

GENDER INEQUALITIES OF SARTANG TRIBE IN WEST KAMENG

DISTRICT, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

CHETEN JOMBA ROCKPUDU¹ & TAGE RUPA²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Geography, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh,
Arunachal Pradesh, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh,
Arunachal Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

In every society women's prime role starts with her responsibility towards her family. Both the male and female have assigned different tasks in the society. Mostly the lighter tasks for women and strength task for male folk. To make an overview of the gender inequalities, an effort has been made to cover the various aspects of women in the society. Such aspects in gender inequalities are occupation, education, ownership of property, right to political activities, religious activities, sex and marital affairs, family affairs/household duties, health etc. The Sartang tribe is one of the lesser known tribe of West Kameng district in Arunachal Pradesh. The family set up is patriarchal where the father is the head of the family. This tribe bears the total population of 5000 persons approximately according to the recent survey conducted. This paper mainly focus on gender inequalities of Sartang tribe with respect their socio-economy and political activities.

KEYWORDS: Gender, Equality, Patriarchal, Women, Sartang

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequalities have the largest impact on women and have wider detrimental impact on development. Gender inequality refers to the unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender. UNICEF describes that gender equality "means that men and women, boys and girls, enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. Equality does not mean that men and women will become the same but that men's and women's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a women or a man in a given context. There are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities in most of the societies. Gender research examines the way in which gender inequality has emerged. Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education in India. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age. The United Nations set of Human Development Indicators (2003) contain two compilations directly applicable to gender geography. These are the UN Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and the UN Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). According to the findings the gender differences are greatest in the developing world. The GEM measures gender inequality using the three basic dimensions of empowerment. According to the World Economic Forums Global Gender Gap report for 2012, Iceland is considered to be the best place for women. Egypt is the country where smallest gender wage gap (18 cents) is recorded by world Economic Forum. Jamaica is the top

country where there are more women than men as legislators (World Economic Forum). According to United Nations study in March 2011, Georgia is recorded as lowest rates of domestic violence. According to World Economic Forum, 92% of female citizens in Burundi have paid work compare with 88% of men. This paper reveals that women are relatively disempowered and enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in the study area. This study is mainly focus on gender inequalities of Sartang tribe with respect to socio-economy and Political Activities.

STUDY AREA

West Kameng district is a mountainous tract in Arunachal Pradesh which covers an area of 7422 sq. km located in the western most part of Arunachal Pradesh. The name is derived from the Kameng River, a tributary of the Brahmaputra River that flows through the district. Kangte is the highest peak of the district and topography is mountainous of Himalayan origin. It experiences arid tundra or a cool climate in the north. According to 2011 census the total population was 83,947 persons comprising 46,155 males and 3998 females.

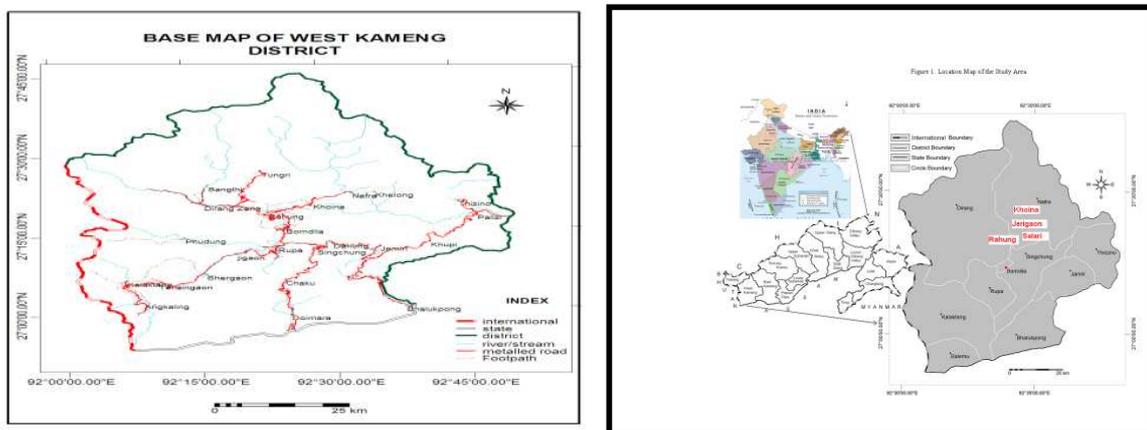


Figure 1

OBJECTIVE

To carry out the work following objectives have been formulated:

- To study the gender inequalities in terms of Socio-Economic Activities.
- To study the gender inequalities in terms of Political Activities.

DATABASE

Both the primary and secondary data have been used to fulfill the work:

Primary Data

- Data have been collected from both the urban and rural areas.
- Questionnaire and Schedule have been formulated.

Secondary Data

- The topographical map published by Survey of India 1971 have been used for the preparation of maps.

- Various published and unpublished Ph. D thesis, Research journals etc. have been used.

METHODOLOGY

The investigator has selected 100 households of samples from the study area through a random sampling technique. The data generated from both primary and secondary sources have been analyzed by using SPSS package for generating appropriate result. GIS software has been used to generate various maps. Photographs from the field have been taken to add visual interpretation of some aspects of the concerned selected region.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

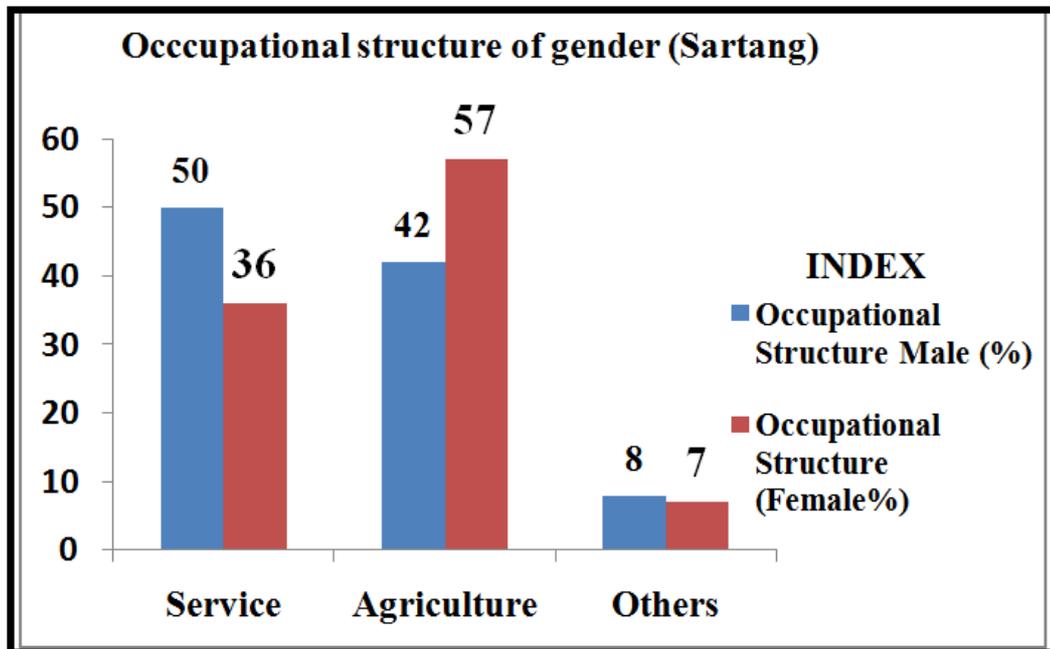
A lot of changes and development have been observed in the various aspects of the traditional life style of people in the present day. The Sartang is a less known tribe of West Kameng District in Arunachal Pradesh. They are mainly confined in the two sub-divisions of West Kameng District i.e. Nafra and Dirang circle and having a population of 5000 persons approximately. Women play multiple roles in the society by carryout the work outside the home as well as taking care of the home affairs. The women's prime role in the society starts with her responsibility towards her family. To make an overview of the gender inequality of women of Sartang tribe, an effort has been made to cover the various aspects of women in the society. Such as gender differential in occupation/work, gender differential in education, gender Differential in ownership of property, gender differential in political activities, gender differential in religious activities, gender differential in health etc.

GENDER DIFFERENTIAL IN OCCUPATION

There is no division of work between both male and female in Sartang society but most of the hard work such as cutting down of trees, collection of building material from jungle, ploughing, carpentry, construction of houses, hunting, fishing etc are carried out by male while women are assigned as less tasks than men. The main responsibilities of womenfolk have to look after their children, cooking, cleaning utensils, fetching water, pounding of rice, grinding of cereals, weaving, knitting, washing of clothes, collection of wild vegetables, fruits etc. Occupation or the work refers to the main source of livelihood. Women carryout multiple work in the society but their work is recognized as unpaid or not reproductive. There are only few works which are exclusively done by a particular sex. For example hunting, fishing and carpentry etc. are only done by men. Weaving, knitting and some few works are done by female only. There is no such occupation which is tabulated to either sex. Women perform the lighter tasks in every society but it never ends.

Due to modernization and advance of education, many changes have been taken up in the society. Earlier women were not allowed to work outside the home. But now a day most of the women are educated and want to have a good standard of life. To avail this opportunity many women are found to serve as professions like doctors, engineers, teachers, defence etc and also other officers in various fields. The modern womenfolk want to be independent in their life not want to be dependent on others. Before the emerging of modernization both the male and female are depended on agriculture for their survival but it now a day most of the agricultural work are done by womenfolk especially in the rural areas. During the agricultural season women wake up early in the morning everyday and prepare tea, breakfast, lunch etc. and get ready for the field after having breakfast at around 6.30am-7.30am. But during the off-season women perform less work. Women are equally participated with male in ploughing, sowing and also in harvesting but preparing of fencing work are carryout by the male members only. Women who are engaged in govt. sector also practices the knitting, weaving, kitchen, garden

etc but working agricultural work cannot afford much time in weaving textiles, especially in rural areas when the male member are out of station or death. In that case women perform or carryout all the indoor and outdoor work. Thus, it is observed that separate works are prescribed for both the men and women. First preference of women is given to household work and is recognized as unpaid which indicate as low position in society than men.



Source: Based on Primary Data

Figure 2

GENDER DIFFERENTIAL IN EDUCATION

Education is one of the important factors of development and social change in the society. It is one the important factor which determines the status of women. The female literacy rate is lower than the male in West Kameng District. According to 2011 census, the literacy rate of the district was 73.4% male and female 59.05%. The total literacy rate of Sartang tribe was 65% whereas female literacy shows lower than male as per primary data of 2011 census. There are various reasons of low literacy rate of female in such society.

Since from the time immemorial women were also getting interested in education but due to lack of parental knowledge they could not get such opportunities. Parents were not allowed to send their girl child to school because they thought that they are just for household work. So, the girl children were trained in household work with their mother in very early age. Besides, most of the parents used to think that females are not contributed in the family's economy because they will leave parent's home after marriage. Child marriage is prevalent in Sartang society since from olden days. In addition to it, due to low economic status of family the girl child could not continue their studies as they have to help their mothers in home. Thus in earlier days female education was overlooked by the society. According to the recent survey 2011 about 80% of the parents get interested to admit their children in good institution whether they are male or female child both get equal status in terms of education. In rural areas, parents work whole day so that their children could get qualitative education. In Sartang society parents have a positive attitude towards educating their children.

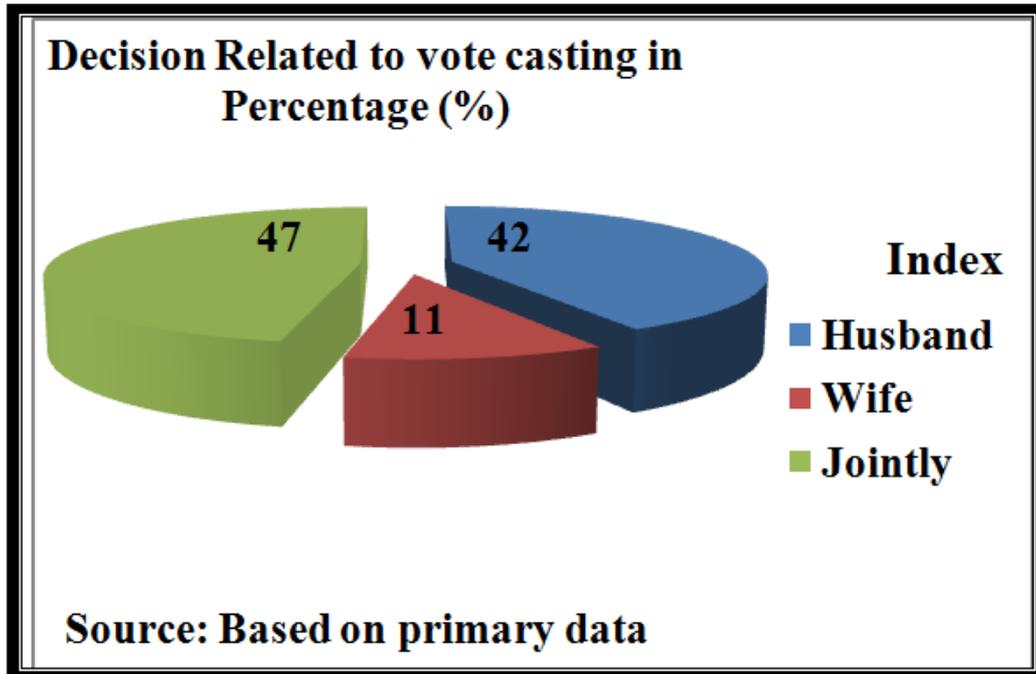
GENDER DIFFERENTIAL IN OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

According to the customary law of Sartang society the ownership of property is based on the family principles and traditions. The properties of Sartang society are inherited through the male line. Women don't have any rights to own it. All the immovable items which constitute land and houses are inherited by male only whereas the movable items constituting beads, finger rings, necklaces, ear rings and traditional attires etc are owned by women folk. According to the customary law parents can also offer the immovable items to female child as a gift but it's up to parent's desire. In the death of women, all the ornaments, clothes etc owned by her are buried with her. The girl child has right to inherit her mother's property whereas son has right to inherit his father's property. In case women buy some share of land, it will be counted as husband's property.

The widow gets full rights over her husband's property if she does not think of remarriage. Besides, she can enjoy the husband's property until remarriage. A wife has every right over her personal ornaments she brought from her parents are kept under her own custody and later on give to her daughters or daughter-in-laws. In some family of Sartang society both men and women kept their earnings separately. But whatever the investment done over their children and household articles are equally distributed through mutual understanding by them. Thus according to present discussion women having low status in terms of ownership of property.

GENDER DIFFERENTIAL IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

In Sartang Society women have been neglected to participate in any political activities in the past. The village organizations was run by menfolk only and men also don't approach women to take participate. Gaon Buras system emerged later and became the head of the village but in prior to that Chhukpen (village head) and Verse (Assistant of head) use to run the Village. Women were also not allowed to speak in any general meeting held in the locality. The decision of the male members were regarded as the final decision whether it was right or wrong. The significant role of women in the political affairs was that they used to serve the people in the whole process of meeting or any kind of gatherings. It has been recorded that no women in Sartang society hold the post in MLA, MP etc. in the constitution till date. But in the Panchayati Raj number of women are participating due to modernization. It has been observed that inspite of facing difficulties they have been supportive with their husband at every step of life.



Source: Based on Primary Data

Figure 3

CONCLUSIONS

In terms of socio-economic condition most of the women works twice a day but their contribution is not recognized. Women plays multiple role in the society such as work inside the house as a housewives as well as outside as an employer and also engage in many other business etc. In the present day we have been observed that gender disparities are existing all over the world. Whatever the role played by women depends on the freedom accorded to them in the family and society. It's true that in every family man is the head of the family and is the main bread earner but he cannot make any decision without consult with wife. In terms of work both men and women are assigned differently. Women play a significant role in the agricultural activities especially in rural areas. Women also plays important role in the political activities. To empower the women government reserved one-third of seats for women in the 73rd and 74th amendment act. In a nutshell, women play a significant role in all the spheres of socio-economic and political activities etc.

REFERENCES

1. Akbar, H. (1998): Role of Women in the Management of Residential environment, *Journal of Human Ecology*, 9, (4): 472.
2. Astige, S.B. (2006): Status and role of the working women in office: Anmol Publications, New Dehli, p.126.
3. Bedard, K. and Deschenes, O. (2005): Sex Preferences, Marital Dissolution, and the Economic Status of Women, *The Journal of Human Resources*, 40, (2): 411-434.
4. Brandes, L. et. al. (2001): The Status of Women in Political Science: Female Participation in the Professoriate and the Study of Women and Politics in the Discipline. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 34(2): PP. 319-323

5. Committee on the status of women political, (1992): Improving the status of Women in Political Science: A Report with Recommendations. *Political Science and Politics* 25, (3): PP 547-551.
6. Chaudhary, R. (2007): Nature and extent of Women's participation in decision making, Ritu Publications Jaipur, pp.109-110.
7. Degi, K. (2002): Women Education in Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh, *Arunachal University Research Journal*, 5, (2): 11-15.
8. England, Paula and Browne Irene. (1992): Trends in Women's Economic Status, *Sociological Perceptions*, 35, (1): 17-25
9. Ferber, M. A, Loeb, J. W and Lowry, H. M. (1987): The Economic Status Of Women: A Reappraisal, *The Journal of Human Resources*, 13, (3): 585-398.
10. Galal, S.B. (2006): Gender, Health and disease: Anmol Publications, New Dehli, p.126.

