

## Empowering Women through Indigenous Practices: A Pathway to Sustainable Development in Assam's Tea Industry

<sup>1</sup>Chandamita Nath, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Sudesh Kumar

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, SOLA, GD Goenka University, Gurgaon Haryana

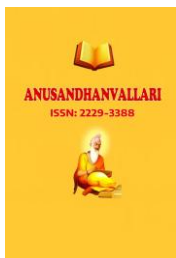
<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor of Sociology, SOLA, GD Goenka University, Gurgaon Haryana

**Abstract:** This study examines the role of ethnic and local practices among womenfolk in Assam's tea plantation communities and their contribution to sustainable development. It brings attention to the rich, yet often disregarded, knowledge systems possessed by these women particularly in the domains of old fashioned farming techniques, herbal medication, water conservation, and community based sacraments. These practices, rooted in generations of lived experience, embody viable approaches to ecological control and social interconnection. The paper emphasises that these women are not merely labourers but active custodians of ecological perception. Their deep connection with nature and community life equips them with strategies that promote resilience in the face of environmental and socioeconomic challenges. However, conventional development policies have often overlooked these contributions, leading to the undervaluation or loss of women's indigenous knowledge. This study advocates for the recognition and integration of these traditional practices into formal sustainability frameworks and development charters. It proposes a model that aligns gender empowerment with ecological stewardship. The argument put forth is that valuing and supporting women's traditional knowledge systems can create more inclusive, equitable, and effective pathways to sustainable development. Ultimately, the paper calls for a paradigm shift that places women's indigenous knowledge at the core not only as a means of preserving cultural heritage but also as a critical resource for achieving long term ecological balance, social justice, and economic sustainability in Assam's tea growing regions. Viewed through this lens, women's empowerment emerges as both a fundamental goal and a driving force in the broader pursuit of sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Indigenous, Women Empowerment, Sustainable Development, Tea Plantation Communities, Ecological Stewardship.

### Introduction:

The Assam tea industry, renowned for its distinctive and robust tea varieties, relies heavily on the often underappreciated role of women. Despite being traditionally marginalised, women in this sector play pivotal roles across various stages of tea production, from harvesting to processing. Their substantial contributions shape the industry, yet they confront distinct challenges (Thomas 2023). The origins of the Assam tea plantation industry can be traced back to the early 19th century when British colonialists identified the region's favourable conditions for tea cultivation. In 1823, Scottish explorer Robert Bruce and his brother Charles stumbled upon a wild tea plant in Assam, prompting exploration into tea cultivation in the area (Guha, 1977). The industry gained momentum when the British East India Company recognized the potential for lucrative tea cultivation. The establishment of the Chabua Estate in 1837 marked the formal initiation of the Assam tea industry, rapidly expanding with the creation of more plantations and becoming a significant economic force in the region. The introduction of the Assam variety of the *Camellia sinensis* plant, renowned for its bold and malty flavour, further fuelled the industry's growth. Assam tea gained popularity not only in Britain but also globally. The British strategically positioned tea gardens along the Brahmaputra River, capitalizing on the fertile plains and favourable climate of Assam.



Despite challenges such as labour shortages and the impact of global events like the World Wars during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Assam tea industry continued to thrive. By the mid20th century, Assam had become synonymous with high quality tea production. In the post-independence era, the Assam tea industry underwent significant changes, with the Indian government promoting indigenous ownership of tea estates. The establishment of the Assam Tea Corporation in the 1970s aimed to support small tea growers and ensure fair wages for labourers.

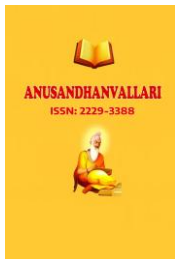
Today, Assam stands as one of the largest tea producing regions globally, renowned for its robust and full bodied black teas. The tea estates in Assam not only contribute substantially to the economy but also play a crucial role in the cultural heritage of the region. The historical journey of transforming wild tea plants into a globally recognized tea producing hub is a testament to the Assam tea plantation industry's enduring legacy. The economic and social inclusion of labourers in Assam's plantation industry, particularly concerning gender dynamics, has emerged as a topic of heightened importance. The tea plantation industry in Assam holds a significant place in both the cultural and economic landscape of India. Known globally for its strong, brisk tea, Assam contributes a substantial share to the nation's tea production and export. However, beneath the surface of this thriving industry lie pressing concerns related to environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic justice. With increasing pressure from global markets, changing climatic conditions, and expanding monoculture practices, the need for sustainable practices in Assam's tea sector has become more urgent than ever. Sustainability in this context refers not only to ecological balance but also to the wellbeing of workers, especially women, who form the backbone of this industry. Historically, the tea plantations in Assam were developed during the colonial period, often without considering the long term environmental consequences or the rights and welfare of the local communities. Over time, the expansion of chemical intensive farming methods, soil degradation, water scarcity, and deforestation have created challenges that threaten the future viability of the industry. At the same time, workers particularly women from tea tribal communities face socioeconomic marginalization and poor living conditions despite their significant contributions to tea production. Addressing sustainability in Assam's tea industry, therefore, requires a holistic approach. This includes promoting ecofriendly farming practices, recognizing indigenous knowledge systems, ensuring fair wages and safe working conditions, and encouraging community participation in decision making. It also calls for policies that balance productivity with conservation, and economic development with social inclusion. As Assam's tea gardens continue to evolve, embracing sustainability is not just an ethical imperative it is key to preserving the legacy and future of the industry.

#### **Literature review:**

Bhattacharyya, Debajyoti (2010), Women Workers in the Tea Plantations of Assam. Bhattacharyya offers a comprehensive justification of the socioeconomic conditions of women workers in Assam's tea gardens. He explores issues like labour exploitation, gender inequality, and health dangers. While the study mainly reviews modern plantation systems, it hints at the loss of traditional community systems that once supported women. This work is initial in understanding the systemic barriers women face and indirectly underscores the potential of reestablishing indigenous contexts for empowerment and sustainability.

Tiwary's (2015) research work highpoints the significant offerings of tribal women in preserving ecological balance and cultural heritage through traditional practices. The study emphasizes how indigenous agricultural methods, community management systems, and knowledge of biodiversity align with sustainable development goals. It validates the central argument that empowering women through these practices is not only culturally appropriate but essential for sustainable growth in Assam's tea industry.

Kikon (2019) examines the gendered impacts of extractive industries and emphasizes how indigenous women resist displacement and environmental degradation through community mobilization and traditional practices. Although not directly about tea plantations, this work provides a critical framework for analysing how indigenous



knowledge and gender intersect in resisting exploitative systems. It offers parallels to the tea industry's dynamics in Assam.

Sarma's (2016) study sheds light on the health practices among tea garden women workers, many of whom rely on traditional knowledge due to limited access to formal healthcare. The research finds that indigenous remedies and community based hygiene practices play a significant role in maintaining wellbeing. This supports the argument that indigenous knowledge is not only sustainable but vital to women's everyday survival and empowerment.

Baruah (2005) contextualizes the Northeast's developmental challenges, focusing on how stateled industrialization and development have often excluded local voices. While not gender specific, the book illustrates how indigenous systems have been disrupted, adversely affecting women's traditional roles. This historical political backdrop is crucial for understanding the disempowerment of women in tea plantations and the importance of reviving indigenous practices.

UNDP (2020). Indigenous Women and Sustainable Development Goals. This global report provides evidence of how indigenous women contribute to achieving SDGs through traditional ecological knowledge, leadership in natural resource management, and cultural preservation. It presents case studies from various regions, reinforcing the idea that empowering indigenous women promotes both gender equality and environmental sustainability. This aligns well with your study's goals in the context of Assam.

Misra (2011) explores the cultural and political resistance of Northeast communities, with a focus on women's roles in maintaining indigenous identity. She highlights how women become custodians of traditional knowledge and community resilience. This offers a theoretical grounding for understanding indigenous practices as tools for empowerment, especially in patriarchal and exploitative settings like tea plantations.

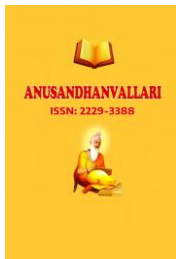
Goswami (2012) analyses the gendered dimensions of conflict and development in the region. Her study shows how women, despite marginalization, reclaim agency through traditional leadership roles and community engagement. This is relevant to your work as it illustrates the potential of indigenous systems in fostering women's empowerment, especially where mainstream structures fail.

Roy, Himadri & Bhuyan, Rina (2022). This realistic study assesses how Self Help Groups (SHGs), often rooted in traditional mutual aid systems, have empowered women economically and socially in Assam's tea estates. The authors argue that combining modern organizational tools with indigenous collective practices creates sustainable empowerment. This directly supports your research hypothesis and offers practical examples of empowerment models.

Das (2007) discovers how social exclusion, including of women and indigenous societies, has been perpetuated by peace and development policies. He critiques top down models and calls for community driven, culturally embedded approaches. The work indirectly emphasizes the value of traditional systems and women's agency in achieving long term, inclusive development, making it relevant for your focus on sustainable pathways in the tea industry.

### **Methodology:**

This study uses a qualitative design for an ethnographic case study to understand how indigenous practices empower women and promote sustainable development within Assam's tea plantation communities. Ethnography offers the opportunity for immersive engagement with participants' daily lives, capturing the cultural and social nuances that shape their experiences. The case study approach allows the researcher to focus closely on specific contexts where such practices are most visible and influential. The fieldwork will take place in selected tea estates



across Upper Assam, particularly in the districts of Tinsukia and Jorhat. Special attention will be given to Ellora Tea Estate in Jorhat, known for its vibrant community life and continued reliance on traditional knowledge systems. These regions are historically significant in Assam's tea industry and provide a rich backdrop for exploring women's roles, challenges, and agency in both domestic and work settings. Data will be collected through a variety of qualitative methods. In depth interviews will be carried out with women plantation workers to document their personal stories, everyday struggles, and how indigenous practices contribute to their wellbeing. Conversations with local elders and cultural knowledge holders will also help uncover the intergenerational transmission of these traditions. Focus group discussions will create space for women to reflect collectively on themes such as traditional healing, childcare, environmental practices, food habits, and community support systems. In addition, participant observation will be a key component of the research. By actively engaging in daily routines, rituals, and informal interactions, the researcher will gain deeper insight into the social fabric and gender dynamics within these communities. For analysis, the study will use thematic coding, drawing connections across interview transcripts, observations, and group discussions to identify recurring patterns and meanings.

The findings will be interpreted through the lens of intersectional feminist theory, which examines how gender, class, ethnicity, and historical marginalisation intersect in shaping the lives of women in plantation settings. This approach will help reveal how indigenous knowledge not only supports basic survival but also enhances women's agency, community identity, and ecological awareness. Ultimately, the study aims to present an alternative, community rooted vision of development one that recognises and builds upon the knowledge, resilience, and cultural strength of women in Assam's tea gardens.

#### **Indigenous Practices among Women in Tea Plantations:**

In the tea garden areas of Assam, women have deep knowledge of medicinal plants, which they use to treat common health problems like coughs, stomach aches, and fevers. These remedies are made from herbs like tulsi, neem, turmeric, and ghost pepper. This traditional knowledge is passed from one generation to the next, usually through women in the family. It helps families who don't have easy access to modern healthcare. Women also make natural insect repellents and healing pastes, showing how close they are to nature and how they care for both people and the environment. To deal with food shortages during rainy seasons or when income is low, women in tea communities use traditional ways to preserve food. They dry vegetables and fish in the sun, ferment bamboo shoots, and pickle or smoke meat. These methods keep food safe to eat for a long time and add flavour and nutrition. Women usually learn these skills from their mothers or other older women. They use simple tools like clay pots or bamboo baskets that are ecofriendly. These skills help families survive tough times and show how capable and creative women are in taking care of their households. Women also look after small home gardens near their houses, where they grow vegetables, herbs, and medicinal plants. They use ecofriendly techniques like collecting rainwater, making compost from kitchen waste, and planting in a way that saves water and protects the soil. These gardens help feed the family and sometimes even bring in extra money. By doing this, women protect nature while also supporting their families, making those strong contributors to sustainable development. Cultural rituals in these communities are closely tied to nature.

Women lead many of these ceremonies, especially during planting or harvest seasons. These include songs, dances, and prayers that show respect for the land, the weather, and natural cycles. Through these traditions, they pass on important values about living in harmony with nature. These rituals also help younger generations learn about their roots and strengthen the community. Women play a big role in keeping these customs alive. Lastly, since many of these communities don't have access to proper schools, most learning happens at home.

Women teach the younger girls how to cook, farm, make medicines, and take care of the family. These lessons are shared while working together in the kitchen, fields, or during festivals. This type of learning creates strong



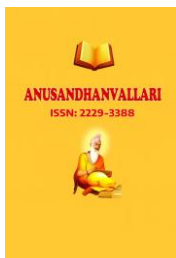
bonds and helps girls grow with confidence and skills. It also helps preserve the wisdom of past generations, led by the women of the community.

### **Empowerment through Indigenous Practices:**

In Assam's tea plantation communities, economic empowerment is becoming increasingly visible through the growth of cottage industries, many of which are rooted in traditional knowledge systems passed down through generations. Women in these communities are at the forefront of creating and running small scale industries such as weaving, making herbal products, and crafting items from bamboo. For example, women in Assam weave textiles using locally sourced materials, a practice that has been passed down from their ancestors. These textiles often reflect the region's culture and traditions, while also providing a steady source of income. Additionally, women use indigenous herbs and plants to make natural soaps, oils, and medicinal products, which are sold in local markets and sometimes even outside the region. This involvement in cottage industries gives women a sense of financial independence, allowing them to have greater control over household finances and contribute to the wellbeing of their families. Women also collaborate through self-help groups (SHGs), where they work together to produce and market their products. These groups provide a platform for women to share knowledge, pool resources, and improve their financial standing, leading to a more stable and self-sufficient community. Through these economic activities, women not only generate income but also invest in better education and healthcare for their families, which has long term positive effects on the entire community. Social empowerment for women in these communities is equally important, as it provides women with opportunities to take leadership roles within the community. Traditionally, women have played a central role in organizing and leading cultural rituals, festivals, and ceremonies, which are key to maintaining the social fabric of tea garden villages. These rituals are often tied to the agricultural cycle, such as planting and harvest festivals, and are essential for the cohesion of the community. By leading these cultural activities, women gain recognition and respect, while also building their leadership skills. In recent years, women's involvement has expanded beyond cultural events, with more women stepping into leadership roles within local governance bodies. Women now actively participate in community decision making, particularly on issues related to healthcare, sanitation, and education, which are areas where they have firsthand experience and knowledge. By becoming involved in these areas, women challenge traditional gender roles and advocate for policies that address their specific needs. This shift in leadership also inspires younger generations of girls, showing them that leadership and civic participation are within reach. Ecological empowerment in Assam's tea plantations reflects women's deep connection to the land and their role as caretakers of the environment. Women traditionally manage household gardens, grow food, and collect medicinal plants, skills that are passed down through generations. Their knowledge of local plants and animals helps them maintain ecological balance in their surroundings. For example, women often use organic methods to grow vegetables, herbs, and fruits, ensuring the sustainability of these resources for future generations. In addition, women play an important role in conservation efforts by protecting sacred groves and engaging in tree planting activities. These practices not only help secure food and medicinal resources for families but also contribute to biodiversity preservation and environmental sustainability. By practicing sustainable agriculture and caring for the environment, women help ensure that their communities continue to thrive despite challenges like climate change and deforestation. Their stewardship of natural resources reflects a profound understanding of the importance of balancing economic needs with environmental protection. Political empowerment in Assam's tea plantations has also been growing as women have begun to mobilize for their rights.

Many women are actively involved in movements focused on land rights, fair wages, and recognition of their contributions to the community. In the past, the land on which many tea plantation workers live was not legally recognized as theirs, but women have taken a leading role in advocating for land titles and legal recognition of their traditional occupations.



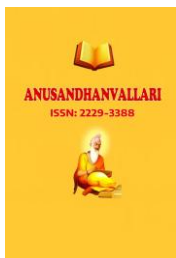


Women are also campaigning for better working conditions in the tea estates, pushing for fair pay and improved labour rights. These efforts highlight women's ability to organize and mobilize for social and economic justice. Political empowerment goes beyond just land and wages it also includes the recognition of women as knowledge holders in areas like agriculture, herbal medicine, and cultural practices. By asserting their value in these areas, women are slowly gaining recognition from both local and national authorities, ensuring that their voices are heard in policy discussions. This political participation not only benefits women but also sets a precedent for future generations of women to take an active role in shaping their communities and claiming their rights.

### **Challenges and Barriers:**

The displacement of traditional knowledge by industrial models is a significant issue faced by rural communities, especially in regions like Assam's tea plantations. Traditionally, women in these communities have played a crucial role in preserving and transmitting Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), which includes practices related to herbal medicine, food preservation, sustainable agriculture, and community based environmental management. However, with the rise of industrialization in the tea plantation sector, particularly the focus on large scale monoculture tea production, these traditional practices are being increasingly sidelined. The focus of plantation management is now on maximizing yield, using modern agricultural techniques, and relying on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. As a result, the sustainable, environmentally friendly practices traditionally used by women, such as organic farming, composting, and agroforestry, are being replaced by more industrial methods that often undermine the health of the land and the community. This shift disrupts the connection between women and the land, erodes local biodiversity, and displaces the invaluable ecological knowledge that has been passed down for generations. Patriarchal systems within both the community and the plantation hierarchy further complicate the situation. In many tea plantations, a patriarchal social structure dictates the roles and responsibilities of both women and men, with women often relegated to domestic tasks while men dominate in decision making and labour within the public and economic spheres. In the plantation hierarchy, men are often employed in supervisory or managerial positions, while women remain in lower paying, labour intensive jobs, such as plucking tea leaves. This unequal division of labour not only limits women's economic opportunities but also suppresses their participation in broader discussions about the future of the tea industry or land use. Within the community, while women may have a strong knowledge of traditional practices, their voices are often not heard in formal decision making processes. This exclusion leads to a situation where industrial models, which are primarily designed and controlled by men, become the dominant force, sidelining the voices and wisdom of women. This imbalance perpetuates the systemic oppression of women and further marginalizes their contributions to the community and the tea industry. The lack of policy recognition of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and women's contributions is another critical issue. Despite the immense value of IKS in areas such as sustainable agriculture, medicinal plant use, and natural resource management, these practices are often not officially acknowledged by government policies. National and local policies often fail to recognize the role of women in preserving these knowledge systems, leaving them vulnerable to the encroachment of industrial farming models and exploitation of natural resources. Moreover, when women do play a role in local policy discussions, their perspectives are frequently ignored or undervalued. As a result, their contributions to both environmental conservation and the economy are not adequately recognized or supported.

The lack of policy frameworks that safeguard IKS and women's rights in these communities mean that these practices are at risk of disappearing, and women's empowerment through their traditional knowledge is severely restricted. The pressures of the global market and the rise of monoculture farming also pose significant threats to the sustainability of traditional practices. With the global demand for tea, especially from multinational corporations, there is a growing emphasis on mass production, uniformity, and the standardization of tea cultivation. This often leads to the replacement of diverse agricultural systems with large scale monoculture plantations that prioritize profit over ecological health. Monoculture farming, while economically beneficial in



the short term, leads to soil degradation, loss of biodiversity, and increased dependency on chemical inputs. For the women who have historically practiced diverse, sustainable farming methods, this shift is not only an economic challenge but also an existential threat to their way of life. The pressures to meet global market demands further limit their ability to continue traditional farming practices, thereby contributing to the erosion of local knowledge and cultural identity. In conclusion, the displacement of traditional knowledge in Assam's tea plantation communities is a multifaceted issue rooted in industrialization, patriarchy, lack of policy support, and global market pressures. Women, who have traditionally been the custodians of ecological and cultural knowledge, are now at risk of losing the means to preserve and pass on these practices. This displacement not only threatens the environment but also undermines the social and economic empowerment of women in these communities. Without policy recognition, gender equality, and support for IKS, these traditional practices face an uncertain future in the face of industrialization and globalization.

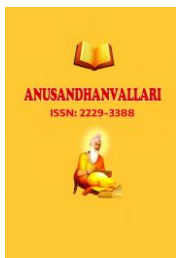
### **Policy Implications and Recommendations:**

Acknowledging and recording the indigenous knowledge held by women in Assam's tea plantation communities is a crucial step toward preserving both cultural heritage and sustainable practices. For generations, women have been the caretakers of unique skills ranging from herbal healing methods and food fermentation to seed preservation and natural pest control. Yet much of this knowledge remains informal and undocumented, risking extinction in the face of modernization and industrial agriculture. When we actively recognize and archive this traditional wisdom through storytelling, ethnographic studies, and local documentation efforts, it not only helps safeguard cultural identity but also affirms the value of women's contributions to community life and ecological health. These records can serve as a resource for education, policymaking, and future development planning that truly reflects local needs and strengths.

Another vital step is to weave this indigenous knowledge into training programs focused on skill development and sustainable living. Most vocational and sustainability initiatives rely heavily on standardized or external knowledge, often overlooking the relevance of what local women already know and practice. By integrating indigenous techniques like organic composting, climate sensitive cropping patterns, or natural dyeing methods into training modules, programs become more meaningful, practical, and community led. This approach not only enhances women's confidence in their skills but also encourages them to innovate while staying rooted in tradition. Workshops, local schools, and NGO led training centres can be ideal platforms to deliver this blended learning model, which values both traditional and modern perspectives. These efforts would support not only sustainable livelihoods but also ecological awareness within the community.

To support long term economic independence, public policy must evolve to encourage entrepreneurship rooted in indigenous practices. Many women in tea plantation regions are already involved in small scale income generating activities, such as preparing herbal balms, crafting handmade textiles, or selling pickled vegetables using time tested methods. With policy support such as microfinance, marketing help, and subsidies, these traditional crafts can be scaled into viable small businesses. Developing marketplaces, cooperatives, and rural business hubs specifically for indigenous women led enterprises would provide visibility and economic stability. Additionally, protecting indigenous intellectual property through legal frameworks would ensure women retain control over their cultural assets. These steps not only uplift rural economies but also give recognition and dignity to women's traditional work, which often goes unnoticed.

Finally, a participatory and community driven approach to development and research can be transformative. Rather than viewing women merely as beneficiaries, they should be engaged as key stakeholders in shaping the direction of development projects. Community mapping, peer learning circles, and participatory rural appraisals (PRAs) are effective ways to make women's voices central. Through these forums, women can share their knowledge, identify local priorities, and co-develop sustainable solutions. When women are empowered to



participate in the research and decision making that directly impacts their lives, development becomes more inclusive, sustainable, and authentic. In the context of Assam's tea industry, this approach can nurture both community resilience and gender equity by aligning progress with the lived wisdom and experience of women.

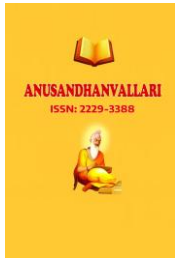
### Conclusion:

In conclusion, the lives and contributions of women in Assam's tea plantation communities offer a powerful testament to the strength of indigenous practices and their relevance in shaping a more equitable and sustainable future. From herbal medicine and traditional agriculture to food preservation and cultural rituals, women carry generations of knowledge that is intricately woven into their everyday lives. These practices not only sustain their families but also reflect a profound understanding of ecology, community, and resilience. Despite their critical roles, women often remain marginalized due to industrial exploitation, patriarchal structures, and a lack of policy recognition. The expansion of monoculture farming and modern development models continues to displace traditional knowledge systems, stripping women of the tools they have long relied upon. Without meaningful intervention, there is a growing risk of losing these deeply rooted skills and wisdom, which are not only vital to local survival but also to global conversations around sustainability and cultural preservation. However, the path forward is promising if steps are taken to recognize and support these women. By documenting indigenous knowledge, integrating it into training and skill development programs, encouraging entrepreneurship based on traditional crafts, and involving women in participatory decision making, a transformative change can be achieved. Such efforts would not only empower women economically, socially, ecologically, and politically but also contribute to broader goals such as sustainable development and gender equity. Ultimately, the future of Assam's tea industry and its surrounding communities lies in valuing the heritage of those who have nurtured it for generations. Empowering women through indigenous practices is not just a matter of justice it is a strategic and sustainable investment in the cultural and ecological health of the region.

### References:

- [1] Agarwal, B. (1994). A field of one's own: Gender and land rights in South Asia. Cambridge University Press.
- [2] Breman, J. (2004). The making and unmaking of an industrial working class: Sliding down the labour hierarchy in Ahmedabad. Oxford University Press.
- [3] Sharma, J. (2011). Empire's garden: Assam and the making of India. Duke University Press.
- [4] Baruah, S. (2000). Indigenous peoples, development and democracy in the Northeast. India International Centre Quarterly, 27(2), 93–104.
- [5] Borpujari, M. (2020). Empowering the tea tribe women of Assam: Through education and indigenous knowledge. Journal of Gender Studies and Development, 3(1), 45–59.
- [6] Nayak, B. (2018). Sustainable development and the tea plantation industry in Assam. Indian Journal of Sustainable Development, 6(2), 17–26.
- [7] Saikia, A. (2019). Women in Assam's tea gardens: Intersectionality and exploitation. Economic and Political Weekly, 54(23), 22–25.
- [8] International Labour Organization. (2018). Working conditions of women workers in the tea sector of Assam. ILO India. <https://www.ilo.org/>
- [9] Oxfam India. (2019). Addressing the root causes of inequality in Assam's tea industry. <https://www.oxfamindia.org/>
- [10] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India. (2021). Indigenous practices and the SDGs: A study on local knowledge systems in North East India. <https://www.undp.org/>
- [11] Bhattacharyya, D. (2010). Women workers in the tea plantations of Assam. Journal of Indian Sociology, 48(3), 239–258.





- 
- [12] Das, S. K. (2007). Peace processes and social exclusion in Northeast India. *Journal of Peace and Development Studies*, 2(1), 15–30.
- [13] Goswami, N. (2012). Gender and conflict in Northeast India. *Gender, Development, and Conflict Journal*, 1(2), 28–45.
- [14] Kikon, D. (2019). Living with oil and coal: Resource politics and militarization in Northeast India. *Political Ecology Journal*, 6(2), 98–112
- [15] Misra, T. (2011). The periphery strikes back: Challenges to the nationstate in Assam and Nagaland. *Northeast Political Review*, 4(1), 53–71.
- [16] Roy, H., & Bhuyan, R. (2022). Empowerment of tea garden women workers through selfhelp groups in Assam. *Journal of Rural Development*, 41(2), 91–106.
- [17] Sarma, J. (2016). Health and hygiene practices of women workers in tea gardens of Assam. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research and Development*, 7(3), 222–230.
- [18] Tiwary, D. (2015). Sustainable development and the role of tribal women in Assam. *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 8(4), 123–137.
- [19] Baruah, S. (2005). *Durable disorder: Understanding the politics of Northeast India*. Oxford University Press.