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Social freedom among the rural scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam: A study of some variables

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Abstract

The study investigated the level of Social Freedom among the rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup district of Assam in respective to their educational status, marital status and working condition. 114 rural women of Kamrup district were taken as sample for the study. Related literatures that discussed women's Social freedom were used as theoretical basis for the study. A standardized scale titled "Women's Social freedom Scale" was used as tool to collect data for the study. Simple percentage method, Mean, S.D. and t-test were used as Statistical technique... From the findings, it was discovered that there exists no significant difference between Social freedom of literate and illiterate, married and unmarried and working and non-working rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam. From the study it was found that most of the rural ST women have Average and Below Average level of social freedom thinking.

Keywords: Social Freedom, Women, Scheduled Tribe.

Introduction

Rousseau stated in his book 'Emile', "The man should be strong and active; the women should be weak and passive."

With this quotation the pathetic scenario of rural women's social life can be drawn. The modern era starts from 1500 A.D onwards. Many changes have taken place in the day to day life of the common masses. But the changing pace of social life of the rural women is still remained slower than the common masses. The rigid culture, traditions, superstitious beliefs etc of Indian society always stands as hindrance in the way towards equal rights and freedom of the rural women. In the present study major concentration is towards the level of women's social freedom thinking among the Scheduled tribe living in the rural Kamrup district of Assam.

Concept of Social Freedom of Women

The term 'Social Freedom' refers to women's desire to be free from social taboos, conventions, rituals and roles which provide them with lower status in society. In the study, the following dimensions of women's social freedom were taken into consideration:-

- Freedom from control or interference of parents and husband
- Freedom from social taboos, customs and rituals which impose conventional roles and restrictions on girls/women.
- Freedom concerning sex and marriage.
- Economic freedom and social equality.

Women

The term 'Women' implies the adult human female. In the present study women refers to the women in the age group of 18 –21 years.

Concept of Scheduled Tribe

The Tribal in our country are known as ADIVASIS in the ordinary usage of the term. In general, it is applied to people who are considered primitive and who live in backward areas

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and do not know the use of writing. Scheduled Tribe classes have been referred in the constitution as ‘Backward Classes’ in Articles 15(4),16(4),338(3) AND 340(1).It is under the Directive principal of the Constitution(Article 46) that the Constitution enjoins upon the state Government “To promote with special care and educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular of the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribe and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.” Regarding our state, Assam is a home land to a large number of Scheduled Tribes which are Boro, Rabha, Hajong, Miri, Dimasa, Karbi etc.

Variables of the Study

The variables of the study are as follows-

- Educational qualification
- Marital status
- Occupation

Statement of the Study

The problem of the study can be stated as follows-

Social Freedom of Rural Scheduled Tribe Women living in Kamrup District of Assam.

Research Question of the Study

- 1) What is the level of Social freedom thinking among the rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows-

- 1) To study the level of Social freedom thinking among the rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 2) To make a comparative study on Social freedom thinking of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 3) To make a comparative study on Social freedom thinking of married and un-married rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 4) To make a comparative study on Social freedom thinking of working and non-working rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.

Hypotheses of the Study

- 1) There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 2) There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of married and unmarried rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 3) There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of working and non-working rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.

Delimitation of the Study

- 1) For the present study only ‘Sontola’ village under the revenue circle Palasbari of Kamrup (rural) District of Assam has selected.
- 2) The present study is delimited only to the Bodo and Rabha Scheduled Tribe women living in ‘Sontola’ village of Kamrup District (rural) of Assam.

- 3) In the study the women refers to the women in the age group of 18 –21 years.

2. Knowledge Gap

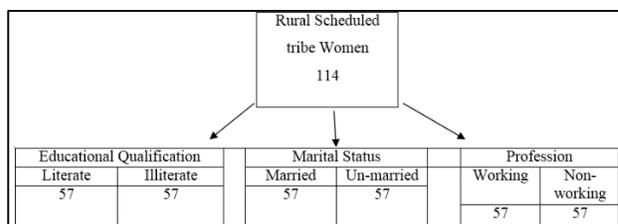
Before conducting the study the researcher reviewed some studies in Indian perspective regarding women’s social freedom. From there it was found Kanjiya & Joshi (2013) conducted a study ‘A study of Social freedom and depression among women’, Sharma (2015). Conducted a study ‘Socio-Demographic variable as predictors of Women social freedom’, Kaur (2013) conducted a study ‘Study of Women empowerment in Kashmir in relation to social freedom’ etc. The review of earlier studies shows that many studies have already conducted on social freedom of women having their locality, marital status, profession, educational qualification and also with some associated variable like women empowerment, depression etc. The present study has given its concentration on Scheduled tribe women of Assam. From the reviews it was found that few studies were conducted on social freedom of women in the perspective of Assam. From this point of view it can be regarded as the knowledge gap between earlier studies and the present study.

3. Methodology of the Study

The present study was fallen under the Descriptive method. There is no readymade data available regarding the Social freedom of rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup district of Assam. Therefore, the survey method was found appropriate for the study.

Sample of the Study

For the present study 114 rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup district of Assam were taken as sample. The data was also stratified in 57 of each on the basis of educational qualifications (Literate and Illiterate), marital status (Married and Un-married) and profession (Working and Non-working). The sample of the study is presented with the help of following diagram.



Tool of the Study

The Women’s Social Freedom Scale (WSFC) developed by L.I. Bhusan was used as tool for the present study.

4. Analysis and Interpretation

Objective wise analysis was done for the present study. For statistical calculation MS Excel, Version 2007 was used.

Analysis of Objective 1: To study the level of Social freedom thinking among the rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam. The results of the Objective-1 have shown in the Table 1.1

Table 1.1: Level of Social freedom thinking of rural Scheduled Tribe women

| Sl. No | Range of z-Scores | Level of Social freedom thinking | Total Number of rural ST women | Percentage |
|--------|-------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | +2.00 & Above | Extremely High | 6 | 5.26% |
| 2 | +1.26 to +2.00 | High | 24 | 21.05% |
| 3 | +0.51 to +1.25 | Above Average | 0 | 0% |
| 4 | -0.50 to +0.50 | Average/Moderate | 36 | 31.58% |
| 5 | -0.51 to -1.25 | Below Average | 36 | 31.58% |
| 6 | -1.26 to -2.00 | Low | 12 | 10.52% |
| 7 | -2.01 & Below | Extremely Low | 0 | 0% |

The Table.1.1 has shown that highest number of rural ST women have Average and Below Average level of social freedom thinking that is 31.58%. Again only 21.05% rural ST women have fallen under the category of High level of social freedom thinking. It has also found that only 5.26% women have Extremely High social freedom thinking which is very less in comparison to the other categories. 10.52% women have fallen under the category of low level of social freedom thinking. It has also interestingly found that no rural ST women have above average and extremely low level of social freedom thinking.

Analysis of Objective 2: To make a comparative study on Social freedom thinking of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam. To examine the difference between Social freedom thinking of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam a null hypothesis was formulated which is as follows-

Null Hypothesis: *There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.*
To examine the above hypothesis, t-test was used. The Table 1.2 shows the N, Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value and the level of significance.

Table 1.2: The Difference between Social freedom thinking of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam

| Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-value | Significance |
|------------|----|-------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Literate | 57 | 9.68 | 2.29 | 1.47 | Not Significant |
| Illiterate | 57 | 10.31 | 2.26 | | |

The above data reveals that the Mean of the literate and illiterate rural ST women is 9.68 and 10.31 respectively. The data also shows the Standard Deviation of the literate and illiterate rural ST women which is 2.29 and 2.26 respectively. The t-value of the obtained scores by the literate and illiterate rural ST women is 1.47 which is not significant at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis *'There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam'* is accepted.

Analysis of Objective 3: To make a comparative study on Social freedom thinking of married and unmarried rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.

To examine the difference between Social freedom thinking of married and unmarried rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam a null hypothesis was formulated which is as follows-

Null Hypothesis: *'There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of married and unmarried rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.'*
To examine the above hypothesis, t-test was used. The Table 2 shows the N, Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value and the level of significance.

Table 1.3: The Difference between Social freedom thinking of married and un-married rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam

| Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-value | Significance |
|------------|----|-------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Married | 57 | 10.26 | 1.96 | 0.35 | Not Significant |
| Un-married | 57 | 10.42 | 2.76 | | |

The above data reveals that the Mean of the married and unmarried rural ST women is 10.26 and 10.42 respectively. The data also shows the Standard Deviation of the literate and illiterate rural ST women which is 1.96 and 2.76 respectively. The t-value of the obtained scores by the literate and illiterate rural ST women is 0.35 which is not significant at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis *'There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of married and unmarried rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam'* is accepted.

Analysis of Objective 4: To make a comparative study on Social freedom thinking of working and non-working rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam. To examine the difference between Social freedom thinking of working and non-working rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam a null hypothesis was formulated which is as follows-

Null Hypothesis: *'There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of working and non-working rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.'*
To examine the above hypothesis, t-test was used. The Table 2 shows the N, Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value and the level of significance.

Table 1.4: The Difference between Social freedom thinking of Working and Non-working rural Scheduled Tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam

| Group | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-value | Significance |
|-------------|----|-------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| Working | 57 | 9.89 | 2.16 | 1.03 | Not Significant |
| Non-working | 57 | 10.42 | 3.17 | | |

The above data reveals that the Mean of the working and non-working rural ST women is 9.89 and 10.42 respectively. The data also shows the Standard Deviation of the literate and illiterate rural ST women which is 2.16 and 3.17 respectively. The t-value of the obtained scores by the literate and illiterate rural ST women is 1.03 which is not significant at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis 'There exists no significant difference between Social freedom of working and non-working rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam' is accepted.

Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are as follows-

- 1) From the study it was found that most of the rural ST women have Average and Below Average level of social freedom thinking that is 31.58%.
- 2) It was also found that only 5.26% women have Extremely High social freedom thinking which is very less in comparison to the other categories.
- 3) It was interestingly found that no rural ST women have above average and extremely low level of social freedom thinking.
- 4) From the study it was found that there exists no significant difference between Social freedom of literate and illiterate rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 5) From the study it was found that there exists no significant difference between Social freedom of married and unmarried rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.
- 6) From the study it was found that there exists no significant difference between Social freedom of working and non-working rural Scheduled tribe women living in Kamrup District of Assam.

5. Recommendation for Further Studies

The recommendation of the further studies are mentioned as follows

- 1) A study can be done on the factor affecting the social freedom of women like their Home environment, family culture, their status at home and society etc.
- 2) Study also can be done on different Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste women of Assam.

6. Conclusion

God has created men and women as two different human by physique. But women also have a heart like a man which feels the pain, they also have treasure of desire which they wish to fulfill. They also want to be free, they also want to fly. On the contrary to these, in our patriarchy society, women are being dominated and their desires are snatched by the society. Therefore, this is the peak time to be aware and be empowered.

Let's fight for your freedom
 Let's fight for your hope
 Let's fight for your life....

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