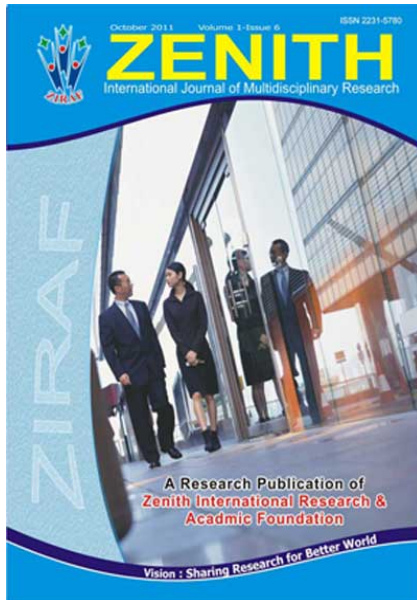


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ETHNIC CONFLICT AND WOMEN- A BRIEF NOTE ON NORTHEAST INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Ethnicity is a sense of identity or a feeling of belonging to a particular ethnic group. Ethnicity sometimes finds expression in political domination, economic exploitation and psychological oppression. Many (if not most) such conflicts involved violence along ethnic lines. Internal conflicts often appear to be ethnic in nature. North-eastern part of India has the landscape with potential racial, lingual and ethnic diversity which creates ethnic tension and conflict. Women of all communities who are caught up in a conflict of armed nature face the choice of either actually becoming involved or try to avoid such conflict or be a silent spectator. In this situation the plight of marginalized women is very degradable. In the Indian context ethnicity not only remains an important part of the reality but it also happens to be the source of a series of major problems faced by the Indian State. The northeastern region has been witness to numerous ethnic conflicts. The participation of women is critical to the success of any peace building process - if half the population is excluded or faces discrimination, peace will be impossible to achieve. It is not enough to have right laws and the institution of justice, but also a change in values is necessary for the right implementation of justice to women out of patriarchal biases. The responsibility lies with the civil society on one hand, and state agencies on the other.

KEYWORDS: ethnicity, conflicts, discrimination, justice, patriarchal.

INTRODUCTION:

Ethnicity is a sense of identity or a feeling of belonging to a particular ethnic group. Ethnicity or ethnic identity also involves, in addition to subjective self-consciousness, a claim to status and recognition either as a superior group or as a group at least equal to other groups (Brass 1991). Ethnicity is a very complex phenomenon. Like other social phenomena, it is subject to change. Its form, place and role in society may alter. Its links, with other social phenomena such as 'politics', 'religion' and class relations may change, posing new questions. It is always closely associated with political, juridical, religious and other social views and forms