



**An Empirical Study on Voting Behaviour of Tai Khamyung Tribe of Powai-
Mukh Village of Tinsukia District of Assam**

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Abstract

Voting behavior is a frequently examined concept in democratic political studies. It is fundamental to democracy, as it is through elections that citizens select their representatives to form a government. Voting behavior is undeniably a crucial component of any political system, as no political system can function effectively without the electorate's awareness and participation in the political process. Casting a vote is a vital aspect of the democratic system, and decisions made at this foundational level have the potential to alter power structures. The Tai Khamyung tribe, a small group of Mongoloid descent, are indigenous inhabitants of Assam, having migrated from the Hukawng Valley of Eastern China in the pre-Christian era. They speak the Tai language and have preserved their distinct cultural identities and traditions. The Tai Khamyung tribe's unique cultural heritage and historical background may influence their voting behavior and political participation patterns. Understanding their perspectives on governance and decision-making processes can provide valuable insights into the functioning of democracy in diverse communities. Examining the tribe's engagement with local and national political systems may reveal important factors that shape their electoral choices and civic involvement.

Key words: Voting behavior, people's awareness, political process, people's participation, Tai khamyung, Hookang valley and Mongoliod.

1.0: Introduction

Assam has been home to numerous tribes characterize by diverse religion linguistic and cultural and practices. The Tai khamyung tribe is one of the tribes residing in Assam and its neighboring state, notably Arunachal Pradesh. In this paper an attempt has been explored the voting behaviour of Tai khamyung tribe in Tinsukia district. The picturesque of Powai-Mukh village located 12 kilometers from Margherita sub-division. This comprises with a population of 250 individuals who speak Tai language. Voting behaviour means which elements and circumstances influence a voter while making use of his vote. The elements and circumstances which influence voting are different in different States and in different circumstances. The voting behaviour is not uniform at all places. The voting behaviour of one place is different from the voting behaviour of another place. So, to draw general conclusion from the voting behaviour of one place will be wrong.

Voting behaviour is a deep process prompted by psychological elements and is influenced by many inward and outward elements. Somebody votes for the protection of group interests, and some makes use of vote by being actuated by religious, caste or religion feelings. Somebody makes use of his vote because of class consciousness, somebody for family traditions and somebody for relationship. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the political behaviour among the Tai khamyung tribe of Powai-Mukh village of Tinsukia district in Assam. The study focuses on the Tai Khamyung tribe residing in Powai-Mukh village, examining their unique voting patterns and political behavior. Factors such as group interests, religious affiliations, caste dynamics, and family traditions are considered in analyzing their electoral choices. This research aims to provide insights into the specific voting tendencies of the Tai Khamyung community within the broader context of Assam's diverse tribal landscape.

2.0: Objectives of the study:

The proposed study sets the following objectives

1. To find out the level of political behaviour of the Tai khamyung tribe.
2. To examine the role of the Tai khamyung tribe in the state politics of Assam.
3. To assess the level of political participation among the Tai khamyung tribe.
4. To focus on the voting behaviour of Tai khamyung tribe.

3.0: Methodology:

The study's methodology is largely historical-descriptive. The research involved gathering both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through field visits, interviews with tribal elders, and participant observation. Secondary data included government records, anthropological studies, and historical documents. This thorough approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of the tribe's development, traditions, and present-day issues in Powai-Mukh Village. The data collection process extended over several months, allowing for an in-depth engagement with the community's everyday life and cultural practices. Interviews with tribal elders offered valuable insights into the oral history and traditional knowledge systems passed down through generations. These firsthand narratives were cross-verified with archival materials to ensure accuracy and to detect any discrepancies or changes in cultural practices over time.

The research methodology employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to provide a nuanced perspective on the tribal community. Ethnographic fieldwork played a crucial role in capturing the lived experiences and cultural nuances of the tribe members. The triangulation of data sources enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings, offering a robust foundation for analysis and interpretation.

4.0: Data analysis and Findings

This section is devoted to an analysis of political behaviour, political awareness and voting behaviour of Tai khamyung of Powai-Mukh Village. The total sample of the study consisted of 150 (One hundred fifty) respondents. The following new question put to respondents which display as follows: -

Table No.1. Why did you cast vote?

Response	No. of Respondents	Total sample	Percentage (%)
Very high (100-76)	Nil	Nil	Nil
High (75-51)	07	07	4.67
Medium (50-25)	35	35	23.33
Low (Below 25)	101	101	67.33
No Responds	07	07	4.66
TOTAL	150	150	100

Table No.1 reveals the fact that the majority of the respondents of Powai-Mukh Village from low level group were the highest number 67.33 % as followed by medium level 23.33%, high level 4.67% and very high level is not found among the respondents having 4.66% did not respond to the questions.

Table No. 2.What type of political system was prevailing at present in India?

Response	No. of Respondent	Total Sample	Percentage (%)
High	03	03	2.00
Medium	26	26	17.33
Low	110	110	73.33
No Response	11	11	7.33
TOTAL	150	150	100

The above Table no. 2 shows that respondents belonging to low level group were the highest in number (73.33). As followed by medium level (17.33) and High level (2.00)and among them (7.33) respondents did not answer the above question.

Table No. 3**Were you a member of any political Party / Organization?**

Response	No. of Respondent	Total Sample	Percentage (%)
Yes	30	30	20.00
No	107	107	71.33
NoResponse	13	13	8.67
TOTAL	150	150	100

It is clear from the analysis of Table no. 3 that regarding the above question (71.33) of the respondents of the Village were answered negatively and 20 % respondents answered positively and above them while (8.67%) of the respondents did not respond to the question.

Table No. 4

Did you think that there should be separate political party of your community?

Response	No. of Respondent	Total sample	Percentage(%)
Yes	30	30	20.00
No	104	104	69.00
No response	16	16	10.67
TOTAL	150	150	100

From the above Table no. 4, it has been revealed that the majority of the respondents (73.33%) of the village were answered negatively. Only (20.00%) respondents were answered positively and (6.47%) respondents did not respond to the question.

Table No. 5

Did you read newspaper?

Response	No. of respondent	Total Sample	Percentage (%)
Yes	30	30	20.00
No	104	104	69.00
No response	16	16	10.67
TOTAL	150	150	100

The above Table no. 5 has shown that only 20% of respondents of the village were interested in reading the newspaper while 69% of respondents did not get information through reading the newspaper. Among the respondents 10.67% did not answer the above question.

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. The socio-economic conditions of the majority of the Tai khamyung tribe are very poor in nature.
2. The low voting rate has made them less politically aware.
3. Illiteracy is one of the causes of low political awareness of the Tai khamyung tribe.
4. The Tai Khamyung tribe has less political participation in government and non-government activities.

5.0: Suggestions:

1. The intelligentsia should come forward to help Tai khamyung tribe as a whole
2. Proper education and economics policies will have to be formulated by the government to upgrade their socio-economic and political status.
3. All possible efforts from all quarter including government and non-government should be made to draw the Tai khamyung tribe to the mainstream of the country.
4. Special economics package should be provided by the government for upgradation of socio-economics status of Tai khamyung tribe.

Furthermore, it may be noted that the Tai khamyung tribe have been contributing towards political and socio-economic development of the state since the colonial rule. But they are always neglected and deprived from their opportunities. Therefore, they deserve special attention of the social scientist.

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