

II

Inclusion and Diversity in India

Social Exclusion of Females in Education: Evidence From *Nyishi* Tribe Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Socially inclusive society may be perceived as the one where all the people feel valued, their differences are respected, their basic needs are met and they live in dignity. Perhaps, social inclusion of female in education is one of the most important components of the whole philosophy of 'social inclusion'. Further, social inclusion of female in education in the tribal world is of special significance which can never be overlooked. In tribal societies, by recognizing and addressing discrimination against girls and women, the success in the fight against all forms of discrimination like that of colour, class, race, ethnicity and age will become more likely, and more lasting, because, the entire society develops when female members become reasonably educated and productive. Social exclusion robs the female members of their power to make decisions, to receive proper health care and education, to earn a living and to voice against exploitations in many forms and at different levels. Basically, promotion of social inclusion of female in education among *Nyishi* community of the Doimukh circle of Arunachal Pradesh is seen as an encouragement to greater socio-economic prosperity. In this paper, an attempt has been made to study need of social inclusion of female in the field of education in the Doimukh Circle. It also studies the present position of female education and nature of spending made on them among the *Nyishi* Tribe of Doimukh Circle. Finally, it offers constructive suggestions to intensify social inclusion of female in education in the study area.

Keywords: *Nyishi* Tribe, Formal Education, Non- formal Education, Social Inclusion

Socially inclusive society may be perceived as the one where everyone feels valued, their differences are respected, their basic needs are met and they live in dignity. Social inclusion is about involving everyone in society, making sure that all have opportunities to work or take part in social activities even though they may have a disability. It has two important aspects. Firstly, it is a philosophy of offering rights to all individuals and groups in society, such as employment, adequate housing, health care, education and training, etc. without being based on merits and wherein, diversities among people are easily accommodated. Secondly, it is an idea of involving every individual to partake in social activities like conversation, marriage, friendship, sharing office and others. There are six underlying values that underpin social inclusion. They are- 1) everyone is

ready; 2) everyone can learn; 3) everyone needs support; 4) everyone can communicate; 5) everyone can contribute; and 6) together we are better.

Perhaps, social inclusion of female in education is one of the most important components of the whole philosophy of 'Social Inclusion'. Further, social inclusion of female in education in the tribal world is of special significance which can never be overlooked. It has been rightly remarked that a society where women are not afforded equal rights as man can never achieve development in a sustainable manner. In the tribal societies, by the virtue of recognising and addressing social inclusion of female in the field of education, the success in the fight against all forms of discrimination like that of colour, class, race, ethnicity and age, will become more likely and lasting. In fact, the entire society develops when the female members are reasonably educated and productive. Gender equity in terms of education is felt primarily as a human right which ensures that all children can afford quality education that prepares them for a participative and productive life.

The Papum Pare District is the capital district of Arunachal Pradesh, which is situated in the North-eastern part of India. It is located in between latitude 26°55"N 28°40" and longitude between 92°40" and 94°21" and surrounded by Kurung Kumey district in the north, Lower Subansiri district in the east, East Kameng district in the west and Assam in the south. The district is divided into two administrative Sub-divisions - Sagalee Sub-division and Itanagar Capital complex sub-division with nine administrative circles namely, Sagalee, Mengio, Toru, Laiporiang, Kimin, Balijan, Doimukh, Itanagar and Naharlagun. It is the abode of the burly *Nyishis* who are known in history for their courage, and belonging to the Indo-Mongoloid group of people speaking Tibeto-Burman language. So far as education in the district is concerned, it has 72,021 educated persons with 42,602 literate males and 29,419 literate females respectively¹. It is observed that, 13,183 male are more educated over and above literate female populace reflecting a dominance of male over female and thereby signaling a predominance of sex discriminatory tendency among *Nyishi* community in the field of education. Therefore, the *Nyishi* community needs to have leveled playing field by ensuring that all the children irrespective of sexes, have equal opportunities for education so that girls and women folk become an active catalyst of social change and reformation in the society. Thus, promoting social inclusion of female in education among *Nyishi* community of the Doimukh Circle of Arunachal Pradesh is seen as an encouragement to greater economic prosperity.

Objectives

The objective of the article is to study the need of social inclusion of females in the field of education in the Doimukh Circle, their present position in education, the expenditure

¹ Official web site (2009) of *The Directorate of Information and Public Relation & Printing, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Naharlagun, INDIA, Population and Literacy in Papum Pare District of Arunachal Pradesh, 2001 Census.*

on their education and to offer constructive suggestions to intensify social inclusion of female in education.

Universe of the Study

The present study has been conducted in four villages of the Doimukh Circle in Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh, namely, Gumto, Emchi, Doimukh and Rono during the month of August 2011. The villages have been selected deliberately on the ground of being major *Nyishi* dominated villages in the entire circle. In fact, these villages may be called as study area of the present paper. Data over the 5 years i.e. from 2007 to 2011 have been taken into consideration for the present study.

Methodology

During the present study, an effort has been made to make the study empirical, based on a field study. However, present study in its entirety is based on both primary and secondary data. For the collection of primary data, a field survey was conducted in 4 villages 20 people from each village have been selected at random basis and interviewed to ascertain present position of education among *Nyishi* community in the study area with special focus on women and female education.

As for secondary data, various articles, Government reports and official websites have been referred for understanding of the problem. However, the internet has been one of the most used sources of secondary data for the present study.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The information/data obtained during the course of survey has been analyzed and interpreted under the following heads:-

Nyishi girls and boys at different stages of formal education system in the study area:

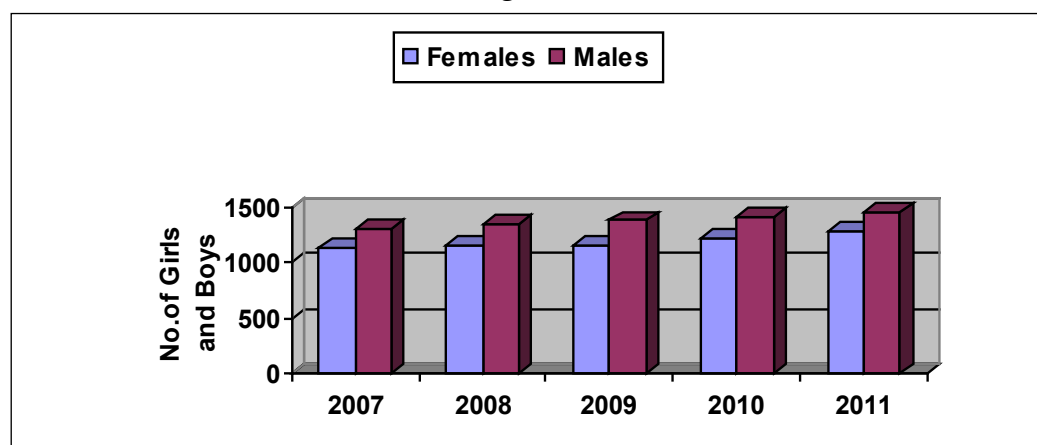
It can be observed from the Table 1 and Diagram A that the total number of girls and boys at different stages of educational system are on the increase with each year from 2007 to 2011 demonstrating positive behaviour. Looking into the present trends in term of numbers of both, female and male at different stages of formal educational system, the better literacy position in the study area can be precisely anticipated. It is evident from the table 1 that, the strength of male surpasses female at pre-school, primary school, middle school, higher secondary school, college and university levels. Fascinatingly, female still dominates at secondary school level over its male counterpart as total females stood at 971 against 961 males throughout the study period. It is also noteworthy to mention that the females have been dominating over the males, right from 2007 to 2011 in the secondary level of education. It is revealed that both, males as well as females attained its peak in term of numbers at primary educational level with highest numbers of 789 males and 649 females in 2011 respectively.

Year	Females (in numbers)						Males (in numbers)					
	07	08	09	10	11	Total	07	08	09	10	11	Total
Pre-schooling	67	64	73	97	88	371	82	86	102	112	117	499
Primary school	627	631	633	646	649	3186	727	741	744	752	789	3753
Middle school	190	196	198	207	231	1022	236	245	256	251	254	1242
Secondary school	181	187	191	199	213	971	145	145	152	156	163	761
Higher secondary	45	48	46	58	69	266	72	76	78	81	84	391
College	22	19	21	26	38	126	35	38	41	45	46	205
University	04	02	02	04	06	18	06	09	09	08	11	43
Total	1136	1147	1164	1219	1294	5960	1303	1340	1382	1405	1464	6894

Table 1: Total Numbers of *Nyishi* Females and Males at different stages of formal educational system (Including non-governmental educational institutions) in the study area.

Source: Field Survey.

Diagram: A



It is important to note that the annual growth rate in number of females under middle School to college level education is sharper than males, which indicate the beginning of female domination over boys in the educational sector probably after 6-10 years in Doimukh Circle in Papum Pare district in Arunachal Pradesh.

Although, throughout the study period, 5960 and 6894 numbers of females and males respectively were under formal education system running from Pre-schooling to University stage.

Nyishi girls and boys under Non-Formal educational system in the Study Area:

It is revealed from table 2 and diagram B that, the total numbers of both, males and females undertaking education under non-formal education system - Open School, IGNOU, Distance Education, Correspondence courses and, other means of continuing

education is on the increase. However, the overall rate of increase is higher in females' case than males foretelling better position of females than males in the field of non-formal education deep into the future. As observed in diagram B, females have always been at a better position than males in the field of non-formal education with exception to the year 2008, where the numbers of males equate the females. The maximum and lowest number of females pursuing education through non-formal institution is 43 and 21 in the years 2011 and 2007 respectively. Whereas, maximum and minimum number of males is found to have undertaken education under non-formal education system is 29 and 18 in 2009 and 2005 respectively. It is found that, the highest annual growth rate in terms of numbers of females throughout the reference period is found to be during 2010-11 exhibiting 38.7 percent.²

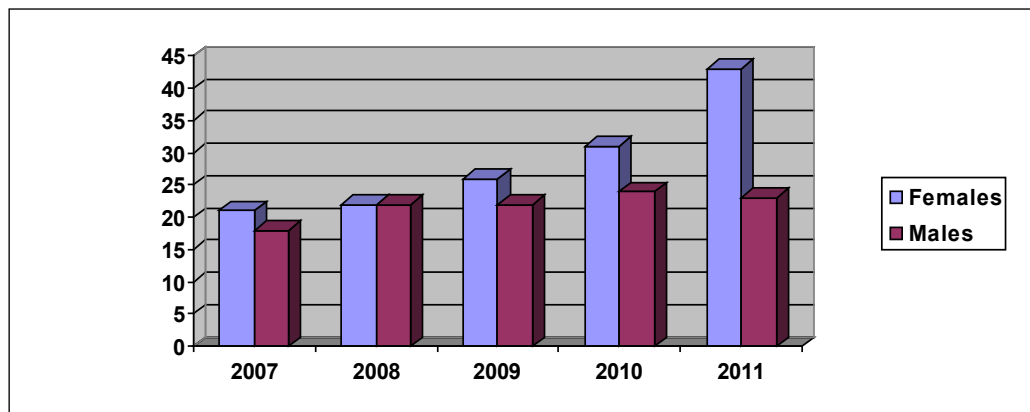
Year	Girls(in numbers)	Boys (in numbers)
2007	21	18
2008	22	22
2009	26	22
2010	31	24
2011	43	23
Total	143	109

Table 2: *Nyishi* female and males under Non-Formal educational system in the Study Area

Sources: Field Survey.

However, the recent picture of males pursuing education through non-formal modes shows attainment of plateau as no significant growth in numbers of males has been observed. In the study area, 143 females and 109 males have availed education under non-formal educational institutions.

Diagram: B



² Statistical Hand Book of Papum Pare District (2007-08); Economic and Statistics Department, Papum Pare District, Yupia, Arunachal Pradesh.

Average per family spending on Education between *Nyishi* Females and Males in the Study Area

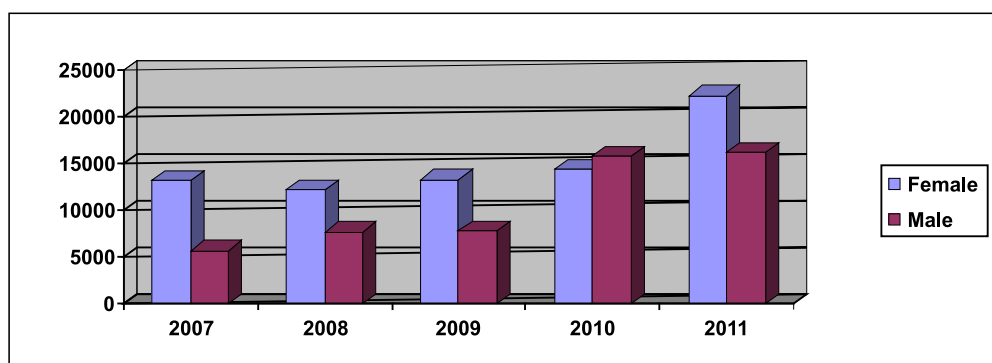
It can be observed from the Table 3 and diagram C that, in the study area, there is an increased trend with regard to spending on education (both males and females) with exception to the year 2008 in the female's case. It has been revealed that, throughout the study period the average per household spending on females by their parents is higher than on males with exception to the year 2010. Interestingly, maximum amount of spending on girls and boys have been evident in the year, 2011 amounting to Rs. 22,218 and Rs. 16,239 respectively. Looking at the present position with respect to the amount being spent on children education, dominance of females over males in the future in educational arena can be safely predicted in the study area.

Year	Girls (in Rs)	Boys (in Rs)
2007	13180	5720
2008	12140	7720
2009	13290	7890
2010	14438	15832
2011	22218	16239

Table 3: Average per family spending on education between *Nyishi* females and males in the study area

Source: Field Survey.

Diagram: C



Findings and Results

From the above analysis, the presence of discriminatory tendency or need of social inclusion of female in education in the light of male counterpart in the Study Area can be summarized under following heads:

Males and Females at different stages of Formal Education: It is felt that, in the *Nyishi* community discrimination against female education prevails at the pre-school

and primary school levels. Boys have outnumbered girls because of higher enrolment at early stage of education by their parents. This tendency has made males to dominate over females especially in higher education. However, the females still dominate at secondary school levels because of their great power of consistency, sincerity and lesser rate of dropouts. But, the lesser number of females at the college and university stage of education can be linked to early marriage. In addition, lesser number of females at elementary education can be linked to the greater number of domestic responsibilities for them and poor sex ratio. Nevertheless, the annual growth rate in the number of females is very encouraging, much more than the males during the study period.

Females and Males under the purview of Non-Formal Education: It is revealed from table 2 and diagram B that among *Nyishi* community, there is non-existence of discriminatory tendency against female education in non-formal education setup. Females have always been at a better position than males. This phenomenon could be linked to the need of continuing education felt by females despite having been married early and having other domestic engagements. Hence, there is no sign of prejudice against female education in the *Nyishi* community.

Spending on education between males and females: It is evident from the table 3 and diagram C that parents have made no discrimination in terms of expenditure, for their girl's education as throughout the study period, average per household spending on girls by their parents is higher than boys with exception to the year 2010.³

Suggestion towards Social Inclusion of Females in Education

Keeping the importance of females education in view, the *Nyishi* tribe of Doimukh Circle in Papum Pare district in particular and state in general need to give stress on following aspects to bolster females' education which are as summarized below:-

Parents should allow their daughter to get married only after they have attained maturity (at and above 18) so that, they can have enough time to devote to learning and education. Therefore, the early marriage of female child has to be abandoned as far as possible. Parents of the study area need to reframe their mind and set it as target that, only after acquiring proper education their daughter is deemed fit for marriage. Lessening female responsibility, workload at home and field will go a long way in promoting female education. Parents should open up bank accounts and adopt insurance policies and other financial plans for their daughters to enable them to pursue higher education and continuing education through non-formal modes after their marriage. Emphasis should be laid on qualified and skilled tutors at home for females so that, despite being laden with workload at home and field, they could catch up with boys in the field of education. Parents should give effective counseling, guidance and moral support to

³UNFPA (February 2006); "Gender Equality: An End in Itself and a Cornerstone of Development". United Nation Population Fund. <http://www.unfpa.org/gender/>.

their daughters so that they could come up at par with male counterparts. Parents have to change their attitude that females are no less than males and can equal their male counterparts in any field and education is not the exception to this. Government should increase the number of non-formal education centre including Adult education, distance education, Open school, and IGNOU etc, enabling females to have continuing education in spite of being married, employed and dropped out from formal educational system. The educational policy of the state should attempt to incorporate plans, policies and programs to promote female education.⁴

Conclusion

Promoting equality in education between females and males is seen as an encouragement to greater economic prosperity. Recognising and addressing discrimination against females in the field of education would make success more likely and more lasting in the fight against all forms of discrimination-colour, class, race, ethnicity and age. Infact, entire societies develop when females are reasonably educated, productive and participative. Thus, existence of a little discriminatory tendency hovering over Doimukh Circle amidst *Nyishi* especially at elementary educational stage needs to be overcome through sensitization on the need of social inclusion among *Nyishi* tribe of the study area enabling them to stand high in the literacy roadmap of the world.

⁴ UNICEF (May 12, 2008). "Gender Equity", <http://www.unicef.org/gender>.