



A Study on Socio-Cultural Profile of Chutiya People of Sarukachari Village, Golaghat District, Assam

Krishna Bora¹, Biswajit Bordoloi²

¹ Assam Jatiya Bidyalaya, Noonmati, Guwahati, Assam, Email: krishnabora21012@gmail.com

² Independent Researcher, Email: bordoloibiswajit38@gmail.com

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22096215>

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Received: 22-06-2026

Accepted: 27-07-2026

Published: 21-08-2026

Keywords:

Chutiya, Culture, Demography, Ethnic, Ritual.

ABSTRACT

It is impossible to analyze a tribe's culture, politics, economy, and education without also examining its society. The Chutiyas were the most cultured of all the Assamese ethnic groups, and they governed magnificently in the kingdom known as Vidarbha (now Sadia Region), with its capital at Kundil Nagar (now in Arunachal Pradesh). The Chutiyas made significant contributions to many facets of society, and without discussing their accomplishments, Assamese society today would be lacking. Assamese culture and civilization were greatly influenced by the Chutia monarchy, which had a long-lasting effect that persisted throughout subsequent historical developments. The Assamese government recognizes the Chutia people as an Other Backward class. They have a strong cultural and historical legacy as an ethnic tribe. The majority of Assamese culture's components were developed by the Chutia community out of all the Assamese ethnic groupings. The Chutiyas, who are currently scattered throughout Assam, have maintained a strong sense of cultural identity despite giving up some customs due to the effects of globalization. As long-lasting indicators of their cultural continuity, a variety of customs are still followed. This study examines the demographic pattern and cultural or rituals elements

Disclaimer: The opinions, interpretations, conclusions, recommendations, analyses, and statements expressed in this research article are solely those of the author(s) and do not reflect the views, policies, or positions of the Publisher, Chief Editor, Editors, Editorial Board, Reviewers, or their affiliated institutions. The author(s) are solely responsible for ensuring the originality, authenticity, and integrity of the manuscript and for ensuring that it is free from plagiarism, AI-generated content, copyright infringement, data falsification, and any other form of academic misconduct.

of the Sarukachari village. The study's foundation is made up of both primary and secondary data. A questionnaire and a basic random sample technique are used to select 100 households for primary data collection. Secondary data gathered from government and other sources was also included to the study's conclusion in order to comprehend the evolving circumstances.

Introduction

Recent crises in India's rural regions have had a direct or indirect impact on human development metrics, employment circumstances, residents' rights, migration and displacement, rural livelihoods, and ecological and environmental sustainability (Dutta & Mistri, 2012). Rural livelihoods, rural poverty, and rural development are frequently discussed in the development debate (Dutta & Mistri, 2012). It has been noted that the income path of agricultural households in emerging nations is fraught with significant risk and unpredictability (Bora, 2020). The majority of rural Indians make their living from agriculture and related sectors. Unfortunately, small and marginal farmers' land-based livelihoods are becoming less and less viable when land can no longer supply a family's requirements for food, fuel, and other modern amenities like entertainment, healthcare, and education. Modern rural economies rely on a variety of different industries in addition to agriculture in order to thrive and meet their demands.

A livelihood is a way to provide for one's basic needs, such as food, water, and shelter, while also utilizing one's talents, resources, and money (Chambers & Conway, 1992). The meaning of livelihood is location and time-specific, changing according to the people, customs, and culture of a particular area as well as the availability of resources in that area. It is a method of providing for one's basic needs, such as food, clothes, shelter, and water, while also accounting for one's assets, income, and skills. Livelihood diversification is a survival tactic employed by rural people in developing countries. Diversification might occur as a deliberate household strategy or as an innate response to the situation.

Each tribe has its unique set of customs, festivals, ceremonies, rituals, and beliefs. One can gain insight into their culture through these. Even if the original form of these ceremonies and rituals has undergone certain alterations as a result of transition, some traits are occasionally still present. These traits provide some insight on the tribe's prior social history. The term "culture" has a very broad and significant definition. Assamese culture is enhanced by the cultures of several tribes, including the Chutiyas, Morans, Boros, Kocharies, Ahoms, Tiwas, Rabhas, Deories, Mising, Singphoes, etc. The Chutiyas, who had

a very rich culture, were the first Aryanized and Hinduized tribe in Assam. Despite the Chutiyas' defeat by the Ahoms, their culture endures and contributes to Assamese civilization. The term "culture" encompasses a wide range of customs, including rites and rituals related to agriculture, childbirth, marriage, language and literature, festivals, clothing, food, habits, the economy, education, women's status in society, tools and methods of cultivation, dwelling houses, songs and dances, art and architecture, crafts and industries, etc (Bharali & Choudhury, 2024).

Rationalization of the study area

Sarukachari village is located at eastern part of Golaghat District, in the state of Assam, India, and under Golaghat revenue circle. The longitude extension of the village is $94^{\circ}6'0''\text{E}$ to $94^{\circ}8'0''\text{E}$ and latitudinal extension of the village is $26^{\circ}26'30''\text{N}$ to $26^{\circ}27'30''\text{N}$. The eastern part of the village is surrounded by Kakodonga river, in west by Mokrong river, Chokial gaon and Athkheliya namghar located in north and Basagaon and Borkachari gaon are located in southern part of the village. The famous Athkheliya Namghar is situated near the northern boundary of the village.

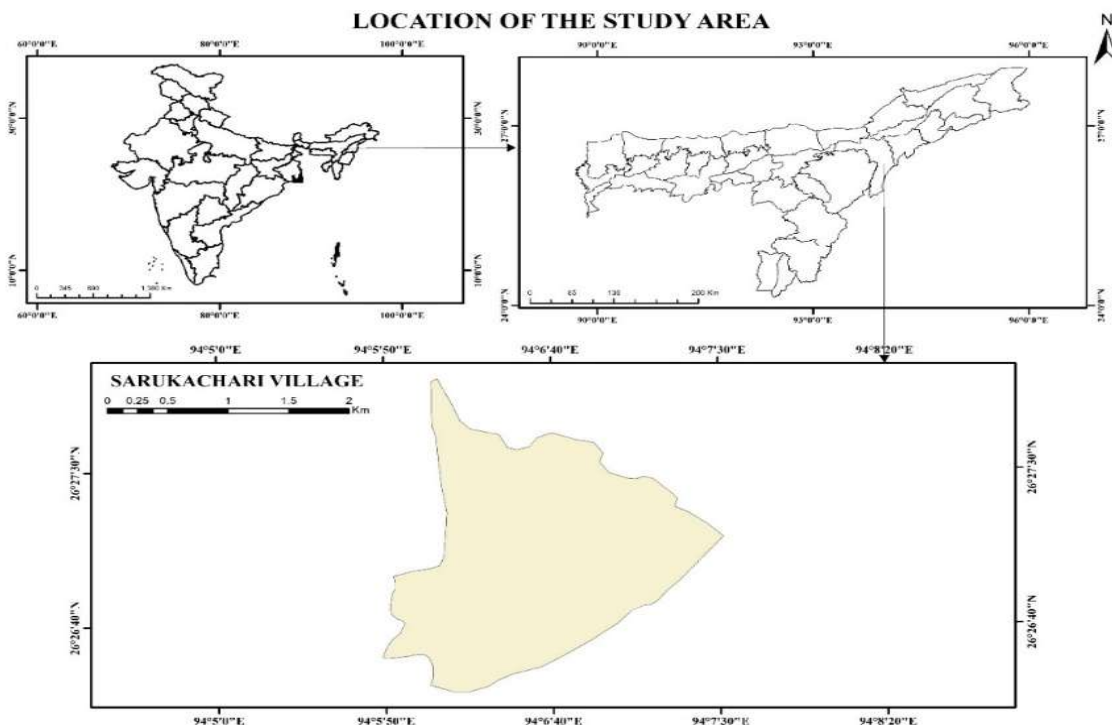


Fig. 1 Locational map of the Sarukachari village

With the total area of 375.48 hectares the village having 236 households has a total population of 1180, out of which male population is 618 while female population is 562 (According 2011 census). 100% of the resident of the village follow Hinduism and the village has a combination of people like Chutia, Kachari,



Sonowal, Ahom etc. Golaghat is nearest town to Sarukachari for economic and all other major administrative work. Also, Borholla is another important place for all economic activities of villagers which is located around 2.5 km away from the village, but Borholla town falls under Jorhat district. Agriculture is the dominant land use type in this village as almost 70% land is devoted to this activity and is the prominent occupation of the villagers. Approximately 75% of the residents of this village work in agriculture.

Database & Methodology

The current paper followed an imperial and descriptive method of analysis. Primary and secondary both methods are used to collect information or data. In this survey standard survey schedule has been developed and used to gather primary data from Sarukachari Village. Primary information is collected from 100 houses out of total 236 households of Sarukachari village based on simple random sampling. The primary and secondary data are represented, interpreted and analysed with the help of tables and figures. The entire study has been successfully completed using both qualitative and quantitative measures. Sex composition, literacy and educational attainment, life expectancy, income pattern, etc. taken from the villagers through direct interaction. Some of the related issues like total population, male and female population, total OBC, ST and SC population etc. have been collected from district census handbook 2011 book. The cadastral map of Sarukachari village were collected from the Golaghat Circle Office and a sketch map were collected from Athkheliya Primary Health Centre. GIS technique has also been used for the preparation of locational map of these villages.

Results and Discussions

Demographic and socio-economic characteristics have a significant influence on overall development in every community (Buragohain, 2013). The goal of the current study is to provide a quick overview of the sample homes' socio-cultural and demographic characteristics.

Sex Composition

The sex composition or ratio of a population is one of its basic demographic features, and it is essential for demographic research. Changes in the population's sex composition are mostly a reflection of a society's evolving socio-economic and cultural standards. The "sex ratio," which is a key indicator of gender inequality, is the number of females per thousand males (Brahmachary, 2021). 235 men and 206 women make up the entire population of 100 houses, which is 441 people, according to the primary survey conducted in 2022. As a result, there are 876 females for every 1000 males.

Literacy rate and educational attainment

A country's literacy rate, which gives information on the country's level of living, male and female social status, access to education, and governmental policies, is a measure of its socio-economic development. Economic advancement is both a cause and an effect of literacy. The literacy rate in India is the proportion of adults over 7 who are able to read, write, and comprehend mathematical operations. Sarukachari village's literacy rate is 86.9%, with male literacy at 84.18% and female literacy at 79.64%, according to the primary survey conducted in 2022.

Perhaps the most significant of the several characteristics of population makeup is education. An individual's educational standing refers to their degree of education or educational accomplishment. Education endows individuals with a feeling of autonomous judgment and the ability to choose between right and wrong. Education and development are correlated in both directions, and educational reform has a significant chance of triggering socio-economic or socio-cultural change across society.

Table 1 Educational attainment of the villagers, 2022

Below HSLC		HSLC		HS		Graduate		Graduate +		Illiterate
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
52	42	25	23	27	19	14	06	03	03	45

Source: Based on primary survey, 2022

Life expectancy

One's "life expectancy" is the number of years someone may expect to live. Life expectancy is a key component of human longevity and development, and various methods are being developed worldwide, including in India, to increase it. According to primary survey, the Sarukachari village's overall life expectancy is 71, while the life expectancy for men is 69 and for women it is 72.

Dress

The people of Sarukachari village mainly wear traditional Assamese clothes made from locally available fabrics. Women generally wear Mekhela Chadar along with Riha, especially during festivals, weddings, and social ceremonies. These dresses are commonly made from Muga, Pat, and Eri silk. Men usually wear Dhoti and Cheleng Chadar, particularly on religious and cultural occasions. The Gamocha (Gamosa) is widely



used by both men and women for daily purposes and also as a symbol of respect. Women also use Hasoti, a small hand cloth, in their everyday activities. Overall, the traditional clothing of Sarukachari village reflects Assamese culture, simplicity, and the use of indigenous textiles.

Importance of Women and men

Rituals such as Aai Sakam, and Gopini Sabah show that women had an important role in Chutiya society, and widows especially took active part in religious rituals. Agriculture was the main occupation, and women participated in all stages of farming such as transplanting, reaping, and harvesting. However, everyday life for common women was very hard. They had to manage all household duties including cooking, washing utensils, fetching water from nearby ponds or rivers, collecting firewood, cleaning the house, and caring for children and elderly family members. Even with their major contribution to family and society, women were considered inferior to men. The society was mainly patriarchal, where the father was the head of the family and everyone followed his authority. Wives were expected to respect their husbands almost like divine figures and never spoke their husbands' names. Daughters were not allowed to inherit their father's property, while widows were permitted to inherit the property of their husbands.

Food habits

Morning food mainly included jalpan such as chira, pitha, akhoi, muri, milk, and curd. Chutiya women were skilled in preparing different kinds of pitha and other rice-based items. They prepared sewadiya bora chawl, tora pitha, nangal dhowa pitha, til pitha, hesa pitha, khula chaporia pitha from different kinds of rice. Including pitika pura, Borali mas with outenga, kharisa, duck meat with kumura were popular dishes. They also consumed foods like kumal chawl (by boiling and then husking chakhua dhan), poita bhat (korkora bhat) along with vegetables such as brinjal and leafy greens and they often use a ladu made with the mix of bhimkal (or other bananas) and pithaguri. Rice beer was prepared and consumed during festivals like Bihu. Chewing betel nut was common, and guests were traditionally welcomed with betel nut and leaves.

Other important findings

The main religious institutions of the Chutiya people in the village are the Namghar and temples. The practice of Khel is prevalent in the village. This Namghar preserves the precious traditional weapon of the Chutiyas, known as the Chutiya Dhenu, which was made by Tisheswar and Muniya Chutiya of the village. This powerful bow later gained significant importance in the military system of the Ahoms.



Fig. 2 Chutiya Dhenu

Sarudoiya japi, bordoiya japi and the musical instruments like ‘doba’ and ‘kali’, originally belonged to the Chutiyas but later these were accepted by the Ahom royalty. Benudhar Sarmah opined that the Chutiyas addressed the goddess Devi Tamreswari as “Madoi,” and similar words such as Taradoi, Rahdoi, Bhadoi, etc., are still prevalent in Assamese society; however, in present times these words are generally used in a light-hearted or humorous sense for instance, when a woman looks beautiful or performs something praiseworthy, expressions like “Taradoi” are used, while words such as “Rahdoi” are used when a woman or a girl appears somewhat restless or mischievous and Women or girls who have little knowledge or awareness about minor or trivial matters are often casually referred to as “Bhadoi.”



Fig. 3 Xorudoiya Japi

Marriage is an important social institution of any community, and it holds a significant place in Chutiya society as well. Among the Chutiyas of the village studied by us, marriage takes place not only within their own community but also with people of other tribes. Three types of marriages are commonly observed in

this village: i) Nuwai Tuloni Biya (ii) Bar Biya and (iii) Burha Biya. Bar Biya is performed between a young boy and a girl and is solemnized in the presence of a priest through the ritual of homa yajna. On the other hand, Burha Biya refers to the practice in which a couple who had already been married long ago performs the marriage ceremony again in their old age; in this tradition, the bride remains the same, meaning the same couple that performed Bar Biya repeats the marriage. This marriage holds great importance in Chutiya society, as performing Burha Biya is considered mandatory for those who wish to take bhajan or become a bhakat in the presence of the Gosain. The social status of individuals who perform Burha Biya is regarded as higher than that of those who have only performed Bar Biya in Chutiya society.

The most essential human needs are a home, followed by food and clothes. The house is a shelter that man has constructed for himself to withstand the whims of the weather and to fulfil his fundamental physiological needs. As a result, a common element of the inhabited world is the house. Based on the materials used to construct the walls and roofing of the dwellings, houses are categorized as Pucca, Semi-Pucca, and Kutcha according to the Census of India (Dutta & Mistri, 2012). In this village, Kutcha buildings are built of earth and bamboo, and the roofs are covered in earthenware tiles and paddy straw. In contrast, Pucca dwellings are composed of concrete (Dutta & Mistri, 2012). Every home in these communities has an open area in front known as the "courtyard" or "chotal" (local name). Every household has an adjoining Bharal ghar (where agricultural products like rice are stored), Cow-shed, Namghar (local word "goxai ghar") to their home building.

Table 2 Types of houses, 2022

Types of houses	Number of households in Sarukachari village
AT Pucca	10
AT Semi-pucca	10
AT Kutcha	77
Hut	3

Source: Based on primary survey, 2022

Household income is reflected in the impact of low educational attainment and low-paying work (Das, 2020). 15 households make less than 50,000 rupees a year, making them very destitute and unable to afford even the most basic essentials for existence. In contrast to those who are impoverished, 77 households with annual earnings ranging from 50,000 to 2,00,000 rupees are considered to be well off. There are more men than women residing in these families, and they earn a livelihood via a range of jobs. The family's majority of members are employed in agriculture. Among other agricultural goods, they sell rice, meat, vegetables, and so on in order to make money. 8 households earning more than 2,000,000 rupees a year often work in the public or private sectors and own sizable amounts of land that may be cultivated. They can purchase whatever they need for luxury and lead lovely lives. This demonstrates how different people's livelihood patterns are from one another.

Table 3 Annual income pattern of the households, 2022

Income level (INR)	No. of family in Sarukachari village
Low (Below 50,000)	15
Medium (50,000-2,00000)	77
High (Above 2,00000)	8

Source: Based on primary survey, 2022

Conclusion

The macro-economic upheavals that India has seen since the early 1990s have made it more difficult for the lower sections of society to maintain stable livelihood patterns, particularly for rural households. The rise of the urban sector has benefited greatly from the process of globalization, whereas the rural sector has lagged behind. The socio-economic situation of the residents of Sarukachari village shows that although their exposure to contemporary society has caused certain modifications in their culture, the villagers are still in a backward position. One of the most crucial factors of demographic characteristics is the level of education and literacy. In these communities, women are literate at a rate that is comparatively lower than that of men, and their educational attainment is quite low. Therefore, it is imperative to address this imbalance through various planning and strategy approaches while simultaneously raising the villagers' level of knowledge. The majority of the villagers in Sarukachari village are working on their primary activities like agriculture, livestock rearing. In light of this, the majority of household income is low to medium. Such that individuals



are unable to meet their fundamental necessities for survival and have a poor level of living. Policy makers should focus on enhancing rural communities' economic, social, and other developmental frameworks in order to accomplish rural development. The government must support specific institutions in carrying out further research in this field as part of the regional development process. Thus, in addition to enhancing basic infrastructure, health and cleanliness must be prioritized, and as much work as possible must be done in both the public and private sectors to maintain livelihoods.

The Assamese census report from 1881 mentions the Chutiyas as a tribe, stating that "Chutiyas are very old inhabitants of Upper Assam." The Chutiyas were the most cultured ethnic group in Assam and had a golden past in the state's history. However, when the Ahom invaded the valley, the Chutiyas were the main ethnic group in upper Assam. The history, customs, and rituals of the Chutia tribe of Assam demonstrate their rich and colourful cultural heritage. This study makes it clear that the Chutia tribe's cultural legacy is an important resource for the tribe, the state of Assam, and the nation at large. As a result, efforts must be taken to protect and develop the Chutia tribe's unique cultural legacy, especially their agricultural rites, which are essential to their identity. By doing this, we can contribute to the rich cultural variety of our country and guarantee the survival and prosperity of the Chutia culture.

Acknowledgments

In order to successfully complete this study on Socio-Cultural profile of Chutiya people of Sarukachari Village, Golaghat District, Assam, the author would like to sincerely thank all the people and government/private organizations who provided assistance, direction, and encouragement.

References

- Bharali, G., & Choudhury, G. (2024). A Study of the Cultural Heritage of Chutia: An Ethnic Tribe of Assam With special reference to Rituals related to Agriculture. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 11(12), 322-327.
- Bora, D. (2020). DETERMINANTS OF LIVELIHOOD DIVERSIFICATION AMONG RABHA TRIBES OF ASSAM: A CASE STUDY. *Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17(7).
- Boruah, M. (2016). *Cultural Ecology Of A Flood Prone Area A Case Study Of Three Village Communities Viz Ahom Chutia And Mishing Of Chamarajan Area In Demaji District Assam* [Doctoral dissertation]. <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/291461>



Brahmachary, P. (2021). SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF URBAN WOMEN OF KOKRAJHAR DISTRICT OF ASSAM. *Indian Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 2(1), 9-28.

Buragohain, P. P. (2013). Human Development among the Tai Ahoms – A Case Study of Upper Assam. Unpublished doctoral thesis, Dibrugarh University

Census of India 2011 - Assam - Series 19 - Part XII B - District census handbook, Golaghat. (2011). <https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog/217>

Chambers, R. & Conway, G.R. (1992) Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century, IDS Discussion Paper 296, Brighton: IDS

Das, M. (2020). An analysis of the pattern and state of livelihood of the people of Goriaghuli village, Kamrup (Metro), Assam from a geographical perspective. *JOURNAL OF HUMAN ECOLOGY*, 71(1-3). <https://doi.org/10.31901/24566608.2020/71.1-3.3250>

Dutta, Shyamal & Mistri, Biswaranjan. (2012). Rural Livelihood Pattern of a Coastal Village in Purba Medinipur (W.B.). PANCHAKOTESAYS: a Multi-disciplinary referred International Journal, ISSN: 0976-4968. 3.

Mahanta, M. (2018). *Social Rites and Rituals of the chutiyas in Assam a study* [Doctoral dissertation]. <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/284925>