

PREFACE

The present study entitled **GENDER RELATIONS IN INDIA (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN TEA GARDEN SETTING IN ASSAM)** is an attempt to find out the kinds of rights, freedom and decision making powers enjoyed by the women in the tea garden setting of Cachar district of Assam.

The study comprises 11 chapters, in all. **Chapter One** conceptualizes the study in a theoretical framework by formulating the problem of research in the light of an extensive review of the existing women/gender studies, designing methodological strategy consisted of universe, units and field, sampling procedure, and forms, sources, analysis, and tools for collection of data; and discussing its sociological significance. **Chapter Two** discusses the historical development of the tea plantation and tea industry in Assam, Barak Valley and Cachar district. **Chapter Three** contextualizes the study in the tea garden setting, particularly in Dewan Tea Garden village and depicts the patterns like settlement of population, social morphology, institutional network and social, cultural, economic and power structure in Dewan Tea Garden and its surroundings. **Chapter Four** deals with the gendering of the kinship relations in the village and analyses the women's dependency and liberty as compared with the men amidst the patrilineality, caste endogamy, polygyny, early and negotiable marriage and practice of dowry. **Chapter Five** attempts to analyze the nature of women's work and, in return, the position and economic independence they enjoy in family and society. **Chapter Six** reveals the patterns of gender participation in decision-making (power relations) in various organizations such as caste panchayat, Gaon panchayat, Bagan panchayat and political parties. **Chapter Seven** analyses literacy rate, drop out rate, enrolment for higher education among males and females to find out the educational status of women. **Chapter Eight** discusses the

patterns of food, nutrition, diseases, treatment, family planning methods adopted by the males and females to understand the gender disparities of health in the village. **Chapter Nine** identifies various types of the communication system that prevails in the village and the use of these systems by the men and women of the village. **Chapter Ten** puts forth the findings of the study that the women are given a low status, more or less, in every aspect of life. The inequality is ingrained in the minds through social values as well as rooted in the unjust distribution of economic and political resources. Any attempt to re-arrange gender relations with a view to social justice have to be initiated simultaneously at more than one count and any tinkering with one count appears inadequate to deal with such a complex problem of systemic inequality.



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