

Women as an Active Agent in Creation, Production and Cultural Continuity: A Study on Angami Naga Society

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Abstract: Timeless tales, traditional knowledge and cultural values have been passed down from generation to generation through oral narratives. The words of verbal expressions played a crucial role in preserving and transmitting the heritage and wisdom of the past. Culture can be understood as the collective practices, values, and beliefs of a community that shares a common ideology. The material culture carries profound and deep symbolic meaning which reflects the character and traits of the people. These objects, used for various purposes, have become integral to their customs and are the cultural identity of the community in absent of written document. The ideas and purposes behind these artefacts are embedded in material culture which include both tangible and intangible knowledge, turning them into powerful cultural symbols and cognizance. This paper explores the role of women in the creation, preservation, and transmission of traditional knowledge and culture. Women, both directly and indirectly, have contributed significantly to the production, dissemination, and continuity of cultural values, ideas, and identity. Through various spheres of life, women have quietly fostered social cohesion and upheld cultural practices alongside men.

Keywords: Angami, Culture, Indigenous, Knowledge, Tradition, Transmit, Values, Women

Received : 21 October 2025

Revised : 19 November 2025

Accepted : 23 November 2025

Published : 30 December 2025

TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:

Seyiechonu Kera (2025). Women as an Active Agent in Creation, Production and Cultural Continuity: A Study on Angami Naga Society. *South Asian History, Culture and Archaeology*, 5: 2, pp. 283-293.

Introduction

Cultural practices and their production have never been the work of individuals alone. Rather, they are collective expressions of belief, tradition and custom, shaped by the participation of all members of a community. Crawford defined, culture is “the sum of all the ideals and activities and material which

characterise a group of human beings” (Hodder, 1982, p.3). Culture, therefore, reflects an entire way of what goes around our life, encompassing both men and women, and is not inherently gender-biased. Women have played a profound role as active agents in the production, preservation, and transmission of cultural norms, values, and traditional knowledge to younger generations. It is also through their efforts together with man that cultural practices have continued, adapted, and endured even amidst social and historical change. Narzary (2021, p.136) presented, “Culture by itself is not gender biased but gendering culture has been one way of maintaining societal structures developed traditionally”. In the context of Naga society even among the Angami tribe gendered interpretations of culture remain prevalent. The patriarchal nature of the society has often led to the elevation of male roles in the creation and continuation of culture, while overlooking and failing to notice the contributions of women. This paper seeks to highlight and critically examine the role of women in the production and preservation of culture, with special reference to the Angami Naga tribe. The primary objective is to acknowledge and foreground women’s ceaseless efforts as key agents and a member of the custodians in traditional knowledge and cultural heritage, whose contributions have too often been neglected or marginalized.

The Angami Nagas

The Nagas belongs to a mongoloid race and are categorised in the language of Tibeto-Burman language. They are considered as “trans-migrator races in India having come from outside as is evident from their physical and cultural traits” (Nshoga, 2009, p.1). The Nagas traced their migratory roots to Mongolia (Nshoga, 2009, Lotha, 2016, Kire, 2019, Yhokha 2022) are generally agreed upon by many scholars in corroborating with oral narratives. The history of migratory roots is not just in oral traditions however the living culture of the people proof to be an element and marker cultural ties and affinities. Igorots of Northern Philippines have close similarities with Nagas in terms of physical appearance, agriculture system, religious belief, head hunting practices and tattooing (Yhokha, 2022, p.22-23). There are number of tribes under the umbrella of Naga and each tribe again has each own distinct dialect. The Angami tribe is one of the major Naga ethnic groups residing in the northeastern region of India. Traditionally hill dwellers and the Angami Nagas are divided into four regional subgroups namely- Southern, Western, Northern, and Chakro Angami’s. The Chakhesang, originally considered part of the Eastern Angami group, separated and were recognized as a distinct tribe after 1946. In earlier times, they were referred to by various names by neighbouring tribes: *Gnamei* and *Tsanglo* by the Ao, *Tsungumi* by the Sema, and *Tsungung* by the Lotha (Kumar, 2005, p.25). The term “Angami” was likely assigned by outsiders, particularly during the colonial period, when the British began recording information about them under that name. The origin of the name “Angami” remains uncertain, but several theories exist. It may derive from the Manipuri word *gnamei* (meaning “fish tail”, the Zeliang word *hangamai* (meaning “thieves”), or the Mao word *ngamai* (meaning “perfect” (Kire, 2019, p.13). As part of the larger *Tenyimia* group, the Angami are culturally and linguistically linked with other tribes, including the Chakhesang, Mao, Pochury, Rengma, and Zeliang. According to oral tradition, a man named *Vadio*, who lived at Makhel, is considered the progenitor of the *Tenyimia* group (Yhokha, 2022, p.87).

Kire (2019, p.13) notes that the name *Tenyimia* is derived from *Tounyümia*, possibly meaning “swift walker” a name given to the Angami, who were believed to always walk ahead of their

two metaphorical brothers, the Lotha and the Sema. Oral narratives also trace the migration of the Tenyimia people to a distant origin, possibly in Mongolia, followed by a journey through Vietnam and China. Some stories even mention a group fleeing from China during the construction of the Great Wall. Yhokha (2022, p.59) explains that the word *Tenyimia* originates from *Tenyio* or *Tenyiu*, a son of Vadio, and that his descendants were known by this name. Many Angami oral traditions suggest a migration route from Burma to Makhel, and eventually to their present-day settlements. The Angamis also traced their origin of migration from South-East Asia base on their cultural affinity and physical appearance with the people of Borneo, Sumatra, Formosa, Philippines, Indonesian and Malay Archipelago. (Nahoga, 2009, p.30). According to Hutton (1921, p.6), Angami ancestors were believed to have emerged from the bowels of the earth symbolically from the south, rather than their current homeland. Through such oral sources, we gain insights into the historical migrations and settlement patterns of the Angami people.

Symbolic Representation and Continuity of Culture

Hodder (1982:11) defines a symbol as “an object or situation in which a direct, primary or literal meaning also designates another indirect, secondary and figurative meaning.” Symbols play a vital role in the expression and transmission of cultural values, beliefs, and collective identity. Neinu (2015) observes that symbols used among the Naga tribes’ function not only as cultural artefacts but also as reminders of societal norms, beliefs, and rules for maintaining social balance and cohesion. As a means of communication, these symbols help preserve and convey traditional knowledge across generations. Among the Nagas, symbols are deeply embedded in various aspects of life, including crafts, artworks, artefacts, festivals, and ceremonies. Through these mediums, cultural values and embodied meanings are sustained and transmitted. Even in contemporary times, women continue to express cultural identity by adorning traditional attire and ornaments during significant occasions. These practices reflect not only aesthetic appreciation but also a conscious assertion of heritage and respect for tradition.

The woven fabric, for example, is not merely utilitarian; it carries profound symbolic significance linked to ancestral history, cultural identity, gender roles, and socio-economic status. In handloom and textile production, symbols manifest through design elements, with each motif crafted intentionally to convey meaning beyond visual appeal (Yhekaü, 2022, p.7). The knowledge and values preserved by grandmothers and mothers remain deeply revered and are carefully passed down to daughters, maintaining intergenerational continuity. Traditional attire, such as the mekhela, is often worn during engagements and other important social events, serving as powerful expressions of cultural identity and lived heritage. In the context of globalization and a rapidly changing society, such practices reflect deliberate efforts by women to uphold and promote traditional cultural values. Through their actions, women become not only custodians but also active transmitters of cultural knowledge. However, despite their vital contributions, women’s roles in sustaining and expressing cultural traditions have often been overlooked or undervalued. Their work and knowledge, central to the continuity of tradition, have not received the recognition and appreciation they deserve. Nonetheless, women have played an indispensable role in embodying and transmitting authentic cultural identity within their communities.

Pottery an Artistic Craft of Women

The art of pottery-making is a long-standing indigenous tradition in Naga society. Ceramics serve as a crucial material source for reconstructing and understanding past societies, particularly those that did not rely on written records. Communities that have practiced this craft contribute invaluable insights into cultural customs and their transmission across generations. Remarkably, this knowledge has endured in certain areas to this day. One of the most intriguing aspects of this art is the ability to create fine and functional products using simple, locally available materials. In the context of Naga tribal society, pottery production has traditionally been the domain of women. Potters those engaged in the making of pottery have played a significant cultural and economic role. Although in some tribal communities, men have also engaged in pottery-making, it remains largely a female oriented craft. Vasa (2014, p.213) notes that while men do participate, especially in Rünguzu, it is considered taboo for the chief to engage in the craft. Not all Naga villages specialized in pottery-making; rather, only certain villages with access to suitable clay developed expertise in this craft and produced pottery for broader distribution.

The techniques used in pottery production among the Nagas are simple and non-mechanized, with no use of the potter's wheel and it is entirely manual and handmade. Among the Angami tribe, the village of Khuzama and Viswema has maintained a long-standing tradition of pottery-making, which holds significant cultural importance. According to Hutton (1921, p.57) ceramic clay suitable for pottery was found only in a few Angami villages, with Khuzama and Viswema known for producing refined and high-quality earthenware that was highly valued. In these villages, women have historically been the primary producers of pottery. Informants from these communities recounted learning the craft from their grandmothers or elder women, highlighting the matrilineal transmission of traditional knowledge. One woman explained that she began learning the craft at a young age under the guidance of her grandmother. Another noted that she had learned from a collective of elder women in her village. Singh (2023) affirms that, traditionally, only women were allowed to engage in pottery-making. This demonstrates the profound role women play in preserving indigenous knowledge systems and crafts. The selection of clay involves indigenous knowledge passed down through generations. As Gachui (2014, p.218) notes, clay selection follows traditional methods inherited from ancestors, and this knowledge is not universally possessed. In Banjar Basangtamiang, for instance, women have followed pottery-making as a vocational path (Mudra, 2018, p.51). Similarly, Hodder (1982) observed that all potters among the Njemps were women. Arnold (1985) adds that pottery-making aligns with women's domestic responsibilities, such as childcare and household chores, making it a practical and culturally sanctioned occupation for women.

This body of research supports the argument that women have played a critical role in the continuity of traditional culture through their craft. As Ngullie (2014, p.199) states, "Pottery, apart from its primary utilitarian purpose, has other cultural connotations." The pots were not only used for daily needs but also held ritual and spiritual significance. Among the Angami, for example, during pre-British times when animism prevailed, ceramic pots were integral to religious practices. A pot filled with rice beer and the belongings of the deceased was buried with the dead, signifying its role in life-after-death rituals. In some Naga tribes, such as the Pochury of Lüradvü village, secondary or jar burials were practiced (Aier, 2018). Being a potter village held substantial strategic importance.

Since pottery clay was not widely available and the skill of pottery-making was concentrated in a few villages, these communities were often protected from enemy raids. In a society where headhunting was practiced and raiding was considered honourable, potter villages maintained cordial relations with surrounding communities, who relied on them for pottery goods. As such, women potters indirectly contributed to peace-building and diplomacy through their craft. Pottery served multiple roles not just for domestic or economic use but also for rituals and funerary practices. Women, through their craft, safeguarded their communities and promoted cultural harmony. Devi and Neog (2014, p.348) noted that during feasts of merit and the erection of megaliths, food was prepared in large inherited pots, underlining the generational continuity of material culture. In summary, women have been the primary force in pottery production, enabling the transmission of traditional knowledge and ensuring the sustainability of cultural practices. Their roles have been vital in both the tangible and intangible spheres of Naga life, making them key custodians of tradition and cultural heritage.

Rituals and Customs Involved with Women

Before the advent of colonial administrators and American missionaries, the Angami Nagas followed an indigenous religion commonly referred to as animism. Their beliefs were deeply rooted in their way of life and numerous ceremonies, rites, and rituals were performed to appease various spirits. These spiritual practices were closely intertwined with daily and seasonal activities. The Nagas of earlier times did not distinguish between gods and ghosts, nor did they assign any hierarchical structure to their deities (Horam, 1988, p.15). Isolated from external influences, they were unaware of other religions and remained wholly immersed in their own spiritual worldview. The rituals and festivals marked every phase of the agricultural cycle, and the role of women was particularly vital in these events. *Sekrenyi*, the most significant festival known as festival of purification to the Angami tribe, the initiation begins with the lady of the house sprinkling rice beer on the posts of the house early in the morning a symbolic act of purification asking Supreme God for blessing, good health and prosperity. Certain ceremonial roles were exclusively reserved for women, and men could not initiate these rituals without their presence. Women held central responsibilities in the sowing and harvesting of crops an especially meaningful role in an agriculturally based society. One such figure is the *Liedepfü*, or “first reaper,” who undertakes specific rites, fasts for five days, and leads the initial harvest and gathering of crops (Yhokha, 2022, p.95). It was considered *genna* (taboo or prohibited) for her to work in the fields for thirty days prior to the *Liedepfü*'s ceremonial harvest. As part of her role, she would receive payment in paddy and send four or five men from her clan to collect a small basket of paddy from each household (Thakro, 2002, p.103–104). This practice not only honoured the sacred role of the *Liedepfü* but also underscored the community's spirit of cooperation and shared respect for ancestral rituals and traditions.

Women's importance extended beyond ceremonial leadership and goes on to agricultural practices. Once the rice paddy was harvested and stored at home, it was the mother of the household who had the honour of preparing and cooking the rice from the first barn. The other family member neither husband nor children was allowed to eat the rice of the leftovers. This act was accompanied by prayers to a Supreme Being, asking for prosperity, good health, and abundant harvest that would sustain the family through the year. Such practices show that women were not only participants but were the bearers

and transmitters of traditional values and culture. They acted as the living link between generations, keeping cultural values alive through their knowledge and daily responsibilities. Women played a critical role in creating, preserving, and transmitting a wealth of indigenous knowledge that profoundly shaped Naga society. Their contributions remain a vital aspect of the community's cultural heritage.

Weaving a Prerogative of a Women

Textile and weaving have long been an age-old traditional practice and a revered craft among Naga women. While the tools used for weaving were typically crafted by men, the entire weaving process was carried out manually by women using the traditional backstrap loom not mechanized power looms. The art of weaving has been preserved as a living tradition, passed down from generation to generation. Grandmothers, mothers, and elder women taught the younger ones through observation and hands on experience. In earlier times, mastering this skill was considered both a duty and a social obligation for women, and over time, each woman in the household was expected to become proficient in weaving. The absence of modern machines and alternative fabrics reinforced reliance on traditional handloom textiles made from locally available materials. What began as a way to meet basic needs eventually evolved into a cultural expression that shaped identity. A woman skilled in weaving and known for her craftsmanship was often considered ready for marriage. In fact, a good weaver was believed to attract a good husband, making weaving not just a practical skill but also a socially valued attribute.

Women wove intricate designs into shawls, mekkelas, and other traditional garments, each piece reflecting the cultural expressions, experiences, and identity of the community. Traditional handlooms were not merely functional fabrics but embodied the creativity, resilience, and strength of women. Each textile carried an unspoken language symbols rich with meaning and deeply rooted in tradition. Thus, weaving played a crucial role in constructing both personal and collective identities within society. These handwoven textiles are not simply garments but carriers of cultural information and significance. They represent symbolic meanings and ancestral wisdom. Weaving was often seen as a domestic responsibility rather than an art requiring special recognition, but as Narzary (2021, p.139) opined out that, it is “a piece of art and manifestation of their creative imagination that embodies community ethos”. Through this craft, women take an active role in preserving and transmitting traditional knowledge, customs, and cultural values. Weaving had played the role of socializing among the family members (Ckj, 2017, p.35). It served as a social space for intergenerational learning and provided a setting for young girls to bond with their elders, mothers, grandmothers, and aunts while acquiring weaving skills. In the absence of formal educational institutions, this was a vital platform where young people learned not just an art, but also the social etiquettes, moral values, life lesson and timeless oral narratives which includes folktale, folksong, myths and legends.

In the context of Feast of Merit, a celebration associated with social prestige, economic wealth, and community recognition, men have historically been the primary focus. These feasts involve multiple stages and elaborate rituals, each feast more grand and costlier. Hosts who performed these feasts earned the right to decorate their homes with *kika* (house horns), animals' motif, wear shawls different from common people, and erect monoliths. Although, “Women dominate the art of weaving, male are given more authority and privileges even in the area of weaves in relation to their roles in

social domain” (Yekha-ü, 2022, p.217). However, the celebration of such feasts would be incomplete without the contributions of women, particularly in weaving the ceremonial shawls and preparing food and other necessities. Often, we gave so much attention and significant importance on the wearer about his rank, status and position but fail miserably to understand, appreciate and acknowledge the artistic craftsmanship, skill of the weaver as well as the work women in general. The heavy patterns and designs on the shawls are not mere decoration however, they serve and portray identity, ethnicity and transmit collective memory and belief of the past.

Behind every traditional attire is the labour and creativity of women, each piece woven with a unique story. The growing demand for traditional garments has opened avenues for self-employment, particularly for women not employed in the public or private sectors. Expert weavers contribute not only to their household economies but also to the safeguarding of cultural practices and embraced traditions that are increasingly threatened by globalization and cultural homogenization. The symbolism embedded in motifs, patterns, and designs provides rich insight into the social structure, values systems, and beliefs of Naga communities. In a rapidly changing world, textiles have become a vessel of cultural preservation. As Yekha-ü (2022, p.272) notes, “Culture and history were preserved through meanings embedded in weaves, with women as key players in the production and preservation of culture, history, and traditions.” Textiles help us understand ethnicity, gender roles, social hierarchies, and a thread of historical continuity.

Longchar (2015, p.38) also highlights that “Ao Naga women have their clan identity through the attire one wears so all the clans maintain their respective attire”. In the absence of written records, these traditional textiles function as narrative documents, encapsulating stories, myths, and legends. Thus, the study of handloom becomes a crucial means of understanding and decoding the cultural past. In essence, weaving is far more than a domestic task, it is a cultural legacy, a historical archive, and a symbol of resilience. Through their craftsmanship, women have preserved ancestral traditions and ensured that the intangible values of their culture remain intact. The artistry embedded in textiles reveals much about the beliefs, identities, and lived experiences of the people. It is through the imperious role played by women that both tangible and intangible cultural heritage continues to thrive and evolve.

Fermented Rice Beer (*Zutho*) and Women’s Role in Angami Naga Society

The Nagas celebrates a number of vibrant festivals closely associated with various agricultural activities and cycles of life. Among the Angami tribe, fermented rice beer *Zutho* holds a central role in completing the cultural and ritual dimensions of any festivity. *Zutho*, an indigenous and locally brewed traditional drink, has long been a staple food of daily life and celebration. It is not merely a beverage, but a deeply embedded cultural aspects. Without it, any festivity among the Angamis is considered incomplete. The traditional knowledge and technique of brewing *Zutho* have been passed down orally through generations, primarily sustained by women from mother to daughter as it involves with obligation of household chores. Women played an active and essential role in the production of fermented rice beer, which was brewed primarily for domestic consumption and served during social visits to friends, family members, and guests. *Zutho* thus became an intrinsic part of the Naga diet and hospitality. Cultural transitions began with the arrival of British colonialists, the spread of Christianity by American missionaries, and the introduction of formal education in the Naga Hills. These influences

led to the decline of many indigenous practices. Nevertheless, the tradition of brewing rice beer largely maintained by women persisted in the domestic sphere and ceremonial contexts.

In Naga society, women were socialized into domestic responsibilities, including food preparation and caregiving. While men were not prohibited from brewing rice beer and were familiar with the process, the task predominantly fell upon the women. The preparation involved several intricate steps drying, cleaning, pounding, husking, fermenting all carried out by womenfolk with care and expertise. Rice beer also held a significant role in marriage rituals. According to Kikhi (2006, p.265), the bride was expected to bring rice beer to the groom's household on the wedding day. Such customs fostered affinal ties, reinforced social networks, and enhanced communal harmony. Similarly, during feasts, celebrations, and communal gatherings, rice beer was customarily served to guests as a mark of hospitality and cultural identity. Women also played a central role in the religious and ritualistic practices associated with death in pre-Christian Angami society. During traditional burial rites, the mother would sprinkle fermented rice beer carried in banana leaves over the burial site and *Zutho* was left on the tomb as a farewell offering. These rituals highlight the indispensable role of women in sustaining religious beliefs and ceremonial traditions.

In the contemporary context, *Zutho* continues to be served at traditional festivals, offering guests an authentic experience of Angami culture. Events such as the Hornbill Festival have elevated indigenous products, including rice beer, drawing attraction and interest from tourists which also creates avenues for entrepreneurship. Young people and local vendors have found new opportunities to promote cultural heritage through traditional cuisine and drinks. *Zutho* is far more than a fermented beverage it embodies the Angami community's cultural memory and values. It has fostered social bonds, communal harmony, and a sense of identity and belongingness as one. Its production and sharing are acts of remembrance and cultural affirmation, linking the present to ancestral roots. However, with the sweeping changes brought by colonial and missionary contact, the role of traditional practices like *Zutho* making has been challenged. Despite this, the cultural significance of rice beer, and the crucial role women play in its production and preservation, remain vital in Angami society today.

Folksong the Keeper of the Traditional Values

Many of the cultural values of the Naga people have been expressed and transmitted through music, serving as a true reflection of their past society. In the absence of written records, tribal histories and stories have been passed down through words of mouth generationally. Likewise, oral traditions have played a critical role in the preservation and transmission of ancient cultural values, beliefs, and identity. In fact, the origins, migration routes, and collective memory of the Naga tribal community have often been studied and understood through oral narratives, which have also guided minor archaeological explorations and excavations. In any historical research involving the visitation of villages, oral sources are vital. Elders are regarded as the custodians and transmitters of knowledge. Alemchiba (1968) rightly observed that Naga literature is preserved in the memory of the elderly, and with their passing, much of this knowledge risks being lost. Oral traditions depend heavily on the memory and storytelling abilities of the elders to narrate history with relevance and authenticity. The lived experiences and insider perspectives of indigenous communities are essential in understanding customs and traditions in depth.

However, within these storytelling traditions, gendered patterns of cultural authority are evident. In many villages, men dominate the space of oral narration during historical research. Aier (2018) highlights how women are often excluded from such meetings, with the justification that the relevant knowledge is not held by them. This reflects the patriarchal structure of Naga society, where women voices are given less authority even when they may possess significant experiential knowledge. Folklores and folksongs are vital in reconstructing historical narratives and cultural memory. They are community treasures, encoding the life histories of the past. For the Angami Nagas, music is an indispensable cultural practice, with folksongs closely associated with every life stage and social function. Zashumo (2022, p.109) points out, “preliterate societies used music as an unambiguous signal for expressing human thoughts more than as a finer symbol”. Folksongs among the Angami serve this purpose by encapsulating broad themes such as joy, sorrow, war, love, agriculture, and festivals. These songs provide us with a glimpse of the past and are considered a nascent form of literature, originating from oral traditions. Moreover, as Bakar (2021, p.52) asserts, “folk tales are the reflection of the society as they embody cultural elements, arts, customs, philosophy, economy, politics, and social beliefs”. Folksongs are not merely artistic expressions however; they reflect on the socio-cultural fabric of the society that created them. Many were composed based on real-life experiences and one such folksong describes the hardship of a girl mistreated by her stepmother a sorrowful song that remains widely known and sung. Every traditional folksong carries symbolic meaning and is intended to convey moral values and messages to future generations. These songs function as cultural texts that communicate values, emotions, and social commentary. Folksongs serve as a form of communication, a bridge across generations, and a medium through which societal harmony and bonding are nurtured. In tribal societies, songs were composed for a wide range of occasions from planting and harvesting to warfare and mourning thus embedding them in daily and seasonal life cycles.

Women have played an important role in sustaining and promoting traditional cultural values through the medium of folksong. These songs, passed from one generation to the next, have become vehicles for preserving cultural identity. Das and Pal (1985, p.40) note that “most of the important junctures of social pertinence are associated with one or another folksong.” Among the Angami Nagas, women have been instrumental in preserving stories, values, and ancestral experiences through song. However, with increasing exposure to external influences and globalization, traditional culture including folksong is under threat. Younger generations often favour Western music over indigenous forms, resulting in cultural displacement and loss. Amidst this cultural fusion and confusion, there is a pressing need for indigenous communities to actively preserve and promote their cultural heritage. In villages like Khuzama in the Southern Angami region, women continue to sing traditional folksongs on events and occasions as a means of showcasing cultural identity. These women are not only bearers of music but also of memory and history. Their songs, rich in meaning, serve as reminders of the heritage passed down by ancestors. Even in a time when Western music dominates, these traditional singers maintain and project cultural continuity through their performances. A numerous amount and traces of rich cultural heritage can be discerned in songs (Saikia, 1985, p.78). Folksongs reflect the socio-economic life of the people and stand as enduring testimonies to the values and realities of past societies. Each folksong carries moral messages, making them powerful sources for preserving memory, identity, and tradition. Therefore, we can assert that folksongs particularly as preserved and

transmitted by women have also played a vital role in sustaining the culture and history of the Angami Naga people.

Conclusion

The role of women in Naga society, particularly in the preservation and transmission of culture, has often been overlooked or undervalued in mainstream discussions. Historically, women's voices held less authority and influence in cultural narratives, as observed by the patriarch traditional community. Despite this marginalization, women have quietly and resiliently contributed to the preservation and promotion of both tangible and intangible cultural knowledge and practices. The traits of patience, resilience, and obedience values ingrained have enabled them to play a crucial, albeit role in sustaining cultural heritage. This paper seeks to shed light on the often-unrecognized contributions of women in the cultural landscape, emphasizing the need for the current generation to reflect on, acknowledge, and reassess their immense impact. While the events and stories of the past cannot be perfectly recaptured, they are kept alive through folklore, folksongs, myths, and the material culture that serves as tangible evidence of history. These forms of cultural expression are essential in re-telling and preserving the stories of the past. For too long, the women have not been credited for their pivotal role in creating, preserving, and promoting cultural values and practices. In this context, the researcher aims to explore the often-hidden role of women as active agents in sustaining culture. Through careful examination and analysis of various cultural aspects and traditions, it becomes clear that indigenous women have been an instrumental in transmitting, safeguarding, and nurturing customs, beliefs, and traditions of the community.

Acknowledgement

I sincerely wish to thank all my informants for generously sharing their valuable and comprehensive knowledge, and for sacrificing their time to narrate the stories. This paper would be incomplete without their rich insights, and I extend my heartfelt gratitude to them for their indispensable contribution to the outcome of this work.

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