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Smita Sharma
M.Phil Student, Dibrugarh
University, Assam, India.

The social freedom among the women living in Kamrup district of Assam: A study of some variables

Smita Sharma

Abstract

In a country like India, women constitute half of the population. Women have always been subjected to discrimination in all aspects. However in the modern times, with the growth in education and vocational opportunities women have become more conscious of their rights of equality and freedom and have revolted among the conventional norms. The desire for social freedom among women has manifested itself by their protest and revolt against the traditional social norms and taboos which place them in an inferior roles and status. The objective of the study is to find out the level of social freedom thinking among the women living in Kamrup district of Assam and to make a comparative study of the level of social freedom thinking of the urban and rural, married and unmarried, joint and nuclear family, literate and illiterate and working and non-working women living in Kamrup district of Assam. The research method used in the study was the Descriptive Method. The sample selected for the study was 180 households. The tool used for the study was the Women Social Freedom Scale developed by Dr. L.I. Bhusan. The findings of the study reveal that 33.33% and 27.22% of the women living in Kamrup district of Assam have Above Average and Average level of social freedom thinking respectively. 23.33% women's level of social freedom thinking was Below Average in Kamrup district of Assam. 7.22% women have High level of social freedom thinking and 4.44% of women have Low level of social freedom thinking in Kamrup district. It was interesting to find that 1.67% of women's level of social freedom thinking was Extremely High. On the other hand 2.79% women's level of social freedom thinking was Extremely Low. There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of the women belonging to joint and nuclear family. There exists significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of urban and rural, married and unmarried, literate and illiterate and working and non-working women living in Kamrup district of Assam.

Keywords: Social Freedom, Women, Variables.

Introduction

A true encyclopedic study which covers the quintessential woman of Tagore: "I am no goddess to be worshipped, nor the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you desire to keep me by your side in the path of danger and daring, you allow me to share the great duties of your life then you will know my true self."

Through ages, women play a specific and crucial role in society and history. The concept of women has been best described in an ancient Sanskrit saying-"Yatra Nary Punjante Tatra Devo Ramante." Women have been given the ascription of mother Goddess and are considered the source of 'Shakti'. A woman creates life, nurtures it, guards and strengthens it. In their task as mother they play a vital role in the development of the nation. But women have been treated as weak, obedient, shy, and timid partner of men and thereby they enjoy an inferior status in the society in comparison to their male counterparts.

In a country like India, women constitute half of the population. It is pride for the people of India that we live in a country which is the world's largest democracy, a sovereign socialist republic with a comprehensive charter of right written into its constitution, a signatory to most treaties for struggle against colonialism, imperialism and racism. However, rarely do we realize about the underneath history of three thousand years old civilization of systematic violation of basic civil, democratic, and human rights of large sections of our population,

Correspondence
Smita Sharma
M.Phil Student, Dibrugarh
University, Assam, India.

such as women. In the present times, with the growth in education and vocational opportunities women have become more conscious of their rights of equality and freedom and have revolted among the conventional norms. The desire for social freedom among women has manifested itself by their protest and revolt against the traditional social norms and taboos which place them in an inferior roles and status.

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.

Variables of the Study

The variables of the study are as follows-

- Locality
- Marital status
- Type of family
- Educational qualification
- Occupation

Statement of the Problem

The statement of the problem undertaken for the study is "The Social Freedom among the Women Living in Kamrup District of Assam: A Study of Some Variables."

Research Question of the Study

1. What is the level of social freedom among the women living in Kamrup district of Assam?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the level of social freedom thinking among the women living in Kamrup district of Assam
2. To make a comparative study of the level of social freedom thinking of the urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
3. To make a comparative study of the level of social freedom thinking of the married and unmarried women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
4. To make a comparative study of the level of social freedom thinking of the joint and nuclear families women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
5. To make a comparative study of the level of social freedom thinking of the literate and illiterate women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
6. To make a comparative study of the level of social freedom thinking of the working and non-working women living in Kamrup district of Assam.

Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the study are as follows:-

1. There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
2. There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of married and unmarried women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
3. There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of joint and nuclear families women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
4. There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of literate and illiterate women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
5. There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom thinking of working and non-working women living in Kamrup district of Assam.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited under the following aspects:-

1. The study is delimited to the rural and urban areas of Kamrup district in Assam.
2. For the study, two areas 'Lokhara' area under the ward no. 17 and 'Sontola' village under the Revenue circle Palasbari were selected.
3. In the study the women refers to the women in the age group of 18 –21 years.

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 rural and urban 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.

Methodology

The research method used in the study was the Descriptive Method. There is no readymade data available regarding the Social freedom among women living in Kamrup district of Assam. Therefore, the descriptive method was found appropriate for the study.

Sample of the Study

The sample selected for the study was 180 households. The sample size was stratified into different categories. The sample size is shown in the following Table No: 1.1

Table 1: The Sample Size

S. No	Dimensions	Group	N	Total
1	Locality	Urban	90	180
		Rural	90	
2	Marital Status	Married	90	180
		Unmarried	90	
3	Types of Family	Joint	90	180
		Nuclear	90	
4	Occupations	Working	90	180
		Non-working	90	
5	Educational Qualification	Literate	90	180
		Illiterate	90	

Tool used in the Study

The tool used for the study was the Women Social Freedom Scale developed by Dr. L.I. Bhusan.

Result and Discussion

Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data were classified; tabulated and statistical analysis was done by using simple percentage, Mean, S.D. and t test. The interpretation of the collected data is as follows-

Table 2: The Level of Social Freedom Thinking among Women living in Kamrup District of Assam

S. No	Range of Z score	Grade	Level of Social Freedom Thinking	No. of Women	Percentage
1	+2.01 and above	A	Extremely High	3	1.67%
2	+1.26 to +2.00	B	High	13	7.22%
3	+0.51 to +1.25	C	Above Average	60	33.33%
4	-0.50 to +0.50	D	Average/Moderate	49	27.22%
5	-0.51 to -1.25	E	Below Average	42	23.33%
6	-1.26 to -2.00	F	Low	8	4.44%
7	-2.01 and below	G	Extremely Low	5	2.79%
Total				180	100%

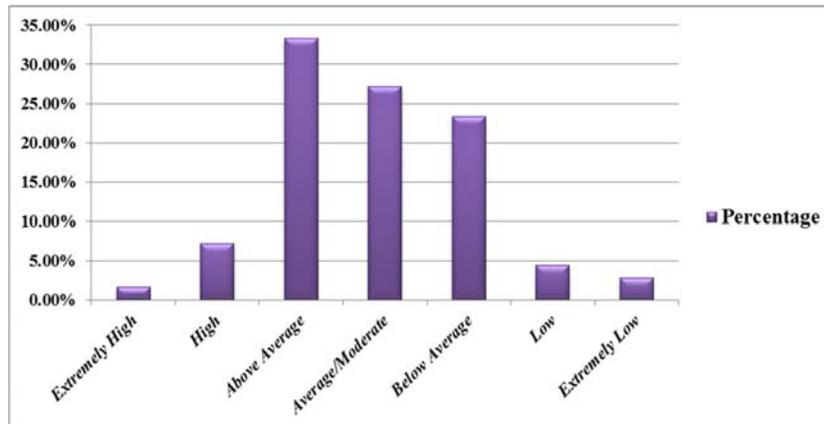


Fig 1: The Level of Social Freedom Thinking among Women Living in Kamrup District of Assam

The Table 1.2 shows that 33.33% and 27.22% of the women living in Kamrup district of Assam have Above Average and Average level of social freedom thinking respectively. 23.33% women’s level of social freedom thinking was Below Average in Kamrup district of Assam. 7.22% women have High level of social freedom thinking and 4.44% of

women have Low level of social freedom thinking in Kamrup district. It was interesting to find that 1.67% of women’s level of social freedom thinking was Extremely High. On the other hand 2.79% women’s level of social freedom thinking was Extremely Low.

Table 3: The Table showing the Mean, S.D, t-value and significance of the Dimensions: Locality, Marital Status, Types of Family, Educational Qualification and Occupation

Sl No.	Dimensions	N	Mean	S.D	t- value	Significance	
1	Locality	Urban	90	13.68	3.37	6.64	Significant
		Rural	90	10.7	2.58		
2	Marital Status	Married	90	11.24	2.16	3.82	Significant
		Unmarried	90	12.84	3.32		
3	Types of Family	Joint	90	11.81	3.35	2.11	Not Significant
		Nuclear	90	10.91	2.22		
4	Educational Qualification	Literate	90	12.01	3.51	5.13	Significant
		Illiterate	90	9.82	1.99		
5	Occupation	Working	90	9.78	2.01	7.72	Significant
		Non-working	90	12.74	3.03		

The above table shows that regarding Locality, the mean score of urban women is 13.68 and of rural women is 10.7. The t-value is 6.64 which is found to be significant at 0.05

level of significance. Therefore it can be concluded that women belonging to urban and rural area of Kamrup district do not have equal level of social freedom. Hence the null

hypothesis – ‘*There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom of urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam*’ is rejected.

Regarding Marital status, the mean score of married women is 11.24 and of unmarried women is 12.84. The t-value is 3.82 which is found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it can be interpreted that married women have low score in comparison to unmarried women. Thus they do not have equal level of social freedom in the Women’s Social Freedom Scale. Hence the null hypothesis – ‘*There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom of married and unmarried women living in Kamrup district of Assam*’ is rejected.

Regarding Type of family, the women from joint family have mean score 10.91 and on the other hand women from nuclear family have mean score 11.81. The t-value is 2.11 which is found to be not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it can be concluded that women belonging to joint and nuclear family have equal level of social freedom. Hence the null hypothesis – ‘*There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom of urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam*’ is accepted.

Regarding Educational qualification, the mean score of literate women is 12.01 which is higher than illiterate woman that is 9.82. The t-value is 5.13 which is found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it can be interpreted that literate women have higher level of social freedom in comparison to illiterate women. Hence the null hypothesis – ‘*There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom of urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam*’ is rejected.

Regarding Occupation, the mean score of working women is 9.78 and of non-working women is 12.74. The t-value is 7.72 which is found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance. It is interesting to find that the mean score of working women is lower than the non-working women. Therefore it can be concluded that working and non-working women of Kamrup district do not have equal level of social freedom. Hence the null hypothesis – ‘*There exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom of urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam*’ is rejected.

Findings

The major findings of the study are as follows:-

1. It was found from the study that most of the women living in Kamrup district of Assam that is 33.33% have above average level of social freedom thinking.
2. 27.22% women’s level of social freedom thinking was average in Kamrup district.
3. It was found that 23.33% women’s level of social freedom thinking was below average in Kamrup district of Assam.
4. It was interesting to find that 1.67% of women’s level of social freedom thinking was extremely high. On the other hand 2.79% women’s level of social freedom thinking was extremely low.
5. Only 7.22% women have high level of social freedom thinking and 4.44% of women have low level of social freedom thinking in Kamrup district.
6. From the study it was found that there exists significant difference between the level of social freedom of urban and rural women living in Kamrup district of Assam.

7. It was found that there exists significant difference between the level of social freedom of married and unmarried women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
8. It was also found that there exists no significant difference between the level of social freedom of joint and nuclear families women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
9. The study reveals that there exists significant difference between the level of social freedom of literate and illiterate women living in Kamrup district of Assam.
10. It was found that there exists significant difference between the level of social freedom of working and non-working women living in Kamrup district of Assam.

Conclusion

Women occupying an important place in the society and playing a prominent role should be encouraged and provide greater scope for thinking and doing stuff. Women from the very early times are tied to various rituals, taboos, rites, customs and traditions. In the modern period when the whole world is moving towards globalization, the women have to come out of the social restrictions and barriers. They have to develop independent thought and actions. This is possible only with the help of education. Education will lead the women section of the society to come of narrow mindedness and provide social freedom.

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