CHAPTER III
SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Every social being has its own distinct socio-demographic and economic characteristics. This distinct feature of human being plays an important role in their lives and in influencing others’ lives also. Regarding this, the present chapter discusses the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents. The present study contains a total number of two hundred and seventy-four respondents selected through random sampling. To give an equal representation and in order to draw accurate information from both men and women, the study adopted an equal proportion of men and women respondents. The previous chapter had already discussed the selection of the area of study and the selection of the sample. Naoriya-Pakhanglakpa constituency falls under the sub-division Wangoi of Imphal-West district. It comes under the Imphal Urban Agglomeration (a term adopted in 1991 Census). It is a continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining urban outgrowths or two or more physically contiguous towns together and adjoining urban outgrowths of such towns. Naoriya-Pakhanglakpa is a non-statutory town and the Census has treated it as a census town based on some demographic criteria. It is one of the two not notified by the Government of Manipur as urban. The majority population of the area depends on agriculture and fishery. So, the present study has treated the area as rural. Around forty-five per cent of the total population of the Imphal-West district lives in rural areas.

Age is considered as a personal factor. Chronological age is considered in many investigations and is related to maturity, perceptions, aspirations, attitudes, values etc. Table 2.1 (page no. iii) shows the distribution of the respondents by their age. Around two-third of the respondents belonged to the age group of 40 to 49 years and 50 to 59 years. Subsuming the two age categories it was noted that three-fourth of the male and around one-third of the female respondents belonged to this age category. In Manipur, 16.1 percent of the population belonged to this age group. These people were at the stage of their life that their children were entering adulthood phase and about to begin
earning. They also have to prepare for the retirement stage. Almost an equal proportion of respondents each reported in adjacent age group categories, i.e., 30 to 39 and 60 to 59 years. In these age categories, more female than male respondents reported. Negligible proportion of respondents has reported in the age group 70 to 79 and 80 to 89 years, more or less similar to the proportion of the population of Manipur. From the above, it can be concluded that most of the respondents of both the sexes belonged to the medium age category, i.e., 40 to 59 years of age.

Marital status of a person may prove to be either conducive or a hindrance for the socialization of their children. Single parent have more responsibilities, pressure and obligations than the both parents living family and have little time to attend their children. Here single parents refer to parents who are staying alone without their spouse. And, married status of the respondents signifies those who are staying with their spouse. The previous chapter has shown the criteria of the selection of the sample in detail. In Table 2.2 (page no. iii), it can be observed that more than two-third of the respondents were married. Of this, a huge proportion of the male respondents in comparison to a little more than half of the female respondents were married. A little less than one-fourth of the respondents were widowed. Among this, little less than two-fifth female respondents and little less than one-tenth male respondents reported to be widowed. Against no male respondents, little less than one-tenth female respondents and a negligible proportion of the female respondents expressed that they were divorced and deserted respectively. Thus, it can be noted that huge majority of male respondents and most of the female respondents were married.

Caste is one of the basic premises of Indian society. It determines the status of the individual. In the words of Rishley (1915), Caste can be defined as a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, claiming a common descent from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community. But such type of caste system is absent in Meitei society even though they are Hindus. So, in the present study castes categorization has been adopted in terms of Scheduled Caste, Other Backward Class and Non-Scheduled Caste. Due to
the absence of people belonged to Scheduled Caste in the area of the present study; it was excluded from the caste category. Most of the population of Meitei community belonged to the Other Backward Class (OBC). Table 2.3 (page no. iii) revealed that little less than two-third of the respondents belonged to the Other Backward Class (OBC). Around two-third of the male respondents and a little less than three-fifth of the female respondents were OBC. Little more than one-third of the respondents were Non-Schedule Caste (Non-SC). Around one-third male respondents and little more than two-fifth of the female respondents were also Non-SC. So, it can be inferred that majority of the respondents of both the sexes were OBC.

Religion is the source of morality. Religion is one of the most important factors in individual’s life which decides how to conduct and regulate cultural and social life. Religion is the provider of basic beliefs, faith and action pattern of an individual. Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Shikhs, Jains are the main religions of Manipur. Hindu religion is prevalent and practice among the Meitei only. Even though they are Hindu, they are different from the mainstream Hindu. Purity and pollution, one of the strong bases of Hinduism has been strictly restricted to the ritual and worshipping place only. Such notions do not have any space in day today life. Hinduism is evanescing from the social life. Sanamahism/Meiteism is the pre-Hindu and traditional religion of the Meitei. Due to the revivalism of the traditional religion movement which began in 1930s by a person named Naoria Phulo, more Meitei are reconverted back to their traditional religion. According to the Census 2001, 43.4 percent of the total populations were Hindu. Around 10.2 percent of the total population was Sanamahism/Meiteism. In the present study, Table 2.4 (page no. iii) exhibited the distribution of the respondents by religion. Around two-third of the respondents were Hindus. This category has been constituted by two-third of the respondents of each sex. Around one-third of the respondents reported that they were Sanamahism/Meiteism. Again, among this, one-third each of the male and female respondents proclaimed to follow Sanamahism/Meiteism. From the above analysis, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents of both the sexes were Hindus.

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Income of the parents and the economic status of the family have its influence on the lives of the children. It decides the facilities the children receive, type of education they get, attitudes, interest and aspirations of the children. Table 2.5 (page no. iv) shows that around one-third proportion of the respondents revealed that their monthly family income were between the range of Rupees 1000 to 3000. Among this, most of the female respondents, i.e., 80.3 per cent in comparison to little more than half of the male respondents reported their monthly family income in this range. Around an equal proportion of the respondents each expressed their monthly family income in the range of Rupees 3001 to 5000 and Rupees 5001 to 7000. More male respondents in comparison to female respondents testified to belong in this monthly family income category. Negligible proportion of the respondents of both sexes asserted their monthly family income in the range of Rupees 7001 to 9000 and Rupees 9001 and above. It can be easily concluded that the families were having low family income. But, in comparison, families of male respondents were in better position than the female respondents’ families in terms of monthly family income.

The previous chapter has shown the proportion of the sample and representation of the sample by the type of households. It can be visualized in Table 2.6 (page no. iv) that more than two-third of the total respondents represented in the both mother and father staying (intact) households. In this category, most of the male respondents against a little more than half of the female respondents were reported. A little less than half of the female respondents were single mothers. A minimum proportion of the male respondents, i.e., 8.8 percent were single fathers. The incongruent on the representation of the sample households was because to give an accurate representation of respondents on household basis. Thus, it can be noted that huge majority of male and majority of the female respondents belonged to intact household, i.e., both mother and father staying households.

Education is an important factor which influences the status of the family. In general it is considered that children of educated parents differ from the children of uneducated parents in their freedom, attitude, way of life, aspirations etc. The educational level of the parents influences the thinking of their children. The state has
68.9 percent literacy rate. 77.9 percent male population and 59.7 percent female population were literate. Imphal-West district has 70.0 percent literacy rate. In the rural areas of this district 73.6 percent of the male population was literate against 57.0 percent female literate population. The sex disparity in literacy was found positive with the present study also. Table 2.7 (page no. iv) illustrated that a little less than half of the proportion of the respondents received education only upto primary level. Of this, little more than half were female respondents and little more than two-fifth were male respondents respectively. Around one-fourth of the respondents could neither read nor write. Around one-third female respondents and around one-sixth male respondents reported in this category. An equal proportion of the respondents each were educated upto matriculate and graduate levels. More male respondents than female respondents claimed in these categories. Also, a negligible proportion of respondents each claimed in the educational level categories of post graduate and professional. It can be concluded that illiteracy rate of female respondents was higher than male respondents; and also education of the female respondents were concentrated in lower level of education where as medium and high level of education were dominated by male respondents.

Occupational status of the parents influences the lives of the children. To some extent, it inspires or persuades the manner in which the children behave, the type of course they chose, the type of occupation they enter. Socialization of gender-role may differ in accordance with the occupation of the parents. The occupation are classified into three categories, i.e., main workers who works more than six months in a year for their livelihood, marginal workers those who works less than six months in a year for their livelihood and non-workers who doesn’t work or engage with any kind of occupation for their livelihood. In the present study, main workers included whose occupation were professional, lecturer, teacher, clerk, security, grade IV services, petty business, weaving, embroidery, carpentry, pessiculture, mason and driver. Marginal workers were those engaged with agriculture and manual labour. Non-workers included those who were unemployed, retired and housewife. Table 2.8 (page no. iv) revealed that little more than half of the respondents were main workers. Among this, more than
half of the male respondents and a little less than half of the female respondents were main workers. Little more than one-fourth of the respondents were marginal workers. Out of this, one-third of the male respondents and one-fifth of the female respondents were marginal workers. Around one-fifth of the respondents were non-workers. Little more than one-tenth male respondents and more than one-fourth of the female respondents were non-workers. From the above, it can be inferred that more male and female respondents were main workers; and more female than the male respondents were non-workers.

Personal income gives the power in decision making in family. They have the power to influence the decision of other members of family. Resource theory holds that the person who is earning more income has more power in family decision making. Table 2.9 (page no. v) explained the monthly personal income of the respondents. Around one-third of the respondents each claimed in the income range Rupees 2001 to 4000 and no income respectively. More than half of the female respondents against around one-eighth of the male respondents reported that they earned no income at all. The case was reversed in the income range of Rupees 2001 to 4000, where more than half of the male respondents against one-sixth of the female respondents were reported. Little less than one-fifth of the respondents’ earned less than Rupees 2000 per month. In this category, around one-fourth female respondents and one-tenth male respondents were included. Low proportion of respondents, however more male than female respondents reported in the monthly income range of Rupees 4001 to 6000 and Rupees 6001 to 8000 respectively. From the above, it can be easily deducted that majority of the male respondents were earning low income per month, where as majority of the female respondents were not having any personal earning.

The number of persons in the family and the interpersonal relationships among the members of the family may influence the socialization of gender role of the children. The family size of the state is 5.8. Table 2.10 (page no. v) shows the distribution of the respondents by the family size. Irrespective of sex differences, huge proportion of respondents expressed their family members in the range of 5 to 7 members. Around one-seventh of the respondents reported their family members in the
range of 2 to 4 members. Around one-fifth female respondents against a minimum proportion of the male respondents were belonged in this family size category. A negligible proportion of the respondents were having family members from 8 to 10 members. It can be easily noted that most of the respondents of both the sexes were having medium family size.

Religion is a matter of both individual and social life. The religious tenets dictate strongly the life of those traditional or conservative. The religious holding of a person may shape the outlooks of their children. Table 2.11 (page no. v) clearly brings to fore that more than half of the respondents were holding traditional or conservative religious attitude. Of this, more of the female respondents in comparison to less than half of the male respondents were traditional or conservative. More than two-fifth of the respondents were modern or liberal in their religious outlook. In this, more of the male respondents against one-third female respondents were reported. Majority of the male respondents were modern in their religious outlook whereas majority of the female respondents were traditional or conservative in their religious outlook.

Table 2.12 (page no. v) illuminated that more than half proportion of the respondents read newspaper. In this, more than two-third of the male respondents against two-fifth of the female respondents were reported. Little more than two-fifth of the respondents were not reading newspaper. Of these three-fifth of the female respondents in compare to little more than one-fourth proportion of the male respondents have reported in this category. Universal of the respondents reported that they took interest in reading the local social and political issues in the newspaper. Most of the male respondents were reading newspaper daily; where as majority of the female respondents did not read newspaper daily.

The poor access to magazines by the respondents was observed in Table 2.13 (page no. v) Near universal of the respondents reported that they did not read magazines. Negligible proportion of the respondents claimed to read magazines. There were 144 periodicals/newspapers published in Manipur, which were published dailies (52), tri/bi weekly (3), weeklies (13), forth-nightlies (12), monthlies (40), quarterlies (9), annuals (4) and other periodicals (11) [2001, Statistical Abstract, India]. Magazines
were available both in vernacular languages and English. Even the varieties of magazines are available; most of respondents reported that they had no time for reading magazines. Those few male respondents who read magazines were reading their job related magazines and little female respondents read the common vernacular magazines.

Radio remains the main medium of mass media of communication. It can be observed from Table 2.14 (page no. v) that large proportion of the respondents used to listen to radio. All male respondents and a huge majority of the female respondents listenec to radio. Less than one-fifth of the female respondents did not listen to radio. Regarding their favourite programs in radio, universal of the male respondents and around cent percent female respondents used to hear news and songs as their favourite programs in radio.

It can be observed in Table 2.15 (page no. vi) that around two-third of the respondents of both the sexes reported of watching television. And around one-third of the respondents of both sexes did not watch television. Most of the respondents of both sex opted for the local channel network. Local news and entertainment remained their main interest to watch. Due to the banned of Hindi Channels in the State by the militants, the mushrooming of local cable networks left the people with the local choice.

Mass media of communication is the basic source of disseminating information and knowledge of the trend. Among those who exposed to one or the more means of mass media of communication, Table 2.16 (page no. vi) shows that around half of the respondents were having low level of exposure to mass media of communication. Two-third female and one-third male respondents reported in this level of exposure to mass media of communication. Little more than two-fifth of the respondents were having medium level of exposure to mass media of communication. More than half of the male and more than one-fourth of the female respondents had medium level of exposure to mass media of communication. Low proportion of the respondents has high level of exposure to mass media of communication. Among this, more male than female respondents reported to have high level of exposure to mass media of communication. It can be concluded that majority of the male respondents were having medium level of
exposure to mass media of communication; whereas majority of the female respondents were having low level of exposure to mass media of communication.

Gender-role ideology of the person may play the shaping of behaviour of their children along the gender line. It is the idea or belief that a person holds in regard to the status and relationship between men and women in society. Table 2.17 (page no. vi) revealed distribution of the respondents by their attitude towards gender-role ideology. Huge proportion of the respondents of both sex were holding modern or liberal gender-role attitude. Minimum proportion of the respondents of both the sexes were having traditional or conservative gender-role attitude. This finding was unexpected and somewhat surprising to the general notion that women hold less traditional gender-role attitudes and beliefs than men, regardless of whether they reside in single- or dual-parents households. Manipur has a history of women work participation and participation in social arena to some extend. The immutable collective power of women in the form of meira-paibi (women torch-bearers) and their respectable position of maibis (priestesses) are accepted and recognized by the society. The male members also justified the claim of women in enjoyment of freedom in some arenas of society. Such surroundings favored the modern or liberal gender-role attitude among men and women.

SUMMARY

This chapter has attempted to outline the socio-demographic and economic profile of the respondents of the present study. The study included 174 male and 174 female as respondents. Majority of the respondents of both the sexes belonged to the middle age category, i.e., 40 to 59 years of age. Majority of the respondents were married, which constituted huge majority male respondents and majority of the female respondents. Again, majority of the male and female respondents belonged to Other Backward Class and were Hindus. Majority of the respondents of both the sexes were having low family income. It was found that most of the female respondents and majority of the male respondents belonged to the low family income category. Majority of the respondents were having intact (both mother and father staying) family. In this
category, huge majority male respondents and majority of the female respondents were reported. In terms of education of the respondents, more respondents were educated up to primary level of education. Majority of the female respondents and more male respondents belonged to this educational level. Regarding the occupation, majority of the respondents were main workers. Majority of the male respondents and more female respondents belonged to this category of occupation. More respondents were having personal income either in the range of rupees 2001 to 4000 or no personal income. Again, it was found that majority male respondents were having personal income in the range of rupees 2001 to 4000, on the other hand majority female respondents has no personal income. Most of the respondents were having medium family size. Professing traditional or conservative religious outlook was claimed by majority of the respondents. Majority of the female respondents claimed in this religiosity level whereas majority of the male respondents has modern or liberal religiosity outlook. Newspaper has been read by majority of the respondents. Reading newspaper was claimed by majority of the male respondents, whereas majority of the female respondents never read newspaper. Huge majority respondents of both the sexes did not read magazines. Listening to radio was claimed by huge majority respondents of both the sexes. Majority respondents of both the sexes watched television. In overall more respondents enjoyed low level of exposure to mass media of communication. It was also concluded that majority of the male respondents were having medium level of exposure and majority of the female respondents were having low level of exposure to mass media of communication. And, huge majority respondents of both the sexes were having modern or liberal gender-role ideology. Taking into consideration the socio-demographic and economic characteristics of the respondents, the next chapter will explore the question that is a major focus of this research: the parental gender-role socialization in Meitei society.