ hinders the insecurity of women living in North-Bengal borderland?

1.7 Methodology

The study has employed critical security studies in understanding the security structure of the State that is present in North-Bengal borders of India. The critical security stand has helped the study to develop a clear conceptual clarity regarding the State and security pattern in international relations. Since the focus of the study is on understanding gender insecurity issues prevalent in North-Bengal borderland, it is through the lenses of critical feminist stand that the study has tried to analyze the issue. In order to understand the form of gender insecurity issues in the borderland, the perception of women is given priority. This has enabled the study to have the understanding of security issues from the ground level. Thus the study has employed qualitative methods in finding the security/ insecurity issues present in North-Bengal borderland. In this regard, the study made use of the qualitative data collection method such as, ethnography, focused group interviews, in-depth interviews, semi-structured questionnaire. All these were done through the extensive field study that was conducted during the course of research. The target groups for the study were women living in North-Bengal borderland. The study has been conducted in two types of border regions i.e open and close. Indo-Bangladesh border is taken as open border where the interview was conduct in the districts of Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Kooch Behar of West Bengal. On the other hand the interview was conducted in the districts of Jalpiaguri, Alipurduar and Darjeeling districts of West Bengal for open border ie.

Indo-Bhutan. The interview was conducted on the basis of the experiences of women in both the open and the closed border. This particular exercise has helped in gaining diverse views and understanding on security issues in Northern Bengal Borderland. The interview was further categorized on the basis of occupation of the women living in the region. This was done primarily to find the difference in opinion among the women, considering their experiences in the border region.

In order to gain general perspectives of gender insecurity in Northern Bengal borderland the study has therefore tried to bring in various perceptions on a singular theme which highlights the core research questions of the study. This particular method has helped the study to gain understanding on security dimension in borderlands and its impact on the women living in the region. Further it has helped in finding the forms of gender insecurity issues prevalent in borderlands. Apart from these, the study has also put into use secondary sources such as books and articles. This has enabled the study to gain a clear view on various issues such as gender, security, borders, borderlands and human security. The study has also made the use of documents, field study, etc as its primary source for understanding the security issues that is present in North-Bengal borders.

1.8 Chapterization

1. Introduction

The chapter deals with the theoretical understanding of Borders, Gender, Security and Everyday experiences. It highlights the importance of understanding borders and borderlands from people's perspectives. The chapter further emphasizes on the need of including the narration and every day practices of women living in the region, in order to gain an understanding towards the forms of gender insecurities

that prevail in the region. Thus, the chapter highlights core question along and the objectives of the study

2. Security Trends and Practices in Indo-Bangladesh Border Region: Incorporating Women's Experiences.

The second chapter tries to locate various security issues that are prevalent in India-Bangladesh border region. While at the same time it brings in the narratives of women over such issues and its impact on their everyday life. By doing so the chapter brings in the perception of the locals who understands the region in their own terms. And especially the narration of women over such issues are taken into account as their voices are overshadowed by the main frame discourse of security, borders and borderlands.

3. Indo-Bhutan Border: Understanding the Issues from the Women of the Border Region.

The third chapter highlights the security issues that are prevalent in India-Bhutan border regions. It also brings in the narration of women over such issues. The chapter at the same time brings in the experiences of border crossing of the women living in the region. By making an every account of the women living in the region, the chapter highlights the forms of gender in securities in the region.

4. Security Concerns and Challenges: Narratives from the Women of Indo-Bangladesh and Indo- Bhutan Border Region

Fourth chapter tries to bring in the different aspects of security that are of major concern for the women residing in the region. The chapter also tries to throw some light on various forms of challenges that these women face repetitively. Through such security concerns and challenges the chapter tries to bring in the focus towards the insecurities that the locals have to undergo in their everydayness.

5. Gender Insecurity Issues in Northern-Bengal Borderland.

The final chapter tries to analyze the narration of women of both the border regions and understand the Northern-Bengal region as a whole. It tries to evaluate the forms of gender insecurities in both the border regions. While at the same time it brings in the similarities and the differences in both the border region. The chapter in the process brings in the core research questions and objectives to analyze the forms of gender insecurities in the region.

6. Conclusion.

Chapter-2

Security Trends and Practices in Indo-Bangladesh Border Region: Incorporating Women's Experience

Map 2: Map of Jalpaiguri District



Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/westbengal/tehsil/jalpaiguri.html>

CHAPTER-2

SECURITY TRENDS AND PRACTICES IN INDO-BANGLADESH BORDER REGION: INCORPORATING WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES.

2.1 Introduction

The existence of borders depends upon the existence of the outside realm. As such borders are understood to be the zone of demarcation between two States, their territorial authority, State's zone of influence or as said by Schendel as "exclusive national space" (Schendel, 2002) and also the population or bodies that state controls²². Protecting or control over sovereign space has always been the prime motive of a State and this is clearly visible in border areas with the presence of military and fences. In the similar vein, Robert Sack (1986), understands territoriality as consisting of at least three things: classification by area; social communication of this area; and an assertion of control over the area. Hence, the presence of armed forces in the region makes the control over bodies and territories as a natural factor for the State. However, this particular process has debunked other aspects related to borders and borderlands such as the issues of gender security.

Historically, the demarcation of India-Bangladesh border region has been a part of the colonial project of British East India Company. And according to Segura and Zavella (2008), border demarcation which is a part of colonization where enlightenment thinkers were in the influence of asserting western ideals over other ideals, while at the same time worked on to replace them. And modernity/coloniality as understood is a co-constitutive binomial and a structure of management that operates by controlling

²²Paula Banerjee, *Borders, Histories, Existencies: Gender and Beyond* (Sage Publication, 2010), William Van Schendel, *The Bengal Borderland* (2001), David N. Gellner ed., *Borderland Lives: In northern South Asia* (Duke University Press, 2013).

the economy, authority (government and politics), knowledge and subjectivities, gender and sexuality (Quijano, 2000; Mignolo, 2013). The creation of border under such lines has sidelined the politics of identity at large making the aspect of gender security in India-Bangladesh border less crucial. Accordingly, A.P Cheater (1998) states that, ‘not all its citizens, especially women, construct their identities and relationships to the State in ways that are congruent with the State’s contemporary construction of a national identity for its citizens’. Thus, gender theorist argues for the new politics of representation, redefinition and resistance (Wilson and Donan, 1998), in understanding borders and borderlands. The chapter in this regard tries to locate the forms of gender security and the perception of women over security issues in India-Bangladesh border region. The chapter will bring in various security issues that are prevalent in Indo-Bangladesh border region along with the narration of women over such issues. At the later stage the chapter will try to understand the everyday experiences of the women living in the region. The inclusion of which will help to formulate an understanding towards the forms of gender in securities that are present in Indo-Bangladesh border region.

Incorporating people’s perspective on security issues in borders and borderlands has been one of the developments insecurity debates. The step has thus opened up the arena for diverse perspectives on borders and borderlands. Eventually, the understanding on borders and borderlands was catered towards the people and their security concerns. It is through the everydayness of the people living in India-Bangladesh borderland the chapter would try to analyze the region which have equal share of both State security as well as other forms of security issues. As according to Wilson and Donnan (1998: 28) “the study of borders adds our understanding of national, ethnic, gender and sexual identities, among others, because borders inflect

these identities in ways not found elsewhere in the State. It is in this regard that the chapter will try to understand the region from its roots by taking in the perception of the women over various issues.

2.2 An Overview of India-Bangladesh Border.

The creation of border between India-Pakistan and also erstwhile East Pakistan (India-Bangladesh) was one of the post-colonialism effects that India as well as the latter countries had to face. The creation of borders not only made the States to readdress various issues but even the local mass on the other hand (mostly the borderlanders) had to lose their homes and families²³.

The history of Indo-Bangladesh border dates back to the year 1947 which was demarcated by British in order to reorganize political space²⁴. If historical background of the border is to be considered then it can be argued that the demarcation of India and erstwhile East Pakistan also made the present border between India and East Pakistan (Bangladesh) to be based on communal basis. Further the boundary demarcation of India and Bangladesh is nowhere done on the basis of spatial rationality²⁵ which is the case of other post-colonial States such as Africa where borders followed “rational” meridian parallel and mathematical lines or

²³Margaret Macmillan, in her book *Paris 1919*, detailed the diplomatic negotiations and influence games that took place around the treaty making process again and again, she noted that the representations of States or nations would refer to aggrandized maps that served their purpose but were not exact depictions of territories and their people.

²⁴In pre-colonial history of India both Pakistan and Bangladesh were the part of a Indian state, however at the end of British administration both these states were carved out of India and thus formed an independent state named as Pakistan and East Pakistan (Bangladesh) in 14th August 1947, Simultaneously, East Pakistan i.e Bangladesh were into turmoil when Pakistan forces went with the brutal administration. Thus, it is in this regard that India as a neighboring country helped Bangladesh to come out of the turmoil and administer as an independent country.

²⁵Spatial Rationality is well understood in terms of boundary demarcation or models of ordering political space which is designed by Europeans for the colonies. According to William Van Schendel, Europeans thought of a political space as a kind of checkerboard in which every state shared fixed borders with other without having any “political voids, in which there was a broad correspondence between states and peoples, and in which state sovereignty manifested itself equally at the political margins and the center (Nugent, 1996).

major geographical features. The body responsible for delineating the boundaries came to be known as the “Radcliffe Boundary Commission” (Bhardwaj, 2015). Hence, the land demarcation between India and then East Pakistan did not consider the ground realities and socio-economic needs (Bhardwaj, 2015, Schendel, 2002) as it was stated that there were pressures and counter pressures that Radcliffe had to weigh against each other (Bhardwaj, 2015).

India shares 4200 km long border with Bangladesh. The border passes through West Bengal (2216.7 km), Assam (263 km), Meghalaya (443 km), Tripura (856 km) and Mizoram (318 km) in India and it covers six Bangladeshi divisions i.e, Chittagong, Dhaka, Khulna, Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet along with a maritime border of 180 km²⁶. It is the longest border that India shares with any other neighboring states. The border is manned by Border Security Force. There are at present 802 Border Out Posts along the border²⁷. Land on both sides of the border was mostly cultivable and was locked, and there were farms within 40 yards of zero point on either side (Banerjee, Monirul Hussian and Ranabir Samaddar, 1999). Most importantly the border also has 53 rivers which make the area complex in its own sense (Banerjee, Monirul Hussian and Ranabir Samaddar, 1999). Thus, India-Bangladesh border sets a mark of two extremes²⁸ i.e is highly militarized zones and borders that are not borders (Gellner, 2013). For example some borders of India and Bangladesh is open where daily activities are conducted effectively like in the case of India and Nepal. On the

²⁶Annual Report, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2007, pp. 35-41.

²⁷Annual Report, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2014-15.

²⁸David Gellner has argued that India-Bangladesh border is the perfect example of two types of border that is well described which is open border and closed border, see *Borderland Lives: Northern South Asia*, eds David Gellner and William Van Schendel, 2013, Duke University Press.

other hand India has managed to secure its border with Bangladesh by fencing 2,828 km from the total sanctioned fencing of about i.e, 3,326.14 km²⁹.

From the above paragraph it can be stated that Indo-Bangladesh border region covers vast region. Since the study is based on Northern Bengal region hence only those region which came under the region was chosen for the study. Thus the districts that are covered for the study are Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Kooch Bihar. From Jalpaiguri district two blocks were selected i.e Rajganj and Jalpaiguri; from Darjeeling district Phansedewa block was identified for the study; from Kooch Bihar, Haldibari and Meklignaj blocks were identified. The field study was conducted on the basis of open end questionnaire. Mainly women of this community was taken as the target group but in order to understand the types of security issues in border region some men were also interviewed in the process. The total interviews that were conducted in the region were 208, and it was so because many women in this region were unwilling to talk and many of times their husbands, fathers or brothers took the role of respondent. As a result many interviews could not be conducted smoothly. However, with the little information gathered during the field study the chapter will discuss the perspective of women on the issues present in the borderland.

2.3 India-Bangladesh Border Agreement

After the partition of India in 1947, the Radcliff Line became the border between India and East Pakistan and following the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971, the same line became the border between India and Bangladesh as well (Ministry of External affairs government of India, 2016). As a result, the issues that India and the East

²⁹Annual Report, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, 2014-15, the fencing of India-Bangladesh border upto 2,828 km has been completed up to December 31, 2014. Some difficulties however has been witnessed for the completion of border fencing due to riverine/ low lying areas, habitations within 150 yards of the border, pending land acquisition cases and protests by the border population.

Pakistan faced in this regard with land boundary continued even after the creation of Bangladesh as well. Though, some of these issues were sought to be settled by the Nehru-Noon Agreement of 1958³⁰. However, both India and Bangladesh were only able to conclude the Land Boundary Agreement in 1974³¹, soon after the independence of Bangladesh, to find a solution to the complex nature of border demarcation. The agreement has been implemented in its entirety, except for three outstanding issues pertaining to (i) undemarcated land boundary of approximately 6.1 km in three sectors viz, Daikhata-56 (West Bengal), Muhuri river-Belonia (Tripura) and Lathitila- Dumbari (Assam); (ii) exchange of enclaves; and (iii) adverse possessions (ibid). Although the agreement was not ratified by India, its implementation, except for the issues mentioned above, represents significant progress, given the fact that both the countries share an approximately 4,096.7 km long boundary³². In respect of Dahagram and Angarporta enclaves of Bangladesh, Article 1(14) of LBA provides for access to these enclaves by leasing in perpetuity an area of 178 meters 85 meters near Tin Bigha (Ministry of External affairs government of India, 2016). This was implemented through Letters of Exchange on October, 1982 between the foreign Secretary and the Additional Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh (ibid).

During the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh to India in January 2010, India and Bangladesh expresses the desire to reach a final resolution to the long-standing problem and agreed to comprehensively address all outstanding boundary issues keeping all the 1974 land Boundary Agreement (ibid). Subsequently,

³⁰Nehru-Noon (Salt) Treaty 1958 proposed exchange of Chitmahals between India and the then East-Pakistan. Subsequently, Indira-Mujib accord of 1974 also echoed the same after formation of Bangladesh.

³¹https://www.jrcb.gov.bd/attachment/Land_boundary_agreement_1974.pdf

³²http://www.hitbullseye.com/currentgk/20156_cover.pdf

detailed negotiations, joint visits to the concerned areas and land surveys were undertaken, resulting in the protocol concluded in September 2011. The Protocol (referred to as the 2011 Protocol) to 1974 LBA, signed on 6th September 2011 during the visit of the PM to Bangladesh, paves the way for a settlement of the outstanding land boundary issues between the two countries.³³

In finalizing the 2011 Protocol, the situation on the ground and wishes of the people residing in the areas involved were taken into account and the written consent of the concerned State Governments was obtained (Ministry of External affairs government of India, 2016).

2.4 India-Bangladesh Border Issues: Incorporating Women's Understanding

The origin of Indo-Bangladesh border has witnessed numerous border disputes³⁴ which created many security issues at both ends of India and Bangladesh. Though India and Bangladesh has a signed peace and friendship treaties or boundary agreement in the year 1974³⁵ but prior to this initiative other agreements such as Bagge Agreement (1950), Nehru-Noon Agreement (1958) and Singh-Ahmed Sheikh Agreement (1959), took place (ibid). However, problems over enclaves, migration, smuggling and human trafficking to name the few could not be controlled. Thus, the failure of these agreements made both the State to enter into another land boundary

³³The agreement will contribute to a stable and peaceful boundary and create an environment conducive to enhanced bilateral cooperation. The agreement will also focus on better management and coordination of the border and strengthen the ability to deal with the issues like smuggling, illegal activities and other trans border crimes (Ministry of External affairs government of India, 2016).

³⁴Border disputes between India and Bangladesh..... (see more information in this).

³⁵India and Bangladesh has signed protocol of boundary agreement in the year 2011 and ratification in the year 2015 (see, India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement: Ramifications for India's Security, Sanjay Bharadwaj, CLAWS journal, 2015).

agreement in the year 1974³⁶. The new agreement tried to solve the issues which remained unsolved during the Radcliffe Commission's demarcation (Bharadwaj, 2006). But the 1974 agreement too was not of great success as there was a difference of interpretation of the Land Border Agreement ground realities³⁷ differed in multiple ways. The lack of clarity on the boundary between the countries caused tensions and disrupted the lives of people living in these areas³⁸. After more than four decades of wait, Land Border agreement of 1974 has been ratified in 2015 and both these States has agreed upon to exchange of 162 enclaves which is to be completed on 30th June 2016³⁹.

Through various agreements both India and Bangladesh has resolved many issues yet issues like the flow of people, the movement of goods, human trafficking so and so forth remained intact (Ranjan, 2015; Dutta, 2016). Such issues in border is purely taken into the account of State security paradigm, which hardly provides space for the experiences of people who at large are the affected⁴⁰ by the demarcation process or border conflict. Thus the border dispute between India and Bangladesh too has affected many individuals living in this particular borderland. Border processing in fact has contributed in the separation of many homes and families (Schendel, 2001). Like for example a 72 year old respondent (respondent no.12) from Indo-Bangladesh border region states that

³⁶The Land Boundary Agreement of 1974 between Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was an attempt to resolve the border problems. The agreement included three distinct issues: exchange of enclaves, adverse positions of land and settlement of 6.5 km of undemarcated land border. (see, "International Border Disputes and Adverse- Possessions of India-Bangladesh International Border", Shib Shankar Chatterjee, White Paper on Land Disputes and Land Swap Deal Between India and Bangladesh, available at <http://newsblaze.com/report/secret-Dossier-of-Land-Dispute-Between-India-and-Bangladesh.pdf>).

³⁷ibid, Sreeradha Dutta, 2016.

³⁸ ibid

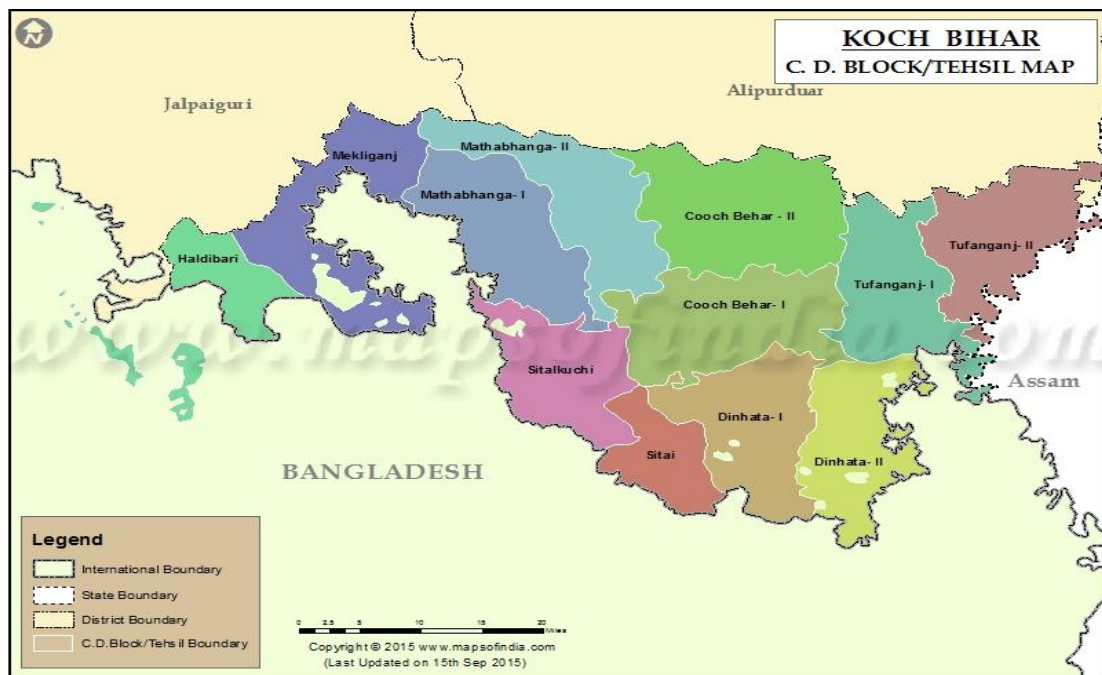
³⁹www.ndtv.com/india-news/implementationof-india-bangladesh-land-boundary-agreement-to-start-tomorrow-1202215.

⁴⁰In the bordering process, like for example of the creation of East and West Germany affected the locals so much so that it was during 1989 that people of both the region answered their dissatisfaction by breaking up the wall.

Before the demarcation of the border I used to go my maternal home very often...I used to feel happy. But I cannot do that any longer now...They (BSF) say first you make passport and cross the border. Its been many years since I haven't seen my brothers. (personal communication, Berubari, Jalpaiguri district, 4th October, 2017)

Though the respondent highlighted on how the demarcation of border between India-Bangladesh affected her life but in the process she gave a general outlining of the impact created by the demarcation on the individuals living in border region. She further touched upon the uncertainty that borders create in the lives of the borderlanders. Hence, border conflict has been one of those issues which clearly affect the locals living in the region. Moreover conflicts in any case and especially border conflicts are very crucial as it have every tendency to be the sole reason for a war between two nations.

Map 3: Map of Koch Bihar District



Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/westbengal/tehsil/koch-bihar.html>

2.4.a. Adverse Possession of Land in India-Bangladesh Border Region: Experiences of Women.

Border territory plays an important functional and symbolic role in International Relations. Especially the traditional notion holds that in the Political-military sphere, standing firm on border claims can be critical in maintaining or increasing one's influence or reputation especially the "reputation for resolve" (Synder and Diesing, 1978) in the eyes of both people within a nation and leaders of other countries. While in the process it is quite apparent that the whole understanding of nationhood dilutes the voices of the people⁴¹. However, according to William Van Schendel, little tangible connection between such intransigence and national defense, the psychological linkage⁴² should not be underestimated (Schendel, 2011). As it is the psychological aspect of the people that will eventually help to create a discourse which is very different from traditional notion. Nevertheless, for the State gaining control over valuable resources through annexation of territory seems to be especially important in an era of global resource scarcity, where they may not be enough of the resource to go around and where external sources of supply may be increasingly insecure (Mendel, 1980).

The issue of adverse possessions of land between India and Bangladesh has been an area which led to the tension between the border guarding forces of the two countries. Muktapur, Pyrdivah and Naljuri along the Meghalaya-Bangladesh border had witnessed firing incidents in the recent past⁴³. In Dumabari area (Assam) firing took

⁴¹The idea of national identity makes people to follow the binary opposite that distinguish between us and them. Hence, this particular pattern also does not allow people to even put their voices as it might be against nation as such. Thus, many of time nations play a strict role of not including the voices of people in various fields and especially insecurity matters.

⁴²The experiences and the understanding of the people living in the border region should not be neglected as they are the one who have better understanding of the region.

⁴³Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2014-15.

place between the two security agencies as early as in 1962 and again in 1965. In Muhuri river area (Tripura), 10 incidents of firing were reported between BSF and BGB, the last reported in 1999. In Borobari (Assam), in a firing incident in 2001, 16 BSF personnel were killed. Thus the adverse possession of areas has been flash point between India and Bangladesh exacerbating the tensions along the border⁴⁴.

It is in such situation that people living in this particular border region live their life where ambiguity of borders makes people also change their life style. Respondent no 33 elaborates the situation further by stating that

You never know about borders and the border gaurds...I have lived in this region since long time and I know that life in borders is very uncertain...One day they (border gaurds) say, *yeh India side hai* (the area belongs to India) and the next day they start fighting over the land. (personal communication, Binnaguri, Jalpaiguri district, 6 october, 2017)

Another respondent, (respondent no 35) from the same village draw attention towards the fear and trauma created by the firing by the border gaurds during this kind of situations. She says

First of all, we don't know where and how the firing starts...it is so sudden. So we have to live very carefully because once the firing starts then we have to quickly rush to our homes...I have heard that people have died during firing...(personal communication, Binnaguri, Jalpaiguri district, 6 october, 2017)

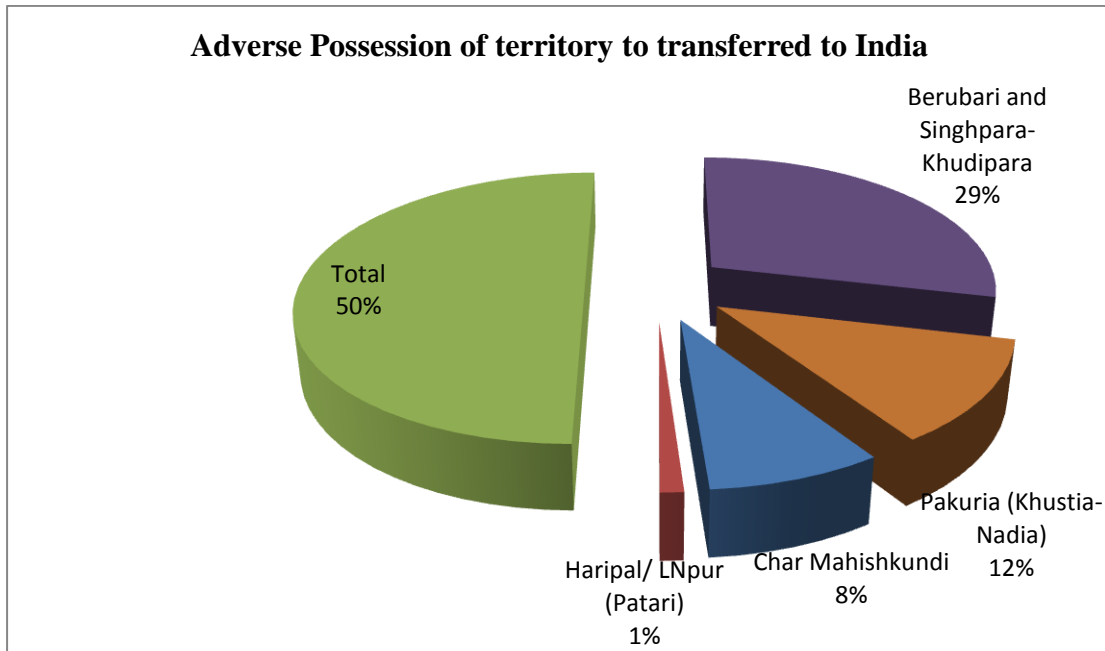
She further states that,

The tension is more when someone from your family has gone outside...that time all you can do is pray to god. (ibid)

⁴⁴ Ibid

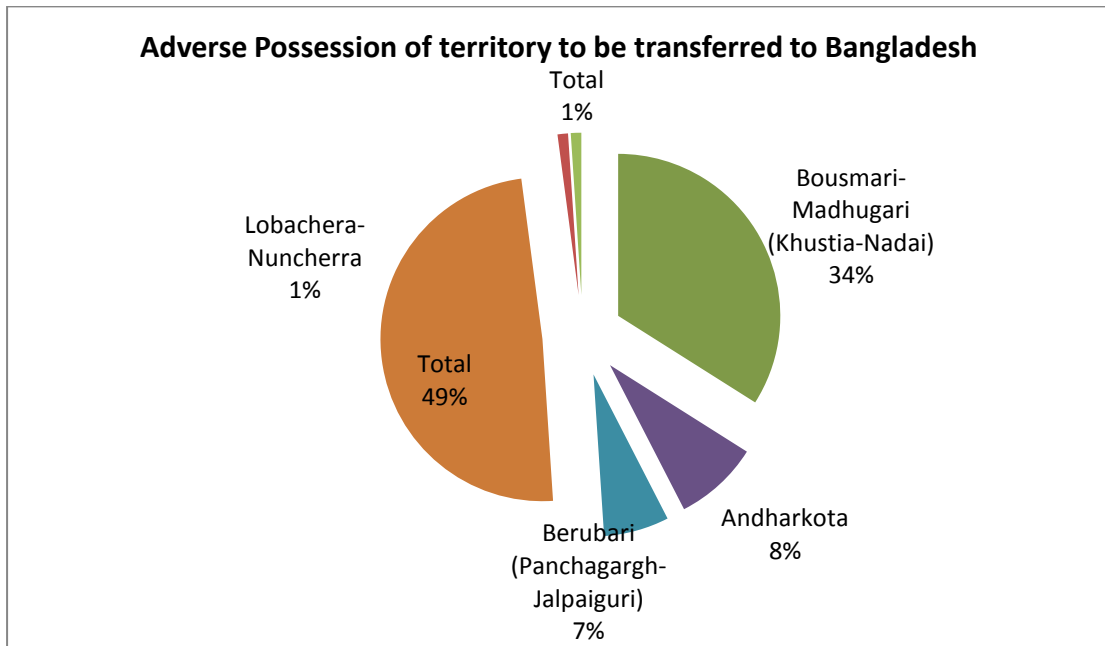
The issue of adverse possession of land between India and Bangladesh has been brought down by land boundary agreement in the year 2015 yet the impact created among the locals is clearly visible. While sharing their experiences, women referred on the impacts created by the conflicts of two States in the border region. They shade light on the importance of territoriality for the nation States. It was evident that the issue of territoriality fails to grab the insecurities of people during the conflicts. Hence, the issue such as adverse possession of land between India and Bangladesh has made the borderlanders to live with fear. And such fear has been maintained through the issue of jurisdiction over lands in the border region. Hence even though there are firm set of understanding about borderless world but for the women living in this particular borderland borders do exist and it exist in their everydayness.

Figure 1: Adverse Possession of Territory to Transferred to India



Source: Ministry of External Affairs Government of India, India and Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement, n.d?

Figure 2: Adverse Possession of Territory to be Transferred to Bangladesh



Source: Ministry of External Affairs Government of India, India and Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement, n.d?

2.4.b. Taking Women's Understanding on Enclaves in India-Bangladesh Border Region

The formation of Indo- Bangladesh border enclaves⁴⁵ was after the two years of the partition of India and Pakistan i.e during 1949. The border consists of 197 such enclaves whose existence not only makes it controversial for both the States but also for the local populace as well. Though home countries claim their sovereignty over these enclaves, the lack of any contact with the citizens with their home countries makes these enclaves as Stateless (Schendel, 2002, Dutta, 2016, Jones, 2009, Ministry of Home Affairs, 2014-15). Since its inception, enclaves was not only part of State security for both the countries it was also equally part of the lives of the people living

⁴⁵Enclaves as defined by William Van Schendel in his article is a portion of one state completely surrounded by another, see Stateless In South Asia: The Making of India-Bangladesh Enclaves, William Van Schendel, Journal of Asian Studies, Vol 61, 2002.

in India-Bangladesh border region. The issue of enclaves not only highlighted the issue of jurisdiction of both the States it has also brought in the issues related to the people living in those enclaves. The issue has been clearly reflected by two of the respondent of the same village (respondent no. 9 and no.10) who mentions that

They were neither allowed to come here or go there... it was very sad to see those people like that... Even we were not allowed to walk near fences nearby to those areas...We are told that it is Bangladesh side so...but when people from that areas got ill...BSF used to go and help them... (personal communication, Daikhata, Jalpaiguri district, 11th October, 2017).

On further enquiring about the issue of enclaves in India-Bangladesh border region, some of the respondent highlighted on how these people used to talk to each other across fences and talk about their problems. Respondent (no 14) reflects on the connectivity of the people and states that,

I have a friend on that side from that area, we used to walk along the fences and talk when BSF did not pay much attention...we talk about daily stuffs or things that is happening in her family like for example somebody got ill in her family or something like that. She even wished to come her someday...and yes even I want to go there.... (personal communication, Binnaguri, Jalpaiguri district, 6th October, 2017)

The respondent while sharing her personal views on the enclaves highlighted on how people of these enclaves are trapped in a confined space making their everydayness nothing but a predetermined “plot” staged for them in the name of internal security by their respective governments (Schendel, 2011).

However, both India and Bangladesh came into a decision at the 17th Chief Secretary Conference held at Dacca on the 29th and 30th August 1950, where each allowed

certain officials and goods from the neighboring State to enter their own enclave but barred enclave people to participate in any regional economy (Shewly, 2016). The above decision did not allow the locale to sell their produce outside the enclave (Shewly, 2016). Moreover those who had land outside enclave could no longer legally cultivate it (Kazirhat, 1999). Hence, the decision seems to have neglected the economic interest of the people living in the enclave (Schendel, 2011). The decision further criminalized the enclave people's daily routines without offering them any alternatives (ibid). The difficulties of the enclave people increased so much so that the passage to their mainland had never been regulated, and this resulted in enclaves people frequently being harassed, forced to pay bribes, or being arrested when they left their enclaves (Shendel, 2002, Joneas. 2009, Dutta, 2016, Jamwal, 2004, Shewly, 2016). With all these problems and security issues government of both the countries decided on implementing the land boundary agreement on 30th July 2015. Even though there is a high hope between both the governments that the implementation of the agreement would finally solve all the problems yet there are some questions that still remains such as the acceptance of the redefined identity by the enclave dwellers.

2.4.c. A Migration and Women in India-Bangladesh Border Region.

The issue of illegal cross border migration⁴⁶ is regarded as a vital issue for India's national security (Bhardwaj, 2014). However, there is always some kind of a force either in form of ethnic violence, domestic tensions or sheer economic compulsions that propel continuous movements of people across the Bengal Borderland (Dutta, 2013). The cross border migration flows affect State's interests in three core areas of national security concern: State sovereignty, or the overall capacity and autonomy of

⁴⁶Migration as such is a phenomenon which is done on the temporary or permanent basis. Literally, migration means crossing boundary of a political or administrative unit for certain minimum period and intermingling with similar ethno-lingual people on a permanent basis.

State actors; the balance of power among States; and the nature of violent conflict in the international system⁴⁷ However it can be argued that the idea is not new. Among various reasons, the porosity of Indo- Bangladesh border is one of the major reasons that have made the cross border migration to gain the pace.

The issue of migration in Indo-Bangladesh border region is one such area where the women are affected directly or indirectly⁴⁸. The border as it seems does not just have fences it also has the inflow of other population since its inception. These inflows have influenced State security aspect at large. In addition, the additional population in the region has changed the demographic profile of the region. It has helped in increase the share of male migrants in the region. Such scenario has affected the sex ratio negatively (Banerjee, 2001). It is in this regard the respondent (No.42) states that

All the time we see lots of people coming to the region...I don't know exactly for what purpose they come to the region but I guess they come for the tour and opportunities to work. (personal communication, Bijandbari, Koch Bihar district, 9th November, 2017)

Further she adds,

Mostly new faces are of the BSF people (which are mostly men)... (ibid)

The rise in the male population in the region coincides with the growing violence against the women (ibid). It also reduces the negotiating power of the women in such an uncertain situation. Hence, the sense of insecurity created by the penetration of additional male population in the society is reflected perfectly during the interview. Even, Paula Banerjee states that in times of generalized violence, the marginalization

⁴⁷Jonathan Krishner, ed., *Globalization and National Security* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

⁴⁸The report of UN (2017) on migration clearly exhibit that percentage of both men and women does not differ much in terms of migration (http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2017_Highlights.pdf).

of women from the public space continues unabated (ibid). Thus, it can be stated that such situation continuous to erode women's physical, economic and social security that holds sway in the border areas (ibid). The infiltration of male population further situates the women of this particular community into more rigid terms and conditions of the patriarchal form of the society (where patriarchy is the base for Indian form of society).

The issue of migration (illegal) has severe implications on the receiving land or territory as well. Apart from the issue of resource sharing the illegal migration has also inflicted on political and other societal issues⁴⁹. Unauthorized migration from Bangladesh has raised concerns in India about insurgency rising Islamic fundamentalism, violation of human rights, minority welfare, illegal trade and impact on the local demography (Nanda, 2005). And this has made the issue of gender insecurity as an important aspect as they are brought illegally and eventually become part of large spectrum of such issues.

Apart from human trafficking, marriage is another means for the women to migrate in the border region. The study has thus tried to understand how migration/ marriage as such have affected the lives of these women. And this is so because of the fact that the women who have migrated in the region have the experience of other region as well. Hence, the section will try to make sense of the border from these women who have migrated in the region after their marriage. Respondent (No. 12) has been married for 12 years now, but before her marriage she lived in proper city. She illustrates on the difference of lifestyles in both the regions. She states that

⁴⁹Societal issues are for example of environment where due to illegal migrants there has been a complaints of reducing forest areas. The other societal issue could be that of pollution that illegal migration has created. Apart from this the other issue could be taken of threat to women in the society.

I thought life would be good after marriage but after coming in the region all I have known is it is not going to be better. Infact sometimes I feel life was more comfortable and easy going before marriage...cause over here nothing is promising to make our life better..no job, no proper facilities and not even proper shops... (personal communication ,Phulbar, Darjeeling district, 11th October, 2017).

The above respondent, shades on the aspect of difficulty such as on lack of proper scope for development in the border region. This particular aspect make the women to believe that border region as compared to other region require a proper attention for the development of the local. Another respondent (no. 19) from same the village further adds..

As far as I am concerned I feel like all the people over here are caged....look at these fences....don't you think this area is more like zoo or sanctuary...its terrible. But what I can do they say its (fences and army) for our security...And 20 years of me living in the region all I can say is that its nothing for us...its all for others (I don't know whom)..but certainly not for us.... (personal communication, Phulbar, Darjeeling district, 11th October, 2017)

The respondent has touched upon the issue of security which has changed their lifestyle profoundly. It is through her experience of living in two different types of the region which makes her define border region to be nothing more than a cage. While at the same time the presence of fences makes her realize the absence of the freedom among the people living in the border region. Thus, it is the absence of freedom that makes the people living in border region to negotiate their daily life. It further highlights on the everydayness of the people living in the border region which largely depends on the mechanisms of security. It is under the influence of security apparatus that people living in the region make their living.

Table 1: Immigration from Bangladesh to India by State and Union Territory, 1981-2001 (Based on Place of Last Residency)

State/ Union Territory	Number of Immigrants			Number of Immigrants per 100,000 total population		
	1981	1991	2001	1981	1991	2001
West Bengal	2,679,029	2,636,588	2,528,993	4908	3873	3154
Orissa	16,947	20,090	38,172	64	63	104
Jharkhand	-	-	7,248	-	-	27
Bihar	39,116	23,603	10,011	56	27	12
Tripura	338,808	364,448	260,844	16,503	13,219	8,154
Arunachal Pradesh	963	1,742	6,591	153	201	600
Assam	NA	213,077	114,844	NA	951	431
Meghalaya	14,793	6,399	4,586	1,108	361	198
Mizoram	1,226	737	929	249	107	104
Manipur	1,536	859	499	108	47	23
Nagaland	744	247	384	96	20	19
Sikkim	69	52	28	22	13	5
Uttaranchal	-	-	18,444	-	-	219
Chhattisgarh	-	-	15,795	-	-	76
Madhya Pradesh	21,704	22,310	10,631	42	34	18
Uttar Pradesh	38,458	44,663	27,053	35	32	16
A. & N. Islands	1,085	3,233	2,998	577	1151	842
Karnataka	2,839	3,260	4,400	8	7	8
Andhra Pradesh	1,121	4,000	4,779	2	6	6
Goa	15	17	77	1	1	6
Pondicherry	38	79	38	6	10	4
Lakshawdeep	0	4	0	0	8	0
Kerala	25	1,720	22	0	6	0
Tamil Nadu	93	2,280	192	0	4	0

Delhi	5,395	9,435	7,346	87	100	53
Rajasthan	1,950	2,890	2,565	5	7	5
Chandigarh	52	61	39	12	10	4
Haryana	357	584	659	3	4	3
Punjab	466	250	406	3	1	2
Himachal Pradesh	78	54	53	2	1	1
Jammu & Kashmir	38	NA	50	1	NA	0
Maharashtra	8,754	12,403	15,796	14	16	16
Daman & Diu	-	1	8	-	1	5
D. & N. Haveli	0	9	5	0	7	2
Gujarat	382	730	341	1	2	1
India	3,176,071	3,375,829	3,084,826	477	403	300

Sources: Census of India (1981, 1991 and 2001)

- The total population of India excludes the population of Assam and Jammu and Kashmir, where the census was not conducted in 1981 and 1991 respectively.
- Goa, Daman and Diu were part of a single union territory in the 1981 census. Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal were carved out as new states from Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, respectively, in the 2001 census.
- The given figures does not however does not highlight the illegal migrants from Bangladesh; it just reflects on the increasing numbers of immigrants from Bangladesh which could both be legal or illegal.

2.4.d. Shared Border and the Issue of Human Trafficking: Highlighting Women's Understanding of the Border Region.

The issue of human trafficking has been a prime security concern in Indo-Bangladesh borderland. Indo-Bangladesh border region consist of both types of border i.e porous and non-porous. As a result, even after having soldiers and checkpoints on the banks of river in Indo-Bangladesh border region, the issue of human trafficking is increasing everyday.⁵⁰ The traffickers make use of the unfenced areas to cross border and continue their activity. There are two crossover points for the human traffickers to operate i.e, Petrapole, on the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, along with Benapole, situated a few miles west, in Bangladesh⁵¹. Though there are gun-toting BSF soldiers present in every check points but the unclear demarcation of the region has made the BSF work difficult to control or stop these people on operating such issues (personal communication).

Trafficking in human beings, especially in women and children, has become a matter of serious concern in India (Gupta, 2033; Sen and Nair, 2004; Sarkar, 2016; Uddin, 2014). More than 2 million women and children are trapped in the red light districts in India⁵². The Indian government estimates that the vast majority of the 500,000 children in the sex industry are girls (Center for Development and Population Activities, 1997). A little over 50 percent of the total commercial sex workers in India are from Nepal and Bangladesh (Shamim, 2001). Another official statistics states that around 3 million women are victims of sex trafficking in India (Joffres, 2008) while experts and on-field organizations reveal that in practice the numbers are four to five

⁵⁰More so it is humanly impossible to monitor the vast expanse of paddy fields and water bodies (<http://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/12400-bengal-new-epicentre-human-trafficking>).

⁵¹<https://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/12400-bengal-new-epicentre-human-trafficking>

⁵²(<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00358533.2014.966499?scroll=top&needAccess=true>)

times higher (Dasra's expert Interview, (ibid). In 2012, a total of 3,554 trafficking cases were reported, an increase of 17 percent from 3,029 cases in 2008⁵³. According to some estimates, at least 40 percent of trafficked victims are adolescents, 15 percent are below 15 years while 25 percent are between 15 and 18 years of age⁵⁴.

Similarly, women from Bangladesh are largely trafficked to India. From India they might be taken to Pakistan or Middle East (ibid). In a research by Sanlaap⁵⁵, in two red light areas of West Bengal it was revealed that most of these women migrate from one place to another. Ninety percent of the red light areas that they have identified are situated in the states that border Bangladesh⁵⁶. Around 50,000 Bangladeshi girls are trafficked to or through India every year and around 5 lakh Bangladeshi women and children aged 12 to 30 years have been illegally sent to India in the last decade (Chauhan, 2018). Most of these are either in the northeast or in West Bengal (ibid). In one particular red light area name Changrabandha about 66 percent women said that they have come from Bangladesh. The report of Sanlaap clearly states, 'The rate of trafficking in Changrabadha is remarkably higher than Dinbazaar. These red light areas are adjacent to Bangladesh border and women are trafficked through these borders like commodities (Sanlaap, unpublished: 18). Illegal transactions between traffickers of India and Bangladesh are on the rise, causing major concerns to the governments of both countries (Biswas, 2015). Citing data from various reports and estimation of NGOs, a BSF study reveals, human trafficking from Bangladesh to India has grown to such a magnitude that it now works directly on the principle of

⁵³http://www.indiaspend.com/investigations/human-trafficking-cases-jump-in-india-convictions-decline_23536

⁵⁴www.stop-india-org/human-trafficking.html

⁵⁵Sanlaap was formed and registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860, which conducts a study of sexually abused girl children in red light areas of Kolkata, South and North 24 Paragans, supported by NORAD).

⁵⁶<http://www.sanlaap.org/about>

demand and supply with a well lubricated machinery of touts working on both sides of the border with the first link in the chain being Dhaka (Chauhan, 2018). However, there is almost no accurate data available on cross border flows because of complexities in regulations, which vary across countries⁵⁷.

However, non-profits estimates of girls trafficked from Nepal and Bangladesh into India range from 500 (Asian Development Bank, 2002) to 10,000 (UNDP, 2002) to more than 28,000 (South Asian Conference to combat the trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Children). Indo-Bangladesh border region thus gives the clear picture of rising concern of human trafficking in the region. Though women of this region are not necessarily the victim of this heinous crime (interview), however this does not reduce them being vulnerable for the crime. As India-Bangladesh border clearly reflects that it is any time possible for the traffickers to cross the border region along with the victim is feasible enough. On the other hand, the issue of human trafficking also gives negative connotation about the border region. And this is because of the fact that many articles and news paper headings do not necessarily gives the clear picture of the issue, it just states that human trafficking is rising in Indo-Bangladesh border region (field work). As one of the respondent (no. 51) states that

Girls are not trafficked from this region but because of this issue our area also gets highlighted. I don't read the newspaper but people do talk about it...and all we think is our region is never highlighted for good purpose...it is always for bad issues.... (personal communication, Simulguri, Jalpaiguri district, 7th October, 2017)

Along with the impact of human trafficking in the region, the respondent at the same time have highlighted on the careless behavior of the media on understanding the

⁵⁷<https://www.kamonohashi-project.net/english/img/Dasra-HT-Kamo%20Research%20Report%20Zero%20Traffick.pdf>

issue itself. As many of times Indo-Bangladesh border region act as the passage for the crime to occur. Apart from this the issue of stigmatization is also visible. The women of the border region also face physiological trauma under such stigmatization (field work). This is clearly visible from the rigidness of the male population towards women in the region. In an interview conducted in the Indo-Bangladesh borderland one of the respondent no. 27 states that,

I have been married for past five years now, however I feel that my freedom has gone since then. He (husband) says its not good to go outside and talk with people as you never know they can take you away (talking about the traffickers). (personal communication, Singimari. Jalpaiguri district, 10th October, 2017)

Thus, the issue of human trafficking has created a sense of fear among the locals because of which the movement of women of this community is further restricted and eventually fall under the trap of further rigidness of the border region.

Table.2 State-wise Number of Case Registered under Human Trafficking in India (2011)

State-wise Number of Cases Registered under Human Trafficking in India (2011)						
State/UTs	Buying of girls for Prostitution	Selling of girls for Prostitution	Procuraton of Minor girls	Importation of girls	Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act 1956	Total
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	0	0	0	0	3	3
Andhra Pradesh	0	2	106	0	497	605
Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assam	0	0	142	2	21	165
Bihar	1	1	183	10	23	218
Chandigargh	0	0	0	0	1	1
Chhattisgargh	0	1	15	2	15	33
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0	1	1
Daman and Diu	0	0	0	0	6	6
Delhi	0	2	3	0	33	38
Goa	0	0	0	0	18	18
Gujarat	0	0	4	0	46	50
Haryana	2	2	0	0	57	61
Himachal Pradesh	0	0	3	0	2	5
Jammu and Kashmir	0	0	0	0	1	1
Jharkhand	1	6	15	6	15	43
Karnataka	0	1	8	12	351	372
Kerala	0	0	9	0	197	206
Lakshadweep	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	2	3	20	45	24	94
Maharashtra	20	2	20	0	390	432
Manipur	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meghalaya	0	0	0	3	2	5
Mizoram	0	0	0	0	8	8

Nagaland	0	0	0	0	2	2
Odisha	0	0	12	0	23	35
Puducherry	0	0	0	0	3	3
Punjab	0	0	0	0	50	50
Rajasthan	0	2	19	0	81	102
Sikkim	0	0	0	0	1	1
Tamil Nadu	0	0	0	0	420	420
Tripura	0	0	5	0	2	7
Uttar Pradesh	1	4	0	0	43	48
Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0	3	3
West Bengal	0	87	298	0	96	481
India	27	113	862	80	2435	3517

Source: India Stat.com

2.4.e. Illegal Trade and other Issues: Women of Indo-Bangladesh Border

Indo-Bangladesh border has emerged as a smugglers paradise (Khanna, 2010). Large numbers of population on both sides of the border are involved in smuggling as an occupation (ibid). However according to Van Schendel (2011), the reason behind people of border areas involved in these kind of activities is due to the fact that the borderlanders have less economic opportunities and hence get engaged in smuggling of any kind. On the Indian side, financiers of the smuggling are located in all towns on Calcutta-Siliguri National Highway and Siliguri-Cooch Behar Highway (Khanna, 2015). Items smuggled from India to Bangladesh are cattle, mustard oil, drugs, rice, sugar, cough syrup (phensydl) for consumption in Bangladesh (ibid). According to the report of World Bank, “Bangladesh’s smuggled imports from India during 2002/2003 were approx \$500 million, or about 40 percent of recorded imports from India, and approx 30 percent of total imports (recorded plus smuggled) from India”⁵⁸.

⁵⁸<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/223546-1168296540386/ch8.pdf>

Low-key handlers, mostly living in border areas, carry out most of the transshipment of the cattle across the border (Ahmed, 2015). There are 68 smuggling corridors⁵⁹ and 149 sensitive villages on the West Bengal border alone⁶⁰. Cattle smuggling is a highly profitable business for the people living in both side of the border. Cattle are reported to be sold at three or four times higher price in Bangladesh than in India⁶¹. So, it is a very lucrative trade for both Bangladeshis and the Indians⁶². The cattle smuggling has also been one of the cause of border killing in Indo-Bangladesh border (Ahmed, 2015). Estimates suggest that about 20,000 to 25,000 cattle heads worth \$81,000 from India are smuggled daily into Bangladesh⁶³. The demand-supply equation keeps the price of cattle quite high in Bangladesh. A cattle head which fetches Rs 500 to 3000 in India gets as much as Rs 20,000 to Rs 40,000 in Bangladesh (Bhattacharjee, 2016). The recent development in this vein was reported by Times of India (city), June 2016, which stated that Border Security Force Guwahati Frontier has apprehended one Indian cattle smuggler from the International border with Bangladesh in Assam's Dhurbi district.

The involvement of the people on such activities also draws some attention towards the issues of human security that are present in border areas. Factors like the lack of job, poverty so and so forth makes people to engage in such kind of activities⁶⁴. The

⁵⁹Cattle corridors or smuggling corridor stretches from the 24 Parganas mudflats in West Bengal to Tripura's forested hills. In West Bengal, cattle corridors are spread along Cooch Behar and Jalpaiguri in northern Bengal, Malda, Murshidabad, and Nadia in Gangetic Bengal, and South 24 Parganas, which is home to the Sunderbans mangrove forests, two thirds of which lie in Bangladesh.

⁶⁰http://www.vethelplineindia.co.in/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/FAO_MSS_Final_Report_VHI_05032014.pdf

⁶¹ ibid

⁶²See for details <http://www.dhakatribune.com/op-ed/2014/aug/20/beef-across-border>.

⁶³<http://www.meghalayatimes.info/index.php/writer-s-column/20960-india-bangladesh-border-management-the-challenge-of-cattle-smuggling>

⁶⁴This particular aspect is also highlighted by William Van Schendel in his many writings on India-Bangladesh border region, where he have clearly mentioned how illegal trade becomes the only option for the people in the region for survivability.

particular aspect is further well emphasized by one of the respondent (no 34), where she states that

Yes some people in this region are involved in such activities...All these activities occur at night and especially after midnight around 3am or 4 am..when everyone is at sleep...But what to do they don't have any other option also.... (personal communication, Berubari, Jalpiguri district, 9th October, 2017)

The respondent thus illustrates not only on the process but also about the risk that these people take in order to meet their daily bread. Though the issue of cattle smuggling has become a security concern for the State but has become the vital option for survivability for the people living in the region. It is through such engagements of people living in the border region that borderland community are able to replace the dependency factor with the State by building up the interrelationship between the people of border communities (Wilson & Lee, 2013).

2.5. Women in Indo-Bangladesh Border

Borderlands are not just a land or a space created in the process of boundary demarcation. It is the land where the security of any State upholds immense importance. It is perceived that the security of borderlands, secures national security, foreign policies, territoriality, and sovereignty of the State. As a consequence, two things become inevitable which are “borders as a site of inclusion and exclusion” (Banerjee, 2011) and the presence of military. This particular characteristic of borderland reflects upon the exhibition of center towards its periphery where the control of land and body is maintained as the prime motive of State's national

interest⁶⁵. At the same time borders as a site of inclusion and exclusion also reveals that borders are the zone of endemic violence where masculinity (Banerjee, 2011) is reflected and maintained. Indo-Bangladesh border region thus reflect on the presence of well maintained masculinity in the region.

During interviews in India-Bangladesh border region it was noticed that many women were not allowed to speak. The scenario was such that women of this particular community were understood as a territory which was acquired by men. This was evident by the fact that most of the time women were not allowed to speak. On the other hand due to the role of the men in the border area as a security providers made these women to adhere to the rules and regulation of the State. Though women of this border region were at some point want to live their life without any conditions set by the State but their willingness were often cut down by their counterparts. Thus, the women of this community under the rigidness of both men and the State apparatus are living their everydayness with the lack of free movement along with the lack of freedom of having their own voices.

Furthermore, border region as a site of distinction between inside and outside is well maintained by the State. And this is done with its security apparatus such as fences and the pattern of surveillance in the border region. It is in such scenario where security of the State is prime and control of the bodies an necessary act (Banerjee, 2010, women living in India-Bangladesh borderland live their everyday life. As a result of women of this particular region face further subjugation. And thus their experiences and understanding over the region is never taken into consideration even

⁶⁵Janet Carten in her article "Borders, Boundaries, tradition: State on the Malaysian periphery" have argued that the lessening power of the ruler is experienced by the subject who moves away from the centre of the State towards the periphery. But the exhibition of State power or force is more in border (periphery).

though they are equally part of it. As a result women of this community fail to understand the importance of individual security in the region.

The function of the State in India-Bangladesh border region such as control of bodies to maintaining a strict pattern of surveillance have a severe implication over the well being of the women living in the region. The suppression of these women under such scenario would curb many opportunities from them. Thus, the gender distinction is not only visible but well maintained in every aspects of the region. It is under such clear distinction that women of this particular community live their everydayness.

On the other hand, the rising issues of migration, illegal trade, human trafficking, and terrorism in India-Bangladesh borderland are adding to the vulnerability of women. It was during the field visit it was understood that migration as a process have created a different impact on the women of this community. Women have become the site of violence/ control and the resistance of that control (Banerjee, 2010) in the process of migration. Thus to analyze the relation of women and borderland in a proper sense then it can be stated that there is a clear establishment of gender exclusion and vulnerability in the region. And this can be seen in the lack of development of the region where due to poverty, education and lack of opportunities, these women have become more vulnerable. The security of women is eventually sidelined under the banner of State security. It is in this regard that Paula Banerjee argues that women's experiences are definitive of those of the vulnerable communities who are forced to pit their bodies against the border and superstructure of State security.

2.6 Conclusion

India-Bangladesh borderland is unique in its own with its history of communalism and period of separation. Along with this it also represents a model of modern day

borderland with rising issue of migration, human trafficking, illegal trade, poverty, lack of health facilities, increasing security pattern, fences so and so forth. In any case borderlands has always been a site of inclusion and exclusion but for people of enclaves for long period this basic criteria of State holding and securitizing borderland has been challenging. Simultaneously, the issue of migration, illegal trade, human trafficking to name the few has been another area of security concern both for the State and people living in the borderland making their everydayness difficult. Women in particular have to face more as they are the ones who have to deal with the situation everyday. It is through their narration on the issues that are prevalent in India-Bangladesh border region that a proper picture of gender security in the region could be drawn.

Chapter-3

Indo-Bhutan Border: Understanding the Issues from the Women of the Border Region.

Map 4: Map of Alipurduar District



Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/westbengal/tehsil/alipurduar.html>

CHAPTER-3

INDO-BHUTAN BORDER: UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES FROM THE WOMEN OF THE BORDER REGION.

3.1 Introduction

Various discourses on borders and borderlands have been framed according to State's definition of territory, jurisdiction, control and legitimacy. However, on making sense of the evolution of borders and borderlands, other dimension of the region comes into the foreplay. The fact that the formation of borderlands as a region had to undergo various other factors which itself is very different from the State's narration of borders and borderlands⁶⁶. However, it is the severe pattern of surveillance that has undermined the discourse of borders and borderlands. But, Indo-Bhutan border region can be identified and framed from very different angle. The border region between India and Bhutan can be well understood for its open nature. In fact the region has been open since its origin. The reflection of which is clearly visible on various other aspects of the region such as the socio-economic condition of the people. While at the same time, the open nature of the border region does not negate on the issues of gender security that are present in the region.

Thus, the chapter will try to locate various security issues that are present in Indo-Bhutan border region along with gender security issues. In this regard the chapter will bring in the perspectives of women living in the border region on various security

⁶⁶State's narration of borders and borderlands has always been from the perspective of security and also from the relation between the States, however this has sidelined the understanding of creating the region from people's perspective. The creation of borders and borderlands has always been from the decision of the centre but the implication of such decision has always been the people at the ground level (Welchman,1996; Newman & Passi, 1998, Newman, 2000; 2002; Kolossov & O'Loughlin, 1998; Van Houtum, 2000).

issues that are present in India-Bhutan border region. It is through such narration that the chapter will highlight on the forms of gender security as well.

3.2 An Overview of Indo-Bhutan Border Region

Indo-Bhutan border has been open since its inception, as the friendship treaty⁶⁷ between India and Bhutan made provision which emphasized on no pillars to be constructed in the border region⁶⁸. Eventually, Indo-Bhutan border region created a different set of nature which defined and made the friendship between India and Bhutan even stronger.

Both India and Bhutan shares 699 km long border between them the process of which took from 1961 to 2006 (Das, 2010). Since it is an open border, people from both side cross border every day. They do not require any visas or special permission to do so and thus a good relation has been maintained so far among the people and the State. India-Bhutan border region lies on Northern region of West Bengal, hence it is approx 340 km from Siliguri (known as chicken corridor and also the main junction for reaching out north eastern states of India). The border region between India and Bhutan lies in the Alipurduar district, Jalpaiguri district and Darjeeling district of West Bengal. The regions that exist in the borders are Jaigoan (India) and Phintsuling (Bhutan). To enter Bhutan or India, people have to cross both these places.

Jaigoan and Phunteshiling apart from being the border areas, have turned into major trade hub in due course of time. Continuous flow of goods and people in the region has grabbed the attention of various entrepreneurs, as a result of which many shops

⁶⁷On 8 August 1949 the Government of India and the Government of Bhutan signed a treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship in Darjeeling. This 10 article treaty was in fact an updated document which Government of British India and Bhutan had signed in 1910 and 1865 (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/164530/8/08_chapter%203.pdf).

⁶⁸<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/open-borders-with-nepal-bhutan-pose-security-threat/articleshow/57387053.cms>

have been opened accordingly. Like for example, during the field study it was observed that Jaigoan had stores of Nike, Addidas, Puma and United Colours of Bennetton⁶⁹. At the same time Phuntshiling had stores which offered products from Thailand such as Rice cooker, water boiler, blankets etc. Thus, the border areas between India and Bhutan are building up as trade block giving opportunities for the locale to explore. However, the openness of the border also has brought in other factors as well such as the illegal flow of goods, rise of insurgents so and so forth. In nutshell, it can be stated that the border region between India and Bhutan is one of the dynamic region where many activities could be seen and observed.

The dynamic outset of Indo-Bhutan border region also brings in the aspect of various securities issues in the region as well. Issues such as State security, gender security, and illegal trade, drug trafficking so and so forth has been grabbing attention lately. As far as State security is concerned, Indo-Bhutan border region consist of 16 battalions with 157 Border Out Posts (Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, Parliament of India, Rajya Sabha, 11th April, 2017). The particular set up of security forces in the region project on the volume of surveillance pattern in the region. Thus, the continuous presence of security forces in the border region gives a sense of the importance of the border from the perspective of the State. And this eventually has diluted the openness of the border region under the umbrella of State security.

Although the presence of armed forces in the region makes India-Bhutan border region to be like any other borders in the world. However, the region also exemplifies other issues as well which falls under non-traditional security issues. Thus, the region

⁶⁹The mentioned stores are an outlet of various international brands that are mostly available in major cities like Thimphu in Bhutan and major cities in India.

seems to be dynamic from this particular aspect as well. People of this region cross border for various purposes. It is the flow of goods and people that the border region has developed a very unique culture where many communities work together. Hence Indo-Bhutan border region demonstrates diverse arenas for understanding the region.

The study in order to understand gender (in) securities 312 women were interviewed in Indo-Bhutan region. It is through their shared experiences in the region the study was able to grab various elements of security in the region. The districts that were covered for the purpose of the study were Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar and Darjeeling district of West Bengal. Out of 312, 167 women were self employed who were engaged in various activities in the border region. Rest 145 women were housewives whose interviews were valuable in understanding the forms of restrictions and various issues that was related to gender insecurity in the border region. From the presence of armed forces to their involvement in various activities these women were able to demonstrate the region from the ground level. Through the help of narratives of women living in Indo-Bhutan border region, the chapter has tried to bring in various security issues from their perspective.

3.3 Tracing History of Indo-Bhutan Border

During the process of its creation, the Indo-Bhutan border has been riddled with varied historical events. From various wars to the intervention of British-India, the background of Indo-Bhutan is similar to that of other borders of India that share with its other neighbouring States. Bhutan's boundary with India lies close to the Himalayan foothills in the Daurs plain (Penjore, 2004). The present boundary line has evolved as a result of the British annexation of a major portion of Bhutan Duars

adjoining Assam and Bengal between 1841 and 1864⁷⁰. This territorial loss deprived Bhutan of potentially productive agricultural land which could have substantially augmented the economic base of the nation (Karan and Jenkins, 1963). Thus, in order to understand the political boundaries of India and Bhutan certain events have to be traced accordingly.

3.3.a. First Anglo Bhutan War

Bhutan was a rightful kingmaker in Cooch Behar kingdom, and even stationed a small force during its reign (Penjore, 2004). However, the smooth relation was hampered after the interests of the British and Bhutan clashed in Cooch Behar⁷¹, resulting into 1st Anglo Bhutan war. Eventually a treaty of Peace was signed in the year 1774 which made British take over Bhutan's role in Sikkim and Cooch Behar⁷² in return for non-interference in its internal matters (ibid). This treaty institutionalized the relation between the two countries for the first time and provided basis for future relation.

3.3.b. Duars Wars and the Treaty of Sinchula, 1865

The whole stretch of plains measuring 3000 square miles along the present India's borders called Duars was under Bhutanese Sovereignty⁷³. The Duars was a single most important part of Bhutanese territory, fiscally and economically (Ura, 2010). The British annexation of Assam Duars in 1841 resulted to the Duars wars in 1864-

⁷⁰http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/137612/9/09_chapter_03.pdf

⁷¹A dispute arose between two claimants to the throne of Cooch Behar in 1772. One of them approached the Bhutan government for help while other sought the help of the British. The war which followed ended with the defeat of Bhutanese. (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/35149/9/09_chapter%202.pdf).

⁷²Bhutan exercised its force in Sikkim, Cooch Behar kingdom and principality of Vijapur, and this factor brought Bhutan in direct contact with the British interest (http://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/jbs/pdf/JBS_10_09.pdf).

⁷³There were a total of 18 Duars under Bhutanese rule-7 Assam Duars in Darrang and Kamrup, and 11 Bengal Duars from river Teesta to Manas, including districts of Ambari Falakata and Jaleph (ibid).

65. As a result of which a treaty of Sinchula was signed between the countries in the year 1865 (Penjore, 2004). The treaty allowed British East India Company to annex all Bengal Duars and extended borders to foothills, in return for a monetary compensation (Mazumdar, 2005).

3.3.c. Manchu Claim and the Treaty of Punakha, 1910

The rising influence of China on Tibet raised a high concern on the political and economical interest of British East India company in the region⁷⁴. Thus, 45 years after the treaty of Sinchula, Treaty of Punakha was signed in the year 1910 (Penjore, 2004). The treaty was in fact a response to geopolitical changes in the north. The major concern of British East India Company over the region was China's fast forward policy in Tibet and other Himalayan States. Thus British wanted to stop the Chinese expansion by keeping Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal and Sikkim as buffer states (Karan and Jenkins, 1963). The new treaty's provisions increased annual compensation for the forced occupation of Bhutan's ex territory and non-interference in Bhutan's internal affairs in return for British guidance on its external matters (Penjore, 2004).

3.3.d. Indo-Bhutan Treaty of 1949

The peace and friendship treaty between India and Bhutan was signed in Darjeeling in 1949. The treaty not only reflects the contemporary nature of relationship but it also laid the foundation for their future development in the 21st century⁷⁵. Amongst others, the treaty provides for perpetual peace and friendship, free trade and commerce, and equal justice to each other's citizens (Lok Sabha Secretariat, Parliament Library and

⁷⁴The rise of China's influence over Tibet was a concern for British East India company as the company always wanted to link Tibet for trade and economical reasons. And China's influence over Tibet would not ensure the flow of trade efficiently. Since both China and Britain followed a very different ideologies it is because of which Tibet too was seen from a similar vein.

⁷⁵<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/1323131.pdf>

Reference, Research, Documentation and Information Service (LARRDIS), Reference Note No.29/RN/Ref./2014, “India-Bhutan Relations). Thus it can be stated that while framing the treaty both India and Bhutan were clear in their objectives. Since, Bhutan wanted to gain a recognition from newly independent India and also to get back 32 square kilometre Dewangri (no Dewathang) ceded by the treaty of Sinchula, 1865, and India to restore Dewathang⁷⁶. Thus, the treaty ensured the motives of both the countries. While at the same time it also removed fear of India’s alleged imperialistic design towards Bhutan⁷⁷, and prevent Bhutan from looking north⁷⁸ (Penjore, 2004).

However, the 1949 Peace and Friendship treaty⁷⁹ did have some issues which created room for various interpretation and hence confusion. It was in this context that in the press conference in Bombay in September 1979, King Jigme Singye Wangchuk stated that the Indo-Bhutanese treaty of 1949 needed to be updated in the interest of both countries so that nothing was left to “open interpretation” (Ahsan and Chakma, 1993). Thus, after 57 years both countries went ahead by signing a revised version of the treaty⁸⁰. The revised version gave Thimpu more freedom in the crucial areas of foreign policy and non-lethal military purchases⁸¹. With this both India and Bhutan are having a cordial relation which is reflected in the border region as well. However,

⁷⁶http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/137612/13/13_chapter_07.pdf

⁷⁷The treaty of 1949 had a very important provision which was embodied in Article 2, the provision stating; that the government of India would undertake to exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan (Malik & Sheikh, 2016).

⁷⁸Bhutan is a small Buddhist kingdom with an area of 40,076 square kilometres landlocked between India and China. It shares the southern border with India and simultaneously the northern border with China. Thus, India fears that if Bhutan sides with China in the north then it will be a security concern for India.

⁷⁹The treaty of 1949 carefully preserved the essence of the British policy, namely safeguarding the vital national interests of India in a strategically important area. According to article 2 of the treaty, the Government of India overtook to exercise no interference in the internal administration of Bhutan. The Government of Bhutan, on its part, agreed to be guided by the advice of the Government of India with regard to its external relations (Poulouse, 1971).

⁸⁰The revised version has rewritten article 2 and 6 of the 1949 document and gives Thimpu more freedom to pursue its foreign policy and in the purchase of non-lethal military equipment as long as such decision do not change India’s vital strategic interest (<https://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/India-Bhutan-update-friendship-treaty/article14718182.ece0>).

⁸¹<https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/1323131.pdf>

like any other border region Indo-Bhutan border region too have some issues which will be dealt in the following section.

3.4 Indo-Bhutan Border Issues: Incorporating Women's Understanding

The lenses of State security have been used time and again in understanding borders and borderlands. Indo-Bhutan border region too at times has been viewed accordingly. India and Bhutan have always followed friendly relation with each other. The reflection of which could be seen in various dimension of their relation⁸². Similarly the friendly relation between India and Bhutan could also been seen in the form of open border that both these countries have maintained so far. The region thus, not only witnesses the free flow people and goods in the region but various other activities as well. Such as the illegal flow of goods, presents of insurgents, illegal trade of animals so and so forth. The section will thus discuss about such issues in the region by taking in the perception of women.

Indo-Bhutan border region is peaceful in the sense that it does not have the issues of border conflicts⁸³. However, the presence of the border gate and the surveillance factor makes the region to follow the general principles laid down by the State for border region. While on the other hand the continuous flow of goods and people makes Indo-Bhutan border region very dynamic and vibrant. It is on the dynamic nature of the region that one of the respondent (no. 14) states that

⁸²Formal bilateral relation between India and Bhutan was started in the 1968. India was the first country to recognize Bhutan's independence and sovereignty. Further, India sponsored Bhutan's application for UN membership in 1971. India is also a major donor of external aid to Bhutan. Over the last four decades, India has provided assistance mainly in the social sector such as education and human resources development, health, hydro power development, agriculture and roads (<http://www.globalindiafoundation.org/Bhutan%20History.pdf>).

⁸³Basically border regions are defined and maintained within the framework of state security. Hence the presence of fences and armed forces in the region is one of the features that can be seen in the border region. However, in case of Indo-Bhutan border region the lack of fences and also less number of armed forces gives a different picture for analyzing borders and borderlands.

There is no problem in crossing the border....I mean we have been crossing border for small-small things...and there is no problem in it. Even people from the other side come here to buy stuffs and return..... My husband works in the other side of the border..so i take lunch for him..meanwhile i get stuffs from there as well....Many because not only people of this border region cross but from the other region as well...its like daily thing... (personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 25th November, 2017).

The free flow of people and goods in Indo-Bhutan border region clearly demonstrates the peaceful nature of the border region. However, at times Indo-Bhutan border region too face various problems and issues that has been creating problem both for the State and also for the people living in the border region.

3.4.a. Presence of Insurgents: Women's Understanding on the Issue

The porous nature of border between Bhutan and India has many contributing factors. It not only allows free flow of goods and people in the region but at the same time it became safe haven for insurgent groups as well. The whole issue of insurgency in Indo-Bhutan border region started with the operation Bajrang that Indian army launched in order to tackle the United Liberation Front of Assam and to lesser extent the National Front of Bodoland in November 1990. As a result of this massive operation, some ULFA⁸⁴ and NDFB⁸⁵ insurgents were forced to flee Bhutan, which shares a porous border with Assam and West Bengal (Rutland, 1999). Thus, by 2003 there were about 30 camps inside Bhutan, with ULFA of Assam owning 13, the

⁸⁴For United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the goal of independence was more significant than the issue of migration and the group appealed for support to all people living in Assam regardless of their ethnic origins. The ULFA stood for armed action and soon after its founding began seeking weapons and military training from official and clandestine sources located in Bangladesh, Myanmar and China, developing close connection with other insurgent groups of North-East India.

⁸⁵The demand for separate Bodo state by the National Front of Bodoland (NDFB), is a result of the long standing economic and socio-cultural aspirations of the Bodo people of Assam. Demands for a separate tribal homeland i.e Bodoland were sporadic while Assam was under British Indian rule, but only during the 1930's did the Bodo's started organising themselves under the concept.

NDFB controlling 12 and the KLO having 5 camps⁸⁶. Scattered all across the dense jungles of southern Bhutan adjacent to Assam and West Bengal, these camps were estimated to lodge about 3500 militants (ibid). However, the royal government of Bhutan by and large chose to ignore their presence during the initial years as they set up camps, mainly in Samdrup Jonkhar district of southern Bhutan along the Indo-Bhutan border (Rutland, 1999). The royal government of Bhutan did not pay much attention to these groups as long as they were not threatening the Bhutanese people (Mazumdar, 2005).

However, in 1998 the royal government finally decided to enter into a dialogue with ULFA and NDFB leaders in order to persuade them to reduce the numbers of camps and ultimately, to leave Bhutan (ibid). It was during the 12th SAARC summit in Islamabad in 2004, that Bhutanese Prime Minister Lyonpo Jigme Thinley asserted that the insurgents had impeded trade, forced closure of several large industries and educational institutions in the affected areas, inhibited general socio-economic development, and conducted several unprovoked attacks against Bhutanese nationals travelling through Assam and within Bhutanese territory (Mazumdar, 2005). As a result under the Operation All Clear, Bhutan took military action against the insurgents in December 2003 (Banerjee & Laishram, 2004).

The mission successfully flushed out many insurgent groups⁸⁷, however, according to the locals there are other groups who still operate in Indo-Bhutan border region

⁸⁶<https://idsa.in/idsastrategiccomments/Indo-BhutanJointActionagainstInsurgents> BChandramohan_051009

⁸⁷During the operation, United Liberation Front of Assam was completely flushed out and according to the locals they no longer operate at least in Indo-Bhutan border region.

(interview)⁸⁸. And this particular aspect has been clearly highlighted by one of the respondent (no 29) who states that

Over here the issue of insurgent groups is not much but in Assam border there are some groups who still have camps... My sister is married there and she informs me about the situation over there.... they collect tax from the locals over there.....they act like the ruler over there and if the army comes to know about them then they will beat the villagers for helping the insurgents.... (personal communication, Birpara, Alipurduar district 19th November, 2017).

The presence of insurgents in the border region between India and Bhutan is making the life of the borderlanders difficult⁸⁹. And this is evident from the fact that the locals not just have to pay tax to these groups but also have to seek permission from them to cross the border as well. The situation of the borderlanders gets even more complicated as the army in the region consider the locals being in favour of the insurgent groups⁹⁰. As a result the locals have to face the trouble from both ends i.e from the armies and also from the insurgent groups. The problem gets even more severe for the women living in the border region. Many girls living in Indo-Bhutan border region are easily lured by insurgent groups and hence they get married. However in many cases their husbands run away during the process of surveillance or during patrolling conducted by army in the region. Such situation is well highlighted

⁸⁸At present, 12 insurgent groups are still active in Assam, of which six are recently formed (Ultras must abjure violence for talks: CM', The Assam Tribune, December 16, 2013, <http://www.Assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnews.asp?id=dec1713/at06>).

⁸⁹Between 1992 and November 2014, 8031 insurgency related fatalities were reported in Assam. Out of this, 4172 were civilians, 822 were security forces personnel and 3037 were insurgents (www.satp.org). Beside, the number of people killed in ethnic riots is estimated to run into several hundred, although accurate statistics are not available (<http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Women%20Headed%20Household-Assam-%20Final%20Report.pdf>).

⁹⁰Anti-insurgency operations conducted by the security forces have also taken many lives including family members of the insurgents or others who did not have any direct links with any rebel group (ibid).

by one of the respondent (no. 35), who was once married to one of the member of the insurgent group but now is residing in Jaigoan and living her life.

She states that

I am happy..over here i can at least live the life peacefully...Its been 6 years now....earlier i used to live in Assam border..i have a home there.... i was married there only..but had to leave the place because of my husband... My name won't come right?..Actually i was married to agrani (local way of calling insurgents)...but after the attack on them..he fled and i was left alone...and after that not only army people but even another agrani group come and ask me about him....and they use to harass me everyday...sometimes these people used to come even at night but some how i had my family (father and brothers)...so i was lucky...there are still others like that...One day my family decided to bring me here....my sis-in-law's family is here so i stay with them now...though i have to do all the work for them but i am happy....(personal communication, Birpara, Alipurdua district, 19th November, 2017).

The above interview brought in another dimension of the presence of insurgent group in the border region. The interview brought in the issues of women in the border region who get married with these groups. These women not only have to dwell around with the questions of the armed forces in the region but also have to live in the fear of other groups present in the border region as well. It can be analyzed that both State (army) and insurgent group pursue their security at the stake of security of women living in the border region. The relation between women, insurgency and State has also led to a situation where scores of households come to be headed by women who have lost the breadwinners of their families. Sometimes most of these

women have to venture out to earn for a living for the first time in their lives⁹¹. The situation is such that while entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict and terrorism, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their sex⁹².

Hence, it is the women living in the border region who have to struggle more when issues like these are present in the border region⁹³. As a result issues like these make the security of women living in the border region worst as they are not only undermined by the State but are undermined by the insurgent groups as well. The other aspect that is hampered by the presence of insurgent in the border region is in the flow of cross border movement of people and goods. These groups as stated by the respondent (no 29), collect tax while crossing the border and also have to seek permission while crossing the border. The people of Indo-Bhutan border region not only have to abide by the norms created by the State in the border region but also have to follow the rules created by the insurgents. And women in particular have to struggle more in this kind of situation as they find unsafe to cross border alone. Hence, for the women of this region, border crossing is only possible in the presence of their male counterparts. It is under the banner of security of both groups that further marginalizes women in the region.

⁹¹<http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Women%20Headed%20Household-Assam-%20Final%20Report.pdf>

⁹²<http://www.un.org/esa/gopher-data/conf/fwcw/off/a-20.en>

⁹³The impact of armed conflict on women is usually different from men. This is because such conflicts compel them to take on different functions, play different roles, and shoulder different responsibilities, depending on the situation. Violence and its consequences can have severe impact on the lives of women and subsequently on their children. Combined with the emotional and psychological stress, women become overwhelmed with the magnitude of tasks and responsibilities when circumstances force them to head a household and be the breadwinner of the family. If this is unusual enough, many such women often meet with disapproval from sections within the society since her role as the breadwinner demands her to come out beyond the social and cultural boundaries, within which she is normally confined to (<http://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/Women%20Headed%20Household-Assam-%20Final%20Report.pdf>).

3.4.b. Issue of Dolomite Mining: Incorporating the Understanding of Women

The issue of Dolomite mining in Indo-Bhutan border region has gained attention in many forms. The extraction of mineral is not only creating environmental problem but is leading to other socio-economic related issues as well. The Pugli hills around Gomtu, an industrial town in southwest Bhutan, are being blasted to extract dolomite, a mineral used both in steel manufacturing and in horticulture⁹⁴. Though the extraction of minerals is one of the five jewels of Bhutan's economy but it has been severely affecting the tea plantations on the other end of the border⁹⁵. Thus, landslides and erosion caused by mining have left at least 14 estates prone to flooding (*ibid*).

Dolomite mining on the Bhutan foothills has led to the rise in the riverbeds of the Titli, Rati, Sukriti, Pagli and Torsha, which flows down to the North Bengal from the hill kingdom. Around 50 to 60 tea estates in the Doars located to the border have been affected by the mines. Thus people living nearby complain that due to the dolomite dust they are having respiratory problems (Saha, 2009). At the same time, the dust is creating water pollution in the region as well (Majumdar, 2007). The other issue that came in the forefront is that of soil fertility (Saha, 2009). Dolomite dust covers the plantation affecting the fertility of the soil⁹⁶. In the Makrapara tea estate, airborne dust kicked up from the mines cakes on the leaves, choking the plants⁹⁷. Further, dolomite sediments are also turning the plantations' soil alkaline, while tea bushes thrive best in slightly acidic soil (*ibid*). Though, in the year 2005, the Bhutan government decided

⁹⁴<https://uk.reuters.com/article/lifestyle-bhutan-dolomite-dc-idUKB12286520070605>

⁹⁵Every time the hills are blasted, the ground is covered with a thick layer of dolomite and stone dust thereby affecting fertility. Formation of calcium crust of soil surface prevents infiltration and reduces the lag time significantly and increases surface run off and thereby the probability of floods. The river banks have a series of tea gardens which need acidic soil, with pH values less than 7. Rampant dolomite and tale quarrying in Bhutan hills has affected tea plantation (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/185766/12/13_chapter%206.pdf).

⁹⁶<https://www.reuters.com/article/environment-bhutan-dolomite-env-dc/mines-destroy-bhutans-mountains-idUSPAR54656020070605>

⁹⁷https://www.telegraphindia.com/1071101/asp/siliguri/story_8496787.asp

to shut down two of the five dolomite mining units located on its border with India⁹⁸. But the issue of dolomite mining still retains as a major concern as the rest of the companies of dolomite mining are still meeting their demands for various purposes⁹⁹.

Map 5: Map of Darjiling District



Source: <https://www.mapsofindia.com/maps/westbengal/tehsil/darjiling.html>

⁹⁸The Times of India, Jan 6, 2005

⁹⁹https://www.telegraphindia.com/1071101/asp/siliguri/story_8496787.asp

The seriousness of the issue could be well observed in the tea estates around the border region. Though, the issue have affected tea plantation at the outset but the people in general have been influenced the most. It has been highlighted by one of the respondent (no. 41) who states that

There are many problems here...already we don't have proper income and because of this mining plantation is getting affected. Many estates has been closed and we are leaving in the stage where we don't have any where to go...no food, no money, no job...so you can imagine the situation we are living in...(personal communication, Chaupara tea garden, Alipurduar district, 22nd November, 2017).

Though the closing of tea estates has various other reasons but most of the respondent firmly believe that the closure of tea gardens is because of the mining. According to the locals, much of these companies were unable to prevent dolomite seepage from river water affecting soils fertility and eventually affecting the production of tea¹⁰⁰. In the year 2015, Lankapara was one of the first estates to be shut down and simultaneously six more neighbouring gardens i.e Birpara, Hantapara, Dumchipara, Tulsipara¹⁰¹ were closed.

¹⁰⁰http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/185766/12/13_chapter%206.pdf

¹⁰¹<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/agri-business/the-dying-tea-gardens-of-north-bengal/article8272419.ece>

Table No. 3. List of Closed Tea Gardens, Jalpaiguri District, North Bengal, West Bengal, 2005

SL. No	Name of Tea Garden Location
1	Looksan Tea Estate Nagarkata
2	Carron Tea Estate Nagarkata
3	Red Bank Tea Estate Dhupguri
4	Surendranagar Tea Estate Dhupguri
5	Dharanipur Tea Estate Nagarkata
6	Raipur Tea Estate Sadar
7	Kathalguri Tea Estate Dhupguri
8	Chinchula Tea Estate Kalchini
9	Ramjhora Tea Estate Madarihat – Birpara
10	Bamandanga & Tandoo Tea Estate Nagarkata
11	Majherbari Tea Estate AlipurDoar-2
12	Chamurchi Tea Estate Dhupguri
13	Samsing Tea Estate Metali
14	Raimatang Tea Estate Kalchini
15	Dheklepara Tea Estate AlipurDoar-2
16	Kalchini Tea Estate Kalchini
17	Kohinoor Tea Estate AlipurDoar-2
18	Mujnai tea Estate Madarihat-Birpara

Source- Study on closed and reopened gardens by Anuradha Talwar, Debashis Chakraborty and Sarmishtha Biswas, 2005

The closing of tea estates in the region thus have made the borderlanders to live under poverty where many of the people have died eventually (Gosh, 2016). A 2012 State government survey of 273 tea states in West Bengal found that, since 2002, more than 1000 people had died due to starvation (Shaktan, 2016). One of the respondent (no 51) states that

My husband died 11 years ago...I am the sole earner....he used to work in the tea estate but after the estate was closed he could not bear it as everything dependent in his earning so....I had to i cannot let my children die because of hunger..so i do stuffs here and there (the respondent seem to be in other business..unwilling to share)....There are so many houses over here which was largely affected by the closure of the tea gardens....(personal communication, Amboek tea garden, Darjeeling district, 16th November, 2017).

The issue of dolomite mining seems to have larger implications on the people around the border region of India and Bhutan. It has brought in the issues of poverty along with the gender insecurity with the closing of the estates¹⁰². Under such situation the vulnerability of women living in the border region could be analysed. The issue of dolomite mining, at the same time, have also affected on various health issues in the region. It has been highlighted by one of the respondent (no 43) who states that

Water is the major problem over here....most of us walk 2 to 3 kilometres to get water everyday....the water that we get from the wells and tubewells are not good cause of this mining the water is contaminated and it is not drinkable...so we use that water for other purpose but for drinking we get it from other villages.... (personal communication, Banarhat tea garden, Jalpaiguri district, 29 November, 2017).

¹⁰²The closing of several tea states in North-Bengal has forced many young girls between 16 and 18 years of age into prostitution in order to feed their families with no income coming from the tea estates, many of them have dropped out of school to become sex workers and earn money (Gosh, 2016).

The border region between India and Bhutan is thus facing a severe problem due to dolomite mining¹⁰³. Women in general are expected to take care of the family and providing water is one of them. As a result, the lack of clean water in the region has forced these women to come out of their home and deal with the issue everyday. Thus, the issue of dolomite mining in Indo-Bhutan border region has encompassed various issues like poverty, health and the issue of gender insecurity as well.

3.4.c. Illegal Trade: Incorporating Women's Experiences and their Perception

The porous border between India and Bhutan has various dimensions and one of them being the practice of illegal trade among the locals. Illegal trade can be defined as the cross border economic activity that is not authorized by the government of either sending or the receiving country (Schendel, 2004). Cross border trade is the main economy of the people of this area and people of this region have been engaging in cross border trade for many decades now. However, due to the restrictions on certain goods, people of this region try to get it through other means. Thus, the very nature of the border gives the people, the opportunity to earn their livelihood in the form of illegal trade. Such activity has been developed as a culture by the locals as the other alternatives seems to be negligible. Hence, illegal trade in various forms has become the major source of earning their livelihood. The lack of opportunity in the border region is well highlighted by one of the respondent (no 23) who states that

I have been living here for almost 20 years now....people do various things but most of them are into their own business.... Well they get stuffs from the other

¹⁰³The impact of the mining/quarrying activities on water was highlighted in a report prepared by the National Council of Bhutan (2013). It was stated that Dolomite and other mineral dust results in dissolving calcium into the river water quality of these rivers. This has destroyed the aquatic diversity and also soil water relationship adversely. Experts felt that the mining was also causing problems with drinking water and irrigation http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/185766/12/13_chapter%206.pdf.

side of the border and sell into villages and markets...Thats a good way of earning...otherwise there is no other option even if you go and work for the shops at one time the owners will ask you to get goods from the other side and give very less money...so better you sell it directly.....(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 25th November,2017).

This form of trade has become the major source of livelihood in the border region between India and Bhutan. The activity has become a continuous process as the crossing of border is a part of everydayness among the people of this region. The illegal trade in Indo-Bhutan border region occurs in many forms like illegal trade of animals, illegal trade of timber and other goods such as oil (petrol), foreign products etc. Even though the process of surveillance is always present yet the people have managed to create their own ways to get goods and materials from the other side of the border. It is through such means and methods created by borderlanders that the region defies the basic principles of the State. Illegal trade though considered as a crime by the authorities of the State, it has become one of the forums for understanding the ground realities in borders and borderlands.

3.4.d. Illegal Trade of Animals

The illegal trade of animals in Indo-Bhutan border region is continuously getting highlighted as the dealers has been exploiting Bhutan's extensive coverage of forest areas which is 71% of total land (Royal Government of Bhutan Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Department of Forests and Park Services, Thimphu, Bhutan, Forest Facts and Figures, 2016). Though there are efforts being made by the

governments from both ends to stop the illegal trade¹⁰⁴ of animals but these efforts are being undermined by growing illegal wildlife trade in the region. Moreover the issue of poverty and inequality in the border region has been extensively used by the traffickers to entice poachers, operating in territories with little government presence¹⁰⁵. As a result, 188 cases of illegal wildlife smuggling were reported between 1992 and 2007, according to the Forest Protection and Surveillance Unit under the Department of Forest and Park Services. The number of cases drastically increased in just two years 114 cases of wildlife crimes recorded between 2008 and 2010¹⁰⁶. The increase in such activities in the border region, according to Rosen and Smith (2010) undermines the efforts of developing nations to manage their natural resources.

The volume of illegal trade in Indo-Bhutan border region could also be estimated by the seizure of wildlife products by SSB in the region. From Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Nepal borders, the SSB teams arrested as many as 221 wildlife smugglers and recovered wildlife products worth Rs 244.56 crore in 247 cases (Kaw, 2017). In 2014, SSB apprehended snake venom worth Rs 100 crore in West Bengal, which happens to be the most wildlife crime prone state with 125 cases followed by UP with 54 cases. Sources said Alipurduar in West Bengal is the main hub of the wildlife smuggling from where 98 cases had been reported followed by Bahraih (15 cases) and Balrampur (15) in UP, Udalguri (14) in Assam, Jalpaiguri (12) and Darjeeling (10) in

¹⁰⁴South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN), State Reserve Forest (SRF), Tiger range country (TRC), Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB), Wildlife Crime control Cordination committee (WCCC), Wildlife Conservation Division (WCD) (Document of World Bank, Report No: ICR00004171., Implementation, Completion and Results report to the Royal Government of Bhutan, June 28, 2017).

¹⁰⁵<file:///D:/Indo-BHutan%20border%20Issues/Bhutan%20struggles%20to%20control%20illegal%20wildlife%20trade%20%20The%20Third%20Pole.htm>

¹⁰⁶<file:///D:/Indo-BHutan%20border%20Issues/Bhutan%20struggles%20to%20control%20illegal%20wildlife%20trade%20%20The%20Third%20Pole.htm>

West Bengal¹⁰⁷. It is from the above figures that the volume of animal trade can be analyzed in Indo-Bhutan border region.

Table No. 4. State-Wise Number of Wildlife Trafficking Cases in India (2013 to 2015)

States/UTs	2013	2014	2015
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	7	NA	NA
Andhra Pradesh	125	15	NA
Arunachal Pradesh	4	5	2
Assam	60	28	NA
Bihar	3	1	NA
Chandigarh	1	1	Nil
Chhatisgarh	282	9	7
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	NA	NA	NA
Daman and Diu	1	NA	NA
Delhi	37	23	4
Goa	3	9	10
Gujarat	2	3	NA
Haryana	114	15	NA
Himachal Pradesh	25	18	8
Jammu and Kashmir	10	NA	NA
Jharkhand	NA	1	NA
Karnataka	22	14	2
Kerala	198	1	2

¹⁰⁷<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-sashastra-seema-bal-now-a-nemesis-for-wildlife-smugglers-2547500>

Lakshadweep	NA	NA	1
Madhya Pradesh	308	230	3
Maharashtra	199	82	NA
Manipur	25	7	7
Meghalaya	3	7	7
Mizoram	18	15	23
Nagaland	10	NA	NA
Odisha	52	11	NA
Puducherry	1	NA	NA
Punjab	28	19	NA
Rajasthan	220	141	NA
Sikkim	2	1	NA
Tamil Nadu	39	32	NA
Telangana	6	3	NA
Tripura	4	2	NA
Uttar Pradesh	317	375	59
Uttarakhand	88	12	5
West Bengal	78	89	24
India	2292	1169	163

Source: <https://www.indiastat.com/table/forest-and-wildlife-data/13/illegaltrade/127/99234/data.aspx>.

The activity at the same time has created a great impact among the people in the border region. Respondent (no. 33) who states that

There are many cases where people are being caught for bringing in animals and their skins....and it is because of that sometimes the checking increases and we too get checked while crossing the border....I don't know much but some are but i guess that's one way of living here right...otherwise what to do...(personal communication, Khaibari, Jalpaiguri district, 20th November, 2017).

The respondent has highlighted two major factors. First, the border region of India and Bhutan has been utilized by the traders to smuggle animals. And second, people of this region engage themselves in such activities as they feel that it is one of the means of survivability. Further, the risk taken during the process of trafficking is also high as there is every possibility of getting caught during the process¹⁰⁸. Such situation highlights the lack of security of livelihood in the region which made the borderlanders to involve themselves in illegal methods that could bring in multiple risk for them. However, the process seems to be conducted in a well planned manner. In one of the group discussion of the field study, it was highlighted that....

The entire trade happens either during the period when the markets of both sides gets busy or just during 1am to some time around 3 am where no one will notice anything...Vehicles are kept for those purpose and people from other side cross the border without any disturbances...Sometimes, the skins and small small stuffs of animals are brought in just wrapped in a plastic bags...you see it won't get noticed...(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 26th November, 2017).

¹⁰⁸ Both India and Bhutan has strong legal and policy framework to regulate and restrict wildlife trade. Infact in India, trade in over 1800 species of wild animals, plants and their derivative is prohibited under the wildlife (protection) act, 1972. India is also a member of the CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered species of Fauna and Flora) since 1976 (https://www.wwfindia.org/about_wwf/enablers/traffic/illegal_wildlife_trade_in_india/). Similarly, Bhutan has Protection of wildlife and Protected Areas Law No. 694 and Biodiversity Act 2003 for the protection of wildlife in the region (<http://www.bagheera.com/bhutan-conservation-and-endangered-species-laws/>).

While, the process of illegal trade of animals in Indo-Bhutan border region greatly challenge the surveillance factor. This at the same time highlight on the aspect of connectivity among the people on both sides of the States as well. The other factor that gets highlighted from the interview is towards the aspect of corporation between the borderlanders and the security providers in understanding the process to curb the illegal trade of animals. The interaction with the borderlanders should be one of the first initiatives to be taken by the State governments in order to conclude the process¹⁰⁹. At the other end though the process of illegal trade of animals is creating a major concern at the global level but the people of the region understand it as a form of opportunity to earn their livelihood. Hence, the entire process could be analyzed as a tussle between the livelihood of the people of border region and the lives of the endangered species of animals that the border regions have to be understood and analyzed.

3.4.e. Illegal Trade of Timber

Illegal Logging and timber smuggling is a growing problem in southern Bhutan. According to the Indian Divisional Forest near the Royal Mans National Park over 121 people were arrested returning from Bhutan with smuggled timber during 2011¹¹⁰. Forest official in West Bengal seized more than 37 truck loads and 231 hand crafts of timber from Bhutan within one month in the same year¹¹¹. Trees like Sidha, Legerstremia perviflora, Tita chap, Michelia champaka, Lali, Laidor, Prali, Oxi and

¹⁰⁹Reducing poverty, increasing income and/or diversifying livelihoods among rural communities would reduce participation in harvesting wildlife to supply the illegal and unsustainable wildlife trade (http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTEASTASIAPACIFIC/Resources/226262-1223319129600/wildlife_ch6.pdf). And because of its characteristically low technical and financial entry requirements, ability to provide quick short-term gains and cash payments, and because of the relatively freely accessible nature of the resource itself (Nuemann and Hirsch, 2000) people get easily attracted.

¹¹⁰<https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/2012/10/16/bhutan-struggles-to-control-illegal-wildlife-trade/>

¹¹¹<file:///D:/Indo-BHutan%20border%20Issues/Bhutan%20struggles%20to%20control%20illegal%20wildlife%20trade%20%20The%20Third%20Pole.htm>

etc are smuggled¹¹². Thus, according to Indian Range office atleast one case a day of timber smuggling came into forefront from Bhutan (ibid). It is under such flow that it can be stated that the illegal trade of timber is rising very fast in the border region between India and Bhutan. At the same time the report of the officials also claims that the timber mafia profiting from Bhutan's forests off late has been engaged in armed conflict with Indian forest rangers¹¹³. Such kind of incidences highlight on the development of another crime in the region.

The border region between India and Bhutan is always open and hence the flow of goods and people is an easy process. Similarly, smuggling of timber in the region too does not have much problem. However, the activity is more fluent when the people involved have well connection with the security personnel in the border region. And this has been well highlighted by one of the respondent (no 76) who states that

My husband has his own business ...Business of timber, I have told him thousand of time to stop that business...its full of risk...whenever the delivery is ready he has to leave the home at night and won't return until morning....he says the setting has been made with the officials but once he was caught as the official was changed and he had no idea about it...but was released...but you can understand the situation, i had to go to police station and talk to so many people for his release...had to bribe so many people just to make sure that his case is not registered.....Please do not enter my name and the address as well....(personal communication, Jaldapara, Alipurduar district, 3rd December, 2017).

¹¹²<https://thebhutanese.bt/gun-trotting-indian-timber-mafia-loots-bhutan-forests/>

¹¹³Illegal trade of timber in the border region between India and Bhutan could lead to many devastation factors which slowly making progress. Thus the illegal trade of wildlife should be taken into serious consideration by the both the government officials as it could lead to the increase in armed conflicts and this could hamper the relation between both the states (<file:///D:/Indo-Bhutan%20border%20Issues/Bhutan%20struggles%20to%20control%20illegal%20wildlife%20trade%20%20The%20Third%20Pole.htm>).

The above interview highlights on the various aspects of cross border illegal activity and also on the level of corruption involved during such kind of activities¹¹⁴. It is due to the help of some corrupt officials that traders are encouraged in conducting such activity without any threat. Moreover the border region between India and Bhutan attracts less attention both by the media and government. The lack of attention in the region has made Indo-Bhutan border region as the favourable route for the traders to conduct such activity. As a result, these kind of activities are conducted almost every day by the people in the border region. It has been highlighted by one of the respondent (no 41) who states that

Taking stuffs from there to here and here to there is the most prominent thing in this border....and its a every second activity and who cares what you are taking or getting...offcourse officials in the gate sometimes get curious but they are more into talking about their own world....Thats why many illegal things also gets supplied from here to there and there to here...now the officials will not know who are actual people and who are those people (illegal traders)....so many things gets unchecked but only few gets into attention...only when the information is leaked..otherwise this region is mostly used for such activities...and the profit is also very high.....(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 26th November, 2017).

It is from her observation that it could be stated that the Indo-Bhutan border region is slowly turning out to be one of the major route for conducting illegal trade. The lack of attention in the flow of goods and people in the region could be one of the contributing factors for the rise of the illegal trade in the region. Though the openness

¹¹⁴During the symposium on Combating Wildlife Crime: Securing Enforcement, Ensuring Justice and Upholding the Rule of Law, The proceedings (2014), Dr. Thaug identified several bottleneck issues that hampers fast and effective combat against the illegal timber trade: (i) human behaviour (ii) corruption (iii) lack of alternative livelihoods (iv) lack of enforcement capacity (v) weak coordination among the agencies concerned (<https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/149395/combating-wildlife-crime-proceedings.pdf>).

of the border is a sign for the good relation between two States but this has been used for various illegal purposes due to which the relation between the two countries could be hampered. At the same time, increase in such activities in the border region also points out to the factors like lack of job opportunities, poverty etc due to which many people get attracted to it very easily. Thus, borders from this perspective should be understood from various trajectories and thus policies should be framed accordingly. The focus should be given more to people's perspective where the issues such as illegal trade in border region could be handled more efficiently.

3.4.f. Illegal Trade of Other Goods

People of India and Bhutan border region cross border for various reasons and getting goods illegally is one them. Foreign goods are easily available in Phentsheling (Bhutan side of the border) whereas Jaigoan (Indian side of the border) provide cheap products for every day use. People of this community also cross border for various jobs that is available on the other side of the border, like for example, people from Jaigoan cross border to earn their daily wages since Jaigoan and nearby areas do not provide much of opportunities for them¹¹⁵. At the same time there is a rising trend among the Bhutanese who come to the border region for various purposes and rent houses in Jaigoan which are not just easily available but are cheap as well. Thus Indo-Bhutan border region have created many reasons for the local community to cross the border.

Similarly, the open nature of Indo-Bhutan border region has also made the people of this community to get access of goods that are easily available on the other side of the

¹¹⁵As areas bordering Bhutan are largely underdeveloped, many Indians work as manual labour in construction sites in that country, where they manage to earn more decent wages (Bhattacharjee, 2016).

border. Goods such as water boiler, rice cooker, blankets, utensils, cosmetics, drawers, mugs (products from Thailand) even oil (petrol and diesel) are brought from Phentshiling to Jaigoan and tea, pulses, meat, fish, fabrics and drugs etc are taken from Jaigoan to Phuentsholing. These goods that are brought in and out are one of the reasons for the making these border regions to develop itself into a town. Nevertheless, the availability of goods and their easy accessibility have given an opportunity for the locals to earn their livelihood. Respondent (no 57) states that

At least we can earn like this....otherwise most of us would have left the place way before...there is nothing to do...no jobs. But these days many big shops are getting opened and young people are hired as well...This place is creating opportunity for many and while we try to get things from there..our husbands are allowed to cross border for jobs.....He works in a hotel over their...and meanwhile I try to get cosmetics from there to sell in other places...there is a huge demand for these products in parlours and shops in siliguri....(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 26th November, 2017).

It is the availability of products and their easy accessibility in the border region that has created an opportunity for these locals to earn their livelihood. However, most of the times the goods that are brought illegally are caught which are settled immediately either through bribing or by other means. It is the process of settlement among the locals and the security forces that needs to be highlight for understanding border culture. Thus, the process of settlement in a way has become the daily practice for the locals who are engaged in the particular activity of illegal trade. According to one of the respondent (no 68)

Getting things from the other side if the border is not that easy...people need to have settlement with the security guards...then only they will try not to notice.....Well we will have to pay 200 rs in advance and you can get

anything....(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurdaur district, 27th November, 2017).

The development of such activities in the region highlights certain factors such as the increase in the level of corruption. Along with this development, the region is also witnessing the flow of drugs¹¹⁶. And this has been a matter of concern for the people living in the region. As the rise in drugs trade has created an impact on the lifestyles of many youngster in the border region. The easy availability of drugs in the region has made them a constant user. This aspect was observed during the field visit while at the same time it has also been highlighted by one of the respondent (no 74) who states that

There is an outburst of drugs in the region and even small kids are into taking drugs..its all because drugs are brought over here and people from other side especially come here to buy them..and eventually people over here too have started taking them...the whole thing of taking and bringing goods has made this also as main business in the region....(personal communication, Dhumpari, Jalpaiguri district, 20th November, 2017).

The rise in illegal trade of drugs has made Indo-Bhutan border region a major hub for drug dealers to make the use of the open border for such purposes. This eventually is affecting the border region between India and Bhutan from the ground level. The issue of illegal trade though have created an opportunity for many in the region but it on the other hand has created a security concern both for the State and the locals in the region. It is under both the factors of opportunity and security concerns that the

¹¹⁶ Free and unregulated trade with India, open border has made Bhutan vulnerable to drug trafficking. Bhutan was more of a destination than a transit route for drug traffickers. A growing demand for Nepalese and Bhutanese cannabis in India and a corresponding demand for codeine based pharmaceutical preparations as well as low grade heroin in Nepal and Bhutan have resulted in two way smuggling of narcotics and drugs through Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders (http://nattanit.namt.weebly.com/uploads/3/8/9/8/38987657/bhutandrugtrafficking_nam%281101%29.pdf).

people of the border community have to live their life. And these people cannot let go of illegal activities in the region as it has become one of the major source of income for them. However, the rise of drug trafficking in the region has made the people to come under dilemma where it is affecting their own community profoundly. Thus, the understanding of security issues such as the impact of drug smuggling in the border region makes it a major security concern in the region. As border region between India and Bhutan has to deal with both pros and cons of such activities.

3.4.g. Human Trafficking: Incorporating Perspectives of Women

According to UNODC official during the workshop organized for sensitizing on human trafficking to the officials of Bhutan and SSB, mentioned that Bhutan is under the heat of organized crime with more cases of human trafficking being reported every year¹¹⁷. Boys and girls are trafficked from Thimpu and other parts of Bhutan to India and Nepal (ibid). Women from West Bengal and Assam have also been forced into the flesh trade in towns like Phuentsholing, Gelephu and Samdrup Jonkhar, mostly for sex (Gupta,2015). However, Bhutan initially was never serious about the issue of human trafficking per se. Young children and women went missing but the officials considered it to be the case of eloping and not the case of human trafficking. It was only after the documentation of the first case study made by National Commission (NCWC), Royal Government of Bhutan in 2007, that issue of human trafficking was highlighted in the State (ibid). It is from this particular aspect it can be stated that the issue of cross border human trafficking went unnoticed till the case study was made.

¹¹⁷<https://www.unodc.org/southasia/frontpage/2015/June/india-bhutan-crossborder-cooperation-to-prevent-human-trafficking-and-smuggling-of-migrants.html>

Trafficking at the same time occur within the State and the region as well. And this particular form of human trafficking is well seen in tea states in Indo-Bhutan border region. An activist working Shakti Vahini, an anti-trafficking NGO, told that in the first ten months of 2015, about 2800 victims of trafficking from West Bengal were rescued from various parts of the country and that the tea gardens¹¹⁸ were the most vulnerable regions for trafficking (Shaktan, 2016). Thus, the issue of trafficking in these tea states is creating problem for the locals in the region. At the same time the rise in such issue is also the consequence of many factors like poverty, illiteracy in the region. It has been illustrated by one of the respondent (no 64) who states that

Girls over here they don't have much option...either they will get married or stay like that...whats the point in educating them further... well there may be cases like that but over here I am telling you they don't have much scope...people who can afford will marry their daughters and those who are not fortunate enough will themselves go places and explore.. They go and find job outside, other means of earning money you know....(personal communication, Bhagatpur tea garden, Jalpaiguri district, 6th December, 2017).

The lack of economic opportunity, poverty and lack of education among girls the region is experiencing the rise in human trafficking. Further, it is also making people believe that, under the lack of economic opportunities for girls, entering into the arena of flesh trade can secure them financially. At the same time it can also be analyzed that it is also a matter of lack of awareness among the people regarding the consequence of such activity. And thus, girls are easily lured under the influence of easy money making process. The rise in the issue of human trafficking in the border region has also brought in the factors of gender insecurity as well. Hence, it is under

¹¹⁸As maximum number of tea gardens come under Northern Bengal region thus the understanding is being derived that the tea states covering Indo-Bhutan border region face the problem of human trafficking.

the circumstances of poverty, illiteracy and lack of scope (as stated by the respondent) that women of this community have to act and survive.

3.5 Women of Indo-Bhutan Border Region.

Indo-Bhutan border region is multi-cultural, people from various cultures live in this particular region. The recent trend of Bhutanese renting houses especially in Jaigoan has added additional flavour to its culture. The mixture of culture in Indo-Bhutan border region has made the entire region to be more dynamic and interesting. People cross border for various purposes, but Indo-Bhutan border region has been mainly used for business purposes. It is through such continuous process in the region that Indo-Bhutan border provide diverse perspectives on making sense of borders and borderlands. Hence, understanding gender security on the region is one of them.

Owing to the dynamic aspect of the region, women of this particular border are engaged into one or the other form of activities. For example some are engaged in running proper business, while some are actively involved in other form of improper business. And that being, taking and bringing goods illegally in the region. It is through the everyday practices of these women that they have developed all forms of means and methods for surviving in border and borderlands. For example, bringing oils (petrol and diesel) and selling them in villages¹¹⁹, taking grocery items for the people of other region, these women have created their own opportunities in the border region. The women of this particular community seem to have well understood

¹¹⁹ Priced at Rs 64 and Rs 72a litre in Bhutan, diesel and petrol both are cheaper by Rs 12 a litre as compared to pumps in West Bengal. The difference is also steadily increasing as Bhutan does not change oil price everyday. Almost all Indian vehicles, travelling through NH31 run a few kilometres extra to get into Bhutan to refill instead of refilling at the Indian pumps (Petroleum Issue in Bhutan border causing heavy revenue loss for India, Debasis Sarkar, ET Bureau, Oct 09, 2018).

the nature of this particular region. As a result of which it is been used as an asset for their own development and growth.

Women of India-Bhutan border region have created their own space; nevertheless the region still bears the issues of border induced gender in securities. This aspect could be analyzed from the issues of cross border human trafficking, prostitution, economic under-development, illiteracy, social stigmatization and lack of employment opportunities in the region for women. It is because of such factors that many young girls of this region have become victims to various crimes in the region. While at the same time even though these women are bread earner of their home, yet in terms of decision making their opinions are not counted. Most of the women involved in cross border trade suffer from social stigmas such as been involved in such as prostitution. This deters women from participating in cross border trade and denies them meaningful economic opportunity. Social stigmas such as prostitution also prevent women from participating in other kind of economic activities such as engaging in small scale business, domestic help and tourism sector.

Women of this particular border region though have made progress but such norm created against the backdrop of their involvement in cross border activities is hampering their free movement in the region. As a result even after having a desire to earn for their own good, women of this region sometimes have to undergo various pressures before stepping out of their homes. It is from this particular aspect that it can be stated that women of this particular community even after having opportunity are pushed into isolation where their growth seems negligible.

Though Indo-Bhutan border region is an open border creating opportunities for many to survive yet at same time it has failed to take a leap ahead on the matter of gender

security. The space created by the women in the region comes at the cost of various forms of social stigmatization. As a result it has further created a ground for gender insecurities in the region. Thus, the experiences of women of this particular region highlight a different dimension for making sense of border and borderlands. Their understanding on various issues in the border region has created many platforms which eventually deviate from the mainstream understanding of the region. Women of this region not only live their everydayness under the whole arena of State security but also in the process of finding the means of surviving in the region as well.

3.7 Conclusion

Indo-Bhutan border region is an open border. This means that there is an unrestricted flow of goods and people in the region. The flow is such that most of the time it gets unaccounted. Thus, the region does not exhibit itself to be a strict border area where crossing border has become part of the everyday routine for the people living in the region. The lack of fences on the other hand has made the movement to be smooth and easy. As a result, people of this community have benefited profoundly by open nature of the border. However at the same time, the region also witnesses rise in other activities such as illegal trade which has become a major security concerns in the region. For example, the rise of drug trafficking is creating social problem for the locals where even small children are affected by it. Thus, it can be analysed that like any other border region, Indo-Bhutan border too have problems and issues which are increasing every day.

Through the narration on various issues by women of Indo-Bhutan border region have highlighted various facets of living in the borderland. The dynamic aspect of India-Bhutan border region is one such area where these women have come up to achieve

some economic independence in the region. It is under such opportunity that women of this particular community were able to discover their own space in the arena of male dominance. While at the same time their engagement in activities such as cross border trade has made them to undergo various forms of traumas and social stigmatizations as well. It is through such experiences that the presence of gender in securities can be understood and analysed in the region.

Chapter-4

Security Concerns and Challenges: Narratives from the Women of Indo-Bangladesh and Indo- Bhutan Border Region

CHAPTER-4

SECURITY CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES: NARRATIVES FROM THE WOMEN OF INDO-BANGLADESH AND INDO- BHUTAN BORDER REGION

4.1 Introduction

The study so far has dealt with various forms of security issues i.e. both traditional and non-traditional those are present in both border areas. It has further brought in the narration of women over such issues. It is with the help of various narrations that the former chapters so far has brought in the gender dimension over security issues in both the region. During the interviews of women in the border region many other aspects of security was highlighted. The following chapter is thus, focussed on women's concerns of security and the challenges living in the border region. It is the concerns of security and the challenges of women living in border areas that the region could be visualized more from people's perspective rather than from the perspective of the State. For example, the mainstream perspective defines border and borderlands as territorial legacy of the State, as a result there are pre-determined conditionality in the region. Thus the role of armed forces, fences and even the life of people living in borderlands are nurtured according to those pre-determined conditions. However, on the other hand women of border region understands and create their own means and methods for surviving in border region. It is through the shared experiences and narratives of women living in borderlands that the chapter will try to locate various challenges and security concerns for the women of this particular region. The chapter in doing so will eventually bring in various forms of border induced gender in securities in both Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan border region.

4.2 Understanding Security in Borderlands

The discourses on border and borderlands have always been from the security aspect of the State. Most of the people perceive that borders and borderlands fall under the concern of State security¹²⁰. As a result the practice has been such that international borders are maintained with new technologies for surveillance. Furthermore, the understanding of borders and borderlands from two major aspects as well: first, citizens or people must subject themselves to the sovereignty of a recognised State in order to obtain the correct documents to legitimate their movement and second, surveillance often requires them to carry out different forms of negotiations if they have a need or desire to make border crossings (Chou, 2006). Thus, it is the flow of movement in border areas that sets another dimension for defining borders and borderlands. Though the reign of globalization has brought a shift in understanding the borders and implied that the world is slowly moving towards a borderless world where goods and people can be moved freely. But the event of 9/11 immediately made borders even more prominent. And as a result of which the security of the State has been viewed again as the prime factor in the discourses of foreign policy and International Relations. Eventually, the incident made the development of borderless world less inhibit and hastened the developments of ever more bordered worlds characterized by stark inequalities and division (Chou, 2009). Thus, it can be analyzed that the whole understanding and practices in borders and borderlands deconstructs itself (Chou, 2006: 129) according to events and issues. Hence, the whole idea of

¹²⁰By most of the people the study here is trying to bring in the general perception that is derived on borders and borderlands by the people across the globe and hence have very limited understanding on the lives of the borderland community. However by making this statement, the intention is not to undermine the understanding of the people over border and borderlands as well.

exception and rule¹²¹ holds its ground on understanding the changing nature of borders and borderlands.

The conventional notion of security that is generally shared is the narrow sense of security within the framework of the Westphalian system of international relations; in which a sovereign State is bound to defend its political independence, territorial integrity and its people (Ohta, 2009). Here the focus is mainly towards State and its security which sidelines the other aspects of security such as individual security. However, with the broadening of the concept of ‘security’ the dimension on threat too got enlarged. Hence as result, the new understanding on threats highlighted that it could have multiple heads (Baldwin, 1999). In the sense, it was perceived that the threat to State security could be from various non-state actors and other forces which carried the capabilities to influence State directly or indirectly. Furthermore, the new emerging threats in borders and borderlands also pointed out that security or for that matter threats has various heads. Eventually these new heads of threats did not just catered State but it also encompassed many individual lives living in borderlands. The State security is more like, “seeing like State (Scott, 1998), in the hybrid political contexts of the modern world security resides, along with political authority, within a much wider array of global, national and local power structures and security arrangements. Hence, security in this view is achieved through the exercise of power, in the border region.

¹²¹Agemben has long argued in formulation best distilled in his book *HomoSacer: Sovereign Power and Bare life*, that the “camp be it concentration camp or refugee camp is the paradigm of political modernity insofar as legal categories and the idea of sovereignty have served a justification for abandoning “enemy bodies”, to zone outside strict legality (“Gorgio Agemben, *State of Exception*, Translated by Kevin Attel, *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, Volume 4, Issue 3, 1 July 2006, Pages 567–575).

The encounter of multiple threats in borders and borderlands has increased the surveillance pattern to be even more rigid and firm¹²². Hence, it was understood that security can operate in parallel with the States as well as within them, in some instances complementing State authority while in others competing with it (Lukham, 2013). Nevertheless, State security in borders and borderlands from this understanding widely covers various aspects of security right from the external threat to the issues of human trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal trade so and so forth. From this particular understanding it can be considered that State can perceive insecurity or is based on the notion of various insecurities perceived both from within and the outside the realm. However, during the field study it was understood that the process of surveillance largely depends on the nature of the border as well. Similarly the issue of security prevalent in the region also depends on the relationship between the countries¹²³. Thus it can be understood that communities, nations, States and empires and the borders between them are constantly in the making and un-making (Davis, 2011).

4.3 Security Concerns in Indo-Bangladesh Borders: Perspective of Women

Indo-Bangladesh border region is a closed border where fences and surveillance are rigid and firm making the border to walk under the principles of State security. While at the same time, the region also has other security issues such as human trafficking, illegal trade so and so forth that complicates the region even more. The security issues

¹²²Since the issues of security in borders and borderlands has increased its dimension, the issues like migration, illegal trade, drug trafficking so and so forth too is understood as a threat to the state. It is under these circumstances that surveillance in borders and borderlands are even more rigid and prominent. Or as said by Konan, 2013, “today we are in era of surveillance borders...Surveillance is every where and certainly where goods and people cross territorial boundaries”.

¹²³Two borders were covered for the study, ie Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan. Hence it was observed that the surveillance factor on both these borders differed vehemently. Strict surveillance was observed in Indo-Bangladesh border, where people were not even allowed to go near the fences . At the same time border crossing was a daily routine for the people living in Indo-Bhutan border areas. It is under this observation that particular understanding was derived.

present in Indo-Bangladesh border region has been extensively dealt in the second chapter. The focus now will be on understanding security concerns from the ground level. The section will thus incorporate the narratives of women living in Indo-Bangladesh border region in order to bring in other aspects of security in the region.

For some analyst security concerns political power, including the use of organized force to establish and maintain social orders and protect them from external and internal threats (Moodie, 2000; Drent, Dinnissen, Ginkel, Hogeboom & Homan, 2014). While for others it is about how individuals and communities are protected (or protect themselves) from violence, abuse of power, orders and other existential risks (Luckham, (eds) 2013). Hence understanding security in Indo-Bangladesh border falls under both factors of security, where under the umbrella of traditional and non-traditional discourses, the strictness or the surveillance in the border area is maintained. While at the same time, people living in the region reflect on insecurities that creates a problem in their day to day activities. For example, the presence of fences and armed forces in the region not only creates an order but at the same time create a form of insecurities for the people living in the region. It is in this regard that respondent (no. 76) states that

Fences are there and so are the armies...but most of the time we fear that if something goes wrong than we will be convicted by the armies around...they tell us that if people cross the border or if there is a fight between India and Bangladesh, armies are there to protect but what about now....who is protecting us from the threat that these armies give us about not going here and there...we are threatened almost every day in our own land....(personal communication, Phansidewa, Darjeeling district, 15th October,2017)

The relationship between the armed forces and people of the borderland community is such that most of the time the people highlight on the insecurities perceived from the protector (i.e, the armies) Tickner, 2004, Enloe, 2014). Such form of relation maintains the binary division where the protected are definitely in the local and domestic sphere while on the other hand the protector are the ones who gets to know the world (Enloe, 2016). As a result, surveillance in borderlands is sometimes manifested more in terms of domestication¹²⁴ of the people in the region. Thus, when security and insecurity are experienced and decided locally the whole act of surveillance itself becomes one of the insecurities living in the border region. It is at the interfaces between local agency, State powers and global order that most politically salient and analytically challenging issues tend to arise (Chou, 2006).

From the issue of migration to human trafficking, the border region between India and Bhutan covers various aspects of insecurities that ultimately challenge the very notion of traditional security debates. This at the same time also creates an impact on various policies of the State¹²⁵. Moreover, during the field visit it was understood that these security issues that are present in Indo-Bangladesh border region helps in developing a proper understanding of the region as well. At the same time, the perception of the people over such issues also becomes necessary, as it is the people of the border community who deals with such issues in their everydayness. (Schendel,2001). It is under these circumstances that one of the respondent (no.49)

¹²⁴The term domestication of people has been used by Cynthia Enloe during an interview on her understanding on the relation between people and armed forces in International Relations. She highlights that since threat are perceived from the outside realm, the protector acts to protect the ones who need protection. But this act of protection also bring in the factor of domestication of people as well.

¹²⁵The issues like migration and human trafficking effects state security at large. And it is so because of issue like migration directly or indirectly affects other areas of the region like resource sharing problems, identity threat so and so forth. As far as human trafficking is concerned, the rise in this kind of issue would make the state incapable of protecting its own people. Thus, these kind of issues in a way challenge the capability of state in the long run.

reflects on how the border region is affected by such issues and eventually their daily life. She states that

For some who have lived here for ages it is easy for them to understand and adopt the strictness in the region but for the new comers, especially those who have married and come..for them it is very difficult to adjust. We try to live normal as possible in the region but what to do because of problem of people coming from the other region illegally or cattle trading and all, we are further confined. Moving freely in the region gets difficult if people are caught conducting such activities...(personal communication, Haldibari, Koch Bihar district, West Bengal, 9th November, 2017).

The respondent through her understanding on surveillance as part of living in the border shed light on the impact of security on local community. Under such experience it can be stated that the people who live in the already existing scenario of control and surveillance (Banerjee, 2001; Schendel, 2000, Gelner, 2012), the presence of additional issues such as human trafficking, cattle smuggling, migration so and so forth, push them into more complex relationship between State and the people. The additional presence of non-traditional security issues further securitizes the region in the process. As a result the individual security such as free movement is compromised at the stake of State security. Hence, security is created and maintained through authoritative discourses and practices of power, together with the great variety of actors and organizations contending and cooperating to establish structures of public authority (Luckham and Kirk, 2013). Indo-Bangladesh border region thus, clearly demonstrates both cooperation and disagreement on the security aspects in the region.

The earlier discourses on borders and borderlands have been through the prism of State security. Though, the concept of security has broadened up yet the importance of State security in border region has remained intact. However, at the same time the

border region witness the emergence of other security issues in the region which creates additional problems for the people living in the region. And this is more so for the women of the borderland community as they have to deal with such issues in their everyday life. The increase in such issues also leads to the increase in the surveillance factor in borders and borderlands. However the necessity of the State (surveillance) has fall under two major perceptions among the people living in the region. While some agree that surveillance and control is necessary to maintain order in the border region but for some, it creates further restrictions on the movement of the people. Such difference could be analyzed from the following interviews of different women in the same community. Respondent (no.64) states that

Well...borders needs to be protected and as far as i think it needs to be securitized. As it is a way for other people (citizen of other state) to come in...and you don't know how those people are. So its better to rely on the army and let them do their job...after all its for our security. (personal communication, Haldibari, Koch Bihar district, West Bengal, 9th November, 2017).

The interviewer who has lived her entire life in Indo-Bangladesh border region claims that securitization is the only way ahead for the security of the people. She adheres to the established notion of securitization in the border region. This form of understanding could hence be analyzed as a derivative of nationalist formation especially in Third World countries. It is like Geraldine Heng in her article "A Great Way to Fly": Nationalism, the State, and the Varieties of Third-World Feminism (1997), states that women's issues, female emancipation, and feminism lend themselves to nationalist self figuration at a given historical moment of nationalist formation, so do they lend themselves to the symptomatic figuration of nationalisms ambivalences to both modernity..... Hence it is under these circumstances that women

not only lack the clarity of over security matters of an individual but also fail to distinguish between both kinds of security. It further suggests how the security of the State over shadows the security of an individual in borderlands. Such debates over security matter do not leave any space for gender insecurity issues that are present in borderlands. The lack of clarity on security issues among the women on the other hand make them to carry the burden of criminality that is shifted onto them, drawing them more tightly into the State mechanisms of surveillance, positioning them simultaneously as victim and as a policer, all under the ideological gaze of the hetropatriarchal State¹²⁶ as protector (Alexander, 1997). Though, some consider that securitization in border region as a part of their life and also as a part of their everyday life. But for some like respondent (no.45) emphasize on lack of free movement of people in the region due to the presence of B.S.F or armed forces in the region. She states that

See protecting people at the stake of their freedom to walk here and there is not good...It is something like keeping people in a cage and telling them that we have kept you here for your protection...this is not good right..i just wish that my children get job some outside...atleast then they will be able to live their life without army and their restriction.... (personal communication, Haldibari, Koch Bihar district, West Bengal, 9th November, 2017).

It is from her statement, it could be analyzed that the necessity of the State has become a form of control for the locals. Further, the process of surveillance and control, make women of this community to live under the structures of patriarchy.

¹²⁶The term has been used by M. Jacqui Alexander in her her article “ Erotic Autonomy as a Politics of Decolonization: An Anatomy of Feminist and State Practice in the Bahamas Tourist Economy” in a (eds) M. Jacqui Alexander and Chandra Talpade Mohanty, (1997), *Feminsit Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, Routledge. By the term hetropatriarchal state she means that to combine the twin process of hetero-sexualization and patriarchy- what Lynda Hart calls “heteropatriarchy”- in order to analyze the significance of a moment of crisis when state sponsored violence moved to foreclose desire between women.

And the structure is well maintained in the form of protected and protector. The understanding is such that protector is masculinized and is supposed to be worldly, rational and strategic and the protected is supposed to be nurturing and grateful (Enloe, 2014). This form of division according to Cynthia Enloe (2014), is nothing but maintaining the structures of patriarchy in the region. As a result, the survivability of women of India-Bangladesh border region largely depends on the factor of patriarchy. It is further enunciated by the fact that women of this particular borderland are surrounded by men ideologies¹²⁷ which works opposite to the development of women. Hence, it is creating an additional layer of control on women in the region. Such incident was clearly visible during the interviews that were answered by the men instead of women in the region. The question asked during interview was on the safety of women and it was eventually the men who gave the answers. Thus the answer responded by (M¹²⁸.no 18) states that

Safety...what do you mean by safety?...Women are safe here...there is nothing wrong....There is no need for her to answer...I am here to answer on her behalf..moreover she does not know how to answer..it would be waste of your time..(personal communication, Rajgnaj, Jalpaiguri district, West Bengal, 11th October, 2017).

It is from these kinds of interview, it could be analyzed that the women of this particular community live their life not just with the control over their bodies (as mentioned and emphasized by Paula Banerjee) but also with the control over their mind and voices as well. Further it can be stated that the security perception of these

¹²⁷By stating men ideologies, the study is trying to make a statement that the existence of borders which is already one form of men ideology has always put men as the sole presenter and re-presenter of everything in the region. And thus this further makes the patriarchy to establish more rules and regulation over women living in border region.

¹²⁸M in front of the Number refers to men of the region who answered for their women and elaborated that women don't know anything rather he will answer for them.

women is synonymised on the form of control that the region offers them. As a result women of Indo-Bangladesh border region tend to associate their security with free will and free movement in the region.

4.4 Understanding Security in Indo-Bhutan Border: A Perspective of Women

The understanding of borders has come to incorporate a set of broadly identifiable and broadly applicable common ideas: globalization, sovereignty, human rights, violence, mobility and security, to name just a few (Pickering, 2011). Most of the concern with borders either broadly or specifically addresses these issues in one way or another (see, Donnan & Wilson, 1999; Gready, 2004; Ortiz, 2001; Howitt, 2001; Soguk, 1999; Devetak; 1995). Eventually, the issues of security in Indo-Bhutan border too revolve around these concepts. While at the same time Indo-Bhutan border region, also exemplifies various other factors which directly or indirectly challenge the very notion of State security. Such challenges could also be due to the nature of the border¹²⁹ itself that allows the free mobility of the people with minimal level of surveillance.

The notion of State security in this particular border region seems to be diluted in the whole process that exists between India and Bhutan. This is because of the fact that both these countries have maintained a good relation with each other. Hence, the whole notion of traditional security studies on protecting its citizens does not fit as the referent objects in this particular region are not confined to the security of States, their institutions and borders. As stated by Chou, (2006), the geopolitics of borders has significantly articulated a new horizontal and relational logic of economic, social and

¹²⁹Indo-Bhutan border is an open border, hence making the mobility of the people in the region easy. The surveillance pattern too in the region seems to be a mere representation of the state's jurisdiction. In the sense, the border between India and Bhutan could be crossed any time and people do not have to show any kind of identification proof while crossing the border.

cultural structures (Chou, 2006). Thus, Indo-Bhutan border region too in the process of creation and maintenance of border policies has created its own unique feature.

It is through the women's perception on security in the region that most understanding of the border region has shaped. Women of this borderland have moved beyond the very notion of State security and have developed their own space and discourses in the region. Women of this region are engaged in various cross border trade activities. The process of border crossing has made these women to create their own space in the region. Donan and Wilson (1999:91) writes that borders create "their own kinds of opportunities for informal commerce and illicit economic dealing". Hence, women of this borderland have certainly taken this factor in their favour and accommodated with the structures of the State security. This aspect is evident from the personal interview of the respondent no. 58

It is a everyday business to cross the border...if we don't then how will we run the business..you see it is all about business...everyone does and so do we...The things that are foreign made and are not available in India like soaps, plastic things you know..if you sell those things in Siliguri then you will get a good price...actually you don't need to go Siliguri, you can send it in the vehicle...(personal communication, Madarihat, Alipurduar district, 9th November, 2017).

It was while stating her daily business in the region, the respondent brought in different aspects of security in Indo-Bhutan border region. For most of the women, flow of trade that occurs in the region brings in economic security for them. Such activity not only allows them to move freely in the region but it also helps them to earn daily bread which is otherwise considered to be the task of men. Their involvement in such activities have made the border region a thriving zone for various

economic activities for them which otherwise is considered to be the realm of men¹³⁰. It is their daily life and the local practices of living in the border region which contradict and even render absurd the nation-State concept of sovereignty (Horstman, 2006). The women of this community through such activities have rendered not only the notion of sovereignty replete but also have developed their own methods for their survival in border region. The survivability aspect of these women becomes valuable since there are very less alternatives. It is under such circumstances that the experiences of these women need greater attention in the discourses of security studies. The experiences of the marginalized and oppressed people is important for arriving at a more objective understanding of the world (Moya, 1997) and eventually for broadening up the discourses on security studies as well.

The other factors that could be analyzed from the above interview is regarding the whole process of border crossing. Though the women are able to gain their own space in the region yet the existence of border outpost on the other hand symbolizes the existence of control over the flow of people and goods. The very existence of gates between India and Bhutan also reflects on the form of control that State exerts on its citizens on being the part of their jurisdiction. Donan and Wilson (1999:108) writes that, “all people who cross international borders must negotiate not only with the State power that they encounter,...but also with new framework of social status and organization with their concomitant cultural ideals and values”. Women not just have to negotiate with State apparatus but being marginalized section have to negotiate at a

¹³⁰It is generally understood that borders are to be securitized, so in the process men are given the task for protection. Eventually, the entire region becomes a work place for men as only men can conduct warfare if such kind of circumstances arises.

different level¹³¹ while crossing borders. The day to day process while crossing the border is well explained by respondent (no.48), who states that

It all depends on their mood...if they are happy they will allow you to go and bring stuffs but if they are in foul mood then you can't even imagine the kind of things that they can do to you. The guards will start checking and if there are ladies then you feel ok but with men you don't feel nice...Sometimes without any checking they will ask you money...It depends on the things that you are getting from there..like if you are getting small things then they will ask you Rs 200 but bigger things will cost you more...and if you say that you don't have money to give then be ready to hear abusive words.....Of course why not?...In fact they are more abusive ...(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 25th November, 2017).

The intention of the respondent during the interview was to reflect on the attitude of armed forces present in the region. The narration however also brought in the aspect of insecurities that women perceive while crossing the border. Crossing of border is an every day routine for most of the women living in the region. This at the same time has also brought in the practice of verbal abuses for them. The form of insecurity created by the security guards in the region through such activity is perceived as a threat by the women living in the region. Thus, it is during the process of border crossing that women perceive such threat from the people who are entitled as the protector. The process of border crossing in the long run could be understood both as an opportunity and also as a zone of insecurities for the women living in the region. As a result the development of women relied on the apparatus of State security. They on the other hand create a prism of insecurities for women either in the form of

¹³¹The study on stating on different level is trying to bring in various studies that has dealt extensively with women on crossing borders and its implication on them. These studies thus have brought in the aspects of violence and rape that frequently occurs in the border region when women try to cross borders (see, Banerjee, 2001; Pickering, 2011).

verbal abuses or in the name of cross border checking. It is under such circumstances that it can be stated that women of Indo-Bhutan border region though challenge the notion of borders and borderlands yet under the prism of State security the whole idea of gender security gets diluted¹³². Yet for most of these women this act of surveillance by the State apparatus seems to be a normal process. Respondent (no. 58) states that

If everything goes well then i cross border every day...but sometimes it does not....the thing is its already settled and the one who are new with them it might get difficult but that is ok...its everyday thing so....(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar, 25th November, 2017).

Women see the act of surveillance as normal procedure but the State on the other hand has been able to control bodies through such act. Eventually, people of this border community are subject to its apparent process of normalization and naturalization that serve to veil the reses of power (Goldberg, 1993). Apart from taking the act of surveillance as normal phenomenon, women in the process have also highlighted on particular aspect of insecurity that dwells around them but is taken as a normal process. This is because the whole aspect of gender in securities in the border region seems to be sidelined at the stake of State security¹³³. Further, the whole discourse of gender security does not really come into the picture while understanding borders and borderlands. It gets marginalized either in the act of surveillance or vandalized under various security issues that borderland offers the women¹³⁴. Moya,

¹³²And it could be said so because of the fact that many laws has been passed for gender security in the region but when it comes to borders and borderlands the issues of abusements or harassments against women hardly gets into the attention of the state. And more so when the security provider itself are the source of threat to the women living in Indo-Bhutan border region.

¹³³The whole idea of state security is based on the notion of protecting the state even at the cost of individual security. In the sense that, if state is secured so will be the people under its jurisdiction. Further, it was understood that state is the sole provider of security to its citizens and hence every citizen has to adhere to its security policies for its protection. Now this particular notion is a derivative of Hobes's Levaithan where every individual surrender their freedom for their ultimate security.

¹³⁴It would be interesting to note that due to various security issues that exist in border region have direct and indirect implication on women living in border region. And this is because of the fact that

(2001) argues that only by acknowledging the specificity and “simultaneity of oppression”, and the fact that some people are more oppressed than others, can we begin to understand the systems and the structures that perpetuate oppression in order to place ourselves in a position to contest and change them (Moraga, 2002). Thus, in order to identify gender security in borders and borderlands, the acknowledgement of the experiences of women on the whole process of security realm of a State becomes important.

Women of Indo-Bhutan border region did not necessarily pin point on the aspects of gender insecurities in the region per se. However while emphasizing on their everydayness in border region they were able to highlight on certain factors which draws attention towards issues of gender insecurities that exist in the region. It is through their narration, it was understood that the issues like dolomite mining, animal smuggling, presence of militants, drug smuggling so and so forth hampers the everydayness of the women. In this regard respondent (no. 26) states that

See crossing border is the only option for us...not necessarily we cross border for to get things from there but most of our men go the other side for work as well...so every time these issues are in the talk in the region then you need to understand that it is going make things worse for us...either the checking will be strict or we will be asked not to go the other side...even children are checked....this way our means of earning gets into trouble...you know what i am saying right?... (personal communication, Amboek Tea Garden, Darjeeling district, 14th October, 2017).

While addressing on the importance of crossing border the respondent bring in the form of insecurities that the region provides. In addition the presence of non-traditional security issues further increase the problems for women. As a result such

women of this particular border region have developed normal process while crossing borders and these issues in a way hampers that normalization. Thus women of this particular border region feel maximum insecurity in the process.

circumstances threaten the whole means and methods of survivability of women in the border region. The interplay of non-traditional security issues with State security in the border region creates a structure of insecurities for the women in the region. This further undermines women in developing their own means and methods for survivability in the border region. The incorporation of such experiences of women allows the discourse of borders and borderlands to have clear picture of the region. It at the same time creates a platform for understanding security through the lenses of gender.

4.5 Women of the Borderland Community and their Challenges

Women of the border region along with various security aspects have to survive with various challenges as well. Thus, the section will reflect on the challenges that women of the border region face in their everyday life. It was during the interviews that it was realized that borders was also capable of creating challenges as well. As a result the study has identified few issues in the border region which could be highlighted as challenges in the region. Issues such as poverty, education, health, water, sanitation and electricity are identified in this regard. Though the identified issues can be clubbed as the basic necessities for any other region but for women it has become an arena of challenge. The fact that borders and borderlands nearly get proper attention for developmental policies makes such issues as a matter of concern for them. The infrastructural developments¹³⁵ that can be seen in border region are mainly done under the concern of State security. The study would therefore like to reflect on all

¹³⁵Especially in concerned with India, there are few organization and schemes that cover developmental aspect in border region but the whole attention is towards the state security perspective. Like for example, The Border Area Development Programme (BADP) was introduced in 1993-94 as a centrally sponsored scheme. Initially, the programme was implemented in the western Border states with an emphasis on the development of infrastructure to facilitate the deployment of Border Security Force (Evaluation Study on Border Area Development programme, PEO Report No.229, NITI AAYOG, June, 2015).

these factors which make the everydayness of women difficult and create a realm of insecurities for them.

By far it has been discussed that the clutch of State security in borderlands over shadows the other forms of issues that is prevalent in the border region. For example, the issue of poverty in border region attracts more attention as the region is highlighted more in association of State sovereignty downplaying the presence of other issues. Such issues can be linked more as the case of gender securities and the everyday challenges in the region. The issue of poverty has become a major concern for the women living in the border region. The roots of poverty are linked to domestic violence and sexual abuse, and the plight of women become more challenging as the lack of education, affordable housing and childcare compromise their efforts to gain social stability (T.N. Richards, Garland, Bumphus and Thompson, 2010). Such issues hamper the living condition of women of the borderland community.

The relation between women and poverty is such that for over thirty years women have abundantly been victims of poverty (Pearce, 1987). According to Richards, et,al (2002), although women have gained significant momentum in areas of equal rights they continue to be deprived in areas of employment. Due to this deprivation, along with family responsibility, the feminization of poverty¹³⁶ coined by Diana Pearce, frames poverty as female issue (Bradley and Wallace, 2001; Richards, 2001). Women of borderland community under the burden of poverty have to negotiate their every day life with the structures of State security. The issue have further implications on

¹³⁶The increasing awareness during the 1970s of the existence and vulnerability of female headed households have over the years alarmed researchers and advocates. Thus, the concept of the 'feminization of poverty' has since then and throughout the 1980s and 1990s , been used and linked to the debate of the vulnerability of female- headed households. Simultaneously, during 1980s the term was largely used to highlight the impact of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP's) on poor women's condition and it was argued that SAP's increased women's already heavy burden (Wennerholm, 2002).

other issues such as employment, health so and so forth which increases the level of gender insecurities in the region.

Health and poverty are inter-connected and it is only one of the significant effects of poverty (Planski and Yousuf, 2017). The socio-economic status under poverty also influences women's health condition (Riviera, 2014) as well. This as a result has a clear implication on the overall development of the region. Further, the lack of development on sectors such as health, education, water and sanitation makes the negotiation of women in border region even more complicated. It is so because women are characterized and associated to have influence over issues which are not a part of State security.

4.5.a. Challenges in Indo-Bangladesh Border and Indo-Bhutan Border Region

The struggle for survivability does not limit women of the border region to negotiate their everydayness against State's security agencies in border region. However their struggle gets more precipitate with various challenges present in the borderlands. Challenges in borderlands could be manifested in many forms like poverty, water, electricity, health care or education. The absence of these amenities are deprive to 'human capabilities' (Naussabum and Sen, 2003; Sen, 1992). Thus, women under the absence or under the challenges of poverty, health care facilities, education so and so forth negotiate their everydayness in the region. The section in this regard will bring in certain challenges for the women living in both Indo-Bangladesh border and Indo-Bhutan border region.

4.5.a.(i). Poverty

The relation between gender and poverty was never given a serious concern till 1970s and it was because the traditional approaches to economic modernization and social welfare in both the west and developing world neglected the contributions of women¹³⁷ (Bandarage, 1984). Women's poverty is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities and autonomy, lack of access to economic resources, land ownership and inheritance, lack of access to education and support services and their minimal participation in the decision making process¹³⁸. The impact of poverty in women living in borders and borderlands gets more profound as the whole idea of gender equality in the field of poverty gets subsumed by the aspect of State security in the region.

The human poverty index¹³⁹ (2011-2012), of the districts covering both Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan border region highlights the level of poverty in the region.

¹³⁷ A significant attention was not given to women in developmental process or for that matter in economic modernization was because of the reason that the target group of development was the homogenous community, where women's need were taken care by the family a homogenous (<http://www.womensinterculturalcenter.org/images/pdfs/voicesofsinglewomen.pdf>).

¹³⁸ www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/poverty.htm

¹³⁹ The idea of taking human development poverty index as a parameter on analysing the impact of poverty in the region is because of the fact that the index covers main areas of deprivation which is directly or indirectly related to poverty.

Table 5. Human Poverty Index of Northern Bengal Region (District Wise) 2011-2012

Districts	Index of knowledge deprivation	Index of health service deprivation	Index of Provisioning deprivation	HPI
Darjeeling	0.204	0.139	0.248	0.197
Jalpaiguri	0.244	0.248	0.408	0.300
Koch Bihar	0.243	0.204	0.398	0.282
North Dinajpur	0.316	0.455	0.507	0.426
South Dinajpur	0.233	0.267	0.487	0.329
Maldah	0.310	0.280	0.531	0.374

Source: Ministry of Human Resource Development Government of India, Census 2011.

From the given data it is evident that District of Jalpaiguri, Koch Bihar and Darjeeling district perform relatively poorly. The poor situation in these regions has a negative influence especially on the women population. Women residing at Indo-Bangladesh border in particular have to fight against poverty mainly due to lack of economic opportunity, further making them vulnerable against heinous crimes such as “Human Trafficking”. Thus this very impact of poverty can be reflected from the respondent (no. 11) of Phulbari village who states that

If there was anything I could do i would have done way before...but there is nothing to do over here...and on top of that my husband does not like women who work and whatever he earns is not enough...(Q. What does your husband do?)...He is a rikshaw puller in Siliguri...The earning is not much, its just 100 rs per day so you know the situation...plus our children are growing day by day...i

really don't know how will we manage...(personal communication, Phulbar, Jalpaiguri district, 23rd oct, 2017).

The respondent while stating her desire to work reflected on the impact of poverty in border region that has eventually become one of the battling issue for her life. The situation of poverty in the region makes the women to negotiate more as it does not provide any economic opportunity for them. In addition, Indo-Bangladesh border region being a closed one does not allow cross border trade. This eventually leave most women to survive solely on the daily wages of their husbands who themselves cannot earn more than required. An illustration of the situation is made by respondent (no.27) who states that

Children's are growing up and so are the expense as well..and its really difficult to run the house with whatever he (husband) earns... 100 rs per day its not enough...we have to buy almost everything and the stuffs are very expensive...on top of that children go to school...because of that my elder son has dropped his schooling and have started going for work...though its a great help but i wish that if there was something i could do..(personal communication, Garalbari, Jalpaiguri district, 22nd October, 2017).

While emphasising on the occupation of family members the respondent brought in the impact of poverty in region. Through the interview it was understood that poverty also impacts on the education of many in the region. Though, the issue seems to be general but the border region having the lack of economic opportunity compel women to negotiate their children's education as well. Thus, poverty has become a major security concern in Indo-Bangladesh border region as it impacts on the overall development of the individual. Since the border region does not have cross border

trade¹⁴⁰ as a result of which women have to depend either on their husband's earnings or to seek for jobs outside the region. Most men on the other hand do not allow their women to work outside. The situation like this further orient women that less education, marrying early age and also working inside their homes is the best deal for them. Women with such orientation do not seek for individual growth and as a result become the marginalized section in the society.

Women of Indo-Bhutan border region on the other hand has made use the issue of poverty to come out of their houses and earn their livelihood. This step has made them to challenge the whole notion of State and its jurisdiction. It has further questioned the role of the State as a security provider. This has been highlighted by respondent (no 14) from Jaigoan who states that

I had to do something...i could not just wait for anyone to improve the condition of my family...I know it is illegal whatever I am doing but had to do..otherwise it is never enough if we just depend on my husband's earning...he works in the shop in the other side of the border...It is through his connection that I am able to get stuffs from there...my family has total seven members....and its just my husband who is earning and its not enough so i have to do this.... (personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 12th November, 2017).

It is the open border between India and Bhutan that has given the opportunity for women to overcome the issue of poverty in the region. This in a way it has helped them to gain a better position in their family. As a result this has made them to have a sense of self development as necessary for the growth of their family and society at large.

¹⁴⁰In Phulbari border (one of the region covered for Indo-Bangladesh border region) does have a system of opening the gate for cross border trade but the locals cannot participate in it as the actual trade is between Bangladesh and Nepal. The region just acts as a route for the trucks of these two countries to exchange their goods. Thus it is because of that the there is no involvement for the locals.

4.5.a.(ii). Water and Electricity

Among many challenges, water supply in border areas is one of the core pressing problems that India faces¹⁴¹. Both Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan border region is no exemption to that. In addition, women must spend more time and energy finding and collecting water they regard as safe for household use especially for drinking, when supplies become contaminated or scarce (Ray, Roy, Chakroborty, Biswas, 2011). Women of Indo-Bangladesh border region due to the lack of safe drinking water have to depend on the ground water or tube wells. Whereas women of Indo-Bhutan border region have to depend on Jhoras, tube wells, hand pumps and wells for water. Thus, it was observed during the survey of Development Plan of West Bengal (2011) that situation of water supply is extreme inadequate in Jaigoan and regions nearby. According to an estimation made by the survey in some parts of West Bengal, water from tube wells contains iron to an undesirable degree¹⁴² (Chaudary and Roy, 2016). The problem of proper water supply exposes them to various water borne diseases. The extent of the problem could be further estimated from the table given below where according to the figures maximum numbers of households lack an access to safe drinking water.

¹⁴¹Please see, <http://www.dnaindia.com/jaipur/report-water-supply-a-pipe-dream-2607137>, http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/10211/12/12_chapter%206.pdf, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2015/sdn1511tn.pdf> <https://bib.irb.hr/datoteka/729054.Paper-Water-IDEAS-2014-Final.pdf> <file:///C:/Users/dell/Desktop/water%20problem%20in%20Indo-Bhutan%20border.html>

¹⁴²Iron overload can lead to hemochromatosis, which can lead to liver, heart and pancreatic damage, as well as diabetes. Early symptoms include fatigue, weight loss, and joint pain. Excessive **iron** is never recommended for digestion; it can lead to stomach problems, nausea, vomiting, and other issues.

**Table 6. District Wise Household Having no Access to Safe Drinking Water
(2011)**

District	Percentage of households
Darjeeling	27.69
Jalpaiguri	16.67
Kooch Bihar	06.40
Uttar Dinajpur	12.91
Dakshin Dinajpur	25.42
Maldah	27.52

Source: Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India (2011).

Stating the problem of proper water supply and its effect on their daily life, one of respondent (no. 47), from Phulbari border region states that

Water is very necessary to run the house...you can live without electricity but not without water. And there is a huge problem of water over here...for water connection we have to go to Siliguri water board but you know how much problem they give us...and especially when you don't know any body from the office.....Military people do help but the help is provided only to one or two family..they cannot help the entire village (personal communication, Phulbar, Jalpaiguri district, 17th October, 2017).

It is from these various challenges that women of border community have to live their life. As according to established notion, women in general are entrusted to provide water and food security to her family¹⁴³.

¹⁴³Due to the whole dichotomy of public of private realm in the various discourses the distinction was also made between men and women in the kind of the jobs they do. Hence, women who belong to private realm are entrusted to provide food and water to the family and hence this becomes their one of the important task to perform. And women in general do tend to the task at their maximum risk.

Similarly, women of Indo-Bhutan border region too face similar kind of situation as far as water is concerned. And this has been well reflected by respondent (no 27) from Mal Bazaar, who states that

We don't have proper water supply....sometimes it comes and for rest of the days we have to depend on small other sources like we have jhoras... Its not clean but what we try to filter it and boil it and then again filter it and then drink... that is the only way for us...Otherwise we don't have any other source....(personal communication, Mal Bazar, Alipuruar distict, 23rd November, 2017).

The poor condition of water supply in Indo-Bhutan border region has made the women of this community to go through such rigorous process everyday in order to drink clean water. In addition women also have to deal with health related problems such as water borne diseases as well. While on the other hand they have to depend on such sources which are not very safe for drinking purposes. Thus, it can be stated that because borders has always been under-represented in terms of social development, the lack of water supply has become a major challenge for the community in the region.

Lack of power supply is another area where women of both the border region find it difficult to adjust with. Proper supply of electricity in the region has become essential in today's world as it is through the electricity that people are well connected with the world outside. The figures below highlights the power supply in the region.

Table 7: District Wise Household having no Electricity

Districts	Percentage of households
Darjeeling	18.99
Jalpaiguri	55.60
Kooch Bihar	72.37
Uttar Dinajpur	66.68
Dakshin Dinajpur	57.58
Maldah	64.51

Source: Census, 2011, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

From the above figures it can be rightly stated that the both region i.e. Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan borders clearly lacks the proper supply of electricity. Border region as such is not connected with the rest of the country, but with the help of electricity the region have the scope of getting connected with the rest of the world. Electricity at the same time has become a hope for many women in the border region. It has been helpful for them to gain access to various information of the outside world. However, the lack of power supply in the region hinders their way for such connection. Respondent (no 61) from Phulabri village states that

Its my marriage in December...and I have collected all the information about new types of earrings and lehengas (bridal wear) from T.V.)....I have collected those ideas from T.V serials..and next month I am going Siliguri with my sister-in-law to buy them...(personal communication, phulabar, Jalpaiguri district, 11 october, 2017).

It was through her future plans that the reliability of these women on T.V information for most of the thing can be analyzed. Proper supply of electricity ensures various information that help in their development. It is with the poor condition of electricity

that the women of this region receive a setback on various information which otherwise is very hard for them to acquire¹⁴⁴.

The other impacts of poor electrification is well highlighted by the women of Indo-Bhutan border region. For them electricity is not just related with connectivity, it is also about conducting a smooth business to earn their livelihood. Respondent (no. 31) from Jaigoan runs a small restaurant and she states that

Its very difficult to work in kitchen...plus its very hot and this light (power) is not regular... You know maximum number of profit for us is through cold drinks and if there is continuous power cut how can we do business... We do order ice blocks... but if there is a proper power supply then i don't have to order ice blocks and i would save money....(personal communication, Dhupguri, Jalpaiguri district, 22nd November, 2017).

Continuous problem of electricity in Indo-Bhutan border is associated with the livelihood of the people. It is through the proper power supply that women of the border region could earn their daily bread and ensure the security of livelihood for their family.

4.5.a.(iii). Health and Education

The issue of health and education forms the basis for the development of every society. As they both exhibits complex dynamic relationships including the growth of human capital (Vogl, 2012). Further health and education of parents especially mother affects the entire set up of social system (Vogl, 2012). Especially in border region where the experiences of women in understanding social, cultural, environmental,

¹⁴⁴And this is so because of the fact that border being a periphery gets sidelined not only from the various developmental factors but also from forms of information that has been changing the various lives around the world. Thus, women of the border community have to be the last on acquiring such information under the lack of power supply in the region.

epidemiological and economic determinants of health and education become crucial (Marmot, Friel, Bell, Houweling and Taylor, 2008). As such issues have become a major challenge for the women living in border region.

Health, in all respects, physical and mental is a fundamental human right. Women of the border region under the condition of social norms, political choices and levels of economic advancement (beijing20.unwomen.org/en/in-focus/health) have to negotiate health concerns even more. The concern of women over health issues in the border region could be analyzed from the table given below.

Table 8: Major Health Issues of Northern Bengal (2015).

District	Malaria	Dengue	Pneumonia	Acute Diarrhoeal
Darjeeling	115	65	481	80133
Jalpaiguri	571	82	552	126277
Kooch Bihar	316	26	800	186349
Uttar Dinajpur	164	48	1114	106292
Dakshin Dinajpur	335	72	512	61788
Maldah	1685	109	10965	76991

Source: Health on March 2015-16 West Bengal (draft copy), State Bureau of Health Intelligence directorate of health services, Government of West Bengal.

The table has brought in some of the common health issues in the region. Such kind of health issues has become crucial for the border region as the lack of proper hospitals in the region, intensifies the issue more. The struggle of such kind could be analysed from the respondent (no. 17)) who states that

It becomes very difficult when even one gets ill from the family...cause it will costs both time and money and many of times we don't have money for

treatment....though there is an option to siliguri and get a better treatment but again who has money....everything depends on the money from food to medicine and even staying over there.... many women over here have started raising 200rs every month...so whoever is in need will use the money...(personal communication, Dangi, Jalpaiguri district, 11th October, 2017).

The poor condition of basic facilities has made the women to struggle everyday in order to meet the health emergencies of the family. On the other hand it has also made women of Indo-Bangladesh border region to find an alternative to meet such challenge. It is through the struggles and the solution of the women that border region could be well understood. On the other hand women of Indo-Bhutan border region have a different approach towards the health issues. Most of the women living in Indo-Bhutan border region are into cross border trade, thus the issue of money during emergencies does not concern them. For them the poor condition of dumping and sanitation¹⁴⁵ has become a major source for various health related issues in the region. The issue is well highlighted by the respondent (no 38) of Jaigoan, who states that

It is actually very difficult to walk around without handkerchief or any extra cloth...every corner over here stinks...no proper facility is here for garbage dumpings..most of the time we burn our own garbage but in market the shop keepers just throw the garbage in open...that is why i don't allow anyone to have food or anything in market...half of the diseases over here is because of these things....If Municipal corporation have done anything than our region would have been clean by now...(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 22nd November, 2017).

¹⁴⁵The issue of dumping and sanitation in Indo-Bhutan border region has already been discussed in chapter 3. However to highlight the issue, the region is poorly maintained, garbages are dumped in every street and concerned of the border area. Further the problem of water adds on the situation and hence the issue of sanitation is visible in every household (the observation has been made during the field study).

The issue of dumping have made the people to negotiate with the various health issues that they have to face while living in the border region. Further the lack of government role in the field of proper administration in the region has made the situation go worse as far as health security is concerned. Women on the other hand have to struggle even more in such situation as they have to put additional effort to ensure the safety of their family.

Similarly, education is another such area where the lack of education or minimum level of education has made the women of the border region to live their life with very limited choices. Below is the table of literacy rate of Northern Bengal region.

Table 9: Literacy rate of Northern Bengal Region for 2008-2009

Districts	Literacy Rate	
	Male	Female
Darjeeling	85.94	73.74
Jalpaiguri	80.61	66.65
Kooch Bihar	81.52	69.08
North Dinajpur	66.65	53.15
South Dinajpur	79.63	67.81
Maldah	67.84	57.84

Source: National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi.

Figures of the above table states that women of both the border region lack education at higher percentage as compared to men. As a result women have limited information on job options and lesser access to mass media and to the market place (Sharma, 1980; Agarwal, 2016). The case is more prevalent in Indo-Bangladesh border region where women of the border region are mostly engaged in household activities and less

on other fields. This has been clearly mentioned by one of the respondent (no.57), where states

My daughter is in class 11 now...we will search for the bride after her class 12... what is the point of studying after that when we know that all women have to do is to take care of our family. Men have to go for job and earn, women have to work at home. Look at me..i have studied till class five.....(personal communication, Phulbar, Jalpaiguri district, 11th October, 2017).

The lack of education among women of Indo-Bangladesh border region has left them only with the option of marriage. It is under such situation that women of border region face their greatest challenge. Further the lack of education among women makes them dependent on their male counter parts both economically and otherwise. Such dependency on male counter parts would lead women to have lower job mobility and often become the sole responsible for childcare, the ideology of female seclusion, and their vulnerability to class /caste-related sexual abuse (Agarwal, 2016).

On the other hand Indo-Bhutan border region shades a different picture on the field of education. The women of this border region due to their engagement in cross border illegal trade and other field have gained a different position in the society and among the family. This is so because their contribution to household earnings becomes substantial (Gulati, 1978; Menchar and Sardamoni, 1982; Menchar, 1987; Maiti, 1987). Their financial contribution in the family has helped them to gain in terms of family diets, health care and better spousal relations. It has also helped them in terms of livelihood choices (Agarwal, 2016). Such benefits is well highlighted by respondent (no 43) states that

I have said my kids..if they will study properly i will provide everything necessary for their further education...even if they have to go some other place to study....I

am not that educated. I went school till class 8 so I will try to earn more for the better future of my children... i would like my daughter to study as much she wants...cause the environment over here for girls are not good...its better if she goes outside and see the world...(personal communication, Jaigoan, Alipurduar district, 23rd November, 2017).

It is through her statement that it could be analyzed that even though the women of this community lack proper education but her economic independence, has helped her to make some choices on the better future of her children. Further it could be understood that the free choices among women could lead to the development of family in particular and in society at large. The value of education is much more among the women of this border region and hence is more concerned regarding the education system in the region as well. Thus, the women of this particular border region have understood the challenge of education in a much more diverse form and hence are determined to educate their children as well.

4.6. Conclusion

The security concerns and challenges among the women of both Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan border region has brought in various aspects of living in borderlands. Borders and borderlands are thus more than a landscape for the people living in the region. The people have various obstacles and problems which gets un-noticed during the entire process of making sense of borders. It is through the narratives of the women living in the border regions that a proper picture of the region could be framed. Their shared experiences on various security concerns and challenges in the region could be utilized to form a separate discourse in understanding borders and borderlands. Various issues and challenges has highlighted on various issues of gender insecurities in both the border regions. Like for example, the issue of poverty

has been the core pressing challenge for the women to survive in the border region. The issue of poverty at the same time has reflected on other forms of gender insecurities in the border region such as human trafficking. It is under the circumstances of poverty and lack of opportunities that the women either live under the realm of men or they move beyond and create their own space in the region. It is through all these aspects that the proper understanding of borderlands is derived.

Chapter-5

Gender Insecurity in Northern Bengal Borderland

CHAPTER-5

GENDER INSECURITY IN NORTHERN BENGAL BORDERLAND

5.1 Introduction

In the study of international relations, traditional security concerns related to State have always remained central. However, the context of security is elusive and needs constant upgrading. Security which was equated with the militaristic/national security at the end of cold war came under immense criticism in the changing international order, as it was no longer applicable owing to increase in vast number of events and development which called for the shift in attention from that of traditional to non-traditional aspects. Buzan (1983), Booth (1990), Pettiford Llyod (1996), Baldwin (1997), Ulman (1983), Rothschild (1995) in their own words discusses on the shifting concept of security. These authors as such emphasize on a thorough re-examining of the concept and the need to enlarge the idea of security to be more en-compassive, which would cater and address the insecurities and demands of not just privileged few, but all. Thus it is under this particular set of perspective that the chapter will be making sense of gender insecurity in borderland in general and Northern Bengal borderland in particular. The particular chapter will try to analyze the issues and the narratives discussed in the previous chapters. The chapter at the same time will try to incorporate the forms of gender insecurity faced by the women living in Northern Bengal borderland.

The narratives of the women living in both Indo-Bangladesh and Indo-Bhutan border region will be taken as a means for generating the understanding the forms of gender insecurity prevalent in borderlands. Use of narratives at the same time would help in understanding the everyday experiences of women living in the North Bengal

borderland. Simultaneously, the study will try to locate the effects of State security in the region on the insecurity of women living in the Northern Bengal borderland. Hence, the chapter in nutshell will try to address the research questions and objectives highlighted for the study.

5.2 Northern Bengal Region and its Strategic Importance

The northern part of West Bengal, separated from its southern counter part by the river Ganga, is popularly known as North Bengal or Northern Bengal. Northern Bengal comprises of the hill district of Darjeeling, sub-Himalayan Jalpaiguri, Kooch Bihar, plains of West Dinajpur and Maldah and south Dinajpur and finally Murishidabad. The region is not a homogenous area, physiographically or in other socio-economic aspects as well. The total geographical area of Northern Bengal is 21854.00 square kilometres which is 24.61 % of the total area of the state¹⁴⁶. The total population of the region according to 2011 census is 17.2 million, literacy rate is 71 % and sex ratio is 946 (Census of India 2011, West Bengal, Series-20, Part XII-B).

Table 10: District Wise Details of Demography of Northern Bengal Region

Districts	Population	Growth Rate	Sex Ratio	Literacy
Maldah	3,997,970	21.5%	939	62.71%
Jalpaiguri	3,869,675	13.77%	954	73.79%
North Dinajpur	3,000,849	22.9%	936	60.13%
Kooch Bihar	2,822,780	13.86%	942	75.49%
Alipurduar	12,22,992	-64%	940	73%
Darjeeling	1,842,034	14.47%	971	79.92%
South Dinajpur	1,670,931	11.16%	954	73.86%

Source: Census of India 2011, West Bengal, Series-20, Part XII-B

¹⁴⁶http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/164815/7/07_chapter%202.pdf.

Northern Bengal Region is pre-dominantly farm based, although many tertiary activities are carried out in the region. Recent years have witnessed a rapid growth of manufacturing industries in the region¹⁴⁷, whose geographical location makes the region a potential candidates for vibrant economic centre with both agriculture and non-agriculture activities¹⁴⁸. Traditionally, tea plantation remains one of the core areas of its economic strengths accounting for more than one-fifth of tea produced in the entire country's adding to foreign reserves through export¹⁴⁹. Apart from these Northern Bengal forms a major connection between north eastern states and Sikkim with rest of India¹⁵⁰. The region thus is major junction for trade, transportation and other kind of activities.

The significance of northern Bengal is also because of the three international border¹⁵¹ that it shares with South Asian neighbouring states of India. Hence, except Alipurduar, rest of the Northern Bengal region districts such as Maldah, South Dinajpur, North Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Kooch Bihar share international borders with Bangladesh. The districts of Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling are contiguous to Bhutan, while Darjeeling is also adjacent to Nepal. The border town of Jaigoan in Alipurduar is the largest overland route between India and Bhutan¹⁵². There are number of entry points along the Indo-Bangladesh borders, including Fulbari, Changrabandha, Bamarihat and Hili.

¹⁴⁷Please see, Report on Economic Scenario and Prospects of North Bengal, January 2016, BCC&i aiding business since 1833.

¹⁴⁸This idea has been derived from the Press Release on Friday 5th May, 2017 by the Indian Chamber of Commerce. Minister –in charge, North Bengal, Development Department, Government of West Bengal region mentioned that North Bengal region with rapid urbanization has an immense importance for non-agricultural sector for IT, service and manufacturing sectors.

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.bengalchamber.com/downloads/report-north-bengal-jan2016.pdf>

¹⁵⁰Siliguri in North Bengal Region has been a connecting corridor between Sikkim and other north eastern states with rest of India.

¹⁵¹These international borders are India-Bangladesh border, India-Bhutan border and India-Nepal border.

¹⁵² <http://www.millenniumpost.in/jaigaon-to-be-developed-into-major-commercial-hub-150080>

The northern Bengal region is located between Nepal and Bangladesh on the two sides while Bhutan lies on the northern front of it. This hyper sensitive region is heavily guarded by Indian Army, Border Security Force (BSF), Sahashtra Seema Bal (SSB) and West Bengal Police (WBP). The BSF is entrusted with the task of manning Indo-Bangladesh borders and SSB are assigned in Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan border region for its security.

Another security concern for India in this region is China because it too shares its borders with Nepal and Bhutan. China is involved in the development of the infrastructure in Nepal. The evidence of a threat to India's security due to such involvement is substantiated with China's evident involvement in Bangladesh¹⁵³, which shares its borders with India, that could be perceived as a security threat to India. For instance, the movement of Chinese troops in the Chumbi Valley¹⁵⁴ is a serious concern for India as it would isolate India's north eastern states from the mainland and this highlights the importance of the Northern region of Bangladesh as well the importance of border regions¹⁵⁵. Northern Bengal Border region is also plagued by other issues such as, human trafficking, illegal trade, illegal immigration, so on and so forth.

¹⁵³ Bangladesh has welcomed China to be one of its most vital partners in the decades since 1971. The matrix of Beijing-Dhaka relations permeates multiple avenues, ranging from strategic to commercial, from energy security to infrastructural. China has helped to build Bangladesh's military capabilities since 2002. India has thus been alarmed at Beijing being Bangladesh's main provider for military hardware. Naval defence is being given particular attention. India is most concerned about the sale of two Ming-class submarines in 2014, as they may enter Indian waters. In addition, Bangladesh set up a missile launch pad near Chittagong Port with the assistance from China in 2008 (<https://www.mmbiztoday.com/articles/india-bangladesh-china-relations-complex-triangle>). Other than these there are other developments as well between Bangladesh and China which exhibits threat to India.

¹⁵⁴ Chumbi Valley is a valley in Yangdong country, Tibet Autonomous region, China. The valley is on the south side of the Himalayas drainage divide, near the Chinese border with Sikkim, India and with Bhutan.

¹⁵⁵ https://cenjows.gov.in/upload_images/pdf/Proceeding%20of%20Seminar%20on%20North%20East%20Region%20of%20India%20Bridging%20Gaps%20&%20Securing%20Borders%20by%20Bri%20g%20HS%20Cheema.pdf

5.3 Gender insecurity and International Relations

Security in International Relations has always been discussed as a prime factor. Hence, achieving security has been the major criteria for the States in international politics¹⁵⁶. However, with the end of cold war and the advent of globalization there has been a shift of understanding security. The idea behind the change in the notion of understanding security was in a way to broaden up the concept of security at large. As a result various dimensions of viewing security were brought in the debates of security¹⁵⁷. Gender security lens too was given space in understanding security and International Relations. Though the security debates welcomed gender dimension in International relations but at the same time it also emphasized in the way gender determined security, primarily international security, and other forms as well. Thus it was highlighted that gender does not determine security, as security is already determined or guaranteed by the State. Security at large does not ask for gender, colour or race (Catro and Corral, 1993). Yet scholars like Baldwin, (1997), Davis, (2003) Sarajevo (2013), Sorenson, (1996) in this regard raised another question stating that since there is no absolute security or absolute safety especially with the increasing dimension of threats, how does the traditional definition of security help in achieving the highest level of individual security.

¹⁵⁶The traditional notion of security largely dealt with the idea that it was the State under whom the whole of security revolved. Thus, accordingly under the circumstances of anarchy (i.e international system), the use of force or military was the only means of gaining security. Thus, in this sense understanding security was largely based on state security through the means of military or armed forces.

¹⁵⁷Security with outburst of globalization has been given a different lenses such as the environmental factor, human rights, poverty, education, food, water so and so forth.

Gender and security are terms whose meanings cause endless political and social controversies¹⁵⁸. Such initiation would unavoidably intensify the meaning of both the terms. Thus, gender dimension insecurity debates would bring in different level of discourse in the forum of International Relations. The whole dimension of security as such is framed around the dimension of maintaining and bringing peace. To which State fulfilled the task by being the provider of security¹⁵⁹. Eventually, the term security was perceived with certain norms in International Relations. For example, it was understood that individual security was achieved under the banner of State security. At the same time, it also determined gender roles in International Relations. As a result, it was understood that men with particular nature such as brave, non-emotional, tough so and so forth were assigned the role of security provider. On the other hand, female were categorized with the certain nature which was opposite to men, making them to be security seeker. Hence, such pre-determined gender roles and gender demarcation in the debates of security and international relations left very little space for the women to intervene in various field of International Relations. Even the historical facts show that ensuring national security was and still a part of the male domain, and that the preservation of State security is considered an exclusively a male task¹⁶⁰ (Sarajevo, 2013).

Starting from different theoretical perspectives of observing the structures of the international systems, theorists of international relations and international security

¹⁵⁸ Among various concepts, security in international relations has been viewed through the lenses of gender. And this so, as both male and female have both different sphere of influence. Thus, accordingly male from this particular understanding becomes the security provider and female the security seeker. So, while entering the field of male domain by any female could create controversies in return.

¹⁵⁹ The reference has been made by the proponents of traditional security from Leviathan, as the creation of Leviathan was purely based on handing over all the rights except for the right to live. This made the Leviathan the sole representator of the individual and also the protector and security provider.

¹⁶⁰ Like in case of various wars or conflicts men has always been in the forefront in ensuring security. And thus, women and children were considered as the vulnerable groups

searched for a paradigm that would provide answers to fundamental security issues of today, the threats and challenges we face in a global world, who the referent object of security is, and where do the key security risks and threats come from (Jaric, 2013). The search for different version of security for various risks and threats also brought in the forms of gender insecurity insecurity debates. Thus, it was understood that gendered dimension would help in gaining security aspects from the marginalized section. This would eventually broaden up the debates of security as during various wars and conflicts these sections were the one who felt the maximum threat¹⁶¹.

5.4 Gender Insecurity in Borderlands

Ever since the inception of the discipline of international relations, one of the topics that have dominated the field was the topic of international security (Jaric, 2013). As a result, State was placed as the main actor in the issue of security matters. Eventually, security issues were related more towards the preservation of territory, borders and territorial integrity, regarding the weapons and military power at the State's disposal, and the comparison of raw power with other State players in the arena of international relations. Hence, the proverbial bow was a potential external threat which puts the State in the realm of foreign policy action, as well as the preservation of national interest which may be variedly defined.

The security issues that were focused as prime factors eventually sidelined individual security at large. However the change in the notion of understanding security encompassed various forms of understanding security including the gender security. The prism of gender security has since been one of the tool in understanding borders

¹⁶¹It was during various wars and conflicts that women and children faced the maxim casualties. And the justification given behind these wars was that it was fought for the protection of women and children. Thus, it was understood that the understanding of security did not provide security for these section instead brought insecurities for them.

and borderlands. And one way of using gender lenses is by incorporating the everydayness of the women living in the border region. As according to feminist theory epistemological foundation in practical knowledge is very much required in creating a knowledge (Darlaston-Jonas, 2007) which is different from the pre-determined set of understanding borders and borderlands. Thus, emphasizing on the narratives as a source of knowledge, and highlighting a predominantly male pattern of what is presented as universal objective knowledge, from which the voice of women was completely omitted is one way of doing so (Sarajevo, 2013). In this sense, and contrary to the positivist view, feminism believes that knowledge is a social construct and questions the claim of neutrality of facts. Further, the emphasis on practical knowledge and everydayness of the women living in the border region would also lay emphasis on the bottom up approach, directly contradicting the generally accepted understanding of the discipline of international relations as dealing with macro systems (top –down) (Sarajevo, 2013).

Putting gender lenses in understanding security in borders and borderlands will bring in various other dimensions of security as well. Women of the borderland community through their narration highlight the struggle of living in the border region. It is through their experiences that borders and borderlands could be framed differently that from the State's perspective of understanding the region. Even the feminist theory of the twentieth century, Marysia Zalewski (2010) claims, that gender mainstreaming of policies is a trend in international institutions, and this term should be taken into account when analyzing the feminist contribution to understanding international relations and international security. This would make gender reality or gender regime known in the field of International Relations. At the same time it would further

emphasize on analytic of works illustrating how to learn, transmit and reproduce knowledge (Jaric, 2013).

Borders and borderlands has most of the time been reflected from the prism of security and the process of militarization. However, the rise in the issues such as human trafficking, illegal trade, drug trafficking so and so forth have broadened the dimension of understanding the region. Increase in such issues in border region has ultimately questioned the whole spectrum of providing security through military means. As the traditional methods of security has been incapable of providing securities for the people. Moreover, issues such as human trafficking, illegal trade of arms, environment so and so forth has been creating insecurities for the State at large. While at the same time such issues have affected the women living in the border region¹⁶² in particular. For example, form of crime, associated with transnational organized criminal groups engaged in trafficking for sexual and/or labour exploitation, the movement of which is increasingly difficult to restrict in the world of open borders, particularly exposes to risk women who are in most cases the objects of pornography and sexual exploitation (Jaric, 2013). Thus, putting the gender lenses on understanding security trends and practices in border region would broaden up the methods for securitizing the region in a profound way. This form of securitization would deal more with the people living in the border region encompassing various form of individual security. At the same time understanding gender security in borderlands would answer the question of ‘what is being secured and who’s security the State is talking about?’.

¹⁶²Like for the example the issue of human trafficking in the border region and it is a known fact the rise in issue such issue is more towards the vulnerable section of the society i.e, women and children. Trafficking of women is one of the most corrosive forms of human rights violations. It results in the gradual destruction of a women’s personal identity, and her right to live as a free human. The victim is subjected to violence, humiliation and violation of personal integrity which may result in life threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS,STD or life ong trauma (Acharya, 2015).

5.4. a. State Security and Gender in Northern Bengal Borderland

Northern Bengal Borderland consists of two forms of border i.e Open border and Closed border. Indo-Bangladesh border region is a closed border and this particular border region by its very nature has a major attributes of all the other forms of border regions in the world. For example, the border region is highly securitized with fences and with the strong armed forces. At the same time it also has other issues of illegal trade, human trafficking, illegal migration so and so forth. Hence the securitization process is highly maintained in the region. On the other hand, Indo-Bhutan which is an open border, that allows the free movement of people and goods in the region. The region in this sense does not have any fences since its inception and the presence of armed forces is a mere an act of the State for maintaining its jurisdiction. Though Indo-Bhutan border region does not resemble the strict sense of borderlands yet it does have other forms of security issues that have largely affected the region. Thus, Northern Bengal borderland clearly reflects on both forms of security process and it is under such diverse forms of security that the study tries to reflect on the relation between State security and gender in the borderland. On drawing the analysis between gender and State security issues like surveillance factor and its impact on the women living in the region was reflected. The other issue which was reflected in the process was on the various issues present in the border region which ultimately affected the women living in the border region.

5.4.a.(i). The Impact of Surveillance on the Women Living in Northern Bengal Borderland.

Act of surveillance is one of the major aspects in any border region. It is through this act that State maintains security in the region. Surveillance in many ways is associated

with the threat perceived from the outside realm and thus armed forces are established accordingly in the region. However, at the same time with the rise in the other issues in the region like human trafficking, illegal migrants, illegal trade and environmental issue the spectrum of surveillance has increased manifold in the region. It is under such circumstances that the women living in this particular borderland have to act and survive.

Women of this borderland have an experience of both forms of border region i.e open and closed border. While the women who have the experiences of closed border highlight that the act of surveillance is delimiting their freedom in the region. They highlight that people of the border region are not allowed to walk near fences as the armed forces take this as it is a major security concern for the armies. Women of the region imply that it is the lack of free movement created by the surveillance factor that eventually hampers their growth and development. Further it also develops a different pattern of controlling women in the region¹⁶³. Border region as such has also been controlling the voices and minds of the women as most of the men were kin in answering the questions for the field study. While at the same time, women of this borderland associated the lack of opportunity with the whole act of surveillance in the region. They claim that if movement were free in the region, people would have engaged themselves in many ways. Hence, for them free movement is a means of ensuring individual security in borderland. It is under the circumstances of free movement that women of this particular borderland could find an alternative against the backdrop of poverty, illiteracy and also the lack of opportunity.

¹⁶³It was during various interviews in Indo-Bangladesh border region, it was understood that the region has been a major contributing factor in maintain control over women. Women are not only restricted in education but even are guided towards early marriage. The dominance of men in the region and the impact of security in the region has made the women to live their life under the principles of men and security.

On the other hand women who have the experiences of living in the open border perceive surveillance from different perspective. The act of surveillance for most women in this region has been of less concern and eventually does not create any restrictions on moving freely. For them, living in open border has facilitated free movement of people and goods in the region. With such an opportunity women of this region have engaged themselves into various activities. Surveillance as such has not hampered their growth and thus is economically independent. Such freedom has made some of these women to be the sole earner as well. However, the shared experiences of these women highlight the different dimension of surveillance. It is under the process of surveillance that free movement of women is eventually hampered and face the maximum threat. Since, most of these women are engaged in illegal trade they at the same time undergo various forms of physical abuse (in the form of frisking), verbal abuse and also take the risk of getting caught. Though the option of bribing the guard to avoid such situation is there yet the possibilities of mental stress and the hindrances created by surveillance cannot be negated. Thus, women of Northern Bengal Borderland conceive various forms of gender insecurity through the act of surveillance in the region. In nutshell it could be understood that whether the lack of free movement or an opportunity of free movement, the act of surveillance in the region is conceived as the threat by the women living in this particular borderland. It is under the insecurities created by the security provider in the region that these women have to dwell with. This as a result hampers in the growth or development of the women in the region.

5.5 Presence of Non-Traditional Security Issues and its Impact on the Women of the Borderland Community

Northern Bengal borderland witness various form of non-traditional security issues in the region. The rise in such issues has been a major security concern for the State as well as for the people living in the border region. The rise in such issues has also created a major impact on the women living in Northern Bengal borderland as it is under such situations that women have to make their living in the region. Further, these issues make them not only vulnerable to various forms of violence but also the strategy maker in order to survive in the region.

5.5.a. Dolomite Mining

People of this borderland community are largely affected by the issues of Dolomite mining. Northern Bengal region has maximum number of tea estates¹⁶⁴ however, due to the mining in the other side of the border many estates are largely affected¹⁶⁵. It has thus been one of the major reasons for the growth of poverty, environmental issues along with the health issues in the region. Due to the issue of mining women living in this borderland has become more vulnerable. As the issue has affect on the aspect of survivability of many in the region. The issue of mining have added the poverty in the region which eventually is affecting the women living in the region directly or in directly¹⁶⁶. As a result, flesh trade among the women in the region has increased¹⁶⁷.

Women of this particular community under the poor living condition have been

¹⁶⁴More than 1.1 million people live in the tea estates of northern Bengal region, which spreads over Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts (<https://www.downtoearth.org.in>news>).

¹⁶⁵More than a 1,000 lives have been lost to starvation since 2002 (Bera, 2015)

¹⁶⁶The impact of dolomite mining has been such that it has created a lot of problems related to environment, health, poverty so and so forth. Such problems has made the people living in the region to live under severe circumstances (please see, <https://www.reuters.com>articles>).

¹⁶⁷The statement is created after the various interviews conducted during the field visit. Though the exact figures could not be achieved but it was understood from the interviews that most of the young girls in the region has been attracted towards easy money making process.

engaging themselves in such profession. Women perceive that it would atleast ensure not just their own survivability but their family as well. Thus, tea estates in Northern Bengal borderland are accounted of trafficking many young girls in the region¹⁶⁸.

5.5.b. Illegal Trade

Northern Bengal Borderland is well acquainted with the issue of illegal trade. Whether open or closed, people of this borderland are depended on such activity for their survivability. Even Willaim Ven Schendel (2011), highlights that people of borderland community engage themselves in such activities as for them getting required goods from towns (basically far) is more expensive than getting it from the other side of the border. However illegal trade have a very different impact on the women living in Northern Bengal borderland. While at the same time there is a difference in the perception among the women towards the impact of illegal trade. This is clearly because of having an experience of two different form of borders i.e open and closed. Women in a closed border region highlight that due the increase in the illegal trade there has been a constant firing in the region. Such activity has made them to live in constant fear which has further curb the movement of people in the region. However, at the same time women of this region perceive illegal trade to be a mode of survivability. Though, women of the region do not engage themselves in illegal trade; yet it is through their husband or father that they perceive illegal trade to be one of the modes of ensuring their survivability in the region.

On the other hand, women of open border region are themselves engaged in illegal trade. They not only get goods from the other side of the border but also supply from their region as well. This has created an opportunity for the women in the region to

¹⁶⁸Save the Children and Burdwan University estimates 3,500 minors (including boys) were trafficked from 12 grdens of the Doars in 2010 (m.timesofindia.com).

come out of the home and earn. It has further has helped them to be less dependent on their male counterpart. These women eventually have developed illegal trade as a daily practice which in turn has become a culture among the people living in the border region. And it is so because even for the women of this community illegal trade is a form of opportunity to earn their livelihood. However at the same time their engagement in illegal trade has also brought a wave of social stigmatization for most of the women involved in cross border trade in the region. Women who are engaged in such activity are regarded to have an involvement in the act of prostitution as well. Thus, it is through such stigmatization that these women are living their life in hardship. Further it is stopping other women in the region to venture into the field of illegal trade.

Women of Northern Bengal borderland in nutshell understand illegal trade to be a form of an opportunity which ensures the survivability in the region. Thus women of this community have to face many issues like that of threat to social stigmatization. And this form of wave of stigmatization eventually portrays the forms of gender (in) securities in the border region.

5.5.c. Human Trafficking

The issue of human trafficking in Northern Bengal borderland is relatively high. Due to the issue of poverty and lack of opportunity, human trafficking has created a huge impact on the region. At the same time illiteracy among women has also been a major contributing factor for the issue to rise. As a result women of this borderland have become vulnerable to the issue of human trafficking and it has become a matter of concern in the region. On a closer look, the issue of human trafficking have created a similar impact on women living in both form of the border region. Flesh trade is

considered as the form of opportunity by the women of this community. Since the region according to them does not create much opportunity, engaging into such activity would ensure economic security. They understand that it would at least make them financially secured. However, at the same time, there seems to be lack of awareness among the women regarding the issue of flesh trade. It was evident during various interviews that women in particular seem to be unaware of various form of violence that such activity could create. As a result women of this community see the flesh trade as an alternative for surviving, the lack of awareness among them at the same time is making the profession as a reasonable option. And this trend is growing among the young girls who get easily lured by the trafficker, as they offer them good amount for engaging themselves in such activity.

5.5. d. Migration

The issue of illegal migrants in Northern Bengal borderland has been a matter of concern not just for the people around but for the State as well¹⁶⁹. The impact of migration is also highlighted by the women living in the community. It was during the field study it was understood that migration as a process in Northern Bengal borderland has to be understood from two different process i.e from the prism of illegal migrants and from the prism of marriage. The flow of illegal migrants in the region has created negative impact on sex ratio, increased the violence against women and also on the negation of women in the decision making process. At the same time, migration has also increased the male population which ultimately has impacted on the sex ratio in the region. This has further created a spectrum of violence against the

¹⁶⁹The rising issue of migration has become a matter of concern both for the state and the people as it deals with the concern of resource sharing. The recent example of the problem of migration was seen during the migration of the Syrian public to most of the European states where the receiving states i.e European states had to intervene and stop the migrants from coming into the region.

women living in the region. For example, with the rise in the male population there are possibilities of women going through various forms of abuses in the region every day. And under the umbrella of patriarchy these issue highly gets unnoticed and hence such activities increases in manifold. At the same time women of this particular region do not get equal share in the decision making process. This eventually has made them to live their life under the domain of their male counterparts. And this was quite visible during the interviews when women were not allowed to answer the question during the interview.

The other aspect of migration in Northern Bengal borderland has to be understood from the perspective of marriages. Many women in the region migrate in the region after their marriages. It is because of the marriage that these women have to live in borderland and has to face various difficulties. According to these women border region has curbed their freedom in many ways. As the region is under strict surveillance these women conceive borderland to be nothing more than a zoo. Thus, in nutshell it can be analyzed that the issue of migration has impacted on the life of women in various ways. Right from the issue of increasing violence to the lack of freedom in the region, these women has to make their living under such circumstances. Further, it is under scenario that the kind of gender insecurities in the region could also be analyzed.

5.6 Everyday Experiences of the Women Living in the Border Region

Apart from witnessing various forms of activities that caters both to the State and the people, the region also witnesses issues that creates a challenge for the living in this particular borderland. Issues like poverty, electricity, water, health and education has been a major challenge for these women living in the border region. The everyday

experiences of the women of Northern Bengal borderland thus has to be understood both from the issues that caters the State and the people while at the same time it also has to be seen from the challenges that the borderland offers them. It is under these various hardships created by the border region that these women are both the victim as well as survivor in the border region. From State security to the challenges in border region, these women have perfected their methods in dealing with various issues. Like for example the issue of poverty, apart from making them as the most vulnerable section it at the same time has made them to search for an alternative. It is due to the poverty that women of this community have entered into various fields like from illegal trade to flesh trade. It is the sense of survivability in the region that made these women to enter into such activities. At the same time these women in the process also have to undergo various forms of abuses and stigmatization in the region. But these have not stopped them into looking for alternatives. Like for example during the interview it was brought into the attention that due to the rising issue of health in the region these women have started raising funds. They collect 200rs per month from the member and during the requirement of emergency the money is used. Thus it is through these forms of survivability skills developed by the women of this region that their everydayness can be measured.

Similarly, the issue of electricity in the region has created a tremendous impact on the women living in Northern Bengal borderland. Electricity has become the source for these women to be connected with the outside world. They gather information from T.V and mobile phones but due to the lack of proper supply of electricity in the region they get cut off from the rest of the world. And this was clearly highlighted by one of the respondent (no 17) from Jaigoan who mentioned that they have to pay 200rs for making AADHAR card in the region. The corrupt officials seem have been making

use of the lack information among the women in particular in the region. And thus under the banner of AADHAR card they collect money from the locals. Thus, the flow of electricity ensures these women the correct information about the various schemes that the government provides in the State. But the lack of proper supply of electricity is making these women to surrender to these trends that eventually hamper the development of the region.

The experiences of the women living in the borderland also accounts for various forms of insecurities perceived by the women in the region. Like for example, while crossing the border women of this community has to face not only verbal abuses from the security provider but also the physical abuses in the form of frisking by the male guards in the region. These forms of experiences are eventually making the women to live under the insecurities created by the security provider. And the women of this particular borderland have to face it almost every day as border crossing is part of their everydayness. Such everydayness of these women thus has to be filtered from the State security apparatus to the issues present in the borderland and also through the challenges in the border region. Their everyday experiences of living in borderland ultimately give a clear picture of the region from the ground level. Hence, it through their experiences that issues of security, borders and borderlands can be redefined.

5.7 Gender Insecurity in Northern Bengal Borderland

Tickner in her work, *Gender in International Relations* (1992), highlights the necessity of relocating the object of reference from the State to the individual, taking into account the implications of gender. Gender may represent a casual variable that encourages States to act in order to achieve security, but it may also be used for the

analysis of the effects of State action on its citizens (Caprioli and Boyer, 2001; Carpenter, 2005). Hence, it is under this particular understanding that the study through the process of various interviews and group discussions have brought in various forms of gender insecurity in Northern Bengal Borderland. Thus in the process it was understood that the correlation between gender and security first and foremost have to be analyzed with the dimension of State security in the region. Northern Bengal borderland demonstrates both forms of borders i.e open and closed. Hence, women of this particular community experience different forms of surveillance that is practiced in two different form of border region. However, this does not negate the facts that whether open or closed women of this community have to undergo the culture of surveillance¹⁷⁰ in the region in their everydayness. It is the practice of surveillance that allow for creating a space for various sgender insecurities in the region. And this is because of the fact that for these women the act of surveillance may have been incorporated in the region for the security of the State but at the same the act has been creating insecurities for the women as well.

Women of this community during the interview clearly highlighted that the security personnel under the banner of State security make the movement of these women in the region difficult. As these women cross border every day, thus, it is their everydayness which is hampered by the surveillance factor. And hence this has been threatening their survivability in the region. Further, the presence of armed forces in the region also ensures the domination of the male population in the region. The increase in the male population in region exhibits the diminishing role of the women in border region. Further, women of this community are situated under the influence

¹⁷⁰The practice of surveillance is referred as culture as the border region has adopted this as a daily practice and this has been in way is understood as one of the characteristics in understanding borderlands.

of men's understanding of security. This would ultimately make the women believe that their own security lies under State security. And thus the issue of gender insecurity gets further sidelined.

The other factor that needs attention while making sense of gender insecurity in borderlands is the rise in various other issues like migration, human trafficking, illegal trade so and so forth. As these issues have a clear impact on the everydayness of the women living in the border region. Thus, there is a necessity for observing security threats through the prism of gendered glasses (Peterson and Runyan, 1999), i.e determining how security issues affect the lives of women and men, and what constitutes a threat from that perspective. During the study it was understood that Northern Bengal borderland not only witness the rise in the issues that targets people and State. At the same time it also witnesses the impact of such issues on the women living in the border region as well. The rise in other form of insecurities in the region is making Northern Bengal borderland as a region of insecurity for the women to live. This is so because of the fact that women of this community under the presence of various issues have further made them the most vulnerable in the community. Such issues have made the living of women in border region even more difficult as they not only have to deal with State security in the region but have to make their way through various troubles. Thus, in the process these women further encounter various forms of violence and domination which is in the form of human trafficking, social stigmatization and also the lack of space in decision making process. In nutshell, these issues create a chain of influence in the region which ultimately creates insecurities for the women living in the region.

The presence of gender insecurity in Northern Bengal borderland is also visible under the challenges that the region has. And these challenges like the issue of poverty,

education, health, electricity so and so forth have created a sphere of insecurities for the women living in the region. Since the State should normatively provide security for all citizens, feminist authors ask whether security seen through the prism of military force, with a focus on the preservation of national security, has the capacity to identify and respond to the security needs of the population within its own borders (Jeric, 2013). Thus, the presence of such issues in the region have brought into the attention towards the lack of State's understanding security from people's perspective and more so gender insecurities in the region. As women of this community are the ones who have to incorporate such challenges in their everyday life and seek for various alternatives in order to survive in the region. It is under various issues that are present in borderlands that the incorporation of the experiences of the women in the study of borders and borderlands become essential. As they are the ones who deal with various security issues everyday and have understood borderland through their everyday struggle.

5.8 Conclusion

Northern Bengal borderland demonstrates various forms of security aspects in the region. And gender insecurity is one of them as the presence of traditional and non-traditional security issues in the region have directly or indirectly create an impact on the lives of the women living in the region. It is through various prisms that the study has tried to make sense of gender insecurity in Northern Bengal borderland. Hence, the experiences of women in this particular borderland are used by the study in order to understand the forms of gender insecurities in the region. Further, this particular exercise has also helped the study in developing the different dimension of understanding borders and borderlands. From the issue of State security to non-traditional security issues, women of Northern Bengal borderland has the experiences

of making their living in the region. They at the same time also struggle everyday with various forms of challenges that the region offers them. It is under such circumstances that the understanding and their everydayness of women defines Northern Bengal borderland.

Chapter-6

Conclusion

CHAPTER-6

CONCLUSION

The study has under taken some of the major concepts of International Relations such as border, gender and security, making Northern Bengal border region as the case study. Northern Bengal border region provided the study with two forms of borders i.e open and closed. The field study is based on India-Bangladesh border region which is closed border and India-Bhutan border region which is an open border. The region at the same time has provided the glimpse of all other forms of security issues that every border region is witnessing today. It is the presence of both traditional and non-traditional security issues that the study has made an effort of bringing in the understanding of gender security issues in the region.

The impact of traditional framework of security on borders and borderlands has been such that majority of the people view or understand the region to be the zone of war. The basic understanding that people have towards the region is the demarcation of one state from the other. So in order to protect the state from the outside the presence of arms and armaments is must. Such kind of understanding so far had marginalized many other issues that exist in the region. Nevertheless, the wave of globalization after the end of cold war made a change in the outlook of the functioning of international system. The impact of which was also felt in the debates of border regions. As a result issues of cross border process such as migration, human trafficking, illegal trade, drug trafficking so and so forth received worldwide attention. Such development at the same time has created platforms for the issues of human security to enter into the debates of border and security. Issues such as poverty, education, water, electricity, food, infrastructure etc was brought into the limelight as

the security issues in border regions. It is during such changes, that gender scholars such as Tickner, Enloe, Collins, J. Aron, H. Altink, N. Yuval Davis to name the few argued that the debates on borders and borderlands should also bring in the focus towards the issue of gender insecurities that exist in every border regions.

Individual security in border region never received a proper attention. It was the rise in certain issues such as human trafficking, migration, illegal trade so and so forth that the vulnerability of the people and women in particular became obvious. It was clear that wars and conflicts were not the only factors that could have an impact on women residing in the border regions. Such circumstances made gender and feminist theorist to divert the attention towards border and borderlands. As a result some progress has been made towards understanding the forms of gender discrimination in the borderlands. While making headway on understanding gender discrimination on border region it was highlighted that due to the issues such as human trafficking, migration, poverty, education etc women in particular are enrolling to be the maximum victims. For example, due to the rising issue of human trafficking in the region women have grown to be the vulnerable section. The issue along with the issue of poverty has made the women of border region to opt for such prospect. During the study, cases has been highlighted were in order to come out of poverty, girls of Northern Bengal border region have started taking flesh trade as their profession. Factors such as these make it very clear for the need to understand the forms of gender in securities that exist in the border region.

From the very beginning of International Relations made certain principles were very clear. For example, national security should be given priority and other issues such as education, poverty, health, water, electricity so and so forth was kept as secondary. Such kind of understanding made State pivotal. However, due to certain progress in

the field of International Relations gender lens was incorporated, though theoretically. But the implication of the progress is less visible in border regions. Women in border regions have to undergo various forms of gender discrimination either through the presence of military or due to various other factors as discussed above. In the case of Northern Bengal border region the study highlighted that the presence of military and surveillance has been creating structure of gender insecurities in the region. For example it was highlighted that women have to function according to the set norms of state apparatus. This has curbed them to move freely in the region. As a result women are ensured that they can attain their own development inside their homes. On the hand women from the open border region claimed that during the process of border crossing they undergo verbal abuses of the armed forces. Such process has become a daily practice for them. Some even highlighted that frisking by the male guards in the border gates has also been a routine for the women who cross border everyday. Such incidents give a clear coverage on understanding gender insecurities that are present in the border regions.

Apart from making an account of the forms of gender insecurities that are present in the border regions the field of border and security also requires to incorporate the perception of women on various security debates. Critical feminist and scholars has placed an argument on the need for incorporating the voices of women. Following the understanding the study has brought in the narratives of women residing in Northern Bengal border region. The study has brought in the perception of women from different borders i.e open and closed border. Northern Bengal border region has various security issues which have a clear impact on the daily activities of the women living in the region. The understanding of those impacts was made visible during the field study by the narration of women over such issues. For example on the issue of

illegal trade, women of the border region consider the activity to be the platform for their own development. Such kind of example indicate that in order to gain the ground realities of the border region the understanding of women over security issues is must.

On the other hand through the narration of women residing in Northern Bengal border region the study has brought in the everyday struggle of women in the region. The study has highlighted the fact that the border region does not only compromise of security issues such as cross border illegal trade, human trafficking, migration so and so forth. Factors such as poverty, water, education, electricity etc also creates a structure of insecurities for them. Women of the border region have to deal with such issues in their everydayness along with the presence of other security issues in the region. For example, the lack of economic opportunity in the border region has made the women to become vulnerable towards flesh trade and human trafficking. It is the lack of education among women in the border region that makes most of the women to consider early age marriage as the vital option. This form of set pattern at the same time maintains the subordination of women as they have to rely on their spouse for most of the things. It has also ensured the participation of women in decision making process to be minimal. Though women from the open border region were gaining success in this field but the cross border movement ensured the stigmatization as the bitter reality for them. Such examples exemplify the real nature of borders and implications of the presence or the absence of security issues over women in the region.

Security debates on borders and borderlands have so far argued for the importance of national interest. However, the study understands that if security in border regions should be understood from the ground level. It should have the proper understanding of the implications of various security issues on the region. War, arms and armaments

are not the only solution for the challenges that women of the border region undergo every day. Women of the region should be well connected with the debates on border security issues. Their understanding on such issues highlights the discrimination being maintained towards gender issues on the debates of border and security. By incorporating the narration of women a gender wave could be established in the field of International Relations. Such development could eventually change the perceptions on the established notion towards borders and borderlands and highlight on the difficulties of the people living in the border region. At the same time it will also bring in the attention towards the compromises being made in the name of national security. It will bring in the focus towards individual security being sidelined and also towards the people of the region for not getting any platform to put grievances. The people of border regions are made to live with the understanding that the only way is towards national security. From all these examples and understanding it can be stated that along with military and armed forces the state should also celebrate the compromises being made by the people residing in the border region in the name of national security.

The study while focusing on the issues of gender in securities in the border region has highlighted various issues. From the impact of national security to the implication of the rising issues of human trafficking, migration, drug trafficking so and so forth on women. The study at the same time brought in the understanding of women towards various security issues in the region. In nutshell, the study has tried to develop an outline in the security debates of International Relations and borders for incorporating the experiences of women in the region. It is through their experiences that security in border regions could be understood from the point of people residing in the region and not from the national security lens. Such deviation is must in order to make border to

be the region of the state and to realise that people living in the region are also the part of the state. It is through the narration of the women over security issues that the study argue that there is need to cut the strings of marginalization of the region and bring them into the larger debates of security in the state.

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Appendices

APPENDIX-I
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDY

Socio-Demographic Profile

1. Name:
2. Address:
3. Age:

5-15	
15-25	
25-40	
40 and above	

4. Education:

Illiterate	
Elementary	
High School	
College and above	
Others	

5. Religion:

Hindu	
Muslim	
Christian	
Buddhist	
Others	

6. Marital Status:

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Widowed	
Others	

7. Total Number of Family members:

8. Total Number of earning members:

9. Occupation:

Security Issues

10. How long have you been living in borderland?

11. Do you see any changes over the past five to ten years in border?

12. Do you face any problems while crossing border?

13. How frequent you cross border?

14. What is the purpose for your visit?

15. Are border police helpful?

16. What are the major problems faced by you? (Specially how does this affect their life?)

17. Do you face any difficulties when border gets closed, especially during elections or political skirmishes in any side of border area? (Again how does women gets affected)

18. During harsh condition how do you make your living? (like the above mentioned situation)

19. Do you see any changes when there is change in political system in the center, and does it impacts on their everyday life? (Are women aware of the political developments that take place at the center?)
20. Does the various policies of central government benefited women over here? (like aadhar card, check some of the policies that has been targeted for women and children and other yojnas)
21. Have you been to other places, other than being on the other side of the border?
22. Do you see any difference, living in other areas and living in border area? (or see any difference in the lifestyle of women)
23. If you were given a chance what would you like to change in this region? (which would benefit them as a women)

APPENDIX-II

PROTOCOL TO THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH CONCERNING THE DEMARCATION OF THE
LAND BOUNDARY BETWEEN INDIA AND BANGLADESH AND RELATED
MATTERS.

The Government of the republic of India and the Government of the People's
Republic of Bangladesh,

Bearing in mind the friendly relations existing between the two countries,

Desiring to define more accurately at certain points and to complete the
demarcation of the land boundary between India and Bangladesh,

Having regard to the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of
India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh concerning the
demarcation of the land boundary between India and Bangladesh and related matters,
May 16, 1974 and Exchange of Letters dated December 26, 1974; December 30,
1974; October 7, 1982; and March 26, 1992 (hereinafter referred to as the 1974
Agreement),

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE 1

The provision of this Protocol shall form an integral part of the 1974
Agreement.

ARTICLE 2

(I) Article 1 Clause 5 of the Agreement shall be implemented as follows:

Muhuri River (Belonia) sector

Boundary in this segment shall be drawn westwards from the existing Boundary Pillar No.2159/48-S along the agreed line as depicted in the index map prepared jointly till it meets the southern limit of the Burning Ghat as shown in jointly surveyed map of MUhuri river area in 1977-78. There after it shall follow the external limit of the Burning Ghat till it meets the centre of northwards along the external limit of the Burning Ghat till it meets the centre of the existing Muhuri River. Thereafter it shall run along the mid stream of the existing Muhuri River upto Boudary Pillar No. 2159/3-S. This boundary shall be the fixed boundary. The two Governments should raise embankments on thier respective sides with a view to stabilising the river in its present course as stipulated in the 1974 Agreement. The parties agree to fencing on 'zero line' in this area.

(ii) Article 1 Clause 12 of the 1974 Agreement shall be implemented as follows:

Enclaves

111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and 51 Bangladesh Enlcaves in India as per the jointly verified cadastral enclave maps and signed at the level of DGLR&S, Bangladesh and DLR&S, West Bengal (India) in April 1997, shall be exchanged without claim to compensation for the additional areas going to Bangladesh.

(iii) Article 1 Clause 15 of the 1974 Agreement shall be implemented as follows:

Lathitilla and Dumabari

Line drawn by Radcliffe from Boundary Pillar 1397 (point Y) i.e the last demarcated boundary pillar position, straight southward to the tri-junction of Mouzas Dumabari, Lathitilla and Bara Putnigoan i.e upto iron bridge, and thence it shall run generally southwards along the midstream of the course of Putni Chara as already demarcate on the ground, till it meets the boundary between Sylhet (Bangladesh) and Tripura (India) i.e Boundary Pillar No.1800.

(IV) The land boundary in the area mentioned below shall be demarcated in the following manner:

Daikhata 56 (West Bengal-Jalpaiguri)/ Panchgarh

Boundary in this segment shall be drawn as fixed boundary from existing Boundary Pillar 774/32-S in the strip sheet 444/6 along the mouza boundary of Daikhata-56 as surveyed in 1997-98 and thereafter will follow the southern boundary of Daikhata-56 (from east to west) upto Point No 18 and therefrom it will follow the western boundary of Daikhata-56 (from south to north) till it meets the center of River Sui at Point No 15 and thereafter, will run along the center of the River Sui upto the Point No., the points as depicted in he sketch map jointly prepared and mutually agreed on August 3, 2011. Thereafter the International Boundary shall follow the already delineated boundary through Main Pillar (MP) 775.

ARTICLE 3

(I) Article 2 of the 1974 Agreement shall be implemented as follows:

The Government of India and the Government of Bangladesh agree that the

boundary shall be drawn as a fixed boundary for territories held in Adverse Possession as determined through joint survey and fully depicted in the respective adversely possessed land area index map (APL map) finalized by the Land Records and Survey Departments of both the countries between December 2010 and August 2011, which are fully described in clause (a) to (d) below.

The relevant strip maps shall be printed and signed by the Plenipotentiaries and transfer of territorial jurisdiction shall be completed simultaneously with the exchange of enclaves. The demarcation of the boundary, as depicted in the above mentioned Index Maps, shall be as under:-

(a) West Bengal

(i) Bousmari- Madhugari (Kushtia-Nadia) area

The boundary shall be drawn from the existing Boundary Pillar Nos, 154/5-S to follow the centre of old course of river Mathabanga, as depicted in consolidation mp of 1962, as surveyed jointly and agreed in June 2011.

(ii) Andharkota (Kushtia-Nadia) area

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No 1525/5-S to Boundary Pillar No 153/1-S to follow the edge of existing River Mathabanga as jointly surveyed and agreed in June 2011.

(iii) Pakuria (Kushtia-Nadia) area

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No 151/1-S to Boundary No 153/9-S to follow the edge of River Mathabanga as jointly surveyed and agreed in June 2011.

(iv) Char Mahishkundi (Kushtia-Nadia) area

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No 242/S/13, to Boundary Pillar No 153/1-S to Boundary Pillar No 153/9-S to follow the edge of river Mathabanga as jointly surveyed and agreed in June 2011.

(v) Haripal/ khutadah/ Battoli/ sapameri/ LNpur (patari) (Naogaon-Malda) area

The boundary shall be drawn as line joining from existing Boundary Pillar No 242/S/13, to Boundary Pillar No 243/7-S/5 and as jointly surveyed and agreed in June 2011.

(vi) Berubari (Panchgarh-Jalpaiguri area)

The boundary in the area Berubari- (Panchgarh-Jalpaiguri) adversely held by Bangladesh, and Beribari and Singhapara-Khudipara (Panchagarh-Jalpaiguri), adversely held by India shall be drawn as jointly demarcated during 1996-1998.

(b) Meghalaya Sector

(i) Lobachera-Nuncherra

The boundary from existing Boundary Pillar No 1315/4-S to Boundary Pillar No 1315/1-S to Boundary Pillar No 1316/11-S in Lailong-Noonchera, Boundary Pillar No 1317 to Boundary Pillar 1317/13-S in Lailong-Lahiling and Boundary Pillar No 1318/1-S to Boundary Pillar

No 1318/2-S in Lailong-Lubhaera shall be drawn to follow the edge of tea gardens as jointly surveyed and agreed in Dec 2010.

(ii) Pyrdiwah/Padua Area

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No 1270/1-S as per jointly surveyed and mutually agreed line till Boundary Pillar No 1271/1-T. The Parties agree that the Indian Nationals from Pyrdiwah village shall be allowed to draw water from Piyang River near point No.6 of the agreed Map.

(iii) Lyngkhat Area

(aa) Lyngkhat-I/ Kulumcherra & Lyngkhat-II/Kulumcherra

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No.1264/4-S to Boundary Pillar No1265 and BP No 1265/6-S to 1265/9-S as per jointly surveyed and mutually agreed line.

(ab) Lyngkhat-III/ Sonarhat

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No 1266/13-S along the nallah southwards till it meets another nallah in the east-west direction, thereafter it shall run along the northern edge of the nallah in east till it meets the existing International Boundary north of Reference Pillar Nos. 1267/4-R-B and 1267/3-R-

(iv) Dwaki/Tambil area

The boundary shall be drawn by a straight line joining existing Boundary Pillar Nos 1275/1-S o Boundary Pillar Nos 1275/7-S. The Parties agree to fencing on 'zero line' in this area.

(v) Naljuri/Sreepur Area

(aa) Naljuri-I

The boundry shall be drawn from the existing Boundary Pillar No 1277/2-S in southern direction upto three plots as depicted in the strip Map No 166 till it meets the nallah flowing from Boundary Pillar No 1277/5-T, thereafter it will run along the western edge of the side, thereafter it shall run eastwards till it meets a line drawn in southern direction from Boundary Pillar No 1277/4-S.

(ab) Naljuri-III

The boundary shall be drawn by a straight line from existing Boundary Pillar No 1278/2-S to Boundary Pillar No 1279/3-S.

(vi) Mukhtapur/Dibir Hawor Area

The Parties agree that the Indian Nationals shall be allowed to visit Kali Mandir and shall be allowed to draw water and exercise fishing rights in the water body in the Mukhtapur/ Dibir Howar area from the bank of Mukhtapur side.

(c) Tripura Sector

(i) Chandannagar- Champarai Tea Garden area in Tripura/ Moulvi Bazar sector

The boundary shall be drawn along Sonaraichhera river from existing Boundary Pillar No 1904 to Boundary Pillar No 1905 as surveyed jointly and agreed in July 2011.

(d) Assam Sector

(i) Kalabari (Boroibari) area in Assam sector

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No 1066/24-T to Boundary Pillar No 1066/24-T Boundary Pillar No 1067/16-T as surveyed jointly and agreed in August 2011.

(ii) Pallathal area in Assam sector

The boundary shall be drawn from existing Boundary Pillar No.1370/3-S to 1371/6-S to follow the outer edge of the tea garden and from Boundary Pillar No. 1372 to 1373/2-S along outer edge of the pan plantation.

ARTICLE 4

This Protocol shall be subject to ratification by the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and shall enter into force on the date of exchange of Instruments of Ratification.

Signed at Dhaka on the Sixth day of September, 2011, in two originals in the English language.

APPENDIX-III

INDIA-BHUTAN FRIENDSHIP TREATY, 2007

The Indian-Bhutan Friendship Treaty, which was signed in New Delhi on February 8, 2007, came into force following the exchange of Instruments of Ratification between the two governments in Thimphu on March 2, 2007. INDIA-BHUTAN FRIENDSHIP TREATY. The Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Kingdom of Bhutan: Reaffirming their respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity; Recalling the historical relations that have existed between our two countries; Recognizing with deep satisfaction the manner in which these relations have evolved and matured over the years into a model of good neighbourly relations; Being fully committed to further strengthening this enduring and mutually beneficial relationship based on genuine goodwill and friendship, shared interests, and close understanding and cooperation; Desiring to clearly reflect this exemplary relationship as it stands today; And having decided, through mutual consent, to update the 1949 Treaty relating to the promotion of, and fostering the relations of friendship and neighbourliness between India and Bhutan; Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

There shall be perpetual peace and friendship between India and Bhutan.

Article 2

In keeping with the abiding ties of close friendship and cooperation between

Bhutan and India, the Government of the Kingdom of Bhutan and the Government of the Republic of India shall cooperate closely with each other on issues relating to their national interests. Neither Government shall allow the use of its territory for activities harmful to the national security and interest of the other.

Article 3

There shall, as heretofore, be free trade and commerce between the territories of the Government of Bhutan and the Government of India. Both the Governments shall provide full cooperation and assistance to each other in the matter of trade and commerce.

Article 4

The Government of India agrees that the Government of Bhutan shall be free to import, from or through India into Bhutan, whatever arms, ammunition, machinery, warlike material or stores as may be required or desired for the strength and welfare of Bhutan, and that this arrangement shall hold good for all time as long as the Government of India is satisfied that the intentions of the Government of Bhutan are friendly and that there is no danger to India from such importations. The Government of Bhutan agrees that there shall be no export of such arms, ammunition and materials outside Bhutan either by the Government of Bhutan or by private individuals.

Article 5

The Government of Bhutan and the Government of India agree that Bhutanese subjects residing in Indian territories shall have equal justice with Indian subjects, and that Indian subjects residing in Bhutan shall have equal justice with the subjects of the Government of Bhutan.

Article 6

The extradition of persons wanted by either state for crimes and for unlawful activities affecting their security shall be in keeping with the extradition agreements between the two countries.

Article 7

The Government of Bhutan and the Government of India agree to promote cultural exchanges and cooperation between the two countries. These shall be extended to such areas as education, health, sports, science and technology.

Article 8

The Government of Bhutan and the Government of India agree to continue to consolidate and expand their economic cooperation for mutual and long term benefit.

Article 9

Any differences and disputes arising in the interpretation and application of this Treaty shall be settled bilaterally by negotiations in a spirit of trust and understanding in consonance with the historically close ties of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation that form the bedrock of Bhutan-India relations.

Article 10

This Treaty shall come into force upon the exchange of Instruments of Ratification by the two Governments which shall take place in Thimphu within one month of the signing of this Treaty. The Treaty shall continue in force in perpetuity unless terminated or modified by mutual consent. In witness whereof, the undersigned being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Treaty.

Done at New Delhi on the Eighth Day of February Two Thousand and Seven, in two originals each in Hindi, Dzongkha and English languages, each text being equally authentic. However, in case of difference, the English text shall prevail.

For the Government of For the Government of

The Republic of India the Kingdom of Bhutan

Sd/-

(Pranab Mukherjee)

Minister of External Affairs

Sd/-

(H.R.H.Trongsa Penlop

Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck)

The Crown Prince of Bhutan