

## **HANDICRAFTS BUSINESS OF MANIPURI ETHNIC COMMUNITY IN SYLHET, BANGLADESH: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

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**Abstract:** Bangladesh poses an important role to promote livelihood status for the tribal community. With the main force of Bengali people, there are some ethnic communities are living in Sylhet city, Bangladesh. Among them, Chakma, Marma, Garo, Hajong, Tripura, Manipuri, and Khashia are the most common. Among them, Manipuri are mostly educated. The most common scene of the ethnic community of worlds is that they are on a backward position on education, culture, socio-economic condition and many other sectors. But the advanced ethnic minority Manipuri people are experts at service, education, business and living standard. Manipuri handicrafts are one of their attractive business product. They are famous for their handicraft. But this sector has some problems. These problems affect their marketing policy. This empirical research arises from the perceived need to get a better understanding of Manipuri handicrafts entrepreneurship development and contribution to their family. The study was to analyze the impact of handicrafts entrepreneurship development, their problems, and prospects of marketing. The research findings revealed that weak technical equipment has significant impacts on enterprise income, total expenditure, and income at the household level. It is recommended that the Government should give emphasis on developing ethnical enterprises. Non-government organizations should cooperate developing ethnical product interests.

**Keywords:** Ethnicity, Business, Bangladesh, Handicrafts, Manipuri,

**Research Area:** Social Sciences

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Ethnicity refers to a distinguished society on the basis of kinship, culture and living patterns. Ethnic community is a social group who differs from mainstream society. Ethnic people have their own language and culture. They practice their own religion, belief and religious functions. They are unique in their all activities and recently those ethnic people get mixed with the Bengali people and culture. The culture got mixed, but they hold a strong position in their own belief and functions. Being an ethnic person, now -a -days, accommodates significance as well as challenges. Since ethnic community belongs to distinct cultural dimensions, they are particular in all segments of living patterns compare with mainstream society. As a smaller group, they have to face problems such as adjustment, aggression and so on. Manipuris, one of the significant part of ethnic communities in

Bangladesh, have their own way of living, cultural traits and patterns, religious belief and rituals. In Bangladesh, Manipuri is one of the most cultural race who mostly living in Sylhet city. However, many indigenous people live in Bangladesh with their typical cultural beliefs, patterns and social life. Among them, Manipuris are the major one and they live at Sylhet in Bangladesh (Singh, 2007:7). Manipuris have a struggling history as well as the examples of becoming self-dependent. Manipuri people used to live in the Manipur region of India and for a difficult situation and other reasons, a significant number of them have migrated in Sylhet. They have had a unique culture (Tufael, 2009:34). This study with deep intention tries to focus on how Manipuri society as an ethnic community challenges they face in their business area as an ethnic society and all of the problems of their business is presented by this study.

## **2. IDENTITY OF MANIPURI ETHNIC COMMUNITY**

Manipuri is one of the ethnic communities in Bangladesh. Their original homeland is Manipur, once a sovereign state and now the northeastern zonal state of India. In the early days, Manipur had different names such as Kyangleipak, Kyangkleipang, Kyanglei, Meitrabak, and Mekhali and the Manipuris were known as Meitei. During the reign of Maharaj Garibniwaz (1709-1748), some missionaries arrived there from Sylhet. There was an opinion that these missionaries named this land 'Manipur' and its principal inhabitants, Manipuris were migrated to the Bangladesh area and settled here at different times due to wars, conflicts and other socio-political reasons. They have their own language called Manipuri, which originated from Tibet-Burman language. The original speakers of Manipuris called themselves 'Meithei's'. They are mostly belonging with the religion 'Hinduism' though some of them are Muslims (Singh, 2007:54). Manipuri language has deep historical root and tradition. Ethnologically, Manipuris belong to the Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman family of the Mongolian race. Meitei Lon or Manipuri language, the mother tongue of the Manipuri people, belongs to the Kuki-Chin group of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Mongolian family of languages. Manipuri literature is very old. It has a rich and variegated history and traditions. The earliest gem of Manipuri literature is Ougri, a lyrical verse, which is believed to have been sung in the honour of the sun god in 33 AD on the coronation ceremony of the Manipuri King Pakhangba. A characteristic feature of the Manipuri script is its each and every alphabet named according to a limb of the human body. Their shapes are also in consonance with those of the limbs. The script was substituted by Bengali script in the 18th century during the reign of Raja Garibniwaj to forge a closer relationship with the newly preached Chaitanya School of Sanatana Dharma which originated in Bengal.

The history of Manipuri literature took a new turn in 1975 with the formation of 'Bangladesh Manipuri Sahitya Sangsad' and publication of Manipuri literary magazine Dipanvita. Bangladesh Manipuri Sahitya Sangsad publishes an irregular journal named Meira (flame). Many other Manipuri organisations have also been publishing literary journals such as Epom, Shajibu, Mitkaphokpa and Kholloao. Manipuri culture has a rich and colourful tradition. Dance and music play a vital role in the life span of Manipuri people. The most flourishing branch of Manipuri culture is dance. The Manipuri synonym of dance is Jagoi and in this dance, body movements create either circle or ellipse. *Rasa* dance is the finest product

of Manipuri culture. Variations of Manipuri dance can be grouped into two broad classes: folk dance and shastriya or classical dance. Manipuri folk dance includes *Laiharaoba*, *Khamba-Thoibi*, *Meibi Jagoi* and *Leisham Jagoi*, while *Rasa*, *Gostha leela*, *Udukhola* and *Mridanga* fall under the classical group. Manipuri dance is characterised by its *lasya* (gentleness), tenderness, and devotion. *Laiharaoba* is full of sweet elegance, grace and a gesture of dedication. *Thyang-Ta*, *Mridonga Nritya* and some forms of *Shri Krishna Nartan* display boundlessness of the emotions of life. *Khamba-Thoibi* dance demonstrates a balanced combination of *Tanva* (forceful form) and *lasya*. Almost all Manipuris are now the followers of the *Chaitanya cult* of *Sanatana Dharma*. But before accepting the *Sanatana Dharma* in the 18th century, Manipuris practised *Apokpa Dharma*. They, however, did not altogether renounce their earlier religious beliefs. Their rites and rituals reflect a synthesis of old and new beliefs. Manipuris observe with great grandeur the religious ceremonies of *Sanatana Dharma* like *Rathayatra*, *Rasa Purnima*, *Jhulanjatra* and also those of their traditional cultures such as *Laiharaoba* and *Sajibu Chairaoba* and worship household deities such as *Sanamahi*, *Pakangba*, and *Leimaren*.

Marriage system of Manipuris is based on some unique customs and practices. Their wedding rituals can be classified into three portions. Before the marriage parents of the boy go to meet the parents of the girl. This starting approach is termed 'Hinaba'. The horoscopes are tallied and if both the parents agree then the next date for the meeting is fixed. On the next meeting, called *Yathang Thanaga*, the consent is given by the girl's parents. The next stage is 'Waroi pot puba' and the groom's family members bring food and the contract is finally sealed. Finally, the engagement is declared amongst the friends and relatives, this is called 'Heijapot'. Friends and relatives from the boy's side then go to the girl's parents with food, fruits and presents. The marriage is fixed by the Brahmin. The men dress in dhoti and kurta with a shawl wrapped around and women in pink 'fanek' and white chader. The arrangement for sitting is made around the Tulsi plant. Interestingly, all ceremonies are conducted around this plant. The bridal dress is unique. It is obligatory for the bride to wear the *Raslila* skirt. The bride-groom's dress is white dhoti, kurta and turban. *Kirtans* and *Shahnai* music is started when the bride and the bridegroom take seven rounds around the Tulsi plant. The bride follows the steps in rhythmic styles with *Shahnai* music. She has to perform the role of a *gopi*. There are many good points in Meitei marriages. There is no stress on huge expenditure. The *laddoos* and sweets are distributed after the marriage ceremony. The guests are given *Dakshina*. The dowry is not as a compulsion but voluntary. The parents of the girl provide essential items for her use such as utensils, sewing machine, implements, clothes etc.

The family structure of Manipuris, traditionally joint in nature. From our study and observation, we found that most of the Manipuris are living in an extended family and most of the members of their family are women. The head of the family based on age. They follow equality and democratic participation in the family decision. At present Manipuris are involved in all kinds of economic activities. Now, maximum Manipuris are employed in a service holder. Also, they are involved with other professions such as doctor, engineer, businessman and so on. Except for the main job they also involved inside occupations.

Female members also engaged in income generating activities. Manipuris now work at government and non-government offices, engaged with business and some other informal activities. Manipuris are the most educated ethnic community in Bangladesh. They face problems like lack of recognition as an ethnic community, less participation in politics, cultural hegemony from the mainstream society etc. Various national policies and development programs have given emphasis on tribal women to enhance their awareness, knowledge, and skills which could make them empowered. With the active and multidimensional process of various programs, they realize their human rights and power in all spheres of life and improve their livelihood status. These multidimensional national policies are also supported and influenced them to create locally based business activities to improve their economic condition. With the technical and financial support of government and non-government organization, they have adopted different home-based enterprises such as pig farming, livestock and poultry farming, shopkeeping, fruits and vegetable cultivation, clothes weaving, which help them to undertake the entrepreneurial activities. These enterprises are still facing problems in the context of both production and marketing.

Without empirical evidence, answer to the livelihood improvement through the question of entrepreneurship development is not so simple and straightforward. have been conducted in-home and abroad, some of them are entrepreneurship development related, and some of them are on socioeconomic conditions of tribal people but no systematic and comprehensive study has so far been conducted on tribal women in Bangladesh for improving their livelihood through entrepreneurship development, particularly in Sylhet region. This research is very important to the government, policy-makers, decision-makers, and researchers in the entrepreneurship development sector as a general study which would give a foundation for future and further business-related policy, especially in designing and implementing programs of entrepreneurship development for tribal people. The findings of the research also help to explain the theoretical background of entrepreneurship development for tribal people in the country context. Thus, the study is carried out to assess the impact of entrepreneurship development on household income and expenditure for entrepreneur tribal people.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

We studied a lot of literature relevant to Manipuri handicrafts. We also viewed some research findings of the Manipuri lifestyle, their way of living, their economic activities and conditions, their religious belief and rituals, their festivals, their historical background and traditional outlook. More than forty-five tribes such as *Khasia, Chakma, Mog, Murong, Tipra, Kuki, Luci, Manipuri, Garo, Patro, Bishnupriya, Hajong, Koach, and Sawntal*, etc., are living in Bangladesh (Ahmed, S.M., 1997). Still, there are very few studies on the impact of entrepreneurship development and livelihood status for the major tribes in Sylhet (Sarma, G. 2014). There are also ten other groups called ex-tribal groups such as *Bede, Bhumali, Bhuiyan, Ganghu, Jalia (Kaibartta), Kukamar, Kurmi, Mahto, Malla (Mallo)*, and *Namasudra* who have lost their distinct identities, languages, cultures, and traditions gradually, integrated into the mainstream Bengali society and culture (Maloney, C. 1984).

The emergence of women entrepreneurship in tribal societies and its contribution to their economy is quite visible in Bangladesh today. About 1.41 million people are tribal which constitute 1.13% of the total population (BBS 2011). In the tribal society, women play a very important role in the highly labour-intensive production process with their male counterparts in the field and contributed to their family income. Generally, they do not get enough time to do some income-generating activities outside the home, and age, socio-cultural traditions and taboos also arresting them within the surrounding of their houses and make their conditions more disadvantageous particularly. Moreover, low level of education, motivation, and friendly environment were not positive elements of showing interest to earn for them (Bhasin, V., 1991).

#### **4. ECONOMIC AND OCCUPATIONAL STATUS**

Manipuris are a self-reliant community. There, it is found that agriculture as their prime earning source and most of the households were found considerably engaged in activities outside. Most of the Manipuris are involved in handicraft and poultry farm. But having an education at present they are receiving jobs for their livelihood. They are involved in making their daily necessary clothes in their own machine run by hand (Sheram, A., 2011).



Considering village and town, professional differences of Manipuris are seen. In the village, they do household activities and handicraft. Agriculture is the dominant profession of most of the Manipuris. Both males and females are engaged in this sector. Female usually perform light activity. However, handloom is another dominant occupation of the Manipuris mainly done by Manipuri women. Manipuri people view handloom as their tradition and it has a special artistic value which originates from Manipuris craft arterially or occasionally. Some of the Manipuris work as carpenters. Again they found a few Manipur people working in paid employment for different tea gardens as carpenters. Gold making is another occupation commonly seen among the Manipuris. Manipuri people are renowned as laborious. It is very rare to find a Manipuri person who is not economically engaged in earning activity. Although agriculture is their traditional and prime earning source, Many are changing their occupation due to different circumstances e.g. scarcity of land, lack of capital, less benefit, lack of available work in rural areas. Those who are receiving higher education have started to involve themselves in different mainstream earning sources and involving both in government and non-government organization. The researchers found a number of

primary and high school teachers who are respected have a good reputation (Ahmed, D.T., 2009).

Now Manipuri women involve them in different earning activities both outside and inside of their home especially in the urban area. 31 percent of the participant was involved in handloom work directly and 37.6 percent were in paid employment. Again 3.14 were NGO worker and only 5 percent were involved in the teaching profession (Ahmed, D.T. 2009). However, the tendency towards job has been increasing as 30 percent and they are engaged in doing a different job.



## **5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Question 1: what is the process of production of Manipuri handicrafts?

Question 2: do they get adequate profit?

Question 3: do they get adequate cooperation from the government?

## **6. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

### ***6.1 Approaches to the study***

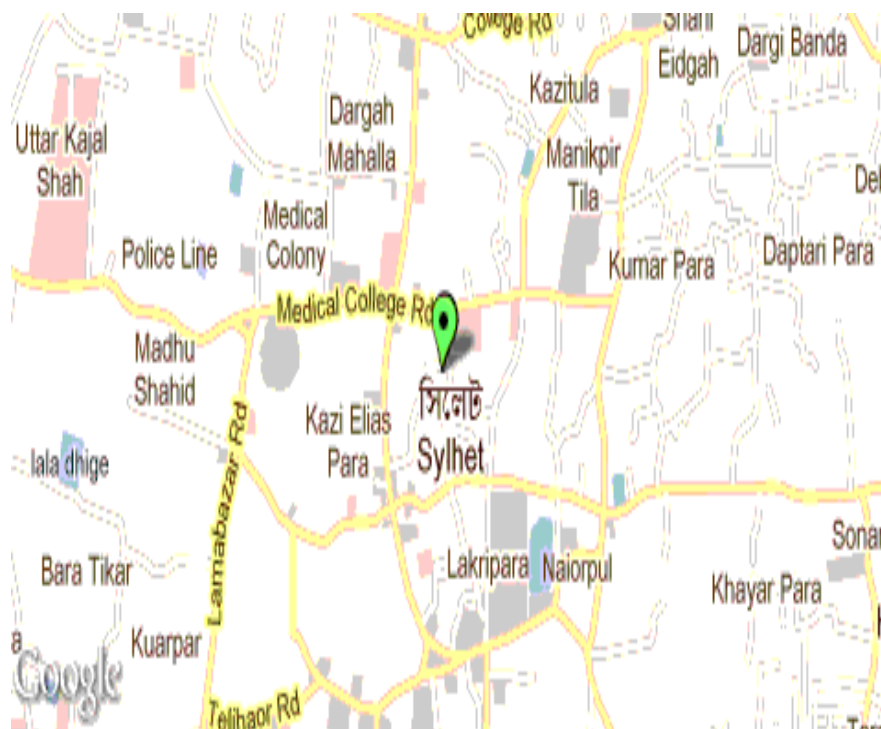
In this study, a mixed research approach has been used because here both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected and analyzed. A qualitative approach has been used to explore the overall business patterns of Manipuri community because the qualitative study is a particularly suitable approach for dealing with critical questions raised in research period and enhancing the knowledge base of various aspects. The quantitative approach of research refers to the systematic and empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. In this study, it is also selected to use a quantitative approach to make a fundamental connection between empirical observations. Qualitative data have been collected by observation, focus group discussion. Also, quantitative data have been collected through interview schedule and observation.

## **6.2 Area of the study**

The main focus of this study was to know the business trends and marketing of Manipuris those who are living in Sylhet city. To achieve effective outcomes we selected Shibgonj, amborkhana, lamabazar and Manipuri para as study areas because it represents the salient features of a Manipuri community. This study has been conducted at Manipuri Para, in Sylhet. The reasons for choosing that area can be described as below-

- the highly populated area where most of the Manipuri people live.
- accessible as many Manipuris are known to us.
- areas are also suitable for communication.

There are 2000-2500 people live in this area with 100 families with whom we interacted to collect relevant data.



## **6.3 Population**

Population means the number of total Manipuri people living in Sylhet. In this study, the household head of the families both male and female, community power structure, religious leader and key informant is the target population. There are 100 families live in Manipuri para which we have selected for the study.

## **6.4 Sampling**

Sampling is the representative unit of the total population. Here we used purposive sampling procedure. Through this method, we easily select the relevant and representative sample size.

## **6.5 Sample size**

Here, our sample size was 10 families out of 100. In this sample size, we had selected both male and female to avoid biases. We had selected 5 males and 5 females as respondents.

Keeping variation in many patterns of their lifestyle as such categorizing with male and female and with different professions we took that sample size which provided us with a comprehensive understanding of the handicrafts business trends of Manipuri.

### **6.6 Respondents**

Household handicrafts head of the family, ethnic community leaders, tailors, shopkeepers etc were considered as respondents for the study.

### **6.7 Sources of Data**

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include collecting data through interview, observation, informal discussion. Secondary sources include collecting data from published books, articles, journals, newspaper, websites etc.

## **7. DATA COLLECTION METHOD FOR QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**

### **7.1 Interview schedule**

We used the interview schedule under survey method for data collection. We have been used to open-ended questions.

### **7.2 Observation schedule**

Observation is a method of data collection in which the participants in the research process, the phenomena within these respondents and the other activities related with the research process will be observed in depth with a great intention to find out needed data or information. We also used the observation method of data collection. We set a time schedule to observe the different ethnic shops, households having machinery and the other pattern of their livelihood which are related to our research topic. We went to their houses, talked with them and observed some varieties in their clothes, products, machinery, different patterns of products and living condition. Conversation analysis: We also used conversation analysis. We made conversation with some key persons such as entrepreneurs of their organization, owners of the shops, shopkeepers, buyers and also with some related media persons. That helped us to get short but salient features of their culture.

## **8. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

Hypotheses1: Manipuri people have their old traditional machinery for handicrafts.

Hypotheses2: they are not expert at the marketing of their products.

Hypotheses3: they do not get enough opportunities to develop their enterprises.

## **9. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The below findings are on the basis of interview schedules, Conversation analysis Observation schedules through which we have conducted the research to find the needed information and data. However, secondary data sources as such journals, articles, essays, published books and their own published materials also are being used as an essential source. Though different methods of data collection were conducted to get information, we found quite the same data and information. That's the key reason for which we arranged the



findings as comprehensive form rather divide these according to the methods of data collection.

## **10. MANIPURI SOCIETY AND ITS CLASSIFICATION**

Through conducting the research we found that Manipuri society in Bangladesh is classified into 3 communities. Meithei, Bishnupriya and Pangan. In Sylhet, under our study, we covered the Meithei community who are mostly living in Sylhet municipal area.

## **11. HISTORY OF MANIPURI IN SYLHET, BANGLADESH**

The Manipuris in Sylhet are one of the major ethnic communities of Bangladesh. They migrated to Bangladesh during the reign of Rajarshi Bhagyachandra (1764-1789) and the process was accelerated by the Manipuri-Burma war. After the war with Burma, Manipur was ruled by the Burmese invaders for about seven years. During that period, King Chourajit Singh accompanied by a large following of Manipuri subjects moved to areas - now in Bangladesh. At present they live in different places of Sylhet Division, like *Kamalganj, Sreemongal, Kulaura and Baralekha* thanas of Moulvi Bazar district; Chunarughat thana of Habiganj district and Chhatak thana of Sunamganj district. According to the 1991 population census, there were about 25,000 Manipuris in Bangladesh. As a result of their changing geographical locations and various kinds of religious and political interaction, Manipuri society became the meeting point of different ethnic groups and cultures. The mother-tongue of the Manipuris belongs to the Kuki-chin group of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Mongolian family of languages. Manipuri literature is very old. It has a rich and variegated history and traditions. Interestingly, a characteristic of the old Manipuri script is that each and every letter of the alphabet has been named after a part of the human body. The shape of a letter is also based on the body part it is named after. Some books on Manipuri subjects have been published in Bengali. Manipuri men and women work together in the field. Men clear the jungles and till the soil, while the women sow seeds and do the transplanting. They celebrate seed planting and crop harvesting in their own colourful way. Manipuri culture has a rich and colourful tradition where dance and music play a vital role. The most vibrant branch of Manipuri culture is dance. Rasa dance is the finest product of their culture. Manipuri dance is characterized by gentleness, tenderness and devotion. The dress they wear during a dance is really gorgeous and beautiful.

Most of the festivals of the Manipuris are accompanied by the consumption of alcoholic beverages. A very popular festival of the Manipuris is a type of Gopi dance celebrating the romantic liaison of Radha and Krishna. In the spring, Manipuris celebrate Holi, when they drench each other with colour. Most religious rites and festivals of the Manipuris are based on the seasons of the year. They also celebrate the rice harvest through a singing contest. Manipuris put up colourful wedding pandals, and the bride and groom go round the pandal to be greeted with paddy and durva grass. Manipuris cannot marry within their own clans. A Manipuri bride comes to visit her parents for the first time on the fifth day after marriage, providing an occasion for a lavish feast. According to tribal custom, all members of the clan are invited to this ceremony and they come with presents of rice, meat, fowls, pigs, money and alcohol. Manipuris have their own rituals regarding the disposal of

the dead body. They keep the dying person outside the house on a banana leaf, while Kirtans are chanted. Dead bodies are washed with the head pointed northward. They bury bodies of adolescents and cremate bodies of older persons. After disposing of the body, the pallbearers take a bath and dry their hands by holding them above a fire before entering their house (Akter, R., 2003).

### *11.1 Handicrafts and Manipuri women*

Manipuri women contribute their families and community through different earning activities. In the past homebound handloom industry was the only source of income of Manipuri women. Household activities are the main sources of income for Manipuri women. Older Manipuri women are selling net as a part Manipuri culture, most of the Manipuri women engage them in income-generating activities. They are playing a significant role as earning members and have a great contribution to their family expenditure. In a few cases, they are the only earner of the family. They said that gender discrimination is less than other community and this has become possible because of their traditional handicraft.



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Manipuri women are directly involved in handloom activities. Manipuri women have a source like agriculture or other activities but they mostly rely on the handloom. Their contribution to household works is a major asset to their family. In the remote villages, they render physical labour in the paddy fields. In urban areas, they weave traditional cloth and fishing nets which are marketed by themselves. The making of traditional Manipuri woollen scarf is common in every Manipuri family in Sylhet.

### *11.2 Manipuri dress, Garments and Ornaments*

Manipuri dress, garments and ornaments are also the glory of their unique culture. Their rich culture and the centuries-old tradition can also be depicted in their handloom woven clothes and the handicrafts that they make till death. The costumes of Manipuri women are called as Innaphi, that is wrapped like a shawl and the Phanek is the skirt. Leifanek is one of the special dresses made for marital occasions. The man wears the dhoti and white Pagri or the turban. They also wear a jacket. These are made with different materials. The most popular Handicrafts of Manipur include Hand-woven and embroidered textiles, Mats made of water reed, Manipuri dance doll, Shawls and blankets, Manipuri bed covers of Moirangfee, Cane and bamboo work, Wood carving. They use both stitched (Hiyesi) and unstitched (Na-Hiyesi) garments. The traditional dress used by the males is

called Pachhati - an about five feet long cloth manufactured by themselves which worn round the waist, held tight by a Gunja, a fold in the back; shorts or shirts are used in the upper body. Panjabi's are used on the Feichoms. The males of the higher classes and distinctive status use a head dress called Koyet or turban, and an upper garment on the shoulder called Lemper Futi using artistic designs. The extreme beauty of women dress is the design of Moirang, a special and artistic type of embroidery which is done by the weavers. Married women wear Muror Futi or vails and take special care of their hair. They paste sindoor on the forehead and also wear kharou or Shakhas like the Bangali Hindus.



## 12. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

In comparison with other ethnic community even with Bengali, Manipuris are enough solvent. Their monthly income shows how standard life possible to live by them. A source of income we found the below traditional activities are still alive on their society:

**Textile Weaving:** This art is however mainly practised by the women of Manipur. This handicraft of Manipur is also known as Laichamphi meaning cotton cloth. The craft was so named because before the second world war the use of woollen yarn was unknown to the Manipuris and they wove their textiles only with cotton yarns.

**Block Printing:** One of the most specific and unique Handicrafts in Manipur is their block prints. The hand block printed towels or the Khamen Chatpa is a sign of honour and is often presented to the village chiefs and warriors. Block printed dresses are also used in the religious ceremonies of the region.

### *12.1 Obstacles in their development and their dreams*

As they are very little in number, all the time they feel fear or threat from the major community and they also had to face a great struggle against the local people to protect their business products. They also had lost a large amount of land by the landgraves.

The national cultural flow also effects on their culture and they have to face a hard work to keep their own entity. Their own language is in a position of being extinction. Their economic activities also are at a turning point in lieu of their traditional activities.

### ***12.2 Shortage of technical machinery***

Almost all the participants agree on the point that they are backward in production and minimizing of production cost only for one reason that is lack of modern machinery. They make products which takes much more time. On the other hand Bangladeshi handicrafts, businessmen use modern machinery which takes less time and cost.

### ***12.3 Problems in marketing***

Manipuri businessmen cannot take proper steps for the marketing of their products. They have no advance responsible personnel for media coverage of their handicrafts. Sometimes they understand a very easy trick of Bangladeshi businessmen that, they are marketing Manipuri handicrafts in the name of other famous brands.

### ***12.4 Tribal or minority concept and their perception***

It is a sad experience for them that the state has no authentic and responsible liability and proclamation about them. Though they are living from a hundred years but yet they have no clear recognition by state what they are meant to be. Sometimes they are called a minor group, sometimes as a tribal and sometimes as an ethnic community. They feel a strong opposite idea of these concepts. According to them, they are nothing but Bangladeshi with a different and unique culture. They also have the urge to get a clear constitutional recognition as Bangladeshi not as tribal. They claim that they should get all the opportunities as Bangladeshi people not as an ethnic minority.

## **13. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. The handicrafts of Manipuri is a vast concept. But we could not get in-depth information about every household because of limited time and we are also not experienced researcher.
2. As a trainee researcher, we could not construct an appropriate interview schedule.
3. Academic study, examination etc. made it difficult for us to work with more respondents.

## **14. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION**

Manipuris are more different than any other ethnic society where the national literacy rate of Bangladesh is 65%, the literacy rate of Manipuri is higher than 90%. The population rate of Manipuri is also recognized most better than the national rate of Bangladesh and it is recognized as a respectable condition in Indian sub-continent (Mohammad, 2009:47).

Manipuri women made some positive impacts on increasing total family income and family expense, buying their necessary personal items, household furniture, ornaments etc., and saving from their income. Based on some constraints, the present study is recommended that no single policy could be prescribed for removing problems; rather mixed policies have to be followed for the development of the Manipuri handicraft. The government must take steps for the development of the handicraft. It is much popular on the one hand and also playing an important role in our economy on the other. It needs to provide necessary financial

and technical assistance which will not only accelerate the handicraft sector but also will assist to increase or find the income source of the Manipuris. Innovative design and marketing training needs to be ensured so that they can hold their position in the competitive market.

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