



## Research Article

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# Demographic Profile of the Kumar Community of Hajo, Kumarpara Village of Kamrup District, Assam, India

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**Abstract:** The demographic structure of a community refers to the composition of its population based on various characteristics, such as age, sex, education, income, household size and other socio-economic factors. Demographic information is crucial for policymakers to design effective public policies for community development projects. It is equally important for better planning and resource allocation by governments and non-governmental organizations in a country. Assam is a meeting ground of various indigenous communities, each contributing to its unique demographic structure. The Kumar community living in Assam is particularly related to pottery. A significant portion of the population of this community also resides in the Hajo area. Though their traditional occupation is pottery, at present, they have mostly given up their traditional occupation for other professions. The present study aims to investigate the demographic structure of the Kumar community residing in Kumarpara village, Hajo, under the Kamrup district of Assam, India, based on various demographic parameters using primary data collected through fieldwork.

**Keywords:** Demographic structure, Kumar, Community, Hajo, Kumarpara

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## INTRODUCTION

Demography is a scientific study of human populations based on their size, structure and development. A demographic profile of a community is essential for understanding the present status of the community, knowing current and future community needs, framing community development strategies, allocating resources etc. for the welfare of the people belonging to the community.

The Kumar (Kumbhakara) is stated to be a mixed caste and it is said that they were allied to the barbers (Das, 1999, p. 16). The Kumar is one of the indigenous communities of Assam, with a unique cultural heritage. The traditional occupation of the Kumar is pottery as well as the making of earthenware. Even though the Kumar community is found in practically every district of Assam, they are mostly concentrated in the districts like Jorhat, Golaghat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Kamrup, Dhubri, Goalpara, Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Darang, Nagaon and Majuli.

The Kumars of Hajo are a functional caste. They live in some localities like Kumarpara, Patani, Pakhamela, Dhoparguri and Nayanpur. The Kumars settled in the Kumarpara are traditionally said to be allied to the Napits (Barbers), who are the next neighbours to them (Das, 1999, p. 17). They had to supply the earthen pots for cooking and other purposes to the temples of Hajo.

### Objectives of the study

- To carry out a household survey of the village of Hajo, Kumarpara.
- To collect data and information regarding the demographic profile of the village.
- To analyze the collected data for a meaningful result.

## METHODOLOGY AND DATABASE

The present study makes use of interview and observation methods under the field study methodology. The primary data have been collected directly from the field with the help of questionnaires. The secondary data have been derived from different books, magazines, journals and the internet. To analyze the result, various statistical methods are used.

### Study area

The study area of Hajo is located in the central part of the Hajo Revenue Circle under the Kamrup district of Assam, India. It is situated at a distance of 32 km. north-west of Guwahati, on the north bank of the mighty Brahmaputra. It covers an area of about 15.41 sq. km. and has a total population of 17625 according to the 2011 census. From a geographical point of view, the place is located at 26°14'35"E latitude and 91°32'24"N longitude. It is bounded by the Lakhaitora (Puthimari) river on the north, Abhaypur and Gerua village on the east, Nadia, Ujankuri and Hahdia village on the west and No. 2 Kulhati village and Hajo-Sota Nadi on the south.

The region is divided into 31 localities. Kumarpara is one of the localities where the study was conducted.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kumhar or Kumbhar is a caste or community in India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Kumhars have historically been associated with the art of pottery (Baidyanath, 1979, pp. 46-47). The Kumhars derive their name from the Sanskrit word *Kumbhakar*, meaning earthen-pot maker (Mandal, 1998, pp. 565-566).

The Kumars of Assam are known as potters by their occupation. They are regarded as Kumbhakar by the *Veda*, *Purana*, *Samhita* etc. B. K. Barua mentions that in Assam, at present, there are two classes of potters: Kumara and Hira. The Hiras are a degraded caste (antyaja) and they are frequently spoken of as a sub-caste of the Candala, but they will not eat with the latter, and their occupation is, of course, quite distinct. They differ from the potters of other castes in that their women also work, and that they shape their vessels entirely by hand, instead of by means of wheels (Barua, 1951, p. 115).

The Kumar community in Hajo Revenue Circle under Kamrup district of Assam is primarily known for its traditional pottery making, a craft that has been passed down through generations. They are scattered in different

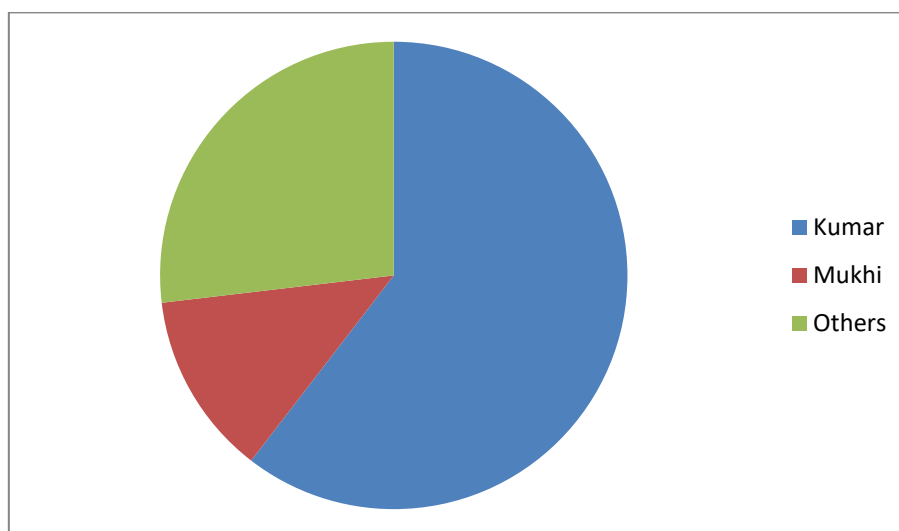
parts of the area, like Niz-Hajo, Bamundi, Sualkuchi, Talia etc. The community is organized under the All Assam Kumar Sanmilen, an association that advocates for their interests and welfare.

### Household census

Hajo, Kumarpara village is home to a number of castes and communities. As many as 134 households reside in the village, out of which 81 belong to the Kumar community with a population of 366. Mukhi, another important community in the village, lives together with the Kumars in peace and harmony. The total number of households of the Mukhi is 17, with a population of 67. Besides, 36 households in the village are from other communities, which are seen to have migrated from different parts of Assam. For our study, the 81 households belonging to the Kumar community have been taken into account.

**Table: 1 Community-wise households in Kumarpara village**

Community	No. of households	%
Kumar	81	60.45%
Mukhi	17	12.68%
Others	36	26.87%
<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 1:** Community-wise households in Kumarpara village

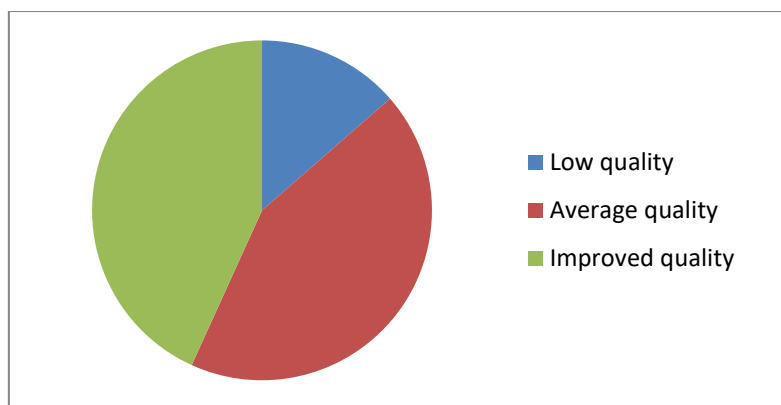
### House type

The majority of the houses in the village are pucca, having a concrete roof, brick walls and cemented floor. Some families have semi-pucca houses with a concrete roof, brick walls and a kutchha floor. Assam-type houses, which are made of bamboo, straw, wood and tin, are also found. Moreover, a limited number of RCC buildings are also seen in the village. So far as the quality of the houses is concerned, 11 (13.58%) houses are of

low quality. However, the numbers of improved and average quality houses are the same, i.e., 35 (43.21%).

**Table 2: Quality of houses in Kumarpara village**

Quality	No. of houses	%
Low quality	11	13.58%
Average quality	35	43.21%
Improved quality	35	43.21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 2:** Quality of houses in Kumarpara village

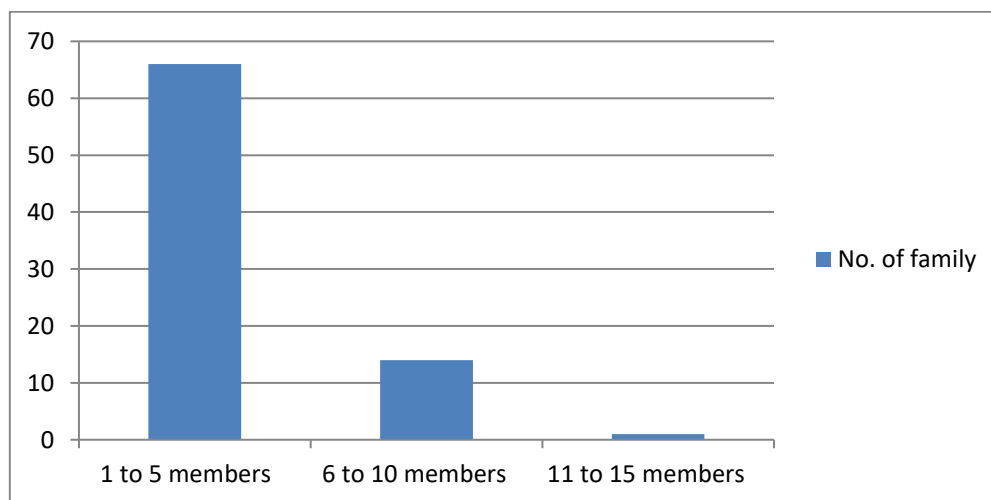
### Family size

A total of 81 families reside in the village. The total population of the village is 366, out of which 188 are male and 178 are female. Based on the analyses of 81 households belonging to the Kumar community, the structure of the Kumar population as per the family size is as follows:

**Table 3: Family size in Kumar community**

Size	No. of family	%
1 to 5 members	66	81.49%
6 to 10 members	14	17.28%
10 to 15 members	1	1.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the above table, it is clear that most of the Kumar families, i.e., 66 (81.49%), consist of 1-5 members, followed by 14 (17.28%) families that consist of 6-10 members. Only 1 (1.23%) family consists of 10-15 members.



**Figure 3:** Family size in Kumar community

Again, the number of joint families in the village is 30 (37%), while 51 (63%) families fall under the nuclear category. Though nowadays, the number of joint families has been decreasing in our society, the village experiences a good number of joint families.

**Table 4: Types of family**

Types of family	No. of households	%
Joint	30	37%
Nucleated	51	63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Sex ratio

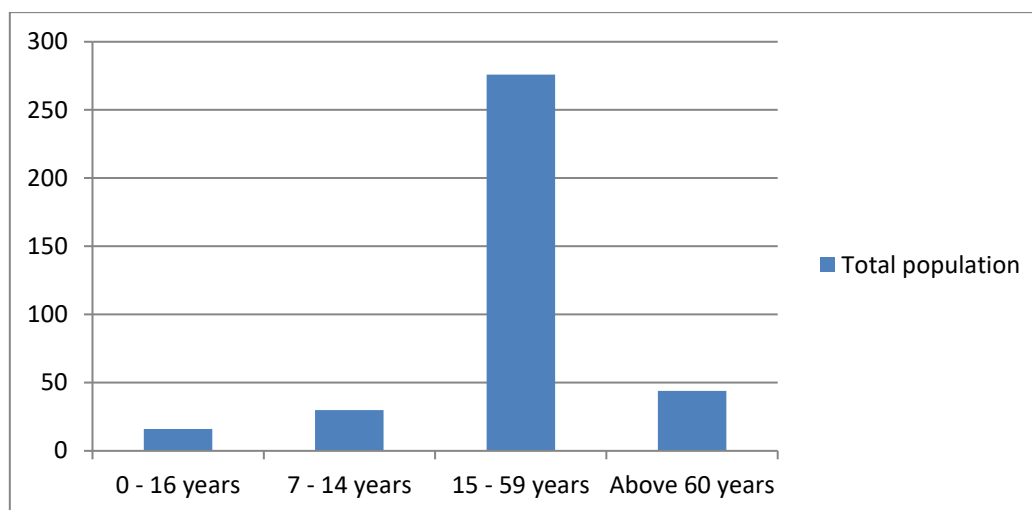
The sex ratio refers to the proportion of males to females in a population. The sex ratio (number of females per 1000 males) may vary across villages, but generally, there are more males than females. In case of the study village, the same thing is happening, i.e., the sex ratio is 947. This means there are 947 females for every 1,000 males in the village. The sex ratio of the village is lower than the state average, which is 958 females per 1,000 males. The child sex ratio (0-6 years) in the village is low to some extent, which is 778 females per 1,000 males.

### Age composition

Age composition refers to the distribution of population across various age groups. It is an important demographic indicator that is essential for framing proper planning and policies for economic development of a nation. In the surveyed village, the age composition is as follows:

**Table 5: Age composition in Kumarpara village**

Age group (years)	Total population	% of population
0 – 6	16	4.37%
7 – 14	30	8.2%
15 - 59	276	75.41%
Above 60	44	12.02%
<b>Total</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Figure 4: Age composition in Kumarpara village**

According to the data, 75.41 percent of the population is in the economically productive age group of 15 to 59 years. In contrast, the age group of 0 to 6 years, which accounts for 4.3%, represents dependents. Additionally, individuals aged 60 years and above (12.02%), indicate an ageing population that requires specialized health care and support.

### Literacy rate

The literacy rate is the percentage of a population that can read and write with understanding. In India, according to the Census, a person aged seven and

above is considered literate if they can read and write with understanding in any language. It is a key indicator of a people's educational level and overall socio-economic development.

When we exclude 16 children in the 0-6 years age group, the literacy rate of the Kumar community in Hajo, Kumarpara village is remarkably high i.e. 95.43%, compared to the state average of 72.19%. The survey report reveals a male literacy rate of 100% and a female literacy rate of 90.64%. According to the 2011 Census, the male and female literacy rate for the state are 77.85% and 66.27%, respectively.

**Table 6: Literacy Rate**

Category	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Literate	179	100%	155	90.64%	334	95.43%
Illiterate	0	0	16	9.36%	16	4.57%

### Occupational structure

The occupational structure of a population refers to the working population engaged in different economic activities or jobs. It essentially shows the proportion of people employed in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. It is a key indicator of the level of economic development of a country.

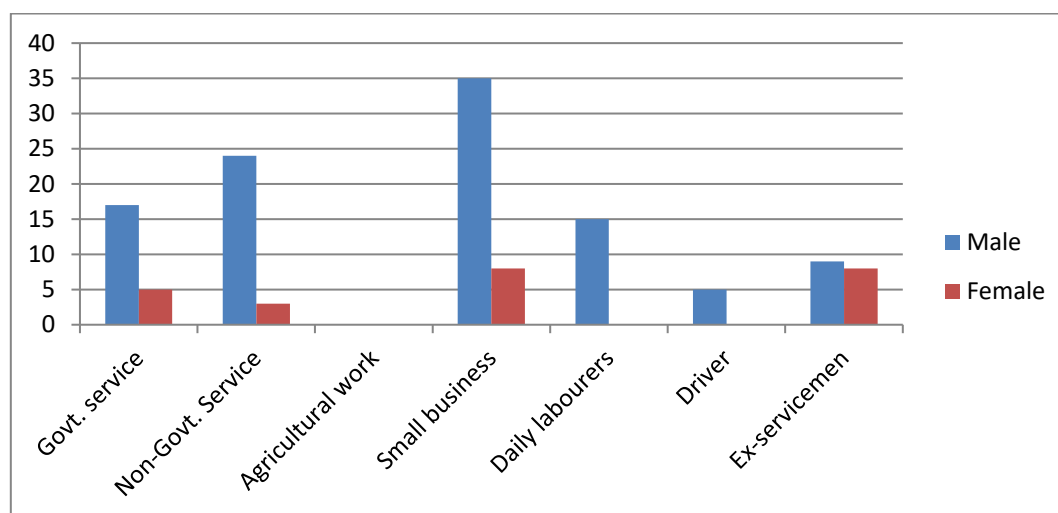
Out of a total population of 366 in the village, there are 129 individuals (35.25%) who are considered as the working population. The remaining 237 individuals (74.75%) are classified as non-workers,

indicating a high dependency ratio. A notable characteristic of the occupational structure of the village is the total lack of agricultural workers.

Another significant feature of the village's occupational structure is the gender disparity in employment. Out of 178 females, only 24 (13.48%) are engaged in various sectors as workers, compared to 105 males (55.85%). This striking difference shows that the majority of women in the community still depend on others for their daily sustenance, which raises questions about the status of today's modern society.

**Table 7: Occupational structure of Kumarpara village**

Category	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Govt. service	17	9.05	5	2.81	22	6.01
Non-Govt. service	24	12.77	3	1.69	27	7.38
Agricultural work	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small business	35	18.62	8	4.49	43	11.75
Daily labourers	15	7.97	-	-	15	4.1
Driver	5	2.66	-	-	5	1.37
Ex-servicemen	9	4.78	8	4.49	17	4.64
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>55.85</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13.48</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>35.25</b>

**Figure 5:** Occupational structure of Kumarpara village

## CONCLUSION

The demographic structure of the Kumar community of Hajo, Kumarpara village is quite interesting. The village is not very far from Guwahati, the gateway of north-east India. Though the Kumars are a potter caste, at present, pottery making is confined to a small number of families. In the past, most of the people of the community were dependent on making earthenware. Some people were also engaged in agricultural and allied activities. However, the number of people engaged in pottery is steadily declining. Another significant feature of the village is that not a single person in the village currently works as a farmer. Moreover, the literacy rate of the village is high (95.43%). It is seen in our survey report that the number of highly educated people in the village is higher and they are holding prestigious jobs in government sectors and securing a vital position in society. The village has tremendous potential for developing tourism through the traditional craft of pottery. But the village and the craft is facing some crucial problems. If the concerned authority takes necessary steps to survive this age-old craft, the village will definitely develop and prosper in the near future.

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