CHAPTER – I

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The term status refers to a position in a social system or subsystem which is distinguishable from and at the same time related to other positions through its designated rights and obligations. In the pure sociological sense, status does not imply rank or hierarchy but denotes only position vis-a-vis others in terms of rights and obligations. But at each status-position in a particular structure can be viewed in terms of superiority and inferiority, i.e., in terms of power, privileges, advantages and disadvantages, the notion of status involves comparison and grading.¹

Status may be either ascribed or achieved. Ascribed statuses are acquired at birth without regard to individual ability and achieved statuses are those which are more or less thrown open to competition.²

Women’s status is often described in terms of their level of income, employment, education, health and fertility as well as the roles they play within the family, the community and society.³

Although women have contributed to the socio-economic life, yet they share inequality in the fruits of their labour because of persistent discrimination. Throughout the world it is now recognized that the status of women in any society is inferior to men. Though women play an important role in the family and society, yet they have not been given equal rights and are underestimated in many countries.

In traditional societies of Asia and Africa, women take equal part with men in producing foodstuffs, in addition to endless household works, yet their works are not given due weightage. In Russia also, in spite of heavy physical labour, women are concentrated on lower levels and subordinate positions in all fields.

In the Indian context, a woman has several roles to play in the family, the community and the social system in general. Yet women do not enjoy the status they should have. Their lower level of status is imposed by the traditional culture and distortions in the process of development, which, in turn, generate inequalities for them.4

In the Indian social structure woman is practically regarded as a secondary citizen having no independent status. She is supposed to perform all the duties but has limited rights. In the man-dominated family she is subordinate to her family, her husband, her son or whosoever is the head of the family. She is always oppressed and exploited. Her main job is

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to manage the house and rear the children. In the agrarian society, she
takes care of the cattle and participates in the promotion of cultivation.
Man thinks that all these jobs are to be carried out by woman and woman
alone. As a result, she is on duty for eighteen hours a day with no leisure
of any sort.\(^5\)

It is well known that ascribed status has been prevalent in Indian
society. Status is usually ascribed by male members to females, as father,
brother, husband and son. Women are controlled by men. If father dies
then it is the elder or younger brother who controls his sister. After
marriage husband has all control over her and after husband's death it is
the son. It is not necessary that the person who has control over women
must be an elderly person. Even younger male person realizes the
responsibility towards women and dominates them. Women are thus
under the control of men and depend on them.\(^6\)

In the North-East state of Manipur also, women have contributed
immensely in the socio-economic development and upliftment of the
society. However, despite their contribution, they are not given their due
position in the society.

Women in Manipur are subordinate to male authority and they have
no much say in the decision making process. There are many restrictions

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placed on women which debarred them to participate in social life. Women are considered as weaker sex requiring social and economic protection. They are seen in their roles as wives and mothers and not as women in their own rights. The status of women is identified by their husbands, parents and children.

Women in general, occupy a position lower than that of men in all spheres of life. It is felt that lack of education is mainly responsible for the low status of women in the society. According to 2001 census, the literacy rate of Manipur is 70.5 percent. For males, the literacy rate is 80.3 percent while for females, it is 60.5 percent which means 39.5 percent women are illiterate in Manipur.

The present high illiteracy rate among women is one of the important constraints on the scope of their employment and attainment of higher social status through economic independence.7

Lack of education has a negative impact on women's lives. Numerous studies have shown that illiterate women have high levels of fertility and mortality, poor nutritional status, less decision making potential, high marital instability, early marriage and low earning capacity.

On the other hand, education makes a woman aware of her rights and privileges. It is also a means of earning livelihood. Education gives

economic freedom to woman through better employment and it builds up her self-dignity. And lack of education makes herself dependent upon the male folk.

Further, education facilitates an increase in knowledge and widens the mental horizon of a person. That is, it brings about changes in the attitudes and values of a person about every realm of life and develops in him/her the desire to improve him/her through introspection. So, women who are educated are not satisfied with their role of a mere housewife. They have realized the importance of their existence and want to utilize their intellectual abilities and to do something which gives them satisfaction and secures for their identity in the family and the society as well. This can be accomplished only by their becoming economically independent. So, more and more educated women are moving towards getting economically independent. 8

The status of women in the Indian society is in process of transformation. Many of them have come forward in the society taking various roles. They have found entry in most professions. They have become more productive and more effective income earner. All these changes are brought by education. However, the process of this change has started among some sections of women only.

Education is an important agent for the upliftment of status of women. Without education women are subjected to all kinds of discrimination in our society. Unless women are educated and economically independent, they will not get treatment equal to men. So, in order to raise the status of women, we need to focus more on education.

Keeping all these things in mind and due to the personal interest of the investigator to deal with this problem the present study has been carried out to determine the impact of education on the socio-economic status of women in Imphal West District, Manipur.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The present study is designed to explore the impact of education on the socio-economic status of women. The areas to be examined in social aspects include type of family, marital status, age at marriage, type of marriage, child bearing and rearing (fertility, age at child birth, place of delivery and nature of feeding the child), husband-wife relationship (spending leisure time together, differences of opinion between husband and wife and understanding between husband and wife), decision-making role (making independent decision on family budget, child education and personal matters), social participation (participation in agitation, social ceremony/function, and other social activities). While in economic aspect, income and occupation of the women are to be evaluated. In addition to this, the relationship between the women's educational status and the husband's educational status, occupation, monthly income and age at
marriage are to be examined. The influence that is exerted by education on these variables are the areas of study and observation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1) To trace the impact of education on social status of women with reference to the following variables.
   i) Type of family: Under this objective, the work attempts to ascertain that to which type of family the women of different educational status belong.
   ii) Marital status: It examines whether there is any difference in the extent of divorce/ separation among the women of different educational status.
   iii) Age at Marriage: It analyses whether there is any difference among the women of different educational status in their age at marriage.
   iv) Type of Marriage: It examines whether there is any difference in the type of marriage, that is, marriage by elopement or arrangement among the women of different educational status.
   v) Child Bearing and Rearing: It examines whether there is any difference in the fertility, age at child birth, place of delivery and nature of feeding the child among the mothers of different educational status.
vi) Husband-wife relationship: It analyses the husband-wife relationship, i.e., spending leisure time together, differences of opinion between husband and wife and understanding between husband and wife among the women of different educational status.

vii) Decision making role: Under this objective, it evaluates whether the decisions relating to family budget, education of children and personal matters are taken by the women independently and the differences among them in this regard.

viii) Social participation: It examines the differences in the participation of women of different educational status in agitation, social ceremony/function and other social activities.

2) To examine the impact of education on the economic status of women in relation to occupation and income.

i) Occupation: Under this objective the differences in the occupational status among the women of different educational status are examined.

ii) Income: It deals with the differences in the earning capacity among the women of different educational backgrounds.

3) To examine if there is any relationship between the educational status of wife and

i) husband's educational status

ii) age at marriage of husband
iii) occupation of husband
iv) monthly income of husband

4) To suggest the appropriate remedial measures.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the purpose of the study.

1. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her type of family.
2. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her marital status.
3. There is no difference of age at marriage among the wives of different educational status.
4. There is no difference of age at marriage of husband with respect to the educational status of wife.
5. There is no difference in type of marriage with respect to the educational status of wife.
6. There is no difference of fertility among the wives of different educational status.
7. There is no difference of age at birth among the wives of different educational status.
8. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her place of delivery.
9. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her nature of feeding.

10. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her husband's educational status.

11. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her spending leisure time with husband.

12. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to differences of opinion between husband and wife.

13. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to understanding between husband and wife.

14. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her making independent decision on family budget.

15. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her making independent decision on child education.

16. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her making independent decision on personal matters.

17. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her participation in agitation.

18. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her participation along with family members in social function / ceremony.
19. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her participation in local social activities.

20. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her occupation.

21. There is no difference of educational status of wife with respect to her husband's occupation.

22. There is no difference of income among the wives of different educational status.

23. There is no difference of income of husband with respect to the educational status of wife.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Educational Status: In the present study, this term is used to denote the status of being illiterate, under matric, matric, under graduate, graduate and post graduate.

Educated: For the present study, this term refers to the individuals who passed matriculation and other higher examinations.

Uneducated: In the present study this term means those who are literates but not passed matric.

Type of family: It includes joint family, nuclear family and extended family in the present study.
**Marital status:** For the present study, this term includes currently married and divorced / separated.

**Currently married:** This term refers to those couples i.e. husband and wife who are not divorced or separated.

**Age at marriage:** It means the chronological age of a person at the time of marriage.

**Type of marriage:** It includes arranged marriage and eloped marriage for the present study.

**Fertility:** The word ‘fertility’ refers to the total number of children born to a woman.

**Age at child birth:** For the present study, this term denotes the actual age of mother at the time of bearing first or second child.

**Place of delivery:** In the present study, this term refers to the birth of the last child at hospital or home or private nursing home.

**Nature of feeding:** This term includes breast feeding and bottle feeding or both.

**Spending leisure time:** It refers to the amount of time spent by wife with her husband during recreation.

**Differences of opinion:** It means the differences of views on any matters between wife and husband.
Understanding between husband and wife: In the present study, it refers to the views, feelings and intentions between the wife and the husband.

Decision making role: For this study, it refers to the role of women in making independent decision on family budget, child education and personal matters.

Social Participation: The term refers to the social roles and activities of women such as participation in agitation, social function and local social activities like meetings, discussions, social service etc.

Type of occupation: In the present study this term includes government employee, non-government employee, production related worker, farmer, sales related worker and housewife (non-working)

Monthly income: This term denotes the actual income earned by a person from all sources.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is confined to the impact of education on the socio-economic status of women inhabiting in the Imphal West District. It is a micro-level study in which an in-depth analysis is made amongst the women of different educational status about their socio-economic positions. Certain variables, stated above such as type of family, marital status, age at marriage, type of marriage, child bearing and rearing,
husband-wife relationship, decision making role, social participation, occupation and income are within the scope of the investigation. The study is also limited to the examination of the relationship between the women’s educational status and the husband’s educational status, occupation, monthly income and age at marriage.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study deals with the changes that are brought by education among the women folk in relation to their socio-economic position.

Education, irrespective of who receives it, contributes to the development of a country. But when women are the recipients, the benefits are even more apparent. An educated woman married late and has fewer children, slowing population growth. Educated women can make more independent decisions. They are more productive-oriented in terms of materials both at home and in the workplace.

Efforts have been made over the past few decades of planned development to enroll more girls in schools and encouraging them to stay in schools, to contribute their education as long as possible and to provide non formal educational opportunities for women. The fulfillment of the constitutional directives in respect of providing free and compulsory

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education up to the age of 14 years has been included as one of the components of the ‘Minimum Needs Program’ and given overriding priority.\textsuperscript{10}

The constitution of India also makes special provisions for women to help them improve their status in society.\textsuperscript{11} The Preamble, Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of State Policy contain the attainment of equality of status of women as one of the specific objectives.\textsuperscript{12} Special provisions under the different Plans have been made to uplift the position of women. Many socio-economic programmes were also started under the Plans. These programmes aim at providing special facilities to women for education, health, training and opportunities for gainful employment\textsuperscript{13}.

The United Nations declared the year 1975 as International Women’s year with the aim of raising the status of women throughout the world. With a view to fulfilling the aims, the UN later declared the decade 1975-1985 as Women’s decade by devising both long term and short term programmes to improve the status of women. The year 2001 was also declared by United Nations as International Women’s Empowerment Year.

In India also, many laws have been enacted and many policies are being implemented to empower the women economically and socially. The National Policy for Empowerment of women was adopted in 2001 with the

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., p.95.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p.89.
objective of ensuring women their rightful place in society by empowering them as agents of socio-economic change and development.

Though a number of policies and programmes have been introduced to raise the status of women in India but we all have very little or no idea about the benefits of the policies and programmes. Thus, it is important to assess the impact of the above policies and programmes on women in the society. The study of such kind would more or less enable us to understand the direct or indirect influence of the women empowerment programmes taken up by the Central and the State Government in the women population. Over and above this, we can ascertain how far education can raise the socio-economic status of the women and if there is any difference in status among the women of different educational levels.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive method was adopted in this study in which the magnitude of the influence that was exerted by education in bringing out the changes taking place in the socio-economic status of the women had been studied.

STUDY AREA

It was not an easy task to cover the whole area of the state in dealing with such a study. So, the geographical area to be covered by the
study was identified. Accordingly, Imphal West district was selected as the work was planned to be carried out at micro-level.

Imphal west district falls in the category of Manipur valley region. With a total area of 558 sq. km., it is located in the central region of the state.

According to 2001 census, Imphal west district had a total population of 4,44,382 of which 2,21,781 were males and 2,22,601 were females. Imphal west district had the highest literacy rate among the districts of Manipur with a total of 80.2 percent literates (89.2 percent males and 71.3 percent females). Imphal West district is populated by persons representing different communities like Meiteis, Meitei-Muslims, Schedule Caste, Schedule Tribes, Marwaris, Punjabis, Biharis, Nepalis, etc. Majority of the population belongs to Meitei Community.

Imphal west district is surrounded by Senapati district on the north, Imphal east and Thoubal districts on the east, Thoubal and Bishnupur districts on the south and Senapati and Bishnupur districts on the west. Imphal west district has thirteen Assembly Constituencies that is, (1) Uripok (2) Thangmeiband (3) Sagolband (4) Keishamthong (5) Langthabal (6) Singjamei (7) Lamshang (8) Konthoujam (9) Patsoi (10) Naoriya Pakhanglakpa (11) Wangoi (12) Mayang Imphal and (13) Sekmai.
POPULATION

The women population residing in the Imphal West District was determined through documents published by the Government of Manipur. It was found that there were 54,230 women according to census of India, 2001 in the age group 35-59 years in Imphal West District.

SAMPLE

In order to examine the socio-economic status, the Meitei women who were in the age group 35-59 years having at least one child had been considered in the selection of sample. Altogether 1008 women selected randomly from 13 Assembly constituencies of Imphal West District were involved in the study.

STUDY TOOL

A predesigned Semi-Structural interview schedule was used as the tool of the study.

CONSTRUCTION OF INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

In order to elicit the information from the informants, relating to the objectives of the present study we developed a predesigned semi-structural interview scheduled for the purposed. To maintain reliability and Validity of the tool the following steps were cautiously taken up.
In the first draft we concentrated on the content, considering objectives and variables of interest of the proposed study. In the second, we looked critically at the formulation and sequencing of the questions. Then we scrutinized the format and finally did a test-run to check whether the interview schedule gave us the information we required and whether both we and the respondents felt at ease with it.

The questions were both open-ended and closed-ended one formulating one or more questions that provided information for each question. We avoided leading questions, words with double, vague meaning, and emotionally laden words while setting the questions.

For proper sequencing of the questions, the interview schedule was made a consumer and user friendly keeping background variables at the outset with natural sequence. More sensitive and personal questions were kept towards the end. The proposed schedule had three sections viz., Section -1 (background variables) Section -2 (Marriage and child bearing and rearing) and section -3 (Participation in the family and society).

A pilot survey was conducted on 50 women to pretest the schedule in terms of its reliability and validity. After the pilot survey, the schedule was revised through the knowledge gained during the survey while interacting to the informants. A few irrelevant questions were excluded and a few were incorporated which were found necessary to achieve the objectives with proper sequence. Then finally the schedule was printed and administered for data collection.
DATA COLLECTION

The personal-interview method was adopted for data collection. At the very outset, the respondents were identified and then they were explained the purposes of the study/survey and made acquainted with the objectives of the present study so that they can realize the importance of their co-operations to draw some valid and significant conclusions which would help the policy makers and programme executors to formulate the future planning for the state. And the respondents were also assured that the information supplied by them would be kept strictly confidential and would not be used for any other purposes except for the study.

In order to gather valid & reliable personal information from the respondents, careful effort was made by creating a friendly atmosphere of trusts and confidence so that the respondents may feel at ease while talking to and discussing with the interviewer. After establishing a good rapport, the factual information was elicited from the respondents. The collection of data started from February, 2005 and continued up to August, 2006.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

After thorough checking and scrutinizing, the data was processed through computer with statistical software. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, univariate and bi-variate tables were introduced and well known Statistical formulae like $\chi^2$-test and ANOVA (F-test) were
applied wherever found suitable and necessary, and accordingly interpretation was made.

Details of the test-$\chi^2$-test and $F$-test are listed hereunder for clarity.

$\chi^2$-test

I. Condition for the Validity of $\chi^2$-test:

It is an approximate test for large values of $N>50$. For the Validity of Chi-square test of "goodness of fit" the following condition must be satisfied.

i) The sample observation should be independent

ii) Constraints on the cell frequencies, if any, should be linear.
    e.g. $\sum O_i = \sum E_i$

iii) $N$, the total frequency should be reasonably large, say, greater than 50.

iv) No theoretical cell frequency should be less than 5. If any theoretical cell frequency is less than 5, it is pooled with the preceding or succeeding frequency so that the pooled frequency is more than 5.

The test enables of find if the duration of the experiment from theory is just by chance or is it really due to the inadequacy of the theory to fit the observed data.
II. The Formula:

If $O_i$ is a set of observed frequencies and $E_i$ is the corresponding set of expected frequencies, then Chi-Square given by

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

follows Chi-Square distribution with $(n-1)$ d.f.

III. Decision rule:

Accept $H_0$ if $\chi^2 \leq \chi^2_a (n-1)$ and reject $H_0$ if $\chi^2 > \chi^2_a (n-1)$, where $\chi^2$ is the calculated value of Chi-Square obtained on the formula and $\chi^2_a (n-1)$ is the tabulated value of Chi-Square for $(n-1)$ d.f. and level of significance $\alpha$.

ANOVA or F-test

I. Assumption for the validity of F-test

Besides, many application of the test it is often used to testing homogeneity of several means. According to R.A. Fisher, ANOVA is the "Separation of variance ascribable to one group of causes from the variance ascribable to other group." For the validity of the test, the following assumptions are made.
i) The observations are independent.

ii) Parent population from which observations are taken is normal.

iii) Various treatment and environmental effects are additive in nature.

II. Types

There are normally two types viz,

i) ANOVA for one-way classification.

ii) ANOVA for two-way classification.

III. Critical Difference (C.D.)

If one wish to find out which pair of treatments differ significantly and in case, treatments show significant effect, critical difference (C.D.) is calculated. It shows “least significant difference” at the given level of significance. The formula is given by

\[ \text{C.D.} = \text{(Standard error (SE) of difference between two treatment means)} \times (t_{\alpha/2} \text{ for error d.f.}) \]

However, in the present study we have not applied critical difference (C.D.).
CHAPTER ORGANISATION

The thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter under the caption 'Introduction' comprises the general introduction, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypotheses, operational definitions, scope of the study, significance of the study, methodology, study area, population, sample, study tool, construction of interview schedule, data collection, analysis and interpretation of data.

The second chapter which is entitled as 'Background of the study' includes demographic profile of Manipur, historical background of women education in India and Manipur, status of women in India, social and economic status of women in Manipur. The third chapter deals with the review of related literature.

The fourth chapter which is entitled as 'women’s educational status and its impact on socio-economic condition' is the body of the thesis. It consists of the results of the analysis and the discussion of the study. This chapter consists of two sections. The first section deals with women's educational status and its impact on social condition. The second section discusses women's educational status and its impact on economic condition.

The last fifth chapter entitled 'Summary and Conclusion' summarizes and concludes overall results of the study. The overall
impression of the study along with the suggestion for further research is also described in this chapter.