

Socio-Economic Status of Tea-Tribes Women-A case study of Mazbat Development Block.

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Abstract:

Woman can play an important role in the upliftman of the society. Without economic political and social participation the human society could not be developing. The preasent study has been design to know the socio-economic status tea tribes women of the Mazbat Development Block. Simple random sampling methals were employed to select the sample of four Tea garden and two village. Data collection was done with the help of “social-economic status scale”, by Udai Parek and G. Trivedi(1964). The major findings reveled that there were various drawbacks in the Tea Tribes women.

Key words : Socio-economic, Tea Garden, Tea Tribes Women.

Inoduction

The status of women refers to the present condition or position in respect of social, economic and political aspects. But social change refers to the alteration, modification and replacement in any aspect society over a period of time. A strong correlation exists between social change and women status. The degree of status given to women in any society reflects the nature of its cultural richness and the level of its civilization standards. So, Swami Bivekanada said “Nation which do not respect women have never become great nor will ever in future”. The status accorded to women in society civilization can be assessed by the way in which women are treated by the members of that civilization.

Basically these tea-tribes were actually called the 'Adivasi' but they were influenced by many language like Hindi, Bengali, Oriya, Santal, Munda, Nagpuri also Assamese and Bengali language were used in both their own language literally the baganiya society consists of approximately 160 tribes and sub tribes in which Munda, Sawtali, Ura Chura, Diya, Pachariya, Parja, Gouda, Kondho, Viaga, Kheriya, Asur. Kol, Bheel, Sabor, Garait, Atrwar, Uria, Baraik, Buari, Khadal, Guwala, Muchali, Bhamij, Kumari, Panika, Pradhar, Tanti, etc are the main.

Study Area

Mazbat Development Block in Udalguri District(B.T.A.D.) in the state of Assam, India, Mazbat is located at 26 42 N 72 30 E / 26.7 N 92.5 E. There are several tea states in its vicinity. It is very close to the orang national park. Males constitute 53 % at the population and female 47% . Mazbat has average literacy rate of 54 % lower than national average of 59, 5% male literacy rate is 79% where only 10% of the population is under 06 years of age.

Table No.1

Number of Respondents of Sample area Mazbat Development Block, Udalguri.

Sl. No.	Name of Area	Nos
1	Orang T.E.	25
2	Mazbat T.E.	25
3	Lamabari T.E.	25
4	Dhanshree T.E.	25
5	Betibari T.E.	12
6	Deba Pukhuri	20
7	Khamtoubari	24

As far as secondary data is concerned, data are collected from arions published and unpublished sources i.c documents ,reports of Govt. bulletin and Journals.

Methodology

The proposed work is based on data collected from primary and secondary sources. Prime emphasis is given to primary data. The primary data have been collected through field survey applying random sampling technique from 07 revenue village i.e. Orang T.E., Mazbat T.E., Lamabari, T.E., Dhanshree T.E., Betibari T.E. Deba Pukhuri, Kamtoubari) in the Mazbat Development Block. Total list of women has been collected from voters list collected from concerned authority. At least 10% of total women are considered to be representative's sample. So, a sample of 100 women was selected from the list.

Objectives

The following are the main objectives of the present study

- a) To assess the economic and social contribution of women
- b) To study the status of women in respect of demographic, economic-social and political aspects.
- c) To suggest some measures for the overall development of women.
- d) To examine the level and nature of economic empowerment of women.

Analysis and findings

There are number of variables determining status of women. For this study we consider only five criteria, which are discussed and brief.

- (i) Age structure and composition.

In study area sex ratio is (931) which is lower than the state (932) and the country (939). It is seen that 35% of the population in the study area below 15 years of age, which indicates that fertility increases due to lack of awareness of family planning and economic consciousness. Secondly 76-95 age-group, reflects low life expectancy of female that of male. Thirdly, in 16-35 age groups the sex ratio is high because due to immigration of female from rural areas to work in household sector. As the most productive period is 16 to 55, so we can say there is enormous female power in Mazbat area for the socio-economic development if they are given proper training and guidance.

At the same time the sex ration also become favourable in group 56-75. i.c 1071 because due to owing low life expectancy of males.

Table No.2

1) Age structure and sex composition, Mazbat Development Block, Udalguri

Age Group	Male(%)	Female(%)	Total	Sex-Ratio
Below 15 years	14.5	13.5	28.0	931
16 to 35	12	17.5	29.5	1458
36 to 55	12.5	12	24.0	960
56 to 75	7	7.5	14.5	1071
76 to 95	1.5	1.0	2.5	666.67
95 above	0.5	1.0	1.5	500

2) Level of Education:

Table No.3

Level of Education Tea Tribes

(Mazbat Development Block, Udalguri)

Educational Level	% of male literate	% of total female literate	Variation (Male-female)
L.P level	22.5	30.5	(-)8
H.S.L.C Passed	31.00	37	(-)6
H.S. Passed	32.5	26.5	+6
Graduate	14.5	5.5	+9
Post Graduate	1.5	1.5	0

Education improves the status and condition of women. A strong positive correlation exists between development of women and education which enables to grow confidence, competency and responsibilities. In study area average literacy rate is (60.25%), which is

lower than the state is (63.25%), where female literacy rate is 44% in study area. So it requires upliftment of female literacy rate to ensure socio-economic development. Likewise, the number of female receiving higher education and professional degree is very low as compared to male(table-4), because on female-education is not returnable this may brings stigma to their daughter.

Table No.4

Education at high level, Tea Tribes, Mazbat Development Block, Udalguri

Category Education	No. of Male	No. of Female
MBBS	0	0
Engineering	0	0
M.Sc.	1	0
M.A.	3	1
LLB	1	1

3. Occupational structure and Income level

One of the vital reflectors of women status is occupational structure. In the study area the female workers are 19%, where male workers are 37% on the basis of activities on which women depend to maintain their family we have found the following occupational structure.

Table No.-5

Female occupational structure, Mazbat Development Block

Sector	Occupation	% of female workers	Average of monthly income
Primary	Poultry farming, Pig farming, labour in the Tea-Garden	20%	Rs.3800/-
Secondary	Household workers, industrial workers	20%	Rs.4500/-
Tertiary	Business, Service, Political Parties and NGO	4%	Rs.18000/-
	Average	45%	

The study reveals that 20% of women are engaged in primary sector with monthly average income 3800/- but the number of women in tertiary sector is very marginal. In fact, we can not rule out the indoor activities of women except of which a family or society can not ran.

4. Social Harassment and Obedience.

A peaceful home and social environment as well as good interpersonal relationship requires female obedience. The study reveals that 60% of female obey social customs and traditions, where 2.75% female ignore social customs and traditions. A close affinity between female obedience and domestic violence exists. Men think that they are superior to female, as a consequence, crimes like physical aggression, burns, attempted hanging, rape, sexual abuse, blackmail etc. are seen in the study area.

Table No.6

Obedience level of female, Mazbat Development Block, Udalguri

Question	Answer	%
1.Obey family barrier	Yes	60%
	Partial	33%
	No	5%
	Not interested to Answer	2%
2.Obey social barrier	Yes	54%
	Partial	25%
	No	7%
	Not interested to Answer	14%
3.Obey religions barrier	Yes	69%
	Partial	20%
	No	6%
	Not interested to Answer	5%

In the study area, there are 20.5% Tea Tribes women who have been harassed from different angels, where 10% women are harassed from the society. 45% women are harassed by their husband because of dowry demand, drug addiction, polygamy etc. Besides, women have been

suffering from economic corruption where discrimination in wage-rate between man and female are observed.

5. Political participation.

The low level of participation of women in policies and public policy decision making process has led to the marginalization of the female gender and increased discrimination against women in Assam. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment has initiated a powerful strategy of affirmative action for providing a structural framework of women representatives in panchayats and municipal bodies in India. In the study area there are five V.C.D.C. But there is no one female chairman. In order to assess the degree of political awareness and political participation of women in the study area, a survey was conducted among the 200 respondents in the study area, where some of the vital information was collected.

Table No.7

Question	Answer			Total
	Yes	No	In different/ not answer	
Are you voter in Mazbat LAC?	191(95.5%)	9	0	200
Do you cast your vote?	178(89%)	16	6	200
Do you like to become GM/EM/MCA/Minister?	104(52%)	70	26	200
Are you aware of various welfare schemes of the Govt?	123(61.5%)	65	12	
Have you ever participated in any social/political rallies/ procession etc.?	125(62.5%)	75	0	200
Are you satisfied with the functioning of people's representatives (GM/EM/MLA/MP etc) ?	56(28%)	124	20	200

Table 7 reveals that 95.5% of total respondents are voters in the study area, 89% of them regularly cast their votes and 52% are interested to become people's representatives. Not that only 28% of the respondents are satisfied with the words of the existing people's

representatives. Therefore, in the light of these data it can be understood that the women in the study area are much more conscious about polity and their political participation rate is encouraging.

Recommendation

1. Identification of functional shelter home and support service and allocation of adequate resources to strengthen their work.
2. Women's rights based agendas have to be incorporated in the political process.
3. Information dissemination on legal safeguards, rights, support services, health and accommodation.
4. Women group should also inform other women about the available support services in the area and towns.
5. Education of the youth is important. This is time to develop healthy and respectful relationships. Schools can work with local communities to deliver anti-violence education.

Conclusion

Social change itself is a history of civilization, where women are an integral part. In the concerned study area, the status of women is satisfactory because of high sex ratio and rapid growth of female literacy in the study area, 11.5% women engage in secondary and tertiary sectors and receiving handsome remuneration, on the other hand, a sizeable section suffering from social, political and economic inequalities. So it is need of the hour to create and environment through positive economic and social policies for actual development of women to enable them to realize their full potentialities. They should be given proper knowledge about RTI act, Domestic violence, Human Rights and fundamental freedom etc. So there is a pressing need for the govt. to evolve suitable policy to improve the quality of life of women.

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