

Role of Women with Special Reference to Socio-cultural Features of Tai Turung Tribes of Jorhat District of Assam

Bijoylaxmi Bhuyan¹ and Nandi Ray²

¹College of Home Science, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Assam, India

²Sub-Divisional Agricultural Officer, Titabor, Jorhat, Assam, India

KEYWORDS Bilingual. Customs. Socio-demographic. Tribal Community. Religious Fervor

ABSTRACT This study was undertaken to highlight some socio-demographic and cultural features of the Buddhist Tai Turung Tribe of Pathar Shyam village located at about 5 km in the south-eastern part of Titabor town of Jorhat district of Assam. Pathar Shyam village inhabited exclusively by the Tai Turungs for ages is surrounded on all sides with villages inhabited by indigenous Assamese communities. The people of this tribe under the forces of changes with respect to time had assimilated with them in certain aspects but still have retained their identity through customs, traditions and festivals. The population of the tribe in the village with a total of 60 households was enumerated at 350 of which 280 were adults comprising four to seven family members in eighty percent of households. All the households displayed 'average' economic condition and were classified either nuclear or extended type of families with none in the joint type of family. Role of the womenfolk within the community is considered important and is accorded a high status in the society with least gender discrimination. It was observed that demographic parameters like landholding, education and type of house had significant positive relationship with income level of the respondents. Negative correlation was found between participation in various activities at home, farm and allied sectors with educated women and higher landholdings. Amongst many festivals *Poi-Mai ko sum phai* that falls on *Maghi purnima* is an important festival observed to commemorate the forecast of Lord Buddha on his attainment of "Nirvana" on the day of *Buddha Purnima*. With the participation of the whole village, this day is celebrated with great pomp and enthusiasm following traditional rituals and values that were retained through ages without intermingling with rituals of other Assamese communities.