

CHAPTER-I
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1.1. An Overview of the Socio-Economic Status(SES)

The term ‘Socio-economic’ apparently is coined by the American sociologist Lester Ward in 1883 (Jones and McMillan, 2001). The concept of Socio-economic status is a very intricate theory. It covers two irreconcilable aspects, one aspect that covers the wealth and material part of livelihood and the other covering the societal part of existence such as social class and prestige. Socio-economic status (SES) refers to individuals or households or community’s position within a hierarchical social structure, which is closely related to health, education, income etc. Renowned authors and prominent scholars around the globe have debated for defining and conceptualisation of socio-economic status but till today there has been neither generally accepted definition for the term ‘Socio-economic Status’ nor any measurement tool that exist (Campbell,1983; Rose. et al., 2001). Some of the frequently used definition includes Chapin’s definition. He defined “Socio-economic status as the position that an individual or family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standards of cultural possessions, effective income, material possessions and participation in the group activities of the community” (Chapin, 1928). Likewise, Graetz has defined the term ‘Socio-economic status’ as a finely graded hierarchy of social positions which can be used to describe a person’s overall social position or standing. It can be indicated by a number of (sub-) concepts such as employment status, occupational status, educational attainment and income and wealth (Graetz, 1995). According to Oakes and Rossi (2003), “Socio-economic status is a construct that reflects one’s access to collectively desired resources, be they material goods, money, power, friendship networks, healthcare, leisure time, or educational opportunities”. While Hauser and Warren (1997) think that socio-economic status is a shorthand expression for variables that characterise the placement of persons, families, or neighborhoods with respect to the capacity to consume valued goods.

According to Krieger (1997), socio-economic status is an aggregate concept that includes both resource-based and prestige-based measures, as linked to both childhood and adult social class position. Resource-based measures refer to material

and social resources and assets, including income, wealth, educational credentials; terms used to describe inadequate resources include 'poverty' and 'deprivation'. Prestige-based measures refer to individual's rank or status in a social hierarchy, typically evaluated with reference to people's access to and consumption of goods, services, and knowledge, as linked to their occupational prestige, income, and education level.

Different scholars have presented different views on defining the 'socio-economic status'. So, there has been no generally accepted definition of socio-economic status and therefore, it is rightfully said by Campbell and Parker (Campbell, 1983) that the debate over socio-economic will end when social research ends.

1.2. Concepts and Measures of Socio-Economic Status(SES)

As it has been supposed that there is no consensus on the definition of socio-economic status, there have been controversies on evaluating the measures for socio-economic status. Consequently, methodologists rarely relied on explicit theory to operationalise the concept while preparing a method to measure socio-economic status. Very often there has been conceptual dispute on two broad approaches for measurement of socio-economic status. The first approach treat socio-economic status essentially as a unitary concept while the second approach focus on the components of socio-economic status.

The unitary concept of socio-economic measurement is closely associated with work of Karl Marx. The key to Marx's analysis of was the idea of exploitation. In agrarian societies the primary classes were the land-owners and the peasants (Marx and Engels, [1848] 1978). Yet, another measure of social class, the British Registrar General's scale (1913) which was renamed in 1990 as the Social Class based on Occupation has been widely used in United Kingdom. In this scale, the occupation of the head of the household is placed in one of five social classes: I-professional; II-intermediate; III-skilled; IV-partly skilled; and V-unskilled. Similarly, Duncan's (1961) socio-economic index (SEI) is a measurement base on occupational standing in US studies.

The second formulation of socio-economic status is a composite approach where socio-economic status is treated as composites of number of distinct dimensions.

Composite socio-economic status measures can be further divided into two basic categories: those that measure material and social deprivation such as the Townsend Index and those that measure social standing or prestige (e.g., social class) such as the Hollingshead Index of social prestige or position. Hollingshead scale (1975) widely known as two-factor Index of Social Prestige (IPS) was based upon occupation and education. Similarly Nam-Powers (1965) occupational status scores were calculated by using a combination of median education and median income levels. In 1974, Rossi and colleagues (Rossi, Sampson, Bose, Jasso, & Passell, 1974) demonstrated Household Prestige score (HHP) base on husband occupation and education along with wife's occupation. Oakes and Rossi (2003) have developed CAPSES consisting of three components namely material capital, human capital and social capital.

In India, various scales for measurement of socio-economic status have been developed, to mention a few, Rahudkar scale 1960, the Kuppuswamy (1981), Srivastava (1978), Parik and Trivedi scale (1964), Bhardwaj scale (2001), Prasad scale (1961), Tiwari scale (2005) etc. However with fast growing economy and social transformation, the reliability of the available scales are considered to be outdated.

Parik et al.(1964) classification is used for rural areas which takes into account following characteristics namely caste, occupation of family head, education of family head, level of social participation of family head, landholding, housing, farm power, material possessions and type of family.

In Prasad's classifications (1961), Standard of Living Index (SLI) and poverty line assessment are used in both urban and rural areas. Prasad's classification is based on per capita monthly income and SLI is based on household physical assets and household characteristics. Tiwari developed a socio-economic scale having much more variables responsible for socio-economic status. Tiwari's scale (2005) has seven indicators namely housing, material occupation, monthly income, land, social participation and understanding. Among all these classifications, the Kuppuswamy classification and the Prasad classification are most commonly used.

Keeping in mind the various concepts revolving around the term socio-economic status, we intend to draw a light on the socio-economic status of Kuki women. For the context of this study, Socio-economic status (SES) refers to the position of the women

in some status ordering as determined by the individual's characteristics like the education, income, health, occupation, family income etc.

1.3. The Socio-economic Status of Women

Before going to the in-depth study of the socio-economic status of the Kuki women of Manipur we briefly highlight the concept concerning to the socio-economic status of the women in India and the status of women in the Manipur.

The 'Status of Women' is again a vague concept. It is defined as a level of women's access to and control over material resources and social resources. Material resources include food, income, land and other forms of wealth where as social resources including knowledge, power and prestige within the family, in the community and in the society at large. In short, it involves the social, economic, political standing of the women in the society.

The current revival of discussion on women's issues is due to the creation of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in 1946. Thereafter, the year 1975 was declared as International Women's Year by United Nation and the periods of 1975-1985 were declared as Women's Decade. Similarly in India, with appointment of the National Committee on the status of Women in India in 1972 and the publication of its report in 1975 marked the first official attempt in contemporary times to study the status of Indian women. The socio-economic status of women is one of the key concerns, frequently debated in the context of progress of developing countries, round the globe. In our society men are privileged over resource utilisation and empowerment than that of the women. This leads to the violation of women rights. One of the important indicators that have occupied the central position in developmental strategy is the enhancement of the socio-economic status of women. Any assessment of the status of women has to start from the social framework, social structures, cultural norms and value system that influence social expectations and perception of the role of both men and women.

The Historical background of the Indian society reveals that in ancient India, women had a great social status and were treated with admiration. They occupied high position in society. Freedom and liberty in matters of education and nuptials were seldom denied. No religious ceremony was considered to be complete without the

participation of the women. The women were the epitome of courage and boldness, love and affection. However, during the course of time the women lost their honored place due to social evils, economic and political factors. This period can be called as a Dark Ages for the women as the evil customs like female infanticide, sati, child marriage, purdah system and polygamy crept in the society. In such a situation, women suffered from the denial of freedom, subjugation and unnatural indoctrination, unequal and inferior status, rigid caste hierarchy and untouchability. Consequently, most women were reduced to inactive element of the society. The religious traditions and social institutions have a deep bearing on the role and status of women. According to Manu's writing in Manusmriti (Hindi law book) has the position of women as "in childhood a woman must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband and her lord is dead, to her sons. A woman must never be independent".

Thereafter, during the colonial rule, some substantial advancement was achieved in bringing equalities between men and women in the area of education, employment and social rights. Many social reformers led the way in launching the reform movements like the Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, etc. which led to the improvement of the position of women. And since independence the status of Indian women changed both structurally and racially. Women are enjoying better rights and opportunities. But still these reforms are yet to bring about development and equivalent status of women with the men. Women are still regarded primarily as mothers, wives, and inferior to men in society. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru aptly remarked that "To awaken the society it is the women who must be awakened. Once she is on the move the family moves; the village moves and the nation moves". It is necessary to improve women status for a better tomorrow.

With passage of time many researchers and scholars from various field has adopted different approaches to examine the position and status of women in any given social structure. It is important to be familiar with the social and economic background to know the status of the women. When they are socially and economically stronger, they are more likely to become self-dependent; their right and confidences in decision making will increase and above all they will have a better position in the family as well as in the society.

Although so much has been given of the emphasis on equality of men and women, equality has not been achieved. This is mainly because of illiteracy, financial dependent and less participation in decision making.

The socio-economic status of women denotes the position they have because of various rights and obligations in the society. Likewise, the status of tribal women is reflected by their access and control enjoyed by the women over their own lives. Often the progress of few middle class tribal women is taken as an indication of their high position. But it has been said that in ground reality majority of them live in rural and hilly area and they are generally deprived or excluded in many aspects of social and economic development in comparison with women of other social groups. The term deprivation is often referred to economic or social shortages. It represents a 'situation of material and social harm which affect a person or a family or a society'.

1.4. Status of Women in Manipur

The status and position of Manipuri women remained a subject of admiration for the foreigners, sociologists and anthropologists who visited Manipur (Asem, 2011). Similarly Grimwood (1975) spoke that the Manipuri do not shut up their women, as is the custom in most parts of India and they are much more enlightened and intelligent in consequence.

The status of the Manipuri women is indeed high in the public sphere. A very good example is the two social movements which are mainly known as the "Nupi Lal" (Women's War). It has been called as the women's war because in both the instance women were the epicenter and they had sustained the agitation to a huge movement. The outbreak of the First Nupi Lal (1904) and the Second Nupi Lal (1939) during the Colonial Rule (1891-1947) has marked the history with Women's movement for upliftment and betterment of the society.

Another relevant instance which can be stated to prove their active participation for development of the society is the mass women organisation which was formed in 1979. It is also called as the 'Meira Paibi' (a women group bearing flaming torches set up in each locality). It is an organisation which came into existence after a long period of a vicious abuse of power by the Indian Army in Manipur 'The Meira Paibi' is still seen patrolling the streets and lanes at night with flaming torches, ready to protect the

civilian basic rights from any form of abuse. Such a vast and strong organisation of women can be hardly seen in other parts of the world. The 'Meira Paibi' has been a political force that challenges any obstacles and problem against any human freedom and individual liberty and human rights obligations.

Manipuri women have inherited the active participation of earlier women of the state. From the pre-independence period till present days, the women are contributing a lot in the organised and unorganised sectors of the economy. The "Khwairamband Bazaar" or "Ima Market" or "Women market" which is exclusively run by women, is a symbol of their courage and hard work. Almost all the trade and commerce activities of Manipur originate from this market. Trading of all commodities like clothes, fishes, poultry, vegetables, fruits, sweets, rice etc is done in this market. The age group of the women varies from young married women to elderly women.

1.5. Manipur: A Glance on the State

Manipur is a tiny hill state with an area of 22,327sq.km located at the Northeastern part of India. The Northeastern States of India is a region which is rich in diverse culture and tradition, breathtaking flora and fauna and habitat of a large number of diverse groups of people making this place a treasure grove. Manipur is surrounded by blue hills with an oval shaped valley at the center. The state is famous for its rich art and tradition and nature's magnificent pristine. The beauty of Manipur which once inspired Mrs. St. Clair Grimwood described it as "A pretty place more beautiful than many show places of the world" (Grimwood,1975). Like the other Northeastern States of India, its topography too is undulating and characterized by numerous hillocks, plains valleys, rivers. The state is famous for its natural beauty, cultural heritage and costumes, dances, arts and crafts, courageous and hard working women.

According to 2011 Census of India, the total population of Manipur is 25.70 lakhs registering a population density of 115 per sq. km. The population has increased by 2.76 lakhs during the decade from 2001 to 2011. The total population of ST and SC are 9.03 lakhs and 97 thousands respectively. The state has a high literacy rate of 79.21 percent.

Manipur is divided into nine districts namely, (i) Imphal West (ii) Imphal East (iii) Thoubal (iv) Bishenpur (v) Churachandpur (vi) Chandel (vii) Ukhrul

(viii) Senapati (ix) Tamenglong districts. The population of Manipur may be broadly classified as the Meiteis, the Kuki and the Nagas. Under the umbrella of these three major groups, there are number of subgroups. The Kuki and the Nagas mostly inhabited in the hill areas and the Meiteis are the main inhabitant of the valley area of the state. And each community has its own social order that influences women resulting in varying degrees of development and progress.

1.5.1 Protective Measures of Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC) in Manipur

The changing demographic pattern and subsequent disparities between the tribal and non-tribal necessitates rigorous measures for protection of their rights. It is also important to safeguard and prevent the exploitation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As remedies for this the State Government of Manipur has since taken the following protective measures (Department for Development of Tribals & Scheduled Castes, 2013).

- 1) For the protection of the SC and ST people through legal and administrative support, special courts were set up in the State under the provision of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Acts, 1989.
- 2) Under the provision of Section 158 of Manipur Land Reforms and Land Revenue Act, there is restriction on the transfer of land belonging to a tribal to a non-tribal.
- 3) There is reservation of 31 percent in both direct recruitment and promotion of Government. offices and Semi-Government Institutions for Scheduled Tribe people
- 4) Commercial vending of liquor is not allowed in the tribal areas. However, the tribal people are allowed to brew liquor for their own consumption for social and religious purposes.
- 5) Under the Manipur (Hill Areas) District Council Act, 1971 six Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) were created in hill areas of Manipur. They are Chandel ADC, Tamenglong ADC, Churachandpur ADC, Senapati ADC, Kangpokpi ADC and Ukhrlul ADC.

- 6) The Tribal Research Institute in the state has been bifurcated from the Directorate for Development of Tribal and Schedule Castes in the year 2007. The Institute is engaged in publication of monographs, booklets, documentation of tribal culture, organising of trainings, seminars and workshops.
- 7) The Manipur Tribal Development Corporation Ltd. was established in 1979 for development and welfare activities of the Scheduled Tribes in the State.

1.5.2. Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes Population of Manipur

The state is not only rich in its natural landscapes but also rich in culture with a diversified population. There are 33 Scheduled Tribes in Manipur. They are Aimol, Anal, Angami, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kabui, Kacha Naga, Koirao, Koirang, Kom, Lamgang, Mizo, Lushai, Maram, Maring, Mao Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Ralte, Sema, Simte, Suhte, Tangkhul, Thadou, Vaiphei, Zou, Poumei Naga, Tarao, Kharam and Any Kuki tribes. They lived mostly in the hill districts of Manipur. The Mao tribe mostly concentrates in the Senapati District, the Tangkhul in the Ukhrul district, the Kabuis in the Tamenglong district, the Anals and Marings in the Chandel district and Kuki in the Churachandpur district. According to 2011 census, the Scheduled Tribes population is 9.03 lakhs that is 35.12 percent of the total population.

There are 7 Scheduled Castes communities in Manipur. They are Loi, Yaithibi, Dhobi, Muchi or Rabidas, Namsudra, Patni and Sutradhar. The total Scheduled castes population is 97 thousand that is 3.78 percent of total population.

1.6. The Origin of the Kuki

The origin and meaning of the word 'Kuki' is shrouded with myths and mythologies. Different writers and scholars have presented diverse views and opinions. But to this day, none of the views have been universally accepted. Some of the common stories of the origin of the Kuki are that from McCulloch (1959) that contended that the Kukis were known as 'Khongjai' in Manipur and that they came out of the bowels of earth or a cave called as "Chinglung" or "Shinlung" or "Khul". The similar story that the Kukis came from the bowel of the earth was pointed out by Shaw (1929).

Another version claims that the word 'Kuki' has originated from a Chinese word. The literal meaning of 'Ku' is lake, that 'Ku' is accepted to be the name of a lake in China

and 'Ki' means the people. So, it is believed that Kuki are original inhabitants of the tracts around the 'Ku'-a lake in China (Bordoloi and Thakur, 1988).

One such legend is the traditional account, handed over through generations that the Kuki came out of the bowels of the earth, or a cave, called Khul or Sinlung or Chinlung. (Ginjathang, 1973)

Jewish theory as a matter of fact, has turned out to be most authentic and it bears empirical validity also. During the last one decade a distinguished writer Hiller Halkin, a Jewish born in New York made an in-depth investigation into the claims of Kuki-Chin-Mizo tribes as Israel /Jewish origin. In this connection, he has written 'Beyond the Sabbath River – In search of the lost tribe of Israel' in 2002. Halkin has spent many years searching the lost Menashe tribe in Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, etc., but which he found it at last in the North East India (T. Haokip, 2008).

1.7. The Meaning of Kuki

Historical record shows the first reference was made to the Kuki in 1777 during Warren Hastings, Governor General of Bengal, when these tribes frequently attacked the British subjects in Chittagong (Gangte, 2010).

Gangmumei, describes the 'Kuki' tribes of Manipur as a group of the great Kuki-Chin family of People. They are linguistically related to the Meiteis. 'Kuki is a genuine term covering a large number of tribes and clans in northeastern India and some part of Upper Burma in Chin Hills. The word Kuki is a Bengali word meaning hill man. They migrated to Manipur hills in the pre-historic times along with or after the Meitei advent (early 18th century) in Manipur Valley. In the writings of G.A.Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India is also found that the term Kuki is of Assamese or Bengali origin signifying the dwellers of interior hills.

The origin of the term 'Kuki' is not certainly known; but it is said to be derived from a word applied to a system of cultivation by the Bengalis. The whole of the wild tribe who dwell in the mountain district contained between Bengal and Burma, Cachar and Manipur and Arakan have received this designation. (Dun, 1891). Captain Lewin (1970, p 130) have mentioned that the Kukis were 'men who live far in the interior parts of the hills, and have not the use fire arms, and whose bodies go unclothed' and were known to the Bengalees by the name of Kookie and the Burmese as the lakhe.

Col Dalton (1872) described the Kukis as “a nation of hunters and warriors, rules as a nation by their principal hereditary chiefs or Rajahs, but divided into clans, each under its own chiefs”.

Contemplating on the various versions of the word ‘Kuki’, it is felt that it is a term given to them by the other people. The word Kuki has actually no meaning to the people it is applied but it can be said that it is used as an identification of this people by others. Kuki does not signify a particular tribe but it is a generic term which includes a number of tribes and clans (Bhadra, 1975). According to Shakespeare (1912) the Kukis were classified as Old Kuki and New Kuki depending on their arrival.

Table-1.1. Classification of Kuki by Shakespeare (1912)

Old Kuki	New Kuki
Aimol, Anal, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Koirao, Koireng, Kom, Lamgang, Paite, Purum, Simte, Vaiph-ei, Zou, Hmar	Thadous (and their other kin groups such as Dongel, Misao, Lupheng, Lupho, Ngoilu, Lamhao, Thengneo, Touthang)

Similarly Gangte (2010) used the term Kuki as to people who claim to belong to the ‘Chin’, ‘Kuki’ and ‘Mizo’ groups. G.A. Grierson has stated that the tribes connoted by Kuki are Anals, Aimols, Chirus, Gangte, Hmars, Koms, Lushais, paites, Purums, Raltes, Suktes, Thadou (Grierson 1904). Soppit conjured that the official terms “Old” and “New” Kuki should not be used and the term “Kuki” itself is too well established to be given up (Soppit, 1967).

Ultimately it can be said that the word ‘Kuki’ is a generic term of traditional identity. Under the umbrella of “Kuki”, a large numbers of tribes, sub-tribes, clan and sub-clans. All this tribes and the sub-tribes have close resemblance with each other in terms of language, culture, custom, attires, and food habits. Even after these homogenous characteristics, they prefer to be identified separately by names of their respective tribes, clan and sub-tribes. Despite this division, the tribes have no language barrier. They are able to communicate in their respective dialects, or use one of the dialects of any sub-tribe depending on the individual who uses the dialect.

The Kuki are scattered over a vast region both in Northeast part of India and the neighbouring countries like Bangladesh and Myanmar (refer to as the Chin). The Kuki are of Mongoloid race with broad and round face. The cheek-bones are prominently bulged with small eyes and have wheatish skin colour. Captain Pemberton(1966) wrote that, “the area of the Kukis Khongjais stretched from the southern border of the Manipur valley to the northern limit of the province of Aracan and the Kukis have been gradually advancing for years in a northwardly direction and gave hitherto established themselves on the ranges which are originally occupied by more northerly tribes or committed such fearful aggressions on the latter, as they compel them to retire and live in unoccupied track between themselves and those formidable opponents”. Similarly, description has been that “the Kukis lived in a large area of hilly country bounded by the Angami Naga of Naga hill districts in the Northern Province of Burma in the east, the Chin Hills and the Lusai hill in the south, and the district of Cachar in the west. It may be said that they occupied the hills of the state of Manipur on all sides of the Imphal valley” (Shaw, 1929).

The Kuki mainly settle in Kanjang, Patkai ranges, stretching Khonumate via Khotoduns River, Jolna Pani, Vadung River, Kuki Dolong and Ningchughat. They also occupied areas from the western Lamding Railway station via Chinzapai and ancient Bengal Railway station and meet at Chittagong seaport (Lupheng, 2010). So ultimately, it can be safely concluded that the Kuki-Chin-Mizo had settled in Chindwin in Burma touching the Kachin boundary line and stretched to Manipur and Naga hills and they specially occupied the area.

From the above facts and discussion, it is quite clear that the word ‘Kuki’ is a generic term. They are settling in the hilly areas of the Northeast India. There are many subgroups under the nomenclature of Kuki. Except for the state of Manipur the Kuki in the other state have retained their identity and call them ‘Kuki’. However, in Manipur the situation is different and because of many socio-political factors the tribes preferred to be known by their tribe names. This matter is divergent in context to our study and our main focus is to bring the socio-economic status of the women. On the basis of written documents stated earlier hence after, the Kuki-Chin-Mizo will be refers as ‘Kuki’ in context of the thesis.

1.8. The Kuki Tribes Under the Constitution of India

The Kukis have undergone a process of fragmentation, reducing most of them into different tribes. Till the Independence of India, to be a 'Kuki' was a symbol of prestige and security. The Government of India in the Constitution (Schedule Tribes) Order, 1950 has sited all the Kuki under "Any Kuki Tribes" in the states of Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and Meghalaya. However in Manipur, the tribes are recognised in the name of their respective tribes. The Kuki people were having an extreme urge for being listed as a Scheduled Tribe so as to be able to enjoy the benefits and the privileges provided by the Government of India. The inclusion of the sub-tribes under the umbrella of the term "Kuki" in the states of Northeast are listed as:

1.8.1. Assam

Any Kuki tribes, including: -

(i) Biate, Biete (ii) Changsan (iii) Chongloi (iv) Doungel (v) Gamalhou (vi) Gangte (vii) Guite (viii) Hanneng (ix) Haokip, Haupt (x) HaolaiHengna (xii) Hongsungn (xiii) Hrangkhwal, Rangkhoh (xiv) Jongbe (xv) Khawchung (xvi) Khawathlang, Khothalong (xvii) Khelma (xviii) Kholhou (xix) Kipgen (xx) Kuki (xxi) Lengthang (xxii) Lhangum (xxiii) Lhoujem (xxiv) Lhouvun (xxv) Lupheng (xxvi) Mangjel (xxvii) Misao (xxviii) Riang (xxix) Sairhem (xxx) Selnam (xxxi) Singson (xxxii) Sitlhou (xxxiii) Sakte (xxxiv) Thado (xxxv) Thangngeu (xxxvi) Uibuh (xxxvii) Vaiphei.

1.8.2. Tripura

Kuki, including the following sub-tribes:-

(i) Balte (ii) Belalhut (iii) Chhalya (iv) Fun (v) Hajango (vi) Jangtei (vii) Khareng (viii) Khephong (ix) Kuntei (x) Laifang (xi) Lentei (xii) Mizel (xiii) Namte (xiv) Paitu, Paite (xv) Rangchan (xvi) Rangkhoh (xvii) Thangluya

1.8.3. Mizoram

Any Kuki tribes, including:-

(i) Baite, Biete (ii) Changsan (iii) Chongloi (iv) Doungel (v) Gamalhou (vi) Gangte (vii) Guite (viii) Hanneng (ix) Haokip, Haupt (x) Haolai (xi) Hengna (xii) Hongsungh (xiii) Hrangkhwal, Rangkhoh (xiv) Jongbe (xv) Khawchung (xvi) Khawathlang, Khothalong (xvii) Khelma (xviii) Kholhou (xix) Kipgen

(xx) Kuki (xxi) Lengthang (xxii) Lhangum (xxiii) Lhoujem (xxiv) Lhouvun (xxv) Lupheng (xxvi) Mangjel (xxvii) Misao (xxviii) Riag (xxix) Sairhem (xxx) Selnam (xxxi) Singson (xxxii) Sitlhou (xxxiii) Sukte (xxxiv) Thado (xxxv) Thangngeu (xxxvi) Uibuh (xxxvii) Vaiphei.

1.8.4. Meghalaya

Any Kuki tribes, including: -

(i) Baite or Beite (ii) Changsan (iii) Chongloi (iv) Doungel (v) Gamalhou (vi) Gangte (vii) Guite (viii) Hanneng (ix) Haokip or Haupt (x) Haolai (xi) Hengna (xii) Hongsungh (xiii) Hrangkhwal or Rangkhoh (xiv) Jongbe (xv) Khawchung (xvi) Khawthlang or Khothalong (xvii) Khelma (xviii) Kholhou (xix) Kipgen (xx) Kuki (xxi) Lengthang (xxii) Lhangum (xxiii) Lhoujem (xxiv) Lhouvun (xxv) Lupheng (xxvi) Mangjel (xxvii) Missao (xxviii) Riag (xxix) Sairhem (xxx) Selnam (xxxi) Singson (xxxii) Sitlhou (xxxiii) Sukte (xxxiv) Thado (xxxv) Thangngeu (xxxvi) Uibuh (xxxvii) Vaiphei.

1.9. Facts on the Economy of the Kukis of Manipur

The economic life of the Kukis in broad-spectrum was as per the requirement by the geographical and physical factors of the land and on the one hand by political and socio-cultural institutions on the other. The natural forest has played the dominant role in shaping and developing the basis of all economic activities of the people. Since their early settlement in Manipur, the Kuki have settled in the outskirts and interior of the hilly areas. Therefore their economic activities are predominantly primitive. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood. They practice Jhum or shifting cultivation as demanded by their ecological surrounding. There was a transition in their economic activities when the British started their colonial economy. The introduction of the money economy and development of markets had a far reaching blow on the socio-economic life of the Kukis. Under the influences of the colonial economy, rice became a prospective commercial crop in Manipur. The cultivation of potato was also encouraged during the British rule. The economic life of the Kukis is not only characterised by the agricultural activities but also by traditional cottage industries and the crafts production system. The industrial economy of the Kukis includes carpentry, basketry, cane and bamboo work, loin loom, metallurgy and

metals work, rice beer preparation, weaving and collection of forest goods and produces.

The British administration and its colonial economy had brought positive consequences upon the traditional socio-economic life of the Kukis in particular and Tribals in general. The colonial authority and the arrival of Christianity, introduced many new ideas and opportunity, which encouraged them to leave their traditional way of life and embraces modernity. Interaction among tribes and sub-tribes as well as with the valley inhabitant has leads to the advancement in trade and commerce. Another positive thing received during this era was introduction of the modern education system. Many Kukis came under the ambit of knowledge. Western educations have opened the eyes of the Kukis towards a modern society and brought to their realisation the thought of emancipation.

1.10. The Kuki Women

The Kuki women are described to be of short stature, having flat nose, strong physique, lustrous hair and represent mongoloid characteristic. Neihsel (1993) described the Kuki women to be having dark yellow brown, dark olive copper and yellow olive skin. “Traditionally Kuki women wore nih-san (red-slip) underneath a ponve (wrap-around) which was worn from above the chest. The ornaments included earrings (bilba), necklace (Khi) of red and blue colours of cornelian beads. Kuki women traditionally wore their hair in two plaits braided around the head” (Kipgen, 2010).

Traditionally, the social roles of the Kuki women were not recognised. The Kuki women had actively taken parts during the Anglo Kuki war of Independence (1917-1919). They have safeguarded the villages and the children in absence of men, supplying food and amenities to the men folks who went to the war and nursing the wounded men. But very minimum records were found which displays the selfless role played by the women. The Kuki society is patriarchal in nature and the women within the family and social setting remains a patriarchal women. The women participation in politics was very rare as the political front was only for the male members. All the administrative positions such as the Chieftainship and Chairmanship were under the control of the male. Some rare instances were found where the women started taking

part in the administration of the villages and had held chieftainship. One privilege the women enjoy than the women of other society is that even after a woman got married and left maternal home, the maternal bond remain intact as there are many cultural rites and ceremonies which are to be observed after marriage till the death of the women. Unlike, in most society once the girl is married then she has less contact with the maternal home.

1.10.1. Bride Price/ Marriage Payment

The marriage system of the Kuki has a customary law which is very eye catching in understanding the status of the Kuki women. There is a customary, that a bride price has to be paid by the groom to the bride's family. And the whole process of bride-price is however not considered to lower the status of the girl; instead it is observed as a prestige for the bride among her friends and relatives. The bride-price literally means marriage payment. The payment is made in the form of cash, kind and 'Mithun'. Marriage cannot be performed unless part of marriage-payment is made in advance by the bridegroom to the bride's family. In earlier time when barter system was practice of the time, payment was done in terms of Mithun. A Mithun used to cost rupees forty as fixed by the British India administration in 18th Century. Though, the number of Mithun differs from clan to clan, it also depends on the beauty of the bride. So, bride price is observed to highlight the high status of the women rather than lowering it.

T.S Gangte (2010) had suggested the logical reasons behind the bride-price.

- a. For compensation to the economic loss of the girl's family as she is the main pillar of the family's economy.
- b. The second reason is that she is the bearer of children for the expansion of family line of generation.

There is another unique custom of the Kuki society which is solemnised only for the women. At the death time, the Kuki women are given prominent place. If a man has paid the full price for his wife during marriage he has to pay a further sum called Long-man (corpse price) to the nearest male relative. This shows an important position held by Kuki women in the family and Kuki custom.

1.10.2. Kuki women : Economic Involvement

The women work along with their male counterpart in the field. They harvest various types of crops like rice, cucumber, beans, maize, ginger, turmeric gourds, King chilli and fruits like oranges, pineapples, lemons, grapes, passion fruits etc. The women know the art of weaving, spinning, pottery and handicraft work. The traditional economy of the Kuki is a subsistence economy. They depend largely on the forest products for their socio-economic requirements. The Kuki derives their source of income mainly from agriculture particularly the Jhum cultivation and forest produces. Rearing of livestock like pig, duck, poultry also provide subsistence income for the women.

With change of time, many are coming out in the market to sell vegetables, fruits, meats, bamboo shoots and other forest products. Many women are the bread earner of the family. Educated women are working in different departments of the Manipur Government. In the contemporary days, with the transition of people's outlook and perception, the Kuki women no longer hesitate to go along with the needs of modern times. The women have started to involved themselves in casting of votes. The women are ready to step out of their societal shroud and are actively participating in every sphere like politics, economy, sports, education, church, religion and administration. If ample opportunities are provided to them, they can make an influential identity of the 'Kuki Women'.

1.11. Description of the Study Area

The Churachandpur district is the largest district in Manipur with an area of 4,570 sq.km and simultaneously it also has the highest Female Schedule Tribe population in the state (Census 2001). The study is conducted in the Churachandpur district where the highest number of Kuki is present.

The Churachandpur district is situated in the south-western part of Manipur. The district is surrounded by Senapati district at the north, Bishnupur and Chandel districts in the east, Assam and Mizoram at the west and Myanmar at the south. It lies between 23° 55'N and 24° 30'N Latitudes and 92° 59'E to 93° 50'E longitudes. The District Headquarter, Churachandpur which is the second largest town of the state, is situated at a distance of 64 km from the state capital that is Imphal.

The topography of the district is totally a hilly area rich in natural forest resources. It comprises of western lowlands (Tipaimukh) Central highlands (Thanlon, Henglep and Singngat).The landscape of the district is hilly. Most of the hill ranges runs from North to South direction.

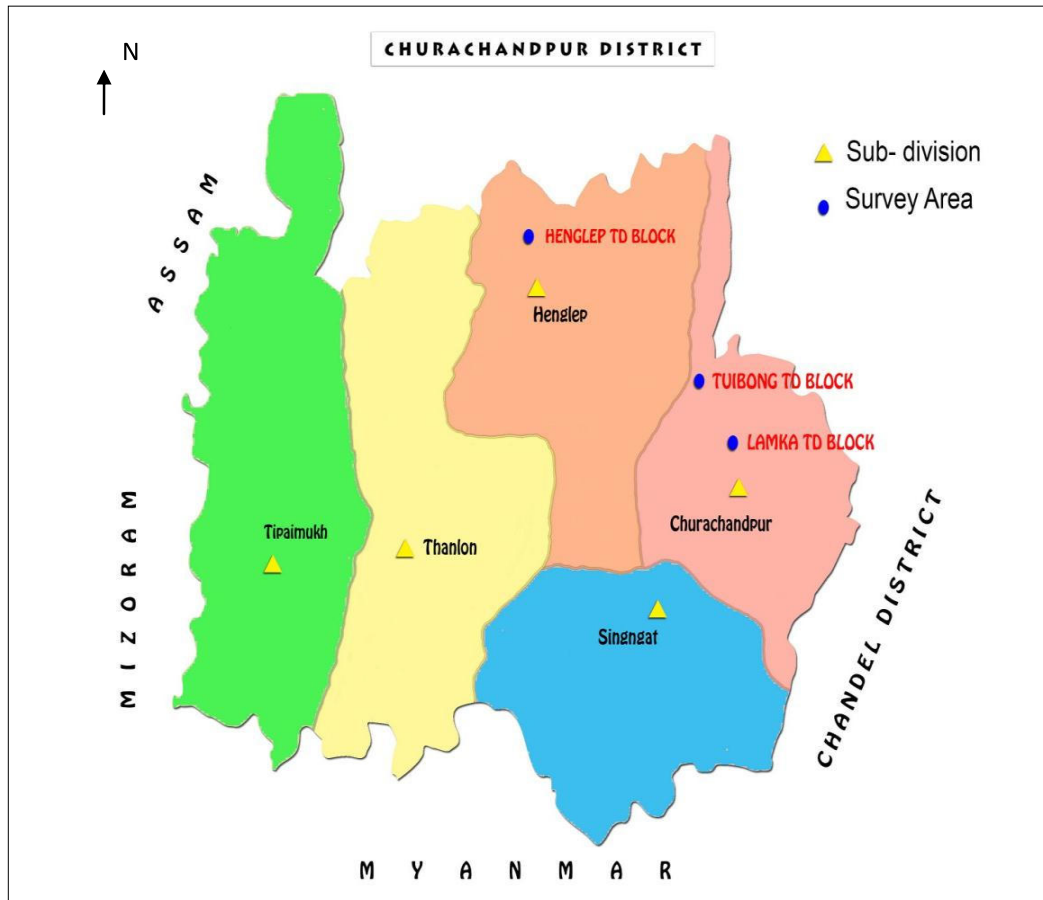


Figure-1.1: Map of Churachandpur District

The important hill ranges includes the Vangai ranges, the Kailam range and Lantang range. Main rivers like the Khuga, Barak, Tulvai and Leimatak River flow through the Churachandpur district. The total population according to 2001 census was 227,905 and the population of the district according to the 2011 census is 271274. So the district experiences a decadal growth rate of 19.03 per cent.

1.12. Administrative Set-up of the Churachandpur District

The Churachandpur district is divided into 5 sub-divisions, namely Churachandpur, Singngat, Thanlon, Parbung (Tipaimukh) and Henglep. There are altogether 10 Tribal

Development (TD) Blocks namely Tipaimukh TD block, Vangai TD block, Thanlon TD block, Henglep TD block, Samulamlan TD block, Tuibong TD block, Saikot TD block, Lamka TD block, Sangaikot TD block and Singngat TD block.

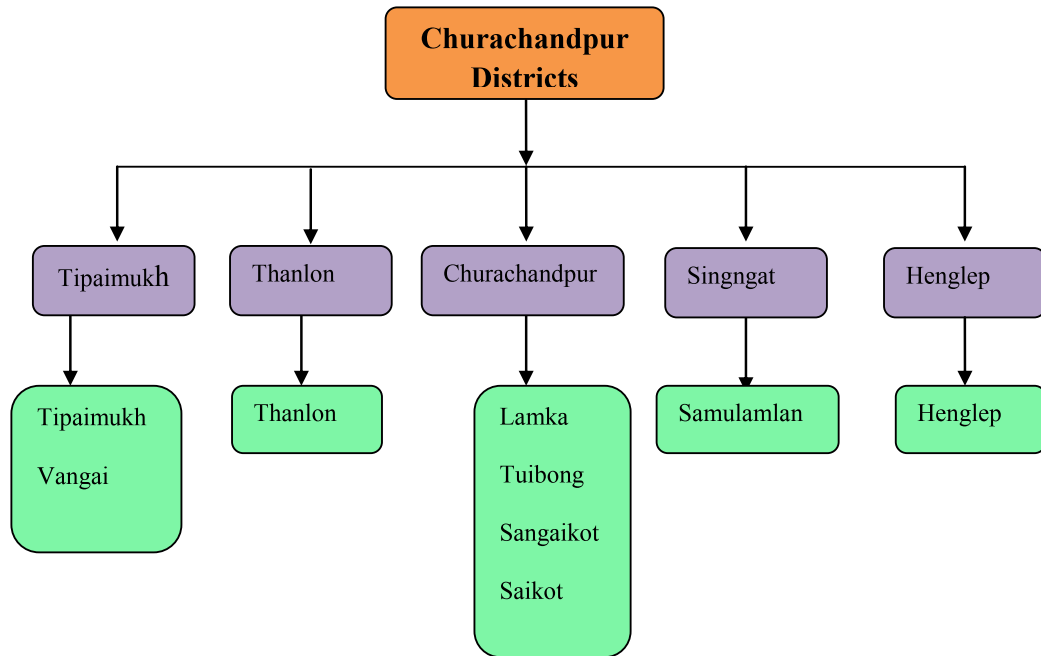


Figure-1.2: Administrative set up of Churachandpur District

1.13. Profile of the Churachandpur Districts

This section gives a brief description of the study area that is Churachandpur district. It includes the Educational Profile, numbers of BPL Families, Health Profile, Working Population, Forest Area and Rural Electrification.

1.13.1. Educational Profile

The first Government school in the district was open in 1952 at Hill town. Earlier to that the first Mission High School came to the districts in 1930 at Old Churachandpur named as “Rostad Memorial High School. A school only for the girl was open in 1952 named Vimla Raina High school in 1952. However it was later converted into a co-educational institution .Prior to the introduction of Manipur Hill Area council Acts (1972), the educational system was under a single administration of Zonal education officer. The creation of Autonomous District Council brings a dual Administration of school.

Table-1.2: Trend of Literacy in Churachandpur District

Year of Census	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Total Population					
Literate	34029	60452	83355	139080	199594
Literacy Percentage	34.68	44.85	48.45	70.6	84.29
Male					
Literate	22260	37029	50597	78871	106026
Literacy Percentage	44.84	52.99	66.38	77.7	88.34
Female					
Literate	11769	23423	34758	60209	93568
Literacy Percentage	24.28	36.09	49.30	63.1	80.13

Source: Churachandpur District Statistical Year Book, 2014

The district has made a tremendous educational achievement during the last few decades. The literacy rate of the total population has shifted from a mere of 34.68 percent in 1971 to 84.29 percent in 2011.

Similarly, in case of the male literacy and female literacy the district shows progress. However, the male literacy rate is found to be higher than the female literacy rate.

Table-1.3: Number of Educational Institutions including Grant-in-aid and Recognised Schools at Churachandpur District

Year Institutions	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Pre-Primary/Primary/JB/UJB School	280	280	280	280	280
Middle/Sr. Basic/Jr. High School	104	104	104	93	93
High/Higher Secondary School	83	83	83	94	94
College	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Churachandpur District Statistical Year Book, 2014

1.13.2. BPL Families

In the year 2009-10, the number of household above poverty line was 23109 and 9881 number of household were below poverty line.

Table-1.4: Families Below Poverty Line and Above Poverty Line of Churachandpur during 2009-10

	Number of Households		
	Below Poverty Line	Above Poverty Line	Total
Churachandpur	9881	23109	32990

Source: Economic Survey of Manipur 2012-13

1.13.3. Working Population

The most recent picture of the working and non-working population of the district is presented in Table-1.5 .The number of workers have increased from 71,933 to 89,779 since 2001 to 2011. The figure of the marginal worker has also increased from 27,430 to 32,876. The Non-worker category in Churachandpur district shows increase in number. This may be caused by unemployment, degradation of forest resources and lack of skill.

Table-1.5: Workers and Non-workers of Churachandpur District

Years	Main Workers	Marginal Workers	Non-Workers
2001	71933	27430	128542
2011	89779	32876	151488

Source: Economic Survey of Manipur, 2009-10 & Economic Survey of Manipur 2012-13

The most recent picture of the female workforce is reflected in the Table-1.6. The figure of the female working population has increased from 42,615 to 52,061 in the last two decade. There is not much change in the figure of the dependency ratio over the decade.

Table-1.6: Female Work force in the Churachandpur district

Decade	Workers	Non workers	Dependency Ratio
2001	42615	68058	159.70
2011	52061	83262	159.90

Source: Economic Survey of Manipur, 2009-10 & Economic Survey of Manipur 2012-13

1.13.4. Forest Area

In a hilly district like Churachandpur district, the economic activities of the people on large scale depend on the forest. According to the Forest Survey of India (2003), forest covers an area of 4157 sq.km that is 90.96 percent of the total geographical area of the district. The Table-1.7 represents the area cover by different categories in the District. An area of 35 sq.km of the district is fully covered by dense forest and moderately dense forests cover an area of 1322 sq.km.

Table-1.7: Forest Area of Churachandpur District (Area shown in sq.km.)

Geographical Area	Total Forest Area	Type of Forest			Percentage
		Very dense	Moderately dense	Open forest	
4570	4157	35	1322	2800	90.96

Source: Forest Report, Forest Survey of India, 2003

1.13.5. Rural Electrification

Rural electrification plays a very vital role in the improvement and development of any socio-economic environment of the rural population. Rural electrification in Churachandpur district faces a more challenging task in term of high cost, inaccessible or difficult terrain. The numbers of electrified villages' not-electrified villages are presented in Table-1.8.

Table-1.8: Rural Electrification in Churachandpur District as on 31st December, 2011

Number Of Village			Percentage Of Villages	
Electrified	Not – Electrified	Total	Electrified	Not - Electrified
248	296	544	45.59	54.41

Source: Economic Survey of Manipur, 2012-13

1.13.6. Health Infrastructure

Altogether there are 79 healthcare centers available in the district. Out of this 64 are sub health centers are spreaded across the district. There is only 1 Government Allopathic Hospital with 150 beds. The district has 4 private hospitals and 9 primary health centers and is altogether 207 numbers of beds available in the health care center of Churachandpur district.

Table-1.9: Number of Health Care Center in Churachandpur District

	Number (as on 2010-2011)
Allopathic Hospital	1(150 beds)
Ayurvedic Hospital	0
Community health centers	1
Primary health centers	9
Dispensaries	0
Sub health centers	64
Private hospitals	4
Total	79

Source: Churachandpur District Statistical Year Book, 2014

1.14. Statement of the Problem of the Study

As per the World's Woman, Statistical Book on Woman (UNO,1955) woman is half of the total world's population, perform two-third of the world's work and 1% of global property is owned by women. Moreover, woman represents three-fifth of the world's total literates and occupies one-tenth of the world's income. According to a report of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (2011), in rural India, almost 60 percent of girls are married before they reach 18 years. Nearly 60 per cent of married girls conceive children before they are of the age 19 years. Similarly, the NFHS-III(2005-06) shows that the main reason of females never attending school are 'expensive cost of education', 'not interested in studies', 'they are education is not considered necessary' and 'required for household work'.

The socio-economic status of women in any social group is determined by their levels of health-nutrition, education and standard of living. Likewise in case of Kuki communities the position of women in the society is determined by their literacy rate, employment rate, their health status, their empowerment over decision making etc. In most cases the socio-economic status of tribal women are lower in comparison to the women of other communities. They are more illiterate, they share more problems related to reproductive health, and are less exposed to the practical world as they are mostly involved in household works. The low educational status is reflected by their lower literacy rate, lower enrolment rate and their presence in the school. Higher illiteracy, poor health and low income indicate low socio-economic status. So, we can get a hint that socio-economic status of the Kuki women is engulfed by low education status, health and economic status.

In Manipur the major proportion of the population is formed by the Meiteis, the Nagas and the Kukis. The Nagas and the Kukis live in the hilly area and the Meities have settled in the valley.

Economic backwardness, lack of development infrastructures, poor transport facilities, poverty, poor health facilities, and shortage of educational facilities are major problem of the hilly areas of Manipur which are dominated mainly by the Tribals. The Kukis and the Nagas are of the view that they are deprived of their right to economic development for which the Meities are mainly blamed (Kangujam, 2008). It is empirically found in many cases that status of women in primitive kind

society has not been that much satisfactory. So, one can take a note over the issue of Kuki women in such a manner that they are doubly deprived, in the first instance as being belonging to the Kuki community and second as being a woman. Thus it is very much essential to search for the condition of Kuki women under the lights of valid rationale. In this regard, the study targets to investigate the socio-economic status of Kuki women in Churachandpur district, Manipur, using suitable valid indicators and tools of measurements.

1.15. Rationale of the Study

In light of the above discussion, we can understand that the socio-economic status of the Kuki women in Manipur is low. This rationale provides ample support to the study the socio-economic status of the Kuki women. To carry out the study, we have used socio-economic indicators like health, education, income, employment.

Healthcare is another major dilemma in far flung remote tribal areas. Lack of food security, sanitation, safe drinking water, poor nutrition and high poverty levels worsen their poor health status. According to the report of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (2005) in some prominent indicators of health such as infant mortality rate and undernutrition, the ST population has the highest percentage in comparison with the SCs and the over-all population. In most cases the socio-economic status of tribal women are lower in comparison to the women of other communities. The study will also undertake the educational attainment of the Kuki women. Moreover, it will investigate the occupational pattern of the Kuki women. This will also bring out their economic status.

The study is concern with socio-economic status of Kuki women rather than men, although some of the measurement issues concerned with variation across the life course could equally apply to men. The focus on Kuki women was considered important because the huge role that is often undertaken by women in a family can result in their having a lower personal development than the male member and a greater dependent upon other family members. The study revolves around the socio-economic status of Kuki women and the extent of disadvantages that the women face with regard to their education, health, employment and income.

So, the study seeks to examine the socio-economic status of women in context with the Kuki society with a view that in every society women struggle against gender norms that bound their resources and opportunities for improvement. Furthermore, it will be logical to search the insight that Kuki women are comparatively more deprived than the women from higher ranked groups in the study area that is Churachandpur districts. This will point out the concrete rationale behind their deprivation.

1.16. Objectives of the Study

After careful consideration, the following sets of objectives are identified for present study:

1. To study and examine the health and education status of the Kuki women in Manipur.
2. To study and examine the income and employment status of the Kuki women in Manipur.
3. A relative comparison of the socio-economic status of Kuki women will be made with that of Non-Kuki women.
4. To find out the major factors determining the socio-economic status of Kuki women and Non-Kuki women.

1.17. Research Questions

In the light of the four objectives, the study set out to search an answer for the following queries

1. Whether the Kuki women are deprived in terms of income and employment compare to Non-Kuki women?
2. Whether the health and education status of the Kuki women are far less than the status of other women?
3. Whether the socio-economic status of Kuki women is not at par with that of the Non-Kuki women in the Churachandpur district?

1.18. Research Design/ Chapter Schemes of the Thesis.

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The chapters are organization of the thesis is as follows

Chapter-I Introduction

- Overview of Socio-economic Status
- Status of Women in Manipur
- The Kukis of Manipur
- Profile of study area- Churachandpur district of Manipur
- Statement of the problem
- Rationale of the study
- Objectives of the study
- Research Questions

Chapter-II Review of related literatures

Chapter-III Conceptual Framework

- Concept of Socio-economic status
- Unitary conceptual Issues of Socio-economic status
- Key Terminology

Chapter-IV Methodology

- Sampling Design
- Selection of District
- Selection of Blocks
- Selection of sampling units
- Data
- Different methods and technique used in the thesis is discussed

Chapter-V An overview of the socio-economic status of women in Manipur with special reference to Kuki women

- Secondary profile of Manipuri women on
 - Demographic
 - Health and Nutritional
 - Education

Sex ratio

Workforce and Employment

- Secondary profile on Kuki women

Literacy

Workforce

Chapter-VI Result and Discussion

- Descriptive statistics of the respondents
- Descriptive statistics of the respondents household
- Results from the analysis of

Health Status

Educational Status

Income Status

Employment Status

Socio-economic Status of Kuki and Non Kuki women

Factors Influencing the Socio-economic Status of the Kuki women

Factors Influencing the Socio-economic Status of the Kuki Women

Chapter-VII Conclusion and Policy Prescription

Bibliography

Scheduled

Appendix