Socio Economic Status of the Ethnic Community in Bangladesh: An Analysis Using Socio Economic Index

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Abstract: *The aim of the study is to measure the socio-economic status of the Ethnic Community (Manipuri and Khasia) in Bangladesh. The study analyzed a total of 113 (82 Manipuri & 31 Khasia) respondents from Manipuri and Khasia community purposively selected from Sylhet district. The information was recorded in a pre-structured questionnaire. Socio-economic status of the Manipuri and Khasia community was identified using self-developed Socio-Economic Index which was constructed by the composition of various factors. Socio economic index revealed that 73.17% of the Manipuri respondents were having good socio economic status while this percentage for Khasia respondents was only 6.45%. One of the major intension of the study was to develop a model of obtaining a socio economic index so that one can easily find the socio economic status of the group or community on the basis of related variables*
Key Words: *Socio Economic Index, Socio Economic Status and Ethnic Community*

I. Introduction

The majority of Bangladesh's 142.3 million people are Bengalis but approximately 3 million are indigenous peoples belonging to at least 54 different ethnic groups speaking at least 35 different languages. These peoples are concentrated in the north, and Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in the south-east of the country [1].The indigenous ethnic groups are the pride of Bangladesh. They enriched the country by their distinct culture and activities. The indigenous ethnic groups in Bangladesh are as follows. Bawm , Biharis, Bishnupriya, Banal, Bediya, Bhumij, Bagdi, Chak, Chakma, Dalu, Garo , Gurkha, Hajonj, Jaintia, Khasi, Khajons, Khumi, Khyang, Koch, Khatriya Barman, Kharia, Karmakar, Khondo, Khumi, Kole , Lushai, Meitei, Mundas , Mros (Mrus or Moorangs), Marmas, Manipuri, Munda, Marma, Mahato, Malo, Mahali, Muriyar, Musohor, Mandi, Oraon, Patro, Pangkhu, Pahan, Rohingyas, Rajbongshi, Rakhain, Rajuar, Rai, Santal,Tripuri, Tanchangya, Turi[2].The main ethnic groups in the plain lands of Sylhet are Khasi, Manipuri, Garo, Patro, Bishnupriya and Tripura, although ECDO non-formal research has indicated that there are approximately 30 different indigenous communities living in Sylhet region. Among these groups, the Manipuri and the Khasi are the largest in population. Each group has distinct linguistic and cultural practices [3].

Gain and others [4] reported in finding of their research area, Manipuri in Kamalgonj that the socio-economic conditions of the Manipuri are better than other plain land indigenous people in Bangladesh. They also found that one third of the Manipuri people's economic situation is in worse position where they are living from hand to mouth. As an ethnic groupManipuri people have their distinct language and cultural practice that influences theireveryday life. Their children struggle to receive education at schools which follow themajority language and cultural system. Despite these barriers, Manipuri people areconscious about the value of education. Although the rate of higher education is notsatisfactory among the Manipuris, their literacy rate is higher than national statistics [5].As the Khasia are the indigenous community, they are living in Bangladesh for long years. They have been a part and parcel of our economy and culture. The Khasi are the only communities in Bangladesh, who still strictly follow a matrilineal system.They have a matrilineal family composition and a matrilocal abode structure [6].

Land is vital for the Khasis in Bangladesh, Costa and Dutta[7] high lighted that a few of the Khasi punjis have their own cultivable land, but most of the Khasi villages do not formally own the land for their betel leaf plantation. Betel leaf is only available in the hilly forests of Sylhet. Their lifestyle is related to betel leaf production. Approximately 75.5 percent of the Khasi are involved in betel leaf cultivation.Shikdar, Biswas&Mollick [8] mention major findings on the condition of Khasia people.The socio economic condition of Khasia people is not so good. Education is low among ethnic groups. This is particularly evident in the Khasi community where education of children rarely progresses past primary level. The cause of these problems can be attributed partly to the remoteness of ethnic community villages; there are no secondary schools located nearby. Language alsocreates a problem as many lessons are conducted in Bangla and not the mother language. There is very little awareness about the threat of HIV/AIDS within ethnic communities, and the general education rate is very low which limits the understanding on HIV/AIDS and connected issues.Employment problems are prevalent throughout indigenous communities. Socio-economic status is the vast concept that is

the replica of the position of individual or community in the society or country. Covering the social and economic aspects, the socio-economic status is defined as the position that an individual or family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standards of cultural possessions, income and participation in community activities [9]. Socio-economic status of the Manipuri and Khasia Indigenous Ethnic community will expose their position in the society.

There were many researches done on Socio economic condition of Ethnic community but no one exactly shows the socio economic status in one scale. It was measured either with income or expenditure or different factors. In this study, there was developed a Socio-Economic Index model which is the sum up of different socio and economic variables is used to know the socio-economic status of ethnic community. However the specific objectives are:
a. Developing a model to determine the socio-economic status
b. To measure the socio-economic status of the ethnic community in Bangladesh

II. Materials &Method

Sylhet division which is the most populous place of the Manipuri and Khasia indigenous ethnic community located in the north eastern region of Bangladesh. From the Sylhet division two upazillas namely Sylhet Sadar and Gowainghat were selected purposively on accounts of availability of a large number of respondents; easy accessibility and good communication facilities. Respondents of 113 ethnic married females of these upazillas were selected randomly. Data were collected from the selected respondents through the direct interview with structured questioner during the period from January to May 2016.The study utilizes self-developed index for carrying out several analyses such as frequency distribution, descriptive statistics were performed through SPSS (Version 20.00). Self-developed Socio-economic index was constructed based on the collected data to measure the socio economic status. The developed formula and their explanations are listed here,

2.1 Socioeconomic Index
The index used to calculate the socio economic status is called socio economic index. Socio economic index is aggregate result of social index and economic index [10].
$$\text{Socioeconomic Index} = \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{Social Index}\right\} + \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{Economic Index}\right\}$$

2.2 Social Index
Social index is influenced by the factors that affect the social position of the individual or family such as health factor, demographic factor, and educational factor. So, the social index is the summation of these health index, demographic index and educational index.
$$\text{Social Index} = \left\{\frac{1}{3} \times \text{Health Index}\right\} + \left\{\frac{1}{3} \times \text{Demograhic Index}\right\} + \left\{\frac{1}{3} \times \text{Educational Index}\right\}$$

2.3 Health Index
Health is not only defined as physical structure but also associated with the factors that helps to keep one healthy. To keep this in mind, four important variables were considered for constructing the health index. The outcomes of the variables are binary. For example, if someone has access to maternal or health care, the value will be 2 otherwise 1.

Table 2.1: Health Related Variable with their Category and Code

Variables	Values
Access Maternal/Health Care	Yes=2, No=1
Standard Toilet Facilities	No facility/ field/ bush = 1 Hanging = 2 Pit/Flush toilet = 3
Safe Drinking Water	No facility = 1 Surface water = 2 Rain water/ Tube well = 3
Basic Electric Facility	Have=2, No=1

After getting the values for those variables, health index can be constructed using the following formula.
$$\text{Health Index} = \frac{\text{Actual Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}{\text{Maximum Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}$$

2.4 Demographic Index
Demographic factor has influenced the social status and has also important significant in the present world. In many parts of the world, social status is influenced by the demographic factors such as ethnicity, age at

marriage, contraceptive use etc. Here three important demographic factors are considered to construct the demographic index by the following equation.

Table 5.2: Demographic Related Variable with their Category and Code

Variables	Values
Family Planning Decision	Both Husband & Wife=2, Others=1
Age at first Marriage	Less than 18 = 1
	18-21 = 2
	Above 21 = 3
Contraceptive Use	Yes=2, No=1

After getting the values for those variables, Demographic index can be constructed using the following formula.

$$\text{Demographic Index} = \frac{\text{Actual Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}{\text{Maximum Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}$$

2.5 Educational Index
Education is the backbone of a nation. To construct the educational index, firstly the educations of the respondents are categorized on the basis of their highest educational achievement. 8 categories are allocated values from 0-17.

Table 2.3: Educational Category and Code

Category	Values
No Education	0
Primary Incomplete	3
PSC Complete	5
JSC Complete	8
SSC Complete	10
HSC Complete	12
Honors Complete	16
Masters Complete	17

The following formula was used to construct the education index of the respondent from their values generated from the education level.

$$\text{Individual Educational Index} = \frac{\text{Actual Value}}{\text{Maximum Value}}$$

Here in the study, it is assumed that the education is necessary for both husband and wife and have an effect of the social status. For this the educational index is weighted by Husband's educational index and wife's educational index.

$$\text{Educational Index} = \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{Husband's Educational Index}\right\} + \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{Wife's Educational Index}\right\}$$

2.6 Economic Index
Economic status is mostly influenced by income, expenditure, occupation etc. Four variables are assumed to calculate the economic index.

Table 2.4: Economic Variable with their Category and Code

Variables	Values
Income	Up to 12000 = 1
	12001 – 20000 = 2
	Above 20000 = 3
Expenditure less than income	Yes=2, No=1
Participation in community affairs	Yes=2, No=1
Occupation	No job=1
	Day labor/ farmers/ housewife = 2
	Government or private job/ business = 3

The following formula is used to construct the economic index.

$$\text{Economic Index} = \frac{\text{Actual Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}{\text{Maximum Value} - \text{Minimum Value}}$$

III. Result

Socioeconomic Status of Manipuri community:
With the use of Socio-Economic Index (SEI) measuring formula, the following table is constructed for 82 respondents from the Manipuri Community.

Table 3.1: Socio-Economic Index (SEI) for Manipuri Community

Serial No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
SEI Value	0.98	0.88	1	0.98	0.83	0.81	0.84	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.94	0.94	1
Serial No	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
SEI Value	1	0.84	0.92	0.91	0.81	0.77	0.85	0.84	0.96	0.93	0.96	0.91	0.71
Serial No	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
SEI Value	0.91	0.79	0.81	0.96	0.82	1	0.92	1	0.94	0.89	0.75	0.98	0.80
Serial No	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
SEI Value	0.98	0.96	0.83	0.82	0.79	0.75	0.82	0.90	0.79	0.79	0.93	0.84	0.93
Serial No	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65
SEI Value	0.83	0.82	0.98	0.88	1	0.98	0.83	0.81	0.84	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.94
Serial No	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
SEI Value	0.94	1	1	0.84	0.92	0.91	0.81	0.77	0.85	0.84	0.96	0.93	0.96
Serial No	79	80	81	82									
SEI Value	0.91	0.71	0.91	0.79									

Socioeconomic Status of Khasia community   :

With the use of Socio-Economic Index (SEI) measuring formula, the following table is constructed for31 respondents from the Khasia Community.

Table 3.2: Socio-Economic Index (SEI) for Khasia Community

Serial No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
SEI Value	0.44	0.64	0.96	0.63	0.61	0.45	0.64	0.62	0.56	0.67	0.63	0.62	0.86	0.59
Serial No	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
SEI Value	0.64	0.59	0.64	0.78	0.82	0.59	0.67	0.74	0.61	0.69	0.68	0.71	0.58	0.69
Serial No	29	30	31											
SEI Value	0.62	0.74	0.61											

Determining Standard Value for Socio Economic Index (SEI):

For analysis and comparison, we need standard value of Socio Economic Index (SEI). To do so, we have assumed standard value for each variable. For example, the values for "Access to maternal/ health care" variable are 2 and 1 represents yes or no respectively. Here the standard value for this variable is 2 or they have access to Maternal/ Health care. The list of variable and their standard value are tabulated below;

	Variables	Values	Standard Values
Health Index	Access Maternal/Health Care	Yes=2, No=1	Yes=2
	Standard Toilet Facilities	No facility/ field/ bush = 1 Hanging = 2 Pit/Flush toilet = 3	Pit/Flush toilet = 3
	Safe Drinking Water	No facility = 1 Surface water = 2 Rain water/ Tube well = 3	Rain water/ Tube well = 3
	Basic Electric Facility	Have=2, No=1	Have=2
	Variables	Values	
Demographic Index	Family Planning Decision	Both Husband & Wife=2, Others=1	Both Husband & Wife=2
	Age at first Marriage	Less than 18 = 1 18-21 = 2 Above 21 = 3	18-21 = 2
	Contraceptive Use	Yes=2, No=1	Yes=2
	Category	Values	
Educational Index	No Education	0	HSC Complete = 12
	Primary Incomplete	3	
	PSC Complete	5	
	JSC Complete	8	
	SSC Complete	10	
	HSC Complete	12	
	Honors Complete	16	
	Masters Complete	17	
	Variables	Values	
Economic Index	Income	Upto 12000 = 1 12001 – 20000 = 2 Above 20000 = 3	Above 20000 = 3
	Expenditure less than income	Yes=2, No=1	Yes=2
	Participation in community affairs	Yes=2, No=1	Yes=2
	Occupation	No job=1 Day labor/ farmers/ housewife = 2 Government or private job/ business = 3	Day labor/ farmers/ housewife = 2

By putting the standard values in Socio Economic Index (SEI) measuring formula, we get this.

Standard Value for Socio Economic Index(SEI) $= \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{Social Index}\right\} + \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times \text{Economic Index}\right\}$

$$= \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times 0.82\right\} + \left\{\frac{1}{2} \times 0.83\right\}$$
$$= \{0.41\} + \{0.42\}$$
$$= 0.83$$

Determining Median Value for Socio Economic Index (SEI):
With the help of SPSS, the median value Socio Economic Indexfor Manipuri and Khasia community were determined. The median value for Manipuri community is 0.89 and the its for Khasia community is 0.66.

IV.   Discussion

Socio-Economic Status of Manipuri Community
The socioeconomic status of the Manipuri community covering the Social, Economic indicators were good as 73.17% reported having standard socio-economic status**.** The Median SEI value was 0.89 for the Manipuri Community and 54.88% respondents whose SEI were .89 or above. It can easily predict that the maximum of the respondents of the Manipuri community were having better socio-economic status. The distribution or access to the resources and facilities were almost equal among the respondents.

Socio-Economic Status of Khasia Community
The socioeconomic status of the Khasia community covering the Social, Economic indicators were not good as 6.45% reported having standard socio-economic status**.** The Median SEI value was 0.66 for the Khasia community and 35.48% respondents whose SEI were 0.66 or above. It can easily predict that the maximum of the respondents of the Khasia community were not having better socio-economic status. The distribution or access to the resources and facilities were not almost equal among the respondents.

Comparison between Manipuri and Khasia
The Median SEI value was 0.89 for the Manipuri Community while it was 0.66 for the Khasia community. This difference in the SEI level indicates that Manipuri were maintaining better socioeconomic status than the Khasia. Comparing with the standard value of SEI (0.93), only 6.45% respondents from Khasia community were found maintaining standard socio economic status while 73.17% respondents from Manipuri community were found maintaining standard socio economic status. Those are illustrated by the following figure 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3
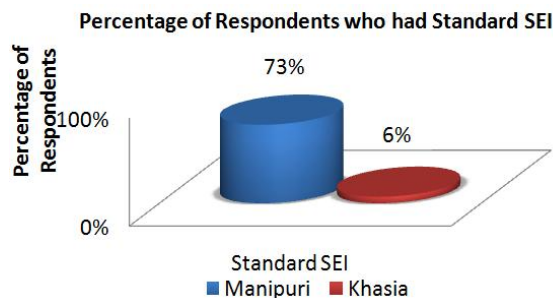

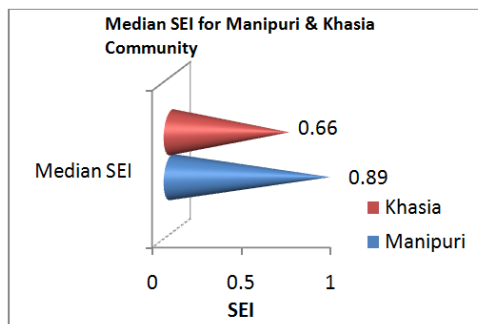**Figure 4.1**: Percentage of Respondents who had Standard SEI

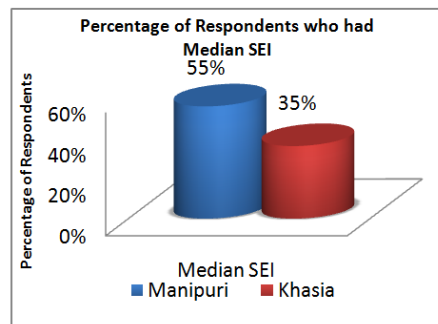Figure 4.2 : Median SEI of Manipuri and Khasia

Figure 4.3: Percentage of Manipuri and KhasiaRespondents who had Median SEI

V. Conclusion

This comprehensive and comparative study discussed the socio-economic status of the Manipuri and Khasia community. A multidimensional self-developed Socio-Economic Index is constructed by composition of various factors is used to measure the socio-economic status of the Manipuri and Khasia community. Socio-Economic Index is aggregate result of social index and economic index. Social Index also subdivided into Health Index, Demographic Index and Educational Index. The study analyzed a total of 113 respondent from Manipuri and Khasia community and found that in Manipuri community, 73.17% respondents were in good socio-economic condition while in Khasia community, only 6.45% respondents were in good socio-economic condition and for the Ethnic community (Manipuri and Khasia), 54.86% respondents were in good socio-economic condition as 62 out of 113 respondents were in good socio-economic condition. Proper policy need to be taken to ensure the education for the Ethnic community people. School, colleges, University, Night School for Elder & worker etc initiatives can be taken in this regard. Income generating activities should be raised for ethnic community. They usually have limited access to the other jobs rather than their ancestral jobs. This self-developed Socio economic Index Model can be customized with the required variable that are needed to include in socio economic status in further use. The variables can be added, reduced and altered on necessity based on the collected information of variable in the research.

Acknowledgements

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