
The Socio-Economic Empowerment of Scheduled Tribe Women with Special Reference to Mishing Women of Assam (Study Based on Mishing Women of Alimur Mishing Gaon, Sivasagar District of Assam)

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Introduction

World development report emphasized that women are an important engine of growth and development. Their ability to save and invest in their families is well documented. But yet in many places, traditions, limited mobility and lack of voice or access to information make women the most neglected and exploited group.

Assam is the inhabitant of various ethnic groups. Among these ethnic groups, Mishing is one of the important plain tribes of Assam which constitutes about 4% of the total. The 6th Scheduled of the Indian constitution declared them as Scheduled Tribe 'Mishing Janajati Unnyan Parishad' has been constituted for their development. Mishing people lived in various places of Assam; traditionally they lived river side of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries with a "Chang Ghar". They are basically agriculturalist and they produced 'Ahu', 'Paddy' in their field. Mishing women prepared 'Apong' (rice beer) and this type of wine is regarded most prestigious in case of religious festival as well as entertaining guests. The Mishing women are most hard worker then the men folk. They are involved not only household work but hearty bust with agricultural field also. Every Mishing women is an aspect weaver and they produce different color full cloth for all the members of the family.

Alimur Mishing Gaon is a neighboring village of our college and it is inhabited by the Mishing people. The Mishing women play a vital role in the family. In this study we want to observe the empowerment of Mishing women of the village in the present day society.

Objectives of the Survey

1. To observe socio-economic status of the respondents.
2. To find out the participation of women in economic activities.
3. To study whether the women receive any benefit from Govt. or taken loan of any kind from financial institutions.
4. To examine the role of women in decision making process in respect of education, health household matters etc.

Field and Methodology

The study was conducted in Dikhowmukh Alimur Mishing Gaon of Sivasagar district. The village is situated in the east of Sivasagar District. There are 330 household in the village and majority of households belong to Mishing community. The village is under Sivasagar Revenue circle and Gaurisagar Development Block. It belongs to Hatighuli Gaon panchayat. The village is situated about 20km away from Sivasagar town and 10km away from Gaurisagar. There are three provincialised primary school, one provincialised middle school, one Anganwadi centre in the village. The provincialised high schools and

Dikhowmukh College are situated at the distance of 7km away from the village. The police station and the Gaon Panchayat office are situated at Gaurisagar about 10km away from the village. Most of the people of the village belong to below poverty line (BPL) category.

Methodology

The study was conducted by using interview method. For this purpose questionnaires are prepared including the above mention objectives. In the village, 100 women were selected randomly and data were collected by the researchers with structured interview schedule. The scribe analyzed the data by classification and tabulation.

Analysis of data

The data were collected through structured scheduled and presented in simple frequently tables followed by observations made.

Table no 1:- Age group of the respondent

SL no	Age group	Frequency	Percentage
1	20-30	38	38%
2	30-40	24	34%
3	40-50	18	18%
4	50-60	10	10%
	Total	100	100%

The age groups of the respondent are presented in table- 1. The age profiles of the respondent are presented in four categories. From this table it is seen that majority of them are in the age group of 20-30 years and only 10% respondent are found in 50-60 age group.

Table no-2:- Educational qualification of the respondents:-

SL no	Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	68	68%
2	H. S. L. C pass	18	18%
3	H .S pass	10	10%
4	Graduate	4	4%
	Total	100	100%

From this table it is seen that 68% respondent are illiterate, 18% respondent are H. S. L. C pass, 10% respondent are H .S pass and only 4% respondent are graduate in the village.

Table no 3: - Marital status of the respondents

Sl no	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	70	70%
2	Unmarried	20	20%
3	Widow	10	10%
	Total	100	100%

The marital status of the respondent is presented in the table No-3. From this table it is seen that 70% respondent are married, 20% respondent are unmarried n 1% respondent are widow.

Table No 4: - Nature of the family of the respondent

Sl no	Name of the family	Frequency	Percentage
1	Nuclear	40	40%
2	Joint	60	60%
	Total	100	100%

As per the data prescribed in the table it is shown that 40% respondents are Nuclear family and 60% are joint family member.

Table No 5: - Main occupation of the Respondent

Sl no	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Service	20	20%
2	Business	20	20%
3	Housewife	60	60%
	Total	100	100%

It is clear from the table that 20% respondents are service holder 20% women are business women and 60% are housewife.

Table No 6: - Total Annual Income of the household of the respondent

Sl- no	Annual income	Frequency	Percentage
1	10,000-20,000	30	30%
2	20,000-30,000	25	25%
3	30,000-40,000	15	15%
4	40,000-50,000	10	10%
5	50,000-60,000	10	10%
6	60,000-70,000	7	7%
7	Above 70,000	3	3%
	Total	100	100%

It is shown in the table that majority of the respondents are in the income group of Rs 10,000 to 20,000 and only 3% respondent are above Rs 70,000.

Table No 7: - Economic activities of the respondents

Sl- no	Activities	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Agriculture	35	35%
2	Weaving	10	10%
3	Can and Bamboo	----	----
4	Rearing Muga	----	----
5	Both Agriculture and Weaving	55	55%
	Total	100	100%

The table revealed that 35% respondents are engaged in agriculture 10% respondent are engaged in weaving and 55% respondent are engaged both agriculture and weaving.

Table No 8: - Own saving account of the respondent

SL no	Bank account of the respondent in her own name	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Accounts in own name	55	55%
2	No. account in own name	45	45%
	Total	100	100%

From the data which is presented in table No 7, it may be shown that 55% respondents have not their own Bank Account and 45% have their own Bank Account.

Table No 9: - Aspect of Decision Making

SL no	Decision Aspect	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Financial Matter	25	25%
2	Education of Children	38	38%
3	Marriage of Family members	37	37%
	Total	100	100%

In the observation it is found that 25% respondent take part in financial matters, 38% respondent take part in education of children and 37% respondent take part in the decision of marriage of the family members.

Finding of the study

From the study of the village we have arrived at the following findings.

- Alimur Mishing Goan is economically and socially a very backward village.
- Almost 95% houses of the village are Kaccha and only 5% houses are Semi Pacca.
- Majority of women of the village belong to lower income group.
- Majority of the women are poor in education.
- The women in study area have no time for watching and listening T.V and Radio due to heavy domestic burden.
- The women of the village are not aware about their health education, and socio-economic status.
- From the study it has seen that majority of the household decision re controlled by husband alone, only few women of the village take part in the decision making process of the family.
- In the village women have been playing a less role to play in social and economic issues of the society.
- Few elder female members of the family played an active role in taking decision of some household matters. The study also revealed that the decision making capacity is increased slowly to those women who are education and economically independent.

Conclusion

From the above study it can be said that without induction of some well planned programme, the empowerment of Mishing Women is not possible. It is needed to do planned and workable steps for the implement of Mshing Women. Upliftment of Socio-Economic condition of women is one of the most priority aspects for women empowerment. It is urgently needed to educate and orient the Mshing Women to improve their Social status. They should be involved in more economic and social activities for their overall development of the family as well as society s a whole. For minimizing the gender differences formation of “Mahila Samiti” (women organization)to make them self reliant, self dependent and self decision maker. Emphasis should be given for creating a good and sound women leadership who can organize the group members to mobilize women to achieve their desire needs. There should take some programmes for women of this village to achieve social development, economic development, health improvement, literary promotion and self confidence, etc.

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