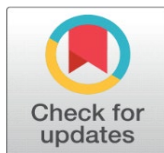
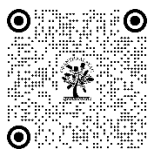


GENDER ISSUES OF GLOBALISATION AMONG WOMEN: THE HILLS OF MANIPUR

Dr. Wonkhuimi Raman¹✉, Dr. C. Niangboi Khuptong²

¹Associate Professor, Department of Education, D.M College of Arts, Dhanamanjuri University

²Associate Professor, Department of Education, D.M. College of Arts



Corresponding Author

Dr. Wonkhuimi Raman,
journalpublication24@gmail.com

DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.2061](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i1.2024.2061)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s).
This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



ABSTRACT

This research article explores the multifaceted gender issues that arise from the process of globalization, particularly focusing on the women of the hill regions in Manipur, India. The study examines how globalization has affected the socio-economic, cultural, and political lives of these women, often amplifying existing inequalities while offering limited opportunities for empowerment. Through an intersectional lens, the research highlights the dual marginalization faced by women in these remote regions—both as women and as members of indigenous communities. Key areas such as labor market participation, access to education, healthcare, and political representation are analyzed, alongside the impact of global consumerism on local traditions and identities. The findings suggest that while globalization has brought about certain economic benefits, it has also entrenched patriarchal norms and widened the gender divide. The study calls for more inclusive and gender-sensitive policies that address the unique challenges faced by women in Manipur's hills, ensuring that globalization becomes a tool for empowerment rather than further marginalization.

Keywords: Empowerment, Gender, Globalisation, Inclusivity, Women

1. INTRODUCTION

Studies on issues of gender have become an entity in itself bringing in numerous experts to tackle the myriad inequities working against women in an ultra-diverse global society. The situations of women are markedly different in developed and developing countries. Developed countries easily accord more prestige to women than under-developed or developing countries. However, this imbalance cannot be nurtured in a global village. The inequalities need to be rectified and the differences equated if Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation is to be benefitted by every member of the globalised society. The compass of change points towards the development of women- their profiles, socio-economic participation, socio-cultural stands, attitudes towards them and more. Legislatures have enacted Bills and Amendments; the intelligentsia have taken up macro & micro studies. Government and non-government agencies have been pressed into action- all in a united effort to achieve one goal i.e. to eliminate gender prejudices. Important contours of gender-justice commonly surveyed among women in the global context embody political-participation, the economic involvements, educational attainments.

2. HISTORICAL LEGACY OF TRIBAL WOMEN

The hills of Manipur came to life at different points of time by different ethno-cultural groups of tribes. Throughout the 19th and early 20th century, the hilly terrains experienced settlement of tribe- groups (Prof. Gangumei). The tribes commonly refer to the cave, 'khul' or 'holes in the earth' as their origin. Today these tribes have occupied mostly the hills and can be grouped into two broad groups viz., the Kuki-Chin-Mizo tribe and the Naga tribe.

Salient features of the tribal society may be summed up as-

- A hunting society
Agrarian subsistence
- Dormitory system
- Weaving society
Chieftaincy
- Animism
- Hill-top dwellers

The tribals professed egalitarian ethos since 'pre-literate and hunting' days. Poverty and tough life in the hills made men and women work together to make ends meet. Women enjoyed relative autonomy in personal and economic matters. They were free in their movement and possessed relative economic independence, participated gaily in the social activities alongside the men. Compared to their counter-parts in the non-tribal societies, women in the tribal society were not subjugated and sub-ordinated apparently. But, it would be 'being romantic' to say that there existed 'gender equality' in the tribal society. To say that women were not discriminated or marginalised among the tribes would be pulling the blind on oneself.

Economic differentiation & social change brought about by modernisation and globalisation has exposed the gender-gap and 'invisibility' of women that has been psycho-socially sanctified in the tribal society.

Gender-inequality is inherent in the ideological and normative thought process among the tribes. Prejudices get legitimized and activated through traditional and customary practices, women's roles in economic and public affairs in the tribal society.

3. SOCIO- CULTURAL SETTINGS

1. **DESCENT:** The tribes of Manipur belong to the patriarchal society. Thus, the boy perpetuates the family- tree. This has a direct bearing on the woman's place in the family. Hers is of impermanence in-wait for her permanent home wherein she is to aid in the continuity of the patriline through reproduction. The woman neither has any jural rights upon property nor her own children. The Kuki-Chin-Mizo group observed the rule of primogeniture mainly the Mizo and Hmar, however, follow the rule of ultimogeniture. Whichever it is, this custom automatically decides which son succeeds the father and inherits his property. Other son(s) eventually separates from the main house to be the patriarch of a new unit. The Kuki-Chin-Mizo woman fades into invisibility. She is expected to be married one day and will be sent home to her.
2. **NAMING A NEW- BORN:** The tribal society has a peculiar &characteristically style of naming the children in a family. The firstborn son, (as in the Kuki & Chin group) of the eldest son takes after the name of paternal grandfather aptly continuing patriarchy. Taking after the clan in a name is not uncommon among the Hmar the Mizo tribes. Thus, there are corresponding name -givers from patrikins and matrikins. Traditional tribal names of sons are also known to bear the outstanding/extraordinary qualities or achievements of their fathers or grandfathers. This peculiar but meticulous skill of the tribesmen is a quaint source of information about a man's patriline and also a socially-applauded consolidation of patriline among the tribes.
3. **FAMILY PATTERN:** The culturally approved form of family among the tribes is neither a rigid 'nuclear' family like that of the western society nor a 'joint' family like that of the Hindu society. It may be termed as a Patri-virilocal society which may develop into a joint family after the son marries. Therefore, it is common to find that a man, his wife & children lives with the aged parent(s) and dependent, unmarried siblings. A newly wedded tribal wife is incorporated' into her husband's family. She is to blend with her new establishment immediately. Her level of

conformity to the husband's family pattern is the index of her being a 'good/competent woman' for which the credit goes not to her but her natal home which is supposed to have 'trained' her. Submissiveness and humility are the qualities expected of a typical tribal wife. There is negligible occurrence of tribal women commencing their wedded life independently in a nuclear family where she could exercise her individuality, capacity or decision-making skills.

4. **MARRIAGE & DIVORCE:** The tribal society does not resist the free mingling of boys & girls socio-culturally. It does not confine marriage to any particular clan or family. But, it holds high reservations on relationships between consanguine. Most marriages are initiated by the boy or the girl concerned. There are incidences of a girl's paternal and becoming that girl's mother-in-law. This kind of marriage between cousins is socially approved as it usually follows a 'well-meant intention' where the bors mother is fully involved. A free-spirited young, unmarried girl, however, faces moral constraints in that her future should not be marred by ill-reputation or illegitimate child or a betrayal by a betrothed during her bachelorette days. A tribal girl is left to her own ingenuity to defend herself and be 'blame-less' till she is married and 'secured' for life.

Bride-prices and bride-wealth are part and parcel of a tribal marriage. Though the degree of value may differ greatly to non-tribal system. One outstanding feature of a tribal society is the non-existence of 'dowry-deaths'. However, bride prices in the traditional non-Naga society, especially may take a life-time to pay due to poverty and bride-wealth is surely forfeited if divorced. One common cause of divorce in the tribal society is adultery. Adultery committed by the wife is an unpardonable offence and of utmost shame. Surprisingly, any extra-marital sexual affair of the husband does not sum up to adultery and is not termed so. Thus, 'adultery' as such pertains to women.

5. **WIDOWHOOD:** Widowhood is a curse to a tribal woman. The Mizo has a traditional saying "Instead of an efficient daughter of a widow, an ordinary girl of an ordinary family is a better choice (for a wife)". In the absence of the Protector (husband), widows hold a lowly social status. Her household suffers intense poverty and is often the recipient of charity. On the other hand, there are no taboos held against a widow's remarriage. Most of the tribal culture favours a remarriage within the same clan preferably the(late) husband's brother. Among the Mizo & Paite women, a newly 'widowed' woman, on the day of her husband's burial, visits her natal home and partakes a meal with her own family. This signifies severing of her bond with her late husband. Then comes a period of mourning (about three months) after which remarriage does not raise 'social' eyebrow. However, the tribal society opines that a decent woman marries once during her life-time.
6. **FAMILY COUNCIL:** One of the peculiar features of a tribal household is its 'family council'. It is the decision-making organ of the family who are emissaries for all socio-cultural issues, joyous or solemn occasions. It is a body formed by assigned kinsmen. It is equivalent to the judiciary-cum-executive instrument for settlement of issues, pertaining to a tribal family. Most of the hill-tribes in Manipur have this traditional norm. Women usually tag along the men of this group on their missions. But their utility is confined to cooking and serving only.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC SETINGS

The tribal societies were life-time cultivators depending on the good earth for subsistence. Tribeswomen woke up at the break of dawn, engage in taking care of the household as well as work in the fields. They weave to clothe their family in the firelight while men and boys socialise in the village dormitory. Dormitory for girls is found among Naga Tribes, Longshim and Morung. Male dormitories are strictly for a no-female zone. However, ladies' dormitories often have male visitors.

The need for male-members in the very source of livelihood in a traditional society. Hence, their presence was valued so much more. "Chang Ai" among the Kuki is a feast that acknowledge the economic contribution of women. The absence of women in an 'all-male sibling' family often cause a relatively early marriage of the eldest son.

5. POLITICAL SETTINGS

The administration of a tribal village was headed by the village chief assisted by the council of elders. The village priest, blacksmith and village-crier are important part of the village administration. Public disputes, division of land for cultivation, social feasts and festivals are within the fold of the chief's authority. Women do not figure in the governance or decision-making of a tribal society. The only way women participate in their meetings is by serving them tea/rice beer.

6. TRIBES WOMEN TODAY

The hill tribes of Manipur live in a society where patriarchy and kinship system ensures their and social wellbeing. All tribal societies of Manipur have a great respect and accord high authority clan council which resolves important issues regarding to family and social values property rights and inheritance follows the patrilineal system in all tribal culture of Manipur. Bride- prices and bride-wealth (movable, material gifts, during marriage) are commonly shared practices among the tribes. Though urban-life and urban-based subsistence activity has been taken up, majority of the tribal population still depend upon the soil and her gifts as the sole means of livelihood. Attempts have been made by the tribal women to include themselves in the political affairs of the state. Many of the traditional customs have been replaced either with new or modified practices mainly due to their contact with European culture. The effect of Christianity among the hill tribes cannot be overlooked as many aspect of their socio-cultural life has adopted a new value system since the advent of this Faith.

A woman who is labelled as the "weaker-sex" is the conceiver and nurturer of posterity, is the keeper of value system, the silent prop to men who run the society, accomplishing it all in her stride. The official display of statistics regarding crime, domestic violence, divorce, accidents, etc. are low probably due to the tribal practise of settling issues amicably between the involving families through clan councils. This is still invoked. Hence, such issues are rarely reported to concerned authorities (government). This traditional practice obscure the clear facts and figures which may project prevalence of discrimination or marginalisation of women in any issues.

No outstanding attempts have been known to be made regarding property rights and inheritance. For the first time, the Paite tribe council has documented the Paite customary laws wherein, the right of a daughter has been confirmed, in the absence of a male issue (Chapter 8-80, p.48). Different tribes had brought out booklets on the customary laws of the traditional cultures, but seldom, any bold changes are made. The booklets served more as a guide-book. It is worth-mentioning, however, that women in the Mizo, Paite, Hmar and Poumai tribes have enjoyed relative favour from their natal homes. Women are known to be gifted with plots of land after being married and happily reside with their family in those. The economy of the hill tribes is still land-based. Deforestation and mode of tribal cultivation has greatly tampered with the traditional means of livelihood in the hills. The soil is not as rich as it used to be and poor education hinders safe and effective use of fertilizers/chemicals. With limited ideas of a back-up plan, the hill people depend on the meagre, seasonal products which give insecurity to them- Women bear the brunt Of the economic -deterioration and look for menial, low-paying jobs, which does nothing to boost their economy nor status.

The European culture has been adopted by most of the tribes in Manipur. This is projected in their style of construction of house, dresses, music and marriages. However, the thread of traditional life still runs, in that, peculiarities of each tribes is incorporated in to these areas making the combination a unique affair e.g., dress and marriage. The impact of Christianity is starkly evident in the way marriage, feast, festivals are celebrated in the tribal communities. In all of these spheres women have enjoyed an uplifted status and are equally respected like men

Religion is a reckoning force impacting the socio-cultural and political changes in a society. The acceptance of this Faith among the tribes has influenced the women section as well. Women have aspired to be religious heads in the churches, especially Protestant churches, and issues have been tackled regarding ordination of women to enhance their involvement in church. Women in Pastoral ministry was realised when Ms. NemneikimVaiphei was ordained a Pastor by the Kuki Baptist Convention, Manipur. Slowly the wave of women participation has reached other similar churches. The Presbyterian Church of India, Tuithaphai division (Churachandpur) has deliberated on this issue in Annual General Conference and Annual Women Conference. Likewise, the Evangelical Baptist Convention Churches in Churachandpur have also had taken up the cause of women in the higher levels of the religious organizations. However, no concrete steps have been taken by these churches and the agenda is still at a nascent stage. Most of the changes in tribal society have been initiated by the church and it will remain a grooming ground for the women folk making them leaders and enabling them to contribute more to the society.

Amidst the deep-gorges of patriarchy, women have managed to hold the coveted office of being a chief in the absence- that of their husband. Though this status passes to the male successor by-passing the wife, Mrs. Lamkhoneng Haokip of Vakan village (1985-2000), Mrs. NemjatingGangte of Santing (1992-), Mrs. Vahjaneng Mate of Tengnoupal, Mrs. Lhaikhohoi Haokip of Kotlen village Miss Ating Haokip of Sawiem village have confronted traditional femininity to make records worth documented among tribal women in Manipur. Village in Chandel Disrtict viz. Bongii and Chahmol of Machi Block are headed by women.

7. CONTEMPORARY ASPECTS OF THE HILL SOCIO-POLITICAL ASPECTS

Formalised and well-structured women organisations have emerged and operated with affluence in the hills of Manipur. The kinship and council systems inherent in the tribal societal make-up have generated the idea of collective force among the tribals. As such, tribal society is a constitution of different forms of associative groups catering various aspects of tribesmen-students group, marketeering group, driver-group, vehicle-owner group and many more. Some of the most influential grouping of women existed under the banner of KWUN, NWUM and ZMA. These prominent women bodies perform activities and initiate movements not only for women but also for relevant communities. They can positively enhance the process of empowerment of women across the hills of tribes.

The toughest turf for tribal women to penetrate is the political arena. This is a relatively new sphere of involvement for tribal women, in particular. But, the logic is acknowledged that women need to participate in the decision-making process if they are in the beneficiaries of those decisions. Women in Manipur, whether tribe or non-tribe, enjoyed the right to vote since 1948 without facing any hurdle in securing their franchise. The journey of hill-women towards the house of decisions is tabled below:-

Table A: Tribes Women in Politics

1	1963-69	Manipur Legislative Assembly	AkimAngnal Lhingzaneng Gangte		As members
2	1972	Manipur Legislative Assembly	1. Lhingzaneng Gangte (Cong)	Henglep constituency	Defeated
3	1974	Manipur Legislative Assembly	LhingzanengGangte (Cong) T.Kholly (Ind)	Saikot Saikot	Defeated
4	1980	Manipur Legislative Assembly	1. T.Kholly (Ind) 2. Alhing Lhingzaneng (Janata)	Saikot Saikot	Defeated
5	1984	Manipur Legislative Assembly	NgainuVaiphei(Ind) Manlianniang(Ind)	Jiribam Churachandpur	Defeated
6	1990	Manipur Legislative Assembly	1. HathoiBaunsing (Cong) 2. B.K. Rose(Ind) 3. Hangmi Shaiza(Cong)	ChurachandpurTh anlon Ukhrul	Defeated Defeated Elected
7	1995	Manipur Legislative Assembly	Chingnou(KNA) B.K. Rose(FPM) T. Kholly (NPP) T. Ngaizanem (MPP)	ChurachandpurTh anlon Saikot Singhat	Defeated
8	2000	Manipur Legislative Assembly	T.Mrs.Guiliangliu Panmei(NCP) Smt.T. Ngaizanem	Tamenglong Singhat	Defeated

In parliamentary elections in addition, there are 6 Autonomous Hill District Council Seats where women can represent the cause of women in particular and the tribal communities in general. Women who have been the silent workers in the tribal society now have new avenues to do the same and take credit for doing what they have been doing in traditional set-ups. The council has two seats in Senapati and 1 each for the other 4 district. Considering the deeply ingrained gender-consciousness and marginalised status they have inherited, the endeavours of tribalism in politics is laudable. The grim record of responses so far is worth deliberated upon. In spite of the easy franchise and reservations of seats in political court, there is an element of superficiality and ignorance in the way the tribals receive the opportunities. It is heartening to know from here that gusty vivacious and sense of adventure lies with the tribal women. They have turned out to be the first women to foray into what was hitherto considered an exclusively male domain in the state. The subsequent performances may not be as desired; however, the spirit of the tribeswoman must prevail eventually of all the fights, this is a good fight for all in general and for women in particular.

8. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Despite their socio-economic contributions, women of the tribes in Manipur are not nearly equal to their men in economic status. Their labour in the household chores and supportive activities in the fields go un-computed. Women are still considered as protégé of their fathers, husbands and sons all throughout their life. This ideology has curbed her mobility and thereby, opportunities for developing her personality go amiss. The result is- 'Lag Behind'. The gender

stereotype slogan 'women take care' and 'men take charge' (Brian Amble) seems to aptly describe the situation of the tribal society here.

Social concept of gender in a society defines the values and roles of feminine characteristics rendered to women are reflected in their work-lives and work pattern. The perimeters of women's labour in economic activities are formed by women's roles in both the family and the society.

Table B.1: Average daily wage rate by occupation (July 1999 to June 2000)

	Ploughing	sowing	Transplanting	Harvesting	Winnowing	Threshing
Male	58.85	53.42	57.72	53.49	-	45.00
Female	52.50	52.00	49.82	47.22	50.00	45.00

Table B.1: Workers and Non-Workers of the Hill District by Sex (2001)

District	Main Worker		Marginal Worker		Non Worker	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Senapati*	37,865	17,008	7,416	14,599	39,949	44,676
Tamenglong	23,775	19,578	3,261	4,249	30,978	29,658
Churachandpur	46,555	25,378	10,193	17,237	60,484	68,058
Chandel	24,085	15,850	5,117	9,493	30,539	33,243
Ukhrul	29,243	22,321	6,627	8,324	37,595	36,668

**Excluding 3 Sub-divisions*

As per 2001 census, women show lower participation as main workers which determines the socio-economic equation with men. Most of their economic contribution stem from part time wages earned. The rate of such occupations exceeds that of men but rarely entails status. Churachandpur district has the highest number of dependent women and Tamenglong are least dependent. It would be valuable to note that tribal women themselves need to be more enterprising. They are creative, equipped with sense of colours, beauty and deft fingers. All these talents have been handed down through socio-cultural legacy. A touch of moral support from the men in their lives would go long way to solve the problems of family economy. Tribal women have the perseverance, patience and tolerance to make their ventures productive.

A high percentage of women in the hills engaged mainly in agricultural activities as cultivators (78%). Very few women (4.2%) put their skill into household industry which could productively develop into a healthy source of income. In any event, tribal women need to be equipped to specialised knowledge that may enhance agricultural inputs. It is high time that cash crops replace food crops. With limited opportunities to be successful in business sector, tribal women constitute an ancillary workforce. Factors that prevent their progress in socioeconomic spheres caused the emergence of inequality, injustice and exploitative condition in the family, society and nation at large.

9. SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL ASPECTS

Gender studies are always incomplete without a glance at educational attainments. The educational status of the member of the society is a whole some index to the progress and achievement of that society. It can be boldly said that education in the hills was spearheaded by missionaries- Mr. William Pettigrew (1896) at Ukhrul, Mr. Watkin Roberts and his team (1910) at Senvon (south Manipur), among the Moyon, Monsang and Anal tribes during 1920's. The main reason behind the crucial role of the churches in tribal societies of Manipur may be accorded to the fact that Christianity and Education were like twin sisters (Dr. Lalhmuoklien).

The Christian population across the hills of Manipur is 90.69% of the total hill population. This implies that the role of the churches and its members will surely direct the direction of socio-cultural, economic and political changes of the hill tribes.

Available data indicates that literacy rates in the hills are 72.7% for males and 56.5% for females. Women trail behind by 16.2%. Ukhrul has the highest literacy rate for both male and female, and Chandel comes lowest among the hills of Manipur. Levels of education determine the chances of utilising acquired knowledge meaningfully to enhance the quality of women's lives and betterment of the society. Here, the educational gap between males and females is against women. The benefits of education is higher for women than it is for men and also more far reaching personally and socially. Tribal women will be provided with positive shifts in her choice of career, marriage, health issues pertaining to herself, the family, etc.

A study of the enrolment of ST students by type of institutions in Manipur from 1990-91 onwards reveal that there is gender inequality in schooling rates. The gap is narrow in the younger population and widens as the educational level moves upwards. There much less girls in the higher levels of education it is at lower levels. Such incidences work against women because the quality and duration of an individual's education has direct impact on subsequent economic development of a society.

Although primary education yields the highest personal and social benefits, lower educational status blocks employment opportunities for women. This is the very reason why the productivity of tribal women is low in spite of their endeavours in economic activities. Consequently, gender imbalance becomes more pronounced. There are 64062 ST students in primary/JB schools, 57956 in middle schools, 89111 in high/higher secondary schools 1640 in schools for professional and other education and 89 students only in the universities as per 2001-02 census report. Vitally related to education is employment, the culmination of education of educational efforts.

The following table shows the need to create fresh avenues for the teaming educated-

Table C: Job Seekers b sex as on 31st December 2006

Districts	Female	Male	Total
Senapati	10,971	31,055	42,026
Tamenglong	3,841	12,987	16,828
Churachandpur	12,704	39,468	52,172
Chandel	6,355	13,680	20,035
Ukhrul	6,782	16,262	23,044
Total	40,653	1,13,452	1,54,105

(Source: Gender Statistics Manipur 2006)

Many women have attained white collar jobs through their own determination, hard work and often, aggression. But a good number of educated women remain to be employed. Sadly, the careers of tribal women tend to start at the lowest level, get hard earned promotions against all odds and retire at low pension salaries. The organisational structure and management of establishments (governmental or non-governmental) is such that it is easy for men to be 'visible' in formalised settings. This create gender imbalance and negatively influences women opportunity to contribute and be acknowledged.

10. CONCLUSION

In the shadows of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation, tribal societies have to be attuned and adjusted to the growing complexities of the modern society confronting diversities that touches each lives every day. Issues of gender justice, education and development require replies with global perspectives. Women have been accredited for their instinct for their survival, carrier and nurturer of life since time immemorial. They cannot remain lethargic and invisible if they are to tackle issues threatening her survival, progress and wellbeing, tribes women included. There have been innumerable Declarations, Provisions, Amendments and Acts to insulate women who dare to aspire against all forms of discrimination and subjugation. Some prominent ones are listed below.

- UN Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1948.

- Decade of Women's Development, UN Declaration (1975-85).
- UN Conference in Mexico City, 1975.
- UN Conference at Nairobi, 1985.
- Beijing Declaration, 1995.
- National Policy for Empowerment of women (NPEW), 2001.
- Constitutional Provisions of India
- Article 14. Right to equality
- Article 25. Right of freedom of worship and Propagation of Religion
- Article 29. Right of conservation of one's Language and Culture
- Article 39. Right of equal pay for equal work for both men and women
- Article 21A. Right to have free and Compulsory Education upto the age of 14.
- Manipur Constitution Act, 1947.
- 73rd and 74th Amendments Acts, 1992 and 1993. State Women Commission Act 2006.

Gender issues that hinder social participation and utilisation of opportunities are common to all tribal women. Women still struggle to find an appreciated space in the society. The present state of tribal women has evolved due to various factors in the tribes speak little about statuses or roles. Conversations centre and social relationships. Their lives are governed society. They are hard workers, even more than men for equal work. Tribal women exhibit ingenuity, creativity and initiative in solving their daily problems of sustenance and survival. Their economic power within their homes is seldom translated into corresponding community power. Men still dominate in public, social and religious affairs. They continue to be the breadwinner whereas women enjoy greater say in their family life, higher level of social freedom and several of their actions are even condoned. With the substantial contributions to supplement primary subsistence, the status accorded to tribal women has advanced very considerably. Despite the lack of control of material & social resources, their economic contribution has given them important and irreversible position. One surprising observation about patriarchy is that it renders respect between genders in the tribal communities. Nonetheless, this concept should not be used to discriminate, marginalise or subjugate women, who are the invisible hands shaping and maintaining the structure of the society. Modernisation is bringing changes which affect men and women differently. Taking economical and technological bases for development reflects male values and exploits vulnerable groups i.e. women. The link between women, culture and developmental organisation must be implicit.

11. SUGGESTIONS

The Secretary General of the United Nations, at the Beijing Conference, gave a concluding remark, "there is no country in the world where women enjoyed equal status as men". A few suggestions may be added so that the gender-scale may move towards its

- Integrating gender policies to the main plans, programs and practices of relevant
- Sincere and diligent monitoring by government or non-government agencies.
- Overcoming the 'fear' factor by women
- Avoid misinterpretation of the true talents of women
- Tailoring education system to meet specific needs of the communities
- Role model for young people to look-up to
- Avoid woman-centred programs that overlook man-woman relation
- Intervention of the church

Tribal women need to create a force that can heal their society from within and strive with their usual fervour and grit so that they may achieve a desirable, healthy balance between the two genders. Only then, men and women can work as partners in letter and spirit to match the global stride. Knowledge helps one in making a living but wisdom helps in making one live a life.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None

REFERENCES:

- Amble, Brian : Gender Stereotypes black women's advancement, In, Asian Human Rights Commission, "Women's Rights: Leading Solutions for no>01/169/Equality and (accessed Peace, January 2008)
- Bhasin Veena: Status of Tribal Women India, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi 110007, India. (A seminar paper)
- Buffalohead, P.R.: Farmers, Warriors, Traders: A Fresh Look at Ojibway Women. (Document No. 28). In, Minnesota Historical Society .48(6) saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society 1993 pp. 236-244. (HRAF Public Information: New Heaven, Conn: HRAF 2000. Computer file) 1983.
- Chowdhry, N.K. Education: Indian Constitution and Education Shipra Publications, 115-A, Marg, Sharkarpur, Delhi- India. 2009, ISBN: 978-81-7541468-6.
- Devi, Ksh. Bimola, The Role Women in Manipur Politics, In, Constraints in Development of Manipur, C. Joshua Thomas, R., Gopalakrishnan & R.K. Ranjan Singh (Eds.) Regency Publications, 20/36-G, Old Market, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008 for PANACEA, Shillong, 2001 ISBN: 81-87498-30-7
- Directorate of Economic & Statistic govt. of Manipur, Imphal: Statistic Abstract Manipur 2007
- Directorate of Economic, 2006& Statistic govt. of Manipur, Imphal: Gender Statistics Manipur
- Fisk, J.: Native Women in Reserve Politics: Strategies and Struggles. Journal of Legal Pluralism 30: pp 121-137. 1990
- Fox, T & Long, D. Nations Reserve. In, D. Long and O. Dickson (Eds.), Visions of the Heart. (p 271-297),
- Gangte, Tingneichong : Women Empowerment and Development: The case of Kuki Women, Department of History, G.P. women's College, Imphal. (A seminar paper, 20-21 March, 2009)
- Horam, M. : Naga Polity, Low Price Publications 425, Nimri, Ashok Vihar, Phase IV, Delhi- 110052. 1992 (Reprint) ISBN: 81-85418-934.
- Khanna, S.K. : Women and The Human Rights, Commonwealth Publishers, 4831/24,
- La Roque, E : Violence in the Family Violence: Ottawa, 1997
- Lalhmuklien, Rev., Dr. : Gospel Through Darkness, History & Missionary Work, of the North-East India General Mission. (ECCI), 1910-2004.
- Nongbri, TIPlut : Development, Ethnicity & Gender, Select Essays on Tribes in India, Rawat Publications, Satyam Apts., Sector 3, Jawhar Nagar, Jaipur-4 (India). 2003 ISBN: 81-7033-783-6.
- Paite Tribe (HQ), LamkaChurachandpur : Paite Customary Laws (1st Amendments), 2004 Prahlad Street- 110002 (India), 2003 (Reprint) ISBN: 81-7169-529-9
- Thompson Canada. 1993 & 2000 Kehoe, A.B. : Blackfoot persons. In, L.F. and Women and Power in Native North America (P 113-125). University of Oklahoma Press, Norman
- Torun, E: Socio-Economic Status of Women according to development levels of countries and structure in Turkey, Department of Agricultural Administration and Marketing, University of Kocaeli, Kocaeli, Turkey. 20 May, 2010. (A Review)
- Voyageur, C.T. Dickson (Eds.) of the Heart; Canadian Aboriginal LAI Allan issues (P (Ids), 81-106) Nelson.