

# Employment and Living Conditions of Mishing Tribel Women: A Case study of Bokakhat sub-division of Golaghat District, Assam, India

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## Abstract

Women are integral part in every society. But the role of women in the development process has varied from society to society, depending upon differences in tradition, culture, outlook, educational break through and response to technological development. Through the rate of female work participation has increased in India over the years, the status of women in general has not been able to diversify the work participation of women particularly among the uneducated in rural Assam. Socio-economic and cultural factors, Demographic features of population determines economic and non-economic role played by women in the society. The Mishing Community, who constitute the second largest (5.9 lakhs, 2001) group in terms of population among the scheduled tribe communities of Assam, is one of the indigenous tribes of the state (Assam). Present study attempt to study the nature of activities undertaken by the women in the sample villages and socio economic condition of their family.

**Keywords**— Employment, Living condition, Mishing Tribel Women

## INTRODUCTION

In Vedic period, throughout India, women's status was high. Women are integral part in every society. But the role of women in the development process has varied from society to society, depending upon differences in tradition, culture, outlook, educational break through and response to technological development. Through the rate of female work participation has increased in India over the years, the status of women in general has not been able to diversify the work participation of women particularly among the uneducated in rural Assam. Socio-economic and cultural factors, Demographic features of population determines economic and non-economic role played by women in the society. The Mishing Community, who constitute the second largest (5.9 lakhs, 2001)<sup>1</sup> group in terms of population

among the scheduled tribe communities of Assam, is one of the indigenous tribes of the state. This Mishing tribal woman plays a significant and crucial rule in agriculture. *During the last 4 decades substantial increase in the non-farm employment to total rural employment has been observed in Assam as in all the states of the country.* The concept of rural non-farm sectors is quite new and Indian debate on this sector began just after publication of Vaidyanathan's article on "Labour use in India: A Study of Spatial and Temporal Variations" in 1986<sup>2</sup>. It is difficult to identify and define the rural non-farm sector in clear and concrete term because of the diverse character of this sector that includes the secondary and tertiary sector in rural areas. *This study is undertaken to analyse the employment and socio-economic*

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<sup>1</sup> Census Report 2001, Regional Census Office, Guwahati

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<sup>2</sup> Vaidyanathan, A., Labour Use in India-A Study of Spatial and Temporal Variations, EPW, Vol-21, No-52 pp A130-A146.

*condition of female non-farm worker based on household survey conducted in 2012-14.*

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Psacharopoulos and Zafiris Tzaatus (1989) conducted a study on female labour supply and statistical evidence from 136 countries and revealed that female labourforce participation is low in subsistence economy and when economy grows female participation increases. Education was a key factor for female labourforce participation in developing countries.

Jeemol Unni(1997) studied about female labourforce participation and real wages and found that there is casualisation of workforce in both women and men in rural areas. When real income of the household declines, poverty increases.

Sherverick(2014)found that female labourforce participation was influenced by education, fertility rates, social structure, nature of job.

## OBJECTIVES

Present study attempt to study the nature of activities undertaken by the women in the sample villages and socio economic condition of their family.

## METHODOLOGY

The data collected present study is primary. The primary data are collected from field survey through questionnaire with direct interview. There are 8 developmental blocks in Golaghat district. Out of eight developmental blocks Bokakhat and Dergaon developmental block is purposively selected on the basis of backwardness and ethnicity. In the second stage five villages randomly selected from developmental blocks .In the third stage out of five villages each 20 women worker were selected (2X5X20=200).

### Selection of Study Area

Golaghat district is famous for Kaziranga National Park, one horn rhino and earliest tea urban center in Assam.Numaligarh refinery is situated in Golaghat district.The district has 8 devolpmental blocks,1125 villages.Total population of the district is 9,46,279.Literacy rate of the district is 91.74,out of which female

literacy rate is 89.11% and male literacy rate is 94.25%.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Economic activities of Women in the study area:

Rural women of the study area are taking part in various economic activities. The participation of rural women in household industrial worker is highest(47%); daily wage earner is second(18.5%), private service is third(13.5%) and participation in government service is fourth (13%) and cultivator, trade and commerce are lowest activities which the women labour force in rural areas do perform.

**Table-1:** *Proportion of Women workers in Sample Villages, Golaghat*

Particulars	Extent of Participation			Total
	Regularly	Occasionally	Never	
Cultivator	12	1	0	13(6.5)
Daily wage earner	30	5	2	37(18.5)
Household Industry Worker	80	8	6	94(47.00)
Trade and Commerce	5	0	0	5(2.5)
Government service	20	6	0	26(13.00)
Private service	20	7	0	27(13.5)
Total	167(83.5)	27(13.5)	8(4.0)	200(100)

Source: Field study, 2020-2021

However, participation of women in rural non-farm activities is a good symptom as it represents diversification of work and the

labourforce and the use of existing women labourforce in productive works.

### Age, Marital Status and Educational background

Table-1, depicts that 40.5 percent female worker belong to age group of 26 to 35 years. 20 percent respondent belong to 36 to 45 years. Around 90 percent of respondents are married, only 10 percent respondent unmarried. The education background of female non-farm labour is very poor, as large 55 percent of the respondents are illiterate.

Table-2: Age, Marital Status and Educational background

particulars	Female worker	Non-farm
(1)	(2)	
(3) Age-Group	Number	Percentage
Below 15 years	15	7.5
15 to 25 years	59	29.5
26 to 35 years	81	40.5
36 to 45 years	40	20
Above 45	5	2.5
Marital Status		
Married	180	90
Unmarried	20	10
Educational level		
Illiterate	110	55
Upto primary level	95	47.5
Upto matric level	5	2.5
	N-200	

Source: Field Survey, 2012-14

### Family background

It is revealed by the data that 60 percent of respondents belong to nuclear families, 40 percent of respondent belong to joint families.

As far size of the family is concern the data shows that 60 percent of them have the family of five to seven members, 35 percent belong to above eight members and only 5 percent respondent have four members.

Table-3: Family Backgrounds of Respondents

Type of Family	Number	Percentage
Joint family	80	40
Nuclear family	120	60
Family size		
Up to four members	10	5
Five to seven members	120	60
Above eight	70	35
Family Income(annual)		
Less than rupees 15,000	62	31
Between 15,000-25,000	70	35
Between 25,000-30,000	60	30
30,000 and above	8	4

Source: Field survey, 2012-14

Tables-2 revealed that 35 per cent respondent annual income below 25000 and is living in poverty. Only 4 percent respondent has income upto 30,000 annually.

Various types of employment and development programmes are being introduced by the central and state governments are given below-

1. DWCRA (Development of women and children in Rural Area): main objectives of the programme are to strengthen the economy of rural women by giving them loan and economic assistance to develop their skills, efficiency and abilities to meet their liabilities effectively.
2. JRY (Jawahar Rozgar Yojna): This is to generate employment on productive works which are of substantial benefit to poor and contribute to the creation of rural infrastructure.
3. TRYSEM (Training for Rural Youth for Self Employment): is a sub plan of

integrated Rural Development Programme.

4. IMY (Indian Mahila Yojna): IMY was launched in August 1995. Its main objectives to give a forward thrust to education, awareness, income generation capacity and empowerment to women.
5. RMK (Rashtriya Mahila Kosh): RMK was constituted by government in 1992 to facilitate credit support of micro finance to poor women for income generating activities.
6. ARVIND: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has started a rural women development programme called ARVIND. It provides loan up to 10 lakhs to the women who work collectively in agriculture for their economic development.

These schemes have identified various ways to improve the capacity of rural women as income generating members of society. The services of Gram Sevikas, Panchayat members should also be utilized to create awareness among women about the advantages and incentives involved in the scheme. Some of suggestions brought forward in this direction are as follows:

1. Proper training for rural women.
2. Women must get easy access to loans.
3. Educating the rural women.

Unless the economic status of females, it would be difficult to eliminate rural poverty. The rural females should be brought to participate into the mainstream of development activities and this would necessitate extension of education and training facilities in rural areas.

## REFERENCES

1. Singh Kator: Rural Development, Principles, Policies and Management, Sage Publications, New Delhi
2. Regional Census Office, Guwahati
3. Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Guwahati

## 4. Human Development Report, 2003