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Patar, M (2020). Priestess tradition among the Plains Tiwas in Assam: Exploring the contemporary dynamics of religion and gender in a peripheral society in the national seminar cum writing workshop *Reading and Writing about Lives in Northeast India* organised by Department of Sociology, Tezpur University

Patar, M and Goswami, N (2022) Ritual status and agency among the Plains Tiwa women: A feminisrt analysis in the national conference on Tribal Development and Inclusivity: Prospects and Interventions held by the Department of Social Work, Martin Luther Christian University.



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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This research is a study based on the Plains Tiwa tribe residing in Central Assam. In this study I have conducted primary field research in order to explore the dynamics of religion, gender and identity among the Plains Tiwas residing in Central Assam. The Tiwa tribe of Assam, also known as the 'Lalungs' is an ethnic group listed as a scheduled tribe by the constitution of India. It is a part of the larger Tiwa tribe inhabiting parts of the Indian states of Assam and Meghalaya. The Tiwas have been primarily divided into two categories- the Hills Tiwas and the Plains Tiwas. The Hills Tiwas, also known as 'the highlanders' are known to inhabit the hills districts of Karbi Anglong and Dima Hasao in Assam and also parts of Ri-Bhoi district in Meghalaya. Majority of the Plains Tiwas are known to inhabit central Assam comprising the districts of Morigaon and Nagaon (Baruah, 1989). However, a significant Plains Tiwa population is found in parts of Kamrup, Dhemaji, Golaghat and Lakhimpur. The total Tiwa population was estimated to be around 3,71,000, according to the 2011 census of which the number of Hills Tiwas was estimated

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