

Social Life of Angami Naga: A Study

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Abstract: *The Tribal represent an important social category of Indian social structure. The tribal's are said to be the original inhabitants of India spread over the length and breadth of the country. Every tribal group have their own religion, custom and own way of life. The Angami is a major Naga ethnic group native to the state of Nagaland in North-East India settled in Kohima District and Dimapur District. They are one of the fifteen major tribes of Nagaland. The study mainly focuses on social life of Angami Naga of Peducha village in Nagaland.*

Keywords: *Indian Tribe, Angami Naga, economic condition, village festivals, Impact of Christianity.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

A Tribe is a group of distinct people, dependent on their land for their livelihood, who are largely self-sufficient, and not integrated into the national society. Thus the term usually denotes a social group bound together by kin and duty and associated with a particular territory. Tribes in the Indian context today are normally referred to in the language of the Constitution as "Scheduled Tribes". The Tribal represent an important social category of Indian social structure. They are said to be the original inhabitants of India spread over the length and breadth of the country. India is a country of multi-racial stock. Different types of people occupy different parts of India, having their own cultural characteristics and levels of development. A Tribe is viewed, developmentally or historically as a social group existing outside of or before the development of states. There are over 700 scheduled tribes notified under Article 342 of the constitution of India. Issues of the tribal development, integration and autonomy have confronted the Indian society right from the British rule in India. Complexity of the Indian tribal population had made it more difficult to solve their issues. Due to the contact with other cultures, the tribal culture is undergoing a revolutionary change. The tribal people are imitating western culture in different aspect of their social life and leaving their own culture.

2. Methodology:

The study is based on both exploratory and descriptive in nature. Both primary and secondary data are collected for the study. Primary data are collected with the help of interview schedule and field observation and secondary data are collected from journals, books, census etc. The study is conducted on 30 respondents from Peducha village in Kohima district of Nagaland. The sample is selected through accidental sampling method.

3. About Peducha Village:

Kohima is the hill capital city of India's North Eastern state of Nagaland. With a resident population of 99,039 it is the second largest city in the state. Originally it is known as Kewhira, it was founded in 1878 when the British Empire established its headquarters of Naga Hills. It officially became the capital after the state of Nagaland was inaugurated in 1963. Peducha is a medium size village located in Sechu-Zubza Circle of Kohima district with total household of 232. The Peducha village has population of 1087 followed by 562 are males and 525 are females as per population census 2011. The Peducha village is administered by Sarpanch (Head of the Village). The village has been an essential part in Angami tribe because each village have a distinct identity and is self-sufficient in most things. Therefore, an Angami village has been described as a *Village state* (Yonuo: 1974).

4. About Angami Naga:

The Angami Naga is one of the major ethnic group of Nagaland. They are mainly concentrate in Kohima District and Dimapur District. They are one of the fifteen major tribes of Nagaland. They are listed as a Scheduled Tribe in the 5th schedule of the Indian Constitution. As per 2011 census report the total population of Angami is 141,722 and they speak Angami language (Tenyidie). In terms of religion most of them are Christian (98.22%) and a few of them are still following Animism (0.71%).

Angami- Naga tribe is one among the many other Naga tribes and has its own cultural identity. The Angami tribe has different groups. They are mainly four distinct groups: Khonoma group, Kohima group, Viswema group, and the Chakroma group. At present, it is common to identify these groups based on their geographic distribution. The

territory of the Angami is made up of the present Kohima district, which is divided into four regions; Southern Angami, Northern Angami, Western Angami and Chakhro Angami. The original name of the tribe is *Tengima*. The word *Angami* is a distortion of the Manipuri word *Gnamei*. Angami were called *Tsungumi* by the Sema, *Tsungung* by the Lotha, and *Mour* by the Ao". In any case, the name *Angami* has been in use for a long time, and now the Angami themselves use it to describe themselves (Das 1994).

The Angamis have been living in the forested hills, sowing and harvesting paddy, brewing rice beer, singing, and hunting. In appearance, an Angami Naga is impressive. The dresses and ornaments are adorned with explicit varieties of colour and designs to which are attached gender and status symbols. They are excellent terrace cultivators. Marriage within the same clan is strictly prohibited. Like any other Naga tribe, inheritance of property, family line and authority are reckoned through the males. But there are certain properties which are exclusively inherited only by the daughter, such properties maybe ancestral or acquired and almost all such properties are belongings of the mother. The village council looks after the administration of civil and criminal cases. The traditional occupation of the tribe is subsistence agriculture with rice as the main crop. Unlike other Naga tribes, who depend almost entirely on shifting cultivation, the Angami practice settled terrace cultivation as the principal method. For the Angami, shifting cultivation plays only a minor role.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation :

The social profile of Angami Naga in Peducha village is shown in following table:

| Table: 1: Social Profile of the Respondent | | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Sex Category | | | Types of Family | | |
| Sex Category | Frequency | Percentage % | Types | Frequency | Percentage% |
| Male | 25 | 83.3% | Joint | 6 | 20% |
| Female | 5 | 16.7% | Nuclear | 24 | 80% |
| Total | 30 | 100% | Total | 30 | 100% |
| Age Group | | | Education Qualification | | |
| Age Group | Frequency | Percentage % | Education Qualification | Frequency | Percentage% |
| 40-49 Yrs | 3 | 10% | Illiterate | 5 | 16.7% |
| 50-59 Yrs | 18 | 60% | Up to class Five | 6 | 20% |
| 60-69 Yrs | 7 | 23.3% | Up to class Ten | 14 | 46.7% |
| 70-79 Yrs | 1 | 3.3% | Graduate | 5 | 16.7% |
| 80-89 Yrs | 1 | 3.3% | | | |
| Total | 30 | 100% | Total | 30 | 100% |
| Source: Field Work | | | | | |

Sex Category: Data reflect that majority of the respondent (83.3%) are male while only a few (16.7%) of the respondents are female.

Types of Family: Data reflect that majority 80% of the respondent prefer nuclear family and only a little segment that is 20% of the villagers have joint family. In terms of marital status, all the respondents in study area are married.

Age Group: The table shows that different categories of age groups of the respondent are interviewed for the study purpose. Out of total 30 respondents, 10% of the respondents are from 40-49 years age group. 60% of the respondent are from 50-59 years and 23% of the respondent are from 60-69 years age group. Beside these 3.3% each of the respondent are from either 70-79 or 80-89 years age group.

Education Qualification: In study area 20% of the respondent education up to class five and 46.7% of the respondent education up to class ten while only 16.7% of the respondent are graduate. Thus, we can say that majority of the respondent in study area are literate and only a few segment that is 16.7% of the respondent are literate.

| Table:2: Economic Life of the Respondent | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
| Occupation | | | Main Earner | | |
| Occupation | Frequency | Percentage% | Main Earner | Frequency | Percentage% |
| Farmer | 11 | 36.7% | Father | 19 | 63.3% |
| Teacher | 4 | 13.3% | Mother | 2 | 6.7% |
| Govt. job | 2 | 6.7% | Son | 4 | 13.3% |
| Business | 4 | 13.3% | Daughter | 5 | 16.7% |
| Cultivation | 9 | 30% | | | |
| Total | 30 | 100% | Total | 30 | 100% |
| Monthly Income | | | Total Earner | | |
| Monthly Income | Frequency | Percentage% | Total Earner | Frequency | Percentage% |
| RS. 10000-20000 | 14 | 46.7% | One | 13 | 43.3% |
| RS. 21000-40000 | 8 | 26.7% | Two | 10 | 33.3% |
| RS. 41000-60000 | 5 | 16.7% | Three | 4 | 13.3% |
| More than 60000 | 3 | 10% | More Than Three | 3 | 10% |
| Total | 30 | 100% | Total | 30 | 100% |
| Pattern of House | | | Saving Account | | |
| Pattern of House | Frequency | Percentage% | Saving Account | Frequency | Percentage% |
| Pakka | 21 | 70% | Yes | 14 | 46.7% |
| Kacha | 9 | 30% | No | 16 | 53.3% |
| Total | 30 | 100% | Total | 30 | 100% |

Source: Field Work

Occupation: The above table shows that 36.7% respondents are farmer, 13.3% are teacher, 6.7% are engaged in govt. job and 13.3% are doing business while 30% are engaged in cultivation.

Main Earner: Data indicate that 63.3% respondents father is the main earner in their family and 6.7% respondent family depend on their mother. While 13.3% of the respondent family depend on their son and 16.7% respondent family depend on their daughter.

Monthly Income: In terms of monthly income of the respondent family it is found that 46.7% respondent family monthly income is Rs. 10000 Rs. 20000 and 26.7% of the respondent family income is Rs. 21000- Rs.40000 per month. While 16.7% of the respondent family income is Rs. 41000-Rs. 60000 and 10% of the respondent family income more than Rs. 60000 per month.

Total Earner: The above data show that 43.3% of the respondent's family have only one earner, 33.3% respondent's family have two earner and 13.3% of the respondent have three earner. Beside these, 10% of the respondent have more than three earner in their family.

Pattern of House: The traditional housing patterns of the Angami Nagas were very simple. One had to simply level the ground that formed the floor. Thatch was used for roofing. They used post made from trimmed trees (Hutton: 1921). But now a days they prefer modern housing pattern. Data indicate that majority of the respondents that is 70% of the respondents have pakka house while 30% of the respondents have kacha house.

Saving Account: in terms of saving account it is found that 46.7% of the respondents have saving account while 53.3% do not have a saving account.

Traditional Food Habit

Rice was the staple food of the Angami tribe. Various domesticated animals were eaten except few of the wild and domestic animals which were regarded as taboo.

Chilies were indispensable ingredient and a large number of wild plants were also used as vegetables. Meals were generally taken thrice a day while rice beer was drunk whole day.

Festivals of Peducha village

The Angami Naga Society has number of festivals and ceremonies and that becomes an inherent part of their everyday life. But due to impact of Christianity, modernization and westernization their traditional culture has changed. The traditional practice are left behind and Christianity was embraced. However, the acceptance of Christianity has not completely wiped out traditional animist belief and practice (Mathur: 1992). When Christianity was introduced in the village the Angami received it and even at present few of them are still practicing their traditional religion. Thus, there is a new way of thinking that supposed the traditional way of living as old fashioned. The way of life, dressing and education has brought about change in the society. The Christianity had changed the outlook of the Naga tribe in general and Angami in Study area in particular. The Naga society was classless, has moved towards class-consciousness and undergone multifarious transformations on its way to modernization (Singh: 2008). However, Peducha village has still celebrating many festivals. These are:

Tiedenyi- This festival is celebrated after harvesting every year.

Pfhiipfhiinyi- This is a terrace cultivation festival which is celebrated when the paddy are blooming.

Terhiinyi- This festival is celebrated in the month of December and January after all the cultivation works are completed.

Ngonyi- This is celebrated before the starting of the cultivation for a successful cultivation throughout the year.

Chadanyi- This festival is celebrated in the month of 10th August every year after cultivation. This festival related to clean sanitation where all the villagers clean their surrounding area in the early morning. After the works are done the villagers gather around for a feast.

Sekrenyi- This festival is also popularly known as *Phousanyi*. It is one of the major annual festival of Angami Nagas. It is observed for ten days every year from the day of the Angami calendar of the month of “purification festival” held to wash off all past sins. The objective is to renew and “make holy” by cleansing the “body and the soul” of the village as a whole, and to bring forth unity among all communities of Nagaland.

Riipfhuoteisizha- This festival is also called “Nuolhou day” which means population day which is celebrated after 3 years but now it is celebrated after every 5 years for one day. In this festival they observe song and dance competition according to peer groups and the villagers also cooked meat and give to their near and dear ones by saying “keviu u ya” which means “kuknalim” and no one is allowed to refuse the meat given to them as it is “kenyii” or sin. Every individual is compulsory to attend the festival.

But now a day’s respondent view that many changes have been taken place in these festivals. Majority of the respondents view that the reason behind these changes is because of converting their faith into Christianity and they also agree that they are adapting good practices with the change of time. Respondent view about the reason for changes in their festivals is shown in following table.

| Reasons | No of Respondent | Percentage % |
|---------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Impact of Christianity | 23 | 76.6% |
| Impact of Western Culture | 3 | 10% |
| Impact of Modernisation | 4 | 13.3% |
| Total | 30 | 100% |
| Source: Field work | | |

The table shows the reasons for the changes in the villages festivals. Data indicate that majority 76.6% of the respondents view that Impact of Christianity is the main reason for the change in the festivals, 10% of the respondent view that Impact of Western Culture is responsible for the changes of the festivals while 13.3% of the respondent says due to impact of modernization such kind of changes are occurred in their festivals.

Dress and Ornament

The Angami Naga have their own dress and ornament and it has its own significance and meanings as a result there are dresses for various occasions, age group, sex and social status. The traditional attire of both man and women are:

Man- Ciiza, Lophre, Phatho, chiitho, bipa, phipa, keshiinyi, phiso, satsa, tsiila, terha, Tsiiphie, Pfhese etc.

Woman- ciibe, vasi, shiesha, thovii, thokieetc.

But due to influence of western culture hardly now any Angami tribe in the village are using these ornament regularly. Respondent view that now people like to use modern ornament instant of these traditional ornament. It is also observed that only during the time of festivals they use their traditional ornament.

6. CONCLUSION:

Thus from the above discussion it can be said that earlier the life of Angami Naga was so simple. Their way of life, food habits, dress habit, housing pattern, customs and tradition were strictly observed and maintained as their forefathers. But due to impact of Christianity, modernization and westernization now a days their way of life are changing remarkably. Many cultural identities are modified due to advent of modernity and Christianity. The modernization and Christianization have affected many aspects of their traditional life, but they have only acted as complementary to their culture of honesty. Therefore, the culture of Angami Naga, though look modern at the periphery but remains traditional at heart.

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