

# **CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE SÜMI NAGA HOUSEHOLD**

Thesis submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfilment for the award  
of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History

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# नागालैण्डविश्वविद्यालय

## NAGALAND UNIVERSITY

(संसद द्वारा पारित अधिनियम 1989, क्रमांक 35 के अंतर्गत स्थापित केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय )

(A Central University established by an Act of Parliament No.35 of 1989)

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### CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the research data presented in this accompanying dissertation titled **“CONTINUITY AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE SÜMI NAGA HOUSEHOLD”** has been carried out by Ms. BokaliShohe bearing Regd No. PhD/HAR/00015 under my guidance and supervision.

The present work is original in its content and has not been submitted in part or full for any other degree or diploma in any other University/Institute.

It is further certified that the candidate has fulfilled all the conditions necessary for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History under Nagaland University.

Dated:

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### DECLARATION

I, Ms.BokaliShohe, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else. The thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to the Nagaland University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Signature of Candidate

Signature of Head

Signature of Supervisor

## **Abstract**

This research delves into the intricate dynamics of the household institution, with a specific focus on the Sümi Naga household, spanning from the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the contemporary era. In recent decades, scholars have increasingly recognized the significance of the household in socio-economic, political and historical research. The household is now acknowledged as a fundamental building block for understanding past societies and monitoring ongoing transformations. Rather than a static entity, the household is seen as a dynamic entity influenced by demographic, life course, and political-economic factors.

While existing historical research has shed light on the impact of factors like Christianity, Colonization, and Education on Naga society, the influence of the evolving socio-economic and political environment on the household has received less attention. Furthermore, the agency and negotiation of the household in response to these changes remain largely underexplored.

This research is particularly relevant because it seeks to examine the shifts and recalibration within the Sümi Naga households triggered by a transition from a domestic agricultural economy to monetized tertiary economy. Drawing inspiration from studies in proto-industrial Europe, we aim to establish a connection between economic arrangements and household composition, considering whether changes in the economy correspond to changes in household structures.

The research employs a comparative approach to examine Sümi Naga households in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Attempt has been made to analyze the division of labor, gender relations, economic influences on household forms, spatial arrangements, architectural changes and the production and the use of household items. Additionally, how food culture has undergone a process of

transformation as a result of introduction of new monetary system post- statehood has been investigated.

Given the scarcity of literary sources pertaining to the Sümi Naga households in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this research has employed a comparative approach to examine Sümi Naga households with research from other regions. Economic transformation, architectural changes, production and consumption within the household, changes in food culture and changes in employment and their influence on societal structure and the household have been analyzed. This research has relied on comparative studies, oral traditions, cultural lores, taboos and practices that have persisted through adaptation.

Aim: This research has aimed to contribute to th comprehension of Sumi Naga households' historical development and adaptation in response to socio-economic and political changes with focus on economic influence. It attempts to shed light on a less-explored facet of Naga society and household history.

The Sumi Naga society, historically agrarian and rooted in traditional practices, underwent profound changes with the advent of modern education and integration of modern economy. This transformation began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries with the colonial British rule and American missionary influence, but it reached a critical juncture when Nagaland attained statehood in 1963. The recognition of statehood introduced government employment opportunities, shifting the community from substance farming to diverse occupational choices. As a result, significant cultural and lifestyle changes emerged, especially among the younger generations influenced by new ideas and values.

This study has examined the multifaceted impact of the modern economy on the Sümi Naga society, emphasizing the complex interplay of opportunities and challenges. While economic integration brought development and improved livelihoods, it also raised concerns about cultural preservation. Elements of continuity are observed in certain traditional practices, such as the bride prize *Ame*, nuclear families and traditional foods. However, there is a noticeable decline in traditional knowledge related to farming and weaving reflecting a shift towards more convenient alternatives. The Sümi community is undergoing various changes, including delayed marriage, changing household demographics, evolving occupations, altered contributions to households and shifts in culinary preferences. Furthermore, traditional practices like pottery-making have lost relevance, and animal husbandry has shifted from household consumption to market-oriented production. House construction has become more individualistic and women status has improved due to modern education and formal employment opportunities.

In this intricate scenario, the Sümi community faces the challenge of balancing continuity and transformation. Preserving cultural identity while embracing economic change is a pressing concern. While certain traditional elements persist, the data collected through questionnaires suggests that practicality often drives their decline. Achieving equilibrium in this dynamic environment is a complex endeavor, one that the Sümi community must undertake as it navigates new opportunities and confronts challenges while safeguarding its rich cultural heritage.

### **Scope of the study**

Studying the household is crucial for gaining insight into the historical changes within Sumi Naga society. This study will help fill in the gaps in our knowledge about how this society is transforming over time. Examining changes in household organization will allow in bridging the

divide between overarching theories of cultural evolution. Considering household as a fundamental unit will help us understand the ongoing economic growth and continuity. It will shed light on the significant contributions of women and children who have provided labor in various economic activities before new employment opportunities emerged.

When we examine society through the lens of the household, we uncover new factors contributing to prosperity, hardship, success and failure. What makes this approach appealing is that it allows us to revisit history from the perspective of the most basic societal structure- the household- providing a fresh viewpoint from the standpoint of ordinary people and their management of their homes. This perspective takes into account the various structural and cultural contexts in which households operated, as well as their perceptions of their environment. This multi-faceted view helps counterbalance the risk of overemphasizing any single factor and provides multiple insights into the complex process of social transformation.

### **Statement of the problem**

The available literary works on Nagas about the change and transformation that has taken place at such a massive scale in a short span of time has been simplified by putting the Christian missionaries and modern system of education as the sole agents for the complex transformation that the society has undergone. There is gap in the research because the complex system that has brought about the change has been simplified and has limited the understanding of other intrinsic factors. This research will therefore be from a socio economic perspective where by the economic changes that came about in the society of the Sumi Nagas and how their mode of production and consumption changed during the course of 100 years (i.e 20th -21st century) brought transformation in the society at large.

**Area of the study:**

The research area will be in the following areas in the Western Sumi areas- Kiyezu village (1911) migrated from Nikuto Village, Nikhekhu Village from Sathaka Village, Alato village from Lizu - Naghuto Village, Kuhoxu village originally known as Muhumi migrated from Shoixe Sathaka area, Kiyevi Village from Satakha village, Llothavi Village from Nunumi Village, Homeland Village from Asukhomi village. Nihokhu Village from Vishepu (sathaka area), Hovishe earlier known as (Hanimi) from Shotomi Village. A comparative study between the origin and the migrated area will be examined. Zunheboto district is the headquarter of the Sumi tribe and most of the migration to the western area have been from this area therefore some prominent villages in the vicinity will be studied, from Atoizu range -Rotomi Village, from Pughoboto range-Lazami and ighanumi; And relevant villages from Sathaka area where many villages had their point of origin. These areas will be visited for collecting data through interviews and if there are artifacts they will also be examined for the purpose of this research.

**Objective of Research:**

- To document an analytical history on the Sumi household.
- Through this research ideas will be formulated about why continuity and transformation takes place in societies at large. It will be an exploration of how the economic activities influenced and shaped the social process of change

**Research Hypothesis:**

The economic structural changes that came about with the emergence of alternative means of employment in this agricultural centered community contributed in bringing about major social transformation. The old cultural practices and tradition began to lose their relevance with availability of lucrative and rewarding employments.

- The overall change that took place in the society started from the household economy.

**Methodology:**

The research has been conducted using both primary and secondary sources. The parameter of the analysis has been outlined as the household of the Sümi Nagas with specific reference to the economic change. The central concern throughout the research will be the change that has taken place



within the society from the economic perspective. It will be a fundamental and qualitative research. The research will therefore be analytical and descriptive in nature.

For the collection of primary source interviews was conducted and questionnaires were collected from different age groups and attempts were made to do a comparative study on the changes that have taken place during different generations. The interview and questionnaires were conducted through the random sampling method.

The source that were used for this research comprise not just the primary source but also included secondary source which were collected from various sources such as books, published and unpublished written records and article. Artifacts materials, unpublished written records and article.

## Chapterization

### CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The chapter discusses briefly the entire dissertation, highlighting the problem of the study, objective of the study, literature review, methodology, and significance of the study. This chapter has done a study on household history in various other regions in order to get a better conceptual idea about the kind of works that are already in existence for household history.

### CHAPTER 2: THE SÜMI TRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY

This chapter looks into the various elements that contribute to the household economy in the tradition Sümi household economy such as the house and its structure, agriculture, animal husbandry and hunting, pottery and weaving.

### CHAPTER 3: FOOD CULTURE AND ECONOMY

Various social science theories about culinary culture have been examined in this chapter. Important tradition food Axone and Ahuna have been looked into to see if the trends of its

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#### CHAPTER 4: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SÜMI HOUSEHOLD WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE MODERN ECONOMY.

Data collected through the questionnaires have been analyzed in this chapter. This chapter has discussed working age of the population, the changing marriageable age, participating in *Ame*, household size distribution, joint family, emergence of transformation in occupation, opinion about government jobs, contributor to family's household economy, contribution of children to the household economy, innovations and their impact on the household, most commonly consumed food items, traditional knowledge of making the food '*Axone*', change and continuity in culinary tradition, change in food production within the household, continuity of traditions, weaving knowledge and economic contribution, pottery-making knowledge and practice, animal husbandry practice, construction of houses, the impact of the new economy on the status of women, unemployment and factors that brought about the most extensive change in household.

#### CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter has discussed the various findings that have emerged through the study. Through this chapter attempts have been made to discuss how the Sümi household has endured across generations, adapting and evolving in response to a multitude of internal and external factors. In the course of this comprehensive exploration into the analytical history of the Sümi household, invaluable insights into the intricate interplay of socio-economic dynamics that have shaped the fabric of Sümi society have been brought to light.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

The present research pertains to the institution of the household with a particular focus on the Sümi Naga household and its continuity and transformation from the 20<sup>th</sup> century till contemporary times. In the Aristotelian concept of the *oikos*, the household, as seen in his *Politics*, refers to everybody living in a given house. This household was conceptualized as an association that finds its primary purpose in meeting daily recurrent needs and the process that goes into it. While he recognizes the primacy of the household's dominant members, he ignores the range of relations and nature of association among the various members of the household that comprise this institution (Booth, 1991). Taking a broader approach for this present research, the household encompasses residency, reproduction, socialization, production, and consumption. The household is essentially the people living in a house and their process of production, consumption, and socializing and includes the commodities within that physical arrangement. It is beside the point that household is a concept to be separated from the concept of family which is a more ambiguous term as it varies contextually, the former is a domestic group while the latter a kinship system.

The importance of the household in socio-economic, political and historical research gained wider popularity following the decades from the 1960s and the 70s. Today it is generally acknowledged that the institution of the household is the basic building block in reconstructing past societies as well as gauging transformations occurring in real time.

Accordingly, the household is not merely a reified unchanging institution that has passively borne the changing conditions thrust upon it. It has been an active agent and moderator of the conditions and changes that gradually came. Reiterating Kertzer (1991, p.156), *“Households are not simply the product of residence rules but are also affected by demographic, life course and political economic factors.”* The existing historical works that have been done shed light only on factors like Christianity, Colonization and Education and their impact on Naga society. The impact of the shifting socio-economic and political environment on the family unit has received little attention. It is another matter that the agency and negotiation of the household towards these same changes remains largely under-researched.

The popularity that research on the household economy received in the 70s and following it have been most recently fuelled by the belated realization that the household that once was recognized for its consumption is also a very relevant source of production (Ironmonger, 2001). This is pertinent to the present research because it primarily aims to study the shift and recalibrations that came about in Sümi Naga households following a major change from a domestic agricultural economy to a monetized tertiary economy that affected the basis of production, consumption, demography and power relations within the household. The most preliminary investigation will entail looking at patterns and nature of household forms among the 20<sup>th</sup> century Sümi Nagas and whether they continue similar trends from the past or have shifted with the changing economy like the case of industrial Europe.

The established theory of proto or pre-industrial Europe, especially in England and France, states that in opposition to the earlier misguided understanding of the

predominant European household as nuclear, the pre-industrial pattern of household formation had been a complex one. It was only in the ensuing industrial era that factors of economy, demography, politics and culture combined to incline towards the now commonly seen nuclear household units. As seen in comparative studies in Europe, efforts will be made to draw a connection between economic arrangements and household composition (Kertzer 1991, 166). As economy changed, there must have occurred changes in household composition even in the Sümi Naga context. This purported link has been put to the litmus test and conclusions have been drawn on whether the relationship was a positive or negative one.

The study of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Sümi Naga household economy is being attempted to understand the ways in which it negotiated with the socio-political and cultural structure or was affected by them and the structure that it helped propagate. The relational and gender role within the household system interacts with the economic and political development within and without. However, this connection is not simple but rather complex. Gender roles and changing dynamics hence, must be an essential part of the research because, “...*household processes as the outcomes of complex negotiations among partially conflicting perspectives of individual family members, with both gender and age acting as important line of conflict.*”(Moch et al., 1987, p. 115). On the issue of gender, the research will look for markers and factors that may or may not have impacted the status and position of women within the household and beyond it.

A comparison will be further made between the dynamics and functioning of the Sümi Naga household then and now. The usual line of enquiry encompassing the division of labour, gender relations, and economic effects on household forms will be analysed.

This endeavour will also include spatial location, architectural aesthetics, and the various utility items that were produced and used. Furthermore, the food culture will also be studied to weave in the subject in a broader sense because not much existing work pertains to how food culture informed and affected the societal underpinnings of society in general and the household in particular.

The scanty literary sources on the Naga household economy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and specifically, the Sümi Naga household, leaves much to be desired. In the absence of sources, the present research must resort to comparative studies, oral traditions, re-enactments in the form of cultural lore, taboos and practices that continue till today, albeit in adaptive forms. Archaeology has often been viewed as a legitimate area to fortify the existing literary sources on history and the household economy as seen in the very well-known example of Pompei (Allison, 1998). This is a legitimate line of enquiry in the subject of the household since the household comprises the contents and objects within its perimeters. These will help reconstruct and deepen the knowledge of the historical household. The research aims to make use of the scanty artefacts that exist with respect to the Sümi Naga household.

## **1.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

As already noted, there are very scant resources pertaining to the household history of the period under study. This is not only with regard to the Sümi Nagas but the Nagas in general. This transitional period was marked by an overwhelming structural change at the politico-economic and socio-ideational level. It is not merely a coincidence thus, that most researches have focussed on these aspects. Hence, the survey on literature on this



topic has by default had to draw a wider net. Most of the existing and relevant work done on the household history and economy is more or less European or American in origin. More recently, efforts are being made to do research on this topic in African and Asian regions. The following are some of the source materials that has been studied as a basis of comparative analysis and a map for the progress and direction of the current research.

Kertzer (1991) has written extensively on the evolution of the household and family forms in Europe. He has mapped the general progress of debates and arguments that trailed the progress of the European household through the proto-industrial period. The impetus that sociologists received through a boom in household studies in the 1960s and 70s helped shape the literature on family life and organization. The apex of this nature of research went into ascertaining the changes and shifts that took place with the transition from agricultural to industrial society from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The paper highlights how the earlier established theory that European preindustrial past was characterized by nuclear households were largely proven to be untrue. This branding of the whole of Europe had not only been misleading but has resulted in homogenizing an area that was significantly marked by complex household forms. The same researchers that had stood up for this largely homogenized theory of the European household had retracted their earlier findings to acknowledge the fallacy of their findings. Laslett, (1965, 1972), a prominent researcher that gave an impetus to such a theory of nuclear household, had proceeded to reject the earlier dominant view of complexities in household form in that order “*pre-existing nuclear family system made Europe fertile ground for the rise of modern industry.*”(Kertzer, 1991, p.157).In the light

of the revision of this view, the reason for the pre-eminent industrialization of Europe and the nuclearization of the household has to be found somewhere else.

Kertzer's bottom-line is that the households are affected by complex variables like demographic, life course, political economic factors whose effects and degree of influence upon the household is not so easy to calculate. He raises the need to address issues that determine the composition of the household at any time or place by observing the matrix of political economy, demography and culture. The fact that similar political pre-conditions do not lead to similar household compositions and the instances where practicality and economy often trumped the preponderance of culture proves that there is a no one size fits all principle for the household history and economy. The study on the East European case as presented by Czap (1978, 1982, and 1983) on Russian serf society in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century belies the common sociological claim that patrilocality notwithstanding, the household composition was in fact, greatly influenced by demographic factors

This finding is very relevant to the present research because what has been established in research supports looking at the particular context of how a region's household system evolves over time because each follows a pattern that is unique to itself. The inescapable fact of the matter is that, the broad categorization of history along pre-industrial and industrial marker is insufficient to grasp the specific course that a region or people's household takes because there is a complex interplay of culture, political-economic and demographic factors involved in the patterns and evolution of the household. The research from other areas or countries may only serve as examples and

comparative basis of analysis to help the present research on the Sümi Naga household arrive at its specific conclusion and thesis. They cannot replace or substitute it.

Laslett (1970) largely concludes in his article that the patterns of the nuclear household family in the industrial era had its sure roots in the proto or pre-industrial period in England and France which possibly explains why these nations industrialized first. He did this by comparing the mean household size of England and France with the American colonial household whose mean size was greater than the first two. He summed up findings that were till date contemporary to conclude that the mean household size in England had stayed unaltered by changes in economic and social organization and even demographic fluctuations since the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. The peculiar case of Japan who was the first Asian country to industrialize was taken as further proof of cementing the theory that the nature and resilience of the household composition was comparable to that of England and France. Laslett supported the theory that household size remains constant over time by using John Hajnal's (1965) findings. On hindsight, this findings and the conclusion of household constancy over change had to be retracted in the coming years (Kertzer, 1991).

Booth (1991) succinctly makes the connection between the Aristotelian ideal of the *Oikos*/ household as envisioned by Aristotle and the Marxian idea of the household economy. That connection between the ideal of self-realization and the similar and more formerly Aristotelian conception of the good life has recently been made by researchers (Elster 1985, 86; Gilbert 1984; Whelan 1983)

Much of Marx's political economy drew inspiration from Aristotle's *Politics* (Booth, 1991, 59). More specifically with regard to the household economy, Marx seems to have appropriated the ancient household economy to critique its despotic nature in contrast to his emphasis on autonomy. In essence Marx owed much to the Aristotelian differentiation between *oikonomikē* and *Chrēmatistikē*, the “art of household management from that of unfettered acquisition- according to their respective ends.” (Booth, 1991, p.60).

The comparison and analysis that Booth draws upon the Aristotelian concept of household is relevant because much of the research on political economy until the modern period drew upon it. The economic activity carried out by the household was subordinated to the non-economic ends determined and best suited to the household's dominant members with the rest only indirectly benefitting from it. By extension of the economic nature of the *Oikos* and its purposes of production and consumption, the city was seen in terms of its main functions as a “vast *oikos*”. The concept of work and labor in the ancient household economy was not so much organized along productivity, time and effort as it was aimed at creating something beautiful or useful. This is held in sharp contrast to Marx's demonization of the capitalist system that reduces all activity to meaningless profit. Marx used this Aristotelian differentiation or distinction between provisioning for the good life and restless wealth pursuit to critique capitalism and envision a new household economy.

What may be carried away from Booth's writing is the preponderance of the household economy towards understanding the larger political economy because the former is where the government of economy originates through various elements within

the household framework. The varying and contradictory nature of Marx's indebtedness to the Aristotelian concept of the household economy has however not been resolved and remains dichotomous. As for the theory that emphasizes the predominance of the economic question over all other aspects of society, the present research will determine how far this has been true for the modern Sümi Naga household since its pre-modern or pre-industrial period.

Creighton's (1996) paper extensively documents the rise of the male breadwinner in the family that became widely prevalent within industrial-capitalist societies. His work reviews the efficacy and relevance of major explanations that led to this rise. Turning away from a strictly Marxist engagement, the significance of agency and negotiation among the key group of actors has been analyzed with their concomitant interests that intersected and diverged. Merely taking a Marxist view of the changing landscape of the household economy as seen in the male breadwinner phenomenon would take much away from the complex nature of the processes that involved and led to it.

Creighton aptly remarks that there has been an over-emphasis on the role of the working class that has led to an underestimation and neglect of the other actors like the employers, the women, the working environment and the labour processes. These factors and actors cannot be studied strictly and narrowly under the need to reinforce gender domination patterns. At the time of writing this article, there was still a gap between studying either household strategies or the groups within the labour market without contriving to draw associations or connections between them.

The paper correctly draws attention to the variability and complexity of the male breadwinner norm that would be specific to region, trade, industry and country. Researchers like Barrett (1980) integrated the influence of pre-capitalist gender practices with the requirements of capitalism that ended up favouring men and not particularly because capitalism demanded a particular household system. But in a marked critique to her theory, the comparison of family policies in Britain and France in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century showed that the difference between the two countries owed little to ideologies and more to the government policies that differed (Creighton, 1996).

Humphries and Ramas (1977) supported that this situation of the male breadwinner had been orchestrated and advanced by the working class for their own material interests. However, while this argument recognizes the merit of struggle that informs family and household systems, they neglect the power dynamics within the family with specific relation to women because this led to their economic dependence on men. Their work was seminal in drawing attention to the impact of early industrial development upon reproduction, fertility regime and the agency of the actors although they may have understated variations across the working-class household. Without taking into account the outside factors of the labour market organization, it would be impossible to correctly ascertain the employment or underemployment of women merely on family economy considerations.

Masculinity and its idea have been seen as an important factor that led men to respond to the economic and social change in a certain way. Rather than male domination, Rose (1986) emphasizes that it was the intention of men to preserve their masculine identity that results in linking class and gender interests in a different way.

Reiterating her, as work was transferred from the home to the factories, men sought a new basis for masculine identity, “... *by sharpening the distinction between the breadwinning capacities of men and the domestic duties of women.*” (Creighton, 1996, p.323). In a critique of Rose’s supposition, Creighton highlights the very real limitations upon both male and female workers because the employers were powerful and dominated over unions due to the labour surplus which led to intense competition for jobs. Thus, it is invalid to argue for male preponderance in the job market only along the lines of masculinity.

On a more relevant point, the women workers themselves did not necessarily oppose the male breadwinner ideal because they saw certain advantages in it for the family as a whole and for themselves. Their option of whether to work or not and when to do so became more flexible. Creighton (1996) highlights how in the case of England, the strong position of employers and strong legislations like the Poor law Amendment Act of 1834 only served to unite men and women despite the gender antagonisms. The more prior urgency to reduce competition for jobs in order to raise wages and spread employment more evenly between families was what gave an impetus to the male breadwinner phenomenon.

The study by Leboutte (1998) utilizes 1,413 households of the Liégeoise Basse Meuse between 1846 and 1900 to analyse the productive capacity of a household unit and compare its level of consumption using a longitudinal perspective. Leboutte confirms that the household is not merely an institution but an active or passive agent that processes and responds to factors like demographics, socio-economic and cultural factors. Like the previous established works, the complexity of the issue prevents the paper from

arriving at any theoretical or methodological conclusion. Nonetheless, the paper has advantage because it uses one of the best sources available in demographic studies: the Belgian Population registers. The analysis utilized two main occupational subgroups: the coalminers as representation of proletarian households and the gunsmiths to represent the proto-industrial ones.

While there was a greater prevalence of nuclear household forms, the percentage of extended and complex forms remains constant throughout the period under study. The nature of the household forms among the gunsmiths and the coalminers corresponded with the nature of their occupational requirement. For example, the more frequent extended households among the gunsmiths was favourable to their cottage-industry organization, which required more workers, enabling offspring, relatives and attached lodgers. As time progressed, a homogenizing pattern occurred in both gunsmith and coalminer households as extended household forms and attached lodgers became more common due to the dire economic depression of the 1880s. This is evidence of the ability of the household to adapt to economic circumstances and show agency. It also flies in the face of the works that support the predominance of nuclear family types in the industrial society. The household is indeed not merely an institution but a very flexible one.

Leboutte further questions the three classifications of the household economy under: family economy with every member working with low productivity, the family wage economy with work moving outside and the rise of active wage members; and finally, the household economy distinguished by wider division of labour along gendered and age lines. Historical studies over periods of time shows that reality is however less linear and more complex. Instead, Leboutte ( 1998), supports Richard Wall's concept of



the adaptive household economy which rather conforms to actual reality. The area under research seems to conform to this last form of adaptive household economy.

As to the calculation of consumption level of a household, it was found that the highest level of consumption is reached after 20-25 years of existence and slowly declines after 25 years. This correlates to the productive capacity of the household also at its maximum between 20-30 years of existence. This result shows that the critical period of a household is during the first 10 years of existence and after 35 years (Leboutte, 1998). Between the two occupational households, the coalminers seemed to have adapted better by practicing wider diversification of income sources.

Gershuny, Jonathan. & Robinson, John P. (1998) in their paper undertakes the task of analysing the continuity or changes in the division of labour in the household and the potential causes for it. The researchers draw upon time-budget surveys from United States (1965, 1975, and 1985) and the United Kingdom (1961, 1974, and 1984) as the basis of analysing the evolution of time spent in housework for men and women over three decades. The findings showed that women were doing less domestic work than before while men were doing more. In particular, the work analyses normative and technological factors which were attributed as cause for the historical changes that took place in the household division of labour.

While some proponents argued that decrease in women's household work time could be explained by their increase in paid work, arguments were made the other way round by others who proposed that the shorter time period required for household chores made possible by technology, may have actually allowed the individuals to take on a job

(Gershuny & Robinson, 1988). In highlighting such complexities, the researchers hold the view that *“a change in the behavioural attributes of particular structural categories may induce a change in the structural composition and vice versa.”*(Gershuny& Robinson, 1988, p. 545).A significant trend seen across these decades that showed reduced household chore of women and their increased participation in paid work was the decline in family sizes. Data by Gershuny& Robinson (1988), further showed a difference in worktime among women based on age group and child status. Women with children reduced their housework while those with no children increase their housework time. Despite the complicated reading of the data that seemed to present no clear-cut or homogenous explanation, the study showed the effect of employment status, family status, social class and education on the total hours of domestic work done by women.

Shelton, Beth Anne, &John, Daphne (1996) states that the debate on household chores and its division is no longer over whether the work time is decreasing over time for women. It has been an established fact that with variations taken into consideration, the reduction of housework for women is more or less the norm. Shelton and John’s paper largely explores the specific ways to measure and qualify housework. More importantly, they seek to understand how the current division of household labour and its variations may be explained by historical and contemporary factors. Lastly, they attempt to evaluate the consequences of the changing but still unequal division of household labour between men and women.

As definition for housework, Shelton and John (1996,300), define it as *“unpaid work done to maintain family members and/or a home.”* They leave the ‘invisible’ types of work that are included in some analysis. They refer to the time diaries as measurement

for analysing the hours and quality of household chores clocked by participants while also covering other measurements like those that focus on specificity of the tasks rather than on the time spent doing them. In their paper, they highlight the limitations of these measurements by pointing to the limitations of time diaries in dealing with tasks performed simultaneously. As for the specific measurement of tasks in lieu of the time measurement, they are largely seen to be unreliable indicators and quite subjective.

On the theory of technological innovations playing a decisive role in decrease of women's housework time, there is no unanimity as to how to measure it objectively. On the whole, Shelton and John (1996, p.303) concede that while it is unclear whether the technology factor facilitated women's entry into the labour force by decreasing household work time, *"they were compatible with their labour force participation."*

In their study of the possible causes of the way labour is divided in the household, Shelton and John review the Marxist/ socialist feminist theory that attributes patriarchy or capitalism or both for it. They aptly point out that such theorization at least partly reflects structural factors but the methodology still lacks consistency. The household labour research is distinguished by dominant quantitative studies that use one or more explanations to understand it. These factors are; relative resources, time constraints, and ideology/sex role explanations.

According to the relative resource explanation, the household division of labour echoes the relative value each partner brings to the relationship. Under this approach, housework is viewed negatively and the one with the most resources can negotiate his/her way out of it. However, what constitutes as valuable resource and the degree of its

importance may differ based on context and specific situations. On the other hand, studies made by Berardo et al (1987), Bergen (1991), Brayfield (1992), South and Spitze (1994) have found men's educational level is positively associated with their housework participation (as cited in Shelton & John, 1996). Some others have found no such association or that the effect disappears when gender ideology measures are figured in. It is also significant that studies on the effect of the social class on division of house work have little or no effect, suggesting that this division standards have been more or less homogenized.

The other measure that focuses on the role of ideology assert that couples with more egalitarian views will share work more equally than those that ascribe to traditional ideas. But even this association is proven to be inconsistent and weak. Nonetheless, some other studies that used time estimates of housework and multiple indicators of gender role attitudes seem to support an association between them.

The last measure is the time availability, demand/response capability and situational view which perceive division of labour as the result of men and women's other time commitments. However, this measure also produces skewed results because in the case of women, no matter how many hours they work out of the home, they continue to carry out the majority of the household tasks. Yet, studies made by Atkinson and Huston (1984) find that when women spend more time compared to their husband in paid work, they later do more female-typed works. But some researchers have brought out differing results, as in the case of Brayfield (1992).

The only sure association that may be drawn is between a woman's paid work time with their household time being negative, resulting in a seemingly greater equal division of work. This is regardless of whether the man's worktime. Other factors like different work schedules, marital status and children factor in but the results show inconsistencies or no great consequence. Comparative studies done across racial and ethnic lines further show variation across cultures.

The researchers give more leverage to the importance of gender in determining household labour time. The new thing they bring to the table on this subject is the idea that household is a resource through which men and women "*display or produce gender.*" (Shelton & John, 1996, p.312). Thus, gender ideologies do not merely determine household division of labour but it is a process through which the ideology is reinforced or acted out. They attempt to explain for the variations and anomalies that other factors produce by supporting the need to use the preponderant issue of gender as the framework to place all the other factors correctly.

While their stated aim also includes analysing the affects or consequences of the division of labour in the house, it is only very briefly touched upon. Again, there seems to be no consistent result on the issues of connection between housework time and labour force participation, earnings and marital satisfaction.

Ironmonger's (2001) work deals with looking at the household economy as being essential and a very active part of the economic process at large. For a long time, with industrialization and the shifting of many erstwhile domestic services to business organizations and the market economy, the focus on the household had only been in its

role as consumers. Economic papers fail to show that household expenditures may reflect consumption but *“are not purchases of goods ready to be consumed but are capital equipment, unfinished goods, raw materials and energy to be used as inputs to a production process.”* (Ironmonger, 2001, p.6). However, the paper effectively shows how household still is an effective processor of production activities whose role may be ascertained in mainly two ways; the human capital/ non-human capital and the transformation of intermediate commodities into their final consumption commodities. Industrialization and the market economy notwithstanding, the household continues to add further value to utilize these services before they are available for use and consumption.

Ironmonger (1972), Becker (1981) and Lancaster (1971), supported the view that the household was being eligible to not merely be seen as part of the economy but large enough to deserve the term household economy. The rest of the economy could be then termed as the market economy. The paper goes on to show how in many cases the market and the household are in direct competition to produce identical services and goods. Examples given are; restaurant meals vs. home-cooked meals, child care at day-care vs. home childcare, housework done by members vs. paid housekeeping/maids etc. Besides, the market economy still needs human capital to function and there are instances where households provide the required unpaid labour in lieu of paid employees.

Reid (1934), contributed significantly to household economic history by pointing out that household is perhaps the most important economic institution which has been neglected only in favour of price based economic system. Subsequently, other researchers like Boulding (1972), Morgan and Baerwaldt (1971), highlighted that the household was

the most important agent in the grants economy as well as covering 60% of the GNP through its purchases. The latter found that grant transfers from governments and private charities only stood at \$90 billion in comparison to transfers within households that were a whopping \$300 billion at that time. Scott Burns observed that in terms of total hours of worktime, those done outside the money economy rivalled it and would soon surpass it (as mentioned in Ironmonger, 2001).

The rise in the focus of the household economy and the importance of measuring the labour arose largely for the purpose of making women's work visible. The larger economy mostly neglects the unpaid labour and economic production done by women and household at home. It is further relevant that the increase noted in the participation of women in paid work neglects the reduction in household production because researches have noted that there is a negative association between the two. Surveys done in 12 OECD countries covering the years 1985-1992 found that the mean time spent in paid work was 24 hours per week per adult. On the other hand, the mean time was 26 hours per week in household chores. To not measure and evaluate the importance of the household labour and its value would be to ignore the significant time, effort and human capital spent doing it.

Of the prevalent method used to impute value to time used in household work/production, the most appropriate one has been the generalist replacement cost method because the working conditions and range of activities are similar to household members. It uses the wage rate for a generalist worker or housekeeper (Ironmonger, 2001, 10). It is now commonly recognized that household production absorbs more labour and atleast one-third the physical capital used in the market economy.

Allison (1998) tracks the general historiographical approaches to the study of household activities using archaeological records. She further emphasizes the importance of using archaeological records simultaneously with written documents and material evidences in arriving at a more composite picture of the historical household activities. Specifically, her paper presents new perspectives on the distribution of household activities in Roman houses with particular focus on the Italian site of Pompeii.

Commodities found at the particular sites of excavations are essential components in household history because by definition, household not only refers to its members and their activities to maintain it, it also encompasses all the goods and furniture found in it. In reiterating Wilke and Rathje (1982), Allison (1998, 16) refers to them as the “*essential building blocks in reconstruction of past societies.*”

While researches till this time made on archaeological findings of the domestic life have focussed on using contemporary ethnographic material to interpret household from the past, Allison stresses on using archaeological commodities and items to read into households and household activities. While written sources may be readily used to provide data on historical periods on household activities, these often have a complex relationship with archaeological findings. A pertinent reason for this complex issue is the acknowledged fact that texts are as much selective and narrowly representative of a given society. More often than not, they are merely or exclusively representative of the elites. Archaeology, for this reason, may provide a broader picture of past households with varied representations that is not bound by the limitations of text records.



The notion in archaeology that gives more priority to the structure over the commodities found inside it has been challenged in the paper. Many times, where material culture did not conform to the documentary records, interpretation has been doctored to fall into lines with the latter (Allison, 1998, 18). The dominant culture or group may dictate the nature of the structure of the house but the activities occurring daily can vary over time. Rapoport (1990) followed a similar thesis that supported the primacy of non-fixed features of the house in offering meaningful insights into household behaviour.

While the theory is credible and merits increased investigation, the pitfall of it lies in the lack of established or proven data collection method because of its fairly recent origins. Allison therefore suggests taking a large number of inter and intra-data sample studies in order to arrive at meaningful patterns of domestic behaviour. Another limitation in studying archaeological household patterns lies in the fact that archaeologists examining the households cannot determine how many households have inhabited the structures. Researches like Smith have proposed that due to this very reason, household series and not household per se may be the unit of reference.

Allison's work on household archaeological study in Pompeii found contradictions in what many modern scholars believed about the separation between family/domestic life and public life even in the layout of the building as a norm by the 1<sup>st</sup> Ad. Her studies led to the conclusion that the house contents indicated no such change in living patterns. Of the 35 halls sampled, 21 of them had evidence of domestic storage in the supposed display area. She concludes that such modern ideas of separation between

private and public may be better contextualized as an attempt to compare with 19<sup>th</sup> century 'separate spheres' frameworks.

The contribution of the paper lies in stressing on the need to examine assumption on consumption patterns, gender roles and division of labour using both textual and archaeological methods side by side.

In contemporary times, development has been a new catchphrase in sociological and economic studies. Household has been identified as an important institution for development. The Carr (2005) observes the limitations of developmental studies of household as they view the household in strict terms as a reified, social institution without accommodating its flexible nature that facilitates the flow of power and knowledge, both within and without. Carr illustrates this flexible agency of the household by studying two villages in Ghana's Central Region.

The paper basically questions the unitary development model of the household as a monolithic institution where individuals are more or less in agreement over how to utilize time, goods and consumption to maximize the common good. Carr finds through his study on the two Ghanaian villages that traditional economic development models are not adequate to understanding the flexible household. It is an active site of production and consumption that is carried out through an on-going process of managing economic and environmental changes. According to Carr (2005), factors of power, gender, production and divisions of labour do not precede economic or environmental changes but are both conditions and result of such exigencies.

Mbaye and Wagner (2017) questions the blind demand by developmental and sociological studies to stop the ‘oppressive’ and ‘retrogressive’ practices like bride prices in African and Asian cultures because they ‘commodify’ women to sustain patriarchal dominance. Mbaye and Wagner (2017), provides evidence to show that in fact, there is a positive association between bride price and the greater leverage of the woman in making fertility decisions. This reduction of fertility pressure upon the woman bought with a higher bride price is a matter that confounds typical socio-economic and contextual factors. While bride price per se has different effects on different women based on other co-factors like the nature of marriage, the economic dependence on men, the education and economic empowerment of women, its effect is largely found to be a positive reinforcement for the women and not a negative one.

The study employed a unique dataset of 2241 married couples in Senegal and collected it in two survey rounds. In stark contradiction to anthropological literature that supports the constraints that bride price effects on women, by using fertility decision as a marker for leverage in the marriage/household, the study found that bride price positively reinforces a woman’s position especially if it is on the higher side. This finding is complemented by previous research in Indonesia that found that women who perceive more household assets as being their own have a greater say in fertility decisions. The study found that birth outcomes of women who received only a symbolic price and those in the top 5 percentile differed by a robust 0.2 children. Ugandan studies corroborate the theory that bride price payments enhance the social status of women although their economic dependence on men does not prevent them from facing domestic violence at home.

The conclusion that has been arrived through the extensive study has flown in the face of earlier anthropological studies that suggested that a woman loses her reproductive autonomy on receipt of a bride price. On the contrary, the econometric results show that a woman's say in her marriage is crucially influenced by the payment from the groom's family to the bride. The predisposition of the groom and his family to pay a higher bride price reflects his willingness to value his wife and acts as future protection against divorces as that would be a failure of investment. The woman finds security in receiving a higher bride price and is able to gauge her standing in her future family.

This preliminary survey has helped give more clarity and direction for future course of the research.

The following are some of the relevant points that have accrued from the exercise:

**a. The interplay of socio-politics, ideology, economy and culture upon the household and its shifts is very complex and requires case to case studies.**

The majority of research done till date on the institution of household is far from consistent and homogeneous. If anything, the common thread has been the complexity of this institution and show that the variables that act upon it do not shape it the same way every time or in the same order. In the absence of established trends and theories that may fit every region or household history, specific studies and researches on this particular issue will continue to stay relevant and will further contribute to a more streamlined theory of this flexible institution. This will broadly contextualize power dynamics, gender relations, and division of labour in the household and other concomitant factors against the larger political, socio-economic and cultural landscape.

- b. While culture and politics have a very influential role in shaping and informing the household, without taking into account the issue of economy and practicality, the picture remains very much incomplete.**

Established works have shown that there is no clear causality between political pre-conditions and cultural preponderance. This is especially relevant for the *Sümi* Naga household and the larger Naga household institution. Till date, most researchers have only sought to analyse changes that came about in Naga society and its structures predominantly through the lens of religion, politics, modern education and culture. This present work will help moderate this over-dependence on religion, political, educational and cultural explanations by proposing to enhance the current works by introducing economic and practical factors.

- c. The importance of researching the economic logic of cultural practices pertaining to the household like bride price in lieu of dowry among the *Sümi* Naga households in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continuing till today.**

The studies made in Ghana, China and some other Asian countries and regions within them have seen a positive relationship between bride prices and the life chances and leverage of the women in the household. This is a stark contrast from the general feminist argument against such practices as being vestiges of past commodification of women and the perpetuation of patriarchy. Since the *Sümi* Nagas have a unique standing among the Nagas in this regard for being the only tribe to have practiced it, this line of enquiry will be most promising.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The available literary works on Nagas about the change and transformation that has taken place at such a massive scale in a short period have been simplified by putting the Christian missionaries and the modern system of education as the sole agents for the complex transformation that the society has undergone. There is a gap in the research because the complex system that has brought about the change has been simplified and has limited the understanding of other intrinsic factors. This research will therefore be from a socio-economic perspective whereby the economic changes that came about in the society of the Sümi Nagas and how their mode of production and consumption changed during the course of 100 years (i.e 20<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> century) will be investigated whereby the source that brought transformation in the society at large will be more clearly understood.

## **1.3 Area of study**

For this research the following areas in the Western Sümi region will be investigated- Kiyezu (A) village (1911), Nikhekhu Village, Alato village, Kuhoxu village originally known as Muhumi, Lhothavi Village, Homeland Village and Nihokhu Village. And from the Central region from which all the Western Sümi villages trace their origin of migration to three prominent villages have been investigated for the purpose of this research- Rotomi village, Asukhomi village and Satakha village. Zunheboto district is the headquarter of the Sümi tribe therefore three prominent villages under this district have been chosen for the purpose of this research. The geographical locations covered by this research are seen in Figure 1. Data collection through questionnaires and interviews were conducted from these villages.

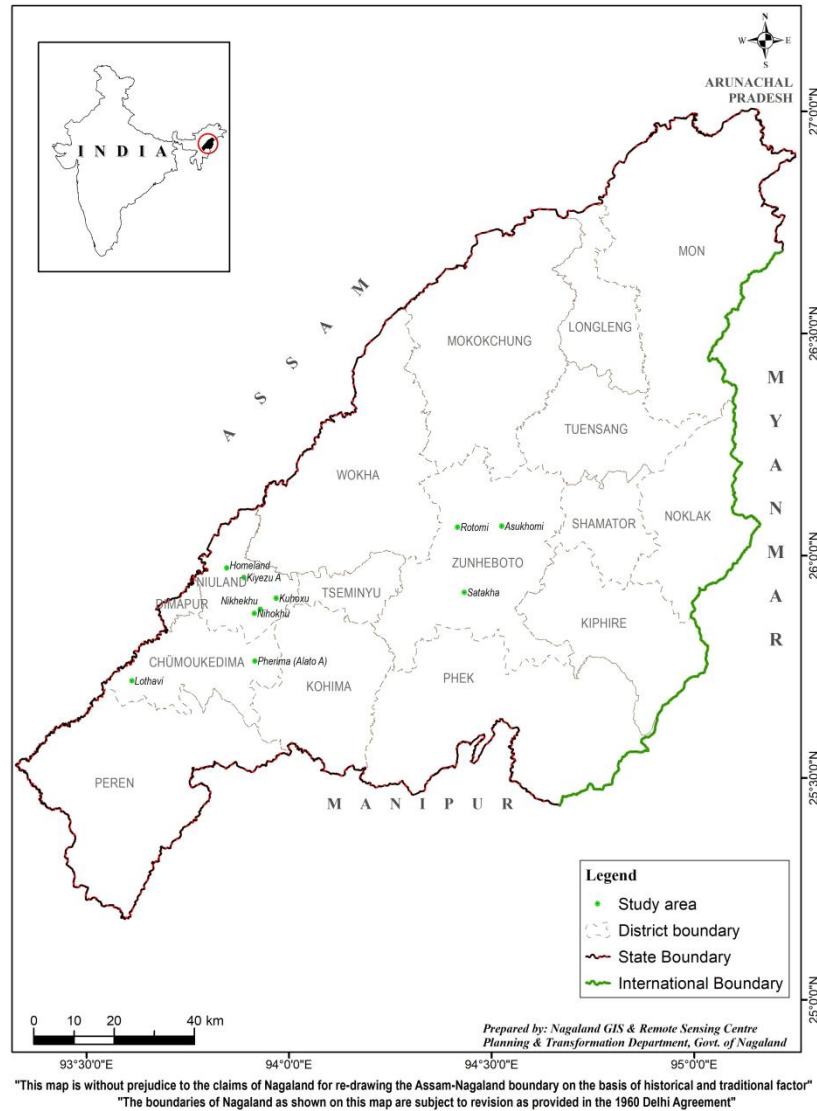


Figure 1: Location of study areas under Zunheboto, Chümukedima & Niuland District, Nagaland.

#### 1.4 Significance of the study

The household is an essential building block in reconstructing past societies. Understanding this institution will help us to fill in the gap in our knowledge about the change that the Sümi Naga society has undergone. An understanding of the nature of change in the household organization can bridge the gap between grand theories of cultural change and evolution. Taking household as a unit for understanding the depth

and reach of the industrial revolution can be helpful in seeing the economic continuity and growth that was happening during the 20th and 21st century rather than as a sudden revolutionary transformation. We can also see the role that women and children played through the input of their labor in many economical areas before the coming up of new employment opportunities.

By looking at the society from the perspective of household new factors in prosperity and hardship, success and failure will emerge. The attraction of the concept is that it enables us to relook at history from the perspective of the most fundamental structure of a society, a refreshing view from the perspective of the masses and their home management. The various structural and cultural circumstances in which they functioned and their opinion of their environment will counteract the implicit danger of over-emphasizing any singular agency and multiple view on the complex phenomena of social transformation.

### **1.5 Objective of Research**

This research paper aims to document an analytical history of the Sümi household. Through this research, ideas will be formulated about why continuity and transformation take place in societies at large. It will be an exploration of how the economic activities influenced and shaped the social process of change

### **1.6 Research Hypothesis**

The economic structural changes that came about with the emergence of alternative means of employment in this agricultural-centred community contributed to bringing about major social transformation. The old cultural practices and traditions began to lose



their relevance with the availability of lucrative and rewarding employments. The overall change that took place in society started with the household economy.

## **1.7 Methodology**

The research has been conducted using both primary and secondary sources. As already mentioned, the parameter of the analysis has been outlined as the household of the Sümi Nagas with specific reference to the economic change. The central concern throughout the research has been to study the change that has taken place within the society from the economic perspective. It is a fundamental and qualitative research. The research has therefore been analytical and descriptive.

For the collection of the primary source, interviews were conducted and questionnaires were collected from varying age groups in an attempt to do a comparative study on the changes that have taken place over generations. Random sampling method was used for gathering data for this research in order to have a better opportunity to include people from all sections of the society into the study.

The sources that will be used for this research will comprise of not just the primary source but will also include secondary sources which will be collected from various sources such as books, published and unpublished written records, and articles from journals. Artifacts, unpublished written records, and article. Artifacts materials used in the household and the significance and meanings attached to them will also be studied.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE SÜMI TRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY

This chapter examines the traditional household economy of the Sümi Nagas that prevailed before statehood, and Indian government jobs created new employment options in the state. The primary economic activity of the Sümi Nagas before statehood was agriculture and hunting, which formed the basic economy of this tribal community. However, other marginalized economic activities also made significant contributions but have often been overlooked; these neglected economic activities will also be included and examined in this chapter. The study of household economy in the context of the *Sümi* is important because the household is the primary unit of this society; it will help us to look closer into the issue of how changes began and took place in the larger context. The household unit will play a very significant role in studying how and why changes began to take place so rapidly in this society. Some of this community's most fundamental economic activities included agriculture, animal husbandry, pottery making, weaving, and cooking (We will be looking into cooking and food in the following chapter). It should be emphasized that economists have only recently started to recognize that a family is essentially a mini-industry. Its importance to the world of the economy is more extensive than it was earlier understood to be since it combines capital goods, raw materials, and labor to clean, feed, have children, and generate other valuable commodities (Becker, 1965). This has led to the belated realization that the household plays such an important role and that it is one of the most essential sources to understand

the economic condition of societies. Campbell opines that the most intimate and crucial relationship to human life is that of the household, which serves as the link between the individual's physical economy and the state's social economy (Campbell, 1903). All items required for the household in the Sümi household were produced and consumed within the household such as the construction of the house, furniture, utensils, food, clothes, and decorative items were all produced within the household by the members of the household; therefore, the study of the household economy provides much information to understand this community's social structure.

Children were trained to learn different life skills to be resourceful at home and community at large. There were no formal schools as we know today. However, the community had a critical institution called the *Apuki* (boy's dormitory) and *Iliki* (girl's dormitory), where young boys and girls were trained to learn about basic life skills to produce commodities that were required in a home while also learning the critical value of discipline and comrade among the village folks. The bachelors from the village though they had their own separate homes, slept together in the boy's dormitory called the '*Apuki*,' according to Elwin Verier (1969) in "The Nagas in the Nineteenth Century," these homes lack any features that would set them apart from traditional village homes and are only used at night by the young men. While the unmarried girls usually gather in groups of three or four at the front section of certain houses at dusk to spin yarn, clean cotton, and chaff, and laugh with the young guys for hours (Elwin, 1969). There were also *Iliki* and *Apuki* in most villages where girls also received training for various required skills (Dr. Sukhato Rotokha, personal communication March 20, 2020)

Gary Becker (1965) asserts that families are both producing units and utility maximizers. He claims that time and market goods are combined through home production functions to generate the essential commodities needed and that they select the optimum combination of these commodities in the traditional manner by maximizing a utility function (Becker, 1965). We see a very similar reality in the case of the Sümi Nagas, where home played a basic unit of the economy in the period before statehood, and government jobs became amply available for the people of this community. The economy discussed here regarding this society was based on the basic necessities required and used within the house.

## **2.1 House:**

When one looks into the tribal society of the Sümi community, it is worth mentioning that most of the Sümi houses in the Azhomi areas were located on top of hills. The Sümi villages are divided into two categories depending on their geographical location and climatic condition the villages located in the colder region were called *Azhomi* areas and the villages located in the warmer regions were called *Ghabomi* areas. The location was chosen for its ability to protect the villages from sudden attacks. The houses were locally constructed by the villagers as a community, and there were no charges paid by the new owners of the home for the construction work done. The construction of houses was a communal activity whereby every village member would help each other as and when the need arose. This sort of community life is now becoming a thing of the past as most of the houses are now being constructed with the help of hired workers who are paid wages to build brick and cement houses for permanency. It is worth mentioning that the Sümi community had a traditional practice of building the home of newly married couples

(Hutton, 1968). The entire village community would come together to build a new home for the new family, and in return, they would offer food for their work. This practice which has now lost its relevance shows that this community was centered on providing protection and comfort to each other in the village without being too concerned about making individual gains. This Sümi social practice demonstrates how the residents of these small villages have incorporated a tradition of social assistance into their way of life. A family that was intended to grow up with the support and good wishes of the community was eventually expected to live in a way that allowed them to give back to their community. Building a home for the newly married couple was not supposed to merely be an act of social welfare but was also associated closely with their religious *chine-chighe*. The builder of the house was required to observe a *genna/chine-chighe* for three days, during this period he was not permitted to converse with or feed anyone who entered the village after spending the night outside. The bridegroom sacrifices a chicken and hangs it from the top of the newly constructed home before moving in with his wife (Hutton., 1968). This custom is now redundant and not practiced as the construction of houses which were in the former days made with bamboo and wood, has become more complex, expensive, and time-consuming with new materials like brick, cement, and iron being used for the modern homes which have new architectural designs.

The Sümi house was said to have been usually constructed with bamboos, and the size of the chief's house was much larger than that of an ordinary villager. The granaries, which formed the villagers' most critical asset, were located on the outskirts of the village to secure them from fire (Hutton, 1968). The location of the granary seems to indicate that there must have been insecurity or fear among the people about a fire erupting and

burning all their food. However, it also shows how there was mutual trust among the villagers to keep their grains in a place away from them which is a commendable act of trust and comradeship among the villagers. Cattle were kept outside the villages (Hutton, 1968). Their yearlong agricultural produce on which they depended crucially for their survival was also kept away from their home, which seems to portray that the existing society had high moral values. If there were constant robberies, the villagers would not keep their granaries away in the isolated jungles out of their village. It is also worth mentioning that very few Sümi villages practice keeping their granaries on the outskirts of villages. This practice is slowly but surely disappearing, from the area under this research villages that no longer have the public granary were found as follows- Asukhomi village, Satakha village, Satoi Village, Kiyezu village, Nikhekhu village, Alato village, Kuhoxu village, Kiyevi village, Lothavi village, Homeland village and Nihokhu village. These villages have that have no public granary now have individual granaries located just next to their homes where it is more convenient for them to get their grains (Figure 12,13,14 and 15). The only village that still had a public granary in this research area was Rotomi village (Figure 11). Some of the reasons for its discontinuity were found to be for following- as many of the villagers have stopped depending solely on agriculture for their livelihood, cultivation in the village has drastically reduced, with granaries now losing their importance as they do not need to store their good for the whole year like they once did, people have also started to relocate their granaries in their homes because the amount of rice, corn or soybeans stored have decreased in quantity. It can therefore be conveniently stored in their homes, and the fear of fire breaking out in the village. The

entire community starving to death is not a reasonable fear for them anymore as their source of livelihood has changed.

The decorations on the Sümi houses were not done randomly or at one's own will as an expression of individual art but rather as an expression of social identity and recognition. When we look at *Tenhaku-ki* (Figure 3), a decoration that looks like the snails crooked shell is seen on the end of two bamboos that look similar to a snails tentacles, which is a part of the decorations on the roof that stretch from the gable, this was explicitly reserved for only those who had successfully fulfilled the social obligation required for such decorations. J.H. Hutton mentions that occasionally barge-boards on the roof of the house, pierced at the ends, may be seen, but this was rare, and horns were only decorated on the front post of the house by individuals who had successfully performed the required social gennas. Feast givers were also given the privilege of decorating the front post of their house (Figure 4). The trophies of war and animal heads killed by the inhabitants were also kept in the front part of the house as decoration items (Sema, 1986). This shows how the house and its decorations were all a way of displaying one's distinction and was a way of the community giving special recognition to individuals and families that had worked hard for the welfare of their village and community. Because carving the wooden post or creating a *Tenhaku-ki* was not necessarily a laborious or difficult activity in themselves, anyone could create one for their own house; But this was restricted only to people who had successfully performed all the required *chine-chighi*, which was basically for meritorious people in the community, who had successfully given the feast of Merit to his village community (Stockhausen, 2014). These houses were different from the ordinary houses (Figure 2) in the village. It goes on to show how there

was always a need to classify individuals into different classes, and this class distinction seems to have been validated and firmly approved by the community. The accomplishment of certain feats in the community were encouraged so that others could likewise strive for such greatness and be inspired to do better for the community's welfare. It was not necessarily a barrier that was made to create class distinctions. Anyone in the village could achieve these notable distinctions with hard work, bravery, courage, and generosity. Decorating the house was, therefore, as we see, not a space for expressing one's taste or a space for creative expression but was rather confined firmly to displaying the house owner's social and economic status in society. Large-scale sculptures were typically created by a team of people working together. Huge house panels used for decorating the house were cut in the forest before being brought to the village, as can be seen on the photograph Kauffmann took close to the Sümi village of Sakhalu which was taken on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1937. The post as was described in the photo was carved by the community but the symbols on the panels was first drawn by the village chief himself with a charcoal (Stockhausen, 2014). The Sümi chief applied a very abstracted shape of the Mithun horns and the enemies' teeth, and the villagers took up the rest of the wood carving (Stockhausen, 2014).

Hokishe Sema, (1986) mentions how the Sümi houses were built in such a way that even the strong march winds can travel through openings created by the hut's front poles crossing one another and that prevent the houses from being blown away. He said that while appearing delicate and feeble, the entire construction is sturdy and substantial. The design was done so that the strong winds which blew so strongly on the top of the mountains could not easily blow down the house (Sema, 1986). The Sümi houses were



built according to the geographical location and the available resource and technology that were accessible to them. The traditional Sümi Naga Houses were airy as they were made of bamboo, and it provided fresh air for them, keeping the houses well-ventilated even though there was fireplace and kitchen inside the house without any proper chimney. People lived a healthy and very long life according to the villagers; many people lived comfortably past their 80s in this kind of house. The air that passed through the house comfortably through the walls of the thatched house must have helped keep the air clean within the houses.

The housekeeping of these traditional houses was the responsibility of the women folks in the house. No man was burdened with household chores, a common practise in all Sümi houses. "Many women in more civilized parts of India may well envy the women of the Naga hills their high status and their free and happy life; and if you measure the cultural level of a people by the social position and personal freedom of its women, you will think twice before looking down on the Nagas as 'savages'" (Haimendorf, 1939, p.101). The fact that women took a chunk of the responsibility in managing the household did not necessarily take away the freedom of living a respectable life; as stated by Haimendorf, the women were respected for the jobs they performed in their homes. The life of a man was never complete until he took a wife and started his own home; only after a man was married could he undertake the most important social responsibility of hosting the feast of merit and thus make his mark in his community and achieve social recognition.

## **2.2. Agriculture.**

Agriculture was the most significant and the main economic activity for the Sümi villagers before statehood because they were entirely dependent on the harvest collected from their farms for their yearlong food requirements. The Sümi community was an agriculture based one and they practiced both jhum cultivation and crop rotation (Hutton., 1968). The road to their villages changed every year as a result of their frequent changing of agricultural farmlands, making the path very temporary. Hutton, in the Sümi Nagas, talk about how shifting cultivation took place by keeping a span of 15-25 years in between cultivation of the same tract of land (Hutton., 1968). As there was ample land available and the population was comparatively low, sufficient time could be given to the land to rejuvenate and restore. Jhum cultivation back then can therefore be considered a very sustainable form of farming. Further, according to J.H. Hutton, seven years was typically the shortest amount of time before the land was deemed suitable for re-cultivation, ten or twelve years was typically thought to be the most typical amount of time for the land to lie fallow. Fifteen to twenty years was thought to be the desired length of time to leave it uncultivated (Hutton, 1968).

An overwhelming majority of the Nagas are engaged in agriculture. This may be attributed to the extensive Jhum or shifting cultivation and to the fact that agriculture in the state depends almost entirely upon human labor with negligible use of animal or mechanical power. According to Saleh Islam, most of the cultivators were owner cultivators in the 1980s, and the percentage of cultivators was much higher compared to other states, which he attributed to the participation of females in more significant numbers in agricultural work (Islam, 1989). Traditional economy of the Sümi community

was subsistence agriculture and we can see that it was the occupation that was most encouraged by the community all other occupations such as pottery making, weaving or crafts were considered unimportant and were only practiced as a secondary activity. There were no specific group of people who took up these jobs as a specialized profession but this were rather looked as essential works that was taught to every individual while they were young in the *Apuki* and *Iliki*. These activities were discouraged during the active working season of the agricultural calendar and were usually performed during the leisure days. As the entire community knew how to perform and manufacture all the products required in their individual homes there was no need for a professional group of workers in these secondary activities. This in turn contributed to major contribution of human labor in the agriculture work force where the entire community would participate in the agricultural activity as there was no other profession that was practiced.

As the Sümi villages were an agricultural-based society, the household naturally formed the most critical unit for analyzing this society- as all the production, consumption, reproduction, and utility were functions that existed conveniently within the confine of the household. The pre-existing Sümi villages were self-sufficient and could meet their fundamental needs with little input from exogamous sources. Except in the occasional occurrences of natural calamities like famine, when it became necessary for neighboring communities to be contacted, they lived independently on their own, relying on no one but their village community. The Sümi people rarely needed to obtain anything or purchase outside the village because they could produce all they needed locally. Very few items were imported to the villages; two very early items were beads

for ornamental jewelry used as status symbols and salt. While writing about the Nagas society covering the period 1827-1896, Elwin Verrier, commented that almost all the tribal villages did not know how to utilize money (Elwin, 1969). However, though they were unaware of money in the modern sense of the term, trade was actively practiced. When examining the Sümi household economy, it is essential to remember that the Sümis did engage in trade, primarily through the barter system and occasionally with worn-out iron daos, one of which was valued at the equivalent of a cock. Brass beads that were about a foot long were also sometimes used as currency, and these were known as "*chabili*" (Hutton, 1968). The Sümi villages were divided into two categories based on the climatic condition within the regions notably known as *Ghabomi* (Sümis who inhabited the warmer regions) and *Azhomi* (Sümis who inhabited the colder regions). As the community lived a very self-sufficient life all the things needed within the household were locally produced within the community.

The amount of rice cultivation has substantially decreased over the years, with many of the villagers leaving the occupation of agriculture and farming to take up government jobs. In Rotomi village, rice cultivation has reduced so drastically that many old granaries lie empty without much use and relevance. One new and essential measure was introduced under village council Chairman Hukato Shohe's initiative in 2017 to give cash prize of Rs.5000 to the villager to the farmer with the highest crop yield. This measure was introduced to encourage the villagers to practice the traditional agricultural knowledge and to increase the production of rice in the village. But it has been noted that there has been very little change in the production of rice from within the village, and rice is still found to be imported into the villages by many households that have discontinued

the practice of agriculture as they are more occupied in pursuing their government jobs which they feel are financially more rewarding. Men and women working in the agricultural sector in this period were working without any wages. Nevertheless, it was more a form of exchanging labor and helping one another, which we see beings to change after the introduction of monetary system in this society.

When Saleh studied Naga life in the 1980s, he stated that the vast majority of Nagas were still working in agriculture. Jhum and shifting cultivation were extensively practiced, according to his writing, and the state relied exclusively on human labor, with little to no mechanical or animal power usage. Owner cultivators form the majority of the cultivators. Compared to other states, the proportion of cultivators in the labor force is significantly higher, which is a result of the greater participation of women in agricultural activity (Islam, 1989). Islam has looked into the change in the economic structure of Nagaland after achieving statehood and his work has focused on the transition that was beginning as a result of the change in occupation of the population.

When looking into the Sümi household economy, it needs to be noted that the Sumi did practice buying and selling, which were mostly in barter system and occasionally in the form of iron pieces. While writing about the Naga society covering the period between 1827-1896, Elwin Verrier, has mentioned how most of the villagers were unaware of the use of money (Elwin, 1969). Though they were unaware of money, there was a trade that was in practice with the outside world as well as we can see from the cornelian beads, coral beads and shells which formed an important cultural item. Gary Becker (1965) observes that families produce units and utility maximizers. He claims that time and market goods are combined through home production functions to generate the

essential commodities needed and that they select the optimum combination of these commodities in the traditional manner by maximizing a utility function (Becker, 1965). The economy thus discussed in this society has been based on the necessities required within the house, which were produced and used within the household and the villages. Therefore, studying households becomes the most crucial component to understanding this society.

The following are some of the tools and implements used by the Sümi people for their agricultural activities (Figure 5,6 and 7): *Akupu*- A small digging hoe; *Amughu*- an axe; *Azhta*- A long and sharp iron tool with a wooden handle almost like a knife but much more prominent in size; it is used for clearing or cutting trees or any object required. *Akuwo*- It is usually made with bamboo which has been bent round and is used for clearing the grass; *Akuwa/ Achaka*- "Is a stick split up at one end of the stick and tied with a cane to keep them at right angles to the handle."; *Apeghe/ Apoghu*- is a winnowing fan, a "shovel-shaped tray of bamboo matting."; *Akwoh*- is a grain basket pointed at the bottom.; *Akwozhe*- "a sieve, made of finely-split bamboo and used for cleaning mille."; *Athehesu*- "a club of wood or bamboo root for breaking up clods of earth"(Hutton, 1968 p.66-67). All the tools required for the agricultural works were also self produced with the help of available resources like wood, bamboo and stone.

### **2.3. Animal husbandry and hunting.**

The two other most important food sources for the Sümi community were animal husbandry and hunting. Islam (1989) discusses how every household in Nagaland generally owns pigs and poultry but describes that the methods of rearing as being

primitive. Cattle and Mithun were considered to be important status symbols, and ownership of these animals was considered to be direct evidence of the wealth of a family. He also mentions how bullocks were generally not used as draught animals, and the practise of milking cows was only beginning to be adopted, and all livestock was until then maintained mainly for meat consumption (Islam, 1989). Although animal husbandry is considered a secondary economic activity among the Sümi's substantial amount of time was devoted to this work, forming an important source of their household economy. Taking care of the livestock was considered an activity that was mostly taken care of by women, but it was not exclusively their job. Hence, there were men and children who were also participating in taking care of livestock. And even today taking care of livestock is done by all members of the family irrespective of gender.

Ghosh (1979) also mentions that a few cows and bulls are usually always kept in each home. Since there is no plough or cart, bulls are raised primarily for beef and not for any other purpose. A few pigs are kept in each home only to provide meat. There are also ducks and crows, with a few of the former and fewer of the latter living in each household. Others are raised for their flesh, including some goats and sheep (Ghosh, 1979).

Hunting was another essential sport for the men, and there was no shortage of wild animals to hunt. It was mentioned by Yetoshe Awomi from Rotomi Village that they even had an instance where one morning two deers were found outside their home, and he recalled how there were many animals and birds to hunt, so there was hardly any shortage of meat during their childhood and even adulthood (Mr. Yetoshe Awomi, personal communication, December 5,2019). It was also mentioned by the Gaon Bura of

Kuhoxu village, (Mr. Phushito Zhimo, personal communication, June 5, 2021) that when they first came to settle in the village, there were lots of wild animals and birds, which have continued to dwindle over the years. It was also prevalent for all households to practice animal husbandry, as we can see from the chart that even till recently; it has been a common practice. This is, however, beginning to change; people are beginning to find cheaper and easier meat in the market, which has mostly been imported from neighbouring states. Moreover, as most households are now busy with other jobs, it has become more and more difficult for people to raise their animals in their homes unless it is for the purpose of selling them in the market.

#### **2.4. Pottery.**

Another important household economic activity of the Sümi people was pottery making, as Ghosh would say “Pottery is the oldest cottage industry but as usual for domestic consumption only” (Ghosh, 1979). All the kitchen utensils required for the households were created from within the household (Figure 9). The cooking pots were made of special clay dug from the bank of streams (Hutton., 1968). Cooking pots could not just be made randomly, but it was performed in a ritualistic and ceremonious manner with only woman participating in making it till the final stage, where it was formed into its desired shape and placed in the fireplace where it is kept for about a week until the assigned day for firing it up in the jungle (Hutton., 1968). This goes on to prove that making pots was considered to be primarily a women's occupation. Sümi women making pottery can be seen in the images in Figure 8. Since pottery making required dedication and time, the chine-chighe was thus said to forbid the woman from not talking to anyone while making pottery; this may have been practiced by the society to probably get the work done



quickly without any interruption so that the work in the field for agricultural activities would not be delayed as a result of woman folks spending too much time in pottery making. Hutton also vaguely suggests that "it is possible that pottery making may, like flute-playing, have some effect on natural forces which would be deleterious to the crops"(Hutton., 1968). There were three categories of pots, as mentioned by J.H. Hutton the ordinary pots for cooking, double cooking pots used for cooking meat and rice at the same time, and ceremonial pots, which were miniature and had handles used exclusively only for ceremonial purpose. This were the simple categories into which the pots were divided because there was no need to create anything extra as the living standard of the people was also quite simple. In a society that lived in self sufficiency we see that while making their own utensils formed an important activity for this community spending too much time on it was not encouraged for fear that it may have a negative effect on the communities farming activity. We see that pottery making was reserved only for fulfilling the basic requirements of the society and practicing this as a form of art was strongly discouraged through various *chine-chighe* so that people might not divert their attention from the main work which was considered to be agricultural work.

## **2.5 Weaving.**

The Sümi have a very long history of weaving, which has been a major source of recognition and social standing for the weaver. Even though there was no monetary exchange for the domestic work that women did before colonisation, a consideration can be made by looking into the cloth market and the typical amount of money that is paid for a household's clothing today. Through this, one can understand and evaluate the economic contribution that women made for their homes through weaving. The art of

weaving has been passed down through village educational institutions like *Illi-ki*, a shared house or girl's dormitory where young girls were taught basic life skills, as well as from mother to daughter or occasionally through senior relatives. It should be remembered that in pre-colonial Sümi society, young men and women lived in separate homes. *Apu-ki* was the name of the boys' residence, which also served as their place of instruction. Weaving was highly valued in the Sümi culture as a crucial economic and social life skill, and this can also be shown in marriage customs where young women who were skilled weavers received higher bride prices. The Sümi community placed a strong emphasis on weaving as an essential economic and social life skill, and we can see that in marriage practices too, where young women who had the skill to weave were given more bride price (Venuh, 2014). In the Sümi community, weaving is typically done in the back strap weaving fashion. Black, blue, and scarlet were the traditional colours most frequently used, while indigo, madder, and yellow are also recognized (Hutton., 1968). This traditional wrap-around, which is woven and worn by women, is known by the Sümi names *hekimini* and *amini*.

J.H Hutton opines that the Sümi people had only recently acquired the art of weaving from their neighboring tribes. This assertion, however, is found to be false because he makes numerous claims in the same book that demonstrate how weaving was a fundamental aspect of Sümi traditions and cultural practices. He also claims that Sümi people were very strict about upholding their *chinne-chighi* (religious omens and beliefs). His statement is further strengthened by this statement "*Sumi lhoayelo "chini" ipi keuno thokha ghasulu che, eno tiye kichimi tsa kije ke. Khiu nomu chini ipi keu veche eno hexamo. Khristomi shive kethiu 'chini' ipi keu kuhave*" (Sumi Christian Centenary 1904-

2004 *SABAK PUGHOBOTO XULHE*, 2004). In this magazine published in 2004, it is well understood that there was still memory among the older people about how these omens and beliefs were very seriously taken into consideration; the above statement says, "According to the Sümi tradition, whatever was said to be '*chini*' was taken very seriously and could forbid a lot of things, that was the elder's word. No one would dare to go against what was said to be *chini*. After Christianity began, '*chini*' was no longer relevant." Religion, omens, and beliefs played an important and major part within the Sümi people, just as they did in every other ancient culture.

Further, Hutton (1968) expresses his assumption that "The clothes worn by the western and central Semas are usually of Lotha patterns. Weaving is only practiced in a few villages, and even here the patterns worn seem to be of Lotha origin, as the prevailing Sema cloth, which may be seen in all the Sema villages from Lazemi to Litsammi, is the black cloth with three red stripes down each side used by the Ndreng Lothas and called by them *sinyeku* . Of course, it is possible that the Lothas have adopted this patterns from the Semas, but in view of the fact that weaving seems a newly-acquired art in the sema country, the reverse is more likely" (Hutton, 1968, p. 14). He expresses a sense of uncertainty and doubt, suggesting that it's conceivable that the Lothas may have adopted the pattern of weaving from the Sümis as well. Instead of fixating on questions of origin and who influenced whom, it is pertinent to ponder and explore the rich tapestry of folklore and oral history shared by these two tribes since both Sümi and Lotha exhibit a multitude of similar customs and traditions, even possessing oral accounts of their recent kinship. By examining these shared similarities, one can delve into the profound connection between these two tribes, rather than fostering a rivalry over who mastered

the art of weaving first. It is also worth mentioning that he was aware of this folk lore, narrated in the book "The origin of tribes," about the story of common ancestry of Sümi, Angamis, Lothas and Aos (Hutton, 1968). Cultural, traditional and religious similarities between tribes were often overlooked or attributed to recent influences, while there was a recurring assertion of constant intertribal warfare as evidence of distinct tribal identities. This persistent argument raises questions about the onset of assimilation processes and whether tribes had common origins before evolving separately over time and across different regions. Exploring these questions could provide valuable insights into the dynamics of indigenous tribal interactions.

If, as suggested by Hutton, weaving was a recently acquired art from neighboring tribes, it would not have played such a fundamental role in their religious ceremonies and cultural customs. As Hutton himself mentions, "Warriors of renown who have also completed all their social gennas may wear a blue cloth of mixed thread called chini-pi ("genna cloth"), but as very few women know how to weave this cloth, it is rarely seen" (Hutton., 1968, p.51). He makes another assumption that the women had limited knowledge of weaving, specially the *chini-Phi*, as the cloth wasn't widely used. However, it is crucial to emphasize that the Sümis strictly adhered to their *chine-cheghe*, which were integral to their animistic religious beliefs prior to Christianization. Also within the close-knit village community, where everyone knew each other very well, wearing such clothing without genuinely fulfilling all the social *chine-cheghe* would have been a conspicuous and challenging act. It is also worth noting that many individuals from the older generation still vividly recall a time when clothing held significant cultural

and symbolic meaning. They still find it inappropriate that certain individuals wear clothing without understanding the relevance of the clothes in contemporary times.

"Weaving, which is done by women, and that only in a few villages, is subject to the prohibition that no weaving may be done while the weaver's husband has gone to participate in warfare, for hunting games or for trade. If this prohibition is not observed, the husband will get his legs caught in a tangle of creepers while passing through the jungle, and thus meet with an accident. Some Semas say that it is genna for their women folk to weave at all. But the truth appears to be that this statement is only a way of getting out of the admission that they do not know how to weave. Wives who can weave are often sought after, but, when taken to a village where the other women do not weave, usually abandon the practice themselves, despite their husbands. The villages in the Dayang valley and west of the upper waters of the Kileki and Dikhu rivers are the ones in which weaving is regularly practiced" (Hutton, 1968, p. 51). We find interesting footnotes in the same page " It really is genna to weave in some South Sangtam villages such as Photsimi, and all their cloths are imported from neighboring tribes" (Hutton, 1968, p.51).

In the paragraph above, Hutton appears to make an assumption that all the gennas mentioned by the Sümis regarding weaving were fabricated excuses to conceal their lack of weaving skills. However, in his footnotes, he acknowledges the authenticity of weaving as a genna among the South Sangtam villages and the importation of clothing for this community. There is an intriguing contrast in his approach, as he openly assumes the Sümis are making excuses without providing a clear rationale, while he doesn't apply the same scepticism to the other community's practices. The folk tale titles "The

Weaving Obsession” tells the story of Nglangle, the daughter of diligent parents. In the narrative, Nglangle displays an intense passion for weaving, whereas her parents do not hold weaving in high regard. Throughout the story, her parents repeatedly urge her to channel her efforts into more vital activities, such as working in the fields for agricultural purposes, as they perceive weaving as a non-profitable endeavor that doesn’t contribute to the family’s economic well-being. They actively discourage her and make efforts to convey the message that weaving hold less significance compared to agricultural tasks (Kath Rengma & Jish Kath, 2017). They celebrated their harvest without sharing the meal with their daughter who is left hungry in the hope that she would be able to learn her lesson. This tale illustrates how, in an agricultural-centric community, weaving seemed to offer minimal economic advantages. As the narrative unfolds, Nlangle experiences remorse for her choices and, having gained wisdom, joins her parents in agricultural work forsaking her weaving passion. In a society primarily focused on agricultural sustenance, there was little room for excess clothing, which was deemed an unnecessary luxury. The entire village’s collective effort was dedicated to securing ample food reserves for the entire year. The folktale unequivocally conveys that prolonged weaving wasn’t deemed a productive pursuit. Investing excessive time in weaving was detrimental to the community, as it did not yield substantial economic benefits, especially when everyone could weave their own cloth. The story underscores that weaving was not a financially rewarding occupation, in stark contrast to agriculture, which held tangible benefits for all. Consequently, this secondary activity has been perceived as an unproductive use of time.

Hutton also noted that in the pre-colonial Sümi society, there was a lack of encouragement for women to engage in weaving. This was a sensible approach because weaving demanded a significant amount of time, and if women devoted too much time to it, they would potentially waste valuable hours that could have been used for essential agricultural activities. Given that the economy of this society heavily relied on agriculture, laboring in the fields was of utmost importance. Therefore, if a significant portion of the population, namely women, were occupied with weaving, it would result in substantial losses for their rural economy.

The idea of wearing clothes was tied down to an important purpose of indicating an individual's social class and status within the community which was an important reason for why weaving *amini* of any design could not be freely done. As it was not simply a matter of adornment or fashion. Another reason for discouraging women from weaving could also be rooted in economic considerations. Weaving was not viewed as an economic trade in itself, as there was no established market for selling clothes and also because every household could weave the required clothes by themselves.

The law mentioned “according to law, if a cloth or dao is stolen, it has to be repaid sevenfold,” (Venuh,2014, p.640) this provides insight into the legal and social structure of the Sümi society, particularly in matters related to property, theft and the significance of woven clothes. It shows how woven clothes were a very important component in this community and the significant value it held in the Sümi society. They were not just items of clothing but had cultural, social and economic importance. The law underscores the importance of property rights in Sümi society and establishes that both clothes and Dao were valuable possessions and stealing them was a serious crime. By

stipulating a sevenfold repayment, it indicates that the Sümi community took property theft seriously and sought to deter potential thieves through severe penalties. It provides valuable information into how these two items were intricate commodities in this community as there was a community-based law regarding them.

From the folk tale “The story of Tsuipu and Khaulipu” provides valuable insight into the practice of weaving among the Sümi community, particularly emphasizing the role of women in this traditional craft (Venuh,2014). This casual mention of weaving in the story helps us understand the cultural and social significance of weaving in Sümi society. In the story Khaulipu, one of the characters, is depicted as engaged in weaving inside her house. This portrayal underscores the integral role of women in Sümi society as skilled weavers. Weaving, for many indigenous communities, including the Sümi, is not merely a practical skill but also a deeply cultural and symbolic one. Weaving is not just a mundane task in Sümi culture; it holds a special place. The mentioning of Khaulipu’s weaving serves to highlight the cultural importance of this craft within the community. This passage from the Sümi folk tale hints at the broader cultural and social context in which weaving is situated within the Sumi society.

The Sümi people's customary marriage gift ritual included weaving as a crucial component. The groom constructs a walking stick with certain designs on it, two different types of carrying baskets (*amuto* and *akho*), and the carrying strap (*Apukho*), according to Sümi tradition, this were the presents which were to be gifted to the prospective wife. The future bride will also in return have to weave a waist belt, an apron, and an *akiyesakixi* (Venuh, 2014, p.695). Weaving was a craft practised by women, while men typically worked with wood, and we see here that in an effort to impress their respective



in-laws, they offer their talents in the form of gifts. Such traditional practices also show how weaving was an important part of the society.

Sümi people are famed for being the most exorbitant among the Naga tribe in partaking of the bride price, with many elaborated customs and traditions attached to it, and this was a critical and intangible social customary practice of the society. This society considered marriage an auspicious occasion and therefore included the initiation of marriage into its most prominent festival, the harvesting festival called *Tuluni*. In the customs of marriage, weaving was a critical cultural, economic, and traditional practice of the *Sümis*. The bride price required *Amnikimijixeh* (Figure 10), which was an essential requirement of the bride price among the high-class people in the society; according to this tradition, a woman, in exchange for the cattle she received, was also required to bring with her after marriage "every neck ornaments like *Achiikula*, *Achipula*, *Achixathikutsa*, *Zuchuyi*, *Achikuhu*, *Anihla* and *Shequnihla*. Apart from this, a pair of every traditional clothes. But the most important is taking different pieces from different necklace like *Achiku*, *Achipu*, *Achixathi*, *Zuchuyi*, *Sheqhunihla*, *Anihla*, *Yechuchi*, and *yeghachila* and stitching it on a sarong called "*kujipu*" which is known as *Aminikimiji*" (Venuh, 2014, p. 696) "Then the day of the marriage is fixed. And as for the *Aminikimijixeh*, before the bride leaves her parents' home, a ritual called "*kichini*" is performed, only after which she leaves for her husband's place. In this ritual she will put on the *Aminikimiji* and all the ornaments and the *Anisuu* would pour the rice beer (made without using water) on her knees and if the water runs straight down her feet then it was a sign of long life and holy marriage. The next day, the marriage is held"(Venuh, 2014, pp. 697–698). This ceremony from the pre-colonial period shows that clothing had profound symbolic implications and

was worn with purpose, demonstrating a profound belief in the omens associated with clothing and ornamentation. Through this ceremony, the performance by young women shows that there is a sense of anxiety and obligation placed on women to have led a virtuous life because the outcomes of this rite appear to be reliant on the excellent character of the bride. It is improbable that the skill of weaving was recently learned because this ritual does not appear to be borrowed or a new one; instead, it appears to be a long-standing one in their traditional marriage ceremonies. By examining the religious rites and customs mentioned above, one can present the argument that weaving was not a "recently" learned skill because it was ingrained in their traditional and customary belief systems.

The Sümi people are known for their elaborate and extravagant practices related to bride price, a crucial and intangible customary tradition in their society. Marriage holds great significance for the Sümis, and they have seamlessly integrated the initiation of marriage into their most prominent festival, the *Tuluni* harvesting festival. In the realm of marriage customs, weaving plays a pivotal role, holding cultural, economic, and traditional importance among the Sümi.

In the context of bride price, there is a particular requirement known as *Amnikimijixeh*, especially among the high-class individuals in the society. According to this tradition, when a woman receives cattle as part of the bride price, she is also expected to bring a significant array of neck ornaments like *Achiikula*, *Achipula*, *Achixathikutsa*, *Zuchuyi*, *Achikuhu*, *Anihla* and *Shequnihla* after marriage. Additionally, she must provide pairs of traditional clothing. However, the most crucial element is the creation of the *Aminikimiji*, a sarong adorned with pieces from different necklaces like *Achiku*, *Achipu*,

*Achixathi, Zuchuyi, Sheqhunihla, Anihla, Yechuchi and Yeghachila.* This sarong is stitched together as part of the bride price.

Before the bride departs from her parents' home to join her husband's household, a ritual called "*Kichini*" is conducted. During this ritual, the bride adorns herself with the *Aminikimji* and all the specified ornaments. The *Anisuu*, a significant figure in the ceremony, pours rice beer on her knees. If the beer flows straight down to her feet, it is considered an auspicious sign indicating a long and holy marriage. The actual marriage ceremony takes place the following day.

This pre-colonial ceremony underscores the profound symbolic significance of clothing and ornamentation within Sümi culture. Every item of clothing is worn with a specific purpose, reflecting a deep belief in the omens associated with attire and accessories. Through this ritual, performed by young women, we can discern a sense of apprehension and responsibility placed on women to have led virtuous lives because the ceremony's outcomes appear to be tied to the bride's character. The weaving skill demonstrated in this ritual does not seem to have been recently acquired; instead, it appears to be an integral part of their longstanding traditional marriage ceremonies. By examining these religious rites and customs, one can argue that weaving was not a recent skill acquired but it was rather an ingrained practice deeply embedded in their traditional belief systems.

To emphasise, clothing and accessories were not simply worn by any individual; rather, they held specific meaning and could only be worn by people who had fulfilled the required criteria. Clothes worn by men: *Lapuchoh* and *Asukudaphi* were only worn by

warriors, *Avi Kiyiphi* was only worn by wealthy individuals, feast givers, and fighters, and *Chini-Phi* was only worn by warriors who had finished all of their social genna.

Clothes worn by women known as *Aminikimji Mini* is considered to be the most prestigious and most crucial *amni* or *hekimini* which "in the olden days was used by only those who were very rich, who had completed all the rituals and *gennas* and well respected in the society. At the time of their daughter's marriage, they would make weave this and give it to their daughters. This sarong isn't worn like the others; instead, this is given as a marriage ornament and to be kept in the house as a showpiece and to be put away only after the birth of the first baby. Again when their daughter gets married to someone from their own class or having the same living standard, this Sarong would pass on to the daughter at the time of marriage" (Venuh, 2014). *Asukuda Mini* is another significant *amni* which was used only by the wife and daughters of rich men who had continuously kept mithuns for generation (a sign of wealth) (Venuh, 2014). *Tsughu Mini* is worn by young girls who "reaches the age when she starts taking the characteristics of a woman," (Venuh, 2014, p. 705).

The Sümi people have a renowned folk song called *Ayekuzule*, which narrates the enduring tradition of passing down the art of weaving through generations. This song is accompanied by a re-enactment that vividly portrays the entire process of cultivating, harvesting, spinning, weaving and finally the act of putting on the woven garments.

***Aye Kuzu Le***

*Wolo wolono ilili wolo he hei*

*Zulo zulono ilili zulo he hei*

*Nipu asuye ishi xu ighi* (This is how our forefathers lived)

*Ishipuzuno luza ye ighi* (This is how we cleaned our forest)

*Ishipuzuno lusa hu ighi* (This is how we *lusa hu* means clear our fields, after putting it on fire, with our spade and prepare the field for sowing)

*Ishipuzu apiti ve ighi* (This is how we sowed our seeds)

*Ishipuzu supha xo ighi* (This is how we harvested our cotton)

*Ishipuzu supha le ighi* (This is how we *le* is a word that describes the process of plucking, peeling and cleaning the cotton)

*Ishipuzuno supha ka ighi* (This is how we beat our cotton)

*Ishipuzuno supha pithe ighi* (This is how we dry the cotton)

*Ishipuzuno aye zu ighi* (This is how we *zu* means the act of rolling the wool from ones thigh)

*Ishipuzuno aye puho ighi* (This is how we *puho* means setting the wool aside in long lines)

*Ishipuzuno aye te ighi* (This is how we *te* which means dry the wool with the water of boiled rice)

*Ishipuzuno aye puthsu ighi* (This is how we roll the cotton wools into balls individually)

*Ishipuzuno aghi ghu ighi* (This is how we arrange the cotton in the wooden frames)

*Ishipuzuno aghi gho ighi* (This is how we weave)

*Ishipuzuno aphi tsughu ighi* (This is how we stitch)

*Ishipuzuno aphi heu ighi* (This is how we wore our cloth)

*Nipu asu ye ishi xu ighi* (This is how our forefathers wove)

*Ni tiqhelino pekishe woni* (Our generation will carry on this tradition)

*Niye woni ye ileno alo* (I am leaving. May you leave in peace)

*Wolo wolono ilili wolo* (A rhythm or melody that was usually sung as an introduction)

*Zulo zulono ilili zulo*

Lyrics taken from song sung during *Sulimi totimi baghi hoho* 2022

Language can play a significant role in identifying what is indigenous to a community and what has been adopted over the course of time. For instance, there are no words in the local Sümi language for what has been introduced after the post-colonial period, for example- Cooking gas, refrigerator, air conditioner, television sets, computers, light bulbs, fans, and even frying pan which still doesn't have a local word and people from the community use the word *ghorai* which is a mispronunciation of the Hindi word *kaddai*. The local community did not eat fried food and, on a daily basis, consumed only boiled food, and frying food was a post-colonial introduction. Even though they stir-fried

(*kusa*-the local word for stir fry), they did not require a special *kaddai* for the task and the regular cooking pots sufficed. The Sümi community clearly had local Sümi words to refer to all the different parts of things required for weaving for example, as Hutton himself has mentioned in his book *The Sema Nagas* : Beam- *akupa-sü*, Breast- rods- *Apfolo-kupfusü*, Lease- rod- *aghethu*, Heddle- *agheni*, Shed-stick- *aghepfu*, Sword(loom striker)- *agheka*, Back strap- *aghaphi*, Shuttle(with woof)- *achepfu-sü* or *agheche-sü*, the Warp- *aghe-keghi*, the stick in which the beam rest in called – *aghewochu* (Hutton., 1968). Unintentionally Hutton, therefore, has left behind a significant marker to prove that weaving was indeed an indigenous knowledge to this community.

Language serves as a crucial indicator in distinguishing between what is native to a community and what has been adopted over time. In the case of the Sümi community, their local language lacks terms for items introduced after the post-colonial era, such as cooking gas or cylinder, refrigerator, air conditioner, television sets, computers, light bulbs, fans, and even frying pans. The term “*ghorai*” is the word which is a mispronunciation of the Hindi word “*kaddai*” and is used for frying pan by the Sümi people. Additionally, the Sümi community traditionally relied on boiled food for their daily sustenance and frying as a culinary practice became more common only after the post statehood period. Even though they engaged in stir-frying (*Kusa*), they did not require a specialized “*Kaddai*” for such purposes as regular cooking pots sufficed. The traditional cooking pots which were made of mud were naturally non-sticky and could be used comfortable for stir frying.

Notably, the Sümi community possessed distinct local Sümi terms for various components used in weaving, as detailed by Hutton (1968) Beam- *akupa-sü*, Breast-rods- *Apfolo-kupfusü*, Lease- rod- *aghetu*, Heddle- *agheni*, Shed-stick- *aghepfu*, Sword(loom striker)- *agheka*, Back strap- *aghapfi*, Shuttle(with woof)- *achepfu-sü* or *agheche-sü*, the Warp- *aghe-keghi*, the stick in which the beam rest in called – *aghewochu*. The stick on which the beam rested was referred to as “aghe-keghi”. This inadvertently provides significant evidence that weaving was indeed an indigenous knowledge within this community.

Mamidipudi and Gajjala's (2008) discusses how there are interactions between the processes of creating development theory and development practice. In their discussion of the problematic nature of conventional development procedures, they examine how handlooms are viewed as a technology. Due to a change in how weavers and their weaving operations are viewed as "natural." They discover that when handlooms and weavers are exoticized as 'natural' rural beings, they are positioned within a duality of nature vs. technology. According to their argument, thinking about the technology's spread and "new" modern and post-modern technologies enables the loom and weaver to blend together into a romanticized rural landscape where new techniques must be incorporated in order for the weaver to improve their economic situation. This makes the idea of the handloom as technology problematic since the weaver becomes a component of it, the weaver functions in relation to the loom, and the function of the loom in creating textiles becomes very visible. They assert that the endeavour to "modernise" handloom weaving reveals the issues with process and ideology in relation to mainstream globalization. They posit that, despite the introduction of new technologies, the weavers



have not benefited significantly. The only exception is e-commerce, which they claim is not a reliable source of income for the weavers because it depends on passing trends rather than a cultural practice shared by the community that would require the product repeatedly(Mamidipudi & Gajjala, 2008).

Mamidipudi and Gajjala's (2008) discuss about the interconnectedness of development theory and practice, particularly in the context of conventional development approaches. It highlights the way handlooms are perceived as a form of technology and how this perception has evolved to depict weavers and their craft as something “natural”. The argument suggests that when handlooms and weavers are exoticized as inherently rural and natural entities, they are placed within a dichotomy of nature versus technology. According to this viewpoint, considering the spread of technology, including modern and post-modern innovations, the loom and the weavers are merged into an idealized rural landscape. It becomes essential to incorporate new techniques to enhance the economic well- being of weavers. The authors revealed that despite the introduction of new technologies, the weavers have not experienced significant improvements in their livelihood and are in fact more reliant on the looms function rather than on their own skills. It can also be noticed that even among the Sümi weavers who still mostly use the conventional strap loom for weaving the introduction of machine loom has not provided any benefit in the lives of the local traditional weavers. But on the contrary it has rather created a fierce market competition for traditional weavers.

Mamidipudi & Gajjala (2008) laments that the traditional knowledge of natural dyeing, documented in text form has fallen into obscurity. Weavers, having become accustomed to the convenience of chemical dyes, find themselves unable to decipher and

reacquaint themselves with these lost techniques. Among the Sümi Nagas, this traditional knowledge which they once practiced is no longer practiced by any of the weavers known to the researcher though some still know the technique they find it inconvenient to practice. The readily accessible chemically dyed materials have rendered this knowledge somewhat obsolete.

The question of whether weaving was predominantly a male or female occupation in ancient classical world remains a subject of ongoing debate. Some authors, like Wesley Thomson, argue that in the classical era, weaving was a substantial profession primarily undertaken by men (Pantelia, 1993; Thompson, 1982). However, Pantelia, (1993) firmly asserts that weaving unequivocally belonged to the domain of women. On the contrary it is evident in the case of the Sümi Nagas through numerous oral traditions and anthropological accounts that weaving was a role exclusively reserved for women within their community. There is a consensus on this matter with no disagreement.

Rao & Babu (2018) conducted a study highlighting how alterations in the traditional weaving framework adversely affected weavers and their family. The research delves into the challenges introduced by power looms in the weaving industry, particularly in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, and their association with weaver suicides. It also examines how the struggles of weavers mirror the ongoing transformations within a specific sector of Indian society. Interestingly, when interviewed, local Sümi Naga weavers did not seem to have faced such dire circumstances even after the introduction of machine looms. Several factors contributed to this. Firstly, very few families practiced weaving as a singular profession for sustaining household economy. This was because every Sümi household could either

weave for themselves or had a relative or friend who could provide them with the traditional cloth. Also because agriculture traditionally formed the primary economic activity of the community, weaving was a secondary occupation for most individuals. Consequently there was no significant disruption experienced. Furthermore, the quality of machine-made garments was inferior to those hand-woven ones. Considering that there were very few professional weavers, the demand for the product was adequately met by local weavers who could only produce one *hekimini* per week, due to the time-consuming nature of the work. There is therefore perpetual discrepancy between production and demand.

Looking at the present scenario in the Sümi community today from the information gathered through interviews when asked about whether the weavers would want their children to pursue the same profession they were all reluctant to encourage it as a profession but they did want their children to learn the knowledge and use this skill in case their first option of getting a more secure and respectable job did not work out. They did feel that weaving was an important cultural tradition that was worth preserving but as a profession they did not feel like the reward was at par with other occupations which are now possible with the many changes that have arrived with modern economy. The profession was at best a last option for survival. The reason for which they did not want their daughters to pursue was because it was financially not very rewarding, not a highly respected job in the society and also because they felt that it was physically a very demanding job which caused backache, visually very straining and very time consuming. There is however no doubt that the quality of the clothes that were hand woven was of more superior quality which was more lasting, and not easily damaged as compared to the

machine woven ones which were more easy to become loose and shabby over long time use. In spite of the tough competition that is challenging this traditional knowledge from losing its relevance the quality of the product is what is sustaining this knowledge so far. People who cannot effort to wear the hand woven *aminis* are also able to participate in keeping the traditional design alive by opting for the traditional designs which are machine woven.

Primary producers have very little access to the market unless they run a store which becomes another obstacle as they cannot do their business and weave at the same time. There is lack of information and connectivity between the weavers and the market. This creates a void which is conveniently being filled by the middle men who takes up the responsibility of connecting the finished product to the market. There are some stores in and around the city of Dimapur, most of these shops are located in the super market area and these shops sell hand woven *aminis* along with the machine made ones too. Since the machine made ones are cheaper there is more demand for it in the market. The machine made ones since they are cheaper are also mostly opted by tourist and visitors to the state and by people who cannot weave or effort to buy the hand woven ones which are more expensive. The hand woven *aminis* are usually sold at Rs.4500 and the same designs which are machine made can cost Rs.2500 or less. If there were no cheaper alternative, everyone would have to purchase hand-woven items, but since there is a cheaper option, the cheaper items become more accessible and offer a cheaper alternative. However, the manufactured versions that incorporate traditional designs are also, in a sense, aiding in the upkeep and preservation of the traditional designs. Machine-woven *amini* will be a less expensive alternative to producing a more accessible cultural expose when taking into

account how convenient it will be for tourists and individuals from outside the community to purchase a hand-woven *amini*.

By examining the cultural, religious, and traditional practices, folktales, folk song, and the regional Sümi language of this Naga community, as well as by critically analyzing J.H. Hutton's book "The Sema Nagas," it becomes clear that weaving was a form of indigenous knowledge that was practiced by the community. Based on the interviews conducted there appears to be a very clear discontinuity of the knowledge of weaving among the Sümi community living in Nagaland. A number of factors were found to have contributed to the discontinuity of this traditional knowledge- First, because weaving is a difficult skill to learn, second, because it seems that there has been a break in the transmission of this knowledge from mother to child, third, because it is not financially rewarding enough because there are easier and more respectable ways to earn a living, fourth, because weaving also puts a lot of physical strain on weavers (especially on their backs and eyes), and fifth, because weaving has lost its relevance. As they no longer need to wear these traditional garments and the majority of the community has changed its clothing pattern, wearing mostly cheaper machine-made garments that are more comfortable and less expensive on a daily basis, the community no longer views weaving as an essential life skill. People are seen adorning themselves with any and all clothing they desire, and traditional clothing no longer has the same meaning and significance as it once did. *Tsughumini* which was worn only by unmarried young girls are today worn by women of all ages and likewise all other *aminis* are worn without any meaning and *chini-chigha* or *gennas* attached to them. *Aminis* are now worn only on certain auspicious or significant days and even if one doesn't know how to weave one can easily procure it

from the market, by working in some other profession and earning more money one can get as many *aminis* as one need without even actually knowing how to weave. The market's accessibility to these *aminis* in both machine- and hand-woven varieties appears to be a significant factor in the disappearance of this traditional knowledge among the local community. The community now has access to more financially rewarding jobs, which has significantly changed the economy of the society that was previously solely centred on agriculture. The community now seems to have a stronger preference for working in the government sector and does not seem to value careers in weaving or agriculture as it once did. Because of how the economy has evolved and how the traditional way of life has altered, it is evident that traditional knowledge is becoming less important.

Though this knowledge of weaving still continues, there have been significant changes to what it means to the weaver and community. Weavers have discontinued growing their own cotton and lost the knowledge of colouring their own thread. The threads they use today are all imported from other states which are chemically dyed as they are more easily accessible and also more practical for them. Not just cotton but there are new materials that are now being incorporated into weaving the traditional *aminis*.

On examining the Sümi Naga community, including their cultural, religious and traditional customs, folk narratives, songs and their regional Sümi language, as well as on critically assessing J. H. Hutton's work, it becomes evident that weaving constituted a form of indigenous knowledge deeply embedded within the community's heritage. However, through interviews and research, a distinct discontinuity in the transmission of weaving knowledge among the modern Sümi community seem to be emerging.

Several factors have contributed to this gap in traditional weaving knowledge. Firstly, weaving is a complex skill to acquire. Secondly, there appears to be a break in the intergenerational transfer of this knowledge from mothers to their children. Thirdly, weaving is not financially lucrative, as there are simpler and more socially esteemed ways to earn a livelihood. Fourthly, weaving has lost its cultural significance. With the majority of the community now opting for cheaper, machine-made clothing which is more comfortable and affordable for daily wear, traditional clothing and weaving skills have diminished in importance. People now freely choose their attire, and traditional garments no longer carry the same symbolic weight they once did. Attire like *tsughumini*, once exclusively worn by unmarried young girls are now worn by women of all ages, devoid of their original cultural and ritual significance. Similarly, other traditional garments are worn without specific meanings or rituals attached to them.

The easy accessibility of these traditional garments in both machine- and hand woven varieties in the market has played a crucial role in eroding this traditional knowledge within the local community. The community has shifted towards more financially rewarding job opportunities, marking a significant departure from its agrarian past. Government sector jobs have gained prominence, while careers in weaving and agriculture have lost their appeal. Consequently, traditional knowledge is gradually losing its importance in this changing economic landscape. While some vestiges of weaving knowledge persist, significant changes have occurred in its practice and meaning for both weavers and the community as a whole. Weavers no longer cultivate their cotton or possess the know-how for dyeing their threads; instead, they rely on chemically dyed threads imported from other states for practicality and accessibility. Moreover, traditional

*aminis* are now incorporating new materials, reflecting a transformation in weaving practices.

In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to examine how the Sümi community has maintained its economic viability by being self-sufficient and generating all the goods and commodities needed in the household from within the household and the villages itself. This chapter has made an attempt to look into how the various commodities required within the household by individuals were all produced by themselves. The production of this various commodities had significant meanings attached to them and garnered social recognition within the community therefore individuals were motivated to improve their skill in producing these commodities. As in the instance of marriage where prospective bride and groom endeavor to impress their future in-laws by giving their hand-crafted gifts (bride's hand woven cloth and groom's wooden crafts). However, since the society was based on agriculture for economy their main motive was to make sure that the people from their community put their focus on agriculture and not be distracted from it. Therefore, all the required commodities were usually created in the seasons where there was less agricultural work during the dry winter seasons and works like weaving and pottery making were usually done during this period. In the traditional Sümi community we see a community that was thriving on self-reliance in self-sufficiency.





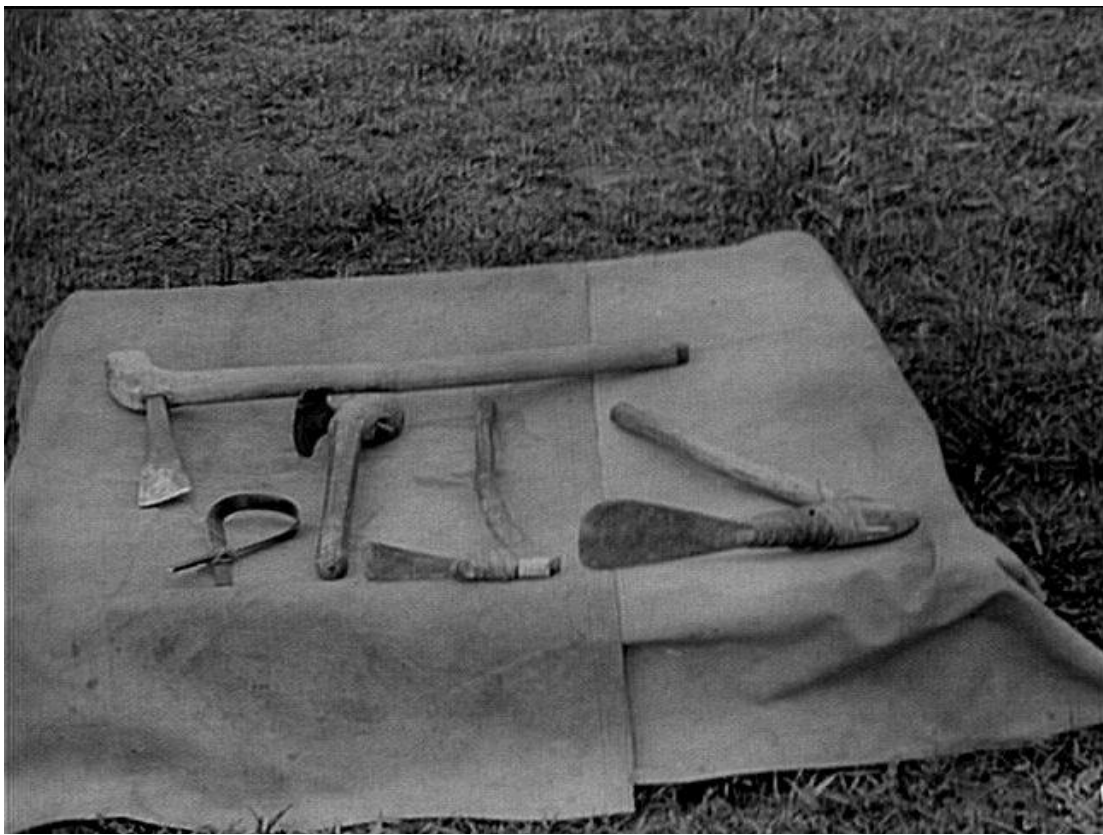
**Figure 2: An ordinary Sūmi House**  
 (Source: PRM; Refnum: JH.3.40-41 ; Date: 1913-23)



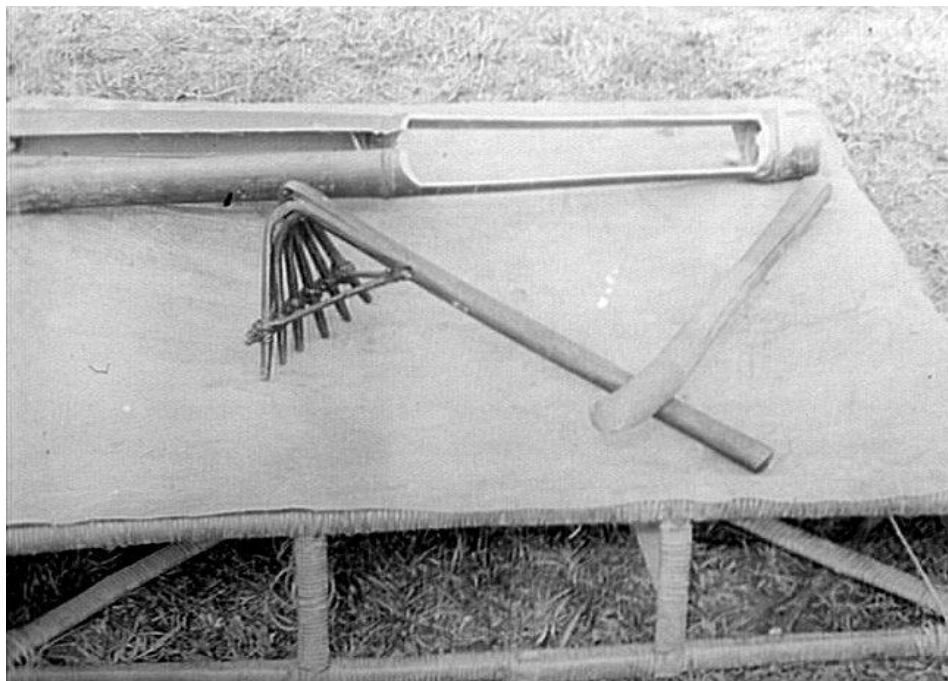
**Figure 3: Thunaqhuki - Snail House**  
 (Source: PRM; Refnum: 35mm negatives 8:10-8:12)



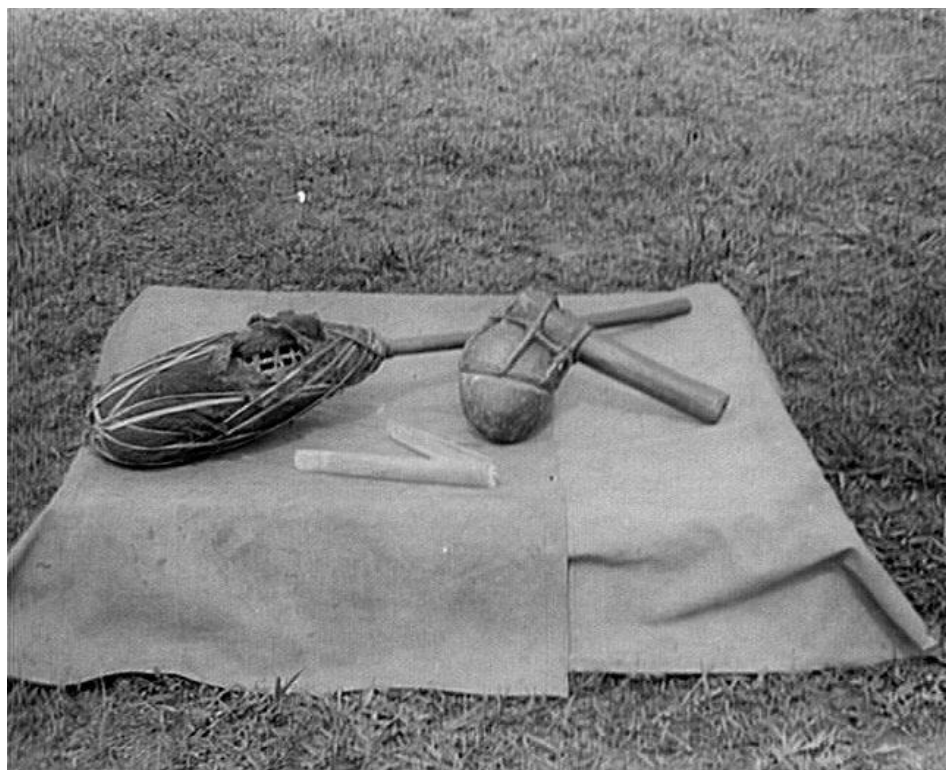
**Figure 4: The House of a feast giver.**  
(Source: Archer/ W.G.; Refnum: 35mm negatives 15:12; Date :1/2/1947)



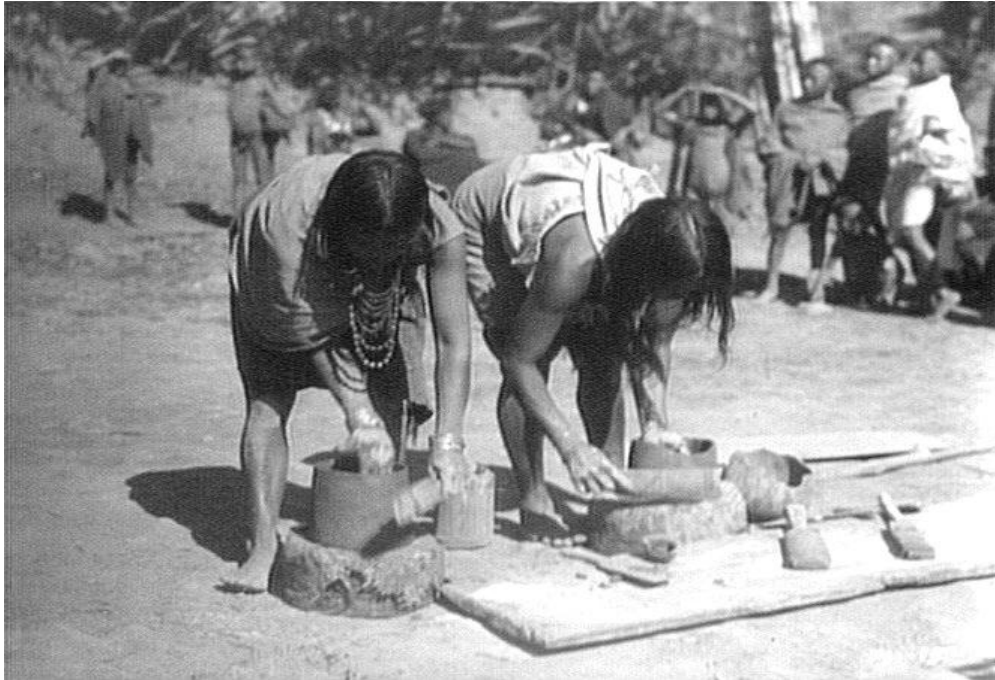
**Figure 5:Sema agricultural implements.**  
(Source: PRM; Refnum: JH.4.81; Date: 1913-1923)



**Figure 6: Sema agricultural implements.**  
(Source: PRM; Refnum: JH.4.86; Date: 1913-1923)



**Figure 7: Sema blacksmith's instruments.**  
(Source: PRM; Refnum: JH.4.82; Date: 1913-1923)



**Figure 8: Sema- Seromi women making pots.**  
 (Source- PRM; Refnum- JH.12.15; Date- 1924-1928)



**Figure 9: Sema cooking pot.**  
 (Source –PRM; Refnum- JH.4.85; Date- 1917-1923)





**Figure 10: Aminikimji mini**  
Source: PRM; Refnum:1946.7.36; Date:1946



**Figure 11: Present day public granary at Rotomi village located next to the cemetery.**





**Figure 12 and Figure 13: Individual granaries at Nihokhu village**



**Figure 14 and Figure 15: Individual granaries at Nikhekhu village located next to their homes.**

## CHAPTER 3

### FOOD CULTURE AND ECONOMY

This chapter looks into the local cuisines that are still consumed by this community and also discusses the change in the menu that is beginning to emerge in the Sümi community as a result of the change in the economy. This chapter discusses an important food among the Sümi community which is *Axone*, the folklore about its origin and its relevance in the present time among the community has also been looked into. This paper also discusses *Ahuna* which is another signature dish prepared by the men folk during the post-harvest festival by the community, including the feast of merit and the significance of food during the festival. There has been rapid transformation in the food system over the last 60 years since Nagaland became a state on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1963, which has largely resulted from the socio-cultural and economic transformation that the community has undergone with the arrival of new economy. The final section of this chapter discusses on the arrival of new menu among this community and the change that this society is rapidly witnessing and living through.

The Sümi people and the food they consumed were determined by the geographical location of their residence and were only restricted to what was locally available prior to their contact with the colonial rule. The food they consumed were mostly boiled but they also knew the art of locally baking their food in the ashes of hot fire (Example; sticky rice pounded and packed in leaves called *kumnupsho*), stir frying with animal fats (*ku-sa-chu-kiu*), and brewing local rice beers made out of fermented rice. Food played an important role in their social lives too. The idea of having enough food to

share with the entire village was considered to be an important status symbol; that is evident in the cultural practice of sharing excess food during their feast of merits. This feast were not just a festival in themselves but with it the feast giver also gained a special position in the society with the social approval and permission to wear certain clothes, decorate his home with special wood arts, their children could also now wear special clothes.

### **3.1. Social science theories about culinary culture:**

Historians of food usually find it necessary to explain the significance of their subject (Super, 2002) as it is a relatively new area of research. However the role of food in human society is complex and might disclose previously unrecognized cultural and social ramifications. It also helps us understand human experiences more fully. According to John C. Super in his essay on "Food and History," economic-political history and the topic of food history are connected, it would therefore be unfair to the subject to treat them separately. He continues by stating that there is no such thing as "unity in diversity" when it comes to the study of food and that this should remain the case because the subject is complicated and there is no need to attempt to address it from a global perspective. Food is the ideal cultural symbol that allows the historian to uncover meaning in social relationships and arrive at new understandings of the human experience(Super, 2002).It has been proven over time how important it is to study the history of food to comprehend the economic, social, and cultural state of society. And this once-obscure discipline is now acknowledged for its capacity to comprehend various facets of former societies.



Pushpesh Pant (2013) examines how the evolution of food over time (from the Stone Ages to the Brahmanical and Buddhist culinary traditions, the Mughal Sultanate, and colonial contacts) has influenced and led to the current modern Indian food and cuisine. He further highlights' how the country's ongoing interactions with various communities and nations over the past years has influenced and changed the type of food that the region produces and consumes today. It is food that defines our national identity (Pant, n.d.) irrespective of how it has continued to evolve over the years with new technologies and inventions. Food production and distribution in the nation has been the subject of ongoing public discussion, and food security has received a lot of attention. Intriguing research has been done on how the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and British, as well as the Italians, Chinese, Arabs, Greeks, and Persians before them, brought various delicacies to India that helped shape the cuisine as we know it today. For instance, the Arabs' *chapati*, *roomali*, and *khamiri* were influenced by Indian *poori*, leading to the development of *parathas*.

Stephanie Assmann's (2022) work among the Japanese examines the fundamental Food Education Law (*shokuikukihon-h*) that was implemented in Japan in 2005 to address the emergence of lifestyle-related conditions and the country's high reliance on food imports. In the perspective of food governance as a whole, she evaluates how the Japanese government reintroduced the traditional idea of food education (*shokuiku*) that originated in the Meiji period (1868–1912). In Japan, the early food education movement of the Meiji period represented a holistic nutritional guide. And important lessons from it were incorporated into the *shokuiku* campaign which included convivial eating, the significance of breakfast, and an emphasis on locality were taken up in the modern

*shokuiku* campaign that focused on the improvement of daily eating habits. The second agenda of the *shokuiku* campaign was to support declining rural economies, including the economies that have been affected by the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster of March 11, 2011. This work shows the importance and relevance of preserving the traditional food knowledge and how restoring traditional food habit brought about positive changes not just in the health of the population but also led to improvement in the rural economy. The study showed how with the reintroduction of traditional food habits the self sufficient economy of the rural areas could also be revived.

Hesseltine and Wang (2022) discusses how Vitamins, antibiotics, and the requirement for amino acids in both humans and animals were not understood prior to World War I, when traditional fermented foods started to interest scientific curiosity. These conditions have developed into a cutting-edge and significant area of study for fermented traditional foods. Due to their distinct enzymatic properties, microorganisms from these fermentations have been studied in relation to regular foods and utilised in new processes. This new area of research can be significant for the area of study in the context of traditional fermented foods of the Sümi Naga traditional food as the community like many other indigenous cuisines has a rich history of fermentation practices that have been passed down through generations. This tradition knowledge of fermenting food have played a crucial role in preserving and enhancing the nutritional value of their food long before the scientific community began to explore the benefits of fermentation. Though in the recent past the Sümi Naga community may not have fully understood the science behind their fermentation processes, they had however developed intricate methods for fermenting various foods such as bamboo shoots and soybeans. This

food not only contributed to their dietary diversity but also provided essential nutrients and helped with food preservation. As scientific interest in fermentation grows researchers are beginning to uncover the significance and nutritional value of these traditional practices. The discovery seems to align with what the Sümi Naga people had known intuitively for generations. These scientific understandings will lead to renewed appreciation for the Sümi Naga traditional foods and will hopefully lead to preserving these traditional practices in a fast transforming period for this community.

### **3.2. Axone:**

*Axone* is a dried fermented soybean has been the staple food of the Sümi community (Venuh, 2014). Despite the fact that many other Naga tribes also eat this food, it has long been known as the Sümi diet, there are numerous jokes and even songs that link the Sümi to this dish '*Axone*'. It is also note mentioning that there is a movie named after the food- '*Axone*' made by Yoodlee films which premiered at London Film festival on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019. Though fermented soybean is a food that is enjoyed in different regions of the country the fermented soybean is more popularly known by the name *Axone* among the Nagas and even in India as well. The fermented soybeans is a delicacy that is also enjoyed in East Asian nations too including China (*Doubanjiang*), Japan (*Miso*, *Natto*), and Korea (*Doejang*, *Cheonggukjang*). The preparation of Sümi fermented soybean-*Axone* is a little different from these Asian countries. We examine how soy beans are fermented in the three distinct Asian nations and compare it to the Sümi Naga technique of preparation in order to comprehend the differences.

**China: *Doubanjiang*:** The preparation of *Doubanjiang* follows the following steps.

Step 1: Soak the broad beans overnight with enough water and then drain.

Step 2: Cook the beans well, but not too fragile.

Step 3: Let it ferment for 3-6 days

Step 4: After the soy beans have been fermented red chilly is added and fermented again together for atleast 3 months and go upto 3years or more. It is stored in a big earthen pot under direct sunlight.

This broad beans paste is then used in a variety of ways as an important sauce for cooking traditional dishes.

**Japanese: *Nato*:** The following are the steps for fermenting *Nato*.

Step 1: Soak the broad beans overnight with enough water and then drain.

Step 2: Cook the beans well, but not too fragile.

Step 3: Let it ferment for 3-6 days. (In the modern method they include *Nato* starter for quicker fermentation)

After fermentation they directly consume the slimy fermented soybean.

**Korean: *Doenjang*:** Following are the steps to prepare *Doenjang*.

Step 1: Soak the broad beans overnight with enough water and then drain.

Step 2: Cook the beans well, but not too fragile.

Step 3: Let it ferment for 3-6 days.

Step 4: Mash the fermented soybeans

Step 5: Turn the mashed fermented soybeans into blocks and dry them in air and sunlight for a few weeks or months until the whole block is completely dry.

The block of dried fermented soybeans are then used for making sauce or paste for various other dishes.

**Sumi: Axone:** Following are the step wise method for preparing Axone

Step 1: Soak the broad beans overnight with enough water and then drain.

Step 2: Cook the beans well, but not too fragile.

Step 3: Let it ferment for 3-6 days.

Step 4: Mash the fermented soybeans

Step 5: Arrange the mashed soybeans into small portions in a banana leaf or *Tsuzukughu* (*Thaumatococcus Daniellii*) local leaf available in the region.

Step 6: Dry the fermented and mashed soybeans wrapped in leaves in the fireplace until it is all dry.

The *Axone* is then ready for consumption by using it in different Sümi cuisines as curry with vegetables, dried Pork, beef and other meat. It is also used for making pickles.

According to a well-known folklore, it has been mentioned that Khujunaqaliu, who was an impoverished orphan girl, daughter of Mutale, lived with her uncle and his

wife who became her stepparents. Her stepmother frequently mistreated her and didn't provide her with enough food when she went out for working in the field. She frequently received only fermented soy beans wrapped in banana leaves from her stepmother without any rice, meat or vegetable. As she did not want to eat the fermented soybean so she kept the food tucked away and hidden on the exterior part of the thatch granary in the field. One day however, she was so overcome by hunger that she could not stand it any longer, so she went to the thatch granary to look for the fermented soybean that she had hidden. In her famished state, she discovered the fermented soybean and ate it, she found it quite tasty. She then tried boiling the dried soybean in water with chilly, tomatoes and salt and to her delight it turned out to be delicious. She began to share her dried soybean with neighbors and friends who began to give her goods she needed in exchange for her *Axone*. She quickly grew to be quite wealthy and married into a prosperous family. Her accidental finding led to a change in her fortune.

The story seems to make a lot of sense when we carefully study the process in which *Axone* is prepared in these three East Asian countries. It does appear that the Sümi preparation of *Axone* was similar to the other three countries up to step 3 (fermentation of soybean). The type of soybean used for *Nato* is the particular variety that the Sümi also use for making *Axone*. The fact that the process for manufacturing *Axone* is similar to the Japanese *Nato* up until the third step and that the next step was discovered by accident by a young Sümi girl according to folklore narrative can serve as an illustration of how regional tastes influence how food develops into various cuisines.

Fermented soybean is a food that is also enjoyed as a delicacy in different parts of North East India. In the state of Manipur it is known as *Chagem Pomba*, in Meghalaya-

*Tungrymbai*, Mizoram- *Bekang*, Sikkim- *Kinema* and in Arunachal Pradesh- *Peruyaana*. In Nagaland the fermented soybean is known by different names Sumi- *Axone*, Chakasang- *Sühbroche*, Sangtam- *Xonyangsu*, Angami – *Dzacie*, *Dachie*, *Zati* and Lotha- *Lyimthem*. People in all of these areas consume fermented soybeans either partially dried or more preferentially, in a sticky and wet condition. In the case of the Sumis and the Lothas, the soybean after fermentation is thoroughly dried in the fireplace. The Sangtam people also dry their fermented soybean, but they prefer to do so in chunkier shapes and dry it by air/sun/fire, which is more similar to the Korean method (*Doenjang*).

All Nagas have a similar translation for ‘*Axone*’ in their languages to refer to the food as soybean and the process of fermentation: Chakhesang - *Sühbroche* (*Sühbro*-soybean; *che*- is a word that is referred to the soybean that has been fermented), Sangtam- *Xonyangsu* (*xonyang* - soybean, *su* is added after the fermentation is completed), Angami – *Dzacie*, *Dacie*, *Zati* (Soya is called a *Chii/shiiza* in Angami, *chie* or *tei* means fermented) and Lotha- *Lyimthem* (Soybean and there is no word for fermentation. The same word for soybean is being used for the fermented soybean). The Sümi Nagas however have a distinctive name for the food (*Axone*) that is not derived from the word soybean. Though there is no known explanation for how the word *Axone* originated, it is assumed that since the cuisine has a strong pungent smell and the Sümi word for smell but there is another word for smelly or foul smelling which is ‘*munashui*’ in Sümi language and *Axo* is a simple term for smell. Therefore, *Axo*, in the name for the food may be derived from the word for aroma. The food must have therefore derived its word from aroma considering that it was a staple diet and a delicacy for the locals. Further looking into the language of the Sümi it is found that every common item used by the

locals has names that begin with "A" when one studies the Sumi language, for instance: Rice- *Athikishi* (uncooked) *Ana* (cooked), curry- *Akulho*, Boiled Vegetables- *Ayekichi*, Meat- *Ashi*, Fish- *Akha*, Bee/Hornet- *Akhi* / *Akuwu*, Wine- *Aji*, egg- *Ayikhu*/ *Awukhu*, Water- *Azü*, Biscuits- *Aküpüghasho* / *Asho*, Milk- *Akichizü* and jobs tears- *Akithina*. Through this observation, inferences can be made that this fermented soybean has been a staple meal of the Sümi Nagas for a reasonable amount longer than it has been for the other tribes for which the cuisine has no such specific name. Languages have a way of revealing significant information about culture and traditions, but they are also particularly useful in identifying new elements because there won't be a word for them. For instance, dal, potatoes, cabbage, and broccoli, which were new vegetables, introduced to the Sümi much later, lack a word in their native tongue.

Despite the fact that fermented soybeans are consumed widely around the globe and even in some parts of India, the process that follows the fermentation of soybeans and how various regions have improvised from that into various cuisines shows how relevance and regional conveniences can lead to significant transformation from one same beginning.

It can also be observed that people who are more hygiene conscious prefer to make their at home because they believe the homemade versions are prepared in a cleaner method, and are more cost-effective. Some even say the there are certain individuals who can make better versions compared to others as every individual create their own distinct flavour. This preference exists and people continue to make them despite the inconvenience and laborious nature of the process. The Sümi typically obtain it through



their Sümi friends or family who they know are more reliable, the *Axone* that is currently on the market seems to cater primarily to non-Sümi.

### **3.2.1. Reasons for the continuity of this traditional food:**

There seems to be a number of economic factors that are contributing to the continuity of this traditional practice and its continuation. The production of *Axone* creates an economic source of revenue for women who produce and market their goods. *Axone* is a staple food among Sümi families and is regularly consumed by them, especially for families who cannot afford meat or a nourishing meal, it serves as a relatively affordable source of protein. It is quite cost-effective for families with little resources. It is a food that some could regard to be an acquired taste, but those who do, enjoy it thoroughly and do not seem to mind having it every day as part of their meal. Being very affordable makes it one of the foods that people eat the most.

From the data collected through questionnaire in Table 23(chapter 4) it can be seen that the most cooked dish among the Sümi people is still largely *Axone*. There also appears to be a number of social advantages that provide people with a source of reason to continue cooking *Axone* and in recent years there have been various new ways of using this ingredient in making new varieties of pickle which have become very popular among the local population. There are many food industries selling various pickle products using *Axone*. People seem to gain a sense of cultural identity through their diet. *Axone* is also a significant source of connection for many women, since it enables them to win over their friends and family by presenting it as a gift. Few individuals have the time to prepare the cuisine because it requires weeks of planning, skill, and work; as a result, it becomes a

cherished gift to present to others. Relevance and the fact that people savor and enjoy its taste while providing them a sense of connection to their tradition or roots appear to be two factors for the continuity of this traditional knowledge for now. The younger generation of women appears to be primarily dependent on the older generation, who manufactures and supplies *Axone* to them as mothers and aunties. As the making of *Axone* requires labor, time and skill the younger generation of woman will require determination and dedication along with the appreciation they have for this indigenous food knowledge to pass to the next generation. There is also a likelihood that if the younger generation cannot spare their time to make it there may arise a new group of professional makers who can pursue it as a full time job and earn their livelihood out of it, as there is already a growing market for it. From the chart below (Figure11) it is evident that *Axone* making is still widely practised and known in the rural villages while the knowledge seems to have rapidly declined among the urban population living in Dimapur town.

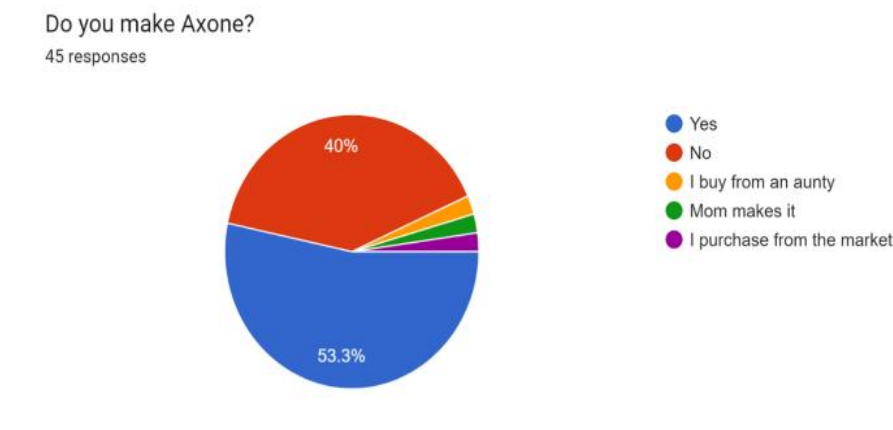


Figure 11: Diagram showing the response to questionnaire from Dimapur.

### **3.3. Ahuna:**

This is a Sümi food that has a festival dedicated to it in recent times. This dish is prepared during the post-harvest festival among the Sümi Nagas and today a very significant festival among the Sümi people has been named after this dish called the *Ahuna* festival. There are a number of rituals that are practised in this festival and one particularly fascinating aspect of this festival is the male centred rituals and ceremonies associated with this festival. It is however not simply because women were discarded from the ceremonies as a sign of excluding women or disrespecting women but was rather done so as a way of protecting women from injury during the new agricultural year (Assumi, 2009).

#### **3.3.1. Origin of the word “Ahuna”:**

There are different opinions about the origin of the word ‘*Ahuna*’, there is an explanation that it is derived from the word ‘*Awonakuchu*’ the word ‘*Awou*’- derived from the word priest, ‘*Na*’- from the word rice and ‘*Kuchu*’- from the word eat(Hutton., 1968); while some assume that the word is derived from the word ‘*Ahu*’- is derived from the word ‘*Asupuhu*’ which means Bamboo vessel and ‘*Na*’- from the word ‘*Ana*’ meaning rice(Assumi, 2009); There also appears to be another explanation about the word ‘*Ahuna*’ according to whom the word is simply derived from the word ‘*Ahuu*’- meaning the top, ‘*Ana*’- meaning rice(Sema, 1986; Swu, 2003). The latter explanation seems to be more acceptable because of the fact that cooking in bamboo tubes was not a very unique or ceremonial style of cooking reserved for this festival but rather during this period of time it was a fairly common style of cooking. There were often instances where

fish in particular and often other vegetable curries was often cooked in bamboo vessels especially while they were out in the forest or working in their field for agricultural works. Therefore since cooking in bamboo tubes was not unique to this occasion it is unlikely that the word is derived from bamboo tubes / *Asupuhu*. It is also not probable that the word is derived from the word *Awou* - which means the priest because there was a role played by the priest during this ceremony but it was not the most important part of the festival also when we study the various functions, ceremonies and festivals of the agricultural Pre-Christian life of this community it is seen that the function of the *Awou* continued in a similar manner with regard to initiating and leading various ceremonies. It is also observed that this was an agricultural ceremony and not one directed particularly for the priestly community so this explanation also do not seem to hold water. The latter explanation that the word '*Ahuna*' is derived from the word *Ahuu*- meaning top and *Anna*- meaning rice; this appears to be the most acceptable because an important part of this ceremony was the taking of the top layer of the rice from the granary where the rice was stored. This was an important part of the ceremony in celebrating the *Ahuna* festival.

### **3.3.2. Myth associated with *Ahuna*:**

This celebration of *Ahuna* festival is related with a myth about the *Kungullimi*, or "sky maidens" (now, since the advent of Christianity, the term is also used to refer to biblical Angels). It was thought that the *Kungullimi* would descend to the ground very early in the morning to gather water from springs. As a result, the men in the village had to go and fetch water in freshly made bamboo containers early in the morning, while it was still dark, before the sky maidens arrived to fetch water. Only the fresh water they had just collected in the morning would be used for cooking on the day of the celebration

(Assumi, 2009). The variety of bamboo used for making this bamboo tubes was called “*Apho*” in the Sümi language and it is the largest variety of bamboo available in the region. This festival is also related to the spirit of dead men and it is believed that the spirit of the dead influence the harvest (V. Pushito, personal communication, July 18, 2020). They believe that the spirit of the dead do not leave the village till the *Ahuna* festival is celebrated, and only after which they depart for the abode of the dead “*kithilato*” (H.S. Rotokha, personal communication, June 15, 2019).

### **3.3.3. The process of making *Ahuna*:**

*Ahuna* would only be prepared from the fresh water fetched from the jungle on this morning by men folks of the village. Additionally, it is mandatory that all food and drinks for this occasion be cooked and consumed only from newly made bamboo cups and vessels. On this day new bamboo mats would also be produced and used to repair the granaries. For baking *Ahuna* in the bamboo tube, fresh leaves are also obtained. The variety of leaves most frequently used for baking *Ahuna* is called the “*Tsuzukughu*,” and it is filled with newly produced rice harvested from the agricultural year; the top layer of rice from the granary is cooked. Hence the word ‘*Ahuu*’ - top, ‘*Anna*’- Rice. Only the best leaves with no flaws or tears are utilised for this purpose after careful inspection (Assumi, 2009).

Following are the step wise method of preparing *Ahuna* (Kuhovi Chophi, personal communication, August 22, 2022):

Step 1: Collect the top layer of freshly harvested rice from the granary.

Step 2: Put some handful rice (depending on the size of the bamboo vessel 2-3 handful) in *Tsuzukughu* leaves.

Step 3: Place the rice covered in leaves slowly into the bamboo tube.

Step 4: Then pour water into the bamboo tube which is filled with rice.

Step 5: Place it in the fire. When the thick smoke begins to disappear slowly the fire is reduced and after sometime the bamboo tube is removed from heat. (Occasionally a thin stick is also inserted into the bamboo tube and taken out from the tube to check if the rice has been fully cooked. If the rice that comes out in the stick is well cooked then it is ready for consumption.)

The rice is thus baked in the fire from the bamboo tube. It takes less than 30 minutes for the rice to be baked in this manner. From the data collected through the questionnaire as can be seen in Table 30 it can be argued that the knowledge of making *Ahuna* seems to be gradually losing its significance as more than 50% of the total respondent did not know how to make it. The respondents who did not know how to bake *Ahuna* were all below 50 years of age. With only a few respondents below the age of 50 years who answered that they knew the art of baking *Ahuna*.

It is however worth mentioning that *Ahuna* was traditionally only baked on this special occasion and therefore since it was not something that people had on a daily basis it must have been more difficult to pass on this knowledge. This festival has however played a prominent role in the agriculturally based society of the Sümi Nagas and is celebrated with renewed meaning in the contemporary times.

#### **3.3.4. Importance of Rice in the economy of the Sümi society:**

It is evident that the rice played an important role in the Sümi community, because rice was crucial for the economy as they consumed it as their staple food and it was the most important food source (Y. Awomi, personal communication, December 15, 2018). Rice could be stored for a longer amount of time than other food sources and therefore in this society that practised subsistent economy whereby they were entirely depended primarily on agricultural produce for their survival it was an important commodity for their economy. For instance the *Ahuna* festival was a very significant agricultural festival not merely celebrated for pomp and show but as a ceremony to appease the spirits to ensure a rich harvest for the agricultural year (V. Pushito, personal communication, July 18, 2020). And one of the most important foods during this festival was the baking of rice.

#### **3.4. Feast of merit:**

The feast of merit was an essential rite among this community to gain social recognition and distinction. There were multiple feasts (Venuh, 2014) that were organised over a period of time for the feast giver to actually gain the prestigious social recognition which would allow him to be in the elite social group of his village community to adorn with certain ornaments and wear certain clothes which were reserved for the affluent few. Because the feast of merit did not consist of a singular feast but involves multiple feasts for the village, it was a difficult feat to achieve and not everyone could perform it but it was also not an impossible one as there were villagers in the community who could achieve such feats. There has often been a misconception among scholars that the Sümi

community was a class-based society because of the fact that there were ornaments and clothes which were reserved for the elite group in the community and the *chine-chighe* associated with it were quite stringently practised. However, when one thoroughly studies the cultural and traditional practices of the Sümis it becomes evident that the social recognition that was given to the village headman (*Akukau*), the head hunters and the givers of feast of merit were an act of the community to preserve order and to encourage meritocracy among the village community. By recognising individuals for their act of service in the form of headhunting where by the fertility of the soil was believed to improve and the harvest for the village would improve or whereby through their act of bravery they had protected the community such recognition would further encourage the younger men to also follow suit, the act of giving the feast of merit would also similarly set a good example and would encourage people in the villages to work diligently in their farm and do welfare activity in the villages where by their wealth would bring about merry making and funfair in the community. The feast givers generosity is rewarded by the community by giving him certain rights and privileges. Therefore, the classification of certain ornaments and clothes were not necessarily a means of segregating the people on the basis of the haves and the have not but was rather a way of serving as an exemplary honour for the people in the village. The feats required to achieve such merit was not reserved for any people but was an open opportunity that could be accomplished by any hardworking individual.

The feast of merit could only be given by a man who was married(Jacobs, 2012). Since the Sümi community was based on agriculture this feast giving could also be possible only for a man who was a successful agriculturist. The tradition that a person



could achieve respectable position in his community and could have the opportunity to wear specific ornaments and clothes based on their ability to feed his village community highlights the profound importance of food within the community.

### **3.5. Contemporary food menu within the Sümi household:**

The food consumed in the Sümi household has undergone substantial transformations over the course of time. These changes primarily seem to have emerged from the changing economy within the society. In the past, when agriculture played a crucial role, the food preferences were closely associated with what was more practical and available through their subsistence farming and agricultural practices. However, with the emergence of new economy and the moving away of people from the traditional agricultural pursuit into various professional fields the reliance on home grown produce and locally sourced ingredients are seen to be diminishing. With the availability of new vegetables in the market from commercialised farmers from other states and the lack of time for farming there is now a more diverse and wider range of food and ingredients for the Sümi community. This can lead to losing their traditional food which can be more difficult to grow or collect from the forest as they have quicker and more convenient options. Their new economic pursuit has led them away from self-production and has made them more reliant on buying goods and agricultural items from the market. Because the agricultural activity of the Sümi community has largely been subsistent and they do not have mass production for selling this situation has given rise to more agricultural items being imported into the market from other states. With this shift there are now new and cheaper food sources that are easily available for the non-agriculture practising section of the society. Mass produced agricultural good from large scale farms are now

producing new items which were earlier not available to this community and with this influx of new agricultural commodities we see a rise in new food menu for the Sümi community. We can observe that new menu and new food are constantly introduced into this community and food is no longer static but is constantly evolving. Some of the new food items introduced among this community are as follows: Dal curry (cheaper and simpler to prepare compared to traditional *Axone*), various stir-fried vegetable curry (potato, cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage etc), masala curry in non-veg items are also becoming popular among the younger people who have specially been exposed through their education and travel to other states of India and dairy items are also becoming an essential part of their diet. This are some of the new changes that are becoming visible in regard to food among the Sümi community.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SÜMI HOUSEHOLD WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE MODERN ECONOMY

Sümi society has irrefutable undergone transformation. This chapter has attempted to look into the scale of this transformation. To understand the transformations, 10 Sümi villages have been looked into. Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to collect information on various aspects of change that the society is undergoing. A random sampling method was applied to represent the overall population better. Both males and females participated, and ages ranged from as young as 30 years to as old as 104 years. Respondents from various age groups were selected to obtain the perspectives of different generations and conduct a more thorough analysis. The variation in the age group will also aid in conducting a comparative study between the older and the younger generations.

Age groups	No. of respondents	Percentage
31-45	108	33.33
46-60	72	22.22
61-75	102	31.48
76 and above	42	12.96
Total	324	100

Table 1: Showing the age groups of the total participants in the questionnaire

Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	138	42.59
Female	186	57.41
Total	324	100

Table 2: Showing the total number of male and female respondents

Villages	No. of respondents	Percentage
1. Kiyezu A	30	9.26
2. Alato	24	7.41
3. Kuhoxu	27	8.33
4. Homeland	30	9.26
5. Rotomi	48	14.81
6. Asukhomi	33	10.19
7. Nikhekhu	30	9.26
8. Nihokhu	45	13.89
9. Satakha	24	7.41
10. Lhothavi	33	10.19
Total	324	100

Table 3: Showing the total number of villages, questionnaires collected, and the

percentage of participation within the total number of participants.

#### **4.1. Working age of the population:**

From the data collected, it is evident from the above tables that the age of the working population has started to increase. For the younger generation aged 30-45 years,

there has been a continuous increase in the age of individuals who began working after 30 years. Compared to the older generation, who generally started earlier, starting as early as 10, becoming a fully-fledged agriculturist by the time they were between the ages of 11 and 20, and even in formal occupations, they were generally employed by their 20s, and this is more than a decade difference. This change evident among the population seems to have resulted because of the change in the economy. Prior to the arrival of new formal employment, as most of the population was engaged in agricultural activities, the population had a larger number of young populations in the workforce in the form, but this is beginning to change with more people leaving the agricultural workforce and joining other formal occupations the age of employment is steadily increasing.

Age groups	No. of respondents	Percentage
1-10	33	11.22
11-20	153	52.04
21-30	84	28.57
31 and above	24	8.16
Total	294	100

Table 4: Showing the age at which the respondents started working.

#### **4.2 The changing marriageable age:**

From the data collected, we can see that the marriageable age is beginning to increase. Only after an individual's career is established can one be confident to take up the responsibilities of marriage and family and as seen in the previous Table 4 the age of

getting employed is beginning to rise, it can therefore be seen that it is having its effect on the rise of the age for marriage as well. As the earlier society depended on agriculture and working in the agricultural sector did not have many requirements, it was simpler to get employed and settle. With modern education and the skills and demands required for new jobs becoming more rigorous, more individuals are taking longer to acquire the skills required to be employed in the formal sector. As people move away from the agricultural sector, formal jobs are becoming crowded, and the competition to get employed is getting tougher. This could be one reason leading younger individuals to late marriages.

Age groups	No. of respondents	Percentage
15- 25	144	50.00
26-35	111	38.54
36- 45	33	11.46
Total	288	100

Table 5: Showing the age at which the respondents married.

#### **4.3 Participating in *Ame*:**

The data collected from Table 6 indicated that 60.19% (186 individuals) replied ‘yes,’ meaning they were willing to participate in the tradition of giving and receiving the bride price. While 39.81% (123 individuals) of the respondents indicated ‘no’ which indicated their reluctance to participate in the tradition of taking ‘*ame*’.

The data suggests that a significant number of respondents (60.19%) were willing and open to upholding the tradition of practicing ‘*ame*’ for their marriage. This indicates that the practice still holds meaningful cultural association with the people. However,

since 39.81%% of the respondents indicated that they were not willing to participate in the practice, this could imply a gradual departure from traditional practices, which could possibly be an influence of modernization and the arrival of a new economy whereby there has been a change in society's perception of social status. As a result of the change in the economy, gender roles are also beginning to change, and the idea of a man being solely responsible for the family is beginning to change as well. The bride price also no longer sets the standard for the social standing of the bride, the groom, or the family as it used to. The data reflected generational differences where the younger generation was less obligated to perform such traditions compared to the older generations. However, the willingness to participate by individuals indicates a desire to preserve cultural traditions.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	186	60.19
No	123	39.81
Total	309	100

Table 6: Showing the respondents' opinion about giving or receiving '*ame*' (bride price for marriage).

#### **4.4 Household size distribution:**

The highest number of members in Table 7 and Table 8 are 10 and below group, but the percentage differs. In Table 7, the percentage is 59.81, % and in Table, 8, the percentage is 56.73%. There is a slight decrease in the percentage in table 8. In the percentage of larger households, there is 1.87% in Table 7 and 6.73% in Table 8 for 15 and above members a similar trend is also seen in group 15 and below (15-10 members in the

family), where Table 7 indicates 4.67% and Table 8 indicates 26.92% both this Table implies that there has been a significant decrease in the respondent's household in comparison to their parents, which indicates a trend towards the smaller household. While both tables show a similar range of household sizes, there are substantial differences in the distribution of respondents' households versus their parents' households. There are a number of factors that seem to be leading to these results. The change in the economy to a monetary system, for one, has put a lot of family under pressure to provide for their children with so much more than just food to eat and shelter to rest; there is a rise with the change in the economy to provide for more as the society is beginning to transition with the change in lifestyle that is seen in this society. With birth control measures, a family also now has the liberty to choose the size of its household according to their financial capacity.

No. of members	No. of respondents	Percentage
5 and below	108	33.64
10 and below	192	59.81
15 and below	15	4.67
15 and above	6	1.87
Total	321	100

Table 7: Showing the number of members in a household.



No. of members	No. of respondents	Percentage
5 and below	30	9.62
10 and below	177	56.73
15 and below	84	26.92
15 and above	21	6.73
Total	312	100

Table 8: Showing the number of members in the respondent parent's household.

#### **4.5 Joint family:**

The percentage of respondents who answered 'Yes' is consistent across all three Tables: 1.85% for grandparents and parents, and 5.56% for the current generation. The percentage of respondents who answered 'No' is also consistent across all three Tables, 98.15% for grandparents and parents and 94.44% for the current generation. There is a slight increase in the percentage of respondents living in a joint family in Table 11 (5.56%) compared to the percentage of their grandparents (1.85%) and parents (1.85%). The data suggests that joint families' prevalence has increased from generation to generation. While the percentage is still relatively low, it is still slightly higher for the current generation compared to their grandparents and parents. The data implies that joint family living may be more likely for the current generation than their parents and grandparents. Despite the increase, the overall percentage of respondents living in joint families remains relatively low. The majority of respondents in all generations live in nuclear families. The consistency in percentage suggests that this community was traditionally based on nuclear family settings, and change has not emerged to a large extent. The data indicates a slight increase in the percentage of respondents living in joint

families for the current generation. However, the overall prevalence of joint families remains low, suggesting that nuclear family structures continue to be dominant.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	6	1.85
No	318	98.15
Total	324	100

Table 9: Information about grandparents' family structure as to if it was a joint family or not

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	6	1.85
No	318	98.15
Total	324	100

Table 10: Information about whether the respondents' parents' family lived in a joint family

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	5.56
No	306	94.44
Total	324	100

Table 11: Information about whether the respondents lived in a joint family

#### **4.6 Emergence of transformation in occupation:**

From the data collected through the respondents, grandparents who were involved in agriculture/farming were 95.37% (309 respondents) in Table 12, and parents who were involved in agriculture/farming were 82.41% (267 respondents) Table 13. The percentage of grandparents involved in agriculture/farming is higher than parents. This indicates a decrease in the prevalence of this occupation from one generation to the next. In regard to government jobs, the percentage of grandparents in this occupation category was 2.78% (9 respondents) Table 12, and parents 14.81% (48 respondents) in Table 13. The percentage of respondents with parents in government jobs is significantly higher than the percentage with grandparents in the same occupation. This suggests an increase in government jobs within the parent's generation.

The percentage of respondents in other occupations for grandparents was 1.85% (6 respondents), and for parents, 2.78% (9 respondents). The data indicates a decrease in the percentage of respondents involved in agriculture/farming from the grandparents to the parent's generation. This could imply a shift away from traditional agricultural occupations. The percentage of respondents with parents in government jobs is noticeably higher than the percentage with grandparents in the same occupation. This suggests a trend toward more people opting for government employment in the parents' generation. The analysis showcases shifts in occupational choices from generation to generation, with changes in the prevalence of agricultural work and an increase in the preference for government jobs.

Occupations	No. of respondents	Percentage
Agriculture/ farming	309	95.37
Government Job	9	2.78
Other	6	1.85
Total	324	100

Table 12: Showing respondents grandparents occupation

Occupations	No. of respondents	Percentage
Agriculture/ farming	267	82.41
Government Job	48	14.81
other	9	2.78
Total	324	100

Table 13: Showing the occupation respondents' parents practiced.

#### **4.7 Opinion about Government Jobs:**

From Figure 12, it can be see that the number of respondents who answered 'Yes' was 93% and no was 6%. From the data, it is observed that a significant majority of the respondents, 93%, believed that the new employment opportunities in the form of government jobs have brought positive changes to the lives of their families. Indicating that a large proportion of individuals view government jobs as beneficial for their families. Only a small percentage of respondents, 6%, opine that the new government jobs did not bring any positive change, probably representing the group of people who were not employed in the government sector or people who still see positive benefits of

continuing with uniform agricultural practice in the society. The data suggests that the majority of respondents perceive new employment opportunities in the form of government jobs as having brought positive changes to their families.

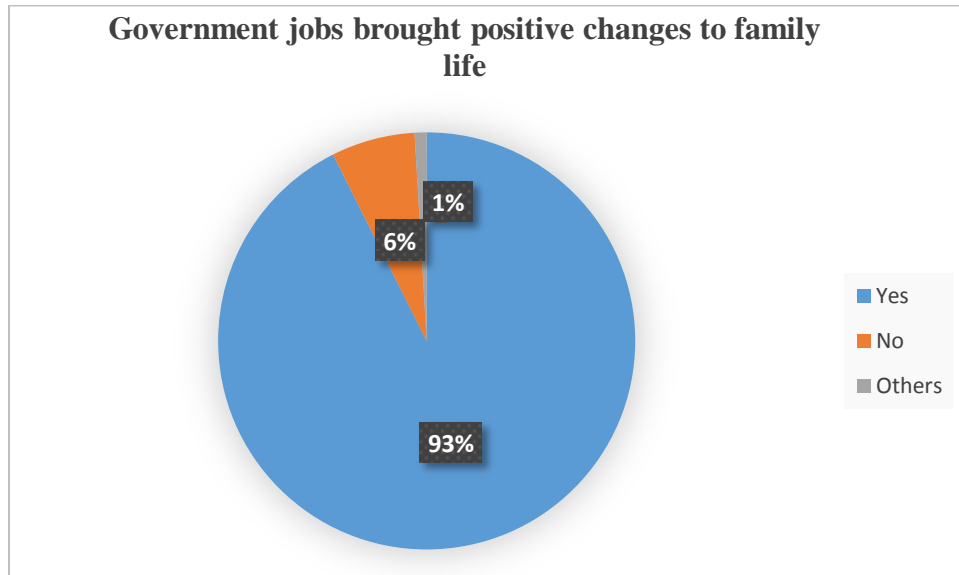


Figure 12: Showing opinion about whether the respondents felt that government jobs brought positive changes to family life.

#### **4.8 Contributor to family's household economy:**

From a comparative analysis between three Tables- 14, 15, and 16, a comparison between 3 generations regarding the contributors to a family's household economy can be made. It can be seen from Table 14 that in parents' households, fathers were the sole main contributors in 31.48% of cases; in grandparents' households Table 15, fathers were the main contributors in 11.11% of cases; and in current households Table 16, fathers are the main contributors in 80.56% of cases. Though fathers have consistently been making a significant contribution to the household economy, it is observed that in the current generation, there has been a spike in the role of fathers as main contributors to the

household economy. Whereas the percentage of mothers being the sole main contributors to the household economy was comparatively lesser, in parents' households (Table 14), only 0.93% of respondents mentioned that their mother was the sole main contributor. In contrast, in the grandparents' household (Table 15), only 0.93%, and in the respondents' households (Table 16), 8.33% of respondents mentioned the mother as the main contributor. The data shows that there has been an increase in the percentage of mothers being the main sole contributors to the household. The role of the father and mother equally sharing the responsibility of the household economy is perceived to be higher in the parents' household (Table 14), 12.04% in comparison to grandparents' household and respondents' households. Children's contribution is negligible in all three generations, indicating a traditional pattern of parents and other adults playing the primary role of provider. None of the respondents mentioned the children as the main contributors in parents' and grandparents' households. However, in the respondents' households (Table 16), 1.85% of respondents mentioned children as the main contributors. Though it was a relatively low percentage, it consisted of parents who could not profit from their agricultural works and were not educated enough to get government jobs these parents had children who were educated and could get a job and were therefore taking care of their parents' household.

The category where all members contributed equally to the household economy was the highest in grandparents' households, 85.19%, and second % in parents' households, 55.56%. While none of the respondents opted for the option 'all the members equally contributed to the household economy' in their own family. This information indicates how children's participation in the household economy was disappearing from society as

parents were shifting their occupation from the agricultural sector to other formal jobs. It can also be noticed that because of the introduction of modern education, children were encouraged to attend schools rather than work on the farms alongside their parents. As the burden of modern education weighed on the children, they could not find enough time to help their parents in their work.

The data suggests that in respondents' households, fathers are typically the main contributors to the household economy, followed by mothers, and in some cases, both parents contribute equally. In grandparents' households, the main contribution comes from the group- all members equally contributed, with fathers being the second largest contributors. The data also shows that children being the main contributor to the household economy were rare in all three cases.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Father	102	31.48
Mother	3	0.93
Both father and mother	39	12.04
Children	0	0
All the members equally contributed	180	55.56
Parents	0	0
Total	324	100

Table 14: Showing family members who were the main contributors in respondents'

parents household

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Father	36	11.11
Mother	3	0.93
Both father and mother	6	1.85
Children	0	0
All the members equally contributed	276	85.19
Parents	3	0.93
Total	324	100

Table 15: Showing the main contributor to grandparents' household economy

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Father	261	80.56
Mother	27	8.33
Both father and mother	30	9.26
Children	6	1.85
Total	324	100

Table.16: Showing the main contributor in respondents' family's household economy



#### 4.9 Contribution of children to the household economy:

From the collected data drawn out from the table, it can be observed that in Table 17, a significant portion, 64.81% of the respondents reported contributing economically to their father's household as children under the age of 18 years. However, Table 18 shows that only a small percentage of respondents' own children currently contribute to their household economy. There appears to be a noticeable shift that has occurred between the generations, indicating that the practice of children contributing to the household economy has decreased significantly. The decrease in children's contribution to the household economy has been influenced by a number of factors, such as the change in parents' occupation from the agricultural sector to more formal jobs, the introduction of modern education, and the changing cultural norms and social expectations. The comparison suggests a substantial decrease in the percentage of children contributing to the household economy compared to the parent generation, reflecting a transformation that the society was witnessing as a result of the change in the economy.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	210	64.81
No	111	34.26
Partially	3	0.93
Total	324	100

Table 17: Showing respondents economic contribution to their fathers' household as a child under 18 years

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	27	9.09
No	270	90.91
Total	297	100

Table 18: Showing the respondents' children's economic contribution to their household economy

#### **4.10 Innovations and their impact on the household:**

There have been a number of new technologies that have been introduced into the society and its impact on the household has been attempted at being assessed. Technologies such as washing machine have significantly reduced the time and energy that woman spend in this chore, vacuum cleaners for cleaning, gas for cooking has significantly reduced the time required for making a meal and with the introduction of water motors it is significantly more easy and convenient to draw waters for using in the washrooms. Table 19 reflects respondents' opinion on the most important invention for the household during their lifetime and Table 20 focuses on whether new technologies have led to a decrease in household work. Respondents believe that many of the new technologies used within the household are functioning with the use of electricity. Therefore, this has been acknowledged as one of the most important technologies for the household. These technologies reduce the time and effort required for household tasks, as seen from the respondent's opinion in Table 20, with 97.22% replying 'Yes' to household work being reduced because of new technologies. In conclusion, the comparative analysis indicates a consensus that new household technologies have significantly reduced household work.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Cooking gas	117	36.79
Washing machine	12	3.77
Electricity	138	43.40
Refrigerators	0	0
Others	51	16.04
Total	318	100

Table 19: Showing what the respondents felt was the most important invention for the household during their lifetime

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	315	97.22
No	6	1.85
Other	3	0.93
Total	324	100

Table 20: Showing the respondents opinion about whether manual work within the household has decreased with the invention of new technologies

#### 4.11 Most commonly consumed food items:

A comparison has been made between Table 21 and Table 22 and from the data, it is observed that *Axone* is the most cooked food in both parent's homes (91.59%) and the respondents' homes (83.33%). The popularity of *Axone* suggests its cultural significance and continued importance over time. There is, however, a slight decrease in the consumption of *Axone* between Table 21 and Table 22. Meat is emerging as a dish that is

being increasingly consumed. This may be because of the easy and cheap availability of meat from poultry farms within and without the state. The comparative analysis highlights that while some staple dishes remain popular over generations, new dietary preferences might be emerging, such as the inclusion of more meat into their diet seems to be evolving while still retaining some traditional roots.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Axone	270	83.33
Dal	12	3.70
Meat	42	12.96
Other	0	0
Total	324	100

Table 21: Showing the most cooked dish in the house of the respondent

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Axone	294	91.59
Dal	12	3.74
Other	15	4.67
Total	321	100

Table 22: Showing the most cooked dish in the house of the respondents' parents' house

#### **4.12 Traditional knowledge of making the food 'Axone':**

From the data collected in Table 23 through the respondents it is evident that majority of the respondents either themselves or their wives knew how to make *Axone*. The high percentage indicates that *Axone* is a familiar and a culturally significant dish in the

community or region of the respondents. The data shows that this culturally knowledge is being passed down among the rural population to the next generation suggesting that culinary knowledge is being preserved and passed on to the next generation in the rural Sümi villages.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	309	96.26
No	12	3.74
Total	321	100

Table 23: Showing if the respondents or their wife know the process of making *Axone*

#### **4.13 Change and continuity in culinary tradition:**

From the data collected in Table 24, it is observed that a substantial majority, 95.37%, of respondents have observed changes in the food prepared in their households compared to their parents' and grandparents' homes, suggesting a shift in dietary habits and culinary practices over generations. Table 25 shows the data that 76.85% of respondents observe that there are food items which are no longer consumed in their household which were prominent in the menu of their parents' home. The high percentages in both tables reflect the evolving nature of food habits and the influence of cultural exposure to new cuisines, economic changes from an agricultural-based society to new form of employment where by having access to forest products were becoming more difficult as the setting of jobs changed and the arrival of new food items from neighboring states which were cheaper and more accessible in the markets. The comparative analysis between the two Tables emphasizes the significant changes in food prepared and consumed in households

compared to the past generations. The data reflects both the adaptability of culinary practices and the influence of various social and economic changes on food choices and consumption patterns over time.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	309	95.37
No	15	4.63
Total	324	100

Table 24: Data on changes in the food prepared in their house, parents house and grandparents house

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	249	76.85
No	75	23.15
Total	324	100

Table 25: Showing the response of individuals on whether there were any food items that were no longer eaten in their household which they had at their parents' house

#### **4.14 Change in food production within the household:**

Table 26 indicates that a significant percentage 65.74% of respondents partially rely on self-produced food for their households. While Table 27 shows that 15.74% of respondents' parents partially produced food for their household while majority that is 84.26% of respondents' parents household exclusively produced their own food. On the other hand, only 4.63% of the respondents exclusively self-produced food items needed for their household on their own. The data also shows that in Table 26 there is 29.63% of the respondents who said that there was no production in their household for food while

Table 27 shows that there were 0% for no production in parents' household. The data suggests a shift from higher reliance on exclusively self-produced food in parents' household to a more partial and no production of food in the current generation. The data suggest that there has been a reduction in exclusive self-production of food over generations and the most important factor for this change appears to be the change in economy. The change reflects how families adapt their food consumption patterns according to their contemporary lifestyle.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Partially	213	65.74
exclusively self-produced	15	4.63
no production	96	29.63
Total	324	100

Table 26: Data showing the amount of self-produced food consumed in their household

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Partially	51	15.74
exclusively self-produced	273	84.26
no production	0	0
Total	324	100

Table 27: Showing how much of the food in the respondents parents household was self-produced

#### **4.15 Continuity of tradition:**

Table 28 reveals that a significant percentage 41.67% of respondents still eat food in the traditional plate "*Asukhu*". However, a majority 51.85% do not use this traditional plate anymore and only 6.48% occasionally use it. Out of the total respondents in Table 29 shows a substantial portion that is 42.99% of respondents who know how to make traditional dish *Ahuna* but a larger percentage of 57.01% do not know how to make *Ahuna*. Table 30 shows that majority 67.59% of the respondents know the traditional knowledge of farming. The data shows a mixed pattern in continuity of traditional knowledge and practices. Traditional farming knowledge seems to be relatively higher in continuity as a large number of the rural respondents knew this knowledge, this was probably because in this area farming still continues. There seems to be decline in traditional knowledge of baking *Ahuna* and this may be because of the change that have arrived in the economic occupation of the people as this food was related to an agricultural religious ceremony for good harvest which is no longer relevant as it used to be. The data suggest that while some traditional practice like farming continues, some others like *Ahuna* baking and eating in traditional plate *Asukhu* seem to be losing its relevance. The comparative analysis indicates varying levels of continuity in traditional knowledge and practices reflecting the complex interplay of tradition and modernization in a community.



Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	135	41.67
No	168	51.85
Sometimes	21	6.48
Total	324	100

Table 28: Showing how many of the respondents still eat food in *asukhu* as platter

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	138	42.99
No	183	57.01
Total	321	100

Table 29: Showing the response of whether the participating individuals know the art of making *Ahuna*

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	219	67.59
No	105	32.41
Total	324	100

Table 30: Showing the response of how many of the individuals still know the traditional knowledge of traditional farming

#### **4.16 Weaving knowledge and economic contribution:**

The percentage of respondents who know how to weave as can be seen from Table 31 is 55.24% while there is a higher percentage for respondents' grandmothers 76.42% as can be seen in Table 35 and respondents' mother 83.33% in Table 33. This data indicates that

there has been decline in the practice and knowledge of weaving over the generations. The respondents who practiced weaving for economic purpose was 45.19% (Table 32), while respondents' mothers were 47.22% (Table 34) and grandmothers were 18.87% (Table 36). These data indicates that the purpose for weaving for household members has been changing over the past generations from it being woven for household members to being increasingly sold to the market outside of one's household. This change is also occurring due to the change in the lifestyle of the members in the community because of the change in the economy whereby people are no longer living a life of self-sufficiency within the household but are beginning to work outside their homes and getting products from outside ones household which has become a possibility with the change in the economy. In Table 37, it is seen that majority of the respondents wear their traditional attire once a week 72.22% which indicates a continuing practice of incorporating traditional clothing into their lives. In conclusion the comparative analysis highlights that there is slight decline in the practice of weaving across generations and that some shifts are observed in economic contribution through weaving.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	174	55.24
No	141	44.76
Total	315	100

Table 31: Response of the respondents or their wives (in case of male respondents) as to whether they know how to weave

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	141	45.19
No	171	54.81
Total	312	100

Table 32: Respondents or their wife's woven items' contribution to household economy

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	270	83.33
No	54	16.67
Total	324	100

Table 33: Showing the response about how many of the respondents' mother can weave

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	153	47.22
No	171	52.78
Total	324	100

Table 34: Shows whether the respondents' mothers made economic contribution to the household through weaving

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	243	76.42
No	75	23.58
Total	318	100

Table 35: Shows if the respondents' grandmother could weave

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	60	18.87
No	258	81.13
Total	318	100

Table 36: Shows if the grandmother made economic contribution to the family by selling her woven products

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Everyday	30	9.26
once a week	234	72.22
once a month	51	15.74
once a year	9	2.78
never	0	0
Total	324	100

Table 37: Shows how often the respondents wear their traditional attire

#### **4.17 Pottery-making knowledge and practice:**

A relatively small percentage, 5.56% in Table 38, know the art of making pottery. This suggests that pottery-making knowledge has lost relevance, and people no longer practice it. In Table 39, only 2.78% of respondents made pottery for economic contribution, implying that pottery's economic significance is not very relevant. Tables 40 and 42 also show that only a small percentage of mothers 3.70% and grandmother 12.96% were engaged in pottery making, indicating that the practice of making pottery had lost its cultural and economic relevance from the earlier generation. The comparative analysis

reveals that pottery-making has not been widely practiced or economically significant in this community since the previous generation. This was probably so because pottery did not hold any significant cultural or traditional values apart from it being used solely for its utility purpose. With the availability of more sturdy aluminium and steel utensils, clay vessels seem to have been readily replaced by the modern metallic ones.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	5.56
No	306	94.44
Total	324	100

Table 38: Shows if the respondents or their wife know the art of making pottery

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	9	2.78
No	315	97.22
Total	324	100

Table 39: Shows if the respondents or their wife make potter for economic venture to support their households

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	3.70
No	312	96.30
Total	324	100

Table 40: Showing the number of respondents whose mothers' know and practice pottery

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	3.70
No	312	96.30
Total	324	100

Table 41: Shows' the number of respondents mothers who made economic contribution to the household through pottery making

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	42	12.96
No	282	87.04
Total	324	100

Table 42: Shows whether the respondents grandmothers made pottery or not

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	3.70
No	312	96.30
Total	324	100

Table 43: Showing whether respondents' grandmother made economic contribution to the family by selling pottery

#### **4.18 Animal Husbandry Practice:**

Table 46 shows that an overwhelming percentage 99.07% reports that their mothers practiced animal husbandry while in Table 48 it shows that 97.22% reported that their grandmothers practiced animal husbandry. Table 44 shows that a substantial majority 83.33% of respondents practice animal husbandry. This indicates that animal rearing was

a common practice among the previous generations too (mothers and grandmothers). There is, however, a slight decline in the number of current generations practicing animal husbandry compared to the previous generation.

Table 45 reveals that 70.09% of the respondent practice animal husbandry for household consumption, whereas only 27.10% engaged in selling their livestock while 2.80% do both trade and rear for self-consumption. In Table 47 the data shows that 66.67% of their mothers specifically reared livestock's for household consumption and only 33.33% reported that their mothers reared their livestock's for economic purpose. A significant difference can be noticed in the case of the grandmother's animal husbandry in Table 49 where only 10.19% stated that their grandmothers reared animals for sale in the market and the majority 89.81% mentioned that the animals were reared specifically for household consumption. This data suggests that primary focus of animal husbandry was for meeting the family's dietary needs. The comparative analysis highlights the continued practice of animal husbandry but shows a shift from its purpose being for household consumption to increasingly being raised solely for economic purpose as a means of occupation to sustain the needs of their household.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	270	83.33
No	54	16.67
Total	324	100

Table 44: Represents the respondents status on whether they practice animal husbandry

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	225	70.09
For sale	87	27.10
Both	9	2.80
Total	321	100

Table 45: Data showing whether practice of animal husbandry was solely for household consumption or not

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	321	99.07
No	3	0.93
Total	324	100

Table 46: Data showing whether the respondents' parents' practiced animal husbandry

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	108	33.33
No, they were specifically for household consumption.	216	66.67
Total	324	100

Table 47: Data showing whether the respondents' parents made economic contribution for the household by selling home reared animals



Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	315	97.22
No	9	2.78
Total	324	100

Table 48: Data showing response on whether grandparents' practiced animal husbandry

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	33	10.19
No, it was specifically used for our household consumption.	291	89.81
Total	324	100

Table 49: Data showing response on whether the animal husbandry was practiced by their grandparents for trade

#### 4.19 Construction of houses:

Across all the three generations (grandparents, parents, and respondents), a comparative analysis has been attempted to study who constructs their houses. In Table 50, the grandparents' houses were mostly constructed by them, 78.50% with the help of relatives, while a small percentage of 20.56% indicated that they built it themselves. Very few respondents (0.93%) mentioned hiring labour outside their village. In Table 51, the construction of the respondents' parents' houses was mostly done by relatives 70.37%, a smaller percentage built houses themselves 20.37%, and a small proportion 9.26% hired labour from outside the village. The data for grandparents and parents is quite similar.

However, there is a significant shift for the respondents. In Table 52, the construction of respondents' houses shows that 77.36% have hired labourers outside their village and state to construct their houses. Only a small percentage of 4.72% build their own house, and 17.92% build their house with the help of relatives. The comparative analysis reveals changes in house construction patterns across generations. There has been a noticeable increase in the use of hired labour from outside the village in the contemporary generation, reflecting changing economic, social, and cultural factors influencing house construction.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Themselves	66	20.56
Relatives	252	78.50
Hired men from outside their village	3	0.93
Total	321	100

Table50: Data showing response on who build the respondents grandparents house

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Themselves	66	20.37
Relatives	228	70.37
Hired men from outside their village	30	9.26
Total	324	100

Table51: Showing response on who built their parents' house (manual labor)

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yourself	15	4.72
Relatives	57	17.92
Hired men from outside their village	246	77.36
Total	318	100

Table 52: Shows response on who built their house

#### **4.20 The impact of the new economy on the status of women:**

Data was collected to determine whether women's status changed with new employment opportunities in the government and private sector. According to the data collected as can be seen in Table 53, 88.89% of respondents 88.89% believed that the status of women changed with the introduction of new employment opportunities, and only 11.11% felt that the status of women did not change.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	288	88.89
No	36	11.11
Total	324	100

Table 53: Shows the respondents opinion on whether they think the status of women has changed as a result of transformation in the household economy.

### **View on women working in the agricultural sector:**

Data was collected to understand whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement that practicing farming or working in the agricultural sector was more difficult for women than working in other formal jobs emerging in the community. As can be seen in Table 54 among the respondents, 85.19% agreed it was more difficult for a woman to practice farming/ agriculture, and only 14.81% disagreed. The data indicates that a significant portion of respondents agree it is more difficult for women to practice farming/agriculture.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	276	85.19
No	48	14.81
Total	324	100

Table 54: Data shows whether respondents agree with the premise that it is more challenging for women to practice farming and agriculture in comparison to more formal employment that are available with education.

### **4.21 Unemployment:**

Data has been collected to understand the perception of respondents about the historical situation of unemployment and farming practices in Nagaland before the State formation on December 1, 1963. The Data is presented in Table 55 with two categories to reflect whether respondents agree or disagree with the statement. Among the respondents, 94.44% agreed with the statement that prior to the establishment of education and new job opportunities, there was no problem with unemployment as everyone practiced

farming. Only 5.56% disagreed with the statement. The strong agreement with the statement indicates self-sufficiency in the traditional farming practice.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
True	306	94.44
False	18	5.56
Total	324	100

Table 55: Shows individuals' opinion on not having unemployment problems before western education and white collared jobs (which came along after statehood)

#### **4.22 Factors that brought about the most extensive change in household:**

From the data collected, 49.07% indicated that the most important factor that brought about extensive changes within the households was Christianity, followed by 26.85% who indicated modern Western education as the most crucial factor responsible for extensive changes within their household and 24.07% stated that change in the economy was the most significant factor driving extensive changes within their households. The majority of respondents who attributed the influence of Christianity as one of the main factor in bringing about extensive changes in their households may have included changes in values, beliefs, social interactions, and cultural practices. Modern education, which was introduced, has influenced an individual's life by transforming various aspects of their life even to the extent of changing their social and economic standing. There has been much work and discussions in Naga society, in general and Sümi community in particular about how transformation in the socio-cultural and religious life ways has come about taking these two factors as the most influential ones. However, since the impact of

the economy is not usually discussed, there is less awareness regarding its influence in transforming a society.

The above discussion and the statistical data presented below in Table 56 indicates that respondents attribute extensive changes within their household to a variety of factors, suggesting a complex interplay of religion, economy, and educational influence on households' transformation.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Christianity	159	49.07
Change in economy	78	24.07
Modern western education	87	26.85
Others	0	0
Total	324	100

Table 56: Response on factors responsible for the most important source that brought the most extensive changes within the household

The data collected from the respondents indicates that 42.59% (Table 57) agreed with the statement that the transition from agricultural to formal economy has had a negative impact on the social life of the society. While 29.63% disagreed with the statement indicating that the transition did not have any negative impact. There were also 26.85% respondents who selected both views as their response. The data highlights a diversity of opinion regarding the impact of transition from an agricultural economy to a formal economy on the social life of the society.

Categories	No. of respondents	Percentage
Agree	138	42.59
Disagree	96	29.63
Both	87	26.85
Other	3	0.93
Total	324	100

Table 57: Shows the opinions' of individuals about the negative impact in the social life of the society as result of change from agricultural economy to formal economy

The Sümi Naga society has experienced significant impact as a result of introduction of modern education. The traditional Sümi Naga society that was historically agrarian and relied on subsistence farming, hunting, and gathering witnessed major changes. There were major changes in the religious and cultural traditions of this society as it came into contact with the colonial British rulers as well as the American missionaries in the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. However, major changes in the lifestyle of this society came about with the introduction of the modern economy in the state, which began with Nagaland becoming a full-fledged state on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1963. With the recognition of statehood came employment in various government sectors, and with it, the monetary system became more prominent. The introduction of new occupations led to major changes, which could be witnessed within the household that gradually emerged into the society. The transition began as changes occurred in the livelihood of the people in the community from being agriculture based to an opportunity of education and job oriented prospects. Ghosh (1979) talked about a situation where the population, which was entirely working as cultivators in the agricultural sector, began to

get engaged in government establishments or business, leading them to leave their agricultural work. Also, the data collected through personal interviews clearly showed that they preferred these new white collared jobs. As a result of the integration of the modern economy, cultural changes were being brought into society through the younger generations, who were influenced by exposure to new ideas and lifestyles. They became comfortable with adopting new values and behaviours, which led to a shift from traditional norms to modern lifestyle. The impact of the modern economy on the Sümi Naga society has been a complex interplay of opportunities and challenges. While economic integration has brought new avenues for development and improved livelihoods, it has also raised questions about cultural preservation. Striking a balance between embracing economic change and maintaining cultural identity is a key consideration for the Sümi Naga community as it navigates the forces of modernization. The modern economy has brought about transformations within the household of the Sümi Nagas, but there have also been certain traditional aspects that have persisted.

The data collected indicates how certain changes have been evident while certain traditions are persisting, even with the arrival of so many changes in the society. Some elements of continuity can be seen in certain traditional practices among the Sümi community, such as participating in taking the bride prize *Ame*, the continuity of nuclear family as opposed to joint families, and food such as *Axone*, which continue to remain as a consistent part of their daily diet, eating food in traditional plates such as *Asukhu*, baking *Ahuna*. However, trends show that people are forgetting this knowledge as it doesn't appear to be very practical for their present lifestyle; the knowledge of farming



and weaving continues but is beginning to show signs of decline in practice, probably because of new convenient alternatives that have emerged.

However, in this complex scenario, it can be observed that the Sümi community is also undergoing a number of changes as a result of the emergence of a new economy. There has been a transformation in various aspects of society, as discussed through the various data collected from the respondents. The age of marriage has risen, the demography of the household is reducing, the occupation of the younger generation is seeing changes, the members contributing to the household has also changed significantly, new menus are being introduced in culinary, food production from the household is also drastically reduced with more consumption than production, potter making has lost its relevance, the purpose of animal husbandry has also changed from it being mostly for household consumption to it being raised for selling in the market, construction of houses have also shifted from it being a communal activity to it turning into personal work. Women's status has also changed due to modern education and formal jobs where women can earn the same or even more than men. The modern economy has led certain aspects of the Sümi Naga household to significant transformation, but certain traditional elements that still had significance, meaning and relevance remained preserved among the community till today. Balancing this complex dynamic of continuity and transformation will be a complex endeavour that the Sümi community will have to work towards as it faces new challenges and opportunities while attempting to preserve its cultural identity.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

"Unlike any period of their history the Nagas, it goes even without mentioning, are now faced with an unprecedented arena of changes in every walk of life. As an inevitable sequel to this, not only faith in old ways of life and traditions have been shaken seriously, giving rise to psychological conflicts and tensions, but also the traits of the age old culture are heading towards oblivion at an alarming rate" (Ao, 1973). This assertion of thought by a Naga emphasizes the necessity of reviving and preserving the lost customs and culture of the past. The statement underscores the challenging and transformative period that the Nagas began to witness. It highlights the need for efforts to balance modernity while also preserving their rich cultural heritage. Additionally, it raises awareness about the potential loss of indigenous knowledge if steps are not taken to safeguard Naga traditions and ways of life. One of the most noticeable consequences of these changes is the erosion of long-standing traditions and customs. These practices, which have been an integral way of Naga life for generations are now being challenged and in some cases, abandoned. This seems to have led to a deep seated sense of conflict and tension within the community.

Sema (1986) claims that the Nagas continued to use and respect their traditional shawls despite the early prohibitions and discouragements imposed by foreign missionaries not to wear traditional clothing because they were thought to be "heathenish". He opined that, "The Nagas will have to preserve their cultural identity.

This can be done by observing their important festivals like Sekhrenyi for the Angami 's, Moatsu for the Ao 's, Tuluni for the Sema's etc" (Sema,1986, p.57-58). Sema's statement highlights the resilience of Naga culture in the face of external pressures, particularly from foreign missionaries who sought to discourage the use of traditional clothing, considering it to be 'heathenish'. Despite these prohibitions, the Nagas persisted in valuing and wearing their traditional shawls. This resistance signifies a deep-rooted attachment to their cultural heritage and a determination to preserve it. The traditional shawls hold symbolic and cultural significance for the Nagas, representing their identity, history and values. By continuing to wear these shawls, they are not only expressing their unique cultural identity but also resisting attempts at cultural assimilation. Sema emphasizes the importance of attending important tribal festivals as these festivals are essential components of Naga cultural life, serving as occasions for communal gatherings and reinforcement of social bonds while displaying cultural richness of each community. These festivals will ensure the continuity of their cultural practices as it will serve as an important medium to pass down cultural knowledge to the next generation. Sema's statement underscores the vital role that cultural practices and tradition plays in preserving and promoting the cultural identity and heritage of the people.

Through this research attempts have been made to demonstrate that the Sümi household has endured across generations, adapting and evolving in response to a multitude of internal and external factors. Certain traditions which still continue like food and traditional attire highlight the resilience of societal structures and the capacity of communities to preserve and adapt their cultural heritage. By analyzing the economic activities within the Sümi household, it has been discerned that economic pursuits are not

merely pragmatic endeavours but wield significant power in shaping social change. Economic factors, such as shifts in subsistence practices or engagement in trade seem to show correlation with shifts in social dynamics and cultural norms. This research has attempted to illuminate instances where economic activities acted as catalyst for profound social transformations. Like the introduction of monetary system which came about with statehood and government service/jobs which made it possible for families to have consistent monetary income which slowly made it feasible for traders to start market places in the state which brought about transformation in the lifestyle of people in their homes and routines. With the change that came about in the economy there was gradually a shift and change that also came about in power dynamics, gender roles and community structures underscoring the dynamic relationship between economic endeavours and societal evolution. Certain elements which continue in the household showcases a remarkable ability to adapt to changing circumstances while preserving its traditional practices. The capacity for adaptation reflects the broader capacity to respond to changes with resilience. It can be observed that changes in society are a complex interplay of numerous factors such as religion, education and modern economy. Giving too much credit to one and ignoring the other factors can lead to narrowing ones understanding of a multifaceted subject of change and dynamics of societies. However as there have been more researches conducted on the other factors and the economic factor has often been neglected while studying the change that have come about in this society this research has underscored the importance of recognizing the agency of economic activities in shaping social processes. In the course of this comprehensive exploration into the analytical history of the Sümi household, we have unearthed invaluable insights into the intricate

interplay of socio-economic dynamics that have shaped the fabric of Sümi society. This endeavor has illuminated the nuanced evolution of the Sümi household and has attempted to provide a broader framework for understanding the mechanisms leading to continuity and transformation within societies at large. On examining the economic activities within the household it revealed that it emerged as a pivotal force that reflected and influenced broader social processes. Economic changes created a catalyze shift in the demography, food consumption-production and cultural norms. It can be concluded that change is not a sporadic event but an inherent, ongoing process.

It is crucial to recognize that while change is an inevitable part of any society's evolution, the pace and nature of these changes can be particularly challenging. The Nagas are navigating a delicate balance between preserving their cultural heritage and adapting to a world that is rapidly modernizing. The period of transition requires careful consideration of how to honor the past while also embracing the opportunities and advancements of the present and future. It is a complex process that demands thoughtful reflection, dialogue and adaptation from all members of the community.

The research has explored the changes that unfolded within an agricultural-centered community as a result of the emergence of alternative employment opportunities. The economic structural shifts brought about by these new opportunities laid the groundwork for significant social transformation. The questionnaires highlighting how the availability of more lucrative and rewarding jobs gradually eroded the relevance of age-old cultural practices. These changes did not occur in isolation but began at the very core of society- the household economy. The transformation was not limited to the realm of economy but permeated from it into all facets of community life. The

agricultural-centric foundation of the community gave way to a more diversified economic landscape, taking the community away from its traditional agrarian roots. This shifts eventually led to changes in the social norms and aspirations. As the household economy evolved, so did the broader societal structure ultimately leading to a transformation in the community's way of life. The emergence of alternative means of employment within an agricultural-centred community led to major transformations in the Sümi Community. The shift from a primarily agrarian economy to one with diverse and lucrative employment opportunities had profound implications for the community's social fabric. The availability of new employments led individuals to reconsider the traditional roles and occupations. Deeply rooted cultural practices and traditions rooted in agricultural life started to lose their relevance and significance. This cultural shift was not necessarily a consequence of economic change but it was intertwined with it.

This study has examined the multifaceted impact of the modern economy on the Sümi Naga society, emphasizing the complex interplay of opportunities and challenges. While economic integration brought development and improved livelihoods, it also raised concerns about cultural preservation. Elements of continuity are observed in certain traditional practices, such as the bride prize *Ame*, nuclear families and traditional foods. However, there is a noticeable decline in traditional knowledge related to farming and weaving reflecting a shift towards more convenient alternatives. The Sümi community is undergoing various changes, including delayed marriage, changing household demographics, evolving occupations, altered contributions to households and shifts in culinary preferences. Furthermore, traditional practices like pottery-making have lost relevance, and animal husbandry has shifted from household consumption to market-

oriented production. House construction has become more individualistic and women status has improved due to modern education and formal employment opportunities.

In this intricate scenario, the Sümi community faces the challenge of balancing continuity and transformation. Preserving cultural identity while embracing economic change is a pressing concern. While certain traditional elements persist, the data collected through questionnaires suggests that practicality often drives their decline. Achieving equilibrium in this dynamic environment is a complex endeavour, one that the Sümi community must undertake as it navigates new opportunities and confronts challenges while safeguarding its rich cultural heritage.

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## Glossary

*Achuka:* The Sümi word for household kitchen.

*Ahuna:* Refers to rice baked in bamboo tubes in the fire but is also associated with post harvest festival

*Apuki:* Bachelors dormitory where unmarried boys were imparted with important life skills, it was an informal educational institute.

*Asukhu:* Traditional wooden plate used as plate.

*Axone:* Dried fermented soybean, which is a traditional food for the Sumis

*Azomi:* Sümi people living in geographically colder regions.

*Chine Cheghe:* It relates to the practice which laid down specific guidelines and customs to be traditionally followed to secure favorable omens and prevent unfavorable ones. It also forbade certain people the right to participate in certain cultural or traditional practices such as wearing certain ornaments, clothes or decorating the house in certain manner until all the necessary criterias were fulfilled.

*Chini-phi:* Forbidden cloth.

*Ghabomi:* Sümi people living in geographically hotter regions.

*Iliki:* Unmarried young girls dormitory where young girls were imparted with important life skills, it was an informal educational institute.

*Tenhaku-ki:* Snail horns which were basically bamboo decorations, sometimes embellished with imitation birds of wood fastened on them, with ornaments of gourds and bamboo tassels hung to the ends of bamboo stick which are put across each other to rattle in the wind.

### Informed Consent Form

I ..... (respondents name) hereby give my permission to Bokali Shohe, Ph.d Research Scholar (Nagaland University) to record my response to a questionnaire for her Ph.d Research work. I understand that the title of her work is **“Continuity and transformation of the Sumi Naga Household.”**

There are no known risks involved in participating in these studies. The respondent’s identity will be kept entirely confidential, and data will be anonymised. Data will be used only for academic purposes. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact the researcher through mail ID: [bokalichophi12@gmail.com](mailto:bokalichophi12@gmail.com).

I understand that photographic, video or audio recording data will be used for educational purposes only. I understand that participation of the respondents is voluntary and that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without giving reasons. I also understand that information collected will be kept confidential and anonymised unless I permit the release of my name.

(please tick the box below and return it to the researcher)

☐ I do give consent for participation in the research studies

(Signature)

Questionnaire for statistical data on the Research title: “**Continuity and transformation of the Sumi Naga Household.**”

Ph.d Research Scholar: **Bokali Shohe** (Nagaland University)

**Individual questionnaire**

**Demography**

- 1) Name :
- 2) Age :
- 3) Sex:
- 4) Origin village:
- 5) Present village/ location:
- 6) At what age did you start working?:
- 7) At what age did you marry?:
- 8) Did/will you take/give ‘ame’ for your marriage? a)Yes b)No
- 9) How many members are there in your household?(including relatives/ helpers)  
a)5 and below b)10 and below c)15 and below d) 15 and above
- 10) How many members were there in your parent’s household ? (including relatives and helpers if any)  
a)5 and below b)10 and below c)15 and below d) 15 and above
- 11) Did your grandparent live in a joint family? a)Yes b)No
- 12) Did your parents live in a joint family? a)Yes b) No.
- 13) Do you live in a joint family? a)Yes b) No.

**OCCUPATION**

- 14) What occupation did your grandparents practice? a)Agriculture/ farming b)Government Job
- 15) What occupation did your parents practice? a)Agriculture/farming b)Government Job
- 16) What occupation do you practice? a)Agriculture/farming b)Government Job c)Private company
- 17) Can you say that the new employment opportunity in the form of Government jobs (change from subsistence agriculture) brought positive changes to your family life? a)Yes b) no c)other
- 18) How many hours did you normally work in a day? As agriculturist..... as employees.....
- 19) Who was the main contributor to your family’s household economy in your parents house hold? a)Father b)mother c) children d) all the members equally contributed
- 20) Who was the main contributor in grand parents household economy?  
a)Father b)mother c) children d) all the members equally contributed
- 21) Who is the main contributor to your family’s household economy?

- a) Father b) Mother c) children
- 22) Did you contribute economically to your fathers household economically as a child under 18 years? a) yes b) No
- 23) Do your children contribute to your household economy? a) Yes b) No If yes from what age.....

### **HOUSEHOLD TECHNOLOGY**

- 24) What according to you is the most important invention for the household during your lifetime?  
a) cooking gas b) washing machine c) electricity d) refrigerators e) others.....
- 25) Would you say that the work within the household has decreased with the invention of new technologies for household? a) yes b) No c) Other.....

### **FOOD ECONOMY**

- 26) Favourite childhood dish?.....
- 27) What is the most cooked dish in your home today? a) Axone b) dal c) meat d) other.....
- 28) What was the most cooked dish at your parents home? a) Axone b) dal  
c) other.....
- 29) Do you/your wife know how to make Axone? a) Yes b) No
- 30) Are there changes in the food prepared in your house today from your parent's and grandparents house? a) Yes b) No
- 31) Are there any food items which you no longer eat in your household (which you had at your parents house)? a) Yes..... b) No.
- 32) How much of the food you eat in your household is self produced?  
a) Partially b) exclusively self produced c) no production.
- 33) How much of the food you had in your parents household was self produced?  
a) Partially b) exclusively self produces c) no production.
- 34) Do you eat food in asukhu? a) Yes b) No
- 35) Do you know how to make ahuna? a) Yes b) No

### **TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE**

- 36) Do you know the traditional knowledge of farming? a) Yes b) No
- 37) Does you/wife know how to weave? a) Yes b) No
- 38) Do you/ your wife weave for economy? a) Yes b) No
- 39) Did your mother weave? a) Yes b) No
- 40) Did she make economic contributions in the household through weaving? a) Yes b) No
- 41) Did your grandmother weave? a) Yes b) No.
- 42) Did she make economic contribution to the family by selling her products? a) Yes b) No

- 43) How often do you wear your traditional attire? a)Everyday b) once a week c)once a month d) once a year e)never
- 44) Do you/wife know how to make pottery? a)Yes b) No
- 45) Do you/wife make pottery for economic contribution to your household? a)Yes b) No
- 46) Does your mother make pottery? a)Yes b)No
- 47) Did she make economic contributions in the household through pottery? a)Yes b)No
- 48) Did your grandmother make pottery? a)Yes b)No.
- 49) Did she make economic contribution to the family by selling her pottery? a)Yes b) no
- 50) Do you/wife practice animal Husbandry (rearing animals-cow,pig,chicken etc)? a)Yes b) No
- 51) Do you practice it for household consumption a)Yes (exclusively) b) For sale.
- 52) Did your mother practice animal husbandry? a)Yes b)No
- 53) Did she make economic contributions by selling them? a)Yes b)No/ they were specifically for household consumption.
- 54) Did your grandmother practice animal husbandry? a) Yes b) No
- 55) Did she make economic contribution to the family by selling her products? a)Yes b)No it was specifically used for your household consumption.
- 56) Who build your grandparents house (manual labor)? a)Themselves b) Relatives c) Hired men from outside their village
- 57) Who build your parents house (manual labor)? a)Themselves b)Relatives c) Hired men from outside their village
- 58) Who build your house (manual labor)? a)Yourself b) Relatives c) Hired men from outside your state or town.

## OPINIONS

- 59) Did the status of women change with the change in her economic house hold production and consumption service after the arrival of new employment (government/private sector formal works)?a)Yes b) no
- 60) Do you agree that it is more difficult for a woman to practice farming and agriculture in comparison to more formal jobs that are available with education? a)Yes b) No
- 61) Do you agree with the statement that prior to the arrival of education and new job opportunities that came after statehood of Nagaland on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. 1963 there was no problem of unemployment as everyone practiced farming? a)True b) False
- 62) What would you say was the most important factor that brought about the most extensive changes within your household?  
a)Christianity b)change in economy c)modern western education d)other.....
- 63) Would you agree or disagree with the statement that the change from agricultural economy to the formal economy has had negative impact on the social life of the society?  
a)Agree b)disagree c)both d) other.....