

Empowerment of Women with Special Reference to Khasi community in Meghalaya, India

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Abstract

The Khasi is one of the tribes living in Meghalaya state of North-East India. This tribe draws much attention of the sociologists, because this tribe practices matrilineal system characterized in terms of marriage, inheritance of property and matrilineal post-marital residence and other social relations. This is rare in other society. The khasi society of Meghalaya is such a society, commonly known as matrilineal where authority, title, inheritance, residence after marriage and succession are traced through female line. So, it is presumed that they do not require any special effort to make them aware and get social, economic, political, psychological understanding and knowledge to establish their rights along with men in their society as they are automatically placed on an esteemed level. Matrilineal society has been a source of great pride to the state. The paper examined the dynamic roles and status of rural tribal women living in Meghalaya, especially of the Khasi women. More precisely, we tried to examine, how much control a Khasi women has over resources within and outside the family. It is empirically observed that the Khasi communities in its traditional arrangement both, men and women enjoy their restricted roles. It can be concluded that empowerment of women is evident in all its glory in Meghalaya's unique women centric society. It is observed from the survey that at present, the Khasi matrilineal is in the transition phase and its future is still not properly defined.

Introduction

Most of the states in India are patrilineal but in Meghalaya it is matrilineal. The Khasi is one of the tribes living in Meghalaya State of North-east India. This tribe draws much attention of the Sociologists especially Social Scientists, because this tribe practices matrilineal system characterized in terms of marriage, inheritance and residential status after marriage. It is commonly believed that the status of women in matrilineal society is higher compared to that of patrilineal society. This can be seen in terms of empowerment and other roles played by the women. However, it may not imply that the women are more empowered than men in Meghalaya. The Khasi society of Meghalaya is such a society, commonly known as matrilineal where female folks determine

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