CHAPTER - IV

SOCIAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN SINGJAMEI ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY MANIPUR
CHAPTER - IV

Social role of Women in Singjamei Assembly Constituency

Manipur

There are 60 Assembly Constituencies in Manipur. Singjamei constituency is one of the 40 constituencies in the valley. It is an urban constituency in the heart of Imphal, the capital of Manipur. The National Highway No. 39 passes through the heart of Singjamei Assembly Constituency. There are three municipal wards in Singjamei Assembly Constituency namely ward Nos. 15, 16 and 17. Singjamei share a large part of the socio economic as well political activities of the state. It is developing as an important commercial centre in Manipur.

According to 2001 census, the total population of Singjamei Assembly Constituency was 23,495 out of which women form half of the population numbering about 12,326. ¹ In Singjamei, majority of the people are the Meiteis. There are non-Manipuris coming from other parts of India. Majority of them engage themselves in small business like selling bakery items, work as barbers, dhobis, cobblers, collection of iron scraps, plastics, running small hotels etc. Most of them stay in rented houses and do not enjoy voting right. Their population and activities are negligible to be considered as important part of the social component in the Singjamei Assembly Constituency. Among the Meiteis, one can find many

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¹ Government of India,(Directorate of Census Operation), Imphal, Manipur.
groups professing different faiths such as Meitei Hindus which form the majority and Meitei Sanamahi adopting indigenous religion. There are also Meitei Christians. But in social rites and practices, it is hard to distinguish one from the other. In fact all the social and religious practices are almost the same in every household and all live in harmony in the constituency.

According to 2001 census, the number of literate persons in the constituency was 18,629 out of which 9,068 was the number of literate women. So the rate of female literacy in Singjamei A.C. is about 49% which shows the status of women. However, there are also illiterate women who form a part of the social component in the constituency.

Like other women of Manipur, the activities of women in Singjamei do not remain confined only at home. They participate in all matters relating to the interest of the people in the locality and the state as a whole. In fact in almost all important issues in Singjamei, it is the women who dominate the scene. Here both the educated and uneducated equally take part in their own way. In actual practice it is the uneducated and illiterate who directly involves in such issue. On the other hand, the participation of educated and employed women in such issues is low.

2. Government of India, (Directorate of Census Operation), Imphal, Manipur.
Family and Educational background of Women in Singjamei Assembly Constituency:

Women could play different roles in indifferent situations. Before marriage she is the daughter who helps her mother a lot. After marriage her role comprises that of a wife, a mother, a daughter-in-law and a caretaker of the family as well. Her activities began from the household chores, caring the children, husband, in laws to that of her active involvement in the activities of the surrounding and the State. In Manipur, it is mostly the women who spearheaded any movement.

The source and the information of this chapter is based on the response to the questionnaire given by 100 married women in the three Municipal wards i.e. 15, 16 and 17 of the Imphal Municipality. Thus the sample size is 300, 100 collected on random basis each from the three wards.

The information was collected by conducting a survey through questionnaire and interviewing them. It was a difficult task so to say because most of the women were not interested, paid no heed and tried to conceal the facts. First questionnaires were distributed, asked them to fill it up and fixed a date to collect it according to their convenience. But most of them misplaced it and even reported to have lost it. Even those women who return it did not respond properly. Therefore, interviewing method was adopted as a second step. While interviewing them, the necessary information could be written properly in the format of the questionnaires.
So with great difficulty a timing convenient to them was somehow managed and collected the necessary data. On the basis of the information thus collected, the study of the women of the Singjamei Assembly Constituency is made.

Women of Ward No. 15: The study is based on the Survey Report of 100 women belonging to 100 households collected on a random basis. The following Table shows the age group of women collected from ward 15 of the Imphal Municipality.

Table - 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>No. of women</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>66 and above</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The information was collected from women belonging to different

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3. The above table is prepared on the basis of the information collected from 100 women belonging to ward No. 15.
leikais or localities in Ward No. 15. The leikais covered by Ward No. 15 include Chingamathak Part -II (A), Chingamathak Part-II (B), Singjamei Thokhom Leikai (A), Singjamei Mathak Chongtham Leikai, Chirom Leikai, Chingamathak Part-I (A), Chingamathak Part-I(B), etc.\textsuperscript{4}

The women belonging to the collected sample belong to different households with varied backgrounds. Their status as well as role inside and outside the families differ according to their type of the family. But one thing found common is that they are all housewives and engaged in different activities only with the sole objective for the betterment of their families.

Table II\textsuperscript{5}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. of family</th>
<th>Percentage of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Joint family</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While analysing the social role of women, it is necessary to study the type of family to which they belong. So the families are divided into two categories, viz. Joint family and Nuclear family. According to the finding 51 percent of women belong to Joint family and that of Nuclear family is 49 percent in Ward No. 15.

\textsuperscript{4} Government of Manipur, Electoral Roll 2006, Office of the Deputy Commissioner/ Returning Officer, Imphal West District, Lamphel, 2006

\textsuperscript{5} The information is collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 15.
The number of women belonging to the two types of families seem to balance each other with a little difference. Traditionally joint family is the most popular type of family in Manipur. In these families, it is mostly the daughter-in-laws who take up the entire responsibility of the management of the household. In India generally women suffer in the joint families. The kind of mental suffering women are likely to experience in joint families come from the fact that the family members take them for granted.\(^6\)

From the response given by the women, it appears that nuclear type of family provides a lot of conveniences for women. In such cases, the activities of household chores become a little lighter comparing with joint family. In fact their responsibility is minimized.

Table III\(^7\)

Educational Qualification of women in Municipal Council Ward No.15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Educational qualification</th>
<th>No. of females</th>
<th>P.C. to total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Under Matric</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Matriculate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Under Graduate</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Post-Graduate(^8)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In ward No. 15 of the Imphal Municipal Council which falls under

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7. The above table is prepared on the basis of response given by 100 women in Ward No.15.
8. Graduate, Post Graduate includes medical, engineering and other professional degree holders.
Singjamei Constituency, the literacy rate of women is above 90 percent. It shows the growing literacy rate in Singjamei. Education of women is given due importance in most families of Singjamei Assembly Constituency. The number of graduates is found to be the highest number regarding educational qualification as it constituted 39 percent of the women interviewed. The number of illiterate and under matric is low. The same is the case regarding the number of women having post-graduate degree.

It appears that education of women is given importance by the parents belonging to Ward No. 15. Majority were found to be graduates. A few decades back, literacy rate for women was not as high as in the recent times. Education has become a very important means for the women to become aware of their rights, responsibilities etc. Therefore many parents felt the necessity of educating their daughters. However the number of women educated upto post graduates and higher level studies is found to be very few.

On the other hand, it may be mentioned that there are also some families which are not capable of sending their daughters to educational institutions. Lack of educational facilities still exist in an urban area like Singjamei Assembly Constituency. Out of the various factors responsible mention may be made of negligence or ignorance of birth control policy by illiterate parents, lack of source of income, low income of the family, etc. In such cases parents send only the sons to school with the belief that daughters would leave their home after marriage and it is only the sons who would bear the responsibilities of the family when the parents
grow old. This attitude comes closer to the general belief in India as for
the poor and the rich alike, sons are considered insurances against
destitution in old age. Such families fail to see the importance of giving
education to women in the modern world.

In Singjamei Ward No. 15 most of the illiterates and under matric
category of women belong to elderly age group i.e. 56 to 65 yrs, 66 yrs
and above etc. They belong to a time when education of women was not
given due importance in the society. Majority of families in Ward No. 15
managed to send off their daughters in schools, colleges and other
institutions. But the race just begins and there is a long way to go.

Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>No. of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The married women interviewed form 97 percent and unmarried 3
percent. A strong emphasis is given on married women as they take
different roles of being a daughter-in-law, wife, mother, caretaker of the
family and their contribution in shaping the future of their children who
are the assets of the society.

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Delhi, 1979, P -30.
10. The table is prepared from the information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward
No. 15.
Table V


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Head of the family</th>
<th>No. of family</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Patriarchal</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Women headed</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the collected sample, the number of patriarchal family is found to be 89 percent while that of women headed family is 11 percent. It shows that the traditional patriarchal system is still existing in Manipur as well as in Singjamei. In some households women are found to be the head of families. But further investigation indicated that such families came into existence only after the death of the male head of the family i.e. Fathers, Father-in-law or husbands.

In the highly educated families, the idea of male domination is found to be relaxable to some extent. Here, each member of the family including husband and wife share equal responsibility and act with a sense of partnership, cooperation and respect for each other. It does not however mean that such families are completely free from any misunderstanding or family disputes or arguments etc. The number of such families is still less when compared with other families. Even in such families, in all important matters, the first chance always go to the male member.

In Manipur most of the working women have to follow a tight

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11. The above table is prepared on the basis of the information collected from 100 women in Ward No. 15.
schedule. Although some keep helpers, majority manage by themselves. Husbands on their part help some times but their help always remain insignificant. So most of the burden fall upon the wife.

On the other hand, the condition of unemployed women is pathetic. They struggle to get any job even if the wage is meagre and manage to live from hand to mouth. They are even beaten by husbands who are drunkards. Thus the traditional male dominated society still lingers in the present day Manipur.

**Women in Ward No. 16 Singjamei Assembly Constituency:**

On the basis of the data and information collected from 100 women from Ward No. 16, we may examine the women of the area.

**Table 1\(^{12}\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Age-Group</th>
<th>Number of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>66 and above</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total :</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table shows the age group of 100 women belonging to Singjamei Assembly Constituency, Ward No. 16.

\(^{12}\) The above table is based on the information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 16.
The areas and leikais covered by the study in Ward No. 16 are (1) Chingamakha (A) (2) Chingamakha (B) (3) Kshetri Leikai Yanglem Leikai & Maisnam Leikai, (4) Maisnam Leikai and Yanglem leikai (5) Kongkham Leirak Makha Chingamakha (A) Ningthoujam Leikai, (6) Chingamakha Ningthoujam Leikai (B) and so on.\textsuperscript{13}

Table II\textsuperscript{14}

Types of Families in Imphal Municipal Ward No. 16, women belonging to Joint and Nuclear Families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of family</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Joint family</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total :</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of women belonging to joint family is 43 percent and Nuclear family is 57 percent. Although joint family system still exists in quite a good number, the number of nuclear family is more in Ward No. 16 which indicates that most women of the ward prefer Nuclear family. In fact it is easier to maintain a small family than a bigger one.

A survey is conducted to determine the educational background of women in Ward No. 16. Education can be regarded as the stepping stone in developing the personality and the career of women. That is

\textsuperscript{13} Government of Manipur, Electoral Roll 2006, issued by Office of the Deputy Commissioner/ Returning Officer, Imphal West District, Lamphel.

\textsuperscript{14} Table II is based on the response collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 16.
why a number of policies for the education of children have been launched in the national level. To mention some, National Policy for Children 1974, National Policy on Education 1986, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, etc. Sarva Siksha Abhiyan aims to educate any children in India by the year 2010. Thus in the recent years education of children for both boys and girls have been given due importance. This scheme has also been implemented in Manipur. Therefore a survey is conducted to determine the literacy rate of women in Ward No. 16 which is given below in Table-III.

Table III\textsuperscript{15}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no</th>
<th>Educational qualification</th>
<th>Number of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Under matric</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Matriculate</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Under Graduate</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table III the number of graduates exceed the other categories and the percentage of Post-Graduate Degree holders constitute 7 percent. Again 23 percent of women belong to the category

\textsuperscript{15} Table III is based on the response collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 16.
of Illiterate and under Matric. Some elderly women belong to this group. It is not surprising as most of the elderly women did not get proper education during their younger days. In the real sense of the term, the importance to female education is given only in the recent years. But the unfortunate thing is that some younger age groups also belong to this group. The reason may be poor economic background of the family. The parents prefer to send sons to school, they cannot afford to send sons and daughters to educational institutions. Another possible reason may be early marriage. Those girls who elope at a young age and lead a married life has no chance of pursuing further studies. They have to remain engaged in the maintenance of their own families and in rearing children. The instance of women continuing further studies after marriage is found to be rare. Many families also do not encourage the further studies of their daughter-in-laws.

Table IV\(^{16}\)

Marital Status of women in the Imphal Municipal Council, Ward No.16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Particular</th>
<th>No. of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table shows the marital status of women of Ward

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16. Table IV is based on the information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 16.
No. 16. The number of married women exceed the number of unmarried women. Here 99 percent of women are married and only 1 percent unmarried.

Table V

Family Structure of women in Imphal Municipal Council, Ward No. 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Head of the family</th>
<th>No. of family</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Patriarchal</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Women Headed Family</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table shows that 80 percent of the families in Ward No. 16 belong to Patriarchal system and only 20 percent is women headed families. It shows that the practice of male domination still exists in Manipur. Hence, the 20 percent of the women headed families is found without husbands. In these cases, the divorcees or those who are separated from their husbands due to one or some other reason etc. or the widows are the heads of the family.

The following is the data and analysis of women belonging to Ward No. 17.

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17. Table V is based on the information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 16.
Table 1

Age-group of women in the Imphal Municipal Council Ward No. 17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Age-Group</th>
<th>Number of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>66 and above</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total : 100</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above Table indicates the age group of women belonging to Ward No. 17. Here the first and last groups of women are fewer in number when compared with other groups.

The Leikais and areas covered by Ward No. 17 are (1) Mayengbam Leikai, (2) Leishangthem Leikai and Oinam Leikai, (3) Singjamei Thongam Leikai (A), (4) Singjamei Thongam Leikai (B), (5) Oinam Thingel Waikhom Leikai, (6) Oinam Thingel Okram Leikai (A), (7) Oinam Thingel Okram Leikai (B) (8) Oinam Thingel Oinam Leikai (A), (9) Oinam Thingel Oinam Leikai (B) etc. The women belonging to these leikais are interviewed relating to their various socio-economic activities.

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18. Table I is prepared on the basis of information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 17.
Table II

Women Belonging to Joint and Nuclear Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.no.</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of family</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Joint family</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Nuclear family</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Ward No. 17 the number of women belonging to Joint family is found to be 52 percent and the number of women belonging to Nuclear family comes up to 48 percent. Though the number of women belonging to Nuclear family is less, there is possibility of increasing the number of Nuclear family in the future. Most of the women expressed the view that nuclear family is more convenient than Joint family. In India nuclear family has become more common in cities and towns. It provides more democratic atmosphere to the members. The reasons are more or less similar in all places of Manipur, particularly in the three municipal wards of Singjamei. Maintenance of a small family and less expenditure might be the main advantages of nuclear type of family among other reasons. In a non-nuclear family set up a women's personal space remains vulnerable to interference and inter-meddling even by immediate relatives of the husband.

20. Table II is based on the information collected from 100 women in Ward No. 17.
21. Interview with Sinam (o) Minarani, Mayeng Leikai on 11-7-07, Urik Khinban (o) Roma, Thongam Leikai and Sagolsen (o) Taruni Devi, Mayeng Leikai on 10-7-07.
The following is the educational background of women in Ward No. 17, Imphal Municipal Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no</th>
<th>Educational qualification</th>
<th>Number of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Under Matric</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Matriculate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Under Graduate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here also as in the case of the other two wards the number of women graduates form the largest in Ward No. 17. However, the number of post graduates is low when compared with other categories. So in all the three wards the number of post graduate degree holders constitute the lowest percentage. However, on the basis of the survey conducted in the three wards i.e. Ward No. 15, 16 and 17, the data on literacy seem to be more or less similar inspite of a few variation.

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24. Table III is prepared on the basis of information collected from 100 women in Ward No. 17
Table IV

Marital Status of Women in Ward No. 17, Imphal Municipal Council

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Particular</th>
<th>Number of females</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of married women exceeds the number of unmarried women. 97 percent of women are married and 3 percent are unmarried.

Table V gives the information on type of family - Patriarchal and women headed based on 100 households of the Imphal Municipal Council Ward No. 17.

Table V

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. no.</th>
<th>Head of the family</th>
<th>No. of family</th>
<th>P.C. of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Patriarchal</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Women headed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here, as in the general case, the first category of family i.e. patriarchal exceed the number of matriarchal family. In the actual sense

25. Table IV is prepared on the basis of information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 17.
26. Table V is prepared on the basis of information collected from 100 women belonging to Ward No. 17.
of the term, the few matriarchal family refers to the family of widows, divorcees and those who are separated from husbands due to various reasons. Therefore, they do not become head of the families due to proper respect and honour given by the society but due to some unfortunate circumstances. The condition of women although seem to improve a little, they still have to face discrimination both at home and the society. The developments relating to women are meant only outwardly and looking deeper into the matter is of utmost necessity. Most women inspite of admitting the acts of violence against them, keep mum and majority of them do not make any complaint. They prefer to bear all the violence due to fear or to save the family from disgrace and so on. But such a step is not going to solve the problem and it will further create more problem in the long run. So, women should be bold enough to admit the real facts.

Family and educational background of women in Singjamei Assembly Constituency has been examined. For the purpose, age group, educational qualification, marital status of women in the three wards i.e. Ward No. 15, 16 and 17 has been analysed. Further percentage of women belonging to joint and nuclear families and patriarchal or women headed families are taken into consideration.

According to the study patriarchal family is common in all the three wards and women headed families are less in number. It also appears that majority of the women respondents prefer nuclear type of family as according to them it is easier to maintain a small family than a bigger one.
Educational background also help in determining the status of women. In all the three wards, graduates occupy the highest percentage. Thus female education has been given due importance by the parents. However the percentage of post graduate degree holders is low. Therefore much concern is needed in this matter in all the three wards.

A comparative study on status and role of women in the three wards of Singjamei Assembly Constituency

Woman as a wife and mother or caretaker of the family in the three wards:

All women whether employed or unemployed are housewives in the real sense of the term as household activities are a must for them. They admitted that they manage to complete all the housework before going to their place of work. For the working women, they have to remain at the office from around 9.30 - 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 - 5 p.m. Even the non working women or those who do not have a regular source of income struggle to earn money. After coming home in the evening, they are busy with housework. Whether joint or nuclear families, the main responsibility of housework is fallen on the daughter-in-law. Keeping helpers are very rare and their children cannot help them due to the educational culture in Manipur like going for tuition, schools, colleges, coaching institutes, home works, weekly or monthly tests and so on.

A women in ward no. 15 who is working as a Counsellor, MACS (Manipur AIDS Control Society) and posted at Churachandpur admitted
the acute problems she is facing and difficulty in maintaining the family.\textsuperscript{27} She has to get ready to go to Churachandpur around 7.30 a.m. It means that by 7 a.m. she manage to complete all the housework and the requirements of her children for school. Sometimes she has night duty and when coming home, proper rest cannot be taken due to housework.

The survey also revealed the problems of women engaging in different economic activities in ward no. 15. A woman said that by 8 a.m. she manage to complete all the household work. For her Sundays and other holidays are busier as these days are meant for washing clothes, arranging and dusting furniture and even for marketing. Another woman engaging in embroidery work admitted of going around to sell her items. So, sometimes she is not available at home when her service is needed either by the in-laws or her husband.\textsuperscript{28}

All the women as wife has to serve their husbands in addition to their in-laws. But in most cases the husbands give very little help. The table shows the report of ward no. 15.

\textsuperscript{27} Interview with Leishangthem Ibempishak Devi, Chingamathak Nameirakpam Leikai, 21-11-06.

\textsuperscript{28} Interview with R.K. Indubala Devi, Chingamathak Ngakraba Leirak and Aribam Nungshitombi Devi, Chingamathak Nameirakpam Leikai, 20-1-07 and 20-11-06.
Table - I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Full support</th>
<th>Partial support</th>
<th>Negative support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table - I shows that only 2 percent of women receive full support of husband. Here the relation is that of co-operation, understanding and equal sharing in all household work like cooking, cleaning dishes, washing, carrying water, getting the children ready for school etc. However women getting partial help from husband form the majority i.e. 82 percent while 12 percent reported of getting no help from their husbands. The partial help supposedly given by husbands are negligible in some cases as some women refuse to disclose the reality.

While studying the women it is also necessary to find out whether they are victims of domestic violence. The report of ward no. 15 is given below.

Table - II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Violence by husband</th>
<th>Violence by in-laws</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women who are victim of domestic violence</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the women admitted of domestic violence either from

29. Table I is based on information collected from 100 women in Ward No. 15. Only one woman admitted she need no help from husband as the family is small. Three woman are single.

30. Table II is based on the survey report collected from 100 women in Ward No. 15.
husband or the in-laws. It appears that they are afraid to admit or bring
disgrace to their families by admitting it. So they need to be pressurized
to reveal the facts with the help of social organisations, meira paibis etc.

The survey on ward no. 16 reveal more or less the same picture of
women with that of ward no. 15. Here also no woman is free from
household work although slight difference is there depending on the
situation and family condition.

The condition of working women is almost similar to that of ward
no. 15. Here also they manage all housework before going to office or
other Government and Non-Government establishments by 9.30 to 10
a.m. Then again the busy schedule of housework begins around 4.30 to
5 p.m. after coming home from work. A working woman posted at a
distant place said that she has to come home late depending on the
availability of bus service. 31 A nurse who works as ANM (Auxiliary Nurse
Midwifery) at a Government hospital reported her tight schedule. 32 Some
other women admitted of taking help even from the neighbouring woman
and keeping their infants at Creche centres. So many kids care centres
have been established in recent times.

As in ward no. 15, the unemployed women of ward no. 16 are

31. Interview with Khumallambam (o) Ibechaobi Devi, Singjamei Chingamakhong Chongthum
Leikai, Imphal, 21-6-07.
32. Interview with Nongmeikapam (o) Ahanbi Devi, Chingamakha Ningthoujam Leikai, Imphal,
17-6-07.
occupied with various activities to support their families. Some of them are shopkeepers, some open hotels, some engage in weaving, embroidery etc. A hotel owner manage to do both housework and open the hotel at around 4 a.m. everyday while a woman reported of stitching mosquito nets and go around to sell the same despite her busy housework. A young brahmin housewife narrated her tight routine. She is the youngest daughter-in-law and manage most of the housework. After housework she is occupied in cleaning the temple, mandap and utensils used in the temple. Moreover, it is her duty to take care of the place after religious ceremonies connected with mostly marriages and deaths of the leikai or locality. For her there is no time to rest except late at night.

Generally most women both in joint and nuclear families take major responsibility in housework. Even women in nuclear families expect no help from other member and their children as they are busy with their studies. Here also most women get less or no help from husbands in housework. Table - 1 shows the report given by women of ward no.16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Full support</th>
<th>Partial support</th>
<th>Negative support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the report shows very little difference with that of ward no.

33. Interview with Kakchingtabam (o) Lata Devi, Chingamakhong Chongtham Leikai, Imphal, 21-6-07.
34. Table - 1 is based on the survey report collected from 100 women in Ward No. 16. One woman is single.
15. Majority obtained only partial help from husbands. Thus the number of fortunate women getting full support of husbands are very few being only 3 percent.

Again on enquiring whether they are victims of domestic violence, only one percent admitted the fact. The report is given in the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Violence by husband</th>
<th>Violence by in-laws</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the report is similar to that of ward no. 15 with the exception that only 1 percent reported of violence by husband. 99 percent refused to admit as they are not in favour of disclosing the real condition in their families.

Women of ward no. 17 admitted more or less the same condition with that of ward no. 15 and 16. Household work is compulsory for all women. In case of joint families they share housework with mother-in-law, sister-in-law etc. However most women admitted that they manage most of the work. In addition to housework they also look after brother-in-laws and take care and serve the old and weak father and mother-in-laws. They expect no help from their children as they are busy with their studies. The same condition is admitted by women belonging to nuclear families.

In case of working women, they manage to do all housework before

35. Table II is based on the survey collected from 100 women in Ward No. 16.
and after office hours. A staff nurse at J.N. Hospital, Porompat manage
to do all housework with great difficulty when she has morning duty.  
Similarly a gymnastics coach by profession at SAI (Sports Authority of
India) admitted of her tight schedule which begins from 6 a.m. onwards.
She manage to complete all housework before 6 a.m. as she has to report
to the coaching centre by 6 a.m.

The table shows the report of help given by husbands in ward no. 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Full support</th>
<th>Partial support</th>
<th>Negative support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It seems that the women admitted partial help only to present a
good impression of their husbands. Here full support from husband
occupy the lowest percentage comparing with ward no. 15 and 16. So
full support is very rare in all the three wards.

Regarding domestic violence, only one out of 100 women admitted
of such violence. The report is given in Table - II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Violence by husband</th>
<th>Violence by in-laws</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here the report is similar to that of ward no. 16. Protection of

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36. Interview with Samurailatpam (o) Dhaneshwari, Singjamei Mayeng Leikai, 8-7-07.
37. Interview with Leishangthem (o) Dhaneshwori Devi, Singjanei Leishangthem Leikai, 8-7-07.
38. Table I is based on the survey collected from 100 women in Ward No. 17.
39. Table II is based on the basis of information collected from 100 women in Ward No. 17.
women from domestic violence Act came into force on 26th October, 2006. It aims to protect women from any sort of violence physically and mentally. The victims can file a petition before a 1st Class Magistrate. However very few women in Singjamei Assembly Constituency dare to file such a petition. A young mother of three children admitted it. Her husband was a user of drugs and alcohol. Quarrels and hot arguments are everyday routine due to financial problem. On the other hand the rest of the women refused to admit domestic violence. Thus women of all the three wards i.e. 15, 16 and 17 presented more or less the same condition.

**Woman as a mother in the three wards:**

The future of a child lay in the hands of the mother. It is the mother who moulds the mental and physical strength of the child since birth. In the present context, a mother’s role need to be focused on the attention she gives on health care of the children, their studies, treatment of the children, the duration of time shared with the children and so on.

In ward no. 15, most of the women admitted of taking health care measures for their children. It included taking the young children at the Urban Health Centre, Singjamei for vaccination and other immunization programmes. Attempt is made to give proper food and other health care precaution. Milk, eggs, banana, seasonal vegetables, fish, meat etc. form the main items of diet. Meals are served just after cooking. Stale food is avoided. Regularity of bed time and cleanliness like regular bathing, cutting hair and nail and washing the clothes are also given importance.
When the problem comes to poor families, no extra care is given to the children. They are provided the ordinary meal and consult doctor only when they fall sick.

Secondly, another subject which need the attention of a mother is the education of children. A mother is the first teacher of a child. So the children in the age group of 2 to 3 years are taught alphabets at home and also sent to either Angawadi centre or pre-nursery institutions. When they grow up, tuition facility is provided as education has become very competitive. Still, some mothers manage to help their children in the evening in solving the home work, finding answers to the questions given in the exercise, dictation to improve spelling etc. Educated women maintain strict time table for studying different subjects, check the Progress Report cards to find out the weak subjects. Many women reported of sending their sons and daughters outside Manipur to pursue different courses. A mother reported of helping her daughter in the data collection for research work. 40 On the other hand uneducated and poor mothers have no chance to give proper education for their children.

Thirdly most women in ward no. 15 admitted of giving equal treatment to children irrespective of sex. A mother admitted of encouraging her two children, a son and a daughter to develop their thinking on gender

40. Dr. Khomdram Sakhitombi Devi, Chingamathak Manipur College Road, interviewed on 20-11-06.
neutral terms. The treatment can be expressed in different ways i.e. food, clothing, health care, education and other requirements. Naturally a mother's love is genuine and sex difference does not matter. Yet due to financial or other unavoidable family problem as well as a social practice, sometimes more importance is given to sons. Some mothers said that they need to give a little more attention to teenage sons to avoid bad company and addiction to drugs and intoxicants.

Finally, the time spent by a mother with her children needs to be analysed. Unemployed mothers spend more time with children. But the working women find it difficult to spare time specially in the morning. For them the best time is evening and night, Sundays and other holidays. The more time a mother spares for her children, the better for the future shaping of the children.

Women in ward no. 16 presented a similar picture with that of ward no. 15 as a mother. Here also the role of a mother is expressed through the health care measures for the children, studies, treatment and the time duration spared for her children.

Firstly, most mothers aspire good health for their children. According to the survey mothers with infants followed immunization programe by taking their children to the Urban Health Centre, Singjamei. Special care is

41. Thingnam Anjulika, Singjamei Chirom Leikai, interviewed on 25-7-07.
taken to protect them from heat, cold, giving regular bath, feeding in time etc. When the children grows, balance diet is given. According to a mother eggs and milk are compulsory for her children but never gave a thought as far as her health and diet is concerned. Health tonics, vitamins and Ayurvedic medicines are also provided by some mothers as precaution from sickness. A mother reported of never taking her children to feasts so that they should not overeat and fall sick.\(^42\)

Regarding cleanliness, the measures include asking the children to wash hand by using soap before taking food, put on tidy dress, regular bathing, cutting nails and hair, forming a regular and eating habit etc. According to a mother, her son who is in XII standard goes to a gym and milk, banana, eggs and other health tonics are provided.\(^43\)

For the poor families no special care is taken regarding health. The children are given just the ordinary food and consult doctor only when fallen sick. A mother admitted that one of her daughter is handicapped but no proper medical care is given due to financial problem.\(^44\)

Secondly, the attention given by women in the education of children resembles that of ward no. 15. Generally when the children are young, the mother teach them reading, writing, spelling and pronunciation. Some

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\(^{42}\) Interview with Heikrujam (o) Landhoni, Chingamakha Iron Leirak, 16-6-07.

\(^{43}\) Interview with Ingudam (o) Memton, Chingamakha Meisnam Leikai, 14-6-07.

\(^{44}\) Interview with Laithangbam (o) Mudrani, Chingamakha Kshetri Leikai, 16-6-07.
mother manage to do so while cooking. In the higher classes, tuition has become a culture in Manipur. According to a mother, tuition is compulsory as her children never study attentively at home.\(^{45}\) The children are also sent to coaching institutes which meant extra expenditure. Very few mothers expressed there is no necessity for tuition.

For the poor families education is a burden and they are in no position to join the race of competitive education. According to a widow her sons earn by working and whatever they earn is spent on their education and maintenance of the family.

Thirdly, the treatment of a mother towards her children is focused here. The survey revealed that most mother give equal treatment and never consider sons to be more important and daughters less important. Same care, love, treatment is given in diet, clothing, education and other requirements. According to a mother, she has only one daughter and five sons. For her the daughter is most loving.\(^{46}\) So almost all the mothers reported of keeping no sex difference regarding the treatment to their children.

Finally, the time duration spent by a mother for her children has been surveyed. The report is more or less similar to that of ward no. 15.

\(^{45}\) Interview with Akoijam (o) Prembala Devi, Chingamakha Maibam Leirak, 14-6-07.
\(^{46}\) Interview with Meisnam (o) Bimola Devi, Chingamakha Meisnam Leikai, 14-6-07.
Generally morning and evening is the routine time for a mother to be with children. It is the same case for employed and unemployed mothers as well.

In ward No. 17, the health care taken by mothers for their children regarding diet and cleanliness resemble a lot to that of ward No. 15 and 16. A mother keep medicines in ready to be used whenever needed as a precaution. Some encourage their sons in building good health by sending to the gyms. A nurse try to provide diet rich in protein and vitamins. Extra care is also taken to stop their sons from mixing bad company and taste drugs etc. For the poor families the condition is same everywhere. No extra care is reported to be taken to keep good health.

Secondly, majority of the mothers seem to be aware of the need of education for their children. Helping the children in lower classes by mothers at home is common. Tuition in higher classes is another common feature. Best attempt is made to send the children at private schools although expensive. They express pride in sending their children outside Manipur to pursue, medical, engineering and other courses. A mother admitted of teaching meitei mayek to her children realising the necessity of knowing the script. For the poor families proper education of children always represent a financial problem.

47. Interview with Naoroibam Sarjubala, Singjamei Thongam Leikai, 10-7-07.  
48. Interview with Shamurailatpam (o) Dhaneswori, Singjamei Mayeng Leikai, 8-7-07.  
Thirdly most mothers admitted giving equal treatment and no sex differentiation to the children. They are provided same food, clothing, education, health care measures, same love and treatment in everything. To some mother the daughters are more loving and closer than sons.

Finally, the time spent by mothers with their children resembles the report of ward No. 15 and 16. Both working and non working women spend together with children mostly at night as they are busy with housework and the children being busy with their studies.

A comparative study on the status and role of women in the three wards of Singjamei Assembly Constituency has been examined. Here the status and role as a wife and caretaker of the family and as a mother is given due importance. Both the working women and those who are engaged in different economic activities face many difficulties in managing the housework and serving the in-laws and husband. In fact they have no time for themselves. Husbands on their part give very little help. The percentage of husbands giving full support to wives in household work is negligible. Again the women also refused to admit cases of domestic violence. Similar condition is found in all the three wards.

As a mother the attention given by women on health care of children, education and treatment of sons and daughters has been analysed. All the mothers take proper care of health and education of their children. Moreover, all the mothers admitted of equal treatment of sons and daughters by giving same diet, same facility on education and so on. A
mother's role represent similar picture in all the three wards of Singjamei Assembly Constituency.

Role of women as an agent of social change - Activities against social abuses:

Since the advent of the Meira Paibis, a vigorous drive was made against alcoholism and other anti social elements. But in the present context their activities have been directed to various fields due to the need of the time. In recent years many social organisations have launched a vigorous drive against any form of intoxicants and social evils. The Meira Paibs extend their co-operation to the social organisations. The women of Singjamei Assembly Constituency appear to be very active in social work.

In ward No. 15, most of the women join Meira Paibi Lup of the Leikai although rate of participation by employed and young women are low. According to the respondents the women as a whole come out of home if necessary to deal with any problems. Dealing with issues like fake encounters, disappearance of civilians, killing of innocent people etc. have been given attention by them. They also try to save innocent youths when nabbed by security forces and goes to meet MLAs or ministers urging for the quick release.

Sometimes the Meira Paibis organise developmental works of the locality which includes cleaning of drains, encouraging youths to take part in sports held during occasion like Yaoshang festival. An interesting
feature of Meira Paibis in recent years is organising marup. According to a respondent, the Meira Lup of her locality organise a marup and each member has to pay Rs. 10 every Sunday. It is a means to urge more women to come out of their homes so that they can look after the locality and keep a vigil on it.

The women also extend social work through organisations. According to the chairperson, WWC (Women Welfare Centre) Chingamathak Nameirakpam Leikai, the centre takes loan from a private financial institution to invest on productive works to improve the economic condition of the members. It is worth mentioning that the women always take leadership in fighting drug addiction, other intoxicants, atrocities on women and solving even family disputes. The Councillor, who won the Imphal Municipal Council Election held in May 2006 admitted of her social works in close co-operation with women of ward No. 15.

In ward No. 16, most of the women admitted of participating in social work and joining the Meira Paibi Lup. According to them, they cannot fix their attention only against alcoholism as many problems have

50. A practice in which a group of people organise a body and its members contribute a fixed sum of money weekly or monthly. Then the total amount of money is to be received by the members turn by turn.

51. Interview with Chongtham Memicha Devi, Chingamathak Manipur College Road, 20-11-06.

52. Interview with Thokchom (o) Sobita Devi, Chingamathak Nameirakpam Leikai, 25-6-07.

53. Interview with Brahmacharimayum Memcha, Counciller Ward No. 15, 21-11-06.
cropped up which needed their involvement. There is one apex body of nine Meira Paibi Lups in the same ward which is named as Chingamakha Apunba Nupi Lup. The women as Meira Paibi take part in settling problems starting from family disputes to the burning issues of the state.

Generally, the women of ward No. 16 as a whole join the Meira Paibi Lup, take part in dharnas, protest rallies against unwanted incidents and drive against all sorts of intoxicants and social abuses. They extend support to the movement of Irom Chanu Sharmila who undergoes a strong opposition against AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Power Act) 1958. According to some women leaders, their activities must extend to a wider area and should not remain confined only in their locality.

A leading social worker admitted of participating a dharna in September 2006, in front of the Parliament House, New Delhi demanding Women’s Reservation with All Manipur Nupi Marup. In April 2004, she along with other Meira Paibis and social organisations visited Sajik Tampak in Manipur to look after the villagers when their normal life was endangered by the conflict situation between the security forces and underground outfits.

Sometimes the activities of the Meira Paibis are contradicted. Few respondents expressed the need for giving proper counselling to them. While trying to settle problems, the Meira Paibis create further tension and misunderstanding which includes destruction of houses of suspected

54. Interview with Akoijam Shanti Devi, Chingamakha Maibam Leirak, 14-6-07.
anti social person, social boycott or forcing the whole family to leave bag and baggage etc. A fair trial after proper investigation of the issue would be the best remedy.

According to the survey, most of the women in ward No. 17, also extend their contribution in social activities as Meira Paibis. One thing is found common in all the three wards i.e. the Meira Paibis keep no longer night vigil regularly. However they swarm out of their homes whenever needed whether it is day or night. Protection of youths from any assault by security forces, atrocities on women and drive against the use of all forms of intoxicants draws the attention of women force.

Some women take leadership of the Meira Paibis Lups. They serve as President, Secretary, Treasurer etc. of the lups in the leikai, organise and participate meetings in the locality and the state on problems relating to women. According to a member, Sapam Leirak, Women Welfare Association, the Association helps in solving local disputes and alcoholism. The Meira lups also provide kerosene and rice in the leikai at cheaper rates. They also organise marup of low amount to keep a fund. The motive is to provide financial assistance to the members in times of need or when a member or anybody in their family expires. Another motive is to keep in touch with all so that they can discuss and become aware all the issues of the locality and the state. According to a

55. Interview with Nongthombam (o) Achoubi Devi, Singjamei Mayeng Leikai, 20-7-07.
respondent she joined Meira Paibi to pass time by mixing with other women as it help her to forget the family burden and relax her mind.

Some respondents expressed that women can contribute in the social upliftment through various fields and not just as Meira Paibi. A teacher in a school for the disabled reported of going around to create awareness programme for the disabled. A vendor of Kauna (water reed) mats at Singjamei Bazar and another vendor of Phanek mapan naiba at Khwairamband bazar expressed their inability in taking active part as Meira Paibi of their locality. They remain confined at the market most of the time. However nothing could stop them from participation in the activity of women as an agent of social change. They as market women take part in all the issues of the state.

Some working women expressed the inability in taking active part as Meira Paibi and other social works. However a full fledged Government employee admitted of managing to spare time for various social work. Although retired at present, she was occupied with social work during her tenure as a social activist. She took active part in the issues of the neighbourhood and the state. She was the Executive member of All Manipur Nupi Marup since 1997. A veteran athlete, she participated in

56. Yurembam (o) Phajabi, Singjamei Mayeng Leikai, interviewed on 11-7-07.
57. Interview with Smt. Shamurailatpam Sanahanbi Devi, a veteran athlete and a retired College Principal, Singjamei Thongam Leikai, 10-7-07.
various events in the state, national and international level. In the 14th World Veterans Athletic Championships held at Brisbane, Australia in July 2001 she won 4th position. In fact, she was given all the necessary support by her family.

The survey collected from the women of Singjamei Assembly Constituency reveal more or less similar condition although little variation is there. Generally young mothers with their infants and working women in organised sectors find difficulty in participating active work of women in fighting social abuses. It is mostly unemployed women who form the real force in any social issues. In certain cases they need proper counselling as their activities are carried away by sentiment, whim and mob action. Whatever may be the case, it cannot be denied that they are the agents of social change.