

## **Chapter - III**

### **Socio-economic and Political Background of the sampled Women: Manipur and Meghalaya**

In the previous chapter the scholar had discussed the nature and limits of women's political participation in the North-East. The discussion was fairly general in the sense that it tried to provide an overall outlook of women's political participation in all the states in the region. The current chapter would be specific and contextualized in the two selected states. This again is limited in the sense that the chapter will be confined to the analysis of the socio-economic and political background of the sampled women. Thus, this chapter attempts to study the socio-economic and political background of the women who were taken as samples for studying dynamics of women's political participation in two of the states in North East India viz. Manipur and Meghalaya.

#### **3.1 Methodology of the Study and Data: The Case of Manipur**

Process of women's political participation here has been studied through field survey in two Districts of Manipur. These Districts are Imphal East and Imphal West. The Districts are chosen purposively on consideration of conveniences, such as accessibility and communication, security, expenditure involved in the survey etc. However most of the features of the Manipur have much in common in the aforesaid selected villages.

The study is conducted in Imphal West district and Imphal East district. The total population of the two districts is the universe of the study, i.e., 974105. Out of this, a population of 300 respondents is selected from each of the two districts. It was then stratified according to the characteristics of sex of family head, caste, occupation, education etc., and finally chose 234 male respondents and 366

female respondents.<sup>1</sup> In other words, 300 respondents consisted of 117 male respondents and 183 female respondents were selected from the total population i.e. 5,17,992 of the Imphal West district, and another 117 male respondents and 183 female respondents i.e. 300 respondents from the total population i.e. 4,56,113 of the Imphal East district were selected as sample of the study. On the basis of incidental sampling respondents are finally selected and data have been collected by framing questionnaires and conducting interview on the respondents on different aspects like family size, sex, education, caste, occupation, income and expenditure, mode of expenditure, etc. From the above analysis the researcher tried to understand the process of women's Political Participation. The study is mainly descriptive and exploratory.

### **3.2 Women in Manipur: An Introduction**

Manipur is famous for its rich culture, dance, drama, martial arts, handlooms, handicraft and sports. Women of Manipur are known for their elegance, beauty and grace. They are also known for their courage, bravery, patience and hard working nature. They are said to have the valour to fight social evils and to protect the interests of their land. In particular, Manipuri women have always been claimed to be readied to fight for justice and for the welfare of the people. The traditional religious books and literature of the early period of Manipur bear ample testimony to their exceptional qualities and the role they played in the process of the formation and consolidation of the society.<sup>2</sup> Manipuri women have always played an important role in the social life. There are lots of evidences where the women played a vital role in enhancing socio-economic condition of the society. Women participate in social gatherings, religious ceremonies and festivals

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<sup>1</sup> The Rationality of the numbers given here is explained in the methodology in the first chapter of this thesis, pp. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> Devi, Ksh. Bimola. Manipur Women-A Study, in N. Sanajaoba (eds.), *Manipur Past and Present, Volume I*, Delhi, Mittal Publications, 1988.

throughout the year. In addition to their household responsibilities and upbringing of children, Manipuri women also participate in the social functions and festivals of their locality.<sup>3</sup> It has been in these social gatherings and festivals that women exchanged their ideas relating to social, political and economic matters of the society.<sup>4</sup> History suggests that right from the very early period of time the womenfolk of Manipur enjoyed a high status and have been playing a very important role in the society.

Presently, women's role in Manipuri society can be accredited to the contribution they are making to end alcoholism and drugs abuse in the state. The women movement namely Meira-Paibi<sup>5</sup> are examples of women's acute participation in curbing social evils in the society.

Manipuri women play a pivotal role in the economic life of the society. They play a very significant role in their family as well. Earlier, they hold a high and free position since all the internal trade and exchange of products were managed by women.<sup>6</sup> Their activities were not confined to the four walls of their domestic life. They went freely for the purpose of internal trade and commerce. This economic contribution of women could be traced back to the early period of Manipur. Women not only did all the works of buying and selling in public and carrying to and fro of the commodities to be sold but also they were engaged in weaving and spinning at home to earn money and be economically independent. Handloom industry is the backbone of Manipuri women's economy as it is the main source of their income as well as that of the state. Women produce varieties of cloths. Their

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<sup>3</sup> 'The Role of Women in Social Development in Manipur', in Working Women's Association Journal of MU, Issue No.1. Vol. 1, 23 October 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Laishram, Dr. Dhanabir, Women's Movement in Manipur, The Orient Vision, a quarterly journal, NRC, Canchipur, Vol. IV, Issue.1 July-Sept, 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Meira-paibi (torch bearer) movements is a new women's movement in Manipur. It exemplifies another collective women's power in Manipur. It began in the 1980s and is still gaining momentum. The womenfolk to save people from the clutches of liquor and drugs launched the movement. This movement has become a major struggle for human rights. The role of the Meira-paibi is gaining ground due to the rapid increased in the human rights violation and other social problems like HIV/AIDS.

<sup>6</sup> Hodson, T.C. *The Meithei's*, Delhi, B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1975 (rp.).

knowledge and skill of weaving is considered as a special qualification. Every housewife used to provide cloths essential for the family. In addition to weaving, women do embroidery works and earn money to supplement the family income. Handloom industry, in fact, has become the most important source of income for women and it is almost exclusively in the hands of Manipuri women. These products are sold in the local market and also exported to other parts of the country. Thus women play a vital role in the economic life of the society. Their contribution to the economic life of the family as well as that of the society at large has been aptly described in a popular saying in Manipur. It says: "They enjoy a certain degree of the economic independence which enable them to involve in every activities directly or indirectly connected with the social and economic problems of the state. This high status accorded to the womenfolk was regarded as one of the greatest prides of Manipur."<sup>7</sup>

The intricately woven handicrafts and handloom items are popular even outside the state. In fact women are engaged in various activities as for instance weaving, silk rearing, yarn making, embroidery, pottery, fishing, and in the agricultural sector women's contribution is more than their male counterparts. Women's participation is important, right from sowing the paddy to weeding, husking, winnowing etc.

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<sup>7</sup> Jananlata M, Education and Women, *Echo*, MUSU, Sept – Nov, 1991, Volume – 1, No.2.

There are many women who run paan-shops, tea and snack stalls contributing into the financial back-up of the family. One can find many women construction workers, domestic helpers increasing in the state. The number of women entrepreneurs is rising too. And *Nupi Keithel*<sup>8</sup> (Popularly known as *Ima* market outside the state) is the most important place in Manipur for business. Here women from far away districts bring their goods, may be vegetables, clothes, rice, fruits, flowers and many other items essential for daily uses. They sell their product to the women vendors in the market. However if we look into the earning of these women vendors, it is far more negligible looking at the amount of labor, time and energy they are putting into it. Some of them are compelled to sell things due to lack of proper source of income in their family and some of them are not. The contribution of women in the economic aspect is also large. Whether in the organized or unorganized sector they have been making their presence felt everywhere. There are many women who are holding high ranking posts as IFS, IPS, and judges in civil courts and pilot and also MP like Kim Gangte (She was first woman Parliamentarian of the state Manipur). A large number of women are working as doctor, professor, architect, film producer, journalist, air-hostess, and teacher, making a difference not in the valley itself but also outside the state and abroad.

### **3.2(a) Basic Characteristics of Sample Households**

The table 3.1 shows the age-wise sex composition of the respondents of Manipur. In the table there are 6 (six) age groups viz. 20-30; 31-40; 51-60; 61-70; 71 and above. In the age group 20-30 the number of male respondents is 24 which come to 10.3 percent of the total

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<sup>8</sup> Nupi Keithel is also known as Sana Keithel or Khwairamband Bajar is a living symbol of the involvement of Manipuri women in the economic life of the society. It is at the centre of Imphal, and is now popularly known as “Ima Market or “Women’s Market”, a major market place managed by women. It is the market them aware of the socio-political problems of the state. Besides this they discuss and interact with one another about social and political affairs of the state in the market place. This makes them aware of the socio-political problems of the state.

respondents i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 54 which come to 14.8 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male-female combine is 78 which come to 13 percent.

In the age group 31-40 the number of male respondents is 36 which come to 15.4 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 108 which come to 29.5 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male, female combine is 288 which come to 24 percent. In the age group 41-50 the number of male respondents is 60 which come to 25.7 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 60 which come to 16.4 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 120 which come to 20 percent. In the age group 51-60 the number of male respondents is 78 which come to 33.3 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 90 which come to 24.6 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 168 which come to 56.

In the age group 61-70 the number of male respondents is 24 which come to 10.3 percent of the total respondent's i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 18 which come to 4.92 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 42 which come to 7 percent. In the age group 70 and above the number of male respondents are 12 which come to 5.13 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 36 which come to 9.83 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 48 which come to 8 percent.

There is an assumption that the most active age group in politics and other activities is 30 to 70.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, in the data the number of population in the age group 30 to 70 is 251 making a good 83.66 percent. Out of this the female respondents is 84 percent and the number of male respondents is just 73 percent. From this source it may be said that the number of female who are socially and economically active is almost equal to that of the male respondents. Thus, it may also be said that in this society women (female) are almost equally or adequately dynamics a compared to their male counterparts. This can lead to another assumption that women also have the potential to be active in all fields including politics, economic and social affairs.

**Table 3.1 Age-wise Sex Composition of the Respondents of Manipur**

Sex	Age-wise Sex of the Respondents						Total
	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	70 & Above	
<b>Male</b>	24(10.3)	36(15.4)	60(25.7)	78(33.3)	24(10.3)	12(5.13)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	54(14.8)	108(29.5)	60(16.4)	90(24.6)	18(4.92)	36(9.83)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	78(13)	144(24)	120(20)	168(28)	42(7)	48(8)	600(100)

Source: Survey Report

<sup>9</sup> It is observed that the most conscious participation in socio-political activities is from people whose age is about 30 years and above. Again after reaching the age of 70 people decrease their participation in such activities and also the age of present MLAs in Manipur Assembly legislative belong between 30 and 70 years of age. Thus, it is assumed that people between 30 and 70 are the most politically and socially active.

**Table 3.2 Distribution of Families by Family Size across different Educational Categories of the Respondents of Manipur**

Sex	Education	Family size			Total
		1-5	6-10	> 10	
Male	Illiterate	20(8.54)	8(3.41)	4(1.70)	32(13.67)
	Literate	140(59.82)	52(22.22)	10(4.27)	202(86.32)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>160(68.37)</b>	<b>60(25.64)</b>	<b>14(5.98)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	76(20.76)	20(8.54)	8(2.18)	104(28.41)
	Literate	140(38.25)	82(22.40)	40(10.92)	262(71.58)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>216(59.01)</b>	<b>102(27.86)</b>	<b>48(13.11)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>376(62.66)</b>	<b>162(27)</b>	<b>62(10.33)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Source: Survey Report

Table 3.2 shows the distribution of families by family size across different educational categories of the respondents of Manipur. In the table family size of 1-5, the illiterate male respondents are 20 which come to 8.54 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same group the number of literate male respondents is 140 which come to 59.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Thus altogether the number of the male respondents of the family size of 1-5 is 160 which come to 68 percent of the total male respondents i.e., 234.

The number of illiterate female respondents of the family size of 1-5 is 76 which come to 20.76 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same group literate female respondent number is 140 which come to 38.25 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus altogether the number of illiterate and literate female respondents of the family size of 1-5 is 216 which come to 59 percent of the total female respondents. It shows that the percentage of family having size of 1-5 members in case of male respondents is almost equal to that of female.

In the family size of 6-10 the number of illiterate male respondents is 8 which come to 3.41 percent of the total respondents



i.e., 234. In the same family size of 6-10 the number of literate male respondents is 52 which come to the 22 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Thus the total number of the male respondents of the family size of 6-10 is 60 which come to around 26 percent of the total respondents.

Again, in the family size of 6-10, the number of illiterate female respondents is 20 which come to 8 percent of the total respondents i.e. 366. In the same family size of 6-10 of the female respondents literate are 82 which come to around 22 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus altogether the number of the female respondents of the family size of 6-10 is 102 which come to around 28 percent of the 234 male and female respondents respectively.

In the family size of above 10 the number of male illiterate is 4 which come to around 2 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same family size the literate male respondents are 10 which come to around 4 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Thus altogether the number of the male respondents of the family size of above 10 are 14 which come to the around 6 percent of the total respondents.

In the same family size of above 10 the number of illiterate female respondents is 8 which come to 2 percent of the total respondents i.e. 366. In the same family size of above 10 the number of literate female respondents is 40 which come to around 11 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus altogether the number of the female respondents of the family size of above 10 is 48 which come to 13 percent of the total female respondents.

The table clearly shows that bigger the family size is the lower is the number of literate respondents across sexes. In the case of male, the ratio is 1-5: 70, 6-10:26 and >10:5. Similarly, in the case of female the ratio goes 1-5:70, 6-10:41 and >10:20. This shows that the literate women are equally aware of the importance of family planning. This interpretation for our purpose at hand can lead to the conclusion that

women are equally participative and conscious about societal concerns.

**Table 3.3 Distribution of Respondents According to Marital Status of Manipur**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Unmarried</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>Divorced/ Separated</b>	<b>Married once</b>	<b>Married more than one</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	34(14.52)	28(11.96)	20(8.6)	112(46.9)	40(17.09)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	80(21.85)	60(16.39)	32(8.8)	162(44.3)	32(8.8)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	114(19)	88(14.66)	52(8.7)	274(45.7)	72(12)	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

From table 3.3 shows the distribution of respondents according to marital status of Manipur. In the table it shows the numbers of unmarried male respondents which is 34 i.e. around 15 percent and the number of the unmarried female respondents is 80 which come to around 22 percent. In this case the number of the unmarried female is more than the unmarried male. Thus altogether the number of the unmarried male and female respondents is 114 which come to 19 percent. The reasons are nowadays women married late because most of the female think that they should have their carrier first prior to marriage and also most of them think about their family.<sup>10</sup>

The number of male widow is 28 which come to 11.96 percent. In the same category, female widow number is 60 which come to 16.39 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of widowed male and female respondents are 88 which come to 14.66 percent. The divorced or separated male respondents are 20 which come to around 8.6 percent and the number of the divorced or separated female respondents is 32 which come to around 8.8 percent. In this case the number of the divorced or separated female respondents is more than the divorced or separated male respondents. Thus altogether the

<sup>10</sup> R.K. Helen, Women in the Socio-political Life of Manipur, in Aheibam Koireng Singh and Dr. Ruolkhumzo, *State Democracy in Manipur and other Essay*, Lamyamba Printers, Konung Lampak, Imphal, Manipur, 1982, p.214.

number of the divorced or separated male and female respondents is 52 which come to 8.7 percent.

In the case of married only once, male respondents are 112 which come to 46.9 percent. In the same case of married only once, female respondents are 162 which come to 44.3 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of the married once male and female respondents are 274 which come to the 45.7 percent. Here, the number of the married once of the male respondents is more than that of female respondents.

In the case of married more than once, male respondents are 40 which come to 17.09 percent. In the same case of married more than once, female respondents are 32 which come to 8.8 percent. Thus altogether the number of the married more than once male and female respondents is 72 which come to 12 percent. It is assumed that relatively more percentage of male can remain either married or remarried after divorce or death of their wives. Here some interesting points may be noted:

1. The system of remarriage of women is not popularly supported in Manipuri society.
2. Due to the activeness of women in the social and economic fields, they are more independent and can sustain even after separation from their husband.
3. There is hardly any man is there who remained alone after divorce or separation from his wife. They married again. Only a few cases are observed where after the death of wife in the very old age they are forced to live with their children.
4. Most of the women in Manipur married lately. It is assumed that female think that they should have their career first than married and also most of them think about their family.

From the above points it may be concluded that in Manipur women are not highly dependent on man. Rather unlike other

traditional patriarchal society, they are sufficiently active and independent.

### 3.2. (b) Social and Psychological Status

When one tries to know the political status of a community or a section of the population e.g. women, one has to go deeper into the social norms, traditions and structures of the society. There is always interaction between the social norms, social beliefs, traditions and the political culture of the society. The degree of interaction is low if the social norms, beliefs and the political culture of the society or the level of civilization or development are at lower level. This gap can be narrowed down or bridged only when the political awareness, political consciousness or the political culture grow from the society itself. The gap can also bridge and narrowed down when the people are fully conscious of their political behaviors. First of all the understanding and feeling about male and female towards sex of children are considered. Table-3.4 represents the distribution of respondents according to their attitude towards the sex of children.

**Table 3.4 Education and Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents According to Attitude towards the Sex of Child**

Sex	Educational Qualification	Preference				Total
		Male child	Female Child	Equally both	Cannot say	
Male	Illiterate	24(10.25)	0	8(3.41)	0	32(13.67)
	Literate	40(17.09)	2(0.85)	160(68.37)	0	202(86.32)
	Sub-total	64(27.35)	2(0.85)	168(71.79)	0	234(100)
Female	Illiterate	70(19.12)	10(2.73)	24(6.55)	0	104(28.41)
	Literate	60(16.39)	20(5.46)	182(49.72)	0	262(71.58)
	Sub-total	130(35.51)	30(8.19)	206(56.28)	0	366(100)

Source: Survey Report.

The table 3.4 shows the education and sex-wise distribution of respondents according to attitude towards the sex of child. In the table, the number of illiterate male respondents who prefer male child is 24

which come to 10.25 percent. In the same category, the literate male respondents who prefer male child are 40 which come to 17.09 percent. Thus altogether those who prefer male child are 64 which come to 27.35.

Again the numbers of illiterate female respondents who prefer male child are 70 which come to 19.12 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents who prefer male child are 60 which come to 16.39 percent. Thus altogether those who prefer male child are 130 which come to 35.51.

The numbers of illiterate male respondents who prefer female child are 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category of the literate male respondents who prefer female child are 2 which come to 0.85 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of female child are 2 which come to 0.85.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who prefer female child are 10 which come to 2.73 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents who prefer female child are 20 which come to 5.46 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of female child are 30 which come to 8.19.

In the numbers of illiterate male respondents who prefer equally both are 8 which come to 3.41 percent. In the same category of the literate male respondents who prefer equally both are 160 which come to 68.37 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of equally both are 168 which come to 71.79.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who prefer equally both are 24 which come to 6.55 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents who prefer equally both are 182 which come to 49.72 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of equally both are 206 which come to 56.28. But regarding about cannot in both group male, female comments nothing. So, it is not relevant. Thus altogether the total number of male respondents of illiterate is 32 which come to

13.67. And literate male respondents are 202 which come to 86.32. In the female respondents of illiterate are 104 which come to 28.41. And literate female respondents are 26 which come to 71.58.

The above data shows that most of the male and female respondents express their independent ideas towards the sex of the child. Of course, the percentage of respondents prefers male child is more than the percentage of respondents prefers female child. Two important points are clearly highlighted by the table. First, though the number of respondents who prefer male child is more than those who prefer female child, as the level of education increases the choice of female child also increases. Secondly, across the sexes the number of respondents who do not have a particular preference of sex is the highest. That means maximum people in Manipur treat both the sexes with equal value. It further means social acceptability of women in all aspects equal to that of men.

**Table 3.5 Distribution of Female Respondents according to Relative Timing of Food Intake vis-a-vis other Members of the Family of Manipur**

Taking Food				Total
Together	After Male	Whenever Needed/Convenience	Any time	
20(5.5)	280(76.5)	46 (12.6)	20(5.5)	366 (100)

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.5 shows the distribution of female respondents according to relative timing of food intake vis-a-vis other members of the family of Manipur. It is a tradition practiced for generations.<sup>11</sup> It is said that this practiced just to show respect to their husband. It does not that mean that the husband looks down or violating the rights of women. In the table the number of female respondents who took food together is 20 which come to 5.5 percent. The number of female

<sup>11</sup> R.K. Helen, Women in the Socio-political Life of Manipur, in Aheibam Koireng Singh and Dr. Ruolkhumzo, *State Democracy in Manipur and other Essay*, Lamyamba Printers, Konung Lampak, Imphal, Manipur, 1982, p.216.

respondents who took after male is 280 which come to 76.5. The number of female respondents who took food whenever needed or convenience is 46 which come to 12.6 percent. The number of female respondent who took food any time is 20 which come to 5.5 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of female respondent are 366.

From the above data it is clear that 76 percent of the female respondents take food after male. 12 percent of the female respondents take food whenever needed. As per the table, majority of women in Manipur seem to have no independent food intake time. This may show the upper hand of male in terms of the timing of food intake. However, when the researcher asked the respondents, most of them do not agree with any kind of relationship between timing of food intake and their freedom and rights. They comment that it is just a matter of canvassing respect to their husband and nothing more. Thus, the social activeness of the women cannot be conclusively highlighted only with this data.

**Table 3.6 Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents According to Membership of Club, Community Centre, Social Organisation or NGO of Manipur**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Literacy Status</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Non-Member</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	10(4.27)	22(9.40)	32(13.67)
	<b>Literate</b>	160(68.37)	42(17.94)	202(86.32)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	170(72.64)	64(27.35)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	100(27.32)	4(1.09)	104(28.41)
	<b>Literate</b>	200(54.64)	62(16.93)	262(71.58)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	300 (81.97)	66(18.03)	366 (100)
<b>Grand-Total</b>		<b>470(78.33)</b>	<b>130(21.66)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table 3.6 shows sex-wise distribution of respondents according to membership of club, community centre, social organisation or NGO in Manipur. The data shows that in Manipur women work and participate in different social and other activities freely. It shows about

the position of the women in Manipur. It is learnt that in Manipur, from the early days women had played important roles in the social organisation. Though, the Manipuri woman lacked educates in early days, they were active in socio-economic activity. Nowadays it is said that educated working women take greater political and social responsibilities.

In the table the number of illiterate male respondent's member are 10 which come to 4.27 percent. Whereas the number of literate male respondents member are 160 which come to 72.64 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of the male respondents member are 170 which come to 72.64 percent. Again the numbers of illiterate female respondent are 100 which come to 27.32 percent. Similarly, literate female respondent is 200 which come to 54.64 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who take membership are 300 which come to 81.97 percent. Thus the grand total in both the male and female member are 470 which come to 78.33 percent.

As against the number of membership the numbers of illiterate male non-member are 22 which come to 9.40 percent. In the same way literate male non-member are 42 which come to 17.94 percent. Thus altogether male non-member is 64 which come to 27.35 percent. Again, the numbers of illiterate female non-member are 4 which come to 1.09 percent. In the same way literate female respondent's non-member are 62 which come to 16.93 percent. Thus altogether male non-member is 66 which come to 18.03 percent. Thus the grand total in both the male and female non-member are 130 which come to 21.66 percent.

From the above data it is shows that 73 percent of the male respondents are members of the club, community centre, social organisation. 27 percent of the male respondents are non-members of the club, community centre, social organisation. Against this, 82 percent of the female respondents are member of the club, community-centre, and social organisation. Only 18 percent of the



female respondents are member of the club, community centre, social organisation. It is evident from the table in Manipur the number of women who take membership in social organization are more than male. This again shows that women are active and participative in social activities.

**Table 3.7 Education-wise Distribution of Female Respondents  
According to Participation in Social Meeting/Function/Fete etc.  
Outside the Locality**

Education	Participation in Social Meeting, Social Gathering, Function etc.			Total
	Own Initiative	With men/women of the same or other family	Others (NGO)	
<b>Illiterate</b>	14(3.82)	30(8.19)	60(16.39)	104(28.41)
<b>Literate</b>	20(5.46)	62(16.93)	180(49.18)	262(71.58)
<b>Sub-total</b>	34(9.28)	92(25.13)	240(65.57)	366(100)

Sources: - Survey Report.

In table 3.7 shows education-wise distribution of female respondents according to participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the locality. In the table the number of illiterate women who took own initiative in participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 14 which come to 3.82 percent. In the same category literate women who took own initiative in participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 20 which come to 5.46 percent. Thus altogether women who took own initiative in participation in social meeting /function/fete etc. outside the village are 34 which come to 9.28 percent.

The number of illiterate women who took part at the initiative of men or women of the same or other family is 30 which come to 8.19 percent. In the same category, the number of literate women is 62 which come to 16.93 percent. Thus altogether the number of women who took part at the initiative of men or women of the same or other family are 92 to 25.13 percent.

The number of illiterate women who took part in such social gatherings on the initiative of others (NGO) is 60 which come to 16.39 percent. In the same category literate women who took part in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 180 which come to 49.18 percent. Thus altogether the number of women who took participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village on the initiative of NGOs is 240 which come to 65.57 percent.

From the above data it come to picture all that the females respondents took part in gathering either on their own initiative or on the initiative of others such as NGO (non-government organisations) or clubs. It is also learnt that they can move alone freely and join any party, function or ceremony and mostly without the permission of senior or male members. The tendency is more for the educated females and also with the increase in age (table 3.7 and 3.8).

**Table 3.8 Age-wise Distribution of Women Respondents' Visit to nearest Town With/Without the Permission of Men in Manipur**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>20-40</b>	60(16.39)	20(5.46)	80(21.85)
<b>41-60</b>	120(32.78)	20(5.46)	140(38.25)
<b>&gt; 60</b>	140(38.25)	6(1.63)	146(39.89)
<b>Total</b>	320(87.43)	46(12.6)	366(100)

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table-3.8 shows age-wise distribution of women respondents' visit to nearest town with/without the permission of men in Manipur. In the table there are 3 (three) age groups viz. 20-40; 41-60; above 60.

In the age group 20-40 the number of female respondents who say 'yes' in terms of visiting nearest town with/without the permission of men in Manipur are 60 which come to 16.39 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same age group the number of female respondents who say 'no' is 20 which come to 5.46 percent of the total respondents.

In the age group 41-60 the number of female respondents who say 'yes' towards visit nearest town with/without the permission of men in Manipur are 120 which come to 32.78 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same age group the number of female respondents who says 'no' is 20 which come to 5.46 percent of the total respondents.

In the age group above 60 the number of female respondents who say 'yes' to visit nearest town with/without the permission of men in Manipur are 140 which come to 38.25 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same age group the number of female respondents who say 'no' is 6 which come to 1.63 percent of the total respondents.

Altogether, the total number of female respondents who say 'yes' to visit nearest town with/without the permission of men in Manipur are 320 which come to 87.43 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same who say 'no' are 46 which come to 12.6 percent of the total respondents.

From the above data it shows that most of the women can move alone freely and join any social activity including joining political party, the party, function or ceremony without the permission of senior or male members. Here again, the tendency is more for the educated females and also with the increase in age.

**Table 3.9 Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents according to their Thinking of Women's Economic Dependence on Men of Manipur**

Sex	Thinking about Dependency of Women on Men			Total
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
Male	140(59.82)	60(25.7)	34(14.53)	234(100)
Female	100(27.32)	200(54.65)	66(18.03)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	240(40)	260(43.33)	100(16.66)	600(100)

Sources: - Survey Report.

In the table 3.9 shows sex-wise distribution of respondents according to their thinking of women's dependence on men of Manipur. In the table there are 2 (two) groups of the 3 (three) category viz. Yes, No and Not sure. In the 'Yes' category of the male group the number of the male respondents are 140 which come to 59.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the female respondents are 100 which come to 27.32 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the 'No' category the number of the male respondents are 60 which come to 25.7 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the female respondents are 200 which come to 54.65 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the 'Not sure' category the numbers of the male respondents are 34 which come to 14.53 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category the numbers of the female respondents are 66 which come to 18.03 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

Thus altogether the number of male and female respondent who say 'Yes' are 260 which come to 43.33 percent of the total respondents i.e., 600. In the same who say 'No' are 240 which come to 40 percent of the total respondents i.e., 600. In the same who say 'Not sure' are 100 which come to 14.53 percent of the total respondents i.e., 600.

From the above data the perception of male and female about whether the female would remain economically and non-economically dependent on men is understood. It indicates of status of the women in the society. However, here is a tricky situation in which 59 percent of male respondents think that women are dependent and at the same time 54.65 percent of women think they are not dependent on men. Thus it is difficult to come to any conclusion on dependence on male if we consider these two perspectives together. However, if we consider women as main subject here, one can come to a conclusion that as per this data more than or at least half of the population think that

women are not dependent on men. This again shows the permissibility or acceptance of women's mobility in society without too much restriction.

**Table 3.10 Education-wise Distribution of Female Respondents according to Opinion about Remarriage after Husband's Death**

Education	Should Remarry after Husband's Death				Total
	Agree	Do not Agree	Not Sure	No Comment	
<b>Illiterate</b>	0	100(27.32)	4(1.09)	0(00)	104(28.41)
<b>Literate</b>	10(2.73)	200(54.64)	52(14.20)	0(00)	262(71.58)
<b>Total</b>	<b>10(2.73)</b>	<b>300(81.96)</b>	<b>56(15.30)</b>	<b>0(00)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table 3.10 shows the education-wise distribution of female respondents according to opinion about remarriage after husband's death. In the table there are 2 (two) groups of the 4 (four) category viz. agree, do not agree, not sure, and no comment. In the table the number of illiterate female respondents who say 'agree' is 0 which come to 0 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same category of literate female respondents are 10 which come to 2.73 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. Thus altogether the total number of illiterate and literate who say 'agree' is 10 which come to 2.73 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

In the illiterate female respondents who say 'do not agree' are 100 which come to 27.32 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same category of literate female respondents are 200 which come to 54.64 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. Thus altogether the total number of illiterate and literate female respondents who say 'do not agree' is 300 which come to 81.96 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

In the illiterate female category respondents who say 'not sure' are 4 which come to 1.09 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same category of literate female, respondents are 52 which come

to 14.20 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. Thus altogether the total number of illiterate and literate who say 'not sure' is 56 which come to 15.30 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

The above data indicates that there is much difference between those who 'agree' with the idea of remarriage after their husbands' death and those who do not. The percentage of agreement does not increase even with the increase of education. Remarriage is not popular in Manipur. It happens only in some rare cases. Around 3 percent of the female respondents say 'agree' that they should remarry after husbands' death. Around 82 percent of the female respondents say 'do not agree' that they should remarry. Around 15 percent of the female respondents say 'not sure' that they should marry after husband. The percentage of the 'do not agree' is more than the 'agree'. The implication is that majority of the women in Manipuri do not want to remarriage after death of their husband. However, when the respondents are asked they claimed that it is not related with their being unfired to remarry, rather it is about the future of their children.

### **3.2 (c) Influences of Print and Mass Media on the Women**

Media is playing a productive role in enhancing women's participation. It gives wider coverage to various activities and measures taken by women. Women of Manipur have some access to mass-media and that plays an important role in raising awareness among the people. In the table there is 3 category of readership viz. everyday, occasionally, never and this will be read across sexes in the group of Illiterate and literate.

**Table 3.11 Distribution of Respondents according to Reading of Newspapers in Manipur**

Sex	Education	Reading Newspaper			Total
		Everyday	Occasionally	Never	
Male	Illiterate	0	0	0	0
	Literate	120(51.28)	60(25.64)	52(22.22)	234(100)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>120(51.28)</b>	<b>60(25.64)</b>	<b>52(22.22)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	0	0	0	0
	Literate	120(32.78)	86(23.49)	160(43.71)	366(100)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>120(32.78)</b>	<b>86(23.49)</b>	<b>160(43.71)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>240(40)</b>	<b>146(24.33)</b>	<b>212(35.33)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report.

In the table the number of the illiterate male respondents who read newspaper everyday is understandably 0. But in the same category, literate male respondent who read newspaper everyday is 120 which come to 51.28 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again in the illiterate female respondents who read newspaper everyday is 0. Literate female respondent who read newspaper everyday is 120 which come to 32.78 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The number of literate male respondents who read newspaper occasionally is 60 which come to 25.64 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category the number of literate female respondent who read newspaper occasionally are 86 which come to 23.49 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The same literate male respondent who read newspaper 'never' is 52 which come to 22.22 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The female respondents who read newspaper 'never' are 160 which come to 43.71 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The above data clearly shows that 56 percent of female respondents read newspaper daily or occasionally (table 3.11). 44

percent female respondents did not read newspaper because they are illiterate. That means more than half of the female respondents read newspaper. Again, around 78 percent male respondents read newspaper daily or occasionally. It means the number of male reading newspaper is comparatively larger. But most importantly more than half of women in Manipur follow news which is indicative of social and political awareness of women in Manipur.

**Table 3.12 Distribution of Respondents according to Listening Radio**

Sex	Education	Listening Radio			Total
		Everyday	Occasionally	Never	
Male	Illiterate	8(3.41)	4(1.70)	20(8.54)	32(13.67)
	Literate	20(8.54)	42(17.94)	140(59.82)	202(86.32)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>28(11.96)</b>	<b>46(19.65)</b>	<b>160(68.37)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	4(1.09)	16(4.37)	84(22.95)	104(28.41)
	Literate	22(6.01)	60(16.39)	180(49.18)	262(71.58)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>26(7.10)</b>	<b>76(20.76)</b>	<b>264(72.13)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>54(9)</b>	<b>122(20.33)</b>	<b>424(70.66)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table 3.12 shows distribution of respondents according to listening of radio in Manipur. In the table the number of the illiterate male respondents who listens radio everyday is 8 which come to 3.41 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondent who listen radio everyday is 20 which come to 8.54 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again the illiterate female respondents who listens radio everyday are 4 which come to 1.09 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents who listens radio everyday are 22 which come to 6.01 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The illiterate male respondents who listens radio occasionally are 4 which come to 1.70 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondents who listens radio occasionally are 42



which come to 17.94 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again the illiterate female respondents who listens radio occasionally are 16 which come to 4.37 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents who listens radio occasionally are 60 which come to 16.39 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The illiterate male respondents who listens radio 'never' are 20 which come to 8.54 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondents who listens radio 'never' are 140 which come to 59.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The illiterate female respondents who listens radio 'never' are 84 which come to 22.95 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents who listens radio 'never' are 180 which come to 49.18 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

From the above data it is clear that around 32 percent of the male respondents listen to radio either everyday or occasionally in Manipur. And around 68 percent of the male respondents never listened radio. And 28 percent of female respondents listened radio either everyday or occasionally in Manipur. And around 72 percent of the female respondent never listened radio. From the table, it can said that maximum number of respondents do not listen to radio. It has been a common trend that that nowadays one finds radio as the least popular mass media. It has been increasingly replaced by other media such as Newspapers, Magazines and Television (TV). Every family is having TV sets (Television). TV is that kind of mass media which have both audio and visual. And also, in Manipur there is local cable which forecast not only breaking-news at every hour but also local entertainment in local language. Therefore, besides newspaper and radio data on TV viewership will provide important inputs for the present study.

**Table 3.13 Distribution of Respondents according to Watching of Television in Manipur**

Sex	Education	Watching Television			Total
		Everyday	Occasionally	Never	
Male	Illiterate	20(8.54)	8(3.41)	4(1.70)	32(13.67)
	Literate	142(60.68)	40(17.09)	20(8.54)	202(86.32)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>162(69.23)</b>	<b>48(20.51)</b>	<b>24(10.25)</b>	<b>234 (100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	70(19.12)	24(6.55)	10(2.73)	104(28.41)
	Literate	200(54.64)	42(11.47)	20(5.46)	262(71.58)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>270(73.77)</b>	<b>66(18.03)</b>	<b>30(8.19)</b>	<b>366 (100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>432(72)</b>	<b>114(19)</b>	<b>54(9)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.13 shows distribution of respondents according to watching television in Manipur. In the table the number of the illiterate male respondents who watch Television (TV) everyday is 20 which come to 8.54 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondents who watch TV everyday is 142 which come to 60.68 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The illiterate female respondents who watch TV everyday is 70 which come to 19.12 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents who watch TV everyday is 200 which come to 54.64 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The illiterate male respondents who watch TV occasionally is 8 which come to 3.41 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondents who watch TV occasionally are 40 which come to 17.09 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The illiterate female respondents who watch TV occasionally are 24 which come to 6.55 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents' who watch TV occasionally are 42 which come to 11.47 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the illiterate male respondents who watch TV 'never' are just 4 which come to 1.70 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the

same way literate male respondents' who watch TV 'never' are 20 which come to 8.54 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The illiterate female respondents who never watch TV are 10 which come to 2.73 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents' who watch TV 'never' are 20 which come to 5.46 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The above (Table 3.13) shows clearly about the distribution of respondents according to watching television in Manipur. In the table 89 percent of the male respondents watch TV either regularly or occasionally. Again, 92 percent of the female respondents watch TV either regularly or occasionally. TV is a kind of mass media through which political party influence voters by canvassing their comments, views and ideas in that form of media. In this case TV viewership women are more active than men.

### **3.2. (d) Economic Status**

Economic status is examined through the distribution of economic resources i.e., whether the female respondent is an earner or dependent, their holding of tangible and intangible assets, nature of inheritance of ancestral property and the nature of job opportunities in which women are involved as against their men counterparts. Also their status in the society can be known through the social position exhibited through the pattern of involvement in social functions and duties (organizer of functions, director, participants or just spectator etc.),<sup>12</sup> which provides dimension of respect earned from the general public. Also the position in the family is exhibited through their pattern (timing, quantity, quality etc.)<sup>13</sup> of nutritional intake that will be considered later. Table-4 described the percentage distribution of respondents according to the earning and dependence of male and

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<sup>12</sup> Department of Economics, North eastern Hill University, Shillong, 793022, Meghalaya, Email: de\_u@yahoo.com.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

female respondents across different age group as observed from the survey data.

**Table 3.14 Distribution of Respondents by Earning Status of Different Age-Group of Manipur**

	<b>Age</b>	<b>Dependent</b>	<b>Earner</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	20-40	42(17.94)	60(25.64)	102(43.58)
	41-60	10(4.27)	86(36.75)	96(41.02)
	> 60	20(8.54)	16(6.83)	36(15.38)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>72(30.76)</b>	<b>162(69.23)</b>	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	20-40	32(8.74)	108(29.50)	140(38.25)
	41-60	40(10.92)	100(27.32)	140(38.25)
	> 60	61(16.66)	25(6.83)	86(23.49)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>131(36.33)</b>	<b>233(63.66)</b>	366(100)
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>203(33.83)</b>	<b>395(65.83)</b>	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

From the table 3.14 shows the distribution of respondents by earning status of different age-group of Manipur. In the table researcher observe that male age group 20-40, dependent are 42 which come to 17.94 percent. In same age group earner are 60 which come to 25.64 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of male respondents are 102 which come to 43.58 percent.

In the male age group 41-60 dependent are 10 which come to 4.27 percent. In same age group earner are 86 which come to 36.75 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of male respondents are 96 which come to 41.02 percent.

In the male age group above 60 dependent are 20 which come to 8.54 percent. In same age group earner are 16 which come to 6.83 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of male respondent are 36 which come to 15.38 percent. Again, the total numbers of dependent male are 72 which come to 30.76 percent. In same way earner male respondents are 162 which come to 69.23 percent.

In the female age group 20-40 dependent are 32 which come to 8.74 percent. In same age group earner are 108 which come to 29.50 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of female respondent are 140 which come to 38.25 percent.

In the female age group 41-60 dependent are 40 which come to 10.92 percent. In same age group earner are 100 which come to 27.32 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of female respondent are 140 which come to 38.25 percent.

In the female age group above 60 dependent are 61 which come to 16.66 percent. In the same age group earner are 25 which come to 6.83 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of female respondent are 86 which come to 23.49 percent. Again, the total number of dependent female is 131 which come to 36.33 percent. In same way earner female respondents are 233 which come to 63.66 percent. Though, there is no such principle that only the earner should be head of the family, in Manipur, the members of the family who earn have more command over the family. In the table the female respondents belonging to age group 20-40, the percentage of dependents is around 9 percent and the percentage of earners is around 29 percent. Here, the number of working female is more than the number of non working female in this age group. But, in the age group of 60 and above the number of dependents is more than that of earners. In this case, female above the age group 60 ages seems to have less earning potential.

Altogether, in the table it is observed that about 36.33 per cent of the female respondents are dependent and around 63.66 per cent are earners. In case of the male respondents about 69 per cent of the male are earners and around 31 percent of the male are dependents. In the table, in case of male in all the age group, the number of the earners is greater than that of dependents. It is only in the age group of above 60 that the number of dependents is more than that of earners i.e., 9:7 where 9 represents the dependents and 7 represents

the earners. In the table, the overall percentage of the female dependents is more than that of male, but less in case of the earners. Though the females earn less they are however active in most of the socio-economic activities in Manipur.

The analysis of this data clearly highlights that in terms of earning status, male are ahead of female. The number of earning female is more than the number of earning male.

**Table 3.15 Distribution of Respondents According to the Inheritance of Ancestral Property**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Property Inherited</b>	<b>Not Inherited</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	230 (98.29)	4(1.70)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	80(21.9)	286(78.2)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	310(51.66)	290(48.33)	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

Table 3.15 shows the distribution of respondents according to the inheritance of ancestral property. The table reveals that the number of property inherited male respondent is 230 which come to 98.29 percent. In the same category of the female respondent are 80 which come to 21.9 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of the inherited property in both male and female are 310 which come to 51.66 percent.

The numbers of male respondent who do not inherit property are 4 which come to 1.70 percent. In the same category of the female respondent are 286 which come to 78.2 percent. Thus altogether the total numbers of the respondents who do not inherit property are 290 which come to 48.33 percent. When it comes to percentages about 98.29 percent of the male respondents have received share of ancestral property while 1.70 percent of the female respondents did not have ancestral property as they did not inherit any ancestral property. 22 percent of the female respondents received their ancestral property. The maximum of these women do not have any male sibling. But some of them share the parental property with male

siblings. 78 percent of the female respondents do not receive their ancestral property due to the presence of a male member in the family. In the absence of a male in a family, privilege are given to the female for inheriting property and ancestral assets in Manipur. It shows that property and ancestral assets based on traditional customs is previously inherited by the sons in the family. The share of property should be equal with all the sons. Sometimes the youngest son inherits more property from the family then the other sons. This settlement of ancestral property should be done with the consent of the parents.

**Table 3.16 Occupational Pattern of the Respondents across Sex And Education of Manipur**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Cultivator</b>	<b>Govt. Service</b>	<b>Business</b>	<b>House Maker</b>	<b>Old Age</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	14(5.9)	0	10(4.2)	0	8(3.4)	32(13.67)
	<b>Literate</b>	8(3.4)	50(21.3)	116(49.5)	0	28(11.9)	202(86.3)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	22(9.4)	50(21.3)	126(53.8)	0 (00)	36(15.3)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	22(6.01)	0	38(24.7)	32(8.7)	12(3.27)	104(28.4)
	<b>Literate</b>	0	42(11.4)	96(26.2)	108(29.5)	16(4.3)	262(71.5)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	22(6.01)	42(11.4)	134(36.6)	140(38.2)	28(7.65)	366(100)

Source: Survey Report.

Yet, another important variable in determining women's socio economic status is occupation of women themselves. Economic independence helps in freeing them from economic and psychological control of families or husband, in shaping assertive personality, in allowing group activity and aggregation of group's interest and greater access to decision making.

The table 3.16 shows the occupational and educational pattern of the respondents across sexes in Manipur. In the table the number of the illiterate male respondents in cultivator category is 14 which come to 5.9 percent. In the same category of the literate male respondents are 8 which come 3.4 percent. Thus altogether in cultivator category of the male respondent are 22 which come to 9.4

percent. The number of the illiterate male respondents in government service category is 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category of the literate male respondents are 50 which come 21.3 percent. Thus altogether in government service category of the male respondent are 50 which come to 21.3 percent.

The number of the illiterate male respondents in business category is 10 which come to 4.2 percent. In the same category of literate male respondents are 116 which are 49.5 percent. Thus altogether in business category of the male respondent are 126 which come to 53.8 percent.

In the number of the illiterate male respondents in old age category is 8 which come to 3.4 percent. The same category of literate male respondents is 28 which come 11.96 percent. Thus altogether in old age category the number of male respondents is 36 which come to 15.3 percent.

The number of the illiterate male respondents in all categories is 32 which come to 13.6 percent. In the same category of literate male respondents are 202 which come 86.3 percent. Thus altogether in all category of the male respondent are 234 which come to 100 percent.

In the table the number of the illiterate female respondents in cultivator category is 22 which come to 6.1 percent. Thus altogether in cultivator category, the number of the female respondent is 24 which come to 6.5 percent.

In the same category the number of literate female respondents is 42 which come 11.4 percent. Thus altogether in government service the number of female respondent are 42 which come to 11.4 percent.

The number of the illiterate female respondents in business category is 38 which come to 24.78 percent. In the same category literate female respondents are 96 which come 26.2 percent. Thus altogether in business category of the female respondent are 134 which come to 36.6 percent.



The number of the illiterate female respondent's in House maker category is 32 which come to 8.7 percent. In the same category of literate female respondents are 108 which come 29.5 percent. Thus altogether in House maker category the number of female respondents are 140 which come to 38.2 percent.

The number of the illiterate female respondents in old age category is 12 which come to 3.2 percent. In the same category of literate female respondents are 16 which come to 4.3 percent. Thus altogether in old age category of the female respondent are 28 which come to 7.6 percent.

The number of the illiterate female respondents in all categories is 104 which come to 28.4 percent. In the same category of literate female respondents are 262 which come 71.5 percent. Thus altogether in all category of the female respondent are 366 which come to 100 percent.

The above table show clearly the comparatively lower in educational background of female respondents and also less in government and private services. However, a very interesting fact shown by this table is that more than 60 percent of women are engaged either in government service or business. This means that the majority of women are economically independent and active. Even amongst those who remain unengaged in any earning occupation, maximum of them are literates. Earlier women were predominantly housewives and agricultural labourer. On the whole, female are relatively lower percentage of occupation than their counterpart men in Manipur in researcher study.

### **3.2. (e) Political Awareness**

The above analysis clearly suggests that women in Manipur are very active in social and economic fields. Now, it is important to understand their level of political awareness.

**Table 3.17 Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents according to the Opinion about Reservation of Seats for Members in the Local Bodies (Gram Panchayat) of Manipur**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No Idea</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	198(84.61)	12(2.6)	30(12.82)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	12(3.3)	300(81.96)	54(14.75)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	210(35)	306(51)	84(14)	600(100)

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table 3.17 shows sex-wise distribution of respondents according to the opinion about reservation of seats for members in the local bodies (Gram Panchayat) of Manipur. In the table there are 2 (two) groups viz. male and female of the 3 (three) category viz. Bad, Good and No Idea.

The numbers of the male respondents who say badly are 198 which come to 84.61 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category the numbers of the female respondents are 12 which come to 3.3 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus unsurprisingly, the number of the male respondents is just 6 which come to 2.6 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. And the numbers of the male respondents are 300 which come to 81.96 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The 'No Idea' column is the most important column in this table as it is the main indicator of political awareness of women in compare to that of men. By knowing the number of 'No idea' respondent's one can understand the number the number of respondents across sexes who could form some idea about the political issues such as reservation of seats in Gram Panchayat. Thus the numbers of the male respondents are 30 which come to 12.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The numbers of the female respondents are 54 which come to 14.75 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

Two very interesting points emerged from these numbers. First, 81 percent of the female respondents say 'Good'. This indicates

majority of the women wants support political participation of women. Secondly more importantly, whether supporting or not maximum number of respondents have information on political issues. In fact, they even form opinion about it.

**Table 3.18 Education and Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents According to the Exercising of Voting Right**

Sex	Educational Qualification	Exercising of Voting Right		
		Yes	No	Total
Male	Illiterate	24(11.11)	8(3.41)	32(13.67)
	Literate	180(76.92)	22(9.40)	202(86.32)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>204(87.17)</b>	<b>30(12.82)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	100(27.32)	4(1.09)	104(28.41)
	Literate	200(54.64)	62(16.93)	262(71.58)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>300(81.96)</b>	<b>66(18.03)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>504(84)</b>	<b>96(16)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.18 shows the education and sex-wise distribution of respondents according to the exercising of voting right in Manipur. The numbers of illiterate male respondents who say yes to exercise voting rights are 24 which come to 11.11 percent. The literate male respondent's who say yes to exercise voting rights are 180 which come to 76.92 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who say yes to exercise voting rights are 204 which come to 87.17 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who say yes to exercise voting rights are 100 which come to 27.32 percent. The literate female respondent's who say yes to exercise voting rights are 200 which come to 54.64 percent. Thus altogether female respondents member are 300 which come to 81.97 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The illiterate male respondents who say 'no' to exercise voting rights are 8 which come to 3.41 percent. The literate male respondent's who say 'no' to exercise voting rights are 22 which come to 9.40 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who say 'no' are 30 which come to 12.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The numbers of illiterate female respondent's who say 'no' to exercise voting rights are 4 which come to 1.09 percent. The literate female respondents who say 'no' to exercise voting rights are 62 which come to 16.93 percent. Thus altogether female respondents member are 66 which come to 18.03 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The total number of illiterate male respondents who say 'yes' to exercise voting rights and 'no' are 32 which come to 13.67 percent. The literate male respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' to exercise voting rights is 202 which come to 86.32 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' is 234 which come to 100 percent.

The total number of illiterate female respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' are 104 which come to 28.41 percent. The literate female respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' is 262 which come to 71.58 percent.

The above data clearly shows that 87 percent of the male say 'Yes' about the exercising of voting right and around 12 percent of the male say 'No' about the exercising of voting right. Again 81 percent of the female say 'Yes' about the exercising of voting right and 18 percent of the female say 'No' about the exercising of voting right. It means that maximum number of female respondents want to exercise their voting rights. Of course, most of the female exercises their voting rights and it increase with the increase number of the educated women. Though, they like to exercise their voting right, they did not like to active involve in politics. But some women involve actively in exercising of voting right and take their advantages for there own benefit. It is also believed that women were less politically aware due to the burden and influence of domestic work which limits female

exposure to political experience and information. There is a gap or contradiction between the ground of political reality and the mode of exercising the political rights by the women voters of Manipur. This may be said that women voters never considered the gender factor while exercising their franchise.

**Table 3.19 Distribution of female respondents in terms of Participation in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting election/Membership of Political Parties in Manipur**

Education	Participation of women in Political Demonstration /Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting Election/ Membership of Political Parties etc.				Total
	Membership of Political Parties	Political Demonstration/ Rallies/ Public Meeting	Contesting Election	None	
<b>Illiterate</b>	10(8.8)	14(12.3)	0	80(21.85)	104(28.41)
<b>Literate</b>	35(9.56)	67(18.30)	15(4.09)	145(39.61)	262(71.58)
<b>Sub-total</b>	45(12.29)	81(22.13)	15(4.09)	225(61.47)	366(100)

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table 3.19 shows the distribution of female respondent in terms of participation of women in political Demonstration/ Rallies/Public Meeting/Membership of Political Parties/Contesting Election/Political parties in Manipur. The table shows the numbers of illiterate women who have membership in Political Parties are 10 which come to 8.8 percent. In the same category literate women who have membership in Political Parties are 35 which come to 9.56 percent.

The number of illiterate women who took part at the Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting is 14 which come to 12.3 percent. In the same category, the number of literate women is 67 which come to 18.30 percent.

The number of illiterate women respondents who contested in election is 0 i.e. 0 percent. In the same category literate women who contested in election are 15 which come to 4.09 percent.

The number of illiterate women respondents who comment 'none' is 80 which come to 21.85 percent. In the same category of the literate women respondents are 145 which come to 39.61 percent.

The above data shows that the number of literate women respondent's percentages is more than illiterate women respondents in the entire category. All the contestants in election are literate. And also, in the 'none' category, literate women respondents are more than the illiterate women respondents who participated in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting Election. The 'none' column is the most important column in this table as it is also the main indicator of political awareness of women in comparison with that of men. By knowing the number of 'none' respondents one can understand that there is a slack in terms of women Participation in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting Election in Manipur. From this it can be concluded that it is not the ultimate indicator for political awareness.

### **3.3 Meghalaya**

The issue of women's political participation has been much discussed at various levels to find out the solution to age old problem of gender discrimination, exploitation of women and to uplift their status and position in the society. However, in most of the tribal societies of Meghalaya even if poor, women always have an instilled special position and role they play in different spheres with great responsibility vis-a-vis their counterpart men. The old customs, giving significance to men, as father or man of the family influenced it, the process of being replaced by a new one in which women increasingly undertake to fill many roles within the home for the development of the society. It is also believed that women were less politically aware due to the burden and influenced of the home which limits female exposure to political experience and information. Though, women had strong participation and spearheaded in various social movement to

get justice against the wrong doer authority even against the British colonial rule. But still gender disparities exist everywhere in Meghalaya. Women are underrepresented in local and national decision making bodies. They earn less than men and participate comparatively less in wage employment and also remain mostly in low grade jobs.<sup>14</sup>

The Khasi society of Meghalaya is such a society, commonly known as matrilineal where authority, title, inheritance, residence after marriage and succession are traced through the female line. So it is presumed that they do not require any special effort to make them aware and get social, economic, political or psychological understanding and knowledge to establish their rights along with men in their society as they are automatically placed on an esteemed level. They are presumed to have free access to education, ownership of property, authority in their family and society; they are supposed to be the heads of their families and have the power to take decision what to be done or not etc.

However, in the political sphere, hardly anybody is there who is female and even in the Dorbar (similar to that of village panchayat plain areas)<sup>15</sup> females are not allowed to take part in the meeting or decision making.

Therefore, the motor questions of the current research still unanswered that whether activeness in social and economic lives necessarily lead to greater political participation of women. In order to answer this question data are collected and analysed in this section.

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<sup>14</sup> Women are poorer than men because more households headed by women fall below the income poverty line than households headed by men. Surveys of household consumption expenditure in Meghalaya show the incidence poverty to be high among the female headed households.

<sup>15</sup> Zehol, Lucy 2003. 'Status of Tribal Women', in Tanka Bahadur Subba (ed.): *Anthropology of northeast India: A Textbook* (293-306). New Delhi: Orient Longman.

### **3.3 (a) Methodology of the Study**

Process of women political participation here has been studied through primary survey in two Districts in Meghalaya. These Districts are East Khasi Hills and West Khasi Hills. The Districts are chosen purposively on consideration of conveniences, such as accessibility and communication, security, expenditure involved in the survey etc. However most of the features of the Meghalaya have much in common with the aforesaid selected villages. As the study is conducted on the West Khasi Hills and East Khasi Hills and the total populations of the two districts is the universe of the study, i.e., 7, 99,767. Out of this a population of 300 respondents each are selected from both the districts of Meghalaya. It has been stratified according to the characteristics of sex of family head, caste, occupation, education etc. and finally chosen 117 male respondents and 183 female respondents out of the total 3, 40,356 populations of the West Khasi Hills district and another 117 male respondents and 183 female respondents making a total number to 300 out of the total population 4, 59,411 population of the East Khasi Hills district respectively.<sup>16</sup> On the basis of incidental sampling respondents are finally selected and data have been collected by framing questionnaire and interview the respondents on different aspects like family size, sex, education, caste, occupation, income and expenditure, mode of expenditure and also on their attitude towards social, political, cultural aspects i.e. on social, cultural, economical, political, religious and psychological aspects of the heads as well as other members of the families. From that information we tried to understand the level of women's activeness in social and political affairs of the state. The study is mainly descriptive and exploratory.

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<sup>16</sup> The rationality of the numbers given here is explained in the methodology in the first chapters of this thesis pp. 14-15.



### 3.3 (b) Age and Sex Ratio of Respondents

The table-3.20 shows age-wise sex composition of the respondents of Meghalaya. In the table there are 6 (six) age groups viz. 20-30; 31-40; 51-60; 61-70; 71 and above.

**Table 3.20 Age-wise Sex Composition of the Respondents of Meghalaya**

Sex	Age-wise Sex of the Respondents						Total
	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	70 & Above	
<b>Male</b>	24(10.3)	78(33.3)	60(25.7)	36(15.4)	24(10.3)	12(5.13)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	18(4.92)	54(14.8)	60(16.4)	90(24.6)	108(29.5)	36(9.83)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	42(7)	132(22)	120(20)	126(21)	132(22)	48(8)	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

In the age group 20-30 the number of male respondents is 24 which come to 10.3 percent of the total respondent's i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 18 which come to 4.92 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number male and female combine is 42 which come to 7 percent.

In the age group 31-40 the number of male respondents is 78 which come to 33.3 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 54 which come to 14.8 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 132 which come to 22 percent.

In the age group 41-50 the number of male respondents is 60 which come to 25.7 percent of the total respondent's i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 60 which come to 16.4 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male, female combine is 120 which come to 20 percent.

In the age group 51-60 the number of male respondents is 36 which come to 15.4 percent of the total respondent's i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 90 which

come to 24.6 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 126 which come to 21.

In the age group 61-70 the number of male respondents is 24 which come to 10.3 percent of the total respondent's i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 108 which come to 29.5 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 132 which come to 22 percent.

In the age group 70 and above the number of male respondents are 12 which come to 5.13 percent of the total respondent's i.e., 234. In the same age group the number of the female respondents is 36 which come to 9.83 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the number of male and female combine is 48 which come to 8 percent.

**Table 3.21 Distribution of Families by Family Size across different Educational Categories of the Respondents of Meghalaya**

Sex	Education	Family size			Total
		1-5	6-10	> 10	
Male	Illiterate	6(2.56)	42(17.94)	4(1.70)	52(22.22)
	Literate	98(41.88)	72(30.76)	12(5.12)	182(77.77)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>104(44.44)</b>	<b>114(48.71)</b>	<b>16(6.83)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	50(13.66)	36(9.83)	10(2.73)	96(31.0)
	Literate	144(39.34)	120(32.78)	9(1.63)	270(69.0)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>194(53.00)</b>	<b>156(42.62)</b>	<b>16(4.37)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>298(49.66)</b>	<b>270(45)</b>	<b>32(5.33)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Source: Survey Report.

Table 3.21 shows the distribution of families by family Size across different educational categories of the respondents of Meghalaya. In the table family size of 1-5 of the illiterate male respondents are 6 which come to 2.56 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same group of the same literate male respondents family size groups are 98 which come to 41.88 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Thus altogether the number of the male

respondents of the family size of 1-5 is 104 which come to 44.44 percent of the total male respondents i.e., 234.

The illiterate female respondents' numbers of the family size of 1-5 are 50 which come to 13.66 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same groups literate female respondent's numbers are 144 which come to 39.34 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus altogether the number of illiterate and literate female respondents of the family size of 1-5 is 194 which come to 53 percent of the total female respondents. It shows that percentage of number of a family's member having size of 1-5 members in case of female respondents is more than that of numbers family size having others members.

But in case of percentage of female respondent's family size of 1-5 groups, percentage of family's size of 1-5 of female respondents is higher than that of family size of 1-5 of the male respondents. Almost at every educational level especially illiterate category, male respondents are having a tendency to keep family size lower than the female respondents.

The family size of 6-10 of the illiterate male respondents the number is 42 which come to 17.94 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The family size of 6-10 of the literate male respondents is 72 which come to the 30.76 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Thus the total number of the male respondents of the family size of 6-10 is 114 which come to around 48.71 percent of the total respondents.

The family size of 6-10 of the female respondents illiterate is 36 which come to the 9.83 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The family size of 6-10 of the female respondents literate is 120 which come to around 32.78 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus altogether the number of the female respondents of the family size of 6-10 are 156 which come to the around 42.62 percent of the 234 male and 366 female respondents respectively.

In the size family above 10 of the male illiterate are 4 which come to 1.70 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the family size of the literate male respondents are 12 which come to around 5.12 percent of the total respondent i.e., 234. Thus altogether the numbers of the male respondents of the family size of above 10 are 16 which come to 6.83 percent of the total respondents.

In the same family size above 10 of the female respondents illiterate are 10 which come to 2.73 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same family size of above 10 of the literate female respondents are 6 which come to around 1.63 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. Thus altogether the number of the female respondents of the family size of above 10 is 16 of 4.37 percent of the female respondents. Here, lower family size in both the illiterate category male and female respondents. With the improvement of education, male respondents become aware and try to control their family size but in case of female heads it makes hardly any difference whether she is educated or not as they are more aware and sensitive to the social changes and face the problems.

The above data reveals the number of percentage of families having size 1-5 in case of male respondents are slightly same as that in case of family size more than 5 persons. In case of female respondents however percentage of families having size 1-5 are much higher (about 53 per cent) than the percentage of families having size 6 and above (around 42 per cent). Almost at every educational level especially in the illiterate category, male heads are having a tendency to keep family size lower than the female heads.

With the improvement of education, male respondents become aware and try to control their family size but in case of female respondents it makes hardly any difference whether she are educated or not as they are not aware and sensitive to the social changes and face the problems. The family size in case of female respondents is lesser because of the separation, divorce or becoming widow at the

early age. The larger the size of the population means more expensive. The lesser the size means less expensive. The poor family cannot afford their daily needs and as such the socio-economic problem in the society. As they remain aloof from the society due to poverty they cannot share their opinion about the society, as well as sizes of the family are also one of the big issues of the society.

From the above analysis, it is assumed that those families which are large and which cannot afford the family problem share its less opinion about the society issues (socio-economic). From this point it may be assumed that most of the male heads are more interest in the family matter than the female heads.

**Table 3.22 Distribution of Respondents According to Marital Status of the Respondents**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Unmarried</b>	<b>Widow</b>	<b>Divorced/ Separated</b>	<b>Married once</b>	<b>Married more than one</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	18(7.7)	12(5.13)	0 (00)	168(71.8)	36(15.4 )	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	6(1.6)	114(31.2)	72(19.7)	162(44.3)	12(3.3)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	24(4)	126(21)	72(12)	330(55)	48(8)	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

Table 3.22 shows the distribution of respondents according to marital status of the respondents of Meghalaya.

In the table it shows that the numbers of unmarried male respondents are 18 which come to around 7.7 percent and the numbers of the unmarried female respondents are 6 which come to around 1.6 percent. In this case the number of the unmarried male is more than the unmarried female. Thus altogether the number of the unmarried male and female respondents is 24 which come to 4 percent.

The numbers of male widow number are 12 which come to 5.13 percent. In the same category, female widow are 114 which come to 31.2 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of widow male and female

respondents are 126 which come to 21 percent. And the divorced or separated male respondents are 0 which come to around percent and the numbers of the divorce or separated female respondents are 72 which come to around 19.7 percent. In this case the number of the divorce or separated female respondents is more than the divorce or separated male respondents. Thus altogether the number of the divorce or separated male and female respondents is 72 which come to 12 percent.

In the case of married once male respondents are 168 which come to 71.8 percent. In the same case of married once female respondents are 162 which come to 44.3 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of the married once male and female respondents are 330 which come to the 55 percent. Here, the number of the married once of the male respondents is more than that of female respondents.

In the case of married more than once male respondents are 36 which come to 15.4 percent. In the same case of married more than once female respondents are 12 which come to 3.3 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of the married than once male and female respondents are 48 which come to the 8 percent. It is assumed that relatively more percentage of male remain either married or remarried after the death or divorced of their wives.

From the above it clearly shows that about 50 percent of the female respondents are either widow divorced or separated. Around 48 percent of female respondents are married once and barely 2 per cent are unmarried. But in case of male respondents, around 86 percent are married (once or twice) and about 8 percent are unmarried. It indicates that relatively more percentage of male remain either married or remarried after the death or divorced of their wives. Here three interesting points may be noted:

- (i) At least 48 percent of the female respondents are married once and that indicates that a substantial portion of females become head after their marriage, which is very uncommon in case of any plain

- land non-tribal society. Due to traditional Khasi customs, males normally live with their wives in the in-laws (wives' parental house).
- (ii) Due to the dominance of Khasi women in the social and economic fields, they are more independent and can sustain even after separation from their husband. But hardly any men are there who remain alone after divorce or separation from his wife.
  - (iii) Another point to be noted here is that the percentage of literate respondents are more in case of female than that of male but in the category of higher education percentage of female respondents are relatively less than that of male.<sup>17</sup> It indicates though rural female also has better access to elementary education in case of higher education their access declines.

Here, the number of literate or illiterate does affect the family and also the social and economic fields, but also to the decision-making process. But, its effect on the socio-economic activity. How? The literate female can think more than the illiterate female about the significant effect on the size of the family. And also women in the social and economic fields, they can be more independent and can sustain even after separation from their husband. More the educated means more the knowledge and the more independence. They can earn their own; can survive alone, if they are educated. And they have the power to decide their own decision regarding about the decision-making process.

### **3.3(c) Social and Psychological Status**

First of all it may consider the understanding and feeling about male and female children. If it is look at the composition of the families (not shown here), it may found in both male and female respondents cases on an average, percentage of female children is more than the percentage of male children for all categories of sex and education of the respondents. Table 3.23 represents the distribution of respondents according to their attitude towards the sex of children.

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<sup>17</sup> Human Development Report, 2011.

**Table 3.23 Education and Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents  
According to Attitude towards the Sex of Child**

Sex	Educational Qualification	Preference				Total
		Male child	Female Child	Equally both	Cannot say	
Male	Illiterate	12(5.12)	0	26(11.11)	14(5.98)	52(22.2)
	Literate	12(5.12)	6(2.6)	124(52.99)	40(17.09)	182(77.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>24(10.25)</b>	<b>6(2.6)</b>	<b>150(64.9)</b>	<b>54(23.07)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	12(3.27)	12(3.27)	30(8.19)	42(11.47)	96(26.22)
	Literate	30(8.19)	84(22.95)	96(26.22)	60(16.39)	270(73.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>42(12.1)</b>	<b>96(20.7)</b>	<b>126(34.5)</b>	<b>102(27.86)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>

Source: Survey Report.

The table 3.23 shows the education and sex-wise distribution of respondents according to attitude towards the sex of child. In the table the numbers of illiterate male respondents who prefer male child are 12 which come to 5.12 percent. In the same category the literate male respondents who prefer male child are 12 which come to 5.12 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of male child are 24 which come to 10.25.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who prefer male child are 12 which come to 3.27 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents who prefer male child are 30 which come to 8.19 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of male child are 42 which come to 12.1.

The numbers of illiterate male respondents who prefer female child are 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category of the literate male respondents who prefer female child are 6 which come to 2.6 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of female child are 6 which come to 2.6.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who prefer female child are 12 which come to 3.27 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents who prefer female child are 84 which come



to 22.95 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of female child are 78 which come to 20.7.

The numbers of illiterate male respondents who prefer equally both are 26 which come to 11.11 percent. In the same category of the literate male respondents who prefer equally both are 124 which come to 52.99 percent. Thus altogether the prefer of equally both are 150 which come to 64.9.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who prefer equally both are 30 which come to 8.19 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents who prefer equally both are 96 which come to 26.22 percent. Thus altogether preferring of equally both are 126 which come to 34.5.

The numbers of illiterate male respondents who says cannot are 14 which come to 5.98. In the numbers of literate male respondents who says cannot are 40 which come to 17.09. Thus altogether the numbers of illiterate and literate male respondents' are 54 which come to 23.07 percent.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who says cannot are 42 which come to 11.47. In the numbers of literate female respondents who says cannot are 60 which come to 16.39. Thus altogether the numbers of illiterate and literate female respondents who says cannot are 102 which come to 27.86 percent. Thus the total numbers of illiterate male respondents are 52 which come to 22.22 percent. And the literate male respondents are 182 which come to 86.32 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The illiterate female respondents are 96 which come to 26.22. And literate female respondents are 270 which come to 73.77 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The above data shows clearly that most of the male and female respondents express their independent attitude towards the sex of child. Of course, the percentage of respondents prefers female child

are more than the percentage of respondents preferring male child and that increases with the level of education in both cases of male and female respondents. One of the most interesting indicators of status of women in Meghalaya is the higher preference of female child than the male child. Again, the number of respondents saying 'equally important' about sex of the child is highest limit across all categories. This shows the equally acceptability of sexes and women's status.

Again 20 percent prefers female child. In both the cases preferring of equally both in male and female respondents are more than the preferring male child or female child. 64 percent prefers equally both in male. 34 percent prefers equally both in female. In both the cases equally and cannot say is more than the preferring of male child or female child.

In Khasi society, the dowry is absent and women also participate in different socio-economic activities and that plays an important role for the non-discrimination between the sexes of child. Though they play active role in socio-economic activity but women are not allowed to take in meeting in the Dorbars and not allowed to take any decision-making process. The underlying assumption is that the women are deprived of their due rights in many spheres of life and it is believed, that the equality can be achieved if women are empowered to take decision and work together with men for its implementation. Socio-economic development without combined effort between male and female is not possible.

**Table 3.24 Distribution of Female Respondents according to Relative Timing of Food Intake vis-a-vis other Members of the Family**

Taking Food				Total
Together	After Male	Whenever Needed/Convenience	Any time	
30(8.2)	0	336 (91.80)	0	366(100)

Sources:-Survey Report,

The table 3.24 shows distribution of female respondents according to relative timing of food Intake vis-a-vis other members of the family of Meghalaya. In the table the number of female respondents who took food together is 30 which come to 8.2 percent. The number of female respondents who took after male is 0 which come to 0 percent. The number of female respondents who took food whenever needed or convenience is 336 which come to 91.80 percent. The number of female respondent who took food any time is 0 which come to 0 percent.

From the table shown above it is clear that the nature and timing of food intake by the females shows their relative independence in the family as well as society.<sup>18</sup> The females in the Khasi families take food whenever they think it is necessary (as shown in table 3.24) and in that sense they are more independent. From this data, it may be assumed that female did not need to take permission or any other form from the male counterpart.

**Table 3.25 Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents According to Membership of Club, Community Centre, Social Organisation or NGO**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Literacy Status</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Non-Member</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	0	52(22.22)	52(22.22)
	<b>Literate</b>	160(68.37)	22(9.40)	182(77.77)
	<b>Total</b>	160(68.37)	74(31.62)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	<b>Illiterate</b>	8(2.18)	88(24.04)	96(26.22)
	<b>Literate</b>	70(19.12)	200(54.64)	270(73.77)
	<b>Total</b>	78(21.31)	288(78.68)	366 (100)
<b>Sub-total</b>		238(39)	362(60.33)	600(100)

Sources: - Survey Report,

Table 3.25 shows the sex-wise distribution of respondents according to membership of club, community centre, social

<sup>18</sup> Though customarily, it is presumed that is out of love and affection the mother of sisters in the family take food after their husband, brothers or children. But in many cases, it happens to be the fact that the wives wait even with hunger for their husbands to return from office, business or farm and take food after their counterparts. It however indicates the psychological position of the females in the family in the name of sacrifice.

organisation or NGO of Meghalaya. In the table the number of illiterate male respondent's member are 0 which come to 0 percent.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who become member are 8 which come to 2.18 percent. In the same category literate female respondent's member are 70 which come to 19.12 percent. Thus altogether female respondents member are 78 which come to 21.31 percent.

The numbers of illiterate female respondent's non-member are 88 which come to 24.04 percent. In the same category literate female non-member respondents are 200 which come to 54.64 percent. Thus altogether female non-member respondents are 288 which come to 78.68 percent.

In the table 3.25, 68 percent of male is members and around 21 percent of female are member. And 31 percentage of male are non-members and around 79 percentage are female are non-members. In this case women are less active than men. The social and civil organisations are mainly/mostly run by men in Meghalaya. In Meghalaya there are almost an unequal proportion of male and female who are members of social organisation. A number of the female respondents do not want to be members of such organisation.

**Table 3.26 Education-wise Distribution of Female Respondents according to Participation in Meeting/Function/Fete etc. outside the Locality**

Education	Participation in Social Meeting, Social Gathering, Function etc.			Total
	Own Initiative	With men/women of the same or other family	Others (NGO)	
<b>Illiterate</b>	90(24.59)	6(1.63)	0(00)	96(26.22)
<b>Literate</b>	216(59.01)	42(1.09)	12(3.27)	270(73.77)
<b>Sub-total</b>	306(83.6)	48(13.11)	12(3.3)	366(100)

Sources: - Survey Report.

Table 3.26 shows the education wise distribution of female respondents according to participation in meeting, social gathering,

functions outside the village. In the table the number of illiterate women who took own initiative in participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 90 which come to 24.59 percent. In the same category literate women who took own initiative in participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 216 which come to 59.01 percent. Thus altogether women who took own initiative in participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 306 which come to 83.6 percent.

The number of illiterate women who took part at the initiative of men or women of the same or other family is 6 which come to 1.63 percent. In the same category, the number of literate women is 42 which come to 1.09 percent. Thus altogether women who took with men or women of the same or other family participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 48 which come to 13.11 percent.

The number of illiterate women who took part in such social gatherings on the initiative of others (NGO) is 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category literate women who took in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village are 12 which come to 3.27 percent. Thus altogether the number of women who took participation in social meeting/function/fete etc. outside the village on the initiative of NGOs is 12 which come to 3.27 percent.

From the above table, it is clear that most of the female participated. The data shows hundred percent of female respondents take part in social gathering and maximum of them on their own initiative. The most important factor for this much participation is regular church service at least once a week. Some of the respondents are not Christian. However, these women happened to be educated and employed. Therefore, it happens to participate in social gatherings.

**Table 3.27 Age-wise Distribution of Women Respondents' Visit to nearest Town With/Without the Permission of Men**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>20-40</b>	96(26.22)	18(4.91)	114(31.14)
<b>41-60</b>	174(47.54)	18(4.91)	192(52.45)
<b>&gt; 60</b>	54(14.75)	6(1.63)	60(16.39)
<b>Total</b>	<b>324(88.52)</b>	<b>42(11.47)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.27 shows, age-wise distribution of female respondents visit nearest town with/without the permission of men. In the table there are 3 (three) age groups viz. 20-40; 41-60; above 60 and two category viz. yes and no.

The age group 20-40 the number of female respondents who say 'yes' in terms of visiting nearest town with/without the permission of men are 96 which come to 26.22 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same age group the number of female respondents who say 'no' is 18 which come to 4.91 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the total number of female respondents is 114 which come to 31.14 of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The age group 41-60 the number of female respondents who say 'yes' towards visiting nearest town with/without the permission of men are 174 which come to 47.57 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same age group the number of female respondents who say 'no' is 18 which come to 4.91 percent of the total respondents. Thus altogether the total number of female respondents is 192 which come to 52.45 of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The age group above 60 the number of female respondents who say 'yes' to visit nearest town with/without the permission of men are 54 which come to 14.75 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same age group the number of female respondents who say 'no' is 6 which come to 1.63 percent of the total respondents. Thus

altogether the total number of female respondents is 60 which come to 16.39 of the total respondents i.e., 366.

From the above data it come to light that even it females are not often the members of different social organisations or clubs. They can move alone freely and join any function or ceremony without the permission of senior or male members. The tendencies are more for the educated females and also with the increase in age (table 3.27).

**Table 3.28 Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents according to their Thinking of Women’s Economic Dependence on Men**

Sex	Thinking about Dependency of Women on Men			Total
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
<b>Male</b>	54(23.08)	132(56.41)	48(20.51)	<b>234(100)</b>
<b>Female</b>	66(18.03)	246(67.21)	54(14.8)	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>120(20)</b>	<b>378(63)</b>	<b>102(17)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.28 shows Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents according to their Thinking of Women’s Dependence on Men. In the table there are 2 (two) groups of the 3 (three) category viz. Yes, No and Not sure. In the ‘yes’ category of the male group the number of the male respondents are 54 which come to 23.08 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the female respondents are 66 which come to 18.03 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the ‘No’ category the number of the male respondents are 132 which come to 56.41 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the male respondents are 246 which come to 67.21 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the ‘Not sure’ category the numbers of the male respondents are 48 which come to 20.51 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

In the same category the numbers of the male respondents are 54 which come to 14.8 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

From the data given above it is clear that most of the male as well as the female respondents think that the females are independent of men economically. Only a few (about 17 per cent of female respondents) think they are dependent on their male counterparts. Perception of male and female about whether the female would remain economically dependent on men provides another indicator of status of the women in the Khasi society.

**Table 3.29 Education-wise Distribution of Female Respondents according to Opinion about Remarriage after Husband's Death**

Education	Should Remarry after Husband's Death				Total
	Agree	Do not Agree	Not Sure	No Comment	
<b>Illiterate</b>	42(11.47)	32(8.74)	22(6.01)	0 (00)	96(26.22)
<b>Literate</b>	84(22.95)	62(16.93)	96(26.22)	28(7.65)	270(73.77)
<b>Total</b>	<b>126(34.43)</b>	<b>94(25.68)</b>	<b>118(32.24)</b>	<b>28(7.65)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.29 shows about the education-wise distribution of female respondents according to opinion about remarriage after husband's death. In the table there are 2 (two) groups of the 4 (four) category viz. agree, do not agree, not sure, and no comment. In the table the number of illiterate female respondents who say 'agree' is 42 which come to 11.47 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same category of literate female respondents are 84 which come to 22.95 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

In the illiterate female respondents who say 'do not agree' are 32 which come to 8.74 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same category of literate female respondents are 62 which come to 16.93 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

In the illiterate female respondents who say 'not sure' are 22 which come to 6.01 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the



same category of literate female respondents are 96 which come to 26.22 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

In the illiterate female respondents who say 'no comment' are 0 which come to 0 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366. In the same category of literate group of female respondents are 28 which come to 7.65 percent of the total respondent i.e., 366.

The above data clearly highlights that 34 percent of the female say 'agree' to remarriage after husband death. 25 percent of the female respondents say 'do not agree'. 32 percent of the female respondents say 'not sure'. Around 8 percent of the female respondent's say 'no comment'. It indicates that in both the categories, literate and illiterate, the number of respondents accepting remarriage after husband expiry is more than those who disagree to remarriage. At the same time the percentage of agreement increases with the level of education. The implication is that even though the educated females acquire the ability to think better and earn the capability of economic independence, a major part of them do not want to remain in isolation of male counterpart. That may of course be because of future security.

### **3.3(d) Influence of Print and Mass Media on Women**

Women of Meghalaya have some access to mass and print media and that plays an important role in raising awareness among them. Though relatively more percentage of men read newspaper than the women, they are also not lagging behind. In the table there is 3 category of readership viz. everyday, occasionally, never and this will be read across sexes in the group of Illiterate and literate.

**Table 3.30 Distribution of Respondents according to Reading of Newspapers**

Sex of Head	Education	Reading Newspaper			Total
		Everyday	Occasionally	Never	
Male	Illiterate	0	0	0	0
	Literate	96(41.02)	72(30.76)	66(28.20)	234(100)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>96(41.02)</b>	<b>72(30.76)</b>	<b>66(28.20)</b>	<b>234 (100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	0	0	0	0
	Literate	140(38.25)	66(18.03)	160(43.71)	366(100)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>140(38.25)</b>	<b>66(18.03)</b>	<b>160(43.71)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>118(39.33)</b>	<b>138(23)</b>	<b>226(37.66)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

In the table the number of the illiterate male respondents who read newspaper everyday is understandably 0 which come to 0 percent. But in the same literate male respondents who read newspaper everyday is 96 which come to 41.02 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again in the illiterate female respondents who read newspaper everyday is 0 which come to 0 percent. Literate female respondents who read newspaper everyday are 140 which come to 38.25 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The number of literate male respondents who read newspaper occasionally is 72 which come to 30.76 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category the number of literate female respondent who read newspaper occasionally are 66 which come to 18.03 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The literate male respondent who read newspaper 'never' is 66 which come to 28.20 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The number of the literate female respondents who read newspaper 'never' is 160 which come to 43.71 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The above table clearly shows that more than 56 per cent of female respondents read newspaper daily or occasionally. And 71 percent of the male respondents read newspaper daily or occasionally

the local newspaper. Considering the percentage of literacy, relatively more males have access to newspaper. Nonetheless, more than half of the female respondent's access to some forms prints media which in fact is significant indicator for social and political awareness. Realistically again a large section of female population (43 percent) do not access print media.

**Table 3.31 Distribution of Respondents according to Listening Radio (local dialect)**

Sex of Head	Education	Listening Radio			Total
		Everyday	Occasionally	Never	
Male	Illiterate	12(5.12)	6(2.6)	34(14.52)	52(22.22)
	Literate	66(28.20)	82(35.04)	34(14.52)	182(77.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>78(33.33)</b>	<b>88(37.60)</b>	<b>68(29.05)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	6(1.63)	6(1.63)	84(22.95)	96(26.22)
	Literate	52(14.20)	110(30.05)	108(29.50)	270(73.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>58(15.84)</b>	<b>116(31.69)</b>	<b>192(52.45)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>136(22.66)</b>	<b>204(34)</b>	<b>260(43.33)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.31 shows about the distribution of respondents according to listening of radio (local dialect). Though radio is also available in most of the families now-a-days relatively less percentage of people listen to radio, which is true for both male and female.

In the table the number of illiterate male respondents who listening radio everyday is 12 which come to 5.12 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category literate male respondent who listens radio everyday is 66 which come to 28.20 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The number of illiterate female respondents who listens radio everyday are 6 which come to 1.63 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same category literate female respondent who listens radio everyday is 52 which come to 14.20 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The number of illiterate male respondents who listens radio occasionally are 6 which come to 2.6 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category literate male respondent who listening radio occasionally are 82 which come to 35.04 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The number of illiterate female respondents who listens radio occasionally are 6 which come to 1.63 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same category literate female respondent who listening radio occasionally are 110 which come to 30.05 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The number of illiterate male respondents who listens radio 'never' are 34 which come to 14.52 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same literate male respondent who listens radio 'never' are 34 which come to 14.52 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234.

The number of illiterate female respondents who listens radio 'never' are 84 which come to 22.95 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. In the same literate female respondent who listening radio 'never' are 108 which come to 29.50 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The above data shows that around 46 percent of female respondents listened to radio programmes everyday (daily) or occasionally. And 71 percent of the male respondents listens either radio daily or occasionally. Again 52 percent of the female never listened radio. And 29 percent of the male never listened radio. In the table the number of male percentage who listen radio is more than the female percentage. And the number of the male percentage who never listened is less than the number of female percentage. From the table it can be said that maximum numbers of the respondents do not listen to radio and has become the least popular mass media. It has been a common trend nowadays which also has been replaced increasingly, by the other mass media viz. T.V and Newspapers.

Therefore, besides this, T.V. viewership will provide important inputs for the present study. This is shown in the next table.

**Table 3.32 Distribution of Respondents according to Watching of Television in Meghalaya**

Sex of Head	Education	Watching Television			Total
		Everyday	Occasionally	Never	
Male	Illiterate	12(5.12)	26(11.11)	14(5.98)	52(22.22)
	Literate	96(41.02)	38(16.23)	48(20.51)	182(77.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>108(46.2)</b>	<b>64(27.35)</b>	<b>62(26.49)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	72(19.67)	6(1.63)	18(4.91)	96(26.22)
	Literate	126(34.42)	76(20.76)	68(18.57)	270(73.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>198(54.09)</b>	<b>82(22.40)</b>	<b>86(23.49)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
<b>Grand-total</b>		<b>306(51)</b>	<b>146(24.33)</b>	<b>146(24.33)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.32 shows about the distribution of respondents according to television viewership (local news). In the table the number of the illiterate male respondents who watch Television (TV) everyday is 12 which come to 5.12 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondent who watches TV everyday is 96 which come to 41.02 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The illiterate female respondents who watch TV everyday is 72 which come to 19.67 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondent who watches TV everyday is 126 which come to 34.42 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The illiterate male respondents who watch TV occasionally is 26 which come to 11.11 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The literate male respondents who watch TV occasionally are 38 which come to 16.23 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. The illiterate female respondents who watch TV occasionally are 6 which come to 1.63 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The same literate female respondents' who watch TV occasionally are 76 which come to 20.76 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the illiterate male respondents who watch TV 'never' are just 14 which come to 5.98 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same way literate male respondents' who watch TV 'never' are 48 which come to 20.51 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again in the illiterate female respondents who 'never' watch TV are 18 which come to 4.91 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366. The literate female respondents' who watch TV 'never' are 68 which come to 18.57 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In terms of the data, it can be said that at least concerning T.V. viewership, maximum number of respondents view T.V. which indicates, at the minimum, the awareness of current affairs in the state.

### **3.3(e) Economic Status**

Status can be earned due to the control over economic access and power. Thus here first of all, status are examined through the distribution of economic power i.e., whether the female respondents are an earner or dependent, their holding of tangible and intangible assets, nature of inheritance of ancestral property and the nature of job opportunities in which women are involved as against their men counterpart.

Table 3.33 shows the distribution of respondents by earning status of the respondents of families of different age-group. In the table researcher present the percentage distribution of respondents according the earning and dependence of male and female respondents across different age group as observed from the survey data.

**Table 3.33 Distribution of Respondents by Earning Status of the Respondents of Families of Different Age-Group**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Dependent</b>	<b>Earners</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	20-40	10(4.27)	100(42.73)	110(47.00)
	41-60	8(3.41)	84(35.89)	92(39.31)
	60 <	6(2.56)	26(11.11)	32(13.67)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>24(10.25)</b>	<b>210(89.74)</b>	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	20-40	24(6.55)	48(13.11)	72(19.67)
	41-60	12(3.27)	132(36.06)	144(39.34)
	60 <	42(11.47)	108(29.50)	150(40.98)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>78(21.31)</b>	<b>288(78.68)</b>	366(100)
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>102(17)</b>	<b>498(83)</b>	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

From the table 3.33 shows the distribution of respondents by earning status of different age-group of Meghalaya. In the table researcher observes that the number of dependents in male age group 20-40 are 10 which come to 4.27 percent. In the same age group earners are 100 which come to 42.73 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of male respondent are 110 which come to 47 percent.

In the male age group 41-60 dependents are 8 which come to 3.41 percent. In the same age group earners are 84 which come to 35.89 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of male respondents are 96 which come to 41.02 percent.

In the male age group 60 and above dependent are 6 which come to 2.56 percent. In the same age group earner are 26 which come to 11.11 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of male respondent are 32 which come to 13.67 percent.

The female age group 20-40 dependents are 24 which come to 6.55 percent. In the same age group earners are 48 which come to 13.11 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of female respondents are 72 which come to 19.67 percent. In the

female age group 41-60 dependent are 12 which come to 3.27 percent. In same age group earner are 132 which come to 36.06 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of female respondent are 144 which come to 39.34 percent.

In the female age group 60 and above dependent are 42 which come to 11.47 percent. In same age group earner are 108 which come to 29.50 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of dependent and earner of female respondent are 150 which come to 40.98 percent.

From the above data it is shows that about 17 per cent of the all respondents are dependent and over 83 per cent are earner. In case of male respondents about 89 per cent are earner and in case of female respondents this percentage are about 79. Though the aged people (whether male or female) who are either retired or non-earner are found to be head in other societies, in Khasi society with the emergence of nuclear family earning became one of the principal criteria to be head of the family for both male and female. The data clearly shows that majority of women (i.e. 78.68 percent to be exactly) are earner and economically independent. Interestingly, now-a-days the male counterpart who contributes significantly to the families income gain command over their female counterpart.<sup>19</sup> Though females are active in most of the socio-economic activities in Meghalaya over 21 per cent of the female respondent are dependent. However, the criteria of earning are not essential for a female to be the head of a family. Also, even if they do not earn and remain dependent on the income of either husband or children they can act as head and thus become decision maker. Moreover, the deserted/divorced/widows also whether earner or not are the heads due to the condition of the family. In some cases of course, due to the death of wife or influence of modern society in some family the name of their senior most male member is presented as the head of the family.<sup>22</sup> However, the chance of becoming head of a non-earner female member is

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<sup>19</sup> Survey Report.



relatively more than a non-earning male member even in a joint family of the rural Khasi society.

**Table 3.34 Distribution of Respondents According to the Inheritance of Ancestral Property**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Property Inherited</b>	<b>Not Inherited</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	84(35.89)	150(64.10)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	186(50.81)	180(49.18)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	270(45)	330(55)	600(100)

Source: Survey Report.

The table 3.34 shows the distribution of respondents according to the inheritance of ancestral property of Meghalaya. The table reveals that the number of property inherited male respondent is 84 which come to 35.89 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category the number of female respondent are 186 which come to 50.81 percent. Thus altogether the numbers of the inherited property in both male and female are 270 which come to 45 percent of the total respondent 600. The numbers of the female respondents who do not inherit parental property are 180 which come to 49.18 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The above table shows that the number of female respondents who inherit parental property is higher than that of male respondents.<sup>20</sup> This again highlight the potentiality of women being economically independent than men in Khasi society. The data reveals that about relatively very less male heads (about 35 per cent) have received share of ancestral property while about 65 per cent does not inherit any property. Those male who inherited property may be either because he does not have any sister or out of parents concern. But in case of youngest daughter the inheritance are compulsory. The data

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<sup>20</sup> The case of inheritance of property, the traditional custom is to inherit ancestral assets primarily to the females especially the youngest daughter of the family. However the other daughters of the family also get the share of the ancestral property informally but not equal with that of youngest one and the settlement is done with the consent of the daughters' maternal uncle.

shows that nearly 51 per cent of the female heads inherited property from their parents. However, the overall fact is that though some of the males do inherit parental property, the females have more chance to inherit property. This indicates that the women have upper hand in terms of property which may lead to economic independence.

**Table 3.35 Occupational Pattern of the Respondents across Sex and Education**

Sex	Educational Qualification	Cultivator	Govt. Service	Business	House maker	Old Age	Total
Male	Illiterate	30(12.82)	0	10(4.27)	0	12(5.12)	52(22.22)
	Literate	0	70(29.9)	90(38.4)	0	22(9.4)	182(77.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>30(12.8)</b>	<b>70(29.9)</b>	<b>100(42.7)</b>	<b>0 (00)</b>	<b>34(14.5)</b>	<b>34(100)</b>
Female	Illiterate	40(10.92)	0	20(5.46)	30(8.2)	6(1.63)	96(26.22)
	Literate	14(3.82)	50(13.6)	60(16.3)	104(28.4)	42(11.4)	70(73.7)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>54(14.7)</b>	<b>50(13.6)</b>	<b>80(21.8)</b>	<b>134(36.6)</b>	<b>48(13.1)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>

Source: Survey Report

Again from the table 3.35 shows the occupational pattern of the respondents across sex and education of Meghalaya. The number of the illiterate female respondents in cultivator category is 40 which come to 10.92 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents are 14 which come 3.82 percent. Thus altogether in cultivator category of the female respondent are 54 which come to 14.7 percent.

The number of the illiterate female respondents in government service category is 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category of the literate female respondents are 50 which come 13.6 percent. Thus altogether in government service category of the female respondent are 50 which come to 13.6 percent.

The number of the illiterate female respondents in business category is 20 which come to 5.46 percent. In the same category of literate female respondents are 60 which come 16.39 percent. Thus altogether in business category of the female respondent are 80 which come to 21.8 percent.

The numbers of the illiterate female respondent's in House maker category are 30 which come to 8.19 percent. In the same category of literate female respondents are 104 which come 28.41 percent. Thus altogether in House maker category of the female respondent is 134 which come to 36.6 percent.

The number of the illiterate female respondents in old age category is 6 which come to 1.63 percent. In the same category of literate female respondents are 42 which come 11.47 percent. Thus altogether in old age category of the female respondent are 48 which come to 13.1 percent.

The table clearly highlight that because of lower educational background female respondents are comparatively less in government service and more in house maker category. However, very interestingly, nearly half of the female respondents are active earners be it in cultivator sector or, government service or business. Reading this economic indicator along with pattern of property inheritance, women in Meghalaya can be said to be more or less economically sound or self- sufficient.

### **3.3(f) Political Awareness**

Now, one can turn to issues concerning political awareness of women in Meghalaya. This will be highlighted through different sets of data collected from field work.

**Table 3.36 Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents according to the Opinion about Reservation of Seats for Members in the Local Bodies (Gram Panchayat/ Dorbar)**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>No Idea</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	198(84.61)	6(2.6)	30(12.82)	234(100)
<b>Female</b>	12(3.3)	300(81.96)	54(14.75)	366(100)
<b>Total</b>	<b>210(35)</b>	<b>306(51)</b>	<b>84(14)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report.

In the table 3.36 shows about the sex-wise distribution of respondents according to the opinion about reservation of seats for members in the local bodies (Gram Panchayat/ Dorbar). In the table there are 2 (two) groups viz. male and female of the 3 (three) category viz. Bad, Good and No Idea. In the 'Bad' category of the male group the number of the male respondents are 198 which come to 84.61 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the female respondents are 12 which come to 3.3 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the 'Good' category of the male group the number of the male respondents are 6 which come to 2.6 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the male respondents are 300 which come to 81.96 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the 'No Idea' category of the male group the numbers of the male respondents are 30 which come to 12.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. In the same category of the female group the numbers of the male respondents are 54 which come to 14.75 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

From the above table it is clear that most of the male respondents did not want reservation of seats for women in the local bodies such as panchayat. Again 3 percent of the female say 'bad' and 82 percent of the female says 'good' and 15 percent of the female say 'no idea'. From the table it can be said that most of the female wants reservation of seats for members in the local bodies. Here the most important indication is that maximum numbers of respondents have opinion about the political issues of the state. Only 15 percent of women say 'No idea' which means they do not form any opinion about this issue. The researcher can further condense the data in the table 3.37.

**Table 3.37 Education and Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents  
According to the Exercising of Voting Right**

Sex	Educational Qualification	Exercise Voting of Right		Total
		Yes	No	
Male	Literate	40(17.09)	12(5.12)	52(22.22)
	Illiterate	164(70.08)	18(7.69)	182(77.77)
	<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>206(87.17)</b>	<b>30(12.82)</b>	<b>234(100)</b>
Female	Literate	90(24.50)	30(8.19)	96(26.22)
	Illiterate	228(62.29)	18(4.91)	270(73.77)
	<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>318(86.88)</b>	<b>48(13.11)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>
	<b>Grand-total</b>	<b>522(87)</b>	<b>78(13)</b>	<b>600(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.37 shows about the sex-wise distribution of respondents according to the exercising of voting right. In the table the number of literate male respondent's who say yes are 40 which come to 17.09 percent. In the same illiterate male respondent's who say yes are 164 which come to 70.08 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who say yes are 206 which come to 87.17 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again the numbers of literate female respondents who say yes are 90 which come to 24.59 percent. In the same illiterate female respondents who say yes are 228 which come to 62.29 percent. Thus altogether female respondents member are 318 which come to 86.88 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

In the literate male respondent's who say 'no' are 8 which come to 3.41 percent. In the same illiterate male respondent's who say 'no' are 22 which come to 9.40 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who say 'no' are 30 which come to 12.82 percent of the total respondents i.e., 234. Again the numbers of literate female respondents who say 'no' are 30 which come to 8.19 percent. In the same illiterate female respondents who say 'no' are 18 which come to 4.91 percent. Thus altogether female respondents member are 48 which come to 13.11 percent of the total respondents i.e., 366.

The total number of literate male respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' are 52 which come to 22.22 percent. In the same illiterate male respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' is 91 which come to 77.77 percent. Thus altogether male respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' is 234 which come to 100 percent. Again the total number of literate female respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' are 96 which come to 26.22 percent. In the same illiterate female respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' is 270 which come to 73.77 percent. Thus altogether female respondents who say 'yes' and 'no' is 366 which come to 100 percent.

From the table above it is clearly understood that about 87 percent of the male respondent say 'yes' and 12 percent says 'no' about the exercising of voting right. Again 86 percent of the female respondent says 'yes' and 13 percent says 'no' about the exercising of voting right. Even some of the females do not bother about whether their names are in the electoral role or not. Of course most of the female exercise their franchise in the election and that percentage increases with the rise in educational level as is observed from the table 3.37.

**Table 3.38 Distribution of female respondents in terms of Participation in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting Election/Membership of Political Parties in Meghalaya**

Education	Participation of Women in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting Election/ Membership of Political Parties etc.				Total
	Membership of Political Parties	Political Demonstration / Rallies / Public Meeting	Contesting Election	None	
<b>Illiterate</b>	0(00)	25(6.83)	0	90(24.59)	115(31.42)
<b>Literate</b>	50(13.66)	30(8.19)	25(6.83)	146(39.89)	251(80.87)
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>50(13.66)</b>	<b>55(15.02)</b>	<b>25(6.83)</b>	<b>236(64.48)</b>	<b>366(100)</b>

Sources: - Survey Report

Table 3.38 shows the distribution of female respondent in terms of participation in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public meeting/Membership of Political Parties/Contesting election/political parties in Meghalaya. In the table the number of illiterate female respondent who have membership of Political Parties are 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category literate female membership of Political Parties are 50 which come to 13.66 percent.

The number of illiterate female respondents who took part at the Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting is 25 which come to 6.83 percent. In the same category, the number of literate women is 30 which come to 8.19 percent.

The number of illiterate female respondents who took part in contest election is 0 which come to 0 percent. In the same category literate women who took part in contesting election are 25 which come to 6.83 percent.

The numbers of illiterate female respondents who comment 'none' are 90 which come to 24.59 percent. In the same category of the female respondents are 146 which come to 39.89 percents.

The above data shows that the number of the literate female respondent's percentages is more than illiterate female respondents in the entire category. All the contestants in election are from literate. And also, in the 'none' category literate female respondents are more than the illiterate female respondents who participate in terms of Political demonstration/rallies/public meeting/contesting election. The 'None' column is the most important column in this table as it is also the main indicator of political awareness of women in compare to that of men. By knowing the number of 'None' respondents one can understand the number of respondents across sexes who could form some idea about the female respondents in terms of Participation in Political Demonstration/Rallies/Public Meeting/Contesting Election/Membership of Political Parties in Meghalaya. From this it can be concluded that it is not the indicator for political awareness.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

Manipur and Meghalaya are the two important states in North-East India in terms of women's role for development of socio-economic and political activities in the country. In every sector of socio-economic affairs in these states, the roles of women are tremendous. From household to the top levels of administration many women intensely involve. In despite of such role in the society political participation visibly low. Representation of women in the assembly is no doubt beyond imagination. So, there is need to make such law which can make women play significant roles in society and also need to change the present system of election. Reservation of women in election will be another option to attract more women in the present political scenario. Therefore it is still the fact that role and contribution of women in politics is an issue that needs to be debated. In socio-economic activities women occupy a very high position in both the states. Manipuri women have always play immense role in the promotion of the society. So is the woman of Meghalaya.