

**THE STATUS OF EDUCATED WORKING WOMEN AMONG
THE TANGKHULS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**

Abstract



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Introduction:

It is said that women constitute about half of the world's population, yet their status has been significantly low in comparison to men. Even today, relations of subordinating and controlling women in the society, a social construct based on the principle of male domination, continues to linger on in the guise of tradition, religion and philosophy. However slow and irregular the development in the educational sphere may be, it has brought about a substantial change in the perception and attitude with regard to the status of woman in the world at large. In India, since independence women have gained enhanced status both legally and socially. The growth of education and technological advancement has led to the entry of large number of women into the *different sectors of modern life*. It has been said that the growing trend of educated women working in the society has elevated the status of women in the society and that she has come to acquire a more or less equal position with her husband in the family. In the course of this development, the educated working women have not only broken the traditional domestic drudge image, but are now more actively involved in decision-making both at home and beyond and are emerging with more respectable status in the society.

The term 'status' refers to a position of an individual in the social structure defined by his or her designated rights and obligations. Each status position is expressed in terms of a role. Since each individual occupies a number of distinct statuses within a society, he or she performs a variety of roles. Status is realized through one's role. The concept of status is used to indicate that the ordering of individuals in terms of attributes- *level of education, occupation, income, etc. and these attributes are responsible for the status and role of women which varies from country to country*. Thus, 'status' is the location or position of an individual in a system of social relationships, while 'role' is the behavior associated with the position. Therefore, each status position is expressed in terms of a role that is, a pattern of behavior expected of the occupant of that status. There are various definitions which have been used to

convey the meaning of the term 'status', for the present study, the term 'status' would refer to a person's social status. That is, referring to her rights and privileges. It is the position of a person on some implicit or explicit scale of what is socially valued, which represents her ability to influence or control the social and physical environment.

In India, including the tribal communities, the emerging role of women sharing in the income earning activity has given rise to conflicting view points. On the one hand, she has earned more respect and equality in her marital relationships. On the other hand, she still retains her inferior position in the still traditional patriarchal set up, despite of her economic independence. These standpoints can be analyzed through the use of the term 'power'. Power is a universal phenomenon in human societies and we see its effects and manifestations but not the phenomenon itself. Power is not authority but it is intimately related to both. Power is thus neither force nor authority, but it makes both force and authority possible. Max Weber's construction of the concept of power seems to be most suited for the present study. He has defined power as "the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action." Power is, therefore, power over others. The Thesis intends to study the effect of women's education and employment on the power relations within the family. With the advent of Christianity, the American Baptist Mission in 1896, then the Catholic Church in 1952, education was not only initiated but was seriously taken up as an essential means of evangelization in the Tangkhul Naga region. Though education was open to all (boys and girls), the traditional preference for men over women was followed by the parents. Whatever may be the case, the advent of Christianity and the introduction of education had brought about a tremendous advancement among the Tangkhul women in particular.

Objectives of the Study:

With a view to understand the status of the educated working women among the Tangkhuls, the following objectives are taken up for the present study.

1. To study the effect of women's education and employment on the power relations within the family;
2. to study the changes in the traditional social structure due to the effect of women's education and employment.

Methodology:

The present study is based on the field work conducted in Ukhrul town of Ukhrul District, Manipur and it also covers the Tangkhul settlements in Imphal, Manipur valley viz; Dewlaland, Lamphel, Tangkhul Avenue, Nagaram, and Langthongching where a sizeable number of educated Tangkhuls have taken residence.

In order to get representatives of all the educated working Tangkhul women, attempt was made to collect data from different occupational groups. Major Government, semi- government organizations, offices and institutions were also approached for the collection of samples besides going from door to door. This had to be done since Educated working women, though a clearly definable category; do not constitute a community in spatial or any other sense of the term. The sample population was spread over in Ukhrul town and Imphal city. Thus, those areas were selected which showed a substantial population of my category of respondents. The data was collected through structured questionnaire, structured interview and observation method. 50 respondents each of the educated working women and their husbands from Ukhrul and Imphal were randomly selected and were given the questionnaire to be filled up by themselves, which were collected on the appointed date by the researcher. The researcher also carried out structured interviews, mostly conducted in the homes of the respondents, according to the convenience and desire of the informants. Secondary data were collected from various libraries using published and unpublished materials in the form of books and journals related to women.

The respondents on the whole understood that information sought was exclusively meant for academic purpose. The data for the study were tabulated by using SPSS programme.

The body of the thesis is divided as follows:

- Chapter I: Introduction which includes the statement of the Problem, Survey of Literature, Objective of the study, Methodology and Chapterization and also the Field Experience of the Researcher.
- Chapter II: Traditional Tangkhul Social Structure and Status of Women
- Chapter III: The Status of Educated Working
- Chapter IV: Nature of Power Relation in the Family and the Changes in the Traditional Social Structure
and Conclusion

The first chapter of the thesis introduces the thesis which includes statement of the problem, survey of literature related to the topic under study and the objectives of the study that sought to examine the effect of women's education and employment on the power relations within the family. The research methodology used for the study and the various field work conducted and the field experience has been discussed in this chapter.

In the second chapter we have discussed broadly the traditional social structure of the Tangkhuls. A Tangkhul village is an autonomous political, social, religious and economic unit. In the political institution the chief of the village was the ruler of the village possessing political power and religious authority. Though he was the head he could never ignore the counsel of the councilors as he was assisted by them in the day-to-day administration of the village. The village council or *Hangva* in the village was the highest organ of power and its basic units were the respective clans from which the councilors were selected. All matters affecting the village community became subject to decisions of the village council based on customary laws, constituted by tradition and

convention. The representatives of the clans were the chiefs of the clans called *Pipa* whose position too, like that of the chief, is heritable. Women were never represented in the village council but they were not debarred from the assembly. Disputes of any nature within the village were settled by elders of the disputing parties. If they could not settle the case the matter might be referred to the village council whose decision was final in the village itself. But disputes between two villages, if the disputing village elders could not settle the problem the matter might be referred to the *Longphang* or to the apex body called *Longrei* or *Tangkhul Long* for its final decision. The representatives of the *Longphang* or *Longrei* would try their best to bring the disputing parties to a compromising point. But if the parties involved refused to comply with the proposal they might pitch a battle and the representatives of the Long would be present there as witnesses. On such occasions and other situations of battles it was the *Pukreila* or the 'neutral lady' who alone had the power to command the battle to be stopped. As she was neutral she could not be hurt by rule. Thus the *Pukreila* had much a say in the inter-village relationship in the yester years of the Tangkhul society. Her role as the peace maker preceded the role of the *Longphang* or *Longrei* where all the matters beyond the village were referred to since its existence. As does in the village council, the *Longphang* and *Longrei* do not have any women representatives to this day inspite of the demands from the women's organization (*Shinaolong*).

In the family and kinship we have seen that kinship is reckoned and recognised both by descent and by marriage. As a patrilineal society, the rule of descent is strictly based on the male line only. Thus, all children acquire membership in their father's clan group which might be a localized group or might spread horizontally over many villages and could never acquire membership in their mother's clan group. The pattern of inheritance, rules of succession and residence closely followed the system of descent. The principle of succession is primogeniture and accordingly the eldest son of the family assumes responsibilities of the family. A daughter has very little time to stay in the parental house for she marries and eventually leaves the parental house. A daughter does not have any legal right on the family property except a small share at the time of

her marriage which she carries with her as a form of gifts. Even in the absence of a male child, a daughter cannot claim, as a matter of right, the family property, but would normally go to the nearest male relatives. A daughter after her marriage continues to maintain a tie with her natal family by sharing a responsibility on the occasions of house construction, death ceremony, wedding etc. The daughters according to their status in the kinship order are accordingly distributed portions of the meat killed for the occasion. Marriage is the outcome of youthful courtship followed by the approval of their parents or arranged by the parents. Tangkhul society is free in matters of matrimonial choices except that while choosing a partner he or she should bear in mind the rules of clan exogamy. Breach of this strict rule will result in heavy punishment and nullification of the courtship. Monogamy is the most preferred type of marriage. Though polygamy was not prohibited it was discouraged due to heavy expenditure involved in marriage and due to its negative connotation in the peaceful existence of the family atmosphere. Dissolution of marriage or the practice of divorce was very rare though the customs and traditions had the provision for the same as it involved severe punishments. A divorce can cause inter-clan feud or even inter-village feud if the parties involved were from different villages. Divorce could be initiated by either the husband or the wife.

Apart from the political and social life Tangkhuls had religious aspect of their life as they believed in the existence of the one supreme god called *Ameowo*. Besides *Ameowo*, they believed in the existence of other supernatural beings that lived in jungles, fields, precipice, rivers and streams, trees, rocks, etc. They believed that some of these supernatural beings were good while others were bad and harmful because of which they often make offerings of animals and fowls to propitiate the latter. The communal observances of the Tangkhuls round the year and their religious rites were connected with their principal economic activities and agricultural undertakings. Accordingly, the spirits (*kameo*) or the gods and goddesses to whom the Tangkhuls make offerings, sacrifices and invocations were broadly divided into *Phunghui Philava*, *Shimlui Kameo* and *Kokto*. One of the distinct features in the religious aspect was that in

one of the most important festival called *Chumphā* the woman or the mother of the house played the role of the priest. Besides, she also assisted her husband and at times the village priest in carrying out the religious rites at different times, round the year. The resemblance of her role as priestess is seen today with the American Baptist Mission inducting women as pastors in the churches in the Tangkhul villages.

Agriculture plays the most important role in the economy of the Tangkhuls. The cultivation of the whole village is affected by the village taboo. The *Awunga* performs the rituals and offers sacrifices to the deity/ spirit for good harvest of the year. Only after he had performed the rites and rituals and sowed the ceremonial seedlings the cultivation of the village for the year began. Both men and women worked in the field. There were distinct season for carrying out various agricultural activities like clearing the jhum, seedling, weeding, harvesting etc. Tangkhuls practiced both jhum and terrace cultivation though the distributions are not even in the whole Tangkhul area. Agriculture partnership or *yarthot* was a distinct feature that was practiced by the youngsters and the married women. It was a reciprocal give and take form of agricultural work based on mutual adaptation and perfect co-operation. Rice is the staple food of the Tangkhuls. Many other crops and vegetables are grown along side the paddy cultivation. Agriculture was the main occupation of the Tangkhul and still plays role in the social and economic life of the Tangkhuls in the interior villages and more so in places where only jhumming is practiced. But with the dwindling yields of the land people become less attached to agricultural work and look for commercial openings offered by the various programme of development planning under the government of Manipur. Agriculture is subordinated by domestication of animals, handicrafts, trade and commerce etc. where in women take active role in all the aspects as she did in agriculture.

In the third chapter of the thesis, we have discussed the status of the educated working women among the Tangkul. The women in the study were mostly in the age group of 35 - 49 years. The men were in the age group of 40 - 54 years. On the average the men respondents were around 6.01 years older than the women. Various aspects like

educational background, educational level, job and marriage of the educated working women are discussed. The discussion also included the information about her husband on various aspects as hers that will reveal the actual status of a wife in her family and outside her home in her work place. Majority of the wife respondents had completed their schooling from village and town. With regard to educational level of the respondent, majority of the women respondents had their educational level up to graduation. Almost half of the husband respondents were graduated and almost the same number of the husbands had post- graduate level of education.

Majority of the wife respondents started working at the age of 20- 34 years. Majority of the men respondents had begun working since 6-10 years and more than 20 years back (at the time of data collection). Majority of the respondents in both the categories were employed in government sector. Comparatively more women respondents were employed in government service than the men respondents. Majority of the respondents in both the categories were employed on permanent basis. Majority of the wife respondents were within the basic pay range of Rs. 4001- 10,000/- Majority of the men respondents were earning within the range of Rs. 5001- 25,000/- per month. Comparatively majority of husband respondents earned more than their wives.

Fulfilling one's ambition, economic necessity and enhancement of social status were the major reasons given by both the categories of the respondents for taking up their job. Majority of the respondents, both wife and husband, said that they had job satisfaction. Majority of the women respondents said that they had job satisfaction because they enjoyed their work, that they got to give service to people and that it was the fulfillment of their ambition. On the basis of these facts it may be said that educated Tangkhul women were impelled to get into employment or professions not only by economic insufficiency, but also by other socio-psychological motivations. Almost all the women respondents said that they enjoyed equal status with men at their work place.

With regard to the age at marriage, majority of the women and men respondents got married between 20- 34 years between 31- 40 years respectively. Majority of the

women had got their job before marriage. Love marriage was dominant among the respondents. Most of the respondents were 6-25 years into their married life. On the marital happiness the respondents were Happy in their married life. Almost all the wife respondents did not face objection from their husbands for working outside their homes. Out of the women who said that they did not face objection from their husband for working outside home, majority of them said that their husbands respected their individuality. A considerable number of them said that additional earning was required in their homes.

Majority of the wife respondents said that their husbands did not prefer them to be housewives. Majority of the men respondents said that they did not prefer their wives to be home maker even if they earned enough. Majority of the respondents in both the categories said that wife's career did not obstruct smooth running of the household. Apart from their career a good number of the women respondents were also engaged in household duties, social service and education of children. Majority of the working women spend much of their time in domestic chores. Majority of the men respondents said that they helped their wives in domestic chores and majority of the women agreed that their husbands helped them in carrying out domestic chores. Men in traditional Tangkhul society were not known for their participation in domestic concerns. It was solely left to the care of the wife or the mother. We see a shift in the nature of the responsibility among the husbands of the educated working Tangkhul women where the husbands sharing a good percentage of their domestic responsibilities though it remains to be more or less the domain of women. Almost all the husband respondents said that they helped their wives in child-care. Majority, of the men who said that they took part in child-care, said that they did so because it was their responsibility. The area of involvement in child-care among the men respondents were mostly disciplining and education. A shift in the role of men is observed in the husband's participation in child care. Men in traditional Tangkhul society were most of the time away or busy in head hunting raids and wars. It was the women who took care of their children with the help of their older children or the in-laws. When children attained certain age they join the

Dormitory or *Morung (Long Shim)* for learning the skills in various field. Disciplining was apart of the Dormitory system.

Comparatively, more women contributed 100% of their earnings than men respondents in running the house. More men respondents contributed more than 50% of their earnings in running of the house than their wives. Bread winning had always been a join venture of husband and wife among the Tangkhul society and it continues to be so as almost all the respondents from both the categories said that both husband and wife contribute almost equally towards their domestic expenses. Though there is a shift in the nature of work (from Jhum to office) for women there is no change observed in her participation in her bread winning role. She continues to be so as she was in traditional Tangkhul society. A large majority of the women respondents said that their husbands were not physically violent to them in times of conflict.

In the fourth chapter the nature of power relations in the family and the changes in the traditional social structure has been discussed. The perceptions of the respondents regarding the ideal role of husband and wife were analysed. In their opinion on the ideal roles of husband and wife, most of the respondents favoured traditional qualities as ideal. A majority of the women and men respondents said that their ideals were according to traditional positions. In short, as perceived by the wife, her educational and economic status did not have an important bearing on her traditional ideal of married life and her ideal role of the husband and wife. The question of having upper hand in the family seemed undeterred as majority of the respondents in both the categories agreed on the husbands' having upper hand though a good number of the respondents said that they are equal.

Several questions related to the effect of education and work on family decision-making was unraveled. We try to find out whether or not the educated working women had the same power in the decision making, as her husband in the family. In order to measure the power of the educated working women Vis-à-vis their husbands, important

areas of family decision making such as- major expenses and purchases, buying and selling of assets and properties, vacations and outings etc. were examined.

Some of the wife respondents took the decision on their own and also some with the consent of their parents and husband. It is seen that the higher educational qualifications had prompted the women to take up some career of their own. Out of the total respondents (men & women), majority of them helped their relatives without their spouse's permission though more husbands give assistance than the wives did. Majority, in both the categories of respondents, said that they had freedom to make decision regarding their own earnings. Majority of the women respondents said that they could spend money for themselves and their children without husband's permission.

A large majority, in both the categories of the respondents, said that major decision on expensive purchases was a joint decision of both husband and wife. A slight contradiction is observed in their opinion with regard to the decision on domestic and inexpensive items. However, it is to be noted that women are a part of the decision-making in domestic affairs. In matters of buying and selling of acquired assets, a little more than half of the women respondents said that it was a joint decision. Among the men, a large majority of them said that it was a joint decision. A considerable number of them also said that it was the husband who made the decision in such occasion. Decision on family outing was a joint one as majority of the wife and husband respondents said so. Thus, we can say that though both husband and wife make decisions together there is a tendency of man having dominant share. Majority of the respondents, in both the categories, said that in times of conflict on domestic matters it was the husband's opinion that prevailed.

On the basis of the data it is found that the educated and earning status of women has resulted, to some extent, the power re-allocation in the husband-wife relationship. No definite co-relation could be found about the amount of money earned and the corresponding decision- making capacity that the working women hold. A co-relation is observed about the level of education of the wife and their power relationship

as all the women did have educational qualifications equal or more than their husbands, and this has a significant influence to the power that they hold. The employment of women functioned to increase her power vis-à-vis her husband because she earned money and kept control over it. It gave her more confidence and because she was earning money she had a new concept of her own worth, and was assertive.

In regard to the statement: “A wife should consider her husband as superior and be submissive to him in everything”. Nearly half of the wife respondents agreed with the statement. Almost half of the wife respondents disagree with the statement. The husband respondents were divided almost in equal numbers between “Yes” and “No” while a few of them were uncertain as to agree or not to agree. In this regard we can say that majority of the respondents in both the categories agree with the statement. Another statement: “In domestic matters women should not exercise authority over men.” Majority in both the categories of respondents did not agree with the statement. From the two statements it is observed that the respondents did recognize and accept men to exercise certain degree of authority over wife. But absolute authority of men is not acceptable to them as well.

General attitude of the respondents with regard to sex role and difference is also taken into account in this chapter. A greater number of the respondents interviewed in both the sets favoured women’s participation in politics which indicated a shift from the traditional idea of women being confined in the domain of family and home where she took care of everyone and everything in the family. Majority of the respondents agreed in the existence of sex differentiations in their own homes or have observed one, and they are of the opinion that no such differentiation would be made among their children with regard to privilege, but treat them on equal terms. There is still some reservation observed when it comes to the respondents’ opinion on the landed/ immoveable properties as according to them they are still bound by the customary laws which does not permit them to give away their landed properties especially the ancestral property to the daughters though they may gift away their self acquired property.

Thus we can conclude that the findings may be seen as retention of traditional family structure with an increase shift to modernity. Though there is a power re-allocation in the family among the husband and wife; the husband does continue to exercise some degree of power over the wife. The educated working women too, by recognizing, approving and accepting the traditional ideas for women's and men's role, have accepted their women status to that of their husbands.

The hierarchical relations between men and women are part of a patriarchal culture that has been historically nurtured by religion, and by economic and legal factors, among other. These are entrenched in the social structure, in the consciousness of most women, and of nearly all men.

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TANGKHULS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**

BY

APEM K.H.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY



**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirement of the Degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in Sociology**

North- Eastern Hill University,

Shillong.

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To
my beloved parents

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May 2010

Declaration


I, **Apem K.H.** hereby declare that the subject matter of the thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/ Institute.

The suggestions made at the time of Pre-Submission Seminar have been incorporated.

This is being submitted to the North-Eastern Hill University for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.**


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(APEM K.H)

THE 24th MAY 2010

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CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER – 1

Introduction

It is said that women constitute about fifty percent of the world's population yet their status has been significantly low in comparison to men. In many societies, she merges her identity with that of her husband and hence perceives herself as a subordinate person. Even today, relations of subordinating and controlling women in the society, a social construct based on the principle of male domination, continues to linger in the guise of tradition, religion and philosophy. Just a few decades ago did the issues relating to women's well being that enhances their status at home and at society have come to receive better attention. This turn around has much to do with the spread of education in general, and education of women in particular, empowering them to assume responsible office of decision- making and financial independence in the world so far dominated by men. However, slow and irregular development in this sphere since the last century, has brought about a substantial change in the perception and attitude with regard to the status of women in the world at large. This development, with regard to the status of women, which is spreading in diverse sections of the society has offered a vast field of sociological interest.

Women every where hold some measure of influence or informal power. The degree varies with the gender system of their culture, the status of class, caste,

community, or religious sect to which they belong, the state laws under which they live, the economic and political position their nation holds, the international structure of power, and their personal attributes of life histories. Everywhere some women may hold more power, in the sense of the interpersonal influence they exert, than the men with whom they associate. However, except with some matrilineal tribal groups, women as a category nowhere hold formal power or publicly recognized authority equivalent to that held by men. Women's formal power also varies by class, culture, race, religious sect and national status, but it is always less than that of man in the same position.¹

There is a rapid transformation in recent years in the role and status of women in different spheres of life. Status and role are also interlinked with the concept of power and position. The dominant opinion in Women's Studies today is that a role confers social, economic, political or cultural power on the individual. In other words, status is determined to a great extent by the power enjoyed by men and women in the domestic and social spheres. Today status is evaluated also in terms of social and economic indicators such as income, property or opportunities and skills that open up opportunities of employment, better health etc. Access to or denial of these services confers or denies power to an individual or group. Many also understand power to mean one's ability to take independent decisions on personal matters like education, career, marriage, fertility, divorce, remarriage, etc. even in the face of opposition or as "women's ability to determine important events in their lives, even when others are opposed to them".² In the present-day context education, economic independence, employment and political participation are the major indices of women's status in a

society. These indices are adjudged on the basis of power in the social, economic, political and religious fields.³

In India, since independence women have gained enhanced status both legally and socially. The growth of education and technological advancement has led to the entry of a large number of women into different sectors of modern life. It has been said that the growing trend of educated women working in the society has elevated the status of women in the society and that she has come to acquire a more or less equal position with her husband in the family. In course of this development, the educated working women have not only broken the traditional domestic drudge image, but are now more actively involved in decision-making both at home and beyond and are emerging with more respectable status in the society.

The term 'status' refers to a position of an individual in the social structure defined by his or her designated rights and obligations.⁴ Each status position is expressed in terms of a role. Since each individual occupies a number of distinct statuses within a society, he or she performs a variety of roles. Status is realized through one's role. The concept of status is used to indicate that the ordering of individuals in terms of attributes-level of education, occupation, income, etc. and these attributes are responsible for the status and role of women which varies from country to country.⁵ Thus, 'status' is the location or position of an individual in a system of social relationships, while 'role' is the behavior associated with the position. Therefore, each status position is expressed in terms of a role that is, a pattern of behavior expected of the occupant of that status. There

are various definitions which have been used to convey the meaning of the term 'status', for the present study, the term 'status' would refer to a person's social status. That is, referring to her rights and privileges. It is the position of a person on some implicit or explicit scale of what is socially valued, which represents her ability to influence or control the social and physical environment.

Applying the term status in the Indian context, women, especially from the lower strata of society, despite of the deprivations of social privileges, took part in home economy, right from the beginning. Though earning for the family was a joint venture both for men and women as hard economic necessity compelled those women to work for wages in factories, construction site, agricultural fields and as domestic helps, yet participation of women in such manual labour was not socially recognized as a sign of economic independence. Rather, it was a low status in the lower strata of society. Meanwhile, women from the higher strata were confined within their own homes. Gradually, the process of exclusion of women from manual work has itself become a symbol of higher social status.

Among the tribals, some contrast the situation of Indian women in general with that of tribal women and state that they are equal to men. This extreme position does not reflect the reality. Most tribal societies are patriarchal and patrilineal. The woman is not regarded as an equal to men among them but enjoys a higher economic and social status than what her some counterparts do in caste societies.⁶ Among the tribals, when we apply the term 'status' in the context of relative superiority and inferiority of women is very vague. It is apparent that the status of women is not uniform among all different

communities and varies from tribe to tribe. For instance, the Mizo society- males distinctly dominate as it has a distinct patrilineal bias or preference. Till recently, there was a system of concubinage and the children born out of a concubine were considered to be of lower status.⁷ Zehol says that like all other Naga groups, the Tangkhuls are patrilineal and hence the male holds for all practical purposes a more decisive position in the society. Even then, in the context of the family, like the father, the mother plays an equally important role.⁸ Horam maintains a balanced view of this issue thus: ⁹

The mother plays the main role in running the households. Indeed the position of women in the Naga society is far from being inferior. The majority of the domestic affairs are in her hands... All her life a woman enjoys considerable freedom. She participates freely on singing and dancing during festivals and entertains the guests. She is never made to feel that she belongs to the weaker sex. Most marriages are love marriages. The young chose their partners and then marriages are conducted through an elderly lady. A girl is free to choose her life partner and rarely is any pressure brought upon her in this matter. The wife is consulted by her husband in all domestic and family affairs. She helps in making decisions, performs domestic duties and shares household responsibilities with him.

The rapid industrialization created general employment opportunities from which women have benefited. Though women are mostly employed at the lower levels in unskilled occupation, it has helped them to become economically independent. The process of urbanization enabled girls to get exposed to education, information, health care, drudgery reduction and employment opportunities.

All tribal communities are passing through a period of transition or change from tradition to modernity. The rural people have started to take the urban version of their culture as their model. Urbanism has caused a change in the ethos of the tribal cultures- this finally leads to changes in the female roles. In modern times, women are co-workers, i.e. working side by side with men in all kinds of jobs. But in rural areas the age long division of labour between the sexes still persists.

In India, including the tribal communities, the emerging role of women sharing in the income earning activity has given rise to conflicting view points. On the one hand, she has earned more respect and equality in her marital relationships. On the other hand, she still retains her inferior position in the still traditional patriarchal set up, despite of her economic independence. These standpoints can be analyzed through the use of the term 'power'.

Power is a universal phenomenon in human societies and we see its effects and manifestations but not the phenomenon itself. Power is not authority but it is intimately related to both. Power is thus neither force nor authority, but it makes both force and authority possible. Talcott Parsons defined power from a functionalist perspective and said that power is employed in the furtherance of sectional interest.¹⁰ From the Marxian perspective, the source of power lies in the economic infrastructure.¹¹ Max Weber's construction of the concept of power seems to be most suited for the present study. He has defined power as "the chance of a man or a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action."¹² For him, Power is, therefore, power over others. The Thesis intends to study

the effect of women's education and employment on the power relations within the family.

With the advent of Christianity, the American Baptist Mission in 1896, then the Catholic Church in 1952, education was not only initiated but was seriously taken up as an essential means of evangelization in the Tangkhul Naga region. William Pettigrew came to Manipur on February 6, 1892.¹³ Pettigrew's knowledge of the Bengali and Meitei languages enabled him to begin preaching immediately. He started schools to give tuition to the children of some government employees. He could not carry on missionary work in the valley as there was opposition from the elites and Manipur State *Darbar*. The king, as the ruling authority, refused to give permission to preach. His friend Major Maxwill, the Political Agent, advised him to go to the areas inhabited by the Tangkhul Nagas.¹⁴

When Pettigrew arrived in Manipur, hardly anything in the field of education had been attempted. The few boys who were studying at the only school in the state (the present Johnstone Higher Secondary School) were being taught Bengali and English languages which were foreign to them. No textbook in the Manipuri language had been prepared. Hence Pettigrew wrote books in Manipuri and taught this language in his school. In recognition of his outstanding work the State made him as honorary Inspector of Schools for two years.¹⁵

The Government finally decided in 1895 that Pettigrew could remain in Manipur only if he confined his mission work to the Tangkhul area, north-east of Imphal, at his own risk. At the same time negotiations with the American Baptist Missionary Union led

to their taking over the work which Mr. Arthington had hitherto supported (Pettigrew worked under the Arthington's Aborigines Mission of Church of England through the end of 1895 and later on under American Baptist Mission). The mission to the Tangkhul Nagas has since been carried on by the American Baptists.¹⁶

After three day's journey on foot from Imphal, William Pettigrew reached Ukhrul village, north-east of the capital, in January 1896. Pettigrew's search for a suitable place for the Gospel ministry took him to villages, first to Ukhrul, then to Paoyi, Shiroi, Khangkhui, and back to Ukhrul which was eventually considered the most ideal place for the dissemination of the Gospel.¹⁷

When Pettigrew first arrived in Ukhrul, the Tangkhuls had no written language, not even the rudiments of an alphabet. Besides, there was no common language for the tribe as a whole; every village had and still has its own dialect. Villages within the radius of five to ten miles may understand a great deal of each other's dialect, but not beyond. It was Pettigrew's task to learn the Ukhrul village dialect in order to prepare a primer and a grammar so the Tangkhul boys and girls could learn to read and write in one common tribal language. His knowledge of the Meitei (Manipuri) language enabled him to learn the Ukhrul dialect easier because people like Mr. Raihao, Chief of Ukhrul, already knew Manipuri. Still it took three arduous years for him to complete a vocabulary and grammar.¹⁸

A Middle English school was established in February 1897 with help from the state. Ukhrul villagers were urged to attend the school. It was a tough start; hardly anyone was interested in the beginning. Major Maxwell, the State Superintendent, had to warn

the village elders that unless they came up with enough students they would be penalized. With great difficulty Mr. Raihao, Chief of Ukhrul village, managed to send 21 students to school, Raihao being one of them. Mr. Zingthan, Chief of Hundung (now Hungpung) village, sent fifteen boys to the same school. Thus with the active support of the chiefs of the two largest Tangkhul villages, the school had an enrolment of 31 students, which began to influence other boys and girls.¹⁹

Luikham has described the growth of the Mission School and the impact of education as: "In 1903 other students were added and the school raised to Upper Primary standing. At the same time a Lower Primary school with fifteen students was established at Hundung. Between 1896 and 1905 the progress was conspicuous. Thirty- eight boys schools were opened- Tolloi, Huining, Paoyi, Chingjaroi, Phadang and Somdal as a joint school, Khangkhui and Nampashi. Although these ten schools were aided by the State, the supervision was entrusted to Mr. Pettigrew. He made it a point that two students should be sent to Ukhrul from each of the surrounding villages. After the work in school was finished some of these were appointed as Lambus (Government- appointed village leaders) and some were given church work."²⁰

Pettigrew's experience in educating the boys was awful and it was even worse getting the girls to attend classes. He said, "Girls were meant for a life of drudgery in the home and in the rice fields. It took Mr. Pettigrew fourteen years to make any appreciable impression upon that attitude of mind, even when the parents had become Christians".²¹

Mrs. Pettigrew made a hard bargain for the education of the girls. The education for the girls began through night school which, in course of time, the girls and older

women attending after the days work was done. By 1908 Mrs. Pettigrew was able to persuade and enroll eleven girls to come from the villages to Ukhrul but two of the girls failed to turn up leaving the number of girls to nine.²² These nine girls were R. Sanamla, R. Lanotla, AR. Mahongai, AR. Lasengla, Z. Harnigaila (from Ukhrul), A.S. Charoni, A.S. Ngalew and A.S. Kasuni (from Chingjaroi) and Shurila from Paoyi.²³ These nine girls lived in a small hostel. In addition to reading and writing, they learned how to keep a home clean, to sew and to knit. They did gardening, cultivating, weeding and harvesting in the rice fields- “ in short, all the things that they would have to do when they returned to their own homes”.²⁴ All the nine girls became Christians and later became active leaders in their respective Churches, working toward the upliftment of their sisters.²⁵

Thus, it is evident that the Tangkhul Nagas (both boys and girls) had an access to western education. Though education was open to all the traditional preference for men over women was followed by the parents. Whatever may be the case, the advent of Christianity and the introduction of education had brought about a tremendous advancement among the Tangkhul women in particular.

Survey of Literature:

The term feminist theory generally suggests a body of knowledge, which offers critical explanation of a woman's subordination. It offers a different kind of analysis and explanation of how and why women have less power and how this imbalance could be changed and transformed. Early feminist works emphasized the ways in which women in all cultures have less power than men and were subjected to patriarchal

control. The systematic study to delineate the causes of women's subordination emerged with Simone De Beauvoir's book *The Second Sex* (1981).²⁶ De Beauvoir argues that women become objects while providing services to men. She develops her thesis on Sartre's existentialist argument that a human can be seen as 'being for itself' (that is moving, conscious existence of human being) and 'being itself' (material existence of human beings which they share with plants and animals etc.). Sartre added a third category 'being for others'. He argues that each individual i.e. being for itself establishes oneself as a subject and defines other beings as an object, as the 'other'. De Beauvoir maintains that man has declared himself as 'self' and women as 'others'. According to her if man wishes to remain free, he must subordinate the 'other'. Though women is not the only other who is oppressed; yet the oppression of women is unique. She also argues that the role of a wife and mother limits a woman's self-development. In these roles a woman is turned into an object, into a machine for cooking, cleaning, caring, giving and sacrificing. To escape from these she suggests three strategies: a) women must go out to work; b) women should become intellectuals; and c) women should work towards social transformation.

Scholarly interest in women as a distinct category emerged at the beginning of the 20th Century and gradually gained momentum. Studies on women began to multiply rapidly after the International Women's Year in 1975 and the International Women's Decade from 1975 to 1985 in order to make their participation in the entire process of development more effective. Many Indian sociologists and feminists have written a lot about women. Some of the important works are being noted down here. Pratima

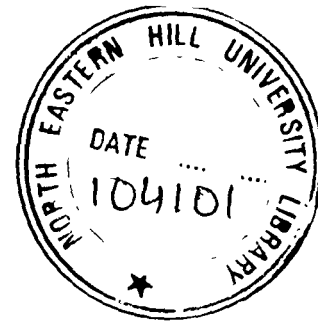
Asthana's book *Women Movement in India* (1974)²⁷ provides a well- documented story of the women's movement in India, manifesting the various forces, which have influenced their progress from the earliest times to the present day. It opens with a brief but illuminating introduction to the subject and then studies lucidly the impact of west, which, as the author says, restored the long-lost self-confidence of Indian women. It gives a comprehensive account of the contributions of the leading reformers to the cause of women, highlighting the efforts made by the women leaders, which created an awakening among Indian women. It also critically examines the work done by the various women's organizations, whose establishment marked the maturity of the feminist movement in India, for the uplift and progress of women. Analysing the cases of the backwardness of women it makes a sharp appraisal of the progress of female education in India. The author concludes by saying that the women's movement has always been a class struggle and after independence it met the same fate as the national movement, it has become a "spent force".

Mary Evans in her study of *The Women Question* (1994)²⁸ brings together the most influential analyses of women's position in society, which have emerged in the past decade. This wide-ranging new set of reading reflects the challenges and complexities of feminism in the 1990's. The discussion encompasses both theoretical issues of identity and the economic and political status of women. It demonstrates the impact of gender not only on how the social world is organized but also on how we understand and interpret that world. Recognizing the diversity of women's experiences, it pays particular attention to the interactions of race, class, gender and sexuality.

Jain Pratibha and Rajan's book *Women Images* (1996)²⁹ provides revealing analysis and an insight about a variety of issues that are crucial to an understanding of the multiplicity of women images in Indian society. The commonly perceived image of women in India is that of the self-sacrificing individual. *Pativrata*, the cultural ethos reflects an essential plurality of visions and emphasizes upon "the complementarity of men and women". The essays in this anthology illuminate a variety of images of women from ancient to modern times as reflected through art, literature, classical and folk traditions and politico- nationalist polemics. It emerges from the essays that women images do exert a powerful influence on the social order and situation of Indian women in many ways. It is emphasized that though images are usually seen as "historical indices of social conditions", their real significance resides not merely in being "historical scraps" but in providing perennial pointers of ideal possibilities. This anthology is intended to contribute to an objective understanding of the perceptions, visions and ideas about Indian women with a view to providing them an identity for their role in society.

Hate in her report on *The Socio- economic Conditions of Educated Women in Bombay City* (1930)³⁰ said that a deep and vital change was taking place in the economic condition and persona; status of women. Her findings indicate that the change in their attitude towards various issues of life had, in turn affected their behaviour patterns in various spheres of life.

*Status of Women (1988)*³¹ the edited volume by Sushila Agarwal examines the status of women by different scholars from constitutional, legal, social and religious aspects in India and also on the status of women in Canada. This constitutional provision in India has been analysed in the context of social reality and traditional value framework. Special provisions of Indian Penal and Criminal Procedure Codes for the protection of women who could be victims of offences in public and private life because of gender have also been examined. Property rights of women under Hindu Law from *Manu* to present day bring out correlation between property rights and status of women. Dealing with the social dynamics and status of women in Islam an eminent scholar writes that a distinction is established between the social tradition and religious scripts in Islam. It has been argued how purely a feudal attitude with corresponding interpretation of the Quran during the medieval ages came to be thought of to have religious sanction, 'women in Muslim Community can be the catalyst of change'. An improvement in their status would be crucial step in the modernization of the community. Another phenomenon is that greater emphasis on political and economic modernization has created serious strains on the social and cultural life of rural people specially women. The book also deals with the role of educators in raising consciousness and in providing girls and boys, skills to effect change in perception of the role of the men and women. The book also deals with various aspects of the status of women in Canada and examines various measures undertaken by the government machinery and women organizations, leading to an improved status of women yet observing at the same time that discrimination against women is unlikely to end within



a generation. This provides comparative knowledge and understanding about the status and rights of women in India and Canada.

Rehana Ghadiallyl's edited book entitled *Women in Indian Society* (1988)³² examines and challenges the various roles ascribed to women in the context of rapidly changing society. There are two concerns that binds the essays together- first, that the reality of women's subordination can best be understood by tradition and mythical portrayals of women; and second, that this understanding must be balanced by a sensitivity to the immediate context. The book is divided into five sections which cover (a) contextual, analytical and theoretical views of women; (b) empirical research organized around existing stereotypes about men and women; (c) an exploration of common forms of violence against women; (d) the way women are portrayed in diverse media; and (e) a description of the growing efforts to sensitize people to the inequalities between the sexes.

Status of Women in Islam (1987)³³ which is an edited volume by Asghar Ali Engineer is an ardent attempt by noted scholars to throw light on the status of women from theological, political and sociological points of view. The first two articles examine in detail the position of women within the framework of Islam. Both the articles make out a plausible case for equal status for women and deal with the dynamics of change. The book examines the case of Muslim Personal Law as it operates in India and discusses the sensitivities involved in bringing about any change through state intervention. The problems of change have been very competently dealt

with in the book. The book also examines the case of Muslim Personal Law in India and argues in favour of change. To put the problem in perspective the author relates it to the social structure which is basically an iniquitous as it is capitalistic. In a society which ensures modernization for the elite and backwardness for the masses, it is difficult to impart equal status to both the sexes. He also examines the problem from the historical point of view.

Pandey and Upadhyay seek to present the status of women in India of yesterday and today for three distinct, yet intimately interlinked, angles-praxis, theory and research in their book *Women in India: Past and Present* (1990).³⁴ The analysis is premised on the assumptions that all thoughts and theory are interlinked with history and tied to human interests and social life processes; that the process of knowing cannot be severed from historical being; and that research established the kind of inter connections that exist in definite social groups in definite periods of time and indefinite countries. The analysis reveals that the status of women in India has steadily deteriorated all round; ideologically, women have come to be considered a completely inferior species, inferior to the male; individually, denied individuality and personality; morally, accused of lacking ethical fibred; economically, treated unearthly of having rights to property; politically, excluded from power positions; and socially, assigned the private sphere of life and kept in subjection. Underneath these prevailing practices underlie ideologies justifying the existing status of women and the accompanying research methodology of the dominant social science theory that leads to distort facts on women's status.

Women in India (1992)³⁵ by Tripta Desai, gives the reader an overview of the Indian Women from ancient times to the present day. The book is divided into three parts of which the first part deals with the historical status of women to the middle of the nineteenth century when India became a colony of the British crown. The second part deals with the native Indian organizations which emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century to meet the challenge of the British missionaries. Then the focus is shifted to the Five- Year Plans in the Post- Independence period with special reference to programmes for women. The third part of the book deals with a history of women organizations in India from the early nineteenth century to the present day with a special coverage of All India Women Conference or AIWC. The conclusion brings out the personal observations of the author.

G. S. Bhadouria in *Women in Indian Art* (1995)³⁶ introduces us to the book dealing with the specifics- sources, media etc. He takes us through the Maurya- Sunga art representations; traverse through the art of the Satavahanas and the Ikshvakus in the second and the third chapters respectively. The fourth and fifth consider the art delineations of the Kusans and the Gupta Vakatakas. In chapter six the author epitomizes his findings and says that one should consider female figurines as representatives of the fair sex, as dampati, a lover and the beloved and not merely as mother goddesses or fertility symbol.

One of the finest chronicle of Indian women and their glorious achievements in recent years in all walks of Indian life was presented by Yashoda Bhat and C.N.

Mangala in their edited book *Beyond the Threshold: Indian Women on the Move* (1995).³⁷ The book highlights the entry and advancement of Indian women in all walks of life hitherto considered essentially as a man's domain, such as civil services, mountaineering, science, engineering, medicine, entrepreneurship and so on. The book proclaims loudly with facts and figures that the Indian women have at long last arrived-armed with legal rights and with proper empowerment. The vibrant brave new world of Indian women beyond the thresholds of their homes emerges out of the pages of this book, bringing into view the various summits conquered by them.

Rana Mehta's, *The Western Educated Hindu Women* (1970)³⁸ a study of the traditional life of the Hindus presents the educated Hindu Woman against the background of traditional caste, joint family, parental authority, rituals, customs and family patterns, and examines the influence of western education on her, in what has gone deeper and changed the traditional value system.

E. Sullerot in his study about *Women, Society and Change* (1971)³⁹ has argued that women have become increasingly aware that the surest way of raising their social status and their position in the families is to become earners. The technological advancement and the economic development, which create more job opportunities for women, have given a new sense of power.

In his book "*The Sociology of Education*" (1975),⁴⁰ Stub Holger R. says that formal education has a role to play in accordance to the social status of women. Education is a major avenue of upward social mobility. Today, education has become a

necessity for everyone. Attempts are made to wipe out the ignorance and illiteracy from the society. Only a hundred years ago, education for women took its birth. In the beginning women were not allowed to study, and schools or colleges did not provide admission to them. Women fought for injustice and finally got the right to study and all these barriers are removed.

A deep understanding of the role played by education and employment in raising the status of women was presented by Sood R. in her study on *Changing Status and Adjustment of Women*” (1991).⁴¹ Education and employment have emancipated women from traditional socio- cultural rigidities to a considerable extent. Today, they enjoy a certain degree of autonomy, identity and self-esteem. A sense of equality among women has reduced men’s superiority over them. She also emphasized that working women not only participate in decision- making, but they make their presence felt almost in all spheres of family life.

A noteworthy study on women in the North- East is that of Chaki- Sircar, Manjusri’s work titled *“Feminism in Traditional Society: Women of the Manipur Valley* (1984).⁴² It deals with the basic foundation of feminism, i.e. women’s individual self-reliance, and sisterhood or collective solidarity, in a society under strong Brahmanic influence. Meitei women of Manipur, though their society is patriarchal, exercise considerable power and influence because of the unique role they play in the economy of the society and because of their organization in different spheres.

Status of Women in Assam (1992)⁴³ edited by Baruah S.L. deals with the status of non-tribal Assamese women from early times till date in different fields like Family, Society, Economy, Law, Politics and Administration etc. It discusses how the socio-religious mores prevalent in their patriarchal society are working as impediments towards women's progress and how women are exploited in the family and the society. The book also suggests ways and means for improving the present situation and making women aware of their rights and potentialities with a view to removing disparities between men and women in enjoying human rights and opportunities.

Das, the author of the book *Status of Tribal Women in Tripura* (1993)⁴⁴ has studied the status of tribal women on the basis of case studies of several Riang women. Das points out how there has been a decline in economic position of women due to changes in agricultural practices from jhuming to settled cultivation which has reduced them from being cultivators to agricultural labourers. However, the Riang women continue to enjoy traditional prestige and esteem.

Modernisation and Women's Status in North Eastern India (2002),⁴⁵ is a study conducted by Walter Fernandes and Sanjay Barbora which indicates that the status of women in most tribes, particularly those in the hilly regions is fairly high. The report also indicates that their status can deteriorate with uncontrolled modernisation and commercialisation. Based on a comparative study of six tribes in four States of the Northeast, it looks at the continuum from the relatively isolated Aka of Arunachal Pradesh to the Angami of Nagaland who have been exposed to many modern inputs and

to political mobilization. The authors analyse the demographic, educational, economic and social data of these communities. The focus is on the changing women's status.

Tiplut Nongbri focuses on the economic activities of Khasi women, a matrilineal tribe in North-East India in her work *Gender, Matriliney, and Entrepreneurship* (2008).⁴⁶ As an informal group of the market economy, Khasi women are engaged in diverse forms of income-generating activities, ranging from agriculture and commerce to contractual services in the tertiary sector. However, women's contribution to the economy remains a largely neglected area both in research as well as in policy, not only in North-east India but also nationally and internationally. What accounts for this indifference to the economic role of women is one of the issues addressed in the book. The central issue however revolves around the question as to why despite the substantial time and energy invested by Khasi women in their business, many still continue to stagnate, and why some, after acquiring some measure of success, slide into oblivion. The author adopts an integrated approach, and through her analysis reveals that women's entrepreneurial growth is not only severely constrained by a biased gender ideology but also by the general apathy and inefficiency of the state machinery. An important point that emerged from the data is the close interplay between women's work, gender ideology and the system of kinship and marriage (matriliney), with the state reinforcing the relationships between the three.

Much has been written about the Nagas in books and articles, some academic and some journalistic. Various writers have initiated discussions and studies about

different aspects of this people. Different authors have emphasized various aspects such as their culture; the impact of British rule in the Naga inhabited area and the advent, growth and impact of Christianity in Naga society. Some of the important books are noted here where mentions have been made about women in their book.

B.B. Ghosh's and P.N. Chopra's edited volume *History of Nagaland* (1982)⁴⁷ is an exhaustive history of the state including the distinctive features of culture in this part of the country. Ghosh and Chopra also touch upon the social, cultural and economic processes at work among the Nagas. *Nagaland: A Contemporary ethnography* (1992)⁴⁸ which is edited by S. Channa, makes an attempt to understand and delve into wide ranging facets of Naga Society such as structure of the villages, religion, ethno-medicine, material culture, women, the agrarian structure, political consciousness and social change.

Hodson, in his book *The Naga Tribes of Manipur* (1996)⁴⁹ describes the ethnology of the tribes inhabiting the hills of the State of Manipur. The Naga tribes in Manipur discussed in this work are the Tangkhuls who inhabit the hills immediately to the east and north east of the valley of Manipur; the Mao and Maram Nagas who inhabit the hills, North of the valley, the Kolya, Khoriao or mayang Khong group in the hills South of Mao and Maram; the Kabuis who inhabit the hills to the West and North- west of the valley, and Quoirengs, Chirus, marrings, smaller tribes, who are to be found in the hills bordering the valley. The study deals with habits, social customs, occupations,

culture and value system have been recorded along with a discussion on the various aspects of their socio- political institutions followed by a lucid analysis on the emergent changes and their reflection on the modern Tangkhul Socio- Political scenarios, particularly after its coming into contact with the Missionary and modern civilization.

Another illuminating work is the *Women in Naga Society* (1998),⁵⁷ edited by Lucy Zehol. She examines from the traditional to the modern scenario which provides vital information on the Naga women from both the men and women's perspective. The basically patriarchal Naga society is reflected by the notions such as the birth of a male child being auspicious, man as the bread winner and protector of the society and women being subordinate to their husbands. However, the author points out the progressive modernization brought about by the adoption of Christianity and spread of education has gradually altered the contemporary situation among the Naga women and they have started participating in diverse activities.

Though many studies have been made on the status of women yet, no author has focused on the status of the educated working Tangkhul women. Thus the present study is mainly focused on the status of educated working women among the Tangkhuls since the introduction of education by the missionaries.

Objectives of the Study:

The present study seeks to assess the position of the educated earning women in her family, and this is in comparison to the position of her husband. The objectives are as follows:

1. To study the effect of women's education and employment on the power relations within the family;
2. to study the changes in the traditional social structure due to the effect of women's education and employment.

Methodology

Sample:

I have taken a total of one hundred respondents which includes two sets, numbering 50 (fifty) in each set i.e. the graduated earning women and the husbands of these graduated earning women.

Area and Milieu of the Study:

Ukhrul is one of the nine districts of the state of Manipur. It is the land of the Tangkhul Nagas. The Tangkhul area is situated on the international border between Myanmar and India in the East, Nagaland borders the North and Manipur valley lies to the west. Ukhrul is the Headquarters of this District. The total area of this District is 4,544 sq. Km. with a total population of 1,40,946 of which 73,413 are males and 67,533 are females. The sex ratio is 920. The density of population is 31sq.km. The literate

persons are 83,284 out of which 47,625 are males and 35,659 are females. The percentage of literacy is 68.96% (Male= 75.40%, Female= 61.91%). The total police stations in this district are 9. There are five Sub- Divisions- Ukhrul, Chingai, Kamjong, Phungyar and Kasom Khullen. The district has 5 Blocks- Ukhrul, Chingai (Ukhrul North), Kasom Khullen (Ukhrul South), Kamjong Chasad and Phungyar Phaisat.

There are different types of Government educational institute in the district. The District has 137 primary Schools, 53 Middle schools, 35 High Schools, 1 Higher secondary school and 1 College.⁵⁸

According to Census 2001, anyone aged seven years or above who can both read and write with understanding in any language, is treated as literate.⁵⁹

In the national context Manipur has a high literacy rate. Literacy percentage according to the Census 2001 is 68.87% (M=77.87%, F= 59.70%). However, this literacy percentage differs widely from district to district of the nine districts in the state. Four districts namely Imphal East, Imphal West, Churachanpur and Bishnupur districts have literacy percentage above the average. In the community wise, literacy percentage of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe have literacy rate below the state average. Even among these communities there are wide differences in literacy rate. More over the state has still a low rate of female literacy as compared to the progress registered by manfolk.⁶⁰

District-wise literacy rate of Manipur According to 2001 Census

Sl. No	District	% of literate Persons	Male	Female
1	Senapati	50.47	56.39	44.04
2	Tamenglong	58.46	67.04	49.11
3	Churachandpur	74.67	84.98	64.40
4	Ukhrul	68.96	75.40	61.91
5	Chandel	57.38	66.12	48.57
6	Bishenpur	71.59	82.25	61.09
7	Thoubal	67.90	80.50	55.34
8	Imphal West	80.61	89.10	72.24
9	Imphal East	76.38	86.44	66.30
10	All Manipur	68.87	77.87	59.70

Sources: Census of India 2001, Directorate of Census Operations, Manipur.

The milieu of the study comprised of Tangkhuls of Ukhrul Township, as educated women are mainly concentrated here. It also covered the Tangkhul settlements in the Imphal, Manipur Valley viz; Dewlaland, Lamphel, Tangkhul Avenue, Nagaram,, Langthongching where a sizeable number of educated Tangkhuls have taken residence. Initially latter three areas were not included but while in the field I realized that the places selected in my research design could not accommodate my sample size and thus was extended in the field.

Sources of Data :

The study is based on both primary data collected through questionnaires and interviews. Secondary sources of data were taken into consideration. Various journals, reports, books and research studies have been examined.

Method of Data Collection:

In order to collect the data and information relevant to the study, primary and secondary sources of data are used. The study is conducted in the Ukhrul town and some pockets of Imphal city.

Primary data was generated through the structured questionnaires and interviews with both husbands and wives. The main questions asked were about their job, marriage relations and their participation in the decision making both major and minor with regard to the family. Separate Questionnaires were given to women and men respondents. The study covers certain aspects which directly impinge upon the personal lives of the respondents. Thus, personal interviews also had to be conducted, as all necessary information could not be elicited through formal questionnaires.

Information relating to the study was also collected from secondary sources. The main sources of secondary data were publications of Directorate of Economics and Statistics and published materials in the form of books journals and research papers of historical and sociological nature. Women specific studies were also consulted to develop necessary insights.

Field work was conducted on three phases. The first phase was done in the month of January 2006. This phase consisted of collecting materials containing folklores and songs from the elders in the villages of Hungpung and Ukhrul and also from other knowledgeable persons.

The Second Phase of Field Work consisted of meeting church leaders and collecting church bulletins etc. This was carried out during January and February 2007.

The Third and the final phase of Field work began on the 14th July, 2007 and ended on the 18th of September 2007. For this phase Ukhul town and some specific areas within Imphal city were selected, as educated working population wise these areas have a large concentration of Tangkhul families. Major government, semi- government organizations, offices and institutions were also approached for the collection of samples besides going from door to door. This had to be done since Educated working women, though a clearly definable category; do not constitute a community in spatial or any other sense of the term. Though the sample population lives in Ukhul town and Imphal city they do not live in any specific area. Thus, those areas were selected which showed a substantial population of my category of respondents.

Personal contact, rapport and communication links were established with each of the respondents. The field work involved considerable movement to the different areas of the town and the city. The questionnaires were given out to the respondents and it was assured to them that their information would be kept strictly confidential and will be used only for research purpose without and identification of the informant being made public. Interviews were mostly conducted in the homes of the respondents and the time was fixed according to the convenience and desire of the informants.

Definition:

In my study, the term “Educated Women” means a woman who has completed her studies up to the graduate level irrespective of discipline of study. Besides, the term “Working Women” means a woman who works to earn, for monetary gain. It includes women who are white collar workers, i.e. salaried workers and women running their own business. It excludes the work which she does as a housewife or as a matter of duty and responsibility and for which she is not paid for.

Chapterization:

The body of the thesis is divided as follows:

- Chapter I: Introduction which includes the statement of the Problem, Survey of Literature, Objective of the study, Methodology and Chapterization and also the Field Experience of the Researcher.
- Chapter II: Traditional Tangkhul Social Structure and Status of Women
- Chapter III: The Status of Educated Working
- Chapter IV: Nature of Power Relation in the Family and the Changes in the Traditional Social Structure
and Conclusion

Field Experience:

Most of the respondents were approachable and polite and after an initial explanation about the study that I was doing, many readily agreed to provide the answers. Some respondents exhibited an initial reluctance though. Some of the respondents were very prompt; they gave me back the filled questionnaires the very

next day after I gave them. However some respondents though I gave my respondents the questionnaires and requested them to fill them up within a week or ten days' time, it was only after repeated visits of four or five times to their homes that I could get the filled up questionnaires. There were also some respondents who promised to give me back the filled questionnaires the same evening of the day I gave them or the very next morning and asked me to come and collect it soon lest they misplace it leading but they never were ready even after three four visits.

I also experienced that women whose husbands were not working exhibited a certain amount of reluctance and tended to ignore certain questions in my questionnaires. Dual earner couples seemed to be more open in their answers to my questions.

At first I distributed fifty sets of questionnaires and tried to collect them all but some even after two three visits said that they had lost the questionnaires which had to be replaced with new ones. Some never returned saying they were very busy. Some women respondents said that their husbands were too busy to fill the questionnaires and thus returned only theirs and said that I could take back the unfilled questionnaires. Because of such uncertainty I picked ten more respondents to complete the fifty sets.

But on the whole, my field work experience had been quite a pleasant and learning one and has helped me to meet many an educated Tangkhul couples who are very hospitable and friendly.

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CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER- 2

Traditional Tangkhul Social Structure and Status of Women

The Tangkhuls constitute an important section of the highlanders of the North-Eastern region of India. They inhabit a geographically very difficult terrain, accessibility to which is beset with high hills and deep gorges. Geographical isolation in the hills has reflected well in their social organization and cultural pattern. For all practical purposes each village is a social political and religious unit under the leadership of the village chief called *Awunga*. Earlier, a village had its own independent social, economic, political and religious concerns. Beside, it had independent external policy, free from the interference of other powers from outside. Regarding the early village of the Nagas, Horam is of the view that: ¹

Whether or not, the village was always a social, political and religious unit, the fact remains that, it was an important unit. Among all the Naga tribes, in the days before Christianity came to the Naga Hills, every village was not only a religious unit but also politically and economically a distinct unit. The village is an independent unit in the tribe.

The habit of head hunting during the pre- British days among the Naga people forced each of the tribal group to live in isolation from one another. Not to speak of

fighting among different tribes but within the same tribe living in the adjoining villages had also disputes and differences which often resulted in constant feud and fighting.

After the advent of Christianity the Tangkhuls started embracing Christianity through missionary work. In spite of the stern resistance given to the new religion in the initial period, Christianity became the religion of the whole community. The conversion to Christianity and the belief in the new religion brought an end to the old beliefs and practices. There had been a total rearrangement in the structure of the system of beliefs and practices. The old belief in the evil spirits and the world of evil spirits dominating the human world was done away with. With the disappearance of the old beliefs, the practices connected with them accordingly disappeared.

Agriculture still plays a dominant role as a source of basic subsistence in the villages but lost its traditional importance as a source of prestige and economic wealth. New source of wealth like government jobs, commercial tradings and education become associated with status and prestige.

Political Institution

The outstanding social and political unit among the Tangkhuls is the village. The sizes of villages may vary from a very small village consisting of 10 houses to very big ones of about 600 houses. Irrespective of the size of the village every village has its own administrative body headed by the village chief known as '*Awunga*'. The office of *Awunga* is hereditary. He maintained his position through brilliance, his personal

qualities and abilities. On the event of the death of the chief his eldest son succeeds to the chieftainship unless he is unworthy of the post due to physical deformity or unsound mind etc. If the eldest son is so undeserving due to some reasons the second son automatically is preferred to be the chief of the village. In the absence of other alternative sons the nearest male relative of the chief inherits the chieftainship.

The *Awunga* or the village chief was the secular and religious head of the village. He acted as the ritual head as he was always the first person to perform all the rituals in the village agricultural activities. The agricultural activities of the year was set forth with the blessings and ritual performance by the *Awunga* of the village. No other villager could sow seed or plant anything before the chief and his wife had performed the ritual for the sowing lest the doer attract bad luck for the whole village resulting in a poor harvest. The chief was the first to set foot and plant the first seedlings at the time of transplantation and he was the first to reap the first harvest of the year with the precedence of appropriate rituals. He presides over all religious events and thus his presence in all the religious observance was indispensable. In effect the Headman was the keeper of the faith with the help of the village priest.² For individual cases, each family was responsible to call upon the village priest to conduct sacrifices.

The chief of a village retains some ritual prominence at the time of the agricultural festivities like *Laira* which is the festival of sowing seeds, but its significance is lost with the population embracing the Christianity. With the coming of Christianity the western/ modern education was introduced to the Tangkhuls and

gradually traditional political organization became accommodative to the new elites. The emergence of new elites in the traditional political organization affected the power and functions of the village chief. In the name of development, Chairmanship is in a trend to replace the post of the chief in administrative, political and judicial field. In recent years, in many Tangkhul villages, the chairman is elected for, say, a period of 3-5 year term with a provision that the chief would return to the post if the chairmanship does not function satisfactorily or rather prove better than the chiefship. In the course of transition from tradition to modernity there has been internal conflict leading to formation of *Tangkhul Wungnao Long* (Tangkhul Chiefs' Union) to safeguard the rights of the chiefs and the traditional political structure.

The villagers had equal access to the village territory, the right to hunt any wild animal and the right to cultivate the land as much as the chief's. However, the chief was recognized as the legitimate guardian of the village land. The chief with the help of the village councilors had to see that outsiders did not encroach on the land, as the practice of head hunting put the village under constant threat. He along with the councilors took care to see that the village was well protected from the attacks of the enemies and preserved the land from wasteful use and fire which swept the hills at the time of burning the fallen jungle for jhumming.

The chief was the administrative head. He summoned and presided over the meetings of the village councilors. Though he was the head of the administration he was not free from constrain. Although he had legislative power and executive functions, he

was, to a large extent, guided by the counsel of the councilors .He could not ignore the opinion of the councilors who were the representatives of the clans of the village. Thus in all matters of dispute and considerations he had to consult the councilors and respect their opinions.

In spite of immense powers given to him as the ruler of the village the chief could never be an autocrat as he was bound by the various customs and laws which are followed with much stringency. He could never ignore the counsel of the councilors and the villagers as the councilors help the chief in day-to-day administration of the village. The village was generally divided into several wards and quarters, comprising of a number of patrilineal clans, which in turn was further ramified into lineages. This has been broken since the coming of Christianity.³ The village council or *Hangva* in the village is the highest organ of power and its basic units are the respective clans from which the councilors are selected. As a matter of fact the head of the clan or *Pipa* is the permanent member of the council though he might nominate someone on his behalf in the council. The nominee keeps going in office as long as he commands the confidence of the clan. He is to protect the interest of the clan in particular and the interest of the village in general. All important matters affecting the village community are subject to the decisions of the *Hangva* based on customary laws, constituted by tradition and convention. The *Pipaship* of a clan, like the chiefship, is hereditary. A *Pipa* of a clan may be a member of the *Hangva* and may remain through his life time or until his eldest son could replace him or he could nominate a person from the clan if he wishes to do so. The *Pipa*'s nominee carries on the office under the guidance of the *Pipa* and remains

in the office as long as he enjoys the confidence of the *Pipa* in particular and the clan in general. The *Pipas* are the most influential persons in their respective clans as they are the ones who take care of the welfare of the clan members. A *pipa* of a clan is not necessarily a member of the *Hangva*. His right and eligibility to the office of the village *hangva* stems from his status in the village at the time of the founding of the village, as the founding of a village was not always easy.⁴

The entire social system of the Tangkhul rests upon the clan system called *Shangnao*. *Shangnao* is a combination of two words- *Shang* meaning group and *Nao*- meaning children. Thus, etymologically *Shangnao* means children of the same group, pointing to the founder ancestor. *Shangnao* may again be subdivided into a number of lineages called *meiphung* meaning hearth or *Vathei* meaning seeds of one father, as such *meiphung* or *vathei* consists of the children of one father, which is a descent group consisting of persons unilineally descended from the known ancestor through a series of genealogical links of relationship which they can trace with precision.⁵

Tangkhul clans are hierarchically organized. Everybody belongs to a clan in the Tangkhul community. There is no person who does not belong to a clan. Every simple biological family is a part of *meiphung* and each *meiphung* is a part of a bigger unit, the clan. Member of a family discuss all the problems of the family and refer certain matters which are beyond their control to the *meiphung*. *Meiphung* further refers the bigger problems to the clan which in turn may refer to the village *hangva*.

The solidarity of a clan is maintained by the co-operation of its constituent units. On every issue of the clan, all members of the clan extended their co-operation as representatives of its major group, the clan. In all the affairs of common concern, rights and duties, privileges and obligations are shared equally by all the members of the clan. This kind of equality makes them stronger to stand as one solid unit. Moreover, since it is believed that they are the descendants of the same ancestor, they consider themselves to be *chinaongara* i.e. male descendants of the same parents. Their clanship ties, summed up in the concept of *chinaongara* (brotherhood) are believed to have the same strength of bond of kinship that exists between brothers. Mention may be made here that by the rules of exogamy women members of a clan marry out of it. They do not contribute to its perpetuation in the parental family and do not affect its organization, whereas they contribute equally to their husband's clans to which they belong after their marriage.

All the clan groups in the Tangkhul society perform various functions. It is the duty of the clan to see that all its members are economically sound. Every family needs and extends co-operation for the successful operation of their agricultural and associated activities. They are to help, particularly at the time of affliction by natural calamities like epidemic diseases, fire havoc, hail storm etc.

The clan elders keep vigil of the proper conduct of its clan members. As such if some one deviates from the social norms they give proper advice to the concerned

person or persons in order to avoid earning a bad name for the clan. Therefore, a deviant in a clan is a matter of worry to the entire clan.

It is the look out of the clan members even at the time of marriage. To begin with, in the matrimonial arrangements some responsible persons of the *Meiphung* go with the parents of the groom to the bride's family with the relatives of the bride's party for the confirmation of the engagement. Clan members of both the families take the responsibilities of the pledge agreed upon, after the engagement is complete. At the time of marriage all the members of the clan extend their help to the groom's family to enable them to arrange a generous marriage feast. On the other hand, the bride's party takes care to see that during the marriage she takes presentations that are satisfactory to the groom's party. The presentations include some traditional shawls which the bride presents to the members of the groom's family and also to the *Pipa* of the *Meiphung*.

According to Tangkhul customary law, after the marriage the fate of the young wife is fully protected by the husband's family members. Be it a desertion by the husband or death of the husband, the wife's welfare is the concern of the husband's family. If they fail to do so her husband's clan members should come to her help. Proper care should be given to the widow and her children for their maintenance after her husband has died. If no proper care is available the clan members should take care of her future by extending all possible help and care to her.

In every Tangkhul village there is an administrative body which assist the head of the village in the administration of the village. This body is known as *Hangva* or the

Village Council. Each clan in a village sends their representatives in the *Hangva* who looks after the interest of the clan. These clan representatives discuss and solve the problems referred to them and matters concerning the village.

With regard to the number of members of the *Hangva* there is no fixed structure. According to the size of the villages the number of the village council varied from village to village. A smaller village with lesser clans has smaller members while a bigger village which has more number of clans has correspondingly more members. It may however be noted that a big village with less number of clans may have more members according to the requirements for the execution of various *hangva*'s functions. Mention may be made here that only the married male members are eligible to represent in the *hangva* as marriage is considered to be the sign of maturity. Women are excluded from political life and thus have no membership in the village council. Though women are not given the right to represent in the *hangva* they are not debarred from the Assembly and their wisdom and knowledge are not totally ignored. Cases may be very rare but it is not nonexistent. There are instances of women taking part in the village affairs. Oral tradition speaks of one Harkhonla of Marem village. Harkhonla was Honsan's widow of Marem Village. She was known for her wisdom in the village and among the neighbouring villages. Shatsang ⁶ said that in the assembly of the *Awunga* and *hangva* in all matters, great and small, Horkhonla was present, and her words of wisdom were always accepted. No discussions would proceed in her absence. There were incidences where proceedings of a meeting of the neighbouring villages to sole disputes could not be carried out because Harkhonla was absent. Harkhonla led the

villagers in defense against the raid carried out by the neighbouring villages. Another woman being Seikhangla (wife of a chief) of Thawai village.⁷ She was wise and was an excellent administrator. She executed many a responsibility of a chief, along with the members of the village council on her husband's behalf. She went about the neighbouring villages along with the councilors wherever her interference in settling a matter or a case was required. The *hangva* were not against her leadership.

Like most Naga tribes, Tangkhul society is highly democratic in their functioning of the village council. Free and cordial discussion takes place in the council meetings concerning common matters under consideration and every representative in it has the right of free expression. No decision was thrust on the villagers by force. The community spirit inspired in them the feelings of loyalty and solidarity.

The functional administration by the *hangva*, which is based on tradition and conventions are orally transmitted from generation to generation. The council, in fact, bound the people in various social and cultural activities within the village jurisdiction thus maintaining village identity and solidarity. All sorts of disputes among the villagers are settled by the *hangva*. Thus the functions of the *hangva* could broadly be divided into Executive, Administrative and Judicial though there is no distinct separation of the powers. The highest power of the village rests in the hands of the *hangva*. They formulate policies of the village during war and in peace. Besides, they are the custodians of the laws of the village. They not only execute and administer the laws but also perform the roles of judges in the court of law.

Disputes of any nature within the village are settled by the elders of the disputing parties. If they could not settle the cases the matter might be referred to the *hangva* whose decision is final in the village itself. But disputes between two villages, if the disputing village elders could not settle the problem the matter might be referred to the *Long-phang* (Range Council) or to the *Longrei* or *Tangkhul Long* (The Apex Council/body) which is the highest body of the Tangkhuls, for its final decision. In the warring days, the representatives of the *Long-phang* would try their best to bring the disputing parties to a compromising point. But if the parties involved refused to comply with the proposal they might have a pitch battle and the representatives of the *Long* would be present there as witnesses.

When both the warring parties could not come to terms, it was the *Pukreila* who intervened. ‘*Pukreila*’ or the ‘neutral lady’ is one who got married with a man from outside her own village. There are two theories regarding the meaning of the word *pukreila*. One theory is that the word *Pukreila* comes from the word *Phakhareila* where *pha* mean body, *kharei* mean great and *la* is a suffix used in a name to indicate the sex. Thus, *Phakhareila* means a “lady of greatness”. To support this, it was argued that because of her intervening capacity in times of war, where no one dared to move about, she was considered great. Thus, the title *Phakhareila* was given only to the woman who mediated in a war between two villages. Secondly, some are of the opinion that *Pukreila* is a term for a woman who got married to a man outside her village. She may or may not practically intervene in a war but by virtue of her marriage she becomes *Pukreila* and that in times of war between her husband’s village and her brother’s

village all the *Pukreilas* of the two villages are obliged to intervene and bring an end to their enmity. The *Pukreilas* of these two villages are those women from the Y village who got married to men from the X village and those women from the X village got married to the men from the Y village. They become *Pukreilas* only in between her husband's village and her brother's village. And her neutrality is recognized only in between these two villages. This argument thus asserts that though the days of head hunting and war are well passed every modern Tangkhul woman who is married with a man outside her village is still a *Pukreila* in between her husband's village and her brother's village.⁸

From the above discussion we can draw a conclusion that women acted as mediators in settling disputes which defied solution, resulting in wars between the disputing villages before the organization at the tribal level came into existence. The origin of the establishment of the earlier form of *Long* is obscure as there were no written documents amongst this people prior to the arrival of the British, as late as 1896. However, oral tradition points to the existence of Hungpung Long which was a collection of a number of villages led by Hungpung village. The existence of the *Long* before the arrival of the British was evident from Hodson's writing:⁹

From the unanimous evidence of our authorities for the period immediately and approximately preceding British rule in Manipur, it is clear that the tribes in this area were in a state of constant hostility, but it is notable that there is no evidence of any tribal organization or of combination except among the

Luhupas or Tangkhul who sent contingents from subject villages at the behest of the dominant village.

Thus, it is clear that there was a tribal organization to maintain peace even in the days of head hunting. Horam referred to three councils in his work *Social and Cultural Life of Nagas*; the Tangkhul Nagas. He wrote: ¹⁰

Though each village has its fixed boundaries and administrative set-up, there were three Range Councils or Longs one for each Range for the entire Tangkhul tribes: (1) Kasomkong Long, (2) Shongva Long, and (3) Vārā Long.

The leading villages of Kasomkong Long were Hunphun (now known as Ukhurul), Faring Ato, Ngainga, Talla (Taloi), Shongron (Somdal), and Phadang. Those of Shongva Long were Hunphun, Faring Azeshi, Phungcham, Longpi Kachui, Longpi Hirei, Lunghar, Shirui, and Langdang Phunghon. Vārā Long was led by Hunphun, Langdang Phungthar, Luithar, Khangkhui Phungthar, Khangkhui Phunghon, Lungshong, and Humpum Vashinao.

He went on to say that “the three erstwhile enjoyed solid administrative powers. With frequent raids and attacks being the rule, inter-village disputes were numerous. Some of these were land disputes which occasioned enmity between villages for generations. The Longs were formed during such conditions and the wisest men served as its members. When the Long made a decision or when a joint meeting of the three Longs settled a dispute no village could refuse to abide by the decision or reopen the matter.”¹¹

Thus, it is obvious that the purpose of the *Long* was to maintain peace and security among the member villages.

Today there is only one *Long* for the entire tribe and it is called *Tangkhul Naga Long*. It had its beginning in the late 1920s. One Shangyang Shaiza of Hunphun village with the help of the early Christian leaders organized all the Awungas of the Tangkhul villages under the banner of '*Tangkhul Union Long*'. The main objective of the *Long* was to fight against the exploitation of the Tangkhuls by the Britishers. As it was difficult to fight against the exploiters individually, the people felt the need to have an organization at the tribal level. As a result the *Tangkhul Union Long* came into existence as an organization of the entire Tangkhul people. Later in 1947-48 the name was modified into *Tangkhul Long*. The nomenclature of the *Long* was further refined in 1960s as *Tangkhul Naga Long* as it is today. Today, *Tangkhul Naga Long* is in many respects a completely different entity from that envisaged by its founding members of the early ages. Many of its provisions are now interpreted very differently. The *Tangkhul Naga Long* has its functions quite different from the organizing principles of the past.

At present the whole Tangkhul area is divided into four divisions, i.e.i) *Ato Longphang* where *ato* means north, *long* means council and *phang* means branch (the meaning of *longphang* is the same in the following reference), which means northern branch council. *Ato Longphang* consists of 43 villages,¹² ii) *Aze longphang* – *Aze* means south i.e southern branch council consisting of 91 villages,¹³ iii) *Zingsho*

Longphang – Zingsho means east i.e eastern branch council consisting of 64 villages ¹⁴ and iv) *Zingtun Longphang* - western branch council consisting of 34 villages. ¹⁵ All these four branch councils are expected to take care of their respective areas. As it was in early days of *Long*, matters which could not be settled in the village may be referred to the respective *longphang*, and further if the *longphang* is unable to settle the matter it may be referred to the *Tangkhul Naga Long* or *Longrei* (*Long* means council and *rei* means big/ high), which is the highest Council of the Tangkhuls.

The *Longphang* is represented by the representatives from all the member villages of that particular region. The number of representatives may differ from village to village according to the size of the villages. The representatives of the *longphang* may elect a Chairman, a Vice- Chairman, a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, an Accountant and a Treasurer from among themselves. Along with these office bearers the council may select five persons who are knowledgeable about the customary laws to be the members of the Standing Committee (Executive Committee).

All the four *longphang* are the constituent units of the *Longrei*, besides the village councils of the Tangkhul villages. The *Longrei* has executive committee consisting of President, Vice- President, General Secretary, Two joint Secretaries, Accountant, Treasurer and two representatives each from all the four branch council. As has been observed in the village council, the apex organization of the Tangkhul does not have women in the executive committee. Women never represented in the organization in the history of the organization and it continues to be so even today. The *Tangkhul*

Shinaolong, the apex body of the women's organization, in recent decade, has been bargaining hard for the representation of women in the *Tangkhul Naga Long* or *Longrei*.

As *Tangkhul Naga Long* is the only organization that covers the whole of the Tangkhul tribe, irrespective of sex and faith that looks after the affairs of the people on all matters it is said that this organization is purely a social and cultural organization.¹⁶ But, 'in the making of *Long*, the village council, one of the smallest political unit of the state government, becomes one of the constituent units of the *Tangkhul Long*. Matters that could not be settled in village *Hangvashim* (village court), may be referred to the *Long*, (Article 26 clause IV) this indirectly made Long organization a part and parcel of political institution of the land.'¹⁷ The *Hangva* under the *Awunga* is a traditional structure which has been encapsulated as a political unit of the state government as village council/ village authority. Even in this modern structure the representation of women is not there.

Family and Kinship Institution

Among the Tangkhuls, there is a clear distinction between kinship by descent and kinship by marriage, although kinship is reckoned and recognized on both lines. As a patrilineal society, the rule of descent is strictly based on the male line only. Thus, all children acquired membership in their father's clan group which might be a localized group or might spread horizontally over many villages and could never acquire membership in their mother's clan group. Thus, recruitment to any clan among the

Tangkhuls has been strictly based on descent through the father's line only. The pattern of inheritance, rules of succession and residence closely followed the system of descent.

Among all clans, the rules of succession required that the eldest son should be the proper heir, although other male children also had a share in the family property. The eldest son of the family is saddled with full responsibility and obligation towards the family who would soon be the head of the family after his father. It is his responsibility to keep close ties with his father and also with other members of the family and clan. It is said that he is responsible for the marriage of his brothers and sisters after the death of his father or if the latter is too old to execute his duties. It is for this reason that the eldest son gets the parental house. Besides he also inherits the best/lion's share of the ancestral property, be it war equipments/ articles like spear, shield etc. or land i.e. homestead, paddy field, and so on and so forth.

The younger sons are expected to help the parents at home and in the field. But when they reach the marriageable age they marry and set up separate houses of their own as a branch family. The younger sons may inherit or may not inherit the property of the parental house depending upon how wealthy the parents are. But as said before, the eldest brother with the supervision of the father, if he is still alive must make a house for his younger brothers providing the necessary properties, both movable and immovable to establish a separate house of his own. If the elder brother fails to carry out this very responsibility of his, he is considered a deviator from the social norms leading to chaos in the family.

Apart from setting up separate houses for the younger brothers the eldest son is also to marry off the daughters in the family if the father is no more or is too old. A daughter has very little time to stay in the parental house for she marries and eventually leaves the parental house. She does not stay back in the parental house after marriage even if the family has no male issue. A daughter does not have any legal claim on the family property except a small share at the time of marriage which she carries with her in the form of gifts. Even in the absence of a male child, a daughter cannot claim, as a matter of right, the family properties, which in this case normally go to the nearest male relatives.

A girl's greatest attributes were physical fitness, skill in the looms, competency in domestic works and ability to exert hard labour in agricultural work. A daughter is thus, like the mother, expected to be very busy before her marriage as performing the domestic works efficiently which is in turn considered to be the most important qualification of a girl. Apart from the domestic works she also learns the art of weaving and she weaves for the entire family. In addition she helps in jhumming land for cultivation, digging the paddy fields, transplanting paddy etc. The ability to perform hard work is the greatest single attribute a girl can use in the marriage market. While the society is tolerant of the free mixing of boys and girls, there is social degradation on premarital sex on the part of the girls which does not permit intimate relationship with boys.

A daughter is bestowed much love and affection by the members of the family. A daughter after her marriage is not totally cut off from the family though she may not be recognized as a member of her patri-clan and does not retain the name of the same, unlike the Mizos of Mizoram where she is recognized by her patri-clan name, even after marriage.¹⁸ She continues to share responsibility in her natal family even after the marriage. The sharing of the responsibility is clearly expressed at the time of house construction, death ceremony, wedding, etc. For instance, at the wedding of her brother, depending on her economic status/ capability she contributes a buffalo, or she may jointly contribute along with her other sisters (if more daughters are married off). And if she is only an average she contributes a certain sum to meet her brother's marriage expenses. No matter what economic status she may hold she puts her share to show that she belonged to the family and still shares the responsibility with the family. The sharing of the sisters, who belong to other family by marriage, in the expense of the brother's marriage and other such expenses is the measure of degree of her relationship with the family and is called *Vak*. All the daughters of a clan who are married to the other clans and have become the member of those clans, have the same responsibility to contribute in the expenses when any of the sons of the clan gets married and throws a lavish feast to the village, depending on their order of proximity, keeping in mind that the immediate sisters of the groom share the greater amount. The married daughters of the clan are called *Yorla*.

The *Yorlas* of a clan are not sent off empty handed after such festivities or ceremonies but each are given specific portions of meat to each of them. The

distribution and allocation of the different parts of the slaughtered animal is described in the best manner by Ruivah: ¹⁹

Allocation of different parts of the slaughtered animal is made according to the status of the person in the kin group. ...all the married women of the family will come and collect their share of meat from the slaughtered animal, according to their status in their parental home. ...the right hindleg is given to the eldest married daughter or sister, the left hindleg to the second married daughter or sister, the right foreleg to the third and the left foreleg to the fourth and so on. In case the groom has only one married sister the remaining legs may go to the nearest female relatives of the former's lineage group.

Marriage is the outcome of youthful courtship followed by the approval of their parents or arranged by the parents. Tangkhul society is free in matter of matrimonial affairs. A boy or a girl is given freedom to choose his or her life's partner without much interference from the parents. However, the proposals made may be acceptable to both the children and the parents. While choosing a partner he or she should bear in mind the rules of clan exogamy. Breach of this strict rule will result in heavy punishment and nullification of the courtship process. A cross-cousin marriage i.e. a boy marrying father's sister's daughter (*Vakhalat*) and a boy marrying mother's sister's daughter or parallel cousin (*Chinaora*) marriage is prohibited. The most preferred proposal is a cross-cousin arrangement called *Pam* i.e. marrying mother's brother's daughter (mother's brother's daughter's marriage). In the choice of spouse, economic class structure plays an important role, apart from the personal attributes. Marriage alliance

usually takes place between the members of the same economic status. The rigidity of the economic status in choosing a daughter-in-law/ son-in-law rings out loud in the well known love story of Shimreishang and Maitonphi where Shimreishang, the boy comes from a rich/ wealthy family and Maitonphi stems from a little lower status. Their love affair was sternly objected by his family. Strong disapproval from Shimreishang's parents resulted in marrying off of Maitonphi to another man from another village. The rigidity in economic status may vary from one family to the other. This is also explained in the same story i.e. the man who married Maitonphi is also from a high status family (said to be a chief/ headman of the village).

When a boy reaches a marriageable age he discloses his wishes to the parents and if the proposal is acceptable to the parents they may entrust a-go-between woman or a match-maker for further negotiation. On the other hand if a boy reaches marriageable age a female relative may take the initiative of match-making. If the proposal is unacceptable on either side discussions for further negotiations may be delayed. As and when the problem is resolved the formal proposal is made by the boy's parents or employs a-go-between known as *Ngalahangsan* to negotiate the proposed matrimonial alliance. The go-between woman, on knowing the mutual acceptability of the families, fixes the date with the girl's family for engagement and then informs the date to the boy's family.

The engagement ceremony takes place at the girl's home. The close relatives and senior members of the bride's clan are invited to witness the ceremony. The

groom's father along with some of the close relatives proceeds to the girl's house. In case of the absence (death) of the groom's father, the eldest brother or one responsible male member of the family acts on behalf of the groom's father. The bride's family receives the guests warmly. The bride's parents treat the guest with the best available food and drinks. The drink of rice beer that they provide on this day was called *Neirakhamang* in the olden days. It is on this day that the groom's family declares what properties both moveable and immoveable would be given to the couple after their marriage. The parents discuss in detail about the bride price or *Manho* and the presents/gifts to be brought by the bride on the day of their marriage. As a sign of confirming the engagement a hoe and one rupee is presented to the bride's family by the groom's family. Pressing the services of the *Ngalahangsan* in linking and cementing the relations between the two families is traditional. She stands as a witness to all the transactions and commitments made between the parties before the marriage and after the marriage as well. After the engagement ceremony the couple can work in each other's field but the bride is never allowed to enter the groom's house till marriage is solemnized.²⁰

Negotiations and engagement is followed by marriage. A considerable period of gap of two or three years is kept between the engagement and marriage for proper arrangement for the celebration. Sometimes the gap may even be longer depending on the capacity of the families for the preparation. During this period the boy and the girl remain extremely attentive to each other's affairs.

Properly arranged marriage through the go-between or a match-maker is considered to be a regular one. Should a serious dispute arise in the family, the whole family, clan and relatives would be involved. In this way the new couple secures social security. Marriage by eloping is treated as immoral. Neither the parents nor relatives would interfere in times of controversy in such a kind of marriage.

The practice of patrilocal residence results in the loss of one member in the girl's natal family. The loss of one member may be said to be compensated by the creation of wider kinship network. On marriage the girl also partially loses her identity by shedding her clan/sur-name and assuming her husband's clan name. For the boy's natal family, the marriage resulted in all-round gain, a gain of one extra labour force and wider network of relationships with the alliance group, at the cost of giving away bride price.

Monogamy is the highest and best conceivable practice among the Tangkhuls. Polygamy is also practiced among the Tangkhuls. As marriage involves heavy expenditure polygamy is very rare and so only the chief of the village, pipa or head of the clan and some rich people can afford to have more than one wife. Rareness of possessing more than one wife is not only due to economic factor but it is also one's choice to have one wife, as polygyny is not looked upon with respect. In this regard, A.S.W. Shimray remarks "Polygamy is frowned by the society, and it is regarded as a reproach to peaceful existence of the family atmosphere..."²¹

There are various forms of marriage in the Tangkhul society. Marriage by payment of a quantum of money called *Manho* by the groom to the bride's parents as mentioned above. In this form of marriage the amount to be paid is fixed with the help of the go-between woman called *Ngalahangsan*. As soon as the negotiation and engagement is over a long period of preparation begins for an elaborated marriage ceremony with much pomp. This form of marriage is ideal and generally practiced. There is a practice of marriage by exchange whereby a man's sister marries his brother-in-law i.e his wife's brother. It is an exchange of sister for a wife. This form of marriage is uncommon and is not encouraged. This type of marriage is called *Seingathat*. Sororate and levirate are not meted with discriminations. Regarding Sororate and levirate K.Ruivah informs that:²²

Though sororate is practiced, sororal polygyny is not practiced. It is expected that the sister of the wife may be married only when the later has died. Sororate is encouraged by both the families. However, it should be borne in mind that the deceased wife's sister is not regarded as a substitute and also not compulsory. It depends on the wishes of the man and the woman. But to look after the fate of the motherless children and to extend their love and sympathy, both the members of the families persuade the concerned person to fill the vacant position...levirate, both junior as well as senior, is practiced in Tangkhul society. Senior levirate is, however, not favoured. In the levirate marriage no marriage ceremony is performed. It is practiced only to save the fate of the widow..., this system is not popular.

M.C. Goswami ²³ has termed these forms of marriages as the secondary form of marriage among the Tangkhuls. Another form of marriage that is in practice among the Tangkhuls is the marriage by elopement which in local term is *Ngapuikathui*. Elopement is the result of parents' disapproval to the children's choice of their marriage partners. It is the last resort for the lovers whose parents do not agree to the proposal. Being frustrated by the refusal of their parents the couple stick to their resolve not to separate for lack of parental consent. The unapproved marriage is regularized after performing a post-marriage feast called *Vashumkasa*.

Maturity is the deciding age for marriage in the Tangkhul society. When a boy or a girl is grown up and is able to work independently on his/her own accord he/ she is assumed in his/ her age group called *Yarthot*. Entering into the *yarthot* is considered a passport for marriage. Therefore, it is expected of every Tangkhul to pass this age to be eligible for marriage. Besides entering the *Yarthot* one has to also have mental maturity to be able to manage and maintain a family. If one fulfils these requirements one is expected to marry as and when one wills to do so. The general age group for marriage ranges from 16 to 20 years and above.²⁴

Divorce or *Ngala kapang* is of rare occurrence, and among the Tangkhuls is given only on the defaulter of either party.²⁵ The practice of divorce although very rare is prevalent among the Tangkhuls. The agreements made at the time of engagement and the vows exchanged at the time of marriage are the binding force which keeps a couple together in spite of their differences. The defaulter of these agreements and vows is

inflicted with severe punishments. Occurrence of divorce is rare as it can cause inter-clan feud or even inter-village feud if the parties involved are from different villages. Parents and relatives take up the matter seriously and try to prevent it. But in spite of all their efforts and disapproval if it is ineffectual the guilty is punished.

The practice of asking for dissolution of marriage is available to both male and female in the Tangkhul society. The initiator of the divorce is to restore the marriage price and also forfeit the properties both moveable and immovable. If the husband initiates the divorce he forfeits everything, "... except the spear, shield dao and other male tools.",²⁶ including the house and the wife along with the children remains in the house and maintains the properties which he declared to be his own. This protects the interest of the helpless wife and at the same time dissuades the husband from seeking a divorce. On the other hand if divorce is initiated by the wife she has to forfeit everything, "...except her 'ZEITHING' and Tansop",²⁷ and lose her identity as well i.e. she ceases to be a member of the husband's family and even the clan. Thus, as Brown²⁸ has stated that divorce is allowed, but seldom resorted to, on account of the great expense.

A prayer for dissolution of marriage can be made by any of the parties to the marriage. There are a few grounds that lead to divorce. Among them the most important one is adultery. Adultery is condemned and looked down upon in the Tangkhul society. It is a punishable crime in the village court or *hangashim*. In case of anyone of the married spouses committing adultery comes to the notice of the aggrieved party,

immediate divorce is effected with due approval from the village council. No one can defy the customary penalty imposed on the guilty person by the *hangva*. Unfaithfulness from either of the party to the marriage can end up in divorce as this leads to quarrels and disharmony in the family.

Sometimes barrenness of the wife may result in a divorce as desire for an issue is strong among the Tangkhuls. Polygamy being accepted in the society, instead of resorting to divorce, some wives, acknowledging the need for issue, may allow the husband to marry a new wife. In such case barrenness may not result in divorce. A wife can ask for divorce when she realizes that her husband is impotent. Divorce based on such ground is very rare but is permissible.

Unsound mind or lunacy of either the husband or wife is also a cause for divorce. Besides if either of the party to the marriage is treated with cruelty, physical or mental, by the other, that would amount to a cause for divorce. But the marriage among the Tangkhul being the outcome of courtship there is hardly any room for such harshness leading to divorce.

Moral character being one of the attributes sought for at the time of marriage alliance, habitual theft of either party may cause the aggrieved party to seek for divorce.

Husband and wife in the course of their life may want to separate from each other for whatever reason understood by both the parties and thus may agree to part

their ways with mutual understanding. This is called *Shatngathan*. Such cases are very rare though it is permissible in the society.

Remarriage both of men and women after the dissolution of the earlier marriage is permissible in the Tangkhul society. Remarriage of a widow and widower also is permissible.

The heirship of a childless couple is automatically devolved on the nearest relative of the couple as such they do not feel the necessity of adopting a child. Besides, it is the responsibility of the nearest of kins to take care of the childless couple during their infirmity and in their old age. Therefore, adoption or *Ruikakhui* is not widely practiced in the Tangkhul society. Though adoption is rare it is not totally absent. There are two theories of adoption. The first is that prior permission or consent of the nearest relative must be obtained before the adoption takes place for the recognition of the adopted child as rightful child of the adoptive parents. Formal recognition by the nearest kinsmen empowers the adopted child to inherit the landed property of the adoptive parents though the ancestral property/ land may be retained by the former. Besides, if the adopted child is from outside the village a general declaration called *Raivao* (declaration of adaptation) has to be made by the adoptive father through the *hangva* by paying *Raivao* fee. The *hangva* would then make a general announcement to all the villagers that the adopted child would be a member of the village from the date of such announcement and no one would be allowed to call the adopted child a “stranger or *Mikhamang*”. On the other hand the second theory believes that there is no such

prescribed regular procedure for effecting an adoption. An illegitimate child is, however, to be adopted to a particular clan in order to establish his identity for all social rights, duties and obligations.

However, whenever an adoption takes place in a family, the adopted son must strictly follow the normal regulations of the adopting clan and he becomes a member of the clan which his adoptive parents belong to. Accordingly, the adopted son cannot marry anyone who belongs to the adoptive parent's clan.

Religious Institution

Religious Beliefs, Practices and Status of Women

The religion of the Nagas before the advent of the British in the Naga Hills is labeled 'Animism'. Y.L. Shimmi ²⁹ writes "Sir James Frazer, somewhere in "*The Golden Bough*", lays down that "when definite deities with specific names and function are recognized the Animist has become a Polytheist and the term Animism is no longer applicable". W.H. Furness in *The Ethnography of the Nagas of Eastern Assam* writes that: ³⁰

Throughout the different tribes I was able to trace a belief in one powerful god, and several lesser gods of the harvest, and many revengeful demons. The chief god appears to be the protector of mankind, and to him sacrifices and offerings of grains and fruit must be made that he may avert or alleviate the malignity of lesser gods who have been offended, and who seek revenge by afflicting man

with poor crops, sicknesses, sudden blindness and deafness. In one or two of the tribes there is a belief in a god, sometimes a goddess, of the harvest, to whom pigs and fowls must be sacrificed when the grain is planted.

S.H.M. Rizvi and Shibani Roy³¹ note the salient features of Naga religion prior to advent of Christianity in Naga Hills as “ According to experts in the study of religion the Naga religion is described to be animistic which lays emphasis on the existence of the deified manifestations of nature and propitiation of spirits both benevolent and malevolent. The causes of discomfort, illness and troubles which befall the family and the inhabitation are attributed to the action of the evil spirits. They hold that commitments, omissions and occasional failures to appease them are the reasons for incurring the displeasure of spirits. By divination they trace such sufferings, ailments and misfortune to the influence of the evil spirits and latter are appeased to ensure good health, and prosperity. The Nagas also believe in the presence of a supreme being called Ukepenuopfu and other local terms used by each group in its owns dialect. He is the creator progenitor of race and all living beings. Curiously this Supreme Being has both male and female attributes”. It is learnt from the said that Nagas had clear notion about the supper natural power and the need to appease the same when displeased. “The fear of punishment of God and the deterrent measures of the social bodies are the essential factors which served as panacea for the ills of all societies, small or big. That is why the Nagas were God fearing and extremely meticulous in religious rites.”³²

Before Christianity was introduced the Tangkhuls believed in the existence of one supreme being³³ called *Ameowo* by some and *Arah* by others who was benevolent. His abode was above the clouds in heaven. As the God was good and did not harm them, the Tangkhuls did not feel necessary to propitiate him. Apart from the existence of the Supreme Being, the Tangkhuls believed in the existence of other supernatural beings (*Kameo*) that lived in the jungles, fields, precipice, rivers and streams, trees, rocks, etc. They believed that some of these supernatural beings were good while others were bad. However, the good spirits did not take much place in the Tangkhul system of belief decidedly as a result of the constant anxiety and fear created by the belief in the evil spirits which tormented them. Thus, there was a broad division between the God of heaven, and the other spirits of the world.

The Tangkhuls' believed that the evil spirits harm them constantly. It was for that reason they often made offerings of animals and fowls to propitiate them. As much as the daily activities of the Tangkhuls had been in the domain of the evil spirits such as in the jhum fields, hunting in the jungles, fishing in the streams, their daily life was filled with constant fear of the evil spirits. They believed that any intrusion to the abodes of the evil spirits would cause illness to the intruders. As such, any illness was believed to have been caused by the evil spirits demanding sacrifices of various natures; the actual sacrificial offering required for any illness was known only by the priests and the physicians or *Khunong*,³⁴ who were considered to have telepathic contact with the evil spirits. The priest/ physician first diagnosed the illness and then he was able to tell which particular spirit caused the illness and the particular type of sacrificial offerings

required. Since each type of evil spirit demanded a particular type of sacrificial offerings, as there were different kinds of evil spirits causing different types of illness, there were equal number of sacrifices, the details of which were known only by the priests or the physician. The spirit of the victim (sacrificial offering) slain was supposed to propitiate the evil spirit; and almost in all cases, the remains of the victim were partaken by the priests and members of the subject's family barring women. The sacrificial materials, the tools and portions of the victim's flesh set aside to represent the victim's spirit became sacred, (it is not clear if this can be called sacred) not to be touched, soon after the priest had completed the rituals of sacrifice.

The communal observances of the Tangkhuls round the year and their religious rites were connected with their principal economic activities and agricultural undertakings. Accordingly, the spirits (*Kameo*) or the gods and goddesses to whom the Tangkhuls made offerings, sacrifices and invocations may broadly be divided into three:

a) *Phunghui Philava*

b) *Shimlui Kameo* and

c) *Kokto*.

a) *Phunghui Philava* - '*Phunghui*' was considered to be female and it was a common name for spirit of harvest/ crop and '*Philava*' means princess. *Phunghui* was believed to have long hair sweeping the ground. It was believed that when *Phunghui* strolls by, that particular side of the field will have a bountiful harvest that year. Riches or bountiful

harvest (as agriculture is the mainstay of the people, good harvest meant prosperity) was believed to be possessed only by female spirit. It was, therefore, that the Tangkhuls made sacrifices and offerings to *Phunghui* to ask for a good harvest (*Mawon*). There were many *phunghuis* like *Kazing* (Heaven) *Philava*, *Ngalei* (Earth) *Philava*, *Shim* (House) *Philava*, *Lui* (Field) *Philava* and so on and so forth, every place had its own *philava*. There was no count as to how many *Phunghui Philavas* were in existence but the Tangkhuls mostly invoke the blessings of *Kazing Philava* and *Ngalei Philava*. *Phunghui* was appeased at different times, occasions and events like *Luirā*, *Ma Khaling* (*Lui Kashom*), *Mangkhap*, *Harra Khayang*, *Mawon Kazai*, *Dharkashat*, *Ma kahat*, *Rakhong kakhon*, *Chum kaphut*, *Chumsin Sakhami*, *Zingkan khamui Sakhami*, *Mawon Khamui Kasa* etc.

Luirā was the first and one of the greatest agricultural festivals of the year among the Tangkhuls. *Luirā* falls in the month of *Marun* (Lunar Calendar of Tangkhul) February and March and the period of the festival spreads for more than ten days. It was the time for merry-making, eating, singing, traditional pageantry, dancing, wrestling and rope-pulling.

In the past, to set open the feast, the village chief and his wife would go to sow seeds in the field. They would sprinkle the blood of a fowl on the paddy grains and pour out some wine in manner of offerings to the spirit (*Kameo*). The ceremonial sowing of the seed was called *Shimlui kathui*. Nobody could sow seed or plant anything before the chief and his wife had performed the ritual lest the doer attracted bad luck or a poor

harvest for the whole village in that year and thereby the fear of famine. With utmost care the chief and the village priest along with the village councilors read the signs of the season and decided upon the date for the festival. Sowing the seeds in time ensured a good year ahead. Here is a folk song that tells about the villagers requesting the chief to set off sowing seed before it was too late: ³⁵

- 1 O kazing kum ura O Wungnaowo
 O Year season has dawn, O Royal Highness

Luithuimi haolo
Initiate seed sowing

Wungnaowo, Luithui, O mihaolo.
Royal Highness, O initiate seed sowing.

- 2 O Luithuimi haolo O rashamthei
 Initiate seed sowing O paddy cropping

O Rashamthei O Rashamthei
O paddy cropping, O paddy cropping

Manao pai shina
Lest it be late.

- 3 O Mamanao mara O Wungnaowo
 O it will not be late O Royal Highness

Luithui mashunga

Its been timely sown (rightlt timed)

Wungnaowo Luithui O mashunga

Royal Highness O it's been timely sown.

- 4 O Luithui mashunga O Rashamthei
O It's been timely sown, O Paddy cropping

Phungla makanya

Rich harvest it was (So rich that lots were left over)

Rashamthei, phungla O makanya

Paddy crop O rich harvest it was.

Free translation of the forgoing

- 1 O right season has down, o your highness
Commence seed sowing
Your highness, O commence seed sowing.
- 2 O commence seed sowing, O paddy crops
Lest it be too late
Paddy crops, O lest it be too late
- 3 O it will not be late, O your highness

It's been timely sown,

Your Highness O it's been timely sown.

4 O it's been timely sown, O paddy grains

Can't carry all home

Paddy grains, O can't carry all home.

After the chief and his wife had done *Shimlui kathui* ceremony then on the next day the villagers were allowed to sow or plant in their respective fields followed by the chief announcing of the date of the festival. On the appointed day some animals were killed and the village chief did all the sacrificial ceremonies which were followed by every household on the very next day.

The village gate remained closed and no one was allowed to enter the village until the third day. On the third day they (villagers) would welcome the guest from different villages. This was the day when the guests from other villages, friends and relatives were entertained. Besides merry-making, singing and eating there was village fair where buying and selling would take place through barter system. The following day all the villagers would leave the village. After that the whole village observed a day of rest from the normal work.

After the festival, planting of the paddy in the jhum land began, and that was called *Ma Khaling* where *Ma* means paddy and *khaling* means planting. Side by side with the planting of the paddy the other crops that were grown at the same season were also planted. By the time the jhum plantations were over the seedling for the terraced

plantations were almost ready and therefore there was no time to waste but get into the terraced field to prepare for the seedlings. In a place where they practiced only jhum transplantation this was not required. Transplanting of the paddy saplings from seed bed to the terraced field is called *Lui kashom*. Like in *Luikathui*, the chief's family had to begin the transplantation in the village. In places where there was only jhum cultivation the owner of the area, for cultivation, for that year may be the first one to plant or sow the first paddy grains (the forest was cleared and burnt for cultivation only for a year and a virgin jungle was cleared like wise in the following year. They might cultivate the once cultivated area after a period of 14- 15 years only.). It was believed that if any other family, other than the chief's family, started rice plantation, the crop would be infested by insects, pests etc. resulting in poor harvest and thereby famine. It was for this reason that they observed it in a very strict manner.

When all the work in the terraced field was over, it was time for them to take rest and relax and feast again to mark the end of sowing and planting of the year. This festival which is still being observed after the completion of transplantation of paddy is called *Mangkhap*. It is observed during the month of July depending upon the timing of the transplantation due to early or late Monsoon. *Mangkhap* means, *Mang*= drink, *kup*= finish/ over, that is to say that all the festivities and celebrations of the year are done and the feasting come to an end with 'this' and so "*Mangkhap*". Every family, rich or poor, according to their capacity, killed their domestic animals during this festival.

In the past, before the actual celebration began at home, the village priest would go to the paddy field and perform the sacrificial rituals. The next day the head of the family of every household would go to their respective fields and fix up feathers of a fowl in every field. As they fixed up the feathers they would invoke the spirit that the crops planted would be plentiful and that it might not go in vain. After that, began the celebration by inviting their relatives, friends and neighbours and sharing with them the best available drinks and meals. It was during this festival that the married daughters got presents from their parents and also from their brothers who were married and had established their own families.

The *Phunghui Philava* was invoked at the time of reading the omens for the agricultural engagements. *Harra Khayang* was one of such time of observing omens for the selection of the location of jhum cultivation for the running year where *Harra* means 'egg' and *khayang* means 'to see or to observe'. This ritual was performed either by the chief of the village or the owner of the area in which the jhumming was to be carried out. This ceremony was performed in the intended area for jhum.

The performer would break the egg slightly and put it on the hot ashes (*Phunghai meisum*) prepared for the purpose. The manner in which the egg boiled, and spilling of its content indicated whether the omen was good or bad, whether the village will face epidemic or war etc. If the omen indicated unfavourable that site/ area was not chosen for jhumming that year. But on the other hand, if the omen indicated well, the performer would announce it to the villagers. Once the announcement of the site for

cultivation was made each family would go and choose their own desirable site and size and then clearing and burning of the forest was done in due time. In return for performing the ritual all the villagers, at the time of harvest gave some share of their produce. The produce might be paddy, millet, corn/ maize, etc.

When all the work in the paddy field was done and when the paddy is almost ready for harvest a day of rest or rather a day of village wide taboo was observed. The observation of this taboo was called *Mawonzai*. The village chief fixed the date for the festival and every head of the family in the village performed the ceremony- sacrificing meat and wine to the spirit, invoking the spirit to protect the crops from the storm, insects, pests and from any other danger and thereby ensuring a successful harvest during that year. In the real sense of the term, *Mawonzai* festival was not a celebration of an occasion. It was rather a time of prayer and sacrifices to Ameowo.³⁶ Since this season happened to be the best available leisure time, people of different age groups organize picnics in different places.

Dharkashat: Dharshat, another festival was observed when the crop was ripe and was ready for harvest, before the actual gathering. The head of every family in the village would go to the field and cut the ears of the grain and wrap it with a cloth. The performer was not supposed to talk to anyone on his way to field and back, until he reached home fearing that if he spoke the good luck would go away from the family. The paddy that he brought was then dried, husked and prepared for the family. As it is the day to eat the first harvest every family kills their domestic animals and fowls. The

head of the family performed the necessary rituals with some meat and wine after which the members of the family partake the cooked rice with the meat. It was believed that if any outsider happened to partake in the first meal it was mandatory for him/ her to join the family on the reaping day as well. The belief that the good fortune of the family will be taken away by the outsider who had joined the first meal if he failed to join them on the day of harvest was strong. Failure to join on the reaping day was taken as an insult (*Sharkakhara*) to the family. Though every head of the family performed the ritual it was the normal practice, to let the chief of the village perform the ritual first.

When the paddy field is ready for harvest everybody prepares themselves by keeping ready their implements and cleaning up the granaries. In the past, observing the condition of the paddy was a must in which members of each clan gathered themselves and discussed the order in which harvesting had to be carried out. They chalked out the details beginning with the one whose field was most ripened.

In the days of yore, prior to the appointed day of reaping as fixed by the clan members the head of the family (of whose field to be reaped) would go to the field to make a sacrifice to the spirit either with an egg or with a fowl. He would invoke the spirit of harvest to keep ready, gathering grains from every corner of the field for the harvest. On the eve of the harvest a ritual was performed by killing a domestic animal. No one was permitted to enter the house except the members of the family.³⁷ Strict silence was maintained in the house through the night, even while moving the stools and other things.

At the dawn the family would prepare the required mid-day meal and the couple (the head of the family and his wife) would go to the field. The husband then would perform some ritual in the courtyard of the hut and the duo would start reaping the paddy sheaves before the arrival of the clan members. Other participant joined them for the day long work. While some reaped the sheaves others carried the same to a place (*ranpum*) where they gathered for thrashing. As the reaping and carrying of the sheaves went on, the thrashing also would go hand in hand. When all the grains were gathered the chaff was then winnowed and was ready for the barn. The food which was prepared and brought from home was served when all was set to take the grains to granary. It was taboo for anyone to enter the house before anyone of the participant of the reaping entered the house. Therefore, they would fix a branch of a tree or leaves at the entrance to keep people from stepping in.

After the food, everyone would collect their load according to their capacity to take it to the owner's barn. It was the housewife who entered the granary first. She would invoke (*pemtha pemtailo*) the spirit to fill up the granary and put down the load she carried. After that every one would bring in their load and she gathered all the grains properly.

A day of rest or village-wide taboo was observed after the harvest (*Ma-kahat*) just before the *Chumphu* festival (see below). This day was called *Nakao Kasa*. On this day everyone would take leave from their daily normal work and it was taboo to touch the farming implements as well. After observing a day's taboo the villagers would clean

their village ponds area-wise. This was known as *Sova Sakhamatha/ Raso Sakhamatha* or *Rakhong Kakhon* where *Rakhong* means pond and *kakhon* means to clean, i.e. cleaning of pond.

Cleaning of the village pond was not done at any time. It was done only after observing the said taboo. Every family was expected to join in the cleaning of the pond failing which may be banned from drawing water from the pond. Village pond was cleaned because the sacrificial new rice was to be cooked with the new water; old water from the pond was taken out and the spring would fill the pond with fresh water. On this day the villagers cleaned the whole village and its surroundings as well which was called *Veivakakhaning*. On that day all the husbands would go to field to collect a pair of crabs- a male and a female along with the mud heap dug out by the crabs and also an herb called *Phungfu* which the wives used for performing rituals.

The grain that was gathered in the granary could not be taken out and consumed before conducting the opening ceremony or the ritual of the granary. So the word *Chum* means granary and *kaphut* means to open. *Chumphu* was a festival of eating new rice. It was celebrated in the end part of November or *Ngaphei* in local term. This festival was celebrated for three consecutive days. The village chief along with the members of Village Council/ Village Authority fixed the date for the festival. They would assess the progress of the harvest of the villagers and fix the day which was known as *Changkui Kakap*.

There are two versions regarding the name of the festival. One version that was common to Western part of Tangkhuls called the festival as *Chumphu*. 'Chum' means barn and 'Phu' means sacrifice. *Chumphu* simply means sacrificing in the barn. Another version that was common to the Raphei holds that the name of the festival was *Chumphut*. 'Chum' means barn and 'phut' means opening. It was the celebration of opening the barn that was filled with new grains.³⁸

Chumphu was the festival of woman. *Chumphu* was the only festival in which the ceremonies were performed by the women folk. She/ the mother of the family, was the Priestess of the festival.

It was taboo for the man to see the ritual performed by the wife. On the day of the festival, after the village and the ponds were cleaned, by evening all the male members of the family would leave their house. They kept their weapons like axe, dao, spear, trap etc outside the house and also slept outside the house (jungle or atleast in the court yard of the house). Some said that they slept outside the village gate³⁹ for the fear that they might see their wives perform the ritual. The wife/ mother than would take the crabs, break the limbs and placing them facing each other covered the crabs and their limbs with the wet mud that was brought. She would then climb the biggest granary and burry the lump in the paddy. It was believed that as the crabs dig hole under the ground that heap up mud, they put the crab in their barn wishing that their paddy might also heap up.⁴⁰ The mother would then invoke the Spirit that her grains might never be over as that of so and so, mentioning the name of one who has plenty of grain in the village.

She would also call upon the spirit to come in, that her family should never fall short of food grains. After the mother had buried the crabs in the paddy she would get down and taking the choicest cooked meat and the best wine she would pour it out near the barn/ *chum* and would chant that the grain would not be out of stock. She continued this ritual/ sacrifice till dawn which was called *Chum Zangkhangawor*. With the completion of the offerings she would close the lid of all the barns believing, if they don't close it the *Mawon* (spirit) may go away from her barn. Then she takes out a bushel of paddy from the biggest barn and would dry it in the oven. The dried paddy was than pounded and cooked with the water drawn from the pond. A woman of modest character would first collect the water from the pond on the day of *Chumpha* and the villagers would draw after she finished drawing. It was with this fresh water the first rice was cooked.

Chumsin Sakhami: A daughter-in-law who had just come to the family was not permitted to take out paddy from grannary. *Chumpha* festival was also considered as a time of handing over the responsibility of mother to the newly married daughter-in-law of the family by the mother-in-law. This was called *Chumsin Sakhami*.⁴¹ In some cases if the family was well to do, a ceremony was performed to hand over the charge of the chum. Normally this ceremony was performed a few days before the *Chumpha* festival. For the ceremony a pig of about a year old and a cow/ bull were killed to feast with the neighbours. The animals killed for the ceremony was called *Chumsinsa*.

When there was severe drought people would invoke the spirit of heaven to shower rain. To please the spirit the villagers baked bread known as *Zingkan Khamui*

Sakhami where *zingkan* means drought, *khamui* means bread and *sakhami* means to make. Every household, in the name of the female members, would bake bread about fifty numbers and offer them to the spirit. This festival was observed so that the spirit might shower rain and that the crops placed in the ground might not dry out for short of water.

Mawon Khamui Kasa: If any of the village physician⁴² happened to see in a dream that the crops planted for the year would not ripen and that the village would have famine then he/ she would inform the chief about the dream. The chief would then inform the village announcer/crier to announce to the villagers that the village community would observe a spirit's bread baking day. Every household, in the name of the female members, would bake bread, five each, and offer them to the spirit invoking her that they might have good harvest the current year. There was no specific time to observe this festival nor was it observed every year. It was observed only when any of the village physicians had had a dream.

b).*Shimlui Kameo*: As discussed above, every village had their own *kameos* (spirits), and every household, field, jungle, sea, stone, practically every place had spirit of its own. In general the spirits of the said are called *Shimlui Kameo* where *shim* means house, *lui* means field and *kameo* means spirit. Though the Tangkhuls believed in the existence of one Supreme God they did not feel the necessity to worship or make sacrifices directly to Him. They believe that wherever there was man there was also a spirit and thus make sacrifices to the spirit for its help and protection. These spirits were

appeared at different times round the year like *Shim kasa*, *Maran Kasa*, *Manei*, *Kashong Kahao*, *Kaphani*, *Meishimi*, *Mei Phani*, *Lamkhavao*, *Shar Kasa*, *Harkhari*, *Kharan*, *Har Katun*, *Nao katun*, *Khana kasa*, *Mingpho Kasang*, *Suikaham*, *Sharana_sei rungkaphok*, *Khanong kasa*, *kappa kasa*, etc.

Construction of a house is known as *Shimkasa*. There were two types of houses: i) *Lengchengshim* and ii) *Ngashishim*. Only the royalties and the rich could afford to construct a *Lengchengshim* as it involved a huge expenditure. A man could not simply construct a *Lengcheng* house because he was rich. He had to observe various omens from the nature and also take omens from dreams.⁴³ After observing all these and only if the omens were favourable then he could announce that he would be constructing a house. Construction of *Lengchen* house required a lot of ritual performance which was performed by the village priest.

Construction of *Ngashishim* involved lesser expenditure as compared to that of *Lengchengshim* as it required only a pig to be killed to feed the people who helped in constructing the same.

Whichever type of house a man may construct he was always helped by the relatives and also the whole village community. On completion of the construction the close relatives gather together to install the hearth (consisting of three stones). On installing the new hearth all the old fires were put off and a new fire was kindled with pieces of wood (frictional fire-making)⁴⁴ and killing either a fowl or a pig a ceremony was performed.

The Tangkhul Nagas were known for their generosity of heart. The rich or the more prosperous people did not hoard their wealth. They would share their surplus to the whole village. This sharing was done by way of throwing feast – *Maran Kasa*/ Feast of Merit (redistribution of wealth). In this feast male members of the family and their relatives took an active part. For all those who took part in the arrangements of the feast certain taboos were to be observed involving restraining conjugal relationships with their wives. This taboo was observed more strictly by the man who intended to perform *Maran*. He not only abstain conjugal relationship but also perform some rites and divinations with the village priest to observe the omen and consult the spirit. He would make public declaration of his intent only when the omens and consultation of the spirit were positive. Once the declaration was made, then come the months long preparation of food, drinks and meat was done. Though the actual feast began only with the felling of the tree, a month long preparation was done- preparation of the rice beer/ wine and all sorts of drinks.⁴⁵ Women took active role in brewing the drinks.

On the day of the *Maran* a huge selected tree (or stone), carefully chosen for the purpose was felled. (This tree was usually in “Y” shape, carved into designs and was erected in front of the house called *Tarung*) After the felling and shaping the post it was usually tied into ropes to be carried home. Sometimes it took days and weeks to bring the post or the stone home as often the post was from a far distant forest. If anything was needed from home then a child was sent, for it was taboo for a man to go home. Then the able male populations of the village would drag it home. In all these activities of felling the tree, carving and dragging nobody could get injured in the process. If

anyone happened to get so it was a belief that someone in the congregation had defiled the ceremony. This defilation is called “*Sharkakharā*” or “*Sharkasho*”.

After the post was dragged home then the village priest would take the blood of the animals sacrificed and would smear to the post and then it was erected in front of the house of the donor. In this ceremony the king or the *Awunga* of the village was invited and offered the prominent seat and served the best choice of meat and wine. The entire population of the village was also invited for the feast.

All these while women folk of the village actively participated with much enthusiasm. They were the ones who supplied food and drinks to the men folk in the course of dragging until it was brought home. During the dragging of the post much noise was made in rhythm called “*Khamahon*”. It was taboo for women to participate in rhythmic cry of the men folk in such occasion.

After the feast was ended the remains of the animals killed, head, was cooked for the women folk known as *Pareikom*. They would drink the *Khorkhan*, dregs of the drinks.

A festival, *Kashong kahao* was observed to protect the crops from insects and pests, soon after the plantation was over. This festival was observed only if the cultivation was completed in time i.e. before the end of July and not if otherwise. The village priest performed the ceremony outside the village gate by sacrificing a fowl to the deity of fruitfulness who grew and protected the crops from any danger. After the

ceremony of the priest a young man who was physically, mentally and morally good was chosen to cut down a tree by a single stroke. The omen for the harvest of the year was taken from this felling of the tree. If the young man felled the tree well, it was considered to be good omen and if he could not fell by a single stroke it was considered to be bad omen. Thus a very careful selection was made while selecting the young man to fell the ceremonial tree.

Kaphani is another occasion where *Shimlui kameo* was remembered. *Kaphani* was not a festival. It was announced all of a sudden by the village crier with the consent of the village headman that no one should go to field to work or carry out their normal work in the field the following day. This announcement and observation of genna took place when someone from the village was killed, when someone got killed falling from a tree, when someone committed suicide in the village etc. This genna was observed that such an incident should not happen in the village thereafter.

The village priest would make a sacrifice outside the village gate when fire breaks out in the village and burned down houses, be it by mistake, out of jealousy or out of enmity, etc. This act of sacrifice for smothering the fire was known as *Meishimi*. The sacrifice to the deity was worth a pig and a vessel of wine (untapped) shelled out either by the victim (whose house is burned) or the one who set the fire. It was a taboo to punish or impose fine on the culprit in such an event or accident.

On hearing the news of fire in other village the neighbouring villages observe a day's genna in their villages and this is known as *Mei Phani*. On the day of genna no

one would go out of the village to work in the field, every household would throw water mosses on their rooftops and the walls and some would tie fresh plantain stems on the walls praying to the deity of the house to keep it cool and moist.

When someone became ill believing it to be caused by the Kameo of a place, the village priest would take two fowls and would make a sacrifice at the village gate. He would perform the ceremony with one fowl and he would leave the other alive, invoking the *kameo* to set free, the bound soul/ spirit of the person who is sick. This was called *Lamkhavao*.

Shar kasa was another type of sacrifices and offerings. When someone acquired a new field, he would make sacrifices worth a dog or a pig in order to please the new spirit. Sometimes even if the field was an old one but produced a poor harvest then the owner would make a sacrifice to please the spirit. Besides, if someone from the family of the owner of the field had had a bad dream and someone felt ill very often, then the owner would request the village priest to appease the spirit by making sacrifices worth a buffalo or a pig.

When there is a rumour about an epidemic the village priest would go to the village gate and tie the intestine (*Harkhari kharan*) of a fowl from one end of the gate post to the other end. This was done so that the *kameo* would not bring in the epidemic to the village.

It was taboo to enter a house where chicks were hatched from the eggs until an invocation was done. Usually the entrance of the house was blocked with a stick so that people would know entrance to the house was forbidden. Once the chicks were hatched, a child of a good health and good structure was called home to make an invocation so that the chicks might be as fruitful as the sparrows and so on. This was called *Har Katun*. The child would then perform it, holding a herb called *hanchang* in the hand and sprinkling water around. The child would then keep the leaves in the basket where chicks were contained.

Nao Katun: If a male child was born in a family, a boy was called to make the invocations and if a female child was born a girl was invited for the invocation. A fowl was sacrificed and the sacrificial meat was put in the plate and the plate was swung six (6) times for a male child and five (5) times for a female child. After that on the sixth day a male child was named and on the fifth day a female child was named.

Ear piercing or *Khana kasa* was widely practiced among the Tangkhul Nagas. Only the rich could afford a pig or buffalo for ear piercing of his son and the ordinary families would do it with a fowl and sticky rice. Only an elderly priest would carry out the ear piercing and it was taboo for others to carry out the task. Ear piercing of a child was done with much care for defiling might result in tearing away of the ears. There were three reasons for ear piercing: i) That the person might live, ii) That he might hear (that he might be bright) and iii) to be able to deck with ornaments.

The manner of address was an important custom and tradition among the Tangkhuls and normally it indicates one's social status within the clan and lineage. When all the elders of a lineage were dead and the nearest relative wanted to claim the name/ title (manner of address) he was required to kill a buffalo and throw a grand feast in the village making sacrifices to the deity which otherwise was not recognized and thus he could not claim the title.

The process for acquiring the new status is called *Mingpho Kasang*. *Mingpho* is a combination of two words where '*ming*' means name and '*pho*' means address and *Kasang* means to put. That is to say, to address someone by prefixing an address with his/ her name which shows his/her status in the lineage and also in the village for instance Luinam may be addressed Amei Luinam or Achui Luinam or Achei Luinam etc.

When a gossip or rumour of a person was spread, irrespective of the matter, it was considered bad and it was believed to affect the person adversely by way of ill health leading to a short life span. Therefore, a fowl was killed and the feather of it was put in a winnower which the priest winnowed, symbolizing the winnowing away of the negative effect of the rumour. This was called Suikaham. Suikaham is derived from two words where '*sui*' means gossip (attached to someone particular) and '*kaham*' means to winnow.

The death of a person, the *Thisham*, *Maran kasa*/ Feast of Merit and such other feasts and occasions were worth atleast a buffalo or more. For any sacrificial buffalo

killed on those mentioned occasions the village priest was the first person to spear the animal and the others would join him. That was for a simple reason that the harassment of the living animal by the living men attracted the anger of the deity and that by the stroke of the priest the fury of the deity would befall on the priest. The opening of the ceremony by the priest was called *Sharana sei rungkaphok*. Numerous omens were observed while slaying the buffalo, in the manner of struggle before its death, manner of falling and lying on the ground, the direction of its head and so on.

The belief in spirit naturally gave rise to the belief in the existence of human spirits. The illness of the subject was due to the spirits keeping captive of the subject's spirit for intrusion into the spirit's abode, and only by releasing the human spirit from the clutches of the spirit by proper propitiation that the illness would subside. The belief also gave rise to the world after death which will be discussed below. There were no female priest but the physicians could be either male or female or both. It was believed that the spirit (*kameo*) was with them and inspired and directed them to give directives to the families of the sick to make sacrifices of animals like dog, pig, buffalo etc. according to the requirement. According to their faith, some experienced relief while others didn't which they interpret it as "the *kameo* was determined to take away the soul/spirit of the sick".

During head hunting raid and war there was always one person who was incharge of observing omens with the help of *kappa*⁴⁶. He would do it before going for the raid and during the raid. During such times all that he said was accepted without any

challenge. On the day he performed the ritual he would not permit anyone from leaving the village, he would stop the women folk from fetching water in the morning and also forbided them to touch and carry the winnower around. The whole village was genna on the day the omen was consulted. Everyone stayed inside the village and no one would go to the field or carry out their daily work.

c)**Kokto**: Tangkhuls believed in the existence of the other world or the life after death (*kazeiram*)⁴⁷ and *Kokto* was the head in that world. All who died went to live in his presence. *Kokto* was known as the cruelest spirit they ever knew and therefore, at the event of death and during *Kathi Kasham* all the rituals were performed carefully with perfection and thoroughness. They fear that failure to carry out the rituals with perfection would attract the anger and displeasure of *kokto*. It was a belief that all that was gifted on the event of dead was taken to the other world or the world of the dead and when he (spirit of the deceased) came in the presence of *kokto*, presented him with the shawl meant for him. The top shawl was never torn as it was meant for *Kokto*. The shawls meant for the deceased were with tear on the edge because if it was torn *kokto* would not accept a torn shawl for himself. *Kokto* was appeased in different manners and occasions like, *Kathi mahon*, *kathi kachifa*, *Chikhur Kharui*, *Thikhong Kharung*, *Wonra kasa*, *Wonyaithing kashun*, *Kathi kasham*, *Wonra khamathai*, *Chikhur khamathai*, *Kazei kazang*, etc.

It was a tradition to dance on the death of a person (male) and this was called *Kathi Mahon* where *Kathi* means death and *Mahon* means dance. It was believed that

there was life after death, as lively and natural as the life on earth, carrying out all the activities. The notion of prestige, rich and poor continue to be felt in the life after death. It was for this reason that the living dedicate dance for the subject on the occasion that he might lead a prestigious life after he had gone to the land of the death. There were four types of *Kathi Mahon*, they were: i) On the death of any male dance was performed (*Kathi mahon*), ii) *Zeipao Kasang*, iii) *Long Mahon*, and iv) *Thisham Mahon*.

The burial of the rich were very expensive requiring four- five or even up to ten buffaloes while ordinary villager managed a cow or a pig. *Kathi kachifa* means the burial of the dead. Even if the deceased did not have one his nearest relation would bear the expenses for his burial. The animals were slain before the grave was dug. It was believed that all that was gifted on the occasion of death was taken along with him to the world of dead (*Kazeiram*). It was for this reason when one grew old he would prepare well (like domestic animals, clothes, etc.) all that he wanted to take with him when he would die.

Shortly after the death, the body was washed, dressed and was placed on a bed where friends and relatives would come with gifts of salt, chili etc., and number of songs were sung. When it was time for burial the body was dressed with head gear, if the deceased the was male, and also dance was perform after which a loud cry by someone saying 'let this be the end' followed by the crowd saying ' *hoooh...huih*', 'o...o...o' '*hoooh...aoh! hoooh...huih!*' which was somewhat like 'Amen'. After that the corpse was placed in the tomb with all the gifts for the journey to *Kazeiram*. A male dog

and a spear were also placed if the deceased was male and if female a *Zeithing* (walking stick made of steel or iron) and a *Tansop* (a basket made of wild bamboo used by women when they go to field) were also placed in the tomb along with the body. All the clothes given to the deceased were torn at the edge except the one meant for *Kokto*. Before the corpse was actually placed in the grave an elderly person would descend into the grave with a pine torch, and twirling it round beseeches an ancestors of the dead to come and fetch the deceased on his way to "*Kazeiram*" saying 'o... so and so is coming, (mentioning the name of the deceased) o... granny, grandpa and everyone come and welcome him/ her.' After that the corpse was taken inside the tomb and all the belongings of the deceased and then finally closed the tomb with stones and earth and a torch of pine would be burnt and placed on the tomb.

It was taboo that anyone would be in the house after the dead body was taken out for burial until every ritual was completed. With the corpse carrying out of the house the fire in the hearth was put out and the ashes cleared, and on entering, fresh fire was brought from another house near by. On returning to the house after the burial ceremony, a male member would lead home beating a tin to frighten away if there be any bad spirit lurking inside the house. On entering the house the family would look for any footprint on the ashes leveled to see if there were more bad lucks or deaths to be expected. If there were none it would mean a favourable sign.

The Tangkhuls had the belief that the dead people, long after they were buried and gone, longed to have the experience of the brightness of the world again. For this,

family graves were opened up after a considerably long gap (when the corpse was expected to have decomposed) on the occurrence of death, and the same was used for the other person. On opening the grave, the bones were collected in a shawl (either *Changkhom* or *Luirim*) and the skull was washed with the best wine called *Zamshei Vaitei*. This was known as *Chikhur kharui*. The bones were put on one side of the grave along with a gourd of wine and gourd cup and some parcels of salt and chili as it was customary to send parcels to their ancestors and to their near ones on the occasion of death. When a great number of these bones were collected, and there was not sufficient room for a fresh corpse, they were taken out of the tomb; and when the fresh corpse had been buried and covered to the depth of a few feet, the bones were thrown in to fill up the grave.⁴⁸

When someone died, his spirit would remain in the house until he was finally given a send off on the occasion of *Thisham* (feast for the dead held once every year). During the period, offerings would be made to the deceased at every meal in the plate he had used when he was alive and placed the plate on the deceased's seat. This was called *Thikhong Kharung*. The deceased's spirit was treated as if he was still alive. The food was then taken away when it was expected to have been consumed. The dogs would feast on it later.

When someone who was wealthy died, a platform or *Wonra* (a resting place) at a good viewing point was usually constructed in commemoration of him. It was constructed for the dead by the living that they might rest and have a good view of the

landscape/field when they move about. When such platform was built, at every harvest (for six years) every woman would pour (offer) out some share of their wine on their way back from field. This ritual was performed for the fear that the dead being in the form of spirit might harm the living, if he was not quenched.

The resting platforms constructed at the death of some great men were maintained well; weeding, cleaning etc. once in a year, consecutively for six years after which might be relaxed. A pig or a calf was killed for weeding the *Wonra* for the first few years and they managed with a fowl for the remaining years.

After the harvest has been gathered in and all instruments in connection with the same had been put aside the *Wonyaithing* was erected. For the purpose the rich kill a cow, the rest manage with pigs and dogs and for those whose children had died, eggs were boiled. The village priest was called in for the performance of the rituals in individual homes that had had deaths that year. After the rituals were performed all friends who came forward to help in erecting the "*Wonyaithing*" were distributed meat and beer. They then erect the structure.

Chikhur Khamathai: The living never neglected their responsibility towards the dead, weeding of the grave yard or *Chikhur khamathai* was another such. The grave yard was never neglected totally. They kept weeding year after year at specific time of the year i.e. January. This weeding was carried out for three days which were also observed as festivals though no special significance was attached to it. The priest performed the ritual and made sacrifices with a fowl and rice beer.

Kathi Kasham: A common farewell was given to the spirits of the dead once in a year known as *kathi Kasham*. This was a very important festival for the dead celebrated during the month of January for a period of ten to twelve days. Rev. William Pettigrew⁴⁹ and S. Kanrei⁵⁰ had given detail elaborations on the festival. Among all the rituals the rituals performed during *Thisham* was observed with much care and rigidity. All that a man had amassed wealth during his life time was given to him when he died either on the day of death or at *Thisham* by means of killing the animals, performing dances (Performing dance on the occasion of dead was quite an expensive item. It was performed at the request of the deceased by his sister's husband's clan members. These dances were performed exclusively by the males. It was taboo for women to participate in dancing on such occasion.), clothing etc. Even if the deceased did not insist on taking everything of his wealth, it was the responsibility of the family not to send him empty handed. If the deceased was dissatisfied with the wealth he was sent with to *Kazeiram*, his spirit would inflict illness on the living. The swan song of the deceased was observed/ carried out with much care and honour.

There was a belief that if the deceased loved/fond of someone when alive, may continue so even after his death by making the person weak. This was called *Kazei Kazang*. When someone experienced that then a fortune teller known as "*Khunong*" was called upon to dialogue. The *khunong* would then make a sacrifice of a fowl and rice beer spreading a bamboo mat on the floor. He would lie flat on the mat with a fowl and would remain so for sometime, breathless (They say that he dies and along with him the fowl also dies). After about half an hour when the *Khunong* was about to come back to

live the fowl came back to live ahead of him and made some sound followed by the *Khunong*. His body being stiff he was helped with some massages to sit up, and then he would narrate the dialogue he had at Kazeiram. He would give the reason why the person in poor health was so, that the subject was enchained because he was loved much or that the deceased was not happy with him/her, etc. and now with his intervention being released.

d) Belief/ Omen:

Tangkhuls believed that man could not relate to gods face to face, because of which there were various ways of communication with gods. They believed that the gods and goddesses spoke to them through nature. They observed signs and symbols from the nature to decipher the will of the gods for them. Some of the most common ones were:

i) *Kapa Khayang*: *Kapa* is the chipped wild bamboo, out of which omens were observed and *khayang* means to see.

ii) *Harkho Khayang*: *Harkho* means legs of fowls. Omens from the feet of the fowls were observed from the position of the feet at the time of consulting the omen .i.e by strangulating the fowls either the right or left foot crossing over the other. If the right leg crossed over the left leg the omen was considered to be good and so on.

iii) *Harra Khayang*: Omens observed from eggs are called *harra khayang* where *harra* means eggs. This omen was observed especially at the time of selecting the site for jhum cultivation.

iv) *Raihai Kakapeo*: Omens connected with head hunting. This omen was observed before going for head hunting raid.

v) *Makho Kazang* : Omens connected with fertility. *Makho* was like an altar where a pot with a lid was placed either on tree top or underground. *Makho* was located usually outside the village gate. This omen was observed by the village priest once in a year. He observed before the village chief set off for sowing of seeds followed by the villagers. No seeds were sown or planted before consulting this omen.

Within a hundred years of missionary work in the Tangkhul area, the traditional beliefs and practices were replaced by Christianity bringing an end to Tangkhul animism. Christianity relieved the Tangkhuls of the clutches of the evil spirits and the fear of the evil spirits. The American Baptist Missionary reduced hundreds of Tangkhul village dialects into one single common language. Besides, it was the Missionary who gave the Tangkhuls a written form of language following the Roman script.

The early opening of the mission schools attracted the commoners to Christianity. But the inimical attitude of the missionaries on the consumption of rice beer created strong opposition from the masses which slowed down the process of conversion. The arrival of the Catholic Missionaries in 1952 which was more

accommodative to the Tangkhuls' culture of drinking rice beer and other brewed drinks was more acceptable to the then non- converts. The conversion continued until the whole Tangkhul population became Christians as late as the present decade.

In the initial period, active Church members were the most educated people as Christians were the forerunners in getting western education. But Christianity spread faster than education and many Tangkhul Christians began to absorb the tradition of the Western missionaries and slowly relegated their traditions as anti Christian. With the spread of western education there emerged educated elite who have come to feel the loss of their tradition and culture resulting to social degeneration and moral degradation. They realized the need to revive their lost treasure by way of gathering knowledge and literature of the pre- Christian era. The documentation of the *Tangkhul Festivals* by the Tangkhul Theological Association (comprised only of Baptist Mission) was one such attempt apart from the many research being conducted on the traditional Tangkhul social structure.

The Baptist Mission from the very beginning (in Tangkhul area) had been more liberal in incorporating women in their mission work as was exemplified by the very participation of Mrs. Alice Pettigrew in the Mission of her Husband William Pettigrew. The slowness in the spread of education and the attitude of the parents towards their girl child in education were the two main factors besides others that hampered women to become leaders in the church. It was only in 2005 that one Pamleiphi Horam ⁵¹ of Namrei village became the first Tangkhul woman to become a full fledged Pastor in the

Baptist Mission. Including Miss Pamleiphi there are now two women pastors, the other being A.S. Khathingla ⁵² of Longpi village, in the whole Tangkhul region. Women assuming responsibilities in the church has some resemblance in the pre-Christian era where women performed the role of priestess in the *Chumphā* festival.

Economic Institution

I

Agriculture

Agriculture was the mainstay of the Tangkhuls. It was subordinated by domestication of animals, handicrafts, weaving, pottery, trade and commerce. Prior to the introduction of the terraced cultivation, the slashing down of the jungle for cultivation was widely practiced. Each year, the chief and the *Hangva* (members of the village council) decided upon the site of jhum land for the year's cultivation. No other part of the village land other than the agreed ranges or stretches of land should be cleared for the year's cultivation by any family. It was not strictly for the fear of the chief and the councilors but for the fear of the *Kameo* (spirit) of the site, whose signs of acceptance for the year's cultivation had been consulted and another reason being animals and birds. When the jhum land was wider, cultivated by many, it was easier for them to scare the animals and birds as the borders were shared, unlike in the isolated jhum, where one had to guard all the four corners of the borders.

Before the site for the year's cultivation had been decided, the omen consultation (*Hara khayang*) was carried out at the intended site either by the chief of the village or the owner of the land. If, after the necessary rituals, the omens were positive then general announcement was made to the villagers. After the announcement was made the range was then publicly opened. Each household head would select a plot for his family and that would be demarcated from the others by a small stream or other natural or artificial dividing lines or indicators like big trees or fallen trunks etc. As the hill men were familiar with the village territory, boundary lines might also be simply expressed in words. The clearing of the jungles was started by late December. After the trees were fallen, it was left to dry, to be burnt in late February or early March, which is followed by clearing of the remains and preparation of the seedling. The cultivation of the whole village is affected by the village taboo. The *Awunga* or the chief of the village had the rights and powers to perform the rite of the taboo. He performed the rituals and offered sacrifices to the spirit for a good harvest. Only after he had performed the rites and rituals and sowed the ceremonial seedlings, the cultivation of the village for the year began. Both men and women work in the field. Even a child starts working at his/her tender age. In the days of yore, all abled men were engaged in the defense of the village as constant inter-village war necessitated them to safeguard their village and its populace and thus women and children alone worked in the field. But during normal situation they all had to work together except in hunting and other activities where women could not take part. While men engaged themselves in constructing jhum huts the women folk busied themselves in seedling. The seedling work was and still is now,

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over by April or beginning of May. By June the first round of weeding begins. Weeding is done two times a year- one, in the months of June/July when paddy grows to the height of ten to twelve inches; and the second weeding is done in the months of August-September when the plants are about to bear fruit.⁵³

Though the Tangkhuls practiced both jhum and terrace cultivation as it is still done even in the present day, these practices are not evenly distributed all over the Tangkhul inhabited area. Terrace cultivation is practiced more in western and northern Tangkhul villages whereas jhum cultivation is mostly carried out in eastern and southern Tangkhul. In certain villages of eastern and southern Tangkhul, terrace cultivation is far more extensive than jhum cultivation, and in certain other villages, both jhum and terrace cultivations are practiced on equal basis. Some villages are fully dependent on jhum cultivation only. Irrespective of the pattern of cultivations done the harvest is normally good. Even when the crops failed due to natural calamity they did not have the problem of sustenance as they have adopted the method of self existence and survival and consequently, there is no begging in the Tangkhul society. The Tangkhul economy was a self-sufficient one.

With the completion of the first round of weeding they immediately shift their work to the terrace land for transplantation of the seedlings. This is the hardest and the busiest season for the Tangkhuls as the plantation work is to be completed within a period of four to five weeks' time. The entire paddy plantation must be over by mid July if not it would be late. This is the time where the agricultural partnership known as

Yarthot (same age group) is most popular (the significance of *Yarthot* has become much less now), besides during the digging of the terraced plot and in the jhum land. Youngsters of the same age, both boys and girls, of the village or locality in cases of big village work together in their fields by rotation. They continue the rotation of work till the field of each member is done. In group working, the work is accompanied with singing and producing a harmonious tone called *khamahon*. There are different songs of work depending on the nature of the work, like there are songs for tilling the ground, songs for transplantation, songs for harvest etc. Singing and healthy joke of laughter minimizes the fatigue. *Yarthot* is not practiced only by the grown ups but even the married women practiced. The team working and the nature of rotation are the same as that of the youngster. The married men as they were involved in the village war and defense did not have *yarthot* other than just a few days' exchange of labour depending on the requirements of their labour and the nature of work like felling of trees and arrangements of water canalling system for terraced wet field. Agricultural work partnership was and still is, a reciprocal give and take form of agricultural work. The relationship among the agricultural work group in the agricultural land was governed by mutual adaptation and perfect co-operation.

Rice is the most important food crop of the Tangkguls. Besides rice many other crops like corn, soya bean, sesame, millet, job's tear, millet and a variety of vegetables are grown. The mode of production in the jhum area was and still is following, the primitive system of jhum cultivation because of which the level of production is comparatively (time space) low. Nonetheless, jhum cultivation had provided the ethos

necessary for the villagers to experience the feeling of oneness resulting from the common bond derived from the sharing of the village land in a uniform way. The cycle of the jhum cultivation was usually fifteen to twenty years but now due to the growth of population and the liberal exploitation of the forest, the cycle has been reduced to ten years in average. The villagers did not return to the same plot within the jhum period when they had sufficient forest to cut.

In the past, as did in the sowing of the seeds, the *Awunga* offered the sacrifices to the *Phunghui* for bountiful harvest, for the entire village community followed by every household after which the mass harvest began. The harvest begins by the middle of October and finishes by late November or early December.

Tangkhus had surplus agricultural products and regardless of social status people could perform feasts of merit in which wealthy men fed the entire village population for days. Rice, meat and rice beer and wine were served to all alike; and the widows, orphans and poor people could satisfy their hunger and thirst.

Though agriculture in the traditional period did not directly result in the accumulation of wealth, but the pressure of agriculture was so great that without first having a substantial position in agricultural wealth, it was almost impossible to pursue other sources of wealth. Wealth in paddy and other daily essentials became indirectly connected with accumulation of wealth since the store of food and other consumption goods allowed one to pursue economic gains in other spheres which were intrinsically related to the ritual ceremonies, the ceremonies of prestige or honour. The accumulated

wealth may be redistributed by way of ceremonial feast or feast of merit (*Maran Kasa*) as a show of pecuniary ability. Because of this the release of accumulated wealth in a conspicuous manner was usually accompanied by a corresponding raise in the social status. In fact, any raise in the social status must be attained by conspicuous redistribution of wealth through the giving of ceremonial feasts. Durable material goods such as spears and ornaments were highly cherished and regarded as the possessions of only wealthy families, and the possessions of these valuables accrued a higher rank in the society to the possessors, but it did not amount to attaining prestigious position in the society as a whole. Thus, the possession of wealth might give one social respect and esteem in the village, but outside the village this wealth might not be recognized as a show of prestigious position and the owner might not be accorded a higher rank at all.

Today, agriculture continues to be the main occupation of the Tangkhuls and still plays an important role in the social and economic life of the Tangkhuls in the interior villages and more so in places where only *jhumming* is practiced. But with the dwindling yields of the land people have become less attached to agricultural work and look for commercial openings offered by the various programmes of development planning under the government of Manipur. But Ukhrol, the district headquarters have a semi independent economic life of their own based on cash economy. The increasing pressure of economic hardship as a result of influx of population and the decline of agricultural products forces the town dwellers and the villagers to enter a mad race for economic supremacy. Earlier, the nearby villages of the Ukhrol town were the suppliers of the consumption goods in the town, but in recent years these villages have failed to

meet the needs of the town and the goods are being imported from Imphal, the capital of Manipur. Besides, the recent flow of developmental fund from New Delhi in a way has increased the purchasing capacity of the people but that result in spiraling up of prices and making the cost of living all the more, dearer. The inflow of the fund has made the Tangkhuls occupationally differentiated society, but only a small section of the population are benefited from this change and the masses remain in deplorable condition.

Apart from agriculture on which the Tangkhul economy rests, domestication of animal also forms a part of their economy. Animal husbandry is commonly for consumption as the Tangkhuls are fond of meat as other Naga tribes are. The domestic animals of the Tangkhuls are cows, bulls, buffaloes, mithuns, pigs, dogs, cats and fowls (chicken). Fowls had been used for omen consultation at the time of migration, in search of a place for settlement. Every family has to rear their own livestock for ready availability of meat in times of entertaining a guest who may come unexpectedly. Besides, earlier, the festivities that used to fall round the year required rearing of animals as all kinds of festivals entailed killing of a number of buffaloes, pigs etc. where dogs and fowls were not usually counted.

Animals especially cattles were used as a unit of value before the emergence of the cash economy. The bride price at the time of marriage paid by the groom's family to the parents of the bride was paid in terms of cattle head; the strength of a Feast of Merit offered by rich man was measured by the number of cattles killed; purchase of field was

also measured in terms of cattle. Besides, criminal were fined in terms of livestock as punishment according to the severity of the crimes committed. Hence animal husbandry played an important role in the economy of the Tangkhuls, and this served the commercial purposes of the people as well.

Majority of the domestic affairs were in the hands of the mother of the house in the Tangkhul society as it is today. As domestication of animals falls within the domain of the house, it is the womenfolk who bore the burden of looking after the domestic animals besides her other activities. She feeds and looks the pigs, poultry and cattles. Animal husbandry was and is still widely practiced by the Tangkhuls as part of their economy. Livestocks are converted into cash after the introduction of the cash economy. At present, full grown buffalo costs about forty-five to fifty thousand of rupees and about fifteen to twenty thousands of rupees for a full grown pig at present. A full grown fowl costs about five hundred to six hundred rupees.

Handicraft is another supplementary economy of the Tangkhuls. Their wood work, basketry and mat weaving and other domestic articles show the rich culture in handicrafts. Wood- carvings like wooden drums for storing water, rice beer, giant pounding tables and wooden plates are made by the Tangkhuls with excellence. Besides, bamboo and cane are used for making baskets and mats of high quality. Bamboo and cane are used for making ornaments and decorative articles like head-gears, helmets and leggings. Before the iron nails were introduced in construction of

houses bamboos were used for construction work for tying and thatching the roofs and nailing of the wood planks.

The art of pottery had been developed in Tangkhul since remote past. T. C. Hodson remarked: ⁵⁴ “Three clans of Hundung and the village of Nunbi make earthen pots from beds of clay close to their villages”. He continued further: “They make vessels of all sizes. These vessels are devoid of any but simplest ornamentation, but are, nevertheless, strong and well-suited to the requirements of the purchasers and command a large sale over the whole of Tangkhul country.” The village of Hundung (now Hungpung) has lost this art of making earthen pots but the Longpi village continues to make earthen utensils. For instance, one Machihan Sasa of Longpi village has won several state and national awards for his skill in pottery.

The Tangkhuls weave a variety of cloths extensively. Weaving was exclusively the occupation of women among the Tangkhul Nagas. They make varieties of shawls, loin cloths for both men and women, cloth/shawl for men and women, for *Awunga* and for the *Pipa* of the clan etc. Of the various types of Tangkhul shawls, *Changkhom* is worn by the womenfolk, young boys and girls. *Haora* is worn by the married men and the unmarried males who are well-grown up. *Thanggan* shawl is worn by the elders and the pipas of the clans as a sign of honour and position. But *Thanggan* shawl is no longer popular in the recent decade and is slowly over taken by the popularity of the latest design called *Chingchui Kachon* or Centennial *Kachon*. *Chingchui* or *Chingjaroi* is the name of a village in the northern Tangkhul and *kachon* means shawl. In fact this shawl

is a modification of the original *Haora kachon*. The modification was done by the people of Chingjaroi and so the shawl is named after the village. It is also called Centennial shawl because it was designed at the time of the celebration of the Centenary of the Baptist Mission in Tangkhul area.

Another shawl called *Seikui Kachon* or *Raivat Kachon* has become popular in the present Tangkhul society. This shawl is not very modern in its design and origin as its popularity. It is said that the shawl has its origin in Marem village. A popular myth narrates that the Meitei *Maharajah* and the British with their contingents came to Marem village, drained dry the small lake called *Palang Ngayi* that was within the village and excavated a golden bowl and the *Seikui kachon* from the lake. The *Palang* Lake still exist today though the water of the lake dries up during the dry season. Because the *Seikui kachon* was found or excavated in a mysterious manner the Meiteis believed that the shawl was designed/ drawn by the spirit of the lake and therefore called the shawl as *Laiyekphi* where *Lai* means spirit, *yek* means to draw and *phi* means shawl. The shawl, as it was taken away from the village to the Meitei valley, was manufactured by the Meiteis ever since and the Tangkhuls used to buy from them. Though it was made by the Meiteis, to this date they do not claim the originality of the shawl to be theirs. They refer to this shawl as *Haophi* which means tribe shawl which is normally understood as the Tangkhul shawl. To this date the name remains unchanged. It is said that weaving of the *Laiphi* or *Laiyekphi* was a monopoly of one Meitei clan. The shawl was worn only by the wife of the village chief among the Tangkhuls. As wearing of the shawl indicated the status of the wearer, ordinary people would not even

dare to use it. Moreover, many people could not afford it as the shawl was expensive and not readily available in their country as it was an imported item from the Meitei kingdom. In the days of yore, the design and drawing of the shawl was not woven but was drawn, using colours. With the improvements in the methods and techniques of weaving among the Tangkhuls, they have been able to weave the shawl; and in the recent decades, the design of the shawl has been successfully woven or embroidered and this makes the shawl more durable. The shawl has gained popularity in recent years as it is manufactured by the Tangkhuls now and it is easily available at a reasonable prices and restriction on the use of the shawl being relaxed

Weaving being an indoor activity could be carried out all through the year. Nonetheless, cloth manufacture was done in the intervals of agricultural work. Intensive weaving was carried out after the harvest. Usually a girl starts learning the art of weaving from a very young age of four or five years and by the time she becomes a teenager she develops the expertise in the art and is in a position to meet her needs and supplement the family income by selling the cloths she has made. In recent years there have been some improvements in the techniques of weaving which has made the process of making easier and faster. In terms of quality the new technique has not been able to prove superior to the old method of loin loom. People still prefer the cloth made from the loin loom which is still costlier than the cloths made using the new technique.

As mentioned in the above pages, a Tangkhul village was a self-sufficient unit. The economic resources and products of the village could sustain its population. But

due to the availability of the product and the suitability of the soil and climate some villages produced some crops more than the others while other villages had abundance of certain goods which some villages lacked, and thus, the need for exchange of goods arose. This could only be fulfilled through trade and commerce, and therefore, inter-village trade and commerce was practiced among the Tangkhul villages since early days. There was a village fair known as *Leingapha* where buying and selling of goods was carried out. All kinds of economic goods and items, available in the village such as cloths, handicraft products, animals etc. were sold and bought in the village *leingapha*. According to Shimray⁵⁵ “the first known fair held was at Hongkha-Muja, a twin viilage at Ango-Ching (Patkoi-rang). All sorts of articles were brought from different directions and surrounding villages and made the *Leingapha* a grand fair. This was held every year. Selling and buying continued for days, even weeks; and along with it, there was merry-making with songs, dances and sports competition. Similar *Leinhapha* was held at Samsok kingdom where the fairs were more elaborate. According to tradition, it lasted for a month where hectic competitions in sports, virgin-dance, song completion etc. were conducted.” Before the emergence of cash they followed the barter system of exchange where they exchanged goods for other goods.

Today, the Tangkhuls still maintain the similar fair which is conducted every year by Hungpung village. The village fair is held at the onset of the harvest where food items from the new harvest is brought for sale and various games also formed a part of the fair. The fair is held usually for a day. As Hungpung village is close to Ukhrul, people from the town flock to the fair for buying and selling their goods, and many go

there to have a taste of the first fruits of the harvest. Both men and women take part in the fair actively, women bring their agricultural products and men bring their hunting games.

II

Economic Status of Women: Inheritance

The Tangkhul society is patrilineal as they count the line of descent always through the father. The office of the chief of the village, the position of the headship of the clan, lineage and family is always passed on to the male descendants. Succession and inheritance is transmitted to the male line. The eldest son gets the best and lion's share of the father's property. As each son gets married they get their share of property according to the order of birth (only of male). In this regard Hodson has remarked thus.⁵⁶

On the eldest son of a family marrying, the parents are obliged to leave their house with the remainder of their family, the son who has married taking two-thirds of the parent's property, not only of the household but of his father's fields, etc. Occasionally the parents are recalled and allowed to remain for sometime, but eventually they have to leave and the property is claimed and divided When the parents are well off they provide a house beforehand. On the marriage of another son the same process is repeated and may be again and again; but according to the usual custom the parents may, after the process has been repeated several times, return to the house of the eldest son.

The property of a Tangkhul usually consists of both moveable and immoveable possessions. The properties may be of ancestral or earned by themselves. The moveable properties include livestock, weapons, agricultural instruments, household articles, ornaments, musical instruments, etc. The immoveable properties comprise of land-homestead, forest, field- both wet terraced field and *jhum*- land, house, etc. By and large property is owned by a man. A woman may own only moveable property that is given to her at the time of her marriage which is in turn gifted away to her daughters at the time of their marriage. Women do not succeed to immoveable properties. In default of sons, the immoveable property goes to the brothers of the deceased, and the moveable property is distributed among the women.⁵⁷ A man enjoys absolute ownership over his properties though restricted to some extent with regard to immoveable properties. He can will away his immoveable properties that he has acquired by his hard work, to his daughters as well if she marries within the village. To cite an example let us take a case history: One Wonnui (Name changed) of Khangkhui village was the only daughter of Mr. Khumkhui (Name Changed). Mr. Khumkhui, apart from his inherited property had acquired some pieces of land (wet terraced field) but he had no male issue. By custom, on his death all his immoveable properties would automatically fall into the hands of his nearest relative (*Shimluikat*).⁵⁸ On his death bed he requested his *Shimluikat* that he should not take otherwise or create complications after his death and that he wished to gift away his field, Choitharvak, to his daughter Wonnui in his memory as she was married within the village. This was acceptable to the *Shimluikat* and till date the same field is being tilled by the daughter.

Generally, the immediate successor to the property of a man is his son. If he has no male issue his elder or younger brother's son inherits the property. If the deceased's children are still minors, his widow manages the property until the eldest son grows up and is able to shoulder the responsibility of the family. In case he has no son, it is the responsibility of the *Shimluikat* to look after the welfare of the widow and her children. It should, however, be noted that the widow and the children have the right to maintenance out of the deceased's property till all the daughters are married and the widow is dead. In case the widow dies before getting the daughters married, the daughters may either stay in their house or in the house of the *Shimluikat*. It is only after the deceased's daughters' marriage and after the death of the widow the *Shimluikat* inherits their property.

It may be interesting to note here that if a man dies leaving no male heir, sometimes, the *Shimluikat* becomes impatient to inherit the deceased's property and thus the widow and her daughters are deprived of their maintenance right. They are literally chased out of their house and are not even allowed to till the field. To cite an example let us see another case history: Mr. Shangmahing (name changed) of Ukhrul village died leaving behind his wife and three daughters. He had no male issue. The daughters were all minors at the time of his death. A few years after his death, the *Shimluikat* of Mr. Shangmahing wanted the widow and the daughters of the deceased to leave the house as he (*Shimluikat*) wanted to make use of the house for his son. He also warned them not to till the field anymore in the ensuing year (it was after the field was sowed/ planted). The deceased's widow and daughters having no where to go, requested

that they might be permitted to stay in the house and also allowed to cultivate the field. Their request was granted and thus they were allowed to stay in the house and cultivate the field for a few more years. And then the *Shimluikat* came again asking them to vacate the house for good and that the field (terraced) field would be given to his son as his share of inheritance as the son was married. As the widow and daughters had no were to go they stayed on only to realize one heartbreaking morning the roof top of their house being removed partially. With the help of the neighbours they sealed it back during the day. The next day came, the widow and the daughters left for the field and on their way back home they were denied entry into their house. Such is the plight of a widow with no male issue. Though the callousness of *shimluikats* may vary but such occurrences are not uncommon.

Tangkhal society being a patrilineal society, a girl at her marriage loses all her previous identity and assumes her husband's identity. The social status and identity of a woman is defined by the status and identity of her husband in the family and also in the society. When the husband is the head of the family she gets the ration but when the husband dies leaving no male issue she has no say in the family. It should be borne in mind that a man becomes eligible to represent the family in the village only after his marriage and when he becomes the head of the family. It does not matter how responsible and able he may be, he cannot represent his family if he is not a married man. There are some exceptions to this rule when it comes to the son of a widow who is just growing up and is only learning to assume the responsibilities of the family and

succeeding to the position of headship of the family. Under no circumstances a woman succeeds her husband's position, be it in the family or in the society.

As mentioned above, in a family every son inherits some property from their parents. But in some poor houses the younger brothers may not get sufficient property from the parents, in such cases the eldest son who inherits the lion's share takes the responsibility to pass on some immovable property to the younger brothers at the time of their marriage.

The illegitimate child (male) who has established his identity and recognition in a family is also eligible to claim his share from his father's property. But the status of the illegitimate child is lower than that of the legitimate children in a family. Thus, children born out of illicit relationship get their share of their parental property according to their status. The case is different when the illegitimate child is a girl. There is no custom to protect her from future insecurity. She has no right to claim a share in her father's property even after her identity/ genetic father is made known. She is left to the total care of her mother and at the mercy of her grandparents (mother's parents). The genetic mother takes full responsibility in bringing her up, to be an acceptable woman in the society someday.

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34. The Khunong, sometimes come back to life with some branches of a tree which he plucked on his way back from Kazeiram. Besides he also returns with his tobacco and water container empty, having shared with the spirits in Kazeiram.
35. This song was sung to the researcher by the elders of Hungpung and was translated by Mr.T.S. Angelus Shimreingam of Hungpung during my Field Work in 2006.
36. TTA's Research Document. 2007 (Private Circulation). *Tangkhul Festivals*. p 35

37. When there is genna in a house, usually a branch of a tree or some leaves is hung at the entrance to announce the people about the genna and restriction of entry to that house.
38. TTA's Research Document. 2007 (Private Circulation). *Tangkhul Festivals*. p 44
39. Ibid p. 44
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41. Ibid p. 46
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45. Tea, Coffee, Sugar, etc. were not known to the Tangkhul Nagas until the Western Missionaries came in the late 19th century.
46. Kapa is a thin chipped wild bamboo piece which was used for making baskets, mats, etc and this was also used for observing/ consulting omens.
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57. Ibid p. 103
58. The one who inherits the property of the nearest relative.

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER- 3

Status of the Married Educated Employed Women

A closer scrutiny of the socio- economic and educational background of the respondents are some of the important components required to identify the manner in which certain processes affect the lives of the people in general and of women in particular. The analysis of the socio- economic position, particularly educational achievement of women will provide an understanding of their status among the Tangkhuls.

Wife

Table -1: Age of the Wife Respondents

Age Group	%
30- 34	16
35- 39	26
40- 44	14
45- 49	26
50- 54	12
55- 59	06
Total	100
Median Age	41.54

Table 1 shows the distribution of age group of the respondents. It is seen from the Table that out of the total respondents, majority of them are in between the age

group of 35- 39 years and 45- 49 years with 26 per cent in each age group. The age group 30-34 has the second highest number accounting for 16 per cent. It is observed from the table that only 3 respondents (6%) are in the age group of 55- 59 years. The Median Age of the Wife Respondents is calculated to be 41.54 years which indicates that the average age of the Wife respondents is quite low.

Table -2: Place of Birth

Place of Birth	Percent
Rural	62
Urban	38
Total	100

From the above table we can infer that majority of the respondents (62%) have reported that their place of birth was rural area. On the other hand, only 38% respondents have responded that their birth place was urban area. It may be so because the majority of the populations in the study areas live in the rural areas whereas a small proportion of the population lives in urban areas. It could also be due to the fact that more than 70% of the population in Manipur lives in rural areas.

Table- 3: Place of Residence

Place of Residence	%
Ukhrul	56
Imphal	44
Total	100

Table 3 shows that majority (56%) of the respondents have their place of residence as Ukhrul and 44% in Imphal. This is because Ukhrul is the home town for the Tangkhuls though a sizeable number of Tangkhuls have taken up their residence in Imphal.

Table- 4: Causes of Migration

Causes	%
Job	26
Marriage	16
Follow Husband	02
Children's Education	02
Parent's Posting	04
Better facilities	02
Not Specified	48
Total	100

From the Table 4 it is observed that out of the total respondents 26% said that they have migrated because of their job compulsions like transfer, change of job, promotion, etc. Another 16% respondents have reported that they have migrated due to their marriage. It is seen that a significant number (48%) of the respondents have not assigned any reason for their migration. This may be because they do not have any specific reason for migration. The table also reveals that only one respondent (2%) has migrated because she has to follow her husband. The education of children's and

seeking better facilities do not seem to be the reasons for many of the respondents as only 2% in each category indicated the same.

Educational Background

Table- 5 (a): Schooling

Schooling	%
Village	40
Town	52
City	06
Town & City	02
Total	100

Table-5 (a) shows that a majority (52%)of the wife respondents have done their schooling in towns. It is also seen that many of the respondents have studied in schools situated in villages. Only one respondent (2%) said that her school education was done in town as well as in city. It may be due to the reason that majority of the population lives in rural areas as indicated in Table 2 above.

Table 5 (b): Pre-University Course (P.U.C.)

Location	%
Village	02
Town	70
City	28
Total	100

As regards the educational background of the respondents at the P.U.C. level, majority of the female respondents (70%) have studied in the colleges located in towns as indicated in the Table 5 (b) given above. The Table also reveals that 28% of the respondents too completed their Pre-University Course in cities. Only a negligible (2%) percentage studied in village.

The reason for the sudden shift of the respondents from village, at the school level, to the towns and cities at the Pre-University level is due to the unavailability of facilities for higher education/college level studies/institutions in the village.

Table - 5 (c): Graduation

Background	%
Town	40
City	58
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Table 5 (c) reveals that there is again a shift in the educational background of the respondents. Out of the total respondents, 58% of them completed their graduation level of studies from cities while 40% of them have completed theirs from towns. One respondent did not reply to this. Nearly 98% of the respondents have reported that they have completed their graduation from either town or from city. This may be due to the non-availability of any college in the rural areas.

Table- 5 (d): Post Graduation

Background	%
Town	46.15
City	53.85
Total	100

Data in the Table 5 (d) shows the background of the respondents who have completed their Post- graduation level of studies. Out of the total respondents only 26% have completed post- graduate and out of these 26%, 53.85% have done their post-graduation from cities while 46.15% have completed theirs from towns.

Out of the total respondents, only one respondent had pursued higher academic studies and has completed M.Phil as well as her Doctoral degree.

Medium of Instruction

Table- 6: School

Medium	%
Vernacular/ Local Dialect	06
English	84
Vernacular/ Local Dialect & English	10
Total	100

From the above Table 6 it is seen that inspite of the many respondents having educational background from the village as seen in Table- 5 (a), 84% of the respondents are from English Medium schools. As can be seen from the Table 6, 10% of the

respondents had a combination of Vernacular/local dialect and English as their medium of instructions in the schools while a small percentage of respondents (6%) stem from vernacular background.

In case of the Post-Matric studies, all the respondents had English as the medium of instruction.

Educational Qualification of the Respondents' Parents

Table- 7 (a): Father

Qualification	%
Illiterate	08
Just literate	16
High School	06
Matric	30
P.U.C.	06
Graduate	24
Post- Graduate	08
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Table -7 (a) reveals that most of the respondents' (more than 70%) fathers were literate. Noticeably 30% had their fathers' educational qualification up to the Matric level, 24% up to Graduate and 8% up to Post- Graduation level. The table also shows that 16% of the respondents' fathers were just literate and 8% of the fathers were

Illiterate. It may be concluded the fathers of the women respondents have been fairly literate.

Table -7 (b): Mother

Qualification	%
Illiterate	38
Just literate	18
High School	24
Matric	08
P.U.C.	04
Graduate	04
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Data in the Table 7 (b) shows that many of the respondents (38%) have their mothers who are illiterate. It is a huge number as compared to that of the fathers, seen in the Table 7 (a) accounting only 8% of the total respondents. It is seen that 24% of the respondents' mothers got education up to the High school level. It is also observed that only a negligible number of mothers had education up to P.U.C. and Graduate level with 4% in each category

Profession/ Occupation of the Respondents' Parents

Table- 8 (a): Father

Occupation	%
Agriculture	12
Government Service	58
Private	16
Business	08
Not specified	06
Total	100

As regards the profession/ occupation of the respondents' fathers Table 8 (a) shows that majority (58%) of the fathers were engaged in Government Service. The Table also reveals that 16% of the respondents' fathers were working in private sector related jobs while 12% and 8% of them said that their fathers were engaged in agriculture and business respectively. It is surprising to note that 6% of the respondents did not mention the occupation of their fathers.

Table- 8 (b): Mother

Occupation	%
Agriculture	30
Government Service	14
Business	04
Housewife	48
Not Specified	04
Total	100

It is seen from the above Table 8 (b) that almost half (48%) of the respondents say that their mothers were housewives. It is also seen that 30% admit that their mothers were cultivators by profession, 14% were in Government Service and only 4% were engaged in business related job. And 4% of the respondents did not respond.

Husband

Table- 9: Age of the Husband Respondents

Age Group	%
30- 34	02
35- 39	08
40- 44	26
45- 49	22
50- 54	28
55- 59	06
60- 64	08
Total	100
Median Age	47.55

From the above Table 9 it is observed that out of the total respondents, majority of them are quite matured and range from the age group of 50- 54 years accounting for 28 per cent followed by the age group of 40- 44 years. It is also seen from the Table that only one respondent (2%) is in the age group of 30- 34 years. It is also found out that the Median Age of the respondents is 47.55 years indicating the level of maturity.

Table- 10: Place of Birth

Place of Birth	%
Rural	64
Urban	36
Total	100

As regards the place of birth, the Table above (10) shows the distribution of place of birth of the respondents. The Table reveals that majority i.e. 64% of the respondents have rural areas as their place of birth and only 36% of the respondents have reported that their place of birth are in urban areas. It can be referred that majority of the respondents are having rural background.

Table- 11: Place of Residence

Place of Residence	%
Ukhrul	56
Imphal	44
Total	100

Data in the Table 51 shows that a little more than half of the respondents i.e. 56% have Ukhrul as their place of residence and 44% of them in Imphal.

Table- 12: Cause of Migration

Cause of Migration	%
Place of Birth same as Residence	24
Job	30
Business	02
Education & Parent's Posting	04
Better Facilities	04
Family Convenience	02
New Settlement	02
Not Specified	32
Total	100

Figures in Table 12 show that 30% of the male respondents have migrated from their place of birth due to their profession, 24% of the respondents indicated that their place of birth is same as their place of residence while a large number i.e. 32% of respondents did not give reasons why they have migrated to the present town/ city.

Table- 13: House/ Land in the Village

House/ Land in the Village	%
No	04
Yes	96
Total	100

The respondents were asked whether they still have House or Land in their respective villages. 96% of them said that they still have and only 4% admit that they do not have anything in the village. These responses are shown clearly in Table 13.

Table -14: Property- Inheritance/ Self Acquired

Property	%
Inheritance	54
Self- acquired	22
Inheritance & Self Acquired	14
Not Specified	10
Total	100

As regards the property of the respondents Table 14 shows that 54% of them admitted that they have inherited their properties from their parents. 24% of the respondents said that they have acquired their properties while 14% of them said that they have partially inherited from their parents and partially acquired by them. As can be seen from the Table, 10% of the respondents did not specify how they have amassed their properties.

Table- 15: Educational Qualification of the Respondentss

Educational Qualification	%
P.U.C	04
Graduate	48
Post Graduate	42
M. Phil	02
Not Specified	04
Total	100

From the above Table (15) it is seen that almost half (48%) of the respondents have completed graduate level of studies. It is also observed that a large number (42%) of the respondents have studied up to the Post-Graduate level.

Medium of Instructions

Table- 16: School

Medium	%
Vernacular/ Local Dialect	08
English	78
Vernacular/ Local Dialect & English	04
Not Specified	10
Total	100

Table 16 shows that a large majority (78%) of the respondents stemmed from English Medium schools and only 8% of the respondents said that they were from Vernacular/ Local Dialect background. While 4% of them came from a combination of Vernacular/ Local Dialect and English other 10% of the respondents did not specify the medium of instructions in school.

Table- 17: Post- Matric

Medium	%
English	88
Vernacular/ Local Dialect & English	02
Not Specified	10
Total	100

As compared with the Medium of instruction in schools we can see from the Table 17 that more of the respondents had English as their Medium of instruction in Post- Matric than that of Schools. Table 17 clearly shows that a large majority (88%) of

the respondents had English as their medium of instruction in their Post- Matric studies and only 2% of them had a combination of Vernacular/ Local Dialect and English.

Educational Qualification of the Respondents' Parents

Table- 18: Father

Qualification	%
Illiterate	30
Just Literate	12
High School	12
Matriculate	06
P.U.C.	06
Graduate	28
Post- Graduate	02
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Table 18 shows the educational qualification of the respondents' fathers. It is noticed that a huge number (30%) of the male respondents admitted that their fathers were Illiterate. 12% of the respondents also admitted that their fathers were Just literate while another 12% of the respondents said that their fathers had studied up to High School level. It is also observed that 28% of the respondents said that their fathers were educated up to Graduate level while only a few (2%) of the respondents' fathers were Post- Graduate.

Table- 19: Mother

Qualification	%
Non- literate	48
Just literate	18
High School	12
Matriculate	10
P.U.C.	02
Graduate	06
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Table 19 shows that almost half (48%) of the male respondents admitted that their mothers were illiterate, 18% of them had mothers who were just literate, 12% of the respondents' mothers studied up to High Schools level and 10% of their mothers up to the Matric level. It is seen that only 6% of the respondents said that their mothers studied up to Graduate level of education.

Profession/ Occupation of the Respondents' Parents

Table- 20: Father

Occupation	%
Cultivator	42
Government Service	36
Business	02
Politician	02
Social Worker	02
Mission Worker	10
Not Specified	06
Total	100

Figures in table 20 show the various occupational distributions of the male respondents' fathers. The Table reveals that a huge number i.e. 42% of the respondents' fathers were engaged in agricultural related works. A good number (36%) of them said that their fathers were government servants and 10% of them said that their fathers were mission workers.

Table- 21: Mother

Occupation	%
Cultivator	52
Government Service	14
Housewife	26
Social worker	04
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Data in Table 21 reveal the occupational distribution of the respondents' mothers. It is seen that majority i.e. 52% of the respondents admitted that their mothers were cultivators and a considerable number (26%) of the respondents' mothers were housewives. 14% of the respondents said that their mothers were government servants.

Job and Marriage

Wife

Table- 22: Sector of employment

Sector	%
Government	70
Private	26
Others	04
Total	100

Figures in the Table 22 show that a large majority (70%) of the female respondents are employed in Government sector and 26% are in Private Sector while 4% of the respondents worked in the other sectors like, in agriculture or were self employed etc.

Table- 23: Nature of Work

Nature of Work	%
Permanent	72
Temporary	28
Total	100

Table 23 reveals that a huge majority (72%) of the respondents are working on a regular/ permanent basis while 28% are working on temporary basis.

Table- 24: Basic Scale

Basic Scale (in Rupees)	%
Up to 1000	02
1001- 2500	10
2501- 4000	12
4001- 7500	36
7501- 10,000	22
10,001- 15,000	08
Not specified	10
Total	100

Data in the Table 24 show the distribution of the Basic scales of the respondents. It is seen that many of the respondents are getting the basic scale between the range of Rs. 4001- 7500 followed by the range between Rs. 7500- 10,000 accounting for 22% of the total women respondents. Only one respondent i.e. 2% falls within the range of Rs. 1000.

Table- 25: Wife's Salary Compared to Husband's

Salary	%
More	32.56
Less	51.16
Equal	16.28
Total	100

A further question was asked to the 86% of the respondents who said that their husbands are working, whether her salary is More or Less or Equal to that of her husband's. To this, 51.16% said that their salaries are lesser than that of their husbands'. 32.56% of them said that their salaries are more than their husbands' while 16.28% said that their salaries are equal to that of their husbands' as seen in the Table 25.

Table- 26: Relationship with Husband in Relation to Earning

Better Relationship	%
Yes	35.71
No	64.29
Total	100

Figures in Table 26 show the responses of the women respondents who said that their salaries are more than that of their husbands'. As seen in the above Table, 64.29% of the respondents said that their conjugal relation would not be better even if their husbands earned more than them. It is also observed that 35.71% of them said "Yes", it would improve their husband- wife relationship if their husbands earned more than them.

Table- 27: Age at Starting Work

Age Group	%
Less than 15	00
15- 19	02
20- 24	32
25- 29	34
30- 34	20
35- 39	08
Not Specified	04
Total	100

From the above Table 27 it is observed that 34% of the wife respondents started working between the age range of 25- 29years. The age group between 20- 24 years closely followed the age group 25- 29 years accounting for 32% of the total respondents. The Table also shows that only 2% of the respondents took up job at a young age group of 15- 19 years.

Table- 28: Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction	%
No	10
Yes	88
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Table 28 shows that a large majority (88%) of the respondents said that they have job satisfaction. On the other hand, 10% of the respondents have opined that they do not have job satisfaction while the rest (2%) of the respondents have not specified whether they have job satisfaction or not. In general it can be concluded that the respondents have shown their satisfaction with the present status of job.

Table 29: Reason for Job Satisfaction

Reasons	%
No Reason	22.73
Good Income	04.55
Service to People	18.18
Fulfilling Ambition	18.18
Enjoy the work	27.27
Good atmosphere	02.27
Good Training	02.27
Challenging	02.27
Non-Transferable	02.27
Total	100

As seen from the Table 29, 88% of the respondents say that they have job satisfaction. A question to assign reasons for their job satisfaction was asked to these 88% of the total respondents. Many interesting reasons were assigned by these respondents as can be seen from the Table 29. The Table reveals that 27.27% of the respondents do enjoy the work at their work place. A good number (22.73%) of the respondents have not assigned any reason, 18.18% of them said they are happy because the nature of their work allows them to have direct contact with the people (Society) and so are happy serving the people. Another 18.18% of them also say that they are happy at their work because it is the fulfillment of their ambition. In general, it can be said that the respondents have job satisfaction because they love their job and since their job also helps them in serving the society.

Table- 30: Reason for Job Dissatisfaction

Reason	%
Low Salary	80
Don't like the nature of work	20
Total	100

In Table 28 we have seen that out of the total respondents 10% of them were not happy with their job. Table 30 reveals that out of the 10%, 80% of them said that they were not happy because their salary was not proportionate to the amount of work/task they perform. Another 20% of them said that they did not have job satisfaction because they did not like the nature of their work.

Table- 31: Reason for taking up present job

Reason	%
Economic necessity	32
Fulfill ambition	40
Enhance Social Status	14
Economic Necessity & Enhance Social Status	08
Economic Necessity & Fulfill Ambition	04
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Figures in Table 31 show that all the respondents had different reasons for taking up their present (during the time of Field Work) job. 40% of them said that their job means fulfillment of their ambition, 32% of them took up their job because of the economic necessity and 14% also said that they took up the job to enhance their social status. Other 12% of them said that there were many reasons for taking up the present job and 2% of the respondents did not answer the question.

Table- 32: Continuity of work

Continuity of work	%
No	18.75
Yes	75.00
Depends on need	06.25
Total	100

We have seen in the Table 31 that out of the total respondents 32% of them took up their present job for economic necessity. In continuation a question was asked to these respondents as to if they'd been working because of economic necessity whether they would continue to work if their economic condition is satisfactory. To this question as we can see from the Table 32, 75% of the respondents said that they desire to continue working even if their economic condition improved. 18.75% of the respondents said that they would not continue in their job if their economic condition was satisfactory while 6.25% of the respondents said that their continuity of the work would depend on the need.

Table- 33: Equal Status with men at work

Equal Status	%
No	04
Yes	94
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Table 33 reveals the status of the women respondents as against that of men/ male at their work place. The Table shows that 94% of the respondents were treated at par with the male workers/ staff/ colleagues at their work place. Only 4% of them said that they did not enjoy equal status as that of the male colleagues at their work place and 2% did not answer the question. Hence, it may be said that at the work place all employees enjoy equal status.

Table- 34: Age at Marriage

Age	%
Less than 20	04
20- 24	26
25- 29	40
30- 34	26
35- 39	04
Total	100
Median Age at Marriage	27.5

From Table 34, it is seen that 40% of the respondents got married when they were within the age group of 25- 29 years followed by the age group of 20-24 years and 30- 34 years accounting for 26% in each group. Only a few respondents got married before 20 years and in between 35-39 years with 4% in each age group respectively. The median age at marriage was found to be 27.5 years. Hence, it may be opined that in general they married at a later age as compared to other parts of the country where the age at marriage is quite low (<20 years).

Table- 35: Type of Marriage

Type of Marriage	%
Love	88
Arranged	06
Love & Arranged	04
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Table 35 shows that 88% of the respondents had Love marriage, 6% of the respondents' marriages were arranged. 4% of the respondents said that their marriages were the outcome of love and were arranged later and 2% of them did not specify if their marriages were the result of love or arranged ones.

Table- 36: Years in Marriage

No. of years in Marriage	%
1-5	02
6- 10	30
11- 15	20
16- 20	18
21- 25	24
26- 30	04
More than 30	02
Total	100

From the above Table 36 it is known that most of the respondents had been married more than 5 years. The number of years that they were into their married life reveals us that they (Wives) had carved enough space for themselves to have some say in the family. It is seen from the above Table that 30% of the respondents were married between 6-10 years followed by 21- 25 years accounting for 24%. Only 2% each fall into 1- 5 years and more than 30 years. The Table also shows the maturity of the respondents.

Table- 37: Married Life

Rating	%
Very Happy	38
Happy	42
Satisfactory	18
Unsatisfactory	02
Total	100

The respondents were asked to rate their married life after having answered the number of years in their married life. 42% of them said that their marriages were 'Happy', 38% of them said they were 'Very Happy' followed by 18% of the respondents saying their married life was 'Satisfactory' and only 2% admitted that their married life was Unsatisfactory. These figures are observed in the Table 37.

Table- 38: Husband's Objection to Wife's Working Outside Home

Objection	%
No	96
Yes	04
Total	100

It is seen from the Table 38 that 96% of the respondents said that their husbands had no objection to their working outside their homes. Only 4% of the respondents admitted that their husbands did object their working outside their homes.

Table- 39: Reason for Objection

Reason	%
He earns enough	50
No time for him and Family	50
Total	100

Out of the total respondents, only 4% said that their husbands object them being employed outside their homes as seen in the Table 38. Out of that 4%, 50% said that the reason for their husbands' objection was because husbands earn enough to look after the family even if they did not work to bring additional earnings. Another 50% as shown in Table 39 said that if they work outside their homes they did not give/ have sufficient time for their families and therefore their husbands did not prefer them as working wives.

Table- 40: Reason for No Objection

Reason	%
He Respects my Individuality	64.58
Additional earning is required	25.00
Respect Individuality & Additional earnings.	10.42
Total	100

Table 40 shows that 64.58 % of the respondents said that their husbands did not object them working outside their homes because they (Husbands) respected their individuality. 25% of them admitted that their husbands did not have problems because

an additional earning was required to run the family while 10.42% said it was due to the combination of both the mentioned reasons.

Table- 41: Husband's Preference on Wife's being a Housewife or Working outside

Preference	%
No	74
Yes	18
Not Specified	08
Total	100

Table 41 shows the response of the respondents to a question whether their husbands would like them to be at home or be working outside their homes. Out of the total women respondents 74% of them said that their husbands preferred them to be working outside their homes than to be at home as housewives. From the same Table it is also known that 18% of the respondents said that their husbands preferred them as housewives while 8% of the respondents did not specify their husband's preferences.

Table- 42: Working Husband

Working Husband	%
No	14
Yes	86
Total	100

A question was asked to the women respondents if their husbands were working. To this 86% of them answered “Yes” and 14% of the respondents said “No” as is seen in the Table 42.

Table- 43: Effect of Career on the Smooth Running of the Household

Effect/Obstruction	%
No	78
Yes	10
Sometimes	06
Not Specified	06
Total	100

Table 43 reveals that 78% of the respondents do not face problem in running the house because of their career. 10% of the respondents admitted that their career does obstruct the smooth functioning of the household. Only 6% of the respondents said that their career hampers the smooth running of the family and 6% of the total respondents did not respond the question.

Table- 44: Other Work besides Job

Type of Work	%
Children's Education	08
Gardening	08
Household Duty	30
Social Service	12
Research Work	02
Business	02
Announce Radio	02
Not Specified	36
Total	100

Apart from their career the women respondents engaged themselves with many other work or activities. Table 44 shows that 30% of the respondents are engaged with various types of household duties that may include cooking, doing dishes, washing clothes, sweeping and mopping rooms, stitching/ sewing etc. We can also observe that a considerable number (12%) of the respondents are also engaged in Social Work/ service. It is also noticed from the same Table that a huge number (36%) of the respondents have not specified what they are engaged with when at home or apart from their job.

Table- 45: Number of Hours in Domestic Work

Number of Hours	%
1 – 3	14
4 – 6	50
7 – 9	12
More than 9	04
Not Specified	20
Total	100

Inspite of having their full- time career the respondents seem to have keen interest in their household chores too. Table 45 shows that 50% of the respondents spend 4- 6 hours a day for their domestic work, 14% said they spend 1- 3 hours in a day. There are a few (4%) who spend more than 9 hours in their domestic works while 20% of the respondents have not specified the number of hours they spend for household chores in a day.

Table- 46: Percentage of Contribution in Running the House

Contribution	%
100%	20
75%	30
50%	22
Less than 50%	24
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Except for the 4% of the respondents who have not responded, all the respondents contribute a good deal in running their houses. Table 46 clearly shows that maximum number (30%) of the respondents contribute 75% of their earnings in maintaining their houses, 24% of them contribute less than 50% of their earnings. The Table reveals that 22% of the respondents said that they contribute 50 per cent of their earnings in managing the family while 20% of them said that they contribute 100 per cent. From the figures in Table 46 we can infer that the wife respondents are co-partners in managing their families with equal responsibilities as that of their husbands.

Table- 47: Husband Help in Domestic Chores

Help in Domestic Chores	%
No	02
Yes	52
Sometimes	46
Total	100

It is seen from the above Table 47 that majority (52%) of the respondents admitted that their husbands help them in performing the domestic chores. Another 46% said that their husbands help them in domestic work sometimes and only 2% of the respondents said that their husband do not help in carrying out their household chores.

Table- 48: Resort to Physical Violence by Husband

Physically Violent	%
No	90
Yes	02
Not Specified	08
Total	100

Data in the Table 48 show the responses of the respondents to a question, how their counterparts (Husbands) react to them in times of conflict. 90% of them said that their husbands are not physically violent with them in times of conflict and 2% of them said that their husbands tend to assault them physically. As can be seen from the Table 8% of the respondents have not answered how their husbands react to them in times of conflict.

Husband

Table- 49: Whether Working

Working	%
No	06
Yes	94
Total	100

It is seen from the Table 49 that almost all (94%) of the respondents are working and only 6% of them are not engaged in any type of Job.

Table 50: Sector of Work

Sector of Work	%
Government/ Public	51.06
Private	29.79
Others	12.77
Not Specified	06.38
Total	100

In the previous Table (49) we have seen that 94% of the respondents are working. These respondents who say they are working were further asked to indicate their sector of employment. As can be observed from the Table 50, Majority i.e. 51.06% of the respondents said that they are Government Employees, 29.79 of the respondent said that they are working in Private Sector while 12.77% of them mark as working in others.

Table- 51: Nature of Work

Nature of Work	%
Permanent	60
Temporary	28
Not Specified	12
Total	100

Out of the total respondents who said that they are working 60% of them are working on regular/ permanent basis and 28% them said that they are working on Temporary basis. 12% of the respondents have not specified the nature of their work.

Table- 52: Income / Salary in a Month

Income (In Rupees)	%
Up to 5000	10
5001- 10,000	18
10,001- 25,000	36
25,001- 50,000	08
50,001- 1,00,000	00
1,00,001- 2,50,000	00
2,50,001- 5,00,000	02
Not Specified	26
Total	100

The level of income is an important aspect of social background. It determines the socio-economic status of an individual. The Table 52 shows the monthly income of the respondents. The table also indicates that the income of the respondents are mostly between Rupees 5001- 10000/- and between Rupees 10001- 25000. As noticed, a considerably good number i.e. 26% of the respondents have not mentioned how much they earn in a month.

Table- 53: Income Rating

Income	%
Very Good	02
Good	52
Satisfactory	16
Insufficient	22
Not Mentioned	08
Total	100

The respondents were asked to rate their income. Table 53 shows their ratings. Majority i.e. 52% of the respondents rated their income as “Good”, 22% said their incomes are “Insufficient” and 16 % of them said that their incomes are “satisfactory”. Only 2% of the respondents said that their incomes are “Very good” while 8% of them have not mentioned.

Table- 54: Your Income as against Your Wife’s

Your Income	%
More	40
Less	26
Equal	18
Not Specified	16
Total	100

When question was asked to the male respondents if their income was “More” or “Less” or “Equal” to that of their wives’ 40% of them said that they were earning “More” than their wives, 26% said that theirs was “Less” than that of their wives’ and 18% said that their earnings were “Equal” to that of their wives’. 16% of the respondents had not answered the question. These figures are clearly shown in Table 54.

Table- 55: Reaction to Wife’s Higher Income

Reaction	%
Feel Good	46.15
Feel Bad	07.70
Its Okay	46.15
Total	100.00

The male respondents were asked to assess their feeling about their wives earning more than themselves. Table 55 shows how they felt, 46.15% said that they “Feel Good” that their wives were earning more than them, 46.15% said that they “Feel Okay” and 7.70% of the respondents said that they “Feel Bad”.

Table- 56: Date of Commencement of your Present Job

How Long (in years)	%
1Year	04
2 – 5	10
6- 10	22
11- 15	06
16- 20	14
More than 20 Years	32
Not Specified	12
Total	100

Table 56 shows the time period of the respondents’ being in their present job. The highest number i.e. 32% of the respondents had taken up their present job for more

than 20 years, 22% of them had worked between 6- 10 years and 14% of the respondents between 16- 20 years. Only 4% of the respondents had taken up their job just one year back. 12% of the respondents did not mention how long they had been working.

Table- 57: Reason for Taking up the Job

Reason	%
Economic necessities	24
Fulfill Ambition	48
Enhance Social Status	12
Eco.Nec., Fulfill Ambition & Enhance Social Status	02
Eco.Nec & Fulfill Ambition	04
Eco. Nec.& Enhance Social Status	02
Not Specified	08
Total	100

Choices were given to the respondents assigning reasons for taking up their present job and from the Table 57 it is clear that fulfilling ones Ambition seemed to be the major reason for being in their job. However a good number i.e. 24% of the respondents said that they were in their job because of economic necessities followed by 12% of them saying it was to enhance their social status. 8% of the respondents did not assign any reason as why they had taken up their present job.

Table- 58: Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction	%
No	20
Yes	72
Not specified	08
Total	100

When asked to give an assessment of their job a large majority i.e. 72% of the respondents said that they were “Satisfied, 20% of them said that they were “Not satisfied” and 8% of them did not mention whether they were satisfied.

Table- 59: Reason for Job Satisfaction

Reason	%
Fulfilling Ambition	33.33
Enjoy my Work	16.67
Helps to meet both ends	13.89
Good Income	05.56
Freedom at work	08.33
Related to my studies	02.78
Service to People	05.56
Not Specified	13.89
Total	100.00

Figures in the above Table 59 show the reasons the respondents assigned for being satisfied in their respective service. Out of the 72%

respondents who had job satisfaction (Table 56) 33.33% of the respondents said that they were satisfied because that was the ultimate fulfillment of their aspiration. 16.67% of the respondents said that they enjoyed their work and another 13.89% of them assigned that their job helped them make both ends meet and equal number (13.89%) of the respondents had not answered.

Table- 60: Reason for Job Dissatisfaction

Reason	%
Less Income	20
No promotion	10
Being a Part- timer	10
No Proper facilities	20
Too much Corruption	10
Irregularities in Office Administration	10
Not Specified	20
Total	100

It is observed from the above Table 60 that 20% each of the respondents did not have job satisfaction because their salaries/ Income were too less and that there were no proper facilities in their work place respectively. It is also seen that 10% each of the respondents had assigned their reason for not having job satisfaction as 'No promotion', being 'Part- timer', 'too much Corruption and Irregularities in the Office Administration' respectively. A good number of respondents (20%) had not answered.

Table- 61: Marital Status at the Time of getting Job

Marital status	%
Not Married	40
Married	52
Not Mentioned	08
Total	100

Table 61 shows the marital status of the respondents when they got their job. As seen in the above Table, 52% of the respondents were married before they got their job and 40% of them were still single when they got their job.

Table- 62: Age at Marriage

Age Group	%
21- 25	08
26- 30	14
31- 35	44
36- 40	26
41- 45	04
Not Specified	04
Total	100

From the above Table (62) it is known that most of the respondents were married between the age group of 31- 35 years and 36- 40 years. This shows that most of the respondents were married at the mature age.

Table- 63: Problems faced due to Wife's Work Outside Home

Face Problem	%
No	92
Yes	02
Sometimes	02
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Data in Table 63 show whether the husband respondents face any problem because of their wives are engaged in their careers. As can be observed, 92% of the respondents say that they did not face any problem inspite of their wives working outside their homes. It is also seen that 2% of the respondents admitted that they did encounter difficulties and another 2% of the respondents said that they did face problems sometimes. 4% of the respondents made no comment on whether they face problem at all because their wives worked outside their homes.

Table- 64: Preference of Wife to be Home Maker

Want wife to be home	%
No	46
Yes	44
Sometimes	02
Not Specified	08
Total	100

Figures in the Table 64 indicate the opinion of the husbands who had working wives. It is seen that 46% of the husbands said that they did not want their wives to be at home taking care of the Children, household, and themselves. A good number i.e. 44% of the respondents felt the need for their wives to be at home. Besides, 2% of the respondents sometimes felt that they wanted their wives to be housewives, taking care of home, household, children etc. Only 8% of the respondents did not answer the question.

Table- 65: Number of Years in Marriage

Years of marriage	%
Less than 1 year	00
1 – 5	02
6- 10	14
11- 15	30
16- 20	14
21- 25	26
26- 30	08
More than 30 years	02
Not Specified	04
Total	100

From the above Table 65 it is clear that the respondents were not newly married couples but were couples who were married for many years majority of them falling between 6 to 25 years.

Table- 66: Rating Married Life

Married Life	%
Very happy	42
Happy	36
Satisfactory	18
Unsatisfactory	00
Not Specified	04
Total	100

The respondents were asked to assess their married life and 42% of them responded that they were “Very happy”, 36% said they were “Happy” and 18% rated their married life as “Satisfactory”. 4% of the respondents did not mention how their married lives were. As we can observe from the Table 66, none of the respondents said that their married life was Unsatisfactory.

Table- 67: Earning enough and Preference of Wife to be a Home Maker

Prefer Wife to be a Housewife	%
No	64
Yes	30
Not Mentioned	06
Total	100

Figures in the Table 67 show the preferences of the husband respondents what they would want their wives to be. 64% of the respondents said that they would not want their wives to be housewives even if they earned enough, 30% of them said that

they would prefer their wives to be housewives if they earned sufficient and 6% of them had not mentioned anything.

Table- 68: Effect of Career on the Smooth Running of the Household

Effect of Wife's Career	%
No	84
Yes	02
Sometimes	04
Not Specified	10
Total	100

Data in Table 68 reveal that 84% of the respondents agreed that the smooth functioning of the household was not disturbed by the wife's career, 4% of them said that their harmony was disturbed sometimes, 2% of them said that the smooth running of the household was obstructed because of the career of the wife and 10% of them had not answered the question.

Table- 69: Help in Domestic Chores

Help in Domestic Chores	%
No	26
Yes	70
Sometimes	02
Not Specified	02
Total	100

From the above Table 69 it is observed that majority i.e. 70% of the respondents helped their wives in the domestic chores. On the other hand we also see that 26% of them admitted that they did not help their wives in domestic chores and only 2% of the total respondents said that they helped in domestic chores only sometimes while 2% of them had not responded.

Table -70: Role/Assistance in Child Care

Take Part in Child- Care	%
No	04
Yes	92
Not Specified	04
Total	100

Figures in the Table 70 show the participation of the men respondents in the up-bringing of their children. It is observed that a large majority of the respondents showed that they had real interest in their children as 92% of them said that they took part in Child- care. Only 4% said that they did not take part and 4% of the respondents had not responded to the question.

Table- 71: Reason for Assistance in Child Care

Reasons	%
It is my responsibility	60.87
I love my children	19.57
I want to help my wife	04.35
My responsibility & I love my children	02.17
My responsibility, Love my children & help my wife	08.70
My responsibility & Because others do it	02.17
Love my children & Help my wife	02.17
Total	100.00

A question was further asked to the respondents who said that they took part in the child- care as to why they participated or to give reason for their participation in the child- care with their wives. To this 60.87% of the respondents said that participating in child- care was their personal responsibility. 19.57% of the total respondents (Husbands) said that they did it because they love their children. These responses are clearly shown in the Table 71, above.

Table- 72: Reason for Non-Assistance in Child Care

Reasons	%
I have no time	50
I don't stay with them	50
Total	100

We have seen in Table 70 that only 4% of the respondents said that they did not take part in Child- Care, out of these respondents, Table 72 shows that 50% said that they could not take part in child- care because they did not stay with the family and another 50% of them said that they could not do so because they did not have the time.

Table- 73: Area of Your Involvement in Child- Care

Area of Involvement	%
Education	16
Disciplining	38
Others	06
Education, Disciplining & Others	14
Disciplining & Others	06
Education & Disciplining	14
Not Specified	06
Total	100

From the above Table 73 it is clear that there was no single area where the respondents were particularly interested. But in general, majority of the respondents seemed to take interest in the education and disciplining of their children and on the whole the all round development and well being of their children.

Table- 74: Your Contribution in Domestic Expenses

Contribution	%
100%	18
75%	30
50%	38
Less than 50%	12
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Table 74 reveals that 18% of the men respondents contributed 100% of their earnings for the domestic expenses, 30% of them contributed 75% of their earnings, 38% of them contributed 50%. 12% of the respondents contributed less than 50% of their earnings for the domestic expenses while 2% of the respondents did not specify how much were their contributions.

Table- 75: Wife's Contribution in Running the House

Contribution	%
100%	24
75%	24
50%	32
Less than 50%	18
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Data in the Table 75 show the contributions of the wives of the respondents (Husbands). It is seen that 24% of the respondents admitted that their wives contributed

100% of their earnings and equal number of the respondents also said that their wives contributed 75% of their earnings in maintaining the house. 32% of the respondents admitted that their wives contributed 50% of their earnings. Only 18% of the respondents said that their wives contributed less than 50% of their earnings and a negligible 2% of the respondents have not mentioned anything the contribution of their wives.

Cross Tabulation

Table- 76: Age of the Respondents

Husband's Age	Wife's Age						Total
	30- 34	35- 39	40- 44	45- 49	50- 54	55- 59	
30- 34	1 (2.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (2.00%)
35- 39	2 (4.00%)	2 (4.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	4 (8.00%)
40- 44	2 (4.00%)	6 (12.00%)	5 (10.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	13 (26.00%)
45- 49	3 (6.00%)	4 (8.00%)	1 (2.00%)	3 (6.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	11 (22.00%)
50- 54	0 (0.00%)	1 (2.00%)	1 (2.00%)	7 (14.00%)	4 (8.00%)	1 (2.00%)	14 (28.00%)
55- 59	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3 (6.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	3 (6.00%)
60- 64	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (4.00%)	2 (4.00%)	4 (8.00%)
Total	8 (16.00%)	13 (26.00%)	7 (14.00%)	13 (26.00%)	6 (12.00%)	3 (6.00%)	50 (100.00%)

Chi-Square = 68.66 with df = 30; Chi-Square (30, 0.01) = 50.89

It is seen from the Table 76 that 14% of the husbands were in between 50-54 years while the wife's age was in between 45-49 years. 12% husband's age was in between 40-44 years while wife's age was in between 35-39 years. In general it may be concluded that the age of the husband was more than the age of the wife.

It is also observed that the age of the husband and wife had a significant relationship as the value of χ^2 was found to be 68.66 with 30 degrees of freedom which was greater than the tabulated value of χ^2 indicating that the age of husband and wife was not independent rather they were dependent.

Table- 77: Rating Married Life

Husband	Wife				Total
	Very Happy	Happy	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Very Happy	16	4	1	0	21
Happy	2	12	4	0	18
Satisfactory	1	4	4	0	9
Not Specified	0	1	0	1	2
Total	19	21	9	1	50

Chi-square = 49.32 with df = 9

Tabulated Chi-square (9, 0.01) = 21.666

The calculated value of Chi-Square is greater than the tabulated value of Chi-Square for 9 degrees of freedom at 1% level of significance. Hence the result does not

show any difference about rating their marriage. We can, thus, conclude that both Husband and Wife had rated their marriage as congenial.

Comparative Tables

Table- 78: Age of the Respondents

Age Group	% of Husband	% of Wife
30- 34	02	16
35- 39	08	26
40- 44	26	14
45- 49	22	26
50- 54	28	12
55- 59	06	06
60- 64	08	—
Total	100	100
Mean Age	47.5	41.54

From the above Table 78 it is observed that out of the total respondents (Husband) majority of them were quite matured and range between the age group of 50- 54 years accounting for 28% followed by the age group of 40- 44 years. Unlike the men respondents most of the women respondents were in between the age group of 35- 39 years and 45- 49 years with 26% in each age group. It indicates that in general the age of the wife was less than the age of their husbands. It is also seen from the table that only one husband respondent (2%) was in his youth, while 16% in case of wife respondents fall in this age group. The table also suggests that all the respondents of the present study were matured falling in the range of 30 years to 64 years of age. The table

also brings to light that men respondents were more matured than their corresponding counterparts. Further, it is interesting to note that the Median ages for the two groups of the respondents are found to be 47.50 years and 41.54 years respectively, indicating that the age of male was quite high as compared to that of the female respondents.

Table- 79: Place of Birth

Place of Birth	Husband %	Wife %
Rural	64	62
Urban	36	38
Total	100	100

As regards the place of birth, the Table 79 shows the distribution of respondents' place of birth. The Table reveals that majority i.e. 64% of the male respondents and 62% of the female respondents had rural areas as their place of birth. Only 36% of the Husband and 38% of the Wife respondents have reported that their places of birth are urban areas. It can be referred that majority of the respondents have a rural background.

Table- 80: Place of Residence

Place	Husband %	Wife %
Ukhrul	56	56
Imphal	44	44
Total	100	100

Table 80 shows that more than half i.e. 56% each of both the sets of respondents had responded that their place of residence is Ukhrul and 44% each of the respondents point their place of residence as Imphal.

Table- 81: Medium of Instructions in School

Medium	Husband %	Wife %
Vernacular/ Local Dialect	08	06
English	78	84
Ver/ Local Dialect & English	04	10
Not Specified	10	–
Total	100	100

Figures from the Table 81 show the distribution of the respondents' educational background. It is seen that 78% of the husband respondents had English as their medium of instruction in school and 84% of the wife respondents came from the same medium. It is also seen that only 4% of the male respondents and 10% of the female respondents had a combination of Vernacular/ Local Dialect and English as the Medium

of instructions while 8% of the male respondents and 6% of the female respondents stemmed from Vernacular/ Local dialect background.

The figures in the Table above suggest that more of the female respondents come from English Medium than that of the male respondents.

Table- 82: Medium of Instruction in Post-Matric

Medium	Husband %	Wife %
English	88	100
Ver/ Local Dialect & English	02	–
Not Specified	10	–
Total	100	100

Data in the Table 82 show the educational background of the respondents in their Post-Matric studies. As can be seen from the Table 100% of the wife respondents had English as their medium of instruction while 88% (a majority) of the male respondents had English, 2% had a combination of Vernacular/ Local Dialect and English as their medium of instruction and 10% of the male respondents had not specified the medium of instruction.

Table- 83: Educational Qualification of the Wife Respondents' Parents

Qualification	Father %	Mother %
Illiterate	08	38
Just Literate	16	18
High School	06	24
Matric	30	08
P.U.C	06	04
Graduate	24	04
Post Graduate	08	–
Not Specified	02	04
Total	100	100

The above Table 83 reveals that most of the women respondents' fathers were more literate as compared to that of their mothers. Noticeably 30% had their fathers' educational qualification up to the Matric level, 24% up to Graduate and 8% up to Post Graduation level. The Table also shows that 16% of the respondents' fathers were just literate and 8% were illiterate.

Unlike the fathers, 38% of the respondents' mothers were illiterate showing a huge difference of 30% between the two. It is seen that 24% of the respondents' mothers got education up to High school level, 8% up to Matric and 4% each up to P.U.C. and Graduation level. 4% of the respondents had not mentioned the qualification of their mothers.

Table- 84: Educational Qualification of the Husband Respondents' Parents

Qualification	Father %	Mother %
Illiterate	30	48
Just Literate	12	18
High School	12	12
Matric	06	10
P.U.C.	06	02
Graduate	28	06
Post- Graduate	02	–
Not Specified	04	04
Total	100	100

From the above Table 84 it is observed that 30% of the husband respondents' fathers were illiterate, 12% were just literate and another 12% studied up to High School level. A relatively large number i.e. 28% of the respondents' fathers were educated up to the Graduate level.

In the case of the respondents' mothers, almost half of the mothers were illiterate. 18% of the respondents said that their mothers were Just Literate, 12% said that their mothers studied up to High School and 10% up to Matric level.

We can infer that literacy level is higher among the fathers of the respondents as compared to that of their mothers.

Table- 85: Family Vacation

Husband	Wife			Total
	No	Yes	Sometimes	
No	13	1	1	15
Yes	2	30	0	32
Sometimes	0	2	0	2
Not Specified	1	0	0	1
Total	16	33	1	50

Table 85 indicates that majority of both husband (64%) and wife (66%) were of the opinion that they go for vacation. Nearly 30% of both the husband and wife had opined that they did not go for vacation.

CHAPTER 4

CHAPTER- 4

Nature of Power Relations in the Family and Changes in the Traditional Social Structure

The understanding of power relation must begin with the types of Ideal roles that are constructed by the respondents. Subsequently, most of the actions are determined by changes in these idealized roles in their relationship. The perceptions of the respondents regarding the ideal role of the husband and wife are analysed. Their opinion regarding the ideal roles of husband and wife, most of the respondents favoured traditional qualities as ideal. A majority of the women and men respondents said that their ideals were according to traditional positions. In short, as perceived by the wife, her educational and economic status did not have an important bearing on her traditional idea of married life and her ideal role of the husband and wife.

Ideal Roles:

The respondents were asked to name a few ideal attributes of both the husband and wife.

i) Ideal Husband Role:

Majority of the women defined the ideal role of a husband as loving, caring, understanding, responsible, manly, have good income and still some defined as

'controller', 'advisor' and 'decision maker'. The men respondents defined their role as understanding, caring and responsible.

ii) Ideal Wife Role:

The women respondents defined their ideal role as kind, caring, responsible, good household manager and home maker. The men defined the ideal role of an ideal wife as kind, generous, dutiful, good household manager, religious, accountable and exposed.

Majority of the men stand by the Tangkhul society's understanding of role and status differentiation i.e. women and men are already assigned by tradition their specific roles and statuses. Most of the women agree with it too.

Majority of the respondents are still traditional in their views about the ideals of a husband and a wife. Even among the women, the ideal role of a wife is still a traditionally defined one, such as good household manager and home-maker. Such attributes are not to be found in the ideal role of a husband who is looked upon as the head of the family and a person in control over the affairs of the family, whether the wife is an earning woman or not.

Answer to the question as to who had the upper hand in their marriage, a large majority of the women respondents said that it was the husband, some said that both were equal, and a few of the respondents said that the wife had the upper hand. Among the men too, majority of them said that it was the husband who had the upper hand in their marriage, while some of them said that both the husband and wife were equal.

Decision Making

Wife

Table- 86: Consent Sought in Taking up the Present Job

Whose Consent	%
Self Decision	32
Parents	26
Husband	28
Husband & Self	02
Uncle	02
Not Specified	10
Total	100

Figures in the Table 86 show how the wife respondents were in the career they were now (at the time of Field Work). 32% of them decided by themselves to take up their present job. Many (28%) of them took up with the consent of their husbands, 26% of them in consultation with their parents. A considerable number (10%) of the respondents had not revealed as to with whose consent they had taken up their present job.

Table- 87: Financial Assistance to relatives Without Husband's Permission

Assistance	%
No	50
Yes	48
Not Specified	02
Total	100

The respondents were asked if they could provide financial assistance or contribution to their relatives without their husband's permission. Figures in the Table 87 are the responses of the respondents to the question. It is seen that 50% of them said that they did not have the freedom to provide assistance to their relatives without their husband's permission. It is also observed that 48% of the respondents had the liberty to do so while 2% of the respondents had failed to respond to the question.

Table- 88: Freedom in Spending One's Earning

Free Decision	%
No	12
Yes	58
Sometimes	30
Total	100

Table 88 reveals that majority of the respondents had the freedom to decide what they wanted to do with their own earnings. 30% of them said that they had the liberty to take decisions regarding their own earnings only sometimes. Out of the total respondents only 12% said that they were not free to take decisions how they wanted to spend their own earnings.

Table- 89: Use of Money for Self and Children without Husband's Permission

Spend Money	%
No	12
Yes	62
Sometimes	26
Total	100

From the above Table 89 it is seen that 62% of the respondents said that they could spend money for themselves and for their children without husband's permission. 26% of them said that they could do so only sometimes. As it is seen in the Table, 12% admitted that they did not have the liberty to spend money for themselves and their children without their husband's permission.

Table 90: Major Decision Maker on Expensive Purchase

Major Decision Maker	%
Husband	12
Both Husband & Wife	88
Total	100

As regards major decision making on expensive purchases a large majority (88%) of the respondents said that it was a joint decision of both the husband and wife. And 12% of the respondents said that it was the husband who took the major decision in events of purchasing expensive items. This, to a certain extent shows that women/wives did not have the opportunity to take absolute decision on their own when it comes

to making expensive purchase unlike their counterparts, though only a small number (12%) of them had the freedom to do so.

Table- 91: Decision Maker on Domestic and Inexpensive Items

Decision on Domestic Items	%
Husband	02
Wife	60
Husband & Wife	38
Total	100

Data in the Table 91 reveal that matters like decision on domestic and inexpensive items, it was the women/ wives who decided mostly. The above Table shows that 60% of the respondents admitted that they (wives) were the ones who made decisions in the events of purchasing inexpensive items. 38% of them said that it was a joint decision and out of the total respondents only 2% of them said that their husbands were the ones who decided even in purchasing the inexpensive items.

Table- 92: Decision Maker on Family vacation

Decisions	%
Husband	02
Wife	06
Both Husband & Wife	80
Not Specified	12
Total	100

It is noticed from the above Table- 92 that Decision for the family vacation was mostly taken by both the husband and wife as 80% of the respondents said so. 6% of them said it was the wife who decided on family vacation and only 2% of them said it was the husband who decided and 12 % of the respondents had not responded to the question.

Table- 93: Major Decision Maker in Buying and Selling of Assets

Major Decision Maker	%
Husband	38
Wife	02
Both Husband & Wife	58
Not Specified	02
Total	100

Data in the Table 93 show that when it comes to buying and selling of acquired assets major decision was mostly a joint decision of both the husband and wife. This is seen in the Table above with 58% of the respondents saying so. There were 38% of the respondents who said that it was the husband who took the major decision. Only 2% said that it was the wife who made the major decision and 2% of the respondents had not responded.

Table- 94: Dominant Opinion in Times of Conflict in Domestic Matters

Whose Opinion	%
Husband	56
Wife	30
Depends on Issues	12
Not specified	02
Total	100

Table 94 reveals that in times of conflict on domestic matters 56% of the respondents admitted that their husbands' opinion prevailed. 30% of them said that it was the opinion of the wife that prevailed should a conflict on domestic matters occur. While 12% of the respondents said that it depended on the issues and 2% of the respondents had not responded to the question.

Attitudinal Statement

Statement I

Table- 95: A Wife Should Consider Her Husband as Superior and be Submissive to Him in Everything

Attitude	%
No	44
Yes	48
Uncertain	08
Total	100

In the above Table 95 it is seen that 48% of the respondents said "Yes", 44% said "No" and 8% of them were "Uncertain".

Statement II

Table- 96: In Domestic Matters Women Should not exercise Authority over Men

Attitude	%
No	42
Yes	38
Uncertain	18
Not Specified	02
Total	100

In the above attitudinal statement 42% of the respondents said “No”, 38% said “Yes”, 18% of them were “Uncertain and 2% of the respondents had not specified.

Husband

Table- 97: Financial Assistance to Relatives Without Wife’s Permission

Financial Assistance	%
No	38
Yes	54
Sometimes	04
Not Specified	04
Total	100

From the above Table 97 it is seen that 54% of the respondents had the liberty to provide financial assistance to their relatives without having to get permission from their wives. 38% of the respondents said that they could not do so without consulting

their spouses. Out of the total respondents 4% of them admitted that they could provide assistance to their kith and kin only at certain times and another 4% of the total respondents had not responded to the query.

Table- 98: Freedom to Decide on One's Earning

Free Decision	%
No	10
Yes	60
Sometimes	28
Not Specified	02
Total	100

In regard to the decisions in their own earnings Table 98 shows that majority i.e. 60% of the respondents said that they were free to take decisions and 28% of them said they could do so only sometimes. The Table also shows that there were 10% of the respondents who said that they had no freedom to decide how their own earnings would be spent.

Table- 99: Children's Preference in Seeking Permission from Parents

Whose Permission	%
Father	06
Mother	04
Both	84
Not Specified	06
Total	100

Question was asked to the respondents as to whose permission did their children seek in matters where permission from their parents were required. Table 99 shows the response of the respondents to this question. The Table reveals that in matters where permissions from parents were required 84% of the men respondents said that their children did not seek permission from a single parent but rather from both the parents. As we can see from the above table only 6% of the respondents said that their children seek permission from the fathers and 4% from the mothers and 6% of them did not specify.

Table- 100: Major Decision Maker on Expensive Purchase

Major Decision Maker	%
Husband	06
Husband & Wife	92
Not Specified	02
Total	100

As regards the major decision on expensive purchases 92% of the respondents said that it was the joint decision of both husband and wife. This shows that women too were consulted and their suggestions valued. Out of the total respondents only 6% of them said that it was the husband who made the decisions and only two per cent of the respondents had not responded. These figures are clearly shown in the above Table 100.

Table- 101: Decision maker on domestic and inexpensive items

Decision Maker	%
Husband	02
Wife	44
Husband & Wife	52
Not Specified	02
Total	100

From the Table 101 it was observed that with regard to the decisions on domestic and inexpensive items 52% of the respondents said that both husband and wife made join decision, 44% of them said that it was the wife who took the decision. Out of the total respondents only 2% of the respondents said that it was the husband who took decisions even in matters of domestic and inexpensive items and 2% of the respondents had not responded to the query.

Table- 102: Decision Maker on Family Outings

Decision Maker	%
Wife	02.86
Husband & Wife	97.14
Total	100

With regard to the decisions on family outings we can see clearly from the Table 102 that decision was almost totally taken by both the husband and wife. It was only a negligible fraction (2.86%) of the respondents who said that decision was taken by wife only.

Table- 103: Major Decision Maker in Buying and Selling of Acquired Assets

Major decision Maker	%
Husband	26
Husband & Wife	72
Not Specified	02
Total	100

It is observed from the Table 103 that wives of the respondents were consulted in times of buying and selling of their assets as 72% of the respondents admitted that the decision for such events were taken by both husband and wife. Though majority of the respondents said that decisions were of both husband and wife there were 26% of the respondents who said that it was only the husband who took the major decisions and only 2% of the respondents did not respond to the question.

Table- 104: Dominant Opinion in times of Conflict in Domestic Matters

Dominant Opinion	%
Husband	68
Wife	12
Depends on Issues	12
Not Specified	08
Total	100

From the above Table 104 it is seen that in times of conflict in domestic matters 68% of the respondents said that it was the husband's opinion the prevailed, 12% of the respondents said that it was rather the wife's opinion that prevailed, still another 12% of

them said that it totally depended on the issues, it could be of the husband's or the wife's. Out of the total respondents 8% of them did not respond to the question.

Attitudinal Statement

Statement I

Table- 105: A wife should always consider her husband as superior and be submissive to him in everything

Attitude	%
No	40
Yes	44
Uncertain	10
Not Specified	06
Total	100

To the above attitudinal assessment 44% of the respondents said "Yes", 40% said "No", 10% of them said "Uncertain" and 6% of the respondents did not give their opinion. It means that both were to be considered as at par and not submissive to each other.

Statement II

Table- 106: In domestic matters women should not exercise authority over men

Attitude	%
No	34
Yes	18
Uncertain	06
Not Specified	42
Total	100

The respondents' attitude in the second statement is clearly shown on the Table 106. It is observed that 34% of the respondents said "No", indicating that women had to play a role in the family related matters. 18% said "Yes", 6% of them said they were "Uncertain" and a good number i.e. 42% of the respondents did not give their opinions regarding the statement.

Cross Tabulation

Table- 107: Freedom to Decide on One's Earning

Husband	Wife			Total
	No	Yes	Sometimes	
No	2	1	2	5
Yes	2	19	9	30
Sometimes	2	9	3	14
Not Specified	0	0	1	1
Total	6	29	15	50

Chi- Square 8.37 df=6 Chi-Square (6,.01)=16.812
 Chi- Square (6,.05)=12.592

As the tabulated value of Chi- Square for 6 degree of freedom at 1% level of significance is 16.812 and at 5% level of Significance is 12.592. The calculated value of Chi- Square is less than the tabulated value of Chi- Square at 1% level or 5% level of significance and hence it is insignificant at both the levels. The result, thus, supports the hypothesis and we can say that they are free to decide about their own earnings.

Table- 108: Major Decision Maker Regarding Expensive Expenses

Husband	Wife		Total
	Husband	Both Husband & Wife	
Husband	1	2	3
Both Husband and Wife	4	42	46
Not Specified	1	0	1
	6	44	50

Chi- Square=9.1 Degrees of Freedom = 2 Chi-Square (2,.05)=5.991

From the above Table it is seen that as regards taking the major decisions regarding Expensive purchases, it is being taken in joint consultation as reported by 84% of the respondents of both husband and wife. It is also inferred that as the χ^2 value is greater than the tabulated value of χ^2 at 5% level of significance, it may be concluded that both husband and wife are responsible for taking the decision regarding purchase of any expensive items.

Table- 109: Decision Maker on Domestic and Inexpensive Items

		Wife			Total
		Husband	Wife	Both	
Husband	Husband	0	1	0	1
	Wife	0	18	4	22
	Both Husband & Wife	1	11	14	26
	Not Specified	0	0	1	1
Total		1	30	19	50

Chi- Square 10.275; df=6 tabulated $\chi^2 = 12.59$

The tabulated value of Chi- Square for 6 degrees of freedom at 1% level of significance is 9.210 and at 5% level of significance is 5.991. Hence, the calculated value of Chi- Square is more than the tabulated value of Chi- Square at 5% level of significance. Therefore, it can be concluded that the decision about the domestic and inexpensive items, the decision is not biased at 5% level of significance.

Comparative Tables

Table-110: Contribution of husband and wife in running the House

Husband	Wife					Total
	100%	75%	50%	Less than 50%	Not Specified	
100%	7	2	2	1	0	12
75%	1	9	1	0	1	12
50%	1	3	8	3	1	16
Less than 50%	0	1	0	8	0	9
Not Specified	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	10	15	11	12	2	50

As regards the contribution of husband and wife in running the house, it is seen from the Table 110 that 14% of them jointly contributed in running the house. 18% of them had reported that their contribution was of 75% each while 50% contribution was reported by 16% respondents. In case of less than 50% contribution by both the partners in running the house was reported by 16% of the respondents. In general, it can be concluded that the major share of their earnings was being used for running the house while a small portion of their earning was being used by them for their personal use or for the purpose of savings.

Table- 111: Financial Assistance to Relatives with/without Spouse's Permission

		Wife			Total
		No	Yes	Not Specified	
Husband	No	13	6	0	19
	Yes	11	15	1	27
	Sometimes	1	1	0	2
	Not Specified	0	2	0	2
Total		25	24	1	50

Table 111 shows the degrees of freedom the respondents had in assisting their relatives without involving the permission of their spouse. From the figures we can see that twenty five (25) women respondents did not have the freedom to help their relatives financially. It is also seen that twenty four (24) respondents were given the liberty to do so and only one respondent had not specified about this.

As can be seen from the above Table more than half of the total number of respondents i.e. twenty seven (27) men respondents had the freedom to provide financial assistance to their relatives without always getting permission from their spouse. It is also observed that nineteen (19) respondents admitted that they consulted with their partners before any financial aide was made towards their relatives. It is also seen that out of the total number of respondents only two (2) respondents said that they could help their relatives only sometimes while another two (2) respondents did not make any comment as to whether they had the freedom to do so.

Table-112: Freedom to Decide on One's Earning

Husband	Wife			Total
	No	Yes	Sometimes	
No	2	1	2	5
Yes	2	19	9	30
Sometimes	2	9	3	14
Not Specified	0	0	1	1
Total	6	29	15	50

It is seen from the Table 112 that nearly 60% of the respondents both husband and wives were of the opinion that they were free to take decisions regarding their own earnings. A small proportion of them had reported that they could not take decision about their earning. It may be due to the fact that their earnings were not much and most of their earnings were being used for the household purposes.

Table- 113: Major Decision Maker on Expensive Purchases

Husband	Wife		Total
	Husband	Both Husband and Wife	
Not Specified	1	0	1
Husband	1	2	3
Both Husband & Wife	4	42	46
Total	6	44	50

Table 113 indicates that nearly 88% and 92% of wife's and husband's respectively had opined that taking major decisions regarding expensive purchases was being taken in consultation with each other, i.e., jointly by both the husband and wife. A small proportion of them had opined that the decision was being taken by either wife or by husband. There was one respondent in case of husband who had not specified about this.

Table- 114: Decision Maker on Domestic and Inexpensive Items

Husband	Wife			Total
	Husband	Wife	Both Husband & Wife	
Not Specified	0	0	1	1
Husband	0	1	0	1
Wife	0	18	4	22
Both H& W	1	11	14	26
Total	1	30	19	50

The above Table 114 shows that twenty six (26) men respondents said that decision on domestic and inexpensive items was jointly taken by both the husband and wife. Out of the total respondents twenty two of them said that decisions on such things were taken by their wives only. We also observe that only one husband said that it was the husband who took the decision on domestic and inexpensive items and one person had not specified on this.

The table also shows that out of the total respondents, majority (30) of the women respondents said that it was the wife who took decisions on domestic and inexpensive items. There were also nineteen (19) respondents who said that decision was jointly taken by both husband and wife and only one respondent said that it was the husband who decided on domestic and even inexpensive items.

Table- 115: Decision Maker in Buying and Selling of Acquired Assets

Husband	Wife				Total
	Husband	Wife	Both Husband & Wife	Not Specified	
Not Specified	1	0	0	0	1
Husband	9	0	4	0	13
Both Husband & Wife	9	1	25	1	36
Total	19	1	29	1	50

It is observed from the Table 115 that majority of them (both husband and wife) are of the opinion that the decision regarding the buying and selling of acquired assets, the decision was taken in joint consultation. There were no respondents who said that women took decision about the purchase or sale of assets unlike the men who had the liberty to do so at times.

Table- 116: Dominant Opinion in Times of Conflict on Domestic Matters

Husband	Wife				Total
	Not Specified	Husband	Wife	Depends on Issue	
Not Specified	1	1	0	2	4
Husband	0	24	9	1	34
Wife	0	1	5	0	6
Depends on Issue	0	2	1	3	6
Total	1	28	15	6	50

As regards the dispute in the family, it is observed from the Table 116 that the decision taken by the husband was final as opined by both husband and wife unanimously. It is also observed from the above Table that 12% of both the respondents had opined that cases were decided upon the merits of the issues.

Table- 117: A Wife should Consider Her Husband as Superior and Be Submissive To Him in Everything

Husband	Wife			Total
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
No	12	4	4	20
Yes	5	17	0	22
Uncertain	4	1	0	5
Not Specified	1	2	0	3
Total	22	24	4	50

From Table 117, it is observed that regarding the question of wife considering her husband as superior and being submissive to him in everything, a good number from both the sets had reported that a wife should consider her husband as superior and be submissive to him. Comparatively, lower proportion of them had argued that it was not true and that a wife should not consider her husband as superior and in their opinion they might be considered as equal. A small proportion had not been able to decide about this aspect.

Table- 118: In Domestic Matters Women Should Not Exercise Authority Over Men.

Husband	Wife				Total
	No	Yes	Uncertain	Not Specified	
No	14	3	4	0	21
Yes	4	12	0	1	17
Uncertain	1	4	4	0	9
Not Specified	2	0	1	0	3
Total	21	19	9	1	50

Figures in the above Table 118 indicate that a near majority of the respondents, both husband and wife did not agree to the statement that in domestic matters women should not exercise authority over men. As can be observed from the same Table a good number (17 & 19) of the respondents (Husband & Wife respectively) agreed to the statement while nine (9) each of the respondents from both the groups were not sure if

they were in support of the statement. A small number of the respondents had not given their opinion with regard to the statement.

General Attitude Towards Sex Roles and Difference:

Apart from administering the questionnaires I also conducted structured interviews while administering the questionnaires to the respondents. It elicited the general attitude towards sex roles and differences concerning the women's role in community decision making, attitude towards the girl child in terms of education, equal opportunities, their rights in landed immovable properties etc.

To the question as to should women participate in politics, a sizeable number of women are in favour and say that women should participate in politics. On the other hand we also have women who said that women might participate but with limitations; still there were some women who did not favour women's participation in politics. Of the men respondents who were interviewed about half of them supported to the idea of women's participation in politics. Like the women respondent there were some men respondents who said that women might participate in politics to certain limits; still there were men who did not favour the idea at all. The reason for 'Yes' among the women was that it was time women had their share outside their homes and have their fair chance in the larger community decision-making as well. The reason for 'Yes but with limitations' was that women having children to look after and home to take care and thus they were tied down with many responsibilities, would not be successful even if they participated in politics and so they must, if they were willing, only after the

children were grown up. The reason for 'No' among them was that Politics is not for women because if they (women) are out of home there is always chaos in the family.

The reason for 'Yes' among men was that no field is reserved, so there is no problem women being involved in politics, provided they are capable, the reason for 'Yes but with limitations' was that family comes first and only after that they might do so, but by experience, citing the example of the first Tangkhul woman MLA, success is very rare for women in politics, physical constrain is one reason among many. The reason for 'No' among them was that they just don't like the idea.

A greater number of the respondents interviewed in both the sets favoured women's participation in politics which indicated a shift from the traditional idea of women being confined in the domain of family and home where she took care of everyone and everything in the family.

Response to the question as to whether there was sex discriminations in their families (among their siblings), almost all of the male respondents said that there were discriminations in their homes and only a few of them said that they did not experience in their homes. Half of the women said that there was discriminations in their homes and half of them said there wasn't any but said that they had observed in their friends' families, citing a few examples.

When asked to elaborate on the discriminations that existed in their homes majority of the male respondents said that it was mainly on responsibilities in the house and in educational spheres. Household responsibilities were laden upon their sisters while they (brothers) were not imposed to carry out the same. They also said that in

educational sphere they were given more opportunities to attend schools and colleges when their sisters were kept home to help their parents or if sisters were sent to schools and colleges they were kept closer to their homes. Some went on to justify this discrimination as the last option for their parents as they were not economically/ financially well off. Giving preference to the male children by the parents was justified as male child was considered the real/ true member of the family unlike a girl child who would belong to someone else (as helper) after her marriage. That's why women in the villages were treated as *Singnairao* in local term, which means servant of the locality. A good number of the respondents also said that there were discriminations against their sisters with regard to property inheritance; sisters were not given any immovable properties as it was against the customary law which prohibits a girl from inheriting immovable (land) property and ancestral properties as it should be retained by the male members.

The women respondents who said that discriminations was practiced in their families when asked to elaborate they said that they experienced it in educational sphere where they were sent to schools where expenses were nominal and the quality compromising when their brothers were sent to schools more expensive and prestigious ones. They also said that movements were restricted on them while their brothers were let loose, etc. When they were prompted as to how about their conditions regarding their property inheritance, they said that it was an understood thing; women do not have their share in family properties except gifts during the time of their weddings, as custom does not permit so.

The respondents were then further asked to share their opinion about discriminations and if they would want to discriminate their daughters as well. To this, almost all of the respondents of both the sets said that there should not be any sex discrimination and that they would not discriminate their daughters. That they would treat their children on equal terms, give equal opportunities to both male and female children and may be more preferences to the ones more capable irrespective of their sex.

To the question whether they would want to gift their daughters their landed/immovable properties as to their son, they said that they would want to will away their landed properties to their daughters like they would, to their sons though they might still have to give greater share to their sons. The men respondents also said that this might be possible only with regard to their acquired properties and not the ones they had inherited from their parents as it is bound by the customary laws.

In the final analysis it is apparent that the modernized Tangkhul family structure retains by and large its traditional moorings. The findings may be seen as retention of traditional family structure with an increase shift to modernity. One cannot say that these changes are structural changes at all. Though there is a power re-allocation in the family among the husband and wife; the husband does continue to exercise some amount of power over the wife. The educated working women too, by recognizing, approving and accepting the traditional ideas for women's and men's role, have accepted their women status to that of their husbands.

The hierarchical relations between men and women are part of a patriarchal culture that has been historically nurtured by religion, and by economic and legal factors, among other. These are entrenched in the social structure, in the consciousness of most women, and of nearly all men.

CONCLUSION

The present study was undertaken in order to make a comprehensive study on the social status of educated working women among the Tangkhul Nagas. Tangkhuls are one of the major tribes of the Nagas inhabiting the Ukhrul District and a small portion in Senapati district of the state of Manipur. With the introduction of western education by the American Baptist Missionary there has been a tremendous change in the life of the Tangkhuls. Women too have access to formal education and as a result of this, they have started taking up jobs outside the domain of their home which further resulted in a shift in the nature of their work. Earlier she worked in the jhum alone but now she works in offices, schools, colleges, hospitals etc. In the light of this change among the Tangkhul women, the present study was conducted in Ukhrul town, the headquarters of Ukhrul District and some areas of Imphal West District and Imphal East District of the state of Manipur.

In the first chapter we have discussed the statement of the problem and the various literature related to the topic under study. In this chapter we have also discussed the objectives of the study that sought to examine the effect of women's education and employment on the power relations within the family. To be able to carry out the study the researcher adopted Interview method and Structured Questionnaire method. In order to collect information related to the study field work was conducted in three phases. The first phase consisted of collecting materials containing folklores and songs from the elders and knowledgeable persons; the second phase consisted of collecting literature on

the early Christians of Tangkhul society and the formation of modern education. The third and the final phase of the field work was carried out building up rapport and personal contact with the respondents.

In the second chapter we have discussed broadly the traditional social structure of the Tangkhuls beginning with a statement that a Tangkhul village is an autonomous political, social, religious and economic unit. In the political institution the chief of the village was the ruler of the village possessing political power; and religious authority. Though he was the head he could never ignore the counsel of the councilors as he was assisted by them in the day-to-day administration of the village. The village council or *Hangva* in the village was the highest organ of power and its basic units were the respective clans from which the councilors were selected. All matters affecting the village community became subject to decisions of the village council based on customary laws, constituted by tradition and convention. The representatives of the clans were the chiefs of the clans called *Pipa* whose position too, like that of the chief, is heritable. Women were never represented in the village council but they were not debarred from the assembly. The respective *pipas* of the clans were very influential in their own clans. Any dispute within the village was settled by elders of both the disputing parties. If they could not settle the case the matter might be referred to the village council whose decision was final in the village itself. But disputes between two villages, if the disputing village elders could not settle the problem the matter is referred to the *Longphang* or to the apex body called *Longrei* or *Tangkhul Long* for its final decision. The representatives of the *Longphang* or *Longrei* bring the disputing parties to

a compromising point. But if the parties involved refuse to comply with the proposal they might pitch a battle and the representatives of the *Long* would be present there as witnesses. On such occasions and other situations of battles it was the *Pukreila* or the 'neutral lady' who alone had the power to command the battle to be stopped. As she was neutral she could not be hurt by rule. If in defiance of the rule someone among the warring parties hurt her, severe punishment would follow on the defaulter's party by the combined forces of the other party and its neighbouring villages. Thus the *Pukreila* had a say in the inter-village relationship in the yester years of the Tangkhul society. Her role as the peace maker preceded the role of the *Longphang* or *Longrei* where all the matters beyond the village were referred to since its existence. As does in the village council, the *Longphang* and *Longrei* do not have any women representatives to this day in spite of the demands from the women's organization (*Shinaolong*).

In the family and kinship system we have seen that kinship is reckoned and recognised both by descent and by marriage. As a patrilineal society, the rule of descent is strictly based on the male line only. Thus, all children acquire membership in their father's clan group which might be a localized group or might spread horizontally over many villages and could never acquire membership in their mother's clan group. The pattern of inheritance, rules of succession and residence closely followed the system of patrilineal descent. The principle of succession was primogeniture and accordingly the eldest son is responsibility and obligations to the family who would soon be the head of the family after his father. A daughter has very little time to stay in the parental house for she marries and eventually leaves the parental house. A daughter does not have any

legal right on the family property except a small share at the time of her marriage which she carries with her as a form of gifts. Even in the absence of a male child, a daughter cannot claim, as a matter of right, the family property, but would normally go to the nearest male relatives. A daughter after her marriage continues to maintain a tie with her natal family by sharing a responsibility on occasions such as house construction, death ceremony, wedding etc. The daughters according to their status in the kinship order are accordingly distributed portions of the meat killed for the occasion. Marriage is the outcome of youthful courtship followed by the approval of their parents or arranged by the parents. While choosing a partner he or she should bear in mind the rules of clan exogamy. Breach of this strict rule will result to punishment and nullification of the courtship. Monogamy is the most preferred type of marriage. Though polygamy was not prohibited it was discouraged due to heavy expenditure involved in marriage and due to its negative connotation in the peaceful existence of the family atmosphere. Dissolution of marriage or the practice of divorce was very rare though the customs and traditions had the provision for the same as it involved severe punishments. A divorce can cause inter-clan feud or even inter-village feud if the parties involved were from different villages. Divorce could be initiated by either the husband or the wife.

Apart from the political and social life Tangkhuls had religious aspect of their life as they believed in the existence of the one supreme god called *Ameowo*. Besides *Ameowo*, they believed in the existence of other supernatural beings that lived in jungles, fields, precipice, rivers and streams, trees, rocks, etc. They believed that some

of these supernatural beings were good while others were bad and harmful because of which they often make offerings of animals and fowls to propitiate the latter. The communal observances of the Tangkhuls round the year and their religious rites were connected with their principal economic activities and agricultural undertakings. Accordingly, the spirits (*kameo*) or the gods and goddesses to whom the Tangkhuls make offerings, sacrifices and invocations were broadly divided into *Phunghui Philava*, *Shimlui Kameo* and *Kokto*. One of the distinct feature in the religious aspect was that in one of the most important festival called *Chumpha* the woman or the mother of the house played the role of the priest. She was the priestess who carried out the entire sacrificial ceremony for the whole family. Besides, she also assisted her husband and at times the village priest in carrying out the religious rites at different times of the year. The resemblance of her role as priestess is seen today with the American Baptist Mission inducting women as pastors in the churches in the Tangkhul villages. Tangkhuls also believed that gods and goddesses spoke to them through nature as a result they observed several signs and symbols from the nature to decipher the will of gods for them.

Agriculture plays the most important role in the economy of the Tangkhuls. The *Awunga* and the *Hangva* exercised extensive power in controlling the agriculture and cultivation of the village land. In the past, cultivation of the whole village was affected by the village taboo. The *Awunga* performed the rituals and offered sacrifices to the deity/ spirit for good harvest of the year. Only after he had performed the rites and rituals and sowed the ceremonial seedlings the cultivation of the village for the year

began. Both men and women worked in the field. But in the days of war men were engaged in the defense of the village and men had to safeguard their village and its populace. Thus women and children alone worked in the field. During normal situation they all work together except in hunting and other activities where women could not take part. There were distinct season for carrying out various agricultural activities like clearing the jhum, seedling, weeding, harvesting etc. Tangkhuls practice both jhum and terrace cultivation though the distributions are not even in the whole Tagnkhul area. Agriculture partnership or *yarthot* is a distinct feature that is practiced by the youngsters and the married women. It is a reciprocal give and take form of agricultural work based on mutual adaptation and perfect co-operation. Rice is the stable food of the Tangkhuls. Many other crops and vegetables are grown along side the paddy cultivation. Though agriculture in the traditional period did not directly result in the accumulation of wealth, wealth in paddy and other daily essentials became indirectly connected with accumulation of wealth since the store of food and other consumption goods allowed one to pursue economic gains in other spheres which were earlier intrinsically related to the ritual ceremonies, the ceremonies of prestige or honour. The accumulated wealth was redistributed by way of ceremonial feast or feast of merit (*Maran Kasa*) as a show of pecuniary ability. Because of this the release of accumulated wealth in a conspicuous manner was usually accompanied by a corresponding raise in the social status. Agriculture is the main occupation of the Tangkhul and still plays an important role in the social and economic life of the Tangkhuls in the interior villages and more so in places where only jhumming is practiced. But with the dwindling yields of the land

people become less attached to agricultural work and look for commercial openings offered by the various programs of development planning under the government of Manipur. Agriculture is subordinated by domestication of animals, handicrafts, trade and commerce etc. where in women take active role in all the aspects as she did in agriculture.

The status of the educated working women among the Tangkuls discussed in the third chapter provides an insight into the problem discussed. The women in the study were mostly in the age group of 35 - 49 years. The men were in the age group of 40 - 54 years. On the average the men were around 6.01 years older than the women.

Most of the respondents in both the categories originally hailed from rural areas. In spite of their rural background, their present place of residence are almost equally spread over Imphal and Ukhrul town which are urban areas. Majority of the women respondents did not give reasons for their migration from the place of birth to their place of residence. A considerably good number of the wife respondents said that they had migrated because of their job and marriage. Among the men respondents too, a majority of them had not given reasons for their migration from their place of birth to their place of residence. Almost about the same number of the husbands said that they had migrated from their place of birth to the place of residence due to their job. A considerable number of the respondents said that their place of birth was same as their place of residence. Though all the men respondents had taken residence in urban areas almost all of them said that they still had house/ land in their own villages. Majority of

the men respondents had inherited their properties from their parents and some of them had acquired by themselves.

Regarding the educational background, majority of the wife respondents had completed their schooling from village and town. A large majority of the wife respondents had done their Pre-University Course in town. Almost all the women in the study had their graduation and post-graduation level of education in town and city. A majority of the respondents in both the categories had English as the medium of instruction both in school and in post-matric studies.

Comparatively more fathers of the women respondents were introduced to higher education (Matriculate and above) than that of the fathers of the men respondents. On the other hand there was only a negligible difference between the mothers of the men and mothers of women respondents. Mothers of the respondents in both the categories were more illiterate or just literate or less educated than the fathers. It seems more preference was given to the boy child by the parents in the first generation of education.

With regard to educational level of the respondent, majority of the women respondents had their educational level up to graduation. Almost half of the husband respondents were graduated and almost the same number of the husbands had post-graduate level of education. Comparatively more men respondents were introduced to university level of education than the wife respondents. Similar kind of case was observed in the parents of the respondents in both the categories.

Regarding the occupation/ profession of the parents of the respondents, almost half of the mothers of the wife respondents were housewives. A good number of the mothers were cultivators too. Among the fathers of the wife respondents, majority of them were in government service. In the case of husband respondents, majority of the mothers were cultivators. A greater number of the fathers of the husband respondents were cultivators followed by government service. Comparatively more fathers in both the categories of the respondents were engaged in government service than mothers. This seems to be corresponding to the difference in their educational level.

Majority of the wife respondents started working at the age of 20- 34 years. Majority of the men respondents had been working since 6-10 years and more than 20 years back (at the time of data collection).

Majority of the respondents in both the categories were employed in government sector. Comparatively more women respondents were employed in government service than the men respondents. Majority of the respondents in both the categories were employed on permanent basis. Majority of the wife respondents were within the basic pay range of Rs. 4001- 10,000/-Majority of the men respondents were earning within the range of Rs. 5001- 25,000/- per month. Comparatively majority of husband respondents earned more than their wives.

Fulfilling one's ambition was high among both the categories of the respondents in the reason given for taking up the present job. However, fulfilling ambition,

economic necessity and enhancement of social status were the major reasons given by both the categories of the respondents.

Majority of the respondents, both wife and husband, said that they had job satisfaction. Majority of the women respondents said that they had job satisfaction because they enjoyed their work, that they got to give service to people and that it was the fulfillment of their ambition. On the basis of these facts it may be said that educated Tangkhul women were impelled to get into employment or professions not only by economic insufficiency, but also by other socio-psychological motivations. Among the men respondents, fulfilling ambition was high, followed by enjoyment of their work, and that being in job helped them make both ends meet. Thus, the major reasons assigned by the men respondents to their job satisfaction were fulfilling ambition, enjoyed one's work and that being in job helped them make both ends meet. Among the women respondents who did not have job satisfaction majority of them said that it was because their salary was very low. Reasons for job dissatisfaction among the men respondents were numerous which do not have single dominant reason.

Majority of the wife respondents, who said that they were working because of economic necessity, said that they would continue to work even if their economic condition improved. Almost all the women respondents said that they enjoyed equal status with men at their work places.

With regard to the age at marriage, majority of the women respondents got married between 20- 34 years. Majority of the men respondents were also married

between 31- 40 years. Majority of the women had their job before marriage. A good number of men respondents were not married when they got their job. Love marriage was dominant among the respondents. Most of the respondents were 6-25 years into their married life. On the marital happiness, there was a slight difference in the experience among the two categories of the respondents as more women rated their married life 'Happy' while more men rated as 'Very Happy'. However, we may say that the respondents were 'Happy' in their married life.

Almost all the wife respondents did not face objection from their husbands for working outside their homes. Out of the women who said that they did not face objection from their husband for working outside home, majority of them said that their husbands respected their individuality. A considerable number of them said that additional earning was required in their homes. Out of the women who said that they faced objection from their husband, half of them said that their husbands object because they earned sufficient, another half of them said that because they worked they had no time for him and for the family.

Majority of the wife respondents said that their husbands did not prefer them to be housewives. Majority of the men respondents said that they did not prefer their wives to be home maker even if they earned enough. Still, a considerably good number of the men respondents said that if they earned sufficient they would want their wives to be home-maker. Majority of the respondents in both the categories said that wife's career did not obstruct smooth running of the household.

Apart from their career a good number of the women respondents were also engaged in household duty, social service and education of children. Half of the women respondents said that they spent between 4- 6 hours in their domestic work. A considerable number of them had not specified the hours they spent in domestic chores. Thus, we can say that a large majority of the working women spend much of her time in domestic chores. Majority of the men respondents said that they helped their wives in domestic chores and majority of the women agreed that their husbands helped them in carrying out domestic chores. Men in traditional Tangkhul society were not known for their participation in domestic concerns. It was solely left to the care of the wife or the mother. We see a shift in the nature of the responsibility among the husbands of the educated working Tangkhul women where the husbands sharing a good percentage of their domestic responsibilities though it still remains to be more or less the domain of women.

Almost all the husband respondents said that they helped their wives in child-care. Majority, of the men who said that they took part in child-care, said that they did so because it was their responsibility. Among the men who did not take part in child-care, half of them said that it was because they had no time. Another half of them said that they did not stay with them. The area of involvement in child-care among the men respondents were mostly disciplining and education. A shift in the role of men was observed in the husband's participation in child care. Men in traditional Tangkhul society were most of the time away or busy in head hunting raids and wars. It was the women who took care of their children with the help of their older children or the in-

laws. When children attained certain age they join the Dormitory or *Morung (Long Shim)* for learning the skills in various field. Disciplining was apart of the Dormitory system.

Half of the women respondents said that they contributed about 75% to 100% of their earnings in running the house. Almost half of them said that they contributed about less than 50% to 50% of their earnings in running the house. Majority of the men respondents said that they contributed about 50%- 75% of their earnings in running the house. Comparatively, more women contributed 100% of their earnings than men respondents in running the house. More men respondents contributed more than 50% of their earnings in running of the house than their wives. Bread winning had always been a joint venture of husband and wife among the Tangkhul society and it continues to be so as almost all the respondents from both the categories said that both husband and wife contributed almost equally towards their domestic expenses. Though there is a shift in the nature of work (from Jhum to office) for women there is no change observed in her participation in her bread winning role. She continues to be so as she was in traditional Tangkhul society.

A large majority of the women respondents said that their husbands were not physically violent to them in times of conflict.

In the fourth chapter the nature of power relations in the family and the changes in the traditional social structure had been discussed. The perceptions of the respondents regarding the ideal role of husband and wife were analysed. In their opinion on the ideal

roles of husband and wife, most of the respondents favoured traditional qualities as ideal. A majority of the women and men respondents said that their ideals were according to traditional positions. In short, as perceived by the wife, her educational and economic status did not have an important bearing on her traditional ideal of married life and her ideal role of the husband and wife.

The question of having upper hand in the family seemed undeterred as majority of the respondents in both the categories agreed on the husbands' having upper hand though a good number of the respondents said that they were equal.

Several questions related to the effect of education and work on family decision-making was unraveled. We try to find out whether or not the educated working women had the same power in the decision making, as her husband in the family. In order to measure the power of the educated working women Vis-à-vis their husbands, important areas of family decision making such as- major expenses and purchases, buying and selling of assets and properties, vacations and outings etc. were examined.

A good number of the wife respondents said that it was their own decision to take up the present job. A considerable number of them also said that they took the consent of their parents and their husbands. Still, a considerable number of them said that they took the consent of their husbands in taking up the present job. Thus, we can say that some of the wife respondents took the decision on their own and also some with the consent of their parents and husband. It is seen that the higher educational qualifications have prompted the women to take up some career of their own.

Half of the women respondents said that they did not give financial assistance to their relatives without husband's permission. Another half of them did so even without husband's permission. Majority of the men respondents said that they give assistance to relatives without wife's permission. Thus, out of the total respondents, majority of them help their relatives without their spouse's permission though more husbands give assistance than the wives.

Majority, in both the categories of respondents, said that they had freedom to make decision regarding their own earnings. Majority of the women respondents said that they could spend money for themselves and their children without husband's permission. Majority of the husband respondents said that children seek permission from both the parents in matters where parent's permissions were required.

A large majority, in both the categories of the respondents, said that major decision on expensive purchases was a joint decision of both husband and wife. With regard to the decision on domestic and inexpensive items majority of the wife said that it was she who made decisions. A majority of the men respondents said that decision on domestic and inexpensive items was a joint one. A slight contradiction is observed in their opinion in this regard. However, it is to be noted that women were a part of the decision- making in domestic affairs. In matters of buying and selling of acquired assets, a little more than half of the women respondents said that it was a joint decision. A considerable number of them said that it was the husband who took decision in such occasion. Among the men, a large majority of them said that it was a joint decision. A considerable number of them also said that it was the husband who made the decision in

such occasion. Thus, we can say that though both husband and wife make decisions together there is a tendency of man having dominant share. Decision on family outing was a joint one as majority of the wife and husband respondents said so. Majority of the respondents, in both the categories, said that in times of conflict on domestic matters it was the husband's opinion that prevailed.

On the basis of the data it is found that the educated and earning status of women has resulted, to some extent, the power re-allocation in the husband-wife relationship. No definite co-relation could be found about the amount of money earned and the corresponding decision- making capacity that the working women hold. A co-relation was observed about the level of education of the wife and their power relationship as all the women did have educational qualifications equal or more than their husbands, and this has a significant influence to the power that they hold.

The employment of women functioned to increase her power vis-à-vis her husband because she earns money and keeps control over it. It gives her more confidence and because she is earning money she has a new concept of her own worth, and is assertive.

In regard to the statement: "A wife should consider her husband as superior and be submissive to him in everything". Nearly half of the wife respondents agreed with the statement. Almost half of the wife respondents disagreed with the statement. The husband respondents were divided almost in equal numbers between "yes" and "No" while a few of them were uncertain as to agree or not to agree. In this regard we can say that majority of the respondents in both the categories agree with the statement. Another

statement: "In domestic matters women should not exercise authority over men." Majority in both the categories of respondents did not agree with the statement. From the two statements it is observed that the respondents do recognize and accept men to exercise certain degree of authority over wife. But absolute authority is not acceptable to them.

General attitude of the respondents with regard to sex role and difference is also taken into account in this chapter. A greater number of the respondents interviewed in both the sets favoured women's participation in politics which indicated a shift from the traditional idea of women being confined in the domain of family and home where she took care of everyone and everything in the family. We also saw that the respondents agreed in the existence of sex differentiations in their own homes or had observed one, and they were of the opinion that no such differentiation would be made among their children with regard to privilege, but treat them on equal terms. There was still some reservation observed when it comes to the respondents' opinion on the landed/ immoveable properties as according to them they are still bound by the customary laws which does not permit them to give away their landed properties especially the ancestral property to the daughters though they may will away their self acquired property.

Thus we can conclude that the findings may be seen as retention of traditional family structure with an increase shift to modernity. Though there is a power re-allocation in the family among the husband and wife; the husband does continue to exercise some degree of power over the wife. The educated working women too, by

recognizing, approving and accepting the traditional ideas for women's and men's role, have accepted their women status to that of their husbands.

The hierarchical relations between men and women are part of a patriarchal culture that has been historically nurtured by religion, and by economic and legal factors, among other. These are entrenched in the social structure, in the consciousness of most women, and of nearly all men.

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