



**A STUDY ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH
LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES IN MANIPUR**

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

KHAIDEM NIRJA

Admn. No. Ph – 275/19 Regn. No. PhD/AEX/00337

Department of Agricultural Extension Education
School of Agricultural Sciences
Nagaland University, Medziphema Campus – 797 106
Nagaland
December, 2025



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BY

Name of Candidate: Khaidem Nirja

Name of Supervisor: Prof. J. Longkumer

Submitted

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Agricultural Extension Education of Nagaland University

Nagaland University

June, 2025

I, Khaidem Nirja, 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 the basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted to School of Agricultural Sciences, Nagaland University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Extension Education.

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CERTIFICATE – I

This is to certify that the thesis entitled **“A Study on Women Empowerment Through Livelihood Activities in Manipur”** submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Agriculture) in the discipline of Agricultural Extension Education, is the record of research work carried out by Khaidem Nirja, Registration No. Ph.D./AEX/00337, under my personal supervision and guidance.

The result of the investigation reported in the thesis has not been submitted for any other degree or diploma. The assistance of all kinds received by the student has been duly acknowledged.

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CERTIFICATE – II

**VIVA VOCE ON THESIS OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION EDUCATION**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**A Study on Women Empowerment Through Livelihood Activities in Manipur**” submitted by Khaidem Nirja, Admission No. Ph-275/19, Registration No. **Ph.D./AEX/00337**, to the Nagaland University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Extension Education has been examined by the Advisory Board and External examiner on

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DEDICATED
TO MY
BELLOVED FAMILY

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Dated:

Place : Medziphema, Nagaland

(KHAIDEM NIRJA)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

%	: Per cent
<	: Less than
>	: More than
$\bar{x}$	: Mean
σ	: Standard deviation
σ^2	: Variance
Σ	: Summation
CARE	: Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
CIDA	: Canadian International Development Agency
DA	: Development Alternatives
DFID	: Department for International Development
DHS	: Demographic and Health Survey
DLA	: Detailed Livelihood Assessment
DVM	: Domestic Violence Module
<i>et al.</i>	: <i>Et alli</i> (and other)
<i>etc.</i>	: <i>et cetera</i>
F	: Frequency
Fig.	: Figure
FPC	: Farmer Producer Company
FSS	: Family Support Scale
GBV	: Gender-Based Violence
GEM	: Gender Empowerment Measure

GDI	: Gender Development Index
GOI	: Government of India
Ha	: Hectare
HD	: Human Development
HDI	: Human Development Index
HDR	: Human Development Report
HEA	: Household Economy Approach
HLS	: Household Livelihood Security
HLSA	: Household Livelihood Security Assessment
HLSI	: Household Livelihood Security Index
i. e	: That is
IFPRI	: International Food Policy Research Institute
ILIA	: Improved Livelihood Impact Assessment
ILO	: International Labour Organization
Km.	: Kilometer
LA	: Livelihood Approaches
LAT	: Livelihood Assessment Tool
LB	: Livelihood Baseline
LS	: Livelihood Strategies
NSC	: National Statistical Office
NSSO	: National Sample Survey Office
OPHI	: Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
Rs.	: Rupees

SES	: Socio-Economic Status Scale
SLA	: Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SL	: Sustainable Livelihood
Sl. No.	: Serial number
SHG	: Self-Help Group
SPSS	: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UK	: United Kingdom
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
WEAI	: Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WEI	: Women Empowerment Index
<i>viz.</i>	: videlicet (namely)

ABSTRACT

A study was conducted on the topic on “A Study on Women Empowerment through Livelihood Activities in Manipur” whereby the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the women in both valley and hilly area, various livelihood activities of the women, the role of livelihood opportunities in empowering them, livelihood security of women respondents, extent of women empowerment through livelihood activities and constraints and challenges faced by the women in empowerment were taken as objectives. The present study was conducted in the state of Manipur and two districts *viz.* Imphal West and Senapati were selected purposively. Two blocks were selected from each district purposively making it a total of four blocks. Three villages each were selected purposively from each of the selected blocks were selected making it a total of twelve villages. The study revealed that majority (76.25%) of the respondents were between the age of 36 and 60 years. Majority (27.91%) of the respondents had completed their education upto higher secondary. Majority (87.08%) of the head of the households in the study area were male. Majority (79.58%) of the respondents were married. Majority (70.00%) of the respondents belonged to nuclear type of family. Majority (70.42%) of the respondents had no training exposure. Majority (53.75%) of the respondents dwelled in semi-pucca houses. Majority (51.25%) of the respondents' household size is upto 5 members. Majority of the respondents were working as vegetable vendors at 54.17 per cent. Majority (77.50%) of the respondents had total landholding size of less than 1 acre. Majority (37.92%) of the respondents' household in the study area were in the category of Rs. 2-3 lakhs annual income. Majority (67.92%) of the respondents in the study area were in the category of Rs. 1-2 lakhs. Majority (95.83%) of the respondents in both the study areas owned farming equipments/tools. It was observed that education cost the highest among the five areas of expenditure with Rs.96555 annually. Majority (28.33%) of the respondents preferred moneylenders for access to credit. Majority (51.25%) of the respondents had non-institutional savings. Majority (76.67%) of the respondents' families were without debt. None of the respondents had migrated from urban area to rural area or from rural area to urban area. Majority

(65.22%) of the respondents in Imphal west and Senapati districts had negligible institutional support. It has been found that majority (82.50%) of the respondents had only one source of income. Majority (54.17 %) of the respondents were vegetable vendors, 7.08 per cent were processed food items vendors, 6.25 per cent were traditional items vendors, 4.58 per cent each were local grocers and fruit vendors, 4.50 per cent were farmers, 3.75 per cent were rearing livestock, 3.33 per cent were engaged in embroidery, 2.92 per cent were engaged in weaving, 2.08 per cent each were hand-woven basket vendors and fish vendors, 1.67 per cent were meat vendors, 0.83 per cent each were fish farmers, tailors and banana leaf vendors and 0.42 per cent operated rice mill. The linear regression revealed that variables like *age*, *skills in various sectors*, *material possessions* and *resources and assets* were significantly associated with the extent of empowerment of the women respondents in the study area at 5 per cent significance level and revealed that *training exposure*, *annual income of the respondents* and *access to credit* were statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level. The study found that majority (98.33%) of the respondents' households were in medium level of Household Livelihood Security. Further, it was revealed that majority (97.50%) of the respondents were in medium level of women empowerment. The major constraints faced by the women included lack of opportunity for female education, women's lack of access to credit and lack of income generating activities of women and depending on others for financial needs. It was recommended that financial literacy programmes, usage of social media and quality packaging strategies, facilities for proper storage for their produce, training programmes be arranged by the concerned departments and agencies after assessing their availability, their time schedule and the location, with emphasis on hands-on training.

Keywords: *Livelihood activities, Women Empowerment, Household Security.*

CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment as defined by Kabeer (2001) is the expansion of ability of the people to make strategic life choices where this ability was previously denied to them. It is also a process to change the distribution of power between men and women, both in interpersonal relations and in institutions throughout society (Tandon, 2016) as women are often considered as subordinates to men and they are denied the power to decide their life choices. To Rowlands (1995), empowerment is a bottom-up process and does not only mean to have access to decision making but also being able and entitled to occupy the decision-making space. According to Pandya (2008), empowerment has become the key strategy for addressing many socio-economic problems as it initiates the process of obtaining the basic opportunities for marginalized people, either directly by the affected people, or through the help of others who may not be marginalized but willing to share their own access to these opportunities.

Nayak (2012) described women empowerment as promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others. Women's empowerment equips and allows them to make life-determining decisions by redefining gender roles or other such roles, which in turn may provide them the freedom to pursue desired goals (Kokane, 2020). The process of empowerment is more relevant for women as they play a major role in household and intra-familial relationships (Malhotra and Schuler, 2005). Women empowerment is also considered as a means to achieve other important livelihood outcomes such as more income, increased well-being (e.g., non-material goods, like self-esteem, health status, access to services, sense of inclusion), reduced vulnerability, improved food security and a more sustainable use of natural resources (e.g., appropriate property rights), improvements in child nutritional status, and self-reliance (Van den Bold *et al.*, 2013).

The Human Development Report also relates empowerment to participation since development is for the people, they must participate fully in the decisions and processes that affect their lives (UNDP, 1995). Roy (2019) concluded in his study

that society must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of self-decision making and participating in social, political and economic life of the country with a sense of equality. For the development of the economy women and men both should work together and women should utilize their skills. Women empowerment is an essential element in national development. Since women constitute half of the population there can be no development unless the needs and interests of women are fully taken into account.

The present study deals with women who are primarily engaged in different informal livelihood activities such as vendors mainly selling agricultural and allied products, farming, weaving, livestock rearing, *etc.* as their primary income generating activity.

1.1 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE WORLD AND INDIA

The concept of 'Women empowerment' was first introduced in the 19th century at the International Women's Conference at Nairobi in the year 1985. The first wave of feminism put importance on women's political rights, such as the right to vote. The second wave of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s emphasized on women's social and economic rights, such as equal pay for equal work and access to education. The third wave of feminism in the 1990s was mainly concerned on the diversity of women's experiences and the intersectionality of gender, race, and class (Reshi, 2022).

In India, empowering women, especially at the grassroots level was focused in the Eighth five-year plan (1992-1997) through Panchayat Raj Institutions and empowering women through translating the recently adopted National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) into action and ensuring survival, protection and development of women and children through rights based approach was taken care in Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) (Mula and Sarker, 2013). The Government of India had ushered in the new millennium by declaring the year 2001 as 'Women's Empowerment Year' to focus on a vision 'where women are equal partners like

men'. The last decades have witnessed some basic changes in the status and role of women in our society. There has been shift in policy approaches from the concept of 'welfare' in the seventies to 'development' in the eighties and now to 'empowerment' in the nineties (Konwar, 2019). This process has been further accelerated with some sections of women becoming increasingly self-conscious of their discrimination in several areas of family and public life. They are also in a position to mobilize themselves on issues that can affect their overall position.

1.2 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN MANIPUR

Women empowerment in Manipur has been a key focus of both government and civil society efforts. The state has seen significant progress in areas like education, politics and social activism. Manipur has a relatively high female literacy rate at 76.94 per cent (Manipur Population Data, Census 2011) which is higher as compared to many other parts of India. The state has a notable history of women's participation in politics and has produced influential women leaders such as Irom Sharmila who is known for her sixteen-year-long hunger strike against the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) (Singh, 2023), M.K. Binodini who was a prominent social activist and political figure known for her significant contributions to social reforms particularly in advocating for women's rights, education and social justice (Ningombam, 2022), Mary Kom whose achievement transcended the boundaries of a mere sporting victory, representing a triumph over systemic gender biases, societal expectations, and the marginalization of women in sports (Barua, 2024). The Meira Paibis (women torchbearers) have played a pivotal role in social justice movements including protests against state violence and human rights violations. The women have also taken up leadership roles in initiatives aimed at tackling drug addiction often acting as grassroots-level support systems for affected families (Devi, 2019).

1.3 LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES

A livelihood comprises of the capabilities, assets (both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living; it is sustainable when it can

cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance capabilities and assets and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long and short run” (Chambers and Conway, 1992).

Livelihood can be best defined as the methods and means of making a living in the world. The term livelihood ‘best expresses the idea of individuals or groups striving to make a living, attempting to meet their various consumption and economic necessities, coping with uncertainties, responding to new opportunities, and choosing between different value positions’ (Long, 2000). Livelihood strategy is an activity undertaken by smallholder households to provide a means of living. The key goal of livelihood strategies is to ensure household economic and social security (Koczberski *et al.*, 2001). The mixed livelihood strategy is an approach for capturing the diversified means of raising household income. Agricultural intensification, to achieve livelihood security, is a key livelihood strategy that has been adopted by the rural households (Scoones, 1998). The diversity of livelihoods is an important feature of rural survival as it is closely allied to flexibility, resilience and stability. In this sense, diverse livelihood systems are less vulnerable than undiversified ones; they are also likely to prove more sustainable over time precisely because they allow for positive adaptation to changing circumstances (Ellis, 2000).

Unorganised or informal sector constitutes a pivotal part of the Indian economy constituting 88.00 per cent of the total labour 47.29 crore as per the 66th round of NSSO survey of 2011-12 (Rani *et al.*, 2018). A high proportion of socially and economically underprivileged sections of society are concentrated in the informal economic activities (Anonymous, 2012). Informal employment is generally a larger source of employment for women than for men in the developing world. Almost 97.00 per cent of the women workforce are involved in the unorganized sectors, majorly in agriculture (Shukla, 2024).

In rural India, livelihood activities are diverse and largely depend on agriculture, natural resources and local art and crafts. Agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood and rural economy in India as it employs more than 50.00 per cent of the

total workforce in India (GOI, 2018). Agriculture is an integral part of everyday life in Indian sub-continent, not only for it employs about 70.00 per cent of workforce of the country, but also for it provides food to the population, raw materials for the industries, wood for fuel and shelter, herbs for medicines and above all means of sustenance and livelihoods (Hasnain, 2008)

The women who are not employed in government service often engage themselves in a variety of livelihood activities and these may vary depending on resources, skills and opportunities. In rural areas, women often work as agricultural labour in planting, transplanting, weeding, harvesting, threshing and other tasks on family-owned or other's agricultural land. Women are involved in all aspects of agriculture operations, from crop selection to land preparation, to seed selection, planting, weeding, pest control, harvesting, crop storage, handling, marketing, and processing (Rani *et al.*, 2019). Many women are also engaged in livestock rearing such as poultry farming, piggery and dairy farming for their livelihood. Several women also take up handloom weaving, embroidery and other traditional crafts for sale at the local markets and act as a source of income for them.

1.4 LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES OF WOMEN IN MANIPUR

Just like most states of India, agricultural sector has a vital place in the economy of the Manipur. The rural population constitutes about 70.79 per cent of the total population according to the final figure of the Population Census, 2011. In Manipur 52.81 per cent of the workers are either cultivators or agricultural labourers (Economic Survey of Manipur, 2017-2018). Women are involved in all aspects of agriculture operations, from crop selection to land preparation, to seed selection, planting, weeding, pest control, harvesting, crop storage, handling, marketing, and processing. Almost all women in rural Manipur can be considered as 'farmers' in some sense. They sometimes work as agricultural labour, sometimes work as unpaid agricultural labour in the family agricultural farm. Like any other peasant economy, household is the basic unit of consumption and production in Manipur wherein both men and women take part in the agricultural activities. In these activities, the heavier works such as ploughing traditionally are in the hands of men and the lighter work

such as transplantation and weeding are carried out by women. Agriculture is the main occupation and the largest productive unit of Manipur's economy (Devi, 2012).

Another sector where a good number of female workers is found engaged is the handloom industry, the largest cottage industry in the state providing avenues of employment opportunities to the people of Manipur. Women produce traditional wears such as phanek, raniphi and wangkheiphi which are highly valued among the women and fetch good profits. The products are in great demand within the state and even in the national and international markets. Majority of the handloom weavers in the state are self-employed artisans who are carrying on their profession in their own homes with the assistance of their family members. Sericulture also plays a vital role in the improvement of economic conditions of the artisans of the Manipur state. Fishing is another important economic activity of women residing in and around the Loktak lake where they use fishing nets to catch fish which is an important food for the valley people and serves as a good source of nutrition and income. Women also take up and manage independently livestock rearing especially poultry and piggery as a reliable source of income. Manipuri women are also involved in small-scale businesses such as stalls, shops, tailoring, baking, basket weaving, *etc.*

Besides the above livelihood activities, a large population of women in the state are found to be engaged as vendors. Women vendors in Manipur play a crucial role in the state's economy particularly in the informal sector. These women are often referred to as market women or vendors are involved in selling a wide range of products from fresh produce such as vegetables and fruits, fish to clothing. The existence of 'Ima Market' is one important example to show Manipuri women being actively involved in the socio-economy of the state and such 'women only' markets have also been set up in other districts of the state such as 'Apfii Saliki' at Senapati district, 'Ava market' at Ukhrul district, 'Nute Bazaar' at Churachandpur district, *etc.*

In Manipur, women are the backbone of agriculture. Manipur has a total population of 2570390 and female population constitute of 49.81 per cent to the total population. Average female's work forces contribution in Manipur is 43.35 per cent. The average per cent of female cultivator /farm labourer to male cultivator /farm

labourer in Manipur is 44.43 per cent. Women are also involved in forest-based handicrafts and cottage industries. About 15.49 per cent of total female population in hill areas are involved in forest-based livelihoods system. Women involved from rearing of fishes to post-harvest activities of fisheries. More than 90.00 per cent of the marketing of fishes are take care by women. Women play a significant role in agricultural and allied fields' development including crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post-harvest operations, agro-forestry, fisheries, etc. in Manipur (Devi *et al.*, 2015).

Some other income generating activities taken up by the Manipuri women are embroidery, weaving, cultivation, private business and others (Vashum, 2016). Women in Kairembikhok village are breaking all stereotypes by getting into the carpentry profession which has always been a male-dominated industry (Anonymous, 2020). Defying all odds, few women are also taking up the job of auto-drivers, notably Laibi Oinam. Manipuri women are also engaged in food processing industry like LIKLA and MEIRA.

Despite all the above progress, women in the state face challenges which include limited access to land and resources, formal employment and financial independence due to certain cultural and social norms.

A distinct feature of Manipuri women is their predominance in economic activity. On the streets, roads, lanes and by lanes of Manipur we see women working with fervour, selling fruits, vegetables, fish, clothes etc. In Manipur, the work participation rate is quite high for women (Arambam, 2020).

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Manipuri women have always played a very vital and active role in social movements. They have contributed immensely to the socio-economic transformation and upliftment of the society. But unfortunately, the society is still in the control of the patriarchal system. Women do not have much say in the decision-making process. The preference of male child is still prevalent. Women produce children; they are mothers and wives; they do the cooking, mending, sewing and washing; they

take care of men and are subordinate to male authority. According to the 2011 census, the literacy rate of the state is 76.94 per cent. For males the literacy rate is 83.58 per cent while for females it is 70.26 per cent. Thus, there is a gap of 13.32 per cent in the male-female literacy rate, which clearly indicates the prejudices of the society towards the female child.

But nevertheless, we can witness the women of the state empowered and empowering one another amidst all the strict cultural and the traditional ways passed on from generations to generations. One such example is the unique Ima Keithel (Ima Market), an all-women market. The study seeks to find out about the various livelihood activities of the Manipuri women in Imphal west and Senapati districts and whether the economic opportunities and financial independence have empowered the women and impacted the lives of the women by strengthening their position and status in the society. Therefore, the present study entitled, **“A Study on Women Empowerment through Livelihood Activities in Manipur”**, has been undertaken with the following objectives:

1.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the women in the study area.
2. To identify the various livelihood activities of the women and to analyse the role of livelihood opportunities in empowering women.
3. To measure the livelihood security of women respondents.
4. To study the extent of women empowerment in Manipur and compare the levels of women empowerment in hill and valley districts of Manipur.
5. To find out the constraints and challenges of women empowerment in hill and valley districts and to suggest appropriate strategies.

1.7 SCOPE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

1. The present study will help in finding the level of women empowerment in Imphal west and Senapati districts of Manipur.

2. The study will help in finding out the livelihood security status of the women in the study area.
3. The study will help in finding out the effect/influence of some livelihood opportunities enjoyed by the women in empowering them.
4. The study will help in developing policies which may bring about positive changes in the lives of women who are engaged in informal income-generating activities.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is conducted by a student researcher and was restricted to two districts, Imphal west and Senapati, of Manipur. The findings and discussions of the study maybe applicable to the villages under study area. Hence, any policy framed based on the results of the study may not conform to policy specification needs in general to other areas/parts of the country. Despite the limitations, all the efforts were made by the researcher to conduct the study as objectively as possible by following all the norms of the scientific research in a systematic way.

1.9 ORGANIZATION AND PRESENTATION OF STUDY

The dissertation is systematically depicted in six chapters as follows:

1. Chapter 1 “INTRODUCTION” consists of the statement of problem, objectives, scope of the study and limitations of the study.
2. Chapter 2 “REVIEW OF LITERATURE” depicts the research investigation dealing with relevant available literatures related to the present study.
3. Chapter 3 “RESEARCH METHODOLOGY” deals with the process of investigation and quantification procedures followed in conducting the study.
4. Chapter 4 “RESULTS AND DISCUSSION” discusses with the findings of the research study and imperative discussion.
5. Chapter 5 “SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION” discusses the ‘summary’ which summarizes the investigation, recommendations and suggestions.

References and Appendices are provided at the end of the thesis.

CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature helps the researcher to understand the theoretical background of the study, provides concrete ideology of the researcher, identifying research gaps that need to be fulfilled in the future and tackle for conceptual issues and addressing them appropriately in the context of the study. It is also necessary to enrich the study with knowledge and information on literature which are available from recent studies and writings to enhance the nature, scope, historical background and to understand the complexities of the study. Review of literature directs the researcher to simplify the focusing area that needs to be further assessed. Hence, the present chapter attempts to fulfil the research gaps of what had been studied and the areas of studies yet to be undertaken.

Keeping in view the objectives of the present study, the review of literature has been presented based on the following aspects:

2.1 Personal and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

2.2 Concept of livelihood activities, livelihood activities adopted by women

2.3 Ways to assess Livelihood Security

2.4 Concept of Empowerment and Women Empowerment, aspects of empowerment and their measurement

2.5 Constraints in women empowerment

2.1 Personal and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Buvinic and Gupta (1997) reported in their study on “Female-Headed Households and Female-Maintained Families: Are They Worth Targeting to Reduce Poverty in Developing Countries?” that the incidence of female-headship is low by international standards.

Jejeebhoy (2000) in her study “Women's autonomy in rural India: Its dimensions, determinants, and the influence of context” observed that young women are more likely than older women to engage in income-generating activities that help them better acquire human, financial, physical and social assets.

Matilda (2005) in a study on “Analysis of Women Empowerment in Kerala”, 750 married women respondents belonging to the age group 18-60 were considered. The majority was in the age group 26- 40. 63.9 per cent belonged to other backward classes and 26 per cent belonged to the forward castes. 10.1 per cent were scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. 63.3 per cent of women stayed in nuclear families and 36.7 per cent stayed in joint families. Employed participants were 31.6 per cent. The percentage of the respondents with education level graduation and above was 22. 63.3 per cent of the households selected were nuclear families and 36.7 per cent were joint families.

Damisa and Yohanna (2007) in their study on “Role of Rural Women in Farm Management Decision-making Process” discovered that majority of the women in Kaduna state, Nigeria’s Chikum and Igabi Local Government Areas were not formally educated and came from low-income families.

Owolabi *et al.* (2011) conducted an assessment on women farmers in Sabon-Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria which revealed that 63.00 per cent of the respondents fell within the young age group, about 30 per cent of the respondents had formal education and 3.00 per cent of the respondents had secondary education and 12.00 per cent of the respondents had primary education. The study also highlighted that majority (67.00%) of the respondents were married, 13.30 per cent of the respondents were widows, 8.00 per cent of the respondents were

unmarried and 12.00 per cent of the respondents were divorced. It also revealed that majority (48.00%) of respondents had 1-3 children. Findings further indicated that 65.00 per cent of respondents had 0.1 – 1.0 ha of land.

Kabir *et al.* (2012) studied the impact of small entrepreneurship on sustainable livelihood assets of rural poor women in Bangladesh. They found that the average age of women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh was 39 years indicating that they are of active age, making them more capable and energetic to engage in their entrepreneurial activities.

Chakravarty *et al.* (2013) in his study on Women's Empowerment in India reported that majority (33.00%) of the respondents were in the age group of 30-40 years, majority (39.00%) of the respondents had completed upto the 10th standard and majority (97.00%) of the respondents were in the married category.

Alonso *et al.* (2014) in his study on "Women, rural environment and entrepreneurship" identified that 28.00 per cent of the women in rural areas of Spain belonged to household of four members.

Devi (2014) in her study on "Determinants of Development among Women in Manipur" recorded that majority of the women are from lower middle class and few are from the upper middle class. Women from the upper middle class are more empowered than from the lower middle class.

Shilparani (2016) reported in her study on women participation in different agricultural operations in Karnataka that majority of farm women were in middle age group as middle-aged respondents were more physically active, have more responsibility and can take up majority of agricultural activities. Further, it was reported that majority i.e 73.89 per cent of farm women respondents belonged to nuclear family and remaining 26.11 per cent belonged to joint family and also added that it maybe because of realization of the advantages of nuclear families in terms of running the family and responsibilities of women.

Vashum *et al.* (2016) in their study, "Income Generating Activities of

Women in Seijang Village, Imphal East District, Manipur” showed that out of the 110 women selected, majority of them i.e., 48 (43.64%) belong to the age group 30-39 years. While 11 (10%) belong to the age group 20-29, 28 (25.45%) are in age group of 40-49 years. No. of working women in the age group of 50-59 years is 19 (17.27%) whereas, it is only 4 (3.64%) in the age group of 60 years and above.

Anna (2018) stated in her study “Empowerment of Maram tribal women in Manipur through self-help group” that in tribal communities, level of education is extremely low due to lack of awareness about values and usefulness of education, and prevalence of early marriages. Poverty is one the reason for this scenario and often women are given less opportunities to be educated. Besides, tribal populations are isolated from the mainstream of society due to cultural and geographical reasons.

Batool and Jadoon (2018) in a study “Women’s Empowerment and Associated Age-Related Factors”, chronological age was categorized into three groups 21-30, 31-40, and 41-49 years; age at marriage divided in two groups, 18-27 and 28-35 years; and age difference from Husband divided into four groups 1-4, 5-8, 9-12, and 13-16 years. The data revealed two significant results; empowerment increased with chronological age, but age at marriage and age difference from husband did not influence women’s empowerment.

Agarwal (2019) in a study “Women Empowerment in India”, women who were between age (15- 49) and were not employed in 12 months preceding the survey were considered to measure employment status of women, women who were between age (15-49) and who owned a house, land alone or jointly and had a mobile phone that they themselves could use were considered for ownership of assets, women age (15-49) who had money, bank or savings accounts that they themselves could use, had taken a loan from micro-credit programme and were allowed to go to their specified places alone were considered for women access to money, credit and freedom of movement, women between age (15-49) who made major household purchases and were independent to visit her family and relatives were considered for participation of women in decision making.

Marchang (2019) stated that the share of students was much larger in urban areas at 41.30 per cent as compared to the rural areas at 32.50 per cent. it was also mentioned that the difference was due to better educational infrastructure in urban areas, better educational accessibility due to lower poverty and higher educational competition which is demanded in most of the urban formal labour market.

Gopalasunder (2020) revealed in his study on socio-economic conditions of women agricultural labourers in Thanjavir district, Tamil Nadu that the average size of family is five members and 96.50 per cent of the women belonged to nuclear families. The respondents were also all married with 74.00 per cent of them belong to age group of 30-35 years and around 10 per cent of them had completed their education upto high school.

Mengstie and Singh (2020) revealed in his study “Ethiopian Women Economic Empowerment Through Microfinance” that microfinance affects women's economic empowerment by improving women's independent income, increasing asset possession levels, and improved monthly saving amount. Moreover, the study proved that the microfinance institution has a vital role in women entrepreneurs' development and business exposure.

Bhagat and Singh (2022) from their investigation on the socio-economic conditions of women agricultural labours in Jharkhand found that majority (37.10%) of the respondents belong to 25-35 age group.

Kuma (2023) revealed in his study Wolaita Ethiopia that age of women, marital status, educational level, perception toward economic empowerment, motivation, income, participation in decision-making and participation in leadership positively and significantly affected rural women economic empowerment.

Rajkumari *et al.* (2023) reported in her study on awareness of digital media by the farm women of Manipur that the majority (51.67%) of the respondents had an annual income of Rs. 2,50,000/- to 4,00,000/- followed by 26.67 per cent had between Rs. 1,00,000/- to 2,50,000/- lakhs, 20.00 per cent had between Rs. 4,00,000/- to 5,50,000/- and only 1.67 per cent had an annual income above

5,50,000. The reason stated was majority of the group earned using agriculture and small agriculture-related businesses, as their main source of income. Also, the result data depicted that majority (40.00%) had completed their primary education, 36.66 per cent completed their secondary education followed by high school (15.00%), 6.67 per cent were illiterate, and a negligible 1.67 per cent have completed their graduation.

2.2 Livelihood activities and the ways to assess them

2.2. 1 Livelihood activities

Chambers and Conway (1992) stated that a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.

Scoones (1998) stated that the mixed livelihood strategy is an approach for capturing the diversified means of raising household income. Agricultural intensification, to achieve livelihood security, is a key livelihood strategy that has been adopted by the rural households.

Ellis (2000) stated that the diversity of livelihoods is an important feature of rural survival as it is closely allied to flexibility, resilience and stability. In this sense, diverse livelihood systems are less vulnerable than undiversified ones; they are also likely to prove more sustainable over time precisely because they allow for positive adaptation to changing circumstances.

Long (2000) stated that the term livelihood ‘best expresses the idea of individuals or groups striving to make a living, attempting to meet their various consumption and economic necessities, coping with uncertainties, responding to new opportunities, and choosing between different value positions’.

Koczberski *et al.* (2001) defined livelihood strategy as an activity undertaken by smallholder households to provide a means of living. The key goal of

livelihood strategies is to ensure household economic and social security.

Kumar *et al.* (2006) stated that about 27 per cent of the farmers considered farming as an unprofitable enterprise and nearly 40 per cent farmers were willing to take up livelihood activities other than farming if they were given an opportunity.

Anonymous (2012) reported that a high proportion of socially and economically underprivileged sections of society are concentrated in the informal economic activities.

Worku and Woldetsadik (2013) evaluated the livelihood strategies of rural women in Central Ethiopia. The findings showed that the women engaged in sporadic and uncontrolled work of income-generating activities such as petty trading, selling firewood, processing and selling indigenous beverages. Migration was unable to significantly alter peoples' means of subsistence. Despite the observed modest improvements in rural livelihood conditions, rural communities in general and female-headed households in particular engaged in various non-farm and off-farm activities as a survival strategy and means of improving livelihood, moved to the nearest towns and cities and made demographic adjustments by reducing the number of new births.

Ifeanyi-obi *et al.* (2014) in their study to inspect the socio-economic factors affecting the choice of livelihood among rural dwellers in southern Nigeria reported that the rural dwellers were engaged in various livelihood activities such as farming, trading, sand gathering, transportation, civil service, contracting, food vendors, tailoring, mechanic, carpentry, welding, palm wine tapping, local gin distillation, aluminium work, plumbing, fishing, broom wearing, basket weaving, mushroom gathering, snail picking, cloth weaving, pottery, etc.

Devi (2014) in her study on "Determinants of Development among Women in Manipur", stated that weaving, agriculture, petty businesses were the main economic resources of Meitei women. Embroidery, knitting and handicrafts are also activities engaged by women.

Sati *et al.* (2014) in their study on sustainable livelihood strategies and options in Sichuan Province, China indicated that the respondents in the study area were engaged in cultivation of different temperate fruit crops such as peach, apple, cherry, walnut, etc. and different vegetables such as celery, okra, tomato, potato, garlic, cowpea, beans, chives, etc. Rearing of different livestock such as pig, poultry, duck, rabbit, sheep, etc. is also common in the study area.

Devi (2015) reported in his study on women's role in agriculture and allied fields in Manipur that women are the backbone of agriculture in the state. Average female's work forces contribution in Manipur is 43.35 per cent. The average per cent of female cultivator /farm labourer to male cultivator /farm labourer in Manipur is 44.43 per cent. Women are also involved in forest-based handicrafts and cottage industries. About 15.49 per cent of total female population in hill areas are involved in forest-based livelihoods system. Women involved from rearing of fishes to post-harvest activities of fisheries. More than 90.00 per cent of the marketing of fishes are take care by women. Women play a significant role in agricultural and allied fields' development including crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post-harvest operations, agro-forestry, fisheries, etc. in Manipur.

Vashum *et al.* (2016) concluded in their study on income generating activities of women in Seijang village, Imphal East District, Manipur that some income generating activities taken up by the Manipuri women are embroidery, weaving, cultivation, private business and others.

Addisu (2017) reported in his study to identify livelihood strategies and diversification in western tip pastoral areas of Ethiopia that the most important livelihood strategies were livestock production, crop production, fishery and trading. Farming and breeding were the primary jobs for almost all of sample households. Fishery was the third most prevailing job. In addition, trading, craftsman were practised. More than half of the households pursued three jobs as a means of income and food.

Haynes (2018) found that a majority of women are involved in agricultural

work, in the form of agricultural labour or small-holding management. There was a lack of opportunity for women in non-agricultural work. This was associated with a wide variety of obligations that women had of household and family responsibilities, which imposed pressure on women to remain in/near the household. Women used assets such as livestock and ornaments to improve financial security.

Garima and Gupta (2019) revealed in her study in Empowerment of rural women through income generating activities during 2016-17 in Kalyanpur and Chaubepur blocks of Kanpur Nagar, Uttar Pradesh that 65.30 per cent of rural women were fully involved and 20% of partially involved in animal rearing activities followed by 54.70 per cent of women who were fully involved in tailoring work activities as an income generating followed by 45.30 per cent of rural women who were fully involved and 34.00 per cent partially involvement in processing milk (curd, Khoya, paneer) followed by 45.30 per cent of women who were fully involved in dairy work activities as an income generating followed by 38.00 per cent of rural women who were fully involved in weaving/knitting activities followed by 33.30 per cent of women who were fully involved in P.C.O. work activities as an income generating followed by 27.30 per cent of rural women who were fully involved and 39.30 per cent partially involved in books & stationery shop centre activities followed by 24.00 per cent of women who were fully involved in Beauty parlour Centre work activities as an income generating followed by 19.30 per cent of rural women who were fully involved and 27.30 partially involved in spices processing mill activities followed by 12.00 per cent of women who were fully involved in utensils shop centre work activities indicating that the rural women were involved in different types of income generating activities to increase the living standard of own life.

Anonymous (2020) reported that women in Kairembikhok village are breaking all stereotypes by getting into the carpentry profession which has always been a male-dominated industry.

Arambam (2020) concluded that the industrial classification data indicates that women in Manipur play an active role in the economy. Their involvement in

productive sectors, like agriculture, trade and commerce and in manufacturing, particularly household industry which are activities which has a lot to do with capital formation (physical and financial) imply that they are really the backbone of the economy of Manipur.

Sharma (2020) orchestrated a study on livelihood diversification in rural households of Sikkim. The results have shown that 77.34 percent of the respondents are engaged in diversification and have a mixed livelihood strategy. The highest or the most common livelihood strategy is on farm + non-farm activities as the combination of these strategies is adopted by 59.70 percent of households. Further followed by combination of on-farm and off-farm activities with 15.67 percent households, combination of off-farm and non-farm activities with 7.66 percent household participation and combination of on-farm, off-farm and non-farm with participation of 5.70 percent households. In other words, majority of the rural households in Sikkim practise at least two livelihood activities.

Ibil *et al.* (2021) carried out a research in Kalimpong Kesindu, Simujan which highlighted that the sources of income for the respondents in the study area were Rubber (34.73%), piggery (32.90%), employment (9.92%), pepper planting (7.78%), vegetables gardening (5.62%), fishing (4.67%), remittances (2.82%), small scale business (0.70%), cocoa (0.48%), fruit trees (0.29%) and rice (0.06%).

Vanalalauvi (2021) stated that the livelihood activities observed in female-headed households in the Letlhakane village, Mizoram are subsistence agriculture in the form of small vegetable gardens growing maize, beans, melons, tomatoes, cabbages, onions, carrots, spinach, fruit trees and keeping livestock (goats) and domestic animals. They are also engaged in informal trade ranging from selling vegetables to selling different products although the shops were very small in size. Activities are initiated according to household resources, availability of labour and the need to provide a living for the households. It is marked that the activities did not offer them security to survive in the future.

Yumnam (2023) stated in her study on women empowerment through

leadership in Manipur that weaving is the second common profession which emerges out of the people's sentiments for it than for its profit.

2.3 Ways to assess livelihood activities

UNDP (1997) stated that conceptually, 'livelihoods' denote the means, activities, entitlements, and assets by which people make a living. Assets are defined as: natural/biological (land, water, common-property resources, flora, fauna), social (community, family, social networks), political (participation, empowerment – sometimes included in the 'social' category); human (education, labour, health, nutrition); physical (roads, clinics, markets, schools, bridges); and economic (jobs, savings, credit). UNDP employed an asset-based approach, emphasizing the promotion of people's access to and sustainable use of the assets upon which they rely as central to poverty reduction. UNDP most often works at the national level and runs specific programmes and activities at district and village level. UNDP has developed a methodology for the design, implementation, and evaluation of Sustainable Livelihood programmes consisting of five steps- Participatory assessment; analysis of the micro, macro, and sectoral policies; assessment and determination of the potential modern technology that complement indigenous knowledge systems; identification of social and economic investment mechanism and an assurance that the first four are integrated in real time.

Carney (1998) stated that the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) improves understanding of the livelihoods of the poor. It organizes the factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities and shows how they relate. It can help plan development activities and assess the contribution that existing activities have made to sustaining livelihoods. Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) for assessing the livelihood activities is based on five pillars or the five livelihood assets: Human Capital, Social Capital, Physical Capital, Natural Capital, and Financial Capital. According to the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA), "Human Capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives". Social Capital implicates social resources, "including informal networks,

membership of formalised groups and relationships of trust that facilitate co-operation” Physical capital is a measure for the existence of physical requirements needed to support livelihood in a sense of infrastructure. Natural capital describes especially for resource dependent communities the stock all livelihood activities are built on. Financial capital can be accumulated from two different sources; one source is represented by available stock in the form of cash or equivalent available assets as livestock, the other source is characterised by the external inflow of money which originates of labour income, pensions, remittances or other types of financial liabilities.

D.A. (1999) extrapolated that creation of a sustainable livelihood strategy for the organisation Development Alternatives (D.A.) incorporates the notion of long-term sustainable growth. To achieve sustainable livelihoods for low-income women, the following techniques are used: developing and disseminating appropriate technologies to generate alternate income; promoting the sustainable use and regeneration of natural resources through appropriate management techniques. The SLs approach is inconsistent since it differs for each project and location. It is dynamic because it adapts to the way of life of the locals, assisting them in better understanding what constitutes a sustainable way of life for themselves.

CARE (2000) has been using Household Livelihood Security (HLS) as a framework for programme analysis, design, monitoring, and evaluation. Household Livelihood Security Assessment (HLSA): The HLSA, developed Tango International for CARE, is a holistic and multi-disciplinary analysis which recognizes that poor families commonly suffer more than one problem at a time and often have to make significant sacrifices to meet their basic needs. HLS uses an integrated or systems approach to analysis, with recognition that poor people and poor households live and interact within broader socioeconomic and socio-political systems that influence resource production and allocation decisions. The HLS assessment process aims to enhance understanding about local livelihood systems – livelihoods, economic, socio-cultural and political systems and the constraints, vulnerabilities, differences

among types of households and among members within the household. marginalization, and risks of poor families living within this context – and important

Krantz (2001) disclosed that the concept of Sustainable Livelihood (SL) represents an effort to go beyond traditional definitions and methods of poverty eradication. More attention is being paid to the numerous causes and processes that either limit or improve impoverished people's ability to make a living in a way that is sustainable in terms of the economy, the environment and society. The SL concept suggests a more comprehensive and integrated strategy for combating poverty.

Save the Children UK (2008) developed the Household Economy Approach (HEA) which is a livelihoods-based framework for analysing the way people obtain food, non-food goods and services, and how they might respond to changes in their external environment, shock or hazard. It aims to capture the situation of different wealth groups in different livelihoods zones.

FAO and ILO (2009) developed the Livelihood Assessment Toolkit (LAT) which aims at collecting information - at community level and the existing livelihood groups - on people's ability to make a living before and after sudden onset natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and tsunamis. The Livelihood Assessment Toolkit (LAT) process consists of three interrelated elements: a Livelihood Baseline (LB); an Initial Livelihood Impact Appraisal (ILIA); and a Detailed Livelihood Assessment (DLA). This toolkit has been formulated as a joint effort between FAO and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Livelihoods baseline (LB) information helps emergency workers know in advance about the population of the affected area. The Initial Livelihood Impact Appraisal (ILIA) is primarily designed to generate a credible and well justified picture of the current and likely impact on livelihoods of a sudden-onset natural disaster. The ILIA will feed into the Flash Appeal, which is normally issued between 72 hours and 10 days after the natural disaster event(s). The main objective of the Detailed Livelihood Assessment (DLA) is to provide a thorough assessment of the impact of disaster on livelihoods and identify opportunities and capacities for recovery at household, community, and local economy levels.

Maurya *et al.* (2017) used five-point scale method to construct livelihood security Indexes. Indicators are assumed that each indicator has equal weight to the overall household livelihood security index. Household's livelihood security index consisted of six livelihood outcomes and were measured based on accessibility, quality and status. Household livelihood indexes such as Economic, Education, Health, Habitat, Food and Social Security were obtained by aggregating the scores of indicators. Each indicator was measured in a different scale. It was first necessary to standardize each indicator as an index for relevant indicator. The standardized indicators of a household will be prepared using the method adopted to calculate Human Development Index (UNDP, 2007) and used by Saravanamutthu Jeyarajah (2016).

2.4 Concept of Empowerment and Women Empowerment

2.4.1 Concept of Empowerment

Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) defined empowerment as an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources; or a process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community, and a critical understanding of their environment.

Rowlands (1995) defined empowerment as a bottom-up process and does not only mean to have access to decision making but also being able and entitled to occupy the decision-making space.

Kabeer (1999) defined empowerment as a change that refers to expansion on people's ability to make strategic life choice in a context where this ability was previously denied to them. Empowerment for a woman means a combination of changes in her aspiration and achievement, i.e. being able to define her own life choices to pursue her goals.

Kabeer (2001) defined empowerment as the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to

them.

Sen and Batliwala (2000) described empowerment as the process by which the powerless gains greater control over the circumstances of their lives. It includes controls over resources and over ideology, a growing intrinsic capability, greater self-confidence and an inner transformation of one's consciousness, that enables one to overcome external barriers.

World Bank (2001) stated that empowerment gives individuals or groups capabilities to make purposive choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes.

Vinod (2004) stated in the Nepal Human Development Report that empowerment is a process and also as the result of the process - whereby the powerless or less powerful members of society and the women gain greater access and control over material and intellectual resources, and challenge the ideologies of discrimination and subordination, which justify this unequal distribution.

Arundhati (2005) defined in the World Bank empowerment as "the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process is actions which both build individual and collective assets and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organisational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets".

Sharma (2008) stated that empowerment occurs within sociological, psychological and economic spheres and at various levels such as individual, group and community and challenges our assumptions about the status quo, asymmetrical power relationships and social dynamics.

Eyben *et al.* (2008) defined empowerment in terms of power to represent people's possibilities and options, and to act on them, the power within that enables people to have the courage to do things they never thought themselves to be capable of and the power that comes from working alongside others to claim what is rightfully theirs.

Pandya (2008) stated that empowerment has become the key strategy for addressing many socio-economic problems as it initiates the process of obtaining the basic opportunities for marginalized people, either directly by the affected people, or through the help of others who may not be marginalized but willing to share their own access to these opportunities.

Luttrell *et al.* (2009) stated that empowerment is a process focuses on the organizational capacity building or an increase in participation of previously excluded group in the design, management and evaluation of development activities.

Tandon (2016) stated that empowerment is a process to change the distribution of power between men and women, both in interpersonal relations and in institutions throughout society as women are often considered as subordinates to men and they are denied the power to decide their life choices.

2.4.2 Concept of Women Empowerment

Young (1993) stated ‘empowerment enables women’ to take control of their own lives, set their own agenda, organize to help each other and make demands on the state for support and on the society itself for change.

UNDP (1996) stated that “Increasing women’s capabilities and empowering them is the surest way to contribute to economic growth and overall development”.

Kabeer and Mahmud (2004) stated that women's economic empowerment can lead to increased income, improved nutrition and health and greater decision-making power within the household.

Malhotra (2004) referred to women empowerment as a process whereby women become able to organise themselves to increase self-reliance, to assert their independent right, to own subordination.

Malhotra and Schuler (2005) stated that the process of empowerment is more relevant for women as they play a major role in household and intra-familial relationships.

Meenu *et al.* (2011) defined women empowerment as women's hold over use of own resources and participation in decision making leading to improvement in their socio-economic status.

Puttaraja and Heggade (2012) defined women empowerment as a way to enabling the weaker section of the society like poor women to acquire and possess power and resources so that they can take decision of their own lives.

Nayak (2012) described women empowerment as promoting women's sense of self-worth, their ability to determine their own choices, and their right to influence social change for themselves and others.

Van den Bold *et al.*, (2013) stated that women empowerment is also considered as a means to achieve other important livelihood outcomes such as more income, increased well-being (e.g., non-material goods, like self-esteem, health status, access to services, sense of inclusion), reduced vulnerability, improved food security and a more sustainable use of natural resources (e.g., appropriate property rights), improvements in child nutritional status, and self-reliance.

Devi (2013) defined economic empowerment of women as one of the basic tools for social empowerment. According to the author, literally empowerment means “to invest with power” and the power is ability through which one can influence the behaviour of other with and without restraint. Women empowerment provides women the “ability to gain control over resources, develop physical and psychological capacity to challenge the prevailing gender customs”.

Mandal (2013) in his article on types of women empowerment mentioned that women's role as mothers, homemakers, wives and sisters are well known, but their role in shifting the entire power relations of a country is a modern concept and that it is crucial and important for a positive change and transformation of the existing unequal society is more crucial and more important.

Nath *et al.* (2015) stated that the concept of empowerment is multidimensional and that empowerment can be viewed as economic empowerment,

social empowerment, political empowerment, educational empowerment, community empowerment. A woman is said to be empowered when she is able to enjoy economic empowerment, social empowerment, political empowerment, educational empowerment and all the human rights which should be enjoyed by a citizen of a nation. etc.

Roy (2019) concluded in his study Women Empowerment that society must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination and women have full opportunities of self-decision making and participating in social, political and economic life of the country with a sense of equality. For the development of the economy women and men both should work together and women should utilize their skills. Women empowerment is an essential element in national development. Since women constitute half of the population there can be no development unless the needs and interests of women are fully taken into account.

Arulsukhijothi (2020) defined women empowerment as a multidimensional process that realise individual or group of individuals identity and powers in all spheres of life.

Kokane *et al.* (2020) reported that women's empowerment equips and allows them to make life-determining decisions by redefining gender roles or other such roles, which in turn may provide them the freedom to pursue desired goals.

Mandot (2020) put forward that women empowerment is an instrument to expand women's ability to make strategic life choice.

Reshi (2022) concluded that women empowerment refers to the process of enabling women to have control over their lives and destinies, by giving them access to education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and political representation. He also added that it is an ongoing process that involves the removal of structural and cultural barriers that prevent women from achieving their full potential.

2.4.3 Aspects of empowerment and their measurement.

Longwe (1995) developed the Women's Empowerment Framework, as an appropriate approach to be used in mainstreaming gender. The framework states that women's development can be viewed in terms of five levels of equality, of which, empowerment is an essential element in each level. The levels are welfare, access, awareness raising, participation and control.

UNDP (1995) put forward the Gender Development Index (GDI) and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) to measure some aspects of women empowerment. The GDI measures achievement in the same basic capabilities including adult literacy, life expectancy and income as Human Development Index (HDI) does and also takes note of inequalities between men and women. The GEM seeks to determine the degree to which women and men participate actively in economic, professional and political activities and take part in decision-making. But several writers critically examined GEM and GDI and pointed out the limitations of these measures to capture women empowerment at the individual level.

According to Karl (1995) women's empowerment can be viewed as a continuum of several interrelated and mutually reinforcing components. One component of women's empowerment is awareness building about women's situation, discrimination, and rights and opportunities as a step towards gender equality. Collective awareness building provides a sense of group identity and the power of working as a group. Capacity building and skills development, especially the ability to plan, make decisions, organise, manage and carry out activities, to deal with the institutions in the world around them are other aspects of empowerment. Participation and greater control and decision-making power in the home, community and society, action to bring about greater equality between men and women are considered as the characteristics of empowered woman.

Beck and Stelcner (1997) developed a range of indicators of women empowerment, both quantitative and qualitative. It breaks down empowerment into legal, political, economic and social empowerment, for the purpose of quantitative

indicators. *Legal empowerment* indicators include the enforcement of legislation related to the protection of human rights, number of cases related to women's rights heard in local courts and their results, number of cases related to the legal rights of divorced and widowed women heard in local courts, the effect of enforcement of legislation in treatment of offenders, increase/decrease in violence against women, rate at which the local justices/prosecutors/lawyers who are men/women is increasing/decreasing, and rate at which the number of men/women in the local police force, by rank is increasing or decreasing will give a macro level measure of women empowerment. *Political empowerment* indicators include percentage of seats held by women in local councils/decision making bodies, percentage of women in decision-making positions in local governments, percentage of women in the local civil service, percentage of women/men registered as voters, percentage of women in the junior senior decision making position with unions, percentage of union members who are women/men and number of women who participate in political campaigning as compared to the number of men. *Economic empowerment* indicators include changes in employment/unemployment rates of men/women, changes in time used in selected activities particularly greater sharing by household members of unpaid housework and child care, salary/wage differentials between women and men, changes in percentage of property owned and controlled by women and men across socio economic and ethnic groups, average household expenditure of female/male on education/ health, ability to make small or large purchases independently, percentage of available credit, and financial/ technical support services going to women/men from government/non-government sources. *Social empowerment* indicators include the number of women in local institutions and number of women in positions of power, extent of training or networking among local women as compared to men, control of women over fertility decisions and mobility of women within and outside their residential locality as compared to men.

Hashemi *et al.* (1996) in the villages of Bangladesh used a model based on eight indicators of empowerment which were mobility, economic security, ability to make small purchases, involvement in the major household decisions, relative

freedom from domination within the family, political and legal awareness. The indicators also included women's participation in political campaigning and protest.

Manson (1998) studied on probability samples of urban households in Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, regarding women empowerment. The dimensions of women empowerment they took are women role in household expenditure and decision making. The study have taken independent variables as social context in terms of gender and family systems, women's land assets, participation in waged work and wife's rank relative to husband. They found social context has a direct and indirect effects on women economic power.

Panda (2000) gave the following indicators, which can be used to assess the level of empowerment of an individual. The most important dimension is *power* which can be assessed through power to make decision at household level, control of resources, level of control over sources of power, level of change in power relations with time (household and group level) and level of political activity in challenging basic power relations in society (individual resistance and mass mobilisation). Panda highlights the next dimension for empowerment as autonomy and self-reliance which can be measured through freedom of action, possession of critical elements to effectively and efficiently undertake desired activity, level of self-awareness, existence of vision of future and absence of unsolicited influences in decision-making. Level of influencing decisions, level of providing material, labour, finance and management input to the project/programme and level of acceptance of responsibilities/ consequence of decision will determine the participation level. Awareness and capacity building of women can be assessed through ability to manage productive resources, developing alternative economic structures locally, creating alternative employment at local level and ability to interact effectively in public sphere. Participation in non-family group, action to bring gender equality, ensuring mobility and visibility, creating mutual dependence, redefining gender relations at domestic and social levels (through reformulation and restructuring of power relations), organising struggle through bringing women together, thinking through common problems, agreeing on common issues, deciding on common

actions and forging common ideologies, transforming institutions (family, education, religion), transforming structures (legal, political, economic and social), mechanisms to sustain the gains in equality, creating alternative power structure at local level, asserting rights to make choice, challenging and eliminating subordination and attaining the status of decision making power in the household are the indicators to assess awareness and capacity building of women.

Yasmin *et al.* (2016) in their study on women empowerment in Bangladesh study constructed a women empowerment index based on three dimensions of domestic empowerment of women: (1) role of economic decision –making power, (2) role of household decision making power and (3) physical freedom of movement in Bangladeshi women. The study also found that women in urban region are more aware about women rights their fundamental needs. The results also revealed that highly educated women are more likely to be empowered in comparison with illiterate women. Employed women who earn cash can play a dominant role on how to use their own earnings. The urban employed women are more likely to be empowered than the rural women.

Ganesamurthy (2008) pointed out the major factors of women empowerment in India and considered the factors such as security, justice, safety, information, legal aid, maternal health, nutrition, education, access to credit, marketing and socio-economic status of women for the measurement of women empowerment in his study.

Alkire *et al.* (2012) stated that the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) measures the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector and comprises two sub-indexes. The first assesses empowerment of women in five domains, including (1) decisions about agricultural production, (2) access to and decision-making power about productive resources, (3) control of use of income, (4) leadership in the community, and (5) time allocation. The second sub-index measures the percentage of women whose achievements are at least as high as men in their households and, for women lacking parity, the relative empowerment gap with respect to the male in their household.

Lombardini *et al.* (2017) developed a measurement tool based on a composite index – the Women’s Empowerment Index (WEI). This builds on experience and tools from the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) (Alkire *et al.*, 2013). This measurement tool recognizes three levels at which change can take place: *personal*, *relational* and *environmental*. Changes at the *personal level* take place within the person. This refers to changes in how a woman sees herself, how she considers her role in society and that of other women, how she sees her economic role, and her confidence in deciding and taking actions that concern herself and other women. Indicators which may come under *personal level* are Self-confidence, Individual knowledge, Opinions and attitudes on women’s economic role, Non-acceptance of GBV, Personal autonomy, etc. Changes at the *relational level* take place in the relationships and power relations within the woman’s surrounding network. This includes changes both within the household and within the community, and encompasses markets, local authorities and decision makers. Indicators which may come under *relational level* are Influencing and community, Control over household assets, Involvement in household decision making, independent income, Experience of GBV, Control over time, etc. Finally, changes at the *environmental level* take place in the broader context. These can be informal changes, such as in social norms and attitudes and the beliefs of wider society, or they can be formal changes in the political and legislative framework. Indicators which may come under *environmental level* are Access to services and resources, Ability to influence at political level, etc.

Barman (2018) stated in his study on role of education in empowering women at Cooch behar, West Bengal that household decision-making is one of the main indicators of women empowerment as when a woman is involved in the household decision-making, then she is definitely more empowered as male member generally take household decisions. Further, he stated that mobility of women refers to free movement by women without being restricted and that mobility of a woman increases if she is educated which leads her to be empowered. Another indicator for women empowerment is the ability to raise voice against social exploitation such as

drug addiction, injustice and domestic violence. In addition to the above indicators is the awareness of the women about their health and hygiene, consciousness about family planning, freedom in voting.

Das and Singh (2020) synthesised a list of the most commonly used dimensions of women's empowerment which includes economic (physical capital, human capital, natural capital and financial capital empowerment), socio-cultural (social capital, familial/interpersonal, organizational, cultural and informational empowerment), agricultural (access to agricultural resources, crop production skills, animal husbandry skills, water-use security levels) and civic (legal, political, and psychological).

2.5 Constraints in women empowerment.

Patil and Balasubramanya (2011) classified the constraints in empowerment of rural women as *personal, social and economic*. *Personal* constraints included lack of education, lack of training, lack of knowledge and skills, lack of freedom to take decision and lack of child-care facilities. *Social* constraints included lack of social mobility because of restrictions in the family, caste system in the village, family restriction, doubts regarding the women capabilities and ego problems of men. *Economic* constraints included loans are not sufficient and income derived is too less. Insufficiency of loans and too little income derived from income generating activities were reported as major economic constraints by 60.06 per cent and 65.60 per cent respondents, respectively. Personal and economic constraints seem to affect empowerment considerably when compared to social constraints. Of the personal constraints, lack of education and lack of training seemed to be the major constraints to empowerment as reported by 94.10 per cent and 88.80 per cent respondents, respectively.

Chaudhari (2014) reported that women street vendors depend more on moneylenders and wholesalers for credit; around 64 per cent of them depend on moneylenders.

Shettar (2015) stated that there are several constraints that check the process of women empowerment in India. Social norms and family structure in developing countries like India, manifests and perpetuate the subordinate status of women. One of the norms is the continuing preference for a son over the birth of a girl child which is present in almost all societies and communities. The society is more biased in favour of male child in respect of education, nutrition and other opportunities. The root cause of this type of attitude lies in the belief that male child inherits the clan in India with the exception of Meghalaya. Women often internalize the traditional concept of their role as natural thus inflicting an injustice upon them. Poverty is the reality of life for the vast majority women in India. It is another factor that poses challenge in realizing women's empowerment.

Sihmar (2016) in his study found many issues and challenges like lack of education and healthcare, gender-based violence, and unequal economic opportunities faced by the Indian women.

Robertson (2017) identified in a study in Myanmar that the central constraint holding women back from joining the labour market transition into the formal economy is time. Their culturally ingrained role as primary caretaker of home has meant that they have less time to devote to economic activities. Also, women's connection to the household means that they are less mobile which limits their access to markets, job opportunities, information and education. Women are also constrained by low level of education.

Shijagurumayum (2017) in his study on level of economic empowerment between male and female members of the same household in Imphal West district of Manipur found that male respondents had significantly higher empowerment level in four indicators of empowerment viz.; access and control over productive assets; access and control over economic resources; autonomy & mobility and time.

Joshi (2018) in her study on training needs assessment of farmwomen in Uttar Pradesh found that constraints such as lack of need-based training (83.00%), drudgery in farming (75.00%), multiple responsibilities of women (67.00%), lack of access to

resources (57.00%), lack of land rights (37.00%), lack of knowledge (43.00%), lack of women specific programs (73.00%) and secondary status of women (28.00%) were faced by the women respondents.

Kumari (2018) in her study on “Constraints in Empowerment of Rural Women in Sahibganj District of Jharkhand, India” concluded that women are discriminated in family. They are provided less opportunity than males in education, employments and in other fields. The study finds that women are discriminated in all walks of life and making them handicapped and obstructing their empowerment. Women are considered as burden and debarred from their fundamental rights.

Harisha (2020) stated that constraints of both time and money often prevent women workers in the informal sectors from acquiring further training, even when such facilities exist. Women also face complex ground realities, including low levels of literacy, discriminatory social customs and traditions, limited hours available for training and work, and limited exposure and unfamiliarity with new technology. In addition, they are also considered secondary income earners and so less importance is given to training of girls for employment.

Mundhe (2021) in his study on ‘The Study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in India’ found that women in India are relatively underdeveloped and, despite many efforts by the government, are somewhat inferior to men. Gender gaps exist regarding access to education and employment. The power of decision-making at home and the freedom of movement of women vary greatly in their age, education and employment status. It has been found that the acceptance of unequal gender norms by women is still prevalent in the society. Rural women are more likely to experience domestic violence than urban women. The gender gap is also very large in political participation. The study concluded that access to education and employment are the only enabling factors, although the focus on goal attainment depends largely on the attitudes of people towards gender equality.

Kanyagui *et al.* (2023) reported that the discussions with the Nagla Chandi, WSHG in Ral Block within the Mathura District, Uttar Pradesh, India, revealed that

financial illiteracy, a lack of awareness of existing government initiatives to support local businesses, and financial records make it difficult for them to access capital and other forms of assistance.

George (2024) stated in his research on ‘Status of Women Street Vendors in India: Issues and Challenges’ that there are various programmes and schemes implemented by the Indian government to protect street vendors but majority of them are facing lack of awareness in availing the schemes.

CHAPTER-III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology deals with the course of actions and methods the researcher has followed to collect data and information and to analyse the problem. The details of the methods and procedures used in the study have been mentioned under the following subtopics:

- 3.1 Selection of the problem.
- 3.2 Research design
- 3.3 Locale of research
- 3.4 Sampling procedure
 - 3.4.1 Selection of the districts
 - 3.4.2 Selection of the blocks
 - 3.4.3 Selection of the villages
 - 3.4.4 Selection of the respondents
- 3.5 Selection of variables and their empirical measurements
- 3.6 Tools and techniques of data collection
- 3.7 Analysis of data

3.1. Selection of the problem

The problem entitled “A Study on Women Empowerment through Livelihood Activities in Manipur” was selected as women of Manipur are well-known for their independent nature from time immemorial and also their role in the socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions of the state is significant. Manipur is also known for the Ema Market, in the valley area in the state which is the largest ‘women only’ market in Asia. In the hill areas of Manipur, similarly women-only markets have sprung up in different districts inspired by the Ema market reportedly in 2018. Besides, the women dominate the markets in both urban and rural areas of the state. They are involved in various agricultural and allied activities for their livelihood. In every change in the structure of the Manipur society, women residing in Manipur contribute to the development of the state. Hence, the problem was taken up to

understand the empowerment of the Manipuri women who are involved in informal economic sector.

3.1 Research design

Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation so as to obtain answers to the research question (Kerlinger, 1995). Considering the need of the present study, the research was formulated on the basis of descriptive research design and suitable variables were selected.

Descriptive research design is a systematic methodology used to describe the characteristics of a population, event or phenomenon. It does not examine causation but rather provides detailed information about existing conditions (Hassan, 2024). Descriptive research is a study of status and is widely used in education, nutrition, epidemiology, and the behavioural sciences. Its value is based on the premise that problems can be solved and practices improved through observation, analysis, and description. The most common descriptive research method is the survey, which includes questionnaires, personal interviews, phone surveys, and normative surveys (Manjunatha, 2019).

3.2 Locale of research

The present study was conducted in the north-eastern state of India, Manipur. It comprises of 1820 sq.km of flat plateau of alluvial valley and 20,507 sq.km of hill territory and forms a part of Himalayan Mountain system, which carry this cup-shaped wonderland inside its series of hill ranges. Nagaland in the north, Mizoram in the south, upper Myanmar in the east and Cachar district of Assam in the west bound Manipur. Imphal is the capital of the state.

The locale of the research was selected because of the unique women-only market and also local market sheds providing a platform to earn a livelihood for women in the valley and also the establishment of similar markets in the hill areas of Manipur. The research aims to study the aspects of empowerment through livelihood and to delve into intricacies of micro-management of entrepreneurial and household

activities and to understand the position of women in the patriarchal society vis-à-vis economic independence

3.3 Sampling procedures

3.4.1 Selection of Districts

There are nine districts in Manipur viz. Imphal west, Imphal east, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Chandel, Senapati, Ukhrul, Tamenglong and Churachandpur wherein first four districts are classified as valley districts and last five districts are classified as hill districts.

Two districts viz. Imphal West and Senapati of the state were selected purposively for the present study representing valley district and hill district respectively based on the engagement of the women in various types of informal livelihood activities especially sale of agricultural and allied products as most women resort to vending for livelihood in the state and other agriculture related activities in the selected area.

3.4.2 Selection of blocks

Two blocks, namely, Lamphel and Lamsang were selected from Imphal west district and Mao Maram and Saitu Gamphazol blocks were selected from Senapati district purposively based on the engagement of the women in various types of informal livelihood activities especially sale of agricultural and allied products as most women resort to vending for livelihood in the state and other agriculture related activities in the selected area.

3.4.3 Selection of villages

Three villages were selected purposively from each of the selected blocks. From Lamsang block, Kanto, Khurkhul, Sekmai and from Lamphel block, Thangmeiband, Iroisemba and Sagolband were selected and from Mao Maram block, Maram Bazar, Senapati town and Shajouba, from Saitu Gamphazol block, Leimakhong, Motbung and Kangpokpi were selected as women engaged in various

types of informal livelihood activities especially vending activities and other agricultural and allied activities were present.

3.4.4 Selection of respondents

Twenty respondents who were engaged in informal livelihood activities especially vending activities and other agricultural and allied activities were selected from each of the selected villages based on random sampling method making it a total of 240 respondents.



Figure 3.3: Map of Manipur

Source: https://mapinside.in/manipur-map-with-district/#google_vignette

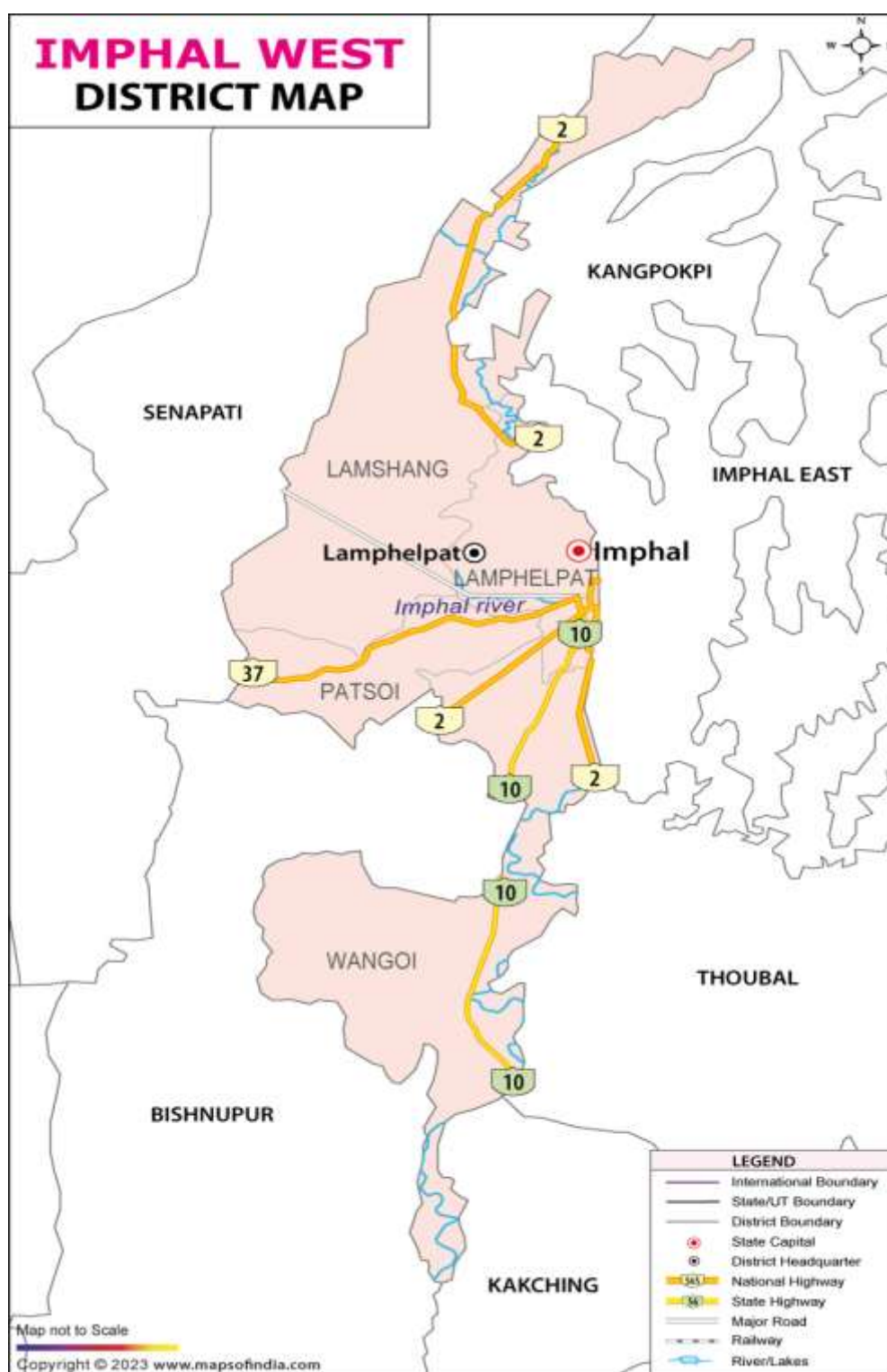


Figure 3.4.1: Map of Imphal West District

Source: Google

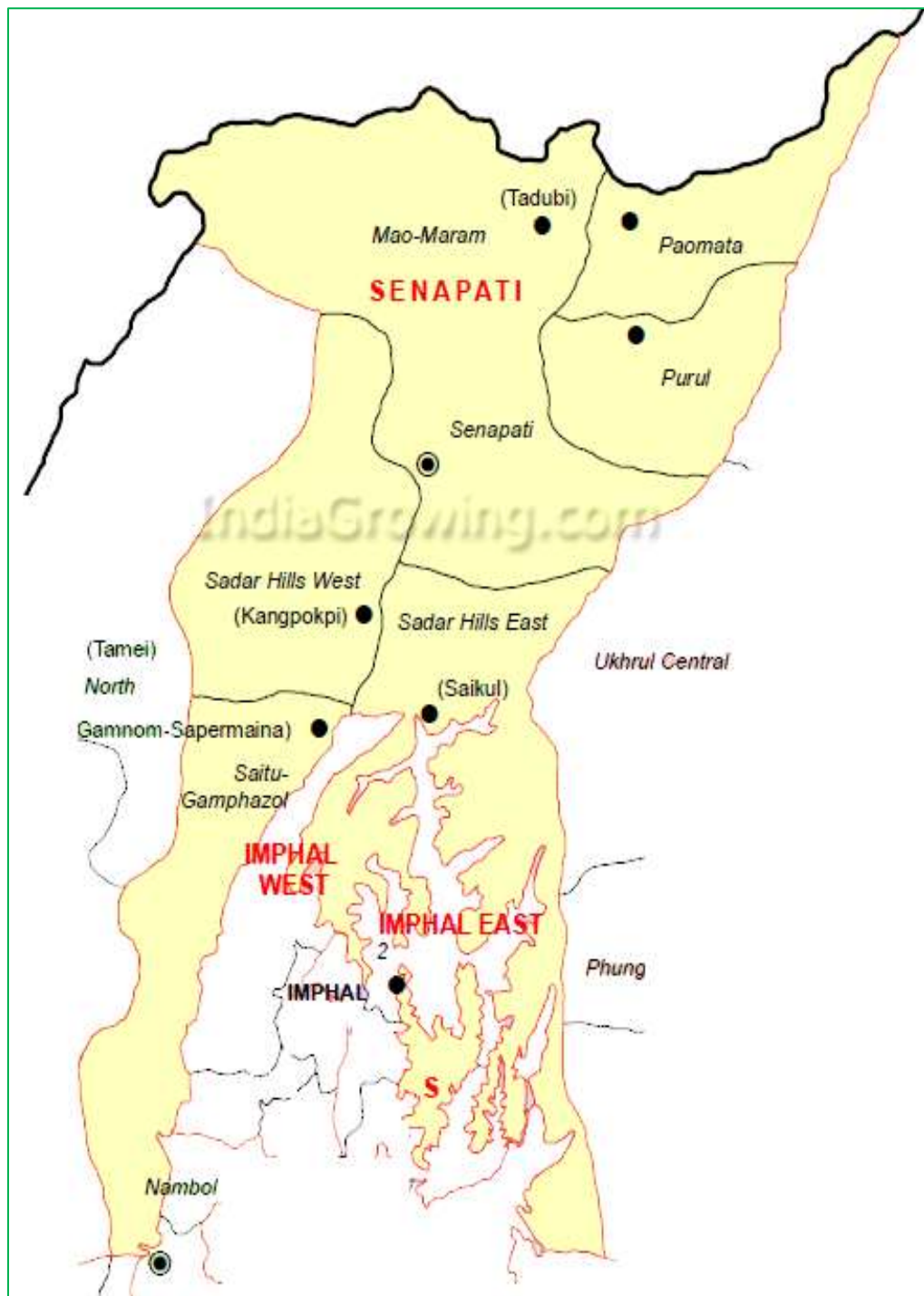


Figure 3.4.2: Map of Senapati District

Source: *Google*

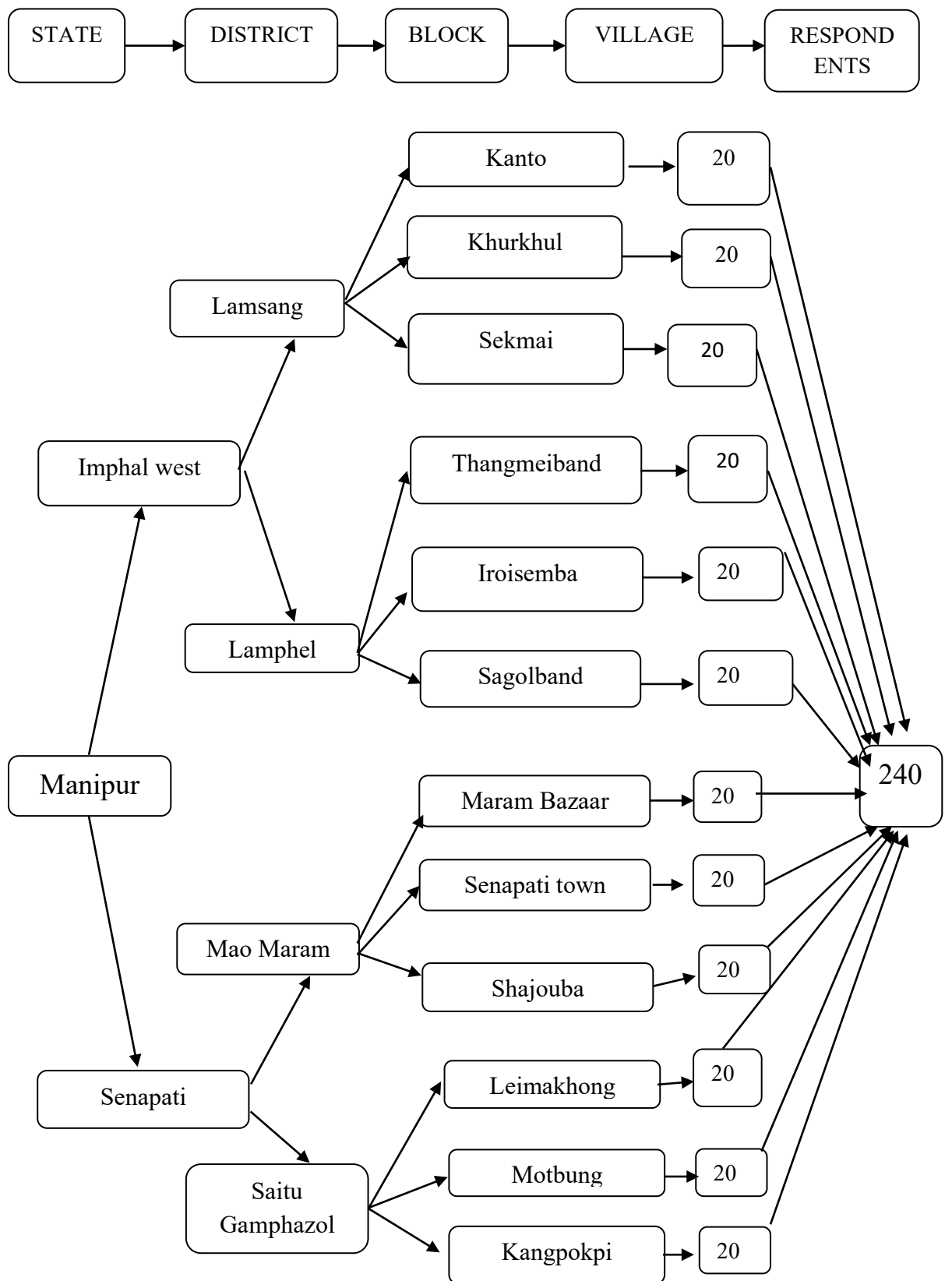


Figure 3.4.4: Sampling Design

3.4.4: Sampling Design

District	Block	Village	No. of respondents
Imphal West	Lamsang	Kanto	20
		Khurkhul	20
		Sekmai	20
	Lamphel	Thangmeiband	20
		Iroisemba	20
		Sagolband	20
Senapati	Mao Maram	Maram Bazar	20
		Senapati Town	20
		Shajouba	20
	Saitu Gamphazol	Leimakhong	20
		Motbung	20
		Kangpokpi	20
Total	240		

3.5 Selection of variables according to the objectives:

Sl. No.	Variables	Measurement tools/techniques
1.	Age	Chronological age of the respondent at the time of interview.
2.	Level of Education	Formal educational qualification at the time of interview.
3.	Gender of household head	Categorised as male and female.
4.	Ethnicity	On the basis of the ethnic group the respondent belongs to.
5.	Marital status	Categorised as married, unmarried, widowed and divorced.
6.	Family type	Categorised as Nuclear and Joint.
7.	Training exposure	Categorised as Yes or No to any training programme attended.
8.	Type of house	Categorised as kaccha, semi-pucca and pucca.
9.	Household size and composition	Categorised as upto 5 family members and above 5 family members.
11.	Occupation	On the basis of their income-generating activity
12.	Total Land holding size	On the basis of their total landholding size that the family owns.
13.	Annual Income of the household	On the basis of the total income earned by the respondents' household in a year.
14.	Annual Income of the respondent	On the basis of the total income earned by the respondents in a year.
15.	Material possessions	On the basis of possessions of certain materials.
16.	Expenditures	On the basis of monthly expenditure on food, education, health, clothing and miscellaneous cost.
17.	Access to credit	Categorised as Banks, SHGs, Moneylenders, Relatives and Friends.
18.	Savings	Categorised as no savings, non-institutional savings, institutional savings and both non-institutional savings and institutional savings.
19.	Debts	Categorised as family with debts and family without debts.
19.	Migration pattern	Categorised as Yes/No to migration.
20.	Institutional support	Categorised as Banks, SHG, Central, Govt./State Govt and Others.
21.	Resources and assets	On the basis of availability of house, land and gold ornaments.
22.	Livelihood Security	Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) developed by Maurya (2017).
23.	Women Empowerment	Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (2017).

A. Empirical measurements of personal and socio-economic variables

1. Age

In a society, age is one of the most important determinants of social status and social role of an individual. In the present study, the number of years rounded in the nearest whole number the respondent lived since birth at the time of interview was taken as a measure of age of the women respondents. The categorization of the respondents based on age was depicted as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Age
1.	Young	Upto 35 years
2.	Middle	36– 60 years
3.	Old	Above 60 years

2. Education

Education refers to the level of formal schooling attained/literacy acquired by the respondent at the time of interview. It is instrumental in building personality and help in changing one's behavior in social life. To quantify the educational status of the respondents, the scoring system developed by Kuppuswamy (2019) in his updated modified Socio-economic Status Scale-Rural was used with slight modification. The scoring of different levels of education was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Illiterate	1
2.	Primary	2
3.	Middle	3
4.	High school	4
5.	Higher secondary	5
6.	Graduate	6
7.	Post-graduate	7

3. Gender of household head

In most of the Indian households, the head of the family is male. However, this variable was taken into consideration to bring out a picture if women in some households are given the authority or not. For the analysis of gender of head of the household, schedule used by Ashagidigbi *et al.* (2022) was followed. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Male	1
2.	Female	0

4. Ethnicity/Ethnic group

The ethnicity is classified according to the ethnic origin of the respondents. In Manipur, there are three main ethnic groups, *viz.*, Meitei, Naga and Kuki. The Meiteis reside in the valley area of the state while majority of Nagas and Kukis reside in the hilly areas. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Meitei	1
2.	Naga	2
3.	Kuki	3

5. Marital status

Based on the marital status, the respondents were categorised into four categories *viz.*, unmarried, married, widowed and divorced. The marital status was scored as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Unmarried	1
2.	Married	2
3.	Widowed	3
4.	Divorced	4

The scoring was done in such a way that it would be easier to convert qualitative responses into quantitative form for ease of tabulation and statistical analysis, without implying any hierarchical order among the categories.

6. Family type

Family type refers to whether the respondent's family is nuclear or joint. To quantify the family type, the scoring system developed by Pareek and Trivedi (1964) in their Socio-economic Status (SES) Scale was used and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Nuclear	1
2.	Joint	2

7. Training exposure

Training exposure refers to the extent the women respondents are exposed to any training programme related to the livelihood activities practised by them. A score of 1 was given to respondents who have attended trainings and a score of 0 to those who have not attended any training. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	0

8. Type of house

The type of house of the respondents indicates their social status. For the analysis, three types of house were considered:

- a) *Pucca house* i.e house strongly built with permanent foundation, walls and roofs made of sturdy materials like cement, bricks and stones.
- b) *Semi-pucca house* i.e house with walls made of pucca materials but roof is not made up of pucca materials like concrete walls and roof made of tinsheet.
- c) *Kaccha house* i.e house with walls made of mud and roof made of straw.

The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Kaccha house	1
2.	Semi-pucca house	2
3.	Pucca house	3

9. Household size

Household size refers to the number of members in the respondent's family. To quantify the household size, Socio-economic Status (SES) Scale-Rural developed by Pareek and Trivedi (1964) was used and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Upto 5 members	1
2.	Above 5 members	2

10. Occupation

Occupation implies to the activity of the women respondents for earning their livelihood. After a pilot study, the respondents were classified into the following categories and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	Vegetable vendor	15
2.	Fruit vendor	14
3.	Traditional wear/items vendor	13
4.	Processed food items vendor	12
5.	Meat vendor	11
6.	Fish vendor	10
7.	Local Grocery shop	9
8.	Farming	8
9.	Livestock	7
10.	Fishery	6
11.	Weaving	5
12.	Embroidery	4
13.	Tailoring	3
14.	Hand-woven basket vendor	2
15.	Banana leaf vendor	1
16.	Rice Mill	0

11. Total Landholding size

In the present study to measure the land, the scoring system developed by Udai Pareek revised in 2021 was used with slight modification and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	<0.40 ha	1
3.	0.40 – 2.02 ha	2
4.	Above 2.02 ha	3

12. Annual Income of the household

Annual income of the household refers to the total earnings in term of rupees in a year by the respondents' households. In the present study to measure the annual income, the scoring system developed by Haque (1981) with suitable modification was used and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Rs. 1-2 lakhs	1
2.	Rs.2-3 lakhs	2
3.	Rs. 3-4 lakhs	3
4.	Rs. 4-5 lakhs	4
5.	Rs. 5-6 lakhs	5
6.	Rs. 6-7 lakhs	6

13. Annual Income of the respondent

Annual income of the respondent refers to the total earnings in term of rupees in a year by the respondents. In the present study to measure the annual income, the scoring system developed by Haque (1981) with suitable modification was used and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Rs. 1-2 lakhs	1
2.	Rs.2-3 lakhs	2
3.	Rs. 3-4 lakhs	3
4.	Rs. 4-5 lakhs	4
5.	Rs. 5-6 lakhs	5
6.	Rs. 6-7 lakhs	6

14. Material possession

Material possession refers to the ownership of certain materials by the respondents' households. For analysing the material possessions, a list of materials was presented to them one by one and their responses were recorded in binary form. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Yes = 1/ No = 0
1.	Farm equipments/tools	
2.	Cell phones	
3.	Television	
4.	Refrigerators	
5.	Vehicle	
6.	Radio	
7.	Washing machine	
8.	Handloom	
9.	Tractor	
10.	Others (Specify)	

15. Expenditures

The annual expenditure of the surveyed households was measured by presenting expenditures on items like food, education, health, clothing and other costs that would be essential in our daily lives. And by summing up of all the expenditures, a total annual household expenditure was estimated. Then, the expenditures based on the mean and standard deviation of the obtained data were categorized as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Scores
1.	Low	$< (\text{Mean} - \text{SD})$
2.	Medium	$\text{Mean} \pm \text{SD}$
3.	High	$> \text{Mean} + \text{SD}$

16. Access to credit

The access to credit refers to the accessibility of any financial help by the respondents from some sources. Their responses were recorded in binary form and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Yes = 1/ No = 0
1.	Banks	
2.	SHGs	
3.	Moneylenders	
4.	Relatives	
5.	Friends	

17. Savings

Savings refers to the portion of the respondent's family income that is kept aside and not spent on current expenditures. Non-institutional savings refer to the savings the women could keep in her own pocket or in informal system like Marup. Marup is the practice of gathering a group of people, pool in certain pre-fixed amount of money on a set date in a month and in each particular month, a certain person would get the amount pooled. This would go on until all the participants get their share. Institutional savings refer to those savings which are kept in formal institutionalized systems such as banks. In the present study, the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	No savings	0
2.	Non -Institutional savings	1
3.	Institutional savings	2
4.	Both	3

18. Debts

Debt is the amount of money that the respondents owe to a lender. In the present study, the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Family with debts	0
2.	Family without debts	1

19. Migration pattern

Migration implies whether the respondents have shifted from any other place, maybe from rural areas to urban areas or vice versa. In the present study, the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Not migrated	0
2.	Migrated	1

20. Institutional support

Institutional support here refers to any support system provided by a department, a bank, SHG by providing them loans, funds, schemes and project. The women were asked if they could obtain any support from any such institutions. And their responses were recorded in binary form. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Yes = 1/ No = 0
1.	Banks	
2.	SHGs	
3.	Central Govt./State Govt.	
4.	Others	

21. Resources and assets

Resources and assets included House, Land and Gold ornaments which could be used to build wealth and support livelihoods. For analysing the resources and assets of the women respondents, a list of resources and assets was presented to them one by one and their responses were recorded in binary form. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Yes = 1/ No = 0
1.	House	
2.	Land	
3.	Gold Ornaments	

B. Empirical measurements of various livelihood activities of the women

Sl. No.	Variables	Measurement tools/techniques
1.	Sources of income	Based on the number of sources of income of the individual respondents.
2.	Primary source of income	On the basis of their income-generating activity which earns them the most.
3.	Secondary source of income	On the basis of their income-generating activity which earns them moderately.
4.	Tertiary source of income	On the basis of their income-generating activity which is mostly freelance in nature and earns them the least.
5.	Skills in various sectors	Categorised as Yes/No to a list of skills possibly practised by the womenfolk.
6.	Seasonality	Categorised as one economic activity throughout the year and two or more economic activities in a year.

1. Sources of income

Sources of income refers to a number of activities through which the women respondents earn an income. The various livelihood activities taken up by the respondents were classified into primary source of income, secondary source of income and tertiary source of income based on their contribution to the total income. For analysing the variable, a number of sources of income was presented to them and their responses were recorded in binary form and the response was scored as 1 if it was 'Yes' and 0 if it was 'No'. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Yes=1/No=0
1.	Only one source	
2.	Two sources	
3.	Three sources	
4.	More than three sources	

2. Primary source of income

Primary source of income implies to the activity of the women respondents contributing the most to her total income. The following list of activities

were considered for tertiary occupation after considerable study and were presented to the respondents. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	Vegetable vendor	15
2.	Fruit vendor	14
3.	Traditional wear/items vendor	13
4.	Processed food items vendor	12
5.	Meat vendor	11
6.	Fish vendor	10
7.	Local Grocery shop	9
8.	Farming	8
9.	Livestock	7
10.	Fishery	6
11.	Weaving	5
12.	Embroidery	4
13.	Tailoring	3
14.	Hand-woven basket vendor	2
15.	Banana leaf vendor	1
16.	Rice Mill	0

3. Secondary source of income

Secondary source of income implies to the activity of the women respondents contributing moderately to her total income. The following list of activities were considered for secondary source of income after considerable study and were presented to the respondents. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	Farming	6
2.	Livestock	5
3.	Fishery	4
4.	Weaving	3
5.	Tailoring	2
6.	Agricultural laborer	1
7.	No secondary Job	0

4. Tertiary source of income

Tertiary source of income implies to the activity of the women respondents contributing the least to her total income and are predominantly freelance in nature. The following list of activities were considered for tertiary source of income after considerable study and were presented to the respondents. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	Farming	4
2.	Livestock	3
3.	Weaving	2
4.	Tailoring	1
5.	No tertiary Job	0

5. Skills in various sectors

For the analysis, the women were presented a list of activities after careful consideration of the target respondents and this included farming, weaving, basket-making, vendor, pisciculture, traditional rice wine making, value-addition activities like pickle-making, fermentation of fish, drying of meat/fish, sericultural activities like rearing of silkworm, reeling of silk thread from the cocoon, piggery, cattle

rearing, poultry and duckery. Then, their responses were recorded in binary form. The scoring was given as follows:

SL. No.	Skills	Yes=1/ No=0
1.	Farming	
2.	Vendor	
3.	Weaving	
4.	Poultry	
5.	Piggery	
6.	Duckery	
7.	Sericultural activities	
8.	Traditional rice-wine making	
9.	Value addition activities (Pickles, fermented fish, drying meat/fish,etc.)	
10.	Others (Specify)	

6. Seasonality

The seasonality refers to the different economic activities that the women take up in different seasons round a year. The women were asked to mention which activities were mostly taken up by them in a particular season. And from the responses, the number of economic activities taken up by the respondents round the year could be known and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	One economic activity throughout the year	1
2.	Two or more economic activities throughout the year	2

ROLE OF LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPOWERING THE WOMEN

For the analysis of the role of livelihood opportunities in empowering women, certain socio-economic variables indicating the livelihood opportunities such as age, education, gender of household head, ethnicity, marital status, family type, family size, training exposure, type of house, occupation, secondary occupation, tertiary occupation, skills in various sectors, total landholding size, annual income of the household, annual income of the respondent, sources of income, material possessions, access to credit, savings, expenditures, seasonality, migration pattern, institutional support and resources and assets were considered and a statistical analysis of Linear Regression was run between the variables and the extent of women empowerment in SPSS and the resulting variables which came out as significant were considered to have a role in empowering women in the study area.

C. Measurement of Livelihood Security of women respondents

To analyze the objective, Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) constructed by Mukesh Kumar Maurya in 2017 was used with suitable modification. Indicators such as Economic, Education, Health, Habitat, Food and Social Security were considered and the HLSI was obtained by aggregating the scores of indicators. It was assumed that each indicator has equal weight to the overall HLSI.

Household Livelihood Security Index

Sl. No.	Indicators	Measurement tools/techniques
1.	Economic Security	On the basis of annual net income of the women's household and statements structured based on the self-sufficiency.
2.	Educational Security	On the basis of educational status of the women, accessibility and monthly expenditure of educational facilities.
3.	Food Security	On the basis of the monthly food expenditure and statements structured based on the availability and adequacy of food.
4.	Habitat Security	On the basis of type of house, ownership of the land on which the house was built and social relationship in the locality.
5.	Health Security	On the basis of accessibility of primary health care centre (services), maternity hospital and general hospital and monthly expenditure on healthcare.
6.	Social Security	On the basis of the level of participation and access to various sources of information.

Each indicator was measured in a different scale and it was first necessary to standardize each indicator as an index for relevant indicator. The standardized indicators of a household will be prepared using the method adopted to calculate Human Development Index (UNDP, 2007). The individual indices can be computed according to the general formula

$$Z_{index} = \frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

i. Economic security

Economic security is the condition of having stable income or other resources to support a standard of living at present and in the future.

This index is based on annual income of the women's household and statements structured based on the self-sufficiency of financial requirements.

Both the scores of the annual income and the statements were standardized to convert them into similar measurements and compiled them to measure the economic security index. Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

ii. Educational security

Educational security index was majorly determined by the educational status of the women respondents and the accessibility and monthly expenditure on educational facilities.

Both the scores of the educational status and the accessibility and monthly expenditure of educational facilities were standardised to convert them into similar measurements and compiled them to measure the educational security index. Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

iii. Food security

Food Security index was based on the monthly food expenditure of the women's households and statements structured based on the availability and adequacy of food.

Both the scores of the monthly food expenditure and the statements structured based on the availability and adequacy of food are standardized to convert them into similar measurements and compiled them to measure the food security index. Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

iv. Habitat security

Habitat security refers to the access of the individuals to adequate shelter and related resources ensuring that they are well-protected enabling a safe and secured livelihoods. This index was based on the type of house and statements structured based on the ownership of the land on which the house was built and social relationship in the locality.

Both the scores of the type of house and the statements on the ownership of the land on which the house was built and social relationship in the locality were standardised to convert them into similar measurements and compiled them to measure the habitat security index. Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories as:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

v. Health security

Health security refers to the capacity of individuals to identify, prevent and manage significant risks to their health. In the present study, indicators like accessibility of primary health care centre (services), maternity hospital and general hospital and monthly expenditure on healthcare were considered to measure the health security of the respondents in the study area.

Weightage in accessibility in Km is given as:

- a) 0-2km=5
- b) 2-4km=4
- c) 4-6km =3
- d) 6-8km = 2
- e) 8-10km=1
- f) 10km & above =0

The scores of the accessibility of primary health care centre (services), maternity hospital and general hospital and monthly expenditure on healthcare were standardised and converted into similar measurements and compiled them to calculate the economic security index. Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

vi. Social security

Social security refers to the capacity of the individuals to maintain and participate in the social networks that enable them to pursue sustainable livelihood by reducing risks, access resources and information. This index was based on the access of the respondents to various sources of information, support from their community.

Weightage of Social Security status attained is given as –

- a) Access to support from friends/ neighborhood =1
- b) Access to phone=2
- c) Access to newspaper =3
- d) Access to TV/radio = 4
- e) Member at village level/block level =5

Both the scores of the level of participation and access to various sources of were normalized and convert them into similar measurements and compiled them to measure the social security index. Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI)

Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) was calculated by averaging the standardized indicators by using formula

$$\text{HLSI} = \frac{E_1S + E_2S + FS + H_1S + H_2S + SS}{6}$$

Here, HLSI = Household Livelihood Security Index

E₁S = Economic Security

E₂S = Educational Security

FS = Food Security

H₁S = Habitat Security

H₂S = Health Security

SS = Social Security

The respondents were then classified into following three categories as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

D. Measurement of Women Empowerment in Manipur

To analyse the extent of women empowerment in the study area, Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* in 2017 was followed with suitable modification. This tool aims to provide a context-specific composite index for the measurement of women's empowerment. This framework recognizes three levels at which change can take place: *personal*, *relational* and *environmental*.

Changes at the *personal level* take place within the person. This refers to changes in how a woman sees herself, how she considers her role in society and that of other women, how she sees her economic role, and her confidence in deciding and taking actions that concern herself and other women.

Changes at the *relational level* take place in the relationships and power relations within the woman's surrounding network. This includes changes both within the household and within the community, and encompasses markets, local authorities and decision makers.

Changes at the *environmental level* take place in the broader context. These can be informal changes, such as in social norms and attitudes and the beliefs of wider society, or they can be formal changes in the political and legislative framework. For example, improvements in self-esteem and confidence (personal change) can influence the way that a woman takes decisions within the household or the community (relational change). If a multitude of women are gaining more confidence (personal change) and establishing better power relations within their immediate surroundings (relational change), then this will generate changes in the broader environment, influencing social norms and possibly effecting changes in the political space (environmental change). This process can also happen in the other direction, with changes in social norms and in broader society (environmental change) affecting how women interact with others (relational change) and how they see and perceive themselves within society (personal change).

The indicators considered were intended to represent the characteristics of an ‘empowered woman’ in the socio-economic context under analysis. The overall Women’s Empowerment Index allows users to combine a variety of indicators describing characteristics of empowerment into one unique composite index. Indices for all the indicators under the three categories were calculated individually and finally a composite index was calculated from the indices obtained.

Under the three levels of *personal*, *relational* and *environmental*, certain indicators are considered and these are listed below:

A. Personal level:

Sl. No.	Indicators	Measurement tools/techniques
i.	Self-confidence	Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale.
ii.	Opinions on women's economic role	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017.
iii.	Acceptability of Gender – based violence	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification (Derived from DHS toolkit).
iv.	Individual knowledge	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
V	Individual capability	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
vi.	Personal autonomy	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification (Derived from DHS toolkit and WEAI).
vii.	Access to credit	Categorised as Banks, Friends, Moneylenders, SHGs/Micro-finance and Relatives
viii.	Economic motivation	Economic motivation Scale developed by Supe (1969) with suitable modification
Ix	Achievement motivation	Scale developed by Reddy (1976) with suitable modification
X	Risk orientation	Risk Preference Scale developed by Supe (1969) with suitable modification
Xi	Decision making capacity	Rationality-Quotient Scale developed by Supe (1969) with suitable modification

B. Relational Level

Sl. No.	Indicators	Measurement tools/techniques
1.	Family support	Family Support Scale developed by Uddin and Bhuiyan (2019) with suitable modification.
2.	Group participation	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
3.	Control over household assets	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification).
4.	Involvement in household decision making	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
5.	Contribution to household income	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
6.	Time and workload	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
7.	Experience of Gender-based Violence (GBV)	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.

C. Environmental Level

Sl. No.	Indicators	Measurement tools/techniques
i.	Safety of movement	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
ii.	Social norms and stereotypes of women's economic role.	Structured schedule based on WEI developed by Lombardini <i>et al.</i> (Oxfam GB), 2017 with suitable modification.
iii.	Ability to influence at political level	Suitable schedule structured based on the participation, opinion on political matters

A. Personal Level Indicators:

i. Self-confidence:

This indicator reflects the attitude that the respondent has towards herself. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) was followed for quantifying the variable. The respondents were presented with ten statements and had to state to what extent she agrees or disagrees with each statement using a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The scale has five positive statements and five negative statements. The scoring for the statements was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score	
		Positive Statement	Negative Statement
1.	Strongly Agree	3	0
2.	Agree	2	1
3.	Disagree	1	2
4.	Strongly Disagree	0	3

The scale value varies from 0 to 30. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Self-confidence* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

ii. Opinions on women’s economic role:

The indicator ‘Opinions on women’s economic role’ assesses individuals’ attitudes towards women’s education, their leadership role and participation in financial activities. Attitudes captured by this indicator are crucial for understanding the social context in which women operate. Statements were developed referring the Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification.

The respondents were presented with three sets of two contradicting statements and asked to indicate which one of the two statements they most agree with. The statements were structured to analyse leadership, ability to keep financial records and education of the women respondents. Those statements which signify women empowerment were scored 2 and those which do not were scored 1. The scale value varies from 3 to 6. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Opinions on women’s economic role* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

iii. Acceptability of Gender – based violence:

This indicator aims to measure the extent to which a woman considers domestic violence to be acceptable. The statements were prepared following the Women Empowerment Index (WEI) by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification which was derived from a simplified version of the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) Toolkit. The respondents were asked to say if they think it is acceptable for a man to beat his wife in a number of different circumstances. Here, nine circumstances were presented to the respondents and the responses were scored as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score range
1.	No	0
2.	Don't know	1
3.	Yes	2

The scale value ranges from 0 to 18. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV)* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

iv. Individual knowledge:

This indicator tests whether a woman has knowledge that is considered important for empowerment. This indicator assesses a woman's awareness and understanding of her legal rights, entitlements and available services.

Statements were developed following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification to measure the knowledge of the women respondents which is deemed to be associated with their knowledge about accessing the justice system and the responses were scored as:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	True	2
2.	Don't know	1
3.	False	0

The scale value ranges from 0 to 15. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Individual Knowledge* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

v. Individual capability:

This indicator is directly linked to individual knowledge presented in the previous point. While ‘individual knowledge’ investigates whether a woman possesses knowledge about her legal rights/entitlements, this indicator investigates whether the women has the capability to apply this knowledge in real life.

Statements were developed referring to Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) and the responses were scored as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	Strongly Agree	5
2.	Agree	4
3.	Undecided	3
4.	Disagree	2
5.	Strongly Disagree	1

The scale value ranges from 5 to 20. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Individual Capability* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

vi. Personal autonomy:

This indicator attempts to measure the level of autonomy that a woman has to decide on an action and to carry it out independently. The respondents were asked to state whether they were normally allowed to make most of the decisions relating to a short list of activities considered to be relevant in the context under analysis. The statements were structured following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) which followed the DHS toolkit and WEAI. The level of autonomy was scored as

Sl.No.	Level of autonomy	Score
1.	Not at all	1
2.	To some extent	2
3.	To a large extent	3

The scale value ranges from 10 to 30. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Personal Autonomy* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

vii. Access to credit:

The access to credit refers to the accessibility of any financial help by the respondents from some sources and their responses were recorded in binary form. It was measured by calculating the frequency and the percentage of the positive and negative responses of the women respondents to the sources as mentioned below:

Sl.No.	Sources	Yes=1/No=0
1.	Banks	
2.	Friends	
3.	Moneylenders	
4.	SHGs	
5.	Relatives	

The scale value ranges from 0 to 5. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Access to credit* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

viii. Economic motivation:

Economic motivation refers to the values or attitude for which the women respondents attached greater importance to profit maximization. This was quantified by using the scale developed by Supe (1969) with suitable modification. The scale consists of six statements, five positive statements and one negative statements, with responses strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree to each statement. And the scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score	
		Positive Statement	Negative Statement
1.	Strongly Agree	5	1
2.	Agree	4	2
3.	Undecided	3	3
4.	Disagree	2	4
5.	Strongly Disagree	1	5

The scale value varies from 6 to 30. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Economic motivation* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

ix Achievement motivation:

Achievement motivation refers to striving to do good work with standard of excellence which may be task related, self- related or related to other aspect. For quantification of this variable, the scale developed by Reddy (1976) was used. The scale consists of nine statements out of which six statements are positive and three statements are negative and the responses are to be rated on five-point continuum namely strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree and the scoring is as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score	
		Positive Statement	Negative Statement
1.	Strongly Agree	5	1
2.	Agree	4	2
3.	Undecided	3	3
4.	Disagree	2	4
5.	Strongly Disagree	1	5

The scale value varies from 9 to 45. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Achievement Motivation* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

x. Risk orientation:

Risk orientation refers to the degree to which the women respondents were oriented towards encountering risks and uncertainty in their income-generating activities and also in securing their livelihood. The scale developed by Supe (1969) was used for the present study. The scale consists of six statements of which one is negative. The scoring procedure followed was as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score	
		Positive Statement	Negative Statement
1.	Agree	3	1
2.	Undecided	2	2
3.	Disagree	1	3

The scale value varies from 6 to 18. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Risk Orientation* converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71– 1.00

xi. Decision making capacity:

The quantification of the variable is done following the Supe's Rationality-Quotient Scale designated to quantify the rational behaviour of the respondents with

suitable modification. The degree of rationality was assessed primarily based on the suitability of individual choice of means. The respondents were presented with eight questions with some choices of responses. And from the responses, the rationality with which they made decisions was estimated. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Rational	3
2.	Intermediate	2
3.	Less Rational	1

The scale value ranges from 8 to 24. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Decision-making capacity* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

Overall Personal level Empowerment Index:

The overall Personal level Empowerment Index was calculated based on simple average of individual index obtained for each indicator and was given as –

$$PEI = \frac{(X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + X_6 + X_7 + X_8 + X_9 + X_{10} + X_{11})}{11}$$

Here, PEI = Personal level Empowerment Index

X_1 = Self- confidence

X_2 = Opinions on women's economic role

X_3 = Acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV)

X_4 = Individual Knowledge

X_5 = Individual Capability

X_6 = Personal Autonomy

X_7 = Access to credit

X_8 = Economic motivation

X_9 = Achievement motivation

X_{10} = Risk orientation

X_{11} = Decision-making capacity

B. Relational Level Indicators :

i. Family support:

Family support is the support that people receive from other family members and it is important to measure the particular person's perception that their family is able and willing to provide such support. The measurement for Family Support was done following Family Support Scale (FSS) for elderly people developed by Uddin (2019) which is applicable to studies concerning weaker section of the society. It consists of twenty positive statements and each statement was measured *via* a 4-point, Likert-style scale, with possible scores ranging from 0 (No) to 3 (Much). The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score
1.	Much	3
2.	Some	2
3.	Little	1
4.	No	0

The scale value varies from 0 to 60. The scale value ranges from 0 to 5. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Family Support* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories as:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

ii.Group participation:

This indicator measures whether a woman belongs to any community groups. Group membership has been widely considered to be an empowering factor as it provides a major source of social networking and social capital (see Alkire *et al.*, 2013). Statements were structured following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification.

The respondents were asked if they were members of a list of groups and this list was intended to be flexible. Each respondent was asked if she regularly attended

meetings of the groups. Their responses were recorded in binary form and the scoring was given as:

Sl.No.	Membership	Yes=1/No=0
1.	Local Women Group	
2.	Market Women association	
3.	Marup	
4.	SHGs	

If they were members of a group or an organisation, questions were put forwarded to the women whether they attend meetings of the group or organisation regularly or not and the scoring is done as follows:

Sl.No.	Regularly attend	Score
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	0

Further, if they attend meetings regularly, questions were put forwarded to the women to what extent they were involved or could influence in making important decisions in the groups and the scoring was given as:

Sl.No.	Extent of influence	Score
1.	Not at all	1
2.	To a small extent	2
3.	To a medium extent	3
4.	To a large extent	4

The scale value ranges from 0 to 24. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Group Participation* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

iii. Control over household assets:

This indicator investigates to what extent a woman has control over the assets owned by the household. Control over household assets is captured by asking each respondent to estimate items the household owns from a list of assets. Statements were structured following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) developed by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) which was referred from WEAI with suitable modification. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Household ownership	Score
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	0

If the household owned the items, further questions were put forwarded to the respondents as to who usually makes the decision whether to use, sell or replace item if need arises. The questions covered whether the woman made the decision either by themselves or jointly with their husband, mainly their husband, someone else or other people. If they answered that their husband or someone else made all decisions, they are coded as ‘not participating in decisions’ and are scored ‘0’ and if they participated alone or jointly with their husbands in one or more of the decisions, they are categorised as ‘participating in decision-making’ and are scored ‘1’. The scoring is given as follows:

Sl.No.	Decision-maker	Score
1.	Respondent herself	1
2.	Husband/Father/Brother	0
3.	Respondent and husband/father/brother jointly	1
4.	Another household member	0
5.	Respondent and Another household member jointly	1
6.	Parents of the respondent	0
7.	Respondent and Parents of the respondent jointly	1
8.	Someone outside the household	0

The scale value ranges from 0 to 26. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Control over Household assets* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

iv. Involvement in household decision-making:

This indicator aims to measure the level of women's involvement in household decision making. Statements were developed following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification. The respondent was asked to state who normally makes most of the decisions concerning a list of activities within the household. If they answered that

their husband or someone else made all decisions, they are coded as ‘not participating in decisions’ and are scored ‘0’ and if they participated alone or jointly with their husbands in one or more of the decisions, they are categorised as ‘participating in decision-making’ and are scored ‘1’. The scoring is given as follows:

The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Decision-maker	Score
1.	Respondent herself	1
2.	Husband/Father/Brother	0
3.	Respondent and husband/father/brother jointly	1
4.	Another household member	0
5.	Respondent and Another household member jointly	1
6.	Parents of the respondent	0
7.	Respondent and Parents of the respondent jointly	1
8.	Someone outside the household	0

And if the respondents were not involved in the decision-making, then further questions were put forward as to how much influence they have on the person making decisions. The scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Extent of influence	Score
1.	Not at all	1
2.	To some extent	2
3.	To a large extent	3

The scale value ranges from 0 to 68. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Involvement in Household Decision-making* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

v. Contribution to household income:

This indicator measures the proportion of self-perceived contribution made by a woman to total household income. The statement was structured following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification.

It should be noted that this is different from measuring the amount of independent income earned by a woman; rather, it involves measuring the proportion of household income she earns.

Percentage of contribution to the household income	
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From the percentage obtained, corresponding index values were calculated and since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Contribution to household income* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

vi. Time and workload:

The statements were structured to measure some important elements of time allocation and workload and to collect information on the number of hours dedicated to a particular task in 24 hours duration. The respondents were presented with certain tasks and asked them to mention the number of hours dedicated to each task daily as shown below:

Sl.no.	Activities	No. of hours
1.	Responsible for the care of children, elderly people or other household members	
2.	Cooking and doing the dishes	
3.	Cleaning the house	
4.	Washing clothes	
5.	Tending farm animals	
6.	Income generating activity	
7.	Agricultural activities	
8.	Shopping/Marketing	
9.	Leisure time (e.g. socializing with neighbours)	
10.	Sleeping/Napping	
11.	Personal care and rest	
12.	Ironing clothes	
13.	Religious activity	
14.	Fetching water	
15.	Fuel collection	

Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Time and workload* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

vi. Experience of Gender – based Violence:

The questionnaire tools used for exploring GBV in the context of the Effectiveness Reviews had been adapted from the Women Empowerment Index (WEI) by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) which was derived from Domestic Violence Module in the DHS toolkit with suitable modification. The respondent was asked if anyone had ever committed any of the violent actions listed. The responses were recorded in binary form and the scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	2

If the responses were positive, a statement was put forth to the respondents whether the incident took place within the household or not, and scoring was given as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	0

If the responses were positive, a statement was put forth to the respondents asking how many times the incident took place during the last 12 months within the household.

Number of times such incidents happen

Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Experience of Gender based Violence (GBV)* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70.
3.	High	0.71 – 100

Overall Relational level Empowerment Index:

The overall Relational level Empowerment Index was calculated based on simple average of individual index obtained for each indicator and was given as –

$$REI = \frac{(Y_1 + Y_2 + Y_3 + Y_4 + Y_5 + Y_6 + Y_7)}{7}$$

Here, REI = Relational level Empowerment Index

- Y₁ = Family support
Y₂ = Group participation
Y₃ = Control over household assets
Y₄ = Involvement in household decision-making
Y₅ = Contribution to household income
Y₆ = Time and workload
Y₇ = Experience of Gender-based Violence (GBV)

C. Environmental level

1. Safety of movement:

This indicator aims to measure the level of perceived safety of movement outside the house and village. Statements were developed following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification. Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with a statement referring to their security outside the house and village. The statements were measured using a Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Sl.No.	Category	Score	
		Positive Statement	Negative Statement
1.	Strongly Agree	5	1
2.	Agree	4	2
3.	Undecided	3	3
4.	Disagree	2	4
5.	Strongly Disagree	1	5

The scale value ranges from 3 to 15. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Safety of movement* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00- 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

2. Social norms and stereotypes of women's economic role:

This indicator aims to measure the social norms and stereotypes around women's economic roles in the communities in which they live. Statements were developed following Women Empowerment Index (WEI) by Lombardini *et al.* (Oxfam GB, 2017) with suitable modification. The respondent was asked to assess to what extent other women in her community agree or disagree with a number of statements referring to the economic role of women. This question does not measure what the respondent thinks but rather what, in her view, other women in her community think. And the scoring was given as follows:

Sl.No.	Category	Score	
		Positive Statement	Negative Statement
1.	Strongly Agree	5	1
2.	Agree	4	2
3.	Undecided	3	3
4.	Disagree	2	4
5.	Strongly Disagree	1	5

The scale value ranges from 5 to 25. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Socio norms and Stereotypes* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

3. Ability to influence at political level:

This indicator aims to measure the ability of the women to influence at political level. Statements were presented to the respondents as to whether they are registered voter or not, whether they are willing to raise their voice on political issues, whether they would like to contest an election or not to measure their extent of ability to influence politically. And the responses were scored as follows:

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Strongly Agree	5
2.	Agree	4
3.	Undecided	3
4.	Disagree	2
5.	Strongly Disagree	1

The scale value ranges from 5 to 20. Since it is an indicator of a composite index, the indicator *Ability to influence at political level* was converted and measured as an index from the data obtained after normalization was done using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Actual value} - \text{Minimum value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}$$

Also, an index value ranges from 0 to 1 and the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

Overall Environmental level Empowerment Index:

The overall Environmental level Empowerment Index was calculated based on simple average of individual index obtained for each indicator and was given as –

$$EEI = \frac{(Z_1 + Z_2 + Z_3)}{3}$$

Here, EEI = Environmental level Empowerment Index

Z_1 = Safety of movement

Z_2 = Social norms and stereotypes of women's economic role

Z_3 = Ability to influence at political level

Overall Women Empowerment Index:

The overall Women Empowerment Index was calculated based on simple average of individual indices obtained for each indicator and was given as:

$$WEI = \frac{(PEI + REI + EEI)}{3}$$

Here, WEI = Women Empowerment Index

PEI = Personal level Empowerment Index

REI = Relational level Empowerment Index

EEI = Environmental level Empowerment Index

After the extent of Women Empowerment was measured, the respondents were classified into the following three categories:

Sl. No.	Category	Score range
1.	Low	0.00 - 0.33
2.	Medium	0.34 - 0.70.
3.	High	0.71 – 1.00

COMPARISON OF THE EXTENT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

For the second part of the objective-3, comparison between the extent of women empowerment in valley and hilly areas, a statistical method Z-test was run between the scores of the indicators at the three levels of Women Empowerment Index (WEI) and also between the extent of women empowerment in Imphal west with the extent of women empowerment in Senapati to check if the difference was significant or not.

E. Constraints and challenges of women empowerment

The respondents were presented a list of constraints and asked to mention if the constraints presented hinder Women Empowerment and scored as –

Sl. No.	Category	Score
1.	Yes	1
2.	No	0

The constraints were presented in frequency and percentage. The rank was assigned depending upon the percentage obtained for each problem.

3.6 TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

The present study shall be based on primary data as well as secondary data. Primary data will be collected from the respondents by conducting personal interview. Secondary data will be collected from annual reports, government records, concerned department, textbooks, handbooks, journals, reports etc.

3.6.1 Preparation of interview schedule

The interview schedule was prepared after considerable research and studies related to the problem and suitable modifications were also made after a brief pilot study since the researcher was familiar with the local people and the dialect of the people to suit to the particular situation and the target population for the collection of data. Also, the researcher has garnered research advices and guidance from researchers and experts of the department. The interview method was selected for the purpose of obtaining more accurate response/information.

3.6.2 Pre-testing of interview schedule

Pre-testing is the process of an advanced testing of the study design after the schedule/questionnaire has been prepared. The objective of pre-testing is to detect the discrepancies that have crept in and to remove them after necessary modification in the schedule/questionnaire. The draft interview schedule was pre-tested in the Imphal west and Senapati districts with the help of few women respondents who were living within the district.

3.6.3 Data collection

Relevant data from the women respondents were collected on the basis of personal interview method with the help of interview schedule. Data was collected from the women respondents from May 2022 to June 2023.

3.7 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected were classified, tabulated and systematically analyzed with appropriate statistical tools for drawing valid conclusion. The statistical tools listed below were used for analysis of available data. SPSS16 was used for the analysis.

3.7.1 Frequency

Frequency is the number of times an event or observation happened in an experiment or study. It can also be defined simply as a *count* of a certain event.

3.7.2 Percentage

Percentages are used for simple comparison. For calculating percentage, the frequency of particular cell is divided by the total frequency (i.e. total no. of respondents) and then the result was multiplied by 100 to obtain the percentages. The mathematical expression is as follows:

$$P = \frac{\text{Frequency}}{\text{Total number of samples}} \times 100$$

3.7.3 Arithmetic Mean

The mean is the arithmetic average and is the result obtained when the sum of the value of individual in the data is divided by the number of individuals in the data. Mean is the simplest score in the distribution. Thus, extreme scores affect the mean. It is a measure of central tendency and is represented by a single figure, which describes the entire series of observation with their varying sizes. Mean of a set of observation is defined as their sum, divided by the number of observation. Mathematically it may be represented as

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_1^N x}{N}$$

Where, $\bar{x}$ = Arithmetic mean of the scores

N = Number of observations

x = Value of observation

3.7.4 Standard deviation

Standard deviation is a statistical measurement that quantifies the amount of variation or dispersion of a set of values. A low standard deviation indicates that the

values tend to be close to the mean (average), while a high standard deviation indicates that the values are spread out over a wider range.

It is calculated by taking the square root of a value derived from comparing data points to a collective mean of a population. The formula is:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}}$$

Where, σ = Standard deviation

x_i = Value of the i^{th} point in the data set

$\bar{x}$ = The mean value of the data set

n = The number of data points in the data set

3.7.5 Variance

Variance is a measurement value used to find how the data is spread concerning the mean or the average value of the data set. It is used to find the distribution of data in the dataset and define how much the values differ from the mean. The symbol used to define the variance is σ^2 . It is the square of the Standard Deviation.

3.7.6 Z-test

Z-test is a statistical test that is used to determine whether the mean of a sample is significantly different from a known population mean when the population standard deviation is known. It is particularly useful when the sample size is large (>30).

The Z-test compares the difference between the sample mean and the population means by considering the standard deviation of the sampling distribution. The resulting Z-score represents the number of standard deviations that the sample mean deviates from the population mean. This Z-Score is also known as Z-Statistics, and can be formulated as:

$$\text{Z-Score} = \frac{(\bar{x} - \mu)}{\sigma / \sqrt{n}}$$

where

$\bar{x}$ = mean of the sample.

μ = mean of the population.

σ = Standard deviation of the population.

n = no. of observations

3.7.7 Regression

Regression is a statistical technique that relates a dependent variable to one or more independent variables. It captures the correlation between variables observed in a data set and quantifies whether those correlations are statistically significant or not.

Regression is a statistical method used in finance, investing, and other disciplines that attempts to determine the strength and character of the relationship between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables.

Linear regression is the most common form of this technique. It establishes the linear relationship between two variables.

Linear regression is graphically depicted using a straight line of best fit with the slope defining how the change in one variable impacts a change in the other. The y-intercept of a linear regression relationship represents the value of the dependent variable when the value of the independent variable is zero.

The general form of regression model is:

Simple linear regression:

$$Y = a + bX + u$$

Multiple linear regression:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + \dots + b_tX_t + u$$

where:

Y=The dependent variable one is trying to predict or explain

X=The explanatory (independent) variable(s) used to predict or associate with Y

a=The y-intercept

b=(beta coefficient) is the slope of the explanatory variable(s)

u =The regression residual or error term

3.7.8 Ranking

Ranking is the process of determining the respondent's priority about their perceptions on a statement. This can be done by finding out the frequency and percentage of positive and negative responses of each statement presented to the respondents. And from the responses, ranking of the statements can be done.

CHAPTER-IV
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the investigation are presented and discussed in this chapter after conducting proper statistical analysis. These are presented according to the objectives of the study:

- 4.1 To study the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the women in the study area.
- 4.2 To identify the various livelihood activities of the women and to analyze the role of livelihood opportunities in empowering women.
- 4.3 To measure the livelihood security of women respondents.
- 4.4 To study the extent of women empowerment in Manipur and compare the levels of women empowerment in hill and valley districts of Manipur.
- 4.5 To find out the constraints and challenges of women empowerment in hill and valley districts and to suggest appropriate strategies.

4.1 PERSONAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WOMEN IN THE STUDY AREA

4.1.1 Age

The number of years rounded in the nearest whole number the respondent lived since birth at the time of interview was taken as a measure of age of the women respondents. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.1.1.

Table 4.1.1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age

(N=240)

Respondent	Age	F	%	Mean	S.D	Range
Imphal West	Young (upto 35)	15	12.50	47.11	11.92	23-83
	Middle Age (36-60)	85	70.83			
	Old Age (Above 60)	20	16.67			
Senapati	Young (upto 35)	13	10.83	44.78	10.06	26-75
	Middle Age (36-60)	98	81.67			
	Old Age (Above 60)	9	7.50			
Pooled	Young (upto 35)	28	11.67	45.94	10.99	23-83
	Middle Age (36-60)	183	76.25			
	Old Age (Above 60)	29	12.08			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.1 indicates that Likewise, in Imphal West district, the majority i.e 70.83 per cent of the respondents fell in middle age group (36-60) followed by old age group (36-60 years) with 16.67 per cent followed by young age group (upto 35 years) with 12.50 percent. In Senapati district, it was observed that the majority i.e 81.67 per cent of the respondents fell in middle age group (36-60) followed by young age group (upto 35 years) with 10.83 per cent followed by old age group (36-60 years) with 7.50 per cent. The Table 4.1.1 also highlighted that the overall mean age of the respondents was 45.94 and the standard deviation was 10.99, the mean age was 47.11 and the standard deviation was 11.92 in Imphal West and the mean age was 44.78 and the standard deviation was 10.06 in Senapati district.

This indicates that a good section of the respondents in the study area were in the middle age group of 36-60 years i.e economically active age group and were in their prime working years. The finding further indicates that a few of the respondents in the study area continued to work even if they had reached a certain age which was included in the old age category. This was because most of them had become accustomed to their livelihood activity and were not ready to retire.

This is in line with the findings of Shilparani (2016) reported in her study on women participation in different agricultural operations in Karnataka that majority of farm women were in middle age group as middle-aged respondents were more physically active, have more responsibility and can take up majority of agricultural activities.

4.1.2 Education

Education refers to the level of formal schooling attained/literacy acquired by the respondent at the time of interview. The respondents were distributed according to their educational qualification as shown in the Table 4.1.2.

Table 4.1.2: Distribution of the respondents according to their educational level

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Education	Illiterate	0	0.00	4	3.33	4	1.67
	Primary	10	8.33	24	16.67	34	14.17
	Middle	16	13.33	30	25.00	46	19.17
	High school	22	18.33	38	31.67	60	25.00
	Higher secondary	47	39.17	20	20.00	67	27.91
	Graduate	25	20.83	4	3.33	29	12.83
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.2 indicates that majority i.e 27.91% of the total respondents had completed their education upto higher secondary, second majority i.e 25.00% had completed upto high school and the third majority i.e 19.17% had completed upto middle-level (class VIII).

The Table 4.1.2 further indicates that majority i.e 39.17 per cent of the respondents in the Imphal West had completed their education upto higher

secondary, which was followed by 20.83 per cent of the respondents as second majority with educational level upto graduation, followed by 18.33 per cent of the respondents as third majority with educational level upto matriculation i.e high school. In Senapati district, it was observed that majority i.e 31.67 per cent of the respondents had completed their education upto matriculation or high school level followed by 25.00 per cent of the respondents with education upto middle-level i.e class VIII followed by 20.00 per cent of the respondents with education upto higher secondary level.

The observation indicates that the majority of the respondents in the study area had completed certain level of schooling. However, it was also observed that the respondents in Imphal West district had better educational attainment than their counterparts in Senapati district. This was because of better educational opportunity and infrastructure in the capital city and also more exposure to peer pressure and competition for better education.

Furthermore, the literacy rate of Imphal West district is 86.08 per cent as compared to 63.60 per cent of Senapati district while female literacy in Imphal west district is 70.98 per cent and female literacy rate in Senapati district is 57.30 per cent (Census 2011). It can also be mentioned that there was age restriction policy in Ema Keithel where unmarried women, age less than 40 years could not occupy an area in the market thereby focusing on the point that the younger ones should emphasize on getting good education (Roy *et al.*, 2021).

This is in line with the findings of Marchang (2019) where it was stated that the share of students was much larger in urban areas at 41.30 per cent as compared to the rural areas at 32.50 per cent. it was also mentioned that the difference is due to better educational infrastructure in urban areas, better educational accessibility due to lower poverty and higher educational competition which is demanded in most of the urban formal labour market.

In addition, Anna (2018) stated in her study “Empowerment of Maram tribal women in Manipur through self-help group” that in tribal communities, level of education is extremely low due to lack of awareness about values and usefulness of

education, and prevalence of early marriages. Poverty is one the reason for this scenario and often women are given less opportunities to be educated. Besides, tribal populations are isolated from the mainstream of society due to cultural and geographical reasons.

4.1.3 Gender of the household head

Due to the prevalence of patriarchal system, in most of the Manipuri households, the head of the family is male. However, female members are assigned head of the family due to certain circumstances. The respondents were distributed according to the gender of the household head at the time of interview as shown in the Table 4.1.3.

Table 4.1.3: Distribution of the respondents according to gender of the household head

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Gender of the household head	Male	102	85.00	107	89.17	209	87.08
	Female	18	15.00	13	10.83	31	12.92
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.3 indicates that majority i.e 87.08 per cent of the head of the households in the study area were male and only 12.92 per cent were female-headed households. It was also observed that at 85.00 per cent and 89.17 per cent of the households in Imphal West and Senapati district were male-headed followed by only 15.00 per cent and 10.83 per cent of the households in Imphal west and Senapati districts were female-headed households. This indicates that the patriarchal system was strictly practiced in both the districts. And a female was generally assigned the head of the family only when the head of the family had passed away and the female head was the closest in age to the previous head of the family or when she was the wife of the deceased head of the family.

The observation of the study is in line with the findings of Buvinic and Gupta (1997) that the incidence of female-headship is low by international standards. In addition, it is also in line with the findings of Mannan (2003) where it was stated that due to strong cultural norms of patriarchy, female-headed households are generally male-absent households, or households where the male-head has died or migrated or enfeebled due to illness.

4.1.4 Ethnic group

In Manipur, there are three main ethnic groups *viz.*, Meitei, Naga and Kuki. The Meiteis reside in the valley area of the state while majority of Nagas and Kukis reside in the hilly areas. The respondents were distributed according the ethnic groups they belong to as shown in the Table 4.1.4.

Table 4.1.4: Distribution of the respondents according to their ethnic group

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Ethnic group	Meitei	120	100	0	0.00	120	50.00
	Naga	0	0.00	71	59.17	71	29.58
	Kuki	0	0.00	49	40.83	49	20.42
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.4 indicates that all of the respondents from the Imphal West district belonged to Meitei community with 100 per cent while in Senapati district 59.17 per cent of the respondents belonged to Naga community, 39.17 per cent of the respondents belonged to Kuki community. This indicates that the Imphal valley was mostly inhabited by Meitei community and the villages selected for the study are all Meitei villages. While Naga tribes and Kuki tribes mostly resided in the hill districts such as Senapati district.

According to the 2011 Census, about 95.00 per cent of the scheduled tribe population were found in the hill districts of Manipur while the remaining 5.00 per cent were in the valley districts while the Meiteis who constituted about 53.00 per cent of the state population dwelled in the valley.

4.1.5 Marital status

In order to fully understand the empowering factors of the respondents, the variable marital status was included. Marital status give us an insight into the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the women respondents and hence data was collected on it. And the respondents were distributed into the categories as shown in the Table 4.1.5.

Table 4.1.5: Distribution of the respondents according to their marital status

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Marital status	Unmarried	18	15.00	12	10.00	30	12.50
	Married	92	76.67	99	82.50	191	79.58
	Widowed	6	5.00	9	7.50	15	6.25
	Divorced	4	3.33	0	0.00	4	1.67
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.5 indicates that majority i.e 79.58 per cent of the total respondents were married followed by unmarried category at 12.50 per cent as second majority followed by widowed category at 6.25 per cent as third majority and in the last place was the divorced category at 1.67 per cent. Furthermore, it was observed that in both Imphal West and Senapati districts majority were married with 76.67 per cent and 82.50 per cent respectively followed by unmarried category with 15.00 per cent and 10.00 per cent respectively as second majority followed by widowed category with a 5.00 per cent and 7.50 per cent

respectively as third majority and lastly followed by divorced category with 3.33 per cent and 0.00 per cent respectively. This indicates that majority of the women were married and they had the responsibility to earn and contribute in providing for their families. But, nevertheless, a section of the women who were unmarried, widowed and divorced were also working to be economically independent.

The observation of the study is in line with the findings of Shilparani (2016) where it was reported that more than eighty per cent (86.67%) of the farm women were married and that they have the responsibility to fulfil the needs of the family which may have forced them to work in the farm.

Shukla (2022) also reported that most respondents were married at 79.31 per cent while 9.19 per cent were unmarried, 6.89 per cent were widowed, 3.45 per cent were divorced and 1.14 per cent were separated.

4.1.6 Family type

Based on the composition of family members in the family, the type of family the respondents belong to is classified into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.1.6.

Table 4.1.6: Distribution of the respondents according to their family type

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Family type	Nuclear	70	58.33	98	81.67	168	70.00
	Joint	50	41.67	22	18.33	72	30.00
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.6 indicates that majority i.e 70.00 per cent of the total respondents belonged to nuclear type of family and the remaining 30.00 per cent belonged to joint family and it was also observed that majority i.e 58.33 per cent in Imphal West and majority i.e 81.67 per cent in Senapati

district belonged to nuclear type of family followed by joint family at 41.67 per cent and 18.22 per cent respectively. This indicates that most of the respondents' families usually moved out of the parent family after getting married to create a nuclear family. However, there was a big difference in the number between the two districts. This was mostly due to a custom among the tribal communities that the younger sons once they get married, they usually move out of the parent house to create their own nuclear families. And in Imphal West, the married couples tend to stay with the parents' family until they had enough residential area or were financially secured enough to move out.

This is in line with the findings of Shilparani (2015) where it was reported in her study that majority i.e 73.89 per cent of farm women respondents belonged to nuclear family and remaining 26.11 per cent belonged to joint family and also added that it maybe because of realization of the advantages of nuclear families in terms of running the family and responsibilities of women.

4.1.7 Training exposure

In order to understand the behaviour of the women to training programmes, the variable was included. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.1.7.

Table 4.1.7: Distribution of the respondents according to their training exposure
(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Training exposure	Yes	42	35.00	29	24.17	71	29.58
	No	78	65.00	91	75.83	169	70.42
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.7 indicates that majority i.e 70.42 per cent of the respondents had no training exposure. Also majority i.e 65.00 per cent in Imphal West and majority i.e 75.83 per cent in Senapati district had no training

exposure. This was because the respondents felt that they did not need any training and they were not able to spare enough time for trainings. However, 29.58 per cent of the total respondents had attended training programmes and as reported some of the training programmes included pickle-making, embroidery, mushroom cultivation, starch washing of traditional wears, colour dyeing of traditional wears and sericulture.

Harisha (2020) stated that constraints of both time and money often prevent women workers in the informal sectors from acquiring further training, even when such facilities exist. Women also face complex ground realities, including low levels of literacy, discriminatory social customs and traditions, limited hours available for training and work, and limited exposure and unfamiliarity with new technology. In addition, they are also considered secondary income earners and so less importance is given to training of girls for employment.

4.1.8 Type of house

To fully understand the economic condition of the respondents, data was collected on the type of house of the respondents. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.1.8.

Table 4.1.8: Distribution of the respondents according to their type of house

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Type of house	Kaccha	35	29.17	44	36.67	79	32.92
	Semi-pucca	63	52.50	66	55.00	129	53.75
	Pucca	22	18.33	10	8.33	32	13.33
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.8 indicates that majority i.e 53.75 per cent of the total respondents dwelled in semi-pucca houses followed by kaccha houses at 32.92 per cent as second majority and lastly only 13.33 per cent of the

respondents live in pucca houses. It was also observed that majority i.e 52.50 per cent in Imphal West and 55.00 per cent in Senapati district dwelled in semi-pucca houses, 29.17 per cent and 36.67 per cent respectively in kaccha houses as second majority and 18.33 per cent and 8.33 per cent respectively in pucca houses as the least majority among the three types of houses. This indicates that majority of the respondents were concerned about quality and durability of their dwelling structure and hence majority invested their earnings to afford pucca walls but were not economically well-off to afford both permanent concrete foundations and concrete ceilings or roofs.

4.1.9 Household size

Household size refers to the total number of members living together under a single roof and kitchen. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.1.9.

Table 4.1.9: Distribution of the respondents according to their household size

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Household size	Upto 5 members	71	59.17	52	43.33	123	51.25
	Above 5 members	49	40.83	68	56.67	117	48.75
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.9 indicates that majority i.e 51.25 per cent of the respondents' household size in the study area was upto 5 members and the remaining 48.75 per cent of the households had a household size above 5 members. It was also observed that in Imphal West, majority of the households consisted upto five members at 59.17 per cent followed by 40.83 per cent of the households with members above 5 in number. This indicates that majority of the families had lesser number of children and it was due to positive impact of the government policy 'We two, our two' policy to promote family planning. However, there were also some

families in the valley which have higher number of children and this was mostly because they wanted to have a son or more even after they already had daughters.

However, in Senapati district, majority of the households had number of members above five at 56.67 per cent followed by 43.33 per cent of the households with members upto 5. This was because even if most of the families were nuclear in nature, they had more number of children and generally counts upto five children. This was because the parents in the hilly areas believed that with more number of children, they were contributing in conserving their ancestral heritage and also for practical reasons such as more number of children would mean that the labour force from the family would be strengthened.

4.1.10 Occupation

The primary activity or source of income of a person is termed as his/her occupation. After considerable study, the respondents were categorized into the following occupation as shown in the Table 4.1.10.

Table 4.1.10: Distribution of the respondents according to their occupation

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Occupation	Vegetable vendor	50	41.67	80	66.67	130	54.17
	Fruit vendor	8	6.67	3	2.50	11	4.58
	Traditional wear/items vendor	10	8.33	5	4.17	15	6.25
	Processed/readymade food items vendor	9	7.50	8	6.67	17	7.08
	Meat vendor	0	0.00	4	3.33	4	1.67
	Fish vendor	5	4.17	0	0.00	5	2.08
	Local Grocery shop	6	5.00	5	4.17	11	4.58
	Farming	5	4.17	6	5.00	11	4.58
	Livestock	5	4.17	4	3.33	9	3.75
	Fish farming	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Weaving	7	5.83	0	0.00	7	2.92
	Embroidery	8	6.67	0	0.00	8	3.33
	Tailoring	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Hand-woven basket vendor	0	0.00	5	4.17	5	2.08
	Banana leaf vendor	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Rice Mill	1	0.83	0	0.00	1	0.42
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

From the study, some of the identified livelihood activities were vegetable vendor, fruit vendor, traditional items vendor, processed food vendor, meat vendor, fish vendor, local grocery shop, farming, livestock, fishery, weaving, embroidery, tailoring, hand-woven basket vendor, banana leaf vendor and rice mill.

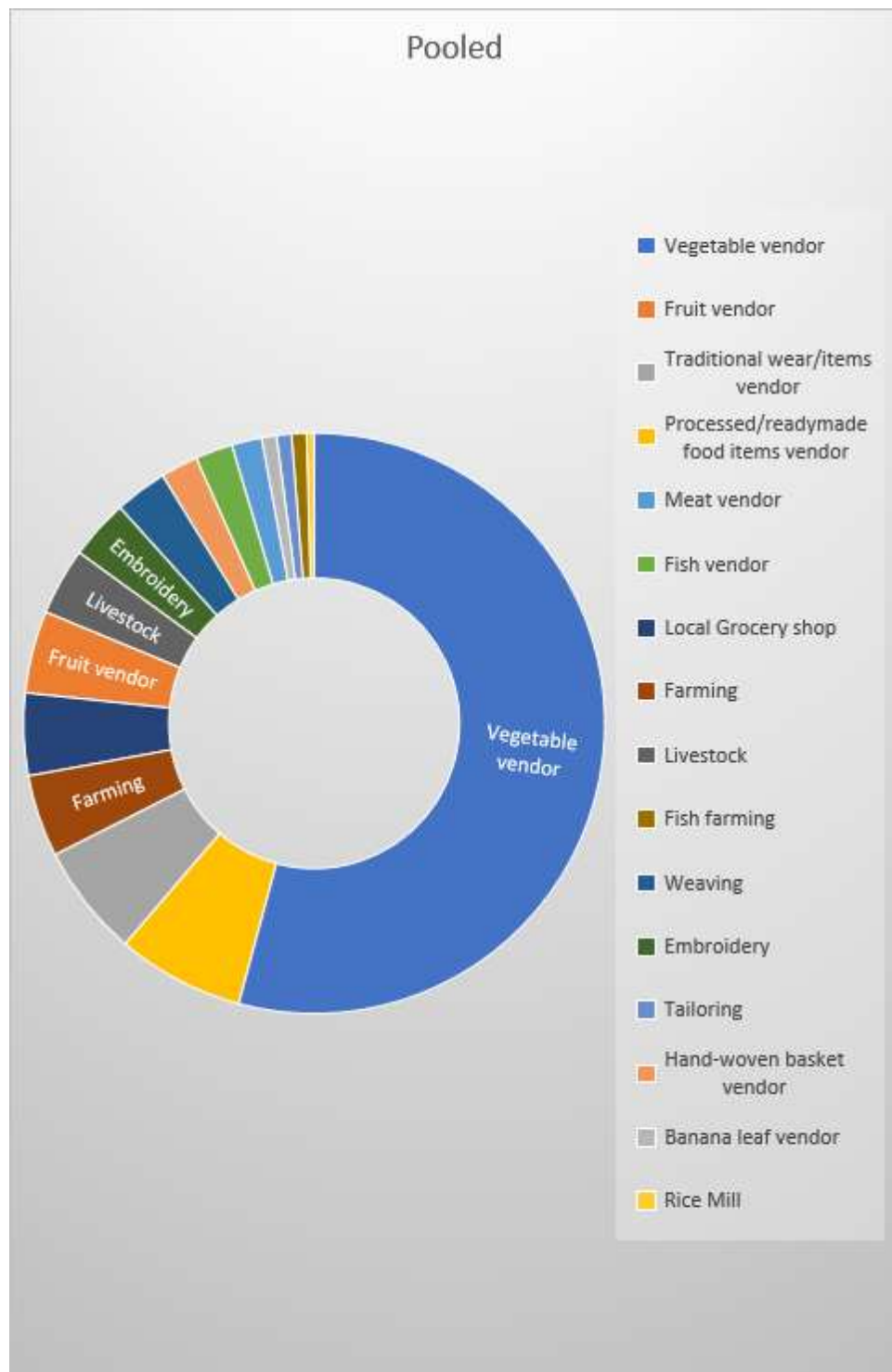


Fig. 4.1: Distribution of women respondents according to their livelihood activities

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.10 indicates that majority of the total respondents were working as vegetable vendors at 54.17 per cent, processed food items vendor at 7.08 per cent as second majority, traditional items vendor at 6.25 per cent as third majority, local grocery shop, fruit vendor and farming at 4.58 per cent each as fourth majority, livestock rearing at 3.75 per cent as fifth majority, embroidery at 3.33 per cent as sixth majority, weaving at 2.92 per cent as seventh majority, hand-woven basket vendor and fish vendor at 2.08 per cent as eighth majority, meat vendor at only 1.67 per cent as ninth majority, fish farming, tailoring and banana leaf vendor at 0.83 per cent as tenth majority and women who run rice mill at 0.42 as least majority.

4.1.11 Total landholding size

Landholding refers to the ownership of land by the family of the respondent. For the analysis of the variable, Socio-Economic Status scale by Udai Pareek revised in 2021 was used and the respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.11.

Table 4.1.11: Distribution of the respondents according to their total landholding size

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Total Landholding size	<0.40 ha	103	85.83	83	69.17	186	77.50
	0.40-2.02 ha	12	10.00	28	23.33	40	16.67
	Above 2.02 ha	5	4.17	9	7.50	14	5.83
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.11 indicates that majority i.e 77.50 per cent of the total respondents had total landholding size of less than 1 acre followed by 16.67 per cent of the total respondents with total landholding size of 1-5 acres as second majority followed by 5.83 per cent of the total respondents with total landholding size of above 5 acres. Also, it was observed in both Imphal West and

Senapati districts that majority i.e 85.83 per cent and 69.17 per cent of the total respondents respectively had total landholding size of less than 1 acre followed by 10.00 per cent and 23.33 per cent of the total respondents with total landholding size of 1-5 acres as second majority followed by 4.17 per cent and 7.50 per cent of the total respondents with total landholding size of 5-10 acres.

This indicates that majority of the women respondents' households in both valley and hill areas had a marginal size of landholding. And this was also a major reason for majority of the women who chose vending as their livelihood activity. It was also observed that the ownership of the landholding in both districts were not in their names.

4.1.12 Annual income of the household

Annual income of the household refers to the total earnings in term of rupees in a year of the respondents' household. In the present study, the scoring system developed by Haque (1981) with suitable modification was used to measure the annual income and the respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.12.

Table 4.1.12.: Distribution of the respondents according to annual income of the household

(N=240)

Respondent	Annual income (Rs.)	F	%	Range	Mean	S.D
Imphal West	1-2 lakhs	8	6.67	150000 - 620000	328816.7	104807.7
	2-3 lakhs	42	35.00			
	3-4 lakhs	49	40.83			
	4-5 lakhs	10	8.33			
	5-6 lakhs	9	7.50			
	6-7 lakhs	2	1.67			
Senapati	1-2 lakhs	23	19.17	110000 - 500000	287590	78462.67
	2-3 lakhs	49	40.83			
	3-4 lakhs	41	34.17			
	4-5 lakhs	4	3.33			
	5-6 lakhs	3	2.50			
	6-7 lakhs	0	0.00			
Pooled	1-2 lakhs	31	12.97	110000- 620000	308203.3	94664.41
	2-3 lakhs	91	37.92			
	3-4 lakhs	90	37.50			
	4-5 lakhs	14	5.83			
	5-6 lakhs	12	5.00			
	6-7 lakhs	2	0.83			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.12 indicates that majority i.e 37.92 per cent of the total respondents fell in the category of Rs. 2-3 lakhs annual income followed by 37.50 per cent of the total respondents in the category of Rs.3-4 lakhs annual income as second majority followed by 12.97 per cent of the total respondents in the category of 1-2 lakhs annual income as third majority. The Table 4.1.12 also indicates that in Senapati district, majority i.e 40.83 per cent fell in the category of 2-3 lakhs annual income followed by 34.17 per cent of the total respondents in the category of Rs.3-4 lakhs annual income as second majority followed by 19.17 per cent of the total respondents in the category of 1-2 lakhs annual income as third

majority. However, it was observed in Imphal West district that majority i.e 40.83 per cent fell in the category of 3-4 lakhs followed by 35.00 per cent of the respondents in the category of 2-3 lakhs as second majority followed by 6.67 per cent in the category of 1-2 lakhs as third majority. The Table 4.1.12 also highlighted that the mean annual income was Rs.308203.3 and the standard deviation was 94664.41.

The Table 4.1.12 indicates that the respondents' households in Imphal West district has higher annual income than those households in Senapati district and this was because Imphal west includes Imphal city which is the capital and a commercial hub of Manipur and had a bigger market and higher customer footfall.

4.1.13 Annual income of the respondent

Annual income of the respondent refers to the total earnings in term of rupees in a year of the individual respondents. In the present study, the scoring system developed by Haque (1981) with suitable modification was used to measure the annual income and the respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.13.

Table 4.1.13: Distribution of the respondents according to annual income of the respondent

(N=240)

Respondent	Annual income (Rs.)	F	%	Range	Mean	S.D
Imphal west	50,000-1 lakh	23	19.17	66500-330000	144912.9	52205.39
	1-2 lakh	81	67.50			
	2-3 lakh	15	12.50			
	3-4 lakh	1	0.83			
Senapati	50,000-1 lakh	32	26.67	72000-260000	122342.3	39271.66
	1-2 lakh	82	68.33			
	2-3 lakh	6	5.00			
	3-4 lakh	0	0.00			
Pooled	50,000-1 lakh	55	22.92	66500-330000	133627.6	47463.62
	1-2 lakh	163	67.92			
	2-3 lakh	21	8.75			
	3-4 lakh	1	0.42			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.13 indicates that majority i.e 67.92 per cent of the total respondents were in the category of Rs. 1-2 lakhs annual income followed by 22.92 per cent of the total respondents in the category of Rs.50000-1 lakh annual income as second majority followed by 8.75 per cent of the total respondents in the category of 2-3 lakhs annual income as third majority. It was also observed that in both Imphal West and Senapati districts, majority i.e 67.50 per cent and 68.33 per cent of the respondents respectively were in the category of 1-2lakhs annual income followed by 19.17 per cent and 26.67 per cent of the total respondents respectively in the category of Rs. Rs.50000-1 lakh annual income as second majority followed by 12.50 per cent and 5.00 per cent of the total respondents respectively in the category of 2-3 lakhs annual income as third majority. The Table also highlighted that the mean annual income was Rs.133627.6 and the standard deviation was 47463.62.

The women selling vegetables earned an average of Rs.500/day, sometimes even just Rs.300/day and at the most Rs.1000/day. The women selling traditional clothes earned an average of Rs.5000/day, sometimes Rs.3000/day and sometimes Rs.10000/day and more upto Rs.20000/day and sometimes no sale. The fruit vendors, dry fish vendors, dry/smoked meat and meat vendors earned an average income of Rs. 1000/day. The women selling processed food items like kabok, laddoo, kangsubi, bujia, different kinds of pickles like chicken pickle, king chilli pickle, bamboo shoot pickle and mushroom pickle earned an average income of Rs.1500/day. The women dealing in farming, livestock and fishery earned an average annual income of Rs.3 lakhs. Those dealing in the field of embroidery earn an average income of Rs.1500/day but when the business is either doing good or in festive season, they can even earn more than Rs.10000/day. The findings also indicated that the earnings were mostly sporadic in nature. Thus, it maybe surmised that there is no economic security for the women vendors.

4.1.14 Material possession

Material possession refers to the ownership of certain materials by the respondents' households. The respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.14.

Table 4.1.14: Distribution of the respondents according to their material possession

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents*					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Material possession	Farm Equipments/tools	113	94.17	117	97.50	230	95.83
	Cell phones	108	90.00	107	89.17	215	89.58
	Television	101	84.17	90	75.00	191	79.58
	Refrigerators	69	57.50	81	67.50	150	62.50
	Vehicle	84	70.00	67	55.83	151	62.39
	Radio	68	56.67	66	55.00	134	55.83
	Washing machine	73	60.83	58	48.33	131	54.58
	Handloom	40	33.33	66	55.00	106	44.17
	Tractor	3	2.50	0	0.00	3	1.25
	Others	10	8.33	5	4.17	15	6.25

*Data are based on multiple responses

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.14 indicates that majority i.e 95.83 per cent of the total respondents in both the study areas owned farming equipments/tools such as garden hoe, sickle, sprayer, spade, trowel and rake. The second most possessed material of the respondents was cell phone at 89.58 per cent as this object was considered a necessity in day-to-day life for better communication. Some of the respondents who did not possess cell phones shared it with their children or they had a common family cell phone for their use. Television was at the third

position at 79.58 per cent as television is a mass media playing important role in providing news and information, advertisements, entertainments and sports.

Other materials like refrigerator and washing machine were also gaining popularity in today's world especially among the womenfolk as these modern appliances offer certain benefits in day-to-day life such as saving time and effort and prevents wastage of food.

Most of the respondents also possessed vehicle either two-wheeler or four-wheeler as this helped them in transportation which was very important to run their businesses or livelihood activities.

Others included materials like sewing machine, oven, bicycle and embroidery machine.

4.1.15 Mean Annual expenditure

The Mean annual expenditure of the surveyed households was measured by presenting expenditures on items like food, education, health, clothing and other costs that would be essential in our daily lives. The respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.15.

Table 4.1.15.1: Mean Annual expenditure of the respondents on different items

(N=240)

Respondent	Expenditure (Rs.)	Mean	S.D	Range
Imphal West	Food	53210	14661.08	32400-84000
	Education	101460	42059.98	0-180000
	Health	10809	3558.86	5400-48000
	Clothing	16897	5413.94	9600-36000
	Others	42920	14200.07	28500-96000
Senapati	Food	54650	15200.36	30000-84000
	Education	91650	33313.57	0-156000
	Health	9285	3531.59	5000-24000
	Clothing	13796	4415.06	10000-30000
	Others	41150	12811.92	30000-100000
Pooled	Food	53930	14930.72	30000- 84000
	Education	96555	37686.78	0-180000
	Health	10047	3545.23	5000-48000
	Clothing	15346.50	4914.50	9600-36000
	Others	42035	13505.99	28500-100000

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.15.1 indicates that education cost the highest among the five areas of expenditure with Rs.96555 with a range of Rs.0-Rs.180000. This indicates that majority of the households considered education as inevitable and were not frugal while investing in education. It was also observed that there was no expenditure for education in some of the families as they had members too young such as a baby who cannot be sent to school yet and some families whose children had completed their education. The second highest cost incurred for majority of the households was food with mean annual food expenditure of Rs. 53930 with a range of Rs.30000 – Rs.84000. This was because food is a basic necessity for survival. The third highest cost was others such as electricity bill, fuel charge, travelling cost and other miscellaneous cost with mean annual expenditure of Rs.42035 with a range of Rs. 28500-Rs.100000. In the fourth place was the clothing expenditure with mean clothing expenditure as Rs. 15346 with a range of Rs. 9600 and lowest cost is Rs.36000. Lastly, it was observed that the women respondents

spent the least in health with mean health expenditure Rs. 10047 with a range of Rs.5000-Rs.48000. When it comes to health, the women most often ignored the symptoms and self-prescribed medications or consulted the nearby pharmacists and avoided visiting doctors unless it was an emergency or it was serious illnesses due to far distance from the nearest hospitals or due to high costs of transportation and consultations. It was also found that most of the respondents were reluctant to go to government hospitals despite the low cost of consultations because of overcrowding and lack of specialists.

Table 4.1.15.2: Distribution of respondents according to their mean annual expenditure

(N=240)

Respondents Annual Expenditure	Imphal west						Senapati						Pooled					
	Low		Medium		High		Low		Medium		High		Low		Medium		High	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Food	45	37.50	59	49.17	16	13.33	39	32.50	60	50.00	21	17.50	84	35.00	119	49.58	37	15.42
Education	10	8.33	87	72.50	23	19.17	16	13.33	88	73.33	16	13.33	26	10.83	175	72.92	39	16.25
Health	15	12.50	82	68.33	23	19.17	11	9.17	101	84.17	8	6.67	26	10.83	183	76.25	31	12.92
Clothing	16	13.33	84	70.00	20	16.67	11	9.17	100	83.33	9	7.50	27	11.25	184	76.67	29	12.08
Others	16	13.33	82	68.33	22	18.33	13	10.83	91	75.83	16	13.33	29	12.08	173	72.08	38	15.83
Mean Annual Expenditure	23	19.17	79	65.83	18	15.00	32	26.67	68	56.67	20	16.67	55	22.92	147	61.25	38	15.83
Mean Annual Expenditure = $\frac{\text{Expenditure on (Food+Education+Health+Clothing+Others)}}{5}$																		

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.15.2 indicates that majority of the respondents were in the medium category of mean annual expenditure with 61.25 per cent followed by 22.92 per cent of the respondents in the low category of mean annual expenditure followed by 15.85 per cent of the respondents in the high category of mean annual expenditure. It was also observed that majority of respondents were in medium category of mean annual food expenditure with 49.58 followed by 35.00 per cent of the respondents falling in the low category of mean annual food expenditure followed by 15.42 per cent of the respondents falling in the high category of mean annual food expenditure. Further, it was also noted that majority of respondents were in medium category of mean annual education expenditure with 72.92 per cent followed by 16.25 per cent of the respondents falling in the high category of mean annual education expenditure followed by 10.83 per cent of the respondents falling in the low category of mean annual education expenditure. Similarly, it was also observed that majority of respondents were in medium category of mean annual health expenditure with 76.25 per cent followed by 12.92 per cent of the respondents falling in the high category of mean annual health expenditure followed by 10.83 per cent of the respondents falling in the low category of mean annual health expenditure. In addition, it was also found that majority of respondents were in medium category of mean annual clothing expenditure with 76.67 per cent followed by 12.08 per cent of the respondents falling in the high category of mean annual clothing expenditure followed by 11.25 per cent the respondents falling in the low category of mean annual clothing expenditure. Lastly, it was observed that majority of respondents were in medium category of mean annual other miscellaneous expenditure with 72.08 per cent followed by 15.83 per cent of the respondents falling in the high category of mean annual other miscellaneous expenditure followed by 12.08 per cent of the respondents falling in the low category of mean annual other miscellaneous expenditure.

It was also observed that the respondents had to purchase most of the food items especially in Imphal West district for even rice and vegetables but in Senapati district, majority of the respondents practiced subsistence farming and also collected

herbs which were consumed as vegetables were naturally grown in the hills which they sometimes brought to the valley markets for sale.

It was found that many reputed expensive schools were there in the state, the women respondents also wish to send their children to the best school available but considering their income, they also compared the school fees and the quality of education and other facilities provided and they chose the school which was affordable while providing quality education.

It was also noted that majority of the women respondents come from low-income backgrounds and they tend to pay attention to their health only when any serious emergency or changes in health that concerns them come up and spend less on health conditions which demand medical attention.

The expenditure in clothing in the two study areas was absolutely random and depended on the capability of the family to afford and the number of family members.

Furthermore, the mean monthly expenditure on others such as fuel, electricity and miscellaneous costs in Imphal West was Rs.3086.667 and that of Senapati is Rs. 2683.33 which were not so high indicating that majority of the respondents' families did not have high spending capability and were financially frugal.

4.1.16 Access to credit

The access to credit refers to the accessibility of any financial help by the respondents from some sources. The respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.16.

Table 4.1.16: Distribution of the respondents according to their access to credit

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Access to credit	Banks	3	2.50	0	0.00	3	1.25
	SHGs	35	29.16	45	37.50	66	27.50
	Moneylenders	40	33.33	20	23.33	68	28.33
	Relatives	23	19.17	27	22.50	32	13.33
	Friends	30	25.00	23	19.17	33	13.75

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.16 indicates that majority i.e 28.33 per cent of the respondents in the study area preferred moneylenders for access to credit followed by 27.50 per cent of the respondents prefer SHGs as access to credit followed by 13.75 per cent of the respondents prefer friends as source for access to credit. Similarly, in Imphal West majority of the respondents relied on moneylenders for their credits at 33.33 per cent, followed by SHGs at 29.16 per cent, followed by friends at 25.00 per cent. While majority of the respondents in Senapati relied on SHGs for their credits at 37.50 percent, followed by moneylenders at 23.33 per cent followed by relatives at 22.50 per cent.

The proportion of women that got access to credit from moneylenders was higher in the valley because the practice of moneylenders lending money to the women have been there since time immemorial and they provided on-the-spot lending by regularly visiting the market approaching the women vendors directly and the loans were also provided without any collateral. The moneylenders collected the repayments in person making it very convenient for the vendors. But nowadays, the women preferred to create SHGs among themselves where the members contribute regular savings creating a common fund used for internal lending and other group activities at an interest rate of 1 per cent or 3 per cent monthly. This saved them from

the informal moneylenders who charged high interest rate at 5 per cent and sometimes at 10 per cent monthly. It can also be observed that the SHG system was the most preferred system of credit among the women vendors in Senapati realizing the benefits and need to protect from the high interest rate offered by informal moneylenders indicating a shift from harsh moneylending system to a more sustainable borrowing SHG system. Some prominent SHGs in Imphal West are Loyalam and Panthou and in Senapati are Okai and Khusii.

Only 2.50 per cent of the women respondents access credit from banks as majority did not own property to serve as the collateral while getting loans. And some, though they could afford a loan from the banks, were not comfortable with all the documentations and other formalities and also loans are usually not availed as quickly as they want.

Majority of the women respondents were also bound by a system called ‘marup’ in both the districts which served as their financial support in times of need. Marup is the practice of gathering a group of people, pool in certain pre-fixed amount of money on a set date in a month and in each particular month, a certain person would get the amount pooled. This would go on until all the participants get their share.

4.1.17 Savings

Savings refers to the portion of the respondent’s family income that is kept aside and not spent on current expenditures. Non-institutional savings refer to the savings the women could keep in her own pocket or in informal system like Marup. Marup is the practice of gathering a group of people, pool in certain pre-fixed amount of money on a set date in a month and in each particular month, a certain person would get the amount pooled. This would go on until all the participants get their share. Institutional savings refer to those savings which are kept in formal institutionalized systems such as banks. The respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.17.

Table 4.1.17: Distribution of the respondents according to their savings

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Savings	No savings	37	30.83	66	55.00	103	42.92
	Non -Institutional savings	76	63.33	47	39.17	123	51.25
	Institutional savings	7	5.83	7	5.83	14	5.83
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.17 indicates that majority i.e 51.25 per cent of the total respondents had non-institutional savings followed by 42.92 per cent of the total respondents had no savings as second majority followed by 5.83 per cent of the respondents with institutional savings.

It was further observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 63.33 per cent of the total respondents had non-institutional savings followed by 30.83 per cent of the total respondents had no savings as second majority followed by 5.83 per cent of the respondents with institutional savings. However, a different finding was observed in Senapati district with majority i.e 55.00 per cent of the total respondents had no savings followed by 39.17 per cent of the total respondents had non-institutional savings as second majority followed by 5.83 per cent of the respondents with institutional savings.

This indicates that majority of the women were not able to save their earnings as they are compelled to spend their income in the household expenditure. Other reasons included low and irregular income, high living expenditures, social and cultural responsibilities and lack of financial literacy.

4.1.18 Debts

Debt is the amount of money that the respondents owe to a lender. The respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.18.

Table 4.1.18: Distribution of the respondents according to their debts

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Debts	Family with debts	33	27.50	23	19.17	56	23.33
	Family without debts	87	72.50	97	80.83	184	76.67
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.18 indicates that majority i.e 76.67 per cent of the respondents' families were without debt followed by 23.33 per cent of the respondents' families with debts that had to be paid off. It was further observed in both Imphal West and Senapati that majority i.e 72.50 per cent and 80.83 per cent of the respondents' families were without debt followed by 27.50 per cent and 19.17 per cent of the respondents' families with debts that had to be paid off. This is because the women were very economical in their financial approach as they know the struggle and the unpredictability to earn their income. They borrowed money from sources like friends, relatives and moneylenders but they always tried their best to pay them back at the earliest.

At the time of the data collection, it was observed that a good number of women had borrowed an amount of Rs.50,000 or more and they had also already paid them back. There were also women who had borrowed somewhat the same amount and had stated that they believe that they would be able to pay the amount back within the next five months while few women stated that they might take longer than five months to be able to clear the debt. The main factor of early repayment was to avoid paying high interest and it was also found that many of the respondents wanted to maintain a relationship based on trust and understanding with the moneylenders.

4.1.19 Migration pattern

Migration pattern refers to the movement of the respondents from urban-to-rural and vice-versa. The respondents were categorized as shown in the Table 4.1.19.

Table 4.1.19: Distribution of the respondents according to their migration pattern

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Migration pattern	Yes	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	No	120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.19 indicates that majority i.e 100.00 per cent of the total respondents had not migrated from urban to rural and vice-versa. Similarly, it was observed that in both Imphal West and Senapati districts, 100.00 per cent of the total respondents had not migrated. This indicates that women vendors in Manipur generally exhibited low rural-to-urban or urban-to-rural migration as they tend to maintain their livelihoods within their native communities and sustained their livelihood activities within familiar surroundings.

4.1.20 Institutional support

Institutional support here refers to any support system provided by a department, a bank, a microfinance institution by providing them loans, funds, schemes and project. The respondents were classified as shown in the Table 4.1.20.

Table 4.1.20: Distribution of the respondents according to their institutional support

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Institutional support	Banks	3	2.50	0	0.00	3	1.25
	SHG	35	29.17	45	37.50	38	33.33
	Central Govt./State Govt	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Others	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.20 indicates that majority of the total respondents in Imphal West and Senapati district have negligible institutional support. Only 33.33 per cent of the respondents had support from SHG and only 1.25 per cent could obtain loan from bank. It was also observed that they had started their livelihood activities from their own savings and they handled it very economically to make their ends meet and keep their business run in long term. However, due to their ignorance and lack of information regarding schemes and programmes for women, they often missed out on certain governmental support. Even if they were aware of such schemes, the processes especially in documentation made them hesitate to ask for further information or go through the formalities.

4.1.21 Resources and assets

Resources and assets included house, land and gold ornaments which could be used to build wealth and support livelihoods. The respondents were categorised as shown in the Table 4.1.21.

Table 4.1.21: Distribution of the respondents according to their resources and assets

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents*					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Resources and assets	House	120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00
	Land	120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00
	Gold Ornaments	94	78.33	38	31.67	132	55.00

*Data are based on multiple responses

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.1.21 indicates that all the women respondents' families owned land and house followed by 55.00 per cent of the women respondents who possessed gold ornaments.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that 100.00 per cent of the women respondents' families owned land and house indicating the importance of land and house and they all maintain a lifestyle where they could afford or inherit and retain the possession of both land and house followed by 78.33 per cent and 31.67 per cent of the women respondents who possessed gold ornaments which indicates that the valley people were more fond of gold ornaments as gold ornaments were considered a part of their traditional wear ensemble besides their financial values. Also, the valley mothers considered it more appropriate to gift their daughters at least a gold-chain and earrings once they enter a certain age, like late teenage or early adulthood.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF VARIOUS LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN AND ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPOWERING WOMEN.

4.2.1 Sources of income

In this study, sources of income refers to a number of activities through which the women respondents earn an income. The respondents were classified as shown in the Table 4.2.1.

Table 4.2.1: Distribution of respondents according to their sources of income

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Sources of income	Only one source	92	77.50	105	87.50	197	82.08
	Two sources	26	21.67	15	12.50	41	17.08
	Three sources	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.1 indicates that majority of the respondents fell in the category of only one source of income at 82.50 per cent followed by the category of two sources of income at 17.08 per cent and lastly the category of three sources of income at 0.83 per cent. Similarly, it was observed both in Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority of the respondents had only one source of income at 77.50 per cent and 87.50 per cent respectively followed by 21.67 per cent and 12.50 per cent of the respondents respectively had two sources of income as second majority and lastly only 1.67 per cent of the respondents in Imphal West with three sources of income.

This indicates that majority of the women respondents were engaged only in one income-generating activity as it was difficult to manage two or more income-

generating activities. However, some women managed additional source of income by vending during specific market hours such as mornings and evenings and the additional activity during off-peak hours allowing flexible time allocation to enhance their income security and resilience to economic shocks. Though seemingly small, the study also highlights an emerging trend where women were exploring diverse income streams specially those which require minimal time as the third source of income to enhance their financial stability. For example, one of the respondents was engaged in operating rice mill as her primary source of income, poultry farming as her secondary source of income and small-scale farming of vegetables as her tertiary source of income.

4.2.2 Primary source of income

Primary source of income refers to the main income-generating activity of the respondent which she devotes most of her time and efforts. The respondents were classified as shown in the Table 4.2.2.

Table 4.2.2: Distribution of the respondents according to their primary source of income

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Primary source of income	Vegetable vendor	50	41.67	80	66.67	130	54.17
	Fruit vendor	8	6.67	3	2.50	11	4.58
	Traditional items vendor	10	8.33	5	4.17	15	6.25
	Processed food items vendor	9	7.50	8	6.67	17	7.08
	Meat vendor	0	0.00	4	3.33	4	1.67
	Fish vendor	5	4.17	0	0.00	5	2.08
	Local Grocery shop	6	5.00	5	4.17	11	4.58
	Farming	5	4.17	6	5.00	11	4.58
	Livestock	5	4.17	4	3.33	9	3.75
	Fish farming	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Weaving	7	5.83	0	0.00	7	2.92
	Embroidery	8	6.67	0	0.00	8	3.33
	Tailoring	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Hand-woven basket vendor	0	0.00	5	4.17	5	2.08
	Banana leaf vendor	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Rice Mill	1	0.83	0	0.00	1	0.42
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

From the study, some of the identified livelihood activities were vegetable vendor, fruit vendor, traditional items vendor, processed food vendor, meat vendor, fish vendor, local grocery shop, farming, livestock, fishery, weaving, embroidery, tailoring, handwoven basket vendor, banana leaf vendor and rice mill.

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.2 indicates that majority of the total respondents were working as vegetable vendors at 54.17 per cent, processed food items vendor at 7.08 per cent as second majority, traditional items vendor at 6.25 per cent as third majority, local grocery shop, fruit vendor and farming at 4.58 per cent each as fourth majority, livestock rearing at 3.75 per cent as fifth majority, embroidery at 3.33 per cent as sixth majority, weaving at 2.92 per cent as seventh majority, handwoven basket vendor and fish vendor at 2.08 per cent as eighth majority, meat vendor at only 1.67 per cent as ninth majority, fish farming, tailoring and banana leaf vendor at 0.83 per cent as tenth majority and women who runs rice mill at 0.42 per cent as least majority.

Likewise, selling vegetables was the most- practiced livelihood activity by the women in both Imphal West and Senapati at 41.67 per cent and 66.67 per cent as they believed it was the most profitable and viable economic activity in the informal sector. They also expressed the opinion that vegetables were needed daily and thus, they will get a daily income through vending of vegetables. The vegetables were obtained from the local farmers who grew vegetables or vegetable farms from whom the vendors procured at wholesale rates and then sold it at retail price directly to the consumers. Also, vegetables like tomato, onion, garlic, cucumber, cabbage, cauliflower and some other vegetables were also imported from states like Assam and West Bengal as the state production could not fulfill the needs of the population especially during the off-season.

In the second place was the traditional wear and items vendor at 8.33 per cent in Imphal west and processed or readymade food items vendor at 6.67 per cent in Senapati district. Manipur is famous for rich heritage and culture and therefore, traditional costumes and items become almost essential in every ritual or events and hence create a good market in the state.

In the third place was the processed or readymade food items vendor at 7.50 per cent in Imphal West and farming at 5.00 per cent in Senapati district. The indigenous food items and snacks such as kabok, singju, bora, kangsubi, etc. are popular and are being preserved but it was also observed that the entrepreneurial



Plate 1: Respondent from Lamphel Block, Imphal west district selling traditional costumes at Ema Market



Plate 2: Respondent from Lamsang Block, Imphal west district selling vegetables at Khurkhul local market shed

creativity of the women is being showcased through the innovative creation of new indigenous snacks.

Other notable livelihood activities practiced by the women as their primary source of income in the Imphal West valley were fruit vending and embroidery at 6.67 per cent each, weaving at 5.83 per cent, local grocery shop at 5.00 per cent, farming, livestock rearing and fish vendor at 4.17 per cent each, fishery, tailoring and banana leaf vendor at 1.67 per cent each and lastly rice mill at 0.83. Similarly, the notable livelihood activities practiced by the women in Senapati were traditional wear and items vendor, local grocery shop and handwoven basket vendor at 4.17 per cent each, meat vendor and livestock rearing at 3.33 per cent each and lastly fruit vendor at 2.50 per cent.

This further indicates that though most of the women were opting for vegetable vendor, some of them choose other livelihood activities such as selling traditional costumes, fruits, fish, dry fish, embroidery works, etc. as they realized the uniqueness of those activities and believed they could fetch good profits. The women practiced the livelihood activities according to their convenience in performing the income-generating activities and also deemed suitable and profitable to meet their financial needs.

The vegetable vendors usually acquired their produce from nearby farm and brought it to the market for sale. Likewise, fruit vendors also acquired their products from fruit dealers or mainland agencies who import the fruits from Delhi, Kashmir and Himachal and some seasonal local fruits such as Mao heikha, maalhei, champra, heikha, guava and heiyai fruits from own garden or locality. Traditional wear vendors acquired their products from the weavers. Meat and fish vendor obtained the meat or fish from the poultry houses or people who rear cattle, pig, hen, duck commercially for meat purpose. The dry fish were mostly acquired from Thanga, Keibul Lamjao, Lhpupaat Tera and Keirenphabi. Those respondents whose livelihood activity was farming focused on cultivation of crops in large scale almost throughout the year growing seasonal crops like rice cultivation from May to



Plate 3: Respondent from Mao-Maram Block, Senapati district selling handwoven basket at Apfii Saliki



Plate 4: Respondent from Mao-Maram Block, Senapati district selling vegetables at Apfii Saliki

November followed by winter vegetables. Some farmers also grew summer vegetables along with rice cultivation.

Other activities such as embroidery was gaining a huge popularity among the valley dwellers as it earned a very good profit as traditional wear was in high demand.

The findings are in alignment with Mohapatra (2012) who stated that vendor is the most scattered category in informal sector, which includes women engaged in selling different types of commodities, like broomsticks, cane baskets, utensils, petty cosmetics, bangles, vegetables and those running roadside tea stalls, etc. Nearly 40 per cent of total vendors are women and 30 per cent of these women are the sole earning members in their families.

Akhter and Kamraju (2023) also reported that the women vendors are classified on the basis of food, vegetables, fruits, electronic gadgets, children toys, flower, broom sticks, vessels, crockery, chairs, beads, ornaments, fish and poultry activities”.

4.2.3 Secondary source of income

Secondary source of income refers to the activity which earns an additional income but lesser than the primary occupation and more than the tertiary occupation. The respondents were classified as shown in the Table 4.2.3.

Table 4.2.3: Distribution of the respondents according to their secondary source of income

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Secondary source of income	Farming	4	3.33	2	1.67	6	2.50
	Livestock	10	8.33	6	5.00	16	6.67
	Weaving	1	0.83	4	3.33	5	2.08
	Tailoring	2	1.67	0	0.00	2	0.83
	Agricultural laborer	10	8.33	3	2.50	13	5.42
	No secondary source	93	77.50	105	87.50	198	82.50
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.3 indicates that majority i.e 82.50 per cent of the total women respondents had no secondary source of income followed by 6.67 per cent of the total women respondents who managed livestock such as poultry, piggery and duckery as second majority followed by 4.17 per cent of the total women respondents who worked as agricultural labour as third majority. It was also observed that majority of the women were engaged only in one income-generating activity as it was difficult to manage two or more income-generating activities and they were of the opinion to focus only on one activity and put their best effort. Also, time factor and age factor played an important role in this case as the older the women were, the more they were unable to handle multiple activities. However, some of the respondents took up domestic activities like livestock rearing, cultivation of crops and weaving besides their main income-generating activity to earn some extra income. Some women also took up activities like vending in the morning and evening hours and other activities like cultivation of crops, rearing of poultry, duckery and piggery in between during their free hours. This was mostly practised by women who sold their products at nearby market sheds.



Plate 5: Respondent from Saitu Gamphazol Block, Senapati district selling vegetables at Thursday weekly market



Plate 6: Respondent from Saitu Gamphazol Block, Senapati district selling vegetables at Wednesday weekly market

4.2.4 Tertiary source of income

Tertiary source of income refers to the occupation which earns additional income but lesser than the primary and secondary occupation. The respondents were classified as shown in the Table 4.2.4.

Table 4.2.4: Distribution of the respondents according to their tertiary source of income

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Tertiary source of income	Farming	1	0.83	0	0.00	1	0.42
	Tailoring	1	0.83	0	0.00	1	0.42
	No tertiary Job	118	98.33	120	100.00	238	99.16
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.4 indicates that majority i.e 99.16 per cent of the total women respondents had no tertiary source of income. Only 0.42 per cent each of the total women respondents could manage farming and tailoring as their tertiary job. The study found that the women who could afford time for tertiary occupation were mostly those women whose primary and secondary occupations were home-based and their tertiary activity were predominantly freelance in nature.

4.2.5 Skills in various sectors

Skills in various sectors refer to possession of at least basic skills by the women respondents. The respondents were classified as shown in the Table 4.2.5.

Table 4.2.5: Distribution of the respondents according to their skills in various sectors

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents*					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
Skills in various sectors	Farming	65	54.17	80	66.67	145	60.47
	Vendor	90	75.00	110	91.67	200	83.33
	Weaving	25	20.83	17	14.17	42	17.50
	Poultry	40	33.33	42	35.00	82	34.17
	Piggery	20	16.67	45	37.50	65	27.08
	Duckery	26	21.67	22	18.33	48	20.00
	Sericultural activities	8	6.67	0	0.00	8	3.33
	Traditional rice-wine making	3	2.50	5	4.17	8	3.33
	Pisciculture	5	4.17	2	1.67	7	2.92
	Value addition activities (pickle, fermented fish, candy, dry fish, etc.)	15	12.50	35	29.17	50	20.83
	Others	8	6.67	5	4.17	13	5.42

*Data are based on multiple responses

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.5 indicates that majority i.e 83.33 per cent of the women respondents possessed vending skills followed by 60.47 per cent of the respondents possessed basic farming skills as second majority followed by 34.17 per cent of the women respondents possessed backyard poultry rearing skill as third majority.

Likewise, it was observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 75.00 per cent of the women respondents possessed vending skills as followed by 54.17 per cent of the respondents possessed basic farming skills as second majority followed by 33.33 per cent of the women respondents possessed poultry rearing skill as third majority.



Plate 7: Respondent from Lamsang Block, Imphal west district practicing weaving



Plate 8: Respondent from Lamphel Block, Imphal west district selling dry fish at Sagolband roadside market

In Senapati district, majority i.e 91.67 per cent of the women respondents possessed vending skills followed by 66.67 per cent of the respondents possessed basic farming skills as second majority followed by 37.50 per cent of the women respondents possessed piggery skill as third majority. This indicates that majority of the women usually opt for vending services as it was considered more profitable and involved less drudgery. Secondly, Manipur being a predominantly agricultural economy, majority of the women respondents possessed at least basic farming skills. Thirdly, majority of the women learned about poultry rearing and pig rearing from their peers and found it to be suitable for them as they could take up the activity in small scale in their backyard in addition to other livelihood activities. Other activities which the women had basic skills were tailoring, computerized embroidery, basket-weaving, baking, operating rice mill, knitting agarbatti-making, starch washing/dyeing of traditional clothes and fermented soybean.

From the study, it was found that the women respondents had considerable skills but were unable to put all of the skills into practice due to lack of resources and time and majority could manage just a single income-generating activities as it was practically hard and unimaginable for a single person to engage in multiple activities even if the opportunities were there. Thus, it can be stated that the skills of the women were underutilized.

4.2.6 Seasonality

Seasonality refers to the change in the income-generating activities of the women respondents depending on the season or time of the year. The respondents are distributed accordingly as shown in the Table 4.2.6.

Table 4.2.6: Distribution of the respondents according to the seasonality of their activities

(N=240)

Items	Category	Distribution of Respondents					
		Imphal West		Senapati		Pooled	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
No. of income-generating activities in a year	One activity throughout the year	93	77.50	105	87.50	198	82.50
	Two or more activities in a year	27	22.50	15	12.50	42	17.50
Total		120	100.00	120	100.00	240	100.00

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.6 indicates that majority i.e 82.50 per cent of the women respondents were engaged in just one income-generating activity in a year in both the study areas followed by 17.50 per cent of the women respondents who were engaged in two or more income-generating activities in a year. This indicates that majority of the women were engaged in one income-generating activity round the year. It was also observed that few women who sold their products in the morning and evening hours in the local market shed could afford some time for another activity like rice cultivation, vegetable cultivation, small scale poultry farming and piggery and weaving though the rice and vegetables cultivation were mostly subsistence in nature. Though it was rare but some women respondents were found to be engaged actively in three economic activities like operating local rice mill, poultry and vegetable cultivation. Some of the women from Senapati district who worked as vendors managed time out of their daily schedule for cultivating rice and seasonal vegetables even though it was subsistence in nature. Some meat vendors also managed to rear pig so that they can save some money.



Plate 9: Respondent from Lamphel Block, Imphal west district selling banana leaves at Ema market



Plate 10: Respondent from Lamphel Block, Imphal west district selling fruits at Sagolband roadside market

Table 4.2.7: Effects of livelihood opportunities of the women respondents in empowering them

Sl. No.	Livelihood Opportunities	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	p-value
1.	Age	0.152	1.988	0.048*
2.	Level of Education	0.085	1.065	0.288 ^{NS}
3.	Gender of household head	0.023	0.371	0.711 ^{NS}
4.	Ethnicity	-0.018	-0.236	0.814 ^{NS}
5.	Marital status	-0.004	-0.065	0.948 ^{NS}
6.	Family type	0.006	0.086	0.931 ^{NS}
7.	Family size	-0.106	-1.624	0.106 ^{NS}
8.	Training Exposure	0.178	2.764	0.006**
9.	Type of house	-0.060	-0.942	0.347 ^{NS}
10.	Occupation	0.045	0.710	0.478 ^{NS}
11.	Secondary occupation	-0.008	0.039	0.904 ^{NS}
12.	Tertiary occupation	0.083	1.311	0.191 ^{NS}
13.	Skills in various sectors	0.112	1.776	0.057*
14.	Total Landholding size	0.002	0.033	0.973 ^{NS}
15.	Annual income of household	-0.074	-0.771	0.441*
16.	Annual income of respondent	0.244	2.703	0.007**
17.	Sources of income	0.013	0.204	0.838 ^{NS}
18.	Material possessions	0.132	1.918	0.056*
19.	Access to credit	0.184	2.880	0.004**
20.	Savings	-0.059	-0.805	0.422 ^{NS}
21.	Expenditures	0.097	1.553	0.122 ^{NS}
22.	Seasonality	0.047	0.747	0.456 ^{NS}
23.	Migration pattern	0.063	0.935	0.353 ^{NS}
24.	Institutional support	0.082	1.095	0.275 ^{NS}
25.	Resources and assets	0.146	2.197	0.024*

*Significant at 0.05% level, ** Significant at 0.01% level, ^{NS}-Non-significant

To analyse the role of livelihood opportunities in empowering women, linear regression function was run between various socio-economic variables listed such as age, educational level, gender of household head, ethnicity, marital status, family type, family size, training exposure, type of house, occupation, secondary occupation, tertiary occupation, skills in various sectors, total landholding size, annual income of respondents' household, annual income of respondents, sources of income, material possessions, access to credit, savings, expenditures, seasonality, migration pattern, institutional support and resources and assets with individual respondents' Women Empowerment Index that was obtained.

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.2.7 indicates that variables like *age*, *skills in various sectors*, *material possessions* and *resources and assets* were significantly associated with the extent of empowerment of the women respondents in the study area at 5 per cent significance level ($p < 0.05$). This implies that changes in these variables are meaningfully related to variations in women's empowerment outcomes. Further, it implies that the *women's age* was positively and statistically significant to the extent of *women empowerment* indicating that as women grow older, their likelihood of being more empowered increases with their life experiences and increased decision-making ability. The study also finds that *skills in various sectors* was positively and statistically significant to the extent of *women empowerment* indicating that as women acquired more skills across different sectors, their extent of empowerment tend to increase as diversified skills enhance women to participate in a broader range of income-generating activities. The analysis further reveals that *material possessions* had a positive and statistically significant relationship with the extent of women empowerment indicating that women who had access to more materials tend to experience higher level of empowerment as material possession reduced the dependency on others thereby improving self-reliance. Lastly, it was also revealed that *resources and assets* was positively significant to the extent of women empowerment as women who had access to such assets had a sense of security and stability and possession of asset like *Gold* strengthens women's financial independence and social status.

The analysis further revealed that *training exposure*, *annual income of the respondents* and *access to credit* were statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level ($p < 0.01$) which implies a strong and consistent association between these variables and the extent of women empowerment. Additionally, it implies that *training exposure* was positively and statistically significant to the extent of *women empowerment* indicating that training exposure equipped women with knowledge, practical skills and boost their confidence. The study also finds that *annual income of the respondents* was positively and statistically significant to the extent of *women empowerment* reflecting their personal earning capacity directly contributing to their financial independence enhancing their bargaining power. The analysis further revealed that *access to credit* had a positive and statistically significant relationship with the extent of women empowerment indicating that women who had access to credit allowed them to invest in their businesses, education or other productive assets fostering self-reliance thereby increasing their extent of empowerment.

4.3 MEASUREMENT OF LIVELIHOOD SECURITY OF WOMEN RESPONDENTS

Household Livelihood Security Index:

For analyzing Livelihood Security, Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) developed by Maurya (2017) was followed with suitable modification and considered indicators such as Economic, Education, Health, Habitat, Food and Social Security. Higher value of the indicator implies households were better off and more secured in terms of their livelihood.

4.3.1 Economic Security

Economic security refers to the capability of the respondents' households to have stable income to support a standard of living in the present and future. Indicator for economic security used by Maurya (2017) is followed with suitable modification. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.3.1.

Table 4.3.1: Distribution of respondents according to their level of economic security

(N=240)

Respondent	Economic Security	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	48	40.00	0.20	0.40	0.119-0.879
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	58	48.33			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	14	11.67			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	53	44.16	0.15	0.37	0.052-0.717
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	62	51.67			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	5	4.17			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	101	42.08	0.18	0.39	0.052-0.879
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	120	50.00			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	19	7.92			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.1 indicates that majority i.e 50.00 per cent of the respondents' households could secured an economic stability at medium level, followed by 42.08 per cent of the respondents' households with low level of economic security as second majority and lastly 7.92 per cent of the respondents' households with high level of economic security. The Table 4.3.1 also highlighted that the index scores of economic security for the pooled population was 0.39, for Imphal West was 0.40 and for Senapati was 0.37 which fell in the medium level of economic security but under average value which indicates that the level of economic security needs to be improved.

Likewise, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati majority of the respondents' households fell in the medium level of economic security at 48.33 per cent and 51.67 per cent respectively, followed by low level of economic security at 40.00 per cent and 44.16 per cent respectively and lastly 11.67 per cent and 4.17 per cent of the respondents' households respectively with high level of economic security.

The average annual income of the women respondents' households in Imphal West district was Rs. 328816.7 and that of Senapati district was Rs. 287590. This indicates that the households of the women respondents in the study areas were not financially well-off and had less economic security. It was also observed that majority of the women respondents were very frugal in their financial approach. However, they were not able to save their earnings consistently and hence majority of the households had financial difficulties which lead to low economic security.

4.3.2 Educational Security

Level of education of the individual, accessibility of educational institutes and monthly expenditure on education are used as indicators for educational security of households (Maurya, 2017) with suitable modifications. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.3.2.

Table 4.3.2.1: Distribution of respondents according to their accessibility to educational institutions

(N=240)

Respondents	Accessibility (km)	0-2		2-4		4-6		6-8		8-10		>10	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Imphal West	Primary school	38	31.67	63	52.50	19	15.83	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	High school	29	24.17	77	64.17	14	11.67	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	Higher Secondary school	23	19.17	57	47.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	11	9.17	29	24.17
	College	20	16.67	25	20.83	15	12.50	0	0.00	13	10.83	47	39.17
	University	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	4.17	23	19.17	43	35.83	49	40.83
Senapati	Primary school	13	10.83	35	29.17	46	38.33	26	21.67	0	0.00	0	0.00
	High school	11	9.17	29	24.17	40	33.33	30	25.00	10	8.33	0	0.00
	Higher Secondary school	8	6.67	20	16.67	28	23.33	40	33.33	24	20.00	0	0.00
	College	0	0.00	15	12.50	28	23.33	40	33.33	24	20.00	13	10.83
	University	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	18	15.00	22	18.33	80	66.67
Pooled	Primary school	51	21.25	98	40.83	65	27.08	26	10.83	0	0.00	0	0.00
	High school	40	16.67	106	44.17	54	22.50	30	12.50	10	4.17	0	0.00
	Higher Secondary school	31	12.92	77	32.08	28	11.67	40	16.67	35	14.58	29	12.08
	College	20	8.33	40	16.67	43	17.92	40	16.67	37	15.42	60	25.00
	University	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	2.08	41	17.08	65	27.08	129	53.75

Table 4.3.2.2: Distribution of respondents according to their level of educational security

(N=240)

Respondent	Educational Security	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	17	14.17	0.16	0.52	0.047-0.88
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	89	74.17			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	14	11.67			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	20	16.67	0.14	0.50	0.136-0.88
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	90	70.00			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	10	8.33			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	37	15.42	0.15	0.51	0.047-0.88
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	179	74.58			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	24	10.00			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.2.2 indicates that majority i.e 74.58 per cent of the respondents fell in the medium level of educational security followed by 15.42 per cent of the respondents falling in the low level of educational security as second majority and lastly 10.00 per cent of the respondents falling in the high level of educational security as least majority. The Table 4.3.2.2 also highlighted that the index values of educational security for the pooled population was 0.51, for Imphal West was 0.50 and for Senapati was 0.52 which fall in the medium level of economic security and well above average value.

Further, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati that majority of the respondents' households fell in the medium level of educational security at 74.17 per cent and 70.00 per cent respectively, followed by low level of educational security at 14.17 per cent and 16.67 per cent respectively and lastly 11.67 per cent and 8.33 per cent of the respondents' households respectively with high level of educational security.

The monthly expenditure on education in Imphal west district was Rs. 8455 and that of Senapati district was Rs. 7637.5. This indicates that the households of the women respondents in the study area considered education very important and invested a good amount of their earnings on education for their children. Majority of the women respondents did not receive higher education but they were determined to provide better education for their children regardless of their gender. The analysis also shows that educational security was more in Imphal West district and this indicates better availability and accessibility of educational facilities. One important factor that affects educational security was the accessibility i.e distance and cost. For some of the respondents, well-reputed educational institutions might be close by but they were not be able to afford it and in some cases, good institutions may be located far away that it was difficult to access and finance both the boarding fee and education fee. Students from the rural areas and the hilly areas tend to shift to the capital city for higher studies due to lack of good educational facilities, faculty and infrastructure. However, it can also be mentioned that in the recent past, the realisation of quality education and the related improved facilities was not concentrated just in the capital city but had travelled far to the hill districts as well. For instant, Maram Don Bosco School, located at Maram, Senapati district is worth mentioning for its educational excellence and transformative contributions to higher education. It had also been awarded with the State Level College Award 2023 by the Department of Higher Education, Government of Manipur.

4.3.3 Food Security

In the present study, indicators such as monthly food expenditure and some statements constructed based on the adequacy of the food supply were considered were selected to measure the Food Security. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.3.3.

Table 4.3.3: Distribution of respondents according to their level of food security

(N=240)

Respondent	Food Security	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	5	4.17	0.15	0.56	0.15-0.88
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	98	81.67			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	17	14.17			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	2	1.67	0.15	0.60	0.15-0.93
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	111	92.50			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	7	5.83			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	7	2.92	0.15	0.58	0.15-0.93
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	209	87.08			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	24	10.00			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.3 indicates that majority i.e 87.08 per cent of the respondents' households fell in medium level of food security followed by 10.00 per cent of the respondents' households falling in the high level of food security as second majority and lastly 2.92 per cent of the respondents' households falling in the low level of food security as the least majority. The Table 4.3.3 also highlighted that the index values of food security for the pooled population was 0.58, for Imphal West was 0.56 and for Senapati was 0.60 which fall in the medium level of economic security and well above average value.

It was also observed in both Imphal West and Senapati that majority of the respondents' households fell in the medium level of food security at 81.67 per cent and 92.50 per cent respectively, followed by high level of food security at 14.17 per cent and 5.83 per cent respectively and lastly 4.17 per cent and 1.67 per cent of the respondents' households respectively with low level of food security.

And the average monthly expenditure on food consumption in Imphal West is Rs. 4434 and that of Senapati district is Rs. 4554.17. This indicates that majority of the women budget their monthly food expenditure judiciously and when required

they stick to the basic dietary needs. It was also found that majority of the women were not able to maintain a balanced diet but they made sure that they did not skip a meal. Although they knew the importance of a balanced diet, they inevitably chose to forego proteins such as meat and fish to cut down on expenses. It can also be mentioned that due to rising cost of food, the respondents in many cases could not afford to go for balanced diet on a daily basis.

4.3.4 Habitat Security

Habitat security refers to the access of individuals to adequate shelter and related resources for a healthy environment, protection from detrimental elements enabling a safe and secure livelihoods. The type of house, social relationship and resolution of conflicts in the community were considered as indicators to measure the habitat security. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.3.4.

Table 4.3.4: Distribution of respondents according to their level of habitat security

(N=240)

Respondent	Habitat Security	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.15	0.74	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	55	45.83			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	65	54.17			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.15	0.75	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	52	43.33			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	68	56.67			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.15	0.74	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	107	44.58			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	133	55.42			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.4 indicates that majority i.e 55.42 per cent of the respondents' households fell in the high level of habitat security followed by 44.58 per cent of the respondents' households falling in medium level of

habitat security and none fall in low level of habitat security. The Table 4.3.4 also highlighted that the index values of habitat security for the pooled population was 0.74, for Imphal West was 0.74 and for Senapati was 0.75 which fall in the high level of habitat security.

It was also observed in both Imphal West and Senapati that majority of the respondents' households fell in the high level of habitat security at 54.17 per cent and 56.67 per cent respectively, followed by medium level of habitat security at 45.83 per cent and 43.33 per cent respectively.

The findings indicates that majority of the women belongs to humble background and their dwelling houses were of semi-pucca type. Though, the number of respondents who had pucca houses was more in Imphal West than Senapati district, the women respondents in Senapati had better social relationship. And this is one of the reasons for both the study area to have the privilege of almost similar habitat security index. The Table also indicates that all the women respondents lived in family-owned land where their houses have been built on and majority had good social relationship in their locality and there was less social conflicts in their locality and if any conflict arises, the locality solved in an unbiased way.

This finding is similar to the study of Sarif *et al.* (2024) in India who stated that the type of the house in which the household members are residing indicates how far the shelter can protect them from the natural disasters and thus indicates the habitat security levels of the households.

4.3.5 Health Security

Health security is the capacity of individuals to identify, prevent and manage significant risks to their health. In the present study, indicators like access to primary health centres and their services was used to measure the health security of the respondents in the study area. The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.3.5.

Table 4.3.5.1: Distribution of respondents according to their accessibility to healthcare institutions

(N=240)

Respondents	Accessibility (km)	0-2		2-4		4-6		6-8		8-10		>10	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Imphal West	PHC	78	65.00	22	18.33	20	16.67	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
	GH	40	33.33	20	16.67	0	0.00	0	0.00	31	25.83	29	24.17
	MH	6	5.00	15	12.50	20	16.67	0	0.00	0	0.00	79	65.83
Senapati	PHC	5	4.17	30	25.00	40	33.33	5	4.17	0	0.00	40	33.33
	GH	20	16.67	40	33.33	3	2.50	10	8.33	5	4.17	42	35.00
	MH	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	120	100.00
Pooled	PHC	83	34.58	52	21.67	60	25.00	5	2.08	0	0.00	40	16.67
	GH	60	25.00	60	25.00	3	1.25	10	4.17	36	15.00	71	29.58
	MH	6	2.50	15	6.25	20	8.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	199	82.92

PHC = Primary Health Centre, GH = General Hospital, MH = Maternity Hospital

Table 4.3.5.3: Distribution of respondents according to their level of health security

(N=240)

Respondent	Health Security	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	41	34.17	0.16	0.43	0.13-0.81
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	73	60.83			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	6	5.00			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	55	45.83	0.14	0.32	0.02-0.69
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	65	54.17			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	96	40.00	0.15	0.38	0.02-0.81
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	138	57.50			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	6	2.50			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.5.3 indicates that majority i.e 57.50 per cent of the respondents had medium level of health security followed by 40.00 per cent of the respondents had a low level of health security and lastly 2.50 per cent of the respondents had a high level of health security. The Table 4.3.5.3 also highlighted that the index scores of health security for the pooled population was 0.38, for Imphal West was 0.43 and for Senapati was 0.32.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 60.83 per cent and 54.17 per cent of the respondents had medium level of health security followed by 34.17 per cent and 45.83 per cent of the respondents who had low level of health security and lastly 5.00 per cent and 0.00 per cent of the respondents who had high level of health security.

It was observed that Imphal West had better health security than that of Senapati area. This is because the capital city was far more advanced in medical facilities with more number of government hospitals, private hospitals like Shija Hospitals and Research Institutes, clinics and experts/specialists which were capable of managing certain critical medical conditions. Compared to Imphal West, Senapati

district was still lacking in medical facilities. Though there were hospitals, there was a lack of doctors, specialists and in some cases, the patients were referred to either Imphal or Dimapur especially for urgent cases. Most of the better medical facilities were available in private hospitals and due to the high cost, it became inaccessible for the respondents thereby resulting in moderate health security index.

4.3.6 Social Security

Social Security refers to the capacity of the individuals to maintain and participate in the social networks that enable them to pursue sustainable livelihoods by reducing the risks of accessing resources and information. The level of participation and access to various sources of information are considered as indicators for analysing social security (Maurya, 2017). The respondents were distributed as shown in the Table 4.3.6.

Table 4.3.6: Distribution of respondents according to their level of social security

(N=240)

Respondent	Social Security	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	8	6.67	0.13	0.58	0.20-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	110	91.67			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	2	1.67			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	3	2.50	0.11	0.53	0.20-0.67
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	117	97.50			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	11	4.58	0.13	0.55	0.20-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	227	94.58			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	2	0.08			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.6 indicates that majority i.e 94.58 per cent of the respondents fell in the medium level of social security followed by 4.58 per cent of the respondents falling in the low level of social security as second majority and lastly 0.08 per cent of the respondents falling in the high level of social

security as the least majority. The Table 4.3.6 also highlighted that the index scores of social security for the pooled population was 0.55, for Imphal West was 0.58 and for Senapati was 0.53 which is well above average level of social security.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati that majority of the respondents' households fell in the medium level of social security at 91.67 per cent and 97.50 per cent respectively, followed by low level of social security at 6.67 per cent and 2.50 per cent respectively and lastly high level of social security at 1.67 per cent just in Imphal West and none of the respondents' households in Senapati district fall in high level of social security.

The findings indicate that Imphal West had better social security at an index value of 0.58 as compared to Senapati district which index value is 0.53. This is because Imphal West is predominantly an urban area and it had better network coverage, better newspaper services and the existence of Ema Keithel since the sixteenth century had really contributed to the development of a proper market culture amongst the women which gave them a sense of belongingness. It was found that within Senapati town, the mobile network was good but in the rural areas, there was less access to phone and social media. In addition, some villages still did not get the privilege of daily newspaper service.

However, it maybe mentioned that since 2018, the government had also established markets meant only for women in the hill districts which had led to the formation of Self-Help groups which became their support system in times of crisis thereby enhancing their social security.

Table 4.3.7: Index values of different indicators of Household Livelihood Security

(N=240)

Items	Imphal West	Senapati	Pooled	Range
Economic Security Index	0.40	0.41	0.39	0.052-0.879
Educational Security Index	0.52	0.50	0.51	0.047-0.88
Food Security Index	0.56	0.60	0.58	0.152-0.93
Habitat Security Index	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.33-1.00
Health Security Index	0.43	0.32	0.38	0.02-0.81
Social Security Index	0.58	0.53	0.55	0.20-0.93
HLSI	0.54	0.51	0.53	0.29-0.75

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.7 indicates that the respondents scored the highest in Habitat Security and the least in Health Security. Also, the Table 4.3.7 indicates that the overall Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) is 0.53, 0.54 in Imphal West and 0.51 in Senapati district, which was around the average index score implying that the Household Livelihood Security of the respondents needed improvement.

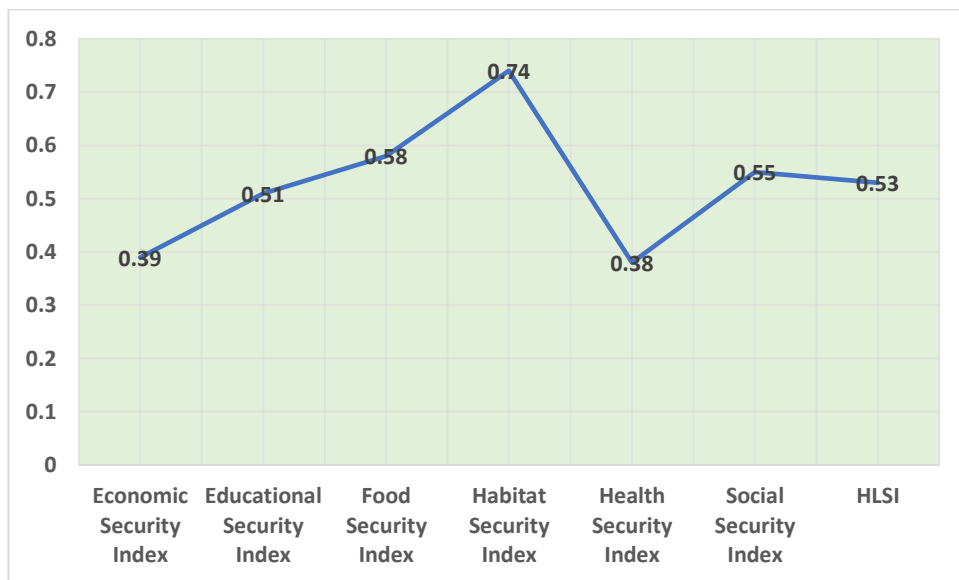


Fig 4.2: Index values of different indicators of Household Livelihood Security Index

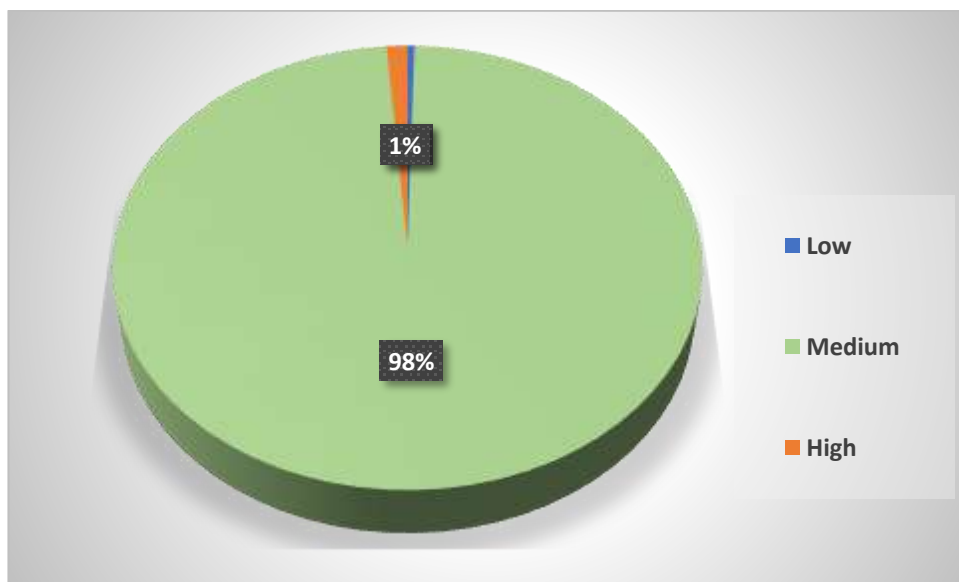


Fig 4.3: Level of Household Livelihood Security Index for pooled population

Table 4.3.8: Distribution of respondents according to their level of Household Livelihood Security

(N=240)

Respondent	HLSI	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.08	0.54	0.34-0.75
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	110	91.67			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	10	8.33			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	1	0.83	0.07	0.51	0.29-0.74
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	118	98.33			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	1	0.83			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	1	0.42	0.08	0.53	0.29-0.75
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	236	98.33			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	3	1.25			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.3.8 indicates that majority i.e 98.33 per cent of the respondents' households were in medium level of household livelihood security followed by 1.25 per cent of the respondents' households in high level of household livelihood security followed by 0.42 per cent of the respondents' households in the low level of household livelihood security. The Table 4.3.8 also highlighted that the index scores of household livelihood security for the pooled population was 0.53, for Imphal West was 0.54 and for Senapati was 0.51 which fell in the high level of habitat security.

Likewise, it was observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 91.67 per cent of the respondents' households fell in the medium level of household livelihood security followed by 8.33 per cent of the respondents' households falling in the high level of household livelihood security and none of the respondents' households fell in the low level of household livelihood security.

However, in Senapati district, it was observed that majority i.e 98.33 per cent of the respondents' households fell in the medium level of household livelihood

security and equal percentage of 0.83 of the respondents' households fall in the low and high level of household livelihood security.

The observation further indicates that the women respondents in Imphal West district were better secured in term of household livelihood than their counterparts in Senapati district. The major reason was lack of good educational and health facilities in Senapati district as these two factors were something which should not be compromised. However, it can be concluded that the Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) in both the study areas were above average but the women respondents in both the study areas should be given more incentives and opportunities to expand their activities so that they can upgrade and increase their financial status to enable them to improve their level of household security.

4.4 EXTENT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN MANIPUR AND COMPARISON OF THE LEVELS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN HILL AND VALLEY DISTRICTS OF MANIPUR

Women Empowerment Index:

For the analysis of the extent of women empowerment for the study, the Women Empowerment Index (WEI), developed by Simone *et al.* OXFAM GB in the year 2017. In the framework considered for measuring WEI, three levels of changes i.e *Personal level*, *Relational level* and *Environmental level* are considered. Under *Personal level of change*, indicators like Self-confidence, Opinion on women's economic role, Acceptability of GBV, Individual Knowledge, Individual Capability, Personal Autonomy, Economic motivation, Access to credit, Achievement motivation and Risk orientation were considered for the study.

Under *Relational level of change*, indicators like Family Support, Group participation, Control over Household assets, Household Decision-making, Contribution to Household income, Time and workload, Experience of GBV and Decision-making capacity were considered for the study.

Under *Environmental level of change*, indicators like Safety of movement, Social norms and stereotypes and Ability to influence at political level were considered for the study.

4.4.1 Personal Level

4.4.1.1 Self- Confidence

Self-confidence is a positive attitude of oneself towards one's self-concept. Confidence is the growth hormone for an individual's personality development without which a person's personal, professional, and social growth in his life remains stunted (Abtahi *et al.*, 2022). The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.1.

Table 4.4.1.1: Distribution of respondents according to their level of self-confidence

(N=240)

Respondent	Self- Confidence	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	22.64	2.74	0.75	0.43–0.97
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	38	31.67				
	High (0.71 - 1)	82	68.33				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	21.99	2.28	0.73	0.46–0.97
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	49	40.83				
	High (0.71 - 1)	71	59.17				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	22.30	2.82	0.74	0.43–0.97
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	87	36.25				
	High (0.71 - 1)	153	63.75				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.1 indicates that majority i.e 63.75 per cent of the total respondents had high level of self-confidence followed by 36.25 per cent of the total respondents had medium level of self-confidence as the second majority and none of the respondents had low level of self-confidence. The Table 4.4.1.1 also highlighted that the index scores of self-confidence for the pooled population was 0.74, for Imphal west was 0.75 and for Senapati was 0.73 which was

overall quite high. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.1 as 0.43-0.97 for Imphal West district, 0.46-0.97 for Senapati district and 0.43-0.97 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 68.33 per cent and 59.17 per cent of the respondents respectively fell in the high level of self-confidence followed by 31.67 per cent and 40.83 per cent of the respondents falling in the medium level of self-confidence and none of the respondents fell in the low level of self-confidence.

This was because majority of the women were in the middle age group (36-60 years) which is economically active age group and the income-generating activity had given them enough exposure and had learnt to fend for themselves and to speak up for themselves. With more exposure, they tend to develop more confidence. Ema market situated at the heart of Imphal city is known as a center for economic hub and it had given the women in the district enough opportunity to gain exposure to the market culture. It can be mentioned here that proper women market place in seven hill districts have been established and inaugurated in the year 2018 which provides the women vendors a permanent facility for daily marketing. Also, in some study areas in Imphal West district and Senapati, the markets were smaller in size and some were temporary market sheds where weekly markets are entertained.

4.4.1.2 Opinion on women's economic role

The indicator 'Opinions on women's economic role' assesses individuals' attitudes towards women's education, their leadership role and participation in financial activities. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.2.

Table 4.4.1.2: Distribution of respondents according to their level of opinion on women's economic role

(N=240)

Respondent	Opinion on women's economic role	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	9	7.50	5.46	0.62	0.82	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	45	37.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	66	55.00				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	11	9.17	5.30	0.60	0.78	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	57	47.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	52	43.33				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	20	8.33	5.38	0.68	0.80	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	102	42.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	118	49.17				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.2 indicates that majority i.e 49.17 per cent of the respondents the women in the Imphal West and Senapati were strongly opinionated in their takes on extent of leadership in financial matters and importance of girls' education followed by 42.50 per cent of the respondents who were moderately opinionated as second majority followed by 8.33 per cent of the respondents who were negligibly opinionated. The Table 4.4.1.2 also highlighted the index scores of opinion on women's economic role for the pooled population was 0.80, for Imphal West was 0.82 and for Senapati district was 0.78 which overall shows that the women were highly opinionated in their pursue of women' economic role. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.2 as 0.33-1.00 for Imphal West district, for Senapati district and also for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in Imphal West that majority (55.00%) of the respondents as strongly opinionated followed by 37.50 per cent of the respondents who were moderately opinionated as second majority and lastly followed by 7.50 per cent of the respondents who were negligibly opinionated. In Senapati, majority i.e

47.50 per cent of the respondents were moderately opinionated followed by 43.33 per cent of the respondents who were strongly opinionated as second majority followed by 9.17 per cent of the respondents who were negligibly opinionated.

The findings indicates that the women in Imphal West were more strongly opinionated in matters of leadership in financial maintenance and good education for girlchild than the women in Senapati district. This is because Imphal West with the presence of Ema market, a 500 years-old all women market has been a hotspot for women economic activities which has been serving as a site for economic development of the women and hence, they were more outspoken and were not hesitant to share their opinions. Even though the women were not financially very well off, they knew how to hold their ground and were capable to take decisions for the economic welfare of families.

4.4.1.3 Acceptability of Gender-based Violence

The indicator aims to measure the extent to which a woman considers domestic violence to be acceptable. The respondents were asked to say if they think it is acceptable for a man to beat his wife in a number of different circumstances. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.3.

Table 4.4.1.3: Distribution of respondents according to their level of acceptability of gender-based violence

(N=240)

Respondent	Acceptability of Gender-based Violence	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	103	85.83	3.90	2.25	0.22	0.00-0.55
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	17	14.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	109	90.83	3.80	2.14	0.21	0.00-0.55
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	11	9.10				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	212	88.33	3.85	2.19	0.21	0.00-0.55
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	28	11.67				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.3 indicates that majority i.e 88.33 per cent of the total respondents have low level of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) followed by 11.67 per cent of the respondents with medium level of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) and none of the respondents would accept any form of domestic violence. The Table 4.4.1.3 also highlighted that the index values of self-confidence for the pooled population was 0.07, for Imphal West was 0.08 and for Senapati was 0.05 which overall shows that the women have very low acceptability of GBV. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.3 as 0.00-0.55 for Imphal West district, for Senapati district and also for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 85.83 per cent and 90.83 per cent of the respondents respectively falling in low level of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) followed by 14.17 per cent and 9.10 per cent of the respondents falling in medium level of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) and none of the respondents in either of the districts did not like to accept any form of domestic violence.

It is known that women have been treated as subordinates to men particularly due to the prevalence of patriarchy in our society. However, from the above analysis, it is evident that women respondents were totally against any kind of domestic violence. It was also noted that the majority of the women especially the middle age category had firmly expressed their belief that one should not resort to violence, but as civilized men, they should talk things out and bring a solution to the situations instead of projecting all the faults on their wives or the female members. It was found that the younger generation of the respondents stood up against their husbands when they resorted to domestic violence, while the older generation of the respondents were more prone to accept such treatment as deserving. This also indicates that the ingrained conditioning of the older women make them more docile; while the younger generation of women being more exposed and aware of their rights are able to speak out and push back.

4.4.1.4 Individual Knowledge

This indicator tests whether the respondent has knowledge that is considered important for their empowerment such as legal rights and knowledge about women-centric schemes issued by the government. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.4.

Table 4.4.1.4: Distribution of respondents according to their level of individual knowledge

(N=240)

Respondent	Individual Knowledge	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	42	35.00	4.18	1.88	0.42	0.00-0.90
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	70	58.33				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	8	6.67				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	72	60.00	2.96	1.64	0.29	0.00-0.70
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	46	38.33				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	2	1.67				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	114	47.50	3.57	1.86	0.36	0.00-0.90
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	116	48.33				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	10	4.17				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.4 indicates that majority i.e 48.33 per cent of the respondents possessed medium level of individual knowledge followed by 47.50 per cent of the respondents possessed low level of individual knowledge as second majority and lastly 4.17 per cent of the respondents possessed high level of individual knowledge. The Table 4.4.1.4 also highlighted that the index scores of individual knowledge for the pooled population was 0.36, for Imphal West was 0.42 and for Senapati was 0.29 which overall shows that the women respondents possessed insufficient individual knowledge. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.4 as 0.00 - 0.90 for Imphal West district, 0.00 - 0.70 for Senapati district and 0.00 - 0.90 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 58.33 per cent fell in medium level of individual knowledge followed by 35.00 per cent falling in low level of individual knowledge and 6.67 per cent falling in high level of individual knowledge.

Furthermore, in Senapati district, it was observed that majority i.e 60.00 per cent fell in low level of individual knowledge followed by 38.33 per cent falling in medium level of individual knowledge and 1.67 per cent falling in high level of individual knowledge.

This indicates that the women respondents had gained knowledge from their peers which would be handy to protect themselves when needed. Also, the women were still learning from their day-to-day experiences indicating that knowledge is not gained just from formal institutions and women who were practicing livelihood activities to earn an income had greater chances to exposure and gain better knowledge and information.

4.4.1.5 Individual Capability

The indicator is directly linked to individual knowledge and investigates whether the individual knowledge has been applied in real life. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.5.

Table 4.4.1.5: Distribution of respondents according to their level of individual capability

(N=240)

Respondent	Individual Capability	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	12	10.00	9.44	1.54	0.54	0.25-0.83
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	100	83.33				
	High (0.71 - 1)	8	6.66				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	26	21.66	8.55	1.60	0.46	0.17-0.75
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	91	75.83				
	High (0.71 - 1)	3	2.50				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	38	15.83	9.00	1.63	0.50	0.17-0.83
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	191	79.58				
	High (0.71 - 1)	11	4.58				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.5 indicates that majority i.e 77.50 per cent of the respondents possess medium level of individual capability to deal issues concerning themselves and the women around them followed by 15.83 per cent of the respondents possess low level of individual capability as second majority and lastly 4.58 per cent of the respondents possess high level of individual capability. The Table 4.4.1.5 also highlighted that the index scores of individual capability to deal legal issues for the pooled population as 0.50, for Imphal West as

0.54 and for Senapati as 0.48. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.5 as 0.25 - 0.83 for Imphal West district, 0.17 - 0.75 for Senapati district and 0.17 - 0.83 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 83.33 per cent and 71.66 per cent of the respondents fell in medium level of individual capability followed by 10.00 per cent and 21.66 per cent of the respondents falling in low level of individual capability and 6.66 per cent and 2.50 per cent of the respondents falling in high level of individual capability.

The analysis of the data of the above Table 4.4.1.5 indicates that the women in the study area still had room for improvement in their capability to fight for themselves and the women around them. This also indicates that the women in general may have good legal knowledge but they tend to either take a back seat when they actually have to face the law as they are consumed in the fear of being abused by those in power or they remain ignorant as long as a particular issue does not affect them.

However, the women respondents who are a part of bigger markets had higher individual capability because those women had better connections and support system and for instance, if a woman vendor in Ema Keithel raise some grievances and if the co-vendors believe she deserves justice, then the women in the Ema keithel were most likely to come as a group and start agitation in support of their co-worker. Having said that, this is not common for those valley women who were sitting in their respective local market sheds and those women in Senapati district as they were very few in number and they usually worked individually.

4.4.1.6 Personal Autonomy

The indicator aims to measure the level of autonomy that a woman has to decide on an action and carry it out independently. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.6.

Table 4.4.1.6: Distribution of respondents according to their level of personal autonomy

(N=240)

Respondent	Personal Autonomy	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	24.60	2.83	0.82	0.56-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	15	12.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	105	87.50				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	23.64	2.80	0.79	0.53-0.96
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	25	20.83				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	95	79.17				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	24.12	2.85	0.80	0.53-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	40	16.67				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	200	83.33				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.6 indicates that majority i.e 83.33 per cent of the respondents enjoyed high level of personal autonomy followed by 16.67 per cent of the respondents enjoyed medium level of personal autonomy as second majority and lastly none of the respondents enjoyed low level of personal autonomy. The Table 4.4.1.6 also highlighted that the index scores of personal autonomy for the pooled population was 0.80, for Imphal West was 0.82 and for Senapati was 0.79 which shows that overall the women respondents enjoyed high level of personal autonomy. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.6 as 0.56-1.00 for Imphal West district, 0.53-0.96 for Senapati district and 0.53-1.00 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 87.50 per cent and 79.17 per cent of the respondents respectively fell in high level of personal autonomy followed by 12.50 per cent and 20.83 per cent of the respondents falling in the medium level of personal autonomy and none of the respondents fall in low level of personal autonomy.

The analysis of the data of the Table 4.4.1.6 indicates that the women respondents in the Imphal West valley and Senapati areas enjoyed high level of

personal autonomy in exercising their rights to decide on an actions concerning the woman herself, and whether to carry it out independently. This is because the women were more or less earning and contributing financially and did not entirely depend on others for their financial needs. In addition, the women respondents developed a more outgoing personality owing to their economic activity whereby they get to interact with other women practising similar activities and also improve their reasoning capability to defend themselves.

4.4.1.7 Access to credit

The access to credit refers to the accessibility of any financial help by the respondents from some sources. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.7.

Table 4.4.1.7: Distribution of respondents according to their level of access to credit

(N=240)

Respondent	Access to credit	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	87	72.50	1.10	0.72	0.22	0.00-0.60
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	33	27.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	102	85.00	0.90	0.63	0.18	0.00-0.40
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	18	15.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	189	78.75	1.00	0.67	0.20	0.00-0.60
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	51	21.25				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.7 indicates that majority i.e 78.75 per cent of the respondents had low access to credit followed by 21.25 per cent of the respondents had medium access to credit as second majority and lastly 0. 00 per cent(none) of the respondents had high access to credit. The Table 4.4.1.7 also highlighted that the index values of access to credit for the pooled population was 0.20, for Imphal West was 0.22 and for Senapati was 0.18 which overall shows that

the women respondents have very low access to credit. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.7 as 0.00-0.60 for Imphal West district, 0.00-0.04 for Senapati district and 0.00-0.60 for the pooled population.

Likewise, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 72.50 per cent and 85.00 per cent of the respondents had low access to credit followed by 27.50 per cent and 15.00 per cent of the respondents had medium access to credit and none of the respondents had high access to credit.

The findings revealed that women vendors and women engaged in small scale businesses in Manipur often face difficulties in accessing credits due to lack of collateral, low level of financial literacy, complexity and rigid documentation, preference of informal source of credit. Although, they prefer informal source of credit, they tend to avoid taking loan due to high interest rates charged.

4.4.1.8 Economic motivation

Economic motivation refers to the values or attitude for which the respondents attached greater importance to profit maximization. Scale developed by Supe (1969) was used with suitable modification to measure the indicator. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.8.

Table 4.4.1.8: Distribution of respondents according to their level of economic motivation

(N=240)

Respondent	Economic motivation	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	23.98	3.13	0.75	0.46-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	39	32.50				
	High (0.71 - 1)	81	67.50				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	22.5	3.38	0.69	0.38-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	59	49.17				
	High (0.71 - 1)	61	50.83				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	23.24	3.33	0.72	0.38-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	98	40.83				
	High (0.71 - 1)	142	59.17				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.8 indicates that majority i.e 59.17 per cent of the respondents possessed high level of economic motivation followed by 40.83 per cent of the respondents possessed medium level of economic motivation as second majority and lastly none of the respondents possessed low level of economic motivation. The Table 4.4.1.8 also highlighted that the index values of economic motivation for the pooled population was 0.72, for Imphal West was 0.75 and for Senapati was 0.69 which overall shows that the women respondents had high level of economic motivation. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.8 as 0.46-1.00 for Imphal West district, 0.38-1.00 for Senapati district and 0.38-1.00 for the pooled population.

Further, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 67.50 per cent and 50.83 per cent of the respondents respectively had high level of economic motivation followed by 32.50 per cent and 49.17 per cent of the respondents falling in the medium level of economic motivation and none of the respondents falling in low level of economic motivation.

The Table 4.4.1.8 indicates that the women respondents in Imphal West were more economically motivated than those in Senapati district because Imphal is the

capital city of Manipur and was more urbanized and had provided the respondents with more opportunities to achieve economic growth. But this did not mean the women in the hilly areas were far behind in economic motivation because the work force participation and the determination of the womenfolk to go out and earn was well-recognised and efforts were being delivered to improve the working condition of the women such as construction of all-women market in seven districts of Manipur like Apfii Saliki at Senapati district, Nute Kailhang at Kangpokpi, Nute Bazaar at Churachandpur, Rani Gaidinliu Women Market at Tamenglong, Jiri Ima Keithel at Jiri, Ava Market at Ukhrul and Japhou Bazar at Chandel (Anonymous, 2020). The most crucial factor was that economic independence enhances the stature and position of the women and it also gives them the freedom in decision-making and mobility.

4.4.1.9 Achievement motivation

Achievement motivation refers to striving to do good work with standard of excellence which maybe task-related, self-related or related to other aspect. Scale developed by Reddy (1976) with suitable modification was used to measure the indicator. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.9.

Table 4.4.1.9: distribution of respondents according to their level of achievement motivation

(N=240)

Respondent	Achievement motivation	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	37.46	5.35	0.79	0.50-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	28	23.33				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	92	76.67				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	36.46	3.82	0.76	0.42-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	33	27.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	87	72.50				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	36.97	4.67	0.77	0.42-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	61	25.41				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	179	74.58				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.9 indicates that majority i.e 74.58 per cent of the respondents had high level of achievement motivation followed by 25.41 per cent of the respondents had medium level of achievement motivation as second majority and lastly none of the respondents possessed low level of achievement motivation. The Table 4.4.1.9 also highlighted that the index values of achievement motivation for the pooled population was 0.77, for Imphal West was 0.76 and for Senapati was 0.79 which overall shows that the women respondents had high level of achievement motivation. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.9 as 0.50-1.00 for Imphal West district, 0.42-1.00 for Senapati district and 0.42-1.00 for the pooled population.

Likewise, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 76.67 per cent and 72.50 per cent of the respondents respectively had high level of achievement motivation followed by 23.33 per cent and 27.50 per cent of the respondents had medium level of achievement motivation and none of the respondents had low level of achievement motivation.

This indicates that the Imphal valley respondents had slightly higher motivation for achievement than their counterparts in Senapati district. This was due to the higher level of competition among the women entrepreneurs in the valley. Another factor was the correlation between achievement motivation and the locality or environment in which one lives (Singh and Sagar, 2023). It can be mentioned that Imphal West had better economic opportunities, better access to education, better health facilities and hence all these factors influenced and encouraged people to achieve more. Nevertheless, the women respondents from Senapati district were hardworking and persevering and they too had the desire to do better in life, to liberate themselves from poverty, provide their children with better education as evident from the findings.

4.4.1.10 Risk orientation

Risk orientation refers to the degree to which the women were oriented towards encountering risks and uncertainty in their income-generating activities and

also in securing their livelihood. Scale developed by Supe (1969) was used with suitable modification to measure the indicator. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.10.

Table 4.4.1.10: Distribution of respondents according to their level of risk orientation

(N=240)

Respondent	Risk orientation	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	15	12.50	13.35	2.31	0.61	0.17-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	67	55.83				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	38	31.67				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	21	17.50	12.28	1.84	0.52	0.08-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	84	70.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	15	12.50				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	36	15.00	12.82	2.15	0.56	0.08-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	151	62.92				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	53	22.08				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.10 indicates that majority i.e 62.92 per cent of the respondents possessed medium level of skills for risk orientation followed by 22.08 per cent of the respondents possessed high level of skills for risk orientation as second majority and lastly 15.00 per cent of the respondents possessed low level of skills for risk orientation. The Table 4.4.1.10 also highlighted that the index scores of risk orientation for the pooled population was 0.56, for Imphal West was 0.61 and for Senapati was 0.52 which overall shows that the women respondents possess medium level of skills for risk orientation. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.10 as 0.17-1.00 for Imphal West district, 0.08-0.92 for Senapati district and 0.17-1.00 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 55.83 per cent of the respondents had medium level of skills for risk orientation followed by 31.67 per cent of the respondents having high level of skills for risk orientation and 12.50 per cent of the respondents having low level of skills for risk orientation.

In Senapati district, 70.00 per cent of the respondents had medium level of skills for risk orientation followed by 17.50 per cent of the respondents having low level of skills for risk orientation and 12.50 per cent of the respondents having high level of skills for risk orientation.

The findings indicate that majority of the respondents were cautious enough not to take risks which would cost them a fortune but would rather take risks which would help them grow. It could also be observed that the index in Imphal West was higher than Senapati district and this was because the valley dwellers had better financial investment options and experiences and bigger market than their counterparts in the hill area.

4.4.1.11 Decision-making capacity

Decision-making capacity of the women was measured using Rationality-Quotient Scale developed by Supe (1969) with suitable modification. It measures how rational the decisions made by the women are regarding their income-generating activities. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.1.11.

Table 4.4.1.11: Distribution of respondents according to their level of Decision-making capacity of the women in their income-generating activity

(N=240)

Respondent	Decision-making capacity	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	7	5.83	17.89	2.96	0.62	0.06-0.94
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	77	64.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	36	30.00				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	9	7.50	17.68	2.85	0.60	0.06-0.86
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	87	72.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	24	20.00				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	16	6.67	17.81	2.93	0.61	0.06-0.94
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	164	68.33				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	60	25.00				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.1.11 indicates that majority i.e 68.33 per cent of the respondents were moderately rational in their decision-making capacity regarding their income-generating income followed by 25.00 per cent of the respondents are highly rational in their decision-making capacity as second majority and lastly 6.67 per cent of the respondents were less rational in their decision-making capacity. The Table 4.4.1.11 also highlighted that the index values of decision-making capacity for the pooled population was 0.61, for Imphal West was 0.62 and for Senapati was 0.60 which is above average and overall shows that the women respondents exercise appreciable level of decision-making capacity. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.1.11 as 0.06-0.94 for Imphal West district, 0.06-0.86 for Senapati district and 0.06-0.94 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts with majority i.e 64.17 per cent and 72.50 per cent of the respondents respectively were moderately rational in their decision-making capacity regarding their income-generating income followed by 30.00 per cent and 20.00 per cent of the respondents respectively were highly rational in their decision-making capacity and lastly 5.83 per cent and 7.50 per cent of the respondents were less rational in their decision-making capacity.

This indicates that the respondents were moderately rational in their decision-making regarding their livelihood activity. It also indicates that they were not high risk-takers and they preferred to be on the safe side. The respondents were more conventional and traditional in their outlook and therefore usually did not deviate from the norm. Also, majority of the women were not financially stable and expressed that they would rather opt for activities which would earn them small but regular income than activities that could earn them high incomes but which was also highly unpredictable. Thus, they often waived off opportunities which they saw as high risks.

4.4.2 Relational Level

4.4.2.1 Family Support

Family Support refers to the support received from other family members. The measurement was done following Family Support Scale (FSS) developed by Uddin and Bhuiyan (2019). The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.1.

Table 4.4.2.1: Distribution of respondents according to their level of family support

(N=240)

Respondent	Family Support	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	3	2.50	43.43	5.92	0.72	0.40-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	60	50.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	57	47.50				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	45.24	5.66	0.75	0.53-0.93
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	65	54.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	55	45.83				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	3	1.25	44.33	5.86	0.74	0.40-0.93
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	125	52.08				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	112	46.67				

The analysis of the data of the Table 4.4.2.1 indicates that majority i.e 52.08 per cent of the respondents had medium level of family support followed by 46.67 per cent of the respondents had high level of family support as second majority and lastly 1.25 per cent of the respondents had low level of family support. The Table 4.4.2.1 also highlighted that the index values of family support for the pooled population was 0.74, for Imphal West was 0.75 and for Senapati was 0.72 which shows that overall the women respondents enjoyed privilege of having high family support. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.1 as 0.40-0.92 for Imphal West district, 0.53-0.93 for Senapati district and 0.40-0.93 for the pooled population.

Likewise, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 50.00 per cent and 54.17 per cent of the respondents respectively fell in medium level of family support followed by 47.50 per cent and 45.83 per cent of the respondents respectively falling in the high level of family support and 2.50 per cent and 0.00 per cent of the respondents falling in low level of family support.

This indicates that the women respondents had a considerable level of support from their families. This was because there is a shift in the mindset of society which believes that women too have the right to earn for themselves and that no restriction should be imposed upon them in deciding for themselves. Also, the women were very hardworking and they contributed good amount to the household income which lead to better lifestyle. So, majority of the families supported and encouraged their female members when they wanted to start their own income-generating activities.

4.4.2.2 Group membership of the women

The indicator measures whether a woman belongs to any group or organisation and if they are a part of the group, how active they are or how influential they are. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.2.

Table 4.4.2.2: Group membership of the women

(N=240)

Respondent	Membership	F*	%
Imphal West	Local Women Group	91	75.83
	Market Women Association	30	25.00
	Marup	62	51.67
	SHGs	5	4.16
Senapati	Local Women Group	102	85.00
	Market Women Association	41	34.16
	Marup	48	40.00
	SHGs	14	11.67
Pooled	Local Women Group	193	80.42
	Market Women Association	71	29.58
	Marup	110	45.83
	SHGs	19	7.92

*Data are based on multiple responses

The analysis of the Table 4.4.2.2 indicates that 80.42 per cent of the respondents were members of Local women group, for instance Meira Paibi in the Imphal West area and Women Society in Senapati district. These local women groups mainly keep a watch on alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence and moral behaviour in their respective communities. The participation is mostly voluntary but it is understood that all categories of women find security and support in case of problems or emergencies therefore majority of the women are of the opinion that joining this local women group are beneficial for their well-being. Secondly, 45.83 per cent of the respondents were involved in Marup system as this helped in providing them financial support in times of need. Marup is a system where a group of women pools a pre-fixed amount of money on particular date/day once or twice a month and the pooled money is given to the participants in turns until all of them gets their share. This acts as a major financial support system for the women. Thirdly, 29.58 per cent of the respondents were members of Market Women Association as those women occupying proper market sheds were mandated to be a

member as this would assure them moral and financial support in times of need and provide them with a sense of belongingness.

Table 4.4.2.3: Distribution of respondents according to their level of group participation

(N=240)

Respondent	Group participation	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	52	43.33	6.73	3.72	0.35	0.00-0.90
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	64	53.33				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	4	3.33				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	64	53.33	6.19	3.68	0.31	0.00-0.80
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	54	45.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	2	1.66				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	116	48.33	6.26	3.65	0.33	0.00-0.90
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	118	49.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	6	2.50				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.2.3 was analyzed taking into consideration their participation in a group and the extent of their influence in the group and the analysis indicates that majority i.e 49.17 per cent of the respondents had medium level of group participation followed by 48.33 per cent of the respondents had low level of group participation as second majority and lastly 2.50 per cent of the respondents had high level of group participation. The Table 4.4.2.3 also highlighted that the index scores of group participation for the pooled population was 0.33, for Imphal West was 0.35 and for Senapati was 0.31 which shows that overall the women respondents have low level of group participation. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.3 as 0.00-0.90 for Imphal West district, 0.00-0.80 for Senapati district and 0.0-0.90 for the pooled population.

Similarly, it was observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 53.33 per cent of the respondents fell in medium level of group participation followed by 43.33 per

cent and falling in the low level of group participation and lastly 3.33 per cent each of the respondents falling in high level of group participation. In Senapati district, it was observed that majority of the respondents i.e 53.33 per cent of the respondents fell in low level of group participation followed by 45.00 per cent and falling in the medium level of group participation and lastly 1.66 per cent each of the respondents falling in high level of group participation.

The Table 4.4.2.3 indicates that overall the respondents showed moderate participation in groups and if participated, they were not active in the functioning of the group. This was because majority of the women tend to stay low-key. What matters most to them was their livelihood and the income to sustain their families and were too preoccupied with their livelihood activities. Thus, they were unlikely to find time for such group participation unless it is compulsory and for their own benefit. Majority of the women vendors formed an association among themselves for a sense of belongingness, mutual support, protection from any unlawful acts against them or if there was any state issues related to government policies, law enforcement, and systemic issues that affect their livelihood, rights, and safety.

4.4.2.4 Control over Household assets

The indicator measures the extent of control a woman has over the assets owned by the household. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.4.

Table 4.4.2.4: Distribution of respondents according to their level of control over household assets

(N=240)

Respondent	Control over Household assets	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	17.73	2.96	0.68	0.38-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	70	58.33				
	High (0.71 - 1)	50	41.67				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	17.58	2.90	0.67	0.42-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	68	56.67				
	High (0.71 - 1)	52	43.33				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	17.65	2.93	0.67	0.38-0.92
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	138	57.50				
	High (0.71 - 1)	102	42.50				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.2.4 indicates that majority i.e 57.50 per cent of the respondents had medium level of control over household assets followed by 42.50 per cent of the respondents had high level of control over Household assets as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low level of control over Household assets. The Table 4.4.2.4 also highlighted that the index values of control over Household assets for the pooled population was 0.67, for Imphal West was 0.68 and for Senapati was 0.67 which overall shows that the women respondents have appreciable level of control over Household assets. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.4 as 0.38-0.92 for Imphal West district, 0.42-0.92 for Senapati district and 0.38-0.92 for the pooled population.

Furthermore, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 58.33 per cent and 56.67 per cent of the respondents respectively have medium level of control over Household assets followed by 41.67 per cent and 43.33 per cent of the respondents have high level of control over Household assets as

second majority and lastly none of the respondents have low level of control over Household assets.

This is because Manipur as a whole is a patriarchal society where men are considered the dominant ones and have a final say in decisions concerning the assets owned, purchase, use or sale by the family. However, in majority of the families, women were privileged to exercise control over assets like cooking gas stove, gas cylinders, mobile phone and kitchen wares. It was also observed that even though the men were the final decision-makers, some of the women respondents could influence the men of the family to a considerable extent in the purchase, use and sale of assets like land, vehicle, livestock.

4.4.2.5 Household decision-making capacity

The indicator aims to measure the level of woman's involvement in household decision-making. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.5.

Table 4.4.2.5: Distribution of respondents according to their level of household decision-making capacity of the women

(N=240)

Respondent	Household Decision-Making Capacity	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	49.73	10.27	0.73	0.38-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	51	42.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	69	57.50				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	48.48	9.50	0.71	0.36-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	55	45.83				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	65	54.17				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	49.10	9.89	0.72	0.36-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	106	44.17				
	High (0.71 - 1)	134	55.83				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.2.5 indicates that majority i.e 55.83 per cent of the respondents were privileged with high level of household-decision making capacity followed by 44.17 per cent of the respondents with medium level of household-decision making capacity as second majority and lastly none of the respondents with low level of household-decision making capacity. The Table 4.4.2.5 also highlighted that the index values of household-decision making capacity for the pooled population was 0.72, for Imphal West was 0.73 and for Senapati was 0.71 which overall shows that the women respondents enjoy the privilege to exercise appreciable level of household-decision making capacity. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.5 as 0.38-1.00 for Imphal West district, 0.36-1.00 for Senapati district and 0.36-1.00 for the pooled population.

Furthermore, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 57.50 per cent and 54.17 per cent of the respondents respectively had high level of household-decision making capacity followed by 42.50 per cent and 45.83 per cent of the respondents had medium level of household-decision making capacity as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low level of household-decision making capacity.

The extent of household decision-making in deciding how to spend the money earned, purchase of land, purchase of furniture, whether the family should take out some loan, where and how to invest the loan amount or where the children would study were often discussed with the husbands and in some cases, it was found that the final decision was made by the woman but in most of the male-headed families, it was found that the final decisions were made by man based on the premises made by the woman. Thus, it was found that the influence of the woman was far reaching but dealt in a diplomatic manner where the man was given the credit.

4.4.2.6 Contribution of the women to their household income

The indicator measures the proportion of self-perceived contribution made by a woman to total household income. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.6.

Table 4.4.2.6: Distribution of respondents according to their level of Contribution of the women to their household income

(N=240)

Respondent	Contribution to household income	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal west	Low (0 - 0.33)	24	20.00	43.67	12.49	0.44	0.25-0.80
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	92	76.67				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	4	3.33				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	21	17.50	41.04	9.07	0.41	0.25-0.70
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	98	81.67				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	1	0.83				
Pooled	Low (0 - 0.33)	45	18.75	42.35	10.97	0.42	0.25-0.80
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	190	79.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	5	2.08				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.2.6 indicates that majority i.e 79.17 per cent of the respondents contributed to their family income at a medium level followed by 18.75 per cent of the respondents contributed to their family income at a low level as second majority and lastly 2.08 per cent of the respondents contributed to their family income at a high level. The Table 4.4.2.6 also highlighted that the index values of contribution to household income for the pooled population was 0.42, for Imphal West was 0.44 and for Senapati was 0.41 which overall shows that the women respondents contribute to their household at a medium level. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.6 as 0.25-0.80 for Imphal West district, 0.25-0.70 for Senapati district and 0.25-0.80 for the pooled population.

Likewise, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 76.67 per cent and 81.67 per cent of the respondents respectively contributed to their family income at a medium level followed by 20.00 per cent and 17.50 per cent of the respondents contributed to their family income at a low level as

second majority and lastly 3.33 per cent and 0.83 per cent of the respondents contributed to their family income at a high level.

The findings indicate that the women respondents were contributing fairly in the household income. They were earning in addition to their husbands or other family members and majority of the husbands were daily wagers, passengers' vehicle drivers, auto driver, truck drivers and manual labour.

4.4.2.7 Time and workload

The indicator aims to measure some important elements of time allocation and workload and to collect information on the number of hours dedicated to a particular task or multiple tasks. The schedule was structured following the Women Empowerment Index by Lombardini *et al.* Oxfam GB (2017) with suitable modification. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.7.

Table 4.4.2.7: Distribution of respondents according to their level of time and workload

(N=240)

Respondent	Time and Workload	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	14.76	0.89	0.62	0.43-0.72
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	95	79.17				
	High (0.71 - 1)	25	20.83				
Senapati	Low (0 - 0.33)	0	0.00	14.55	1.13	0.61	0.55-0.70
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	104	86.67				
	High (0.71 - 1)	16	13.33				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	14.66	1.02	0.61	0.43-0.72
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	199	82.92				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	41	17.08				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.2.7 indicates that majority i.e 82.92 per cent of the respondents had a medium level of workload followed by 17.08 per

cent of the respondents with high level of workload as second majority and lastly 0.00 per cent (none) of the respondents had low level of workload. The Table 4.4.2.7 also highlighted that the index scores of level of workload for the pooled population was 0.61, for Imphal West was 0.62 and for Senapati was 0.61 which overall shows that the women had medium level of workload. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.7 as 0.43-0.72 for Imphal West district, 0.55-0.70 for Senapati district and 0.43-0.72 for the pooled population.

Likewise, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 79.17 per cent and 86.67 per cent of the respondents respectively had medium level of workload followed by 20.83 per cent and 13.33 per cent of the respondents respectively had high level of workload and none of the respondents in the study area had low level of workload.

This can explain that the women were engaged with either their income-generating activity or household chores for most of the time in a day and majority of them retired from their daily tasks only at bed time. This indicates that the women spent many hours in physical work including both the paid and the unpaid works. Majority of the women respondents spent around 8-10 hours in their income generating activities and try to balance both the household chores and their income generating activities and thereby drawing only 2-3 hours for their personal care and leisure time and 5-6 sleep hours. The study also revealed that the range of hours the women were engaged in both paid and unpaid work was 10.25-17.5 hours in Imphal West district and 12-17 hours in Senapati district.

4.4.2.8 Extent of Experience of Gender Based Violence (GBV)

The indicator aims to measure the number of occurrences or incidences where the women were harassed verbally, physically. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.2.8.

Table 4.4.2.8: Distribution of respondents according to their extent of experience of Gender Based Violence (GBV)

(N=240)

Respondent	Experience of GBV	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal west	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	119	99.17	11.43	2.64	0.06	0.00-0.37
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	1	0.83				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	120	100.00	11.37	2.62	0.04	0.00-0.32
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	0	0.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	239	99.58	11.40	2.63	0.05	0.00-0.37
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	1	0.42				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.2.8 indicates that majority i.e 99.58 per cent of the respondents experienced low level of Gender based Violence (GBV) followed by 0.42 per cent of the respondents experienced medium level of Gender based Violence (GBV) and lastly none of the respondents experienced high level of Gender based Violence (GBV). The Table 4.4.2.8 also highlighted that the index values of experience of Gender based Violence (GBV) for the pooled population was 0.05, for Imphal West was 0.06 and for Senapati was 0.04 which overall shows that the women respondents experience very less Gender based Violence (GBV). Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.2.8 as 0.00-0.37 for Imphal West district, 0.00-0.32 for Senapati district and 0.00-0.37 for the pooled population.

Further, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 99.17 per cent and 100.00 per cent of the respondents respectively experienced low level of Gender based Violence (GBV) followed by 0.83 per cent of the respondents in Imphal West experienced medium level of Gender based Violence

(GBV) and lastly none of the respondents experienced high level of Gender based Violence (GBV).

Few of the women respondents had experienced violence such as being humiliated or insulted in front of other people to make them feel bad or inferior about themselves. One or two women respondents had been slapped on, being threatened due to some misunderstandings. However, majority of the women did not experience physical assault although they had been subjected to verbal abuse.

4.4.3 Environmental Level

4.4.3.1: Safety of movement

The indicator aims to measure the level of perceived safety of movement of the women outside their house and village. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.3.1.

Table 4.4.3.1: Distribution of respondents according to their level of safety of movement

(N=240)

Respondent	Safety of movement	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	12.22	1.73	0.77	0.42-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	47	39.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	73	60.83				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	2	1.67	11.57	1.45	0.72	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	54	45.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	64	53.33				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	2	0.83	12.15	1.54	0.75	0.33-1.00
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	101	42.08				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	137	57.08				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.3.1 indicates that majority i.e 57.08 per cent of the respondents had high level of safety of movement followed by 42.08

per cent of the respondents had medium level of safety of movement as second majority and lastly 0.83 per cent of the respondents had low level of safety of movement. The Table 4.4.3.1 also highlighted that the index values of safety of movement for the pooled population was 0.75, for Imphal West was 0.77 and for Senapati was 0.72 which indicates that the women enjoy high level of safety of movement. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.3.1 as 0.42-1.00 for Imphal West district, 0.33-1.00 for Senapati district and 0.33-1.00 for the pooled population.

Further, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 60.83 per cent and 53.33 per cent of the respondents having high level of safety of movement followed by 39.17 per cent and 45.00 per cent of the respondents with medium level of safety of movement as second majority and lastly 1.67 per cent of the respondents in Senapati district had low level of safety of movement and none of the respondents in Imphal West district enjoy low level of safety of movement.

The findings indicate that the women respondents in the Imphal West valley and Senapati areas felt safe to move in and out of their house and village. Majority of the women respondents were empowered to considerable extent that they felt safe and secured to move out of their locality to practice their income-generating activities and also majority of them did not worry much about returning home in the late evening if their situations demand so. This also shows that they had come out of the conservative conventional folkways where women were scorned at if they walk out of the house late at night indicating that they had gained certain level of freedom of movement. Furthermore, it was also observed that the women in the valley area felt more safe than the women in the hills. This is because of the topography of the areas, better transport facility and less isolated places in the valley area.

4.4.3.2 Social norms and stereotypes

The indicator aims to measure the social norms and stereotypes around women's economic roles in the communities they live. The respondent was asked to assess to what extent other women in her community agree or disagree with a number of statements referring to the economic role of women. This indicator does

not measure what the respondent thinks but rather what, in her view, other women in her community thinks. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.3.2.

Table 4.4.3.2: Distribution of respondents according to their perception of other women on social norms and stereotypes

(N=240)

Respondent	Social norms and stereotypes	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	24	20.00	14.15	2.83	0.46	0.10-0.85
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	87	72.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	9	7.50				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	16	13.33	14.52	2.77	0.48	0.15-0.90
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	95	79.17				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	9	7.50				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	40	16.67	14.33	2.80	0.47	0.10-0.90
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	182	75.83				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	18	7.50				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.3.2 indicates that majority i.e 75.83 per cent of the respondents had the perception that the women in her community had medium level of agreement with the social norms and stereotypes that surrounds a woman followed by 16.67 per cent of the respondents with the perception the other women had low level of agreement as second majority and lastly 7.50 per cent of the respondents who had the perception the other women had high level of agreement as third majority. The Table 4.4.3.2 also highlighted that the index scores for the pooled population was 0.47, for Imphal West was 0.46 and for Senapati was 0.48. Furthermore, the range of the score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.3.2 as 0.10-0.85 for Imphal West district, 0.15-0.90 for Senapati district and 0.10-0.90 for the pooled population.

Further, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 72.50 per cent and 79.17 per cent of the respondents respectively had the

perception that women in her community had medium level of agreement with the social norms and stereotypes that surrounds a woman majority followed by 20.00 per cent and 16.33 per cent of the respondents with the perception that the other women had low level of agreement as second majority and 7.50 per cent of the respondents with the perception that the other women had high level of agreement as third majority.

The Table 4.4.3.2 indicates that majority believed that the women living in their communities would agree to a medium extent with the social norms and stereotypes such as women are also as capable as men in contributing to household income, they can also as good as men be a leader and in financial decisions as men.

4.4.3.3 Ability of the women to influence at political level

Ability of the women to influence at political level refers to the women's capacity, opportunity and actual involvement in political decision-making whether at the household, community or broader level. The respondents were distributed into the following categories as shown in the Table 4.4.3.3.

Table 4.4.3.3: Distribution of respondents according to their level of Ability of the women to influence at political level

(N=240)

Respondent	Ability of the women to influence at political level	F	%	Mean	S.D	Normalized Mean	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	13	10.83	11.23	2.03	0.46	0.25-0.93
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	102	85.00				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	5	4.17				
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	15	12.50	11.16	1.45	0.45	0.25-0.65
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	105	87.50				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00				
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	28	11.67	11.19	1.76	0.46	0.25-0.93
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	207	86.25				
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	5	2.08				

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.3.3 indicates that majority i.e 86.25 per cent of the respondents had medium level of ability to influence politically followed by 11.67 per cent of the respondents had low level of ability to influence politically as second majority and lastly 2.08 per cent of the respondents had high level of ability to influence politically. The Table 4.4.3.3 also highlighted that the index scores of ability to influence politically for the pooled population was 0.46, for Imphal West was 0.46 and for Senapati was 0.45 which is below average indicating that improvement is needed.

Further, it was observed in both Imphal West and Senapati districts that majority i.e 85.00 per cent and 87.50 per cent of the respondents respectively fell in medium level of ability to influence politically followed by 10.83 per cent and 12.50 per cent of the respondents falling in the low level of ability to influence politically and 4.17 per cent of the respondents in Imphal West falling in the high level of ability to influence politically and none of the respondents in Senapati district fall in high level of ability to influence politically.

The whole population of women respondents in both the study areas were all registered voters and this indicates that they had an important role in deciding their political leaders. However, majority of the women were not interested to come out and contest an election. Some of them would take initiatives to raise their voice but majority of them would rather keep low profile until it deemed necessary.

Table 4.4.4: Distribution of respondents according to their level of women empowerment

(N=240)

Respondent	Women Empowerment level	F	%	S.D	Normalized Mean (WEI)	Range
Imphal West	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.04	0.63	0.54 – 0.73
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	114	95.00			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	6	5.00			
Senapati	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.04	0.61	0.52 – 0.68
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	120	100.00			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	0	0.00			
Pooled	Low (0.00 - 0.33)	0	0.00	0.04	0.62	0.52 – 0.73
	Medium (0.34 -0.70)	234	97.50			
	High (0.71 – 1.00)	6	2.50			

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.4 indicates that majority i.e 97.50 per cent of the respondents fell in the medium level of women empowerment followed by 2.50 per cent of the respondents fall in the high level of women empowerment and lastly none of the respondents fall in the low level of women empowerment. The Table 4.4.4 also highlighted that the index scores of women empowerment for the pooled population was 0.62, for Imphal West was 0.63 and for Senapati was 0.61 which indicates that the women respondents are empowered to a desirable level but there is room for improvement. Additionally, the range of the WEI score was also highlighted in the Table 4.4.4 as 0.54-0.73 for Imphal West district, 0.52-0.68 for Senapati district and 0.52-0.73 for the pooled population.

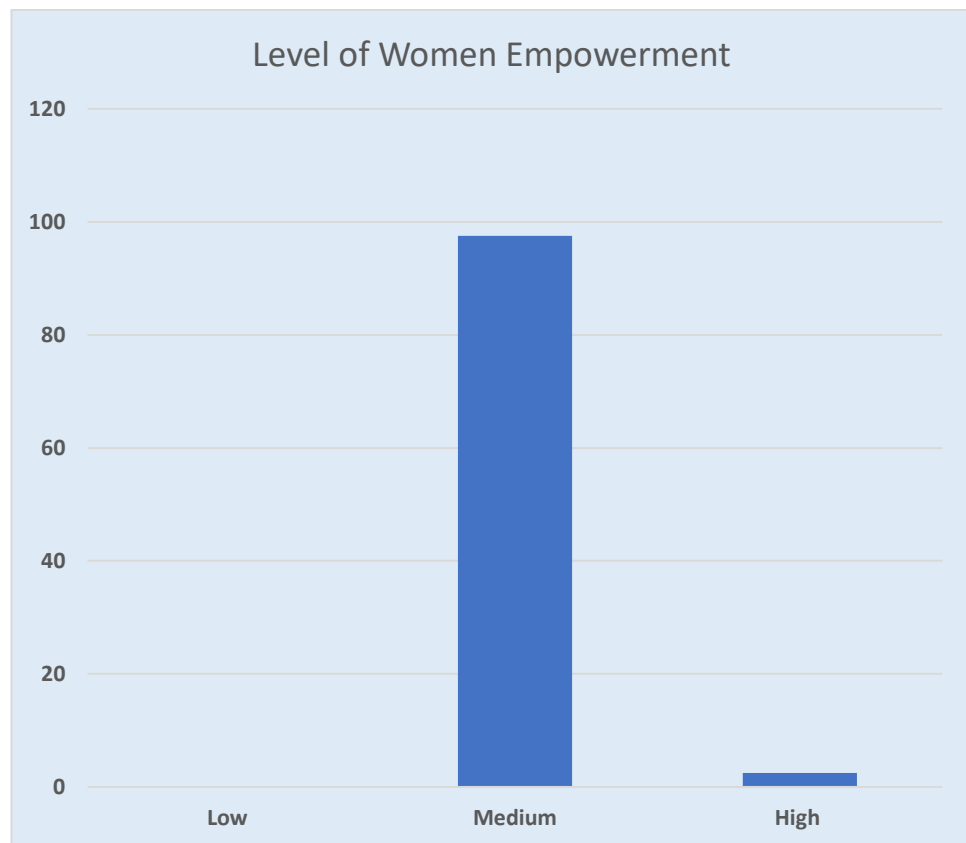


Fig 4.4: Level of Women Empowerment for pooled population

Likewise, it was observed in Imphal West that majority i.e 95.00 per cent of the respondents respectively fell in medium level of women empowerment followed by 5.00 per cent of the respondents falling in the high level of women empowerment and none of the respondents fell in low level of women empowerment. While 100.00 per cent of the respondents in Senapati district fell in medium level of women empowerment and none in either high level or low level of women empowerment.

This indicates that the women respondents in the state were empowered at moderate level. The study also revealed that the women respondents in the valley area were a little more empowered than their counterparts in the hilly areas. The credit certainly goes to the existence of 500 years-old Ema market and the women in the Imphal valley enjoy privileges such as bigger markets and more working hours as it was a city and not secluded as in the hilly areas. The women in Imphal West also got certain privileges as exposure to women-market culture since time immemorial and had been engaged in vending service thereby earning a livelihood. However, the women in Senapati did not lag far behind with the establishment of permanent market sheds, they were provided with better market opportunities and areas to explore various livelihood activities.

Table 4.4.5: Comparison of levels of Women Empowerment in Imphal West and Senapati districts of Manipur

Level	Indicators	Normalized Mean Score		Difference	P-value
		IW	S		
1. Personal	Self-Confidence	0.75	0.73	0.02	0.046*
	Opinion on women's economic role	0.82	0.77	0.05	0.104 ^{NS}
	Non-acceptance of GBV	0.92	0.95	0.03	0.156 ^{NS}
	Individual Knowledge	0.68	0.67	0.01	0.228 ^{NS}
	Individual Capability	0.48	0.48	0.00	0.584 ^{NS}
	Personal Autonomy	0.82	0.79	0.03	0.009**
	Access to credit	0.22	0.18	0.03	0.512 ^{NS}
	Economic Motivation	0.75	0.69	0.06	0.00040**
	Achievement Motivation	0.79	0.76	0.03	0.09 ^{NS}
	Risk Orientation	0.61	0.52	0.09	0.00007**
	Decision-making capacity	0.62	0.60	0.02	0.69 ^{NS}
Personal level index value:		0.68	0.65	0.03	0.0692^{NS}
2. Relational	Family Support	0.72	0.75	0.03	0.15 ^{NS}
	Group Participation	0.32	0.31	0.01	0.75 ^{NS}
	Control over household assets	0.68	0.67	0.01	0.69 ^{NS}
	Household decision-making capacity	0.73	0.71	0.02	0.33 ^{NS}
	Contribution to household income	0.44	0.41	0.03	0.35 ^{NS}
	Time and workload	0.69	0.68	0.01	0.11 ^{NS}
	Non-occurrence of Gender based Violence	0.88	0.87	0.01	0.618 ^{NS}
Relational level index value:		0.64	0.63	0.01	0.67^{NS}
3.Environmental	Safety of movement	0.77	0.72	0.05	0.0018**
	Social norms and stereotypes	0.46	0.48	0.02	0.00293**
	Ability to influence at political level	0.46	0.45	0.01	0.77 ^{NS}
Environmental level index value:		0.56	0.54	0.02	0.099^{NS}
Women Empowerment Index value:		0.63	0.61	0.02	0.00353**

* Significant at 0.05% level, ** Significant at 0.01% level, NS-Non significant

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.5 indicates that the respondents were the most empowered at the personal level with index scores of 0.68 and 0.65 respectively in Imphal West district and Senapati district with overall 0.67 index score of women empowerment at *Personal level*. In the second place was the extent of women empowerment of the respondents with index scores 0.64 and 0.63 respectively in Imphal West district and Senapati district with overall 0.63 index score of women empowerment at *Relational level*. The *Environmental level* was the level in which the respondents were the least empowered among the three levels with index scores of 0.56 and 0.54 respectively in Imphal West district and Senapati district with overall 0.55 index score of women empowerment at *Environmental level*.

To further test whether the difference between the levels of women empowerment in Imphal West and Senapati district was significant, a statistical method paired Z-Test was used to measure the level of significance between the observed values of women empowerment.

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.4.5 indicates that the difference in the levels of Women Empowerment in Imphal West and Senapati district was numerically small i.e 0.02 but the Z-test revealed that this difference was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level with *p*-value as 0.00353. This indicates that the observed difference in the extent of empowerment of women between the two study areas was not due to random variation. This was because the socio-economic and geographic aspects of the two districts was quite contrasting and Imphal West being more urbanized offered better access to education, healthcare, markets, employment and connectivity which contribute to greater empowerment opportunities for women. And the women in Senapati district faced challenges such as limited infrastructure, lower service delivery and traditional socio-cultural structures that affect women empowerment.

Further, at *personal level*, the Table 4.4.5 indicates that even though the difference in the scores of self-confidence between the two study areas was relatively small at 0.02, the difference in the levels of self-confidence between the two study

areas was statistically significant at 5 per cent significance level with p -value 0.046 indicating that the observed difference did not occur by chance suggesting a consistent pattern across the sample. This is because of the distinct socio-economic and cultural environments of the two districts with Imphal West providing greater exposure to education, market cultures with the existence of aged-old Ema market, more public participation. It can also be stated that interaction and socialization sure help a person to build up her confidence.

Also, at *personal level*, a significant difference was observed in the levels of personal autonomy regarding certain decisions between Imphal West and Senapati districts with p -value 0.009 which was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level. This is because Imphal West is more urbanized, offers greater exposure to mobility, individualistic norms that empower women to make decisions independently. Considering the terrain, better transportation, infrastructure, women in Imphal West had more opportunities to acquire driving skills, engage in entrepreneurial activities unlike the women in Senapati district whose hilly terrain limited road connectivity, dispersed settlements which restricted mobility and decision-making in areas such as travel, business or public participation.

Additionally, at *personal level*, it was observed that the difference in the scores of economic motivation between Imphal West and Senapati districts was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level with p -value as 0.0004. This indicates that women in Imphal West demonstrated a higher level of economic motivation compared to their counterparts in Senapati district and it was because of the existence of Ema market, an economic hub run entirely by women and managed across generations which has been inspiring the Manipuri women to participate in trade and economic activity to be able to exercise financial independence. In contrast, such women-led public economic space were lacking in Senapati thereby limiting women's exposure to entrepreneurship.

Lastly, at *personal level*, it was observed that the difference in the scores of risk orientation between Imphal West and Senapati districts was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level with p -value as 0.00007. It was also

observed that the women in Imphal West scored higher in risk orientation than those in Senapati district suggesting they were more inclined to take financial or business-related risks. This is because the women in Imphal West had better exposure to urban and supportive business environment that reduce the perceived risk associated with economic ventures. Also, the influence of institution like Ema Keithel helped the women in normalizing risk-taking behaviour and increase their confidence.

In addition, at *environmental level*, a significant difference is observed in the level of safety of movement at p -value 0.0018 which was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level. This is because Imphal West is more urbanized and majority of the women did not have to pass through secluded areas while travelling certain distances thereby making the women feel more safe while moving out of their house and village.

There was also a significant difference in the perception of the women regarding the acceptability or agreement of the other women in their community to social norms and stereotypes surrounding a woman's economic role at p -value 0.00293 which is statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level. This was due to various socio-cultural, economic and exposure-related factors.

4.5 CONSTRAINTS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN HILL AND VALLEY DISTRICTS

Table 4.5: Distribution of respondents according to Constraints in Women Empowerment (N=240)

Sl. no.	Constraints	F	%	Rank
1.	Lack of opportunity for female education is a barrier in the process of women empowerment	240	100.00	I
2.	Women's lack of access to credit is a barrier in women empowerment	239	99.58	II
3.	Lack of income generating activities of women and depending on others for financial needs is a hindrance to women empowerment	237	98.75	III
4.	Women themselves also hinder the progress of other women	232	96.67	IV
5.	Seldom women raise their voices against any kind of harassment	215	89.58	V
6.	Social taboos, superstitions, religious customs and tradition hinder in women empowerment	201	83.75	VI
7.	Women tend to avoid to lead a group or an organization	193	80.42	VII
8.	The male dominated society cannot digest the women coming forward to lead	178	74.17	VIII
9.	The general act of giving the ownership of property to the male counterparts often a factor of suppressing the women	171	71.25	IX
10.	Sometimes the family members oppose the women to participate in social activities	159	66.25	X
11.	The women even though they are earning are often not free to spend their income independently	157	65.41	XI
12.	Male members of the family generally taking in charge of the income and the financial decisions is a factor which suppresses the female members of the family	149	62.08	XII

The analysis of the data in the Table 4.5 indicates that ‘Lack of opportunity for female education is a barrier in the process of women empowerment’ ranked first with 100.00 per cent indicating that the whole population of the women respondents agree that women need education for their overall empowerment. The constraint ‘Women’s lack of access to credit is a barrier in women empowerment’ ranked second with 99.60 per cent. Without financial support, a person cannot be independent and had lesser decision-making capacity. The constraints ‘Lack of income generating activities of women and depending on others for financial needs is a hindrance to women empowerment’ ranked third with 98.80 per cent. The constraint itself signifies that not being able to provide for oneself and not being independent gives the other person a very good opportunity to look down on them and hence could disrobe them of their basic rights and cuts down one’s abilities.

‘Women themselves can also hinder the progress of other women’ ranked fourth with 96.67 per cent positive responses. ‘Seldom women raise their voices against any kind of harassment’ ranked fifth with 89.58 per cent positive responses. ‘Social taboos, superstitions, religious customs and tradition hinders in women empowerment’ ranked sixth with 83.75 per cent positive responses. ‘Women tends to avoid to lead a group or an organisation’ with 89.58 per cent positive responses. ‘The male dominated society cannot digest the women coming forward to lead’ ranked eighth with 74.17 per cent positive responses.

‘The general act of giving the ownership of property to the male counterparts often a factor of suppressing the women’ ranked ninth with 71.25 per cent positive responses. ‘Sometimes the family members oppose the women to participate in social activities’ ranked tenth with 66.25 per cent positive responses. ‘The women even though they are earning are often not free to spend their income independently’ ranked eleventh with 65.41 per cent positive responses. ‘Male members of the family generally taking in charge of the income and the financial decisions is a factor which suppresses the female members of the family’ ranked twelfth with 62.08 per cent positive responses.

This is in line with the findings of Sakthivel (2015) in his study “A Study on the Constraints Militating against the Attainment of Empowerment of Women in India” stating that some constraints in women empowerment are illiteracy and it has been found as major constraint for the attainment of women empowerment in the nation, discriminatory nature of male towards female wherein in India, since the olden days, the men have been in control of politics, social, economical as well as cultural and traditional spheres of life, religious and cultural beliefs is another important constraint of women’s empowerment in India which tightens up the female population, insufficient power and insignificant distribution of power among man and women in India is additional constraint in attainment of women empowerment in the country, less and very insignificant participation of women in political field.

Mundhe (2021) in “The Study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment in India” concluded that poverty and lack of education are major obstacles to women empowerment.

Reshi (2022) stated that women still face significant barriers to accessing education, particularly in developing countries even though education has been identified as a crucial factor in women's empowerment, enabling them to participate fully in social, economic, and political spheres.

CHAPTER-V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Women's empowerment is the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such an ability. The ability to exercise choice incorporates three inter-related dimensions: resources (material, human and social), agency (the ability to define one's goals and act upon them) and achievements (well-being outcomes) (Kabeer, 1999).

Livelihood can be best defined as the methods and means of making a living in the world. The term livelihood 'best expresses the idea of individuals or groups striving to make a living, attempting to meet their various consumption and economic necessities, coping with uncertainties, responding to new opportunities, and choosing between different value positions' (Long, 2000).

Like any other peasant economy, household is the basic unit of consumption and production in Manipur wherein both men and women take part in the agricultural activities. In these activities, the heavier works such as ploughing traditionally are in the hands of men and the lighter work such as transplantation and weeding are carried out by women. Agriculture is the main occupation and the largest productive unit of Manipur's economy. (Devi, 2012).

Manipuri women have always played a very vital and active role in social movements. They have contributed immensely in the socio-economic transformation and upliftment of the society. But unfortunately, the society is still in the control of the patriarchal system. Women do not have much say in the decision-making process. Their representations both in the secondary and tertiary sectors are quite minimal. The preference of male child is still prevalent. Women produce children; they are mothers and wives; they do the cooking, mending, sewing and washing; they take care of men and are subordinate to male authority.

But nevertheless, we can witness the women of the state empowered and empowering one another amidst all the strict cultural and the traditional ways passed on from generations to generations. One such example is the unique Ima Keithel (Ima

Market), an all-women market. The study seeks to find out about the various livelihood activities of the Manipuri women in the hill and valley areas and whether the economic opportunities and financial independence have empowered the women and impacted the lives of the women by strengthening their position and status in the society. Therefore, the present study entitled, “A Study on Women Empowerment through Livelihood Activities in Manipur”, has been undertaken with the following objectives:

Objectives of the study

1. To study the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the women in the study area.
2. To identify the various livelihood activities of the women and to analyse the role of livelihood opportunities in empowering women.
3. To measure the livelihood security of women respondents.
4. To study the extent of women empowerment in Manipur and compare the levels of women empowerment in hill and valley districts of Manipur.
5. To find out the constraints and challenges of women empowerment in hill and valley districts and to suggest appropriate strategies.

5.1 Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design. Manipur was chosen for the current study. Imphal west, Imphal east, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Chandel, Senapati, Ukhrul, Tamenglong and Churachandpur are nine districts of Manipur. Imphal west and Senapati were chosen for the study. Two blocks, namely, Lamphel and Lamsang were selected from Imphal west district and Mao Maram and Saitu Gamphazol blocks were selected from Senapati district making it four blocks altogether. From Lamsang block, Kanto, Khurkhul, Sekmai and from Lamphel block, Thangmeiband, Iroisemba and Sagolband were selected. From Mao Maram block, Maram Bazar, Senapati town and Shajouba, from Saitu Gamphazol block, Leimakhong Bazar, Motbung Bazar and Kangpokpi Bazar were selected. So, a total of 12 villages were selected based on the engagement of the women in various types of informal livelihood activities especially

vending activity and agricultural and allied activities as most women resort to such activities for livelihood in the state. Using the random sampling method, 20 respondents were selected from each village making it a total of 240 respondents.

The researcher used an interview schedule prepared beforehand after considering the variables taken for the study to collect data through personal interviews. To draw reliable inferences, the acquired data were categorised, tabulated and carefully examined using appropriate statistical methods including percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, Z-test and regression.

5.2 SALIENT FINDINGS

5.2.1 PERSONAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WOMEN IN THE STUDY AREA

Age

Majority (76.25%) of the respondents were between the age of 36 and 60 years with 12.08 per cent of the respondents above 60 years and 11.67 per cent of the respondents who were upto 35 years. It was also observed that overall mean age of the respondents was 45.94 and the standard deviation was 10.99.

Education

Majority (27.91%) of the total respondents had completed their education upto higher secondary with 25.00 per cent of the respondents who had completed upto high school and 19.17 per cent of the respondents who had completed upto middle-level i.e class VIII.

Gender of the household head

Majority (87.08%) of the head of the households in the study area were male and only 12.92 per cent of the households were female-headed households.

Ethnic group

All of the respondents (100%) from Imphal west district belonged to Meitei community while in Senapati district 59.17 per cent of the respondents belonged to Naga community, 39.17 per cent of the respondents belonged to Kuki community.

Marital status

Majority (79.58%) of the total respondents were married and 12.50 per cent of the respondents were in unmarried category and 6.25 per cent of the respondents were widowed and 1.67 per cent of the respondents were divorced .

Family type

Majority (70.00%) of the total respondents belonged to nuclear type of family and the remaining 30.00 percent belonged to joint family.

Training exposure

Majority (70.42%) of the respondents had no training exposure and 29.58 per cent of the respondents had attended trainings such as pickle-making, embroidery, mushroom cultivation, starch washing of traditional wears, colour dyeing of traditional wears and sericulture.

Type of house

Majority (53.75%) of the total respondents dwelled in semi-pucca houses followed by 32.92 per cent of the total respondents who dwelled in kaccha houses and lastly 13.33 per cent of the respondents who dwelled in pucca houses.

Household size

Majority (51.25%) of the respondents' household size was upto 5 members and the remaining 48.75 per cent of the households had a household size above 5 members.

Occupation

Majority of the total respondents were working as vegetable vendors at 54.17 per cent, processed food items vendor at 7.08 per cent as second majority, traditional items vendor at 6.25 per cent as third majority, local grocery shop, fruit vendor and farming at 4.58 per cent each as fourth majority, livestock rearing at 3.75 per cent as fifth majority, embroidery at 3.33 per cent as sixth majority, weaving at 2.92 per cent as seventh majority, handwoven basket vendor and fish vendor at 2.08 per cent as eighth majority, meat vendor at only 1.67 per cent as ninth majority, fish farming, tailoring and banana leaf vendor at 0.83 per cent as tenth majority and women who runs rice mill at 0.42 per cent as least majority.

Total landholding size

Majority (77.50%) of the total respondents had total landholding size of less than 1 acre followed by 16.67 per cent of the total respondents with total landholding size of 1-5 acres as second majority followed by 5.83 per cent of the total respondents with total landholding size of 5-10 acres.

Annual income of the household

Majority (37.92%) of the respondents' households in the study area were in the category of Rs. 2-3 lakhs annual income followed by 37.50 per cent of the respondents in the category of Rs.3-4 lakhs annual income as second majority followed by 12.97 per cent of the respondents in the category of Rs.1-2 lakhs annual income as third majority. It was also observed that the mean annual income was Rs.308203.3 and the standard deviation was 94664.41.

Annual income of the respondent

Majority (67.92%) of the respondents in the study area were in the category of Rs. 1-2 lakhs annual income followed by 22.92 per cent of the respondents in the category of Rs.50,000 - 1 lakh annual income as second majority followed by 8.75 per cent of the respondents in the category of Rs.2-3 lakhs annual income as third majority.

It was also observed that the mean annual income was Rs. 133627.6 and the standard deviation was 47463.62.

Material possession

Majority (95.83%) of the total respondents in both the study areas owned farming equipments/tools and the most common out of these were garden hoe and sickle. The second most possessed material was cell phone at 89.58 per cent as this object was considered a necessity in day-to-day life for better communication and also very handy and could be carried around easily. Television held the third position at 79.58 per cent as the material possessed by the respondents as television played a big role as a mass medium for providing news, advertisements, entertainments and sports. It was also observed that materials like refrigerator and washing machine were also gaining popularity in today's world especially among the womenfolk as these modern appliances offered certain benefits in day-to-day life such as saving time and effort and prevents wastage of food. Most of the respondents also possessed vehicle either two-wheeler or four-wheeler as this helped them in transportation which was very important to run their businesses or livelihood activities.

Mean Annual expenditure

It was observed that education cost the highest among the five areas of expenditure with Rs.96555 as the mean annual educational cost and the range was from Rs.0.00 to Rs. 180000. The second highest cost incurred for majority of the respondents' households was food with mean annual food expenditure of Rs. 53930 and the range was from Rs. 30000 to Rs.84000. The third highest cost was the category 'Others' with mean annual expenditure of Rs.42035 and the range was from Rs.28500 to Rs.100000.

Majority of the respondents were in the medium category of mean annual expenditure with 61.25 per cent followed by 22.92 per cent of the respondents in the low category of mean annual expenditure followed by 15.85 per cent of the respondents in the high category of mean annual expenditure.

Access to credit

Majority (28.33%) of the respondents preferred moneylenders for access to credit followed by 27.50 per cent of the respondents who preferred SHGs as access to credit followed by 13.75 per cent of the respondents who preferred friends as source for access to credit followed by 13.33 per cent of the respondents who relied on relatives for access to credit and lastly only 1.25 per cent of the respondents who preferred banks for access to credit.

Savings

Majority (51.25%) of the total respondents had non-institutional savings followed by 42.92 per cent of the total respondents who had no savings as second majority followed by 5.83 per cent of the respondents who had institutional savings.

Debts

Majority (76.67%) of the respondents' families were without debt while 23.33 per cent of the respondents' families were with debts that had to be paid off.

Migration pattern

None of the respondents had migrated from urban area to rural area or from rural area to urban area indicating that the women tend to maintain and sustain their livelihoods within their immediate geographic context.

Institutional support

Majority (65.22%) of the total respondents in Imphal west and Senapati districts had negligible institutional support. Only 33.33 per cent could obtain support from SHG in the form of loan and only 1.25 per cent could obtain support from banks in the form of loan such as house loan given that they had a guarantor.

Resources and assets

It was observed that all the women respondents owned land and houses followed by 55.00 per cent of the women respondents who possessed gold ornaments.

5.2.2 VARIOUS LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES OF THE WOMEN

Sources of income

Majority (82.50%) of the respondents had only one source of income. The second majority consisted of respondents with two sources of income at 17.08 per cent and the rest 0.83 per cent of the total respondents had more than two sources of income.

Primary source of income

Majority (54.17 %) of the respondents were vegetable vendors, 7.08 per cent were processed food items vendors, 6.25 per cent were traditional items vendors, 4.58 per cent each were local grocers and fruit vendors, 4.50 per cent were farmers, 3.75 per cent were rearing livestock, 3.33 per cent were engaged in embroidery, 2.92 per cent were engaged in weaving, 2.08 per cent each were hand-woven basket vendors and fish vendors, 1.67 per cent were meat vendors, 0.83 per cent each were fish farmers, tailors and banana leaf vendors and 0.42 per cent operated rice mill.

Secondary source of income

Majority (82.50%) of the total women respondents had no secondary job followed by 6.67 per cent of the total women respondents who reared livestock as second majority followed by 4.17 per cent of the total women respondents worked as agricultural labourers as third majority.

Tertiary source of income

Majority (99.16%) of the total women respondents had no tertiary job. Only 0.42 per cent each of the total respondents were engaged in farming and tailoring. It could also be noted that tertiary source of income is mostly freelance in nature.

Skills in various sectors

Majority (83.33%) of the women respondents possessed vending skills followed by 60.47 per cent of the respondents with basic farming skills as second majority followed by 34.17 per cent of the women respondents who possessed poultry rearing skill as third majority.

Seasonality

Majority (82.50%) of the women respondents were engaged in one income-generating activities in a year in both the study areas followed by 17.50 per cent of the women respondents who were engaged in just two or more income-generating activities in a year.

Effects of livelihood opportunities of the women respondents in empowering them

It was observed that variables like age, skills in various sectors, material possessions and resources and assets were significantly associated with the extent of empowerment of the women respondents in the study area at 5 per cent significance level ($p < 0.05$). This implies that changes in these variables were meaningfully related to variations in women's empowerment outcomes. The analysis further revealed that training exposure, annual income of the respondents and access to credit were statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level ($p < 0.01$) which implies a strong and consistent association between these variables and the extent of women empowerment.

5.2.3 MEASUREMENT OF LIVELIHOOD SECURITY OF WOMEN RESPONDENTS

Household Livelihood Security Index:

For analyzing Livelihood Security, Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI) modified by Maurya (2017) was followed and considered indicators such as Economic, Education, Health, Habitat, Food and Social Security. Higher value of the

indicator implies households are better off and more secured in terms of their livelihood.

Economic Security

Majority (50.00%) of the respondents' households could secure an economic stability at a medium level, followed by 42.08 per cent of the respondents' households with low level of economic security as second majority and lastly 7.92 per cent of the respondents' households with high level of economic security. The study also highlighted that the overall index score of economic security was 0.39 which fell in the medium level of economic security and also under average (i.e 0.50 index score) which indicates that the level of economic security of the respondents still had room to improve.

Educational Security

Majority (74.58%) of the respondents were in medium level of educational security followed by 15.42 per cent of the respondents in low level of educational security as second majority and lastly 10.00 per cent of the respondents in high level of educational security as least majority. The study also highlighted that the overall index score of educational security was 0.51 which fell in the medium level, however a little above the average index score (0.50) indicating that the educational security could be improved.

Food Security

Majority (87.08%) of the respondents' households were in medium level of food security followed by 10.00 per cent per cent of the respondents' households in the high level of food security as second majority and lastly 2.92 per cent of the respondents' households were in the low level of food security as the least majority. The study also highlighted that the overall index score of food security was 0.58 which fell in the medium level of food security and well above average index value (0.50) but still could work to increase their income to afford a a better diet.

Habitat Security

Majority (55.42%) of the respondents' households were in high level of habitat security followed by 44.58 per cent of the respondents' households in medium level of habitat security and none were in low level of habitat security. The study also highlighted that the index values of habitat security for the pooled population was 0.74 which fell in the high level of habitat security.

Health Security

Majority i.e 57.50 per cent of the respondents had medium level of health security followed by 40.00 per cent of the respondents had low level of health security and lastly 2.50 percent of the respondents had high level of health security. The study also highlighted that the index score of health security for the pooled population was 0.38 which was lower than the average index score (0.50) indicating the urgent need for improvement in the health sector in the state especially for serious and emergency cases.

Social Security

Majority (94.58%) of the respondents were in medium level of social security followed by 4.58 per cent of the respondents in low level of social security as second majority and lastly 0.08 per cent of the respondents in high level of social security as the least majority. The study also highlighted that the index scores of social security for the pooled population was 0.55 which was above average index score (0.50).

Household Livelihood Security

Majority (98.33%) of the respondents' households were in medium level of Household Livelihood Security followed by 1.25 per cent of the respondents' households who were in low level of Household Livelihood Security followed by 0.42 per cent of the respondents' households who were in low level of Household Livelihood Security. The study also highlighted that the index score of habitat security for the pooled population was 0.53 which overall fell in medium level of habitat

security but improvement could still be made to level up their Household Livelihood Security. The study further indicates that the respondents scored the highest in Habitat Security at 0.74 index score and the least in Health Security at 0.38 index score.

5.2.4 EXTENT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN MANIPUR AND COMPARISON OF THE LEVELS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN HILL AND VALLEY DISTRICTS OF MANIPUR.

5.2.4.1 Personal Level:

Self- Confidence

Majority (63.75%) of the total respondents had high level of self-confidence followed by 36.25 per cent of the total respondents had medium level of self-confidence as the second majority and none of the respondents have low level of self-confidence. The study also highlighted that the index score of self-confidence for the pooled population was 0.74 which was overall quite high.

Opinion on women's economic role

Majority (49.17%) of the respondents the women in the Imphal west and Senapati were strongly opinionated in their takes on extent of leadership and had a strong say in the economic matters followed by 42.50 per cent of the respondents who were moderately opinionated as second majority followed by 8.33 per cent of the respondents who were negligibly opinionated. The study also highlighted the index score of opinion on women's economic role for the pooled population was 0.80 which overall shows that the women were highly opinionated regarding women' economic role.

Acceptability of Gender-based Violence

Majority (88.33%) of the total respondents had low level of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) followed by 11.67 per cent of the respondents with medium level of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) and none of the respondents would accept any form of domestic violence. The study also highlighted

that the index score of acceptability of Gender-based Violence (GBV) for the pooled population was 0.22 which overall shows that the women had very low acceptability of GBV.

Individual Knowledge

Majority (49.16%) of the respondents possessed medium level of knowledge followed by 47.50 per cent of the respondents possessed low level of knowledge as second majority and lastly 3.33 per cent of the respondents possessed high level of knowledge. The study also highlighted that the index score of individual knowledge for the pooled population was 0.36 which overall shows that the women respondents possessed somewhat low level of individual knowledge.

Individual Capability

Majority (77.50%) of the respondents possessed medium level of individual capability to deal issues concerning themselves and the women around them followed by 15.83 per cent of the respondents possessed low level of individual capability as second majority and lastly 4.58 per cent of the respondents possessed high level of individual capability. The study also highlighted that the index score of individual capability to deal issues related to them and women around them for the pooled population was 0.48 which was below average which indicates that the women could do better to improve their capability.

Personal Autonomy

Majority (83.33%) of the respondents had the privilege of high level of personal autonomy followed by 16.67 per cent of the respondents had the privilege of medium level of personal autonomy as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low level of personal autonomy. The study also highlighted that the index score of personal autonomy for the pooled population was 0.80 which shows that overall the women respondents had the privilege of high level of personal autonomy.

Access to credit

Majority (78.75%) of the respondents had low access to credit followed by 21.25 per cent of the respondents had medium access to credit as second majority and lastly 0.00 per cent of the respondents had high access to credit. The study also highlighted that the index score of access to credit for the pooled population was 0.20 which overall shows that the women respondents had very low access to credit.

Economic motivation

Majority (59.17%) of the respondents had high level of economic motivation followed by 40.83 per cent of the respondents had medium level of economic motivation as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low level of economic motivation. The study also highlighted that the index score of economic motivation for the pooled population was 0.72 which overall shows that the women respondents had high level of economic motivation.

Achievement motivation

Majority (74.58%) of the respondents had high level of achievement motivation followed by 25.41 per cent of the respondents had medium level of achievement motivation as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low level of achievement motivation. The study also highlighted that the index score of achievement motivation for the pooled population was 0.77 which overall shows that the women respondents had high level of achievement motivation.

Risk orientation

Majority (62.92%) of the respondents had medium level of skills for risk orientation followed by 22.08 per cent of the respondents had high level of skills for risk orientation as second majority and lastly 15.00 per cent of the respondents had low level of skills for risk orientation. The study also highlighted that the index score of risk orientation for the pooled population was 0.56 which overall shows that the women respondents had medium level of skills for risk orientation.

Decision-making capacity

Majority (68.33%) of the respondents were moderately rational in their decision-making capacity regarding their income-generating income followed by 25.00 per cent of the respondents who were highly rational in their decision-making capacity as second majority and lastly 6.67 per cent of the respondents were less rational in their decision-making capacity. The study also highlighted that the index score of decision-making capacity for the pooled population was 0.61 which was above average and overall shows that the women respondents exercised appreciable level of decision-making capacity particularly in their income-generating income.

5.2.4.2 Relational Level:

Family Support

Majority (52.08%) of the respondents had a medium level of family support followed by 46.67 per cent of the respondents who had a high level of family support as second majority and 1.25 per cent of the respondents who had a low level of family support. The study also highlighted that the index values of family support for the pooled population was 0.74 which shows that overall, the women respondents had the privilege of high level of family support

Group participation

Majority (49.17%) of the respondents had medium level of group participation followed by 48.33 per cent of the respondents who had low level of group participation as second majority and lastly 2.50 per cent of the respondents had high level of group participation. The study also highlighted that the index score of group participation for the pooled population was 0.31 which shows that overall the women respondents had low level of group participation.

Control over Household assets

Majority (57.50%) of the respondents had medium level of control over Household assets followed by 42.50 per cent of the respondents had high level of

control over Household assets as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low level of control over Household assets. The study also highlighted that the index score of control over Household assets for the pooled population was 0.67 which overall shows that the women respondents had appreciable level of control over Household assets.

Extent of household decision-making capacity of the women

Majority (55.83%) of the respondents were privileged with high level of household-decision making capacity followed by 44.17 per cent of the respondents were privileged with medium level of household-decision making capacity as second majority and lastly none of the respondents were privileged with low level of household-decision making capacity. The study also highlighted that the index score of household-decision making capacity for the pooled population was 0.72 which overall shows that the women respondents had the privilege to exercise high level of household-decision making capacity.

Contribution of the women to their household income

Majority (79.17%) of the respondents contributed to their family income at a medium level followed by 18.75 per cent of the respondents who contributed to their family income at a low level as second majority and lastly 2.08 per cent of the respondents who contributed to their family income at a high level. The study also highlighted that the index score of contribution to household income for the pooled population was 0.42 which overall shows that the women respondents had a medium level of contribution to their household income.

Time and workload

Majority (82.92%) of the respondents had medium workload followed by 17.08 per cent of the respondents who had a high workload as second majority and lastly none of the respondents had low workload. The study also highlighted that the index score of time and workload for the pooled population was 0.68 which overall shows that the women had medium workload.

Extent of Experience of GBV

Majority (99.58%) of the respondents experienced low level of Gender based Violence (GBV) followed by 0.42 per cent of the respondents experienced medium level of Gender based Violence (GBV) as second majority and lastly none of the respondents experienced high level of Gender based Violence (GBV). The study also highlighted that the index score of experience of Gender based Violence (GBV) for the pooled population was 0.05 which overall shows that the women respondents experienced very less Gender based Violence (GBV).

5.2.4.3 Environmental Level:

Safety of movement

Majority (57.08%) of the respondents had the privilege of high level of safety of movement followed by 42.08 per cent of the respondents had the privilege of medium level of safety of movement as second majority and lastly 0.83 per cent of the respondents had the privilege of low level of safety of movement. The study also highlighted that the index score of safety of movement for the pooled population was 0.75 which indicates that the women could move around freely outside of their house and village without any fear.

Perception on Social norms and stereotypes

Majority (75.83%) of the respondents thought that the women in her community had medium level of agreement with the social norms and stereotypes that surrounds a woman followed by 16.67 per cent of the respondents who thought the other women had low level of agreement as second majority and lastly 7.50 per cent of the respondents who thought the other women had high level of agreement as third majority. The study also highlighted that the index score for the pooled population was 0.47.

Ability of the women to influence at political level

Majority (86.25%) of the respondents had medium level of ability to influence politically followed by 11.67 per cent of the respondents had low level of ability to influence politically as second majority and lastly 2.08 per cent of the respondents had high level of ability to influence politically. The study also highlighted that the index score of ability to influence politically for the pooled population was 0.46 which was below average indicating that participation in the political matters among the womenfolk still needed to be improved.

Level of Women Empowerment

Majority (97.50%) of the respondents were in medium level of women empowerment followed by 2.50 per cent of the respondents in high level of women empowerment and lastly none of the respondents was in low level of women empowerment. The study also highlighted that the index score of women empowerment for the pooled population was 0.62 which indicates that the women respondents were empowered to a desirable level but there was room for improvement.

The study further revealed that the respondents were the most empowered at the personal level with overall 0.67 index score of women empowerment at *Personal level*. In the second place was the extent of women empowerment of the respondents with overall 0.63 index score of women empowerment at *Relational level*. The *Environmental level* was the level in which the respondents were the least empowered among the three levels with overall 0.55 index score of women empowerment at *Environmental level*.

Comparison of levels of Women Empowerment in Imphal west and Senapati districts of Manipur

The findings of the study indicates that the difference in the levels of Women Empowerment in Imphal West and Senapati district was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level as p -value is 0.00353 (<0.01).

Further, at *personal level*, it was revealed that the difference in the levels of self-confidence between the two study areas was statistically significant at 5 per cent significance level with p -value 0.046.

Also, at *personal level*, a significant difference was observed in the levels of personal autonomy regarding certain decisions between Imphal west and Senapati districts with p -value 0.009 which is statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level.

Additionally, at *personal level*, it was observed that the difference in the scores of economic motivation between Imphal west and Senapati districts was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level with p -value as 0.0004.

Lastly, at *personal level*, it was observed that the difference in the scores of risk orientation between Imphal west and Senapati districts was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level with p -value as 0.00007.

In addition, at *environmental level*, a significant difference was observed in the level of safety of movement at p -value 0.0018 which was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level.

There was also a significant difference in the perception of the women regarding the acceptability or agreement of the other women in their community to social norms and stereotypes surrounding a woman at p -value 0.00293. Although the difference was small in numerical value, it was statistically significant at 1 per cent significance level.

5.2.5 Constraints in Women Empowerment

It was observed that 'Lack of opportunity for female education is a barrier in the process of women empowerment' ranked first with 100.00 per cent indicating that the whole population of the women respondents agree that a woman needs education for her overall empowerment. The constraint 'Women's lack of access to credit is a barrier in women empowerment' ranked second with 99.60 percent.

Without financial support, a person cannot be independent and has less decision-making capacity. The constraint 'Lack of income generating activities of women and depending on others for financial needs is a hindrance to women empowerment' ranked third with 98.80 per cent. The constraint itself signifies that not being able to provide for oneself and being dependent on others frequently lead to situations where they are disrespected and hence could disrobe them of their basic rights and cut down one's abilities.

'Women themselves can also hinder the progress of other women' ranked fourth with 96.67 per cent positive responses. 'Seldom women raise their voices against any kind of harassment' ranked fifth with 89.58 per cent positive responses. 'Social taboos, superstitions, religious customs and tradition hinders in women empowerment' ranked sixth with 83.75 per cent positive responses. 'Women tend to avoid leading a group or an organization' with 89.58 per cent positive responses. 'The male dominated society cannot digest the women coming forward to lead' ranked eighth with 74.17 per cent positive responses.

'The general act of giving the ownership of property to the male counterparts often a factor of suppressing the women' ranked ninth with 71.25 per cent positive responses. 'Sometimes the family members oppose the women to participate in social activities' ranked tenth with 66.25 per cent positive responses. 'The women even though they are earning are often not free to spend their income independently' ranked eleventh with 65.41 per cent positive responses. 'Male members of the family generally taking in charge of the income and the financial decisions is a factor which suppresses the female members of the family' ranked twelfth with 62.08 per cent positive responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of the study, the following points are recommended:

- 5.6.1** It has been observed that permanent market sheds such as Ema Keithel have existed since the 16th century, providing dedicated spaces for women to sell

their products. In recent years, particularly since 2018, similar market sheds have been established in the hilly regions and other parts of the state. These developments have the potential to significantly support unemployed and marginalized women by offering them platforms to initiate small-scale businesses. Given that a large proportion of women engage in vending activities as a primary means of livelihood following agricultural work, it is recommended that more number of such marketplaces should be established to enhance their economic stability and empowerment.

5.6.2 A majority of women continued to rely on moneylenders as their primary source of credit, largely due to the longstanding presence and accessibility of this informal lending system. Moneylenders often approach the women directly, offering loans and collecting repayments on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. This system is perceived as convenient and straightforward requiring minimal procedural effort. In contrast, many women are hesitant to engage with formal banking institutions due to the complexity of processes and unfamiliarity with institutional requirements. In this context, it is recommended that the women be provided awareness programmes on financial literacy programmes to equip them with the knowledge and confidence to access formal financial services and that they be assisted while undergoing the procedural formalities. Awareness programmes on various schemes that support women such as PM SVANidhi, PMMY, Uplifting Women Street Vendors Program should also be organised.

5.6.3 Based on the findings, it is recommended that targeted interventions be implemented to support women in improving their financial stability. Since the majority of women lacked consistent savings due to limited earnings that barely meet their daily expenditures, efforts should be made to enhance their income-generating capacity. This may include expanding their market access, ensuring strict quality control of their products and increasing visibility through active promotion and branding strategies. Furthermore, there is a need to address the digital divide affecting older women entrepreneurs. Many in the older generation remain unfamiliar with digital platforms and continue to rely on traditional business practices such as passively waiting for customers at

their stalls. Therefore, it is further recommended that training programs focused on digital literacy and modern marketing techniques should be introduced to encourage a more dynamic and competitive business approach among these women.

- 5.6.4** The study revealed that a majority of women opted for vending services as their primary livelihood, primarily due to the perception that it requires less physical labor compared to traditional occupations such as farming or weaving. To encourage greater participation of women in agriculture, it is recommended to increase the appeal of farming as a viable business livelihood option and the women be made aware that agriculture can be taken up as a business and with innovative agricultural technologies being introduced and made accessible at affordable costs, it will significantly reduce physical strain. In addition, agricultural technologies like terrace farming, hydroponic, *etc.* can be introduced and trainings be provided to the women to facilitate additional income generating activities thereby diversifying their source of income.
- 5.6.5** A significant proportion of women engaged in the informal sector in Manipur had limited formal education. This maybe attributed to historical and socio-cultural contexts in which education for girls and women was not sufficiently emphasized or promoted. To address this gap, it is recommended that awareness programs be implemented for skill development programs, Financial literacy and basic digital skills. Such initiatives should aim to encourage educational participation and lifelong learning which are essential for empowering women, improving their economic opportunities and enhancing their participation in decision-making processes.
- 5.6.6** It was also observed that majority of the women were engaged in selling perishable commodities like vegetables and are significantly constrained by the lack appropriate storage facilities for their products. To expedite sales and prevent spoilage, vendors reduce prices towards the end of the day encouraging quick purchases. Some vendors extend their working hours beyond the regular market hours to maximize sales opportunities. This highlights the vendors' resilience and creative coping mechanisms in managing perishable goods. Therefore, addressing this issue through the

provision of accessible and affordable storage solutions is essential for improving the livelihoods of women vendors.

- 5.6.7** A majority of the women lacked exposure to formal training opportunities primarily due to time constraint and domestic responsibilities that limit their availability. Additionally, some women perceived formal training as unnecessary relying instead on peer learning and experiential knowledge. However, it is important to emphasize that structured, hands-on training offers more comprehensive skill development and practical applicability. Therefore, it is recommended that training programs should be designed with flexibility taking into account the participants' schedules, availability and accessible venues to ensure greater participation and effectiveness. Pamphlets, leaflets, bulletins and other such publications maybe distributed to the women so that they can go through during their spare time.
- 5.6.8** Many women vendors faced significant marketing challenges due to the saturation of similar products in local markets, resulting in limited customer bases. Most vendors were confined to fixed market locations which further restricted their outreach and competitiveness. Although some women adopted a more mobile approach by selling their goods at different weekly market venues, such practices remain limited. To enhance their market potential, it is recommended that women entrepreneurs explore alternative marketing strategies, such as leveraging digital platforms for online sales, engaging in value addition of freshly harvested products, and adopting innovative and creative approaches to differentiate and promote their products across diverse consumer platforms.
- 5.6.9** It was observed that many women in Manipur were members of certain groups like Meira Paibi, Market women association, Marup and SHG. However, it was observed that even though they had joined a group, they were reluctant to offer opinions in the decision-making processes of the group unless deemed necessary. While a small number of women exhibited confidence in taking on leadership responsibilities, the majority preferred to remain inconspicuous. Therefore, it is recommended that the women be encouraged to come out and contribute more in the decision-making of their corresponding groups and this

further indicates a need for targeted capacity-building programs to foster leadership skills, confidence and collective participation among women vendors.

5.6.10 It was also observed that health centres in Imphal West were relatively well-distributed and functional as compared to Senapati district. In Senapati district, even though there were PHCs and a district hospital, the overall health infrastructure was less robust compared to Imphal west. A significant concern was the shortage of medical staff and essential equipments that in complicated cases, the patients in Senapati district were often referred to either Imphal or Dimapur for better health services which was kind of risky in emergency cases. Therefore, it is recommended that the district be provided with well-trained medical specialists, skilled nurses and adequately staffed health facilities to ensure accessible, timely and affordable healthcare services.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

The present study was conducted in two districts of Manipur *viz.* Imphal west and Senapati and it was limited to twelve villages from Lamsang Block, Lamphel Block, Mao Maram Block and Saitu Gamphazol Block. Therefore, future research and investigations maybe taken up in other districts of Manipur to gain better insights about the livelihood activities adopted by women and the extent of empowerment. Further study will help in bringing out the bigger picture and the potentiality of the women in different parts of the state. Hence, the following measures are suggested:

5.7.1 A research with detailed plan including other variables concerned with the study may be taken up to find out the association of women's livelihood activities and their empowerment.

5.7.2 A comparable study may be taken up in other districts of Manipur to know the overall condition and extent of empowerment in the state.

5.7.3 A subsequent study may be taken up to further understand the factors of women empowerment and the barriers in it to upgrade the conditions of women and their

empowerment which may bring about a better society where women are considered a subordinate to men.

5.7.4 A future investigation may be taken up to explore more on different innovative livelihood activities that the women in Manipur are engaged in, especially as a group like SHG, FPC, etc.

5.7.5 An extended analysis may be taken up to further understand the financial management of such women and explore ways for effective delivery of certain schemes that are related to them.

APPENDIX

Interview schedule on Ph.D. research
Title: A Study on Women Empowerment through Livelihood Activities in
Manipur
Khaidem Nirja
Roll no.: Ph-275/19
Department of Agricultural Extension Education,
SAS, Nagaland University, Medziphema

Kindly answer the following questions by giving about 10-15 minutes of your valuable time. The following questions are for research purpose and any kind of data collected will solely be used for research purpose. No personal data will be shared to any other outside person/agency/organization

Respondent No:.....

Phone no.:.....

Date of Interview:

District:.....

Block:.....

Village:.....

PART A

I. Socio-personal and economic characteristics

1. Name:.....
2. Age:.....
3. Education:..... (Illiterate / Primary / Middle / Higher Sec./Graduate/Above)
4. Gender of the Head of the Family:.....(Male/Female)
5. Ethnic group:.....
6. Marital status:..... (Married/Unmarried/Widowed/Divorced)
7. Family type:.....(Joint/Nuclear)
8. Training Exposure: Have you participated in any training related to agricultural and allied activities which can help to generate income?: (Yes/No):.....
If Yes, what is the training that you have attended?.....
9. Type of house:.....(Pucca/Kaccha/Semi-pucca)
10. Family size:.....(Upto 5/ Above 5)
11. Occupation:.....
12. Total landholding size (acre/hectare):

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Yes=1/No=0</i>
1.	No land	
2.	< 1 acre	
3.	1-5 acres	
4.	5-10 acres	

13. Total Annual income of the household:

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Yes=1/No=0</i>
1.	50,000-1 lakh	
2.	1 – 2 lakhs	
3.	2 – 3 lakhs	
4.	3 – 4 lakhs	
5.	4 – 5 lakhs	
6.	5 – 6 lakhs	
7.	6 – 7 lakhs	

14. Total Annual income of the respondent:

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Yes=1/No=0</i>
1.	50,000-1 lakh	
2.	1 – 2 lakhs	
3.	2 – 3 lakhs	
4.	3 – 4 lakhs	
5.	4 – 5 lakhs	
6.	5 – 6 lakhs	
7.	6 – 7 lakhs	

15. Materials possessions:

<i>Materials</i>	<i>Yes / No</i>	<i>Materials</i>	<i>Yes / No</i>
House		Gold Ornaments	
Land		Television	
Vehicle		Radio	
Farm Equipments/tools		Tractor	
Telephone/cell phones		Washing machine	
Refrigerators		Handloom	
Harvester		Others (specify)	
Yes = 1, No = 0			

16. Expenditures: Annual expenditure of the household

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Rs/month</i>
1.	Household expenditure	
2.	Food expenditure	
3.	Health expenditure	
4.	Education	
5.	Clothing	
6.	Others	

17. Access to credit:

<i>Sources</i>	<i>Yes /No</i>	<i>Sources</i>	<i>Yes /No</i>
Banks		Friends	
Moneylenders		SHGs	
Relatives		Others (specify)	
Yes = 1, No = 0			

18. Savings:

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Score</i>
1.	No savings	0
2.	Non -Institutional savings	1
3.	Institutional savings	2
4.	Both	3

19. Debts:

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Score</i>
1.	Family with debts	0
2.	Family without debts	1

20. Migration pattern:

<i>Items</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
Have you migrated here from other location?	
Reasons for migration:	

21. Institutional support

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
1.	Banks	
2.	SHG	
3.	Central Govt./State Govt.	
4.	Others	
Yes = 1, No = 0		

22. Resources and assets

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
1.	House	
2.	Land	
3.	Gold Ornaments	
Yes = 1, No = 0		

Part B

I. Various Livelihood activities of the women respondents

1. Sources of income

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
1.	Only one source of income	
2.	Two sources of income	
3.	Three sources of income	
4.	More than three sources of income	
<i>Yes = 1, No = 0</i>		

2. Primary source of income

<i>Items</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Primary source of income	

3. Secondary source of income

<i>Items</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Secondary source of income	

4. Tertiary source of income

<i>Items</i>	<i>Activity</i>
Tertiary source of income	

5. Skills in various sectors:

<i>Sectors/Enterprises</i>	<i>Yes / No</i>	<i>Sectors/Enterprises</i>	<i>Yes / No</i>
Farming		Post harvest activities (pickle, fermented fish, candy, etc)	
Weaving		Sericulture	
Basket making		Piggery	
Vendor		Cattle rearing	
Pisciculture		Poultry	
Traditional rice-wine making		Marketing	
<i>Yes = 1, No = 0</i>			

6. Seasonality:

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Yes/No</i>
I.	One income-generating activity all throughout the year	
II.	Two or more income-generating activities throughout the year	
<i>Yes = 1, No = 0</i>		

Part C

I. HLSI (Household Livelihood Security Index)

a. Economic Security

<i>Items</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Annual income of the household	

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Yes = 1</i>	<i>No = 0</i>
Savings can be done consistently every month		
We do not depend on others for financial needs		
Our income is enough to bear the family expenses		
There is financial problem in our family at the moment		

b. Food Security

<i>Items</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Monthly Food Expenditure	

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Yes = 1</i>	<i>No = 0</i>
I feel that the amount of food we are getting is adequate		
We are able to maintain a balanced diet		
We have to purchase most of the food items from the market		
The food items are easily available in the nearby market		
Good drinking water is available		
Sometimes, we have to skip a meal because of financial problem		
I worry that our food would run out before we get money to buy more food		

c. Health Security

<i>Items</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Monthly Health Expenditure	

<i>Service</i>	<i>Accessibility Distance (km)</i>
Primary health center	
Maternity hospital	
General hospital	

<i>Services</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Vaccination for children's		
24 hours facility		
Ambulance facility		
Health insurance		

d. Habitat Security

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
The type of our house is kaccha		
The type of our house is pucca		
The type of our house is semi-pucca mixed		
We own the land on which our house is built		
We have a good social relationship in our locality		
There is rarely social conflicts within our community		
If there is any conflict, our community try to solve it in an unbiased way		

e. Educational Security

<i>Items</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
Monthly educational Expenditure	

<i>Education</i>	<i>Accessibility Distance (km)</i>
Primary School	
High School	
Higher Secondary School	
College	
University	

f. Social Security

<i>Statements</i>	<i>No = 0</i>	<i>Yes = 1</i>
I am a member at village/block level (5)		
I have access to TV/radio (4)		
I have access to newspaper (3)		
I have access to phone (2)		
I have access to support from friends/neighbourhood (1)		

Part D

I. Empowerment of women in the study area:

A. PERSONAL LEVEL INDICATORS

A.1. Self-confidence (Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale):

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

<i>Sl.No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>
1	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
2	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
3	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.				
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.				
6	I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
7	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.				
9	I certainly feel useless at times.				
10	At times I think I am no good at all.				
SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree and SD= Strongly Disagree					

A.2. Opinions on women's economic role:

<i>With which of the two statements do you agree most?</i>			
	<i>Score</i>		<i>Score</i>
Men are better leaders than women.	1	A woman can be a leader, just like a man can	2
It is a waste of time to train a woman to keep financial records when you could train a man and he will do the job better.	1	It is good to train a woman to keep financial records because she can do the job as well as a man.	2

A good marriage is more important for a girl than a good education.	1	A good education is more important for a girl than a good marriage	2
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A.3. Acceptability of Gender-Based Violence (GBV):

<i>In your opinion, is it acceptable for a man to beat his wife if:</i>	<i>Yes = 1</i>	<i>No = 0</i>
She disobeys her husband or any in-laws		
He suspects that she has been unfaithful		
She neglects the children		
She spends money without permission		
She is not supporting her husband in earning income		
She goes out without permission		
She goes to see her family without permission		
She does not cook		
She argues back		

A.4. Individual knowledge:

<i>Do you think these statements are true or false?</i>	<i>True=2</i>	<i>False = 0</i>
I am aware that the Constitution of India guarantees equal rights to women.		
I am aware of the Domestic Violence Act that protects women from abuse.		
I am aware that harassment at home or anywhere is legally punishable.		
I am aware that after divorce, a woman has the right to ask for alimony from her husband.		
I am aware of schemes like PM SVANidhi that provide loans to vendors.		
I am aware of schemes like PMMY that provide loans to vendors		
I am aware that formation of SHGs among women can help acquire loans.		

A.5. Individual capability:

<i>To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>
I am willing to work and provide for my family					
I am willing to fight for my rights					
I am willing to support my sisters and friends to fight for their rights					
I am willing to work to bring an equality between the two gender					
<i>SD = Strongly Disagree = 1, D = Disagree = 2, U = Undecided = 3, A = Agree = 4, SA = Strongly Agree = 5</i>					

A.6. Personal Autonomy:

<i>Statements</i>	<i>Not at all =1</i>	<i>To some extent=2</i>	<i>To a large extent = 3</i>	<i>N/A=0</i>
Can you decide by yourself to visit your relatives/friends?				
Are you allowed to go out of your locality all alone by yourself?				
Can you personally decide to participate in community groups, activities or meetings taking place in your community?				
Can you go to your parents' house without informing your husband or in-laws?				
Can you spend money without the permission of anyone?				
Can you go out to join a festival without informing anyone?				
Can you decide by yourself to be a working woman?				
Can you decide by yourself to start a business/enterprise?				
Can you come out of the stereotypical married-woman dress code and dress up in your own comfortable ways?				
Are you allowed to drive a vehicle?				

A.7. Economic motivation:

A set of statements representing economic motivation of farmers are given below. Please state the degree of your agreement (SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, UD- Undecided, DA- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree), about each statement

<i>Sl.No.</i>	<i>Statements</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>UD</i>	<i>DA</i>	<i>SD</i>
1.	A woman should work towards larger income-generating activities and economic profits					
2.	The most empowered woman is she who makes the most profit.					
3.	A woman should try any new idea which may earn her more money.					
4.	A woman should try to make sure that the economic activities taken up is increasing monetary profits in comparison to just earning enough for house consumption					
5.	A woman must earn her s living but the most important thing in life cannot be defined in economic term.					
6.	It is difficult for a girl child to make a good start unless she is provided with economic assistance.					

A.8. Achievement motivation:

Sl. No.	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Only those women who depend on themselves go ahead in life					
2.	Women should struggle hard to provide better education for her family					
3.	Learning new skills leads to success in handling economic activities					
4.	Women should stay at home rather than work outside					
5.	One should work hard until one is satisfied with the result					
6.	Hard work leads to success in life					
7.	Women should concentrate only on cooking and household management					
8.	Hardwork is the only solution for most of the problems					
9.	Since everything is determined by God, there is no need to struggle hard on the farm					

A.9. Risk orientation: Scale developed by Supe (1969) with suitable modification

Sl.No.	Statements	A	UD	DA
1.	A woman should engage in more than two number of economic activities to avoid greater risks involved in engaging one or two activities			
2.	A woman should rather take more of a change in making a big profit than to be content with a smaller but less risky profits			
3.	A woman who is willing to take greater risks than the average woman usually have better financial condition			
4.	It is good for a woman to take risks when she knows his chance of success is high			
5.	It is better for a woman not to try new activity, unless most other women have used them with success			
6.	Trying an entirely new income-generating activity by a woman involves risk, but it is worth			

A.10. Decision making capacity:

I. How did you decide what income generating activities to be taken up?

3	Market conditions		Demand for the particular item		Financial need	
---	-------------------	--	--------------------------------	--	----------------	--

2	Ease in doing business		Market regulations		Satisfying the general needs of the family	
---	------------------------	--	--------------------	--	--	--

1.	Always undertake the same activity		Do not know	
----	------------------------------------	--	-------------	--

II. Why did you prefer to take up only those activities and not others? Because of:

3	Recommendations of experienced wholesaler/retailer		Choose to meet the specific needs		Conception of market	
---	--	--	-----------------------------------	--	----------------------	--

2	Experimenting with new economic enterprises		Recommendations Of Relatives/Neighbours		Use resources which were available	
---	---	--	---	--	------------------------------------	--

1	Same as last year		General experience of last year		Do not know	
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III. How did you decide your method for doing this type of business?

3	Recommendations of experienced wholesaler/retailer		Special benefits of the enterprise		Careful Observations of demand and supply of the particular product	
---	--	--	------------------------------------	--	---	--

2	General Experience or Knowledge		Recommendations of Relatives/Neighbours	
---	---------------------------------	--	---	--

1	The same as last year		Do not know	
---	-----------------------	--	-------------	--

IV. How do you decide the input to be used for your economic activities?

Because of:

3	The quality of the raw materials		Recommendations of experienced wholesaler/retailer		Availability of capital	
---	----------------------------------	--	--	--	-------------------------	--

2	General Experience of Knowledge		Recommendations of Relatives/Neighbours/Other Farmers		Recommendations of customers	
---	---------------------------------	--	---	--	------------------------------	--

1	Used what was in hand		Always uses the same		Do not know	
---	-----------------------	--	----------------------	--	-------------	--

V. How did you decide the various measures to protect your business?

3	Recommendations of wholesaler/retailer		Improving the quality of the product		Careful observations	
---	--	--	--------------------------------------	--	----------------------	--

2	General Experience of Knowledge		Recommendations of Relatives/Neighbours		Recommendations of customers	
---	---------------------------------	--	---	--	------------------------------	--

1	Used what was in hand		Always uses the same		Do not know	
---	-----------------------	--	----------------------	--	-------------	--

VI. How did you decide the time of marketing of your produce?

3	Consideration of the keeping quality of cotton		Market rates		Financial need	
---	--	--	--------------	--	----------------	--

2	Recommendations of Relatives/Neighbours		Recommendations of customers	
---	---	--	------------------------------	--

1	Always sell at the same time of the year		Immediately after production		Do not know	
---	--	--	------------------------------	--	-------------	--

VII. What type of written records do you keep?

3	Farm books		Production record		Receipts, check		Bills and sale		Records of expenditure and income	
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2	Records of labourers		Do not know or none	
---	----------------------	--	---------------------	--

1	Uses memory	
---	-------------	--

VIII. Have you ever tried to figure out what your profit was from your business?

3	Yes	
---	-----	--

1	No	
---	----	--

<i>Coding</i>	Rational = 3	Intermediate = 2	Less rational = 1
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B. RELATIONAL LEVEL INDICATORS

B.1. Family Support:

<i>Item no.</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Little</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Much</i>
1.	My family loves me				
2.	I get respect from my family				
3.	My family helps me with daily activities				
4.	My family helps me with religious activities				
5.	My family gives me useful information				
6.	My family gives me emotional support				
7.	My family shares important decisions with me				
8.	My family understands my personal desires				
9.	My family helps me to participate in social events				
10.	My family listens to my problems				
11.	My family helps to solve my problems				
12.	My family is aware of my health				
13.	My family helps in my treatment				
14.	My family treats me as an important person				
15.	My family gives me money when I need it				
16.	My family is careful about my food				
17.	My family is careful about my sleep				
18.	My family gives me companionship				
19.	My family helps me to stay happy				
20.	I am satisfied with my family support				
<i>No = 0, Little = 1, Some = 2, Much = 3</i>					

B.2. Group Participation:

Group participation and degrees of influencing in community groups

<i>Are you a member of the following groups?</i>	<i>1 = Yes 0 = No</i>	<i>Do you regularly attend meetings of groups given below? 1 = Yes 0 = No</i>	<i>If yes: To what extent are you involved in making important decisions in the group? 1 = Not at all 2 = To a small extent 3 = To a medium extent 4 = To a large extent</i>
Meira Paibi			
Women association			
Marup			
SHGs			
Youth club			
EU group			

B.3. Control over household assets:

<i>Does your household own the following items? Yes=1 No=0</i>	<i>If the household owns this item now, ask: Who would you say can decide whether to use, sell or replace item if the need arises? 1 = Respondent herself 2 = Husband/Father 3 = Respondent and husband/father/brother jointly 4 = Another household member 5 = Respondent and another household member jointly 6 = Someone outside the household 7 = Parents of the respondent 9 = N/A</i>
Land	
Vehicles	
Agricultural machinery (like tractor, harvester, sprayer, etc.)	
Livestock	
Cooking gas stove and cylinders	
Refrigerator	
Telephone/mobile-phone	
Others	

B.4. Household Decision Making

<i>In your household, who normally makes most of the decisions about the activities listed below?</i>	<i>1 = Respondent herself</i> <i>2 = Husband/Father</i> <i>3 = Respondent and husband/father jointly</i> <i>4 = Another household member</i> <i>5 = Respondent and another household member jointly</i> <i>6 = Someone outside the household</i> <i>7 = Parents of the respondents</i> <i>0 = Household is not involved in this activity</i> <i>9 = N/A</i>	<i>If decisions are NOT normally solely or jointly made by the respondent herself: To what extent do you think you can influence the person who makes the decisions to change their decision?</i> <i>1 = Not at all</i> <i>2 = To some extent</i> <i>3 = To a large extent</i> <i>9 = N/A</i>
How much of the income earned should be kept for savings		
How to spend the money earned from the main household income-generating activity		
How to spend the money earned from the other income-generating activity		
What food to buy and consume		
Purchase of furniture for the house		
Purchase of plots of land		
Purchase of plots of vehicles		
Purchase and sale of livestock		
Purchase of large cooking utensils (e.g. large saucepan)		
Whether the household should take out a small loan, from what source, and how much to borrow		
How to invest the money borrowed		
What to give relatives when they marry or have a celebration		
The education of your children		
How many children to have		
Transfer of property to a relative or any other person		
Approve a marriage		
Housework and care of the elderly person/children/disabled persons		

B.5. Contribution to Household Income:

Given the total income of your household, what is the percentage of your own contribution?	
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B.6. Time And Workload

<i>How many hours did you spend doing this activity?</i>	<i>Number of hours</i>
Care of children, elderly people, disabled person or other household members	
Cooking	
Cleaning the house	
Washing clothes	
Tending farm animals	
Income-generating activities	
Agricultural activities	
Shopping	
Leisure time	
Sleeping at night/napping	
Personal care and rest	
Ironing	
Religious activity	
Fetching water	
Fuel collection	
Others (specify)	

B.7. Experience Of GBV:

<i>Now I need to ask you about some things that may have been done to you by someone. Has anyone ever done any of the following to you during the last 12 months?</i>	<i>1 = Yes 2 = No 8 = No answer 9 = Don't know</i>	<i>Only if yes:</i>	
		<i>Did this take place within the household?</i>	<i>How many times did this happen during the last 12 months within the household? Number of times</i>
Say something to humiliate you in front of others			
Threaten to hurt or harm you or someone you care about			
Insult you or make you feel bad about			

yourself			
Push you, shake you, slap or punch you or throw something at you			
Threaten to attack you with a knife, gun or other weapon			

C. ENVIRONMENTAL LEVEL INDICATORS

C.1. Safety of Movement:

<i>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</i>	SD	D	U	A	SA
I feel safe to walk alone in and around my village					
I don't have to worry even if I have to go back home late at night					
<i>SD = Strongly Disagree = 1, D = Disagree = 2, U = Undecided = 3, A = Agree = 4, SA = Strongly Agree = 5</i>					

C.2. Social Norms and Stereotypes of Women's Economic Role

<i>To what extent do you think other women in your community agree with the following statements?</i>	SD	D	U	A	SA
Women are just capable as men of contributing to household income					
A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after home and family					
Women are able to be good leaders as well as men					
Women are better in financial decisions					
A man can save more money than a women					
<i>SD = Strongly Disagree = 1, D = Disagree = 2, U = Undecided = 3, A = Agree = 4, SA = Strongly Agree = 5</i>					

C.3. Ability to influence at political level:

<i>Statements</i>	SD	D	U	A	SA
I am a registered voter					
I usually take initiative to raise my voice regarding any political concerns					
I have contested an election earlier					
I am interested to contest an election as I believe I have the potential to bring a positive change					

D. Constraints

<i>Constraints</i>	<i>Yes=1</i>	<i>No=2</i>
Women's lack of access to credit is a barrier in women empowerment		
Social taboos, superstitions, religious customs and tradition hinder in women empowerment		
Lack of opportunity for female education is a barrier in the process of women empowerment		
Sometimes, the family members oppose the women to participate in social activities		
Lack of income generating activities of women and depending on others for financial needs is a hindrance to women empowerment		
The general act of giving the ownership of property to the male counterparts often a factor of suppressing the women		
Male members of the family generally taking in charge of the income and the financial decisions is a factor which suppresses the female members of the family		
The women even though they are earning are often not free to spend their income independently		
Lack of Knowledge on information is also a barrier in women empowerment		
Seldom, women raise their voices against any kind of harassment		
Women tend to avoid to lead a group or an organisation		
The male dominated society cannot digest the women coming forward to lead		
Women themselves can also hinder the other women		