

Empowerment of Women and Skill Development through Indigenous Knowledge: A Study on the Karbis of Karbi Anglong, Assam

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Abstract

The social inequality lies rather in certain features of all human societies. Predominantly in most of the countries the men enjoy the authority, power and rights over the resources. In contrary, by empowerment we mean to a large extent about the increase of womens' relative access to economic opportunities and resources. The anthropological study of economic organization is a focal point for discovering the relationship between material and non material aspects of the environmental resources and human behaviour as well as the social system within which it is exchanged and distributed as cultural goods and services. In our country the tribal people are dwelling in the high hills and forest covered regions. Their livelihood and traditional economic organization is intimately associated with multifarious natural and environmental resources. In the tribal societies women folk play a very crucial role. In this context, the environmental resources related to traditional economic organization has generated a scope of income for them and it can generate a wider potential for their economic self dependence. The present study has been done on the Karbi tribal group, of Karbi Anglong, Assam to analyze the significance of the environmental resources in the empowerment of women.

Key words: *Environment, Resource, Economic Organization, Women, Empowerment.*

Introduction

The social inequality lies rather in certain features of all human societies which are necessary to them. This stratification is above all

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a system of distributive status i.e. a system of differential distribution of desired and scarce things. Predominantly in most of the countries the men enjoy the authority, power and rights over the resources whereas the majority of the women are debarred from it. Even they are worstly deprived, exploited, neglected and suffered a major set back in different ways. In many societies women are excluded from performing major religious leadership roles and are forbidden to participate in most of the important rituals (Peoples and Bailey, 228:1997). Patriarchy legitimizes culturally backed bio-physiological differences between men and women as the basis of unequal access to resources, opportunities and rewards and to rights. Women suffer from many disadvantages in social life. This extends to controlled access to essential domains of life such as education, mobility, employment, property, income and decision making. This happens because the value system perceives woman as a social category inferior to man in all aspects of social life (Sharma, 1997: 133-135). Here the roles are culturally assigned to the genders, while the degree of unequal access lies between the genders in the perspectives of prestige, authority, power, right and economic resources (Ember, 2002:533). It is to be mentioned here that although the issues are related with the control over the resources and authority over decision making but the cultural and social dimension of the facts cannot be ignored too. Particularly in the Indian context the exploitation and deprivation of women can be seen in multidimensional aspects and it has become a widely practiced social problem for the entire country. Although the constitution of India guarantees equal rights for both men and women but the women folk are still striving to achieve equality from the social, economic, political, and legal perspectives as a whole. They continuously face discrimination and marginalization both subtle and blatant, and do not share the fruits of development equally.

Plans, Policies and Programmes related to Women Empowerment

In the process of poverty eradication and reducing gender discrimination, the governments have been implementing various

schemes and programmes providing ways and means towards women development and empowerment.

After attaining independence, the Government of India, initially decided to pave a path to bring about social change based on three major areas, viz., constitutional and legal reforms, planned development based on mixed economy and state support to social welfare activities. All these three policies are expected to create a democratic, just and prosperous society. All these three steps have their impact on the status of women.

The constitution of India has given special attention to the needs of women to enable them to exercise their rights on equal footing with men and participate in national development.

Planned development was considered to be the most efficient way for solving the numerous problems of poverty which had caused various imbalances and discriminations among vast numbers of people. The policy measures had serious implications for Indian women. The committee on status of women, in its report “towards equality”, has mentioned, “women are considered to be handicapped by social customs and social values and, therefore, social welfare services have specially endeavoured to rehabilitate them. The Planning Commission defined three major areas in which they had paid special attention to women's development. (a) Education, (b) Social welfare and (c) Health. A planned approach to provide special thrust to the welfare of women was adopted with the launching of the first five year plan in 1951.

The First Five Year Plan (1951–56) contemplated welfare measures for women. To implement welfare measures for the benefit of poor women, the Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was established to deal with the problems of women. The CSWB recognized and realized the need for organising women into Mahila Mandals or women's club as an approach to community development.

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approach to women's issues was determined recognizing women as workers. Further, protection against injuries at work, maternity benefits and crèches for their children. It also suggested immediate implementation of the principal of equal pay for equal work and provision for training to enable women to compete for higher jobs.

The Third Five Year Plan (1961 – 66) sincerely recognized the greater importance of education for women which has been a major welfare strategy for women. This plan allocated the largest share for expending social welfare services and condensed courses of education. As regards to wealth, maternal and child welfare programmes were proclaimed in terms of maternal and child welfare, health education, nutrition and family planning.

Thus the emphasis on women education was continued during the Fourth Five Year Plan also (1969 – 1974). The basic policy was to promote women's welfare as the base of operation. The outlay on family planning was stepped upto reduce the birth rate through education. Immunization of pre-school children and supplemental feeding, expectant and nursing mother.

Need for training women in respect of income generating activities and their protection was stressed in the Fifth Five Year Plan. Further, the fifth plan also recommended a strategic programme of functional literacy to equip women with skills and knowledge to perform the functions as a good housewife. Under the health programmes, the primary objective was to provide minimum public health facilities integrated with family planning and nutrition for vulnerable groups, children, pregnant and lactating mothers.

The Fifth Year Plan was happened to be during the decade of International Women's decade and the submission of the Report of the Committee on the status of women in India (CSWI) "Towards Equality". The CSWI had comprehensively examined the rights and status of women in the context of changing social and economic conditions and the problems relating to the advancement of women. The CSWI reported that the dynamics of social change and development had adversely affected a large section of women and had created new imbalances and disparities.

It was realized that constitutional guarantees of equality would be meaningless and unrealistic unless women's right to economic independence is acknowledged and their training in skills as contributors to the family and the national economy was improved. Consequently National Plan of Action (1976) providing the guidelines based on 'United Nations' World Plan of Action for women' came into force. The National Plan of Action identified areas of health, family planning, nutrition, education, employment, legislation and social welfare for formulating and implementing of action programmes for women and called for planned interventions to improve the conditions of women in India. The women's welfare as development bureau was setup in 1976 to act as a nodal point within the Government of India to co-ordinate policies and programmes and initiate measures for women's development.

The Sixth Five Year Plan stressed the need of economic independence educational advance and access to health care and family planning as essential for women's development. So the strategy was threefold: of education, employment and health. They are independent and dependent on the total developmental process.

The Seventh Five Year Plan sought to generate awareness among women about their rights and privileges. The long term objectives of developmental programmes in the Seventh plan were to raise women's economic and social status in order to bring them into the mainstream of national development and recognized the importance of women in contributing to the various socio-economic, political and cultural activities. The seventh plan emphasized the need to open new avenues of work for women and perceive them as crucial resource for the development of the country. Another salient and crucial recognition was the need for organisation of women workers and unionization.

Under the plan, a new scheme, "Women's Development Corporation" has been taken up for promoting employment generating activities by supporting schemes from women's group and women from poorer sections of society¹⁵. A women's development planning and monitoring cell was also set up for collection of data

and monitoring of plan programmes. A very significant step therein was to identify and promote beneficiary oriented programmes which extended direct benefits to women. During the 7th Plan period, the Indian Parliament adopted a National Policy on Education 1986 included a chapter on Education for women's equality.

The strategy in the Eighth Plan was to ensure that the benefits of development from different sectors did not bypass women and special programmes were implemented to complement the general programmes. The main objective of Eighth Plan was to extend the reach of services to women both qualitatively and quantitatively. Panchayati Raj institutions are involved in the designing and implementation of women's programmes. The approach of the Eighth Plan made a definite shift from development to empowerment of women. In order to meet the needs of women and children, there had been a progressive increase in the plan outlays over the time of eight five year plans. The outlay of Rs. 4 crores in the First Five Year Plan (1951 – 56) had gone up to Rs. 2000 Crores in the Eighth Five Year Plan.

The Ninth Five Year Plan came into effect from April 1, 1997. An approach paper had been developed by the Planning Commission and accepted by the National Development Council, which had become basis for developing Ninth Five Year Plan. In this approach paper focus was laid on empowerment of women and people's participation in planning and implementation of strategies. An important objective in the Approach paper was the empowerment of women. In planning process, empowerment at the outset, means choices for women and opportunities to avail of these choices. The supportive environment should be provided to women at all stages by the home, school, religion, government and work place. A supportive environment was one that gender sensitive. In all regional meetings, participants asked for gender sensitisation or training at all levels in public and private sectors. Women are facing problems like feminisation of poverty, inadequate investment in social sectors, increasing violence against women and stereotyped portrayal of women in private and state media especially television. There is

necessity for information and training opportunities, reservations and social services etc., and people's involvement is necessary for the success of any programme. Empowerment is about choices and the ability exercise women's choices will be limited unless they are more involved in policy-making. The 9th Five Year Plan is an attempt to bring in women's issues within the policy-making spheres. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1993 ensure reservation of 1/3 of seats for women in all elected offices of local bodies, in rural and urban areas. In the rural areas, women have thus been brought to the centre-stage in the nation's efforts to strengthen democratic institutions. The Tenth Plan aims at empowering women through translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) into action and ensuring 'survival' protection and development of children through rights based approach. The Eleventh Plan Approach paper aimed to raise the sex ratio for the age group 0 – 6 to 935 by 2011 – 12 and to 950 by 2016 – 17. Further, this plan intends to ensure 33 percent of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of all government schemes are women and girl children. It also proposes to ensure that all children enjoy a safe childhood without any compulsion to work.

National Perspective Plan for Women 1988 – 2000 A.D.

To boost up the programmes for women's development, a National Perspective Plan for Women (1988–2000 A.D.) was brought out by the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development. The plan pays special attention to the rural women who suffer from double discrimination. The plan does not seek more investment or more resources but gives a new thrust and responsiveness to developmental programmes at all levels. The National Perspective Plan's main aim is to promote holistic perspective to the development of women. Some of the main recommendations of the National Perspective Plan are as follows:

1. While programme for women will continue to be implemented by different ministries, there is need for a strong interministerial co-ordination and monitoring body in the Department of Women and Child Development.

2. Education to girls should be given priority and awareness needs to be generated regarding the necessity of educating girls so as to prepare them to contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the country.
3. There is strong need to eliminate all forms of discrimination in employment especially to eliminate wage differentials between men and women.
4. The Planning Commission and all ministries and government departments must have a women's cell.
5. In order to change the attitudes towards women and girls and to raise the social consciousness of the country, a conscious strategic change is required in national media and communication effort.
6. Law drafting technologies and enforcement mechanism including police, judiciary and other components need to be reviewed, sensitised and strengthened so as to provide equality and justice.
7. Government should effectively secure participation of women in decision-making process at National, State and Local levels. This would imply use of special measures for recruitment of women candidates.
8. 30 percent reservation should be provided at Panchayat and at district level for women.
9. There is urgent need to improve the effectiveness of voluntary action.

The National Policy for Empowerment of Women

The Government of India has declared 2001 as Women's Empowerment year. The national policy of empowerment of women has set certain clear-cut goals and objectives. The policy aims at upliftment, development and empowerment in socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects, by creating in them awareness on various issues in relation to their empowerment.

The following are the specific objectives of National Policies particularly of rural folk on Empowerment of women in India.

- i. Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their

full potential.

ii. The de-jure and de-facto enjoyments of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all political, economic, social, cultural and civil spheres.

iii. Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social political and economic life of the nation.

iv. Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public life etc.,

v. Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.

vi. Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

vii. Ministering a gender perspective in the development process.

viii. Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child.

ix. Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organizations.

The National policy for empowerment of women envisaged introduction of a gender perspective in the budgeting process as an operational strategy. A few laws and legislations are enforced strictly for effective and proper implementation of this policy.

National Policy of Women- 2016 (Draft report)

Empowerment of women is a socio-political ideal envisioned in relation to the wider framework of women's rights. It is a process that leads women to realize their full potential, the rights to have access to opportunities, resources and choices with the freedom of decision making both within and outside home. Its prime objectives are-

1. Creating a conducive socio-cultural, economic and political environment to enable women enjoy de jure and de facto fundamental rights and realize their full potential.
2. Mainstreaming gender in all round development.

3. A holistic and life cycle approach to women's health.
4. Improving and incentivizing access of women to universal and quality education.
5. Equal participation in social, economic and political sphere.
6. Increasing workforce participation of women in economy.
7. Developing a gender sensitive legal judicial system.

Indigenous Knowledge, Skill Development, Skill Development and Women Empowerment

Inter Relationship between Environment and Economy: The anthropological study of economic organization is a focal point for discovering the relationship between material and non material aspects of the environment and human behaviour as well as the social system within which it is exchanged and redistributed as cultural goods and services. The economic organization is treated as a link between the material base to culture and social structure. Economic order in one form or another is a functional prerequisite to societal survival and continuity (Hoebel-Frost, 1976:247). From the anthropological point of view economy is believed as a system of managing the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in a society. Piddington (1952) says “economic system is designated to satisfy material wants of the people to organise production, to control distribution and to determine the rights and claims of ownership within the community (see Dash, 2004:123).” Every society has access to natural resources-land, water, plants, animals, minerals and every society has cultural rules for determining who has access to particular resources and what can be done with them (Ember,2002:286). The natural environment is the origin of all the resources people use to secure the material needs and desires. All groups are selective choosing to utilize certain resources and to ignore others (Hunter- Whitten, 1976:237). All societies have customs specifying access to natural resources; customary ways of transforming or converting those resources through labour into necessities and other desired goods and services; and customs for distributing and perhaps exchanging goods and services (Ember, 2002:305). In this regard every society makes use of a technology,

which includes tools, constructions and required skills. The technology and material cultures of a people are so intertwined with their economic life that they can be treated as separate only conceptually (Clifton, 1968:187).

Each local economic system represents a more or less unique aggregation of experience built up partly through progressive innovation by the people themselves as they have adjusted to their local setting. Actually, the economic system of any people quickly reveals that behaviour relating to production, exchange, property and consumption all tie in functionally with social organization and with the political, legal, religious and aesthetic behaviour (Kessing, 1958:223). The economic behaviour of the people lies in their own cultural terms, focusing on the substantive social and technological processes through which human interact with one another and with the environment to meet their subsistence needs (Hunter- Whitten, 1976: 251). The study of the relations between cultural patterns and physical conditions is of the greatest importance for an understanding of human society and it is intimately co-related with the economic organization of the concerned society.

In our country, the tribal people are dwelling in the high hills, isolated forest covered region and they are far away from the conveniences of regular communications and urban attractions. Their entire livelihood is very much depended on the forest based natural products. The concerned people are mainly hunter-gatherers. They collect their foods from their environment. They primarily consume the fruits, roots and tubers of the locally available plants. Further, they hunt the animals within their close vicinity for consumption. Moreover, they collect the honey from their surroundings. In the concerned areas there a number of local rivers and other water resources. Those provide them the fishes and other aquatic animals as a source of animal protein. Thus, the prime requirement of food of the concerned people is totally depended upon environment. Moreover, the environment not only provides food to the human society, rather it is the major source of animal fodder too. In rural societies domestication is a common feature. The forest and neighbouring

environment provides plentiful of grazing land to them and the leaves, grasses are used as their fodder. On the other hand, the concerned people get milk and meat from the domesticated animals as a source of their food. Meanwhile, being closely associated with forest and environment, the concerned people are very much depended on the natural products for their dresses. For this purpose they collect the raw materials from their surroundings and weave it by their own hands. The economic aspects of the simple societies are intimately related with their environmental perspective. They collect the fuel from their surroundings. Moreover, a number of forest based products like latex, honey are major economic pursuit for them. The societies which deal their livelihood by settled agriculture are totally depended on nature and use simple technological means for their productions. Most of the communities in the North–Eastern states are depended on the shifting hill cultivation by utilizing the natural resources and climatic conditions in a proper manner. A number of communities are depending on the handicrafts by utilizing the natural resources like bamboo and cane. The ecological products are related with the economic perspectives of the people. In this context, the production of material commodities involve the conversion of natural resources directly or indirectly, with the help of human labour and capital into a final consumable form. In this context, the present study has been done among the Karbi tribal group of Karbi Anglong, Assam.

The Present Study its Salient Findings and Discussion: The Karbi Anglong District is situated in the central part of Assam. It is bounded by Golaghat district in the east, Meghalaya and Morigaon district in the west, Nagaon and Golaghat district in the north and North Cachar Hill district and Nagaland in the south. The district with dense tropical forest covered hills and flat plains are situated between 25° 33' N to 26°35' N Latitude and 92°10' to 93°50' E Longitude. The multi-ethnicity of the district is comprised of a number of tribal groups and according to Census 2011, tribal population is numerically dominant in the district. The major tribal ethnic groups of this district are Karbis, Bodos, Kukis, Dimasas, Hmars, Garos, Rengma Nagas, Tiwas, Man. Besides, a large number of non-Tribals

also live together in this hill region. Karbis are the indigenous community of the said region.

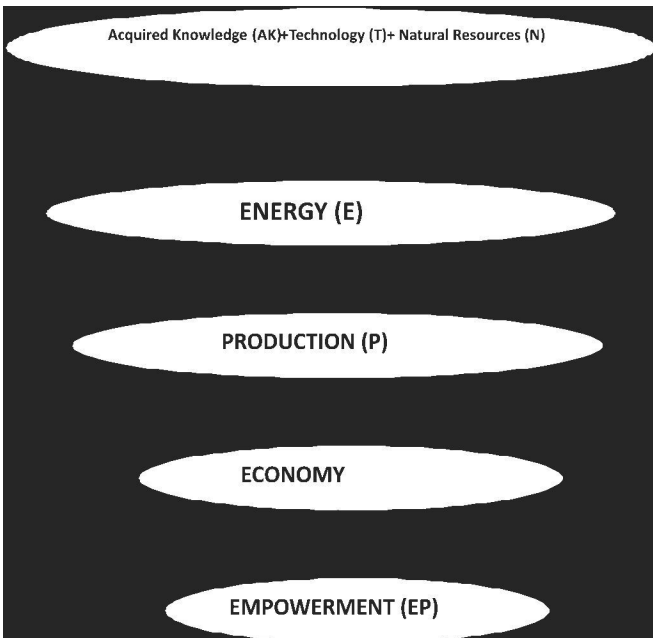
About 85 percent of the district is covered by the hills. As per the State of Forest report 1999 of Forest Survey of India, Dehradun, 6044 sq. Kms. of the district are under dense forest cover while 2776 sq. kms are under open forest cover. The important forest types found in Karbi Anglong District are:-

1. Moist semi-evergreen forests.
2. Moist Mixed Deciduous forests.
3. Riverrain Type.
4. Miscellaneous type with scattered pure or mixed patches of bamboos.

The forests of Karbi Anglong are extensive and rich in minor forest produces like Cane, Patidoi, Dhuna, Agar, Ekra, Thatches, Barks of Baghnala, Laham, Dalchini, Patihunda, Rema, Satkora and a variety of medicinal plants. Forest, streams and natural resources have emerged as a prime resource of economic pursuit among the studied people. Cultivation, kitchen gardening, animal husbandry, fishing, handicrafts made up of bamboo as well as garment preparation are the major economic pursuit of the Karbi people. Along with the males, the females are playing an equal role in this economic productivity. In many cases they are selling the produces directly in the market.

It is necessary to provide equal status for the women in every aspect if the approach comes through some socio-cultural perspectives. To provide equal right to the women and to abolish the indiscrimination we have to make them the stakeholder of production generation. It is not by increasing their physical capability, rather we have to make them socially powerful. As stated earlier, we cannot create or destroy any source of power; rather we can transform it from one form to another. The application of acquired knowledge will enhance the access and operation over technological skills. It is the fact that technology can produce energy and in case of simple societies, natural resources can be utilized as the prime raw material. So, along

with the abundance of natural resources, if the women of simple societies have the knowledge of application over technological means, then they will be able to generate more energy. It will increase the production into manifold. Ultimately these productions ensure and increase the power because it has some market value by which they can fulfill their materialistic as well as many other needs and necessities. Thus, acquired knowledge and technological skill will enrich the women to access over production and economy. Ultimately, the authority and rights over economy will empower the women and they will enjoy equal status with the male, irrespective of social or cultural disapproval. In this regard, a model can be mentioned related with the women empowerment and equal gender accessibility which is known as “**AKTNEP**” theory i.e. “**Application of Acquired Knowledge to utilize Natural Resources with the Help of Technology for Energy Production as well as Empowerment (AKTNEP)**”, where the knowledge of technological skills and utilization of natural resources will generate production. It will endow with the scope to generate income which can ultimately empower the women. The theory can be demonstrated through the following diagram-



From the empirical perspective the application of the “AKTNEP” theory has been well observed among the female folk of Karbi Society.

Objectives of the Study: The present study has the prime objective of-

1. To know about the relation between environmental resources and traditional economic organization of the concerned people.
2. To know about the role of women in the traditional economic organization in the society.
3. To focus on the issue that how, environmental resources and traditional economic can empower the women of the studied society.

Methodology Applied: The present study has been conducted through the intensive field work among a few selected villages of Karbi Anglong district. The study has been done among 650 families who are primarily associated with their traditional occupational pursuit. Among the studied families the total population was 3,900 among whom there were 2050 males and 1850 female. The study has been conducted by applying case study, interview, genealogy, observation methods. The collected was analyzed to know about the role of traditional economic organization in the perspective of women empowerment. The study was conducted during the period of January 2015 to December 2016. There were four divisions of the total field work. Two to three times of field work was done under each division as per the requirement.

Division-1: Foremostly, the general observation of the village was done along with the completion of Preliminary Census Schedule (PCS). The details of that form are discussed in the forthcoming sections of this writing.

Division-2: Case studies were taken on the concerned families. It was focused on the issues of their historical background, early settlement, traditional occupational pursuit, folk cultural heritages, religious festivals, political organization, indigenous knowledge and

utilization of natural resources, importance of natural resources in their traditional occupational pursuit, role of women in traditional occupational pursuit, social status of women and their role in decision making authority.

Division-3: Detailed open structured interviews were taken from the key informant, eldest person of the settlement, leader of the traditional political organization of the concerned society, administrative authority related with the studied settlement. It focused on the significance of environmental resources in their traditional occupational pursuit and its consequent role in the empowerment of women.

Division-4: The social awareness of the concerned women is taken into consideration in this division. It was focused to know about their knowledge related to different policies and programmes associated with the social welfare, economic welfare and health perspective of women.

The multifarious environmental resources of the studied area, the traditional occupational pursuits of the studied people, the role of womenfolk in their traditional occupational pursuit and its significance in women empowerment are discussed below in brief-

1. Shifting Hill Cultivation or Jhum Cultivation:- The shifting hill or jhum cultivation is mostly practiced in the hilly regions. It begins from the middle months of February (Thangthang) or the beginning of March (There). To cultivate they first begin to cut down the trees of the forest or jungle of the hill slopes to be used as jhum field. This work is called 'Ritkepan'. Next phase of the work is burning the dry materials (Me Kekai). This is followed by complete clearing of the areas as well as preparation of the soil with the help of hoes. After having prepared the soil, the seeds of the cereals are shown. This is done during the month of April-May (Jangmi-Aru) when the summer rain begins. The principles crops are Rice (sok) viz. Chubok, Lobok and along with other jhum crops like Maize (Thengthe), Arhar (Thekek), Cotton (Phelo), Pumpkin (Bonghom) etc. are also grown in the same field. The female folk play a very crucial role in this regard. When the paddy seedlings attain same height, these begin the

'karlu' the process of weeding. After that a ritual offering are given to God of Wealth (Rit Anglong Karkle). Paddy is harvested generally during the period of September-October (Chiti-Phre) and the other crops at different months.

More over, among the Karbis there is a social practice. There was a youth social organization called "Jir Kadam" whose members (Jirsong) were all the young boys and girls from the age of 18 years. They were generally put to work in the jhum field of the village's right from the beginning of the cultivation up to the harvesting of the crop. The people, used to sell their surplus in the market. The productions of crops are according to the cultivated land areas along with supply of rainfall.

2. Settled Cultivation:- Settled agriculture is done on the plains areas. However the studied area is adjacent to foothill. So, the cultivation is done in a small valley adjacent to the hill and converts it into a narrow wet paddy field mainly for rice. The women folk are associated to it in different perspective in relation to its different steps. The technological implements related with agriculture were of quite primitive type. Paddy cultivation with the help of plough is also extensively carried along the narrow and isolated foothill plains bordering.

A number of vegetables like potato, mustard, turmeric, brinjal, cucumber, tomato etc are cultivated by them to a great extent. It was primarily consumed by them, while the surplus was sold by them directly in the market. The female folk was primarily associated with the selling of vegetables and pulses.

3. Kitchen Gardening: The women folk of the studied families cultivate a number of fruits and vegetables in the kitchen garden. This primarily includes green leaves, tomato, chilly, brinjal, lemon, banana, jackfruit, gourd, pumpkin etc. These produces plays a very crucial role in their daily food pattern. On the other hand, the surplus of such produces is regularly sold by them in the local market. Such selling of both the agricultural and kitchen garden produces generates a regular source of income for them in the local market. .

Case Study-1: Hunmili Tissopi (32 years), had a five membered family. She used to do the Jhum cultivation regularly along with her husband. Further, in their hut she used to do kitchen gardening like brinjal, gourd, pumpkin, sweet gourd, spinach, tomato in different season. She used to sell those vegetables directly in the local market. By selling them she used to earn at least Rs. 100/- per day. With such income she can afford her purse as well as provide the requisites of their children to a certain extent. Her husband also accepted her effort of earning and he gives her equal importance in the decision making factors of their families.

4. Animal Husbandry: Apart from agricultural crops, they keep domestic animals for socio- economic purpose. Such fowls and livestock are not only indispensable for various ritual and social feasts but these are also good cash earner. Further, they also used to collect fishes from different local streams. Such animal produces are regularly sold in the market by the female folk and it generates a regular source of income for them. Meanwhile, they rear the eri- silk cocoon in the household. It was used for the preparation of their traditional dresses as well as they used to sell it for commercial purpose.

Case Study-2: Karen Engtipi (27 years), had three children and her husband passed two years ago. She was primarily involved with jhum cultivation. However in adverse climatic situation the scarcity of desired resources told upon their common minimum livelihood. Further, in their hut she used to domesticate livestock and fowls. She used to sell the animal produces directly in adjacent local markets. By selling them she used to earn at least Rs. 2500/- per month. With such income she can provide stability in their familial income and fulfill their common minimum livelihood requirement. Her in laws have accepted her effort of earning and in many cases she is the prime decision masking authority of the family.

5. Handicrafts and Weaving: Bamboo and cane are one of the major and abundant natural resources of the said region. With it a number of material cultural implements are being prepared by them, particularly the female. It primarily includes bamboo mats, baskets, agricultural

implements or house holds uses like for carry rice and vegetables (*Hak, Ingtong*), Mats (*Tar*), Storage for rice, Sesame (*Dur, Hoton*), Hand fan (*He-jap*) and various implements like Beleng, Ingkrung, Kasu Arahep, Lumplak akroi etc. To store large amount of paddy they use 'Ingkro'; to carry firewood they use Chatkang, Theng Khangra for carrying firewood; Anchoho, Anchohu, Phelo bisir, Si, Kove Thok for keeping Betelnuts and betel leaves; Hak kengdo, Burup, Ru, Soklet, No pak abe, Hak Khalun for keeping cloths, Bapthali, Chengpi, Chengso, Chengburuk, Lumhor, Anchobak, Siro, Anthonng, Phak lohong, Inghoi, Vo-um, Langpong for drinking water, tea etc. Along with daily usage they prepare the bamboo and wooden models of traditional Karbi Houses, Jambili athan i.e. the traditional symbol of Karbi social structure, different sculptures, masks, table mats and a number of other decorative implements. These have a huge demand among the common mass in the market both among the Karbis and non Karbis. These products are regularly sold in Diphu market and in most of the cases the studied women folk used to prepare them in their household. Even in local fairs and in daily market the Karbi women sell them directly and earn by themselves. Only by selling these products generally one can earn approximately Rs. 1000/- Rs. 1500/- per month.

Further, with the help of bamboo, locally available silk cocoon, thread and different wild fruits they prepare the traditional garments. This work is intimately associated with the female folk of the studied families. These products have a good market price. The shawls are not less than Rs.400.00 and the women cloths 'pini' and a belt 'vamkok' would cost a minimum of Rs.1,000.00 and Rs. 150.00 respectively. The women also earned their living by spinning the cotton to prepare the cloth 'pilu' etc. More over the male jacket (choi hongthoir), bag (jarong), man's turban (poho) etc are either sold in the market or used at home. The instrument required for these production are thread 'Hon', Therang, Thening, Thepun, Kanti, Harp, Hi-e, Ponglang, Ae-doi, Thehu etc. The instrument needed for spinning the cotton and warm yarn are Honlam, Takari and Michongkret. Another implement called as Lithai used for taking out

the seed of cotton before spinning. Again, they also give the colour on the threads which are collected from different jungle fruits collected from the forest. They used a fruit called as Sibub for black colour, Laha for red colour, Seluka or Kopak ban for yellow colour etc. It is to be mentioned here that, these locally prepared garments play a dual role. It is their source of earning as well as they meet their requisite of cloths in daily livelihood.

Case Study-3: Urmika Hansepi (37 years), had a five membered family. She used to do the Jhum cultivation regularly along with her husband. Further, in her leisure period she used to prepare woolen garments and bamboo made products for household usage and selling. In one had it reduced the economic burden of purchasing the clothes and simultaneously it could generate her earning. She used to sell those produce directly in different shops of Diphu market or sell to the customer personally. By selling them she used to earn at least Rs. 1500/- per month. With such income she can accumulate a fold of rice for her family to a great extent.

Category of Monthly Income: The multifarious natural products like vegetation, domesticated animals, fishes, bamboo have played a major role in the economic pursuit of the studied people. In these occupational sources the women folk play a major role. As the natural resources are abundant in the region it has provided them the scope to come in direct monetary exchange in the market and has generated their regular scope of earning. However, it is an admirable fact that, every year the produces varies to certain extent, still the level of income is more or less proportionate for them to satisfy their common minimum livelihood. It has been reported that, their monthly income is approximately between Rs. 2,500/- to Rs. 3,000/-. Utilization of different produces plays a crucial role for the sustenance of the studied families. With the help of indigenous knowledge and implements, they can convert the natural raw materials into economic produces, which can generate scope of earning for them. Ultimately, it had secured the economic involvement of women in daily familial discourse and provides them the scope to get empowered.

The indigenous knowledge based traditional economic organization

and its skill development can be proliferated at wider dimension through the social outreach programmes of Nationalized and corporate banks, financial agencies.

The holistic development of a nation is intimately related with the increase of Gross Domestic Production and maximum utilization of natural resources for production as well as its equal distribution at the grass root level. However, most of the Tribal dominated villages are still remaining out communicated from the economic mainstream. The traditional economic organization of the Tribal people in India, are intimately depended upon the adequate utilization of locally available natural resources. However, neither such products are globally getting marketized nor it is providing them the much needed monetary support at a better level. In such cases the corporate financial agencies like corporate banks can play a very vital role. It can financially support at the individual level or group level through micro-financing and self help group. As the resource and labour will be easily available, thus at the initial stage capital investment will be minimum. On the other hand, through entrepreneurs, the local products can be directly collected from the local people and it will be globally marketized, where the banking sector will play the significant role about the profit distribution. It can be represented through the following diagram-



General Observation

The contemporary society has formed after transformation processes through socio-cultural evolution. In the early prehistoric period i.e. in savagery, human being were totally nomadic and hunter gatherer. They were totally depended on nature for their survival. Then both

male and female accumulated the natural resources and enjoyed the common authority and rights over the resources and usage. Followed by the stage of barbarism where human being first started to cultivate and showed their tendency for a settled life. The last stage is the civilization which is mainly based upon settled agriculture and permanent settlement of livelihood. In this period the concept of surplus appeared out for the first time. To control over the surplus the male society gradually imposed sex based taboos upon the female related to their physical as well as physiological characteristics and made them confined within the household territory. They were become segregated from the domain of education, economy and political field. As a result their outer world views like knowledge, skills of the same could not flourish. Even till now in Indian society within the household territory, the females are under the subordination of their husband and in-laws regarding their common minimum requirement. Despite of all legislations and policy commitments and planning, women remain a vulnerable group. The need of the present decade is to develop status for the women and to redress the indiscrimination against them. If we really want to empower the women in reality then we must have to go beyond the current outlook. We have to look for a broader approach that addresses planning, adequate resource allocation, programme design and formulation, targeted intervention and implementation based upon the requirement of women residing at the field level with their participation. In this concern government has taken a number of initiatives. Constitutional safeguards regarding education, job involvement as well as economic security, political participation of the women must be ensured. To establish a gender bias less society and to redress the indiscrimination against the women, the society must have to assure their remarkable participation in every aspect. In this regard long traditional social and cultural stigma imposed on women should be uprooted from the society and in this connection a lesson about importance of women in every aspect must be introduced in the educational curriculum for the awareness of male folk. A family is build up with both men and women. Moreover she is the bearer of our future generation, so if she is kept debarred from the

empowerment then the progress of the human society in the forthcoming period will have to face a major setback. So the real development is possible, besides governmental efforts and initiatives if the people of society share, care in every aspect to the women for the sustainable development. Here the interaction between human life and environment plays a major role. Particularly in case of the Karbis it has been noticed that, the women folk had utilized the natural resources to generate their own source of income. It had given her a major scope to support their family economically and in many cases without her earning the common minimum livelihood would have to face a serious challenge. The male folk of the studied society had accepted their major supportive role in economic pursuit and in many cases her consensus is not ignored in decision making purpose. Thus, it can be summarized that, particularly among the tribal societies, the utilization of natural resources are intimately associated with their traditional economic organization with the help of indigenous technology. The women folk of the said society play a crucial role in it. Such produces generate a regular source of income for them and can play a vital role in the empowerment of women.

Recently there is a growing awareness that business needs to manage its relationship with the wider society. Corporate leaders are responsible for their corporations' impact on society and the natural environment beyond legal compliance and the liability of individuals. To the novice, this annotated bibliography offers a short but nevertheless deep introduction to the field. More experienced leaders can gain new perspectives on how to grow in their approach to sustainability and how to develop innovative business models in accord with the triple bottom line.

CSR is becoming a leading principle of top management and of entrepreneurs. The number of observations in research in this field clearly delineated models, leadership competencies, accountability, and structure of partnerships as well as organizational challenges and limitations and ethics. Organizations can reexamine their pattern of behaviors in the TBL framework and begin their journey toward a sustainable approach that is integrated into their business strategy.

Further, in the contemporary period, for the holistic national development through significant corporate role the unattended local resources may get a global economic platform and it can play a very vital role in the socio-economic development of a large section of downtrodden tribal people of the nation.

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